

Report of the **FAS Task Force** on

Visual Culture & Signage



How and where we memorialize individuals, events, and moments in our institutional history should reflect our core institutional values and commitments to truth, knowledge, critical thinking. The visual culture of the FAS should honor our past in a truthful way while also celebrating the diversity and vitality of our present and instilling a sense of pride and belonging that is equally available to all members of our community. Honest and rigorous conversations about how we weave together our past, present, and future through our visual culture and symbols are necessary to build the stronger, more equitable future we envision.

Claudine Gay
Edgerley Family Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Message to the FAS community, 2020



Contents

I. Introduction:
A Call for Renewal



V. **Guidelines**



II. **Principles**



VI. **Conclusion**



III. **FAS Visual Culture
and Signage Today**



VII. **Appendices**

IV. **Recommendations**



A Call for Renewal



This report calls for Harvard’s Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) to adopt a more dynamic, welcoming, and inclusive approach to its visual culture and signage. The time has come to bring our ways of representing the FAS and its history into closer alignment with our present community and its values as well as with the more egalitarian future we aspire to build. Under the leadership of Dean Claudine Gay, the FAS has been making a concerted effort not only to diversify its students, staff, and faculty but also to welcome, engage, and empower them more equitably. This effort entails honoring the unique capacity of each member of our community to contribute to the shared intellectual pursuits to which the FAS is dedicated.

The cosmopolitan ethos that informs the pursuit of an inclusive campus warrants our deepest commitment. It flows from the most laudable and ancient notion of a university as a gathering of scholars from across boundaries of academic discipline, nation, and identity, and it additionally flows from our commitment to excellence. As the Presidential Task Force on Inclusion and Belonging observed in its 2018 report, academic excellence requires a diversity of perspectives and experiences that only a truly inclusive institution can deliver in full. Responsive to the call of the Presidential Task Force for inclusive symbols and spaces, the present report offers a new vision for FAS visual culture and signage as well as a set of recommendations for how to achieve it.

In particular, this report calls for visual culture and signage that better represent the diversity, aspirations, and dynamism of Harvard and the FAS. It calls for new approaches to determining whom we feature in our pictures and sculptures and

how we feature them. Our institutional past bears many traces of the social exclusions and subordinations that have marred American society and higher education, and our community should be honest and forthright in reckoning with those painful aspects of our history. But our past also contains many inspiring stories of those who have struggled against these injustices, stories of pathbreaking achievement that have too long gone untold and uncelebrated. This report calls for bringing these neglected stories and their protagonists into our visual culture so as to inspire those who carry on that work in the present and to provide a fuller, more nuanced account of Harvard’s long and layered history. As the FAS pursues this more inclusive history, it has a chance to rethink how it uses pictorial genres to represent core commitments and values. To date, the FAS has relied extensively on the portrait, a genre that highlights the individual. This report calls for also exploring other ways of representing our history and our aspirations, ways that recognize the vitality

of intellectual community, environment, and human interaction.

The report also envisions improvements to our outdoor spaces and clearer, more hospitable signage. The pastoral beauty and historic significance of our campus warrant tending, to be sure, but making the resources of our campus more accessible and ensuring all newcomers feel welcome and at ease are also important goals. Changes in landscaping and building entrances could enhance the campus experience for those with disabilities. Better signage could accentuate our commitment to learning, show care to our visitors, and hasten feelings of belonging within our diverse community of faculty, students, scholars, and staff.

Process is as important as outcome, and this report calls for the broad engagement of our community in the curation of our visual culture and signage. Although overseeing our campus efficiently requires clear lines of responsibility, the Task Force encourages the FAS to involve

more members of our community in the curation process. This will require striking a balance between centralized oversight and local agency, a balance that will enable the creativity of our community to flourish. Ultimately, we believe broad and transparent engagement would enable the FAS to benefit more fully from the diverse perspectives in our community, including the perspectives of our Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) colleagues;

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*, and Queer (LGBTQ) colleagues; and our colleagues with disabilities. It would also enable us to bring out the educational potential of the curation process to be in line with the teaching and research mission of the FAS. Above all, this report calls for curating our visual culture and signage in ways that activate the FAS campus as a welcoming place of education and scholarship.

| The Charge of the Task Force

In the fall of 2020, Dean Gay convened the FAS Task Force on Visual Culture and Signage to further the commitment of the FAS to become more socially just and academically robust. In particular, Dean Gay launched the Task Force as part of a set of measures to advance racial justice, setting out the charge with these words:

“

Our campus has been home to generations of faculty and students who are part of a long history of pathbreaking accomplishment, advancing fields of knowledge and leading change in the world around them. But that rich history is also beset by chapters of exclusion and discrimination that are in deep tension with the vibrant, diverse campus community we celebrate today and the truly inclusive scholarly community we aspire to be. How and where we memorialize individuals, events, and moments in our institutional history through imagery and symbols should reflect our core institutional commitments to truth, knowledge, and critical thinking. At the same time, they should authentically represent the possibility inherent in our present moment and encourage the sense of welcome and belonging each of us needs to feel seen, heard, and able to thrive.

”

In the course of its work, the Task Force came to understand the vital importance of addressing the “deep tension” that Dean Gay had identified. The visual culture and signage of an institution constitutes a public statement of its values, a statement that can communicate indifference or care, disregard or recognition, hostility or hospitality. In this moment of historical reckoning with racial injustice, the FAS has an opportunity and an obligation to reconsider and revise its visual culture and signage to ensure that our campus offers a broad welcome to our community, to our returning alumni, and to our visitors, a welcome that communicates and upholds the principles we cherish.

| What Is Visual Culture?

The visual culture of the FAS is capacious and varied. It includes the landscaping and architecture of our campus. It includes the gates and sculptures of Harvard Yard. It includes the design of our interior spaces, from the dining halls of the Houses to the classrooms in the Science Center. It includes moldings and doors, pilasters and reading chairs, pictures on walls and busts on plinths. All of these elements of our campus bear messages, as powerful as they are implicit, about what the institution values, who it celebrates, and what kind of community it aims to foster. While attending to the panoply of our visual culture, the Task Force also singled out signage—where the visual meets the verbal or the diagrammatic—for particular attention. Because signage helps us orient ourselves in an unfamiliar space and interpret our surroundings, it can leave an immediate and lasting impression of our institution and its values.

Within a community, visual culture can anchor feelings of pride or belonging. New and unfamiliar elements of visual culture can therefore elicit strong reactions.

When a large Picasso sculpture was installed in what is now called Daley Plaza in Chicago (1967), much of the initial commentary was critical. Accustomed to commemorative public art, people were uncertain about what the sculpture was saying about the city. Over time, the people of Chicago came to embrace the sculpture, which has become an icon of the city and its commitment to public art and civic dynamism. In opening themselves to the unfamiliar ambiguities of the work, the people of Chicago let themselves be changed. The history of Maya Lin’s Vietnam Veterans Memorial on the National Mall (1981) is another exemplar of this transformative process from unsettling intervention to treasured landmark. To the extent that the FAS chooses to pursue a more aspirational visual culture, it will be asking the members of its community not only to grow accustomed to new objects on the Harvard campus but also to open themselves to the possibility of being changed by them.

While the Task Force focused on the physical spaces of the Harvard campus, its members remained keenly aware that FAS visual culture extends into digital spaces. The Task Force gave priority to the visual culture of the physical campus for three principal reasons. First, transforming the visual culture of the campus requires grappling with issues that have no precise parallels in the virtual realm, such as the storing, conserving, and insuring of art. Second, the virtual representations of the FAS are easier to keep up-to-date and indeed already represent the current FAS community more fully than do our physical spaces. Third, to the extent that our websites and postings represent the campus, they often do so through images of its visual culture, and therefore changes to our visual culture on campus will

support and foster changes to the digital imagery we circulate. Although the focus of this report is on the physical campus, many of the principles and guidelines it offers are applicable to curation of our digital communications as well.

As broad as visual culture is, it remains only one dimension of our campus sensorium. As our bustling dining halls and cafés remind us daily, the Harvard campus is a place of seeing in addition to one of hearing, touching, smelling, and tasting. Indeed, the most iconic object on the Harvard campus, the statue of John Harvard in the Yard, is a site of tactile ritual as well as visual interest. For our community members who are blind or have low vision, the culture of Harvard arrives wholly or principally via senses other than sight. While the Task Force embraced the challenge of tending the visual culture of the FAS, it remained ever mindful of the embeddedness of the visual in a manifold sensory environment and the different ways in which our community members may interact with it. One worthy question that our inquiry left unanswered is how the FAS, in the midst of a modern culture that privileges and often isolates vision, might cultivate the engagement of other senses as it curates its campus.

| Continuity and Change

In making its recommendations, this Task Force calls for a new approach to the visual culture and signage of the FAS. Change at any institution with rich traditions can be unsettling, and it is worth remembering that Harvard’s 385-year history is a marvel of both continuity and transformation. From its inception, Harvard has embraced a commitment to the pursuit of truth. It has always been, and continues to be, a scholarly community nestled beside the Charles River, united by a dedication to learning. Alumni,

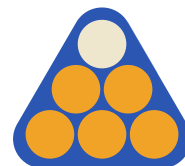
students, staff, and faculty take pride in this enduring commitment and relish the challenge of carrying it further into the 21st century. Continuity, however, is only one side of the Harvard coin. Harvard and its pursuit of veritas have flourished over the centuries precisely because its community and leadership have recognized when moments call for structural change. Throughout its long history, Harvard has responded to major historical shifts by reinventing its constituent parts, including its curriculum, its administrative organization, its appointment and tenure procedures, its undergraduate residences, and its admissions process. The Harvard any living alumnus knows is a world apart from the clergy-run “Harvard Colledge” of the 17th century. The courage to risk transformation is precisely what has enabled Harvard to enjoy its peerless

streak of eminence, and it is as part of that history of continual transformation and renewal that the Task Force approached its work and its recommendations.

| Related Efforts

The FAS Task Force on Visual Culture and Signage was fortunate to work alongside other teams on campus grappling constructively with Harvard’s past, including the University’s Committee to Articulate Principles on Renaming and the Presidential Initiative on Harvard and the Legacy of Slavery. Based on conversations among the leaders and other members of these entities, the Task Force anticipates synergistic results to emerge from these related efforts. From many angles, this is an exciting time of renewal for the Harvard campus. 🌟

Principles



“Academic excellence requires diversity and inclusion.”

With these words, the Harvard University Presidential Task Force on Inclusion and Belonging articulated a guiding principle for our institution. As that Task Force recognized, living up to this principle will require “an honest institutional history and efforts to revisit how we weave past and present to future through our repertoire of symbols.” In the three years since that Task Force’s 2018 Report, Harvard has made progress along these lines, but the need to reckon with our past and how we represent it has only grown. Across the FAS today, we see efforts to reconsider the visual culture and signage of our campus. Students, staff, and faculty alike are thinking deeply about the physical spaces and symbolic markers that present the FAS to our community and to the world.

Our visual culture conveys the institution’s mission and signals its core values to all who visit our campus or our websites. Dear to the memories of Harvard alumni, our campus visual culture also frames the lived experience of today’s students, faculty, staff, and visitors. The visual culture of the campus has long taken shape from the incremental sedimentation of history; today, we are challenged to shift our paradigms, to reimagine curation and context, and to elevate voices that have long been quieted and unheard. To support the units of the FAS as they address calls to rethink our visual culture and signage, we provide the following principles.

Our visual culture and signage should:



center our educational mission and institutional values in an intentional way.



reflect a dynamic view of our institutional history.



connect Harvard's history to a present and future that recognize the values of diversity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility.



celebrate our strengths in the arts.



Our visual culture and signage should center our educational mission and institutional values in an intentional way.

The FAS is grounded in a teaching and research mission that seeks to educate citizens and citizen leaders for society and produce the next generation of boundary-pushing researchers and scholars. At the heart of this mission is a commitment to the transformative power of a liberal arts and sciences education. This commitment helps shape our values—including veritas, diversity and inclusion, intellectual and social transformation, and the pursuit of a just and open society. In turn, these values help define our mission. Through the visual culture and signage of the campus, we affirm both mission and values for the Harvard community and communicate them to a wider world. Every image on a website, every picture on a wall, every sculpture in a courtyard, every plaque on a building, and every sign on a walkway shapes an impression of who we are and who we aspire to be.

We must therefore be intentional about our visual environment and signage. As we bring longstanding Harvard values into refreshed alignments with institutional commitments to diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging, we must actively work to make those recalibrated values explicitly visible.

This is easier said than done. Our visual culture represents enormous financial and emotional investment. Many among our community value the experience of a “traditional” Harvard: Georgian buildings replete with wood-paneled rooms, ancient fireplaces, and gilt-framed portraits of bygone leaders. At the same time, inertia comes readily to institutions: many of our spaces look much as they did decades ago, even as the values of the community have evolved. In many cases, the lived experience of the Harvard community has become misaligned with the visual culture of the institution. Affirming the values of the present moment and the future of our mission will require an approach to Harvard’s visual culture that takes seriously practices of curation—selecting, organizing, and caring for our large inventory of visual culture—and circulation—a new and intentional openness to dynamism and change rather than the sedimentary accretion of images and objects over time.

Dynamic practices of curation and circulation could help realize the potential of Harvard’s visual culture and signage to contribute to our educational mission. To date, that potential remains largely untapped. Members of our community

daily pass through our visual culture without much sense of what or whom the pictures, objects, and signs represent. Now is the time to bring our visual culture into our classrooms and public discourse, where it can stimulate the minds and inspire the imaginations of our community and our visitors. The FAS is dedicated to the experience of teaching and learning, and our visual culture and signage should play a larger role in that mission.

This principle should guide not only our choices of objects and signs to display but also the processes by which we make those choices. We should curate our visual culture through engagement and discussion aimed at fostering the social understandings that give rise to care, and we should make decisions about what to display and where based on what our visual culture and signage has to contribute to the expansively defined FAS educational mission.



Our visual culture and signage should reflect a dynamic view of our institutional history.

Harvard's history is dynamic. Indeed, few institutions of higher education can point to as rich a history of transformation and change. Examined carefully, many practices that are taken for longstanding tradition turn out to be relatively new. Spaces that seem old have sometimes been deliberately crafted that way. The evolution of our visual culture is best measured in decades, not centuries. Our approach to Harvard's history—as it is expressed in visual culture—should be equally dynamic.

Only a dynamic approach to representing the FAS and its history can be sufficiently responsive to shifts in norms and community values. This truth has become painfully apparent in recent years, as the University has begun reckoning with problematic elements of its history. Such reckonings include but are surely not limited to the Presidential Initiative on Harvard and the Legacy of Slavery, considerations of the Charter of 1650, and assessments of the exclusions and inequities that are part of Harvard's past. We address these shortcomings in our institution's history not to erase the past but to chart our way toward a Harvard

that more equitably welcomes all of its community members and its visitors. Such reassessments are part of the dynamism of Harvard's history and form a compelling basis for new approaches to visual culture and signage. They require us to set limits on the “originalist” approach to historic preservation that has shaped much of our current visual culture and which tends to perpetuate exclusionary ideologies of the past. These reassessments ask us instead to explore more progressive approaches that make room for the courageous reinvention that Harvard has time and again achieved.

These crucial changes do not inevitably suggest censure. While it is clear that there are aspects of our visual culture that no longer reflect our mission and do not have a place on our campus, the principle of dynamism has a broader foundation. Many people, actions, and events from the history of the FAS are worthy of admiration. The finite world of our visual culture can be opened up through curation and circulation. We can bring forth some of the many untold stories that may inspire a renewed commitment to the pursuit of inclusion and belonging and its fostering

of academic excellence. A dynamic visual culture would aim to be circulatory rather than static, future-focused as well as traditionalist. Our visual culture can and should offer a richer, more expansive, and truer sense of all that has gone into making the history of the extraordinary place that is Harvard.



Our visual culture and signage should connect Harvard's history to a present and future that recognize the values of diversity, inclusion, belonging, and accessibility.

Harvard aspires to be a welcoming, inclusive, and accessible institution of learning. That aspiration ought to encompass signage, visual interfaces, and physical environments that improve access for people with disabilities. It ought to encompass visual and signage strategies that make the campus legible to our community. Most fundamentally, it ought to encompass efforts to convey, in the words of the Presidential Task Force on Inclusion and Belonging, “the openness and accessibility of our campus and of an academic life to people from all backgrounds.”

Students in Harvard College have never been more diverse, and other parts of the FAS are striving to match that achievement. This expansion of opportunity to a wider range of peoples lies at the heart of Harvard's contemporary pursuit of its mission and informs its future aspirations. Our visual culture and signage have too often failed to reflect that

diversity or meaningfully engage with it. Even as we value Harvard's past, then, we must also account for the lived experience of the Harvard community in the present. We must make the spaces, pathways, representations, and signage that help shape the lives of students, faculty, and staff more welcoming of our community in the marvelous fullness of its range. A dynamic, curatorial, circulatory approach to visual culture and signage will be most effective if it endeavors to balance three temporal imperatives: valuing history and tradition, addressing present-day experience, and charting a path to better futures. In addition to recognizing Harvard's history and providing spaces of inclusion and belonging for our current community, then, our visual culture and signage should drive future-focused possibilities for a campus eager to tend voices long unheard. In our visual culture, past, present, and future need to sit together in generative proportion.



Our visual culture and signage should celebrate our strengths in the arts.

What we put on our walls, in our rooms, and in our courtyards should stimulate thought and reflection. In its 2008 report, the Harvard Task Force on the Arts lamented that “ours is not a seriously curated campus” and called on the University to make the arts integral to its cognitive life. Our visual culture and signage should live up to this promise.

Just as we seek fearless and unfettered thinking in our classrooms, so should we entertain new ideas in our visual culture and signage. For example, although Harvard has traditionally recognized and celebrated its history through the genre of portraiture, our campus community is primed both to rethink portraiture—its forms, subjects, creators, and modes of display—and to embrace a multitude of other forms of visual culture.

We have a tremendous opportunity to celebrate our strengths in the arts, from the unrivaled collections of our museums and untapped resources of our departments and programs to our catalytic partnerships with contemporary artists of all kinds and our brilliant, inventive students. All of these are part of our strength in the arts and can be called on to help fashion a richer articulation of our institutional values.

A curatorial approach to our visual culture would stimulate the circulation of available works as well as the commissioning of new pieces and the reimagining of old spaces in new ways. We must consider the different uses of distinct kinds of space—residential housing, classrooms and offices, public space—and build appropriate visual culture and signage for each while also balancing architecture and public art, interiors and exteriors, wayfinding and student privacy and security, and other considerations. 🏠

FAS visual culture and signage today



The FAS boasts many fine works of art and architecture, and its campus is famously picturesque. Today, however, some of the norms that have defined our visual culture no longer inspire or satisfy our community, nor do they meaningfully engage our educational mission. In particular, the extent to which our present visual culture may perpetuate categorical forms of exclusion and marginalization puts it at odds with the inclusive ethos that now prevails on our campus.

The shortcomings of our present visual culture became abundantly clear in the course of our most crucial work as a Task Force: listening. We engaged in a variety of outreach efforts, including large meetings, focus groups, an FAS-wide survey, and one-on-one conversations. We heard heart-wrenching stories of alienation, accounts of first-year students feeling that

the art on the walls conveyed to them that they were not part of the real Harvard, that the institution did not deem the histories of people like them worth remembering. We heard anger about the willingness of the institution to persist in celebrating historical figures who defended prejudice and subordination against the egalitarian currents of their own time. We heard many state that the visual and visible elements of our culture should be meaningful and legible to the community but often are not. There was curiosity, confusion, and sometimes frustration about the opaque processes and exclusions that have shaped our current visual culture, about why buildings were named as they were, or why certain people and not others were memorialized in portraits. We heard repeatedly that people wanted fuller exposition and richer, more augmented stories and context about what they saw. This was often accompanied by energetic


suggestions about expanding the media and modes of our storytelling. Some of those who spoke with us expressed concern that the lack of explanation or exposition accompanying our visual culture has served to hide troubling stories about Harvard's past, stories of racial injustice, discrimination, and oppression. We discovered how widespread the feeling is that the Harvard campus, by virtue of its scant signage, is far more bewildering and unwelcoming than it ought to be.

We also discovered that certain elements of our visual culture hold broad appeal within our community. For example, we learned that many members of the FAS treasure the brightly colored chairs in Harvard Yard for their playful invitation to gather, which counteracts the coldness of our stone columns and massive facades. We learned that almost all the members of our community value the long history

of Harvard, that they take pride in it being the oldest college in North America. We learned that what concerns our community is less the institution's past than its willingness to share honest and inclusive accounts of it. Above all, we heard that our visual culture and signage matter to our community and that bringing them into better alignment with our values could make our campus a better place to study, work, and learn.

Soon after the Task Force was formed, the timeliness of its work became readily apparent. We had not yet launched our outreach when the community began to reach out to us. Several FAS faculty, students, or staff came forward to let us know of plans in place to update the visual culture within particular units. The conversations that ensued were galvanizing and invaluable. We discovered how prevalent the desire was to improve the visual culture of our campus, and we learned about the obstacles and

challenges that people striving to make improvements were encountering. These conversations made clear that a one-size-fits-all approach to renewing our visual culture will not suffice. The FAS needs instead a vision for our visual culture that is rooted in our shared institutional values yet capacious enough to allow the boundless creativity of our community to flourish in response to local needs.

Based on what it heard, the Task Force concluded that the visual culture of a college or university campus can play a vital role in the educational mission. It can encourage and inform, enthrall and stimulate. It can activate the institution's past accomplishments on behalf of its current aspirations. This is certainly true at Harvard. What our community wants from its walls, walkways, and gathering spaces is less a reminder of institutional authority and more a recognition of the inspiring efforts that have brought us to the promise of our present. 

Recommendations



To realize the vision of the Task Force, we offer the following recommendations, rooted in the principles articulated above. These recommendations represent a good-faith effort to distill our conversations over the past year and to represent the considerable passion, knowledge, and diversity of opinion we heard from the FAS community, including those on the Task Force. These recommendations are grounded, fundamentally, in a deep respect for the power of art in public spaces to spark dialogue, cultivate new understanding, and enable our community to grow together through a shared experience of our campus.

The principles and recommendations we offer are guided by the belief that our community should chart our way forward as a community. It is not necessary, realistic, or even preferable that everyone agree on every decision with respect to our visual culture and signage. We can, without unanimity, make space for the multitude of voices and stories that make up our institutional history. Indeed, robust conversation and debate are essential to a thriving educational environment.

We acknowledge that implementing these recommendations will require significant resources, including ample funding but also the time and dedication of colleagues and students from all corners of the FAS. We advocate strongly for involving our diverse community of students, staff, faculty, and alumni in these proposed changes. It is our hope that these recommendations will spark an ongoing conversation in which everyone has an opportunity to participate.

Finally, we acknowledge that these recommendations are only a start. We heard and considered many different compelling ideas for changing our visual culture that are worthy of future exploration. The curation of a dynamic visual culture in the FAS will necessarily be an ongoing process and will require continued conversation and care. But we also believe that these recommendations could meaningfully animate an inspiring and inclusive visual culture featuring more just and equitable representation in our public spaces, to the great benefit of the entire FAS community. With this aim in mind, we recommend that the FAS:

Renew our visual culture and signage to represent a broader range of peoples, activities, and experiences in a variety of artistic media.

In every one of our listening sessions and in much of the written feedback we received, respondents raised concerns about the narrow representation of peoples in our visual culture. Specifically, who is, or should be, eligible for representation in our “sacred spaces” was a question that was raised frequently and with passion. There is a strong desire for a more diverse and inclusive visual culture, one that displays images and objects that more fully tell the interlocking stories of Harvard’s history and recognize the worthy contributions of those who have been overlooked.

To integrate our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion more fully into our historic campus, the FAS should make a proactive effort to represent a broader range of people, activities, and experiences in our visual culture and signage. Our spaces of living and learning should represent the diverse community we are and hope to be. As we heard through our outreach, our visual culture should be aspirational rather than merely reflective.

There is nothing outdated about seeing our better selves in those who have come before us. The question is: Who among the multitudes who came before us shall we deem worthy of emulation, and what activities, discoveries, and achievements shall we celebrate? We recommend that the FAS invest the necessary funds, time, and effort to make our visual culture varied and inspiring so that the paths of aspiration it blazes are expressly open to all.

The need to diversify extends to the artistic media and representational modes of our visual culture. Harvard has historically relied heavily on portraiture as an honorific medium in campus spaces. While there will always be a place for portraiture in our visual culture, we recommend expanding the artistic media and modes of representation we use to celebrate our community’s past achievements and future aspirations. This recommended change also presents an opportunity to reconsider who and what we choose to represent. Instead of isolating the individual as we do through our portraiture, we might focus instead on the collaborative work of faculty, researchers, staff, and students or on the discoveries they have made.

One suggestion surfacing in our outreach called for commissioning artists to represent moments of intellectual contestation from Harvard’s past as a way to recover and appreciate the history of our campus as a site for important debates with many contributors.

We recommend introducing experimental, contemporary, and temporary works that acknowledge our diverse community and have the ability to put our past in animated conversation with the present. Juxtaposing the old and historic with the new and contemporary has the potential to enliven spaces and open up meaningful dialogue. Moreover, taking advantage of temporary visual interventions or installations to mark a moment or celebrate a season can create a more inclusive visual environment to lasting effect. Frequently in our conversations, members of our community invoked Teresita Fernández’s *Autumn (...Nothing Personal)*, a 2018 installation in the Yard, as an inspiring example of the enduring impressions that a temporary work can bestow.

Commit to refreshing the visual culture of priority opportunity spaces.

Our Task Force defined a “priority opportunity” space as any high-impact FAS space that could become a model space through investment, attention, and intervention. We have defined a “model space” as one that actualizes the principles of the Task Force in exemplary ways,

inspires those who encounter it to reflect on their aspirational role in the history of Harvard, and enables the community to grow together through a shared experience of the campus. As a first step toward cultivating a dynamic visual culture, we recommend that the FAS commit to refreshing the visual culture in the following spaces:

- The Faculty Room
- Annenberg Hall
- The GSAS Student Center in Lehman Hall

These spaces all represent important places where the FAS community gathers. They are also spaces whose visual culture is dominated by homogenous portraiture of white men. There was a strong sense

both among members of the Task Force and in the feedback we received from the FAS community that our visual culture in these places should be more diverse and should recognize far more explicitly the struggle for inclusiveness and equity that continues today. Our august gathering spaces should play a positive role in building community and connecting us to one another. At present, none of these priority opportunity spaces achieve those goals in an exemplary way.

For example, Annenberg's walls prominently display a series of 23 portraits. Of those portraits, none of them depict women, and all but three of them depict white men. The exclusion embedded in the current visual culture of these spaces

perpetuates a too narrow understanding of our institution's past, present, and future. We recommend that the visual culture of these spaces be refreshed in a way that rebalances the historical narrative, bringing to the fore overlooked individuals and histories that deserve recognition.

Even as we single out these priority opportunities, we hasten to underscore the importance of updating the visual culture of other FAS spaces. Fortunately, salutary efforts are already underway in a number of key spaces around campus. The Harvard College Library (HCL), a place of paramount importance for FAS scholarship, has launched the HCL Task Force on Inclusive Library Spaces to renew the visual culture of specific library

spaces with the goal of making them more broadly welcoming to users. The Houses, as home for most of our undergraduates, also contain spaces of special importance with respect to inclusion and belonging. The Task Force was gratified to learn about the Creamer Fund for Inclusive Spaces, a pilot program within the College aimed at bringing our residential spaces into closer alignment with our ideals. There may be an opportunity to expand this program to give students more agency in shaping the visual culture of the buildings they call home. Strengthening the partnership between the Harvard Art Museums and the FAS could enhance these and related efforts through expanded and improved loan practices, as described in recommendation seven.

Create a dynamic program of public art in the FAS.

For an institution with such capacities in the arts, and with such a strong desire to engage in serious inquiry and debate, the FAS features strikingly little public art on its campus. The installation of beautiful, complex, aspirational, and thoughtfully provocative public artworks is one of the best ways to spark conscientious reflection and public conversation. We recommend that the FAS create a dynamic program of public art in its outdoor spaces. A few new permanent works of art could punctuate and unify the campus geography while also linking students of different generations

through common points of reference. Nonetheless, we recommend that the new program focus on temporary public art commissions that could engage a wide range of artists and bring more dynamism to our campus. Although even temporary art works can be costly to commission, such a program could be relatively economical as well as enlivening.

Pursuing a program of temporary public art would also enable the FAS to embrace a future that places less emphasis on acquisition and ownership and more on supporting living artists and engaging them in dialogue with the campus community.

Students and faculty, as well as outside artists, could all contribute to this program. The process of commissioning living artists to create new work, or bringing existing work to campus, would ideally include extensive community input and outreach. These conversations could center on issues of civic and public space, monuments, architecture and design, and the role of artists in civil society. Contemporary artwork would demonstrate an engagement with contemporary values to counterbalance—and engage—the histories that our built environment embodies.

Expand the program of campus tours and historical signage using digital content and new technologies.

Many people with whom we spoke described the impact of campus tours on the visual culture of the FAS. From the daily bustle around the Yard to the sound of tour guides reciting familiar stories, these tours color the experience of our institution. Indeed, with respect to everyday experience, these tours are arguably the most prominent non-architectural, non-landscape feature of our campus. They communicate to visitors and community members alike which stories are worth telling and whose contributions are valued. These choices do not necessarily align with the vision for equity and inclusion that the FAS espouses. An example raised by many members of our community is the oft-repeated story that traces the origins of Widener Library to Harry Elkins Widener's tragic death on the RMS Titanic and to and his mother's subsequent endowment of a new library. This story is of course important and gives context to one of the most noteworthy buildings on campus. But this story (and the number of times each day that it is told) puts the spotlight almost exclusively on the contributions of the most privileged. We too rarely, if ever, hear a tour guide telling visitors about the African American architect Julian Abele

and his role in creating Widener as chief designer for the architectural firm that designed the building.

Although the FAS bustles and hums with the research and teaching activities of a leading private university, thousands of tourists and other visitors visit the campus in much the same way they would a public museum or historic site. Our faculty, staff, students, and alumni also express curiosity about our history and the diverse array of people who have contributed to it. But few stories about Harvard are visible to anyone navigating our campus. As educators, we should think as creatively about teaching with our outdoor spaces as we do about teaching in our studios, labs, and classrooms. Currently, we are not sharing the rich and diverse history of this place with those who make a special visit to our outdoor spaces or use them every day. The FAS has an opportunity to expand and rebalance the narratives it shares to create a more representative public history.

We recommend that an expanded program of tours—accessed both via smartphone and via physical plaques on campus—should be established by, or in concert with, the FAS. QR code labels, placed throughout campus, could give smartphone users access to text, audio, and video content about each history or

person profiled. A successful precedent for such a tour can be found at Princeton University, where Abby Kliensky, a public historian and Princeton alumna, led the production of (In)Visible Princeton, a set of tours of the campus that focus on the stories of African Americans, Asian Americans, women, university traditions, and university “firsts.” We believe a similar program of tours highlighting the FAS's history, architecture, and important community members would not only emphasize the historical diversity of our community but also spark curiosity and learning as people make their way through our educational and working environment.

In concert with the creation of new tours to highlight underrecognized histories, we recommend the development of a strategy and program of historical signage and markers in FAS outdoor spaces. In particular, we recommend that the FAS engage the Cambridge Historical Commission in a review of all language on plaques on or adjacent to campus with an eye toward telling more equitable and complete stories of the past. This could be done through a class on public history that enlists students, in conversation with Cambridge's public historians, to help rewrite the plaques.

Encourage curricular innovations that would make our visual culture a more integral part of our teaching and learning mission.

Our campus is a living laboratory, a place rich in history, artifacts, architecture, and art. We recommend that the FAS take better advantage of the learning potential

of our campus by creating incentives and pathways for new courses or modules to integrate our visual culture into the curriculum. The curation of our campus is not simply an administrative responsibility; it is also a pedagogical opportunity. Courses exploring the aesthetic, historical, sociological, and ethical issues attending efforts to update our visual culture could provide students with a rare chance to

engage in experiential learning across disciplines. Having a class design a digital exhibition would be feasible within a semester time frame, and such a project might have a life afterward.

Establish better wayfinding and interpretive signage on the FAS campus.

Many members of our community desire better wayfinding around campus. A particular frustration concerns the lack of signage identifying the programmatic and curricular use of each FAS building. Time and again, we heard from community members that even after years of work or study on campus, they still did not know what happens inside certain buildings or where to find certain resources. We recommend the enactment of a new signage program that orients everyone walking through our campus and clearly announces the departments, centers, and other uses within each building to ensure that members of the University community can easily locate offices, colleagues, and activities of interest to them.

At its best, wayfinding goes beyond signage to help people locate themselves in the world and feel confident in navigating their surroundings. The wayfinding system of the FAS should be generous and show that the institution

cares that students and other community members know their way around through different parts of campus and have the visual cues they need to move with confidence. Wayfinding can make someone feel that they belong in a space and are empowered to navigate it.

We recommend that the FAS adopt an approach to wayfinding that incorporates the best practices of human-centered design, including more noticeable and differentiated signage and landscaping. We also recommend that the approach formally integrate broad community input into decision making, including input from our maintenance workers, so that our wayfinding evolves in a manner that meets user needs. Such an approach would mark a deliberate turn away from the Wayfinding Principles and Design Guidelines for Harvard Yard that were issued in 2010. While these guidelines provided many useful recommendations, such as the addition of campus maps, there are some recommendations less consonant with the goal of creating a more equitable and inclusive campus

visual culture. An example is the recommendation that wayfinding and historical or cultural signage be as modest and small as possible. This approach to historic preservation, which privileges the “character and culture” of our campus over the needs of today’s users, is often read by members of our community as inimical to present needs and historical reckoning.

As a first step, we recommend the FAS build on and expand the University’s practice of installing new outdoor maps, which have been very successful in orienting visitors and community members alike to the routes connecting Harvard’s schools and other cultural destinations on campus, such as University museums. There is further opportunity to offer students and others more granular information about academic buildings, FAS museums, and wayfinding within the FAS by installing more maps and expanding on the excellent work already done at the University level.

Expand and improve loan and commission practices.

To achieve the goals of a dynamic, circulatory approach to our visual culture and signage, our community needs equitable and efficiently administered access to a broad range of artworks produced by a diverse group of artists working in various media. Satisfying this need will require bolstering the resources currently available at the University.

At present, there are a modest number of works available for loan from museum collections to the FAS community, and

those that are available feature too narrow a range of artists, subjects, and themes. We recommend expanding the portfolio through broadening the array of loaned works of art, commissioning new works, and exploring different types of visual art, including time-based media, landscape, installation, and performance. We recommend that the FAS partner with the Harvard Art Museums to explore the expansion of available offerings for loan to FAS living and learning spaces and the creation of a more transparent and equitable process for accessing those collections. Given the limited capacity of the loan collection at present, we recommend investing in new works procured with the intention of

being loaned out and circulated within the FAS community, extending the boundaries of the museum, and creating meaningful opportunities for learning and exchange through visual culture. There is great appetite in our community, notably in the Houses, for extending the boundaries of the museums further and more purposefully into our living and learning spaces.

To date, one of the best resources for diversifying our visual culture has been the Harvard Portraiture Project. Many individuals with whom we spoke celebrated the positive effect of seeing new portraits on the walls that enable our

spaces to better reflect Harvard's diversity. We believe there are opportunities to strengthen the good work the project has been doing. To achieve the goals of the project's original mandate and better serve the University community,

we recommend expanding the pool of artists commissioned for new portraits and exploring innovative alternatives to traditional portraiture. Moreover, we also recommend a more transparent process for how portrait subjects and artists

are selected, one that provides the FAS community with meaningful opportunity for engagement and input.

Commit to supporting the dynamic curation of FAS spaces over the long term.

The creation of a dynamic visual environment—one that embraces the dialogue between continuity and change that is essential to the resilience and responsiveness of our institution—will require sustained community engagement and dedicated resources. To achieve the promise inherent in this vision, we believe the FAS should:

1. Analyze, consolidate, update, and refine inventories of FAS visual culture.

Within the FAS, we identified multiple inventories of visual culture. These inventories take various forms, including maps, databases, books, spreadsheets, and lists. They also vary in detail, in the consistency of updates, and in the amount and quality of information. We have inventories cataloguing Notable Interiors, Cultural Property, landscape details and maintenance schedules, buildings, and classroom characteristics and scheduling data. Many of the inventories are not easily accessible. We propose that the FAS undertake a comprehensive analysis of its inventories of visual culture and, where possible, consolidate them, making the information visible and accessible to the FAS community. A complete digital catalogue of FAS visual culture could provide inventory and content information for each location, including an account of the governance of the space, whenever possible.

One of the most challenging inventories to manage is the Cultural Properties Inventory. The original description, which created an inventory of over 5,000 objects, may have been overly broad. We propose that the FAS, working in consultation with colleagues from the Harvard Art Museums and University Archives, develop a definition for Cultural Property and update the existing inventory to reflect that definition. To support the tracking and conservation of these objects, building managers should be informed of the objects of Cultural Property in the buildings that they manage. Additionally, a process for deaccessioning items once deemed to have historical and cultural value but no longer meeting that description should be developed and documented. We recommend working with FAS Office of Finance to develop a policy for disposition of non-accessioned materials similar to existing policies concerning equipment disposal.

2. Clarify institutional authority over FAS visual culture and signage.

There is much centralized control over FAS visual culture and signage, and yet the leaders of our units often experience uncertainty about who can make decisions about visual culture in a particular space, hamstringing efforts at change. This situation is further complicated by the embeddedness of the FAS within the larger University, where the boundaries of "ownership" and governance over space are often blurred, leaving units too often

unsure of how to proceed with visual renewal projects. We recommend that the FAS identify and empower an entity to help set policy on visual culture and signage. This entity could take responsibility for the oversight of visual culture, particularly if supplied with sufficient resources to manage conservation, acquisition, moving and storage, installation/de-installation, and periodic site review to update inventories to ensure alignment with the principles and vision articulated in this report.

3. Refine alternatives for contextualization.

As part of the process of curating our visual culture, we recommend creating a portfolio of options for displaying objects in context to support learning, critical inquiry, and open dialogue. These options could include providing historical information about an object or juxtaposing the object with other objects in an educational or thought-provoking way. Digital platforms could supply context and even provide opportunity for feedback. Any digital content, of course, should align with the University's digital accessibility protocols.

4. Develop better care and maintenance protocols for art objects.

Historically, responsibility for the care and maintenance of art objects installed on the FAS campus has generally fallen to the Harvard Art Museums. The assignment and contours of this responsibility

have often been left vague and ad hoc. To facilitate care and maintenance, we recommend the development of a clearer and more robust set of protocols that would specify ample and timely consultation with the Harvard Art Museums beginning in the earliest stages of planning for any acquisition or installation.

5. Develop a community of practice through a well-maintained website.

To renew and activate our visual culture, members of the FAS community need access to up-to-date information about relevant resources. We recommend the development of a well-maintained website that documents changes to our visual culture and shares principles and best practices. The website should provide contact information for expert consultants, who can help units working on refreshing

their spaces. These resources can help support the development of a community of practice that is well prepared to pursue the vision articulated in this report.

6. Create an innovation fund for visual culture and signage through a percent-for-art program and/or other means.

Making our visual culture more dynamic will require dedicated funding. We recommend the creation of a visual culture innovation fund to support units in their efforts to renew their visual culture. By offering support through an application process, such a fund could signal institutional backing for community-driven changes, encourage reluctant departments to review spaces for updating, and enable units with relatively scant resources to pursue change.

To sustain a culture of visual dynamism in the long term, we also recommend that the FAS establish a Percent-for-Art program for large renovation and new capital construction projects. Such programs have been exceedingly successful at other universities, providing dedicated funds to foster access to the arts on campus and to integrate the arts into the built environment in a sustainable and systemic way. Funds could be used to commission new works of art, purchase existing works, develop interpretive and wayfinding materials, support maintenance, and perform periodic upgrades for projects that are technologically driven.

Create a new entity to oversee implementation of these recommended changes.

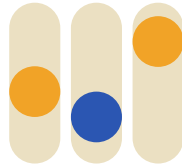
We recommend the immediate establishment of the FAS Committee on Visual Culture and Signage to oversee the implementation of these recommended changes. We believe the formation of a standing body with dedicated staff support from museum and facilities professionals will be a critical next step to the success of this initiative. Membership on the committee should be diverse, including FAS faculty, staff, and student representation, but small enough to facilitate nimble decision making.

The new committee would serve as a source of information as well as of valuable services in support of the visual

culture at the FAS. Its charge would be to administer the FAS visual culture innovation fund, act as responders to any and all questions arising from local units, facilitate projects in line with the vision and principles of the Task Force, support strong communication of goals, and actively problem solve while ensuring all needs are met and in compliance with University and governmental regulations where applicable. Given that the inability to locate governing authority for spaces has been identified as a major roadblock to change, we recommend that this advisory committee be vested with the authority to approve projects in spaces where governance is unclear, at least until an FAS office is ready to serve that function. A full list of proposed areas of oversight and assistance can be found in Appendix I.

Because the creation of a dynamic, inclusive visual culture across the FAS will require sustained effort over time, in the long term, we recommend that the FAS consider hiring a campus curator to provide leadership, executive vision, and coherence to the visual culture and signage of the FAS. An FAS campus curator would bring the professional and technical expertise necessary to realize the full promise of the vision laid out in this report. 🗨️

Guidelines



Our conversations with members of the FAS community revealed widespread enthusiasm for renewing our visual culture, but that enthusiasm was too often tempered or even extinguished by confusion over how to make desired changes on both a strategic and tactical level. Who has authority to make changes to the visual culture of a particular space? What is a good process for evaluating the present visual culture and coming up with a better alternative? How could a unit obtain FAS approval for a plan? Are there any restrictions on changing particular spaces, and who could provide the necessary information? What other questions should a unit making these efforts ask? Adopting the recommendations set forth above will enable members of our community to address many of the questions and concerns we heard in the course of our conversations. In addition, we hope that the following guidelines might help FAS units as they seek to transform their local visual culture. These guidelines are meant to be just a starting point. As units across the FAS work to update their visual culture, we will doubtless learn new things that will warrant altering and refining the sequence of steps proposed here.

#1

Assess the current state and establish priorities.

Units should consult with local users (students, faculty, staff, and researchers) to determine which spaces containing visual culture and signage may warrant special attention. Units may wish to prioritize high-profile spaces that attract many users and visitors or spaces that students and staff use to relax and socialize. In the face of limited resources, the leaders of FAS units should look to make the greatest difference possible under the circumstances. Transformation of our visual culture will be a gradual process, not an immediate or total one, and priorities will need to be identified.

To make good decisions about visual culture and signage, leaders of FAS units should become familiar with the history and evolution of their units. A clear understanding of the current state of the local visual culture and signage and how well it is supporting the aspirations of the FAS will be helpful in thinking about the future of particular spaces.

Leaders of FAS units seeking to update visual culture or signage will need access to the FAS inventory adumbrated above to have a fuller account of the existing objects and spaces. They may also need to conduct more granular inventories of local spaces if the inventory cannot supply all necessary information.

#2

Clarify governance.

Having identified a priority space for updating, units should ascertain who has authority to approve changes to the visual culture of that space. This is particularly important in the case of common or shared spaces. Neighboring units may need to work together if pursuing a project in a shared space.

#3

Identify stakeholders.

Units should also take the initial step of identifying all key stakeholders with respect to the space in question, including visitors and returning alumni, as well as local users. Articulating stakeholders will help ensure the inclusion of multiple views into the process and broad consultation around proposed changes.

#4

Ensure robust representation.

Groups assigned responsibility for proposing or implementing changes should be inclusive, with broad and diverse representation from the local community of users, including faculty, staff, researchers, and students. Representation on decision-making groups should reflect multiple perspectives, and ways should be found to consider and respect the interests of non-local users, including visitors and returning alumni.

#5

Develop clear goals.

Leaders should work with the members of their local units (including faculty, researchers, staff, and students) to clarify what they hope to achieve by renewing the visual culture in their local spaces. The more clearly FAS units can define specific goals for their visual renewal projects, the easier it will be to attain them.

When articulating goals, units should consider the guiding principles set out by the Task Force and relate them to their local aspirations. They may wish to acquaint themselves with spaces on campus that have successfully updated their visual culture and signage and to use them as touchstones for their own efforts.

#6

Make use of expertise.

As needed, decision-makers should avail themselves of relevant FAS expertise, presumably through a newly created FAS Committee on Visual Culture and Signage, part of whose remit should include responding to questions arising from local units and directing them to appropriate resources.

#7

Identify resources and constraints.

Visual culture and signage worthy of the FAS requires investment. The creation of model spaces requires executive vision and support, financial resources, and staffing. Identifying and mobilizing the available resources, including funds, time, and knowledge, will be critical to success.

Absent ample funds to commission new work, those seeking to renew spaces may look to the collections of Harvard's museums for work to display. Although our museums are dedicated to serving the University community, there are several considerations that FAS units seeking to avail themselves of their services should factor into their planning efforts. Every object on display that needs to be removed and stored, and every object that is requested for installation, poses a challenge to staff time, resources, and the limits of space. Many artworks are not suitable for display in environments lacking the necessary security or climate controls. Even works of art that are donated and purchased independently of the museum will one day require conservation, an eventuality for which plans should be laid from the start.

Changes to the visual culture and signage of our spaces can also be subject to a host of legal constraints, including stipulations of donors, subsequent legal agreements, historical commissions, and local ordinances. Leaders of FAS units seeking to make such changes will need to learn about any such constraints that may pertain to their spaces.

#8

Develop options and formulate specific recommendations.

Leaders of FAS units may find it useful to undertake a basic problem-solving process: identify specific problems, generate a list of potential solutions well-aligned with unit aims and objectives, note available resources and constraints, and pursue best options.

Care should be taken to consider not only what to put on display but also the medium and manner of its representation, as well as the history of its production. Extrinsic elements, such as context, juxtaposition, sequence, lighting, and placement also figure prominently in our experience of visual culture and signage. If so inclined, leaders of FAS units would be encouraged to reach out to the Committee on Visual Culture and Signage for guidance on such matters.

Consideration should be given to new, innovative art forms, as well as to the power and value of technology, to activate visual culture in local spaces and to amplify the stories of those who have broadened the horizons of the FAS.

#9

Solicit feedback and refine proposed changes.

Once options have been considered and weighed, a specific recommendation should be put forward to the community for feedback. This second round of engagement is crucial to ensure that the plan is truly responsive to the aspirations and needs surfacing in the initial outreach. The feedback may lead to an additional round of planning.

At an institution like ours, full of brilliant and independent thinkers, it is often challenging to arrive at consensus. Consensus, however, need not be the goal. What is most important is that the process and final proposal should strive to reflect multiple voices and a spirit of inclusion. With a commitment to the idea that change does not mean erasure and that history is dynamic and not static, units have a great opportunity to reshape the FAS in a way that cares for all of our constituent persons and places.

#10

Take action.

After proceeding with thoughtful input, units should move with all due speed to implement their respective plans. Units should identify opportunities through communications and events to spotlight the changes and celebrate the renewed space.

#11

Review and Revise.

An important element of a dynamic and circulatory approach to visual culture is regular review and revision. Unit leaders may wish to incorporate periodic review of the visual culture in their spaces. This will help units understand what was and was not successful about different interventions or changes in their visual culture, enabling continuous learning across our campus. Each space and community will have unique needs and aspirations, but together we can amass an array of relevant and robust practices. 🍌

Conclusion



Ours is a time of tumult and change.

In the midst of it, the Task Force is grateful to have had an opportunity to engage key constituencies of the FAS in conversations about the future of our visual culture and signage. In response to our outreach, members of our community shared their views and suggestions with unstinting candor and generosity. Although in the course of our conversations we heard—and uttered—a great variety of opinions from a great variety of positions, the affirmation that the FAS should refresh and revitalize its visual culture and signage was loud and clear. We hope that this report will be helpful in both catalyzing and guiding that effort.

As we proceed, it will be important to bear in mind that the process of transforming our visual culture and signage will entail trial and error. We will make mistakes, and feathers will be ruffled. Our approach to this process of discovery will be crucial. We will need to balance passion with forgiveness and innovation with patience. We will need to remember, as Rakesh Khurana, Dean of Harvard College, likes to say, to be hard on the problem and easy on each other. If we commit to learning from our mistakes and to sharing what we learn, together we can find our way toward a visual environment on campus that better represents and serves the community we are and the more just community we hope to become. 🌈

Appendix 1:**Oversight of Campus Visual Culture**

Throughout this report, we have indicated a need for a dedicated and properly staffed oversight body to help our community make changes to the visual culture of their local spaces as well as to oversee more generally the implementation of these recommendations. As described above, the remit of this oversight body would be to administer an FAS visual culture innovation fund that seeds visual renewal projects, to act as responders to any and all questions arising from local units, to facilitate projects in line with the vision and principles of the Task Force, to support strong communication of goals (including the creation and maintenance of the website), and to problem solve creatively while ensuring that needs are met in compliance with University and governmental regulations where applicable. Areas of their oversight and assistance might include:

- Contractual compliance
- Project management (scheduling, communication, maintenance, etc.)
- Design assistance for large projects
- Object/item selection assistance
- Resource coordination
- Deaccession or transfer of an item for donation or sale
- Financial tracking and invoice processing
- Photography documentation
- Condition reporting
- Inventory control
- Fine arts insurance
- Care and conservation
- Storage determinations and logistics
- Copyright management
- Communication (announcements, marketing, presentations)
- Main point of contact for all questions related to the visual culture

Appendix 2:

Task Force membership

- **Robin Kelsey**, Dean of Arts and Humanities, Shirley Carter Burden Professor of Photography, Chair
- **Shelby Acteson**, associate director of University Disability Resources
- **Jennifer Allen**, director of collections management at Harvard Art Museums
- **Lowell Brower**, lecturer on folklore and mythology
- **Dan Byers**, John R. and Barbara Robinson Family Director of the Carpenter Center for Visual Arts
- **Teju Cole**, Gore Vidal Professor of the Practice of Creative Writing (fall 2020)
- **Phil Deloria**, Leverett Saltonstall Professor of History
- **Sarah Duncan**, manager of IT operations at the Institute for Quantitative Social Science
- **Maryellen Fitzgibbon**, senior planner at the Office of Physical Resources and Planning
- **Adriana Gallegos**, manager of administrative operations at Harvard Library
- **Jenny Gan '22**, vice president of the Undergraduate Council (spring 2021)
- **Noah Harris '22**, president of the Undergraduate Council (spring 2021)
- **Shigehisa Kuriyama**, Reischauer Institute Professor of Cultural History
- **James Mathew '21**, president of the Undergraduate Council (fall 2020)
- **Michael McGarrah**, vice president of the GSAS Student Council
- **Ian Miller**, professor of history and faculty dean of Cabot House
- **Venkatesh Murthy**, Raymond Leo Erikson Life Sciences Professor of Molecular and Cellular Biology
- **Sandra Naddaff**, senior lecturer on literature and comparative literature; dean of Harvard Summer School
- **Sheree Ohen**, FAS associate dean of diversity, inclusion, and belonging
- **Jane Pickering**, William and Muriel Seabury Howells Director of Harvard's Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology
- **Veronica Santana**, assistant director of diversity, inclusion, and belonging at SEAS
- **Sheila Thimba**, dean of administration and finance at Harvard College
- **Alexis Turner**, president of the GSAS Student Council
- **Ifeoma "Ify" E. White-Thorpe '21**, vice president of the Undergraduate Council (fall 2020)

Appendix 3: Outreach conducted

The Outreach working group began its work in the late fall of 2020 and completed it in March 2021, with the goal of capturing as much feedback as possible from the FAS community about the current and future state of visual culture across campus. We used a multipronged approach and methodology that was designed to encourage response from a broad swath of faculty; undergraduate and graduate students in the College, GSAS, and the Extension School; postdocs; staff; and alumni. To this end, we offered multiple ways of providing feedback.

These included

1. a survey designed and administered by Harvard College Institutional Research and sent to everyone in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, to which 1,006 unique respondents replied. 42.4 percent of the respondents were staff; 19.8 percent were graduate students; 17.65 percent were faculty; 15.64 percent were undergraduates; and 4.6 percent were postdocs;

2. a series of focus groups administered by Harvard College Institutional Research with undergraduates and graduate students from the College and GSAS;

3. an email account to which people could send suggestions, concerns, and ideas, which received 27 responses; and

4. a listening tour. We attended over 15 different meetings with over 500 people in attendance collectively. In many of the meetings, we offered a brief PowerPoint that framed the work of our task force, our charge, and our emerging guidelines and principles. The meetings included the following:

- Faculty Deans
- SEAS/Science Chairs
- Social Science Chairs
- Arts & Humanities Town Hall
- FAS Faculty Council
- Undergraduate Council
- DEI Peer Advisors and Harvard Foundation Interns
- FAS Administrators Town Hall
- Employee Resource Groups Council
- Harvard College Library Leadership Group and Harvard College Library Inclusive Spaces group
- Campus Services group (x2)
- DCE DIB group
- FAS Postdoctoral Association
- HAA Board; Harvard Alumni Class Secretaries and Treasurers