

## **PUBLIC INVITED TO UCO'S FIRST AMENDMENT DAY ON APRIL 25**

The public is invited to the University of Central Oklahoma's First Amendment Day on April 25 to hear national and state speakers address the five freedoms guaranteed and debated in this country.

"This conference will define what the First Amendment means to students on college campuses," said Erin Barnett, conference co-director. "There are going to be many informative panels and speakers who are champions for it and defend it to the best of their ability."

UCO President Don Betz declared April 25 as First Amendment Day on the UCO campus in conjunction with the launch of the 50<sup>th</sup> year of the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame, which is housed on campus. The 49<sup>th</sup> class will be inducted on April 25.

The "First Amendment Day" conference will be from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday, April 25, in UCO's Mass Communication building and the Nigh University Center. It is being organized by the co-chairs, Erin Barnett and Trevor Stone, and advised by Hall of Fame director Joe Hight.

The conference will include the freedom of the press and the impact if we lived without it, freedom of expression and the impact it would have on college campuses and a keynote speaker. Rob Rogers, the former editorial cartoonist for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, will speak on the First Amendment and satire.

At 10 a.m., Dr. James Machell, dean of the College of Education and Professional Studies will be moderator for *Teachers' First Amendment Rights*. Panelists will be First Amendment attorney Bob Nelson and Oklahoma education advocate Angela Clark Little. It will be in the Mass Communication building, Room 120.

The 49<sup>th</sup> Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame induction ceremony will be from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Nigh University ballrooms. Before the ceremony, the Mary Jo Nelson Display Cabinet will be dedicated at 11 a.m. in the hall of fame office on the third floor. The Oklahoman columnist Steve Lackmeyer is the featured speaker.

At 1:50 p.m., students and others will gather at the First Amendment board in the Nigh University Center to march to the Mass Communication building for a special unveiling of a First Amendment display at 2 p.m. Betz, Mass Communication chairman Dr. Mary Carver and Miss UCO Shelby Cargill, a Mass Communication student, are the featured speakers. The dedication will be in the hallway just outside Room 120 of the Mass Communication building.

After the dedication, there will be panel discussions in Room 120 of the Mass Communication building.

At 3 p.m., the panel, *Freedom of the Press: Without It, Is the First Amendment Doomed?*”, will focus on challenges on press freedom in our society. The moderator will be Bob Dotson, retired national TV correspondent and author. Panelists will be Ziva Branstetter, corporate accountability editor, The Washington Post; Mary Bishop-Baldwin, copy editor, Tulsa, and marriage equality pioneer; internationally known photojournalist M.J. Alexander; and database journalism pioneer Griff Palmer, formerly of The New York Times. Room 120, Mass Communication Building.

“We wanted to shine light on our nation’s First Amendment, the most misunderstood one, Freedom of the Press, and how the five freedoms empower us,” said Trevor Stone, conference co-director.

John Wood, who served on UCO’s Freedom of Expression Committee will moderate the third panel, *Freedom of Expression on the College Campus*. Special guest panelists will be Dr. Suzette Grillot, former University of Oklahoma dean who has filed a First Amendment

lawsuit against the university, and Joey Senat, an FOI expert from Oklahoma State University. First Amendment Day co-chair Erin Barnett and Stockton Duvall, past UCO Student Body president. This panel will focus on the ability of how students on college campuses are able to freely express their views and opinions safely and responsibly.

The conference keynote, *The First Amendment and Satire*, will feature Rob Rogers, Pulitzer finalist and UCO graduate who received nationwide attention when he was fired from the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette for his satirical columns on President Trump. Rogers will focus on his work, especially on his satirical cartoons.

All are welcome the conference.

####

## **INFORMATION BOX:**

The First Amendment is ME. The First Amendment is US.”

### **When:**

Panel and Speakers: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on April 25.

### **Where:**

University of Central Oklahoma  
100 N. University Drive  
Edmond, Okla. 73034

Panels: Nigh University and Mass Communication Building

- **DAY’S ACTIVITIES:**

NOTE: President James Madison, father of the First Amendment, will make appearances throughout the day. He will pass out First Amendment buttons and cards.

All Day: First Amendment Board in the Nigh University Center.

10 to 11 a.m.: **“Teachers’ First Amendment Rights.”** Moderator: Dean Dr. James

Machell. Panelists: First Amendment attorney Bob Nelson and Oklahoma education advocate Angela Clark Little. Room 120, Mass Communication Building.

11 a.m. – **Dedication of Mary Jo Nelson Display** in the Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame office and launch of hall of fame museum (With Steve Lackmeyer, The Oklahoman columnist, writer and author)

11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.: **Oklahoma Journalism Hall of Fame induction ceremony**, Nigh University Center ballrooms.

1:50 p.m.: **Gathering in Nigh University Center at First Amendment Board to march to Mass Communication building**. Led by James Madison and two drummers.

2 p.m.: **Dedication of the First Amendment Display in the Mass Communication building**. Speakers: UCO President Dr. Don Betz, Dr. Mary Carver, chairman, Mass Communication Department, Miss UCO Shelby Cargill AND James Madison, father of the First Amendment and Constitution.

2:30 p.m.: March into Room 120: Led by James Madison and two drummers.  
**Announcement of First Amendment Day contest winners.**

3 p.m.: **"Freedom of the Press: Without It, Is the First Amendment Doomed?"**  
Moderator: Bob Dotson, retired national TV correspondent and author.  
Panelists: Ziva Branstetter, corporate accountability editor, The Washington Post; Mary Bishop-Baldwin, copy editor, Tulsa, and marriage equality pioneer; internationally known photojournalist M.J. Alexander and database journalism pioneer Griff Palmer, formerly of The New York Times. Room 120, Mass Communication Building.

4 p.m. **"Freedom of Expression on the College Campus"**  
Moderator: John Wood, member, Freedom of Express Committee, UCO.  
Panelists: Dr. Suzette Grillot, University of Oklahoma, and Joey Senat, FOI expert, Oklahoma State University; First Amendment Day co-director Erin Barnett; and past UCOSA president Stockton Duvall. Room 120, Mass Communication Building.

5 p.m.: **Keynote: "The First Amendment and Satire"**  
Rob Rogers (<https://robroggers.com>), Pulitzer finalist and UCO graduate who received nationwide attention when he was fired from the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette for his satirical cartoons about President Donald Trump. Room 120, Mass Communication Building