

SG Elections Executive Debate: Transcription

Supervisor of Elections Henry Fair: Good evening Gators. 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 19th -20th. 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 and Catherine Seemann for their help in preparing for tonight. Thank you to Action SG for agreeing to film tonight's debate so that it can be viewed by students who were unable to attend. Finally, I would like to thank and now introduce our moderator for this evening, Mr. Marna Weston

Mr. Marna Weston is a 1994 graduate of the University of Florida receiving dual degrees in History & Telecommunication. As a UF undergrad, he was involved in campus and community activities. He received the City of Gainesville's highest award for diversity & multicultural awareness in 1991. He also served as President of the UF Speech and Debate team. Mr. Weston has served as moderator for many community debates including Accent Presents Governors Richard Thornburg & Michael Dukakis and more recently an ACCENT Marijuana debate. Mr. Weston serves or has served in a variety of campus positions including: Consultant to the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program, Administrative Assistant to UPWARD BOUND, UF Speech & Debate Team Alumni Coach, Instructor for Public Speaking in the Colleges of Agriculture, CLAS, and Warrington College of Business, and University Writing Program Instructor for the AIM Program.

Moderator Marna Weston: Thank you Mr. Supervisor of Elections and thank you Gators everywhere, at home and here in the audience, for participating in this auspicious occasion. When Gators get together, great things happen. Although sometimes in order to get where great things happen we have a little disagreement to determine how well to get there. That's why this process exists, to allow for the civil discourse necessary to elect your next executive slate of leaders at the University of Florida. It is an honor to be here tonight to address you and to moderate this debate. I am reminded of the creed of the University of Florida, "The welfare of the state, rests on the character of the citizens." These are your candidates whose civility and citizenship, honor and lives, will be tested in the candidacy for your executive slate. Since this debate is for those at home, I want to remind you all that civility does not just extend to the incredible candidates that we have here, but also to all of you. It is an honor to be at this hall and participate in this process and see it live. But there are people who are listening who are trying their best understand every nuance. They can't see what is taking place here but they can only perceive what is taking place by the ability to understand every sound, every utterance. So when the debate begins, we ask that you please remain quiet, not have outrage or unnecessary noise, so that everyone at home can understand what's going on. Except that this time, I would like to give you an opportunity to go as loud as you want to congratulate this executive slate of candidates. *crowd cheers* Thank you very much. The candidates will be introducing themselves shortly, but I'd like to give you a chance to acknowledge them. For the Impact Party, which is sitting closest to me, the Presidential Candidate, Michael Murphy, the Vice Presidential Candidate, Sarah Abraham and the Treasurer Candidate, Santiago Gutierrez. Equally Gator glorious, the Slate of the Inspire Party, first, the presidential candidate Zachariah Chou, the Vice Presidential candidate Mackintosh Joachim, and the treasurer candidate Gouthami Gadamsetty. Ladies and gentleman, this evening both campaigns should be granted a maximum of five minutes to deliver an opening statement and three minutes to deliver a closing statement. By flip of a coin, we have determined which party will go first and what party will speak second, I'll let you know that in just a second. One candidate per campaign shall be chosen by their 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, one of the specified executive candidates are eligible to speak during this time. The speaking order for the opening and closing statements was decided by the flip of the coin, executed by myself shortly before the debate began. The campaign winning the toss, would get a chance to decide to speak first or second, in both the opening and closing remarks. The opposing campaign would receive the speaking option that the winner did not choose. We performed the toss, and the Impact party won the toss, and deferred to let the Inspire party talk first. The speaking order for the questions will go in alphabetical order by campaign name, and will rotate per question. The campaigns will be provided equal time to respond to both questions. The time provided to each candidate will be 2 minutes for each response. There are timekeepers in the front row. I would suggest both campaigns to note the time keepers. The time allowed per question will be two minutes, followed by a one minute rebuttal, and followed by a 30 second rebuttal. 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. A Rebuttal may be provided by a candidate other than the candidate who responded initially for any question. 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 upon 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. I would like to give the opportunity to give one more round of applause for both campaigns.

The Inspire Party is now recognized for opening statements.

Zachariah Chou: Is this thing on? Ok. Sorry, that would have been awkward if would have just talked on. Are we ready to go? Good evening everyone, my name is Zachariah Chou, and I am running to be your Student Body President. This is Gouthami Gadamsetty, and she is running to be your Student Body Vice-President, and this is Mackintosh Joachim, and he is running to be your Student Body Treasurer. Together, we are the Inspire Party executive ticket. Now before I talk about policy, I would like to talk about my typical Tuesday. So what's a typical morning for Zach? Well, I wake up, like most of you do, I drag myself out of bed, but the first thing I do on a Tuesday is I run down to the Gator Career Closet in the Reitz Union. I run the "Free Headshot" program. I stay there for two hours, I see people come down, I fix their collars, fix their ties, and I take a free headshot. I watch as it goes on their resumes, their LinkedIn's and I hope it gets them a job. I come to the Career Closet because I came to the University of Florida realizing that not every single person who came here had the ability to get high quality, professional headshots. I figured that it is really important, no matter your background, to have these things, so I dedicated my time ever since Fall of 2016. After headshots, I go to the Inspire table, I pick up a clipboard, and I talk to people. I find out their stories, what they care about, and how I can help. That's really important, because sometimes you need to reach out to different people. Sometimes I try to get them meetings, and that's another thing I do. Sometimes it's with the Chief Diversity Officer, sometimes it's with the pharmacy, really anything I can do to get the students connected to their resources, because sometimes, successful advocacy is connecting students to the resources that want to help them. Once the sun goes down, I race to the Reitz Union, and I straighten up my collar, and my own tie. I get a whole bunch of live streaming equipment into my bag and I head down to Senate. In Senate, we talk about anything. It could be Richard Spencer, mental health counseling, but yeah, anything can happen in Senate, go fish. But the constant, every Tuesday night, almost every Tuesday, I am there live streaming. That's because I think it's really important that the information should go out to everyone, no matter where you are, if you are in Gainesville, out of Gainesville, out of state, studying abroad. So that's why I take the time to live stream these meetings. After all that is done, I go to Relish, sometimes Larry's Giant Subs because they're open late, and that's it. And so, how is this day important to you? Because I spend almost every waking hour of my life, Tuesdays, other days of my life, serving students, and I think that is really important. That's why I decided to run with Inspire party. Inspire party was founded in Fall of 2017,

because Student Government was not representing every Gator the way that they should. Since then, our senators have fought for critical issues, such as more mental health funding, and keeping Library West 24/7. We have also worked collaboratively in bringing menstrual hygiene products to restrooms. We know what matters to actual students, because we are actual students. We work full jobs on campus, we use the microwave in the Reitz, and we thank the bus driver no matter what. We have lived alongside you, and we are better representatives because of this. We want to change the culture around Student Government. You shouldn't have to reach out for us, but we should be reaching out to you, whenever we can, however we can. Inspire believes in this, I believe in this. My name is Zachariah Chou and I am running to be your Student Body President. Gouthami has spent time making a home for others. She is an ambassador of Student Activities and Involvement, where she spends her time talking to students one on one, and helping them find the organizations best for them. She is also the president of the Engineering Leadership Circle, where she works with other presidents of organizations in the College of Engineering to help them develop their own leadership styles, this has given her experience in not only connecting Gators with their home on campus, but also investing in future generations of leadership. Mackintosh Joachim, running for your Student Body Treasurer, has spent his time at the University of Florida as a fearless visionary, who has used his voice for the people who need it the most. He served as the first ever MCDA liaison for Senate, and offered students from underrepresented backgrounds a voice in the chamber. Further, he has been an advocate for causes such as inclusive practices at commencement ceremonies, and he has also been the treasurer for the UF chapter of the NAACP, which has given him plenty of financial experience. Together, we are your executive ticket for the Inspire Party. Thank you.

Moderator: It is now time for an opening statement from the Impact Party.

Michael Murphy: Testing, testing. Awesome. Good evening, Gators, my name is Michael Murphy, and I am running to be your next Student Body President. Alongside of me are my running mates: Sarah Abraham and Santiago Gutierrez, who I know are just as excited as I am to share our vision for the University of Florida. I thank each of you, for taking the time out of your busy schedules tonight to learn our vision for UF. It is my hope tonight, that through our answers to your questions, we can show you why you should vote for the Impact Party during elections on February 19th and 20th. As a rising senior, and a current Senate President, I have had the opportunity to represent 50,000 Gators. Whether it is big initiatives like lobbying for tuition assistance for families of fallen first responders or military members, or smaller initiatives, like providing rain ponchos all around campus. I am proud of my track record of putting students first and working hard to enhance the student experience. My running mate, Sarah, has also dedicated her time at UF serving the Gator Nation. She currently serves as the President of the Indian Student Association, where she has provided a home for many students on campus. She currently also serves a Senator for the College of Business, and sits on the Budget & Appropriations committee and Judiciary Committee, where she has had the opportunity to work with many different student organizations, and help spread their presence on campus. These experiences make her uniquely qualified to serve as your Student Body Vice President. Santiago has served as the Treasurer of the Hispanic Student Association, as well as chief of staff to the Student Body President. Having served in these roles, Santiago has had the experience and opportunity of seeing both sides of the budgeting process, which makes him the most qualified candidate on this stage to be handling the millions of dollars that are allocated to Student Government. Outside of our executive ticket, we running alongside a full slate of 50 equally experienced student leaders that are looking to serve you in the Student Senate. Their experience is a key difference that I hope to draw out this evening during this debate. Just this week, my opponent was called out by the sitting Student Body President for inflating key parts of his record, and misleading the student body on others. While lack of a record in Student Government is no excuse for making one up, it doesn't end there. A week ago today, my opponent violated the Student Government Codes we all swore to uphold, in order to duck a difficult vote. Whether my opponent did this on purpose, or is unaware of the statutes we follow in student senate is immaterial. In either case, he is unfit to serve as our next Student Body President. Finally, the Inspire candidate for the Student Body Treasurer is

equally unqualified. While my opponents on the other side of the stage promoted Mack's role as serving as a student organization treasurer, they failed to mention that this organization is not a student government funded organization, and that he has never filled out an SAR. Mack simply does not have the necessary experience to serve as a Student Body Treasurer, and his record in Student Government is just as concerning as his lack of experience. In true Inspire Party fashion, Mack's key accomplishments that he tells on the campaign trail are actually projects that were completed by the Impact Party. Not only was an emergency blue light in Graham Hall brought to campus by our party, but it was completed by someone on this stage, Mack's opponent, Santiago, who actually worked with other Impact members and agency heads for months on this project, and actually filled out the SAR to secure funding. By contrast, the Impact Party is dedicated to improving the student experience at the University of Florida. Our platform reflects key student concerns, like affordability, safety, diversity and academic support. In the three years since our party was created, our student leaders have checked off the vast majority of all of our platform initiatives. What we have seen from the Inspire Party is a complete failure to keep their word. On this stage a year ago, the Inspire party promised you things like canceled days on election days and more parking on campus, yet none of these promises have been kept. Words are nothing without action, and platforms are nothing without a promise. The Impact does not use our platform as a goal to aspire to, but rather is our contract with the student. The choice before you this evening should be a simple one. On one side of the stage, you have three candidates with the experience they need to succeed in their positions. There's a party with a proven track record of keeping their promises made to the students. On the other side of the stage are three candidates whose lack of experience has destined them to fail. We have a party who has proven time and time again they simply do not know what it takes to follow through with their word, and most importantly, there is a party who is more concerned with taking credit than taking action, and making noise instead of making progress. I hope to use this debate to show you, the student body, which party is which. Thank you, and we look forward to answering your questions.

Moderator: With both opening statements by the parties being complete, we've decided to go in alphabetical order for the questions. The first question goes to the Impact party:

Our first question is for the Impact Party: "Both campaigns have promoted representing the student body as a whole. How do you think your campaign is representative of all Gators?" – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Sarah Abraham: The Impact party strives to include all Gators, no matter race, sexual or gender minorities. The Impact party has not only empowered me and every other student along with this campaign, but it empowers everyone that it meets in its path. Impact strives to reach all corners of campus, no matter what students they are facing. We go to talk to every student during campaigning so that they can truly understand what the Impact Party is doing. The Impact Party also puts up platform trackers so that the students understand what work is being put in through this party. The Impact Party often comes into Student Senate and meets with students through physical office hours, online office hours, and talks to their constituents so that everyone is being told about the transparency and the projects that are being worked on in Student Government. Impact party strives to reach every diverse corner of this campus and it will continue to do so.

Moderator: Inspire Party, you now have a one minute rebuttal.

Zachariah Chou: Inspire represents the student body as a whole, because we are the student body as a whole. I can point to an example of what happened during slating. Think of a party who is out there, outside the Reitz, with their flyers, who is willing to take any student walking by, and give them an opportunity to serve in the Student Senate, because we believe that the change in University of Florida exists in every Gator. That's why we are willing to give any Gator the chance to go into Senate. They talk

about how their executive heads come down to senate to talk. I don't think that happens that happen. I heard that once upon a time, Jocelyn came to almost every single Tuesday night meeting, and I would like to do that as your Student Body President.

Moderator: Impact Party, you now have a second, 30 second rebuttal.

Sarah Abraham: The Impact party also flyers, pulls a slate of many different communities on this campus, and Student Body President, the current one, Ian Green, also comes into senate to talk about his projects, and his current initiatives, and what he plans to do, and takes the input from everybody else.

Moderator: Our second question is for the Inspire Party: "Addressing mental health resources is a topic that both campaigns have placed on their platform. What concern about mental health resources would you address first?" – You have 2 minutes to respond

Zachariah Chou: I think the foremost concern surrounding mental health is one: resources and two: our culture surrounding these resources. So let's talk about the elephant in the room: the CWC, the Counseling and Wellness Center, and the things that we know about like people going in for triage then being put on waitlists. We don't want that, and we will do anything to make sure that these students are get the access to their health that they need. That means a lot of different things. Our university has submitted a legislative budget request to the state, and unfortunately that has been denied. But now that we have new leadership, a new senate, or well at least some new senators, there's an opportunity for us to refresh these requests and see if we can get more funding from the state, because we are a state institution and a lot of these things come from the state, so sometimes we have to lobby, sometimes we have to fight at a different level. Secondarily, I also would like to address other things, such as group therapy to make sure that we are helping other people. I recently gave a presentation talking about mental health, and someone came up to me after and they talked about how meaningful it would be for them to have a group therapy centered on the experiences of survivors of sexual assault. I know that the CWC has started doing programs focused on for an example, men of color, and I know that group therapy often is more accessible and more easier to get into, we can help even more people on this campus. So there's a lot of things out there, and there's even further solutions. So they have the kiosk, I listened on mental health particularly for graduate students and they talked about a health contract, where they can email a therapist and get a response within a day. That's not the same as a therapy session, but it something that we can look into as a Student Government, and I bet that that is going to make the lives of a lot of students better. So I am happy and I am proud to pay for more mental health resources, because I know that I am helping my friends, and I am helping Gator Nation.

Moderator: Impact party, you now have a one minute rebuttal.

Michael Murphy: Absolutely. So Impact Party proudly champions any additional advocating for resources on campus for mental health resources on campus. We are the party that was able to secure the funding for eight additional counselors at no extra cost to the students. Something that I am really excited to see from the current administration is: I know they are working on publishing mental health hotlines on the back of every Gator1 to ensure that no matter where that student is, they have access to a professional care provider. Something that I am really excited to bring to the University of Florida, Zach mentioned it, is that we going to bring the mental health kiosks. I think one of the great benefits that come from this mental health kiosk is defusing this negative stigma that is, "mental health." I think these kiosks in very public places will allow to engage with this material and hopefully have conversations with other students about it. The accessibility aspect of this platform point is another thing that I am excited about implementing.

Moderator: Inspire Party, you now have a thirty second rebuttal.

Zachariah Chou: We secured funding for mental health. When Smith Myers came to senate, he credited the students that protested. When the Alligator published, they also credited the students that came down and protested, and we helped rally them and bring them to senate. For the Gator1 hotline, they're actually digitizing the cards so I'm not sure on the back of what card you're going to be putting them on. As for the kiosks, I don't like how sometimes this university does things that makes us feel like a number. Sure we can do kiosks, but we need to look at the picture.

Moderator: Our third question is for the Inspire Party: "Graduate & professional students account for approximately 31% of the student body. As representatives for all students, how would you ensure that graduate and professional students voices are being heard and best represented?" – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Sarah Abraham: I think we can agree that graduate students live a very different from undergraduate students, where from 9:00-5:00, they are in class or at work, whereas undergraduate students are walking from class through the central part of campus, and other things that are very different. Something that the Impact is proposing to do, and hopefully accomplish is changing the Executive Secretary of "Graduate, Professional and Family Affairs" to its own cabinet division. So this new cabinet director will be able to put on intentional programming for graduate students, work with educational councils, the professional colleges, and make sure that these grad students know about the available resources available to them. We want to make sure that they feel just as included as the undergraduate students do, because in the end, they also go to this university, and we also want to make sure we are serving them. With this intentional programming, we want to make sure they understand the benefits of Student Government, and how we can help them in our daily lives.

Moderator: Inspire Party, you have a one minute rebuttal.

Gouthami Gadamsetty: Graduate students are a very important part of this campus. They make up a very large portion of the student body, and I am very proud of Inspire and our senators for doing so much for them. I think making a cabinet is a great step, but I think I can take it one step further, giving them a seat on the local fee committee, because truthfully, their fees are a lot higher. They also pay fees as graduate assistants. That's something Inspire Party has worked on with the GAU with other grad students to make sure that we have more representation in every part of campus. Students shouldn't have to pay fees when they're working for the University, to take that one step further, making sure that we take their concerns to the board of trustees and truly pay attention to any part of their campus from their daily life, to their academic life.

Moderator: Impact Party, you a thirty second rebuttal.

Sarah Abraham: Impact Party too has raising graduate compensation fees for these grad assistants. Another thing that the Impact Party is also striving to do is to actually raise the caps of the travel fees so instead of \$350 per head, to \$400 per head, because the president of these graduate councils has been asking for this and Impact is always going to provide for what the students want.

Moderator: The fourth question is for the Inspire Party: "This question is in two parts. Both campaigns have discussed making changes to the 800 codes around funding for student organizations. Could you first discuss what you would change and, secondly, how it would benefit students?" – You have 2 minutes to respond.

Mackintosh Joachim: First, I would make sure that every organization should know that they can be funded through student government. I know a lot of student orgs that right now do not know that they can be funded by Student Government. I want to work with SAI along with the Budget Chair during mandatory training to make sure that they know that they can be funded by Student Government if they meet certain criteria. Also, I want to make it known to all organizations that instead of using external bank accounts, they could use the Student Government Bank Account, so they don't have to pay extra fees. Second, I would like to make it easier, because the 800 codes are very hard sometimes, so I want to make it much easier for student orgs to really understand the process of being funded by Student Government. Thank you.

Moderator: Impact, you have a one minute rebuttal.

Santiago Gutierrez: Mack, I don't really understand what you mean by, "external bank accounts," when the external revenues that we have for student organizations here that allow the students to use their money more freely, abided by not only Student Government codes, but also university codes. So you won't be using it to, let's say funding for alcohol or other things that wouldn't reflect well on the students or this university. Now as far as the 800 codes, we wanted to reflect them on the student body by increasing the food from \$3.50 to \$4.00, and as Sarah said, the graduate caps from \$350 to \$400, so that these grad students that need it for networking, don't have to worry about the financial burden that they have in their career futures, by increasing these caps to reflect the modern student body. Thank you.

Moderator: Inspire Party, you have a 30 second rebuttal.

Mackintosh Joachim: What I was referring to was a lot of student orgs can go outside to open their own bank account, not knowing that they can actually stay within Student Government and open that bank account within Student Government. It's in the codes, 801.2, look it up. Second of all, I want to cut red tape around funding. That's what I was talking about. Thanks.

Moderator: Our fifth question is for the Impact Party and was taken from a student submission. Impact, your party has been criticized for taking credit for others success. Of particular interest are the expansion of Summer Bright Futures and dockless scooter sharing programs. How would you respond to these accusations and how would you better provide context around accomplishments? 2 minutes please.

Michael Murphy: Thank you. So our platform reflects exactly what the student body wants and so that's something really exciting. Our platform is in contract to the students. That being said, earlier, or last week rather, my opponent published an article releasing the emails of over 200 pages of emails regarding the Bright Futures and claims that none of those emails are equivalent to work. Once again, 200 pages of emails is no work. On the dockless scooters front, Of course dockless scooters are coming to Gainesville, but the implementation on how they work on campus is still in the works. Something that the Impact Party is really excited to work on is the "Pilot Program" to ensure that students are able to use this at a discounted rate. We're also looking forward to working with campus partners like Nightlife Navigators to ensure that all students are safe on the scooters and wearing helmets. Thank you.

Moderator: Inspire, 1 minute rebuttal.

Zachariah Chou: So, that was 200 emails over 5 years. If you want to do some division over there, you can have your Treasurer candidate do it, but that's not a lot of work. When emailing, when I was getting the street lights for Infinity Hall, that was dozens upon dozens of emails. When I was trying to get menstrual hygiene products within Newell, that was even more emails. It doesn't take much to send an email and that's the best that they can come up with when they say they were the people that brought in Bright Futures, then that is not very convincing to me. In terms of dockless scooters, something I noticed on their clarification platform is that they want to work with housing to make sure you can bring in a charger--oh I have 30 seconds, ok-- bring in chargers for scooters inside. But, if they actually knew what was going on within housing, they would know that two months ago, housing already sent an internal email talking about how with any motorized vehicle, you're not even allowed to have them inside the residence halls. Unfortunately when it comes to dockless scooters, Impact is doing too little, too late. Oh yeah, Bird provides free helmets by the way.

Moderator: Impact, 30 second rebuttal.

Michael Murphy: The first thing you're seeing that my opponent said he did the lights at Infinity Hall, but in fact that is a lie. Former Impact Student Body President, Susan Webster, did that. In regards to the Bright Futures, I personally have been on a bus load of students for the legislature to ensure this is something that we have. Of course it's not going to happen in one year, it's a government, you know this Zach. Thank you.

Moderator: The sixth question is for the Inspire Party. Inspire, your party has been criticized for failing to act and intentionally misrepresenting information that may mislead the electorate. Of particular interest are the recent resolution on Venezuela and the information shared on your website about the Presidential vetoes of a former Impact Student Body President. How would you respond to these accusations and how would you better provide better context around these topics?

Zachariah Chou: Alright so first, let's talk about the street lights because Michael just probably said I lied, but after Ian Green published his letter to the editor, saying that the street lights around Infinity Hall wasn't really me, guess what I did, I emailed the City of Gainesville. Here is their response: "Our data indicates that Mr. Chou initiated the lighting request for the Innovation Square area on March 21st, 2017. Staff coordinated with GRU and Engineering staff to determine the best course of action. The lighting has been installed in November 2017. So, if you're going to call me out for lying, I don't know. Sometimes when you point the finger at someone, there's three fingers pointing back. Additionally, they said that the (inaudible) that Ian talked about are part of district initiatives, so I don't know. I'm pretty okay on the facts. Let's talk about the Venezuela resolution. I published the LTE talking about transparency, why I abstained on the ballot on the resolution, you can read that on The Alligator. They talked about me abstaining, like sorry I don't choreograph these things politically ahead of time. I didn't know what would happen in that Senate meeting. Sometimes I thought the best ground was the middle ground because I

didn't want to vote against the interests of the Venezuelan community. Talking about the vetoes, I mean Smith Meyers really did veto those legislations and apparently Ian Green's reasoning is that the Legislative branch can't like write laws for the Executive branch to follow, which I thought was kind of questionable. Then he also says that "My administration has been providing closed captioning for transcripts and videos" but like if you go on the SG website right now, you'll see that most of these videos don't have transcripts and there is even a video they published this month that doesn't have captions or a transcript. Why is it so hard for SG to serve every student? It's not, and they don't do it. Look at our announcement videos, I have, we have captioned our own video, we have a transcript on our video. Thanks Mac for calming me down. But Impact Party doesn't have captions on their announcement video and they don't have a transcript either and I think that's kind of messed up and that shows you where their priorities are.

Moderator: Impact, you now have a 1 minute rebuttal.

Michael Murphy: There was a couple...

Moderator: Please go ahead, I apologize for the interruption. There was a little something from the audience. I want to remind everyone that those types of things take away from the debate and they take away from all candidates. Please let's let the candidates do it. Back to you please.

Michael Murphy: Absolutely. So there's a lot of things to address, but unfortunately I only have 1 minute so I'll do one of the things that I think is most important that Mr. Chou said on this stage tonight. Last week there was a vote, a very heated Senate meeting where there were passionate students from both side of the issue coming. This is something that filled the Public Debate and members of both sides came and delivered emotional testimonies, tears running down their faces, passion the whole time throughout Public Debate. That being said, you could see Mr. Chou laughing and joking, smiling and grinning on his livestream as these testimonies were given. That being said, Mr. Chou's reasoning for abstaining on the vote was a "conflict of interest". A lack of being informed is not a conflict of interest, Mr. Chou. Do your research.

Moderator: Inspire, 30 second rebuttal.

Zachariah Chou: For being the party of tangible change, Impact really seems to pay a lot of attention to this resolution that did nothing to help the situation in Venezuela. When I consulted my Venezuelan friends during the meeting, even today, they still stand by my decision because they know that that resolution was symbolic. When it comes to abstaining, sometimes there's competing interests. You want

to support the Venezuelan community, but at the same time, you know there are stances that Student Government, state institutions should not take. This was an incredibly complex issue.

Moderator: Our seventh question is for the Impact Party. SG Cabinet supports and creates programming for multiple areas of student life and student populations. How do you see Cabinet supporting students under your administration?

Sarah Abraham: Thank you. So, I think we all should know that one of the main jobs that Student Body Vice President holds is to be in charge of the 18 Cabinet Directors underneath them, plus the Cabinet Division Chairs. That being said, we need to work hard to be inclusive of every single Gator on this campus. Now, unlike other people, I have served as a cabinet director and did so extremely successfully. In this position, it was my job to unite students on the one thing we all share, going to UF. Just like that, the Health Affairs Cabinet does the same things, serving students from all walks of life, incorporating the CWC, the Infirmary, and anything else that could potentially contribute to Health Affairs. That being said, we want to make sure that our events are being programmed properly so that it can have maximum participation. We want to make sure that we're reaching all diverse parts of the university, whereas we should go into GBMs so that students that don't necessarily come to our events can understand how they can benefit from us. We also want people to consistently go into Student Senate meetings. Going into the Student Senate is extremely vital because there are 100 senators in there able to relay this information to their constituents. Now if they are relaying this information to their constituents about the events that are going on, we can successfully have a greater number of turnouts to these events. And lastly, I'd love to start a Student Government newsletter where it would have plenty of information about Board of Trustees meetings, what's happening in the Student Senate, and the Exec, that way students have a physical copy of the events that are going on for that month and that way we can also fix this issue of not having enough members coming to these events.

Moderator: Inspire, 1 minute rebuttal.

Gouthami Gadamsetty: Thank you for explaining what the Vice President role is. On your last point of having a newsletter, I think that's something I'm really proud of our senators for doing with their own constituents. So, since Inspire has already done it, I think we'll be a great party to take that, you know, further to the rest of the student body. In terms of the cabinets we do have, I think it's important to address that we should have a cabinet for our transfer students that come here. We're the biggest university in the state of Florida and I think it's sad that we don't have it because they should be supported. We should have a cabinet for our graduate students and those seats should be filled with people who are passionate and really could help those students. And within the cabinets that we already have, we have to make sure that we are being effective with how that outreach is going. So we have cabinets for LGBTQ, for multicultural students who are international students, but as a student who falls under some of these categories, I haven't been reached out to and I want to change that. Thank you.

Moderator: Impact, 30 second rebuttal.

Sarah Abraham: If you're referring to the listserv that gets sent out as your newsletter, I'm pretty sure I know a lot of students that would like to be taken off of that because they simply don't appreciate that. Second thing is, I too would like to start a graduate cabinet, as I mentioned in one of my other answers. And third point is that I also mentioned going into student organizations because there's always things that we can improve on and I think going into these diverse organizations can help us get the communities that we need involved.

Moderator: Our eighth question is for the Inspire party. If elected, as student government leaders you would serve as conduits between the student body and upper level administration at the University of Florida. How would you work with administrators to achieve your Platform goals?

Zachariah Chou: I think I'm the perfect person to answer this question because that's what I've been doing since freshman year. As a freshman, indeed it was me that went to the City of Gainesville to get the street lights. I emailed them, I figured out the bureaucracy, and I made things happen. I have met with the CEO, you know, the Vice President knows me on a first name basis, president Fuchs knows me on a first name basis. That's because I'm always in the room, I'm always bugging them for information and because we have that relationship established. That's what makes it so important to elect me as your Student Body President, because I already have those relationships. Sometimes, when I meet with the Chief Diversity Officer, I bring students with me. I can actually make an appointment every month because I know some kind of diversity-related issue is going to come up and I bring them to him and ask him for his advice on where to go. So when Puerto Rican students came to me and asked me questions on how to get the financial aid they need--these students were affected by Hurricane Maria--I brought them to the Chief Diversity officer. He told me who to talk to in administration and then I took them to the Financial Aid Office. There we talked to the Vice President of Enrollment, we talked to the Director of Financial Aid, and right now we're still working on making sure that they have the aid that they need. But this is a perfect example of what I do in many different threads of all the work that I do for students. As I mentioned in my earlier statement, sometimes there's people who want to help and there's students that need to help and one of the most effective things you can do as a member of Student Government is just connect the dots. As a senator, you don't really have that much power, you don't have that much money to make a change, but sometimes I still made it. I've done all these things, I've helped make these accomplishments. Even the menstrual hygiene products. We worked with the Administration, we worked with Library Administration, and we got something done. That's why I'm proud to say that I am the best candidate in terms of the Administrators and making sure that we can deliver our Platform with their help. Thank you.

Moderator: Impact, 1 minute rebuttal.

Michael Murphy: Do you think you could repeat the question?

Moderator: Yes, of course. If elected, as student government leaders you would serve as conduits between the student body and upper level administration at the University of Florida. How would you work with administrators to achieve your Platform goals?

Michael Murphy: Absolutely. So, a misunderstood role of the Student Body President is of course he serves as the Student Body President and the head of the Executive Branch. But, a lesser known role of the Student Body President is the sole student voting member on the Board of Trustees. So, ensuring before every meeting, going to the students, doing a dorm tour, talking to students who aren't usually reached, I think this is something that is extremely important as Student Government officials, that we hear the voices of our students. Not only hear, but listen to and ensure that it is taken action on. Impact Party has been able to implement new initiatives such as "Meeting You" where students, no matter where they are in the world, they're able to meet with our executive branch. And one more time Zach, with the lights, I find it incredibly interesting that in all this talk about lights, you are leaving the students in the dark. You did not do the lights. Susan Webster did it in 2016. Thank you.

Moderator: Inspire Party, 30 second rebuttal.

Zachariah Chou: Once again, this is from Debbie Leistner, the Public Works Planning Manager from the City of Gainesville dated, oh today: "Our data indicates that Mr. Chou initiated the light request for the Innovation Square area". Like how can you listen to his alternative facts, it's really getting tiring. Let me tell you another story. One time I was at Pascal's with president Fuchs and he was congratulating me on running for President. He asked me, "Hey, do you know who you're running against?" and I said Michael Murphy and he was like, "Hm, never heard of him".

Moderator: Our ninth question is for the Impact Party. I would encourage the candidates to keep the mics close so everyone could hear what they are saying. Our ninth question is for the Impact Party. 24 hour, 7 day a week Study Space has been a contentious topic over the last year. What role, if any, did your party have in the conversation and what do you plan on advocating for in the future?

Michael Murphy: So Impact Party of course is the party that not only brought one 24/7 study space to campus, but two. So Library West, this year as you may know, there was a period of time when it wasn't 24/7. We were able to negotiate with the Provost Office to ensure that this was once again a reality for the next couple years. President Green was able to negotiate this at no additional cost to the students. Once again, no additional cost to the students. When this became an issue last Fall, The Inspire party advocated to raise the students' fees. Now, for a party that takes affordability as one of its strongest initiatives, I think it be a little ironic that this is the first thing that they tried to do. This is something that is not the only issue where they try to raise fees as a solution. Looking back at the Counseling and Wellness Center

once again, while we were looking for alternative routes to fund, the Inspire Party should look into the students' pockets first and not last. Thank you.

Moderator: Inspire, 1 minute rebuttal.

Zachariah Chou: After the local Fee Committee, which had a bunch of Impact affiliated appointees on it, failed a proposal from the CWC to get permanent funding for older mental health counselors, Impact advocated to go and talk to the Chief Financial Officer to try to squeeze some more funds, talking about overhead and stuff like that. So you know what I did. I emailed the Chief Financial Officer and he was like no it can't be done, and did we ever hear back from tem on that, I don't think so. On the subject of the libraries, I'd like to make it abundantly clear that I have not, probably ever, advocated to increase the Activity and Service Fee to fund the libraries. I'm not committed to that. I'm committed to making sure every single student on the campus as access to libraries, the computers, the textbooks, the software that they need to be successful. I was out there. I was fact-finding. I wrote not one, two, three, but I think six Alligator columns trying to figure out what happened with Ian Green and the funding because his party was not transparent through the process. If you're going to make decisions that affect all students...

Timer: Time.

Moderator: Impact, 30 second rebuttal.

Michael Murphy: Absolutely. For a party who is all about additional study pace and making sure that everyone has additional 24/7 study space, I find it ironic and a little funny that you pump out hate towards Newell Hall. Newell Hall has offered 400 plus student study spaces as well as over 150 student jobs. Thank you.

Moderator: Our tenth question is for the Inspire Party. Transportation and Parking Services has been working to update the master plan, which will impact students. If elected, what steps would you take to advocate for student parking? You have two minutes.

Zachariah Chou: So, student parking is an incredible and complex issue and I've had the pleasure of emailing TAPS to work on various initiatives such as "Frost Loss", talking to them about bike racks, but parking of course is the elephant in the room. How are we going to be having an accessible university? How do we make sure that not only our students, but our faculty and staff, the janitors, the maintenance workers, everybody, has access? And honestly, that's going to take a lot of work and when it comes to that, Student Government doesn't necessarily have the direct control over these things. So a lot of what

we are saying advocates for “make sure these decals aren’t expensive” oh make sure yatta, yatta, yatta. But what we really need to do, in my personal opinion, based off my talk with TAPS, is change the culture. What does it take to make people bike from their homes onto campus? What does it do to like make people not like take their bikes to work or like to Gainesville at all? And I think we are (inaudible) with various ride share programs the city has or even dockless scooters, we’ve already gone there, can do a lot to make a big difference. But otherwise our Student Government will of course be advocating for issues that will defend students. You know, how many permits, the times of permits. I also think we can work with TAPS to figure out the best way to optimize the decal system because you know, you know the signs and it’s like 4:22 pm and you’re pulling up to Murphree Area and it’s like a blank to 4:30 pm sign and then you’re like oh no. Because in your mind you’re thinking about that one friend, who you know had this, “I left my car 5 minutes early and I got a ticket”. Like do we even know if that’s the best way to do this? I think we should of course definitely work with TAPS to make sure that they have the data, they have the student input to make the most effective changes on our campus. Thank you.

Moderator: Impact, 1 minute rebuttal.

Michael Murphy: So parking is one of the biggest issues facing students as well. Raise your hand if you’ve gotten a parking ticket in the last year. That’s what I thought. So something that we absolutely need to advocate for is more parking spaces and unfortunately, as it stands, TAPS is working to shrink the available student spaces on campus. We’re really excited to see, the reason for that is that we’re actually building new parking garages in an attempt to increase student parking in the end. I think working with TAPS should be a holistic process in which we’re making sure that all the voices of the students are heard. Thank you.

Moderator: Inspire Party, you may now have a 30 second rebuttal.

Zachariah Chou: Yeah, it’s what I said. Like a lot of what Student Government does is advocacy based and sometimes you can do things and you can’t do things. When you look at our ticket, think about the people who have successfully advocated for you in the past. I promise you, I’ll pinky promise you Michael Murphy, that I successfully advocated for those street lights. And we’ve been advocating for you on multiple issues across the board and we will continue to do so, win or lose in this election honestly. We’ll keep on tugging for ya’ll.

Moderator: Our eleventh question is for the Impact Party. How does your campaign plan on supporting and advocating for marginalized populations on campus? You have 2 minutes to respond.

Sarah Abraham: So, traditionally marginalized communities don’t always feel safe on this campus, especially as a predominantly white institution, it can be hard to find our place on this campus. That being

said, I want to start initiatives with Student Government Productions and Accent so that we can help empower these traditionally marginalized communities. That meaning, bring in speakers from various communities. Bring in performers from these communities so that when they do come here, these marginalized communities can be empowered, feel related to, so that they know that they can reach these heights that these performers are acting on. That it's not always the same old plan that we follow again and again, but that these people can come here and empower the students so that they too can feel as though they have a voice and be successful. And lastly, Impact Party strives to make everyone feel empowered and included. That being said, we are advocating for resources on this campus for these traditionally marginalized communities, promoting the IBC, promoting La Casita, promoting the Lapita Institute that will hopefully be coming. We want to make sure that everyone on this campus feels as though they can feel safe here, comfortable, and so they can understand that they too, that this is home for them.

Moderator: Inspire, 1 minute rebuttal.

Mackintosh Joachim: Bringing speakers on campus is actually a great idea. I really love it Sarah, I hope we can work on it in the future. As a person of color myself, I can tell you that a lot of students tell me that they do not feel as a Student Government, that we represent them 100%. I want to change that. I want to make sure that every person of color on campus feels that they are welcome within Student Government and that they don't feel as they are being used as tokens. That they feel very welcome. Thank you.

Moderator: Impact, 30 second rebuttal.

Sarah Abraham: I will not sit up here and be called a token, nor will Santiago. We have worked extremely hard to be where we are today. Never will I be called a token. This party has put us up based on our merit. We are here because we earned these positions. We have done the positions in the back, we've been working our way up here, we deserve to be here. And I too agree with you that students don't always feel safe here, that they sometimes what to get included. Now the Impact Party has done that for us, none of us are tokens.

Timer: Time.

Moderator: The twelfth question is for the Inspire Party. What is one positive attribute of your opposing presidential candidate? You have 2 minutes.

Zachariah Chou: Michael Murphy has always been kind to me. He always greets me with a smile. He always shakes my hand. I have known him, I guess since Freshman year, because we both served as senators within our respective areas. Personally, he has always been a person that I've been happy to reach across the aisle to talk to. I'm not going to leave it right there, I have nicer things to say about him. Honestly, it's not just Michael it's Santiago and also Sarah, they're very nice people. I sound like Trump. Sorry for going off script. We are able to leave politics at the door, like if Michael asked me to go bowling or something, I'd go with him. And since I have time, I'll tell a story. Someone at the J School contacted me about wanting to do, like, Super Smash Bros and they asked if I'd be willing to do it with Michael Murphy and I was like yeah I'd do it. And then they were like, "do you think Michael Murphy would wanna do it?" and I was like he'd do it too, because I know Michael, like we've known each other for years and despite all this, despite our disagreements on street lights, we can still greet each other with a smile, and that's going to happen regardless of the outcome of this election.

Moderator: Impact.

Michael Murphy: Absolutely. Thank you Zach. I mean the words of affirmation, I would like to say I'm blushing but I'm blushing all the time, so that's how that works. I'd say one of the most positive attributes of Zach is he's just a really funny guy. I think his record speaks for himself, both his posts on social media and in person. He will from time to time post a pretty spicy meme and I'm not afraid to tell you that that's probably going to be me next week. That being said Zach, it is absolutely true that both you and I are able to leave politics at the door, and yes I'll be more than happy not only to play Super Smash but to go bowling with you. Thank you.

Moderator: And now Inspire, you have final privilege, 30 seconds.

Zachariah Chou: I mean it's really be a privilege to be able to serve with Michael in the Senate. So, I don't know. This is one of those weird questions, like how to you rebut that? I don't know Michael, I'm happy to play Super Smash, go bowling, and go on a fishing trip with you. Honestly, Michael's a very funny guy too. We know each other, we know our personalities and I'm happy to be his friend.

Moderator: Thank you to both parties and it's nice to see that civility and positive exchange from both candidacies. At this point, we now conclude the question portion of the debate and we'll now move to closing statements. By a prearranged, Inspire will now have 3 minutes for their closing statement. Inspire Party.

Zachariah Chou: So, before I go into the closing, closing statement, I'd like to address some of the elephants in the room that has come through this debate, and I'd like to point them out. Mainly Bright Futures funding because that's something that's so important to some of these students and affects almost

all the students here that are in-state. And Impact party has really made it a point to be the party that brought you the expanded Bright Futures, you know the summer Bright Futures, the 100% tuition, and unfortunately, within this debate, they haven't given you a convincing response that will make you feel like they were really out there in the state. Not just on UF visitation day, but always out there fighting for Bright Futures and I think that's something that tells you how they deal with the facts. And the same thing goes for the street lights. I have the email. I literally printed it out from the City of Gainesville and they still can't agree on whether I did street lights or not. You see, at the end of the day, the facts lie with Mac, the facts lie with Gouthami, and the facts lie with me. But this isn't all about facts so let me tell you a story. When I first came into Senate, I was the only Independent candidate that won that election cycle. I felt frightened, and lonely, and I didn't feel like the institution of Student Government cared about me. People straight up didn't sit next to me in Senate. I tried attending an Impact caucus meeting and I was told I was making people uncomfortable. I got rejected from committee after committee, but still, I bought my Student Government polo, my Student Government long sleeve and my Student Government quarter zip. But even though as I put on my Student Government gear, it's always been a little ironic to me that I represent an institution that didn't want me--until I met Michael Murphy. You know, there's a lot of people out here at UF who put on Gator gear but, just like me and my Student Government polo, feel as though their clothes aren't meant for them. There are people who don't feel welcome here, there are people who slip through the cracks. I'm glad that plenty of senators feel comfortable in senate, I'm glad that there are plenty of students at UF that feel comfortable there, but I'm here to make sure that people who once felt like I did, they find pride, they find a home. We want to represent each and every one of you. We want to fight and advocate for each and every one of you. Inspire is here to make sure that our Student Government represents every Gator. We are the people who outlived the long cycle, we are the people who take your flyers in Turlington, sometimes, we are the people who are in the stall right next to you when you use the restroom and we say it's about time for new leadership. It's time to take action. It's time to empower students. It's Chou time.

Moderator: We'll have time for applause for everyone at the end. Impact Party, your 3 minute closing statement.

Sarah Abraham: Thank you all for taking the time this evening to let us share our vision for UF. I hope you have a better understanding of how Michael, Santiago and I will create a Student Government that works for and welcomes every Gator. For months now, Senator Chou as chronicled Student Government updates in his weekly column, picking apart our achievements and criticizing our plans for students. Now when his own record is being faced by a critical eye, the Inspire Party finally calls for bipartisanship, unity and civility, but the stakes of this election are too high to be misled and Senator Chou's misinformation has spread too far. As we close tonight, I would like to remind you all what the Impact Party stands for. We've listened to the voices of students and made true, tangible change to the University of Florida. We're the party that is enhancing the student body experience in every way possible, not a party of empty promises. In one of Senator Chou's recent letters to the editor, he stated that effort does not equate to accomplishment, however, history has shown that Inspire Party's Platform are solely efforts that don't ever get accomplished. Our party knows what's achievable. The Impact Party is committed to the true leadership that every student deserves. This election, you have to decide. On February 19th and 20th, you can cast your vote for a party that is unable to differentiate between making noise and making progress or you can cast your vote for a party with a Platform that believes the students come first. Cast your vote for the Impact Party. Thank you.

Moderator: Ladies and gentlemen, to give you the opportunity to recognize everyone equally, I will give you the names of both of the candidates of the parties for each position. For the Inspire Party for Treasurer, Mackintosh Joachim and Santiago Gutierrez. The Inspire Party candidate for Vice President, Gouthami Gadamsetty and the Impact Party candidate, Sarah Abraham. And your Presidential candidates, for the Inspire Party, Zachariah Chou and from the Impact Party, Michael Murphy. Gators at this point, the event ends. I'd like to thank the Supervisor of Elections, Mr. Fair. Also Liz Delaney for the outstanding opportunity to be here and to give you the opportunity to listen to these six outstanding Gators. Any of them would be excellent representatives of the University of Florida for the time I've spent with them this evening. I would like to remind you that you have the obligation as well as the opportunity to vote on February 19th and 20th. With that being said, good evening, go Gators, and one more time please celebrate these six outstanding Gators.