



FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE

MINUTES  
FACULTY SENATE MEETING  
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2022  
FSU ZOOM  
3:05 P.M.

**Regular Session**

The regular session of the 2022-23 Faculty Senate was held on Wednesday, September 14, 2022. Faculty Senate President Eric Chicken presided.

The following members attended the Senate meeting:

T. Adams, P. Aluffi, C. Ann Baade, S. Ballas, E. Bangi, A. Barbu, C. Barrilleaux, C. Barry, R. Baumbach, B. Birmingham, M. Blaber, M. Bourassa, A. Boutin, E. Brookshire Madden, R. Brower, D. Broxterman, M. Buchler, U. Bunz, J. Calhoun, E. Chicken, R. Coleman, L. DeBrunner, A. Dewan, M. Duncan, V. Fleury, K. Gallivan, J. Geringer, M. Gonzales Backen, T. Graban, A. Gunjan, D. Gussak, W. Hanley, M. Hanline, E. Hilinski, P. Hoeflich, R. Hughes, K. Ishangi, S. Johnson, K. Jones, M. Killian, E. Kim, J. Kimmes, E. Loic, G. Martorella, P. Maurette, A. McKenna, Y. McLane, C. Moore, E. Murphy, J. Ohlin, G. Ostrander, C. Owens, J. Palmer, N. D. Pifer, J. Proffitt, Q. Rao, A. Rassweiler, N. Rogers, E. Ryan, C. Schmertmann, H. Schwadron, T. Somasundaram, D. Soper, J. Standley, E. Stewart, R. Stilling, B. Stvilia, Y. Tang, G. Tyson, K. Ueno, A. Volya, D. Whalley

The following members were absent. Alternates are listed in parenthesis:

E. Alvarez, J. Ang, D. Armstrong, H. Bass (S. Steppan), W. Berry, D. Bish, M. Bukoski (E. Hinchman), J. Chanton, E. Chassignet, I. Chiroescu, B. Coggeshall, E. Coleman, S. Daniels, F. Dupuigrenet, D. Eccles, S. Foo, G. Gerard (S. Perfect), R. Goodman, W. Guo, C. Hofacker, B. Howren, P. Iatarola, A. Khurshid, A. Lemmon, S. Lester (V. Mesev), W. Li, M. Mack, J. McNulty, R. Morris, E. Peters, M. Porter, R. Roberts, O. Steinbock, A. Stiegman, B. Sults, M. Swanbrow Becker, Z. Yu.

**I. Approval of the Agenda, September 14, 2022 meeting**

The agenda was approved as distributed.

**II. Approval of the Minutes, April 13, 2022 meeting**

The minutes were approved as distributed.

**III. Report of the Steering Committee – Bridgett Birmingham, Co-Chair of Steering Committee**

- Bridgett Birmingham began the report by stating that the steering committee has met 14 times since the last Faculty Senate meeting.
- The Steering Committee is engaged in several activities on behalf of the Senate, including participating in the searches for the VP of Advancement and President of the Foundation, Marla Vickers and the selection of the VP of Research, Dr. Stacy Patterson.

- The Steering Committee has also been very active in discussions about post tenure review, HB7, the ongoing mold remediation and building evaluations on campus.
- Bridgett Birmingham reported that the sustainability plan that the senate put forward last spring has a new strategic plan that has sustainability measures in its goals, and the campus is launching a \$1 million grant program for sustainability efforts.

#### **IV. Announcements of the President of the University**

- President Chicken stated there were no announcements from the President of the University.

#### **V. Reports of Special Committees**

- President Chicken stated there were no reports of Special Committees.

#### **VI. Reports of Standing Committees**

- President Chicken stated there were no reports of Standing Committees.

#### **VII. Unfinished Business**

- President Chicken stated there were no Unfinished Business.

#### **VIII. New Business**

##### **a. Statement on Free Expression (addendum 1)**

- **President Chicken** – opened the discussion by stating that the Board of Governors recommends that the Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, and Student Government annually review and endorse the board's statement of free expression.
- **Kay Jones, Arts & Sciences** – discussed how the two bills related to this are conflicting bills.
- **Liz Iaconis, Executive Cabinet, Student Government** – wanted to let the Faculty Senate know that they had not discussed it as a collective body to date.
- **Erin Ryan, Law** – discussed that there is no conflict between the principles that the board of Governors is asking us to endorse as a matter of academic freedom.
- **President Chicken** – stated that this reinforces the academic freedom that we have had on campus for over 100 years. It supports as already listed in our faculty handbook, the collective bargaining agreement that academic freedom is essential.
- **Lisa Scoles, Office of General Counsel** – agrees with Erin Ryan about how there is no conflict between bills about free expression. Discussed how HB 7 is just a restatement of the rights that have been endorsed and protected on this campus for generations.
- **Tarez Graban, Arts & Sciences** – asked why the request to endorse this statement now, as well as what is to be gained by our endorsing a statement generated from the Board of Governors versus authoring our own statement that might be a little less vague and a little helpful.
- **President Chicken** – replied that he is unsure why the timing is now. He noted this statement is from 2019 and this is the first time we have been asked to endorse it. He also stated that they can endorse this statement, and at the same time strengthen our stance on free expression, academic freedom, civil discourse. Erin Ryan agreed with President Chicken on this statement.
- **Lisa Scoles, Office of General Counsel** – answered that she believed it is due to the Board of Governors Civil Discourse Final Report, which recommend that was released early in 2022.

- **Will Hanley, Arts & Sciences** – asked what the leadership of the Board of Trustees is, or what do they mean by that language on the statement.
- **President Chicken** – answered that he didn't have a direct answer for this, but that this may be why the statement isn't specific.
- **Erdem Bangi, Arts & Sciences** – asked about the last bullet point in the best practices for civil discourse. It talks about encouraging faculty to establish and maintaining a learning environment and a classroom that supports free expression of all viewpoints. Could this be interpreted that to suggest including a religious viewpoint against a scientific argument in a science?
- **President Chicken** – replied that our faculty and classrooms already meet what this statement is saying.
- **Carolyn Egan, Office of General Counsel** – answered that there are not ant conflicts or problem with that philosophy or the application of the section that Senator Bangi is asking about.
- **Erin Ryan, Law** – there are many different points of views raised in our discussions and our jobs as academics is to create an environment in which those people who hold different points of view, can talk meaningfully with each other. She noted that it does put the burden on us as academics, to find a way to have difficult conversations, and move forward, even if we don't come to agreement.
- **Ralph Brower, Social Sciences & Public Policy** – asked about conversations that students bring up and if they must entertain all conversations.
- **Erin Ryan, Law** – answered that in the same document, it states that you do not have to entertain their conversation and that they can challenge a student on a topic.
- **Carolyn Egan, Office of General Counsel** – agreed with Senator Ryan's response. FSU's faculty in general do not put topics off limits, they discuss them.
- **Robert Stilling, Arts & Sciences** – had concerns about the review process on the university's campus free speech climate.
- **President Chicken** – stated that a review of the campus free speech requirement would be looking at our endorsement and providing them with our statements on academic freedom from our handbook and our collective bargaining agreement.
- **Carolyn Egan, Office of General Counsel** – agreed with President Chicken. She also noted that FSU constantly reviews our own policies to ensure we provide and protect open dialogue and free speech.
- **Erin Ryan, Law** – made a clarification on what was being endorsed by the faculty senate. It is only appendix A, not the entire document.
- **Erdem Bangi, Arts & Sciences** – expressed his concern about the difference between having a conversation with a student on a topic and including a topic into the curriculum.
- **President Chicken** – no curriculum needs to be modified. Faculty just need to allow a discussion to proceed and maintain an open dialogue.
- **Erin Ryan, Law** – stated that it does not mean that these points of view that are raised cannot be challenged. She also again noted that we already do these things in our classrooms.
- **Erin Ryan, Law** – asked if the senate is going to endorse it and if the senate endorses it, what form will it take? She discussed that in the ACFC, there was a concern about the idea that this is coming from the BOG down to us, that we are being asked to endorse a statement from the BOG when really these principles normally come from our realm

of shared governance, and it is redundant with what we already do and what we already say. In the steering committee, the discussion on that matter was about the proper jurisdiction of the different components of the university system and how do we work together and who gets to say what in the end. They agreed on the principle of the statement and one way of potentially sidestepping the power struggle that is implicated by this is by making our own statement that reflects the principles that we think overlap with the statement that the BOG has given us.

- **President Chicken** – concluded that the Steering Committee will continue to discuss this possible endorsement, and they welcome any thoughts or concerns from Faculty.
- b. **Call for nominations for Torch Awards – Jayne Standley, Co-Chair Torch Awards Committee**
- **Jayne Stanley, Music** – announced the call for Torah award nominations. She stated that they are looking to recognize people who have significantly and in a sustained way contribute to the academic mission of the university, the person must be alive, and not on the Florida State University payroll. There are three awards give, one for each of the torches. Vires recognizes moral, physical, and intellectual strengths. Artes recognizes appreciation of esthetics and the beauty of intellectual pursuits. Mores acknowledges respect for customs, character and tradition. These nominations are due by October 12th.
- c. **Confirmation of committee membership – Bridgett Birmingham, Co-Chair Steering Committee**
- **Bridgett Birmingham** – displayed the Faculty Senate Standing Committee Appointments for the 2022-2023 year. A poll was used to vote.
  - **President Chicken** – launched the poll to approve this list of committee members. He also asked for Senators to please encourage fellow faculty members to volunteer for these very important committees.
  - **Bridgett Birmingham** – Voted to approve
  - The Faculty Senate Standing Committee Appointments for the 2022-2023 year was unanimously approved.
- d. **Task Force Committee on Sexual Misconduct**
- **Ralph Brower, Social Sciences & Public Policy** – asked for an update on the response from the president or the provost about the Task Force Committee on Sexual Misconduct.
  - **President Chicken** – discussed that the task force was endorsed in the last spring meeting. President McCullough's response was that it is moving. HR has been considering all those recommendations point by point. Right now, Janet Kistner has been taking the lead on gathering the responses from HR and within HR, it's the EDI group who is going through those recommendations and looking at them carefully. No report is ready yet. The expectation is that this semester we will get an official response that we can share with the Senate.
- e. **Mold and Radon**
- **Roxanne Hughes, Mag Lab** – stated the Mag Lab had a meeting with the Provost and Kyle Clark on the mold and radon. She discussed that the MAG Lab had to hire a

contractor to clean out the air ducts for mold. She discussed that senators could contact her about how this is moving across campus to make sure we're all in buildings that are healthy and safe for faculty, staff and students.

**IX. Special Orders**

- President Chicken noted there were no special orders.

**X. University Welfare, Matthew Lata – United Faculty of Florida, FSU Chapter**

- Matthew Lata announced that over the summer they agreed on a new three-year contract.
- He continued with the bargaining updates. This included results on salaries at 4%, merit at 0.5%, and deans and departments at 0.75%. Market equity needs to be calculated, but that will start sometime in late January. The contract also codified the tuition, scholarships, attendance added free speech to the protected rights of faculty, increase the number of sabbaticals from one out of 30 to 1 out of 12 faculty members.
- Next, Matthew Lata announced that our lawsuit against the survey bill precedes. The judge wanted to know what the results were before he made a ruling which is now scheduled to be heard in January.
- The lawsuit against Stop Work Act has been referred to in this meeting before and that is proceeding on multiple fronts.
- He continued with that another focus is on the November 8th vote. faculty can encourage students to register, we cannot tell them how to vote, but we can encourage them to register, make sure they are registered, encourage them to do their civic duty, encourage them to be good citizens. We can encourage our colleagues to do the same. It really is possible that we could make a big difference this year.
- Matthew Lata concluded with the social events are getting back to normal. The membership drive is going extremely well.
- **President Chicken** – also acknowledged how important it is to vote. He opened the floor for questions.
- **Michael Blaber, College of Medicine** – asked about the raise of 4% and if it applied to out-of-unit faculty, and if not is there any information for those faculty.
- **Matthew Lata, UFF** – stated the raise does not apply to faculty at either the College of Medicine or the College of Law. He has no information on the College's and suggest speaking with HR if you do.
- **President Chicken** – asked if there were any more items for University Welfare and none were posed. He also noted he forgot to call for any other topics or items of New Business, earlier in the meeting and proceed to call for them now.

**XI. Announcements of deans and other administrative officers**

- No announcements were presented.

The meeting adjourned at 4:07 pm.

Eric Chicken

Faculty Senate President

# Civil Discourse Final Report 2022



# **CIVIL DISCOURSE INITIATIVES in the STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM**

## **INTRODUCTION**

As members of many different societal groups and communities, people thrive on the personal interactions that occur every minute of every day. These ongoing interactions provide the foundation for learning, discovery, and growth in a university setting. More specifically, open-minded, tolerant, and respectful discourse among campus community members is critical to enabling students to learn and pursue their educational goals, faculty to effectively teach, and staff to pursue fulfilling work.

To promote civil discourse in the State University System, the Board of Governors, the presidents of Florida's twelve public universities, adopted a "Statement of Free Expression" in 2019. The Board's statement directly aligns with the well-established "Chicago Principles" that originated at the University of Chicago in 2014 to articulate the university's overarching commitment to free, robust, and uninhibited debate. Universities have widely adopted the Chicago Principles throughout the U.S.

The Board's Statement of Free Expression was endorsed by the twelve state universities as a vehicle to establish, maintain, and support a full and open discourse and the robust exchange of ideas and perspectives on all university campuses (See Appendix A). The statement reinforces that a critical purpose of a higher education institution is "to provide a learning environment where divergent ideas, opinions, and philosophies, new and old, can be rigorously debated and critically evaluated."

Board of Governors Chair Syd Kitson established the Board's Civil Discourse Initiative during his January 2021 "State of the System" address. Chair Kitson expressed concern regarding the steady decline in respectful discourse among those with differing viewpoints. He stated that the university setting could provide a foundation for understanding, learning, and growth in this area. Chair Kitson tasked Governor Tim Cerio to lead the initiative through the Strategic Planning Committee. Governor Cerio has stated that "Civil discourse, conducted civilly without fear of reprisal, is critical to free speech and ensuring academic and intellectual freedom – not just on our university campuses, but throughout our country."

The 2018 Legislature established the Campus Free Expression Act in section 1004.097, Florida Statutes. This statute provides direction and relevance to the Board's initiative as it codifies an individual's right to engage in free-speech activities at public higher education institutions. It also prohibits a public institution from shielding students, faculty, or staff from expressive activities while authorizing a public institution to create and enforce reasonable restrictions under specified conditions.



## CIVIL DISCOURSE: BEST PRACTICES

### The State University System

The state universities provided information on activities and initiatives promoting and supporting civil discourse in their campus communities. Best practices gleaned from a review of their submissions were highlighted within the following four categories.

1. Workshops & Professional Development: Presentations, lectures, workshops, or training designed to provide opportunities for faculty, staff, students, and campus partners to learn how to engage in and facilitate dialogue respectfully.
2. Speakers, Dialogue & Debate: Events or programs that provide opportunities for faculty, staff, and students to engage in, observe, or facilitate conversations and encourage civil discourse.
3. Outreach (on and off-campus): Programs, workshops, and or campaigns with external partners help cultivate a campus culture of civil discourse.
4. Research and Academic Affairs: Research-based initiatives, web tools, and courses designed to provide opportunities for students, faculty, and staff to engage in and learn about issues related to civil discourse in a formal setting.

Additionally, the committee researched established national programs addressing civil discourse and interviewed prominent authorities in this area. Interviews were conducted with Dr. Robert George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence & Director, James Madison Program at Princeton University; Dr. Lynn Pasquerella, President of the Association of American Colleges and Universities; Dr. Diana Hess, Dean, University of Wisconsin School of Education; Ms. Liz Joyner, Founder & C.E.O., the Village Square; Dr. Bill Mattox, Director, James Madison Institute's Marshall Center for Educational Options; Dr. Tim Chapin, Dean, FSU College of Social Sciences and Public Policy, and Dr. Jonathan Haidt, founder of the Heterodox Academy.

### National Models

A review of the national postsecondary system and institutional civil discourse programs identified a number of highly regarded initiatives and strategies that promote and support civil discourse. Examples include the following.

- The Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution, Brigham Young University: The Center's primary focus is conflict resolution. Through mediation, arbitration, training workshops, research, conferences, academic courses, and consultations, the Center assists both the university and the community in building skills and promoting understanding of peace, negotiation, communication, and conflict resolution.
- Heterodox Academy: Heterodox Academy is a nonpartisan international collaborative of professors, administrators, and students committed to enhancing the quality of research and education by promoting open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in institutions of higher learning. The



Heterodox Academy was founded in 2015 by scholar Jonathan Haidt. He was prompted by his views on the negative impact that the lack of ideological diversity has had on the quality of research within the Academy.

The Academy collaboratively engages with universities throughout the U.S. to promote rigorous, open, and responsible interactions across lines of difference as essential to separating good ideas from bad and making good ideas better. Heterodox scholars view the university as a place of collaborative truth-seeking, where diverse scholars and students approach problems and questions from different points of view in pursuit of knowledge, discovery, and growth.

- The Institute for Civic Discourse and Democracy, Kansas State University: The Institute pursues theories and practice in civic discourse that are identified to advance improvements in all campus and community interactions. The Institute supports public conversation to elevate specific qualities of civic discourse, including inclusiveness, equality, reciprocity, reflection, reason-giving, and shared decision-making. The Institute offers certificates and degrees through the university's communication studies department; and offers workshops, facilitator training, and research opportunities through the Kansas Civic Life Project.
- The James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions: The James Madison Program is a scholarly institute within the Department of Politics at Princeton University and is dedicated to exploring enduring questions of American constitutional law and Western political thought. The James Madison Program was founded in 2000 by Dr. Robert George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University, and follows the University of Chicago's principles on freedom of expression.

The James Madison Program promotes teaching and scholarship in constitutional law and political thought and provides a forum for free expression and robust civil dialogue and debate. The Program hosts visiting postdoctoral and undergraduate fellows and offers various activities, courses, summer programs, and other related activities promoting free expression.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

All 12 universities in the State University System have voiced a commitment to civil discourse and have provided numerous examples of programs and policies to establish, maintain, and support civil discourse throughout their living, learning, and working environment.

In recent years, there have been incidents of unacceptable behaviors and violations of codes of conduct and personnel policies relating to civil discourse by administrators, faculty, and students in the system. When such incidents occur, universities must respond to grievances with rapid response, thorough review, and adjudication according to their established policies. This process is most valuable when the conflict is resolved,

the impacted individuals are redressed, and all involved can learn and grow from the experience.

Moreover, programming restricting participation based on race or ethnicity, and in violation of existing university policies, has occurred with more frequency on Florida campuses. Although perhaps well-intentioned, often the effect of these programs is to further divide and disenfranchise, rather than promote understanding through civil discourse.

## The Board of Governors as Advocate

The Board of Governors, responsible for the management and operation of the State University System, is unequivocal in its support of civil discourse throughout its 12 campus communities. The Board believes that each campus community member has a unique and critical role in the adherence to civil discourse and the ongoing support of the establishment, maintenance, and evaluation of civil discourse initiatives.

The Board of Governors' "Statement of Free Expression" remains an integral part of the Board's three-pronged mission for state universities: to deliver a high-quality academic experience for students, to engage in meaningful and productive research, and to provide a valuable public service for the benefit of local communities, metropolitan regions, and the state.

- I. **The Board of Governors expects that the leadership at each university will operationalize the Board's commitment to open-minded and tolerant civil discourse by promoting, supporting, and regularly evaluating adherence to the principles set forth in the Board's Statement of Free Expression and cultivating a culture of civil discourse in all campus interactions, including academic, administrative, extracurricular, and social dealings.**

## University Planning

In its 2025 Strategic Plan, the Board of Governors sets forth its mission for the State University System and further states that the state universities will "*support students' development of the knowledge, skills, and aptitudes needed for success in the global society and marketplace.*" The Board strongly believes that the state universities are well-positioned to provide the foundation for civil discourse learning, understanding, and growth for all campus community members.

Each university's Accountability Plan is an annual report of specific accountability measures and strategic plans.

- II. **The Board of Governors recommends that each university's Accountability Plan and Strategic Plan include a specific endorsement of the Board's Statement of Free Expression, as well as a clear expectation for open-minded and tolerant civil discourse throughout the campus community. The Board of Governors will include similar statements and principles in its Strategic Plan for the State University System.**

## **University Leadership**

State university boards of trustees have the powers and duties necessary for each university's operation, management, and accountability. University civil discourse policies, programs, and initiatives should be viewed as strategic priorities by each board of trustees. The Board of Governors also believes that university faculty senates and student governments have a vital role and should participate early and often in the development, implementation, evaluation, and support of civil discourse programs and initiatives.

- III. **The Board of Governors recommends that the leadership of each university board of trustees, faculty senate, and student government annually review and endorse the Board's Statement of Free Expression and commit to the principles of civil discourse.**
- IV. **The Board of Governors recommends that each board of trustees conducts a thorough review of current student orientation programs, student codes of conduct, and employee policies and procedures to ensure consistency with the Board of Governors Statement of Free Expression, the principles of free speech and civil discourse, and compliance with section 1004.097, Florida Statutes.**

## **The University President**

The university president has primary responsibility for establishing the campus culture and setting the day-to-day living, learning, and working environment for all university community members. The president directs and monitors these efforts and is ultimately accountable for the civil discourse climate in the campus community.

Board of Governors Regulation 1.001, University Board of Trustees Powers and Duties, states that the annual evaluation for university presidents addresses "responsiveness to the Board of Governors' strategic goals and priorities."

- V. Beginning in the 2022 presidential evaluation and contract renewal cycle, as a part of a president's evaluation, the Chair of the Board of Governors will consult with the board of trustees chair to review the university's campus free speech climate, including adherence to the principles set forth in the Board's Statement of Free Expression, the occurrence and the resolution of any issues related to the university's compliance with substantiated violations of section 1004.097, Florida Statutes, and the implementation of best practices promoting civil discourse.

## **Academic, Student, and Administrative Affairs**

Board of Governors Regulation 1.001, University Boards of Trustees Powers & Duties, directs each board of trustees to adopt regulations or policies for a student code of conduct and establish a personnel program for all university employees. These policies are required to include standards for performance and conduct as well as disciplinary actions, complaints, appeals, and grievance procedures.

A university's personnel policies, orientation programs, and student code of conduct are critical to setting the tone for a climate of open-mindedness and tolerance for civil discourse. More specifically, all university campus areas, including classrooms, lecture halls, offices, and extracurricular, residential, and social locales, offer opportunities for learning, tolerance, and growth. Academic deans and directors, student affairs administrators, faculty, and students share responsibility for establishing and reinforcing tolerant, open-minded, and respectful discourse on a university campus.

- VI. The Board of Governors recommends that university academic, student affairs, and administrative leaders review student orientation programming, student codes of conduct, and employee personnel policies and procedures to ensure that they contain clear and unambiguous support for the Board's Statement of Free Expression, and the principles of free speech and civil discourse, and that they are in compliance with section 1004.097, Florida Statutes.

## **Best Practices for Civil Discourse**

- VII. The Board of Governors recommends implementing the following best practices based on its review of university programs and initiatives that effectively promote and support civil discourse.

- **Instill the importance of civil discourse, academic freedom, and free speech from day one**, utilizing student and employee orientation sessions, public assemblies, and official university documents and communications.
- **Schedule and host ongoing, campus-wide forums, dialogues, and debates** on various issues and perspectives to promote open discussion, understanding, and learning opportunities.
- **Foster intellectual diversity** by encouraging university leadership to: (1) promote viewpoint diversity and open-minded discussion and debate, and (2) highlight and enforce policies that prohibit programming that excludes participation based on race or ethnicity.
- **Avoid disinvitations** by developing clear, viewpoint-neutral policies and procedures governing the invitation and accommodation of campus speakers.
- **Provide targeted educational and professional development opportunities** for university administrative employees to reinforce free expression and open-minded debate norms.
- **Encourage faculty to establish and maintain a learning environment in their classrooms and offices that supports open dialogue and the free expression of all viewpoints and create processes to evaluate the strength of such environments.**

## **Appendix A**

### **State University System of Florida**

### **Statement of Free Expression**

**April 15, 2019**

The State University System of Florida and its twelve public postsecondary institutions adopt this Statement on Free Expression to support and encourage a full and open discourse and the robust exchange of ideas and perspectives on our respective campuses. The principles of freedom of speech and freedom of expression in the United States and Florida Constitutions, in addition to being legal rights, are an integral part of our three-part university mission to deliver a high-quality academic experience for our students, engage in meaningful and productive research, and provide valuable public service for the benefit of our local communities and the state. The purpose of this statement is to affirm our dedication to these principles and to seek our campus communities' commitment to maintaining our campuses as places where the open exchange of knowledge and ideas furthers our mission.

A fundamental purpose of an institution of higher education is to provide a learning environment where divergent ideas, opinions, and philosophies, new and old, can be rigorously debated and critically evaluated. Through this process, often referred to as the marketplace of ideas, individuals are free to express any ideas and opinions they wish, even if others may disagree with them or find those ideas and opinions to be offensive or otherwise antithetical to their own worldview. The very process of debating divergent ideas and challenging others' opinions develops the intellectual skills necessary to respectfully argue through civil discourse. Development of such skills leads to personal and scholarly growth and is an essential component of each of our institutions' academic and research missions.

It is equally important not to stifle the dissemination of any ideas, even if other members of our community may find those ideas abhorrent. Individuals wishing to express ideas with which others may disagree must be free to do so without fear of being bullied, threatened, or silenced. This does not mean that such ideas should go unchallenged, as that is part of the learning process. And though we believe all members of our campus communities have a role to play in promoting civility and mutual respect in that type of discourse, we must not let concerns over civility or respect be used as a reason to silence expression. We should empower and enable one another to speak and listen, rather than interfere with or silence the open expression of ideas.

Each member of our campus communities must also recognize that institutions may restrict unlawful expression, such as true threats or defamation. Because universities and colleges are first and foremost places where people go to engage in scholarly endeavors, it is necessary to the efficient and effective operations of each institution for there to be reasonable limitations on the time, place, and manner in which these rights are exercised. Each institution has adopted regulations that align with Florida's Campus

Free Expression Act, section 1004.097, Florida Statutes, and the United States and Florida Constitutions and the legal opinions interpreting those provisions. These limitations are narrowly drawn and content-neutral and serve to ensure that all members of our campus communities have an equal ability to express their ideas and opinions while preserving campus order and security.





# STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

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**Board of Governors**  
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