

als don't seem focused that way.)

More broadly, proposals to reduce the top income-tax rates would reduce the incentive to make charitable gifts. On the other hand, proposals to end hedge-fund and private-equity managers' preferential "carried interest" tax rate might raise that class of substantial donors' taxes somewhat, making their philanthropic pursuits more valuable.

As fundraisers digest these possibilities—and fight to control their resulting indigestion—the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) and other trade groups are sounding the alarm. CASE, for instance, is disseminating

fact sheets for member institutions to use in rebutting arguments for taxing endowments, targeting a fixed percentage of their distributions for financial aid, or mandating a payout rate (like the rule requiring non-operating foundations to distribute 5 percent of their market value annually). Business should be brisk for higher-education lobbyists.

—JOHN S. ROSENBERG

## Sanctions Scrutinized

FOLLOWING MONTHS of heated debate within the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) over the policy of sanctioning students who belong to unrecognized single-

gender social organizations (final clubs, fraternities, sororities), Harvard College dean Rakesh Khurana announced on January 25 that a committee including faculty members, predominantly those holding administrative positions, would convene "to consider whether the policy can be improved, either by changing aspects of its existing structure, or through some broader revision." That policy, set to take effect with the class of freshmen arriving this August, prevents student members of such organizations from holding leadership positions in recognized undergraduate organizations, and precludes their eli-

# University People

## Press Changes

William P. Sisler, director of Harvard University Press since 1990, will retire at the end of the academic year. His tenure saw the publication of *Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, by Thomas Piketty, an analysis of the dynamics driving the distribution of wealth in Europe and the United States, which has sold more copies than any book in the press's history, as well as an expansion overseas and initiatives that included the digital Loeb Classical Library and the Murty Classical Library of India. For more about Sisler, see "The 'Wild West' of Academic Publishing," January-February 2015, page 56.



STU ROSNER

**William P. Sisler**

## Curator's Homecoming

Makeda Best, Ph.D. '10, most recently assistant professor in visual studies at the California College of the Arts, has been appointed Menschel curator of photography at the Harvard Art Museums. The appointment is both a homecoming and the source of a potentially fruitful collections-classroom collaboration: her doctoral adviser was Robin Kelsey, Burden professor of photography and dean of arts and humanities.



UNIQUE NICOLE

**Makeda Best**

## Schwarzman Scholars

Ten Harvard alumni and students have been awarded Schwarzman Scholarships for a year of master's study at Tsinghua University, in Beijing—a recently created fellowship meant, in time, to carry the heft and prestige of the venerable Rhodes and Marshall scholarships. The future leaders include: Kayla Chen '16; Janet Eom '14; Anatol Klass '17; Quynh-Nhu Le '17; Tonatiuh Liévano, S.B. '14; Sophia Lugo '17; Rhea Malik '17; Jonathan Padilla '12; Bo Seo '17; and Bob Wu '15.



COURTESY OF SOPHIA LUGO

**Sophia Lugo**



COURTESY OF ANATOL KLASS

**Anatol Klass**

## Academic Alumni

G. Gabrielle Starr, Ph.D. '99, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at New York University, has been named president of Pomona College—the first woman and African American to hold that office. She succeeds long-time Pomona leader David W. Oxtoby '72, who also presided over Harvard's Board of Overseers during the 2013-2014 academic year....Elizabeth Bradley '84, a professor of public health and of global strategy at Yale, where she is also head of the Branford undergraduate residence, has been appointed president of Vassar.



JEFF HING/POMONA COLLEGE

**G. Gabrielle Starr**

## Breakthroughs

The 2017 Breakthrough Prizes, each worth \$3 million, were conferred on Mendel professor of genetics and of medicine Stephen J. Elledge (for work on cell damage and cancer); and jointly on Andrew Strominger, York professor of physics, and Cumrun Vafa, Donner professor of science, with Joseph Polchinski of the University of California, Santa Barbara (for work on quantum field theory and string theory). Professor of physics Xi Yin received a \$100,000 New Horizons prize for early-career work in physics.



KRIS SNIBBE/HPAC

**Andrew Strominger**



STEPHANIE MITCHELL/HPAC

**Cumrun Vafa**

## Moving On from Mather

Mather House faculty deans Christie McDonald, Smith professor of French language and literature and of comparative literature, and Michael D. Rosengarten, will step down at the end of June, concluding seven years of service. Their decision coincides with McDonald's retirement from the faculty.

## Title IX Exit

Mia Karvonides, Harvard's Title IX officer and director of the office for dispute resolution—and thus the central figure in setting sexual-assault policy and hearing cases on campus—has departed to become enforcement director in the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights. She came to Harvard in March 2013.

gibility for Rhodes, Marshall, and other scholarships that require College endorsement. When announced last spring, the policy drew criticism from faculty members and students alike. And in an Undergraduate Council referendum question last fall, students favoring repeal of the sanctions outnumbered those who supported them by a two to one ratio.

Khurana said the committee will conclude its work by the end of this academic year and present its recommendations in the fall, with time allowed for broader faculty input before the proposed guidelines are forwarded to President Drew Faust for approval. In the meantime, the current policy remains in effect.

Discussion of the sanctions, which were announced without prior vote of the faculty, consumed the better part of the November and December faculty meetings. Khurana's announcement led former College dean Harry R. Lewis to withdraw his motion opposing the sanctions, discussion of which would likely have continued at the February 7 faculty meeting (after this issue went to press). For more background, see [harvardmag.com/finalclub-review-17](http://harvardmag.com/finalclub-review-17).

~JONATHAN SHAW

## Faculty Figures

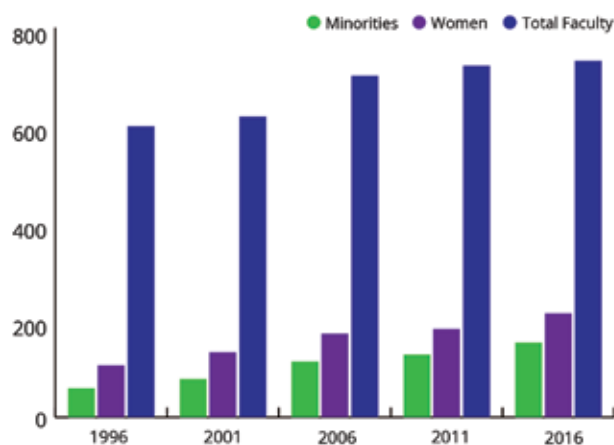
ONE WAY the constraints on the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) show up is in the relatively restrained growth of the faculty itself. From the fall of 1996 to the

fall of 2006, the number of professors rose 17 percent, from 598 to 701. In the decade since, the cohort grew just 4 percent, to 732 (with engineering and applied sciences, and life and physical sciences, accounting for 14 and 30 net new positions, respectively, and the arts and humanities and social science divisions 12 and 1 positions smaller, respectively).

FAS plans to maintain this level cohort, even as its composition continues to shift toward sciences—particularly the applied varieties. Bringing aboard new scientists entails FAS outlays to fit up expensive laboratories and fund new colleagues' research until they qualify for competitive, external sources. The financial section of FAS dean Michael D. Smith's annual report refers to numerous capital investments and fellowship commitments to advance work across the sciences.

Another change accompanies this strategic remaking of the faculty. The "faculty trends" section of the report notes that of 103 FAS faculty members who have signed agreements since a formal retirement-planning program began in 2010, 90 (more than 87 percent) have been men, and 13 (just un-

The Faculty's Changing Composition



Source: Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Dean's Annual Report 2016

der 13 percent) women. As they retire, notes the report, and FAS continues "to recruit and promote from more inclusive candidate pools, we expect to see greater diversity in the senior faculty." Along that dimension, at least, FAS can expect to progress toward one of its important goals even when the faculty as a whole is not growing.

In the near term, of course, retirement of a senior faculty member and his or her succession by a junior one may have the effect of reducing compensation costs for a time. But as the flow of junior appointees ascends toward the tenured ranks (more than three-quarters of FAS professors are tenured), that buffer would diminish.

~JOHN S. ROSENBERG

## THE UNDERGRADUATE

# A Coddled Campus?

by MATTHEW BROWNE '17

**A**BOUT 30 of us packed into our Adams House suite to watch the election returns: roommates, girlfriends, buddies, friends of friends, strewn across Craigslist-procured couches, the cluster of Harvard dorm chairs, and the stained carpet. The room glowed only faintly from string lights and the TV. We watched on CNN because it seemed like the common choice, what you watch on mute in the airport or a hospital wait-

ing room. By the end of the evening, when a Trump victory was all but inevitable, the room was disconsolate. People cried, phoned loved ones, hugged, slumped, and kissed as what we had thought was unthinkable happened.

There was a funereal spirit on campus the next day. Cambridge looked like a town does the day following a big storm: clear streets, new earth, and the glaze of something sinister. I heard rumors of can-

celed classes, tearful seminars, and professors giving speeches and calls to action. But my own academic day was remarkable in its unremarkableness. I went to my English section and tried my best to contribute to the discussion, not knowing whether all of our reading of *Infinite Jest* should be related back to Trump or none of it. It was hard to talk. I was pretty quiet and so was everyone else.

The next day, a family friend sent me a text message, asking if classes at Harvard had been canceled. She sent me an article she'd seen from some alt-right publication, entitled "Yale Professor Cancels Exam for Snowflake Students Distraught at Election Result." It said that the election-mourning liberal students had "wiped their tears, and pulled themselves together enough to ask their professors to cancel their exams because they were so upset by the results."