

Tufts Reinstates Christian Ministry After Policy Spat

Tufts University will recognize Tufts Christian Fellowship, a chapter of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, as a student religious group.

The group was first told it violated the schools non-discrimination policy by requiring its leaders to follow “basic **biblical truths** of Christianity.”

But a student judiciary at the university announced Wednesday that student religious groups should not be required to appoint leaders who do not share in their beliefs.

Like several other private colleges, Tufts has an “all-comers” policy that requires official student organizations to be open to all students for both membership and leadership, regardless of beliefs.

But Intervarsity leaders appealed the school’s decision and the Tufts Committee on Student Life decided unanimously the policy should not apply to leaders of religious groups.

“It is reasonable to expect that leaders within individual religious groups be exemplars of that particular religion,” the committee ruled. “Therefore, an ‘all-comers’ policy for group leadership may not be appropriate.”

The new policy states that religious groups must remain open and consider all students for membership but they can rely on doctrinal statements when appointing leaders.

“We appreciate that the Committee on Student Life recognizes that faith-based groups may need the freedom to use faith-based criteria in its leadership selection in order to remain consistent with the mission and beliefs of their faiths,” TCF

members said in response to the decision.

“We also appreciate the Committee’s desire to protect all students on campus by both affirming the nondiscrimination policy and defining its proper context and application for student religious groups,” they said.

The organization was not so lucky at Vanderbilt University. Last year, the Nashville university adopted the “all-comers” policy that forced 15 Christian groups from the school.

TCF will remain on suspension until the group submits a new application for recognition, which it intends to do immediately.