

Construction of the webinar



60 min: 15-min presentation + discussion



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Innovative Universities Global Webinar

**University of Austin (UATX):
blending innovation with
the fearless pursuit of truth**

September 26, 2024

Speaker



Dr. Pano Kanelos

Founding president of the
University of Austin

THE FEARLESS PURSUIT OF TRUTH



University
of Austin



RENEWING *the* PROMISE *of* HIGHER ED

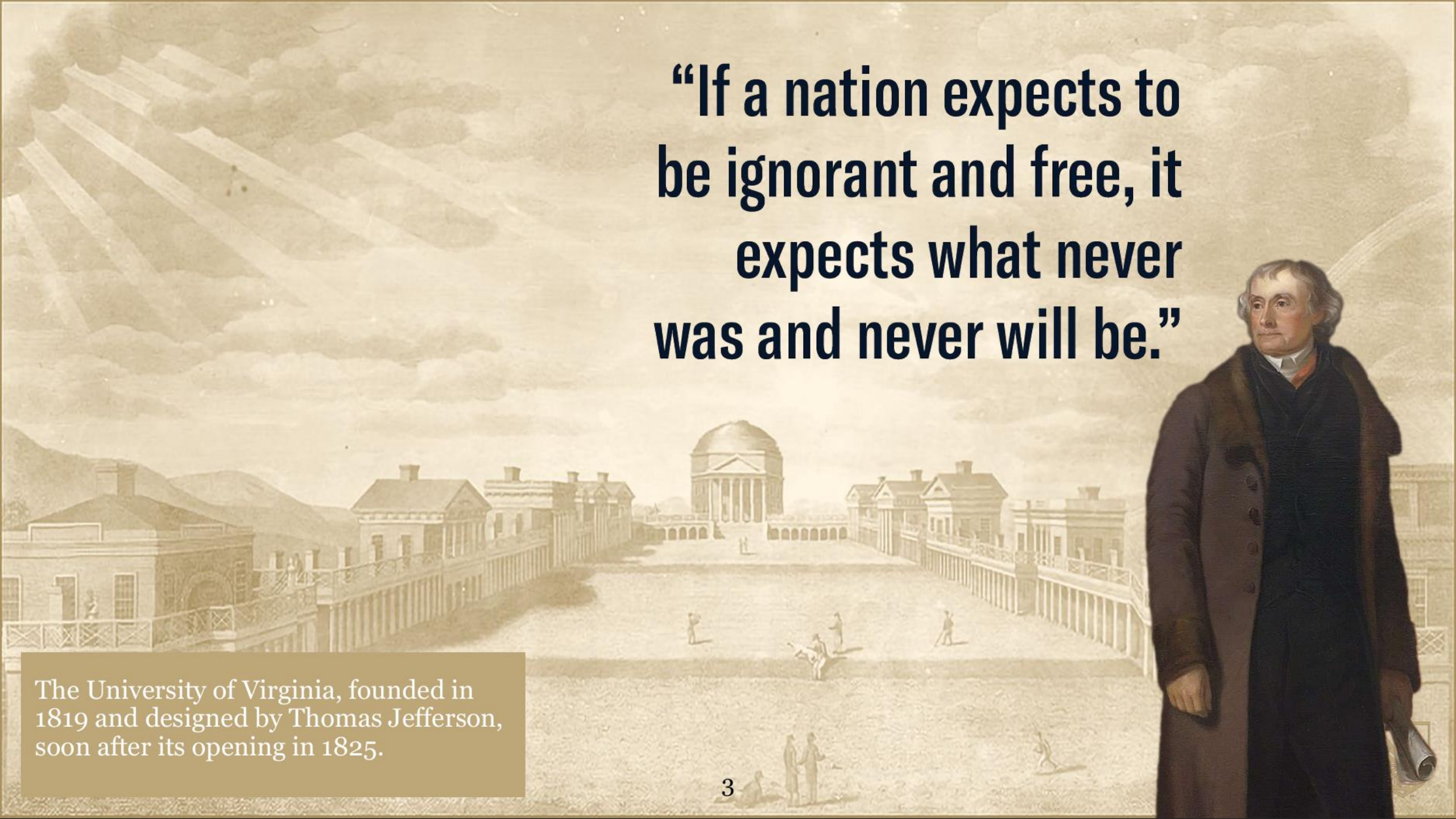
The University of Austin's motto is the fearless pursuit of truth.

It is committed to intellectual freedom, meritocracy, institutional neutrality, and the American republic's founding principles of individual liberty and the rule of law.

Our goal is to be competitive with—but fundamentally distinct from—the existing elite institutions by the end of this decade.

We believe that a reinvention of the university is indispensable if our civilization is to be preserved and advanced.





“If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, it expects what never was and never will be.”



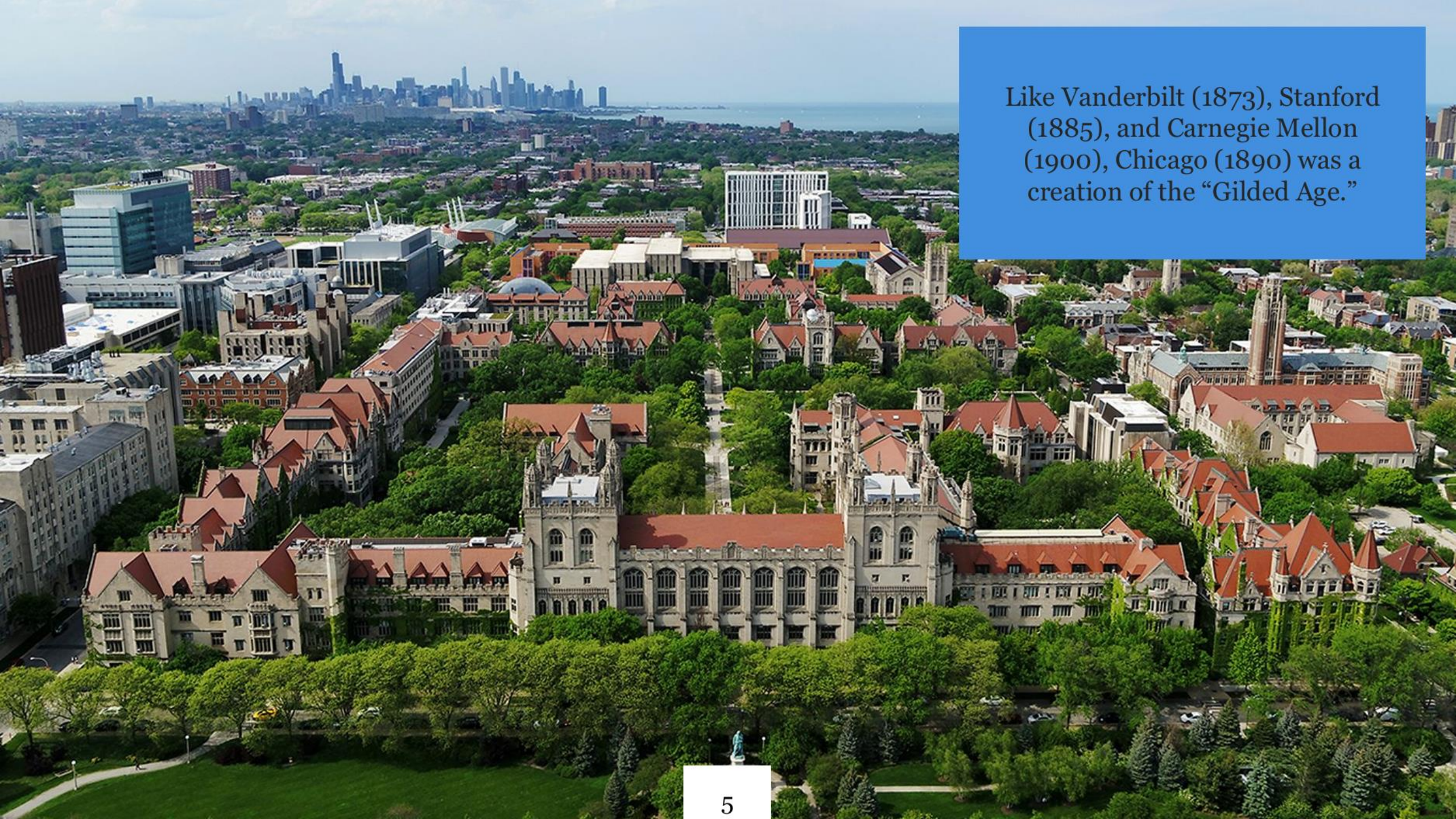
The University of Virginia, founded in 1819 and designed by Thomas Jefferson, soon after its opening in 1825.

As times have
changed,
Americans
have founded
new
universities.



Right: Albert A. Michelson,
Professor of Physics and first
American Nobel laureate, delivers
the second Convocation Address
in front of Goodspeed and
Gates-Blake Halls, with President
William Rainey Harper (above),
professors, and trustees in
attendance, University of
Chicago, July 1, 1894.

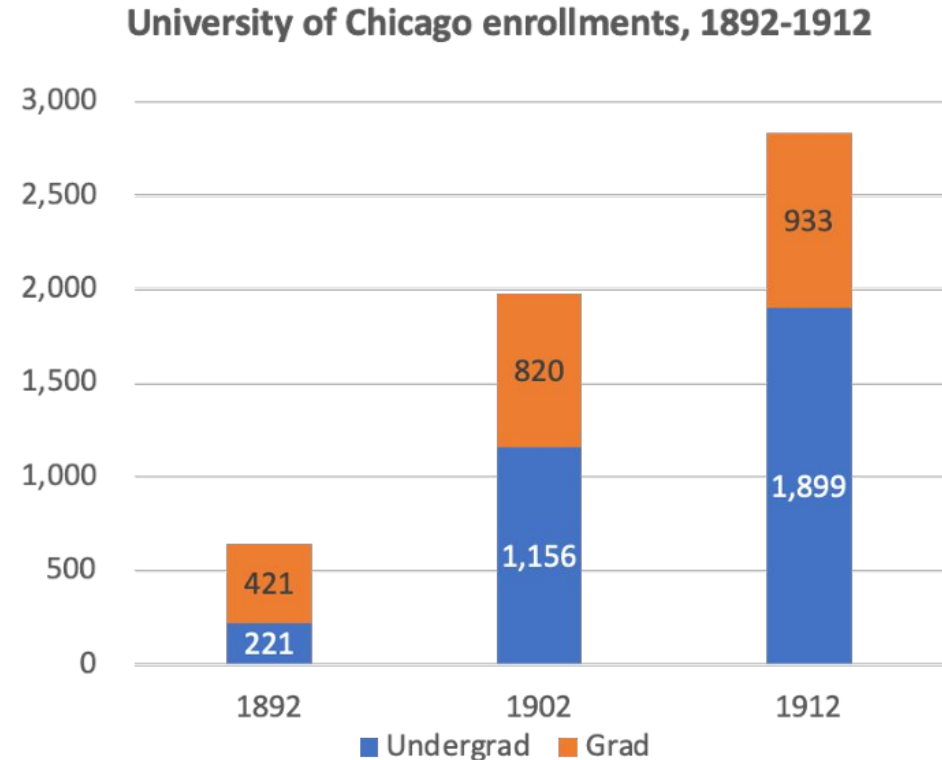




Like Vanderbilt (1873), Stanford (1885), and Carnegie Mellon (1900), Chicago (1890) was a creation of the “Gilded Age.”

In keeping with Chicago's rapid economic growth in the 1890s, the new university scaled at a blistering pace.

- The first classes at the University of Chicago were held on October 1, 1892, exactly 14 months after Harper had started work as president.
- The total number of students tripled between 1892 and 1902, from 642 to 1,976.
- By June 1892, 60 instructors had been appointed. The number soon doubled.



At Chicago, Harper reinvented the university

- In addition to the university and its libraries, Harper created an extension school, a university press, and affiliations with other educational institutions in the region.
- He proposed a calendar of four quarters, including a fully functioning summer quarter. Convocation (graduation) occurred at the end of every quarter.
- In rapid succession, Harper added a business school and a law school.
- Harper's commitment to academic freedom set a new standard that was widely adopted.



The case of Chicago illustrates how a single university can **transform** both the **form and content** of education.



University of Chicago members of the Manhattan Project, including Enrico Fermi (front row, left) and Leó Szilárd (second row, right).



Milton Friedman at the University of Chicago Economics Department in 1971. Friedman won one of the [99 Nobel Prizes](#) awarded to Chicago scholars between 1907 and 2023.



But in our era of rapid economic growth, **almost no new universities** have been founded.

→ Of today's top 25 universities, according to the global rankings compiled by the London [*Times Higher Education Supplement*](#), 10 were founded in the U.S. between 1855 and 1900.

→ But only a handful of new universities have been set up this century: University of California Merced (2005), Ave Maria University (2003), and Soka University of America (2001).

→ Despite being one of the fastest-growing cities in the one of the fastest-growing states, and being rated the [#1 college town](#) in the U.S., Austin has only one public university (University of Texas at Austin) and four small private ones.

- ◆ St. Edward's University (Catholic, founded in 1877)
- ◆ Huston-Tillotson University (historically black, dating back to 1870s)
- ◆ Concordia University Texas (a Lutheran institution founded in 1926)
- ◆ South University (the Savannah-based college has had a campus in Round Rock since 2009)



Hedge Fund CEO Ken Griffin '89 Makes \$300M Donation to FAS, Harvard to Rename GSAS in His Honor



Forbes

FORBES > BILLIONAIRES

Billionaire Stephen Schwarzman Gifts \$188 Million To Oxford University

David Dawkins Former Staff

I cover the work and wealth of Europe's richest.



Jun 1



Office of the President

Landmark \$1 billion gift from alum Michael R. Bloomberg for graduate financial aid

The Rockefellers of the 2020s have preferred to direct their philanthropy to established colleges.



Yet these philanthropic dollars have been funding institutions **increasingly hostile** to the principles of a free society.

Why Did Harvard Students Cheer on Hamas?

Perhaps its administrators should modify the school's admissions process to ensure that students lacking a basic moral compass are rejected.

Oct. 18, 2023 2:17 pm ET



172



Gift unlocked article



Listen (4 min)



The Harvard Crimson

Faculty Speech Must Have Limits





Universities **really do matter**, as Friedrich Hayek said.

“Nowhere is freedom more important than where our ignorance is greatest—at the boundaries of knowledge, in other words, where nobody can predict what lies a step ahead.”

“[W]e so often forget today that intellectual freedom rests on a much wider foundation of freedom and cannot exist without it.”

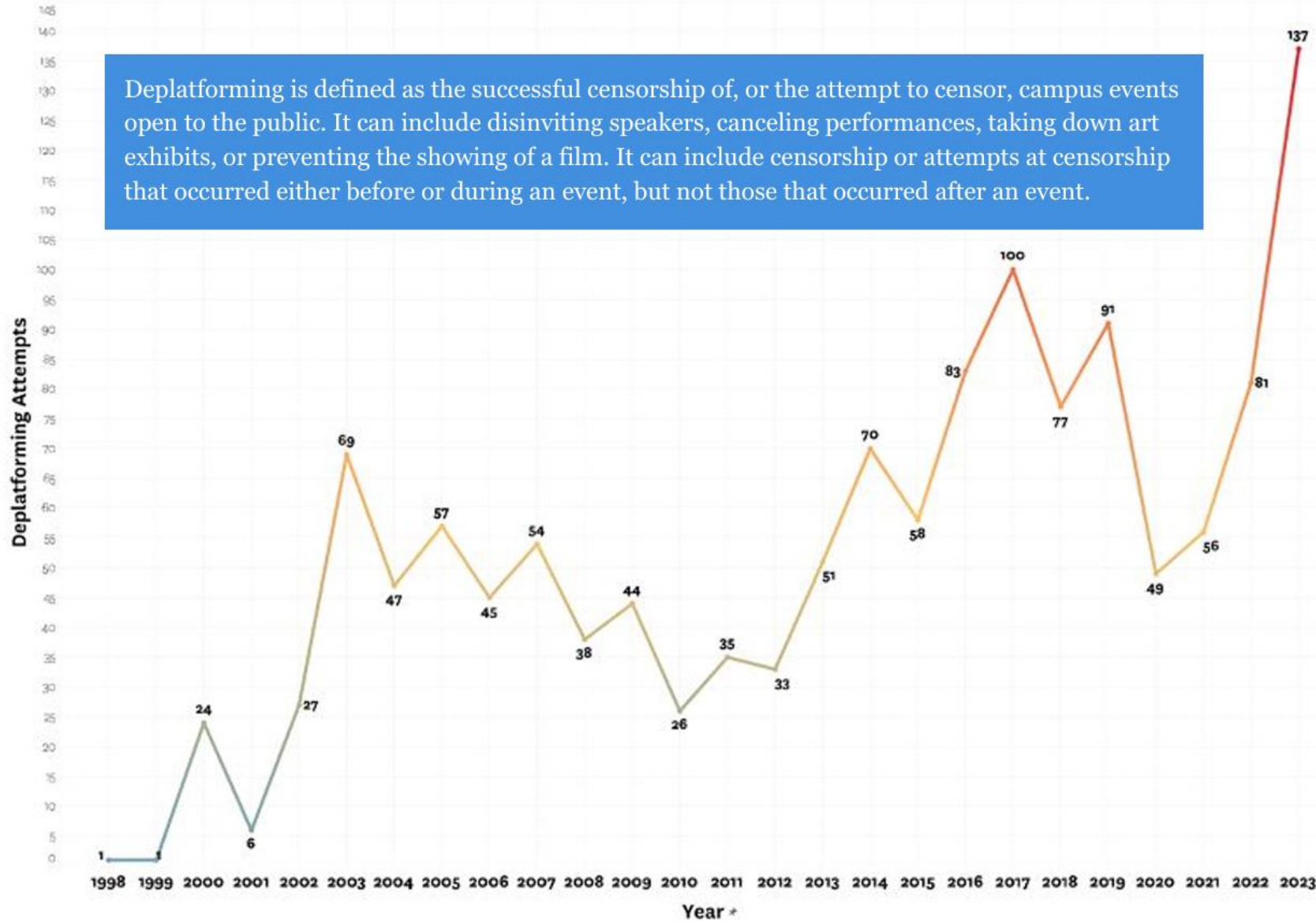
“But the ultimate aim of freedom is the enlargement of those capacities in which man surpasses his ancestors and to which each generation must endeavor to add its share—its share in the growth of knowledge and the gradual advance of moral and aesthetic beliefs, where no superior must be allowed to enforce one set of views of what is right or good and where only further experience can decide what should prevail.”

The Constitution of Liberty (1960), Part III, Ch. 24.



Campus Deplatforming Attempts from 1998-2023

Deplatforming is defined as the successful censorship of, or the attempt to censor, campus events open to the public. It can include disinviting speakers, canceling performances, taking down art exhibits, or preventing the showing of a film. It can include censorship or attempts at censorship that occurred either before or during an event, but not those that occurred after an event.



But today's universities have become **hostile to freedom of speech.**

Source: FIRE's Campus Deplatforming Database, as of February 5th, 2024.

About the Data: This database includes attempts to cancel performances, remove art exhibits, or prevent the showing of a film, in addition to attempts to disinvite speakers. It also includes censorship or attempts at censorship that occurred either before or during an event, but not those that occurred after an event (e.g., a student club's right to invite speakers is revoked because of something said at the event). Visit

<https://www.thefire.org/research-tools/campus-censorship-database> for more information.



Cancel culture has made a **mockery of tenure**, which was designed to protect academic freedom.



Carole Hooven



Joshua Katz



Roland Fryer



Bret Weinstein

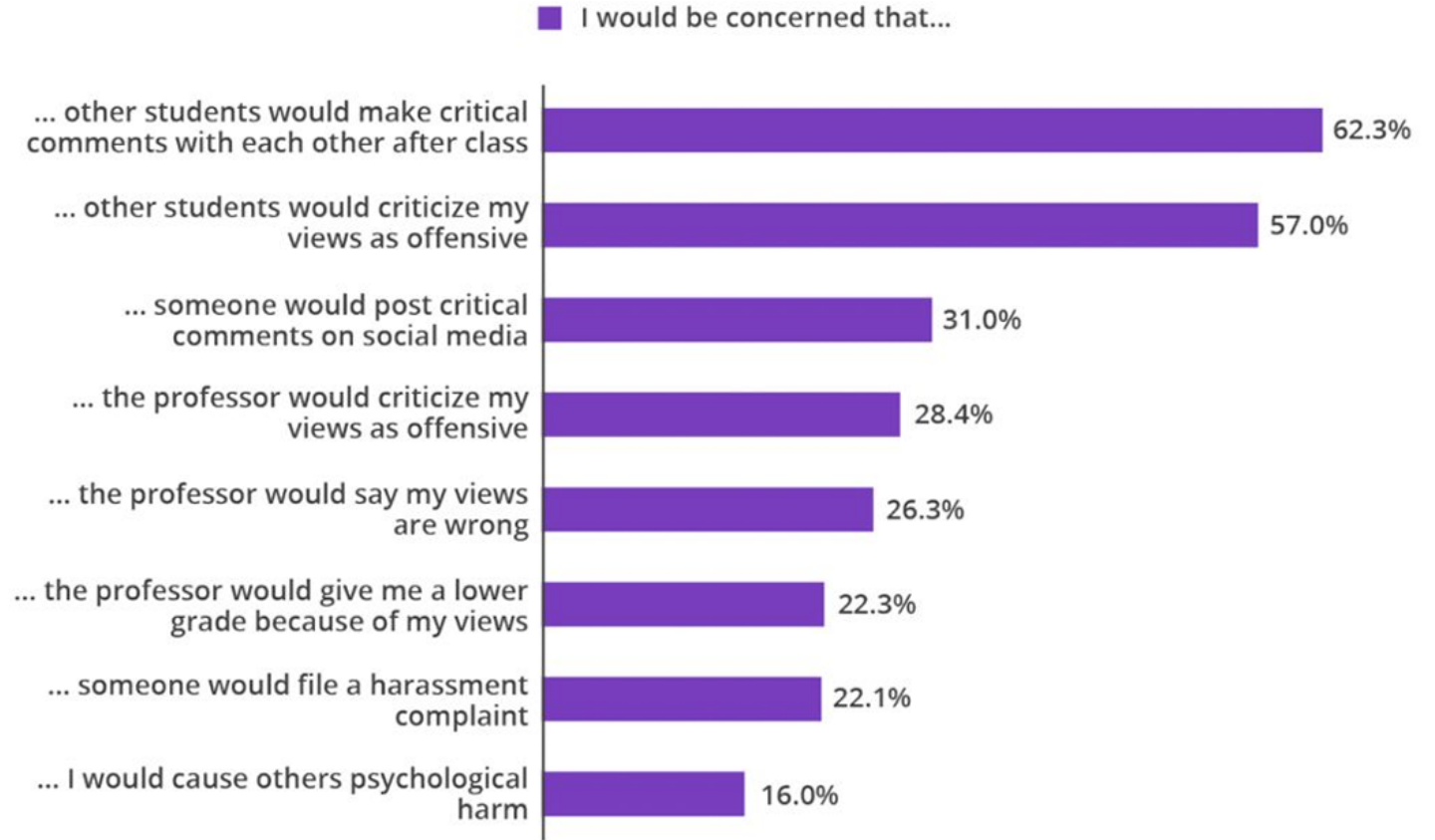


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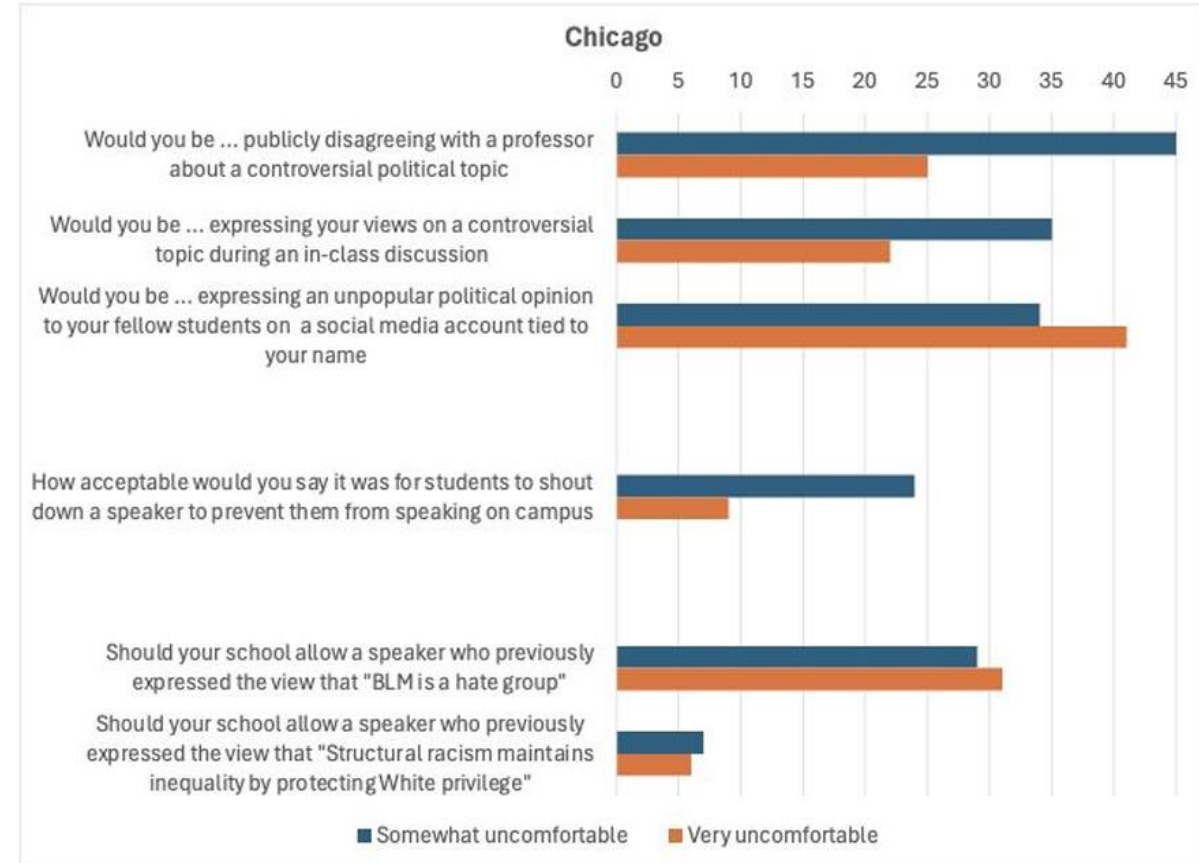
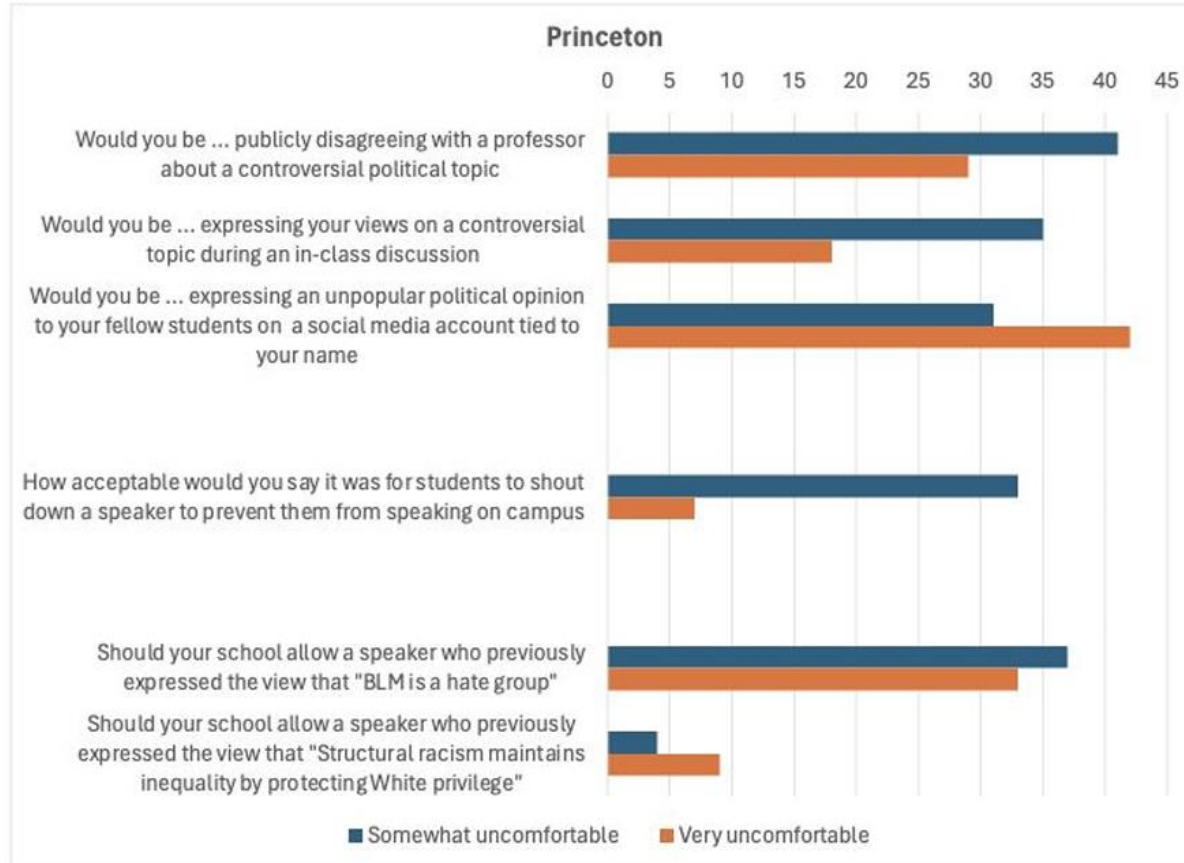
of students say they are reluctant to discuss at least one of five controversial topics.

Source: Zhou, S. & Barbaro, N. (2023). Understanding Campus Expression Across Higher Ed: Heterodox Academy's Annual Campus Expression Survey. Heterodox Academy.

Percentage of students who selected each of the eight options for why they are reluctant to share their views in class



And there is very little difference between the elite colleges.



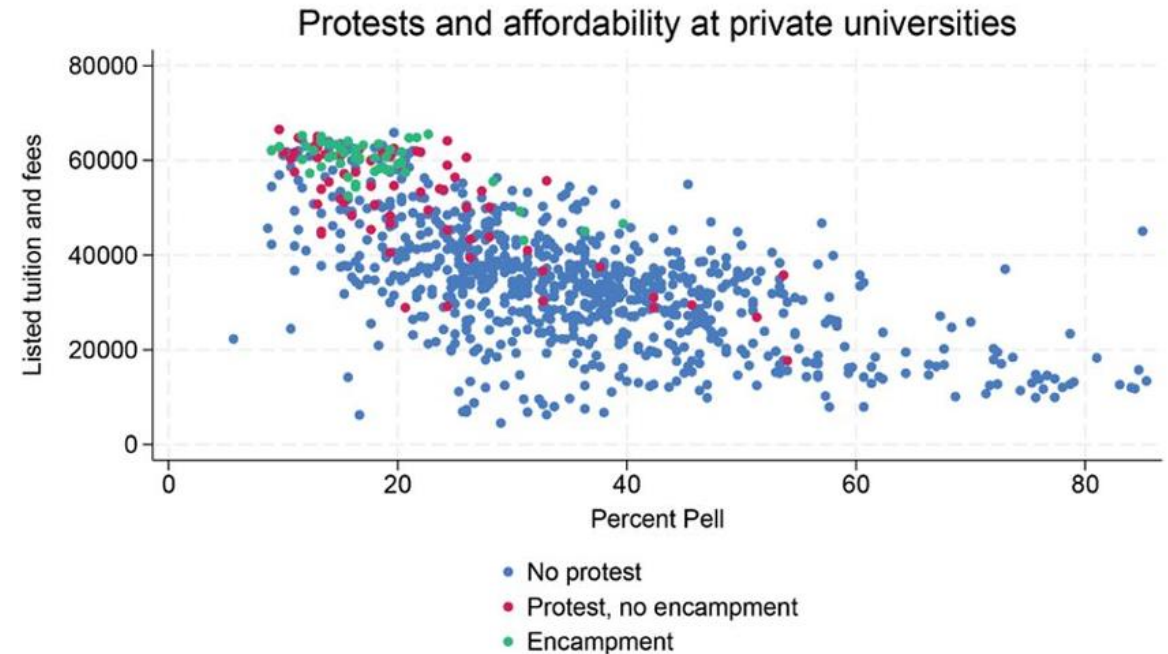
Indeed, the elite colleges stand out for their lack of free speech (and sympathy for extremists).

2024 College Free Speech Rankings

What Is the State of Free Speech on America's College Campuses?

187	Princeton University	39.02	Below Average
207	Stanford University	36.32	Below Average
233	Middlebury College	27.63	Poor
234	Yale University	26.73	Poor
239	University of Texas, Austin	26.38	Poor
240	Dartmouth College	25.76	Poor
241	Duquesne University	25.25	Poor
247	University of Pennsylvania	11.13	Very Poor
248	Harvard University	0.00	Abysmal

Source: Stevens, S.T. (2023). 2024 College Free Speech Rankings: What Is the State of Free Speech on America's College Campuses? The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression.



Source: Kelchen, Robert, Marc Novicoff (2024). "Are Gaza Protests Happening Mostly at Elite Colleges?" Washington Monthly. June 24. <https://washingtonmonthly.com/2024/06/23/are-gaza-protests-happening-mostly-at-elite-colleges/>.



This has consequences **far beyond** the universities themselves.

- Many of the problems that concern us—illiberal attitudes to free speech, explicit discrimination in the name of “equity,” censorship based on pseudoscience and “critical theory”—originated in the established universities.
- As Andrew Sullivan memorably put it in 2018, “We all live on campus now.”

We All Live on Campus Now

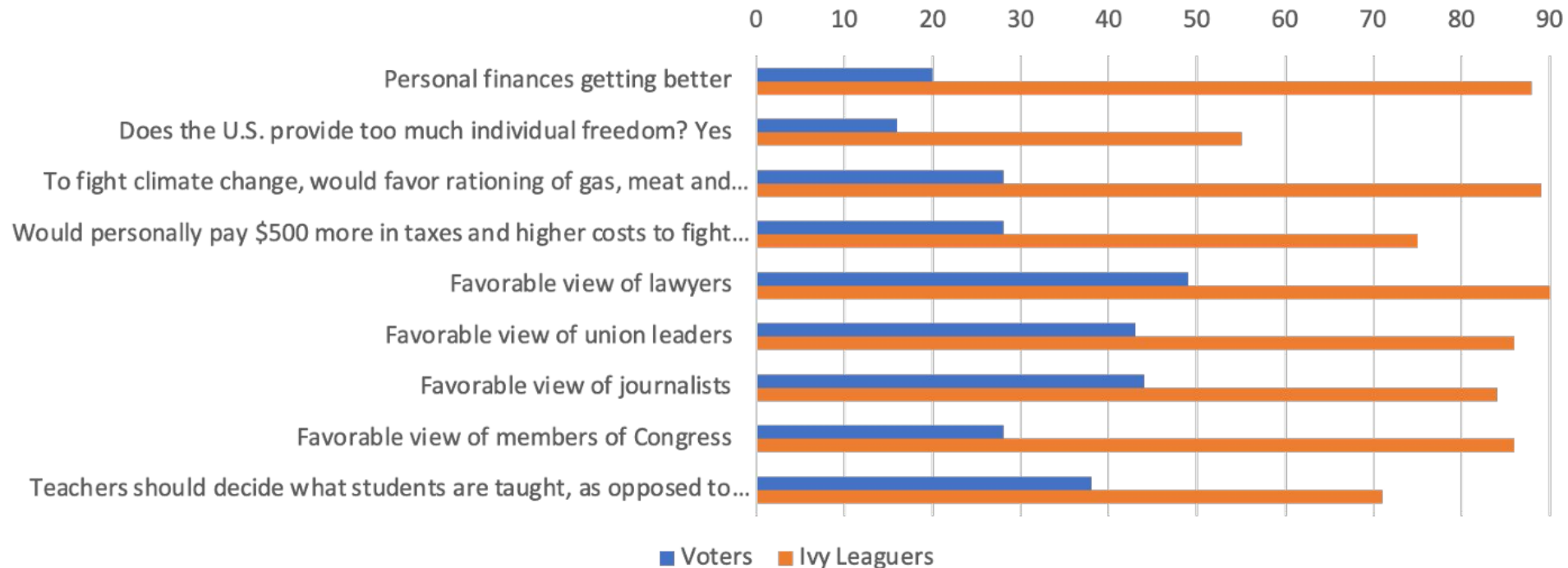
By Andrew Sullivan



NYU students hold a rally calling for the school to become a “sanctuary campus” in November 2016. McGregor/Pacific Press/LightRocket via Getty Images

Graduates of elite institutions are **increasingly estranged** from ordinary Americans.

Ivy Leaguers and voters: The Great Divide



Approximately 1% of the total U.S. population have a postgraduate degree, enjoy a household income of more than \$150,000 annually, and live in a zip code with more than 10,000 people per square mile. Roughly half of this elite attended Ivy League schools or other elite private schools, including Northwestern, Duke, Stanford, and the University of Chicago. This group are the “Ivy Leaguers.”



Perhaps even worse, the erosion of scientific rigor has led to a crisis of credibility for science itself.

There are multiple symptoms of what happens when intellectual standards are allowed to slide:

- The replication crisis in the natural and social sciences.
- The fake scholarship of “[Grievance Studies](#).”
- The deterioration in the quality of recruits to the civil service and concomitant [deterioration in government administration](#).

Essay

Why Most Published Research Findings Are False

John P. A. Ioannidis

Summary

There is increasing concern that most current published research findings are false. The probability that a research claim is true may depend on study power and bias, the number of other studies on the same question, and, importantly, the ratio of true to no relationships among the relationships probed in each scientific field. In this framework, a research finding is less likely to be true when the studies conducted in a field are smaller; when effect sizes are smaller; when there is a greater number and lesser preselection of tested relationships; where there is greater flexibility in designs, definitions, outcomes, and analytical modes; when there is greater financial and other interest and prejudice; and when more teams are involved in a scientific field in chase of statistical significance. Simulations show that for most study designs and settings, it is more likely for a research claim to be false than true. Moreover, for many current scientific fields, claimed research findings may often be simply accurate measures of the prevailing bias. In this essay, I discuss the implications of these problems for the conduct and interpretation of research.

Published research findings are sometimes refuted by subsequent evidence, with ensuing confusion and disappointment. Refutation and controversy is seen across the range of research designs, from clinical trials and traditional epidemiological studies

factors that influence this problem and some corollaries thereof.

Modeling the Framework for False Positive Findings

Several methodologists have pointed out [9–11] that the high rate of nonreplication (lack of confirmation) of research discoveries is a consequence of the convenient, yet ill-founded strategy of claiming conclusive research findings solely on the basis of a single study assessed by formal statistical significance, typically for a p -value less than 0.05. Research is not most appropriately represented and summarized by p -values, but, unfortunately, there is a widespread notion that medical research articles

It can be proven that most claimed research findings are false.

should be interpreted based only on p -values. Research findings are defined here as any relationship reaching formal statistical significance, e.g., effective interventions, informative predictors, risk factors, or associations. “Negative” research is also very useful. “Negative” is actually a misnomer, and the misinterpretation is widespread. However, here we will target relationships that investigators claim exist, rather than null findings.

As has been shown previously, the probability that a research finding is indeed true depends on the prior

is characteristic of the field and can vary a lot depending on whether the field targets highly likely relationships or searches for only one or a few true relationships among thousands and millions of hypotheses that may be postulated. Let us also consider, for computational simplicity, circumscribed fields where either there is only one true relationship (among many that can be hypothesized) or the power is similar to find any of the several existing true relationships. The pre-study probability of a relationship being true is $R/(R+1)$. The probability of a study finding a true relationship reflects the power $1 - \beta$ (one minus the Type II error rate). The probability of claiming a relationship when none truly exists reflects the Type I error rate, α . Assuming that c relationships are being probed in the field, the expected values of the 2×2 table are given in Table 1. After a research finding has been claimed based on achieving formal statistical significance, the post-study probability that it is true is the positive predictive value, PPV. The PPV is also the complementary probability of what Wacholder et al. have called the false positive report probability [10]. According to the 2×2 table, one gets $PPV = (1 - \beta)R / (R - \beta R + \alpha)$. A research finding is thus

Citation: Ioannidis JPA (2005) Why most published research findings are false. *PLoS Med* 2(8): e124.

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“

A school that makes **freedom of inquiry** an essential part of its identity, selects students who show special promise as **seekers of truth**, orients and prepares those students for **productive disagreement**...such a school would be inspiring to join, a joy to attend, and a blessing to society.”

JONATHAN HAIDT and GREG LUKIANOFF

The Coddling of the American Mind



RENEWING *the* PROMISE *of* HIGHER ED

At the turn of the 20th century, a host of new universities were founded that changed the course of higher ed, such as U Chicago, Stanford, and Johns Hopkins. **Over a century later, it is time for the founding of new institutions.**

In May 2021, a small group of founders met to address the current crises in higher education.



BARI WEISS



NIALL FERGUSON



JOE LONSDALE



We are done waiting for the legacy universities to right themselves. And so we are building anew.”

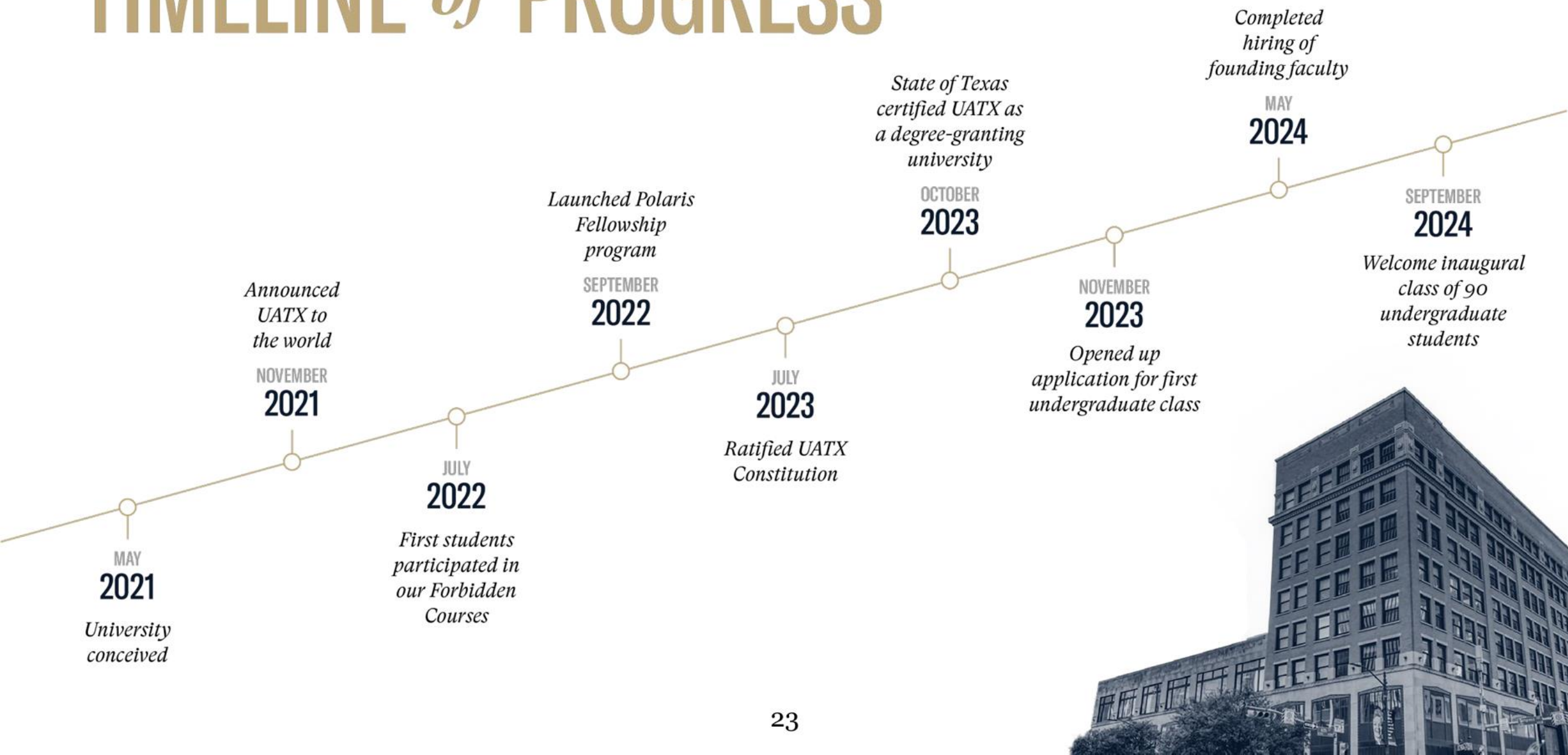
PANO KANELOS

In November 2021, we announced UATX

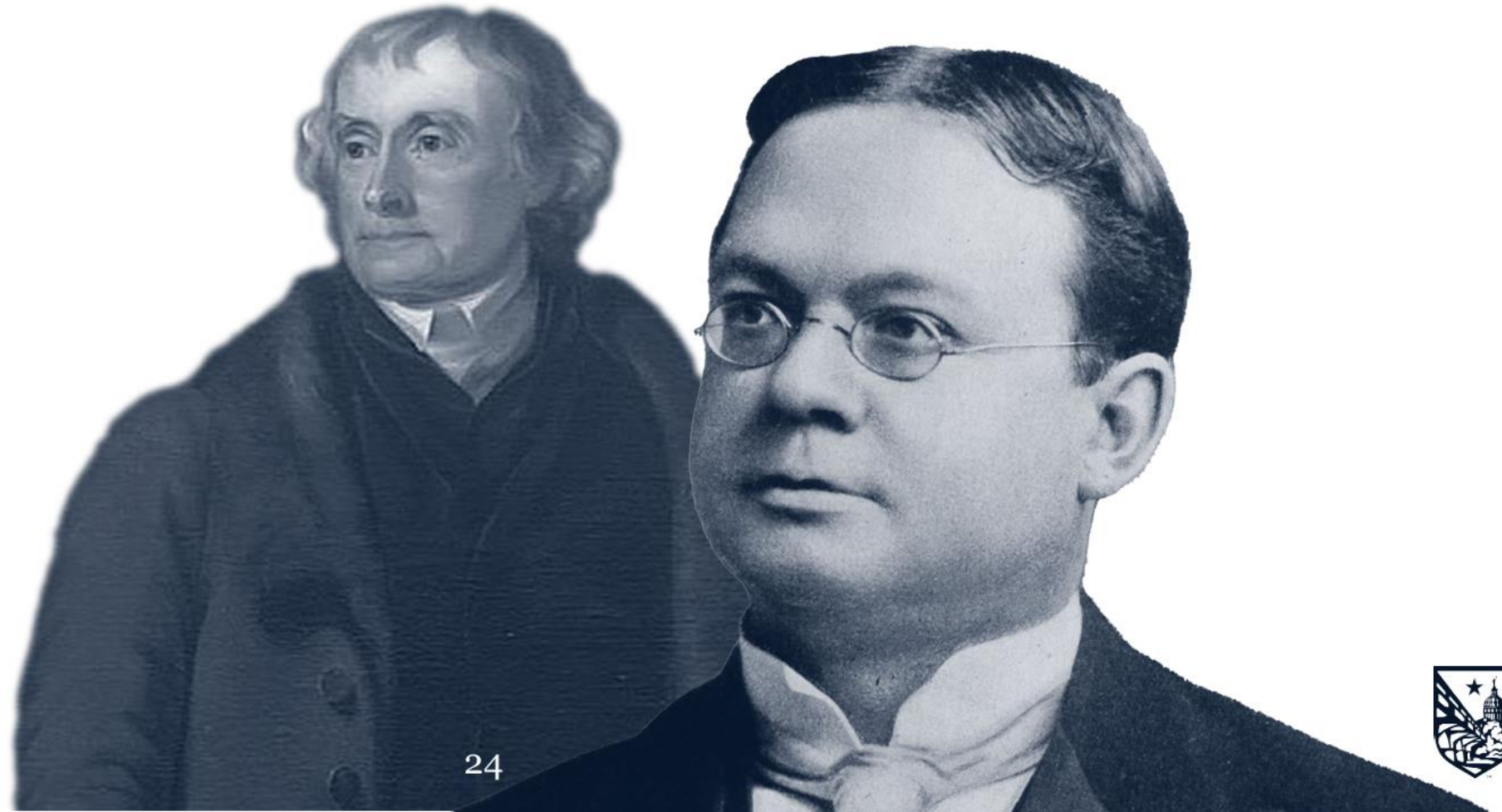




TIMELINE *of* PROGRESS



The University of Austin is our attempt to follow in Jefferson's and Harper's footsteps ...



... by appealing to high school seniors who are fed up with self-censorship and who aspire to build.



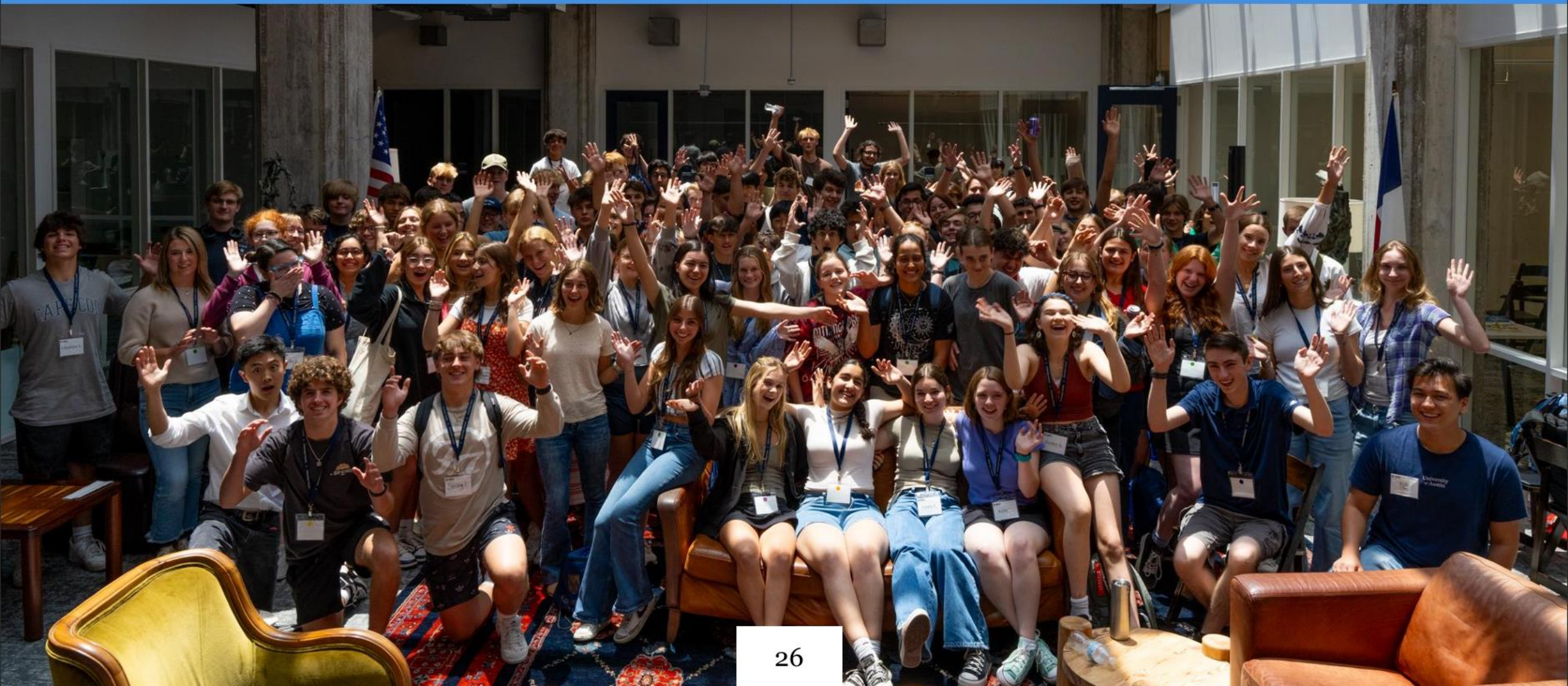
What's UATX in a line?

- Don't just go to school. Build one.
- We're not just going to school. We're building one.
- The fearless pursuit of truth.
- UATX: for the fearless.
- UATX: where builders go.
- We don't wait for permission.
- UATX students don't wait for permission
- Other colleges have customers. We have founders.
- UATX: Found yourself. (Dare to Found)

“People here are **looking for truth**, looking to get to the heart of an issue, rather than have a superficial understanding ...”



We have built it. And they are coming.



Student Testimonials

“There’s not a lot of spaces where you can feel **comfortable being uncomfortable.**”

“**Everyone wants to be here.** Everyone wants to learn. Everyone puts their phone away and is engaged.”

“It’s very easy to talk to people here. People are more authentic. They want to talk to you, and you want to talk to them, they have a lot of thoughts, and they share them, which is not what I’m used to. I’m used to people censoring what they think. But here **people are more open**, and I think that speaks a lot about UATX’s mission of creating an open atmosphere.”



Panel Discussion

Save the date:

**Thursday,
October 10, 10 AM CEST**

**University for Continuing
Education Krems**

**Stay tuned for the upcoming
webinar!**



Mag. Friedrich Faulhammer

Rector of Danube University
Krems

**Have a great evening and
follow us with
[#InnovativeUniversities](#)**