

2026 Annual Higher Education Outlook **Colleges & Universities at the Crossroads**

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Meet the Presenters



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Learning Outcomes

1. Compare and contrast the 2026 operating environment with other moments in higher education history.
2. Describe the primary challenges facing the higher education industry in 2026.
3. Identify one to two areas of opportunity for your institution.



Uncertain Times? How Different Is This Environment?

Demographic
shifts

AI

Skepticism

Interference

2026 Annual Higher Education Outlook

Big Themes

- Financial Challenges
- The Value Proposition
- Technical Disruption
- Cultural/Social Issues



Financial Challenges Issues in 2026

Expense
Reduction

Revenue
Diversity

Deferred
Maintenance

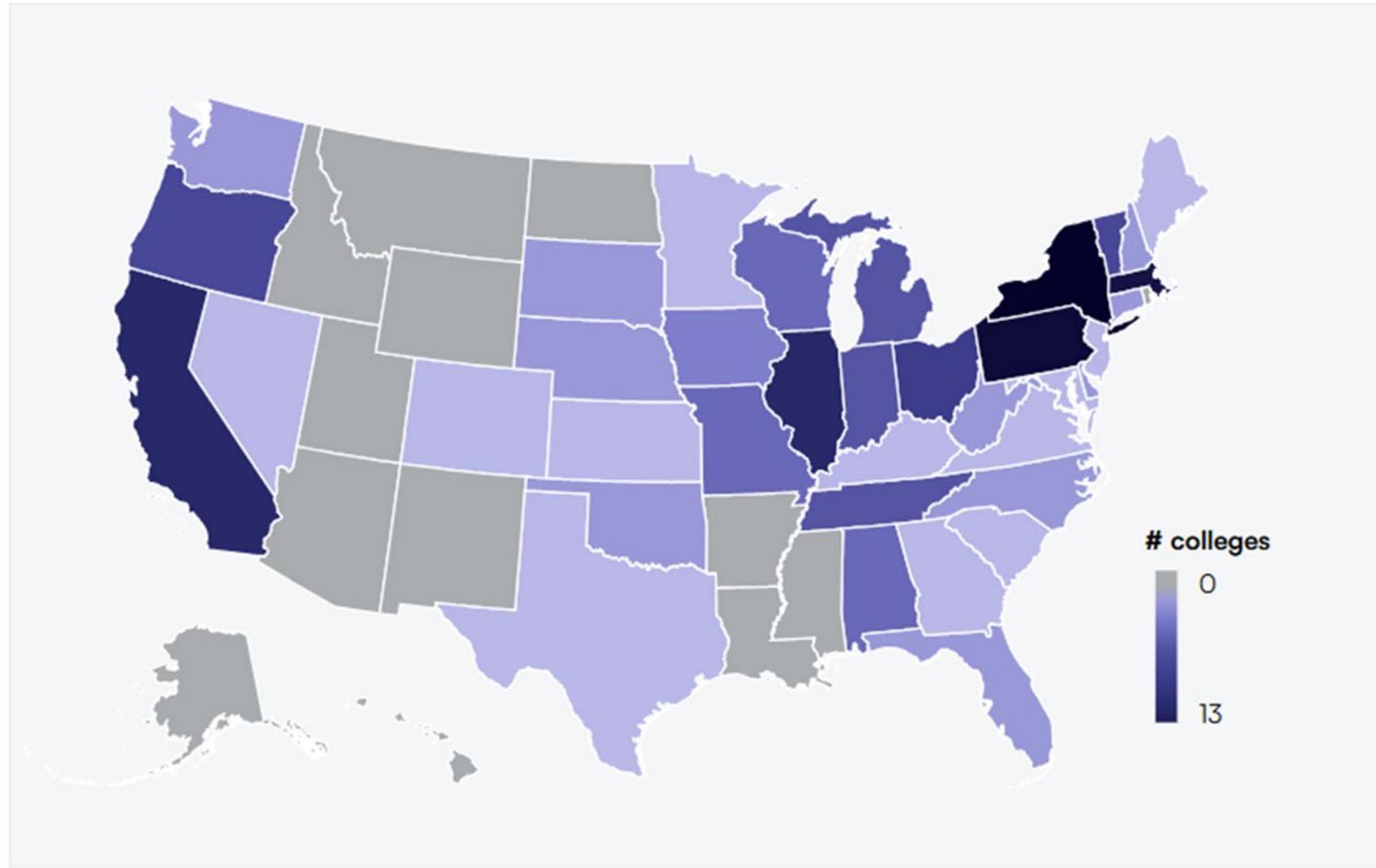
Pricing/Loan
Limits

Debt
Management

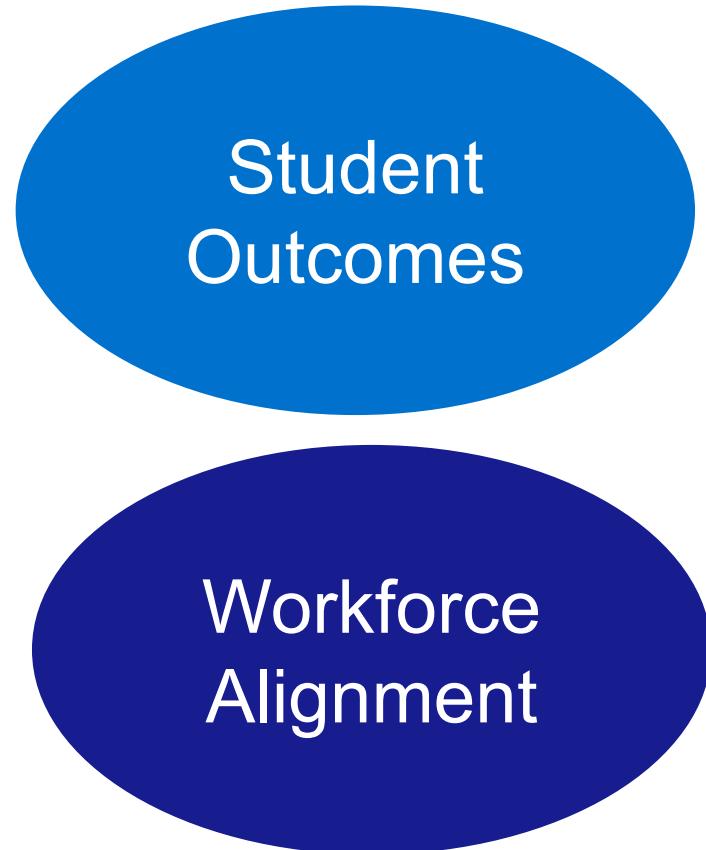
Endowment
Management

Closures & Mergers

[See data here](#)



Value Proposition Issues in 2026



Technical Disruption Issues in 2026

AI in the
Classroom

AI in
Operations

AI as a
Disruptor

Cultural & Social Issues Issues in 2026

Neutrality

Campus
Climate

Looking to
2029

Big Ideas 2026 & Beyond

Strategic
Partnerships &
Business Model

Influence/Advocacy

Community
Relationships

Differentiation

Thank You!

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