

# Trends

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## Supportive Campus Environment

A series of questions on the annually administered *CSB/SJU Senior Survey* asks students to evaluate the environment created by the colleges and their staff. Seniors are asked about the type of support the colleges offered to promote students' academic, personal and social growth and about the kinds of role models they found at Saint Benedict and Saint John's. They are also asked about the amount and ways they interacted with faculty members inside and outside of the classroom.

Seniors generally indicate that they received the academic and social support they needed, and that they found role models within the community.

- ❑ **Academic Support.** Eighty-five percent of senior students indicated that the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University frequently provide support for students to succeed academically. This response is similar to that of seniors at liberal arts institutions nationally. Women were more likely than men to indicate that CSB and SJU provided the necessary academic support.

Eighty-two percent of CSB/SJU students evaluated their academic advising experience to be good or excellent. Women were more likely than men to describe their advising as excellent (38% vs. 28%). Among other roles, academic advising helps students find a major or area of study which fits their career and personal goals. Most senior students indicated that they were pleased with their major choice: 82% of CSB/SJU students indicated that they would choose the same major if they could start college over again. Saint Benedict students were more likely than their Saint John's peers to indicate that they would definitely select the same major again.

- ❑ **Social Support.** Nearly nine in ten Saint Benedict and Saint John's seniors (86%) rated their overall social experience as excellent or good. A similar percentage of seniors described the schools as comfortable, community and friendly when given a list of adjectives. Men and women were equally likely to rate their social experience highly and to select those three adjectives to describe the schools.

Fully two-thirds of senior students (68%) indicated that CSB/SJU frequently provided them with support to thrive socially. Men and women were equally likely to indicate that they received the social support they needed. Only 38% of senior students at liberal arts institutions nationally responded similarly.

- ❑ **On-Campus Mentors or Role Models.** Students identify many different campus community members as role models. Nearly six in ten senior students (58%) identified another student as a role models or mentor. Fully four in ten men (42%) indicated that their Faculty Resident was a role model, compared to only 7% of women who identified their Residence Director as a mentor. Men were also more likely than women to identify a monastic member as being a mentor or role model, which may result from monastic community members living in student residence halls. One in five students (19%) identified a college or university administrator as a role model.

CSB/SJU seniors report positive and supportive relationships with their peers, faculty members and other campus community members.

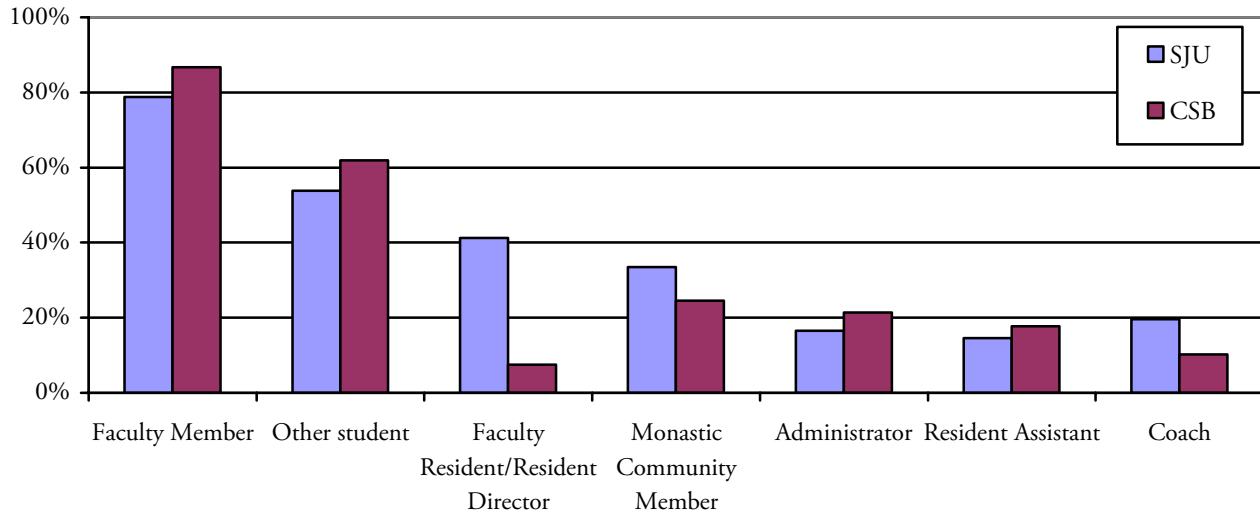
Prepared by Kathryn Enger  
Institutional Planning  
and Research

COLLEGE OF  
Saint Benedict



Saint John's  
UNIVERSITY

## Mentors of CSB/SJU Senior Students



Most senior students at CSB/SJU characterized their relationships with other campus community members positively. Nearly all seniors (96%) indicated that their relationships with other students were excellent or good. Fewer than one in ten seniors characterized their relationships with administrators, support staff, or monastic community members as poor.

### Student Interaction with Faculty

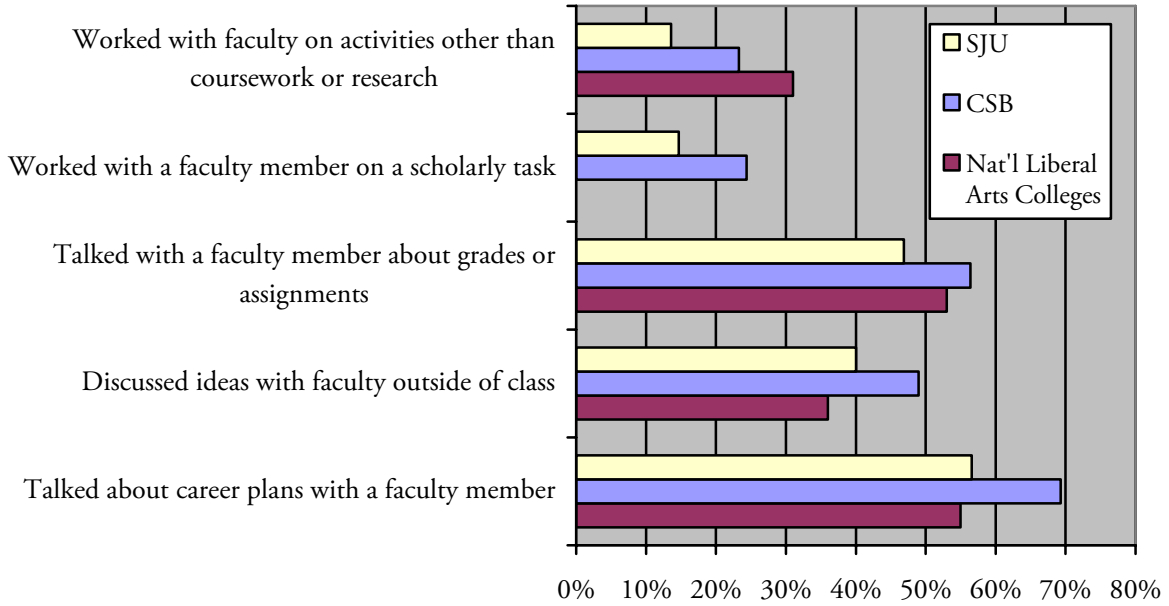
NSSE researchers have found that senior students at baccalaureate arts and sciences institutions (liberal arts colleges) tend to have better relationships with faculty members than students at other types of institutions. In general, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University students describe close and positive relationships with faculty, although Saint Benedict students are more likely than their Saint John's peers to indicate frequent engagement with faculty.

- ❑ **Engagement with Faculty outside the Classroom.** Eighty-three percent of all 2006-2007 CSB/SJU seniors identified a faculty member as a mentor or role model. Fully nine in ten seniors described their relationships with faculty as good or excellent. Saint Benedict students were statistically more likely than their Saint John's peers to identify a faculty mentor (87% vs. 79%) and to characterize their relationships with faculty as excellent (42% and 34%).

Fifty-four percent of CSB/SJU seniors reported that they have worked with faculty on a scholarly task (such as a research project). Nearly half (45%) of all Saint Benedict and Saint John's seniors said that they frequently discuss ideas with faculty outside of class, compared to just 29% of seniors at liberal arts colleges nationally. However, senior students at other baccalaureate liberal arts colleges were more likely to work with faculty members on activities other than coursework, such as committees, orientation and student life activities. Saint Benedict students were more likely to indicate engagement with faculty in all of these areas.

- ❑ **Classroom Engagement with Faculty.** Seniors at other baccalaureate arts and sciences institutions are more likely than CSB/SJU seniors to talk frequently with faculty about grades or assignments. Approximately 63% of seniors at other such institutions indicated they frequently speak with faculty about their grades and assignments, while only 48% of CSB/SJU seniors responded similarly. Again, women were more likely than men to indicate that they had spoken with faculty members about their grades.
- ❑ **Faculty as Advisors.** Saint Benedict and Saint John's students were more likely than their peers nationally to talk with faculty about their career plans. While just 53% of all seniors at liberal arts colleges nationally indicated that they frequently discuss career plans with faculty, 66% of all Saint Benedict students and 57% of all Saint John's students said the same. Additionally, 45% of Saint Benedict students and two-thirds (33%) of Saint John's students talked with faculty about graduate school plans.

## Student-Faculty Interaction



For additional information, please contact Kathryn Enger at 320-363-5452 or [kenger@csbsju.edu](mailto:kenger@csbsju.edu). Past issues of the *Trends* research newsletter are available at <http://www.csbsju.edu/institutionalresearch/trends/>.