

Guidelines for Political Candidate Visits to Cleveland State University

Prepared by the Department of Student Life with counsel from Legal Affairs (Fall 2008).

Cleveland State University (CSU) is committed to the expression of a wide range of ideas and opinions and to their free discussion. As an instrumentality of the State of Ohio, CSU may not act in any way to support a particular political candidate, party, or issue. Furthermore, CSU's integrity as a place of open inquiry prohibits it from advocating any particular idea. Therefore, CSU is committed to maintaining the rights and dignity of all, particularly in relation to political partisanship. Political campaign activities will be limited to the discourse of ideas among candidates and the audience. CSU has developed these guidelines and procedures to facilitate the fair and efficient hosting of political events.

Officially recognized student organizations in good standing may host a political event, but must follow these guidelines in order to host a political candidate or organization at Cleveland State:

- Candidates for a national, congressional, or statewide office who officially have filed in Ohio will be eligible for an invitation
- The hosting student organization must notify the Dean of Students in writing of the date, time, location and political candidate it is hosting no less than 15 working days in advance of the visit
- Subsequent invitations will be sent by Cleveland State University to provide an equal opportunity to other candidates to appear at a comparable event within a comparable time frame
- No admission fees can be charged
- No political fundraising events can be held at CSU
- No campaign literature should be distributed
- No compensation will be paid to a candidate
- Candidates will cover their own travel expenses, costs of personal/travel security**, and rental fees for facilities
- Candidates will not have access to campus email/mailbag/distribution lists
- These events should be open to the entire campus community and to the public at large, however it is necessary abide by fire code capacity rules
- Student organizations hosting a political candidate will attend an *Events Management Committee* meeting through the Department of Student Life in order to pre-plan for a safe and effective event which abides by all university policies and procedures no less than 10 working days before the event
- Debates should include all qualified candidates.
- Forums offer candidates a setting for delivering their message, for receiving feedback from the campus audience, and for an open airing of ideas. When hosting a forum, the CSU host organization should follow these guidelines:

- Forums need not include all candidates at the same time but can include a “series” of individual events
- Should invite/include all eligible candidates for political office
- Should be moderated in a neutral manner by a member of the campus community
- All candidates should have equal time to address the audience
- Audience members should be given an opportunity to pose questions to all candidates
- The host organization may make a non-partisan announcement inviting the campus community
- Candidates for a national, congressional, or statewide office who officially have filed in Ohio may request to have a forum on campus. When considering the request, University officials will take into account ongoing operations and previously scheduled demands on space, time and other resources. Candidates will cover their own travel expenses, costs of all security** and any other associated costs.

****Personal/Travel Security vs. Campus-based Security**

When the invited candidate is high profile or a current government official requiring specific security protocol, the University will not assume responsibility for the expense of certified police officers from the CSU police department or any other law enforcement/security agency. CSU will make all best efforts to accommodate each candidate’s security needs so long as they are duly communicated in advance of the visit. CSU will also provide a cost estimate for security staffing that exceeds the institution’s provided coverage and will expect payment in full for security services immediately prior to the speaking engagement on the date of the visit.

Related Cleveland State University Policies & Procedures:

PUBLIC FREE SPEECH AND INFORMATION AREA

The use of the Science Research outdoor Plaza located at 2351 Euclid Avenue is available to individuals or organizations wanting to exchange opinions as a freedom of speech location, or a non-commercial, informational-only program. The space must be scheduled with the Conference Services and shall be governed by all of the applicable provisions contained herein. Distribution by hand of literature or flyers, and the presence of information solicitors, is also limited to the Science Research outdoor Plaza area. The individual or organization cannot move to indoor facilities due to inclement weather. No individual or organization utilizing the Science Research outdoor Plaza may interfere with the normal daily activities of recognized official University related activities.

USE OF UNIVERSITY FUNDS

(Student Organization Involvement Guide III.D.2.b.2 ; pg. 22)

No money may be allocated by Student Government Association or Student Bar Association for political purposes. Political is defined as anything pertaining to

candidates, activities, and issues which either appear on a ballot or are directly involved in any public election. Political shall also be defined as lobbying activities on behalf of a private interest.

USE OF UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

Student organizations wishing to use university facilities for political events must follow the guidelines and regulations as outlined by CSU Conference Services. For additional information, facility availability and costs, contact Conference Services at Administration Center, Room 104, 2300 Euclid Avenue 216.523.7203 or online at <https://mycsu.csuohio.edu/services/conferenceservices/>