

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

URBANA-CHAMPAIGN • CHICAGO • SPRINGFIELD

September 25, 2014

Andrew Seidel
Freedom from Religion Foundation
P.O. Box 750
Madison, WI 53701
aseidel@ffrf.org

Re: FOIA 14-614

Dear Mr. Seidel:

I am responding to your request dated September 11, under the Illinois Freedom of Information Act in which you request:

“We request certain records related to chaplain Jason Epperson and the University of Illinois (University) football program.

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;
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.”

Office for University Relations

Urbana • 108 Henry Administration Building • MC 370 • 506 South Wright Street • Urbana, IL 61801 • (217) 333-6400 • Fax (217) 333-5733
Chicago • 414 Administrative Office Building • MC 971 • 1737 West Polk Street • Chicago, IL 60612-7228 • (312) 996-3772 • Fax (312) 996-1836

Information responsive to your request is available and attached. These are public documents numbering 31 pages. Please note that no documents were located for points 1, 5 and 6 of your request.

Portions of these documents have been redacted pursuant to the following section(s) of the Act:

- 140/7(1)(a) that exempts from disclosure "Information specifically prohibited from disclosure by federal or State law or rules and regulations implementing adopted under federal or State law." Certain information has been redacted as exempt from production under section 7(a) of the Freedom of Information Act. Specifically, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. §1232g) protects the privacy of student education records and prohibits the release of any information from a student's education record without the consent of the eligible student or parent of the student.
- 140/7(1)(c) that exempts from disclosure "Personal information contained within public records, the disclosure of which, if disclosed, would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, unless the disclosure is consented to in writing by the individual subjects of the information." This includes names of private citizens and other personally private information.

Should you wish to inspect or receive a physical copy of these documents, please call Melanie Kuehn at the phone number below and she will provide you with all necessary details.

You have a right, under the law, to seek a review of this response by the Public Access Counselor (PAC) in the Office of the Attorney General. The PAC may be reached by phone at 217-782-1396, by email to publicaccess@atg.state.il.us, or by postal mail at the Public Access Bureau, 500 S. 2nd Street, Springfield, Illinois 62706. You also have the right to seek judicial review under section 11 of this Act.

If you have questions for our office, please contact 217-333-6400.

Sincerely,

Thomas P. Hardy
Executive Director
and Chief Records Officer