

Bama Students for Life
MSC #873307
1831 University Station
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

February 11, 2014

Mr. Carl Bacon, Director – Ferguson Center
The University of Alabama
751 Campus Drive
Ferguson Center - Suite 356
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487

Re: Censorship of Pro-Life Speech at The University of Alabama

Dear Mr. Bacon,

We are Bama Students for Life, a registered student organization, writing regarding the recent removal of our pro-life display at the Ferguson Center. From January 8 to February 7, we reserved one of the glass display cases that student organizations are allowed to use in the Ferguson Center. Our display informed students about the harms caused by abortion, including photographs of women who have died as a result of having an abortion and two small photographs of aborted children. Our club went through the proper procedures and obtained permission to use the display case, and our request was approved without any problems. However, on Thursday morning, we discovered that our display had been removed by university employees. We were directed to Ms. Donna Lake's office, where she explained that she had received complaints about our pro-life display. Ms. Lake claimed that according to "policy," displays cannot be "offensive" or "graphic." She said that we were "lucky" to have been allowed to have it up for as long as we did.

We believe that the removal of our pro-life display violates our First Amendment right to free speech. The United States Supreme Court has said that educators cannot ban offensive speech. *Morse v. Frederick*, 551 U.S. 393, 409 (2007).

The Ferguson Center permits all kinds of speech by other students and student groups that many people would find "offensive" or "graphic." For example, on one bulletin board is an ad for the UA Theatre & Dance program's presentation of "Blood Wedding." The poster states that the event is "For Mature Audiences" and features blood stained glass superimposed on a picture of a bride and groom. A few months ago the Ferguson Center Art Gallery displayed student artwork and one painting showed male full frontal nudity.

Other student groups are also permitted to display information about women's health, safety issues, and the consequences of sex. All of these problems were addressed in our pro-life display that provided facts and information on the harm caused by abortion—both to the infant who is killed and to the mother.

We are asking that you respond to us by Monday, February 17th and issue an apology for removing our pro-life display without any notice. We would also like to put up our display in the Ferguson Center display case during the next available slot. Thank you for helping us right this wrong.

Sincerely,

Bama Students for Life