MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty and Staff

FROM: Mark B. Rosenberg

SUBJECT: Finishing Strong and Staying Focused

DATE: November 3, 2021

We are now wrapping up the first week of November and entering the last weeks of our Fall semester. I want to thank you for your significant efforts to make sure the 2021-22 academic year builds on the meaningful gains we made last year for our students and our community. Together, we have set high goals this year. We have expectations that we will once again establish a record four-year student graduation rate of more than 63 percent and develop impactful research that will improve the lives and the well-being of our community. Our FIU is on an upward trajectory because our community is committed to excellence in everything we do.

Along the way, we have faced many challenges, including the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and its variants, the distractions of a hurricane season that is almost over, and concerns about academic freedom at institutions of higher education. At FIU, we applaud you for your willingness to respect individual choice and your deepened commitment to the health and well-being of our community. We are now more ready than ever before for any weather-related challenges that may come our way. And we support the sentiments expressed in the recent Faculty Senate resolution, reminding us that academic freedom must be protected. I am looking forward to a robust conversation in the coming months on academic freedom issues.

To finish strong this Fall semester, we must remain focused on helping our students complete their coursework, graduate in a timely manner, and secure meaningful employment or pursue graduate studies. Regardless of the circumstances, there will always be important issues that we must manage, and that is why it is important for us to continue to get better at being better and focus on student success. So, as we close out this semester, let us rededicate ourselves to providing hope and opportunity to those who depend on us, most importantly, our students.