

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

March 19, 2008

Good afternoon!

You may recall that our February meeting ran late and I did not report then. I hope you have had time to read my remarks on “Peter Pan and the Three Musketeers” in the minutes.

Since our last Senate meeting faculty and administration bargaining teams held one brief meeting. There was no substantial progress. Both sides recognize that the legislative and budget environment are a source of critical uncertainty, making for difficult bargaining. Regrettably, as matters become more certain they seem to become bleaker. Nonetheless, our teams are scheduled to meet again Friday next week and we are hopeful of progress in future sessions.

Speaking of the legislature, our statewide UFF and our UFF-FSU Chapter have joined Faculty Senates statewide in opposing efforts to gut the Board of Governors. I trust everyone has been following this issue and realizes the importance of faculty speaking up against further politicization of Florida higher education. Further information is available at the UFF-FSU web site.

Faculty must remain vigilant not only on budget matters and SUS governance, but also on academic matters. Budgetary problems should not be used as a pretext to bypass the faculty in academic affairs. Current discussions of restructuring and discussions about giving control of faculty hiring decisions in at least one area to ideology-driven private funding sources are potentially serious threats to academic freedom and shared governance. These are concerns to both Faculty Senate and UFF.

There is at least one common thread in all of this. It is a simple but important message: “We *can* do together what you cannot do alone.” That includes achieving better terms in bargaining, retaining faculty influence on academic matters, and a more favorable legislative and budget environment (despite the mess created by previous ill-considered legislative efforts).

One quick announcement: We will be surveying the faculty’s views on bargaining priorities and other matters next month. Please respond, and encourage your colleagues to respond as well. A good response rate helps our UFF-FSU chapter better represent faculty.

Are there any questions?

Thank you for your time, and a special “thank you” to any Senators whose service is ending with this term.