

Fireside Chat

WITH DEAN LOWE



Special Guest

JAMAL SOWELL

FAMU VP OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

MARCH 31, 2025

2:30 PM | SJGC LECTURE HALL

FAMU

SCHOOL OF
**JOURNALISM
& GRAPHIC
COMMUNICATIONS**

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ABOUT THIS EVENT

FAMU Vice President of Government Relations Jamal Sowell will visit SJGC for a fireside chat with Dean Mira Lowe March 31. The pair will discuss the intersection of Communications and Government and why Government Relations can be a rewarding career path for communications majors. He will also speak about FAMU Day at the Capitol, happening April 9th, and discuss the FAMU legislative priorities for this legislative session.

RUN OF SHOW

What Media Team	Time	Notes
Set Up	2:00	Set up the room (chairs and podium) Make sure photography team is on the way
Dean Lowe and Vice President Sowell arrive	2:20	Introductions between Dean Lowe and Vice President Sowell Tell them where they will sit Give them event book Tell them the run of the show
Prof. Lumpkin and Tartaglione open event	2:30	Make sure everyone is seated and quiet
Dean Lowe interviews Vice President Sowell	2:35 - 3:30	Questions have been given to them beforehand.
Questions from audience	3:30 - 3:40	Lowe recognizes students who have questions
Dean Lowe thanks everyone and closes	3:40	Make sure people have taken the survey. (Remind them it is for attendance for class)

Bio

Jamal Sowell Vice President Government Relations



Jamal Sowell is FAMU's Vice President of Government Relations. Before he joined the FAMU administration in 2024, VP Sowell was named among Florida Trend's 500 most influential business leaders and served as Florida's Secretary of Commerce and CEO of Enterprise Florida. Sowell was the Chief of Staff for Port Tampa Bay, an entity that generated \$17.2 billion in economic value. Though he did not graduate as a Rattler, his father, mother and wife are all FAMU alumni.

Sowell's family has a strong military legacy—his grandfather was in World War II, his father served in Vietnam, and his brother was in Iraq. He is a Pat Tillman Scholar and veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan who enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps as a Private First Class and completed his time in the Marines as a Captain. He is currently in the United States Navy Reserve and is an appointee to the Florida Defense Support Commission, which aims to bolster Florida's military missions and installations..

Bio

Mira Lowe Dean School of Journalism and Graphic Communication



Mira Lowe is the dean of the School of Journalism and Graphic Communication at Florida A&M University (FAMU). At FAMU, she is dedicated to creating an environment where students from all backgrounds can thrive. She believes strongly in preparing students for the ever-evolving media landscape, ensuring they gain the skills they need to succeed in the industry. Lowe focuses on hands-on learning and leadership development.

Before joining FAMU, Lowe was assistant dean for student experiences and director of the Innovation News Center at the University of Florida's College of Journalism and Communications. There, she managed student journalists who covered local news across 19 counties in North Central Florida, giving them hands-on experience in real-world journalism.

Earlier in her career, Lowe held key newsroom positions. She served as senior editor at CNN Digital and was the editor-in-chief of JET magazine, becoming the first woman to lead the publication.

Lowe holds a Bachelor of Arts in Television and Radio from Brooklyn College and a Master of Science in Journalism from Columbia University.

With over 30 years of experience in media, Lowe has worked across journalism, digital platforms, and broadcasting. Throughout her career, she has been committed to fostering excellence in journalism, increasing diversity in media, and empowering the next generation of journalists.

QUESTIONS FOR OUR SPEAKER

[[Maureen Tartaglione introduces Dean Lowe and VP Sowell, with overview of VP's bio]

TARTAGLIONE: ...and now, Dean Lowe, I'll ask you to take over as moderator of our fireside chat."

LOWE: Thank you, Professors Lumpkin and Tartaglione, and thank you Vice President Sowell for taking time to be here today.

Before we talk about the role of communications in government relations, I want to ask you what's happening in your current role right now. We're about halfway into your first legislative session representing FAMU at the Capitol. How is it going?

Are there any ways we should be supporting FAMU's efforts during the session [legislative day]?

Some of our students would like to pursue those types of activities [legislative day] as a career, could you talk a little bit about your own career path and how you became such an influential figure in the state?

Are there opportunities for our graduates with strong communications skills to enter the field of government affairs full time?

What are some common career paths for Public Relations or Journalism graduates who want to work in government affairs?

What advice would you give to students who want to use their Public Relations or Journalism degree to enter the field of government relations?

QUESTIONS FOR OUR SPEAKER

What can students do while they're still in college to start building a network that would help them enter the field?

Can you describe the relationship government relations professionals have with the media? Would you say it's symbiotic? Adversarial?

How has the rise of social media changed the way government agencies communicate with the public?

Given today's political climate, what do you think public relations practitioners can do to foster trust between the government and the public?

AT 3:30 p.m.:

Thank you so much for sharing your insights. At this point, I'd like to open our chat up to questions from members of our audience.

AT 3:40 p.m. I think we have time for one more question.

[CLOSING]

LOWE: Thank you again, Vice President Sowell, for joining us today. Students, don't forget to scan the QR code for this event to record your attendance before you leave.

Given today's political climate, what role do public relations professionals play in fostering trust between the government and the public?

How has the rise of social media changed the way government agencies communicate with the public?

ABOUT SJGC

The School of Journalism & Graphic Communication (SJGC) at Florida A&M University is one of the nation's premier journalism, visual, and mass communications programs at an historically Black college or university.

Founded in 1982, it is the first program of its kind at an HBCU to receive national accreditation. With a focus on academic excellence, experiential learning, and professional development, SJGC prepares students to be influential storytellers, communicators, and leaders equipped to meet and exceed the demands of a competitive and evolving media marketplace.

At SJGC, students develop highly sought-after skills that enable them to effectively present information, persuade audiences, and produce compelling content. Our students learn how to not only develop their voices but also represent the voices of others in a state-of-the-art facility, as they take part in its award-winning multimedia platforms.

SJGC offers a hands-on learning environment that allows students to hone their skills in real-world settings within the school and the greater community. From student media productions and year-round training to making connections with alumni and supporters, SJGC's emerging professionals have the opportunity to learn from and engage with prominent media professionals from high-impact organizations through a range of programs.