



Opinion of General Counsel

Opinion # 2012-02

Campus Political Activities

This opinion outlines and clarifies the University of Kentucky's policies regarding political activities on campus. While the UK campus is always a center of civic involvement and political discussion, there are federal and Kentucky law, as well as UK regulations, on political activities that may occur on the campus.

Subject to the exact language of the laws and the UK Regulations, these general guidelines *must* be followed:

1. University resources (buildings, facilities, email system, supplies, etc.) must not be used to endorse, promote or support any political candidate, political party, or ballot initiative.
2. University facilities may be used as a limited public forum to which all candidates are invited to participate.
3. Registered student organizations may use UK facilities for meetings of their organization and the organization may invite political candidate(s) to be their guests.
4. If a UK employee wishes to publicly support a political candidate, political party, or ballot initiative, the UK employee must be clear that he or she is acting as a private citizen, not as a UK employee.
5. Social media (My Space, Facebook, Twitter accounts, etc.) sites that are created and/or maintained by, or for, University units must avoid anything that might be considered as political campaigning. Social media accounts that are strictly personal---in your personal name and maintained personally by you from your home computer or personal laptop---may be used to express your personal political beliefs and may be used to engage in political campaigning. If you maintain a "professional" (non-UK) social media account, and use it routinely for UK-related activities such as communicating with students, you should also avoid anything that might be considered as political campaigning. Whether or not you can engage in political campaigning on a social media site that is your "professional" site depends on the extent to which your professional site is intermingled with your University position and work.

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) and more information on the subject of campus political activity are available at: <http://www.uky.edu/Legal/faq.htm>. For questions, please contact the Office of Legal Counsel at (859) 257-2936.

References:

Internal Revenue Code, Section 501(c)(3)

[Governing Regulation, Part I](#)

- Section D.2(c), Use of University Name
- Section D.2(d), Civic Responsibility of the Individual
- Section D.2(e), University Resources
- Section H, Use of University Facilities
- Section I, Political Activity