

University awards more degrees than before

The number of bachelor of fine arts recipients has increased in recent years

By Teri Meeuwesen
Oregon Daily Emerald

Movies like "Antz" and "A Bug's Life" that use computer animation to pull audiences into the theaters are crawling all over the movie screens. To accommodate the popular growth, more and more graduates are earning a bachelor's degree of fine arts to work behind the scenes.

"We have become an incredibly visual culture," said Laura Alpert, associate professor and director of the Department of Fine and Applied Arts.

The number of BFA recipients has grown—slowly and steadily—alongside the total number of degrees awarded at the University since 1993, according to the 1998 University of Oregon Profile.

The total number of bachelor's degrees has grown from 2,875 in 1993-94 to last year's 3,047.

Society's changes are just one

part of the slow increase in the number. Enrollment, transfer students, retention and tuition costs also play a role in the number of degrees awarded.

Mike Clark, administrative assistant for curriculum in architecture and interior architecture, said when the number of students enrolled in the architecture program fell this past year, the number of degrees fell respectively.

"Inevitably, there are links between everything in life," he said.

The same changes can be said for any other department at the University, he said. If the University increases its enrollment, it can produce more graduates and vice versa.

Total enrollment at the University has remained somewhat steady since 1990, according to the November 1998 Profile of Students at the University of Oregon released by the Office of the Registrar.

Retaining students and increasing the number of transfer students at the University help keep enrollment steady and growing in

most departments, said Jim Buch, associate vice president for student academic affairs.

In any given year, there are about the same number of transfer students coming into the University as enrolling freshmen, he said.

High school students who have taken college credit courses are counted as transfer students at enrollment.

The average time it takes to complete degree requirements must also be taken into consideration, he said. It takes about five to six years on average to complete the necessary classes for a degree, but that is changing.

"Students are taking full advantage from their classes," he said. "They are carrying a slightly higher load than usual so they can try to finish up on time. I think instructors are doing a better job at making courses available to students."

In the meantime, tuition has gone up—another factor in the number of degrees awarded, Clark said.

Tuition has risen 91.91 percent for undergraduate residents since 1990. For non-resident undergraduates, there was a 119.34 percent increase.

However, while tuition increases, students are thinking more about the job market and its requirements, Buch said.

"Employers are eager for employees that can write well, speak well, can do data analysis and think critically," he said. "I think the University trains people well in these areas."

To improve graduation rates, The Board of Higher Education established four goals for the state's university system for the next biennium: increasing quality and student access, employability and cost-effectiveness of students and their educations.

"We will improve graduation rates of entering freshmen and community college transfers by 2 percent ... adding some 13,450 qualified graduates to the work force," said Oregon University System Chancellor Joe Cox in a speech on Friday.

Today's Events

Tuesday, March 9

■ A rally to urge legislators to support a Pell Grant increase will be held at 10:30 a.m. in the EMU Breezeway. ASUO and OSPIRG are coming together to protest the decreasing number of grants available for students.

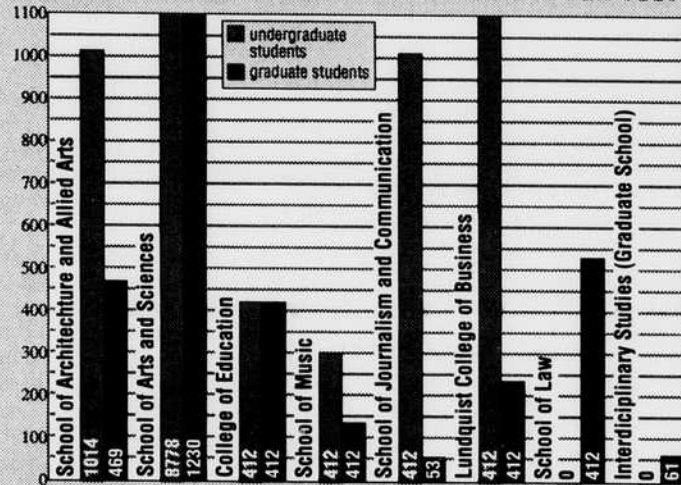
■ Seminar: "Babies' Brain Growth: The New Research — Part B." Noon-1:30 p.m. in the EMU Ben Linder Room. Dennis Reynolds, from the EMU Child Care and Development Centers, will be speaking. For information, visit darkwing.uoregon.edu/~humanres/train98.htm, or call 346-3159.



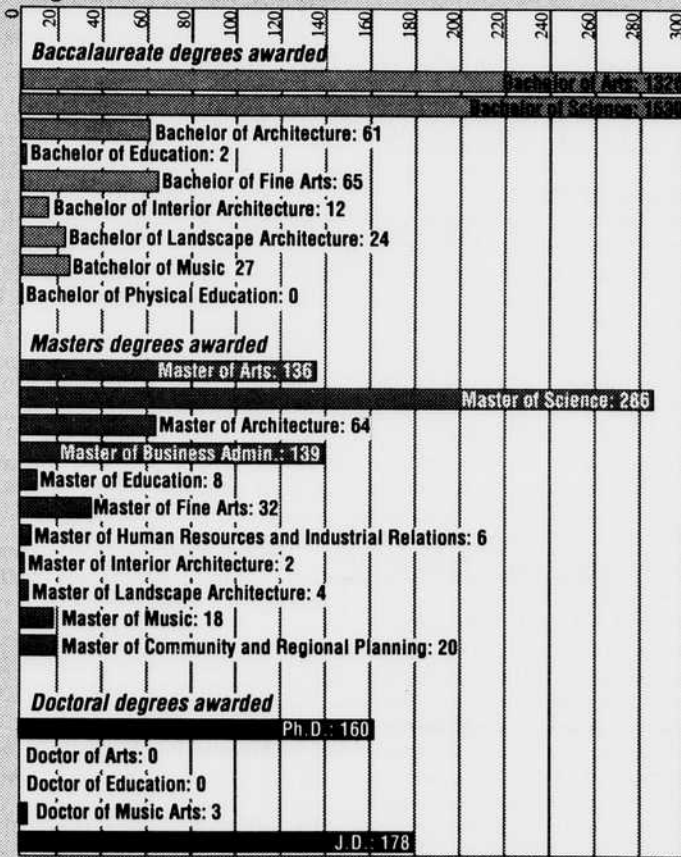
Enrolling in degrees

The enrollment numbers at the University directly effect the number of degrees awarded.

Students enrolled in the various schools in Fall 1997



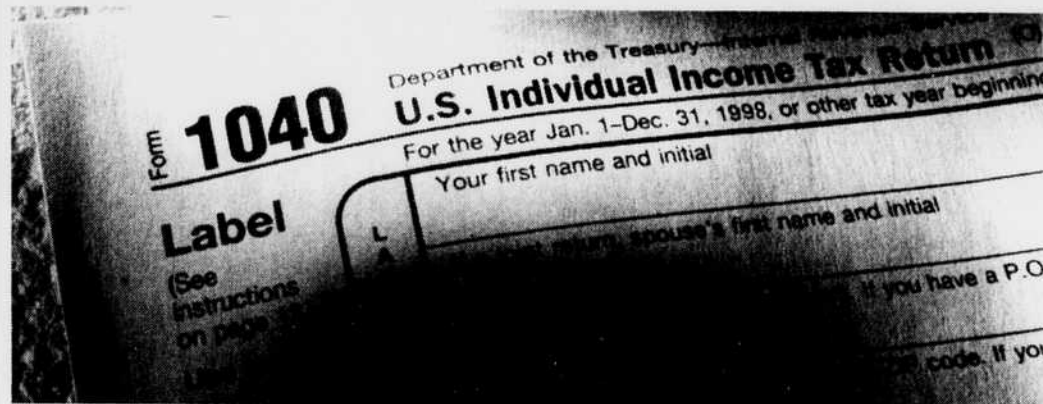
Degrees awarded in 1998



SOURCE: University of Oregon "Profile of Students" Fall 1997 and Fall 1998

Katie Nesse/Emerald

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