

VIA FACSIMILE (919) 831-3545 and U.S. MAIL

July 25, 2008

Chancellor James L. Oblinger
Office of the Chancellor and Staff
Holliday Hall A, Box 7001
North Carolina State University
Raleigh, North Carolina 27695-7001

Dear Chancellor Oblinger,

The Committee for Open Discussion of Zionism has asked me to write to respectfully request that you reconsider your refusal, on procedural grounds, to entertain Professor Terri Ginsberg's grievance when her teaching contract at North Carolina State University was not renewed.

Our Committee has as its Honorary Chairpersons Michael Ratner, Esq., who is President of The Center for Constitutional Rights, the renowned American historian, Howard Zinn and Richard Falk, the Princeton Professor of International Law and United Nations appointed Special Rapporteur on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Our working members are academics and attorneys in the United States.

Our Committee is of the opinion that Professor Ginsberg was not rehired because she screened films on campus that depicted both Palestinian as well as Israeli views of the dispute — from perspectives that she, a scholarly expert in the area, believed would broaden students' and audience understandings of the complexity of the conflict. We think the procedural reason given for not considering her grievance was, frankly, not the real reason.

Our concern is twofold. Your dismissal of Professor Ginsberg's grievance is a violation of her labor rights as an NCSU faculty member, and, by extension, a violation of her students' rights to consider as fully as possible the ideas she presented in relation to the films she screened and the written materials she assigned. It also violates her right to present and defend the perspectives of persons belonging to protected racial, religious and national groupings, namely Arabs, Muslims, Jews and especially Palestinians — all of which included her students, invited guests to campus and members of the general NCSU community. Finally, your dismissal of Professor Ginsberg's grievance violates her right to exercise her academic freedom in a genuinely open and balanced manner, one that fosters belief in a just peace in the Middle East that respects the rights of both the native population and those Palestinians who were expelled in the wars of 1948 and 1967. We believe that unless such rights are respected, both here and in Palestine/Israel, the conflict there, which today poses a dire threat to the local inhabitants, may very well provoke another regional war, or perhaps a war even more wide-ranging.

There can be no social change without democracy, yet North Carolina State University has impeded the free flow of ideas by which the truth may be found and justice achieved. The Committee for Open Discussion of Zionism urges you therefore to reconsider Professor Ginsberg's appeal on substantive grounds, for if you do, we are sure Professor Ginsberg will be restored to the position of professional respect she formerly graced with devotion and intelligence.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Steven Smith, Esq.
Attorney for and member of
The Committee for Open Discussion of Zionism

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