

## **Office of Electronic Communication: Election Campaign Policies**

Adopted Oct. 23, 1999 by the UUA Board of Trustees  
AMENDED April 2004, October 2007

**Preamble:** The UUA affirms its commitment to providing timely, high-quality information that will support the participation of our congregations and their members in the discernment process as the Association nominates and elects its leaders. The following rules and behaviors are set forth to articulate the primary ways in which the Association will use electronic media to support the free, open and fair election of candidates for national elected office while maintaining its consistent high service standards.

### **1. General behaviors regarding election campaign practices on uua.org.**

At times determined by the Secretary of the Association, the UUA will establish a special mailing list called election-L for election discussion, and those who wish to vigorously campaign or discuss election issues will be encouraged to join this list. Campaigns may be discussed on other UUA mailing lists as they relate to the topic of each list. To the best ability of managers of other UUA mailing lists, discussion of candidate's campaigns will be even-handed and will not overtake the normal issues discussed on any given list.

Campaigning on the UUA web site and on all UUA lists except election-l is expressly prohibited. The UUA endeavors to provide information about the candidates for elective office, links to their websites, and to otherwise provide a forum for appropriate discussion of campaign issues and discernment of candidates' qualifications through electronic media. The UUA web site does not host candidates' sites, and does not support partisan information.

The UUA and its staff make no attempt to review or assess the content of any candidate's web site that is linked to or from its own, nor to authenticate any claims made on any candidate's web site. The UUA staff, with the exception of candidates who are also members of the staff, will not participate in discussions of the merits of individual candidates on UUA-hosted lists, including election-l, nor will they comment on these matters on their own or other blogs or social networking sites, nor will they accept advertising on sites which they control and manage.

A copy of these rules will be posted on the UUA's Election Campaign web site, which will be established January 9, 2008, for public access and review.

### **2. UUA Election Campaign Web site and Candidates' Websites.**

a. An Election Campaign website will be sponsored by the Election Campaign Practices Committee (ECP), and administered by the Director of Electronic Communication under the ECP's direction. The website will be updated on a weekly basis. The ECP shall designate an individual to respond to questions regarding the election site; that individual's name will be identified on the website.

b. This web site will be located in the "About Us" section of UUA.org (links are on all pages of our website), navigated as: About Us > Governance > UUA Elections.

c. The ECP portion of the UUA web site will contain:

1. All election content posted in UU WORLD Magazine
2. A link to the web sites of announced candidates and links to candidates' media pages (if applicable)
3. Links to podcasts or streaming media produced by the candidates
4. A video platform statement of up to ten minutes in length which will be produced by the UUA for each candidate. These statements will be no more than ten minutes in length and will be produced for each candidate at UUA expense. Other updated video platform statements, produced by the candidate, will be posted to the UUA's website upon request.
5. Links to and promotion of online chats being held by candidates.
6. Hosting of a "Question of the Month" feature in which each candidate has the opportunity to respond to a question with a 500-750-word statement.
7. Hosting of one online chat per candidate (at UUA expense), with the UUA establishing parameters for this service. Transcription of the chat will be provided and hosted on UUA.org, also at UUA expense.
8. Hosting (courtesy of the General Assembly Planning Committee) of a Candidates Forum at GA which will be streamed live, and captured for prompt rebroadcast and transcription on the UUA's website, also at UUA expense.
9. Hosting of a February Candidates Forum at UUA headquarters in Boston, to be streamed live, captured for prompt rebroadcast and transcription on the UUA's website, also at UUA expense.
10. Coverage of election results

d. The UUA will provide a redirect to a candidates website through an intuitive name (example: [uua.org/kaymontgomery](http://uua.org/kaymontgomery)) or secondary domain service for candidates' websites if requested (example: [www.kaymontgomery.uua.org](http://www.kaymontgomery.uua.org)) at no charge to the candidates.

e. No department or member of the UUA staff will provide support service to a candidate or to their election campaign to promote their electronic presence (e.g., scanning documents, graphic or web design, FTP service, etc). The UUA will not host web sites for candidates.

### **3. Use of UUA-hosted electronic mailing lists.**

a. At the direction of the Secretary of the Association, an electronic mailing list named election-L shall be established for the use of individuals who wish to discuss the upcoming election campaign. The list will be moderated by the Secretary of the Association or designee and a representative from the Election Campaign Practices Committee who is committed to impartial management of the list. Appropriate topics for this list include messages campaigning for and against specific candidates, discussion of present and/or future election rules, etc. A more detailed description of the election-L list, including instructions for subscribing, will be at <http://www.uua.org/mailman/listinfo/election-l.html>. This email list will be opened on June 1, 2008 and will remain open until August 1, 2009.

b. Discussion of elections on all other UUA-hosted mailing lists will abide by all behaviors and protocols already in place and cited at <http://www.uua.org/lists/listpolicies.html>. Any discussion around election matters that occurs will be issue-based and pertain to the subject for which the list exists. Election-related posts will not discuss personalities or character issues. No unsubstantiated claims or allegations will be made or tolerated on list discussions.

c. Participants in UUA-hosted lists will be informed when they sign onto a list (through the FAQ for each list) of rules governing discussion of upcoming elections. These rules will be linked from the Election Campaign site to rules governing UUA-hosted lists.

1. When these rules takes effect, current list subscribers will be notified of this change in practice through a message sent by the Director of Electronic Communication to all list managers. Managers will be directed to send the message to all subscribers.

d. If list managers feel that discussion on a list is becoming partisan or overtaking the stated intent of the list, managers will contact list members to remind them of the rules regarding the use of electronic media for the election campaign, and ask them to move the discussion to the election-L list.

e. If list managers feel that discussion is exceeding appropriate levels, they will notify the Office of Electronic Communication, [oecc@uua.org](mailto:oecc@uua.org) (email),

explaining the situation that is occurring and, if necessary, requesting assistance from an OEC staff member.

f. If a list member is reminded of the accepted procedures regarding election campaign postings and continues to violate the accepted rules, the list managers will request the Director of Electronic Communication to remove that individual from participation in that list. The Director of Electronic Communication, acting as the agent of the ECP, would take such action.