

UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA

2023 Legislative Session - Week 6



Pictured: Matthew Lata, UFF-FSU President, speaking against SB 266 at the Senate Education Appropriations Committee. Go Matthew!

TAKE ACTION!

[Click here](#) to oppose SB 266 by telling all of the members of the Senate Fiscal Policy committee to vote NO when the bill comes before them.

HB 999 is still stalled in committee due to our advocacy. Continue to take action against the bill [here](#).

This Week in Tallahassee

This week, SB 266—the Senate companion to HB 999—was heard in the Senate Education Appropriations Committee. As part of this hearing, the bill received a "strike all" amendment that changed several of its key features around diversity, hiring, and tenure:

- post-tenure review returns to every five years—there is no longer a requirement that post-tenure review can occur at any time for cause.
- funding for diversity, equity, and inclusion programs (DEI) is no longer banned.
- hiring of faculty is no longer in the hands of the Boards of Trustees; instead, hiring will be overseen by the president, the president's executive team, and/or the college deans.

While some of these changes were good, as is usual with the Florida Legislature, every good idea comes paired with several that are worse. UFF still maintains the following concerns about SB 266, even in its amended form:

- faculty input is not a required part of the hiring process.
- universities and colleges are banned from providing funding to groups, programs, events, or other activities that engage with Critical Race Theory (CRT); general education courses are ideologically restricted.

- Faculty are banned from "distorting" historical events in curriculum, with no clear explanation of what counts as a distortion or who gets to make that distinction.
- Decisions regarding "evaluations, promotions, tenure, discipline, or termination" can no longer be grieved or arbitrated, sending all such disputes directly into costly court battles.
- Accreditation boards may not enforce rules around tenure, academic freedom, or diversity if they conflict with state law, which will generate an immediate accreditation crisis in program, degree, and institutional accreditation.

This bill still has one remaining stop in the Fiscal Policy committee. **Please take a moment today and tell the committee to vote NO on SB 266.**



Pictured: Eric Scarffe, President of UFF-FIU, testifying about how SB 266 is already harming higher education in Florida.



Pictured: UFF-FSU member Robin Goodman speaking truth to power about SB 266. She even invited legislators to attend her class!

Transition to eDues

This week, **HB 1445** passed through its final committee stop, which means it will go to the House Floor for final vote soon. HB 1445 is the anti-union and anti-freedom bill that will require most public sector unions to maintain 60% density and remove the ability to deduct dues from employer payroll. We expect that this bill will be signed by Gov. DeSantis as early as next week, so we need UFF members to begin the transition to FEA and UFF's proprietary eDues system.

Over the next few weeks, all UFF members will receive an email invitation to join eDues from centralmemberssystem@floridaea.org. This email will contain all of the information you need to join this secure system.

There is no need to end your local dues deduction, as new dues deductions will not begin until after July 1st. However, if you have any questions or need extra help with signing up, you can join one of two weekly opportunities to get any support you need!

Every Monday from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, UFF will host statewide Zoom eDues Office Hours, where members can receive one-on-one assistance with signing up for the eDues system. **Join here!**

Every Friday, from 3:00 - 4:00pm, UFF is hosting Fight Back Friday townhalls, where all members can receive eDues instructions and work on local organizing plans to help their colleagues join this safe and secure system. **Register here!**