

Resolution on Institutional Process and Governance in the Case of Dr. Kate Polak

Affirmed February 2, 2026

WHEREAS, freedom of expression and the transparent exercise of due process are essential to the open exchange of ideas in a healthy academic and civic environment; and

WHEREAS, the University retained outside counsel to investigate social media posts authored by Dr. Kate Polak in her capacity as a private citizen that did not identify herself as a Florida Atlantic University employee; and

WHEREAS, the report of outside counsel states that “discipline is only allowable for off-the-job conduct based upon facts demonstrating actual harm to the University’s ability to carry out its mission—which has not been demonstrated on the record reviewed;” and

WHEREAS, the report of outside counsel further notes that “[Dr. Polak’s] personnel file reflects no prior discipline and documents a record of effective teaching and performance;” and

WHEREAS, Dr. Polak had received support for promotion to Senior Instructor from her Department colleagues and Chair as well as from her College colleagues and Dean, conveying an implicit expectation of contract renewal; and

WHEREAS, to the knowledge of the University Faculty Senate, the University has never previously denied a non-tenure track promotion case, and the contract renewal accompanying such a promotion, when the case enjoys academic unit and College support, and

WHEREAS, the University’s letter to Dr. Polak dated January 20, 2026, which advised her of outside counsel’s conclusion that “disciplinary action does not appear warranted,” also informed her that “the University has decided not to renew your appointment,” and

WHEREAS, the University has provided no substantive performance-based explanation for its decision not to renew Dr. Polak’s appointment; and

WHEREAS, the process leading to that decision appears to have departed significantly from usual norms and practices of academic leadership at Florida Atlantic University,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the University Faculty Senate of Florida Atlantic University perceives the University’s decision not to reappoint Dr. Polak as a *de facto* disciplinary action unsupported by evidence reviewed by outside counsel, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the absence of any merit-based rationale for the decision and the lack of transparency in the process threatens the open exchange of ideas that has long been a cornerstone of the academic culture at Florida Atlantic University, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the University Faculty Senate of Florida Atlantic University calls upon President Adam Hasner and the University’s Board of Trustees to provide a clear,

written report to the entire University community detailing the procedures and rationale that led to this decision, and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the University Faculty Senate of Florida Atlantic University recommends that President Hasner rescind the decision not to reappoint Dr. Polak and allow her reappointment and previously existing application for promotion to Senior Instructor to proceed according to normal academic procedures.