

Trends

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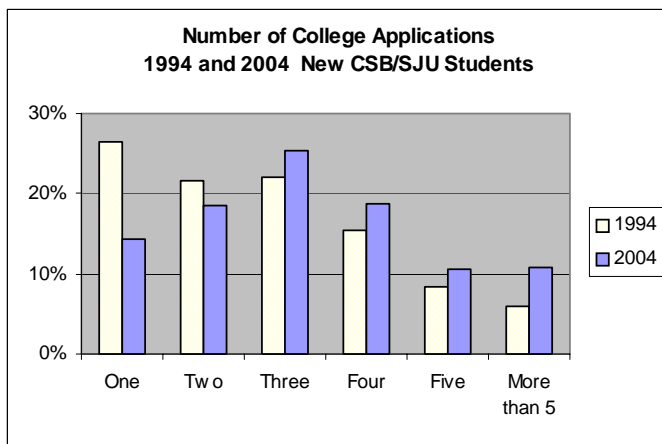
A Research Newsletter Prepared by the Office of Institutional Planning, Research, and Communication

New Students' College Choice Characteristics

The College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University have surveyed new entering first year students for most of the last 30 years. This fall, as part of new student orientation, first year students took the *New Entering Student Survey: Attitudes, Experiences, and Expectations*. The survey provides the colleges with an opportunity to identify and student characteristics, experiences, and expectations. This fall, 735 CSB/SJU students, representing nearly a three-quarters of all new entering students, completed the survey. The data that follow summarize the key characteristics influencing their college choice.

Choosing a College

- As our academic profile has improved, and as on-line admission applications have simplified the college admission process, the number of new students applying to multiple colleges has increased. Nearly two-thirds of all new CSB/SJU students in fall 2004 applied to three or more colleges, and 21% applied to five or more colleges. Fewer than 1 in 6 new Saint Benedict and Saint John's students this fall applied only to CSB or SJU. By comparison, in 1994, fully one-quarter of all new CSB/SJU students applied only here, while only 6% applied to five or more colleges.



- Consistent with prior years, the overwhelming majority of new CSB/SJU students this fall (83%) identified the College of Saint Benedict or Saint John's University as their first choice institution. CSB and SJU were similarly ranked by students of all academic abilities. Saint Benedict and Saint John's students have been much more likely than their peers at other types of institutions nationally to indicate they were attending their first choice college. Typically, only 70% of all new students nationally – across all institution types – indicate that they enrolled at their first choice college.
- Like college students across the country, new Saint Benedict and Saint John's students indicate that opportunities to become more educated, get better jobs, make more money, and prepare for particular careers are the primary reasons for going to college. At least two-thirds of all students cite one of those reasons as being a "very important" factor influencing their decision to go to college.

Most new students choose the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University because of their reputation of academic excellence.

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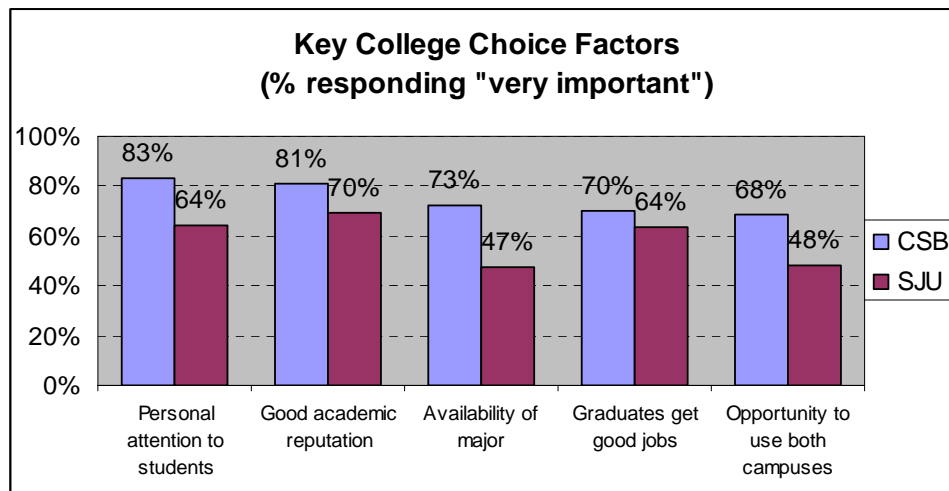
COLLEGE OF
Saint Benedict



Saint John's
UNIVERSITY

Why CSB/SJU?

- Personal attention to students. This year's survey marked the first time students were asked about the importance of receiving personal attention. Fully 98% of all new entering students said that it was an important factor in choosing to come to CSB/SJU. Nearly three-quarters cited personal attention as a "very important" factor influencing their enrollment decision.
- Academic reputation. Fully three quarters of all 2004 new entering students said that the academic reputation of the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University was a "very important" factor influencing their decision to enroll.
- An environment that stresses academic excellence. In connection with academic reputation, 98% of new students stated that learning in an environment that stressed academic excellence was important. More than half said it was "very important." Among students who said an academic environment was very important, two-thirds also thought it was "very important" for CSB/SJU to offer academically challenging courses.
- Graduates get good jobs. Fully two in three new entering students cited the quality of jobs obtained by CSB/SJU graduates as a "very important" reason for enrolling at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. In addition, more 80% of all new students said that preparation for employment after graduation was a very important expectation for their Saint Benedict and Saint John's experience. New students are likely quite familiar with the jobs and job prospects of CSB/SJU graduates: nearly half report that a family member either attends or attended one or both of the colleges.



- Other important choice factors.
 - Over 60% of all new entering students said the availability of a major in an area of interest was a "very important" reason for selecting CSB/SJU.
 - Nearly half of all students indicated that their campus visit had a "very important" influence on their college choice. This number is down, however, from last year when over 60% of all students said the same.
 - Nearly 60% cited the opportunity to attend classes, participate in activities, and use facilities on both the CSB and SJU campuses as "very important."
 - Forty-seven percent (47%) said it was "very important" that graduates of CSB/SJU go to good graduate schools. More than 7 in 10 students said they plan to eventually earn a graduate or professional degree.
- As part of the survey, students were given a list of adjectives and asked to choose all those they thought described Saint Benedict and Saint John's. The most frequently selected adjectives were "Friendly" (81%), "Comfortable" (73%), "Community" (70%), and "Fun" (66%). Seniors have been asked the same question on the *CSB/SJU Senior Survey*, and have provided nearly identical responses. Other adjectives commonly selected by new entering students were "Spiritual," "Intellectual," and "Academically Challenging." Those adjectives least selected were "Average," "Global," "Elite," and "Diverse."