

# US News rates grad schools

■ US News and World Report's rankings of graduate programs leave some proud while others are puzzled

By Brooke Ross  
Oregon Daily Emerald

U.S. News & World Report released its annual rankings of the country's graduate schools Monday, and several University graduate programs received some of the highest ranks in the nation.

The survey separately evaluated graduate programs in business, education, engineering, law and medicine. Based on experts' opinions and statistical data, 1,000 programs were evaluated and 50 schools were chosen for the top tier of each category.

Four University graduate programs made it to the top tier. Special education was the third highest in the nation for the second consecutive year. The education program ranked 11th, an improvement from last year's 20th-place finish. The cognitive psychology program placed 18th, while the psychology doctorate program received a rank of 45.

While several University faculty members are excited about the news, some questioned the merit of the ranking system.

"It's just astounding," said Martin Kaufman, dean of the college of education. "There's no question that it gives one great pride to be surrounded with a faculty of such

excellence and students of such quality."

Kaufman said the education graduate program benefited from 125 grants last year, which is likely one reason for this year's higher rank. He said the money from these grants allowed both faculty and students to extend their research and involvement in community education programs.

"It's the importance and impact of this research work that brings visibility," he said.

Kaufman said students have the opportunity to participate in programs that involve teaching children how to read, or they can do research to examine and find solutions for school violence. He said these interactive opportunities have made the program more popular, with the number of students tripling in the last 10 years.

Michael Benz, area coordinator for the special education graduate program, said both the quality of research and teaching also earned the special education program its high rank.

"We have a very strong faculty in special education that's heavily involved in cutting-edge research," Benz said.

He said students may be drawn to the program because they can do research in a variety of areas involving people with disabilities, including violence prevention, literacy, and how to make school transitions easier.

"Our students leave here with

teaching licenses and four or five job offers," Benz said.

The special education graduate program has ranked in the top five for several years, which he said is because of the continued research opportunities students have and the quality of the program's faculty.

"We have a very long, distinguished history both in our teaching and research," Benz said. "It's just an example of the kind of excellence we've had here."

However, not everyone is happy with the rankings. The University law school ranked in the second tier, below the 50th rank, and James O'Fallon, associate dean for academic affairs, said the rankings do not make sense.

"I don't think they should be doing these rankings," he said. "People should not choose where to go to school based on a crude, manipulated set of numbers."

O'Fallon said this year's law school ranking is similar to last year's, but there are nearly 200 law schools in the country, so no one person can determine a school's overall quality. For example, he said criteria such as reputation and the salaries of former students are considered, both of which can be influenced by outside circumstances that have nothing to do with the quality of the school.

"Even the U.S. News & World Report acknowledges there are difficulties in ranking, but it's a pure moneymaker for them," he said.

Luers, who had his trial postponed after his attorney, Ken Morrow, died unexpectedly last November, is scheduled to go on trial today in Lane County Court.

Marshall pleaded guilty last November to conspiracy to commit arson

and possession of a destructive device in connection with the June fire.

Romania Chevrolet General Services Director Rich Hazel said that cleanup at the dealership is ongoing and it would be difficult to speculate how long it will take to complete.

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charges resulting from the alleged possession of destructive devices after a June 2000 fire at Romania Chevrolet.

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