



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

SEP 13 1985

Mr. Harvey C. Bream, Jr.  
President  
The Cincinnati Bible Seminary  
2700 Glenway Avenue  
Box 043200  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45204-3200

Dear President Bream:

The Office for Civil Rights of the Department of Education (OCR/ED) is in the process of resolving a number of pending requests for religious exemption from Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Our records indicate that The Cincinnati Bible Seminary (CBS) filed such a request, but there is no record that OCR adequately acknowledged this request.

We have recently reviewed your request (copy enclosed) in which you describe policies practiced at The Cincinnati Bible Seminary 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. You have supplied information in your 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 Cincinnati Bible Seminary an exemption to those sections of the Title IX regulation specified in your request letter. The exemption is limited to the extent that compliance with the Title IX regulation conflicts with the religious tenets followed by CBS. The Cincinnati Bible Seminary is hereby exempted from the requirements of the following sections of the Title IX regulation: 34 C.F.R. § 106.21(c); § 106.31(a) and (d); § 106.34; § 106.40; § 106.57; and § 106.60. The basis for our decision to grant this exemption is discussed in further detail below.

Your letter indicates that The Cincinnati Bible Seminary is affiliated with the undenominational Christian churches and churches of Christ. You state that "the Constitution of The Cincinnati Bible Seminary stipulates that we accept ' . . . the full and final inspiration of the Bible to the extent that it is . . . the infallible Word of God, and therefore, the all-sufficient rule of faith and life . . . .'" CBS follows the biblical tenets practiced by the undenominational Christian churches and churches of Christ in matters of morality and training of religious leaders. This relationship between the undenominational Christian churches and churches of Christ and the Cincinnati Bible Seminary adequately establishes that The Cincinnati Bible Seminary is controlled by a religious organization as is required for consideration for exemption under § 106.12 of the Title IX regulation.

In your letter you indicate that students and employees at The Cincinnati Bible Seminary must adhere to the religious tenet against sexual immorality as based on the scriptures. You state that there is no discrimination against married, pregnant applicants, students or employees. Based on this principle, The Cincinnati Bible Seminary has requested and is granted by this letter exemption to § 106.21(c) (marital or parental status of applicants for admission); § 106.40 (marital or parental status of students); § 106.57 (marital or parental status of employees); and § 106.60 (pre-employment inquiries).

Additionally, your letter indicated that religious tenets of the undenominational Christian churches and churches of Christ limit the roles of individuals in the preaching ministry, elders, and deacons to males. Thus, CBS offers several courses such as Speech from the Pulpit and Practical Ministries to male students only. Further, you state that summer internship programs operated by independent, local undenominational Christian churches and churches of Christ, consistent with the above stated tenet, restrict most such internship programs to male preaching students. Based on the above tenet, The Cincinnati Bible Seminary has requested and is granted by this letter exemption to § 106.34 (access to course offerings) and § 106.31(a) and (d) (education programs and activities).

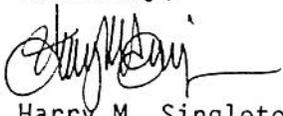
This letter should not be construed to grant exemption from any section of the Title IX regulation not specifically mentioned. In the event that OCR receives a complaint against your institution, we are obligated to determine initially whether the allegations fall within the exemption herein granted. 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.

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

Linda A. McGovern  
Acting Regional Civil Rights Director  
Office for Civil Rights, Region V  
Department of Education  
300 South Wacker Drive, 8th Floor  
Chicago, Illinois 60606

Sincerely,



Harry M. Singleton  
Assistant Secretary  
for Civil Rights

Enclosures

cc: Linda A. McGovern, Acting Regional Civil Rights Director, Region V