

2025–2026

Annual Report

From proof of concept to
institutional practice

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Letter from the Director

August 2026

Dear friends and colleagues,

A year ago, the Center for Expanding Viewpoints in Higher Education (CEVIHE) at Tufts University was little more than a concept written down on paper. We have come a long way in a short time. If you participated in any of our programs during the 2025–2026 academic year, what you probably noticed most of all was the energy—the excitement, the love of learning, the thrill of meeting people and ideas you had not encountered before. In short, you would have noticed how great a university like Tufts can be.

CEVIHE was established in a moment of turmoil across higher education in the United States. Many Americans lack confidence in what universities do. Do they adequately prepare students to learn from different perspectives? Do they produce future leaders who will work well with others at the forefront of science, industry, and civic life? Are they helping young people cultivate the virtues necessary to lead a fulfilling life at a time of profound technological change and uncertainty? Do they create healthy research ecosystems in which scholars are entrepreneurial and willing to ask the hardest and most interesting questions of our time?

The community of students, faculty, and staff who shaped CEVIHE's work in its first year is energized by a shared optimistic vision of what a great university can be. It is a place where serious minds meet; where we read carefully, listen generously, argue respectfully, and work together on hard problems; and where the pursuit of truth is enlivened rather than diminished by disagreement. Few things are more exciting than that.

I am pleased to share our first annual report. The report documents what we have built over the past year. What stands out most is the groundwork we have laid for the years ahead. The Center did not simply run a few dozen successful programs. We established a new fellowship for incoming first-year students, and we are ready to welcome the inaugural cohort in the fall. We developed a new postdoctoral fellowship program and hired eight early-career scholars across the humanities and social sciences. They have now joined us on campus. We have built a new intellectual home at Tufts for anyone who wants to lean into the big questions of public life.

I am grateful to everyone who has helped build this vision, and I look forward to seeing where we go in the next year.

With gratitude,



EITAN HERSH

Director, Center for Expanding Viewpoints in Higher Education
Professor of Political Science, Tufts University

The Year at a Glance

In its inaugural year, CEVIHE moved from launch to durable operating capacity. The Center built recurring student-facing programs, a student leadership ecosystem, public convenings, research and curricular pathways, communications infrastructure, and a physical home for serious, sustained conversations across ideological, religious, cultural, and disciplinary differences.

2,270

cumulative attendance
across 52 tracked
activities

896

cumulative attendance across 18
sessions of *Politics and Culture from
All Sides*

26

student leaders and club
delegates across three student
leadership bodies

12

student organizations
represented on the Student
Organizations Council

98

applications for student positions; 17 students
employed across research, communications,
events, curriculum, and measurement

25

incoming first-year undergraduate
students selected from 84
applications for the Edge Fellowship

8

postdoctoral fellows hired
from 364 applications

34

faculty members actively
participated in programming

177,000+

LinkedIn impressions across
63 posts and reposts

120,000+

Instagram views across
70 posts and reels

415

people completed the Join the
Conversation form

375

books acquired for the library at
97 Talbot Avenue

Leadership and Advisors

Eitan Hersh

DIRECTOR

Eitan Hersh is a Professor of Political Science and the inaugural Director of CEVIHE. He conducts research on U.S. elections and political participation. The vision for the Center stems from his teaching experience and his students' appetite for deep learning on all sides of political and cultural controversies. In collaboration with students, faculty, staff, and community advisors, Professor Hersh sets the Center's intellectual and strategic agenda.

Arik Burakovsky

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Arik Burakovsky, previously Associate Director of the Russia and Eurasia Program and the Hitachi Center for Technology and International Affairs at The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, oversees CEVIHE's operations and communications and works closely with Professor Hersh on strategic planning, partnerships, and program development.

Shani Agarwal Hood

PROGRAM MANAGER

Shani Agarwal Hood, previously Program Director at the Harvard Catholic Forum, oversees CEVIHE's student engagement, including its student leadership structure, the Edge Fellowship for first-year undergraduates, and student-facing programming.

Faculty Advisory Board

Our faculty advisors guide the Center's academic priorities, offering perspectives from different disciplines and connecting CEVIHE's work to teaching and research across Tufts.

SILKE FORBES

Professor of Economics

KEN GARDEN

Associate Professor of Religion

MICHAEL J. GLENNON

Professor of Constitutional and International Law, The Fletcher School

LESLEY INKER

Professor, Clinical and Translational Science Program, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

AMY KUHLIK

Dean of Student Affairs, School of Medicine; Assistant Professor of Medicine

KEREN LADIN

Associate Professor of Community Health

PETER LEVINE

Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life; Lincoln Filene Professor of Citizenship and Public Affairs

DAVID LOGAN

Assistant Professor of Security Studies, The Fletcher School

VICKIE SULLIVAN

Cornelia M. Jackson Professor of Political Science

ICHIRO TAKAYOSHI

Associate Professor of English

Community Advisory Board

Our community advisors bring experience from civic life, business, and philanthropy, helping CEVIHE connect its campus work to wider professional and public communities.

JASON EPSTEIN

Affiliate Partner, Stonecourt Capital; Tufts Trustee

CARINE HAJJAR

opinion journalist and editorial board member, *The Washington Post*

JOE KENNEDY III

President, Citizens Energy Corporation; former U.S. congressman

ADAM LEWIS

Head of School, Catholic Memorial

JENNIFER SELENDY

Founding Partner, Selendy Gay PLLC; Tufts Trustee

JIM STERGIOS

Executive Director, Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research

LINDA WHITLOCK

former President and CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston; leadership advisor and experienced nonprofit board chair

DANIEL ZILBERMAN

Global Head of Special Situations and Global Co-Head of Financial Services, Warburg Pincus LLC; Tufts Trustee

OUR MODEL

What CEVIHE Built

CEVIHE’s first-year work reflected a simple institutional logic. Students develop durable intellectual and civic habits through repeated, structured encounters with serious disagreement, not through isolated exposure to unfamiliar views. Campus culture changes when research, curriculum, and student life reinforce one another over time.

For these reasons, the Center built a layered ecosystem: weekly opportunities for intellectual formation and community-building; public convenings on contested issues; faculty and community advisory bodies; postdoctoral and undergraduate fellowship pipelines; early-stage curriculum and research development; communications infrastructure; and a dedicated house where an intellectual community can take form.

The result is not a finished model but an institutional foundation. CEVIHE now has the personnel, programs, student leaders, faculty relationships, advisory bodies, communications channels, and physical space needed to deepen engagement across differences at Tufts and begin translating its practices to higher education more broadly.

Student Engagement and Civic Development

Student engagement was CEVIHE’s most direct route to early impact. The Center created spaces in which students could read closely, listen generously, question seriously, disagree honestly, and return the next week for more.

Recurring Programs

The *Politics and Culture from All Sides* lunch series became CEVIHE’s flagship weekly campus-wide workshop. Offered for credit but open to all Tufts students, faculty, and staff, the series combined controversial texts, faculty discussants, guest speakers, and structured conversations on sensitive questions. Dozens of students, faculty, and staff participated regularly, even without formally enrolling.

In Fall 2025, the series examined topics such as viewpoint diversity in higher education, liberalism and its critics, race, trust in medicine, religion and meaning, and sex and intimacy. In Spring 2026, the range broadened further to issues such as moral law and human nature, nutrition policy, Christianity and the American founding, Ukraine and just war, human flourishing, art as open inquiry, the cultural influence of “wokeness,” school choice, free trade and protectionism, fast fashion, and the boundaries of campus speech.



Across 18 sessions, the series recorded cumulative attendance of 896 (an average of around 50 per session) and consistently received strong formal course evaluations. Students said the experience exposed them to arguments they rarely encounter elsewhere and enabled sustained interactions with faculty across status lines. Across completed Fall 2025 and Spring 2026 evaluation surveys, 95% of respondents rated the course excellent or very good.

As an additional monthly touchpoint, CEVIHE launched a campus-wide film series in collaboration with the Film and Media Studies Program (FMS) in Spring 2026. Offered for credit through both FMS and the Department of Political Science, the four-part series on *Individualism and Nonconformity in Film* used landmark films to examine conscience, authority, dissent, integrity, and the obligations of public life. The series, rated excellent or very good by 90% of evaluation survey respondents, offered a humanities-centered pathway into CEVIHE's mission.

“This course has allowed me to consider perspectives and viewpoints I would have never otherwise heard, which I found very valuable, and has given me a broader understanding of political and cultural issues facing our society today.”

FALL 2025 COURSE EVALUATION

“My horizons were expanded in every discussion, and I have much more appreciation and attention for the nuance in critical discussions today.”

SPRING 2026 COURSE EVALUATION



Edge Fellowship

CEVIHE recruited its inaugural class for the Edge Fellowship, a selective cohort-based undergraduate program for incoming first-year students in the School of Arts and Sciences (A&S). The fellowship identifies students who demonstrate academic excellence, civic engagement, leadership potential, comfort with disagreement, and a willingness to engage peers who view the world differently. A [Tufts Admissions profile](#) introduced prospective students and families to the fellowship, as well as CEVIHE's programming and student leadership opportunities. The response from incoming students was strong: CEVIHE selected 25 fellows from 84 applicants.

The fellows will begin in Fall 2026 with a rigorous first-year experience that includes the two-course *Religious and Philosophical Roots of the Modern World* sequence, pre-major advising, an off-campus retreat, weekly meetings with CEVIHE staff, access to educational enrichment funding, and the *Cultivating Civic Virtues* leadership seminar. Designed specifically for the Edge Fellowship, the weekly seminar uses brief readings, structured conversations, and exercises to cultivate habits and skills central to a liberal arts education and prepare fellows for leadership in their communities. Because the Edge Fellowship has not yet begun, its outcomes will be assessed in future reports.

Students as Co-Creators

CEVIHE established three complementary [student leadership bodies](#). The Student Advisory Board advised the Center on programming and campus culture; the Student Organizations Council connected diverse student clubs to one another and to the Center's work; and the Student Conference Committee designed and organized the Center's annual student-led conference.

By the end of the academic year, CEVIHE had 26 formal [student leaders](#) and student organization delegates across these bodies. The Student Advisory Board met regularly

"I have seen so many freshmen and sophomores at Tufts interacting with CEVIHE as if it has always been an institution at the university, and that fills me with great hope for its longevity."

SPRING 2026 STUDENT LEADERSHIP REFLECTION

and provided substantive guidance on program design and Center priorities. The Student Organizations Council created a forum for 12 unique political, media, cultural, religious, and advocacy clubs engaged in civic and public life.

Across the Fall 2025, Spring 2026, and Summer 2026 staffing cycles, CEVIHE received 98 applications for student positions and employed 17 students. Their roles spanned research, curriculum development, measurement, communications, photography and videography, event planning, and logistical support.

Student-Initiated Programs

CEVIHE supported its first student-initiated reading group in Spring 2026, *Critiques of Liberalism from Karl Marx and the Intellectual New Right*. Developed by seniors Jacob Ackiron and Asaf Grofman and facilitated by guest instructor Jonah Hassenfeld, the group placed Marxist, conservative, nationalist, and post-liberal [critiques of liberalism](#) in sustained conversation with one another. The reading group addressed a curricular gap that students themselves had identified: these intellectual traditions are often encountered separately, with few opportunities for sustained comparison. In formal evaluations, 87.5% of respondents rated the course excellent or very good. By Summer 2026, several students were already developing additional reading groups for the year ahead.

The Center also supported student-led social programming. The *Political Unity Social and Fundraiser* brought together students from diverse political clubs in support of the Somerville Homeless Coalition’s Project SOUP. Students emphasized that the event worked because it was “student-run and student-organized,” allowing relationships to form organically.

CEVIHE also co-sponsored the Spring 2026 crisis simulation hosted by *Hemispheres: The Tufts University Journal of International Affairs*. The simulation placed students in a fictional geopolitical crisis involving an attempted annexation of Canada by the United States, requiring them to represent different countries and international organizations. Participants formed alliances, negotiated under pressure, and reasoned from positions that often differed from their own.

“It was amazing to see people of all different political leanings come together over good food for a good cause.”

STUDENT REFLECTION ON THE POLITICAL UNITY SOCIAL AND FUNDRAISER

“This course made me think extremely deeply and honestly made me question everything I knew about politics. It’s a course that I would take 100 times over.”

SPRING 2026 READING GROUP EVALUATION



Research and Curriculum Development

CEVIHE designed a postdoctoral fellowship to introduce new research and courses to Tufts and serve as a model for other universities. In addition, the Center organized a research convening on a sensitive topic and took initial steps in curricular development.

Postdoctoral Fellowship in Expanding Viewpoints

CEVIHE laid the groundwork for a major curricular and research contribution by moving its *Postdoctoral Fellowship in Expanding Viewpoints* from concept to implementation during the Center’s first year. The fellowship was designed to cultivate early-career scholars whose teaching and research broaden the range of ideas represented in their disciplines and strengthen Tufts’ culture of open inquiry. The model connects CEVIHE’s work to co-hosting academic departments and programs through faculty mentorship, research, teaching, and student engagement.

Across searches spanning Community Health, Economics, Civic Studies, Civic AI, Judaic Studies, and open calls for the humanities and social sciences, CEVIHE received 364 applications and hired eight postdoctoral fellows. Four were hired through searches conducted in collaboration with academic departments and programs that requested postdoctoral placements; four were hired directly through CEVIHE. The resulting cohort will begin teaching and participating in CEVIHE’s intellectual life in Fall 2026.

The cohort’s intellectual breadth is central to the Center’s mission. The postdoctoral fellowship extends CEVIHE beyond events and student engagement into academic infrastructure, bringing new scholarly expertise to Tufts while supporting early-career scholars whose research and teaching place overlooked questions and perspectives into wider disciplinary conversation.

The Regulation of Vice

In March, the Center hosted its first research conference on a public policy topic. This two-day program showed that CEVIHE can identify a difficult set of public policy questions, bring together experts with diverse vantage points, use a public event to surface competing premises and trade-offs, and convene scholars and practitioners for deeper inquiry.

CEVIHE’s conference on *The Regulation of Vice* opened with a public panel discussion, *Policy Responses to Gambling, Recreational Drugs, and Pornography*, which brought together experts to examine how democratic societies should respond to behaviors that can be pleasurable, profitable, harmful, stigmatized, addictive, or morally contested. The event, which was made available as a video recording and covered in *The Tufts Tribune*, was moderated by Ian Coss (GBH journalist and podcast host) and featured Isaac Rose-Berman (American Institute for Boys and Men), Shaleen Title (former commissioner of the Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission), and Charles Fain Lehman (Manhattan Institute for Policy Research).

“I valued the opportunity to hear people from competing vantage points and was impressed by the extent to which the individuals present—often with strongly opposed positions—were still interested in engaging.”

POST-EVENT SURVEY RESPONDENT

The panel discussion was followed by a workshop that allowed a smaller group of experts and practitioners to examine these questions in greater depth. The goal was to clarify competing claims about autonomy, harm, consent, commercialization, and state responsibility; compare regulatory approaches across domains; and identify questions for future research. CEVIHE plans to refine and adapt this model to other contested questions in the future.

Curricular Innovation

In its first year, the Center took preliminary steps toward developing curricular materials on contested questions of public life, including early-stage work on immigration, gender and sexuality, and public health. Student research assistants conducted background research to inform anticipated faculty review and pilot testing. The purpose of the Center's curricular work is to help students encounter the strongest versions of competing arguments on sensitive topics and to develop the habits of mind and character necessary to think clearly about the most important questions of public life.

Public Convenings and Co-Sponsored Programming

CEVIHE established itself as a serious convening hub during its first year. Public programming emphasized intellectual depth, careful moderation, exposure to competing arguments, and opportunities for students to pose direct questions and receive substantive answers.

The Future of the American Left and Right

The inaugural headliner series, *The Future of the American Left and Right*, introduced CEVIHE's public convening model. In November, Musa al-Gharbi, a sociologist at Stony Brook University's School of Communication and Journalism, spoke on the ideas and tensions shaping contemporary progressive politics. His talk drew largely on his book, *We Have Never Been Woke: The Cultural Contradictions of a New Elite* (Princeton University Press, 2024). The visit also included a meet-and-greet with student leaders, a private dinner with faculty and staff, an event recording, and coverage in *Tufts Now*.



“I was grateful for the opportunity to hear speakers who critiqued the views that so many of us at Tufts hold.”

POST-EVENT SURVEY RESPONDENT

In March, CEVIHE hosted Reihan Salam, a political commentator and president of the Manhattan Institute for Policy Research, for a headliner event on demographic change, political realignment, and the future of American public life. The event was covered by *Tufts Now* and made available as a video recording. Salam also met privately with student leaders, faculty, and staff.



The Configuration of the Middle East After the Gaza War

A February public forum with Israeli journalist Haviv Rettig Gur was CEVIHE’s largest public event of the past academic year, drawing 310 attendees. The forum, titled *The Configuration of the Middle East After the Gaza War*, examined Israeli and Palestinian political dynamics, the future of Gaza, regional geopolitical shifts, and the broader implications of the war. Coverage of the event appeared in *The Tufts Daily*, *Hemispheres*, and *The Tufts Tribune*, reflecting the broad range of campus reactions that serious engagement with a contested subject can generate. Rettig Gur also met with student leaders for an informal discussion and joined faculty and staff for a private dinner conversation.

The event tested CEVIHE’s model under pressure. The subject was charged, attendees held sharply different views, and some students objected to the invitation and the event’s content. Yet the forum demonstrated why the Center exists: not to manufacture agreement but to create a space in which difficult questions can be asked directly, speakers can be questioned rigorously, and disagreement can be expressed in ways that sustain open inquiry. CEVIHE plans to bring a Palestinian expert to campus in the next academic year, giving students an opportunity to encounter another thoughtful perspective on the conflict and the future of the region.



Expanding Viewpoints Symposium

The inaugural *Expanding Viewpoints Symposium* on April 16–17, 2026, was CEVIHE’s clearest demonstration of student-led public intellectual programming. Designed by the Student Conference Committee, the Symposium convened undergraduates from Tufts and other universities across Greater Boston around the theme *Grievance and Governance in a New Populist Era*. The theme asked how populist movements on the left and right are reshaping American politics, institutions, and public life. *Tufts Now* profiled the student organizers in advance of the event.

The Symposium featured political philosophy scholar Linda Rabieh (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Boston civic leader Alberto Vasallo III (El Mundo Boston), political scientist Kristin Lunz Trujillo (Boston College), and public health expert Amy Lischko (Department of Community Health, Tufts University). The event also included a keynote fireside chat between post-liberal writer Sohrab Ahmari, U.S. editor of *UnHerd* and a co-founder of *Compact*, and

democratic socialist writer Bhaskar Sunkara, president of *The Nation* and founding editor of *Jacobin*. The keynote conversation was made available as a video recording.

In conversations about higher education, immigration, healthcare, and affordability, students and experts asked: How can leaders honor legitimate grievances without surrendering to simplistic narratives, govern a pluralistic society without denying real differences, and rebuild trust when many citizens believe that institutions no longer serve their interests?

“It created an opportunity to converse more rigorously on hot-button issues while also leaving room to learn about the nuances of topics that students may be less familiar with.”

STUDENT REFLECTION ON THE SYMPOSIUM



“We met the goal of attendees considering perspectives other than their own.”

STUDENT REFLECTION ON THE SYMPOSIUM

Co-Sponsored Programs

CEVIHE co-sponsored programs across the university, organized by the Jonathan M. Tisch College of Civic Life and several academic departments and programs. These events included *Planning for New Towns*, a symposium on housing and adaptive zoning; *Nations Apart* with journalist and author Colin Woodard; *Is Catholic Post-Liberalism Unjust?* with political philosopher Kevin Vallier; *Irreconcilable Differences: Christian Nationalism and the First Amendment* with historian of American religion Randall Balmer; and *The United States at 250*, a faculty panel discussion. These collaborations reinforced CEVIHE’s role as an institutional connector and broadened the range of topics through which students encountered disagreement.

Faculty and Community Engagement

Faculty engagement was essential to CEVIHE’s legitimacy in its first year and will remain central to its future impact. By the end of the academic year, Professor Hersh had met with more than 70 faculty members across Tufts to discuss the Center’s mission, programming, curricular innovation, and opportunities for collaboration. He also worked with faculty across schools, advising them on navigating politically sensitive research and teaching in their disciplines. Faculty from A&S, The Fletcher School, and the School of Medicine contributed to CEVIHE as discussants, moderators, mentors, co-sponsors, postdoctoral search collaborators, seminar leaders, and thought partners.



The 10-member Faculty Advisory Board provided guidance on academic priorities, including programming and postdoctoral searches. Its members helped CEVIHE identify intellectual gaps, evaluate opportunities, and preserve a model that is voluntary, collaborative, discipline-sensitive, and consistent with academic freedom and shared governance. The eight-member Community Advisory Board brought civic, business, and philanthropic perspectives to the Center’s work. Its members offered critical feedback and shared the Center’s work with stakeholders beyond Tufts.

Both boards met once per semester, and individual advisors consulted periodically with CEVIHE leadership on programming, curriculum development, external engagement, and strategy. Together, they connected the Center to scholarship and teaching inside the university and to communities beyond campus.

“Democracy depends upon people with conflicting views talking with one another.”

MICHAEL J. GLENNON, PROFESSOR OF CONSTITUTIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LAW, THE FLETCHER SCHOOL, IN *TUFTS NOW*

Communications and Public Reach

CEVIHE built a substantial communications platform during its first academic year. The website, LinkedIn, Instagram, newsletters, YouTube videos, photo archive, and media coverage allowed the Center to reach students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, community members, donors, advisors, and external audiences. Communications became part of the Center’s intellectual efforts: explaining why each program mattered, preserving the substance of discussions, and making the model legible beyond campus.

Between the launch on September 3, 2025, and June 30, 2026, the website recorded more than 8,000 active users and more than 30,000 page views. A total of 415 people completed the Join the Conversation form. Those submissions reflected interest from students, faculty, staff, alumni, community members, and external audiences.



Instagram served as CEVIHE’s primary visual record of student-facing programming, growing to 451 followers and generating more than 120,000 views across 70 posts and reels, together with more than 2,700 likes, comments, shares, and saves. LinkedIn served as CEVIHE’s primary professional communications channel, documenting programming, spotlighting student and faculty leadership, and publicizing events. By the end of the reporting period, it had nearly 1,300 followers and had generated more than 177,000 impressions and over 1,500 reactions across 63 posts and reposts.

CEVIHE consolidated its email communications infrastructure in Spring 2026, publishing monthly newsletters and occasional student-facing updates beginning in February. By the end of the academic year, the Center had 890 total Mailchimp contacts, including 854 email subscribers. Across 13 selected messages, the email campaigns achieved an aggregate open rate of 40.6%. The video archive extended the life of public programs beyond the room: CEVIHE’s YouTube channel recorded 1,443 views and 398.3 watch hours across five event recordings. In the future, the Center plans to create shorter edited videos that make its programs and curricular resources more widely accessible.

SELECTED EVENT RECORDINGS

- [Keynote Fireside Chat with Sohrab Ahmari and Bhaskar Sunkara](#)
- [Policy Responses to Gambling, Recreational Drugs, and Pornography](#)
- [Expanding Viewpoints Headliner Event with Reihan Salam](#)
- [Expanding Viewpoints Headliner Event with Musa al-Gharbi](#)
- [Expanding Viewpoints on Campus with Professor Michael Glennon](#)

Media and External Engagement

CEVIHE’s launch generated attention from campus, regional, and national media outlets. *Tufts Now*, *The Boston Globe*, *MassLive*, and *The Tufts Daily* examined the rationale for creating a university-wide initiative devoted to intellectual pluralism and engagement across differences. *The Tufts Daily* situated the Center within Tufts’ broader adoption of institutional pluralism and published faculty reactions, a favorable editorial, a student-centered feature, and critical commentary; *The Tufts Observer* examined cross-ideological discourse and concerns about academic freedom and faculty governance in a two-part series; and *The Tufts Tribune* published both supportive and critical arguments about viewpoint diversity on campus. CEVIHE was also included in Heterodox Academy’s report on *The New Landscape of “Civics Centers” in Higher Education*.

“We are eager to see what the Center [for] Expanding Viewpoints in Higher Education has to offer. The center aims to integrate more diverse perspectives into course curricula and encourage deeper discussion — a seemingly promising first step toward fostering constructive engagement across ideological, religious, and cultural differences.”

THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE TUFTS DAILY

In a *Boston Globe* [commentary](#), Professor Hersh argued that durable changes in campus culture cannot be achieved solely through administrative directives; they must also emerge from students and faculty who model curiosity, goodwill, intellectual independence, and professional decorum in their daily conduct. He discussed CEVIHE's approach in conversations with WBUR, the *Harvard EdCast*, *Times Higher Education*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times*, and the Harvard Kennedy School Ash Center's *Terms of Engagement* podcast. Burakovsky explained the Center's student-centered model and emerging research agenda in *The Tufts Daily*, *The Tufts Observer*, and *The Tufts Tribune*, emphasizing that disagreement is not a reason to withdraw but an invitation to participate seriously in a conversation.

In October 2025, Burakovsky represented the Center at the [Constructive Dialogue Institute \(CDI\) Leadership Institute](#), where senior leaders from nine universities compared institutional models and developed strategies

to strengthen constructive dialogue, open inquiry, and free expression. Professor Hersh joined the Harvard Radcliffe Institute's *Radcliffe in the Round* series and participated in the workshop that produced the white paper *Intellectual Diversity and the Mission of Higher Education*. He reflected on the course that helped inspire CEVIHE in the American Enterprise Institute (AEI) essay, "[The Unexpected Benefits of Teaching American Conservatism](#)," and joined a [Tufts University Alumni Association conversation](#) about the Center's origins, inaugural year, and ambitions.

A major external recognition came in June 2026, when [Heterodox Academy](#) awarded Professor Hersh its 2026 Leadership Award as part of its Open Inquiry Awards, recognizing his role in launching and directing CEVIHE and "building durable institutional structures for cross-ideological dialogue."



A Home for the Center

CEVIHE completed a major milestone by moving into and furnishing its dedicated home at 97 Talbot Avenue, Medford. Opening the house at the close of the Center’s first academic year gave CEVIHE a physical identity: a place where students and scholars can gather, read, argue, listen, and build the informal trust on which serious intellectual life depends.

The house includes three private offices for CEVIHE leadership and 13 additional workstations—two for student workers, eight for postdoctoral fellows, one for the Administrative Coordinator, and two for future visiting scholars—for a total of 16 workstations. It also includes a seminar room with seating for up to 34 and audiovisual equipment for classroom use, a working kitchen, and a library of 375 books. The building is furnished and operational, while the Center continues to acquire art and decor and undertake additional renovations.

The house provides CEVIHE with a visible, welcoming home for lunch conversations, reading groups, seminars, student meetings, faculty collaboration, postdoctoral work, and an informal intellectual community. With its warm library and seminar room, it is designed as a place where students and scholars can connect face-to-face.

CEVIHE also continued building the administrative infrastructure necessary for a growing university-wide center. Shani Agarwal Hood joined as Program Manager in January, following a competitive search that attracted 161 applications. She oversees student engagement, student leadership, the Edge Fellowship, and programming. By the close of the reporting period, CEVIHE had launched a search for an Administrative Coordinator to strengthen office operations. The search concluded shortly thereafter, positioning the Center to begin the 2026–2027 academic year with additional administrative capacity.



Looking Ahead

Looking ahead to the 2026–2027 academic year, the Center will welcome its inaugural Edge Fellowship cohort; integrate eight postdoctoral fellows into teaching, research, and student engagement; expand student leadership development; deepen the use of 97 Talbot Avenue as a hub for seminars, reading groups, faculty collaboration, postdoctoral work, visiting scholars, and student-initiated programming; enhance learning assessment, program evaluation, and campus climate measurement; and accelerate curriculum development on contested social, political, moral, and cultural questions.

The Center will also increase its external engagement, partnering with higher education leaders and educators across the United States to develop durable approaches to open inquiry and constructive disagreement. CEVIHE's goal is not only to strengthen intellectual life at Tufts but also to develop a model that can contribute meaningfully to the renewal of higher education broadly.

A concrete goal for the coming year is to create a platform for developing and disseminating excellent curricula on consequential challenges in public life. The platform will incorporate expertise from across fields and from universities across the country. It will spur innovation in course development so that students everywhere are better equipped to learn about sensitive political and cultural topics.

The Center's first year showed that there is real demand for serious engagement across differences and that students, faculty, staff, alumni, community members, and external audiences will participate when the work is done thoughtfully. The next stage is to deepen that work, measure it more carefully, and make it useful beyond Tufts. CEVIHE was launched to renew the university's intellectual mission. Its first year suggests that the work is both necessary and possible.



APPENDIX

Selected 2025–2026 Program Inventory

The following inventory summarizes the principal programs, public events, recurring series, student-led initiatives, and capacity-building milestones of CEVIHE’s inaugural year.

Recurring programs

- *Politics and Culture from All Sides* weekly lunch series in Fall 2025 and Spring 2026
- *Individualism and Nonconformity in Film* monthly series in Spring 2026

Student leadership and co-creation

- Open houses on the Medford/Somerville and Boston Health Sciences campuses
- Information sessions for admitted students and prospective students
- *Student Advisory Board, Student Organizations Council, and Student Conference Committee*
- Student worker team across research, communications, events, curriculum development, and measurement
- *Critiques of Liberalism from Karl Marx and the Intellectual New Right* student-initiated reading group in Spring 2026
- *Political Unity Social and Fundraiser*
- *Hemispheres Crisis Simulation*
- Student leadership dinner and graduation reception

Public convenings

- *The Future of the American Left and Right* headliner series with Musa al-Gharbi and Reihan Salam
- *The Configuration of the Middle East After the Gaza War* public forum with Haviv Rettig Gur
- *Policy Responses to Gambling, Recreational Drugs, and Pornography* panel discussion and *The Regulation of Vice* workshop
- *Expanding Viewpoints Symposium*, a student-led conference on *Grievance and Governance in a New Populist Era*

Co-sponsored programs

- *Planning for New Towns* symposium
- *Nations Apart* with Colin Woodard
- *Is Catholic Post-Liberalism Unjust?* with Kevin Vallier
- *Irreconcilable Differences: Christian Nationalism and the First Amendment* with Randall Balmer
- *The United States at 250* faculty panel discussion

Institution-building

- *Edge Fellowship* recruitment and selection
- *Postdoctoral Fellowship in Expanding Viewpoints* searches and hiring
- *Faculty Advisory Board* and *Community Advisory Board* engagement
- Website, social media, monthly email newsletter, video, and media infrastructure
- Relocation to 97 Talbot Avenue and outfitting of the building’s offices, seminar room, workstations, kitchen, audiovisual systems, and library



Center for
Expanding Viewpoints
in Higher Education