MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty and Staff
FROM: Gary Stinnett
Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources
DATE: October 16, 2012
SUBJECT: Voting and Other Political Activity

[Please print and post this for individuals in your unit who do not have regular access to email.]

The guidelines below are provided to assist with questions that may arise concerning use of work time for election-day activities and policies and state laws regarding political activities.

Voting
Voting is encouraged as part of our electoral process. Managers have the discretion to allow flexible work scheduling to accommodate voting employees, or to allow employees to use vacation leave, bonus leave, FY 13 special leave, or accrued compensatory time off.

Employees cannot use work time to vote. The polls are open for twelve (12) or more hours on Election Day and employees can take advantage of “One-Stop Voting” which begins October 18 and continues through Saturday, November 3. As in the last presidential election, an early voting site for Mecklenburg County registered voters only will be located on campus at the Cone Center.

Please check the first link below for other one-stop voting sites and hours of operation in Mecklenburg County, as well as the second link for information on early voting opportunities in other North Carolina counties where employees may be registered.

http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/BOE/Documents/2012%20nov%20early%20voting%20all%20sites.pdf
http://www.app.sboe.state.nc.us/webapps/OS_sites/

Working at Election Polls (for pay)
Employees should request use of vacation leave, bonus leave, or accrued compensatory leave if they are working for pay inside the polls or if they are distributing brochures, transporting voters, or engaging in other partisan campaign activities.
Community Service Leave (for non-partisan volunteering only)
Community Service Leave may be used if employees are volunteering to work inside the polls for the state or county Board of Elections to assist with the voting process as long as they are not receiving pay and are not distributing campaign brochures, transporting voters, or engaging in any other partisan campaign activities.

Other Political Activity
In addition, University policies and state and federal laws apply to politically-related activities of public employees (faculty and staff). Being a state employee does not mean you lose any of your constitutional rights to participate, or not participate, as you desire in the political process as long as such participation is not on work time.

Please consider that wearing political buttons or conspicuously posting signs or banners which endorse a particular candidate or party may suggest that the University endorses your opinion and may cause employees that you supervise to feel uncomfortable.

Policy Regarding Political Activity by University Employees
No University employee shall use the authority of his/her position, implicate the name of the University, or utilize State resources to support or oppose any candidate, party, or issue in an election involving candidates for office or party nomination. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. No employee may take an active part in managing a campaign, or campaign for political office or otherwise engage in political activity during working hours. N.C.G.S. §126-13; State Personnel Manual (Section 3, page 35); UNC Policy 300.5.1.

2. No employee may use his or her position, State or University funds, services (including mail service), supplies (including letterhead), equipment (including telephone and computers), vehicles or other university property to support or oppose a candidate. N.C.G.S. §126-13; UNC Policy 300.5.1.

3. No employee may coerce an employee to support or contribute to a political candidate or party or to change voter registration. N.C.G.S. §126-14.

4. No EPA employee (including Faculty and EPA Professionals) may promise preferential treatment or threaten detrimental treatment of an employee to induce support or opposition to a candidate. UNC Policy 300.5.1.

5. If running for or holding office, all EPA employees (Faculty and EPA Professionals) must comply with UNC Policies 300.5.1 through 300.5.4 and 300.5.6 and University Policy Statement #102.3. For many types of office, the policies require that before becoming a candidate or holding political office, the University employee must make certain disclosures and receive various approvals on a prescribed schedule. Prospective candidates or office holders for some political office must petition the chancellor for approval months in advance, and failure to do so may result in loss of university employment.

The UNC System Policy Manual can be found online at: http://www.northcarolina.edu/content.php/legal/policymanual/contents.htm

Should you have questions concerning the interpretation and/or application of the laws and policy, please feel free to contact Jeanne Madorin, Director of Employee Relations, Training and Compliance at 70659 or at ilmadori@uncc.edu.