

Constitution of the UNF Chapter of United Faculty of Florida

ARTICLE I

Name

This organization shall be known as the University of North Florida (UNF) Chapter of the United Faculty of Florida (UFF).

ARTICLE II

Objectives

Section 1. To bring faculty employees of the University into a relationship of mutual assistance and cooperation in order to obtain and maintain the rights and privileges bestowed upon faculty by: the Collective Bargaining Agreement as ratified by both UNF-UFF and the UNF Board of Trustees; the Constitution of the State of Florida; the UNF Constitution; UNF Board of Trustees governing policies; the UNF Faculty Association bylaws; and policies and traditions of UNF.

Section 2. To promote democratic joint governance and mutual support at the University, enabling members of the UNF community to better serve the students, faculty, and administration of UNF, and ultimately the people of the State of Florida.

Section 3. To achieve and safeguard due process and academic freedom for all instructional personnel, researchers, and those engaged in implementing the curricular missions of the university.

Section 4. To combat all forms of illegal discrimination, contract violations, mistreatment, and failures to ensure basic fairness in the operations of UNF for the members of UFF.

Section 5. To achieve open dialog and good working relations between UNF-UFF and the UNF administration, and to facilitate communication between the administration and faculty.

Section 6. To actively promote and respect the rights of all members via discussion and dispute resolution within the provisions of the unit's Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 7. To embrace all forms of human diversity. No discrimination shown toward members, applicants for membership, nor any other member of the UNF community, shall be tolerated.

ARTICLE III

Membership

Section 1. Active Membership. All faculty and professional employees holding classifications listed in Appendix A of the 2014-2017 Collective Bargaining Agreement between the UNF Board of Trustees and UNF-UFF shall be eligible for active membership. Active members are those who have joined the UNF-UFF Chapter and are up to date on dues payments. The right to vote and to hold elective office shall be limited to active members, except as otherwise provided in the Constitution and Bylaws.

Section 2. Eligibility for membership. No person employed in a position listed in Appendix A may be barred from membership, except for those who: (A) are convicted of a felony, (B) fail to pay dues, (C) misappropriate, embezzle, or improperly use UNF-UFF funds, (D) violate a Federal or state labor laws, (E) accept contributions from representatives of the employer, (F) engage in collusion with the employer to the detriment of UNF-UFF or its members, and (G) engage in other forms of improper conduct as specified in the Chapter Bylaws.

Section 3. Non-voting membership. Upon individual approval by the Chapter Council, nonvoting membership shall be open to any person who is interested in advancing the cause of higher education but is not eligible for active membership.

ARTICLE IV

Officers and Chapter Council

Section 1. The membership shall elect by secret ballot four Officers: a President, a VicePresident, a Secretary, a Treasurer. In addition, the membership shall elect the appropriate number of Senators and Alternate Senators as determined by the United Faculty of Florida state Bylaws. All of these Officers, Senators, and Alternate Senators must be full-time dues paying employees and remain full dues-paying members during the periods of nomination, election,

and terms of service. All Officer, Senator, and Alternate Senator positions shall have a term of one year.

Section 2. The Chapter Council shall be composed of the elected Officers and Senators, the appointed grievance representative, the appointed negotiation representative, as well as the appointed chairs of the standing committees.

Section 3. Vacancies in the office of an elected Officer or Senator shall be filled within 30 days of the occurrence by the President, with the consent of a majority of the Chapter Council.

ARTICLE V

Affiliations

Section 1. The United Faculty of Florida shall maintain affiliation with the Florida Education Association and the National Education Association and their constituent affiliations.

Section 2. The chapter shall consider affiliation with other groups having purposes similar to the objectives of UFF.

ARTICLE VI

Referenda, Recall, and Due Process

Proposed actions, including amendments to the Constitution and recall of elected officers, shall be submitted to a referendum vote by order of 2/3 the Chapter Council or by petition of at least 20% of the members. The Chapter Council shall ensure that ample opportunity is given for any arguments to be communicated to the membership and shall ensure that the membership has the opportunity to vote by a fair and, if requested, secret ballot. The majority vote of the membership shall be enforced by the highest remaining Officer or longest tenured Senator.

ARTICLE VII

Amendment

This constitution may be amended as follows: A proposed amendment shall be distributed to all members at least 30 days prior to a vote. A Constitutional amendment shall be adopted by 2/3 of the vote cast. The vote may be held either at a membership meeting or by secure electronic vote over two consecutive days when classes are in session.

Ratification of Constitution

This Constitution shall take effect immediately after a vote by fair ballot by the majority of active members approves ratification. The vote may be held either at a membership meeting or by secure electronic vote over two consecutive days when classes are in session.

ARTICLE VIII

Chapter Bylaws

Activities not directly addressed by the UNF-UFF Constitution will be conducted according to the Chapter Bylaws.

BYLAWS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH FLORIDA (UNF) CHAPTER OF THE UNITED FACULTY OF FLORIDA (UFF)

(revised March 2017)

ARTICLE I

Rules of Order

Section 1. Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern in all cases not covered by the Chapter Constitution or Bylaws.

ARTICLE II

Committees

Section 1. The Standing Committees shall be:

- (1) Grievance Committee
- (2) Membership Committee
- (3) Communications Committee
- (4) Nominations and Elections Committee
- (5) Bargaining Team

Section 2. The President will appoint the chairpersons and membership of each standing committee. Each UNF college and the library should be represented on the Chapter Council. In making appointments, the President should give due consideration to the representation for each college as a result of general elections. If it is not possible to obtain the desired diversity of representation in a particular year, members from the neglected unit should be sought for

committee membership in that year, and efforts should be made the next year to obtain Council representation from the unit in question.

Section 3. The President may create special, temporary committees when needed and appoint members as appropriate to the committee tasks. These will not alter the quorum needed to conduct business at Chapter Council meetings. They will terminate one year after formation, unless renewed for a second year by the President.

ARTICLE III

Duties of Officers and Chapter Council

Section 1. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Chapter and of the Chapter Council. He or she shall be an ex officio member of all committees, shall sign all necessary documents and papers, and represent the organization. The President shall make an annual written report to the membership including the number of members, a summary of the financial status of the Chapter, and an outline of the year's major efforts and outcomes. He or she will make the recommendations for course releases for the chapter as needed to maximize the benefits of these resources to unit success. At the conclusion of the President's term of office, the President will serve in an advisory role to the Chapter Council as Immediate Past President for the period of one year.

Section 2. When the President cannot be present, the Vice President shall represent the President and shall exercise those duties prescribed by the President or the Chapter Council. In the event of a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President shall serve as President for the period remaining in the existing term. Typically, the Vice President will be consulted for all major decisions made by the President.

Section 3. The Secretary shall maintain records of the Chapter Constitution, Bylaws, and minutes of all the meetings of the Chapter Council. He or she should also maintain records of consultations with the administration. The Secretary shall schedule monthly meetings of the Chapter Council at a time and place that promotes the greatest attendance and participation. In the event the President and Vice President positions are vacant simultaneously, the Secretary should promptly convene a meeting of the membership to fill the vacant posts.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall be the chief financial officer of the Chapter, and shall exercise supervision over the receipt and disbursement of all monies, properties, securities, and other evidence of financial worth of this organization. The Treasurer shall prepare an annual budget and make regular financial reports to the Chapter Council. The Treasurer shall co-sign (with the President) all financial reports.

Section 5. The Senators shall represent the Chapter at the statewide UFF Senate meetings. Senators serve as voting members of the Chapter Council and provide leadership, directions, and guidance to the President and other officers. The Senators shall submit to the Chapter Council a composite report on the proceedings of each State Senate meeting, due at the next scheduled meeting of the Council. A lesser number of representatives must be selected for the annual Representative Assembly of the Florida Education Association (FEA) and the Representative Assembly of the National Education Association (NEA). When a Senator, or FEA / NEA representative is unable to attend, he / she shall recommend to the President an Alternate Senator to represent the Chapter at the meetings.

Section 6. The Chapter Council shall adopt an annual budget and administer the policies of the Chapter. The Chapter shall regularly notify the membership of its actions.

Section 7. The Chapter Council shall have the power to employ persons on full or part-time basis, as long as the Chapter remains in good financial standing. The Council shall create and approve the position. It shall also identify a person to recommend for hiring to the President.

Section 8. Non-attendance at three consecutive meetings, or <50% attendance during any 12month period, of the Chapter Council by members of the Council may result in their replacement. Any officer or committee chair that fails to respond to e-mail and voice messages for a period of two weeks may result in their replacement, unless the person has notified the Council of extended travel plans. For purposes of a quorum, members may designate a proxy from the group of Alternate Senators for a specific meeting. Council members may not use proxies to fulfill the attendance requirement.

ARTICLE IV

Duties of the Standing Committees

Section 1. All committees shall be under the direction of the President and they shall issue reports to the President and the Chapter Council at each monthly meeting. Each committee should meet monthly, in addition to the regular Chapter Council meetings.

Section 2. The Grievance Committee shall support members in both informal disputes and formal grievances. All members are eligible for grievance support unless sanctioned for improper conduct or are no longer eligible for membership. The members of the Grievance Committee must be properly trained in how to process grievances, and this training can be obtained through the state office. This committee shall meet regularly to discuss the pending cases, solicit the member's ideas, and determine whether each new case has sufficient merit as

an informal dispute or formal grievance. When supporting grievants, UFF shall proceed under the mantra “innocent until proven guilty”. The committee shall maintain sufficiently trained individuals to serve as ombudsmen in the initial investigation of complaints. It shall also keep sufficiently trained individuals to serve as grievance officers that advise the Chapter Council, advise grievants, represent the grievant in all proceedings, and assist grievants in the preparation of appropriate documents and exhibits needed to process grievances through the appropriate vehicles. The committee will supervise and keep records of all grievance proceedings.

Great care must be taken to avoid giving the impression a grievant is being “sold out,” meaning substantive discussions have been held behind closed doors, excluding the grievant or other concerned parties. If evidence of improper contact is established, either the grievance committee, a member of the grievance committee, or the grievant may submit a motion for sanction to the Chapter Council. The grievance representative in question shall cease processing grievances during the period in which the allegation is investigated (see Article VI). When the committee and the grievant do not agree on a course of action, the individual can pursue the case as an individual.

Section 3. The Membership Committee shall endeavor to increase the Chapter membership by membership activities.

Section 4. The Communications Committee shall publish a regular newsletter, with editions being distributed at a minimum of twice per school year, and such other publications as directed by the President and/or the Chapter Council. The President shall serve as the Editor, unless he or she delegates this role to someone else. Every effort should be made to represent the various views of the members.

Section 5. The Nomination and Election Committee shall solicit nominations from the entire membership and give every dues paying member an equal chance to cast an anonymous vote for the elected positions. There should be an open nominations period of at least two weeks during the Spring term. After the nominations are closed, there should be a campaign period of at least one week before the voting process takes place. All of the candidates are entitled to be informed of the names of all the nominees at the end of the nomination period. Each nominee is also entitled to a copy of the membership list before the campaign period begins. The members who will be deemed qualified to vote must have submitted a signed membership form to the state office and appear on the salary deduction list, or have paid dues in cash prior to the campaign period. The election should normally take place in the month of March. The nominations and elections committee should check to make sure the election is completed in time for the incoming President to make the course release decision(s) for the spring semester. The new Officers will officially take over at the end of the Spring term. It is a conflict of interest for any member of the nominations and elections committee to run for office in the upcoming

year. If one or more of the members wants to run for office, the person or persons in question should resign from this committee before the nomination period has closed.

ARTICLE V

Meetings

Section 1. All meetings of the Chapter, the Chapter Council, and committees are open to the membership, except when personnel matters and/or grievances are being discussed. To facilitate business, the convener of the meeting (usually the President) may request that persons not explicitly invited to the meeting remain silent.

Section 2. There should be a meeting of the membership during each Fall and Spring term. Membership meetings can make Chapter policy on any issue whatsoever, and their decisions are binding on the Chapter Council and the Chapter as a whole. Notice of all major changes and new programs should be sent at least two weeks before the meeting where they will be discussed and voted upon. A special meeting of the membership shall be called by the President within two weeks of him/her receiving of a petition from at least 10% of the members.

Section 3. The Chapter Council should meet every month during the regular school year. The time and place of the meetings shall be determined by the Secretary and should be distributed to all Council members during the first week of the semester. An agenda should be distributed with the meeting call. A special meeting of the Chapter Council shall be called by the President within two weeks of him/her receiving a request for such from a majority of the Chapter Council.

ARTICLE VI

Improper Conduct and Due Process

Section 1. Any member or officer may be sanctioned for improper conduct by a 2/3 vote of the Chapter Council. A motion for sanction can be put forth by any member of the Chapter Council or a Committee in a Chapter Council meeting, or any member in a Membership Meeting. When such a motion is put forth, the President should table the motion until the next meeting of the Chapter Council and appoint an investigation committee as described in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. The charge(s) shall be put in writing and signed by the member making the allegation. This document shall not be made public to those outside UNF-UFF unless required by law. The charge should include specifics, such as the names, dates, and behaviors in

question. The investigation committee will interview the appropriate witnesses and collect the relevant evidence. The investigation committee will then issue a finding of fact to the Chapter Council. A trial may be conducted as described in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. The range of possible sanctions includes reprimands, censure, fines and expulsion.

Section 2. The expectations for members' conduct in a meeting are covered in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised. Improper conduct also includes, (A) violating the Chapter Constitution or Bylaws, (B) misappropriation, embezzlement or improper or illegal use of union funds, (C) violating Federal and state labor laws, (D) accepting union election campaign funds from administrators (representatives of the employer), and (E) colluding with the employer to the detriment of other union members, (F) obtaining membership through fraud or misrepresentation, (G) deliberately interfering with any official of our union in the discharge of such official's lawful responsibilities, (H) the solicitation or acceptance of a bribe of any gift of more than nominal value from the employer, member, group of members, or employee of the union, and (I) conviction of a crime, the nature of which is such as to bring the union as an organization into disrepute.

Section 3. A decision of the Chapter Council to impose a sanction can be appealed in a meeting of the membership. The decision of the Chapter Council will be in force until it is overturned. The member in question, or a member representative designated by him/her, will be permitted to present his/her side. A member of the Chapter Council appointed by the President will present the majority view of the Council. The procedures outlined in Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will once again be applied. The members may overturn the sanction by a 2/3 vote of those present or by secure electronic vote over two consecutive days when classes are in session.

Section 4. Should the President be accused of improper conduct, the Vice President should administer the procedures outlined above. Should both the President and the Vice President be accused, the Secretary should administer the procedures, and so on down the chain of command described elsewhere in these Bylaws. If the Chapter is unable or unwilling to follow these procedures, a complaint may be filed with the state UFF President.

ARTICLE VII

Severability

In the event that any provision of these Bylaws is found to be invalid or unenforceable by final decision of a tribunal of competent jurisdiction, or is rendered invalid by a change in the state UFF Bylaws, then that provision shall be of no force, but the remainder of the Bylaws shall continue in full force and effect.

ARTICLE VIII

Amendment

Section 1. A member who wishes to propose an amendment to these Bylaws should give a copy of the text to a member of the Chapter Council for distribution to the membership and placement on the meeting agenda.

Section 2. The proposed amendment shall be distributed to the membership at least two weeks prior to a vote. A Bylaw amendment shall be adopted by a majority vote, either at a membership meeting or by secure electronic vote over two consecutive days when classes are in session.

Approved at a Meeting of the Chapter Council, _____