



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT  
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June 4, 2012

Peter Bonilla, Associate Director  
Individual Rights Defense Program  
Foundation for Individual Rights to Education  
601 Walnut Street, Suite 510  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

Dear Mr. Bonilla,

As president of Texas A&M University-San Antonio I would like to present an explanation of the facts versus some of the selective reporting to date. Let me assure you, our school heads, our University Police Department and our administration have acted in a professional manner befitting the distinguished Texas A&M System to ensure the safety and security of our campus community and to preserve the privileges of academic freedom. I have also provided a similar response to the AAUP.

Our adjunct faculty members are important and valuable members of our community who play a critical role in our development. In Texas, all employees are at-will, unless they have an employment contract. Non-tenure-track adjunct faculty are appointed on a semester-by-semester basis according to the specific needs of the University. They are provided an appointment letter that specifies the beginning and ending date of the appointment and clearly states that "there is no expectation of continued employment." Ms. Bradford was provided such an appointment letter for each semester that she was appointed to teach at Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

During early planning for the fall 2012 semester, Ms. Bradford was asked whether she would be available to teach in the fall 2012 semester. She was not provided an appointment letter for the fall semester. The tentative class schedule is a planning document that is subject to change for any variety of reasons. Anyone who is acquainted with the process, including Ms. Bradford, knows that.

However, as Texas A&M-San Antonio continues to grow and pursue accreditation, bringing on full-time, tenure track faculty is a necessary part of the next stage of growth. Ms. Bradford was notified that the University would not be able to offer her any classes for the fall 2012 semester, along with approximately twenty other non-tenure-track adjunct faculty members who were similarly notified. This is part of the final process in the planning for future semesters that is partly contingent on various factors, including registration. Adjuncts who will not be needed are notified as soon as possible. The timing of the article in the SA Current regarding Ms. Bradford's opinions of the University was pure coincidence in relation to the notification messages. In addition, Dr. Bush has made it clear that he was not aware of the article when he provided Human Resources the list of adjunct faculty that would not be asked to return for the fall. She was also notified that she could address any concerns she may have about the decision to the provost, which she has not done.

For reference, tenure-track faculty within The Texas A&M University System are appointed to one-year terms during a six-year probationary period. If a tenured or tenure-track faculty member is dismissed for cause during a term, they are given appropriate due process, as outlined in policy. Tenure-track faculty members whose one-year term appointment will not be renewed are provided timely notice and an opportunity to submit a written complaint to an administrator as required by state statute and/or submit a written appeal of the decision that is reviewed by a faculty committee.

A tenure-track faculty member's written appeal of a nonrenewal must be based on an allegation that the decision was made [1] in violation of academic freedom; [2] for an illegal reason (i.e., discrimination); and/or [3] inadequate consideration of the faculty member's professional achievements. If a preliminary hearing committee determines that the faculty member has made a prima facie case regarding the basis of the appeal, they recommend that the matter be heard by an evidentiary hearing committee. After a hearing the evidentiary hearing committee makes a written recommendation to the president.

The implication that the University acted without regard to academic freedom is unsubstantiated. Students, staff and faculty regularly express a variety of views in and out of the classroom at Texas A&M-San Antonio; it is our duty to protect their right to do so, and to provide a safe place for the exploration of ideas – no matter how controversial. The notion that the University would retaliate against any faculty member, adjunct or tenure-track, for expressing their personal views, is a contradiction to the mission of Texas A&M-San Antonio. Preparing and empowering students “through dynamic teaching, scholarship, research and public service” is grounded in our cherished First Amendment rights.

Texas A&M-San Antonio's unprecedented growth is a testament to the quality of education that our commendable faculty and staff make possible, and at every step we maintain the highest level of commitment to academic study and the success of our students. While we are very disappointed in Ms. Bradford's approach to sharing her views on this University, we are confident in our approach and our actions.

Thank you for the voice you provide for higher education in today's changing world. I remain proud to be the president of this exemplary University, which is changing the landscape of this city forever and realizing the dream of affordable and accessible higher education for the citizens of San Antonio and the South Texas Region.

Sincerely,



Dr. Maria Hernandez Ferrier  
President



Dr. Brent Marriott Snow  
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs



Dr. William Bush  
Interim Head, School of Arts & Sciences