



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Office of the President

SUBJECT: Political and Campaign Activities	Effective Date:	Policy Number: 2-600.1	
	Supersedes: 2-600	Page 1	Of 5
	Responsible Authority: Vice President for Government and Community Relations		

DATE OF INITIAL ADOPTION AND EFFECTIVE DATE: 4/21/2008

APPLICABILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

This policy applies to all employees and, in limited situations as noted, students of the university. It is consistent with federal, state, and other laws that pertain to political and campaign activities.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

As a state university, it is imperative that UCF maintain its integrity and credibility in the public forum. This is particularly true of the political process and the manner in which university employees affect or are affected by activities such as lobbying, holding public office, or engaging in other political activities.

UCF faculty, staff and students may be asked by political candidates or campaigns to distribute campaign literature, post campaign signs, to join a candidate on campus for campaigning or to help organize a campaign event. Faculty, staff and students may also become a candidate for elected office. This policy addresses specific aspects of political activity involving actual or perceived university endorsements, campaign events, testifying before a governmental entity, running for public office and participating in appointed public service.

DEFINITIONS

Government entity. Any state, federal, or local governing or advisory body composed of elected or governmentally appointed officials, or any quasi-public body that holds recognized authority.

POLICY STATEMENT

As individuals, UCF employees are encouraged to support candidates or issues of their choice and participate in the democratic process as a privilege of citizenship, but they must not in any way associate these activities as formal representation or endorsement by the university which would violate state law and endanger the tax exempt status of UCF's affiliated organizations.

Prohibited Political Activities

UCF employees are prohibited from taking an active part in a political campaign while on duty or within periods of time during which university employees are expected to be performing services for which the employee receives compensation from the university. As work time expectations are varied among UCF employees, a presumption of adherence to this policy may be made when an employee engages in political activities when not located on UCF-owned or controlled facilities and when not utilizing UCF equipment, materials, supplies, services, or the like.

UCF employees are prohibited from using the authority of their university position to secure support for, or oppose any candidate, party, or issue in a partisan election or affect the results of such election. Similarly, UCF employees are prohibited from using a promise of reward, threat to encourage, and/or coerce any other University personnel to support or contribute to any political issue, candidate, or party.

Use of State Resources

Current state laws and regulations prohibit state employees from using state resources to participate in political campaigns or activities, including lobbying and political solicitation of any kind. Renting UCF facilities for campaign-related events, on the same terms available to any member of the public under applicable use policies for that facility may be permissible, provided that campaign fundraising does not occur under any circumstances.

Examples of prohibited uses of state resources would include, but not be limited to, such activities as soliciting or accepting political contributions in a UCF facility, sending out a campaign mailing using university stationery or postage purchased by the university, using the official UCF email system or email list or listserv for the purpose of supporting or opposing a political candidate or ballot initiative, and using UCF property and resources to display or reproduce material supporting or opposing a political candidate or ballot initiative.

Activities Potentially Perceived as Official University Endorsements

Student organizations or activity groups associated with various academic programs cannot participate in campaign activities even if participation is in-kind or reimbursed for actual expenses. For example, it is not appropriate for a UCF music group to display the UCF name while performing at a campaign rally.

Candidates on Campus

Political candidates and their staff or supporters and political organizations are always welcome on campus for tours, briefings, or other related activities, but UCF will not officially sponsor a politically partisan rally or fundraiser. Registered student organizations may invite candidates or sponsor such activities provided they follow prescribed procedure for use of university space. Facilities owned or controlled by UCF, or any affiliated organizations, may be rented for use by political parties and candidates in accordance with applicable regulations and policies.

The Office of Government and Community Relations is always willing to assist, as appropriate, depending upon scheduling and availability of staff and facilities, but under no circumstances is the university responsible for generating press coverage or soliciting attendance at such events.

Further guidance should be sought from the Office of the General Counsel and the Office of Government and Community Relations.

PROCEDURES

Official University Positions

The UCF Board of Trustees has designated the president of the university as its principal spokesperson and representative on all government relations matters with all levels of government. The president may delegate this authority as appropriate. In no case shall an employee of the university formally represent the president or the Board of Trustees without prior approval and delegation by the president.

Except in the case that an employee is presenting research in their field of expertise, if an individual employee of the university who is not the president's designee is invited by any government entity to make a presentation or address an issue before it, the employee shall clearly and publicly state that their comments are personal and not intended to represent the official views or position of UCF. No state resources may be used to support these activities unless approved by the president or designee in advance of the event.

Running for Public Office

University employees may run for public office or participate in appointed public service, but it is incumbent on the individual to demonstrate to their supervisor that no conflict of interest or conflict of commitment exists. If the elected or appointed public position adversely affects the duties and responsibilities of the individual relative to the university, appropriate adjustment in compensation, length of contract, or prescribed duties shall be agreed to in writing and approved by the president or designee. The individual's immediate supervisor is responsible for any required written forms or approvals. In situations where the individual holding or running for public office would present a conflict of interest or interfere with the full discharge of their university duties, the individual may be required to take a leave of absence or resign employment with the university pursuant to Regulation UCF-3.018 Conflict of Interest or Commitment; Outside Activity or Employment.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

Section 11.062, Florida Statutes, use of state funds for lobbying prohibited; penalty.

http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0000-0099/0011/Sections/0011.062.html

Section 104.31, Florida Statutes, Political activities of state, county, and municipal officers and employees.

http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0100-0199/0104/Sections/0104.31.html

Section 112.313, Florida Statutes, Standards of conduct for officers and employees of entities serving as chief administrative officer of political subdivisions.

http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0100-0199/0112/Sections/0112.313.html

Regulation UCF-3.018 Conflict of Interest or Commitment; Outside Activity or Employment

<http://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter3/documents/3.018OutsideActivityorEmploymentFINALApril17.pdf>

Regulation UCF-4.029 Use of University Facilities; Definitions; Priority of Use; Restrictions on Use.

<http://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter4/documents/4.029UseofUnivFacDefPriorityofUseFINALJune18.pdf>

Regulation UCF-4.0293 Use of University Grounds by the Campus Community; Campus Demonstrations and Outdoor Events

<http://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter4/documents/4.0293UseofUnivFacCampusDemonstrationsFINALJune18.pdf>

Regulation UCF-4.0294 Use of University Facilities; General Requirements

<http://regulations.ucf.edu/chapter4/documents/4.0294UseofUniv.FacGeneralReqsFINALJune18.pdf>

INITIATING AUTHORITY: Vice President for Government and Community Relations

POLICY APPROVAL
(For use by the Office of the President)

Policy Number: 2-600.1

Initiating Authority: Janet D. Owen Date: 5/11/2020

University Policies and
Procedures Committee Chair: Paul L. Bishop Date: 4/30/2020

President or Designee: _____ Date: 05/14/2020