



**SCHOLARS**  
STRATEGY NETWORK

## Higher Education Was Built For Moments Like This

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As many of us in higher education plod through our spring semester, the mood on our campuses is unmistakable: exhaustion, unease, the quiet fear that the work we do in higher education no longer feels possible—or welcome.

Across the country, public trust in colleges and universities has fallen to [shocking lows](#). Faculty are being told to avoid “[controversial](#)” [topics](#). Students are told they’re [too fragile or too radical](#).

The students sitting in our classrooms right now are watching all of this closely. They see the political [vitriol rising](#), elected officials [mocking expertise](#), and higher education itself being [cast as partisan](#). Many are disillusioned. But beneath that fatigue, we see something else—a hunger for authenticity, purpose, and pathways to tangible impact. Students still want to believe that their voices matter. They just need to see their college and universities believe it too.