

**UFF**

**Governance Documents**



**Constitution & Bylaws**

**As amended and approved on Sep. 9, 2018**

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1 UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA CONSTITUTION AND  
2 BYLAWS

3 **CONSTITUTION**

4  
5 **PREAMBLE**

6 We, the members of the United Faculty of Florida, have established this union in order  
7 to achieve certain objectives that are paramount to our individual and collective  
8 interests. Accordingly, the membership body shall be sovereign in all areas of  
9 organizational concern. Authority to represent member interests shall be delegated to  
10 the Senate and Steering Committee, which shall constitute the union's official governing  
11 units.  
12

13 **ARTICLE I. NAME**

14 **Section 1.** This organization shall be known as the United Faculty of Florida (UFF), which  
15 shall be an affiliate of the Florida Education Association (FEA), the National Education  
16 Association (NEA), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the American  
17 Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO).  
18

19 **ARTICLE II. OBJECTIVES**

20 **Section 1.** To bring faculty, professional employees and employed graduate students, of  
21 Florida's colleges and universities into - mutual assistance and cooperation in order to  
22 obtain for them the rights and privileges to which they are entitled.  
23

24 **Section 2.** To take appropriate action in order to safeguard rights guaranteed under the  
25 Constitutions of the United States of America and the State of Florida and to take  
26 appropriate political action that will promote the passage of progressive legislation,  
27 thereby improving the political, economic, and educational conditions of society.  
28

29 **Section 3.** To promote a democratization of the colleges and universities of Florida that  
30 will enable members to better serve the people of the State of Florida.  
31

32 **Section 4.** To achieve and safeguard due process and academic freedom.  
33

34 **Section 5.** To combat all forms of discrimination based on sex, age, disability, gender  
35 identity or expression, marital status, national origin, immigration status, political belief,  
36 race, color, religion, or sexual orientation in the colleges and universities of Florida and  
37 society.  
38

39 **Section 6.** To promote academic excellence in teaching, research, and community  
40 service in Florida's institutions of higher education.  
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42 **Section 7.** To strengthen the well-being of the people of Florida through research,  
43 teaching, and community service in Florida's institutions of higher education.

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**ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** Faculty, professional employees, employed graduate students, and staff in the public and private colleges and universities of the State of Florida, who are members of a UFF bargaining unit, shall be eligible for active membership in UFF except as otherwise provided in this Constitution and Bylaws. The right to vote and to hold elected office shall be limited to active members except as otherwise provided in the Constitution and Bylaws.

**Section 2.** No discrimination shall ever be shown toward members or applicants for membership because of sex, age, disability, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, immigration status, political belief, race, color, religion, or sexual orientation.

**Section 3.** UFF members shall be unified dues members of the FEA, NEA, AFT, and AFL-CIO.

**Section 4.** At-large membership shall be open to any person who is employed in higher education in Florida but who is not a member of a UFF collective bargaining unit. At-large members shall be eligible for all the benefits of membership, excluding holding elected office.

<sup>1</sup>

**Section 5.** Members who retire and who wish to retain their affiliation shall be eligible for retiree membership. Retiree members shall be eligible for all the benefits of membership, excluding holding elected office.<sup>2</sup>

**Section 6.** A member may only be removed from the rolls for failure to pay dues

**ARTICLE IV. CHAPTERS AND BARGAINING COUNCILS**

**Section 1.** The UFF Senate shall establish Chapters and Bargaining Councils.

**Section 2.** Each Chapter may adopt Constitution and Bylaws that are in addition to, but in conformity with, the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Faculty of Florida. Chapter officers shall be elected annually unless another term of office is specified in the Chapter Bylaws.

**Section 3.** Senators shall be organized into appropriate Councils as set forth in the Bylaws.

**ARTICLE V. OFFICERS**

**Section 1.** The membership shall elect biennially by open nomination and secret ballot a president and a first vice-president.

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<sup>1</sup> Defines at-large membership more clearly. Moved up.  
<sup>2</sup> Defines retiree membership more clearly.

85 **Section 2.** Each Bargaining Council shall annually elect a vice-president by open  
86 nomination and secret ballot, who may, but need not, be already a member of the UFF  
87 Senate. The appropriate Council shall fill vacancies.  
88

## 89 **ARTICLE VI. UFF SENATE**

90 **Section 1.** The UFF Senate shall be the union's official legislative body and shall consist  
91 of the president, the first vice-president, chapter presidents and senators elected in a  
92 manner presented in the Bylaws. Senators shall serve their terms as per their chapter  
93 bylaws. The Senate shall be apportioned on the basis of the total number of members in  
94 good standing at each Chapter<sup>3</sup> Composition of the senate should reflect the diversity  
95 of the membership of the union.<sup>4</sup>  
96

97 **Section 2.** The UFF Senate shall adopt a budget.  
98

99 **Section 3.** The UFF Senate shall have the power to interpret and enforce this  
100 Constitution and to make rules not in conflict with this Constitution.  
101

102 **Section 4.** The UFF Senate shall appoint such committees as it deems appropriate and not  
103 inconsistent with the Constitution.

104 **Section 5.** The UFF Senate shall have the power to carry out all business affairs of the  
105 United Faculty of Florida.  
106

107 **Section 6.** The UFF Senate shall establish procedures for periodically evaluating the  
108 union's goals and redirecting the resources of the union to achieve these goals.  
109

110 **Section 7.** The UFF Senate shall meet at its discretion or upon call by the president at  
111 least once a year.  
112

## 113 **ARTICLE VII. UFF STEERING COMMITTEE**

114 **Section 1.** The UFF Steering Committee shall consist of the president, the first vice-  
115 president, the vice-president of each bargaining council, the chairpersons of the  
116 Contract Enforcement, Government Relations, Diversity and Leadership Committee and  
117 Membership Committees, and the UFF members of the FEA Governing Board. The Chair  
118 of the Contract Enforcement Committee shall not vote on appeals from denial of  
119 arbitration. Composition of the Steering Committee should reflect the diversity of the  
120 membership of the union.  
121

122 **Section 2.** The Steering Committee shall prepare a budget for submission to the UFF  
123 Senate.  
124

125 **Section 3.** The Steering Committee shall be the UniServ Coordinating Council.  
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<sup>3</sup> Rewritten to conform to current practice

<sup>4</sup> Revised to make this more aspirational, as we do not have a mechanism for enforcing this  
– and we don't want to be in violation of our own constitution

127 **Section 4.** The Steering Committee shall have the authority to approve employment of  
128 staff.<sup>5</sup>

129  
130 **Section 5.** The Steering Committee shall have the authority to act for the UFF Senate  
131 between meetings of the Senate and shall report all actions to the Senate.

132  
133 **Section 6.** The President shall have the duty, authority and responsibility to investigate  
134 claims of chapter dysfunction. The Steering Committee shall have the authority based  
135 upon evidence presented, to place chapters in trusteeship for violation of the UFF  
136 Constitution and Bylaws; the Chapter's Bylaws; Florida Statutes, Chapter 447; the  
137 Federal Landrum-Griffin Act, Subchapter V, Section 481 (Terms of Office and Election  
138 Procedures); Subchapter VI, Section 501 (Fiduciary Responsibility of Officers of Labor  
139 Organizations); and/or for the purpose of assuring faithful and consistent performance  
140 of collective bargaining obligations and other duties as bargaining agent.

141  
142 **Section 7.** The Steering Committee shall meet at least once a quarter.

143  
144 **ARTICLE VIII. RECALL AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS**

145 **Section 1.** The recall of elected statewide officers shall be submitted to a vote by Senate  
146 action, by request of at least 20 percent of the UFF membership, by request of chapters  
147 representing at least three-fourths of UFF membership, or by at least one-half of the  
148 chapters. The UFF Senate shall ensure that ample opportunity be given for pro and con  
149 arguments to be presented to the membership and shall ensure that the membership  
150 has the opportunity to vote by a fair and secret ballot. A simple majority of those voting  
151 shall prevail.

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153 **Section 2.** Constitutional amendments shall be adopted by two-thirds vote of the  
154 Senate. Proposed amendments shall be mailed to all senators at least 30 days prior to  
155 the Senate meeting at which proposed action is to be taken.

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<sup>5</sup> Rewritten to conform to current practice.

157 **BYLAWS**

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159 **ARTICLE I. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

160 **Section 1.** The rules contained in *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern in  
161 all cases not covered by the Constitution and Bylaws.  
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163 **ARTICLE II. CHAPTERS, BARGAINING COUNCILS AND PRESIDENTS'**  
164 **COUNCILS**

165 **Section 1.** Chapters shall be established by the UFF Senate.  
166

167 **Section 2.** Bargaining Councils of senators shall be established by the UFF Senate.  
168 Bargaining Councils shall set legislative, bargaining, and other priorities in the area under  
169 their jurisdiction.  
170

171 **Section 3.** The Senate shall establish a Presidents' Council for each Bargaining Council,  
172 made up of the chapter presidents in that Council, or those chapter presidents'  
173 representatives, to facilitate dialogue on issues and matters confronting the union and its  
174 chapters. The vice presidents of the Bargaining Councils shall chair meetings of their  
175 respective Presidents' Council. The president of UFF shall chair collective meetings of the  
176 Presidents' Councils.  
177

178 **Section 4.** Presidents' Councils shall meet at least twice a year, . They prepare the  
179 agenda for their respective Bargaining Council meetings, shall work with the state  
180 leadership in establishing union priorities, and shall review union progress in the areas  
181 of membership, political action, contract enforcement, and other relevant areas.<sup>6</sup>  
182

183 **Section 5.** The Presidents' Council shall have the authority to act for their respective  
184 Bargaining Councils between meetings of the Bargaining Councils and shall report all  
185 actions to the Bargaining Councils.  
186

187 **ARTICLE III. DELEGATE SELECTION TO AFFILIATE**  
188 **ORGANIZATIONS**

189 **Section 1.** The president and president-elect and first vice-president and first vice-  
190 president-elect shall be delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly and the AFT  
191 convention. All other delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly and the AFT  
192 convention shall be elected biennially to two-year terms, in accordance with NEA and AFT  
193 Bylaws, respectively.  
194

195 **Section 2.** The president, president-elect, first vice president and first vice president-elect

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<sup>6</sup> Rewritten to conform to current practice

196 shall be delegates to the FEA Delegate Assembly. Remaining delegates shall be elected  
197 annually through elections in each chapter with the number of delegate seats to be elected  
198 by members of each chapter and by the at-large members determined by the membership  
199 count as of January 15. The delegate election process shall provide for open nominations  
200 and be conducted by secret ballot. The members receiving the highest numbers of votes  
201 shall be elected as delegates. Remaining nominees may serve as alternate delegates.  
202 Candidates for UFF senator or alternate senator may run concurrently for FEA delegate  
203 or alternate delegate. The number of FEA delegates per chapter shall be fixed at one for  
204 each 50 members or major portion thereof. The number of FEA alternate delegates shall  
205 be limited to the number of FEA delegates. In the event a chapter cannot send its allotted  
206 delegation to the FEA Delegate Assembly, alternate delegates from other chapters shall be  
207 selected by the UFF president, from the same bargaining council, if possible. FEA delegates  
208 and alternates must be elected and reported to UFF at least 30 days prior to the convening  
209 of the first session of the annual FEA Delegate Assembly. President shall select at large  
210 alternate delegates to reflect the diversity of the membership.

211  
212 **Section 3.** UFF members of the FEA Governance Board shall be elected in conjunction with  
213 the election of UFF officers. FEA Governance Board members shall be elected to two-year  
214 terms commencing on July 1 of odd-numbered years. <sup>7</sup>

215  
216 **Section 4.** In the event of a vacancy on the FEA Governance Board, a successor will be  
217 nominated and elected by the Steering Committee from the membership of the Senate  
218 prior to the next FEA Governance Board meeting. The person elected will serve for the  
219 period remaining in the existing term.

220  
221 **ARTICLE IV. DUTIES AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

222 **Section 1.** The president shall preside at all meetings of the UFF Senate and of the UFF  
223 Steering Committee. The president shall be an ex officio member of all committees, shall  
224 sign all necessary documents and papers, shall represent the organization, shall  
225 coordinate and oversee the organization's programs and policies, as determined by the  
226 UFF Senate, shall make an annual report to the members, and shall convene special  
227 meetings of committees, councils, and Senates. The president shall be a member of the  
228 FEA Governance Board. In the event only one candidate has been nominated by the  
229 published nomination deadline, then that candidate shall be deemed elected by  
230 acclamation and no election by secret ballot of the membership is required.

231  
232 **Section 2.** The first vice-president shall represent the president when the president  
233 cannot be present and shall carry out the duties assigned by the president or the Senate.  
234 In the event of a vacancy in the office of the president, the first vice-president shall serve  
235 as the president for the period remaining in the existing term.

236  
237 **Section 3.** In the event of a vacancy in the office of first vice-president, a successor will be

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<sup>7</sup> Rewritten to conform to current practice



238 nominated and elected by the Steering Committee among Bargaining Council vice-  
239 presidents. The Senate will then confirm or elect the successor at its next regularly  
240 scheduled meeting. The person elected will serve for the period remaining in the existing  
241 term. In the event of a vacancy on the Bargaining Council vice-president, a successor will  
242 be nominated and elected by the Steering Committee. The Senate will then confirm or elect  
243 the successor at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The person elected will serve for  
244 the period remaining in the existing term.

245

246 **Section 4.** The vice-presidents selected by the Bargaining Councils shall preside at  
247 meetings of their respective Bargaining and Presidents' councils.

248

249 **Section 5.** By April 1 in odd-numbered years, the president and first vice-president shall  
250 be elected by open nomination and secret mail ballots of the UFF membership to  
251 congruent two-year terms commencing on July 1. The vice-presidents selected by the  
252 Bargaining Councils shall be elected by open nomination and secret ballot at the first  
253 meeting of the Bargaining Council after March 1 of each year and shall take office  
254 immediately upon election.

255

256 **Section 6.** Chapter presidents shall preside at all meetings of their respective chapters.  
257 They shall be ex officio members of all committees of their chapters and members of their  
258 respective Presidents' Council, shall sign all necessary documents and papers of their  
259 chapters, and shall represent their chapters within UFF.

260

261 **Section 7.** Elections for all statewide UFF offices and all delegates to the FEA  
262 Representative Assembly, the NEA Representative Assembly, and the AFT  
263 convention shall be by plurality vote.

264

## 265 **ARTICLE V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

266 **Section 1.** The UFF Executive Director shall be the chief administrative officer of the  
267 United Faculty of Florida and shall implement and carry out the union program of  
268 activities as determined by the UFF Senate and president.

269

## 270 **ARTICLE VI. UFF SENATE**

271 **Section 1.** The number of senators shall be fixed at one for each 25 members or a major  
272 portion thereof for each chapter, including the chapter president, who shall be a senator.  
273 The number of senators shall be determined by the membership on file as of January 15.  
274 Senators shall be elected by April 15 and shall take office by September 1. Every chapter  
275 shall have at least two senators regardless of membership.

276

277 **Section 2.** Each voting member of the Senate may carry the proxy of up to two other  
278 members of the Senate, provided that the members are from the same chapter. <sup>8</sup>

279

280 **Section 3.** Each chapter of UFF may elect as many alternates as senators and may send

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<sup>8</sup> Moved to Article VIII: Meetings

281 alternates to replace senators who do not attend.<sup>9</sup>

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## 283 **ARTICLE VII. UNION STANDING COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS**

284 **Section 1.** The following shall comprise the union's Standing Committees:

285

286 a) Contract Enforcement

287 b) Government Relations

288 c) Membership

289 d) Diversity and Leadership<sup>10</sup>

290 e) Credentials and Elections.<sup>11</sup>

291

292 **Section 2.** Committee chairs and members shall be nominated by the president and  
293 confirmed by the Senate biennially. In the event of a vacancy on any standing or special  
294 committees, the president will appoint an interim chair or members as needed. The senate  
295 will then confirm or elect successors at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

296

297 **Section 3.** The president may appoint special (ad-hoc) committees when needed.

298

299 **Section 4.** The Senate shall set forth the functions of all committees and councils and  
300 shall establish policies and procedures governing their operations.

301

302 **Section 5.** The UFF Senate shall be charged with ensuring that the committees are  
303 representative of the different regions of the state and represent university, college and  
304 graduate assistant members. Composition of these committees should reflect the  
305 diversity of the membership of the union.

306

## 307 **ARTICLE VIII. MEETINGS**

308 **Section 1.** The time and place of the Senate meetings shall be fixed by the Senate. All  
309 policy resolutions shall be referred to the Senate for consideration.

310

311 **Section 2.** Special Senate meetings of the UFF may be called by the president, by a majority  
312 of senators, or by a majority of the Steering Committee.

313

314 **Section 3.** Bargaining Council meetings may be called by a majority of the senators  
315 composing the Council, by the bargaining council vice presidents, or by the UFF  
316 president.

317

318 **Section 4.** Presidents' Councils shall meet in conformity with Article II, Section 4, of the  
319 Bylaws.

320

321 **Section 5.** Except when personnel matters and grievances are being considered,

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<sup>9</sup> deleted to conform to current practice

<sup>10</sup> Mandated by Senate vote

<sup>11</sup> Legal requirement

322 every member shall have the right to attend and participate in any meeting, including  
323 Senate, council, chapter, and Steering Committee meetings. Voting rights and rules of  
324 participation shall be in accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws and the  
325 recognized rules set forth in the manual of parliamentary procedure.<sup>12</sup>  
326

## 327 **ARTICLE IX. DUE PROCESS AND APPEALS**

328 **Section 1.** All subordinate bodies of the United Faculty of Florida (such as chapters,  
329 councils, etc.) and members thereof, shall be entitled to the right of appeal.  
330

331 **Section 2.** An initial appeal goes to the membership of the appropriate chapter or  
332 council for decision, to be taken at a membership meeting, in the case of a chapter.  
333

334 **Section 3.** If the appellant is dissatisfied with the decision rendered on the initial  
335 appeal, a written appeal may be filed within 30 days to the Steering Committee  
336 through the president. The Steering Committee also has the authority to take  
337 jurisdiction over an initial appeal that is not acted upon within 45 days after it has  
338 been submitted.  
339

340 **Section 4.** If the appellant is dissatisfied with the decision of the Steering Committee, it  
341 may be appealed to the UFF Senate whose decision shall be final and binding upon all  
342 parties of interest.  
343

344 **Section 5.** Only the chapter from which the grievance is filed may appeal to the UFF  
345 Steering Committee a decision by the Contract Enforcement Committee to not arbitrate a  
346 case. The Steering Committee decision shall be final.  
347

## 348 **ARTICLE X. AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**

349 **Section 1.** To carry out its commitment to affirmative action within the internal  
350 governance structures of the union, the UFF urges all members to commit themselves to  
351 selected balanced representation, with due regard to proportional representation of  
352 minorities and women.  
353

## 354 **ARTICLE XI. DUES**

355 **Section 1.** Regular dues shall be one percent of regular salary for members of those  
356 chapters that are bargaining agents or part of larger units for which the United  
357 Faculty of Florida is the bargaining agent or for those members serving as executive  
358 officers of UFF, FEA, AFT or NEA. Regular dues shall include the dues of FEA, AFT and  
359 NEA.  
360

361 **Section 2.** Dues for members of UFF who are not members of bargaining units shall be \$45  
362 plus the cost of FEA, AFT and NEA dues. This amount shall be raised each year by the  
363 average increase in salary for UFF members as determined by the UFF Senate. Dues for  
364 Life UFF Retired members shall be \$100 plus FEA, AFT and NEA life dues.

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<sup>12</sup> edited to clarify members' rights

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366 **ARTICLE XII. AMENDMENT**

367 **Section 1.** Proposed amendments shall be mailed to all senators at least 30 days prior  
368 to the Senate meeting at which proposed action is to be taken. A majority of the  
369 membership as represented by the senators voting shall be sufficient to adopt the  
370 amendment.