

How the Case Moved Through the Court System

Supreme Court of the United States

Writing for a divided Court, Justice Powell holds that the quota system used by the University of California at Davis medical school is unconstitutional, but that race could be used as a "plus" in the application process.

Regents of the University of California v. Bakke (1978)



Supreme Court of California

The California Supreme Court agrees with the Superior Court and declares the special admissions program unconstitutional. In addition, the court orders that Bakke be admitted to the medical school at the University of California at Davis.

Bakke v. Regents of the University of California (1976)



Superior Court of Yolo County, California

After his second rejection, Bakke files his case in a trial court. The superior court declares that the special admissions policy "operated as a racial quota" and violates federal and state constitutions and Title VI. It also says that race cannot be used as a factor for admissions. However, the Court does not order Bakke's admission because he did not prove that he would have been admitted if the special admissions policy did not exist.

Bakke v. Regents of the University of California (1974)