

DIVERSITY AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: THE STATE OF CAMPUS OPINION

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Introduction

In December 2000, a U.S. District Court judge ruled that the University of Michigan could provide preference in admission policies to minority students. He relied partly on expert social science testimony, which concluded that such policies advance racial and ethnic diversity and improve the education of all students, not just the minority students admitted under the policy.¹ Shortly thereafter, however, another District Court ruled that preferences by the University of Michigan law school, designed to achieve the same goal, did not pass Constitutional muster.² In his decision, the judge accepted some “facts” about the possible beneficial consequences of diversity, but he expressed doubt as to whether such facts “trumped” constitutional notions of equal protection. He was later overruled.

It is unclear how much of a role social science evidence will play in the forthcoming Supreme Court decision that is expected to address these inconsistencies.³ However, key philanthropic organizations such as the Ford Foundation, believing that such evidence will play some role, are continuing to finance major survey research projects exploring the possible benefits of diversity for all students in colleges and universities.⁴

Supporters of diversity-based admissions policies have also relied upon testimonials contained in amicus briefs submitted by business and educational groups, which argue for the importance of increasing diversity through preferential hiring and admissions. A case has to be made to justify the use of racial, ethnic, or other criteria for admission to a selective college before courts, which view any racial criteria for admission with great suspicion. Such reliance sets a heavy burden of proof. Therefore, those arguing the case for preferential treatment must demonstrate a significant public need for the use of racial criteria.⁵ In short, they must demonstrate that all or at least most students benefit from the use of such criteria.

Much of the evidence that addresses this requirement relies on the reported attitudes, perceptions, and memories of students, faculty, and administrators with regard to the usefulness or effectiveness of diversity programs. Surveys of one or more of the three university constituencies have

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been conducted at individual schools and occasionally in national polls.⁶ In order to advance this debate, we included some items about attitudes relevant to campus diversity in a large-scale survey that was administered to representative samples of students, faculty, and administrators in the United States and Canada. To our knowledge this is the first representative cross-national survey of all three groups, which permits direct comparisons of their attitudes toward affirmative action and diversity. In the body of this article we will first outline the historical and legal context of this debate, showing how social science data gradually became a major factor in it. Then we will describe the procedures and findings of our survey, and discuss their implications for the current debate.

The Issues

Conceptual and legal precursors of affirmative action legislation can be found in two seminal court cases during the 1950s.⁷ In the famous 1954 case, *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Court ruled that state statutes segregating students by race were unconstitutional and mandated all public schools to remove discriminatory policies.⁸ Two years later, in *Florida ex rel. Hawkins v. Board of Control*, the Court determined that the *Brown* ruling also applied to higher education.⁹

However, progress in desegregating education proved to be slow. Merely removing barriers to integration did not seem to be effective in fostering it. Thus, the federal government under Lyndon B. Johnson undertook a more proactive position. In 1964, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act gave the federal government the authority to withhold funding from institutions of higher education that discriminated on the basis of ethnicity.¹⁰ The term “affirmative action” itself came to the fore in an executive order issued by Kennedy in 1961 and expanded by Lyndon Johnson in 1965.

The Johnson administration’s policy required that all agencies involved in government contracts “take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed . . . without regard to their race, creed, color or national origin.”¹¹ Affirmative action was eventually applied to institutions of higher education as well. By the 1970s, federal administrators began to require universities to include reports of student enrollment as part of their affirmative action plans.¹²

Affirmative action has henceforth evolved to entail the concepts of “diversity” and “multiculturalism.” On American college campuses today, the concepts remain contentious, but the terms of the debate are not always clearly defined. Affirmative action and diversity or multiculturalism are often treated as equivalents and are intertwined.¹³ But they do not carry the same meaning. To complicate matters, the meaning of affirmative action itself has changed. The original definition is still employed, but the term is now often used in ways that do not always correspond with the intentions of those who first defined it.

Initially, affirmative action policies were primarily designed to assist African-Americans who not only had suffered from serious discrimination over a very

long period of time but whose ancestors, taken from their homelands by force, also had been enslaved. By this definition affirmative action is primarily a moral issue.¹⁴

Even so, the practical implications of following the policy are by no means clear. The term is used to justify policies as varied as ending discrimination against blacks; reaching out to identify African-Americans who meet standards for admission to elite universities but who have been ignored; and straightforward racial preferences, timetables, and/or quotas. Reaching out and ending discrimination were emphasized in initial discussions of affirmative action. However, as early as the Nixon administration's "Philadelphia Plan" (and even in some initiatives supported by Lyndon Johnson), timetables, goals, and quotas came into play.¹⁵

Survey data also reveal considerable confusion about the term "affirmative action." Some respondents understand it as ensuring fairness or reaching out to minorities. However, others are persuaded that it calls for preferences. Thus, when asked if they support affirmative action, majorities of Americans respond positively. But when the same respondents are asked if they support quotas or timetables or hiring less qualified people for jobs to make up for past injustices, large majorities of Americans express their opposition. Even majorities (though smaller ones) of African-Americans often oppose such policies. A similar pattern of results emerges from surveys of students and academics.¹⁶ A 1998 National Opinion Research poll found that 85 percent of respondents are opposed to hiring preferences, even when such policies were placed in the context of acknowledged previous discrimination.¹⁷

The justification of timetables or quotas springs from the belief that, without such mechanisms, people who wish to will find ways to continue to discriminate against blacks despite the law. To take individual legal action against such persons is a long and cumbersome procedure. Consequently, it is argued that the only way to ensure fairness for blacks is some sort of quota system, generally based on estimates of the proportion of African-Americans who would be hired or admitted to college if fair policies are followed. So important has this perception become that many civil rights activists regard those who support hiring or admissions policies based on criteria for assessing individual merit as merely sophisticated bigots.¹⁸ They believe that so-called "merit" bases for hiring or admission are merely subterfuges.

The landmark court case, *Regents of California v. Bakke*, re-framed much of the affirmative action discussion.¹⁹ Bakke, a white man, sued the University of California for reverse discrimination after he was rejected for admission to the medical school at the U.C.-Davis campus in 1978. He won the case and was admitted.²⁰ After the Supreme Court's decision, "diversity" gradually came to supplement affirmative action as a basis for special admissions or hiring policies, (although, as already noted, the terms are often used interchangeably). The argument, based on Justice Powell's opinion in the Bakke case, is

that the university should be allowed to hire or admit diverse groups of persons in order that Americans learn to deal effectively with an increasingly varied nation and world.

Educational institutions now defend affirmative action or diversity programs by attempting to demonstrate their benefits for the education of all students. For evidence they turn to social science research.²¹ Based on such studies they argue that diversity itself contributes to positive educational outcomes for students of all racial and ethnic origins.²² But there are key differences between diversity and affirmative action with regard to special hiring and admissions policies. If affirmative action addresses a moral question, diversity can be construed as a largely pragmatic approach. The issue in the latter case is not one of making up for past injustice.

In theory, colleges and universities will seek out all under-represented ethnic or racial groups, where under-represented tends to mean less than a group's proportion in the relevant population. In California, for example, Latinos and blacks were included among those "people of color" admitted to the California system under diversity programs, whereas Asian Americans were not.²³ In general the presence of Asian Americans in elite American colleges and universities (e.g., 34 percent of the undergraduate student body at Stanford, 25 percent at Columbia, 18 percent at Harvard, and 17 percent at Yale) tends to be discounted.²⁴ But students of Asian background surely add to diversity.

In agreeing to focus on diversity claims, African-Americans face a real dilemma. Affirmative action concerns support their demands more than that of any other group in American society with the possible exception of indigenous Americans. But vigorously advocating such claims potentially deprives African-Americans of allies among Hispanic groups who lack the same historically-based moral standing. Diversity criteria are attractive in the strategic sense that they increase the number of possible allies among other people of color. On the other hand, invoking diversity criteria implies that the legitimacy of black claims to preference is no greater than that of other racial or ethnic minorities.

Nonetheless, recent cases suggest that diversity issues will dominate court proceedings. The argument is not only that black and Latino students will bring different and complementary perspectives to universities, but also that their admission to universities will also make non-Hispanic whites realize that blacks and Latinos are diverse rather than monolithic groups in their opinions and attitudes.

Multiculturalism is clearly tied to diversity claims. It is often associated with a desire to broaden perspectives by the study of other cultures, including those of other countries as well as racial and ethnic groups. However, it is now also associated with the demand for college courses that examine issues of groups defined as marginal in the United States. Such groups include women, blacks, Hispanics, as well as gays, lesbians, and transsexuals. The

argument is that all these groups represent distinct cultures that are worthy of study and contribute to a fuller understanding of social life.

Supporters of policies designed to increase diversity relied on social science evidence and/or expert testimony that sought to demonstrate that such policies benefited most, if not all, students. Those making the case for diversity have also relied on widespread public expressions of support for ethnically and racially sensitive hiring and admission programs by college staff and national university organizations. In *Gratz v. Bollinger*, the Court discounted the plaintiff's argument that the evidence introduced could not override Fourteenth Amendment constitutional guarantees. It found the evidence of the value of diversity in admissions policies strong enough to permit Michigan's revised admissions program to pass constitutional muster.²⁵

The contention accepted by the District Court is that the mere presence of racial and ethnic diversity in the undergraduate student body improves the quality of education. This is true even if those students admitted under affirmative action or diversity criteria are not quite comparable to those admitted under "merit" criteria. In *The Shape of the River*, Bowen and Bok, for example, argue that increasing the diversity of American elites is more important than maintaining a supposed meritocracy based on paper and pencil tests.

However, the decision in *Gratz v. Bollinger* was an exception to the general trend in the past decade. Neither the courts nor the public have seemed favorably disposed toward either affirmative action or diversity policies in college admissions or hiring. Some programs were overturned by voters in referenda, and the courts started to reject both affirmative action and diversity as grounds for special treatment.²⁶

When faced with negative court decisions and referenda, some states have adopted admissions policies designed to ensure substantial enrollment by black and Latino students without relying on explicitly racial or ethnic admissions criteria. In such states as Texas, Florida, and California, these policies include reducing reliance on, or replacing, standardized tests like the SAT, and/or admitting a certain percentage of students who are in the top tier of their high school graduating class. Given the relative racial segregation of public schools, such policies ensure the admission of black and Hispanic students who otherwise might not have been accepted by flagship state universities. Similar policies are being adopted by some private colleges and universities.²⁷ But future efforts will be contingent upon the Supreme Court's decision. And in making their decisions, the justices will consider the survey data on campus attitudes.

The Survey

In an effort to shed new light on attitudes toward diversity on college campuses, we analyzed results from our cross-national survey of student, faculty, and administrators at colleges and universities in the United States and Canada. The survey was conducted for the authors in 1999 by the survey research firm

of Angus Reid. The analysis in this paper is limited to data from the United States sample. The sample included a total of 140 universities and colleges, stratified by institution type according to the Carnegie classifications of Doctoral, Comprehensive, and Liberal Arts schools. Within strata, the schools were randomly selected from the entire universe of qualified institutions with probability of selection proportional to size (faculty and student body combined). Once the initial sampling of schools was drawn, it was examined to ensure representativeness on the key variables of region, quality, and size, with some substitutions made at that time to enhance the school samples' profile on these characteristics.

For both the faculty and student surveys, given that the school selection was proportional to size, the sampling plan called for a roughly equal number of interviews from each school. For the administrators, with their much smaller universe, all eligible targets from all selected schools were placed in the sampling pool. The resulting sample totaled 4,083, consisting of 1,643 students, 1,632 faculty, and 808 administrators. All data collection was conducted by the Angus Reid Group using the firm's network of central location Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) facilities. Interviewing was conducted between 4 March and 3 May 1999. Response rates among those contacted were 53 percent for the student sample, 72 percent for faculty, and 70 percent for administrators. Historically black colleges were excluded from the sample used for the analysis presented in this paper.

With directly comparable data from the three components of the university community, it is possible to explore the scope and degree of agreement and disagreement within universities.

Most surveys of the academy indicate that students, faculty, and administrators typically wish to increase the diversity of the student body, the faculty, and the administration, at least in principle.²⁸ Our survey addressed several facets of campus opinion with regard to diversity issues. While there was substantial agreement among students, faculty, and administrators on most issues, there were also some important differences. There is widespread support for offering multicultural courses on American campuses, but not for requiring them. Only one out of six (Table 1) American students (16 percent) believes that courses about the experience of minorities should be required, but a much larger group, 38 percent, believe that such courses should be encouraged. Hardly anyone thinks that such courses should not be offered. Support for encouraging multicultural course offerings is even higher among faculty and senior administrators. Seventeen percent of faculty and administrators believe such courses should be required, and 42 percent of faculty and 46 percent of administrators believe they should be encouraged.

In general there is widespread endorsement of the ongoing discourse on minority issues at colleges and universities, and of the treatment of minorities

Table 1
Support for Course Diversity

| Thinking about courses on the experience of racial minorities. For undergraduates, should these be ... (3.4c) | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| Standards | Fac % | Stu % | Adm % |
| Required | 16.9 | 15.9 | 17.4 |
| Encouraged | 42.4 | 37.5 | 46.4 |
| Made Available | 38.9 | 45.3 | 34.8 |
| Not Offered | 1.5 | 1.2 | 0.7 |
| (Dk/Ns) | 0.3 | 0.0 | 0.7 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| N | 1594 | 1569 | 789 |

Source: 1999 North American Academic Study. Note: Results are for the U.S. only. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Higher mean values indicate more responses towards "Not Offered."

Table 2
Attention to Minority Issues

| This university pays too much attention to minority issues. (11.1e) | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|
| | Fac % | Stu % | Adm % |
| Strongly Agree | 1.9% | 3.6% | 0.3% |
| Moderately Agree | 10.3 | 14.2 | 6.7 |
| Moderately Disagree | 45.1 | 47.9 | 44.6 |
| Strongly Disagree | 42.0 | 33.8 | 48.4 |
| (Dk/Ns) | 0.7 | 0.5 | 0.0 |
| Total Agree | 12.2 | 17.8 | 7.0 |
| Total Disagree | 87.2 | 81.7 | 93.0 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Respondents | 1594 | 1569 | 789 |

Source: 1999 North American Academic Study. Note: Results are for the U.S. only. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Respondents from historically Black colleges have been excluded.

on campus. Most members of the university community do not believe an inordinate amount of attention is invested in diversity issues. Over 80 percent of faculty, students, and administrators either moderately or strongly disagreed with the statement: "This university pays too much attention to minority issues" (Table 2). Students deviate slightly from the other groups, with 18 percent agreeing there is too much attention paid to minority issues, compared to 12 percent among faculty, and 7 percent among administrators.

This commitment to racial discourse apparently does not stem from widespread concern over racism on campus. When faculty, students, and administrators were asked, "And do you think minority students are treated better, worse or about the same as white students at your university?," over 70 percent

Table 3
Treatment of Minorities and Majorities

| | Do you think minority faculty are treated better, worse, or about the same as white faculty at your university (college)? (10.6a) | | | And do you think minority students are treated better, worse or about the same as white students at your university (college)? (10.6b) | | |
|---------|---|-------|-------|--|-------|-------|
| | Faculty % | Stu % | Adm % | Faculty % | Stu % | Adm % |
| Better | 11.6% | - | 8.3% | 7.4% | 5.8% | 6.2% |
| Same | 72.4 | - | 77.4 | 73.0 | 79.3 | 76.4 |
| Worse | 12.4 | - | 12.7 | 18.0 | 14.1 | 16.6 |
| (Dk/Ns) | 3.1 | - | 1.0 | 1.0 | 0.2 | 0.6 |
| Total | 100.0 | - | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |

| | From the following four groups, who do you think faces the toughest time getting hired for a faculty position at the average university? (10.7) | |
|-------------------|---|-------|
| | Fac % | Adm % |
| White females | 10.1% | 12.2% |
| Minority females | 18.6 | 17.4 |
| Minority males | 15.0 | 18.1 |
| White males | 43.3 | 36.6 |
| No diff. (vlntrd) | 5.5 | 6.1 |
| (Dk/Ns) | 7.6 | 9.6 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Respondents | 1594 | 789 |

of all respondents answered “the same.” However, among those who do believe that minorities are treated differently, the proportion who believe they are treated worse than whites is over twice as great as the number who see their treatment as better: faculty, 18 percent Worse vs. 7 percent Better; students, 14 percent Worse vs. 6 percent Better; and administrators, 17 percent Worse vs. 6 percent Better.

The results were similar when faculty and administrators were asked, “Do you think minority faculty are treated better, worse or about the same as white faculty at your university (college)?” Faculty and administrators are inclined to believe that minority faculty are treated the same as whites (Table 3): 72 and 77 percent, respectively (students were not asked this question).

Indeed, a plurality believes that it is white males who have the most difficult time becoming a member of the university faculty. Faculty and administrators were asked, “From the following four groups (White females, Minority females, Minority males, and White males), who do you think faces the toughest time getting hired for a faculty position at the average university?” A plurality of both groups (Table 3) feel that it would be hardest for a white male to become a member of the faculty (43 percent of faculty and 37 percent of administrators, respectively). By contrast, white females were the least likely to be chosen as the group having a hard time becoming faculty: 10 and 12 percent, respectively. Minority females (19 and 17 percent, respectively) and minority males (15 percent of faculty and 18 percent of administrators, respectively) were in between.

Merging the data by ethnicity, the proportion who feel that it is hardest for whites to find a faculty position outweighed those who see more difficulty for minorities by 53 to 34 percent of faculty respondents, and 49 to 36 percent of administrators. Similarly, when the data were merged by gender, we found that males were selected as having the more difficult time, by about a two to one margin—58 to 29 percent of faculty and 55 to 30 percent of administrators, respectively.

Taken together, these findings suggest that most university staff members did not subscribe to the notion of white male hegemony in the present-day professoriate. Most respondents also contested the notion that merit- as opposed to race-based hiring policies favored white applicants. Approximately two-thirds of all faculty, students, and administrators disagreed with the statement, “Traditional standards of merit for jobs and school admission are basically affirmative action for white males” (Table 4).

Beyond tapping the perceptions of respondents about minority issues, we examined the more highly contested concerns as to what measures colleges and universities should take in order to further campus diversity. On these matters, a major difference in opinion separates students from staff when the prescriptions for ensuring diversity involve admissions and hiring standards. In response to the statement, “No one should be given special preference in

Table 4
Merit and Objectivity

| Traditional standards of merit for jobs and school admission are basically affirmative action for white males. (13.1a) | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|
| United States | | | |
| | Fac % | Stu % | Adm % |
| Strongly Agree | 6.6 | 4.7 | 3.5 |
| Somewhat Agree | 24.0 | 29.0 | 20.1 |
| Somewhat Disagree | 36.7 | 42.5 | 42.8 |
| Strongly Disagree | 30.5 | 22.3 | 29.4 |
| (Dk/Ns) | 2.2 | 1.6 | 4.2 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Total Agree | 30.6 | 33.7 | 23.6 |
| Total Disagree | 67.2 | 64.8 | 72.2 |

Source: 1999 North American Academic Study. Note: Results are for the U.S. only. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Table 5
Admissions and Jobs

| No one should be given special preference in jobs or college admissions on the basis of their gender or race. (11.1f) | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|
| | Fac % | Stu % | Adm % |
| Strongly Agree | 34.2% | 66.7% | 26.2% |
| Moderately Agree | 21.3 | 18.7 | 21.5 |
| Moderately Disagree | 32.6 | 10.0 | 41.4 |
| Strongly Disagree | 11.1 | 4.6 | 10.0 |
| (Dk/Ns) | 0.8 | 0.1 | 1.0 |
| Total Agree | 55.5 | 85.4 | 47.7 |
| Total Disagree | 43.7 | 14.5 | 51.4 |
| Total | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |
| Respondents | 1594 | 1569 | 789 |

Source: 1999 North American Academic Study. Note: Results are for the U.S. only. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Respondents from historically Black colleges have been excluded.

jobs or college admissions on the basis of their gender or race,” two-thirds (66.7 percent) of the students strongly agree, compared to only one-third of the faculty (34 percent) and one-quarter (26 percent) of the administrators (Table 5). An overwhelming 85 percent of students agree with the statement either strongly or moderately, as compared to a slight majority (56 percent) of the faculty and only a minority (48 percent) of administrators.

Similar fault lines appeared on policies concerning admission standards and minority students, although the differences among groups were not as great. Seventy-five percent of the students disagreed with the statement (Table 6): “More minority group undergraduates should be admitted here even if it means relaxing standards.” Lower percentages (though still majorities) of faculty (57 percent) and administrators (55 percent) joined the students in disagreeing. On the issue of easing standards if necessary to appoint minority faculty, there was more agreement. Eighty-one percent of faculty, 76 percent of students, and 83 percent of administrators disagreed with the statement: “The normal academic requirements should be relaxed in appointing members of minority groups to the faculty here.”

Thus, majorities of all three groups oppose lowering standards to increase minority representation on campus. Members of the university staff are more opposed than are students to lowering standards for faculty. But students consistently oppose the lowering of standards for minority students as well as faculty, while the faculty and administrators express greater reservations when the policy will affect the composition of the faculty. However, most members of the three groups we studied do not believe that weighted criteria will have a substantial impact on academic quality. In response to the two statements, “What impact, if any, do you think special admissions policies for minority students have on academic standards?” and “What impact, if any, do you think special hiring policies for minority faculty have on academic standards?”, the majority (53 percent or more of each of the three groups) assert that there is “no real impact” (Table 6).

On the other hand, among those who believe that there is an impact on academic standards, the greater proportion (24 to 35 percent) expresses the belief that such policies lower them, as opposed to only 2 to 13 percent who maintain that standards will be raised by such policies.

Conclusion

On the whole, the state of American campus opinion evinces a relative consensus in regard to some diversity issues, such as the attention that should be given to minority concerns and the desirability of offering (but not requiring) courses on the study of racial or ethnic groups other than their own. However, opinion on using preferential policies to achieve greater diversity is divided between students, on the one hand, and university staff on the other. Reflecting an apparent difference in core beliefs, students are more likely to oppose

Table 6
Attitudes toward Affirmative Action and Its Consequences

| | More minority group under- graduates should be admitted here even if it means relaxing standards. (10.1) | | | The normal academic requirements should be relaxed in appointing members of minority groups to the faculty here. (10.2) | | |
|-------------------|--|----------|----------|---|----------|----------|
| | United States | | | United States | | |
| | Fac % | Stu % | Adm % | Fac % | Stu % | Adm % |
| Strongly Agree | 9.4 | 7.1 | 7.6 | 2.5 | 6.6 | 1.2% |
| Agree w/ Rsrv. | 31.7 | 17.7 | 35.8 | 15.9 | 17.0 | 15.8 |
| Disagree w/ Rsrv | 31.1 | 31.7 | 33.5 | 32.0 | 29.6 | 34.5 |
| Strongly Disagree | 25.8 | 42.8 | 21.3 | 48.6 | 46.3 | 47.9 |
| (Dk/Ns) | 2.0 | 0.7 | 1.8 | 1.0 | 0.5 | 0.6 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 10 |
| Total Agree | 41.1 | 24.8 | 43.4 | 18.3 | 23.5 | 16.9 |
| Total Disagree | 57.0 | 74.5 | 54.8 | 80.6 | 75.9 | 82.4 |
| | What impact, if any, do you think special admissions policies for minority students have on academic standards? (10.3) | | | What impact, if any, do you think special hiring policies for minority faculty have on academic standards? (10.4) | | |
| | United States | | | United States | | |
| Standards | Fac % | Stu % | Adm % | Fac % | Stu % | Adm % |
| Much higher | 0.9% | 2.7% | 0.4% | 2.0% | 3.2% | 1.0% |
| A little higher | 2.1 | 7.3 | 1.6 | 4.1 | 9.5 | 2.6 |
| No real impact | 56.5 | 53.0 | 66.2 | 54.8 | 57.9 | 69.4 |
| A little lower | 30.2 | 27.8 | 24.9 | 28.2 | 21.8 | 20.3 |
| Much lower | 7.6 | 6.8 | 3.7 | 7.7 | 6.5 | 3.7 |
| (Dk/Ns) | 2.9 | 2.5 | 3.2 | 3.2 | 1.1 | 3.0 |
| Total | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Total higher | 2.9 | 10.0 | 1.9 | 6.1 | 12.7 | 3.6 |
| No real impact | 56.5 | 53.0 | 66.2 | 54.8 | 57.9 | 69.4 |
| Total lower | 37.8 | 34.6 | 28.6 | 35.9 | 28.3 | 24.0 |
| N | 1594 | 1569 | 789 | 1594 | 1569 | 789 |

such affirmative action policies in principle, whereas faculty and administrators show greater willingness to support them. A slight majority of administrators support special admissions criteria in some instances, whereas a solid majority of faculty members is opposed to them.

One finding belies the assumption on many campuses that university faculties are sanctuaries of white male privilege. Our respondents are most likely to believe that white males actually have the hardest time gaining entry. We cannot know whether this perception is a historical assessment or the result of contemporary affirmative action policies. Nonetheless, what is uncontested is that members of the university do not believe that the customary putative meritocratic approaches to hiring and admissions currently favor white males. Thus, it should not be surprising to find that most members of the academic community prefer traditional (non-preferential) hiring practices.

Overall, there is a tendency on campus to reject a system of preferences, which is especially strong among students. While majorities believe that such policies will not undermine academic standards, a significant minority believes that they will, and far fewer believe they will raise standards. Such views call into question some of the arguments presented by those who maintain that important benefits will flow from increasing diversity.²⁹

In sum, our results are perhaps more ambiguous and nuanced than much of the literature on diversity would predict. To be sure, most members of the academic community embrace discussion and learning opportunities with regard to racial diversity. However, they also eschew traditional affirmative action practices, if they are seen to result in lower academic standards. Students differ sharply from faculty and administrators in the extent of their reluctance to endorse the principle of using preferential policies to increase diversity. It is especially worrisome that a majority of teachers, administrators, and students believe that such policies have made no difference in the educational quality of the institution, and a significant minority believe that the policies have lowered academic standards. Few respondents in any of the three groups believe that standards have been raised as a result of current diversity policies.

Notes

1. *Gratz v. Bollinger*, 97-CV-75231-DT, 122 F. Supp. 2d 811, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, 2000.
2. *Grutter v. Bollinger*, Civil Action No. 97-CV-75928-DT, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, Southern Division, 2001.
3. On 2 December 2002, the Court announced it would hear both Michigan cases with a decision to be reached by June 2003. See Adam Liptak, "Diversity's Precarious Moorings," *New York Times*, 3 December 2002, The Nation section, 3.
4. "Powerful Groups and Figures Weigh In for U. of Michigan in Affirmative-Action Case," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 22 June 2001, 21.
5. For a recent review of the relevant literature, see Thomas E. Wood and Malcolm J. Sherman, *Is Campus Racial Diversity Correlated with Educational Benefits? Part IV of Race and Higher Education: Why Justice Powell's Diversity Rationale for Racial Preferences in Higher Education Must Be Rejected* (Princeton, NJ: National Association of Scholars, 4 April 2001).

See also "Powerful Groups and Figures," *Chronicle of Higher Education*; Peter Schmidt, "How Michigan Won Corporate Backing for Its Defense of Affirmative Action," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 24 November 2000, A21; and "Ford Foundation Moves to Promote Defense of Diversity," Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, News and Information Services, 12 July 2001.

6. For instance, Gary Orfield and Dean Whitla, "Diversity and Legal Education: Student Experiences in Leading Law Schools," Cambridge, MA: The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University, August 1999. <http://www.law.harvard.edu/groups/...rights/publications/lawsurvey.html>.
7. William T. Trent, "Student Affirmative Action in Higher Education: Addressing Underrepresentation," in *The Racial Crisis in American Higher Education*, ed. Philip G. Altbach and Kofi Lomotey (New York: State University of New York Press, 1991).
8. *Brown v. Board of Education*, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).
9. *Florida ex rel. Hawkins v Board of Control*, No. 624, Supreme Court of The United States, 350 U.S. 413; 76 S. Ct. 464; 100 L. Ed. 486; 1956 U.S. Lexis 1290, 12 March 1956.
10. Trent, "Student Affirmative Action in Higher Education."
11. William G. Tierney, "The Parameters of Affirmative Action: Equity and Excellence in the Academy," *Review of Educational Research*, 67, 2 (1997): 167.
12. William Bowen and Derek Bok, *The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).
13. It seems that diversity is increasingly and explicitly replacing affirmative action in the arguments for concerns about minority students, because it is clear that the present Court, at least, is unlikely to accept the constitutionality of affirmative action initiatives. The University of Michigan has made diversity the centerpiece of its argument before the courts.
14. In *We Are All Multiculturalists Now* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), Nathan Glazer reports that he now supports affirmative action for African-Americans. Though he was for many years a strong and highly regarded critic of preferential policies [see his *Affirmative Discrimination* (New York: Basic Books, 1975)], he has changed his mind because his expectation that African-Americans would integrate, much as have Italians and Jews, has not come to pass and Glazer believes that new policies are required. While Glazer argues that the nation owes a particular moral debt to African-Americans, he does not support affirmative action for Latinos, discrimination against whom is more comparable to experiences of newly arriving Jews or Italians than to the black experience in America. Indeed the situation of Latinos is probably better than it was for Italians, Irish, or Jews, given the fact that the great majority immigrated at a time when civil rights laws were fully in place.

Rhetorically, at least, it is considered wrong to discriminate, and there is also available a wide range of social services that did not exist for earlier generations of immigrants. See Seymour Martin Lipset, "Affirmative Action and the American Creed," *Wilson Quarterly*, 16 (Winter 1992): 52-62.

15. Stephan Thernstrom and Abigail Thernstrom, *America in Black and White: One Nation, Indivisible* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997).
16. See Lipset, "Affirmative Action and the American Creed"; Paul M. Sniderman and Edward G. Carmines, *Reaching Beyond Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997); Civil Rights Org., "A Majority of Americans Support Affirmative Action Programs for Women and People of Color," June 1997, http://www.civilrights.org/policy_and_legislation/pl_issues/affirmative_action/background/majority_support.html; Gallup Organization, *Race Relations*, 9-12 March 2001, <http://www.gallup.com/poll/indicators/indrace.asp>; Paul M. Sniderman and Thomas Piazza, *The Scar of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University, 1993); Thernstrom and Thernstrom, *America in Black and White*; Frederick R. Lynch, *Invisible Victims: White Males and the Crisis of Affirmative Action* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989); Charlotte Steeh and Maria Krysan, "Affirmative Action and the Public, 1970-1995 (The Polls-Trends)" *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 60, 1 (1996): 128-158; and Thomas E.

- Wood and Malcolm J. Sherman, *Is Campus Racial Diversity Correlated with Educational Benefits?*
17. NORC 2001, *General Social Survey: Affirmative Action*, Men/Women benefit at expense of opposite sex, DISCAFFW, Question 516b <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/GSS/>
 18. James A. Banke, *Multiethnic Education: Theory and Practice*, Third Edition (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1994); Carl Rowan, *The Coming Race War in America: A Wake-Up Call* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1996); and Ellis Cose, *The Rage of a Privileged Class* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993).
 19. *Regents of University of California v. Bakke*, 438 U.S. 912, 98 S. Ct. 3140, No. 76-811, US Supreme Court, 1978.
 20. Tierney, "The Parameters of Affirmative Action."
 21. Such social science research might include: Bowen and Bok, *The Shape of the River*; "Deposition of Patricia Gurin, February 12, 1999 in the matter of: *Barbara Grutter v. Lee Bollinger, et al.*," Esquire Deposition Services, Ann Arbor, MI. Original File 021299PG.ASC, 90 pages, Min-U-Script® File ID: 1373710982; Gary Orfield and Michael Kurlaender, *Diversity Challenged* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University—Harvard Education Publishing Group, 2001); Orfield and Whitley, "Diversity and Legal Education"; Daryl Smith et al., "Diversity Works: The Emerging Picture of How Students Benefit—An Executive Summary," Featured Monograph from the AACU web page, 10 December 1997; and Wood and Sherman, *Is Campus Racial Diversity Correlated with Educational Benefits?*
 22. On the other hand, Arthur Levine (in "The Campus Divided, and Divided Again," *New York Times*, 11 June 2000, Section 4, 17) and Arthur Levine and Jeanette S. Cureton (in *When Hope and Fear Collide: A Portrait of Today's College Student* [San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1998]) paint a more negative picture. Multiculturalism and other factors have led to self-segregation and considerable tension. Furthermore, in "Do Facts Matter?" (*Jewish World Review*, 18 October 2001; <http://www.jewishworldreview.com/cols/sowell.html>), Thomas Sowell argues that black students, finding themselves in the lower quartile of students at the schools to which they have been admitted, react by seeing prejudice and rejecting "white" knowledge, an approach that has now been picked up by other groups. In whites a sense of guilt and doubt wrestles with a sense of perceived unfairness.
 23. Stephan Thernstrom, "Asian Americans vs. Multiculturalism," *Academic Questions* (Spring 1999): 34-39. Also, Martin Trow, "California After Racial Preferences," *Public Interest* (Spring 1999): 64.
 24. Thernstrom, "Asian Americans vs. Multiculturalism."
 25. As already noted, late in 2000, a U.S. District Court decision (*Gratz v. Bollinger*) did permit the University of Michigan to use diversity claims as a rationale for differential admissions policies based on race and ethnicity.
 26. See Bowen and Bok, *The Shape of the River*; Levine and Cureton, *When Hope and Fear Collide*; Thernstrom and Thernstrom, *America in Black and White*; Trow, "California After Racial Preferences"; and Wood and Sherman, *Is Campus Racial Diversity Correlated with Educational Benefits?*
 27. Marcia Yablon, "Test Flight," *New Republic*, 30 October 2000, 24.
 28. For instance, Zogby International, *Report on Academic Life*; Levine and Cureton, *When Hope and Fear Collide*; and Orfield and Whitley, "Diversity and Legal Education."
 29. We deal with the question in more detail, which includes subjecting additional survey items to a multivariate data analysis, in Rothman et al., "Does Diversity Improve Educational Quality?," *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, Spring 2003, in press.