

Universities: breaking down walls

[Education](#), [University](#)



Do colleges and universities need to change to accommodate students once excluded from the university? This is a powerful question that society needs to know the answer to and the universities need to address. This is also a complicated question that has many facets that need to be addressed.

Universities need to accommodate people with the willingness to learn and become educated. The university can't think that the privileged are the only people that deserve the education they offer; the university has to think on a broader scale and include the once excluded.

If this problem were looked at from a financial standpoint, it would hurt the universities, but if this problem were looked at from a social standpoint, it would benefit society as a whole. Mike Rose is a great example of what can happen if the university put some faith in the under-privileged student. The son of an Italian immigrant family, he was placed within the vocational school system. Though placing him within the vocational school system was a mistake due to a clerical error, he played down to expectations beautifully.

From those days within the vocational school system to the University of California, Los Angeles where he is now the Professor of Education is a huge testament to the power of education and where it can take someone in life. Education surpasses all boundaries, and education takes someone as far or as high as they want to go, Mike Rose is a shining example of this. Mike Rose also mentions a key aspect of education, which is the support his professors throughout his college and/or entire educational experience.

Without help, guidance, and support from your professors, the student, will at times more often than not will feel that education doesn't want to

embrace your efforts, and that is why the support offered from your professors is such a vital part of the education process. Rose also uses great vivid examples in his passage that pertain to the importance of education and shows why it shouldn't be excluded from anyone willing to accept the challenge of receiving it. The idea of getting an education is the driving force behind anyone and everyone that gets an education.

Take for example, Mike Rose's uncle who came to America from Italy. He came here with nothing, not even an education, and he had to fight (literally) for everything he got, even his education. He was embarrassed in school for not understanding anything that was taught and not being able to read or write, but he overcame these adversities and eventually taught his mother how to sign her name and helped her with everything that she needed from reading flyers to announcements of sales to legal documents. Finally, he took care of all the writing she needed done.

This is just one of the many stories Rose used and I use it to show that if education and/or the university embraced Rose's uncle in his endeavors instead of shunning him, then it would've been a much easier transition for him and a richer experience for him and the many others like him. This is an all too familiar place for the underprivileged, but there is a heartfelt story from a brilliant scholar and that person would be Bell Hooks, who came from a poor family that was high on values and family. Hooks decided early on that she wanted more for herself in the way of education, but knew it would be a difficult task to accomplish.

When she left her home in the South to pursue her education at Stanford, her parents warned her of the traps and pressures out in the world, but she stood firm with her decision to go to California for schooling. When Hooks arrived at Stanford, she realized that there was a whole other world out there, away from her home in the South. Hooks was tested many times throughout her college experience to change her values to that of the aristocratic values that the university was pushing onto the student body.

But Hooks maintained her values that her parents, family, and surroundings had instilled in her, and she moved on to be an educator, not just an educator but also someone that cared about the student's education. Hooks moved on from Stanford to Harvard and eventually started to lecture all over the country; she even wrote books in a non-academic format so that people of all educational levels could read and understand her message. To look through her eyes the university appears to be a dismal, wretched place that caters to an affluent, upper class, and white society.

Also would you take notice that the university frowned upon black on black relationships and supported a powerful white-supremacist structure. The reason for this outlook is that through her experiences the universities pampered the privileged and didn't pay attention to the underprivileged. And when the university did let an underprivileged person walk among them, the university would try to corrupt that individual and have them change their values to values that were more suited for the university.

The aristocratic faculty of the universities would urge people to cut ties to your past and change your values, but all in all, that's not the way to

accommodate the once excluded students; that" s a way to include them but reform them to the university" s way of thinking and to the values the university wants instilled in those individuals. To truly include the underprivileged the universities would have to let them be free: free to think, free to criticize, and free to be themselves. The universities aren" t willing to do that for the mere fact that they lose their control over the student body.

For the university to truly accommodate the once excluded the university would have to change not only its curriculum but also its view on people. It would have to look at a person as just that a person, not as this one" s privileged and this one" s not. Universities have to understand that a person willing to learn is a person worth educating. So in the end the answer to the question do colleges and universities need to accommodate the once excluded students the answer would have to be yes, if the once excluded student is willing to learn.