

## Univ. of Wisconsin Sidesteps System-Wide Policy on Bible Study Bans

By Jim Brown  
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(AgapePress) - A University of Wisconsin committee is recommending that two UW campuses be allowed to continue their bans on resident assistants leading Bible studies in their dorm rooms.

Instead of recommending a system-wide policy, a UW committee has issued a report recommending that there not be a uniform policy on whether RAs lead Bible studies in their own dorms. The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (UWEC) is currently being sued over its Bible study ban. At the same time UWEC has outlawed RA-led Bible studies, it has encouraged RAs to lead controversial plays and seminars promoting feminism.

Robert Shibley with the [Foundation for Individual Rights in Education](#) (FIRE) says UWEC has chosen not to respect the religious-freedom rights of its students. He explains.

"The problem with this situation, and the fact that the [committee's] report didn't address, is that [UW-Eau Claire] bans a form of private religious expression -- that's those RA-led Bible studies -- but they actually fund [using tax dollars] public political expression that's really very controversial," Shibley says.



Having reviewed the report, FIRE says that the failure to recognize what it sees as a "glaring double standard" proves the school is "not serious about treating its students equally." That, says Shibley, is disturbing.

"The school had actually endorsed and given an 'atta boy' to an RA who led a production of *The Vagina Monologues* as an official activity," he shares. "But when Lance Steiger, an RA, wanted to lead a Bible study privately in his own room and on his own time, they sent him a cease-and-desist letter to do it."

Officials at the Eau Claire campus initially told Steiger the Bible studies may alienate some students or make them feel judged. UW is asking for public feedback on the committee report.

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Jim Brown, a regular contributor to *AgapePress*, is a reporter for [American Family Radio News](#), which can be heard online.

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