

# COMM 255 : FREE EXPRESSION AND PUBLIC ASSEMBLY

## Transcript title

Free Expression Public Assem

## Credits

3

## Grading mode

Standard letter grades

## Total contact hours

30

## Lecture hours

30

## Course Description

Provides a comprehensive overview of civic rights and responsibilities under Federal and State laws pertaining to free expression and public demonstrations.

## 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.

## 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

- Arts and Letters