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Legal suit

Law students make valid point with protest

IU law students will join in a nationwide boycott of law classes today to protest unequal treatment of minority and women faculty in American law schools.

Since only three of IU's 22 tenured law professors are women, and only one is black, these students have a point.

"Curricula and scholarship are still grounded in the white male perspective and don't reflect our changing society. If Indiana wishes to compete as a national law school, it will have to better reflect the diversity of our nation," said a pamphlet about the boycott.

The boycotters are right, but the IU School of Law isn't the only culprit. Many of our institutions (of higher learning and beyond) just don't promote women or people of color beyond a certain level.

Those in charge of hiring and promoting (in universities as well as corporations) traditionally have countered this complaint by saying there aren't as many candidates for jobs/promotions who are women/people of color. But since affirmative action educational practices have been in effect, this simply is not the case anymore.

The truth of the matter is, for the most part, older, white males are in charge of hiring and promotion. They did not go to school (probably) with many women or people of color or work with them as equals in the lower ranks, and they probably hold some

stereotypes because of ignorance.

Too bad we can't mandate a cultural diversity awareness class for tenured faculty and deans of schools.

But no matter what their stereotypes, the old white males won't be in charge for long. Since by the year 2000, 75 percent of people entering the workforce will be women or people of color, they have but a few years left to call the shots.

Then, perhaps, those in power will reflect some of the enormously varied life experiences Americans now have and will pass respect for this diversity onto students.

Bryant Garth, dean of the school of law, said in a recent *Daily Student* article that he agrees the law school needs more minorities on the faculty but disagrees with strikes as a form of protest.

Until Garth and others like him stop talking about encouraging diversity and actually put aside their prejudices and begin hiring and promoting women and people of color, strikes will have to do.

The boycotters also will stage a rally at 3 p.m. today on the law school steps. Let's hope their call for diversity is heard by the ears of those now in charge.

Otherwise, it could be a long wait.

Jill Miller
for the Editorial Board