

1 ARTICLE 20

2 **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE AND ARBITRATION**

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4 **20.1 Policy/Informal Resolution.** The parties agree that all problems should be
5 resolved, whenever possible, before filing a grievance within the time limits for filing
6 grievances stated elsewhere in this Article, and encourage open communications between
7 administrators and employees so that resort to the formal grievance procedure will not
8 normally be necessary. The parties further encourage the informal resolution of grievances
9 whenever possible. At each step in the grievance process, participants are encouraged to
10 pursue appropriate modes of conflict resolution. The purpose of this Article is to promote a
11 prompt and efficient procedure for the investigation and resolution of grievances. The
12 procedures hereinafter set forth shall be the sole and exclusive method for resolving
13 grievances of employees as defined herein.

14
15 **20.2 Resort to Other Procedures.** It is the intent of the parties to first provide a
16 reasonable opportunity for resolution of a dispute through the grievance procedure and
17 arbitration process. Except as noted below, if prior to seeking resolution of a dispute by
18 filing a grievance hereunder, or while the grievance proceeding is in progress, an employee
19 requests, in writing, resolution of the matter in any other forum, whether administrative or
20 judicial, the University shall have no obligation to entertain or proceed further with the
21 matter pursuant to this grievance procedure. As an exception to this provision, a grievant
22 may file an EEOC charge while the grievance is in progress when such filing becomes
23 necessary to meet federal filing deadlines pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 2000e et seq. Further,
24 since the parties do not intend that this grievance procedure be a device for appellate
25 review, the University representative's response to a recommendation of a hearing officer or
26 other individual or group having appropriate jurisdiction in any other procedure shall not be
27 an act or omission giving rise to a grievance under this procedure.

28
29 **20.3 Definitions and Forms.** As used herein:

30 (a) the term "grievance" shall mean a dispute filed on a form referenced in Section
31 20.3(c) concerning the interpretation or application of a specific term or Article(s) and
32 section(s) of this Agreement, subject to those exclusions appearing in other Articles of this
33 Agreement. A Step 1 Grievance is a grievance alleging that one or more violations of this
34 Agreement have occurred at, or within, a college level unit. A Step 2 Grievance is a
35 grievance that has either

36 (1) continued from the Step 1 college or unit level to the University level or

37 (2) been filed alleging that one or more violations of the Agreement have occurred at
38 the dean's or the University level.

39 (b) the term "grievant" shall mean an employee or group of employees who has/have
40 filed a grievance in a dispute over a provision of this Agreement that confers rights upon the
41 employee(s) or the UFF. The UFF may file a grievance:

42 (1) in a dispute over a provision of this Agreement that confers rights upon the UFF.

43 A grievance filed by the UFF on behalf of the UFF shall be initiated at Step 2; or

44 (2) on behalf of the bargaining unit, a group of employees, or an individual
45 employee, provided any group is identified with sufficient specificity to enable the University
46 to identify its members.

47 (c) Consolidation. The parties may agree to consolidate grievances of a similar nature to
48 expedite the review process. In a consolidated grievance, one Appendix "C," "D," or "E" may
49 be attached, bearing the signatures of the grievants.

50 (d) Grievance Forms. Each grievance, request for review, and notice of arbitration must
51 be submitted in writing on the appropriate form attached to this Agreement as Appendix "C,"
52 "D," or "E," respectively, and shall be signed by the grievant. All grievance forms shall be
53 dated when the grievance is received. If there is difficulty in meeting any time limit, the
54 grievance representative may sign such documents for the grievant; however, grievant's
55 signature shall be provided prior to the Step 1 meeting or Step 2 review if filed directly at
56 Step 2. The aforementioned grievance forms, as well as Appendix "H," may be filed by
57 means of fax, United States mail, email, or any other recognized means of delivery. Emails
58 received after 5pm Eastern time will be deemed to have arrived the next business day.

59 (e) Remedy. A grievance shall specify the remedy sought by the grievant.
60

61 **20.4 Burden of Proof.** For each violation alleged in a grievance filing except an alleged
62 violation of Article 16, the duty of proving or disproving the fact or facts in dispute between
63 the parties at the grievance proceeding(s) shall be on the employee. For disciplinary
64 violations, the burden of proving the fact or facts at the grievance proceeding(s) shall be on
65 the University.
66

67 **20.5 Representation.** The UFF shall have the exclusive right to represent any employee
68 in a grievance filed hereunder, unless an employee elects self-representation or to be
69 represented by legal counsel. If an employee elects not to be represented by the UFF, the
70 University shall promptly inform the UFF in writing of the grievance. No resolution of any
71 individually processed grievance shall be inconsistent with the terms of this Agreement and
72 for this purpose the UFF shall have the right to have an observer present at all meetings
73 called with the grievant or grievance representative for the purpose of discussing such
74 grievance and shall be sent copies of all decisions at the same time as they are sent to the
75 other parties.
76

77 **20.6 Grievance Representatives.** The UFF shall, on or before September 1 of each
78 year, furnish to the University a list of all persons authorized to act as grievance
79 representatives and shall update the list as needed. The UFF grievance representative shall
80 have the responsibility to meet all classes, office hours, and other duties and responsibilities
81 incidental to their assigned workload. Some of these activities are scheduled to be
82 performed at particular times. Such representative shall have the right during times outside
83 of those hours scheduled for these activities to investigate, consult, and prepare grievance
84 presentations and attend grievance hearings and meetings. Should any hearings or
85 meetings with the University's representatives necessitate rescheduling of assigned duties,
86 the representative may, with the approval of the appropriate administrator, arrange for the
87 rescheduling of such duties or their coverage by colleagues. Such approval shall not be
88 unreasonably withheld.
89

90 **20.7 Appearances.**

91 (a) When an employee participates during working hours in an arbitration proceeding or
92 in a grievance meeting between the grievant or representative and the University, that
93 employee's compensation shall neither be reduced nor increased for time spent in those
94 activities.

95 (b) Prior to participation in any such proceedings, conferences, or meetings, the
96 employee shall make arrangements acceptable to the appropriate supervisor for the
97 performance of the employee's duties. Approval of such arrangements shall not be
98 unreasonably withheld. Time spent in such activities outside regular working hours shall not
99 be counted as time worked.

101 **20.8 Formal Grievance Procedure.**

102 (a) Filing.

103 (1) Step 1 and Step 2 grievances shall be filed in Academic Affairs on the appropriate
104 form in the appendices within thirty days following the act or omission giving rise thereto, or
105 the date on which the employee knew or reasonably should have known of such act or
106 omission if that date is later. Thirty days shall be determined by the date stamped on the
107 completed grievance form filed in Academic Affairs, or by the date of mailing as determined
108 by the postmark or timestamp. The grievant may amend the Appendix "C" form one time,
109 either prior to the Step 1 meeting for all grievances filed at Step 1, or prior to the Step 2
110 review for all grievances filed directly at Step 2. Additional amendments to the grievance
111 may be permitted by mutual agreement of the parties.

112 (2) An employee may seek redress of alleged salary discrimination by filing a
113 grievance under the provisions of this Article. An act or omission giving rise to such a
114 grievance may be the employee's receipt of the employee's salary warrant for the first full
115 pay period in which the annual salary increases referenced in the Salary Article 23 are
116 reflected.

117 (3) The filing of a grievance constitutes a waiver of any rights to judicial review of
118 agency action pursuant to Chapter 120, Florida Statutes, or to the review of such actions
119 under University procedures which may otherwise be available to address such matters.
120 This grievance procedure shall be the sole review mechanism for resolving disputes
121 regarding rights or benefits which are provided exclusively by this Agreement. Only those
122 acts or omissions and sections of the Agreement identified at the initial filing may be
123 considered at subsequent steps.

124 (b) Time Limits. All time limits contained in this Article may be extended by mutual
125 agreement of the parties, except that the time limits for the initial filing of a grievance may
126 be extended only by agreement between the University and the UFF. Upon failure of the
127 University to provide a decision within the time limits provided in this Article, the grievant or
128 the UFF, where appropriate, may appeal to the next step. Upon the failure of the grievant or
129 the UFF, where appropriate, to file an appeal within the time limits provided in this Article,
130 the grievance shall be deemed to have been resolved by the decision at the prior step.

131 (c) Postponement.

132 (1) The grievant may, in the written grievance at Step 1, request the postponement
133 of any action in processing the grievance formally for a period of up to thirty days, during
134 which efforts to resolve the grievance informally shall be made. The initial such request
135 shall be granted. Upon the grievant's written request, additional extensions should be
136 granted unless to do so would impede resolution of the grievance. Upon request, the
137 university's representative shall, during the postponement period(s), arrange an informal
138 meeting between the appropriate administrator and the grievant. The grievant shall have the
139 right to representation by the UFF during attempts at informal resolution of the grievance.
140 The grievant may, at any time, terminate the postponement period by giving written notice
141 to the university's representative that the grievant wishes to proceed with the Step 1
142 meeting. If the postponement period, or any extension thereof, expires without such written

143 notice, the grievance shall be deemed informally resolved to the grievant's satisfaction and
144 need not be processed further.

145 (2) In the case of a grievance filed pursuant to the Expedited Grievance Procedure
146 referenced in the Article regarding Conflict of Interest/Commitment, the postponement
147 period shall be no more than seven days unless the employee and the university agree
148 otherwise.

149 (d) Step 1.

150 (1) Meeting. The University's representative and the grievant and the grievance
151 representative shall meet no sooner than seven and no later than fifteen days following
152 receipt of:

- 153 a. the grievance if no postponement is requested, or
- 154 b. written notice to proceed with the Step 1 meeting.

155 At the Step 1 meeting, the grievant shall have the right to present any evidence in support
156 of the grievance, and the grievant and/or the UFF representative or the grievant's legal
157 counsel (if selected), and the University's representative, shall discuss the grievance.

158 (2) Decision. The University's representative shall issue a written
159 decision summary of the meeting and their conclusion(s), stating the reasons therefore,
160 to grievant's Step 1 representative within thirty days following the conclusion of the meeting.
161 In the absence of an agreement to extend the period for issuing the Step 1 decision, the
162 grievant may proceed to Step 2 if the grievant's Step 1 representative has not received the
163 written decision by the end of the 30th day following the conclusion of the Step 1 meeting. A
164 copy of the decision-written summary shall be sent to the grievant and to the local UFF
165 Chapter if grievant elected self-representation or representation by legal counsel.

166 (3) Documents. Where practicable, the Step 1 reviewer shall make available to the
167 grievant, or grievance representative, documentation referenced in the Step 1 decision
168 written summary prior to its issuance. All documents referred to in the decision-written
169 summary and any additional documents presented by the grievant shall be attached to the
170 decision-written summary, together with a list of these documents. In advance of the Step 1
171 meeting, the grievant shall have the right, upon written request, to a copy of any reasonably
172 identifiable documents relevant to the grievance.

173 (e) Step 2

174 (1) Filing.

175 a. Continuation of Step 1 Grievance. If the grievance is not satisfactorily
176 resolved at Step 1, the grievant may file a written request with Academic Affairs for review
177 of the Step 1 decision-written summary by the University's representative. The grievant
178 must make this request within thirty days following receipt of the Step 1 decision by the
179 grievant's Step 1 representative. Thirty days shall be determined by the date stamped on
180 the notice by Academic Affairs when the request is received in that office, by 5pm Eastern
181 time, the date of receipt via email, or by the date of mailing as determined by the postmark
182 or timestamp.

183 b. Step 2 Grievance Alleging Violation(s) of the Agreement at the University
184 Level. A grievance may be filed at Step 2 if it alleges that one or more violations have
185 occurred at the University level.

186 (2) Meeting. The University's representative and the grievant and the grievant's
187 representative shall meet no sooner than seven and no later than fifteen days following
188 receipt of:

- 189 a. the grievance if no postponement is requested or
- 190 b. written notice that the grievant wishes to proceed with the Step 2 meeting.

191 At the Step 2 meeting the grievant shall have the right to present evidence in support of the
 192 grievance, and the grievant and/or the UFF representative or the grievant's legal counsel (if
 193 selected) and the University's representative shall discuss the grievance.

194 (3) Decision. The University's representative shall issue a written decision, stating
 195 the reasons therefore, to the grievant and grievant's Step 2 representative within thirty days
 196 following the conclusion of the review meeting. Thirty days shall be determined by a receipt
 197 executed by Academic Affairs, or by the date of mailing as determined by the postmark or
 198 timestamp. In the absence of an agreement to extend the period for issuing the Step 2
 199 decision, the UFF may proceed to Step 3 if the grievant's Step 2 representative has not
 200 received the written decision by the end of the 30th day following the conclusion of the Step
 201 2 meeting. A copy of the decision shall be sent to the grievant and to the UFF grievance
 202 chair if the grievant elected self-representation or representation by legal counsel.

203 (f) Step 3 Arbitration.

204 (1) Filing. If the grievance has not been satisfactorily resolved at Step 2, the UFF
 205 may, upon the request of the grievant, proceed to arbitration by filing a written notice of the
 206 intent to do so. Notice of intent to proceed to arbitration by submitting Appendix E with
 207 Academic Affairs within thirty days after receipt of the Step 2 decision by grievant and
 208 grievant's Step 2 representative (if the grievant is represented by the UFF, the decision will
 209 be sent to the UFF grievance representative) and shall be signed by the grievant and the
 210 statewide UFF President, Director of Arbitrations or designee. Thirty days shall be
 211 determined by a receipt executed by the office receiving the grievance, or by the date of
 212 mailing as determined by the postmark or timestamp. The grievance may be withdrawn at
 213 any time by the grievant or by the statewide UFF President, Director of Arbitrations or
 214 designee at any point during Step 3. The parties shall stipulate to the issue(s) prior to the
 215 arbitration. In the event a stipulation is not reached, the parties shall proceed to a hearing
 216 on arbitrability pursuant to Section 20.8(f)(4).

217 (2) Selection of Arbitrator. Within ninety days after the execution of this Agreement,
 218 the parties shall review the existing Arbitration Panel list. If either party wishes to make
 219 changes to the panel, or if an arbitrator needs to be added because of a vacancy,
 220 Representatives of the University and the UFF shall meet to make changes or additions to
 221 that list within ninety days after the execution of this Agreement for the purpose of in order to
 222 selecting/maintain an Arbitration Panel of ten or more no fewer than nine members.^[CP2]

223 Within fourteen days after receipt of a notice of intent to arbitrate, representatives of the
 224 University and the UFF shall meet for the purpose of selecting an arbitrator from the Panel.
 225 Selection shall be by mutual agreement or by alternately striking names from the Arbitration
 226 Panel list until one name remains. The right of the first choice to strike from the list shall be
 227 determined by the flip of a coin. If the parties are unable to agree to a panel of arbitrators,
 228 they shall follow the normal American Arbitration Association procedure for the selection of
 229 an arbitrator. The parties may mutually select as the arbitrator an individual who is not a
 230 member of the Arbitration Panel.^[CP3] The arbitration shall be held within sixty days following
 231 the selection of the arbitrator, if practicable.

232 (3) Authority of the Arbitrator.

233 a. The arbitrator shall not add to, subtract from, modify, or alter the terms or
 234 provisions of this Agreement. Arbitration shall be confined solely to the application and/or
 235 interpretation of this Agreement and the precise issue(s) submitted for arbitration. The
 236 arbitrator shall refrain from issuing any statements of opinion or conclusions not essential to
 237 the determination of the issues submitted.

238 b. Where an administrator has made a judgment involving the exercise of
 239 discretion, such as decisions regarding tenure or promotion, the arbitrator shall not

240 substitute the arbitrator's judgment for that of the administrator. Nor shall the arbitrator
241 review such decision except for the purpose of determining whether the decision has
242 violated this Agreement. If the arbitrator determines that the Agreement has been violated,
243 the arbitrator shall direct the University to take appropriate action. An arbitrator may award
244 back salary where the arbitrator determines that the employee is not receiving the
245 appropriate salary from the University, but the arbitrator may not award other monetary
246 damages or penalties. If notice that further employment will not be offered is not given on
247 time, the arbitrator may direct the University to renew the appointment only upon a finding
248 that no other remedy is adequate, and that the notice was given so late that (a) the
249 employee was deprived of reasonable opportunity to seek other employment, or (b) the
250 employee actually rejected an offer of comparable employment which the employee
251 otherwise would have accepted.

252 c. An arbitrator's decision awarding employment beyond the sixth year shall not
253 entitle the employee to tenure. In such cases the employee shall serve in a non-tenure-
254 earning capacity^[CP4] during the seventh year without further right to notice that the
255 employee will not be offered employment thereafter. If an employee is reappointed at the
256 direction of an arbitrator, the University's representative may reassign the employee during
257 such reappointment.

258 (4) Arbitrability. Issues of arbitrability shall be bifurcated from the substantive
259 issue(s) and, whenever possible, determined by means of a hearing conducted by
260 conference call. The arbitrator shall have ten days from the hearing to render a decision on
261 arbitrability. If the issue is judged to be arbitrable, an arbitrator shall then be selected to
262 hear the substantive issue(s).

263 (5) Conduct of Hearing. The arbitrator shall hold the hearing in the city where the
264 grievant is employed, unless otherwise agreed by the parties. The hearing shall commence
265 within twenty-five days of the arbitrator's acceptance of selection, or as soon thereafter as is
266 practicable, and the arbitrator shall issue the decision within forty-five days of the close of
267 the hearing or the submission of briefs, whichever is later, unless additional time is agreed
268 to by the parties. The decision shall be in writing and shall set forth findings of fact,
269 reasoning, and conclusions on the issues submitted. Except as expressly specified in this
270 Article, the provisions of the Florida Arbitration Code, Chapter 682, Florida Statutes, shall
271 not apply. Except as modified by the provisions of this Agreement, arbitration proceedings
272 shall be conducted in accordance with the rules and procedures of the American Arbitration
273 Association.

274 (6) Effect of Decision. The decision or award of the arbitrator shall be final and
275 binding upon the University, the UFF, and the grievant, provided that either party may
276 appeal to an appropriate court of law a decision that was rendered by the arbitrator acting
277 outside of or beyond the arbitrator's jurisdiction, pursuant to Section 682.13, Florida
278 Statutes.

279 (7) Venue. For purposes of venue in any judicial review of an arbitrator's decision
280 issued under this agreement, the parties agree that such an appeal shall be filed in the
281 courts in Orange County, Florida, unless both parties specifically agree otherwise in a
282 particular instance. In an action commenced in Orange County, neither the University nor
283 the UFF will move for a change of venue based upon the defendant's residence in fact if
284 other than Orange County.

285 (8) Fees and Expenses. All fees and expenses of the arbitrator shall be divided
286 equally between the parties. Each party shall bear the cost of preparing and presenting its
287 own case. The party desiring a transcript of the arbitration proceedings shall provide written
288 notice to the other party of its intention to have a transcript of the arbitration made at least

289 one week prior to the date of the arbitration. The party desiring such transcript shall be
290 responsible for scheduling a stenotype reporter to record the proceedings. The parties shall
291 share equally the appearance fee of the stenotype reporter and the cost of obtaining an
292 original transcript and one copy for the party originally requesting a transcript of the
293 proceedings.

294 (9) Retroactivity. An arbitrator's award may or may not be retroactive as the equities
295 of each case may demand, but in no case shall an award be retroactive to a date earlier
296 than thirty days prior to the date the grievance was initially filed in accordance with this
297 Article.

298

299 **20.9 Filings and Notification.** All documents required or permitted to be issued or filed
300 pursuant to this Article may be transmitted by fax, United States mail, email, or any other
301 recognized delivery service. Refusal to accept delivery to the address indicated in the
302 university's records will be deemed as delivered. Receipt by UFF Representative shall
303 constitute receipt only when the UFF represents the employee. Step 1 and Step 2 decisions
304 shall be transmitted to the grievance representative (s) by personal delivery with written
305 documentation of receipt or by certified mail, return receipt requested, or via email. In the
306 event that any action falls due on a Saturday, Sunday, or holiday (as referred to in in the
307 Leaves Article), the action will be considered timely if it is accomplished by 5:00 p.m. on the
308 following business day.

309

310 **20.10 Precedent.** No complaint informally resolved, or grievance resolved at either Step 1
311 or 2, shall constitute a precedent for any purpose unless agreed to in writing by the
312 University's representative and the UFF acting through its local President or representative.

313

314 **20.11 Processing.**

315 (a) The filing or pendency of any grievance or arbitration proceedings under this Article
316 shall not operate to impede, preclude, or delay the University from taking the action
317 complained of. Reasonable efforts, including the shortening of time limits when practical,
318 shall be made to conclude the processing of a grievance prior to the expiration of the
319 grievant's employment, whether by termination or failure to reappoint. An employee with a
320 pending grievance will not continue to be compensated beyond the last date of
321 employment.

322 (b) The University's representative, may refuse consideration of a grievance not filed or
323 processed in accordance with this Article. If there is a question of timeliness, the grievance
324 may proceed, but the question of timeliness will be submitted for an arbitrability hearing
325 before the matter is considered further.^[CP5]

326

327 **20.12 Reprisal.** No reprisal of any kind will be made by the University or the UFF against
328 any grievant, any witness, any UFF representative, or any other participant in the grievance
329 procedure by reason of such participation.

330

331 **20.13 Records.** All written materials pertinent to a grievance shall be filed separately from
332 the evaluation file of the grievant or witnesses, except decisions resulting from arbitration or
333 settlement.

334

335 **20.14 Inactive Grievances.** A grievance which has been filed at Step 2 or Step 3 and on
336 which no action has been taken by the grievant or the UFF for ninety days shall be deemed
337 withdrawn and resolved in accordance with the decision issued at the prior Step.