HRM-011

Campaigning for and Serving in a Public Office

Effective Date Thursday, June 5, 2008

Status Final

Last Revised Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Policy Type University

Contact Office President (Office of the)

Oversight Executive
President of the University

Applies To Academic Division (Excludes the Medical Center).

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Reason for Policy

Assists the University in continuing to provide uninterrupted service should a faculty or staff member seek to serve in a position as an appointed or elected public official. The University is prohibited by federal tax law as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, from directly or indirectly providing resources to support a political campaign.

Definition of Terms

Terms

Description There are no terms that require definition.

Policy Statement

Faculty and staff members may campaign for themselves and serve in elective or appointive public office, provided their activities do not interfere with their University responsibilities and commitments or otherwise conflict with University policies. Faculty and staff members, however, must ensure that their campaigning and positions are neither misunderstood nor communicated as being endorsed by the University either directly or inferentially. University resources (including, but not limited to, University letterhead, email accounts, equipment, and staff) may be used to support only the mission of the institution.

1. **Faculty Responsibilities:**
   Faculty are expected to inform their immediate supervisor, dean, and, if applicable, vice president in a timely fashion prior to seeking election to or campaigning for public office, so that the University may ensure that instructional and other duties will at all times be properly performed and managed.

   A leave of absence for personal reasons may be authorized if the campaign requires either more time than would customarily be allowed for consulting activity, or for protracted absences from Charlottesville or other regular University worksite. Such leave may be given for the duration of an election campaign or a term of office, on timely application, and for a reasonable period of time upon approval by the immediate supervisor, dean, and the responsible vice-president. The terms of such leave will be set forth in writing and will not affect unfavorably the tenure status of a faculty member; the time spent on such leave will not count toward the probationary period for faculty on the tenure track. A leave of absence shall be without pay, though a faculty member may credit such time against available annual leave.

2. **Staff Responsibilities:**
   Staff members are expected to inform their immediate supervisor in a timely fashion prior to seeking election to public office. Staff members are expected to limit campaigning to off-duty hours; any campaign activity engaged in during work hours must be charged to personal leave or unpaid leave subject to supervisor approval. If elected, the term must be served during off-duty hours or must be charged to personal leave or unpaid leave subject to supervisor approval.

3. **Compliance with Policy:**
   Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination in accordance with relevant University policies.

   Direct questions about this policy to the Office of the President.

Procedures

Requesting University Leave
University Staff Leave without Pay

Related Information

Political Activity
EXT-003: Communicating with Government Officials
FIN-054: Employee Obligation to Report Potential Conflicts of Interest
HRM-003: Employment of Administrative or Professional General Faculty Members, Section IV.D Consulting Activities
HRM-013.01: Paid Leave for University Staff Employees
HRM-033: Employment of Professional Research Staff
HRM-038: Faculty Leaves
HRM-045: Faculty External Consulting and Internal Overload
PROV-017: Promotion and Tenure Policy
Classified Staff Annual Leave - Policy 4.10
Classified Staff Leave without Pay - Policy 4.45

Policy Background

This policy was originally issued in the BOV minutes 6/2/1978.

Major Category Human Resource Management

Next Scheduled Review Saturday, September 16, 2028

Revision History

Confirmed 9/16/25; Added Compliance section 7/20/21; Updated 10/3/16.

Supercedes Policy Text

University policy on Campaigning for and Serving in an Elected Public Office, University Board of Visitors, June 1978.

Approved By Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

Approved Date Thursday, June 5, 2008