

Christian College Policies Are Not 'Homophobic'

Embracing Biblical views of marriage as between a man and a woman does not mean religious institutions are hostile to LGBTQ people.

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To the Editor:

On behalf of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, I'd like to respectfully respond to the Aug. 1 article, "[Seattle Pacific Sues Washington AG](https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/08/01/seattle-pacific-sues-washington-keep-homophobic-policies), (<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2022/08/01/seattle-pacific-sues-washington-keep-homophobic-policies>)" written by Josh Moody. The article describes the hiring policies of SPU as "homophobic." We believe this mischaracterizes the university's Lifestyle Expectations and labels all Christian colleges and universities that follow a faith-filled mission in accordance with Biblical marriage standards unjustly.

The CCCU supports the religious mission of our member institutions and advocates for a robust understanding of religious freedom where the right to practice these beliefs includes the right to hire for mission. Our institutions uphold Biblical views of marriage as between one man and one woman. Following those views is a choice that each student, faculty member and employee makes when attending, teaching or working at a Christian institution.

It is simply incorrect and unfairly pejorative to label Biblical views of marriage as "homophobic." Nine justices of the Supreme Court in the Obergefell case spoke approvingly of this difference of opinion in stating that, "The First Amendment ensures that religious organizations and persons are given proper protection as they seek to teach the principles that are so fulfilling and so central to their lives and faiths, and to their own deep aspirations to continue the family structure they have long revered."

Homophobia, as used in the article, implies a hostility or fear of LGBTQ people that is dangerous and prejudicial. To be clear, LGBTQ people are welcome and safe at Christian colleges and universities. Respecting the tradition of marriage in accordance with upstanding moral behavior is not homophobic. It is grounded in the Bible and a foundation for a moral society as lived throughout the mission and practices of each CCCU institution. We hold the Christian belief that all human beings, without exception, are invested with inherent worth and dignity.

The right to live freely and hold different worldviews as an American cannot be undervalued. Neither can the right of religious liberty. In a pluralistic society, we must respect people with views different from ours, and the words and tenor of this article did not show respect for constitutionally protected

views that may differ from those of the author.

Homophobia has no place in Christian colleges and universities. It also should not appear when describing them. We are grateful the title was already amended, but we ask that the article be updated to remove the word “homophobic.”

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