

Registered Student Organizations Guidelines for Political Events

Division of Student Affairs

Registered Student Organizations Guidelines for Political Events

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro values freedom of speech and participation in the political process as fundamental rights guaranteed by the U. S. Constitution. *UNCG actively encourages registered student organizations and their members to be engaged citizens, including participation in the democratic process. In exercising this right, no University resources may be used.* For more information, please see the *UNC Policy Manual (Policy 300.5.1(4))* and the *UNC General Administration Guidelines Concerning Use of UNC Resources for Political Campaign Activities*.

Nonpartisan programs and events are events where there is either no political bias expressed or, if political bias is expressed, all sides get a fair and equal opportunity to express their views. Publicity cannot indicate University approval or endorsement of a candidate, party, platform, or issue in an election. Examples include:

- Voter registration activities.
- A debate where there are equal numbers of representatives from multiple views. Each “side” has the same opportunity to speak and to respond to questions.
- Issue-based public polls, conducted in a fair and unbiased manner (no “push polling”).
- Transportation or activities to encourage and support all UNCG community members to vote, regardless of affiliation or belief.
- A student organization circulating a fair and unbiased questionnaire to all candidates, compiling the results, and sharing the information with the campus. Results and presentation cannot contain editorial opinion or advocate for a specific candidate, platform, or party.
- A candidate appears on campus in their role as a public office-holder, not as a political candidate. The candidate may not reference the election or issues, and the sponsoring group may not mention or endorse a political candidate. The registered student organization must document and clearly state the non-political reasons for the invitation to campus (usually due to expertise, history of experience, celebrity, etc.).

Partisan events are campaign rallies, speeches and any other event designed to support one candidate or party. **Political fundraising events are not allowed on campus.** When partisan events are allowed, no fundraising may take place in connection with the event. Partisan events may be sponsored by recognized student organizations if costs associated with the partisan event are paid by the partisan partner (for example, paid by a political party, a political campaign office, or other non-university supporters) or, to the extent costs are paid by the student organization, then **student fees and other UNCG-provided funds cannot be used.** Students wishing to plan partisan events must comply with the policies referenced in these guideline and use the event contract process managed by Campus Activities and Programs, including notification to Campus Activities and Programs immediately upon the start of discussion of sponsorship with any campaign, political party, platform group, or similar political organization. Examples include:

- Forum to provide information designed to convince persons to vote a specific way on a candidate, party or issue.
- A “debate” where representatives from one ideology or affiliation speak but equal numbers of representatives from multiple views do not have the same opportunity to speak and to respond to questions.
- Events or activities sponsored by a political campaign office.

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- Activities, events, materials, programs, or publicity, conducted to influence policy, raise awareness on a specific issue in an election, support a candidate or party, or acquire resources for the same.
- Direct contact to solicit votes, identify supporters, or influence persons to vote a specific way on a candidate, platform, party, or issue (i.e., canvassing).

For all events:

1. So that there is as much lead time as possible for planning and coordination of University units, the student organization must notify Campus Activities and Programs as soon as possible.
2. All activities must comply with UNCG's policies, including *Outdoor Assemblies and Distribution/Petitioning* (http://policy.uncg.edu/outdoor_assemblies/) and may not interfere with or disrupt the teaching, research, and public service missions of the University or other normally conducted activities on campus.
3. Reservations, including tables at the EUC, may be made through the *Elliott University Center Reservations Office*.
4. Registered student organizations planning events must use the event contract process managed by *Campus Activities and Programs*.
5. Publicity cannot indicate University approval or endorsement of a candidate, party, platform, issue in an election or the event itself, without prior approval, in writing, from *Campus Activities and Programs*. Publicity shall identify the student group sponsoring the event. UNCG will be mentioned, if at all, only as the location of the event if the event is held on campus. Publicity may not include the following without prior approval, in writing, from *Campus Activities and Programs*:
 - a. University seal, UNCG logos, word marks, or other copyrighted images, including university-wide, athletic, or departmental images.
 - b. Letterhead or other material identified with UNCG.
 - c. Mascots, iconic photographs, or any other images or words which could lead a person to believe UNCG was endorsing or supporting a specific individual, party, platform, or issue in an election.