

COMM 255 : FREE EXPRESSION AND PUBLIC ASSEMBLY

Transcript title

Free Expression Public Assem

Credits

4

Grading mode

Standard letter grades

Total contact hours

40

Lecture hours

40

Course Description

Provides a comprehensive overview of civic rights and responsibilities under Federal and State laws pertaining to free expression and public demonstrations. Compares free expression and protest in other parts of the world with that here in the United States.

Course learning outcomes

1. Explain the relevance of the First Amendment.
2. Analyze various Supreme Court decisions re-defining free speech and assembly principles.
3. Identify resources and techniques for encouraging non-violent, collective action.
4. Articulate the correlation between using ethical communication and successfully appealing to large audiences.
5. Identify ways that the US Constitution's First Amendment differs from free expression and public assembly laws in other countries.

Content outline

1. Understanding Free Expression and Assembly
 - a. Free Expression Principles:
 - i. John Milton
 - ii. John Stuart Mill
 - b. Role of Federal Govt. in Free Speech Issues—1st Amendment
 - c. Role of State Govt. in Free Speech Issues—14th Amendment
 - d. Legislative Law
 - i. Constitution
 - ii. Congress
 - e. Common Law
 - i. Federal Courts
 - ii. Court Opinions
 1. From the Court
 2. Concurring Opinions
 3. Dissenting Opinions
 - iii. Landmark Decisions
 - f. Challenges to Free Expression and Assembly
 - i. Obscenity
 - ii. National Security

iii. Copyright

iv. Defamation

v. Imminent Danger

2. Practicing Free Expression and Assembly

a. Hands on Activity Planning

i. Practice democratic principles while advocating for Democracy (Sharp, Gene. From Dictatorship to Democracy)

ii. Student Interest—via discussion/pre-attendance survey

b. Collective Action

i. Participatory Decision-Making Techniques

1. Consensus

2. Principled Negotiation

3. Standard Agenda

ii. Coordinated Issue-Research

iii. Proper Documentation of Research

iv. Information-Oriented Awareness-Raising Materials

1. Public Space Messaging (individual): Signs, Clothing, Mime

2. Public Space Messaging (group): Slogans, Chants, Songs, Dance, Theatrics

3. Personal Space Messaging: Flyers, Cards, White Papers, Position Statements, Samizdats, Origami

v. Interaction with Public

1. Role Plays

2. Debate Exercises

3. Speech Preparation and Delivery

4. Tolerance Drills

5. Tabling

vi. Local Rules—State, Municipal, Parks and Recreation

c. Review and Reflect Discuss/Debrief Compose Reflective Essay

Required materials

Key Free Expression texts: John Milton's "Areopagitica," Gene Sharp's "From Dictatorship to Democracy," US Constitution, selected court opinions.

General education/Related instruction lists

- Cultural Literacy
- Arts and Letters