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ATTITUDES TOWARD AND KNOWLEDGE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN  
HIGHER EDUCATION

by

Erika Ann Carr

A Dissertation  
Submitted to the  
Faculty of The Graduate College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
Department of Educational Leadership, Research and Technology  
Dr. Andrea Beach, Advisor

Western Michigan University  
Kalamazoo, Michigan  
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# ATTITUDES TOWARD AND KNOWLEDGE OF AFFIRMATIVE ACTION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Erika Ann Carr, Ph.D.

Western Michigan University, 2007

Affirmative action has become an increasingly important topic in higher education because colleges and universities are key battlegrounds regarding how affirmative action policies are enacted. Senior-level higher education administrators have historically taken the lead in shaping affirmative action policies in higher education, and knowing their own community's standpoints on the policies could assist them in deciding how to proceed in defending affirmative action in the face of increasing opposition.

This study measures individuals' attitudes toward and knowledge of affirmative action within one university in the state of Michigan, where affirmative action was banned through a state-wide election in November 2006. An invitation to participate in a web-based survey was sent out to a random sample of faculty, staff, graduate students, and undergraduate students. Five-hundred and twenty university community members responded.

The web-based survey was a modification of Echols' (1997) Echols Affirmative Action Inventory (EAAI), which measured respondents knowledge of and attitudes toward affirmative action. The modified survey questions were divided into six sub-categories: definitions, knowledge of affirmative action, attitudes of affirmative action, perceived impact of affirmative action, support of affirmative action, and demographics.

The study found that personal definitions did vary somewhat by various demographic groups. However, in general the definitions were more positive in nature than they were negative meaning they are supportive of affirmative action than opposed. Attitude level was significantly related to race, party affiliation, and direction of vote. Knowledge level was found to be significantly different based on race, education level, position at the university, direction of vote, party affiliation, and age. Both support level and impact level of affirmative action were found to be significantly influenced by certain demographic variables. Additionally, knowledge, attitude, and impact combined were found to significantly influence support level. Overall, support for affirmative action among university community members was higher than that of the overall population in the state.

The findings here can be used by higher education leaders in states that have not banned affirmative action to consider how to impact the knowledge and attitudes of not only their own institutions but the population at large.

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## AKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“And let us run with endurance the race that God has set before us” - Hebrews 12:1

Thanks to God for leading me and guiding me all of my life and providing me with the endurance to finish this race. Thank you to my husband and superman who has sacrificed as much as I to see this goal achieved. I appreciate and love you for all that you are. To my parents who have continued to support me without question and whom have always been and continue to be in my corner – thanks for teaching me everything I needed to know about life. To Justin for being a brother and a friend. To my father and mother-in law for loving and supporting me as much as their own daughter. To Sonya for her avid enthusiasm and excitement in all aspects of life and for being a great Sister. To Dr. Andrea Beach, not just my chair, but my mentor, role model, advisor, coach, friend, and everything I needed her to be when I needed her to be it. To Dr. Sue Poppink and David Glenn for their wisdom and assistance on my committee. To Dr. Mark Orbe for his guidance and encouragement. To my supervisors, Diana Hernandez and Dr. Martha Warfield, for paving the way for women leaders and for fostering a work environment conducive of growth and development – thank you for your guidance and mentorship. To my coworkers for teaching me just as much about myself as about the work we do. To Sherrie and Ronicka for their friendship and support. To all the individuals that helped me through this journey, there are more than I could ever write.

Erika Ann Carr

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The benefits of affirmative action accrue not simply to the individuals for whom opportunities are expanded, but to the entire university community, which derives much of its vitality from the perspectives of different cultures, races and individual points of view. While neither Cornell nor America has yet realized the full potential of an ecumenical society, I continue to believe that such a society is our best hope for mobilizing the skills and realizing the potential of all our people. Universities like Cornell must take leadership in developing such a society. For all these reasons, I am committed to maintaining an assertive policy of affirmative action at Cornell. (Rawlings, 1995).

The above quote is a statement on affirmative action from former president of Cornell, Hunter R. Rawlings III. "Presumptions of a level playing field in higher education suggest that affirmative action is passé, yet students of color continue to face situations with which other students do not have to contend" (Carroll, Tyson, & Lumas, 2000). Affirmative action policies in higher education have become increasingly controversial. Affirmative action is, "voluntary and mandatory efforts undertaken by federal, state, and local governments; private employers; and schools to combat discrimination and to promote equal opportunity in education and employment for all," (APA, 1996, 2). Although the formal definition is presented here, many individuals do not have a clear understanding of affirmative action (Crosby, 1994; Sax & Arredondo, 1996). The purpose of this study will be to understand faculty, staff, and students

attitudes toward and knowledge of affirmative action at a mid-sized public university in the State of Michigan. Higher education leaders can use the findings in this study to understand what variables influence affirmative action positions on their campuses which will then assist leaders in better defending affirmative action policies on their campuses.

The rich and tumultuous history of affirmative action is reviewed as well as the key premises behind both proponents and opponents of affirmative action. Proponents of affirmative argue that affirmative action is needed in society due to racism as well as gender and racial disparities. They also argue that affirmative action has been an effective policy in some regard and that it assists institutions in creating diverse campuses which benefit all participants. Opponents of affirmative action argue that affirmative action is reverse racism and is not all that effective. Additionally, they argue that affirmative action is no longer needed and that racism does not exist in today's society as it had in the past.

Higher education's reaction to the affirmative action controversy is also discussed. It is important to examine how institutions have been responding to the increasing oppositional force to affirmative action. Institutions have had a timid reaction to defending their attacked affirmative action policies. More elite universities have taken the lead in eliminating many race-based programs, but other institutions have been following suit and it seems almost inevitable that many more institutions will follow as well (Hamilton, 2003; Schmidt, 2004). The opening quote in this chapter is a rather unique strong stance from a university president, Hunter R. Rawlings III from Cornell, advocating the need for affirmative action. Other university presidents have taken strong positions for affirmative action but they have been few and far between when compared

with other university administrators who have taken weak to no position on affirmative action.

Previous research studies that have examined knowledge and/or attitude of affirmative action is examined and compared with the results of this study. Previous studies found race, gender, political ideology, educational background, and socio-economic status to be influencers of affirmative action attitudes and/or knowledge. Studies on individuals' perceived impact of and support level of affirmative action were also discussed.

### Theoretical Framework

Both Hartsock's (1983) standpoint theory and Malen's and Knapp's (1997) symbolic policy perspective are used to inform this study.

Standpoint theory is discussed as a way to explain the polarized positions on affirmative action. Nancy Hartsock (1983) rooted her theory in the idea that women had a particular standpoint just by being women. Standpoint theory later evolved to explain differing viewpoints based on other factors that make up an individual such as race or income level. Wood (2005) explained that standpoints are achieved through critical reflection of power relations and through engaging in the struggle required to construct an oppositional stance. Standpoints are formed through a critical reflection of power relations and affirmative action addresses power relations in the United States.

Affirmative action was formed to address racism and sexism. African Americans, women, and other minority groups were not given the same privileges as White American males. Affirmative action mandated that all governmental institutions and agencies were required to consider race and gender when recruiting and/or hiring. Individuals form

their standpoint through critical reflection of affirmative action and how the policy impacts them. Understanding Standpoint Theory will assist in understanding individuals' standpoints. Additionally, understanding individuals' affirmative action standpoints may increase understanding and provide constructive ways to approach conversations. Constructive conversations of affirmative action may lead to less polarized positions.

Affirmative action is also examined as a symbolic policy. Malen and Knapp (1997) described the symbolic policy perspective as one that uses imagery to create and sustain the policy. The idea is that a symbolic policy creates meaning and sends messages through the use of symbols. Understanding how affirmative action operates as a symbolic policy will further understanding of how individuals' standpoints are influenced by the symbolic messages about the policy that are sent through news and other media sources.

#### Statement of the Problem

Affirmative action has become a critical issue in higher education. In the 2003 University of Michigan court cases (Gratz v. Bollinger, 2003; Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003), the Supreme Court ruled affirmative action constitutional. Specifically, the Supreme Court stated that race can be used as a factor in college admissions selection, just not the only factor. Political conservatives attempted to counter the Supreme Court's ruling by bringing affirmative action to the ballot in the State of Michigan. Many individuals were concerned about this initiative:

The fear commonly expressed by higher education observers and officials is that the numbers of Black and Latino students at elite institutions will fall dramatically as they did immediately after the use of race in higher education admissions was banned in California and in Texas in 1995 and 1996. (Roach, 2003).

Prior to the 2003 Supreme Court ruling and the ballot initiative in Michigan, both California (1996) and Washington (1998) had already eliminated affirmative action through a state ballot. As a result, race cannot be used as a factor in selection of who will receive resources, services, admissions into a university, or employment in either California or Washington.

In the State of Michigan there has been a lot of controversy over affirmative action given that the Supreme Court ruled affirmative action policies constitutional in 2003 during the University of Michigan court cases (*Gratz v. Bollinger*, 2003; *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2003). Immediately after the Supreme Court ruling Ward Connerly and the American Civil Rights Coalition initiated the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative, a campaign to put affirmative action on the ballot in the State of Michigan and thereby counter the Supreme Court's decision. Connerly's American Civil Rights Coalition was also the organization that brought affirmative action to the ballot in both California and Washington. "Connerly announced his disdain with the Supreme Court decision and his plans to sponsor a ballot initiative that would eliminate affirmative action in the State of Michigan called the Michigan Civil Rights Act," (Sowislo, 2005). As a result of Connerly's ballot initiative, individuals in the State of Michigan voted on November 7, 2006 to eliminate affirmative action policies in the state. Most recently Ward Connerly's American Civil Right Coalition announced plans to get affirmative action on state-wide ballots in Arizona, Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma for the fall of 2008 (Schimdt, 2007). According to Schmidt (2007), they are calling it "Super Tuesday on affirmative action" day and all five states chosen by Connerly's American Civil Rights

Coalition are well over three-fourths White and known for their political conservatism, which may mean a five point win for Connerly and his organization.

Understanding attitudes of affirmative action in a university setting is important because the affirmative action battle has taken place largely on college campuses. Since the inception of affirmative action in 1964, it has been contested and many times in university settings. The Regents of the University of California vs. Bakke in 1978 was the landmark case that set a legal precedent for affirmative action. The Supreme Court ruled that race could be used as a factor in the admissions processes. Decades after the Bakke case, other cases have surfaced contesting affirmative action policies on university campuses. Since higher education has been used as the battle field for affirmative action debates, the attitudes and perceptions of those in higher education seem important.

#### Research Questions

In order to understand individuals' knowledge of and attitudes toward affirmative action, the following five research questions were developed:

1. To what extent and in what ways do personal definitions of affirmative action differ among demographic groups?
2. To what extent do attitudes regarding Affirmative Action differ among demographic groups?
3. To what extent does knowledge of affirmative action differ among demographic groups?
4. To what extent does individuals' knowledge of Affirmative Action influence their attitude of Affirmative Action?

5. To what extent do individuals' knowledge of affirmative action and their perceived impact of affirmative action influence their support of affirmative action?

These five research questions will inform a better understanding of both attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action.

### Methods

In order to answer the above research questions, an anonymous web-based survey was administered to all faculty, staff, and students (both graduate and undergraduate) at a Midwestern research I university. The survey measured individuals' knowledge of and attitude toward affirmative action. The survey instrument used was a modified version of the Echols Affirmative Action Inventory (EAAI) developed by Echols (1997). The original inventory consisted of 67 items/questions and about 81 variables. Revisions were made to Echols original design in order to directly answer the research questions in this study.

### Significance of the Study

This study will add to the literature on affirmative action knowledge and attitudes by examining attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action through the lens of Standpoint Theory and inform university administrators on what encompasses individuals' affirmative action attitudes and knowledge level. It is important for universities to be aware of the attitudes toward and knowledge of affirmative of its members and how those compare with the general population. It is also important to understand affirmative action in its entirety in order to know how best to respond as an institution to the continuous attacks on affirmative action policies. The intended



audience is primarily university administrators who will now be poised to be the leaders in affirmative action policy-making just as they have in the past. This study will provide insight into university members' standpoints on affirmative action. Since higher education institutions in Michigan will again be poised to take a leadership role in shaping admission policies after the state-wide affirmative action election in November 2006, it will be important for institutions to have an understanding of how their own communities perceive the issue.

Now that Michigan voters have determined the fate of affirmative action, higher education institutions must determine their responses. Public universities in Michigan must abide by both federal law due to financial aid funds to the university and state law. In this case the state and federal laws on affirmative action conflict. In any situation where a state law conflicts with a federal law, the federal law preempts the state law. Consequently, public higher education institutions have a fine line to travel. Institutions must now consider whether or not to revise their affirmative action policies such as admissions policies and if so how those policies should be revised. Institutions in Michigan specifically will attempt to abide by both state and federal affirmative action laws, which in many cases will be impossible. As the literature review in Chapter 2 indicates, higher education has had a timid reaction to the recent affirmative action challenges. Institutions have been quick to dilute and in some cases cover-up their own affirmative action policies. However, institutions do not necessarily have to dilute or eliminate all affirmative action policies due to the federal and state law conflict. With more states targeted for affirmative action challenges, five states for the fall of 2008 (Schmidt, 2007), more higher education leaders will need to decide what kind of

leadership stance they will take on the issue. Senior-level higher education administrators have historically taken the lead in shaping affirmative action policies in higher education, and knowing their own community's standpoints on the policies could assist them in deciding how to proceed in defending affirmative action in the face of increasing opposition.

This study may inform higher education institutions of how other institutions have responded as well as their options in responses. By understanding their university members' attitudes toward and knowledge of affirmative action, institutions may also make a more informed decision on how they as an institution should respond.

#### Limitations and Delimitations

A delimitation of this study was that the web-based survey was only administered to one university. The institution is a mid-sized Midwestern university in Michigan.

One limitation in this study was that since affirmative action was put on the ballot and voted on in Michigan, there was much media attention on the issue. The media could have impacted individuals' attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action.

A second limitation to this study was the knowledge portion to the survey. There were ten factual knowledge questions about affirmative action on the survey and the questions come as close to fact as possible. Chapter 3 provides references to support each knowledge question answer. However, due to the nature of affirmative action, there is always some room for debate and therefore, knowledge of affirmative action becomes difficult to measure and is a limitation in this study.

## Conclusion

After Michigan's state-wide election on affirmative action, it becomes important to understand not only how individuals voted, but their attitudes toward affirmative action and their knowledge level that is influencing their attitudes. Since universities have been at the forefront of affirmative action controversy, it becomes important to know the attitudes and knowledge of university members. This study seeks to uncover the attitudes and knowledge of one university community in order to understand why they may be voting a particular way. This chapter has outlined the overall problem, the research questions to be answered, the methodology, the significance of the study, and delimitations/limitations of the study. The next chapter provides an indepth view of the literature surrounding affirmative action.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review will examine the history of affirmative action policies, the main issues surrounding affirmative action, higher education's response to the University of Michigan U. S. Supreme Court cases, effects of eliminating affirmative action, attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action, and theories that inform this research study. The information in the literature review will inform the results of the study which will be forthcoming. Higher education leaders can use the results from this study to understand what standpoint elements influence individuals' affirmative action positions and subsequently better defend affirmative action policies on their campuses in times of increased opposition.

#### A Brief History

##### *Definitions*

The American Psychological Association's (APA) formal definition of affirmative action is, "voluntary and mandatory efforts undertaken by federal, state, and local governments; private employers; and schools to combat discrimination and to promote equal opportunity in education and employment for all" (1996, p. 2). The purpose of affirmative action upon its creation was to provide for and protect equal opportunities for all. In respect to higher education, "[t]he main objective of affirmative action policies . . . is to improve educational opportunities for minorities by equalizing admission requirements by including race as one factor in the admission process," (Garrison-Wade & Lewis, 2004, p. 24).

### *Origins*

Affirmative action policies were introduced into higher education in 1965 as a follow-up to the 1964 Civil Rights Act. “Title VI of this act mandated the desegregation of public elementary, secondary and postsecondary education institutions” (Moreno, 2003, p. 16). President Lyndon B. Johnson officially mandated Affirmative Action policies through Executive Order 11246, stating that government must take “affirmative action” in the hiring of minorities (Garrison-Wade & Lewis, 2004). Johnson’s executive order applied to all government contractors, including state supported universities. In response, these institutions began applying affirmative action to their admissions policies. Currently, Executive Order 11246 is administered by the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs. This office requires that all employers with 50 or more employees, and federal contracts in excess of \$50,000, file written affirmative action plans with the government. Additionally, the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education requires schools and colleges to use affirmative action to overcome the effects of past discrimination and to encourage and maintain voluntary affirmative action to attain a diverse study body (44 Fed. Reg. 58,509, 1979).

Johnson’s Executive Order 11246 was originally created for minorities solely. However, Johnson amended the order in 1967 to include women. Then Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 added handicapped persons to affirmative action policies. Finally, Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 added veterans to affirmative action policies. Almost from the inception of affirmative action, the policies have been challenged.

### *Challenges in Employment and Contracts*

In the 1979 *United Steelworkers v. Weber*, the Supreme Court ruled that race-conscious affirmative action efforts designed to eliminate a racial imbalance in an employer's workforce resulting from past discrimination are permissible if they were temporary and did not violate the rights of White workers. The ruling allowed for temporary remedial use of race and gender selection criteria by private employers. Another case, *Johnson v. Transportation Agency* (1987), allowed the Supreme Court to re-emphasize that severe underrepresentation of women and minorities justified the use of race or gender as one factor in choosing candidates. The emphasis was also on using race and gender as *a* factor and *not the only factor*. These rulings meant that affirmative action policies must be flexible, temporary in duration, and narrowly tailored to avoid becoming rigid quotas. Justice Powell highlighted the importance of creating a "compelling interest" for affirmative action in the 1978 *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, which is described in more detail in the next section. Powell's comments, however, created the need for an institution, employer, or state to justify affirmative action as a "compelling interest" and he indicated that a diverse student body was one such interest. Powell's "compelling interest" resurfaced in the 2003 University of Michigan cases, which are also described in more detail in the following section.

In 1989 *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Richmond's minority contracting program was unconstitutional and needed to present a compelling interest as well as be narrowly tailored. Richmond's program was designed to increase public contracting opportunities for minority businesses by providing a 30%

set-aside for minority businesses. The U.S. Supreme Court then ruled in 1990, *Metro Broadcasting, Inc. v. FCC*, that affirmative action policies should be upheld. The Court allowed certain preferences for minorities in broadcast licensing proceedings and justified their decision by stating that broadcast diversity was a “compelling interest” for the government. The Court reiterated this decision in the 1994 *Adarand Constructors, Inc. V. Pena* by again upholding affirmative action policies that were narrowly tailored and provided a compelling governmental interest.

### *Challenges in Higher Education*

During the 1970’s, affirmative action policies in higher education were actively challenged. The first challenge to affirmative action in higher education was *DeFunis v. Odegaard* (1974), in which DeFunis took the University of Washington to the State’s Supreme Court after twice being denied admission to its law school. Marco DeFunis was a white Jewish male of Spanish-Portuguese decent. The main premise for DeFunis’s case was that the university considered minority applications separate from non-minority applications. The Washington State Supreme Court upheld the affirmative action policies at the University of Washington by stating that the university was “producing a racially balanced student body and alleviating the shortage of minority attorneys” (as cited in Moreno, 2003, p. 17). DeFunis did appeal to the United States Supreme Court, but the Court dismissed the case due to the fact that DeFunis had already been admitted into Washington State University’s law school and was about to graduate. As a result, the case was remanded back to the Washington State Supreme Court where the earlier decision was reinstated.

A few years later in 1978, the *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke* was decided by the Supreme Court and again the Court upheld the university's affirmative action policies. Allan Bakke was a thirty-two year old white male, Vietnam veteran with a master's degree in mechanical engineering. By 1973 Bakke had applied to thirteen medical schools and had been denied by all. Bakke then sued the University of California claiming that the special minority admissions program had reduced the number of available slots in the program. The university reserved sixteen out of one hundred spots for certain minority groups. The California Supreme Court did rule the University of California's policies unconstitutional; however, the case was appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court. The Supreme Court was divided on the issue, but did rule affirmative action policies necessary and constitutional. However, the Court also ruled that the use of numbers or quotas to obtain affirmative action goals was unconstitutional and the University of California was in violation of this because it used a specific number. In summary, affirmative action policies were upheld by the court, but the use of specific quotas were deemed unconstitutional. This landmark case was used as a precedent for affirmative action cases that followed.

During the 1990's affirmative action policies were again challenged. It was during this time that two very distinct events in affirmative action history occurred. The first was that in 1995 the Regents of California voted to end all affirmative action programs at all of their campuses (Moreno, 2003, p. 18). This unprecedented event created momentum for a State ballot initiative on this issue and in 1996, one year later, California voters passed Proposition 209, a law that prohibited the use of all affirmative action policies in the State. That same year in Texas, a U.S. Court of Appeals for the



Fifth Circuit ruled that its law school's policy of considering race in the admissions process was unconstitutional (*Texas v. Hopwood*, 1996). However, the case never reached the Supreme Court because the program declared unconstitutional was no longer in use, so the Court refused to hear the case. A year later, in response to *Texas v. Hopwood*, the Texas legislature passed the Texas Ten Percent Plan, which ensured that the top ten percent of students in all high schools in Texas have guaranteed admission to the University of Texas and the Texas A & M system. Also in 1998, voters in Washington passed Initiative 200 which banned affirmative action in the state. In 2000, Florida legislature passed the One Florida Plan that banned affirmative action. The plan guarantees the top 20% of all high school students admission to the University of Florida system.

Affirmative action battles were again brought to higher education's doorstep in the 2003 University of Michigan cases. This time the Supreme Court heard and ruled upon two affirmative action cases simultaneously. These two landmark cases, *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) and *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003) both dealt with affirmative action in the admissions process in higher education. *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003) focused on undergraduate admissions at the University of Michigan, while *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) centered on law school admissions at the University of Michigan. Lords (2003) explained the premise of the *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003) case by stating that the plaintiff, Gratz:

...claimed that the university discriminated against them to accept Blacks and Hispanics with lower test scores and grade-point averages, even though more than

1,200 other White applicants with lower test scores and grades than Gratz, for example, were admitted to Michigan in the same year ... (p. 29).

In *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003), Barbara Grutter also claimed that less-qualified minority students were admitted into the University of Michigan Law School while she was denied admission (Lords, 2003). As the Supreme Court had in earlier precedent cases, the Court upheld the university's affirmative action policies; however, not with the same degree of firmness as it had in the past. The Court ruled that race could continue to be used in the admission process in higher education. However, the court also ruled that race could not be used as the only factor in selection of students into a university. This last addition to the ruling gave many higher education administrators a mixed message. Although race could be used in university admissions, it could not be the only factor used. As a result, universities became guarded in interpreting the line between permitted use and non-permitted use of race as a factor. Garrison-Wade & Lewis (2004) stated:

... *Grutter v. Bollinger*, (2003) . . . allowed the University of Michigan Law School to use race-based affirmative action to diversify its student body.

However, in the *Gratz v. Regents* (2003) decision, the Supreme Court ruled that the university's undergraduate College of Literature, Science, and Arts could not use an admission process that awarded points based on an applicant's race and ethnicity. (p. 24)

In *Gratz vs. Bollinger* (2003), the Supreme Court ruled that the points awarded to race and ethnicity were essentially too many points, but in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) the Supreme Court upheld affirmative action by ruling that the University of Michigan's law school admissions procedures were satisfactory. After this quasi-victory for affirmative

action, opposers of Affirmative Action policies immediately began to challenge the policies by creating a ballot initiative in the State of Michigan. This initiative was lead by Ward Connerly, who led successful campaigns to ban affirmative action policies in both California and Washington (Schmidt, 2003). Mr. Connerly's campaign to bring affirmative action to the ballot in Michigan as he had in other states moved the affirmative action battle from the federal level to the state level. According to Klein (2004):

States have become the next battleground in the affirmative-action debate, after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled last year in two cases at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor that colleges can consider race in admissions, but also must treat students as individuals, and not accept or reject them solely on the basis of their skin color. (p. 1)

This is where higher education institutions are currently. They are left to sift through the somewhat mixed messages of the 2003 Supreme Court ruling and to continue to fight off opponents of affirmative action policy. Hamilton (2003) stated:

Despite race-conscious admissions being upheld in the Michigan law school decision, the assault on race-conscious programs has continued unabated, portending anything but a long struggle ahead for the inclusion of underrepresented minorities in the nation's most competitive four-year colleges and universities. (p. 21)

Affirmative action history is long and rich and there is still much more history to be written before all is said and done.

### The Key Issues

There are four main issues surrounding affirmative action policies about which people disagree: racism, racial disparities, diversity, and effectiveness of the policies.

#### *Racism*

Most Americans would agree that racism is a concern in our society. However, there is much debate today about how much of a role racism plays in our society and how to correct existing racism. “Presumptions of a level playing field in higher education suggest that affirmative action is passé, yet students of color continue to face situations with which other students do not have to contend” (Carroll, Tyson, & Lumas, 2000, p. 128). Frazer and Wiersma (2001) examined racial prejudices in undergraduates and found that White undergraduates were equally likely to hire an African American or White job applicant, but when asked a week later to recall their interview experiences with both White and African American interviewees, they consistently reported the African American applicant as being less intelligent than the White applicant. Dovidio and Gaertner (2000) found that White participants exhibited a more subtle prejudice that they termed aversive racism. They measured racial attitudes and biases in rating the qualifications of an African American and White candidate among White college students in 1989 and then again 10 years later. The bias against an African American candidate persisted over the 10 year gap. Supporters of affirmative action would argue that the only way to ensure a more integrated higher education system is to develop policies that mandate administrators to secure the integration of all races and ethnicities within higher education institutions (Carroll, Tyson, & Lumas, 2004; Crawford, 2000). “The arguments in favor of race-based affirmative action have long centered on the

condition of black Americans, building on a widespread feeling that special help is justified to counteract a long history of adverse discrimination,” (Crawford, 2000, p. 37). Opponents of affirmative action claim that affirmative action is a form of racism in that it uses race as a factor and as a result excludes another race (Crawford, 2000; Schuck, 2003). To further argue their point, critics of affirmative action claim that using affirmative action policies in favor of white students only would be considered unconstitutional (Schuck, 2003). As a result, they claim that affirmative action policies are a form of reverse discrimination (Crawford, 2000).

### *Racial and Gender Disparities*

Another debatable issue involved in affirmative action cases is that of racial disparities in higher education (Arredondo, 2002; Bernard et.al, 2003; Crawford, 2000; Schuck, 2003). “Racial inequalities in academic achievement contribute to racial inequalities in occupational opportunities and achievements,” (Crawford, 2000, p. 39). For example, national statistics revealed that 66% of students nation-wide enrolled in a degree seeking institution for the fall 2005 were White, 13% were African American, 11% were Latino, 7% were Asian or Pacific Islander, 1% were Native American, and 3.3% were non-resident alien status (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2006). The disparities continue when looking at educational attainment. According to a 2002 U.S. Census report on educational attainment (Day & Newburger, 2002), among adults 25 years of age or older in 2000, 28% of White non-Hispanics, 44% of Asians and Pacific Islanders, 17% of Blacks and 11% of Hispanics had obtained a bachelors degree. According to a 2007 report published by the U.S. Department of Education (NCES 2007-467), since 1990, Black graduates have closed a 6 percentage point gap with White

graduates in the percentage completing their high school education with at least a midlevel curriculum. However, the corresponding White-Hispanic gap in 2005 was not significantly different from that in 1990. Additionally, the National Science Foundation reported that in 1990 underrepresented minorities were 17% of all undergraduate students; by 1994, they were 21%. As the statistics reveal, there are still significant gaps in the percentage of white Americans attaining higher education versus the percentages of African Americans and Latinos. Defenders of affirmative action believe that the only way to eliminate some of these racial disparities in our society is through affirmative action policies. Critics believe that focusing on other societal disparities, such as social class, is a better way to offer special support for underrepresented students than focusing on race.

In contrast, the disparities between males and females in higher education have substantially decreased. According to the same 2002 U.S. Census report by Day and Newburger, in 1975 18% of men and 11% of women had achieved a bachelor's degree. By 2000, 28% of men and 24% of women had obtained a bachelor's degree. Additionally, at Western Michigan University, in 2002 males made up 49.2% of the student body and women made up 50.8% (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2005-2006). Clearly women have made some significant gains relative to the disparities that existed not too long ago between males and females in higher education. Taylor (1990) attributed women's success to affirmative action policies.

### *Diversity*

Diversity is a third issue in affirmative action debates (Arredondo, 2002; Bernard, et al., 2003; Crawford, 2000; Schuck, 2003). The U. S. Census Bureau has estimated that

by the year 2050, non-Hispanic Whites will account for only 52.8% of the United States population (U. S. Census Bureau, 2000). Supporters of affirmative action link diversity with academic excellence and student success. Bernard, et al. (2003) stated:

Affirmative action policies reflect twin commitments to academic excellence and a diverse student body. Just as important, the policies reflect a commitment to the principle that these two values are in harmony, and that they produce important synergies. A growing body of research has demonstrated that students learn better when they interact with diverse classmates in and outside the classroom.

(p. 31)

Inkelas (2003) found that students who socialized with students who were ethnically or racially different from themselves were more likely to support affirmative action policies. Inkelas (2003) explained that students who participated in campus diversity programs were more likely to have informal conversations with friends about diversity and as a result, would reflect upon their own racial identities. Students who had developed their racial/ethnic identities, Echols (2003) concluded, were more likely to support affirmative action than students who had not developed their identities. Additionally, the Supreme Court ruled in both *Gratz v. Bollinger* (2003) and *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) that diversity was a “compelling government interest” (Daniel, 2003, p. 74). In summary, affirmative action supporters would say there is a two-part benefit to the diversity argument and that is that diversity is beneficial and that affirmative action does indeed increase diversity (Crosby, Iyer, Clayton, & Downing, 2003). Bowen and Bok (1998) studied records of more than 80,000 students at 28 competitive colleges and universities in 1951, 1976, and 1989 and found affirmative action has increased diversity of student

bodies in higher education. Affirmative action critics do not argue the importance of diversity; rather, they argue that affirmative action policies are an immoral means to achieve diversity (D'Souza, 1991; Clegg, 2004; Canady, 1998). In the University of Michigan Supreme Court case, *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2003, Justice Clarence Thomas cited research that was originally used to improve educational environments for minority students to make the point that minority students actually suffered at predominately White institutions and would be more successful at historically Black institutions (Thomas quoted in Grutter, 2003, p.17)

Critics of affirmative action policies have a concern with what the majority of current policies define as diversity (Arredondo, 2002; Crawford, 2000). For the most part, affirmative action policies are written to support African Americans, Latinos, Native Americans, and women. In fact, most universities have a very narrow definition of diversity for which only preferences for African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans are made (Arredondo, 2002). Although there is evidence that African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans are underrepresented in higher education, there are other underrepresented groups in higher education who do not receive the benefits of affirmative action policies such as Asian Americans (Arredondo, 2002). Asian Americans as a large group are not underrepresented in higher education. According to the 1999 Census figures, 42% of Asian Americans twenty five years or older had completed at least four or more years of college. However, not all groups of Asian Americans are well represented in higher education, in 1990, 17.4% of Vietnamese, 5.7% of Cambodians, 5.4% of Laotians, and 4.9% of Hmong 25 years old had earned a bachelors degree (Fong, 2002). Detroit Federal District Judge Bernard



Friedman stated in the University of Michigan Grutter case that the policy favored African Americans and mainland-born Puerto Ricans but did not favor Arabs or Eastern Europeans. Arredondo (2002) predicted that in the future the question of how to define diversity will become increasingly more difficult, especially when considering if disadvantaged Whites, Asians, and Arab Americans should also benefit from forms of affirmative action.

Finally, diversity and affirmative action are two different concepts that have developed differently throughout history though diversity is often used to defend the need for affirmative action. Diversity is an extremely broad term that has more recently been stressed by corporate businesses seeking to capitalize their profit. The need of diversity in society is rarely debated. In contrast, affirmative action came from the civil rights movement and has consistently been under attack since its existence.

### *Effectiveness*

The last major issue in affirmative action debates is that of the overall effectiveness of affirmative action policies. Affirmative action opposers claim that the effectiveness of affirmative action policies is questionable, but they do not cite data to support their claim (Garrison-Wade & Lewis, 2004). Mangan (2004) reported that out of 20 law schools in 1995, 51% of Black students had grade-point averages that placed them in the bottom of their classes, while only 5% of White students were found to be in the bottom of their classes. A law professor at the University of California stated, "Affirmative action hurts Black law students more than it helps them by bumping applicants up into law schools where they are more likely to earn poor grades, drop out, and fail their states' bar exams" (as cited in Mangan, 2004, p. 1). Of course, supporters

of affirmative action argue about how effective affirmative action policies truly are and how to address whatever lack of effectiveness there is. In general, affirmative action supporters would argue that there have indeed been some benefits to affirmative action policies. Carroll, Tyson, and Lumas (2000) studied affirmative action at the University of California, Berkeley and reported, "UCB's affirmative action policies were successful in recruiting, retaining, and graduating underrepresented minority students" (p. 12). Additionally, supporters would argue that without affirmative action policies in place, enrollment of minority students would drop to all time lows. Scholars have indicated that the elimination of affirmative action policies has had an impact on minority enrollment in colleges. (Kaufmann, 2006; Garrison-Wade & Lewis, 2004). Kaufmann (2006) reports that in California in 1995, prior to the enactment of Proposition 209, minority students made up 38% of high school graduates, 21% of entering college freshmen at a University of California system constituting a 17% gap. By 2004, Kaufmann (2006) reports that minorities made up 45% of high school graduates and 18% of incoming freshmen which constituted an increased gap of 27%. Women were also impacted negatively by the loss of affirmative action in California. Kaufmann also reported that between 1995 and 2005 the enrollment of women at the University of California's graduate-level business and management programs dropped by 11% and dropped 21% for women pursuing doctoral degrees. Interestingly, then-Governor of California, Pete Wilson, ceased the collection of race and gender data of all employment and contracting constituting a four year break in the availability of data. Bowen and Bok (1998) found that African Americans made up 4.8% of undergraduate students, 1% of law students, and 2% of medical students in 1965. In 1998, the National Center for Education Statistics (2001) found that 11% of

undergraduates were African American and 9% were Latino. After the elimination of affirmative action in California via Proposition 209, faculty at the University of California, Davis published (2005) that in the state-wide university system new female faculty hires had declined by 25% from 1994 to 1999. Kaufmann and Davis (2006) reported that new female faculty hire statistics have just now reached pre-Proposition 209 levels. The authors cite the recovery has been the result of legal battles and faculty activism. In a research brief, Kaufmann (2006) reports that the result of Proposition 209 in California has been both a decrease in the hire of faculty of color and women and a decrease in students of color and women enrolling in and graduating from technical fields in state colleges and universities.

Opponents of affirmative action argue that the policies are not all that effective to begin with, if effective at all. They also claim that affirmative action policies are no longer needed in today's society and that it is a form of reverse discrimination (Garrison-Wade & Lewis, 2004, p. 25). Garrison-Wade and Lewis (2004) stated:

Critics of affirmative action claim that admission measures are flawed, but do not cite data to support their claims. These critics offer no empirical data to support that affirmative action produces harm to minority students and decreases opportunities for white students (p. 25).

The literature has revealed that the critics of affirmative action who claim that it is ineffective due to affirmative action being a form of reverse discrimination, do not consistently provide evidence to justify their claims of ineffectiveness (Crawford, 2000; Shuck, 2003). It would appear that little research has been done to measure a form of ineffectiveness of affirmative action policies.

It would make sense that individuals would argue the effectiveness of affirmative action policies, since the policies themselves have been vague since their initiation (Eaton, 1997). Since there are no set goals or benchmarks regarding when affirmative action has been successful, individuals argue about the meaning of effectiveness. Critics of affirmative action often argue that the policies are either ineffective or they have been effective and their time has ended (Garrison-Wade & Lewis, 2004; Schuck, 2003). Schuck (2003) even argues that ending affirmative action would redistribute minorities to less competitive institutions where he believes they would be more likely to succeed. Selingo (2005) found a mixed enrollment picture when he examined 29 colleges with competitive admissions and compared enrollments from 2002 to 2004. He found that a quarter of the institutions, including the University of Michigan, saw a reduction of African American and Latino students in their fall enrollment from 2002 to 2004. However, he also found 11 colleges where the number of African American and Latino students had actually increased from 2002 to 2004. Supporters of affirmative action argue that the policies have produced some societal change but much more equality is needed and that not enough minorities and women have pushed through. Additionally, there has been no real evidence of the true effectiveness or ineffectiveness of affirmative action policies. Eaton (1997) explained:

... while we can confirm that changes in enrollment patterns accompanied the different stages of access, we do not know whether or not these changes were the result of access policy or itself. We do not have evidence to establish a casual connection. (p. 240-241)

### Higher Education's Response to the Michigan Cases

Institutions of higher education responded to the recent 2003 Supreme Court affirmative action ruling in a defensive and passive manner in many ways. For most institutions, the ruling has forced them to re-examine their affirmative action policies in order to determine if they are in violation of the new affirmative action precedent.

Selingo (2005) explained the reaction of university presidents' quite eloquently:

While college presidents were largely united in their public support of affirmative action in the months leading up to the oral arguments in the cases, their response to the decisions over the past year and a half has been much more guarded and, at times defensive. The muted reaction is, in part, a result of the continuing legal efforts of the coalition of advocacy groups to eliminate race-based programs at colleges and the November election, which swept a larger, and more conservative, Republican Party into Congress. (p. 1)

Higher education institutions are timid with current affirmative action policies. In many ways, it appears they are somewhat afraid of drawing too much attention to themselves by having too radical affirmative action policies. "A few college leaders wonder just why it is that so many institutions are acting as if they lost the Michigan cases – indeed, as if the Supreme Court had actually banned affirmative action," (Selingo, 2005, p. 2). There is a fear in higher education institutions, perhaps a legitimate fear, that they will come under litigation as a result of their affirmative action policies. Hendrickson (2001) reported that institutions wanting to use race as a factor in their admissions policies will, "...through an administrative or legislative proceeding, [need to] conform to the strict scrutiny doctrine" (p. 134). In other words, institutions will have to check and double

check to ensure that their affirmative action policies remain legal. Additionally, states will now have to justify a compelling State interest for diversity by providing evidence of current discrimination in the State (Hendrickson, 2001). Most institutions do have some type of affirmative action policies still intact. Selingo (2005) asserted that the true fault lies with higher education institutions that did not shout the victory of the 2003 ruling loud enough. Instead, institutions acted almost afraid of standing firm in support of their own affirmative action. Schmidt (2004) provided evidence of minority programs in higher education disappearing at least by name. He further explained that universities and colleges have become so fearful of legal woes that they have been dropping the word “minority” from titles connected with scholarships and fellowships. Other examples of the rather weak response of universities to the 2003 ruling were that of both Princeton and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, both of which initially insisted that their programs were in compliance with the law. Later, they changed their minds and phased out race-based programs or opened them to all students (Hamilton, 2003). Also according to Hamilton (2003), other institutions began to follow suit, including Iowa State University, University of Delaware, and the University of Virginia. Schmidt (2004) found that since 2003 nearly 70 colleges have opened minority programs to nonminority students in response to complaints and threats of legal action from advocacy groups.

#### *Differences in the Way Institutions are Responding*

According to the literature, there are no apparent differences in the ways in which universities are responding to the recent 2003 Supreme Court ruling (Hamilton, 2003; Schmidt, 2004). It appears that all institutions are uneasy with the recent ruling and fearful that they will be the next institutions under fire for unconstitutional affirmative

action policies. Schmidt (2004) described it as “falling dominos” (p. 3). It appears that the more elite universities have taken the lead in eliminating many race-based programs, but other institutions are following suit and it seems almost inevitable that many more institutions will follow as well (Hamilton, 2003; Schmidt, 2004). As Schmidt (2004) claimed, “most colleges have not given any indication that they plan to defend programs that are race exclusive” (p. 4). It appears that there is truly not much difference in the way institutions are responding. In actuality, it appears that institutions are just looking at the more elite institutions for guidance and creating the domino effect as a result.

Hamilton (2003) quotes Beverly Ledbetter, vice president and general counsel for Brown University:

The great danger as I see it for institutions will be the impulse to look at other schools – say looking at Princeton or MIT – for cues on what you should be doing on your campus. Schools cannot assume their programs are inadequate nor can they assume they’re adequate because other schools have or have not phased their programs out... (p. 22).

It appears that Ledbetter’s warning to institutions went unheeded since institutions just seem to be following each other rather than making individual defenses for their programs (Schmidt, 2004).

The only slight difference noticeable in the literature is that some institutions are relatively unaffected by the 2003 ruling. For institutions in Georgia and California, where affirmative action has been banned at the state level via an election, the 2003 Supreme Court ruling will have little to no effect on their policies.

### *Higher Education's Reaction*

After extensive review of the literature, the response of higher education to the 2003 Supreme Court ruling is apparent. Universities are on guard. They are not taking a defensive stand for affirmative action; instead they are changing current affirmative action policies in order to ensure that they will not be the next target for litigation. “Colleges throughout the nation are quietly opening a wide range of minority programs to students of any race, mainly to avoid being accused of discrimination” (Schmidt, 2004, p. 1). Higher education’s response to the 2003 ruling is crucial to the future of affirmative action. If universities begin to eliminate race-based programs, then much of the affirmative action policies in place to fight discrimination will be eliminated (Garrison-Wade & Lewis, 2004; Kaufmann, 2006; Schmidt, 2004). To a certain extent, universities have no choice in their reaction because lawsuits are coming right and left as anti-affirmative action organizations seek to eliminate it. Schmit (2004) found that six universities are currently under investigation by the Department of Education’s Office of Civil Rights for continuing programs that only serve minority students. The response of higher education to the 2003 ruling could be the death of affirmative action. The literature review revealed that most universities were either in the process of changing their affirmative action policies or had already done so (Schmidt, 2004).

### *Effects of Eliminating Affirmative Action*

Affirmative action supporters feel that the elimination of affirmative action policies would be a great loss in our society. Dr. Robert G. Newby, a sociologist at Central Michigan University, stated (in Roach, 2003), “Ending affirmative action will only add to increased racial struggle and tension. What they’re doing is re-legitimizing



all-White institutions of higher education” (p. 32). In fact, the affirmative action debate does often appear to be racially divided. Skerry (1998) explained that African Americans are more supportive of affirmative action than White Americans. Skerry (1998) quotes Sigelman and Welch (1994) as saying:

Many blacks and whites actually define affirmative action differently. Most blacks concede that preferential treatment is unfair, but support the other components of affirmative action. Most whites also consider preferential treatment unfair, but whites are more likely than blacks to regard preferential treatment as a central component of affirmative action. (p. 10)

In addition to creating a more racially divided country, the elimination of affirmative action would also eliminate some amount of opportunity for minorities and women. “Still, many who are uncomfortable with diversity plans also fear that without preferences, competitive institutions would include few black students, a profoundly troubling outcome in a society seeking to erase the vestiges of racism,” (Schuck, 2003, p. 2). If people are left up to their own discretion and no affirmative action policies are in place, what will the impact of that be? Many supporters of affirmative action feel that minorities who are already discriminated against in society will have no form of protection from discrimination. Moreno (2003) agrees that the elimination of affirmative action will have a negative impact on minority students:

If race-based affirmative action is outlawed, it will have an enormous impact on the ability of colleges and universities to maintain a diverse student body.

According to the research, there is not an adequate substitute for race-based affirmative action at this time; neither class-based nor merit-based options will

maintain the level of racial and ethnic diversity that has been achieved on today's college and university campuses. (p.20)

Since the 2003 ruling, both University of Michigan and Ohio State University have experienced decreased enrollments in both African American and Latino students (Selingo, 2005). University of Michigan saw 21% decrease in African American student enrollment and a 13.4% decrease in the number of enrolled Latino students. Ohio State University saw a reduction of 31.3% African American students and 8.3% of Latino students (Selingo, 2005).

With no alternative plan in place, the elimination of affirmative action is alarming. Although the 2003 Supreme Court upheld affirmative action as constitutional, it also ruled that race alone could not be used in selection of a candidate. As a result, universities have taken a defeated stance and have begun operating as though affirmative action has already been eliminated (Schmidt, 2004).

#### Attitudes on Affirmative Action

There are several studies that have examined attitudes regarding affirmative action, and researchers have attributed a variety of reasons for individuals' attitudes towards affirmative action. Among the variables noted in the research that influence an individual's attitude were race, gender, political ideology, educational background, and socio-economic status.

#### *Race/Ethnicity and Gender*

Several studies found that an individual's race was related to his/her perception of affirmative action; specifically that people of color tended to view affirmative action more positively than white people (Bell, Harrison, and McLaughlin, 2000; Bobo, 1998;

Echols, 1997; Inkelas, 2003; Klineberg and Kravitz, 2003; Kravitz and Platania, 1993; Meader, 1998; Sax and Arredondo, 1999; Smith, 1998; Virgil, 2000; Williams, 1999).

Researchers have also found that women tend to view affirmative action more favorably than men (Bell, Harrison, and McLaughlin, 2000; Inkelas, 2003; Kluegel and Smith, 1983; Kravitz and Platania, 1993; Meader, 1998; Sax and Arredondo, 1999; Smith, 1998).

Sax and Arredondo (1999) examined the affirmative action attitudes of over 277,850 college freshmen. Their data was drawn from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP) 1996 Freshman Survey. This is an annual survey of college freshmen conducted by the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles. Whites had the highest percentage of opposition to affirmative action (25.6%), Asian Americans were second (16.5%), Mexican Americans third (9.2%), and African Americans (5.3%) followed with the lowest percentage of opposition to affirmative action. The inverse was also found to be true meaning that African Americans had the most favorable attitudes toward affirmative action (43.5%) and Whites having the least favorable attitudes toward affirmative action (8%). The attitudes were measured on a four-point Likert scale and it was discovered that at least 50% of all students within each racial/ethnic group have some ambivalence in their position toward affirmative action indicating that they either somewhat agree or somewhat disagree. Additionally, Sax and Arredondo found that gender impacted affirmative action attitudes. In all four racial/ethnic groups, the males had a higher percentage of opposition to affirmative action than the females did.

Bell, Harrison, and McLaughlin (2000) also did a study on forming and changing people's attitudes toward affirmative action programs in employment. The researchers selected an organizational behavior course at a large urban university. They asked the participants to complete a beginning survey and then compared their initial attitudes to an affirmative action program with their attitudes after hearing a presentation on the program. They found they could influence the attitudes of individuals through the presentations. They also found that there was a racial and gender difference among attitudes toward affirmative action programs. White men had the highest level of resistance to affirmative action and that White individuals in general consistently had less positive attitudes than other racial groups. Although the researchers did find racial and gender differences in affirmative action attitudes, their research also indicated that attitude was based on beliefs and evaluations of the specific affirmative action program. They found they could change groups attitudes based on how the affirmative action program was presented. Interestingly, the researchers found that Whites responded more negatively to the affirmative action program when presented with unfavorable opinions of affirmative action from authoritative business sources. The minority groups, however, responded more positively when presented with favorable information on affirmative action.

Inkelas (2003) examined the attitudes of Asian Pacific American college students' attitudes on affirmative action. She worked with a total of 414 Asian Pacific American students in the 1994 graduating class. Inkelas (2003) followed the students through all four years of their college experience. A methodological analysis consisting of data preparation, descriptive analyses, and two sets of multivariate analysis were used to

assess the students' attitudes. She compared attitudes of affirmative action in practice with those attitudes of affirmative action in principle. Affirmative action in practice was defined as differential SAT or ACT criteria for students of color in college admissions, a high priority being given to financial aid for students of color, and the hiring of more faculty of color as a top priority. Affirmative Action in principle was defined as universities aggressively removing institutional barriers and promoting equality and by including multicultural perspectives in the curriculum. She found that a large percentage of Asian Pacific Americans (98%) support affirmative action in principle, but considerably fewer support affirmative action practices. Specifically, 30% of Asian Pacific Americans in her study opposed affirmative action in practice. Additionally, Inkelas found that next to Asian Pacific Americans, Whites were the second largest group to support affirmative action in principle but not in practice. Both Latino and African American students were least likely to differentiate between principle and practice and more likely to support affirmative action. Inkelas also found that Asian Pacific American female students were more likely than male Asian Pacific American students to support affirmative action in principle.

Smith (1998) looked at a sample of 290 students and explored the differences between gender and racial/ethnic groups' levels of support for affirmative action programs and policies in higher education. Participants of this study responded to a questionnaire, entitled the "Survey of College Adjustment and Cultural Diversity Issues in Higher Education". He found gender and racial/ethnic differences in college students' support for affirmative action in higher education. He did, however, find a greater difference among race/ethnicity than gender. As is consistent with other studies, Smith

(1998) found that Whites and Asian American students expressed greater opposition to affirmative action, while African American and Hispanic American students were more supportive.

Williams (1999) collected data from a probability sample of a major metropolitan area in the United States and examined the extent to which racial prejudice predicted variations in Whites' support for both government efforts and economic initiatives such as affirmative action that were aimed at assisting minorities. He found that racial prejudice was the strongest predictor of Whites' support or non-support of affirmative action policies. The researcher also found that when racial prejudice was controlled for, Whites who adhered to basic American values of equal opportunity, held beliefs that some groups are dominant over others, and believed in the actual inherent superiority of Whites, actually favored affirmative action.

Kluegel and Smith (1983) used data from a survey of Americans' beliefs about social stratification, conducted in the summer and fall of 1980. They restricted their sample to only Whites which yielded a total of 1596 cases. In measuring the attitudes of Whites on affirmative action, they found that females were more supportive of affirmative action than males.

Bobo (1998) collected data from 1869 participants through a telephone survey, the 1992 Los Angeles County Social Survey. The researcher examined group interests to find reasons behind individuals' beliefs of affirmative action. He also found that African Americans and Latinos were more likely to have more favorable opinions toward affirmative action, while Whites and Asian Americans were more likely to have more negative opinions of affirmative action. However, Bobo also found that at no time did

the group responses indicate diametrically opposite views. In other words, the responses for all groups fell throughout the range of the Likert scale, but a general pattern of opposition to affirmative action was found in Whites and Asian Americans. Even though, the racial groups all fell throughout the range of the Likert scale, there was still a large and significant racial group difference in response to each item designed to measure the attitudes of affirmative action.

Kravitz and Platania (1993) surveyed 349 undergraduate students at a multicultural metropolitan university. Specifically, the researchers wanted to know the effect of sex and ethnicity on affirmative action attitudes. They found that women evaluated affirmative action more positively than did men. In fact, women were still more favorable toward affirmative action than men even when the affirmative action plan was not directed toward them. The researchers also found that African Americans and Latinos had more positive attitudes toward affirmative action than Whites.

Klineberg and Kravitz (2003) explored attitudes regarding affirmative action in contracting among African Americans, Whites, and Latinos. The researchers examined data from an annual survey administered in the Houston area. The survey evaluated the city's affirmative action program. They found in their study the same racial/ethnic divisions among attitudes of affirmative action.

Bell, Harrison, and McLaughlin (1997) looked at Asian American attitudes toward affirmative action in employment. The researchers surveyed over 1000 participants selected from introductory organizational behavior courses at a large urban Southwestern university. They found evidence that Asian Americans' attitudes of affirmative action were more closely aligned with Latinos than Whites, meaning that they

avored affirmative action policies more than Whites. According to their study, Asian Americans indicated more experience with workplace discrimination than did Whites, about the same as Latinos, and less than African Americans.

Meador (1998) analyzed data from the *Midwest Colleges Study*, which was a cross-sectional study of the institutional and organization factors related to the success of Black students at predominantly White four-year institutions. The *Midwest Colleges Study* was based on a mail questionnaire of students from six different Midwest institutions. She (1998) found a difference in attitudes of race-based policies, such as affirmative action, between African Americans and Whites and between males and females.

Echols (1997) completed a study that measured the attitudes and perceptions of students of affirmative action and anti-discrimination. Echols' Affirmative Action Inventory (EAAI) was administered to 705 undergraduate and graduate students. The researcher developed the EAAI to assess an individual's knowledge of facts of affirmative action; diversity and affirmative action; quotas, diversity, and affirmative action; moral and ethical aspects of affirmative action; and demographic attributes of respondents. She found significant relationships among gender, and race attitudes toward affirmative action. Both White and African American females were more likely to favor affirmative action than White and African American males. Additionally, African American students were more likely to favor affirmative action than White students. Specifically, 33.1% of white females opposed affirmative action while only 16.3% of African American females opposed affirmative action. Additionally, 69.8% of White



males opposed affirmative action and only 30% of African American males opposed affirmative action.

Virgil (2000) used Echols' (1997) Affirmative Action Inventory (EAAI) to examine the perceptions of graduate and professional students of affirmative action. He received 228 usable surveys of both graduate and professional students from a major research university. He also found a significant relationship among race, gender and an individual's support or non-support for affirmative action.

#### *Socio-Economic Status*

Sax and Arredondo (1999) found that the higher the parent-income level of a student, the more likely that individual would oppose affirmative action for Whites, Asian Americans, and Mexican Americans. For African Americans, however, they found that the reverse was true. The higher the parent income, the less likely they would oppose affirmative action. In other words, African American students coming from lower socio-economic backgrounds had a higher percentage of opposition to affirmative action than African Americans coming from a higher socio-economic status. In contrast, Echols (1997) found no statistically significant relationship between socio-economic status and attitudes toward affirmative action. She did, however, find that those in the income bracket of \$29,000 to \$39,000 and \$52,000 and up were less likely to support affirmative action.

#### *Political Ideology*

Sax and Arredondo (1999) found that there was a considerable relationship between political ideology and affirmative action attitudes. Specifically, they found that liberals across racial groups were more likely than conservatives to support affirmative

action. Individuals who indicated a moderate political ideology supported affirmative action more than conservatives but less than liberals. Inkelas (2003) did not look at political ideologies directly; however, she did find that students majoring in humanities or social sciences were more likely to support affirmative action than other fields. Bobo (1998) also found a connection between political ideologies and attitudes of affirmative action, especially among Whites. However, Bobo argued that the relationship was largely due to the racial attitudes connected with certain political ideologies rather than the ideologies themselves. Echols (1997) also found a significant relationship among political groups and their attitudes towards affirmative action. According to her findings, 19.9% of Democrats supported affirmative action while 6.5% of Republicans supported affirmative action.

Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo (1996) completed a study using data from three different samples and found relationships between political conservatism and racism. Further, the researchers found that the connection between racism and political conservatism increased as education level increased. They found that political conservatism was linked to opposition to affirmative action.

#### *Educational Level*

Education level has also been found to influence individual's attitudes on affirmative action (Golden et al, 2001; Sax & Arredondo, 1999). Additionally, Federico & Sidanius (2002) found that higher levels of education mediated the relationship between prejudice and attitudes toward affirmative action in a way that college graduates had the strongest association between prejudice and affirmative action attitudes than others. Echols (1997) did not find a significant relationship between education level and

affirmative action attitude. However, Echols (1997) only looked at the differences between graduate and undergraduate students and did not have participants with some or no higher education in her study.

### Knowledge of Affirmative Action

There has been some research indicating a relationship between an individual's knowledge of affirmative action and his/or attitudes toward affirmative action (Bell, 1996; Goldsmith et al., 1989; Stout & Buffman, 1993). Goldsmith, et al. (1989) interviewed 62 college women and found positive correlations between two measures of knowledge and two measures of attitude. Stout and Buffum (1993) surveyed 193 social workers and found that experiences with affirmative action were positively related to self-reported knowledge of affirmative action. Self-reported means that respondents reported what they believed to be their own knowledge level of affirmative action. In contrast, Bell (1996) found, after surveying 610 participants, self-reported knowledge of affirmative action was related to more negative attitudes.

Additionally, there has been research indicating that the general public does not have a clear understanding of affirmative action (Crosby, 1994; Eberhardt & Fiske, 1994). Through a survey administered via the telephone, Kravitz & Platanis (1993) found that participants had a limited understanding of the details of affirmative action. One example was that respondents didn't know which organizations were required to have affirmative action plans. Another study completed by Pace and Smith (1995) surveyed 1075 professionals and asked them to identify which of three statements most closely matched their understanding of affirmative action. Respondents chose from either linking affirmative action with recruitment, weak preferential treatment, or strong

preferential treatment. Pace and Smith (1995) found that many of the respondents believed affirmative action involved weak preferential treatment (48.3%) while only a few of the respondents linked affirmative action with strong preferential treatment (7.8%). The remaining respondents linked affirmative action with recruitment (43.8%). Interestingly, Fletcher and Chalmers (1991) found that more than half their respondents indicated their opinions about affirmative action would change when given an opposing argument.

Echols (1997) found that an individual's race and gender influenced his/her knowledge of the facts of affirmative action. Specifically race and gender were found significant to differences in knowledge ( $p=.000$ ) when controlling for other socio-economic factors, such as education, income, age, and party affiliation and accounts for 63% of the variance ( $R^2=.63$ ). Echols found that although education, income, age, and party affiliation contributed as well, race and gender were the strongest influences to a person's knowledge of the facts of affirmative action.

Although there have been some studies linking knowledge of affirmative action with attitudes of affirmative action, research on individuals' knowledge of affirmative action has been limited.

### Perceived Impact

Some studies indicated that self-interest was a factor in individuals' affirmative action attitudes (Bobo, 1998; Sax & Arredondo, 1999; Smith, 1998). Sax and Arredondo (1999) argued that individuals are not likely to support policies that will not benefit them or that may impose costs on them. Smith (1998) explained that self-interest involves an individual being guided by personal interests rather than collective interest. Smith (1998)

found that when respondents were asked about special admissions in higher education, Asian American ( $m=3.01$ ) and White ( $m=2.42$ ) male and female students maintained similar degrees of self-interest and as a result had the highest levels of opposition to affirmative action. African American ( $m=4.29$ ) and Hispanic American ( $m=4.02$ ) students maintained different levels of self-interest as compared to Asian Americans and Whites and were more supportive of affirmative action policies.

Carroll, Tyson, & Lumas (2000) studied the experiences of 18 University of California, Berkley minority Alumni. They found that respondents from different racial/ethnic groups perceived themselves as “affirmative action admits.” Additionally, all respondents supported affirmative action and were angered by current anti-affirmative action policies now in place at the university. Kluegel and Smith (1983) conducted a study that examined the affirmative action attitudes of Whites. They obtained data from a survey (total sample of 1596) of Americans’ beliefs about social stratification, conducted in the fall of 1980. Kluegel and Smith (1983) argued that Whites agreed in principle that Blacks should have equal opportunity but lost enthusiasm for it once actual programs threatened opportunities for Whites and specifically economic opportunities. The researchers found in their study that self-interest did influence affirmative action attitude; however, they also found that racial effect and stratification beliefs also influenced attitude and it was really those three factors combined that shaped an individual’s attitude on affirmative action. Racial effect included both traditional racial prejudice and symbolic racism where symbolic racism is the modernization of traditional racism and involves the lingering sense of negative attitudes toward African Americans by Whites. Stratification of beliefs was defined as values that reflect dominant ideas

about how one achieves high status in the American stratification order. Bobo (1998) found that Whites were most negative about affirmative action when there was a perceived threat from African Americans. In other words, when Whites felt their opportunities were being directly threatened, they were more negative about affirmative action policies. Additionally, Echols (1997) found that the majority of her White participants favored anti-discrimination policies but opposed affirmative action. She also found that there was a positive and significant relationship between a person's acceptance of affirmative action and acceptance of quotas for athletes and children of alumni in college admissions, but there was a negative relationship found between a person's acceptance of affirmative action and his/her opinion of quotas for ethnic minorities. Essentially, participants were more accepting of affirmative action when it benefited them, but not as accepting when it did not. Further, Echols (1997) found that race and gender were the strongest factors influencing a person's knowledge of the facts of affirmative action. As a result, she concluded that being the recipient of affirmative action greatly impacted one's knowledge of the facts of the policy legislation.

#### Symbolic Policy Perspective

Malen and Knapp (1997) described the symbolic policy perspective as one that uses imagery to create and sustain the policy. The idea is that a symbolic policy creates meaning and sends messages through the use of symbols. Airasian (1988) explained that symbols tend to be more emotional than intellectual. "That is to say, symbols evoke not only concrete images, but also feelings, values, emotions, and sentiments," (Airasian, 2003, p. 302).

Affirmative action policies use symbols to create meaning and send specific messages. Key symbolic terms that the policy uses are “non-discrimination,” “leveling the playing field,” “equal opportunities,” and “human rights.” The term “affirmative action” itself is full of symbolic imagery. Affirmative action symbolizes to individuals many different things such as equal opportunities, racism, fairness, and reverse discrimination. Policy makers who seek to promote affirmative action policies attach positive meanings to words used to describe affirmative action such as “equal opportunities” and “leveling the playing field.” Opponents of affirmative action attach negative meaning to the concept by equating affirmative action with “reverse discrimination” and “preferential treatment.” Cobb and Elder (1983) explained that the historical background of a symbol adds to its potency. Affirmative action history is rich and filled with controversy, which has indeed added to its symbolic power.

### *The Actors*

The actors in a symbolic perspective create the symbols in policy through their interpretations of the problem. Malen and Knapp (1997) stated of actors:

Policy ‘problems’ are construed as a matter of perception – those of the policymakers whose interpretations of events prompt the promulgation of symbols, and those of the public who collectively (yet in diverse ways) interpret the problem in light of policy actions. (p. 431)

Malen and Knapp (1997) also explained that actors in a symbolic policy are the communicators of the symbols and their meaning to the mass public. In addition, the actors in a symbolic perspective can be viewed as manipulative in that they use symbols to create the meaning of the policy that they want others to perceive (Malen & Knapp,

1997). In this way, the symbolic perspective could be seen as deceitful and negative. However, Malen and Knapp (1997) explained that actors in a symbolic perspective do not always mean harm by their manipulation, but sometimes manipulate policy meaning through the use of symbols in order to achieve a goal they believe is best for all. Ogawa (2003) expressed the importance for the actors to gain buy-in from the other institutional members.

There were many individuals who came together to shape affirmative action policies. The federal government, institutions of higher education, plaintiffs in court cases, and judges were key players in the formation of affirmative action policies. It can be assumed that the various actors involved in the formation of affirmative action policies used their own interpretations of the problem to create an affirmative action policy solution. It can also be assumed that their interpretation of the problem and their perception of a need or lack thereof for affirmative action contributed to the creation of the symbols in the policy. The actors then communicated these same symbols through their created policy. Throughout affirmative action policy history, the actors have changed, but as they have changed, they have continued to fill the same roles. For example, presidents of universities, justices, lawyers, plaintiffs have all changed but their replacements have continued to fill the same roles. For example, Bakke fought admissions to higher education by dismantling affirmative action in 1978 while Gratz and Grutter fought a very similar battle in 2003. Each new actor continues to communicate the needed meaning of the policy through symbols and imagery. It would be fair to assume that the actors involved in creating affirmative action policy did use some amount



of manipulation to communicate the desired meaning of the policy and to gain buy-in from the larger society.

### *The Purpose*

The main purpose of a symbolic policy is to shape how individuals perceive an institution, the problems in that institution, and the work that is carried out in that institution (Malen & Knapp, 1997). Through the manipulation of symbols, the policy can manage and even control how affirmative action in a given situation is perceived.

The concept of affirmative action was first developed through Lyndon B. Johnson's Executive Order 11246 in 1965. Johnson's order mandated the use "affirmative action" of all governmental agencies and contracts. The executive order came one year after the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Because affirmative action policies sprang from the President's Executive Order, there was no opportunity for debate among governmental policy makers or congressional leaders. As a result, the policies began to be shaped by the governmental agencies and contractors who were now responsible for instituting the policy of which higher education was at the forefront. However, given the history of affirmative action policies, it is entirely plausible that the actors creating the affirmative action policy had much invested in how the policy would be perceived.

Since the inception of affirmative action policies in the United States, they have been surrounded by controversy. In order to dilute some of this controversy, it would have behooved the policy-makers to manage some of the controversy by managing the symbols used to communicate the policy. Through the use of symbols, the policy makers could control how individuals perceived the policy and thus would be able to limit some of the controversy. For example, one of the symbols in affirmative action policy is that it

seeks to eliminate discrimination by creating equal opportunities for all. The policymakers have shaped the perception of the policy by stating that the essence of the policy is a nondiscrimination policy. Most individuals would agree that discrimination should be eliminated, so this highlights a common sentiment in society and masks, if you will, some of the more controversial aspects of the policy such as the measures needed to create equal opportunities.

### *The Process*

According to Malen and Knapp (1997) the process involved in the symbolic perspective consists of five steps: 1) Perception of institutional needs; 2) creation or selection of symbols from the jointly held traditions, sagas, and values of the audiences; 3) targeted communication of symbols to key audiences; 4) assessment of audience responses; and 5) adjustment of symbols to maximize audience responses. (p. 431). It is through these steps that a symbolic policy is developed.

Through speculation it is reasonable to assume that the development of affirmative action policy went through these steps. In step one, there was a perceived need for affirmative action policies. It is likely that the societal climate at that time gave the governmental agencies, charged with enacting affirmative action, the push they needed to realize the need for affirmative action. United States President Lyndon Johnson initiated affirmative action policies in 1965. The second step involves the creation of symbols based on shared societal values. Affirmative action policy uses symbolic terms that most of society would agree with such as “nondiscrimination”, “human rights”, and “equal opportunity.” Step three involves communication of the symbols to key audiences. It is likely that these same symbolic terms were used to

communicate to the larger society the importance for the affirmative action policy. The fourth step was also likely used as policy-makers assessed how the larger society responded to the policy. It is also likely that as time has progressed certain changes have been made in the policy in order to accommodate changes in the community's response to the policy. Since affirmative action policy has changed over time, it is likely that new symbols have been utilized in order to continue to maximize the policy's effectiveness.

### *The Outcomes*

According to Malen and Knapp (1997) the main outcome of a symbolic policy is the audience's response and commitment to the institution as well as its awareness about a particular issue. In addition, Malen and Knapp stated, "Thus the efficacy of policy resides in its capacity to shape perceptions of social conditions, events and institutions irrespective of its capacity to alter actual social circumstances" (p. 431). So an important outcome of a symbolic policy is the perceptions the policy creates through the symbols the policy uses.

Affirmative action policy does indeed create a societal awareness as to the need for equal opportunities for all. This would be a symbolic outcome as it creates awareness as well as shapes the perspectives of individuals about a societal issue. Other messages, however, surrounding affirmative action such as "reverse discrimination" send a contrary message about the policy. Which messages an individual believes about affirmative action could impact their perception and as a result, the overall outcome of the policy. If individuals believe affirmative action is about equal opportunities for all, they may support the policy and believe their community is doing something good by utilizing

these policies. However, if an individual perceives affirmative action as reverse discrimination, support of affirmative action is less likely.

### *The Theories of Action*

The theory of action from a symbolic perspective involves the transmission of symbols through policy that shape individuals' perceptions, opinions, and actions (Malen & Knapp, 1997). The use of symbols in the policy to create meaning for the masses is key to its theory of action.

Affirmative action policy does use certain terms that act as symbols. For example the phrase "equal opportunity" is used throughout many affirmative action policies. As previously pointed out in this paper, it would be difficult to find too many individuals who would argue against the need for equal opportunity. Another symbolic theme in affirmative action policy is the word nondiscrimination. Again it would be difficult to find anyone who would argue against the importance of a nondiscriminatory policy. Through the use of these symbols, affirmative action policy communicates the meanings of the policy. These symbols shape individuals' perceptions, opinions, and actions.

### *Analysis of the Symbolic Perspective*

Affirmative action policy fits well with the symbolic perspective. First, the policy contains symbols that have been previously discussed in this paper. Words or phrases such as "nondiscrimination" and "equal opportunities" are riddled throughout the policy and shape the meaning of the policy. Second, affirmative action policies in general contain symbolic imagery. The phrase "affirmative action" itself invokes strong meaning to most individuals. Lastly, it could be argued that affirmative action policies are self-perpetuating, meaning that the policies themselves communicate a need for themselves

through symbolic imagery. However, there is research indicating that the need for affirmative action policies is a reality rather than just a created façade (Bowen & Bok, 1998).

## Standpoint Theory

### *Overview*

Nancy Hartsock (1983) developed the idea of standpoint theory in her book, (*Money, Sex, and Power*). Hartsock (1983) rooted her theory in the idea that women had a particular standpoint just by being women. Hartsock's (1983) feminist standpoint theory is grounded in classic Marxism. Marxist theory examines how capitalism naturalizes class divisions while feminist standpoint theory analyzes how societal patriarchy naturalizes male and female divisions, making it seem natural that women would be subordinate to men. Essentially Hartsock's theory explained how "women and men create their own realities through their different activities and experiences" (Hekman, 1997, p. 343). Over time the theory has evolved. In 1990, Collins added the concept of subjugated knowledges. Subjugated knowledge was created to further explain African American feminist standpoint. To subjugate or to master and control a woman's own knowledge in creating her standpoint is the basic premise behind subjugated knowledges. Haraway (1988) added the concept of situated knowledges to the feminist standpoint theory and Harding developed strong objectivity to add to the theory. Haraway's situated knowledge is defined as feminist objectivity. In other words, taking in all knowledge and research available to form a standpoint not just the knowledge offered by the mainstream which is primarily White and male dominated. Harding's strong objectivity incorporated into feminist theory a way to maximize objectivity by not

buying into the premise that that you must be on one side of an issue or the other. In other words, strong objectivity challenged more dichotomous ways of thinking. In addition to explaining the feminist standpoint, the theory began to evolve to explain other standpoints, especially those related to inequality (Collins, 1997). Collins explains it as “an interpretive framework dedicated to explicating how knowledge remains central to maintaining and changing unjust systems of power,” (1997, p. 375). Further, Wood (2005) explained that standpoints are achieved through critical reflection of power relations and through engaging in the struggle required to construct an oppositional stance. In other words, standpoints are not merely political positions, but a holistic way in which the world is perceived that is formed through critical reflection. Although Wood (2005) does acknowledge the political nature of standpoints, she argued that they are formed through dedicated self-reflection and are not so simply created. Hallstein (2000) explained that the political nature of standpoints were rooted in the fact that an individual must go through a particular development process in achieving a standpoint. Wood (2005) offered her summary of the key claims of standpoint theory:

- 1) Society is structured by power relations, which result in unequal social locations for women and men: men are the dominant, privileged, or centered group, and women are the subordinate, disadvantaged, or marginalized group;
- 2) Subordinate social locations are more likely than privilege social locations to generate knowledge that is “more accurate” or “less false”;
- 3) The outsider-within is a privileged epistemological position because it entails double consciousness, being at once outside of the dominant

group and intimately with that group in ways that allow observation and understanding of that group;

- 4) Standpoint refers not simply to location or experience, but to a critical understanding of location and experience as part of larger social and political contexts;
- 5) Any individual can have multiple standpoints that are shaped by membership in groups defined by sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, economic class, etc.

### *Standpoint Theory and Research*

Dougherty and Krone (2000) explained that researchers do not often utilize standpoint theory due to the fact that there has been a perception on standpoint theory that it causes polarization. They contested the notion of standpoint theory as polarizing and claimed rather that standpoint is used to explain both similarities and differences among groups and can often lead to better understanding on all parties. Despite the limited use of standpoint theory in research, there have been several studies addressing race and gender relations that have utilized the theory (Bell, Orbe, Drummond, & Camara, 2000; Hawkesworth, 1999; Warren, Orbe, & Greer-Williams, 2003). Warren, Orbe, and Greer-Williams used standpoint theory to explain the similarities and differences among groups in perceived communication episodes, particularly conflict. The researchers conducted ten focus groups in which participants were asked to view a racial and gender conflict among a diverse group and then discuss their perceptions of the video with the focus group. They found that there were significant differences among racial and gender groups with regards to how they perceived the conflict. An example

was that the majority of white females that viewed the video felt the conflict centered more around gender than race as it involved an African American man and a white women. African American females, however, felt that the conflict was more about race than gender. These similarities among the various racial and gender groups were defined by the researchers as their standpoints. Bell, Orbe, Drummond, and Camara (2000) utilized Collins' (1986) Black feminist thought theory, which is a modification of standpoint theory, to inform their case study. The researchers examined the communicative experiences of African American women and found that Black feminist thought theory explained their study sufficiently and encouraged other researchers to consider the theory for future studies. Hawkesworth (1999) used standpoint theory as an analytical tool to examine women's standpoints on affirmative action and welfare by comparing five different standpoints: conservative, liberal, socialist, black feminist, and postmodernist.

#### Symbolic Policy, Standpoint Theory, and Affirmative Action in Higher Education

The developers of affirmative action policies in higher education have been administrators in the higher education institutions themselves. Various lawsuits have also shaped affirmative action policies. Recently, however, Michigan voters decided to eliminate affirmative action policies in the State of Michigan through a state-wide election held November 7, 2006. Fifty eight percent of the voters voted to pass Proposal 2 subsequently eliminating affirmative action in the State. It is likely that voters based their decisions on much of what they had been told about affirmative action through the symbolic imagery that surrounds it. Prior to the upcoming election, voters were mere audience members for this symbolic policy; as they voted they had the power to eliminate



or maintain the policies. In the two other states where a state-wide election on affirmative action took place, both states, California and Washington, eliminated it. Michigan is the first state to have an election after the 2003 Supreme Court ruling that upheld affirmative action policies. Michigan voters did eliminate affirmative action in the state. Therefore, it is important to understand not only how voters voted, but why voters voted the way they did. It then becomes important to understand people's perceptions of affirmative action. Standpoint theory gives insight on people's standpoints or in essence their perceptions of things, thus standpoint theory gives insight on how to understand people's understanding of affirmative action. The political nature of standpoints (Wood, 2005) will inform our understanding of the attitudes and perceptions of affirmative action. If knowledge does influence an individual's perception of affirmative action, then it becomes important to understand individuals' standpoints. Fletcher and Chalmers (1991) found that their participants indicated their opinions of affirmative action would change if provided with different and new information.

Now that Michigan voters have determined the fate of affirmative action, higher education institutions in Michigan will once again be the leaders in shaping admission policies. Institutions must now consider whether or not to revise their admissions policies and if so how those policies should be revised. As the literature review has revealed, higher education has had a timid reaction to the recent affirmative action challenges. Institutions have been quick to dilute and in some cases cover-up their own affirmative action policies. It will be interesting to see how higher education institutions respond.

## Conclusion

The literature review has examined the history of affirmative action policies, the main issues surrounding affirmative action, higher education's response to the Michigan cases, effects of eliminating affirmative action, attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action, and theories that inform this research study. The next section will address the intended methods.

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine the attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action among various groups within higher education in order to inform higher education leaders how they can impact the attitudes and knowledge of their community members and the population at large. By impacting affirmative action attitudes and knowledge, leaders can better defend affirmative action policies on their campuses. This study examines the attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action of a sample of university members from one mid-sized Midwestern university. This chapter discusses the research design, setting, sample population and participants, survey instrument, data collection, and data analysis.

#### Research Design

Quantitative methods examine the relationships between and among variables in order to answer questions and hypotheses through surveys and experiments (Creswell, 2003). Qualitative studies are investigative and attempt to understand a particular social situation, event, role, group, or interaction (Lock, Spirduso, & Silverman, 1987). This study is quantitative, as a quantitative study is an excellent way to measure both attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action. This study consists of a web-based survey which will be open-ended in order to examine in more detail some of the concepts in the survey.

### Research Questions

The following are the research questions used in this study:

1. To what extent do personal definitions of affirmative action differ among demographic groups?
2. To what extent do attitudes regarding Affirmative Action differ among demographic groups?
3. To what extent does knowledge of affirmative action differ among demographic groups?
4. To what extent does individuals' knowledge of Affirmative Action influence their attitude of Affirmative Action?
5. To what extent do individuals' knowledge of affirmative action and their perceived impact of affirmative action influence their support of affirmative action?

### Setting

The survey was administered at one mid-size university in Michigan. On November 7, 2006 a state-wide election was held in which voters decided whether or not to eliminate affirmative action. Although other states (California, Texas, and Washington) have had similar elections, this was the first state-wide election on affirmative action since the 2003 Supreme Court ruling that upheld affirmative action policies at the federal level.

### Sample Population

The participants in this study were a random sample of faculty, staff, and graduate and undergraduate students at one mid-sized Midwestern university. Faculty were

defined as all employees that the Department of Human Resources identifies as faculty both permanent and temporary and both full and part-time. Staff were defined as all employees who are identified by the Department of Human Resources as regular staff. Temporary staff were taken out of the population due to the fact that many of the temporary staff were actually students and there is no way to sort the student temporary staff from the non-student temporary staff. This included all non-faculty professional employees at the university both part and full-time. Students were defined as all currently enrolled part and full-time students, both undergraduate and graduate.

### *The Population*

*Faculty.* According to Human Resources Information Systems there was a total of 876 regular faculty and 474 temporary faculty for a total of 1350 faculty for the Fall 2006 semester. Gender and race data was not collected for the 474 temporary faculty. Out of the 876 regular faculty, there are 534 males and 341 females. There was a total of 871 full time regular faculty and 5 part time regular faculty. The racial and ethnic make-up is as follows: 2 American Indian, 72 Asian, 37 African American, 19 Hispanic, 0 Native Hawaiian, 629 White, and 117 Not Specified. Please see Tables 1 and 2 to view demographic information for both faculty and staff at the university.

*Staff.* According to Human Resources Information Systems for the Fall 2006 semester there was a total of 1887 regular staff and 481 temporary staff for a total of 2,368 staff at the university. Gender and race data was not collected for the 481 temporary staff employees. Out of the 1,887 regular staff, there are 1,841 full time and 46 part time employees. There were 750 males, 1,127 females, and 10 unspecified. The breakdown of race and ethnicity is as follows: 8 American Indian, 37 Asian, 203 African

American, 30 Hispanic, 2 Native Hawaiian, 1,418 White, and 189 Not Specified. Please see Tables 1 and 2 to view demographic information for both staff and faculty at the university.

Table 1

*Numbers of Faculty and Staff*

Type of Employee	Total	Total Temporary	Total Regular	Total Regular Full Time	Total Regular Part Time
Staff	2368	481	1887	1841	46
Faculty	1350	474	876	871	5

Table 2

*Demographics of Regular Faculty and Staff*

Type of Employee	Males	Females	African American	American Indian	Asian	Hispanic	Native Hawaiian	White	Not Specified
Staff	750	1127	203	8	37	30	2	1418	189
Faculty	534	341	37	2	72	19	0	629	117

*Graduate Students.* According to the Office of Student Academic and Institutional Research's Enrollment Report for the Fall 2006, there were 4,760 graduate students enrolled at the university. Out of the 4,760 enrolled graduate students 2,657 were enrolled full time and 2,103 were enrolled part time. There are a total of 1,876 female graduate students and 2,884 male graduate students. With regards to race and ethnicity of the graduate students, there were 328 African American, 64 Asian & Pacific Islander, 85 Hispanic, 30 Native American, 610 International, and 3,643 White or

Unknown. Please see Tables 3 and 4 to view demographic information for both graduate and undergraduate students.

*Undergraduate Students.* According to the Office of Student Academic and Institutional Research's Enrollment Report for Fall 2006, there were 20,081 total undergraduate students enrolled at the university. There were 17,653 full time students and 2,428 part time students. Out of the total 20,081, there were 9,889 male undergraduate students and 10,192 female undergraduate students. The race and ethnicity of the undergraduate population was as follows: 1,139 African Americans, 339 Asians & Pacific Islanders, 449 Hispanics, 102 Native Americans, 365 International students, and 17,687 Whites or Unknowns. Please see Tables 3 and 4 to view demographic information for both undergraduate and graduate students.

Table 3

*Numbers of Graduates and Undergraduates*

Type of Student	Total Number	Full Time	Part Time
Undergraduates	20,081	17,653	2428
Graduates	4760	2657	2103

Table 4

*Demographics of Graduates and Undergraduates*

Type of Student	Males	Females	African American	Asian & Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Native American	International	White or Unknown
Undergraduate	9889	10,192	1139	339	449	102	365	17,687
Graduate	1876	2884	328	64	85	30	610	3643

### *Power Analysis*

A power analysis was run to determine the random sample number needed to facilitate statistical significance. Glass and Hopkins (1996) described power as the probability of rejecting a null hypothesis when it is false. In other words, power measures the strength of the statistics. It is important that the sample number selected is large enough to create statistical significance. A sample calculator was used to determine the appropriate sample size. Please see Table 5 to view the projected sample sizes needed for this study. A 95% confidence interval was used in all sample size calculations. The calculations for both a confidence interval of 4 and a confidence interval of 5 can be found in Table 5. The confidence interval is the plus and minus figure of a percent of the population that answered. For example if 47% of the sample population answered yes to survey question one, the confidence interval is 47% plus and minus 5, 42% to 52%. Meaning that if someone from the entire population answered that same survey item they would have a confidence interval of 42% to 52% of answering yes to the same question.

The needed sample size for each of the four populations was determined using a confidence interval of both 4 and 5. I then emailed out three times the needed sample size in order to get the needed number of respondents back. Since the total population of faculty at the university is only 1350, a confidence interval of 4 yields a needed sample size of 416. When you multiply 416 by 3 in order to obtain the number of email participants needed a number of 1248 is obtained. This number of 1248 is too close to the total population number of 1350; therefore a confidence interval of 5 was used, which yields a needed sample size of 299 and 897 email participants needed. The other three



demographic groups can use a confidence interval of either 4 or 5. A confidence interval of 5 was used for the other three groups as well: staff, undergraduates, and graduates.

The sample size number using a confidence interval of 5 will then be multiplied by 3 to determine the number of surveys needed to be sent out to possible participants. The following number of surveys for each group was randomly emailed out to possible participants: Faculty, 1000; Staff, 1000; Graduates, 1100; Undergraduates, 1200. Please see Table 5 below for further sample size information.

Table 5

*Sample Size Information*

Populations	Total #	Confidence Level	Sample Size C.I. of 4	Sample Size x 3	Sample Size C.I. of 5	Sample Size x 3	# of Surveys emailed
Faculty	1350	95%	416	1248	299	897	1000
Staff	1887	95%	456	1368	319	957	1000
Graduates	4760	95%	533	1599	356	1068	1100
Undergraduates	20,081	95%	583	1749	377	1131	1200

### Survey Instrument

This study used an existing instrument and modified that instrument in order to answer more precisely the research questions. An overview of the original design was given along with explanations for the survey modifications. Revisions to the EAAI were completed in order to best answer the research questions in this study. A qualitative open-ended question was posed at the beginning of the survey that asked each participant to type out his or her own personal definition of affirmative action. Other revisions to the survey include modifications to questions, deleted questions, and added questions. Some of Echols original questions remain in their true form. Validity and reliability of the

instrument will be discussed. Lastly, explanations of the survey items will be provided below.

### *Instrument Development*

Echols (1997) developed the Echols Affirmative Action Inventory (EAAI). The original inventory consisted of 67 items/questions and about 81 variables. Some revisions were made to Echols original design. In the revised survey there are a total of 41 items/questions. A four-point Likert scale format is used throughout Echols' original questionnaire. For example strongly agree is equal to four, while strongly disagree is equal to one. Echols original inventory was divided into five sections: (a) knowledge of facts about affirmative action, (b) diversity and affirmative action, (c) quotas, diversity, and affirmative action, (d) moral and ethics of affirmative action, (e) demographic attributes of survey respondents. The first section was designed to obtain a general knowledge of the facts of affirmative action and the purpose of federal affirmative action programs. The next section of the survey was created to determine the level of participation in diversity and affirmative action events of the respondents. The quotas, diversity, and affirmative action section was created to obtain respondents' beliefs about the issues of diversity, quotas, preference and affirmative action. The next section was designed to obtain the moral and ethical beliefs about affirmative action policies, programs, and laws of the respondents. The last section of the survey was designed to obtain relevant demographic information believed to influence both attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action.

In order to answer the research questions of this study, Echols' inventory was modified. The modified survey can be found in Appendix B. A four-point Likert scale

was used throughout the revised survey as well. The questions were divided into six sub-categories: definitions, knowledge of affirmative action, attitudes of affirmative action, perceived impact of affirmative action, support of affirmative action, and demographics. The first section consists of the open-ended question that asks each survey participant to define affirmative action. It was important in this study to examine how individuals are defining affirmative action in their own words and then to examine how those definitions differ. The next section is the knowledge section. Several questions from Echols' original inventory were modified and/or deleted while other questions have been added. The modifications were done in an attempt to make the questions more factual and more contemporary. The attitude section consists of thirteen questions and is a modification of three of Echols' original categories, diversity and affirmative action, quotas and affirmative action, and morals/ethics of affirmative action. This study did not need specific information on diversity, quotas, and morals because the research questions in this study do not ask for that. Echols also examined both non-discrimination policies and affirmative action policies while this study does not examine non-discrimination policies. As a result non-discrimination questions were deleted from the modified survey. Both the perceived impact questions and the support question were new questions and new sub-categories altogether. The demographic information collected includes gender, race, age, education level, political party affiliation, income level, and position at the university. One question added to the demographic section asks the respondents to indicate whether they voted on November 7 and, if so, whether or not they voted to eliminate affirmative action.

Echols (1997) developed the survey using guidelines proposed by Shuman and Presser (1981), Dillman (1977), Alreck and Settle (1985), and Sudman (1976). The proposed guidelines caused Echols (1997) to pay particular attention to bias in the survey. Specifically, Echols (1997) was mindful of question-order effects, question form and content, and tone and intensity of wording. Modifications of the original survey were made with the same considerations in mind.

#### *Validity and Reliability*

Echols' (1997) survey was an appropriate fit for this study because her instrument has been used prior to this study and therefore has been tested for validity. Prior to Echols conducting her study, she ran a pilot study on the original instrument and some revisions were made to improve her original instrument after the pilot study. Echols' found a low reliability score of  $\alpha = .2097$  for her aggregated knowledge items (Knowl1-Knowl9). However she found a slightly higher reliability score ( $\alpha = .5000$ ) for aggregated knowledge questions Knowl4, Knowl5, and Knowl8. Echols attributed the low reliability of the knowledge items on her survey to either the sensitivity of race and gender-oriented studies and the response bias due to discomfort and resentment towards the portrayed "facts" about affirmative action or sampling errors related to the number of items, item selection, and response error (Sudam, 1976; Alreck & Settle, 1985). She found another low reliability ( $\alpha = .1930$ ) for the following aggregated diversity and affirmative action items: DFUNCT1 thru DFUNCT5, RACEFAC1 and RACEFAC2, RESENT1, RESENT2, MSCHOLAR, and SATISFAC. However she found an overall high reliability ( $\alpha = .8503$ ) for the following aggregated diversity and affirmative action items: RACEFAC1, RACEFAC2, RESENT1, RESENT2,

MSCHOLAR, SATISFAC. Both the quotas and affirmative action ( $\alpha = .7393$ ) and the moral/ethics of affirmative action ( $\alpha = .7863$ ) had overall high reliability for all aggregated survey items in those subsequent sections. Permission to use Echols' instrument was give by Echols via email.

Not only did Echols use the instrument, but the instrument was also used by Virgil (2000). Virgil, however, made no modifications to Echols instrument and did no further reliability testing on her instrument.

Cronbach's alpha was used to test the modified instrument for reliability of both the knowledge and attitude items of the survey. For the knowledge items, Cronbach's alpha was used to determine if the ratio scale number equaling the number of correct responses is reliable. If Cronbach's alpha was above the .70 threshold then the ratio scale was considered reliable. If Cronbach's alpha was below the .70 threshold than the ratio scale was determined unreliable. Cronbach's alpha for the aggregated knowledge items on the survey was  $\alpha=.772$ . As a result, the aggregated knowledge items on the modified survey were considered reliable. Cronbach's alpha for the aggregated attitude items was  $\alpha=.779$ . The aggregated attitude items of the survey were also considered reliable. If the ratio scale had been determined to be unreliable for either the aggregated knowledge or attitude items then a factor analysis would have been run on each of the individual knowledge and attitude items to determine which combinations would be appropriate. Cronbach's alpha found both the aggregated knowledge and aggregated attitude items on the survey to be reliable.

Echols (1997) tested the survey instrument for validity. A test is valid if it measures what it was developed to measure (Cresswell, 2003; Rudestam & Newton,

2001). Echols' EAAI produced similar results when used by Virgil (2000). This brings some reliability to the EAAI as well. Rudestam and Newton (2001) explained that reliability is the ability of a measure to produce consistent results. It is extremely important for an instrument to have both reliability and validity (Cresswell, 2003; Rudestam & Newton).

### *The Knowledge Questions*

The knowledge questions on the survey are as close to being fact as possible. However, due to the nature of the topic of affirmative action, there is some room for interpretation. Given that there is some interpretation involved in the knowledge survey questions, it does become a limitation in the study. In order to explain the answers that I will use for the knowledge questions on the survey, a brief discussion of each knowledge questions will be given.

*Affirmative action correcting for past discrimination.* The first question on the survey asks if affirmative action is designed to correct past discrimination against all minorities. According to much literature on affirmative action, it was indeed designed to correct past discrimination by protecting minorities from further discrimination (Crosby et al., 2003; Garrison-Wade & Lewis, 2004; Hendrickson, 2001). Lyndon B. Johnson created the concept of affirmative action through his Executive Order 11246. Johnson explained his reasoning for creating affirmative action in a speech at Howard University in June of 1965. In the speech he explained:

“You do not just take a man who for years has been hobbled by chains, liberate him, bring him to the starting line of a race, saying, ‘you are free to compete with

all the others,' and still justly believe you have been completely fair..." (Johnson, 1965).

Essentially Johnson was explaining that in order to create an equitable society, there must first be corrections made for past injustices.

*Affirmative action should be implemented.* The second knowledge question on the survey asks whether or not affirmative action policies should be implemented because they are required, irrespective of if an individual agrees with the policies or not. Affirmative action policies have been mandated by the Federal Government originally through Johnson's Executive Order 11246 and then has been upheld throughout the years by the Supreme Court. Just recently the Supreme Court upheld affirmative action policies in the 2003 University of Michigan cases. As a result, individuals are required to use affirmative action policies in all government contracts including higher education institutions, employment, and government contracting. There are three states that have eliminated affirmative action requirements through a state-wide election (California, Michigan, and Washington). Just recently, there was a state-wide election in Michigan on November 7, 2006 which banned affirmative action in the state. Currently, however, affirmative action policies are required at the federal level which is what the question asks.

*Federal affirmative action protecting minorities, women, the handicapped, & veterans.* The third knowledge question asks respondents if federal affirmative action was designed to protect minorities, women, the handicapped, and veterans. Indeed federal affirmative action does protect minorities, women, the handicapped, and veterans. Johnson's initial Executive Order 11246 initially only included minorities, "race, creed,

color, or national origin” (Executive Order 11246, 1965). A few years later, Johnson amended his order by adding women to affirmative action policies (Executive Order 11246, 1967). Through the years, the Executive Order has continued to be amended by adding both veterans and the handicapped. Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 added the handicapped to affirmative action policies. The Vietnam Era Veterans' Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974 added veterans to affirmative action policies.

*Supreme Court affirmative action case in 2003.* The fourth knowledge question asks if the Supreme Court permitted the use of race and gender in the selection of candidates into university admissions policies through the 2003 University of Michigan cases. In 2003 the Supreme Court ruled on two University of Michigan cases, one at the graduate level and one at the undergraduate level, but both related to affirmative action in college admissions (*Gratz et al. v. Bollinger*, 2003; *Grutter v. Bollinger*, 2003). The Supreme Court ruled on both cases by stating that affirmative action policies were indeed still needed. The Court stated specifically that race and/or gender could be used in selecting an individual, but should not be the only means of selection. Consequently, federal affirmative action programs have been upheld. There have been no other rulings at the federal level on affirmative action since the 2003 University of Michigan cases.

*Quotas in affirmative action policies are illegal.* The fifth question asks the respondents if quotas in affirmative action policies are illegal. Initially with Executive Order 11246, there was no formal federal statement regarding the use of quotas in affirmative action policies. As a result, they were essentially permissible but not required. However, during the 1978 *University of California v. Bakke*, the Supreme Court ruled that affirmative action policies were necessary and constitutional but also



ruled that the use of quotas to obtain affirmative action goals illegal. Since the 1978 Bakke ruling, quotas in affirmative action policies are illegal at the federal level.

*Federal affirmative action guidelines only apply to college admissions.* The sixth knowledge question asks if federal affirmative action guidelines apply only to college admissions. Federal affirmative action programs apply to all government contractors which includes higher education institutions and employment (Executive Order 11246, as amended). So, affirmative action policies do not just apply to college admissions but to all government contractors.

*Goals and timetables.* The seventh knowledge question asks if goals and timetables in affirmative action policies are illegal. While quotas in affirmative action policies are illegal, goals and timetables are permissible. President Nixon's administration clarified the distinction between quotas and goals in 1973 by issuing a memo, *Memorandum: Permissible Goals and Timetables in State and Local government Employment Practices* (1973).

*More than ten states that have banned affirmative action.* The eighth knowledge question asks if there are currently more than ten states that have banned affirmative action. In actuality, only three states have successfully banned affirmative action policies through a state-wide election. California was the first state to ban affirmative action through a state-wide election in 1996. Proposition 209 allowed California voters to either uphold or eliminate affirmative action in their state. Washington then followed suit in 1998 through a very similar state-wide election called Initiative 200. Michigan voted to eliminate affirmative action just recently in November 2006 through Proposition 2. Other attempts to bring affirmative action to the ballot in other states have been made by

affirmative action opponents. However, California, Michigan, and Washington are the only states that have voted to eliminate affirmative action thus far.

*The Michigan Civil Rights Initiative.* The ninth knowledge question asks if the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI) seeks to eliminate affirmative action in the State of Michigan through a state-wide election. Indeed the Michigan Civil Rights Initiative is the organization that initiated the vote by developing the ballot wording, getting enough signatures from Michigan voters in order to put in on the ballot, and continuing to support their process through various legal proceedings and financial contributions. In fact, the MCRI is led by Ward Connerly, a University of California Regent who led Proposition 209 which led to affirmative action policies being banned in California through a state-wide election.

*The beginning of federal affirmative action.* The last knowledge question asks if federal affirmative action requirements began in the 1920s. As stated above, federal affirmative action requirements began in 1965 through Lyndon B. Johnson's Executive Order 11246.

#### *Attitude vs. Knowledge*

The attitude section of the survey contains thirteen survey items that attempt to get at an individual's perception of affirmative action. The knowledge section of the survey is based on factual information and so there is a right and a wrong to each question which is supported by research. However, the attitude questions do not have a right or wrong answer. Instead, the questions are designed to measure an individual's perception, attitude, or opinion.

### *Impact*

There are two questions on the survey that have been coded as impact. The impact questions are designed to examine how individuals perceive they are impacted by affirmative action. One question asks individuals if they have ever benefited from affirmative action and the other asks if their family members have ever benefited. Since there is no real way to determine if someone has or has not benefited from affirmative action, the answer to this question cannot be proved and is a matter of perception.

### *Support*

The support question asks the respondents to what extent they support affirmative action. The respondent answers on a four-point Likert scale from no extent to a great extent. This question allows the researcher to analyze the differences among the extent to which individuals support affirmative action and their knowledge of affirmative action.

### *Demographics*

The demographics asked for on the survey are as follows: gender, race, age, educational level, party affiliation, income level, position at the university, and direction of the respondents' votes. The demographics become independent variables and will be examined to determine if any one variable influences any of the dependent variables, knowledge or attitude of affirmative action. Among the variables noted in the research that attributed to an individual's attitude were race, gender, political ideology, educational background, socio-economic status, and racist/sexist ideology.

### **Data Collection Procedure**

Data from the web-based survey was collected by staff in the Academic Technology and Instructional Support (ATIS) unit at the university. ATIS collected all

the data from the surveys, put the data into a database, and provide them to me. As a result, I did have direct contact with the survey administration process. The data from the open-ended item or question was also be provided to me. Recruitment of survey respondents was conducted through direct email correspondence. I sent the survey invitation email to a sample of faculty and staff. ATIS provided me with an email distribution list containing a random sample of the requested number from each group (faculty, staff, undergraduate students, and graduate students). I was then able to send the email to all sample participants directly without being able to see any individual emails so I had no way of knowing who my selected sample was.

Participation in this quantitative web-based survey was voluntary and participants were solicited through a direct email correspondence. A copy of the email correspondences sent out to faculty, staff, undergraduates, and graduates can be found in Appendix A. One week after the initial survey invitation was emailed, a reminder email was sent to the same sample group. Three days after the first reminder, a second and final reminder email was sent to the same sample group.

## Data Analysis

### *Overview*

A crosswalk table describing the analysis for this study can be found in Appendix C. The first step in the quantitative analysis was to run some simple descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics involve tabulating, depicting, and in essence describing sets of data (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). Once the descriptive statistics were collected, then I ran the inferential statistics. Inferential statistics allow me to infer meaning onto an entire population from the characteristics of a sample population (Glass & Hopkins, 1996).

ANOVAS or analysis of variance will be run. ANOVAS are the most widely used inferential statistical technique (Willson, 1980). ANOVAS were used to determine whether the differences among the means of different variables are greater than would be expected from sampling error alone in order to determine the statistical significance (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). The demographic groups were gender, race, age, position at the university, education level, political party affiliation, and income level. Chi-squares were completed for all the categorical questions. Chi-square tests determine whether there are any differences in the data due to variation (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). Chi-squares also determine if there is a significant relationship between two variables, but not the strength of that relationship (Glass & Hopkins, 1996). Key variables were coded for the statistical analysis. The Likert scale questions are coded from strongly agree to strongly disagree on a four-point scale. Other questions were coded such as yes is equal to one and no is equal to zero. Variables have also been coded into six categories: Definitions, Knowledge, Attitude, Impact, Support, and Demographics.

Prior to undertaking analysis to answer the research questions, confirmatory or exploratory factor analysis was performed on the survey items to be aggregated.

### *Research Questions*

*Definitions.* The first research question is to what extent and in what ways do personal definitions of affirmative action differ among demographic groups? This question attempts to examine differences among respondents' personal definitions of affirmative action based on different demographic groups (gender, race, age, education level, party affiliation, income level, position at the university, and direction of vote). A content analysis was completed on the participants' definitions of affirmative action. An

objective coding scheme applied to data is content analysis (Berg, 2004). Content analysis is achieved through the use of coding frames, which are used to organize the data (Berg, 2004). Coding was used to pull out themes among the various participants' responses. I developed an objective coding frame. The content analysis divided the definitions into codes by content and different categories received a number that was then used in a quantitative analysis. Once the data was sufficiently coded, Chi-square analyses were run to examine demographic differences in personal definitions.

*Attitudes and knowledge.* The second research question is to what extent do attitudes regarding Affirmative Action differ among demographic groups? This question examined the differences among attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action and the various demographic groups (gender, race, age, education level, party affiliation, income level, position at the university, and direction of vote). The first part of the analysis examined the differences among attitudes of affirmative action based on the various demographic groups. In order to answer this question, attitudes of affirmative action were aggregated from specific survey questions (Attitude1, Attitude2, Attitude3, Attitude4, Attitude5, Attitude6, Attitude7, Attitude8, Attitude9, Attitude10, Attitude11, Attitude12, and Attitude13). These aggregated survey questions become the dependent variable, attitudes of affirmative action. The demographic groups then became the independent variables. ANOVAS were run to answer this question.

The second part of the analysis examined the differences among knowledge of affirmative action and the various demographic groups (gender, race, age, education level, party affiliation, income level, position at the university, and direction of vote). The variable, knowledge of affirmative action, is created by aggregating specific survey

questions (Knowl1, Knowl2, Knowl3, Knowl4, Knowl5, Knowl6, Knowl7, Knowl8, Knowl9, and Knowl10). Knowledge of affirmative action became a ratio variable based on the number of correct answers a respondent received in the knowledge section. The dependent variable became knowledge of affirmative action and the various demographic groups were the independent variables. Chi-square analyses were done on some of the knowledge questions. ANOVAS were also run.

*Knowledge influencing attitude.* The third research question is to what extent does knowledge of affirmative action differ among demographic groups? This question investigated the extent to which individuals' knowledge of affirmative action influences their attitude of affirmative action. For this question, knowledge of affirmative action is again the same aggregated data from the knowledge survey questions. Knowledge of affirmative action is a ratio variable obtained by the number of correct responses a survey respondent receives. Attitude of affirmative action was aggregated data collected from the attitude survey questions. Knowledge of affirmative action then became the independent variable and attitude of affirmative action became the dependent variable. In order to answer this question, a univariate regression was run using the independent variable of knowledge of affirmative action to build a predictive profile of attitudes toward affirmative action.

*Knowledge and attitude.* The fourth research question is what extent does individuals' knowledge of Affirmative Action influence their attitude of Affirmative Action? A univariate regression was run with knowledge as the independent variable and attitude as the dependent variable in order to determine the influence affirmative action knowledge has on affirmative action attitude.

*Support of affirmative action.* The final research question is to what extent do individuals' knowledge of affirmative action and their perceived impact of affirmative action influence their support of affirmative action? This question explored the extent to which individuals' knowledge of affirmative action and their perceived impact of affirmative action influences their support of affirmative action. The variable, knowledge of affirmative action, was again obtained through the aggregated knowledge section survey questions and was a ratio variable based on the number of correct responses an individual receives in the knowledge section of the survey. The variable, perceived impact of affirmative action, was obtained through the aggregated survey questions in the perceived impact section of the survey (Impact1 and Impact2). The variable, support of affirmative action, was directly linked the support question on the survey that asks whether an individual supports affirmative action. For this research question, both knowledge of affirmative action and perceived impact of affirmative action became the independent variables and support of affirmative action became the dependent variable. A univariate regression analysis was then run.

### Conclusion

This chapter has explained the overall research design of the study by thoroughly discussing the research questions, the setting, the sample population, the survey instrument, data collection, and data analysis. This study is a quantitative research design that examined the attitudes and knowledge of individuals in higher education on the topic of affirmative action. The study used a survey modification method. The following chapter, Chapter 4, will contain details on the results of the data analyses that will then



answer the research questions in this study. Chapter 5, the Discussion section, will provided detailed discussion of the meaning of the answers to the research questions.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

This chapter reports the results of the statistical analyses completed in order to answer the five research questions in this study. The findings in this study will inform university administrators on what influences their community's affirmative action attitudes and knowledge so that they can prepare to defend affirmative action in the face of increasing opposition. First, some general survey demographics will be presented and compared to the institution's campus demographics. Further detailed information regarding the survey respondents will also be presented. Second, one-way ANOVAs, t-tests, and bivariate correlations will be presented. These tests explain the relationship between the various demographic variables and the four dependent variables, knowledge total, attitude total, impact total, and support level. Third, chi-square analyses will be presented on the coded survey personal definitions in order to show the frequency and type of definitions provided by the respondents. Fourth, a series of regression analyses will be presented on the influences on the support level of affirmative action. Modeling will be presented in order to demonstrate which variables have the strongest influences on support level of affirmative action and how the influencing variables interact with each other.

#### *Survey Responses*

A total of 562 individuals responded to the web-based survey invitation, out of the 4300 individuals who were sent the survey invitation via email, which constitutes a 13% response rate. Table 6 contains a break-down of the number of faculty and staff

respondents compared to the number at the institution, and Table 7 presents the number of graduate and undergraduate student respondents compared to the total numbers at the university. Tables 8 and 9 contain the breakdown of gender and race/ethnicity respectively compared to position at the university for both the institution as a whole and the survey respondents. The gender and racial/ethnic data for the institution were obtained from the institution's Human Resources Information Systems from the Fall 2006 semester, however, the system only collects gender and racial/ethnic data on its permanent or regular employees. Table 10 presents the breakdown of regular and temporary employees. For the survey data displayed in Tables 8 and 9, there were four respondents who did not indicate a gender and twelve who did not indicate a race and these, no responses, were omitted from the tables. The survey respondents are not entirely representative of the university as a whole. There were actually a higher percentage of faculty responses to the survey and a slightly lower percentage of staff responses to the survey than there are represented at the university as Table 6 indicates below. Additionally, there were significantly fewer undergraduate respondents and slightly more graduate student respondents than representative of the university.

Table 6

*Numbers of Faculty and Staff*

	Staff	Faculty	Total	% Staff	% Faculty
University	2368	1350	3718	64%	36%
Survey	141	145	286	49%	51%

Table 7

*Numbers of Students*

	Undergrad	Grad	Total	% UnGrad	% Grad
University	20,081	4760	24,841	81%	19%
Survey	111	123	234	47%	53%

There was a fairly close representation of male and female survey respondents for all position categories as compared to the university as Table 8 below indicates.

Table 8

*Numbers and Percentages of Gender and Position at the University*

		University	Survey
Undergraduates	Males	9889	51
	Females	10,192	60
	Total	20,081	111
	% Male	49%	46%
	% Female	51%	54%
Graduates	Males	1876	49
	Females	2884	73
	Total	4760	122
	% Male	39%	40%
	% Female	61%	60%
Staff	Males	750	42
	Females	1127	99
	Total	1877	141
	% Male	40%	30%
	% Female	60%	70%
Faculty	Males	534	73
	Females	341	71
	Total	875	144
	% Male	61%	51%
	% Female	39%	49%
Other	Males	NA	13
	Females	NA	24
	Total	NA	37
	% Male	NA	35%
	% Female	NA	64%

There was a fairly close representation of survey respondents for all racial groups in all position categories as compared to the university as Table 9 indicates.

Table 9

*Numbers and Percentages of Race/Ethnicity and Position at the University*

		University#	Survey#	University%	Survey%
Undergraduates	White	17,687	86	90%	78%
	African American	1139	3	6%	3%
	Latino	449	3	2%	3%
	Asian	339	6	2%	5%
	Native American	102	2	1%	2%
	Other	NA	10	NA	9%
	Total	19,716	110		
Graduates	White	3643	85	88%	71%
	African American	328	15	8%	13%
	Latino	85	1	2%	1%
	Asian	64	13	1%	11%
	Native American	30	1	1%	1%
	Other	NA	4	NA	3%
	Total	4150	119		
Staff	White	1418	111	75%	80%
	African American	203	13	11%	10%
	Latino	30	6	2%	4%
	Asian	37	2	2%	1%
	Native American	10	1	1%	1%
	Other	189	5	10%	4%
	Total	1887	138		
Faculty	White	629	123	72%	85%
	African American	37	5	4%	3%
	Latino	19	2	2%	1%
	Asian	72	8	8%	6%
	Native American	2	1	0%	1%
	Other	117	5	13%	3%
	Total	876	144		
Other	White	NA	28	NA	78%
	African American	NA	3	NA	8%
	Latino	NA	0	NA	0%
	Asian	NA	2	NA	6%
	Native American	NA	1	NA	3%
	Other	NA	2	NA	6%

Table 10

*Numbers of Temporary and Regular Faculty and Staff*

Type of Employee	Total	Total Temporary	Total Regular	Total Regular Full Time	Total Regular Part Time
Staff	2368	481	1887	1841	46
Faculty	1350	474	876	871	5

*Age*

The age of the respondents' ranged from 18 to 68 with the mean average age being 38. The average age of undergraduate respondents was 22. The average age of graduate student respondents was 32. The average age of staff respondents was 44 while the average age of faculty respondents was 48. Lastly, the average age of respondents who indicated their position at the university was "other" had an average age of 44.

*Education*

Of the 562 respondents, 117 reported being undergraduate students pursuing a bachelors, 112 reported having obtained a bachelor's degree, 165 reported having a masters degree, 138 reported having obtained a doctorate degree, 26 reported having obtained some other form of education, 4 individuals did not respond.

*Income*

Respondents were asked to report their income levels, since income had been found to be a factor in people's attitudes toward affirmative action in Sax and Arredondo's (1999) study even though Echols (1997) had found income and attitude toward affirmative action not to be significant. Twenty of the 562 respondents reported their income as being under \$7000, 33 were in the \$7000-\$17,000 range, 39 were in the \$18,000-\$28,000 range, 53 were in the \$29,000-\$39,000 range, 60 were in the \$40,000-

\$50,000, and 343 reported an income of \$51,000 or higher. Fourteen individuals did not respond.

#### *Party Affiliation and Direction of Vote*

With regard to party affiliation, 86 of the 562 respondents defined their political party affiliation as Republican, 224 said they were Democrats, 101 claimed an independent party affiliation, 124 reported they had no political party affiliation, and 8 individuals did not respond. Of the 562 respondents, 151 (27 %) reported that they voted to eliminate affirmative action in the State of Michigan, while 350 (62%) reported they voted not to eliminate affirmative action. Sixty one individuals did not respond to the question. This breakdown in reported votes is rather different than the vote split in the state. Affirmative action was eliminated with a vote of 2,141,010 (58%) votes to eliminate the policy and 2,141,010 (42%) votes to uphold the policy out of 3,696,701 total votes.

#### *Impact and Support*

The first of two impact questions asked respondents to rate on a 4-point Likert scale whether they felt that close family members and/or friends of theirs had benefited from affirmative action. The second impact question asked respondents to rate on a 4-point Likert scale whether they themselves had benefited from affirmative action. Respondents were also asked on a 4-point Likert scale to what extent they would support affirmative action (Table 12). The results of these questions are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

*Survey Responses Regarding Impact and Support*

		Extent of Support for Affirmative Action					Total
		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Response	
Friends & Family Benefited	Strongly Disagree	51	49	30	14	1	145
	Disagree	34	63	80	40	0	217
	Agree	20	27	46	56	1	150
	Strongly Agree	3	4	3	29	0	39
	No Response	1	9	5	1	4	11
	Total	109	143	164	140	6	562
I benefited	Strongly Disagree	74	65	43	15	1	198
	Disagree	32	63	80	49	1	225
	Agree	2	14	36	50	1	103
	Strongly Agree	0	1	3	24	0	28
	No Response	1	0	2	2	3	8
	Total	109	143	164	140	6	562

Table 12

*Survey Responses Regarding To What Extent Respondents Support Affirmative Action*

	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Strongly Disagree	109	19%
Disagree	143	25%
Agree	164	29%
Strongly Agree	140	25%
No Response	6	1%
Total	562	100%

## General Knowledge of Affirmative Action

Once data were collected, and in preparation for analysis, an aggregated variable for knowledge was created. There was a total of ten knowledge questions consisting of a forced yes or no choice. The data for these ten questions were recoded so that a correct



answer was equal to one and an incorrect choice was equal to zero. Once the data were recoded, a new variable called “knowledge total” was created that was a sum of all correctly answered knowledge questions ( $\alpha=.772$ ). Once the knowledge variable had been aggregated, more sophisticated statistics could be used to determine relationships. The aggregate variable was used as the dependent variable in a series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests to determine if respondents’ knowledge scores were influenced by their age, race, education level, position at the university, party affiliation, and reported vote. The results of those ANOVAs are presented below.

A one-way ANOVA test indicated that knowledge is not significantly related to income. However, knowledge was found to be significantly different based on race/ethnicity ( $p=.049$ ), education level ( $p=.002$ ), and position at the university ( $p=.008$ ) using a one-way ANOVA test. The knowledge total was also found to be closely approaching a significant difference with party affiliation ( $p=.053$ ). Additionally, a t-test indicated that knowledge scores were not significantly different based on gender ( $p=.661$ ) but that they did differ based on direction of vote ( $p=.000$ ). Lastly, a significant ( $p=.037$ ) but not strong correlation ( $R=.090$ ) between age and the knowledge total was found using a bivariate correlation. Table 13 below presents the results from the ANOVA tests.

Table 13

*ANOVA Analysis of Knowledge Total and Demographics*

		Sum of Squares	F – value	P – value
Race	Between Groups	30.24	2.121	.049
	Within Groups	1311.52		
	Total	1341.75		
Party Affiliation	Between Groups	26.138	2.197	.053
	Within Groups	1315.61		
	Total	1341.75		
Education Level	Between Groups	44.76	3.817	.002
	Within Groups	1296.99		
	Total	1341.75		
Income Level	Between Groups	11.20	.774	.590
	Within Groups	1330.55		
	Total	1341.75		
Position at University	Between Groups	33.092	3.490	.008
	Within Groups	1303.646		
	Total	1336.739		

A Post Hoc Tukey test was performed on all variables that showed statistically significant differences on the omnibus F-test above. These post-hoc tests revealed that the only significant difference with regard to race and an individual's knowledge total score was the difference between White respondents and African American respondents ( $p=.014$ ). White respondents had lower knowledge total scores than African American respondents, indicating that White respondents were less knowledgeable of affirmative action than African Americans. There were no other statistically significant differences between race categories on the knowledge total. Table 14 presents the information from the post hoc Tukey test.

Table 14

*Post Hoc Testing for Knowledge Total by Race/Ethnicity*

Post Hoc Test	Race/Ethnicity	Race/Ethnicity	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	White	African American	-.869	.258	.014
		Latino	-.087	.451	1.00
		Asian	-.243	.282	.978
		Native American	.413	.634	.995
		Other	-.216	.306	.992

As stated earlier, the ANOVA test was run on knowledge total and political party affiliation revealed that party affiliation was close to being significant on knowledge total ( $p=.053$ ). A Tukey post hoc test (Table 15) indicated that only Republican and Democratic party affiliation are approaching statistical significance ( $p=.072$ ). According to the test, a respondent from a Republican Party affiliation is less knowledgeable than a respondent from a Democratic party. However, the difference between republicans and democrats is not statistically significant. No other party affiliation differences existed.

Table 15

*Post Hoc Testing for Knowledge Total by Political Party Affiliation*

Post Hoc Test	Political Party	Political Party	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Republican	Democrat	-.533	.196	.072
		Independent	-.198	.226	.952
		None	-.157	.216	.979
		Other	-.276	.391	.981

A Post Hoc Tukey test was also run on the differences in educational levels on total knowledge score (Table 16). There was a significant difference in knowledge levels between people with doctorates and undergraduate students ( $p=.002$ ) and doctorates and

people with bachelors ( $p=.007$ ). There were no other significant differences in knowledge based on education level.

Table 16

*Post Hoc Testing for Knowledge Total by Educational Level*

Post Hoc Test	Education Level	Education Level	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Doctorate	Undergraduate	.732	.193	.002
		Bachelors	.679	.195	.007
		Masters	.340	.177	.391
		Other	.574	.328	.499

Once again, using a post hoc Tukey test, significant differences in knowledge levels by position at the university were found and are presented in Table 17. There was a significant difference between undergraduate students and faculty ( $p=.004$ ). Faculty members were more knowledgeable of affirmative action than the undergraduate students. No other significant differences existed by position at the university. However, the difference between graduate students' knowledge level and faculty members' knowledge level approached significance ( $p=.062$ ) with faculty being more knowledgeable of affirmative action than graduate students.

Table 17

*Post Hoc Testing for Knowledge Total by Position at the University*

Post Hoc Test	Position at the University	Position at the University	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Faculty	Undergraduate	.68788	.19446	.004
		Graduate	.50220	.18903	.062
		Staff	.36451	.18240	.268
		Other	.34028	.28688	.759

A t-test indicated that the direction of vote was significant to knowledge total as displayed in Table 18. Lavene's F-test for equal variance was not significant ( $p=.111$ );

therefore the t-test was run for equal variances not assumed. The t-test revealed that respondents who reported voting to eliminate affirmative action were less knowledgeable of affirmative action than those who voted to uphold affirmative action ( $p=.000$ ,  $t=-4.086$ ).

Table 18

*Independent T-test for Knowledge Total by Direction of Vote*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal Variances not Assumed	-4.086	316.281	.000	-.563	.138

*Summary*

To summarize the findings regarding respondents' knowledge of affirmative action, African American respondents had significantly higher knowledge total scores than White respondents, respondents with doctoral degrees had significantly higher knowledge total scores than undergraduate students and respondents with bachelors degrees, and faculty had significantly higher scores than undergraduate students. Additionally, one party affiliation relationship approached significance but did not reach it, in that Democrat respondents had near significantly higher knowledge total scores than Republican respondents. Lastly, those who voted to eliminate affirmative action were significantly less knowledgeable of affirmative action than those who voted to uphold the policy.

*Attitudes of Affirmative Action*

The attitude variable was aggregated in a slightly different manner. There was a total of thirteen attitude questions, all on a Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree,

3=agree, 4=strongly agree). A new variable, "attitude total," was created by summing up all the attitude responses and then dividing by the total number of attitude questions, creating a mean average attitude score as the aggregated attitude variable ( $\alpha=.779$ ). The higher the attitude score, the more favorable a respondent's attitude was toward affirmative action. Conversely, a low attitude score indicated an unfavorable attitude toward affirmative action. As with the knowledge question, a series of statistical tests was performed to determine the extent to which respondents' demographic groupings influenced their attitudes. The results of those tests are presented below. T-tests, ANOVAs, and bivariate correlations were used, based on the level of the independent variable being examined.

A one-way ANOVA test indicated that attitude did not differ significantly by income or position at the university, but did differ significantly by race ( $p=.000$ ) and party affiliation ( $p=.000$ ). Education level approached significance but did not obtain it ( $p=.086$ ). T-tests revealed that attitude level did not differ by gender ( $p=.090$ ), but did differ significantly by direction of vote ( $p=.000$ ). A bivariate correlation table indicated that age and attitude were not significantly related ( $p=.829$ ). The results from the ANOVA tests can be found in Table 19.

Table 19

*ANOVA Analysis of Attitude Total and Demographics*

		Sum of Squares	F – value	P – value
Race	Between Groups	10.414	7.673	.000
	Within Groups	125.541		
	Total	135.955		
Education Level	Between Groups	2.329	1.938	.086
	Within Groups	133.627		
	Total	135.955		
Party Affiliation	Between Groups	10.369	9.181	.000
	Within Groups	125.587		
	Total	135.955		
Income Level	Between Groups	1.297	.891	.501
	Within Groups	134.658		
	Total	135.955		
Position at the University	Between Groups	1.721	1.851	.118
	Within Groups	128.287		
	Total	130.007		

With regard to race, there were significant differences between White and African American respondents ( $p=.000$ ) and White and Asian Respondents ( $p=.018$ ). White individuals had a less favorable attitude toward affirmative action than did African Americans and Asian respondents. There was also a significant difference between African Americans and individuals who indicated their race/ethnicity as other ( $p=.022$ ). African Americans had a more favorable attitude toward affirmative action than did individuals who self-identified as other. There were no other significant differences among race. Table 20 contains details on the post-hoc test.

Table 20

*Post Hoc Testing for Attitude Total by Race/Ethnicity*

Post Hoc Test	Race/Ethnicity	Race/Ethnicity	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	White	African American	-.373	.079	.000
		Latino	-.372	.139	.106
		Asian	-.287	.087	.018
		Native American	.147	.195	.989
		Other	.0117	.094	1.000
	African American	White	.373	.079	.000
		Latino	.000	.157	1.000
		Asian	.086	.113	.988
		Native American	.520	.208	.164
		Other	.384	.119	.022

There were significant differences in attitude between respondents who indicated they were Democrats and all other categories of respondents (See Table 21). Democrats had a more favorable attitude toward affirmative action than did Republicans, Independents, those with no political party affiliation, and those with some other political party affiliation. No additional significant party relationships existed.

Table 21

*Post Hoc Testing for Attitude Total by Political Party Affiliation*

Post Hoc Test	Political Party	Political Party	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Democrat	Republican	.256	.060	.000
		Independent	.172	.057	.031
		None	.164	.053	.027
		Other	.324	.114	.051



It was determined using independent t-test that individuals who voted to eliminate affirmative action had more negative attitudes toward affirmative action than those who voted to uphold affirmative action ( $p=.000$ ,  $t=-12.256$ ). Lavene's F-test found that equal variances assumed for attitude total and direction of vote was not significant ( $p=.108$ ) and as a result the t-test was run with equal variances not assumed. Table 22 displays the results of the independent t-test.

Table 22

*Independent T-test for Attitude Total by Direction of Vote*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal Variances not Assumed	-12.256	351.797	.000	-.476	.039

*Summary*

In summary, a series of statistical tests revealed that White respondents had significantly more negative attitudes toward affirmative action than did African American or Asian respondents. African American respondents had significantly more positive attitudes than those who indicated their race as other. Democrats had a more favorable attitude toward affirmative action than did Republicans, Independents, those with no political party affiliation, and those with some other political party affiliation. Lastly, those who voted to eliminate affirmative action had significantly more negative attitudes toward affirmative action than did those who voted to uphold affirmative action.

*Impact and Affirmative Action*

Impact was defined as a respondent either directly benefiting from affirmative action or having friends or family members that benefited. For both impact questions, the

respondent answered using a four-point Likert scale with one being strongly disagree that friends and family or himself or herself have been impacted by affirmative action and four being strongly agree that friends and family or himself or herself have been impacted by affirmative action. An aggregated impact variable was developed by adding the responses of impact one and two and then averaging the number. The new aggregated variable was labeled "impact total."

A one-way ANOVA test determined that reported impact total did not differ by education level. However, the ANOVA found that impact level did differ by race ( $p=.000$ ), political party affiliation ( $p=.000$ ), and position at the university ( $p=.040$ ). Additionally, differences in impact by income level were found to approach significance ( $p=.088$ ). T-tests indicated perceived impact differed by gender ( $p=.000$ ) as well as reported direction of vote ( $p=.000$ ). Table 23 presents the t-test for impact by gender and demonstrates that males reported being significantly less impacted by affirmative action than females ( $t=-5.170$ ). Lavene's F-test for equal variances was not significant ( $p=.728$ ) so the t-test was run with equal variances not assumed. Table 28 will present the t-test results for impact by direction of vote. Age and impact level were found not be significantly related through a bivariate correlation table. Table 23 provides the data for the independent t-test for gender and impact level and Table 24 indicates the results of the one-way ANOVA tests.

Table 23

*Independent T-test for Impact Total by Gender*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal Variances not Assumed	-5.170	514.089	.000	-.351	.068

Table 24

*ANOVA Analysis of Impact Total and Demographics*

		Sum of Squares	F – value	P – value
Race	Between Groups	50.486	14.173	.000
	Within Groups	329.498		
	Total	379.984		
Education Level	Between Groups	4.906	1.455	.203
	Within Groups	375.078		
	Total	379.984		
Party Affiliation	Between Groups	31.651	10.104	.000
	Within Groups	348.333		
	Total	379.984		
Income Level	Between Groups	7.444	1.848	.088
	Within Groups	372.540		
	Total	379.984		
Position at the University	Between Groups	6.753	2.531	.040
	Within Groups	368.182		
	Total	374.935		

In order to determine the direction of the statistically significant relationships, a Tukey post hoc test was run on each statistically significant variable as is depicted in Table 24. The post hoc Tukey test indicated a statistically significant difference between White respondents and African American respondents ( $p=.000$ ), White respondents and

Latino respondents ( $p=.000$ ), African American respondents and Asian respondents ( $p=.000$ ), African American respondents and those who indicated their race as Other ( $p=.000$ ), Latino respondents and Asian respondents ( $p=.000$ ), and Latino respondents and those who indicated their race as being Other ( $p=.000$ ). According to the test, White respondents were less impacted by affirmative action than African American or Latino respondents. African Americans were impacted more by affirmative action than White, Asian, and Other respondents. Latino respondents were more impacted by affirmative action than White, Asian, or Other respondents. Asian respondents were less impacted by affirmative action than African American or Latino respondents. Individuals who self-identified their race/ethnicity as being Other were less impacted by affirmative action than African American or Latino respondents. Table 25 indicates the results of the post hoc Tukey test.

Table 25

*Post Hoc Testing for Impact Total by Race/Ethnicity*

Post Hoc Test	Race/Ethnicity	Race/Ethnicity	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	White	African American	-.958	.129	.000
		Latino	-1.253	.225	.000
		Asian	.101	.141	.992
		Native American	-.170	.317	.998
		Other	-.049	.153	1.000
	African American	White	.958	.129	.000
		Latino	-.295	.254	.909
		Asian	1.060	.184	.000
		Native American	.788	.338	.230
		Other	.909	.193	.000
	Latino	White	1.253	.225	.000

Table 25 - Continued

	African American	.295	.254	.909
	Asian	1.354	.261	.000
	Native American	1.083	.385	.075
	Other	1.204	.267	.000
Asian	White	-.101	.141	.992
	African American	-1.06	.184	.000
	Latino	-1.35	.261	.000
	Native American	-.27	.343	.986
	Other	-.150	.201	.989
	White	.170	.318	.998
Native American	African American	-.788	.338	.230
	Latino	-1.083	.385	.075
	Asian	.271	.343	.986
	Other	.120	.348	1.000
	White	.049	.153	1.000
	African American	-.909	.193	.000
Other	Latino	-1.204	.267	.000
	Asian	.150	.201	.989
	Native American	-.120	.348	1.000
	White	.049	.153	1.000
	African American	-.909	.193	.000
	Latino	-1.204	.267	.000

A post hoc Tukey test (Table 26) was also run on political party affiliation to determine which reported categories were significantly different. The test revealed that there were significant differences between Republicans and Democrats ( $p=.000$ ), Democrats and those indicating they had no political party affiliation ( $p=.000$ ), and Independents and those indicating they had no political party affiliation ( $p=.043$ ). Specifically, Democrats reported being more impacted by affirmative action than Republicans or those who indicated they had no political party affiliation, and Independents were more likely to report being impacted by affirmative action than those

indicating they had no political party affiliation. There were no other significant relationships regarding political party affiliation.

Table 26

*Post Hoc Testing for Impact Total by Political Party Affiliation*

Post Hoc Test	Political Party	Political Party	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Democrat	Republican	.446	.100	.000
		Independent	.220	.095	.189
		None	.529	.089	.000
		Other	.307	.189	.583
	Independent	Republican	.226	.116	.373
		Democrat	-.220	.095	.189
		None	.309	.106	.043
		Other	.087	.198	.998

A post hoc Tukey test revealed that there were no significant differences between positions at the university for impact level. However, undergraduates' impact level approached a significance difference ( $p=.065$ ) from that of staff's impact level but did not reach a statistically significant difference. The difference indicated that undergraduate respondents reported that they were less impacted by affirmative action than staff respondents. Table 27 reveals the results from the post hoc Tukey test.

Table 27

*Post Hoc Testing for Impact Total by Position at the University*

Post Hoc Test	Position at the University	Position at the University	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Undergraduate	Graduate	-.15953	.10692	.568
		Staff	-.27343	.10363	.065
		Faculty	-.17996	.10300	.406
		Other	.08108	.15504	.985

An independent t-test depicted in Table 28 found that individuals who voted to eliminate affirmative action were less impacted by affirmative action than those who

voted to uphold affirmative action ( $t=-7.848$ ). Lavenne's F-test for equal variances was significant ( $p=.001$ ) so the t-test was run with equal variances assumed.

Table 28

*Independent T-test for Impact Total by Direction of Vote*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal Variances Assumed	-7.848	499	.000	-.580	.074

*Summary*

To outline the findings in regards to impact level of affirmative action it was found that women reported being significantly more impacted by affirmative action than men. White respondents were significantly less impacted by affirmative action than African American and Latino respondents and African American respondents were significantly more impacted than White, Asian, or Other respondents. Additionally, Latino respondents were significantly more impacted by affirmative action than White, Asian, or Other respondents. Democrats were significantly more impacted by affirmative action than Republicans or respondents who indicated they had no political party affiliation. Additionally, Independents were significantly more impacted than those indicating no political party affiliation. Those who voted to eliminate affirmative action were significantly less impacted by affirmative action than those who voted to uphold affirmative action. Lastly, undergraduate students were nearly significantly less impacted by affirmative action than staff respondents but it was still not significant.

### Support and Affirmative Action

Support level was determined by asking the respondents to answer to what extent they supported affirmative action on a four-point Likert scale; four being a great extent and one being no extent.

A one-way ANOVA test indicated that support level did not vary significantly based on income level. Additional one-way ANOVA tests found that race ( $p=.000$ ), education level ( $p=.000$ ), party affiliation ( $p=.000$ ), and position at the university ( $p=.000$ ) all showed significant differences in support level. The results from the ANOVA tests are presented in Table 29. A t-test indicated that support level differed significantly by gender ( $p=.014$ ), such that males were less likely to support affirmative action than females ( $t=-2.461$ ). Lavene's F-test for equal variances was not significant ( $p=.425$ ) so the t-test for gender and support was run with equal variances not assumed. Another t-test found that support level also differed significantly by direction of vote ( $p=.000$ ) with individuals who voted to eliminate affirmative action being significantly less supportive of affirmative action than those who voted to uphold the policy ( $t=-22.999$ ). Results from the two t-tests can be found in Tables 30 and 35 respectively. A bivariate correlation table indicated that age and support level were significantly ( $p=.000$ ) positively related at a moderate level ( $R=.217$ ).



Table 29

*ANOVA Analysis of Support Total and Demographics*

		Sum of Squares	F – value	P – value
Race	Between Groups	74.316	11.514	.000
	Within Groups	597.046		
	Total	671.361		
Education Level	Between Groups	59.680	10.849	.000
	Within Groups	611.682		
	Total	671.361		
Party Affiliation	Between Groups	94.957	18.319	.000
	Within Groups	576.404		
	Total	671.361		
Income Level	Between Groups	7.178	1.000	.425
	Within Groups	664.183		
	Total	671.361		
Position at the University	Between Groups	53.598	12.213	.000
	Within Groups	605.602		
	Total	659.199		

Table 30

*Independent T-test for Support by Gender*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal Variances not Assumed	-2.461	481.118	.014	-.230	.094

A post hoc Tukey test run on race indicated several significant relationships (Table 31). First, it found that White respondents were significantly less supportive of affirmative action than African American ( $p=.000$ ) and Latino ( $p=.002$ ) respondents. Additionally, the test indicated that African Americans were significantly more

supportive of affirmative action than Asian ( $p=.010$ ), Native American ( $p=.006$ ), and Other ( $p=.000$ ) respondents. Lastly, the test found that Latino respondents were significantly more supportive of affirmative action than Native American ( $p=.023$ ) and Other ( $p=.001$ ) respondents. No other significant relationships were found with regard to race and support level.

Table 31

*Post Hoc Testing for Support Total by Race/Ethnicity*

Post Hoc Test	Race/Ethnicity	Race/Ethnicity	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	White	African American	-1.159	.173	.000
		Latino	-1.185	.304	.002
		Asian	-.300	.190	.697
		Native American	.482	.426	.919
		Other	.259	.206	.869
	African American	White	1.159	.173	.000
		Latino	-.026	.342	1.000
		Asian	.860	.247	.010
		Native American	1.641	.455	.006
		Other	1.419	.260	.000
	Latino	White	1.185	.304	.002
		African American	.026	.342	1.000
		Asian	.885	.351	.153
		Native American	1.667	.519	.023
		Other	1.444	.360	.001

Significant differences between education levels on support level were found using a post hoc Tukey test (Table 32). Undergraduate respondents were significantly less supportive of affirmative action than respondents with masters ( $p=.000$ ) and doctorates ( $p=.000$ ). The relationship between undergraduate respondents and those with

bachelors degrees approached significance ( $p=.058$ ) with undergraduates being less supportive of affirmative action than those with bachelor degrees. Respondents with doctorate degrees were found to be significantly more supportive of affirmative action than respondents with bachelor degrees ( $p=.003$ ) and respondents with some other form of education ( $p=.005$ ). No additional significant relationships were found.

Table 32

*Post Hoc Testing for Support Total by Educational Level*

Post Hoc Test	Education Level	Education Level	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Undergraduate	Bachelors	-.389	.139	.058
		Masters	-.553	.127	.000
		Doctorate	-.880	.132	.000
		Other	-.073	.227	1.000
		Other	.480	.221	.253
	Doctorate	Undergraduate	.880	.132	.000
		Bachelors	.491	.133	.003
		Masters	.327	.121	.076
		Other	.808	.224	.005

Another post hoc Tukey test indicated some significant differences between party affiliations on support level (Table 33). Respondents who indicated they were Democrats were found to be significantly more supportive of affirmative action than respondents who indicated they were Republicans ( $p=.000$ ), Independents ( $p=.000$ ), identified themselves with no party ( $p=.000$ ), and those who indicated they had some other party affiliation ( $p=.010$ ). There were no other significant relationships found between party affiliation and support level.

Table 33

*Post Hoc Testing for Support Total by Political Party Affiliation*

Post Hoc Test	Political Party	Political Party	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Democrat	Republican	.943	.129	.000
		Independent	.551	.122	.000
		None	.745	.114	.000
		Other	.825	.243	.010

Additional significant differences were found between positions at the university regarding support level using a post hoc Tukey test which is presented below in Table 34. The test indicated that undergraduate students were significantly less supportive of affirmative action than graduate students ( $p=.004$ ), staff ( $p=.000$ ), and faculty ( $p=.000$ ). Faculty were significantly more supportive of affirmative action than both undergraduates ( $p=.000$ ) and graduate students ( $p=.011$ ). There were no other significant relationships based on position at the university for support level.

Table 34

*Post Hoc Testing for Support Total by Position at the University*

Post Hoc Test	Position at the University	Position at the University	Mean Difference	Std. Error	Sig.
Tukey HSD	Undergraduate	Graduate	-.483	.137	.004
		Staff	-.648	.133	.000
		Faculty	-.898	.132	.000
		Other	-.405	.199	.249
	Faculty	Undergraduate	.898	.132	.000
		Graduate	.415	.128	.011
		Staff	.250	.124	.260
		Other	.492	.193	.081

An independent t-test found that respondents who voted to eliminate affirmative action policies were significantly less likely to support affirmative action than respondents who voted to uphold affirmative action ( $p=.000$ ,  $t=-22.999$ ). Lavene's F-test

for equal variances was not significant ( $p=.193$ ) so the t-test was run with equal variances not assumed. Table 35 displays the results from the t-test.

Table 35

*Independent T-test for Support by Direction of Vote*

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Equal Variances not Assumed	-22.999	329.513	.000	-1.653	.072

*Summary*

Statistical analysis revealed that female respondents were significantly more supportive of affirmative action than male respondents. With regard to significant racial/ethnic differences, White respondents were significantly less supportive of affirmative action than African American and Latino respondents. Additionally, African American and Latino respondents were significantly more supportive of affirmative action than White, Native American, and Other respondents. African American respondents were also significantly more supportive of affirmative action than Asian respondents. Undergraduate students were found to be significantly less supportive of affirmative action than respondents with masters and doctorate degrees. Respondents with doctorate degrees were significantly more supportive of affirmative action than respondents who were undergraduates, those with bachelors, and those with some other type of education. Democrats were significantly more supportive of affirmative action than republicans, independents, affiliated with no political party, and belonged to some other political party. Undergraduate students were significantly less supportive of affirmative action than graduate students, staff, and faculty. Also, faculty were

significantly more supportive of affirmative action than both undergraduate and graduate students. Those who voted to eliminate affirmative action were significantly less supportive of affirmative action than those who voted to uphold the policy. Lastly, there was a moderate correlation between the age of the respondent and their support level indicating that the older the respondent was the more supportive they were of affirmative action.

### Personal Definitions of Affirmative Action

As a part of the survey, respondents were asked to define affirmative action in their own words. These qualitative definitions were analyzed for content, coded, and the codes grouped into theme codes so that they could also be statistically analyzed and compared to other variables. Initially, the definitions were coded among sixty-six different codes. Each definition could receive anywhere from one to four total coding numbers. In order to further generalize the definitions, a second round of coding was done using the definition's original codes as a guide. The second round of coding gave each definition one primary code consisting of eight different coding choices, one optional secondary code and one optional third code consisting of code numbers nine through thirteen. Sub-codes 1, 3, 5, and 7 were considered positive affirmative action codes meaning that these definitions were supportive of affirmative action policies. Sub-codes 2, 4, 6, and 8 were given to definitions that were not supportive of affirmative action. Only definitions that did not have a primary code were given a secondary code in its place. Sub-codes nine through thirteen were considered secondary codes and were primarily ways in which respondents would describe who and what affirmative action impacts. In general, the sub-codes were not found to be as useful in analysis. A

complete list of the codes and sub-codes used can be found in Appendices B and C.

Once most of the definitions had been assigned at least one primary code statistical analysis could be done. A brief definition of each of the eight primary codes is displayed below in Table 36.

Table 36

*Definitions and Abbreviations of Primary Codes*

Code #	Code	Definitions referring to Affirmative Action as:	Abbreviation
1	Discrimination Positive	Remedy past discrimination, remedy present discrimination, positive discrimination, eliminate discrimination and disadvantages, eliminate/prevent/reduce discrimination, etc.	D+
2	Discrimination Negative	Discriminatory practice, discrimination, reverse discrimination, counter perceived discrimination, judges based on race and gender, etc.	D-
3	Equal Rights Positive	Equal rights/access/opportunities, provide opportunities/access, evening/leveling the playing field, advancement toward equality, fair treatment, giving rights to minorities, etc.	ER+
4	Equal Rights Negative	Unfair, unequal rights, disenfranchises students, no longer necessary, etc.	ER-
5	Preferential Treatment Positive	Preferential treatment, special consideration to historically disadvantaged, giving equally qualified minorities preferential treatment, not preferential treatment, etc.	PT+
6	Preferential Treatment Negative	Preferential treatment, preference to minorities, minorities given more or greater opportunities, government forcing the hiring of a person of a different race, given things based on race, etc.	PT-
7	Diversity Positive	Encourages social diversity, assuring diversity proportional to society-wise diversity, diversity a factor in decision-making, a practice justified by the need for diversity, etc.	Div+
8	Competing Negative	If equal applicants minority gets job, people of other races get White jobs, minorities take jobs from the qualified, competing with Whites and males, lowering the bar, etc.	Com-

Chi-square analyses were run on the demographic variables that permit such analysis (gender, race, income level, education level, party affiliation, position at the university, and direction of vote).

In general, both males and females had more positive definitions than negative ones. Females, however, were slightly more positive, with 83.28% of the definitions positive whereas the male definitions were 75% positive. The equal rights positive category had the highest number of male (79 out of 216) and female (148 out of 305) respondents. The Chi-square test was significant at  $p=.004$ , indicating that differences in definitions by gender were greater than would be expected by chance. Table 37 presents the chi-square table and Table 38 provides the percentages of positive and negative definitions for both males and females.

Table 37

*Crosstab of Gender and Primary Code (Chi Square significant at  $p=.004$ )*

	D+	D-	E+	E-	P+	P-	Div+	Com-	Total
Males	45	12	79	3	23	22	15	17	216
Females	44	5	148	12	38	17	24	17	305
Total	89	19	227	15	62	39	39	35	

Table 38

*Numbers and Percentages of Positive and Negative for Gender*

	Total	+ Total	+ Percent	- Total	- Percent
Males	216	162	75.00%	54	25.00%
Females	305	254	83.28%	51	16.72%

When looking at race, again respondents were more positive than negative. However, there were some slight differences. African Americans were more positive than any other racial group (97.37% positive definitions). Native Americans were least positive (40% positive definitions). The most common definition code for all racial



groups was again the positive equal rights code. Table 39 presents the chi-square for race/ethnicity and Table 40 presents information on the percentages of positive and negative definitions each racial/ethnic group had.

Table 39

*Crosstab of Race and Primary Code (Chi Square significant at  $p=.021$ )*

	D+	D-	E+	E-	P+	P-	Div+	Com-	Total
White	63	15	175	12	53	33	33	28	412
African American	8	0	24	0	3	1	2	0	38
Latino	3	1	6	0	1	0	0	1	12
Asian	11	0	6	1	0	0	2	1	21
Native American	0	0	1	0	1	1	0	2	5
Other	3	0	13	1	1	3	2	3	26
Total	89	19	227	15	62	39	39	35	

Table 40

*Numbers and Percentages of Positive and Negative for Race/Ethnicity*

	Total	+ Total	+ Percent	- Total	- Percent
White	412	324	78.64%	88	21.36%
African American	38	37	97.37%	1	2.63%
Latino	12	10	83.33%	2	16.67%
Asian	21	19	90.48%	2	9.52%
Native American	5	2	40.00%	3	60.00%
Other	26	19	73.08%	7	26.92%

The definitions were again more positive than they were negative for all education level categories. Table 41 provides the results from the chi-square analysis and Table 42 provides the percentages of positive and negative definitions for each education level. As the table below indicates, all education level groups had similar positive percentage rates ranging from 71% to 83%. Once again, the most common code for all levels of education was the positive equal rights.

Table 41

*Crosstab of Education Level and Primary Code (Chi Square significant at  $p=.202$ )*

	D+	D-	E+	E-	P+	P-	Div+	Com-	Total
Undergrad	18	7	42	7	12	7	5	9	107
Bachelors	15	2	48	3	11	9	7	11	106
Masters	26	4	68	3	22	12	12	6	153
Doctorate	27	4	68	3	22	12	12	7	155
Other	2	0	17	1	1	2	0	1	24
Total	89	19	227	15	62	39	39	35	

Table 42

*Numbers and Percentages of Positive and Negative for Education Level*

	Total	+ Total	+ Percent	- Total	- Percent
Undergrad	107	77	71.96%	30	28.04%
Bachelors	106	81	76.42%	25	23.58%
Masters	153	128	83.66%	25	16.34%
Doctorate	155	129	83.23%	26	16.77%
Other	24	20	83.33%	4	16.67%

With regard to party affiliation, those who indicated that they were of some other political party had the least positive definition response rate at 57.89% while Democrats had the highest response rate at 87.20%. The other three groups had positive response rates. Please see Table 44 for more information regarding the percentage of positive and negative definitions for each party group. With the exception of those who indicated they were other, the most common code category was again the positive equal rights. The highest for those who indicated other was the positive discrimination code. Table 43 presents the chi-square analysis for party affiliation.

Table 43

*Crosstab of Party Affiliation and Primary Code (Chi Square significant at  $p=.001$ )*

	D+	D-	E+	E-	P+	P-	Div+	Com-	Total
Republican	5	4	41	4	6	11	5	5	81
Democrat	40	3	99	2	30	8	15	14	211
Independent	14	2	41	2	10	11	12	5	97
None	25	6	40	6	13	6	6	7	109
Other	5	2	3	0	2	3	1	3	19
Total	89	19	227	15	62	39	39	35	

Table 44

*Numbers and Percentages of Positive and Negative for Party Affiliation*

	Total	+ Total	+ Percent	- Total	- Percent
Republican	81	57	70.37%	24	29.63%
Democrat	211	184	87.20%	27	12.80%
Independent	97	77	79.38%	20	20.62%
None	109	84	77.06%	25	22.94%
Other	19	11	57.89%	8	42.11%

Those individuals making less more than \$51,000 had the highest percentage of positive definitions (82.77%) as Table 46 demonstrates. Table 45 provides the chi-square analysis for income level. Equal rights reflected in a positive manner was again the most common code used for all income levels.

Table 45

*Crosstab of Income Level and Primary Code (Chi Square significant at  $p=.001$ )*

	D+	D-	E+	E-	P+	P-	Div+	Com-	Total
<7000	4	0	7	2	0	3	1	1	18
7-17\$	4	0	10	1	6	3	3	3	30
18-28\$	6	2	12	4	3	3	2	3	35
29-39\$	8	2	29	1	3	4	0	2	49
40-50\$	11	2	23	1	5	3	6	5	56
51000<	54	9	143	5	45	21	27	21	325
Total	89	19	227	15	62	39	39	35	

Table 46

*Numbers and Percentages of Positive and Negative for Income Level*

	Total	+ Total	+ Percent	- Total	- Percent
<7000	18	12	66.67%	6	33.33%
7-17\$	30	23	76.67%	7	23.33%
18-28\$	35	23	65.71%	12	34.29%
29-39\$	49	40	81.63%	9	18.37%
40-50\$	56	45	80.36%	11	19.64%
51000<	325	269	82.77%	56	17.23%

Undergraduates were the least positive in their definitions with a positive response rate of 68.37% and staff had the highest level of positive definitions at 86.86% as Table 48 indicates below. The most common definition used by all groups at the university was defining affirmative action as equal rights in a positive way. Table 47 displays the chi-square analysis for position at the university.

Table 47

*Crosstab of Position at the University and Primary Code (Chi Square significant at  $p=.000$ )*

	D+	D-	E+	E-	P+	P-	Div+	Com-	Total
Undergrad	17	7	35	7	10	10	5	7	98
Grad	20	3	38	3	16	16	7	6	109
Staff	19	5	75	2	16	4	9	7	137
Faculty	27	2	54	2	19	7	18	11	140
Other	5	0	25	1	1	1	0	4	37
Total	89	19	227	15	62	39	39	35	

Table 48

*Numbers Percentages of Positive and Negative for Position at the University*

	Total	+ Total	+ Percent	- Total	- Percent
Undergrad	98	67	68.37%	31	31.63%
Grad	109	81	74.31%	28	25.69%
Staff	137	119	86.86%	18	13.14%
Faculty	140	118	84.29%	22	15.71%
Other	37	31	83.78%	6	16.22%

The crosstab revealed that those who voted to eliminate (61.97% positive response rate) affirmative action were less positive in their definitions than those who voted to uphold affirmative action (88.52% positive response rate). Table 50 reflects the positive and negative percentages for both voting groups. However, both groups had the highest coded category as equal rights positive. Table 49 presents the chi-square analysis for direction of vote.

Table 49

*Crosstab of Direction of Vote and Primary Code (Chi Square significant at  $p=.000$ )*

	D+	D-	E+	E-	P+	P-	Div+	Com-	Total
Eliminate	16	11	51	8	17	20	4	15	142
Uphold	67	5	160	5	40	15	26	13	331
Total	89	19	227	15	62	39	39	35	

Table 50

*Numbers and Percentages of Positive and Negative for Direction of Vote*

	Total	+ Total	+ Percent	- Total	- Percent
Eliminate	142	88	61.97%	54	38.03%
Uphold	331	293	88.52%	38	11.48%

### *Summary*

Overall, there were more positive definitions than negative ones. The most significant difference noted was that between those who voted to eliminate affirmative action (62% positive definitions) and those who voted to uphold the policy (89%). The most common coded category used was that of equal rights positive. This definition was the most common for all demographic groups. Individuals who received this code defined affirmative action as a form of equal rights, access, or opportunities and as a way to level the playing field for all. They defined affirmative action as fair and an avenue to

equality. The second highest code for all groups was discrimination positive. This code consisted of definitions that described affirmative action as a remedy to past and present discrimination and referred to it as a form of positive discrimination. The most common negative code was preferential treatment negative. This code was given to definitions that described affirmative action as giving preference to minorities as well as giving minorities more or even greater opportunities whether they warranted them or not. In summary, the definitions were more positive than negative and were most commonly coded as equal rights positive.

#### Models of Influence on Support for Affirmative Action

To answer research question #5, to what extent do individuals' knowledge of affirmative action and their perceived impact of affirmative action influence their support of affirmative action, a series of regression analyses were conducted. First, the influence of knowledge on support was examined and then impact was added to that to directly answer the research question. In order to explain further the influences of support, further regression analysis were run using other independent variables. As a result, attitude total was added to the analysis consisting of knowledge and impact. Then the demographic variables were added to the analysis to determine their influence on support level. The variables gender, race, position at the university, party affiliation, age, and education level were all added to the regression analysis at different stages to determine their effect. When variables were found to have no influence on support level they were taken out of the regression.

### *Influences of Attitude Level*

An initial univariate regression indicated that knowledge level significantly influences attitude level ( $p=.000$ ) at a relatively moderate correlation level ( $R=.262$ ,  $R^2=.069$ ) and explains 6.9% of the variance in attitude. A second univariate regression was run with both impact total and knowledge total as predictors for attitude level. The test revealed that knowledge and impact combined significantly influence attitude level ( $p=.000$ ) at a moderate correlation level ( $R=.394$ ), and explained 15.2% of the variance in respondents' attitudes. Table 51 presents the initial univariate regression for attitude level by knowledge and impact.

Table 51

#### *Univariate Regression Analysis for Attitude Level*

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Mean Square	F	p-value
Knowledge	.262	.069	.067	8.725	40.919	.000
Knowledge & Impact	.394	.155	.152	9.853	50.855	.000
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
	B	SE	Beta	t-ratio	P-value	
Constant	1.565	.087		18.002	.000	
Knowledge Total	.065	.012	.210	5.283	.000	
Impact Total	.175	.023	.299	7.528	.000	

### *Influences of Support*

In order to determine the ways in which knowledge level, attitude level, and impact level influenced support level, a univariate regression model was run with support as the dependent variable (Table 52). The combined variables knowledge level, attitude level, and impact level were found to significantly influence support level ( $p=.000$ ) at a

fairly strong correlation level ( $R=.661$ ). They explained 43.3% of the variance in support.

Table 52

*Univariate Regression Analysis for Support Level*

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Mean Square	F	p-value
Independent Variables	.661	.437	.433	94.626	142.541	.000
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
	B	SE	Beta	t-ratio	P-value	
Constant	-1.094	.203		-5.398	.000	
Knowledge	.070	.023	.100	3.016	.003	
Impact	.396	.045	.298	8.742	.000	
Attitude	1.040	.079	.459	13.217	.000	

In order to move beyond the research questions, other predictors of support were looked at using linear regression modeling. As Table 53 indicates above, knowledge, attitude, and perceived impact all influence support level and account for 43.3% of the variance in that variable. Age and gender were added to knowledge total, attitude total, and impact total and the linear regression revealed that age was a significant influence of support level ( $p=.000$ ) but gender was not ( $p=.469$ ). Knowledge total, attitude total, impact total, gender, and age accounted for 47.3% of the variance.



Table 53

*Univariate Regression Analysis for Support Level Adding Gender and Age*

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Mean Square	F	p-value
Independent Variables	.691	.478	.473	59.561	96.893	.000
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			
	B	SE	Beta	t-ratio	P-value	
Constant	-1.774	.240		-7.396	.000	
Knowledge	.052	.023	.075	2.284	.023	
Attitude	.372	.045	.281	8.233	.000	
Impact	1.084	.078	.473	13.825	.000	
Gender	.051	.070	.023	.725	.469	
Age	.017	.003	.214	6.767	.000	

In order to further explore the influences of respondents' support level, another univariate regression was run. In this case gender was deleted from the model and race was added (Table 54). In order to accurately analyze the influence of race, two dummy variables were created. The first dummy variable was called race dummy White. In order to create it, the race variable was recoded to calculate all White respondents as one group and all non-White respondents as the alternate group. The second dummy, race dummy African American, was created similarly. All the African American respondents were recoded as one group and all other respondents were placed into the other group. By creating two variables, it could be seen which race had more significant influences over support level. The univariate regression revealed that the race dummy White variable was not significant in predicting support level ( $p=.782$ ) but the race dummy African American variable was significant ( $p=.028$ ). The six variables in this univariate regression, knowledge total, impact total, attitude total, age, race dummy White, and race

dummy African American were significant to support level ( $p=.000$ ) and accounted for 47.9% of the variance.

Table 54

*Univariate Regression Analysis for Support Level Deleting Gender and Adding Race*

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Mean Square	F	p-value
Independent Variables	.696	.485	.479	49.865	81.891	.000
	Unstandardized Coefficients B	SE	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-ratio	P-value	
Constant	-1.543	.245		-6.298	.000	
Knowledge	.045	.023	.065	1.972	.049	
Impact	.352	.046	.267	7.691	.000	
Attitude	1.062	.079	.463	13.414	.000	
Age	.017	.003	.210	6.632	.000	
Race Dummy (W)	-.028	.101	-.010	-.277	.782	
Race Dummy (AA)	.365	.165	.084	2.208	.028	

Since race dummy White was found to be insignificant in the last test it was deleted for the next univariate regression test and party affiliation was added (Table 55). In order to accurately examine the influences of party affiliation on support level, a dummy variable was created. The party affiliation variable was recoded so that all democrats were one group and all other party affiliations, including those that did not have one, were considered the alternate group. The party dummy variable was considered significant ( $p=.000$ ). The six new variables, knowledge total, impact total, attitude total, race dummy African American and party dummy, accounted for 49.9% of the variance.

Table 55

*Univariate Regression Analysis for Support Level Deleting Race Dummy (W) and Adding Party*

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Mean Square	F	p-value			
Independent Variables	.711	.505	.499	51.914	88.566	.000			
	Unstandardized Coefficients B	SE	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-ratio	P-value	Zero-order	Partial	Part – Effect Size	
Constant	-1.491	.219		-6.795	.000				
Knowledge	.039	.023	.057	1.748	.081	.271	.076	.054	
Impact	.325	.045	.246	7.157	.000	.467	.299	.221	
Attitude	1.030	.078	.448	13.184	.000	.589	.500	.406	
Age	.016	.003	.199	6.413	.000	.221	.270	.198	
Race	.299	.144	.068	2.071	.039	.269	.090	.064	
Dummy (AA)									
Party	.318	.071	.145	4.471	.000	.334	.192	.138	
Dummy									

In order to determine how much each variable was contributing to the influence on support level, a part and partial correlation was run. The test indicated that attitude had the highest  $R^2$  value ( $R^2=.406$ ), indicating that it explained the greatest amount of variance (40%) in support, and knowledge total had the lowest ( $R^2=.054$ ). Race dummy African American also explained a very small amount of variance in support ( $R^2=.064$ ). Table 55 provides a complete presentation of the model's components.

To continue exploring predictors of support level, another univariate regression was run. This time the variable, position at the university, was added. Two position dummy variables were created. The first, position dummy undergraduate, allowed for all undergraduate respondents to be one group and all other positions at the university to be considered the other group. The second dummy variable, position dummy faculty,

consisted of all faculty respondents as one group and all other positions as the other group. The test revealed that both position dummy undergraduate ( $p=.022$ ) and position dummy faculty ( $p=.034$ ) were significant to support level. Additionally, the combined variables, knowledge total, impact total, attitude total, age, race dummy African American, party dummy, position dummy undergraduate, and position dummy faculty account for 50.7% of the variance. Table 56 presents the results of the regression analysis.

Table 56

*Univariate Regression Analysis for Support Level Adding Position*

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Mean Square	F	p-value			
Independent Variables	.717	.515	.507	39.655	68.635	.000			
	Unstandardized Coefficients B	SE	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-ratio	P-value	Zero-order	Partial	Part – Effect Size	
Constant	-1.120	.251		-4.470	.000				
Knowledge	.033	.023	.048	1.471	.142	.270	.064	.045	
Impact	.317	.045	.240	7.013	.000	.467	.294	.215	
Attitude	1.016	.078	.442	13.057	.000	.590	.498	.400	
Age	.009	.003	.111	2.653	.008	.220	.116	.081	
Race	.336	.145	.076	2.314	.021	.269	.101	.071	
Dummy (AA)									
Party	.296	.071	.135	4.147	.000	.333	.179	.127	
Dummy									
Position	-.241	.105	-.090	-2.301	.022	-.261	-.101	-.070	
Dummy (U)									
Position	.184	.086	.075	2.125	.034	.206	.093	.065	
Dummy (F)									

A part and partial correlation (Table 56) was run to determine the level of influence each variable had on the support level. It was found that both position dummies had fairly

weak correlations, with position dummy undergraduate accounting for only 7% of the variance and position dummy graduate faculty accounting for only 6.5% of the variance. Attitude again had the strongest correlation accounting for 40% of the variance and knowledge had a continual sinking correlation with this test accounting for only 4.5% of the variance. The knowledge total also lost significance with each univariate regression test run with the last test indicating it was not significant to support level ( $p=.142$ ).

Education level was added to the following univariate regression test (Table 57). An education dummy variable was created called education dummy undergraduate. This variable consisted on all respondents who were currently undergraduate students in one group and all other education levels in the alternate group. The eight variables combined, impact total, attitude total, age, race dummy African American, party dummy, position dummy undergraduate, position dummy faculty, and education dummy undergraduate, were significant to support level ( $p=.000$ ) and contributed to 50.6% of the variance. Education level, however, was not found to be significant to support level ( $p=.324$ ). With all these eight variables combined, position dummy undergraduate also became not significant to support level ( $p=.541$ ).

Table 57

*Univariate Regression Analysis for Support Level Adding Education*

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Mean Square	F	p-value			
Independent Variables	.717	.514	.506	39.563	68.213	.000			
	Unstandardized Coefficients B	SE	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-ratio	P-value	Zero-order	Partial	Part – Effect Size	
Constant	-.986	.233		-4.237	.000				
Impact	.322	.045	.244	7.122	.000	.467	.299	.218	
Attitude	1.041	.076	.453	13.645	.000	.590	.515	.419	
Age	.009	.003	.116	2.762	.006	.220	.121	.085	
Race Dummy (AA)	.351	.145	.080	2.425	.016	.269	.106	.074	
Party Dummy	.299	.072	.136	4.173	.000	.334	.180	.128	
Position Dummy (U)	-.106	.174	-.040	-.612	.541	-.261	-.027	-.019	
Position Dummy (F)	.185	.087	.075	2.123	.034	.206	.093	.065	
Education Dummy (U)	-.156	.159	-.059	-.987	.324	-.245	-.043	-.030	

The part and partial correlation (Table 57) again revealed that attitude level had the highest correlation to support level ( $p=.419$ ) and impact level had the second highest correlation to support level ( $p=.218$ ). Education level had the weakest correlation to support level accounting for only 3% of the variance.

In the final model (Table 58), education level is taken out since it was not found to be significant to support level. The final model finds impact total, attitude total, age, race dummy African American, party dummy Democrat, position dummy undergraduate, and position dummy faculty to all be significant to support level. Attitude still accounts for the highest amount of variance at 40% and impact the second highest at 21%. The

other variables account for smaller amounts of variance: Age, 8%; race dummy African American, 8%; party dummy Democrat, 13%; position dummy undergraduate, 7%; position dummy faculty, 6%. Table 58 below indicates the results from the regression model. Knowledge total has lost significance with each variable added to the model and has now become insignificant ( $p=.100$ ) and accounts for only 5% of the variance in the model. Since knowledge total had been losing significance throughout the modeling, analyses were run to determine if there were interactions between variables causing the significance drop. No evidence of interaction in the regression modeling was found. Specifically, knowledge total was run in a correlation with race and position and no interactions were found.

Table 58

*Univariate Regression Analysis for Support Level Final Model*

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Mean Square	F	p-value		
Independent Variables	.716	.513	.505	39.919	69.155	.000		
	Unstandardized Coefficients B	SE	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-ratio	P-value	Zero-order	Partial	Variance Explained Part – Effect Size
Constant	-1.14	.248		-4.578	.000			
Knowledge	.037	.022	.053	1.650	.100	.269	.072	.050
Impact	.311	.045	.235	6.924	.000	.462	.289	.211
Attitude	1.012	.077	.441	13.152	.000	.588	.497	.400
Age	.009	.003	.114	2.751	.006	.222	.119	.084
Race	.370	.143	.085	2.598	.010	.268	.113	.079
Dummy (AA)								
Party	.295	.071	.134	4.158	.000	.334	.178	.127
Dummy								
Position	-.233	.104	-.087	-2.249	.025	-.255	-.098	-.068
Dummy (U)								
Position	.184	.086	.075	2.129	.034	.207	.092	.065
Dummy (F)								

Since attitude total had predicted 40% of the 50% variance in the model, it became important to look at what variables influenced attitude level. The regression modeling revealed that knowledge total, impact total, race dummy White, and party dummy Democrat were all significantly related to attitude level (see Table 59). Gender, age, education level, and position at the university were all found to be insignificant to attitude level. Of the 17% of accounted variance, knowledge total contributed to 19% of the variance; impact total 24%; race dummy White 9%; and party dummy Democrat 12%.



Table 59

*Univariate Regression Analysis for Attitude Level Final Model*

	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Mean Square	F	p-value		
Independent Variables	.423	.179	.173	5.707	30.115	.000		
	Unstandardized Coefficients B	SE	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t-ratio	P-value	Zero-order	Partial	Variance Explained Part – Effect Size
Constant	1.681	.099		16.903	.000			
Knowledge	.059	.012	.192	4.892	.000	.262	.203	.188
Impact	.150	.024	.256	6.229	.000	.340	.256	.240
Race	-.105	.045	-.092	-2.319	.021	-.171	-.098	-.089
Dummy(W)								
Party	.119	.039	.121	3.044	.002	.210	.128	.117
Dummy								

## Summary

This chapter presented the significant findings of the study and answered the five research questions. A series of statistical tests were run in order to determine relationships and infer greater meaning. Knowledge, attitude, impact, and support of affirmative action were all found to be significantly related to various demographic variables. Knowledge total was significantly different among racial/ethnic groups, party affiliation, position at the university, education level, and direction of vote. Attitude of affirmative action was found to be significantly different among racial/ethnic groups, party affiliation, and direction of vote. Impact of affirmative action was significantly related to gender, race, party affiliation, income level, position at the university, and direction of vote. Support of affirmative action was significantly related to gender, race, age, party affiliation, position at the university, and direction of vote. With regards to respondents' personal definitions of affirmative action, the definitions were generally

more positive in nature than negative. Respondents most commonly defined affirmative action as equal rights in a positive way. The most noticeable difference between positive and negative definitions was that between those who voted to eliminate affirmative action and those who voted to uphold affirmative action. The regression analyses revealed that knowledge significantly influenced attitude of affirmative action. Knowledge and impact combined also significantly influenced attitude of affirmative action. Knowledge, attitude, and impact of affirmative action combined were found to significantly influence respondents' support level of affirmative action. Regression modeling indicated that as more variables were added knowledge had a continuing less impact of the influence of the support level of affirmative action. The final regression model for support level found variables combined (attitude, impact, age, race dummy for African Americans, position dummies for undergraduate and faculty, and education dummy for undergraduates) to significantly influence the support level of affirmative action. Attitude level contributed to high percent of the accounted variance in the support model so regression modeling was also completed on attitude level. The final regression model for attitude level revealed that knowledge, impact, race dummy White, and party dummy Democrat all significantly influenced attitude level of affirmative action. Chapter 5 will discuss the results presented here and will compare those results to what other research studies have found.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

#### Overview of Significant Findings

This chapter will provide an overview of significant findings, compare the findings of this research study to those of previous research studies, present implications of the findings, discuss limitations to the study, and recommend research areas for future research on this topic. The findings of this study serve to inform university administrators what standpoint elements contribute to individuals' affirmative action positions. Administrators can then utilize this understanding to influence individuals' affirmative action positions as well as to seek ways to defend higher education affirmative action policies in times of increasing opposition.

#### *Personal Definitions of Affirmative Action*

The first research question of this study asked: to what extent and in what ways do personal definitions of affirmative action differ among demographic groups?

In general, there were far more positive definitions than negative ones among all demographic groups. There were notable differences in definitions among gender, race, education level, income level, position at the university, and direction of vote. Both males and females had more positive definitions than negative ones; however, females respondents were slightly more positive in their definitions than male respondents (8% more positive). African Americans were more positive than any other racial group. Asian Americans were the second most positive, Latinos third, Whites fourth, and Native Americans had the least positive definitions. The definitions of African Americans were

97% positive; Asians were 90%; Latinos were 83%; Whites were 79%; Native Americans were 40%. The most significant difference noted was that between those who voted to eliminate affirmative action (62% positive definitions) and those who voted to uphold the policy (89%). In regards, to education level, positive definitions seemed to increase slightly with education level, with an 11% increase in positive definitions between undergraduate students and those who had obtained a doctorate degree. Democrats had the highest percentage of positive definitions, ranging from 8% to 30% higher than the other party groups. Specifically, Democrats were 17% higher than Republicans. With regard to income level, those individuals making less than \$29,000 per year were slightly less positive in their definitions than those making over \$29,000 per year. However, it is important to note that 343 of the 548 respondents who indicated an income level reported that they made \$51,000 or more. Additionally, there appeared to be no relationship between income level and position at the university. In terms of position at the university, staff had the highest percentage of positive definitions and faculty the second highest. Undergraduates had the smallest percentage of positive definitions with an 18% difference between staff and undergraduates. There were no noticeable differences among definitions of affirmative action by age.

The differences among participants' definitions of affirmative action by demographic groups (gender, race, education level, income level, party affiliation, position at the university, and direction of vote) were slight. Overall, the definitions were more positive in nature than negative. Equal Rights positive was the most common code for all demographic groups. Definitions that defined affirmative action as a form of equal rights, access, or opportunities and as a way to level the playing field for all were coded

as equal rights positive. Discrimination positive was the second highest code for all groups. This code consisted of definitions that described affirmative action as a remedy to past and present discrimination and referred to it as a form of positive discrimination. The most common negative code was preferential treatment negative. This code was given to definitions that described affirmative action as giving preference to minorities as well as giving minorities more or even greater opportunities whether they warranted them or not. Pace and Smith (1995) found in their study that many of their respondents believed that affirmative action involved at least some form of weak preferential treatment while only a few respondents felt affirmative action consisted of strong preferential treatment.

There were no current research studies found on participants' personal definitions of affirmative action with which to compare these particular results. There were prior qualitative research studies that inquired of their participants their affirmative action attitudes and knowledge through interviews and focus groups, but no previous studies asked participants to define affirmative action in their own words as this study has done.

#### *Attitudes of Affirmative Action*

The second research question of this study examined to what extent attitudes regarding affirmative action differ among demographic groups.

Statistical analysis revealed that attitude was significantly related to race, party affiliation, and direction of vote but not significantly related to income level, position at the university, age, or gender. This is somewhat consistent with other research studies, and is discussed in detail below.

*Gender.* Other research studies have found gender and attitudes toward affirmative action to be significantly related, with females having more positive attitudes toward affirmative action than males (Bell, Harrison, & McLaughlin, 2000; Inkelas, 2003; Kluegel and Smith, 1983; Kravitz & Platania, 1993; Meader, 1998; Sax & Arredondo, 1999; Smith, 1998). This study, however, did not find a significant relationship between gender and affirmative action attitude level. It is uncertain why this study did not find a relationship between gender and attitude of affirmative action, however, it is important to note that females were found to be more supportive of affirmative action than males. Additionally, females in this study indicated they were more positively impacted by affirmative action than male respondents.

*Race.* Several studies have found a significant relationship between an individual's race and his or her attitude toward affirmative action, and that minorities viewed affirmative action more positively than White respondents (Bell, Harrison, and McLaughlin, 2000; Bobo, 1998; Echols, 1997; Inkelas, 2003; Klineberg and Kravitz, 2003; Kravitz and Platania, 1993; Meader, 1998; Sax and Arredondo, 1999; Smith, 1998; Virgil, 2000; Williams, 1999). This research study found White respondents had significantly less favorable attitudes toward affirmative action than African American or Asian respondents. However, there were no other significant differences among racial groups on attitude toward affirmative action. Of the 562 respondents, 434 were White, 39 were African American, 12 were Latino, 32 were Asian, 6 were Native American, and 27 were Other.

*Political party affiliation.* This study found that Democrats had more favorable attitudes toward affirmative action than did Republicans, Independents, those with no

political party affiliation, and those with some other political party affiliation. Other research studies have also found a relationship between political party affiliation and attitude of affirmative action (Bobo 1998; Inkelas, 2003; Sax & Arredondo, 1999). Echols (1997) found that Democrats were more supportive of affirmative action than Republicans. Sidanius, Pratto, & Bobo (1996) found a correlation between political conservatism and opposition to affirmative action.

*Direction of vote.* Individuals who voted to eliminate affirmative action had more negative attitudes toward affirmative action than those who voted to uphold affirmative action. There are currently no research studies on individuals' direction of vote on affirmative action and their measured attitude level with which to compare these results. Since affirmative action ballot initiatives have only occurred more recently and only in California, Washington, and Michigan, it is not surprising that previous studies have not compared individuals' direction of vote on a state-wide affirmative action election with their affirmative action attitudes and knowledge as this study has done.

*Education and income level.* Although this study found education level and income level to not be significantly related to attitudes on affirmative action, other studies have found both education level (Golden et al., 2001; Sax & Arredondo, 1999) and income level (Sax & Arredondo, 1999) to be significantly related to attitudes toward affirmative action. Echols (1997) found no significant relationship between income level and affirmative action but did note that individuals in the income bracket of \$29,000 to \$39,000 and \$52,000 and up were less likely to support affirmative action.

*Knowledge of Affirmative Action*

The third research question of this study asked: to what extent does knowledge of affirmative action differ among demographic groups?

Statistical tests revealed that knowledge level was significantly different based on race/ethnicity, education level, position at the university, direction of vote, party affiliation, and age. Income level and gender were not found to be significantly related to knowledge level. Research measuring individuals' knowledge of affirmative action has been limited. Echols (1997) found that an individual's race and gender influenced his or her knowledge of the facts of affirmative action. Additionally, Echols found that although education, income, age, and party affiliation contributed as well, race and gender were the strongest influences on a person's knowledge of the facts of affirmative action. Echols found both income level and gender significant in influencing an individuals' knowledge level; however, this study found income level and gender to be nonsignificant variables. One reason income level may not have been a factor in this study is that 343 of the 548 respondents who indicated an income level reported that they made \$51,000 or more. So, there may not have been enough differences in the respondents' income levels to find a relationship. It is uncertain why gender and knowledge were not found to be related. However, gender was found to be positively related to both impact level and support level.

Further statistical tests revealed that African American and Asian respondents were more knowledgeable of affirmative action than White respondents. Participants who identified as Democrat were more knowledgeable than participants who identified as Republican at a near significant level. Individuals with doctoral degrees were found to be



significantly more knowledgeable of affirmative action than undergraduate students and those with bachelor degrees. Faculty were found to be significantly more knowledgeable of affirmative action than undergraduates. Lastly, those who voted to eliminate affirmative action were significantly less knowledgeable of affirmative action than those who voted to uphold affirmative action.

### *Knowledge and Attitude*

The fourth research question asked about the relationship between individuals' knowledge of Affirmative Action influence their attitude of Affirmative Action.

An initial univariate regression indicated that knowledge level significantly influences attitude level at a relatively moderate correlation level and explained 7% of the variance in attitude. A second univariate regression was run with both impact total and knowledge total as predictors for attitude level and revealed that knowledge and impact combined significantly influence attitude level and explain 15 % of the variance in respondents' attitudes. Previous research studies have linked knowledge to attitude level and impact level to attitude level but there were no research studies combining both impact level and knowledge level to determine their combined on attitude level of affirmative action.

### *Support of Affirmative Action*

The fifth research question of this study asked: to what extent do individuals' knowledge of affirmative action and their perceived impact of affirmative action influence their support of affirmative action?

This study found both knowledge of affirmative action and impact of affirmative action to significantly influence support level. Attitude level was also found to

significantly influence support level. Through a regression analysis the three variables combined (knowledge, attitude, and impact) were found to account for almost half of the variance (43%) in support. Previous studies (i.e. Bobo, 1998; Echols, 1997; Kluegel and Smith, 1983; Sax & Arredondo, 1999) examined the influence of each one of these variables on support of affirmative action but had not examined the combined influence of knowledge, attitude, and impact on affirmative action support level.

*Support.* Prior to the regression modeling, t-tests and one-way ANOVAs indicated that support level differed by other demographic variables. Gender, race, age, education level, party affiliation, position at the university, and direction of vote were all found to differ significantly in support level of affirmative action. Specifically, females were found to be more supportive of affirmative action than males. White respondents were significantly less supportive of affirmative action than African American or Latino respondents. African American respondents were more supportive of affirmative action than White, Asian, Native American, and Other respondents. Latino respondents were also found to be significantly more supportive of affirmative action than White, Native American, and Other respondents. Respondents who were currently pursuing an undergraduate degree were found to be significantly less supportive of affirmative action than both master degree and doctorate degree respondents. Democrats were found to be significantly more supportive of affirmative action than Republicans, Independents, no party affiliates, and other party affiliates. With regards to position at the university, undergraduate respondents were found to be significantly less supportive of affirmative action than graduate students, staff, and faculty. Consequently, faculty were found to be significantly more supportive of affirmative action than both undergraduates and graduate

students. Lastly, those who voted to eliminate affirmative action were significantly less supportive of the policies than those who voted to uphold affirmative action.

Previous studies also found a significant relationship among race, gender, and an individual's support or non-support for affirmative action (Echols, 1997; Sax & Arredondo, 1999; Smith, 1998; Virgil, 2000). Specifically, they found that females were more supportive of affirmative action than males and that African Americans were more supportive of affirmative action than Whites. Smith (1998) also found that Whites and Asians were less supportive of affirmative action than African Americans and Latinos. Inkelas (2003) found that a large percentage of Asian Pacific Americans (98%) support affirmative action in principle, but considerably fewer support affirmative action practices. Kluegel and Smith (1983) found that gender significantly influenced support of affirmative action and that females were more likely to support affirmative action than males.

*Impact.* Gender, race, political party affiliation, and direction of vote were found to significantly influence impact level. Education level, income level, position at the university, and age were found to not be significant to impact level. Female respondents indicated that they were impacted by affirmative action significantly more than male respondents. African American and Latino respondents were significantly more impacted by affirmative action than White, Asian, or Other respondents. Democrats were significantly more impacted by affirmative action than Republicans or those who indicated they belonged to some other political party. Independents were also found to be significantly more impacted by affirmative action than those belonging to no political party. Respondents who voted to eliminate affirmative action were significantly less

impacted by affirmative action than those who voted to uphold affirmative action. Smith (1998) found that females and non-Asian minorities indicated they were significantly more impacted by affirmative action than Whites, Asians, or males. Carroll, Tyson, & Lumas (2000) found a correlation between perceived impact of affirmative action and support of affirmative action. The participants who indicated they were “affirmative action admits” all supported affirmative action. Other research studies found that Whites were less likely to support affirmative action since they did not directly benefit from affirmative action (Bobo, 1998; Kluegel and Smith, 1983). Echols (1997) found that participants were more accepting of affirmative action when it benefited them, but not as accepting when it did not.

*Beyond the research questions.* Regression modeling on support level indicated that impact, attitude, age, being African American, being a Democrat, being an undergraduate (negative), and being a faculty member all significantly predicted support level. The concept of combining variables to determine the combined influence on affirmative action support level was unique to this study. Previous studies investigated each of these variables individually but none had combined the variables to determine their combined influence. Through regression modeling this study was able to determine the strongest combination of variables that influence support level of affirmative action.

Attitude level accounted for the largest amount of the variance in the regression model (40% out of 50%). Knowledge level initially significantly predicted support level in the regression model but as more variables were added, knowledge level lost significance. Further, knowledge level accounted for very little of the variance in the model – only 5%. Statistical analyses were run to determine if there were any

interactions between knowledge total and other variables that were causing it to lose significance, however, no interactions were found.

Since attitude level contributed to such a large amount of the variance in the regression model for support level, another regression model was completed on attitude level to determine the variables most predictive of attitudes on affirmative action. Knowledge total, impact total, being White, and being Democrat were all found to significantly influence attitude of affirmative action. Impact total accounted for the largest amount of variance on attitude level (24%), while race dummy White (negative) accounted for the least amount of variance (9%). Knowledge total accounted for 19% of the variance and being Democrat accounted for 12% of the variance. Previous studies have indicated that self-interest was a factor in individuals' affirmative action attitudes (Bobo, 1998; Sax & Arredondo, 1999; Smith, 1998). Other research has indicated a relationship between an individual's knowledge of affirmative action and his or her attitudes toward affirmative action (Bell, 1996; Goldsmith et al., 1989; Stout & Buffman, 1993). In contrast, Bell (1996) found that more knowledge of affirmative action was related to more negative attitudes of affirmative action. However, previous studies did not investigate the influence of combined variables on attitude where this study looked at the influence of several combined demographic variables as well as knowledge and impact levels. Examining the influence of a combination of several variables on attitude level allows for a more thorough understanding of individuals' standpoints that in turn create affirmative action positions.

### Summary of Findings

This study found that personal definitions varied somewhat by the various demographic groups (Race, gender, age, educational level, political party affiliation, income level, position at university, and direction of vote). However, in general the definitions were more positive in nature than they were negative. The most common code assigned to the personal definitions was equal rights positive, which was given to definitions that referred to affirmative action as equal rights, access, and opportunities and/or leveling the playing field. The most common negative code was preferential treatment which was assigned to definitions that described affirmative action as preferential treatment, preference to minorities, minorities given more or greater opportunities, and/or government forcing the hiring of a person of a different race.

Attitude level was significantly related to race, party affiliation, and direction of vote but not significantly related to income level, position at the university, age, or gender.

Knowledge level was found to be significantly different based on race/ethnicity, education level, position at the university, direction of vote, party affiliation, and age. However, income level and gender were found to not be significantly related to knowledge level.

Knowledge, attitude, and impact combined were found to significantly influence support level. Additionally, gender, race, age, education level, party affiliation, position at the university, and direction of vote were all found to significantly influence support level of affirmative action while income level was found not to be significant to support level. Gender, race, political party affiliation, and direction of vote were found to

significantly influence impact level. However, education level, income level, position at the university, and age were found to not be significant to impact level. Impact total, attitude total, age, race dummy African American, party dummy Democrat, position dummy undergraduate, and position dummy faculty were all found to significantly influence support of affirmative action. Attitude level was the largest influencer of support level. Knowledge total, impact total, being White (negative), and being Democrat were all found to significantly influence attitude of affirmative action.

### Implications of Findings

The results here indicate that an individual's race/ethnicity, gender, age, educational level, political party affiliation, income level, position at university, and direction of vote do influence that individual's support of and attitudes toward affirmative action. There is evidence that some of the demographic variables (race/ethnicity, education level, position at the university, direction of vote, party affiliation, and age) influence knowledge of affirmative action as well. Perception of the impact of affirmative action on individuals was also found to be influenced by demographic variables (Gender, race, political party affiliation, and direction of vote). Additionally, this study found that 50% of the support level of affirmative action could be explained through a combination of variables (impact, attitude, age, being African American, being a Democrat, being an undergraduate, and being a faculty member). Finally, knowledge total, impact total, being White (negative), and being Democrat were combined to form a significant influence on attitude level of affirmative action. By understanding how several variables combine to create individuals' standpoints and subsequently their

affirmative action positions, university administrators can better understand what could influence those standpoints.

### *Standpoint*

Variables such as individuals' gender, race, political party affiliation, age, position at a university, education level, and income level influence individuals' attitudes toward affirmative action, how they perceive they are impacted by affirmative action, what they know about affirmative action, and whether or not they support affirmative action. These variables combine to create an individual's standpoint. An individual's standpoint then acts as a filter for all information and influences one's attitude toward, knowledge of, perceived impact of, and support of affirmative action. Dougherty and Krone (2000) contested the notion of standpoint theory as polarizing and claimed rather that standpoint is used to explain both similarities and differences among groups and can often lead to better understanding of all parties. Through this study, two different affirmative action positions emerged: 1) individuals who support affirmative action and 2) individuals who oppose affirmative action. Understanding what combined standpoint elements impact individuals' affirmative action positions could inform university administrators as to what might influence individuals' affirmative action positions.

### *Symbolic Policy*

If higher education administrators have a good understanding of their community's standpoints, then they may choose new or different symbols with which to associate affirmative action policies in order to shape individuals' standpoints. Airasian (1988) explained that symbols, "evoke not only concrete images, but also feelings, values, emotions, and sentiments" (p. 302). Administrators can associate affirmative



action with symbols that may assist in more positive views of affirmative action such as equal rights, the importance of a diverse campus, leveling the playing field, etc.

Although these symbols are more traditional in nature, they do create positive associations to affirmative action. Higher education leaders could also create new symbols to associate with affirmative action that would create positive associations but would carry less baggage than older more traditional symbols. Leaders could look to their own community in assistance in creating new and positive affirmative action symbols. Perhaps by using the power of symbols in symbolic affirmative action policy, higher education administrators can influence individuals' standpoints on affirmative action. Administrators could possibly get communities as a whole to view affirmative action more positively.

### *Knowledge Level*

Knowledge level explained a mere 5% of the variance in support of affirmative action but explained more of the variance in attitude of affirmative action (19%). This is important because knowledge level of affirmative action can be influenced through interventions. Other variables such as race, gender, age, income level, education level, political party affiliation, direction of vote, and whether or not they have been directly impacted by affirmative action are intrinsic variables and are more difficult if not impossible to change. However, knowledge level can be increased. Social marketing strategies can be put together to influence the knowledge level of affirmative action in certain individuals. Fletcher and Chalmers (1991) found that their participants indicated their opinions of affirmative action would change if they were provided with different and new information. Collins (1997) explained that knowledge remains central to

maintaining and changing unjust systems of power. Knowledge level is one avenue to influence the attitude level of affirmative action and perhaps by influencing attitude toward affirmative action, support of affirmative action will be influenced as well. Since knowledge explains 19% of attitude and attitude level explains 40% of support, increasing knowledge of affirmative action will influence support of affirmative action.

It is important to note, however, that influencing individuals' knowledge level regarding affirmative action alone would not be enough to change the support level of mass individuals. Knowledge level does not explain all of what makes up an individual's attitude toward or support for affirmative action. Therefore, it is important to understand further the many standpoint elements that influence individuals' affirmative action positions. Additionally, only about 50% of the variance in support level of affirmative action was explained in this study, which means there are other unknown variables that could be influencing the support level of affirmative action.

#### *University Setting*

In this study, 62% of the respondents said that they voted to uphold affirmative action policies in Michigan while only 27% reported voting to eliminate affirmative action. There were some respondents who did not answer either way (11%). This is strikingly different from Michigan's November 2006 Affirmative Action vote, in which 58% of individuals voted to eliminate affirmative action and 42% voted to uphold the policy. In the county where the university in this study resides, 53% of individuals voted to eliminate affirmative action while 47% voted to uphold affirmative action. This does indicate a difference in standpoints among individuals associated with the university (faculty, staff, and students) and those individuals not associated with the university.

University members appear to be more positive in their attitudes toward and support of affirmative action than do non-university members. There is a 26% difference in the number of votes against affirmative action in the state-wide election compared with the participants in this study.

It is also important to note, however, that there were also variations in attitude toward and support of affirmative action by position at the university. Previous studies measured undergraduates (i.e. Echols, 1997; Sax & Arredondo, 1999) or faculty (Flores & Rodriguez, 2006) but not both. This study uniquely examined the attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action of four different university positions (undergraduates, graduate students, staff, and faculty), and found some differences among the positions. Specifically, undergraduate students were least supportive of affirmative action, with 42% voting to eliminate the policy, while faculty were the most supportive of affirmative action with only 26% voting to eliminate the policy. Only 36% of graduate students and 38% of staff reported voting to eliminate affirmative action. Even though undergraduate students were least supportive of affirmative action when compared with other university members, they were still more supportive of affirmative action than the general population. It is important for leaders in higher education to be aware of its own members' attitudes toward and support of affirmative action and how these attitudes and support level may vary not only in respect to the general population but also among each other.

If university members have a more positive attitude toward affirmative action than the general population, university members can be more expressive and bold in their opinions. Previous research has revealed higher education's timid reaction to legal and

legislative attacks on affirmative action (Hamilton, 2003; Schmidt, 2004). Are their reactions driven by fear of larger community censure or by fear of internal lack of support?

There is also an interesting potential within the higher education community to contest the ballot initiative bans on affirmative action. Michigan's public higher education institutions must have a responsibility to adhere to both the state and federal affirmative action laws. Michigan institutions must adhere to the state laws because of the state they reside in and the federal laws because they receive federal financial aid which ties them to all federal laws. In any situation in which federal and state laws conflict, the federal law preempts the state law. As a result, Michigan institutions and other public institutions with a state law banning affirmative action (California and Washington) have a fine line to walk. Leaders in these institutions will have to choose carefully how to respond to state bans on affirmative action. Administrators in these institutions can still take a strong stance to protect their affirmative action policies by citing federal imperatives and policies. As a result, institutions could end up defending these policies in court and the outcome could go either way. If leaders look at their members' (faculty, staff, and students) attitudes toward affirmative action, this could assist them in deciding in how to respond to the affirmative action laws. The point is that even institutions in states with state-wide bans on affirmative action do have the option of taking a strong positive stance for affirmative action and maintaining affirmative action policies at their respective institutions. It just may mean that they may have to fight this battle all the way to court. Uniting with other higher education institutions to shape a unified response could strengthen universities' position on affirmative action as well.

Higher education institutions that do not have a state-wide ban on affirmative action would do well to learn from Michigan's, California's, and Washington's experience. The same group, American Civil Rights Coalition, responsible for putting affirmative action on the ballot in Michigan, California, and Washington are now focusing their efforts and resources on bringing affirmative action to the ballot in other states. Recently the organization has announced its plans to put affirmative action on the 2008 ballot in Arizona, Colorado, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma (Schmidt, 2007). Leaders in higher education can take the lead now in preparing for such a battle in their states by promoting their current affirmative action policies and educating the university and community members as to how the policies work. If institutions want to keep affirmative action policies, they will have to work to sell the benefits of such policies to their consumers. The concept of selling the benefits of affirmative action policies goes back to the notion of affirmative action as a symbolic policy.

Interestingly, the affirmative action controversy has most often played out in higher education. As a result, universities are in a leadership position in shaping affirmative action imagery. Universities' positions on affirmative action could influence the larger population's support level of affirmative action, if that position is strongly, accurately, and compellingly expressed. Since university members appear to have a more positive image of affirmative action than the general population, their strong expression of this could influence peoples' knowledge about, perception of, and consequently support of affirmative action.

### Limitations

There were some limitations to this study. First, there was much media attention regarding affirmative action around the time the survey was administered due to the state-wide vote in November 2006. My survey was administered just a few months later in January 2007. The excessive media attention regarding affirmative action could have influenced individuals' survey responses, particularly the wording they used in their personal definitions. Secondly, the knowledge questions of the survey were carefully selected affirmative action facts supported by references. However, which factual affirmative action questions selected could present possible bias. Thirdly, although the sample population was demographically representative of the university population, it was not large enough to support any claims to representation of the university as a whole. Nor was it representative of the Michigan voting population, in that there was a significant difference in the direction of the survey respondents' votes and the direction of the general voting population's votes. Lastly, in measuring the influence of education level on affirmative action knowledge, attitude, impact, and support, only individuals within a higher education system were measured. Individuals with only a high school diploma or those with no high school diploma were not studied. Some of these limitations lead into some of the recommendations for future research.

### Recommendations for Further Research

This study leads to several future research recommendations. Specifically, a follow-up qualitative study, a comparison study in different settings, a study focusing on knowledge of affirmative action, a study focusing on attitudes and knowledge of diversity, and a longitudinal study are all recommended.

### *Qualitative Study*

This study found several demographic variables (gender, race/ethnicity, age, income level, education level, political party affiliation, position at the university, and direction of vote) that influence one or several factors regarding affirmative action (attitude, knowledge, impact, and support). However, this study did not investigate in great detail why these demographic variables or multiple standpoint elements influence individuals' positions on affirmative action. A qualitative study, investigating how being African American, female, and/or Democrat influences an individuals' affirmative action position compared to being White, male, and/or Republican would be worthwhile. Additionally, this study only explained 50% of the variance of support level of affirmative action. Future studies could investigate other variables that influence the support level of affirmative action. This study examined all the variables that previous studies on affirmative action had addressed (gender, race/ethnicity, age, income level, education level, political party affiliation, position at the university, direction of vote, and self-interest). Perhaps a qualitative study asking participants to explain how they formed their position on affirmative action and which standpoint elements contributed would provide information regarding other influencing variables. One such variable not examined in this study was media influence. Perhaps finding out where individuals get their information on affirmative action and what that information consists of may be an influencing variable to support level. Another variable not addressed in this study was perceived negative impact of affirmative action. This study asked respondents if they or friends or family of theirs benefited from affirmative action but there was no question on the survey asking participants if they or friends and family of theirs had been negatively

impacted by affirmative action. Other variables may be discovered through an in-depth qualitative study.

#### *University Setting*

This study only examined the attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action on one university campus in the mid-west. Other studies could be done in different higher education settings (i.e. larger universities, private colleges, or community colleges) to examine whether university members' attitudes would consistently be more positive toward affirmative action than the general population. Additionally, studies could examine the attitudes and knowledge of individuals not on a university campus and compare a university sample with a non-university sample to further examine the differences among the attitudes and knowledge. Understanding why university members have more positive attitudes than outside-university members may help to further understand the two different affirmative action standpoints.

#### *Knowledge*

Another recommendation for future research would be for a study measuring knowledge of affirmative action in greater detail to truly measure its role in affirmative action positions. Previous studies on affirmative action have been limited and the results mixed. A study focusing solely on knowledge and types of knowledge of affirmative action would be beneficial. Perhaps a study investigating if knowledge is more affective or intellectual in foundation would help administrators know if they should be teaching the facts of affirmative action or connecting affirmative action knowledge to more emotional concepts. Additionally, as stated earlier in the limitations section, even selecting which affirmative action facts to put on the survey could have presented bias in



the study. Therefore, a study thoroughly examining which knowledge questions to ask participants would also be beneficial.

### *Diversity*

This study did not examine individuals' attitude and knowledge of diversity, although diversity and affirmative action are often linked together. An interesting study could compare individuals' knowledge and attitudes of affirmative action with their knowledge and attitudes of diversity. It would be interesting to see if there are relationships between individuals' perceptions of diversity and their perceptions of affirmative action.

### *Longitudinal Study*

Finally, it would be interesting to see future studies investigate differences in attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action over time to see if attitudes and knowledge change over time. Additionally, it would be interesting to see if banning affirmative action in particular states impacts their residents' attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action. Examining time as a variable in affirmative action attitudes and knowledge would be a unique and interesting future study.

### *Conclusion*

This study examined the attitudes toward and knowledge of affirmative action in higher education through a quantitative web-based survey administered to a sample of faculty, staff, and students at a large mid-sized university in the mid-west. Prior to the study an in-depth review of the literature was discussed in Chapter 2, which included the history of affirmative action, previous studies on attitude and knowledge of affirmative action, and the theoretical framework for the study. Chapter 3 presented the

methodology for the study while Chapter 4 presented the results of the study. Chapter 5 provided a summary of the results, implications of the findings, and recommendations for future studies. The findings here can be used by higher education leaders in states that have not banned affirmative action to consider how to impact the knowledge and attitudes of not only their own institutions but the population at large.

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## APPENDIX A

## Email Survey Invitation

*Email announcement to a random sample of faculty, staff, undergraduates, & graduates will read:*

Please participate in a short survey for your chance to win an iPod Shuffle.

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled "Attitudes and Knowledge of Affirmative Action *in Higher Education*" designed to analyze the attitudes and knowledge of college undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and staff. The study is being conducted by **Dr. Andrea Beach** and **Erika Carr** from Western Michigan University, Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership. This research is being conducted as part of the *dissertation* requirements for **Erika Carr**.

This survey is comprised of 1 short answer question, 26 multiple choice and true/false questions, 8 demographic questions, and will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Your replies will be completely anonymous.

If you interested, please click on link below for access to the survey and more information:

Please click the following link to begin the survey:  
<http://survey.atis.wmich.edu/atis/eaai.htm>

**Information survey respondent will receive once he/she clicks onto the survey link:**

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research study.

Due to the controversial nature of the topic of this survey, affirmative action, there may be some emotional stress involved in answering some of the survey questions. In order to alleviate some the possible stress, this survey has been designed to be completely anonymous. All survey data will be collected in a large database and then provided to the researcher. There is no way to link any individual to their response. Additionally, you may choose to not answer any question by simply leaving it blank and moving on to the next question.

This survey will take 15-20 minutes to complete and as a result may be inconvenient for you and your time. In order to alleviate this, you are able to stop the survey at any point by simply closing your internet server. Your results will not be kept unless you click the submit button at the end of the survey.

Clicking the submit button at the end of the survey indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply.

Data collected through this survey will help to explain the attitudes and knowledge of affirmative action of those involved in higher education.

If you have any questions, you may contact **Dr. Andrea Beach** at (269) 387-1725, **Erika Carr** at (269) 349-3713, the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (269-387-8293), or the vice president for research (269-387-8298). *You may also contact the Chair, Human Subjects Institutional Review Board (387-8293) or the Vice President of Research (387-8298) if questions or problems arise during the course of the study.*

This consent has been approved for use for one year by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. If you receive this beyond November 2007, then the consent is no longer up to date.

If you choose to participate in this survey, you may click the link below to begin the survey.

### **Email Message, Email Reminder and Survey Invitation 1 & 2:**

*Email reminder to the same random sample of faculty, staff, undergraduates, & graduates will read:*

This is a reminder to please participate in a short survey for your chance to win an I-Pod Shuffle.

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled "Attitudes and Knowledge of Affirmative Action *in Higher Education*" designed to analyze the attitudes and knowledge of college undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and staff. The study is being conducted by **Dr. Andrea Beach** and **Erika Carr** from Western Michigan University, Department of Teaching, Learning, and Leadership. This research is being conducted as part of the *dissertation* requirements for **Erika Carr**.

This survey is comprised of 1 short answer question, 26 multiple choice and true/false questions, 8 demographic questions, and will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Your replies will be completely anonymous.

If you interested, please click on link below for access to the survey and more information:

Please click the following link to begin the survey:  
<http://survey.atis.wmich.edu/atis/eaai.htm>



**Message at close of survey regarding iPod Shuffle Drawing:**

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. If you would like to enter the iPod Shuffle drawing, please click the "Enter Drawing" icon below in which you will be asked to submit your name, email address, and mailing address. Your survey responses will remain confidential and anonymous. If you chose not to enter the drawing, then just click the "Exit Survey" icon below.

**Message upon entering drawing information:**

Thank you again for taking the time to complete this survey. Your information has been entered into the iPod Shuffle drawing. Winners will be notified via email and mail at the end of February 2007.

## APPENDIX B

## Initial Coding Categories

<b>Coding Categories</b>	<b>Code</b>
Equal rights/access/opportunities	1
Provide opportunities/access	2
Remedy Past Discrimination	3
Preferential Treatment	4
Policy/rules/program	5
Judges based on race and gender	6
Allowing minorities to participate	7
Evening/Level the playing field	8
Unequal rights	9
Using race as a factor in selection	10
Remedy present discrimination/racial inequalities	11
Discriminatory practice/discrimination	12
If equal applicants, minority gets job	13
People of other races get White jobs	14
Encourages social diversity	15
For minorities	16
Minorities take jobs from the more qualified	17
Reaching out to minorities and women	18
Policies to ensure representation of all groups	19
Disenfranchises students	20
Quotas	21
Preference to minorities	22
Quoted definition?	23
For women	24
Recruitment/promotions of underrepresented groups	25
lowering the bar	26
No definition	27
Increased awareness of minorities and women when selecting	28
Assuring diversity proportional to society-wide diversity	29
Government forcing the hiring of a person of a different race	30
Diversity a factor in decision-making	31
Fair treatment	32
Special consideration to historically disadvantaged	33
Eliminate/Prevent/Reduce discrimination	34
Giving minorities extra help	35
Law to give minorities access	36
Positive discrimination	37
Giving minorities a set up	38
A practice justified by the need for diversity	39
Creates a diverse student body/creates diversity	40
Given things based on race	41
Eliminate discrimination/disadvantages	42
Giving rights to minorities	43

Giving equally qualified minorities preferential treatment	44
Unfair	45
Improves education and employment	46
Allows the use of race & gender when selecting/hiring	47
Reverse discrimination	48
No longer necessary	49
In Education & Employment	50
Active Measures	51
Advancement toward equality	52
Regardless of Sex, Race, Religion, Age, or Sexual Orientation	53
Opportunity for minorities to improve	54
In Employment	55
Everyone still must meet employment/admissions standards	56
Competing with Whites and males	57
Minorities may or may not be as qualified	58
In Higher Education	59
Setting aside resources	60
Not Preferential Treatment	61
Underrepresented Groups	62
Counter Percieved Discrimination	63
Minorities given more or greater opportunities	64
Seeking a wide candidate pool	65
Doesn't know	66

## APPENDIX C

### Sub-Code Categories

#### PRIMARY CODES 1-8

##### Sub-Categories (POSITIVE)

##### Discrimination Positive

Remedy Past Discrimination  
 Remedy present discrimination/racial inequalities  
 Positive discrimination  
 Eliminate discrimination/disadvantages  
 Eliminate/Prevent/Reduce discrimination

##### Equal Rights/Level the Playing Field Positive

Equal rights/access/opportunities  
 Provide opportunities/access  
 Evening/Level the playing field  
 Advancement toward equality  
 Reaching out to minorities and women  
 Fair treatment  
 Law to give minorities access  
 Allowing minorities to participate  
 Giving rights to minorities  
 Opportunity for minorities to improve

##### CODE

1

3

11

37

42

34

3

1

2

8

52

18

32

36

7

43

54

##### Sub-Categories (NEGATIVE)

##### Discrimination Negative

Discriminatory practice/discrimination  
 Reverse discrimination  
 Counter Perceived Discrimination  
 Judges based on race and gender

##### Unequal Rights/Level the Playing Field Negative

Unfair  
 Unequal rights  
 Disenfranchises students  
 No longer necessary

##### CODE

2

12

48

63

6

4

45

9

20

49

### Preferential Treatment Positive

Preferential Treatment  
 Special consideration to historically disadvantaged  
 Giving equally qualified minorities preferential treatment  
  
 Not Preferential Treatment  
 Everyone still must meet employment/admissions  
 standards  
 Giving minorities extra help

5

4

33

44

61

56

35

### Preferential Treatment Negative

Preferential Treatment  
 Preference to minorities  
 Minorities given more or greater opportunities  
 Government forcing the hiring of a person of a different  
 race  
  
 Given things based on race

6

4

22

64

30

41

### Diversity

Encourages social diversity  
 Assuring diversity propotional to society-wide diversity  
 Diversity a factor in decision-making  
 A practice justified by the need for diversity  
 Encourages social diversity  
 Policies to ensure respenstation of all groups

7

15

29

39

40

15

19

### Competing with Whites/White Males

If equal applicants, minority gets job  
 People of other races get White jobs  
 Minorities take jobs from the more qualified  
 Competing with Whites and males  
 Minorities may or may not be as qualified  
 lowering the bar

8

13

14

17

57

58

26

### SECONDARY CODES 9-13

#### Group Impacted/Referred To

For minorities  
 For women  
 Underrepresented Groups

9

16

24

62

#### Sector Impacted/Referred To

In Education & Employment  
 In Employment  
 In HigherEducation  
 Improves education and employment

10

50

55

59

46

#### Quotas

Quotas

11

21

<b>Using Race/Gender as a Factor in Selection &amp; Hiring</b>	<b>12</b>
Using race as a factor in selection	10
Allows the use of race & gender when selecting/hiring	47
Increased awareness of minorities and women when selecting	28
Recruitment/promotions of underrepresented groups	25
Seeking a wide candidate pool	65

<b>Other/Miscellaneous Codes</b>	<b>Code</b>
<b>No Answer or Don't Know</b>	<b>13</b>
Quoted definition?	23
No definition	27
Doesn't know	66

## APPENDIX D

### Survey Instrument

Var. Name	Var. Definition	Value Labels
<b>Definition of Affirmative Action</b>		
<i>Directions</i>	<i>Please provide your definition of affirmative action in the space below.</i>	
Definition1	Definition of affirmative action:	Open-ended Question
<b>General Knowledge</b>		
<i>Directions</i>	<i>Please read the following questions and click whether the answer to each one is yes or no.</i>	
Knowl1	The original intent of affirmative action was to correct past discrimination against all minorities.	Yes = 1, No= 0
Knowl2	The law requires that affirmative action policies be implemented, whether or not one is in agreement with their intent.	Yes = 1, No= 0
Knowl3	Federal affirmative action was designed to protect minorities, women, veterans, and handicapped.	Yes = 1, No= 0
Knowl4	The Supreme Court ruled that using race and gender can be used as a factor in selecting an individual for admittance to a university program in the 2003 University of Michigan cases, Gratz v. Bollinger & Grutter v. Bollinger.	Yes = 1, No= 0
Knowl5	The use of quotas in affirmative action policies is illegal.	Yes = 1, No= 0
Knowl6	Federal affirmative action guidelines only apply to college admissions.	Yes = 1, No= 0
Knowl7	The use of goals and timetables in affirmative action policies is illegal.	Yes = 1, No= 0
Knowl8	Currently more than 10 States have banned affirmative action policies through a statewide ballot.	Yes = 1, No= 0
Knowl9	The Michigan Civil Rights Initiative (MCRI) seeks to eliminate affirmative action in the State of Michigan through a statewide election.	Yes = 1, No= 0
Knowl10	Federal affirmative action requirements began in the 1920s.	Yes =1, No = 0

Attitude		
Attitude1	Getting involved in diversity functions is important	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude2	Quotas should be legally acceptable in college admissions when used for athletes	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude3	Quotas should be legally acceptable when used for ethnic minorities	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude4	Quotas should be legally acceptable when used for women	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude5	Quotas should be legally acceptable when applied equally to all racial groups	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude6	Affirmative action reduces women's self-esteem	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude7	Affirmative action reduces academic standards	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude8	People should support affirmative action as a policy to remedy past discrimination	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude9	Affirmative action is morally right.	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude10	Equal opportunity in hiring/admissions based on merit is a good moral principle.	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude11	It is morally right to hold the U.S. government responsible for the consequences of slavery.	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude12	Offering underrepresented minorities academic scholarships as a remedy to past discrimination is morally good.	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Attitude13	Preferential treatment for victims of past discrimination is morally appropriate.	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Perceived Impact		
Directions	Please read the following questions below and click the boxes that most match your beliefs.	
Impact1	Close family members and/or friends of mine have benefited from affirmative action	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4
Impact2	I have benefited from affirmative action	Str Disagree = 1, Disagree = 2, Agree = 3, Str agree = 4



Support of Affirmative Action		
Directions	Please read the question below and click the box that most matches your belief.	
Support1	To what extent do you support affirmative action	No Ext = 1, Small Ext = 2, A Good Ext, A Great Ext = 4
Demographic		
Directions	Please answer the following demographic questions below.	
Gender	What is your gender	Male= 0, Female = 1
Race	What is your race or ethnicity	White = 0, Black = 1, Latino = 2, Asian = 3, Native American = 4, Other = 5
Age	What is your age	
Educat	Education level	Undergrad = 1, Bachelors = 2, Masters = 3, Doctorate = 4, Other = 5
Party	Political party affiliation	Republican = 1, Democrat = 2, Independent = 3, None = 4, Other = 5
Income	Total family income before taxes	Under \$7000 = 1, \$7000-\$17,000 = 2, \$18,000-\$28,000 = 3, \$29,000-\$39,000 = 4, \$40,000-\$50,000 = 5, \$51,000 or more = 6
Position	Position at the university	Undergrad = 1, Graduate = 2, Staff = 3, Faculty = 4, Other = 5
Vote	If you voted on November 7, 2006, did you vote to eliminate affirmative action programs in the State of Michigan?	Yes = 1, No= 0
Coded Variables		
Knowl	General knowledge items: Knowl1, Knowl2, Knowl3, Knowl4, Knowl5, Knowl6, Knowl7, Knowl8, Knowl9, and Knowl10	
Attitude	Attitude items: Attitude1, Attitude2, Attitude3, Attitude4, Attitude5, Attitude6, Attitude7, Attitdue8, Attitude9, Attitude10, Attitude11, Attitude12, Attitude12, Attitude13	
Perceived Impact	Impact1, Impact2	
Support	Support1	
Gender-Race	Black Females, Black Males, White Females, White Males, Latino Females, Latino Males, Asian Females, Asian Males, Native American Females, Native American Males, Other Females, Other Males	
Answers to Knowledge Questions		
Knowl1	Yes	
Knowl2	Yes	

Knowl3	Yes
Knowl4	Yes
Knowl5	Yes
Knowl6	No
Knowl7	No
Knowl8	No
Knowl9	Yes
Knowl10	No

## APPENDIX E

### Crosswalk Table for Data Analysis

Research Question	Survey Question/s	Independent/s	Dependent	Method of Analysis
To what extent do personal definitions of affirmative action differ among demographic groups?	Please define affirmative action.	Race/ethnicity, gender, age, educational level, political party affiliation, income level, position at university, and direction of vote	Definition of affirmative action	Content analysis, Chi-Square Analysis ( $\chi^2$ )
To what extent do attitudes regarding affirmative action differ among demographic groups?	Attitude1, Attitude2, Attitude3, Attitude4, Attitude5, Attitude6, Attitude7, Attitude8, Attitude9, Attitude10, Attitude11, Attitude12, Attitude13	Race/ethnicity, gender, age, educational level, political party affiliation, income level, position at university, and direction of vote	Attitude of affirmative action (aggregated variable)	Descriptive Statistics, ANOVAS (F-Test)
To what extent does knowledge of affirmative action differ among demographic groups?	Knowl1, Knowl2, Knowl3, Knowl4, Knowl5, Knowl6, Knowl7, Knowl8, Knowl9, Knowl10	Race/ethnicity, gender, age, educational level, political party affiliation, income level, position at university, and direction of vote	Knowledge of affirmative action (aggregated variable - ratio variable of number correct)	Descriptive Statistics, Chi-Squares, ANOVAS (F-Test)
To what extent does individuals' knowledge of affirmative action influence their attitude of affirmative action?	Aggregated Knowledge Questions compared to Aggregated Attitude Questions	Knowledge of affirmative action (aggregated variable)	Attitude of affirmative action (aggregated variable)	Univariate Regression

# Crosswalk Table Continued

To what extent do individuals' knowledge of affirmative action and their perceived impact of affirmative action influence their support of affirmative action?	Aggregated Knowledge Questions and Impact1 and Impact2 compared to Support1	Knowledge of affirmative action (aggregated variable - ratio variable of number correct), Perceived Impact of affirmative action (aggregated variable)	Support of affirmative action (Support1)	Univariate Regression
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## APPENDIX F

## Email Permission from Echols to Modify EAAI Survey

Page 1 of 2

**Erika Carr - Re: Fwd: Permission to use Affirmative Action Assessment**

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**From:** Celina Echols  
**To:** Erika Carr  
**Date:** 8/30/2006 12:39 PM  
**Subject:** Re: Fwd: Permission to use Affirmative Action Assessment

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Sure. Sorry for the delay.  
At 09:40 AM 8/30/2006, you wrote:

Dr. Echols,

I am sure you are extremely busy, but I am hoping to get your permission to use your Affirmative Action Assessment (EAAI). I am a doctoral student at Western Michigan University in the Educational Leadership department. You can either email me back or call me at (269) 387-3319. I will also try to reach you again by phone.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Erika Carr

Erika Carr, M.A.  
Director  
King/Chavez/Parks  
College Day Program  
Western Michigan University  
2285 Ellsworth Hall  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008  
Phone: (269) 387-3319  
Fax: (269) 387-3390

>>> Erika Carr 6/26/2006 2:11 PM >>>  
Dr. Echols,

I have also left you a voicemail. My name is Erika Carr and I am a doctoral student in Educational Leadership at Western Michigan University. I am emailing you to request your permission to use

file://C:\Documents and Settings\CarrE\Local Settings\Temp\XPgrpwise\44F586F3WM... 10/29/2007

your Affirmative Action Assessment that you developed in your 1997 dissertation for my dissertation.

My phone number is (269) 387-3319 and my email is erika.carr@wmich.edu. I am sure you are extremely busy, but if you could respond, I would greatly appreciate it.

Thanks so much for your time,

Erika Carr

Erika Carr, M.A.  
Director  
King/Chavez/Parks  
College Day Program  
Western Michigan University  
2285 Ellsworth Hall  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008  
Phone: (269) 387-3319  
Fax: (269) 387-3390

*"Become the change you wish to see in others." Gandhi*

**Celina Echols, Ph.D., Associate Professor  
College of Education and Human Development  
Department of Educational Leadership and Technology  
SLU Box 549  
Hammond, Louisiana 70402  
Ph: 985-549-3913  
Fx: 985-549-5712**

*"Happiness is not elusive; happiness is seeing the smallest in beauty and seizing it." Echols*

*"The unexamined life is not worth living." Plato.  
but.... "Re-examining life is painful." Malcom X*

## APPENDIX G

## HSIRB Approval



Human Subjects Institutional Review Board

Date: November 21, 2006

To: Andrea Beach, Principal Investigator  
Erika Carr, Student Investigator for dissertationFrom: Amy Naugle, Ph.D., Chair *Amy Naugle*

Re: HSIRB Project Number: 06-11-12

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research project entitled "Attitudes and Knowledge of Affirmative Action in Higher Education" has been **approved** under the **exempt** category of review by the Human Subjects Institutional Review Board. The conditions and duration of this approval are specified in the Policies of Western Michigan University. You may now begin to implement the research as described in the application.

Please note that you may **only** conduct this research exactly in the form it was approved. You must seek specific board approval for any changes in this project. You must also seek reapproval if the project extends beyond the termination date noted below. In addition if there are any unanticipated adverse reactions or unanticipated events associated with the conduct of this research, you should immediately suspend the project and contact the Chair of the HSIRB for consultation.

The Board wishes you success in the pursuit of your research goals.

Approval Termination: November 21, 2007

Walwood Hall, Kalamazoo, MI 49008-5456  
PHONE: (269) 387-8293 FAX: (269) 387-8276