

Annual Report

2023

heterodox
academy

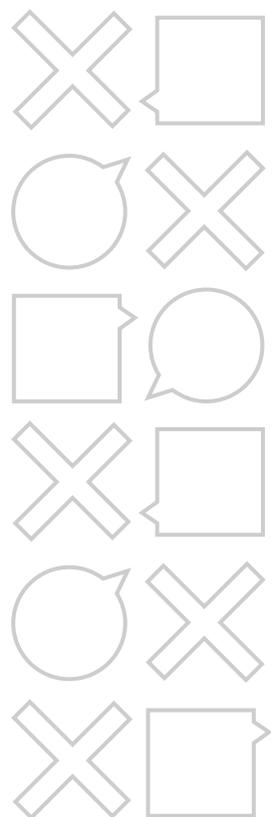


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A Letter From The President

Dear Members and Supporters,

It's been an extraordinary year in higher education.

For now, Heterodox Academy has been calling attention to the purpose of colleges and universities: the noble pursuit of truth and understanding, made possible by openness, curiosity, and a principled resistance to groupthink.

It has been lonely work at times. But HxA members saw years ago what many see today: open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement are not just abstract ideals. When higher education is working properly, these ideals are the special ingredients that distinguish a university from a social club, a corporate venture, or a politicized bureaucracy.

As university presidents fumble, public trust drops, economic models wobble, and all kinds of reform ideas swirl, higher education needs Heterodox Academy now more than ever.

We're ready.

As you'll read in this annual report, our members have been working hard: founding communities on over 50 campuses, organizing within academic disciplines and regions, taking steps into the STEM world, and helping us build a new research center to connect it all.

The next year will bring new challenges, no doubt. But we see opportunities for change opening across the academy. I'm grateful for your support and partnership as the Heterodox Academy community moves forward to seize them, together.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Tomasi', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

John Tomasi
President

PLEASE NOTE: As a one-time adjustment, this report covers HxA's fiscal year and calendar year 2023, i.e. September 2022 - December 2023. Future annual reports will follow the calendar year.

Activating for Impact

6,334 Members and Counting

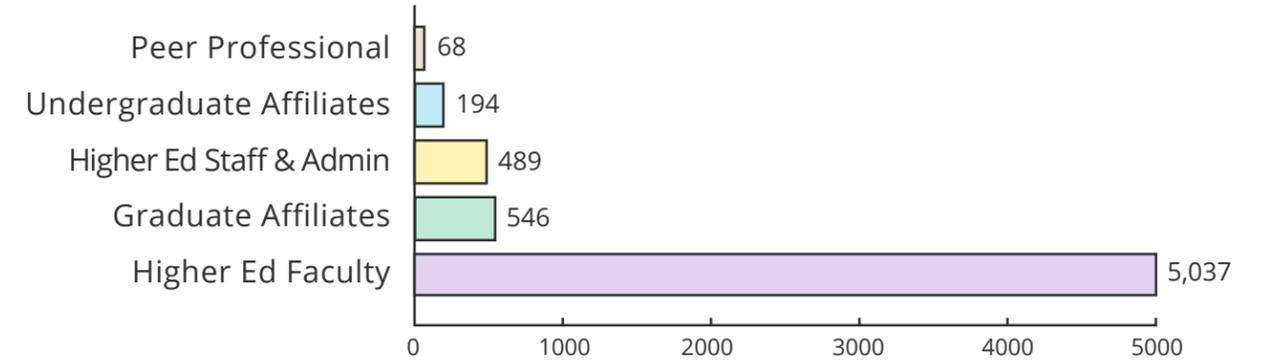
All stats as of December 31, 2023

Top 12 Campuses by Membership

- Western Michigan University: 69
- Harvard University: 60
- University of Virginia-Charlottesville: 56
- University of Washington-Seattle Campus: 53
- New York University: 52
- Columbia University: 50
- University of California-Berkeley: 45
- University of California-Los Angeles: 43
- Stanford University: 43
- Arizona State University-Tempe: 43
- University of Michigan-Ann Arbor: 37
- University of Toronto: 36



Members by Professional Category



Top 10 Countries by Membership



Self-Reported Political Orientation of HxA Members

*Data provided by 87% of members



A Growing Network

Campus Community Network Launches



- Launched in **January 2023** to bring members together on campuses to support each other’s mission-driven efforts, showcase and model HxA values, and improve institutional policies, practices, and culture.
- **51 Campus Communities formed** in 2023 across the US, Canada, and the UK
- Campus Communities have **recruited over 302 new HxA members** on their campuses since launching in 2023.



“The Campus community was a life-saving program when I simply needed support to understand what was going on, needed resources, and know that there are people who think the same way as I do.”

Alexandra Lysova,
Associate Professor of Criminology, Simon Fraser University

Bonus Highlight: Read feature coverage about the Campus Community Program launch published in [The Chronicle](#).

Early Policy Impact

- [Free Speech Resolution](#) Based on the Chicago Principles Adopted at UNC-Charlotte
- Western Michigan University Formally [Embraces Open Inquiry and Viewpoint Diversity as Cultural Norms](#)
- Simon Fraser University Initiates Changes to Research Excellence Award Policy and Faculty Hiring Guidelines

HxCommunities Gather by Discipline and Region

- HxA hosts **27 HxCommunities**, virtual groups of educators, staff, administrators, and students interested in advancing our core principles within their shared discipline, across their region, or within their academic area.
- There were **2,473 participants** involved in HxCommunities in 2023.
- Combined, our HxCommunities hosted **76 events and gatherings** in 2023.

By the numbers: HxA and its local communities hosted **133 in-person and virtual events**

Hosting Events

Virtual Events: Un-canceling Research, and More

In 2023, we focused on hosting virtual events with panels of experts discussing some of the biggest issues facing academia today. Events covered topics such as:

- **[UNCANCELED]**
Why Biological Sex Remains A Necessary Analytic Category in Anthropology.
Kathleen Lowrey, Elizabeth Weiss, Kathleen Richardson, Michèle Sirois, Silvia Carrasco, Carole Hooven

heterodox academy
presents

UNCANCELED

Let's Talk About Sex Baby: Why Biological Sex Remains A Necessary Analytic Category in Anthropology

Wednesday, November 8th
4:00 - 6:00 pm ET
via Zoom webinar & YouTube livestream

Attend the panel that the American Anthropological Association and the Canadian Anthropology Society removed from their conference program, featuring:

Kathleen Lowrey, University of Alberta
Elizabeth Weiss, San José State University & Faculty Fellow at HxA
Kathleen Richardson, De Montfort University
Michèle Sirois, PDF Québec
Silvia Carrasco, Autonomous University of Barcelona

Talks to be followed by discussion with **Carole Hooven**, Senior Fellow at AEI & Fellow at Harvard Psychology, & audience Q&A.

revived a panel removed from the American Anthropological Association and Canadian Anthropology Society's November conference. [You can watch here.](#)

- **Peer Pressure and the Suppression of Viewpoint Diversity.** Yan Dominic Searcy, Jay Van Bavel, Kevin Wallsten, and Megan Lonsinger discussed the research and motives underlying campus censorship of contentious viewpoints. You can [watch the event here.](#)

- **How Will AI Shape Academic Research?**
David Rozado, Corinne Dalelio, and Pedro Domingos discussed the impact that new AI tools like ChatGPT may have on academic research and publishing, from biased responses to AI generated articles. You can [watch the event here.](#)

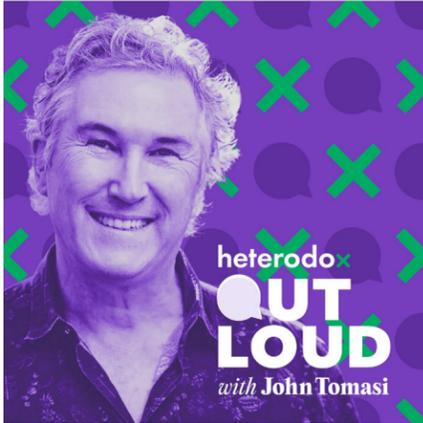


HxCanada Community Hosts Major Conference

The HxCanada Community, along with the McGill Campus Community, hosted a conference about Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) on April 20-21, 2023. The two-day conference drew more than 160 attendees.

Elevating Voices

Heterodox Out Loud Podcast

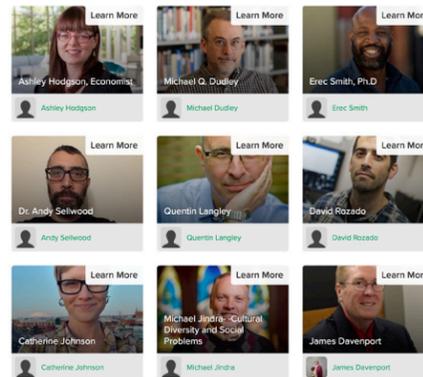


Hosted by Heterodox Academy President John Tomasi, we have kickstarted our new bi-weekly podcast. In our first episodes, John animated conversations with Eric Kaufman, Yascha Mounk, Pano Kanelos, Carole Hooven, and Greg Lukianoff.

- 22,000+ downloads on podcast platforms
- 10,000+ views on Youtube

From October to December 2023

Speakers Bureau



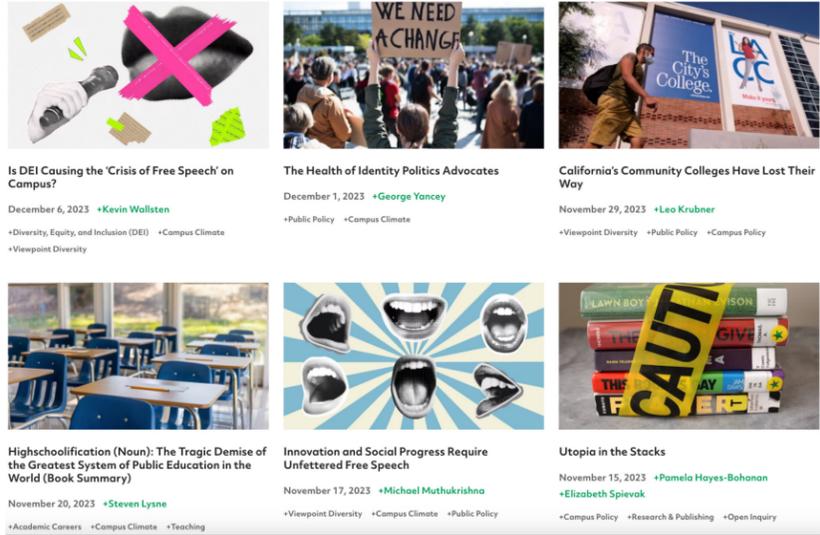
This year we also launched our new [HxA Speakers Bureau](#). This exciting initiative is set to bridge the gap between event organizers and intellectually curious audiences by facilitating access to professional, engaging, and thought-provoking speakers from HxA’s esteemed membership.

49 speakers joined the bureau from across various fields, encompassing arts and humanities, business, education, health and medicine, law, libraries and museums, STEM, and social sciences.

Writers Group

Through the Writers Group, HxA aspires to help its members develop a public voice, understand the media landscape, and cultivate valuable networks, allowing them to emerge as leaders in contemporary conversations around higher ed in general as well as their specific disciplines and areas of expertise. Throughout 2023, our cohort of Writers Group members placed essays in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Spectator*, *American Affairs*, *UnHerd*, *Pop Matters*, *Contexts*, *Psychology Today*, *Liberal Education*, *Discourse*, *The Hill*, *DC Journal*, and other outlets.

HxA Blog



Since 2015, the HxA blog has hosted a wide range of views and discussions on how HxA’s goals are best applied to real issues in teaching, scholarship, and higher education policy. Blog post topics in 2023 included: Diversity and merit, the gender gap in STEM and social sciences, DEI, affirmative action, and many other topics.

- 57 published blog posts
- 135,000+ website visits

Investing in Research

Center for Academic Pluralism Opens in NYC



HxA's new Center for Academic Pluralism, funded by a multi-million dollar lead grant from Templeton Religion Trust, enables HxA to deepen its impact at a time of hot debate over the future of higher education. By bringing together scholars at The Center to conduct research, assemble data, and host events, HxA aims to uncover new insights about the role of pluralism in academic life, with the ultimate goal to improve campus culture, climate, and practices.

To make this vision a reality, HxA welcomed five accomplished inaugural fellows to the Center in 2023.

- **Adam Gjesdal**, Postdoctoral Fellow, political philosopher
- **B. Duncan Moench**, Postdoctoral Fellow, social critic at large at Tablet
- **Diana C. Mutz**, Faculty Fellow, Samuel A. Stouffer Chair in Political Science and Communication at the University of Pennsylvania
- **Azim Shariff**, Faculty Fellow, Professor and Canada 150 Research Chair of Moral Psychology at the University of British Columbia
- **Elizabeth Weiss**, Faculty Fellow, Professor of Anthropology at San José State University

Bonus Highlight: Read feature coverage about The Center for Academic Pluralism published in [The College Fix](#).

Heterodox Scholars at Work

Heterodox Academy members are expert scholars in their fields, but often ask questions and explore answers that are typically overlooked. Our network, and research grants, led to several notable academic publications:

Brigham Young University Researchers Conducted Experiment Showing the Benefits of Constructive Dialogue on Contentious Topics

Article: [Reflective Structured Dialogue as a Tool for Addressing Wicked Public Health Problems](#) by Cassidy Weaver, Janaya Brown, Lexi Brady, Parker Carlquist, Seth Dotson, M. Dru Faldmo, P. Cougar Hall, and Jeffrey Glenn

Insight: Participation in structured conversations on COVID-19, mental health, and racism was strongly associated with improved attitudes related to openness, tribal identity, and moral disdain. Over 95% of participants reported that they enjoyed taking part in the conversations and that it helped them better understand the experiences of others.



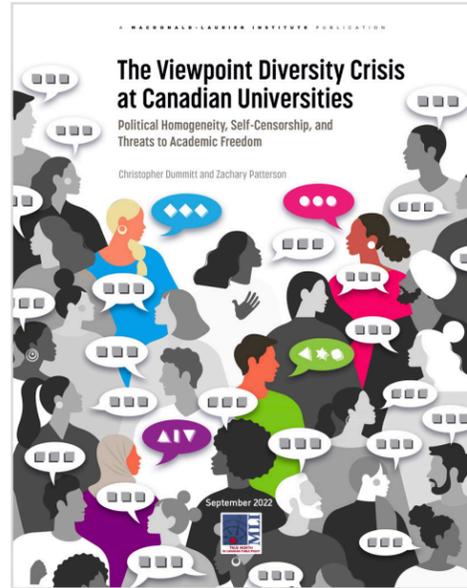
HxA Members Administer and Publish Campus Expression Survey with New Zealand Students

Article: [Perceived Freedom of Expression at New Zealand Universities](#) by Jamin Halberstadt, Arindam Basu, Barry Hughes, Ruth Hughes, Michael Johnston, James Kierstead, and David Rozado

Insight: Chilled campus speech is not confined to the United States — results show that New Zealand students are at least as reluctant to discuss controversial topics such as politics and gender in class.

HxCanda Members Publish Comprehensive Report on the Free Expression Crisis Across Canadian Universities

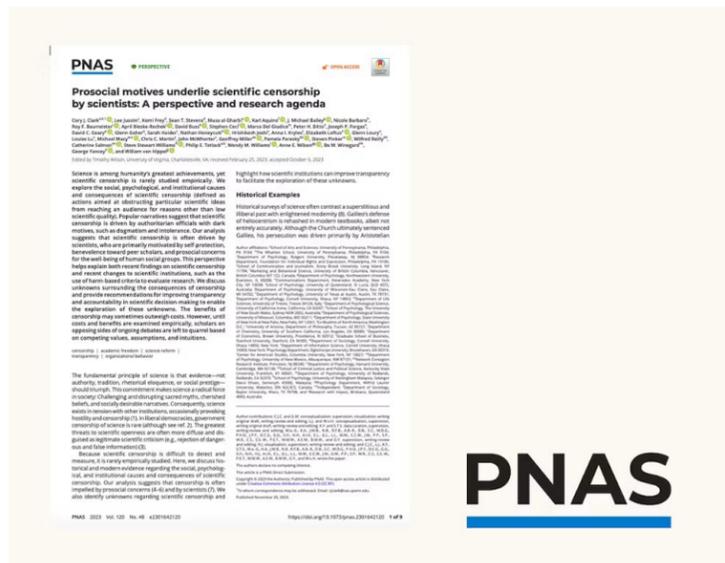
Article: [The Viewpoint Diversity Crisis at Canadian Universities: Political Homogeneity, Self-Censorship, and Threats to Academic Freedom](#) by Christopher Dummitt and Zachary Patterson



Insight: The demonstrated threats to academic freedom and viewpoint diversity suggest that existing protections at universities are insufficient in preventing the formation of a monoculture, which can have significant negative impacts on the quality of education that students receive.

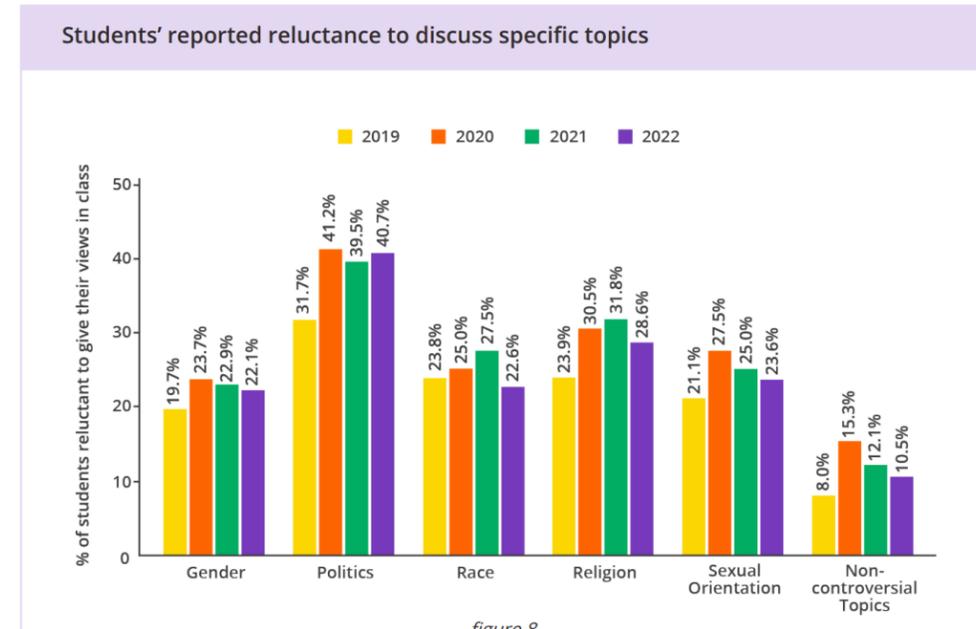
New Paper on Scientific Censorship, with 24 Heterodox Academy Members as Co-authors, Published in Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

Article: [Prosocial Motives Underlie Scientific Censorship by Scientists: A Perspective and Research Agenda](#)



Insight: Scientific censorship is often driven by scientists, who are primarily motivated by self-protection, benevolence toward peer scholars, and prosocial concerns for the well-being of human social groups. This perspective helps explain both recent findings on scientific censorship and recent changes to scientific institutions, such as the use of harm-based criteria to evaluate research.

Student Voice: Free Expression by the Numbers



*all stats from the March 2023 [Campus Expression Survey Report](#)

On HxA's annual Campus Expression Survey:

58.5% of students reported being reluctant to discuss at least one of the five controversial topics asked about.

63.2% of students agreed that the **climate on their campus prevents people from expressing their views** because others might find those views offensive.

62.3% of students chose **"other students would make critical comments** with each other after class" as the top reason **why they were reluctant** to share their views in class.

A **reluctance to share views** in the classroom **increased at least 10 percentage points** for students who reported **lower amounts of peer interaction** compared with students who reported a high amount of peer interaction.

Reviving Open Inquiry in STEM

The HxA STEM Initiative — In 2023, Heterodox Academy launched an initiative to [revive open inquiry in STEM](#), which will last through 2024 and is made possible thanks to support from [Schmidt Futures](#), a philanthropic initiative of Eric and Wendy Schmidt. The initiative includes special events, research funding, and other programming

Open inquiry is increasingly under threat in the natural and applied sciences. Whether through the publishing system, rules for competitive grants, restrictions on data access, hiring criteria, or simple social pressure, an orthodoxy of “acceptable” research has found its way to STEM departments on campus (Sciences, Technology, Engineering, and Math).

The stakes are high. When scientific bodies restrict data access, de-fund or stigmatize certain hypotheses, or even make political endorsements, many STEM researchers worry about the long-term impacts for the sciences, including their life-changing discoveries and innovations. This year, Heterodox Academy made a commitment to revive open inquiry in STEM — and it’s only the beginning.

Professor and HxA Faculty Fellow Elizabeth Weiss Fights for Open Inquiry in Anthropology

Professor Elizabeth Weiss emerges as a steadfast advocate for open inquiry in academia, embodying HxA’s core principles. A once lauded professor of anthropology at her home institution, Weiss was canceled for advocating for a pro-research approach of working with native skeletal remains. After being locked out of her lab with no access to the collections needed to do her research, Weiss joined HxA’s Center for Academic Pluralism as an inaugural faculty fellow in 2023. Weiss confronts professional challenges with resilience and a commitment to fostering diverse perspectives within her field.



Astrophysicist Beatriz Villarroel Wins 2023 HxA Open Inquiry Award for Courage

[Beatriz Villarroel](#) is an assistant professor at the Nordic Institute of Theoretical Physics located within Stockholm University. Her research focuses on the structure and coevolution of active galactic nuclei and their host galaxies and searching for extraterrestrial intelligence.

Villarroel received the 2023 Courage Award from Heterodox Academy for her courage in the face of harassment and discrimination within her field for [her choice to work with exoplanet pioneer Geoff Marcy](#). As a result of her collaboration with Marcy, she was barred from presenting results her research teams at a Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence (SETI) conference in the United States, and was informed she could not continue her professional collaboration with him if working at a California research institution at which she was applying for an affiliate position.



HxSTEM Members Publish Influential Op-Ed in *The Wall Street Journal* Challenging the Idea that Merit in STEM is ‘Hurtful’

The HxSTEM community has been highly active in challenging orthodoxy in the sciences and defending merit-based evaluation from students in classes through the faculty ranks. In the spring, two prominent members of the HxSTEM community, Jerry A. Coyne (professor emeritus of ecology and evolution) and Anna I. Krylov (professor of chemistry) [published an op-ed](#) defending merit in STEM, based on their [published academic article](#), to bring viewpoint diversity to a national audience.

Get Involved with HxA

Attend the 2024 Heterodox Academy Conference, June 6-8 in Chicago



With winds of change blowing in higher education, we'll convene in the Windy City to explore what comes next for open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in the academy. You won't want to miss this HxA Conference full of wide-ranging perspectives, rigorous new scholarship, and practical tools for change.

Learn more: <https://heterodoxacademy.org/2024conference/>

Your Dollars Drive Change Across Higher Ed

Show your support of open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in 2024 by donating to Heterodox Academy. Your generosity will further expand the impact of our Campus Community Network, amplify the research outputs from our Center for Academic Pluralism to advance our mission, and aid in maximizing members' impact on campuses and in classrooms.



Donate today: <https://heterodoxacademy.org/donate/>

Refer a Colleague and Help Grow Our Membership



Heterodox Academy can accomplish its mission only through the dedicated efforts of our expanding membership. Heterodox Academy members are our greatest asset and strength in fighting for academic freedom on campuses around the globe. You can help accelerate our impact by referring a colleague on your campus to become a member of Heterodox Academy today.

Refer a friend: <https://heterodoxacademy.org/become-a-member/>