

Retired Faculty Condemn ICE Intrusion at the University of Florida

To: University of Florida Senior Leadership and Board of Trustees
From: The Retired Faculty of the University of Florida
Date: May 22, 2025
Regarding: Collusion with federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) toward indiscriminate detention of international students, faculty, and staff

We, the Officers and Board of Directors of the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida, Inc. (**RFUF**), are writing to express our distress and disgust regarding state, local, and UF's collusion with the outrageous if not unconstitutional visa revocations of international students, faculty, and staff at universities across the country, the Florida State University System, and the University of Florida in specific.

Particularly distressing is the covert and startling way in which this action has occurred where University of Florida police have essentially been deputized under the federal ICE 287(g) Memorandum of Agreement as "force multipliers" to detain individuals without warrants solely on suspicion of immigration violations. Affected students, faculty and staff have reportedly received little to no formal notice, rationale, or recourse, leaving them in a state of confusion, abject terror, and uncertainty about their academic futures, legal status, and personal wellbeing.

Allowing the ICE 287(g) MOA to go forward sends an unconscionably perverse message to the University community, as well as perhaps irreversibly eroding the trust expected of the University of Florida Police Department while unnecessarily diverting UFPD officers from their primary mission of campus safety.

Even individuals who are United States citizens run the risk of detention if cultural profiling takes hold of campus police acting with suspicion as instructed by ICE. Fear of detention could easily prevent a student from seeking medical attention, mental health treatment, or even educational support services. Most disturbing is ICE's authority to access international student data in search of even the smallest infraction to be loosely interpreted as criminal for shameless justification of deportation.

It is crystal clear to us that the UF Police Department's published guiding principles are completely inconsistent with and anathema to any activity under an ICE 287(g) MOA. For example:

- Emblazoned on their website is the UFPD's motto that **UFPD Believes in Transparency**,
- And that "...[UFPD's] fundamental duty is to serve the community: to safeguard lives and property; to *protect the innocent against deception, the weak against oppression or intimidation* and the peaceful against violence or disorder; and to *respect the constitutional rights of all to liberty, equality and justice* [italics added for emphasis].

If the University of Florida is genuinely committed to global education and is indebted to the role that thousands of international students across the State University System play in academic and research excellence, then that message could not be more strongly delivered than by your taking an expeditious and vigorous defense of our international community.

Substantial time remains before a change in the Office of the President occurs and time is what we do not have in combating the metastatic symptoms of authoritarian intrusion into the internal operations of the University.

We, therefore, call upon the current UF senior leaders and the Board of Trustees to act in the following ways:

1. **Immediately condemn and withdraw from the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement 287(g) Program.** It is important to point out that as of May 13, 2025, the states of **Vermont, Rhode Island, and Delaware have no such MOAs**. Furthermore, the states of **Connecticut, New Jersey, Illinois, Washington, Oregon, and California** have enacted legislation prohibiting such MOAs with ICE.
2. **Advocate for institutional transparency:** Make public the scope and consequences of the current visa crisis at the University of Florida, including the number of affected students, faculty, and staff and the rationales provided for visa revocation.

3. Issue guidance: Immediately contact all students, faculty, and staff who have already suffered or are at risk of visa revocation to make certain that these individuals clearly understand due process protections and are provided legal or administrative counsel if necessary. For those who have been compelled to leave the United States, make certain that UF continues to support remote participation in their education or professional role assuming they joined UF with a valid visa.

Surely ICE and other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies have sufficient authority and bandwidth to operate independently without conscripting campus police officers presumably to cast a higher resolution net over a haven where students, faculty, and staff benefit from and expand the best of what America has to offer. In short, we think it reprehensible that a component of the University of Florida has been authorized to be complicit in ICE's misguided and indiscriminate attempt to purge our international community. If for no other reason than respect for the core values of UF and all other Florida universities, academic freedom, due process, cultural enrichment, and global engagement for all, we implore you to withdraw from the MOA with ICE. Our international community of students, faculty, and staff deserves nothing less.

We greatly respect and appreciate UF's leadership in achieving national preeminence in education, research, and public service, which is precisely why we are appealing to you to maintain the highest ethical standards and independence and why we stand ready to assist you in this urgently needed action.

Sincerely,

Richard D'Alli (Medicine), Immediate RFUF Past President 2024 to 2025
Steve Lodle (Communications), Chair RFUF Communications Committee

The Officers and Board of Directors of the Retired Faculty of the University of Florida