



News & Events

University News & Information

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, California

February 27, 2004

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Free-Speech Expert to Visit Cal Poly Thursday

SAN LUIS OBISPO – A nationally known expert on free-speech issues will visit Cal Poly on Thursday, March 4, for several appearances, including a midday meeting open to the public.

Community members will be able to sit in on a session with Robert O'Neil from noon to 1:30 p.m. in Bishop's Lounge in the University Union. O'Neil is the founding director of the Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression, located in Charlottesville, Va.

At the public meeting, O'Neil will discuss civility and diversity with Cal Poly administrators, professors and staff members as well as community members interested in those issues. Anyone interested in attending needs to reserve in advance with Pat Harris in the university's Student Life and Leadership office at 756-2582 or pharris@calpoly.edu.

Author of several books on free speech and former president of both the University of Virginia and the University of Wisconsin, O'Neil continues to teach first-amendment law, including a seminar called "Free Expression in Cyberspace." His most recent books are "The First Amendment and Civil Liability" and "Free Speech in the College Community." He also chairs the American Association of University Professors Committee on Academic Freedom and National Security in Time of Crisis.

O'Neil is visiting the university to address students and the Cal Poly faculty and staff as part of a "Provocative Perspectives" series. He will speak to a university audience on "Campus Speech -- How Free? How Different?" at a breakfast on campus.

"We are fortunate to have on our campus someone of such national reputation and stature in this field," said Vice President for Student Affairs Cornel Morton, whose office co-sponsors the "Provocative Perspective" series. "We feel O'Neil can help us understand more clearly how the issues of free expression and civility intersect on a college campus."

Cal Poly's Continuing Education office is inviting former University of Virginia students, teachers and others with a connection to the school to a reception in O'Neil's honor from 3 to 5 p.m. Thursday. For the location (not yet determined), contact Vivian Steele in Continuing Education at 756-7434.

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