

# What is Collective Bargaining?

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Unionized workers in Florida are legally entitled to negotiate the “terms and conditions of employment” with their boss. In higher ed, these “terms and conditions” include pay, work hours, leave benefits, tenure, promotion, and many other matters. The process of negotiation is known as “collective bargaining” and it results in a “Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA),” sometimes referred to as our contract.

This CBA codifies working conditions for all workers in a “bargaining unit.” The term “bargaining unit” refers to all the workers at a given workplace who are eligible for union membership.

## COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AT UF

At the University of Florida, UFF-UF negotiates with representatives of the UF Board of Trustees (BOT). Our union is represented at negotiations by a dedicated Bargaining Team. This Bargaining Team consists of unpaid faculty volunteers who receive advice and support from paid union staffers.

Over the course of negotiations, the two bargaining teams meet regularly, passing proposed changes to the CBA back and forth across the bargaining table and discussing the merits of their proposals. Negotiations conclude when the UFF-UF and BOT teams reach a tentative agreement (TA) on changes to the CBA.

All agreements between the UFF-UF and BOT teams must then be ratified by both the UF Board of Trustees and all members of the UFF-UF bargaining unit, irrespective of union membership. Because Florida is a so-called “right-to-work” state, all member of the UFF-UF bargaining unit are entitled to the protections and benefits of the CBA, regardless of whether they’re a union member.

## WHAT / WHEN DO WE BARGAIN?

Every three years, the full CBA is open for negotiations. This means that both UFF-UF and the UF BOT can propose changes to any aspect of the document. Our current contract is the 2021-24 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), which was ratified on June 18, 2021.

Additionally, every year, UFF-UF and the UF BOT negotiate our salaries, including any raises.

When needed, the UFF-UF and BOT bargaining teams engage in “impact bargaining,” which often produces Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs). These MOUs typically involve short-term amendments to the CBA in response to a crisis (or “impact”) like the COVID-19 pandemic.

## ARTICLES HIGHLIGHTS

### Article 10 on Academic Freedom and Responsibility:

This article is the gem of CBA, providing the strongest academic freedom protections across the entire SUS! Academic freedom rights are fundamental because they enable faculty to teach and research their areas of expertise without fear of censorship.

### Article 19 on Tenure and Promotion:

This article includes provisions that protect tenure and define a politically-neutral, expert-driven sustained performance evaluation process.

### Article 21 on Other Leaves:

This article contains one of our biggest recent wins: eight weeks each of paid parental and medical leave.