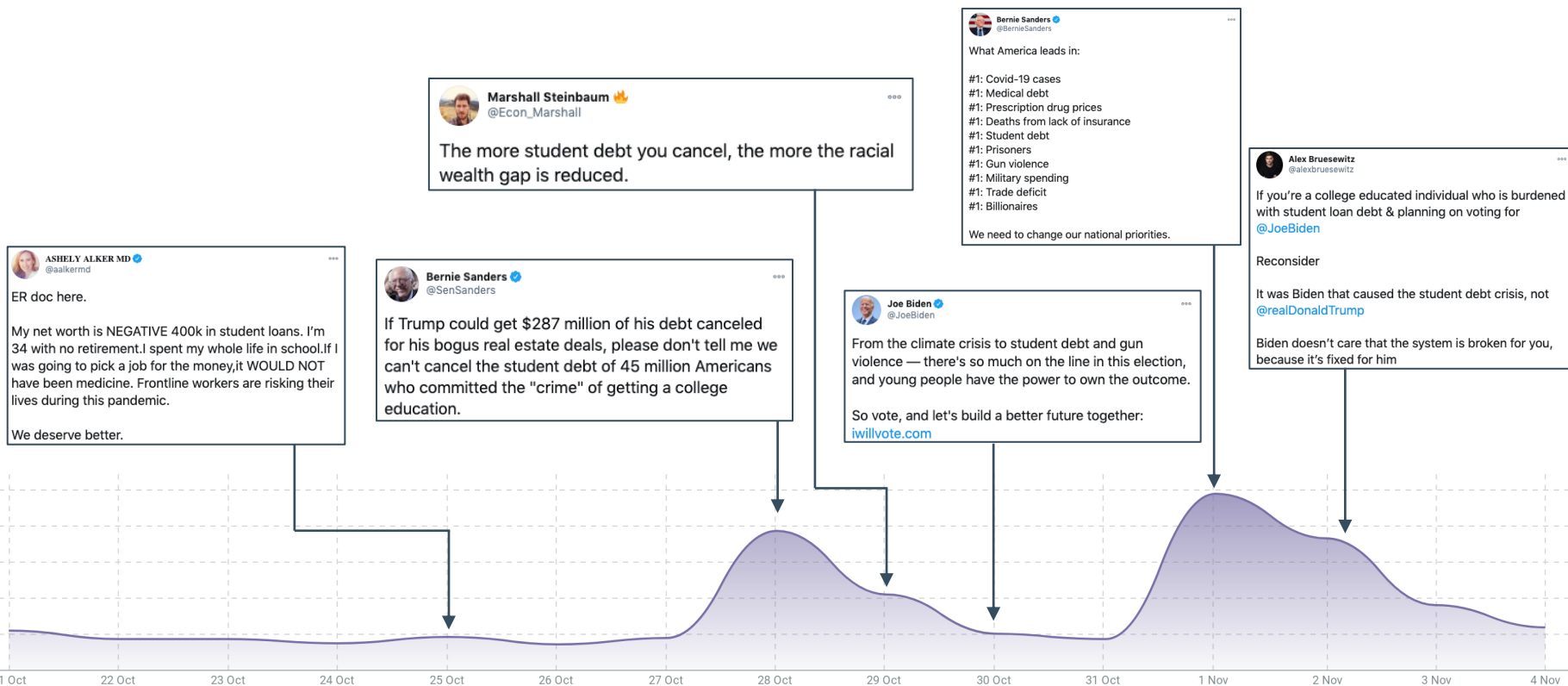


SAMPLE SOCIAL LISTENING REPORT: STUDENT DEBT

10/21 – 11/04



SOCIAL LANDSCAPE OVER TIME



137.6 thousand Mentions

NET SENTIMENT

*Breakdown of
posts with an
identifiable
sentiment*

Sentiment	Percentage
Positive	16%
Negative	84%

#ForgiveStudentDebt
#Vote2020
#TeamBidenHarris
#VOTE
#CancelStudentDebt

@BernieSanders/@SenSanders – 2 posts, 238.5K engagements
@JoeBiden – 1 posts, 154.7K engagements
@MarkRuffalo – 2 posts, 13.9M potential reach

[illegible]

- During the last two weeks, the presidential election featured prominently in social conversations as both [left](#) and [right](#) leaning users took to Twitter to use the student debt crisis to advocate for their respective candidates. **As he has been for several years, Sen. Bernie Sanders was a leading influencer in the conversation.** He shared two posts, [one](#) roundly criticizing America for its student debt, COVID-19 cases, and other challenges and [one](#) arguing explicitly for cancelling student debt.
- The tone of the conversation was overwhelmingly negative as [users shared their anger](#) over the lack of government action on student debt. **Notably, posts mentioning former Vice President Joe Biden were typically positive.**

- It will be important to monitor how a Biden win could change the tone of this conversation in the coming months.
- Very few of the posts discussed practical implications of debt cancellation such as large tax increases to cover costs, fairness for working class taxpayers, tuition spikes, tax implications for beneficiaries and windfalls for wealthy borrowers.
- Influencers typically dominate mentions, but **everyday Americans are also driving this topic**. Over 95% of posts in the last two weeks came from users with fewer than 10,000 followers. Users who shared [personal stories](#) often garnered thousands of engagements.

IMPLICATIONS

Canceling student debt was not part of Joe Biden's original platform. He adopted the position only after Senators Sanders and Elizabeth Warren had exited the race. **The timing suggests that his support may have been driven by a desire to shore up the left wing of the Democratic party.**

As with any new presidential administration, student debt cancellation will be one of many campaign promises that will be tested in the coming months. While the grassroots nature of support might be encouraging in some respects, this topic received only moderate social coverage – 137.6K posts in 14 days compared to 597.8K posts related to universal healthcare. **The lack of a unified and powerful voice, in addition to the absence of active support from well-heeled interest groups will likely make this an uphill battle for activists.**

