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Law school increases in females, minorities

Nearly half of the incoming law school class is female; 18 percent of the class is ethnic minorities, 40 percent of whom are Asian

By A. Sho Ikeda
Reporter

As a slow Oregon economy pushes many to apply for law school instead of searching for employment, the University's School of Law witnessed an increase in minority and female students for the 2003-2004 school year. Additionally, out-of-state student enrollment also increased.

Of the class of 2006, 58 percent of the students are men and 42 percent are women. Last year marked a drop in female enrollment from 2001; however, the number of female students increased by 8 percentage points this year.

The number of minority students also increased this year, rising to 18 percent from 15.6 percent in 2002. The new number comprises 7.2 percent Asians, 6.1 percent Hispanics, 1 percent blacks, 1 percent American Indian and 2.6 percent as other minorities.

Moreover, the percentage of out-of-state students increased this year to 57 percent from 54 percent last year. Approximately 21 percent of incoming law students are University graduates. Out of 99 applications from University students, the law school accepted 38.

School of Law Admissions Director Katherine Jernberg attributed the increase in law school applicants to the slow economy.

"This year was more competitive than last year," Jernberg said. "Some students hold off on going to school for a few years after they graduate, but now more students are deciding to go ahead with law school."

Approximately 9.8 percent of all applicants were accepted and will ma-

triculate at the School of Law for the 2003-04 school year. This year's class represents 185 new students out of the nearly 1,900 who applied, a number significantly larger than the 1,700 students that applied in 2002.

Law school spokeswoman Eliza Schmidkunz said 38 states were represented in this year's class, reflecting an increasingly diverse school. Additionally, the law school accepted applicants from 82 different undergraduate schools.

Schmidkunz said most undergraduates who applied majored in political science, psychology, economics or history.

The average age of new law students remains steady at 25, which is two years younger than the average age of applicants in 2001. Jernberg said she also attributes this statistic to the sluggish economy, which may have pushed students to apply for law school earlier than usual. The age range for students attending the law school this year is 19 to 51.

Jernberg said most law students were focusing on international law and diplomacy, while a number of students were also studying intellectual property and patent law and alternate dispute resolution.

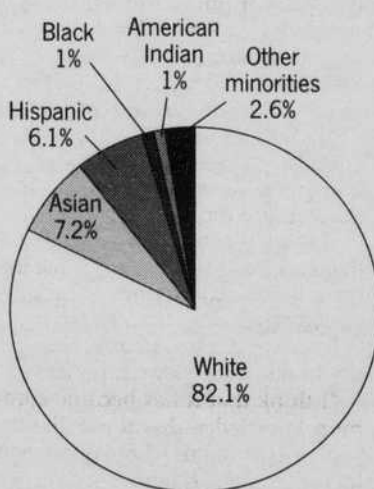
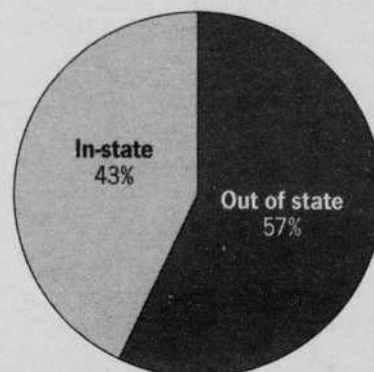
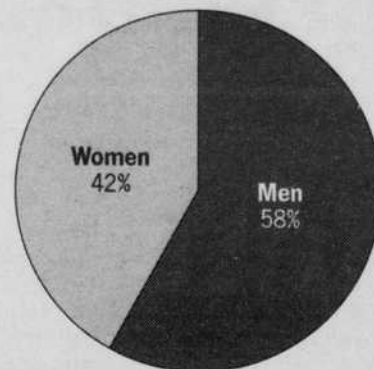
The incoming class showed above-average scores when it came to test scores and grade point averages. The median GPA of the class is 3.4 while the median Law School Admission Test score is 160, which is rated on a scale of 120 to 180. These LSAT scores are above the national average, which is 151.

School of Law Dean Laird Kirkpatrick said he was pleased with this year's class.

"The students we admitted as the Class of 2006 are among the best-credentialed and most-diverse in the school's history," Kirkpatrick said.

Contact the reporter at shoikeda@dailyemerald.com.

LAW SCHOOL ENROLLMENT DEMOGRAPHICS



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SOURCE: University School of Law

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