

PRESSURE ON ENROLLMENT CONTINUES

Two hundred eighty-eight full time law students enrolled in the first year class in September, 1976. The total was three wide of the mark (285) set by the Faculty.

To come that close to its target, the Admissions Committee spends many hours in the slow, careful selection from almost 2,000 applications.

Applicants are notified when their files are complete and consideration can begin. Early in the month of April all applicants offered admission are asked to respond promptly to a letter asking their intentions. After responses to the second mailing are received, the files in the "Hold" category are reviewed again. All of those placed in "Hold" are considered to be potentially successful law students. Some are accepted, and in late spring some others among them are placed on a ranked waiting list, from which applicants are selected right up until Registration Day.

The Class of 1979 was chosen from 1,991 applications, the largest number for several years. Of these, 845 are residents of Wisconsin, and 1,146 are non-residents. In the class as it arrived to enroll, 237 members are classified as residents, and 51 as non-residents.

Despite the advantages given residents of Wisconsin in terms of numbers admitted, the Law School still turns away hundreds of qualified Wisconsin residents each year.

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The median undergraduate grade point average of the class of 1979 is 3.51; the median LSAT score is 628, down a little from a year ago.

There are 98 women in the entering class, compared to 83 who registered in 1975, and 96 in 1974. It is a trend which accounts for some of the pressure on enrollments, and there is no reason to believe it won't continue.

Nineteen participants in the Legal Education Opportunities Program are members of the new class, making the total LEO enrollment in the Law School 49.

Students entering in 1976 represent 95 undergraduate colleges from all areas of the United States. The University of Wisconsin-Madison contributed 110, while other campuses in the University system produced 65 of the new law students, 24 of them from University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

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Law School faculties and administrators keep testing the winds of change to get some notion of what is ahead. There are a few indicators this year which may have implications for the future. One is the increase in undergraduate enrollments—a development which has filled the dormitories in Madison and elsewhere, and has caused some colleges and universities to announce enrollment limits.

Another indicator adds uncertainty to the future. There has been a small decrease in the number of people taking the Law School Admission Test and in the number of candidates registered with the Law School Data Assembly Service, a service of the Educational Testing Service which prepares transcript summaries for law school admissions committees and officers. This decline will not immediately have any effect, since every law school has many more applications than it can handle. As a possible indication of a trend, however, it deserves close observation over the next few years.

Speculation as to the future of the profession also clouds the enrollment picture. Although it is not possible to judge the present job market with any hard data, nor that of 1980 and beyond, some applicants may fear what has been called a "glut" of lawyers. This may appear to be true in some areas. At the University of Wisconsin Law School (and probably at many others) the employment picture for 1977 is somewhat brighter than in 1976—which turned out to be a pretty good year, after all. [See page 15.]

Professor Walter Raushenbush, long time chairman of the Admission Committee, will be on leave at the law school of Arizona State University during the spring semester, 1976-77. Professor Arlen Christenson will replace him as chairman.

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