



How to Describe Your HxA Affiliation

About this Resource

Heterodox Academy (HxA) provides frameworks, data, tools, and platforms to help people understand and address the challenges facing institutions of higher learning regarding open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement. Members and other supporters of HxA -- the actual agents of change -- are encouraged to use these materials by acting in their communities, classrooms, institutions, and disciplines.

Since our September 2015 launch, we have seen a radical increase in the number of people committed to finding solutions to the challenges HxA exists to address. Scholars have launched research collaborations, working groups, and events; they have developed pedagogical innovations; members have sought out ways to better institutionalize heterodoxy in everything from course syllabi to job ads, to non-discrimination and diversity statements; and they have been making their case to their colleagues and other academic stakeholders through public talks, publications and social media engagement. And progress is being made as a result of their initiative, courage, hard work and perseverance.

As the movement continues to grow and incorporates a larger and more diverse array of stakeholders, and as more efforts are being developed and launched without the direct involvement of HxA leadership (which is the goal!), questions increasingly arise about how members and other supporters should describe their relationship with HxA, and the connections between HxA's efforts and their own.

Below are some common ways people have sought to express affiliation or solidarity with HxA and guidance as to if or how they should proceed. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list and if you have a question about a particular situation, please contact us at questions@heterodoxacademy.org.

Key Considerations

- 1. One of our core principles** is that people should speak for and as themselves rather than anonymously or via collectives – this is described in greater detail in the '[HxA Way](#).'
- 2. HxA has thousands of members** that hail from a range of demographic and ideological backgrounds and work at a variety of institutions. Out of respect for this pluralism, we encourage our members to be aware that fellow members may have different views on issues or may not wish to be associated with a given argument or approach. Therefore, it is important for members not to share views and approaches as representing those of HxA as an organization or any other HxA members.
- 3. As a 501c3 not-for-profit organization**, we are forbidden from advocating for or against any ballot initiative, political party or politician, advocating for business interests of donors, etc. — or allowing the impression of these things to happen (that is, we can be held responsible if it looks like we are allowing these things). Those who claim affiliation with us, who are ostensibly acting as members of HxA, while engaging in activity which violates our charter (i.e., praising or criticizing any particular ballot initiative, politician, political party, business, etc.) — could jeopardize our 501c3 status.

Faculty/Departmental Webpages

These sites are important institutional signals and noting your HxA affiliation on these pages can help indicate to colleagues, students, prospective students or collaborators, journalists, etc., that you are a scholar who is committed to open inquiry, viewpoint diversity and constructive disagreement — and help elevate the salience of this mission for those who happen to view your page. **We encourage all members to add a blurb about HxA to their faculty or departmental pages if possible.**

Email Signatures

This is an easy way to signal your affiliation and help spread HxA's mission (under the assumption, of course, that you will be using your professional (.edu) email and engaging in professional correspondence in a style that aligns with the 'HxA Way').

Here is an example of how members can reference their HxA affiliation in their email signature:

[NAME]

[RANK], [DEPARTMENT], [UNIVERSITY]

Member, Heterodox Academy

Social Media Profiles

We encourage all HxA members and supporters to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#), dive into the conversations on these forums, and share the content we post. **However, please do not put '@HdxAcademy member' or any variation of this (i.e., @HdxAcademy) as part of your social media profile(s).**

While we understand and appreciate the intent to help raise interest about HxA and to signal pride in membership, most of us are not modeling the '[HxA Way](#)' in all of our social media interactions (although it would be great if we did!). It is important not to appear that you are speaking as a representative of HxA or that your personal views on a topic are characteristic of those of HxA or its membership. The easiest way to do this is to simply refrain from affiliating personal social media profile with HxA.

Heterodox Communities (HxCommunities)

Affiliation

Our [HxCommunities](#) initiative provides space for scholars from specific disciplines to connect to discuss research and ideas, share strategies and resources, and collaborate. If you are a member of an HxCommunity, we encourage you to spread the word and encourage others to join, while also being mindful to distinguish between your HxCommunity and HxA itself.

When referring to your community and its activities, whether you're a moderator or participant, please distinguish HxCommunities from the HxA organization by referring to HxCommunities in one of these ways:

- "Hx [discipline, location, etc.] Community" (e.g., "HxScience Community" or "HxNYC Community")
- "Heterodox [discipline, location, etc.] Community" (e.g., "Heterodox Science Community" or "Heterodox NYC Community")

Please do not refer to your community as "HxA [community]" (e.g., HxA Colorado) or "Heterodox Academy [community]" (e.g., Heterodox Academy Mathematics).

Op-Eds and Media Inquiries

HxA has a team of appointed research assistants, faculty fellows, and members of the leadership team who occasionally publish op-eds and list their institutional role at HxA in their byline. However, these works are typically proposed, produced, and workshopped within our [Writers' Group](#) to ensure that they appropriately model our organizational values, do not violate our 501c3 status, and make a novel and valuable contribution to the public discussion.

Many other HxA members also independently produce and publish op-eds and engage with the media. This is great! We strongly encourage our members and supporters to make the case for open inquiry, viewpoint diversity and constructive disagreement in op-eds, media interviews, public talks, and other public forums, and model our organizational values when engaged in the public sphere. We similarly encourage people to spotlight our data, tools, resources, and initiatives and invite others to join – whenever it is sensible to do so.

However, **please do not add 'HxA member' (or any variation of this) to your byline for independently produced and published works without first consulting with HxA.**

Doing so could be especially damaging when staking out a strong stance on a controversial topic (which could alienate other members or potential members insofar as it is perceived to be the position of HxA writ large), or when engaged in activity that would violate our 501c3 status (i.e., arguing for or against any particular ballot initiative, political candidate, political party or business interest).

In a similar vein, **if a journalist contacts you due to your HxA membership, or if HxA otherwise comes up in an interview, feel free to mention you are a member. However, please also emphasize that you are speaking for and as yourself, not as a representative of HxA.**

If a reporter asks for HxA's position on a topic — or for information about the organization — please do not feel compelled to 'guess' or 'wing it.' Instead, simply direct the journalist to the HxA Communications Team (questions@heterodoxacademy.org).

Open Letters/ Statements

HxA leadership has generally discouraged open letters and collective statements on two grounds:

First, we view it as central to our mode of engagement that scholars should speak for and as themselves rather than appealing to collectives or hiding behind anonymity.

Second, the reason a long list of signatories follows a statement is to appeal to institutional power dynamics or sheer force of numbers to persuade, over and above whatever arguments or data may be contained in the letter.

But we also appreciate that using this tactic (open letters, collective statements) is an issue about which there can be reasonable disagreement, and there is disagreement within our membership about the appropriateness and efficacy of taking such measures. **We ask that if you sign an open letter or collective statement, you do it exclusively as a scholar affiliated with a department or academic institution, not as a representative or member of HxA in any capacity.**

Panels, Conferences, Initiatives,

Edited Volumes

HxA encourages the formation of cross-collaboration, local initiatives, disciplinary initiatives, etc. We hope to help foster more of these via our [HxCommunities Initiative](#). However, we do not have 'groups' or 'chapters' or any sub-entity for which there are separate spokespeople or parallel organizational structures. **Constellations of members, be it across a particular discipline, or in a given geographical region or institution, or working on a particular issue, or in a particular professional capacity (e.g., high school teachers), should not describe themselves as HxA chapters, etc., or suggest they in any way speak on behalf of HxA or some HxA sub-entity, or other members.**

Similarly, it will often be the case that initiatives, events, or publications will be put together primarily or exclusively by HxA members. This does not make them HxA initiatives, events, or publications, and they should not be described as such. These are your creations! Take the credit you deserve rather than ascribing it to us. But do tell us about them. We love to celebrate or amplify members' efforts and help provide models that other people can draw from. Please contact our Membership Team at membership@heterodoxacademy.org to keep us in the loop.

Likewise, if you are speaking at an academic conference (especially on issues related to our mission) we'd love to know about it. However, for many reasons mentioned above, **please do not describe yourself as an HxA member at an academic conference without consulting with HxA first.**

Trademarks and Using the Word

“Heterodox”

Because we hold a range of trademarks related to our name and our work, please contact us if you’d like to use the word “Heterodox” (or some derivative thereof) to describe a panel, event, collected volume, etc., that our organization and its efforts inspire. We will review your request and, if it seems broadly consistent with our organizational mission and values, we will grant a license to use the mark free for a particular instance.

Critically, this would not amount to an endorsement by HxA for the event or product itself, nor its organizers, nor its content – it would merely indicate that we did not detect an obvious contradiction between that work and our own when the request was made. Hence, it would still be essential to ensure that the initiative, product or event was not described as, or implied to be, from Heterodox Academy, by HxA, approved by HxA, etc. An example of someone doing this well:

There is an independently organized and funded annual conference called “Heterodoxy in Psychology” – put together by HxA founding member Richard Redding and others. Many of our members, particularly those in psychology or adjacent fields, participate in the conference. However, HxA played no role in organizing or sponsoring the event. Therefore, it is explicitly emphasized on the event page this is not an HxA event:

The Heterodoxy in Psychology Conference is an independent conference not organized or sponsored by Heterodox Academy or other entities. The content and views shared at this conference do not necessarily reflect the position or commitments of other organizations.

Conclusion

Once again, this guidance is not intended to be exhaustive. If you have a question about a particular case, please contact us (questions@heterodoxacademy.org) for more information and we’d be happy to help.