

CAMPAIGNING, CANVASSING AND PETITION DRIVES ON THE MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

- GUIDELINES -

Michigan State University encourages students to be informed about and participate in the political process. A number of political activities are permissible on the campus so long as the normal and on-going educational functions and services of the University are maintained. The following detailed guidelines govern campaigning, canvassing and petitioning drives on the Michigan State University campus.

These statements of prohibited and/or required activities are drawn from existing documents such as: Article 9 of the Student Rights and Responsibilities (SRR) document; Outside Speakers Policy; Policy on University Facilities and Services (including fundraising activities); Ordinance 31.00 Signs.

As referred to in this document, “political activities” include:

- 1) Campaigning – for an issue or a candidate which appears or will appear on a duly constituted ballot for a University, local, state, or national election.
- 2) Petition drives – to place an issue on a duly constituted ballot, to seek a recall, to have a referendum.
- 3) Canvassing – direct personal contact with individual voters to solicit their political support or opinions.
- 4) Voter registration

These guidelines are based on, and subject to, existing University Ordinances, policies, and regulations. No part of these guidelines may be taken as an abridgment of current ordinances or regulations. It should be understood that University Ordinances have the stature of law and are equally applicable to all persons “coming upon land governed by the Board of Trustees.”

University policies and regulations apply specifically to members of the University community. It is hoped that all candidates, campaign workers, and canvassers who are not members of the University community will respect the guidelines as established and conduct their activities accordingly.

Further information or clarification on matters covered below may be requested from Student Life, 101 Student Services Building, Michigan State University (telephone: 517-355-8286) or Residence Education and Housing Services, G-60 Wilson Hall (telephone: 517-884-4996).

I. REGISTRATION OF OUTSIDE SPEAKERS

- A. Registered student organizations may sponsor a group or individual to speak on campus according to the Outside Speakers Policy. Registration is not required for individuals who are speaking or campaigning in outdoor areas of campus open to the general public.

II. POSTERS AND SIGNS

- A. Posters may be placed on non-departmental bulletin boards in all classroom and office buildings, and on outdoor bulletin boards, without prior permission and sponsorship of students and/or registered student organizations. Posters placed in other locations within these buildings are not permitted and may be removed. It is recommended that posters not exceed 12" x 18".

B. Residence Halls

1. Public Access Areas

There are public posting bulletin boards in the residence halls. To place items on these bulletin boards, located in the public access areas, simply enter the residence hall during open access hours and place your item on the public posting board. The size of posters and notices cannot exceed 12" by 18".

2. Living Areas

In addition to the public posting bulletin boards in the residence halls, there are also bulletin boards throughout the halls in the living areas. These bulletin boards are the property of Residence Education and Housing Services. To post on these boards, follow the guidelines below:

- The posting of signs, handbills, and flyers in the residence halls is limited to Michigan State University staff, registered student organizations, and other groups approved by REHS staff.
- If you meet the above outlined criteria, please drop your pre-counted signs off at the residence hall business office, and the residence hall staff will post your signs for you on the bulletin boards in the residence halls.
- The size of posters and notices cannot exceed 12" by 18".
- The sponsor and/or source of the sign, handbill, or flyer must be clearly identified to REHS staff in order to establish that the posting is on behalf of MSU staff, a registered student organization, or other approved group.

- C. Banners, posters, and notices may not be attached to the exterior of any University building or any University facility, including utility poles. In addition, banners, posters, and notices may not be placed inside a University building in such a fashion as to create a fire or safety hazard.
- D. A-frames and sandwich boards (with or without posters) may be placed on University property if they are sponsored by a registered student organization, do not exceed 3' x 5', and the location has prior approval from the Office of Campus Planning and Administration (telephone: 517-355-9582). Approval of location will be for a maximum of seven days and this approval should be sought at least five class days prior to placement to allow time for notification of the appropriate University departments.
- E. Posters on sticks are not permitted on University property because of damage to grass, sod, and potential injury to pedestrian traffic.

III. LEAFLETS AND HANDBILLS

- A. Leaflets and handbills which are free and do not contain advertising for commercial products, services, or activities may be distributed by anyone, including non-students and non-student organizations.
- B. The following time, place, and manner restrictions apply to distribution of leaflets and handbills on campus. Non-students and non-student organizations are expected to observe these same guidelines.
 - 1. Hand-to-hand distribution in the public areas of classroom and office buildings is permitted as long as it does not interfere with scheduled University activities or disrupt University services.
 - 2. When special activities (lectures, concerts, etc.) are scheduled, the sponsor of the special activity will determine if hand-to-hand distribution may take place at the event.
 - 3. Distribution, either hand-to-hand or from a table or booth, is permitted outside of campus buildings as long as it does not interfere with use of streets, sidewalks, or building entrances.
 - 4. Literature may be placed in the “free will pick-up” distribution racks located in the main lobby of each residence hall.
- C. Spartan Stadium Rules
 - 1. Distribution may not take place in the concourse or inside of the stadium during an athletic event.

2. Distribution outside of the stadium is permitted hand-to-hand if it does not cause interference or disruption to the flow of traffic either to or from the event.
3. Areas for tables and booths will be designated by Student Life, in consultation with other appropriate offices, on the basis of traffic and safety control.

IV. GENERAL DINING HALL AND RESIDENCE HALL GUIDELINES

- A. Petitioning, campaigning, canvassing, solicitation, and distribution of materials for non-revenue-producing purposes is prohibited in dining halls.
- B. Petitioning, campaigning, canvassing, solicitation, and distribution of materials for non-revenue-producing purposes is prohibited at any time that a residence hall is not open to the public.
- C. All individuals who are not a resident of that specific hall are subject to visitation and guest policies and must have a resident of the hall serve as an escort. Each resident can have up to three guests at one time. The escort must accompany their guests during the entire time they are in the residence hall.
- D. Petitioners, campaigners, canvassers, solicitors and distributors must observe the wishes of residents who post their rooms, "No Solicitors or Distributors."

The foregoing restrictions are designed solely to protect the safety, security and privacy of residents. They are not to be considered as prohibiting or discouraging solicitation for non-revenue producing purposes in the residence halls.

Aside from enforcement of the foregoing restrictions, university staff shall in no way prohibit legitimate petitioning, campaigning, canvassing, solicitation, or distribution for non-revenue producing purposes, censor materials to be distributed, or otherwise interfere with individuals or groups engaged in such activity.

V. VOTER REGISTRATION IN UNIVERSITY RESIDENCE HALLS

Access to the living areas of residence halls is limited to residents and authorized University personnel in order to enhance the safety and security of the student residents. Individuals may engage in voter registration activities in the public areas of University facilities, subject to all applicable residence hall policies. Residents of University-operated residence halls may conduct voter registration activities in the living areas of their own residence hall, provided that all applicable university guidelines are followed.

Students who have been sworn in as deputy registrars for the purpose of registering residence halls students as voters in East Lansing or Meridian Township should coordinate time, place, and manner of their efforts with the Community Director. Consideration should be given to the privacy of the individual students when canvassing or soliciting for voter registration. It is

recommended that the deputy registrar reserve a table in a public location in the residence hall. Table reservations can be made through Destination State.

VI. FUNDRAISING

- A. All fundraising activities must be sponsored by student governing groups, registered student organizations, or living unit organizations.
- B. All fundraising activities must be registered according to the appropriate policies and must follow any applicable time, place, and manner restrictions.

VII. USE OF UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

- A. Individual candidates, including students and University employees, may reserve University facilities for individual campaign purposes (speeches, informal meetings, etc.). Reservations can also be made by registered student organizations, living units, and/or major governing groups. The sponsoring organization is responsible for any charges that might be incurred.
- B. University facilities requested by registered student organizations sponsoring a candidate or political activity must be reserved through Student Life. All other groups must request the use of University facilities through the Office of the Secretary to the Board of Trustees.
- C. Registered student organizations, including residence hall councils, may invite candidates to residence halls, room reservations must be made through procedures as established by Destination State.
- D. Requests for the use of residence hall facilities should be submitted to Destination State for their approval at least 7 days in advance of the date of the event. An approved Activity Planning Form (APF) must be secured from Student Life prior to making contact with Destination State.
 - 1. Requests will not be denied on the basis of the candidates or sponsoring organization's beliefs, goals, or attitudes.
 - 2. In reviewing and granting these requests, residence halls will grant equal opportunity to use facilities to the extent that such facilities are available.
 - 3. Residence halls are encouraged to sponsor forums so that students may have contact with all of the candidates at one time.

VIII. OUTDOOR EVENTS, INCLUDING THE USE OF PUBLIC ADDRESS EQUIPMENT AND BULLHORNS, AND PARADES

- A. These events must be sponsored by registered student organizations or living unit organizations.
- B. These events require special permission and Student Life (101 Student Services Building, telephone: 517-355-8286) should be contacted regarding the procedures for obtaining permission and the guidelines for conducting such events. Since some permissions require the approval of other University departments, inquiries and discussion of plans should be initiated at least five class days prior to the event.

IX. OTHER IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Individuals engaged in campaigning, ballot initiatives, and other political activities should be familiar with the following documents located on the website of the Office of Governmental Affairs:

- Use of MSU Facilities for Political Activities
- Participation in Campaigns and Ballot Measures
- Faculty Participation in Partisan Politics

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