

Christian symbols make Muslim students uncomfortable.

Muslim students at Catholic University of America complain that Christian symbols make them uncomfortable when they pray in empty classrooms

Crucifixes? At a Catholic university? How about that.

Of course, at the heart of this complaint is the hope of establishing a Muslim prayer space on the campus that would be subject to different standards than the rest of the university -- a little enclave of Islamic law where its ban on the display of crosses would be "respected."

It is mentioned below that Muslim students say they like CUA because they feel "safe" and "comfortable." They are receiving the benefits of what Catholics have built at CUA, but are expecting more. They want to bend the institution to their own purposes for their own "comfort."

They think it's a fine place, if it just weren't so, you know, *Catholic*, and therefore un-Islamic. "University Accused of Discriminating Against Muslims," from CUA's [The Tower](#), October 20 (thanks to B.):

New charges have recently been filed against the University on counts of illegal discrimination against its Muslim and female students. The allegations are being reviewed by the District of Columbia Office of Human Rights (OHR), which has the strictest discrimination laws in the country. President John H. Garvey and the University is being urged to respond to the charges.

John F. Banzhaf III, the George Washington University Professor of Public Interest Law who initiated the legal controversy surrounding same-sex residence halls, is also the one behind these new charges.

You'll want to read this sitting down:

The official allegations claim that CUA, "does not provide space --- as other universities do --- for the many daily prayers Muslim students must make, forcing them instead to find temporarily empty classrooms where they are often surrounded by Catholic symbols which are incongruous to their religion," according to a press release on PRLOG.com.

This formal complaint also maintains that the new same-sex residence halls are particularly discriminating against female students, which is a new position on the same-sex lawsuit that began last month.

For both aspects of the complaint: it's a Catholic university, a private institution. No one is being forced to attend it. On the other hand, its very nature and identity puts a giant target on it for social engineering.

Banzhaf claims that the University is denying Muslim students the same benefits that students of other religions are able to enjoy since there is no formal Muslim association sponsored by Catholic University but the Columbus School of Law has an association for Jewish students

"Denying Muslim students the opportunity for form a student group on campus could hardly be based upon any fundamental Catholic doctrine since Georgetown University not only has such a Muslim student group, but also provides its Muslim students with a separate prayer room and even a Muslim chaplain," said Banzhaf in that press release.

"An important reason [that Muslims are gravitating towards Catholic universities] is that the Muslim students, especially those who are observant, feel comfortable and safe at the institution," said President Garvey in an interview with NPR in December of 2010. "It's a place where their own faith practices are mirrored by our own. And they feel both welcome and understood at the campus."

Gentlemen, start your platitudes:

"Even though it's a Catholic school, a lot of its teachings are very similar to Islam," said Al Salmi. "It teaches respect, community service, love, worship etc. which are things that Islam also teaches."

The discrimination charge asserts that although OHR has been investigating alleged discrimination on campus since Banzhaf's lawsuit began, "neither the President nor anyone else speaking for the University has sought to explain to the public, or even to CUA's own students, why it believes that its discrimination does not violate the Human Rights Act."

"As University spokesman, I have repeatedly explained to anyone who has asked me, including the media, that we reject the premise of Banzhaf's argument, namely that single-sex residence halls are discriminatory," said Victor Nakas, University Vice President of Public Affairs. "And we also reject his assumption that the Human Rights Act requires residence halls to be co-ed."

That does a fine job of illustrating the mindset at work here. Rules and standards are hate and discrimination.

As these charges are being considered by the Office of Human Rights, the University administration said they will continue to work towards the betterment of its students.

"Catholic University is committed to the religious freedom and dignity of all members of its community," said Nakas. "This includes the dozens of Muslims who come to the University for its academic excellence as well as its demonstrated history of outreach and dialogue to people of all faiths."

Posted by Marisol on October 26, 2011 7:51 AM | [31 Comments](#)