

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA  
Civil Discourse Update  
Summer 2023

The Board of Governors as Advocate – Recommendation I			
<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.</i>			
	In Progress	Implemented	Summer 2023 Update
<b>Operationalization of the Board's commitment to the Statement of Free Expression and cultivating a culture of civil discourse</b>		<p>President Law Formed a university-wide workgroup to implement the Board of Governors' civil discourse recommendations. The workgroup reviewed the Board of Governors' recommendations and best practices to provide the President and University Leadership with guidance and strategies to operationalize and further promote civil discourse at USF. Recommendations outlined in this report represent actions taken and as an institution of higher education, we recognize that a culture of civil discourse is an ongoing iterative process and will continue to explore best practices and innovative ideas for the years to come.</p>	<p>Although recommendations were implemented last year we continue to strengthen our efforts related to civil discourse.</p>
	<b>If "in progress," anticipated implementation date:</b>		

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<b>University Planning – Recommendation II</b>	
<i>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.</i>	
<b>Accountability Plan</b>	<b>Strategic Plan</b>
Completed	Completed
<b>If "in progress," anticipated completion date:</b>	<b>If "in progress," anticipated completion date:</b>

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University Leadership – Recommendation 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. NOTE: The first review should be completed during the 2022-2023 academic year.			
	University Board of Trustees	Faculty Senate	Student Government
Review and endorse the Board's Statement of Free Expression and commit to the principles of civil discourse	Completed	In Progress	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date: The statement is currently under review for discussion at an upcoming meeting during the fall 2022 semester.	If "in progress," anticipated completion date: <b>September 13</b>
Summer 2023 Update	In Progress	In Progress	In Progress
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
	The statement is anticipated to go before the BOT at the August meeting.	The statement is under review and will go before the senate for consideration.	Student Government will review and endorse the statement this fall when they are back in session.

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University Leadership – Recommendation IV			
<i>The Board of Governors recommends that each <b>board of trustees</b> 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.</i>			
	Board's Statement of Free Expression	Principles of Free Speech & Civil Discourse	section 1004.097, Florida Statutes
<b>Student orientation programming</b>	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
<b>Student codes of conduct</b>	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
<b>Employee personnel policies and procedures</b>	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:

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Academic, Student, and Administrative Affairs – Recommendation VI			
The Board of Governors recommends that <b>university academic, student affairs, and administrative leaders</b> 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.			
Review by Academic Affairs Leaders	Board's Statement of Free Expression	Principles of Free Speech & Civil Discourse	section 1004.097, Florida Statutes
Student orientation programming	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
Student codes of conduct	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
Employee personnel policies and procedures	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
Review by Student Affairs Leaders	Board's Statement of Free Expression	Principles of Free Speech & Civil Discourse	section 1004.097, Florida Statutes
Student orientation programming	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
Student codes of conduct	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
Employee personnel policies and procedures	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
Review by Administrative Leaders	Board's Statement of Free Expression	Principles of Free Speech & Civil Discourse	section 1004.097, Florida Statutes
Student orientation programming	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
Student codes of conduct	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:
Employee personnel policies and procedures	Completed	Completed	Completed
	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:	If "in progress," anticipated completion date:

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Best Practices for Civil Discourse – Recommendation VII			
<i>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.</i>			
	In Progress	Implemented	Summer 2023
<b>1. 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.</b>		Implemented a civil discourse orientation module for students, graduate students, and parents and families. We will continue to revise and refine orientation programs as needed based on feedback and assessment.	This year's orientation modules will again include a module on civil discourse.
	If "in progress," anticipated implementation date:		
<b>2. Schedule and host ongoing, campus-wide forums, dialogues, and debates on various issues and perspectives to promote open discussion, understanding, and learning opportunities.</b>		The following items were Initially launched in August 2022 and additional events will continue in alignment with fall and spring semester activities. The First Amendment Forum (student organization) holds civil discussions, events, and workshops. The Event Support Team supports the success of events and free expression on all USF campuses. Members of the team are often seen at on-campus protests, vigils, demonstrations, and programs with speakers with controversial material or other risk factors. Constitution Day is an annual on-campus event, themes for fall 2022 are still being discussed, and past events have emphasized principles of the U.S. Constitution, valuesbased civic leadership, common purpose, and action as conscientious and engaged citizens.	The First Amendment Forum (student organization) holds civil discussions, events, and workshops. The Event Support Team supports the success of events and free expression on all USF campuses. Members of the team are often seen at on-campus protests, vigils, demonstrations, and programs with speakers with controversial material or other risk factors. Constitution Day is an annual on-campus event with activities to educate the community on principles of the U.S. Constitution, civic leadership, and engaged citizenship.
	If "in progress," anticipated implementation date:		
<b>3. 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.</b>		University Leadership members are available to present at faculty, staff, and student meetings to strengthen academic commitment and practices related to civil discourse and dialogue facilitation. This was initially launched in August 2022 and will continue in alignment with fall and spring semester activities.	Leadership members are available to present at faculty, staff, and student meetings to strengthen academic commitment and practices related to civil discourse and dialogue facilitation.
	If "in progress," anticipated implementation date:		
<b>4. Avoid disinvitations by developing clear, viewpoint-neutral policies and procedures governing the invitation and accommodation of campus speakers.</b>		Human Resources materials, USF policies, and USF regulations have been reviewed and revised to articulate the university's commitment to free speech and academic freedom. We anticipate continuing with an annual review of these items to gather feedback and incorporate additional revisions that meet the needs of the community.	Human Resources materials, USF policies, and USF regulations articulate the university's commitment to free speech and academic freedom, a central webpage with all applicable documents and policies is maintained by HR.
	If "in progress," anticipated implementation date:		

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**Best Practices for Civil Discourse – Recommendation 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.*

	In Progress	Implemented	Summer 2023
<b>5. Provide targeted educational and professional development opportunities for university administrative employees to reinforce free expression and open-minded debate norms.</b>		Preliminary changes supporting free expression have been made and Human Resources will continue to explore enhancements to employee orientation and further address civil discourse consistent with the Board's statement.	Implemented a Civil Discourse & Public Speech on Campus module in new employee orientation; The course is also available as a stand-alone online course for employees.
	If "in progress," anticipated implementation date:		
<b>6. 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.</b>		Faculty resources for these topics are available through the Faculty Success website and Faculty Focus Newsletter. New Faculty Orientation included resources and discussions around facilitating open discussion and free expression in their courses and learning experiences with students. These strategies are also part of ongoing faculty development programs that include workshops and learning resources centered on inclusive teaching practices. The university developed guidance to summarize key points of Florida House Bill 7 (the "Individual Freedom Act") to strengthen best practices related to open dialogue and free expression. This was initially launched in August 2022 and will continue in alignment with fall and spring semester activities.	Faculty resources for these topics are available through the Faculty Success website, along with guidance to strengthen best practices related to open dialogue and free expression. New Faculty Orientation will again include resources and discussions around facilitating open discussion and free expression in courses and learning experiences with students. These strategies are also included in workshops and other learning resources for effective teaching.
	If "in progress," anticipated implementation date:		