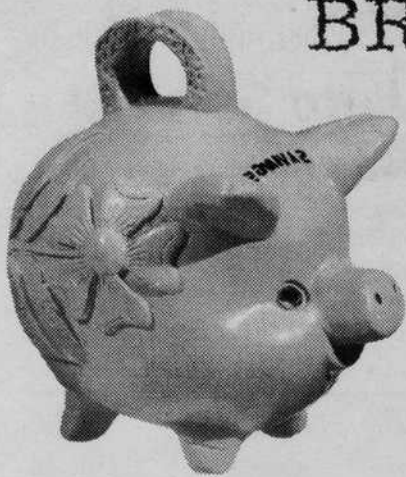


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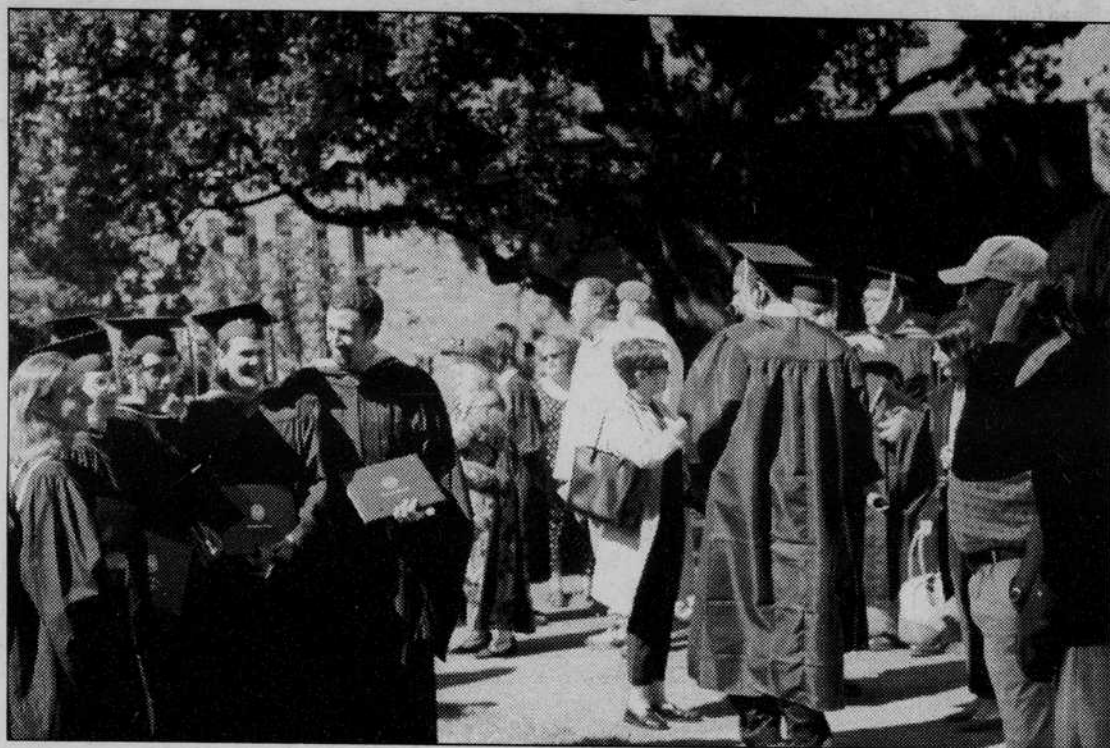
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Making the grade



Summer University graduates bask in the glory of graduating as they line up for group pictures.

Jessie Swimeley Emerald

Law school's diversity grows

■ This year's freshman class includes a larger number of minority students than in previous years

By Danielle Gillespie
for the Emerald

As doors open and new students flood into hallways and scatter in search of classrooms, the University School of Law will become alive again with 172 incoming freshmen.

This year, the freshman class is a slightly more diverse student body as a result of the law school's continuing attempts to attract more minority students and provide more opportunities for women while increasing academic standards.

"We are very pleased to welcome this group of students," said Katherine Jernberg, the law school director of admissions. "The application process was extremely selective this year because the University wanted to decrease class size, and the number of students applying increased 17 percent with a high of 1,372 applicants."

Jernberg said the number of minority students attending the law school has also increased from previous years. In 2000, the entering

class had 13.9 percent minority students, and this year it has 15 percent.

She said this increase can be credited to the law school's outreach programs and groups at the University that aid minorities in their education and encourage their pursuit of law. The Asian-Pacific, African-American, Latin American, Native American and Minority law associations work together to provide a network of support for minorities, she said.

"This year, the Latin American Law School Association is planning on putting more effort and time into helping first-year students feel welcome by providing contacts with returning students to offer advice and support," said the group's Co-director Margarita Molina.

In addition, Jernberg said the University annually holds a Minority Law Day, which is an outreach program that allows minority students to interact with professors and current law students.

"Our faculty is constantly trying to involve and encourage minorities, and it is greatly appreciated," she said.

However, unlike Oregon's other two law schools, Lewis and Clark College and Willamette University, the University of Oregon does not

have a staff position to support minority students and to handle minority recruitment.

"Although I believe that minority recruitment has improved and the administration is moving in the right direction, there is a lot of work to be done ... We do have the dean of student affairs, who does an incredible job, but it would be nice to have a staff member whose sole position was to handle minority recruitment and issues," Minority Law Association Co-director Denise Espinoza said.

The percentage of women who will be entering the law school this fall has slightly declined from last year. Jernberg said in 2000, the law school admitted 53 percent males and 47 percent females. This year's accepted class is 57 percent male and 43 percent female, but Jernberg said the ratio between men and women still remains close.

"We are very interested in the achievement of women and women participation," she said. "At our University, we have more women active with the Student Bar Association, law review and law journals than at other colleges across the country. Overall, we are in a good spot right now, but there is always room for improvement."

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