



Dear Students:

Last week, a number of political messages were chalked on the sidewalks in and around the Lincoln Park campus by two registered student organizations. Similar chalk messages have appeared at other campuses around the country as part of an orchestrated effort by national political groups. The messages included partisan political slogans and phrases, as well as direct support of certain candidates for president.

While these chalk messages are part of national agendas in a heated political battle, they appeared on campus at a time of significant racial tension in our country and on college campuses. DePaul is no exception. The university has been addressing campus climate issues in an effort to provide an inclusive and supportive educational environment. In this context, many students, faculty and staff found the chalk messages offensive, hurtful and divisive.

These messages raise complex issues which interact with each other: providing an inclusive and supportive educational environment, DePaul's mission and Vincentian values, the importance of freedom of expression in the academic enterprise, and civic involvement in the national election process. Given these complexities, it is important to clarify university policies and institutional actions.

Political Campaigning Activities on Campus

Consistent with our educational mission, we promote and encourage students' engagement in the political process. However, as a 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit organization, the university is significantly limited in the types of political activities it can promote or support. In accordance with federal regulations, DePaul may not engage in any activity in support of or opposition to any candidate for public office, federal, state or local. In practice, this means no partisan political advertising may be conducted on campus that could in any way be attributed to DePaul University. Additional information is provided in the [Political Campaigning Activities](#) policy in the DePaul University Policies & Procedures Manual.

Questions concerning any campus activities associated with political campaigns or parties should be directed to the [Office of Student Involvement](#). In order to provide some clarification, listed below are several illustrative, but not exhaustive, examples of activities, some permitted and some not.

- Individual students may wear political paraphernalia such as t-shirts, hats, buttons, stickers, etc.
- Students may display campaign signs, flyers or posters in their personal room in a manner not visible to the public: so, not on a window or exterior door.
- Students may form partisan political student organizations, if properly registered with the

Office of Student Involvement, to hold meetings and events to inform and educate interested members of the campus community.

- Registered student organizations may set up tables for political candidates in the Student Center to provide literature and political information to the campus community.

However, these tables must clearly indicate that the information and materials provided do not reflect the views or opinions of DePaul University.

- Students or student organizations may not post partisan political flyers, posters, signs or images on University bulletin board, buildings, electronic message boards, forums or sidewalks. This includes chalking on campus property.

DePaul University may remove any materials it determines is in violation of these policies and will

in [Father Holtschneider's message](#) to the campus community on March 30, 2016.

Maintaining an inclusive campus environment, and helping all community members feel welcome in this context, takes constant work and reflection. DePaul is an outstanding community, fully committed to this work, and I am certain that we can vigorously enter into this moment of public debate and attend to one another in the process.

Eugene L. Zdziarski, II, Ph.D.
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