

# Pacific University Policy on Political Campaign Activity

Pacific University supports the principles of Academic Freedom and encourages free and open discussion of ideas and opinions. As part of its dedication to active citizenship, the University encourages students, faculty, and staff to exercise their civic rights to participate as individuals in the political process.

As a tax-exempt entity, Pacific University is prohibited by federal law from participating in or attempting to influence campaigns for any elective public office or any political initiative (such as a public referendum). The University may not endorse a candidate or ballot proposal, provide or solicit financial or other support for candidates or political organizations, or establish political action committees.

This policy is adopted by the University in an attempt to balance these competing considerations.

**Individual Involvement in Campaigns by Faculty and Staff.** Faculty and staff who engage in political campaigns in their individual capacities must clearly and unambiguously indicate that their actions and statements are their own and not those of the University. University staff and faculty are discouraged from engaging in political activity at University functions or through official University publications. No employee should feel pressured by colleagues to contribute to, or perform tasks in support of, a political campaign.

If a member of the faculty or staff is running for political office, no campaign activities shall be conducted on campus, to avoid the appearance of a University endorsement.

## **Use of Facilities and Resources.**

Use of University facilities and resources in support of a political candidate, party, referendum or political action committee (PAC) that could give the appearance that the University is supporting one candidate or position over another is not permitted.

## ***Prohibited Uses***

- Using official University stationery, name, trademark, wordmark, seal, email, telephones, computers, printers and copiers.
- Providing mailing lists, office space, telephones, photocopying, computers or other institutional resources.

- Posting information on a University-administered website (i.e., a website with a pacificu.edu extension) that is favorable to one candidate or issue, or posting a hyperlink on a University-administered website to a candidate or campaign site.

This list is only a sample of the type of uses that are prohibited. If you have questions, please contact the Office of Legal Affairs (503.352.2236.)

### ***Approved Uses***

- Subject to University policies on permission and scheduling, recognized student groups may use University facilities for partisan political purposes so long as they reimburse any costs the University may incur in providing such space.
- If an appearance by a declared candidate for public office or a group supporting a public referendum is broadly publicized to nonmembers of the Pacific University community or is co-sponsored or paid for by outside organizations, the sponsors must rent the space from the University on the same terms that are available to any group wishing to use such space as established by University Conference Services. If space is rented to a candidate in an election, any competing candidate would be able to rent space on the same terms.
- Candidates may be invited to appear on campus in a non-candidate capacity, e.g., to participate in a class, provided that no campaigning or fundraising is done at the event and a non-partisan atmosphere is maintained.
- Candidate forums or debates may be held on campus as part of the University's educational mission, as long as all qualified candidates are invited to participate.
- Administration and faculty should take special care in relation to any above-described activities, to avoid the appearance of institutional endorsement.

**Fundraising.** Funds or contributions for political candidates or campaigns may not under any circumstances be solicited in the name of Pacific University or on any University campus, and University resources may not be used in soliciting such funds. If Pacific students, faculty or staff make political contributions, they must do so as individuals.

**Courses.** Courses at Pacific University may require students to participate in the political campaigns of candidates of their choice, but only if the University (including the faculty member) does not influence the students' choice of candidates.

**Student Publications.** Student publications may run editorials expressing the editors' views on candidates for public office, provided that the publication's

editorial policy is free of editorial control by University administrators or faculty advisors. A statement on the editorial page must indicate that the views expressed are those of the student editors and not those of the University.

**Voter Registration.** Voter registration and “get out the vote” drives by University-sponsored organizations must be done on a non-partisan basis (i.e., they may not focus on a particular party).

**Legislative and Political Activities.** Federal and State laws significantly restrict gifts and honoraria for public officials, including meals and tickets to sporting events.

Any lobbying on behalf of the University must be approved by the Vice President for University Relations.

Should you have any questions relating to this policy, contact the Vice President for University Relations (503.352.2905) or the Office of Legal Affairs (503.352.2236.) This policy only provides basic information regarding political activities. It is strongly advised that you seek guidance before you sponsor a political event.