

Metro State should stay an equal-opportunity college

Editor: Recently, an enrollment cap was placed on Metropolitan State College. Now, there is an effort to create admissions standards. If admissions standards are enacted, it would provide an excellent reason to lift the enrollment cap.

But that may not happen. It is beginning to appear that the trustees, Legislature and company are trying to turn Metro into a traditional college. Metro is not a traditional college and was never intended to be.

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Editor: The non-traditional programs at Metropolitan State College were designed to offer hope for advancement to segments of society with the most pressing problems of low income, poor job advancement and life fulfillment. One reason the school has

been so successful is because learners have been considered capable until they prove otherwise. They have not been singled out as losers by any standards, including lack of a high school diploma.

For many of these people it is the first successful education experience they have ever encountered, and they are as elated and encouraged as any learner at any age who experiences success. This signals the possibility of a reversal of their stagnant socioeconomic status, and they tend to put more and more energy into their studies until they achieve to the same degree as the "traditional" students.

Metropolitan State College should be viewed as a safety valve to reduce social and economic problems and to truly offer equal opportunities to all of our citizens.

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Editor: I urge Metropolitan State College president Paul Magelli and the trustees for Metro not to capitulate to the narrow-minded views of Colorado's enemies of education, Rep. Bob Leon Kirscht, R-Pueblo, and Sen. Cliff Dodge, R-Denver. Unfortunately, these two have lost their perspective regarding the efficacy of a diverse educational structure.

Those of us who have watched Metro grow and have experience with its graduates know that the lack of admission standards has not affected the quality of the graduates. It is wonderful to have at least one college in this state that allows students to demonstrate competence or incompetence, rather than using a prediction of a priori incompetence based on an entrance examination. The college boards and

class rank only measure a narrow spectrum of student potential. Throughout our history individuals who marched to a different drummer have made great contributions to our society.

Metro was the last bastion for the non-conformist who had not made a deity out of grade point average. It was the last haven for a "late bloomer" or an iconoclast starting to recognize the need for a more formal acquisition of knowledge.

We need a place in our society for individuals served by Metro as it was first conceived. A homogeneous educational system is counterproductive to society's aims and objectives. An elitist approach to education will "color everything gray."

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