

Bargaining Update

Salary talks on hold

Lisa Mills

UFF Communications

Your bargaining team has been hard at work this fall negotiating a new contract and has reached tentative agreement on 25 of the 31 articles. However, negotiations on Article 23 (salaries) are on hold until more stable budget information becomes available. The initial salary proposal from the Board of Trustees includes money for its preferred raise packages (awards and discretionary raises) but no money for merit, market equity, or cost of living raises. The UFF proposal reallocates those monies into an across-the-board raise, including additional salary raises if tuition is

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Lawmakers boost tuition but warn more cuts will be needed

Special Session underway in Tallahassee.

Lisa Mills

UFF Communications

UCF students will be paying more for classes in the spring but the tuition hike won't bring in enough money to offset more budget cuts next year. Full-time students will pay \$55 more next semester, which amounts to a 5 percent increase beginning in January. Automatic increases in future years will be tied to inflation, roughly boosting tuition by 3 percent each year. Lawmakers can

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You have 30 days to file a grievance. Don't wait to contact the contract enforcement chair to get help: jblakescott@gmail.com

Fall 2007 Events

Collective Bargaining Sessions

Oct. 18, 2007

9:00 am – 11:30am

CSB 212

Nov. 13, 2007

9:00 am – 11:30am

CSB 212

All sessions are open to the public. Come show your solidarity!

Teaching/Research Awards Workshop

Oct. 31, 2007

Noon-1:00pm

Student Union Room 316AB

RSVP Required! See more details below

Open Discussion: The UCF Contract

Nov. 8th

Student Union Room 218AB

12:00-1:15pm

RSVP Required! See more details on page 2

\$29,000 Raise, anyone?

“Other Awards” at UCF

Here's a Halloween treat for you: your UCF-UFF union is sponsoring a MEMBERS ONLY workshop to help you apply for various UCF teaching and research awards that can collectively increase your salary up to \$29,000. Dr. Keith Folse and Dr. Tison Pugh will give an overview of various teaching and research awards, emphasizing concrete steps that you should be doing NOW so that you will have a solid portfolio for next year.

****This workshop is a benefit for UCF-UCF members only****

- Nonmembers may become members of UFF-UCF on the day of the event.
- RSVP required: Dr. Terri Fine: drmisty@juno.com
- Wednesday, October 31, 2007
Student Union Building, Room 316AB
12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Lunch provided

A Message from your union president

Lisa Logan

UFF President

A day without the union...and you think the cuts to FL's universities are bad....

According to *The New York Times* (July 20, 2007) UCF has the distinction of the worst student-faculty ratio in the country (28:1). The table below offers comparisons within the state of Florida.

University	UCF	UF	FSU	USF	FAU	FIU
Fall 1999	20.6	22	NA	17.7	NA	NA
Fall 2000	22.3	20	22	17.7	16	14
Fall 2006	27.8	21.4	21.3	18.9	19	24

Faculty turnover at Florida universities is 14%, and hiring freezes prevent new faculty hires. As of October 12, the Florida state legislature voted in favor of a reduction to state universities of \$58.8 million or 2.5%. Deans, chairs, and directors are slashing their budgets in anticipation of an even worse year in 2008. Research travel is discouraged, and the possibility of raises looks dire. Welcome to another year in the sunshine state, where the failure to fund higher education responsibly is a way of life.

Could things get worse? Yes. Imagine a day without the union. Imagine waking up in Florida without a contract—that little purple book. Just imagine: your computer catches fire, but your department is under no obligation to replace it; you design a software program on your own time, but the university claims ownership; you file a grievance, but that grievance is decided by a team of the university administration's representatives; on a Saturday morning, you participate in a rally for social justice, and you learn that the next time you do that you'll be fired; raises are distributed, but you don't get one, and you're not told why; the university shifts the cost of healthcare for its PPO plan so drastically that most faculty can afford only a cut-rate university-sponsored plan; your department dictates that your research must now focus on a topic that matches the agenda of a corporate donor;

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you are not offered any summer teaching unless you accept reduced pay at adjunct rates.

You get the idea. Our contract defines the terms and conditions of the work that ALL of us do (whether we join UFF or not). UFF is the entity that bargains and protects our contractual rights. Yet UFF has been doing more with less for some time. When faculty are stretched, who has time to volunteer their service to ensure our rights and academic professionals? How are you helping UFF to bargain and protect your contract? Two members of the UFF bargaining team have served for six years; our grievance chair has served for three years. Do you assume that UFF will always be there? Do you leave our rights to others to defend?

I urge you, my colleagues, to step up and defend our rights and working conditions in the face of Florida's higher education crisis. Join UFF today, and make us stronger at the bargaining table. Volunteer a few hours a month in chapter leadership so that UFF can do even more. Consider assisting the 1400+-member bargaining unit by getting involved in our chapter. While morale is not exactly at an all-time high, let's remember the value of our contract, which protects us from doing too much more with too much less. To join or get involved, email me at logan.lisa@gmail.com.

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raised by 3% or more. "Everybody always asks about salaries but salaries are only a small part of the contract," said UFF Vice President Beth Young. "Other issues are especially important in a tight budget year."

TEACHING ASSIGNMENTS

Some colleges with special degrees offer a course release to faculty in their regular teaching area, and then offer teaching assignments for the special degree at different pay rates. UFF is concerned about this practice and is negotiating under Article 8. "We want to make sure that teaching and compensation are handled fairly in these cases," said Young. Your union is also negotiating summer teaching assignments and compensation. The UFF proposal says summer classes should be taught by qualified faculty members, even if their salaries are above those offered to adjuncts or graduate teaching assistants. "We want all 'planned out of load' teaching assignments and compensation handled fairly," said Young.

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

This year UFF won an important arbitration victory over the BOT regarding annual evaluation standards covered in Article 10. The case involved several grievances filed over department evaluation standards in the College of Business Administration. These department standards violated the contract in several ways: they failed to differentiate between different ratings, they were not based on the faculty member's assignment, and they allowed chairs to downgrade faculty for a lack of "professionalism," even when no flaws were identified in teaching, research, and service. "Evaluating faculty this way would be like saying to our students, 'Yes, you did a-plus work on all your assignments and tests, but I don't think you seem 'studious' enough so I'm giving you a C in the class,'" Young commented. Now, the BOT wants to change the language in Article 10 so that it allows such practices for evaluating faculty.

DISCIPLINE

Article 16 of the contract concerns the process by which employees are investigated once accused of doing something harmful in the university community. UFF arbitrators are working out language that would make the investigation and punitive process clear. "We want to specify things like how the university can investigate an employee, how long that investigation can last, and what constitutes paid leave," said Young. UFF's goal is to make the language in this article more formalized and clear. The union also wants to make sure employees are not disciplined for actions unrelated to the university community, but that might be considered "embarrassing" to university administration.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Attend a bargaining session. Join United Faculty of Florida.

More cuts on the way

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boost college and university more if they need to. Governor Charlie Crist vetoed a 5 percent tuition increase earlier this year but now says he's keeping an open mind.

Democrats say raising fees, cutting sales-tax exemptions or allowing more kinds of gambling at Indian casinos can bring in badly needed revenue. Republicans say they want to keep trimming and hoping that the economy picks up. According to Senate Rules Chairman Jim King (R-Jacksonville), the current housing downturn and the cumulative \$20 billion in tax cuts approved by Florida lawmakers over the past nine years has drained dollars from the state treasury. So far, lawmakers have slashed almost \$1 billion from Florida's \$71 billion dollar budget. More cuts may be months away.

OPEN DISCUSSION:

The UCF contract: What does it mean for ME?

On November 8th, your UFF-UCF faculty union is sponsoring a small presentation and open discussion to help faculty understand what our new contract may contain. The discussion is designed to answer many important questions faculty may have right now, such as "do we get a raise?" "If so, how much?" "What areas of the contract have been revised?" "What do these changes mean to me?" We invite all faculty members to an open discussion Thursday November 8, 2007 in the Student Union Building, room 218AB. The event will be held 12:00pm to 1:15pm and Lunch will be provided. **You do not have to be a member to attend, but we hope you'll be inspired to join after you hear how hard we're working for you!** ❖

Founded by Annette Kolodny, **Feminists Against Academic Discrimination** (FAAD) includes a legal fund which assists women faculty in defending themselves against employment discrimination in their educational institutions. FAAD is "especially interested in professors discriminated against on the grounds that women's studies 'isn't significant' or because we are 'too abrasive' or 'political' in standing up for our rights." <http://www.f-a-a-d.com/> Email: Sharon Leder Sharon@techmangallery.com or Ines Shaw isshaw@yahoo.com