

**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Contact:**

Andrew Gothard, UFF President, [andrew.gothard@floridaea.org](mailto:andrew.gothard@floridaea.org)

Candi Churchill, UFF Executive Director, [candi.churchill@floridaea.org](mailto:candi.churchill@floridaea.org)

**SB 266 Will Cause Irreversible Harm  
to Florida’s Higher Education System**

Today, the Florida House passed SB 266, sending the bill to Gov. DeSantis’s desk for signature. While the bill’s supporters have claimed that it will provide “accountability” to Florida’s colleges and universities, SB 266 is in fact another unconstitutional attack upon the freedoms of Florida’s students to learn and faculty’s rights to teach—freedoms that are undermined by state-sponsored indoctrination and control.

Make no mistake, despite efforts to paint the bill as substantially less aggressive than its companion HB 999, SB 266 will—

- Ban courses, books, and programs that discuss or research oppression of groups in US history and culture because the state would rather white-wash our past than face it and learn from it.
- Defund programs, faculty teaching and research lines, and student support programs that do not align with Gov. DeSantis’s extremist ideology around diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Compel faculty speech regarding the teaching of American history and ban statements or publications that run afoul of state ideology.
- Dramatically limit what can be taught in general education courses, restricting students from being able to explore topics and fields that are disfavored by the Gov. and his Republican colleagues.
- Exclude faculty expertise in the hiring process, lest a faculty member who does not advance state-sponsored ideology be hired to teach Florida’s students.
- Block faculty unions from enforcing contracts and working conditions through the grievance and arbitration process, in direct violation of the Florida Constitution.
- Block funding for student groups who express ideas that are contrary to state ideology.
- Turn non-partisan colleges and programs—such as the Florida Institute of Politics—into partisan indoctrination factories that support only the state’s favored political viewpoint.
- Intimidate accrediting bodies into no longer enforcing protections around academic freedom and equal access, in order to allow greater state control of curriculum and culture across Florida’s colleges and universities.

In short, SB 266 is a key example of how Gov. DeSantis and his supporters in the legislature have decided that the state has the right to control and compel viewpoints in higher education classrooms across the state. UFF stands opposed to this fundamental attack upon the freedoms of all Floridians, and we call on all organizations—public and private, whether in education or otherwise—to stand with us.

**The Higher Education Affiliate of Florida Education Association, National Education Association,  
American Federation of Teachers, and AFL-CIO**