

NEWS RELEASE

University of Oregon

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Freed

President Robert D. Clark has accepted the recommendation of a faculty panel that he terminate the employment of Jeffrey P. Freed as a graduate teaching fellow at the University of Oregon.

The ad hoc hearing committee, chaired by associate professor of law Dominick R. Vetri, had been named to sift charges against Freed based on his participation in a May 5 "take-over" of the Army ROTC building on the University campus.

In a report transmitted to Clark and Freed on July 13, the committee said that Freed's actions on May 5 comprised a rejection of "long-standing and ... valid principles of academic freedom and professional responsibility. Such actions cannot be countenanced if the campus is to remain free and open. The expression of dissent and the attempt to produce change should not be carried out through a process of disruption."

Serving with Vetri on the hearing committee were Robert Fagot, professor of psychology; Richard Higgins, associate professor of physics; H. T. Koplin, professor of economics; and Glen Love, associate professor of English.

Freed had been charged May 17, pursuant to rules adopted in 1970 by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education, with failure to perform the responsibilities of an academic staff member toward his colleagues and toward the University. At his request, the Vetri panel conducted open hearings on the charges June 28, 29 and 30.

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The committee concluded, on the basis of a preponderance of evidence, that Freed violated specific provisions of the 1970 conduct rules by blocking entrance to the ROTC building "with the intent thereby to hinder and prevent faculty and students from entering or exiting," and by moving about the building "with the intention of obstructing, disrupting, and preventing the persons who worked there from conducting their normal business."

In reaching its judgment, the committee noted that "the ROTC program on this campus, as on others, has become a focal point of protest against the war and military influence on foreign and domestic policy." Nevertheless, the committee said --

"Lawful and open means exist by which those who wish to alter the role or structure of ROTC on the campus, or to remove the program entirely, may proceed. Many who share Mr. Freed's views are at work on such means.

"When the opportunities for peaceful change exist -- opportunities for action within accepted principles of academic freedom and faculty governance -- there is no justification for abrogating these principles."

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