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NEWS RELEASE

Feb. 1, 2007

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ACADEMIC FREEDOM TOPIC OF UPCOMING DEBATE AT UM

MISSOULA—

Two national experts will be at The University of Montana Wednesday, Feb. 14, to continue ongoing discussions about academic freedom and the autonomy of institutions of higher learning.

Anne Neal, president of the American Council of Trustees and Alumni, and Robert Bowen, general secretary of the American Association of University Professors, will hold a debate titled "Academic Freedom and Institutional Autonomy" at 8 p.m. in the University Center Theater.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will be of interest to campus and community members who are concerned about higher education and its function within American society.

Both Neal and Bowen have been strong voices in discussions about the meaning of academic freedom and accountability for institutions of higher learning. The UM debate was generated by articles written by Neal and Bowen that were published in the fall 2006 edition of the academic journal *The Montana Professor*.

Bowen has held positions on university faculties and in university administration. He

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has spoken on behalf of the AAUP in its challenge to the Solomon Amendment, which was first passed in 1995 by Congress and since has been revised three times. The amendment involves limits to federal funding for institutions that choose to restrict campus access to military recruiters.

Neal is an attorney with experience in First Amendment law and has been involved with cultural and civic organizations supporting the arts and humanities. She has been an advocate for involvement by educated, interested parties beyond the confines of the campus in discussions concerning how universities function within the broader community.

“The debate should be very lively,” said UM Professor Linda Gillison, who is coordinating the event. “We hope lots of community members will attend.”

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