



27 March 2025

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What Are We Going to Do About It?

In 1871, Thomas Nast drew a cartoon of Boss Tweed presiding over a Roman game, and asked, "*What are you going to do about it?*" We are in a similar situation now.

- **National Updates.** It's becoming clear that the federal campaign against higher education is not going to abate until it's stopped. For more, see below.

Meanwhile, the Legislature is in session.

- **Is the Legislature Waking Up?** The Legislature finally has other priorities besides kicking us around. But there are some bills to watch. For more, see below.

In addition to all the Unfair Labor Practice complaints and lawsuits that the union is pursuing against the State of Florida and its agencies, there is also Washington.

- **What is the Union Doing About Washington?** While the United Faculty of Florida deals with local and state issues, our national affiliates are dealing with Washington. For more, see below.

All this craziness can be overwhelming. But acting together, there's a lot we can do.

- **What Can You Do?** The trick is to get organized. For more, see below - and attend the townhall tomorrow at 1 pm - details in the flier below.

Breaking news about USF Sarasota-Manatee. Apparently unembarrassed by Mr. Corcoran's [problematic performance](#) at New College, some political operators are trying to [incorporate USF Sarasota-Manatee](#) into Mr. Corcoran's fiefdom (which is already trying to [annex the Ringling Museum](#)). Current USF S-M employees would be either moved to St. Petersburg or Sarasota or transition to "comparable roles while remaining at New

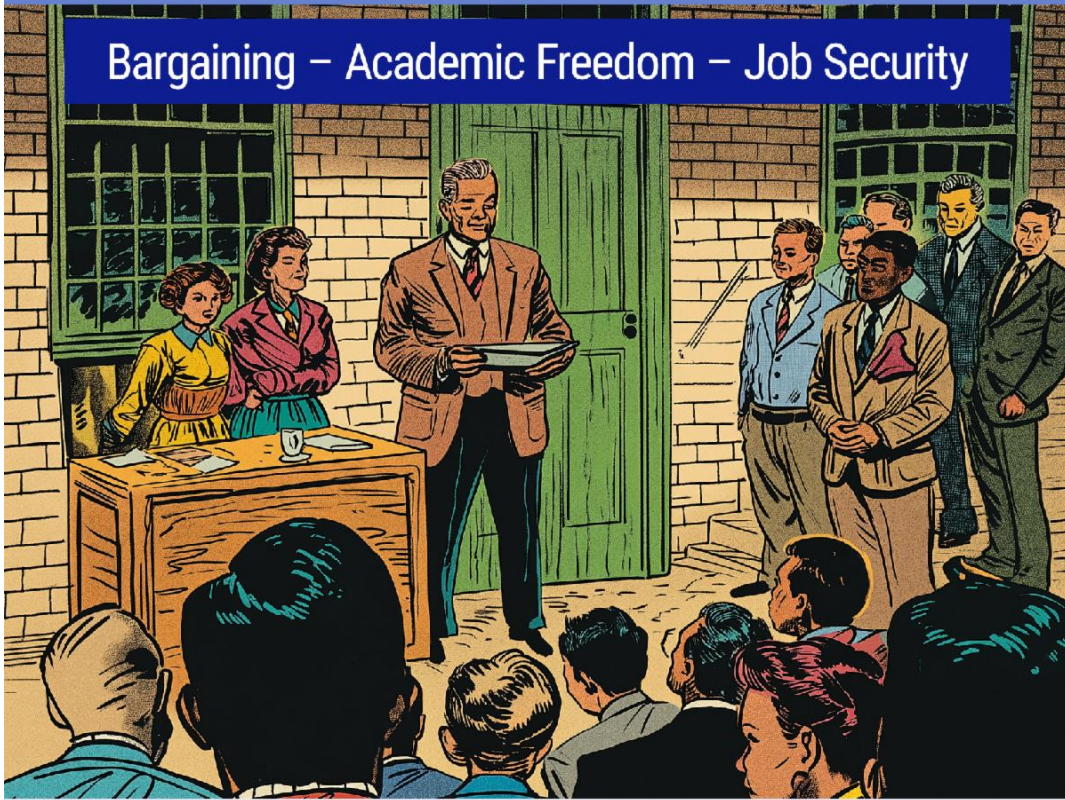
College," although it looks as if what Mr. Corcoran wants are the buildings and grounds.

UFF United
Faculty
of Florida

invites you to

A Townhall *on* What's Happening

Bargaining – Academic Freedom – Job Security



March 28 at 1pm



Scan for Zoom Meeting Link

In Person at:
USF Tampa, Patel CGS 140

Chapter Meeting & Townhall Tomorrow

Chapter Meeting Tomorrow Friday at 12 noon on USF Tampa in the Patel Center, room CGS 140, and on Zoom. On the [agenda](#): bargaining and grievances, litigation and legislation updates, and more. And here are [the minutes](#) for the March 14

Chapter Meeting. For a Zoom link, contact [the chapter secretary](#).

Then, after the Chapter Meeting...

Townhall on salaries, job security, academic freedom, pending litigation and legislation, and other issues on Friday, March 28, at 1 pm on USF Tampa in the Patel Center, in CGS 140, and [on Zoom](#). Everyone is invited.

And later...

Social After the Townhall

On March 28, from 5 pm to 7 pm, we will have a social at [New World Brewery](#) at 810 E. Skagway Ave., in Tampa. Come and join us!

But the Faculty Senate has organized an event just before the social...

Faculty Senate Townhall Before the Social

The Faculty Senate's General Education Council will also host a Townhall tomorrow Friday, at 4 pm, on USF Tampa, in the Patel Center, in CGS 136/138. The topic will be adding general education courses to the Fall 2026 catalog. It will be hybrid on Teams: here is [the link](#).

Upcoming Events

Meetings and events are posted on [the Events Calendar](#) of the [UFF USF website](#). Here are events for the next three weeks:

- March 28 at 12 pm: [Chapter meeting](#).
- March 28 at 1 pm: [Townhall](#).
- March 28 at 5 pm: [Social](#).
- April 10: Ballots for chapter election due.
- April 11 at 10 am: [Bargaining Session](#).
- April 11 at 12 pm: [Chapter Meeting](#).
- April 11 at 5 pm: [Social](#).

Election Season

Our thanks to everyone who agreed to run for chapter offices and representative seats. Ballot packets are in the mail - but only UFF members may participate in this election.

Also, the statewide UFF is also conducting an election, so UFF members should watch their mail for *two* ballots.

About Membership and eDues. Many former members were not aware that they were dropped from UFF membership when they failed to enroll in eDues. If you are paying by eDues, you should be receiving a receipt every other week from FEA's computer - and you should receive two ballots this spring. If not, and if you are not paying by check, then you are not a member.



*Socials Every
Other Friday*

Mon, Mar 24	Tue, Mar 25	Wed, Mar 26	Thu, Mar 27	Fri, Mar 28 	Sat, Mar 29
Mon, Mar 31	Tue, Apr 1	Wed, Apr 2	Thu, Apr 3	Fri, Apr 4	Sat, Apr 5
Mon, Apr 7	Tue, Apr 8	Wed, Apr 9	Thu, Apr 10	Fri, Apr 11 	Sat, Apr 12
Mon, Apr 14	Tue, Apr 15	Wed, Apr 16	Thu, Apr 17	Fri, Apr 18	Sat, Apr 19
Mon, Apr 21	Tue, Apr 22	Wed, Apr 23	Thu, Apr 24	Fri, Apr 25 	Sat, Apr 26

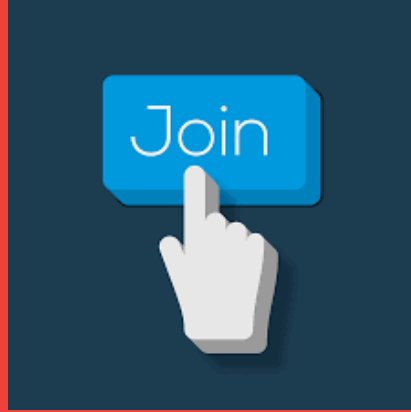


Scan for Map

**Join Us Every Other Friday
at New World Brewery, 5-7PM**

March 28, April 11, April 25

New World Tampa
810 E Skagway Ave, Tampa, FL 33604



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](#).

National Updates

The news from Washington is so continuously bad that it is tempting to simply turn off the news. For example...

- Facing a \$400 million cut in federal funding, [Columbia University acquiesced](#) to several invasive demands ostensibly concerning antisemitism.
- The University of Maine [agreed](#) to keep transgender athletes out of women's sports after the U.S. Department of Agriculture paused funding on its grants to U. Maine.
- The federal government [paused](#) \$175 million in grant money to University of Pennsylvania during an investigation of transgender athletes in sports.
- Johns Hopkins University [is laying off](#) over 2,000 workers after it lost \$800 million in USAid funding.
- Immigration and Customs Enforcement has started [targeting foreign students and faculty](#) who say or post things that the federal government doesn't like.

Some of this seems to be sheer spite, like [the order](#) to shut down the Institute of Museum and Library Services. And in an example of almost spiteful grift that shows the attitude of the people making these decisions, the U.S. Department of Agriculture [canceled a lot of journal subscriptions](#) from university presses and academic societies while preserving subscriptions from major for-profit publishers. How that facilitates the mission of the Department of Agriculture is unclear.

Universities are responding with [layoffs](#) and [student admissions cuts](#). Meanwhile, the some Europeans are [reconsidering](#) their practice of not only spending less on defense than the USA but also of spending less on R&D than the USA. For example, Aix Marseille Université [announced](#) that as "some scientists in the United States may feel threatened or hindered in their research", AMU is launching a "Safe Place For Science program, dedicated to welcoming scientists wishing to pursue their work in an environment conducive to innovation, excellence and academic freedom."

AMU's announcement [inspired](#) a similar announcement from Vrije Universiteit Brussel, and the Pasteur Institute is already headhunting. The French government called on research institutions to submit headhunting proposals, and the Dutch government is working on funding.

Back in the USA, not all university presidents are hiding in their offices, hoping that Washington will pass them by. **Princeton President Christopher Eisgruber [told viewers](#) of the PBS Newshour that university presidents should stand together** against the federal administration rather than knuckling under one by one. (See also [Politico's interview](#) with Wesleyan University President Michael Roth.) This is not going to blow over - it will continue, and get worse, until it is stopped.

Or until Washington makes Europe great again...



Before pursuing a policy to return to the Nineteenth century, Washington should remember who ran the world in the Nineteenth century...

Is the Florida Legislature Waking Up?

This year, legislators seem to be more receptive to our arguments in favor of good bills and against bad ones. That may be because a lot of their constituents are being hit by high insurance premiums, high housing costs, and, of course, the price of eggs - making wokeness a less pressing issue. Here are some bills (good, bad, and mixed) that we are watching and educating legislators about:

- **Making Certification More Onerous.** Currently, the union has to win an annual election (once the state commission gets around to running it) in order to remain certified. [Senate Bill 1766](#) / [House Bill 1387](#) would require that a majority of the bargaining unit - not just a majority of those voting - vote in favor of certification. ([Senate Bill 1328](#) and [House Bill 1217](#) also play with certification.)
- **Banning DEI from Medical Schools.** Among other things, [Senate Bill 1710](#) / [House Bill 731](#) requires that medical school courses assign letter grades - raising the question of what other micromanagement legislators might dream up.
- **Guns on Campus.** [Senate Bill 184](#) / [House Bill 31](#) would

permit any person "authorized to do so" to carry firearms into dormitories and residence halls (and presumably, classrooms). However, a college or university may designate certain events and areas as gun-free zones. Fortunately, this bill appears to be in trouble.

- **Transparency in Presidential Searches - and Red Tape for Course Materials.** [Senate Bill 1321](#) / [House Bill 1387](#) would remove the exemption from Florida Sunshine from presidential searches - so that these searches would have to be conducted in Florida Sunshine - but also require that almost all course syllabi and lists of course materials be posted 45 days prior to the start of the semester in a location "easily downloadable by current and prospective students" and, of course, political trolls.
- **Waiving Graduate Student Fees.** [Senate Bill 760](#) / [House Bill 631](#) would waive fees for graduate assistants.
- **Restricting Political Interference in Academic Affairs.** [Senate Bill 1410](#) / [House Bill 609](#) would require that the State Board of Education ensure that Florida state colleges and universities are "free from undue political influence and interference in academic affairs, including curriculum design, faculty appointments, research activities, and administrative operations."

Meanwhile, both the [Governor](#) and the [Legislature](#) are thinking of cuts in education funding.

Dealing with the Legislature is a labor-intensive business. While a few legislators are close-minded or ideological or whatever, many are genuinely uninformed about colleges and universities, or even education in general, and many of these are willing to at least listen. If you are interested in educating your elected representatives - who are SUPPOSED to represent YOU - contact [the chapter secretary](#) about participating in government relations.

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](#).

What is the Union Doing About Washington?

The United Faculty of Florida has two national affiliates, the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association. Both are educating Congresspeople about the bad

effects of [invasive legislation](#).

And they are both in court. For example...

- The American Federation of Teachers [sued the U.S. Department of Education](#) for restricting access to student loan payment assistance.
- The American Federation of Teachers and the American Sociological Association [sued the U.S. Department of Education](#) to challenge [a letter](#) warning against anything that looks remotely DEI - and which is so sweeping and so vague it would invite abuse. (USF is one of the recipients of [this letter](#).) The National Education Association and the American Civil Liberties Union have also [filed suit](#).
- The AFL-CIO, of which the American Federation of Teachers is a part, and several other organizations [filed suit](#) to keep the Department of Government Efficiency from accessing personal data of American workers.
- The National Education Association, the NAACP, and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (which used to represent USF staff) has [sued the government](#) for shutting down the U.S. Department of Education.

And American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten had [a four-word response](#) to [the Executive Order](#) to close the U.S. Department of Education: "**See you in court.**" Here is [the response](#) from the president of UFF's state affiliate, the Florida Education Association.

Multiple suits are not duplicative: the outcome of any one suit is not guaranteed, and sometimes all it takes is for one to succeed.

(Notice that USF has received *two* threatening letters from Washington this month. This is not something to be complacent about.)

Unfortunately, recalling the periodic updates concerning UFF's litigation over the arbitration ban, the Stop Woke law, the previous certification election law (which pushed us into eDues), and other unconstitutional and illegal state actions, litigation ... takes ... a ... long ... time. And the outcome is not guaranteed. [A stitch in time being worth nine](#) later on, it is better to pay attention to elections and elected officials *before* the bad legislation hits the statute books. Just a thought.

Incidentally, union dues are paying for the lawyers that are working on these and other lawsuits. We should all be grateful to UFF members for supporting education in this dark hour.



Thomas Nast's 1871 cartoon: "What are you going to do about it?" The big emperor at upper left is William "Boss" Tweed.

What Can You Do?

First of all, this does not show any signs of blowing over, so hunkering down is not going to help much. And appeasement only delays the inevitable. Second, organization matters: winning a fight like this means running a campaign, and that entails a lot of mundane work. Movies like [Ghandi](#) and [Selma](#) understate the vast amount of planning that goes into a successful campaign.

We need people willing to step forward and donate their time and energy to defending themselves, their colleagues, and their university. Come to the Townhall meeting, tomorrow at 1 pm on USF Tampa campus, in the Patel Center, room CGS 140, and find out how we can succeed if we all pull together.

Postscript. The Oracle has just published some suggestions on [How the USF community can have a voice in presidential search](#). It boils down to paying close attention to the Board of Trustees and communicating to the Board.

Salaries Employment Health
 Grievance Protection Law
 Regulate Contract
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING
 Process Negotiation
 Agreement Productive
 Working Hours Terms Rules
 Employer Union Wages Group
 Overtime Safety Establish Cost
 Issues Representative
 Limits Work-life Salary
 Participate

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 we have a (brief) [bargaining survey](#) we ask people to fill out.

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](#).



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. 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.

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

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