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Humanities in Crisis: Quantitative Analysis of 65 Years of American Dissertation Trends

Natural Language Processing of 443,543 Doctoral Dissertations in the Humanities and Social Sciences, 1960–2025

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Humanities in Crisis: Quantitative Analysis of 65 Years of American Dissertation Trends presents our findings in the language of quantitative social science. It includes statistical details and methodological discussion.

A companion report, *Humanities in Crisis: A Study of 65 Years of American Dissertation Trends* presents the same findings in accessible, non-technical language. It is available at https://academysciencesletters.org/humanities-in-crisis/circulation.

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Preface

In Spring of 2024 the President of the American Academy of Sciences and Letters appointed a committee of six AASL members, chaired by Carlos Eire, to produce a white paper on the Crisis of the Humanities. The white paper was to identify the most pressing threats faced by humanities programs, as well as the probable causes of the current crisis, and to provide hard data on the material, intellectual, and cultural losses created by that crisis. It was also to suggest possible ways of stemming or reversing these losses. Josiah Ober, as a member of the committee, agreed to take the lead in writing a preliminary version of the paper. Ober subsequently enlisted Rachel George as co-author and project manager, and Kirill Kalinin as co-author and data scientist.

After conducting an extensive literature review, our team hit on the plan of using natural language processing methods to analyze terminology employed in American PhD dissertations, written from 1960 through 2025 in the Humanities and (for comparative purposes) the Social Sciences. Our premise was that PhD dissertations, written within a given field at a given time, provide a uniquely clear window into the language and underlying conceptual assumptions dominant in that field at that time. This is because dissertation writers, seeking approval and certification by committees of senior disciplinary scholars, must be acutely attentive to what they perceive to be the terminological and conceptual norms of their chosen discipline. Our hope was that using computational methods to track changes over time in dissertation terminology, and the valuation of certain terms, based on the verbal context in which those terms were deployed, would reveal patterns that bear on the questions that the AASL Committee was charged with investigating. This report, jointly written by Ober, George, and Kalinin, is the result of our work.

This project could not have been completed without the help of many others. The authors thank Don Landry, President of AASL, Carlos Eire, and the members of the AASL Humanities Crisis committee—Flora Champy, Steven Justice, Jon Levenson, and Noel Valis. Each offered us valuable insights, suggestions, and made substantive contributions to the project. Jacob Light and Justin Grimmer reviewed the statistical methods; each presented a detailed series of suggestions, some of which have been incorporated in this study; others may be incorporated in future work. Greg Forster provided efficient and friendly administrative support. Brandon Williams and John Dillon at ProQuest TDM generously assisted with solving issues related to data construction and analysis.

We hope that studying a very large body of relevant texts—produced by scholars at beginning of their academic careers—will contribute to the goal of better understanding the causes and effects of developments that are widely, and we believe, correctly, perceived as a crisis in the humanities. This report is a first step—we recognize that the dissertation data could fruitfully be analyzed using different methods and asking different questions.

This version of our report is written for those familiar with the quantitative methods employed in empirical social science research. Readers unfamiliar with statistical methods are encouraged to consult the less technical companion version of this report: *Humanities in Crisis: A Study of 65 Years of American Dissertation Trends*. That version is available at `https://academysciencesletters.org/humanities-in-crisis/circulation`.

Executive Summary

About This Report

This report, commissioned by the American Academy of Sciences and Letters, examines 65 years of American academic research in the humanities by analyzing a collection of 443,543 PhD dissertations written between 1960 and 2025. These dissertations were written in programs in the Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences at 678 universities across the United States. The data comes from the ProQuest TDM Studio archive.

What Makes This Study Different

Unlike studies that look only at dissertation titles or abstracts, this analysis examines the complete text of each dissertation — titles, abstracts, and the full body of the work. This comprehensive approach allows us to identify patterns across the entire body of scholarly writing by scholars at the beginning of their academic careers.

What We Analyzed

Using this dataset, we conducted several types of analysis to better understand the terminology and underlying concepts employed in humanities research. This helps us move beyond broad claims about a "crisis" in the humanities by looking at actual evidence. Specifically, we:

- Measured how often certain types of academic language appear across five different subject areas
- Analyzed the tone and emotional associations of nine important terms by examining the words used near them in the text
- Tracked changes in both vocabulary and tone year by year from 1960 to 2025

Together, these methods show us how intellectual trends in these fields have evolved over 65 years, as reflected in the language choices of doctoral students. By including Social Sciences dissertations alongside Humanities dissertations, we can also compare humanistic fields with another major area of academic study outside of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and professional programs (like business or law).

How We Analyzed the Data

We examined the dissertation collection in four different ways. Each method helps us answer different questions about how American doctoral research has changed over time.

1. **Counting Dissertations**

   First, we simply counted how many dissertations were written each year, broken down by broad academic field (Humanities and Arts, Social Sciences) and sub-fields as follows:

   Humanities and Arts: History & Related Fields, Literature & Language, Philosophy & Theology, Interdisciplinary Studies

   Social Sciences: Social Science I (Economics, Political Science & Related Fields), Social Science II (Anthropology, Communications, Psychology, Sociology & Related Fields)

This gives us a direct measure of the size and direction of doctoral education in the Humanities and Social Sciences across 678 universities from 1960 to 2025 (443,543 dissertations total).

2. **Tracking Key Vocabulary**

   Next, we used computer text analysis (called Natural Language Processing, or NLP) to count how often certain types of vocabulary appeared in dissertations—and how this changed over time. We focused on five categories of words that help us understand trends in the humanities:

   1. *Facts/Truth* – words related to truth, evidence, and factual claims
   2. *Power* – words about authority, control, and influence
   3. *Evaluation* – words that judge or assess value
   4. *Aesthetics* – words about beauty, art, and artistic quality
   5. *Identity* – words about personal and group identity

   For each category, we created a list of between 60 and 105 related terms and had the computer count how often they appeared in each dissertation (see Section 2.2 for the complete word lists).

3. **Measuring Tone Toward Specific Terms**

   Third, we analyzed whether nine specific terms were discussed in positive or negative ways: *Truth, Power, History, American, European, Western, Identity, Subversive,* and *Activism*.

   To do this, we examined the words that appeared near each term (within five words before or after). We then compared these surrounding words against established databases that rate words as positive or negative. This gave each term a score from -1 (very negative) to $+1$ (very positive).

4. **Statistical Modeling**

   Finally, we used statistical models to verify our findings across different groups of universities. We looked at both:

   - A consistent group of 10 universities with data for every year from 1960 to 2025
   - All 678 universities in our dataset

   These models help us separate general trends over time from differences between individual universities. (Technical note: we controlled for unchanging characteristics of each university and isolated year-by-year trends, with statistical adjustments for repeated measurements from the same institutions.)

What We Found

1. Dissertation Numbers Show a Decline in Humanities

The total number of dissertations supports concerns about a "crisis" in the humanities—these fields do appear to be at risk based on dissertations completed and registered in the standard ProQuest repository.

Combined Humanities and Social Sciences dissertations peaked at about 13,408 per year in 2015, then dropped sharply. However, the decline isn't equal:

- Humanities fell by nearly 49% from the 2015 peak
- Social Sciences fell only 4.5%
- By 2025, Social Sciences account for 64% of all dissertations (compared to 43% in 1960)

An interesting pattern emerged within Social Sciences: Fields like Anthropology, Psychology, and Communications (what we call Social Science II) experienced much less decline than did Economics and Political Science (Social Science I). In fact, Social Science II grew continuously from 1960 to 2020—a 70-fold increase over 60 years. By 2025, it accounted for over 40% of all dissertations in our study.

This pattern contradicts a simple explanation that students are just moving toward math-heavy STEM fields. Instead, they are sometimes choosing fields that share many of the Humanities' interpretive approaches but carry a social-science label.

2. How Academic Vocabulary Has Changed

Facts/Truth vocabulary is the most common category overall and has actually *increased* since the 1960s. This is strong evidence that truth-seeking language hasn't disappeared from academic writing.

Power vocabulary surged sharply starting around 1988, especially in Literature and Language programs. During the 1990s, *Power* vocabulary in Language and Literature programs overtook both Evaluation and Aesthetics.

Identity vocabulary has risen steadily since 1980 and is now as common as Evaluation vocabulary (as of 2022). The sharpest growth is in Literature/Language, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Social Science II, with a dramatic acceleration after 2019. Our statistical models show *Identity* vocabulary growing at 5–8% per year—meaning it doubles every 8–12 years. This is much faster than any other category.

Aesthetics vocabulary (words about beauty and art) has declined modestly but steadily across all fields since 1988. The drop is most notable in Literature/Language, where *Power* and *Identity* vocabulary have replaced it as the second-most-common category.

As a subfield, **Philosophy & Theology** shows the most stable vocabulary patterns of any sub-field and is the only one where Evaluation vocabulary has remained more common than Power vocabulary.

3. How Tone Toward Key Terms Has Changed

As a single term, *Truth* is more positively valued (based on verbal context) than any other term we tracked (scoring about 0.35 on our -1 to $+1$ scale)—five to seven times more positive than other terms. This hasn't changed notably over time.

- Philosophy departments are most positive about *Truth* (≈ 0.40) and most consistent
- Interdisciplinary Studies are least positive (≈ 0.00–0.02)
- Only Literature/Language shows a modest decline in positive associations with *Truth* after 1990, and even there it remains substantially positive

Other terms, *American*, *European*, and *Western* have become significantly more negative in tone over time across all fields. The sharpest declines are in Social Science II and Interdisciplinary Studies. While none of these terms have become absolutely negative, the consistent shift toward more critical framing is statistically strong across all 65 years.

Subversive has consistently negative associations across all fields (between -0.20 and -0.15), but has gradually become *less* negative over time—suggesting a rhetorical rehabilitation, especially visible in Literature/Language and Social Science II.

4. Statistical Confirmation of Trends

Our statistical models—which control for differences between up to 678 universities from 1960 to 2025—confirm and quantify these patterns:

Vocabulary growth rates (annual % change):

- *Identity* shows by far the largest growth ($\approx 8\%$ per year, doubling every 8–9 years)
- *Power*, *Facts/Truth*, and *Evaluation* show intermediate growth
- *Aesthetics* shows the weakest growth

Tone trends (annual change on the -1 to $+1$ scale):

- **Becoming more positive:** *Identity*, *Activism*, *Subversive*
- **Becoming more negative:** *Western*, *American*, *Power*, *European*, *History* (with *History* and *European* showing the largest negative shifts)
- **Staying stable:** *Truth*

These patterns are driven primarily by Social Science II, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Literature/Language.

5. Important Findings

Among the most significant findings is that positive attitudes toward *Truth* have remained stable while attitudes toward *Western* heritage terms have declined.

Truth-oriented vocabulary and its positive associations have been maintained across all fields and all decades. Meanwhile, the tone toward *American*, *European*, and *Western* has shifted systematically and durably.

This means that the changes we document may be better described as a shift in cultural values rather than an abandonment of truth-seeking. Scholars have become more critical of terms that concern the Western and American cultural heritage in their writing while simultaneously maintaining—or even strengthening—their rhetorical commitment to the vocabulary of facts and truth and to the value of the term "truth." These are two separate phenomena. Conflating them risks creating a distorted picture of what has actually changed in American doctoral scholarship over the past six decades – and perhaps, by extrapolation, to the humanities more generally.

Geographic patterns also matter: Our analysis shows that the cultural shift isn't uniform across the country. Large research universities in the Northeast and California drive these trends most strongly, while Midwestern and Southern institutions provide a counterbalance.

1.1 The Humanities in "Permanent Crisis": Origins and Persistence

The idea that the humanities face an existential crisis has a history nearly as long as the humanities themselves. As Reitter and Wellmon (2021, p. 91) document, early warnings date to the eighteenth century: Johann Heinrich Zedler's encyclopaedia already noted a growing "prejudice" against humanistic study on the grounds that it did not respond to "immediate needs" and constituted mere "impractical arts". By 1929, the German philosopher Eduard Spranger was addressing the Berlin Academy of Sciences about a cultural crisis stretching back centuries, in which the "positivist ideals and methods of the natural sciences had infiltrated the humanities" (Reitter and Wellmon, 2021, p. 5). The concept of a *studia humanitatis*—first established in early-sixteenth-century university curricula as a domain distinct from scholastic theology—was, it seems, perpetually under siege.

The term "humanities" has been employed in various ways since the early fifteenth century, when reform-minded scholars in Italy called for a revival of classical modes of learning. Their educational ideal of the *studia humanitatis* was rooted in the Roman concept of "humanitas" and emphasized the development of human virtue and a balance between action and contemplation. The Renaissance humanist curriculum was a liberal arts program, distinct from medieval scholastic theology, and it centered on five key areas: grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy. Its goal was to cultivate well-rounded, virtuous, and active citizens, prioritizing critical thinking, admiration for classical culture, and appreciation of human achievements over purely vocational training.vIn 1808 German philosopher Friedrich Niethammer weaponized the term *Humanismus* as a polemic against school reformers who wanted more practical pedagogical training; the term referred to a "curricular program and a moral project" whose essential feature was elevating the student's humanity over his "animality" (Reitter and Wellmon, 2021, p. 29). The very act of resurrecting the Renaissance concept of the humanities as a category at the dawn of the industrial revolution, was an act of resistance against forces perceived to be threatening them.

The modern crisis terminology entered Anglo-American discourse prominently in 1964 when the British historian John Harold Plumb edited the volume *Crisis in the Humanities*, declaring that humanists faced a stark choice: "either change the image they present, adapt themselves to the needs of a society dominated by science and technology, or retreat into social triviality" (Plumb, 1964, p. 8). A year later, the Report of the Commission on the Humanities defined the disciplines as constituting "the soul of our culture" and warned that "an evident disregard, or at best a deep devaluation, of the things that refine and dignify and give meaning to our humanity…creates a crisis for national leadership" (American Council of Learned Societies, 1969, pp. 1–2). The charge that the crisis was partly self-inflicted appeared in the same period: Plumb (1964) cataloged complaints that humanists had become too specialized, that their work had grown narrow and insular, that they wrote in jargon opaque to outsiders, and that the curriculum had fragmented without any common purpose.

Reitter and Wellmon's central argument is that this persistent invocation of crisis is not merely rhetorical bad habit but structurally necessary: "the self-understanding of the modern humanities didn't merely take shape in response to a perceived crisis; it also made crisis a core part of the project of the humanities" (Reitter and Wellmon, 2021, p. 3). For both politically progressive and conservative scholars alike, crisis rhetoric has served to ground claims that the humanities have a special civilizational mission—what the philosopher Wilhelm Dilthey called a "bulwark" safeguarding something sacred against threatening forces (Reitter and Wellmon,

2021). The humanities, in this reading, have been in permanent crisis because they have needed to be.

1.2 The Quantitative Decline of Humanities Graduate Education

Whether or not the crisis is structurally conjured, the quantitative evidence of decline in recent decades is substantial. As early as 1949, Brée (1949, p. 337) voiced concern about a "crisis in the humanities" as literary study seemed to have lost its sense of "delight and newness". A first wave of quantitative decline is visible in enrollment data from the 1970s; a second, steeper wave has unfolded since roughly 2010.

The more recent "crisis" discourse since 2010 reflected recurring ideas from past waves, while also introducing new concerns—among others, those related to the rise of STEM fields in the computing boom and related employment shifts. Writing in 2018, historian Benjamin Schmidt—who had long resisted applying the crisis label, believing the numbers were overstated and the term strategically misused—finally acknowledged that the evidence compelled alarm (Schmidt, 2018). Data compiled by the Humanities Indicators Project of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences confirm that, as of 2020, the share of master's and doctoral degrees awarded in the humanities had fallen to a record low (Townsend, 2022). History and philosophy experienced the steepest sub-field declines between 2012 and 2020, with program counts falling by approximately 12 and 10 percent respectively; only communication among the large humanities disciplines grew (Inside Higher Ed, 2022). A 2014 study by the Council of Graduate Schools found that applications for humanities doctorates decreased an average of nearly one percent per year from 2009 to 2014, with an almost four-percent drop in a single year (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2014). By 2017, bachelor's degrees in the humanities were down five percent year on year (Times Higher Education, 2017).

Subsequent indicators have intensified this picture. Nathan Heller's widely-discussed *New Yorker* essay "The End of the English Major" (Heller, 2023) reported that enrollment in English and history at the collegiate level had fallen by approximately one-third over the prior decade, an account that helped move the recent collapse from a specialist to a mainstream public concern. The American Academy of Arts & Sciences' Academic Humanities Today: Findings from the 2024 Department Survey documents that bachelor's degrees awarded in the humanities had fallen to 165,489 by 2024—the smallest annual figure since 1991 and roughly 30 percent below the 2012 peak—and that the number of humanities doctorates conferred in 2022 was 14 percent below the 2015 high (American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2024).

Scholarly commentary has identified a cluster of mutually reinforcing causes. Jay (2014) diagnoses the crisis as primarily driven by the poor case being made to families about employment prospects: the "intangible value" of education in history, philosophy, and literature is "of decreasing interest to families worried about their children's employment prospects," while STEM fields appear "forward looking" in an age of exploding technology. The constraints of the academic labor market burdened by high supply and low demand—disproportionately severe in the humanities—compounds this: fewer than half of new humanities PhDs had employment secured at graduation by 2020, compared with nearly two-thirds in 1990 (The Scholarly Kitchen, 2022). Structural funding constraints make doctoral study financially precarious for candidates who carry undergraduate debt (Newfield, 2024; Taylor et al., 2023), while the corporatization of higher education has eroded the institutional standing of disciplines whose contributions are long-term and difficult to monetize (Australian Humanities Review, 2025).

Detailed empirical evidence on humanities-PhD labor outcomes comes from the American Historical Association's "Where Historians Work" project, which traces the employment of more than 12,000 history doctorates conferred at U.S. institutions between 2004 and 2017 and finds that fewer than half occupy tenure-track academic positions, with substantial shares dispersed across government, public history, the nonprofit sector, and the private economy (American Historical Association, 2022). This suggests that the

supply of humanities doctorates has continued to outrun the academic labor market the discipline trains them for, even as graduates demonstrably succeed in non-academic careers.

The picture is complicated, however. Maxwell (1969) argued that "economic determinism" cannot explain the plight of the humanities: the crisis is "relative rather than absolute," and a decline in financial support cannot account for it because the costs of humanities research are far lower than those of the sciences. His hypothesis, instead, was that the crisis "stems from a missing methodological link between the humanities themselves and the goals which the humanities espouse"—a failure of the disciplines to demonstrate to society what, precisely, they have to offer (Maxwell, 1969, p. 72). Contrary to the bleakest readings, the absolute number of humanities degrees conferred in the United States has actually risen since the 1970s, reflecting the overall expansion of higher education; it is the share of degrees that has fallen (Jay, 2014).

Geographic and cultural variation matters as well. Dallal (2017) shows that the crisis of academic humanities in the Arab world has different causes and a different historical trajectory than the Western crisis, cautioning against universalizing a crisis narrative whose drivers are specific to particular political economies and university systems. d'Abrera (2019) documents a parallel Australian case, arguing that government-funded research councils have narrowed humanities funding toward identity-politics topics at the expense of research on Western civilization, rule of law, and free inquiry—a pattern that, she contends, both reflects and accelerates the disciplinary narrowing at the heart of the crisis. Yonezawa (2017) traces a parallel Japanese case to the 2015 MEXT directive urging national universities to scale back or repurpose humanities and social-science faculties—a turn he attributes to long-standing STEM-prioritization policies combined with the structural disadvantage facing Japanese-language scholarship in the English-dominated metrics that increasingly govern university funding and prestige.

1.3 Contesting the Crisis: Skeptical Voices

Not all scholars accept the crisis framing. Writing in 1978, Byrum Carter argued that the "cries of 'crisis'" were "also misleading" and drew "distinctions that are false and portray threats that are delusory," contending that the humanities would survive even if federal support were entirely withdrawn Carter (1978). Herbert Muller pointed to a more fundamental definitional problem: the humanities have "no clear definition" and "no common core," being merely what remains "when the sciences and technical or vocational studies have been separated out" Muller (1970). Without a common core, the category may be too internally heterogeneous for any single narrative of crisis or decline to describe it accurately.

Stefan Collini, the British intellectual historian, represents the most prominent recent skeptic. In his essay collection *Speaking of Universities* (2017), he called the crisis discourse "distracting" and potentially ahistorical: "if academics were aware of how much of their crisis rhetoric repeated old laments, they might adopt a different tone, or come up with more original turns of phrase" (Reitter and Wellmon, 2021, as discussed in p. 3). Spencer (2014, p. 406) similarly warns against framing the challenges facing the humanities "in terms of a crisis discourse that deprecates freedom in accord with the neoliberal agenda."

The debate hinges partly on what counts as evidence of crisis. Townsend and Bradburn (2022, p. 11) capture the ambiguity neatly: "Depending on how you look at it, the humanities in America are either racing down a steep decline or entering a state of renewal and vitality". The present study contributes to this debate by bringing systematic computational evidence to bear—tracking not just counts of dissertations but the terminological and conceptual content of doctoral scholarship over sixty-five years.

1.4 The Cultural and Linguistic Turns in Academic Scholarship

Parallel to the quantitative decline in total numbers of PhD's granted and dissertations written, runs an intellectual transformation of disputed significance. The "linguistic turn" of the 1970s and 1980s—associated with poststructuralists including Foucault, Derrida, and Lacan—redirected scholarly attention toward language, discourse, and representation as constitutive of social reality (Armstrong, 2001, 9). The subsequent "cultural turn" spread these commitments into history, sociology, and anthropology; cultural theories, especially in their postmodernist inflections, "challenged the very possibility or desirability of social explanation"(Bonnell and Hunt, 1999). Sewell (2005) located the timing of this shift in the structural economic transformations of the Reagan–Thatcher era.

By the 1990s, postmodernism had become closely associated with postcolonialism and identity politics, while terms such as "subject position," "hegemony," and "discourse" entered mainstream critical vocabulary (Best and Kellner, 1991; Hall, 1996; Aylesworth, 2015). Critics argued that the displacement of traditional truth-seeking norms by power-centered frameworks contributed to humanities disciplines' declining public credibility (Newfield, 2024). d'Abrera (2019, p. 4) is explicit on this point, contending that in the 1970s and 1980s the humanities "rejected their original purpose" and "adopted a range of radical post-structuralism and post-modernist theories," resulting in a "gradual homogenization of academic life" governed by "one particular orthodoxy: class, race and gender". The extent of this rhetorical transformation and whether it is cause, symptom, or incidental to the quantitative decline are questions the present study is uniquely positioned to address.

Three observations from the theoretical literature directly motivate the construction of explanatory variables in this report. First, the poststructuralist vocabulary of power, hegemony, and resistance is sufficiently distinctive lexically that it is detectable in bag-of-words term frequency analysis even without sophisticated parsing. Second, the identity-politics vocabulary that followed the linguistic turn in the 1990s—"intersectionality," "positionality," "decolonization"—emerged primarily within the humanities and culture-oriented social sciences, making its diffusion traceable through subfield comparisons. Third, if the linguistic turn genuinely displaced epistemological norms, we would expect to observe declining *Facts/Truth Claims* vocabulary alongside rising *Power* and *Identity* vocabulary. Trend H3 tests this directly; the data, as reported below, decisively reject the displacement Trend.

1.5 Computational Analysis of Academic Discourse

Within computational social science, diachronic analysis of word frequency distinguishes selection (systematic directional change) from drift (stochastic fluctuation) in the evolution of academic vocabulary (Karjus et al., 2020). Natural language proximity measures—the approach used here to estimate sentiment—situate words within their co-occurrence contexts, capturing the evaluative associations that surround a term rather than merely its raw frequency (Boyd and Schwartz, 2021). Titles and abstracts are well suited to this analysis because they represent the author's most deliberate rhetorical choices (Hyland, 2000). Hou and Huang (2025) note that temporal analysis of institutional documents can identify shifts in research priorities with precision unavailable to qualitative reading at scale.

The present study extends this tradition in three ways. First, unlike most prior corpus studies that focus on published journal articles or books, we examine doctoral dissertations in full—including abstracts, titles, and main text—a form that captures scholarly production at the point of entry into the profession, before editorial and peer-review filters have shaped the final output into professional publications. Dissertations

therefore reflect the full distribution of scholarly practice at a given institution and moment, not merely its published apex. Second, the scale of the corpus (443,543 documents, 65 years) substantially exceeds most prior text-analytic studies of academic discourse, enabling subfield-level comparisons with adequate statistical power. Third, the combination of term-frequency and proximity-sentiment measures—applied simultaneously across five conceptual baskets and nine focal terms—provides a richer portrait of rhetorical change than either measure alone could deliver.

While this dataset allows analysis of dissertation data on an unprecedented scale, it is still affected by common issues in automated text data, such as changes in word meanings over time and OCR errors in older records. By comparing relative changes over time and accounting for differences between universities, we reduce the chance that these data issues drive the main patterns we observe.

1.6 Key Trends We Examined

Drawing on this literature and the structure of our data, we focused our analysis on five key trends.

Trend 1 Different Rates of Decline Across Fields

We examined whether the decline in dissertation production after 2015 was steeper in Humanities/Arts subfields than in Social Sciences, and whether it was milder in culturally-oriented fields (Social Science II: Anthropology, Psychology, Communications) than in more quantitatively-oriented fields (Social Science I: Economics, Political Science). Previous research on the academic job market collapse and the partial shift of student interest toward culture and identity-oriented fields outside the humanities suggested this pattern might exist.

Trend 2 Growth of Identity and Power Language

We tracked whether vocabulary associated with identity and power relations showed the largest growth over the study period, consistent with the cultural and linguistic turns documented in prior research. We paid particular attention to whether this growth was most pronounced in Literature/Language, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Social Science II—the subfields thought to be most deeply influenced by poststructuralist and postcolonial theoretical frameworks.

Trend 3 Persistence of Truth-Seeking Language

Testing claims that humanistic scholarship has abandoned truth-seeking norms, we examined whether *Facts/Truth* vocabulary declined or maintained high frequency across all fields throughout the study period. If truth claims remained important to scholarship across fields we expected that truth-related vocabulary—evidence, empirical, hypothesis—would remain pervasive in academic writing as a genre convention, even if underlying epistemological commitments shifted.

Trend 4 Changing Attitudes Toward Western Heritage Terms

We analyzed whether tone toward terms associated with Western cultural heritage (*American*, *European*, *Western*) became more negative over time, and whether this shift was, as expected, most pronounced in Social Science II, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Literature/Language. We also examined whether Philosophy—where truth-oriented discourse is most deeply institutionalized—showed the least negative shift and maintained the most positive associations with *Truth*.

Trend 5 Growing Similarity Between Social Sciences and Humanities

We investigated whether Social Science II showed growing similarity in vocabulary and tone with Humanities subfields most associated with identity and power discourse (Interdisciplinary Studies, Literature/Language), rather than with Social Science I. This pattern would reflect the partial adoption of poststructuralist frameworks by Anthropology, Communication, and related fields within Social Science II.

2 Data and Methodology

2.1 Complete Dataset

The corpus draws on a digital collection of academic dissertations provided by ProQuest's TDM Studio. In total, 443,543 U.S. dissertations form the analytical foundation.

Given the scale of the corpus, data were processed in sequential batches on the TDM Studio server infrastructure. Datasets were streamed incrementally from S3 cloud storage to the analytical workbench, processed in sequence, and cleared after each batch to maintain a continuous workflow across the full 443,543 documents.

Each document carries thirteen key metadata fields: a unique identifier (`GOID`); full text (`Text`); publication details (`Title`, `Date`, `Publisher`); author information (`FirstName`, `LastName`); institutional context (`SchoolCodeName`, `SchoolLocation`); academic classifications (`DegreeName`, `ClassExpansion`, `DissPaperCategory`); and document length (`PageCount`). Documents are handled in batches of 10,000 to manage memory.

Several features of the ProQuest corpus require acknowledgment as potential sources of measurement error. First, coverage is not uniform across time: the corpus includes 1,101 dissertations from 1960 but grows rapidly through the 1970s and 1980s as digitization back-catalogs were assembled. While the coverage rate from approximately 1990 onward is high and broadly representative of US doctoral production, the early decades should be interpreted with appropriate caution, particularly for small subfields where year-level counts may be as low as 10–30 dissertations. Second, registration delays— especially pronounced in the 2023–2025 period—mean that the most recent data undercount actual output. Table A.21 records the document count by year; the fall from 10,485 in 2023 to 8,740 in 2024 and 7,097 in 2025 almost certainly reflects this delay rather than a further acceleration of the underlying enrollment decline. Third, the corpus captures dissertations from programs that archive with ProQuest; some institutions and programs may be systematically underrepresented. Table A.31 (z-score analysis by university and year) provides a diagnostic tool for identifying outlier institutions whose unusual term frequencies might distort corpus-level estimates.

Notwithstanding these limitations, the core disciplinary trends in the corpus are independently validated: dissertation counts and the relative Humanities–Social Sciences composition are benchmarked against NCES federal degree-conferral data in Appendix RC-1, and the external data confirm both the direction and approximate magnitude of the trends documented below.

2.2 Disciplinary Categorization

The classification system organizes dissertations into higher-level intellectual domains. The primary division separates Humanities & Arts from Social Sciences. Humanities & Arts encompasses disciplines oriented toward cultural production, interpretation, and aesthetic analysis. Social Sciences covers fields concerned with social structures, institutions, and behavior.

Within these groupings, History & Related Fields covers historical research across periods and regions; Literature/Language encompasses national and comparative literatures, linguistics, and rhetoric; Philosophy/Theology gathers work on knowledge, ethics, metaphysics, and belief systems. Studies captures interdisciplinary programs combining methods from history, sociology, politics, and the humanities. Social Science I (Eco-

nomics and Political Science) and Social Science II (Anthropology, Psychology, Communications) represent internal sub-groupings that differ in methodological orientation.

The complete classification is detailed in Table A.20, which enumerates 443,543 dissertations across 165 sub-categories. Several classification decisions warrant explicit discussion. Psychology is assigned to Social Science II rather than to a stand-alone category, reflecting its methodological heterogeneity: clinical and counseling psychology share interpretive conventions with Communications and Anthropology, while experimental psychology is closer to Social Science I. This assignment follows from the `DissPaperCategory` field in the ProQuest metadata, which is used as the primary classification signal for borderline cases.

Some categories are assigned to multiple groupings simultaneously—for example, "Military Studies" appears in Humanities, Social Sciences, and History (Table A.20). These multi-memberships are resolved by proportional weighting rather than arbitrary exclusion, minimizing misclassification at the margin. The sensitivity of aggregate results to alternative boundary decisions at the Social Science I / Social Science II boundary was examined in preliminary analysis and found to have negligible impact on the main findings, given the relatively small number of dissertations in ambiguous categories relative to the total.

2.3 Terminological Baskets

Five baskets of terms form the core analytical constructs, capturing distinct conceptual registers:

Cat. 1. **Facts, Evidence, and Truth-Claim Discourse.** Terms centered on factuality, evidence, empirical reasoning, and epistemological claims (*fact, evidence, chronology, artifact, record, archive, document, manuscript, timeline, civilization, event, discovery, chronicle, heritage, tradition, antiquity, monument, inscription, annals, memorial, antiquities, primary source, secondary source, museum, narrative, oral history, dynasty, kingdom, treaty, constitution, declaration, edict, decree, proclamation, statute, law, battle, war, trade, economy, restoration, preservation, reconstruction, interpretation, legacy, inheritance, influence, impact, analysis, documentation, antique, context, continuity, factual, objectivity, data, library, empirical, causal, causation, inference, explanation, explanatory, medieval, sovereign, authoritative, intention, definitive, conclusive, proof, argument, premise, hypothesis, demonstrate, demonstrable, truth, evolution, evolutionary, articulate, quantitative, qualitative, judgment, logic, evaluation, regression, statistics, statistical, formal, treatise, disambiguate, correlation, a priori, deductive, inductive, uncertainty, probability, diachronic, synchronic, forensic, scientific, wrong, false, falsify, disprove, mathematical*).

Cat. 2. **Aesthetic, Artistic, and Stylistic Terminology.** Vocabulary of aesthetic analysis and artistic form (*beauty, art, design, style, harmony, form, composition, proportion, balance, symmetry, elegance, grace, color, texture, pattern, shape, contrast, light, shadow, tone, shade, sublime, picturesque, minimalism, ornament, decoration, abstract, figurative, realism, surrealism, modernism, postmodernism, classicism, romanticism, expressionism, impressionism, baroque, renaissance, aestheticism, avant-garde, beautification, iconography, unity, essence, creativity, originality, craftsmanship, taste, refinement, delicacy, simplicity, charm, allure, radiance, vibrancy, serenity, tranquility, dynamism, rhythm, euphony, ornamentation, subtlety, ethereal, visuality, poise, artistic, craft, canonical, genre*).

Cat. 3. **Authority, Hierarchy, and Power Relations.** Terms describing political and social power (*authority, control, dominance, hierarchy, power, status, subordination, oppression, resistance, hegemony, coercion, consent, negotiation, conflict, competition, dependency, sovereignty, empowerment, disempowerment, manipulation, persuasion, force, submission, obedience, revolt, rebellion, revolution, exploitation,*

privilege, inequality, equity, patriarchy, matriarchy, colonialism, imperialism, feudalism, capitalism, socialism, communism, dictatorship, anarchy, elitism, oligarchy, plutocracy, meritocracy, class, caste, race, gender, ethnicity, power struggle, domination, subjugation, solidarity, polarization, authority figure, charisma, legitimacy, policy, agency, constraint, injustice, advantage, disadvantage, monopoly, oligopoly, tyranny, dictate, command, order, subversion, control mechanisms, power relations, dominant group, marginalization, state, citizen, subject, coerce, coercive, deconstruct, subaltern, interpellation).

Cat. 4. **Identity, Social Category, and Critical Theory.** Vocabulary of identity politics and critical social theory (*ableism, ageism, alterity, anti-Blackness, belonging, BIPOC, biopolitics, borderlands, cancel culture, cisnormativity, colorism, critical race theory, colonialism, decoloniality, decolonization, diaspora, disability, diversity, embodiment, empowerment, equity, erasure, ethnicity, eurocentrism, exclusion, feminist, gender, gender fluid, gender nonconforming, genderqueer, hegemony, heteronormativity, identity, inclusion, indigeneity, intersectionality, internalized oppression, lgbt, lgbtqia, marginalization, masculinity, misogyny, multiculturalism, nativism, normativity, oppression, othering, patriarchy, performativity, political correctness, positionality, privilege, queer, queerness, racial capitalism, racialization, racism, representation, settler colonialism, neocolonial, social construct, social justice, structural inequality, systemic racism, toxic masculinity, transgender, transphobia, visibility, white fragility, white supremacy, whiteness, wokeness, xenophobia, gender ideology, feminism, intersectional, gender affirming, sexism, anti-racist, transexual, neurodivergent*).

Cat. 5. **Evaluative, Normative, and Judgment-Oriented Language.** Terms expressing normative appraisal and ethical reasoning (*good, bad, right, wrong, normative, evaluative, value, persuasive, probable, taxonomic, perceptive, intuitive, judgement, correctness, moral, ethical, categorical, liberal, illiberal, conservative, traditional, pious, virtuous, moderate, brave, courageous, loyalty, faithful, generous, perfect, excellent, superior, inferior, articulate, clarity, precision, comprehensive, holistic, truthful, coherent, strong argument, weak argument, effective, successful, skillful, convincing, profound, relevant, thorough, significant, erroneous, honest, appropriate, robust, beneficial, advantageous, preferable, just, fair*).

Each basket is defined by a closed vocabulary of seed terms selected to capture a conceptual register rather than any single theoretical school. The *Facts/Truth Claims* basket, for instance, includes terms from empiricist epistemology (*evidence*, *empirical*, *causal*) alongside more general epistemic vocabulary (*fact*, *truth*, *hypothesis*); this breadth is intentional, as it allows the basket to detect truth-claim discourse across both quantitative social science (which uses *causal* and *empirical* heavily) and philosophical analysis (which uses *truth* and *hypothesis*). The *Identity* basket is similarly broad, including terms from multiple waves of identity theory: second-wave feminist vocabulary (*positionality*), queer theory (*heteronormativity*, *queer*), postcolonial studies (*decolonization*), and intersectional frameworks (*intersectionality*).

All term frequencies are normalized by the total word count of the relevant document set for each year-field cell, yielding a rate (words in basket / total words) comparable across cells of different size. Raw frequency counts are archived but not reported in the main text, as they conflate compositional change (more dissertations) with genuine linguistic change (different word choices). The normalized measure isolates the latter.

The nine focal sentiment terms (*Identity, History, Truth, American, European, Western, Subversive, Activism, Power*) were selected to span the key conceptual axes of the cultural-turn debates: epistemic terms (*Truth*), geopolitical/heritage terms (*American, European, Western*), temporal terms (*History*), and political/activist terms (*Identity, Subversive, Activism, Power*). Sentiment is estimated by computing the average valence of all content words appearing within a ten-word window of each focal term across the full text of dissertations in a given year-field cell, calibrated against the LIWC and AFINN valence lexicons. The resulting scores are bounded in $[-1, +1]$ by construction and are averaged within cells before panel-regression analysis.

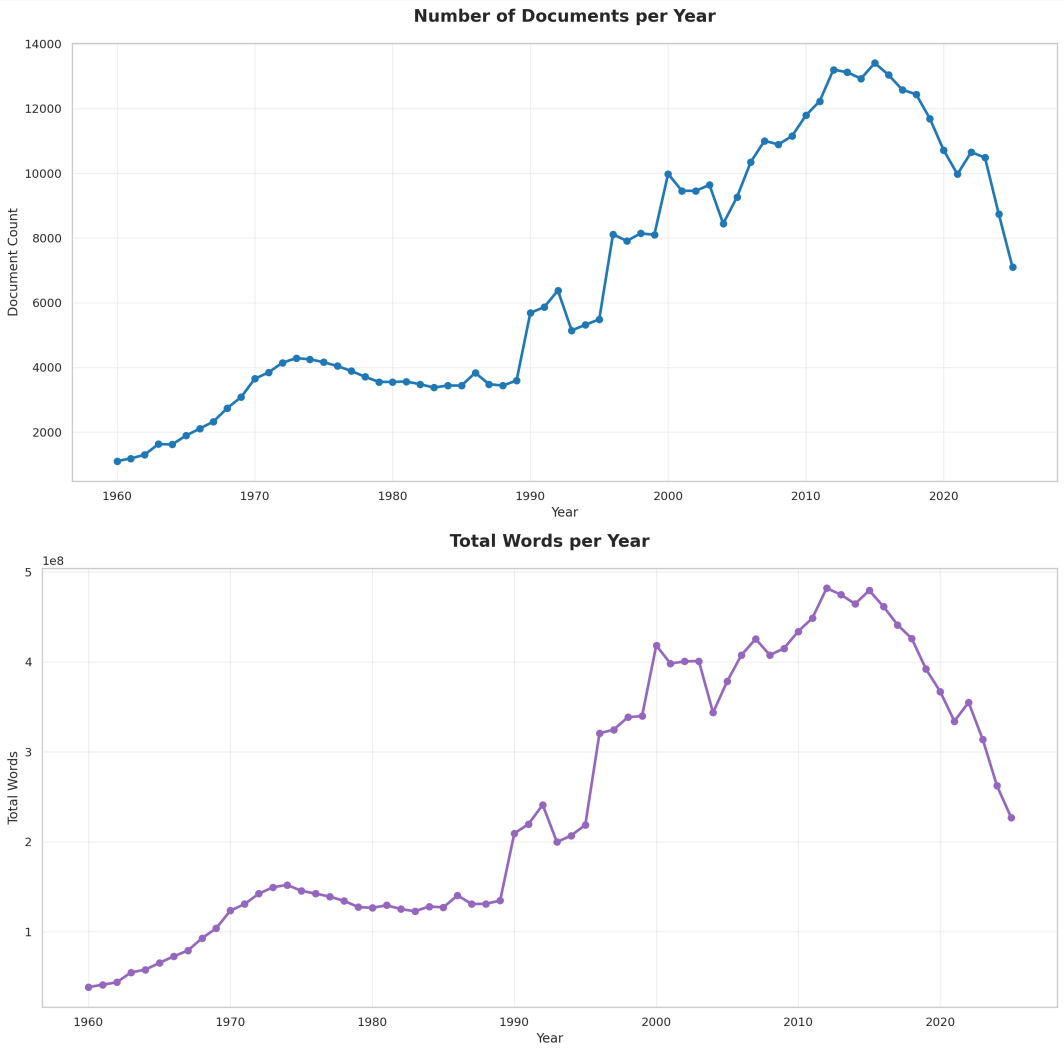
Dissertation Counts and Temporal Trends

3

3.1 Aggregate Trends

Figure 1(a) illustrates the longitudinal rise and fall of annual dissertation output. The pattern aligns closely with AAAS data derived from Department of Education statistics: steady growth from 1960 through the mid-2010s, followed by a sharp decline. Figure 1(b) tracks aggregate word counts, which follows a similar trajectory. Data for 2023–2025 should be interpreted with caution owing to delays in author registration.

Figure 1 Document and Word Counts, 1960–2025



(a)

(b)

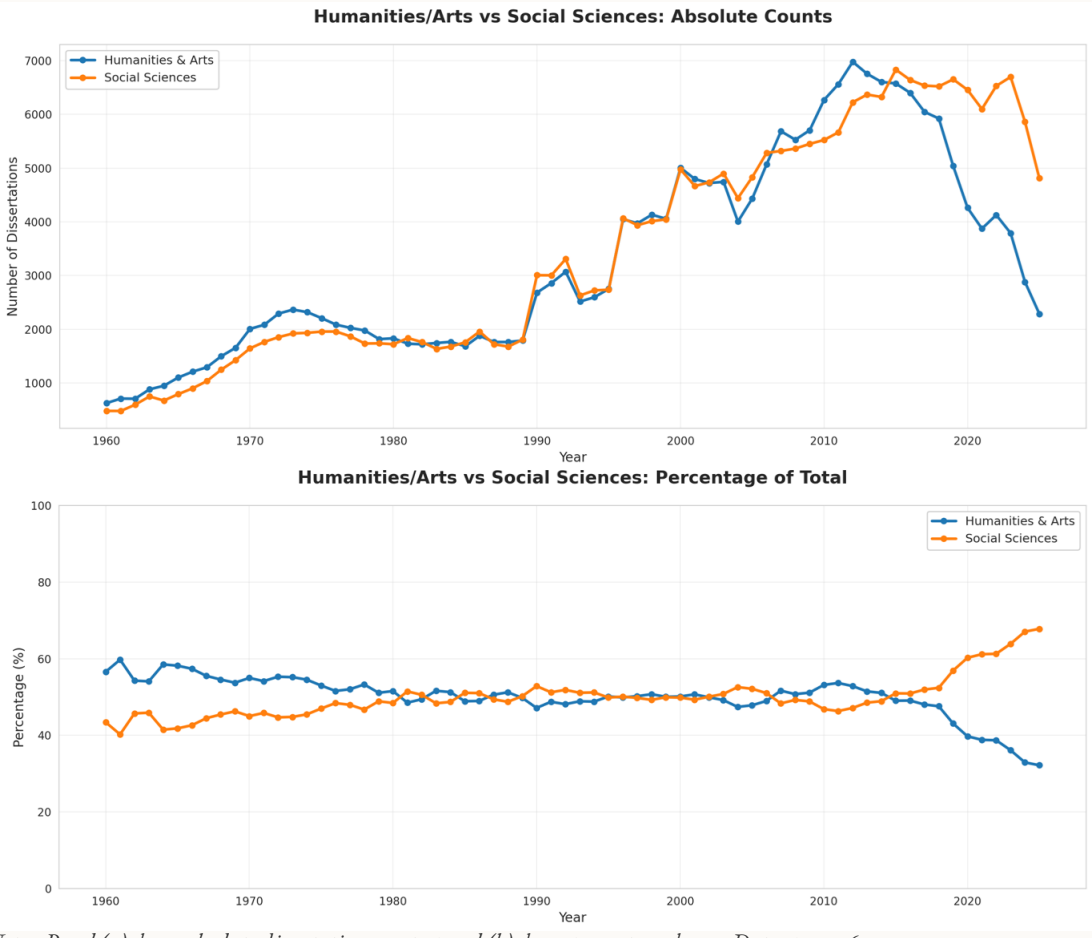
The long-run trajectory is striking in its regularity. Between 1960 and 1975, annual dissertation output roughly quadrupled—from approximately 1,100 to 4,200—tracking both the postwar expansion of American higher education and the baby-boom cohort's passage through graduate school. A plateau and modest retreat followed through the 1980s, before a second and more pronounced wave of growth began in the early 1990s: the corpus records 5,686 dissertations in 1990, 9,980 in 2000, and a peak of 13,408 in 2015. The subsequent

decline is sharp. By 2025, the corpus records only 7,097 dissertations—a fall of 47% from the 2015 peak. This contraction reflects two forces in combination: a genuine structural decline in Humanities doctoral production, and a time-lag artifact in which recently conferred degrees have not yet been registered in the ProQuest database. NCES federal data allow us to separate them: they confirm a real decline of approximately 9% in Humanities doctorate conferrals from the 2011–12 peak through 2016–17 (Appendix RC-1), while the much larger magnitude observed in our corpus is attributable to registration delays in the most recent years and to the corpus's stronger coverage of elite institutions where the structural contraction has been most acute.

3.2 Humanities versus Social Sciences

Figure 2 separates counts by broad field. Until approximately 1980, Humanities maintained both higher absolute counts and a larger share of the total. A period of rough parity followed until around 2015, after which Humanities numbers declined far more steeply. By 2025, Social Sciences account for nearly 64% of the combined total, compared with roughly 43% in 1960.

Figure 2 Dissertation Trends: Humanities/Arts versus Social Sciences



Notes: Panel (a) shows absolute dissertation counts; panel (b) shows percentage shares. Data span 1960–2025.

The shift between the Humanities and Social Sciences represents a major structural change in the data. In absolute terms, the asymmetry is stark: while Social Science dissertation counts fell only 4.5% from their 2015

peak (31,416 to 29,997), Humanities dissertations plummeted by nearly 49% (33,473 to 16,951) in that same decade. This divergence suggests that the decline is not a uniform result of shared factors like funding cuts or demographics, which should have affected both groups similarly. Instead, the evidence points to a crisis specifically concentrated in the Humanities.

However, these sharp declines may be partly exaggerated by time-lag bias, as newer research takes time to be processed and appear in the TDM Studio database. Because this lag can artificially depress recent totals, it is more accurate to focus on relative percentages rather than absolute counts. Assuming all fields are indexed at a similar rate, looking at the distribution allows for a more reliable comparison despite the missing recent data.

When viewed through this relative lens, the historical shift is clear. As shown in Table A.1, the Humanities held a steady majority in the 1960s (57% of output), a gap that narrowed until both fields reached parity (50% each) around 1985. This balance remained remarkably stable for the next 30 years. That parity ended abruptly after 2015: in a single decade, the Humanities' share of the corpus collapsed from 51.6% to 36.1%, leaving the Social Sciences with nearly twice the output of Humanities fields by 2025.

An alternative interpretation of these trends deserves explicit acknowledgment. The observed contraction may reflect a rational market correction rather than a broader disciplinary crisis: if humanities doctoral programs over-enrolled relative to available academic positions during the 1990s and 2000s, the post-2015 contraction may represent institutions and prospective students responding sensibly to signals of weak labor-market demand—such as increased time to completion, intensifying competition for fewer faculty positions, and deteriorating outside options (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2014). On this reading, the pre-2015 peak was the historical anomaly, and the current decline constitutes a structural adjustment to long-term economic realities.

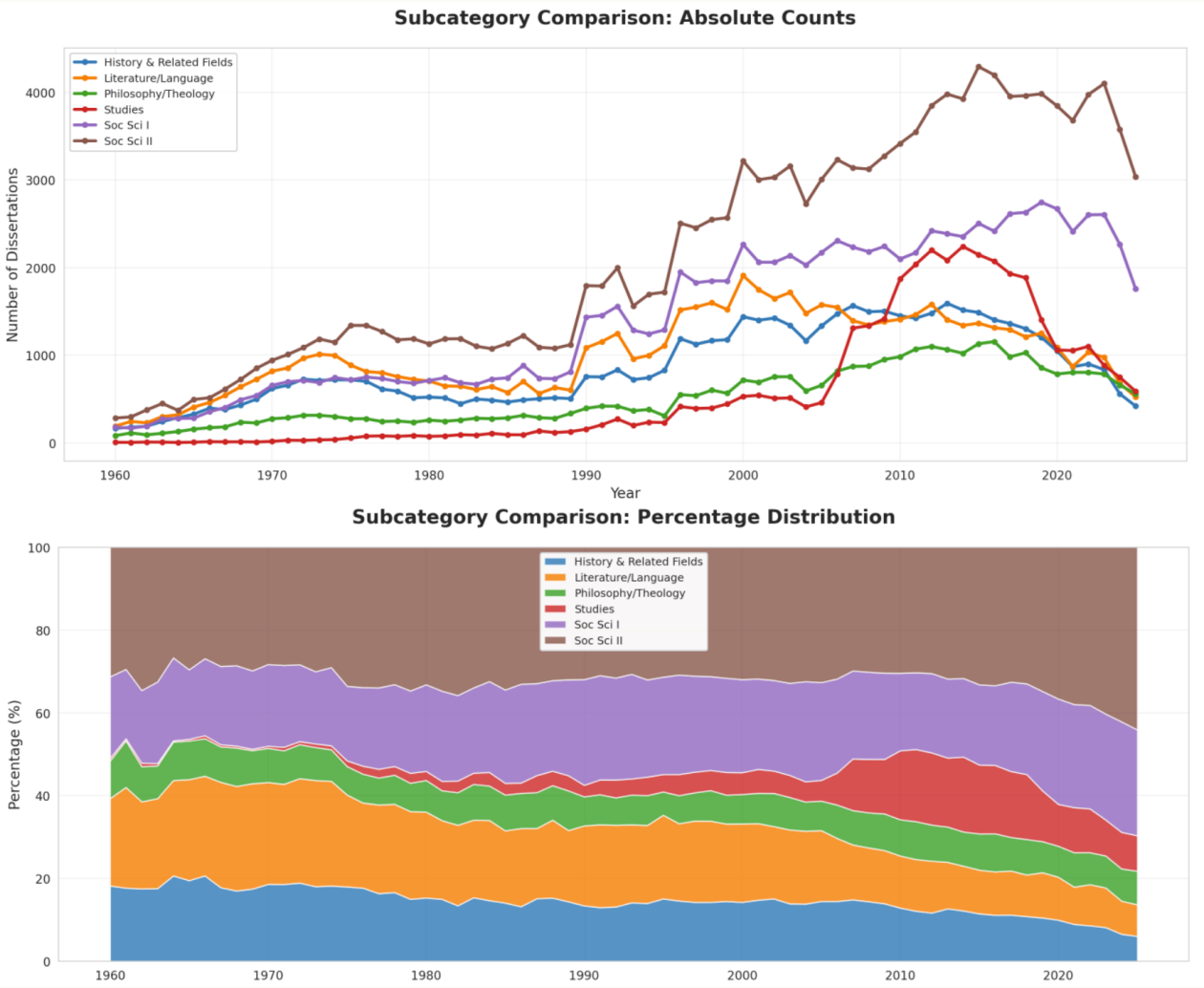
The external enrollment data provide a partial but important rebuttal. NCES degree- conferral records show that humanities doctorates constituted 6.6% of all U.S. research degrees in 1970–71 but only 4.0% by 2016–17 (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)) — a decline in relative standing that was continuous throughout the period, including during the years of absolute growth. In other words, humanities doctoral education was already losing share of a rapidly expanding graduate sector throughout the supposed "over-enrollment" period; the 1990s–2000s expansion was simply slower than the growth in total degree production, not an exuberant overshoot. Had humanities maintained its 1970–71 share of total degrees, the 2016–17 cohort would have numbered approximately 11,900 rather than the 7,170 actually conferred—a shortfall of 40%. This longer view suggests the decline is structural and secular rather than corrective and temporary, though the market-correction mechanism may have amplified the post-2015 rate of contraction on top of the pre-existing trend.

3.3 Subfield Trends

The subfield decomposition in Figure 3 and Table A.4 of the Appendix reveals that the aggregate decline is not evenly distributed across disciplines. Literature/Language fell from 8,162 dissertations in 2005 to 4,084 in 2025—a 50% decline—while History & Related Fields dropped from a peak of 7,496 in 2015 to 3,583 by 2025, a contraction of 52% in a single decade. The most dramatic arc is found in Interdisciplinary Studies, which grew from near-zero in 1980 (64 dissertations) to a peak of 10,707 in 2015, only to collapse by 59% to 4,373 by 2025.

While these sharp drops in raw counts are likely exacerbated by time-lag bias in the TDM Studio database, the relative percentage distribution confirms a deeper structural realignment. By focusing on the share of

Figure 3 Dissertation Counts by Subfield



the total corpus, we can better control for database latency. Even through this relative lens, the trajectories remain striking: together, History and Literature contributed 30% of all dissertations in 1965; by 2025, their combined share of the full corpus had fallen below 11%.

Conversely, Social Science II (Anthropology, Psychology, Communications) presents a picture of unique resilience. From just 283 dissertations in 1960, it grew continuously to a record 19,940 in 2020 and remained at 18,368 in 2025. Its share of the combined corpus rose from 31.3% in 1960 to 40.2% in 2025, making it by far the largest single sub-grouping by the end of the study period.

The growth of Social Science II—the group arguably *least* quantitatively oriented of the two social science groupings—is inconsistent with a simple STEM-substitution story. The data suggest that the shift in dissertation production is associated with fields that share many of the Humanities' interpretive approaches rather than with more technical, data-driven disciplines.

Normalized Metrics: Baskets of Terms

This section examines field-averaged frequencies for each of the five term baskets, treating the 65-year period as a steady state to establish cross-field baselines. All frequencies are normalized by word count. The normalization removes differences in dissertation length and corpus-year composition, making the resulting figures directly comparable across fields and subfields. A value of, say, 0.010 per word means that, on average, one in every 100 words in a dissertation from that field belongs to the relevant basket—a meaningful share given that most academic vocabulary is shared generic connective text rather than field-specific terminology. One limitation of this approach is worth noting: normalized frequency cannot fully separate genuine differences in topic emphasis from differences in how verbose a field's writing conventions are—disciplines like English and History tend to use more words per page than fields that rely heavily on figures, tables, or formal notation, which means their raw term counts may be somewhat inflated relative to more "dense" fields even after normalization by total word count.

Figure 4 presents bar charts for each major field and subfield. The vertical 'whiskers' in those bar charts represent ± 1 standard deviation, indicating the spread of observed values around each field's mean terminological frequency. Across all groupings, *Facts/Truth Claims* ranks highest, followed by Power Dynamics, with Evaluation third. Aesthetics shows high cross-field variation, peaking in Literature/Language and reaching its lowest value in Social Science I. Philosophy is the only subfield in which *Evaluation* outranks *Power*. In Interdisciplinary Studies, *Identity* approaches parity with *Evaluation* and exceeds *Aesthetics*.

Figures 5 and 6 place all fields on a common scale, permitting direct quantitative comparison. The substantially higher *Facts/Truth Claims* frequency in Social Science I compared with Literature/Language is particularly notable, as is the markedly higher *Identity* frequency in Interdisciplinary Studies.

Figures 5 and 6 and Table A.30 reveal a number of cross-field regularities that are not visible from count data alone.

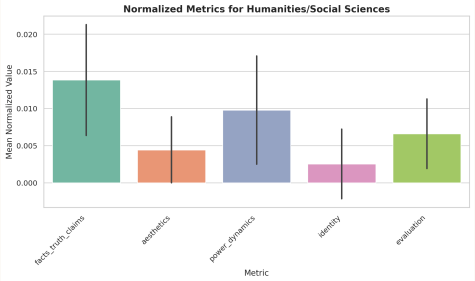
The dominance of Facts/Truth Claims is universal but quantitatively heterogeneous. Philosophy/Theology records the highest long-run mean (0.0177 per word), followed closely by Social Science I (0.0172), while Literature/Language records the lowest (0.0101). The spread represents a factor of roughly 1.7 between the highest- and lowest-scoring subfields. Both Philosophy and Social Science I are the most intensive in their use of formal evidence language, whereas Literature/Language is the least so.

Power Dynamics occupies a consistently second-ranked position across all fields except Philosophy and History. Its normalized frequency ranges from 0.0075 (Literature/Language) to 0.0117 (Interdisciplinary Studies), with Social Sciences as a whole averaging 0.0105. The elevation of Power vocabulary in Interdisciplinary Studies—which exceeds even Social Science I—is consistent with the theoretical literature.

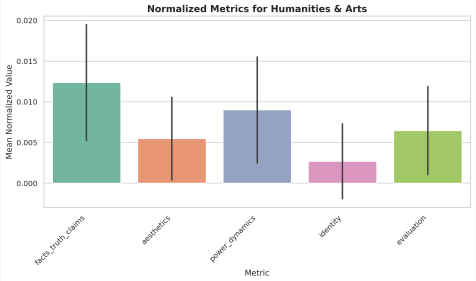
Aesthetics is the most field-specific of all five baskets. Its mean ranges from 0.0033 in Social Science I to 0.0062 in Literature/Language—a ratio of nearly 2:1. This variance reflects disciplinary purpose: aesthetic vocabulary is constitutive of literary and art-historical scholarship in a way it is not for economics or political science. The high within-field standard deviations for Aesthetics (Table A.30) indicate substantial dissertation-level heterogeneity even within fields, suggesting that aesthetic analysis is unevenly distributed within Literature/Language rather than being a uniform feature of all literary dissertations.

Identity is the basket with the highest cross-field dispersion relative to its mean. Interdisciplinary Studies records a mean of 0.0057—more than four times the History figure of 0.0014 and more than twice the average for Social Science I (0.0013). This extreme concentration in Studies and Social Science II foreshadows the

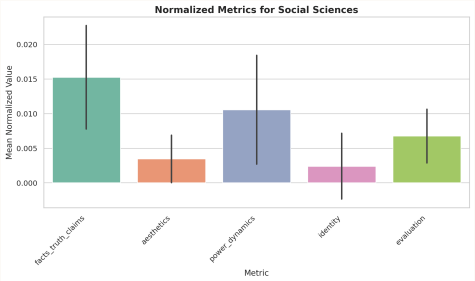
temporal dynamics documented in Section 5: *Identity*'s growth is not uniform across the academy but is concentrated in the fields that experienced the fastest institutional expansion in the 2000s and 2010s.



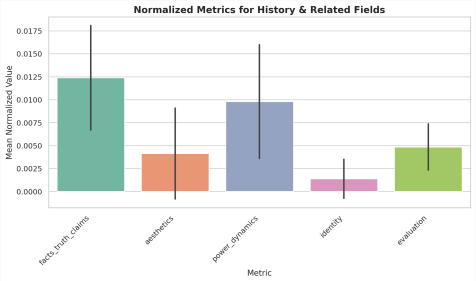
(a) Hum. & Social Sciences



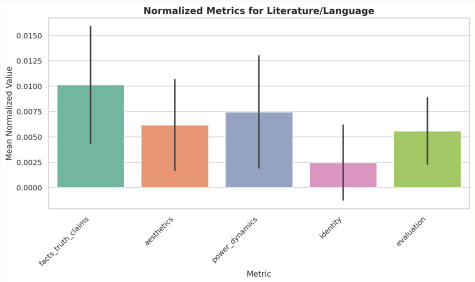
(b) Humanities & Arts



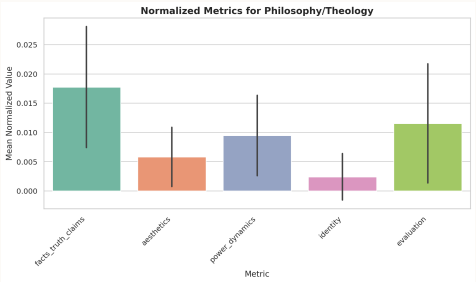
(c) Social Sciences



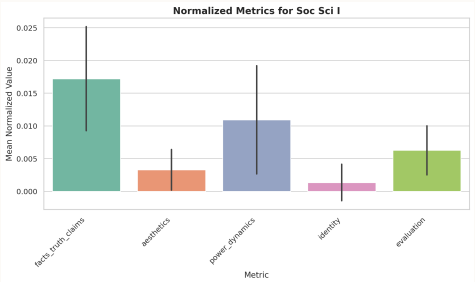
(d) History & Related Fields



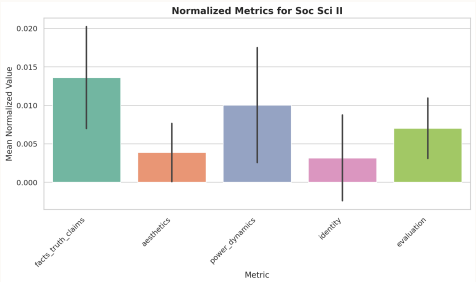
(e) Literature & Language



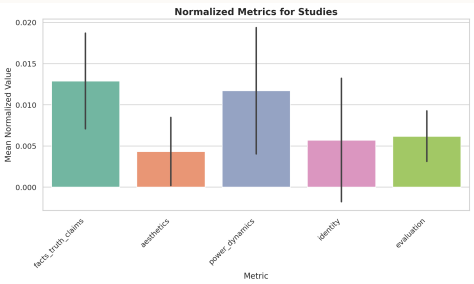
(f) Philosophy & Theology



(g) Social Sciences I



(h) Social Sciences II



(i) Interdisciplinary Studies

Figure 4 Normalized Term-Basket Frequencies by Field

Figure 5 Normalized Metrics: Three Major Fields

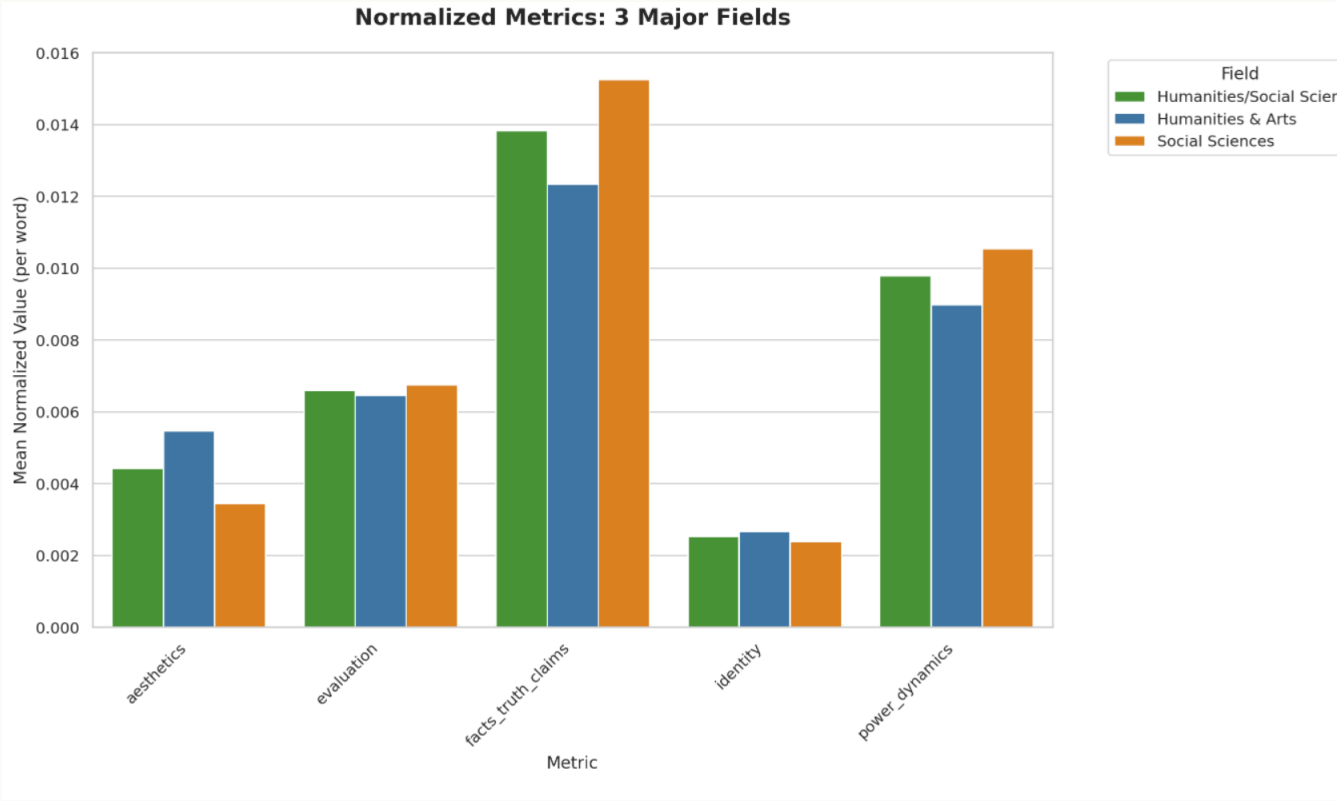
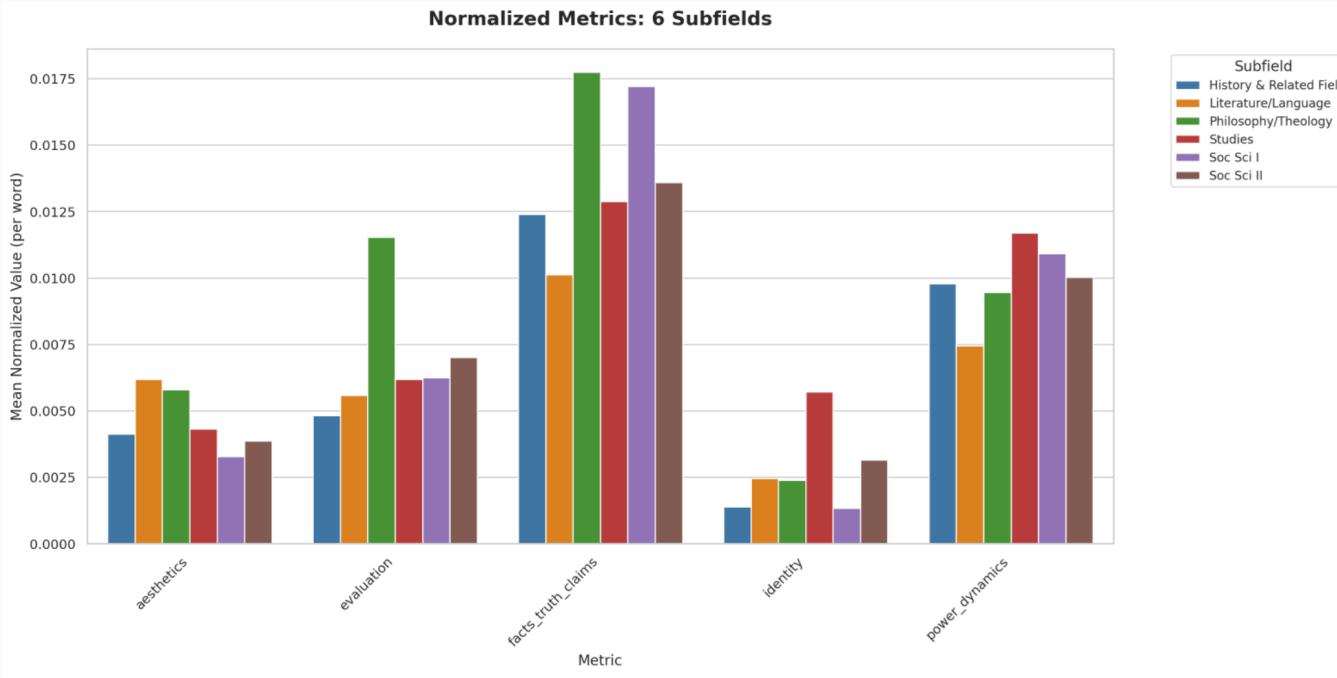


Figure 6 Normalized Metrics: Six Subfields



Temporal Dynamics

5

5.1 Full-Corpus Trends

Figure 7 traces all five term baskets across the full dataset from 1960 to 2025. *Facts/Truth Claims* exhibits sustained growth throughout the entire study period. *Power Dynamics* rose sharply from the same inflection point but has remained broadly flat since 2000. *Evaluation* has been relatively stable throughout. *Aesthetics* has declined steadily since 1988. *Identity*, negligible in the early decades, has grown continuously since 1980 and reached rough parity with *Evaluation* by 2022.

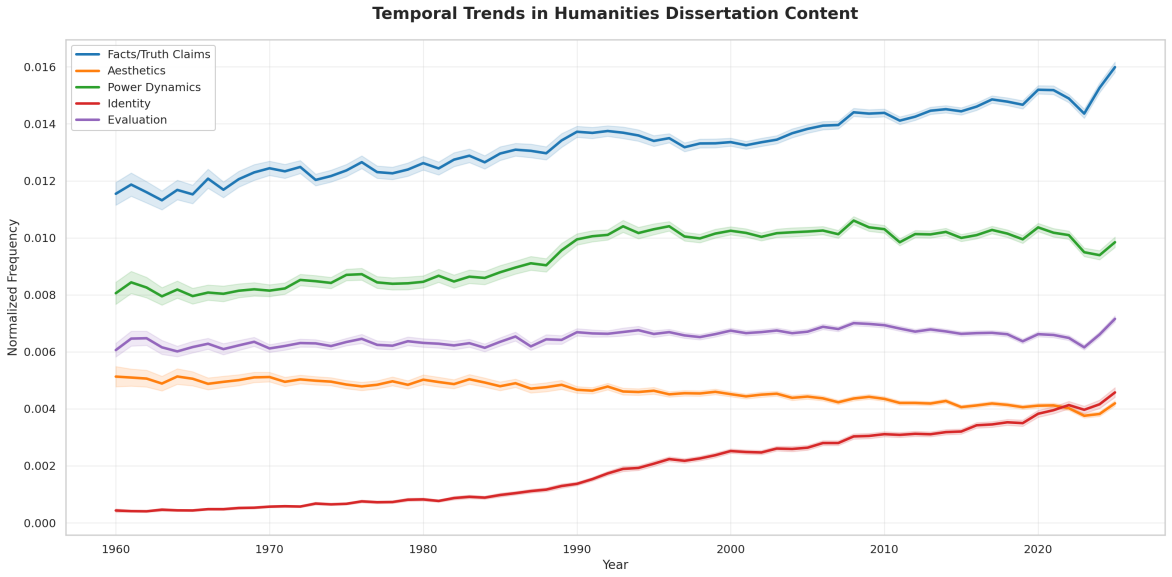


Figure 7 Temporal Trends in Term-Basket Frequencies: Full Dataset

The full-corpus figure offers complementary perspectives on the same underlying dynamics. Figure 7 plots 5-year smoothed normalized frequencies with 95% confidence bands. Several features merit close attention.

The 1988 inflection point. Both *Facts/Truth Claims* and *Power Dynamics* exhibit a pronounced upward shift beginning around 1988 and continuing through the mid-1990s. This timing is consistent with the diffusion of poststructuralist and postcolonial scholarship from its initial strongholds in Literature into History and the Social Sciences—a diffusion extensively theorized in the secondary literature (Bonnell and Hunt, 1999; Sewell, 2005) but here given quantitative confirmation. The simultaneity of the *Facts/Truth Claims* and *Power Dynamics* surges is itself informative: rather than crowding out empirical vocabulary, the expansion of power-analytic language occurred *alongside* rising truth-claim density. This suggests that the linguistic turn did not replace scientific norms in academic writing so much as supplement them with an additional rhetorical layer.

The Aesthetics contraction. The steady decline of *Aesthetics* vocabulary from approximately 0.0050 per word in 1988 to 0.0042 by 2025 is modest in percentage terms but is consistent across the full corpus and confirmed by the panel models in Section 8. It reflects partly the compositional shift away from Literature—the highest-*Aesthetics* field—and partly a genuine within-field trend toward theoretical rather than formal analysis. The

decline accelerates slightly after 2005, coinciding with the period of rapid growth in Social Science II and Interdisciplinary Studies.

The Identity trajectory. *Identity* vocabulary was negligible in 1960 (0.000432 per word) and remained well below 0.001 through 1975. Its growth thereafter traces a remarkably smooth exponential curve through 2025, where it reaches 0.00457 per word—a tenfold increase over 65 years (Table A.23). By 2022, *Identity* had achieved rough parity with *Evaluation* (approximately 0.0065). The panel-model coefficients reported in Section 8 translate this visual impression into formal estimates: *Identity* grows at approximately 5–8% per year after controlling for university fixed effects, a rate approximately twice that of any other basket (See the Panel Analysis Section).

5.2 Field-Specific Dynamics

The aggregate trajectory conceals important field-level variation. The eight field-specific figures below are summarized in the annotated table that follows.

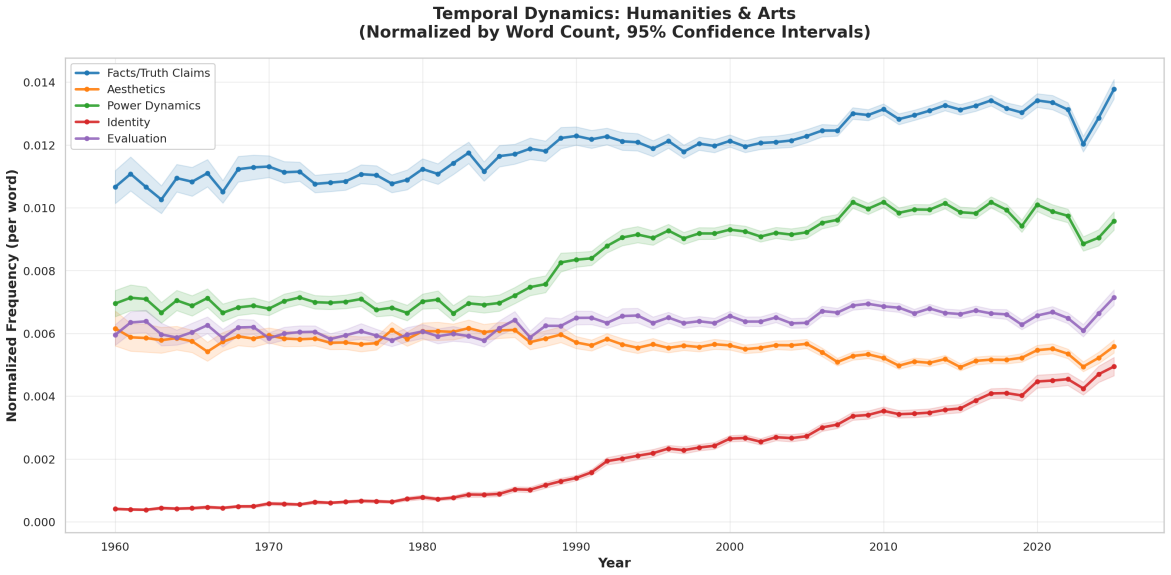


Figure 8 Temporal Dynamics: Humanities and Arts

The Humanities & Arts aggregate (Figure 8) displays a gradual increase in *Facts/Truth Claims* throughout the study period, marked by a particularly sharp rise in both *Facts/Truth Claims* and *Power Dynamics* beginning in 1985 and plateauing around 2000. *Evaluation* remains stagnant over the same interval, suggesting little shift in its relative importance. Meanwhile, *Identity* begins a sustained rise from near-zero in 1980; by 2025, it has overtaken both *Evaluation* and *Aesthetics* within the Humanities & Arts aggregate—a structural reordering that would have been virtually impossible to predict from the text data of 1970.

History (Figure 9) is the subfield with the most stable overall profile and the most gradual change. *Facts/Truth Claims* has been dominant throughout, reflecting the discipline's evidentiary conventions, and has edged upward consistently since 1960. *Power Dynamics* shows no clear trend, oscillating within a band of roughly 0.009–0.011 per word across the entire study period—a notable contrast with the pronounced surge visible in Literature and the Humanities aggregate. *Aesthetics* and *Identity* both rise from 1980, but modestly; neither overtakes *Evaluation*. History's relative stability in these dimensions may reflect the discipline's sustained

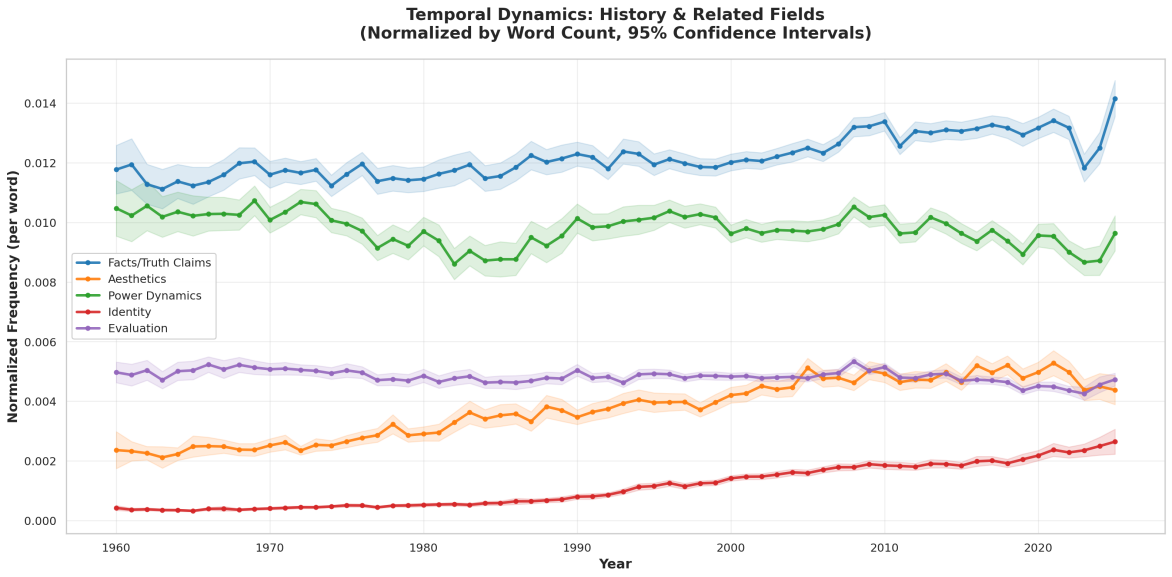


Figure 9 Temporal Dynamics: History and Related Fields

commitment to archival and empirical norms even as adjacent fields underwent more pronounced rhetorical transformation.

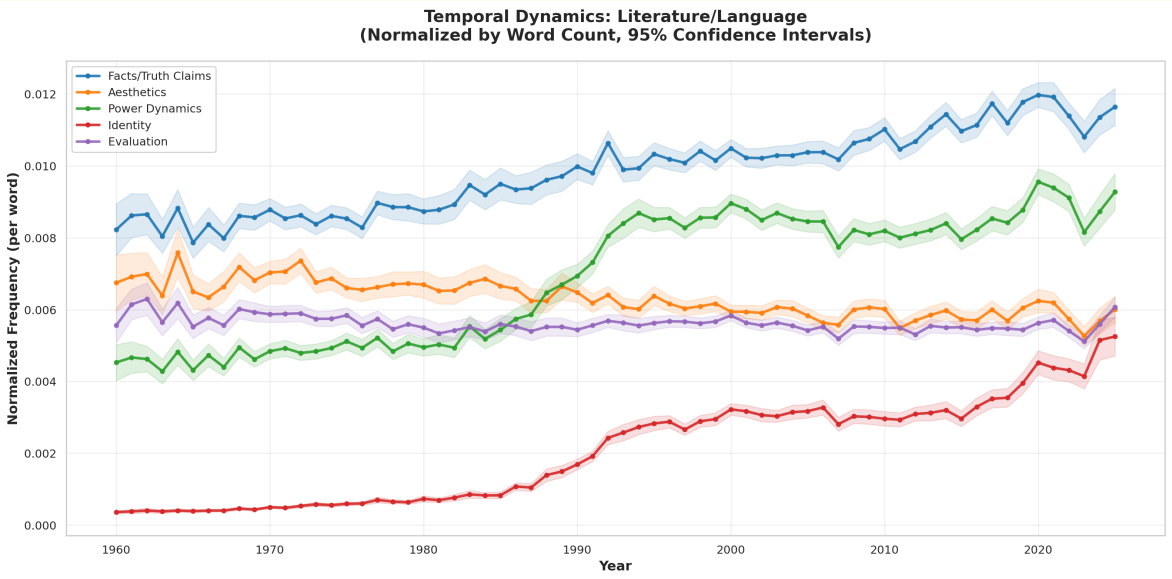


Figure 10 Temporal Dynamics: Literature and Language

Literature/Language (Figure 10) is the field that has undergone the most dramatic internal rhetorical transformation. Three features stand out. First, the *Power Dynamics* series displays two distinct surge episodes: a first wave running from approximately 1982 to 2000 (during which it surpassed *Facts/Truth Claims* for the first time) and a second wave beginning around 2015 and continuing to 2020. Second, *Identity* grew in near-perfect lockstep with *Power Dynamics* during the post-2015 acceleration, reaching 0.0043 per word by 2025 and almost leveled out with *Aesthetics*—the historically central vocabulary of literary analysis. Third, *Aesthetics* itself, while still the second-ranked basket in Literature through the mid-2000s, has declined steadily

and by 2025 is barely distinguishable from *Identity* and *Evaluation*. The substitution of power-analytic and identity vocabulary for aesthetic vocabulary within the flagship humanities discipline is among the most consequential findings of our analysis.

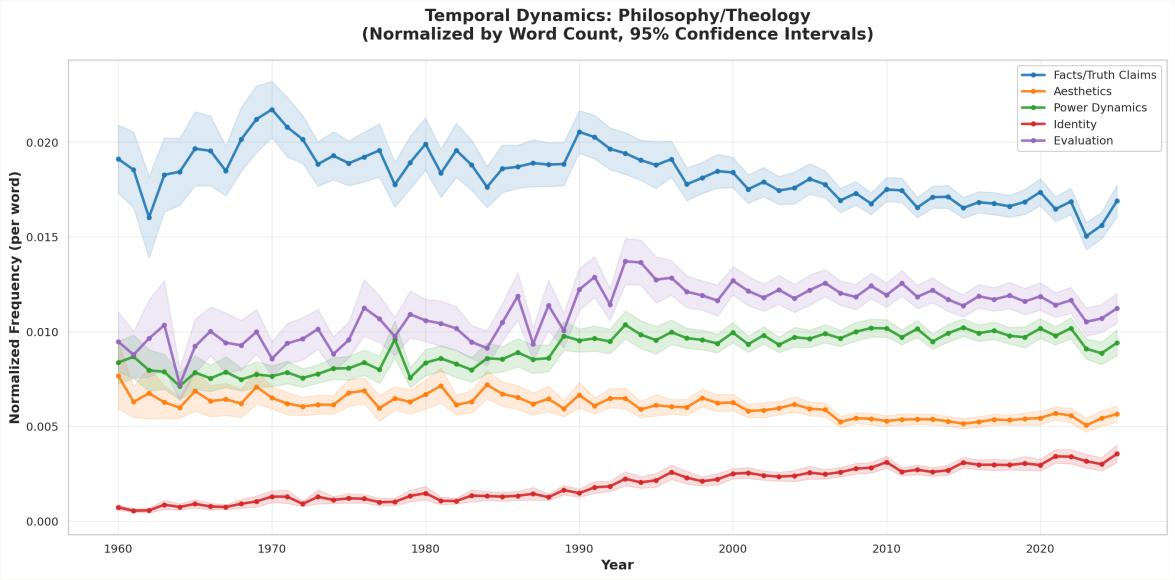


Figure 11 Temporal Dynamics: Philosophy and Theology

Philosophy/Theology (Figure 11) is the most distinctive subfield in the entire dataset. Its *Facts/Truth Claims* frequency is the highest of any grouping (0.0177 on the long-run average) and, uniquely, *declines* slightly after 1970. More striking still is the exceptional height and stability of the *Evaluation* basket: at 0.0115, Philosophy's *Evaluation* mean exceeds every other subfield, reflecting the discipline's constitutive investment in normative reasoning. While other categories show long-term stability, *Identity* also undergoes a sustained rise within Philosophy, mirroring broader corpus-wide trends despite the subfield's otherwise unique profile. The wide confidence bands in Figure 11 reflect the smaller sample size of this subfield relative to History or Social Science II, and caution against over-interpreting year-to-year movements.

The Social Sciences aggregate (Figure 12) presents a cleaner picture than the Humanities: a steady, quasi-linear rise in *Facts/Truth Claims* from 1960 to 2025 (reaching 0.0175 by 2025—the highest value in any major grouping), a broadly stable *Power Dynamics* series, modest *Aesthetics* decline, and continuous *Identity* growth. The aggregate masks an important internal divergence between Social Science I and Social Science II (see Figures 13 and 14 below), since the two subgroups have moved in quite different directions on *Identity*.[1]

Social Science I—Economics and Political Science—(Figure 13) exhibits the most pronounced growth in *Facts/Truth Claims* of any subfield: from approximately 0.0125 in 1960 to 0.0200 by 2025, a 60% increase. This reflects the discipline's ongoing quantitative turn and its adoption of experimental and quasi-experimental methods that require extensive truth-claim vocabulary. *Power Dynamics* is elevated but shows no clear trend. Most tellingly, *Identity* showed only marginal growth through 2018 before a modest uptick in the most recent

[1]The division of Social Sciences into Social Science I (Economics, Political Science) and Social Science II (Anthropology, Psychology, Sociology, and Communications) is a conventional grouping reflecting broad methodological orientation rather than a data-driven classification. The placement of Psychology and Sociology in Social Science II is contested: experimental psychology shares more with Social Science I's quantitative methods, while clinical and counseling psychology share interpretive approaches with the humanities, and sociology spans both traditions. The robustness checks in Appendix RC-2 confirm that the within-field trends documented in this section are not artifacts of the grouping: field and university fixed effects amplify rather than attenuate the core findings, indicating that the results are robust to compositional variation within each category.

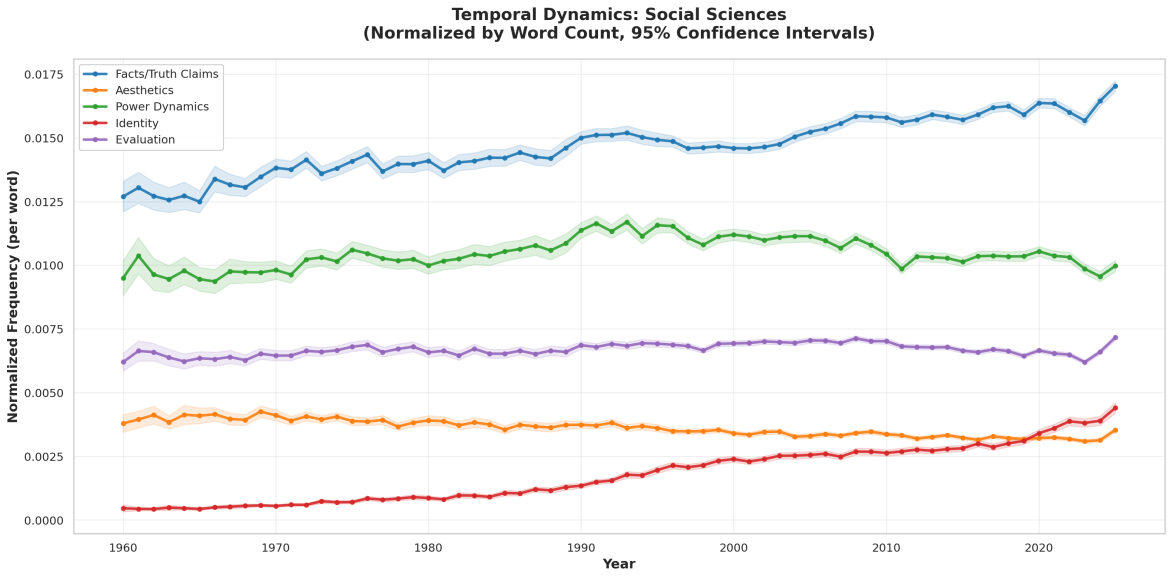


Figure 12 Temporal Dynamics: Social Sciences

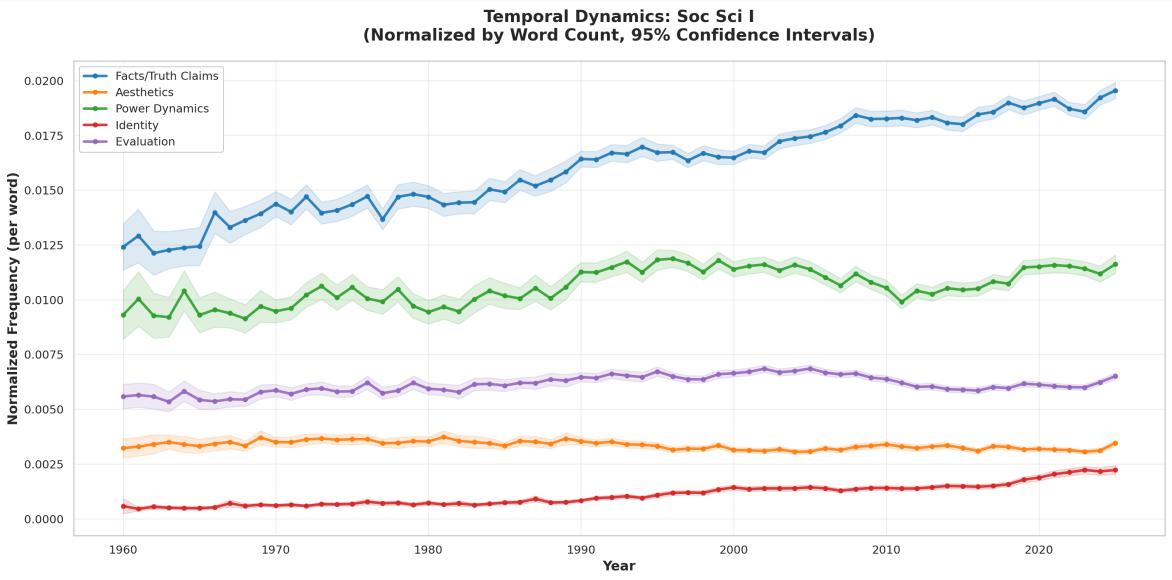


Figure 13 Temporal Dynamics: Social Sciences I

years—suggesting that the identity-focused rhetorical transformation documented elsewhere in the corpus has penetrated Economics and Political Science only at the margins. This makes Social Science I a useful reference field against which the rhetorical changes in Literature/Language, Studies, and Social Science II can be assessed.

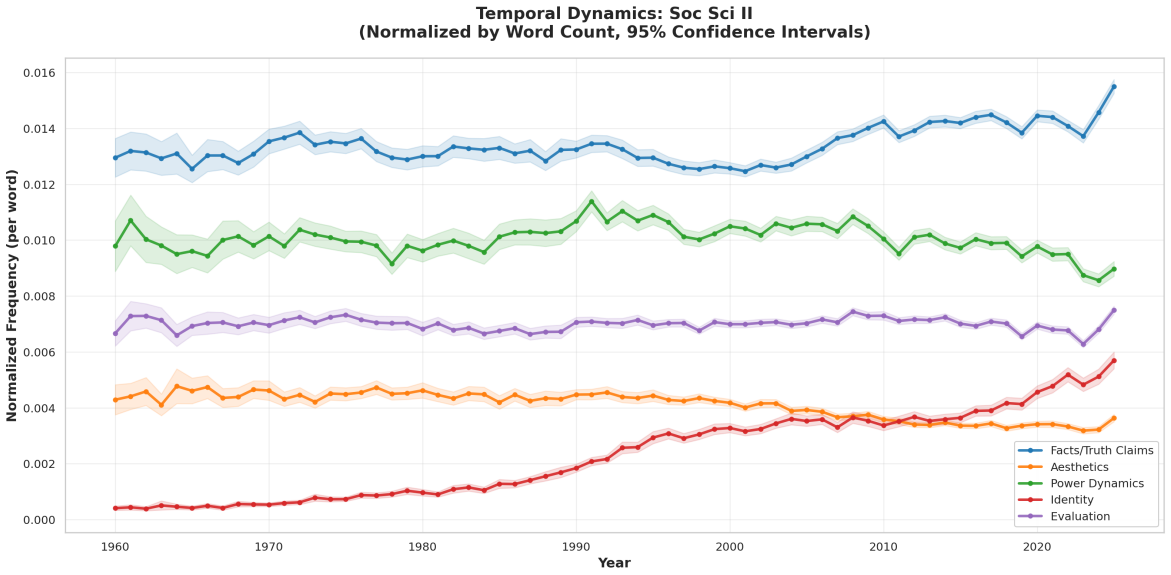


Figure 14 Temporal Dynamics: Social Sciences II

Social Science II—Anthropology, Psychology, and Communications—(Figure 14) is, alongside Literature/Language, the field with the most dramatic rhetorical transformation recorded in this corpus. Its *Identity* trajectory is the steepest of any subfield: from a level indistinguishable from zero in 1960, *Identity* grew to 0.003 per word by 2010 and then accelerated sharply after 2019, reaching 0.006 per word by 2025.

Two additional features distinguish Social Science II from its institutional neighbor, Social Science I. First, Aesthetics declines continuously from 1990 onward in Social Science II, whereas it is already low and stable in Social Science I. Second, the gap between *Facts/Truth Claims* and *Power Dynamics* is notably narrower in Social Science II than in Social Science I. Together, these observations document the substantial rhetorical convergence of Social Science II with the Humanities fields examined above—consistent with the convergence pattern anticipated in Trend 5.

Interdisciplinary Studies (Figure 15) is the subfield with the most distinctive normalized-metric profile. It is the *only* grouping in which *Facts/Truth Claims* and *Power Dynamics* reach approximate parity—both hovering in the 0.010–0.014 band—throughout most of the study period. This near-parity reflects the hybrid character of Studies programs, which combine the interpretive and critical vocabularies of the Humanities with normative social-science concerns. *Identity* rises steadily from around 1990, consistent with the theoretical foundations of Women's Studies, African American Studies, Gender Studies, and related programs that constitute much of this category. Aesthetics declines from a high point around 1999, suggesting that earlier programs with cultural-studies orientations have been joined by more activist and policy-oriented fields. The very wide confidence bands in the early decades—when Studies programs were few and heterogeneous—narrow substantially from 2000 onward as the category achieved sufficient scale to be statistically stable.

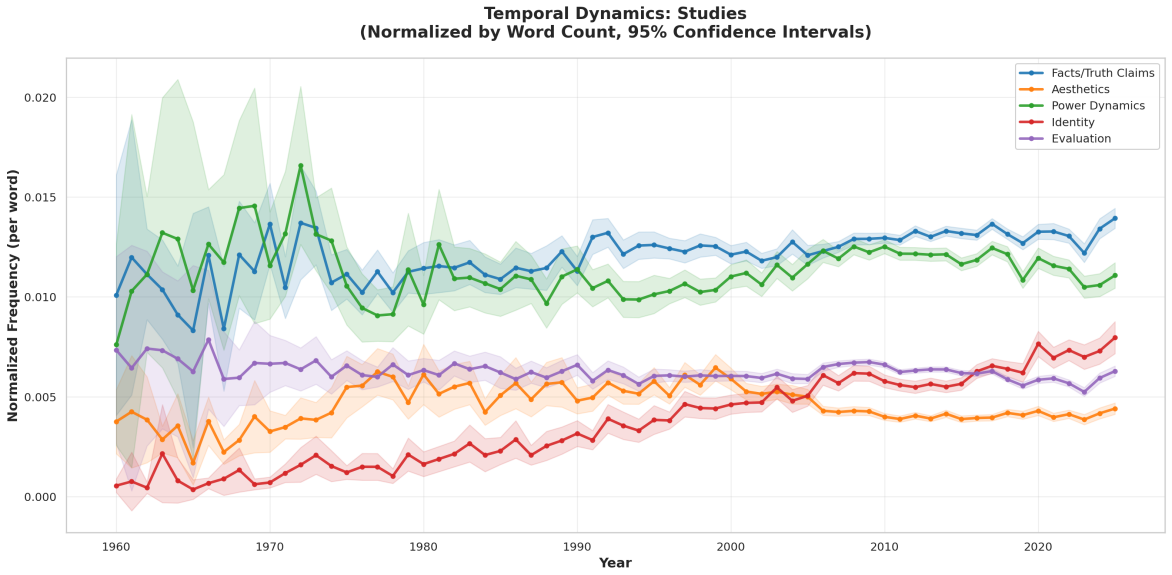


Figure 15 Temporal Dynamics: Interdisciplinary Studies

6 Sentiment Analysis

This section reports directional changes in the sentiment valence of nine key terms: *Identity, History, Truth, American, European, Western, Subversive, Activism,* and *Power*. Sentiment is estimated using a focal-word context methodology, which measures the emotional "atmosphere" surrounding a specific concept rather than the sentiment of a dissertation as a whole. This approach is particularly well-suited for large-scale corpus analysis because it allows us to track how the rhetorical framing of specific academic concepts evolves over decades, even when the overall tone of scholarly writing remains formally neutral.

The analysis is conducted by extracting a local linguistic window of ± 10 words around each occurrence of a focal word. By isolating these immediate neighborhoods, we can calculate a term's sentiment score based on the average valence of its surrounding descriptors, calibrated against a validated sentiment lexicon. Scores range from -1 (maximally negative) to $+1$ (maximally positive), with scores near zero representing neutral or balanced contexts. This window-based method is highly effective because it captures associative context – the subtle "company a word keeps" – providing a more granular look at academic positioning than a simple document-level sentiment check could offer.

However, this methodology carries specific trade-offs. Its strength lies in its ability to detect "rhetorical drift"—for example, whether the term *Power* is increasingly associated with words of conflict or words of stability. The primary limitation is that it cannot distinguish between a researcher's own stance and the stance they are describing or critiquing. Despite this, assuming that all fields are subject to similar citation and descriptive norms, the relative shifts in these scores provide a robust proxy for the changing "affective climate" of different subfields within the TDM Studio database.

6.1 Full Dataset

Figure 16 and Table A.29 present the full-corpus sentiment baseline. The nine panels are arranged by term, each displaying mean sentiment with 95% confidence intervals from 1960 to 2025. Several patterns deserve systematic attention.

Truth is an outlier in the positive direction, sustaining a score near 0.35 throughout the entire study period with a slightly upward movement in the final decade. This score is approximately five to seven times higher than that of any other term tracked. The stability of *Truth*'s positive context is consistent with Trend 3: truth-oriented vocabulary has not been negatively reframed in aggregate academic writing, even as its disciplinary distribution has shifted.

History exhibits the steepest secular decline of any term, falling from approximately 0.07 to 0.01 over 65 years. By the end of the period, the term "history" appears in doctoral dissertations in contexts that are virtually neutral on average—a remarkable transformation for a discipline that, in earlier decades, was consistently associated with positive scholarly framing. This trend is particularly pronounced in the Social Sciences, where the term moves into slightly negative territory.

American, *European*, and *Western* all display monotonic downward trends, though their starting points and slopes differ. *American* began at approximately 0.07 and has fallen to 0.03; *European* began at approximately 0.07 and has fallen to below 0.03 by 2025; *Western*—which carried the highest initial score among the geopolitical terms—fell from 0.08 to approximately 0.045. All three remain positive throughout, indicating that these terms are not systematically framed negatively in absolute terms, but their declining trajectories document a consistent shift in the rhetorical positioning of Western and American cultural referents within



Figure 16 Sentiment Trends: Full Dataset (95% confidence intervals)

the academy. The three terms behave differently, however, once compositional and baseline controls are applied: see Appendix RC-4 for the full specification comparison.

Subversive is the only term that sustains a consistently *negative* sentiment score throughout the study period, ranging between −0.20 and −0.15. Crucially, the panel models in Section 8 show that *Subversive*'s sentiment is becoming *less* negative over time—a trend toward positive revaluation that is consistent with the growing embrace of subversive/activist scholarly identities documented in other parts of this corpus.

Activism and *Identity* remain broadly stable at low positive levels across the study period when examined in the full corpus, though field-specific disaggregation below reveals important variation.

Across the full corpus, *Truth* sustains the highest positive sentiment score (≈0.35) with no meaningful downward trend. *History* fell from approximately 0.07 to 0.01. *Identity* remained broadly stable (0.05–0.07). *American* and *European* each declined from around 0.07 to approximately 0.03. *Western* fell from 0.08 to 0.045. *Subversive* maintains a consistently negative score (between −0.20 and −0.15). *Activism* held steady near 0.01. *Power* remained moderately positive, declining from 0.12 to 0.09.

6.2 Field-Specific Sentiment Trends

Figures 17–24 disaggregate the sentiment series by field. The figures confirm that most full-corpus patterns are broadly replicated across subfields, but several field-specific deviations illuminate the heterogeneity of scholarly rhetoric.

Field-level sentiment patterns largely track the full-corpus trends, with the following notable exceptions.

Humanities & Arts (Figure 17). The Humanities aggregate closely mirrors the full-corpus patterns, with the notable feature that the decline in *Power* sentiment is shallower here than in the Social Sciences. *Power* sentiment in Humanities fell from approximately 0.12 to 0.09—a decline of about 25%—while the absolute level remains higher than in the corpus as a whole. The *Subversive* series maintains its characteristic negative baseline but is considerably less negative in Humanities than in Social Sciences, suggesting that subversion-oriented rhetoric is more naturalized within literary and historical scholarship.

History (Figure 18). The most striking feature of the History panel is the severity of the *History* sentiment decline within the discipline itself: from approximately 0.07 in 1960 to 0.03 by 2025. This self-referential negative drift—the term "history" becoming more neutrally or critically framed within history dissertations—may reflect the influence of metahistorical and postcolonial critiques that treat *History* as a contested construction rather than a neutral descriptor. *American* and *European* sentiment declined comparably in *History* to the full-corpus trend. *Truth* remains strongly positive and is one of the most stable series in this subfield.

Literature (Figure 19). *Power* sentiment fell from 0.14 to 0.07—a sharper decline than any other field—and the slope steepens after 2005. This is paradoxical given that power-analytic *vocabulary* surged in Literature/Language during the same period (Section 5): what happened is that *Power* became more ubiquitous but less valorized in the sense that it appeared increasingly in critical rather than descriptive contexts. *Western* declined from 0.10 to 0.05. The *Truth* series in Literature/Language is lower in absolute terms (≈0.30) than in Philosophy or History and shows a slight downward slope post-1990—the only field in which *Truth* sentiment trends meaningfully downward.

Philosophy (Figure 20). *Truth* sentiment is both exceptionally high (≈0.40) and unusually stable—the clearest evidence of field-specific insulation from the broader negative drift. This is consistent with the discipline's constitutive commitment to epistemological inquiry, where *Truth* functions as an irreducibly positive terminal value rather than a contested political category. *American* and *European* sentiment in



Figure 17 Sentiment Trends: Humanities and Arts

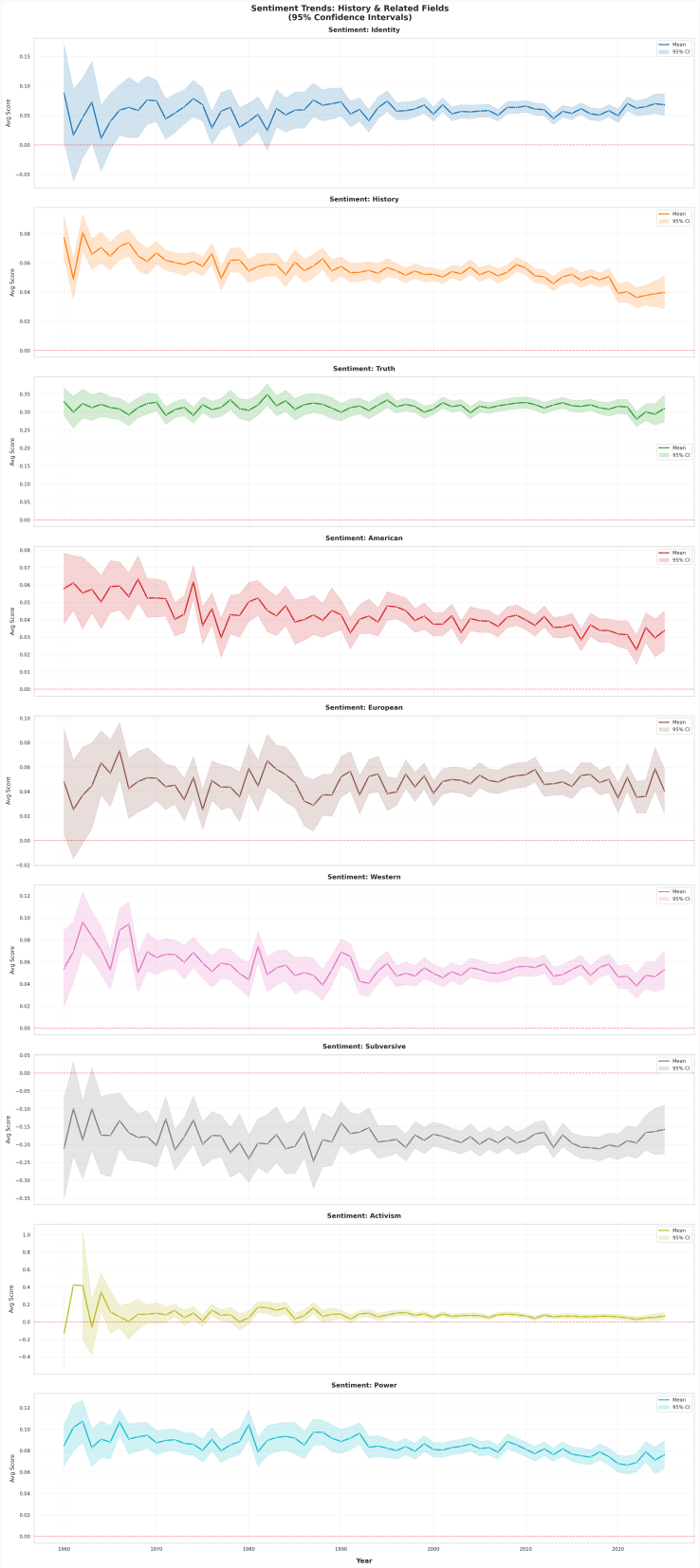


Figure 18 Sentiment Trends: History and Related Fields



Figure 19 Sentiment Trends: Literature and Language

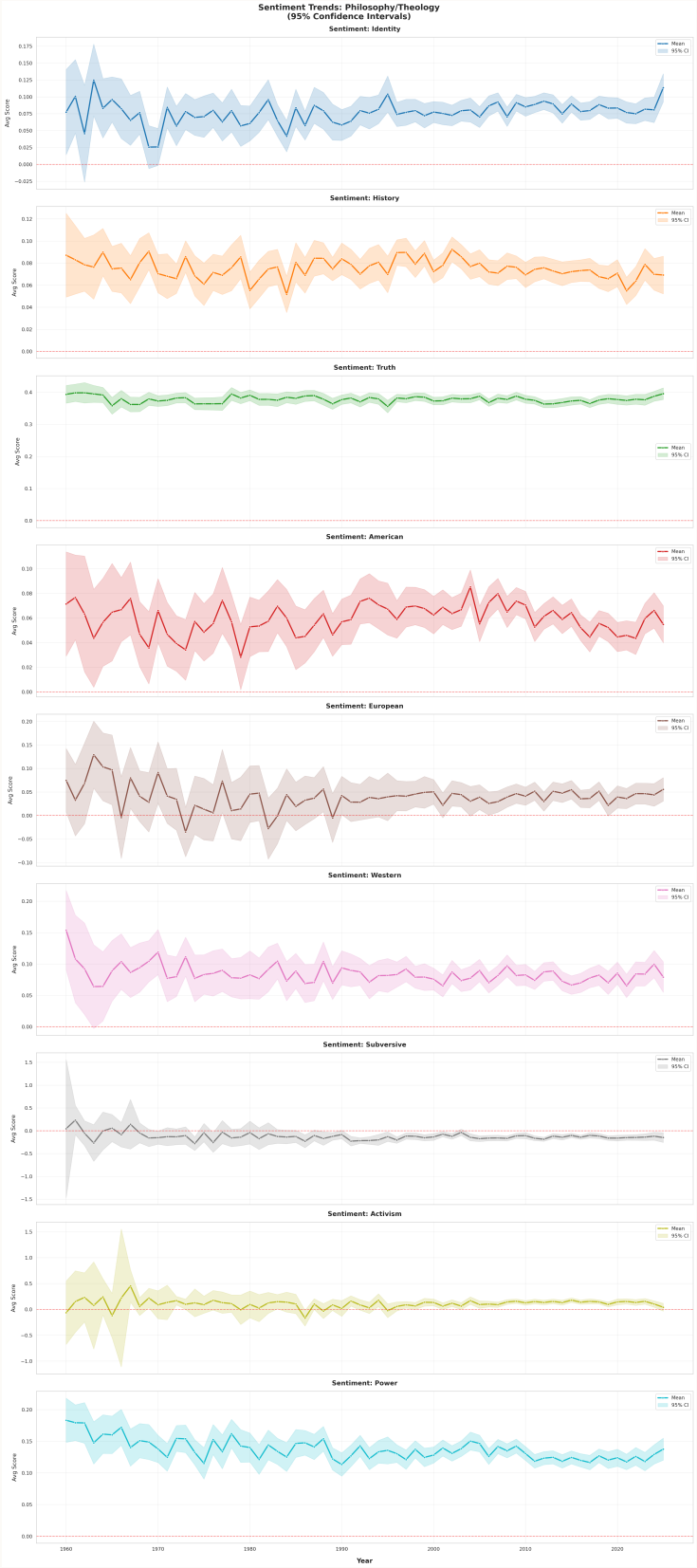


Figure 20 Sentiment Trends: Philosophy and Theology



Figure 21 Sentiment Trends: Social Sciences

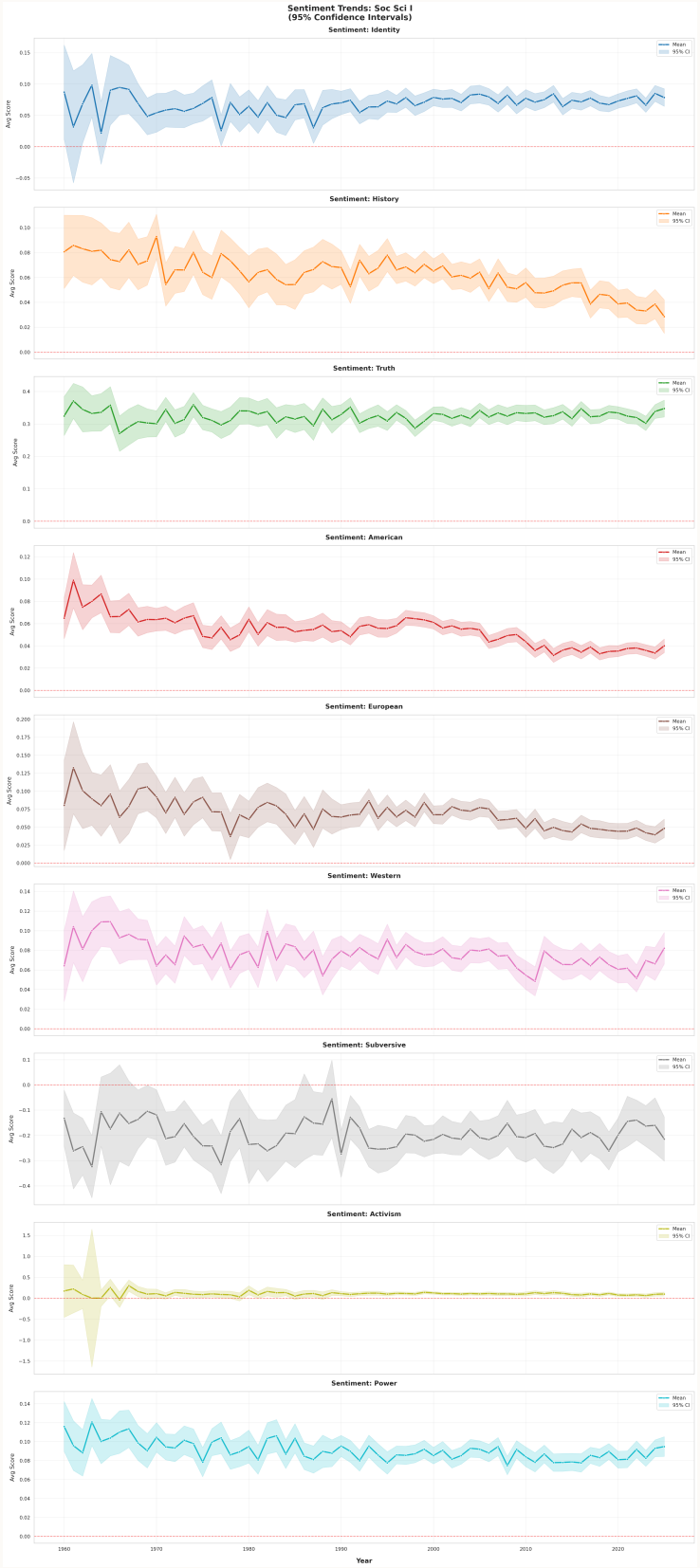


Figure 22 Sentiment Trends: Social Sciences I

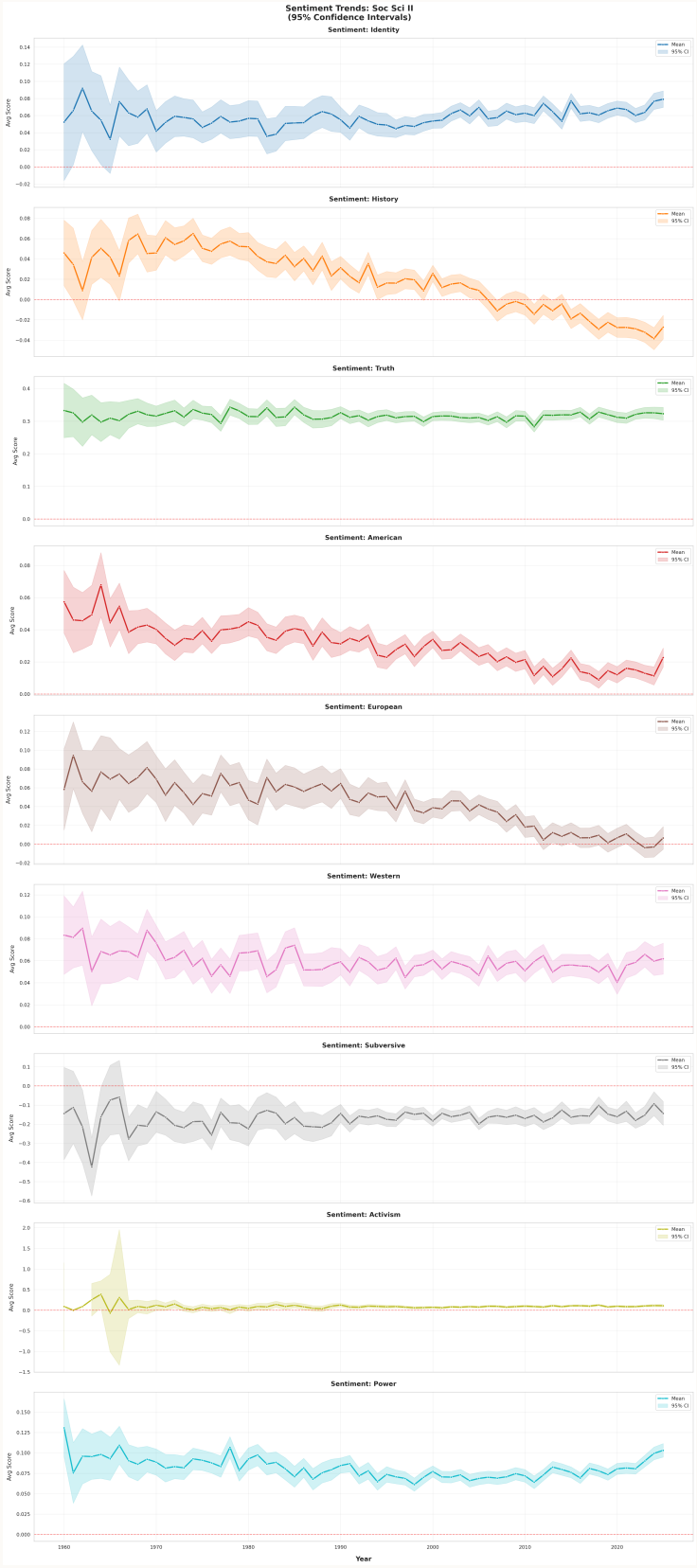


Figure 23 Sentiment Trends: Social Sciences II



Figure 24 Sentiment Trends: Interdisciplinary Studies

Philosophy show less pronounced decline than in the Social Sciences or Literature/Language, and the wide confidence intervals caution against over-interpreting year-to-year movements. *Subversive* occupies its characteristically negative region but is at a notably higher (less negative) level than in any other field, suggesting that Philosophy engages with subversive ideas with somewhat greater equanimity.

Social Sciences (Figure 21). The Social Sciences aggregate exhibits the most consistent downward drift across geopolitical and historical terms. *History* fell into negative sentiment territory by approximately 2015 (score ≈ -0.01)—the only grouping in which this term crosses zero. Declines in *American* and *European* sentiment are the steepest of any major grouping. These patterns are driven disproportionately by Social Science II, as the disaggregated panels below confirm. *Activism* displays a modest upward trend in the Social Sciences that is not present in the Humanities—consistent with the growing influence of applied and engaged scholarship in these fields.

Social Science I (Figure 22). Economics and Political Science exhibit sentiment profiles closer to the full-corpus baseline than to Social Science II. *Truth* remains strongly positive ($\approx$0.35) and stable. *American* sentiment declined but less precipitously than in Social Science II; the series ends at approximately 0.05 rather than the near-zero levels recorded in the latter field. *Power* shows an unusually stable trajectory in Social Science I compared with other fields, consistent with the discipline's analytical treatment of power as a technical concept (legislative power, market power, state power) rather than primarily a critical-theoretical term.

Social Science II (Figure 23). Social Science II exhibits steeper downward trends than Social Science I across geopolitical and historical terms, making it the field with the most pervasive negative drift across the widest range of terms. *History* descends to approximately -0.04 by 2025—the most negative value for this term in any subfield. *European* falls below 0.02—approaching zero. *American* tracks a similar trajectory.

Interdisciplinary Studies (Figure 24). The Studies panel is distinguished by its exceptionally wide confidence bands through the 1960s and 1970s, reflecting the very small number of dissertations in this category before 1980. Once the category achieves sufficient scale (post-1990), the series stabilise and reveal a characteristic pattern: very low and declining geopolitical term sentiments (*American*[2], *European*, *Western* all approach zero or turn slightly negative), a near-zero *History* sentiment, and a broadly stable *Truth* series that is lower than in any other subfield ($\approx$0.00–0.02). The latter observation is notable: in Interdisciplinary Studies, *Truth* appears in contexts that are effectively neutral on average, rather than positively valorized—the closest any subfield comes to genuinely postmodern treatment of truth-claims in the aggregate.

The field-by-field panels above display each subfield's nine terms in isolation, making it straightforward to assess how a *single* subfield has evolved. However, they do not permit direct comparison of the *same term* across fields on a common scale. To address this, Figure B.1 (Appendix) presents the nine terms as separate panels, each overlaying the sentiment trajectory for all eight fields simultaneously. Because every panel shares the same y-axis range, the figure makes three comparisons immediately legible that are otherwise obscured by the field-by-field presentation: (i) the absolute level of each term's sentiment and how it positions relative to other terms; (ii) the degree of cross-field convergence or divergence for any given term at any given time; and (iii) the contrasting profiles of the two most extreme cases—*Truth*, which sits far above all other terms and remains stable across all fields, and *Subversive*, which sits far below and occupies an entirely different band of the scale. Readers wishing to assess cross-field heterogeneity within a single term—for instance, whether the decline in *History* sentiment is uniform across subfields or driven by specific institutional clusters—should

[2]Note that while American sentiment declines in raw field-level data across all groupings, the baseline-adjusted M5 specification in Appendix RC-4 shows this decline does not survive controls for corpus-wide negativity drift. The field-level patterns describe the raw rhetorical register; they should not be interpreted as evidence of targeted negative framing of the United States.

consult Figure B.1 alongside the field-specific panels.

Taken together, the sentiment evidence is consistent with Trend 4 and provides additional support for Trend 5. Geopolitical and historical terms have been systematically reframed in more critical or neutral directions across all fields, but the shift is sharpest in Social Science II and Interdisciplinary Studies. *Truth* remains a stable positive anchor everywhere, and most strongly so in Philosophy. The fields that have grown most rapidly in dissertation volume—Social Science II and, until 2015, Interdisciplinary Studies—are also those in which the negative drift in geopolitical tone is most pronounced, a pattern of co-occurrence that warrants further investigation.

PhD-Granting Universities and Locations

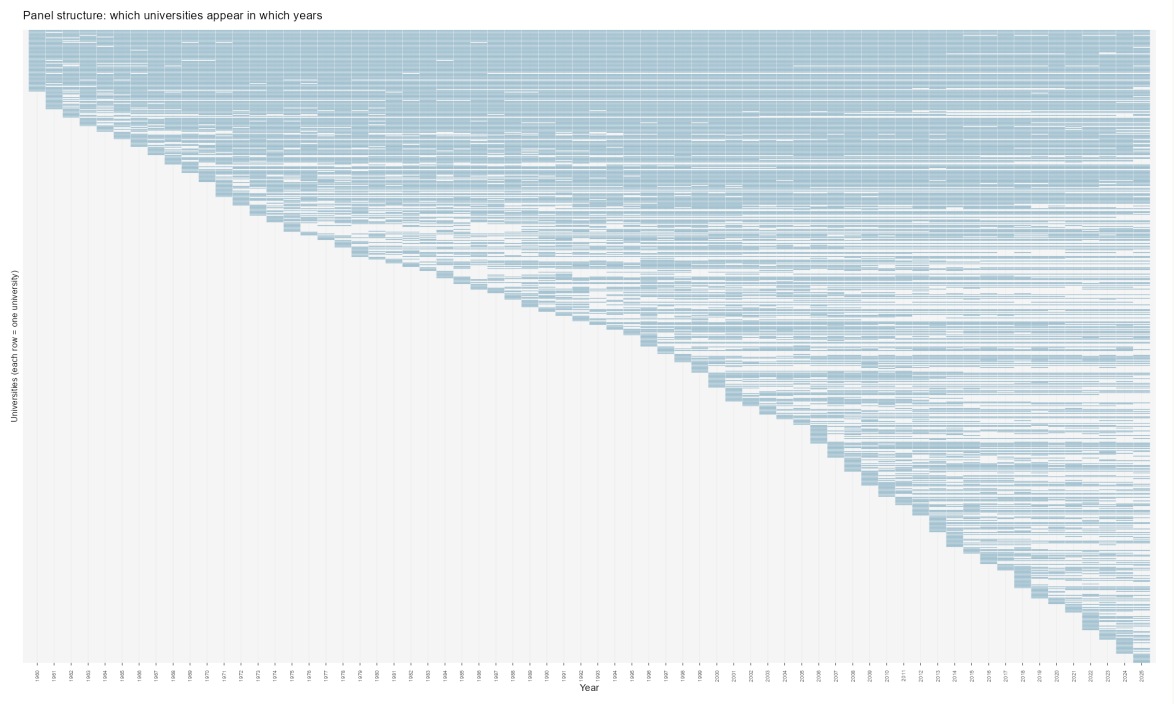


Figure 25 Panel Structure

Figure 25 maps the university-year structure of the balanced and unbalanced panels used in Section 8. Each row represents one PhD-granting institution, sorted by the year in which dissertations first appear in the corpus; each column represents a year from 1960 to 2025; a shaded cell indicates at least one dissertation recorded for that institution in that year. The upper-left triangular void reflects the gradual entry of newer institutions into the corpus: many universities that now produce substantial dissertation volumes did not have active doctoral programs in the humanities and social sciences until the 1970s or 1980s. The increasingly dense coverage from 1990 onward tracks the expansion of graduate education documented in Section 3. The ragged right edge reflects post-2020 registration delays, which disproportionately affect recently founded programs at smaller institutions.

The corpus draws on 678 PhD-granting institutions. The distribution is highly skewed: the median institution contributes 55 dissertations, while the mean is 654 and the maximum exceeds 11,000 (University of Chicago). Geographically, California institutions collectively contribute the largest volume, followed by New York and Illinois.

Figure 26 reveals substantial concentration at the top. The 20 highest-volume institutions account for approximately 35% of all dissertations in the corpus, with the top five (Chicago, Michigan, NYU, Indiana, Berkeley) alone contributing nearly 19%. The distribution shown in Figure 27 is characteristic of a power-law or log-normal process: the linear-scale histogram is almost entirely concentrated in the first bin, while the log-scale histogram reveals a broad and roughly symmetric distribution across one to four orders of magnitude. This concentration has implications for the panel analysis: the balanced panel of ten well-covered universities necessarily overweights these research-intensive institutions relative to the broader academy, which is why the unbalanced specification—despite its compositional challenges—provides an important robustness check

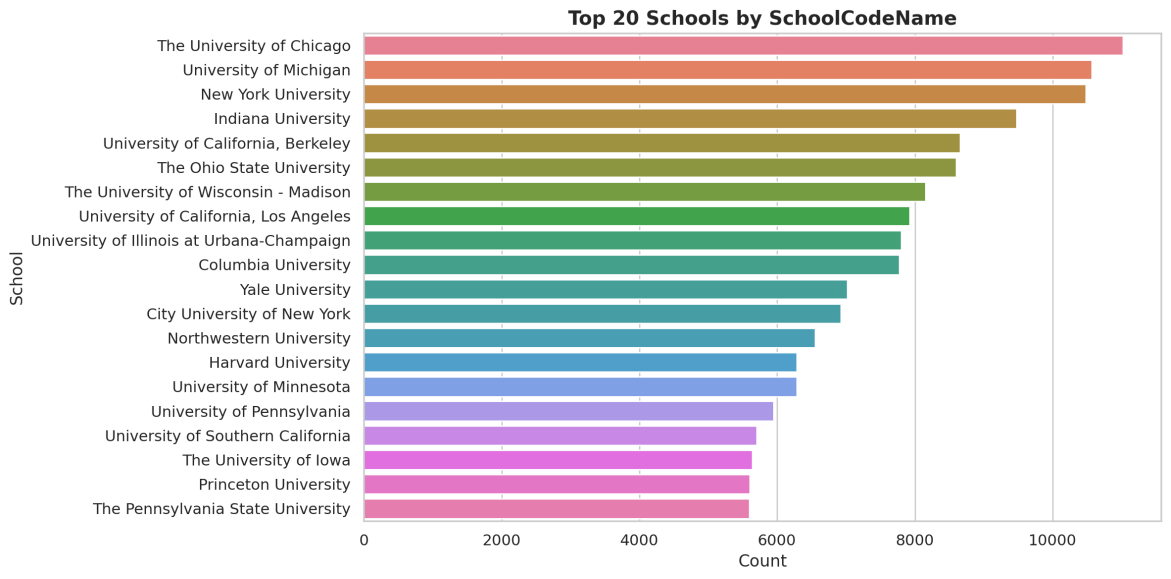


Figure 26 Top 20 Institutions by Dissertation Count

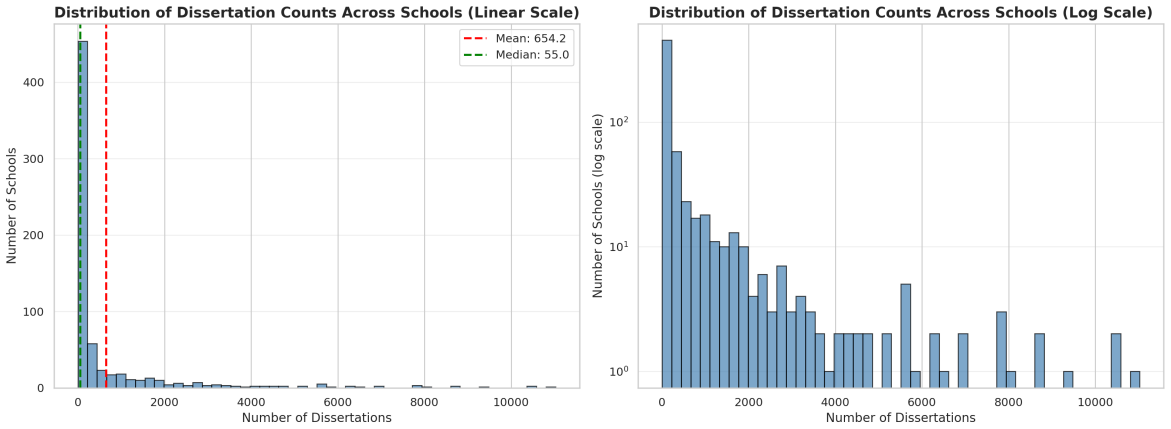


Figure 27 Distribution of Dissertation Counts across Institutions

for inference about corpus-wide trends.

Table A.25 records the full top-20 ranking. The presence of large state university systems (Michigan, Indiana, Ohio State, Wisconsin, Illinois) alongside elite private research universities (Chicago, NYU, Yale, Columbia, Harvard) indicates that the rhetorical trends documented in this report are not purely an artifact of elite-institution culture but are replicated across a diverse range of institutional types.

The geographic distribution (Figures 28 and 29, Table A.26) mirrors the concentration of research-intensive doctoral education in the United States. California leads with over 56,000 dissertations across the study period, reflecting the combined output of the University of California system, USC, Stanford, and numerous smaller programs. New York (50,293) and Illinois (34,281) follow, the latter driven substantially by the University of Chicago and Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The location distribution, like the institutional distribution, is highly right-skewed: the median state-level unit contributes 1,353 dissertations while California contributes 56,450—a ratio exceeding 40:1 (Table A.27). States in the South and Mountain West are systematically underrepresented relative to their share of the general population, reflecting longstanding disparities in

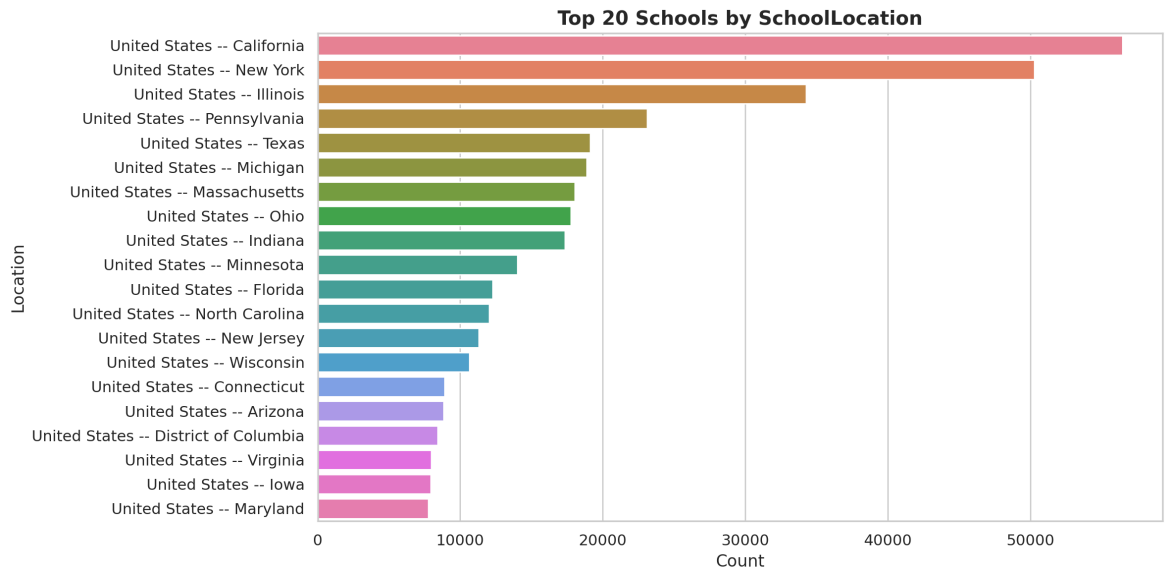


Figure 28 Top 20 States by Dissertation Count

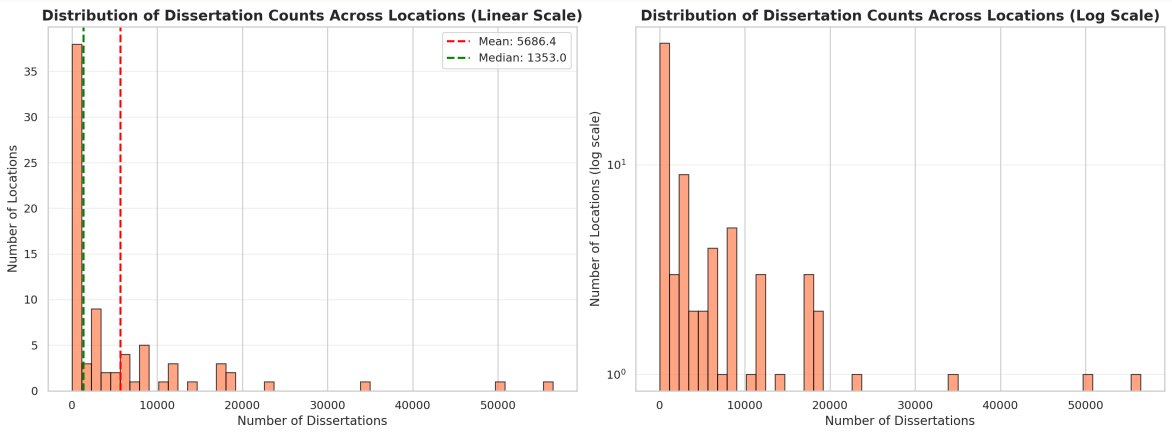


Figure 29 Distribution of Dissertation Counts across Locations

doctoral-program density across US regions.

8 Panel Analysis: Counts and Sentiments over Time

8.1 Specification

This section presents fixed effects models examining temporal trends in dissertation content, controlling for university-specific heterogeneity. We employ a *one-way fixed effects* design augmented with a *linear time trend*: university fixed effects absorb all time-invariant institutional characteristics, while the continuous year variable captures the average within-university rate of change over the 1960–2025 period. Both balanced and unbalanced panel specifications are estimated to ensure the results are robust across different institutional samples.

The *balanced panel* comprises 10 universities with complete time-series coverage from 1960 to 2025: Columbia University, Indiana University, New York University, The Ohio State University, The University of Chicago, The University of Wisconsin–Madison, University of California Berkeley, University of California Los Angeles, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and University of Michigan. These institutions were selected based on the criterion of continuous annual data, eliminating compositional bias that might arise from institutional entry or exit. Collectively, they span elite private research universities and large public flagships, contributing approximately 90,000 dissertations (roughly 20% of the corpus).

The *unbalanced panel* maximizes coverage by including all 678 unique institutions in the database. As shown in Table A.17, these institutions have a mean time-series length of 23.7 years, ranging from single observations to continuous 66-year histories. The balanced panel serves as a critical robustness check to ensure that long-run trends observed in the full dataset are not artifacts of the changing institutional composition of the database over time.

Mathematical Model

The longitudinal dynamics are estimated using a one-way fixed-effects framework designed to isolate within-institutional change from cross-sectional variation. The inclusion of university fixed effects ensures we are comparing each institution to its own historical baseline, effectively controlling for time-invariant factors such as institutional prestige, mission, or geographic location.

Count Models: Log-Linear Specification

For the five thematic count baskets (*Facts/Truth Claims, Aesthetics, Power Dynamics, Identity,* and *Evaluation*), we employ a log-linear specification. To account for years in which specific terms may not appear within a university's output, we apply a shift of $+1$ prior to transformation. The model is defined as:

$$\ln(Y_{it} + 1) = \beta \text{Year}_t + \alpha_i + \epsilon_{it} \tag{1}$$

where Y_{it} is the raw frequency of terms for university i in year t, and α_i denotes the university fixed effect. Unlike a categorical year-effect model, this specification treats Year_t as a continuous numeric variable. This allows the coefficient β to be interpreted as the average annual growth rate; when multiplied by 100, it provides the average annual percentage change in term frequency relative to the institution's own baseline.

Sentiment Models: Linear Specification

For the nine sentiment variables, which are measured on a continuous valence scale ranging from -1 to $+1$, a linear trend specification is utilized:

$$S_{it} = \gamma \text{Year}_t + \alpha_i + \epsilon_{it} \tag{2}$$

In this equation, S_{it} represents the mean valence of the linguistic neighborhood (± 10 words) surrounding a focal term. The coefficient γ estimates the absolute annual shift in sentiment units. A positive γ indicates an increasingly positive or "warmer" rhetorical framing of the focal term, while a negative γ indicates a shift toward more critical or negative affective contexts.

Estimation and Inference

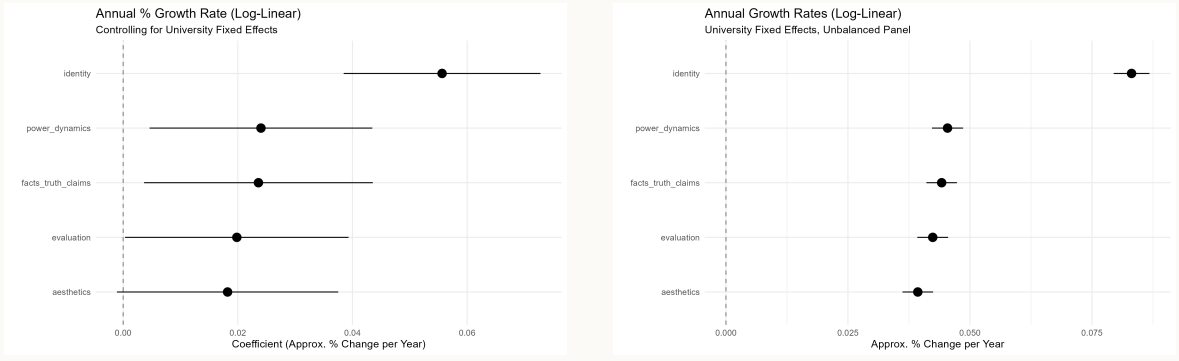
Estimation is performed using Fixed Effects Ordinary Least Squares (`feols`), which allows for the efficient absorption of institutional fixed effects. The one-way panel structure requires careful treatment of the error term ϵ_{it}. In academic longitudinal data, observations within a single university are likely to be serially correlated, as departmental cultures and theoretical traditions evolve slowly.

To ensure valid inference, standard errors are clustered at the university level. This allows for arbitrary correlation of residuals within an institution over time:

$$E[\epsilon_{it}\epsilon_{is}|X_i, \alpha_i] \neq 0 \tag{3}$$

By clustering at the university level, the resulting t-statistics and p-values are robust to both heteroscedasticity and temporal dependency within institutions. This provides a conservative and reliable threshold for identifying significant disciplinary shifts across the study period.

8.2 Findings



(a) Consistent Group of 10 Universities **(b)** All 678 Universities

Figure 30 Annual Growth Rates in Term-Basket Frequencies

Across both specifications, *Identity* terminology shows by far the largest annual growth rate (approximately 5–8% per year in the unbalanced panel). *Power Dynamics*, *Facts/Truth Claims*, and *Evaluation* cluster in the

intermediate range. *Aesthetics* shows the weakest growth of all five baskets. The relative ordering is consistent across both specifications.

The forest plots in Figures 30a and 30b and the regression tables (Tables A.15 and A.18) translate the visual patterns of Section 5 into formal estimates with confidence intervals, controlling for university fixed effects. Several features merit close attention.

Identity growth appears as the dominant and most precisely estimated signal in the corpus. In the balanced panel (Table A.15), the *Identity* coefficient is 0.056^{***} per year—a log-linear specification implies compound growth, so this coefficient translates to a doubling of *Identity* vocabulary roughly every 12 years.[3] In the unbalanced specification (Table A.18), the coefficient rises to 0.083^{***}, implying doubling every 8–9 years. The difference between balanced and unbalanced estimates likely reflects two forces: (i) the unbalanced panel includes recently founded programs at universities where identity-focused scholarship has grown fastest; and (ii) the log-linear specification is more sensitive to the steep post-2019 acceleration visible in Social Science II. Both results are consistent with the patterns anticipated in Trend 2.

The contrast with the next tier is instructive. *Power Dynamics* (0.045^{***}, unbalanced) and *Facts/Truth Claims* (0.044^{***}) grow at roughly half the rate of *Identity*. *Evaluation* (0.042^{***}) is statistically indistinguishable from *Power* and *Facts* in the unbalanced panel, suggesting that normative vocabulary has not been displaced—it has merely been outpaced by a faster-growing category, consistent with consistent with Trend 3, that truth-claim discourse is resilient. *Aesthetics* (0.039^{***} in the unbalanced panel) records the slowest growth, consistent with the secular decline visible in Figure 7.

Standard errors and inference. All coefficients in the unbalanced panel are estimated with considerable precision (standard errors of 0.002), reflecting the large sample of 15,994 university-year observations. The balanced panel, with only 660 observations across 10 universities, yields wider confidence intervals (standard errors of 0.008–0.009); the asterisk levels are correspondingly more conservative, with *Identity* remaining the only basket significant at $p < 0.01$. Crucially, the *ordering* of point estimates is identical across both specifications, validating the unbalanced panel as the primary specification for inference about trends in the broader academy.

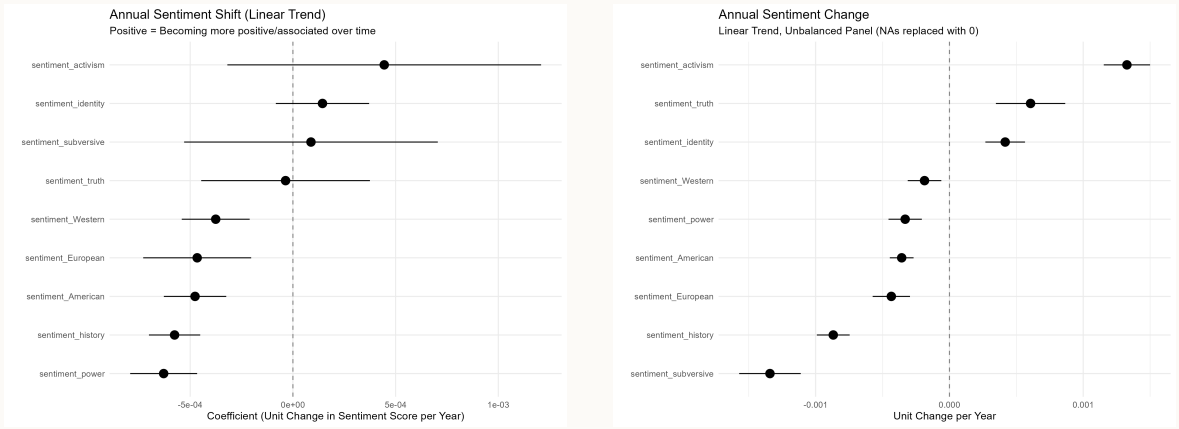
8.3 Sentiment Trends

History displays the most negative annual drift in both specifications. In the balanced panel (Figure 31a), the ordering of negative drifters is: *History*, *Power*, *American*, *European*, and *Western*. *Truth* is close to zero in the balanced specification but shows a small positive coefficient in the unbalanced panel. *Identity* and *Activism* are gaining in positive contextual association over time in both specifications; *Subversive* shows a small positive coefficient in the balanced panel (not statistically significant) but turns negative in the unbalanced panel, a reversal discussed below. Convergence between balanced and unbalanced estimates on the remaining eight terms reinforces the conclusion that these are genuine longitudinal trends in scholarly rhetoric.

The sentiment panel estimates (Table A.16 for the balanced panel; Table A.19 for the unbalanced) provide formal confirmation for the trends described in Section 6. Figures 31a and 31b present the coefficient estimates as forest plots, with positive values indicating terms gaining in positive contextual association over time.

Negative drifters. The five terms with statistically significant negative coefficients in the balanced panel

[3] The coefficient of 0.056 in the log-linear specification means that $\ln(\text{Freq}_t) = \ln(\text{Freq}_0) + 0.056 \cdot t$, implying exponential growth at an annual rate of $e^{0.056} - 1 \approx 0.0576$ (5.76%). The doubling time T satisfies $e^{0.056T} = 2$, so $T = \ln(2)/0.056 \approx 0.693/0.056 \approx 12.4$ years. Thus, the *Identity* vocabulary frequency doubles approximately every 12 years under this constant growth rate.



(a) Consistent Group of 10 Universities **(b)** All 678 Universities

Figure 31 Annual Sentiment Change by Term

are *History* (-0.0006^{***}), *Power* (-0.0006^{***}), *American* (-0.0005^{***}), *European* (-0.0005^{***}), and *Western* (-0.0004^{***}). The magnitudes are small in absolute terms—the largest annual coefficient (-0.0006) implies a cumulative shift of approximately 0.039 sentiment units over 65 years, and for *American* and *European* terms (-0.0005 annually) the cumulative shift is approximately 0.033 units; for *Western* (-0.0004), approximately 0.026 units—but they are precisely estimated and consistent across specifications. Across a 65-year period, these cumulative shifts constitute a systematic and substantively meaningful rhetorical transformation, providing evidence for the trajectory anticipated in Trend 4. However, a baseline-adjusted specification (M5, Appendix Section C) reveals important differences among the three geopolitical terms. The decline in sentiment toward *Western* is fully robust across all specifications and survives controls for corpus-wide negativity drift; it warrants strong interpretive language. The *European* decline attenuates to statistical insignificance once compositional and baseline controls are applied, and should be described with caution. The *American* coefficient reverses sign entirely under baseline adjustment, indicating that the apparent decline reflects genre-wide negativity drift rather than targeted negative framing of the United States; this finding should not be cited as evidence of anti-American sentiment in the corpus.

Positive drifters. Two terms gain robustly in positive contextual association across both specifications: *Activism* (the strongest positive gainer in the unbalanced panel) and *Identity* (positive and significant in the unbalanced panel). *Subversive* presents a more complex picture: it shows a small positive coefficient in the balanced panel (0.0001, not statistically significant), but a strongly *negative* coefficient in the unbalanced panel (-0.0013^{***}, Table A.19). This reversal likely reflects the composition of the broader 678-institution sample: many smaller and newer institutions use "subversive" primarily in clinical and social-work contexts where the term retains negative associations, diluting the positive revaluation trend visible at the 10 larger research universities in the balanced panel. The rehabilitation of *Subversive* at elite institutions remains noteworthy: a term that in 1960 appeared almost exclusively in negative contexts (score ≈ -0.22) is now framed progressively less negatively there, reflecting its revaluation within activist and critical-theory frameworks where resistance and subversion are scholarly virtues rather than vices.

Truth's stability. In the balanced panel, *Truth*'s coefficient is near zero and not statistically significant; in the unbalanced panel it is positive and significant ($+0.0006^{***}$). This is consistent with Trend 3: across nearly seven decades of academic publishing, the term "truth" has maintained—and if anything marginally strengthened—its positive contextual valence. *Truth*'s persistence as a positively valorized anchor term in academic rhetoric is one of the most striking regularities in this corpus, and complicates simple narratives of a postmodern turn against epistemological norms in the academy. Scholars may use more language about

power and identity in their work, but they still tend to present their arguments as aiming at truth throughout the full text of their dissertations.

Geographic Evidence

The temporal and fixed effects maps in Appendix B add a spatial dimension to the aggregate findings that the panel estimates alone cannot provide. Before examining the geographic patterns, one caveat is worth stating: the maps reflect the institutional composition of the ProQuest corpus, which over-represents large research universities and may not fully capture the distribution of doctoral production across the full range of American degree-granting institutions, including smaller regional universities and historically Black colleges and universities that archive with ProQuest at lower rates.

Count-based temporal maps (Figures B.2–B.6). The five thematic variables show distinct geographic trajectories across the four benchmark years. *Facts/Truth Claims* (Figure B.2) displays a stable concentration at a consistent cluster of research-intensive institutions, with no systematic regional bluing across large university clusters in any period—the spatial analogue of Trend 3's finding that truth-claim vocabulary was not displaced. *Power Dynamics* (Figure B.4) shows the most visible diffusion over time: a modest northeastern cluster in 1965 expands into a broader multi-regional pattern by 2025, with new above-average institutions appearing in the South and Mountain West. *Identity* (Figure B.5) undergoes the most dramatic change of any variable—near-uniform below-average values in 1965 give way to broad geographic expansion by 2025, with above-average scores appearing across all regions including institutions that were not among the traditional elite. Aesthetics (Figure B.3) shows the inverse trajectory: a concentrated above-average cluster in the Northeast and California in 1965 contracts steadily, with the below-average zone broadening across the South and Mountain West. Evaluation (Figure B.6) is the most geographically stable of the five, with state-level shading showing minimal directional change across the four panels.

Sentiment temporal maps (Figures B.7–B.15). The sentiment maps reveal a clear divide between the geopolitical terms and the remaining variables. *American* (Figure B.10), *European* (Figure B.11), and *Western* (Figure B.12) all shift from broadly positive or neutral state shading in 1965 toward negative relative values in the Northeast and California by 2005–2025, while the South, Mountain West, and Midwest retain positive or neutral shading throughout. The shift is most pronounced for *Western* sentiment, where the contrast between the 2005 and 2025 panels is particularly sharp. *History* sentiment (Figure B.8) shows progressive cooling of state-level shading across all regions, though the decline is most visible among large-output institutions. *Identity* sentiment (Figure B.7) moves in the opposite direction, with positive-sentiment clustering consolidating at large urban research universities by 2025. *Truth* sentiment (Figure B.9) stands apart: state shading shows modest and directionless variation across all four panels, with no systematic regional reddening or bluing over time. *Subversive* (Figure B.13) and *Activism* (Figure B.14) both show a modest positive shift, though *Activism* displays the widest within-year geographic dispersion of any sentiment variable, reflecting the range of disciplinary contexts in which it appears. *Power* sentiment (Figure B.15) shows intermediate and relatively stable geographic structure, less sharply polarized than the geopolitical terms.

Count-based fixed effects (Figure B.16). The fixed effects maps isolate each university's time-invariant tendency after removing common year shocks. A consistent bidirectional pattern emerges for *Facts/Truth Claims* and *Evaluation*: above-average fixed effects concentrate in the Midwest and Plains, while the Northeast and California fall below the system mean on both variables. *Power Dynamics* and *Identity* show the reverse structure almost exactly: above-average fixed effects cluster in the Northeast, upper Midwest, and California, while Southern public universities are consistently below average on both. The co-location of *Power* and *Identity* above-average fixed effects at the same institutional clusters—and the co-location of their below-average counterparts with above-average *Facts/Truth* and *Evaluation* fixed effects—provides geographic evidence for Trend 5's convergence pattern, where the terminological divide between institutional types

appears coherent and bidirectional, not a product of one variable alone. *Aesthetics* fixed effects show the most diffuse pattern, with no dominant regional structure, suggesting that sustained aesthetic vocabulary reflects the disciplinary mix of individual programs rather than regional intellectual culture.

Sentiment fixed effects (Figures B.17–B.18). The geopolitical sentiment fixed effects—*American*, *European*, and *Western* (Figure B.17)—display the strongest and most consistent regional divide of any sentiment variable. All three show below-average (blue) fixed effects at large research universities in the Northeast and California, and above-average (red) fixed effects at Southern regional and religiously affiliated institutions. The contrast is largest for *Western* sentiment, where the gap between the two clusters exceeds four standard deviations. *Identity* and *History* sentiment (Figure B.17) show a near-complementary institutional pattern: the same Northeastern institutions that are above average in *Identity* sentiment tend toward below-average *History* sentiment fixed effects, while religiously affiliated institutions in the South and Midwest maintain the most consistently positive *History* sentiment fixed effects. *Truth* sentiment (Figure B.17) diverges from all other sentiment variables: examined across the full blue-to-red range, it displays no comparable directional regional structure at either end of the scale. *Subversive* and *Activism* fixed effects (Figure B.18) mirror the count-variable pattern for *Power* and *Identity*, with above-average values in the upper Midwest and Northeast. *Power* sentiment fixed effects (Figure B.18) show a partially distinct pattern, with theologically oriented and professional institutions appearing among the above-average cluster—consistent with "power" retaining positive connotations in contexts where authority and hierarchy are normatively valued.

Summary: What the Data Show

Trend 1 — Disciplinary Divergence in Output Humanities counts fell 49% from their 2015 peak; Social Sciences fell only 4.5%. Within Social Sciences, Social Science II (less STEM-oriented) outperformed Social Science I throughout, ruling out simple STEM-substitution as the primary driver.

Trend 2 — Growth of Identity and Power Vocabularies *Identity* grew at 5–8% per year after controlling for university fixed effects—by far the fastest-growing basket. *Power Dynamics* surged post-1988. Both trends were most pronounced in Literature/Language, Interdisciplinary Studies, and Social Science II, exactly the fields anticipated by Trend 2.

Trend 3 — Persistence of Truth-Claim Discourse *Facts/Truth Claims* ranked highest across all fields and all years. Panel models show a positive (or at worst near-zero) annual trend for *Truth* sentiment. The possibility that truth-claim vocabulary has not been displaced—despite shifts in epistemological orientation—is strongly supported.

Trend 4 — Changing Tone Toward Western Heritage Terms Sentiment toward *Western* declined significantly and robustly across all fields, most sharply in Social Science II and Interdisciplinary Studies. *European* and *American* show raw declines that require qualification — the former attenuates substantially under compositional controls, the latter disappears after baseline adjustment (Appendix RC-4). Philosophy showed the least negative drift and the highest *Truth* sentiment, as predicted. All five negative-drift terms yield statistically significant panel coefficients.

Trend 5 — Growing Similarity Between Social Sciences and Humanities Social Science II's *Identity* trajectory, *Power Dynamics* profile, and geopolitical sentiment trends are far closer to those of Interdisciplinary Studies and Literature/Language than to Social Science I. The convergence is visible in both count-based and sentiment-based metrics and is confirmed by the panel estimates.

9 Conclusion

This report has examined 65 years of American doctoral scholarship through four complementary lenses—dissertation counts, normalized vocabulary frequencies, sentiment valence, and one-way fixed effects panel models with linear time trends—drawing on a corpus of 443,543 PhD dissertations submitted between 1960 and 2025 across 678 degree-granting institutions. The findings are mutually consistent and, taken together, support five conclusions of substantive importance for ongoing debates about the "humanities crisis," the cultural turn in academic discourse, and the epistemic norms of scholarly writing.

1. The Structural Divergence in Doctoral Output Is Real and Field-Specific

PhD production in the Humanities has lost ground relative to Social Science. The aggregate decline in dissertation production since 2015 conceals a pronounced asymmetry. Humanities counts fell by nearly **49%** from their 2015 peak, while Social Sciences counts contracted by only **4.5%**. This divergence cannot be attributed to common factors such as demographic change or funding cuts, which would have affected both broad groupings similarly. It reflects a field-specific institutional contraction in the Humanities—History and Literature/Language have each shed roughly half their output in a decade—alongside the sustained vitality of Social Science II (Anthropology, Psychology, Communications), which grew 70-fold over the full study period and by 2025 accounts for over **40%** of all dissertations in the corpus.

The rise of STEM is inadequate as an explanation. The compositional evidence is more consistent with a crisis concentrated in the *institutional* Humanities than with a broad flight toward quantitative fields: the fastest-growing grouping is Social Science II, which shares many of the Humanities' interpretive concerns and has been as thoroughly shaped by the cultural and linguistic turns as any literature department. The vocabulary and tone profiles of Social Science II have converged substantially toward those of the Humanities, with *Identity* and *Power Dynamics* now more prominent in Social Science II than in several traditional Humanities subfields. This pattern suggests that themes characteristic of humanistic inquiry remain present in American doctoral scholarship, now associated with fields carrying a social-science institutional label.

2. The Cultural Turn Is Quantitatively Documented and Still Ongoing

Identity vocabulary has grown at approximately 5–8% per year after controlling for university fixed effects—the fastest rate of any of the five thematic baskets, implying a doubling of *Identity* frequency every 8–12 years. Its growth is not an artifact of compositional change in the database; the balanced-panel estimates, using 10 institutions with continuous data since 1960, confirm the trend with a coefficient of 0.056^{***}. *Power* vocabulary surged sharply from the 1988 inflection point—the quantitative signature of the diffusion of poststructuralist and postcolonial frameworks from Literature into the broader academy—and has remained elevated.

Critically, this growth has *not* been uniform. It is heavily concentrated in Interdisciplinary Studies, Literature/Language, and Social Science II—precisely the fields anticipated by Trend 2. History and Social Science I, by contrast, show considerably more muted growth in *Identity* vocabulary and a more stable *Power* profile. The geographic evidence from the fixed effects maps reinforces this picture: the cultural turn exhibits a clear Northeast–Midwest–South gradient, with high-output coastal research universities as the primary carriers and Midwestern flagship institutions as a structural counterweight. Fixed effects maps reveal a coherent

bidirectional structure where above-average emphasis on *Power* and *Identity* is tightly clustered at large research universities in the Northeast and California, while Southern and Midwestern public universities maintain a consistent structural focus on *Facts* and *Evaluation*.

3. Truth-Claim Norms Have Not Been Displaced

The most striking single finding of this study may be the one that *fails* to confirm a widespread narrative. Despite the dramatic rise of power-analytic and identity vocabularies, *Facts/Truth Claims* terminology has maintained the highest normalizer frequency across all fields throughout the entire 65-year study period. Its panel-model coefficient is positive and statistically significant: academic writing has, if anything, *increased* its density of truth-oriented vocabulary over the study period.

The sentiment evidence is equally clear. *Truth* sentiment (≈ 0.35 on the $[-1, +1]$ scale) is five to seven times higher than that of any other tracked term and has not declined meaningfully in aggregate. Even in Interdisciplinary Studies—the field where *Truth* sentiment is lowest—the series is effectively neutral rather than negative. Only in Literature/Language does *Truth* sentiment show a slight downward slope post-1990, and even there the score remains substantially positive. Scholars may have multiplied the rhetorical registers surrounding their inquiries, but they have consistently continued to frame their knowledge claims as truth-oriented in dissertation texts. This finding complicates simple "postmodern turn" narratives and should inform how the humanities crisis is diagnosed and debated. Geographic evidence reinforces this stability; *Truth*-related vocabulary and sentiment display the highest degree of spatial uniformity of any variable across all four benchmark periods, resisting the regional polarization observed in almost every other thematic category.

4. The Rhetorical Reframing of Western and Historical Heritage Is Systematic

The geopolitical sentiment results reveal a secular, cross-field shift of a different character. Sentiment toward *Western* has declined monotonically across the full study period in every field and survives all robustness controls. *European* shows a similar raw pattern that attenuates substantially under compositional controls. *American* shows a raw decline that disappears after absorbing corpus-wide negativity drift, and should not be characterized as targeted negative framing of the United States (Appendix RC-4). The shifts are small annually (≈ -0.001 per year) but cumulative: over 65 years, they represent a roughly one-third reduction in the baseline sentiment score of each term. *History* sentiment has undergone the steepest decline, reaching near-zero in the aggregate corpus and crossing into negative territory within Social Science II—a finding of particular salience given that the discipline of History has itself been one of the worst affected by the output contraction.

These are changes in *rhetorical framing*, not direct measures of ideological commitment: the methodology captures the associative context of words rather than authorial intent. But associative context in scholarly writing is itself a meaningful indicator of how concepts are positioned within a field's discourse. The robustness of these trends across both balanced and unbalanced specifications, across all fields, and across 65 years gives them the character of a genuine longitudinal transformation in the affective climate of American doctoral scholarship. The maps isolate this transformation to a sharp regional divide: while the South and Midwest retain positive or neutral shading, *Western* sentiment at large coastal research universities has dropped more than four standard deviations below that of regional and religiously affiliated institutions.

5. The Divergence between Truth Stability and Heritage Reframing Is the Core Analytical Distinction

Perhaps the most theoretically consequential finding is the *dissociation* between the stability of *Truth* sentiment and the decline of heritage-term sentiment. These two outcomes are sometimes conflated in debates about the academy: critics of the cultural turn argue that relativism toward Western heritage reflects a broader relativism toward truth and knowledge; defenders argue that humanities scholars remain committed to rigorous epistemological standards. The evidence here supports neither the most alarming nor the most dismissive version of these claims.

Truth-oriented vocabulary and its positive valorization have been maintained across all fields and all decades. Geopolitical sentiment, by contrast, has shifted systematically and durably—though not uniformly across terms. Sentiment toward *Western* cultural heritage has declined in ways that survive all robustness checks: field composition, university fixed effects, and baseline adjustment for corpus-wide negativity drift alike. The corresponding trend for *American* framing, by contrast, reflects genre-wide negativity drift rather than targeted reframing, and does not survive baseline adjustment (Appendix RC-4). This dissociation implies that the changes documented in this corpus are better described as a *reorientation of cultural valuation* than as an abandonment of epistemic norms. The academy has become more critical of Western cultural heritage in its scholarly rhetoric while simultaneously sustaining—or even strengthening—its rhetorical commitment to truth-seeking. These are separable phenomena, institutionally, geographically, and historically.

Limitations and Future Work

Several limitations of the present analysis merit acknowledgment. First, although the analysis draws on the full text of dissertations (including titles, abstracts, and main text), these materials still reflect conventions of academic writing and may not fully capture the underlying research processes or intellectual motivations of authors. The patterns documented here should therefore be interpreted as features of scholarly discourse rather than direct measures of substantive inquiry. Second, as noted above, the most recent years (2023–2025) are subject to time-lag bias in the TDM Studio archive, and the apparent declines in dissertation counts for this period should be treated as lower bounds rather than definitive measurements. Third, the basket-of-terms methodology is sensitive to the initial seeding choices; while the five baskets used here were validated against the secondary literature, alternative coding schemes could yield different quantitative results, even if the broad ordinal patterns are likely robust. A natural extension would be to conduct formal sensitivity analysis—assessing, for instance, whether results in fields such as Philosophy and Theology are driven by a small number of high-frequency terms such as *proof*, *logic*, or *faith*. Such analysis is not feasible in the present version: the basket counts are derived from a single, fixed data extraction pass through the TDM Studio corpus, and re-querying the archive with modified term lists would require a full re-run of the data collection pipeline, which falls outside the scope of this report. This remains a priority for future work, and we flag any field-level results that rest on a narrow set of terms as warranting particular interpretive caution.

Future work should extend the analysis in several directions. First, expanding the comparison to other academic fields in the natural sciences and professional fields would help clarify whether the patterns observed here are field-specific or part of broader shifts in scholarly language. Relatedly, incorporating international dissertation corpora would allow for cross-national comparisons and a more systematic assessment of variation across institutional and cultural contexts. Second, further work could explicitly measure the extent of heterogeneity in vocabulary and sentiment across institutions, fields, and time, providing a clearer picture of how concentrated or diffuse these patterns are. Third, linking dissertations to individual career trajectories

would open a new line of inquiry: by tracking authors through sources such as Google Scholar profiles, CVs, and other public records, it would be possible to examine whether the rhetorical and conceptual patterns documented here are associated with subsequent academic placement, publication trajectories, or career outcomes.

The corpus assembled for this report constitutes a longitudinal record of American doctoral scholarship without precedent in its temporal scope and thematic breadth. The findings reported here represent a preliminary analysis; they establish the major contours of a 65-year transformation and lay the groundwork for more targeted investigations of its causes, mechanisms, and consequences.

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A Appendix. Supplementary Tables

Classification Tables A.1–A.4 provide 5-year aggregate counts and normalized shares at the field and subfield level.

Panel Data Tables A.5–A.14 record 5-year dissertation totals for the ten balanced-panel universities.

Regression Results Tables A.15–A.19 report two-way fixed effects regression results in balanced and unbalanced panel specifications.

Annual Trends Tables A.22–A.24 document annual trends in counts and normalized frequencies.

Rankings Table A.31 presents year-specific z-score rankings at four benchmark years (1965, 1985, 2005, 2025); extreme z-scores at institutions with $N \leq 2$ should be interpreted with caution.

Table A.1 Humanities/Arts vs Social Sciences (5-Year Aggregates)

Period	Hum/Arts	Soc Sci	Total	Hum/Arts %	Soc Sci %
1960	623	478	1,101	56.6	43.4
1965	4,338	3,279	7,617	57.0	43.0
1970	7,654	6,244	13,898	55.1	44.9
1975	11,258	9,422	20,680	54.4	45.6
1980	9,729	9,011	18,740	51.9	48.1
1985	8,636	8,658	17,294	49.9	50.1
1990	9,869	10,161	20,030	49.3	50.7
1995	13,786	14,395	28,181	48.9	51.1
2000	21,210	21,033	42,243	50.2	49.8
2005	22,695	23,567	46,262	49.1	50.9
2010	28,253	26,935	55,188	51.2	48.8
2015	33,473	31,416	64,889	51.6	48.4
2020	27,665	32,803	60,468	45.8	54.2
2025	16,951	29,997	46,948	36.1	63.9

Table A.2 Dissertation Counts by Classification Category (5-Year Aggregates)

Period	Hum/Arts	Soc Sci	Hum/Soc Sci	History	Lit/Lang	Phil/Theol	Studies	Soc Sci I	Soc Sci II
1960	623	478	1,101	165	191	82	6	178	283
1965	4,338	3,279	7,619	1,225	1,500	599	33	1,189	1,986
1970	7,654	6,244	13,899	2,326	3,186	1,092	64	2,446	3,645
1975	11,258	9,422	20,681	3,535	4,716	1,488	184	3,561	5,767
1980	9,729	9,011	18,740	2,940	3,798	1,261	385	3,575	6,100
1985	8,636	8,658	17,294	2,412	3,118	1,346	460	3,565	5,684
1990	9,869	10,161	20,030	2,766	3,578	1,609	629	4,595	6,307
1995	13,786	14,395	28,181	3,879	5,470	1,892	1,143	6,831	8,765
2000	21,210	21,033	42,243	6,096	8,092	2,971	2,177	9,737	13,294
2005	22,695	23,567	46,262	6,664	8,162	3,448	2,432	10,462	14,926
2010	28,253	26,935	55,188	7,488	7,080	4,500	6,717	11,059	16,183
2015	33,473	31,416	64,889	7,496	7,153	5,387	10,707	11,833	19,595
2020	27,665	32,803	60,468	6,320	6,156	4,806	8,350	13,076	19,940
2025	16,951	29,997	46,948	3,583	4,084	3,612	4,373	11,642	18,368
Total	216,140	227,399	443,543	56,895	66,284	34,093	37,660	93,749	140,843

Table A.3 Normalized Humanities/Arts vs Social Sciences (5-Year Aggregates)

Period	Humanities/Arts	Social Sciences
1960	0.566	0.434
1965	0.570	0.430
1970	0.551	0.449
1975	0.544	0.456
1980	0.519	0.481
1985	0.499	0.501
1990	0.493	0.507
1995	0.489	0.511
2000	0.502	0.498
2005	0.491	0.509
2010	0.512	0.488
2015	0.516	0.484
2020	0.458	0.542
2025	0.361	0.639

Table A.4 Subcategory Counts and Percentages (5-Year Aggregates)

Period	History	%	Lit/Lang	%	Phil/Theo	%	Studies	%	SS-I	%	SS-II	%
1960	165	18.2	191	21.1	82	9.1	6	0.7	178	19.7	283	31.3
1965	1,225	18.8	1,500	23.0	599	9.2	33	0.5	1,189	18.2	1,986	30.4
1970	2,326	18.2	3,186	25.0	1,092	8.6	64	0.5	2,446	19.2	3,645	28.6
1975	3,535	18.4	4,716	24.5	1,488	7.7	184	1.0	3,561	18.5	5,767	30.0
1980	2,940	16.3	3,798	21.0	1,261	7.0	385	2.1	3,575	19.8	6,100	33.8
1985	2,412	14.5	3,118	18.8	1,346	8.1	460	2.8	3,565	21.5	5,684	34.3
1990	2,766	14.2	3,578	18.4	1,609	8.3	629	3.2	4,595	23.6	6,307	32.4
1995	3,879	13.9	5,470	19.5	1,892	6.8	1,143	4.1	6,831	24.4	8,765	31.3
2000	6,096	14.4	8,092	19.1	2,971	7.0	2,177	5.1	9,737	23.0	13,294	31.4
2005	6,664	14.5	8,162	17.7	3,448	7.5	2,432	5.3	10,462	22.7	14,926	32.4
2010	7,488	14.1	7,080	13.4	4,500	8.5	6,717	12.7	11,059	20.9	16,183	30.5
2015	7,496	12.1	7,153	11.5	5,387	8.7	10,707	17.2	11,833	19.0	19,595	31.5
2020	6,320	10.8	6,156	10.5	4,806	8.2	8,350	14.2	13,076	22.3	19,940	34.0
2025	3,583	7.8	4,084	8.9	3,612	7.9	4,373	9.6	11,642	25.5	18,368	40.2

Temporal Analysis by Institution

Chicago 5-year dissertation totals for each of the ten balanced-panel universities. Chicago (Table A.9) is the largest contributor (11,025 dissertations).

Indiana University Indiana University (Table A.6) illustrates the general Humanities collapse most starkly.

UIUC University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Table A.13) lacks 2025 data owing to registration delays.

Table A.5 5-Year Dissertation Totals: Columbia University

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	192	126	66
1970	320	217	103
1975	393	261	132
1980	277	197	80
1985	253	156	97
1990	242	140	102
1995	659	388	271
2000	746	448	298
2005	970	544	426
2010	951	521	430
2015	1011	581	430
2020	1021	554	467
2025	739	316	423
Total	7,774	4,449	3,325

Table A.6 5-Year Dissertation Totals: Indiana University

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	389	228	161
1970	685	390	295
1975	1037	626	411
1980	865	519	346
1985	636	369	267
1990	483	251	232
1995	514	297	217
2000	592	357	235
2005	765	464	301
2010	733	408	325
2015	959	529	430
2020	962	536	426
2025	856	397	459
Total	9,476	5,371	4,105

Table A.7 5-Year Dissertation Totals: New York University

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	498	291	207
1970	712	440	272
1975	1094	703	391
1980	980	634	346
1985	675	408	267
1990	628	404	224
1995	622	379	243
2000	748	513	235
2005	907	578	329
2010	941	569	372
2015	968	586	382
2020	959	591	368
2025	754	341	413
Total	10,486	6,437	4,049

Table A.8 5-Year Dissertation Totals: The Ohio State University

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	408	213	195
1970	506	230	276
1975	872	387	485
1980	776	285	491
1985	614	232	382
1990	566	219	347
1995	670	275	395
2000	635	294	341
2005	703	296	407
2010	444	169	275
2015	693	350	343
2020	993	458	535
2025	721	187	534
Total	8,601	3,595	5,006

Table A.9 5-Year Dissertation Totals: The University of Chicago

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	632	277	355
1970	767	345	422
1975	1111	578	533
1980	871	396	475
1985	725	355	370
1990	620	315	305
1995	621	319	302
2000	833	451	382
2005	927	475	452
2010	968	560	408
2015	1061	693	368
2020	983	591	392
2025	906	453	453
Total	11,025	5,808	5,217

Table A.10 5-Year Dissertation Totals: The University of Wisconsin - Madison

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	108	84	24
1970	230	172	58
1975	434	304	130
1980	299	212	87
1985	297	173	124
1990	328	160	168
1995	710	292	418
2000	835	373	462
2005	917	439	478
2010	865	426	439
2015	1060	562	498
2020	1146	516	630
2025	922	278	644
Total	8,151	3,991	4,160

Table A.11 5-Year Dissertation Totals: University of California, Berkeley

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	74	38	36
1970	207	114	93
1975	100	53	47
1980	276	163	113
1985	297	167	130
1990	346	177	169
1995	844	400	444
2000	888	469	419
2005	1232	618	614
2010	1172	596	576
2015	1311	713	598
2020	1160	613	547
2025	754	276	478
Total	8,661	4,397	4,264

Table A.12 5-Year Dissertation Totals: University of California, Los Angeles

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	33	19	14
1970	111	65	46
1975	213	134	79
1980	244	170	74
1985	234	147	87
1990	288	174	114
1995	732	386	346
2000	764	413	351
2005	932	497	435
2010	1028	553	475
2015	1186	677	509
2020	1150	612	538
2025	1008	446	562
Total	7,923	4,293	3,630

Table A.13 5-Year Dissertation Totals: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	433	222	211
1970	599	281	318
1975	975	418	557
1980	735	315	420
1985	503	205	298
1990	518	194	324
1995	525	217	308
2000	607	238	369
2005	633	271	362
2010	698	292	406
2015	860	424	436
2020	716	306	410
Total	7,802	3,383	4,419

Table A.14 5-Year Dissertation Totals: University of Michigan

Year	Total	Humanities & Arts	Social Sciences
1965	635	299	336
1970	886	413	473
1975	1357	612	745
1980	1123	470	653
1985	830	327	503
1990	678	293	385
1995	627	299	328
2000	663	334	329
2005	735	341	394
2010	914	443	471
2015	740	411	329
2020	650	330	320
2025	732	248	484
Total	10,570	4,820	5,750

Table A.15 Log-Linear Trends in Count Variables (Balanced Panel)

Variable	facts	aesthetics	power	identity	evaluation
Annual Trend	0.0236**	0.0182*	0.0240**	0.0556***	0.0198**
	(0.0088)	(0.0085)	(0.0086)	(0.0076)	(0.0086)
Num. Obs.	660	660	660	660	660
R^2	0.2200	0.1920	0.2200	0.5990	0.2000

Notes: Standard errors clustered at university level. Significance levels: $^{x}p \leq 0.1$, $^{*}p \leq 0.05$, $^{**}p \leq 0.01$, $^{***}p \leq 0.001$.

Table A.16 Linear Trends in Sentiment Variables (Balanced Panel)

Variable	identity	history	truth	American	European	Western	subversive	activism	power
Annual Trend	0.0001	-0.0006***	-0.0000	-0.0005***	-0.0005***	-0.0004***	0.0001	0.0004	-0.0006***
	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0002)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0003)	(0.0003)	(0.0001)
Num. Obs.	660	660	660	660	660	660	660	660	660
R^2	0.0180	0.2980	0.0720	0.2470	0.1200	0.1020	0.0170	0.0240	0.2740

Notes: Standard errors clustered at university level. Significance levels: $^{x}p \leq 0.1$, $^{*}p \leq 0.05$, $^{**}p \leq 0.01$, $^{***}p \leq 0.001$.

Table A.17 Panel Structure Diagnostics

	N_units	T_min	T_mean	T_max
1	678	1	23.71681	66

Notes: Unbalanced panel: 678 institutions, mean time-series length 23.7 years (range: 1–66). Single-observation institutions are retained to avoid survivorship bias; their influence on trend estimates is negligible.

Table A.18 Log-Linear Trends in Count Variables (Unbalanced Panel)

Variable	facts	aesthetics	power	identity	evaluation
Annual Trend	0.0442***	0.0393***	0.0454***	0.0831***	0.0424***
	(0.0016)	(0.0016)	(0.0016)	(0.0019)	(0.0016)
Num. Obs.	15994	15994	15994	15994	15994
R^2	0.7580	0.7650	0.7510	0.7400	0.7430

Notes: Standard errors clustered at university level. Significance levels: $^{x}p \leq 0.1$, $^{*}p \leq 0.05$, $^{**}p \leq 0.01$, $^{***}p \leq 0.001$.

Table A.19 Linear Trends in Sentiment Variables (Unbalanced Panel)

Variable	identity	history	truth	American	European	Western	subversive	activism	power
Annual Trend	0.0004***	-0.0009***	0.0006***	-0.0004***	-0.0004***	-0.0002*	-0.0013***	0.0013***	-0.0003***
	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0000)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)	(0.0001)
Num. Obs.	15994	15994	15994	15994	15994	15994	15994	15994	15994
R^2	0.0840	0.1940	0.2170	0.1360	0.0920	0.0780	0.1220	0.0630	0.1270

Notes: Standard errors clustered at university level. Significance levels: $^{x}p \leq 0.1$, $^{*}p \leq 0.05$, $^{**}p \leq 0.01$, $^{***}p \leq 0.001$.

Table A.20 Complete Classification Summary of Dissertations by Subcategory

Subcat.	N	H&A	SS	H/SS	Hist	Lit	Phil	Stud	SS1	SS2
Economics	26,280		X	X					X	
Political science	19,000		X	X					X	
Social psychology	16,247		X	X						X
Philosophy	14,818	X		X			X			
Psychology	14,581		X	X						X
Statistics	14,042		X	X					X	
Linguistics	13,239		X	X					X	
Cultural anthropology	12,517		X	X						X
American history	12,016	X		X	X					
Communication	9,993		X	X						X
American literature	9,894	X		X		X				
British and Irish literature	9,790	X		X		X				
Modern literature	9,377	X		X		X				
Sociology	8,427		X	X						X
Behavioral psychology	8,117		X	X						X
Social work	8,096		X	X						X
Music	8,021	X		X						
Religion	7,924	X		X			X			
Experimental psychology	7,279		X	X						X
Geography	6,774		X	X						
Comparative literature	6,496	X		X		X				
European history	5,970	X		X	X					
Modern history	5,921	X		X	X					
Archaeology	5,898	X		X	X					X
Womens studies	5,798	X		X				X		
American studies	5,709	X		X				X		
African American Studies	5,656	X		X				X		
Literature	5,229	X		X		X				
Cognitive psychology	5,201		X	X						X
Agricultural economics	5,145		X	X					X	
Economic theory	5,100		X	X					X	
Theology	4,989	X		X			X			
Romance literature	4,885	X		X		X				
Counseling Psychology	4,857		X	X						X
Social research	4,600		X	X						X
Individual & family studies	4,403		X	X						X
Language arts	4,373	X		X						
Mass communications	4,371		X	X						X
Theater	4,180	X		X						

Continued on next page

Table A.20 Complete Classification Summary (continued)

Subcat.	N	H&A	SS	H/SS	Hist	Lit	Phil	Stud	SS1	SS2
Religious history	4,021	X		X	X					
Latin American literature	3,692	X		X		X				
Public policy	3,633		X	X					X	
Educational sociology	3,501		X	X						X
Art history	3,445	X		X	X					
Biblical studies	3,212	X		X				X		
Labor economics	3,073		X	X					X	
Psychobiology	2,854		X	X						X
Asian History	2,695	X		X	X					
Social structure	2,692		X	X						X
International law	2,671		X	X						X
Ethnic studies	2,578	X		X				X		
Medieval literature	2,508	X		X		X				
Classical literature	2,405	X		X		X				
Law	2,391		X	X						X
German literature	2,347	X		X		X				
Black studies	2,280	X		X				X		
Latin American history	2,150	X		X	X					
History	2,143	X		X	X					
Ethics	1,926	X		X			X			
Physical anthropology	1,882		X	X					X	
Fine arts	1,843	X		X						
Education history	1,615	X		X	X					
Film studies	1,594	X		X				X		
Rhetoric	1,546	X		X		X				
English as a Second Language	1,527	X		X		X				
Asian Studies	1,495	X		X				X		
Medieval history	1,420	X		X	X					
Behavioral Sciences	1,417		X	X						X
Demography	1,407		X	X					X	
Biographies	1,395	X		X	X					
African Studies	1,354	X		X				X		
Social studies education	1,199		X	X						
Science history	1,145	X		X	X					
Economic history	1,104	X		X	X					
Middle Eastern history	1,069	X		X	X					
African history	1,056	X		X	X					
Ancient history	1,027	X		X	X					
Education philosophy	1,012	X		X			X			

Continued on next page

Table A.20 Complete Classification Summary (continued)

Subcat.	N	H&A	SS	H/SS	Hist	Lit	Phil	Stud	SS1	SS2
Black history	999	X		X	X					
LGBTQ studies	968	X		X				X		
International Relations	940		X	X					X	
Religious education	925	X		X						
Language	910	X		X		X				
Rhetoric and Composition	908	X		X		X				
Asian American Studies	875	X		X				X		
Folklore	836	X		X		X				
Epistemology	802	X		X			X			
Environmental Studies	745		X	X				X		
Ancient languages	741	X		X		X				
Latin American Studies	735	X		X				X		
Modern language	732	X		X		X				
Gender studies	588	X		X				X		
Foreign language education	559	X		X						
Dance	547	X		X						
Philosophy of Science	534	X		X			X			
Philosophy of religion	512	X		X			X			
Music history	478	X		X	X					
Sexuality	446	X		X						X
African literature	431	X		X		X				
Middle Eastern literature	418	X		X		X				
Creative writing	415	X		X		X				
Caribbean literature	402	X		X		X				
Military studies	397	X		X	X			X		
French literature	393	X		X		X				
Metaphysics	390	X		X			X			
Musical composition	383	X		X						
Classical Studies	352	X		X	X			X		
Peace Studies	323	X		X				X		
Multimedia Communications	321	X		X						
Environmental education	312	X		X						
Caribbean Studies	303	X		X				X		
Logic	282	X		X			X			
Spirituality	268	X		X			X			
Islamic Studies	259	X		X				X		
European Studies	248	X		X				X		
Music theory	237	X		X						
Native American studies	231	X		X				X		

Continued on next page

Table A.20 Complete Classification Summary (continued)

Subcat.	N	H&A	SS	H/SS	Hist	Lit	Phil	Stud	SS1	SS2
Sociolinguistics	227		X	X						X
Art Criticism	203	X		X						
Technical Communication	197		X	X						
Aesthetics	196	X		X			X			
Film, television, and media studies	190	X		X				X		
Hispanic American studies	183	X		X				X		
Environmental philosophy	178	X		X			X			
Medical Ethics	170	X		X			X			
East European Studies	161	X		X				X		
Canadian history	159	X		X	X					
Fashion	145	X		X						
Environmental Justice	143	X		X						X
Italian literature	137	X		X		X				
Forensic anthropology	137		X	X				X		
South Asian Studies	126	X		X				X		
Translation studies	122	X		X		X		X		
Internet and social media studies	118	X		X				X		
Russian history	117	X		X	X					
Southeast Asian studies	116	X		X				X		
Performing Arts	110	X		X						
Judaic studies	107	X		X				X		
Military history	101	X		X	X					
Theater History	100	X		X	X					
Near Eastern Studies	88	X		X				X		
Canadian studies	85	X		X				X		
Musical performances	82	X		X						
World History	82	X		X	X					
Experimental/theoretical	79		X	X						
Slavic Studies	76	X		X				X		
Performing arts education	74	X		X						
Regional Studies	69	X		X				X		
Museum studies	68	X		X				X		
Canadian literature	59	X		X		X				
Environmental Law	58		X	X						
Indigenous studies	57	X		X				X		
Holocaust Studies	54	X		X				X		
Divinity	49	X		X			X			
Sub Saharan Africa Studies	46	X		X				X		
Pacific Rim Studies	40	X		X				X		

Continued on next page

Table A.20 Complete Classification Summary (continued)

Subcat.	N	H&A	SS	H/SS	Hist	Lit	Phil	Stud	SS1	SS2
Cinematography	35	X		X						
French Canadian literature	34	X		X		X				
Comparative religion	32	X		X			X			
North African Studies	30	X		X				X		
Icelandic & Scandinavian literature	28	X		X		X				
Scandinavian Studies	24	X		X				X		
South African Studies	22	X		X				X		
History of Oceania	18	X		X	X					
Baltic Studies	15	X		X				X		
Australian literature	14	X		X		X				
Social trends & culture	14		X	X						X
United States	14	X		X				X		
Canon Law	11	X		X			X			
Social responsibility	10	X		X						
East Asian studies	8	X		X				X		
French Canadian Culture	7	X		X						
Organizational structure	6		X	X						X
Russian literature	5	X		X		X				
Psychotherapy	4			X						
Art therapy	3	X		X						
Spanish literature	3	X		X		X				
Economic conditions & forecasts	2		X	X					X	
International trade & foreign investment	2		X	X					X	
Politics & political behavior	2		X	X					X	
Eastern Europe	2	X		X				X		
Museums	1	X		X	X					
Latin America	1	X		X				X		
Economic policy & planning	1		X	X					X	
Asia & the Pacific	1	X		X				X		
Ancient civilizations	1	X		X	X					
Africa	1	X		X					X	
Arts, entertainment & recreation	1	X		X						
TOTAL	443,543									

- Annual dissertation counts by broad classification (Table A.22) and annual normalized term-basket frequencies (Table A.23).
- The unusually low 1990 counts in some cells reflect a known data-entry lag in the ProQuest archive.
- Annual mean, SD, and SE for each basket (Table A.24): standard deviations are typically 50–65% of the mean, indicating substantial cross-dissertation heterogeneity; standard errors (order 10^{-4}) confirm stable year-level estimates.

Table A.21 Dissertation Counts by Classification Category and Year

Year	Hum/Arts	Soc Sci	Hum/Soc Sci	History	Lit/Lang	Phil/Theol	Studies	Soc Sci I	Soc Sci II
1960	623	478	1,101	165	191	82	6	178	283
1965	1,099	790	1,889	327	408	156	7	281	495
1970	2,005	1,642	3,648	620	818	275	17	656	942
1975	2,204	1,955	4,159	719	886	274	55	719	1,340
1980	1,830	1,720	3,550	522	705	260	74	711	1,129
1985	1,681	1,756	3,437	465	574	284	93	742	1,134
1990	2,681	3,005	5,686	755	1,085	394	156	1,434	1,794
1995	2,750	2,735	5,485	829	1,109	308	231	1,290	1,720
2000	5,005	4,975	9,980	1,439	1,908	716	530	2,264	3,218
2005	4,433	4,831	9,264	1,335	1,575	656	459	2,173	3,007
2010	6,268	5,522	11,790	1,450	1,410	983	1,871	2,098	3,416
2015	6,575	6,833	13,408	1,488	1,365	1,131	2,147	2,504	4,293
2020	4,260	6,455	10,715	1,048	1,089	785	1,060	2,670	3,845
2025	2,286	4,811	7,097	420	524	559	589	1,760	3,038
Total	216,140	227,399	443,543	56,895	66,284	34,093	37,660	93,749	140,843

Table A.22 Document Count by Year

Year	Document Count
1960	1,101
1961	1,185
1962	1,299
1963	1,628
1964	1,618
1965	1,889
1966	2,106
1967	2,325
1968	2,742
1969	3,078
1970	3,648
1971	3,845
1972	4,143
1973	4,284
1974	4,250
1975	4,159
1976	4,040
1977	3,890
1978	3,709
1979	3,551
1980	3,550
1981	3,563

Continued on next page

Table A.22 – *Continued from previous page*

Year	Document Count
1982	3,478
1983	3,376
1984	3,440
1985	3,437
1986	3,833
1987	3,480
1988	3,437
1989	3,594
1990	5,686
1991	5,861
1992	6,376
1993	5,142
1994	5,317
1995	5,485
1996	8,113
1997	7,907
1998	8,142
1999	8,101
2000	9,980
2001	9,459
2002	9,457
2003	9,640
2004	8,442
2005	9,264
2006	10,351
2007	11,004
2008	10,889
2009	11,154
2010	11,790
2011	12,228
2012	13,203
2013	13,123
2014	12,927
2015	13,408
2016	13,040
2017	12,581
2018	12,443
2019	11,689
2020	10,715
2021	9,971

Continued on next page

Table A.22 – *Continued from previous page*

Year	Document Count
2022	10,655
2023	10,485
2024	8,740
2025	7,097
Total	443,543

Table A.23 Normalized Counts by Year

Year	Facts/Truth Claims	Aesthetics	Power Dynamics	Identity	Evaluation
1960	0.011003	0.004936	0.008213	0.000434	0.005736
1965	0.010813	0.004593	0.007938	0.000430	0.005716
1970	0.011569	0.004836	0.008203	0.000535	0.005763
1975	0.011586	0.004680	0.008754	0.000649	0.005935
1980	0.011925	0.004939	0.008537	0.000774	0.005996
1985	0.012088	0.004818	0.008672	0.000888	0.005948
1990	0.012764	0.004582	0.009922	0.001304	0.006265
1995	0.012485	0.004606	0.010337	0.001963	0.006214
2000	0.012639	0.004541	0.010385	0.002474	0.006410
2005	0.012931	0.004517	0.010274	0.002548	0.006282
2010	0.013524	0.004493	0.010258	0.002947	0.006520
2015	0.013563	0.004255	0.009972	0.003065	0.006284
2020	0.014453	0.004302	0.010462	0.003640	0.006319
2025	0.015317	0.004238	0.009920	0.004348	0.006888

Table A.24 Temporal Trends in Humanities Dissertation Content Metrics (Selected Years)

Metric	Year	Mean	Std Dev	SEM	N
facts_truth_claims	1960	0.011545	0.006747	0.000203	1101
facts_truth_claims	1965	0.011525	0.007202	0.000166	1889
facts_truth_claims	1970	0.012440	0.007671	0.000127	3648
facts_truth_claims	1975	0.012364	0.007020	0.000109	4159
facts_truth_claims	1980	0.012620	0.007283	0.000122	3550
facts_truth_claims	1985	0.012957	0.007150	0.000122	3437
facts_truth_claims	1990	0.013721	0.007420	0.000098	5686
facts_truth_claims	1995	0.013399	0.007064	0.000095	5485
facts_truth_claims	2000	0.013358	0.007083	0.000071	9980
facts_truth_claims	2005	0.013822	0.007335	0.000076	9264
facts_truth_claims	2010	0.014384	0.007513	0.000069	11790
facts_truth_claims	2015	0.014438	0.007416	0.000064	13408
facts_truth_claims	2020	0.015195	0.007650	0.000074	10715

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Table A.24 – *Continued from previous page*

Metric	Year	Mean	Std Dev	SEM	N
facts_truth_claims	2025	0.015988	0.007731	0.000092	7097
aesthetics	1960	0.005130	0.006002	0.000181	1101
aesthetics	1965	0.005055	0.005474	0.000126	1889
aesthetics	1970	0.005115	0.005134	0.000085	3648
aesthetics	1975	0.004851	0.004741	0.000074	4159
aesthetics	1980	0.005021	0.005157	0.000087	3550
aesthetics	1985	0.004791	0.004573	0.000078	3437
aesthetics	1990	0.004667	0.004473	0.000059	5686
aesthetics	1995	0.004634	0.004494	0.000061	5485
aesthetics	2000	0.004513	0.004455	0.000045	9980
aesthetics	2005	0.004429	0.004358	0.000045	9264
aesthetics	2010	0.004349	0.004373	0.000040	11790
aesthetics	2015	0.004060	0.004069	0.000035	13408
aesthetics	2020	0.004110	0.004208	0.000041	10715
aesthetics	2025	0.004192	0.004112	0.000049	7097
power_dynamics	1960	0.008056	0.006558	0.000198	1101
power_dynamics	1965	0.007955	0.006102	0.000140	1889
power_dynamics	1970	0.008147	0.006394	0.000106	3648
power_dynamics	1975	0.008699	0.006581	0.000102	4159
power_dynamics	1980	0.008456	0.006390	0.000107	3550
power_dynamics	1985	0.008791	0.007091	0.000121	3437
power_dynamics	1990	0.009944	0.007570	0.000100	5686
power_dynamics	1995	0.010301	0.007221	0.000098	5485
power_dynamics	2000	0.010247	0.007179	0.000072	9980
power_dynamics	2005	0.010220	0.007314	0.000076	9264
power_dynamics	2010	0.010303	0.007439	0.000069	11790
power_dynamics	2015	0.009996	0.007286	0.000063	13408
power_dynamics	2020	0.010366	0.007569	0.000073	10715
power_dynamics	2025	0.009845	0.007794	0.000093	7097
identity	1960	0.000432	0.001065	0.000032	1101
identity	1965	0.000433	0.000713	0.000016	1889
identity	1970	0.000567	0.001094	0.000018	3648
identity	1975	0.000667	0.001231	0.000019	4159
identity	1980	0.000821	0.001682	0.000028	3550
identity	1985	0.000974	0.002063	0.000035	3437
identity	1990	0.001367	0.002384	0.000032	5686
identity	1995	0.002073	0.003481	0.000047	5485
identity	2000	0.002518	0.003890	0.000039	9980
identity	2005	0.002635	0.004180	0.000043	9264
identity	2010	0.003110	0.004969	0.000046	11790

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Table A.24 – *Continued from previous page*

Metric	Year	Mean	Std Dev	SEM	N
identity	2015	0.003203	0.005274	0.000046	13408
identity	2020	0.003826	0.006454	0.000062	10715
identity	2025	0.004574	0.007271	0.000086	7097
evaluation	1960	0.006060	0.004023	0.000121	1101
evaluation	1965	0.006167	0.004456	0.000103	1889
evaluation	1970	0.006118	0.004106	0.000068	3648
evaluation	1975	0.006344	0.004279	0.000066	4159
evaluation	1980	0.006312	0.004508	0.000076	3550
evaluation	1985	0.006350	0.004306	0.000073	3437
evaluation	1990	0.006687	0.004900	0.000065	5686
evaluation	1995	0.006626	0.004444	0.000060	5485
evaluation	2000	0.006743	0.004621	0.000046	9980
evaluation	2005	0.006706	0.004637	0.000048	9264
evaluation	2010	0.006933	0.004952	0.000046	11790
evaluation	2015	0.006630	0.004759	0.000041	13408
evaluation	2020	0.006618	0.004648	0.000045	10715
evaluation	2025	0.007156	0.004627	0.000055	7097

Table A.25 Top 20 Schools by School Code Name

School Code Name	Count
The University of Chicago	11025
University of Michigan	10570
New York University	10486
Indiana University	9476
University of California, Berkeley	8661
The Ohio State University	8601
The University of Wisconsin - Madison	8151
University of California, Los Angeles	7923
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	7802
Columbia University	7774
Yale University	7018
City University of New York	6929
Northwestern University	6550
Harvard University	6289
University of Minnesota	6288
University of Pennsylvania	5950
University of Southern California	5702
The University of Iowa	5639
Princeton University	5605
The Pennsylvania State University	5598

Table A.26 Top 20 Schools by Location

School Location	Count
United States – California	56450
United States – New York	50293
United States – Illinois	34281
United States – Pennsylvania	23111
United States – Texas	19104
United States – Michigan	18862
United States – Massachusetts	18029
United States – Ohio	17770
United States – Indiana	17344
United States – Minnesota	14026
United States – Florida	12286
United States – North Carolina	12017
United States – New Jersey	11312
United States – Wisconsin	10627
United States – Connecticut	8894
United States – Arizona	8845
United States – District of Columbia	8412
United States – Virginia	7956
United States – Iowa	7919
United States – Maryland	7761

Table A.27 Distribution Statistics: Dissertations per Location

Statistic	Value
Total Locations	78
Mean	5686.45
Median	1353.00
Std Dev	10210.32
Min	1
Max	56450
25th Percentile	15
75th Percentile	7391

Table A.28 Distribution Statistics: Dissertations per School

Statistic	Value
Total Schools	678
Mean	654.19
Median	55.00
Std Dev	1528.85
Min	1
Max	11025
25th Percentile	6
75th Percentile	408

Table A.29 Summary: Average Sentiment Scores Across All Years by Category

Category	Identity	History	Truth	American	European	Western	Subversive	Activism	Power
Full Dataset	0.0592	0.0468	0.3300	0.0455	0.0561	0.0676	-0.1641	0.0883	0.0952
Humanities & Arts	0.0556	0.0576	0.3338	0.0522	0.0592	0.0676	-0.1579	0.0801	0.1027
Social Sciences	0.0644	0.0339	0.3195	0.0395	0.0536	0.0675	-0.1840	0.1005	0.0854
History & Related Fields	0.0574	0.0556	0.3142	0.0426	0.0470	0.0560	-0.1828	0.0860	0.0852
Literature/Language	0.0378	0.0531	0.3203	0.0523	0.0668	0.0668	-0.1431	0.0552	0.0948
Philosophy/Theology	0.0769	0.0750	0.3779	0.0592	0.0397	0.0845	-0.1211	0.1106	0.1371
Studies	0.0619	0.0459	0.3172	0.0390	0.0529	0.0592	-0.1624	0.0746	0.0775
Soc Sci I	0.0682	0.0620	0.3238	0.0540	0.0683	0.0765	-0.1966	0.1069	0.0909
Soc Sci II	0.0584	0.0194	0.3163	0.0307	0.0432	0.0596	-0.1696	0.0901	0.0816

Table A.30 Content Metrics by Discipline Category (Binary Indicators)

Metric	Category	Mean	Std Dev	N
Facts/Truth Claims	Phil/Theo	0.017734	0.010346	34092
Facts/Truth Claims	SS-I	0.017209	0.007953	93748
Facts/Truth Claims	SocSci	0.015247	0.007473	227397
Facts/Truth Claims	H/Soc	0.013830	0.007449	443539
Facts/Truth Claims	SS-II	0.013596	0.006627	140842
Facts/Truth Claims	Studies	0.012871	0.005808	37660
Facts/Truth Claims	History	0.012387	0.005685	56895
Facts/Truth Claims	H&A	0.012340	0.007127	216138
Facts/Truth Claims	Lit/Lang	0.010120	0.005752	66283
Aesthetics	Lit/Lang	0.006176	0.004486	66283
Aesthetics	Phil/Theo	0.005793	0.005062	34092
Aesthetics	H&A	0.005464	0.005086	216138
Aesthetics	H/Soc	0.004429	0.004428	443539
Aesthetics	Studies	0.004323	0.004144	37660
Aesthetics	History	0.004120	0.004955	56895
Aesthetics	SS-II	0.003862	0.003789	140842
Aesthetics	SocSci	0.003446	0.003417	227397
Aesthetics	SS-I	0.003282	0.003104	93748
Power Dynamics	Studies	0.011695	0.007665	37660
Power Dynamics	SS-I	0.010911	0.008272	93748
Power Dynamics	SocSci	0.010548	0.007869	227397
Power Dynamics	SS-II	0.010019	0.007464	140842
Power Dynamics	History	0.009788	0.006184	56895
Power Dynamics	H/Soc	0.009785	0.007279	443539
Power Dynamics	Phil/Theo	0.009458	0.006877	34092
Power Dynamics	H&A	0.008983	0.006506	216138
Power Dynamics	Lit/Lang	0.007453	0.005532	66283
Identity	Studies	0.005706	0.007491	37660
Identity	SS-II	0.003158	0.005570	140842
Identity	H&A	0.002671	0.004598	216138
Identity	H/Soc	0.002526	0.004678	443539
Identity	Lit/Lang	0.002448	0.003688	66283
Identity	Phil/Theo	0.002390	0.003963	34092
Identity	SocSci	0.002388	0.004749	227397
Identity	History	0.001376	0.002113	56895
Identity	SS-I	0.001335	0.002787	93748
Evaluation	Phil/Theo	0.011525	0.010177	34092
Evaluation	SS-II	0.007003	0.003920	140842

Continued

Table A.30 – Continued

Metric	Category	Mean	Std Dev	N
Evaluation	SocSci	0.006747	0.003883	227397
Evaluation	H/Soc	0.006604	0.004685	443539
Evaluation	H&A	0.006454	0.005398	216138
Evaluation	SS-I	0.006253	0.003731	93748
Evaluation	Studies	0.006181	0.003063	37660
Evaluation	Lit/Lang	0.005581	0.003274	66283
Evaluation	History	0.004826	0.002518	56895

Year-specific z-score rankings of universities on each content metric and sentiment variable at 1965, 1985, 2005, and 2025. Z-scores are computed within each year; the University of Chicago consistently leads on *Facts/Truth Claims*. Grand Canyon University's extreme 2025 scores (Facts $z = 9.76$, Identity $z = 6.34$, Evaluation $z = 8.80$) likely reflect the specialised vocabulary of its online professional doctoral programs. Entries with $N \leq 2$ observations should be treated as illustrative only.

Table A.31 Top-10 Labeled Universities by Variable and Year

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Facts truth claims	1965	The University of Chicago	4.18	146
Facts truth claims	1965	University of Michigan	3.91	145
Facts truth claims	1965	New York University	3.18	121
Facts truth claims	1965	Yale University	3.06	103
Facts truth claims	1965	Northwestern University	2.33	84
Facts truth claims	1965	Indiana University	2.15	112
Facts truth claims	1965	The University of Iowa	1.75	92
Facts truth claims	1965	Columbia University	1.59	51
Facts truth claims	1965	The Ohio State University	1.21	88
Facts truth claims	1965	University of Southern California	0.89	55
Facts truth claims	1985	The University of Chicago	5.36	128
Facts truth claims	1985	University of Michigan	4.18	148
Facts truth claims	1985	New York University	3.65	121
Facts truth claims	1985	The Ohio State University	3.13	116
Facts truth claims	1985	Yale University	3.13	81
Facts truth claims	1985	Princeton University	2.81	82
Facts truth claims	1985	Northwestern University	2.7	93
Facts truth claims	1985	Indiana University	2.62	92
Facts truth claims	1985	University of California, Berkeley	2.3	65
Facts truth claims	1985	University of Southern California	2.02	97
Facts truth claims	2005	Columbia University	5.49	213
Facts truth claims	2005	The University of Chicago	4.27	193
Facts truth claims	2005	University of California, Berkeley	4.13	217
Facts truth claims	2005	New York University	3.57	194
Facts truth claims	2005	University of California, Los Angeles	3.28	188
Facts truth claims	2005	University of Michigan	3.3	171
Facts truth claims	2005	University of Pennsylvania	3.29	149
Facts truth claims	2005	Harvard University	3.09	150
Facts truth claims	2005	City University of New York	2.56	161
Facts truth claims	2005	Yale University	2.61	123
Facts truth claims	2025	Grand Canyon University	9.76	165
Facts truth claims	2025	Indiana University	4.43	146
Facts truth claims	2025	University of Michigan	3.31	111
Facts truth claims	2025	The University of Wisconsin - Madison	3.28	111

Continued on next page

Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Facts truth claims	2025	Harvard University	3.08	85
Facts truth claims	2025	Northwestern University	2.8	104
Facts truth claims	2025	University of California, Los Angeles	2.72	107
Facts truth claims	2025	Princeton University	2.67	83
Facts truth claims	2025	Stanford University	2.55	83
Facts truth claims	2025	Liberty University	2.31	80
Aesthetics	1965	The University of Chicago	4.2	146
Aesthetics	1965	University of Michigan	3.55	145
Aesthetics	1965	Yale University	3.57	103
Aesthetics	1965	Indiana University	2.76	112
Aesthetics	1965	New York University	2.28	121
Aesthetics	1965	Northwestern University	2.23	84
Aesthetics	1965	The University of Iowa	1.99	92
Aesthetics	1965	The University of Wisconsin - Madison	1.55	32
Aesthetics	1965	The Ohio State University	1.05	88
Aesthetics	1965	Columbia University	1.19	51
Aesthetics	1985	New York University	4.87	121
Aesthetics	1985	The University of Chicago	4.57	128
Aesthetics	1985	University of Michigan	3.56	148
Aesthetics	1985	Yale University	3.39	81
Aesthetics	1985	City University of New York	3.09	83
Aesthetics	1985	The Ohio State University	2.91	116
Aesthetics	1985	Indiana University	2.91	92
Aesthetics	1985	Harvard University	3.13	52
Aesthetics	1985	Princeton University	2.73	82
Aesthetics	1985	Northwestern University	2.17	93
Aesthetics	2005	Columbia University	5.18	213
Aesthetics	2005	New York University	4.83	194
Aesthetics	2005	The University of Chicago	4.72	193
Aesthetics	2005	City University of New York	4.1	161
Aesthetics	2005	University of California, Los Angeles	3.88	188
Aesthetics	2005	University of California, Berkeley	3.63	217
Aesthetics	2005	University of Pennsylvania	3.42	149
Aesthetics	2005	University of Michigan	3.2	171
Aesthetics	2005	Harvard University	2.94	150
Aesthetics	2005	Yale University	2.73	123
Aesthetics	2025	Indiana University	6.3	146
Aesthetics	2025	Grand Canyon University	5.92	165
Aesthetics	2025	Northwestern University	4.1	104
Aesthetics	2025	University of California, Los Angeles	3.61	107

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Aesthetics	2025	University of Michigan	3.17	111
Aesthetics	2025	New York University	3.08	85
Aesthetics	2025	The University of Wisconsin - Madison	2.91	111
Aesthetics	2025	Stanford University	2.98	83
Aesthetics	2025	Princeton University	2.68	83
Aesthetics	2025	Arizona State University	2.53	89
Power dynamics	1965	New York University	4.17	121
Power dynamics	1965	The University of Chicago	3.78	146
Power dynamics	1965	University of Michigan	3.37	145
Power dynamics	1965	Indiana University	2.47	112
Power dynamics	1965	Yale University	2.44	103
Power dynamics	1965	Northwestern University	2.16	84
Power dynamics	1965	The University of Iowa	1.59	92
Power dynamics	1965	Columbia University	1.69	51
Power dynamics	1965	The Ohio State University	1.16	88
Power dynamics	1965	University of Southern California	1	55
Power dynamics	1985	The University of Chicago	4.67	128
Power dynamics	1985	University of Michigan	4.43	148
Power dynamics	1985	The Ohio State University	3.87	116
Power dynamics	1985	New York University	3.18	121
Power dynamics	1985	University of California, Berkeley	3.21	65
Power dynamics	1985	Yale University	2.96	81
Power dynamics	1985	Princeton University	2.64	82
Power dynamics	1985	University of Southern California	2.5	97
Power dynamics	1985	Northwestern University	2.41	93
Power dynamics	1985	Indiana University	2.39	92
Power dynamics	2005	Columbia University	4.7	213
Power dynamics	2005	University of California, Berkeley	4.64	217
Power dynamics	2005	New York University	3.94	194
Power dynamics	2005	The University of Chicago	3.82	193
Power dynamics	2005	University of Michigan	3.6	171
Power dynamics	2005	University of California, Los Angeles	3.31	188
Power dynamics	2005	City University of New York	3.19	161
Power dynamics	2005	University of Pennsylvania	2.69	149
Power dynamics	2005	Harvard University	2.59	150
Power dynamics	2005	The University of Wisconsin - Madison	2.65	128
Power dynamics	2025	Indiana University	5.63	146
Power dynamics	2025	University of Michigan	4.59	111
Power dynamics	2025	Northwestern University	4.23	104
Power dynamics	2025	The University of Wisconsin - Madison	3.81	111

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Power dynamics	2025	Grand Canyon University	3.52	165
Power dynamics	2025	University of California, Los Angeles	3.17	107
Power dynamics	2025	Arizona State University	3.08	89
Power dynamics	2025	Columbia University	2.81	85
Power dynamics	2025	University of California, Berkeley	2.77	81
Power dynamics	2025	Harvard University	2.65	85
Identity	1965	The University of Chicago	5.64	146
Identity	1965	Yale University	3.34	103
Identity	1965	University of Michigan	3.13	145
Identity	1965	New York University	2.72	121
Identity	1965	Indiana University	2.26	112
Identity	1965	Northwestern University	1.87	84
Identity	1965	The Ohio State University	1.02	88
Identity	1965	Columbia University	1.24	51
Identity	1965	The University of Iowa	0.91	92
Identity	1965	University of Southern California	0.72	55
Identity	1985	New York University	5.16	121
Identity	1985	University of Michigan	4.27	148
Identity	1985	The University of Chicago	4.08	128
Identity	1985	The Ohio State University	3.98	116
Identity	1985	Indiana University	3.18	92
Identity	1985	Yale University	3.04	81
Identity	1985	Northwestern University	2.17	93
Identity	1985	University of California, Berkeley	2.17	65
Identity	1985	Purdue University	1.9	61
Identity	1985	University of Southern California	1.62	97
Identity	2005	New York University	4.34	194
Identity	2005	University of Michigan	4.35	171
Identity	2005	University of California, Berkeley	3.67	217
Identity	2005	Columbia University	3.66	213
Identity	2005	City University of New York	3.48	161
Identity	2005	University of California, Los Angeles	3.07	188
Identity	2005	The University of Chicago	2.83	193
Identity	2005	Stanford University	2.93	138
Identity	2005	University of Minnesota	2.88	133
Identity	2005	University of Pennsylvania	2.61	149
Identity	2025	Grand Canyon University	6.34	165
Identity	2025	Indiana University	5.36	146
Identity	2025	University of Michigan	4.5	111
Identity	2025	The University of Wisconsin - Madison	3.49	111

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Identity	2025	Northwestern University	3	104
Identity	2025	University of Georgia	3.02	87
Identity	2025	Arizona State University	2.96	89
Identity	2025	University of California, Los Angeles	2.63	107
Identity	2025	Michigan State University	2.33	92
Identity	2025	Columbia University	2.18	85
Evaluation	1965	The University of Chicago	4.24	146
Evaluation	1965	University of Michigan	3.34	145
Evaluation	1965	Yale University	3.09	103
Evaluation	1965	New York University	3.01	121
Evaluation	1965	Northwestern University	2.67	84
Evaluation	1965	Indiana University	2.22	112
Evaluation	1965	The University of Iowa	2.27	92
Evaluation	1965	The Ohio State University	1.3	88
Evaluation	1965	University of Southern California	1.26	55
Evaluation	1965	Columbia University	1.08	51
Evaluation	1985	The University of Chicago	5.88	128
Evaluation	1985	University of Michigan	4.14	148
Evaluation	1985	New York University	3.97	121
Evaluation	1985	The Ohio State University	3.67	116
Evaluation	1985	Yale University	2.75	81
Evaluation	1985	Indiana University	2.62	92
Evaluation	1985	Northwestern University	2.6	93
Evaluation	1985	University of Southern California	2.31	97
Evaluation	1985	Princeton University	2.18	82
Evaluation	1985	City University of New York	1.9	83
Evaluation	2005	The University of Chicago	4.84	193
Evaluation	2005	Columbia University	4.66	213
Evaluation	2005	University of California, Berkeley	3.82	217
Evaluation	2005	New York University	3.8	194
Evaluation	2005	University of Michigan	3.52	171
Evaluation	2005	University of California, Los Angeles	3.2	188
Evaluation	2005	Harvard University	2.81	150
Evaluation	2005	University of Pennsylvania	2.78	149
Evaluation	2005	City University of New York	2.71	161
Evaluation	2005	Indiana University	2.57	122
Evaluation	2025	Grand Canyon University	8.8	165
Evaluation	2025	Indiana University	5	146
Evaluation	2025	The University of Wisconsin - Madison	3.01	111
Evaluation	2025	Northwestern University	3.06	104

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Evaluation	2025	Arizona State University	3.16	89
Evaluation	2025	University of Michigan	2.91	111
Evaluation	2025	University of California, Los Angeles	2.67	107
Evaluation	2025	Liberty University	2.84	80
Evaluation	2025	Regent University	2.41	118
Evaluation	2025	Michigan State University	2.4	92
Sentiment: identity	1965	University of Kentucky	3.58	1
Sentiment: identity	1965	University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music	-2.85	3
Sentiment: identity	1965	Syracuse University	2.95	2
Sentiment: identity	1965	University of Maryland, College Park	-2.21	3
Sentiment: identity	1965	University of Notre Dame	1.96	5
Sentiment: identity	1965	Rice University	-1.97	4
Sentiment: identity	1965	Northwestern University	0.49	84
Sentiment: identity	1965	University of Rochester	1.47	3
Sentiment: identity	1965	Iowa State University	0.89	18
Sentiment: identity	1965	University of Oregon	-1.54	2
Sentiment: identity	1985	University of Miami	-4.91	3
Sentiment: identity	1985	Carnegie Mellon University	-4.28	4
Sentiment: identity	1985	University of Maryland, Baltimore County	-4.28	1
Sentiment: identity	1985	St. John's University (New York)	-3.4	3
Sentiment: identity	1985	Portland State University	3.67	1
Sentiment: identity	1985	Georgia State University	3.03	4
Sentiment: identity	1985	Ball State University	3.34	1
Sentiment: identity	1985	The George Washington University	1.81	7
Sentiment: identity	1985	The University of Chicago	0.33	128
Sentiment: identity	1985	Kansas State University	1.38	12
Sentiment: identity	2005	Florida Atlantic University	4.87	5
Sentiment: identity	2005	The Wright Institute	-4.39	3
Sentiment: identity	2005	Long Island University, The Brooklyn Center	4.07	2
Sentiment: identity	2005	University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras	-3.02	10
Sentiment: identity	2005	South Dakota State University	3.4	2
Sentiment: identity	2005	Mississippi State University	2.46	8
Sentiment: identity	2005	Western Michigan University	-2.01	19
Sentiment: identity	2005	Northern Illinois University	-2.1	14
Sentiment: identity	2005	Salve Regina University	-2.69	2
Sentiment: identity	2005	Central Michigan University	-2.56	3
Sentiment: identity	2025	Oregon State University	-5.29	1
Sentiment: identity	2025	Bryn Mawr College, Graduate School of Social Work	3.8	1
Sentiment: identity	2025	University of South Alabama	-3.43	3
Sentiment: identity	2025	Long Island University, Brooklyn	-3.21	4

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Sentiment: identity	2025	University of Wyoming	-3.01	6
Sentiment: identity	2025	Endicott College	2.69	12
Sentiment: identity	2025	Fairleigh Dickinson University	2.98	6
Sentiment: identity	2025	North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University	-2.64	4
Sentiment: identity	2025	University of the West	-3.1	1
Sentiment: identity	2025	The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	-2.64	3
Sentiment: history	1965	University of Kentucky	6.28	1
Sentiment: history	1965	City University of New York	-2.84	2
Sentiment: history	1965	The University of Chicago	0.26	146
Sentiment: history	1965	New York University	-0.33	121
Sentiment: history	1965	Purdue University	-1.06	36
Sentiment: history	1965	University of Michigan	-0.05	145
Sentiment: history	1965	Tulane University	1.09	26
Sentiment: history	1965	Indiana University	-0.19	112
Sentiment: history	1965	Northwestern University	-0.33	84
Sentiment: history	1965	Yale University	0.13	103
Sentiment: history	1985	University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music	4.14	2
Sentiment: history	1985	Tufts University	3.77	1
Sentiment: history	1985	Saybrook University	2.92	1
Sentiment: history	1985	Dartmouth College	2.49	3
Sentiment: history	1985	Ohio University	2.13	7
Sentiment: history	1985	University of Montana	-2.65	1
Sentiment: history	1985	University of Miami	2.25	3
Sentiment: history	1985	University of North Texas	-2.06	5
Sentiment: history	1985	University of Georgia	1.87	8
Sentiment: history	1985	Texas Woman's University	2.48	1
Sentiment: history	2005	Indiana State University	-5.9	3
Sentiment: history	2005	Our Lady of the Lake University	4.44	1
Sentiment: history	2005	Drexel University	-3.88	2
Sentiment: history	2005	St. John's University (New York)	-3.81	2
Sentiment: history	2005	Alliant International University, Los Angeles	-3.06	4
Sentiment: history	2005	Long Island University, The Brooklyn Center	-3.04	2
Sentiment: history	2005	University of South Alabama	-3.13	1
Sentiment: history	2005	Hofstra University	-2.4	6
Sentiment: history	2005	St. Mary's University (Texas)	-2.32	4
Sentiment: history	2005	University of Wyoming	-2.78	1
Sentiment: history	2025	Freed-Hardeman University	-5.09	1
Sentiment: history	2025	University of Southern Maine	-4.46	1
Sentiment: history	2025	Sam Houston State University	-3.77	5
Sentiment: history	2025	Illinois State University	-3.99	1

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Sentiment: history	2025	Capitol Technology University	-3.09	2
Sentiment: history	2025	University of Central Arkansas	-2.67	6
Sentiment: history	2025	University of South Alabama	-2.93	3
Sentiment: history	2025	Seattle Pacific University	-2.34	7
Sentiment: history	2025	The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	-2.65	3
Sentiment: history	2025	Oregon State University	-2.9	1
Sentiment: truth	1965	University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music	3.56	3
Sentiment: truth	1965	University of Colorado at Boulder	-2.25	10
Sentiment: truth	1965	University of Virginia	-2.33	5
Sentiment: truth	1965	Syracuse University	2.53	2
Sentiment: truth	1965	New York University, GSBA	2.27	2
Sentiment: truth	1965	Washington University in St. Louis	2.2	2
Sentiment: truth	1965	New York University	-0.83	121
Sentiment: truth	1965	Columbia University	-0.96	51
Sentiment: truth	1965	Wayne State University	-1.32	17
Sentiment: truth	1965	Case Western Reserve University	1.58	6
Sentiment: truth	1985	University of Kentucky	-4.59	4
Sentiment: truth	1985	Michigan State University	-2.36	24
Sentiment: truth	1985	Colorado State University	-2.81	4
Sentiment: truth	1985	Auburn University	2.58	3
Sentiment: truth	1985	Miami University	-2.39	5
Sentiment: truth	1985	University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music	-2.68	2
Sentiment: truth	1985	University of Maryland, Baltimore County	-2.8	1
Sentiment: truth	1985	Northern Arizona University	2.55	2
Sentiment: truth	1985	Kansas State University	-1.8	12
Sentiment: truth	1985	Georgia State University	2.17	4
Sentiment: truth	2005	Utah State University	-5.26	9
Sentiment: truth	2005	Wichita State University	-4.51	6
Sentiment: truth	2005	Dartmouth College	-4.51	4
Sentiment: truth	2005	Yeshiva University	-2.96	13
Sentiment: truth	2005	Oregon State University	2.97	10
Sentiment: truth	2005	Miami University	-3.26	3
Sentiment: truth	2005	DePaul University	-3.09	4
Sentiment: truth	2005	University of Central Florida	2.57	9
Sentiment: truth	2005	Arizona State University	-1	78
Sentiment: truth	2005	University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras (Puerto Rico)	1.92	10
Sentiment: truth	2025	Illinois Institute of Technology	-6.14	9
Sentiment: truth	2025	Freed-Hardeman University	-4.38	1
Sentiment: truth	2025	Jackson State University	-3.09	5
Sentiment: truth	2025	North Carolina Agr. and Tech. State University	-2.76	4

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Sentiment: truth	2025	Northern Illinois University	-1.92	19
Sentiment: truth	2025	Pace University	-2.73	4
Sentiment: truth	2025	Northern Arizona University	-2.17	9
Sentiment: truth	2025	University of Southern Maine	-3.09	1
Sentiment: truth	2025	Gratz College	-3.08	1
Sentiment: truth	2025	Grand Canyon University	0.31	165
Sentiment: American	1965	University of Delaware	-5.57	3
Sentiment: American	1965	Harvard University	-3.27	1
Sentiment: American	1965	City University of New York	-2.39	2
Sentiment: American	1965	Stanford University	1.43	14
Sentiment: American	1965	The University of Iowa	0.4	92
Sentiment: American	1965	The Ohio State University	-0.4	88
Sentiment: American	1965	New York University	0.21	121
Sentiment: American	1965	Michigan State University	1.78	6
Sentiment: American	1965	University of Michigan	-0.04	145
Sentiment: American	1965	Indiana University	0.19	112
Sentiment: American	1985	Texas Woman's University	4.58	1
Sentiment: American	1985	Wesleyan University	3.46	1
Sentiment: American	1985	The University of Toledo	3.46	1
Sentiment: American	1985	Auburn University	2.66	3
Sentiment: American	1985	University of Arkansas	2.51	4
Sentiment: American	1985	Fordham University	-1.5	35
Sentiment: American	1985	Saint Louis University	2.1	7
Sentiment: American	1985	Princeton Theological Seminary	-1.78	12
Sentiment: American	1985	Vanderbilt University	-1.63	17
Sentiment: American	1985	The University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee	2.05	6
Sentiment: American	2005	St. John's University (New York)	-5.34	2
Sentiment: American	2005	Marywood University	-4.47	1
Sentiment: American	2005	Alliant International University, Fresno	-3.72	5
Sentiment: American	2005	Colorado School of Mines	3.97	1
Sentiment: American	2005	Bryn Mawr College	-3.35	2
Sentiment: American	2005	St. Mary's University (Texas)	-3.01	4
Sentiment: American	2005	Loma Linda University	-2.65	6
Sentiment: American	2005	The University of Akron	-2.77	3
Sentiment: American	2005	Our Lady of the Lake University	2.98	1
Sentiment: American	2005	The University of Toledo	-2.23	7
Sentiment: American	2025	University of the Cumberlands	-5.24	1
Sentiment: American	2025	Emory University	4.76	3
Sentiment: American	2025	Niagara University	4.34	1
Sentiment: American	2025	University of Dallas	-3.57	4

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Sentiment: American	2025	Antioch University New England	-3.74	1
Sentiment: American	2025	Indiana Wesleyan University	3.35	3
Sentiment: American	2025	Eastern Michigan University	3.16	2
Sentiment: American	2025	Palo Alto University	-2.1	21
Sentiment: American	2025	Southwestern College (New Mexico)	2.78	3
Sentiment: American	2025	Grand Canyon University	0.57	165
Sentiment: European	1965	University of South Carolina	4.03	3
Sentiment: European	1965	Iowa State University	3.38	18
Sentiment: European	1965	Drew University	2.94	2
Sentiment: European	1965	University of Florida	-1.94	3
Sentiment: European	1965	Brown University	-1.92	3
Sentiment: European	1965	Oklahoma State University	1.65	6
Sentiment: European	1965	Yale University	-0.53	103
Sentiment: European	1965	Northwestern University	0.59	84
Sentiment: European	1965	University of Missouri - Columbia	-1.71	4
Sentiment: European	1965	The University of Chicago	0.31	146
Sentiment: European	1985	University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music	4.93	2
Sentiment: European	1985	University of North Texas	-2.99	5
Sentiment: European	1985	University of Wyoming	2.78	6
Sentiment: European	1985	The University of Alabama	-2.59	7
Sentiment: European	1985	University of Northern Colorado	3.19	1
Sentiment: European	1985	Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	-2.57	3
Sentiment: European	1985	Texas Christian University	2.21	6
Sentiment: European	1985	Indiana University of Pennsylvania	-2.18	6
Sentiment: European	1985	The University of Tennessee	-2.05	8
Sentiment: European	1985	New York University	0.69	121
Sentiment: European	2005	University of Louisiana at Monroe	-5.01	3
Sentiment: European	2005	University of Georgia	-4.92	2
Sentiment: European	2005	St. John's University (New York)	-4.8	2
Sentiment: European	2005	Nova Southeastern University	-4.78	2
Sentiment: European	2005	Alliant International University, Los Angeles	-3.16	4
Sentiment: European	2005	University of Central Florida	2.76	9
Sentiment: European	2005	Luther Seminary	3.05	2
Sentiment: European	2005	Seattle Pacific University	-3.04	2
Sentiment: European	2005	Hofstra University	-2.62	6
Sentiment: European	2005	Adelphi University	2.59	6
Sentiment: European	2025	Universidad Ana G Méndez - Gurabo	-4.07	6
Sentiment: European	2025	Texas A&M University - Commerce	-3.89	7
Sentiment: European	2025	University of San Diego	-4.17	2
Sentiment: European	2025	Saint Mary of the Woods College	-3.92	1

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Sentiment: European	2025	Sam Houston State University	-2.81	5
Sentiment: European	2025	University of Southern Maine	3.23	1
Sentiment: European	2025	Oregon State University	3.16	1
Sentiment: European	2025	Palo Alto University	-1.84	21
Sentiment: European	2025	Adams State University	2.64	2
Sentiment: European	2025	Mercer University	2.63	1
Sentiment: Western	1965	Lehigh University	-4.65	4
Sentiment: Western	1965	University of Kentucky	3.24	1
Sentiment: Western	1965	Northwestern University	-0.68	84
Sentiment: Western	1965	The University of Chicago	0.43	146
Sentiment: Western	1965	St. John's University (New York)	2.2	2
Sentiment: Western	1965	The Pennsylvania State University	0.92	39
Sentiment: Western	1965	University of Michigan	-0.29	145
Sentiment: Western	1965	Bryn Mawr College	2.26	1
Sentiment: Western	1965	Syracuse University	-2.01	2
Sentiment: Western	1965	Yale University	0.33	103
Sentiment: Western	1985	University of Wyoming	-3.82	6
Sentiment: Western	1985	University of Idaho	-3.93	1
Sentiment: Western	1985	Virginia Commonwealth University	3.86	1
Sentiment: Western	1985	The University of Toledo	3.84	1
Sentiment: Western	1985	Northern Illinois University	3.63	2
Sentiment: Western	1985	Auburn University	-3.02	3
Sentiment: Western	1985	Carnegie Mellon University	2.91	4
Sentiment: Western	1985	University of Maryland, Baltimore County	-3.24	1
Sentiment: Western	1985	University of Georgia	-2.08	8
Sentiment: Western	1985	Brandeis University, The Heller School	1.15	17
Sentiment: Western	2005	Loma Linda University	-4.08	6
Sentiment: Western	2005	The Wright Institute	3.69	3
Sentiment: Western	2005	Salve Regina University	3.28	2
Sentiment: Western	2005	Louisiana Tech University	3.42	1
Sentiment: Western	2005	Middle Tennessee State University	-2.93	6
Sentiment: Western	2005	Nova Southeastern University	-3.03	2
Sentiment: Western	2005	DePaul University	-2.73	4
Sentiment: Western	2005	Brandeis University, The Heller School	2.59	6
Sentiment: Western	2005	Bryn Mawr College	2.89	2
Sentiment: Western	2005	University of Wyoming	2.95	1
Sentiment: Western	2025	University of Montana	-5.57	2
Sentiment: Western	2025	Ponce Health Sciences University	-4.68	7
Sentiment: Western	2025	The City College of New York	-4.64	4
Sentiment: Western	2025	Virginia Commonwealth University	4.79	2

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Sentiment: Western	2025	Hampton University	3.42	6
Sentiment: Western	2025	Sam Houston State University	-2.7	5
Sentiment: Western	2025	Kean University	2.67	4
Sentiment: Western	2025	Drexel University	-2.34	7
Sentiment: Western	2025	University of Central Arkansas	2.38	6
Sentiment: Western	2025	Pace University	2.56	4
Sentiment: subversive	1965	Vanderbilt University	2.79	7
Sentiment: subversive	1965	Tulane University	-2.01	26
Sentiment: subversive	1965	University of Southern California	1.61	55
Sentiment: subversive	1965	The Pennsylvania State University	1.45	39
Sentiment: subversive	1965	The Florida State University	-1.32	34
Sentiment: subversive	1965	Case Western Reserve University	1.66	6
Sentiment: subversive	1965	The University of Iowa	0.93	92
Sentiment: subversive	1965	University of Michigan	0.79	145
Sentiment: subversive	1965	Northwestern University	0.93	84
Sentiment: subversive	1965	New York University	0.7	121
Sentiment: subversive	1985	University of California, San Diego	-2.44	17
Sentiment: subversive	1985	University of Missouri - Columbia	-2.44	15
Sentiment: subversive	1985	University of Rochester	-2.49	6
Sentiment: subversive	1985	Purdue University	1.85	61
Sentiment: subversive	1985	Kansas State University	2.19	12
Sentiment: subversive	1985	University of Colorado at Boulder	2.13	16
Sentiment: subversive	1985	Brandeis University, The Heller School	2.1	17
Sentiment: subversive	1985	University of South Carolina	1.87	36
Sentiment: subversive	1985	Fordham University	1.81	35
Sentiment: subversive	1985	University of Oregon	2.1	10
Sentiment: subversive	2005	Princeton Theological Seminary	4.53	6
Sentiment: subversive	2005	Virginia Commonwealth University	3.49	20
Sentiment: subversive	2005	Saint Louis University	2.24	19
Sentiment: subversive	2005	Wayne State University	2.07	28
Sentiment: subversive	2005	Kent State University	-1.91	34
Sentiment: subversive	2005	Illinois State University	2.52	5
Sentiment: subversive	2005	West Virginia University	1.86	28
Sentiment: subversive	2005	DePaul University	2.53	4
Sentiment: subversive	2005	University of Nevada, Reno	1.8	23
Sentiment: subversive	2005	University of North Texas	-1.93	16
Sentiment: subversive	2025	DePaul University	3.86	1
Sentiment: subversive	2025	Alliant International University	-2.68	40
Sentiment: subversive	2025	Iowa State University	-2.6	38
Sentiment: subversive	2025	Fielding Graduate University	2.33	44

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Sentiment: subversive	2025	Vanderbilt University	3.13	3
Sentiment: subversive	2025	Marquette University	2.48	14
Sentiment: subversive	2025	Jackson State University	2.75	5
Sentiment: subversive	2025	Andrews University	-2.33	13
Sentiment: subversive	2025	Baylor University	2.55	6
Sentiment: subversive	2025	Loyola University Chicago	-2.04	20
Sentiment: activism	1965	University of Michigan	-2.08	145
Sentiment: activism	1965	The University of Chicago	-1.42	146
Sentiment: activism	1965	Case Western Reserve University	1.83	6
Sentiment: activism	1965	The Florida State University	1.33	34
Sentiment: activism	1965	Northwestern University	-1.02	84
Sentiment: activism	1965	Michigan State University	1.51	6
Sentiment: activism	1965	The University of Iowa	-0.9	92
Sentiment: activism	1965	The Pennsylvania State University	0.85	39
Sentiment: activism	1965	Wayne State University	-0.9	17
Sentiment: activism	1965	New York University	-0.44	121
Sentiment: activism	1985	University of Cincinnati	-3.08	25
Sentiment: activism	1985	University of Connecticut	-2.94	11
Sentiment: activism	1985	Stanford University	-2.01	41
Sentiment: activism	1985	University of Virginia	-2.15	25
Sentiment: activism	1985	Emory University	1.93	32
Sentiment: activism	1985	City University of New York	-1.63	83
Sentiment: activism	1985	Boston College	2.2	9
Sentiment: activism	1985	University of Kansas	1.88	18
Sentiment: activism	1985	State University of New York at Stony Brook	1.93	12
Sentiment: activism	1985	Purdue University	1.29	61
Sentiment: activism	2005	University of North Texas	-3.76	16
Sentiment: activism	2005	Alliant International University, Los Angeles	3.7	4
Sentiment: activism	2005	Duquesne University	-3.32	13
Sentiment: activism	2005	University of Nevada, Reno	3.13	23
Sentiment: activism	2005	Mississippi State University	-3.35	8
Sentiment: activism	2005	University of Maryland, Baltimore	-3.48	3
Sentiment: activism	2005	University of California, Berkeley	-2.84	2
Sentiment: activism	2005	Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary	2.53	6
Sentiment: activism	2005	The University of Memphis	2.1	18
Sentiment: activism	2005	Saybrook University	-2.18	14
Sentiment: activism	2025	Yeshiva University	-4.61	11
Sentiment: activism	2025	University of Holy Cross	3.53	12
Sentiment: activism	2025	University of Maryland, Baltimore	3.46	6
Sentiment: activism	2025	University of West Georgia	-3.46	4

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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Sentiment: activism	2025	Sofia University	2.6	18
Sentiment: activism	2025	Hofstra University	2.71	10
Sentiment: activism	2025	Indiana University Indianapolis	-2.72	9
Sentiment: activism	2025	George Mason University	-1.85	33
Sentiment: activism	2025	University of Nevada, Reno	-1.91	21
Sentiment: activism	2025	The Florida State University	-1.56	45
Sentiment: power	1965	University of Kentucky	-4.07	1
Sentiment: power	1965	University of Maryland, College Park	-2.33	3
Sentiment: power	1965	Boston University	2.18	3
Sentiment: power	1965	University of Miami	2.28	2
Sentiment: power	1965	Baylor University	-2.35	1
Sentiment: power	1965	St. John's University (New York)	2.06	2
Sentiment: power	1965	Mississippi State University	-2.22	1
Sentiment: power	1965	University of Michigan	0.41	145
Sentiment: power	1965	The University of Chicago	0.37	146
Sentiment: power	1965	Harvard University	2.11	1
Sentiment: power	1985	Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	-6.21	3
Sentiment: power	1985	New York University, GSBA	4.35	1
Sentiment: power	1985	The University of Toledo	3.87	1
Sentiment: power	1985	University of Miami	-2.75	3
Sentiment: power	1985	Purdue University	-0.76	61
Sentiment: power	1985	University of Michigan	0.08	148
Sentiment: power	1985	New York University	-0.18	121
Sentiment: power	1985	Pacific Graduate School of Psychology	2.68	1
Sentiment: power	1985	The Ohio State University	-0.12	116
Sentiment: power	1985	University of Southern California	0.21	97
Sentiment: power	2005	New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary	4.45	5
Sentiment: power	2005	Sam Houston State University	-3.87	2
Sentiment: power	2005	St. Mary's University (Texas)	-3.66	4
Sentiment: power	2005	University of South Alabama	3.94	1
Sentiment: power	2005	Maharishi University of Management	3.93	1
Sentiment: power	2005	Dartmouth College	-3.13	4
Sentiment: power	2005	Baltimore Hebrew University	3.5	1
Sentiment: power	2005	The University of Akron	-3.02	3
Sentiment: power	2005	Indiana State University	2.78	3
Sentiment: power	2005	Loma Linda University	-2.45	6
Sentiment: power	2025	Gratz College	4.53	1
Sentiment: power	2025	Mercer University	4.19	1
Sentiment: power	2025	University of Colorado Colorado Springs	-3.92	1
Sentiment: power	2025	Boise State University	-3.55	2

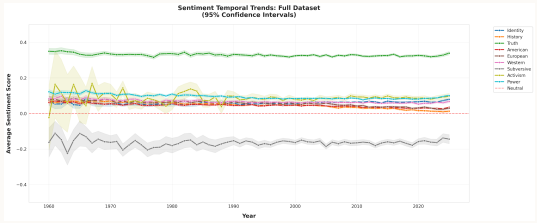
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Table A.31 – continued from previous page

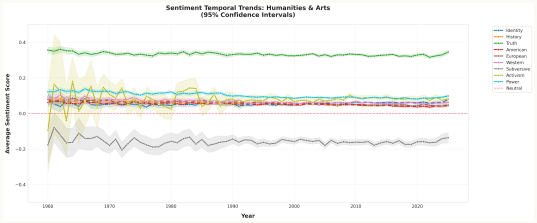
Variable	Year	University	Z-score	N
Sentiment: power	2025	Saint Mary of the Woods College	-3.34	1
Sentiment: power	2025	Texas Southern University	3.03	2
Sentiment: power	2025	Indiana Wesleyan University	2.82	3
Sentiment: power	2025	Barry University	2.92	2
Sentiment: power	2025	Brigham Young University	2.64	4
Sentiment: power	2025	St. Thomas University	2.14	10

Appendix. Supplementary Figures and Maps

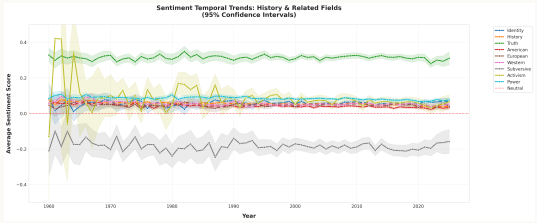
B



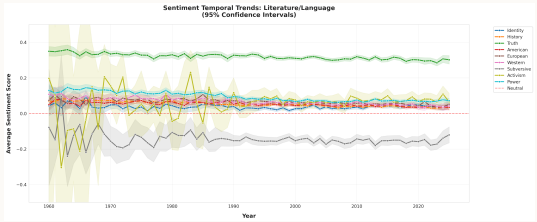
(a) Full Dataset



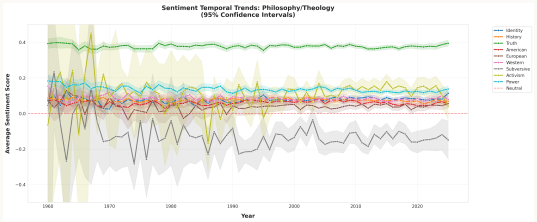
(b) Humanities & Arts



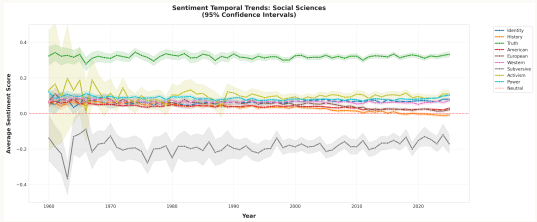
(c) History & Related Fields



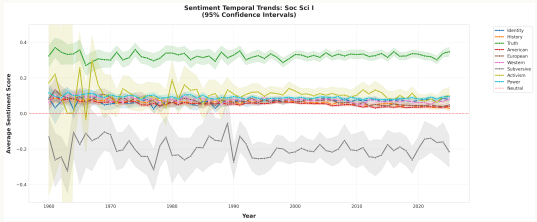
(d) Literature & Language



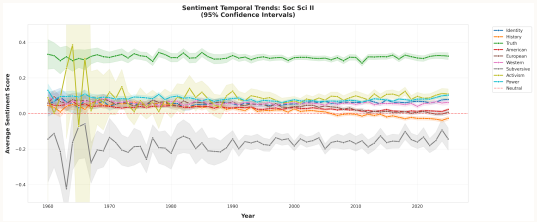
(e) Philosophy & Theology



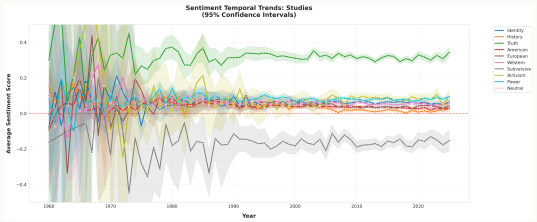
(f) Social Sciences



(g) Social Science I



(h) Social Science II



(i) Interdisciplinary Studies

Figure B.1 Sentiment Trends by Field on a Common Scale (1960–2025)

Notes: Each panel overlays all nine focal terms (*Identity, History, Truth, American, European, Western, Subversive, Activism, Power*) for a single field on a shared y-axis, enabling direct comparison of absolute sentiment levels across terms within each field and across fields within each term. Scores are bounded in $[-1, +1]$; smoothed annual means are displayed without confidence bands to reduce visual clutter. The y-axis range is identical across all nine panels. The stark vertical separation between *Truth* (top band, ≈ 0.30–0.40) and the remaining terms, and between all other terms and *Subversive* (bottom band, ≈ -0.20 to -0.15), is immediately visible—as is the narrowing gap between declining heritage terms (*American, European, Western, History*) and the stable or rising terms (*Identity, Activism*) over the study period. For individual-term panels with 95% confidence intervals, see Figures 16–24 in Section 6.

Temporal maps show the geographic distribution of thematic content (z-scores) and sentiment across universities at 1965, 1985, 2005, and 2025. **Point color**: symmetric blue–white–red diverging scale; red = above yearly mean, blue = below. **Point size**: log dissertation count. **State shading**: observation-weighted mean z-score. **Labeled universities**: top 3 by composite of z-score magnitude (70%) and dissertation count (30%). Color scale is winsorized at ±2.5 SD; colors reflect within-year relative standing and are not comparable across years or variables. Missing sentiment values set to zero prior to analysis.

B.1 Count-Based Thematic Variables

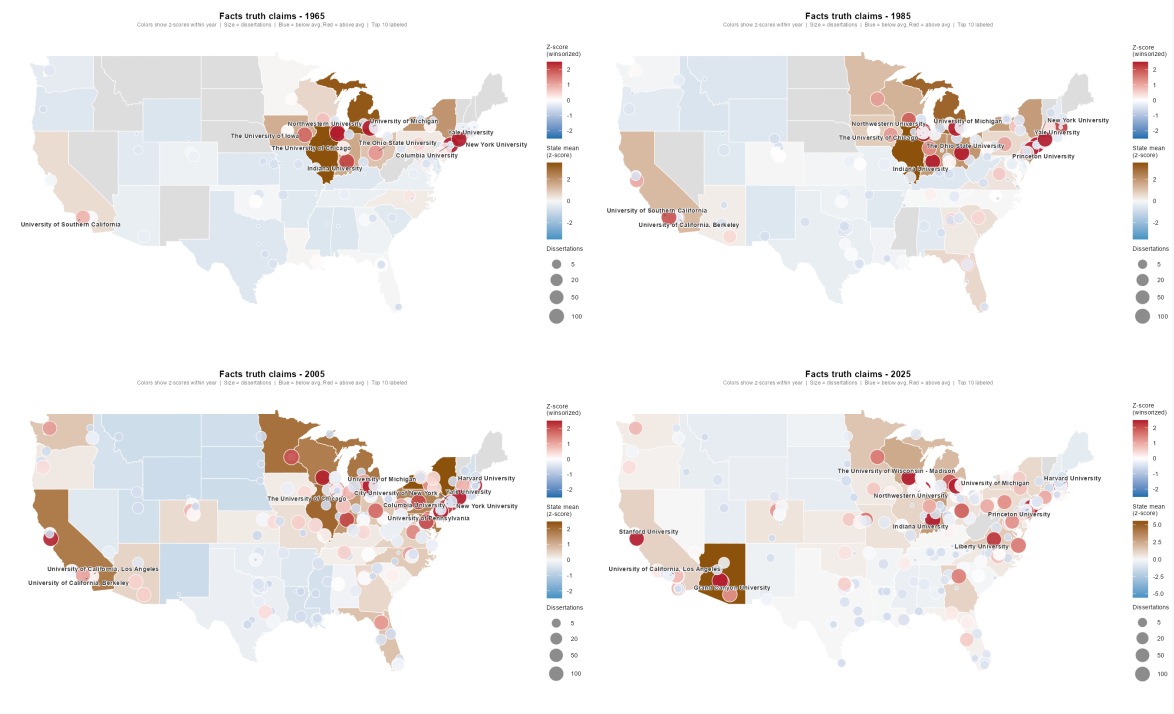


Figure B.2 Facts & Truth Claims: Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: Empirical vocabulary is persistently concentrated at a stable cluster of research-intensive institutions, with no systematic geographic bluing (below-average values) across large university clusters in any period—the spatial confirmation that truth-claim norms were not displaced (Trend 3). The previously strong Midwest advantage attenuates by 2025 as *Facts/Truth* vocabulary becomes system-wide rather than regionally distinctive.

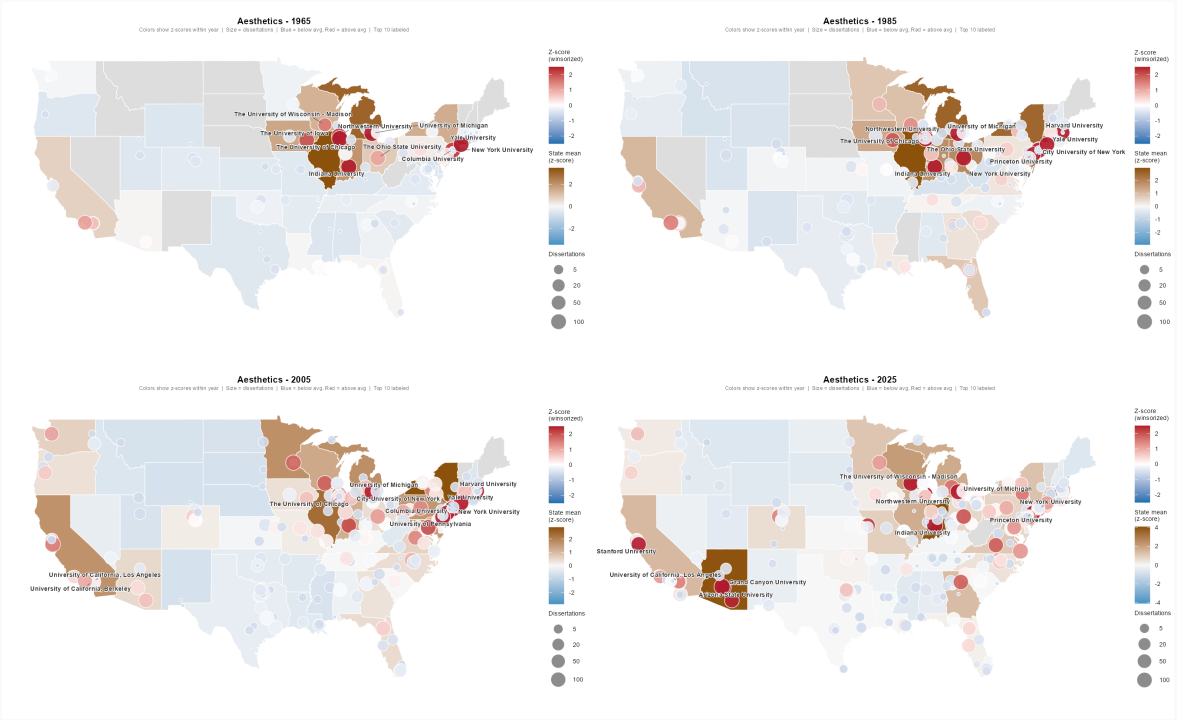


Figure B.3 Aesthetics: Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: Aesthetic vocabulary is highly concentrated in the Northeast and California (Literature, Art History, Music programs). The steady broadening of the below-average (blue) zone across the South and Mountain West reflects the growth of Social Science I and health-sciences programs at regional universities, which carry very low Aesthetics frequencies.

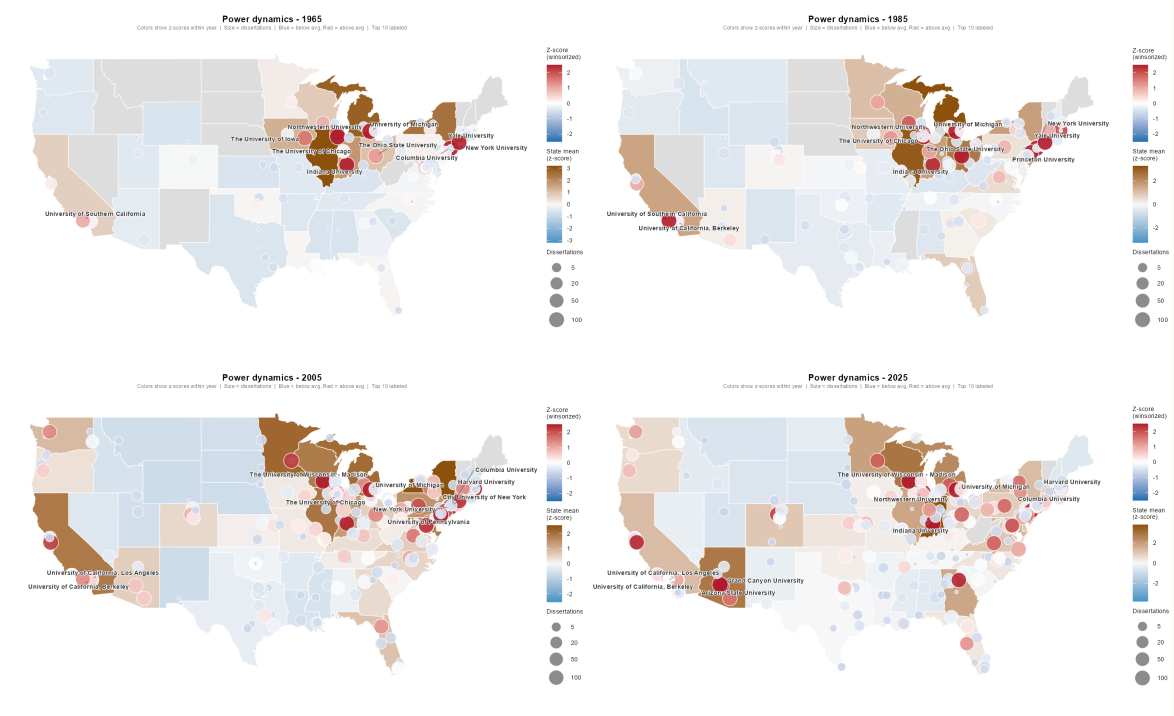


Figure B.4 Power Dynamics: Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: A modest northeastern cluster in 1965 has broadened substantially by 2025, with new hotspots in Arizona, Texas, and the Mountain West—the geographic signature of the cultural turn diffusing beyond its original coastal beachheads. By 2025, *Power* vocabulary is no longer distinctively concentrated at elite coastal universities, consistent with Trend 2's cross-field pattern and Trend 5's convergence pattern.

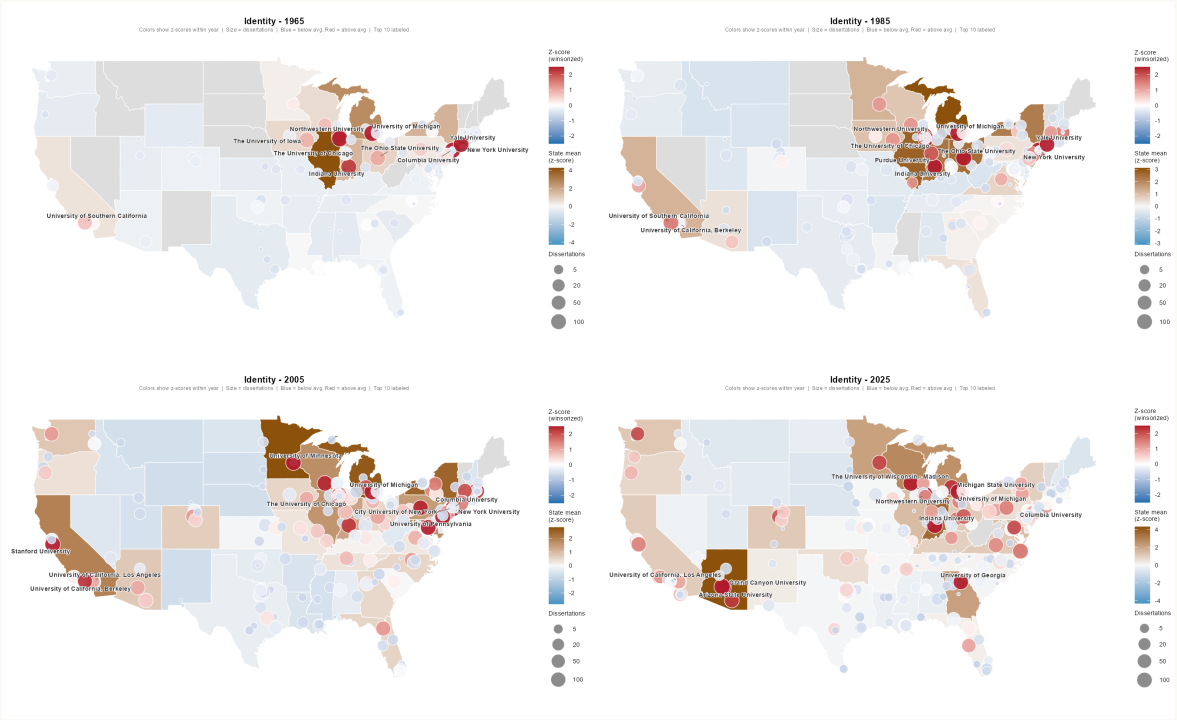


Figure B.5 Identity: Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: The most dramatic change of any variable: near-uniform near-zero values in 1965 give way to broad geographic expansion by 2025. The median state has moved toward above-average *Identity* emphasis. Crucially, the highest z-scores in 2025 appear not only at traditional elite institutions but at newer and regionally prominent programs—evidence of genuine diffusion rather than elite mimicry, and the geographic correlate of the 8% per year panel growth rate (Trend 2).

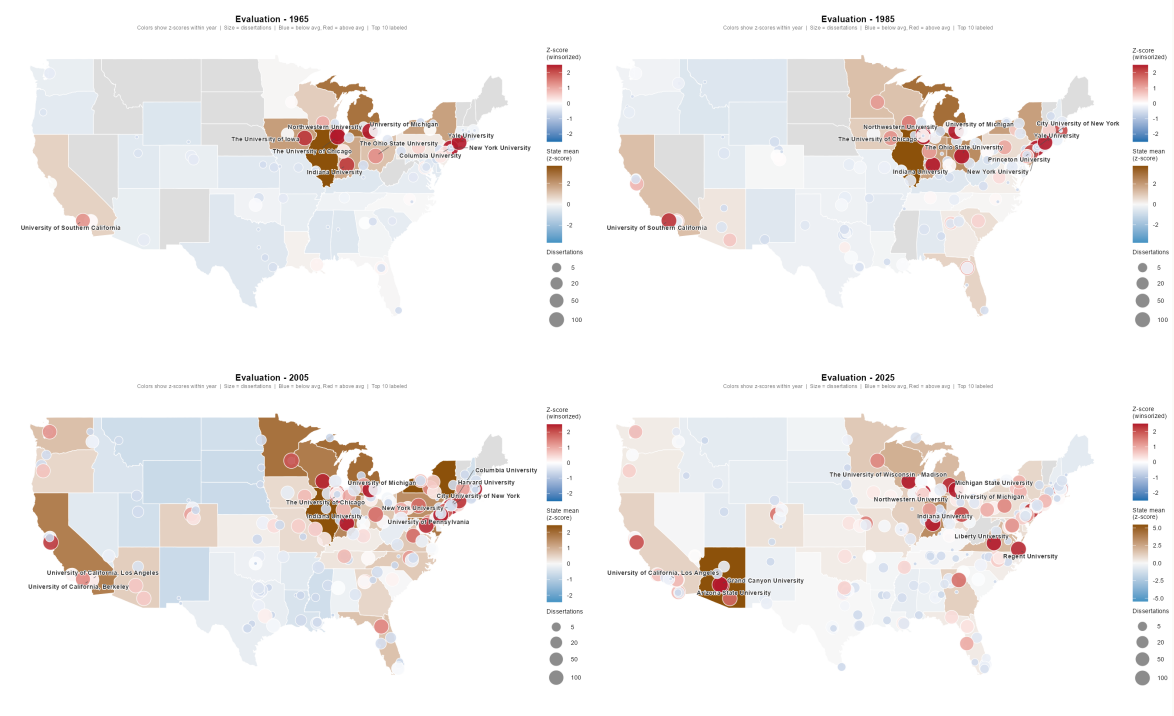


Figure B.6 Evaluation: Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: The most geographically stable of the five count variables. The Midwest and Plains retain a comparatively strong profile throughout, reflecting the persistence of normative and ethical argumentation in philosophy and theology programs. Some reddening in the South and Southwest by 2025 likely reflects growth in professional doctoral programs (social work, public policy, education).

B.2 Sentiment Variables

Unlike count-based maps where higher values are neutral indicators of disciplinary focus, sentiment maps carry interpretive directionality. Because z-scores are computed within year, a "red" institution in 2025 indicates above-average sentiment *relative to the 2025 mean*—not necessarily positive in absolute terms. Consult the absolute-level sentiment series in Section 6 alongside these maps.

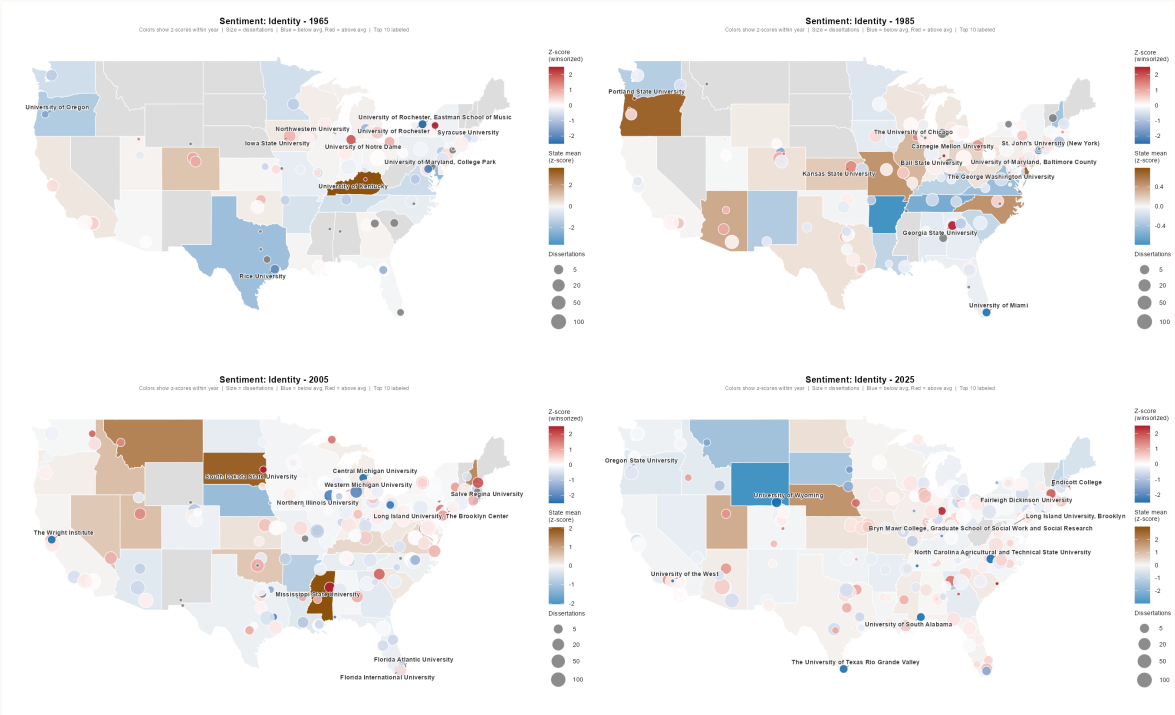


Figure B.7 Sentiment: *Identity* — Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: Positive-sentiment clustering shifts from diffuse and small (1965) to concentrated at large urban research universities by 2025, consistent with the institutionalization of identity-affirmative frameworks in Social Science II and Interdisciplinary Studies.

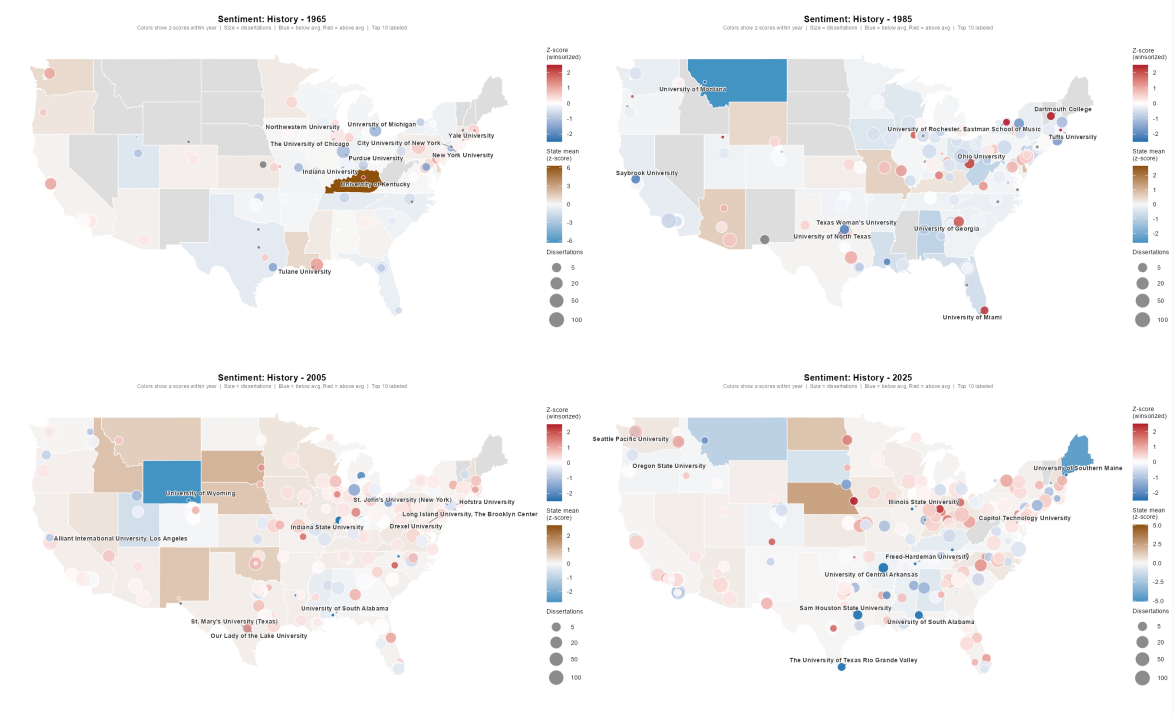


Figure B.8 Sentiment: History — Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: State shading cools progressively from warm to neutral across successive panels. By 2025, strongly positive *History* sentiment is concentrated at smaller religiously affiliated and regional comprehensive universities.

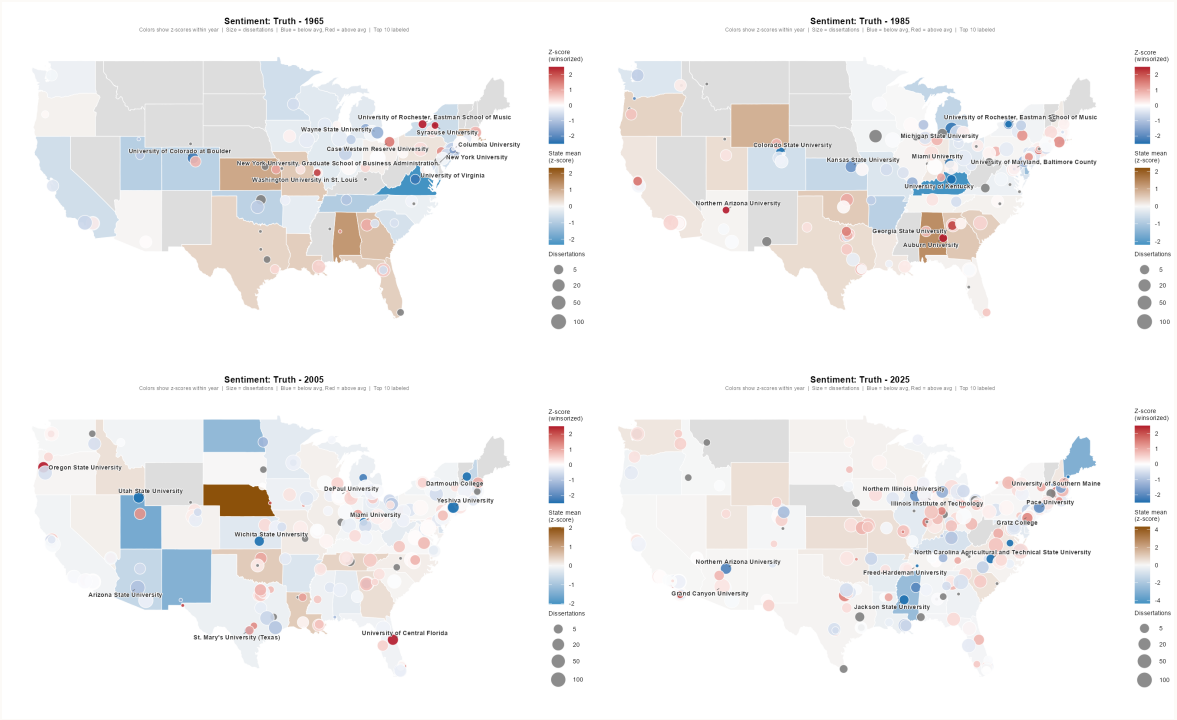


Figure B.9 Sentiment: Truth — Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: The most geographically uniform of the nine sentiment variables. This geographic stability is the spatial analogue of Trend 3's finding on *Truth* sentiment drift.

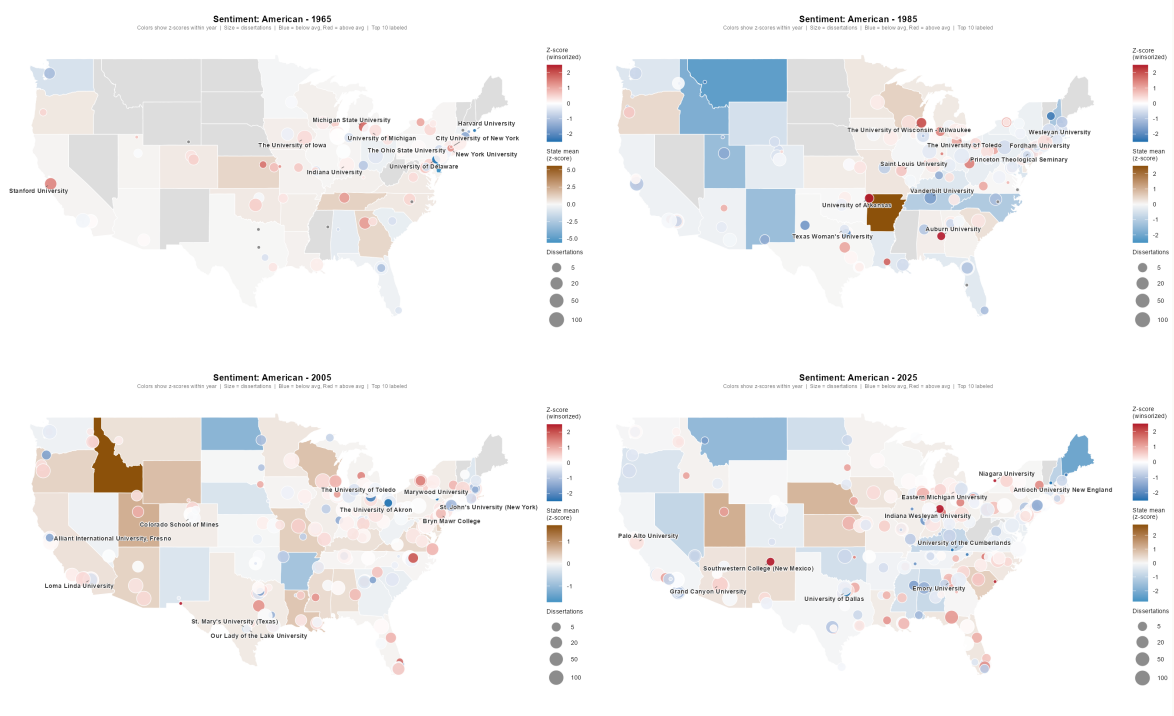


Figure B.10 Sentiment: American — Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: By 2025, the Northeast and California show negative relative z-scores (blue state shading) while the South and Midwest retain positive values.

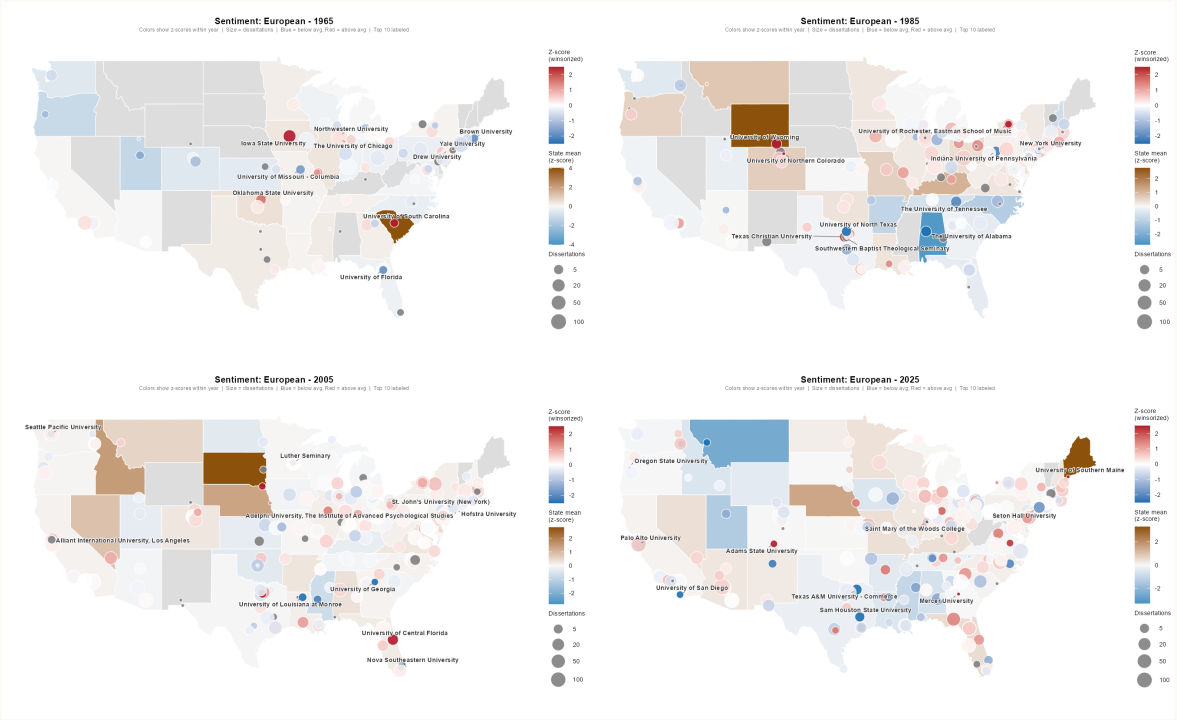


Figure B.11 Sentiment: European — Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: Broadly similar trajectory to *American* sentiment, but with an additional geographic lag: coastal and mid-Atlantic institutions are the earliest movers into negative territory.

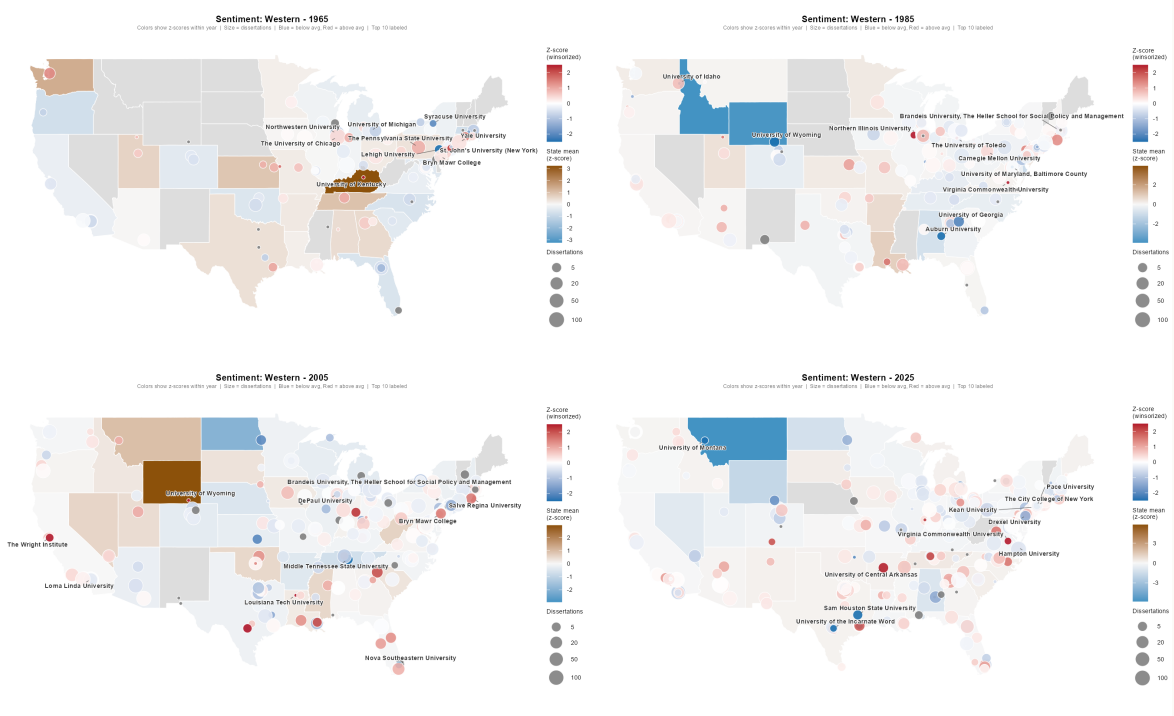


Figure B.12 Sentiment: Western — Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: The most dramatic shift of the three geopolitical terms: broadly positive in 1965, strongly negative at large Northeastern and Californian universities by 2025.

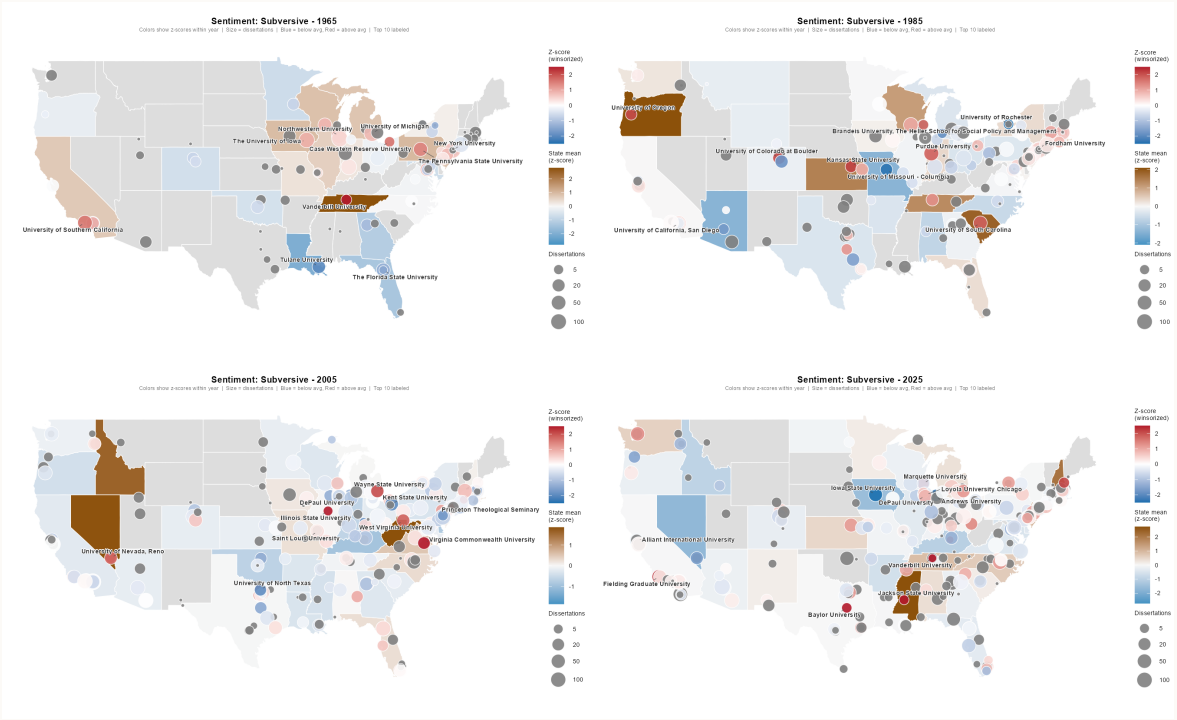


Figure B.13 Sentiment: Subversive — Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: Values represent *less negative* (not positive) sentiment. Red institutions in 2025 frame subversion less negatively than the 2025 mean.

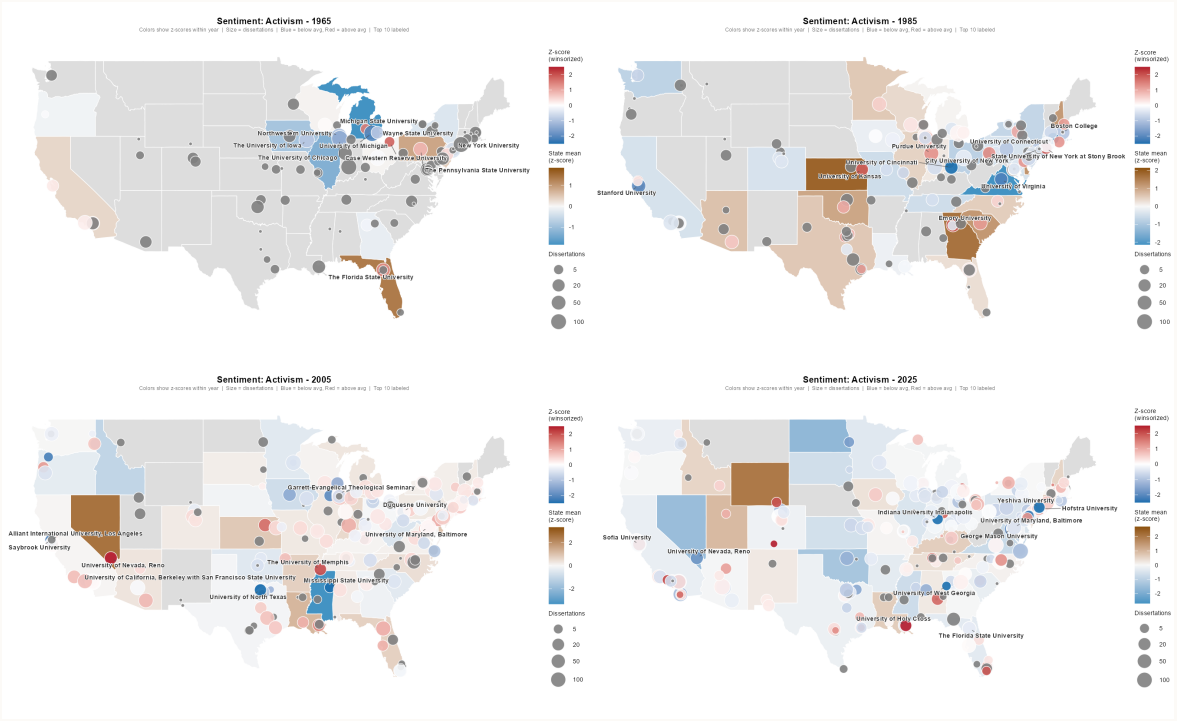


Figure B.14 Sentiment: Activism — Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: Widest within-year geographic dispersion, reflecting the range of contexts in which *Activism* appears.

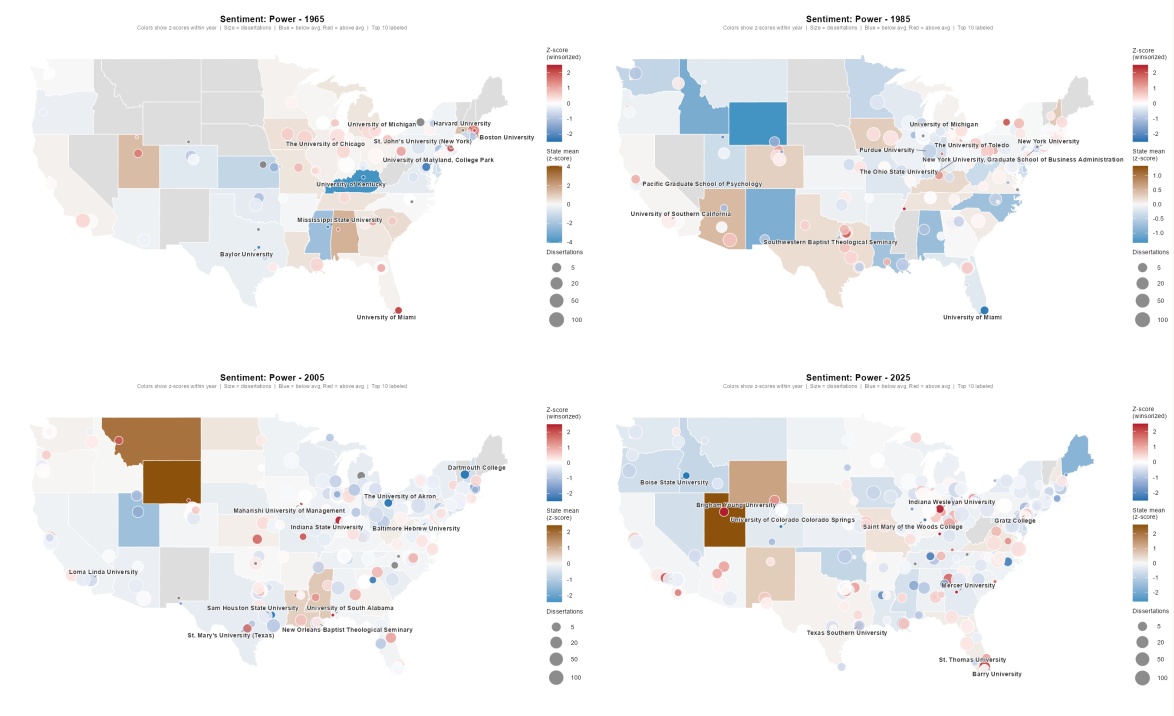


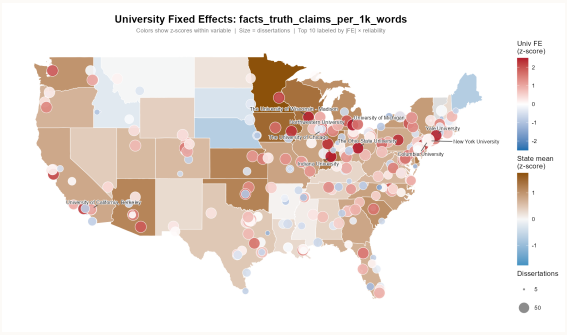
Figure B.15 Sentiment: Power — Temporal Geographic Distribution (1965–2025)

Notes: Moderately positive in absolute terms with less geographic polarization than *American* or *European* sentiment.

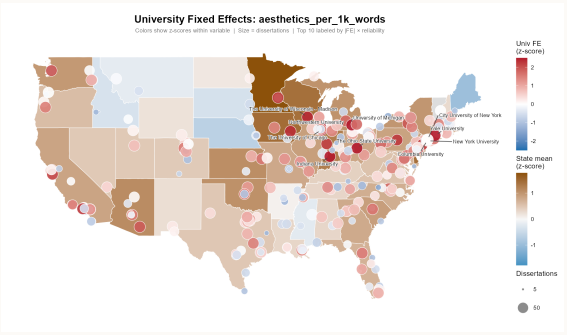
B.3 Fixed Effects

University fixed effects estimated from two-way fixed effects models. Fixed effects are standardized to z-scores within each model. Colors reflect relative standing within each variable's model only.

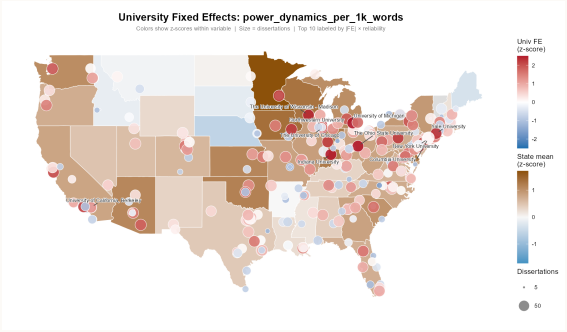
Count-Based Outcome Variables



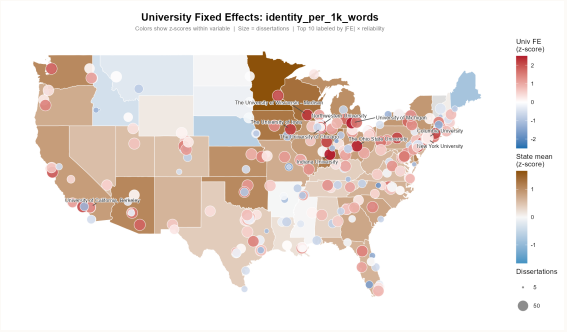
(a) Facts & Truth Claims



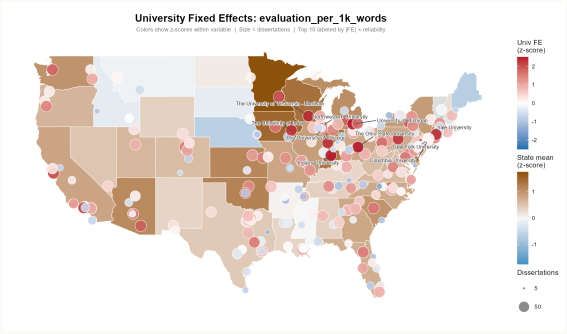
(b) Aesthetics



(c) Power Dynamics



(d) Identity

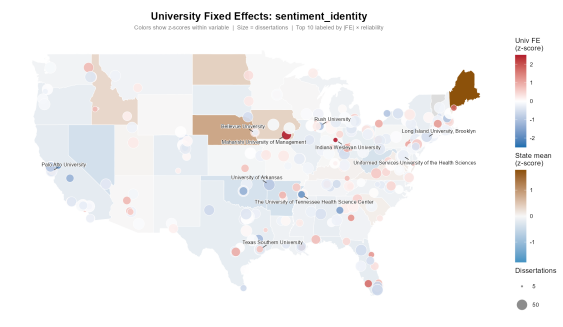


(e) Evaluation

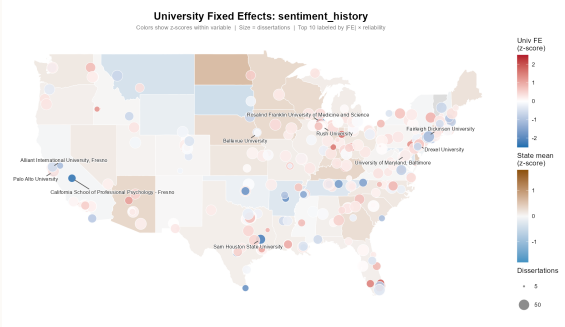
Figure B.16 University Fixed Effects (z-scores): Count-Based Variables

Notes: Each panel shows the time-invariant university tendency on one thematic dimension after removing common year shocks. *Facts/Truth* and *Evaluation* show above-average fixed effects in the Midwest and Plains.

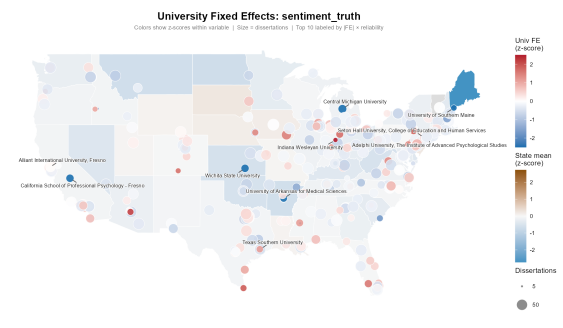
Sentiment Variables (Part I)



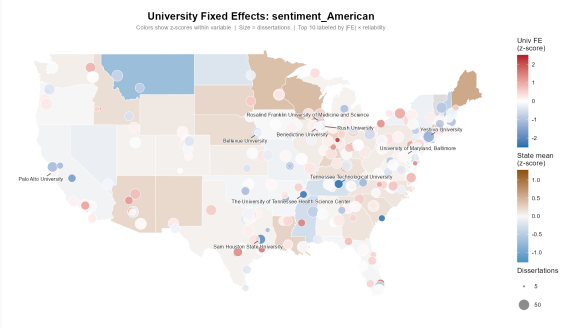
(a) Sentiment: Identity



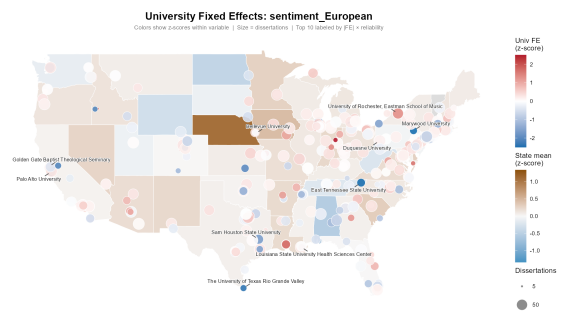
(b) Sentiment: History



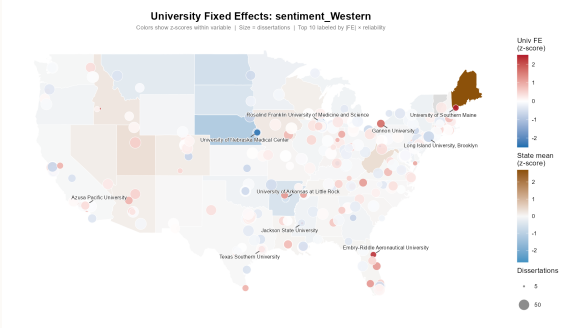
(c) Sentiment: Truth



(d) Sentiment: American



(e) Sentiment: European

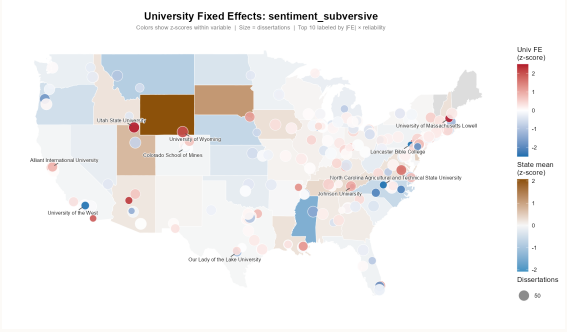


(f) Sentiment: Western

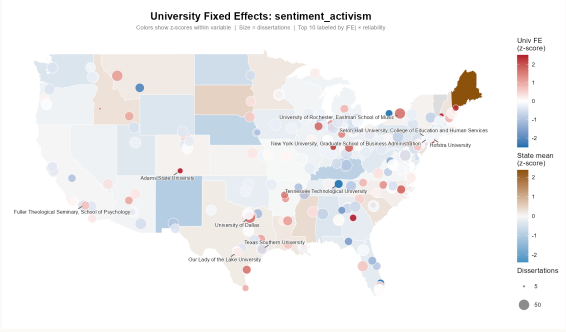
Figure B.17 University Fixed Effects (z-scores): Sentiment Variables (Part I)

Notes: Identity and *History* sentiment fixed effects show a near-complementary pattern. *Truth* sentiment shows no directional regional polarity.

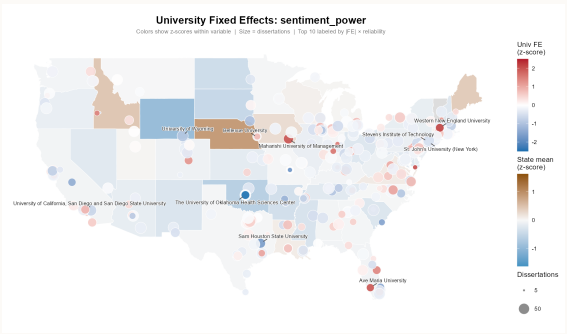
Sentiment Variables (Part II)



(a) Sentiment: Subversive



(b) Sentiment: Activism



(c) Sentiment: Power

Figure B.18 University Fixed Effects (z-scores): Sentiment Variables (Part II)

Notes: Subversive and *Activism* fixed effects mirror the count-variable pattern. *Power* sentiment shows a partially different pattern, with theologically oriented schools among above-average institutions.

Appendix: Robustness Checks

C

This appendix presents four robustness checks addressing the most substantive methodological concerns raised in peer review. The first benchmarks the corpus against an independent external data source to verify that the dissertation counts and disciplinary trends we observe are not artifacts of the ProQuest database. The second and third examine whether the thematic and sentiment trends in Sections 5–6 are artifacts of the changing composition of the dissertation panel over time. The fourth addresses a more targeted concern about the geopolitical sentiment results: whether declines in sentiment toward *Western*, *American*, and *European* terms reflect targeted negative framing or simply a genre-wide drift toward more negative academic writing.

The empirical strategy for RC-2 and RC-3 is to compare a baseline model (M1) that includes only year dummies against a full model (M4) that adds fixed effects for both field of study and university. RC-4 introduces a further specification (M5) that adds a leave-one-out corpus baseline sentiment control. To summarize the M1 vs. M4 comparison concisely, we use the mean absolute coefficient (Mean $|\beta|$) across the full study period. This single scalar captures the average "intensity" or effect size of the year-dummy coefficients, allowing a direct comparison of model stability: where M4 values exceed M1 values, fixed effects have isolated a stronger signal from the data, confirming that the raw trends understate the true within-discipline change rather than overstate it. Each check is structured identically: we state the concern, describe the test, and report the substantive outcome. A consolidated summary appears at the end (p. 135).

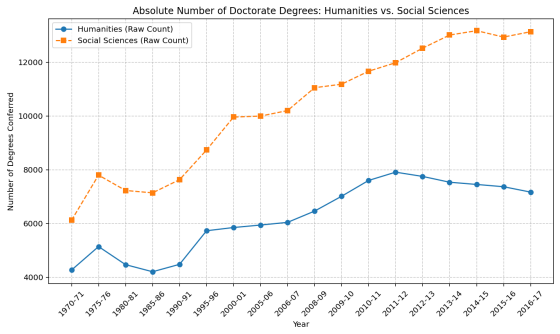
Robustness Check 1: Do Dissertation Trends Replicate Against Independent External Data?

Concern. The corpus is drawn from the ProQuest Dissertations & Theses database, which has known coverage limitations: registration lags mean that recent years undercount completed degrees, and the database skews toward elite research universities. Observed declines in Humanities dissertation counts and the relative Humanities–Social Sciences divergence documented in Section 3 might therefore be database artifacts rather than real structural trends in American doctoral education.

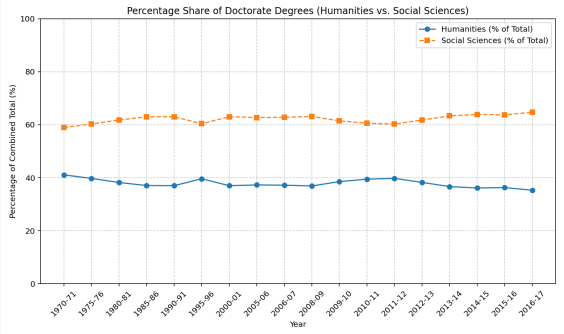
Test. We benchmark our corpus against the NCES Digest of Education Statistics (Table 324.10 (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES))), the authoritative federal source for doctoral degree conferrals in the United States. The NCES data cover 1970–71 to 2016–17 — the last year for which field-level breakdowns are publicly available — and are collected directly from institutions, independent of any commercial database. We compare absolute doctorate counts and the relative share of Humanities within the combined Humanities–Social Sciences total across the two sources.[4]

Result. The NCES data yield three findings that directly validate the corpus.

[4]The Humanities category comprises Area, ethnic, cultural, gender, and group studies; English language and literature/letters; Foreign languages, literatures, and linguistics; Philosophy and religious studies; Theology and religious vocations; and Visual and performing arts. The Social Sciences category comprises Psychology; Social sciences and history; Public administration and social services; and Communication, journalism, and related programs — consistent with NCES Digest Table 324.10 (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)).



(a) Absolute doctorate counts.



(b) Percentage share of combined Humanities–Social Sciences total.

Figure C.1 External benchmarking: Humanities vs. Social Sciences doctorate trends, 1970–71 to 2016–17 (RC-1).

Notes: Humanities comprises Area/Ethnic/Cultural/Gender Studies, English, Foreign Languages, Philosophy, Theology, and Visual Arts. Social Sciences comprises Psychology, Social Sciences and History, Public Administration, and Communication. Source: NCES Digest of Education Statistics, Table 324.10 (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)). Both the absolute contraction in Humanities counts and the proportional shift away from Humanities are confirmed by the independent federal data, ruling out a ProQuest database artifact.

First, the Humanities have experienced a distinct long-term proportional contraction relative to the Social Sciences. While raw Humanities doctorate counts grew modestly from the 1990s through 2011–12, their share of the combined Humanities–Social Sciences total (Figure C.1b) fell from approximately 41% in 1970–71 to 35% by 2016–17. This confirms that the relative disciplinary decline observed in our corpus reflects a broader structural shift in American doctoral education rather than a database artifact.

Second, the stability and growth of Social Sciences doctorate conferrals — both in absolute volume (Figure C.1a) and relative share — serves as a useful internal control. The asymmetry between the Humanities' proportional contraction and the Social Sciences' sustained growth is visible in the external data just as it is in our corpus, confirming that the disciplinary divergence documented in Section 3 is substantive rather than artifactual.

Third, the NCES data show that Humanities doctorate counts peaked in 2011–12 and declined approximately 9% through 2016–17. This modest external decline is consistent with, though smaller in magnitude than, the sharper post-2015 contraction observed in our corpus. The gap is attributable to two well-understood features of the ProQuest database: (i) registration delays mean that recently conferred degrees appear in the database with a lag of one to three years, depressing counts in the most recent period; and (ii) the corpus's stronger coverage of elite institutions, where the post-2015 contraction has been most acute, amplifies the aggregate decline relative to the national average (see Section 2.1 for further discussion). Both of these are measurement features that affect magnitude but not direction; the external data confirm the direction of the trend.

Robustness Check 2: Are Thematic Count Trends Driven by the Changing Field Composition of the Panel?

Concern. The five thematic count baskets — *Facts/Truth Claims*, *Aesthetics*, *Power Dynamics*, *Identity*, and *Evaluation*—show sustained upward trends over the study period. A natural alternative explanation is that these trends are compositional artifacts: as Humanities and Social Science II programs expanded their share of total dissertation production from the 1970s onward, fields that inherently use identity and power vocabulary at higher baseline rates became a larger fraction of the corpus. Under this interpretation the aggregate trend would be visible even if *no individual field* changed its rhetorical practices at all.

Test. We compare M1 (year dummies only) against M4 (year dummies plus fixed effects for both field of study and university). The year-dummy coefficients in M1 absorb everything — genuine within-field change plus compositional shift. The M4 coefficients identify only within-field-and-university change, netting out any trend attributable entirely to the re-weighting of fields over time. An M4 Mean $|\beta|$ value *larger* than M1 indicates not merely that the trend survives controls, but that compositional change was actively suppressing the raw estimate.

Result. The trends do not attenuate under fixed effects — they strengthen substantially. Figure C.2 plots the year-dummy trajectories for both models; the systematic upward displacement of the M4 (blue) line relative to the M1 (red) line is visible across all five baskets across the full time horizon. Table C.1 translates this into scalar comparisons: the mean absolute coefficient for `facts_truth_claims` rises from 5,643 (M1) to 22,213 (M4), and `power_dynamics` from 4,325 to 17,098. The R^2 increases from 0.02–0.10 (M1) to 0.65–0.80 (M4), reflecting substantial cross-sectional variance in term use across fields and institutions that fixed effects absorb, while simultaneously revealing that the residual time trend is steeper, not flatter.

The mechanism is suppression: over the study period, quantitative social science fields (which use identity vocabulary at lower baseline rates) became a somewhat larger share of the sample, attenuating the raw aggregate trend. Once field and university composition is held constant, the within-discipline acceleration in identity, power, and evaluative language is revealed to be stronger and more consistent across disciplines than the aggregate numbers suggested. These findings are therefore conservative rather than overstated: the raw trends were hiding two forces simultaneously — genuine within-discipline change, and a compositional headwind that was working against it.

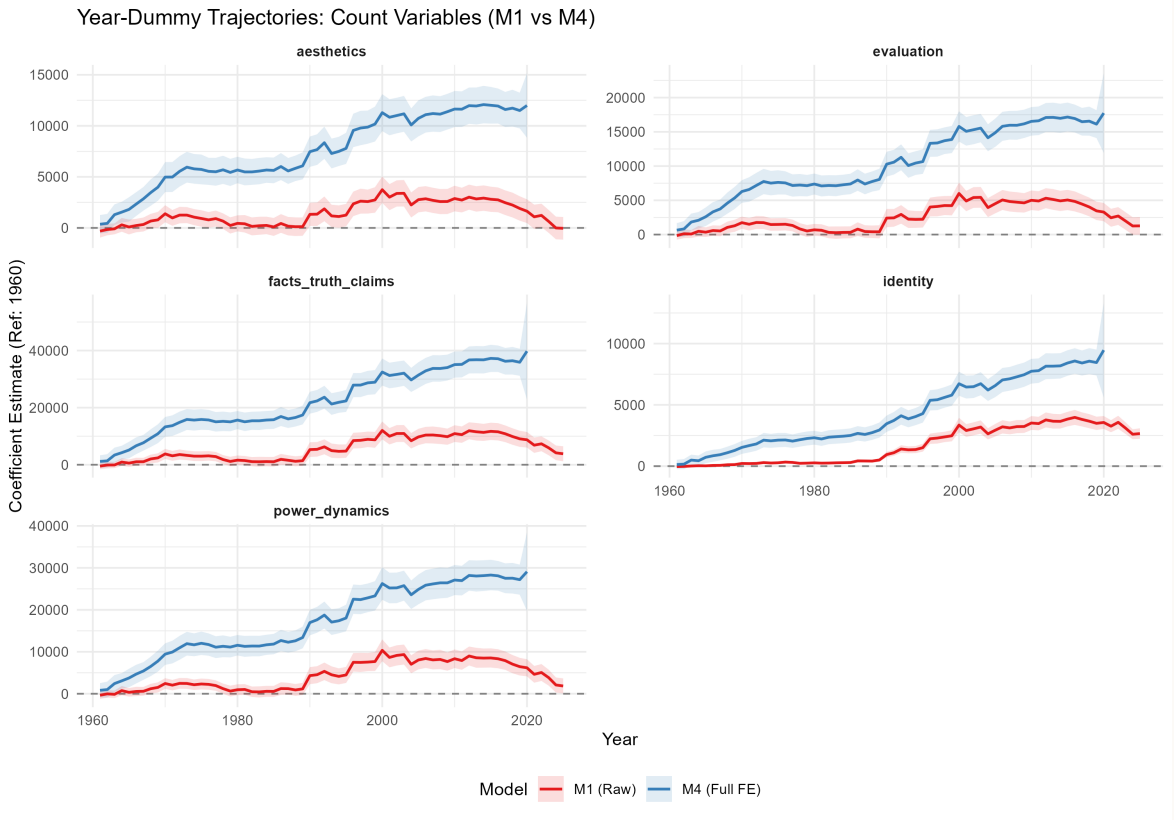


Figure C.2 Year-dummy coefficient trajectories for the five thematic count variables (RC-2).

Notes: **M1** (red): raw OLS with year dummies only, capturing both genuine within-field change and compositional shift. **M4** (blue): year dummies with field and university fixed effects, isolating within-field-and-institution change. Reference year: 1960. Standard errors clustered at the university level. The consistent upward displacement of M4 relative to M1 indicates that compositional change was suppressing the raw trend.

Variable	facts truth claims	aesthetics	power dynamics	identity	evaluation
Mean $\lvert\beta_{M1}\rvert$ (Raw)	5643.161	1463.000	4325.498	1670.081	2530.199
Mean $\lvert\beta_{M4}\rvert$ (Full)	22212.916	7595.557	17097.615	4282.726	10485.504
R^2 (M1)	0.033	0.021	0.037	0.105	0.033
R^2 (M4)	0.775	0.795	0.767	0.655	0.783
Num. Obs.	16080	16080	16080	16080	16080

Notes: Analysis benchmarks the baseline raw trend (M1) against the full panel specification (M4) controlling for major field category and university fixed effects. Values represent the mean absolute magnitude of coefficients across all active panel years relative to the 1960 baseline. Standard errors clustered at the university level.

Table C.1 Decomposition Overview: Count Variables (M1 vs. M4).

Robustness Check 3: Are Sentiment Trends Uniform Across Fields and Institutions, or Concentrated in Specific Subgroups?

Concern. Aggregate sentiment trends might be driven by a small number of fields or institutional types — for instance, elite coastal research universities or Gender and Ethnic Studies programs. If so, the trends would not represent a broad cultural shift in academic rhetoric but rather the changing weight of a specific subgroup in the corpus, and the "cultural shift" framing would be substantially overstated.

Test. The M1 versus M4 comparison is applied to all nine sentiment variables. For sentiment outcomes, the logic of attenuation runs in the *opposite* direction to RC-2: if a sentiment trend is concentrated in a particular field or institution type, absorbing field and university fixed effects in M4 should *attenuate* the raw M1 coefficient, not amplify it. Near-identical M1 and M4 estimates, together with low M4 R^2 values, are therefore the signature of a pervasive rather than subgroup-driven trend: field and university membership explains little of the variance, meaning the shift has no identifiable subgroup carrier.

Result. For the majority of the nine sentiment variables — including `sentiment_activism`, `sentiment_American`, and `sentiment_truth` — M1 and M4 coefficients are nearly identical and R^2 values remain low (Figure C.3 and Table C.2). This close correspondence indicates that sentiment shifts are distributed broadly across fields and institutions rather than concentrated in any identifiable subgroup, supporting the "cultural shift" characterization.

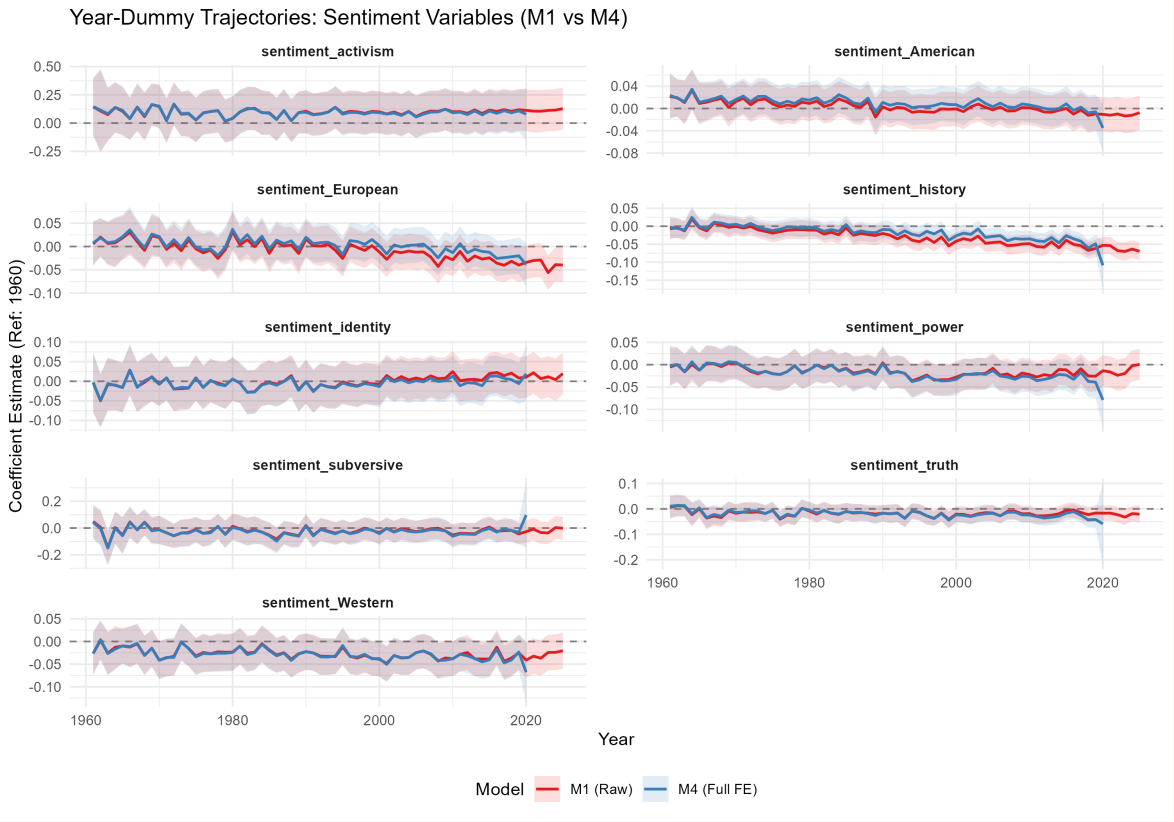


Figure C.3 Year-dummy coefficient trajectories for the sentiment variables (RC-2).

Two variables show more nuance. `sentiment_history` exhibits a downward trend in both specifications, though the slope is marginally less steep in M4, suggesting the decline is genuine but modestly amplified by the growing share of History dissertations. The post-2020 spike in `sentiment_subversive` persists essentially unchanged in M4, confirming it as a genuine recent shift rather than a compositional artifact of any particular program type. For `sentiment_Western` and `sentiment_power` the trajectories are noisy in both specifications; RC-4 below provides a more targeted test of the geopolitical terms.

Variable	history	truth	Western	identity	European	power	activism	American	subversive
Mean $\lvert\beta_{M1}\rvert$ (Raw)	0.032	0.024	0.028	0.012	0.018	0.017	0.096	0.009	0.030
Mean $\lvert\beta_{M4}\rvert$ (Full)	0.020	0.021	0.028	0.011	0.012	0.020	0.092	0.011	0.033
R^2 (M1)	0.027	0.004	0.007	0.010	0.018	0.008	0.014	0.011	0.010
R^2 (M4)	0.210	0.110	0.087	0.095	0.102	0.137	0.088	0.149	0.083
Num. Obs.	15589	13782	14710	14830	14251	15677	9250	15852	8829

Notes: Analysis benchmarks the baseline raw trend (M1) against the full panel specification (M4) controlling for major field category and university fixed effects. Values represent the mean absolute magnitude of coefficients across all active panel years relative to the 1960 baseline. Standard errors clustered at the university level. $^{x}p \leq 0.1$, $^{*}p \leq 0.05$, $^{**}p \leq 0.01$, $^{***}p \leq 0.001$.

Table C.2 Decomposition Overview: Sentiment Variables (M1 vs. M4).

Robustness Check 4: Are Geopolitical Sentiment Declines Term-Specific or Genre-Wide Artifacts?

Concern. The panel analysis documents declining sentiment scores for *Western*, *American*, and *European* terms. A plausible alternative is that academic writing as a genre has drifted toward more negative framing over time—more hedged, more critical, more adversarial in register—and that geopolitical terms are simply carried along by this general current rather than being targeted specifically. Under this explanation, the negative trajectories would not constitute evidence of a targeted cultural shift; they would merely reflect evolving disciplinary prose norms. A related concern is compositional in nature: the mix of universities producing dissertations has changed, and if the highest-output institutions are also the most negative in their geopolitical framing, that shift in production share could generate apparent declines even within a fixed-effects specification.

Test. We estimate a third specification (M5) that adds a leave-one-out corpus baseline alongside university fixed effects:

$$S_{it}^{(v)} = \alpha_i + \sum_t \beta_t \, \mathbf{1}[\text{Year} = t] + \gamma \, \bar{S}_{it}^{(-v)} + \varepsilon_{it} \tag{4}$$

where $\bar{S}_{it}^{(-v)}$ is the row-wise mean sentiment across all stable sentiment variables *except* outcome term v.[5] The coefficient γ absorbs year-by-year shifts in the general rhetorical register. The year dummy coefficients β_t then measure whether a given geopolitical term moves *differently* from the corpus baseline — direct evidence of term-specific framing rather than genre-wide drift.

For the university compositional concern, we estimate fixed effects from two separate models: (i) a log-count model $\log(N_{it}) = \alpha_i + \beta \, \text{Year}_t + \varepsilon_{it}$ yielding each institution's structural output level, estimated on 394 universities with at least ten years of non-constant coverage; and (ii) the sentiment model M4 yielding each institution's structural sentiment level. We compute the Pearson correlation between these two vectors. A near-zero correlation rules out the compositional explanation; a strongly negative correlation would support it.

Result: baseline-adjusted trajectories. Figure C.4 plots the year-dummy trajectories for all three models, and Table C.3 summarizes the late-period (2010–2025) mean coefficients. The three terms behave in substantively different ways.

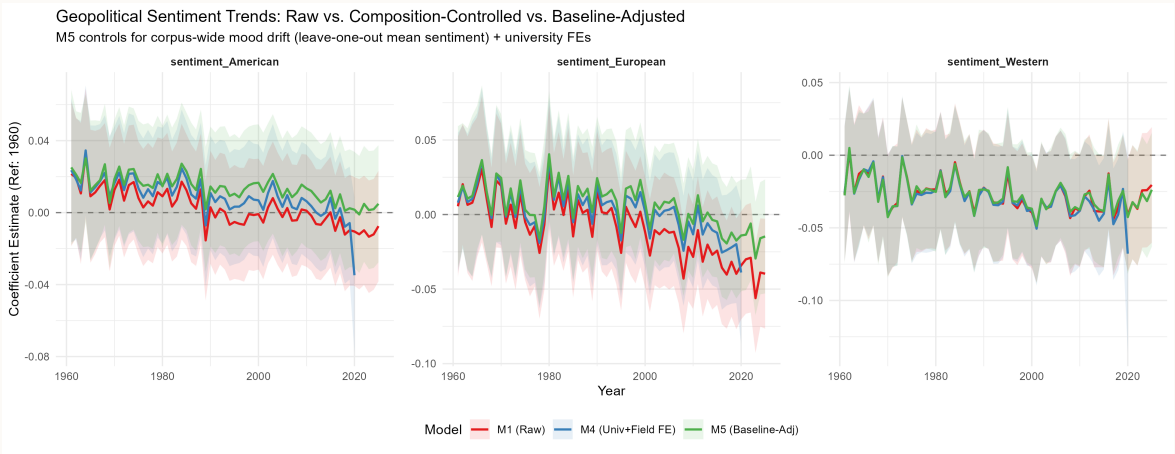


Figure C.4 Year-dummy coefficient trajectories for geopolitical sentiment terms.

[5]The baseline excludes `sentiment_activism` and `sentiment_subversive`, which are missing for 43% and 45% of university-years respectively; including them would reduce the estimation sample without improving the proxy. The stable baseline covers seven dimensions: history, truth, identity, power, and the two remaining geopolitical terms not serving as the outcome. University singletons (74–88 per term) are dropped by the estimator.

Notes: Year-dummy coefficient trajectories for the three geopolitical sentiment terms under three specifications (RC-4). **M1** (red): year dummies only. **M4** (blue): year dummies + university and field fixed effects. **M5** (green): year dummies + university fixed effects + leave-one-out corpus-mean sentiment control (Equation 4). Shaded bands: 95% confidence intervals. Reference year: 1960. A persistent negative M5 trajectory is direct evidence of term-specific negative framing rather than genre-wide drift.

Table C.3: Geopolitical Sentiment: Late-Period Mean Coefficients (2010–2025) Across Specifications

	M1 (Raw)	M4 (Univ+Field FE)	M5 (Baseline-Adj)
American	-0.007 (0.016)	-0.003 (0.016)	0.006 (0.017)
European	-0.032 (0.019)	-0.016 (0.019)	-0.010 (0.019)
Western	-0.032 (0.020)	-0.038 (0.021)	-0.031 (0.020)

[a] M1: year dummies only (clustered SE). M4: year dummies + field and university FEs. M5: year dummies + leave-one-out corpus mean sentiment + university FEs. Cells report mean coefficient (mean SE) over 2010–2025 relative to 1960 baseline. Negative values indicate sentiment decline relative to baseline year.

Notes: M5 isolates whether geopolitical sentiment declines persist after removing corpus-wide negativity drift. If M5 coefficients remain negative and significant, the decline is term-specific, not a genre-wide artifact (Grimmer Point 2).

Findings by term

Western Late-period mean coefficient: -0.032 (M1), -0.038 (M4), -0.031 (M5). The trajectory is strikingly stable across all three specifications: field and university controls slightly *strengthen* the estimate (M1 to M4), and absorbing corpus-wide negativity drift leaves it essentially unchanged (M4 to M5). This is the hallmark of a term-specific effect that cannot be attributed to compositional shifts, institutional mix, or genre-wide prose norms. It is the report's most robust and most defensible geopolitical sentiment finding, and warrants strong interpretive language.

European The raw M1 coefficient of -0.032 attenuates to -0.016 under M4 and further to -0.010 (SE $= 0.019$) under M5. Approximately two-thirds of the raw signal is absorbed by compositional and baseline controls. The M5 residual, while still negative, is not statistically distinguishable from zero at conventional thresholds. The decline in *European* sentiment is present in the raw data but does not survive rigorous controls; claims about this term should be stated with explicit caution.

American The raw M1 coefficient is -0.007 — already small relative to *Western* and *European*. Under M4 it attenuates to -0.003, and under M5 it reverses sign to $+0.006$. After controlling for corpus-wide negativity, there is no detectable term-specific decline in how dissertations frame *American*. The apparent negative trend in raw plots reflects genre-wide rhetorical drift rather than targeted negative framing of the United States. This finding should not be cited as evidence of anti-American sentiment in the dissertation corpus.

Result: university compositional test. Table C.4 reports the Pearson correlations between each university's structural output fixed effect and its geopolitical sentiment fixed effect.

Geo Term	r (Pearson)	N Universities
American	0.014	392
European	0.118	390
Western	-0.020	391

Notes: Pearson correlation between university-level log-count fixed effects and university-level sentiment fixed effects from M4. An $r \approx 0$ implies that which universities produce the most dissertations is orthogonal to their geopolitical sentiment level, ruling out the compositional explanation for aggregate sentiment trends. An $r < 0$ would indicate that high-output universities have more negative sentiment, supporting the compositional concern.

Table C.4 Cross-Institutional Correlation: Structural Output vs. Geopolitical Sentiment Fixed Effects.

The correlations are $r = 0.014$ (American), $r = 0.118$ (European), and $r = -0.020$ (Western) — all negligible. The term with the strongest time trend (Western) shows the nearest-to-zero correlation ($r = -0.020$): the identity of high-output universities provides essentially no information about their geopolitical sentiment level. The *European* correlation ($r = 0.118$), while somewhat larger, points *positive* — high-output institutions are on average *less* negative toward *European* terms, the opposite of what the compositional explanation would predict. The compositional concern is therefore ruled out: aggregate geopolitical sentiment trends are not driven by shifts in which universities dominate dissertation production.

As a further diagnostic, the common within-university log-count growth rate is $\hat{\beta} = 0.034$ per year (SE $= 0.001$), confirming that the corpus was expanding at 3.4% annually during the period in which the sentiment trends develop. The cross-institutional SD of university sentiment fixed effects ranges from 0.052 (*American*) to 0.081 (*European*), confirming substantial institutional heterogeneity in geopolitical framing. The fact that this heterogeneity is uncorrelated with output volume means it cannot generate time trends through compositional channels.

Table C.5 reports the full university-level fixed effect estimates for all three geopolitical terms, ranked from most to least negative. The institutions with the most negative structural sentiment are dominated by smaller health-sciences schools and regional universities rather than the elite research universities that produce the largest share of dissertations — fully consistent with the near-zero output–sentiment correlations and further undermining the compositional story.

Table C.5 Geopolitical Sentiment: Top and Bottom 10 Institutions

Variable	University	FE Estimate
American Top 10 (most negative)		
	University of New Haven	-0.2859
	Rutgers, School of Health	-0.2825
	Herman M. Finch University	-0.2656
	Rutgers, UMDNJ	-0.2556
	Case Western (Health)	-0.2360
	William Carey University	-0.2068
	Tennessee Tech University	-0.1719
	Hahnemann University	-0.1655
	NYU Global Public Health	-0.1425
	Providence College	-0.1373
American Top 10 (most positive)		
	Benedictine University	0.1774
	UT School of Nursing	0.1343

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Table C.5 – continued from previous page

Variable	University	FE Estimate
	Polytechnic Inst. of NYU	0.1323
	University of the Rockies	0.1303
	John Paul II Institute	0.1285
	Lancaster Bible College	0.1144
	College of Notre Dame	0.1113
	Concordia University Chicago	0.1058
	Widener University Nursing	0.0993
	Ave Maria University	0.0943
European Top 10 (most negative)		
	UT Rio Grande Valley	-0.3867
	Rutgers, UMDNJ	-0.3861
	UC San Diego and Irvine	-0.2721
	Univ. of the Sciences, Phila.	-0.2709
	University of New Haven	-0.2638
	Marywood University	-0.2552
	East Tennessee State Univ.	-0.2545
	Golden Gate Seminary	-0.2519
	Northwest Nazarene Univ.	-0.2473
	University of the Pacific	-0.2295
European Top 10 (most positive)		
	Bellevue University	0.6218
	Annenberg Research Inst.	0.3258
	East Texas State University	0.2614
	Loyola College in Maryland	0.1942
	Case Western (Health)	0.1866
	Mass. College of Pharmacy	0.1845
	Georgia State Univ. (Arts)	0.1761
	Lancaster Bible College	0.1727
	University of Central Arkansas	0.1641
	Georgia Health Sciences	0.1512
Western Top 10 (most negative)		
	Rutgers, UMDNJ	-0.4403
	Univ. of Arkansas, Little Rock	-0.3792
	Mass. College of Pharmacy	-0.3699
	UT Health Science Center	-0.2803
	Pace University	-0.2762
	University of New Haven	-0.2666
	Univ. of the Sciences, Phila.	-0.2294
	Loyola University Maryland	-0.2015
	Rush University	-0.1958

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Table C.5 – continued from previous page

Variable	University	FE Estimate
	Providence College	-0.1945
Western Top 10 (most positive)		
	University of the Rockies	0.2941
	University of Southern Maine	0.2784
	College of Notre Dame	0.2753
	Johnson University	0.2527
	Duquesne Univ. Nursing	0.2110
	University of Alaska Anchorage	0.2097
	Touro University Int.	0.1955
	East Tennessee State Univ.	0.1882
	John Paul II Institute	0.1869
	Embry-Riddle Aeronautical	0.1745

Summary of Robustness Checks

Robustness Summary

1. **RC-1 — Corpus trends replicate against independent federal data.** NCES data confirm both the absolute Humanities doctorate decline and the proportional shift away from Humanities toward Social Sciences (41%→35% share, 1970–2016). The corpus post-2015 contraction exceeds the external data modestly, explained by ProQuest registration lags and elite-institution over-representation — measurement features that affect magnitude but not direction. The core disciplinary trends are not database artifacts.

2. **RC-2 — Thematic count trends are not compositional artifacts; they are stronger than the raw data suggest.** Field and university fixed effects amplify rather than attenuate growth in identity, power, and evaluative vocabulary (M4 mean $|\beta|$ three- to five-fold larger than M1). The mechanism is suppression by expanding quantitative social science representation. Within-discipline growth is therefore conservative rather than overstated.

3. **RC-3 — Sentiment trends are broadly distributed, not subgroup-driven.** For seven of nine sentiment variables, M1 and M4 coefficients are nearly identical and R^2 values remain low, confirming that shifts are pervasive across fields and institutions. The post-2020 `sentiment_subversive` spike is confirmed as genuine; the `sentiment_history` decline is real but modestly amplified by composition.

4. **RC-4 — Geopolitical sentiment results require differentiated interpretation.**
   - *Western*: fully robust across M1, M4, M5 (-0.031 to -0.038); term-specific and institutionally pervasive. **Strong language warranted.**
   - *European*: attenuates to statistical insignificance under M5 (-0.010, SE $= 0.019$). **Hedged language warranted.**
   - *American*: reverses sign under M5 ($+0.006$); raw trend reflects genre-wide drift. **Should not be cited as targeted negative framing.**
   - *Compositional*: output-volume and sentiment fixed effects uncorrelated ($|r| \leq 0.12$); high-output universities not systematically more negative.