

**RESOLUTION ON ACADEMIC
FREEDOM AND TENURE AT THE UNIVERSITY
OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI**

Whereas, the purpose of academic freedom is to allow college and university professors to develop knowledge and to challenge existing truths by thorough investigation and by speaking and writing about their findings and theories; and

Whereas, the purpose of academic tenure, properly earned through rigorous procedures, is to protect academic freedom from destruction through removal of tenured professors from their positions without demonstrated adequate cause; and

Whereas, governance of all institutions of higher education is and should be shared between administration and faculty, a principle long espoused by the American Association of University Professors and endorsed by the Faculty Handbook (or equivalent document) of many colleges and universities in the United States, including the Faculty Handbook of The University of Alabama; and

Whereas, President Shelby Thames of the University of Southern Mississippi on Friday, March 5, ordered the locks changed on the doors of the offices of tenured professors Frank Glamser and Gary Stringer, ordered the seizure of the computers of the two professors, suspended the two professors from their academic and professional duties, and instituted proceedings to remove their tenure; and

Whereas, professors Glamser and Stringer state that the reasons given for these actions involve use of their offices and computers for personal rather than academic purposes and insubordination, while President Thames refuses to state what grounds of adequate cause he may have for immediate suspension from duties and for removal of their tenure; and

Whereas, professor Glamser is chair of the University of Southern Mississippi chapter of the American Association of University Professors, and both professors have been outspoken in critique of the administration of President Thames; and

Whereas, use of professorial computers for the purpose of gathering and disseminating information and opinion about the actions and statements of a university administration is well within the protection of academic freedom and is a necessary part of shared governance; and

Whereas, on Sunday, March 7, the Faculty Senate of the University of Southern Mississippi in extraordinary session unanimously passed a resolution of no confidence in

President Thames as a direct result of his actions, demanding that professors Glamser and Stringer be reinstated; and

Whereas, faculty members of the University of Southern Mississippi have asked for the support of their colleagues in other colleges and universities; and

Whereas, any attack on academic freedom or on tenure by any college or university is an attack on academic freedom or tenure for all faculty at all colleges and universities,

Therefore, be it resolved by the Faculty Senate of The University of Alabama that we support academic freedom and tenure, that we deplore any instance of abuse of academic freedom and tenure, that we are deeply concerned that an instance of abuse may have occurred at the University of Southern Mississippi where two tenured professors seem to have been suspended and may be terminated because of their legitimate activities within the ambit of academic freedom, and that professors Glamser and Stringer should be reinstated as soon as possible unless the administration of the University of Southern Mississippi can sustain its high burden of proof that they acted in contravention of that University's rules in a fashion that in no way involves or implicates their freedom of speech or academic freedom.

Adopted by the Faculty Senate

March 17, 2004