

Rules for Political Participation by the University
And its Schools, Divisions, Programs, and Centers,
And their respective Faculty, Staff and Student Groups/Clubs

GENERAL

- YU is an organization that is tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (a §501(c)(3) organization).
- As a §501(c)(3) organization, YU is not allowed to participate in “political campaign intervention.” A political campaign intervention is any action that supports or opposes a candidate for public office.
- YU may not make campaign contributions or issue endorsements of political candidates. This means that YU cannot display political signs in its public spaces or have employees distribute campaign materials.
- YU websites can link to a candidate’s website only if they provide a link to the sites of all candidates for that office and the links serve an educational purpose.
- Professors are permitted to discuss upcoming elections in class only if they do so for an educational purpose and refrain from expressing approval or disapproval of particular candidates or political parties.
- YU is permitted to take positions on issues of public policy and advocate for those positions. However, this advocacy cannot come in the form of supporting or opposing any candidate for public office.
- YU should avoid making statements on public policy issues in the times just before an election, especially if it does not routinely issue such statements.
- When participating in issue advocacy, it is best practice not to reference any political candidates or upcoming elections. This includes indirect references to candidates, such as descriptions of their political party or personal background.
- YU cannot allow a candidate to use its equipment or facilities unless other candidates are also allowed the same opportunity.
- Candidates may buy or lease equipment or facilities from YU as long as they do so on the same terms as the general public.
- These restrictions also apply to University centers and student groups/clubs.

FAQs

- **I am a YU manager/administrator or faculty or other staff member. I want to express my political beliefs. What can I do?**
 - You may comment on political campaigns only in your personal capacity, and you should state that you are not speaking on behalf of YU. See above for restrictions on faculty discussions during class.
 - You cannot use YU’s equipment, facilities, or employees to participate in political activity.
 - This includes not using YU email addresses, phones, and computers.
 - You should avoid any political activity while at work, during work hours, or on a work device.

- You should not make political endorsements or partisan statements at YU events or in YU communications.
- **I lead a University program/center or a student club/group, and we want to host an event featuring a candidate (including incumbents) for public office. Is this allowed?**
 - Yes, you can host an event with a candidate, but must follow these guidelines:
 - No political fundraising is permitted at the event.
 - If you are having the individual appear in their capacity as a candidate, you must provide opportunities for other candidates for the same office to speak at a similar campus event.
 - At the event, an organization representative should state that the event organizer/YU is not endorsing or opposing the candidate or their views.
 - What if the candidate is not appearing in their capacity as a candidate?
 - You may host an event featuring a candidate in another capacity: for example, to discuss their career in business or their work leading a community organization.
 - The candidate and event organizer should refrain from discussing the upcoming election.
 - A candidate may also want to attend an event open to the public: for example, a YU sports game. This is fine as long as they attend on the same terms as the general public.
 - What if our program/center or student club/group wants to host multiple candidates at once?
 - If you are hosting multiple candidates at once for an event, such as a public forum or debate, event organizers should be sure to give each candidate an equal platform to promote their views.
 - Any hosts or moderators must remain neutral.
- **Can YU host a voter registration drive?**
 - Yes! This is consistent with YU's mission as an educational organization.
 - Communications should encourage all people to register and vote, regardless of political affiliation.
 - Any assistance provided, such as distributing voter registration forms or transporting voters to polling places, should be provided to everyone on a nonpartisan basis.