UNPUBLISHED

UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS
FOR THE FOURTH CIRCUIT

No. 20-6892

CORY C. BOWDEN,

Petitioner - Appellant,

v.

J. HAMILTON, Warden,

Respondent - Appellee.

Appeal from the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia, at Alexandria. Rossie David Alston, Jr., District Judge. (1:19-cv-01415-RDA-MSN)

Submitted: December 17, 2020 Decided: December 21, 2020

Before THACKER, HARRIS, and QUATTLEBAUM, Circuit Judges.

Dismissed by unpublished per curiam opinion.

Cory C. Bowden, Appellant Pro Se.

Unpublished opinions are not binding precedent in this circuit.

PER CURIAM:

Cory C. Bowden seeks to appeal the district court's order denying relief on his 28 U.S.C. § 2254 petition. The order is not appealable unless a circuit justice or judge issues a certificate of appealability. *See* 28 U.S.C. § 2253(c)(1)(A). 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). When the district court denies relief on the merits, a prisoner satisfies this standard by demonstrating that reasonable jurists could find the district court's assessment of the constitutional claims debatable or wrong. *See Buck v. Davis*, 137 S. Ct. 759, 773-74 (2017). 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. *Gonzalez v. Thaler*, 565 U.S. 134, 140-41 (2012) (citing *Slack v. McDaniel*, 529 U.S. 473, 484 (2000)).

We have independently reviewed the record and conclude that Bowden 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 this court and argument would not aid the decisional process.

DISMISSED