



July 13, 2023

On June 29, 2023, the Supreme Court ruled that the use of race in college admissions is unconstitutional under the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment. In the case of education, affirmative action is best defined as “a set of procedures designed to...remedy the results of such prior discrimination, and prevent such discrimination in the future”.¹ It was never about giving a minority group an advantage, but rather leveling the playing field between all.

By taking into consideration the historic discrimination towards specific races, and the recognition of privilege with other races, affirmative action aimed to create an equitable application process, by assessing students holistically and on accomplishments reflective of access. Racism and racial inequality have been prevalent since the creation of the United States, and the ending of affirmative action sets students back, especially Black and Hispanic/Latino students.

To quote Associate Justice Sonia Sotomayor, with the decision to end Affirmative Action, “the Court subverts the constitutional guarantee of equal protection by further entrenching racial inequality in education”.²

The GSC is in agreement with the statements made by President Sian Beliock, Dean Duane Compton, and Dean Jon Kull, that although we do not yet understand the implications of the Supreme Court’s decision, we are committed to fostering a diverse and welcoming community at Dartmouth. Dartmouth and our graduate student community at large, would not be the institution that is it without the plethora of differing perspectives and experiences from our students. We assure students that regardless of the Supreme Court’s decision, we all deserve to be and belong here at Dartmouth.

The GSC will continue to advocate and support diverse groups and initiatives across campus, and fight for students from all backgrounds. There is much work to be done and we all have a role in making our community a safe and inclusive environment.

If you need more support during this period of time, we recommend you reach out to counseling services [here](#), utilize the Dartmouth provided UWill subscription [here](#), or reach out to other members of the graduate student community including the [cultural and identity-based clubs the GSC supports](#).

References

1. "Affirmative Action." *Cornell Law School*, Cornell, https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/affirmative_action. Accessed 10 July 2023
2. Totenberg, Nina. "Supreme Court reverses affirmative action, gutting race-conscious admissions." *NPR*, 29 June 2023, <https://www.npr.org/2023/06/29/1181138066/affirmative-action-supreme-court-decision>. Accessed 10 July 2023.