1. Introduction

1.1 Each member of the North Carolina Central University (NCCU) community has the right to freely express his/her views on any subject, including advocacy for, or against, candidates for public office and for, or against, political issues. This expression is protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and by the N.C. Constitution, Sec. 14, Freedom of Speech and Press. In exercising these rights, however, the resources of NCCU cannot be used and political activities cannot be incompatible with the general responsibilities of public employment.

1.2 This policy applies explicitly to the use of public resources in support of, or in opposition to, political campaigns and issues. It is not intended to limit discussion among faculty, staff and students, and other State employees regarding political or campaign issues or candidates or to limit debates at which candidates or speakers have equal time.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all NCCU employees.

3. Impermissible Activities

3.1 Engagement in political activities by NCCU employees during working hours is not permitted. Political activity must be conducted independently from NCCU employment. Consistent with State law, no NCCU employee may take an active role in managing a campaign, or engage in political
3.2 NCCU is not permitted to endorse any political party, candidate, or cause. NCCU officials must refrain from activities that may be perceived as university support of a political campaign.

3.3 An employee may not use the authority of their position or property of the university to secure support for, or to oppose, any person or issue in any election.

3.4 No State employee or official may coerce, solicit, or compel an SHRA subject to the human resources act State employee to support or contribute to a political candidate, party, or cause.

3.5 NCCU funds, equipment, or services (“Resources”) (e.g., vehicles and other equipment, telephones, campus mail, computers and e-mail, postage, photocopying and fax, etc.) may not be used for political activities.

3.6 Employees may not use Community Service Leave to work at campaign sites or to engage in other political activities related to an election (i.e., handing out campaign brochures, transporting voters, holding signs, etc.). Employees engaged in these types of activities should use other leave (i.e. annual, bonus, special) to cover time off.

3.7 Voting is not allowed as work time. Most polling stations are open extended hours and should allow most employees to vote before or after work. Additionally, employees have other options, such as early voting or voting during their scheduled meal break. Management may allow employees to use available vacation/bonus leave or compensatory time for hours missed during employee’s regular work schedule for voting purposes. Management, to the extent business operations allow, may provide employees a flexible work schedule so that they can make up the missed time within the same work week.

3.8 No EHRA employee (Faculty and EHRA Non-Faculty) may promise preferential treatment (or actually confer such preference) or threaten detrimental treatment (or actually impose such treatment) to any person to induce support for, or opposition to, a candidate, political office, or partisan political group.

3.9 NCCU employees in federally aided programs are also subject to the Federal Hatch Political Activities Act, as amended 5 U.S.C §1501-1508.

4. Permissible Activities

4.1 The university is permitted to conduct broad voter education, public opinion polls on issues, and voter registration drives provided they are conducted in a non-partisan manner. Providing opportunities to speak on an equal basis for all registered candidates for public office is also allowed.

4.2 Political campaign activities are permitted on university property only if they are (1) sponsored or hosted by registered student organizations and (2) all expenses related to the activity, if any, are borne by the candidate, political organization, or student organization.

4.3 Employees may participate fully in public affairs in a manner that does not compromise their efficiency or integrity as employees or the neutrality, efficiency, or integrity of the constituent institution or unit in which they are employed. To that end, employees must not imply that the political opinions they assume are endorsed by the University.

4.4 Employees are allowed to use Community Service Leave if they are volunteering to work inside the polling place to facilitate the voting process on behalf of the state or local Board of Election.

5. Political Candidacy
5.1 University EHRA employees who are exempt from the State Human Resources Act and who intend to run or hold any elective or appointive public office, whether part-time or full-time, must comply with Section 300.5.2 of the UNC Policy Manual adopted by the Board of Governors. This may require that the employee must make disclosures and receive approvals on a prescribed schedule prior to becoming a candidate or holding political office. Failure to follow these directives constitutes a violation of the terms and conditions of university employment and may result in disciplinary action.