

COLUMBIA

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIBLE & MISSIONS
BIBLE COLLEGE
SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL EDUCATION
WMHK-FM

October 15, 1986

Ms. Alicia Coro
Assistant Secretary
for Civil Rights
Office for Civil Rights
Department of Education
Switzer Building, Room 5000
330 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Re: Title IX Religious Tenet Exemption Request
Pursuant to 12 C.F.R. § 106.12(b)

Dear Ms. Coro:

I am writing to request that Columbia Bible College and Columbia Graduate School of Bible and Missions ("CBC/CGS") be granted a religious tenet exemption from certain provisions of the Department of Education's Title IX regulation (34 C.F.R. Part 106).

CBC/CGS is a private coeducational institution offering programs of professional training for Christian service, and thus is a "school of divinity" under the Office for Civil Rights' ("OCR") definition of that term.*/
CBC/CGS and its programs are described more fully in our academic catalogs, copies of which are enclosed. The religious principles to which we adhere are set forth in a Doctrinal Statement, which appears at page 6 of the College catalog and page 120 of the Graduate School catalog. CBC/CGS is controlled by a Board of Trustees which, in directing the institution's affairs, is guided by religious purposes set forth in our Articles of Incorporation. For these reasons, CBC/CGS is an "educational institution which is controlled by a religious organization" within the meaning of 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a)(3) and 34 C.F.R. § 106.12.

*/ OCR has defined a "school of divinity" as an institution "whose program is specifically for the education of students to prepare them to become ministers of religion or to enter upon some other religious vocation, or to prepare them to teach theological subjects." Explanation of HEW Form 639 A (3/77).

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CBC/CGS supports the aims of Title IX and in good conscience seeks to eliminate all unwarranted distinctions between the sexes. Nevertheless, as a professional training institution for Christian ministries, we are committed to the biblical ethic which makes a clear differentiation in the roles of the sexes. In addition, although we apply the moral standards of the scripture without discrimination on the basis of sex, some of our regulations (which apply such standards to those of both sexes equally) conflict with certain provisions of the Title IX regulation. Accordingly, CBC/CGS claims an exemption from the following provisions of the Title IX regulation, which are inconsistent with our religious tenets:

§ 106.21(c) - Admission; § 106.40 - Marital and Parental Status;
§ 106.51(b)(6) - Employment; § 106.57 - Marital or Parental Status;
and § 106.60(a) - Pre-employment

Our request for exemption is made on the basis of our commitment to what we interpret to be the biblical standard of Christian living and morality. The Bible forbids sexual relations outside the marriage relationship for men and women equally; the Bible is clear in its teachings on the sanctity of human life and that human intervention to terminate life after its conception is to be opposed; and the Bible is clear in its commitment to the sanctity of marriage and the inappropriateness of divorce and re-marriage in certain circumstances. We would not permit an applicant to enroll who is pregnant or who has recently given birth to a child and who is not married. The father of such a child would not be permitted to enroll either. Married applicants who are pregnant are welcome. We would not admit an applicant who recently has terminated a pregnancy. Comparable policies are applied to students and employees. In addition, our regulations and policies impose limitation on the admission and employment, and treat differently, applicants, students, and employees who are divorced.

§ 106.31(b)(4) - Education programs and activities

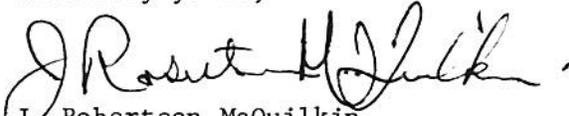
We believe that the Bible differentiates between men and women as to appearance. This differentiation is reflected in certain regulations governing proper decorum in grooming or dress. However, the principles underlying these rules of decency and modesty apply equally to both sexes.

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CBC/CGS believes that the constitution prohibits any government interference in the teaching and practice of religion. In submitting this statement, we do not waive any right to the protection of the constitution in this or any other matter, nor do we waive any statutory or other limitation on the jurisdiction or authority of the Office for Civil Rights or any other governmental entity. Further, we reserve the right in the future to claim exemption under 20 U.S.C. § 1681(a)(3) from Title IX generally or from specific provisions not identified in this letter.

We thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact us if you need any additional information.

Sincerely yours,


J. Robertson McQuilkin
President

JRM;m