

August 18, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

First, I would like to welcome our new full-time faculty and members. We are excited to work with you. We also look forward to supporting you, representing you, and protecting you. If you have not filled out a membership form yet, please contact the UF Membership Chair, Jen Oo at membershipuf@gmail.com.

As we near the beginning of the Fall 2020 semester, I am confident that you are very busy with a unique set of preparations to accommodate a unique semester and time in history. All of us are working hard to adjust our pedagogy in the face of a global pandemic and an ongoing civil rights movement that cannot be ignored; so thank you for your dedication to our students, even when you are anxious and overwhelmed. I will keep this “welcome back” email as concise as possible in the spirit of one of the busiest weeks of the year.

2020 In a Nutshell:

In early March of 2020, as part of the impasse process, the district and UF were unable to affect a mutually acceptable settlement by using the mediation process, so the state-assigned mediator released both parties to fact finding in accordance with Section 3548.1 of the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA).

Given the global pandemic that caused districtwide closures on 3/16/2020, our working conditions changed dramatically, which triggered negotiations with the district and resulted in two very successful temporary COVID-19 MOUs; both were ratified with a historic participation and overwhelming majority, and were among the strongest in comparison to surrounding districts.

What is Next?

Fact-finding has been scheduled for October 8th and 9th, 2020. Meanwhile, either party can attempt to come to a settlement, and our union remains open to good-faith efforts from the District. As we get closer to fact-finding, our unity becomes more important than ever. We are committed to meaningful **on-schedule** salary raises, health coverage for dependents, and lab/lecture parity.

Given our district’s massive reserve, which is an accumulation of carryover money over the past few years, the District has never claimed a financial inability to cover the costs of our proposals during the last two years of negotiations. In addition, the District’s financial projections over the past three years have assumed a deficit but ended up with tens of millions of dollars in carryovers. A quick glance at the financial projections of the last few years (and comparing them to the ending balance) will make you lose all confidence in our District’s ability to project accurately and responsibly.

Year	Projected	Actual	Difference
2016/2017	Deficit of \$6,132,595	Carryover of \$12,921,007	\$19,053,542
2017/2018	Deficit of \$1,536,743	Carryover of \$19,611,122	\$21,147,865
2018/2019	Deficit of \$4,613,419	Carryover of \$17,701,894	\$22,315,313

What is New?

During the June 9th, 2020 BOT meeting, our union leadership announced an initiative to create a Racial Justice and Equity Committee that would incorporate a racial justice lens

in our union efforts. As we witness the Black Lives Matter movement leading the racial justice efforts in our country and as we continue to educate ourselves about institutional inequities, we cannot exclude NOCCCD and our union from this important conversation. And just like all other educational institutions in this country, NOCCCD is rife with racial inequities. It is not a secret that those at the lower end of the salary schedule are disproportionately BIPOC faculty. It is not a secret that the lack of health coverage for dependents has a disproportionate impact on single mothers of color. It is not a secret that a district that does not offer a fair compensation will not attract qualified diverse faculty; therefore, it is not a coincidence that the ongoing national discourse concerns itself with budgets since they are indicative of the moral character of an institution. Resources matter; all else are empty words.

Finally, if there is anything that we have learned from the BLM movement, it is that to affect change we must be united, so please continue showing United Faculty solidarity by wearing red on red-shirt Wednesdays during your virtual meetings and classes. If you still need a shirt, please let us know, and we will gladly ship it to you.

In Solidarity,

Mohammad M. Abdel Haq, M.A.
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UF Lead Negotiator
Fullerton College, Fullerton

"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will" - Frederick Douglass