

Law school rank stays second-tier

Despite the methodology used, a University official says the rank doesn't reflect schools quality

By Jan Montry
Oregon Daily Emerald

The School of Law has been ranked in the second tier of U.S. News & World Report's annual law school rankings, putting the University above the third and fourth tier schools. The ranking has remained relatively unchanged since 1995, when the law school placed in the top tier at No. 40.

U.S. News bases their ranking of law schools on a variety of factors, including median Law School Admission Test scores, employment rates for graduates at different periods of time, average per-student spending for the past two years, total number of volumes and titles in the school's library and student-teacher ratio.

Law school faculty, as well as lawyers and judges, also have a role in the rankings. The dean and three faculty members at each law school were asked to judge schools in two surveys on a scale from "marginal" to "outstanding." Likewise, lawyers and judges from around the country vote on schools using this method.

Despite the wide rating methodology, some law school officials believe the ranking system is not completely accurate.

Law school Career Services Director Merv Loya said employers usually only pay attention to the rankings when they haven't already researched the law school in question.

"The only time rating makes a difference is when (employers)

2003 rankings

1. Yale University
2. Stanford University
3. Harvard University
4. Columbia University
5. New York University
6. University of Chicago
7. (tie) University of Virginia
- University of California, Berkeley
- University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of Virginia

Tier 2 includes:

- University of Oregon
- Lewis & Clark Law School (First-place in environmental law)

Tier 3 includes:

- Willamette University College of Law

SOURCE: U.S. News & World Report

don't have contact with the law school," he said.

Loya, who is also an assistant dean, added that most people who use the rankings aren't aware that lawyers and judges usually give the law school a high rating, but the lack of large financial contributions puts the law school at a lower overall ranking.

"What tends to be missing is quality," he said, "but how do you measure quality? It's easy to measure dollars and cents."

This year, the law school has attracted some of the brightest minds in the nation.

A recent statistic shows the median LSAT score for the incoming class is eight points higher than the national average of 151.

Contact the reporter at janmontry@dailyemerald.com.

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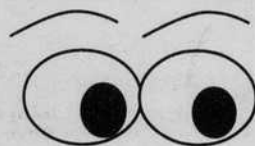
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Game Date

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USC
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Washington

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Tuesday, September 3
Monday, September 9
Monday, October 7
Monday, October 14
Monday, October 21
Monday, November 4

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