

STUDENT SENATE BILL 2025-1101

TITLE: Resolution in Support of the University of Florida's International Student Community

AUTHOR(S): Senator Alesandro Cafferata, Senator Ioel Katz

SPONSORS: Senator Austin R. Britton, GAU Co-President Cassandra Urbenz, Graduate Caucus Chair Robert Dreasher, Senator Burton Litman and Senator Isabella Flores

WHEREAS, the University of Florida (UF) is home to over 6,000 international students representing over 140 countries and over a quarter of the graduate student body, who contribute significantly to the academic, cultural, and social fabric of our university [1][2]; and,

WHEREAS, international students enrich classroom discussions, foster global perspectives, and strengthen cross-cultural understanding across our campus; and,

WHEREAS, international graduate students play an indispensable role in advancing UF's research mission, serving as teaching assistants, researchers, and collaborators on groundbreaking projects, securing critical federal and private grants, and elevating the university's reputation to the benefit of all students, faculty, and staff; and,

WHEREAS, the contributions of international graduate students directly support UF's standing as a top-tier research institution; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida International Center (UFIC) provides essential services to international students and scholars, including F-1 and J-1 visa advising, immigration compliance assistance, and cultural adjustment support, ensuring their smooth transition and success at UF [3]; and,

WHEREAS, UFIC plays a vital role in supporting Fulbright Scholars, exchange visitors, and global research cooperation, further strengthening UF's international reputation and academic excellence [4]; and,

WHEREAS, international students face unique challenges as they navigate academic, legal, and social systems while pursuing their education far from home; and,

WHEREAS, it is our shared responsibility to ensure that all students feel supported, respected, and empowered during their time at UF; and,

WHEREAS, it is the University of Florida's mission to ensure a "broadly diverse environment necessary to foster multi-cultural skills and perspectives" [5]; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida seeks to keep its international students in good standing with regards to immigration status; and,

WHEREAS, the officers of University of Florida Police Department serve as trusted figures of authority for all students, and positive relationships between international students and campus authorities are essential for maintaining both safety and a positive learning environment; and,

WHEREAS, interactions between international students and immigration enforcement have historically created challenges for academic communities seeking to foster trust and belonging; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Florida has recently entered into a 287(g) agreement between its Police Department and federal immigration authorities [6]; then,

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate recognizes the invaluable contributions of international students to our campus community, research excellence, and institutional success.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate expresses gratitude for the dedicated work of the University of Florida International Center (UFIC) in its support of international students.

THEREFORE, LET IT FURTHER BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate reaffirms its commitment to fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for all students.

THEREFORE, LET IT FINALLY BE RESOLVED that the University of Florida Student Senate encourages continued efforts to provide resources, guidance, and advocacy to ensure the success and well-being of our international student population.

Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to Dean of the International Center and Associate Provost Marta L. Wayne.

[1] <https://internationalcenter.ufl.edu/j-1-studentscholar/j-1-students>

[2] <https://graduateschool.ufl.edu/gss/international/>

[3] <https://internationalcenter.ufl.edu/about-ufic/our-services>

[4] <https://internationalcenter.ufl.edu/student-opportunities/us-student-fulbright-program>

[5] <https://handbook.aa.ufl.edu/about-uf/mission-and-plans/#:~:text=Mission%20Statement&text=We%20are%20The%20Gator%20Nation,economic%2C%20cultural%20and%20societal%20benefit.>

[6] <https://floridaphoenix.com/2025/04/10/uf-joins-other-state-universities-seeking-to-collaborate-with-ice/>