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Conservative activist to discuss free speech on campus at Cal Poly

Nick Wilson

Conservative activist Mason Weaver will return to Cal Poly on Tuesday to give a speech titled "Your Freedoms on Campus," according to the university's College Republicans organization.

Weaver, a former Black Panther, will address the issue of free speech on campus. Weaver's speech will take place at 7 p.m. in Building 3, Room 213.

Mason's 2002 visit to Cal Poly spurred a free speech lawsuit filed by former Cal Poly student Steve Hinkle.

Hinkle, who is white, was reportedly confronted in November 2002 by some black students in the lounge who said they found a flier he intended to post titled "It's Okay to Leave the Plantation."

One student threatened to call campus police, according to the suit. Hinkle left without posting the flier.

In March 2003, the school's judicial affairs office ruled that Hinkle violated a state regulation barring "obstruction or disruption" of campus functions — specifically, a Bible study the students said they were preparing to hold.

Hinkle was ordered to write letters of apology to the students and warned that he could face stiffer penalties or even potential expulsion if he refused, according to the lawsuit.

Hinkle sued the university claiming his First Amendment rights were violated. Cal Poly agreed to pay Hinkle a \$40,000 settlement, covering his legal bills. Hinkle was the president of Cal Poly College Republicans at the time.

Weaver's talk is part of Freedom Week, sponsored by the College Republicans. For more information about additional events, contact Brendan Pringle at brpringl@calpoly.edu.

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