



12 September 2024

Email not displaying properly? [View it in your browser](#)

## The Board

Regardless of who appoints the board of a public agency like USF, the board represents (or is supposed to represent) the institution within the community the institution serves. In particular, the USF Board of Trustees should engage with the faculty. So how engaged is it?

- **A General Education Timeline.** One an important curricular matter, the timeline itself militated against faculty involvement. For details, see below.

Meanwhile, the erosion of our paychecks - and recent big raises for some Florida institution presidents - raise morale issues. The following is a Board decision.

- **Cucumbers, Grapes and Salaries.** Big raises to CEOs and minimal (or none) to ordinary employees can erode solidarity within the institution. For more, see below.

One of the recent contract proposals from the Board's bargaining team suggests that the Board feels burdened by union comment at Board meetings.

- **Speaking Truth to Power.** Power may not want to hear it. For details, see below.

For more on latest bargaining session, see the [Letter](#) from our chief negotiator.

**This fall, chapter meetings will be on alternate Fridays on USF Tampa in EDU 161, although we plan on two meetings on the other two campuses, dates TBD.** The meetings are hybrid: contact [the Chapter Secretary](#) to get a link.

**Chapter Meeting Tomorrow Friday at 12 noon in EDU 161 and on Zoom.** On the [agenda](#): BOT meeting report, the AAUP survey and the WSJ ranking, the FEA Assembly and UFF Senate meetings, and more. And here are the [August 30 minutes](#). **All UFF USF employees - members and non-members alike - are**

invited to attend the chapter meeting (we will have lunch). But to Zoom in to the chapter meeting you must have an invitation: contact [the Chapter Secretary](#) to get one. Meetings and events are [posted on the Events Calendar](#) of the [UFF USF Website](#). Come and check us out.

## The Board of Governors is Coming to Tampa

The Board of Governors, which oversees the entire Florida State University System, will meet on USF Tampa next week Wednesday, September 18. The meeting will be in the Marshall Student Center Ballroom from 2:30 - 3:30. This will follow committee meetings from 9 am to 2:30 pm.

Here is the [page for all the meetings](#), and here is [the agenda](#) for the main meeting. Notice that [the proposal that all course materials be vetted](#) is tucked into the [Affordability motion](#), which is in the Consent Agenda.

If you have anything to say to the board about an agenda item, here are [the instructions](#) for speaking to the Board. Notice it may take a few days to get approval, so if you want to speak, you should act quickly.

## What is a Contract Good For?

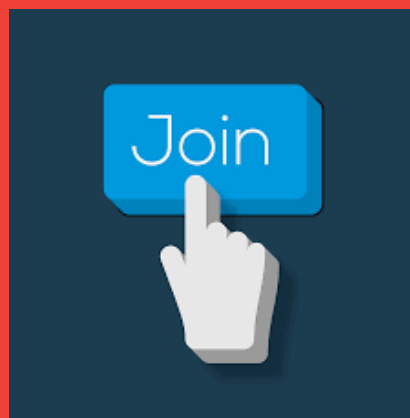
**A contract can help when you get in trouble - *if you use it*.** If your contractual rights are violated, you have the right to file a grievance seeking redress, and we can help. But remember, **you have thirty days from the time you knew or should have known about the contract violation to file the grievance, so if something happens, contact us asap.** For more information, see the [Grievance Page](#).



## A Civics Reminder

If you have [missed two federal elections](#), you may have been purged from the voter rolls. And if voting by mail, you must [renew your vote by mail](#) request for each federal election.

**Yes, it's an Election Year!** The general election is on **November 5**, and the **deadline to register is October 7**. This election will not only be for the president, but also for many representatives and officials who make decisions affecting you and your university. **If you are eligible to vote, we strongly encourage you to do so.** Check the [Florida Division of Elections](#) today!



### Union Membership

If you are not a union member, please [join today](#) (the form connects automatically to the eDues form, so you will want to have your banking information or checkbook information handy). We are stronger standing together in solidarity.

## Membership Status

If you are going on a reduced-pay leave or sabbatical, or if you are retiring or resigning, please contact us so we can adjust your eDues accordingly: visit the [UFF Membership Policy webpage](#). In particular, if you are retiring, we encourage you to consider joining the UFF Retired chapter: here is [their webpage](#).



### Bargaining the Next Contract

Your UFF-USF Bargaining Committee met with USF-BOT bargaining representatives to begin negotiations for the successor agreement to the current Collective Bargaining Agreement 2021-2024.

The Bargaining Committee wants your ideas, comments, suggestions, and desiderata from the employees that the union represents. Please send thoughts on bargaining to [the Bargaining Committee](#).

## A General Education Timeline

One would think that if a major curricular issue appeared in January, with a deadline to act by September 1, the Administration would consult with faculty bodies during the spring term when everyone is on the clock. After all, it is the faculty who knows about curriculum. But when the Board of Governors went after the [General Education curriculum](#), that is not what happened.

- On January 24, the Florida Board of Governors adopted a [systemwide regulation](#) that [got in the news](#) for creating two social science (not humanities!) courses on American history and adding it to the General Education Curriculum - and removed Principles of Sociology from that curriculum. And each university must "... review and approve [and] ... submit its approved list of general education courses ... no later than September 1."
- Between January 24 and June 24, the Board of Trustees met on [March 18](#) and [June 4](#), with two additional "Special" Board meetings; but the string "general education" does not appear in the minutes of any of those four meetings. The [Academics & Campus Environment \(ACE\) Committee](#) met three times while the [Governance Committee](#) met twice; "general education" does not appear in the minutes of of

any of these five meetings.

Then came summer, when many faculty think of other things.

- On June 24, USF Undergraduate Studies sent [an email](#) asking recipients to check if 17 General Education courses comply with the rather conventional Statute [1007.25\(d\)](#) - and the ideologically driven Statute [1007.25\(c\)](#) barring General Education courses from teaching that anything bad is inherent in America or teaching anything barred by the Anti-Woke [Statute 1000.05](#). The letter cited the Board of Governors regulation but not anything from USF's own Board of Trustees.
- The Faculty Senate does not meet during the summer, but the [Executive Committee](#) does. The General Counsel made a presentation on General Education at the [July meeting](#), largely on the legislative mandate. The Executive Committee was unhappy: the bar against speculation or theory seemed to bar philosophy, the implementation seemed to go beyond the legislative language (the General Counsel said that USF would follow the Board of Governors' interpretation), the legislation would require that faculty distort history, and so on.
- On [August 20](#), the ACE Committee heard a presentation on the procedure, but the list of approved courses was not among the enclosed documents.
- On [August 27](#), the Governance Committee faced the September 1 deadline with the next full Board meeting on September 10. So "acting on behalf of the full board," the Committee approved sending in the list. The list was not among the enclosed documents for the meeting.

On September 4, the [Oracle](#) reported that the General Counsel told the Committee that the list would be presented to the Board of Trustees. But the list was not on the Board's agenda, and in fact, when two faculty members requested time to address the Board regarding General Education, the requests were denied on the grounds that General Education was not on the agenda.

Faculty were largely out of the loop.

---



# Capuchins reject unequal pay



Snapshot from excerpt from Frans de Waals [TED Talk](#)

## Cucumbers, Grapes, and Salaries

Some presidents of Florida colleges and universities have gotten some pretty big pay packages lately. (These packages are handed out by their boards, who are presumably acting in accordance with their fiduciary responsibilities.) The timing was particularly bad: inflation hit faculty and staff pretty hard, and while the buying power of institutional funding is recovering, the buying power of paychecks have not.

The problem usually isn't the money - even a million dollars won't break the university's bank - the problem is morale. If faculty and staff see top administrators getting large raises while regular employees suffer tangible losses, it looks like we're not in the same boat after all.

Moralists may claim that this resentment is mere envy and that employees should not stoop to it. But the resentment is real, and we share it with close relatives. The primatologist Frans de Waals conducted the following experiment on two monkeys who could see each other's cages. The first monkey is prompted to perform a trick, and is rewarded with a cucumber slice. The second monkey is then prompted to perform the same trick and is rewarded with a grape. Then back to the first monkey, who is prompted to perform the trick again, and is again awarded with a cucumber slice. Not as good as the grape that the second monkey got, and the first monkey [hurled the cucumber slice](#) out of the cage.

The resulting morale problem can affect performance - and for

an institution like USF with high aspirations, that can be a problem. Employees don't particularly resent generous executive pay packages if ordinary employees are also doing well; it is generous executive pay packages when most others are *not* doing well that creates problems.

## Speaking Truth to Power

How much does the Board want to hear from the public - or from the faculty?

One of UFF's [contractual privileges](#) is that "The UFF shall be granted a place on the agenda at each Board meeting for the purpose of addressing any item on the Board's agenda that affects the wages, hours, or other terms and conditions of employment of employees." This is a useful privilege, for UFF representatives rarely have a chance to speak directly to the Board, especially in a public setting.

Especially if union members attend to show UFF their support (hint, hint, hint).

At Tuesday's Board meeting, UFF USF Chapter President Steve Lang started with his usual prologue on the USF sailing team, and then segued into the Presidential Goals and Indicators, which showed a "clear focus on [the AAU](#)." He mentioned the goal of hiring five hundred new faculty members over the next five years, and warned that that might be difficult if USF acquired the reputation of not keeping its salaries up to the cost of living.

(UFF surveys indicate that faculty are concerned about the erosion of their buying power due to inflation, and the erosion of their academic freedom. Meanwhile, our reputation may be suffering: [a recent AAUP survey](#) indicates that southern universities are acquiring an undesirable reputation, while USF sank from # 151 to # 250 in [the latest Wall Street Journal rankings](#). If this continues, it will affect both retention and recruiting.)

President Lang made his presentation in three minutes, but apparently three minutes too far, for one of the Administration's proposals in bargaining was to impose a restriction on UFF's presentations: they had to comply with [USF's instructions](#) on presentations, which are a bit more restrictive and subject to unilateral change.

It is not clear what bothers the Board of Trustees (the Administration team represents the Board). Is three minutes of sailing and salaries too hard to bear? But that is part of the job of being a trustee. [Florida Statute 286.0114\(2\)](#) says, "Members of the public shall be given a reasonable opportunity to be heard on

a proposition before a board ... The opportunity to be heard need not occur at the same meeting at which the board or commission takes official action ... if the opportunity occurs ... during the decisionmaking process ... within reasonable proximity in time *before* ... the official action." [Italics added.]

[USF's instructions](#) are more restrictive, claiming that the [Florida Statute 286.0114\(2\)](#) empowers the chair to deny time to anyone who intends to speak on something that is not, at that moment, on the agenda. Recall that two faculty members were denied the opportunity to speak at Tuesday's board meeting about General Education. Listening to ordinary people must be a tiresome business.



## Follow us on Social Media &&& *Join us on Social Media*

We have a Facebook group: see [United Faculty of Florida at USF](#). This page is a place where UFF members can exchange thoughts and ideas. **The page is "public", but only dues-paying UFF members are eligible to post items on the page. If you are a UFF member, ask to join on the page, and the moderator will invite every UFF member that asks to join.** Non-members are welcome to look (but you need a Facebook account to do that). So check us out ... join the conversation.

- We have a blog: see [The USF Faculty Blog](#). This has news items as they come up.
- We are on Twitter (aka X), so follow us on Twitter / X via [@UffUsf](#).
- We are on Instagram, so check us out at Instagram [@usf\\_uff](#).
- We even have a You-Tube channel: [check out our videos](#).

**We are revamping our publicity machine, and if you are interested in social media, in membership, or in**



conversations with you colleagues across campus, *come join the campaign*. Contact [the Communications Committee chair](#).

---

## USF United Support Fund for Food Pantries

Many of our students are struggling during with food insecurity, and the USF Foundation is supporting the [USF Food Pantries](#) to help out. They are accepting non-perishable donations, but one can also make monetary donations for the pantries at all three campuses.

## Details, Details

he USF-UFF Chapter website is <http://www.uff.ourusf.org>, and our e-mail address is [uff@ourusf.org](mailto:uff@ourusf.org). About this broadcast: This Newsletter was broadcast from Constant Contact, and is intended for all members of the UFF USF Bargaining unit (USF faculty and professionals at most departments). A (usually identical) version will be broadcast to USF-News and USF-Talk from [mccolm@usf.edu](mailto:mccolm@usf.edu).

If you do not want to receive the UFF Biweekly, you can unsubscribe below or contacting [the Chapter Secretary](#). If you do not receive the Biweekly, but want to, contact [the Chapter Secretary](#).

United Faculty of Florida | 30238 USF Holly Dr University of South Florida | Tampa, FL 33620 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!