

President Marrero responds to book-burning incident in Armstrong open forum

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Byline: Nathan Woodruff | @Nw19982

Body

SAVANNAH - Georgia Southern University President Kyle Marrero fielded questions regarding the book-burning that took place last Wednesday at an **open forum** event on the Armstrong campus Monday.

Marrero said that the students that were involved in the burning of Jennine Capó Crucet's novel "Make Your Home Among Strangers" outside a GS residence hall last week are not being punished because they are protected by their first amendment rights according to administration.

"This is a campus of which we have to unite together and understand what we will tolerate what we will allow to happen on our campus' and then how we will uphold First Amendment rights," Marrero said. "These aren't easy conversations."

Marrero said that he sympathized with students, but that he has to protect student's rights.

"Some of you would like to see more formal action taken on the students in the video and I can empathize-I can sympathize with your frustration and even your anger," Marrero said. "My job is to protect the rights of all students."

A student in the audience asked the question, "Why must minorities and persons of color rise above the blatant hate that people of caucasian descent show?"

Marrero responded that it is needed in order to continue to collaborate together. The president then spoke on his statement that he released Friday.

"I am not able to respond as quickly as you would like me to respond. I don't respond at the speed of social media," Marrero said. "It wasn't until we had via investigation enough information for me to respond to campus. The approval for that statement was expedited via the legal and system process and sent to campus Friday afternoon."

SGA will be holding another **open forum** Wednesday on the Statesboro campus. The **forum** is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. in the Russell Union Ballroom.

Jason Chapman of The George-Anne Inkwell Edition contributed to this article

Nathan Woodruff, Managing News Editor, gaeditor@georgiasouthern.edu

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