



The Society for  
Integrative &  
Comparative  
Biology

SICB  
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Supreme Court of the United States  
1 First Street, NE  
Washington, DC 20543

During recent oral arguments before the Supreme Court in the case of Fisher vs. University of Texas, Justice Antonin Scalia suggested that many black college students would be better off at “less advanced” institutions of higher education. The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB)<sup>1</sup> unequivocally rejects this statement.

As professional scientists, the members of SICB strive to improve diversity in the classroom, the laboratory, and in professional scientific societies such as our own. SICB’s mission is to foster research, education, public awareness and understanding of living organisms from molecules and cells to ecology and evolution. SICB also encourages interdisciplinary cooperative research that integrates across scales, and new models and methodologies to enhance research and education. Diversity is fundamental to every part of this mission.

Diversity within the sciences is critical to advancing the frontiers of science and to improving science education and communication, because it allows us access to unique ideas, perspectives, and human resources. Although we believe that affirmative action alone is insufficient to achieve diversity, we reject Justice Scalia’s suggestion that students from under-represented groups leave STEM fields disproportionately because they lack ability or competence. Rather than lay the blame for current inequities at the feet of those experiencing discrimination, those interested in undoing pervasive injustices should seek to pair affirmative action with reforms that make the sciences more welcoming to students from underrepresented groups.

SICB is proud to join its collective voice to those of other scientists and the conscientious public who are making a stand for the importance of diversity to the future of research and education in STEM fields.

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<sup>1</sup> SICB represents 2,500 faculty, students, and other professionals in the biological sciences and beyond, across all fifty states and around the world