

**UNPUBLISHED**

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

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**No. 12-6029**

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MICHAEL CUNNINGHAM,

Petitioner - Appellant,

v.

ANTHONY PADULA,

Respondent - Appellee.

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Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of South Carolina, at Anderson. Margaret B. Seymour, District Judge. (8:10-cv-01027-MBS)

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Submitted: May 17, 2012

Decided: May 24, 2012

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Before GREGORY, SHEDD, and DUNCAN, Circuit Judges.

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Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

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Michael Cunningham, Appellant Pro Se. Donald John Zelenka, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Columbia, South Carolina, for Appellee.

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Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Michael Cunningham seeks to appeal the district court's order accepting the recommendation of the magistrate judge and denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 2254 (2006) petition and the court's order denying his Fed. R. Civ. P. 59(e) motion to alter or amend that judgment. These orders are not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. See 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(A) (2006); Reid v. Angelone, 369 F.3d 363, 369 (4th Cir. 2004). A certificate of appealability will not issue absent "a substantial showing of the denial of a constitutional right." 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(2) (2006). When the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists would find that the district court's assessment of the constitutional claims is debatable or wrong. Slack v. McDaniel, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000); see Miller-El v. Cockrell, 537 U.S. 322, 336-38 (2003). When the district court denies relief on procedural grounds, the prisoner must demonstrate both that the dispositive procedural ruling is debatable, and that the petition states a debatable claim of the denial of a constitutional right. Slack, 529 U.S. at 484-85.

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Cunningham has not made the requisite showing.

Accordingly, we deny a certificate of appealability and dismiss the appeal. We dispense with oral argument because the facts and legal contentions are adequately presented in the materials before the court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED