



July 19, 2023

APSA Statement on Supreme Court Rulings on Affirmative Action

On June 29, the Supreme Court of the United States issued a pair of rulings, [*Students for Fair Admissions \(SFFA\) v. Harvard and SFFA v. University of North Carolina*](#), which declared the use of affirmative action admission policies at colleges and universities to be unlawful. This decision imposes unprecedented changes in U.S. higher education admissions policy and annuls the longstanding legal precedent behind current efforts to use affirmative action to diversify student bodies at colleges and universities. This decision will make diversity much more challenging to foster and will have a negative impact on the quality of higher education for all by reducing diversity on campus and in the classroom.

The American Political Science Association (APSA) is disappointed in the Supreme Court's decision and is greatly concerned about the long-term consequences this ruling will have on diversity and equity in higher education. Specifically, although the decision directly pertains to undergraduate college admissions, it will also likely have a negative impact on diversity at other levels of higher education and beyond due to the flow of undergraduate student populations into the graduate, postgraduate, and professoriate levels and into non-academic professions. In addition, the decision sets a precedent that is likely to be used to challenge other mechanisms for achieving diversity based on race-neutral criteria.

APSA strongly believes in the value of diversity and cultivating an environment at all levels of higher education that is welcoming to people from all backgrounds. A diverse community is essential to cultivating cross-cultural understanding, enhanced innovation and problem-solving, and meaningful dialogue in classrooms, offices, and academic research settings. In addition, we believe programs that aim to broaden participation in higher education are a critical tool to address the historic educational inequities that have persisted as a result of legacies of racial discrimination and exclusion at U.S. colleges and universities.

APSA stands resolute in our commitment to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion and we will continue to support our own [*Diversity and Inclusion Programs*](#). Additionally, we encourage and endorse efforts by those in the higher education community to explore alternative avenues—that comply with the Supreme Court's decision—to advance diversity in their academic communities, such as taking the impact of race on students' lived experiences into consideration during the admissions process. We extend our steadfast support to all who are impacted by this decision.

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Lisa Martin

Lisa Martin
President

John Ishiyama

John Ishiyama
Past President

Mark E. Warren

Mark E. Warren
President-Elect

Steven Rathgeb Smith

Steven Rathgeb Smith
Executive Director

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