

Carthage College Policy on Political Campaigns, Candidates, and Events

As an institution of higher education, Carthage College prepares and strongly encourages our students, faculty, and staff to involve themselves in world affairs and to exercise fully the rights of citizenship, including participating in the political life of their communities, the state, and the nation. Carthage College also works to educate students about voter registration and ways to engage in the democratic process and is recognized as a Voter-Friendly Campus by the Campus Vote Project.

Carthage College is not affiliated with any political party or group. As a private 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, Carthage College is prohibited from directly or indirectly participating in, or intervening in, any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Political Campaign and Fundraising Activities

- Carthage College may not endorse, recommend, or otherwise indicate political support for or against any candidate for an elected office, or for any current holder of such an office.
- Carthage College may not sponsor campaign events, or coordinate voter education activities with candidate campaign events. A "campaign event" is any event at which individuals are solicited to support a candidate for public office.
- Carthage College officials, administrators, faculty, and staff are not authorized to make public statements on behalf of Carthage College in support of or opposition to a political campaign or candidate for public office, either explicitly or implicitly.
- Carthage College officials, administrators, faculty, and staff are not authorized to use College resources in support of, or in opposition to, a political campaign or candidate for public office.
- As employees of a private 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, Carthage College officials, administrators, faculty, and staff are prohibited from campaigning for or against a political candidate while on duty and/or serving in the capacity of their college role. Prohibited activities include, but are not limited to, soliciting votes for a candidate, wearing campaign promotional items (such as T-shirts or buttons), and displaying political/campaign material in offices and on doors/windows. These restrictions apply on campus, when teaching Carthage classes or participating in College- or College-related meetings virtually, and when otherwise representing Carthage in an official role.
- Employees who engage in political activities as private citizens must not use their official title or Carthage status to imply, either explicitly or implicitly, that the college is taking a position.
- Carthage College faculty members may invite elected officials and/or candidates for elected office to speak to their classes if such a visit is part of the curriculum and the official/candidate is speaking in a non-campaigning capacity. Faculty hosting such a guest speaker should not mention the official/candidate's candidacy or the upcoming election.

- Carthage College faculty and staff may write editorials and/or speak on political topics and concerns, but they must state that the opinions being expressed are personal and not the opinions of Carthage College. This statement may not be necessary in academic journals and other specific publications/settings. Please consult with the Office of Marketing and Communications to determine if a statement is needed and statement phrasing. There are several factors the College will consider in making this determination including how directly it is focused on political campaigns or politicians and whether the publication is academic or popular press.
- Carthage College is prohibited from making any contributions to political campaign funds, or from using College funds, supplies, or equipment for political fundraising purposes.
- Carthage College facilities may not be used for fundraising or campaign events, rallies, or celebrations for candidates or political parties. Activities or expenditures that advocate for a specific candidate or political campaign are not allowed.
- Facilities may be used for political meetings, provided the meetings are not affiliated with a particular party or campaign, provided they do not interfere with regularly scheduled College functions, provided the events are free and open to the student body, and provided that sponsors pay in advance the regular fee for the use of the facilities and all costs associated with additional needs related to the event, such as increased Public Safety or other law enforcement, shuttles, cleaning, rentals, etc. See Carthage College Facility Use Policy for more details.

Other Political Activities

The College supports and protects the freedoms of speech, expression, petition, peaceful assembly, and association. Students, faculty, and staff are welcome to communicate and share their political views through conversation and respectful debate at all times.

The following guidelines pertain to any/all political events requested to take place on the Carthage College campus:

- External candidates for office, political office holders, and campaign surrogates/affiliates are not allowed to campaign on campus.
- Political debates may be held on campus with prior approval from the Office of Student Life and the Office of the Provost, provided that space is available, that the event will not conflict with or disrupt other campus activities, that a security plan is approved in advance, and that all related expenses are paid for by the event organizer.
- Student organizations that are currently registered with the Office of Student Involvement may invite candidates for political office or current officeholders to speak at meetings of their organization, provided that the visit is not a campaign event. Groups that bring a candidate to campus are responsible for all expenses incurred during the visit related to the speaker (including security). The burden for all costs is on the inviter and candidate; expenses cannot be paid with College funds. All guests/invitations must be approved by the Office of Student Life before they are invited/issued.

- No College-derived funding may be used to conduct political activities or to make political contributions.
- Political campaign materials and/or messages may not be displayed or distributed on campus grounds or placed in common areas on campus, including on Kissing Rock, automobile windshields, utility poles, etc. Current Carthage students, and student organizations that are currently registered with the Office of Student Involvement, may request permission from the Office of Student Involvement to have an informational table in approved locations and times at which they can peacefully and respectfully promote their political issues and candidates.
- Campus mail and email systems are not to be used to distribute political campaign materials.
- Use of Carthage College symbols and insignia is not permitted for any political event.
- Promotional material for the political event may not state or imply that Carthage College endorses a political candidate, a political organization, or a political position.
- Carthage College reserves the right to decline requests to speak on our campus for any reason.

Members of the campus community should act in a manner consistent with the Carthage College conduct policies.

Please direct questions regarding political campaign activity on campus to the Office of the Provost.

For more information, please refer to the [American Council on Education Brief on Campaign-Related Activities](#) (2024)

Institutional Policy Effective Sept. 3, 2024.