



## TAKE ACTION AGAINST YET ANOTHER ATTACK ON ACADEMIC FREEDOM

As you know, since 9/11, the right has ramped up its attack on academics who dare to dissent from the U.S. occupation of Iraq and its policy in the Middle East more generally. Neo-McCarthyite groups like the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, Students for Academic Freedom and the David Project have published lists of "disloyal" faculty and scurrilous reports on allegedly "anti-American" courses dealing with U.S. imperialism, Islam and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Respected scholars who study and write about such subjects -such as Norman Finkelstein-- have been denied tenure solely on the basis of their politics. Others, like Ward Churchill, have had tenure summarily stripped from them. In similar instances, applications for tenure have been seriously threatened (Nadia Abu El-Haj: Joseph Massad) and books and their publishers have been targeted for censorship (i.e. Joel Kovel's book "Overcoming Zionism" and University of Michigan Press). Now, the assault on academic freedom has effected yet another critical scholar: Terri Ginsberg, a Ph.D. in Cinema Studies from NYU and an authority on Israeli and Palestinian film.

Last fall, Terri was hired to a one year, non-tenure track position in Film Studies at North Carolina State University (with the possibility of renewal). As part of her teaching responsibilities, she offered advanced courses on film and media treatment of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and on the political aesthetics of Holocaust film (the subject of her recent book) ; she was also charged with helping to program a Middle Eastern film series.

Unfortunately, as Terri details in a grievance she filed with the NCSU Faculty in March 2008, the director of the film studies program and the director of the Middle East studies program at NCSU made a number of administrative decisions in the course of the past year that flagrantly violated Terri's academic freedom.

To begin with, they limited her involvement in the film series which she had been hired to curate, and criticized the introduction she gave at a screening of the Palestinian film "Ticket to Jerusalem" as biased and overly political. Moreover, the director of the film studies program refused to purchase many of the materials Terri had requested for her Palestine/Israel film and media course and submitted her evaluation of Terri's teaching prematurely. All of this culminated in her contract not being renewed for the upcoming academic year.

The grievance Terri filed with the NCSU Faculty alleged violations of her First Amendment and equal opportunity rights under the University Code. Despite a recommendation from the NCSU Faculty Chair that her case be given a full hearing, NCSU Chancellor James L. Oblinger summarily dismissed her petition on the grounds that it was filed "too late" and that Terri was no longer a university employee. To make matters worse, the AAUP-- who had been helping Terri with her case-- informed her in the wake of Oblinger's decision that they would no longer provide her with assistance. (For more information about the facts of Terri's case, read the following article: <http://tinyurl.com/6emb89>)

In response to this outrage, people from around the world have been inundating NCSU with letters demanding that the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees allow Terri's grievance to go forward. An online petition has been started that requests that NCSU consider Terri's case and asks the AAUP to give her the support she deserves.



## **TAKE ACTION:**

**Please take a few minutes to help Terri in this fight. First, add your name to the petition of support drafted by Academics for Justice (AcademicsForJustice.org):**

<http://tinyurl.com/5l8l78>

**Second, send e-mails and make phone calls to D. McQueen Campbell, chair of the NSCU Board of Trustees, and D. McQueen Campbell, Chair NCSU Board of Trustees**

tele: 919-515-2195

fax: 919-831-3545

[trustees@ncsu.edu](mailto:trustees@ncsu.edu)

**Dr. Larry A. Nielsen, NCSU Provost & Executive Vice Chancellor**

[larry\\_nielsen@ncsu.edu](mailto:larry_nielsen@ncsu.edu)

tele: 919-515-2195

fax: 919-515-5921

Steve Macek  
Assistant Professor  
Speech Communication  
North Central College