

CHANCELLOR'S PROCEDURES AND ILLUSTRATIVE GUIDANCE ON POLITICAL ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE VSC SYSTEM

November 2007

The following procedures and illustrative guidance apply to VSC colleges and programs:

A. Political Events Sponsored by the VSC

1. **Participation and Sponsorship.** Although the VSC is a public, tax-exempt institution and therefore may not endorse any candidate for political office, it may provide and sponsor opportunities to educate its students, faculty, employees and the public at large through candidate lectures, forums, debates and other similar events on campus.
2. **Procedures.**
 - a. **Approval.** A political event may be sponsored by a college or program if approved by the President or designee. If the event is a debate or forum, all announced candidates shall be invited to participate although attendance by all is not required. All candidates participating shall be invited to participate in any reception or other social event that may be associated with such events. If candidate lectures are desired, all candidates shall be invited to give a lecture. No preferential treatment shall be given candidates in terms of scheduling, facilities or publicity.
 - b. **Publicity.** Promotional material for VSC-sponsored political events may not state or imply that the VSC, or any official thereof, endorses a political candidate or organization.
 - c. **Costs, Expenses, Fees and Honoraria.** The VSC shall not charge candidates for use of facilities for VSC-sponsored events. No candidate or organization may be paid any compensation, honorarium or expenses. No admission fee may be charged. At such events, no fund-raising activities may be conducted and only non-partisan voter registration activities may take place.

B. Political Events Sponsored by VSC Recognized Groups and Organizations

- c. Disclaimer Statement. At the beginning of each political event, after the event is fully convened, the political candidate or his or her representative, or the sponsoring group or organization, shall deliver the following spoken disclaimer:

D. VSC Resources

VSC officials, students, faculty and other employees are prohibited from using VSC resources such as funds, vehicles, fax machines, duplicating equipment, supplies, services or mailing labels for political campaign purposes, except as otherwise may be permitted by Policy 501. In addition, the college logo, letterhead, symbols or other proprietary marks of institutional affiliation may not be used to endorse or oppose candidates, political parties or political campaigns.

E. Illustrative Guidance

Examples of permissible activities include:

- Non-partisan course work and assignments designed to educate students about the political process
- Non-partisan education or training programs created to enhance public understanding of the electoral process
- Student newspaper political editorials
- Public forums to which all candidates are invited and equal access and opportunity are provided
- Candidate appearances on college radio shows provided all announced candidates are invited
- Non-partisan candidate surveys or public opinion polls
- Personal, individual membership in a political party
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