00:03.12
Vincent Munoz
I think what we need to do is explain how our principles of free speech, free inquiry, will help serve the cause of justice.

Betty Friendan
The First Amendment, the constitutional freedom of speech and freedom of conscience that is the bulwark of our democracy.

00:21.94
Bettina Apthekar
There was a passion in what was being said, affirming this, what people consider a sacred constitutional right, freedom of speech and freedom of association.

00:34.49
Michelle Deutchman
From the UC National Center for Free Speech and Civic Engagement, this is Speech Matters, a podcast about expression, engagement, and democratic learning in higher education.

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I'm Michelle Deutschman, the Center's Executive Director and your host. This week is International Education Week, a global initiative jointly established by the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education in April 2000 under President Bill Clinton.

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The goal of the week is to celebrate the benefits of international education and academic exchange worldwide. Each November, campuses use this week to recognize the contributions of international students and the value of global educational exchange.

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This year, it provides us an opportunity to more closely consider the conditions these students need to fully participate in American campus life. The First Amendment provides some of the same protections to international students in the U.S. as it does to American citizens.

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For instance, non-citizens generally enjoy fundamental First Amendment rights like freedom of speech, press, and assembly. Yet, these protections have come under stress recently as the Trump administration has made efforts to detain and deport students and scholars for their expressive activities.

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If joining a protest, writing an opinion piece, or posting on social media can stoke fears about one's ability to remain in the U.S., how freely can students participate in the exchange of ideas that universities promise to encourage?

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And what can campus communities do to support these international students? To help us explore these difficult questions, we're joined by Karin Fischer today, an international reporter for *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and creator of the newsletter, *Latitudes*.

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Karin's reporting has taken her all over the world, from Bangladesh to China to Ghana, and her work has appeared on *NPR* in the *New York Times* and *Washington Monthly*. We're eager to dive into our conversation with Karen, but first, let's turn to Class Notes, a look at what's making headlines.

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After Democrats' sweeping victory in the midterm elections, pundits and press outlets are discussing how higher ed may be reshaped by the results. Influential lawmakers like Maine Senator Susan Collins and North Carolina Representative Virginia Foxx were ousted from their seats.

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Foxx served as either the chair or ranking member of the House Education Committee from 2017 to 2025, during which time she interrogated college presidents,

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in anti-Semitism hearings, and issued the committee's first of numerous subpoenas to higher ed leaders. Candidates endorsed by the American Association of University Professors won big, taking 11 of 12 possible races.

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Overall, higher education advocates hold hope with Democrats in office and that that will mean being better able to address issues of higher education affordability, among others.

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The youth vote was critical to Democrats' victories. According to new data from the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, roughly 27% of eligible young voters ages 18 to 29 cast a ballot in the 2026 midterms, a number within a few percentage points of the highest youth turnout rate for a midterm election in American history.

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The 35-point margin of support for Democrats among young voters in 2026 is also one of the largest recorded in a national election. In non-election news, some higher ed institutions are abandoning flock camera surveillance on campus, an effort termed de-flocking.

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This follows privacy concern pushback from student communities like the Deflock Emory Coalition. Universities, including Emory, Cornell, and Penn State, have declined to renew their contracts with Flock Safety and removed Flock Technology from their campuses.

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Lastly, a new study by the National Bureau of Economic Research exploring why students censored themselves in classroom discussions found that students with strongly held views on either end of the political spectrum, left or right, shared their perspectives most often, while students with moderate or mildly conservative beliefs spoke the least.

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Students also tended to overestimate how much their peers disagreed with them. According to the study's authors, when widely held views go unspoken in the classroom, students may see their peers as more extreme than they are and leave college less prepared to navigate disagreements.

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Now back to today's guest. Karin Fischer is a reporter for *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, where she covers all aspects of U.S. higher education's engagement in the world, including international student mobility, comparative education, and the impacts of geopolitics on colleges and universities.

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She is the creator of the Latitudes newsletter, where every Wednesday she sends out updates on the top stories in international higher ed. A graduate of Smith College, Karen received the East-West Center's Jefferson Fellowship for Reporting in Asia and the International Reporting Project Fellowship for Work on Education and Gender, also in Asia.

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Her work has been honored by the Education Writers Association, the National Press Foundation, and the Poynter Institute. Welcome, Karin. Thank you for joining us. I know the last week has been particularly busy with election results, and we really appreciate your time.

06:02.94
Karin Fischer
Oh, no, I'm happy to be here. Thanks, Michelle. So, I always start the podcast by asking our guests about their journey to where they are at this moment. You have spent years reporting on international students and their experiences, and I'm curious to know what drew you to the beat and to covering international education in particular.

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I always sort of jokingly say it's because I'm close as close as it comes to being international. I'm Canadian, so the most international person in the Chronicle newsroom. But seriously, it was a little bit of happenstance.

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At the outset, an editor just needed help with a project. I started writing on it. And it was just a really fascinating time to be reporting on international students. It was right at the beginning of a wave of students, particularly from China, coming to the U.S.,

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And it was presenting so many issues for the students, for the colleges. It was kind of like this new uncharted frontier, really, given the magnitude of the students coming. So it's just an exciting thing to be covering.

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And did you always like traveling? Oh, yeah, absolutely. Yeah, that's not an unpleasant part of the job. I was going to say that for me, that would be a really good perk.

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You know, so since you've had a chance to, you know, be in this, on this beat for a while, I'm curious, like, when you compare this moment to other moments in the past, what you might say about house issues about international students have changed over the years and maybe your thoughts on what factors have led to those kinds of changes.

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I think there are a couple of things that have changed. One is just the whole situation, the whole moment that we're in is very different. Rather than international student numbers growing, we're really talking about American colleges losing their share, their dominant share of international students in the world.

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And so that presents all kinds of challenges for colleges. And it really quite is a question, too, about just the United States' role in the world. I think beyond that, one of the things I also have would say, I used to live in Washington, D.C., and, you know, everybody there covers education.

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who's a reporter covers the government, and I didn't. And I used to say that I was a former government reporter because I'd covered Congress. But today, I write so frequently now about politics and geopolitics and the way that they touch international students and the way they touch colleges that serve them.

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And so that's a very different than even a decade ago when it was just, they were two totally different issues. That is super fascinating that now there there's like a nexus between them.

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You know, we've spent the better part of this year's Speech Matters podcast focusing on like all the challenges that higher ed has been facing, whether that's debates over viewpoint, discussion of overreach by state and federal government, threats to scientific and medical research, impact of AI.

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And my guess is this question, the answer is probably like implicit in everything that you do, but I think it would be helpful for it to be explicit for our listeners, which is given the overwhelming number of issues facing higher ed,

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Why should international students and the issues they face be something that all of us should be deeply concerned about? I would answer that on a couple of levels. One is simply a very practical one for American colleges, international students

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pay their own way if they're undergraduates and master's degree students. And so they have been a big, important part of colleges balancing their budgets, including in California, where, you know, the state had decreased funding for the public universities and international students admitting more of them was just simply a way to keep the lights on.

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Another reason is sort of implicit in the statement you just made about research, which is that international students are really just a critical core part of American research at the college level.

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There are more than 40% of doctoral students. If you look at majors like computer science or physics, they are the vast majority of the doctoral students, we really would not have research labs at our universities without international students' presence.

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And the final reason is a really big picture one, which is that if you go back to the origin of things like the Fulbright program, the idea was that if people come, they study together, they live together, they learn together, and that helps them learn about one another.

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And so just for the United States role in the world, having international students come and learn about this country, I think has been pretty important. Oh, thank you for laying that out. I mean, more than 40 percent of doctoral students is a huge number. And I'm imagining that's what people refer to when they talk about brain drain, that people will be, you know, not able to come to the United States to study and to contribute to science and medicine and other things.

11:06.73
I'm curious if you've done any reporting on how international students' experiences with free expression in their home countries shape their expectations of speech on U.S. campuses, right? And I'm thinking about what might someone who comes from another country be expecting in terms of like expression and engagement on a U.S. campus? And then maybe how is that different than what they might have expected before they came?

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It can really vary because our international students are not a monolith. you have some students come from places with really robust free press. They're very used to issues being covered in the newspapers and debated in public.

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And so for them, they're coming with that same expectation that that will happen here. But when you look at some of the largest groups of students coming, they're coming from places like China, where obviously free expression is a much more political issue.

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And so they often come not having, you know, been able to talk freely about and debate issues. They are probably used to using VPNs, you know, to get around the firewall and get on the Internet and see read things that we would take for granted.

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I think that those students can also be affected by how they imagine the United States, too. mean, some of them really do come to the U.S. because they think that there is an opportunity for free expression here.

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And that's actually an appeal for them. They look forward, if not, you know, to being student journalists, they look forward just even to the notion of being able to be in classrooms and be able to talk freely and to debate controversial issues.

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and say what's on their minds. Do you have any sense of situations where a student might fear that even if the expressive activity is protected in the U.S., that their home country might frown on their being act politically or expressively active and how that might reflect on the home country and could result in repercussions?

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Yes, unfortunately, that has been a sort of reoccurring issue in this country. The notion that the restrictions on speech in students' home countries has sort of crept in and has affected American classrooms and American campuses as well.

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We've and had a number of instances in which Chinese students in particular have said something on campus, posted on social media when they're in the U.S., even on social media platforms that don't exist in China.

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And they have been penalized for that when they've been when they've returned to their home countries. A couple of years ago, for example, I wrote about some protests that were happening over COVID lockdowns. The protests were on lockdowns in China, but they were happening in the U.S. And this one of the students who was covering it was herself, a Chinese national, who wanted to be a newspaper reporter.

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And she was so worried that she wouldn't, of the repercussions, she didn't want to put her in name on her article, even though she only was going to report the fact she was not editorializing at all. She was just saying what happened.

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But she was worried enough that ultimately they didn't run the article because she refused to put her name on it. That is very interesting and I feel like is a good segue to another thing I wanted to ask you about in your, maybe it wasn't this week, but last week you were talking about international students and the midterm elections.

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And we're going to get to that a little bit more. But one of the things I noted was that all of the students you interviewed talked to in your article asked for their name not to be used.

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And I wondered what that might tell us about the political climate for international students, both here and potentially in their home countries. It says so much, frankly.

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This was not the case. Even five or 10 years ago, students would have felt pretty comfortable with speaking to an American reporter for publication in the U.S. about ideas about their personal beliefs and personal views.

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Yes, you had some students who were who were from California, cultures and from countries with political systems that that made them more careful about what they said. But yeah I did many stories where I spent a lot of time really told the personal stories of students from China, from Saudi Arabia.

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And at no point did anybody ever say, oh, you can't use my name because that just didn't seem to be that that kind of a environment. But now I think the students are both concerned about what's how what they say is going to reflect back in their home countries.

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And frankly, they're concerned about what happens here in the U.S. There was a number of students who a year ago were had their visa status revoked because they took part in pro-Palestinian demonstrations, or in one case, a student merely wrote an op-ed in the student newspaper.

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And so I think a lot of students are very wary about what the American government's stances are about free speech and whether or not international students share the same free speech rights as Americans do.

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I mean, it's a very sad reality. I mean, when I go to do workshops about free speech, it's like, how do you share with students, both international and otherwise, about what it means to amplify your voice, right? Like using publishing and op-ed when so many people watched, you know, that Tufts graduate student be kind of whisked away by, you unidentified masked people. It's very hard to counter those kinds of things.

16:51.32
You wrote about a recent study in Latitudes called Policing Dissent, International Students, Political Expression, and the Spring 2025 Legal Status Termination in U.S. Higher Education. And this might be what you were already referencing, but it basically showed that you know, universities, if there were protests about the Israel-Hamas war, they were more likely to revoke international students' legal status if they had previously experienced campus protests on their campus.

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So it didn't matter. It seemed to me that the study was saying it didn't matter whether the protesters were actually international students or otherwise, but if there were a lot of protests, they were looking to sort of potentially like have repercussions for those that are were from other countries. Is that accurate? And sort of what are your thoughts on that? Yeah, that's right. I mean, the U.S. government was revoking those legal statuses, actually, and for most part, for nothing to do with free speech.

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But it was, you know, actually rather minor things like traffic citations and run-ins, minor run-ins with law enforcement that were causing these students to be, to lose their visa status.

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But when the researchers looked at where those students were, where those students were losing status, they found that they were, as you said, often on campuses in which there had been heightened scrutiny. And the idea was that the Trump administration was perhaps paying more attention to these campuses because of speech issues.

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Certainly the Trump administration, although, again, most of these students were not losing their visas over speech concerns or their participation in protests, has been repeatedly linking international students to campus protests, suggesting that they are the organizers and the agitators and the folks who are coming to this country with the and intent to disrupt American campus life.

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And so I think that even if the two things were seemingly unrelated to one another, I think it's just in the water now that people are very concerned about the ways that that speech is being policed in this country. Yeah.

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And through your coverage of these issues, especially, you know, in this current administration, are there specific things that you've seen from campuses, whether it's faculty or administration, to sort of mitigate some of these potential harms that have been effective?

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I mean, I think for one, you've seen campuses themselves be a little bit more cautious in what they say and how they talk about their international students because they are concerned about getting noticed for potentially the wrong reasons.

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I think you do find individual faculty members, some of whom have a lot of experience and in countries like China, have really become much more aware of who's in their classrooms and how that affects the speech.

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As far as actual policies, unfortunately, no, there have not been colleges that have affirmatively acted in any way to protect international student speech.

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There was a controversy at George Washington University in Washington, D.C., over Chinese students postering on campus. And the students in that case, some of the students had pushed through the student government.

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They were pushing for the university to take a stance and to affirmatively say, okay, we are we're passing a policy that’s back that protects the speech rights of international students.

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It did not pass, however. even though probably whatever resolution or policy would just be reinforcing the law that already exists. So it would be more symbolic then.

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It would be, but, you know, I think groups like Human Rights Watch have come in and said and that having those policies are very important if we don't want kind of the repression of foreign governments to sort of stretch into American campuses.

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So, yes, it is protecting the speech rights, although actually I would say it's a private school, I was going to say. So actually, they really do need that extra layer of speech. Yeah, I would also say that this is actually an active question. Do international students have the same speech rights as American citizens?

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That was part of the debates in the case the cases over the Tufts student and other students who had been had their visa status rewrote. And in in a separate case, the student newspaper at

Stanford University actually went to court because they said that the threat of visa revocations was making their international students journalists afraid to report.

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And so in both of those cases, the judges sided with the students and said, yes, international students do have speech rights. Now, of course, we'll see how those these cases proceed on appeal and if the government challenges that. But it is, on one hand, I think we all assume, because we all have these speech rights, that international students don't. But maybe there is this need to affirmatively say, yes, there they are, exist for international students.

22:06.06
I'm glad you raised those cases because I think probably many of our listeners and either haven't thought ah about it or realized that so far as, you know, as the law and precedent stands, that rights like speech and assembly and press are protected for international students. But also, you know, like you said, it's all what happens in appeal. And then, you know, ultimately the Supreme Court, like right before we started recording, I saw that a number of attorneys generals are now appealing the, you know, appeals court ruling in the Stop Woke Act, you know. And I think there was many people who are, you know, academic freedom and speech advocates who were just thrilled with that appeals court decision. And I, you know, you just it sort of takes your breath away, like, oh, wait, like, it's not done. And the stakes are still so high.

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So I think it's important that you're highlighting that it's, you know, the law is set until it's until it's not set, right? Right, exactly. And the way we think about the value of an American education is about having that opportunity, as you said, for academic freedom, for free expression, to exchange ideas, even ones that are unpopular. And what does it mean if, you know, 6%, which is how many, the share of international students in the overall American student body, what if 6% of your students don't feel like they have the same rights and can't exchange ideas?

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ideas in the same way. Does that damage the value ah of the degree in the education? Well, certainly, if not both of those, so the experience, right, which is supposed to be all about the exchange of ideas. And with that, I kind of want to go back to kind of the time leading up to the midterm elections. I was really taken with something that was in Latitudes. Well, we will have a link, by the way, to Latitudes with the with the episode notes, where you talk to these different international students about the midterms. And one of them, Michael, described U.S. politics this way. For me, this is like the and NBA finals and the Super Bowl all together.

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And another student described the experience by saying, I want to shout, but I don't have any voice. And so I'm wondering, based on your reporting and your experiences, know, what does civic engagement look like for international students?

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I think it's become somewhat curtailed in for many students these days. There have been points where obviously international students were taking, if not leading roles, important roles education.

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in speech, even if they can't vote, they were participating in sort of the political environment. You know, if I think back to the first Trump administration when the administration put in place a travel ban that stranded a lot of international students and scholars.

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Some of the biggest, most forceful opponents of that ban were international students themselves. However, you know, we talked, you asked earlier about people wanting to use their names. And I think that there has been some shrinking of, for at least for some students, of this sort of political space in the U.S. where they are concerned about the repercussions of what speaking out looks like.

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And so even though they know there are so many issues in the election that affect them. And so much about control of Congress and what's happening with the presidency can determine their experience studying in the United States.

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A lot of them feel like, you know, they don't want to risk their visas. They don't want to speak out. They want to be cautious observers of things, if not very nervous observers of the American political process.

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You mentioned cautious observers, which takes me back to when you talked about how institutions are more cautious about how they talk about their international students. And I wanted just to press a little bit more on what does that mean? Like they're more cautious about sort of showcasing the number, you know, and like impact of what their international students are doing or like how is how is that cautiousness, I guess, exhibited?

26:04.70
I think in a number of ways. One is you don't have quite the number of institutions sort trumpeting their international population. Something that was seen as a real benefit, a real feather in the American cap, so to speak, before is suddenly much more mixed in a time when being globally engaged isn't seen as such an obvious good.

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It also can affect how they these colleges advise their international students. Some colleges may be, I mean, I talk with many people who are in the position of leading offices of international students or being advisors to international students. You say that they're really, ah feel to like they're in a tough place where they want to, on one hand, they've seen what it has happened with these students in the past couple of years losing their visas and they want to counsel caution.

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At the same time, they, like, as we've talked about, understand that having free expression is part of the American college experience. And so, you know, you have some colleges say very explicitly, don't go to protests, don't get involved in demonstrations where perhaps there could be arrests because that could jeopardize your student visas.

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On the other hand, one thing that people really took note of last year is of the Trump administration had pushed Harvard to reveal more data about their international students.

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And when they did not, because they did not actually collect this kind of data under federal law, the Trump administration tried to revoke Harvard's ability to enroll international students.

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And when the university, the university went to court immediately, and it said very explicitly, we're not Harvard without our international students. And so I think for a lot of students, perversely, even though it's not a very auspicious reason for that this statement, they really welcomed the fact that here was such a prominent institution standing up and saying so very publicly that they were it's part of having international students and they saw it as critical to their the education that they offered.

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Yeah, that is certainly heralding, you know, a very important message from a very important like voice. Before we talk about what the impact of the elections will be and perhaps maybe get to a like a more hopeful note, I feel like I've gone too far without us talking about ICE and the impact of ICE on campuses and even the possibility of the presence of ICE on campus. And I would just be interested to hear about, you know, what you've learned from your reporting, both about the level of fear and anxiety on the part of international students, which I'm guessing is high, but also how university officials have been, if at all, preparing for and responding to visits by ICE or other federal immigration officials.

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The concern has been acute among students, international students, as well as undocumented students. I think back to the showdowns in Minnesota about a year ago, and you had students really who were afraid as international students to come to campus because they were worried that just merely their presence would enable them to be picked up by ICE For what reason, they weren't really sure, but they were concerned about it.

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One thing you have seen is colleges, which had sort of maybe unwritten rules or rules that were not necessarily known by everybody on campus about how to handle what happens when you have um police or ICE on campus.

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I think that's one thing that colleges have been pretty forthcoming about. They've often said, okay, here, we're telling everybody what has what happens if ICE comes, who you can talk to who they should talk to where they can go, what the implications are if you're stopped as an international student by ICE.

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And obviously these colleges were spurred by some of these protesters that we were talking about earlier or were arrested on college campuses or in college properties.

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for free expression. And so I think there's a real desire by colleges to be transparent and to have everybody understand sort of what the protections are and what they should do and what the next steps they should take should ICE come to campus.

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But just even, but knowing what to do, I don't think that doesn't but doesn't mitigate the anxiety and sometimes outright fear that students feel. No, that that makes sense. It's and sort of the same as some of the legislation that's been passed, right?

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That even if it gets challenged and struck down by the court, like the chilling effect has already happened. And that sort of can't be, you know, that bell cannot be unrunged. You know, I want to talk about the midterm elections and how you think, you know, this sweep by Democrats, not only in, you know, Congress and in the Senate, but also like, you know, in governor's offices and legislatures across states, you know, how do you think things are going to be different going forward?

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and so like We can start broad and then we can sort of, you know, talk more specifically. you know, in particular, I'm interested in in funding and enrollment as two issues. For international students. Yes, for international students. Thank you. No, no just clarifying.

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Well, so let me start where you ended, which is to talk about the states, because I think a lot of what was happening in individual states was not necessarily getting as much attention because so much was focused on things like, you know, fears over ICE coming to campus.

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In a number of states, you had governors or legislatures take actions to curtail the ability of international students to study in certain countries, to restrict international engagement and exchange programs, and to even make it more difficult for colleges to hire international scholars through H-1B visas.

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And so I think even in states, and here I'm thinking particularly of Texas, Even if nothing has changed at the federal level, just having a very different posture by the elected officials at the

state level is pretty important. The other thing that I think to keep on the state subject for just a second is you mentioned earlier, Michelle, about up state attorneys general.

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I think one of the things that's been very important on both sides of the issue for international students and for undocumented students is the roles that state attorneys general play in challenging Trump administration policies.

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on so for these students. And so you have and attorneys general, for example, challenging efforts by the Trump administration to end state tuition policies for undocumented students.

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You have attorneys general coming in and weighing in on some of these free speech cases. You had them trying to intervene when students in their states were losing their visa status. On the same token, you had attorneys general agree with the Trump administration and allow policies to go forward that I think a lot of people have concerns about, like, for example, not allowing undocumented students to be able to come to college for the same tuition amounts.

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And so I think I would simply say that it's just both what the Attorney's general do in standing up for international students, for undocumented students, and supporting colleges. But it's also things that they can do to restrict the kinds of things that these colleges can do when it comes to international students, and some in some ways enable legislation that perhaps colleges and international students might not be supportive of, or not legislation policy by the and Trump administration.

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And so even though it happens on a piecemeal basis, state by state by state, It matters, I think, a lot to the broader sort of environment for international students in the U.S. I'm really happy that you kind of pulled us back to state issues because I think it can be overwhelming to just continue to think about the federal issues. And it's interesting about what you're saying that like even though we're supposed to be a United States, the experiences that people and international students have really is dependent on where you're going to school and that it's very different. And mean, I'm sitting in my, you know, UC Blue State home. It's very different than a Texas or a Florida or somewhere else.

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And, you know, again, I know you probably don't have a crystal ball where you can predict the future, but if you were going to look into one in terms of funding, and terms of seeing enrollment numbers going up do you see that happening? And I guess, I don't know if you can quantify this, but like, how long is it going to take? Or is it going to be a long road to kind of get back to where we were, say, a decade ago?

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You're right. I don't have a crystal ball. My prognostication skills are not the sharpest. But I would say that, yes, likely you are correct that it will not happen overnight.

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I think on one hand, the messaging, um you talked about a chilling effect. And I think that the perception does matter when students are reading. And I think we don't necessarily appreciate this, but in Many countries, they cover American higher education on the front pages of newspapers or on the front of websites.

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You know, so I think the perceptions, the idea that the country is perhaps just, if not in particular policy, but just in its sort of stance is more welcoming to international students, that does matter.

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That said, there are just so many things that are going to make it difficult for that kind of a rebound that you talked about to happen. You know, a lot of the things that the Trump administration has done were structural. When you think about, for example, something as simple as, you know, the number of people that were laid off or who left federal government, well, that's That includes people in State Department, includes people who issue international student visas.

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And one of the biggest problems, just most immediate problems international students face is it's very difficult to get a visa right now just because there's not that manpower in the consulates around the world.

36:29.30
I also would say that there are policies specific to international students that have been working their way through by executive order. And those there's nothing that will stop those policies.

36:41.71
They're separate from what Congress does. So even if Congress is controlled by Democrats, the Trump administration can still continue to make policy that affects and restricts international students.

36:53.37
And then finally, I would say there's things that we don't even think of as being particular to international students, but really can affect their ability or their desire to want to come to the US. A very simple one is back to the research funding question.

37:05.85
So many graduate students are international students that when the federal government cuts money for research, that actually has an outsized impact on how foreign students view studying in the United States.

37:19.73
And so, yes, on one hand, the perceptions may change, but there is also just a lot of things on the ground that can continue to be difficult for international students.

37:30.90
On that note, I don't know if you have any thoughts about, you know, if you were, you know, running a university or overseeing an international ah center or office in university, if there are things that you feel like you've heard from both international students or scholars about things that might be done in this moment and moving forward to support international students.

37:58.10
It sounds so very basic, but just acknowledgement of these issues, I think, can go a long way for students to understand that they do have these fears, that they do have this hesitation, that they are perhaps feeling not always as welcome about studying in the U.S. And, you know, even though we just talked about all the things that could that make the U.S. maybe not as suspectable for international students, it's also the case that just saying publicly,

38:28.02
This is a campus that welcomes international students and wants them here. I think that does go some ways to sort of affecting the environment that these students are living in.

38:40.89
Absolutely. And that's one of the reasons that we decided to like use this International Education Week to kind of like put a spotlight on some of these issues, because I think that they're not always top of mind for everyone.

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And, you know, we always kind of we start the same way and we always wrap the same way, which is to help our listeners um think of something that they might be able to do or read or reflect on to like increase their awareness of the issue we're talking about. And so with that in mind, I'm wondering if there's any things and they can be basic things that students or faculty members or others who are on campuses or in the higher education space can do to either support international students' participation in campus life or to learn more about

39:27.77
international students and what it's like for them on United States campuses at this time? mean, I think that they can take advantage of, and not just people who are on campus, but entire communities can take advantage of the students who are in their midst and learn, spend time and learn about their experiences.

39:46.52
International Education Week is kind of an easy way to do that. There are, on most campuses, there are activities and fairs and festivals. of sort of highlighting international students, highlighting things as simple as their cuisine or their dance, but just that help raise the profile of international students.

40:08.50
I think, as you said, international students aren't something that we think about all the time, or most people don't think about perhaps at all. But if you're walking across a college campus, chances are you're walking past lots of international students.

40:22.17
And so taking that time to get to understand a little about their culture, to be sort of good hosts, I suppose, I think can go a long way. No, thank you.

40:34.81
I like that. It's like all about just kind of awareness and acknowledgement sort of per your other answer. Is there anything else that you want to add kind of on this issue vis-a-vis expression and engagement or really just about international students and sort of the moment that we're in?

40:52.25
I would simply say that the other reason that we should care, you asked me earlier about why we should care about international students. And the fact is, if their experience is changed in the classroom, what does that mean for the experience of American students in the same classroom?

41:09.43
Is this learning the same part of your class, you know, a number of your classmates don't feel free to express themselves or to share their opinions or are being very wary of how they talk about things?

41:23.10
but So the idea is, yes, the restrictions on international students speech affects international students. But what does it mean for the broader whole experience of going to school in the United States?

41:36.73
I think that's a super important point. And I really appreciate all of your time, especially in this busy moment. And your vantage point that has certainly been illuminating for me and I'm sure for our listeners. So thank you.

41:50.52
Thanks so much. That's a wrap. Thanks again to Karin Fischer from *The Chronicle of Higher Education* for joining us. Tune in next month when we talk to Jonathan Zimmerman, Professor of History of Education at University of Pennsylvania. And we take a look back at 2026 and look ahead to 2027. If you enjoy listening to Speech Matters, please subscribe on Apple Podcasts or Spotify. Leave us a review and forward this episode to a colleague who's interested in the issues we discussed.

42:22.20
Talk to you next time.