

STANFORD UNIVERSITY NEWS SERVICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STANFORD - Students occupying the Applied Electronics Laboratory (AEL) at Stanford no longer will let researchers there use their offices alone.

"This marks a shift from moral persuasion to physical coercion," a young research associate at the laboratory, Rodney Edwards, told students today. "If I want to go into my office and think by myself I couldn't do so," he said.

Edwards, 33, has spoken for hours with students since they entered the building Wednesday night.

Yesterday afternoon, he voluntarily left his office after permitting a small class-like group to meet there. When he returned, David Pugh, a Stanford student, asked him to leave because he would be interrupting a meeting of protest leaders there.

When Edwards returned to his office this morning, two sit-inners were sleeping on the desk and floor. They would not leave when he inquired if they would do so.

"We don't let anybody use their office; we have decided we are stopping work here," Benton Cook, a freshman, told Edwards. Neither Pugh nor Cook is currently enrolled, but both were last quarter.

Edwards said nothing in his office appeared to be missing since he left it yesterday. Cook said he would prefer that Edwards not remove any of his personal papers and books, but said he would not attempt to stop Edwards from doing so.

Edwards was working in his office when the demonstrators arrived at 11 p.m. Wednesday. He invited several to talk with him.

At 4 a.m., he decided to leave, as did the two remaining students who slept in the hallway. He locked the door.

Edwards spoke with students again Thursday, inviting them in small informal discussion groups and locking the door when he left. When a small, class-like group came by, looking for a place to meet, he offered them the use of his office. The incident with Pugh followed.

Edwards does unclassified research in data processing and pattern recognition. His studies are funded by the Army. Edwards is most excited by the potential applications of his work in medical diagnosis.

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