



## ***FACT SHEET***

### ***Adams v. The Trustees of the University of North Carolina– Wilmington***

#### ***ABOUT THE CASE***

Dr. Mike Adams, a criminology professor at the University of North Carolina–Wilmington, frequently received accolades from his colleagues after the university hired him as an assistant professor in 1993 and promoted him to associate professor in 1998. At the time he was an atheist, but his conversion to Christianity in 2000 impacted his views on political and social issues. After this, he was subjected to intrusive investigations, baseless accusations, and the denial of promotion to full professor even though his scholarly output surpassed that of almost all of his colleagues. In a lawsuit filed against the university on Adams' behalf, Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys contended that the university denied Adams a promotion because his nationally syndicated opinion columns espoused religious and political views that ran contrary to the opinions held by university officials.

#### ***STATUS AS OF 2014-03-14***

In April 2007, Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys representing Adams sued UNCW officials in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of North Carolina, Southern Division. The court ruled against Adams in March 2010, prompting ADF attorneys to appeal to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit. In July 2010, the American Association of University Professors, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, and the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression jointly filed a friend-of-the-court brief in support of Adams' appeal, arguing that Adams' reference to his opinion columns in a promotion application does not disqualify them from First Amendment protection. The 4th Circuit agreed and sent the case back to the district court to determine whether the university retaliated against Adams because of his expression. The court found sufficient evidence of retaliation to warrant a trial, which is scheduled to begin on March 17, 2014.

#### ***WHAT IS AT STAKE?***

Ensuring that university professors maintain the constitutionally protected freedom to hold and express their views without retaliation from government officials who do not share the same views.

#### ***CONTACT Alliance Defending Freedom Media and Public Relations***

Phone: (480) 444-0020, x. 56020 / E-mail: [media@alliancedefendingfreedom.org](mailto:media@alliancedefendingfreedom.org) / Web: [www.adfmedia.org/home/contact](http://www.adfmedia.org/home/contact)

#### ***ABOUT Alliance Defending Freedom***

Alliance Defending Freedom is an alliance-building, non-profit legal organization that advocates for the right of people to freely live out their faith.

#### ***ABOUT Travis Barham***

Travis Barham serves as litigation staff counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom at its Regional Service Center in Georgia, where he litigates to preserve religious freedom and freedom of speech on college and university campuses across the nation. Barham joined Alliance Defending Freedom in 2006 and is a member of the bar of the U.S. Supreme Court, the U.S. Courts of Appeal for the 4th, 7th and 11th Circuits, and the states of Arizona and Georgia. He is also admitted to federal district courts in Arizona, Indiana, Michigan, North Carolina, and Wisconsin. Barham has practiced law since 2006 and earned his J.D. from Washington and Lee University School of Law, where he graduated *summa cum laude*.