

Joint Resolution of the University Faculty Senate of Florida Atlantic University and the United Faculty of Florida–FAU Chapter Reaffirming Commitment to Free Expression and Civil Discourse

WHEREAS Florida Atlantic University has placed at least one tenured faculty member on administrative leave for their social media posts,

WHEREAS the uncertainty created by this action could serve to chill the lawful exercise of free speech by members of the University community, and

WHEREAS the open exchange of ideas, including controversial ideas, is a cornerstone value of higher education, and

WHEREAS, the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida and the 12 State University System Boards of Trustees have affirmed that the role of a public university is not to shield individuals from ideas they may find objectionable, but to protect the rights of all members of the university community to engage with and respond to a wide range of perspectives – “even if other members of our community may find those ideas abhorrent,”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the University Faculty Senate (UFS) of Florida Atlantic University (FAU) and FAU’s chapter of the United Faculty of Florida (UFF-FAU):

1. **Holds** that the public disclosure of personnel actions taken in response to public speech—when such disclosure lacks clearly articulated and specific grounds—has a chilling effect on the free expression of ideas within the university community;
2. **Reaffirms** its commitment to the principles of free speech and civil discourse;
3. **Opposes** any effort to suppress, punish, or otherwise infringe upon the exercise of free speech and expression by public university employees, when that expression is legally protected from punitive action;
4. **Calls upon** the University administration to abide by existing policy on proscribed speech or expression by employees, and to work through joint governance to revise that policy if needed; and
5. **Urges** the University administration to develop policy through joint governance to ensure due process for students and employees whose speech or expression may legally be subject to disciplinary action.