

From: Afshar, Negar
Date: Tuesday, October 6, 2026 at 4:14 PM
To: Finkel, Matthew D. **Subject:** Friendly Reminder

Hi everyone,

I hope your semester is going well.

This is a friendly reminder of the expectations we established when Young Americans for Freedom was founded on our campus. Part of that agreement was meeting with me regularly, as well as discussing any event or speaker ideas in advance so we can review and approve them together.

I have not had the chance to meet with your leadership team this semester, and I want to ensure we are all still aligned on those expectations. I also see that a Speaker Request form was submitted, and we need to discuss that before anything can move forward.

Please select a time on my calendar as soon as possible so we can reconnect and review your plans.

Thank you,

Negar Afshar, MS
Director, Student Organizations and Engagement
Student Engagement
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From: Finkel, Matthew D
Sent: Thursday, October 8, 2026 12:15 PM
To: Afshar, Negar

Good afternoon Negar,

I hope your day is going well. I spent this morning re-reading the ERAU YAF Chapter Bylaws that were sent in upon re-registration of our chapter this semester and did not see anything which pertained to meeting with you regularly as a condition of our chapter hosting events. This was further evidenced by us holding multiple tabling events and activism projects this semester thus far, like the 9/11 Never Forget Project, which were all approved through proper SchedulER requests and approvals of course.

As the new Chairman of the chapter, and someone who was heavily involved with getting our last speaker event approved, It was clear to me that by the rules you set in place, the speaker form, created by you last semester, was our way of advising you of our intent to host a speaker on campus in any future instances, and that by filling it out with all the requested information, we would be providing you with the information you need to approve the event or come back to us with any changes that we would need to make to host the speaker on campus. We understood the form as a way to accelerate the process which took months last semester, and we happily complied with filling it out, even though we know that other RSOs host speakers without doing so, thus already creating an inequality in how we function as an RSO.

Furthermore, when attending the RSO officer training, it was clearly relayed multiple times that all event requests/approvals should start with filling out the respective forms on campus groups, which again led us to believe that we should start the process with the Speaker Form.

If you have any questions or concerns about what we submitted, It would be much appreciated if you could relay them either in email or allow us to go over them with another member of the RSO team, as your meeting availability seems very limited in the coming days and we would like to address any possible concerns as soon as possible. We would also be happy to once again connect you with Lt. Col. Allen West's staff at YAF if necessary to expedite the contract negotiation process.

Regards,

Matthew Finkel

From: Afshar, Negar <AFSHARN@erau.edu>

Date: Thursday, October 8, 2026 at 4:45 PM

To: Finkel, Matthew D

Subject: Re: Friendly Reminder

Hi Matthew,

I will send a full response to your email shortly. As for the meeting, please go ahead and choose a time that works for you, or send me a few available times and I'll be happy to coordinate.

Thank you,

Negar Afshar, MS

Director, Student Organizations and Engagement

Student Engagement

From: Finkel, Matthew D. <FINKELM@my.erau.edu>

Sent: Friday, October 9, 2026 1:01 PM

To: Afshar, Negar
Subject: Re: Friendly Reminder

Good Afternoon,

Just wanted to pop this back up to the top of your inbox since I know you mentioned that you had more follow up to my email.

While I am coordinating with the rest of the executive board on a possible meeting time, it would be helpful to continue this conversation over email as to prevent any delays with approvals.

Regards,
Matthew Finkel

From: Afshar, Negar <AFSHARN@erau.edu>

Date: Friday, October 9, 2026 at 2:58 PM

To: Finkel, Matthew

Subject: Re: Friendly Reminder

Hello Matthew,

The speaker request is currently moving through the appropriate review process. My request to meet with you and any available members of your executive board, as well as my response to your previous email, are separate from that process and are not delaying the review of the speaker request.

Thank you,

Negar Afshar, MS

Director, Student Organizations and Engagement

Student Engagement

From: Finkel, Matthew D. <FINKELM@my.erau.edu>

Sent: Friday, October 9, 2026 3:33 PM

To: Afshar, Negar

Subject: Re: Friendly Reminder

Negar,

Thank you for the update on the speaker request review process. That is great to hear

Regards,

Matthew Finkel

From: Afshar, Negar <AFSHARN@erau.edu>

Sent: Thursday, October 15, 2026 09:47

To: Finkel, Matthew D.

Subject: Friendly Reminder

Good morning, Matthew,

Thank you for your email. I hope your day is going well. Over the past several days, I have taken the time to thoroughly review our records, communications, and event history with YAF dating back nine years. Because your message includes several distinct points, I want to respond to each of them clearly and directly, so we are all operating with the same understanding.

1. Regarding Chapter Bylaws: Chapter bylaws outline the internal rules and procedures that a student organization sets for itself (officer duties, meeting structures, membership guidelines), and similar operational matters. They do not govern the expectations, requirements, or oversight set forth by the university. For that reason, reviewing your bylaws would not shed any light on the long-standing expectations between YAF and the Office of Student Engagement. Those expectations have always existed outside of your internal bylaws, and that is both normal and appropriate.

2. Regarding Previously Approved Events (e.g., 9/11 Never Forget Project): We did review all of your recent submissions, including the 9/11 Never Forget Project and the accompanying Spirit Rock component. Those were routed through the appropriate reviewers, and I was looped in by the staff overseeing those processes. Because of our nine-year relationship, and because YAF historically conducted itself responsibly and collaboratively, we trusted that your chapter would continue to operate within the expectations we've reiterated many times. The events you submitted were straightforward, non-incendiary, and did not require an immediate meeting. However, the fact that these particular events did not require a meeting does not mean the expectation of meeting with me has been removed. The semester had just begun, and we were monitoring all organizations closely. The standing requirement for pre-event conversations with YAF leadership has never been rescinded.

3. Regarding the Speaker Request Form: The Speaker Request Form was created last spring in response to a new requirement from university leadership that all speaker requests be reviewed through their respective areas. This is a campus-wide requirement that applies to all departments and student organizations inviting speakers, whether academic, corporate, alumni, political, or otherwise. Multiple departments may be involved in the review and approval process before a speaker is approved to come to campus.

The form was not created specifically for YAF, nor was it intended to replace our established event-planning conversations. I was transparent with your leadership that, as a newly

implemented process, approvals could take additional time while workflows were being established and tested. With that in mind, we worked with your organization to coordinate as many elements of the event as possible while the formal approval was pending so that your planning could continue.

To be clear, the Speaker Request Form applies to all RSOs. However, completing the form does not replace required meetings with my office, particularly for events that may require additional coordination due to risk, logistics, or broader campus impact. At no point in our conversations or documentation was it stated or implied that submitting the form would eliminate the need for those meetings.

If you are aware of organizations that have hosted speakers without completing the required form, please provide that information so I can review it. Based on our records, the form has been used consistently across campus.

4. Nine-Year History of Collaboration: From the very beginning, starting with Kevin O'Connor's leadership, YAF and the Office of Student Engagement maintained a strong, respectful, and collaborative relationship. We met regularly, discussed event intent and impact, and ensured that every speaker and activity was conducted responsibly.

For nine years, this approach resulted in:

- Zero incidents
- Civil discourse
- Respectful engagement
- Positive recognition from YAF National, who used ERAU's chapter as a model for other campuses

This success was built on transparency, open communication, and mutual respect.

5. Shift in Tone and Approach This Year: Unfortunately, over the past several months, the tone of communication from the new YAF leadership has changed significantly. Emails have become increasingly accusatory and adversarial, with assumptions made without consultation and broad claims presented without verification. This is not how YAF has historically operated on our campus, and it is not a sustainable approach moving forward. As a reminder, ERAU is a private institution. Student organizations exist because the university permits them to exist. Events occur because the university approves them. All RSOs, including YAF, are required to comply with university policies, procedures, and instructions from university staff. I have personally taken considerable criticism over the years for supporting YAF's presence on campus, but I have consistently defended the importance of allowing all students to express their ideas respectfully. That support has always been grounded in the collaborative relationship we maintained, a relationship that has now shifted.

6. Path Forward: You and your leadership team have a decision to make: If you would like to return to the collaborative, respectful, and transparent relationship that YAF has maintained with this office for nearly a decade, I am more than willing to continue that partnership. If not,

then we will need to move forward differently. I am happy to have a conversation with you and your officers in person, to reset expectations and ensure clarity moving forward.

Thank you,

Negar Afshar, MS

Director, Student Organizations and Engagement

Student Engagement