

FAQS ON POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES POLICY

University's Involvement in Political Campaign Activity

Q: What is a “political campaign activity” as defined in the Temple [policy](#)?

A: A political campaign activity is an action or event that supports or opposes any candidate for public office at the federal, state or local levels.

Q: Does Temple’s policy on political campaign activity limit my rights to engage in politics?

A: The policy does not aim to limit university members from expressing personal opinions or engaging in political activity in their individual capacities and as private citizens, nor does it aim to restrict the pursuit of knowledge. Individuals, however, cannot speak for the university. The university’s purpose is to create and share knowledge. The university promotes research into and discussion of important issues in society inside and outside the classroom, including the free expression and exchange of political viewpoints and ideas.

Q: Can the University participate in political campaign activity?

A: As a tax-exempt organization under [§ 501 \(c\) \(3\) of the Internal Revenue Code](#), the university is prohibited from endorsing candidates, making donations to political campaigns, engaging in political fundraising, distributing statements on behalf of a candidate or party, and directly or indirectly engaging in any political campaign activities on behalf of or against any candidate or group of candidates for federal, state and local offices.

Q: If the University cannot participate in political campaign activity, why can the university allow political campaigns to reserve space on campus?

A: Temple does not endorse or support individual candidates. Rather, Temple allows any candidate to host events on campus, if they choose to do so, in accordance with Temple’s space reservation policies.

Q: Can the University encourage and hold “get out the vote” activities?

A: Yes, as long as such activities are conducted in a non-partisan manner. For example, hosting or presenting public forums and publishing voter education guides to encourage, enable, and inform the democratic process are permissible if such activities are conducted in a non-partisan manner.

Individual Participation in Political Campaign Activities

Q: Can I make social media posts endorsing political events, issues, candidates or make other politically-centered statements?

A: Yes, provided that such endorsement is done as a private citizen. Speaking and/or acting for the endorsement of any candidate(s) in the name of the University is prohibited. If the name of the University is identified, it should be communicated that the opinions expressed are yours and not the opinions of the University. Also, you may not use University resources (e.g., University letterhead, Temple logos, or Temple affiliated social media accounts, email, funds, equipment, etc.) when making political statements.

Q: Can I talk to the media or make social media posts in which I favor or oppose a particular candidate?

A: You can do so on the condition that you are clear that you are not making a statement on behalf of the university and you are not acting in your official capacity as a representative of Temple. You may identify your positions at the University so long as you make it clear that your affiliation with the University is provided for identification purposes only.

Q: What if I am called upon by the media to offer my opinion on an election or on politics, in general?

A: If you identify your relationship to Temple in offering comments made in your professional or expert capacity, all such comments should be non-partisan.

Q: As a faculty member can I discuss a political campaign in class?

A: Genuine curricular activities aimed at educating students with respect to the political process are acceptable provided they are relevant to the subject of the course and do not advocate for any particular candidate(s).

Q: As a student, does this policy even apply to me?

A: The policy applies to students acting in their university-affiliated roles. Students and University-Recognized Student Organizations are prohibited from using appropriations from the University General Activity Fees to contribute to a political campaign. Students and university-recognized student organizations may host candidates, political events, and “get out the vote” activities in accordance with section I.2. of the [Political Campaign Activities policy](#).

Q: How can I bring a political event to campus?

A: Please refer to the [Political Campaign Activities policy](#) for specific guidance on “Institutional Event Procedures”. Section I.1. and 2.

Examples of Permitted/Prohibited Campaign Activities

Q: Are there examples of what an individual can and cannot do with regard to engaging in political campaign activities?

A: The policy contains illustrative guidance. Specifically:

- Examples of permissible activities include:
 - 1) Non-partisan course work, curricular activities and assignments designed to educate students regarding the political process.
 - 2) University-sponsored non-partisan education or training programs created to enhance public understanding of the electoral process.
 - 3) Student political editorials and endorsements in a university-sponsored student newspaper.
 - 4) University-sponsored public forums to which all viable candidates are invited and to whom equal access and opportunity are provided.
 - 5) University-sponsored non-partisan public opinion polls regarding issues (rather than candidates), provided that questions are framed to be fair and neutral and do not directly or indirectly concern records or positions of particular candidates or parties.
 - 6) Personal, individual membership in a political party.
 - 7) Voting in any elections (with time off as authorized by applicable leave policies).
 - 8) Public expression of views in an explicitly personal capacity.
 - 9) Personal contributions to a candidate for elected public office.
- Examples of impermissible activities include:
 - 1) Endorsement or other support of a political candidate by the university, its officials, administrators, employees or agents in their official capacity.
 - 2) Campaign contributions by institutional officials or representatives in their official capacity or on behalf of the institution, and solicitation of campaign contributions by university employees or representatives in the workplace or in their official capacities.

- 3) University reimbursement of political donations or activities.
- 4) Linking university-sponsored voter education or registration activities with political events.
- 5) Participation in political activities during work time.