

Council denies funding appeal by Wide Awake

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Student Council rejected Wide Awake Productions' appeal of Council's recent decision not to fund their organization at last night's Council meeting, and representatives of the publication threatened legal action.

Wide Awake, a publication that expresses a Christian point of view, was denied funding because Council's Appropriations Committee considered it a religious activity, which is grounds for denial of funding.

The editors of Wide Awake presented Council with a letter from the Center for Individual Rights that expressed concern the decision violated the organization's constitutional rights. The letter threatened legal action against both the University and Council.

"We are going to appeal to the Student Activity Committee and if we get the same response from them, we'll take it to court,"

Wide Awake Managing Editor Rob Prince said. "We have a strong constitutional case, and the precedent set by the Virginia Advocate proves we fall under the Board of Visitors' guidelines."

The Virginia Advocate won its appeal for funding in 1989 after the Committee denied them funding because of their political subject matter on the basis they participated in political expression, not political activity.

"Wide Awake magazine serves an educational purpose by exposing people to the Christian perspective," Wide Awake Editor-in-Chief Ron Rosenburger said.

"Wide Awake is free to publish whatever they want," said Felicia Kantor, Council vice president for services and finance. "It's only an issue of whether student activity funds should be used."

Council also was scheduled to hear the appeal of Loki Science magazine last night, but none of the group's members were present to state their case. Loki Science also was defunded by Council last month.