

*Following the passage of Initiative 200, President McCormick reiterated the importance of maintaining a diverse student population at the University of Washington. In this statement, he advises the community that the UW will continue to maintain and promote diversity as much as possible within the law.*

## **Statement from UW President Richard L. McCormick regarding I-200**

Initiative 200 becomes law today, Dec. 3. In some important respects, it marks the end of an expansive era at the University of Washington, during which thousands of students who otherwise may never had gone to college had a chance to gain an education. Thirty years of affirmative action in admissions are now history.

However, diversity remains—now more than ever—an important value to the educational mission of the University of Washington. In an increasingly heterogeneous society, learning how others think, what values they hold, how they relate to our own values, is a crucial component of the educational process. Students who learn from one another in a diverse environment are better prepared to live in such a society. For this reason, the University is determined to do everything we can consistent with the law to maintain and promote the diversity of this campus.

In the past, race and ethnicity have been used as a positive factor among any in determining admissions to the University. This will no longer be the case. However, administrators and faculty are hard at work revising University admissions criteria so that the classes we admit will still reflect the diversity of our society. Their work is not yet complete, and indeed it will be a greater challenge to admit a diverse class, but we are committed to doing everything within our power to achieve this result.

As has been noted in the media and elsewhere, the status of many programs, particularly recruitment and outreach programs, is unclear under the new law and may take time to resolve. The University will continue to support and operate these programs in the belief that Initiative 200 was never intended to prohibit them.

The University of Washington is proud of its 30-year commitment to diversity. The new legal and political environment of Initiative 200 means that we will have to work even harder to put that commitment into action. In our view, both educational excellence and the health of our society require that we do so, using every available means within the law. That is the path we are determined to follow.