IMPLEMENTING DIVERSITY IN GRADUATE EDUCATION: CIC ADMINISTRATORS AND THE SUMMER RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM (SROP)

BY

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DISSESSATION

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Policy Studies in the Graduate College of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2014

Urbana, Illinois

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the perceptions of university administrators regarding the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP). The program was developed with the goal of diversifying the graduate programs at the CIC institutions. Interviews were conducted with senior level administrators at each of the fifteen sites. These campus leaders provided insights into the program rationale in addition to identifying the opportunities and challenges that have resulted from its implementation. The findings suggest that these institutional leaders are keenly aware of the severe underrepresentation of minority students across the graduate programs. Given this condition, the SROP serves as an outreach and recruitment tool that is necessary to develop a pipeline for minority graduate students. Program participants are encouraged to pursue advanced degrees and consequently seek faculty positions. While there has been progress in the development of a talent pool, the ultimate goal of diversifying graduate programs and the faculty ranks has proven to be a difficult task and continues to be a challenge. However, these institutions remain committed to the program as they aspire to achieve diverse campus communities. The findings also suggest that in order to create diverse campuses, institutions must continuously assess their structural environments and realign or add to their efforts accordingly.
To my wife, Marilyn;
and to our three children,
Natalie Alexis, Emily Andrea, and Victor Agustin
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would first like to thank my parents, Jose Victor Perez and Maria del Rosario Montenego Perez, for their unconditional love and support. I also want to thank my sisters Evelyn, Janira, and Joanna for being my best friends and constant supporters. I would like to acknowledge my aunts Julia Morales, Dora Montenego, Ana Regina Montenego, Maria Eugenia Montenego, and Fidelina Perez for their love and encouragement. Additionally, I would like to thank my cousins Claudia, Edith, Gardenia, Andrea, and Danilo for all of the great moments that we have shared and the ones to come. I owe much respect and admiration to my grandparents: Jose Leon Montenego, Maria Luisa Morales Montenego, Victor Perez, and Juana Concepcion Sanchez Perez.

To my wife Marilyn, thank you for being by my side through all of the peaks and valleys of this educational journey – your love and support mean the world to me. To our three lovely children who brighten our lives: Natalie Alexis, Emily Andrea, and Victor Agustin – I dedicate my work to you and hope that the world gives way to all of your dreams and aspirations.

I would also like to thank my committee members: Dr. James D. Anderson, President Stanley O. Ikenberry, Dr. Laurence J. Parker, and Dr. William T. Trent. It certainly has been an honor and privilege to work with such a fine group of intellectuals. Thank you for making my graduate school experience at the University of Illinois memorable. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Dr. James D. Anderson for being a great advisor, mentor, and also a dear friend. I am also thankful to Dr. Katherine Ryan and Dr. Stafford Hood for providing me with valuable experiences in the field of evaluation.
Finally, I would like to take a moment to show appreciation to the following individuals near and far who have become great friends over the years. Thank you for your friendship and camaraderie: Anel Laj, Ian Johnson, Rubicela Rodriguez, Conrado Fuentes, Nathalia Jaramillo, John Arrona, Juan C. Moreno, Modesto and Rosanna Alvarez, Alejandro Ruiz, Rudy and Jezabel Salas, Carlos Sanchez, Rafael Covarrubias, Emmanuel Guapo, Al Luna, Jerrell Beckham, Mario Rios Perez, Andrew and Isela Sandoval, Maurice Hobson, Jeannine Slater, Jason Greer, Caesar Sereseres, Maria Jimenez, Xochitl Casillas, Victor Cervantes, Keena Arbuthnot, Eduardo Coronel, Moises Orozco, Gabriel Rodriguez, Brett Grant, Erika Rasch, and Rogelio Bolanos.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The American system of higher education has been an engine that has driven both individual success and many of the advancements of our society. Indeed, graduates of American colleges and universities fill the professional ranks in vital areas including education, medicine, law, the arts, engineering, and many others. Through their achievements and discoveries, college and university alumni have undoubtedly made our nation stronger. Yet, it is still the case that only a relative low number of individuals are able to pursue higher education and consequently reap the rewards associated with earning the credentials needed to access better work and life opportunities. The number is even lower for minority and low-income students, and this is quite evident at the more elite public and private institutions and in graduate programs. To be sure, for most of their institutional histories, elite public and private institutions have struggled to open the doors of opportunity and to compensate for earlier failures of the system to provide full opportunity for all. The impact of such failures has been especially apparent on members of minority groups, but also apparent for those from low-income families, those in America’s inner cities and rural communities, for immigrant families, and others.

This study explores an educational initiative developed and implemented by university administrators that aims to change the status quo by providing educational opportunities to minority students in attempt to diversify the graduate programs across the CIC institutions. The initiative is the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP), a program designed to increase the number of minority students who pursue graduate
degrees. The study focuses on understanding the perceptions of university administrators regarding the SROP and key institutional components that are needed to increase access and diversity in graduate education, particularly at highly selective public institutions. As such, semi-structured interviews were conducted with campus administrators and the following is a partial list of key questions that were addressed:

1. Can you give me a brief history of how the program has evolved over time?
2. In what ways is the SROP program consistent with your institutional mission and goals?
3. What do you see as the primary goal of the SROP program at ____?
4. What are the key components of the program?
5. Which components matter most and why?

Much of what we know about access and equity in higher education has focused on the undergraduate level. Many of the studies analyze and unpack public and university policies that in one form or another seek to broaden participation whether it is at the admissions level, through studying campus climate issues, addressing equity and diversity issues, or examining financial aid policies (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Chang, Witt, Jones, & Hakuta, 2003; Gerald & Haycock, 2006). Yet, there is scant research that seeks to examine whether the same challenges and opportunities exist at the post-baccalaureate level. This study contributes to this gap in knowledge by focusing on the perspectives of university administrators who represent institutions that confer a large proportion of the nation’s Ph.D. degrees. It is at these institutions that the issues of inequality and limited access are magnified, as minority students are severely underrepresented among doctoral degree earners. To be fair, this condition is not unique to this group of universities. In a recent
article, Garces (2012) points to statistics from the U.S. Department of Education to describe a general picture of minority students’ graduate degree attainment in comparison to their representation in the population as follows,

An advanced degree is the key to many positions of power and influence in the United States, yet students of color remain severely underrepresented in graduate studies. Latinos made up 16% of the U.S. population, but only 6% of the entire graduate-student population in 2008; and of all of the doctoral degrees conferred in 2007, only 4% were granted to Latinos and 6% to African Americans, who represented 12% of the U.S. population (pp. 93-94).

The underrepresentation of minority students in graduate programs is a condition that must be contextualized within and outside of the educational arena. Indeed, the broader social structure has also played a significant role in maintaining a social order. As such, the efforts focused on expanding educational opportunities for traditionally underrepresented students have to be contextualized within the broader social, political, and economic conditions of our nation at different points in time. Additionally, it is necessary to incorporate a multidisciplinary lens as scholars across fields have made significant contributions to our understanding of the multiple layers associated with inequality of opportunity for citizens of color in American society. It is through these works that we know that the premise for increasing access and equity in higher education for minority students has been based on four fundamental rationales: 1) redressing past-discrimination; 2) the pursuit of the ideal of equality of educational opportunity; 3) the benefits associated with diversity; and 4) ensuring the continued economic development of our nation. A brief summary of these rationales is warranted here.

While citizens of color in America have had to endure struggles to obtain better life and educational opportunities, the experiences of African Americans in this country serve
as the base for reflecting on a social structure that has historically privileged some and oppressed others. One fundamental reason for redressing past-discrimination has to do with two of the most appalling policies that had an overwhelming impact on the lives of African Americans: slavery and Jim Crow laws. Walter Allen (2005) maintains that, “education has been an elusive, long-denied dream for African Americans – first as slaves forbidden to read and write at risk of death or maiming, and later through various societal machinations blocking access to schools and educational resources” (p. 18). Other minority groups have also had to endure both de facto and de jure segregation, and those experiences also underscore the historical significance of race in the United States.

Bowen, Kurzweil, and Tobin (2005) are correct in noting that, “the historical record of the role played by race in American life is far more than just a ‘backdrop’ to consideration of policy issues in the present day (p. 139).” The impact of limited educational opportunities was quite significant. Bowen et al. highlight that, “by the end of the Civil war, only 28 African Americans had received baccalaureate degrees” (Ibid.). Moreover, once slavery was abolished, the social structure that was in place was slow to change. For instance, in education, school children were still legally segregated in most parts of the country. This condition did not change until the monumental 1954 Brown court decision was handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court, which led to the demise of formal, legal segregation in the United States (Andersen, 2009). Ultimately, Chief Justice Earl Warren led the Court in declaring segregation unconstitutional (Guinier, 2009). While legal segregation was eliminated, the legacy of such policies is arguably still evident in the customs of many institutions across the nation.
It is important to note that in higher education, the battle to desegregate colleges and universities began as early as 1859 with Berea College in Kentucky (Kluger, 2004). Upon its founding, Berea College drew its students from emancipated slaves and loyal Union mountaineers (Bowen, Kurzweil, & Tobin, 2005; Kluger, 2004). The state legislature and Kentucky supreme court were opposed to this practice and eventually passed legislation and handed down court decisions that allowed Berea College to continue to admit and enroll African American students as long as they were taught at different times and in different locations than White students (Ibid.). Essentially, the courts and public opinion focused on ensuring that segregation was maintained.

Following the Brown decision and with the Civil Rights Movement taking shape, most colleges and universities began to provide access to minority students who had been previously excluded from these institutions. One of the key developments was the consideration of race in admissions to highly selective institutions. This policy was aligned with President Kennedy’s issuance of Executive Order No. 10925 in 1961, requiring that all government-contracting agencies take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are treated equally without regard to their race, creed, color, national origin, and two years later because of gender (Tierney, 1997). Lowe, Jr. (1999) put it as follows, “originally a federally sanctioned policy to provide access and opportunity for blacks in employment and contracting, affirmative action was extended in the period following 1965 to encompass college and university admissions as well” (p. 4). To be sure, in 1960, “very few African Americans held public office, and few had entered the elite occupations and professions. Virtually no blacks could be found in the country's leading corporations, banks, hospitals, or law firms” (Bowen and Bok, 1998, p. 4). It was clear then that this
troubling history of discrimination and exclusion had to be reversed and affirmative action policies could assist in achieving this goal.

Some institutions also broadly considered the students’ educational backgrounds on the premise that educational opportunities were not equally distributed across communities nationwide. Schools where the majority of students of color attended were under-resourced in that they lacked adequate facilities, updated textbooks, access to college preparatory curriculums, and in some cases qualified teachers (Oakes, 1985, 2004; Oakes, Rogers, Lipton, & Morrell, 2002). As a result of these and similar university initiatives, minority students began to pursue undergraduate and graduate degrees at a significant rate beginning in the 1960s. Consequently, Bowen and Bok (1998) underscore that because affirmative action policies were implemented, this helped to expand educational opportunities for African Americans at elite institutions, and also contributed to the rise of the African American professional middle-class. Hence, by broadening participation, institutions of higher education were helping to move America towards the ideal of equality of educational opportunity. Yet, these initiatives did not last long as they would soon be challenged given the high stakes associated with securing admissions to elite public and private universities and graduate schools. To be sure, a return to a more conservative government led to the demise of egalitarian social policies that were enacted by the previous generation. The change in policy direction resulted in a decline in the number of African American and other minority students admitted to elite institutions.

At the same time that minority students’ enrollment continues to drop at elite institutions, there is also a major demographic shift occurring in the country. Today, the United States is more diverse than at any other point in history. The 2010 Census indicated
that 308.7 million people resided in the United States, with the majority of the population growth coming from “increases in those who reported their race(s) as something other than White alone and who reported their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011, p.3). One of the key highlights of this report is that between 2000 and 2010, the minority population increased from 86.9 million to 111.9 million, representing a growth rate of 29 percent over the first decade of the 21st century (Humes, Jones, & Ramirez, 2011). A more recent report by the Census Bureau indicates that in 2011, minorities increased from 36.1 percent in 2010 to 36.6 percent or 114 million (“Most Children”, 2012). Moreover, it is estimated that 50.4 percent of our nation’s children younger than 1 year were minorities, as were 49.7 percent of children in the younger than age 5 population (“Most Children,” 2012). Future population estimates highlight an even more diverse nation. By 2043, the U.S. is projected to become a majority-minority nation, and by 2060, minorities are expected to comprise 57 percent of the population (“U.S. Census Bureau Projections,” 2012). Other key figures and estimates in the population also indicate the dramatic change that is taking place in the United States. Government officials note that,

Between 1980 and 2008, the racial/ethnic composition of the US shifted—the White population declined from 80 percent of the total population to 66 percent; the Hispanic population increased from 6 percent of the total population to 15 percent (15.4%); the Black population remained at about 12 percent (12.2%); and the Asian/Pacific Islander population increased from less than 2 percent of the total population to 4 percent (4.5%). In 2008, American Indians/Alaskan Natives made up about 1 percent of the population. People of two or more races made up about 1 percent of the population. ...In 2025, the distribution of the population is expected to be 58 percent White, 21 percent Hispanic, 12 percent Black, 6 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, 2 percent two or more races, 1 percent American Indian/Alaska Native, and less than 1 percent Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (Aud, Fox, & KewalRamani, 2010, pp. 6-7).
Given that over one-third of the U.S. population are citizens of color confirms that the diversity of our nation continues to grow rapidly, and it is increasingly evident not only in our schools but the workforce and in American life in general.

In the affirmative action legal cases, the courts have also maintained the significance of understanding the magnitude of diversity. In the recent Grutter decision, the Supreme Court held that, “the Law School’s narrowly tailored use of race in admissions decisions to further a compelling interest in obtaining the educational benefits that flow from a diverse student body is not prohibited by the Equal Protection Clause” (Grutter v. Bollinger Syllabus, 2003, p.2). This decision reaffirmed Justice Powell’s opinion in the landmark Bakke case in which he made the argument that achieving diversity is a compelling state interest and the “only interest asserted by the university that survived scrutiny” (Ibid.; Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, 1978). He emphasized that, “the nation’s future depends on leaders trained through wide exposure to the ideas and mores of students as diverse as this Nation” (Ibid.; Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, 1978). To be sure, the future of affirmative action depends heavily on whether the goal of achieving diversity remains a compelling interest. Certainly, the high Court will have evidence from social science research that establishes the benefits of diversity. In the “Brief of the American Educational Research Association et al.” submitted as Amici Curiae in support of the respondent (in Fisher v. University of Texas), the benefits of diversity are identified as “improvements in intergroup contact and increased cross-racial interaction among students; reductions in prejudice; improvement in cognitive abilities, critical thinking skills, and self-confidence; greater civic engagement; and the enhancement of
skills needed for professional development and leadership (p. 5). Jeffrey Milem (2011) also contends that,

Individual students, the institutions they attend, the private sector, and our society at large derive important benefits from campus diversity. ...One important conclusion that emerges from reviews of the scholarship on diversity is that the vitality, stimulation, and educational potential of an institution are directly related to the composition of its student body, faculty, and staff. Campus communities that are more racially diverse tend to create more richly varied educational experiences. These experiences help students learn better and prepare them for participation as engaged citizens in an increasingly diverse, democratic society” (pp. 326-327).

A final rationale for broadening participation in higher education for minority students centers on developing a skilled workforce. Indeed, there is a critical need for American workers who have advanced degrees to ensure that our country remains a firm competitor in the global market economy. To be sure, global economic forces challenge America and suggest a future in which the full development of all of the nation’s talent – by closing the gap in educational access and achievement at every level – is increasingly crucial to America’s future, the health of families and communities, and the strength of our democracy. The underlying factor in meeting society’s need for skilled workers lies on the recognition that other nations are increasing the educational achievement of their citizens, and consequently are now serious contenders in developing new ideas and making discoveries. Many have taken notice of this development and have proposed an agenda to revitalize our economy through broadening educational opportunities for all citizens. For instance, in 2006 former President George W. Bush introduced the America Competes Act (Public Law 110-69), in which the mandate was clear: the act called for the investment in innovation through research and development and to improve the competitiveness of the United States. Around the same time, the National Academies (2005, 2010) published the
report, “Rising Above the Gathering Storm: Energizing and Employing America for a Brighter Economic Future,” which clearly provided evidence that the U.S. is losing ground in areas that are most vital to our ability to compete in the global market economy. Similarly, Gandara and Orfield (2006) note that,

During the last several decades a disquieting change has been occurring with respect to the United States’ educational standing in the world. Once the unquestioned leader in availability and quality of public education, with the highest per capita level of education, the United States has fallen behind several other nations. Although among 55-65 year olds, it still ranks number one in college completion, among 25-34 year olds it has fallen behind Canada, several northern European and Asian countries (p. 2).

More recently, the Council of Graduate Schools (2009) highlighted that, “for the past 50 years, the United States has benefitted from an investment in the preparation of knowledge creators, innovators, world leaders, and professionals in key fields” (p. 1). Yet, they argue, many of those leaders are nearing retirement and there is a dire need to replace that talent pool. Ultimately, they advocate “for strengthening diversity and inclusiveness efforts in the graduate education enterprise as a key component of a national talent development strategy, which will ultimately strengthen our economy and maintain our quality of life” (Ibid., p. 2). Given the demographic shift, they also suggest that even a slight increase in the number of underrepresented students who earn doctoral degrees will help us resolve the shortage of highly trained workers. Clearly, broadening educational opportunities for all Americans is vital to our economic health and our ability to compete with other nations.

Statement of the Problem

Students of color continue to be underrepresented in higher education, a condition that is magnified at selective institutions of higher education and in graduate schools. The
historical record highlights that the access and equity trajectory for minority students in higher education began with exclusion, followed by “separate-but-equal” or legal segregation, then some access, and now back to more segregation and limited access (Chang, Witt, Jones, & Hakuta, 2003; Gandara, Orfield, & Horn, 2006; Karen, 1991; Orfield, Marin, & Horn, 2005). Hence, in spite of policies and initiatives that have been enacted to address access and equity over time, the problem still persists: minority students still lack access and equality of educational opportunity. One indicator that clearly highlights the underrepresented status of minority students in higher education is the total number of degrees conferred. The U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2008) reported that in the 2007-2008 academic year, White students received approximately (69%) of all postsecondary degrees, African Americans received (10.5%), Hispanics received (8.3%), Asian and Pacific Islanders received (6.5%), and American Indian and Alaska Natives received (0.8%) percent of all degrees. At the highest degree level, Whites received (57.1%) of all doctoral degrees, African Americans received (6.1%), Hispanics received (3.6%), Asian and Pacific Islanders received (5.7%), and American Indian and Alaska Natives received (0.43%). To no surprise, the higher the degree level, the less likely it is for minority students to be represented among degree earners. The distribution of conferred degrees at the different educational levels highlights this condition.

The U.S Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics (2008) reported that in the 2007-2008 academic year, at the Associate's degree level, Whites received approximately (66.8%), African Americans received (12.8%), Hispanics received (12.2%), Asian / Pacific Islanders received (5.2%), and American Indian / Alaska Natives
received (1.2%). As for Bachelor’s degrees conferred, Whites received approximately (71.8%), African Americans received (9.8%), Hispanics received (7.9%), Asian and Pacific Islanders received (7%), and American Indian and Alaskan Natives received (0.74%). In terms of Master’s degrees awarded, Whites received (65.5%), African Americans received (10.4%), Hispanics received (5.9%), Asian and Pacific Islanders received (6%), and American Indian and Alaska Natives received (0.60%). At the highest level, the distribution of doctoral degrees is as follows: (57.1%) of doctoral degrees were awarded to Whites, (27.7%) to foreigners, (10.3%) to traditional underrepresented students (African American, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Natives), and (5.7%) to Asian and Pacific Islanders. Clearly, for African American, Hispanic, and American Indian and Alaska Native students, the higher the educational degree, the fewer degrees were awarded to them as indicated by the data for the 2007-2008 academic year.

Trend data starting from the mid-1970s to the turn of the century reveal a similar picture in that there was an increase in the number of degrees conferred to minority students over time, but the change happened slowly and in small increments (U.S. Department of Education, 2005). To be sure, minority students are not equally represented among degree earners as compared to their share of the population (See Tables 1-3).
Table 1: Bachelor's degrees conferred by degree-granting institutions, by racial/ethnic group: Selected years, 1977 - 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian / Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian / Alaska Native</th>
<th>Non-resident alien</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian / Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian / Alaska Native</th>
<th>Non-resident alien</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976 - 77</td>
<td>917,900</td>
<td>807,688</td>
<td>58,636</td>
<td>18,743</td>
<td>13,793</td>
<td>3,326</td>
<td>15,714</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>88.0</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 - 81</td>
<td>934,800</td>
<td>807,319</td>
<td>60,673</td>
<td>21,832</td>
<td>18,794</td>
<td>3,593</td>
<td>22,589</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>86.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 - 91</td>
<td>1,094,538</td>
<td>914,093</td>
<td>66,375</td>
<td>37,342</td>
<td>42,529</td>
<td>4,583</td>
<td>29,616</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 01</td>
<td>1,244,171</td>
<td>927,357</td>
<td>111,307</td>
<td>77,745</td>
<td>78,902</td>
<td>9,049</td>
<td>39,811</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>74.5</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 - 04</td>
<td>1,399,542</td>
<td>1,028,114</td>
<td>131,241</td>
<td>94,644</td>
<td>92,073</td>
<td>10,636</td>
<td>44,832</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.

Table 2: Master's degrees conferred by degree-granting institutions, by racial/ethnic group: Selected years, 1977 - 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian / Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian / Alaska Native</th>
<th>Non-resident alien</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian / Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian / Alaska Native</th>
<th>Non-resident alien</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976 - 77</td>
<td>316,602</td>
<td>266,061</td>
<td>21,037</td>
<td>6,071</td>
<td>5,122</td>
<td>967</td>
<td>17,344</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 - 81</td>
<td>294,183</td>
<td>241,216</td>
<td>17,133</td>
<td>6,461</td>
<td>6,282</td>
<td>1,034</td>
<td>22,057</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>82.0</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 - 91</td>
<td>337,168</td>
<td>261,232</td>
<td>16,616</td>
<td>8,887</td>
<td>11,650</td>
<td>1,178</td>
<td>37,605</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>77.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 01</td>
<td>468,476</td>
<td>320,480</td>
<td>38,265</td>
<td>21,543</td>
<td>24,283</td>
<td>2,481</td>
<td>61,424</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>13.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 - 04</td>
<td>558,940</td>
<td>369,582</td>
<td>50,657</td>
<td>29,666</td>
<td>30,952</td>
<td>3,192</td>
<td>74,891</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>66.1</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 3: Doctor's degrees conferred by degree-granting institutions, by racial/ethnic group: Selected years, 1977 - 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian / Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian / Alaska Native</th>
<th>Non-resident alien</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Black, non-Hispanic</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian / Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian / Alaska Native</th>
<th>Non-resident alien</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1976 - 77</td>
<td>33,126</td>
<td>26,851</td>
<td>1,253</td>
<td>522</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>3,747</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980 - 81</td>
<td>32,839</td>
<td>25,908</td>
<td>1,265</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>877</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>4,203</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>78.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990 - 91</td>
<td>39,294</td>
<td>25,855</td>
<td>1,248</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>1,504</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>9,824</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>85.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 01</td>
<td>44,904</td>
<td>27,454</td>
<td>2,207</td>
<td>1,516</td>
<td>2,587</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>10,063</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 - 04</td>
<td>48,378</td>
<td>28,214</td>
<td>2,900</td>
<td>1,662</td>
<td>2,632</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>12,753</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


*Note: Detail may not sum to totals due to rounding.
Given the low number of doctoral degrees awarded to minority students, it is to be expected that the number of minority professors in institutions of higher education also be far from parity. Consider that in 1981 at the full professor level, 93.5% percent of the faculty were White, 2.1% were African American, 1.0% were Hispanic, 3.3% were Asian American, and 0.2% were American Indian (See Table 4). Roughly twenty five years later in 2005, White professors comprised 86.3% of full professors, 3.2% were African American, 2.2% were Hispanic, 6.5% were Asian American, 0.3% were American Indian (Harvey, 2003; Ryu, 2008). While it is important to note the progress that has occurred, it is also crucial to consider how much work needs to be done to realize access and equity in higher education. The trend data is similar at the associate and assistant professor levels during the same time period (See Tables 5 and 6).

Table 4: Full-time faculty, by academic rank (Full Professor), race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1981, 1991, 2001, and 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>115,210</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>144,341</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>161,936</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>169,192</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>107,690</td>
<td>93.5</td>
<td>132,065</td>
<td>91.5</td>
<td>142,597</td>
<td>88.1</td>
<td>145,936</td>
<td>86.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>2,396</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>3,572</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5,030</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>5,484</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1,166</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2,038</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>3,120</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3,793</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>3,759</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>6,371</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>9,357</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>11,060</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>199</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>519</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Harvey, 2003; Ryu, 2008
Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding
* Totals do not add up due to the omission of data on foreign faculty
Table 5: Full-time faculty, by academic rank (Associate Professor), race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1981, 1991, 2001, and 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>1981</th>
<th>1991</th>
<th>2001*</th>
<th>2005*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>105,584</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>116,631</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>96,959</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>103,918</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>3,576</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4,942</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1,438</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2,107</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>3,262</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>5,391</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Harvey, 2003; Ryu, 2008
Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding
* Totals do not add up due to the omission of data on foreign faculty

Table 6: Full-time faculty, by academic rank (Assistant Professor), race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1981, 1991, 2001, and 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>110,974</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>126,344</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>99,154</td>
<td>89.3</td>
<td>106,557</td>
<td>84.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>5,419</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>7,524</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1,771</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>3,246</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>4,349</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>8,649</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Harvey, 2003; Ryu, 2008
Note: Details may not sum to totals due to rounding
* Totals do not add up due to the omission of data on foreign faculty

At the highest level of the administration ladder the picture is also bleak. In 2003, at the highest ranks of the administrative chain (e.g. president, chancellor, campus dean, etc.), 87 percent of chief executive officers were White and only 13 percent were minority chief executive officers at both private and public institutions of higher education (Harvey, 2003). In 2007, another report highlighted similar data that demonstrated relatively small changes. At the aggregate level and at all institution types, Whites totaled 84.2% of total senior administrators, African Americans totaled 9.3%, Asian Americans totaled 1.6%,

American Indians totaled 0.4%, Hispanics totaled 4.0%, and Other/Multiple Races totaled 0.5% (King & Gomez, 2008). Additionally, the authors reported that,

> During the past 20 years, the percentage of the nation’s college and university presidents who are people of color rose only from 8 percent to 14 percent. When minority-serving institutions are excluded, racial/ethnic minority presidents today lead just 10 percent of colleges and universities (King & Gomez, 2008, pp. iii-iv).

Clearly, from the undergraduate level to the highest-ranking officials of colleges and universities, individuals from minority groups are less likely than Whites to be represented at all levels.

> At the Big Ten universities, which make up the majority of the institutional members of the CIC, a similar trend follows as minority students were underrepresented among doctoral degree earners from when SROP was introduced to the present. Data for selected years between 1985 to 2010 indicate that foreign students experienced an increase in the total number of doctoral degrees earned from approximately 21% to almost 42%; White students experienced a decline going from earning almost 72% of doctoral degrees in 1985 to approximately 48% in 2010; Black students experienced a small drop in the number of doctoral degrees earned from 2.8% in 1985 to 2.6% in 2010; Hispanic students experienced an increase in the number of doctoral degrees earned from 1.3% in 1985 to 2.7% in 2010; Asian and Pacific Islander students also experienced an increase going from 2.3% of doctoral degrees earned in 1985 to 4.2% in 2010; and finally, American Indian/Alaska Native students experienced a slight increase from 0.1% of doctoral degrees earned in 1985 to 0.3% in 2010 (See Tables 7-9). An interesting trend that is evident in the data is that foreign students earned more Ph.D. degrees in 2010 than all non-White students combined. If the trend continues, foreign students may soon surpass White students in the total number of Ph.D. degrees that are conferred to them.
Table 7: Doctoral degrees conferred by Big Ten universities, by race/ethnicity: Selected years, 1985-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Foreigner</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian or Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian / Alaska Native</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>5,133</td>
<td>1,095</td>
<td>3,694</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21.3%</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>5,510</td>
<td>1,801</td>
<td>3,358</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32.6%</td>
<td>60.9%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>6,206</td>
<td>2,150</td>
<td>3,469</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>34.6%</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>5,651</td>
<td>1,895</td>
<td>3,174</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>33.5%</td>
<td>56.1%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>5,919</td>
<td>2,393</td>
<td>2,951</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>40.4%</td>
<td>49.8%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>6,705</td>
<td>2,790</td>
<td>3,243</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>41.6%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IPEDS, 2013

Table 8: Doctoral degrees conferred by Big Ten universities, by race/ethnicity, 1985

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian or Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian / Alaska Native</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>73.0%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>91.9%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>607</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>67.9%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan State</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>72.3%</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>80.6%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>66.0%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>69.6%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penn State</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>71.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purdue</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>66.6%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>1.5%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>473</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70.2%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IPEDS, 2013
Note: Numbers do not add up to 100% as foreigners are excluded from the tally.
Table 9: Doctoral degrees conferred by Big Ten universities, by race/ethnicity, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Asian or Pacific Islander</th>
<th>American Indian / Alaska Native</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>763</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>59.2%</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>48.4%</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan State</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4.0%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>701</td>
<td>383</td>
<td>54.6%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State</td>
<td>757</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penn State</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purdue</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>40.1%</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>716</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>57.1%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: IPEDS, 2013
Note: Numbers do not add up to 100% as foreigners are excluded from the tally.

Given the disparities between White and minority student degree earners, a persistent and central concern for university administrators, public policy, higher education policy, and the courts is how to resolve the enduring issue of access to college and graduate school. One approach to increasing minority representation in graduate and professional schools is the preparation of minority undergraduate students for graduate study through intensive research experiences with faculty mentors and enrichment activities in summer programs such as the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation’s Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship (MMUF) program; the Summer Research Early Identification Program (SR-EIP) administered by the Leadership Alliance and hosted at thirty-two of the nation’s leading research universities, including the institutional members of the Ivy...
League and public universities including the University of Virginia and University of Miami; the Carnegie Mellon Summer Programs for Diversity; the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Moore Undergraduate Research Apprentice Program (MURAP); the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program; and the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP). The missions and goals of the programs at UNC and the Mellon Foundation are similar to those of SROP. At UNC, the mission of the program is as follows: MURAP seeks to change the demography of the academy to more closely reflect the composition of society as a whole by changing the composition of the student population seeking Ph.D. degrees. The Mellon Foundation indicates that the mission of their program is as follows: The mission of MMUF is to increase the representation of underrepresented minorities in the faculty ranks of institutions of higher learning. The goal is to bring greater diversity to scholarship and learning by making intellectual culture truly reflective of the American experience.

Given that this study focuses on examining the perceptions of CIC university administrators regarding SROP, it explores if these leaders believe that this program serves as a gateway to graduate schools and the professoriate for minority students. Examining these perspectives is crucial as it is uncommon to find university administrators’ voices and practical experiences in higher education research. As such, this study seeks to understand why a particular group of CIC institutions has been able to continue their support, albeit at different levels, for the Summer Research Opportunities Program in an era that has witnessed the elimination of many of the policies and programs that were put in place to provide equality of educational opportunity for previously excluded students. Understanding such commitments and actions is beneficial as they can inform future
university policies that address access and equity issues. As a point of context, administrators are asked to consider the value that is placed on programs and initiatives that address the underrepresentation of minorities in graduate education. Furthermore, they are asked to think about access and equity issues while reflecting on a program that was designed to address access to graduate education. Administrators who represented the universities that comprised the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) at that time introduced the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) in 1986\(^1\). The leaders of these institutions implemented the SROP as a response to the underrepresentation of minority students in graduate schools and the lack of minority professors at their respective institutions. In this sense, the idea behind taking this action is aligned with institutions taking affirmative action to ensure that their respective institutions reflect the growing diversity of the nation.

The fundamental rationale behind the SROP was that in order to diversify the CIC graduate schools and subsequently the professoriate, this group of universities should develop a program that would introduce minority students to research and advanced study during their undergraduate years. As such, the task was to identify talented students of color from throughout the country and invite them to conduct research studies under the guidance of faculty members at one of the CIC institutions during the summer months. By exposing selected participants to the research process and engaging them in seminars that discuss graduate study, these students would then be more inclined to pursue advanced

\(^1\) The fifteen institutions that hosted the Summer Research Opportunities Program at the time of this study were as follows: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), Indiana University, University of Iowa, University of Michigan at Ann-Arbor, Michigan State University (MSU), University of Minnesota, Northwestern University (NW), Ohio State University (OSU), Pennsylvania State University (PSU), Purdue University, University of Wisconsin at Madison, University of Chicago (UC), University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Indiana University / Purdue University in Indianapolis (IUPUI), University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee.
degrees and eventually consider joining the professoriate. Understanding university administrators’ perspectives towards SROP is critical because these institutions are among the top producers of doctoral degree recipients in the United States. Indeed, recent data highlights that two of the CIC institutions, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and the University of Wisconsin at Madison are among the top five institutions that confer the highest number of doctoral degrees (National Science Foundation, 2009). The following is a brief description of the program.

The Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP)

The Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) established the Summer Research Opportunities Program in 1986. At that time, the CIC was the academic consortium of the major research universities in the Midwest; these institutions included the eleven institutions of the Big Ten Athletic Conference, the University of Chicago, the University of Illinois at Chicago, the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, and Indiana University/Purdue University at Indianapolis (IUPUI). Administrators at the CIC institutions established the SROP in recognition of the need for inter-university cooperation to increase the number of talented students from underrepresented groups who enrolled in their institutions’ respective graduate programs. As such, the goal of the SROP has been to increase the number of minority Ph.D. recipients at the collaborating institutions. In turn, these future Ph.D. recipients are encouraged to consider pursuing academic careers in order to increase the diversity within all ranks of the academy.

Institutions select students from a variety of colleges and universities to participate in the program. Participants are mostly juniors who are enrolled in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges,
and Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs). Additionally, students from traditional research-intensive institutions and students who attend the host institutions are also selected to participate. Program participants must meet the minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.0 and be in good academic standing. Furthermore, students must secure two letters of recommendation from faculty members who are familiar with their overall academic achievements. Moreover, while the program aims to increase the number of underrepresented students, it is not exclusive to only serving minority students. For example, on some of the campuses a small proportion of students who are first-generation college students, students from low socio-economic backgrounds, and students who are interested in issues pertaining to racial minorities are also selected to participate in SROP. Since its inception in 1986 to 2004, SROP has served close to nine thousand students (See Table 10). Out of these participants, over eleven hundred have earned graduate degrees, and over fifteen hundred were currently enrolled in graduate school during this time period (See Table 11). It is important to note here that more recent data is not available either through the CIC or through the host institutions. However, the nearly two decades of data that is included here provides us with a sense of the magnitude and potential impact of the program. Moreover, the path towards earning a doctoral degree in some fields now ranges between seven to ten years, so many of SROP program participants are still in graduate school.

While in the program, participants engage in a variety of activities throughout the eight to ten weeks. The major component of the SROP is a research project that participants conceptualize and conduct with the guidance of faculty mentors from their respective disciplines. SROP students also participate in campus-based educational
enrichment activities, such as but not limited to, Graduate Record Exam (GRE) preparation classes, scientific writing courses, academic seminars and a CIC-wide summer conference. Given that SROP is an established program, it is essential to examine the value that university administrators at the host institutions place on this program in order to understand how the program evolved, the impact of the program, and how and why it is sustained. The insights of these administrators will enhance our understanding about the manner in which decisions about diversifying these institutions are made on college and university campuses and the complexity of measuring the changes that result from these policies and strategies.

Table 10: SROP participants by year and host institution: 1986-2004

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Table 11: Graduate Outcomes for SROP Participants, 1986-2004

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<th>Approx. Percent Grad Study</th>
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Source: CIC Graduate Recruitment and Retention Workshop, November 15-16, 2006, Columbus, OH

Purpose and Significance of the Study

This study departs from the mainstream study on affirmative action and diversity, which largely focuses on national debates by scholarly experts, legal arguments, court decisions, and state legislatures. The struggle to transform graduate education is waged not only in federal courts, popular referendums, admissions offices, and university legal departments; it is also shaped by university administrators who face the challenging and sometimes difficult task of implementing programs designed to achieve diversity in graduate education and by extension the professoriate. This is the heretofore-understudied
dimension of diversity efforts, that is, the perceptions and attitudes of those charged with implementing graduate diversity programs within the complex web of higher education bureaucracy. This study contributes to this gap in the knowledge base and therefore will make contributions to the broader body of research on diversity, access, and equity in higher education.

Of importance to this study is to examine the commitment of CIC administrators to SROP. For almost three decades, the SROP program has persisted on the campuses of the CIC universities even though court decisions, the ebb and flow of students and faculty, and the context in which the SROP is carried out have all changed considerably. One key element in the persistence of SROP is the knowledge, commitment and priority given to the program by university administrators. To be sure, the future of SROP and other efforts to realize America’s promise and secure its future depends materially on the engagement of university administrators with SROP and comparable initiatives.

While popular explanations of the failure to achieve diversity in graduate education focus on court rulings, the conservative backlash, and the helplessness of universities to enforce affirmative action, they fail to explain how university administrators make decisions that further or constrain the implementation of programs aimed at diversifying graduate education. This is especially important in light of recent anti-affirmative action developments. Since the late 1990’s, seven states have implemented referendums, legislation or executive orders banning race-conscious admissions policies and practices. The recent Supreme Court ruling in *Fisher v. University of Texas* (2011) further cements the anti-affirmative action backlash and hamstrings efforts to diversify American higher education. In this context, more research is needed on how university administrators
conceptualize diversity programs within a politically and legally constrained environment. A close study of the perceptions and attitudes of CIC administrators and the implementation of SROP will shed light on how institutions of higher education have dealt with restrictions on affirmative action while still pursing and implementing diversity programs.

*Conceptual Framework: Access, Equity, and Diversity in Higher Education*

The continued pursuit of access, equity, and diversity in higher education is grounded fundamentally on interrupting the status quo in order to create not only more equitable institutions, but also a more robust democracy that strives to ensure that the ideal of equality is at its core. Many of the policies and programs that have been developed to realize this ideal have been broadly categorized as diversity initiatives. Over time, policies and issues that have focused on diversity include the desegregation of higher education, the development of race-conscious policies and programs such as affirmative action, addressing structural issues within the university including the diversification of staff, faculty, and administration; and responding to campus climate issues (Anderson, 2002; Bowen & Bok, 1998; Chang, 2002; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pederson, & Allen, 1999; Smith, Altbach, & Lomotey, 2002; Tierney, 1997; Trent, 1991). Unfortunately, recent discourses have been limited in scope by mainly focusing on the use of race in admissions decisions. Mitchell Chang (2002) succinctly discusses this condition in the article titled, “Preservation or transformation: Where’s the real educational discourse on diversity?” In this paper, Chang notes that the because the recent discourse on diversity has mainly focused on considering race in admissions decisions, it “tends to: (a) overlook the full historical development of diversity-related efforts on college campuses, (b) focus primarily
on admissions as the main goal, (c) ignore transformative aims, and (d) underestimate the impact of diversity on student learning” (Ibid., p. 128). Hence, he suggests that we must broaden the diversity discourse in order to account for the widespread benefits of diversity (Ibid.). Moreover, we must continue to examine what these initiatives aim to achieve in order to understand the types of commitments and changes that need to occur in order to realize the goal.

Historically, diversity initiatives emerged from the pursuit of access and equity through the demands from oppressed groups for social justice. Thus, creating diversity, as Chang (2002) argues, has not been just about increasing the number of minority students who are admitted; it is also about transforming institutions and in doing so advancing our democratic ideals. This pursuit must be understood and continually situated within the broader historical, political, and economic context. Hence, Chang is correct in reminding us that,

> It is important to recognize that the ‘diversity movement’ in higher education is not simply a colorful and innocuous idea or trend. Rather, many advocates of diversity-related efforts and initiatives hold that diversity is, at its core, an ideological justification for changing existing arrangements of privilege and power” (Ibid.).

Without a doubt, the process to create change in higher education has been slow. Many institutions of higher education have resisted the changes that diversity calls for in all areas of campus including changes in the curriculum, the hiring of a more diverse faculty, and campus climates (Ibid.). This certainly has been the case at elite public universities. Given this condition, the pursuit of access and equity continues to be necessary.

The Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) fits well within this broadly defined diversity agenda as minority students’ access to elite graduate programs has been
limited in a similar fashion that access to elite undergraduate programs has been guarded (Gerald & Kaycock, 2006). To be sure, access to elite institutions matters in real significant ways. Alexander Astin, one of the nation’s leading higher education scholars made the argument early on that access to elite public universities was a myth. In 1975, Astin presented a paper titled, “The myth of equal access in public higher education,” in which he examined access to the nation’s elite public institutions. At the time, he suggested that many legislators were content with defining access “simply in terms of students being able to enroll somewhere,” meaning that the students who were graduating from high school could attend some form of postsecondary education (Astin, 1975, p. 4). However, this type of access by no means should be equated with equality of opportunity. He made the distinction as follows:

If institutions were roughly equivalent in their resources and offerings, that definition would probably make sense. However, institutions are by no means equivalent and the student’s future may depend as much on the kind of institution attended as on attendance versus nonattendance. Indeed, with the proliferation of public community colleges and the substantial resources of financial aid now available to needy students, the real issue of access is not who goes to college, but who goes to college where (Ibid., p.4).

Moreover, he argued that the system of public higher education in the United States evolved into a clear institutional hierarchy, with very few elite and renowned institutions at the top, a substantial number of middle-class status institutions, and a large number of relatively unknown institutions (Astin, 1975). Within this hierarchy, he noted, minority students were “most likely concentrated in the two-year and the least selective four-year institutions, and concentrated least in the universities...low income and minority students tend to be disproportionately concentrated in institutions at the bottom of the hierarchy” (Ibid., p.7). As such, minority students at the time were not able to benefit from the
investments that elite institutions make on behalf of their students. Astin noted that students who were admitted to elite institutions had a lot to gain from the enhanced resources that were made available to them including renowned faculty, residential housing, and student support services, all which helped them to successfully earn degrees (Ibid). Almost 40 years later, the headline has not changed as minority students still face an uphill battle in obtaining access to elite public and private institutions and to graduate programs.

In the recent report, “Separate and unequal: How higher education reinforces the intergenerational reproduction of White racial privilege,” Anthony Carnevale and Jeff Strohl (2013) from Georgetown University highlight the continued inequality in higher education. The authors found that “between 1995 and 2009, more than eight in 10 of the new White students have gone to the 468 most selective colleges and more than seven in 10 of net new African-American and Hispanic students have gone to the 3,250 open-access, two- and four-year colleges” (p.5). Hence, the condition that Astin wrote about in 1975 still exists at the turn of the century because minority students are still more likely to attend institutions with limited resources and are less likely to graduate from college. Carnevale and Strohl (2013) also conclude that “the polarization of the postsecondary system matters because resources matter” (p. 7). Indeed, they write,

The 468 most selective colleges spend anywhere from two to almost five times as much per student. Higher spending in the most selective colleges leads to higher graduation rates, greater access to graduate and professional schools, and better economic outcomes in the labor market, when comparing with White, African-American, and Hispanic students who are equally qualified but attend less competitive schools. Greater postsecondary resources and completion rates for White students concentrated in the 468 most selective colleges confer substantial labor market advantages, including more than $2 million dollars per student in higher lifetime earnings, and access to professional and managerial elite jobs, as well as careers that bring personal and social empowerment (Ibid.)
Furthermore, based on their findings, they contend that for minority students who were in the top half of their high school class and either did not go to college or did not graduate from college because they enrolled in open-access, two- and four-year colleges, the likelihood that they would have graduated had they attended an elite institution would have increased to a predicted 73% graduation rate. Hence, they suggest that, “the ‘graduation crisis’ is a function of which postsecondary schools these students attend and not that the students are somehow ‘unfit’ for college” (Carnevale & Strohl, 2013, p. 3). In essence, they explain the role of higher education in reproducing inequality as follows,

The postsecondary system is more and more complicit as a passive agent in the systematic reproduction of White racial privilege across generations. More college completion among White parents brings higher earnings that fuel the intergenerational reproduction of privilege by providing more highly educated parents the means to pass their educational advantages on to their children. Higher earnings buy more expensive housing in the suburbs with the best schools and peer support for educational attainment. The synergy between the growing economic value of education and the increased sorting by housing values makes parental education the strongest predictor of a child’s educational attainment and future earnings. As a result, the country also has the least intergenerational educational and income mobility among advanced nations (Ibid., pp. 7-8).

Clearly, many of the same challenges that exist today in terms of increasing access to elite institutions and graduate programs and realizing equality of educational opportunity are not new. The historical record provides evidence that should inform the current access debates by underscoring the long journey that minority students have had to endure to obtain educational opportunities and crack open the doors of elite institutions. As Karen and Dougherty (2005) put it,

...despite a large increase in the overall number of students going to college, differences by race and social class are actually increasing. To understand this conundrum, we must better comprehend the politics of college access and how the larger patterns of inequality in the United States are produced through education.
At the same time, we must appreciate that a major political reaction has undermined the legitimacy and effectiveness of policies for achieving educational equality (p. 33).

It is important then to continue to broaden the discussion on access and equity because inequities in higher education still persist. This study will inform the discourse by identifying the opportunities and challenges that exist in diversifying graduate programs. Particular attention will be paid to identifying the institutional factors that must be considered beyond just a desire to increase the number of underrepresented students who are admitted to graduate programs across the SROP host institutions. In other words, is it possible to achieve this specific goal within the university structures that exist, or are there specific changes that need to happen in order to achieve the goal? Furthermore, it will also be critical to highlight how administrators justify the continued sustainability of SROP as this will provide a comprehensive view at how diversity-related initiatives are rationalized at elite public institutions.
CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The overarching theme of this literature review accentuates the longstanding issues of access and equity in higher education and documents the quest by marginalized groups to realize the ideal of equality of opportunity broadly and equality of educational opportunity specifically. This particular focus is based on the fact that a major part of educational policy since the mid-twentieth century was designed to address the ideal of equality of educational opportunity (Howe, 1997). Yet, one of the challenges regarding the pursuit of equality of educational opportunity has been defining the parameters by which to measure the success or failure of the intended goals (Astin, 1975; Howe, 1997). First, a clear definition helps to set a benchmark by which to measure progress. M.T. Hallinan (1988) contends that the concept of equality of educational opportunity “refers to equalizing individuals’ access to educational resources,” and equality of opportunity mainly refers to educational outcomes (p. 251). If this definition is used, all students should have an equal chance of accessing educational resources and should be equally represented among degree earners at all institutions. Yet, this ideal remains an aspiration when we consider the continued pursuit of access and equity in higher education.

In order to understand the persistent inequality within higher education, the issues of access and equity must be contextualized within the social, economic, and historical fabric of the United States. Indeed, if this critique is not contextualized within the broader social structure, it leads to simple and unfounded analyses such as the all-too-common assumption that all individuals have an equal chance to pursue educational opportunities.
An often cited quote from a speech delivered by President Johnson succinctly points to this false assumption. In 1965, approximately a decade prior to the *Bakke* decision, former President Johnson proclaimed in a speech at Howard University his justification for “moving beyond nondiscrimination to a more vigorous, affirmative effort to provide opportunities for black Americans” (Bowen & Bok, 1998, p. 6). His rationale was as follows,

> You do not take a person who, for years, has been hobbled by chains and liberate him, bringing up to the starting line in a race and then say, ‘you are free to compete with all others,’ and still justly believe that you have been completely fair (Ibid.).

Issues of access, merit, opportunity, diversity, and equality in higher education are heavily contested when they pertain to minority students seeking opportunities at the most prestigious institutions. Yet, through the courts, through changes in policy, and in the adoption of educational innovations, steps have been taken over the years to break down these barriers and move America closer to the ideal of equality of educational opportunity.

Policies, programs, and initiatives that aim to expand educational opportunities have fallen under the social justice umbrella. Indeed, the pursuit of expanded educational opportunities is critical because many rewards are associated with earning a college degree. For instance, research indicates that college graduates tend to earn higher incomes, are more likely to have access to health care, experience more job security, and enjoy a better quality of life (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). For those who attend elite colleges and universities, they are more likely to be admitted into prestigious graduate programs and have a better chance at assuming key leadership and professional roles afforded to those who earn these advanced degrees (Bowen & Bok, 1998; Carnevale & Strohl, 2013). Access to educational opportunities in this sense is highly valued and the
stakes are high. Yet, there are many inequalities that exist in the broader society that impact the educational trajectories for minority students and limit their ability to have a fair chance of pursuing higher education. For example, a large number of minority students have to overcome many social ills like poverty, discrimination, and unequal schools. Ironically, education has often been viewed as an endeavor that can help students overcome all social inequalities. Howard Bowen (1977) made this case in noting that, “in the United States, education has often been hailed as the ‘great equalizer,’ a means of blurring, if not erasing, social differences” (p. 326). Yet, educational opportunities are not distributed equally. And so it remains that many embrace the ideal of equality of opportunity, but the challenge lies in the implementation. Kerr (1967) put it as follows, “America’s greatest dilemma – the contrast between principle and practice in achieving equality of opportunity” (p. 11). In higher education, we have ample evidence to make the case that indeed providing equality of educational opportunity at this level is far from becoming a reality, as is the case with the limited access that minority students have had to the nation’s elite institutions. To that end, the following section summarizes the context that led to the demand for access, which began with the dismantling of legal and customary segregation. It is in this journey that inequality becomes transparent and the pursuit of equality of educational opportunity justified.

Desegregation in Higher Education

As part of the Civil Rights Movement, people of color challenged inequality in American society. They did this by several means including staging demonstrations, in some instances by rioting, and certainly by seeking justice through the courts. At the core
of the movement was the quest to dismantle the system of segregation. In higher education, access to traditional White institutions started with Berea College. The college was founded in Kentucky in 1859 and drew its students from emancipated slaves and loyal Union mountaineers (Bowen, Kurzweil, & Tobin, 2005; Kluger, 2004). As such, the administration was purposely integrating the study body at Berea College that was located in a southern state, a decision that was unheard of during this time. John G. Fee, a nondenominational minister and abolitionist spearheaded Berea College, which began as a one-room school on land that was donated by Cassius M. Clay (“The Roller-Coaster Ride,” 1996). As expected, the people of Kentucky were not accepting of this new integrated college and demonstrated their lack of support by harassing John Fee, even pulling him from his home and publicly whipping him, and continuously professing their slave-holding interests (“The Roller-Coaster Ride,” 1996). The legislature of the state of Kentucky also affirmed the sentiment against integration by introducing “legislation that required school officials to teach blacks and Whites at separate times in separate locations” (Lewis, 2004, p.24). As such, Kluger (2004) notes that the state “found the biracial school not to its taste and passed a law saying that any institution could teach members of both races at the same time only if they were taught separately in classes conducted at least twenty-five miles apart” (p.87). Berea College filed a lawsuit against the state but was unsuccessful. Kluger (2004) affirms that,

Kentucky’s Supreme Court held the twenty-five mile separation a bit excessive, but otherwise not only approved the balance of the new state law but applauded its aims. God created the races dissimilar, the court noted, and any interracial association ‘at all, under certain conditions, leads to the main evil, which is amalgamation’...[F]ollowing the order of Divine Providence human authority ought not to compel these widely separated races to intermix (p.87).
Despite the opposition of many in the state, this did not stop John Fee and others from raising funds to expand Berea College and to continue to admit African American students. Many of the African Americans who graduated from Berea College during this time assumed important professional roles, with some going on to teach in segregated colleges and secondary schools in the South (“The Roller-Coaster Ride,” 1996). In fact, “an 1892 graduate, James Bond, taught at Fisk University and served as a trustee of Berea College from 1896 to 1914. His grandson is Julian Bond, the civil rights activist and former Georgia state senator” (“The Roller-Coaster Ride,” 1996, p.62). One of its most well-known graduates from the class of 1903 was Carter G. Woodson, the son of former slaves who went on to earn a Master’s degree from the University of Chicago in 1908 and a Ph.D. from Harvard University in 1912, and is well remembered for publishing the Journal of Negro History and for becoming dean of the Howard University School of Liberal Arts (“The Roller-Coaster Ride,” 1996). The access by African Americans to Berea College came to a halt when in 1904 the state of Kentucky passed the so-called “Day Law,” which “made it illegal for blacks and Whites to be educated together at any level from grade school through graduate school” (The Roller-Coaster Ride, 1996, p.63). As such, despite being committed to integrating higher education, in 1908, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the state and mandated Berea College to only accept White students. This did not change until 1950 when the Day Law was amended to permit integrated education (The Roller-Coaster Ride, 1996). Clearly, the Plessy doctrine of separate-but-equal prevailed and the Court once again protected legal segregation.

Armed with the conviction that African Americans deserved to be treated equally under the law, a group of attorneys who graduated from Historically Black Colleges and
Universities (HBCUs) and then from Howard Law School were able to realize their first victory in cracking the longstanding law of segregation by demanding equal protection as guaranteed by the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution. The first case focused on Donald Gaines Murray who was denied admission to the University of Maryland law school because of the color of his skin. Mr. Murray met every other requirement for admission to the law school including earning a college degree from the prestigious Amherst College (Kluger, 2004; Stefkovich & Leas, 1994). The university's registrar returned Murray's application and handling fee on February 9, 1935 and stated in the letter, “President Pearson instructed me today to return to you the application form and the money order, as the University does not accept Negro students, except at the Princess Anne Academy” (Kluger, 2004, p. 188). In a previous letter in response to Murray’s inquiry about admission to the law school, university president Pearson explained that, “the state legislature had earmarked funds for him to attend law school out-of-state or at Morgan State or Princess Anne Academy. The latter, hardly an institution of higher education, highlighted the artifice of segregation's claim of separate but equal facilities and institutions” (Lewis, 2004, p. 25).

In this case, Pearson v. Murray (1936), the state Circuit Court held that because the state of Maryland failed to provide a “separate-but-equal” law school, the all-White University of Maryland law school had to admit Mr. Gaines Murray. The ruling was appealed to the Maryland Court of Appeals with no success as the court affirmed the lower court decision. This ruling has been noted as the first victory in the fight for equal opportunity in higher education (Lewis, 2004). The strategy that the group of attorneys employed was key is securing this victory. The goal in the case, Kluger (2004) argues,
“would be not to attack the constitutionality of segregation itself but to challenge its legality as it was practiced by showing that nothing remotely approaching equal educational opportunities was offered to Negroes in segregated states – and that was unconstitutional” (p.186). Using many of the university officials’ own testimonies, Murray’s attorneys were successful in arguing the case. Lewis (2004) notes that,

They willingly offered that there was no law school for blacks in the state; showed little sense that one should exist, even a patently unequal one; admitted that the state had not appropriated funds to send Murray out of state; and evidenced little concern for even the crudest elements of the Plessy doctrine (p. 26).

This was no small victory. In fact, Lewis (2004) adds that,

What Maryland judges decided had little reach beyond the state’s borders. NAACP lawyers and those they defended understood this. Incremental change brought little relief for the majority of blacks seeking a fair share of resources. Yet the body of law rested on the establishment of precedent. Thus a gradualist approach continued (p. 26).

Indeed, it was the precedent set in the Murray case that would serve as the foundation for other lawsuits that followed. Another important case landed in Missouri in 1938.

The NAACP lawyers knew for a fact that Missouri did not have a law school for African Americans and that they would not be admitted to the all-White University of Missouri law school (Lewis, 2004). Just like in Maryland, African Americans were only admitted to Black institutions, and if a law school did not exist at the Black institution, one could be created, or an African American student could choose to attend an out-of-state program (Lewis, 2004). If an African American resident would choose the latter, the state would pay the difference in Missouri’s cost to those of the new institution (Kluger, 2004). However, the state did not pay for travel or accommodations (Lewis, 2004). Llloyd Gaines, an African American resident who had graduated from Lincoln University of Missouri applied to the University of Missouri law school because “he rejected the state’s legitimate
offer to build a law program at Lincoln or to travel out-of-state, saying that doing so would place an undue burden on him and deny him equal rights just because of his race” (Lewis, 2004, p. 27). As expected, the law school at the University of Missouri denied Gaines admission and instructed him to apply either to Lincoln University or an out-of-state school. Arguing before the U.S. Supreme Court, Charles Houston used the same strategy of not challenging "the holy writ of Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) and the legitimacy of separate-but-equal schools. But he insisted that the Court enforce the principle” (Kluger, 2004, p. 211). Houston’s strategy paid off. Kluger writes,

Missouri’s efforts to establish a university for Negroes on the same basis as the ones for Whites was certainly ‘commendable,’ but the fact remained that [the Court noted] instruction in law for negroes is not afforded by the state, either at Lincoln University or elsewhere within the state, and that the state excludes negroes from the advantages of the law school it has established at the University of Missouri (p. 211).

The Supreme Court affirmed in Gaines v. Canada (1938) that, “by the operation of the laws of Missouri a privilege has been created for White law students which is denied to Negroes by reason of their race” (Kluger, 2004, p. 212). Consequently, the Court noted that Mr. Gaines was entitled to be admitted to the law school at the University of Missouri (Kluger, 2004). Slowly, segregation was being cracked by cases like Murray and Gaines.

Indeed, it took these cases of single individuals to demonstrate the undue burden that would be placed on African American students if they would either attend a segregated and unequal, if available, Black law school or attending an out-of-state institution. Perhaps the most important lesson here, however, is to highlight the measures and monetary resources that these traditional White institutions used to protect segregation. By all means, both Murray and Gaines were monumental in setting precedent for future cases challenging the separate-but-equal doctrine in all sectors of society.
The next battle began in Oklahoma in 1946, where Ada Lois Sipuel who was a graduate of Langston College applied and was denied admission to the University of Oklahoma law school (Kluger, 2004). It seemed like it would be tough to win this case because Oklahoma was a state that was known for its fierce opposition to integration. Kluger (2004) notes that, “Oklahoma was so vehement in its opposition to biracial schools that its laws called for a fine of from $100 to $500 a day against any institution that instructed Whites and blacks together, and any student attending such a school could be fined five to twenty dollars a day” (p. 257). The lower court and later the state supreme court in 1947 ruled against the plaintiff noting that, “the university did not have to open a black law school until it had enough applicants to make one practicable. Meanwhile, “Ms. Sipuel could wait” (Kluger, 2004, p. 257). Sipuel’s attorneys appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court and the case was captioned Sipuel v. Oklahoma State Board of Regents (1948). The Supreme Court ruled that, “Oklahoma had to build an equal law school for blacks, admit Sipuel to the present law school, or close it altogether until blacks could be accommodated” (Lewis, 2004, p. 30). As expected, the Oklahoma Board of Regents was displeased with the ruling and “created a separate law school overnight by ordering a small section of the state capital in Oklahoma City roped off for colored students and assigning three law teachers to attend to the instruction of Miss Sipuel and others similarly situated” (Kluger, 2004, p.258). Thurgood Marshall, the NAACP attorney who was representing Ms. Sipuel objected to this treatment, but this time the U.S. Supreme Court rejected his appeal and thus the action taken by the Oklahoma Board of Regents was preserved.

At approximately the same time in 1946, a man named Heman Marion Sweatt applied for admission to the University of Texas at Austin law school and was also denied
admission on racial grounds (Kluger, 2004). The courts in the state rejected Sweatt’s petition. Yet, the state of Texas did pledge $3 million dollars for a brand-new university for African Americans, which would include a law school (Lewis, 2004). Moreover, the district court where the case was first heard gave the state six months to establish a law school at the state Black college, Prairie View University (Kluger, 2004). In the meantime, the state rented a few rooms in Houston and hired two African American lawyers to serve as faculty members (Kluger, 2004). Sweatt maintained that this set-up was not equal and the state responded with opening another makeshift law school in Austin. (Kluger, 2004). Again, Sweatt objected to attending this so-called law school now situated in a few basement rooms near the University of Texas and the state capital. Marshall, who also served as the lead attorney for this case filed an appeal and the U.S. Supreme Court heard the case four years later in 1950 (Lewis, 2004). The Court ruled in Sweatt v. Painter (1950) that Heman Sweatt be admitted to the University of Texas law school (Kluger, 2004; Lewis, 2004). Kluger (2004) asserts that, “it was the first time the Supreme Court had ordered a black student admitted to a school previously for White students on the ground that the color school established by the state failed to offer equal educational opportunity” (p. 281). Stefkovich and Leas (1994) succinctly highlight the key points regarding equal educational opportunity in the case by summarizing the Court’s opinion:

Comparing such measurable factors as ‘number of faculty, variety of courses, opportunity for specialization, size of the student body, scope of the library, [and] availability of a law review and similar activities,’ the Court maintained that the University of Texas Law School was superior. It also found the Whites-only law school far superior with regard to the more intangible, less easily measurable assets that make for a great law school such as ‘reputation of the faculty, experience of the administration, position and influence of the alumni, standing in the community, traditions and prestige.’ The Court further recognized the importance of exchanging ideas and views for those who wish to practice law and noted that this type of learning could not be acquired in isolation (p. 409).
Clearly, it was determined that only the University of Texas could provide Mr. Sweatt with an equal educational opportunity. Interestingly, the U.S. Supreme Court also ruled on another similar case on the same day as *Sweatt*.

In Oklahoma, the NAACP also represented George McLaurin who had applied to pursue a doctoral degree in education at the University of Oklahoma and was denied admission (Lewis, 2004). Mr. McLaurin had already earned a Master’s degree, which made him a strong candidate for admission. The District Court mandated that McLaurin be admitted to the University of Oklahoma (Lewis, 2004). The University of Oklahoma admitted McLaurin but ensured that segregation was protected. Lewis (2004) highlights that, “he would sit in a specially roped off section of class, the library, and the dining hall. If McLaurin was to learn, he would do so without benefit of free and full access to all of the university’s resources, especially other students” (p. 32). In this case, the Court was called to determine “whether a state may, after admitting a student to graduate instruction in its state university, afford him different treatment from other students solely because of his race” (McLaurin, p. 638 qtd. in Stefkovich & Leas, 1994, p.409). Based on the overt segregation of McLaurin, an appeal was made to the U.S. Supreme Court to hear the case. On the same day that the Court ruled on *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), the Court also ruled on *McLaurin v. Oklahoma* (1950), and it opined that,

> Individuals retained the right to associate with whomever they chose, but the state could not introduce measures that barred such interaction. Thus, it outlawed roped classrooms, separate tables, and other state-mandated acts of segregation in university settings (Lewis, 2004, p. 32).

The ruling in *McLaurin* was significant although the high Court upheld segregation by not addressing *Plessy*. Nevertheless, Kluger (2004) argued that the ruling was critical in that,
“for the first time, the Court had asserted that separate-but-equal education was not merely a slogan. The equality had to be real or the separation was constitutionally intolerable” (p. 283). Indeed, it seemed that American society was finally gearing towards a more democratic society by the mid-twentieth century, even if it was doing so by dismantling pockets of educational inequality one institution at a time.

**Segregation is Unconstitutional: The Brown v. Board of Education Case**

In 1954, the U.S. Supreme Court handed down the decision in one of the nation’s most significant court cases, *Brown v. Board of Education*, which led to the demise of formal, legal segregation in the United States (Andersen, 2009). The fundamental issue addressed in *Brown* rested in the notion that “racial segregation harmed black children” (Andersen, 2009; Guinier, 2009). Lani Guinier (2009) put it as follows, “presented with psychological evidence that separating black children from Whites ‘solely because of their race generates a feeling of inferiority as to their status in the community that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone,’ Chief Justice Earl Warren led the Court to declare segregation unconstitutional” (p. 150). Yet, there was strong resistance to this mandate. As Howard (1979) noted,

Decreeing a principle was one thing, enforcing it another. Aware that practices entrenched for generations – from school segregation to Jim Crow laws – were not likely to be wiped out overnight, the Court moved cautiously. A year after the first *Brown* decision, the Justices handed down a second unanimous decree in looking to local school authorities and federal district courts to carry the main burden of school desegregation. *Brown II*, as this decision is known, made a household word of the phrase ‘with all deliberate speed’ – the pace at which desegregation was to proceed. Southern segregationists turned to tactics of delay. In 1956, 96 Southern Congressmen signed the ‘Southern Manifesto,’ denouncing the school decisions as a ‘clear abuse of judicial power’” (pp. 98-99).
Clearly, while a new racial consciousness was being developed, southern Whites opposed desegregation in real ways. In addition to public officials resisting to desegregate, other individuals also resisted the court mandate in their own way. Margaret Andersen (2009) writes that,

> The optimism spawned by *Brown* was nonetheless tempered by the fierce resistance that it also sparked. The *Brown* decision energized White resistance that had previously been cloaked under White paternalism. ...Whites mounted direct and indirect opposition to integration through violence, through legal maneuvering to thwart the implementation of *Brown*, and through withdrawal from public educational institutions (p. 73).

Whites in the South established private schools, and in other places, Whites also moved to the suburbs to resist desegregation; this action has been referred to as “White flight.” (Andersen, 2009). With similar sentiment, Lewis (2004) underscores the reactions in the South as follows,

> Schools across Virginia closed for a year or two in most vicinities and as long as seven years in Prince Edwards County. Arkansas Governor Orval [Faubus’] decision to oppose desegregation in Little Rock led to a classic confrontation between the governor and President Dwight Eisenhower. In the end the President was forced to send troops under federal command to protect nine young African Americans whose commitment to change brought them into ugly confrontation with hate-spewing mobs of White parents who violently rejected the idea of desegregated schools. ...From 1954, when the Supreme Court declared *Plessy* null and void, through 1955, when the courts directed the South to desegregate with all deliberate speed, until 1969-71, when most southern states finally desegregated, massive resistance, interposition, and other measures of evasion dominated. Across the South lawyers visited federal courthouses to complain that ‘all deliberate speed’ seemed on a slow train to nowhere. From Virginia to Mississippi many schools were not effectively desegregated until 1970 (pp. 33-34).

Indeed, both in the North and South, many Whites found ways around dealing with desegregation. Many legal scholars and social scientists have written extensively on the consequences of the *Brown* decision, and Andersen (2009) points to one significant result in noting that, “possibly one of the greatest impacts of *Brown* and subsequent movements
has been the reduction of overtly expressed prejudice” (p. 73). Yet, many question the long-term consequences of Brown, with some noting very little change occurring. Andersen notes,

In the years since Brown, White resistance had flared up in opposition to busing and to other plans for desegregating the schools. But, for the most part, resistance has now become more passive, cloaked in behaviors that seem on the face of it to be benign (such as seeking a ‘quality education' for one’s children or maintaining one’s property values) (Ibid., p. 73).

One of the fundamental shortfalls that has been identified in regards to Brown was the limitation of focusing just on desegregation versus a focus on equality. Andersen (2009) asserts that, "the tactic of desegregation became the ultimate goal, rather than the means to secure educational equity. The upshot of the inversion of means and ends was to redefine equality, not as a fair and just distribution of resources, but as the absence of formal, legal barriers that separated the races” (p. 151). Nevertheless, the Brown decision led to many changes, both fundamentally and symbolic in American society, one particularly being the potential of moving forward towards a more just society. Other sectors of American society were also changing slowly during the years leading up to Brown. “In 1947, Branch Rickey and Jackie Robinson broke the color line in baseball. In 1948, the Supreme Court forbade the enforcement of restrictive clauses that kept blacks out of White neighborhoods. That same year, President Truman ordered immediate desegregation of the armed forces” (Howard, 1979, p. 98). Through the Brown decision, changes occurred in education and although they focused on elementary and secondary schools, the ruling also had broader impacts and had implications that reached higher education (Lewis, 2004). James Anderson asserts that, “It formed the legal basis for enabling African American students to seek admission to all-White colleges and
universities in the southern states” (2002, pp. 9-10). Yet, time would tell that change was slow to occur in the broader society as well as in colleges and universities. Lewis (2004) cogently documents the painstakingly slow process towards change in noting that, 

Yet few readily acknowledge how recently change in American educational opportunities has come. As late as the early 1960s the University of Michigan used photos to pair freshmen roommates by race and gender. Only six or seven years before the Bakke decision did elementary and secondary schools across the South desegregate. Black students at historically White colleges, especially in the South, could be counted on two hands rather than by the hundreds. The average black and White American born in 1955 who lived in the South would have spent the majority of their schooling in segregated schools (p. 34).

Overall, Brown was the starting point towards a more promising future. While it must be acknowledged that Brown was limited in that it focused solely on the negative effects that segregation had on African American children, it also forced the high Court to acknowledge that all citizens, irrespective of race, had the constitutional right to full and equal protection as spelled out in the Fourteenth Amendment. Andersen (2009) is correct in her analysis in affirming that, “In sum, Brown changed how we think about citizenship in the United States. Diverse groups could now define themselves as citizens with equal rights. This resulted in a new assertiveness fueling social and political change in the years to come” (p. 77). Moreover, Brown reaffirmed the nation that the foundation of citizenship is education. In the years to come, it would be noted that Brown helped to fuel the Civil Rights Movement.

The Civil Rights Movement

Under the leadership of U.S. Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, changes in public policy positively impacted the life and educational opportunities of citizens of color and the poor. During this time, the Civil Rights Movement was gaining momentum nationwide. In
response to the demands made by the Civil Rights Movement, Gandara and Orfield (2006) note that in 1961, “President Kennedy created the Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity and issued Executive Order 10925, which referenced the term affirmative action to describe measures designed to achieve ‘nondiscrimination’” (p. 3). Following President Kennedy's assassination, President Johnson carried the baton forward. Kantor and Lowe (1995) underscore that, “from the outset of the Great Society, the idea that education could eliminate poverty and expand economic opportunity for racial minorities and the poor dominated thinking about social and economic policy” (p. 4). The mandate was promoted as a campaign against discrimination and poverty, and for the first time education policy was front and center on the policy radar. As President Johnson advanced, “improving education for poor and minority children was one of the nation's principal unfinished tasks” (Ibid.). In accordance with this mandate, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Higher Education Act of 1965 were two significant pieces of legislation that were enacted (Paguyo & Moses, 2013, p. 555). Of importance to the education arena, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 declared that, “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance” (Ibid.). Orfield (2005) notes that the Civil Rights Act further expanded college access by outlawing racial/ethnic discrimination.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 helped students who previously could not pursue a college degree due to financial hardships by providing them with a variety of grants and financial aid options, with one being the highly recognized College Work Study program (Orfield, 2005). Furthermore, other policies focused on identifying and helping promising
low-income students “who had not had adequate preparation for college, and provided the first need-based system of federal college aid. In the early 1970s this approach was extended and made permanent by the creation of the Pell Grants” (Ibid., 2005, p. 1). The impact of these policies was significant. Orfield (2005) highlights that,

> During this period of expansion and affordable college access between World War II and the mid-1970s, the country witnessed an explosion of university attendance and completion, and for the first time attending college became a serious option for a significant percentage of non White Americans (p.1).

In higher education, leaders were encouraged to “reform their admissions policies and expand the breadth and diversity of student applicants, a pool traditionally composed of White men” (Paguyo & Moses, 2013, p. 555). Yet, when it came to access to elite institutions, a wave of attacks took center stage.

*Affirmative Action in Higher Education*

One of the most significant educational policies that has been credited with moving the country closer to the realization of equality of educational opportunity is affirmative action. The policy of affirmative action focuses primarily on 1) overcoming the effects of past discrimination and 2) the benefits of diversity. Tierney (1997) suggests that there were three rationales for the creation and implementation of affirmative action:

> The first, *compensation*, refers to addressing previous discrimination. *Correction*, the second rationale, pertains to the alteration of present discrimination. And the third, *diversification*, concerns the importance of creating a multicultural society. In one sense, we might think of these distinct but interrelated rationales as past-, present-, and future-oriented reasons for implementing affirmative action (p. 170).

Yet, the charge calling for more educational opportunities did not come from within higher education. People of color were demanding social justice and equality in all aspects of society through the Civil Rights Movement. Anderson (2002) notes that,
As the civil rights movement gained momentum and broadened to include various ethnic groups of color, government and educational institutions were faced with the choice of increasing social unrest or changing long-standing policies and practices that had kept groups of color from all but token representation in dominant U.S. educational, political, economic, and social institutions (p. 10).

Accordingly, colleges and universities responded to external pressures by instituting affirmative action policies that called for new admissions policies that incorporated race into admissions formulas, in addition to the traditional factors of grade point average and SAT/ACT scores. This was done with the goal of increasing the number of underrepresented students (especially African American students) who were admitted, enrolled, and graduated from the nation’s elite colleges and universities.

The philosophical foundation for such changes rested on both the acknowledgement that these colleges and universities had long historical records of discrimination and exclusion targeting minority students and that all students, regardless of race, should be given the opportunity to access these institutions. The latter rested primarily on the notion that education is the great equalizer and that if students from underrepresented communities were given a chance to access the nation’s most prestigious institutions, this would level the playing field in terms of affording them the opportunity to succeed and in turn contribute significantly to society. Hence, higher education has always been regarded as being the social institution that provides students with the training needed to access the most prestigious careers and professions. Historically, only White students had access to this vehicle of social mobility, and thus affirmative action policies were devised to reverse this trend. To be sure, it was in this era that university leaders began to profess that their institutions valued diversity, but how to achieve diversity was and still is the central point of debate.
The nation’s premier institutions took the lead in recruiting minority students to their respective campuses. Bowen and Bok (1998) note that after President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act in 1964, “almost all leading colleges and professional schools came to believe that they had a role to play in educating minority students” (p. 6). Yet, this belief came, at times, in reaction to their campus climates. Bowen and Bok assert that, “often spurred by student protests on their own campuses, university officials initiated active programs to recruit minority applicants and to take race into account in the admissions process” (ibid., pp. 6-7). Hence, it wasn’t until the government and universities faced political and public pressures resulting from the Civil Rights Movement, that the country had to come to a stand still and was forced to address issues of racism and inequality with great seriousness. In higher education, a similar process occurred. Given the relationship they have shared with both federal and state governments over time, colleges and universities had to address the long embedded legacies of institutional racism and inequality in access. Most college leaders tied the new recruitment efforts to the missions of their respective institutions. Bowen and Bok (1998) suggest that,

To begin with, they [universities] sought to enrich the education of all their students by including race as another element in assembling a diverse student body of varying talents, backgrounds, and perspectives. In addition, perceiving a widely recognized need for more members of minority groups in business, government, and the professions, they acted on the conviction that minority students would have a special opportunity to become leaders in all walks of life (p. 7).

Access to the nation’s elite colleges and subsequently the potential for access to the nation’s leadership positions across sectors has been fueled with intense debate, and it is the competition for access to these two sectors that has sparked strong opposition to affirmative action. Indeed, the conversation about diversity has taken center stage as notions of past-discrimination have fueled public opposition given that many claim that
racism is hard to prove or in some cases many believe it is non-existent. Perhaps the opposition is fueled by the reality that progress was achieved through affirmative action. Indeed, the data indicates that students of color did enroll in colleges and universities as a result of affirmative action policies and also benefitted from participating in programs and initiatives that were enacted to increase access and equity in higher education. Some of the policies and programs included “grants and scholarships to help finance the cost of higher education, as well as academic support programs aimed at helping them adjust to campus life and thereby to increase their rate of retention and graduation” (Anderson, 2002, pp. 11-12). The positive results stemming from affirmative action policies did not sit well for many. Bowen and Bok (1998) noted that affirmative action policies led to an increase in the enrollments of minorities, especially an increase in the enrollment of African American students. They note that,

The percentage of blacks enrolled in Ivy League colleges rose from 2.3 in 1967 to 6.3 in 1976, while the percentage in other ‘prestigious’ colleges grew from 1.7 to 4.8. Meanwhile, the proportion of black medical students had climbed to 6.3 percent by 1975, and black law students had increased their share to 4.5 percent” (Ibid., p. 7).

Despite such increases, they asserted, “a challenge to the legality of such admissions policies under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act finally reached the Supreme Court in the Bakke case” (Bowen and Bok, p. 8).

To be sure, the Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978) case showcased the split between the goals of diversity and meritocracy, as opponents of affirmative action held that the two were incompatible. Given this assumption, it was the competitive admissions process to the nation’s elite institutions that fueled the battles against affirmative action starting with the Bakke case. Alan Bakke, a White male who was twice rejected from the University of California at Davis Medical School, sued the University
of California on the grounds that a disadvantaged-minorities-only program in effect in 1973 at the medical school had accepted candidates less qualified than he was (Wilkinson III, 1979). Bakke argued that because this program set aside a certain number of admissions slots for minority students for which he could not be considered, he had been deprived of his constitutional right to equal protection as guaranteed by the Equal Protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment (Lowe, Jr., 1999).

The Supreme Court of the United States ruled in 1978 that the practice of instituting quotas was unconstitutional. However, the Court did sanction the use of race as a plus factor in admissions decisions if racial diversity supported the educational mission of the institution (Lowe, Jr., 1999). Put differently, Bowen and Bok (1998) note that “four Justices upheld the admissions procedure as a necessary device to overcome the effects of past discrimination, with Justice Blackmun writing, 'In order to get beyond racism, we must first take into account race” (p.8). Ultimately, the Court ordered that Bakke be admitted to the medical school because the university had violated his right to equal protection (Lowe, Jr., 1999). Justice Lewis Powell wrote the deciding opinion, one that is cited frequently in defense of race-conscious admissions policies. In his opinion, Justice Powell “condemned the use of rigid quotas in admitting minority students and found that efforts to overcome ‘societal discrimination’ did not justify policies that disadvantaged particular individuals, such as Bakke, who bore no responsibility for any wrongs suffered by minorities” (Bowen & Bok, 1998, p. 8). Clearly, the Court was sharply divided. Nevertheless, Justice Powell suggested that universities could employ race-conscious admissions policies if their leaders believe that diversity benefits student learning. Thus, he offered that admissions officers could take race into account, among other factors, when evaluating minority students in
comparison to other applicants (Bowen and Bok, 1998). As such, the consequences of this decision were such that,

...the Bakke outcome provided a Supreme Court sanctioned method to continue to admit significant numbers of underrepresented minorities as long as there was no set quota. Colleges and universities could insist, as most did, that they did not use quotas as rigid admissions targets, but that they evaluated each individual in the context of his or her talents, life experiences, and potential. ...The claim that diversity was educationally beneficial moved the discussion into territory where academic institutions have been accorded the responsibility of self-regulation (Lowe, Jr., 1999, pp. 26-27).

While the decision provided a broader rationale for diversity, there was an often-overlooked analysis on the Bakke decision in the dissenting opinion that Justice Thurgood Marshall wrote. In his opinion, Justice Marshall reminded the country how fundamentally embedded the issues of race and inequality were on the American fabric. With authority he noted,

I agree with the judgment of the Court only insofar as it permits a university to consider the race of an applicant in making admissions decisions. I do not agree that petitioner's admissions program violates the Constitution. For it must be remembered that, during most of the past 200 years, the Constitution, as interpreted by this Court, did not prohibit the most ingenious and pervasive forms of discrimination against the Negro. Now, when a State acts to remedy the effects of that legacy of discrimination, I cannot believe that this same Constitution stands as a barrier.

Three hundred and fifty years ago, the Negro was dragged to this country in chains to be sold into slavery. Uprooted from his homeland and thrust into bondage for forced labor, the slave was deprived of all legal rights. It was unlawful to teach him to read; he could be sold away from his family and friends at the whim of his master; and killing or maiming him was not a crime. The system of slavery brutalized and dehumanized both master and slave.

...The status of the Negro as property was officially erased by his emancipation at the end of the Civil War. But the long-awaited emancipation, while freeing the Negro from slavery, did not bring him citizenship or equality in any meaningful way. Slavery was replaced by a system of laws which imposed upon the colored race onerous disabilities and burdens, and curtailed their rights in the pursuit of life, liberty, and property to such an extent that their freedom was of little value. Despite the passage of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments, the Negro
was systematically denied the rights those Amendments were supposed to secure. The combined actions and inactions of the State and Federal Governments maintained Negroes in a position of legal inferiority for another century after the Civil War. (Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, 1978, pp. 387-388, 390, emphasis mine).

Indeed, it is mind boggling that such esteemed and learned individuals could affirm without hesitation that the supposed harm that affirmative action was causing Whites could be compared to the harm that had been imposed on African Americans and other minorities alike for centuries. Margaret Andersen (2009) eloquently explains how the issue of harm was framed from the period beginning with Brown to the more recent Grutter case as follows,

\emph{Brown} rested on the argument that segregation did harm, but harm in and of itself seems no longer to stand as a viable argument for legal redress. Instead, showing intent to discriminate seems to be the standard, something that is hard to do given the more covert way that institutional racism operates. Furthermore, as evidenced in the \emph{Grutter} decision, concerns about ‘harm’ have shifted to the harm done to Whites by such measures as affirmative action. Thus, even though the \emph{Grutter} case upheld affirmative action (with narrowly tailored means), Justice Sandra Day O’Connor speculated in the majority decision that ‘even remedial race-based governmental action generally ‘remains subject to continuing oversight to assure that it will work the least harm possible to other innocent persons competing for the benefit.’ She also writes that a race-conscious admissions program must not ‘unduly burden individuals who are not members of the favored racial and ethnic groups.’ Moreover the \emph{Grutter} decision shifts the benefits of programs like affirmative action to the dominant institutions instead of specifically to minorities, as the argument in \emph{Grutter} about the compelling state interest in achieving diversity in the student body makes clear (pp. 80-81)

The arguments grounded on past discrimination started to lose ground in the \emph{Bakke} court, and has since not been included in other cases regarding affirmative action (Delgado, 1997). The more recent cases on affirmative action have focused on the benefits of diversity and many social scientists have responded to this trend by providing the Court with evidence that indicates that diversity yields important educational benefits for all students (Gurin, 1999; Gurin, Nagda, & Lopez, 2004; Milem, 2003). Yet, it is crucial to note
that the *Bakke* decision also allowed colleges and universities to consider race as one factor in the admissions process. As such, diversity initiatives on campus have now been expanded to include different facets of the campus by taking on a broader meaning and agenda.

Bowen and Bok (1998) note that affirmative action has had a positive impact for minority students. For instance, African Americans witnessed significant gains in degree attainment and subsequently comprised the emerging African American middle-class during the decades after *Bakke*. Latinos also have benefitted from these policies. Gandara and Orfield (2006) highlight the positive impact that affirmative action has had on Latino students in noting that, “an all-time high of 21.4 percent of 18- to 24-year old Latino males were enrolled in college in 1976, while a peak of 19.5 percent of Latina females had been reached the year prior, in 1975” (p. 3). Despite these gains which resulted from the affirmative action policies of the 1960s and 1970s, the authors also note that, “a waning of commitment to affirmative action toward the end of the 1970s and the Reagan-era aid cuts took their toll on college-going among Black and Latino students” (Ibid.). Horn and Flores (2003) note that the attack on affirmative action was unfolding nationwide and resulted in legislation against affirmative action, beginning in California. Horn and Marin (2006) note that,

In 1995 the University of California’s Board of Regents approved SP-1, banning the use of race and ethnicity in admissions policies. Subsequently, in 1996, the voters passed the California Civil Rights Initiative (Proposition 209), amending the state’s constitution to ban affirmative action not only in public higher education, but also in public employment and contracting. Although the Board of Regents repealed SP-1 in 2001, Proposition 209 still makes it illegal for higher education to consider race/ethnicity in admissions decisions. These efforts in California were the continuation of a trend towards states taking a narrow view of race/ethnicity and college admission (p. 170).
Also, in 1996, affirmative action in admissions came under attack in Texas and the policy lost significant support as “the Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit ruled in the case of *Hopwood v. Texas* (1996) that the University of Texas law school could not take race into consideration in admitting students unless such action was necessary to remedy past discrimination by the school itself” (Bowen & Bok, 1998, p. 14). The court justified their ruling in noting that, “the use of race to achieve a diverse student body...simply cannot be a state interest compelling enough to meet the steep [constitutional] standard of strict scrutiny” (Ibid.). Additionally, the court upheld that affirmative action constituted reverse discrimination. The consequences of the ruling impacted all initiatives in Texas higher education that were enacted to provide opportunity for minority students. Anderson (2002) underscores that, “the Texas Attorney General has interpreted the ruling as banning affirmative action in admissions, scholarships, and outreach programs aimed at recruiting students of color” (p. 16). In Washington, a similar trajectory unfolded. In 1998, Initiative 200 went into effect, “banning the consideration of race in state decision making about employment, education, and contracting in the state of Washington. Although the Ninth Circuit ruled in *Smith v. the University of Washington Law School* (1996) that *Bakke* was still the law of the land, Initiative 200 prevents colleges from implementing affirmative action in Washington” (Horn & Marin, 2006, p. 170). Even more telling of the movement against affirmative action is the case that developed in Florida. In 1999, Florida’s Jeb Bush became the first governor to abolish affirmative action policies in higher education and other state agencies without a court ruling or citizen initiative when he announced the implementation of his One Florida Initiative (Executive Order No. 99-281). Consequently, the initiative
ended the use of race in public decisions in contracting, employment, and higher education (Marin & Lee, 2003).

In Michigan, seven years later in 2003, affirmative action would also come under fire, but this time the outcome was favorable in support of affirmative action. In *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) and *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003), “the Supreme Court upheld the basic rationale for race-conscious admissions in higher education, reaffirming the ruling 25 years earlier in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* (1978) that promoting diversity in higher education is a constitutionally compelling interest and that the flexible use of race in a carefully crafted admissions policy can survive constitutional challenge” (Ancheta, 2005, pp. 175-176). Without a doubt, the future of affirmative action is not certain. Nonetheless, affirmative action policies made a dent toward providing access for minority students to the most selective institutions. For the first time, as Orfield (1998) argues, colleges and universities embraced race conscious affirmative action policies because it was clear that the historical and continued inequality and segregation of the nation’s public K-12 system could only be overcome through redressing the longstanding discrimination. Elsewhere, Gandara and Orfield (2006) put it as follows, “although affirmative action has never enjoyed either universal support or implementation, its greatest achievement may have been in fostering the debate about the nation’s responsibility to redress a history of discrimination against some groups of Americans (p. 3). Ultimately, affirmative action did manage to expand access for minority students, but parity was never reached and still remains an unaccomplished goal. It boggles the mind that opponents of these measures believe that these types of policies are not needed anymore when the playing field has never been leveled. Anderson’s (2002) analysis speak to this matter,
As recently as 1968, students of color in America could look back at 332 years of racial segregation and exclusion from American colleges and universities. Many citizens – in fact, the majority – now believe that political and educational reforms during the past three decades have erased over three centuries of racial discrimination (p. 19).

What remains unchanged regardless of affirmative action policies is that higher education is a valuable resource and therefore all qualified individuals who desire to pursue higher education should be given the opportunity to do so, irrespective of the prestige of the university. The “Joint Statement of Constitutional Law Scholars” (2003) put it as follows:

Citing Sweatt v. Painter, the Grutter Court also recognized that institutions of higher learning, and law schools in particular, provide the training ground for many of our Nation’s leaders. Individuals with law degrees, for instance, occupy large numbers of the nation’s state governorships, seats in both houses of Congress, and federal judgeships. According to the Court, ‘[i]n order to cultivate a set of leaders with legitimacy in the eyes of the citizenry, it is necessary that the path to leadership be visibly open to talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity.’ Access to higher education ‘must be inclusive of talented and qualified individuals of every race and ethnicity, so that all members of our heterogeneous society may participate in the educational institutions that provide the training and education necessary to succeed in America’ (p. 6).

Interestingly, in Grutter, Justice Sandra Day O’Connor became the first member of the high Court to point to a time when racial preferences will no longer be needed. She made this case as follows,

The Court is satisfied that the Law School adequately considered the available alternatives. The Court is also satisfied that, in the context of individualized consideration of the possible diversity contributions of each applicant, the Law School’s race-conscious admissions program does not unduly harm nonminority applicants. Finally, race-conscious admissions policies must be limited in time. The Court takes the Law School at its word that it would like nothing better than to find a race-neutral admissions formula and will terminate its use of racial preferences as soon as practicable. The Court expects that 25 years from now, the use of racial preferences will no longer be necessary to further the interest approved today (Grutter v. Bolinger Syllabus, 2003, p. 5).
The challenge to ending the consideration of race in admissions decisions did not take nearly the twenty-five year period that Justice O'Connor suggested, because in Texas, another affirmative action case started to unfold in 2011. In *Fisher v. University of Texas*, Abigail Fisher, a White applicant was denied admission to the prestigious University of Texas at Austin for the entering class of 2008. She sued the University of Texas on grounds that the consideration of race in the admissions process violated the Equal Protection Clause. The District Court and Fifth Circuit sided with the University of Texas, but the case was appealed and the U.S. Supreme Court will soon decide on the outcome of this case. In 2013, the Supreme Court handed down its first decision in the case, which in essence sent the case back to the Fifth District Court because it was noted that the lower court did not follow the strict scrutiny clause as outlined in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003). Before making a judgment on the case, the Supreme Court held that the lower court must analyze whether the University of Texas “offered sufficient evidence to prove its admissions program is narrowly tailored to obtain the educational benefits of diversity” (*Fisher v. University of Texas* et al. Syllabus, p. 1). The outcome of the *Fisher* case will certainly signal where the high Court stands on the consideration of race in admissions and affirmative action policies. Also, it is still to be determined whether the 25-year period that Justice O'Connor suggested will hold.

Given the pending decision in *Fisher*, the future of affirmative action is uncertain. In light of the attacks on affirmative action, it could be mean that in the near future we will witness a return to a time when it was clear that access to our nation’s elite institutions of higher education was considered a birthright for the privileged and an unattainable goal for students of color. Furthermore, it is critical to continue to remind all those who care
about the future of America and its institutions of higher education that times are changing and if access is not expanded, a great talent pool will be lost and the consequences can be dire for all.

Summer Research Programs

Affirmative action has been the basis for the development of educational initiatives and institutional policies that aim to expand access for previously excluded students and strive to broaden equality of educational opportunity. The Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) fits within this broader agenda to increase access and educational opportunities for minority students. Hence, the CIC had an explicit rationale that built upon expanding educational opportunities for minority students and at some institutions first-generation students. Recently, there have been other studies that have looked at undergraduate research programs and a review of that research follows here.

Research articles on undergraduate research programs are beginning to emerge although most of these studies focus on programs that are open to all undergraduate students. The primary incentive for these studies has been the fact that federal government agencies have increased their financial support through grants awarded to universities to support research in critical areas. The focus has been largely on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) areas (See Barlow & Villarejo, 2004; Hunter, Laursen, & Seymour, 2006; Lopatto, 2010; Osborn & Karukstis, 2009; Seymour, Hunter, Laursen, & Deantoni, 2004). At the undergraduate level, initiatives have been developed across the nation to address the retention and success of students who pursue degrees in these areas. At some institutions, the focus has been placed on underrepresented students given that they are less likely to receive degrees in these fields.
of study. Universities have also started to invest in undergraduate research programs and the scopes of these programs vary. For instance, some programs aim to increase the pool of students who pursue graduate degrees and professional careers in areas of high demand. Other programs target minority students given that they are less likely to be represented among graduate students and professionals in these areas. Overall, the majority of studies on undergraduate research programs have focused primarily on single program evaluations (Barlow & Villarejo, 2004). The emphasis of such studies has been on examining key program components such as faculty-student relationships, the impact of these programs on students’ aspirations to pursue graduate degrees, student academic pursuits and employment following program participation, the relationship between these programs and diversity initiatives on campus, the intricacies of program development and implementation, and the sustainability of these initiatives (See Barlow & Villarejo, 2004; Bauer & Bennett, 2003; Eagan Jr., Hurtado, Chang, Garcia, Herrera, & Garibay, 2013; McCoy, Wilkinson, & Jackson, 2008; Singer & Zimmerman, 2012).

A recent study examined a longitudinal sample of 4,152 aspiring STEM majors who completed the 2004 Freshmen Survey and the 2008 College Senior Survey and found that a student’s probability of aspiring to enroll in a STEM graduate program increased with participation in an undergraduate research program (Eagan Jr. et al., 2013). The authors note that this finding builds on previous research on college choice theory which suggests that above all other variables, students who have the intention to pursue a college education or graduate degree are more likely to do so than their peers who do not develop similar intentions (Ibid.). Based on their analysis, the authors conclude that the students in the sample who participated in undergraduate research programs were approximately 14
to 17 percent more likely to pursue a graduate or professional degree in STEM (Ibid.). They also acknowledge that this study is limited in that it examined intentions to matriculate versus examining actual enrollment data. This study is an important contribution to the literature on undergraduate research programs given the use of a large data sample.

Ultimately, the authors conclude that, “the findings suggest that these structured undergraduate research programs are wise investments for governmental and private agencies and institutions that strive to contribute to the larger goal of sustaining our nation’s capacity to flourish in the areas of science and technology” (p. 708). They also point to the fact that only 20% of the students in the sample had participated in these types of programs, and therefore suggest that institutions must remain cognizant as to which students have access to these programs across race, class, and gender (Ibid). This is important, because as Jeffrey Milem (2011) found at the University of Maryland after surveying rising juniors about their participation in the university’s undergraduate research program, only 17% of the students had participated in the program. Surprisingly, however, he underscores “that not a single African American or Latino male reported being involved in research with one of their teachers” (p. 329). Hence, males of color were not benefitting from the potential to receive one-on-one contact with faculty members, which has been shown to positively impact the student experience (Ibid., Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). By conducting this survey, Milem and his colleagues were able to engage the campus community by encouraging them to audit their scholarships, special programs, and college awards to learn which students were participating and which ones were being
excluded (Ibid.). This also raises the importance of having disaggregated data in order to present a clear picture of which students are benefitting from any given campus resource.

In another study, the focus was on the evaluation of an undergraduate research program designed to reduce the attrition of minority students from the biological sciences. The authors found that program participants were more likely to succeed and graduate in the biological sciences in comparison to those who did not participate in the summer research program (Barlow & Villarejo, 2004). This finding is similar to the previous study in that program participants were also more likely to pursue graduate degrees in the Biological Sciences than those students who did not participate in the undergraduate research program. The value of the program, the authors suggest, is significant in that the program helps increase the representation of minority students in science fields (Ibid.).

The program that was examined was the Biology Undergraduate Scholars Program (BUSP) at the University of California at Davis. Similar to SROP, the BUSP program at UC Davis was established to “address the significant university-wide racial/ethnic disparities in graduation in the biological sciences” (p. 862). The authors identified two key characteristics of the program that led to program success: one was employing a cooperative approach to problem solving in advanced mathematics courses and two, the program provided academic and career advising to program participants. Key challenges that were identified included the investment of faculty and staff time and the limited availability of institutional funding. The design of the study employed a multivariate analysis to measure the impact of overall program participation on graduation, and whether participation in laboratory research improved graduation rates (Ibid.). Overall, the authors conclude that, “a program providing academic enrichment, personal support
and research experience can substantially reduce the attrition of underrepresented minority students from biology, and that these students can – and do – go on to challenging and successful careers” (p. 877). Indeed, this is a unique response to a challenging problem that demonstrates a good return on the institutional investment.

The study by Hunter, Laursen, and Seymour (2006) takes on a different approach as they conducted an ethnographic study at a liberal arts college to understand the role of undergraduate research in students’ cognitive, personal, and professional development. More specifically, the study was designed to “address fundamental questions about the benefits (and costs) of undergraduate engagement in faculty-mentored, authentic research undertaken outside of class work, about which the existing literature offers few findings and many untested hypotheses” (Ibid., p. 41). The researchers interviewed 76 participants and 55 faculty members across four different programs. Interviews were also conducted with 62 students who did not participate in undergraduate research programs; this served as the comparison group. Additionally, 16 faculty members who also had not participated in these programs were interviewed. The authors found that students who participated in undergraduate research programs overwhelmingly reported positive experiences. Students reported that they had benefitted in seven different areas in the following order: “personal-professional gains, thinking and working like a scientist, gains in various skills, clarification/confirmation of career plans (including graduate school), enhanced career/graduate school preparation, shifts in attitudes to learning and working as a researcher, and other benefits” (p. 44).

Faculty reported similar gains that students conveyed but “framed them in terms of students’ growth as young professionals, especially development of attitudes and behaviors
viewed as requisite for students to continue in science research, and ultimately, in the profession” (Ibid.). More specifically, the faculty who participated in the undergraduate research programs reported the benefits to students as: “thinking and working like a scientist, becoming a scientist, personal-professional gains, clarification/confirmation of career plans (including graduate school), enhanced career/graduate school preparation, gains in various skills, and other benefits” (Ibid.). Overall, the authors conclude that this program bestows upon students benefits that students who did not participate did not report to have gained during their college careers. Additionally, they contend that the benefits that were derived help to support the recommendations by the 2002 Boyer Commission Report that conducting research supports the overall goal of teaching and learning. Clearly, this study adds to the body of knowledge on studies on undergraduate research programs by identifying the gains that students reported having made as a result of their participation in this program accordingly.

In a similar study, David Lopatto (2004) focused on examining the benefits that students gained from participation in undergraduate research programs, but also paid attention to seeking to identify whether there were any differences between minority students and their peers. He notes, “in this study, I examine the hypothesis that undergraduate research enhances the educational experience of science undergraduates, attracts and retains talented students to careers in science, and acts as a pathway for minority students into science careers” (p. 270). The author developed a survey to inform his questions and 1,135 undergraduates representing 41 colleges and universities completed the online survey. These students were participants in the Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) sponsored undergraduate research programs. The findings
indicate that program participants overwhelmingly reported that participating in the program enhanced their educational experience. Also, students reported twenty specific gains, with the highest gains reported in learning the research process, ability to solve scientific problems, and learning lab techniques (Ibid.). Additionally, the respondents reported their desire to pursue graduate education in the sciences. Of importance is the fact that the “patterns of postgraduate plans were similar across gender and ethnic groups” (p. 276). As such, the program is helping to increase the number of underrepresented students who pursue graduate degrees in the sciences.

Evaluation studies on similar research programs have also emerged. One study focuses on the federally funded Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program (McCoy, Wilkinson, & Jackson, 2008). The focus of this evaluation study is on the education and employment outcomes of program participants. The authors provide the following background information for the McNair program:

The McNair Program is one of the Federal TRIO Programs offered by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to motivate and support students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The McNair Program was established in 1986 to increase the attainment of doctoral degrees by students from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds. Recipients of summer research internships must have completed their sophomore year in college. ... Authorized by Title IV, Part A, Subpart 2, Chapter 1, Section 402E of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended (P.L. 102-325), the McNair Program awards grants to institutions of higher education for grantees to provide participants with educationally enriching scholastic experiences that help prepare them to enter graduate school and complete doctoral degrees (p. 1).

One of the main findings lies in the descriptive analysis of the main program objectives, which are: the number of participants who have earned a doctoral degree coupled with the number of these participants who are employed in faculty positions. The following are the numbers that they report:
Overall, among former McNair participants who had sufficient time to earn a doctorate degree at the time of this study, 6.1 percent reportedly had earned their doctorates. As expected, the rate for earning a doctorate increased the more time that had elapsed since participating in the McNair Program. For students in the program between 1989 and 1993, 14.4 percent reportedly had earned doctorates, and 3.9 percent of participants in the program between 1994 and 1998 reported having earned a doctoral degree.

Of McNair participants who completed doctoral degrees, about 65 percent indicated that they were employed in higher education. Seventy-two percent of that group reportedly were on the faculty of the institutions in which they worked. Only 4 percent of professional degree recipients indicated that they were employed in higher education. Of that group, about 40 percent were on the faculty. Overall, then, about 20 percent of McNair doctoral and professional degree recipients reported that they were faculty members in institutions of higher education.

Although the majority of Ph.D. and other doctoral degree recipients on faculties were in tenure-track positions, only six individuals indicated that they had obtained tenure. That is not surprising, in view of the time it takes to obtain tenure after joining the faculty of an institution. In contrast, the majority of professional degree recipients were not in tenure-track positions, and none held tenured faculty positions. The largest proportion of doctoral and professional degree recipients who were not faculty at institutions of higher education were employed in industry or business (61.2 percent) (pp. xii-xiii).

One of the limitations of this report is that the authors do not provide an account of the degree to which the outcomes that they gathered represent program success. While the description of program participants and their professional outcomes are important contributions, there remains much to be examined as it relates to the McNair program. Perhaps a starting point for future research on the program could be to examine the characteristics of participants who went on to pursue academic careers and their perceptions on whether the McNair program provided them with the tools needed to be successful academics.

The literature on the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) is also limited in scope. For instance in 2007, Barbara McFadden Allen and Yolanda Zepeda provided a general overview of the program in the article titled, “From baccalaureate to the
professoriate: Cooperation to increase access to graduate education.” One of the highlights of the article is the authors’ description of the program administrative details that they succinctly summarize as follows:

Each SROP host university conducts its own summer program or set of programs, independent of the consortium and following local campus policies and guidelines. Eligibility criteria are driven by local goals; selection processes vary, and specific compensation packages are locally determined. There is, however, a core set of elements that all programs have in common (p. 77).

Additionally, the authors point to the benefits associated with program participation. They note, “the success of the program rests on two prongs: flexibility, allowing host universities to customize local program to their campus priorities and resources, and stability, maintaining a network of opportunities that can be sustained through program and staff changes” (Ibid., p. 79). It is important to note that the authors base the claim of program success on the fact that the program has been operating for over two decades, has served thousands of students, and program data indicate that two-thirds of participants do enroll in graduate school upon completion of the SROP (Ibid.). This yield alone, the authors claim, has increased the access to graduate education for minority students. Due to the overall program design, the authors end with noting that SROP has served as a key recruitment tool for the host institutions, a practice that did not exist prior to the program and one that is still evolving. Indeed, while the recruitment of minority students for selective colleges and universities has been in place for quite some time, the SROP serves as an example of a recruitment tool for graduate programs across the host institutions and warrants a more careful examination to determine whether this component has yielded promising results.

There is also one report that focuses on the evaluation of the University of Wisconsin at Madison SROP. The evaluation study on the program is titled, “Evaluation of
the UW-Madison’s Summer Undergraduate Research Programs” (Foertsch, Alexander, and Penberthy, 1997). The authors note the following purpose for conducting the program evaluation as follows,

The primary purpose of this evaluation was to provide program directors and Graduate School administrators with information to assist them in meeting program goals. A secondary purpose was to facilitate a dialogue regarding the effectiveness of these programs in preparing participants for research careers and recruiting participants to the UW-Madison’s graduate programs” (p. 1).

The evaluation of SROP included interviews with SROP program directors at the annual summer conference in 1996. The evaluators wanted to gain an understanding of how the program goals and strategies of other host institutions compared with those of UW-Madison. This campus is unique in that the SROP is comprised of seven different summer programs. The evaluators also interviewed the program directors to understand the goals and strategies of each of these programs coupled with a dialogue on how to better achieve the programs’ goals (Foertsch, Alexander, and Penberthy, 1997). Overall, the goals of these programs focus on exposing talented undergraduate students to the research process and subsequently recruiting them to the UW-Madison’s graduate programs. It is important to note here that UW-Madison explicitly note that their SROP is used as a recruitment strategy for their graduate programs. Yet, program directors at this host campus also expanded on the meaning of success to include participants seeking graduate degrees at other campuses. However, the Graduate College, which serves as the funding source for all programs, is more interested in meeting the goal of diversifying the graduate programs across the University of Wisconsin at Madison campus. At first, the authors found little evidence to suggest program success according to the Graduate College goal. They summarize this finding as follows:
Directors were uncertain how successfully their programs were achieving the post-program goal of encouraging enrollment in UW-Madison’s graduate programs, especially since most of these programs have done only limited tracking of former participants. If anything, most program directors—and the administrators at the Graduate School—were under the impression that the percentage of program participants returning to UW-Madison for graduate or professional school was very low. Program directors correctly argued that many factors which students consider in deciding where to attend graduate school were simply beyond their control. For example, the unreliability of financial support, the dearth of minority researchers, Madison’s cool climate, and Madison’s distance from many participants’ Southern hometowns were cited by the directors as non-program-related factors which seemed to dissuade a number of program participants from considering UW-Madison for graduate school (Ibid., p. 3).

Interestingly, the evaluators found that UW-Madison’s program participants actually had a strong record of pursuing graduate degrees at other institutions, and while the campus did not do a good job of tracking their participants, the CIC did have the numbers to highlight the program’s success at the local level. When considering the CIC data, the authors found the following: “for those UW-Madison participants who have graduated and been tracked by the CIC, 42% have gone on to graduate school (38% of whom have already received advanced degrees) and an additional 23% have gone on to professional school (26% of whom have already received advanced degrees) (Foertsch, Alexander, and Penberthy, 1997, p. 4). Even more striking is the fact that the CIC data revealed that a significant number of program participants actually did enroll at UW-Madison’s graduate programs. Yet, the program directors and Graduate College staff were unaware of this result given that they did not track these students. The authors estimated that approximately 10% of program participants returned to UW-Madison to pursue graduate study but still did not have any data to support this assertion. The evaluators found the following results for program participants:

Of the 42% of UW-Madison program participants who went on to graduate school, 60% (or 25% of the total), enrolled at UW-Madison. Of the 23% who went to
professional school, 43% (or 10% of the total) enrolled at UW-Madison. Altogether about one third (35%) of summer program participants came back to the UW-Madison for graduate or professional school (Ibid., p. 5).

Clearly, if the Graduate College and program directors had invested more time in tracking program participants, the campus could have been made aware of the significant percentage of program participants who would eventually pursue graduate degrees at UW-Madison.

Based on interviews with 16 former SROP participants and an additional 81 former student survey responses, the authors conclude that the success in recruiting these students to UW-Madison’s graduate programs is tied to positive program experiences. Respondents noted that the program provided key experiences that helped inform their decisions on whether to pursue graduate degrees. These experiences were:

(1) giving them a taste of what research was like so they could decide whether they would enjoy being researchers; (2) giving them a taste of what being a graduate student was like so they could decide whether they could handle it; and (3) giving them alternatives to medical school if they decided they either could not or did not want to become physicians (Foertsch, Alexander, and Penberthy, 1997, p. 10).

The survey data also yielded similar results in that 87% of the participants reported that the program “had a positive impact on their confidence in doing research, handling undergraduate class assignments, handling graduate level work, interacting with faculty, getting into graduate or professional school; and increase interest in the STEM fields” (p. 11). The faculty mentor interviews also yield some interesting results. In short, faculty reported enjoying their experience with mentoring SROP participants. However they noted several key barriers to increasing the number of program participants who pursue graduate degrees at UW-Madison and these included more follow-up and personal contact
by administrators and faculty mentors with participants after they complete the program; more funding as many students could not attend UW-Madison because they could not afford it; a concerted effort by graduate programs to admit these talented students and pay careful consideration to the effort that faculty have taken to mentor these students prior to entering graduate school; and finally, faculty mentors felt that the university should put more weight on their work as mentors in tenure decisions as they invest the time to mentor these students and at times this process takes them away from the time they spend on their own research projects (Ibid.).

The authors conclude with some recommendations based on the survey data. They suggest that 85% of program participants reported that not enough minority professors were available at UW-Madison. The authors challenge the campus to diversify its faculty if they want to attract more minority students to their graduate programs. Two other suggestions included securing more funding for minority students and establishing a better strategy to follow-up with program participants once they complete the program. Overall, this report does a good job in examining the SROP at UW-Madison and it would be beneficial if other institutions did the same in order to determine the similarities and differences across the host institutions.
CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Qualitative Research: Philosophical Assumptions

This study employs qualitative research methods to understand how a group of campus administrators perceive the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP). In higher education, conducting qualitative research is fairly new and still evolving because there has been a preference for quantitative research to inform institutional decision-making and policy development (Harper & Museus, 2007). Yet, qualitative research offers “descriptive and explanatory insights into educational problems for which undercurrents have been only partially understood and solutions narrowly conceived” (Harper & Museus, 2007, p. 1). William Tierney and Yvonna Lincoln (1994) note that the use of qualitative research methods in higher education research began to surface around the mid-1980s, although the methods have been employed in fields such as sociology and anthropology for over a century. At its core, according to them, theoretical debates regarding positivism, constructivism, and critical theories have influenced qualitative research methods. These emerging debates can be linked to any of the three distinct philosophical stances that researchers can build upon when conducting qualitative research: functionalism, constructivist, and criticalist. Tierney and Lincoln (Ibid.) succinctly summarize the philosophy guiding each stance as follows,

The terms functionalism, constructivist, and criticalist refer to specific ‘postures’ or traditions which grow out of philosophical schools of thought. In brief, functionalism derives from realism (in all of its many forms) and may be defined as a research posture which holds that all elements of a phenomenon have predetermined functions and relationships (usually causal), and that it is the task of
the researcher to come to terms with the elements’ or objects’ functions and relationships to each other. Constructivism, deriving from the psychological work of Alfred Schutz, and the phenomenological hermeneutics of Martin Heidegger, focuses on the world as a socially constructed set of multiple realities, based on mental consciousness of participants and meanings which they attach to events, circumstances, and interactions they encounter. Critical perspectives derive from early Marxian formulations and focus on the historically reified and underlying structures of social organization which serve to shape human behavior, particularly in oppressive, marginalizing, or nondemocratic ways (Tierney & Lincoln, 2004, p. 108).

In qualitative research, central philosophical assumptions are linked to making sense of multiple realities, and in this study a critical interpretive view is considered in order to understand how access and equity agendas interrupt longstanding hierarchies in elite graduate programs and in society. Ultimately, the goal is to make meaning about the role that the SROP has played in disrupting the status quo. What the findings suggest must also be grounded on how individuals make sense of everyday realities. Certainly, philosophical views have been developed over time to help us engage with this particular research process. Creswell (2013) describes these philosophical assumptions as “the beliefs about ontology (the nature of reality), epistemology (what counts as knowledge and how knowledge claims are justified), axiology (the role of values in research), and methodology (the process of research)” (p. 20). According to Creswell (2013), the characteristics and implications for practice for each of these assumptions include:

**Ontological:** reality is seen through many views. An example of this is the researcher reports different perspectives as themes develop in the findings.

**Epistemological:** includes subjective evidence from participants; researchers attempt to lessen the distance between himself or herself and that being researched. Examples of the implications for practice include: the researcher relies on quotes as evidence from the participants; collaborates and spends time in the field with participants; and becomes an ‘insider.’

**Axiology:** researcher acknowledges that research is value-laden and that biases are present. An example of this is that the researcher openly discusses values that shape the narrative and includes his or her own interpretation in conjunction with the interpretations made by participants.
Methodological: researcher uses inductive logic, studies the topic within its context, and uses emerging design. Examples of these implications for practice include: researcher works with particulars (details) before generalizations, describes in detail the context of the study, and continually revises questions from experience in the field (p. 21).

Hence, it is critical to build upon these philosophical assumptions so that the interpretive framework is directly linked to the nature of multiple realities.

Given the array of philosophical assumptions, qualitative research is “not a singular method, methodology (overall design strategy), or philosophical stance, even while it attempts to bring some coherence to the methodological differences between the various schools and postures (Tierney & Lincoln, 1994, 109-110). The authors argue that, “in a postmodern world the use of any qualitative methodology implies a philosophical orientation toward our informants and towards ourselves as authors. That orientation is essentially phenomenological, interpretive, and critical rather than functionalist” (Ibid., p. 110). Due to the fact that this study employed semi-structured interviews, there is a direct link with the interpretive stance in qualitative research. Moreover, a key aspect of this study is exploring multiple perspectives, a process which will focus on emerging themes and the incorporation of quotes in the data analysis. Indeed, how administrators interpret the challenges and opportunities regarding access and equity in graduate education can provide a rich context for developing an analysis of the value that is placed on SROP as an educational initiative that was put in place to address these issues.

One of the central debates in favor of quantitative research methods is the belief that this research method is objective. Contrary to this assertion, qualitative researchers acknowledge that there is no method that can claim to lead to an absolute truth (Harper and Museus, 2007). Moreover, Harper and Kuh (2007) underscore that “trying to be
objective often constrains one’s capacity to identify inequities and injustice, something sorely needed on contemporary colleges and universities (p. 7). Given the uncertain future of affirmative action policy and initiatives, it is crucial to understand how these leading experts are thinking about the role that SROP plays in increasing the representation of minority students among the graduate student bodies of their respective institutions and the future outlook of minority faculty as well.

*Interpretive Framework: Pragmatic utilitarian stance*

Two of the ways to describe the interpretive framework in qualitative research is to either describe its nature and use in the study or to rely solely on the philosophical assumptions (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative researchers can choose among a growing number of interpretive frameworks, which include: postpositivism, social constructivism, transformative, postmodern perspectives, pragmatism, feminist theories, critical theory, queer theory, and disability theory (Ibid.). Given the intent of this study to explore how administrators perceive the SROP and other institutional components that are necessary to increase the number of minority students in graduate programs, I chose to take on a pragmatic utilitarian stance. This stance allowed me to focus on finding out what administrators think about SROP, and how, if at all, their perspectives are changing. In essence, I wanted to find out what do these leaders think? How consistent are these views across campuses? And what do these differences tells us bout the future of SROP and other efforts to close the gaps and open the door of opportunities for all? Given the focus on finding out how diversity looks like in practice, the data gathered in this study will inform the role that institutional leaders play in sustaining educational initiatives that address the problem of access and equity in graduate education.
Michael Quinn Patton (1990, 2002) has written extensively on the pragmatic utilitarian stance, which focuses on the “outcomes of the research – the actions, situations, and consequences of inquiry – rather than antecedent conditions (as in postpositivism). There is a concern with applications – ‘what works’ – and solutions to problems” (Creswell, 2013, p. 28). Others have also helped to outline what a pragmatic framework entails, and Creswell (2013) identifies some of those views as follows:

- Pragmatism is not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality.
- Individual researchers have a freedom of choice. They are “free” to choose the methods, techniques, and procedures of research that best meet their needs and purposes.
- Pragmatist researchers look to the “what” and “how” of research based on its intended consequences – where they want to go with it.
- *Pragmatists agree that research always occurs in social, historical, political, and other contexts* (emphasis mine).
- Recent writers embracing this worldview include Rorty (1990), Murphy (1990), Patton (1990), Cherryholmes (1992), and Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003).

Patton (2002) further elaborates on the pragmatic utilitarian framework by describing his work in evaluation practice. It is important to note that in qualitative research, as is in education research, scholars draw from multiple perspectives and approaches in the work that they do. While this study is not an evaluation study, there are aspects of evaluation practice that complement this work. For instance, Patton (2002) draws from the standards adopted by the American Evaluation Association in that they call for evaluations to be useful, practical, ethical and accurate. He suggests that criteria for judging the quality and credibility of qualitative inquiry in this approach relies on the fact that, “the focus is on answering concrete questions using practical methods and straightforward analysis while appreciating that those who use evaluation apply both ‘truth tests’ – are the findings
accurate and valid? – and utility tests – are the findings relevant and useful?” (p. 271).
Moreover, Patton (2002) argues that there is no specific research design that should be
promoted because the context of the study matters. For example, “each case depends on
the purpose of the study, the scholarly or evaluation audience for the study (what the users
want to know), the funds available, the political context, and the interests/abilities/biases
of the researchers” (p. 272). Also, the purpose of the study guides the design and
subsequently the analysis.

Based on the pragmatic utilitarian stance, this research study sought to gather the
multiple perspectives of university administrators regarding SROP. One of the main
reasons why I chose to interview administrators was because I am interested in
understanding how theory and policy impact practice and vice versa. While we know a lot
about the philosophical and political arguments around equity, access, and diversity,
there’s a gap in our understanding of how administrators perceive these issues and the
challenges that come along with implementing educational initiatives that serve as a
response to these conditions. Thus, the focus on administrators’ perspectives provides us
with an understanding of how institutional leaders make decisions, commit to certain
initiatives, and how they tie these decisions with their institutional missions, cultures, and
the broader educational agenda.

Data Collection Procedures

The data in this study was collected with the assistance of an education research
grant awarded by the Office of Education Research and Improvement (OERI), U.S.
Department of Education (Award No. R305T010762). The title of the research project was:
The principal investigator was Dr. William T. Trent, a professor in the department of Educational Policy, Organization, and Leadership at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. I was part of the research team and was able to conduct the interviews given my role as a Graduate Research Assistant for the project. It must be noted here that any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this study do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of Education. The grant proposal identified the following broad question that informed the set of studies that were undertaken: What are the individual attributes of students of color and women, along with key educational experiences and institutional characteristics, that contribute to their success in securing graduate education that leads to the Ph.D. and faculty positions? Subsequently, four main objectives were identified in the SROP Research Project: 1) To study the effectiveness of sponsorship-based programs in higher education for minority students; 2) To explore the relationship between institutional and individual characteristics; 3) To understand the processes and experiences across the span of graduate education; and 4) To examine the complex internal and external factors that influence career decisions and opportunities. Surveys and interviews were the two main methods used in gathering data for the set of studies.

From the six studies that were conducted, I was able to carve out this particular study, based on the interview data, which focuses on the perceptions of CIC administrators on SROP as a gateway to graduate school for minority students. The interview data helps to explain how university administrators express and operationalize their commitment to SROP. Hence, this data helps to gauge the level of institutional commitment to the SROP as perceived by this unique group of administrators. Ultimately, the findings will contribute
to the body of knowledge on access and equity in higher education because there is scant research that has been done that documents the perspective and attitudes of campus leaders at different levels of the administration ladder, towards enacting and sustaining this type of initiative.

*IRB Approval*

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign IRB office approved the research proposal, which identified the methods for engaging human subjects. The main purpose for submitting an IRB application is to ensure that a university-wide committee reviews research studies for their potential “harmful impact on and risk to participants” (Creswell, 2012, p. 152). Also, an informed consent form is attached to the research proposal; this is the letter that is given to the respondents prior to the interview. In this form, background information on the study is provided, data collection procedures are explained, a statement is provided which underscores that respondents can voluntarily decide to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences, and another statement is provided which tells the interviewee that their responses will be kept confidential. Given the key administrative positions that the informants hold, they were assured that their names would not be associated with specific research findings. The IRB committee approved the procedures employed in this set of studies.

Upon IRB approval, we began traveling to conduct the interviews at the fifteen host institutions beginning in the summer of 2003 and continued to conduct interviews during the summers of 2004, 2005, and 2006. Given the lapse in time, the University of Illinois IRB had to approve the use of this data for this particular study. They approved the study because I conducted the interviews as a member of the original research team early in the
doctoral program. Furthermore, and of importance here, the data has not been analyzed, and therefore, IRB categorizes this study as a secondary analysis. As such, a new IRB application was submitted only to notify the office that I am examining a data set that was previously approved by their office. Additionally, an IRB application had to be submitted so that I could use a different title for this particular study.

*Conducting Interviews: Research Sites and Respondents*

To explore questions about how CIC administrators perceive and understand the significance of the SROP on their campuses, I conducted interviews under the supervision of Professor William T. Trent, with a select group of campus-level administrators at the fifteen host institutions. A purposeful sampling approach was used because the focus was to gauge administrators’ perspectives (Creswell, 2013). Hence, with the help of SROP program directors and coordinators, we were able to identify which administrators on the fifteen campuses worked closely with the program. This approach was useful because administrators provided detailed information and insights that informed the questions that were posed.

The final list of interviewees included individuals who held one of the following administrative appointments: Chancellor, Vice President for Student Affairs, Provost or Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Dean of the Graduate College, Assistant Dean of the Graduate College; a total of 41 interviews were conducted. The following tables illustrate the distribution of interviews with administrators by position type and number of interviews by host institution (See Tables 12 and 13).
Table 12: Number of interviews by administrative position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Administrative Position</th>
<th>Number of Interviews (n=)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chancellor</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vice President for Student Affairs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost or Vice President for Academic Affairs</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of the Graduate College</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Dean of the Graduate College</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 13: Number of interviews by SROP host institution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Host Institution</th>
<th>Number of Interviews (n=)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Chicago</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Illinois at Chicago</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana University</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana University/Purdue University in Indianapolis</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Iowa</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Michigan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan State University</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Minnesota</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwestern University</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio State University</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania State University</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purdue University</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin at Madison</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We traveled to each of the host institutions, and the individual face-to-face interviews were conducted in the respondents’ offices. Hence, the interviews were a one-time, brief exchange between the researchers and the respondents. The interviews lasted between one to one and a half hours. The interviews were semi-structured, and responses were tape-recorded. The interviews yielded 416 pages of transcribed data.

Access to Respondents

I did not encounter any problems with gaining access to campus administrators who served as informants during the interviews. I attribute this seamless process to the fact that Professor Trent, a nationally recognized expert in higher education, pitched the studies to the CIC council of deans who then reported back to their staff that we would be engaging their campuses with this set of studies. As a professional courtesy, administrators received a description of the research project objectives prior to our campus visits. Additionally, the research team enlisted the help of SROP coordinators and directors at each of the SROP host campuses to schedule the interviews. Given our limitation of time and travel dates, we were not able to interview an equal number of administrators at each campus. Yet, when combined, this sample is impressive in that it includes an array of leaders who have significant administrative responsibilities.

Per the guidelines in the IRB approval, administrators were provided with consent forms for them to review and sign before the interviews commenced. We had two copies of the consent form, one that each administrator signed and returned to us, and the other copy for them to keep for their records. Once the administrators consented to participate in the study, the interviews proceeded.
Interview Questions

Interview protocols were developed for each group of interviewees, including program participants (both former and current), faculty mentors, program coordinators and directors, focus groups, and finally campus administrators. The interview protocol that was used in interviewing campus administrators was first sent for review to the SROP Research Project Advisory Board. The research project advisory board was comprised of national experts who study access, diversity, and equity issues in higher education. The use of an interview protocol is necessary in order to have consistency both in the questions that are posed during the interviews and in the data that is collected. The following is the list of questions that were included in the interview protocol:

1. How long has this campus been involved with the SROP program?
2. Can you give me a brief history of how the program has evolved over time?
3. How long have you been involved with the program?
4. Can you tell me the ways in which you are involved?
5. In what ways is the SROP program consistent with your institutional mission and goals?
6. What do you see as the primary goal of the SROP program at ________?
7. Can you tell me about the organization of the SROP program here at ________________?
8. What are the key components of the program?
9. Which components matter most and why?

Additionally, the protocols included an extended list of questions in case that the administrators were brief in their responses. This was done because we anticipated that answers might vary by respondents based on their experience with SROP and the length of time that they had held their position. Certainly, administrators who were recently
appointed may not have the institutional knowledge to cover the variety of issues regarding SROP with great detail. Conversely, more seasoned administrators might offer extensive responses to the main set of leading questions. Either way, we also anticipated that given the open-ended nature of the questions, the interviewees might naturally share information that could inform the extended list of questions. The extended list of questions were:

10. Are there additional components that you would like to see included in the program? Why?
11. How successful is the SROP program at achieving its stated goal? To what do you attribute its success or lack of it?
12. What do you see as the principal benefits of program participation for SROP students? For faculty mentors? For academic units? For the campus as a whole? For the CIC institutions as a network?
13. What else is important for us to understand about the operation and impact of the SROP program on your campus?

Data Analysis

Given the fact that the respondents could easily be identified given their high profile positions if we were to use their title or institutional name, they remain anonymous, and no specific institution will be linked to any of their responses. Instead, themes that emerge from the data are identified. If administrators holding a specific position bring up a certain theme, and it is pertinent only to that level of administration, the title of the position is used (i.e. Provost), but the name of the institution will not be identified. Given that there are 15 research sites, and the similarities in campus compositions, it is unlikely that any administrator can be identified.
In this study, I followed the standard analytical procedures used when examining interview data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). They are as follows and arranged in sequence:

1. Affix codes to the transcriptions of the interviews.
2. Sort and sift through the data to identify similar phrases, relationships between variables, patterns, themes, distinct differences between subgroups, and common sequences.
3. Gradually elaborate on a small set of generalizations that cover the consistencies discerned in the data.
4. Confront those generalizations with the formalized body of knowledge in the form of constructs or theories.

This process of analyzing the data is adapted from the work of Matthew Miles and A. Michael Huberman (1994). By following this sequence, I was able to engage in the process of data reduction. “Data reduction is the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data that appear in the transcriptions (Ibid., p.10).

Following this stage, the process of inductively generating themes emerged (Moustakas, 1994). Seidman (2006) succinctly explains the process as follows:

Most important is that reducing the data be done inductively rather than deductively. That is, the researcher cannot address the material with a set of hypotheses to test or a theory developed in another context to which he or she wishes to match the data. The researcher must come to the transcripts with an open attitude, seeking what emerges as important and of interest from the text” (p. 117; cites Glaser & Strauss, 1967)

The method of developing themes is based on an analytical process. Creswell (2013) underscores that this process requires the analyst to decide what responses go together to form a pattern, identify what constitutes a theme and name it, and the meanings associated with the emerging themes. The next chapter will reflect the themes that emerged from the
data. In reducing the data, I engaged the transcriptions manually because I wanted to ensure that I carefully read every page. Additionally, I read the transcripts three times before bracketing off sections that signaled an important theme. This is an important aspect of qualitative research methods because this process allows for thematic analysis through the identification of similar perceptions across the respondents. The end result of the analysis has to meet the strategy for validating findings when using the pragmatic utilitarian stance. Patton (2002) describes this process as posing questions that produce largely descriptive answers. Hence, the administrators’ perspectives served to meet the need of gathering information regarding the SROP. Their responses allowed me to attach practical meanings and make interpretations based on their perspectives.

Limitations of the study

One of the limitations of interviewing and qualitative research is the fact that one is relying on individuals’ perceptions, which can be guided by any number of influences unbeknownst to the interviewer. Another limitation is that the perceptions of any given individual cannot be generalized to a larger sample. Museus (2007) notes that, “limitations of individual interviews are inherent in the reliance on the perceptions of the interviewee. Of course, the perceptions provided by one interviewee are specific to that individual and cannot be generalized to any larger population” (p. 32). Moreover, another limitation that must be noted is the lack of more data. Given the limited funding available to conduct these face-to-face interviews at different sites across a large region, it was not feasible to interview more administrators to increase the data pool. However, future studies can certainly build upon the findings from this study.
Another important challenge for qualitative researchers lies in making sense of the data that is collected through interviews. Patton (2002) succinctly summarizes this challenge as follows:

The challenge of qualitative analysis lies in making sense of massive amounts of data. This involves reducing the volume of raw information, sifting trivia from significance, identifying significant patterns and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal. The challenge is that there are not and cannot be formulas for determining significance. No ways exist of perfectly replicating the researcher's analytical thought processes. No straightforward tests can be applied for reliability and validity. In short, no absolute rules exist except perhaps this: Do your very best with your full intellect to fairly represent the data and communicate what the data reveal given the purpose of the study. (p. 276).

Indeed, the human factor is at the core of qualitative inquiry, and therefore the researcher has the obligation to provide as much detail regarding the procedures employed in the study, and in turn use the respondents' words in quotes to validly represent their perspectives.
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This chapter reports the findings that emerged from the interview data. The presentation of the findings follows Seidman's (2006) model for interpreting interview data. In this model, the researcher begins to interpret the data as he/she is conducting the interviews and normally does this through taking notes. Once the interview data is transcribed, the researcher analyzes the data by marking passages that are of interest, labeling them, grouping them, and subsequently formulates interpretations. The interpretations tend to inform the following broad set of questions that researchers should keep in mind when analyzing interview data:

- What connective threads are among the experiences of the participants they interviewed? How do they understand and explain these connections? What do they understand now that they did not understand before they began the interviews?
- What surprises have there been? What confirmations of previous instincts? How have their interviews been consistent with the literature? How inconsistent? How have they gone beyond? (Ibid., p. 128).

Hence a major strength of conducting interviews is that this process allows us to understand how individuals perceive their experiences within the context of their work. In higher education, it is rare to find studies that focus on administrators’ perspectives regarding educational initiatives on their campuses. Many higher education scholars and practitioners have critiqued the current state of higher education research for the lack of studies that could inform the everyday decision-making and policy-making on critical issues confronting higher education like social progress (Bensimon, 2007; Milem, 2011). This study aims to inform the issue of diversifying graduate programs at elite public institutions and therefore the weight was placed on collecting individual perspectives.
regarding the challenges and benefits involved with doing this work. When placing such attention on the individual perspectives, Seidman (2006) emphasizes that, “we can see how their individual experience interacts with the powerful social and organizational forces that pervade the context in which they live and work, and we can discover the interconnections among people who live and work in a shared context” (p. 130). As expected, the campus administrators who participated in the interviews provided perspectives that help us understand pertinent issues regarding access and equity for minority students. Indeed, many of the administrators used SROP to discuss broader issues related to diversity in higher education as well as in society. The following themes emerged: 1) the SROP serves a variety of institutional goals, 2) the continued significance of diversity initiatives, and 3) program strengths and challenges. The following section elaborates on these themes and the issues that administrators associated with them accordingly.

*Conceptualizing the SROP: Multiple Goals, Multiple Aspirations*

The background information that was provided on SROP was consistent across the board. Interestingly, some of the administrators mentioned that they have been around their respective institutions since the program was introduced in 1986. However, there were multiple perspectives when it came to providing the context for the program and its intended goals. For instance, the fundamental rationale for developing the SROP was to diversify the graduate programs across the host institutions. One administrator noted, “I believe the primary goal of SROP was to change the institutional culture by bringing graduate students of color not only to SROP but to our graduate programs.” The logic behind this rationale was clear: administrators acknowledged that most of the graduate
programs at their institutions at the time had very few or no graduate students of color, especially at the doctoral level. This confirms what the national and institutional data indicate for that time period, which was that minority students were underrepresented among graduate students and among doctoral degree recipients.

Absent from the responses was a lack of connection between the underrepresented status of minority students and the broader historical, political and economic context. For instance, no administrator gave reasons for the lack of diversity on their campuses. The issue was framed within a limited scope of an admissions agenda. This is certainly in line with what Chang (2002) underscores in that diversity discourses tend to only address the admissions process for minority students in an effort to find ways to increase their numbers among the student bodies. A more complex analysis could have included insights as to the barriers that were in place that limited the educational opportunities that minority students had prior to the mid 1980s.

“Getting a Taste of Graduate School”

Campus leaders responded to the underrepresentation of minority graduate students by implementing the SROP. Naturally, they noted that one way to pursue this goal was to expose talented minority undergraduate students to their graduate programs. In essence, the idea was that if they invited talented students from around the country to participate in SROP, these students could get a firsthand experience in conducting research and give serious consideration to pursuing doctoral degrees and subsequently seek faculty positions. The following outlook speaks to this matter:

I think that the primary goal has always been to provide a research experience; a meaningful research experience to students, with the idea of stimulating their
interest in pursuing graduate education and perhaps a career in academia. That has, I think, always been the central goal.

The research experience that participants gain through SROP serves many purposes. For one, program participants gain a unique experience, or as one interviewee put it, “get a taste of graduate school.” Another administrator expanded on what this process looks like in practice,

The idea is to bring a group of talented minority students to a research campus, let them work their way through the project, deal with an advisor who makes sort of research demands on them, and in effect, try out the kind of thinking and the kind of life that they would be getting into if they decided to go on to graduate school.

Fundamentally, by participating in SROP, students are able to experience the difference between being an undergraduate student versus a graduate student, learn the demands and benefits of conducting research, and work one-on-one with a faculty mentor, which are all important experiences that have the potential to persuade them to pursue doctoral degrees.

Also, administrators mentioned that the SROP provides access to research for some SROP students. This was described as SROP participants having access to labs and other academic resources that their home institutions might not have, especially for those students who come from smaller institutions like Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges, and small liberal arts colleges. One respondent put it this way, “one of the basic issues for me is to ensure that people who come from institutions that aren’t necessarily like ours have an opportunity to understand how a first-class research institution works. And I see this as an opportunity for that purpose.” With similar sentiment, another administrator at a different campus highlighted the experience of one student, which demonstrates this access to research that others also
identified as being a central purpose of SROP. The student’s experience was explained as follows,

This young man that I met two nights ago, his eyes are bug-eyed. I mean, they’re wide open right now. He’s never had the opportunity to work in a lab with some of this high tech equipment that my husband has. He has never seen an operation like this. I mean, this is a relative world of post-docs and graduate students and all they do is research and not just the type of research based on what you’ve learned in books. You know, undergraduates—unless you’re a very special undergraduate and you’re chosen to participate in some kind of an honors program, I don’t think you ever get a glimpse of research and graduate education. I acknowledge, maybe I’m not being fair to what’s going on on other campuses, I may not be. There may be a lot more of that than I am aware of.

Hence, by spending the summer at a large research-intensive university, students are exposed to a wider range of resources that they may otherwise not experience if they did not leave their campus to participate in SROP.

_Becoming Competitive Applicants_

Through participation in the program these students also pick up the skills needed to become competitive applicants to graduate schools. In addition to conducting independent research and joining a research team, the SROP provides students with seminars that address various topics such as applying to graduate school, GRE preparation courses, writing courses, and the opportunity to participate in the culminating research conference where they present their work. Combined, these opportunities enhance the participants’ resumes and applications to graduate schools. After all, being admitted to graduate school is a central goal for SROP participants. One administrator pronounced that, “it would be a success if they would go on to graduate school with the greatest acceptance.” Thus, the SROP experience provides program participants with a set of tools and skills that they can use and build upon when they get ready to apply to graduate school.
schools. Of importance here is that students are able to devote several weeks to examining a research question, which in essence mirrors the graduate school experience. This by itself is important because students are able to include this experience in their graduate school applications, which enhances their profiles.

**SROP as a Recruitment Tool**

Other campus administrators suggested that the goal of the SROP remains to recruit students of color for their graduate programs. For instance, one administrator stated, “the primary goal of the program is to recruit quality doctoral students.” Other respondents used different phrases to also signal that recruitment is the primary goal of SROP such as “to identify individuals with high potential,” and “expose participants to the very best part of our university to encourage them to enroll in our graduate programs.” Campus leaders justified the need to recruit students because institutions compete for them. Program participants have achieved academic success at the undergraduate level, come highly recommended by faculty at their home institutions, and also understand the importance of conducting research by simply applying to the SROP. Upon graduation, these students have academic profiles that indeed make them competitive for graduate admissions and therefore many institutions employ different strategies to recruit these students. One administrator noted that on her campus, some faculty members call students to discuss what type of research is taking place in their labs as a means to get them to select their institution for the summer. Normally, they call students who have multiple offers from the SROP host institutions because they believe that the personal touch of having faculty take the time to call a student sometimes helps the student understand that there’s possibly a
good match with a mentor at their particular institution. These faculty members also do this once admissions offers have been made to students who have applied to their respective doctoral programs.

The idea that SROP can serve as a recruitment tool could serve as a discussion point on how to merge academic excellence and diversity in higher education (Bowen, Kurzweil, and Tobin, 2005). While the direct connection was not presented in this fashion, recruitment by itself suggests that institutions are looking for these types of students. Again, this is an institutional strategy that needs to be further explored to understand how recruitment is rationalized and how to implement it. This means that administrators must also express how much their institutions are willing to invest to attract these talented graduate students.

Building the Pipeline: Faculty of Color

Another set of campus leaders identified the goal of SROP as being the means for increasing faculty of color at their respective institutions. They conceptualize this by noting that SROP helps to identify and train highly talented minority students early on during their undergraduate careers and this sets the foundation for them pursuing doctoral degrees and then becoming faculty members. One administrator shared his perspective regarding this line of thinking as follows:

The goal of the SROP program has been for more underrepresented students to seriously consider academic careers. In turn, we hope that this will result in a larger pool of young faculty members who will eventually become middle-age faculty members after. That’s such a hard problem to resolve because the pool is small, and the schools are many. But you have to realize that eventually you’re going to be competing for very few people, but it’s important, it simply must happen, and I think SROP is one of the ways that can happen.
Hence, this perspective signals the need to implement a pathway to graduate school and to the professoriate and SROP serves as a gateway for underrepresented students. One respondent put it this way, “It’s essentially an effort to be active, productive participants in the process of growing future faculty members.” It is important to note that these administrators also made it a point to highlight that there are still very few minority students across the nation who are earning doctoral degrees, which creates a small pool of minority candidates for professorships. Within the distribution of doctoral degrees across disciplines, it is evident that some disciplines have smaller pools of minority PhDs and therefore SROP serves as a mechanism to increase the number of underrepresented doctoral degree recipients who could fill these ranks.

While it is important to note that these administrators are thinking of SROP as a way to increase the pool of PhDs who could potentially join the academic ranks, there was no explanation on whether there is follow-through on this aspiration. For instance, are there steps that these institutions are taking to recruit graduate students of color? Are they providing admitted students with the resources necessary to succeed? And are graduate students provided with any resources to help them become competitive applicants for faculty positions? Thus, it is not enough to suggest that there is a seamless process for minority undergraduate students to pursue graduate degrees, earn their doctorates, and then join the academic ranks.

*The Continued Significance of Diversity Initiatives*

One of the objectives of this study was to understand how programs like SROP and other similar educational initiatives that focus on equity and diversity are justified.
Campus administrators unanimously agreed that the SROP continues to be necessary because we have not reached a time period when these types of programs are no longer necessary. One respondent remarked that,

> Hopefully, we will reach some kind of a transition phase in the future. Yet, we are still in a time period in which this program is still necessary. In the long term, the positive outcomes of SROP will help us get to the point when these programs are no longer necessary. Right now, we clearly don’t have the number of underrepresented graduate students that we aspire to have. We should have them and would like to have them. So anything that we can do to rectify the situation should be our central goal.

This perception parallels Justice Sandra Day O’Connor’s opinion in Grutter v. Bollinger (2003), which underscored that affirmative action will no longer be necessary in twenty-five years. It is still to be determined if this timeline will hold or whether it will need to be revisited and that point in time.

Currently, administrators described the continued inequality of educational opportunity as a justification for sustaining programs like SROP. One respondent expressed that, “if opportunities were equal, there would be folks in the pipeline, and you wouldn’t need to find ways to increase that population.” Thus, it seems that minority students’ representation must be clearly defined and achieved. The literature holds that representation is usually either linked to the nation’s population or a particular state’s population (Smith, Altbach, and Lomotey, 2002). To be sure, the number of minority graduate students on the campuses that host SROP does not come close to mirroring their representation in the population.

_Inequality of Educational Opportunities_

Campus leaders did not hesitate to state the current lack of minority students in
their graduate programs, a condition that accentuates their underrepresented status at these institutions. One respondent affirmed that there is no question that these programs are still necessary because as she put it,

I’ve watched carefully the Ph.D. production over the years, and while there has been some progress, there’s still a gap. And I think there needs to continue to be efforts like SROP to increase the number of students who are eligible and who will go onto graduate schools. And I don’t think there’s any question about that. So I think without that, I think you would see a decrease in the number of students who apply and are successful in going on to graduate school. So I think even now, there’s still a need for programs like SROP.

The underrepresented status for minority students was also framed as an issue that should be contextualized within the changing demographics of the country and what this means for American society in general. An interesting perspective emerged from one respondent as she used the conditions of the Middle East to relay the message that no society should have a large proportion of their population uneducated and without access to opportunities. She reasoned that,

You could not have half your population systematically testing ignorant and have the culture survive. For instance, some countries in the Middle East were keeping the women, you know, utterly without education, and that’s not stable. And I think that in the same kind of way, we can’t afford to have great big chunks of our population systematically limited in terms of their access to education. That’s a powerful talent pool that we’re not taking advantage of. So I think, yeah, we need things like this.

Additionally, one administrator framed it a bit differently as he suggested that SROP is absolutely necessary despite the changing legal landscape. He made the point as follows,

Yeah, I think – look at where we are now, and look at where we need to be. I think yes. If you’re asking me what the legal end of the world is, it changes from day-to-day. But I think the answer is yes. And interestingly enough, one doesn’t hear any complaints.
Finally, another perspective that emerged related to the continued inequalities that still exist in American society. One campus administrator made this connection in the following remark:

Well, I’m afraid society hasn’t changed as much as we would like to believe it’s changed, and without these kinds of intervention structures, many of the opportunities that are somewhat automatic for the majority of people are not as automatic for people in an underrepresented group, and we need all kinds. I mean, the world hasn’t changed appreciably—not as much as we would like to think it has changed since 1964. Legally, opportunities are there, but we know that there are all kinds of other structural obstacles and stumbling blocks that are there in the way that prevent students of color from having access to educational opportunities. Without programs like SROP, the little progress that we’ve made in terms of diversity in our faculty, diversity in some professional disciplines, would not be there if it wasn’t for these kind of intervention programs.

Overall, there was agreement among administrators that SROP and similar initiatives are still necessary because minority students continue to experience inequality of educational opportunity.

Revisiting the Mission of the Land Grant University

Given the persistent limited access to elite graduate programs, what is the role that these institutions should be taking in addressing this issue? Most administrators were keen on connecting the access problem with larger democratic ideals grounded on the pursuit of social justice and equality. For instance, ensuring access has been a central goal for public universities, some of which are land-grant institutions as is the case for a core group of the SROP host institutions. These land-grant institutions remain committed to ensuring access as outlined in the land grant legislation. From the beginning, land grant institutions set out to serve the needs of society. G. Edward Schuh (1986) wrote that,

The land grants were created in response to the elitism and limited relevance of the private universities in this country. They were to provide upper level education for the masses – especially in agriculture and the mechanical arts. In addition, land
grant universities were to generate new knowledge, apply it to problems of society, and extend that knowledge to others beyond academia. It was a tripartite mission: teaching, research, and extension (p. 6).

Through the federal government’s enactment of the Morrill Land Grant in 1862, the states that received public land endowments and research funding vastly expanded their universities, which gave rise to scientific research. The legislation was also a response to the emerging social classes of American society. Clark Kerr (2001) pointed out that,

The land grant movement was also responsive to a growing democratic, even egalitarian and populist, trend in the nation. Pursuing this trend, higher education was to be open to all qualified young people from all walks of life. It was to serve less the perpetuation of an elite class and more the creation of a relatively classless society, with the doors of opportunity open to all through education” (p. 36).

Given this foundation, the contract between the university and the public is an aspect of the land grant mission that might need to be revisited as some of the campus administrators noted in their perceptions about how SROP fits within the mission of their institutions.

To be sure, the nation looks a lot different today in terms of demographics than it did during the middle of the 19th century. As such, one social problem that the land grant institutions tried to resolve, that being the inequality of educational opportunity by race and class, still exists and in some places it is magnified and therefore remains of central concern at the turn of the century. In connecting access to the mission of the university, one respondent maintained that,

I think we need to continue to redefine what access means in a Land Grant institution. In 1855, access was just letting people go to a university and broadening their base of study. I think for us now, it means having a school where students who come from a variety of backgrounds have a legitimate opportunity to engage in all aspects of a research university. I see the SROP program as a way of taking that historic land grant responsibility of access to really the best part of a research university and making it available to a variety of students so that they can prosper and grow.
Another campus leader suggested that perhaps it is now time to build on the traditional mission of the land grant university and elaborated on this point in his remark that,

> We need to strive to be a land grant university for the 21st century, because when we think about the way the land grant mission was defined, there was room for growth so that it’s not just about agriculture or agriculture and engineering, but that it really has an urban mission, that it tries to outreach and engage with the whole community. This includes really worrying about urban issues and things like education and so on.

Interestingly, other respondents also made connections to the role of the university in addressing social problems, both locally and throughout the state. One respondent succinctly pointed out these issues by maintaining that,

> Universities are human institutions that function far from perfectly. So we may have very lofty values and goals. And so, in that context of imperfection and the human enterprise, I think that programs like SROP serve to ignite the academic interests and potential that students have. And we owe that to students who come. And I think that the system, by and large, of where our students come from, high school experiences and the systems of universities still don’t account for the academic passion of students of color. We’re too focused on being at-risk. And I think this program is really important to move from at-risk to academic potential. So I think that’s really very, very important. I think the second--and I wish that we were in world where that was different; I think it’s really different than it was 10 years ago. The world is turning, I think, in a positive way. But it’s still very imperfect in that regard. For us, 90% of our students are from [this state], and there’s great structural inequality in the high schools [in our state] for students of color, particularly if they’re socio-economically disadvantaged. And that’s another reality of our society that we need to work on, and that’s a part of the academic challenge. I also think that the students who have these experiences are the kinds of ambassadors for learning, that they change attitudes of faculty and staff. And unfortunately that’s something that does need to be changed. And it also helps to change the attitude of students coming into the university, because these students talk about this experience.

Clearly, the issue of inequality of educational opportunities can also be addressed within institutions of higher education because this remains a significant social problem. For land
grant universities, these institutions can do this by expanding the reach of research and its implications, and by doing so can contribute to society in meaningful ways.

A commitment to diversity requires action and strategy

Many of the interviewees discussed campus culture as it relates to the missions of their respective institutions and how SROP serves as an educational initiative that addresses directly some of the concerns on their campus communities. For one, many institutions claim to be committed to campus diversity, but that commitment doesn’t translate into action. By sustaining SROP, this sends a message to potential graduate students that these institutions are committed to increasing the diversity on their campuses, are dedicated to helping alleviate the limited educational opportunities that students of color have, and also aspire to maintain a social contract with the public. The support offered to SROP may also symbolize other pertinent issues, as one administrator remarked,

I think SROP helps in a number of ways for [our institution] to fulfill its mission. First of all, this is an excellent opportunity for us to bring students of color to [this campus] and hopefully get them to get a better feel for [our campus]. We’ve had some incidents on campus, as many campuses have, that have brought about some bad press in the past few years. And I think it gives these students the opportunity to be on campus and begin to establish relationships with faculty here, to see the kind of community we have here and the kind of infrastructure we have to support students. I think it’s real important. And so often times when we talk about—which is one of our major challenges in our framework, to foster diversity at [our institution]—the recruitment and retention of a diverse student body, we almost always think about that at the undergraduate level. And so, for us to begin to introduce some students to graduate life at [our institution], the possibilities of graduate life here, I think, is exciting.

At a different institution, another administrator shared a similar perspective and notes that SROP makes the following statement to students:
So this participation in a program like this says that this institution cares about undergraduate and graduate initiatives, cares about diversity, it’s putting its money where its mouth is, is reaching out to—I mean, the outreach and engagement and the diversity piece are very much part of the sort of new understanding of land grants. So it’s in harmony, I guess, with the basic flow of the university. And the departments and the programs that are in that flow are the ones that are doing well. And the ones that are not bothering to take care of their undergraduates or not bothering to contribute to diversity are more likely to fall by the wayside. So I think it’s part of that general – we’re on a trajectory, and this fits beautifully with that kind of trajectory.

In a related point made in another interview, the importance of taking action to solve climate issues was highlighted in the following statement:

I think we’ve got an obligation as an educational institution to – I’ll use a euphemism—to help build a pipeline. You know, so many times you hear, when you’re trying to recruit faculty members, about the pipeline, which I think is just the language of exclusion. And people talk about that as if, well, there aren’t enough people in the pipeline, so we’re done. And I always point out to people, no, the response of our institution needs to be, if there’s a pipeline problem, then we’ve got an obligation to make a contribution to the pipeline. And so, I think it’s a chance for [this institution] to serve the wider community. Whether we interest folks in [our campus] or not is really secondary to interesting folks in graduate school wherever it is they go. And one of the things that I would hope the SROP would do on this campus is to convince people that it’s everybody’s job. And that’s why my comment about broader involvement, and how we build on this wonderful experience to just change the face of the institutional effect.

Finally, one interviewee succinctly summarized the importance of connecting access and diversity issues to the mission of the institution and how SROP helps to fulfill this goal as follows,

Well, I think it’s fundamentally consistent with our institutional goals of making sure that the educational opportunities in this state and this university are open to all students. And clearly, it’s a part of our effort to make sure that we are recruiting and retaining a very highly diverse student population, and that we’re preparing those students to go on for graduate professional pursuits as well. So it’s clearly connected to our commitment to diversity and our commitment to excellence, and our commitment to prepare the next generation of scholars and responsible citizens that is part of this effort as well, because clearly, I think some of the skills that young people obtain while they’re doing this work prepares them to be better citizens in a diverse democracy.
This set of responses represents the complex connections that administrators make between institutional policies, priorities, and strategic initiatives. Certainly, SROP represents a commitment to making the institutions places where diverse students are welcomed and supported and also relays the message that these campuses aspire to continue to realize the goal of equality of educational opportunity.

Program Challenges and Strengths

While university administrators were able to readily discuss the philosophical underpinnings of the Summer Research Opportunities Program and provide the contextual analysis for its development and implementation, one of the most significant challenges regarding the SROP is that there have been only a few studies done that have focused on examining the program. This reality makes it very difficult to discuss program impact with certainty given the lack of evidence. Other challenges that were identified were participants’ pre-program preparation, lack of fellowships targeted towards SROP participants once they are admitted to a doctoral program, isolation in the academy, and other issues regarding diversity and affirmative action both in theory and practice. This section expands on the issues that were identified accordingly.

The lack of studies and evaluations on a program like SROP highlights an area of research that needs further exploration. One respondent put it simply, “the problem with these programs is that other than your study – this is only the second time to my knowledge that anyone has initiated a scientific and structured study to give analysis of these programs.” Indeed, studies on SROP have been few and include: 1) a study initiated by the University of Wisconsin which is the only program that has initiated an evaluation
study on SROP as mentioned in Chapter Two (See Foertsch, Alexander, and Penberthy, 1997); 2) the CIC also produced one publication which provided an overview of SROP (See McFadden Allen & Zepeda, 2007); and 3) the other remaining studies have come out of this particular set of studies on SROP (See Davis, 2008; Perez & Gong, 2005; Trent, Lee, & Owens-Nicholson, 2007). The article by Danielle Joy Davis looks at the role of mentoring for SROP participants, while the Perez and Gong and Trent et al. studies focus on examining financial aid issues. As such, it was very difficult for this group of administrators to provide concrete evidence to suggest program success. At one institution, one administrator noted that while they more or less know the former SROP students who are doctoral students at his institution, they don’t know whether other program participants went on to graduate school elsewhere. He remarked, “I would like to know what’s happening to the graduates of each of the programs. And I ask it here, and people say, well, we sort of..., and so to me, this is sort of the problem – tracking one’s alumni is an extremely important event.” The issue was also brought up by another administrator who put it this way, “I think that where we aren’t so successful is with the follow-up and outcome.” Clearly, tracking participants and studying SROP would provide everyone with much needed evidence regarding the impact of the program.

Another issue that was brought up at different institutions was the preparation of SROP participants prior to coming to campus. The following insight describes the issue at hand:

The challenge lies before the students start the program. That may be something that you might want to explore; like how long did it really take for participants to get engaged in the activity and what could have been done to help them make a more successful or faster transition into their research project? Did they know what they were going to do before they got there or did they have to spend two weeks or three weeks figuring out what they were going to do? And how could we make sure that
their time, which is really precious during the program, was effectively used? Are we better off doing some prior selection negotiations between the student and the mentor or how often does that happen, so that they could already arrive having done some of their readings? Then they could get involved in it sooner.

With similar sentiment, at another participating institution, one campus leader suggested that students should connect with the mentors prior to arriving on campus so that they can peruse research articles before arriving and thus be better prepared and can hit the ground running. The issue here is that the SROP is eight-to-ten weeks long, and in some fields of study, it is very difficult to conduct even a small research project within this timeframe. Hence, the more legwork that can be done before arriving to campus, the better the experience will be for the student.

Financial Aid Matters

Campus administrators also brought up the issue of funding for graduate school as a potential barrier for SROP participants. They noted that once SROP participants apply and are admitted into doctoral programs, it is difficult to provide fellowships to them and many choose to either not pursue a doctoral degree or attend another institution that offers them a better financial aid packages. One respondent opined that, “if you really want to know what I think is the biggest failure of SROP is, it is the lack of fellowships for graduate study.” At other institutions, the issue was even broader than fellowships, as they expressed concern that there are now fewer financial aid packages available for minority applicants including a low number of tuition waivers and limited teaching assistantships, which in turn means that students must decide whether they are willing to accrue loans to support their aspiration of obtaining a doctoral degree.
Participant Selection

Finally, there are other issues that were identified as being challenges for SROP. One has to do with the selection of program participants. Several campus administrators commented that many individuals around campus question the SROP goals because the students that they have worked with are from middle-class families and are not first-generation students. This view is consistent with those expressed by some individuals who oppose affirmative action, as Deborah Malamud (1997) writes,

To its critics, one of the flaws of race-based affirmative action is that its main beneficiaries are economically privileged members of the eligible minority groups. Supporters of race-based affirmative action, particularly in the sphere of education, have responded by claiming (implicitly or explicitly) that economic inequality is not, in fact, the reason for race-based affirmative action at all. Instead, they embrace diversity as affirmative action’s central goal – and in doing so, they find a justification for continuing to include the middle class in minority affirmative action (p. 939).

Additionally, other campus leaders noted that in today’s legal landscape, they must consider how the campus community views SROP. One respondent alluded to the possibility that the SROP program could be continued even if affirmative action was struck down by the high Court if it would make a more conscientious effort to admit low-income, first-generation, non-minority students. She noted,

If I were to do something with SROP to try to continue its viability in the face of all these legal issues, I’d try to find rural students whose high school experience and aspirations are really not much different than some of the students who are of color who come from urban settings, or whose aspirations are not a lot different than some of the children of farm laborers in that area because their family is dirt poor. And I think we’re going to have to have some stake in our future for students like that. The nature of economic, structural inequality in America and the biases that occur in America will essentially diminish with programs like SROP. But the question is, is there a place for that kind of program? And I think the other challenge, and which I don’t have an answer for, is that there are now people of color who have generational wealth, and the programs like SROP don’t make a distinction between students of color with generational wealth and some privilege. There is the classic argument regarding race, and I appreciate and understand that
argument. I would have programs for students of color that acknowledge and are based on that argument. But I think in the future, if we think about these programs and their sustainability, we're going to have to think about those kinds of issues.

These points of view reflect many of the same arguments that have been offered by academics and legal scholars who study issues pertaining to affirmative action policy. Irrespective of where any of these campus administrators stand in regards to affirmative action, I think it is noteworthy to consider that they are giving some thought to these issues and rightfully express some concern for the future of this program and similar initiatives. For higher education researchers, this serves as a reminder that the collection of evidence that demonstrates the continued significance of access, equity and diversity in higher education should be a priority.

Addressing Isolation in the Academy

This study also explored the institutional components that are necessary to ensure that minority students successfully complete graduate programs and earn doctoral degrees. The most salient theme that emerged from this inquiry was the issue of isolation in the academy. We know from research that students who experience feelings of prejudice and alienation have lower rates of college graduation (Loo and Rolison, 1986). Indeed, this was a key finding from social science research that was highlighted by the eight national associations that submitted the Amici Curiae in support of the University of Texas. The statement was as follows:

Research studies examining the harms associated with racial isolation and tokenism reinforce the University's interest in obtaining a diverse student body. Among the harms ameliorated by increased diversity are stereotyping, stereotype threat that compromises student achievement, microaggressions, and overt discrimination against minority students” (p.5).
One respondent noted that many graduate students of color do not complete their degrees at her institution for various reasons including the unwelcoming campus culture that can isolate these students accordingly. She remarked,

I’ve seen too many students start and not finish a graduate degree for all kinds of reasons. I think you have to create a nurturing environment and I think a lot of times we forget that. They arrive, they get launched into their classes, some of them begin their research programs right away, but what I often witness is an intense loneliness on the part of these students and this doesn’t have to just be a minority student on a campus that’s predominantly non-minority. We don’t pay a lot of attention to that. It’s – what would you call it – the personal side of things.

Offering a similar explanation, another respondent commented that,

I’m sure you’ve heard many times students talking about how difficult it is to go through graduate school alone. And that’s what happens, I think, when there isn’t a faculty person or faculty people who sit and talk to a person about something other than what they’re required to take. When a student becomes a mathematician or a sociologist or a statistician by association, you know, it’s sort of an apprenticeship in a way. If you’re a graduate student included in the culture, then you have an opportunity to think in those terms, whereas if you’re a graduate student without being included, then you’re studying everything and you’re trying to pass everything, but you’re not part of that culture.

Creating a campus culture that is hospitable to all students addresses these non-cognitive factors that potentially can negatively impact students. One campus leader noted that one way to approach this was to encourage faculty to serve as mentors and not just advisors.

This is necessary and he explains this in the following way:

Effective mentoring is needed as opposed to advising, as well as providing resources when necessary for people to pick up. Also, all students need to have an environment where they know there is a support group for them and that they are not isolated. I am very sensitive that people feel the need to say that I have done a wonderful job if I have a woman or an African-American in my program and yet they are the only one; but my colleagues insist that we have met our goal. Yet, I remind them that no one wants to be the only person of color out there all by his/herself, and thus there’s a need to recruit a critical mass.
Program Strengths: Key Educational Components

Campus administrators across the host institutions assert that the strengths of the SROP lie within key components of the program. Among those are the participants’ opportunity to experience being at a research university, engaging in meaningful research projects, establishing a relationship with a faculty member, and the ability to establish a network with other students who have similar aspirations and demonstrate a passion for learning. The following perspective captures the program components that positively impact program participants:

Well, the relationship to the mentor is at the core of it, and the opportunity to live in this campus research environment while they're trying to finish up a particular work or a particular project is another very powerful component. And a third one probably is the kind of modeling of graduate student work that they're getting from the graduate assistants that they're working with, and fourth – a very important one is what I was talking about before, just their ability – the opportunity it provides for them to just live among themselves as they think through, ultimately individually, that – in ways that are very, very strongly affected by the group dynamic, I think – their ideas about whether this is what I want to do with the next several years of my life or not.

Given the fact that many of the SROP participants come from other institutions, the program offers them a new experience during the summer months. One administrator maintained that the SROP offers participants with many opportunities, which she identified as follows:

The heart of the matter--and I’ll come back to that--is, of course, the engagement of the student in a research project under the mentorship of a faculty mentor. And the – perhaps not in absolute order – I’ll list other components. The campus experience itself, finding out what it’s like to be on a different campus; sometimes smaller, sometimes bigger; what it’s like at a research university, what the libraries are like, what the facilities are like, what people do. And that’s important. I think our program has a lot of sensible components. Having said that, the heart of the matter is the research experience. I think that this component alone is not sufficient. I think that at the seminars – and you’ll get a list of the schedules – seminars on writing, the panel discussions, the GRE practice – all of those activities, components, they’re very
necessary. One might argue that the students from certain schools come with a certain amount of that savvy already, but my experience is that most don’t – that in general, students don’t, and that’s really helpful for the students. If you aren’t getting it anywhere else on your own campus, then you really – you need that. And you can absorb it better in the SROP program because that’s what you’re here for. You’re not trying to work in an appointment with your advisor while you’re taking full courses. You’re learning that and people are presenting it as important, and I think it’s a good time to have that information.

There’s also the perspective that SROP offers many of the participants with an experience that they might not have if they were not admitted to the program. Many of the interviewees underscored the opportunities that the SROP provides because many of the participants are first-generation and therefore may have not been exposed to the intricacies of graduate school. The following response captures this very well:

I think the huge pluses are that it opens some possibilities, even given the advent of television, which has opened a lot of possibilities for people. You can’t strive for something you don’t know about. If it’s not part of your life space, you can’t strive for it. If it’s not a goal that you’re familiar with and know anything about, you can’t strive for it. So you’ve got to open possibilities for people if you want them to strive for higher education, if you want them to strive for the doors that higher education will open. So I think you render these types of opportunities for those who don’t have access to them. Most of them don’t have professors in their families. Most of them don’t have – many of them don’t have college people in their families. So how do they know unless you encourage them to come in and find out? It gives them experience, which enhances that potential. You can know about it and say, well, that’d be a wonderful thing to do, but it’s like a pipe dream. How do I go about it? Well, this is how you go about it. This is what it means, this is a how-to, not only to establish goals, but how might you get to those goals, if you want them. And then I think it results in networks. I think it puts people who don’t have these opportunities necessarily in their family structure or in their neighborhoods, in contact with other people who are like them and whom they identify with, but who are more on this page of the handbook than the other pages of the handbook.

The Role of the Faculty Mentor is Key

Program participants also gain from other program components. For instance, it was highlighted that given that students work one-on-one with a faculty member, they are
able to establish a relationship with an expert in a certain field. This not only yields an incredible learning experience, but usually leads to having a person who can serve as a reference or someone who will be willing to write letters of recommendation for students when they are ready to apply to graduate school. Hence, faculty mentors are identified as being a significant component of the program as highlighted in the following perspective

Well, it’s – you know, I don’t know that I can pick out the most important thing, but in talking with some of our colleagues, I think one of the things that comes through is that we are fortunate in that we have so many faculty who are willing to be mentors. There are other programs that struggle to find faculty advisors. They’re important for students. And we have no problems. This year, I think that we’ve got something like 80 faculty on this campus that are mentoring students. To me, that’s just a mind-boggling number — because I know how precious summertime is for faculty, for them to be willing to take on a student, particularly from another campus, another university; they’ve never seen them before; they don’t know what to expect really, and they’re willing to spend the time and the energy to mentor these students. I think it’s just a wonderful thing. There are other things that are absolutely critical for the program, but if we didn’t have the mentors, the program would not be, you know, nearly as successful as it is.

Finally, the annual SROP conference was also identified as a key program component. At the conference, students are able to present their work in a style that mirrors those of professional national conferences. This includes poster presentations, roundtable discussions, and conversations with other professors and students who are also interested in learning about the various research projects that students have completed over the summer.

The Educational Benefits of Diversity

Institutions and departments also gain from having minority students as they bring different perspectives to the classroom and to research. This has been a crucial argument
in the affirmative action cases, and one respondent suggested that this is another way to look at diversity initiatives. He offered the following perspective,

> Academic units grow from experience. We’re always having some sort of celebration of diversity, but a lot of times, these young people will be in departments where there are maybe one or two other graduate students of color, or maybe none, or no undergraduate students to speak of. And so I think from the same perspective as I just mentioned for the mentors, academic units grow as well, in terms of a gaining a broader perspective, a better understanding of students from diverse backgrounds, a better understanding of the institutions and the quality of the educational programs that these students come from.

Another respondent put it differently in asserting that by having students of color among the graduate students, this alone can change faculty perspectives. He explained,

> And I think a lot of the ways that I’ve seen faculty members benefit from this in terms of – I’m not saying that people are biased, but they do have some low expectation levels, I think, for students of color. It’s been my experience with faculty – they immediately – when they hear about these programs, rather than say that these are high-ability students, they think this is some kind of a remedial activity to help these students come to par, but what I’ve heard from people that have served in these capacities, what a tremendous educational experience it was for them, in terms of getting to know a young person from another ethnic background and just learning how bright and intelligent they are – and they learn a lot about these institutions that these kids come from as well, especially when some of the kids have been recruited from Historically Black Colleges, for example, or Hispanic Serving Institutions. Somehow or another there’s a myth out there that these students have come from educational backgrounds – educational institutions that are less than, say, big research-intensive institutions like [our university]. And I think that’s one of the most powerful things that can happen, a change in perspective, greater appreciation for their talents, and all that these young people bring to the table.

Put differently and frankly, one campus leader asserted that, “diversity without any infrastructure is useless. When you bring folks in you say oh we have them here, but there is no sensitivity for these kids in that environment.” It’s still a long road ahead to arrive at a point where universities have enacted these supportive infrastructures, as one campus leader rationalized,
This university has a history of not being a place that's as diverse as we would certainly want it to be, and it's been one that has not often had a welcoming climate, and those kinds of changes – particularly climate – are things that take time, regardless of how much the president or I may speak out on a topic. Certainly that kind of leadership is important, but it requires a change in the environment, a change in the climate, and the faculty have to be very much a part of that, because if they don't see the value of having a diverse student body, if they don't see how issues of diversity impact, in many, many cases, their own field of inquiry, or cause them to think about their own field in ways that they haven't before, then I don't think we can make the progress that we need to be making. And that's an area at this institution that we need to continue to work very hard on. And the more opportunities that we have for faculty to interact in a very intensive way with students from different backgrounds, the better. So I think the faculty are the ones that really have an opportunity to – aside from the students themselves – to benefit the most.

Ultimately, many of the interviewees contended that it is absolutely necessary to change the campus cultures of their institutions so that minority students on campus can be academically successful and take ownership and pride in the institution. However, further exploration is needed on the ways in which SROP helps to change the institutional cultures of the host institutions.
CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

The overall arching theme that runs across the findings is that the Summer Research Opportunities Program (SROP) is still necessary given the continued underrepresentation of minority students across graduates programs and the lack of diversity among the faculty at each of the host institutions. While progress has been achieved in diversifying these institutions, much remains to be done. Based on the design of the study, this section will highlight what administrators perceive as the opportunities and challenges for diversifying graduate education. Additionally, the ideas and themes that stand out to me are weaved into the remarks. In other words, my interpretations of the meanings from the findings are included as well as their implications.

Institutional commitment

First, it is of utmost importance for institutional commitment towards diversity to translate into action. Campus leaders acknowledged that SROP sends the message to the campus community as well as to prospective students that these institutions are committed to diversifying their graduate programs. Indeed, it takes more than resources to sustain the SROP. Faculty, administrators, and staff must engage prospective students during the summer months in order to establish relationships with them so that program participants can gain an appreciation for the campus climate. While some administrators acknowledged that their campuses have had racial incidents over the years which have casted a negative light upon their campuses, it is necessary to invite prospective students to these campuses so that they can see for themselves that there are individuals
on each campus who are vested in their academic success. However, it should not be underestimated that institutions must address hostile campus climates that are unwelcoming to minority students. While SROP cannot be the sole response, it is an initiative that helps promote diversity on these campuses.

Of course, like any other program, there are strengths and weaknesses that have been identified by administrators regarding both the ability of the institutions to foster a diverse community and the implementation of SROP. It is fair to note that, while not explicitly stated by these institutional leaders, creating diverse campus communities is a difficult task and this is a dimension that tends to be overlooked and should receive more attention. Indeed, research on diversity has been clear in noting that in order to create and sustain diverse campus communities, several aspects of the campus must be transformed and this is no simple task because elite institutions have a long history of excluding minorities from among their ranks (Chang, 2002; Milem, 2011; Hurtado, Milem, Clayton-Pedersen, & Allen, 1999; Smith, 1989). As such, the desire to create diverse environments is not just an admissions numbers game, it is also a process towards transforming institutions to serve the needs of every student so that she or he is successful and has a positive experience along the way. In recognizing this process, institutions need to be ready to deal with the realities of their campus communities because as reported in the findings, not all members of the campus community are ready to embrace the goal of diversity.

Instead of seeing the challenges toward making institutions more diverse as barriers, researchers continue to remind us that another way to frame this condition is for
institutions to look upon this process as ongoing institutional self-assessments that are needed in order to address issues that arise and realign the efforts to realize the goal (Bensimon, 2004; Diaz and Kirmmse, 2013). An important note must be made here that the focus of analysis is not the students, but rather the unit of analysis is the institutional context that impedes progress towards achieving the goal. Several dimensions of the institutions that were identified in this study which hinder progress toward diversifying the campuses include: isolating environments on campus (i.e. classrooms, labs, and housing); the continued acceptance of the unfounded belief that minorities are deficient; an incomplete buy-in to the idea that diversity is everyone’s job on campus and not just one unit or a small group of staff; and the lack of a message by central administration on the importance of diversity in creating not only positive learning experiences for students but also the continued significance of diversity for sustaining a democratic society. Clearly, given the fact that diversity is more than just admitting students of color, institutions must be ready to support efforts in the long-term but also be ready to realign and transform the institutions if the efforts are to bear fruit.

Developing the pipeline

The need to move beyond the focus on admissions was made clear in this study as administrators underscored the significance of developing the pipeline of minority graduate students of color. To do so, it requires that institutions be ready to reach out to talented undergraduate students of color from throughout the country. Hence, SROP serves both as an outreach and recruitment tool for these universities because it has become increasingly clear that they must now compete for these students. Yet, students are also aware of campus climate issues around the country and research suggests that
students of color seek places that are supportive and diverse (Park, 2006). So how do institutions demonstrate that they are committed to these students? One way to do this is through investing in SROP. Program participants are offered travel, boarding, and a stipend to encourage them to spend a summer at a particular host institution. It is through this experience that they can get a feel for a campus and subsequently can make informed decisions about the place where they want to pursue their graduate degrees. Additionally, because they are paired with a faculty mentor in their area of study, they also get exposed to the type of academic environment that they could expect to have if they decide to pursue graduate study at that particular institution. In essence, this program is a marketing tool. The institution wants to expose their campus so that program participants can get a good sense of what it is like to be a student at that particular campus. As such, the funding for SROP can be interpreted as an investment in developing the pool of talented minority graduate students.

Besides giving students the opportunity to experience the campus during the summer, program participants also need to be exposed to the process of applying to graduate school. While these students have the necessary credentials to be competitive applicants for graduate school, some of them may not be familiar with how to package themselves to stand out from other applicants. For instance, SROP students learn early on that their faculty mentors will more than likely write letters of recommendation in support of their applications for graduate school. Hence, it behooves them to put all of their energy and effort into developing a strong research study, developing a relationship with the faculty mentor, and take the opportunity to ask questions regarding graduate study at that particular institution. This is important because for many of these students this is the only
opportunity that they will have during their undergraduate careers to explore graduate school and therefore they benefit greatly from this experience.

As such, if these students did not participate in SROP, they would not have the research experience that other applicants might have when applying to graduate school. Certainly, conducting research is an important experience to have, which helps a student become a competitive applicant for graduate school. Other program activities also complement the research experience including seminars on scientific writing, applying and preparing for the GRE, research presentations, and networking with experts across academic fields of study. By providing minority students with the opportunity to conduct research and participate in these seminars at one of the host institutions, SROP is able to provide these students with the necessary educational experiences that they need to become competitive applicants. One administrator suggested that SROP is important because too many individuals on campus want to get away from doing diversity work, as the pool of talented minority students is small. His response to that type of attitude is if the talent pool does not exist or it is small, then “let’s create it.” This speaks to the importance of developing the educational pipeline for students of color.

The disconnect between research and practice

The lack of research and evaluation studies on SROP and the lack of data were the two most significant limitations that were identified regarding the program. One of the reasons why there is a lack of research or evaluation studies on SROP might be that there isn’t a concerted effort by faculty members who study access and diversity to examine programs like SROP. Also, the literature in higher education has consistently noted that there is limited collaboration between faculty and student affairs professionals (Jackson &
Ebbers, 1999; Tinto, 1998). This is problematic because many student affairs professionals are not trained to evaluate programs or develop surveys to assess program effectiveness. In this sense, higher education practice is limited by the lack of evidence that could be produced if higher education faculty and others trained in similar fields would conduct studies on campus-initiated programs and policies. Certainly, because SROP has been around for over a quarter of a century, it should be examined.

On the administrative side of the SROP, it seems like further exploration is needed to understand why tracking data is not available. One can speculate that issues like limited staff, limited accountability, or the simple reality that students tend to move several times while in college might be reasons why the data is not available. Another possibility could be that institutional leaders actually don’t want to collect data given the continued scrutiny of these types of initiatives. To be sure, opponents of affirmative action are always signaling out programs that may be against their interests. Institutional leaders are thus reluctant to want to bring any attention to diversity related initiatives given the consequences associated with potential lawsuits.

*Reaffirming the significance of diversity*

The findings from this study are consistent with the literature in that discussions on access and diversity continue to mainly focus on the number of minority students who are admitted. Hence, as Chang (2002) noted, there is an overemphasis on limiting the discussion to questions pertaining to which students should be admitted to these elite colleges and universities and the criteria by which to select them. The stakes are high and therefore this process is heavily protected and contested at the same time. Yet, the reasons why these positions are heavily guarded are limited in the conversation. For instance, it is
well established that students who are able to earn advanced degrees from prestigious institutions have a greater chance to enter the professoriate, of securing high level and influential positions in politics, government, and in industry, and also make significant contributions to our society. As such, it is problematic that most of the graduate programs across the SROP host institutions remain comprised mainly of White and international students. Given this reality, the leadership in our society is not representative of the rich diversity of our nation. Increasingly, the younger population is also more diverse and yet campus administrators negate to reason that in order to sustain and strengthen our democracy for future generations, all students should have a chance to pursue advanced degrees and gain access to positions of power and influence.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS

It is commendable that SROP remains an educational resource available for talented minority students who are thinking about pursuing graduate degrees across the host institutions. Indeed, it is impressive that for almost three decades, the SROP has been in operation although policies, court decisions, and public opinion regarding diversity initiatives have changed. The long history of the program provides administrators across the host campuses with a sense that the institutions that they represent are committed to doing the often difficult work of building diverse student bodies and increasing the number of faculty of color at their respective institutions. To be sure, many program participants have gone on to earn their doctoral degrees either at the host institutions or at similar institutions, and this reality certainly has made a dent on the status quo. Yet, while this notable achievement should be recognized, many of the institutions look similar, if not worse, in terms of the diversity of the student bodies and faculty ranks as they did in 1986. Certainly, SROP cannot be held solely responsible for changing this condition. The historical record is clear in indicating that these institutions have long resisted diversifying even when well-qualified students and faculty are available. This is certainly a difficult reality and one that institutional leaders and education researchers cannot ignore. Also, we must keep in mind that we are at a crossroads in American history and may be approaching a time when change will certainly have to occur or we risk losing our standing in the world and perhaps even the strength of our democracy.
To be sure, the U.S. population continues to dramatically change as it is becoming more diverse, and yet prestigious public institutions of higher education still remain places where only the elite and wealthy attend. With the decrease in state and federal funding for higher education, in addition to increases in tuition costs, it is clearly becoming more challenging to change this condition. Yet, perhaps now is the time for institutional leaders who proudly proclaim their support for diversity to take whatever measures are needed to ensure that their institutions are places where all students, irrespective of race or income, can have the opportunity to achieve academic success. This is also the case for diversifying the faculty ranks and staff at their respective institutions. In essence, elite higher education institutions have not fared well by simply professing their commitment for diversity. These institutions must be transformed so that they can genuinely demonstrate that they are concerned with the future health of our nation and the strength of our democracy, and this can only be done by ensuring that the their campuses reflect the rich diversity of our nation.

Future considerations

Administrators across the SROP host institutions genuinely showed support for the program and its aim of diversifying their graduate programs. However, the continued underrepresentation of minority students across graduate programs is telling of how difficult and painstakingly slow it is to change institutional cultures. Given that the problem persists, the significance of SROP and other diversity initiatives across campuses is still evident. There are several issues that these institutions might want to consider in the future as they continue to seek ways to diversify their graduate programs. First, administrators in this study did not discuss any benchmarks for success. Institutions might
want to set a long-term goal of achieving an equal representation of minority graduate students according to their share of the population. If this were to be the goal, it would be beneficial to set short-term benchmarks that could measure progress. Perhaps setting a benchmark of a 20% increase per year could be manageable, and on the year when this target is not met, these institutions can assess their efforts and realign any strategic initiatives that are in place or implement new strategies.

A second strategy that campus administrators should consider is conducting institutional assessments that examine the historical and current experiences of graduate students of color. By gathering and sharing the findings from such assessments with the campus community, this can possibly lead to a more complex understanding of the issues that minority graduate students of color have faced while pursuing their degrees. In turn, these institutions can develop strategic plans to address the issues that are identified. The focus must also be inclusive of both academic and nonacademic issues. As we have learned in this study, some campus administrators noted that there have been incidents on their respective institutions that have negatively impacted the campus climates. Institutions must be able to continuously assess their campus cultures or risk having a negative reputation. Given the current expansion of social media, it is critical for campuses to address any incidents that impact the campus climate because the news of such events spreads quickly.

Finally, the leaders at the SROP host institutions need to do a better job with developing more complex statements on the significance of diversifying graduate programs. The focus seems to be only on the educational benefits of diversity for students. Yet, diversity among doctoral degree earners is also crucial because individuals who earn
these advanced degrees contribute to our society in meaningful ways. Certainly, the leaders in industry, science, the academy, politics and other arenas tend to have advanced degrees from institutions that host the SROP program and from other similar high-caliber institutions. Moreover, the diversity of our nation continues to grow at a very fast pace and it is becoming necessary for these institutions to train a diverse pool of doctoral degree recipients in order to meet the demands for a diverse workforce that helps sustain both our economy and democracy. The great public universities throughout the country have certainly been key in developing the talent pool over time and now must find ways to continue this tradition by stepping up to the challenge of developing a talent base that is reflective of their state populations. Also, the future of affirmative action policy remains uncertain. Thus, it is essential for leaders to begin to develop statements that speak to diversity beyond the admissions policies. To be sure, diversity must be framed in more complex ways so that all stakeholders understand its impact across different aspects of the university in addition to its impact on the future of our nation.


Fisher v. University of Texas, 631 F.3d 213 (5th Cir. 2011), cert. granted (No. 11–345).


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*Sipuel v. Board of Regents of Univ. of Okla.,* 332 U.S. 631 (1948).


Smith v. the University of Washington Law School, 233 F.3d 1547 (3d Cir. 1996), cert. denied, 121 S. Ct. 2192 (2001).


