



USJ POLICY ON POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

1. RATIONALE

- 1.1 As a Catholic Institution for Higher Education, the University of Saint Joseph (hereafter the 'University') is committed, following the teaching of the Gospels, to maintaining an academic, work, and living environment in which all members of the University community are treated with respect, equal rights, and human dignity.
- 1.2 The University is committed to the free and open discussion of ideas and opinions both as part of its academic mission and through the political process. However, as a non-profit, private institution of higher education, the University restrains itself from directly or indirectly participating in any political campaign on behalf of, or against, any candidate for elective public office.
- 1.3 The University is committed to providing all the necessary information needed for its faculty members, staff, or students to gain a clear understanding of the University, its policies, procedures, and culture as well as the guidelines on political activities.
- 1.4 To ensure compliance with this policy, all University faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and to anyone representing the University inside or outside the campuses of the University must abide by the following guidelines when engaging in political activity at the University.
- 1.5 The University shall provide a special mechanism to determine whether this Policy has been violated because of participating in prohibited political activities.

2. DEFINITION

- 2.1 'Campaign' means an organized effort to influence individuals and/or groups to elect a particular Candidate or Candidates to public office.
- 2.2 'Candidate' means an individual who has announced themselves as campaigning for an elective public office, whether at the local or national level.
- 2.3 'Political activities' mean actions that endorse or oppose a Candidate, a political party.
- 2.4 'Lobbying' means acting directly or soliciting others to act for the purpose of promoting, opposing, amending, or influencing any action or inaction by any member of the executive or legislative branch of local government or any government office.
- 2.5 'Candidate surrogate or advocate' means another politician, celebrity, or person of influence, campaigning on a Candidate's behalf.
- 2.6 'Public Office' means an individual who has made a formal announcement of candidacy or qualified under the local law to seek nomination for election or elections to any local or national government office.
- 2.7 'University resources', for the purposes of this policy, means: University funds and purchasing mechanisms, including: the Procurement Card; University offices, conference rooms, and other spaces and facilities; University copiers, fax machines, computers, and



other electronic equipment; University computer networks, websites, social media accounts, email accounts, listservs, trademarks or intellectual property, and mailing lists; University telephones, and voicemail and mail systems; and University letterhead, stationery, and other supplies.

- 2.8 'Work hours' mean the regularly scheduled hours of work assigned to an employee as determined by their supervisor or designee, and in accordance with Catholic University policies, employment contracts, and/or applicable collective bargaining agreements.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 This policy provides general guidance for faculty, staff, and students and to anyone representing the University inside or outside the campuses, so that they can engage in the political process in an individual capacity that does not jeopardize the University's integrity.

4. SCOPE

- 4.1 This policy applies to all University of Saint Joseph's faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and to anyone representing the University inside or outside the campuses of the University.

5. POLICY CONTENT

- 5.1 As an educational charity and an institution of the Catholic Church, USJ holds itself to an unbiased non-partisan policy on all political issues and undertakes corporately to avoid the reality, and even the appearance, of advocacy for or against any political campaign, organisation, political candidacy, public referendum, or other political initiative in the region.
- 5.2 This policy provides general guidance for all USJ faculty, staff, local and overseas students, employees, and to anyone representing the University so that their engagement in political activities, in an individual capacity, does not jeopardize the University's name and integrity.
- 5.3 USJ fully recognises the rights of students, faculty members and staff, who are Macao residents, to participate as individuals in local political and other public affairs, in accordance with the local and the country Laws.
- 5.4 USJ may not direct any individual political choice, and does not limit lawful political expression, exercised outside the University's campus and activities.
- 5.5 By its very nature, the University may engage in:
- i. public debate on issues relating specifically to higher education;
 - ii. formation concerning the Laws mentioned in clause 5.7 of this Policy, the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church and general civic responsibility for the common good;
 - iii. non-partisan educational programs on specific policy issues.
- 5.6 All USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and anyone representing the University, are responsible for sustaining the highest ethical standards of this institution, and of the broader community in which we function. Central to that institutional commitment is the principle of treating each University member fairly, and with decency and respect regardless, but not limited to his/her race, colour, national origin, sex, religion, age or political affiliation.
- 5.7 All USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and anyone representing the University, are responsible for having a clear understanding of, and sustaining high



- standards of, behaviour with respect to the local and national laws and policies, including but not limited to:
- i. the “Constitution of the People's Republic of China”;
 - ii. the “Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region”;
 - iii. the “Law on Maintenance of National Security”;
 - iv. the One Country Two Systems policy;
 - v. love for the Country and Macao;
 - vi. respect for symbols and emblems of Macao and of the Country.
- 5.8 In the exercise of their duties and obligations at USJ, or while representing USJ externally, all USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and to anyone representing the University must exercise great care to avoid even the appearance of institutional endorsement of any given political opinion.
- 5.9 All USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and anyone representing the University USJ who engage in political activities, should do so in their individual capacity, without mentioning their institutional affiliation to USJ, or with a disclaimer specifically indicating that their actions and statements are their own and not those of the University. They should avoid the appearance of institutional endorsement, or public perception of such endorsement.
- 5.10 All USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and anyone representing the University USJ may take part in partisan political activities freely in their own time, but they must not do so in the course of their regular work and responsibilities for the University.
- 5.11 All USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and anyone representing the University, should not engage in political activity at University functions or through official University publications.
- 5.12 This Policy prohibits all USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and to anyone representing the University, in their capacity as University staff and student, from using University funds, logos/marks, services, vehicles, interoffice mail, or an usj.edu email account, telephones, computers, printers and copiers, office space or any other campus facility, service, or resource when conducting political activities.
- 5.13 Political activities on University property are prohibited at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, campaigning (solicitation), posting or distribution of posters, fliers, or leaflets, or transmission of materials over the Internet or meetings conducted by video teleconference, etc.
- 5.14 University officials must exercise even higher levels of prudence, insofar as political activity may involve a conflict of interests, and their public profile may imply USJ endorsement even when working on personal time. As a rule, senior staff should consult USJ’s legal counsel if they engage in political work, to ensure that no legal conflict exists.
- 5.15 All USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and anyone representing the University, should comply with the rules and guidelines laid down in this Policy.
- 5.16 Those USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and anyone representing the University, whose behaviour (whether in the course of official duties or private activities) adversely affects the image and reputation of the University, cases of suspected breaches of ethical and professional conduct or non-compliant behaviour (particularly those involving endangering national security, breach of the Local and the Country Laws and/or Policies, including but not limited to, those mentioned in clause 5.7 of this Policy, will be held liable for disciplinary action in accordance with the USJ’s “Disciplinary Policy for Staff”.



6. EXEMPTION OF THE POLICY CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING THIS POLICY

6.1 Voter Education and Registration Activities

- i. Voter education and registration activities are permissible so long as such activities are focused on increasing public understanding of the electoral process or encouraging participation in that process. Such activities must be conducted in a non-partisan manner, and may not focus on a particular Candidate or party.

6.2 Seeking Public Office

- i. Faculty, staff, and students who are intending to seek public office and who decide to run for public office while at USJ, must inform their immediate Line Manager. This notification should be made as soon as the faculty, staff member, or student is considering becoming a Candidate, but, in all cases, notification must be made no later than immediately upon declaring candidacy;
- ii. To ensure compliance with the University Policies, including policies relating to conflict of interest and/or a conflict or commitment, a plan to manage potential conflicts must be established by the University.

7. CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATING THIS POLICY

- 7.1 Failure to comply with this and related policies is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension without pay, or termination of employment or association with the University, in accordance with applicable disciplinary procedures (e.g., for staff, faculty, students).

8. POLICY AWARENESS

- 8.1 The University links this policy electronically through the USJ websites designed to convey law enforcement information. All USJ faculty, staff, local and non-local students, employees, and anyone representing the University individuals to whom this policy applies, are responsible for becoming familiar with, and following, this policy. University Line Managers are responsible for promoting the understanding of this policy and for taking appropriate steps to ensure compliance with, concerning emergency or law enforcement information.

DISCLAIMER – This Policy is subject to ongoing review and amendment as appropriate. Amendments to this policy are made by the Executive Council in response to advice and recommendations from across the University.

Author: Executive Council

Amendments: Administrator

Approved by: Executive Council

Approval date: 29 July 2024

Operational commencement date: 29 July 2024

Version number: 003

***Ratified by General Council 01/2024-2025, Meeting date: 17th October 2024**