

Luther Rice College and Seminary

Case Name: *Luther Rice College and Seminary v. Lynne Riley*

Case Action: Case filed on October 15, 2024.

Significance: Whether the government can exclude Christian schools from financial aid because of their beliefs.



Background:

Georgia offers students financial aid programs to help cover tuition costs for undergraduate degrees. But Georgia excludes some private colleges and universities from these programs because they are “too religious.” Specifically, state officials exclude private schools that are a “school or college of theology or divinity.” Luther Rice College and Seminary is one such school excluded from receiving tuition benefits because it has a religious mission, awards religious degrees, and teaches all courses from a Christian worldview. Due to this, no Luther Rice student can receive state student aid for any degree or course. Also, no Georgia high school student can receive dual credit at Luther Rice. If Luther Rice did not have a religious mission, offer religious degree programs, and teach all courses from a Christian worldview, its students could receive Georgia student aid. No student should have to choose between going to the school that aligns with their beliefs or receiving tuition benefits.

Key Points

- By not allowing students to receive state financial aid, it’s taking opportunities away from them and forcing them to attend other schools that may not share their same worldview.
- People of faith should receive the same state benefits as others.
- No religious school should be forced to change its Christian views or practices to receive a state benefit, nor should a student have to choose between receiving state funding and their faith.

Key Facts

- It’s unconstitutional for the government to deny a religious school a public benefit solely for its religious beliefs.
- Religious discrimination has no place under the First Amendment.

The Bottom Line: The state should never limit educational opportunities for students solely due to their religious beliefs.