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WHAT IS YOUR OPINION OF SUPREME COURT NOMINEE ALITO?



MICHELE REILING
SENIOR

"(He) seems a lot better than Harriet Miers."



DAVID GOWARD
SENIOR

"Oh, he's a straight, white male ... and God knows we don't have any diversity on the bench."



KYLA COY
SENIOR

"While (Alito) represents the Bush ideology, I don't necessarily think he's the best for the country."



CHRIS MOE
FRESHMAN

"It seems the Supreme Court has turned into a puppet of the administration."

Alito: Two professors emphasize diversity

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was such a disaster."

If Alito is approved by the Senate, he will be the 11th Catholic justice in the court's history. Currently there are two Jewish judges, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Stephen Breyer, and two Protestants, John Paul Stevens and Sandra Day O'Connor. Catholics currently represent 24 percent of the U.S. population. Jews represent 2 percent and Protestants 45 percent, according to the American Religious Identification Survey by The City University of New York.

"He's been a judge for a long time and I think he will fit in pretty well," Forell said.

Frank Nash Professor of Law Jim

O'Fallon, whose focus is constitutional law and theory, said he would prefer a less conservative judge on the court.

On the other hand, O'Fallon said, people look too much at people's political philosophies.

"Politics overshadows that they're judges interpreting the law," he said.

O'Fallon said there are several examples in history where politically conservative people have turned out to be very good judges.

One example is Justice Harry A. Blackmun, who was appointed by President Richard Nixon for his conservatism, but eventually wrote the opinion for *Roe v. Wade* that legalized abortion. Alito's decisions are more important than his political philosophy, O'Fallon said.

Senior Michele Reiling, a romance languages major, said she is waiting for the hearings before forming her opinion.

"The (Democrats) say this is terrible because a judge is supposed to be middle of the road," she said. "(Alito) seems a lot better than Harriet Miers."

University freshman Chris Moe said, "It seems the Supreme Court has turned into a puppet of the administration."

"Hopefully it works out, but I'm a little scared," he said.

The Senate Judiciary Committee is expected to begin Alito's hearings on Jan. 9.

Contact the campus and federal politics reporter at rnwilbur@dailyemerald.com

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fun, I spent at the computer writing my essays," he said.

Payne was busy at Lane. He had a 4.2 GPA and was editor of *Earth Tide*, an environmental, literary and arts magazine, but found time to edit the five essays required for the scholarship.

"I spent an incredible amount of effort on that application, and then I spent a lot of time visualizing winning as well," he said.

From an initial field of 1,290 only 76 undergraduate and graduate students were selected for one of the "largest scholarship offered in the United States," according to a press release on the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Web site.

The path to the University has been long for Payne.

After graduating from high school in 1992, he enrolled in the California College of Arts and Crafts, an acclaimed art school, because he thought he could "slide by."

"My dad was an artist ... and I kind of wanted to identify with him," Payne said. "It was an easy path."

Two years later, he decided that art wasn't his medium and dropped out. He moved around the country for a few years and landed in Eugene after traveling here with the mother of his child. After a few years of working, he realized he wanted to go back to school to write.

"Since I was a child — probably five or six — writing was really what I wanted to do," he said. "It wasn't something people were telling me to do ... but something I just realized was what I wanted to do," he said.

He enrolled at Lane and describes his time there as "amazing."

"The professors there are very dedicated (with) very small class sizes, so you get really good one-on-one attention," he said.

He added that while at Lane, he had several mentor-style relationships and even went to some of his professors' houses for dinner. He credits Ellen Cantor, his first writing teacher, as being a "huge influence" on his life.

Lane made it possible for him to come to the University, he said, giving him time to focus and providing support to foster his academic career.

He applied for several scholarships with the assistance of Lane officials and eventually won three of them.

The University tries to make itself very accessible to community college transfer students, said Kirk Koenig, the University's senior associate director for operations of admissions.

He mentioned the dual enrollment program with Lane and the dual enrollment/dual admissions programs between the University and Southwestern Oregon Community College.

"The dual admission means that the student can start out at Southwestern and know that they're admitted,"

he said.

He added that community colleges fill an important education niche in Oregon and that the University works closely with these schools, particularly Lane.

Kristi Berg, a University senior assistant director of admissions who works with transfers said the dual admissions program was a good match for the variety of students with different needs compared to the typical four-year college student.

"Some of them it's totally financial, because community college is about half the cost of U of O," she said. "We also have older-than-average students that sometimes are just getting back into the workforce, and it's nice for them to be able to take a class or two to get back into things."

For Payne, his treatment here at the University has been very satisfying. He said he's especially enjoying the School of Journalism and Communication. As an aspiring magazine and non-fiction writer, he said he is excited for next term because he will move into more specialized courses.

"I'm really excited to be at the J-school here," he said. "I've met a lot of great professors already, and I'm just really encouraged by the work that they do and the courses that they're offering."

Contact the higher education reporter at kbrown@dailyemerald.com

"Lane gave me a great start! After I transferred to finish my degree in graphic design, I quickly realized I was better prepared than my peers. And once I was done with my degree, I got a job I really love."

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