

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging 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.

Rod Smolla, Dean and Professor of Law at Widener University Delaware Law School

Dean and Professor of Law at Widener University Delaware Law School, Rod Smolla has had a multi-faceted career, as a university president, a dean at two law schools, director of academic centers, a professor, a civic leader, a prolific writer and public speaker, and a highly successful lawyer, specializing in constitutional law and appellate litigation. He was the 11th President of Furman University, in Greenville, South Carolina, the Dean of the Law School at Washington and Lee University Law School and the University of Richmond Law School, Director of the Institute of Bill of Rights Law at the College of William and Mary, and Senior Fellow and Project Director of the Washington Annenberg Program of Northwestern University.

In 2011, he was appointed by Governor Nikki Haley to serve as a Commissioner on the South Carolina Commission of Higher Education, which included within its mission the oversight of all of South Carolina's public universities and colleges, and licensure and programmatic approval for all public and private educational programs within the state. He also has served on the law faculties of DePaul University, the University of Illinois, and the University of Arkansas, and has been a visiting professor at the University of Melbourne, Australia, Indiana University, the University of Denver, Duke University School of Law, and the University of Georgia School of Law.

Smolla was graduated from Yale University *cum laude*, majoring in American Studies. He then went to Duke Law School, where he graduated first in his class. After law school Smolla clerked for Judge Charles Clark of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit, and then began private practice in Chicago, with the firm of Mayer, Brown, and Platt. He then moved into academic life, beginning his career as a law professor. His academic career has been evenly divided between service at public and private universities and colleges.

As an educator, Smolla has been an advocate for approaches to learning that emphasize engagement, experiential learning, service, and the bridging of theoretical inquiry and real-world experience. As a Law School Dean he argued that American law schools should seek a greater balance between instruction of legal theory and doctrine and the development of law students as professionals, including skills relating to counseling, advocacy, writing, negotiating, civic engagement, pro bono service, legal ethics, and professionalism.

As a University President he emphasized community outreach, diversity, holistic approaches to admissions, the arts, athletics, engaged learning, public service, and the importance of intense university involvement in the surrounding community.

Smolla is an accomplished teacher and author. He has won numerous teaching awards, including the Virginia State Council of Higher Education Distinguished Faculty Award. His writing interests are eclectic, including law review scholarship, law school casebooks, legal treatises, university press books, trade books published for general audiences, magazine and newspaper articles, on-line publications, and fiction, including short stories and plays.

He has published more than 65 law review articles and essays, including pieces in the *Stanford Law Review*, *Michigan Law Review*, *Pennsylvania Law Review*, *Duke Law Journal*, *Fordham Law Review*, *Georgetown Law Journal*, *Georgia Law Review*, *Virginia Law Review*, *Northwestern Law Review*, *Illinois Law Review*, *Texas Law Review*, *George Washington Law Review*, *Wake Forest Law Review*, *Law and Contemporary Problems*, *Washington and Lee Law Review*, *William and Mary Law Review*, and *Southern California Law Review*, among many others.

Smolla is one of the nation's leading legal scholars on issues of freedom of speech, academic freedom, and mass media. He is the recipient of numerous literary and academic prizes and honors, including the *ABA Silver Gavel* award. His latest book, *The Constitution Goes to College*, was published in 2011 by New York University Press, and deals with constitutional principles and ideas that have shaped American higher education. One of his trade books, *Deliberate Intent* (Crown Publishers 1999), was made into a television movie by the FX Cable Network, and the role of Rod Smolla was played by Timothy Hutton. The book and movie describe Smolla's involvement in the notorious *Hit Man* case, in which he successfully represented the families of three murder victims in a suit against the publisher of a murder instruction manual used by a hit man for instructions in carrying out the murders.

Throughout his career, Smolla has been active in litigation matters involving constitutional law, civil rights, mass media, advertising, defamation, and privacy law. He has participated as counsel or co-counsel in litigation matters in state and federal courts throughout the nation, and is a frequent advocate, having presented oral argument in numerous state and federal courts, including the Supreme Court of the United States. He has also served as an expert witness in litigation, and presented testimony in committees of the United States Senate, United States House of Representatives, state legislative bodies, and state and federal administrative agencies. Smolla is active in civic and community affairs, and in various legal, academic, and civic organizations, and he frequently speaks to community groups, church groups, youth groups, schools, and college organizations. He has served on many corporate and non-profit boards and held leadership roles in numerous scholarly and civic organizations. In the public sphere he has been an advocate for greater bipartisan cooperation in addressing major issues of public policy, and for greater civility in public discourse.