CUSA 2026 Presidential By-Election Campaign Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines provide information regarding the November 2026 Presidential By-Election and explain campaign procedures and requirements under the Electoral Code (hereinafter referred to as the Code). These guidelines supplement, but do not replace, the provisions of the Code, applicable CUSA policies, Carleton University policies, or applicable law. It is the responsibility of all candidates and their campaign teams to familiarize themselves with these requirements.

Fairness in Elections

The role of the Chief Returning Officer is to ensure the election runs in an orderly and fair fashion and produces a result in which the electorate can have confidence. All Presidential candidates and their campaign teams are expected to campaign with integrity, respect for other candidates and students, and adherence to the Electoral Code. Candidates have a significant influence on the tone of the election and are encouraged to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the responsibilities of the office they seek.

Campaigning

Campaign period: Monday, November 16 to Wednesday, November 25, 2026. The official opening and closing times will be communicated by the CRO. Voting will take place November 23–25, 2026. Campaigning before the official campaign period begins is prohibited (Schedule IV, 1(c)).

Social Media

The Code makes no distinction between online/digital platforms and comparable physical/in-person activity (S. 38(2)). Candidates and their campaign teams should conduct themselves appropriately and respectfully on social media and other digital platforms. Candidates must use their names as presented on the ballot

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when interacting or campaigning online (S. 38(1)). False, maliciously misleading, defamatory or harassing communications may result in penalties. Candidate-specific campaign promotion must not begin before the official campaign period. Solicitation of nominations during the nomination period must not become advance campaigning.

Campaign Expenses

Candidates and campaign teams who incur campaign expenses, including receiving in-kind (i.e. free) goods and services, must account for those expenses and submit a complete Report of Campaign Expenses, with receipts and supporting evidence, to the CRO no later than 72 hours after the end of the voting period (S. 40). Candidates who have incurred no expenses must still inform the CRO. Expenses must be recorded in Canadian dollars and include applicable taxes and the fair market value of in-kind contributions.

Limits: Presidential candidates must strictly adhere to the campaign expense limit established by the Electoral Code. Spending in excess of the prescribed limit may lead to penalties or disqualification.

- Presidential Candidates - $800

Campaign Materials

Presidential candidates and their campaign team members are permitted to distribute paper-based campaign materials and use digital platforms during the official campaign period (S. 38(3)). Only Presidential candidates are permitted to put up paper posters in designated areas (S. 38(4)).

Physical campaign materials distributed to students must be paper-based. Distribution may not be excessive so as to cause a nuisance, health or safety risk, obstruction of pedestrian traffic, or environmental harm. Campaign materials should be handed directly to people and must not be left unattended in public places, such as on cafeteria tables or chairs. Campaign materials must not use CUSA logos or insignia. Schedule IV identifies failure to obtain CRO approval of

campaign material as an electoral offence. Candidates should submit proposed materials for approval following the process communicated by the CRO.

The CRO may penalize a candidate or campaign for prohibited materials, excessive distribution, unauthorized postering, or other conduct that violates the Electoral Code or these guidelines. The candidate is responsible for the conduct of their campaign team.

Tabling

Tabling may take place only in designated and authorized locations. Any tabling opportunities made available for this Presidential By-Election, including locations, dates, hours and sign-up procedures, will be communicated separately by the CRO and the relevant space administrators. Previous General Election tabling arrangements do not automatically apply to this by-election. Candidates and campaign teams are responsible for supervising their assigned tables, keeping walkways accessible, respecting other space users, and complying with the conditions of the venue. Authorized paper-based campaign materials may be handed to students at approved tabling locations, subject to the restrictions in these guidelines.

Posters

Presidential candidates may put up paper posters in designated locations (S. 38(4)). All posters must comply with Carleton University's Posting Policy and these guidelines. Posters that do not comply may be removed by University Facilities Management or other responsible authorities. CUSA bears no responsibility for damage or costs associated with such removal. Candidates with non-compliant posters may also be penalized by the CRO.

Posters may only be affixed on campus to existing bulletin boards and existing wall spaces specifically designated for postings, as described below. Posting is prohibited on areas not specifically designated for public posters, including walls, pillars, doors, windows and bathroom stalls (except residence room doors where

expressly permitted below). Bulletin boards reserved for legally required workplace notices must not be used. Candidates may not mount new bulletin boards.

Candidates who put up posters must respect other candidates and the broader University community. Existing posters, including those belonging to other candidates, must not be damaged, vandalized or covered. Removing or relocating existing material is permitted only where expressly allowed in the designated posting rules below. Posters may not exceed 11 x 17 inches and are generally limited to one poster per bulletin board per candidate, except where a different limit is stated. Posters must be removed within 24 hours after the voting period ends and disposed of appropriately.

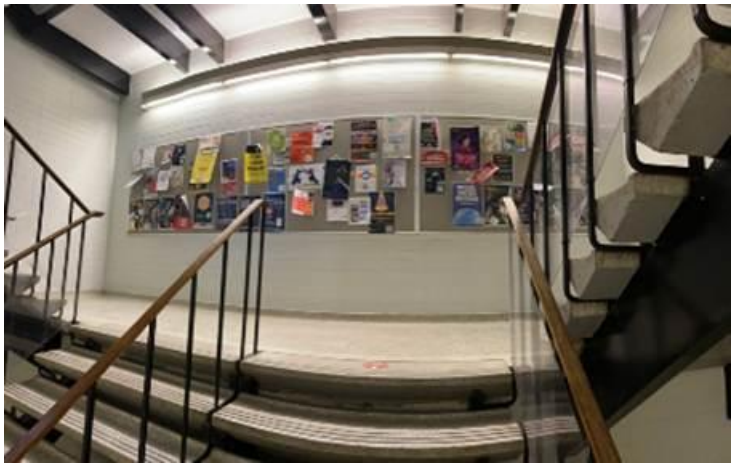
Poster content must be respectful in both graphics and language. Posters that are harassing, malicious or otherwise inappropriate may result in penalties and may be ordered removed.

Category 1: Campus Residence & Residence Commons Spaces (minus the two Boards which fall under Category 2)

The following spaces are drawn from the 2026 General Election posting guidance. Posting is permitted only where the location remains designated and authorized for the Presidential By-Election. Residence and Residence Commons posting is restricted to the designated boards and residence room doors described below.

a) Special Board Allowances in Residence Commons

- Untitled Board in the staircase from the tunnels to Residence Commons. The board is three panels wide. Candidates may only use the far left panel, but any other posters in the far left panel that are not related to the election may be relocated to the far right and/or centre panel.



Untitled Board in the tunnel level of Residence Commons. Candidates are welcome to use the Board, but no existing posters can be removed by.



b) Residence Room Doors:

Bedroom doors may have posters as long as the occupants adhere to the following:

- Using adhesive that will not leave a permanent mark/remove paint on doors;
- That all occupants agree with the poster(s); and

- That the poster(s) is/are flat against the door so it does not pose any fire hazards.
- Posters may never be put on glass or prevent someone from seeing through a space (like a peephole).
- No posters are permitted anywhere in residence buildings other than on residence room doors, unless prescribed elsewhere in this guidance.

Category 2: Campus (minus Residence & Residence Commons Spaces, but including two Boards in Residence Commons)

Posters are permitted on the types of designated boards described in sub-categories a, b and c below, subject to the stated limits. Other boards (sub-category d) may be used only with the permission of, and subject to the rules imposed by, the authority responsible for the board.

a) Boards titled "University News & Events 

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Boards listed below must be used in compliance with the campus Posting Policy, which means overlapping posters, posters for past events, posters that are more than a month old, posters not fully on the board, commercial posters, and more than one poster for each initiative/event per board is not permitted. This means that each candidate is only permitted to have one poster per board.

The University regularly removes postings from these boards. Its cleaning practices will not change for the by-election. Candidates may retain additional posters for replacement after a clearing, but CUSA is not responsible for posters removed by University personnel.

- Patrick's Building (Level 1 – public hallway)
- Teraanga Commons #1 (Level 2 – public hallway)
- Teraanga Commons #2 (Level 1 – public hallway)
- Mackenzie Building (Level 2 – public hall 2200)

- Minto Case Building (Level 2 – public corridor)
- Richcraft Hall (Level 1 - in corridor which lends to tunnels)
- Nesbitt Biology Building (Level 2 – public hallway 213/236)
- Steacie Building (Level 2 – public hallway 202)
- River Building (Main level – Steacie Building junction)
- Herzberg Building (Level 2 – public hallway 2220)
- Loeb Building (Level 2 – public hallway)
- Social Science Research Building (Level 1 – public hallway 122)
- Paterson Hall (Level 1 – public corridor)
- Dunton Tower (Level 1 – public hallway)
- Azrieli Pavilion (Level 2 – public hallway 173)
- Nideyinàn (Level 4 - near Campus Card Office and Booster Juice)
- Nideyinàn (Level 4 – Galleria) (titled "General Information")



b) Boards titled "CUSA Board" 

CUSA Boards may be identified by a “CUSA Board” label or CUSA plaque. The boards listed below are designated posting locations under the General Election guidance, subject to confirmation for this by-election. Candidates must respect any posted instructions and the authority managing these boards. Posting on an authorized CUSA Board does not grant permission to campaign elsewhere on CUSA property. Do not remove or damage another candidate’s material.

- Nideyinàn (Level 1 - beside entrance to Ollie’s)
  - Subject to space availability, each candidate is permitted up to 1 poster on this board
- Nideyinàn (Level 1 - beside vending machine near bookstore)

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- Subject to space availability, each candidate is permitted up to 1 poster on this board
- Nideyinàn (Level 3 - by entrance to service centres)
  - Subject to space availability, each candidate is permitted up to 1 poster on this board
- Nideyinàn (Level 5 - near elevator)
  - Subject to space availability, each candidate is permitted up to 5 posters on this board
- Tunnel between Tory and Paterson Hall (giant orange board)
  - Subject to space availability, each candidate is permitted up to 5 posters on this board

c) Untitled Boards or wall paint installations titled "Postings"



These locations are larger designated posting areas. Within reason, candidates may post multiple posters provided they respect existing postings, campus rules, and any instructions from the responsible authority.

- Untitled: Nideyinàn (Level 4 - between Galleria/The WIng & Roosters)
- "Postings": University Centre Building (Level 1 - in the tunnels)
- "Postings": Herzeberg Laboratories (Level 1 - in the tunnels)

d) Other Boards on Campus, not Included in the Above 3 Sub-Categories

In addition to the boards listed in sub-categories a, b and c, some campus boards are managed by faculties, schools, clubs, or other groups. Candidates may use these only where the managing authority permits election postings. Unless that authority expressly provides otherwise, candidates are limited to one poster per board. Candidates must respect all requests to remove non-compliant posters.

Category 3: Off-Campus

CUSA x elections

Off-campus posters must comply with applicable municipal bylaws, property rules, and any relevant building or condominium regulations. Candidates should obtain approval from the relevant property owner or manager where required.

Campaign Team and Candidate Responsibilities

Each candidate must submit a list of campaign team members to the CRO. A campaign team includes individuals authorized to speak or post on behalf of the candidate, and others who participate in coordinated campaigning beyond the level of an ordinary supporter or voter. Any changes to the team must be provided to the CRO in writing within 48 hours. The Electoral Code applies to campaign team members, and electoral offences committed by them may result in demerit points against the candidate (S. 1, 2 and 70). Schedule IV, Section 1(i) prohibits utilizing CUSA employees as part of a campaign team, with reference to the restrictions in Section 9; Schedule IV, Section 1(q) prohibits using non-electors as part of a campaign. Candidates should seek clarification from the CRO before involving any person whose eligibility is uncertain.

Restricted Campaigning Spaces and Conduct

Campaigning is prohibited in CUSA offices, prohibited CUSA property and university libraries, including spaces managed by the Carleton University Library (Schedule IV, Section 1(f)). Candidates may speak to students and attend club or student-society events when allowed by organizers and the venue; permission to attend an event does not override a space restriction. Any authorized tabling or posting activity must remain within the location and terms explicitly approved by the responsible authority. Candidates and campaign teams must not intimidate or harass electors, offer benefits in exchange for electoral support, obstruct University operations, interfere with the voting process, operate another student's ballot, or attempt to view a student's voting selections. Candidates should respect the privacy and independence of each elector.

Complaints, Appeals and Penalties

CUSA x elections

Reports of alleged electoral offences must be submitted to the CRO no later than 72 hours following the end of voting (S. 64). The CRO may investigate complaints and will consult the Election Advisory Committee before issuing demerit points (S. 65). A candidate who receives a penalty may appeal to the Appeals Committee within 72 hours after receiving the penalty notice (S. 76). Ten demerit points is the threshold for disqualification (S. 71). All candidates are expected to cooperate with investigations. For Presidential candidates, reimbursement of eligible campaign expenses is determined by first-ballot vote share: 95% of actual expenses for more than 10% of the first-ballot vote; 50% for between 5% and 10%; no reimbursement below 5%. Candidates who are disqualified are not eligible for reimbursement. Demerit-point deductions apply as provided in Section 41.

Authority

These guidelines are issued by the Chief Returning Officer under Section 20(f) of the Electoral Code as procedures for the administration of the election. Under Section 38(5), rules cannot be changed once an election is underway. Questions should be directed to cro@cusaonline.ca . In case of inconsistency, the Electoral Code and other applicable superior policies prevail.

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