



UFF Biweekly

United Faculty of Florida -- USF System Chapter

United Faculty of Florida - USF Chapter

29 January 2026

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

External Attacks

USF faces - and all the Florida universities face - attacks by the state government. Some of it is publicity-mongering or ideological...

- **The Syllabus Rule.** Starting this summer, components of all syllabi are to be posted online 45 days prior to the beginning of term.

...some of it is sheer grift...

- **Sarasota Under Siege.** The governor again attempts to hand USF Sarasota-Manatee to the godfather - er, president - of New College.

...some of it targets the union...

- **Certification Wars.** UFF won yet another certification election overwhelmingly, this one at USF. So union-busting legislators now propose something else.

...and some it targets the universities' habit of making hiring decisions based on merit.

- **The Governors and International Faculty.** The Board of Governors is today considering a proposal to bar universities from hiring foreign citizens as faculty.

Meanwhile, something disturbing has been happening to USF.

- **Where Did All the Grad Students Go?** During the past seven years, the number of graduate students at USF has declined. There are several possible causes, and the Faculty Senate heard several proposals for addressing the issue.

Returning to attacks by the state, we again run our article on:

- **Government Relations.** Many legislators know only what the leadership and the lobbyists tell them. It's time they

heard from their constituents.

A lot of our problems can be traced by to legislators who only know what the leadership and lobbyists tell them. **The Legislature is in session now**, and the union would like UFF members to go to Tallahassee during this session and educate legislators. If you are interested, please fill out [this form](#).

This semester, most chapter meetings (including the meeting tomorrow) will be on USF Tampa in EDU 145.

Bargaining Session Friday, February 13, at 2 pm, on USF Tampa in the Patel Center in CGS 140. It is open to the public, and we **strongly** encourage everyone to come in person and support the home team. (But if you absolutely cannot come, here is [the link](#).) **Both teams will present responses to the other team's proposals.**

Collective Bargaining Agreement February 2026 Bargaining Session



Sessions are open to the public. We strongly encourage everyone to attend.

**Friday, February 13th
2pm**

**UFF USF Chapter meeting
precedes the negotiation:
noon in CGS 140**

**CGS 140
USF Patel Center**

UFF United University of
Faculty South Florida
of Florida Chapter



uff.ourusf.org

It's **541** Days Late

A new contract to succeed the current one should have been "tentatively agreed to" and ratified by the employees and the Board by **7 August 2024**. We are now down to a handful of articles. Don't just cross your fingers - come support the home team at the February 13 bargaining session, 2 pm on USF Tampa in the Patel Center in CGS 140.

EDues issues

If you are not paying dues, you are not a UFF member - and unless you are paying dues by check, you would be getting biweekly notices from FEA's computer about dues deductions. ***If you are not receiving FEA's receipts, you are not paying eDues.*** For assistance, [contact us](#).

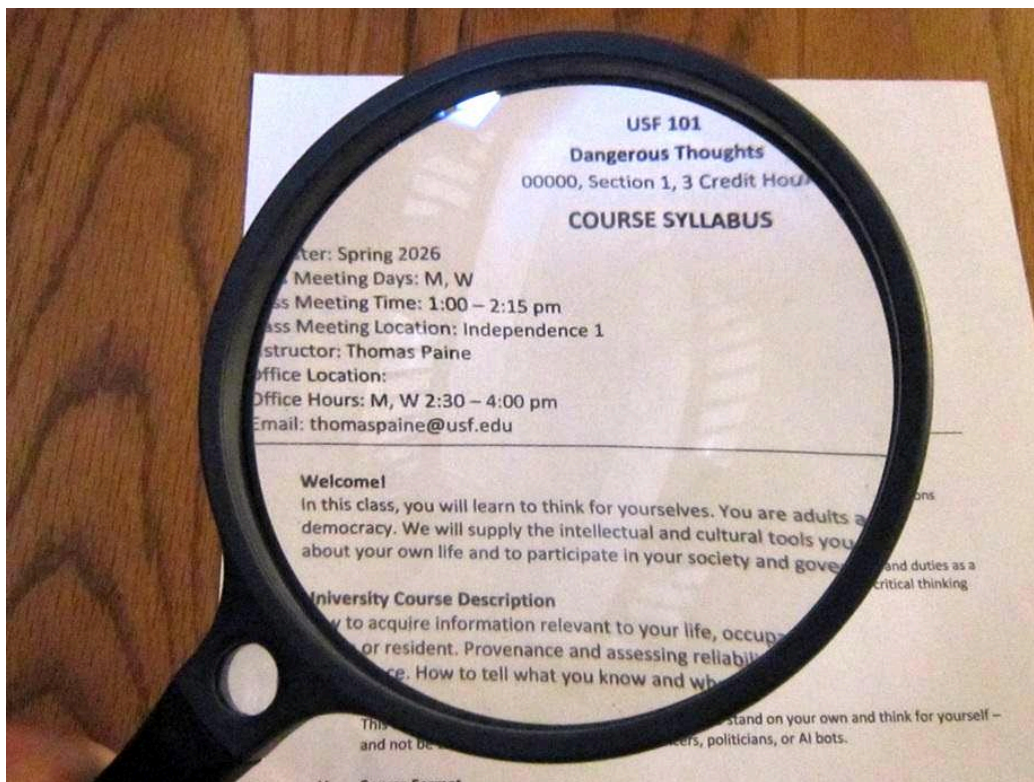
Chapter Meeting

Chapter Meeting Tomorrow Friday at 12 noon on USF Tampa in EDU 145, and on Zoom. On [the agenda](#): certification, USF Sarasota-Manatee v New College Florida, Graduate Enrollment, the chapter election, and more. And here are the [January 16 minutes](#). For those who cannot come in person, you can get a Zoom link by contacting [the chapter secretary](#).

Upcoming Events

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

- Today: State University System Board of Governors [Meeting](#) at Florida State University.
- Tomorrow, January 30 at 12:00 pm: Chapter Meeting on USF Tampa in EDU 145.
- February 4 at 2:30 pm: [Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting](#) on USF Sarasota / Manatee in C306.
- February 13 at 12:00 pm: Chapter Meeting on USF Tampa in CGS 140.
- February 13 at 2:00 pm: Bargaining Session on USF Tampa in CGS 140.
- February 17 9:00 am - 12:00 pm: USF Board of Trustees committee meetings: Academic & Campus Environment and Strategic Initiatives meetings.



The Syllabus Rule

Faculty are now required to submit their syllabi 45 days before a term begins. The State University System (SUS) Board of Governors, which oversees the twelve institutions within SUS (which includes USF) [passed the requirement unanimously](#) without discussion last fall. The [SUS rule](#) actually says, "Each university board of trustees shall adopt a regulation that..." but although the USF Board of Trustees does not appear to have adopted such a regulation, USF seems to be moving forward.

According to [the SUS description](#), "The amendment will provide greater transparency for students to make informed decisions as they select courses prior to registering." Given the difficulty getting students to read the syllabus *after* classes start, this is an implausible rationale. And the rule says that syllabi will be posted in a searchable database for review by political operatives - er - by the public and parents.

To facilitate searching sans AI hallucinations, USF is using a software product called [Simple Syllabus](#), a product of [Simple Higher Ed](#) that Google Gemini (probably the most commonly used AI) reports has "Administrative Value" in "maintaining compliance, managing, and centralizing course data" - although Google Gemini admits that for faculty, it can be slow, clunky, and labor intensive.

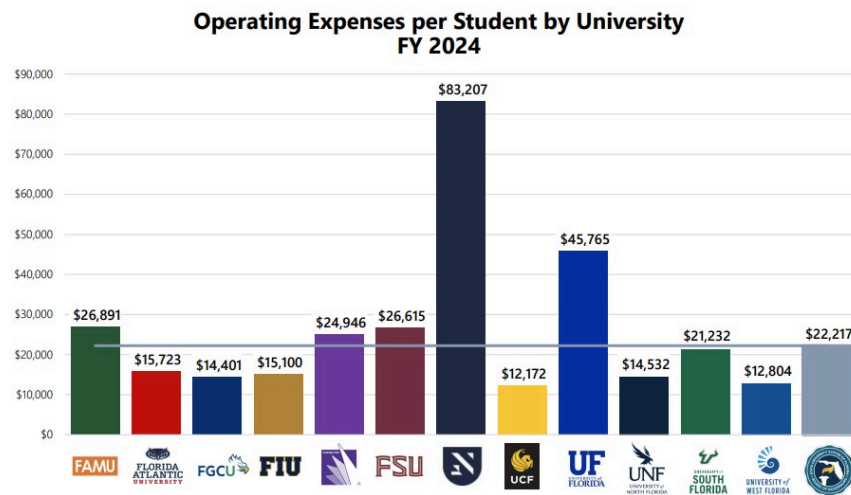
The union has multiple concerns. The 45-day requirement is going to cause a lot of grief. Faculty will be wrestling with slow, clunky, and labor intensive software. Political operatives will be

pouncing on syllabi and squawking about mangled quotes taken out of context. Frightened administrators will respond by demanding compliance with ... whatever. And in the end, students still won't read the syllabus.

At the moment, the union's options are limited, although we are watching things carefully. For the time being:

- We are told that syllabi can be changed mid-semester, so we recommend that each syllabus have a disclaimer that all items are subject to change.
- If anyone gets in trouble because of something in their syllabus, please contact our [Contract Enforcement Committee](#) asap. But remember, the union cannot represent a non-member in a grievance.

So [join today](#).



- Operating expenses per student calculated by dividing operating expenses for each university by its student enrollment
- There is a wide disparity in operating expenses per student among universities reflecting different levels of efficiency

Last November, the Florida Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE) [reported](#) that New College Florida was blowing vast amounts of money.

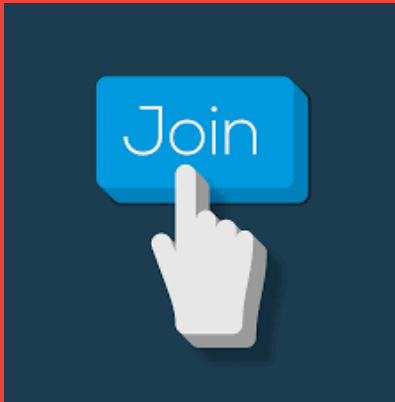
Sarasota Under Siege

Legislation to hand over the USF Sarasota-Manatee campus over to the New College Florida administration is in the legislative hopper.

It never got that far last year, and after the Florida DOGE's report on NCF's spending spree (see figure above), one would not expect that a state budget entitled [Focus on Fiscal Responsibility](#) would have, hidden away, a [conforming bill](#) handing the assets (and liabilities) of USF Sarasota-Manatee to the New College administration to play with.

This legislation would take effect once the governor signs it - if it gets that far. It provides for a teach-out for USF Sarasota-Manatee students and says that USF faculty should have access to necessary facilities during the teach-out, but otherwise does not mention faculty.

The proposal to hand over the USF Sarasota-Manatee campus to New College got a lot of opposition last year, and much of the community is still opposed. The conforming bill is before the Legislature this session, and if you have strong feelings about it, now is the time to share them with your legislator. For more on how to do this, see the article on Government Relations below.



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.

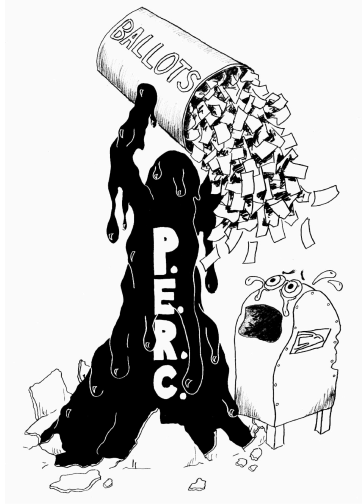
If you have difficulties with the eDues form, see the [instructions](#).

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](#).

Certification Wars

Readers may recall that the Public Employees Relations Commission (PERC) just conducted the second certification election for UFF USF. And [the vote](#) was 622 to 14 in favor of UFF representation. That's 97.8% in favor.



(If you did not get a ballot, or if you voted and your ballot was returned, [please let us know.](#))

For legislators who wanted to break the unions, this was unsatisfactory, so...

Representative [Jenna Persons-Mulicka](#) has proposed a bill entitled [Public Employees Relations Commission](#) (!) that would require that in future certification elections, a union would have to win supporting votes from **a majority of all employees in the bargaining unit - not just a majority of votes cast**. Since most employees sit out certification elections (ahem!), this is a neat way to get rid of annoying public employee unions.

This law almost certainly violates the Florida State Constitution, but the courts take years (UFF and its affiliates are litigating laws passed in 2023), so UFF and its affiliates focusing on this bill **NOW**. If you have an interest in educating legislators about the consequences of bad legislation, see the article on Government Relations below.

The Governors and the International Faculty

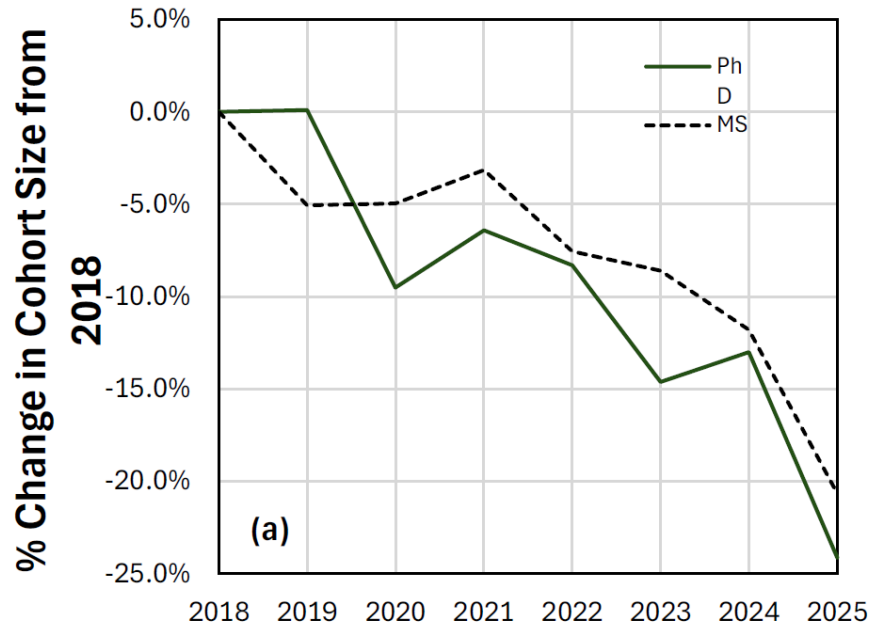
USF may be barred from hiring foreign faculty for a year.

The State University System Board of Governors is meeting at Florida State University today, and this morning at 10 am, the [Nomination and Governance Committee](#) will consider a motion to add "Each board of trustees shall not utilize the H-1B program in its personnel program to hire any new employees through January 5, 2027" (see page 5 in the [proposed draft](#)). This motion will likely surface at the main Board meeting. The [Public Notice of Intent](#) says that if approved, the amendment will be available for public comment for fourteen days. After that, the Board will decide what to do; its [next meeting](#) is on February 23.

Last fall, Governor Ron DeSantis visited USF and called on the Board to "[pull the plug](#)" on employees with H-1B visas, saying, "...it's a poor reflection on some of the decisions that some of these universities have made that they're trying to say they need an H-1B visa to do some of these jobs." But it's not a matter of need; search committees tend to select the most highly qualified

candidate, and some such candidates would need a H-1B visa to come here.

Evidently, the governor is not entirely committed to making personnel decisions based on merit. And ironically, the other amendment being considered today is: "Each board of trustees' personnel program must not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, or sex." But discriminating on the basis of nationality is apparently okay.



The chart above was composed from data from the USF Office of Decision Support. The data points denote the end-year data, and hence the data for 2025 is probably incomplete.

Where Did All the Grad Students Go?

USF is experiencing a multi-year decline in our masters and doctoral populations. This is a major challenge for our growing research enterprise, since these students perform much of the research that drives USF research growth. This decline spans USF and is not mirrored by state or national trends: it is a USF-level challenge that requires a full-institution response.

That is the first paragraph of a preliminary Report of the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Council on Graduate Recruiting, Retention, and Research, which was described in the last Faculty Senate meeting. The report highlight six "challenges":

- Mental health, especially social isolation.
- Financial stress, including housing.
- Career preparation and low job placement upon graduation.
- Graduate teaching and advising, including support for at-risk students.

- Graduate recruiting, which is currently ad hoc.
- Lack of data, an interesting problem considering the Administration's alleged obsession with metrics.

The report proposes several initiatives to address these challenges, some of which require more institutional infrastructure, and some of which would require a lot of faculty participation.

This is a serious problem, for it not only threatens our research enterprise, but as a major part of USF's mission is sending highly skilled professionals out to contribute to the community, this decline means that USF is not fulfilling a major component of our mission.

We are grateful to the Ad Hoc committee for bringing this problem to the attention of the USF community, and we hope that it will be addressed more seriously than, say, the longstanding faculty retention problem at USF. And we strongly recommend that the UFF USF Graduate Assistants United - which represents graduate assistants in bargaining and enforcing their contract - have a seat at this table.

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](#).

Government Relations

This year is an election year, so the Florida legislative session started two and a half weeks ago.

While UFF visits legislators during the session - and the UFF staff and officers invite UFF members to come join them during the session to help educate legislators about probable effects of bills already in the hopper - **the time to influence legislation is *while it is being composed*.** That means **NOW**.

The union is sending faculty to Tallahassee to talk to legislators during the current session. If you are a union member and are interested in going, please fill in [this form](#).

Meanwhile, the chapter's Government Relations Committee is seeking volunteers to visit their local legislators - and **legislators pay more attention to their own constituents.** If you are

interested in talking to Tampa Bay area legislators about higher education issues, contact [the chapter secretary](#). Thank you.

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

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](#).



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

We have a Facebook group: see [United Faculty of Florida at USE](#). 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 [chapter secretary](#).



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.

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!