

The University of Alabama
Faculty Senate
Passed on October 10, 2018

Resolution on the Placement of a Menorah on the Rose Administration Lawn

Whereas, The University of Alabama's custom to place *solely* a Holiday Tree at an official central location such as the Rose Administration Lawn is perceived as the University endorsing only one perspective of the winter-holiday season; and

Whereas, The United States Supreme Court has long determined that advances of religious symbols on public grounds constitute governmental proselytization that violates the Establishment Clause, but held the display of both the Menorah and the "Christmas tree" as visual symbols of the same secular winter-holiday season that does not violate the Establishment Clause (see 492 U.S. 573 (1989) *County of Allegheny v. American Civil Liberties Union*); and

Whereas, The University requires a specific permit to place a Menorah at designated official campus locations such as the Rose Administration Lawn but does not require a similar permit to place the Holiday tree; and

Whereas, limiting the display of a Menorah to the Ferguson Student Center does not provide University Employees equal opportunity to view the Menorah as displaying the Holiday Tree at the Rose Administration; and

Whereas, Displaying one, but not both visual symbols of the secular winter-holiday season in official campus space negates the University of Alabama Capstone Creed to "promote equity and inclusion" as well as its own strategic goal to "create and sustain an inviting, respectful, and inclusive campus environment that enhances awareness and appreciation of cultural and individual diversity, promotes community and tolerance, and prepares students for the global society in which they will live and work."

Therefore Be It Resolved, That The University of Alabama Faculty Senate most strongly urges the Administration to place a Menorah by the side of the Holiday tree at the Rose Administration Lawn this and future holiday seasons and send a strong message of unity, tolerance, and liberty that does not violate the Establishment Clause, while broadening the commemoration of the holiday season in a more diverse, pluralistic, and celebratory manner of widely shared traditions.

The University of Alabama Faculty Senate calls upon the Administration to view this as an opportunity to join numerous academic institutions across the nation that regularly display both the Holiday Tree and the Menorah side by side.