
POLITICAL CANDIDATE AND ELECTED OFFICIAL VISIT PROTOCOLS

Introduction

Promoting civic engagement and preparing our students for such engagement is a Winthrop University priority and institutional value. In past election cycles, Winthrop University has been fortunate to host a variety of national, state, and local political candidates and office holders.

These visits have provided unparalleled opportunities for Winthrop University students, faculty and staff, and the Rock Hill community to interact with and to learn from these individuals. Such events are consistent with Winthrop University's mission to serve the state of South Carolina through education and community engagement.

This policy provides guidance for the campus community related to:

- Sponsorship
- Invitations and Queries from Candidates and Public Officials
- Cultural Event Designation
- Communicating Institutional Neutrality
- Facilities and Setup
- Media Relations
- Security and Parking Protocols
- Community Participation
- Cost Sharing
- Review process

Sponsorship

Different protocols are required for especially prominent officials and candidates (governor, US senators and representatives, and US presidential candidates) than for other officials and candidates [statewide office holders and candidates (other than at the gubernatorial level) and local officials and candidates]. These protocols are as follows:

Type A: Campus visits or campaign stops by prominent officials and/or candidates

Visits by the following individuals or individuals of comparable status not listed are coordinated by the Office of the President or a proxy:

- Presidential candidates or surrogates campaigning on their behalf (e. g., family members, other office holders, campaign staff)
- Other national executive office holders (e.g., President, Vice President, Cabinet, etc.)
- Governor or gubernatorial candidates
- US Senator or US Senate candidates
- US Representative or US House of Representatives candidates
- Members of a state legislative caucus traveling as a group (e.g., the South Carolina Black Legislative Caucus)

Upon receipt of the request, the Office of the President will notify the Political Science Department; University Communications and Marketing; University Events; West Forum; and Winthrop Police Department about the visit.

Type B: Campaign visits by state and local candidates and officials

Visits by the following individuals or individuals of comparable status not listed are coordinated typically by an academic department:

- Other state level office holders and candidates (e.g., Superintendent of Education)
- Local office holders and candidates

University Sponsorship

University departments and programs may not sponsor or cosponsor partisan political events (i.e. Democratic candidate debates) or campaign stops. Student groups, with the assistance/oversight of their advisor, however, may sponsor such events at their discretion. University employees may assist with the planning and execution of such events.

Student Group Sponsorship

Student organizations are encouraged to sponsor events and to solicit assistance from the appropriate university office. However, no student is allowed to take sole responsibility for arranging events. Individual students should not be primarily or solely responsible for arranging events with prominent candidates and office holders and shall inform the Office of Student Activities and the Office of University Events as soon as possible.

External Sponsorship

From time to time, external organizations may wish to sponsor political events on campus without University collaboration. In these instances, the Office of University Events will treat these events as it would any other external organization that uses University facilities in terms of hall rental, catering, event insurance, etc.

Organizers of Type B visits should inform the Office of the President. The Office of the President will notify the Political Science Department; University Communications and Marketing; University Events; West Forum; and Winthrop Police Department about the visit.

Type C: Non-campaign Cultural/Educational Events and Bi/Multi-partisan candidate debates

University departments and programs may sponsor candidates or elected officials to deliver public lectures, debates, and forums on topical issues in election and nonelection years. These programs should be nonpartisan, bi-or multi-partisan, non-ideological, and/or represent diverse perspectives. Sponsoring programs should notify the Office of the President about their event. The Office of the President will notify the Political Science Department; University Communications and Marketing; University Events; West Forum; and Winthrop Police Department about the visit.

Type D: Guest Lectures

Individual faculty members may invite candidates/public officials to provide a guest lecture or discussion during scheduled class time. These appearances must not be candidate stump speeches and should provide students with an opportunity to interact with a candidate or public official. Such visits are not open to the public and pose a minimal security risk; thus, such visits are exempt from other sponsorship protocols.

Winthrop University encourages such visits for their educational value. Faculty members are strongly encouraged to inform the Office of the President of such visits in case the Office of the President wishes to greet the candidate/office holder. Further, the faculty should coordinate with Campus Police for reserved parking for the guest.

Invitations and Queries from Candidates and Public Officials

Invitations

Invitations extended to Type A candidates/officials to speak or to participate in multi-candidate debates (see Type C) should be extended by the Winthrop University President. The West Forum Director will be listed as the initial contact person.

Invitations to other officials may be extended by a Sponsoring Department as appropriate. Student organizations are encouraged to cosponsor events with an appropriate office or department.

In all cases, the event coordinator (based on the type of event) will notify the appropriate building manager, the Office of the President, Political Science Department; University Communications and Marketing; University Events; West Forum; and Winthrop Police Department of pending visits as soon as invitations are accepted.

Queries from Candidates or Public Officials

A candidate or public official may approach a variety of offices or individuals to express interest in a campus appearance. Regardless of which office/individual is contacted, the request will be forwarded to the appropriate contact person, depending on the type of candidate/official making the request.

These contacts are:

- Office of the President (Type A)
- Sponsoring Department or Program: Department Chair or Program Director (Types B & C)

These contacts will in turn, notify the Political Science Department; University Communications and Marketing; University Events; West Forum; and Winthrop Police Department about the visit.

Declining an Appearance

Winthrop University reserves the right to decline requests from candidates, public officials, or groups at its discretion. Possible reasons for refusal include scheduling conflicts, lack of sponsorship, lack of appropriate available space, and/or an inability to provide adequate security.

Cultural Event Designation

Sponsoring departments, programs, and/or student organizations may apply for cultural event designation at their discretion. Approval of such events is the sole responsibility of the Cultural Events Committee and applications should reach the committee by the stated deadlines. Campaign stops and partisan events are not likely to qualify. Visits by public officials or debates and forums that include a variety of perspectives may qualify, pursuant to the [cultural events approval criteria](#).

Communicating Institutional Neutrality

Winthrop University will make every effort to communicate that, while it welcomes candidates and public officials to its campus in the spirit of civic and community engagement, it does not implicitly or explicitly endorse any candidate, party, or ideological perspective. To communicate this institutional neutrality, Winthrop University will take the following steps:

- 1) Include a Neutrality Statement on all news releases, posters, social media, email announcements, other relevant documents, and appropriate locations on the web site.
- 2) Winthrop University employees who are attending the event in their official capacity will be identified by wearing a uniform and/or official Winthrop nametag. They will not participate in any solicitation of volunteers and will refrain from any activities (e.g., sign waving, cheering) that might imply endorsement of a candidate's/official's beliefs.

- a) This provision applies only to Winthrop employees attending the event in their official capacity. Winthrop employees attending as private citizens may participate in all of these activities as long as they are not wearing an official Winthrop uniform and/or nametag.
- b) If students are attending the event as paid employees (e.g., student technicians in the DiGiorgio Campus Center), they are subject to the same restrictions as other employees.

Neutrality Statement

The University's Neutrality Statement is

Winthrop University is a public institution dedicated to serving the state of South Carolina and to promoting the free exchange of ideas and informed citizenship. Thus, Winthrop University welcomes political candidates, elected officials, and guest speakers from all partisan and ideological perspectives to visit campus and to present their ideas to the Winthrop and Rock Hill communities. These appearances do not constitute an endorsement of any party, candidate, or ideological perspective.

Facilities and Setup

Venue

Once a candidate/public official visit is booked, the sponsoring department/program/student organization must work with the candidate/official and Office of University Events to select an appropriate facility. Once an appropriate facility has been identified, the sponsoring office and the Office of University Events must work with the building coordinator prior to any agreement with the candidate/official.

Possible venues include

[McBryde Hall](#)

- Capacity is 600 guests seated
- Restrooms
- Proximity to food serving area
- Wheelchair access through Tillman Breezeway
- Speaker podium with Winthrop University logo
- Contact Audio-Visual Services (803/323-4683) for a current list of audio-visual equipment and specifications.

[Tuttle Dining Hall](#)

- Capacity is 125 guests.
- Contact Audio-Visual Services (803/323-4683) for a current list of audio-visual equipment and specifications.
- Other details are identical to McBryde Hall.

[Dina's Place](#)

- Located in the DiGiorgio Campus Center
- 224 fixed, raised theater seats and 4 handicap seating areas (2 ground level 2 top level)
- Wheelchair access on the first floor and ground floor

- Proximity to restrooms
- Stage dimensions 15 ft. front to back and 30 ft. wide on ground level
- 2 Green Rooms available with restrooms
- 2 speaker podiums (with Winthrop logo)
- Contact the Associate Director of the DiGiorgio Campus center (803/323-2248) for current list of technology and audio-visual equipment and specifications.

Richardson Ballroom

- Located in the DiGiorgio Campus Center
- Ballroom dimensions 93 ft. length and 77 ft. width
- Can be divided into two halves if a smaller space is desired
- 400 chairs available for flexible seating arrangements
- 9 (4 ft. x 8 ft.) stage pieces, stage leg heights 13 in. or 23 in. & 2 staircases
- Fully wheelchair accessible
- Food service serving area
- Restrooms off ballroom foyer
- Black Backdrop 12 ft. wide max. and 8 ft. high
- Speaker podium (with Winthrop logo)
- Contact the Associate Director of the DiGiorgio Campus Center (803/323-2248) for current list of technology and audio-visual equipment and specifications.

Byrnes Auditorium—NOT AVAILABLE 2019-2021

- Seating for up to 3,448
- Stage dimension of 48 ft. wide and 33 ft. deep
- Speaker podium (with Winthrop logo)
- Stage furnishings to include soft goods (main curtain, masking, legs, back black, and midstage), House P/A, chairs, stands, chorale risers, and sound shells
- Additional rooms available for private receptions, green rooms, or other purposes
- Proximate to [MacFeat House](#) with food service warming kitchen and reception spaces
- Public restrooms on upper level
- Wheelchair access on lower level, south side (Kinard Hall side).
- Accessible restroom in lobby
- Contact the Office of University Events (803/323-4683) for a list of current technology and audio-visual equipment and specifications

Winthrop Coliseum

- Located at the Winthrop University Recreational & Research Complex
- Arena seating for 4,000 - 6,100 depending on stage and floor seating
- Ample parking for cars and satellite trucks
- Stage dimension of 32 ft. wide and 24ft. deep
- Stage furnishings to include tables, chairs, video board, rigging grid,
- Speaker podium (with Winthrop logo)
- Food serving area
- Wheelchair accessible on the ground (lower) level
- Ample restrooms
- Additional rooms available for private receptions, green rooms, or other purposes
- Contact the Office of University Events (803/323-4683) for a list of current technology and audio-visual equipment and specifications

Depending on academic and athletic scheduling, other spaces can also be used, such as Owens classrooms, Plowden Auditorium, and Johnson Theater.

Staging, Seating, and Catering

Sponsored Events

For all student group-sponsored events, the Winthrop University logo must be prominently displayed. The university will work with the campaign to help make this occur.

Where possible, Winthrop student volunteers should be asked to introduce the speaker, sit on the stage, and take pictures with the candidate before or after the event.

Winthrop University's logoed step-and-repeat should be used on or close to the stage or for media interviews at sponsored events.

Tables

Winthrop University can provide tables for sign-in, volunteer signups, voter registration or other purposes at the request of the candidate/official. Any such tables will be plain and unadorned. They will neither display Winthrop logos/literature nor be staffed by any Winthrop employees. Instead, all tables must be staffed by campaign or office volunteers/staff who are prominently identified as such (e.g., with name tags, candidate/party t-shirts or uniforms, or signage).

Winthrop Logo and Other Decorations

Recognizing that national political figures, presidential candidates especially, may have their own preferences for staging, event coordinators should make every effort to present Winthrop University in a favorable manner. Thus, for all Winthrop-sponsored events, at the discretion of Winthrop University, the Winthrop logo must be prominently displayed. Options could include:

- A banner with the Winthrop logo
- Use of the Winthrop "step and repeat" for candidate photos or media interviews
- Podium with the Winthrop name and logo displayed
- Winthrop banners
- Mugs or water bottles featuring the Winthrop logo
- Tablecloth or runner with logo
- Winthrop flag

A United States flag and a South Carolina state flag may also be displayed.

Seating on the Stage

If audience members are permitted on stage, every effort will be made to permit Winthrop students to sit or stand on the stage behind the candidate/public official. This will enrich the students' experience at the event. When appropriate, students will be permitted to sit on the stage without regard to whether they are wearing Winthrop attire.

Designated Seating for Winthrop VIPs

Winthrop University will negotiate with the candidate/official to reserve seating for University VIPs (e.g., Trustees, University officers, and the like) who wish to attend the event. These reserved seats will be in addition to any set aside by the candidate/official for his/her own purposes.

Catering

Winthrop University may wish to host a reception or meal for public officials who visit campus for educational purposes (Type C and Type D above). Candidates making campaign stops will be notified that catering services are available through its food service provider and that they may not bring in food or drinks from outside vendors. All catering expenses incurred by candidates making campaign stops will be paid by the candidate.

Insurance

The party using Winthrop's space must procure liability insurance in the amount of \$2,000,000 for the Coliseum and Byrnes Auditorium and \$1,000,000 for all other facilities and areas at Winthrop University naming Winthrop University as an additional insurer for protection against claims for personal injuries, wrongful deaths, and property damage. A copy of the certificate of insurance must be given to the University.

Media Relations

News Release

Winthrop University will provide appropriate publicity for visits by candidates and public officials. The type and intensity of the publicity will vary depending on the type of event.

For campaign events, the institution's news releases typically include basic event information only. Such releases will list the following:

- The candidate's name, title, and, if relevant, office sought
- Location, event time, and "doors open" time
- Street address, and parking information
- A media contact for the public official or candidate
- Neutrality statement

For debates, forums, and cultural events, the news releases will provide more detailed information, consistent with Winthrop University's usual practices.

For campaign stops or externally sponsored events, the University will provide a media contact for the candidate, public official, or sponsoring organization, as appropriate, to ensure the University does not appear to speak for a candidate, campaign, or another organization.

Faculty Expertise

For Type A visits especially, Winthrop University provides value added by providing faculty expert(s) who are available to news media for interviews and commentary. The availability of faculty will be communicated to candidates/officials and news media alike.

University Communications and Marketing personnel will communicate with departments housing faculty who have pertinent expertise (e.g., Political Science, Sociology, Economics, Social Work, History, or others) to work to provide at least one faculty expert at each event and will advertise this availability to the media in attendance.

Coordinating with Type A Candidates and Officials

University Communications and Marketing will coordinate with media personnel accompanying Type A candidates/officials, seek the following information, and coordinate with relevant news organizations and university offices as appropriate:

- The schedule for press releases/information to media and responsibility for notifying campus audiences
- The number of media representatives anticipated at the event
- Special technological needs (e.g., the mult-box for multiple organizations to plug in for audio)
- Candidate's availability for media interviews before or after the event This may include:
 - type of interview(s) (individual or group)
 - location of interview(s)
- What Winthrop identifiers are needed (e.g., podium, table cloths, Winthrop banners, etc.)
- Availability of satellite truck parking and parking for other news media
- Determination of whether the candidate/official is traveling with national or regional media who require early entry and/or setup for coverage of an event.
- Development and distribution of fact sheets about Winthrop University, the Winthrop Poll, or other related programs/departments and additional information such as faculty member biographies.

Photography and Videography by University Personnel

Winthrop University will negotiate with the candidate/official to permit Winthrop University personnel to photograph and videotape the event. These materials are the intellectual property of Winthrop University and may be used in University publications and posted on the web site and/or social media for the University's own purposes.

Outside videotaping/film production or photography

Winthrop University must approve all outside videotaping, filming, and photography. Individuals interested in this option must fill out the Film Approval Form in Appendix A. Additionally, based upon the event and its attendance, film or photography waiver forms must be secured. They must be provided by the outside production/photography individual or group.

Security and Parking Protocols

Winthrop University is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and guests alike. Thus, the following provides an inventory of questions and consideration that should be negotiated with candidates/officials who are visiting campus to ensure that the University can provide a secure environment.

Any and all vendors, event participants, and all others associated with the event or protests, who are at the event venue(s) and surrounding areas, fall under campus policies and rules.

Personal Security

- Does the candidate have his/her own security detail?
- Is the security detail public or private?
- Is the security detail armed or mainly crowd control?
- Who is the contact person for the personal security team?
- In the case of a high-profile candidate, has the South Carolina Office of the United States Secret Service been notified?
- Are there special security needs?
 - Ambulance on standby, based on availability
 - Hospital location and route
 - Police escorts to and from campus
- Type of vehicle the candidate is traveling in and how many in the caravan?

Venue Security

- Are there any special requests for security inside the venue?
 - Will barriers between candidate and crowd be used?
 - Are building diagrams needed?
 - Do exits need to be known before the visit?
 - Do exit routes need to be established before the visit?
- Does the candidate need a meeting facility prior to the appearance?

Parking Needs

- Is special parking necessary to accommodate buses? If so, how many busses and how big are they?
- Are special parking spaces needed for campaign staff? If so, how many spaces?
- Will all members of the candidate's campaign staff and the news media have visible credentials?
- What are the parking needs for the news media (if not included with the campaign buses), including unobstructed areas for satellite trucks?

Timeline

Requests for Security Assistance must be made seven (7) days prior to the visit to ensure proper personnel are available and scheduled.

Additional Security Considerations

It is important that all members of an outside security detail have appropriate credentials and that the security detail contact the Winthrop Police Chief early. It is not sufficient for campaign staff to simply confer with the Winthrop event contact concerning security issues. The Winthrop Police Chief must speak and work with any security detail directly.

Also, it is important external security details understand that the Winthrop Campus Police are in charge of security while on the campus. The Winthrop Campus Police will coordinate as needed with the Rock Hill Police Department, the York County Sheriff's Office, and other such agencies. Any and all businesses and individuals must comply with all Winthrop University policy and procedures.

Community Participation

Winthrop University sees hosting events involving candidates and other officials as an important community service to the state of South Carolina. Therefore, candidate/official visits will be free and open to Winthrop University students and to the public at large. Special invitations to groups such as community leaders, Winthrop University Board of Trustees members, or faculty and students at area institutions may be issued by the sponsoring office. In any case, every effort will be made to admit all persons to these events without regard to their partisan or ideological perspectives. However, admission may be limited by space considerations. Attendees may also be required to pass through a security checkpoint if required by the Secret Service, Campus Police, or other security detail.

Cost Sharing

Winthrop University will work to host visits by political candidates and/or public officials with minimal additional cost when these events are held during regular business hours and with regular staffing. However, should the event be held outside of regular business hours and/or require additional staffing for security, technology, custodial services, and the like, the visiting candidate or official will be charged for these services.

Winthrop University has a limited supply of tables, chairs, linens, and audio-visual equipment available for special events. If the event requires furnishings, equipment, or other items (i.e. special lighting, tents, stanchions for crowd control, etc.) that the University cannot provide, the visiting candidate or public official will be charged for renting these items from an outside vendor.

Events sponsored by the University or Student Organizations will not engender a fee for space rental. Events sponsored by external organizations will be charged the appropriate room rental fee. Contact the Office of University Events (803/323-4683) for specific questions regarding potential cost.

Review

The University will review and update this policy as needed.