

Trends

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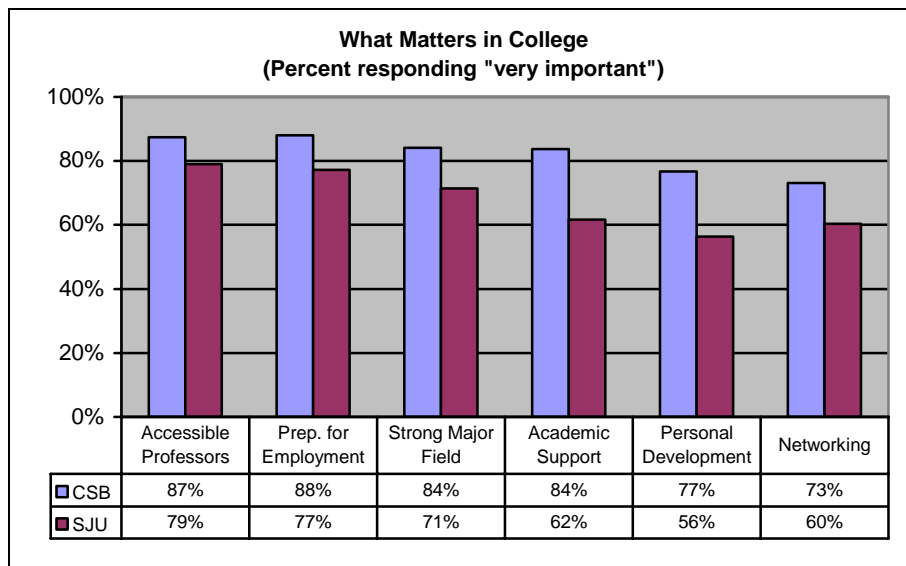
A Research Newsletter Prepared by the Office of Institutional Planning, Research, and Communication

Collegiate Expectations of New CSB/SJU Students

More than 970 new entering CSB/SJU students, representing 95% of the class, completed the *New Entering Student Survey* this fall. The survey provides the colleges with an opportunity to identify and evaluate student characteristics, expectations, and high school experiences. This issue of *Trends* examines the collegiate expectations of our new students before they began classes this fall.

Key College Expectations

- Most new entering CSB and SJU students expect to have a positive experience at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of all new students this fall indicated that chances were "very good" they would be satisfied with their undergraduate experience here. Students this year were more likely to expect to be satisfied than students in previous years. Women were slightly more likely than men to expect satisfaction (76% vs. 70%). Students of color were less likely than their white peers to expect to be satisfied (60% vs. 74%). CSB/SJU students are more likely than their peers at highly selective Catholic colleges nationally to expect a positive experience. Our students' apparent pre-disposition to expect a positive experience at CSB/SJU supports the colleges' higher than average retention and completion rates.



- New students were provided with a list of college characteristics and asked to indicate how important each was to them at CSB and SJU. "Accessible professors" was the most frequently selected characteristic. In addition, nearly four in five new students identified a strong academic department in their major as very important, and 74% said "access to support to help you succeed academically" was very important. Interestingly, in spite of their interest in accessible professors, only about half indicated that there was a "very good chance" that they would communicate regularly with their professors.

Most new CSB/SJU students expect to have a positive and academically successful experience.

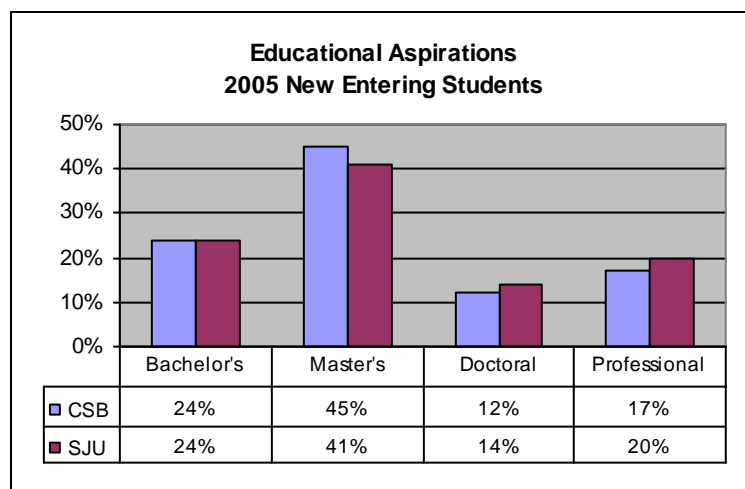
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COLLEGE OF
Saint Benedict



Saint John's
UNIVERSITY

- The typical new Saint Benedict and Saint John’s student in fall 2005 graduated in the top quarter of her or his high school class, had a high school grade point average of over 3.6, and earned a composite ACT college entrance exam score of 25.2. Almost 70% described their academic ability as above average in relation to their peers, and fully three-quarters rated their drive to achieve as above average. It is not surprising, then, that most new students said they expected to earn good grades while at CSB/SJU. Nearly two-thirds of all new Saint Benedict and Saint John’s students this fall reported that they expected to earn at least a “B” grade average while in college. Their expectations are well founded. The mean cumulative grade point average among 2004-2005 CSB and SJU seniors, who had similar expectations as new students three falls earlier, was 3.28.
- Similar to new four-year college students across the country in 2004, nearly three-quarters of all new Saint Benedict and Saint John’s students in fall 2005 indicated that they expected to eventually complete a graduate or professional degree. Men and women were about equally likely to say they would earn an advanced degree. Students of color were more likely than white students to aspire toward an advanced degree (85% vs. 74%). Among all those expecting to complete a graduate degree, 43% identified a Master’s degree as their objective. Though the overwhelming majority of new students cited a graduate school aspiration, less than half said that graduate school counseling was very important.



- Nearly 80% of all Saint Benedict and Saint John’s students said there was at least some chance they would participate in a study abroad program at CSB/SJU—49% indicated they were very likely to do so. Eight in ten new entering students reported that study abroad opportunities at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University were an important factor in deciding to enroll here (37% said they were “very important”). Study abroad participation rates at CSB/SJU are significantly higher than national averages. Half of the senior class this year has studied abroad, compared to just 34% of all seniors at baccalaureate liberal arts colleges nationally.
- Most new entering CSB and SJU students describe themselves as religious. Fully two-thirds said they frequently attended religious services and only 7% said they never attended religious services. Nearly 40% indicated that they spend at least one hour every week praying or meditating. The vast majority of new students believe spiritual development is important and likely during college. More than 80% of new students in fall 2005 said there was at least some chance they would strengthen their religious beliefs and convictions while in college. Fully half said that integrating spirituality into their lives was a very important or essential life objective.

Departments identified as a probable major by at least ten new entering students may request detailed summary data comparing their students’ characteristics with all new entering students. Division summaries are also available for the Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Humanities, and Fine Arts. For additional information, please contact Jon McGee (jmcgee@csbsju.edu) at 5287 or Kathryn Enger (kenger@csbsju.edu) at 5452. If you would like to read past issues of *Trends*, please visit our website at <http://www.csbsju.edu/institutionalresearch/trends/default.htm>.