

Remarks to the FSU Faculty Senate on Collective Bargaining and Related Matters
By Jack Fiorito, Senator and UFF-FSU Chapter President

October 17, 2007

Good afternoon!

There is no bargaining progress to report since our previous Senate meeting because no negotiating sessions have been held since the end of August. Faculty and administration teams will meet this Friday, however. I remain hopeful that matters will improve at the bargaining table. As you probably know, cuts to university budgets were less severe than earlier forecasts, and in fact university funding increased relative to last year. (Thanks to the many of you and your colleagues who contacted legislators or the governor about the impact of proposed budget cuts on students and FSU. The information at the UFF-FSU web site about these issues and how to contact officials was a very popular “click” in recent weeks.) Hopefully the administration will recognize that retaining and rewarding current FSU faculty for their efforts needs to be a high priority. As I have said previously, there is no pathway of excellence that does not include placing a high priority on current FSU faculty.

Although we have not bargained recently, we have not been sitting on our hands. Encouraging faculty to speak out about the budget situation is one example of other things the UFF-FSU Chapter does. Our UFF-FSU Chapter does many things to advance and protect faculty interests on a continuing basis, not only in government and at the bargaining table. We meet regularly with FSU administrators to discuss faculty concerns and interests, and we defend individual faculty rights every day. For example, we are meeting with the Provost Monday on a variety of issues. And I am sure that Dean Rowe would confirm that she devotes much of her time to UFF-related meetings concerning faculty rights.

We also provide opportunities for faculty members to talk informally with administrators and others who are important to faculty in various ways. Tomorrow (Oct. 18), Director of FSU Libraries Julia Zimmerman will be our guest at a 12:30 luncheon in the Student Services Building (Rm. 218). Senators are most welcome. Lunch is on the UFF-FSU Chapter. There are other luncheon meetings coming up and we will have more details on these later. As a quick preview, next month, on Nov. 7th, President Wetherell will be our guest. On January 24th Dean Travis will be our guest, and on January 31 former Senator Bob Graham, who is leading efforts to compel the Board of Governors to exercise its constitutional authority over higher education, is scheduled. Once again, Senators are especially welcome. Please join us for these events.

Are there any questions? Thank you for your time.