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Dear Friend,

Officials at the University of Wisconsin are trying to kick Campus Crusade for Christ off campus. They say that we, and many other Christian groups it appears they are targeting, are out-of-line with their non-discrimination policy because we discriminate on the basis of creed and religion.

The problem is that Christian organizations require leaders to be Christians. It is not enough that our membership and programs are open to every UW student. To be in line with the UW policy, even students of divergent beliefs like atheists, Muslims, and Satanists must have opportunity to be leaders of the Christian group.

Sounds ludicrous, doesn't it? This goes against common sense. Who besides the University would want a Bible study led by an atheist? It would be just as inappropriate as requiring the Vegan club to be run by a bunch of meat eaters, or the College Democrats to be run by the Young Republicans. Every organization needs to be able to choose leaders who agree with its tenets and objectives.

Of course, I am generally in favor of non-discrimination policies. When applied properly, they protect people who sometimes need an extra measure of protection. But in this application, the university is twisting a good thing into an offense against the first amendment, limiting our religious freedom. While we allow anyone to participate in our membership, our leadership must be protected.

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IV) has already filed a federal law suit against the University of Wisconsin system. The IV chapter at the UW-Superior campus was derecognized because it requires its officers to sign a Statement of Faith. Although IV has attempted to resolve this issue outside of the courts, the UW has failed to change its stance. Now that it's gone to court, I can't see how IV could lose this case.

In Madison, we're supporting IV's cause, while we wait to see what happens here. With each new school year the student leaders need to reapply to be a recognized student organization on the UW-Madison campus. Many benefits come with recognition, including access to meeting space on campus and funding. Many think and have charged that this money is largely what is motivating the UW's actions now. In the last few years the Supreme Court has clearly stated that religious organizations should be granted access equal to that of other student organizations, including the funds from student fees. So, at stake is hundreds of thousands of dollars on UW-Madison's campus alone. So, if the University can find any reason to disqualify a Christian group from student organization status, then the University has found a way to disqualify the Christian group from funding and access on campus. Each ministry will be hurt.

Currently we are functioning on a limited basis on campus. Campus Crusade students have still been able to make room reservations, but the funding received from the UW has been stopped. As one of the largest student organizations on campus, few would contest that Campus Crusade for Christ is worthy of this funding, yet we can't even use the money that was previously allotted to our group to pay for the room on campus where our first weekly meeting with 600 students was held.

Let me clarify. Our concern for the money is by far the secondary issue. The main concern is our ability to operate effectively on campus just as any other student organization operates. The university's pursuit to undermine the influence of students involved in Christian organizations is deplorable. That key officials in this public institution would use the non-discrimination policy to discriminate against Christian groups is ironic and wrong. Should the university continue down this foolish path, our ability even to host student meetings, large and small, is in jeopardy.

Please pray for this situation. We know the whole university with all of its staff is not our enemy. For years we have wanted to serve the UW, its staff, and its students. We and many other groups and churches share this desire to be a blessing to this important institution and we don't want this issue to create barriers to present and future outreach. Pray that this issue would be resolved quickly without being much more of a distraction than it already has been.

Thanks for reading this letter. While I'd rather share how God is actively working to change lives on campus (and He is), this is the issue at hand. We trust that God will ultimately even use this for His glory.

Yours for caring for the University,

Scott Roe

P.S. On another note, I've heard *CBS Evening News with Katie Couric* is flying in a news crew which will be at our weekly meeting tomorrow night. It appears they'll interview me and a number of our students who have left the crazy drinking and party scene as a result of their faith. Please join us in praying for God to use this segment in multiple ways as it will likely air coast to coast next week.

P.P.S. I've held off mailing this, because this is not the letter I wanted to send. I'll try to send out another letter soon with some of the many highlights we've seen this fall which would certainly encourage you.