

UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA

2023 Legislative Session - Week 9



Pictured: Representative Anna Eskamani advocating for higher education during debate on SB 266.

TAKE ACTION!

We have now reached the end of the 2023 Florida Legislative Session! Thank you to all those who testified in Tallahassee, attended our weekly Power Hour events, called or emailed your legislators, hosted teach-ins and other awareness events, or otherwise supported your colleagues at home and across the state. Solidarity forever!

This Week in Tallahassee

After weeks of advocacy on both sides of the issue, SB 266 passed the House on Wednesday and is now headed to Governor's desk for signature. Our members should be incredibly proud of our work on this bill. Because of our phone calls, emails, testimony before committee, and other activities, HB 999 (the much worse companion to SB 266) died on the House floor, and we were able to strip from 266 the requirements for post-tenure review at any time, lessen the restrictions on DEI funding, limit the attacks on curriculum, and more. That said, SB 266 remains unconstitutional in the way it compels faculty speech, restricts student speech, and undermines the right to collectively bargain our working conditions. **Learn more in this linked press release from UFF President Andrew Gothard.**

On Tuesday, House members voted to lay HB 1335 on the table, meaning it is effectively dead for this session. Moreover, the Senate version of this bill, SB 264, now contains a carve-out for Chinese international faculty and GAs who wish to purchase property in Florida, meaning they will not be barred from buying homes under this legislation. These are major victories for our international members who would be directly harmed by the xenophobia in this bill! To provide further support, you can still **sign this petition in solidarity.**

Not sure who to contact? Find your locally elected legislator [here!](#)

Sine Die (Finally!)

Every year, the Florida Legislative Session lasts for nine weeks, at the end of which both bodies adjourn Sine Die, or roughly meaning "indefinitely." While the legislature can choose to extend the session to complete further business, that extension must be narrowly tailored to specific issues, and it operates under roughly the same rules as a special session. We currently have no expectation that the current session will be extended.

Any bills that have not been passed in both chambers by the end of the session fall to the floor, meaning they are cancelled for that session. Bills that have been passed in both chambers go to the governor's desk for signature. Gov. DeSantis has already signed some bills, such as those that restrict abortion rights and provide the right to carry a concealed without a permit—both of which he signed under the cover of night due to their broad unpopularity among Floridians. Currently, UFF and FEA are waiting for his signature on SB 256 (this year's anti-union bill) and SB 266 (the anti-higher education bill).

Unless otherwise stated in the legislation, all Florida laws (excluding the budget) go into effect on July 1 of that year.



Pictured: Representative Lindsay Cross speaking in support of SB 266 amendments that would protect collective bargaining.

Transition to eDues

While we wait for signatures on the two major bills that we have focused on this session, UFF is not standing idly by. We are taking action! As of today, over 1900 members or—23% of our total membership—have signed up for eDues! Let's keep that momentum going, since the higher our percentage goes on eDues, the more power we have to protect our colleges and universities.

Joining is simple! Search your email inbox for your eDues invitation from the following email address: **centralmemberssystem@floridaea.org**. This digital invitation will contain all of the information you need to join this secure system. On average, it takes a member less than three minutes to sign up. If you can't find it, email your local chapter!

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, you can join one of two weekly opportunities to get any support you need!

Every Monday from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm, UFF hosts 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!](#)**