Protecting Diversity: Can We Afford to Throw Out Grutter Before Its Expiration Date?

**KEY FINDINGS**

Greater campus diversity at U.S. law schools is associated with lower student attrition for underrepresented students of color.

Among underrepresented students of color at U.S. law schools, greater law school campus diversity is associated with decreases in overall student attrition across institutional selectivity levels. The magnitude of the effect increases as institutional selectivity decreases. At a school with below average selectivity, an increase in diversity from the minimum measurement to the maximum is linked to a predicted drop in attrition of 3 percentage points, from 9 percent to 6 percent.

 Greater campus diversity is associated with slightly higher GPAs and higher predicted likelihood of bar passage for law students of color.

For law students of color, greater campus diversity is associated with higher final GPAs. For a Black student, for example, a typical increase in diversity index is associated with a 2 percentage-point increase in predicted probability of first time bar passage, from 58 percent to 60 percent; for Hispanic students, a 3 percentage-point increase, from 68 percent to 71 percent.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

1. Our results reconfirm that there are indeed educational benefits to people of color resulting from greater student body diversity.

2. As the Supreme Court weighs the future of affirmative action, these findings are an important reminder that full racial integration in higher education remains a critical and not-yet-complete objective for institutions and policymakers.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

There is a lack of diversity in law school (e.g., Black students are represented in law school at about half the proportion of Black people in the population) and affirmative action is under threat as we await Supreme Court decisions in Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College and Students for Fair Admissions v. University of North Carolina.

We used data from the American Bar Association, the U.S. Census Bureau, and our collaborative study with the Law School Survey of Student Engagement to model for institutional diversity and selectivity.

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1. We measure diversity as an index that accounts for both (1) the probability that two randomly selected students will differ by race and (2) the extent to which the racial/ethnic composition of the law school campus resembles that of its surrounding geographic area.

2. We operationalize selectivity as an index accounting for (1) 25th, 50th, and 75th percentile UGPA; (2) 25th, 50th, and 75th percentile LSAT score; and (3) overall acceptance rate for a given law school class.