



Yale admissions office responds to my WSJ piece

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Jeremiah Quinlan, dean of undergraduate admissions at Yale, has written a letter to the Wall Street Journal responding to my opinion piece last week. Countering a claim I never made, he asserts that civic activism in an applying student is not “the only attribute we look for.”

Interestingly, Quinlan does not distance his office from, seek to explain, or mention at all, the earlier Yale admissions blog post on which my piece was based, which had said of accepted students: “we expect them to be versed in issues of social justice.” Instead, he summarily dismisses my analysis as “false” and wrong.”

Meanwhile, in Quinlan’s reworking, what had been a call for applicants to be “versed in issues of social justice” has turned into a thing more anodyne: Yale will “expect its students to be engaged citizens.”

But even that fallback ought to be controversial, if intended as a requirement for applicants rather than a plus. So a high school senior has mastered a field of study or performance, shown mature character and wide-ranging mind, but never spoken out on a public issue, marched, campaigned or even perhaps taken the time to vote? That’s an automatic “no” for an admissions committee?

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