Resolution of the University of Florida Faculty Senate,
representing the faculty of the University of Florida, joining the ACFS statement on
Academic Freedom

Be it here declared that the University of Florida Faculty Senate joins the Advisory Council of
Faculty Senates in expressing deep concern regarding breaches of academic freedom at UF:

The State University System of Florida Advisory Council of Faculty Senates, representing the
faculty of all twelve public universities in Florida, have united to express our grave concerns
over the recent events taking place at our member institution, the University of
Florida. Together, we express deep alarm about what appears to be a serious breach of
academic freedom.

In its 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure, based on its
original 1915 Declaration of Principles, the American Association of University Professors set
forth clear professional norms regarding faculty participation in civic discourse: “College and
university teachers are citizens, members of a learned profession, and officers of an educational
institution. When they speak or write as citizens, they should be free from institutional
censorship or discipline….” Recognizing their obligations as representatives of their disciplines
and universities, the AAUP further notes that faculty have an obligation in such circumstances to
speak with accuracy and respect for others, and as individuals rather than institutional
speakers. This is precisely what the faculty at the University of Florida were attempting when
their public participation was blocked by the university.

When faculty are invited to participate in policy processes through their speech or research, they
do so as objective experts, prepared by academic training to focus on evidence over
bias. When they are denied the right to participate, not only does it undermine both freedom of
inquiry and the independence of the university, it denies the citizens of the State, to whom the
university is ultimately responsible, access to the most current and independent knowledge
available on the issue under consideration.

In these recently publicized instances, faculty in a variety of disciplines attempted to engage in
professional activity consistent with the principles of academic freedom that have been
protected in the United States for over 100 years. As fellow faculty and stewards of the
academy, we rise to defend these principles, especially when they are challenged in what
appears to be a systematic way. We urge the University of Florida to reconsider these
decisions, and we urge the State University System to reaffirm its commitment to academic
freedom and freedom of speech as core values of all public institutions of higher learning.