

CUSA X elections

CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER RULING

Carleton University Students' Association General Elections 2026

Date of Ruling: February 17th, 2026

Ruling Code: 2026GE-ND-012

This public report is issued pursuant to Section 67(a) of the CUSA Electoral Code. It summarizes the outcome of a ruling made by the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) in relation to a review conducted during the Campaign Period of the 2026 CUSA General Election.

I. Authority

This Notice of Decision is issued pursuant to the authority of the Chief Returning Officer (CRO) under the CUSA Electoral Code, including but not limited to Sections 59, 63, 66, and Schedule IV.

II. Candidate

Maxwell Heroux

Presidential Candidate, 2026 CUSA General Election

III. Standard of Proof

Pursuant to Section 58 of the Electoral Code, the burden of proof for electoral offences is beyond a reasonable doubt.

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No finding of violation is made unless the CRO is satisfied that each essential element of the alleged offence has been established to that standard.

IV. Summary of Review

Complaint 012 alleged that during the active campaign period, the candidate engaged in conduct that interfered with free electoral participation.

Specifically, it was alleged that the candidate:

- Inserted himself into a discussion between electors after overhearing conversation relating to him;
- Continued the interaction beyond the initial location (History Lounge) into campus areas;
- Maintained proximity during shared movement through campus;
- Engaged in adversarial discussion in an election context.


The complainant's identity remains confidential pursuant to the Electoral Code.

V. Findings

After review of the evidentiary record, the CRO determined beyond a reasonable doubt that:

- The candidate intentionally approached electors after overhearing election-related commentary;
- The interaction continued across multiple campus locations;
- The discussion remained campaign-related in substance;
- The candidate maintained proximity throughout the movement;
- The conduct, viewed objectively, exceeded ordinary engagement.

The Electoral Code protects the ability of electors to engage in political discussion without interference or sustained confrontation from candidates.



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The CRO found that continuing election-related engagement across physical spaces constituted interference with free electoral participation within the meaning of Schedule IV, s.1(a).

While the evidence did not establish physical force or explicit threats, the conduct met the threshold for a Major Offence based on interference.

To avoid duplicative penalties for overlapping provisions, the conduct was treated as a single Major Offence

VI. Penalties Issued

The candidate was found responsible for:

Schedule IV, s.1(a) - Actions interfering with free and fair elections

Classification: Major Offence

Penalty Imposed: **5 Demerit Points**

VII. Note

The Electoral Code protects both:

- Candidates' right to engage in campaigning; and
- Electors' right to participate, discuss, and critique freely without interference.

This decision reflects the application of the objective standard required under the Code and is based solely on the evidentiary record.

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VIII. Appeal Information

In accordance with the Electoral Code, this decision will automatically be referred to the Appeals Committee for review.

IX. Additional Information

A full Notice of Decision, containing the complete findings of fact, analysis, evidence considered, and rationale, has been provided directly to the candidate in accordance with Section 67(b) of the Electoral Code.

This public report is provided for transparency and does not include confidential or identifying information.