

Trinity Evangelical
Divinity School
Bannockburn, Deerfield, Illinois 60015 312/945-6700

Thursday
September 30, 1976

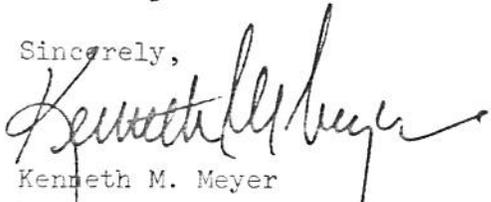
Mr. Martin H. Gerry, Director
Office of Civil Rights
Department of Health, Education and Welfare
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Gerry:

As indicated in the accompanying Assurance of Compliance (HEW 639) under Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, our institution has completed its self-evaluation and has not found it necessary to modify any policies or practices to come into compliance with Part 86.

We are, however, requesting a religious exemption under the provision of 45 C.F.R. 86.12. Our request for exemption is related to 86.21 "Admission" and 86.38 "Employment Assistance to Students". These sections forbid a school from inquiring into the marital or parental status of applicants or from aiding our graduates in placement with organizations which discriminate on the basis of sex. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School does accept students into any program or course without discrimination on the basis of sex, marital or parental status. However, our students are affiliated with approximately sixty different denominational groups. While these groups vary a great deal, many would practice congregational form of church polity or autonomy of each local church. The majority would also hold to a high view of the Bible as authoritative in governance of the local church. Thus, on the basis of such Scriptural passages as I Timothy 3:1-13 or Titus 1:5-9 most churches seeking Trinity graduates for the role of elder-pastor in the local church would believe that role is limited to men. Further, many churches on the basis of the same Scriptures plus those dealing with divorce (i.e. Mark 10:2-12) would feel divorce would disqualify a person from this office. While Trinity admits divorced persons for study, we feel it necessary to counsel them on the possible difficulty in placement following study and therefore need to inquire into their marital status in their application for admission. It should not be necessary to document this case further in as much as the past and present practice of the Christian Church is so well known as evidenced by an exclusively male priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church and the recent well-publicized struggle within the Episcopal Church in ordaining women. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School therefore requests an exemption from Sections 86.38 (a) (1) and (2) and from 86.21 (c) (4) on the basis of the above discussion. We believe this to be a valid request for exemption under 86.12.

Sincerely,


Kenneth M. Meyer
President