

CONFERENCE ON LEGAL SAFEGUARDS FOR YOUR RELIGIOUS MISSION APRIL 24-25, 2025

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OVERVIEW: Every institutional leader knows there are imminent legal threats that could jeopardize their school's freedom to operate and fulfill their mission. Prudent leaders keep abreast of these threats and prescient leaders are taking appropriate action to mitigate these threats. Review the current legal landscape across the United States and hear from legal experts about how you can best lead your institution through the maze of threats with grace and wisdom.

DAY 1 THURSDAY | APRIL 24

9:00 – 9:15 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS — PHILIP DEARBORN, PRESIDENT | ABHE

9:15 – 10:00 SESSION 1: THREATS TO THE RELIGIOUS LIBERTY OF BIBLICAL HIGHER EDUCATION

PRESENTER: GREG BAYLOR, SENIOR COUNSEL, DIRECTOR OF CENTER FOR RELIGIOUS SCHOOLS | ADF

OVERVIEW: In a fallen world, distinctly Christian educational institutions inevitably encounter hostility to their biblical missions. Governments at all levels—federal, state, and local—are the source of many of these threats.

- ▶ Identifying challenges posed by Congress, state legislatures, and local legislative bodies
- ▶ Understanding obstacles created by regulatory bodies
- ▶ Knowing the problems city and county councils generate

10:00 – 10:30 Q & A DISCUSSION

10:30 – 10:45 REFRESHMENT BREAK

10:45 – 11:30 SESSION 2: LEGISLATIVE AND ADMINISTRATIVE ADVOCACY AND BIBLICAL HIGHER EDUCATION

**PRESENTERS: GREG BAYLOR | ADF; TONYA SHELLNUT, SENIOR STATE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS DIRECTOR | ADF
NATALIE DODSON, POLICY ANALYST, ETHICS AND PUBLIC POLICY CENTER**

OVERVIEW: In a representative democracy, we have the right and obligation to participate in the lawmaking process. Governments can be a source of protections of or threats to your institution's religious exercise and religious mission.

- ▶ Learning what it takes to make a difference in Congress
- ▶ Comprehending the complex system for influencing federal regulatory actions
- ▶ Understanding how to participate effectively in state legislative advocacy

11:30 – 12:00 Q & A DISCUSSION

12:00 – 12:15 A WORD FROM OUR GOLD SPONSOR — ALLIANCE DEFENDING FREEDOM

12:15 – 1:00 LUNCH — CATERED AT THE ABHE DINING ROOM

1:00 – 1:45 SESSION 3: LEGALLY PROTECTING YOUR INSTITUTION

PRESENTER: VALERIE LONDONO, SENIOR COUNSEL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF CHURCH & MINISTRY ALLIANCE | ADF

OVERVIEW: Institutions of biblical higher education can take steps to minimize the legal and public relations risks generated by their distinctive religious character. And they can position themselves to best withstand any attacks that may come.

- ▶ Understanding the importance of written policies and procedures—and of communicating them to applicants, students, staff, and faculty
- ▶ Linking the substance of policies and practices to your institution's religious convictions
- ▶ Consistently applying relevant policies and procedures



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DAY 1 CONT'D

1:45 — 2:15 Q & A DISCUSSION

2:15 — 2:30 REFRESHMENT BREAK

2:30 — 3:15 SESSION 4: COURAGE TO STAND: THE CASE OF LUTHER RICE COLLEGE & SEMINARY

PRESENTERS: RYAN TUCKER, SENIOR COUNSEL, DIRECTOR OF CENTER FOR CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES | ADF;
STEVEN STEINHILBER, PRESIDENT | LUTHER RICE COLLEGE AND SEMINARY

OVERVIEW: Defending your institutions from attacks on your religious freedom is critical. But institutions of biblical higher education have a role to play when it comes to going on offense and taking on unconstitutional laws and policies that violate religious liberty.

- ▶ Understanding what it's like to be a party to a lawsuit
- ▶ Dealing with media, constituent, and public relations
- ▶ Serving as the steward of an issue for the benefit of your institution and others

3:15 — 3:45 Q & A DISCUSSION

3:45 — 4:00 WRAP-UP

5:00 DINNER OFF-SITE

DAY 2 FRIDAY | APRIL 25

9:00 — 9:15 INSIGHTS FROM THE WORD — PHILIP DEARBORN

9:15 — 10:00 SESSION 5: CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS: MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS TRAINING

PRESENTERS: JAMES ARNOLD, COMMUNICATIONS INTEGRITY DIRECTOR; RYAN TUCKER; GREG BAYLOR | ADF
LINDSAY COURTEAU, ASSOC VP STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | GENEVA COLLEGE

OVERVIEW: Disputes involving hot-button legal and cultural issues present challenging public relations issues for Christian institutions of higher education.

- ▶ Knowing when and how to communicate with both friendly and hostile audiences
- ▶ Understanding how much to say, how to say it, and when to say it
- ▶ Coordinating among various internal constituencies to deliver consistent strategic messaging

10:00 — 10:30 Q & A DISCUSSION

10:30 — 10:45 REFRESHMENT BREAK

10:45 — 11:30 SESSION 6: LEGAL SAFEGUARDS FOR YOUR RELIGIOUS MISSION ROUNDTABLE

OVERVIEW: Discuss the most pressing legal issues your institution is facing with both the panel of presenters and attendee affinity groups. Create a draft of your **Personal Action Plan** based on the most significant and urgent issues you should address following the conference.

11:30 — 12:00 Q & A DISCUSSION AND WRAP-UP

12:00 — 1:00 CLOSING LUNCH



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