U of M students protest proposed closure of General College

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MINNEAPOLIS (AP) - University of Minnesota students staged a rally Wednesday in support of General College, which would be closed if administrators follow a task force's recommendation.

The proposal suggests closing the college and merging its programs with other colleges as part of a plan to bolster the university's standing as a top research university.

Students in General College, which has an enrollment of about 1,850, said closing the school would hurt the university's diversity. The college admits underprepared students, many of them minorities, who then move on to degree-granting colleges.

Student Zeb Anderson told the crowd the closure would mean "less access for black, poor inner city and finally, me, a rural white kid."

City Council member Natalie Johnson Lee told the crowd the university needs General College. "These decisions are the epitome of racist policies," she said. "They are the epitome of elitism."

Vice president Robert Jones, citing low graduation rates, said the college hasn't performed well. "I'm less than happy with the results we've gotten out of General College," he said.