



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Where are the Boards?

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The academy is facing a crisis of confidence. Where shared governance once nurtured robust debate and institutional progress, a climate of fear is taking hold, stifling dialogue and endangering the very mission of higher education. Decision-makers, ensnared in an atmosphere marked by uncertainty, are both terrified to act and paralyzed by inaction. They are troubled by a well-orchestrated effort that seeks to fundamentally alter higher education, forcing the sector into a state of existential terror for the foreseeable future. Consequently, we are witnessing a shift from shared governance to scared governance, and the consequences are profound.

At present, presidents seem to be thunderously quiet, boards approach critical issues with trepidation and faculty members feel suppressed in their teaching and research. The insidious costs of these constraints—the lost opportunities, the stifled innovation, the further erosion of trust—are staggering. These costs must be exposed to public scrutiny, as they are not confined to higher education. The repercussions of external intrusion will manifest in every facet of our society.