



# FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY Division of Student Affairs

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## Free Speech and Campus Civility

The right to free speech is arguably one of the most cherished and contested freedoms given to Americans under the Bill of Rights. Testing out the limits and ramifications of what it means to speak our minds without causing harm to others will likely continue to be a matter for political and public debate for generations to come. Here at FAU, we encourage our campus community to exercise this cherished freedom in lively debate. In fact, we protect and promote that right. What we do insist on, however, is that everyone in the FAU community behave and speak to and about one another in ways that are not racist, religiously intolerant or otherwise degrading to others. It is fine, laudable even, to disagree and dialogue with others about differences of opinion or matters of conscience, or to engage in intense conversations about academic or scholarly matters.

Offensive language and personal attacks are sometimes used to assault and undermine others. At FAU, we strive to embody the best of what it means to be human, abiding by that other cherished maxim: Treat others as you would have them treat you. Those who hold themselves to this standard often find that their peers treat them with the same measure of respect and courtesy, and that by behaving in a manner that honors the dignity of all human beings, they gain new perspectives and insights. The opposite holds true for those who behave with a lack of empathy and integrity. So, as the busy and energetic academic year continues on FAU's campuses, we encourage everyone to rise to the challenge of civility and embrace this principle of kindness in word and deed. Mutual respect dignifies both the message and the messenger.

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Last Modified 4/29/13