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University fall enrollment establishes new record

By Kelly Cunningham

Media Relations and Public Affairs

The Ann Arbor campus set a new enrollment record for fall 2007 with 41,042 students, 1,017 more than last year, a 2.5-percent increase, according to the Office of the Registrar. The increase was 3.4 percent for graduate/professional students and 2.1 percent for undergraduates.

The fall class of 5,992 students represents an increase of 11 percent over last year, and freshman applications were up 6.5 percent to 27,474. Admissions were up 12.9 percent, and the yield rate — the number of admitted students who ultimately enrolled — was 46.4 percent, an increase of 0.5 percent over the previous year.

"This year, as in the past, the students who apply to the University continue to be remarkable for their academic preparation, their life experiences, and demonstrated leadership and talent," says President Mary Sue Coleman. "We have assembled an outstanding and diverse class that we are confident will contribute significantly to our academic community."

The incoming freshman class, one of the largest on record, is almost evenly divided between men and women. The breakdown, with all figures referring to first-year students, follows. The class includes 334 (5.8 percent) African-American students, a 1.2-percent increase over last year. Hispanic Americans represent 4.7 percent, or 267 students, a decline of 2.6 percent. Native Americans dropped by two students, to 50 (0.9-percent decrease). Asian Americans increased by 21.7 percent or 135 students, bringing the total to 757 (13.2 percent of the class). Students identifying as white made up 65.2 percent or 3,741 of the total class, an increase of 333 students from last year. Non-resident aliens accounted for 251 freshmen.

The number of underrepresented minority students in the freshman class was approximately the same as last year, but when calculated as part of the larger incoming class size, the percentage of underrepresented minority freshmen declined from 12.7 percent to 11.4 percent.

Throughout the student body, the overall number of African-American students declined by 3.3 percent, the number of Hispanic Americans increased 1 percent, the number of white students increased by 2.1 percent, the number of Native American students declined by 1.2 percent and the number of Asian-American students increased by 0.4 percent.

"We are cautiously optimistic about our ability to maintain diversity in our student community," says Theodore Spencer, associate vice provost and director of undergraduate admissions. "However, the full impact of Proposal 2 is not reflected in the current year's enrollment numbers because it took effect mid-way through the admissions cycle. We'll have a more accurate indication of its potential impact in fall

2008."

The admissions cycle was conducted in two distinct components, in accordance with adoption of Proposal 2 by Michigan voters in November 2006. The amendment to Michigan's Constitution bans public institutions from discriminating against or giving preferential treatment to groups or individuals based on their race, gender, ethnicity or national origin.

During the first component that ended in late December, U-M considered the race, gender, national origin and ethnicity of applicants as part of a holistic review process. In compliance with Proposal 2, the University discontinued consideration of these factors within the holistic review process during the remainder of the admissions season that began on Jan. 10.

"At other universities with similar ballot proposals across the country, underrepresented minority student enrollment has dropped significantly," says Senior Vice Provost Lester Monts. "We have worked hard to inform prospective students about U-M's ongoing commitment to diversity and will continue to reach out to as many students as possible to ensure the most highly qualified and diverse applicant pool."

Several procedures were implemented to encourage a diverse incoming class, including implementation of the College Board's geodemographic tool, Descriptor PLUS, and expedited admissions and financial aid processes. Continuing its ongoing commitment to make a U-M education affordable for all admitted state residents, significant University funds have been made available in the continuing M-PACT grant program and the new Michigan Tradition and Michigan Experience awards.

Coleman, U-M faculty, students, staff, administrators and alumni engaged in personal outreach to invite students to apply and, when admitted, to enroll.

The University is focusing on improving the pipeline of students interested in applying to U-M by engaging students at earlier ages. A new Center for Educational Outreach and Academic Success will help support this effort by supporting partnerships between the University and K-12 schools and community-based educational organizations.

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