

UNPUBLISHED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

No. 18-7202

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff - Appellee,

v.

JAMES RONALD HELMS, JR.,

Defendant - Appellant.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Western District of North Carolina, at Charlotte. Robert J. Conrad, Jr., District Judge. (3:15-cr-00251-RJC-DCK-1; 3:18-cv-00267-RJC)

Submitted: December 20, 2018

Decided: December 27, 2018

Before DIAZ and RICHARDSON, Circuit Judges, and TRAXLER, Senior Circuit Judge.

Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

James Ronald Helms, Jr., Appellant Pro Se.

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

James Ronald Helms, Jr., seeks to appeal the district court's order denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 2255 (2012) motion. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(B) (2012). 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) (2012). 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 motion 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 Helms has not made the requisite showing.* Accordingly, we deny Helms' motion for 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 this court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED

* Although the district court did not give Helms notice under *Roseboro v. Garrison*, 528 F.3d 309 (4th Cir. 1975), our certificate of appealability assessment convinces us that, even if such notice was required, the omission was harmless.