SIKKIM UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (SUSA) ELECTION 2026

GUIDELINES FOR THE STUDENTS' ELECTION DEBATE

The Election Committee hereby issues the following comprehensive guidelines for the conduct of the Students' Election Debate as part of the Sikkim University Students' Association (SUSA) Election 2026. The debate is intended to provide a democratic platform for candidates to present their manifestos, articulate their visions and priorities, respond to questions, and engage in constructive discussions on issues concerning students and the University. The guidelines aim to ensure fairness, transparency, discipline, inclusivity, and equal opportunities for all eligible candidates.

1. Objectives of the Debate

The Election Debate shall have the following objectives:

1. To provide candidates with an opportunity to present their manifestos, visions, proposed programmes, and priorities for student welfare and institutional development.
2. To promote issue-based discussions on academic affairs, student welfare, campus facilities, extracurricular activities, inclusivity, and other matters concerning the student community.
3. To encourage democratic values, critical thinking, accountability, transparency, and responsible leadership.
4. To ensure a fair, respectful, and inclusive exchange of views among candidates and participating students.

2. Eligibility and Confirmation of Participation

1. Only officially nominated and duly scrutinised candidates for the SUSA Election 2026 shall be eligible to participate in the debate.
2. Candidates must confirm their participation with the Election Committee within the stipulated deadline.
3. Participation shall be strictly individual. Proxy representation by another candidate, supporter, or any other person shall not be permitted.
4. Candidates must report to the venue at the time specified by the Election Committee and complete any necessary registration or attendance formalities.
5. Candidates shall comply with the instructions issued by the moderator and the Election Committee throughout the event.
6. Any change in a candidate's eligibility status shall be dealt with in accordance with the applicable election rules.

3. Format and Structure of the Debate

1. The debate shall be conducted under the supervision of the Election Committee and moderated by a faculty member designated as the Debate Coordinator or Moderator.
2. The Moderator shall ensure that all eligible candidates receive a fair opportunity to express their views within the prescribed time limits.
3. The debate shall ordinarily be conducted in the following sequence:
    - Opening remarks by the Moderator and an explanation of the debate rules.
    - Introduction of candidates and their respective posts.
    - Presentation of manifestos, visions, priorities, and proposed programmes.
    - Question-and-answer session involving the Moderator and, where permitted, the audience.
    - Closing statements by candidates contesting the post of President.
    - Concluding remarks by the Moderator and the Election Committee.
4. Candidates contesting the post of **President** shall be allotted **five (5) minutes** each to present their views, manifestos, and priorities, followed by a **two (2)-minute closing statement**.
5. Candidates contesting all other posts shall be allotted **three (3) minutes each** to present their views, manifestos, and proposed programmes.
6. Audience questions may also be invited, subject to the time available and the procedures announced by the Election Committee.
7. Questions shall relate to student welfare, academic development, campus facilities, student representation, inclusivity, accountability, and other relevant University matters.
8. The order of presentation shall be determined by the Election Committee or the Moderator through a fair and transparent procedure.

4. Time Management

1. The prescribed speaking time shall be strictly observed for all candidates.
2. The Moderator or designated Timekeeper shall indicate when the allotted time is nearing completion and when it has expired.
3. Candidates shall conclude their remarks promptly upon the expiry of their allotted time.
4. Any additional time or modification to the debate schedule shall be granted only by the Moderator in consultation with the Election Committee and, where applicable, equally to similarly placed candidates.
5. Candidates shall not interrupt another speaker to extend their own speaking time or respond outside the designated question-and-answer session.

5. Rules of Conduct for Candidates

All candidates shall maintain the highest standards of discipline, dignity, integrity, and mutual respect throughout the debate.

1. Candidates shall address issues constructively and focus on their own manifestos, policies, proposals, and plans for student welfare.
2. Personal attacks, defamatory allegations, abusive language, intimidation, hate speech, discriminatory remarks, and derogatory comments about any candidate or group shall be strictly prohibited.
3. Candidates shall respect the Moderator's authority and comply with all reasonable instructions relating to the orderly conduct of the debate.
4. Candidates shall not use the debate as a platform for personal disputes, communal or divisive appeals, or attacks unrelated to the issues under discussion.
5. The display or distribution of banners, posters, placards, props, campaign materials, or other promotional items during the debate shall be strictly prohibited.
6. Candidates shall maintain decorum before, during, and after the debate and shall not engage in conduct that undermines the fairness or credibility of the event.

6. Guidelines for the Moderator or Debate Coordinator

The Moderator shall conduct the debate impartially and ensure that the proceedings remain orderly, balanced, and focused.

1. The Moderator shall explain the rules, speaking time, question-and-answer procedure, and consequences of violations before the debate begins.
2. The Moderator shall treat all candidates equally, irrespective of their position, popularity, organisational affiliation, or perceived support.
3. The Moderator shall ensure that questions are relevant, clear, and appropriate to the purpose of the debate.
4. The Moderator may disallow questions that are defamatory, discriminatory, misleading, irrelevant, or intended solely to provoke personal confrontation.
5. The Moderator shall have the authority to issue warnings, stop a speaker whose conduct violates the rules, and temporarily suspend proceedings if required to restore order.

7. Guidelines for the Audience

Students are encouraged to attend the debate and participate constructively in the democratic process.

1. Audience members shall maintain silence and decorum while candidates or the Moderator are speaking.

2. Sloganeering, heckling, booing, chanting, disruptive applause intended to intimidate candidates, and other forms of interruption shall not be permitted.
3. Audience members shall not engage in personal attacks, abusive remarks, threats, or discriminatory conduct against any candidate or participant.
4. Questions, where invited, must be concise, relevant, and directed towards the issues under discussion rather than the personal lives of candidates.
5. The Moderator may invite and accept questions submitted in writing, depending on the arrangements announced before the debate.
6. The Moderator shall have the discretion to select questions to ensure relevance, fairness, diversity of issues, and effective use of the available time.

8. Media Coverage, Photography, and Recording

1. The Election Committee may arrange official photography, audio recording, or video recording of the debate for documentation, transparency, and institutional record-keeping.
2. Any official recording shall be handled in accordance with the University's applicable rules and directions.
3. External media coverage, public broadcasting, or live streaming of the debate shall require prior approval from the Election Committee and any other competent University authority, where applicable.

9. Violation of Guidelines and Disciplinary Action

1. The Election Committee shall be responsible for enforcing these guidelines and maintaining the integrity of the debate.
2. Depending on the nature and seriousness of a violation, the Moderator may issue a verbal warning, direct the individual to stop the offending conduct, withdraw the opportunity to continue speaking, or suspend the proceedings temporarily.
3. Repeated or serious violations may be referred to the Election Committee for appropriate action under the applicable election rules.
4. No disciplinary action shall be imposed arbitrarily or solely on the basis of a candidate's views or criticism expressed respectfully and within the rules.
5. The Election Committee shall maintain a record of serious violations and the action taken, wherever necessary.

10. Authority and Interpretation

1. The Election Committee shall supervise the overall conduct of the debate and ensure compliance with these guidelines.
2. The Moderator shall be responsible for maintaining order and implementing the prescribed debate procedure during the event.

3. In the event of a dispute regarding the conduct of the debate, the matter shall be referred to the Election Committee for a decision consistent with the applicable rules.

11. Event Details

Event: Sikkim University Students' Association (SUSA) Election Debate 2026
Date: 3 November 2026 (Tuesday)
Time: 10:30 AM to 1:00 PM
Venue: Conference Hall, Raap Jyor (Cauvery) Girls' Hostel, 5th Mile, Tadong

All eligible candidates are requested to participate in accordance with these guidelines. Students attending the event are expected to cooperate with the Election Committee and maintain the decorum necessary for the successful conduct of the debate.

Election Committee
Sikkim University Students' Association (SUSA) Election 2026