



“No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship, place, or ministry whatsoever... but all men shall be free to profess, and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion, and that the same shall in no wise diminish, enlarge, or affect their civil capacities.

THOMAS JEFFERSON

“ALL POSSESS ALIKE LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE”
Guarding Our Heritage of Religious Freedom

The University of Texas at Austin
School of Civic Leadership

and

American Council of Trustees and Alumni

September 24, 2026 | Austin, TX

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ACTA
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF
TRUSTEES AND ALUMNI

ABOUT US

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN SCHOOL OF CIVIC LEADERSHIP is home to a community of scholars and students who draw on ancient questions—What is justice? What is liberty? What is true?—to prepare for lives of significance and for successful careers. We wrestle with the great ideas of the Western tradition to prepare ourselves for the opportunities and challenges of our moment. We study the best achievements and greatest difficulties of the American tradition in order to understand what it takes to preserve the blessings of liberty for ourselves and for others. Students in the SCL encounter the distinct inheritance of Western civilization and the American constitutional tradition as part of a larger quest wisdom about how to live and how to lead.

<https://civicleadership.utexas.edu/>

THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES AND ALUMNI (ACTA) is an independent, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting academic excellence, academic freedom, and accountability at America's colleges and universities. Launched in 1995, we are the only organization that works with alumni, donors, trustees, and education leaders across the United States to support liberal arts education, uphold high academic standards, safeguard the free exchange of ideas on campus, and ensure that the next generation receives an intellectually rich, high-quality college education at an affordable price. In 2024, ACTA established the **National Commission on American History and Civic Education** to remedy the long-standing failure of American colleges and universities to require a foundational course in U.S. history and Government.

<https://www.goacta.org/>

To learn more about
our speakers, please
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Guarding Our Heritage of Religious Freedom

AGENDA

5:00 p.m. Reception

University of Texas at Austin
William C. Powers, Jr. Student Activity Center
2201 Speedway, Austin, TX 78712

5:30 p.m. PROGRAM

Welcoming Remarks

Justin Dyer, Rex W. Tillerson Chair and Dean of the University of Texas
at Austin School of Civic Leadership

Overview of ACTA's National Commission and Introduction of Keynote Speaker

Dr. Michael B. Poliakoff, ACTA President & CEO

Keynote

Vincent Philip Muñoz, Tocqueville Professor of Political Science
University of Notre Dame

Panel Discussion: Guarding our Heritage of Religious Freedom

Vincent Philip Muñoz

Wilfred M. McClay, Victor Davis Hanson Chair in Classical History
and Western Civilization, Hillsdale College

Cara Rogers Stevens, Associate Professor of History, Ashland University

Stephen T. Collis, Clinical Professor, Director of the Bech-Loughlin
First Amendment Center and the Law & Religion Clinic, The University
of Texas School of Law

Mathew Reising, Assistant Professor, School of Civic Leadership
(Moderator)

Audience Q&A