Twitter Thread by Ashton Pittman



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Ok @JoeNBC, let's talk college free speech & #CancelCulture, a thread:

1. @OleMiss fired Garrett Felber, a celebrated anti-racism history scholar who spoke up on UM leaders' relationships with 'powerful, racist donors' & ties to mass incarceration.

Read: https://t.co/0eDlpsUPq6

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

2. @OleMiss is trying to compel its ombudsman to turn over confidential communications in order to unmask the #UMemails whistleblowers who exposed a web of racism among UM officials and donors.
https://t.co/bqr2Dvxhc2

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

3. Faculty fear it's an effort to fire the ombudsman.

"People would be terrified of speaking up because people who speak up get hammered at this university. There is no place to go except the Ombuds office." https://t.co/bqr2Dvxhc2

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

4. UM's EORC, which enforces Title IX, is leading the effort to unmask the #UMEmails whistleblowers on "hostile work environment" allegations after they exposed a web of racism and sexism on campus. https://t.co/bqr2Dvxhc2

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

5. When someone at UM journalism school leaked an audio recording that could've revealed a wealthy donor was behind racist emails and photos, a "witch hunt" ensued to find the "treacherous" whistleblower.
https://t.co/5zO5Y8gsEg

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

6. After left-wing UM sociologist JT Thomas joined the #ScholarStrike to teach about systemic racism, State Auditor Shad White investigated & subpoenaed his class roster, communications & teaching materials. https://t.co/vbv5hDcWDi

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

7. Chancellor Glenn Boyce not only did not stand up for Prof Thomas' 1st amendment rights, but turned over Thomas' teaching materials. White is now demanding Thomas pay $1912, saying his protest broke the law. https://t.co/K7MO5V8MuL

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

8. In a letter to the chancellor, auditor White said Thomas could be fired for participating in the nationwide effort to focus attn on racial & policing injustice & to use Scholar Strike as a teaching tool. https://t.co/zVZb2rVEPq

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

9. Meanwhile, after j-school donor Ed Meek made public a racist Facebook post w pics of Black women in tight party clothes, UM journalism school dean Will Norton condemned him.

But guess who wasn't cancelled? https://t.co/K2yGQqYsgj

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

10. Wealthy businessman Blake Tartt was the donor who actually shot the photos Meek posted—& wrote in an email to Norton:

"Oxford & Ole Miss have real problems when Black hookers are working on Jackson Ave." https://t.co/K2yGQqYsgj

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

11. Norton not only didn't cancel Tartt, he kept his knowledge of the emails and that Tartt took the photos even as he publicly denounced Meek and called for his name to be removed from the j-school. In fact... https://t.co/K2yGQqYsgj

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

12. Norton continued showering Tartt (who sent Norton other racist emails referring to Serena Williams using an ■ emoji) with praise for more than a year end a half after, hoping to procure a sizable donation. https://t.co/bhW3yfH2MO

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

13. Tartt's role in the controversy that took Ed Meek down was covered up.

Not only was Tartt not cancelled, but the next year, he served on the committee to find a new chancellor—and helped pick Boyce. https://t.co/bhW3yfH2MO

14. Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

When whistleblowers made a public records request that uncovered the truth about the Ed Meek affair and the Tartt/Norton emails, Dean Norton resigned, hoping that the emails would stay secret. https://t.co/5zO5Y8gsEg

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

14. The emails also included the dean making homophobic comments about then-Fox News host & alum Shepard Smith.

Publicly, Norton said he wanted to return to teaching. https://t.co/5zO5Y8gsEg

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

15. As we worked on these stories, we found that even many tenured faculty were scared to death to speak publicly without anonymity. They feared professional retaliation—and an oppressive UM media policy. https://t.co/5zO5Y8gsEg

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

16. After our story came out & revealed the Norton/Tartt emails, was the ex dean cancelled?

No. He hasn't taught since resigning as dean in April, but continues to earn $18k monthly—his dean bonus pay intact. https://t.co/ZiOqq9XLhp

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

17. The whistleblowers who revealed the racist/sexist/homophobic emails? The UM Title IX organization is trying to unmask them & investigating them for "creating a hostile work environment...on basis of race." https://t.co/ZiOqq9XLhp

Campus free speech & cancel culture (cont.):

18. When historian Garrett Felber (nationally known for mass incarceration scholarship) gets fired after criticizing campus ties to the private prisons & racist donors, where are campus free speech warriors? ■ https://t.co/0eDlpsUPq6

So @JoeNBC, if you or any others wanna talk about #CancelCulture & campus free speech, I invite you to read our #UMEmails series & other reports on UM.

For some reason, these stories are never part of these "But college free speech!" discussions. Why? https://t.co/ZiOqq9XLhp