

Political Activities at the UW School of Dentistry

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Reviewer: Gary E. Farris

Personal use of any University resources, computers, or equipment to support political activities (such as assisting a campaign for election, promoting or opposing a ballot proposition or initiative, or lobbying members of state or federal legislature), even though not for remuneration, is not permitted.

I. Definitions

Political Campaigning: Any activity to solicit support, financial or otherwise, for or against ballot issues or the election of a person to an office.

Political Activities include, but are not limited to, activities to solicit support, financial or otherwise, for or against legislation, governmental policies, or other political issues.

University resources include, but are not limited to, university funds and purchasing mechanisms, including the Procurement Card; university offices, conference rooms and other spaces and facilities; university vehicles; university copiers, computers, and other electronic equipment; university computer networks, websites, social media accounts, e-mail accounts, listservs, and mailing lists; university telephones, voicemail, and mail systems; university letterhead, stationery, and other office supplies (e.g., pens, toner, paper); and university branding (e.g., UW name, service marks, logos, etc).

The following are meant to be illustrative examples, but we cannot list all possible examples. Talk to your manager or contact UWSOD Compliance (dcomply@uw.edu, 206.543.5331) for more information.

II. Employees (including faculty, staff, postdoctoral scholars, and student employees)

You may not engage in political campaign activities while at work or during your normal work activities or use any institutional resources at any time for political campaigning. You may not solicit contributions or services for political purposes from your UW colleagues during your work time or theirs.

Although employees may post a political sign at their personal workstation or wear a campaign button, employees who do so are urged to exercise caution and prudence. Leaders (supervisors, managers, faculty, et. al.) should be careful about wearing political buttons because of the impact it may have on staff, students, and others, owing to the "power differential." You should be aware of the rules for each facility at which you work. Displaying political signs or buttons in clinical areas could be upsetting or distracting to patients and potentially cause discomfort among your colleagues even if you are not in a patient care area. Accordingly, UWSOD employees should consider the impact of such displays while on duty or at their workstations and avoid displaying political signs in public or clinical areas. Remember, not everyone agrees with your views.

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University employees who wish to attend to political rallies, demonstrations, fundraisers or other events during the workday may do so during their breaks and lunches. Employees who wish to be absent from work during their regular working hours must request and receive supervisor approval in advance of the absence per the terms of their employment agreement.

When participating in political campaigning or other political activities as private citizens, university employees must ensure their participation cannot be interpreted as expressing the position of the University of Washington.

- University employees 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 Washington.
- University employees should make it clear that any reference to their title and affiliation with the university is for identification purposes only.

III. Students

In keeping with its educational and service mission, and its desire to promote discussion of and participation in political and civic issues, the UW encourages and supports the involvement of students in government and political affairs within the following parameters:

- 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 Washington.
- With the exception of individual student email accounts, personal use of University resources by students in support of Political Campaigning is prohibited.
- Registered Student Organizations (RSO) may use their resources to support Political Campaigning and other Political Activities if they are in compliance with the RSO Policy Guide.
- RSOs and other informal student groups may receive permission to use available University facilities for partisan and/or non-partisan Political Activities, provided that such organizations make the necessary arrangements with appropriate University officials; pay the normal costs, if any, for such use (including any increased security costs); and recognize their obligation to abide by all applicable University rules and regulations.
- Whenever an RSO or group of students hosts, sponsors, or publicizes a politically related event, the sponsoring student group must deliver a disclaimer explaining that the use of University facilities or resources for this event does not constitute an endorsement by the UW, the views of those invited to speak on campus are the views of the speaker and not of the UW, and that the UW does not endorse or oppose any candidate or organization.

IV. Resources

- [Administrative Policy Statement 47.2: Personal Use of University Facilities, Computers, and Equipment by University Employees](#)
- [Washington State Ethics in Public Service Act](#)
- [RCW 42.52.180 – Use of public resources for political campaigns](#)
- [Training: Ethics In Public Service Act](#)