

Appropriate Civic Engagement as a State Employee:

- Being a public employee does not mean one cannot engage in public policy debate; it merely means one may not do so while at work or by using state-provided equipment, supplies and utilities. In other words, communication as a private citizen should be done on one's own time, keeping the following in mind:
 - Communications can be via personal e-mail accounts, but not via a Winthrop e-mail account. (Yahoo and Gmail, among others, will provide free accounts.)
 - Communications can be via personal telephones, but not via Winthrop-provided office or cell phones.
 - Communications can be via personal stationary, but not via Winthrop letterhead stationary.
 - Communications should be prepared via personal computer equipment/supplies, not Winthrop-owned computer equipment/supplies.
 - Contact/identifying information should reference personal address and phone number – not Winthrop address and phone number.

All of the above Winthrop materials and equipment are provided for employees' use only in carrying out their official assignments. To do otherwise, especially in terms of activities deemed "lobbying," would constitute a violation of state and university policy.

- Only three employees of Winthrop are authorized and registered to lobby for Winthrop (registration and complex income reporting are required for those so authorized.) Those are the president (authorized by law *ex officio*), and by his/her designation, the president's assistant for public affairs and a Columbia consultant are also registered. For any other employee to contact legislators or other state officials *as a representative of Winthrop* is a violation of state law. (Note: Trustees, because they are not employees, may make such contacts in their capacity as citizens/trustees.)
- Any Winthrop employee retains the rights of a private citizen – i.e., the right to contact officials in their respective personal capacities, using personal means.

Recommendations:

- Imagine anything you say/write on the evening news, because it could be – and not always in a way beneficial to you or to Winthrop.
- Know the record of your public official and tailor comments accordingly, rather than using template complaints that could be misplaced if directed to a supporter of one's cause.
- Acknowledge contextual, "big picture" circumstances that are beyond anyone's control if those apply to your topic.
- Let officials know you expect a response to your comments indicating their position.
- Thank officials for their willingness to serve in office, even if you are disagreeing with them about a certain issue.