

POLITICAL ACTIVITIES POLICY

Purpose

The University of Mary is committed to the free and open discussion of ideas and opinions and promotes participation in political activities (defined below) by members of the university community as a means to furthering the University's educational goals. At the same time, as a non-profit, private institution of higher education whose activities are regulated in part by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, the University itself is prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in any political campaign on behalf of or against any candidate for elective public office. Accordingly, no university school, department, or organization, and no member of the university community speaking for the University, may advocate for or against a candidate for elective office (defined below) or use university resources to do so.

This policy provides general guidance for faculty, staff, and students so that they may engage fully in the political process. It also provides guidelines for permissible appearances of candidates on campus.

The University reserves the right to support the tenets of Catholic social teaching in a non-partisan manner.

No policy can anticipate every situation that may arise. Accordingly, if any proposed activity is not covered in this policy, or if there is any uncertainty regarding that activity, it is important to contact the Office of Public Affairs (701-355-8262) in advance so that appropriate guidance can be provided.

Statement of Policy

Definitions

"Campaign" means an organized effort to influence individuals and/or groups to elect a particular candidate or candidates to public office.

"Candidate" means an individual who has announced his or her intent to campaign for an elective public office, whether at the federal, state, or local level.

"Political activities" mean actions that endorse or oppose a candidate, a political party, or a political action committee (PAC); take a position on an issue for the purpose of assisting or opposing a candidate or political party in a campaign; or otherwise support a candidate, political party, or PAC in a campaign.

"University resources," for the purposes of this policy, mean university funds and purchasing mechanisms; university offices, conference rooms, and other spaces and facilities; university copiers, facsimile machines, computers, and other electronic equipment; university computer networks, websites, social media accounts, email accounts, listservs, and mailing lists; university telephones, voicemail, and mail systems; and university letterhead, stationery, and other supplies.

Political Activity Guidelines

Faculty and staff (including student employees) may not engage in political activities during work hours.

If a proposed activity is not discussed in these guidelines, or if there is uncertainty about the permissibility of a proposed activity, contact the Office of Public Affairs in advance of engaging that activity in order to obtain appropriate guidance.

Candidate Appearances

Appearance of a candidate on campus must be for an educational or informational discussion, forum, or talk to the university community or for a political debate. The Executive Vice President must approve such appearances.

The event may not be conducted as a campaign rally or intended to assist a particular candidate, and the moderator must make it clear that the University does not support or oppose any candidate.

Candidate Campaigning, Endorsement, and Fundraising

Except where otherwise noted, the following prohibitions apply to all university entities supported in whole or in part by university funds, including registered student organizations.

Candidate campaigning (solicitation) on university property is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, the posting or distribution of posters, fliers, or leaflets or the transmission of materials over the internet. No school, department, or university organization may post hyperlinks to a candidate's website or campaign websites on a university website.

No candidate may be endorsed by the University or by a school, department, or university organization.

Funds or other contributions to support a candidate, campaign, political party, or PAC may not be solicited or made in the University's name, on university property, or using university resources. All such contributions by faculty, staff, or students may be made only in an individual capacity.

Campaign paraphernalia may not be sold, distributed, or made available by schools, departments, or university organizations. Marauders on Politics may, however, display and distribute campaign materials as part of a non-partisan voter education program for students.

Event Communications and Postings

Student organizations, officially constituted campus groups, or other organizations of the University that are sponsoring an approved discussion, forum, talk, political debate, or approved voter education or registration activity may use campus communication mechanisms to announce that event. All such communications and postings must comply with the University's Acceptable Use Policy and Posting Policy.

Presentations and Political Speech

Faculty, staff, and students are free to express their individual and collective political views, provided they understand and make clear that they are not speaking for or in the name of the University of Mary.

Student Organizations

It is desirable to have student organizations remain engaged and active in the political process. However, no student organization is equipped to speak on behalf of the University of Mary. Neither does Marauders on Politics exist to support one candidate over another, nor will the University give recognition to a student organization that has as a goal to support a particular political party or candidate.

Whenever a student organization hosts, sponsors, or publicizes an event on behalf of a political campaign or a political party, the sponsoring student organization must deliver a disclaimer explaining that the use of university facilities or resources for the event does not constitute an endorsement by the University, that the views of those invited to speak on campus are the views of the speaker(s) and not of the university, and that the University does not endorse or oppose any candidate or organization in connection with this or any other political campaign or election.

Use of University Funds and Resources

University resources may not be used for political activities, either by university organizations or by outside organizations. Use of university buildings and facilities is permissible for the limited purposes set forth above and subject to the University's Scheduling Policy.

Use of University Name, Seal and Insignia

The University's name, seal, and insignia, or those of a university school, department, or university organization, may not be used on any documents that endorse or oppose any candidate for elective public office. This prohibition applies to any university entities supported in whole or in part by university funds, such as registered student organizations.

Voter Education

Voter education activities are permissible so long as such activities are focused on increasing public understanding of the electoral process or encouraging participation in that process. Such activities must be conducted in a non-partisan manner and may not focus on a particular candidate or party.

Approved

19 August 2019 by the President of the University

22 August 2019 by the Board of Trustees (EC)

18 March 2021 delivered to University Senate