



Executive Order 4-03

By the authority vested in me by the Constitution and Statutes of the Student Body of Florida International University, it is hereby ordered,

WHEREAS, On April 15th, 2019, the State University System of Florida and its twelve public postsecondary institutions adopted the Statement on Free Expression,

WHEREAS, The Board of Governors recommended in its 2022 Civil Discourse Report that there be an annual endorsement of the Statement on Free Expression from each State University's Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, and Student Government,

WHEREAS, On September 27th, 2022, the FIU Student Government Association reaffirmed the Statement on Free Expression through Executive Order 3-02,

WHEREAS, The Statement on Free Expression was drafted to support and promote a robust discussion, and the interchange of ideas and viewpoints on our separate campuses, and the Student Government Association remains committed to these principles,

WHEREAS, The third week of October annually is Free Speech Week, which commemorates the same values espoused by the Statement on Free Expression,

WHEREAS, The Student Government Association strongly believes in effectively promoting freedom of inquiry and expression,

WHEREAS, In accordance with SGAS §4001.4, the Student Body President may issue Executive Orders to institute "the addition of requirements not in conflict with the Constitution," and such orders shall "carry the binding effect of statutes."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ALEXANDER P. SUTTON, as Student Body President of Florida International University, in obedience to my solemn duty to uphold the Constitution and Statutes of the Student Body and in accordance with SGAS §4001.4, and the Board of Governors 2022 Civil Discourse Report, hereby issue the following Executive Order, to take immediate effect:

Section 1. The Student Government Association hereby endorses the Florida Board of Governors' Statement on Free Expression, attached to this Executive Order.

Section 2. The Student Government Association may not censor or delete any student speech, nor may it restrict students' right to free expression. It shall be the official policy of the Student Government at FIU that:

- (1) Comments posted on SGA social media posts shall never be deleted.
- (2) Students shall not be denied the opportunity to comment publicly at meetings of the Cabinet or the Executive Board, with at least 24 hours' notice to the Student Body President.
- (3) The following SGA events shall be recorded and available to the public: Elections Candidate Debates, the State of the Student Body Address, SGA Press Conferences, Town Halls, and Forums, and any other event or meeting, at the discretion of a simple majority vote of the Executive Board.
- (4) If the Senate decides, by simple majority vote, to make its meetings be recorded, then such recordings shall be made publicly available. The Senate may revoke this decision at a later date by a simple majority vote.

Section 3. The Executive Administrator is hereby ordered to host at least one Press Conference each Fall and Spring semester. Press Conferences may be held in GC150, the GC Pit, the Panther Square in the Wolfe University Center, or any other available space. All students shall be guaranteed the right to ask questions at a Press Conference.

Section 4. The Student Government Association hereby recognizes the third week of October as Free Speech Week, and shall commemorate this week annually by holding a Press Conference that week or another week in October as scheduling constraints permit.

Section 5. A Press Conference shall be held on Wednesday, October 18th, 2023, at 3:00PM, in GC150, and it shall be broadcast over zoom so that all students may attend.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused this order to be carried out, on this Monday the 16th of October, 2023.



Alexander P. Sutton, Student Body President

Monday, October 16th, 2023



Florida Board of Governors Statement on Free Expression

The State University System of Florida and its twelve public postsecondary institutions adopt this Statement on Free Expression to support and encourage 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 world view. 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 the academic and research missions of each of our institutions.

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 expression that is unlawful, 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 with 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.