

# Harvard Law Gets Personal

By JENNIFER SAMUELS  
Staff Writer

Harvard Law School recently unveiled sweeping changes to make the first-year experience for students more individualized.

But UNC officials say changes at the top-notch law school will not affect the actions of UNC administrators.

Harvard Law will spend \$20 million next fall to decrease class sizes and create smaller units, called "colleges," within the department.

Steve Armini, Harvard Law spokesman, said students and faculty feel small classes will be beneficial, allowing smaller groups of students to participate in everything from advising to intramural sports.

He said that because Harvard is one of the nation's largest law schools, it must try to provide students with a personalized learning experience. "Harvard Law has the best of both worlds," Armini said. "We are able to maintain the benefits of a large law school while simulta-

neously offering small classes."

Third-year Harvard Law student Derek Ho of Shervon, Mass., said he feels that the general consent among the student body is that classes are too large.

Ho said that many classes contain about 140 students, creating an unproductive classroom dynamic.

"Law classes are conducted in such a manner that the professor will call on a student at random, which results in a conversation between two people while the other 138 students look on," he said.

Harvard Law administrators also are considering a new grading system that would replace the current system of letter grades with an evaluation system ranking students by high honors, honors, pass and fail.

But Ho said he feels a change in grading system will be detrimental to law students when they attempt to get jobs.

"I think that some employers will have trouble interpreting the new grades," he said. "My fear is that the new system will cause students to be compared unfairly to those from other schools."

Brian Bromberger, UNC School of Law associate dean for academic affairs, said there are two different ways to examine grades.

Bromberger said looking at grades alone reveals an individual professor's opinion, while evaluating students based on class rank allows students to be considered in relation to each other.

Harvard Law is consistently rated in the top three in most law school rankings, including the often-mentioned U.S. News & World Report. The same report ranked UNC's School of Law 22nd.

But Bromberger said UNC is not strongly influenced by the actions of other law schools. "We always look at what other schools are doing," he said, "but at the end of the day, we decide what to do ourselves."

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