



**Student Government
Association**
Office of the
Student Body President

Executive Order 03-02

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

- WHEREAS** On April 15, 2019, the State University System of Florida and its twelve public postsecondary institutions adopted the Statement on Free Expression;
- 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;
- WHEREAS** The Student Government Association strongly believes in effectively protecting freedom of inquiry and expression,;
- WHEREAS** Supports open-minded civil discourse and free expression while fostering a culture of diversity and espousing different points of view to encourage differing perspectives that promote effective and expansive learning opportunities;
- WHEREAS** The Board of Governors included seven recommendations for civil discourse in its 2022 Civil Discourse Report;
- WHEREAS** The Board of Governors recommended in its third recommendation 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”;
- WHEREAS** The Student Government Association understands the need to support Free Expression on campus;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, *Cristhofer Lugo*, Student Body President of Florida International University, in obedience to my solemn duty to uphold the Constitution and Statutes of Student Government and pursuant to SGAC§5.03.1.9 and SGAS§4001.4 issue the following order;

- Section 1.** Support and endorses the commitment of the State University System of Florida Board of Governors to civil discourse and;
- Section 2.** Support and endorses Florida International University in their support of the Statement of Free Expression;

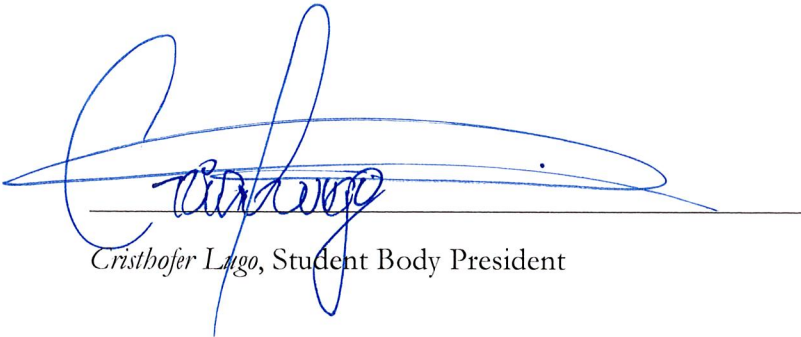
The State University System of Florida and its twelve public postsecondary institutions adopt this Statement on Free Expression to support and encourage a full and open discourse and the robust exchange of ideas and perspectives on our respective campuses. The principles of freedom of speech and freedom 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 expressions, 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.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused this order to be carried out, this Tuesday, September 27, 2022


Cristhofer Lago, Student Body President

