

A Summons to Responsible Freedom

Values and Moral Standards at The Florida State University

The moral norm which guides conduct and informs policy at The Florida State University is responsible freedom. Freedom is an important experience which the University, one of the freest of institutions, provides for all of its citizens: faculty, students, administrators, and staff. Freedom is responsibly exercised when it is directed by ethical standards.

As the Florida public university most deeply rooted in the liberal arts tradition, The Florida State University not only focuses on intellectual development, but as a community of moral discourse it also recognizes the need for the development of the whole person. The University maintains a comprehensive educational program ranging from classroom instruction to research and creative activities at the frontiers of human knowledge. These modes of searching for the truth are mutually enhancing and provide the context for the liberating experiences students gain from contact with ideas and individuals. Education based in the liberal arts provides an opportunity for students to learn to express themselves; to think critically both quantitatively and qualitatively; to gain an understanding of and respect for self and others; to understand the world by knowing more about its history, the role of science and technology, and social and cultural achievements; and to develop specialized talents for a vocation. This opportunity is provided with the conviction, as reflected in the University seal, that through such an educational experience one can come to a clearer understanding of the complex moral issues inherent in human life and can develop the knowledge and skills for effective and responsible participation in the world.

The Florida State University shares a commitment to the dignity and worth of each person and is guided in its many endeavors by that underlying value. Through academic activity, community involvement, social interaction, cultural experience, recreational and physical activity, and religious involvement, students find many avenues in the University community for the development of the whole person.

The University shares this society's commitment to the rule of law and expects members of the community to abide by the laws of the city, state, and nation, as well as University rules and regulations.

The University aspires to excellence in its core activities of teaching, learning, research, creative expression, and public service and is committed to the integrity of the academic process. The Academic Honor Code is a specific manifestation of this commitment. Truthfulness in one's claims and representations and honesty in one's activities are essential in life and vocation, and the realization of truthfulness and honesty is an intrinsic part of the educational process.

The University is a place of both assent and dissent and is committed to academic freedom and civil dialogue. In a free and vigorous academic community an ongoing clash of ideas is to be expected and encouraged. The University has a special obligation to see that all have an opportunity to be heard.

The Florida State University is committed to nondiscrimination in matters of race, creed, color, sex, national origin, age, and disability. This commitment applies in all areas with students, faculty, and other University personnel. It addresses recruiting, hiring, training, promotions, and

applicable employment conditions. It is also relevant to those aspects of the University concerned with the choice of contractors, suppliers of goods and services, and with the use of University facilities. The University believes in equal opportunity practices which conform to both the spirit and the letter of all laws against discrimination.

A responsible student recognizes that freedom means the acknowledgment of responsibility to the following: to justice and public order; to fellow students' rights and interests; to the University, its rules, regulations, and accepted traditions; to parents, teachers, and all others whose support makes one's advanced education possible; to city, state, and national laws; to oneself; and to the opportunity for specialized training and continuing education toward the ends of personal fulfillment and social service. Students are urged to use their freedom in the University community to develop habits of responsibility which lead to the achievement of these personal and social values. Responsible student behavior requires observance of the Student Conduct Code, which is based on respect for the dignity and worth of each person and the requirements for successful community life.

Relations among all persons should be characterized by mutual respect and equality. Sexism, sexual harassment, and sexual coercion of any sort are wrong and constitute a violation of fundamental moral requirements and state law. Minimally responsible behavior requires that no one take sexual advantage of another.

The University enforces all laws relevant to alcohol and controlled substances and further strongly discourages the use of illegal substances at any time. The University disseminates and encourages the dissemination by others of information concerning the responsible use of alcohol.

The cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity of the University community provides an opportunity for learning about those different from oneself. The University expects each individual to make a special effort to ensure that all are treated with dignity and respect and accorded the full opportunities of the University. Racism, whether in assumptions, attitudes, acts, or policies, is incompatible with the concept of responsible freedom as espoused by The Florida State University.

The University is a compassionate community. In its treatment of students, it recognizes the wisdom both of letting students experience the consequences of their actions and of providing the opportunity to learn and grow in ways that can overcome past difficulties. The University provides ongoing student support through the health center, counseling services, and the academic advising process.

The university experience is a time for adventure, fun, excitement, the making of new friends, and the discovery of new possibilities. There are numerous individual and organized opportunities for students to develop and to learn in the course of their university years to exercise newly acquired freedom deliberately and responsibly.

Matriculation to The Florida State University, then, is a summons to the exercise of responsible freedom in a community of teaching, learning, and discovery.