

What is a UFF-UF Grievance?

A grievance is a formal complaint made by a faculty member about a violation of the Collective Bargaining Agreement. Its purpose is to:

- Defend faculty members' rights, both individually and collectively
- Protect our academic and professional integrity
- Enforce the Collective Bargaining Agreement

Any violation of your rights and protections, as codified in the CBA, represents a potential grievance. The most common grievance causes include:

- Inaccurate or unfair annual or third-year evaluations
- Violations of the tenure or promotion process
- Improper non-renewals or layoffs
- Changes in workload and assignment (e.g., a significant increase in course size or number of courses)

WHO CAN GRIEVE?

All members of the bargaining unit can grieve violations of the CBA. UFF-UF members can be represented free of charge by UFF-UF. To access this benefit, you must have been an active member at the time of the perceived violation of the CBA.

Faculty who are not UFF-UF members must either represent themselves or hire a lawyer at their own expense. Legal expenses associated with a significant grievance will typically exceed \$20,000.

WHO WILL HELP YOU NAVIGATE THE GRIEVANCE PROCESS?

UFF-UF has a dedicated, experienced Grievance Team. This Grievance Team consists of unpaid faculty volunteers who receive advice and support from paid union staffers.

Our Grievance Officers have decades of experience and a strong track record of successfully resolving faculty concerns, often without resorting to the formal grievance process.

WHEN TO CONTACT THE GRIEVANCES TEAM?

Contact the Grievance Team as soon as something happens in your work life that you feel is inappropriate, even if you are not sure whether a violation of the CBA has taken place. The team will help you determine what, if any, violation has occurred.

Contacting the Grievances Team does **NOT** commit you to filing a grievance. The team is always eager to resolve problems informally without resorting to the grievance process. You can contact our Grievance Team via email at:

uff-uf-grievances@googlegroups.com

HOW DO GRIEVANCES WORK?

If our Grievance Team believes that a violation of the CBA has taken place, they will – with your permission – investigate the case and begin drafting a formal grievance. In the meantime, they will attempt to resolve the situation informally.

The grievance process has three stages:

- In the first stage, often referred to as a “Step One Grievance,” the Grievance Team meets with a representative of the dean of the college in which the incident occurred and seeks a formal resolution.
- If the grievance is not resolved to the faculty member’s satisfaction, the grievance process proceeds to the second stage, often referred to a “Step Two Grievance”; in this stage, the Grievance Team meets with a representative of the university provost and seeks a formal resolution.
- If the grievance has still not been resolved to the faculty member’s satisfaction, the grievance proceeds to arbitration, often referred to as “Step Three Grievance”; in this stage, a neutral arbitrator hears the case and delivers a legally-binding resolution.

HOW ARE GRIEVANCES RESOLVED?

If you ask the Grievance Team for help, they will typically resolve your concern without initiating the grievance process. Should you initiate a formal grievance, your grievance can – and likely will – be resolved in either the first or second stage. Grievances only rarely proceed to arbitration (or a Step Three Grievance - see above).

In most instances, the UFF-UFF Grievance Team finds a satisfactory resolution to faculty concerns. In recent years, our team has:

- Helped a tenured faculty member get their job back after wrongful termination
- Enabled a faculty member to create a specialized course of study after UF deemed the program controversial and sought to suppress it
- Forced UF to reconsider promotion decisions for faculty members whose promotion packets were improperly reviewed

CAN THE UNIVERSITY RETALIATE IF YOU FILE A GRIEVANCE?

Retaliation is prohibited by both federal and state labor law, as well as your Collective Bargaining Agreement.