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Statement from the Department of History at Georgia Southern University October 12, 2019 Concerning Recent Book Burning Incident

December 11, 2019

The faculty of the Department of History at Georgia Southern is dismayed that some students recently chose to express their intolerance towards Professor Jennine Capó Crucet and her ideas by burning her book on Wednesday, Oct 9. Book burning is at odds with our values of reasoned discourse, civil treatment of others, and openness towards ideas and experiences we might not share. Historically, book burning has been associated with intolerant and anti-democratic regimes. In the context of our diverse campus community, this symbolically potent action, combined with students' online harassment of Professor Capó Crucet, who is Latina, reads as an act of intimidation. It represents a rejection of our core values, which include respect for others, reasoned intellectual inquiry, and an appreciation for our shared bonds. We condemn this behavior in the strongest of terms.

As part of the department's response, faculty will hold a teach-in on "Book-Burning, Censorship & Free Speech in Historical Perspective" in IAB 1020 on the Statesboro campus at 5.30 on Tuesday, October 15. This represents an invitation to learn about why book burning has become such a recognizable symbol of intolerance around the world, and to foster a dialogue about what happened on our campus. We encourage all members of the Georgia Southern community to join us.

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Statement from the Department of History at Georgia Southern University Concerning White Nationalism

December 11, 2019

The Georgia Southern University Department of History unequivocally condemns the ideologies of white supremacy, white nationalism, and nativism, whether they are promoted on our campus or in our culture. As historians, we study the diversity of the past—of peoples, cultures, languages, religions, ideologies, and political systems. We analyze how and why societies and assumptions have changed over time, and how people have struggled to create a

world that recognizes and strives for political, economic, ethnic, religious, and gender equality. We have also seen the consequences of ideologies that use self-serving and factually groundless arguments and conspiracy theories to promote and justify the power and dominance of one group while denying the humanity and equality of others. Such ideologies have a violent historical legacy and have fueled recent episodes of horrific violence, including in Charleston (2015), Charlottesville (2017), Pittsburgh (2017), and El Paso (2019). These hateful ideas are incompatible with the values of the university and evidence-based reasoning. We affirm that diversity in all forms strengthens our community by opening our individual worlds to new ideas and perspectives.

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