

THE FLORIDA POLYTECHNIC UNIVERSITY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

FPU-6.010 Employee Political Activity

(1) **Employee Duties During Work Hours.** University employees are encouraged to exercise their constitutional right to vote as well as to express their personal opinions about political candidates and issues. At the same time, the University expects that an employee will fulfill his or her duties in a manner consistent with the University's mission. The University requires that employees refrain from conducting any outside activities or political activities during the employee's work hours while employed at the University.

(2) **Employees may not Coerce.** Pursuant to Florida Statutes section 104.31, unless otherwise provided by law, an employee may not use his or her official authority or influence for the purpose of interfering with an election or a nomination of office or coercing or influencing another person's vote or affecting the result thereof, or directly or indirectly coerce or attempt to coerce, command, or advise any other officer or employee to pay, lend, or contribute any part of his or her salary, or any money, or anything else of value to any party, committee, organization, agency, or person for political purposes. Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit an employee from suggesting to another employee in a noncoercive manner that he or she may voluntarily contribute to a fund which is administered by a party, committee, organization, agency, person, labor union or other employee organization for political purposes.

(3) **Use of University Facilities.** University employees may not use University facilities (unless rented through Facilities under the same terms as provided to non-University employees under **FPU-1.011 Political Activity on Campus**), e-mail, logos, computers, printers, email, office space, University mailing lists, hyperlinks from the University web page to the candidate's web page, or University stationary on behalf of a political candidate or political issue, to avoid the appearance of University endorsement of or opposition to a candidate or issue.

(4) **Employee Running for Political Office.**

(a) The employee must obtain permission. Employees who wish to run for or hold public office must first comply with University regulation **FPU-6.008 Outside Employment and Outside Activities** and get permission from the President/designee to participate in the outside employment/activity.

(b) Determination that running for/holding office interferes with duties. If the President/designee determines the employee's activities related to running for and/or holding public office will interfere with the full discharge of the employee's duties, and the employee wishes to run for or hold public office despite such determination, the employee must obtain a leave of absence or submit a resignation.

(c) Determination running for/holding office does not interfere with duties. If the President determines the employee's activities related to running for and/or holding public office will not interfere with the full discharge of the employee's duties, the employee who wishes to run for public office must follow leave procedures when participating in political activities during the employee's work hours.

(d) Avoiding the appearance of an endorsement. In order to avoid the appearance of a University endorsement, the employee must not wear a University identification badge while campaigning.

(5) Employee Campaigning on Behalf of a Candidate.

(a) Employee must obtain permission. If an employee desires to campaign on behalf of a candidate or issue, that employee must comply with University regulation **FPU-6.008 Outside Employment and Outside Activities** and get permission to participate in the outside employment or activity.

(b) Avoiding the appearance of a University endorsement or opposition. When necessary to avoid confusion, the employee should make clear that he/she is expressing personal opinions—and not speaking in an official role or on the University’s behalf—when taking a position for or against a candidate or issue. For example, when making a public appearance on behalf of a candidate an employee should not wear a University identification badge.

(6) Penalties for Violations. Employees who violate this regulation are subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

Authority: Florida Statutes §§ 104.31 and 110.233 and Board of Governors regulation 1.001(5).

History: New 6.5.15