



UFF Biweekly

United Faculty of Florida -- USF System Chapter

7 November 2024

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The Post Tenure Review Packet

Post tenure review is most likely a contractual violation, but litigation is likely to move slowly ... and meanwhile, some of us are up for review this academic year. So we are in that awkward position that occurs in American law: play along for now and pick up the pieces later.

- **The Post Tenure Review Packet.** So what should be in this packet? We take a look at the nuts and bolts.

Tomorrow Friday, at 10 am, the UFF will have a session + Q&A on post tenure review on USF Tampa in EDU 161. It will be hybrid with restrictions; for a Zoom link, contact [the chapter secretary](#).

Turning to a more typical subject for a union newsletter, **the next bargaining session is on Friday, November 15, starting at 11 am, on USF Tampa in SVC 2070** (in the depths of the old Services building). It will be streamed, but please come in person so you can cheer the home team. **We will present our salary proposal, and it will help if we have an audience that will glare at the other team as we do so.**

- **How Salaries Work.** There are merit raises, discretionary raises, promotional raises, and ... things that are not raises. For details, see below.

Meanwhile, the Public Employee Relations Commission has told us that they will conduct a (mail) referendum to see if employees in the UFF USF Bargaining Unit want to continue to be represented by the United Faculty of Florida. Just when that overworked, underfunded, and ideologically tilted commission will do that is uncertain.

- **Certification and SOI Cards.** The Commission does not know what they want if the referendum is delayed to next year. But the law says that there is supposed to be a referendum next year anyway. Assuming that the courts

don't strike down the law first...

Wouldn't it be nice if the state government just obeyed the law?

Chapter Meeting after the PTR Session

Chapter Meeting Tomorrow Friday at 12 noon in EDU 161 and on Zoom. On [the agenda](#): the UFF Senate, bargaining, and more. And here are the [October 25 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.

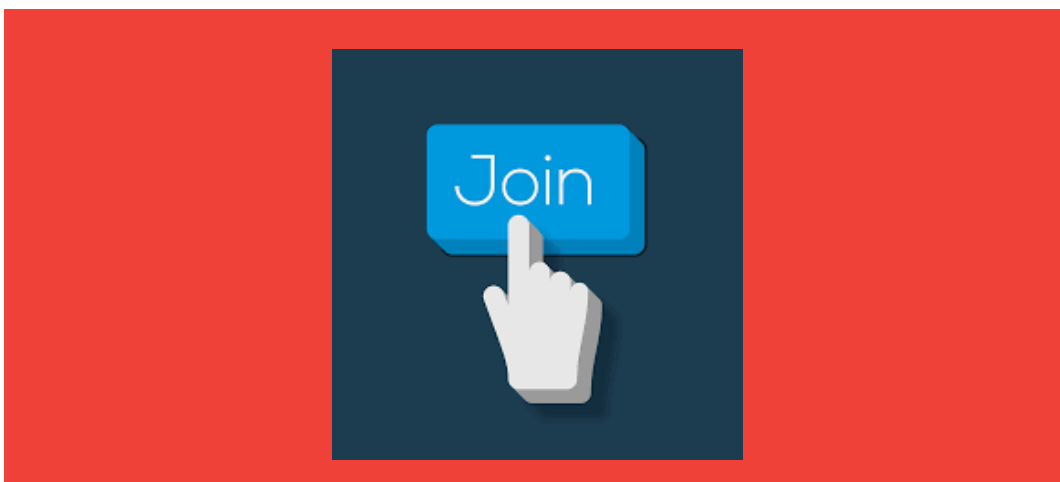
Bargaining Session and Social on November 15

The next bargaining session is on November 15, starting at 11 am on USF Tampa in SVC 2070. It will be [streamed on Zoom](#), but please come in person if you can and cheer the home team.

In addition to political storms, we made it through two hurricanes. Come celebrate with us. **All UFF USF employees - members and non-members, faculty and graduate students - are invited to a Survivors' Social on November 15 from 5 pm to 7 pm** at the [New World Brewery on 810 E. Skagway Ave.](#), in Tampa.

Holiday Season Toy Drive

The West Central Florida Federation of Labor will be conducting its annual Toy Drive this season. The toys will be given to children in need of ages 0 - 17. You can bring new toys to the USF Department of Mathematics office in CMC342. Thank you.



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.

If you have difficulties with the eDues form, see [the instructions](#).

The Post Tenure Review Packet

Whatever the concerns of the USF community at large, for those who have been selected for post tenure review during this academic year, the primary concerns are the nuts and bolts of meeting "expectations" that the Board of Trustees waved into existence for reasons largely unrelated to the mission of the university.

First, the legalities: [Florida Statute 1001.706\(6\)\(b\)](#) says that the State University System Board of Governors *shall* adopt a regulation mandating post tenure review; that "shall" is probably a violation of the [Florida State Constitution IX.7\(d\)](#), but the courts haven't gotten to that yet. But the Board complied anyway with a [SUS Regulation 10.003](#) requiring that all universities adopt a regulation implementing "Post-Tenure Faculty Review", and the USF Board complied with [USF Regulation 3.016](#). And the Administration is now [implementing this regulation](#).

Every year, a fifth of the eligible faculty (the word "eligible" being a bit ambiguous here) are selected for review, and for those selected this year, there are deadlines:

- **2 December 2024:** Review packet is due in Archivum. This includes the narrative, CV, and annual evaluations for the years 2019 - 2023.
- **28 February 2025:** Chair and dean return written assessments and recommended ratings to faculty member.
- **14 March 2025:** Faculty response (another narrative) to assessments and recommended ratings due.
- **15 April 2025:** Provost or Executive Vice President of Health Sciences (as appropriate) informs dean of outcome. Presumably, someone informs the faculty member of the outcome.
- **8 May 2025:** If the rating is "does not meet expectations", a Performance Improvement Plan, composed by the dean in consultation with the faculty member and chair, is due.

(Incidentally, while the narratives have been described as "optional", they probably aren't. An absent narrative may well be taken as evidence of absence of met "expectations".)

For the next 25 days, the primary issue is the first review packet, typically consisting of a narrative (of at most 12,000 characters - including spaces) and a CV. You must also make sure that your annual evaluations for 2019 - 2023 are actually in Archivum. **Warning: Archivum is a bit user-hostile and dysfunctional, so you should *not* wait until December 1 before checking it out.** By November 25, you should have familiarized yourself with it; we have posted the [Faculty Guide](#), which provides some idea of what Archivum is up to.

About the narrative and CV, here is a logistical syllogism.

- The deans and the provost / executive vice president will be dealing with a lot of packets from diverse units of fields that the senior administrators are inexpert in. **For most review packets, the chair's assessment and recommended rating will probably carry great weight.**
- **If the chair has any sense, the chair will rely on departmental criteria in composing assessments and recommendations.** Failure to do so will ultimately create more work for the chair and greatly increase the probability of complications or even litigation. (Unfortunately, last year, some chairs went rogue; deans are *strongly* advised to watch out for this sort of thing - in the long run, this can cost the university a lot in time, money, and reputational damage.)
- **A narrative and CV addressing the departmental criteria will make it easier for the chair to determine what the assessment and outcome should be.** (And as the UFF USF Publicity Chair tells his students, a happy grader is a lenient grader.)

So the narrative and CV should directly address the departmental criteria - as much as possible.

Departmental criteria vary, in focus, level of detail, and even in structure. **Some departments look at the entire five year period as a unit while others divide the period into (say) five year-long units.** The narrative's structure should reflect the structure of the departmental criteria.

- The criteria should be divided into Teaching, Research, and Service. So the narrative should be likewise divided to facilitate the chair's assessment.

At the October 28 session on post tenure review conducted by the Provost's office, faculty were informed that performance was evaluated per assigned effort (in Full Time Equivalent) to teaching, research, and service, but it is not clear exactly how that works. **As USF is an AAU institution, research is going to be taken seriously, but teaching and service should also be taken seriously.**

- At the October 28 session, faculty were informed that the

period under review were the calendar years 2019 - 2023. If your department's criteria presumes that performance be broken down in to five year-long units, then your narratives on teaching, on research, and on service, could be similarly broken down to facilitate comparison with the annual evaluations (which are part of the packet). However, as many assignments - especially service assignments - go by academic year, the narrative should articulate between those two time periods.

- In addition, while 2024 is not under consideration, activities performed before 1 January 2024 could produce confirmation of the value of those activities during 2024. With that in mind, it may be useful to refer to presentations, article submissions or acceptances, etc., for efforts occurring before 2024.

So what should be in the narrative? Departmental criteria we have seen stress scholarship, teaching, and service, but what will be evaluated is *evidence* of these things.

- **Teaching.** All the items in the departmental criteria should be directly addressed in the teaching component of the narrative. However, the packet will not include syllabi or course materials. It will contain the annual evaluations, and thus the teaching narratives (of the annual evaluations), student evaluations, and committee and chair comments and reports. Do not assume that the chair (much less the dean, not to mention the provost) has read all these carefully: highlight important points that deserve emphasis. Finally, mention the major things you did (e.g., redesigning a course) *even if the departmental criteria did not mention them.*
- **Research.** For some departments, items in departmental criteria tend to concern publicizing research (and material support for research), rather than the research itself. And some criteria for publicizing and / or support emphasize quantity over quality. **If your quantity meets or exceeds the "expectations" in the criteria, make that clear (do not count on your chair to notice stuff - even with the best of intentions, things can get overlooked).** But if not, you should describe the research itself and its significance, together with how it is or may be publicized (this can include very old-fashioned or non-traditional media). In addition, activity includes submitted manuscripts and grant proposals, however unsuccessful; *one of the traditional arguments for tenure is that it provides the ability for scholars to take risks - and risks taken are evidence of scholarly activity even if departmental criteria don't mention them.*
- **Service.** There is a wide spectrum from service to the university (e.g., in departmental committees) to service to

the community (e.g., making presentations to community groups). Service activities of the sort enumerated in the departmental criteria should be reported, but in addition, those service activities that advance the mission of the university should be reported - and whatever the officialese, the university is a public agency and its mission includes service to the public.

Since the chair does the first assessment, it may be wise to consult with the chair to find out the chair's expectations. In addition, if there is trouble down the road - at whatever level - *all* documentation will be important. So **save all correspondence on PTR.**

The chairs and other assessors have been handed the pointed end of a pointed stick and should be cautious about dismissing evidence of good performance.

- **The entire process of composing and vetting criteria was rushed** and, being without precedent (what is the history of periodically evaluating tenured faculty to determine if they should remain tenured??!), is inevitably problematic.
- **The "expectations" were themselves composed *after* the performance being evaluated;** the only expectations communicated to faculty in advance were those in departmental criteria for the annual evaluations.
- **The consequences of a negative assessment can be serious.** Putting a faculty member in good standing on a Professional Improvement Plan - or finding that faculty member unsatisfactory - can affect the entire unit for years to come. (And, of course, there are the reputational and legal consequences.)

Assessors should be careful about contending that "expectations" were not met.

The entire process statewide has not yet crossed the courts' red line: no one has actually been fired *yet*. Faculty at some institutions have been informed that they *will be fired* in about a year. Others have been threatened (follow this Professional Improvement Plan or else). But the courts are more inclined to move *once material damage is done*. So the litigation is likely to continue for some time.

For faculty, the danger is immediate. But USF as an institution faces threats of reputational damage and an implosion of recruitment and reputation, and these threats are glacial in the movement and implacability. The governor and the Legislature may be appeased today, but it is quite possible that in a decade, there will be no AAU institutions in Florida.

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](#).

How Salaries Work

As noted in the [9 October 2024 Biweekly](#), that 3% raise that the Administration announced and is now in GEMS is nice, but it does not make up for the 12.5% cut in buying power UFF USF employees suffered because of the inflation spike during the life of the previous contract. **UFF will present a salary proposal at the November 15 bargaining session at 11 am on USF Tampa in SVC 2070.** The meeting is open to the public and the public (and UFF USF employees, especially) are invited.

Meanwhile, there are several kinds of raises, all of which are controlled by the contract. **Merit raises are based on annual evaluations, and over time, they are the primary source of raises for most UFF USF employees.** Promotional raises are for promotions.

There are two kinds of discretionary raises:

- There are no limits for raises for "extra compensation", verified counteroffers, "market equity, including compression/inversion" and legal and other settlements.
- There is a limit on raises for "special achievement, and to develop and implement plans" and for research, teaching, service accomplishments.

This is where the 3% raise appears to have come from.

Then there are things that are not raises: a bonus (like the bonuses for exceeding or meeting expectations in a post tenure review) are one-time payments only that do not change base salary.

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](#).



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](#). And if you haven't already, please fill in this [short survey](#) from the Bargaining Committee.

A Certification and SOI Card Reminder

Just a reminder.

You may recall that every Florida public employees union (like UFF) that the governor doesn't like (like UFF) must have 60% membership in order to automatically retain "certification", i.e., the right to represent employees in bargaining and enforcing a contract. UFF - ahem - does not have 60% membership, so in order to continue to represent YOU, we need an election in which YOU vote IN FAVOR of retaining UFF as your "collective bargaining agent". (This does not mean you have to join - just that you want us to continue to represent you in bargaining your contract.)

We have been informed that the Commission will set up the election ... soon. We don't know what soon means, but be advised, it's coming, and UFF must win the election in order to continue bargaining and enforcing our contract.

Another problem has surfaced: will the Commission need new Showing of Interest (SOI) cards? You may recall filling them out last academic year: they were a petition for the certification election that the Commission is only now getting around to conduct. If the Commission doesn't get the election going by the end of the year (which is quite possible, considering their snail's pace), will they want new SOI cards? The Commission doesn't know (!). And what about the next certification election, for which we are supposed to submit another petition - SOI cards - next March?

We are mailing out a request for more SOI cards to all UFF USF employees. Again, this is not a commitment to join UFF,

and it is not a commitment to vote in favor of retaining UFF as your union. It is just a petition that the certification election be held. And if you find all this rigamorale ridiculous, remember that on Election Day.



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

The USF-UFF Chapter website is <http://www.uff.ourusf.org>, and our e-mail address is 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.

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