



BOARD OF OVERSEERS ELECTION:

HAAFS RECOMMENDS THEODORE CHUANG, SCOTT MEAD AND TIM RITCHIE ON FREE SPEECH ISSUES

April 1, 2024

Harvard Alumni For Free Speech urges you to take the time to exercise your right to vote in the elections for the Board of Overseers starting April 1st and in future years.

Electing Overseers who will advance issues important to you is one of the few avenues concerned alumni have to influence what happens at Harvard. Therefore, we urge alumni concerned about free speech issues to be active in these elections.

In light of the challenges to free speech, academic freedom and viewpoint diversity on the Harvard campus, challenges that became apparent to many alumni and others over the past year in particular, Harvard Alumni for Free Speech, together with FAIR Harvard Alumni+, asked each of the eight nominees for the Board of Overseers, as well as the eight nominees for the HAA Board of Directors, to share their thoughts on the issues of free speech on campus, institutional neutrality, required DEI statements for faculty hiring, promotion and tenure, and viewpoint diversity.

We are very grateful to the seven Board of Overseers nominees who committed the time and effort to provide us with their views on these very important issues.

The responses to the HAFFS/FAIR Harvard Alumni+ questionnaire indicated that there was broad support for free speech and viewpoint diversity on campus.

- Concerns were noted about restricting hate speech and protecting against campus disruption.
- Views were mixed on institutional neutrality - particularly on issues perceived as important, whether to members of the Harvard community or more generally - but there appeared to be consensus towards moving to more institutional restraint, if not outright institutional neutrality.
- Views were even more mixed on requiring or using DEI statements for faculty hiring, promotion and tenure, with most of the nominees indicating that it was important to maintain mechanisms to promote diversity, equity and inclusion within faculty ranks, as well as to identify commitment to these goals.

The responses we received are available for you to read through the links on the [HAFFS website's 2024 Elections tab](#).

Based on the questionnaire responses we received, other public statements of the nominees, and follow up communications with several of the nominees, HAFFS has decided - focusing only on free speech issues - to recommend three of the nominees for election to the Board of Overseers:

Theodore Chuang

Scott Mead

Timothy Ritchie

We believe that Theo, Scott and Tim most closely align with furthering HAFFS's mission to advance free speech, academic freedom and viewpoint diversity at Harvard.

Each of the other nominees who responded indicated they share an interest in promoting free speech and viewpoint diversity on campus. We look forward to continuing to engage with all of the nominees who are elected.

During the course of its review, HAFFS consulted with Fair Harvard Alumni+ and The 1636 Forum, two other alumni groups that share HAFFS's mission to advance free speech and academic freedom at Harvard. We note that the mission of those two alumni groups is broader than HAFFS's more narrow focus on free speech and academic freedom.

Fair Harvard Alumni+ and The 1636 Forum are conducting their own separate reviews, in accordance with their respective missions. If you are interested in their views on the nominees, please visit their websites, using the above links.

We did not receive responses from any of the HAA Board nominees prior to our deadline on March 31, 2024, so we have not evaluated any of the HAA nominees. We will, however, post on our website's 2024 Elections tab any responses we receive from them after the deadline.

[end of HAFFS 2024 Election Committee Statement]