

NIPISSING UNIVERSITY

Policy Category:	General
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Policy Name:	Policy on Political Activities and Events
Responsible Department:	President and Vice-Chancellor
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Approval Authority:	Board of Governors
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A. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to encourage university community participation in the public discourse and contribution to important policy debates, and to provide parameters for the university community to ensure that participation in political activities is done in compliance with all current collective agreements in effect at Nipissing University as well as all relevant Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) policies regarding charitable organizations and political activity. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as an abridgement of any related articles in current collective agreements or the Nipissing University Act (1992).

B. Scope

This policy covers Faculty and staff participation in partisan political activities; attendance at partisan political events; fundraising or political contributions; and the use of university facilities, premises and resources for partisan political activities.

C. General Principles

Nipissing University is committed to free and open discussion and the exchange of ideas and opinions on issues that affect the wider community, including the expression of political views, within its campus. Nipissing University encourages students, faculty and staff to exercise their civic rights to participate as individuals in the political process. Our status as an institution of

higher education puts our faculty members in a position to provide expert commentary on local, provincial and federal issues, and to make meaningful contributions to public debate on a variety of wide-reaching public policy issues.

Without limiting the forgoing, as a registered charitable organization, we must also operate within the applicable federal legislation relating to charities and political activity. As such, Board members, employees and officers of the University cannot, either in their official capacity or at the University's expense, engage in certain types of partisan political activity.

Links to the relevant CRA and University documents are provided at the end of this policy.

Definitions:

For the purposes of this policy:

Partisan political activities shall be defined as per CRA Policy Statement CPS-022: A partisan political activity is one that involves direct or indirect support of, or opposition to, any political party or candidate for public office.

Staff are defined as full time and part time members of OPSEU, full time and part time Administrative staff, and Administrative contract employees of the University.

Faculty are defined as members of either the Nipissing University Faculty Association (NUFA) or the Contract Academic Staff Bargaining Unit (CASBU)

Board Members are defined as per the Nipissing University Act (1992) and all subsequent amendments.

D. Policy

1. Participation in Political Activities

Curricular activities and university-sponsored fora on public issues with education as the main focus shall be encouraged.

Candidate forums or debates may be held on campus as part of the University's educational mission, as long as all qualified candidates are invited to participate.

Faculty, Staff and Board members may freely engage in comment on political issues or public policy as individuals, but shall refrain from purporting to be presenting the official position of the University. If a faculty, staff or board member is listed as a supporter of a political campaign or initiative it should be without mention of institutional affiliation or with a disclaimer indicating that their actions and statements are their own and not those of Nipissing University.

3. Attendance at Political Events

As per CRA policy commentary CPC 001 (1992), attendance by registered charity officials, in their official capacity, at a fundraising dinner for a politician is not acceptable because it conveys the impression of partisan political activity by a registered charity. Faculty, staff, students and board members are free to attend partisan political activities and events as long as no university resources are devoted to their attendance, and they do not purport to represent the University in an official capacity at such events.

4. Fundraising or Political Contributions

University funds, including but not limited to operating funds, external grants and donated funds may not be used to make contributions to a registered political party, a registered constituency association, or a registered political candidate.

5. Use of University Facilities, Premises and Resources for Political Activities

Political parties shall be eligible to occasionally use University facilities provided that such facilities are booked and paid for through appropriate university office(s) responsible for booking facilities, and the same terms that are available to any group wishing to use University space.

Funds or contributions for political candidates or campaigns may not be solicited in the name of Nipissing University or on any university campus, except in that part of a campus space which the candidate or party has rented according to the University policy. University resources may not be used in soliciting political donations.

The use of the University name, letterhead or logo or other identifying mark for partisan political purposes such as solicitation of funds or other support of a political party or candidate or the endorsement of candidates for public office is specifically prohibited.

Links to Documents Cited in this Policy:

Nipissing University Collective Agreements and Staff Guidelines:

<http://www.nipissingu.ca/departments/human-resources/employee-relations/Pages/default.aspx>

Nipissing University Act:

<http://www.nipissingu.ca/about-us/governance/board-of-governors/Pages/Nipissing-University-Act.aspx>

Canada Revenue Agency

Political Activities Policy Statement

Reference number CPS-022

Effective date September 2, 2003

<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/plcy/cps/cps-022-eng.html#N10234>

Political Party's Use of Charity's Premises: Policy Commentary

Reference number CPC-007

Release Date October 14, 1992

<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/plcy/cpc/cpc-007-eng.html>

Attendance at a Political Fundraising Dinner: Policy Commentary

Release date February 6, 1990

Reference number CPC-001

<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/plcy/cpc/cpc-001-eng.html>