

**From:** [Kevin Patriquin](#)  
**To:** [equity](#)  
**Subject:** Trinity Western University Law School application  
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I am writing to express my opinion that the N.S. Barristers Society should not oppose this application by Trinity Western University. I do not take this point of view because of any belief in that University's Community Covenant Agreement. On the contrary, I would not have attended such a law school because I could not in good conscience have agreed to be bound by this covenant. My personal opinion aside, it is a free choice for someone to attend this University knowing in advance what is expected of them. Anyone interested in obtaining a law degree has many other options available to them other than Trinity Western.

In reviewing the TWU covenant agreement there seems to be much in it that would satisfy the expected conduct and behavior of a law school graduate in dealing with all members of society post-graduation. For example, it states that students commit themselves to cultivate Christian virtues such as "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, ... peacemaking, mercy, and justice." It also states they should "treat all persons with respect and dignity..." and to "be responsible citizens both locally and globally who respect authorities, submit to the laws of this country, and contribute to the welfare of creation and society." It is difficult to argue that such characteristics are contrary to the morals and ethics expected of a member of the bar.

TWU has been in operation for more than 50 years. It currently offers majors in 42 undergraduate programs and 16 graduate programs. It apparently consistently ranks near the top in the Canadian University rankings by the national surveys as conducted by MacLean's magazine and the Globe and Mail. A similar challenge was made in the past against TWU's application for a teacher education program but in 1981 the Supreme Court of Canada upheld the right of TWU to offer such a program. That was 13 years ago and I have not been able to find any indication that TWU teaching grads exhibit any prejudice against gays or any other segment of society.

There are many faith-based Universities in the United States that have excellent law schools that graduate students without fear of their faith compromising their duties as a lawyer. Notre Dame and Boston College are two such Catholic Universities. Pepperdine law school in California is such an example of an evangelical University. Their curriculum and course conduct must be approved by the law society and such would also be the case in Canada. We should not pre-judge law school graduates on the basis for their personal beliefs or the beliefs of the educational institution where they obtained their degree. Our main concern should be whether they are competent and willing to abide by our code of ethics.

We should be careful as to how far such opposition can be taken. Should society oppose other professions from recognizing degrees from TWU and other similar educational institutions. Should we be afraid that doctors will not treat some patients because of their sexual orientation? What about teachers and their students, social workers and their clients, et cetera? Also, why stop at Christian faith-based universities. What about Catholic High Schools whose teachings on heterosexual and gay relationships probably mirrors TWU's community covenant? What about Islamic schools whose teachings would treat gay relationships in a more harsh manner? Should we

try to ensure that none of their graduates ever become lawyers so that their “poisoned minds” do not affect their ability to represent a client in court? The bar society should judge members on their performance at the bar, not which route they took to get there!

Respectfully submitted,

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Member of the N.S. bar since 1986.