

Petition: Urging the University of Chicago to Publicly Defend Academic Freedom and Institutional Independence

To the University of Chicago Administration,

On April 22, over 150 presidents of colleges, universities, and scholarly societies — including every Ivy League school except Dartmouth — issued a statement titled *A Call for Constructive Engagement*. Together, they condemned the Trump administration's increasing use of federal power to reshape higher education through political coercion. These actions have led to pauses in research funding, revocations of student visas, and demands for ideological oversight — threats to the integrity of higher education itself.

The University of Chicago did not sign this statement.

As current students of this university community, we do not presume to know the administration's reasoning. However, we believe this moment demands a clear reaffirmation of the university's commitment to academic freedom and institutional independence, principles at the heart of the Kalven Report.

Too often mischaracterized as a call for neutrality, the Kalven Report is in fact a call for vigilance. It affirms that a university's strength lies in its integrity, not its detachment, and that when its core mission is threatened, it is obligated to defend its values and its ability to pursue truth through free inquiry.

We call on the University of Chicago to do just that.

We are not asking the university to take a partisan position. We are asking it to take a principled stand to publicly engage in defense of the rights of students and scholars to learn, speak, and protest without fear of political retaliation. In this time of escalating federal overreach, silence sends a message. So does action.

We, the undersigned, urge the University of Chicago to publicly and visibly defend academic freedom, institutional independence, and the conditions that make open inquiry possible.

Signatures below.

Elijah Jenkins, Class of 2026, President of Undergraduate Student Government

Timothy Lu, Class of 2026, Executive Vice President of Undergraduate Student Government

Alan Cano, Class of 2028

Carmen Cox, Class of 2027

Destiney Samare, Class of 2028, College Council Representative, Chair of Sexual Assault Awareness & Prevention Tour Guide, & Student Visit Coordinator

Luisa Herrmann, Class of 2028

Isabella Ciriello, Class of 2028, University Wind Ensemble Pianist, W+ general body member

Sydney Cook, Class of 2026

Katherine Reynolds, Class of 2026

Olivia Shanler, Class of 2026

Hannah Thier, Class of 2026, Co-President of Project Reproductive Freedom

Jessica Wu, Class of 2028

Olivia Ward, Class of 2025, President of the University Pep Band

Robbie Hlatki, Class of 2027, Co-President, UChicago Democrats

Cynthia Wang, Class of 2028

Jane Doe, Class of 2025, Resident Assistant

Katherine O'Donnell, Class of 2025

Dani Magbanua, Class of 2026, Kababayan President

Isaias Vilato, Class of 2026, Co-President of BlackGen Capital, USG Greek Life Liaison, and VP of UChicago Private Equity

Leslie Xiao, Class of 2027

Amma Bromley-Perry, Class of 2025, RSO President of UC Psych

Valentina de Pablo, Class of 2026, Regular

Samy Kouidri, Class of 2027

Marcus Kuo, Class of 2027

Mariama Camara, Class of 2027

Claire Barbosa, Class of 2026

Eli Kanner, Class of 2027, Co-president of Midwave Radio, Co-director Communications for UChiVotes

Sydney Sparr, Class of 2026

Aidan Joseph Jimenez, Class of 2025

Shalom Moche Kato, Class of 2028

Anthony Buchfuhrer, Class of 2027, College Council Representative, Chair of the Academic and Career Affairs Committee

Ana Inukai, Class of 2027

Onese Ewherido, Class of 2027

Kala Reaves, Class of 2027

Angeth Mayen, Class of 2028

Willa Wiley, Class of 2027

Brooke Caldwell, Class of 2027

Arsima Araya, Class of 2025, Trustee and Faculty Liaison

Seth Knights, Class of 2026

Annie Yang, Class of 2026, Chair of the Committee on Campus Sustainability

Chris Koehler, Class of 2028

Joslyn Jenkins, Class of 2028

Samuel Klein, Class of 2025

Haley Thomas, Class of 2027

Zaniah Wheeler, Class of 2027, Manager at reSource Thrift Store, Community Service Chair for the Organization of Black Students

Angie Alvarez, Class of 2028

Aidan Keesler, Class of 2028, College Council Representative

Sarah A, Class of 2026

Elena Tiedens, Class of 2025

Emmett Reid, Class of 2025

Matthew Wren, Class of 2027

Natalia Espinoza, Class of 2027

Will Vanman, Class of 2028, USG Committee on Campus Sustainability, Divest UChicago, Phoenix Sustainability Initiative

Corrie Barnes, Class of 2025

Leo Kohlhepp, Class of 2028

Zachary Kratzer, Class of 2026

Caitlin Mooney, Class of 2026, SGFC Vice Chair

Cheyenne Mennenga, Class of 2025

Leena Saif, Class of 2026, SAO Caseworker

Kamiryn Braxton Grimes, Class of 2027, BLAC Executive Board UAA Representative, SAAC Social Media Chair

Amadis Davis, Class of 2025

Evelyn Figueroa Medina, Class of 2027

Laila Sims, Class of 2025

Letom Kpea, Class of 2028

Shanice Handley, Class of 2027, Action Chair of OBS

Valerie Champagne, Class of 2026

Sophia Sasaki, Class of 2026

Layne Kohler, Class of 2026

Isabella Alnemri, Class of 2028

Seri Welsh, Class of 2026, Vice President Phoenix Sustainability Initiative

Alexis Munoz Villar, Class of 2028, VP of Hitchcock House, Secretary of UChicago Lawtinos

Liam Chia, Class of 2026, Vice President of Student Affairs

Angie Whitfield, Class of 2027

Lamont Rhodes, Class of 2025

Jennifer Huo, Class of 2026

Aparna Viswanathan, Class of 2028

Samantha Francis, Class of 2025

Livia Zhu, Class of 2025

Mella Bettag, Class of 2026

Nicolas Restivo, Class of 2027

Lydia Gafford, Class of 2027

Carina Tarasenska, Class of 2027

Madelena Batista, Class of 2028

Tyler Dulkis, Class of 2028

Jeanne Patterson-Vallian, Class of 2027, Communications Chair for the Organization of Black Students

Matea Kitchen, Class of 2028

Ibukun Odeleye, Class of 2026

Jennifer Sauter, Class of 2026

Marlo Moran, Class of 2027

Jane Taylor, Class of 2026

Georgia Wluka, Class of 2025, Student Marshal; Howell Murray Alumni Association Award recipient

Cameron Landin, Class of 2026, Former President, UChicago Democrats

Malaina Culbertson, Class of 2028

Abigail Pacheco, Class of 2028

Isha Mehta, Class of 2027

Yona Litwin, Class of 2025

Sophia Falk, Class of 2026

Elijah Marx, Class of 2028

Dalia Pustilnik, Class of 2026, Secretary, Phoenix Sustainability Initiative

Kayla Rios, Class of 2027

Lillian Fu, Class of 2026

Julia Viteri, Class of 2028

Theodore Cohen, Class of 2028

Addison Marshall, Class of 2028

Violet Reed, Class of 2026

Madison Newton, Class of 2025

Emma Ramsey, Class of 2028, Society for International Relations Outreach Director

Amelia Hintz, Class of 2028

Mary Roberts, Class of 2028

Kendall Palmer, Class of 2028

Tiffany Tang, Class of 2026, Hallowed Grounds Financial Manager

Ellie Levy, Class of 2028

Madison Mathes, Class of 2026

Charlie Pomper, Class of 2027

Zachary Nemec, Class of 2028

Celina Cortes, Class of 2026

Georgia Levine, Class of 2028

Salma Heiba, Class of 2028

Meghana Halbe, Class of 2026

Uziel Garcia Manuel, Class of 2028

Ariel Trejo, Class of 2026, Chair of the Committee on Marginalized Student Affairs

Kimaya Ghoge, Class of 2026

Eva Fajardo, Class of 2026

Reilly Amara, Class of 2025

Eugenio Garza Garcia, Class of 2027

Donaji Torres-Marquez, Class of 2025

Keyara Sims, Class of 2026

Reese Villazor, Class of 2025, External Communications Chair, Kababayan

Evelyn Wyman, Class of 2025

Lindsay Greenspan, Class of 2027

Sebastian Davis, Class of 2026

Ryan Witter, Class of 2027

Daniela Rivera Solano, Class of 2025

Alexandria Porter, Class of 2025

Juan Simón Angel, Class of 2026, MECHA Co-President, Ex-College Council Representative for Class of 2026

Chad Coen, Class of 2025, College Council Representative, Chair of Student Government Finance Committee

Odunayo Akinade, Class of 2025, College Council Representative, Class of 2025

Ashley Wick, Class of 2027

Mitchell Hanson, Class of 2026

Esmeralda Cerritos-Martinez, Class of 2025

Adrian Kingori, Class of 2026

Ella Storms, Class of 2027, W+ Winter Institute Co-Chair

Maggie Banks, Class of 2028

Luc Pierre-Louis, Class of 2028

Anton Lesokhin, Class of 2028

Judah Haybes, Class of 2025

Kacey Archer, Class of 2028

Obioma Ukomadu, Class of 2026

Vasuda Vaidyanathan, Class of 2026

Keya Loding, Class of 2026

Kalysa Blunt, Class of 2026, Organization of Black Students Treasurer

Ayishat Shadare, Class of 2025

Nina Lahet, Class of 2028

Alessandro Ricci, Class of 2027

Audrey Shin, Class of 2028

Michi, Class of 2025

Stacia Konow, Class of 2025

Nhi Tran, Class of 2028

Elizabeth Johnson, Class of 2026

Darius Suplica, Class of 2025

William Alexander Deanhardt, Class of 2025

Camille Kruger, Class of 2027

Isabel Alvarez, Class of 2026

Christopher Rios, Class of 2026

Juliana Carreiro-Oliver, Class of 2026

Harry Feng, Class of 2025

John Love, Class of 2027

Elizabeth Zeilman, Class of 2028

Juan Carlos Rodríguez II, Class of 2025, Student Leader for OMSA

Lilianne Asokwah, Class of 2028

Olivia Myers, Class of 2027

Carly Ryan Cairns, Class of 2025, Co-Chair of W+ Women and Gender Minorities in Public Service

Yeap Qian Fang, Class of 2026

Violet Reed, Class of 2026

K-LA Spieles, Class of 2025, Quest+ RSO President, Student Employee at CCSS

Janiya Brown, Class of 2026

Eva Youel Page, Class of 2025