

APA Official Actions

Position Statement on Diverse Representation in Medicine

Approved by the Board of Trustees, December 2024

Approved by the Assembly, November 2024

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“Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . .” – *APA Operations Manual*

Issue:

Programs aimed at eliminating unlawful discrimination among applicants, remedying the results of such prior discrimination, and preventing such discrimination in the future. Applicants may be seeking admission to an educational program or looking for professional employment. In modern American jurisprudence, it typically imposes remedies against discrimination on the basis of (at the very least) race, creed, color, and national origin (Cornell Law School, n.d.). There is a continuous need to increase the number of minority psychiatrists from groups underrepresented in medicine with respect to their proportion of the overall population. APA has previously developed and instituted policies recognizing and supporting the special mental health issues of minority populations as well as issues regarding diversity in the physician workforce; however, these programs represent a specific strategy and approach that is not directly addressed in these supported efforts. These programs are an approach through which all spaces, not just those within medicine, can actively counter structural factors such as systemic racism and white supremacy that contribute to underrepresentation of various groups in the workplace. In June 2023, the Supreme Court delivered its decision in *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College* and its decision in *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. University of North Carolina* which held that the admissions systems of both institutions do not comply with the principles of the equal protection clause embodied in Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. The ruling does clarify, however, that colleges and universities have the ability to consider how a given applicant discusses the impact that race has had on his or her life in the form of discrimination, inspiration, or any other noted impact (*Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 2023; *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. University of North Carolina*, 2023).

APA Position:

It is the position of APA that implementation of affirmative action programs and policies increase representation of underrepresented groups in medicine and prevent discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and/or gender identity.

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