

Remarks on Collective Bargaining for Faculty Senate  
January 21, 2009  
By Jack Fiorito, Senator and UFF-FSU President

Since December's Senate:

- UFF-FSU faculty teams have met twice with Provost Abele and other Administration/BOT representatives in "President Consultations" and once with the Administration/BOT's bargaining team
- The UFF-FSU faculty bargaining team has held two lengthy caucuses
- We've conducted a very brief poll of faculty (about 400 responded) on possible responses to budget cuts (results available at [www.uff-fsu.org](http://www.uff-fsu.org))
- The Administration/BOT notified our UFF-FSU Chapter that faculty will be laid off as a result of budget cuts
- New collective bargaining agreements have been printed (at last!) and are being distributed by faculty volunteers (copies are available in the lobby)
- Our UFF-FSU Chapter formed a legislative action committee to explore ways to change the Florida legislature's higher education budget-cutting tendencies

At bargaining and consultation sessions we've discussed a wide range of issues, including faculty awards, new non-tenure track faculty classifications, campus safety, bicycle commuter tax benefits, child care, campus mail, web-based student evaluations of instruction, Senate and UFF roles, discretionary salary increases, and of course, budget matters.

Budget matters and coping with them have unsurprisingly been the main focus in our recent sessions. We have been assured that the Special Session's cuts will not require faculty layoffs, but that the upcoming regular Legislative Session will likely necessitate up to 150 faculty layoffs. We expect upcoming sessions to focus on ways to avoid layoffs, and we will probably impose on faculty once again for their views on some options, but in more specific terms than our December poll. We have made significant information requests to the Administration/BOT so that we can obtain the most informed input possible from faculty and make the best possible decisions for faculty.

I would like to encourage Senators, and all faculty, to "mentally step back" from the budget gloom and doom for just a moment. A fundamental thread in all this is that our UFF-FSU Chapter will continue to push for faculty input and fairness. These are difficult times, but we must not let budget difficulties be used to undercut faculty voice on academic matters in the Senate nor on employment matters in bargaining. I urge you to support and work for a stronger faculty voice in both arenas.

With that in mind, I want to extend a special invitation to all Senators to attend the luncheon tomorrow featuring Professor Dan Clawson (UMass-Amherst), who will lead a discussion on "American Universities Under Attack: Whose Vision Will Prevail?" Lunch will be provided by the UFF-FSU Chapter. Please join the discussion and encourage your colleagues to attend. That's 12:30pm tomorrow, Room 203 Student Services Building. Hope to see you there!

Questions? Thank you.