


Policy Approval Form

Executive Summary. (Type a short summary of the process followed to develop this policy, identify those involved in its development, reason for undertaking the process, and key features of the policy). This section is to be completed by the group or individual assigned to develop this policy.

These amendments to the Student Communications Media policy are proposed by the members of the student activities organization Cooper Point Journal. The amendments add language to the Responsibilities and the General Description portions of the policy section that focuses on the Cooper Point Journal organization and newspaper. The language reinforces the spirit and intent of the existing policy – acknowledgment that content of the student newspaper is the sole responsibility and liability of the students who produce the newspaper and that the students and newspaper are protected from interference by anyone acting on behalf of the college. The amendments are proposed on the advice of an attorney for the Student Press Law Center, in response to a U.S. 7th Circuit Court of Appeals decision that public college newspapers are subject to the same supervision and prior review that high school newspapers are subject to under the U.S. Supreme Court decision *Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier* unless the college newspaper by policy is a “designated public forum.” The 7th Circuit decision is being appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court which many in legal circles anticipate will hear the case since it is the first time a court has ruled that *Hazelwood* applies to colleges. In language established by the courts, “designated public forum” establishes that students bear responsibility and liability for the newspaper and the students and newspaper are protected from interference by anyone acting on behalf of the college. The Student Press Law Center attorney, a nationally recognized and honored authority on this subject, reviewed Evergreen’s policy to determine whether current policy would protect The Evergreen State College and the Cooper Point Journal. He said the intent of the policy seems clear. He advised, however, that the words “designated public forum” be added to the existing policy to be certain the students and newspaper are protected from interference and that the college bears neither responsibility nor liability for newspaper content. Student Activities director Tom Mercado agreed it would be prudent to amend the policy. Cooper Point Journal advisor Dianne Conrad provided Cooper Point Journal members a seminar on the history of the existing Student Communications Media policy, the 7th Circuit Court decision and the advice of the Student Press Law Center attorney. The CPJ members engaged in the process defined for them by their policies. Monday, Nov. 7, the CPJ membership discussed the matter in the weekly organization meeting and posted at several places within the CPJ office proposed language for an amended policy. Monday, Nov. 14, the members again discussed the matter and agreed by consensus to request that the college amend the policy. Wednesday, Nov. 16, the CPJ leadership agreed by consensus to forward the proposed amendment to Vice President for Student Affairs Art Costantino. A copy of the student media policy with proposed amendments is attached. New language for the CPJ portion is underlined and appears on the second page.

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost  Date 1-10-06

Vice President for Finance and Administration  Date 1-10-06

Vice President for Student Affairs  Date 1-10-06

Executive Associate to the President  Date 1-10-06

President  Date 1-10-06

Date policy becomes effective _____