

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion Policy Regarding Political Campaigning

As an institution of higher learning, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion is committed to academic freedom, supports free expression of political views by members of its community, and promotes open dialogue about important issues in society. The College-Institute encourages its students, faculty and staff to exercise their rights of citizenship, including participation in the political life of their communities, the state and the nation, and to educate and involve themselves in world affairs.

As a non-profit organization, the College-Institute must nonetheless abide by federal tax law prohibitions with the provisions governing its tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code and ensure that activities engaged in by members of the College-Institute community or the college itself do not call into question the college's non-partisan, educational status. Federal statute stipulates that non-profit, tax-exempt institutions of higher education are prohibited from participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

This policy therefore contains guidelines governing the use of College-Institute affiliation and resources for political activities, the use of its facilities, services and personnel to promote, finance or support individuals, groups or organizations campaigning for public office. Nothing in this Policy is intended to limit the rights of students, faculty or staff to express personal opinions or to engage in political activity in their individual capacities and as private citizens.

1. The following guidelines and restrictions apply to campus involvement in political campaigns.

Every member of the College-Institute community has a right to participate or not, as he or she sees fit, in the electoral process. As an individual you are free to endorse, support, or oppose candidates. However, students, faculty and staff of the College should be careful to qualify that the opinions expressed are their own and do not represent the official position of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

No member of the College-Institute community should speak for or act in the name of the college in a political campaign or other partisan electoral activity.

Use of the college's name, letterhead, or logo for partisan electoral purposes such as the solicitation of funds or other contributions in support of a political party or candidate or the endorsement of candidates for public office is prohibited.

2. Every effort should be made to ensure that appearances of candidates for public office or their political representatives at college sponsored events have a substantive purpose and appear in their non-candidate capacity, and that such visits not be conducted solely as campaign rallies or events.

Candidates for office, including elected officials seeking reelection, that approach the college administration seeking opportunities to appear on campus and address the College-Institute community should accordingly be referred to the Vice President of Administration.

If a faculty member, administrative and/or academic department, or the college itself chooses to invite an individual candidate to speak, every attempt should be made to provide opposing candidates the same opportunity.

Members of the College-Institute community may not use college facilities, services, and college-sponsored events for campaign or party fund-raising activities.

College facilities, services, and college-sponsored events may not be used by outside organizations or outside individuals whose purpose is to further the cause of a candidate or political party.

3. The following restricts use of college resources for partisan electoral purposes.

Use of the campus mail service (other than U.S. mail), college mailing lists, college-provided office supplies, computers, telephones, facsimile machines, or copiers, for soliciting votes or campaign fund raising is prohibited.

Campaign workers, including students, faculty, and staff, are not permitted to engage in person-to-person solicitation of funds through the campus mail service. Any mail solicitation must be through the U.S. Postal Service only.

No display or distribution of political campaign materials, such as posters, notices, handbills, and banners intended to promote one candidate or party over another, or influence people how to vote are permitted.

Campus organizations and departments may use campus mail to publicize political forums and discussions but may not use the mail service to endorse, raise money for or otherwise promote a candidate for public office or a political person, organization or lobby.

Organized voter registration activities, voter education programs, and "get out the vote" drives are exempt from the provisions outlined above, provided no attempt is made to influence how people should vote, advance or oppose individual candidates for office or a political party or to promote a position on a public referendum or issue up for vote.

If you wish to obtain a copy of the academic freedom statement adopted by the Board of Governors, please contact Joni Askin (jaskin@huc.edu), Office of Human Resources, Cincinnati.