



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

JUN 18 1985

Dr. Daniel Anderson  
President  
Appalachian Bible College  
Bradley, West Virginia 25818

Dear Dr. Anderson:

The Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Education (OCR/ED) is in the process of clearing a backlog of requests for religious exemption from Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Our records indicate that the Appalachian Bible College filed such a request but there is no record that OCR adequately acknowledged this request.

We have recently reviewed the request filed by former President Pipkin (copy enclosed) in which he described certain policies practiced at the Appalachian Bible College as consistent with the tenets of the religious organization that controls the institution. These policies would violate certain sections of the regulation implementing Title IX (copy enclosed) absent a religious exemption. The former president supplied information in his request letter that establishes that the institution is controlled by a religious organization and that tenets followed by this organization conflict with specific sections of the Title IX regulation. Therefore, I am granting the Appalachian Bible College an exemption to those sections of the Title IX regulation specified in the request letter. The exemption is limited to the extent that compliance with the Title IX regulation conflicts with the religious tenets followed by the institution. The Appalachian Bible College is hereby exempted from the requirements of the following sections of the Title IX regulation: 106.34 and 106.40. The bases for our decision to grant this exemption are discussed in further detail below.

The institution's letter indicates that the Appalachian Bible College is a Christian educational institution which prepares students for Christian service in church-related ministries. The College's religious tenets are based on Bible teachings. The relationship between the Christian faith and the Appalachian Bible College adequately establishes that Appalachian Bible College is controlled by a religious organization as is required for consideration for exemption under § 106.12 of the Title IX regulation.

It is stated in the request letter that the "Bible teaches that the pastoral office and preaching are reserved for men. Women may elect courses in the Bible-Pastoral Studies program but they may not graduate from it." In addition, the letter stated that because the Bible forbids sexual relations outside of marriage, the College disciplines all students who violate this standard. Thus, the institution practices the following:

1. The pastoral office and preaching are reserved for men as explained in the Bible; only men graduate in Bible-Pastoral Studies.

Based on the above principle, Appalachian Bible College has requested and is granted by this letter, exemption to § 106.34: Access to course offerings.

2. Prohibition of sexual relations outside of marriage as explained in the Bible.

Based on the above principle, Appalachian Bible College has requested and is granted by this letter exemption to § 106.40: Marital or parental status.

This letter should not be construed to grant exemption from any section of the Title IX regulation not specifically mentioned. In the event that OCR receives a complaint against your institution, we are obligated to determine initially whether the allegations fall within the exemption here granted. Also, in the unlikely event that a complainant alleges that the practices followed by the institution are not based on the religious tenets of the controlling organization, OCR is obligated to contact the controlling organization to verify those tenets. If the organization provides an interpretation of tenets that has a different practical impact than that described by the institution, or if the organization denies that it controls the institution, this exemption will be rescinded.

I hope this letter responds fully to the College's request. I regret the inordinate delay in responding to the original request. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Philadelphia Regional Office for Civil Rights. The address is:

Dewey E. Dodds  
Regional Civil Rights Director  
Office for Civil Rights, Region III  
Department of Education  
Gateway Building, 6th Floor  
3535 Market Street  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104

Sincerely,



Harry M. Singleton  
Assistant Secretary  
for Civil Rights

Enclosures