

Incoming class up 15%

by Jacob Avidon

This fall Macalester College welcomed its largest first-year class in the last five years. The 481 students enrolled is a 15 percent increase over the class of 1995.

Macalester also received 15 percent more applications for the class of 1996 than it did for the class of 1995. The percent accepted to Macalester went down 4.6 percent while enrollment went up 2.6 percent. As usual, the class of 1996 is very diverse in its make-up, with just under 20 percent of the students representing multi-cultural backgrounds, including 43 students from foreign countries. The largest demographic group is Minnesotans, who represent 19.3 percent of the first-year class.

First-year students interviewed had strong opinions of their first three weeks on campus, and of the campus itself.

"It's very diverse. There is a lot of opportunity to get involved," first-year Kristine Santos said.

A number of students commented on the difficulties that some people are having adapting to the school's atmosphere.

B.J. Lewis and Dan Iosue, both first-year football players, spoke about the difficulties they are having being accepted by the Macalester community, because they play football.

"They're [Macalester students] prejudiced against you because you're a football

player," Iosue said, adding that he had expected some of these biases.

Lewis commented on the assumptions being made about members of the team. He said that people assume, "Oh, you guys are the gay bashers."

"I give everyone a chance, but some people don't give me a chance," Lewis said.

"There are people who are not as tolerant as they ought to be," first-year Matt Sawicki said. He was alluding to an apparent increase in bias crimes on campus.

"I never expected it to happen at Mac," he said.

Sawicki said he was making no assumptions about who was responsible for the incidents, but he said it was wrong to blame the football players without formally looking into the matter.

Sawicki was also distraught at the apparent goals of the Seven Year Plan. He specifically mentioned goals to recruit specific types of students, for example more "athletic people, affluent people, and [politically] conservative people."

Other students said they feel accepted by the community. First-year Jasna Janjic said that other students had been receptive to her as an international student. Dwain Chamberlain spoke similarly of the student body's acceptance of him as an African-American.

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