

Free Speech Under Fire: OU Student Punished for Citing Bible in Essay

A University of Oklahoma student says she received a failing grade on a psychology essay after citing the Bible and expressing traditional Christian beliefs about gender. The student has filed both a formal grade appeal and a religious discrimination complaint, alleging that the instructor targeted her for her faith-based views.

Samantha Fulnecky, a psychology student at OU, was assigned a 650-word response essay to an academic article discussing gender roles and perception. Fulnecky's submission reflected her Christian worldview, arguing that gender distinctions are rooted in "God's original plan for humans." She supported her position with Scripture and warned that dismantling biological gender would cause social harm.



Order Jonathan Cahn's Newest Book, "The Avatar" on !

Her instructor gave the paper zero out of 25 points. The grading feedback stated that her argument was "offensive," accused her of "demonizing a minoritized population," and criticized her for lacking empirical evidence. However, the assignment instructions did not require scientific citations, only a "thoughtful discussion" of the article. Fulnecky contends she met the requirements and believes her grade was based on bias against her religious views.

In response, Fulnecky submitted a grade appeal and filed a complaint with the university, arguing that the grade violated her First Amendment rights. The complaint also alleges discrimination under university policy, which prohibits

adverse treatment based on religion.

Religious liberty advocates warn that penalizing students for citing the Bible in moral or philosophical discussions erodes academic freedom and freedom of conscience. They argue that public universities must remain neutral and protect the rights of all students to express faith-based perspectives – especially when assignments invite personal reflection.

As legal proceedings unfold, the outcome could have significant implications for free speech, religious liberty, and academic fairness in state universities.

This article originally appeared on American Faith and is reposted with permission.