

**STUDENT SENATE BILL 2024-1718**

**TITLE: Graduate, Union, and Institutional Development Enhancement (GUIDE): Section 1, Volume III: UF Unions**

**AUTHOR(S): Senator Austin Britton, Senator Cassandra Urbenz**

**SPONSOR(S): Senator Danielle Loftis, Senator Anna Huber, Senator Anusha Chaudhary, Senator Victoria Peters**

**WHEREAS**, Graduate Assistants United under the United Faculty of Florida (GAU) as well as the United Faculty of Florida at the University of Florida (UFF-UF) are the recognized bargaining units of the graduate employees and the faculty at UF [1-2]; and,

**WHEREAS**, United Campus Workers UF(UCW) represent the staff and adjunct employees throughout the university, and are currently working to organize as a recognized union [3]; and,

**WHEREAS**, GAU has represented the collective interests of graduate assistants throughout UF campuses since 1972; and,

**WHEREAS**, GAU must bargain an improved collective bargaining agreement (CBA) every three years, with the current negotiations occurring since September 9th, 2023; and,

**WHEREAS**, higher benefits has been established to correlate with higher productivity and lower turnover [4-5]; and,

**WHEREAS**, since its founding, GAU victories have included paid leave, the establishment and raising of stipends, tuition waivers, healthcare insurance, protections about appointments and reappointments, enhanced non-discrimination language, and protections for academic freedom [2]; and,

**WHEREAS**, GAU is currently bargaining towards instituting a living wage, increasing healthcare protections, addressing overwork, fighting discrimination, and lowering rent burdens; and [2]; and,

**WHEREAS**, Instituting a living wage and GAU's other demands will have a broad positive impact on the campus community as a whole [4-5]; and,

**WHEREAS**, the state of Florida in 2023 passed HB256, which raised barriers for public bargaining units, and placed unions across the state "in a panic" [6,12]; and,

**WHEREAS**, academic freedom is protected by both Article 9 of GAU’s CBA and Article 10 of UFF’s CBA, creating an inherent tie between the fight for academic freedom and the higher education labor movement in Florida [1-2]; then,

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate supports the continued existence of GAU and UFF-UF; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate supports the above listed unionization efforts of UCW; and,

**THEREFORE, LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the University of Florida Student Senate supports the above listed current endeavors of employees exercising their collective rights.

*Proviso: A copy of this resolution shall be sent to UF-GAU Co-Presidents Eva Garcia-Ferres and Cassandra “Cassie” Urbenz, UFF-UF President Meera Sitharam, Chief Bargainer Patrick Keegan.*

[1]<https://uff-uf.org/>

[2]<https://www.ufgau.org/>

[3]<https://ucw-cwa.org/join-united-campus-workers-florida>

[4]<https://www.whitehouse.gov/cea/written-materials/2022/04/06/blocking-the-low-road-and-paving-the-high-road-management-practices-to-improve-productivity/>

[5]<https://insight.kellogg.northwestern.edu/article/worker-productivity-minimum-wage-increase>

[6]<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/256>

[7]<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/266>

[8]<https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2022/7>

[9]<https://www.flsenate.gov/laws/statutes/2021/288.860>

[10]<https://www.science.org/content/article/new-florida-law-blocks-chinese-students-from-academic-labs>

[11]<https://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/desantis-signs-bill-banning-countries-of-concern-from-buying-land-property-in-florida/3030244/>

[12]<https://www.wusf.org/courts-law/2023-06-30/as-floridas-new-union-law-goes-into-effect-its-do-or-die-time-for-labor>

[13]<https://www.aaup.org/report/preliminary-report-special-committee-academic-freedom-and-florida>

[14]<https://www.flsenate.gov/Committees/BillSummaries/2023/html/3145>

[15] <https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/846>

 11/12/24

Blake Cox  
Senate President

Date