

## **Rule for Freedom of Speech San Juan College**

Freedom of speech is a basic tenet for citizens in the United States. It is protected under the First Amendment to Constitution which states:

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or of breaching the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”

The State of New Mexico has codified parameters for speech and assembly in State Statute 30-20-13..D:

“No person shall willfully interfere with the educational process of any public or private school by committing, threatening to commit or inciting others to commit any act which would disrupt impair, interfere with or obstruct the lawful mission, processes, procedures or functions of a public or private school.”

San Juan College as an institution of higher education, promotes free speech. Diverse points of views, expressed through civil discourse and debate, form a cornerstone for active learning on a college campus and in our society. San Juan College is a learning community and uses the exchange of ideas and information to further individual knowledge and understanding in order to be a responsible active citizen in this community, state, and nation. Diverse thoughts and expressions are needed to promote a students ability to participate and interact in a global environment.

San Juan College has a legitimate right to protect the safety and security of students, faculty, and staff. The College must also maintain its primary mission relative to educating its students. In that regard, the College maintains the right to designate public space and time for the use of free speech activities, while holding to a view that this restriction is content and viewpoint neutral. All attempts will be made to minimize the impact of this designation on opportunities of speakers to present their views.

The College has a designated non-limited “Free Speech” area which is the outside amphitheater in the College courtyard. The College has allocated the hours of 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm Monday through Friday for use of the amphitheater for free speech activities. The area may be reserved for non-limited “Free Speech” activities by contacting the Office of Student Activities. The use of amplification is not permitted in this area as the activities cannot interfere with the educational mission of the College. During inclement weather, the “Student Lounge” area in the Student Services Building will be used for these non-limited “Free Speech” activities.

The non-limited “Free Speech” area is reserved for San Juan College students, faculty, and staff as a first priority. All other off campus organizations or individuals may reserve

the space designated on a first come basis. The College will not reserve this space for any one organization or individual on a continuing basis, thus allowing the space to be used by others. During non-limited “Free Speech” activities which draw larger numbers of people than can be accommodated safely in the areas defined, the College reserves the right to relocate those activities to another venue of its choosing on campus.

The College will maintain a reservation system for table space for non-limited “Free Speech” in order to maintain equity with the use of that space. The Office of Student Activities will operate that system, giving priority to student groups and faculty. Regarding all other groups, reservations will be limited to once a week unless table space is open and not in use. Outside group reservations will be made on a first come basis. The Graphics Arts area in the Student Center outside the Student Lounge is the designated space for tables to accommodate this need. The College will not allow use of amplification in this area to avoid disruption of its primary educational mission.

The College must protect the pedestrian traffic through this area and thus restricts the number of tables to five at one time. Users of the space must remain behind their table in order to ensure unimpeded pedestrian flow through the area. Materials used for display must remain behind the table.

Policies for material used for imparting information to the campus constituencies are included for such items as posters, signs, or information sheets. These materials will be restricted to 2’ by 3’ and will not contain material that incites, advocates, or encourages physical altercations, violence, and other disruptions which interfere with the educational mission of the College. The Office of Student Activities will review such posters, approve and date stamp them. The material will be restricted to 15 in number for posting on approved boards on campus. The material will be removed at the end of the two week time given to for posting.

Single individual “Free Speech” activities taking place in traditional public forums are allowed under the protections listed in the United States Constitution. Organized activities involving gatherings of people are regulated in time and place on the San Juan College campus to allow the educational mission to proceed without interruption. Single individual rights are protected as long as this “Free Speech” activity does not disrupt the rights of others and their ability to use walkways, roadways, or to access facilities. The College believes in the rights of all to express their views in a civil manner while allowing the College to maintain order and the use of its public facilities while pursuing its mission of education.