

**PSI 10 December 2025 3h**

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**Document 1.**

**Republicans have hated universities for years. Anti-war protests gave them a reason to punish them.**

**The White House is casting elite universities as places of hate as the diploma divide reaches an all-time high**

In 2021, JD Vance proclaimed “the universities are the enemy.” He was inspired by Richard Nixon, who in 1972 claimed: “Professors are the enemy”. This week, the White House declared war against them.

President Donald Trump and his administration are escalating their attacks on higher education, intensifying a years long effort to hobble the campuses they say breed progressive ideology and are hotbeds of hate.

Republicans have long blamed college campuses for being ground-zero for a number of “woke” culture war issues, including diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives and academic frameworks like critical race theory.

The protests that roiled college campuses last spring gave Republicans fuel to go after the schools over concerns about antisemitism, and Trump has taken actions to punish higher education.

The Trump administration’s effort pulls levers of power across the federal government. The Department of Education warned universities they could face penalties, reminding them that taxpayer support “is a privilege.” Trump’s administration pulled \$400 million in funding from Columbia University, an upper Manhattan bastion of progressive activism.

Meanwhile, cuts to research institution grants by the National Institutes of Health are causing campuses across the country to consider halting medical research, stopping construction and euthanizing lab animals.

“What I like most about the President is just the intensity, the focus on doing what he said he was going to do, which no one’s better at doing,” House Judiciary Committee chairman Jim Jordan (R-Ohio) told POLITICO of the Trump administration’s recent education directives.

It’s a shrewd political tactic from the GOP to frame elite colleges as the factories of extremism as the diploma divide reaches an all-time high. Fifty-six percent of voters without a college degree supported Trump in the 2024 election, up from 51 percent in 2020, according to exit polls.

“At a lot of these schools, they’re not pursuing what is good, true and beautiful. It’s become the oppression Olympics and a complaint seminar of people sitting in a circle and finding out who’s been offended the most that day,” said Charlie Kirk, a conservative youth whisperer and political firebrand. Those conditions, he added, “creates a very weak political movement, which I think plays into one of the reasons we were able to steamroll you guys back in November.”

But it was Columbia — known as “the activist Ivy” — that became Republicans’ biggest bogeyman. When students there pitched tents on a campus lawn and refused to leave, it launched the school into the eye of a national political firestorm, with progressive members of Congress joining activists.

House Speaker Mike Johnson told the students to “stop wasting your parents’ money” and called for the National Guard to be to remove them if they didn’t comply. The protests at Columbia have continued, as have the arrests.

All of the recent moves represent the fulfillment of long-held conservative wishes. “If any of us want to do the things that we want to do for our country, and for the people who live in it, we have to honestly and aggressively attack the universities in this country,” JD Vance told the National Conservatism Conference in 2021, before he had been elected to the Senate.

Now he's Trump's Vice President, and the White House is beginning to do just that.  
Irie Sentner, POLITICO, March 2025

## Document 2.

### **Harvard beat Trump in court. Here's what could happen next. Harvard faces an appeal in court, the prospect of more attacks and a possible delay in restoring the more than \$2 billion in frozen federal funding, experts say**

A federal judge's ruling was a resounding win for Harvard — finding that the Trump administration had violated the Constitution in freezing federal research funding to the school. It was immediately cheered by faculty, alumni and student groups, with many urging Harvard to keep fighting.

But despite the victory, Harvard faces hurdles in its standoff against an administration determined to force change on higher education, and the final outcome for Harvard is far from clear.

The challenges are unprecedented: They include a promised appeal in court, worry that the government will slow-walk restoring frozen research funds, threats to future grants— and the prospect of another 3 1/2 years of a hostile White House with a proven willingness to aim arrows at its opponents.

The Trump administration, which has already opened numerous investigations at Harvard, has threatened to revoke its nonprofit status and to bar international students and scholars from campus. After the ruling, it signaled new plans to eventually “streamline” the process of denying funding for schools found to have violated civil rights law.

“Yesterday’s court ruling is a victory for Harvard,” said Allison Wu, a Harvard graduate and leader of an alumni group. “But even beyond an appeal, the government still has many means of pressure.”

She mentioned terminating grants, denying visas, seizing patents — and turning threats into action.

The White House made clear the fight is by no means over. “Harvard does not have a constitutional right to taxpayer dollars,” spokeswoman Liz Huston said, “and is ineligible for grants in the future.”

U.S. District Judge Allison D. Burroughs ruled that freezing more than \$2 billion in research grants violated Harvard’s right to freedom of speech and federal laws. She vacated the freeze and barred the Trump administration from using that reasoning to block grants to Harvard in the future. In her ruling, she wrote the government “used antisemitism as a smoke-screen for a targeted, ideologically- motivated assault on this country’s premier universities,” jeopardizing decades of research.

The White House said it will appeal the ruling, and many expect the case to advance to the Supreme Court. Experts said the Trump administration’s first move could be to ask that the court order be paused before the appeal, which would allow the government to delay resuming any payments to Harvard.

The ruling was “nearly a complete victory” for Harvard, said M. Gerhardt, a law professor at the University of North Carolina. As a result, the Trump administration’s goal will be to get its arguments before the Supreme Court — where it expects a favorable hearing — as soon as possible.

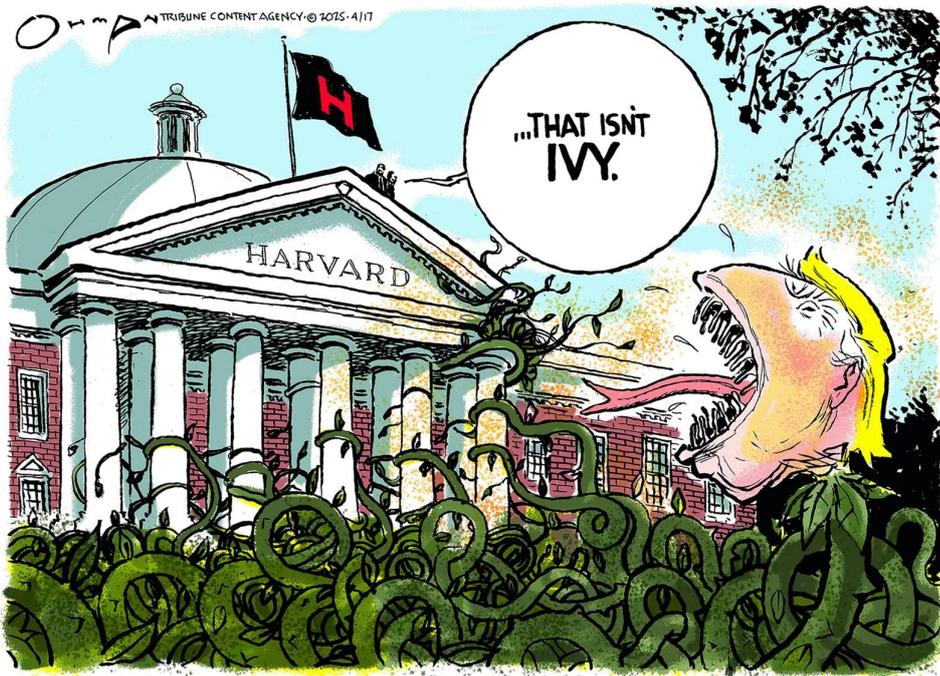
Even if higher courts affirm that Harvard’s funding must be restored, there are ways for the administration to drag its feet.

Scott Delaney, a research scientist at Harvard’s school of Public Health, said that every day that passes is another day without funding for researchers. “Time is not on Harvard’s side,” he said.

Harvard’s president, Alan M. Garber, said that the ruling validates the school’s arguments in defense of academic freedom, scientific research and core principles of higher education.

Susan Svrluga, Joanna Slater and Laura Meckler, The Washington Post, September 5, 2025

Document 3. The Week, April 2025



Document 4. The Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2023

