

January 14, 2010

From the LSAC in response to Disturbing Trend in Law School Admissions

Many of you have read the recent New York Times article on US minority law school enrollment. That article cites a study, using LSAC data, by a Columbia University law professor that found a decrease in enrollment of some minority groups from 1993 to 2008.

We at LSAC have some concerns about that study and the resulting press reports about it, and want the law school community to have a few facts as well as LSAC's perspective on the data.

We thought it was important for you to know what our data show.

- There was a significant change in LSAC's data-collection methodology in 2000. These changes make data from Fall 2000 going forward incomparable to prior data.
- We notify data-users of this change on our website and warn against making comparisons between years on opposite sides of this divide. Studies using 15 years of LSAC data as if they represent an unbroken chain ignore this warning.
- While there may be positive or negative movements in figures from one end point (e.g. Fall 2001) to another (e.g. Fall 2008), there is variability in the interim years.
- Diversity among law school matriculants has consistently increased over the past several years. In Fall 2001, 26% of matriculants self-identified as a race/ethnicity other than Caucasian/White and by Fall 2009 was 29%. (See table below.)

Matriculant Group		Fall 2001	Fall 2002	Fall 2003	Fall 2004	Fall 2005	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009
Total Matriculants	Freq.	42,719	45,992	46,176	45,388	45,807	46,117	46,744	46,500	48,947
	% of Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
American Indian/Alaska Native	Freq.	304	295	323	350	337	331	372	359	327
	% of Total	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Black/African American	Freq.	3,110	3,088	3,040	3,101	2,975	3,295	3,296	3,392	3,519
	% of Total	7%	7%	7%	7%	6%	7%	7%	7%	7%
Caucasian/White	Freq.	31,236	33,411	32,707	31,747	32,715	32,775	32,837	32,506	34,464

	% of Total	73%	73%	71%	70%	71%	71%	70%	70%	70%
Chicano/Mexican American	Freq.	701	697	702	652	620	619	600	673	628
	% of Total	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Hispanic/Latino	Freq.	1,510	1,543	1,742	1,772	1,990	2,087	2,286	2,367	2,579
	% of Total	4%	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	Freq.	2,996	3,456	3,682	3,797	3,759	3,678	3,839	3,874	3,976
	% of Total	7%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Puerto Rican	Freq.	789	741	778	767	755	716	781	787	766
	% of Total	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Can Aboriginal	Freq.	2	4	1	11	5	1	5	3	1
	% of Total	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	Freq.	1,682	1,875	2,050	1,986	2,082	2,143	2,251	2,191	2,299
	% of Total	4%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
No Ethnic ID	Freq.	389	882	1,151	1,205	569	472	477	348	388
	% of Total	1%	2%	2%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%
<b>Total Non-Caucasian/White</b>	Freq.	11,094	11,699	12,318	12,436	12,523	12,870	13,430	13,646	14,095
	% of Total	26%	25%	27%	27%	27%	28%	29%	29%	29%

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