



Policy on Campus Political Activity

March 25, 2008

Introduction

Recognizing our commitment to produce active citizens engaged in a full civic life, Widener seeks to reverse the trend towards civic apathy among American youth by encouraging participation in the political life of the community and exposing the campus to people whose call to public service creates a better world for us all.

At the same time, as a non-profit, private institution of higher education whose activities are regulated in part by Section 501C3 of the Internal Revenue Code, Widener University is prohibited from participating or intervening in any political campaign of a candidate for public office.

For those reasons, political activity on campus must support an educational purpose while avoiding direct appeals for fundraising or solicitations on behalf of campaign committees or candidates for elected office.

General

Elected officials are encouraged to visit Widener University in their formal capacity as public servants. Widener University may directly sponsor or indirectly support such visits without violating provisions of the Internal Revenue Code.

Candidates also are encouraged to visit Widener University. Visits must be sponsored by an officially constituted campus organization. Opportunities must be extended to viable opposition candidates allowing them to visit campus in comparable forums and timeframes.

Separately, political candidates and campaign committees may lease university facilities for partisan events; however, the Internal Revenue Code prohibition against fundraising on campus remains in effect. In addition, Widener University asserts the right to ensure at least 50 percent of the audience is reserved for Widener students, faculty, administration or guests.

Guideposts

The following guideposts outline acceptable political activity on our four campuses:

Presentations: Students, faculty, and staff 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, Widener University. Endorsement of a particular

candidate by an officially constituted campus group is not permissible. The University name and insignia may not appear on stationery or any other material used or intended to promote a particular candidate.

Candidates and Campaigning: An appearance by a candidate for public office on campus must be for an educational or informational talk to the University community and sponsored by an officially constituted campus organization. Appearances must be coordinated with the Office of the President to ensure that opportunities to appear on campus are extended to all viable candidates running for a particular office. The event should be moderated by a campus representative who should make it clear that Widener University neither supports nor opposes the candidate.* Candidate campaigning and fundraising, including the transmission of campaign materials over the Internet, is not allowed anywhere on University property without University permission. Posters and leaflets must be in accord with the Widener University policy for posting notices on campus.

Use of University Facilities and Resources: No political activities, including services and materials, may be paid for with University funds. The use of facilities and resources is subject to University scheduling policy. Campus organizations may use campus communications to announce political forums and discussions sponsored by officially constituted campus groups as long as the focus is on educational opportunities rather than fundraising, the solicitation of voters, the recruitment of campaign workers, or any other activity designed to further the campaign of any one candidate.

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

Posting Flyers: Posters, signs, notices, and flyers may be posted on designated sites on campus. All materials must bear the official Widener University stamp before being posted for a specific event or program.

* Disclaimer language for moderated events: *While neither supporting nor opposing our guest and his/her bid for elected office, Widener University is proud to present this educational opportunity for our campus to participate more fully in the political life of our community.*