

# InterVarsity Ministries Accused of Gay Discrimination

It happened again. An InterVarsity Christian Fellowship chapter is suspended from another campus. This time it happened at New York's University at Buffalo.

Jim Lundgren, vice president of InterVarsity, says the suspension has been a couple of months in the making.

"A few months ago, a student leader in the InterVarsity chapter came to the InterVarsity staff there and to a couple of the student leaders in the chapter, and confessed that he was in a same-sex relationship with another student and that he was inclined to continue that relationship and did not believe it was a sin," he says.

In the process of the conversation he asked the leadership what he should do. Lundgren says, "The student and the staff worker recommended that he step down from leadership, which he did."

Unfortunately, that didn't end the issue. Lundgren says: "Apparently the gay and lesbian group on campus filed a complaint late last week with the university's student government association, saying that InterVarsity was discriminating against a gay student."

While the university has an "all inclusive" policy—meaning anyone can join a student group on campus, Lundgren says that wasn't the issue here. "This involved leadership, not membership, because we welcome anyone to be involved in an InterVarsity Chapter," he says, "partly because of our commitment to evangelism."

Members of the student association at the university voted on Friday to suspend the school's InterVarsity Christian

Fellowship chapter. Lundgren doesn't believe this suspension will last very long: "We have always been able to see our chapters reinstated because the Supreme Court decisions apply to state-funded schools like this."

The Student Association Senate declined to lift the suspension during a meeting on Sunday, choosing instead to appoint a special investigative committee to determine whether InterVarsity's leadership requirements violate the school's policy.

Lundren says InterVarsity is taking action. "We believe that it's actually the student government association that's breaking the law," he says. "So we're sending a letter to the school, reframing what happened, stating the law according to the Supreme Court, and asking that our chapter be reinstated."

This kind of antagonism isn't new to InterVarsity. "We've had 15 of these kinds of things happen this fall," Lundren says, "which generally we've had two or three a school year."

Are these concerted attacks against Christians? Lundren says, "I think 'attack' would be too strong. We have chapters on almost 900 campuses, and even though 15 is a lot, 15 out of 900 is not a majority. On the other hand, the gay and lesbian lobby on many campuses is getting more aggressive and working to attack other Christian ministries."

Lundren is asking Christians to pray for campus ministry which seems to be under more scrutiny.