



UTAH DEBATE COMMISSION

Budget Information

Budget Assumptions

- Debates are held every two years based on statewide elections held every four years and congressional elections taking place every two years.
- Each year's budget includes one Special Election debate.
- Debate costs include production, polling, voter database, security and travel.
- Costs are estimated to increase 4% per year.

General & Special Election Debates - \$34,700 per debate

- Held at universities across the state.
- Student engagement and exposure to a broader demographic.
- Higher costs due to mobile equipment and travel.

Primary & Off-Campus Debates - \$11,100 per debate

- Held in the studios of our media partners.
- Lower costs due to media partners donating facilities and equipment.

Utah Debate Commission Budget - Two & Four-Year Debate Cycles

	2025	2026	2027	2028
General & Special Election Debates	1	4	1	7
<i>Budget per Debate</i>	\$ 34,700	\$ 36,100	\$ 37,500	\$ 39,000
Primary & Off-Campus Debates	0	6	0	14
<i>Budget per Debate</i>	\$ 11,100	\$ 11,500	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,500

Total Budget	2025	2026	2027	2028
General & Special Election Debates	\$ 34,700	\$ 144,400	\$ 37,500	\$ 273,000
Primary & Off-Campus Debates	\$ -	\$ 69,000	\$ -	\$ 175,000
Administrative	\$ 89,200	\$ 92,800	\$ 96,500	\$ 100,400
Education & Youth Outreach	\$ 20,800	\$ 21,600	\$ 22,500	\$ 23,400
	\$ 144,700	\$ 327,800	\$ 156,500	\$ 571,800

Average for Four-Year Cycle **\$ 300,200**

Budget Request

To provide the highest quality of political discourse, expand civic education, foster public engagement, and maximize voter participation, the UDC needs:

\$300,000 / year for the next four years.



UTAH DEBATE COMMISSION

2024 Debates

The Utah Debate Commission (UDC) hosted six primary election debates at PBS Utah in 2024 for each statewide and federal race in all registered Utah parties with more than one debate-qualifying candidate:

Gubernatorial

Moderated by Caroline Ballard

- Spencer Cox
- Phil Lyman

Attorney General

Moderated by Glen Mills

- Derek Brown
- Frank Mylar
- Rachel Terry

U.S. Senate

Moderated by Glen Mills

- John Curtis
- Trent Staggs
- Jason Walton
- Brad Wilson

1st Congressional Dist.

Moderated by Julie Rose

- Paul Miller
- Blake Moore

2nd Congressional Dist.

Moderated by Rod Arquette

- Colby Jenkins
- Celeste Maloy

3rd Congressional Dist.

Moderated by Thomas Wright

- J.R. Bird
- John Dougall
- Mike Kennedy
- Case Lawrence
- Stewart Peay

In 2024, UDC hosted seven general election debates at institutions of higher education across the state, bringing the dialogue and candidates to students and constituents:

Gubernatorial

Moderated by Jason Perry @ Salt Lake Community College

- Gov. Spencer Cox
- Brian King
- Robert Latham

Attorney General

Moderated by Maura Carabello @ Southern Utah University

- Rudy Bautista
- Derek Brown
- Andrew McCullough
- Michelle Quist

U.S. Senate

Moderated by Glen Mills @ Weber State University

- Carlton Bowen
- John Curtis
- Caroline Gleich

1st Congressional Dist.

Moderated by Natalie Gochnour @ Utah State University

- Bill Campbell
- Daniel Cottam
- Blake Moore

2nd Congressional Dist.

Moderated by Max Roth @ Utah Tech University

- Celeste Maloy
- Nathaniel Woodward

3rd Congressional Dist.

Moderated by Leah Murray @ Brigham Young University

- Mike Kennedy
- Glen Wright

4th Congressional Dist.

Moderated by Caroline Ballard @ University of Utah

- Burgess Owens
- Katrina Fallick-Wang



UTAH DEBATE COMMISSION

Utah's only nonpartisan and independent forum for public discussion among candidates for federal and statewide elected offices.

Ensures Fair Representation: By allocating funds to the Utah Debate Commission (UDC) the State Legislature supports an impartial forum for candidates to present diverse perspectives to voters. The UDC hosts debates for federal and statewide races, and has produced 56 primary and general debates in election cycles since 2014. All candidates who meet UDC qualifying standards have access to debate participation.

Promotes Civic Engagement: Funding the Utah Debate Commission encourages informed civic participation by providing a platform for meaningful debates on Utah's critical issues. UDC debates are broadcast live on Utah's major television stations and covered by radio and print outlets across the state, including the following UDC partners:

- ABC4 (KTVX)
- Fox13
- PBS Utah
- BYU Broadcasting
- KSL
- Salt Lake Tribune
- Deseret News
- KUTV
- Utah Association of Broadcasters

Educates the Electorate: The commission plays a vital role in educating voters, allowing them to make well-informed decisions by facilitating debates that delve into candidates' positions and proposals. Candidates receive unparalleled exposure to Utah voters, and constituents access valuable dialogues through UDC debates, which are live streamed on social media platforms.

Enhances Democratic Processes: Supporting the commission contributes to an open and transparent democratic system, fostering healthy political discourse and understanding among constituents. The UDC provides a unique and elevated experience for students and local citizens by partnering with Utah's eight major institutions of higher education who serve as debate hosts. Together, they build passion for lifelong civic engagement in a new generation.

- Brigham Young University
- Southern Utah University
- Utah Tech University
- Salt Lake Community College
- University of Utah
- Utah Valley University
- Utah State University
- Weber State University

Debates are rotated around the state among these educational establishments, growing public exposure for candidates, highlighting regional issues, and helping each candidate's message reach Utahns throughout the state.

Strengthens Democracy's Foundation: Financial support for the Utah Debate Commission reinforces the foundational principles of democracy, promoting accountability, accessibility, and the exchange of ideas in the electoral process.

For more information, see [Utah Debate Commission](https://UtahDebateCommission.org) at UtahDebateCommission.org