



May 18, 2005

Robert L. Shibley
Foundation for Individual Rights in Education
210 West Washington Square, Suite 303
Philadelphia, PA 19106

Dear Mr. Shibley:

Thank you for your letter dated April 18, 2005 expressing concern about issues relating to freedom of speech on college campuses, and specifically about freedom of speech at the Oviedo Campus of Seminole Community College (SCC). Your letter was forwarded to me by our President, Dr. E. Ann McGee. As Vice President for Student Success for this institution, I appreciate the opportunity to address your concerns and to reassure the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) that we value and support freedom of speech and, indeed, the constitutional and academic freedoms that are enjoyed at Florida's many colleges and universities. SCC prides itself in providing an outstanding environment that fosters the success of our students, faculty, staff, and community constituents.

Ms. Gail Agor's comments regarding Ms. Eliana Campos' request to hand out People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) literature expressed her personal opinion and were not made in her official capacity as Student Activities/ Career Resource Specialist at SCC. In addition, Ms. Agor was not authorized by the College to comment on the content of Ms. Campos' intended speech or literature. Further, SCC will continue to educate its staff to process requests like Ms. Campos' request in a completely content-neutral manner in the future.

Please be aware that SCC contacted Ms. Campos on several occasions after her initial request to Ms. Agor to inform her that she is welcome to setup a table on campus and distribute PETA literature. But to date she has not returned any of the following communications.

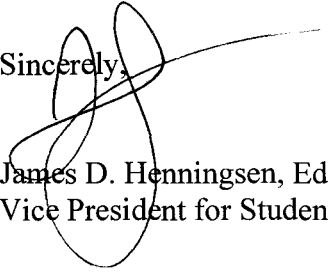
Attachment A – 3/28/05 email from Mr. Neal Graham, Acting Dean, Oviedo Campus to Ms. Campos informing Ms. Campos of SCC Policy 6.0700 and offering to speak with her if she had any questions.

Attachment B – 4/4/05 email from Mr. Graham to Ms. Campus asking Ms. Campos to contact him directly to schedule a time to use the free speech zone and for any further information or concerns.

Attachment C – 4/8/05 email from Mr. Randy Pawlowski, Director of Student Life, to Ms. Agor informing her that Ms. Campos may set up a table at the Oviedo campus free speech zone.

Finally, as you can see from this last attachment (C), Ms. Campos is welcome to express her viewpoint, as she has requested and as you have requested in your April 18 letter. Via this letter and a separate phone call, I am personally conveying to Ms. Campos that she is welcome to set up a table on our Oviedo campus.

Sincerely,



James D. Henningsen, Ed.D
Vice President for Student Success

C: Dr. E. Ann McGee
Dr. Carol Hawkins
Ms. Suzanne Tesinsky
Mr. Joe Sarnovsky
Mr. Neal Graham
Mr. Randy Pawlowski
Mr. Michael Garlich
Mr. Tom O'Hern
Ms. Eliana Campos

Attachments

ATTACHMENT A

Neal Graham - Use of College Grounds for Free Speech and Assembly

From: Neal Graham
To: elianacampos515@hotmail.com
Date: 3/28/2005 4:54 PM
Subject: Use of College Grounds for Free Speech and Assembly

Gail Agor has asked me to contact you to provide information about the use of college property for the exercise of free speech and assembly.

The use of college property for this purpose has been codified in formal policies and procedures approved by the SCC District Board of Trustees.

SCC Policy 6.070 gives the SCC President the authority to designate specific areas of the Sanford/Lake Mary Campus and the Oviedo Campus for this purpose.

SCC Procedure 6.0700 states:

"Use of SCC grounds for this purpose will be conducted in a manner **not to interfere with the conduct of classes or the normal activities of the college.** Determination of what constitutes interference will be made by the College President **or designee** and shall reflect the best interest of the college educational needs. **The designated area on the Oviedo Campus will be adjacent to the clock tower at the center of campus.**"

You may review these policies and procedures in their entirety by going to the SCC web page and clicking on "About SCC" and then on "Policies and Procedures."

Thank you for your interest in the policies and procedures of Seminole Community College. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions.

Neal Graham
Dean of the Oviedo Campus
Seminole Community College
Phone: 407-971-5010
Fax: 407-971-5005
grahamn@scc-fl.edu

ATTACHMENT B

Neal Graham - Re: Hello again

From: Neal Graham
To: Campos, Eliana; Williams, Yolanda
Date: 4/4/2005 6:28 PM
Subject: Re: Hello again
CC: Agor, Gail; Pawlowski, Randall

Dear Ms. Campos,

I am responding to your email of 4/4/05 to Yolanda Williams which has been forwarded to me.

In my email to you of 3/28/05, I tried to be very clear about the policies and procedures established by the College to provide guidelines for off-campus organizations to speak or disseminate information (tabling) on campus. Again, SCC Policy 6.070 and Procedure 6.0700 may be accessed on the SCC web page by clicking on "About SCC" and "Policies and Procedures." Ms. Agor asked me (she did not "tell" me) to send you this information. The free speech zone at the Oviedo Campus has permanent concrete tables and even umbrellas for protection from the sun. You would be responsible for providing your own signage. Please contact me directly to schedule your appointment to be on campus.

Finally, I have spoken with Ms. Agor about your conversation in her office on 3/24/05. She has reassured me she did wish to embarrass you and regrets any discomfort that may have resulted from your conversation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for any further information or to address any concerns.

Best regards,

Neal Graham
Dean of the Oviedo Campus (Acting)
Seminole Community College
Phone: 407-971-5010
Fax: 407-971-5005
grahamn@scc-fl.edu

ATTACHMENT C

From: Randall Pawlowski
To: elianacampos515@hotmail.com
Date: 4/8/2005 7:22:47 AM
Subject: PETA

Hi Eliana,

You have my permission and Neak Graham's permission to set up a table near the clock tower on the OViedo Campus. Please contact Neal directly at 407-971-5010 to discuss the date and time. If you need a table, he can make the arrangements.

For groups or people who are not registered student organizations, the free speech zone is the only place according to SCC policy that you can promote PETA.

Please call me if you have any other questions at 407-328-2320.

Good luck!

Randy Pawlowski
Director of Student Life
SCC

>>> "Eliana Campos" <elianacampos515@hotmail.com> 04/07/05 3:04 PM >>>
Mr. Pawloski,

In the e-mail you sent me on the 4th of April you said that you would be getting back to me by Wednesday. I know today is only Thursday, but my the reason I am writing to you again is because I noticed the Dean of the Oviedo Campus Cc my e-mail and his response to you as well as a couple other people.

If at all possible can we please keep this between you and me because I do not like that fact that the Dean sent my e-mail to all these different people including Mrs. Agor (who I have a problem with). Since this whole incident happened I have been trying to get this corrected by writing to many different people, and no one seems to want to help me. I have been told by quite a few people that you would be able to help me and I really hope this is true.

I completely understand that I could talk in the free speech zone. I have been told over and over again, but that is not the problem. The first thing I was told was that I would not be allowed to table in the free speech zone even if I wanted to (by Gail Agor). Then later on I was told that I can. The thing is, Mrs. Agor said that when tables are set up they are set up in the Little Bean and that I was not allowed to. I would like to know the tabling guidelines. Everyone seems to be giving me the run around.

If you can help me with this thank you very much. And if you are unable to help me in this matter just please let me know and I will not write to you anymore. Thank you for your time.

Eliana Campos
