



## CIVIL DISCOURSE INITIATIVES RECOMMENDATIONS INTERIM UPDATE

I. The Board of Governors expects that the leadership at each university will operationalize the Board's commitment to open-minded and tolerant civil discourse by promoting, supporting, and regularly evaluating adherence to the principles set forth in the Board's Statement of Free Expression and cultivating a culture of civil discourse in all campus interactions, including academic, administrative, extracurricular, and social dealings.

a. Key Groups Involved:

- Board of Trustees
- President's Cabinet
- Human Resources
- Faculty Development/New Faculty Orientation
- Student Affairs

b. Milestones:

Board's Statement of Free Expression will be linked to the university's homepage (FSU.edu), the university's "About FSU" page (fsu.edu/about), the university news homepage (news.fsu.edu), Office of the President homepage (president.fsu.edu), Admissions homepage (admissions.fsu.edu), the Division of Student Affairs homepage (studentaffairs.fsu.edu), Department of Student Conduct and Community Standards homepage (sccs.fsu.edu), "Uphold the Garnet and Gold" - university's longtime civility initiative - homepage (uphold.fsu.edu), the Student Government homepage (sga.fsu.edu), Office of the Provost homepage (provost.fsu.edu), Office of Faculty Development and Advancement homepage (fda.fsu.edu), General Counsel's homepage (generalcounsel.fsu.edu/attorneys), and Human Resources homepage (HR.fsu.edu).

The scope of the Student Conduct Code includes the paragraph below. The highlighted portion has been proposed as an addition to be approved by the FSU Board of Trustees this fall:

The University fully recognizes and values the right of all students and individuals to seek knowledge, debate ideas, form opinions, and freely express views in accordance with the expectations set forth in this Code. *The University supports the principles of free speech and civil discourse outlined in the Board of Governors' "Statement of Free Expression" ("Statement of Free Expression", Florida Board of Governors, 2019).* This right must be exercised in a manner which will not interfere with the same rights and freedoms of others in their enjoyment of the benefits of the programs offered by this University, or their lawful use of university facilities, including ingress and egress (for more information, see the University's Freedom of Expression Rights and Responsibilities regulation). Additional expectations for student organizations are outlined in the Student Organization Conduct Code and other University rules, regulations, and/or policies.

c. Timelines:

- September 23 – Board of Trustees will review for consideration.

- Conduct Code Update – Proposed timeline for approval to code changes:
  - August 1 - Final Proposed Edits of Student Conduct Code (Reg), Student Organization Conduct Code (Reg), 2-2 (policy) and 2-2a (policy)
  - August 8 - First “reading” of regulations and policies at Cabinet
  - August 22 - Approval of Regs and Policies by Cabinet
  - August 23 - Publish policies for notice and comment
  - August 23 - Publish of Regs for Notice and Comment as for Regulations
  - September 23 - BOT Meeting for approval of Regs
  - September 24 - Posting of updated Regs and Policies

II. The Board of Governors recommends that each university's Accountability Plan and Strategic Plan include a specific endorsement of the Board's Statement of Free Expression, as well as a clear expectation for open-minded and tolerant civil discourse throughout the campus community. The Board of Governors will include similar statements and principles in its Strategic Plan for the State University System.

a. Key Groups Involved:

- President’s Cabinet
- Provost’s Office
- Board of Trustees

b. Milestones:

- Board of Trustees approved 2022 Accountability Plan on April 26, 2022, which included the following statement:

*Undergirding FSU's strategy is a shared commitment with the Florida Board of Governors to advancing open-minded and tolerant civil discourse. Thus, FSU endorses the principles set forth in the Board's Statement of Free Expression and works to cultivate a culture of civil discourse in campus interactions, including academic, administrative, extracurricular, and social dealings.*

- The goal listed will be included in the revised strategic plan and presented to the Board of Trustees for approval this fall:

*Goal III: Building a Community Committed to Inclusive Excellence*

*Across the nation, institutions of higher education are struggling to become community leaders that are committed to inclusive excellence in an increasingly multicultural world. FSU is uniquely positioned to be a leader in diversity, equity and inclusion within its campus and in the communities it serves. We aspire to develop diverse, equitable and inclusive student body supported and lead by a diverse community of faculty and staff who will promote these efforts locally and globally. FSU has distinguished itself with honors including the 2021 APLU Degree Completion Award for improvements in degree completion parity across all student populations and by being named one of only 10 “Diversity Champion” universities nationally by INSIGHT Into Diversity magazine. Our approach starts with a belief that diversity is about more than a particular head count: it must reflect the quality and depth of interactions. By valuing, celebrating and leveraging the differences and similarities within our community, we create a fertile environment for problem-solving—one that is more inventive and compassionate. We’re proud that our cohesive community has become a signature of the FSU experience. But we can, and we will, do more. Undergirding FSU's strategy is a shared commitment with the Florida Board of Governors to advancing open-minded and tolerant civil discourse. Thus, FSU endorses the principles set forth in the*

*Board's Statement of Free Expression and works to cultivate a culture of civil discourse in campus interactions, including academic, administrative, extracurricular, and social dealings.*

c. Timelines:

- Accountability Plan - Completed
- Strategic Plan – Fall 2022

III. The Board of Governors recommends 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.

a. Key Groups Involved:

- President's Cabinet
- Board of Trustees
- Faculty Senate President
- SGA President/SGA Student Senate

b. Milestones: Leadership to present to each key group for consideration.

c. Timelines:

- September 21, 2022 – Leadership present to Student Senate for their consideration.
- September 22, 2022 – Leadership present to Board of Trustees for their consideration.
- September 2022 – Leadership present to Faculty Senate for their consideration.

IV. IV. The Board of Governors recommends that each board of trustees conducts a thorough review of current student orientation programs, student codes of conduct, and employee policies and procedures to ensure consistency with the Board of Governors Statement of Free Expression, the principles of free speech and civil discourse, and compliance with section 1004.097, Florida Statutes.

a. Key Groups Involved:

- Board of Trustees
- President's Cabinet

b. Milestones: Approval will be included on the September 2022 Board of Trustees Meeting Agenda. Trustees will review materials prior to the meeting and receive a presentation during the meeting. The board will then review and approve.

c. Timelines: Summer and Fall 2022

V. Beginning in the 2022 presidential evaluation and contract renewal cycle, as a part of a president's evaluation, the Chair of the Board of Governors will consult with the board of trustees chair to review the university's campus free speech climate, including adherence to the principles set forth in the Board's Statement of Free Expression, the occurrence and the resolution of any issues related to the university's compliance with substantiated violations of section 1004.097, Florida Statutes, and the implementation of best practices promoting civil discourse.

a. Key Groups Involved:

- Chairman for the FSU Board of Trustees
- Chairman for the Florida State University Board of Governors

b. Milestones: 2022-2023 Presidential Evaluation

c. Timelines: Based on the preference of the Chair of the Board of Governors and the Chair of the Board of Trustees

- VI. The Board of Governors recommends that university academic, student affairs, and administrative leaders review student orientation programming, student codes of conduct, and employee personnel policies and procedures to ensure that they contain clear and unambiguous support for the Board's Statement of Free Expression, and the principles of free speech and civil discourse, and that they are in compliance with section 1004.097, Florida Statutes.
- a. Key Groups Involved:
    - New Student and Family Programs
    - Student Affairs
    - Human Resources
  - b. Milestones:
    - Implementation of Civil Discourse Training in the instruction of Orientation Leaders which incorporates the Freedom of Expression module that is available within the Resilience Project ([strong.fsu.edu](http://strong.fsu.edu)).
    - Implementation of a small group session with Orientation Leaders dedicated to the facilitation of civil discourse and its importance. Required for every student as a part of orientation. The Resilience Project and Freedom of Expression modules is required of every student during the online pre-orientation process.
    - Implement a review FSU's policies pertaining to academic freedom, free speech, and civil discourse in New Employee Orientation (Staff).
  - c. Timelines:
    - All incoming students will arrive with this experience. Fully implemented Summer 2021.
    - New Employee Orientation Update– September 2022.
- VII. The Board of Governors recommends implementing the following best practices based on its review of university programs and initiatives that effectively promote and support civil discourse.

Best Practices for Civil Discourse:

- Instill the importance of civil discourse, academic freedom, and free speech from day one, utilizing student and employee orientation sessions, public assemblies, and official university documents and communications.
  - Schedule and host ongoing, campus-wide forums, dialogues, and debates on various issues and perspectives to promote open discussion, understanding, and learning opportunities.
  - Foster intellectual diversity by encouraging university leadership to: (1) promote viewpoint diversity and open-minded discussion and debate, and (2) highlight and enforce policies that prohibit programming that excludes participation based on race or ethnicity.
  - Avoid disinvitations by developing clear, viewpoint-neutral policies and procedures governing the invitation and accommodation of campus speakers.
  - Provide targeted educational and professional development opportunities for university administrative employees to reinforce free expression and open-minded debate norms.
  - Encourage faculty to establish and maintain a learning environment in their classrooms and offices that supports open dialogue and the free expression of all viewpoints and create processes to evaluate the strength of such environments.
- a. Key Groups Involved:
    - President's Cabinet
    - Deans
    - Power of We
    - Student Affairs
    - Human Resources

- Faculty Development & Advancement
  - The Center for the Advancement of Teaching (CAT)
- b. Timelines:
- Orientation online pre-orientation module will be reviewed, and any changes implemented for summer 2022.
  - Power of We – Power of We, a student organization focused on creating opportunities for people across the spectrums of politics and life experiences to convene and collaborate, will hold 2 events by December 15, 2022 which are open to all students, faculty, and staff. These schedules will provide civil discourse on a variety of topics.
  - Civil Discourse discussion with the Dean’s Council
  - Student Leadership Team (all directors) trained to set the tone
  - Faculty Development & Advancement, which is the office that coordinates New Faculty Orientation, will include a review and discussion of FSU’s policies pertaining to academic freedom, free speech, and civil discourse.
  - A website is being created for faculty and instructors that provides readings and resources on national programs and initiatives to promote and support civil discourse.
  - Individual consultation is available to assist faculty to create classroom activities to learn and practice civil discourse.
  - Multiple professional development opportunities (workshops and reading groups) on facilitating classroom discussions and debates that are inclusive of diverse viewpoints will be offered this year.