From Discord to Dialogue:
Exploring the Impact of Campus Protests on Higher Ed Brands

June 2024
### Data Collection Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High School Juniors (36%) and Seniors (64%) were surveyed.</th>
<th>Parents of College-Bound High School Juniors (51%) and Seniors (49%) were surveyed.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>641</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **78%** of students are planning to enroll at a 4-year college or university.
- **7%** of students are planning to enroll at a 2-year school or technical school and are unsure of their plans afterwards.
- **15%** of students are planning to enroll at a 2-year school or technical school as a pathway to a 4-year school.
- **55%** of parents said their highest level of education is some college/associate’s/bachelors.
- **18%** of parents said their highest level of education is high school or lower.
- **26%** of parents said their highest level of education is some post-grad / Master’s / Doctorate / PhD.

Fielded: May 22 – June 3, 2024  
Panel Source: Prodege Panel
The campus protests and Capitol Hill testimony were not just news events. Prospective students and, especially their parents, were paying attention.
Parents were 2x more likely than prospective students to say they were highly familiar with the recent protests.
9 in 10 parents have heard of at least one campus that has experienced a recent protest and about 8 in 10 prospective students could recall hearing about protests on at least one campus.

Approximately how many schools have you heard about experiencing campus protests recently?

- UG Prospects:
  - 0: 17%
  - 1-2: 26%
  - 3-4: 24%
  - 5 or more: 33%

- Parents:
  - 0: 11%
  - 1-2: 22%
  - 3-4: 22%
  - 5 or more: 46%
Columbia, UCLA, Harvard, and NYU are mentioned by a significant number of parents. Among students, only Columbia, Harvard, and UCLA are mentioned by more than 5%.

What is the college or university that comes to mind when you think about the protests on campuses?
Impact on Trust in Higher Ed

How have the recent protests affected your trust in higher education?

- Decreased: 37%
  - UG Prospects: 10%
  - Parents: 10%
- Increased: 7%
  - UG Prospects: 11%
  - Parents: 9%
- No Impact: 36%
  - UG Prospects: 36%
  - Parents: 34%
- Significant Decreased: 19%
- Slight Decreased: 28%
- Significant Increased: 11%
- Slight Increased: 9%
- No Impact: 11%
Impact of Protests on Perceptions: UG Prospects

How have the recent protests affected your opinion of higher education in general?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Higher Ed in General</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your opinion, how has the reputation of [school names] been affected by the protests?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Individual School</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slight Impact of Protests on Perceptions: UG Prospects

How have the recent protests affected your opinion of higher education in general?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Higher Ed in General</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your opinion, how has the reputation of [school names] been affected by the protests?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impact</th>
<th>Individual School</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Impact of Protests on Perceptions: Parents

How have the recent protests affected your opinion of higher education, in general?

- Negative: 30%
- Positive: 9%
- No Impact: 36%

In your opinion, how has the reputation of [school name] been affected by the protests?

- Significant: 26%
- Slight: 31%
- No Impact: 21%

- Negative: 7%
- Positive: 6%
- No Impact: 21%
Impact on Interest of Attending College/Child Attending College

How have the recent protests on college campuses impacted your interest in attending college?

- UG Prospects
  - Decreased: 27% (7% significant decrease, 11% slight decrease)
  - Increased: 7% (11% significant increase, 7% slight increase)
  - No Impact: 48%

How have the recent protests on college campuses impacted your interest in your child attending college?

- Parents
  - Decreased: 11% (11% significant decrease, 7% slight decrease)
  - Increased: 8% (7% slight increase)
  - No Impact: 53%
The story gets more complex when we look at the findings by political beliefs.
Recent campus protests have had a more significant negative impact on Republican parents’ trust and opinion of higher ed in general.
## Parents by Political Beliefs

(Effect on Perception of Campuses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Political Beliefs</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>No Impact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independence</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democrat</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Republican</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your opinion, how has the reputation of [school name] been affected by the protests?

- Significant: 29% Independent, 16% Democrat, 50% Republican
- Slight: 36% Independent, 38% Democrat, 29% Republican

### Survey Results

- **Negative Impact**: 29% Independent, 16% Democrat, 50% Republican
- **Positive Impact**: 36% Independent, 38% Democrat, 29% Republican
- **No Impact**: 36% Independent, 27% Democrat, 16% Republican
Parents by Political Beliefs
(Impact on Interest in Child Attending College)

How have the recent protests on college campuses impacted your interest in your child attending college?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Independent</th>
<th>Democrat</th>
<th>Republican</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slight</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decreased</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Impact</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Significant: 9% Decreased, 21% No Impact
Slight: 6% Decreased, 7% Increased
No Impact: 56% Decreased, 17% Increased, 64% No Impact
Key Takeaways

Parents and students are highly aware of the protests but associate them with a small subset of schools.

Interest in attending college is somewhat affected. Both the duration and impact on specific schools is to be determined.

Every issue continues to chip away at positive sentiment and support for higher education.
On behalf of our Alexandria, Oakland, and Columbus offices,

Thank you.

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