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Heterodox Academy 2025 Annual Report

*Equipping faculty and campus leaders to build
cultures of open inquiry on campuses everywhere.*

heterodox
academy



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Letter from HxA's President

Meeting the Moment

Friends and Members,

The biblical story of Joseph is a lesson of wisdom unrecognized — until it becomes indispensable. As a young man, Joseph showed unusual insight and integrity. But his visions were ignored, and even punished. Joseph worked, without bitterness, even when he learned that people often protect their own interests rather than do what is right. When a crisis arrived, leaders turned to Joseph for the advice they had long overlooked. In that moment, because he had prepared with intelligence and goodwill, Joseph was uniquely positioned to help.

In its tenth year, Heterodox Academy finds itself in a similar moment. For much of our history, we had a dream of universities returning to their truth-seeking mission. Though this vision was mostly ignored and sometimes even punished, HxA continued to work to make it a reality. We formulated a set of foundational principles, created a membership association, and then organized our members into campus-based communities. We built a research center, The Mike and Sofia Center for Academic Pluralism, and deepened our organizational capacity. Through that decade, we worked with the steady determination and belief that our university system — with all its flaws — is a precious resource worth saving.

Over the past year, everything changed. University leaders encountered a crisis of public trust they could no longer ignore. And suddenly, they turned to HxA for guidance. Because we had prepared our organization in a principled way, we were ready to help.

This was a year of tremendous achievement at HxA. Our membership grew by 11 percent and now exceeds 8,200. Our Campus Community Network has grown to link our member-groups across more than 80 campuses in three countries. Our members have hosted more than 230 programs and events across our various communities and joined us at our three regional conferences hosted on university campuses. This year's national HxA conference drew over 400 attendees and hosted over 100 speakers across panels, talks, and workshops. Our publications, *inquisitive* and *Free the Inquiry*, and our podcast *Heterodox Out Loud* have been read and listened to hundreds of thousands of times. The Segal Center released major reports and datasets on DEI statements in faculty hiring, institutional neutrality policies, and the rise of civics centers — along with our landmark Open Inquiry U Reform Agenda. Perhaps most exciting, we launched a University Partnerships team, which in 2026 will significantly expand our direct work with college presidents.

After years of HxA and its members being cast as campus contras, college leaders now seek us out as principled allies. This report describes the remarkable year we just finished. It is a sign of even bigger things to come.

JOHN TOMASI, D.PHIL

HxA President

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With steady, strategic growth, HxA has become the leading organization representing faculty, staff and students on college campuses who seek to promote norms of open inquiry, constructive disagreement and viewpoint diversity. This is slow, quiet, bottom-up work, classroom by classroom, campus-by-campus, with the mission to shift campus cultures burdened by constraints and taboos. I support HxA because I have watched its membership growth, and I have seen the impact of its work at its conferences, in its student surveys and published materials, and in how profoundly it has influenced the way higher education reform is discussed.

LESLIE SPENCER,

*Board of Directors, Alumni Free Speech Alliance
Board of Directors, Princetonians for Free Speech*



Letter from HxA's Board Chair

Open Inquiry's Moment Has Arrived

Friends and Members,

Just a few years ago, the work of HxA was seen as challenging an increasingly problematic but too often accepted status quo in higher education. Our members, though always principled and well-intentioned, were sometimes labeled as disruptors or even troublemakers. Our outreach to university leaders, and offers to help them create cultures of open inquiry and viewpoint diversity, typically went unanswered.

You and I know the culture has shifted, and that the conditions now increasingly favor many reforms we long promoted. But as the chair of the Heterodox Academy Board of Directors, I can tell you that we at HxA are treating this moment not as one of celebration, but rather as a unique moment of opportunity. The shift is encouraging, but increases the urgency of action.

This report features examples of the work our members are doing at scores of campuses in every region of the country. HxA plays a leadership role in the campus reform movement in large part because we are leading change from the bottom up. We know that insider-driven reform is the only truly effective method for achieving lasting change.

John Tomasi opened this report by comparing our work to the biblical figure of Joseph, who faced pushback from institutions and leaders. In its own humble way, the work of HxA has been following a similar trajectory. The vision and foresight of John Tomasi and co-founder Jonathan Haidt have prepared us for this cultural moment, and now is the time to ensure that the resources HxA has developed — campus communities, reform toolkits, data-driven strategies, leadership playbooks — will be increasingly adopted and implemented by campuses around the nation.

But in order to do so, we must build our resources — for as the story of Joseph relates, seven years of famine can come just as readily as seven years of plenty. If you have already supported our work, thank you for your generosity. If you are considering a gift to HxA, I hope the stories in this report have made clear both our great impact so far and the urgency of this cultural moment. I ask you to please consider joining our effort.

We are glad to count you as a fellow advocate of open inquiry and viewpoint diversity, and I thank you for your interest in and support of Heterodox Academy.

JEFFREY S. FLIER M.D.

Chair, HxA Board of Directors

\$100k+

The Achelis and Bodman Foundation
 Anonymous
 Arthur Vining Davis Foundations
 The Beth and Ravenel Curry Foundation
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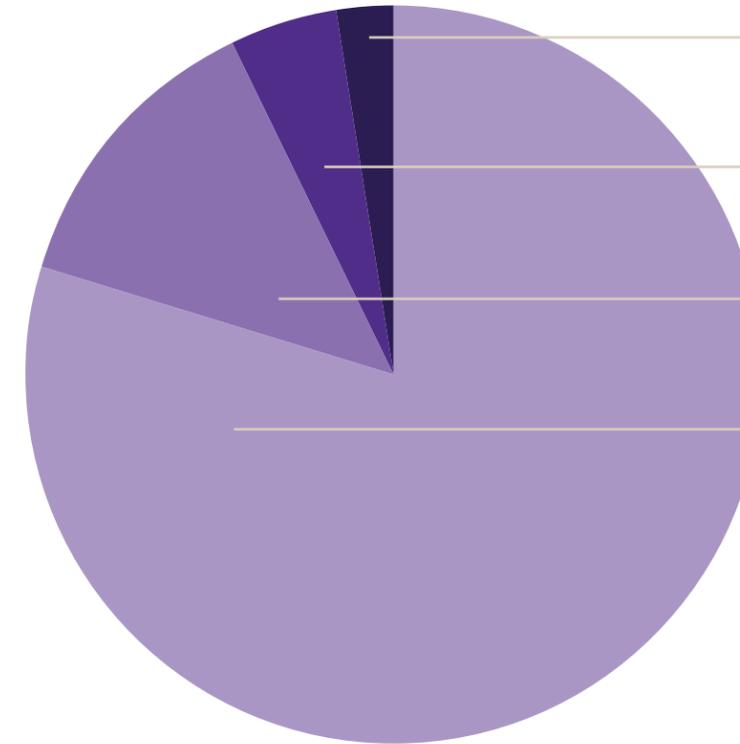
Allen & Company
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Gifts listed were received between January 2025 and December 2025. We regret any errors or omissions. Please contact McKay Stangler (stangler@heterodoxacademy.org) if you have any corrections.

2025 Revenue



Other Income (2.4%) <i>Includes revenue and sponsorships from 2025 Conference</i>	\$173,082
Annual Fund (4.5%)	\$318,551
Major Gifts (13.1%)	\$913,319
Foundation Giving (79.8%)	\$5,550,738
Total	\$6,955,692

2025 Expenses

Operations & Overhead	\$2,195,820	Total	\$5,979,206
Programs & Events	\$2,159,880		
Outreach	\$137,735		
Fellowships	\$630,603		
Professional Fees	\$832,537		
Other Expenses	\$22,630		

*Calendar year figures derived from portions of two fiscal years. Revenue received in prior years for CY 2025 is included; revenue recognized in CY 2025 for future years is excluded. Revenue categories have been redefined from CY 2024 and are not directly comparable to prior year figures.

*Approximately 71% of our funding in CY 2025 was unrestricted, allowing us to invest in strategic initiatives and operations, while 29% was restricted for specific campus communities, research, fellowships, and events.

UNVEILED OUR
4
POINT
OPEN INQUIRY U
AGENDA
FOR ACADEMIC
REFORM

At HxA, we're equipping faculty, staff, and campus leaders to build a stronger academic culture through practical and principled recommendations that can be championed through any position within the university.

**CAMPUS
COMMUNITIES
BRINGING OPEN
INQUIRY TO
82
COLLEGES &
UNIVERSITIES**

Our chapters are led by HxA members dedicated to improving university policies and cultures, host difficult and thought-provoking academic conversations, and provide localized support to faculty, students, and staff working to create models of open inquiry in the academy.

**HxA
CONFERENCES
WELCOMED
700+
ATTENDEES**

In 2025 we hosted our annual conference in Brooklyn, New York and hosted our first ever regional conferences at Colorado State University, the University of Maryland, and Simon Fraser University.

**HxA GAINED
794
MEMBERS IN 2025**
FOR A TOTAL OF 8,265
WITH A GROWTH
RATE OF 11%

Members are foundational to the success of HxA, doing the critical on-the-ground work to bring open inquiry to every classroom, discipline, and campus.

**20k+
COPIES OF
INQUISITIVE
DISTRIBUTED**

HxA's intellectual magazine brings deep thinking on open inquiry to campuses across the nation.

ACROSS ALL
PLATFORMS,
HxA'S CONTENT
RECEIVED OVER
6.8
MILLION VIEWS

HxA brings resources, tools, and educational content to readers across North America and beyond, including our flagship publications *inquisitive* and *Free the Inquiry*.

**MEMBER
WORKSHOPS
600+
ATTENDEES**

Our member workshops hosted throughout the academic year equip faculty, staff, and campus leaders with the professional skills needed to build cultures of open inquiry on their campus.

**106
FACULTY USING
SWAY TO HELP
6,400+ STUDENTS
CONSTRUCTIVELY
DISAGREE**

Sway is an innovative AI tool developed by members to help their students have better, more constructive conversations across any topic, fostering the essential skills of scholarly engagement early in their academic careers.

All we had to do was to look at the Heterodox Academy website – the toolbox that you had created, the model statements [on institutional neutrality], gave us a roadmap for how we could proceed. We then took that and made it our own.

JEFF BRENEMAN,
Vice President for Government Relations and External Partnerships, Western Michigan University



HxA Staff

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Judy Bigelow

University Partnerships

Advancing internal reform on campus



University partnerships, led by Director of University Partnerships Justin McBrayer, are central to Heterodox Academy's mission of advancing open inquiry. While HxA incubates ideas and advocates for internal-led reform, the real change happens on campus — through the leadership of faculty, staff, and administrators. Over the past year, we have deepened our collaboration with campus leaders to help cultivate cultures of open inquiry and viewpoint diversity.

Our team has visited campuses nationwide, presenting to faculty, meeting with presidents and provosts, and engaging in candid conversations about the challenges they face. Together, we explore how to strengthen the foundational conditions of free expression, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement to help move our universities forward as trusted institutions that advance knowledge.

In the year ahead, we will expand these strategic partnerships with institutions committed to lasting reform. As trusted advisors and principled allies, we will equip campus leaders with research-based policy proposals, white papers, and assessment tools to evaluate and improve the climate of inquiry on campus. Through these partnerships, we support universities in building communities that prioritize the power of knowledge and truth-seeking — ensuring that open inquiry remains the foundation of higher education.



We love to have Heterodox Academy on campus because we appreciate the vision you have. As I see it, HxA wants to do work that is truly boundary breaking to enable a university that is grounded in truth with no boundaries, no taboos.

KAVITA BALA
Provost, Cornell University



The Segal Center for Academic Pluralism

Tracking and Analyzing Trends

Led by Director of Research and Resource Development Dylan Selterman, research drives HxA's mission forward. By systematically tracking and analyzing trends in intellectual climate, faculty attitudes, and institutional policy, we help universities diagnose challenges and measure progress over time. This research not only informs the national conversation; it provides practical tools for internal reform, ensuring that efforts to strengthen open inquiry are grounded in data and designed for lasting impact.

Last year, 10 HxA Research Fellows in residence at the Segal Center advanced a rigorous research agenda examining open inquiry, free expression, and viewpoint diversity in higher education. Together, they produced 45 scholarly articles, chapters, professional presentations, and public commentary that equip HxA members and campus leaders with evidence to guide reform.



My faculty fellowship at the Segal Center has been one of the highlights of my academic career. The free exchange of ideas, the support for research projects, and the opportunities for collaboration among an impressive network of scholars has substantially improved my thinking and work. The benefits of this fellowship will extend well beyond my own development; they'll continue to shape my scholarship, teaching, and public work for the rest of my career.

MICHAEL J. STRAMBLER, Ph.D.
Associate Professor, Yale School of Medicine
HxA Faculty Research Fellow, 2025-26



THE NEW LANDSCAPE OF "CIVICS CENTERS" IN HIGHER EDUCATION

HxA developed the first-of-its-kind public dataset cataloguing civics centers across U.S. higher education. The report identifies dozens of centers, describes their institutional characteristics, and highlights emerging political and structural patterns.



The New Landscape of "Civics Centers" in Higher Education

An Analysis of Missions, Structures, and Legislative Origins Across U.S. Colleges and Universities

authors: SHIRI SPITZ SIDDIQI & MICHAEL REGNIER

DEI Statements Report

JULY 2025



THE USE OF DEI STATEMENTS IN FACULTY HIRING

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.

What's Going On With DEI Statements in Faculty Hiring?

Analysis of Faculty Job Ads from Fall 2024

authors: ALEX ARNOLD, ERIN SHAW, NATE TENHUNDFELD

Institutional Neutrality Report

MARCH 2025



TRACKING THE IMPACT OF INSTITUTIONAL NEUTRALITY ON CAMPUS

HxA released the first ever report analyzing the wave of policy adoptions. The team continues to manage the most comprehensive database of over 160 institutional neutrality policies.

The Rising Tide of Statement Neutrality in Higher Education: How Universities Are Rethinking Institutional Speech

authors: ALEX ARNOLD, ERIN SHAW, NATE TENHUNDFELD, NICOLE BARBARO



HxA CAMPUS COMMUNITIES

Stanford, Brigham Young, University of Waterloo, and University of Arkansas, among many others, joined our impactful network of 82 Campus Communities organizing for change on their campuses.



HxCOMMUNITIES

HxA members come together across 31 peer communities to form strong alliances across shared disciplines and topics, including newly organized groups such as HxSocial Work, HxArts & Culture, and HxMountain West.



HxA REGIONAL CONFERENCES

Clusters of HxA Campus Communities come together to get local, expose new faculty and administrators to our mission, and work together to have an even bigger impact. In 2025, members hosted conferences across the Mountain West, Mid-Atlantic, and Canada.



Member Engagement

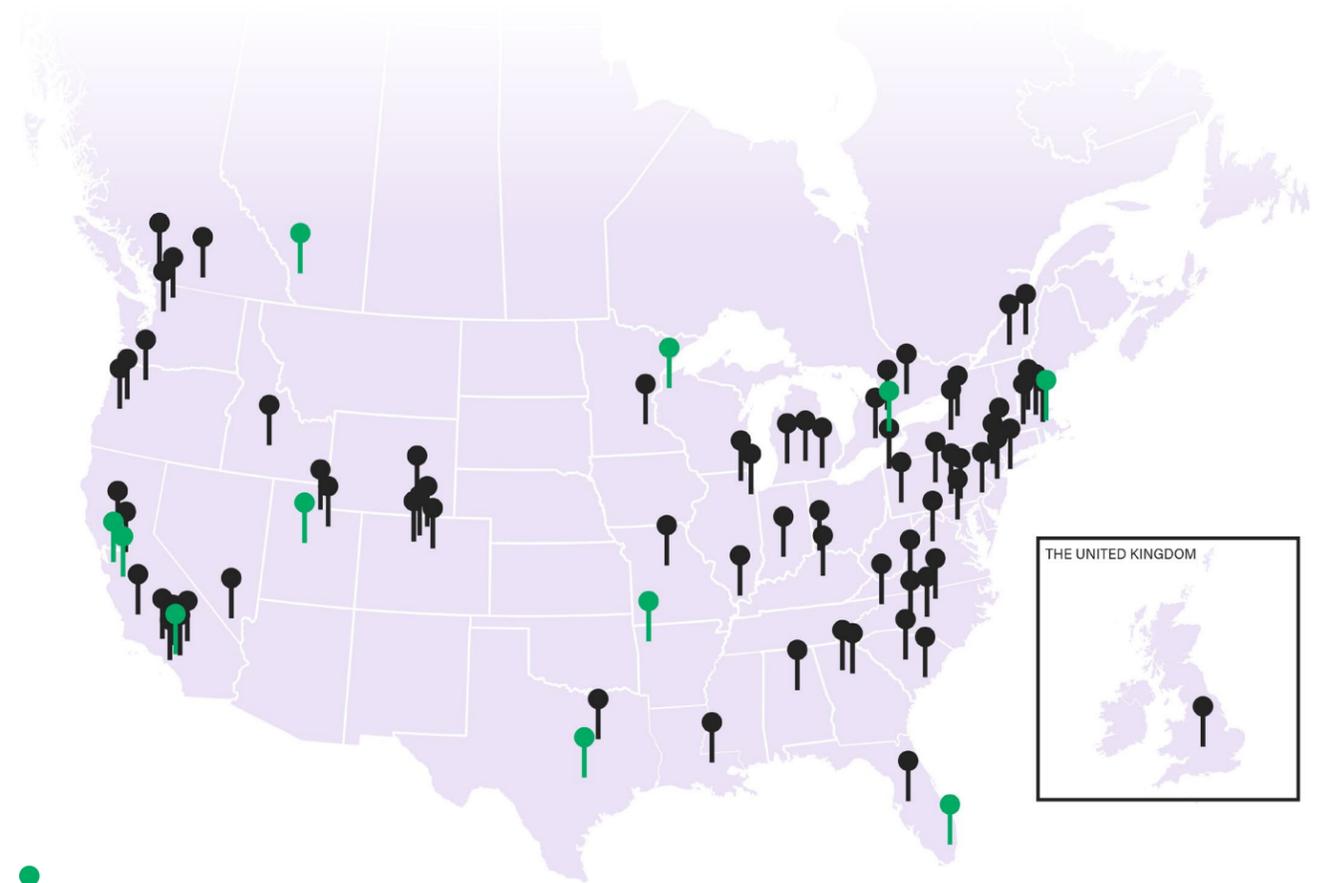
Supporting Epicenters of Change on Campus



Led by Director of Member and Campus Engagement Bethany Boucher, our members and organized groups come together to drive lasting change on their campuses, within their disciplines, and across their regions.

Our communities create spaces where inquiry, free expression, and constructive disagreement is modeled and practiced. Campus Communities and HxCommunities have collectively hosted over 230 events this year. Members lead workshops attended by over 600 members sharing informed practices that can be scaled across classrooms and campuses. And our more than 8,200 members continue to be involved in a variety of campus committees where they have been influential in driving institutional policy changes that advance open inquiry on their campus.

By connecting principled individuals across institutions, HxA transforms isolated concern into coordinated action. These communities are where ideas foster relationships that drive reform. Through our members, the values of open inquiry move from aspiration to lived reality on campuses nationwide.



 New Campus Communities Launched in 2025.



**heterodox
academy**

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TAX ID #82-2903153

Heterodox Academy (HxA) is a non-partisan, non-profit membership organization of thousands of faculty, staff, and students working to build cultures of open inquiry on college and university campuses through research, resource development, and community mobilization. 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.**