Contact: Terry J. San Filippo
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Lecture on Landmark Same-Sex Marriage Case To Commemorate Constitution Day at Cal Poly Oct. 23

SAN LUIS OBISPO - The public is invited to the fourth annual Constitution Day at Cal Poly and a free presentation by law professor Eileen Scallen, a legal expert in the landmark California Supreme Court decision allowing couples of the same sex to marry. Scallen will speak from 2 to 3 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 23, in Room 220 in the University Union to commemorate the anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution.

Her lecture is titled "Family as a Fundamental Right: The Constitutional Right to Same-Sex Marriage in California." In her talk, Professor Scallen will discuss how the California Constitution established a “fundamental right” of two unrelated adults, who share a loving relationship, to create a family recognized by the law, and that the state did not show a “compelling state interest” in limiting that fundamental right to opposite-sex couples.

Scallen’s presentation is timely in light of Proposition 8, the California Marriage Protection Act which, if passed on the Nov. 4 election, would amend the California Constitution to read: “Only marriage between a man and a woman is valid and recognized in California.”

Scallen teaches at William Mitchell College of Law in St. Paul. Minnesota. She earned a B.A. in 1981 and an M.A. in 1983 from St. Olaf College. She earned her law degree from the University of Minnesota in 1986. She is widely published, with a chapter, “Foundationalism and Ground Truth in American Legal Philosophy: Classical Rhetoric, Realism, and Pragmatism," in the upcoming book “On Philosophy in American Law.”

Scallen taught at the University of California’s Hastings College of the Law from 1989 through 2000 and served as the college’s associate academic dean from 1996 to 1998. Previously Scallen served as an associate with the prestigious Latham & Watkins Law firm in Los Angeles and as a clerk for the Honorable A. Wallace Tashima in the U.S. District Court for the Central District of California.

Admission to Scallen’s presentation is free and open to the public. A permit is required to park on campus.

The Constitution Day lecture is co-sponsored by Cal Poly's Office of the Provost, the College of Liberal Arts, History Department and Political Science Department.

For more information, contact Terry J. San Filippo, College of Liberal Arts, at 805-756-1216 or Professor Ron Den Otter, Political Science Department, 805-756-6147.

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Oct. 9, 2008
For Immediate Release

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