

THE ORGANIZER

Newsletter of UFF-UCF: The United Faculty of Florida

Chapter Officers

Scott Launier, President
 Lee Ross, Vice President
 Barry Mauer, Treasurer
 Terri Fine, Secretary

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Barry Mauer
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Welcome from the President



Scott Launier with his students

Scott Launier Writing and Rhetoric

On behalf of the entire UFF-UCF leadership team, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 2016-17 academic year and the second issue of our newsletter *The Organizer*. In this issue, you’ll find stories written by UCF faculty from across the campus, as well as information on our union’s many activities. As a collective faculty, we have an opportunity to make this another excellent year.

2015-16 was my first year as Chapter President, and I have dedicated myself to building our membership and increasing our involvement within our chapter, in our community, and at the state and national levels.

Within our chapter, we continue to offer meaningful workshops and social events, with many more to come (see the notices in this issue of *The Organizer* for details on upcoming events and opportunities). We also held a strategic planning meeting this July where we determined the following priorities: Workload; AESP; building the Steward program; growing our Grievance Team; and increasing Communications. Are you interested in getting involved in any of these areas? Contact an officer or council member to learn more.

Bargaining Update

Bargaining for the current contract period (August 8, 2016 - August 7, 2017) has been underway since February.

Only 4 Articles remain open for negotiation:

- Article 3 - UFF Privileges
- Article 8 - Appointments
- Article 23 - Salaries
- Article 24 - Benefits

We are relatively close to agreement on most issues. The 2 major items that are still under discussion are salaries and tuition benefits.

Salaries:

We proposed a 3% salary increase (2% across-the-board plus 1% merit) while the Board of Trustees team offered 2.5% (1% across-the-board plus 1.5% merit).

Benefits:

We proposed that spouses, domestic partners, other dependents, and children under the age of 26 be eligible for 12 credits per semester free tuition and that UCF join The Tuition Exchange, which is a reciprocal scholarship program with >660 member institutions. The BOT team offered 6 credits per semester (Fall, Spring, and Summer) and not joining The Tuition Exchange.

At the local level, we continue to move forward with our initiatives to connect with the broader UCF and Central Florida communities. I serve as a trustee on the Executive Board of the Central Florida Labor Council, a member of the Racial Justice Committee of Organize Now, and am on the Steering Committee of Jobs with Justice, which has led to growing partnerships with labor, faith, and community organizations, such as the Florida Rights Restoration Coalition, Equality Florida, and the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). Most recently we celebrated the first graduating class of the Latino Leadership Institute, which empowers Latinos and other minorities by increasing their participation in the democratic process.

At the state and national levels, I have become more active in our parent organizations. Along with other chapter members, I attended the biannual statewide senate meetings of the United Faculty of Florida in Tampa, and the NEA, AFT & FEA Representative and Delegate Assemblies in Washington, DC and Minneapolis. This year, I also was honored as an invited speaker at the National Conference for NEA Communications Teams in Albuquerque, and, along with Chapter Vice President Lee Ross, made presentations at the NEA Higher Education Conference in San Diego. These conferences are an excellent opportunity to learn more about and help shape education policies in the United States.

I am grateful to all of our team leaders, council members, and active members whose presence inspires me to do more every day. Meeting with people is the best part of this job, and I am awestruck by the ability, intellect, and character of every faculty member at UCF. Saying thank you does not come close to expressing how I feel.

I hope this gives you a glimpse of the range and variety of work that our union is doing, and the many opportunities union membership offers. Please friend me on Facebook, and feel free to e-mail, call, or text me at scottlaunier@gmail.com or 321-225-2080 if you would like to learn more about becoming an active union member. There is a lot happening in our union every week, and there are many ways to participate, including bargaining, grievances, membership, diversity, events, assemblies, and helping us set future goals and priorities. Contact any of our officers or council members to get involved. There is always more we can do to help make UCF stronger.

Scott Launier is Associate Instructor in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric.

Treasurer Report

UFF increased our activities across the board, which meant spending more money on education and training events, socials, communications, bargaining, member give backs, and trainings and conferences for our leadership team.

Our expenses and activities have grown, but so has our effectiveness. We have more members than ever, a more powerful role in promoting our mission, and a much larger and very committed Council.

UFF achieved national prominence in our efforts to gain parental leave for faculty, block the "guns on campus" bill, work with community partners, and grow membership. And we did it all while maintaining a healthy financial footing.

We are prepared to do even more this year, including bargaining for faculty raises and tuition benefits, defending our contract from administration abuse, expansion of our member give back programs, more social events, and more communications with our members and our bargaining unit. UFF uses its resources wisely to make life better for all of us at UCF!

Working Together



Lee Ross
Criminal Justice

I have a lot to learn. My union colleagues are aware of this—but also supportive and tolerant of my snail-like pace along a learning curve they thought was relatively short. Oh well. Just when I think I've figured something out, it becomes more complex and nuanced. I've experienced this as a member of our Collective Bargaining Team, where agreement often seems imminent but may be distant and uncertain, in my role on the Membership Committee, where non-union members' reasons for not joining are as diverse as our population, and in my role as Vice President,

where there is always more to do. Still, the union made noticeable progress along several lines this year, such as information updates, membership growth, and improved communications with the administration, but there's more work to be done.

I've learned that UCF is an extremely large enterprise and that a few administrators can be arbitrary. Fortunately, I've also learned that most administrators are decent people, highly aware and respectful of faculty rights. As Frederick Douglass said, "If there is no struggle, there is no progress." While Douglas wrote these words 150 years ago, they are still relevant to us today, and as we work together to build a stronger union and university, we are wise to remember that there's strength in numbers, talk is cheap, and privilege obscures progress.

We have a lot of work to do, and we need faculty involvement and input to get it done. The union does a lot with little, but we do it together, and I've learned that my union colleagues are knowledgeable and generous. By being active in the union, I am able to interact constantly with talented faculty across multiple disciplines. These opportunities, alone, are worth the price of admission, for they have increased my learning exponentially.

Our union is dedicated to representing and protecting the rights of faculty, and we are ever mindful of faculty concerns. As the late Nelson Mandela said, "A good head and a good heart are always a formidable combination." Our union leadership embodies this belief.

Lee Ross, Vice President of UFF-UCF, is Associate Professor of Criminal Justice. He researches religion and social control theory as well as the consequences of mandatory arrest policies and the role of religion in domestic violence.

Building Community



Yovanna Pineda
History

As a first-time UFF-senator, I appreciate what our union does to create a sense of community. Does community-building matter to faculty? Most public and private universities answer yes, providing clubs and lounges specifically for faculty to meet, discuss ideas, vent, and simply enjoy one another's company. Four of the previous universities where I had positions had spaces for faculty, especially new members, to gather. For instance, the University of Michigan has several faculty bars and lounges across the campus where faculty gathered after hours. Stanford thought that getting away from our desks and labs and interacting with our colleagues important enough that they picked up the tab for a monthly happy hour for junior faculty!

What might seem inconsequential to the research and teaching experience is actually quite important, because faculty spaces offer a relaxed atmosphere in which we can talk about our work. Like every profession, networking is essential to an academic career. It's where ideas are shared and opportunities found, especially with colleagues outside my history discipline. For example, I learned about new ways to analyze social groups from sociologists and biologists at these informal gatherings. Besides, it is fun, and

fun is the easiest and most effective remedy to the overwork and—all too frequently—anxiety endemic to academics. Even at Harvard, they recognized that working faculty were not just “brains on sticks,” but breathing, sensitive human beings with a need for belonging and community. The director of my Harvard program encouraged us to have fun because, as she argued, it improved our writing projects. Without these faculty spaces at UCF, it is easy to get lost in the shuffle or feel like a cog in the machine among the many faces and buildings on campus.

Hence, for me, our union's social meetings became my space. We gather at different places on and off campus, and it helps me feel like I belong, reducing the feeling that I am an isolated wanderer. The union is also a good place to get straightforward answers to a myriad of questions: How do partnerships at UCF actually work? Why do UCF officials mention ASU so much? What is going on with Colbourn Hall—like, why isn't it up already? Academics spend a great deal of time probing deep questions, but, just like everyone else, we have ordinary questions that need answering. It's important to be able to find answers without judgment or belittling and, especially, without the bureaucratise that circulates in most universities.

No union is perfect—ours included—but it is a growing community that welcomed me, and will certainly welcome you to ask questions, speak up, and get involved in shaping the culture of UCF. Perhaps, in 2017, we can finally build that missing faculty club.

Yovanna Pineda is Associate Professor of History. Currently, she is working on her second book project, *Harvesting Technology: Farm Machinery Use, Invention, and Memory in Argentina* and on a companion documentary film, *The Birthplace of the Harvester*.

Music Night



*Flying Horse*TM

B I G B A N D

UFF is sponsoring a free "Music Night" for union members and their family and friends to enjoy a concert by the Flying Horse Big Band on Friday, November 4 at 8:00pm at the Communications Auditorium, room 101. These tickets will be First-Come-First-Serve. Reserve yours today by emailing Farrah Cato: fmcato@aol.com.

Bargaining Our Rights



John Fauth
Biology

I use active learning in all my classes and ask you to play along for a moment. Reach into your pocket, your purse, or your loose change jar and grab a coin. Any coin will do, whether it's a shiny new quarter or a penny worn with age. Now flip to the tails side. Look for the Latin inscription there - if you're like me, you may need reading glasses or a magnifying lens to find it. What does it say?

E pluribus unum - Out of many, one. It's the motto of the US, but what else could it represent? In my mind, it describes a university comprised of great teachers and scholars and a diverse student body united in purpose to learn and improve society. It also describes our union chapter; a group of like-minded faculty who work together to advance the practice of our profession. Finally, it describes our Collective Bargaining Team, who channel the passions, aspirations, and wisdom of >1,450 faculty into contract language that governs the rights, terms, and conditions of our employment.

Early in 2015-2016, our team joined the UCF Board of Trustees in ratifying a new Collective Bargaining Agreement without going to

impasse. We achieved this historic event, a first for UCF, by focusing on win-win strategies including more sabbaticals, paid parental leave, and a definition of academic freedom that simultaneously protects faculty rights and UCF's brand. We concluded negotiations amicably, because we had willing partners in the administration who realized that if we worked together, our university would be stronger, more inclusive, and return greater value to our students, alumni, and community.

Much of our success came from opening bargaining to everyone in-unit. We invited faculty to craft proposals, ask questions during negotiations, discuss ideas in caucuses, and introduce proposals. Contributions from faculty strengthened our bargaining effort - *E pluribus unum* in action! We continue to use this model, which is drawing attention from national organizations. Earlier this month, our union was featured in the NEA's *Advocate*, which carried a piece on Yovanna Pineda, Beatriz Foster-Reyes, and the Work-Family Life Caucus's efforts to win parental leave, as well as an essay by Chapter President Scott Launier.

Please join us Wednesday, Oct. 26, 10am-noon in Millican Hall 395E for the next bargaining session. Topics on the agenda include summer appointments, salaries, incentive awards, and tuition benefits for dependents. We know you are busy, so feel free to bring work with you, leave early if you need to, arrive late if you must, the point is to join the many of us working as one to finalize our new contract.

John Fauth holds a B.S. in Biology & Chemistry from St. Lawrence University and a Ph.D. in Zoology from Duke University. He is Associate Professor of Biology and the chief negotiator for UFF-UCF.

Paid Parental Leave



Latarsha Chisholm
Health Management and Informatics

While pregnant with my second child, I began to hear discussions regarding a new parental leave policy. I was extremely excited to hear about this, since the previous policy only allowed 6 weeks leave for a vaginal delivery and 8 weeks for a cesarean section. UCF's new parental leave policy, which provides 16 weeks of leave for 9-month faculty, is a needed and drastic improvement over the old policy that had been in place for far too long. The new policy allowed me to have a semester off with my beautiful baby girl and family. However, this happy ending almost didn't happen for me and my family.

While I was working on the paperwork to apply for parental leave, I was informed by a colleague that I was eligible for the newly-bargained parental leave. My first step was to contact the UCF Human Resources Office to discuss my options. Initially, I was informed that I would not be eligible for the new parental leave if my daughter was born before the new bargaining contract went into effect. My due date was December 4, 2015, and the new contract would not be effective until December 8, 2015 – 4 days after I gave birth! Consequently, I contacted John Fauth, Chair of the Union's Bargaining Committee, Dan Murphree, Grievance Chair,

and Scott Launier, our Chapter President, regarding the situation. They each responded quickly and took the necessary steps to ensure that I would benefit from the new leave policy.

Unfortunately, the process took a few weeks to resolve, and the waiting and uncertainty were difficult, but the union representatives worked with me to make sure I had all the necessary documents signed and delivered to the appropriate people. Eventually, HR decided that I was eligible for the new parental leave, which made me the first UCF employee to benefit from this newly bargained benefit!

The benefits of extended parental leave are well documented in the literature. The major benefit for my family was the ability to return to a somewhat normal schedule. Bringing my daughter home from the hospital was a time of excitement and joy, but it also was stressful. Our family's daily routine, including sleep, was completely disrupted, but the new leave policy gave me the extra time I needed to develop new schedules and routines, without the stress of returning back to work before I was ready. Additionally, the time off allowed me to breastfeed my daughter for longer, have more time to bond with her at home, and gave me the opportunity to be prepared mentally and physically for my return to work.

I would like to thank the union for helping make sure that I was able to use the new parental leave, and I would like to thank the union and the administration for understanding the need to implement this policy for UCF employees.

Latarsha Chisholm is Assistant Professor in the Department of Health Management and Informatics. Prior to joining UCF, she was a post-doctoral fellow at the University of North Carolina.

Supporting Families



Beatriz Reyes-Foster
Anthropology

The Spring 2015 semester we formed the UCF Work-Family Life Focus Group. Below are a few things I learned from leading this group of engaged, passionate faculty and staff.

The successful negotiation of paid parental leave galvanized us, and we found a ready ally in Linda Walters of the Center for Success for Women Faculty. We advocated for high chairs and changing tables in the Student Union (the high chairs came first, the changing tables began appearing more recently), and pushed for the construction of an on-campus playground in recognition of the fact that children are present on our campus.

Unfortunately, the Little Knights Playground project was not allowed to move forward despite the fact that UFF committed funds to help build it. Hopefully by building a coalition with students, we can move closer to the realization of the playground in the near future.

In spring 2016, the Work-Family Life Focus Group created the Network Resource file, a living Google Document (<http://tinyurl.com/z6dl5xc>) with centralized information that UCF faculty and staff consider important, such as

pediatrician recommendations, trusted sitters, and reliable child-care facilities.

At the same time, we recognize that many of our faculty members find themselves caring for other kinds of family members, such as aging parents, sick spouses or siblings, and adult children with disabilities. When we started the Family Life Focus Group, we always maintained an inclusive definition of "family." A serious challenge ahead will be expanding our efforts to assist faculty and other university employees facing challenges such as elder care and serious family illness.

The effectiveness of our group is only as strong as the commitment of those involved in its mission. As committed as I continue to be to promoting work and family life at UCF, at this point in time I am ready to assume a role of support rather than one of leadership so that I may devote more energy to my own young family and my pursuit of work and family life balance. I'm confident that whoever takes leadership of this caucus will have the help of many committed individuals willing to work together to make UCF a better place to work.

Please contact me at mireya18@gmail.com if you're interested in joining or leading the Work-Family Life caucus.

Beatriz Reyes-Foster is Assistant Professor of Anthropology. She founded the UCF Faculty Parents Network, an online support community for UCF faculty and staff. She has published extensively on suicide and mental health in Mexico and human milk sharing in Central Florida. Currently, she is working on a book, *Psychiatric Encounters: Life in the Wards of a Mexican Psychiatric Hospital*.

Supporting Professional Development



Barbara Rau Kyle
Writing and Rhetoric

I met my Chinese colleague at UCF's University Writing Center when he was a doctoral student in 2006. We stayed in touch after he accepted a position as an engineering professor in Shanghai, and I've given him feedback on some of his papers. His dilemma is familiar to many non-native English speaking academics: his research is valued by his field's international journals, but his communication is not always clear or effective. Recently, he asked for my assistance in starting a writing center to help his graduate students overcome these same obstacles.

I offered what I could, such as remote planning with occasional visits to establish the center and help hire a director. Then I recalled a recent UCF email inviting applications for Professional Development Leave (PDL), a program bargained for faculty by UFF. With a PDL, I would be able to take fuller advantage of a great opportunity and give the project the attention it merited. I submitted my proposal, along with the necessary sign-offs from my chair, dean, and Regional Campus Administration, who funds my position at the Cocoa campus.

In November I received my award letter. My chair congratulated me, but quickly followed with a

note that the leave may need to be deferred if funding my replacement could not be worked out with Regional Campuses. I was aware that departments have the option to defer due to possible funding or scheduling problems, but nothing in my schedule prevented reassignment issues, and surely my superiors' signatures represented their commitment to support and fund my PDL application. Surely a system was in place to designate funding responsibility for regional faculty award recipients.

With winter break approaching, it was time to make plans. Deferring my leave would limit my initial involvement in the Shanghai Writing Center and reduce its chance of success. I needed to press the issue to avoid deferral if possible, but with so many parties involved, I wanted some advice on the best way to proceed. Thanking my good sense for joining the union, I sought assistance from UFF. Within a month, I had confirmation of my PDL for the 2016-2017 academic year.

Although the year has just begun, I have already been able to spend 4 weeks in China. I learned much from visiting writing centers at English-curriculum universities in the Shanghai area, and I worked one-on-one with students. I will return to China later this fall to work with them again and take the next steps toward hiring someone who will take over when my year is finished. I am excited about the upcoming year and the chance to lay the proper groundwork for the writing center, thanks to the support of UFF. Our union works not only to bargain for our benefits, but also to ensure that they are implemented.

Barbara Kyle is an Instructor in the Department of Writing and Rhetoric, Cocoa.

Serving the Community



Keri Watson
Art History

As a faculty member at a public institution, service is an important part of my life. I serve my discipline through teaching and research. I serve my department, college, and university through work on committees and Faculty Senate, and I serve my profession through membership and participation in UFF, which provides numerous opportunities to make meaningful contributions at the local, state, and national levels.

At the local level, I serve as a UFF senator and on the membership committee. I attend monthly council meetings, bargaining sessions, and help build our membership. The benefits of union membership don't end on our campus, though, and for me, the best part of being a union member is the opportunity to serve the larger community.

In September I attended the UFF Senate & Steering Committee Meeting in Tampa, where I met with other representatives from across the state to discuss issues affecting Florida faculty, and in October I will attend the annual FEA Delegate Assembly in Orlando where delegates from K-12 and higher education meet to plan, discuss, and make decisions that impact Florida's education policies. These meetings are a great

way to learn more about the issues facing educators in our state.

In addition to these opportunities, this past May, UFF sponsored my participation in a Jobs with Justice Leadership Training retreat. This training brought together people from labor, faith-based, and community groups to learn the skills necessary to build strong organizations. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to learn more about the issues facing my community, and while at the retreat, I met people from the AFL-CIO, Organize Now, the Black Women's Roundtable, Yaya, and the Hope Community Center.

Through these new connections, I will be facilitating a book club on John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* at the Hope Community Center as part of the National Endowment for the Arts Big Read (Feb. 27-Apr. 14, 2017). I look forward to partnering with the community on this national education initiative in support of reading and literacy, and I appreciate the union for facilitating this connection.

Through my UFF membership, I do more than participate in collective bargaining and contract negotiation. Because our union is part of the Florida Education Association, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Education Association, I belong to the largest community of educators in the United States. Through this membership, I have the privilege of serving my profession and advocating for public education.

Keri Watson is Assistant Professor of Art History in the School of Visual Arts & Design where she specializes in modern and contemporary art and the history of photography. Currently, she is researching the intersections of text, image, race, and disability during the Great Depression.



Did You Know? UFF union member benefits are worth far more than the cost of dues

Our union provides so many benefits it would take several “Did You Knows” to list them all. The upcoming Open Enrollment period is a great time for you to learn about them. UFF members and officers will be present at this year’s Benefits Fair to explain these benefits. Please visit us!

UCF’s Open Enrollment period begins Monday, October 17 and ends Friday, November 4 (6:00 p.m.). The 2016 Benefits Fair will be held on Friday, October 28, from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in the Pegasus Ballroom at the Student Union. UFF member benefits include:

- Complimentary NEA \$15,000 Introductory Term Life Insurance for new members for one year + AFT \$10,000 Introductory Term Life Insurance for new members for one year
- Auto insurance with no-charge \$500 personal property coverage for theft and \$0 deductible for auto damage while at or near school property
- \$500 gift for closing on a mortgage + another \$500 if you are a first-time home buyer + an additional \$1000 dollar grant if you are a veteran
- A networked realtor program that allows members to receive \$50 for every \$10,000 in home value after closing
- AFT & NEA auto buying programs that save members thousands of dollars
- NEA Credit and Loan programs that offer cash back, travel discounts, and low consolidation rates
- Special retirement programs, savings products, health insurance programs, disability insurance, long term care, and home insurance plans
- Exclusive discounts on airlines, hotels, cruises, and resorts, car rentals, and guided vacations
- Discounts on legal services, tax preparation, extended auto warranties, cell phone service, computers, textbooks, magazines, gifts, health clubs, and wholesale club memberships

UFF membership has benefits!

United Faculty of Florida

UFF-UCF will have a table during the 2016 Benefits Fair, which will be held on Friday, October 28, from 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. in the Pegasus Ballroom at the Student Union. Please visit us to learn about the benefits of UFF membership.

uffucf.org

#QuiltsforPulse



Anastasia Salter
Digital Media

On June 12, 2016, our community was shocked by the horrific shooting at the Pulse LGBTQ nightclub here in Orlando. Many of us were looking for some way to contribute, which led to long lines of donors at our local blood banks and an outpouring of support and donations for Orlando's LGBT center and the Pulse victim support fund.

Orlando Modern Quilt Guild president Alissa Lapinsky was one of those watching, and she decided to coordinate with the guild to launch a charity drive for quilts. Charity quilt-making is one of the ways guilds reach out to support communities: guilds regularly make quilts for children's centers, disaster relief, and other causes. As quilts are physical embodiments of comfort, they are one way we can reach out. In this spirit, Alissa posted a call on social media, and the response brought contributions from quilters around the world as well as in all 50 states.

Alissa and the other guild officers set the charity drive around rainbow hearts, inviting people to send completed quilts or contribute individual blocks. Several UCF faculty members and staff,

including myself and fellow union member Anne Sullivan, are among the guild members who have been involved in the project, contributing time piecing, quilting, and finishing quilts assembled from donated blocks as well as working on our own quilts for donation.

I found working with the blocks to be particularly moving, as most were sent from far outside Orlando and reflected the work of contributors ranging from experienced quilters to children making their first quilt block. Many of the quilts and blocks came to the guild with letters from the quilters involved, with several guilds and community centers around the world coming together to make their donations.

As of September, the total number of quilts received or assembled from donated blocks has passed 1500, and there are currently over 900 people on the planned list of recipients. The quilts will be distributed through 13 organizations to reach families, employees, doctors, officers, and emergency response workers impacted by the Pulse shooting. One of these organizations is UCF, and the guild plans to include cookies for the UCF bomb-sniffing canine.

I have been heartened by the union's response to the tragedy. From our local chapter to the state office to the Florida Education Association and National Education Association, Orlando is United.

*Anastasia Salter is Assistant Professor of Digital Media. She is the author of *Jane Jensen: Gabriel Knight, Adventure Games, Hidden Objects* (forthcoming 2017) and *What is Your Quest? From Adventure Games to Interactive Books* (2014), and co-author of *Flash: Building the Interactive Web* (2014).*



Quilt by UFF-member Anastasia Salter



UFF-UCF Chapter President Scott Launier and Sue Carson, President of the Seminole County Teacher's Association, at the National Education Association Representative Assembly in Washington, DC, July 2016



Jennifer Proffitt and other FEA members from across Florida at NEARA



Florida Education Association President Joanne McCall at NEARA

Enriching Scholarship:

The UFF-UCF Travel Gap Grant Supports Faculty Travel

Over the last 18 months, UFF has awarded more than \$13,000 to members from across the campus. Faculty from departments including Accounting, Anthropology, Art History, Chemistry, Communications, Digital Media, Education, Engineering, History, Modern Languages, Music, Nursing, Theater, and Writing and Rhetoric have used the UFF-UCF Travel Gap Grant to travel to conferences around world. At a time when university support for travel has decreased, the union has worked hard to mind the gap. Going to a conference and need support? Join the union today.

American Folklore Society: Long Beach



Natalie Underberg-Goode
Digital Media

As faculty members know, presenting papers at conferences is an important part of our profession. Doing so not only provides the opportunity to share scholarly research, but also to network with colleagues and make new connections that ultimately benefit the individual faculty member and the institution where he or she works.

Conferences, however, are potentially costly endeavors, often involving airfare in addition to

fees for hotel, meals, and ground transportation. I normally try to attend 2 conferences a year, which is costly. I have minimized costs over the years by sharing hotel rooms, searching for the best hotel deal, and not staying the entire length of the conference. As faculty in certain units may not have a travel budget, these costs need to be paid by the faculty out-of-pocket unless funding is received from another source.

Receiving a UFF-UCF Travel Gap Grant was very helpful, effectively defraying a portion of the travel costs for my last conference, the annual meeting of the American Folklore Society in Long Beach, California. With the support of the UFF-UCF Travel Gap Grant, I was able to focus on the conference rather than worrying about the expenses accrued during it. The fund also allowed me to stay 2 days longer, attend more panels and meetings, and network with scholars in my field.

Ultimately, attending conferences benefits UCF too, because I incorporate the ideas I have learned and the connections I have made into my research, teaching, and service. For all these

reasons, I am grateful for this small measure of support for my research endeavors and am happy to return the favor by serving on the Travel Grant application review panel.

Natalie Underberg-Goode is Associate Professor in the UCF School of Visual Arts and Design, and core faculty in the Texts & Technology Ph.D. program. Her areas of research are digital storytelling, folklore, and cultural heritage. She teaches courses in such areas as digital narrative and research methods.

Photonics West: San Francisco



Stephen M. Kuebler
Chemistry and Optics

I have enjoyed many benefits from my membership in the union. For instance, recently I attended "Photonics West 2016," an international conference held in San Francisco, California, and part of my travel costs were defrayed by a UFF-UCF Travel Gap Grant. While at the conference, I presented 2 papers, chaired sessions, and met with colleagues with whom I co-edit a peer-reviewed journal.

The UFF-UCF Travel Gap Grant was particularly helpful because my annual evaluation is based in part on disseminating my scholarship and engaging in professional service, even though my department has no funds allocated for faculty travel, and there is little available at the

college level. The UFF-UCF Travel Gap Grant provided me \$500 for a sensibly short application, so it was well worth the effort.

Union membership has also helped me during my travels as an academic. Since starting my journey at UCF in 2003, the union has negotiated contracts that included pay raises and benefits far exceeding my dues. The contracts negotiated by UFF maintained my rights as a faculty member, even during the lean years of the economic downturn. These contracts also expanded the number of TIP, RIA, and SoTL awards, and it created promotion opportunities for Instructors and Lecturers.

Many union benefits can be enumerated, but I'd like to focus on one that was unexpected and which I regard as among the most valuable. The union fosters the community of the UCF faculty. Through UFF activities, I have met colleagues across all academic disciplines. In particular, I have been able to establish connections to faculty outside the STEM fields. These interactions have enriched my teaching, scholarship, and service, and they have enriched me personally.

When I first considered joining the union, I wondered if the dues (1%-of-income) were worth it. Five years in, I'm convinced that UFF membership has returned the value of my dues many fold, and in ways I didn't even expect.

Stephen Kuebler, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Optics, earned the B.S. in chemistry and B.A. in German at Tulane and the D.Phil. in chemistry at the University of Oxford. He was a post-doctoral researcher at Caltech and the University of Arizona, and was awarded a Marshall Fellowship, the NSF Graduate Fellowship, NSF CAREER Award, two TIP awards, and two COS Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Awards. His research in nanophotonics has been supported by NSF, DARPA, Lockheed-Martin, Prime Photonics and the Petroleum Research Fund.

ANNOUNCING:

Fall 2016 UFF-UCF TRAVEL GAP GRANT

Note: the deadline for applications is coming soon. We have sent several email reminders to faculty about the deadline, but we also wanted to include a final notice in our newsletter.



We will be offering the Travel Gap Grant again in the spring. Please apply!

Recently, ORC announced an expansion of its travel support program: <http://tinyurl.com/ucftravel>. UFF supports this expansion. However, due to constraints within the ORC program—such as requirements that departments provide matching E&G funds as well as a limited budget that was fully allocated within the first two months of its fiscal year—UFF is announcing a new round of our Travel GAP Grants.

Because there are still gaps between expectations for travel and travel resources for faculty, UFF is offering five awards this fall to our members of up to \$500 each for travel to professional conferences, workshops, and other professional events.

Awards can be used for travel and/or registration expenses only. Applicants must provide evidence of expectations for professional travel from within their departments or units as well as evidence about the limits of available funding. Evidence of expectations may include AESPs, P/T guidelines, and/or job descriptions. Faculty should apply for the ORC funds first, and if additional support is needed or if the ORC funds are exhausted, then apply for the UFF-UCF Travel GAP Grant. UFF plans to use the information we gather from this process to press for additional resources for travel from the UCF administration.

You must be a dues-paying member of UFF to apply for a Travel GAP Grant award. If you are not yet a member, you will become instantly eligible for this award once we process your membership form.

Priority will be given to those traveling to give a presentation but we will consider awarding funds for travel for other reasons, such as professional development or to fulfill officer obligations for a national or international professional organization.

If you are awarded a Travel GAP Grant, we will contact your department or unit to transfer the funds. We also ask winners to provide service for your fellow faculty members by writing for the UFF newsletter and/or serving on a UFF committee.

The deadline for application is October 21, 2016. Once the Travel GAP Grants have been awarded, we will suspend the program until spring of 2017. Ultimately, we want our employers, rather than our union, to pay for the travel expected of us. Awardees will not be eligible for another Travel GAP Grant until at least 20 months after their award.

Please contact Barry Mauer, UFF Treasurer, barrymauer.UFF@gmail.com, to obtain an application form. Completed applications are due by: October 21, 5:00pm.

Broadening Our Communications

Our chapter started several initiatives this past year to improve communications with our members, our bargaining unit, the UCF administration, and the broader community.

One of the results of these efforts is this newsletter, *The Organizer*. The first issue was distributed last year to faculty across UCF and also made an impact statewide as union chapters at other schools throughout Florida looked to our newsletter as a model for their own. The success of *The Organizer* has prompted us to increase its production to twice a year (October and March), and we are looking for people to help. Have an idea for an article? Contact barrymauer.UFF@gmail.com.

Another new initiative is the monthly steward report. It's part of our two-way communications program. Stewards are volunteers who keep bargaining unit members informed of union activities through monthly reports delivered at departmental faculty meetings. Stewards also bring ideas back to the leadership of UFF. We have a few stewards now, but we need more. Please contact me if you're interested.

In 2015-16, UFF also continued its series of weekly "Did You Know" emails. The series, over 50 so far, provides information on our contract, benefits, and history. We have heard from many faculty that the "Did You Know" emails clarified questions they had about sick leave, evaluations, summer teaching, and intellectual property.

We also continue to communicate with the administration through once-a-semester consultations with the provost, his staff, and other members of the UCF administration. This year, we are beginning a series of meetings



Barry Mauer
English

between UFF leaders and UCF chairs and deans. The purpose of these meetings is to build working relationships and avoid problems, such as contract violations, that still come up too often.

UFF has brought a brighter spotlight to our activities by building relationships with the media in Orlando, across the state, and nation. UFF leaders have been interviewed numerous times for stories in the *Orlando Sentinel*, and we have produced stories for the Florida Education Association's *Advocate*, the statewide *UFF News and Views*, and the nationwide *NEA Higher Education Advocate*. In addition, we continue to update our chapter webpage—www.uffucf.org—with information about our chapter, our contract, and our activities.

We plan to expand our communications to include a redesigned website, tweets and blogs, a bigger media presence locally and nationwide, and communications about our activities. Please contact me to get involved!

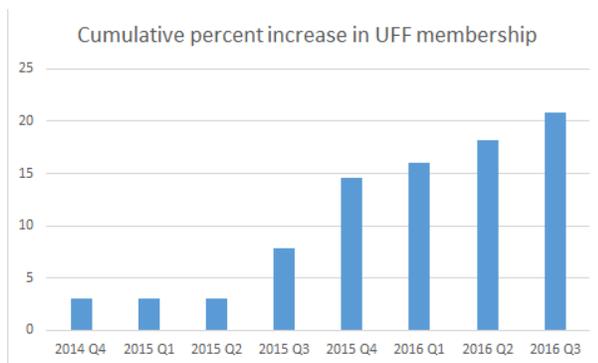
Barry Mauer is Associate Professor of English and teaches in the Texts and Technology Ph.D. Program. His work develops new research practices in the arts and humanities such as citizen curating. He also publishes scholarly comics about delusion and denial as they affect politics.

Growing Our Membership



Yan Fernandez
Physics

As chair of the Membership Committee, I am happy to report that our membership continues to grow, and I welcome our new members from so many departments, centers, and units around UCF! During the past year, our membership grew more than 12% and we continue to add new members.



In twelve departments, 50% or more of the faculty are UFF members, led by Anthropology, English, ELI, SVAD and Modern Languages.

Departments with the highest percentages of UFF members

Anthropology	84
English	71
English Language Institute	69
School of Visual Arts & Design	61
Modern Languages	60

Still, our Membership Committee recognizes the continued work that must be done to communicate the benefits of UFF membership to all of our faculty, especially since so many new faculty have been hired in the last few years.

We endeavor to have one-on-one visits with as many of our faculty - both new and old - as possible in the near future, because although many units on campus show strong membership density, we still have no union members in several diverse units, such as Marketing, CREOL, Food Service & Lodging Management, and the Institute for Simulation and Training.

We represent all of UCF's faculty, and as such, we are privileged to reach out to faculty across campus. During office visits, we get to see firsthand just how passionate faculty are about their work and about facilitating their students' academic pursuits. Faculty want to provide students with the best education possible, and we realize that our working environment is our students' learning environment! So a supportive, healthy workplace not only lets faculty flourish, but it lets students thrive, too.

Faculty must come together and have a strong, authentic, and independent voice when communicating with the administration and legislators; UFF is that voice, and the more members we have, the stronger our voice is. I look forward to chatting with more of you in this new academic year about our union or any other issues on your mind. It's *your* union, and your union leadership listens!

Yan Fernandez is an astronomer and Associate Professor in the Department of Physics, starting his 12th year at UCF. He has been a UFF union member almost as many years, and has helped with chapter leadership since 2012.

Working for Diversity and Inclusion

As a Hispanic female with a hidden disability, advocating for diversity is personal, and the majority of my service last year, including participation in the Provost's Academic Leadership Development Program and service as the Office of Diversity Initiatives-sponsored Faculty Fellow for the Center for Success of Women Faculty, was dedicated to this cause.

My project, "Coquí in the Land of Penguins: Minority Faculty in Academia," used B.J. Gallagher and Warren Schmidt's *Peacock in the Land of Penguins* to address how minorities are perceived in academia. In the original story, a lively and colorful peacock is told that in order to be successful he must look and act like the penguins in charge. He must tone down his personality and wear a penguin suit to fit into the corporate world. My use of the coquí, a frog symbolizing Puerto Rico, takes this story a step further by addressing the unique needs of faculty of color and Hispanic faculty in particular.

During a workshop I conducted for CSWF, faculty of color expressed feelings of not belonging, marginalization, and being unappreciated. Some faculty said they were excited to work at UCF, but once they arrived they encountered everything from microaggressions to outright racism. This was not what they expected, especially for a university located in a city with a large diverse population (28% Black and 25% Hispanic).

Following this research, during Summer Faculty Development Conference's diversity session, I presented data on UCF retention and promotion of faculty of color. From 2014 to 2015, 7 faculty from underrepresented groups left the university, and in 2014, there were 14 Hispanics in 12-month faculty positions, 77 in 9-month faculty positions, 2 serving as chairs, 1 dean, 3 assistant vice presidents, and 1 associate vice president.



Ilenia Colón Mendoza
Art History

UCF is nearing HSI (Hispanic-serving Institution) designation, and the number of Hispanics in leadership positions is not as high as one would expect. Further research, including exit interviews, is needed to identify the reasons Hispanic faculty leave UCF.

As part of my Leadership Empowerment Program project, I created a pilot group to aid in the retention of minority faculty and staff called M.O.S.A.I.C., which provides: Mentorship, Opportunity, Support, Achievement, Initiatives, and Community. To participate, please join our Facebook UCF Minority Mentorship Community or contact me at ilenia.ColonMendoza@ucf.edu.

Ilenia Colón Mendoza is Associate Professor of Art History in the School of Visual Arts & Design. Her book, *The Cristos yacentes of Gregorio Fernandez: Polychrome Sculptures of the Supine Christ in Seventeenth-Century Spain* (Routledge 2015) examines the significance of the Cristo yacente sculptural type within the context of the theatrical elaborations of the Catholic Holy Week in Baroque Spain.

Interested in supporting diversity? Join UFF's Diversity and Equality Committee.

YOU'RE INVITED

... to our annual end of semester social for all UCF Faculty on December 5, 2016. We look forward to seeing everyone! Feel free to bring a guest.

Where: Azteca Restaurant (11633 University Blvd, Orlando)

Food: a variety of light dishes

Drinks: soft drinks plus house/well brand drinks

Guaranteed: camaraderie, networking, chips, and salsa

Monday, Dec. 5th, 4-7pm



11633 University Blvd.



Join Us!

Council Meetings

Oct. 26, Wednesday 10:30 – 12:00 in CNH 513
 Nov. 16, Wednesday 10:30 – 12:00 in CNH 513
 Dec. 5; Tuesday 2:30 – 4:30 at Azteca D'Or

Committees

As with most organizations, your union's leadership includes committees and teams that work to accomplish many tasks. Feel like contributing to your union? Check out our committees and see what strikes your fancy.

Don't see a committee you like? Start your own group within UFF. What do you want to see happen at UCF? By all means, tell us! Even better, join us and **make** it happen! Contact our membership chair, Yan Fernandez at yrf@me.com.

And remember: UFF is a professional organization, so work you do for UFF counts toward your service commitment.

- Bargaining Caucus Team
- Bargaining Research Team
- Bargaining Issue Task Force
- Civic Engagement Team
- Communications Team
- Diversity and Equality Committee
- Events Committee
- Grievance Team
- Legislative Committee
- Membership Team
- Work-Family Life Caucus

Bargaining Sessions

Oct. 26, Wednesday 10:00 – 12:00 in MH 395E
 Nov. 9, Wednesday 10:00 – 12:00 in MH 395E
 Nov. 30, Wednesday 10:00 – 12:00 in MH 395E
 Dec. 14, Wednesday 10:00 – 12:00 in EDU 305

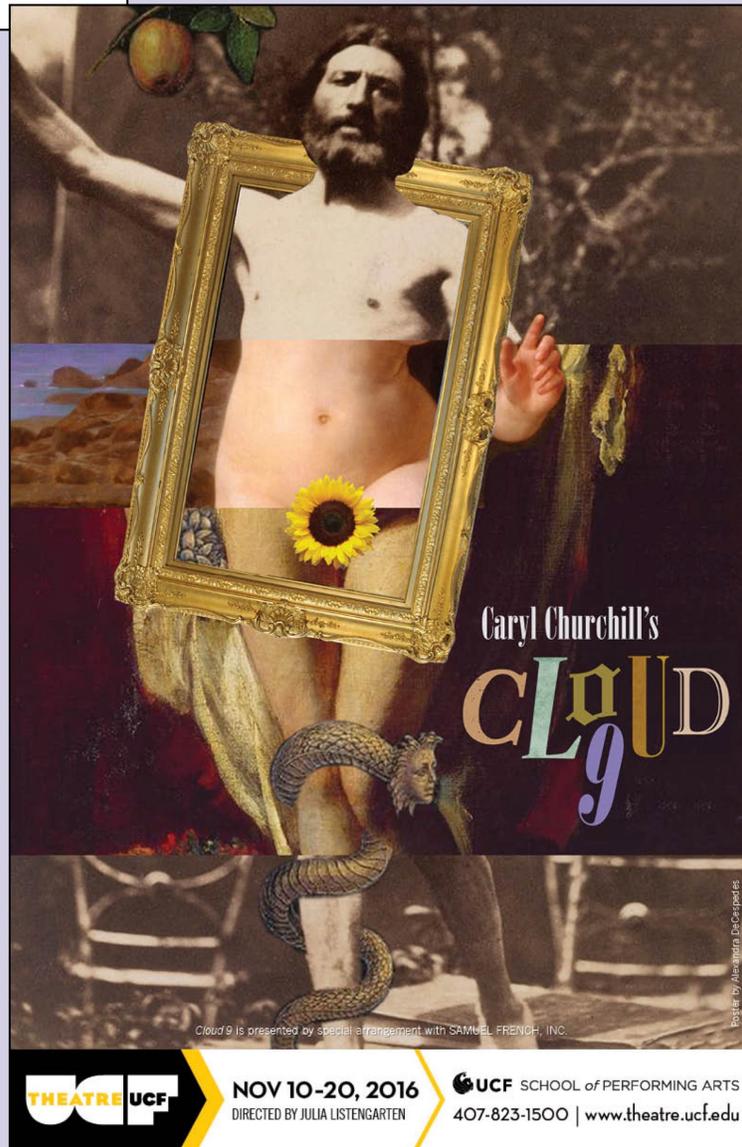
Legislative Issues



For the past 2 years, UFF has fought legislation that would allow the concealed carry of firearms on college campuses. Following 2 resolutions we passed last year, one opposing the bill and the other calling for a "right to vacate" should the concealed carry bill become law, we contacted lawmakers, administrators, other UFF chapters, and media outlets. We participated in rallies and worked with the League of Women Voters, the Campaign to Keep Guns Off Campus, and the UCF Police Department, and we strengthened our legislative committee to deal with political issues that concern faculty at UCF. If you would like to organize around legislative issues of concern to faculty, please let us know!



Night at the Theatre



UFF is sponsoring a free "Night at the Theatre" for union members and their family and friends to enjoy Cloud 9 on Saturday, November 19 at 7:30pm at the Theatre Black Box, room 128. These tickets will be First-Come-First-Serve. Reserve yours today by emailing Farrah Cato: fmcato@aol.com.

Protecting Our Rights



Dan Murphree
History

The grievance process is one of the most important tools faculty have to protect their Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA)- defined rights and improve the university community. This year, UFF made great strides in improving grievance procedures, countering CBA violations, and expanding the size and scope of the Grievance Team. We created and implemented new Grievance Protocols to streamline the grievance process and recruited representatives from CAH, COHPA, MAE, COS, and the Library. Our newly empowered team successfully grieved violations related to annual evaluations, unprofessional supervisor behavior, and compensation.

Unfortunately, not all instances of administrative action, poor management, and malfeasance are grievable. It's important that faculty familiarize themselves with the CBA and understand how and why contract violations can be grieved while other issues are better dealt with in other ways. Still contacting a member of the Grievance Team is a good first step whenever faculty suspect their rights have been violated. Even if the issue at hand is not grievable, the Grievance Team can offer advice and make informal efforts to

improve the situation. UFF representatives are skilled at coming up with innovative solutions and also can draw on legal resources from the state organization, NEA, and FEA. When dealing with CBA violations, we use the same qualities that equip us to be effective teachers and researchers: the ability to investigate, analyze, and provide answers for varied audiences.

Members of the Grievance Team are faculty who share the same concerns as their colleagues. Those pursuing grievances are not alone. Grievants and representatives work together with UFF leadership, both at UCF and at the state office in Tallahassee. The ramifications of a grievance are broader than the concerns of one person, therefore any violation of the CBA effects all faculty members.

Grievances are essential protections for faculty members. Some grievances don't conclude in the grievant's favor and even the most successful case involve months of preparation. But the process as a whole is not a zero-sum exercise. Even when a grievance does not produce the desired outcome, it goes a long way to changing administrative behavior. Every time a grievance is filed, President Hitt, Provost Whittaker, and their representatives are informed. Every time a grievance resolution meeting takes place, faculty members and their UFF representatives have an opportunity to explain why administrators should be acting differently. Any grievance with a successful outcome for the concerned faculty member is a victory for all UFF faculty and goes a long way to helping make UCF stronger.

Dan Murphree is Chair of the Grievance Team, and Associate Professor and Interim Assistant Chair in the History Department.

Become a Member

APPENDIX B

UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA DUES CHECK-OFF AUTHORIZATION FORM

I authorize the University of Central Florida to deduct from my pay, starting with the first full biweekly pay period commencing not earlier than seven days from the date this authorization is received by the University, membership dues of the United Faculty of Florida in such amount as may be established from time to time in accordance with the constitution and bylaws of the UFF and certified in writing to the University by the UFF, and I direct that the sum so deducted be paid over to the UFF.

UFF dues payments are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. However, they may be tax deductible under other provisions of the Internal Revenue Code.

The above deduction authorization shall continue until either (1) revoked by me at any time upon thirty days written notice to the University and to UFF, or (2) my transfer or promotion out of this bargaining unit. Unless this Dues Check-off Authorization is revoked in the manner heretofore stated, this authorization shall remain in full force and effect in accordance with the provisions of Section 447.007 Florida Statute.

_ Date

Employee's Signature

_ Employee Identification
Number

Name-printed

_ Department/Unit

College/Area



THANK YOU FOR JOINING YOUR FACULTY UNION!

To help us process your membership form efficiently, please complete both the top and bottom portions of this form.

Please note that we need non-UCF, personal e-mail and postal addresses since federal election law forbids UFF from sending information about union elections and about legislative matters to you through your employer.

_ Home Address (number, street)

Personal e-mail address

_ Home Address (apartment or suite)

Personal phone

_ Home Address (city, state, ZIP)

UCF address (Campus, building & room)

Send by campus mail to **Prof. Patricia Angley, CNH 405A, Dept. of English, Zip +1346;**
or contact Membership Committee Chair Prof. Yan Fernandez (yrf@me.com, x36939) for a pickup.

UFF's mission:

To protect and support the practice of our academic professions, including teaching, research and service.