

# Colleges: Bible Verses Contaminate Textbooks

## Lawsuit to settle dispute over religious references

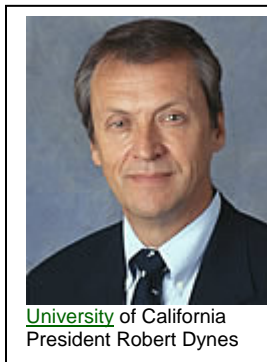
Posted: May 2, 2007

By Bob Unruh

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*Note from Pastor Kevin: In Germany homeschooling is illegal, and those who try to buck the system have seen their children kidnapped by the government and forced into foster care. In California, it is becoming more difficult for homeschooled high school graduates to be accepted into State Universities. If this trend prevails, and it becomes impossible to be accepted unless the graduate has a public school diploma, then I pray Christian parents will see that it is more important to teach their children the truth than it is for them to ensure their children gets "higher" education.*

Officials at the highest levels of the University of California system are stomping on constitutional religious rights by banning Christian perspectives from educational materials high school students may use to prepare for college entrance, according to a case scheduled for trial later this year.



The case was triggered by the university system's decision that basic physics, American literature and biology textbooks by major Christian book publishers such as Bob Jones University Press and A Beka Book wouldn't qualify for core requirements in the state because of the inclusion of Christian perspectives.

The Association of Christian Schools International, which represents schools serving more than 1.1 million students worldwide, brought the lawsuit against the system run by Robert Dynes, UC president, alleging violations of the freedoms of speech, religion and association, and U.S. District Judge S. James Otero has refused the university's demand for a dismissal.

The move comes in a state where WND also has reported state lawmakers are considering legislation that also would ban many

Christian perspectives from public schools as well. The plans would forbid anything that "reflects adversely" on the homosexual lifestyle, so any statement regarding the Bible's condemnation of that lifestyle choice as sinful would be an offense. Even "mom" and "dad" could be banned under the proposal.

The judge said in the Christian school case that the rejection by university officials of several school texts is the issue. "If in fact such rejection is based on Defendants' discrimination of Plaintiffs' applications solely because of the religious viewpoints ... such action would run afoul of the limits of Defendants' freedom to determine its admissions policies."

At issue is a new and apparently standardized policy implemented by the UC system - and copied by California State officials - that rejected textbooks that addressed such subjects as literature and biology, but also included a Christian perspective.

The university's action creates issues for students in any schools using those texts, because without state system approval of the core classes during a high school education, students have little or no chance of being accepted to attend the university system.

The lawsuit alleges that the school is discriminating against Christians and the Christian viewpoint, because while a literature text with a Christian viewpoint was disallowed, "Gender Roles in Literature," "Feminine Perspectives in Literature," "Literature from the 60's Movement" and "Gender, Sexuality, and Identity in Literature" all were approved.

Burt Carney, an executive with the school association, said he's met with officials for the university system, and was told that there was no problem with the actual facts in a BJU physics textbook that was disallowed.

In fact, an ACSI report said, UC officials confirmed "that if the Scripture verses that begin each chapter were removed the textbook would likely be approved..."

"It's egregious how they are treating Christian schools in California," Carney told WND. "They are basically saying that any textbooks that include overt Christian content or themes, they're going to reject it automatically."

"Here's the very university that talks about academic freedom," he said. "It's very discriminating. They don't rule against Muslim or Hindu or Jewish [themes] or so forth, only those with a definite Christian theme."

UC officials returned WND's call asking for comment, but then said they couldn't answer specific questions about the issue.

Spokesman Alfred White said he would refer WND to someone who could respond, and then spokesman Ricardo Vasquez told WND he would have someone else call.

He was able to confirm that some courses are approved as elective although they don't qualify for core requirements. However, he could not explain why "Gender Roles in Literature" was endorsed to fulfill core requirements but "American Literature" including a Christian perspective was rejected completely.

Carney said the trial is expected to take place in federal court in Los Angeles in November.

In an [online](#) statement about the case, UC officials said the books in question "were reviewed by faculty who concluded they did not meet UC's guidelines."

"The question the University must confront in reviewing these texts is not whether they have religious content, but whether they provide a comprehensive view of the relevant subject matter, reflecting knowledge generally accepted in the scientific and educational communities..." it said.

ACSI said that is exactly the point.

It quotes a memo from Roman Stearns, special assistant to the director of admissions, providing standard language to reject textbooks from Bob Jones University Press or A Beka Books:

"In establishing and implementing the 'a-g' subject area requirements, UC faculty's main interest is that students entering the University are well prepared to be successful at UC. The content of the course outlines submitted for approval is not consistent with the *viewpoints* and knowledge generally accepted in the scientific community. As such, students who take these courses may not be well prepared for

success if/when they enter science courses/programs at UC."

The university's position paper on that issue appeared to back off its earlier written statement, saying that it wants to assure that the courses "include appropriate subject-matter content" so that incoming students are "conversant with accepted educational and scientific content and methods."

The lawsuit said the students in Christian schools "hold a viewpoint and religious faith that they should present and study not only all standard subject matter in science, but in addition their Christian viewpoint."

The court documents show that ACSI noted the state of California "has agreed that in public and private schools, students do not have to accept everything that is taught, and cannot be required to hold a state-prescribed viewpoint."

"Dogma is a system of beliefs that is not subject to scientific test and refutation..." the state guidelines propose.

"Plaintiffs support, and do not object to, understanding the major strands of scientific thought, methods, facts, hypotheses, theories, and laws," ACSI said in its filings. "Their constitutional rights are abridged or discriminated against when they are told that the current interpretation of scientific method must be taught dogmatically, and must be accepted by students, to be eligible for admission to University of California institutions."

ACSI cited courses such as "Industrial Poetry," "Islam," "Modern History of Women in Science," "The Art of Protest" and "The Environmental History of Europe."

"Defendants obviously routinely approve courses with a narrow or specialized focus, including the influence of nearly every imaginable group on history (and plaintiffs believe they should evenhandedly approve such courses), but disapproved 'Christianity's Influence on American History' as 'focus too narrow/too specialized,'" ACSI said.

"Special Providence: American Government," was rejected, but India history, Mexican history, Irish history and Jewish history were endorsed, ACSI noted.

"In other words, defendants routinely approve courses which add viewpoints such as non-Christian religion, feminism, an ethnic preference, a political viewpoint, or multiculturalism, or that focus on religions such as Buddhism or Judaism, (and plaintiffs believe they should evenhandedly approve such courses), but disapprove courses which add viewpoints based on conservative Christianity," the court filings said.

University officials previously confirmed to ACSI that the rejections are because of "their general approach to science" in relation to the Bible and their discussions of evolution.

The discriminatory policy results in requirements that for a student from a Christian school to be eligible for admission, he or she must "be in the top two percent ... of ACT takers or the top four percent ... of SAT I takers..." the ACSI documentation noted.

Students from secular schools, however, "with a 3.5 GPA whose best SAT II scores are merely in the bottom eight percent ... for Writing, the bottom one percent ... for Math Level II, and the bottom five percent ... for Chemistry would need only a 420 out of 1600 on the SAT I..."

The state's "a-g" basics include history and social science, English, mathematics, lab science, foreign language, arts and college prep minimums. The change apparently adopted by a UC board made up of representatives of its various campuses and implemented by Susan Wilbur, the system's director of undergraduate admissions, impacts schools because if their basic courses aren't approved by the UC system, their students are forced to qualify through alternative routes, such as admissions testing.

ACSI is headquartered in Colorado Springs, Colo., but also has 18 regional offices around the world, through which more than 5,440 schools in 105 nations are served.

Carney told WND that California is the only state subjecting textbooks from Christian publishers to the additional restrictions, but since the state often is considered a leader in education, the concern is that other states would follow.