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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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United Faculty of Florida Statement in Response to Governor DeSantis' DOGE Initiative

The United Faculty of Florida (UFF) is deeply concerned about Governor Ron DeSantis' Executive Order 25-44, which mandates the identification and elimination of so-called “inefficiencies” within Florida’s State University System and Florida College System. His recently announced "Department of Government Efficiency" (DOGE) initiative unduly targets our state's respected colleges and universities with intense scrutiny and unwarranted micromanagement.

Florida’s higher education system has consistently been ranked as the best in the nation, demonstrating exemplary outcomes, excellent efficiency, and widespread student success. Our universities are world-renowned hubs of research, innovation, and educational excellence, directly contributing to the state’s economy and national prominence.

The DOGE team’s intrusive demands—detailing budgets, staffing, academic courses, facilities, research centers, and particularly the progress on shuttering Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives—clearly signals a politically motivated move to undermine academic autonomy, faculty rights, and institutional integrity. These programs, often misunderstood by political interests, are essential for fostering an environment of inclusion, innovation, and competitive academic inquiry, benefiting students and the broader Florida community alike.

This initiative, under the guise of efficiency, places an unnecessary and potentially detrimental administrative burden on university and college leadership, diverting critical resources from their core educational missions. Moreover, it unjustly infringes upon academic freedom and institutional independence, qualities integral to the long-standing success and national recognition of Florida’s higher education system.

If Governor DeSantis and his administration are serious about efficiency, they should start by ensuring our colleges and universities are properly funded to attract and retain world-class faculty, maintain academic excellence, and serve the needs of students across all disciplines. Rather than being recognized as vital engines of economic growth and innovation, our higher education institutions have been treated as an expense to be minimized. We believe they are an investment to be protected.

UFF firmly believes in accountability and transparency. However, we strongly oppose politically charged campaigns thinly disguised as efficiency audits, particularly those that aim to suppress academic freedoms and inclusivity programs. Real accountability means providing faculty, students, and staff the resources and support to continue delivering exceptional education, not enforcing compliance with ideologically driven mandates.

Only by safeguarding these values can we maintain our position as the nation's leading higher education system and continue to effectively serve the students and communities of Florida. Together, we can push back. Together, we can defend democracy. Together, we will defend the dignity of our profession and the integrity of our institutions.

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The United Faculty of Florida represents over 25,000 faculty at all 12 public universities, 15 colleges and Saint Leo University, along with graduate assistants at four universities.