

To the FSU Community,

As many of you may know, the US Supreme Court ruled today against the affirmative action admissions processes used by Harvard University and the University of North Carolina.

The details of that 237-page decision will take some time to fully understand and interpret. However, on the face of it, it does not appear to impact our admissions processes. As you will read in the press release sent today from FSU, our holistic admissions process looks to other factors beyond race. At the same time, our values espouse the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in what we do at FSU. I am proud of our diverse student body and recognize our continuing efforts to be a socially just, equitable, and inclusive society that respects and encourages diversity in its many forms.

We should acknowledge our successes at FSU while working to do more to prepare our students to be successful leaders in a diverse and complex global environment. And we will continue that commitment. I echo the Chancellor's statements below. Our mission has not changed, nor will it.

[FSU Press Release](#)

USM Chancellor Statement:

USM Chancellor Jay A. Perman on the Supreme Court Decision Regarding Race-Conscious Admissions
June 29, 2023

Today, the Supreme Court released its opinion in two cases concerning affirmative action in college admissions. The court's majority opinion in these cases rejects 45 years of precedent affirming the constitutionality of race-conscious admissions.

The court's ruling prohibits colleges and universities from considering a student's race as a factor influencing admissions decisions—even among many other factors. And while the opinion does not state outright that student diversity is *not* a compelling state interest, neither does it affirm that it is. We strongly believe the established body of research proving that diverse learning environments provide educational benefits that better prepare students for work, for life, and for leadership. This is the very purpose of higher education.

Certainly, diversity is a guiding principle for the USM, whose mission is “to educate and serve the people of Maryland, to advance equity, justice, and opportunity, and to produce the research and scholarship that improve lives.” Today's decision doesn't change this mission.

And in this new landscape drawn by the Supreme Court, Maryland does, still, have an advantage in providing the diverse environments that benefit our students and our state. Maryland is among the nation's [most racially and ethnically diverse states](#), and so the first part of our mission statement—to educate and serve the people of Maryland—means we must reflect on our campuses and in our classrooms the state's population. Our universities can and will do this within the bounds of federal law.

But educating Maryland's people means more than a yes/no decision on a candidate's application. It means advancing college access and affordability—giving every learner who wants a USM education the ability to enroll here. And it means giving these same learners—across all backgrounds and

experiences—the individualized academic, financial, and social supports that help them complete their degree.

These efforts are central to the USM’s [Vision 2030](#) strategic plan. Because we will not keep Maryland strong by leaving talent out.

Our universities have been preparing for this ruling for some time, and are examining their admissions policies and practices to determine whether any need to be adjusted.

Nevertheless, we are Maryland’s *public* system of higher education. We serve the people of Maryland—all of them. And the Supreme Court’s ruling today will not inhibit our ability to do just that.