

Questionnaire for HAA Elected Director Candidates
Adrienne E. Dominguez

1. How important should diversity be at Harvard? What strategies should the University pursue regarding this? (Please discuss specific programs, including Ethnic Studies, and policies if you can.)

Diversity should be, and I believe is, important at Harvard. People with different backgrounds and life experiences—based on gender, socioeconomic factors, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, political leaning, etc...—bring varied perspectives, ideas, and interpretations. Without diversity, Harvard would be staid and boring, lacking in dynamism and creativity; intellectual growth and discussion would be static and stymied.

I am most familiar with the undergraduate admissions initiatives, as the bulk of my involvement as an alum has stemmed from my efforts with the Dallas Schools & Scholarships Committee. I believe the University is already pursuing a number of strategies to ensure diversity and inclusion, including its holistic admissions process in which race, socioeconomic status, first generation applications, and a whole host of other factors are considered. The First Generation Program is there to support these efforts, as is the First Generation Harvard Alumni SIG. Recruitment of students from under-represented areas geographically—the heartland of the US, for example—is also vital to the process of creating a diverse student body. These efforts are crucial to the creation and maintenance of a diverse Harvard.

I would like to learn more about the proposal for an Ethnic Studies department. With the wealth of resources and academics Harvard has, it seems like the basic foundation for such a department, or committee, is there, but I am not well enough versed in the intricacies of the creation of a new concentration to be able to speak knowledgeably on the subject.

2. How can Harvard encourage more diversity among its alumni leaders and activities? (If not discussed above.)

Overall, I think Harvard tries to encourage diversity in the alumni realm. The HAA is open to all manner of SIGs and the leadership conferences foster an exchange of ideas and strategies that I think is unmatched by other universities. Of course, Harvard is all I know, so that may be the result of a myopic view, but I don't think so.

One area that could use improvement, however, is more intentional integration of affinity alumni associations, such as the Harvard Latino Alumni Alliance. I don't think those are incorporated or promoted at the Club or SIG level—which is likely the grass roots level of involvement for most alumni—as much as they could or should be.

And as discussed above, a diverse undergraduate core will grow up to be a diverse set of alumni leaders.

3. Please state your views on affirmative action and race-conscious admissions.

At its heart, diversity requires balance. This is a uniquely difficult task that requires affirmative and conscious action to achieve. I believe that the holistic admissions process currently in place at Harvard, in which race is considered among many factors in the evaluation of each applicant as a whole person, is the correct approach. Adopting a completely race-neutral process would signal a retreat from Harvard's leading position in establishing and fostering a diverse student body.

4. What do you think Harvard's role should be in creating a more equitable, inclusive and just society?

Harvard alumni become leaders on a variety of scales—worldwide, national, state, municipal, business, entertainment, academic, church, whatever community in which they find themselves. The List of Harvard University people on Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Harvard_University_people) is almost embarrassing, particularly when viewed in light of my own small achievements. Because Harvard is the launching pad for so many notable alumni—leaders of men, women, countries—I do think it has a distinct responsibility to provide an example of the equitable, inclusive, and just society we want our alumni to help create.

5. What steps have you taken to bring diversity and inclusion to Harvard, to your workplace, and/or to an organization that you have been involved with?

Please see my bio, which is attached hereto.

FULL BIO

Adrienne E. Dominguez

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Adrienne E. Dominguez is a partner with Thompson & Knight in Dallas, where she focuses her law practice on intellectual property and commercial litigation.

A member of the Dallas Hispanic Bar Association and the Hispanic National Bar Association, Dominguez strives to increase opportunities for Hispanics—particularly women—in the legal profession. She served as commissioner for the HNBA Standing Commission on the Status of Latinas in the Profession from 2008 to 2012, and she was a 2013 Leadership Council on Legal Diversity Fellow.

Dominguez is president of the Dallas Hispanic Law Foundation, which awards scholarships, internships, and grants to Hispanic students with an interest in the law. She also chairs Thompson & Knight's Diversity and Inclusion Committee and co-chairs the firm's Women's Initiative Group.

Dominguez is a longtime co-chair of the Harvard Club of Dallas's Schools & Scholarships Committee, where she has helped recruit and interview numerous prospective Harvard College students, including those from underrepresented communities. In 2018, she received a Hiram S. Hunn Memorial Schools and Scholarship Award from the College's Office of Admissions and Financial Aid for her volunteer work.

"In school and over the years through the Harvard Club of Dallas, I have met so many brilliant, vibrant people of diverse backgrounds and interests, all striving to make a difference while retaining a sense of community. Part of the Harvard deal is that you are a member for life—there is always some way you can give back. I'd like to be a part of that mission."