Adopted: June 9, 1998

ACADEMIC SENATE
Of
CALIFORNIA POLYTECHNIC STATE UNIVERSITY
San Luis Obispo, CA

AS-505-98/DTF
RESOLUTION ON
THE ACADEMIC VALVE OF DIVERSITY

WHEREAS, Cal Poly has stated its commitment to diversity in the *University Strategic Plan* and in the *Commitment to Visionary Pragmatism;* and

WHEREAS, The CSU's *Mission Statement* expresses the institution's commitment to "educational excellence for a diverse society"; and

WHEREAS, The commitment to diversity is reflected in both the *Academic Senate CSU Report on the Meaning of the Baccalaureate Education in the CSU* and the *CSU Cornerstones Report;* and

WHEREAS, The commitment to and the importance of diversity have been affirmed by the Association of American Universities, the American Council on Education, the American Association for Higher Education, the American Association of University Professors, the American Association of University Administrators, the Educational Testing Service, the Association of American Medical Colleges, The Association of American Law Schools, The American Society for Engineering Education, the Association of Goveming Boards of Universities and Colleges, the College Board, and many others; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate at Cal Poly accept and endorse the American Association of University Professors' *The Educational Value of Diversity,* the Association of American Universities' *On the Importance of Diversity in University Admissions,* and the American Council on Education's *On the Importance of Diversity in Higher Education;* and, be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate recommend to its administration that they actively reaffirm the academic value of diversity among its faculty, staff, students, and within the curriculum; and, be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate at Cal Poly in partnership with its administration devise plans and strategies to promulgate and implement the diversity and educational objectives outlined in the above three documents; and, be it further

RESOLVED: That the Academic Senate at Cal Poly recommend to its administration that the ProvostIVice President for Academic Affairs provide an annual assessment of the previously mentioned partnership's diversity related activities to the Academic Senate.

Proposed by: The Diversity Task Force
Date: April 21, 1998
Revised: June 8, 1998

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS FOR

RESOLUTION ON
THE ACADEMIC VALUE OF DIVERSITY

American Association of University Professors

.cademe article, January/February 1997

The Educational Value 01 Diversity

By Jonathan R. Alger

Diversity is not a dirty word, but recent legal and political developments in the higher educalion context seem to suggest Otherwise In the 1978 *Bakke* deCision, Justice Lewis Powell found the attainment 01 a diverse student body to be a constltutionally permissible goal *tor* a university exercising its educational judgment, and he recognized race as one among a number of factors COOlributing to that diversity. In the 1996 *Hopwood* deciSion, a lederal appellate court··with considerable judicial chutzpa··asserted that Justice Powell had been mistaken. and that diversity cannot serve as a "compelling interest" justifying racebased allirmative action programs in higher education. Calilornia, the nation's largest and most radally diverse state. has now banned the consideration 01 race in its higher education programs. Why has the affirmative consideration of race to achieve diversity in higher education lallen into legal and social disrepute?

One major reason is that diversity has become an end in itself, rather than a means to a greater educational end. In addition, the need lor diversity has frequently been conlused by its supporters and critics alike with the need to remedy discrimination. Although remedying discrimination has been recogniZed as a permissible basis for racebased allirmative action, it rests on dillerent assumptions and relies on dillerent evidence.

The opponents of racebased affirmative action have largely succeeded in convincing the courts and the public that the goal or racial diversity renects and reinforces racial stereotypes, acts as a poor substitute for true intellectual diversity, and serves as a thinly disguised excuse for racial quotas. Too olten these criticisms have been on target, in part because universities have failed 10 establish the fundamental link between diversity and their educational missions. II programs premised on the need for diversity are to survive in this legal and political climate, the educational value of these programs lor all students must be fUlly and forcefully articulated.

The argument for the necessity 01 diversity is perhaps stronger in higher education than In any other context, but only if diversity is understood as a means to an end. The ultimate product of universities is education in the broadest sense. Including preparation lor life in the working world. As part of this education, students learn from lacetolace interaction with raculty members and with one anOlher both inside and outs de the classroom. Racial diversity can enhance this interaction by broadening course oNerings, texts, and classroom examples, as well as improving communications and understanding among individuals of dillerent races. The impact 01 diversity is evidenced by the inclusion 01 multicultural perspectives in many disciplines·authors Such as Toni Morrison have joined the accepted canon.

A common criticism *ot* racebased diversity programs, rellected In the *Bakke* discussion 01 intellectual diversity ariSing from diNerent perspectives and life experiences, is that raco is used as a mere proxy tor a panicular perspective or point 01 view. According to thiS cnllQue. a university seeking diversity assumes that individuals 01 particular races will bring with them certain perspectives due to their racial backgrounds ThIs assumplion is patronizing and misguided, 01 course, because members or every racial group diller in their life experiences, Proponents of diverSity have all too olten pennit1ed the ,bate to be centered on this argument and have faltered in the couns when trying to delend the use or race to achieve intellectual diversity. Given ., le strict scrutiny with which racial classifications aro jUdged under American law. il is nol surprising fhat couns have Irowned upon Ihis justillcalion for racebased diverSity programs.

In fao. the educational valuo or diversity can be delended largely on the basis or the exact opposite of this stereotypical assumption. The range of similarities and dINerencas within and among racial groups is preCisely what gives diversity in higher education its educational value. For example. by seeing firsthand that all black or Hispanic studeOls dO not act or think aliko. white students can overcome leamed prOludices Ihal may have arisen In part *tram* a lack 01 direct exposure to individuals 01 other races One can imagine Ihe Impact on a whito student from a homogenous white suburt>an background. whose views regarding blacks havo been shaped primarily by television and movies, 01 a law school class reaturing arguments from black students as diverse as Thurgood Marshall and Cllarence Thomas. Ukewise, the recenlly immigrated Asian Amenean Studont in the same class, who assumes that most white Americans think alike, may be surprised by white students with opinions as diverse as Antonin Scalia and Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

Similarly. prejudices can be overcome when students discover just how much they have in common wilh their peers from other races. Prejudice Is feamed behavior, and the prevafence of young offenders in racially motivated hate crimes demonstrates that it is learned at an earty age. Due to local control of elementary and secondary education in this country, many students altend neighborhood schools that are segregated according to local demographics. Once in college together, however, students of dillerent races may discover that their political beliefs or extracurricular interests provide as much or more common ground as does race. No textbook or computer can substitute for the direct personal interaction that leads to this type of selfdiscovery and growth.

ThiSeducational benefit is universal In thal all students leam from it, nOl just minority students who might have received a "bump" in the admissions process. Indeed, majority students who have previously lacked significant direct exposure to minorities Irequenlly have the most to gain from interaction with Individuals of other races. The universality 01 thiS benefit distinguishes the diversity rationale from the rationale of remedying discrimination, under whiCh minority students receive special consideration to make up for past injustices to their racial group.

Diversity as Institutional Mission

The diverSity rationale also diNers from remedying discrimination in that it stems directly from. and reinforces, the educational mission 01 the university as defined by the institution itsell. In *Bakke* ,Justice Powell cited the universlty's academic freedom interest In selting the criteria lor selection of its students to meet its educational goals. This relationship of diversity to academic freedom and to the university's educational mission Implies that each institution is in the best position to determine its own diversity goats in light of Its educational objectives, For example. some Institutions have religious roots and desire a student body that keeps those ties alive. Historically black colleges were founded to educate black students shut out or other institutions and have a mission that includes continued support *ot* underprivileged groups. Moreover. the mission of each Institution is determined to some extent by its service area and applicant pool, which can change over lime as changes occur in Ihe institution'Ssize, stature. or program offerings.

Each institution's interest in and need lor racial diversity will vary based upon these factors. As Harvard President Neil Rudenstine recently described. all intemationally recognized college or university that draws students from all over the country and the world-SUch as Harvard or Stanford-might have as pan of its educational mission a comrnitmentto expose its students to individuals from all races represented in the naMn or even the world. A publldy funded landgrant college, however, might have a special legal obligation to servo the citizens 01 its Stale, and Its interest In diversity would

renect that mission and service area. A community college might be established to serve students in a distinct region or metropolitan area, whereas a tribally controlled college might have a statutorily authorized core miSSion 01 serving Native Americans 01 partiCular tribes

In some of these cases, it may be that affirmative efforts are required to achieve the diversity needed to match the educational mission because jitiOnal recruiting *eNorts* are insufficient. For example, a predominantly white college in a rural location with little racial diversity may decide that its educational mission includes a need to broaden the horizons 01 its students by recruiting students 01 other races and *tram* other places. Even if the college itself has no history 01 discrimination, it may need to make affirmative efforts to anract and retain such students, particulany until it develops a welcoming reputation for minority students.

Of course, this model of learning assumes that students will interact with peers 01 other races in a variety 01 settings once enrolled at a university. Clubs, cultural centers, or special events that celebrate the traditions and contribulions of minority groups can be inclusive and send a welcoming signal to minority students. Il minority students remain largely segregated in campus housing, dining halls, classes, and activities, however, much of the potential interactive educational value of diversity may be lost for all students. For thiS reason, university programs based on diversity should locus not merely on the initial admissions process, but also on retention and on involvement in the full range of fields of study and extracurricular activities.

Recent studies by Alexander Astin and others have shown that direct student experience with racial diversity corresponds to increased cultural awareness and commitment to promoting racial understanding, This exposure comes at a critical time in students' lives: the university in essence serves as a controlled microcosm previewing the larger society and working wor1d into which the students will graduate At that point, their employers will expect them to be able to work and interact with a wide variety 0/ people in an increasingly global economy.

More research remains to be done, however, by colleges and universities seeking to define and develop their interest in diversity as related to their educational missions. In a recent survey of exiSting research on diversity, the Association 01 American Colleges and Universities reports that campusbased diversity initiatives have a positive impact on the education of allstudents··promoting increased tolerance and understanding or differences, greater commitment to social justice, and improved academic success and cognitive development. As the frontline educators who serve as students' teachers, mentors, role models, and friends, laculty members are uniquely positioned to observe and evaluate these educational benefits of diversity in a variety of campus contexts. For this reason, AAUP's Committee L on HiStorically Black Institutions and the Status or Minorities in the Profession, along with other organizations in higher education, is seeking systematic faculty input to inform the debate over the nature and extent of these educational benefits.

Merit and Other Considerations

If racial diversity in higher education is a compelling interest" for which there is no adequate alternative, it must still be "narrow1y tailored" to ftt its goals in order to meet the legal standards lor programs in which race is considered. Maya univerSity give special consideration to race in its admissions process to a greater extent than to other diversity factors such as geography or religion? Similarly. may special consideration be given to some minority groups and not others? The answers depend upon the extent to which raceneutral admissions procedures provide an adequate crosssection of students with regard to these other lactors.

This principle applies to recruiting for all sorts of university needs and activities. In somo years a university might need to make special efforts to obtain a topcaliber Quarterback for its foolball team or bassoon player for its orchestra, but not when it already has a wealth of applicants from which to choose 10 will play Quarterback or bassoon, Special consideration should be given to members of partiCular racial groups only to the extent necessary to _;hieve the diversity interest artiCulated by the institution at a given time. This need is subject to constant reassessment in light of changing demographics and other circumstances. The goals should *never* approach rigid Quotas; nexible ranges are more legally sound and allow for the myriad of factors that must be considered in putting togethor a student body.

Critics of diversity argue that ractors such as race shoutd not be considered in admissions or financial aid because such deCisions should be based sotety on individual "merit." Traditionally, such critics have dofined merit narrow1y to reflect individuals' past academic achlovement or potential as measured by grade point averages and standardiled lest scores, perhaps allowing lor consideration 01 certain types 01 special skills or talents such as athlotic or musical ability. All *ot* lhese factors can of course contributo to the education 01 fellow students, but they are not the only lactors that contnbute to the breadth and Quality of the learning environment on a college campus. Looking at an entering class as a whole, any of a number 01 factors that distinguish a particular applicant from large numbors of other individuals in the pool may also contribute to the overall learning environment. An applicant's "merit" therefore cannot be measured in the abstract without reference to other appliCants: each individual's characteristics must be compared with the needs of the class as a whole. A star high school Quarterback may have "merit" based on hiS past athletic accomplishments, for example, but it may mean little at an institution at whiCh fifteen other star Quarterbacks are also applying·or which has no football team at all.

Ironically other factors having little to do with a traditional definition or merit-such as relationships to wealthy alumni or highlevel university administrators··have long been accepted as legitimate criteria in admissions and financial aid decisions. Consideration of these nonmeritoriOus factors has never been thought of as "stigmatizing" for the students who benefited. The critics of racial diversity and defenders of traditional "merit" would be much more convincing iIthey attacked these forms of preference with equal vigor, because consideration or such factors has historically had a strong adverse impact on minority appliCants.

These critics also *claim* that consideration of other raceneulral critelia such as socioeconomic status or geographic origin··i.e., criteria not SUbject to striCt judicial scrutiny-could provide the same results as considerati0n of race. Studies 01 the impact of using such factors to seek racial diversity have not been encouraging, however. For example, estimates indicate that the cessation or racebased affirmative action in Califomia will have an adverse impact on African American and Hispanic students, even if socioeconomic status is relied upon heavily in admissions decisions

Far from renecting a colorblind society, racial classifications receive the highest level of constitutional scrutiny precisely because race has been such a powenul and divisive force in AmeriCan and wond history. In the postCold War world, racial and ethnic tensions have emerged as the greatest single threat to societies all over the globe··ranging *trom* the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia to South Alrica, Rwanda. and even Canada. Facetoface interaction in the higher education context can playa key role *in* developing genuine interracial understanding and tolerance (0 overcome such tensions. Racial diversity within institutions is a compelling need, because palnrul historical experience has demonstrated that 'separate but equal" educational systems are never equal and breed prejudice, miSunderstan6ing. and resentment. If universities want to avoid a relapse into increased radal segregation in light of the pressures against aNirmative action in today's political *and* legal climate, they must make the case lor the need 'or racial diversity to further the core educational purposes for which they exist··anlj enlist the help or their faculty in identifying and articulating its educational benefits.

Jonathan R Alger is AAUP associate counsel and staff liaison 'or Committee L on Historically Btack Institutions and the Status ot Minorities in the Profession.

On the Importance of Diversity in University Admissions

On April 14, during its annual spring meeting in Washington, D.C., the Association of American Universities adopted a statement that expresses strong support for continued attention to diversity in university admissions.

The Association of American Universities consists of 62 leading North American research universities. These institutions are represented at the association's meetings by their president or chancellor.

The text of the statement that was adopted April 14 is reproduced below.

> For some time, the consideration of ethnicity, race, and gender as factors in college and university admissions has been strenuously discussed both within and outside of the academy.
>
> The public debate about the goal of diversity. as well as affirmative action; the 1995 decision of the Regents of the University of California to discontinue any special consideration of ethnicity, race, and gender as factors in admissions; the passage of Proposition 209 in California; and the *Hopwood* ruling of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals have all combined to create substantial uncertainty about the future representation of minority students within our student bodies. Special efforts to identify and enroll women··particularly but not only in fields such as mathematics, the physical sciences, and engineering··may also be affected.
>
> As members of the Association of American Universities, we therefore want to express our strong conviction concerning the continuing need to take into account a wide range of considerations-··including ethnicity. race, and gender··as we evaluate the students whom we select for admission.
>
> We speak first and foremost as educators. We believe that our students benefit significantly from education that takes place within a diverse setting. In the course of their university education, our students encounter and learn from others who have backgrounds and characteristics very diHerent from their own. As we seek to prepare students for life in the twenty·first century, the educational value of such encounters will become more important, not less, than in the past.
>
> A very substantial portion of our curriculum is enhanced by the discourse made possible by the heterogeneous backgrounds of our students. Equally. a significant part of education in our institutions takes place outside the classroom. in extracurricular activities where students learn how to work together, as well as to compete: how to exercise leadership. as well as to build consensus. If our institutional capacity to bring together a genuinely diverse group of students is removed··or severely reduced··then the quality and texture of the education we provide will be significantly diminished.
>
> For several decades--in many cases, far langer··our universities have assembled their student bodies to take into account many aspects of diversity. The most eHective admissions processes ha'ie done this in a way that assesses sludents as individuals, while also taking into account their potential to contribute to the education of their fellow-students in a great variety of ways. We do not advocate admitting students who cannot meet the criteria for admission to our universities. We do not endorse quolas or ·sel·asides· in admissions. But we do insist that we must be able. as educalors, to selec1 those students··from among many qualified applicants··who will best enable our inSlitutions to fulfill their broad educational purposes.
>
> In this respect, we speak not only as educators, bU1 also as concerned citizens. As presidents and chancellors of universities that have historically produced many of American's leaders in business, government. the professions. and the arts. we *are* conscious of our obligation to educate exceptional people who will serve all of the nation's diHerent communities. The evaluation of an indi'/idual applicant to our universities cannoL therefore, be based on a narrow or mainly "statistical" definition of merit. The concepl of merit must take fully into accounl not only academic grades and standardized lest scores, but also the many unquantifiable human qualities and capacities of individuals, including their promise for continuing future development. It must include characteristics such as the potential for leadership··especially the requirements for leadership in a heterogeneous democratic society such as ours.
>
> We therefore reaffirm our commitment to diversity as a value that is central to the very concept of education in our institutions. And we strongly reaffirm our support for the continuation of admissions policies, consistent with the broad principles of equal opportunit/ and equal protection, that take many factors and characteristics into account··including ethnicity, race, and gender··in the selection of trose individuals who

will be students today, and leaders in the years to come.

Association of American Universities member Institutions

Brandeis University
Brown University
California Institute or Technology
Camegie Mellon University
Case Westem Reserve University
The Cattlolic University of America
Clark University
Columbia University
Comell University
Duke University
Emory University
Harvard University
Indiana University
Iowa State University
The Johns Hopkins University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Mcgill University
Michigan State University
New York University
Nonhwestem University
The Ohio State University
The Pennsylvania State University
Princeton University
Purdue University
Rice University
Rutgers, The State University or New Jersey
Stanrord University
Syracuse University
Tulane University
University of Arizona
University at Buffalo-State University or New York
University of Califomia, Berkeley
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University of California, Irvine
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THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES
1200 New York Avenue NW·· Washington, D.C. 20005 •. 202·408·7500

On the Importance of Diversity in Higher Education

America's colleges and universities differ in many ways. Some *are* public. others *are* independent; some *are* large urban universities. some are two-year community colleges, others small rural campuses. Some offer graduate and professional programs, others focus primarily on undergraduate education. Each of our more than 3,000 colleges and universities has its own specific and distinct mission. This collective diversity among institutions is one of the great strengths of America's higher education system, and has helped make it the best in the world Preserving that diversity is essential if we hope to serve the needs of our democratic society.

Similarly, many colleges and universities share a common belief, born of experience, that diversity in their student bodies, faculties, and staff is important for them to fulfill their primary mission: providing a quality education. The public is entitled to know why these institutions believe so strongly that racial and ethnic diversity should be one factor among the many considered in admissions and hiring The reasons include:

- Diversity enriches the educational experience.
  We learn from those whose experiences, beliefs. and perspectives are [illegible] our own, and these lessons can be taught best in a richly diverse intellectual and social [illegible]

- It promotes personal growth--and a healthy society.
  Diversity challenges stereotyped preconceptions: it encourages critical [illegible] and it helps students learn to communicate effectively with people of varied backgrounds,

- It strengthens communities and the workplace.
  Education within a diverse selling prepares students to become good [illegible] increasingly complex. pluralistic society; it fosters mutual respect and teamwork; and [illegible] communities whose members are judged by the quality of their character and their [illegible]

- It enhances America's economic competitiveness.
  Sustaining the nation's prosperity in the 21st century will require us to [illegible] of the talents and abilities of all our citizens. in work settings that bring together [illegible] diverse backgrounds and cultures.

American colleges and universities traditionally have enjoyed significant latitude [illegible] their missions. Americans have understood that there is no single model of a good college. and [illegible] standard can predict with certainty the lifetime contribution of a teacher or a student. Yet. the [illegible] determine who shall teach and be taught has been restricted in a number of places. and [illegible] attack In others. As a result, some schools have experienced precipitous declines in the enrollment [illegible] African-American and Hispanic students. reversing decades of progress in the effort to assure that all [illegible] American society have an equal opportunity for access to higher education.

Achieving diversity on college campuses does not require quotas. Nor does diver[illegible] admission of unqualified applicants. However, the diversity we seek, and the future of the nation [illegible] require that colleges and universities continue to be able to reach out and make a conscious effort [illegible] and diverse learning environments appropriate for their missions. The success of higher edu[illegible] the s',-ength of our democracy depend on it.

Endorsements

AACSB . The International Association for Management [illegible]
ACT (formerly American College Testing)
American Association for Higher Education
American Association of Colleges For Teacher Edu[illegible]
American Association of Colleges of NurSIll'[illegible]

American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association *ot* Dental Schools
American Association *ot* Stale Colleges and Universities
American Association *ot* University Administrators
American Association *ot* University Professors
American College Personnel Association
American Council on Education
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
American Medical Student Association
American Society for Engineering Education
APPA: The Association of Higher Education Facilities Officers
Association *ot* Academic Health Centers
Association *at* American Colleges and Universities
Association of American Law Schools
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Universities
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association *ot* College Unions International
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Coalition of Higher Education Assistance Organizations
Coker College, Hartsville, South Carolina
College and University Personnel Association
Commission on Independent Colleges & Universities
Consortium on Financing Higher Education
Council for Advancement and Support *ot* Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Educational Testing Service
Golden Key National Honor Society
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
La'N School Admission Counsel
Lutheran Educallonal Conference *ot* North America
NAFSA· Association *ot* International Educators
National Association *tor* College Admission Counseling
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Graduate and Professional Students
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Association *ot* Student Personnel Administrators
National Collegiate Athletic Association
National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations
NAWE: Advancing Women in Higher Education
New England Board of Higher Education
The College Board
The College FundfUNCF
The Education Trust
University Continuing Education Association

American Council on Education
One Dupont Circle Washington, DC 200J6

Last modified March 17, 1998
Send comments and suggestions 10 web@ace nche.edu

State of California
Memorandum

RECEIVED
SEP 22 1998
Academic Senate

CAL POLY
SAN LUIS OBISPO
CA 93407

To: Myron Hood
Chair, Academic Senate

Date: September 18, 1998

From: Warren J. Baker
President

Copies: Paul J. Zingg
Harvey Greenwald
Linda Dalton

Subject: AS-505-98/DTF, Resolution on the Academic Value of Diversity
AS-506-98/DTF, Resolution on *The Cal Poly Statement on Diversity*

I am pleased to accept Resolutions AS-505-98/DTF and AS-506-98/DTF.

The Academic Senate is to be applauded for its clear affinnation of the educational values of diversity and its recognition that diversity strengthens our community and prepares our students more fully for effective citizenry, responsible careers and engaged lives.

Both resolutions underscore the University's values that are imbedded in our Mission Statement and Strategic Plan. The voice of the Senate in these matters will strengthen the University's ability to continue its efforts to foster greater diversity among our students, faculty and staff. Clearly aligning Cal Poly with the important statements on diversity that the nation's principal educational associations have made signals our commitment and resolve.

I look forward to working with the Senate and our entire University community in achieving the promise within these resolutions.