

Trends

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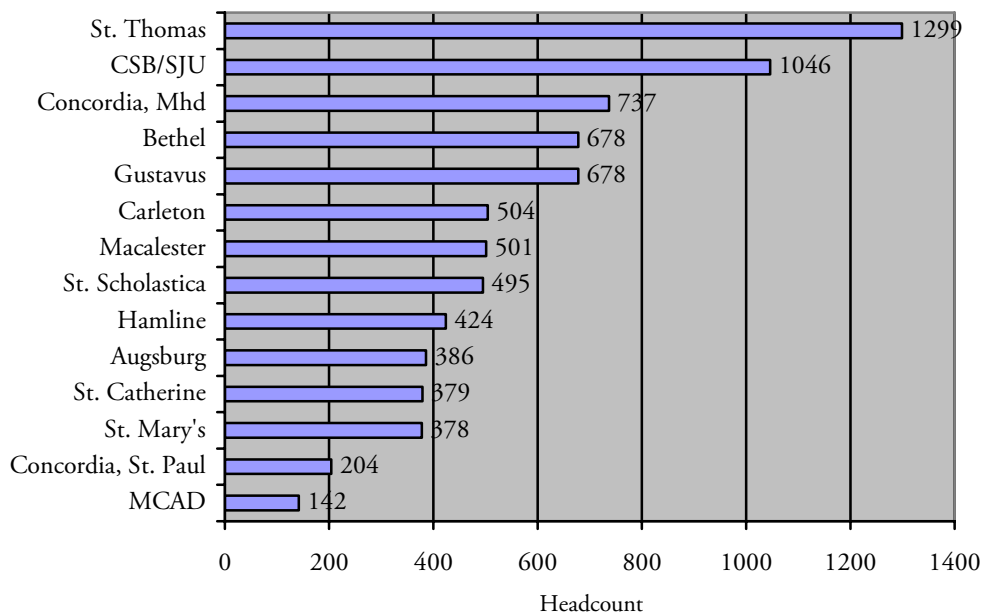
A Research Newsletter Prepared by Enrollment, Planning and Public Affairs

Enrollment Highlights at Minnesota's Private Colleges

First-time new entering student enrollment at Minnesota's private colleges rose by less than one percent from fall 2005 to fall 2006, the smallest increase this decade. In total, the state's 17 private colleges enrolled 8,821 new entering students, 74 more than in 2005. Unlike prior years, all of the increase occurred among men. Enrollment of new male students increased by 6 percent, a gain sufficient to offset a 4 percent decline in new female enrollment.

Enrollment of men at private colleges in Minnesota this fall totaled 3,783, the highest ever. Female enrollment dropped to 5,038. Even with the decline, women still comprised 57 percent of all new entering private college students this fall. The University of Saint Thomas and CSB/SJU continue to enroll the largest share of new entering students. Together, Saint Thomas, Saint Benedict, and Saint John's enrolled more than a quarter of all new entering Minnesota private college students.

Fall 2006 New Entering First Year Students



Final fall enrollment data for all Minnesota colleges is not yet available but Minnesota's private colleges expect to enroll about 13 percent of all new entering college students in Minnesota in fall 2006, a market share that has remained virtually unchanged this decade.

Admission Trends

Enrollment of new entering female students at private colleges dropped even though female applications for admission increased by 4 percent. Applications for admission from men rose by 5 percent. In total, Minnesota's private colleges received 36,297 applications for admission last year, the highest number ever (though a substantial portion of these applications are duplicate or multiple applications). The aggregate acceptance rate totaled 67 percent – just shy of the five year average. Yield rates continued to fall, dropping to 36 percent in 2006 from 42 percent in 2001 – a reflection of both rising competition (particularly with public colleges) and rising numbers of multiple applications.

Unlike prior years, enrollment of men at Minnesota's private colleges increased this year while female enrollment declined.

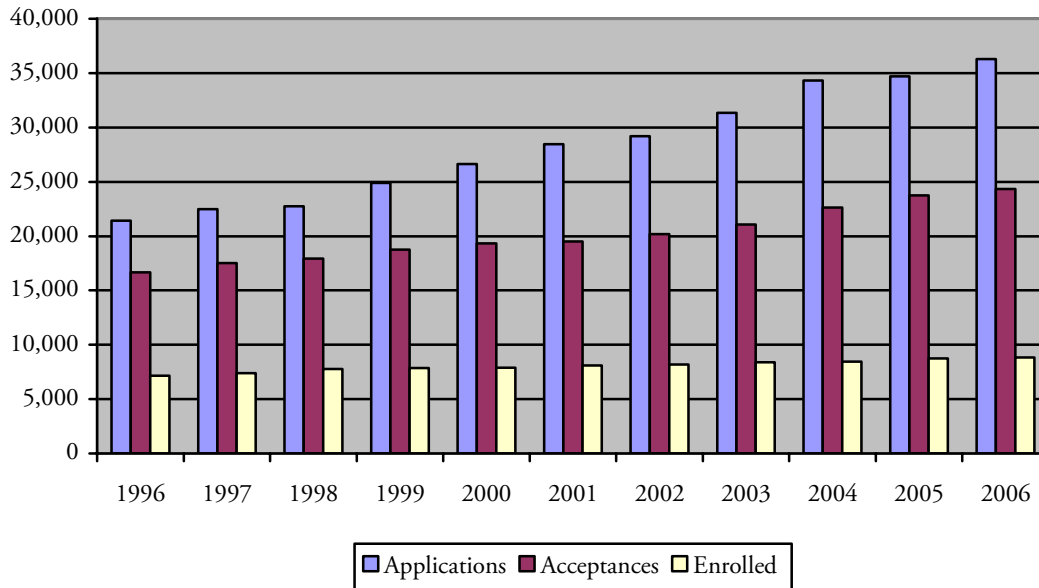
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COLLEGE OF
Saint Benedict



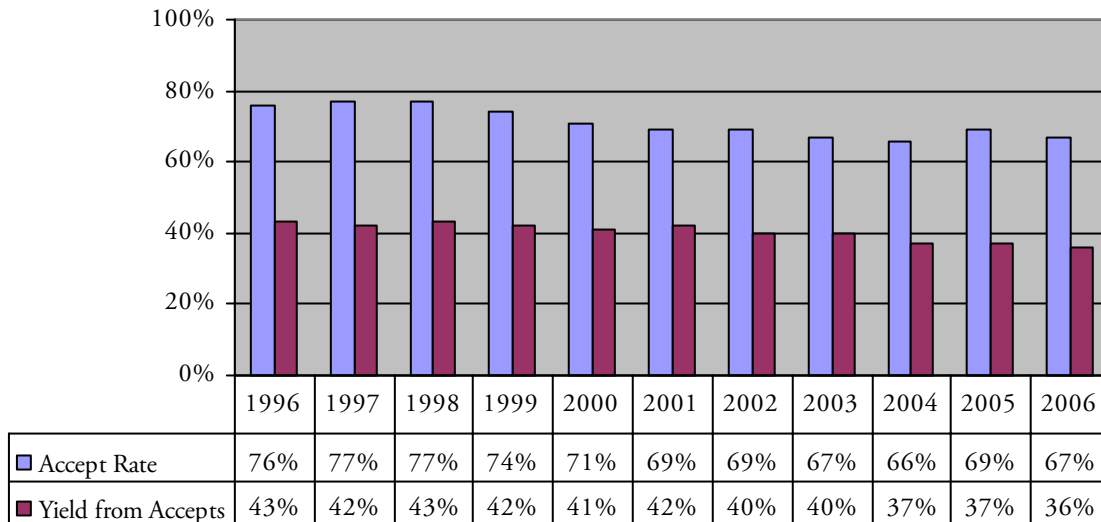
Saint John's
UNIVERSITY

New First Year Students at Minnesota's Private Colleges (Number of Applications, Acceptances, Enrolled Students)



Over the years, the number of new students applying to multiple colleges has increased. Nationally, more than 70 percent of students apply to 3 or more colleges as opposed to just 50 percent five years ago (HERI Freshmen Survey). Acceptances have not risen at the same rate as applications, meaning Minnesota's private colleges have become increasingly more selective, on average, in the last decade.

Trends in Acceptance and Yield Rates at Minnesota's Private Colleges



Conclusions

We do not know if the decline in female enrollment was a one-time event or the signal of a new trend. The number of female ACT test takers in Minnesota declined by 5 percent between 2003 and 2006.

The number of high school graduates in the state has leveled off and will remain stable through 2008 – though the racial and ethnic composition of the state's graduates has already begun to change. Other states in the upper Midwest have already begun to experience sharp drops in high school graduates. The long-term trend of high school graduates in the region – coupled with increasing price sensitivity among families – will almost certainly influence admission applications and yield at Minnesota's private colleges for years to come.

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