

Political Activities

July 1, 1966

Mr. George B. Mather
Director
Iowa Center for Education
in Politics
State University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

Dear Mr. Mather:

I am replying to your letter of June 7 regarding the policies of the University of Oregon in connection with political activities on the campuses of publicly supported institutions of higher learning.

I have taken your questions in each case and supplied an answer.

1. Are political speakers freely allowed the use of your facilities for the presentation of per se political speeches?

Political speakers are not only allowed the use of University of Oregon facilities for political speeches, but for a number of years, the University has encouraged a policy of political involvement of members of the University community, both faculty and students. Through the efforts of various University related organizations, almost all of the candidates for national office have appeared and spoken on the campus. In 1948 Mr. Dewey, Mr. Stassen, and Mr. Wallace all appeared, and since that time almost all presidential and vice-presidential candidates and Senatorial and House of Representative candidates from this State or district have appeared in campaign speeches during election years.

2. Under what conditions or regulations may student political groups (such as the Young Democrats or Young Republicans, etc.) sponsor the appearance of political figures?

Any recognized student group may sponsor political speeches at any time. The freedom to invite such speakers is not restricted. Any student group, whether of a political or other character, must be recognized by the Faculty-Student Committee on Student Activities. This Committee normally grants recognition as a matter of course, and groups covering every facet of the political spectrum have been recognized.

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3. The University of Oregon has not itself sponsored "Party Days" or mock conventions, but the Associated Student organization and recognized student groups have, on occasion, held model conventions. Any of the recognized groups are free to do this if they choose.
4. If no adequate facilities are available elsewhere in the community and there is no interference with scheduled University functions, political parties and candidates may rent our facilities.
5. The University's "open policy" in relation to political candidates and speeches is of long standing. However, in 1962 the faculty determined that the statement should be reduced to writing. The incident that caused this development was the appearance on the campus of the secretary of the American Communist Party, Mr. Gus Hall. A copy of this document is attached.

I hope this information has been helpful to you. We would be happy to amplify any point on which you need more information.

Very sincerely and cordially yours,

Arthur S. Flemming
President