

**Summary of Workshop on the
Impact of Ballot Initiatives and Judicial Decisions
Related to Admissions and Recruitment, Financial Aid, and Outreach
at the University of California, University of Washington,
University of Texas, and University of Georgia**

*January 23-24, 2007
Ann Arbor, Michigan*

Purpose of Workshop

The purpose of the Admissions, Financial Aid and Outreach Workshop was to provide an opportunity for key University of Michigan staff in these area to interact with a group of distinguished panelists from universities that have considerable experience with challenges to their affirmative action programs as the result of ballot initiatives or judicial decisions. These experts gave presentations and actively engaged the participants during extensive and interactive information sharing sessions. Approximately 75 staff attended this invitational workshop.

Planning Committee

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January 23-24 Workshop Summary of Panelists' Key Points and Recommendations

The workshop covered two days. The panelists gave formal presentations, engaged in lengthy exchanges of information, and conducted numerous one-on-one discussions with participants and members of the planning committee. The following is a summary of key points, observations, "lessons learned," and recommendations that the panelists offered based on their experiences and challenges:

- California implemented a comprehensive, contextual review.
- Admissions offices redefined how they look at merit – no longer use only GPA and test scores.
- Institutions now admit across a full range.
- Test scores are evaluated within context of the school environment.
- Institutions admit up to 6% "exceptions."
- Years of analysis show these students will be successful.

Major Points and Lessons Learned*

**Many of these can be perceived to be recommendations as well.*

1. All panelists acknowledged the difficulty of maintaining their numbers of minority students. After nearly a decade, most institutions had not recovered to their previous levels.
2. California collects racial information on student applications but admissions reviewers don't see this information.
3. California learned that using social economic status as a factor in considering students will not help increase the number of underrepresented students because most do not qualify for need based financial aid.
4. California's Board of Regents voted to eliminate affirmative action prior to passage of the ballot initiatives. This created considerable problems.
5. California has focused on transfer students, especially from community colleges, but this has not increased the numbers of underrepresented minorities.
6. We should expect increased and ongoing requests for data, and there will be ongoing challenges to programs and policies relative to minorities. California had to hire additional staff to meet internal data needs and handle external requests. These challenges posed problems with data confidentiality and security.
7. Panelists acknowledged that computer modeling, when race/ethnicity is taken out of the equation, will not benefit underrepresented students.
8. Some panelists reported that other institutions started to raid their underrepresented faculty and that we can expect that to happen at Michigan.
9. Private institutions that do not have affirmative action bans are the biggest beneficiaries; they can attract more minority students because they can still offer scholarships.
10. Without race and gender based scholarships and financial aid, few minorities will attend these institutions. Most reported that students may be admitted, but they won't come without financial support.
11. Perceptions of negative climate issues on campuses can hinder recruitment efforts.
12. The University of Washington had a very strong diversity statement and charge from its board. This has been enormously helpful and takes the pressure off the president and administration.
13. Some campuses placed special emphasis on getting federally funded diversity programs to protect them.

14. Transparency is important because opponents of affirmative action will always be on the look out for evidence of the use of race and gender in decision-making.
15. Campuses don't do a good job of explaining why students with outstanding academic records are not admitted.
16. California has done a good job of increasing low-income, Pell eligible numbers but the system cannot attract student students from the middle class. This has created class differences. Either students are very poor or very wealthy. Several participants suspected this would happen at Michigan, if it's not already occurring. Middle class underrepresented students end up going to USC or Stanford. However, the increase did not come from African American applicants.
17. Several panelists indicated that they were too cautious when it came to outreach. Note: California lost a legal challenge to its targeted outreach, and the Governor and Legislature have allocated very little funding for outreach. Early on after 209 was passed, the institutions received almost \$100 million. Now outreach funds are secured by raising application fees.
18. Texas found that students selected from the second tier (not as strong as the top tier) do very well once they get to campus. We were cautioned that if we only select from the top tier, we will lose a lot of underrepresented students. This reinforces the importance of the holistic review.
19. It is important to get underrepresented students to visit the campus. The chances of getting them to attend after they are admitted goes up significantly if they have visited.
20. Institutions need to do a better job of assessing the effectiveness and quality of various outreach programs.
21. Pipeline programs are long term (starting in middle schools) and don't guarantee that students will enroll at a particular campus or even go to college.
22. California and Washington grandfathered in their race and gender scholarships and did not change them. Once students are admitted from a race blind selection process, the University of Washington allow them to become eligible for race specific scholarships.
23. Washington hired a development person to raise money for underrepresented students and programs. It has secured over \$15 million.
24. California is finally seeing some increases in enrollments 10 years after 209. However, while the numbers of Latino/a students enrolled are increasing, the numbers for African American students are not. California participants said, "We have not done well with this population."

25. Some of the outreach programs focused on math and science teachers to help them improve their teaching.
26. Texas stressed the importance of managing the emotions on campus and to stay optimistic. While it is very easy to get discouraged, it is better to be positive and continue to believe in what one is doing.
27. Texas puts considerable emphasis on class ranking in high school, since research shows that SAT scores correlate more with family income than grades.
28. The Longhorn Opportunity Program in Texas identifies schools to be essentially adopted by U of Texas, and a select number of scholarships are awarded directly to the schools. There are now 70 schools in the program. They schools traditionally did not send a lot of students to U Texas. The program began with 39 schools and guaranteed a 5-year commitment to selected schools. They use a lot of celebrations in the high schools when students receive scholarships awards. However, they caution that Admissions must concentrate on the fire at the front door, and let others develop programs that attract academically stronger students coming through the pipeline.
29. Texas participants believe it is important to have the president attend scholarship ceremonies at the high schools where possible. This seems to make a difference.
30. Students admitted in Texas under the 10% plan are guaranteed enrollment but are not guaranteed choice of academic major. For example the business school admits only the top 3%.
31. Texas does not recalculate grades.
32. Texas has a large mandatory summer program for 800 students who have to take 9 hours of high demand courses. They must be successful if they are going to continue into the fall semester. The top 10% students are not in the summer programs. Summer programs are a success, based on retention and graduation rates.
33. While Texas has lots of outreach programs in the public schools, it cannot run all the schools. Therefore it concentrates on the schools selected for the Longhorn Opportunity Program. The number of students enrolling at the University went up significantly after the implementation of the Longhorn Opportunity program.
34. Texas has done better on gender. It found that while high school women don't outscore men on the SAT tests, they outperform them in the classroom. However, the African American gap still exists, and the number of African American applicants has not increased significantly.
35. California plans to put all of its raw enrollment data online. Anyone can draw the data down and run the statistics. Individuals can use this searchable database to handle general inquiries.

36. Washington has stopped using the word merit because most people think that it's grade point average and test scores. That's not the perception that we want.
37. Washington uses the Michigan holistic approach to selecting students. It also places less emphasis on GPA and test scores. Instead, it selects students with the best overall talents and experiences that would enrich the student body. Institutional values are very important.
38. Washington representatives stated that some people felt that they were doing an end around the ballot initiative, but they were very mission focused. There was considerable institutional resolve and a feeling that this was an assault on institutional academic freedom. Additionally they had considerable support from their Regents and the courts narrowed the focus in their proposal.
39. Faculties tend not to support holistic approaches. It is important to let the faculty have lots of discussion on this issue among themselves. In Washington, they finally realized that if the University made admission determination on GPA and test scores alone that most of the students would be white or Asian American, and would come from the Seattle area.
40. No matter what Michigan does, opponents of affirmative action are not going to be happy; neither will supporters.
41. Challenges to affirmative action activities are a "never ending story."
42. Participants have paid little attention to how graduate and professional students are being impacted – especially if there is a significantly decreased pipeline of undergraduate students from underrepresented populations.
43. UC-Berkeley has outreach interns to help with efforts at various under served, underrepresented schools.
44. Participants found that it's important to keep faculty in the loop relative to diversity planning because many still are concerned that increasing diversity will lower institutional ranking.
45. Lots of people want to do diversity programs that don't address equity issues. There has to be a balance; otherwise you end up with lots of diversity programs but not make gains in students and faculty of color. These programs should not be proxies for solving equity problems.
46. Several panelists reported that the perception existed that despite all the efforts, climate conditions have not improved on campus. This is a major source of frustration and concern.

47. Several panelists stressed the importance of involved and sustained institutional leadership that keeps everyone focused. It is also very important to have strong commitment from the academic side, including the chief academic officer and deans.
48. One has to communicate to campus constituencies that expanding diversity doesn't mean remediation or unqualified.
49. The Georgia Board of Regents voluntarily agreed to drop race and gender in admissions decisions. It also dropped alumni legacy.
50. It is important to have ongoing institutional communication with the campus community because there are going to be negative articles in the media. Prospective students may believe those articles, and they will discourage other students from enrolling.
51. Georgia has a program similar to the Texas Longhorn Opportunity Program with different schools. It also does school based fundraising for scholarships.
52. One impact of banning affirmative action in Washington is that the University is serving poor and rich students. Middle-income students who don't qualify for need-based aid do not enroll.
53. UC-Berkeley is trying to raise \$400 million for low-income students.
54. Washington didn't ask state for outreach funds, but rather made a commitment to use institutional funds.
55. Washington has theme programs targeted to specific groups. However, the institution lets everyone know that the programs are open to anyone and that no one is excluded.
56. Washington has continued its minority scholarships and endowments.
57. At the University of Washington the diversity mission comes from the Regents Statement of Diversity. The Regents approve all policies. Some of the regents have been very helpful in raising additional funds and providing leadership that pushes for diversity.
58. Washington is considering establishing a diversity institute for faculty who do research.
59. Should use the word "underserved populations" instead of "underrepresented populations?"

Recommendations and Suggestions

1. Make sure we are clear on our definitions of diversity, merit, affirmative action, financial aid and preferences and be pro-active in communicating these to multiple constituencies.
2. Success has to be defined as more than getting underrepresented students, faculty and staff to the campus.
3. Climate issues have to be addressed because they do impact whether underrepresented students, faculty and staff will come to U-M as well as stay.
4. It is important to recognize and reinforce group identity. Diversity should not be a code word for assimilation. Underrepresented students want to be appreciated and know that their racial identities are respected.
5. Be very careful about which cases you defend – you can lose more than you gain, and create a legal precedence.
6. When it comes to outreach programs in K-12 schools, focus on a select group of schools as opposed to spreading too thinly among many, many schools.
7. Michigan needs to have a person at the executive level that has responsibility for coordinating campus diversity. We also need to develop a campus diversity plan that focuses on short term and long-term strategies.
8. It is important to manage the kinds of statistical reports produced and when they are strategically released to the media and the public.
9. It is important to have a good assessment plan for diversity activities; however, they should not be assessed in ways different than other programs are assessed. Too often there seems to be a higher bar for diversity programs compared to others.
10. Be cautious about implementing lots of “feel good” diversity programs. You will end up with lots of programs but have little impact on recruiting and retaining underrepresented students, faculty and staff.
11. Regents have to make a very strong and make public statement in support of campus diversity.
12. Research on diversity issues needs to be ongoing and supported by central administration. The research done in the lawsuit was outstanding and really saved the day for higher education. Need to keep doing this and perhaps do more collaborative work among peer institutions.
13. Need a publication that describes various programs at U-M, and more importantly get this information to underrepresented students in high schools and to counselors and parents.

One of the biggest challenges will be in convincing underrepresented students in high school that Michigan is still a welcoming place.

14. Care needs to be exercised that in the quest to advance broad based diversity that the equity issues involving race and gender are addressed. Our students of color are very suspicious that diversity will move forward except for the racial/ethnic concerns.
15. We need to seek help from the corporate community and foundations that supported Michigan during the legal challenges that went to the U.S. Supreme Court.
16. Michigan has to stay on top of how the demographics are shifting in the state. We learned that major demographic changes require new practices of recruiting, financial aid packaging, academic support, and outreach activities.
17. Michigan might benefit from having an ongoing taskforce that visits other institutions around the country that have faced similar situations. This will help to get best practices from staff that directly involved in implementing programs, policies and procedures.