

University of Florida
GUIDELINES FOR FACULTY AND STAFF ON LOBBYING POLICY

The University's policy on lobbying Florida state officials is based on FS11.061 and "Joint Rules of the Florida Legislature 2016-2018," Section 1.1. As citizens, all individuals have free speech rights that allow them to "lobby" government officials regarding public issues. However, as state employees, all faculty and staff are under more stringent requirements, and the courts have placed some restrictions on free speech. The University's policy on lobbying is intended to protect both UF and employees. It is not intended to squelch free speech or discourage civic engagement on campus.

The following general guidelines may be helpful as employees seek to exercise their rights under the first amendment while at the same time respecting the legal restrictions placed on state employees.

1. Political action or "lobbying" can be defined as attempting to persuade state government officials, via any medium (signing petitions, organizing or participating in demonstrations, distributing fliers, political fund raising, etc.).
2. Employees may volunteer for and engage in political activities *on their own time (including leave time)*, using their own computer, FAX machine, or other equipment, via a non-UF server.
3. Employees may not use any UF listservs, computers, telephones, etc., to encourage colleagues to take political action, or to contact government officials for the purposes of lobbying. Employees may not use their UF email for political action.
4. Faculty may discuss politics in and outside of the classroom within the educational context of teaching a course or doing research.
5. Faculty should not direct students to volunteer for or engage in political action as part of a course requirement.
6. Employees should not engage in political activities during UF's regular business hours, which essentially are 8:00-5:00 Monday-Friday. You may use vacation time for this purpose.
7. At any time employees are engaged in political action, they should make it clear they speak for themselves and not for UF. Provide a disclaimer that makes it clear that your actions or remarks are your own and not those of UF. UF employees may not engage in any lobbying that conflicts with University lobbying goals.
8. If you wish to engage in lobbying activities on behalf of a non-UF organization or association, this should be disclosed on your outside activities form for a conflicts assessment. Approval must be received from your department chair and dean prior to commencing such activities.

Resources:

2017 UF Lobbying Policy: <https://administrativememo.ufl.edu/2017/02/2017-lobbying-memo/>
Florida Statute 11.061: http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0000-0099/0011/Sections/0011.061.html

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“Joint Rules of the Florida Legislature 2016-18”:

<https://www.flsenate.gov/PublishedContent/ADMINISTRATIVEPUBLICATIONS/JointRules.pdf>

AAUP Statement on Academic Freedom: <https://www.aaup.org/academic-freedom-students-and-professors-and-political-discrimination>