



Yale L. Rosenberg Memorial Lecture

Keynote Speaker

Michael S. Roth

President, Wesleyan University

April 23, 2026

ACADEMIC FREEDOM DEPENDS ON THE ECOSYSTEM OF FREE SPEECH

Thursday, April 23, 2026

6:30PM Central Time | Keynote Lecture

Reception and Book Signing to Follow

In Person and Virtual

Approved for 1.0 hour of Texas MCLE credit

John M. O'Quinn Law Building
Danny M. Sheena Courtroom

Keynote Speaker

Since becoming president of Wesleyan University in 2007, **Michael S. Roth** has overseen numerous improvements to the physical campus, including the soon to be completed life sciences building, as well as the launch of interdisciplinary programs focused on such areas as public life, creative writing and criticism, the environment, film, East Asian studies, integrative sciences, education studies, science and technology, and design and engineering. An intellectual historian with a love of the classroom, he teaches Wesleyan undergraduates each semester and also offers courses online.

Under his leadership, Wesleyan celebrated a record-breaking fundraising effort—raising more than \$482 million, primarily for financial aid—and is now successfully embarked on an even more ambitious campaign. Roth has undertaken a number of initiatives that have made a Wesleyan education more affordable for many and more accessible to students from under-represented groups. In the wake of the Supreme Court’s affirmative action decision in July 2023, he announced a suite of new recruiting efforts aimed at enhancing diverse campus learning including an end to admissions preference for legacy applicants and the creation of an African Scholars Program.

Author of numerous publications centered on how people make sense of the past, his last three books (all published by Yale University Press) have focused on liberal education, the most recent being *The Student, A Short History* (2023). His *Beyond the University: Why Liberal Education Matters* (2014), was recognized with the Association of American Colleges & Universities’ Frederic W. Ness award for a book that best illuminates the goals and practices of a contemporary liberal education. His 2019 book, *Safe Enough Spaces: A Pragmatist’s Approach to Inclusion, Free Speech, and Political Correctness*, addresses some of the most contentious issues in American higher education—including affirmative action, safe spaces, and questions of free speech. Roth regularly publishes essays, book reviews, and commentaries in the national media and scholarly journals. An outspoken defender of the value of colleges and universities and their importance to democracy, he was given the PEN/Benenson Courage Award in 2025 for standing up against governmental assaults on higher education.

About the Yale L. Rosenberg Memorial Lecture



An alumnus of Rice University, **Yale L. Rosenberg** graduated in 1964 from New York University Law School, where he was a Root-Tilden Scholar. Rosenberg joined the University of Houston Law Center in 1972 to pursue his true calling of teaching after a distinguished career in government. His inspired instruction in Civil Procedure, Federal Jurisdiction, Professional Responsibility, and Jewish Law at the UH Law Center earned him the UH Teaching Excellence Award in 2000. An award-winning scholar, Rosenberg has been called “America’s prophet” for his analysis of the decline of federal habeas corpus. Rosenberg’s successful academic career was matched only by his marriage to Irene Merker Rosenberg. Those who

knew Yale and Irene marveled at the great love between them for more than 30 years as marriage partners, collaborators, and colleagues.

The Yale L. Rosenberg Memorial Fund was established to recognize and foster excellence at the UH Law Center. The endowment is used to fund a student writing prize and to bring distinguished speakers to the Law Center.

Related Reading

law.uh.edu



Comparative American and Talmudic Criminal Law (2016)

Irene Merker Rosenberg and Yale L. Rosenberg