

SG Debate Transcript 2020

Stephanie Siler: Welcome to the Student Government debate, hosted by the Supervisor of Elections.

We look forward to providing a comprehensive debate featuring the two executive tickets vying to be your next Student Body President, Vice President, & Treasurer.

I hope tonight is a valuable experience and that all members of the student body remember to participate in our student body elections, on February 18th -19th.

Before we begin I would like to take a moment to thank a few people who were instrumental in this process:

Liz Delaney, James Tyger, Lauren Hughes, and RyAnn Gavin for their help in preparing for tonight.

Thank you to Action SG for agreeing to film and livestream tonight's debate so that it can be viewed by students who were unable to attend. The livestream can be found on the Facebook page.

Finally, I would like to thank and now introduce our moderator for this evening, Dr. Amy Martinelli

Dr. Amy Martinelli is a lecturer is a graduate of the University of Florida receiving her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instructions specializing in Social Foundations of Education from the College of Education. She has recently returned to the University of Florida this past fall to serve as a lecturer in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' Dial Center for Written and Oral Communication. Additionally, Dr. Martinelli serves as the Assistant Director of the University of Florida Speech and Debate Team.

Moderator:

1. Both campaigns shall be granted a maximum of 5 minutes to deliver an opening statement and 3 minutes to deliver a closing statement.
2. One candidate per campaign shall be chosen by the campaign to give the opening statement, and one to give the closing statement. This selected person may give both statements if the campaign so chooses. Any of the specified executive candidates are eligible to speak during this time.
3. Speaking order for the opening and closing statements was decided by flipping a coin, executed by the moderator shortly before the debate began. The campaign winning the toss will decide to speak first or second in both the opening and closing statements. The opposing campaign will receive the speaking option the winner does not choose. We performed the toss a few minutes ago and Gator Party won the toss. They chose to speak second in both the opening and closing statements. Inspire Party will be speaking first.
4. The speaking order for the questions will go in alphabetical order by campaign name and will rotate order for every question.
5. The campaigns will be provided with equal time to respond to each question. The time provided to respond to each question shall be two minutes. A one-minute period will be provided for the rebuttal. And 30 seconds for a second rebuttal.
6. Questions will be asked to the campaigns as a whole, and the campaigns will have to decide which candidate will respond to the question. Once the chosen candidate begins to speak, no other member of the campaign is allowed to respond to the same question during the two-minute answer period.
7. Rebuttal may be provided by a candidate other than the candidate who responded initially for any question.

8. Any candidate who goes over the time limit will receive a warning. Upon receiving a third warning, that candidate will be removed from the debate.

With the rules of the debate established and agreed to by both parties prior to the start of the debate, a final reminder that we ask the audience to hold applause until the end of the debate.

Moderator: I now invite a representative from the Inspire Party to give their opening statement.

Matthew Barrocas: Good evening. I'll start by saying thank you to everyone in this room for being here, to everyone live streaming for watching, and to the organizers for this event. Engagement like yours makes the student government accountable, and that engagement is even now important. Our campus now faces the worst issues our campus has ever faced. Not long ago, UF received an F score for racial equity and a C for gender equity. Only last semester, the campus wellness survey was released that showed UF as an even higher increase in cases of sexual assault. And to this day, student government organizations are experiencing a massive funding crisis, leaving some of our largest organizations unable to host the keystone events that define UF student's time in four years. Inspire feels the way we should close this gap with our student government. With a budget of over \$20 million, we are uniquely qualified to fix these issues. We need you. We need an executive branch that understands these struggles. One that not only acts as a center for organization and decision making, but also one that follows a track record of fixing these issues. My name is Matthew Barrocas. I serve as UF's president for the College of Democrats chapter and was their treasurer last year. I'm also a proud senator for the college of Liberal Arts and Sciences. I've written legislation addressing the University's historical treatment of LGBTQ+ individuals such as myself and supported Inspires legislative efforts to add blue lights and expand sexual assault resources. By my side is the vice-presidential candidate, Emily Hyden. A campus advocate who has taken it upon herself to be the change she wants to see in student government. When a member of the student senate shot down advocates for blue lights on Fraternity row, Emily led a protest of hundreds to see through with the plan. Now, thanks to her committee, there are 4 new blue lights. Our presidential candidate Matthew Diaz is unfortunately very sick and unavailable tonight. Diaz is very involved, serving as student government senator and founder of the initiative student organization which gave him experience. Funding organizations is one of the essential duties Diaz works for. Trevor Pope was in charge of the senate allocations committee when Young Americans for Freedom was denied funding. Trevor Pope and Gator Party senate president Emily Dunson were the two authors of the bill that directly resulted in a federal lawsuit against UF in regard to 14th amendment rights. The Gator Party holds the majority in the Senate and hasn't made a single revision to the SG finance laws. Despite not one, but two disastrous budget cycles, which have resulted in hundreds of organizations lacking funding, the funding crisis. Some organizations receive full funding while others struggle to receive any at all. The current system is broken because of the Gator Party and remains broken because of the Gator Party. Now onto the topic of diversity. Student government's bridges to minority outreach program has sat inactive for the past year. The LGBTQ+ affairs cabinet, our first-generation cabinet is also empty. The Gator party wants to create representation in student government by creating cabinet positions for those that are underrepresented. What's the point of having a cabinet if no one serves in it? Gator Party passes off these issues as Impact party, and that they are different, or better, but I don't think any of us should lie to ourselves. Gator Party and Impact party are the same people. Gator party members ran as Impact party before. Current senators worked in the impact party executive branch. They are all the same. Diversity should not just be for show, funding student organizations needs to be taken seriously. Future challenges need to be taken seriously. We are candidates who will resolve these issues and live through these issues. We are fighting for you. Thank you.

Moderator: I now invite a representative from the Gator Party to give their opening statement.

Trevor Pope: Good evening everyone, my name is Trevor Pope and I'm running to be your next Student Body President. I want to first thank the student government for all their hard work and making this debate a reality. I'd also like to thank all of you out in the audience for taking time out of your busy schedule to hear how Gator party will best serve the student body. The University of Florida means not only so much to myself but also to my family. Both my parents graduated as Gators and I was even born right down the hill at Shand's hospital.

From an early age my parents have instilled in me a sense of pride for this University and encouraged me to leave the University of Florida a better place than I found it. It's important for you to understand that I am not your conventional candidate for student body president. For the past four years I gave respect to the students and family members as a Florida Cicerone and welcomed the entire class of 2021 as a preview staffer. Within Student Government, I chaired the Senate allocation committee, where I worked on new Student organizations so they can pursue their interest in their passions. Also, I founded a brand-new executive agency called the class councils, where I worked to approve UF's alumni participation rate in an effort to strive for 5. I stepped away from Student Government last year ready to start a new chapter in my life. However, since I've left, I've seen the student government completely fall apart. I currently see a student government where our leaders lack leadership and partisan gridlock has stifled legislation supporting sexual assault survivors, Mental Health Resources, and most importantly representation of student's interests. I'm coming back to the student government to instill hope in our student body. Student government needs leaders who are not self-centered, but self-less. We need a student government that knows how to help build for the future, that works to create an inclusive and accessible campus and that will enhance the student experience. But, to make this a reality, I have two outstanding running mates by my side. First, my vice-presidential candidate Lauredan Offical, and my treasurer, Jessica Jesurajan. Starting with my running mate Lauredan, he understands the value of our work. He knew that the only way to be successful was through perseverance, dedication, and a little bit of finesse. His experience with the black affairs program has shown his focus on the well-being of students and community building. He served as leadership and development involvement chair and he is currently serving as a leadership and service division chair. I know that he is the most qualified to oversee the exciting and diverse programming that our Gator Nation needs. Jessica Jesurajan has personally experienced many of the hardships that come with being a woman of color. She was born in India, raised in Singapore, and moved to the United States when she was just 8 years old. Based on all these challenges go through voice and pride and fighting for others, her experience as a resident of the Indian Students Association and being a member of the budget and appropriations Committee has given her exactly the experience she needs to be a successful student body treasurer. And together, we are Gator Party. Tonight, we're going to talk about how we can improve the student experience at UF and as your student body president, I can promise that when issues arise, I will work to become a powerful force for good, and unifying students will tackle the challenges that face our student body. I believe that student government this year is at a crossroads and I want students to know that when I walk into a board of trustees meeting, I'm not just a student representative, but instead I am the voice of over 50,000 Gators. At the end of this debate, I hope we can come together and remember that we all want to make this University a better place. Thank you, and as always, go Gators.

Moderator: Our first question is for the GATOR Party:

The Inspire Party states that what makes them different is that they “will fight for issues that actually matter to the student body.” Gator Party, how do you differentiate yourself from the Inspire Party? – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Trevor Pope: So, I think that in differentiating ourselves, one of the things that we really want to focus on as the Gator party, is representation. And that comes with more, in my philosophy, is not waiting for students to come to you, but instead actively going up and seeking them. And historically, I think that a lot of our nontraditional students, or students that don't fall within that involvement bubble, are underrepresented on campus. And I think that my background, as a preview staffer and a cicerone, has provided me with the appropriate training to

make sure that all of our students feel integrated and included in the many great services that UF has to offer. And one group of students that we specifically want to focus on is those nontraditional students, like our PACE, our IA, and our transfer students. And working alongside my vice-presidential candidate, we hope to basically create a transfer cabinet so that when they come to UF, they have a voice. This will also help UF's retention rate. Also, our administration, one of the things we'd like to work on, is providing representation for our international students, so one of the things we plan to do is work with the Career connections center to essentially create greater accessibility to international students so that they feel prepared for the real world, and they are able to graduate, because at the end of the day, that's what we are all here to do. So, I think what makes Gator Party unique is the effort that we are putting into student interest.

Moderator: Inspire Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Emily Hyden: Thank you, Trevor. Trevor mentioned that what differentiates Gator Party from Inspire party is to fight to stand up and represent the diverse backgrounds and nontraditional students, and the gator party plan is to do so by establishing cabinets for the students. However, as we mentioned in our opening statement currently the cabinets of LGBTQ+ affairs, first generation cabinet, and even the Greek affairs cabinet are all empty. So, this isn't representation if there are no people in the cabinets actually representing you. First we need to go back and make sure that we're filling the cabinets we already have before you move on to new issues, but Inspire as well also wants to improve the condition of international students by reaching out to the people that put on Career showcase and ensuring that more visa sponsorship employers are available.

Moderator: GATOR Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Lauredan Offical: It's a silly notion to think that we don't want to fill our cabinet positions, especially being the only person on stage with cabinet experience, not just for one year, but two years, serving both as director and chair of the cabinet. One of the ways we also plan on reaching this representation is by changing the way we look at outreach. So currently, in the cabinet, we have office hours for cabinet directors that are posted in the SG Office. We are missing so many students this year, and so, for ...

Time has expired.

Moderator: Our second question is for the INSPIRE Party:

The 2020 United States presidential election could be one of the most contentious election seasons in recent years. How would your administration support civic engagement, education, and work to bridge the divide? – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Emily Hyden: Thank you for that question. Yeah, so obviously our country is at a time right now where it's extremely divided, and division has even been seen on our campus. If you recall when Trump and Guilfoyle came to speak there is obviously a huge outrage on behalf of students on our campus and even people in the community as well, It's especially important as members of the executive branch in the UF student government to reach out into the community, to reach out into the University, and ensure that students know when elections are held and how they can register to vote, also where polling locations are. It's especially important to maintain the status of the Reitz union as an early voting location and location in to push that through programming events. There are already different groups on campus that do, such as FirstGen, Chomp the Vote, etc. so really just standing behind these groups and empowering them through election season. While at the same time, we are promoting a safe campus where expression is available for all students but where all students feel safe and do not feel marginalized by the words of other students or by the actions of the student government, which stands to govern the students, obviously. While at the same time ensuring that we are making sure students know that they are encouraged to vote and should go out and do so.

Moderator: GATOR Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Trevor Pope: So, this question is specifically in regards to, really the politicized nature of UF's climate right now, and from my four and a half years on campus, I've seen UF more polarized now than it's ever been. And my philosophy is, when it comes to my personal ideological and political beliefs, is to keep them entirely outside the world of student government. Student government does not have the space for us to inflict our beliefs and instead we should be representative of students and some of the things that they would like to see on this campus. Specifically, tailored to voting locations agency and ensure that students are able to be civically engaged. One of the things I would like to do is actually work with the Chomp the Vote agency, basically to ensure that all students have access to the ballot box. I'm going to make sure I'm working with the Reitz Union so that it gets qualified as an early voting location.

Moderator: Inspire Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Emily Hyden: As Trevor said, our campus has become increasingly polarized, but I think that's because of speakers. So, as we see that happen on our campus, I will emphasize that it is extremely important that student government stands up for its students during times like these, and not bring in speakers such as Trump and Guilfoyle, who have the potential to create an environment on campus that is not safe, and that's all I have to say.

Moderator: Our third question is for the GATOR Party:

The implementation of the new student organization funding model has been hotly debated. What, if anything, do you believe is needed to improve the process and how will you work with student organizations related to funding during your administration? – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Jessica Jesurajan: So, ever since the new 800 codes have been enacted, I have had the pleasure of being on the budget and appropriations committee, but on top of that, I've also been elected as president of the Indian student organization a student organization that we have here on campus, so I've really had the opportunity to see the role of both sides. I've been on the budget side, where you really prioritize all student organizations to some adequate funding, but I also have been on the student organization side, where it's really hard to be able to adapt to these changes when sufficient funds are not given to us. And so, on the forefront of my goals is to work on increasing the event funding houses. So as of right now student organizations are allotted up to \$5,000 per event, and, as we've seen last year a lot of student organizations did not have the opportunity to hold huge, monumental, and annual shows that they normally got to do, and that's unacceptable. During my time if I am elected, I will make it my personal vision that all student organizations have this access to necessary funding. One of my other goals is for Graduate and Professional Students. These students have a lot of different and unique challenges when it comes to the budget process, and some of these challenges include a lot of support from their student government. And really, they are not inclusive in a huge part of our student body. A lot of the time their perspectives are overlooked by finance, but with us on your ticket, we will really try to raise awareness of this.

Moderator: Inspire Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Matthew Barrocas: Thank you. If you are on the Budget and Appropriations committee, why haven't you done anything to fix this issue? If you want to see Trevor Pope's impact on student organizations, go look at all the student organizations needed funding, desperately. What will the Inspire Party do on this issue? We will amend the 800 codes to ensure that access will be available to the general council, large scale events, multicultural communities, cabinets, such as the American student assembly. We are going to do this by ensuring equal, accessible information to all student organizations. Did it make any sense to hold SG finance training after the budget cycle for the semester was closed? No. Student organizations that are better connected to SG are funded better, but that's not fair. We will treat organizations equally, provide organizations with all the information they need, and do better for the students.

Moderator: GATOR Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Trevor Pope: So, Inspire Party is attempting to create a connection between my term as allocations chair and the fact that student organizations can no longer receive funding, and the fact of the matter is, it's a completely false scenario. Two years ago, I blocked funding to a conservative organization with an SG Finance code that's still in existence even after the lawsuit. And what's craziest to me, is that the Inspire party is getting so upset about SG funding a conservative speaker, but instead ...

Time has expired.

Moderator: Our fourth question is for the INSPIRE Party:

What is the number one way that you feel your party and Student Government can make campus more inclusive for all students? – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Emily Hyden: Specifically, because I have a unique position in running with the Inspire Party as a Greek candidate, I think the most important thing we can do to make the campus more inclusive is by implementing online voting and ending the "I voted" sticker process that currently exists on our campus. The "I voted" stickers are turned in by people after they vote to members of their Greek houses, who then tabulate the percentage of people in the house that voted, and then this number is used to a lot opportunities to different people based on their participation in the election. It's inherently exclusive of anyone that is not in the Greek community, and it is just outright wrong. Also, online voting would allow students students studying abroad, students in internships, students on satellite campuses to have a say in Student Government elections, and it will increase voter turnout. We are talking about increasing voter turnout in the 2020 election. Why don't we insist on increasing voter turnout on our own campus? Why don't we look at the ways we can establish mechanisms that make it easier for students to go about electing representatives and having a say in how a \$22 million budget is handled. And as I said, the best way to do that in my personal view is to abolish the system that currently exists to allows to give opportunities to Greek students and inherently marginalize other students in the process.

Moderator: GATOR Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Trevor Pope: I personally have nothing against online voting. In fact, I support online voting, and in 2016, on the referendum for online voting, I actually voted "yes." So yes, I would like to see it get done, I think it should get done. In fact, other SEC schools have online voting. It has been implemented successfully, so under my term as Student Body President, I want to make sure that I am working with IT to have online voting at UF. But I think the most important thing is that when we do bring it to UF, we do it correctly.

Moderator: INSPIRE Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Emily Hyden: From my understanding, when there was a referendum, and online voting was put on it, the majority of the student body voted to pass it. However, when it was seen in the Student Government Supreme Court, which was largely system ruled, they came up with some excuse to fail it. So this is something that students have wanted, and are still wanting, and Trevor, I hope that is a promise because that is the best way to include all of campus in how Student Government operates.

Moderator: Our fifth question is for the GATOR Party:

There was vigorous debate surrounding the actions of the current Student Body President, including a call by some for impeachment. Gator Party was criticized for their handling of the impeachment process. How do you respond to that criticism and if elected how would you hold Student Government accountable? – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Trevor Pope: So, this was specifically in reference to bringing Donald Trump Jr. to campus, which in my view was a political act by the current administration. But like I said earlier, my philosophy is and always has been that there is no room for your personal, political and ideological beliefs in the world of Student Government. Once again, our job as Student Government Leaders is to represent the students, and as your next Student Body President, I want to make sure that the speakers we are bringing to campus are those that students actually want to see. Which brings me to my goals of the next ACCENT and SGP chair. I want to make sure that the new chairs are bringing multiple performers and speakers throughout the course of the year that are appealing to masses of all 50,000 students. That way, when we look back at the end of the year, every single student should be able to say, “You know what, there was at least one speaker or one performer that appealed to me personally.” If I can accomplish that, I will hang my hat on doing a dang good job as Student Body President. And I will ultimately find an ACCENT chair that has those same goals as myself.

Moderator: INSPIRE Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Matthew Barrocas: Thank you. Gator Party may try to push the invitation of Donald Trump Jr. off on Impact Party. I don’t think that is fooling anybody, but it is clear that the Gator Party denied the right of the impeachment inquiry to be heard by the entire Senate. They moved it to the Judiciary Committee, where it was failed after 2 minutes of conversation. It should have been heard by the full Senate. I should have had the opportunity, with all of my fellow senators, to vote on the impeachment. Additionally, I agree that Student Government officials should not bring their personal, political opinions into who to pick and choose for events, but we cannot be giving \$50,000 in student fees to members of a political campaign. We can bring in ideological speakers but cannot bring in members of an active political campaign with student funds. Thank you.

Moderator: GATOR Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Trevor Pope: During my time at UF, I have seen multiple highly politicized speakers, from Richard Spencer, to Donald Trump Jr., to Ben Shapiro, all of which have entirely outraged students. Why would I, as the next Student Body President, want to bring in a speaker to campus that is just going to upset the Student Body? That is not doing my job as an elected official.

Moderator: Our sixth question is for the INSPIRE Party:

Inspire- Your party has faced allegations of destroying public records, intentionally recording other students without their consent, and being politically opportunistic. How do you respond to these allegations and how would you hold student government accountable if you are elected? – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Matthew Barrocas: We wouldn’t have to be talking about destroying public record if the live streaming system that was voted on by Student Government and pushed on by Inspire Party 2 years ago and passed was implemented. If the Senate implemented cameras rather than slow-rolling the process and allowing Zach Chou to record things, we would have public record student live-streams on the SG website. Thank you.

GATOR Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Trevor Pope: So this question is specifically talking about how Inspire Party has illegally recorded other students, and I think you see that most recently in Inspire Party recording former Progressive Party’s transphobic remarks. For me, it is amazing that someone is willing to weaponize LGBTQ+ issues for political gain, and if that’s something you can stand behind, then you should probably rethink your party affiliation.

INSPIRE Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Emily Hyden: I completely agree that putting transgender students at risk is something that should never be done for political gain. However, I've listened to the tapes, intently, all of the tapes that were posted and it was said by a member, in the recording to turn off the mic. A member that's not in Inspire. So I think with that being said, we can't say or prove that Inspire was recording when there is physical evidence.

Time has expired.

6:41 pm – Our seventh question is for the GATOR Party:

7. Student Government represents the entire student body, including our graduate and professional students. At times, Student Government can struggle to keep Graduate Senate seats filled. How does your party intend to improve graduate and professional student representation and retention in Student Government? – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Trevor Pope: So, as the lone professional student on the stage, I am the only one who understands the struggles and needs of our graduate students. I am one of you, and I am the only one that understands the hardships that you go through. And oftentimes, as a grad student, there is a sentiment of otherness and feeling as if you are not a part of our campus. Many of our graduate students have not set foot in some of the hallmarks of UF, like Turlington, or the Reitz, and grad students make up about 30% of our student body, and they can no longer be ignored and neglected on this campus. They've been neglected in multiple ways. For an example, as a law student, I pay \$2000 in fees a year that's primarily tailored to the undergraduate experience, and in addition to that, there are plans to destroy two of the five graduate and family housing that provides affordable and living accommodations to grad and professional students. That would simply not happen with me in the room. In fact, when the board of trustees meet this summer to tear down those houses, I will proudly vote "no." I will advocate for graduate and professional students as your next Student Body President.

Inspire Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Matthew Barrocas: I begin my answer by acknowledging Graduate Assistants United's expertise and hard work on these issues, and I think that Student Government acting as a force to support them will help in their effort to have full fee reduced and eliminated. Currently, Graduate Students pay fees for jobs that don't provide a living wage for them anyway, so they are exploited by the university. With Student Government behind them, these fees can be eliminated and it's really important that we eliminate these fees to attract better graduate student talent. The better graduate students we have, the better academic output for this university, the better undergraduate experience with all the TA's we have, and this will improve UF's ranking overall. Gator Party has chosen consistently not to fill the graduate seats in Senate. This is a decision made by their Senate leadership, and I think it really shows their priorities for student graduates.

GATOR Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Trevor Pope: So on the topic of grad students, I would like to point out the fact that Inspire Party is currently unable to fill their slate with both grad and professional students. This begs the question: if you can't even fill your slate, how are you expected to represent them, and ultimately outreach to them? And with respect to the filling of the grad senate seat, I personally was disappointed to not see that grad student selected to the seat, but making real change comes in the office of Student Body President.

6:45 pm – Our eighth question is for the INSPIRE Party:

8. The first amendment and freedom of expression are heavily discussed topics on college campuses across the country. If elected, how would you support free expression on campus when ideas and opinions may differ from your own? – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Emily Hyden: I think that obviously our constitution is of utmost importance, and something that we should always strive to uphold, specifically the first amendment and the fourteenth amendment, of which I will make a remark. Trevor Pope, who is running to be Student Body President, sat on the Budget and Allocations Committee, and authored a bill with Emily Dunson that denied funding for Young Americans for Freedom based on, I don't know the ideals, but denied them funding, which resulted in a lawsuit to UF in which \$65,000 was paid, and is now responsible for why so many organizations are struggling on our campus. Which can then be tied to the fact that when we had a speaker who was so polar, so hateful, come and speak on our campus, that person outraged students in groups that are marginalized by this man's tweets, by this man's rhetoric, and that is just not fair. I think that we need to consider students, first and foremost, above all while also having respect for the first and fourteenth amendment, of course you should be able to express what you have to say, express your thoughts. This is a college campus. That's the beauty of a college campus, is what we can learn from each other. But what we also must learn, and what also much enforce is the principle of respect and how respect for you fellow students comes first and foremost, and with that, hopefully if you're saying something offensive, you decide not to say it, and as we all learn and grow we all find the right things to say. But yeah.

a. GATOR Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Trevor Pope: So, once again Inspire Party is trying to create this link between my term as allocations chair and the inability of student organizations to get funding, and it's a stretch at best. And what I was trying to say earlier is what's funny is how Inspire can get so upset at student government for bringing a conservative speaker to campus, but then also getting mad at me for denying funding to a conservative organization who was trying to bring in a conservative speaker. But regardless, there's really no way to link myself to UF's funding model, which is unable to provide for student organizations. But what we should focus on is how we can best improve our model to ensure that our student body is getting the funding that they deserve.

b. INSPIRE Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Emily Hyden: Donald Trump Jr. had a right to speak on our campus, as well as protestors had the right to speak outside. What was not okay was for student fees to be funneled into a campaign, through the Trump victory campaign financial chair. That's what is unacceptable. But Trevor, as a Law student, I'd hope that you would understand that in your term as budget and appropriations chair, you and Emily Dunson denied funding, you denied their first amendment constitutional right.

6:49 pm – Our ninth question is for the GATOR Party:

9. The Student Body Vice President's Cabinet is made up of directors who program for specific topics and student populations. In reviewing the current model, what, if anything, would you change?
– You have 2 minutes to respond.

Lauredan Official: Great question. Actually, as your next Student Body Vice President, I am going to bring a brand-new division to the University's student government. Specifically, the transition division. This will include the PACE cabinet, the Innovation Academy cabinet, First Generation Affairs, External Student Affairs, and International Student Affairs that is currently under the Diversity Division. I want to hold student cabinets division to specifically program, make sure these students are feeling welcomed, and foster a sense of community among these students. I also want to repurpose cabinets. I will create a Leadership and Development cabinet, which will have a greater focus on underutilized services on this campus. My mother is a housekeeper. She makes \$18,000 a year and she had to raise five kids by herself, as a single mom. And so, I really want to refocus the Finance Cabinet to host a series of workshops that deal with the issues that students are facing on this campus. I've gone hungry on this campus, and so I want to partner with preexisting departments so that any

student on this campus doesn't have to go through what I went through, and can save a penny, so they can graduate.

a. INSPIRE Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Emily Hayden: Lauredan, I would just like to say those are fantastic ideas, thank you for those, genuinely. As I said earlier, the cabinets are going unfilled, the LGBTQ+ Affairs, First Gen and Greek Affairs as well. As Vice President, I would want to ensure that all cabinet positions are filled, but due to personal experience I'd also like to ensure, first and foremost, that there is a fair and equitable allocation process for putting people into these cabinet positions. People that know these students' backgrounds so they can sympathize with them and are familiar with this campus, familiar with the ins and outs and ways to help their students. I think it is extremely important for the agencies, like the freshman leadership committee and LGBTQ+ Affairs. I hope that in the future the selection process is made fair so that...

Time has expired.

b. GATOR Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Lauredan: As your next Vice President, I will make sure that the selection process is fair. I'm specifically looking for one thing in a student and all I want is for a student to have a vision and experience in their respective domain. I participated in the Black Student Union Leadership Development institute, so I know leadership development and can be a cabinet director because I have a whole years' worth of experience in the black student Union, learn what it is to be a leader, and how to serve communities.

6:53 pm – Our tenth question is for the INSPIRE Party:

10. What do you think is the most important issue impacting University of Florida students and what will your administration do to address it? – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Emily Hayden: I think the most important issue that is currently facing the UF student body is safety and access, accessibility to safety and resources on our campus. First and foremost, in case you are unaware Uber Safe Rides was reduced from 50% to 25% and currently still does exclude the areas of District C and D, so there is the total group of students that don't have this resource or the accessibility to get home late at night for this reduced fare. Additionally, I think that SNAP hours and Uber Safe Ride hours need to be extended into the early morning to ensure that all students are getting home, getting where they need to be safely. It's also important to mention that the campus climate survey revealed that drastic increase in sexual assault on UF campus. This is something that is completely not acceptable, something that we must work on. We're currently working on it with Green Dot and Kognito. Um, and also it's important that in first year Florida, the Inspire Party wants to bring into First Year Florida curriculum drug and alcohol content as well, so that students will be brought into as a freshman things that they would be encountering and what not, and we also want to work with GatorWell to make testing kits for drinks available too, just to make sure that no one's drink is getting drugged and they can check it if it is. There are so many more ways that we can improve campus safety and it's so important, I learned when working with the UFPD working with students during the blue lights protest, and so many different brains that can work together to formulate the best ideas for how to make this campus safe and inclusive for every single Gator no matter what time of day or night it is.

a. GATOR Party – You may now have a 1-minute rebuttal

Trevor Pope: I think the biggest issue, and my number one priority during my time as student body president, is really just opportunity. Yes, the University of Florida is now the top 10 institution, but does that mean our students are more ready for the real world? Does that mean that they're more likely to get jobs? During my time at University of Florida I've seen administration make decisions on behalf of the student body without their best

interest in mind, and I think the results of that is a lot of our talented individuals going to other schools, so with that being said I think we need to continually cultivate our young high school students in that originally took from Ian Green's administration as part of the Bridges Minority Outreach Program, and I want to ensure that that is properly supported and funded as we go forward in this upcoming year.

b. INSPIRE Party – You may now have a 30 second rebuttal

Emily Hyden: First and foremost I'd like to say that the external revenue brought in by the housing fair, which was used to fund the \$20,000 to get government banquet, um, could be used to fund these purchases I think that's a great idea. I also would like to say that as Student Body President it's incredibly important that you realize the privilege that you have as a male to walk home at night and not be afraid if or what could happen to you. I think that the safety hierarchy of needs sits higher. It's one of our human needs that we have to satisfy.

7:00 pm -At this point that now concludes the question portion of the tape. We will now move on to our closing statements. INSPIRE Party you now have 3 minutes for a closing statement.

Emily Hyden: Alright, so we have talked about a lot of different topics. This evening but I would like to refocus on the two issues that we brought up in our opening statements today. Performative diversity is not diversity, empty cabinets do not express diversity, letting the student governments minority program starve while you eat panko breaded mac and cheese is not diversity and being a 75 percent republican party saying you're going to represent this entire college campus is not diversity. Gator Party candidates despite how many times they may throw around the word in their profile picture blurbs, only understand diversity to be skin deep. There is a reason why the tokenization of minorities in the sunken place comes up every single year at the student government debate. It is a simple truth. Student government cares the most about diversity when it's election season and it stands especially true for the system party. Unfortunately, the election season is almost over but it is our hope that we the Inspire Party will continue being able to fight for your communities for much longer than that. On the matter of funding do not forget that Trevor Pope is the individual most culpable for the high-profile lawsuit against student government that has resulted in hundreds of student organizations without proper funding. The Gator party has sat on its hands while they have a majority in the senate. How many bills have they passed to fix the budget crisis? The answer is zero. These are the people that can't keep the printer working at Newell Hall. So, I guess it probably was a lot to expect for them to fix a problem that they manifested and created themselves. To be hapless fools is one thing but to be individuals who have not only seriously damaged student life at UF but just idly sat by as students suffered is an unforgivable violation of their duty as a student leader. The University of Florida deserves better. You deserve better. That is why Inspire is asking for your vote.

7:03 pm - GATOR Party you now have 3 minutes for a closing statement.

Jessica Jesurajan: Thank you all for coming out tonight to hear the Gator Party share our vision for the University of Florida. I hope that our answers to your questions will help you better understand how Gator Party bills for the future and creates opportunities and enhance the student experience. But before we lead let's shine a little light on some common misconceptions. Inspire claims to stand on three pillars, inclusivity, transparency and accountability, but these are just talking points they do not follow through on. Inclusivity: Inspire has a history of removing party members who offer dissenting opinions even when made in private. They have pushed out all of the most zealous until the only people left are those willing to do anything to win. When they played identity politics to damage their political rival, Inspire put party first. Transparency: Inspire claims to be transparent but it is clear that, that couldn't be further from the truth. When an Inspire party, official was caught deleting footage in the senate's livestream and editing meeting minutes to avoid portraying their party in a negative light. Instead of doing what was right, Inspire put the party first. Accountability: for Inspire accountability only seems to apply to others and not themselves. Their senators can't even handle the most basic responsibility to go to events to meet their constituents. When their senators broke the rules, Inspire put the party first. It is time to flip the switch. Gator Party puts students first. When the class of 2021 took their first

steps on this campus Trevor Pope was our man as a member of preview staff and welcomed the next wave of Florida Gators to town. When Black first-year students needed a role model Lauredan Official stepped up and served as the pat coordinator. Helping hundreds of students transition to the University of Florida. When the Student Government budgeting model changed overnight, I stepped up to ensure that the Indian students association and many others had the funding necessary to continue hosting intentional programming. This is what gator party is all about. It's for this reason that I am beyond confident in Trevor, Lauredan, myself and the rest of the Gator Party as we bring back hope in our student government. On February 16th and 19th cast your vote for a party with hope, for a party with a plan, for a party for gators. Cast your vote for the Gator Party.

7:06 pm – Event ends. Thank everyone for attending and encourage them to vote on February 18th and 19th.