



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

When Targeting DEI Means Restricting Research and Academics

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The mission of public universities is a sacred one: to advance knowledge for the public good through teaching, research and community engagement. But that mission depends on independence: Faculty and students must have the freedom to ask difficult questions and follow evidence wherever it leads – free from political interference.

While recent federal actions [to dictate curriculum, steer research agendas and condition funding](#) have drawn public attention and ire, bans on diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives pose a quieter but equally consequential threat. Though many think these bans focus solely on [eliminating student-support policies and admissions and programs](#), they are also quietly narrowing the scope of what students and communities are allowed to know.