

**1. How important should diversity, equity, and inclusion be at Harvard, and what strategies should the University pursue to address these goals? How would you work to advance Ethnic Studies at Harvard, including the establishment of a concentration and department? In addition, please discuss other specific programs and policies, especially the 1650 Charter's pledge to facilitate education of American Indian youth.**

I grew up in a community – the suburbs of Cincinnati located in Kentucky, just across the Ohio River, which forms the border between the two states – with little racial and ethnic diversity. In my graduating class of roughly 250 students, I think that we had less than ten non-white students, and all of our teachers, staff, and coaches were white. As a public school, we did feature socio-economic diversity; the houses of my friends ranged from single-wide trailers to mansions.

Harvard offered a very different experience, and different in a good way. I didn't know anyone at Harvard when I decided to apply and showed up on campus for FOP (First-Year Outdoor Program) only knowing a few incoming classmates from Cincinnati and Kentucky that I had met through the admissions process.

I certainly met my fair share of the children of global elite – including the Prince of Denmark who was a visiting student one semester – but I also found myself learning from, interacting with, befriending, and rooming with, students, faculty, and staff from different racial, ethnic, and national backgrounds, religious beliefs (including none), political and ideological perspectives, and sexual orientations.

These experiences changed my life for the better, encouraging a lifelong desire to seek out and promote diversity in all aspects of my life.

My experience taught me of the importance of Harvard prioritizing work to expose students to diverse people and ideas, while ensuring that students are treated equally and feel included (and I would add, that they belong on campus).

As far as working to advance Ethnic Studies, I don't know enough to say that I support (or oppose) such a concentration and department. Given the current FAS financial struggles, I would want to be assured that sufficient financial resources exist to ensure that an Ethnic Studies department and concentration could succeed.

The Ethnic Studies portion of this question reminds me of my first semester on campus in 1990 when many students protested the fact that what was then known as the Department of Afro American Studies had only one tenured faculty member, which often forced concentrators to take classes at other schools in Boston and made it challenging to receive the advising support needed.

Fortunately, then FAS Dean Henry Rosovsky recruited Henry Louis Gates Jr. from Duke to become the chair of the Afro-American Studies department. Gates then recruited other

faculty, such as William Julius Wilson and Cornell West, to build the best such department in the country.

If Harvard were to have an Ethnic Studies department and concentration, I would want it to be the best in the country, so that concentrators, as well as non-concentrators taking a single class, would be able to receive the quality of education that they deserve.

The final part of this question caused me to read the 1650 Charter for the first time. (I knew its content but had never seen the actual wording.) While Harvard has evolved from a school that primarily trained white men to become ministers, it still generally follows the Charter's mandate that the school's leaders promote the "advancement of all good Literature, Arts, and Sciences".

Interestingly, the reference to the education of "the English and Indian Youth of the of the County in Knowledge and Godliness" is likely the first legislative mandate that education be offered to a diverse group of students – albeit a narrow definition of diversity that would exclude most students enrolled today.

Therefore, staying true to the Charter means holding true to educating a diverse student body.

**2. Given the Supreme Court's ruling against race-conscious admissions, the federal government's hostility to efforts to promote diversity, equity and inclusion, and Harvard's dismantling of diversity centers, what measures should the University adopt to promote student-body diversity along multiple dimensions, including racial diversity?**

Despite the Supreme Court's decision, Harvard can still promote a diverse student body by ensuring that its admissions process allows applicants to discuss how race, ethnicity, and other forms of diversity (including socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, faith, and even ideology) have impacted an applicant's lived experience.

My partners and I at our law firm have had to adapt our hiring practices in the wake of court rulings, but we are still able to hire a diverse group of attorneys and business professionals by establishing hiring practices that focus on building teams with varied backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and identities.

By following the same practices, Harvard can hire the diverse faculty and staff that its students need to thrive.

**3. Do you support the elimination of admissions preferences for (A) recruited athletes, (B) children of donors, and (C) children of alumni (legacy)? Please address all three categories. Please comment on Harvard College's [newly-implemented alumni interview policy](#) that requires alumni interviewers to erase all**

**references to an applicant's race, ethnicity, or national origin in their interview reports.**

I support admissions preferences for recruited athletes. As long as Harvard competes in Division I athletics, and the Ivy League maintains its school-specific requirements such as the Academic Index, I am comfortable with setting aside a limited number of slots for each varsity team. When I was the IOP Director, I served as a faculty fellow for the men's basketball team. My main role was to be a campus resource for players and to assist with on-campus recruiting, including getting to know the parents of prospective student-athletes. I was proud of those young men – most of whom were students of color. They made Harvard a better campus.

As for eliminating preferences for children of donors and alumni (legacy), I am open to a conversation about eliminating preferences for those two categories. In the past, the Admissions Office has stated that such preferences help with philanthropy and volunteerism. I wonder if that is still true today (assuming that it ever was true). I am curious how other private schools – especially Ivies and other similar schools – have approached this topic. Also, I wonder whether it would be truly possible to eliminate such preferences, given the opacity surrounding Harvard's admissions process. On the other hand, as Harvard's student body has diversified, the alumni (legacy) preference now favors a more diverse set of applicants than when I was applying for the Class of 1994.

I have been an alumni interviewer for over thirty years, including serving as chair of the Schools Committee of the Harvard Club of Cincinnati for several admission cycles. I found this new policy to be quite frustrating, especially because it was hard to “tell the story” of one of my interviewees – the US-born daughter of immigrants from a war-torn country – without being able to reference such topics. While I am sure that my interviewee was able to discuss the impact that such a background has had on her life elsewhere in her application, I didn't feel as if I could be as effective in my interview report.

**4. How do you think Harvard can uphold the ideal of academic integrity free of political biases, contrary to pressures from the federal government and certain stakeholders, including protecting the right to protest?**

I am very troubled by the efforts of the Trump administration to threaten the academic freedom of Harvard and other post-secondary institutions by pressuring them to adopt priority positions of the administration, stifling debate on campus, or even forcing the hiring or firing of faculty and staff in exchange for releasing holds on, or rescinding cancellations of, grant funding, ending investigations, or settling litigation.

Harvard, like all institutions, makes mistakes from time to time, and is subject to investigations, and ultimately, any punishments or sanctions for violations of laws or policies that are uncovered in those investigations. But the administration's politically motivated desire to make an example of Harvard is unwarranted.

When I worked at the IOP, we taught our students how to organize on behalf of their beliefs and encouraged them to speak their minds, including protesting, if they felt so called. Of course, such protests had to follow the school's rules and any relevant laws. On more than one occasion, we set aside areas outside the Forum – usually along JFK Street – for students to protest speakers – as it was important to allow students to protest while still allowing the audience to hear the speaker. At least twice, I remember asking protestors that were disrupting a Forum to leave when they refused to stop interrupting a Forum that I was moderating. In both cases, the protestors peacefully left on their own accord when asked.

We also required every speaker in the Forum to answer unfiltered questions from the audience. Adherence to this rule almost resulted in the cancellation of an address by a foreign head of state who initially didn't want to answer any questions from the audience. In that case, I was on call to walk out to the lectern to announce the cancellation to the assembled audience and members of the press; fortunately, the leader had a change of heart.

**5. What concrete steps have you taken to bring diversity and inclusion to Harvard, to your workplace, and/or to other organizations? Are you a member of any of the signing groups below?**

When I was Secretary of State, it was important to me that Kentucky's elections were trusted by all Kentuckians. One of the most important priorities of my time in office was the implementation of the Help America Vote Act, which Congress passed in 2002 in response to the challenges posed by the 2000 election. To assist implementation, I worked with an Advisory Committee that included the chairs of both political parties, county clerks, legislators from both parties, the long-time leader of Kentucky's NAACP chapter, the Executive Director of the Kentucky Disabilities Coalition, the Kentucky ADA Coordinator, and representatives from Kentucky Protection & Advocacy, the Migrant Workers Coalition, and the League of Women Voters.

Having such diverse perspectives greatly assisted our successful implementation efforts of HAVA. This approach guided my entire time in office, and I continue to follow in my continued work on improving elections.

I'm proud of my record during my service as Director of Harvard's Institute of Politics. I worked closely with our student leaders, staff, and faculty to ensure that we brought to campus individuals – most prominently our fellows and Forum speakers – with varied backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, and identities. By nearly doubling the number of Director's Internships – fully paid summer internships – we not only were able to increase the diversity of our offerings, but we were able to allow more students to have a meaningful summer experience without having to worry about how to both pay for living expenses and meet the summer earnings contribution requirement for students on financial aid. (The latter requirement has fortunately been repealed.)

I'm also very proud that two of our outstanding IOP student leaders are candidates this year for the Harvard Alumni Association Board of Directors. It's an honor to share the ballot with them.

Since leaving the IOP, I continue to volunteer at the Harvard Kennedy School in various capacities. Most recently, I worked with several HKS faculty members to recruit a diverse group to participate in an executive session focused on improving election administration. This was made more challenging in the wake of Harvard policies implemented after the 2023 Supreme Court ruling, but we were able to do so. The variety of perspectives and experiences have helped build a robust discussion over the past few years of executive session convenings.

Currently, I am a partner and practice group leader in the law firm [FBT Gibbons](#), which has an outstanding and award-winning track record on [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging](#). I'm proud to work somewhere that takes such values seriously. For example, we have been classified as Mansfield Certified Plus by the Diversity Lab for several years running and recently won a Compass Award from the Leadership Council on Legal Diversity.

In my volunteer capacity, I have served for almost a decade on the board of [ArtsWave](#), a nonprofit that works to build a stronger community through arts. ArtsWave [believes](#) an inclusive arts community reflects the diversity of the region it serves and has led the charge in helping Greater Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky arts organizations embed diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in all aspects of their programming and operations. In addition to my board service, I have been a long-time member, including several years as a sub-committee chair, of ArtsWave's Sustaining Impact Grant committee, where we financially reward those organizations that do that just that, while we assist those who need assistance.

I have also served as a board member of [Aviatrix Accelerators](#) for nearly ten years. Aviatrix helps women start and grow their own small businesses. I served a two-year term as chair, and FBT Gibbons has regularly been a sponsor of Aviatrix's efforts to extend its programming to women from diverse backgrounds.

Finally, for several years, I served as co-chair of Conservatives Against Discrimination, a group formed to protect members of the LGBTQ+ community from discrimination. While the group no longer exists, a [YouTube video](#) remains online, in which I explain why it was important for me to speak out. Because of this work, I was a featured plenary speaker at the 2020 Big 12 LGBTQIA & Allies Summit, which was hosted by Texas Tech University, just a few days before the pandemic shutdowns began. My understanding is that such summits no longer happen in light of anti-DEI legislation passed in Texas and other Big 12 states.

At home, I continue to work on behalf of LGBTQ+ issues in several ways including representing Kentucky Competes, a business coalition formed by the [Fairness Campaign](#) in Kentucky, and speaking at my community's Pride Festival, where my church, [Trinity](#)

[Episcopal Church](#), regularly wins the award for the best float, as we live up to our church motto - "Ya'll Means All".