

Advisory Council of Faculty Senates

Advocating for Academic Excellence in the State University System of Florida

Resolution on Safeguarding Free Expression in the State University System of Florida

WHEREAS, on September 10, 2025, Charlie Kirk was fatally shot while participating in a campus speaking event at Utah Valley University – an act of violence that constitutes a direct assault on free expression and civil discourse;

WHEREAS, institutions of higher education are founded upon the principle that universities must remain open forums for the free and lawful exchange of ideas,^{a,b,c} including those that may be controversial or unpopular;

WHEREAS, the Board of Governors of the State University System of Florida and the twelve 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”;^c

WHEREAS, violence, intimidation, or suppression of speech has no place in a democratic society or on a university campus, and directly undermines public trust in the role of higher education;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates:

1. **Unequivocally condemns** the murder of Charlie Kirk as a reprehensible act of violence and an attack on the principles of free expression and lawful discourse;
2. **Reaffirms its commitment to protecting the rights** of all individuals, regardless of political belief, to engage in peaceful speech, public dialogue, and civil debate on university campuses;
3. **Opposes any effort to suppress, punish or otherwise infringe** upon members of our public university communities’ lawfully protected exercise of free speech and expression; and
4. **Calls on Educational Leaders in the State of Florida to safeguard** our educational institutions as bastions of free expression and civil discourse, consistent with the purpose of institutions of higher learning within a free and open society.^{a,b,c}

a. Supreme Court of the United States, *Keyishian v. Board of Regents*, 385 U.S. 589 (1967)

b. Supreme Court of the United States, “*Sweezy v. New Hampshire by Wyman*, Attorney General, 354 U.S. 234 (1957)”

c. State University System of Florida Statement of Free Expression, April 15 2019,
https://www.flbog.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/SPC_09_Civil-Discourse_Final_CE.pdf