

MEMORANDUM

To: University Council
From: Ronald Daniels, Provost
Subject: Political Engagement on Campus
Date: February 27, 2008

As a followup to our discussion at University Council on January 30, I am pleased to present a progress report on the numerous steps taken by the offices of the Provost and the Vice Provost for University Life to enhance political engagement on campus:

- VPUL has developed a free plan for student-sponsored political events, which will allow student organizations to host candidates at no cost, as part of students' general fees.
 - Only educational events explicitly permitted by federal, Commonwealth, local, and institutional policies can be hosted for free.
 - Events in Irvine, while still rent-free, require union tech support and expanded security, and, therefore, will require some money from event planners.
- VPUL has created a detailed guide to student event planning to help students put these events together, which will eventually expand into a comprehensive, interactive guide to planning student events at Penn.
- Matt Waller, Director of Public Affairs and Communications in VPUL; Dawn Maglicco Deitch, Director of the Office of Government and Community Affairs; and Fran Walker, Director of the Office of Student Life met with leaders of campus political organizations to offer support, strategies, and resources, including advice on finding spaces for events and the nuances and ramifications of Penn's non-profit tax status.
- Vice Provost Val Cade met with the REV-UP voting organization, which reported that the system developed after the January UC meeting to support student political initiatives has already seen positive results, including arranging for a political event to be hosted at no charge, after an initial request from the facility managers for a security fee.
- Vice Provost Cade met with John Dilulio of the Fox Leadership Program, whose Penn Leads the Vote/Get Out the Vote (PLTV/GOTV) will be leading Penn's vote drive activities this election year. The Fox PLTV students have developed a comprehensive schedule of events (as noted at January's UC meeting) for voter registration, education, and turnout, as well as other activities and special efforts to reach incoming students.
- Recent or upcoming visitors to Penn include former President Bill Clinton; Senators John McCain, Arlen Specter, and Ron Wyden; Congressmen Chaka Fattah and Patrick Murphy; and former White House Deputy Chief of Staff Karl Rove.