

Introduction

Chairman Weatherford, President Law, BOT Members, and Colleagues,

Good morning. For those who don't recognize me; I'm Steve Lang, the newly elected President of the United Faculty of Florida at USF. I'm a professor of educational measurement and research on the SP campus. I see the AD is on the agenda – and I'm a supporter of college athletics and unabashed supporter of the sailing team.

Also on the agenda is the new CBA. UFF is very pleased that the faculty voted to ratify the new Collective Bargaining Agreement. It was a lot of work to create a contract that clearly communicates but is also flexible in our unpredictable world of covid and consolidation. The faculty who worked on the contract included a lawyer, a dept. chair, an ex-dean, and one ex-school superintendent, all ranks from instructor to librarian and full professor. Some may be surprised to learn there were registered members of all major political parties.

So where are we now? The faculty are aware of PBMs, AAU indicators, Academic Analytics, and rankings. USF is moving up and achieving new heights every year. I went to a workshop on journal citations a few weeks ago. My summer reading at the beach is "Demystifying Scholarly Metrics"! Metrics and rankings are revealed at the end of an effort – and they capture a snapshot, but don't really describe how the institution got there. What were the choices and investments over the years that produced the metric?

How do metrics reveal a good contract? Is there a word or paragraph that gets extra points? When I worked in the public schools and universities of other states without collective contracts, there was confusion, conflict, and court cases. I was there when an instructor filed a court case that ended in the removal of an effective President and Provost of a major university way up North (in Athens, Georgia) that started over a single student in a single course. When things get that crazy, no one wins, everyone loses. *In my view, the recruitment, development, and retention of highest quality employees, particularly university faculty, will be as challenging in this decade as ever before.* I believe that the upward path of USF deserves the best CBA.

I would like to compliment the administration over the past few years, because Provost Ralph Wilcox, VPs Jim Garey, Dwayne Smith, GC Gerard Solis, Health's Olga Joanaw, and Ombudsman Steve Prevost have worked with the faculty to implement the previous CBA. Some of what we learned affected the current proposed CBA. The new CBA will hopefully provide a vehicle for faculty to teach and to thrive as scholars.

The United Faculty of Florida wants the best CBA possible. I believe, if the CBA is good, and if the built-in processes to enact the contract happen, then over the next 3 years the external metrics associated with recruitment, development, and retention of the best faculty will happen also. Thank you for this time.