

Trends

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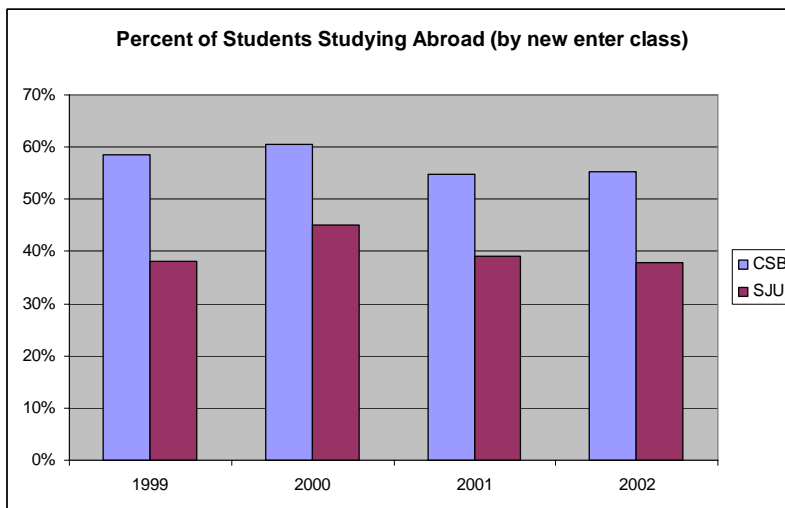
A Research Newsletter Prepared by the Office of Institutional Planning, Research, and Communication

Study Abroad among CSB/SJU students

International and global learning is an increasingly important expectation of a liberal arts education. The College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University historically have been among the leading baccalaureate institutions in the nation in the number and percentage of students who study internationally. Global education continues to be a top priority at the two institutions. The following data summarizes participation rates, characteristics, and trends of student studying abroad while at CSB/SJU.

Study Abroad Participation Rates and Characteristics

- Between fall 1999 and spring 2005, over 2,500 students from the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University have participated in a study abroad program (nearly all participated in a semester long program). More than half of all students who enrolled at CSB/SJU between fall 1999 and fall 2001 and graduated or remain enrolled studied abroad (58% of CSB students and 41% of SJU students).
- Study abroad programs at CSB/SJU are increasingly popular with students. The number of CSB/SJU graduates who studied abroad increased by nearly 60% between 2001 and 2004. While the majority of students who started college in fall 2002 still have another year of school, nearly half have already studied abroad (55% at CSB and 39% at SJU) and this number should continue to grow next year, since approximately 1 in 7 students who go abroad do so in their fourth year.



Note: Percentages refer to all students in a new entering class who have either graduated or are still enrolled.

- While the percentage of students in each new entering class to study abroad has been increased nearly continuously in recent years, the 2001 new entering class saw a decrease, perhaps due to international tension and the start of the war in Iraq during their junior year (when most students study abroad).
- Among new entering students in fall 2003 and 2004, more than 8 in 10 said there was at least

Since 1999, the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University have sent more than 2,500 students to study on six different continents.

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COLLEGE OF
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some chance they would study abroad while attending CSB/SJU, and nearly half (49%) described their chances as “very good.” Women were a third more likely than men to indicate a strong desire to study abroad (59% vs. 38%).

- Study abroad programs at CSB/SJU attract strong students. The mean ACT score for SJU students who studied internationally was 25.5, compared to 25.0 for students who did not. Among CSB students, the average ACT score among study abroad participants was 25.2, versus 24.4 for those who did not study internationally. Students who studied abroad also had higher average high school grade point averages (3.67 vs. 3.58). Pre-college achievement gaps between those who studied abroad and those who did not widened during college. The average college GPA among CSB/SJU students who studied abroad was 3.44, compared to 3.19 among students who did not study abroad.
- Over three-quarters of all students who studied internationally were affiliated with a major either in the Social Sciences (46%), or the Humanities (32%). While only one-in-twenty students who studied abroad majored in one of the Fine Arts, they accounted for over 70% of students in that academic division. Over 60% of all students majoring in one of the Humanities studied abroad, as did half (49%) of all Social Science majors and a third (34%) of all Natural Science majors.

College Experience

- When asked on the CSB/SJU *Senior Survey* about their collegiate experience, students who studied abroad reported a significantly different view of the schools and the schools’ impact on their development:
 - Students who studied abroad were nearly a third more likely than other students to say CSB/SJU had “very much” contributed to their social and political awareness (23% vs. 16%).
 - The *Senior Survey* provided students with an opportunity to select adjectives which they thought best described the institutions. Students who studied abroad were three times as likely as other students to select “Global” as a school descriptor (33% vs. 11%).
 - Nearly half (49%) of all students who studied abroad “strongly agreed” that their experiences outside the classroom improved or enhanced the quality of their academic experience, compared to 40% of all other students.

Changing life Expectations

- As new entering students, those expecting to study abroad responded similarly to their peers not seeking a study abroad experience on questions of values, experiences and expectations. However, as seniors, students who studied abroad reported different life goals and expectations than those who did not study internationally:
 - As new-entering students, approximately 1 in 20 students said promoting racial understanding was an “essential” life objective. However, by their senior year, students who studied abroad were nearly twice as likely as those who had not to say that promoting racial understanding was “essential” (20% vs. 11%, up from 6% vs. 5%, respectively).
 - In addition, nearly two-thirds (62%) of all senior students who studied abroad said promoting social justice was an “essential” or “very important” life objective, compared to less than half (47%) of students who did not go abroad. Indeed, 62% of students who studied abroad also reported participating in a community service or volunteer program (compared to 48% of all other students).