



Resolution: 22-23 RS I: Civil Discourse

Authors: Senate Pro Tempore Range & Chair Wiktorski

To read as follows:

WHEREAS, the Florida Board of Governors passed recommendations relative to civil discourse on public campuses in January of 2022; and

WHEREAS, the Civil Discourse procedure, also known as the marketplace of ideas, is the idea that, “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” according to the State University System of Florida; and

WHEREAS, the principle of free speech and expression in the United States Constitution and Florida Constitution are an integral part of Florida’s University State System’s three-part university mission to “deliver a high-quality academic experience for students, engage in meaningful and productive research, and provide valuable public service for the benefit of local communities and the state.”; and

WHEREAS, a fundamental purpose of an institution of higher education is to provide a learning environment where divergent ideas, opinions, and philosophies can be vigorously debated and critically evaluated; and the process of debating divergent ideas and challenging others’ opinions develops the intellectual skills necessary to respectfully argue through civil discourse; and

WHEREAS, Individuals wishing to express ideas with which others may disagree must be free to do so without fear of being bullied, threatened, or silenced; and

WHEREAS, the University of West Florida may reasonably restrict speech that is unlawful or impedes the efficient and effective operation of the institution, such as true threats or defamation, and has the right to have reasonable limitations on time, place, and manner in which these rights are exercised in compliance with Florida statutes and the United States and Florida Constitutions; and

WHEREAS, every university in the Florida University State System 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; and

WHEREAS, Recommendation 3 of Florida State University System Board of Governors Strategic Planning Committee relative to civil discourse dictates that each university Board of Trustees, Faculty Senate, and Student Government annually review and endorse the Board's Statement of Free Expression as well as commit to the principles of civil discourse; and

WHEREAS, the University of West Florida Student Government Association supports and encourages a full, open discourse and the robust exchange of ideas and perspectives on our campus and the right of students to engage with those who express their ideals on the campus.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the University of West Florida Student Government Association recognizes the freedom of speech and expression for all students and faculty and affirms the Board of Governors State of Free Expression and commits to the principles of civil discourse outlined in the Board of Governors implementation recommendations.

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Mr. Patrick Marshall  
Student Body President

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Ms. Ariauna Range  
Senate Pro Tempore