



UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA

SEPTEMBER RECAP NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 30 2021



Pictured: Deandre Poole and Nicole Morse of UFF-FAU.

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Public Protests

Our chapters at FAU, UF, FSU-GAU, and UNF have held public protests for safer COVID working and learning conditions. FIU, USF, and other chapters have presented signed petitions to their administrations, while more have formed COVID Action Committees to take further action, such as distributing masks on campus. Overall, our chapters are actively advocating for your health and safety as members of this union.

See pictures of the joint UF/UF-GAU rally [here](#), published in *The Independent Florida Alligator*.



Pictured: UFF-UF and UF-GAU members and leaders

Statewide Actions

In early September, UFF engaged in a Public Records Request Storm, during which we submitted requests to over two dozen higher education campuses, Gov. DeSantis, the Florida Board of Education, and the Florida Board of Governors, seeking information about formal restrictions on COVID reopening policies on Florida's higher education campuses. As a follow-up, we sent a cease and desist letter to the Florida Board of Governors, telling them to stop interfering in local health and safety bargaining efforts.

Read our press release on these actions [here](#).

Public Statements

Since the beginning of August, our local and statewide leaders have given dozens of interviews to a variety of news outlets on topics covering COVID reopening policies, UFF's lawsuit against the "Viewpoint Discrimination" Law (HB 233), our statewide Public Records Request campaign, and more.

You can keep up with all of UFF's media coverage [here](#).



Pictured: FSU-GAU, FSU, and FAMU-GAU members and leaders

The "Viewpoint Discrimination" Lawsuit

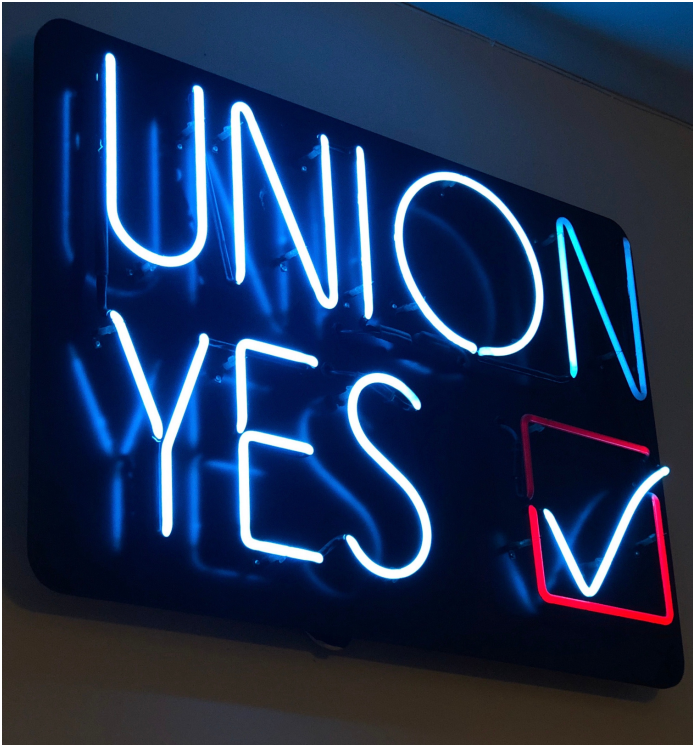
UFF's lawsuit against the state regarding HB 233, the "Viewpoint Discrimination" Law, is still moving through federal court in the Northern District of Florida. While the state has submitted a motion to dismiss, we feel confident in our rebuttal, and we look forward to fighting this law in court in the coming months.

You can read the original filing, as well as our rebuttal to the motion to dismiss, [here](#).

UFF Senate Recap

The September 2021 UFF Virtual Senate Meeting was held Saturday, Sept. 18 – Sunday, Sept. 19, with almost 150 Senators and leaders in attendance. This session's UFF Senate resolutions include a statement and policy of support for abused international graduate students, a recommendation for local chapters to undertake mask distribution campaigns, and a statement of collective support for the College for All Act. To read these resolutions, please click [here](#).

By an overwhelming majority, the Senate voted to hold its February 2022 Session entirely virtual. New registration policies, governing rules, and other updates will be announced later this year.



Legislative Update

Even though it's only September, the Florida Legislature is already active, with its first Committee Week being held Sept. 20–24. UFF has again filed the “Grad Assistant Fee Waiver” bill, and we are seeking support for a repeal of HB 233’s language around student recordings, anti-shielding measures, and viewpoint diversity surveys. Bad bills we are currently tracking are HB 6007 “Guns on Campus” and two anti-critical race theory bills, HB 57 and SB 242.

State Committee Updates

Leadership, Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity

The Leadership, Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity (LEID) Committee is promoting an NEA-endorsed event on George Floyd’s birthday at 3 p.m. EDT Thursday, Oct. 14. In addition, The African American Policy Forum is holding a National Teach-In to discuss the impact of attacks on critical race theory in higher ed.

You can register for this event [here](#).

The committee also had a successful first book club initiative, with over 30 participants and eight facilitators from UFF leadership. We sponsored a survey, and many participants found the book club inspiring. If you'd like to attend future LEID events, please contact uff@floridaea.org.

Government Relations

The Government Relations Committee has recently launched its HERO (Higher Education Regional Outreach) Teams, and we already have almost 40 volunteers signed up to contact their legislators in support of our union. In the HERO program, UFF leaders in the same geographical region join together to support one another in legislative work across campuses. With this program, we're putting the "collective" back in collective action!

If you'd like to join a UFF HERO Team, please sign up today! We're always looking for new participants, and you don't need any previous experience to get involved. We will meet you where you are and find an action that matches your available time commitment. Sign up [here](#), and join your colleagues today as we fight for higher education in the Florida Legislature.

The UFF Steering Committee

The UFF Steering Committee is chaired by the UFF president and composed of the UFF first vice president, the four Bargaining Council vice presidents, the chairs of the four standing statewide committees, and the two FEA Governance Board seats. Each of these positions is either elected by UFF members or confirmed by the UFF Senate body.

In its September meeting, the committee adopted a notice and guest attendance policy for those who would like to attend a Steering Committee meeting. You can read this policy [here](#).

Contract Enforcement

The UFF Contract Enforcement Committee (CEC) decides on whether the union will take grievance cases to arbitration, and chapters may appeal its decisions to the Steering Committee for final review.

The CEC would like to welcome its two new members: Carolynne Gischel from FGCU and Jordan Lenchitz from FSU-GAU. A special thanks also goes out to Ben Serber, formerly of FSU-GAU, who has since taken a full-time union staff position in North Dakota.

Membership

Would you like to be involved with enabling local leaders to grow membership in their home chapters? The Statewide Membership Committee has a place for you! Learn how to strategize and lead trainings that empower your local members and contribute to the success of the UFF 10K Membership Challenge.

Become a committee member today by contacting committee co-chair Angel Jimenez at uff@floridaea.org



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As your UFF statewide officers, we thank you for being a member of UFF. Every day, because of members and leaders like you, our union is able to advocate for faculty rights across the state, from campus offices all the way to the Florida Legislature. What we achieve, we achieve together through the power of collective action and the unshakable conviction of member solidarity.

Please feel free to contact us at any time. We are here to serve and support you.



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