

# CHIEF RETURNING OFFICER RULING

***Carleton University Students' Association General Elections 2026***

**Date of Ruling:** February 9th, 2026

**Ruling Code:** 2026GE-ND-004

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.

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## 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.

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## II. Candidate

**Aditri Janapatla**

Councillor Candidate (FPGA), 2026 CUSA General Election

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## III. Standard of Proof

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

# CUSA <sup>x</sup> elections

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.

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## IV. Summary of Review

This matter arose from observations made by the Office of the Chief Returning Officer and review of publicly accessible campaign-related content associated with a Faculty of Public & Global Affairs candidate.

The CRO identified that campaign materials were publicly posted on social media prior to receiving required CRO approval. The approval requirement was clearly communicated during the All-Candidates Meeting (ACM) and reinforced through written campaign guidelines and official election materials.

The candidate was issued a Notice of Complaint and provided a written response within the permitted timeframe. All submissions were reviewed in full.

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## V. Findings

After reviewing the relevant materials and submissions, the CRO determined beyond a reasonable doubt that:

1. Campaign materials were publicly disseminated on multiple dates prior to receiving CRO approval.
2. The candidate had attended the All-Candidates Meeting and received training and written guidance clearly outlining the prior approval requirement.
3. No evidence was provided demonstrating that approval had been granted before publication.

The CRO determined that the approval requirement is prospective and cannot be satisfied retroactively.

## VI. Electoral Code Violations

The following violations were established under Schedule IV of the Electoral Code:

- Failure to obtain CRO approval prior to public dissemination of campaign materials.
- Campaigning contrary to required procedures / Undermining the Electoral Process.

The CRO noted that the approval process exists to ensure fairness, equal treatment, consistent enforcement, and a level playing field for all candidates.

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## VII. Penalties Issued

In accordance with Schedule IV of the Electoral Code, the following penalties were issued:

- 2 demerit points - Failure to obtain CRO approval for campaign materials.
- 2 demerit points - Campaigning contrary to required procedures / Undermining the Electoral Process.

**Total: 4 demerit points**

No additional sanctions were imposed.

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## VIII. Appeal Information

Pursuant to Section 76 of the Electoral Code, the Candidate may appeal this decision to the Appeals Committee within 72 hours of receipt of the full Notice of Decision.

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## 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.