



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY  
**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
Executive Action Summary

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Academic Affairs-Attachment 2

**Committee Name:** Academic Affairs

**Date:** June 13, 2025

**Agenda Item:** Revisions to BOT 411, *Political Candidacy*

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Information

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Review

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Action

**Resolution:**

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees hereby approves revisions to BOT 411, *Board of Trustees – Political Candidacy Policy*, as indicated in Attachment A.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees hereby directs the Office of the Provost to take appropriate measures to update other University-wide policies and procedures to effectuate these revisions, including the rescission of conflicting provisions, in consultation with academic governance.

**Recommendation:**

The Trustee Committee on Academic Affairs recommends that the Board of Trustees approve revisions to BOT 411, *Political Candidacy*, as indicated in Attachment A.

**Prior Action by BOT:**

BOT 411, *Political Candidacy*, was enacted in December 1950.

**Responsible Officer:**

Thomas Jeitschko, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

**Summary:**

The revised policy transitions the administrative responsibility for decision-making and administration of the policy from the Board of Trustees to the Office of the Provost, streamlining oversight and aligning with existing operational practices relating to faculty and academic staff employment matters. Revisions to the policy also align with the broader initiative to update older board-level policies, including moving BOT 411 into the standard policy template.

**Background Information:**

The original policy governing political candidacy by faculty and academic staff was enacted by the Board of Trustees on December 21, 1950. At that time, the board emphasized the dual importance of protecting the constitutional rights of academic employees to engage in political life while preserving the

University's operational integrity and public neutrality. The policy was adopted amid increasing civic engagement among faculty and concerns about the potential for full-time campaigning to interfere with teaching and institutional responsibilities. The board underscored that while political participation was a private right, it required careful separation from the faculty or academic staff member's University duties and identity.

**Source of Funds:**

Not applicable.

**Resource Impact:**

Not applicable.



## Board of Trustees Policy

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**POLICY NUMBER: BOT 411**

**POLICY NAME: Political Candidacy**

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<b>Effective Date:</b>	December 21, 1950
<b>Last Review Date:</b>	June 13, 2025
<b>Next Scheduled Review Date:</b>	June 2030

### I. POLICY STATEMENT

As citizens, the faculty/academic staff members of Michigan State University have the same rights and responsibilities of free speech, thought, and action as all citizens of the United States. Their position, however, imposes special obligations, such as emphasizing that they are not institutional spokespersons, and exercising appropriate restraint.

Faculty/academic staff members have a binding obligation to discharge instructional and other regular duties, and performance of these duties may be impaired by any private activity requiring a large portion of time.

This policy provides employment parameters for faculty and academic staff members campaigning for state or federal office.

## II. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

Office of the Provost

## III. SCOPE

This policy applies to all faculty and academic staff members employed by the University.

## IV. DEFINITIONS

None listed.

## IV. POLICY

Faculty and academic staff members campaigning as political candidates for state or federal offices shall do so on their own time. For the period of such candidacy, it is required that they obtain unpaid leaves of absence from employment at Michigan State University or continue work at the University on a part-time basis. ~~Final responsibility for such decisions shall rest with the Board of Trustees~~The Office of the Provost is responsible for administering this policy.

Leaves of absence are not required of faculty members who become candidates for offices of a temporary or part-time nature, such as members of a municipal charter revision commission, members of a local school board, or holders of municipal office.

This policy is intended to safeguard the freedom of speech, thought, and action of faculty/academic staff and to avoid impairment of the significant contributions they are capable of making toward improved local, state, and federal government.

## V. PROCEDURES

None listed.

## VI. RELATED POLICIES AND INFORMATION

None listed.

## VIII. HISTORY

Enacted: December 21, 1950

~~Amended: June 2025~~Amended: June 13, 2025

*Retired Policy No. 03-17-04*

