

MEMORANDUM

January 27, 2012

Dear students, faculty and staff:

Today, I met with members of Occupy FIU, at their request, to discuss the January 12 arrests. I was joined by key members of FIU's leadership, including Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Kenneth Jessell, Senior Vice President Sandra Gonzalez-Levy, Vice President Rosa Jones, and Chief of Staff Javier Marques. We also addressed the group's concerns regarding increased tuition, more opportunities to meet with FIU administrators, and free speech on campus.

I reiterated to the group that FIU has a rich history of allowing and supporting individuals and groups to express their beliefs and opinions without hindrance. That is why I welcomed a conversation about how we could come together to find constructive solutions.

We discussed our efforts to keep FIU open to qualified students, including our decision to not cap enrollment, and provide the education this community needs.

On the topic of tuition, I referred to the [statements](#) I made to the House Education Committee last week regarding tuition increase, and the need to find more sources of financial aid to help those who cannot afford a higher education. I provided them with some important statistics of what we have done with the dollars we have collected as a result of past tuition increases: we've hired more faculty members, improved the advisor-to-student ratio, and provided more financial aid to those who qualify.

Since 2007, we have grown by nearly 10,000 students and lost \$72 million in state funding. Yet, by the end of this fiscal year, we will have hired an additional 80 faculty members, 18 advisors, 8 public safety officers, and 59 support positions.

Members of the group requested that we drop charges on the two FIU students and five other individuals arrested earlier this month for disrupting campus activities. They also asked that we review our free speech zones and expand them to the entire campus.

There must be a balance between free speech and our ability and responsibility to deliver a quality education. I am comfortable with our policies and law enforcement actions. However, we committed to review our guidelines as they pertain to designated free speech zones. The welfare of our students is our paramount concern.

We agreed to continue the conversation and meet again in two weeks. I look forward to a continued dialogue on the issues important to FIU and the South Florida community.

A video of today's meeting will be made available on our website shortly. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me at this address.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark B. Rosenberg', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark B. Rosenberg
President