

## **POLITICAL ACTIVITY POLICY**

### **General Policy**

Adler University is committed to the free and open discussion of ideas and opinions and strongly encourages all students, faculty and staff to exercise their right to fully participate in the political process.

Adler's status as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code prohibits the University itself from participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office. Political intervention includes not only making financial contributions but also the publication or distribution of written or oral statements on behalf of or in opposition to a particular candidate. Because of Adler's mission, values and long history of social justice, our community is afforded some latitude to advocate for political causes on the University level if the political activity is conducted within distinct parameters. Although no policy can cover every situation and should be examined on a case by case basis, the below parameters offer initial guidance to ensure that the University remains compliant with federal and state restrictions.

### **Issue Advocacy**

As an institution, Adler may take positions on public policy issues, including issues that divide candidates in an election for public office. However, as an institution, Adler must avoid any issue advocacy that functions as political campaign intervention. Avoiding political intervention while still advocating for issues can be achieved by:

- Avoiding favoring or opposing specific candidates
- Not identifying candidates by name
- Avoiding advocacy statements or actions issued near an election
- Not specifically referencing voting or an upcoming election.

### **Policy for Adler Events**

Adler's name, or those of an Adler campus, or department may not be used on any documents to endorse or oppose any candidate for elective public office. This prohibition applies to any entities supported in whole or part by Adler funds, such as registered student organizations.

Political forums, candidate speeches, and debates are allowed under the condition that no candidate either directly or indirectly receives an endorsement, preference, or support from Adler. The following guidelines apply:

- The agenda for the forum or debate should address a wide range of issues and be of significant interest to members of the Adler community.

- A non-partisan individual should serve as moderator and ensure that all ground rules are followed.
- The moderator should state, at the beginning and conclusion of the program, that the views expressed by the participants are their own and not those of Adler, and that sponsorship of the forum is not intended as an endorsement of any particular candidate.
- Participants should be allotted equal time in which to present their views and ideas. Selection criteria for participation must be non-partisan.
- For a primary election, all candidates for nomination by the party being represented at the forum should be invited to participate.
- Where a general election is the underlying contest for a forum or debate, a non-partisan candidate debate is permissible provided that at least two candidates are invited to participate, and the forum or debate does not promote or advance one candidate over another. Criteria for determining participation must be non-partisan.
- Forums or debates limited to mainstream parties are permissible.
- At the beginning of each political forum, candidate speech or debate, a representative of the sponsoring group or organization should deliver the following disclaimer: "This event is sponsored by \_\_\_\_\_. The use of Adler facilities for this event does not constitute an endorsement by the Adler. Adler does not endorse or oppose any candidate or organization in connection with this or any other political campaign or election."
- Politicians and individuals associated with political causes may speak and participate in events if their participation is not political (such as a graduation speaker).
- Voter education and registration activities are permissible so long as such activities are focused on increasing public understanding of the electoral process or encouraging participation in that process.
- Adler events organized around political issues instead of political candidates may be allowed provided that the issue is central to Adler's mission, vision, and values. Adler has a historical involvement with the issue and the event isn't timed to coincide with an election.

### ***Policy for Student Organizations***

Unlike Adler, recognized student organizations are not prohibited from using Adler facilities to host, sponsor and publicize an event on behalf of a single candidate provided the student organizations follow Adler procedure for reserving space and hosting an event AND Adler's facility is not already committed for university use.

Whenever a student organization hosts, sponsors, or publicizes an event on behalf of a political campaign or a political party, the sponsoring student organization must deliver a disclaimer explaining that the use of Adler facilities or resources for this event does not constitute an endorsement by Adler, the views of those invited to speak on campus are the views of the speaker and not of Adler, and that Adler does not endorse or oppose any candidate or organization in connection with this or any other political campaign or election.

However, no student organization or individual may:

- Use the name or seal of Adler or any of its campuses on letters or other written materials intended for support of a political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office, including the solicitation of funds for such purpose or activities.
- Use Adler resources, for political campaigns or solicitation of endorsement of, or opposition to, candidates for public office.
- Use Adler property for the placement of signs (including flyers, banners, posters, stickers, and chalking) of endorsement of, or opposition to, candidates for public office.
- Host a campaign rally at Adler facilities.

Any questions or inquiries in determining whether or not an activity comports with the federal and state requirements and/or Adler University policy should be directed to the Office of the General Counsel.