

Impact of Florida House Bill 233 on Teaching and Learning in the State University System

Invitation, Informed Consent, and Survey Link

Dear Professor/Instructor:

We are writing to invite you to participate in a 10-question survey of instructors and professors (assistant/associate/full) who teach in the State University System of Florida. This research explores the impact of Florida House Bill 233 on teaching and learning, including intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity.

What is the purpose of this research?

House Bill 233 states that it:

1. prohibits the State Board of Education and Board of Governors from shielding students, staff, and faculty from certain speech;
2. requires State Board of Education to conduct an annual assessment on intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity;
3. creates a cause of action for recording or publication of certain video or audio recordings; and
4. revises provisions related to protected expressive activity, university student governments, and codes of conduct.

This law went into effect on July 1, 2021. We are seeking your feedback on how the provisions in House Bill 233 have affected students, professors, and instructors across various universities, disciplines, and programs. If you are interested in reading the full text of this bill (although not required for this survey), please see

<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2021/233/BillText/er/PDF>

This is an independent piece of research conducted by two professors at Florida Atlantic University. This exploratory study is not part of the “annual assessment on intellectual freedom and viewpoint diversity” that is required by House Bill 233. The researchers plan to publish the findings of this study in a peer-reviewed journal. The findings of this study may also be used by legislators and public policy makers as they review the impact of this legislation and determine whether to retain, expand, amend, or revoke various provisions in this bill.

How long will it take to complete the survey?

This online survey includes both closed (multiple choice) questions and open ended (comment) questions. You should be able to complete the 10 multiple-choice questions in less than 10 minutes. If you choose to provide comments for the open questions, this entire survey will take 15 to 30 minutes to complete, depending on the length of your answers. We appreciate your answers to the open questions because they will provide specific examples and elaborate on the types of impacts of HB 233 that you have experienced.

How will the researchers protect your anonymity?

This research is being conducted through an online survey program called Qualtrics. The privacy parameters have been set so that your IP address and identity cannot be recognized. To ensure the anonymity of your responses, the survey is not collecting any personally identifying information. Only aggregated data will be shared in any publications or presentations of this research.

The survey includes requests for some demographic information, including the name of your university and the unit within which you teach. If you prefer not to include this information, you may check the response box for “I prefer not to answer.” We are gathering demographic information so we may determine the extent to which the research sample is representative of the full cadre of professors and instructors from across the State University System.

What are the risks and benefits of this research?

Risks associated with this research study are minimal. There are no direct benefits to you. The results of this research could be used to inform future laws and policies governing universities, which could benefit you and your university. Your participation is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may also withdraw from the study before submitting your answers. Given that this is an anonymous survey, we cannot exclude your responses once you have submitted your survey. The Florida Atlantic University Institutional Review Board reviewed these protocols and determined that this project does not meet the definition of human subject research according to the Code of Federal Regulations (Title 45, Part 46) because no identifiable private information is being collected. The IRB provided approval to proceed as “not human research” (IRB #1841857-1).

If you would like to participate in this research, please click on the following link. By clicking on this link and completing the online survey, you are indicating your consent to participate in this study: https://fau.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_396ppR0LIP9EDMG Alternatively, you may consent and begin the study by pasting the URL into your internet browser.

Who may I contact if I have any questions or concerns about the study?

- If you have questions about the study, you may email one of the primary investigators, Dr. Allan Barsky at abarsky@fau.edu or Dr. Danielle Groton at dgroton@fau.edu
- If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you may call Florida Atlantic University Division of Research, Research Integrity Office at (561) 297-1383 or send an email to researchintegrity@fau.edu.

Thank you for considering participation in this survey. We appreciate your time.

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