

FREEDOM FROM RELIGION *foundation*

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October 22, 2018

SENT BY MAIL & EMAIL TO: president@auburn.edu

Dr. Steven Leath
President
Auburn University
107 Samford Hall
Auburn, AL 36849

Re: Unconstitutional Football Chaplaincy Program and Open Records Request

Dear Dr. Leath:

I am writing on behalf of the Freedom From Religion Foundation (FFRF) regarding the football chaplain at Auburn University (AU). FFRF is a national nonprofit organization with more than 32,000 members across the country, including members in Alabama. Our purposes are to protect the constitutional principle of separation between state and church, and to educate the public on matters relating to nontheism.

In 2014, FFRF sent Auburn University an open records request asking for information related to its football chaplain, Chette Williams, and the football chaplain program at AU. After we exchanged many emails back and forth with an assistant athletic director, Cassie Arner, and submitted a \$500 deposit, AU cut off communications and—to date—we have not received the records we requested under the Alabama Public Records Law, Ala. Code § 36-12-40.

We understand that AU still employs Chette Williams as a football chaplain to proselytize and pray with its football team, so we are resubmitting our request below. We ask that AU obey the law and provide the records we have been waiting on for years.

Multiple complainants recently reached out to us after AL.com posted a video showing Chette Williams leading the Auburn University football team in prayer before a football game against Southern Miss. on September 29, 2018.¹ In the video, Williams leads the team in an unmistakably Christian prayer:

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you so much again for this opportunity that we have every Saturday to circle up and hook up with each other, but more importantly, to hook up with you. We pray for each family represented in this circle, Father. We pray for those who are traveling to the game, but most of all Father, we pray that your power and presence be with this team today... We would just have a call, and each one of these players would recognize that call today as

¹ Laura Goldman, *Go inside Auburn's prayer circle before facing Southern Miss*, AL.COM (Sept. 29, 2018), http://www.al.com/auburnfootball/index.ssf/2018/09/go_inside_auburns_prayer_circl.html

they go out on this field. And not only that, but to recognize the call in our lives spiritually. Father, we love you. We thank you so much for Jesus who died on the cross for our sins, and it's in His name.²

We'd like to remind AU that employing a chaplain and giving him unfettered access to a captive audience of football players is unconstitutional. While student athletes are free to pray, either individually or as group, university staff members should not be leading, participating in, or encouraging students to engage in religious exercises, or hiring "chaplains" to do so. Please find a copy of FFRF's 2015 Pray to Play report attached. A copy was sent to AU back in 2015, but the information regarding the nature and extent of college football chaplaincies and the legal liability that AU exposes itself to by allowing its chaplaincy to continue are still relevant today.

Open Records Request

For the purposes of this request, "Chaplain" refers to Chette Williams and any of his predecessors, successors, assistants, co-chaplains, or anyone who fills the role of spiritual or religious counselor; "Football Program" means the University football team, which includes all coaches and football personnel, paid or unpaid, who regularly access the team's facilities; "records," "communications," or similar terms are meant to include, but not be limited to emails.

Pursuant to the Alabama Public Records Law, Ala. Code § 36-12-40, I hereby request the following records, from 2012 to the present:

1. All Football Program, University, or Athletic Department policies concerning coach or clergy-led prayers for student athletes; this includes any policies regarding restrictions on coach or clergy-led prayers before athletic competitions, practices, or team functions;
2. All Football Program, University, or Athletic Department schedules, notices, memos, emails, or announcements related to religious services, prayer gatherings, bible studies, Fellowship of Christian Athletes meetings, or other religious activities in which the Chaplain was involved;
3. All communications, including but not limited to email, between Football Program staff and the Chaplain concerning the scheduling, planning, advertisement, or sponsoring of religious services, prayer gatherings, bible studies, bible distributions, or other religious activities for football players, staff, or their families;
4. All Football Program, University, or Athletic Department records related to the Chaplain's travel with the football team. This includes all travel plans, itineraries, and financial records, including any plane tickets, meals, or hotel stays arranged by the Football Program, University, or Athletic Department;

² *Id.*

5. All Football Program, University, or Athletic Department records related to financial payments or reimbursements made to the Chaplain;
6. All Football Program, University, or Athletic Department job postings, or job descriptions concerning Football Program chaplains, or any other position primarily revolving around the spiritual development of football players; and
7. Any other Football Program, University, or Athletic Department records related to the Chaplain's official or unofficial football team duties or activities.

Please respond to this request without delay. If more time is needed to gather information responsive to one or more of the items above, please indicate that in your response. If you choose to deny any part of this request, please provide a written explanation of your denial including any references to statutory exemptions or case law upon which you rely. If any of these records are available electronically, they may be emailed to chris@ffrf.org.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Please feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, or clarifications at chris@ffrf.org or 608-256-8900.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Line", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christopher Line
Patrick O'Reiley Legal Fellow
Freedom From Religion Foundation

Enclosure

PRAY TO PLAY

Christian coaches and chaplains are converting
football fields into mission fields



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This report was financed, researched, and written by the Freedom From Religion Foundation. FFRF is a national membership association of approximately 23,000 freethinkers: atheists, agnostics and skeptics. The Foundation is a non-profit, tax-exempt, educational organization under Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3).

Incorporated in 1978 in Wisconsin, FFRF has two main purposes: (1) to promote the constitutional separation between state and church, and (2) to educate the public on matters relating to nontheism.

FFRF.org

FFRF's legal staff spent more than 12 months investigating this report. We dedicate it to the memory of Anne Nicol Gaylor, FFRF's founder and a visionary firebrand that sought to protect citizens' freedom of thought.

Principal researchers, authors, and investigators of this report

Andrew L. Seidel is a staff attorney and constitutional consultant at FFRF. Mr. Seidel has two law degrees, one magna cum laude the other with a perfect GPA and studied international human rights law at the University of Amsterdam. Tulane Law gave him the Haber J. McCarthy Award and Denver Law gave him the Outstanding LLM Award—both for being top of his discipline. His undergraduate degree, a cum laude BS, is in neuroscience.

Patrick Elliott is a staff attorney at FFRF. He received a degree in legal studies and political science from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He received his Juris Doctor from the University of Wisconsin Law School and is a member of the State Bar of Wisconsin's Civil Rights division. Mr. Elliott specializes in state/church advocacy and litigation.

Neal Fitzgerald is a law clerk at FFRF attends the University of Wisconsin Law School (class of '16). This is his second summer clerking with FFRF.

Chris Line is a law clerk at FFRF attends the University of Wisconsin Law School (class of '17). This is his first summer clerking with FFRF.

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PRAY TO PLAY

Christian coaches and chaplains are converting football fields into mission fields

“If somebody comes into my territory, my zone, I want to hit him hard. ... I’ll hit him with all the love of Jesus I can muster.”

Gill Byrd, San Jose State, San Diego Chargers, Tampa Bay Buccaneers (1991)¹

“God does not give a damn what goes on in athletics. Nor should he.”

Bob Knight, Indiana University basketball coach (1985)²

Public universities and their employees cannot endorse, promote, or favor religion. Yet, many football coaches at public universities bring in chaplains—often from their own church or even members of their own family—to prey on and pray with students, with no regard for the rights of those students or the Constitution. These coaches are converting playing fields into mission fields and public universities are doing nothing to halt this breach of trust. They are failing their student athletes.

The purpose of this report is to expose this unconstitutional system, encourage universities to fix it, and stimulate further efforts to protect students’ rights of conscience.

The facts laid out in this report, often in the words of the coaches or chaplains themselves, leave universities no room to defend these chaplaincies as accommodations of student athletes’ religion or as truly voluntary options.

Nor can religion, historically a divisive force, be claimed to unify today’s diverse student body. Barely half of college students (54%) now consider themselves Christian, yet 100% of the chaplains we investigated are Christian.

If an athlete is willing to challenge this system, FFRF will help.

Though this report focuses on chaplaincies for football teams, they exist for other collegiate sports as well, particularly basketball. The chaplaincies vary in structure, but are functionally identical. Chaplains lead teams in bible study, chapel services, and pre-and post-game prayers. Chaplains receive money, tickets, meals, and free travel on the university’s, or more accurately, the students’ and taxpayers’ dime. Occasionally, so do the chaplains’ wives. Coaches regularly fundraise for the chaplain, using their influence and position to direct funds to religious organizations rather than the school or athletic program. At least one chaplain appears to preach creationism to his athletes.

These chaplaincies raise serious legal issues for the university, and the coercive nature of the coach-athlete relationship exacerbates those issues. Coaches control many aspects of their players lives and are now extending that reach to athletes’ private religious beliefs. An atheist football player on a ranked football team, speaking to us on condition of anonymity, told us that the head coach had him lead a team prayer. The player felt he had no choice but to comply. Coach suggestions, even if they violate the

players' religion or lack thereof, are not viewed as optional. Oftentimes, they are simply mandatory, as Arian Foster recently explained regarding his time at the University of Tennessee.

This system has a catch-22: because of the coercive power dynamic in the coach-athlete relationship, any student athlete with the courage to challenge this system will suffer. It would take an exceptionally brave student to risk losing his scholarship, diploma, and future. If an athlete is willing to challenge this system, FFRF will help.

Research for this report was conducted over the past year and included inspecting hundreds of pages of university records. The report examines:

1. The unique position student athletes occupy and their susceptibility to religious coercion by coaches and chaplains.
2. The extensive public financing of these chaplaincies, including direct payments to chaplains, paying for the chaplain and his family to travel, and using the university's influence and resources to fundraise for the chaplains' religious organizations.
3. Schools portraying chaplains as legitimate, official members of the coaching staff.
4. The use of religion and chaplains in recruiting players, often to skirt NCAA rules.
5. The recent history of chaplaincies, most of which can be traced to Bobby Bowden, Tommy Tuberville, and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.
6. The true purpose and actual effect of the chaplaincies, which is to promote the coach's personal religion and to convert athletes to that religion.
7. The legal problems these issues raise for universities.
8. A model policy for public universities to adopt and a discussion of the misconception at the heart of this issue: that religion, and specifically Christianity, is required to be a complete or good human being.

As part of this investigation, we focused on schools that appeared to have the most flagrant chaplaincies and examined records documenting these programs, including:

- Policies concerning coach or clergy-led prayers for student athletes
- Records of team religious services, prayer gatherings, bible studies, etc.
- All communications, including email, between coaches and the chaplain
- Records relating to the chaplain traveling with the team
- Records related to financial payments or reimbursements made to the chaplain

We received few of the records we requested. For instance, the universities provided very few emails or other communication and almost no policies. Some records, such as the FCA business proposal to the University of Washington, are very illuminating. This helpful information was supplemented with independent research and interviews with an atheist player at a ranked football program. Despite these refusals and the sporadic information, the records and research conclusively show that coaches are imposing their religion on players and that chaplains are the tools for this imposition.

Student athletes are “uniquely susceptible to coercion” from coaches. Coaches control players’ education, futures, and, to a certain extent, finances

Coaches control players' prospects for future careers, in professional sports and otherwise. Players that obey coaches and fit in with the team are more secure in their scholarships and playing time, and therefore in their education and future career.³

Players have an enormous financial incentive to remain on the team and consequently, to remain in the coach's good graces.⁴ They often receive scholarships for an education that would otherwise leave them with a mountain of debt. “Coaches place tremendous pressure on the players . . . If a player falls into disfavor with the coaching staff, he may be ‘recruited over,’ that is, replaced by a newer player. Coaches often encourage players who have been recruited over to quit the team or to transfer.”⁵ This level of control is often by design. For instance, many schools shifted from “four-year to one-year athletics scholarships . . . to create a mechanism by which university athletic programs could maintain pressure on the scholarship athlete throughout his college career.”⁶

But that father-son-like relationship means coaches need to tread even more carefully when it comes to students' rights of conscience. That relationship should not be used as a license to convert the trusting student athlete to the coach's religion.

That financial and educational control extends to a player's future prospects. Coaches control playing time and therefore the player's output. And even though less than 2% of college athletes have professional careers, coaches have significant control over who will, because they control who plays and when.

One of those student athletes who went pro, Arian Foster, recently came out of the closet as an atheist in a video for the Openly Secular campaign and in an ESPN interview.⁷ According to that interview, Foster explained that “[t]he separation of church and football -- not to mention church and public education -- blurred at [the University of] Tennessee.”⁸ Foster could not escape the coach-imposed religion at the college level and when he asked to follow his own beliefs, he was labeled a conceited outcast:

Coaches, led by head coach Phil Fulmer, scheduled trips to Sunday church services as team-building exercises. Foster asked to be excused. He was denied. (The school confirmed that these team-building exercises to churches took place.) Word spread: Foster was arrogant, selfish, difficult to coach.⁹

Our interviewee said, “there is so much competition and everybody’s so talented, that you look for the littlest thing to give you an edge.”¹⁰ That edge might be obeying coaches “suggestions” to attend church or pray in spite of your personal beliefs.

“I sometimes think the last stand of dictatorship in this world is the college football coach. His word is law, his rule is absolute, his power is unlimited.”

This structure gives every word the coach utters the power of implicit coercion, but in some instances, as at Tennessee under Fulmer, coaches rely on explicit coercion. “Athletes often participate in these pregame rituals out of habit or a sense of team unity. Others are forced to participate due to threats of reduced playing time or other coercive acts.”¹¹ Coaches have been accused of this repeatedly, from University of Colorado Head Football Coach Bill McCartney in the mid-80s to Delaware State University volleyball coach LaKisya Killingsworth this summer.¹² Even as far back as the ‘70s, coaches were “attempting to convert the student-athletes to Christianity, to be saved, to be part of the Born-Again movement.”¹³ In the most egregious cases, “A ‘no pray/no play’ rule is instituted by a coach to force acceptance of a certain belief or face repercussions including reduced or no playing time.”¹⁴

The coach-player relationship is often an emotional, parent-like bond

Coaches are often surrogates for parents. Just this year, Georgia players thanked head coach Mark Richt for being “the father figure I so desperately needed” and for being a “father figure... to every young man that needed” it.¹⁵ Bobby Bowden said, “I had to be like a father to these boys. Well, my father taught me about the Bible, my father taught me about church...”¹⁶ This aspect of the player-coach relationship

is well known and widely documented: “players frequently develop an enduring emotional bond with their coach.”¹⁷ This is admirable and much needed for some young men. But that father-son-like relationship means coaches need to tread even more carefully when it comes to students’ rights of conscience. That relationship should not be used as a license to convert the trusting student athlete to the coach’s religion.

Coaches portray chaplains as special members of the coaching staff with special access. Chaplains themselves take on this powerful position, mixing the roles of coach, parent, and minister, all while promoting their personal religion to athletes. The atheist athlete we interviewed said that the chaplain is “around a lot during meetings, during practice, during pretty much everything and will always be talking with people, other players.”¹⁸ Chaplains take on this parental role and the influence it affords.

No escape: College athletics demands disciple, obedience, and regimentation

College teams are highly regimented and disciplined, much like the military. This is one reason employers seek out student athletes: “We like athletes and former military personnel because they are disciplined, regimented, they know how to get over failure quickly and they keep moving forward,” said a New York Life insurance representative about Ohio State’s football job fair.¹⁹ Athletes must adhere to a strict code of conduct, nearly every waking hour of their daily life is regimented and scheduled during the season, they are bonded to the their teammates by suffering (difficult workouts, two-a-days, etc.), and team rituals. They must obey the coach and conform to the team. Federal courts have explained that such environments are coercive and therefore subject to heightened restrictions on the government endorsing religion.

Although [Virginia Military Institute]’s cadets are not children, in VMI’s educational system they are uniquely susceptible to coercion. VMI’s adversative method of education emphasizes the detailed regulation of conduct and the indoctrination of a strict moral code. Entering students are exposed to the “rat line,” in which upperclassmen torment and berate new students, bonding “new cadets to their fellow sufferers and, when they have completed the 7-month experience, to their former tormentors.” At VMI, even upperclassmen must submit to mandatory and ritualized activities, as obedience and conformity remain central tenets of the school’s educational philosophy. In this atmosphere, General Bunting reinstituted the supper prayer in 1995 to build solidarity and bring the Corps together as a family. In this context, VMI’s cadets are plainly coerced into participating in a religious exercise.²⁰

These factors—coach control, athletics as a way of life, the coach-athlete bond, and the controlled, regimented lifestyle of the student athlete—are symptoms of the immense power coaches hold over their players. The Pulitzer Prize-winning sports columnist Jim Murray wrote, “I sometimes think the last stand of dictatorship in this world is the college football coach. His word is law, his rule is absolute, his power is unlimited.”²¹ Others have observed that “[t]he coach’s authority often seems as inviolable as that of an Army general.”²² Given these similarities, student athletes, like the cadets at VMI, are “uniquely susceptible to coercion.” Many are coerced into participating in coach “suggested” religious activity.

“seriously terrifying moment”

Athletes do not view coaches’ suggestions as optional. The coach may recommend off-season training, but for student athletes, “It is ‘understood’ that an athlete will practice on his own and lift weights, and that his failure to do so may result in him being ‘replaced.’”²³ Similarly, the coach might “recommend” players attend chapel or bible study, but the players do not see it as a suggestion, they see it as an order.

The head coach asked our atheist athlete interviewee to lead prayer for the team. Even as an atheist he complied. This nonbeliever was forced to say the prayer because the coach “asked.” When your coach asks you to do something, you do it. Compliance was the only option during what this player described as a “seriously terrifying moment.”

This coerciveness is exacerbated by the players’ full, regimented schedule. Between attending the same classes, eating together, and their practices and workouts, teammates may spend 16–18 hours a day with each other.²⁴ They even room together. Despite the NCAA’s 20-hour limit, student athletes consistently report spending 40 hours or more weekly on athletic activities in season and another 40 hours on academic activities.²⁵

These religious events are part of that regime and not easy to escape. It is typical for teams to have some or all of the following:

- Chapel the day before every game, including away games
- Chapel during training camp on Sundays and everyday for some teams
- Pre-game prayer in the locker room
- Post-game prayer on the field, usually with both teams
- Post-game prayer in the locker room
- Bible study, scripture sessions, and devotionals²⁶

Most of the coaches attend these religious observances. Players feel, as our interviewee put it, that not to show up is to risk their position, “I was kind of scared to not go [to chapel and bible study] because you’re obviously trying to win a job you

don’t want to give the coaches any reason or indication that, you know, I wasn’t saying that the coaches would necessarily do anything differently if I didn’t show up but I just wanted to make sure that I had my face there...”²⁷ He regularly envisions getting discovered and sidelined because a coach might think, “oh he’s not religious” and might screw up “because God’s pissed off at him” or because “he didn’t pray.”²⁸

If coaches think athletes should pray, student athletes will pray to play.

This coercive environment explains why, as Adrian Despres, the chaplain at University of South Carolina, likes to brag, “100%” of players attend “voluntary” chapel.²⁹ That attendance is not because all the players are Christians or devoutly religious, but because players feel attendance is mandatory, despite claims to the contrary. If a coach wants you to say or do something, you do it.

Added to this coercive dynamic is the proselytizing behavior of the chaplains themselves, which can be “very pressing,” as our interviewee put it. Coaches add to this pressure by sending chaplains to talk with players going through difficult times, instead of allowing players to seek out their own religious or professional counseling. Of course, coaches should encourage counseling for players facing personal difficulties, but if coaches are going to send counselors to players’ rooms or to talk with players, they *must* be secular, trained counselors, not chaplains seeking converts.

In short, if coaches think athletes should pray, student athletes will pray to play.

Public universities are bankrolling Christian ministers.

Entanglements between university athletic programs and religious chaplains inevitably involve the exchange of money or valuable public resources. Whether through direct payments, school-financed travel, or special perks, you can bet on chaplains receiving publicly-subsidized compensation.

Direct Payments

Despite obvious constitutional problems with the practice, some public universities pay chaplains for their religious work. This is illegal.

At Georgia Tech, Chaplain Derrick Moore was paid \$7,500 under his chaplain contract for the 2014 football season.³⁰ His first task under the contract is to: “Provide Spiritual and Personal Development for Student Athletes (primarily the football program).” Moore has contracts with Georgia Tech dating back to at least 2011. According to school records, Georgia Tech paid him more than \$14,000 in 2011

and 2012.³¹ Based on those school records, it appears that Georgia Tech has paid him more than \$43,000 total.

At South Carolina, Chaplain Adrian Despres is paid \$4,500.³² Since 2010, he has been paid a total of \$18,000. Much like other universities, his official title is not “chaplain,” but rather some benign title crafted by the university. Despres’ paid position conflicts with South Carolina’s “Chaplain Policy,” which provides that, “A chaplain may not be remunerated by the Athletics Department for services provided and work performed in his or her capacity as chaplain.”³³

“A chaplain may not be remunerated by the Athletics Department for services provided and work performed in his or her capacity as chaplain.”

At Clemson, Coach Dabo Swinney made arrangements with a donor in 2011 to provide at least \$2,500 annually to the coach for a chaplain.³⁴ It is unclear where these funds were deposited. The school’s chaplain, James Trapp, received payments directly from the university beginning in 2011.³⁵ After FFRF raised questions about Trapp’s position with the team in 2014, the university’s general counsel claimed that Trapp was hired to assist with recruiting efforts, noting “he also has a separate and independent presence on the Clemson University campus” with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.³⁶ Even if the chaplain job is mostly privately funded, his privileged access to players due to his religious position raises significant First Amendment concerns.

Chaplains at some schools receive per diem payments. At the University of Missouri, school records show that Chaplains Shay Roush and Nathan Tiemeyer receive such payments.³⁷ Not only did the chaplains receive per diems, both of their wives received per diems for meals at the Cotton Bowl in 2014.³⁸ The university per diem payments to the chaplains and their wives for the Cotton Bowl totaled \$840.³⁹

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Virginia Tech’s chaplain, Dave Gittings, received state meal vouchers totaling \$475 for meals at the 2013 Sun Bowl.⁴⁰ The vouchers described the purpose as, “Money for Meals with Dave and wife and daughter while traveling with football team for Sun Bowl.”⁴¹ Gittings signed a statement on the voucher that said, “I hereby certify that the expenses listed below were incurred by me on official business of the Commonwealth of Virginia and included only such expenses as were necessary in the conduct of this business.” It is unclear on what basis Chaplain Gittings believes that meals for his wife and daughter

were for official Virginia Tech business. In 2014, a Virginia Tech expense report showed that Gittings, his wife, and daughter also received \$366 worth of meals while at the Military Bowl.⁴²

Travel

At nearly every school FFRF analyzed, chaplains received flights and accommodations paid for by the school. Football teams routinely let chaplains travel on the team planes and buses. Effectively, public university athletic departments treat chaplains as coaching staff.

The University of Washington provided formal contracts with chaplains to attend bowl games. The agreements provided that the chaplain would “[a]ssist with management of team bench during game and chaplain-religious service for players and families.”⁴³ The school agreed to provide the chaplain and his guest with “transportation, lodging, subsistence and event tickets.”⁴⁴

These free flights pile up. For example, Louisiana State University’s chaplain, Ken Ellis, flew on planes chartered for the team 22 times between 2010 and 2013. He stayed with the team in a hotel 24 times during the same period.⁴⁵

Not just the wives, but also the children of Mizzou’s chaplains traveled on team planes and stayed in team hotel rooms.

Chaplain travel with the team was ubiquitous and in some cases the benefit was extensively abused. Missouri records show that the wives of chaplains traveled on team planes and stayed in hotels paid for by the school.⁴⁶ In 2011, Shay Roush’s wife, Lynn Roush, was on a team flight and hotel manifest for a game at Texas A&M. In 2012, Lynn traveled with the team for a game against Central Florida. Lynn also flew with the team and stayed in a team hotel room in 2013 for a game against the University of Georgia.⁴⁷ Rachel Tiemeyer, the wife of Mizzou’s other chaplain, traveled on the team plane for a game against Arizona State in 2011.⁴⁸

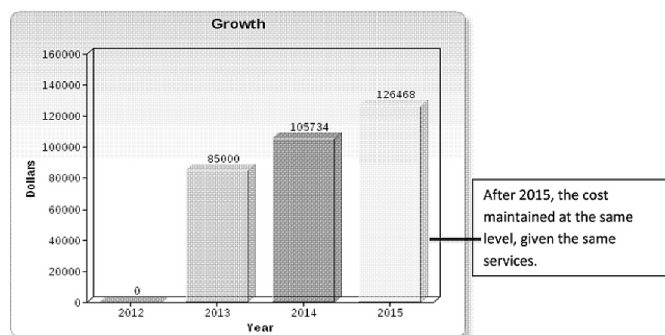
Not just the wives, but also the children of Mizzou’s chaplains traveled on team planes and stayed in team hotel rooms. Shay, Lynn, and their three children were provided team flights for the Independence Bowl in 2011.⁴⁹ The family was provided with two hotel rooms.⁵⁰ The entire Roush family was also on flight manifests for team flights to and from the Cotton Bowl in 2014.⁵¹ Joining them on those flights was chaplain Nathan Tiemeyer, his wife, and three children.⁵² The cost for commercial airfare around the New Year holiday for 10 travelers could easily top \$4,000.

Like Mizzou, Virginia Tech provided accommodations to the family of its chaplain at the Military Bowl, including two rooms for four nights, totaling \$1,080.⁵³

Fundraising

University of Washington “Business Proposal”

At the University of Washington, a Fellowship of Christian Athletes representative, Jonathan Rainey, pitched a fundraising scheme to the school in 2013. The “Fellowship of Christian Athletes Business Proposal” sought to have donors give to the FCA while the donors would “still be given full-credit for their donations and the benefits that they would typically receive, had the money gone directly to the university.”⁵⁴ The business proposal predicted the program cost would be \$126,468 by 2015.⁵⁵ The planned costs included \$65,000 for the chaplain and a \$15,000 car stipend.⁵⁶



Fundraising plan for the University of Washington FCA

The Washington business proposal shows disturbing ties between fundraising and program content. It says, “The main focus in terms of identifying customers for this project is the donors and alumni because they have the money to invest.”⁵⁷ It continues, “Every six months a report will be distributed amongst the investors that will quantify how many students were mentored, what their issues were (i.e., depression, suicidal, relationship and how this was affecting them as a student-athlete).”⁵⁸ While the reports would not identify student names, they would apparently disclose sensitive student information to donors that health professionals or university personnel would not ordinarily be permitted to disclose (as discussed below, this may create serious legal issues for schools under student privacy laws). Donors would also receive reports on “the number of bible studies, chapels, and other faith base [*sic*] services that were coordinated or assisted with for the student-athletes.”⁵⁹

The business proposal directly connects the FCA program to the university by giving donors “soft-credit for the donation” since “FCA essentially gives the money back to the university by supplying the representative and materials for the university to use.”⁶⁰ In addition to credit, the proposal sought to give FCA donors access at official team events: “To make the project translucent for investors, all investors will be invited to partake in a chapel session and a team meeting the night before team competition. Investors will also benefit by giving to this

because the donation will be tax deductible because FCA is 501C3.”⁶¹ Essentially, the FCA, a private religious organization with a religious mission, is accepting money and in return, giving donors special access to public university athletes.

The FCA sought to use the school to recruit donors and said the project would entail “targeting the right donors.”⁶² The “right donors” would be identified through market research and, “[m]ost universities already conduct this type of research, however, if that is not the case, a questionnaire will be developed to be passed out to current and potential future donors.”⁶³ The plan called for 10 donors to give \$10,000 each.⁶⁴ The FCA also planned to have student athletes participate in fundraisers that would “coincide with other UW athletics events like competitions and award banquets.”⁶⁵

The Washington proposal notes that Virginia Tech, Georgia Tech, and the University of Mississippi developed similar FCA programs for student athletes.

Fundraisers and Memorabilia Sales

Recognizing that direct payments to chaplains posed a problem, Ole Miss Coach Hugh Freeze helped hawk Ole Miss licensed gear to raise money for the chaplain.⁶⁶ In 2013, he authored a letter posted on www.alumni-shop.com, which said:

We have coaches that are men of integrity, character and faith to work with these young men to build a strong foundation that will lead to excellence on the field – it is my desire to have a Fellowship of Christian Athletes Chaplain to join and come alongside our coaches and players to help us spiritually.⁶⁷



That letter continues, “Thirty (30%) of all University of Mississippi and fifteen (15%) of any other university products purchased will be donated to the FCA Chaplain John Powell Fund.”⁶⁸

At the University of Georgia, Coach Mark Richt fundraises for his brother-in-law's chaplain position and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. At a gala event in the Butts-Mehre football complex in July of 2014, Richt helped bring in big money for the FCA.⁶⁹ The gala featured a silent auction with UGA memorabilia, including an "authentic Todd Gurley home red jersey."⁷⁰

Special fundraising privileges abound at other schools. At Clemson, chaplain James Trapp received permission from the athletic department to imprint the school's trademarked "paw" logo on shirts for the FCA, Trapp's employer.⁷¹ Clemson's official "Guidelines for Athletic Chaplains," prohibited chaplains from engaging in "fund-raising activities which, in the sole discretion of Clemson University, might be construed as implying the endorsement or support of the University."⁷² Despite this policy, athletic department staff approved the FCA t-shirts.

Each year, the University of Wisconsin Athletic Department gives the team's longtime chaplain, Father Mike Burke, items to auction off for the benefit of his church, St. Maria Goretti Catholic Parish. The church uses the proceeds for religious functions: "[t]he proceeds of this event go to help the present and future needs of our school, religious education and youth ministry programs, adult faith formation and evangelization, and savings for the future for our parish."⁷³

In 2012, the St. Maria Goretti auction included UW items such as:

- an autographed UW football helmet signed by Coach Bret Bielema and Athletic Director Barry Alvarez,
- a UW football signed by Coach Bielema,
- a UW hockey stick signed by Coach Mike Eaves,
- a UW hockey helmet signed by Coach Eaves,
- an opportunity to be a UW basketball "ball kid" for a game,
- and a private tour of Camp Randall stadium.⁷⁴

The church auctioned off similar items in 2014:

- a basketball signed by Coach Bo Ryan,
- a football signed by Alvarez and Coach Gary Andersen,
- a UW football helmet signed by Coach Anderson and Alvarez,
- a hockey stick signed by Coach Eaves,
- and a tour of Camp Randall Stadium by a UW Athletics staff member.⁷⁵

[Note: In response to this information, FFRF requested similar autographed items from the university through the athletic department's charitable request form in July of 2015. FFRF was granted permission to auction off a tour of Camp Randall and have coaches sign memorabilia.]

Other Benefits

Chaplains often receive special sideline passes or complimentary tickets. Any fan of college football would relish the opportunity to walk the sideline during a game or to have valuable season tickets on the house.

Virginia Tech chaplain Dave Gittings receives four free season tickets. VT's ticket request form listed the reason for Gittings' complimentary tickets as simply, "pastor."⁷⁶ A tax notice provided by the VT Athletic Department that was signed by Gittings stated that the face value of a single season ticket was \$350, or \$1,400 total.

Along with free tickets, chaplains have often been given keys to athletic facilities and offices within the building. At Mississippi State, the chaplain has an office in the athletic building "just like any other coach."⁷⁷ North Carolina State provides an office to chaplain Al Byrd.⁷⁸ Likewise, James Trapp at Clemson has an office in the athletic building from which he distributes bibles and displays bible verses.⁷⁹

VT's ticket request form listed the reason for Gittings' complimentary tickets as simply, "pastor."

Any player would recognize a person with an office in the football complex next to other coaches as a university employee with authority over them. The university may designate a chaplain as having no official status at the university, but the loud and clear message players receive is that the chaplain is part of the coaching staff.

Regardless of the chaplaincy structures, the chaplains appear to be school employees because of their special access and privileges.

The chaplaincies can vary widely in structure and nomenclature, from a church dedicating a pastor to the team and the team giving that pastor special access (FSU), to the coach's personal priest traveling with the team and sitting behind the bench (Louisville basketball), to a "character coach" who preaches to and prays with students (Cincinnati football, Wichita State basketball), to a Fellowship of Christian Athletes sponsored chaplain (Mississippi State, Clemson), sometimes with an office in the stadium (Auburn), or who brags about attending every team event (South Carolina).

However these chaplaincies are set up on paper, the chaplains are treated as an official part of the university and team. The player FFRF interviewed is on a team with a chaplain that is allegedly separate from the school. But as far as the players are

concerned, the chaplain is 100% “a fully integrated member of the football team itself.” “He is the team chaplain, he doesn’t go by any other name. I’ve never heard anything else other than team chaplain. So it’s 100%.” When asked if it was fair to call chaplains by another title such as player development coach or character coach, our interviewee said, “No, it’s definitely not ... he doesn’t preach on character, he preaches the Bible.”

Most chaplains schedule official bible studies, chapel services or mass, or in the case of Illinois and other schools, both.⁸⁰ To increase peer pressure and ensure maximum attendance, these religious events tend to be centered on times when the team is likely to be congregated together, such as, immediately before or after meals or team meetings.⁸¹ Sometimes these services are even scheduled at the same time as a “team snack.”⁸² Players may feel as though they are being forced to opt out of a team experience, rather than voluntarily opting-in to religious worship.

At least two universities have taken the step from proselytizing to baptizing. Auburn University’s Chette Williams claimed 10 years ago that he had baptized 20 players during his first six years as chaplain.⁸³ Williams has continued to baptize Auburn players including Sammie Coates and Trovon Reed in 2013⁸⁴ and Jeff Whitaker in 2012.⁸⁵ Today, the number of Auburn football players baptized by Williams could easily exceed 50.

Clemson University went so far as turning its football field into a baptismal font. Former Tiger DeAndre Hopkins was baptized on the 50-yard line of the Clemson practice field, in football pads, surrounded by teammates and coaches, by local pastor Perry Noble.⁸⁶ Noble also baptized Sammy Watkins at his church, NewSpring [sic] Church, the church head coach Dabo Swinney attends.⁸⁷ Incidentally, Noble believes that “[w]e’ve bought into the lie that there’s a line between the secular and the spiritual. Jesus is Lord of ALL. And that means ALL.”⁸⁸



Coach Jeff Scott
@coach_jeffscott



Follow

Highlight of my week....was seeing DeAndre Hopkins get Baptized in front of his teammates on Thursday after practice.



Numerous factors contribute to the public appearance that chaplains are officially part of the team. But the sum total of these factors shows the problem. Chaplains typically:

- Attend every team event, practice, meal, etc.
- Have team events organized for their religious activities, e.g., bible study or chapel
- Lead the team in prayers or religious pep talks
- Travel with the team, either on the team bus or on the team plane
- Stay in the team hotel
- Patrol the sideline during home, away, and bowl games
- Wear team apparel with school or athletic team logos
- Adopt a title indicative of university support, such as “Auburn team chaplain” as seen on the Auburn Football website
- Appear on the team website as staff
- Have special access to the team and coaches as if they were staff
- Invite their friends and family to attend games at team expense
- Help with recruiting
- Baptize team members in athletic facilities using athletic department gear
- Have offices in the stadium or athletic department

Claiming that chaplains have both secular and religious duties does not mitigate this official appearance. Clemson defended paying James Trapp, a chaplain, for “recruiting efforts” saying that “he also has a separate and independent presence on the Clemson University Campus.” But that double duty—one religious and one university—is known only to the university’s attorneys. To all players and all outward appearances Clemson football is employing a chaplain.

The public university grants the special privileges and unrestricted access because he is a Christian clergyman.

As another example, at Auburn, one of the two schools that has refused to release records to FFRE, chaplain Chette Williams has an office in the stadium, typically wears AU branded clothing, organizes religious revivals for the team, is regularly referred to by official or official-sounding names, leads the team in prayer, baptizes players, randomly attends other team practices and meetings, travels with the team, and much more—even though technically the university does not employ him.⁸⁹ Technically, the Fellowship of Christian Athletes employs him. But anybody looking at this relationship would think, as our interviewee thought of his team’s chaplain, that Williams

is “a fully integrated member of the football team itself.” No other group, volunteer, or citizen (and no other religion) gets the access, privileges, prestige, and benefits that the chaplain does. The public university grants the special privileges and unrestricted access because he is a Christian clergyman.



These chaplains appear to be an official part of the university. Legally speaking, that appearance is sufficient to show the First Amendment violation. In this case, appearances are not deceiving. The chaplains appear to be an official part of the university because they are.

Coaches are using religion as recruiting tool.

Coaches recognize the power of using religion to lure recruits to their institution. Schools that highlight their evangelical Christian programming have an advantage in recruiting players from families with like-minded Christian beliefs.

Former Clemson Coach Tommy Bowden noted that having a Christian message was “a tremendous recruiting advantage.”⁹⁰ Ole Miss Coach Hugh Freeze said that he believes it is important to tell recruited players and their families that he believes in Jesus.⁹¹

A common refrain from coaches is that they are merely letting recruits and their families know about their religious perspective. Coach Freeze at Ole Miss has said, “we just present who we are.”⁹² He reportedly tells recruits how he found success through Jesus.⁹³

After FFRF complained about the promotion of Christianity within the Clemson football program, Coach Dabo Swinney defended himself, saying in part, “Recruiting is very personal. Recruits and their families want – and deserve – to know who you are as a person, not just what kind of coach you are. I try to be a good example to others, and I work hard to live my life according to my faith.”⁹⁴

Yet, Clemson recruits and others tell a different story. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* reported that before joining the team, some recruits prayed with Clemson coaches on the phone during recruiting calls.⁹⁵ They reportedly heard from Swinney on recruiting visits, “I’m a Christian. If you have a problem with that, you don’t have to be here.”⁹⁶

This signals to recruits that religious minorities and non-religious student athletes are not fully welcome and would never fully be a part of the team. To Christian parents of recruits, it signals that their son’s potential new football family will carry on their religious upbringing. In effect, coaches are preying upon the religious beliefs of key decision-makers in a recruit’s life. They are using evangelical Christianity to sell their program by demonstrating that the most powerful man on a team is Christian and will infuse the team with his religion.

Our interviewee also had firsthand experience of a chaplain helping recruit players by praying with them.

At a public university, this religious pandering is not only wrong but also unconstitutional. Any other government employee would face harsh sanctions were they to abuse their public position in such a manner. A public university admissions recruiter would be stopped in his tracks were he to insinuate that an academic program was a Christian program. A head of a university department who was interviewing prospective associate professors would be harshly reprimanded were she to assert that non-Christians “don’t have to be here.” So how is it that coaches get away with such behavior? Thus far, weak university administrators have let highly paid coaches do as they wish.

NCAA Compliance

Schools run the risk of violating NCAA rules if their unofficial chaplains have unpermitted contacts with recruits. This raises a unique problem because some universities are in fact violating constitutional requirements in order to comply with NCAA recruiting rules. To bolster recruiting, some schools have made the chaplain position official with a formal, paid position or other contractual arrangements.

At Clemson, the school pays the chaplain for the specific purpose of recruiting. A senior athletic official explained this in a 2011 email saying, “[W]e will pay James Trapp as an intermittent employee at the rate of \$100 per weekend for the purpose of classifying him as a staff member to enable interaction with prospects and recruits.”⁹⁷ The email concludes, “By copy of this to [Compliance Director Stephanie Ellison], we’re confirming the appropriateness of this under NCAA rules.”⁹⁸

At the University of South Carolina, Adrian Despres’ official duties include: “Speak to Football Recruits and Families on Official and Unofficial Visits about Character Coach Program at South Carolina.”⁹⁹

Records from the University of Washington provided insight into the NCAA compliance problems surrounding chaplain contact with recruits. After athletic staff raised an inquiry with the Pac-12 conference over recruit contact with religious leaders, a compliance officer with the conference wrote, “Unless you consider these individuals to be UW staff members, they cannot have contact with visiting recruits.”¹⁰⁰ He also wrote, “We’ve had a violation before when a team chaplain who was not an institutional employee met with a PSA [prospective student-athlete]’s parents during a[n] official visit weekend.” The school created an agreement with the chaplain for a “staff volunteer” position, formalizing the chaplain’s position on the team.¹⁰¹

The “Fellowship of Christian Athletes Business Proposal” at Washington highlighted the involvement of the chaplain in recruiting. The proposal discussed marketing the program:

The third and final stage would be targeting prospective student-athletes and making them aware of the program that the university is offering. This makes the school intriguing for future prospects. This will also appeal to the donors because they want to make sure their investment is being put to use. It would also be an added incentive to know potential student-athletes would be interested in such a program as recruiting is an important element to growth of athletic programs.

The FCA chaplain program was being presented to Washington athletic personnel with the explicit benefit of aiding recruiting. Neither the Pac-12 nor the NCAA compliance office responded to FFRF inquiries related to chaplain contacts with recruits.

While unmonitored chaplain contact with recruits raises serious NCAA compliance issues, it is unclear how some schools are handling that problem. It is even more disturbing that a number of schools have sought to comply with NCAA rules by paying and contracting for a religious position at a public university. Apparently, public universities care more about violating NCAA rules they do about violating our country’s founding document: the Constitution.

How did we get here? Bobby Bowden, Tommy Tuberville, and the FCA: an unholy alliance.

The problem of university-sponsored chaplains preying on student athletes is relatively new. The origin of this practice comes from Bobby Bowden, Tommy Tuberville, and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Bobby Bowden’s tenure at Florida State spawned many of the modern, college football chaplaincies including UGA, Clemson, South Carolina, and Mississippi State. Tuberville is responsible for Ole Miss., Auburn, and

training many other school’s chaplains while at Auburn.

Bowden’s predatory religious practices

Bobby Bowden abused his publicly funded position of power and authority over vulnerable young men—both players and coaches—to impose his personal religion on them. On August 27, 2014, Bobby Bowden appeared on Fox News to promote his book, *The Wisdom of Faith*.¹⁰² Bowden admitted to deliberately proselytizing his players with no regard for their belief or the law. Fox News personality Elizabeth Hasselbeck gushed that Bowden “will feel himself a failure if he doesn’t share that message of Christ with others.” Referring to a public high school team that removed a team chaplain after FFRF complained, Hasselbeck said, “But now teams are not going to be allowed—Orange County [Fla.] right now saying no place for faith in football. So that message that you’re giving Coach, is not going to perhaps be allowed on the football field anymore.” She asked Bowden, “what do you think about that?” Bowden responded:

Well, I do it anyway. I did it anyway at Florida State. I don’t care about political correctness, I want to be spiritually correct.

He did not care about the religious choices of his players or about the strictures of the First Amendment—he cared about promoting his personal religion.

Bowden regularly appears on the Christian Broadcasting Network. His CBN biography notes that he “told his players they would ... be encouraged to attend church on Sunday.”¹⁰³ According to his pastor, Doug Dortch, “God has given him a tremendous window of opportunity and Coach Bowden uses it faithfully and obediently. Virtually every message he shares contains the plan of salvation, and his heart is truly to see people come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.”¹⁰⁴ Bowden would tell players, “I don’t want to offend your family or your parents, but I have a relationship [with Jesus], and if I don’t tell you about it then I’d be doing wrong.”¹⁰⁵

“What do you think of athletes who invoke God when they’re interviewed after a sporting event?” Bobby Knight: “Let’s let the Lord work on cancer, on providing homes for the homeless. The first time I ever coached at college, not knowing what the hell I was doing, we were playing at Princeton, and before I sent the team out we said the Lord’s Prayer. Our trainer put his arm around my shoulders and said, ‘For whatever it’s worth, I just don’t think you and praying mix.’ And we never said another pregame prayer.”¹⁰⁶

Bowden abused his public position to influence the religion of his subordinates. Georgia head coach Mark Richt, Bowden’s

former assistant coach, joined that interview and said that Bowden “did share his faith, actually, with the entire football team after the death of [FSU player] Pablo Lopez... He basically presented the Gospel to the team ... He was talking to the team, but I was a young graduate assistant coach ... right there I was convicted [*sic*] to go see coach the next morning and pray to receive Christ as my Lord and savior.”

Bowden’s first FSU chaplain, Ken Smith, confirmed Richt’s story:

“Out of Pablo Lopez’s death, assistant coach Mark Richt became a Christian,” reminded Ken Smith, alluding to Georgia’s current head coach. “Bobby became stronger in how he shared faith. When Lopez died, I’ll never forget being in the hospital. Coach Bowden told me that night ‘I will never again coach a kid where I don’t know where he stands in his faith.’ And he didn’t. ... From there on, [Bowden] was very bold in sharing his faith and what it meant. He was never coercive or intimidating. He didn’t hit anyone over the head with a Bible but he was very explicit in his relationship with Christ.”¹⁰⁷

According to players, after that, “[e]very meeting and practice started with a devotional. When [a player] asked Coach why he did this, he said he wanted to make sure that every one of his players’ spot in Heaven was secure.”¹⁰⁸ Bowden stated his goal most boldly in his book, God’s “purpose for me was to go into coaching and try to influence young men for Jesus Christ. He wanted me not only to teach them to be good people but also to surrender their lives to Him.”¹⁰⁹ Bowden even assumed the title “evangelist.” “[I]t is a good name,” he said. “I think more of it as trying to give my witness, but it does involve evangelizing... that’s what God wants me to do.”¹¹⁰ This is not football—it is proselytizing using a publicly funded office.

This is not football—it is proselytizing using a publicly funded office.

Bowden begins the chaplaincy at FSU

Bowden sought to formally unify football with Christianity by establishing a chaplaincy.

Bowden appointed Ken Smith as team chaplain in 1981. Bowden and Smith met in Tallahassee, when Smith offered “his services to the coach after some players were caught stealing. Bowden also knew Smith through both men’s work with the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.”¹¹¹ “After hearing Smith speak at an FCA event, Bowden asked him to be the team chaplain. ‘Not many people had chaplains and no one was sure what a chaplain did,’ said Smith. ‘Coach Bowden just wanted someone who would work with Christian athletes.’”¹¹²

Clint Purvis, the current FSU chaplain who is nominally affiliated with a local church, took over from Smith in

1988. At the time, Purvis ministered at Bowden’s own church.¹¹³ Purvis, “has come to mirror Coach Bowden’s highly effective philosophy of ministry.”¹¹⁴ In one of his books, Bowden wrote, “... I really tried to point the boys in the right direction. Our team chaplain, Clint Purvis, had Bible study during the week. We had a team chapel. We had a devotional before every coaching staff meeting. I had Christians speak to our teams before games. One time, Billy Graham spoke to my team before one of his revivals...”¹¹⁵

The “begats:” Bowden, Ken Smith, and Tuberville spread the chaplaincy

Over the years, Bowden’s assistant coaches and his first chaplain transferred to other public universities, impregnating those programs with the same religiosity—and disrespect for the Constitution. Two factors helped spread the chaplaincies: Bowden’s protracted stay at FSU and Ken Smith’s itinerancy. Smith, Bowden’s first chaplain, left Bowden to establish full-time chaplaincies at South Carolina, Mississippi State, and took over the chaplaincy at Ole Miss. As Bowden’s tenure continued and the chaplaincy endured, his assistant coaches went to other schools. Jimbo Fisher, Bowden’s assistant from 2007 to 2009, still allows Clint Purvis, Bowden’s second chaplain, access to the team.

Tracing this spreading web is a bit reminiscent of the “begats” in the Hebrew bible: “Bowden begat Smith at FSU who begat a chaplaincy at South Carolina under Brad Scott who begat...”

Georgia

After 15 years with Bowden, Mark Richt, whom Bowden converted, left FSU in 2001 to coach at the University of Georgia. Richt immediately appointed his brother-in-law, Kevin Hynes, as UGA’s chaplain.¹¹⁶ Since then, Richt “has taken his team to churches in the preseason. A devotional service is conducted the night before each game, and a prayer service on game day.”¹¹⁷

Clemson

In the foreword to his son’s book, Bobby wrote: “When Tommy was a head coach, he always had a full time chaplain for his team. He wanted all his players to know about our Savior before they graduate.”¹¹⁸ Tommy Bowden coached with his father Bobby on and off before settling in as head coach at Clemson (1999-2008), where he appointed Tony Eubanks as the team chaplain.¹¹⁹ Tommy Bowden “began the Clemson football tradition of ‘Church Day,’” and “had his team attend FCA breakfasts. He said it wasn’t mandatory but ‘it was strongly encouraged’ and the coaching staff ‘knew who wasn’t there.’”¹²⁰ He also instituted “spiritual Two-a-Days.”¹²¹ According to one source, before his position with the Clemson football team, Eubanks served as chaplain for the UGA *basketball* team at request of head football coach Mark Richt.¹²²

Dabo Swinney, who coached under Tommy Bowden

and took over for him at Clemson, later hired a new chaplain, James Trapp. When Swinney was a wide receiver at Alabama, Tommy Bowden was his position coach (1989).¹²³ Swinney now runs one of the most notoriously religious public school football programs in the country.

South Carolina

Brad Scott worked at FSU as an assistant to Bowden for ten years before moving to the head coach position at South Carolina in 1994. Scott brought Ken Smith, Bowden's first chaplain, with him.¹²⁴ Lou Holtz, who defended coaches pushing religion on their players, continued the chaplaincy when he took over in 1999 (and lost every game).¹²⁵ While the chaplaincy may have been appropriate at a private religious school such as Notre Dame, Holtz's previous school, it was inappropriate and unconstitutional at a public school. Head coach Steve Spurrier continued South Carolina's chaplaincy, now led by Adrian Despres, who took over in 1999.¹²⁶

Mississippi State

According to chaplain Ken Smith, "when Brad [Scott] got fired [by South Carolina], coach [Jackie] Sherrill contacted me and asked me if I wanted to" move to Mississippi State, which Smith did the next year.¹²⁷ At the time, Smith was "paid by Mississippi State."¹²⁸ Sherrill met Smith when he came to minister to the team after the drowning death of player Keffer McGee. It was not until McGee's death that Sherrill imposed the Lord's Prayer on the team at every practice.¹²⁹

Ole Miss, Texas Tech, and more

Tommy Tuberville is personally responsible for the chaplaincies at Ole Miss, Auburn, Texas Tech, and now Cincinnati.¹³⁰ But even Tuberville's decision to institute a chaplaincy might have ties to Bowden. Tommy Tuberville was an assistant coach at Miami from 1986-1993 while Leo Armbrust was chaplain (1983-1996). Before every game Armbrust would "go around and bless every one of them, Catholic or not."¹³¹ That was Tuberville's "first experience" with team chaplains.¹³² At Miami, he met Wes Yeary who he would bring on as chaplain at Ole Miss in 1995.¹³³ In fact, he "hired Yeary and gave him full access to the team. Yeary worked out with the players, led team chapels and attended practice."¹³⁴

Leo Armbrust, the Miami Hurricanes chaplain, was asked to join the team by head coach Howard Schnellenberger one month before Schnellenberger resigned.¹³⁵ Armbrust stayed on with Jimmie Johnson and the pair would end up on the Miami Dolphins together.¹³⁶ Armbrust and Bowden spoke at Pablo Lopez's memorial services in 1986. As mentioned earlier, the emotion and religious revival accompanying Lopez's death converted Bowden's then-assistant Mark Richt (who also played at Miami under Schnellenberger from 1979-1982).

Auburn

When Tuberville replaced Terry Bowden at Auburn in 1999, one of Tuberville's "first moves" was to bring on Chette Williams as team chaplain.¹³⁷ "A tremendous spiritual revival ... moved on the Auburn team since his arrival. ... players are getting baptized, carrying around Bibles and wearing wooden cross necklaces."¹³⁸

one of Tuberville's "first moves" was to bring on Chette Williams as team chaplain. "A tremendous spiritual revival ... moved on the Auburn team since his arrival. ... players are getting baptized, carrying around Bibles and wearing wooden cross necklaces."

Gene Chizik was a defensive coordinator under Tuberville from 2002-2004. When he left to coach Iowa State, he planned to hire a full time team chaplain.¹³⁹ More than 100 professors and college staff signed a petition against this chaplaincy because it would illegally favor Christianity.¹⁴⁰ These professors were particularly concerned with the "negative consequences for non-Christian students, and even for Christian students who may not believe in the particular religious form of Christianity that such a chaplain might endorse."¹⁴¹ When Chizik took over at Auburn from Tuberville in 2009, he kept Williams on as chaplain. As did head coach Gus Malzahn when he took over in 2013.

Other school chaplains attend Auburn training camp

Tuberville also brought his Ole Miss chaplain, Wes Yeary, to Auburn in 2007. With Tuberville's help and financial support, Williams and Yeary set up a training camp for team chaplains and an internship program hosted by Auburn.¹⁴² "Tuberville hired Yeary ... and charged him with starting a new national FCA program to train team chaplain. The program is based in Auburn and is being funded by private donors, including Tuberville."¹⁴³ According to reports, Tuberville got the idea after receiving calls from coaches who "wanted to know where he got his team chaplain and how he managed to build a team with such a strong and vocal faith."¹⁴⁴ Tuberville described the program:

I had a young man by the name of Wes Yeary at Ole Miss. He came with me to Auburn. We started a chaplain program. It got so big, I got more people calling me — my fellow coaches — not about Xs and Os, but about, 'Hey, tell me about your chaplain program. It sounds great.' So what we ended up doing is we started training chaplains in Auburn with the help of the FCA. We started placing them at Southern Miss, Georgia Tech. We had them going everywhere. In the last couple of years, we've moved it to Baylor, and Wes Yeary's running that program there now...¹⁴⁵

Cincinnati

Tuberville continues to hire chaplains for his teams. When he arrived in Cincinnati in 2013, Tuberville hired Antrione Archer as chaplain. Archer was later jailed on charges of sexual assault.¹⁴⁶

Ties to the FCA

At the center of this confusing network is the Fellowship of Christian athletes, a \$100 million Christian ministry dedicated to winning converts.¹⁴⁷ FCACHaplains.org states an explicit desire, not to help students worship, but “to present to athletes and coaches and all whom they influence the challenge and adventure of receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, serving Him in their relationships and in the fellowship of the church.”¹⁴⁸

The FCA abides by an unabashedly evangelical Christian statement of faith:¹⁴⁹

- We believe the Bible to be the inspired, the only infallible, authoritative Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- We believe there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)
- We believe in the deity of Christ (John 1:1), in His virgin birth (Matthew 1:18, 25), in His sinless life (Hebrews 4:15), in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood (Hebrews 9:15-22), in His bodily resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:1-8), in His ascension to the right hand of the Father (Acts 1:9-11) and in His personal return in power and glory (Hebrews 9:27-28).
- We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful men and women, regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. (John 3:16; John 5:24; Titus 3:3-7)
- We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. (John 14:15-26; John 16:5-16; Ephesians 1:13-14)
- We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost, they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation. (Matthew 25:31-46; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)
- We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Philippians 2:1-4)

The FCA is the source of many of these problematic chaplaincies. One interviewer flat-out asked, “How does [Mississippi head coach Hugh] Freeze pull all this off at a state-funded school?” He unhesitatingly responded, “I do everything through the FCA platform.”¹⁵⁰

Tommy Tuberville does the same thing: “There are a lot of things that are cultivated through a football team in college, and we feel like cultivating them through FCA and Jesus Christ is an avenue where they can grow in all areas.”¹⁵¹

For instance, University of Virginia player Jimmy Howell, converted to the FCA version of Christianity at a bible study led by team chaplain George Morris:

[Morris] asked everyone to close their eyes. “Tonight, you can decide that Jesus is your Lord and Savior,” he told the room. “And if you want to make that change right now, then open your eyes, stand up, and come to the front of the room.” Howell decided to give his life to Christ right then and there, joining an ever-growing constituency of Christians on the UVA football team. “Ever since Coach London and [chaplain] Morris got here people are more vocal and more out about being Christians and believers,” Howell said. “It’s readily talked about every day around the locker room. You see a Bible everywhere you go.”¹⁵²

FCA’s goal is to convert people to Christianity, to get them to accept Jesus Christ as “Savior and Lord.” FCA chaplains are not committed to the university, the Constitution, or even students. FCA chaplains “demonstrate steadfast commitment to Jesus Christ and His Word....”¹⁵³ They are committed to their religion and bringing others into that religion. And public universities are giving them free rein to do so.

Most of the prime movers building this incestuous weave of religion throughout college football are tied to the FCA:

- Ken Smith, the grandfather of football chaplains, is a former member of the FCA Board of Trustees and has been inducted into the FCA’s Hall of Champions (2010).¹⁵⁴
- Bobby Bowden is currently the FCA’s “golden ticket.” The FCA annually gives the “Bobby Bowden Student Athlete of the Year” award to a Christian “who epitomizes the student-athlete.”¹⁵⁵ Bowden is a sought-after public speaker that regularly appears for FCA, especially at their fundraisers.¹⁵⁶
- FCA’s national chaplain-training project was the brainchild and funded by Tuberville and instituted at Auburn during his tenure.

Coaches and the FCA have a mutually beneficial relationship that thrives at the expense of students and schools.

Coaches and the FCA have a mutually beneficial relationship that thrives at the expense of students and schools. The FCA attempts to sell access to teams and players and in the process raise money and convert students. Coaches receive awards and, like Bowden, are feted and asked to speak all over the country. Many of the coaches in this report have been named FCA’s coach of the year, including Hugh Freeze, Bobby Bowden, Mark Richt, Tommy Bowden, Dabo Swinney, and Tommy Tuberville.

This relationship exists in spite of FCA's knowledge that "public institutions receive public funding. Also, some private universities receive public funds. This brings a difficult matter with regard to government law in relation to separation of church and state."¹⁵⁷

Public universities' willful blindness

In the end, the constitutional responsibility lies with the university, not the FCA. Universities have an obligation to protect students from religious coercion, direct or indirect, not to turn a blind eye. And certainly not to allow religious groups to raise money on the backs of their players. Many have abandoned their duty under the First Amendment.

The true purpose and actual effect of these chaplaincies is to impose the coach's religion on his players.

Two related facts are central to determining the purpose and effect of these chaplaincies: the diverse demographics of students and the uniform religion of every chaplain.

First, recent surveys show that 35% of college-aged Americans are not religious and 44% are not Christian.¹⁵⁸ This percentage applies to millennials: adult Americans aged 18-30. Younger millennials, those born in the 1990s are even less religious than older millennials, by about four points.¹⁵⁹ These are the student athletes. While these numbers change with geography, a consistently large number of young Americans are not religious and not Christian. For instance, in the American South, where the most egregious chaplaincies exist, 39% of young Americans are not Christian.¹⁶⁰

"we have Muslim guys on the team and we don't have an Islamic chaplain [It's] purely fundamentalist Christianity."

Second, and this is perhaps most telling aspect of this system, is that all of the chaplains we investigated were Christians and usually evangelical Protestants. As our interviewee put it, "There are definitely no alternatives to it, we have Muslim guys on the team and we don't have an Islamic chaplain [It's] purely fundamentalist Christianity."¹⁶¹ In light of the religious affiliations of students, this is particularly damning.

There are two reasons typically given as the purpose of these chaplaincies: to promote team unity or to accommodate players' religion. Neither is persuasive.

In a diverse group, religion is divisive not unifying

Chaplains do not promote team unity. If the demographic statistics cited in this report—44% of college athletes are not Christian—does not make that clear, the nature of

religion should. Religion is divisive. Yes, it will effectively unite people of the same sect, but it alienates everyone else, especially in a team atmosphere. When Doc Rivers began coaching the Orlando Magic he noticed something about the pre-game prayer, "something he didn't like."¹⁶²

"I looked up in one of the prayers, and Tariq (Abdul-Wahad) had his arms folded, and you could see that he was really uncomfortable with it," Rivers ... told USA TODAY Sports recently. "So the next game, we were standing up in a circle, and I said, 'Hey guys, we're no longer praying...'"¹⁶³

Coach Rivers grew up going to church, praying every night, and considers himself a "very religious" man.¹⁶⁴ But he recognized that religion's divisiveness was bad for team unity:

"We're no longer praying," Rivers recalled saying to his team. "I want to take a minute. Everybody close their eyes. We all can have different religions, we have different Gods, we can just take a minute to compose. If you guys want to pray individually, you can do it. If you want to meditate, do whatever you want."¹⁶⁵

Rivers' moment of silence worked:

"Then after that game, Tariq Abdul-Wahad walks in to me, gives me a hug with his eyes tearing, and said, 'Thank you. That is so important to me. No one has ever respected my (Muslim) religion.' He said, 'I'm going to give you everything I've got.'"¹⁶⁶

Religion's divisiveness has been recognized since this country was founded. The Supreme Court recently noted, "The Framers and the citizens of their time intended to guard ... against the civic divisiveness that follows when the government weighs in on one side of religious debate; nothing does a better job of roiling society," and "the divisiveness of religion in current public life is inescapable."¹⁶⁷ In fact, the "purposes of the First Amendment's Religion Clauses [are] to assure the fullest possible scope of religious liberty and tolerance for all, to avoid the religious divisiveness that promotes social conflict, and to maintain the separation of church and state."¹⁶⁸

When the founders were trying to bring together diverse people, from different colonies, into one cohesive, unified country under a representative government, they deliberately kept religion and the division it sows out of our government. Surely that same wisdom applies to a diverse group of students coming together for a few short years to form a team.

The chaplains do not "accommodate" players' exercise of religion

Chaplaincies are not established to serve students or help them worship for four reasons.

Firstly and perhaps obviously, chaplains do not accommodate

every player's religion. Chaplains only accommodate Christians' religion. There are only Christian chaplains and they do not meet the needs of nonbelievers and believers of other faiths.

chaplains do not accommodate every player's religion. Chaplains only accommodate Christians' religion

The FCA recognizes this, even pointing out that it is competing against the university offered services. For instance, at the University of Washington, the FCA's own chaplain proposal admitted, "There are a number of competitors when looking at programs designed for student-athletes. Typically, the schools have mentorship programs and life-skill programs. Schools also tend to have psychologists on hand that students can access on a need to need basis. Campuses have religious centers where students can attend regardless of faith or denomination. There are multiple outside organizations that exist."¹⁶⁹

There is no reason to think that the 1 in 3 nonreligious players would be comfortable dealing with a person who provides comfort from a religious viewpoint. Chaplains cannot simply set aside their religion in order to assist a nonbeliever, and are often unwilling to even try to do so. For instance, when the UGA chaplain and a player are talking, the chaplain listens. "The next thing I do is I open the Word of God and I say, 'O.K., I'm going to offer them Biblical teaching with a Christian world view. Well, here's what the Bible says about that.' There are two world views, one that's Christian, one that is Biblical, and one that's not, and I share the Christian world view with these guys."¹⁷⁰

Chaplains view the world and its problems through the lens of religion and a god, a view inapposite to nonbelievers. A secular counselor or therapist would be equipped to counsel 100% of athletes, and would be actually licensed to do so.

I'm going to offer them Biblical teaching with a Christian world view. Well, here's what the Bible says about that.' There are two world views, one that's Christian, one that is Biblical, and one that's not, and I share the Christian world view with these guys.

Secondly, playing sports does not burden coaches' or athletes' ability to exercise their religion freely, so there is no need for any accommodation. Athletes live on or near campus, within easy reach of the hundreds of local houses of worship and student and campus religious organizations. Those organizations already accommodate every other students' religious needs. Athletes' religious needs are simply not so different as to warrant imposing one particular

chaplain of one particular religion on the whole team.

Thirdly, if chaplaincies are truly about religion (as opposed to the emotional and psychological well-being of players), then there are better ways to accommodate every players' religion. A moment of silence, as Coach Rivers discovered, would allow every student to honor their religion or lack of religion without imposing the chaplain's religious choices on them. Or, coaches could simply stick to the NCAA's 20-hour rule and give students time to worship with one of the multitude of campus religious organizations. FSU, for example, has nearly 50 student organizations and many more community partners to help students of nearly every faith worship while away from home, including Baha'i, Buddhist, Jewish, Muslim, and Native American.¹⁷¹

the coaches at his school send the chaplain to students, rather than letting students go to the chaplain.

Fourth, the chaplains are not passive bystanders awaiting requests from students, they actively insert themselves into the program and into athletes' lives. Gamecock chaplain Adrian Despres regularly boasts about his access to players, not the other way around: "I'm privy to all the conversations, I'm in the locker room a lot."¹⁷² The programs sometimes claim, as Florida State did, that the chaplain "does not lead the team in prayers" and that he only "responds suitably to requests or inquiries from [those] who seek him out."¹⁷³ FSU made this claim despite ample, public evidence to the contrary. FSU's chaplain, Clint Purvis, publicly said that he "does a *team* devotional before every game."¹⁷⁴ Photographs show Purvis leading not only the Seminoles, but other teams in prayer.¹⁷⁵ During Bowden's last practice, "Purvis urged all of the players to come forward and had as many of them as possible put their hands on Bowden's shoulders and back, ... Purvis said later [the act] was a prayer of thanksgiving."¹⁷⁶ Our interviewee confirms that the coaches at his school send the chaplain to students, rather than letting students go to the chaplain.

Chaplains can be so territorial that even competing religious leaders may be hesitant to interact with football players without first informing their chaplain. In a 2014 email exchange between Senior Pastor of the Clemson Presbyterian Church, David Sinclair, and current Clemson assistant athletic director of football player relations, Jeff Davis, Sinclair explains that he wants the football chaplain, James Trapp, to understand that he does not want his bible study to be perceived as competing with Trapp's own bible studies and ministry.¹⁷⁷ This deference to the chaplain illustrates that chaplains are not just resources for players, but that they have an ownership over the religious facets of the football team.

Chaplains have nothing to do with coaches' or players'

freedom of religion. Coaches, players, and even chaplains can worship as they want. They can go to church, read the bible, and pray as often as they like. Nothing prevents them from doing so. But they cannot use a publicly subsidized position at a university to promote their personal religion. Nor can they use the coercive nature and structure of a public football program to mandate, order, or even suggest that players under their control should worship as the coaches wish.

What then, is the true purpose of these chaplaincies?

Coaches are not coy about their motivations for employing chaplains. In the first pages of his book, Bowden explained the purpose behind coaching decisions like employing a chaplain:

God wanted me to be a football coach... His purpose for me was to go into coaching and influence young men for Jesus Christ. He wanted me not only to teach them to be good people but also to surrender their lives to Him. ... God still has a plan for me, and it is to spread His word to as many young people as possible. It is what I tried to do as the head football coach at South Georgia College, Howard College, West Virginia University, and Florida State University...¹⁷⁸

On another occasion, Bowden said, “I want my boys to be saved.”¹⁷⁹ His actual “boy,” son Tommy, was similarly open about his goal. In his book, Tommy wrote:

...I hated to think of some of these boys being on campus the next four or five years, away from home and family, getting totally out of the habit of church attendance, slipping further and further away from God. I wanted to *give them at least one person in authority who was pointing them in the right direction*, every chance I got. And I really did.¹⁸⁰

His use of religion was designed to **prevent** students from freely exercising their religion, not fostering that religious free exercise. “One of the last things we talked about in the locker room on Saturday... was to tell them that I hoped they’d be in church tomorrow. They sure knew *I’d* be going.”¹⁸¹ After games, Tommy Bowden reminded players “that God was the One who had blessed them with the ability to play football... [and] that one of the best, most immediate ways they could show Him their thanks was by going to His house in the morning and telling Him so.”¹⁸² Again, as if to show that this was about pressure and not free exercise, Bowden concluded his religious coaching reminiscences by observing, “That’s influence.”¹⁸³

“God still has a plan for me, and it is to spread His word to as many young people as possible.”

Kevin Hynes, UGA’s chaplain and brother-in-law to head coach Mark Richt, has been explicit too: “Our message at Georgia doesn’t change, and that’s to preach Christ and Him crucified, it’s to win championships for the state of Georgia and win souls for the Kingdom of God, so we’re going to continue down that path.”¹⁸⁴ He also “tr[ies] to get these guys plugged in to church...”¹⁸⁵ Hynes even does this with non-Christians,

I tell people ... that come to Georgia that are not Christians and allow me to speak in their lives, I encourage them to walk with Jesus. ... I encourage them to get into Bible study. I encourage them to get in the Word. I encourage them to memorize Scripture.¹⁸⁶

Mississippi head coach Hugh Freeze cares more about converting players than about winning, “When my life comes to an end, how much does that scoreboard really matter?”¹⁸⁷ Jill Freeze, his wife, explained what Freeze really cares about: “His passion... is to use football to reach others for Christ.”¹⁸⁸ Noted one article, “the lengths to which Freeze goes to inject Christianity into a major FBS program at a state university is striking, even in the heart of the Bible Belt.”¹⁸⁹ Ken Smith, the first of the chaplains, said of Freeze: “He sees coaching as a ministry more than anyone I’ve ever met...”¹⁹⁰ Freeze sees his position as head coach as a chance to win converts for Jesus, his team is the mission field, and his chaplain is simply a tool to help him accomplish those conversions.¹⁹¹

“He sees coaching as a ministry more than anyone I’ve ever met...”

Tommy Tuberville is similarly open about his mission, though he likens being Christian to being a good person and prefers to use the latter language, possibly not realizing that non-Christians might take umbrage at the claim that they cannot be good people. Tuberville told the FCA:

We want them to mature ... [n]ot just academics and not just sports, but spiritually. ... And we feel like being a Christian and understanding the difference between right and wrong is a major avenue of success—of overcoming that stage of life where sometimes you tend to not do things right—to take the easy way out. There are a lot of things that are cultivated through a football team in college, and we feel like cultivating them through FCA and Jesus Christ is an avenue where they can grow in all areas.¹⁹²

These chaplaincies exist for precisely the reason the coaches are so clearly stating: the system is designed to impose the coach’s religion on a vulnerable population. Christian chaplains are meant to take advantage of a coercive environment and use it to convert student athletes into Christians. Sociologists have long known that groups like the FCA, “use sports to recruit new members and promote certain religious belief.”¹⁹³ Jay

Coakley, Ph.D., a sports sociologist, has observed that religion's role in sports sometimes seems solely to advance the religious values of a certain individual, like the coach, at the expense of others: "it also tends to turn the words of coaches into commandments that must be followed by athletes as a form of Christian witness. When this happens, the control coaches have over athletes becomes extensive, and potentially dangerous."¹⁹⁴

These chaplains exist to promote the coach's religion, not accommodate the religious needs of players. In short, these chaplains are about violating students' rights.

Athletic Chaplaincies at public universities violate the First Amendment.

FCA: "[P]ublic institutions receive public funding. Also, some private universities receive public funds. This brings a difficult matter with regard to government law in relation to separation of church and state. This law is something that organizations who engage in this type of work are aware of and strictly follows the right protocol."¹⁹⁵

Ken Smith, the grandfather of football chaplains himself, has expressed doubt at the propriety of mixing football and religion: "I'm not sure if before a football game is the right place to pray, where everyone is screaming and hollering and all of a sudden you stop and pray... I've definitely been offended by some of the prayers I've heard, like 'God bless the defense.'"¹⁹⁶ Though his doubts about mixing Christianity and football are religious, violating the constitution is the bigger problem.

Coach liability

Public university football coaches are government employees. As representatives of the government, coaches may not use that governmental position to promote or advance their personal religion, or even participate in student initiated religious activity.¹⁹⁷

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As university employees and state representatives, coach conduct is governed by the separation of state and church (the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment).¹⁹⁸ In other words, when they are acting as coaches—i.e., at the university

or interacting with players—they cannot encourage, endorse, or otherwise promote their personal religion. When they are acting as private individuals—i.e., at home with family—they are free to preach and pray as much as they want. Of course, coaches at private schools, like Notre Dame, are not bound by the First Amendment because they are not government actors.

When coaches hire or coordinate hiring "volunteer" chaplains, and then give these chaplains unfettered access to a captive audience of football players and assistant football coaches, they illegally sponsor religion and the chaplain's religious message. The Supreme Court has explained that "[s]chool sponsorship of a religious message is impermissible because it sends the ancillary message to members of the audience who are nonadherents 'that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community and accompanying message to adherents that they are insiders, favored members of the political community.'"¹⁹⁹ A state school and its representatives, while acting in their official capacities, must remain neutral on religious matters.

By doing otherwise, they are abusing their governmental office for personal religious ends. Simply, public university football coaches cannot appoint or employ a chaplain or agree to coordinate with a "volunteer" chaplain because public universities may not advance or promote religion.²⁰⁰

University liability

The benefits that public universities bestow on Christian chaplains such as salaries, offices in the stadium, and per diem and travel with the team, show that not only is the coach advancing his own religious agenda, but that the universities also favor Christianity.

Direct payments and other valuable benefits granted for a religious position at a public school are blatantly unconstitutional. According to the Supreme Court, the First Amendment dictates that public schools may not "aid any or all religious faiths or sects in the dissemination of their doctrines."²⁰¹ Government funds cannot be used for religious development.²⁰²

This favoritism is likely the result of universities looking to pacify their prized football coaches so that they can reap the benefits of a successful football program. However, by allowing their employees to force religion on both students and other employees, universities are endorsing the sectarian messages of both the coach and the chaplain, and thereby violating students' rights.

The favoritism and access also confers a certain legitimacy to the chaplain's religion. The chaplain appears to be officially affiliated with the university, thus, the state is donating its power and prestige to one particular religion.

Chaplains' unrestricted access raises serious legal issues under student privacy laws

Students trust coaches and universities with lots of personal information. Many of the records we received were redacted, often rightfully so. But team chaplains have access to all sorts of personal information, some that students would wish to be guarded closely.

Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or student in order to release any information about a student.²⁰³ In fact, federal law says “No funds shall be made available ... to any educational agency or institution which has a policy or practice of releasing, or providing access to, any personally identifiable information in education records...”²⁰⁴

The privacy issues are exacerbated because, as the Washington FCA business proposal makes clear, the FCA chaplains report on their activities and interactions with students to FCA donors. This would appear to be problematic on two fronts—the chaplain, allegedly a non-school employee, receiving confidential student information and then communicating it to a private party. Given the level of access these chaplains have and that coaches deliberately send them to troubled players, probably with information about those troubles, it is quite possible that coaches and chaplains are regularly violating federal privacy laws.

Chaplains do not accommodate athletes' religion and even if they did, no accommodation is necessary—and is therefore unconstitutional

There are limited instances when government chaplains may exist but the circumstances that allow for their existence are not present in a public university football program. Government chaplains may only exist as an accommodation of religious beliefs when the government makes it difficult or impossible to seek out private ministries.²⁰⁵ For instance, it may be difficult for military service members to find a place of worship while on mission in a foreign country or for an inmate in a prison to find a way to worship.²⁰⁶ These government chaplains are meant to lighten these government-imposed burdens on religious exercise.

If serious government-imposed burdens on religious exercise truly existed for collegiate athletes and coaches, universities would be providing chaplains to all their college athletes, not just Christians, who happen to preach the same religion as the head coach.

First, as discussed above, football chaplains do not accommodate athletes' religion. They impose Christianity on all athletes, no matter what their religion. Imposition is not the same as accommodation, and it is illegal.

Second, even if the chaplains were a legitimate accommodation, college athletes and coaches do not have the same government-imposed burdens on their religious exercise that members of the military and prison inmates have. During the week players attend both classes and practices but are otherwise free to seek out religious services and counsel like any other college student. Any team travel is limited enough that students are on campus at some point during the week and weekend with enough time to worship if they desire. If serious government-imposed burdens on religious exercise truly existed for collegiate athletes and coaches, universities would be providing chaplains to all their college athletes, not just Christians, who happen to preach the same religion as the head coach.

The chaplains' religious worship is not genuinely voluntary and even if it were, voluntariness cannot excuse a constitutional violation

Coaches and universities may not hide behind voluntariness to excuse state-church violations. Courts have summarily rejected these arguments, as Supreme Court Justice Brennan noted “the availability of excusal or exemption simply has no relevance to the establishment question . . .”²⁰⁷ When striking down organized, pre-meal prayers at the Virginia Military Institute, a federal court held: “VMI cannot avoid Establishment Clause problems by simply asserting that a cadet's attendance at supper or his or her participation in the supper prayer are ‘voluntary.’”²⁰⁸

Even if voluntariness could excuse these violations, the coercive nature of the collegiate coach/student athlete relationship means that the prayers, chapel, and other religious exercises are not genuinely voluntary. A coach's “suggestions” are law—there is no such thing as “voluntary” on a college football team.

The FCA, despite inducing coaches to violate these rules, admits that this is the state of the law

The FCA recognizes that at the university level, courts are still concerned about a university staff member's “personal beliefs having a coercive effect on the students.”²⁰⁹ The FCA rightly observes that “In a public university setting, there must be adequate separation so that an employee's views are not perceived as connected to a university course” or the university itself.²¹⁰

The FCA even recognizes that a coach or chaplain's free speech is irrelevant in this context: “speech used to motivate students or athletes in a professor's role as state employee is not considered a matter of public concern and therefore not individual, protected speech. For example, coaches may not be able to claim motivational purposes for leading teams in prayer before games.”²¹¹

The FCA even explains that coaches cannot endorse Christianity, but must speak objectively about religion if it comes up: “professors and coaches must present

beliefs objectively, by discussing aspects of Christian faith rather than putting forth their own personal beliefs, due to the potential coercive effects on the students.”²¹²

Despite their knowledge of the law, the FCA actively violates the Constitution and encourages coaches to do so as well.

Despite the legal perils, universities have no policies in place governing chaplains or organized religious activity in athletics.

Most universities do not have policies regarding chaplains. They set no limitations, guidelines, or expectations for their coaches or chaplains regarding religious activities and ministering. This omission may simply be because the rule is so clear: university athletic teams should not have chaplains and coaches should not be promoting or endorsing religious activity in their official capacity. But, given the pervasive, intrusive chaplaincies this report elucidates, that rule is either not understood or not enforced through any university policy.

Some universities simply refuse to regulate chaplains. Instead, universities declare that chaplains are not official university positions, then grant those chaplains unlimited, unrestricted access to student athletes.²¹³ The lack of policies is dangerous because chaplains have employee-level access to players and facilities, but chaplains lack the accountability that comes with actually being employed by the university.

In other words, chaplains appear to everyone to be university employees with a religious mission. Chaplains are not concerned with whether their proselytizing of student-athletes is inappropriate or unconstitutional. As long as they keep in good standing with their coach, who shares their religious views and desire to proselytize to players, and with the FCA or whichever organization pays their bills, they are free to use the university’s name and program to promote their own personal religious views.

The universities that do have policies relating to chaplains are vague. They typically give discretion to the coach, who often shares the chaplain’s desire to spread their religious views to the team. And even if policies exist, universities do not enforce them.

For example, South Carolina’s chaplain policy prohibits paying chaplains for their services.²¹⁴ However, during the 2014 football season, South Carolina’s football chaplain, Adrian Despres, was paid \$4,500 as a “character coach.”²¹⁵ They also refer to him as the “Character Development Counselor,” which entails: being a life counselor for football players, coaches, and staff; crisis counseling; character counseling for football players, coaches and staff; hospital visitations (pre and post surgery); Parent liason [*sic*] for current football players; character motivating

messages; and speaking to football recruits and their families about the character coach program at South Carolina.²¹⁶

The employment title and job description give the appearance that Adrian Despres has a secular position with the football team, but his own actions and words, as well as descriptions from the University of South Carolina and coaches, reveal that he is and always has been employed as a chaplain to spread his religious views. Despres calls himself chaplain: “I’ve been chaplain for the University of South Carolina for 11 years now.”²¹⁷ When Despres is introduced, even in church, he is introduced not as an employee of FCA, but as “the chaplain for the University of South Carolina.”²¹⁸ Head coach Steve Spurrier calls Despres “Preacher” or “Reverend.”²¹⁹ Spurrier has specifically said: “that’s what he is, he’s a preacher... He preaches the Word – the gospel ... what we all need to hear.”²²⁰

Despres even preaches religious doctrines that conflict with scientific facts the university teaches to biology students, such as evolution.

What Despres actually does has little to do with character and everything to do with Christ. He preaches religious doctrine. Despres gave a sermon with four players, in their official team jerseys, on stage at a local church. He asked the congregation:

Do you know the number one issue the football team wrestles with? The number one need on the football team at the University of South Carolina? The number one need on the football team at the University of Clemson? The number one need at Alabama? The number one need at Auburn? The number one need across the country on every football team is their need to deal drastically with sin.²²¹

And of course, to Despres “Jesus Christ is the answer to the world’s system today! Jesus is the answer.”²²²

During the team chapels, Despres preached “a series called ‘Christian Man Laws’ this year [about] how Christian men should man up and stop being sissies for Christ.”²²³

Despres even preaches religious doctrines that conflict with scientific facts the university teaches to biology students, such as evolution. During that same sermon, Despres claimed to have debated—and despite an in-depth search, no such debates seem available—“some of the top evolutionists in the country on creation versus evolution and I’ve never, by God’s grace, I’ve never lost.”²²⁴ He then attempts to use some repeatedly debunked arguments against evolution—including lightning striking primordial ooze, millions of monkeys at typewriters, and a watch needing a watchmaker. Despres says at the beginning of his sermon that it is “very similar to the kind of chapel stuff we’ve been doing this year with the football team.”²²⁵

Despres is not a character coach; he is seeking to convert young men to Christianity. He is a chaplain. South Carolina, despite its policy, paid for religious services.

The easy fix: adopt this model policy and recognize the misconception at the heart of the issue.

It has been said “that college coaches don’t let anyone encroach on their turf—be it the president of the university or the president of the United States.”²²⁶ But coaches at public universities are state employees like anyone else. They are not special and they are not coaching at Brigham Young University or some other religious institution. They may not want to let anyone encroach on their turf, but this particular aspect of their turf is regulated by the Constitution. The First Amendment binds them like any other government officer or employee—they cannot foist their personal religion onto players. When they do so, it is the college that is legally and financially liable. Chaplains, who appear to be school employees, are given access as school employees, and act as school employees, inflict the same legal liability on schools as any other employee.

It is therefore in the best interest of universities to adopt policies that protect their student athletes from this proselytizing. Athletes can use any of the other religious resources on campus to worship as they choose. If the university truly believes athletes need extra care, they ought to provide trained professionals—therapists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and, of course, sports psychologists—to help them with those issues. The benefits of this policy are twofold: a trained professional serves the students and the programming is legal.

(See model policy on the next page)

MODEL POLICY

Policy on religion in athletics

Policy Statement: Rights of Conscience for Student Athletes

The University recognizes the unique power dynamic between student athletes and coaching staff and the University values the right of every student athlete to hold his or her own religious or nonreligious views, free from direct or indirect coercion or contrary endorsement. Therefore, the University has adopted the following provisions to protect the rights of conscience of its student athletes and to prohibit religious coercion by coaches.

Coaches, Staff, and Volunteers

All University representatives, including coaches, athletic department staff, and volunteers must remain neutral on matters of religion. University representatives may not plan or endorse any religious activity to their players. They may not include religious activities, even if optional, in team schedules, announcements, or other communications.

Hired Chaplains

Athletic department staff, including coaches, may not coordinate the hiring or appointment of a chaplain, a religious/spiritual advisor, or an assistant whose primary qualifications or duties are religious, whether paid or “volunteer”. Student athletes who wish to receive religious or spiritual counseling have access to facilities that administer these services to the general student body.

Campus Ministry Chaplains

People who are not legitimately affiliated with the athletic department, such as student body chaplains or other religious representatives, may not be given special access to players during any athletic events. Such representatives may not have offices in stadium or athletic department facilities; may not be given complimentary access to games and events; may not be paid, reimbursed, or given a per diem for their services; and may not travel with a team or have their travel and accommodations paid through any university or athletic department funds. Athletic department staff, including coaches, cannot encourage student athletes to fundraise for chaplains or the organizations they represent or donate University or team property to volunteer chaplains or the organizations they represent.

Character Development Coaches

Character values such as respect, perseverance, humility, sportsmanship, and teamwork are secular values that the University seeks to instill in all of its student athletes. Hiring a “character coach,” a “player development coach,” or other such employee is a permissible way to foster these values in student athletes, provided that all university staff and volunteers—including that employee—remain neutral on matters of religious belief.

Any character development coach is explicitly prohibited from promoting a particular religious viewpoint, pressuring student-athletes to choose religion over non-religion, or directly or indirectly coercing student-athletes to participate in any type of religious activity. A person holding this position must comply fully with the university’s nondiscrimination policy and must be prepared to assist, without prejudice, student athletes with a diverse range of religious and nonreligious viewpoints. A person holding this position must have training in psychology, psychiatry, sports psychology, secular therapy, or a substantially equivalent field—divinity or religious counseling experience is insufficient to fulfill this position. A person meeting these criteria may be paid.

(Report concludes on the next page)

The misconception: Religion is not required to be a good, moral person

Implicit in all these chaplaincies is the idea of “developing the total person, not just the total player” as Tuberville put it.²²⁷ Christian coaches like Tuberville and Bowden believe they are accomplishing that goal by making good Christians: “we feel like being a Christian and understanding the difference between right and wrong is a major avenue of success.”²²⁸

The idea that religion, and particularly Christianity, is required to be a complete or good human being is erroneous. The idea itself is religious, so promoting it in a public university is problematic, but it is also simply wrong. Religion is not required to be moral, productive, or happy—in fact, sometimes the reverse is true. Modern social science shows that for virtually every measure of societal success and well-being, the *least* religious states and countries score better.²²⁹

The physicist Steven Weinberg once famously observed, “Religion is an insult to human dignity. Without it you would have good people doing good things and evil people doing evil things. But for good people to do evil things, that takes religion.”²³⁰ Weinberg’s point is that religion just as frequently provides a divine license for immorality as a mandate for moral actions. History proves his point. In this country alone, Christianity has provided the divine sanction for slavery, racial discrimination, and discrimination based on sexual orientation. Given the conservative evangelical bent of many chaplains, it would be unsurprising to discover that they have preached the latter at chapel services or bible studies.

Whether a chaplain is selected by the FCA or by a coach, their Christianity is no guarantee that they are a role model or have good character. Kent Bowles was an FCA representative for over 22 years, including his position as the chaplain for the University of Oklahoma’s football team. Last October, Bowles was arrested for stealing prescription pills after he tricked a man into leaving him alone in his house under the guise of an FCA fundraiser.²³¹ University of Cincinnati coach Tommy Tuberville hired Antrione Archer as team chaplain and, so he could draw a university salary, as director of player development. Last May, Archer, who instructed players on appropriate “sexual conduct”²³² in his role as chaplain, was later jailed for sexually assaulting a 73-year-old grocery store employee.²³³

There is no doubt that coaches have enormous influence on their players’ lives. That influence can be either positive or negative. This level of control, sports writer Rick Telender observed, often leads coaches to turn players “into young men with warped perspectives on obedience, morality and competition ... unable to function appropriately in the real world ... until they learn new methods of behavior and thought.”²³⁴

Religion is no guarantee of moral behavior, happiness, or

the ability to function in the real world. If coaches truly want to help their players, and want to do so within the confines of the Constitution, they ought to encourage universities to adopt the model policy laid out above and hire a development coach or counselor under that policy.

The saddest aspect of this system is that the universities involved have failed their students. No student athlete could seriously be expected to jeopardize his scholarship and education by challenging a coach’s unconstitutional action within the system or in court. Universities are allowing their students’ rights of conscience to be trampled. They have failed at protecting that which they exist to foster—the freedom of thought. It’s time for a change.

METHODOLOGY

FFRF has received complaints about sports chaplains for years, both at the high school and university level. When researching complaints at Clemson and Florida State from students at those schools, FFRF attorneys encountered chaplaincies at other public universities. They soon noticed that the spread of chaplaincies can be tied to a few coaches—Bobby Bowden, Tommy Tuberville, and others—all evangelical Christians. FFRF’s legal staff committed hundreds of hours of research to finding the nature and extent of the chaplaincies and the problems they create.

As part of this investigation, we requested public records from schools that appeared to have the most egregious chaplaincies, including:

- Auburn University
- University of Alabama
- Bowling Green State University
- Clemson University
- Florida State University
- Georgia Institute of Technology
- University of Georgia
- University of Illinois
- Louisiana State University
- Mississippi State
- University of Missouri
- University of North Carolina
- Oregon State
- University of South Carolina
- University of Tennessee
- Virginia Tech
- University of Washington
- University of Wisconsin

Several schools have refused to respond. Auburn took a \$500 deposit in December 2014 and has not provided any records or responded to emails within the last three months. Alabama has also not produced records. Oregon State wanted more than \$6,000 for their records, which FFRF declined to pay, being more than triple any other estimate. Tennessee refused to provide records to any non-resident and has not produced them for residents before this report was completed.

Even when schools did respond, the records were often woefully incomplete. We requested emails and communications between chaplains and staff, and rarely received any of these.

We intend to update this report and make additional records available as we receive them. Despite these refusals and the sporadic information, the records and research conclusively show that coaches are imposing religion on their players and that chaplains are often the tool for this imposition.

FFRF also requested records from several schools involving basketball chaplains, who often masquerade as character coaches. Those schools included: Louisville, University of Kansas, University of Maryland, University of Oklahoma, University of Virginia, and Wichita State.

To supplement these records and the research, FFRF interviewed a current student athlete at one program on the condition of complete anonymity.

Our letters are having an impact, but not quite as we had hoped. Instead of the schools working to protect their student athletes, the FCA and its chaplains are attempting to cloak their activities.²³⁵

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ENDNOTES

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- 2 Feinstein, 1986
- 3 Hockensmith, 2004. For an example of how a coach can ruin a star athletes education and possibly career see the published account of Sammy Maldonado. McCormick, 2006, p. 104 n. 142
- 4 Nestel, 1992
- 5 McCormick, 2006, p. 104
- 6 McCormick, 2006, p. 113
- 7 Keown, 2015
- 8 Keown, 2015
- 9 Keown, 2015
- 10 Doe, 2015
- 11 Fried & Bradley, 1994
- 12 Monaghan, Religion in a State-College Locker Room: Coach's Fer-
vor raises Church-State Issue, 1985; Monaghan, U. of Colorado Foot-
ball Coach Accused of Using His Position to Promote His Religious
Views, 1992; Carrano, 2015
- 13 Farrell, 1984
- 14 Fried & Bradley, 1994
- 15 Rowe, 2015 Isaiah McKenzie, a current WR at UGA, and Arthurly
Lynch, a former UGA tight end, both send head coach Mark Richt Fa-
ther's Day messages on social media this year. Lynch said, "Thanks for
being more than just a coach. You were the father figure I so desper-
ately needed." McKenzie said, he's not my father, but I thank this man
here for being a father figure. Not just to me, but to every young man
that needed [it.]"
- 16 Bianchi, 2014
- 17 Bagnato, 2005 noting that "players frequently develop an enduring
emotional bond with their coach" and providing two examples: "Eight
members of Bryant's 1982 Alabama team served as pallbearers at his
funeral. Nine players on Eddie Robinson's last Grambling team were
the sons of former Robinson players."
- 18 Doe, 2015
- 19 Fox Sports, 2015
- 20 *Mellen v. Bunting*
- 21 Murray, 1995, p. 147
- 22 Bagnato, 2005
- 23 McCormick, 2006, p. 108
- 24 Jacobs, 2015; Zak, 2013; O'Neil, 2011
- 25 NCAA, 2011
- 26 Bowden B. , Called to Coach: Reflections on Life, Faith and Foot-
ball, 2011; Roberts, 2005; Sharing the Victory, 2011; Dasher, 2008;
Gamecock FCA; Southwestern Assemblies of God University, 2012;
Heimovitz, 2014; University of Missouri, pp. 15-21, 23, 25-28, 30, 33,
46, 48-50, 52, 54, 55, 57-60, 62, 64-65, 79-84, 86-89, 91-92, 112-15,
117-18, 120-123, 125-128, 145-148; University of Illinois, pp. 1, 3-10,
16-17
- 27 Doe, 2015
- 28 Doe, 2015
- 29 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist (4/7), 2010
- 30 Georgia Institute of Technology, p. 16
- 31 Georgia Institute of Technology, p. 1
- 32 University of South Carolina, p. 2
- 33 University of South Carolina, p. 1
- 34 Clemson University, p. 43
- 35 Clemson University, pp. 4, 6
- 36 Clemson University, p. 86
- 37 University of Missouri, pp. 155-63
- 38 University of Missouri, pp. 155-56
- 39 University of Missouri, pp. 155-56
- 40 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, p. 71
- 41 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, p. 71
- 42 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, pp. 72-73
- 43 University of Washington, pp. 5, 7, 11, 13
- 44 University of Washington, pp. 5, 7, 11, 13
- 45 Louisiana State University, p. 1
- 46 University of Missouri, pp. 37, 44, 96-97, 106-08, 140-41, 155
- 47 University of Missouri, pp. 139, 141
- 48 University of Missouri, p. 41
- 49 University of Missouri, p. 44
- 50 University of Missouri, p. 45
- 51 University of Missouri, pp. 106, 108
- 52 University of Missouri, pp. 106-07, 109
- 53 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, p. 76
- 54 University of Washington, p. 44
- 55 University of Washington, p. 44

- 56 University of Washington, p. 54
- 57 University of Washington, p. 49
- 58 University of Washington, pp. 49-50
- 59 University of Washington, p. 50
- 60 University of Washington, p. 50
- 61 University of Washington, p. 50
- 62 University of Washington, p. 55
- 63 University of Washington, p. 55
- 64 University of Washington, p. 57
- 65 University of Washington, p. 70
- 66 Jones R. , 2013
- 67 Freeze
- 68 Freeze
- 69 Brooker, 2014
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- 71 Clemson University, p. 19
- 72 Clemson University, p. 2
- 73 University of Wisconsin, p. 42
- 74 University of Wisconsin, pp. 38-41
- 75 University of Wisconsin, p. 44
- 76 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, p. 77
- 77 The Dispatch, 2012
- 78 North Carolina State University, p. 2
- 79 Wolverton, 2013
- 80 University of Illinois, p. 1
- 81 Bowling Green State University, pp. 2-4
- 82 Bowling Green State University, p. 5
- 83 Roberts, 2005
- 84 Marcello, 2013
- 85 Whitaker, 2012
- 86 Babb, 2014
- 87 Babb, 2014
- 88 Noble, 2015
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- 90 Babb, 2014
- 91 Babb, 2014
- 92 Babb, 2014
- 93 Babb, 2014
- 94 Robinson, 2014
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- 98 Clemson University, p. 4
- 99 University of South Carolina, p. 6
- 100 University of Washington, pp. 82-83
- 101 University of Washington, pp. 5-8, 81
- 102 Bowden B. , Leadership lessons from Bobby Bowden, 2014
- 103 700 Club, 2010
- 104 Palmeri, 2003
- 105 Palmeri, 2003
- 106 Grobel, 2014
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- 110 Palmeri, 2003.
- 111 Adams D. , 1989
- 112 Leypoldt, 2014
- 113 Palmeri, 2003
- 114 Palmeri, 2003
- 115 Bowden B. , Called to Coach: Reflections on Life, Faith and Football, 2011
- 116 King, Kevin 'Chappy' Hynes: The Dawg Sports Interview, 2007
- 117 Drape, 2005
- 118 Bowden & Kimbrough, 2012
- 119 Brewer Eubanks "joined the [FCA] in 1999, serving as Urban Director in Atlanta. Then, Georgia Bulldogs Head Football Coach Mark Richt called Eubanks to be chaplain for the school's basketball program, and he served in that position for two years before taking the position of chaplain at Clemson. "I think the chaplain's ministry is fairly new, within the FCA structure," said Eubanks. "I think that Coach Bowden was one of the first to have a chaplain's ministry, which he started when he was at Tulane."
- 120 Jones J. , 2014
- 121 Bowden & Kimbrough, 2012, p. 132
- 122 Bowden & Kimbrough, 2012, p. 132

- 123 Jones J. , 2014
- 124 Walters, 2012; Harmon, 1995
- 125 Holtz, 2014
- 126 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist 4/7, 2010
- 127 Starkville Daily News
- 128 Elkins, 2001 "Sherrill introduced the Rev. Ken Smith, a 22-year Baptist minister, as the team's new chaplain at media day. ... Most chaplains are employed by the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, of which Smith is a board member, but he is paid by Mississippi State."
- 129 Robertson, 2006
- 130 Williams, 2010
- 131 Patton, 1986
- 132 Ewert, 2007
- 133 Brown, 2009
- 134 Johnson, Yearly a busy man at Auburn, 2006
- 135 D'Angelo, 1986
- 136 Habib, 2012
- 137 Johnson, Talk on the Plain is about coach, 2003, p. D4
- 138 Johnson, Talk on the Plain is about coach, 2003, p. D4
- 139 Heggen, 2007
- 140 Faculty of Iowa State, 2007
- 141 Faculty of Iowa State, 2007
- 142 Auburn Football
- 143 Johnson, Yearly a busy man at Auburn, 2006
- 144 Johnson, Yearly a busy man at Auburn, 2006
- 145 Justice, 2010
- 146 WKRC, 2015
- 147 FCA 2014 Financial Statement
- 148 FCA Chaplains
- 149 FCA, Statement of Faith
- 150 Cooley, 2014
- 151 Ewert, 2007
- 152 Whitehead, 2012
- 153 FCA Chaplains
- 154 FCA Hall of Champions
- 155 FCA, 2015
- 156 Foster, 2014; Sports Mic; Middle Tennessee Seminole Club; Redle-
man, 2015
- 157 University of Washington, p. 48
- 158 Pew Research Center, 2015. Percentages listed are for millennials, born from 1981 and later, but at least 18 years old when the survey was conducted. In other words, the demographic for every student athlete in the country.
- 159 Pew Research Center, 2012. The data for 2012 shows that of older millenials, those born in the 1980s, 30% were nonreligious while 34% of younger millenials, those born in the 1990s, were nonreligious.
- 160 Pew Research Center, 2014. The South includes Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Tennessee, South Carolina, North Carolina, Kentucky, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, and Maryland.
- 161 Doe, 2015
- 162 Amick, 2014
- 163 Amick, 2014
- 164 Amick, 2014
- 165 Amick, 2014
- 166 Amick, 2014
- 167 McCreary County, Ky. v. American Civil Liberties Union of Ky
- 168 Van Orden v. Perry
- 169 University of Washington, p. 48
- 170 King, Kevin 'Chappy' Hynes: The Dawg Sports Interview Part Two, 2007
- 171 Nole Central; FSU Spiritual Life Project
- 172 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist 2/7, 2010
- 173 Florida State University, pp. 48-49
- 174 Purvis, 2011
- 175 Wallheiser
- 176 Smits, 2009
- 177 Clemson University, p. 23
- 178 Bowden B. , Called to Coach: Reflections on Life, Faith and Football, 2011
- 179 Drape, 2005
- 180 Bowden & Kimbrough, 2012, p. 39
- 181 Bowden & Kimbrough, 2012, pp. 39-40
- 182 Bowden & Kimbrough, 2012, p. 40
- 183 Bowden & Kimbrough, 2012, p. 40
- 184 King, Kevin 'Chappy' Hynes: The Dawg Sports Interview Part Two, 2007
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188 Cooley, 2014

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192 Ewert, 2007

193 Coakley, 1982

194 Coakley, 1982

195 University of Washington, p. 48

196 Isaacson, 1986

197 Borden v. Sch. Dist. of the Twp. of East Brunswick Doe v. Duncanville Indep. Sch. Dist

198 Bishop v. Arnov Garcettiv. Ceballos

199 Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Doe

200 Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Doe Lee v. Weisman Wallace v. Jaffree Epperson v. Arkansas Sch. Dist. of Abington Twp. v. Schempp Engel v. Vitale

201 McCollum v. Bd. of Educ

202 Lemon v. Kurtzman Comm. For Pub. Ed. & Religious Liberty v. Nyquist Levitt v. Comm. for Pub. Ed. & Religious Liberty (“...the State is constitutionally compelled to assure that the state-supported activity is not being used for religious indoctrination.”)

203 20 U.S.C.A. § 1232g

204 20 U.S.C.A. § 1232g

205 Carter v. Broadlawns Medical Center

206 Katcoff v. Marsh

207 Abington Twp. Sch. Dist. v. Schempp, (“the availability of excusal or exemption simply has no relevance to the establishment question . . .”); Lee v. Weisman (“It is a tenet of the First Amendment that the State cannot require one of its citizens to forfeit his or her rights and benefits as the price of resisting conformance to state-sponsored religious practice.”); Mellen v. Bunting, (“VMI cannot avoid Establishment Clause problems by simply asserting that a cadet’s attendance at supper or his or her participation in the supper prayer are ‘voluntary.’”); Santa Fe Indep. Sch. Dist. v. Doe (quoting W.Va. Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette) (“Fundamental rights may not be submitted to vote; they depend on the outcome of no elections”)

208 Mellen v. Bunting

209 FCA, Handbook, p. 19

210 FCA, Handbook, p. 20

211 FCA, Handbook, p. 20

212 FCA, Handbook, p. 21

213 Louisiana State University, p. 2

214 University of South Carolina, p. 1

215 University of South Carolina, pp. 2-3

216 University of South Carolina, pp. 4-6

217 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist (4/7), 2010

218 Bowen, 2013

219 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist (4/7), 2010

220 Columbia International University, 2012

221 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist (4/7), 2010

222 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist (4/7), 2010

223 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist (4/7), 2010

224 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist (5/7), 2010 Despres is wearing a SC shirt and the video is also described in a way that increases the appearance of an official religious endorsement: “Gamecock Football team Chaplain Adrian Despres is joined by Gamecock football players Marcus Lattimore, Nick Jones, Dylan Thompson, and Brandon Davis, as they share their personal testimonies of Faith at the First Baptist Church of Spartanburg, SC. What an inspiring and fun-filled evening of worship, testimony, and evangelism. In this video, Adrian continues his devotion and presents the facts of creationism versus the theory of evolution.”

225 Despres, Gamecocks at Spartanburg First Baptist (4/7), 2010

226 Bagnato, 2005

227 Ewert, 2007

228 Ewert, 2007

229 Zuckerman, 2009, p. 955

230 Weinberg, 1999

231 SI Wire, 2014

232 Adams T. , Meet Antrione Archer, 2013

233 WKRC, 2015. Tuberville allegedly fundraised for the chaplain writing “One of the most important things I have learned throughout my coaching career is that a team with great character is an absolute requirement for championship football. Our Director of Player Development Antrione Archer has done such a tremendous job with our players off the field with his Character Education Program, that this year I promoted him as our team Chaplain. I want to help prepare our young men for life’s challenges and triumphs during their career at UC and future endeavors. When players leave the University of Cincinnati I want them to leave with a great education and to have developed skills of self-responsibility as men. For I believe that these are true factors of becoming a good citizen.

Our Chaplain is for ALL of the athletic teams on the University of Cincinnati campus. Below are some excerpts from Antrione Archer regarding the Chaplain program.” Adams T. , Spiritual Support at UC,

235 For instance, we quoted extensively from a few FCA articles in our Sept 2014 letter to FSU. Don Leypoldt's story, "Seminoles Run Recalls Strong FCA Roots," (Leypoldt, 2014) is now completely gone, except for the copy we archived. The ChaplainsConnect.org website, which provided a biography of Ken Smith, the first chaplain Bobby Bowden hired, is no longer active. That information would be lost if not for the screenshot we took at the time. We cited those two documents seven times in our letter to FSU—they were the only sources controlled directly by the FCA or chaplains. They are already covering their tracks.