

POLITICAL CAMPAIGN ACTIVITY ON CAMPUS

Franklin Pierce University believes an informed electorate is the key to the health of our democracy and is committed to facilitating opportunities to our campus of first-time voters to launch a lifetime of civic engagement.

However, as a 501(c)(3) organization, the University must comply with [IRS guidelines](#) that prohibit directly or indirectly participating in any political campaign for a candidate for elected office. To do so could jeopardize the University's non-profit status. The University's guidelines are consistent with these as well as with those issued by the [American Council on Education](#) and the [National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities](#). Also governing this activity are provisions of the Higher Education Act and the [Federal Election Commission](#).

To ensure compliance and maintain an environment that is respectful and welcoming of all political beliefs, the University has policies and procedures in place to regulate the time, place and manner of political activity on campus.

Generally permitted activities by recognized student organizations or FPU students, staff and faculty include:

- Non-partisan and non-biased voter education unrelated to specific candidates or initiatives, and which is not connected to a campaign event.
- Appearances by Federal Election Commission ("FEC") legally registered candidates and surrogates who are invited by the University to campus to participate in an educational public forum or provide a general address with an introduction to the event by a University representative.
 - All FEC legally registered candidates must have equal access to participate in educational public forums and provide public addresses.
 - Student organizations may invite and coordinate the appearance of speakers on campus, including FEC legally registered candidates and surrogates, provided that (i) the student organization clearly communicates that the event is not supported or endorsed by the University by including a disclaimer in printed materials and oral introductions (see below for disclaimer language); (ii) the student organization does not use University funds or resources in the planning, coordination, or conducting of the event; and (3) the event is coordinated and organized in compliance with the University's policies and procedures regarding the use of the University's spaces and facilities, including paying any usual facility fees.
 - The following disclaimer must be included in any written material about the event, and should be stated orally at the event (during the Introduction, for example): "This [event/publication] is sponsored and endorsed solely by the [student organization] and is not supported or endorsed by Franklin Pierce University. Franklin Pierce University does not participate in or advocate for any political campaigns on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office."
- Issue-based advocacy events that are non-partisan and educational in nature.

- Tabling in the Student Center or other approved common location/event (e.g. Constitution Day Candidates' Fair in the Library Courtyard); campaigns can table no more than once per week during the academic year through the NH Primary election, and within the three months before a general election, and reservations are made through the Director of Student Engagement, Raven Recreation and Wilderness Adventure Programs.
- Notwithstanding the restrictions below, students, faculty and staff may make personal political contributions and participate in campaign activities of their choosing provided that such contributions and activities only occur in an individual and private capacity (and not on behalf of or as a representative or agent of the University) as long as (i) the activity is engaged in during the faculty or staff's non-work hours, (ii) it is clear that the University does not endorse the candidate, and (iii) the student, faculty or staff member does not use University's resources, funds, supplies, or equipment to participate.

University students, student organizations, and the University, its staff, and faculty are generally prohibited from engaging in the following political activities:

- Coordinating voter education activities with candidate campaign events.
- Fund-raising of any kind (including but not limited to candidates, political parties, PACs, and Section 527 organizations).
- Endorsing or advocating against a candidate. Such activities include but are not limited to rating or ranking a candidate or a candidate's policies or positions in any form, format, or platform, including social media.
- Using institutional logos or the Franklin Pierce University name – as well as that of the colleges, departments and centers that comprise it, including the Marlin Fitzwater Center for Communication –to promote any candidate's campaign in any form, including, but not limited to, the use of flyers, advertisements, newspapers, video, electronic communications and social media.
- Use of University resources, mailing lists (email, listservs, USPS addresses, social media lists, and the like), office space, telephones, photocopying or other institutional supplies or equipment in connection with a campaign.
- Sponsoring campaign (non-educational) events and activities to advance the campaign of a candidate.
- Posting of campaign signage, including yard signs, flyers on walls or in mailboxes, banners on campus or on the roadway leading to campus; exceptions are materials within three feet of a table (if tabling on campus), within the event venue, or within three feet of the entrance(s) to the venue.
- In accordance with standing policies on solicitation in on-campus residences, distributing campaign materials in residence halls is prohibited.

Responsibility of campaigns and campaign staff:

- Cover the full expenses related to a campaign event (as opposed to an educational event), including police and fire detail, meeting room rental fees, cleaning fees.
- Respect the policies and procedures of the University, which are in place to preserve the institution's IRS status, as well as the privacy and rights of the members of the Franklin Pierce University community. This includes being respectful of Franklin Pierce University's singular commitment to maintain an environment that is welcoming of all political viewpoints.
- Guests of the University must stop at Campus Safety as they enter campus on University Drive; guests will be issued a parking pass. The only exceptions are: 1) if parking spaces have been reserved ahead of time through the sponsoring department on campus, such as the Fitzwater Center; or 2) the guests are attending a publicly advertised and University-sponsored event, such as a candidate forum.

Procedures

- Prior to coordinating any activity under this Policy, recognized student groups must meet with the Director of Student Engagement, Raven Recreation and Wilderness Programs.
- All other potential sponsors, including departments, students, faculty and staff must meet with the Director of the Marlin Fitzwater Center for Communication before coordinating any activity under this Policy.
- After meeting with the Franklin Pierce University representative identified above, paperwork must be filed with the Office of the Associate Provost at least one week in advance of the event detailing:
 - University affiliated sponsorship (name and contact information of recognized student group, or other University community member or department)
 - Event/activity details (time, location, summary of activities)
 - Communication plan, including sample promotional materials and distribution plan
 - Understanding of these policies and procedures and taking of responsibility for proceeding in accordance with them

Please note: Campaigns are welcome to rent space for campaign events through Franklin Pierce University [Conferences and Events Services](#).

Resources

<https://www.naicu.edu/policy-advocacy/issue-brief-index/regulation/political-campaign-activity-on-campus>