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Heterodox Academy 2024 Annual Report

PROMOTING AND PROTECTING OPEN INQUIRY, VIEWPOINT DIVERSITY,
AND CONSTRUCTIVE DISAGREEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION

heterodox
academy



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Letter from HxA's President

Charting a Path Forward Together

Dear Members and Supporters,

As we close another extraordinary year in higher education, I am delighted to share with you this annual report of HxA's accomplishments. HxA's work to promote the ideals of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement at our universities has never been more vital. Most importantly, as the report describes, our programs and activities have never been more impactful.

In 2024, we celebrated the first full year of the Mike & Sofia Segal Center for Academic Pluralism. Made possible by a transformative multi-year grant, the Segal Center is already catalyzing vital research, events, and initiatives that explore the role of pluralism in academic life. The Center's work strengthens our ability to advance institutional change and foster a more inclusive and intellectually vibrant academic culture.

This past year also marked the launch of *inquisitive*, a bold new HxA periodical bringing thought-provoking essays, research, and commentary centered on the core values of open inquiry

and viewpoint diversity. With contributions from thought leaders from around the world, *inquisitive* is poised to become a trusted resource for those seeking fresh perspectives on freedom in higher education.

The second half of 2024 saw the launch of HxA's first dedicated policy team, led by veteran First Amendment attorney and advocate Joe Cohn. Under Joe's leadership, HxA is addressing policy on two critical fronts: governmental and institutional. We are working to ensure that legislation supports—rather than hinders—academic freedom and that university-based policies, including Institutional Neutrality, foster environments where diverse viewpoints and constructive disagreement are not only permitted but actively encouraged. By engaging simultaneously with policymakers and higher education leaders, HxA is shaping a landscape where open inquiry and rigorous debate remain central to the academic experience.

Most importantly, we're continuing to build momentum for the future. Our Campus Community Network

blossomed in size and influence in 2024, with 74 active communities now driving cultural and policy changes at institutions across North America and beyond, collectively impacting *over two million students each year*. These grassroots efforts are not just inspiring—they are reshaping norms and expectations in favor of academic freedom.

As you read through this report, I hope you'll feel the energy and possibility that radiates through the work of our members. Together, we are not just responding to the challenges of our time—we are building a vibrant, pluralistic, sustainable future for higher education.

Thank you for your support and partnership in this critical mission.

With gratitude,

John Tomasi
President, Heterodox Academy

HxA Staff

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Heterodox Academy is one of those rare venues where one can encounter a range of viewpoints and engage in genuine, robust discussion across differences. During my time as HxA's inaugural John Stuart Mill Faculty Fellow, I connected with academics in the U.S. and abroad who see dissent and disagreement as drivers of intellectual growth. Having a platform that facilitates some of the most desperately needed conversations about academe, especially at a time when intellectual and ideological conformity have become a defining feature of institutions of higher learning, has been a breath of fresh air for many of us who are eager to reform higher education from within.

AMNA KHALID, DPhil

Associate Professor of History at Carleton College

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The Heterodox Vanguard (\$100k+)

Arthur Vining Davis Foundations
 Cliff and Laurel Asness
 The Beth and Ravenel Curry Foundation
 Edelman Family Foundation
 Margaret and Dan Loeb Foundation
 The Mike and Sofia Segal Foundation
 Thomas W. Smith Foundation
 Jonathan Sobel and Marcia Dunn
 Templeton Religion Trust
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Open Inquiry Pioneers (\$50k+)

Ken and Jackie Broad
 John and Amy Griffin Foundation
 The Kovner Foundation
 George S. Loening
 Paul and Angie Martino
 The Melville Foundation
 OneRoot Foundation
 Philanthropy Roundtable
 Chris Rufer
 Robin and Sandy Stuart Family Foundation

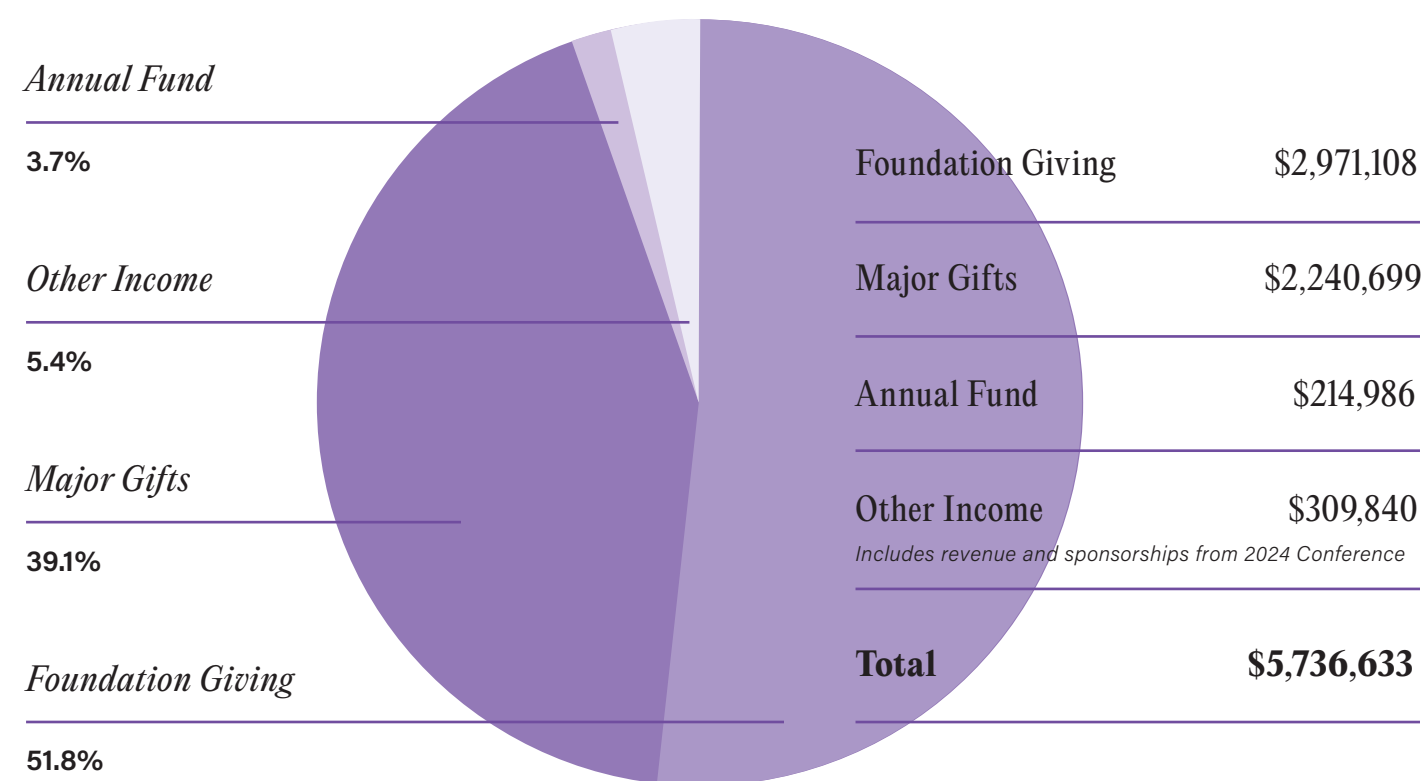
Guardians of Discourse (\$10k+)

Allen & Company
 The Better Natures Foundation
 Donald Charles
 John Chisholm
 Pilar and Lew Davies
 Jonathan Haidt
 Frank Laukien
 Steve Laub
 Robert and Roni Lemle
 Gerry Ohrstrom
 Shulman Family Charitable Fund
 The Snider Foundation
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 The Nathan & Esther K. Wagner Family Foundation

Sustaining Benefactors (\$1k+)

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 Christ and Cynthia Stacey
 Kate Stith
 Ashley Waters Gundersen
 Zigman Family Trust

2024 Revenue



2024 Expenses

Operations & Overhead	\$1,784,785	Professional Fees	\$418,690
Programs & Events	\$2,324,980	Other Expenses	\$12,120
Outreach	\$206,802	Total	\$5,148,999
Fellowships	\$401,623		

Calendar year figures based on portions of two fiscal years. Revenue excludes out-year revenue from multi-year grants recognized during this time period.

Approximately 55% of our funding in CY 2024 was unrestricted, allowing us to invest in strategic initiatives and operations, while 45% was restricted for specific campus communities, research, fellowships, and events.

BY 2024'S CLOSE

148
INSTITUTIONS
ADOPTED
INSTITUTIONAL
NEUTRALITY
POLICIES

In 2024, HxA teamed up with like-minded organizations to push institutional statement neutrality, supercharging a wave of adoption. These university-based policies allow students and faculty to research, learn, and speak with less fear.

CAMPUS
COMMUNITIES
GREW

39%

FROM 50 TO 74
CHAPTERS IN 2024

HxA's Campus Communities work diligently on improving university policies and cultures, host difficult and thought-provoking academic conversations, and provide localized support to faculty, students, and staff working to effect healthier, freer institutions.

HxA 2024
CONFERENCE

400+
ATTENDEES

Chicago, June 2024: HxA convened a 3-day gathering featuring university presidents leading in viewpoint diversity, devoted educators sharing methods for curious classrooms, and disciplinary experts exploring depoliticization of accreditation and disciplinary associations.

HxA GAINED

1,089

MEMBERS IN 2024

FOR A TOTAL OF 7,393
WITH A GROWTH
RATE OF 17%

HxA members do the critical, on-the-ground work of improving their own institutions' policies and cultures, helping create campuses that nourish open inquiry and viewpoint diversity.

ACROSS ALL
PLATFORMS,
HxA'S CONTENT
RECEIVED OVER

6.5
MILLION VIEWS

HxA reaches across North America—and across the world—to open minds to pluralistic ideas and to bold conceptions of freedom of thought, inquiry, and expression.

HETERODOX
CONVERSATIONS

900+

ATTENDEES


Heterodox Conversations bring dynamic and thought-provoking public dialogues on controversial topics. Led by exceptional scholars, these events demonstrate how intellectual curiosity and viewpoint tolerance foster productive discourse.



FREE THE INQUIRY The lowdown on higher ed from Team HxA

State Legislation on Tenure, DEI Could Have Major Impacts on Higher Education

Real-time policy analysis of what could help or harm academic freedom.

 **RAHEEM WILLIAMS AND JOE COHN**
FEB 15, 2025




INSTITUTIONAL NEUTRALITY
heterodox academy
DARTMOUTH COLLEGE ADOPTS NEUTRALITY

FREE THE INQUIRY The lowdown on higher ed from Team HxA

UNT's Misinterpretation of Texas Law Threatens Academic Freedom

University administrations should be standing up for academic freedom.

 **JOE COHN**
NOV 26, 2024

HxA is one of the most effective organizations at trying to steer the ship of higher education in the right direction.

MATT BURGESS, PhD
Assistant Professor of Economics at the University of Wyoming



Policy Division

HxA Advocates Strong Protections for Open Inquiry

In 2024, HxA established its first dedicated policy advocacy team, **hiring nationally-renowned First Amendment attorney Joe Cohn, JD** (shown above), to lead. In just under half a year, HxA's Policy Division has established itself as a go-to resource for **smart, nonpartisan analysis** of emerging laws and regulatory interpretations in the higher ed space.

On the legislative front, **HxA's policy team proactively engages with elected representatives** to make sure governmental oversight is done in a way that supports open inquiry and avoids requiring forced political speech—allegiance to one ideology or another—in our nation's academic research units and college classrooms.

What about our advocacy on college campuses? The **HxA Policy Division has already connected with leaders of over 100 colleges and universities**. These engagements have spanned the diverse landscape of higher education, including liberal arts colleges, tribal community colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), state university systems, and Ivy League schools.

These first-round efforts **contributed significantly to the adoption of Institutional Statement Neutrality across America**. Under these policies, leaders commit to generally refraining from taking stances on contested issues, allowing students and faculty to research, learn about, and speak on controversial topics with less fear.

The Segal Center for Academic Pluralism

Research Supporting HxA's Mission

Led by Director Alex Arnold, PhD (shown right), The Segal Center for Academic Pluralism is the ideas laboratory of HxA—researching, exploring, generating, testing, and disseminating facts and ideas about open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in higher education.

Besides conducting original research in support of HxA's mission, the Segal Center hosts faculty and postdoctoral fellows from a range of academic disciplines interested in freedom of inquiry and expression. Segal Center fellows conduct original theoretical, normative, and data-driven research and drive wider conversations about truth-seeking and open inquiry in higher ed. In 2024, 80 scholars applied for the positions, with four faculty and one postdoc fellow chosen from the highly competitive pool.



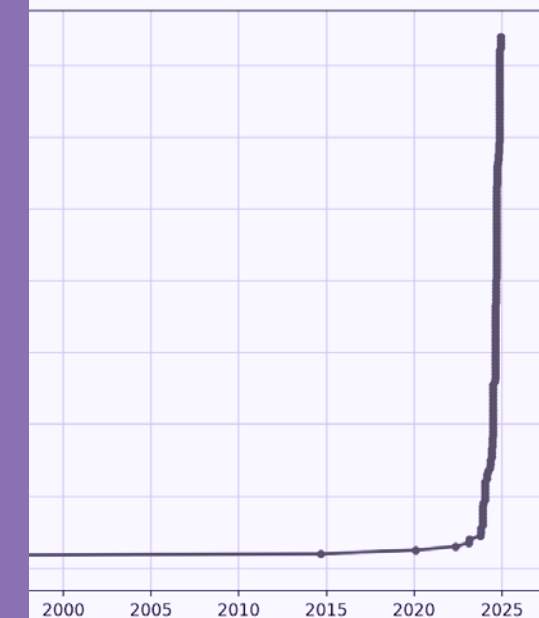
IN 2024, THE SEGAL CENTER TOOK HxA'S CAMPUS EXPRESSION SURVEY NORTH TO CANADA

- Nearly 80% of students were at least somewhat reluctant to discuss at least one controversial issue in class.
- Students most fear social ostracism and shaming by their peers.
- The more politically extreme on the left or right, the more likely students are willing to speak up—meaning extreme views are likely to get the most airtime.



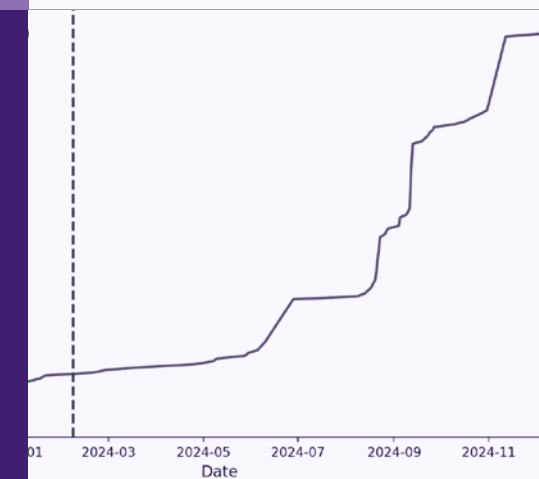
INSTITUTIONAL NEUTRALITY ADOPTIONS DATA TRACKING

In 2024, the Segal Center research team also tracked institutional neutrality policies across higher education, creating the first systematic database on the adoption of these important policies.



HxA HIGHER EDUCATION DATABASE INITIATIVE

In 2025, HxA's Higher Education Database Initiative will expand to analyze institutional performance across multiple dimensions of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement. The initiative provides key insights for major stakeholders in our change work, including university administrators, trustees, faculty, and philanthropists.



The Segal Faculty provided me the ability to launch ambitious survey and qualitative projects on academic freedom, institutional constraints on that freedom, and willingness to censor in the academy. Immersed in the Segal Center's rich climate of rigorous inquiry, I had my thinking challenged and had my intellectual passion rekindled.

COLLEEN EREN, PhD
Segal Faculty Fellow



HxA CAMPUS COMMUNITIES

Helping HxA members support each other's efforts, showcase and model HxA values, and improve policies, practices, and culture on 74 North American campuses.



HETERODOX COMMUNITIES

Convening virtual alliances around shared disciplines and areas of interest. HxA now plays host to 30 Heterodox Communities with more in the pipeline.



SPEAKERS BUREAU

Elevating the expertise of HxA members, sharing ideas and success stories around our values. HxA's Speakers Bureau now features over 80 thought leaders.



Campus Communities

HxA Connects and Supports Change Agents

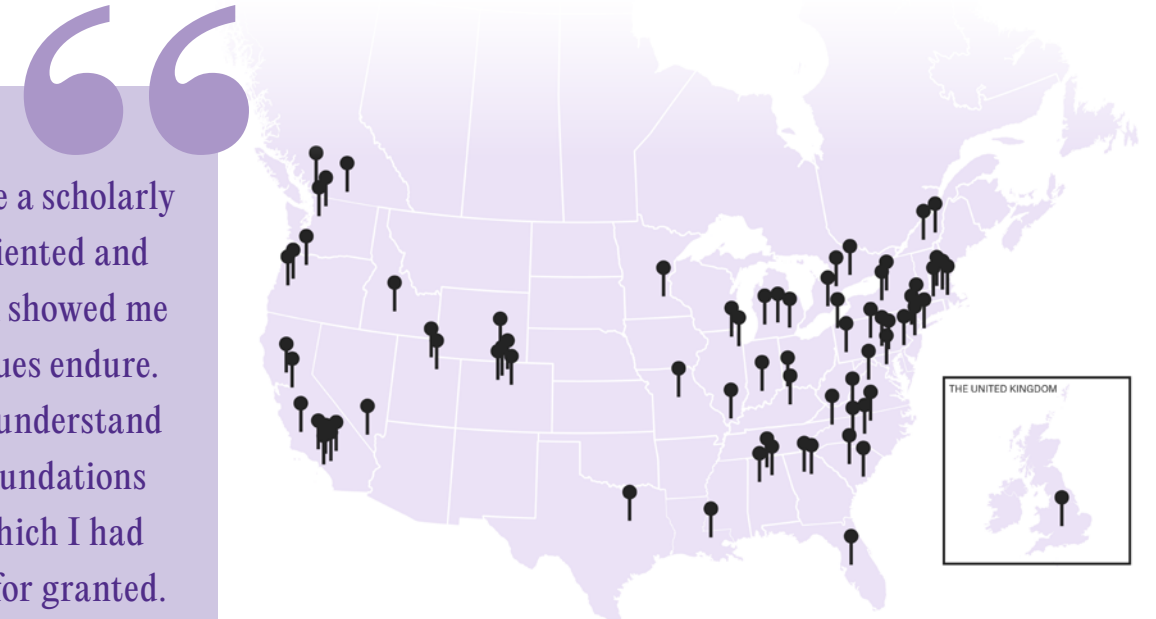
Led in 2024 by Martha McCaughey, PhD, and presently led by Bethany Boucher (shown left), HxA's Membership and Community Engagement team works with a 7,000+ member network of academic leaders to help them **strengthen intellectual communities, improve campus cultures, and advance policies that support free and open academic discourse.**

In 2024, HxA Campus Communities hosted over 135 group actions, including convening events, developing programming, and effecting positive policy interventions. Highlights include the **"Reducing Polarization Dialogue Series"** in Colorado, ultimately expanded across all seven Campus Communities in the Mountain West with the tagline **"America is too beautiful to be so divided."**

This year, Heterodox Communities hosted a total of 63 events. Just one example: HxCanada partnered with McGill University's Campus Community to host **"EDI and Academic Freedom: An Honest Dialogue,"** drawing 400 attendees over two days. With each new conversation, collaboration, and connection that HxA makes possible, we are not just responding to challenges in higher education—we are **actively shaping its future.**

HxA has given me a scholarly home...I felt disoriented and isolated, but HxA showed me that scholarly values endure. It also helped me understand the intellectual foundations of these values, which I had previously taken for granted.

From our Member Survey





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TAX ID #82-2903153



Heterodox Academy (HxA) is a non-partisan, non-profit organization consisting of over 7,300 members of faculty, staff, and students from around the world who advocate for preserving and promoting the values of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in institutions of higher education and research. If you are interested in supporting our mission, **become a member** or **make a donation** to support our work. If you want to stay up-to-date on HxA news, the latest HxA content, or upcoming HxA events, **subscribe to our emails**.