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**DISTRICT I**

June 13, 2023

To:

Hon. Laura Gramling Perez  
Circuit Court Judge  
Electronic Notice

Anthony Russomanno  
Electronic Notice

Anna Hodges  
Clerk of Circuit Court  
Milwaukee County Safety Building  
Electronic Notice

Jeffrey Wilde  
17390 Crest Hill, #305  
Brookfield, WI 53045

You are hereby notified that the Court has entered the following opinion and order:

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2022AP1419

Jeffrey Wilde v. Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System (L.C. # 2021CV6476)

Before Brash, C.J., Dugan and White, JJ.

**Summary disposition orders may not be cited in any court of this state as precedent or authority, except for the limited purposes specified in WIS. STAT. RULE 809.23(3).**

Jeffrey Wilde, *pro se*, appeals an order of the circuit court dismissing his complaint against the Board of Regents for the University of Wisconsin System, in which he sought to compel the Board to issue him a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee (UWM). Based upon our review of the briefs and record, we conclude at conference that this case is appropriate for summary disposition. *See* WIS. STAT. § 809.21(1) (2021-22).<sup>1</sup> We summarily affirm.

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<sup>1</sup> All references to the Wisconsin Statutes are to the 2021-22 version unless otherwise noted.

In his complaint, Wilde contended that a previous chair of the English Department at UWM had written a letter—which he was unable to locate—permitting Wilde to re-enter the masters program in English Literature. He asserted religious discrimination, retaliation, and harassment by other professors at UWM in their refusal to allow him to proceed with obtaining his degree.

The Board filed a motion to dismiss on several grounds, including sovereign immunity. It also asserted that claim preclusion applied, because Wilde had previously filed a petition for judicial review in April 2015, after this same claim was rejected by the Equal Rights Division of the Department of Workforce Development; that petition was dismissed with prejudice by the circuit court. Additionally, the Board argued that to the extent Wilde was claiming breach of contract for the failure to abide by the alleged letter from the department chair, such a claim is barred by the statute of limitations. The Board explained that the letter must have been written prior to Wilde's April 2015 case, since that case contained the same allegations; therefore, a breach of contract claim here would be outside of the six-year limitation on such causes of action, as Wilde's current complaint was filed in October 2021. *See* WIS. STAT. § 893.43(1).<sup>2</sup>

The circuit court granted the State's motion to dismiss on the grounds of failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted, based on sovereign immunity. Wilde appeals.

We conclude that Wilde did not properly preserve his issues on appeal by raising them before the circuit court. Wilde never filed a response brief to the Board's motion to dismiss, as

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<sup>2</sup> The Board also pointed out that Wilde's complaint listed UWM as the defendant, but that UWM is a university designated and controlled by the Board, and is not itself an entity that may be sued.

ordered by the circuit court. Although he filed several letters with the court which he asserted contained “evidence to support [his] case,” he never presented any arguments countering the Board’s bases for its motion to dismiss, as relied on by the court.

“It is a fundamental principle of appellate review that issues must be preserved at the circuit court. Issues that are not preserved at the circuit court, even alleged constitutional errors, generally will not be considered on appeal.” *State v. Huebner*, 2000 WI 59, ¶10, 235 Wis. 2d 486, 611 N.W.2d 727. Put another way, “[a]rguments raised for the first time on appeal are generally deemed forfeited.” *Northbrook Wis., LLC v. City of Niagara*, 2014 WI App 22, ¶20, 352 Wis. 2d 657, 843 N.W.2d 851. We deem the issues brought by Wilde on appeal to be forfeited.

Furthermore, Wilde’s appellate brief presents no cogent legal arguments, but rather, consists of statements regarding his master’s thesis, his work history, and various assertions relating to the religious beliefs and sexual orientation of people involved in his alleged mistreatment. Therefore, in order to review the merits of his case, we would first have to develop arguments for him, “serv[ing] as both advocate and judge.” *See State v. Pettit*, 171 Wis. 2d 627, 647, 492 N.W.2d 633 (Ct. App. 1992). This we cannot do. *See id.*

Accordingly, we affirm the circuit court’s order dismissing his complaint.

Upon the foregoing,

IT IS ORDERED that the order is summarily affirmed. *See* WIS. STAT. RULE 809.21.

IT IS FURTHER ORDERED that this summary disposition order will not be published.

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*Sheila T. Reiff*  
*Clerk of Court of Appeals*