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## Foundations of Excellence First -Year Student Final Report and Recommendations 2017

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# Foundations of Excellence

First -Year Student Final Report  
and Recommendations 2017



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## Section 1: Executive Summary

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The College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University are working with the Foundations of Excellence (FoE) of the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education (JNGI) to develop a comprehensive First-Year Experience (FYX) as part of the SD2020 Liberal Arts for Life goal of meeting “the needs and aspirations and exceed the expectations of a 21st century student body.” The FYX is not merely a program or set of programs, but an environment that encompasses all the students’ experiences and relationships with the institutions from the time of their deposit until they return for their sophomore year.

FoE provides a way to systematically and candidly evaluate programs, policies, and procedures across departments and programs. This self-study becomes the basis for an action plan designed to improve student learning, persistence, and personal development. With the collaboration and guidance of JNGI, project leaders Karen Erickson, Emily Esch, Mary Geller, and Doug Mullin organized a working task force comprised of faculty, administrators, staff, and students from across both campuses. The task force organized into committees that evaluated CSB/SJU performance on the nine aspirational principles of excellence, termed the Foundational Dimensions® and developed recommendations to improve the experience of first-year students.

The “Dimension Committees” were aided in their evidence gathering by two surveys, one of first-year students and one of faculty and staff. These surveys ask questions about respondents perceptions of institutional performance of each dimension. We also conducted an audit of policies and practices related to all first-year students and made that information available through the Current Practices Inventory (CPI).

We entered into this study with the belief that our usual high retention rates for first-year students suggest that our institutions have been doing many things well for the students we have been serving. Our evaluation bore this out. However, we are also aware that our student demographics are changing as they become more reflective of national demographics, particularly as we draw more students each year from growing population centers which are all outside of Minnesota.





## Highlights from the self-study process indicate:

- FYX will enhance an already strong first-year experience, as indicated by survey data from both students and faculty/staff. Improvements are needed in advising and assessment.
- Though students generally indicate satisfaction with their experience, some report feeling disengaged from other first-year students and not well-connected to the institutions and/or faculty and staff. We need to address these concerns.
- We propose developing a First-Year Lab Experience that addresses equity. All students deserve to feel part of our institutions, to have a strong foundation in our mission, resources available to help them succeed, opportunities for personal development, and the skills to take ownership of their own learning. In addition to the lab, the FYX would include expanded orientation, pre-arrival programs, and expanded faculty development for first-year advising and teaching methodology for all of their courses enrolling a high percentage of first-year students.
- The FYX will be collaborative in its implementation, just as the self-study and recommendation phase have been a rich collaboration between student development, academic affairs, and other staff. We recommend that an implementation team include key leaders from those most closely connected to first-year students, and those with skills to build connections to all staff and faculty who seek to support first-year students' success. This may require leadership in the form of a new position (or a portion of a position): Director of the First-Year Experience (most likely from the faculty), or Co-Directors (one from staff and one from the faculty). An advisory committee should guide the implementation, assessment, and on-going revision of FYX, and include FYS Director, the two Deans of Students, the Director of the Common Curriculum, the Assistant Dean/Director of Academic Advising, a librarian, and others as indicated once the full FYX takes shape.



## Section 2: Task Force Members

### A. Liaisons with John N. Gardner Institute

Name	Title
Karen Erickson	Academic Dean
Emily Esch	Associate Professor of Philosophy
Mary Geller	CSB Vice President for Student Development
Doug Mullin	SJU Vice President for Student Development
Tory Oelfke	Assistant Registrar
Stuart Perry	Director of Financial Aid
Robert Piechota	Executive Director of Financial Aid

### B. Steering Committee (Dimension Co-Chairs)

Name	Title
Theresa Anderson	Academic Advisor
Carol Brash	Associate Professor of Art
Shawn Colberg	Assistant Professor of Theology
Mike Connolly	SJU Dean of Students
Karyl Daughters	Associate Professor of Communication
Karen Erickson	Academic Dean
Emily Esch	Associate Professor of Philosophy
Mike Ewing	Director of Counseling & Health Promotion
Mary Geller	CSB Vice President for Student Development
Sarah Gewirtz	Information Literacy Librarian
Jason Kelly	Assistant Dean & Director of Academic Advising
John Kendall	FYS Instructor
Lori Klapperich	Assistant Director of Health Promotion
Barb May	Associate Dean
Doug Mullin	SJU Vice President for Student Development
Sarah Pruet	ESL Coordinator/Instructor
Terri Rodriguez	Associate Professor of Education
Joe Rogers	Director of Global Education
Anne Sinko	Assistant Professor of Mathematics
Jody Terhaar	CSB Dean of Students

**C. Dimension Committees**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Committee Role</b>	<b>Dimension</b>
Mike Connolly	SJU Dean of Students	Staff Co-Chair	<b>All Students</b>
Kari-Shane Davis Zimmerman	Associate Professor of Theology	Faculty Member	
Elizabeth Erickson	CSB Student Senate President	Student Member	
Matt Lindstrom	Professor of Political Science	Faculty Member	
Kaitlyn Ludlow	CSB Senior	Student Member	
Ramond Mitchell	SJU Student Senate President	Student Member	
Jody Terhaar	CSB Dean of Students	Staff Co-Chair	
Carol Brash	Associate Professor of Art	Faculty Co-Chair	<b>Diversity</b>
Matt Davis	Admission Representative	Staff Member	
Sarah Haas	CSB Sophomore	Student Member	
Deborah Pembleton	Assistant Professor Global Business	Faculty Member	
Joe Rogers	Director Global Education	Staff Co-Chair	
Annika Turner	Manager Short Term Education Abroad	Staff Member	
Shawn Colberg	Assistant Professor of Theology	Faculty Co-Chair	<b>Faculty</b>
Laura Hammond	Assistant Director ELCE	Staff Member	
Bryan Moreira	SJU Junior	Student Member	
Josephine Nistler	CSB Senior	Student Member	
Terri Rodriguez	Associate Professor of Education	Faculty Co-Chair	
Allison Spenader	Associate Professor of Education	Faculty Member	
Shannon Essler-Petty	Assistant Professor of Education	Faculty Member	<b>Improvement</b>
Lori Klapperich	Assistant Director Health Promotion	Staff Co-Chair	
Phil Kramer	Director of OARCA	Staff Member	
Barb May	Associate Dean	Staff Co-Chair	
Laura Taylor	Assistant Professor of Theology	Faculty Member	
Chris Wing	Academic Review	Staff Member	



Dana Drazenovich	Instructor of FYS	Faculty Member	<b>Learning</b>
Katie Furniss	Visiting Assistant Professor of Biology	Faculty Member	
Sarah Gewirtz	Information Literacy Librarian	Staff Co-Chair	
Mary Korman	CSB Senior	Student Member	
Anne Sinko	Assistant Professor of Mathematics	Faculty Co-Chair	
Angie Whitney	Director of ELCE	Staff Member	



Mike Ewing	Director of Counseling & Health Promotion	Staff Co-Chair	<b>Organization</b>
Hannah Kooima	Student FYF Co-Director	Student Member	
Johnny Kroehle	Student FYF Co-Director	Student Member	
Sarah Pruet	ESL Coordinator/Instructor	Faculty Co-Chair	

Karen Erickson	Academic Dean	Co-Chair	<b>Philosophy</b>
Emily Esch	Associate Professor of Philosophy	Co-Chair	
Mary Geller	CSB Vice President for Student Development	Co-Chair	
Doug Mullin	SJU Vice President for Student Development	Co-Chair	

Kyle Becker	SJU Junior	Student Member	Roles and Purposes
Chris Bolin	Instructor of FYS and English	Faculty Member	
Karyl Daughters	Associate Professor of Communication	Co-Chair	
Megan Dierberger	CSB Sophomore	Student Member	
Jason Kelly	Assistant Dean & Director of Academic Advising	Co-Chair	
Erica Rademacher	Assistant Director of Career Services	Staff Member	

Theresa Anderson	Academic Advisor	Staff Co-Chair	Transitions
Karen Backes	Dean of Admission	Staff Member	
Imani-Jireh Johnson	CSB Sophomore	Student Member	
John Kendall	FYS Instructor	Faculty Co-Chair	
Kyhl Lyndgaard	Director of FYS/Writing Center	Staff Member	
Maxwell Martin	SJU Sophomore	Student Member	



## Section 3: Narrative on General Situation

### A. History/Overview

Defined by the goals of CSB/SJU's Strategic Directions 2020, the First-Year Experience (FYE) Task Force formed at the beginning of 2015 with members from across the institution. The FYE Task Force was led by a Steering Committee composed of the CSB Vice President of Student Development, Mary Geller, Academic Dean, Karen Erickson, the faculty Co-chair of the Common Curriculum Visioning Committee, Dr. Emily Esch and the SJU Vice President of Student Development, Fr. Doug Mullin. These four people continued to lead the group through the self-study process.

The FYE Task Force met multiple times during Spring semester 2016 to discuss the charge laid out by SD2020:

**Create a comprehensive two-semester First-Year Experience (FYE) program, in conversation with our First-Year Seminar. FYE will facilitate the transition to college and create a foundation for student success. In addition, it also will include curricular and co-curricular programming as well as an introduction to our Catholic and Benedictine heritage and values.**

After much discussion, the Task Force realized that it would be difficult to move forward on this charge without an inventory and assessment of what we are currently doing for first-year students. A group of Task Force members attended the First-Year Experience Conference and were introduced to the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education (JNGI), a non-profit organization that partners with institutions to provide “comprehensive, evidence-based, externally guided self-study and improvement process” of the experiences of first-year students, a program it calls “Foundations of Excellence” (FoE). Rather than try to create our own self-study across multiple departments and programs, we recommended to the presidents that we partner with JNGI, which has been working with institutes of higher learning since 1999. We felt that this would not only provide a comprehensive structure for a self-study, but it would also give us access to national trends and noted experts in the field.

While open to working with JNGI, the presidents noted that the FoE is particularly renowned for success in working with institutions seeking to increase their retention rates among first-year students. Since CSB and SJU already have extraordinarily high retention rates, will this be a good fit for us?

We clarified with the presidents and JNGI that our intention is not to fix a retention problem, but rather to assess current academic and co-curricular programming to identify areas where, in light of our changing student demographics, we might implement best practices to assure that all students have first-year experiences that will launch them into college success. The Gardner Institute affirmed this as an appropriate goal and the presidents approved our recommendation.



In June of 2016, Karen Erickson, Emily Esch, and Doug Mullin participated in a Launch Meeting at JNGI along with several other colleges and universities. Over the summer and into the fall, together with Mary Geller, the four recruited members to join the FoE team. As explained in more detail later in this report, the FoE is set up around nine Dimension Committees. We identified faculty and staff co-chairs for each committee, and asked them to seek out students as well as additional faculty and staff to work on their respective committees. By the end over 50 faculty, staff, and student members participated in the self-study process. Please refer to section 2 for a complete list of participants.

During the summer and into the fall of 2016, the Steering Committee worked with staff to gather the data that the Dimension Committees would use to do their work. This was compiled into an inventory (Current Practices Inventory or CPI) using the web-based platform provided

by JNGI. The information collected was readily available through secured access to FoEtec on the JNGI website. All Dimension Committee members, as well as any institutional member who requested access from one of the Liaisons, were granted access. The data gathered includes information on the demographics of the first-year class, retention status by ethnicity, and course enrollment/grading information. More information can be found in Appendix F.

In addition, JNGI provides access to two electronic survey instruments, one for faculty and staff and one for first-year students. These surveys were conducted in fall 2016. Results from the surveys can be found in Section 3.B as well as Appendix B and C. These surveys were an important piece in the dimension group's work and provided valuable data for the steering committee's work.

Dimension Committee work commenced after the data was collected, and continued into early spring of 2017. Each Dimension Committee submitted its own report, which included recommendations based on evidence. The full Dimension reports can be found in Appendix D; summaries of the Dimension reports are in Section 4. Once the reports were submitted, the co-chairs of the nine Dimensions Committee met together to categorize and prioritize the recommendations from all nine reports. Our final recommendations can be found in Section 5.

The Steering Committee kept the community informed of our work throughout the process. In fall 2016 we staffed an FYX information table at the Gen Ed open discussion on September 1, and presented an overview of the process at a Student Development All-Staff on September 22, and an all-community on October 17. On March 2, 2017, we presented at a joint meeting of Trustee's Committees on Student Development and Academic Affairs. We presented at the Student Development All-Staff on April 20, 2017, and at the College of Saint Benedict's President's open campus forum. Each presentation provided opportunities for discussion and feedback, which in turn enhanced the on-going work of revising the philosophy and recommendations.

## B. Foundations of Excellence Surveys

The FoE project used two surveys specifically developed to support the self-study. Through the CSB/SJU Office of Academic Review & Curricular Management (OARCA), we administered a survey for faculty and staff, and a survey for new students in fall 2016. Both surveys are products of Skyfactor (formerly EBI-Mapworks) and were developed in collaboration with FoE.

The FoE New Student Survey for Four-Year Institutions was administered electronically shortly after fall mid-term grades were issued. By surveying new students at this time we were able to get a glimpse of their “first impressions” of CSB/SJU.

Many students make decisions about transferring and/or their commitment to college early in their first year on campus. While the student survey does not provide a complete student perspective based on a full year, it does capture student understanding at an important point in the decision-making cycle. On October 24, 2016, the survey was sent out to all 1000 of our new first-year students who were over 18-years-old at the time of the survey. The survey closed on November 7, 2016, with 268 respondents, for a response rate of 26.8 percent.

Because the return rate from first-year students was lower than we had hoped, it is questionable how generalizable the results may be, particularly when looking at subgroups of respondents. Note, for example, that women respondents outnumbered the men respondents by nearly 2:1:

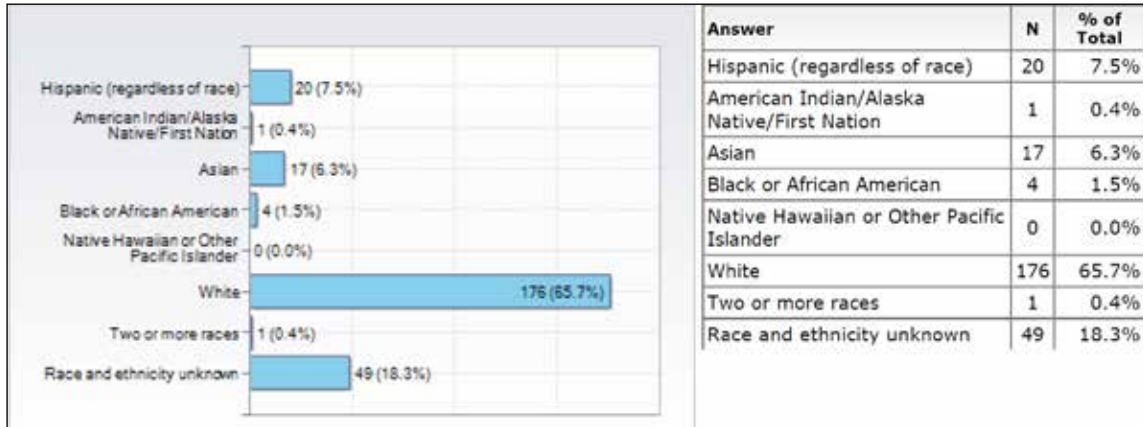
**Self-Reported Gender of First-Year Student Respondents**

Answer	N	% of Total
Male	73	33.5%
Female	145	66.5%



In addition, while it may have been interesting to examine cross-tab findings regarding race/ethnicity, the number of respondents for each category other than “white” or “race and ethnicity unknown” is too low to draw meaningful conclusions:

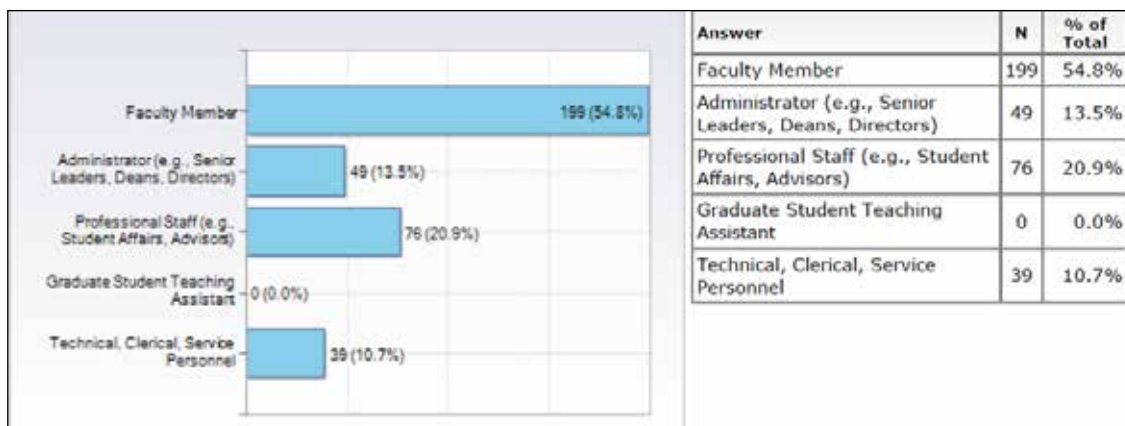
### Self-Reported Race/Ethnicity of First-Year Student Respondents



Even with these limitations, it is worth noting that trends are generally very positive with some noted areas of caution. Our recommendations seek to recognize our strengths and support where we are currently meeting students’ needs, but also to respond to what we learned from those students who responded to the survey.

The FoE *Faculty/Staff Survey for Four-Year Institutions* was also administered electronically and sought to investigate the perceptions of faculty and staff about various aspects of the campus environment that align with the nine FoE Dimensions. The survey used branching technology so that respondents were directed to answer questions depending on their primary roles and length of employment. Survey results were made available in the FoEtec system and were analyzed by a variety of demographic and employment variables. On September 19, 2016, the survey was sent to all faculty and staff within the divisions of Academic Affairs, Student Development, and Admission. A total of 670 people were invited to participate in this survey. The survey closed on October 3, 2016, with 365 respondents, for a response rate of 54.5 percent.

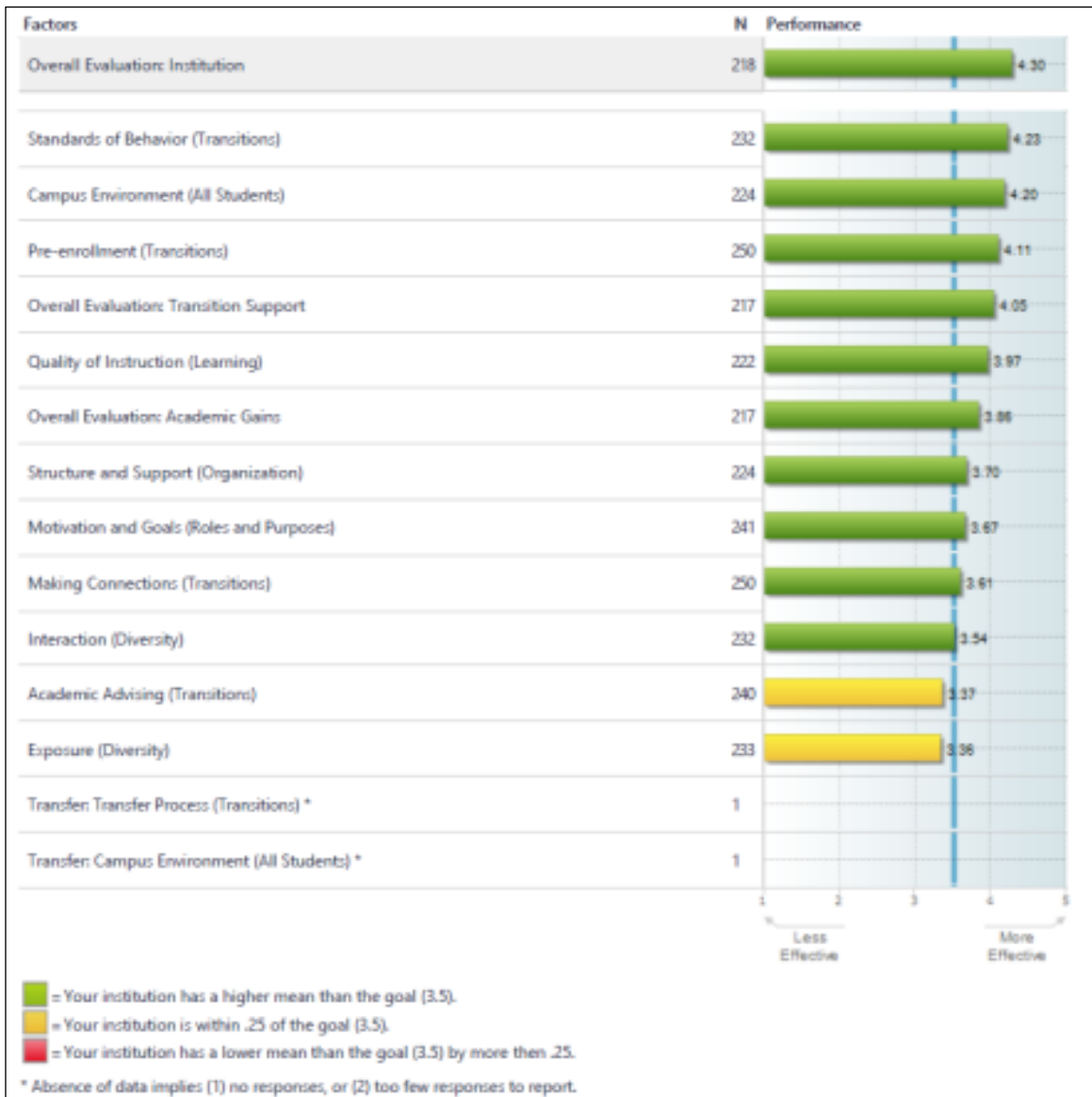
### Respondents to Faculty and Staff Survey by Category



## General Findings

The Student Survey findings generally showed high levels of satisfaction (i.e., with a mean score higher than the FoE established goal of 3.5 on a 5.0 scale) on 11 of 13 areas. The two areas below the goal, Academic Advising (transitions), and Exposure to Diversity came in within .13 of the FoE established mean goal of 3.5:

**With which aspects of the current first-year experience are College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University students most and least satisfied?**



Results from the Faculty and Staff Survey show more mixed results than the Student Survey. Mean scores from the Faculty and Staff Survey were above the 3.5 mean satisfaction level (established by FoE) in eight key areas; within .14 of that 3.5 mean goal in two areas; and below the 3.5 mean goal by more than .25 in eight areas:

**With which aspects of first-year students' current experience are College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University faculty/staff most- and least- satisfied?**



The material included in the Current Practices Inventory (CPI—see Appendix F) and the survey results provided a starting point for the dimension committees as they conducted their portion of the self-study and generated a general assessment of our current success in the different areas related to first-year student success.



## Section 4: Summary of Dimension Reports

The Foundations of Excellence provides a summary of the dimension committees' analysis and general assessment. Our liaison, Betsy Griffith, read each dimension report and gave helpful feedback as we shifted from analysis and self-study to the revision and prioritization of recommendations.

An important step in the Foundations of Excellence process is to assess the effectiveness and possibilities for improvement in our current offerings. Each dimension committee studied particular aspects of the first-year students' experience, guided by the FoE categories of analysis.

### A. Philosophy:

We found no evidence of an explicit written philosophy for the first year of college at CSB and/or at SJU, nor for any department or unit of the colleges. That said, our faculty and staff have demonstrated and expressed a high level of commitment to the success of our first-year students, and they believe that a formalized institutional philosophy would be valuable.

In creating the draft for the first-year philosophy, several key institutional documents were referenced. The draft was reviewed and approved by various stakeholders, and disseminated throughout the campus community.

#### Current draft of the First-Year Philosophy:

Throughout their undergraduate study, true to our Catholic, Benedictine heritage, students engage in explorations to help them learn to see themselves as complex and developing persons, to respect all others in the same light, to understand their gifts, and to accept their responsibility as stewards of the common good.

The liberal arts as experienced in Benedictine community invite students to hold in creative tension things that seem like opposites: intellect and faith, local and global concerns, the dignity of work and the importance of art, respect for persons as they are, grounded in the reality of the present moment, and a commitment to lifelong transformation.



## **B. Organization:**

All of the components of a strong first-year experience exist. Our central finding is that coordination and integration of the first-year experience could make the biggest difference in students' first-year experience. We recommend a centralized first-year experience structure directed by a person whose main role is to organize and facilitate information sharing and collaboration on services/programs.

## **C. Learning:**

It is clear that we lack learning goals specific to the first-year experiences with the exception of the First Year Seminar (FYS) course. First-year learning outcomes need to be developed and assessed. We need to create a more systematic way of measuring the effectiveness of pedagogy on student engagement. There should be opportunities for faculty to determine effective tools to address high DFWI rates in their courses and promising pedagogies for decreasing their occurrence. Student Learning Outcomes and Assessment should address the students total first-year experience.

## **D. Faculty:**

The Committee found that while many faculty members excel in pedagogical, advising, and out-of-class engagement with first-year students, a gap exists between (1) institutional expectations/goals for effective faculty engagement, and (2) a “culture of responsibility [that] is nurtured by chief academic officers, deans, and department chairs and supported by the institutions’ reward systems.” The widest perception gap exists between institutional leaders and faculty teaching courses with high enrollments of first-year students.

The gap between unit-level (departmental) leaders and faculty teaching courses is substantially narrower. The committee specifically noted that institutional reward systems in forms such as funding for professional development, campus-wide structures of faculty support (e.g., LES sessions, Thursday Forums, Fall Faculty Forums, etc.), and specific protocol for faculty review, rank, tenure, and promotion lack specific rewards/targets/expectations for excellence in engaging first-year students as pedagogues, advisers, and in out-of-class experiences. The committee noted some difference in structural support for faculty teaching First-Year Symposium (FYS) and those teaching courses with high enrollments of first-year students.

A majority of committee recommendations therefore address strategies for closing the gap between expectations and a culture of concrete rewards that incentivize faculty excellence in engagement with the first-year experience. Such rewards include clarity about the status of first-year teaching in annual reviews of probationary faculty as well as in tenure and promotions processes; they also suggest further rewards external to review, rank and tenure, which motivate and recognize excellence in engaging first-year students. In related ways, the committee also recommends clearer practices of assessment of first-year student learning with a concrete way of enabling departments/units acting on insights gained from such assessment.

## E. Transitions:

Several important support structures for the first-year transition are embedded in the CSB/SJU experience while other existing supportive experiences require student awareness that the services exist and would be beneficial. These services require student initiative to access (academic advising, counseling, career services, financial aid). Yet other logical services may be difficult to locate (tutor information), or are perhaps not evident at all (study skills development, requirements for acceptance to most majors). We recommend a coordinated, identifiable focus for the first-year transition. In doing so, faculty and staff can be more intentional in connecting students to valuable resources in a timely fashion (such as the library’s important resources for first-year students).

## F. All students:

The All Students Committee members discussed at length the question, “Are the academic, social, personal, and psychological needs of CSB/SJU students being met?” In reviewing the student and staff/faculty survey and resources, we are pleased to see high rankings, though concerns were noted by anecdotal comments from the committee and from data from other surveys that show areas for potential improvement, as noted in the recommendations.

Similar to many other institutions, CSB and SJU have many different sub-populations and we attempted to provide evidence, when available, to document efforts to support all students.

Other than FYS, Orientation, FYE, first-year student housing and residential curriculum, most other programs and services (academic advising, tutoring, SAS, etc.) are being provided for all students not just first-years, at the institutions. Therefore, we support the development of learning outcomes with a focus on the first-year experience.



## G. Diversity:

The Diversity Dimension team was tasked with establishing to what degree the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University ensures that its first-year students "experience diverse ideas, world views, and cultures as a means of enhancing their learning and preparing them to become members of pluralistic communities" in three intersecting spheres: Diverse Ideas, Interactions, and Behaviors.

The committee recommended the development of three initiatives. The first is to create initiatives in the curriculum (currently a low ranking) that address the experiences listed above. Findings related to this dimension underscored the need for the development of learning outcomes for the FYX proposed model as well as for the new common curriculum. The second recommendation is based in the co-curriculum (the committee found some strong programs already in place). The third recommendation supports initiatives integrated across the curriculum (the committee found this to be the component in need of most improvement).



## H. Roles and Purposes:

The Roles and Purposes dimension subcommittee performed an analysis of available evidence reflecting current CSB/SJU practices for articulating the roles and purposes of higher education and found that results are mixed. There is strong evidence of clear attention to articulating the value of education for personal growth and serving the public good. There is moderate attention to effectively communicating the purpose of education for future employment and to promote engaged citizenship. There is also moderate performance with regard to communicating the rationale for the required common curriculum courses, major requirements, and required competencies (e.g., library literacy, writing). Current practices reflect low or non-existent attention to engaging first-year students in conversations about their motivations for pursuing higher education and articulating the rationale of requirements for getting into a major. The committee identified 10 recommendations for improving conversations with first-year students about the roles and purposes of higher education. Those recommendations are organized by performance indicator (i.e., not rank ordered) and labeled as high, medium, or low priority.

## I. Improvement:

In general, CSB/SJU has not been an assessment driven organization. We have pockets of systematic assessment processes but there is no central driving philosophy or force. This is true for efforts targeted at first-year programming as well. Our report offers comments on our current situation, our rating in each of these categories, and our recommendations regarding our first-year signature programs related to systematic assessment, assessment results being used to improve existing practices, institutional dissemination of key first-year data to faculty/staff, recent assessment activities designed to improve campus understanding of student success factors for first-years and strategies to improve the first-year experience.

## Section 5: Recommendations for Action

- ✳ **Recommendations are arranged by theme, and those recommendations for the FYX Implementation Task Force are given first in Roman Type.**

*Related recommendations for other offices follow in italics, with office listed in parenthesis. Though other offices will take the lead role in these initiatives, they will proceed in close communication and collaboration with the FYX Implementation Task Force.*

### A. Advancing Student Learning and Success

#### 1. Learning outcomes

- a. Design institutional first-year learning outcomes to guide the development, delivery and assessment of inclusive, universally accessible first-year programs and curriculum.
- b. Design learning outcomes that articulate behaviors that lead to holistic student success.
- c. Ensure the learning outcomes that are clear and measurable, and provide evidence-based assessment to inform programmatic changes via the assessment cycle.

#### 2. Programs

- a. Design a for-credit-lab as on-going orientation, and an advising program to meet learning outcomes (see Appendix E), aligned with FYS/Seminar 100 of the new curriculum.
- b. Design optional one-credit spring course(s) open to all students, but required for students on academic probation, possibly gendered.
- c. Ensure universal access to wrap-around support services (mentoring, advising, general academic tutoring in the new centralized Student Academic Success Center). Specific programs must be implemented in the context of a transition-to-college plan that is inclusive of all students.
- d. Design a sustainable fiscal and personnel plan that ensures program success.

#### 3. Assessment of Programs

- a. Design an effective assessment schedule for the program that includes self-assessment opportunities for students lined to metacognition learning outcomes developed by CCVC and learning outcomes developed by student development.
- b. *Implement a comprehensive campus climate survey. Review past campus climate surveys (IDC, Mellon); consider best options to track our campus climate in terms of diversity and inclusion. Apply appropriately to the work of FYX (Institutional Research; Academic Assessment).*

## B. Advising and Mentorship

1. Provide orientation and on-going training and support for faculty serving first-year students, and strengthen the connections between faculty and first-year residential life to develop initiatives (learning communities, faculty mentors).
  - a. Create an Advising Syllabus for faculty advisors teaching courses with a high percentage of first-year students and provide training in how to use it.
  - b. Create incentives, faculty recognition awards, and reward systems that reflect the importance of first-year teaching and advising.
2. Create a campus-wide advising culture with articulated programs to help students learn to identify, value, and use the available resources for advising and career planning, and for developing the skills to make authentic and healthy academic and social choices. Possibilities include:
  - a. One-on-one advising (with faculty, student development staff, academic advising).
  - b. Peer-to-peer engagement or mentoring opportunities with student employees, mentors within athletic programs, multi-year student housing, to promote engagement among students across their time at CSB/SJU.
3. Implement a standardized program on personal motivations for pursuing higher education. Create opportunities for students to explore the reasons they chose to attend CSB/SJU, and to consider how best to thrive here. Possibilities include:
  - a. Self-assessment of their experience, to make remaining here (or transferring) a conscious and informed choice.
  - b. Build upon initial conversations (“What brought you in the door?”) about how to build resiliency, balance, perseverance, motivation, buy-in – Why am I here? Which CSB/SJU programs and resources match my skills and passions?
4. Work with academic departments to facilitate the nuanced exploration of self and of possible majors, so that students explore their major interests in a thoughtful, informed, and reflective manner.
  - a. Create/invest in a four-year student academic/career development curriculum (like ATLAS).
  - b. Communicate Major Requirements with standardized Departmental Curriculum checklists posted on website and included in the official catalog; clearly identifying the requirements for entry into and progress within the major.
5. Review current registration process for new students for fall and spring semester, including how students are placed in particular courses.





## C. Academic Curriculum

1. *Align the new lab (see Appendix E) with FYS/Seminar 100. Consider other first-year Common Curriculum courses in light of the proposed optional one-credit spring course(s). (Director of Common Curriculum)*
2. *Build common reading(s) into FYS/Seminar 100, taken by all first-year students in the fall semester. (Director of Common Curriculum and FYS Director)*
3. *Clarify role of Seminar 100 faculty person in terms of advising. (Director of Common Curriculum and FYS Director)*
4. *Design a process for the submission of syllabi for courses in the Common Curriculum to the Director of the Common Curriculum. Assist faculty in including the general education learning outcomes for that course on the syllabus (Director of Common Curriculum).*
5. *Assist departments in assessing first-year student learning for courses with high first-year enrollment. (Academic Dean, APSAC; CCC)*

## D. Co-Curriculum

1. Define the stages of orientation: pre-arrival information, transition to campus (first days prior to classes), intermediate (first six weeks), advanced (yearlong). Define learning outcomes for each stage. Provide explicit campus expectations regarding achieving these learning outcomes.
2. Incorporate intentional academic components into the “transition to campus” orientation component in a way that links the initial information to what will happen in FYS.
3. Leverage technology for possible orientation modules that can be used prior to and after arrival to campus.
4. Address timely and effective orientation information as well as delivery methods with early/late new student enrollment.
5. Consider a summer bridge program.
6. Study the value/fit of living/learning communities as a high-impact practice initiative for our first-year residence areas.
7. *Design student leadership training to achieve FYX learning outcomes, such as inclusivity and mentorship. (Director of Orientation)*
8. *Address high-risk behavior related to first-year alcohol and substance use as an impediment to student success. (CSB and SJU Deans of Students; Alcohol 2.0 Task Force)*
9. *Survey families of historically underrepresented students to determine best methods to increase their knowledge of and connection to CSB/SJU in order to support their student. Address assumptions of the hidden curricula related to parent information and engagement. (Institutional Research)*





## E. Professional Development of Faculty and Staff

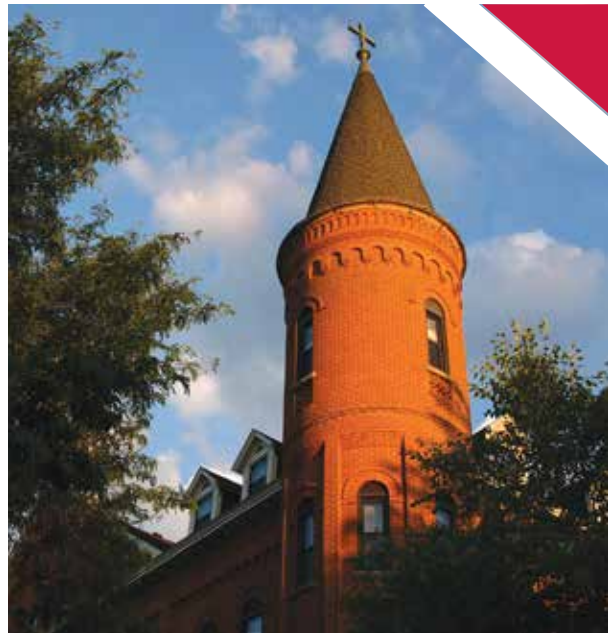
1. *Require all new faculty teaching and advising first-year students to attend workshops/other programming aimed at the needs of first-year students, including strategies for introducing students to the meaning and value of a liberal arts education. Provide professional development opportunities for continuing faculty working with first-year students. (Academic Dean and Dean of the Faculty)*
2. *Provide professional development opportunities for Student Development Staff focused on extended orientation and other programming related to the success of first-year students. (Director of Orientation; CSB and SJU Deans of Students)*
3. *Include inclusivity training in student and faculty/staff orientation as preparation for providing curriculum and co-curricular activities/programs throughout the first year. (Human Resources, Intercultural Directions Council, Dean of the Faculty)*
4. *Highlight the importance of teaching first-year students in faculty annual performance, third-year, tenure, and promotion reviews; review all faculty recognition awards in light of recommended first-year teaching/advising award proposal from the Implementation Task Force. (Dean of the Faculty)*
5. *Highlight the importance of working with first-year students in annual staff performance review. (CSB and SJU Deans of Students)*

## F. Organizational

1. Hire a Director of the First-Year Experience to develop an integrated cross-divisional, cross-departmental structure for unifying and facilitating the first-year experience components. The lead person of this structure would be the staff member in charge of enhancing, evaluating, and improving the first-year experience.
2. Establish an advisory committee of faculty who teach high first-year enrolled courses, student development and academic advising.
3. Assign leads from Academic Affairs and Student Development to collaborate on orientation efforts in and outside the classroom creating a more seamless and connected experience for first years.
4. Create FYX website. Include the philosophy, learning outcomes and key resources with references for faculty and students. Make the website easily accessible and user-friendly. (Implementation Task Force with the assistance of the Office of Marketing & Communication)
5. *Brand the first-year experience in a way that easily identifies all in and outside class experiences related to the program. (Office of Marketing & Communication)*

## G. Bigger Institutional Issues

1. Create a committee of key Academic Affairs and Student Development personnel that meet monthly to share information, coordinate and collaborate efforts and discuss campus needs.
2. Review staffing, policy, campus traditions, and educational efforts to ensure the safety, health and wellness, and inclusion for all students.
3. Prioritize programming to practice inclusion skills – e.g.: RAD, IISS programs, MLK week, Gender Summit.
4. *Explore avenues to ensure counseling services can meet all first-year student needs. Evaluate current staffing levels, hours of service, types of services and programs, etc. to determine if gaps exist and provide necessary additional resources. (CSB and SJU Deans of Students)*
5. *Create a functional master calendar required to reserve space so as to improve coordination and communication among student clubs, departments, and academic programs for events. This will help the general education courses to incorporate co-curricular events and could assist in managing the overlap of key programs and events. (Information Technology Services; Events)*
6. *Review policy on registration holds. (Registrar, Academic Dean, Assistant Dean/Director of Academic Advising)*
7. *Recruit and retain faculty and staff from underrepresented groups. (Dean of the Faculty; HR Inclusive Hiring Task Force)*
8. *Continue (Mellon) inclusivity training and expand to include entire community. (Dean of the Faculty; Intercultural Directions Council)*



## Section 6: Strategies for Implementing the Recommendations

### A. Implementation Process

We recommend the implementation of a curriculum for first-year students that integrates their curricular and co-curricular lives in a way that helps them transition to and be successful in their first year of college. Our vision embraces a collaborative, integrated process. Thus, we plan to populate the FYX Implementation Team with faculty and staff from across the institutions. Do to the fact that many employees work reduced contracts over the summer, we will form the Implementation Team in June and July so that they are ready to begin their work in August.

The FYX Implementation Task Force has the following charge:

- Develop learning outcomes**
- Develop programming to meet the learning outcomes**
- Develop assessment strategies for these learning outcomes and programs**
- Lead the search for the Directors of FYX**
- Propose an FYX implementation schedule and plan**
- Communicate regularly with the community, getting feedback and giving updates**

### B. Sample Timeline

**May 2017:** Populate the FYX Implementation Task Force with faculty and staff most familiar with or working closely with first-year students and their needs (e.g., Mike Connolly, Emily Esch, Jason Kelly, Kyhl Lyndgaard, Lacey Solheid, Jody Terhaar, and Sarah Gewirtz).

**June 2017:** Emily Esch and Doug Mullin attend the FoE Summit meeting and workshop on implementation

**August 2017:** At the All Campus Forum present FoE report to the community

**Fall 2017:** FYX Implementation Team begins work refining the learning outcomes. Pilot component of FYX including common readings and a redesign of the academic success component of fall orientation. Begin search for FYX Program Director.

**Spring 2018:** Refine and develop programming to meet the learning outcomes, and create an assessment model and timeline.

**Fall 2018:** Finalize the learning outcomes and programming in time to be approved by the relevant faculty committees (new course proposals are due by December 1 for implementation the following academic year). Begin implementation of FYX components where appropriate and continue pilot projects.

**Fall 2019:** FYX fully implemented.

## Section 7: Appendices



### A. Examples of Learning Outcomes and First-Year Programs

#### B. Student Survey Results on Questions Related to:

1. Dimension 2: Organization
2. Dimension 3: Transitions
3. Dimension 5: All Students
4. Dimension 6: Learning
5. Dimension 7: Diversity
6. Dimension 8: Roles and Purposes
7. Overall Evaluation of Institution

#### C. Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

1. Dimension 1: Philosophy
2. Dimension 2: Organization
3. Dimension 3: Transitions
4. Dimension 4: Faculty/Campus Culture
5. Dimension 5: All Students
6. Dimension 6: Learning
7. Dimension 7: Diversity
8. Dimension 8: Roles and Purposes
9. Dimension 9: Improvement
10. Overall Evaluation of Institution

#### D. Reports from Dimension Committees:

1. Philosophy
2. Organization
3. Transitions
4. Faculty
5. All Students
6. Learning
7. Diversity
8. Roles and Purposes
9. Improvement

#### E. FYX Lab Prototype

1. Learning Outcomes
2. Design

#### F. Current Practices Inventory (CPI)

1. Demographics of First-Year Cohort Fall 2014
2. Retention Data
3. High Enrollment Courses for First-Year Students
4. High DFWI Courses for First-Year Students



## Appendix A

### Examples of Learning Outcomes and First-Year Programs

It is beyond the scope of this report to provide learning outcomes and programming, but we offer the following examples from other institutions as a starting point of discussion for the FYX Implementation Team:

#### 1. Learning Goals/Outcomes

- A. There are several ways to approach the development of learning outcomes. **Goucher College** has stated their goals for their first-year students in broad, engaging ways. We offer two examples here, (the complete list of their learning outcomes can be found at: <http://www.goucher.edu/student-life/new-student-information/first-year-learning-outcomes>).

##### Develop a Plan

You will develop an understanding and appreciation of the liberal arts tradition and the core curriculum at Goucher College. Ultimately, you will become self-directed in developing a working plan for your educational path, including a study-abroad plan that is an integral part of your overall academic vision.

##### Engage in the Community

You will identify with and become involved in the Goucher community in academic, co-curricular, and social arenas. You will develop the self-awareness and confidence needed to proactively engage with others in and out of the classroom. You will participate in co-curricular activities, organizations, or initiatives and cultivate at least one mentoring relationship with a staff or faculty member. You will embrace Goucher's community principles of respect, inclusion, communication, service and social justice, and responsibility. You will develop an awareness of your own identity and place within a diverse community.



- B. The **University of South Carolina**, which offers the oldest first-year experience program in the United States, has developed six principles that guide their creation of 10 assessable learning outcomes. We offer examples of each below; (for a full description follow this link: <http://www.sc.edu/univ101/aboutus/goals.html>).

### USC Basic Principles

Community should be established early in order to promote a sense of belonging and to create an inclusive and welcoming learning environment.

The focus of this class is having students reflect on and process course content and their experiences, rather than simply distribute information.

### USC Learning Outcomes

#### Foster academic success

Identify and apply strategies to effectively manage time and priorities.

Adapt and apply appropriate academic strategies to their courses and learning experiences. Promote personal development, wellbeing, and social responsibility.

Clarify their values and identity and articulate how these shape their perspectives and relationships with people who are similar to and different from themselves.

Initiate a process toward the attainment of personal and professional goals and articulate potential pathways to employability.

## 2. Programs

Institutions have developed different types of courses as part of their first-year experience programming. Below are several programs chosen because they illustrate different ways to implement first-year learning outcomes.

### Heidelberg University

Heidelberg University has a three-semester program for new students called AIM Hei. One interesting feature of this program is that it is non-credit bearing but required for graduation.

From page 33 of the Heidelberg University catalog:

*The AIM (advise, inspire, mentor) Hei mentoring program is a three-semester program for new incoming students that provides a structured means by which students can: 1. design and implement a program of study – both inside and outside the classroom – aimed at achieving the learning goals the University has for its graduates; 2. Define, explore, and reflect upon their academic, personal, and professional goals and relate those goals to Heidelberg and beyond. New students select an AIM Hei themed section and work with that faculty member for three semesters.*

*The AIM Hei program is designed to meet many of the kinds of learning outcomes that we have discussed regarding FYX, including an understanding of the value of a liberal arts education, the integration of curricular and co-curricular activities, goal-setting, and awareness of the resources available.*



### **Beloit College**

Beloit College has a program called First-Year Initiatives. There is a first-year Initiatives Seminar course that looks much like CSB/SJU's first semester of FYS in that it teaches both basic academic skills and introduces students to college resources. However, they have designed this seminar to begin during orientation week:

The seminar begins with a one-week orientation session (New Student Days) and continues through the rest of the first semester. During New Student Days, students get to know their Initiatives advisor and other seminar participants, engage with a common reading, and attend a series of programs with topics that range from adjusting to the culture of their new environment to reflecting on community engagement.

Beloit has also developed some interesting Advising programs. The FYI Seminar instructor is the advisor for the liberal arts and stays with the student for at least the first year, even after the student has found a faculty advisor in their major. This is the stated role for the Initiatives advisor:

- to assist you in designing your educational trajectory;
- to help you reflect upon, develop, and implement a strategy for achieving your academic, career, and personal goals;
- to connect you with other resources on campus that can help you to address specific academic, career, and personal concerns;
- to make all reasonable efforts to be able to meet with you when you request an appointment;
- to support and stimulate your capacity to make informed decisions, to negotiate difficulties, and to take responsibility for and learn from the consequences of your actions and choices.

Beloit also has an Advising Practicum for the first three semesters, which is a series of workshops and sessions designed to help students plan their college career (see: <https://www.beloit.edu/initiativesprogram/advising/practicum/>).

## Hendrix College

Hendrix College has developed their first-year experience around four core areas: Academic Advising, Academic Support Services, Common First-Year Courses, and First-Year Peer Mentors. Here are brief descriptions, taken from the website, of each of these areas:

**Academic Advising** – All first-year students at Hendrix are assigned to a full-time faculty advisor who is a member of our Council of New Student Advisors (CNSA), a group of advisors experienced in working with new students. Each CNSA advisor is a mentor, ally, and resource for new students' early academic work.

**Academic Support Services** – Successful Hendrix students cultivate an array of mentors (course professors, advisors, staff professionals, etc.) and programs to assist in and support their academic work. Our central assistance program in academics is Academic Support Services. Students are encouraged to use these services for all interests and concerns relating to their academic work – tutoring, time management, test preparation and anxiety, disability services, individual appointments on any topic or concern that is related to academic success and satisfaction, etc.

**Common First-Year Courses** – New students at Hendrix take two common courses in their first semester at Hendrix: The Engaged Citizen (1 whole course credit) and the Explorations new student seminar (.25 credit). Both were developed and approved by Hendrix faculty to orient new students to the academic climate and expectations of the College and to facilitate their early success. Requiring these courses underscores the College's commitment to providing students with early common academic experiences that engage them in the liberal arts approach provided by Hendrix.

**First-Year Peer Mentors** – At Hendrix, every first-year student is supported in his or her academic work by two student academic mentors, an Academic Peer Mentor (APM) and an Explorations Peer Mentor (EPA). An Academic Peer Mentor (APM) works with the new student advisees assigned to a specific CNSA faculty advisor. The APM stays in touch with his or her new student advisees throughout the year and is available as a peer model and resource for first-year students in all areas related to academics. APMs are strong academic students with a particular commitment to assisting new students' transition to Hendrix through academic advising. An Explorations Peer Mentor (EPA) is assigned to each Explorations class, benefiting the course and its students in a variety of ways by providing this upperclassman perspective.

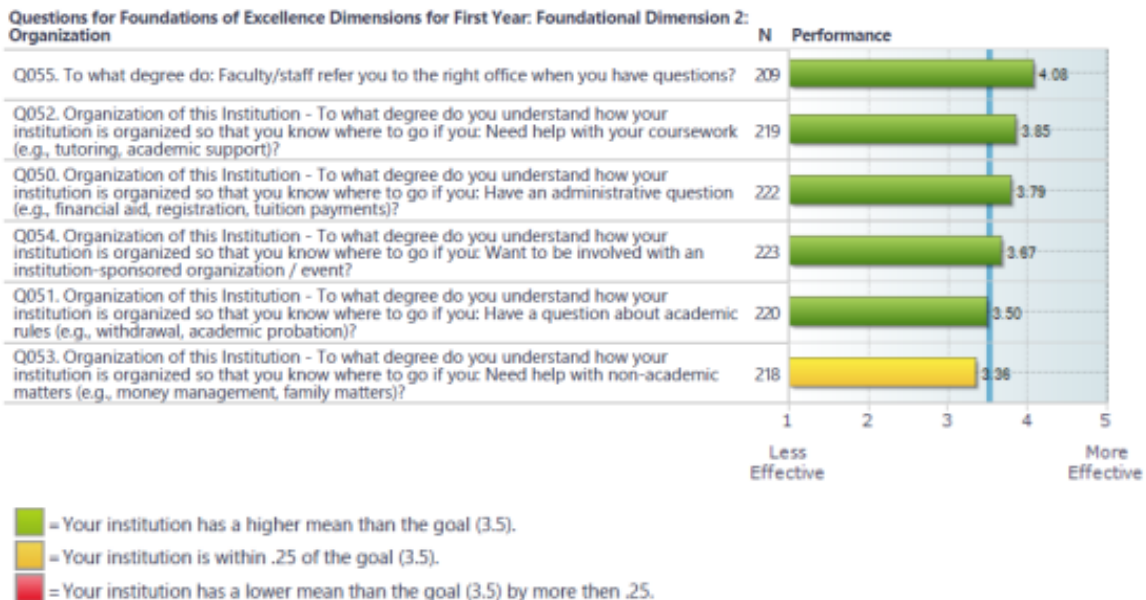






## Appendix B.1. Student Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 2: Organization



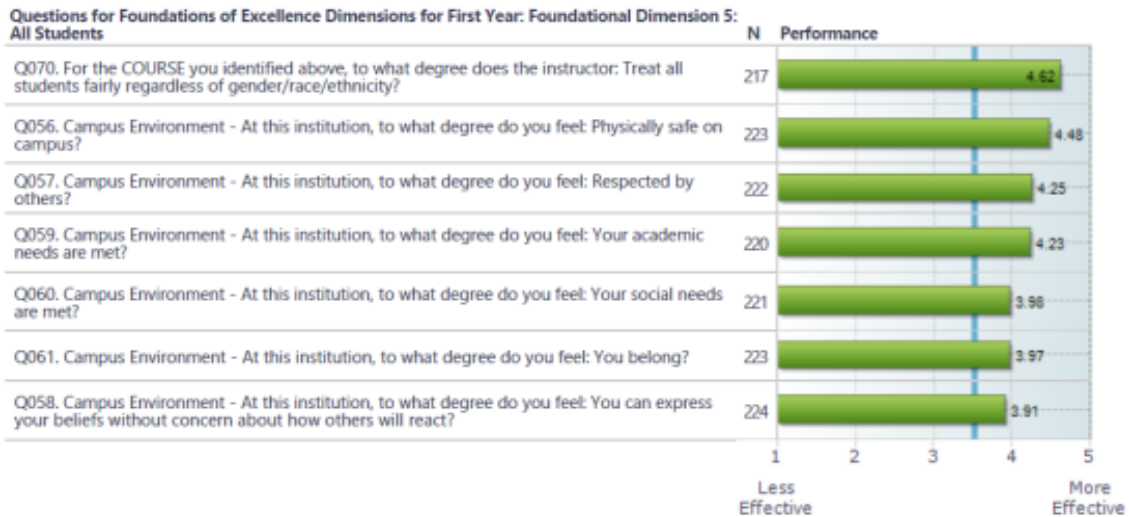
## Appendix B.2. Student Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 3: Transitions



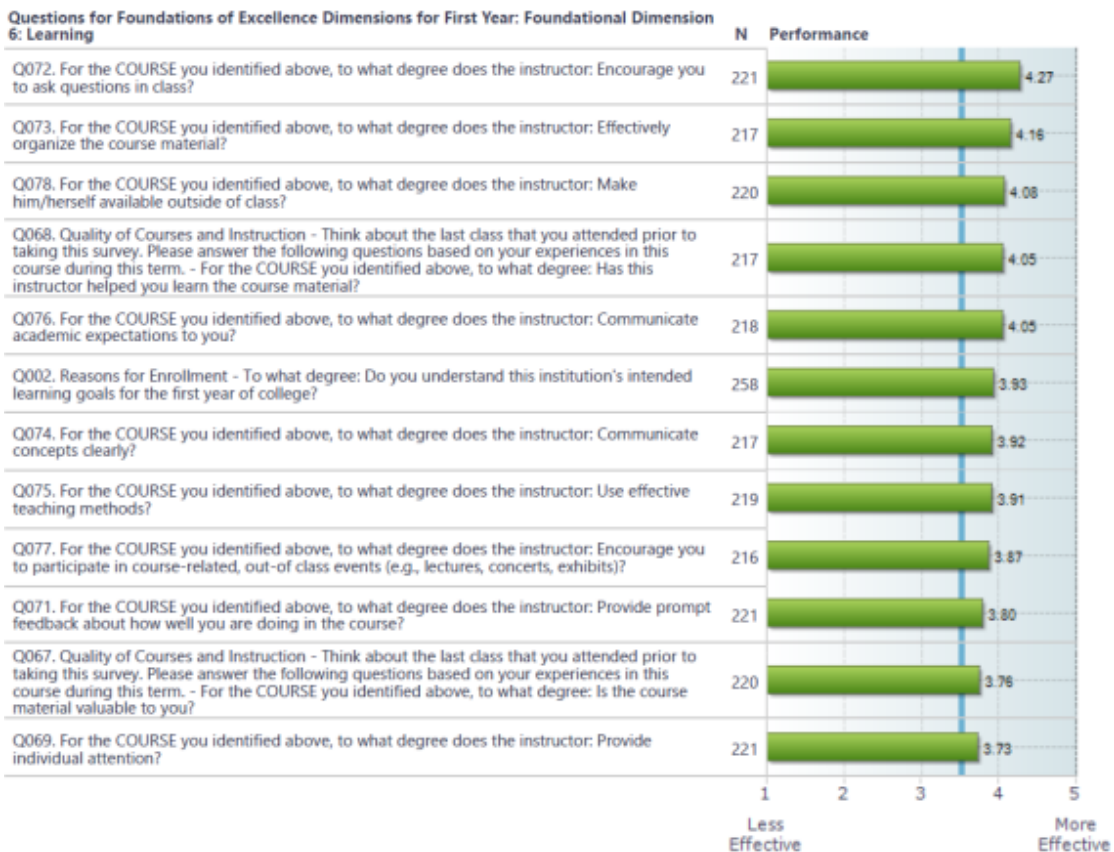
## Appendix B.3. Student Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 5: All Students



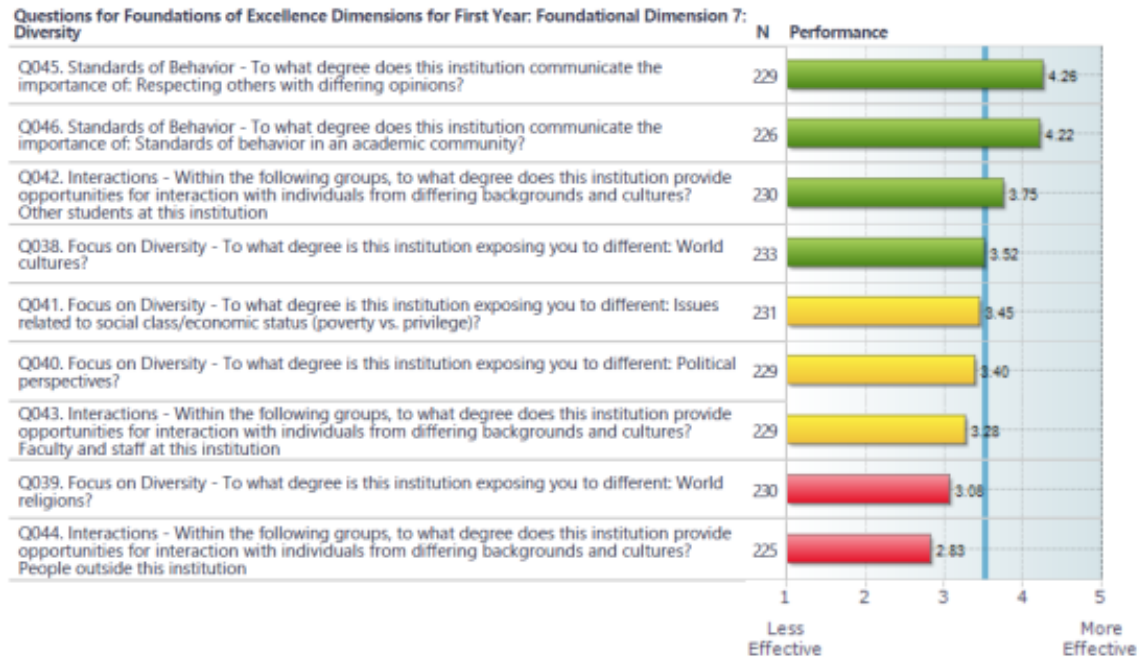
## Appendix B.4. Student Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 6: Learning



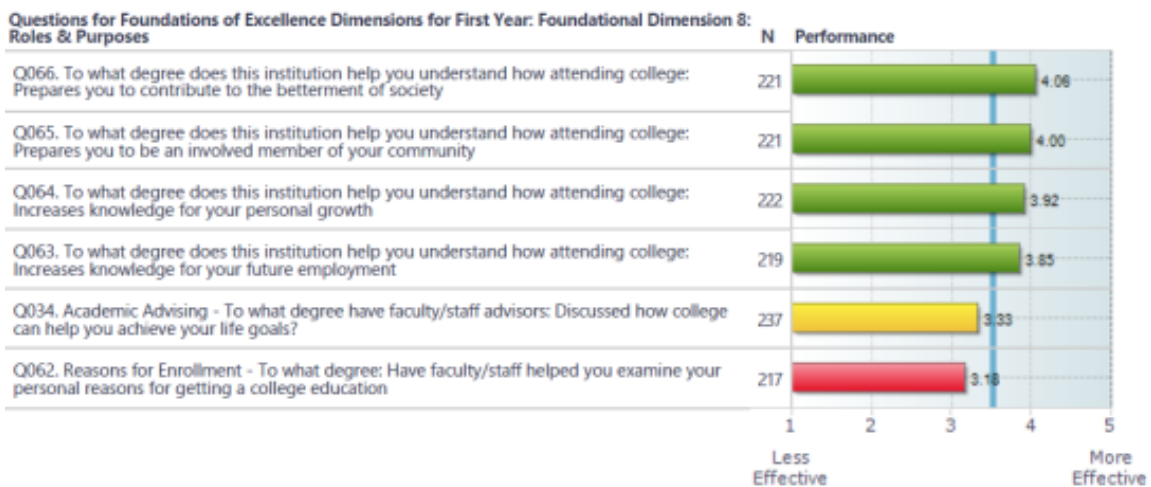
## Appendix B.5. Student Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 7: Diversity



## Appendix B.6. Student Survey Results on Questions Related to:

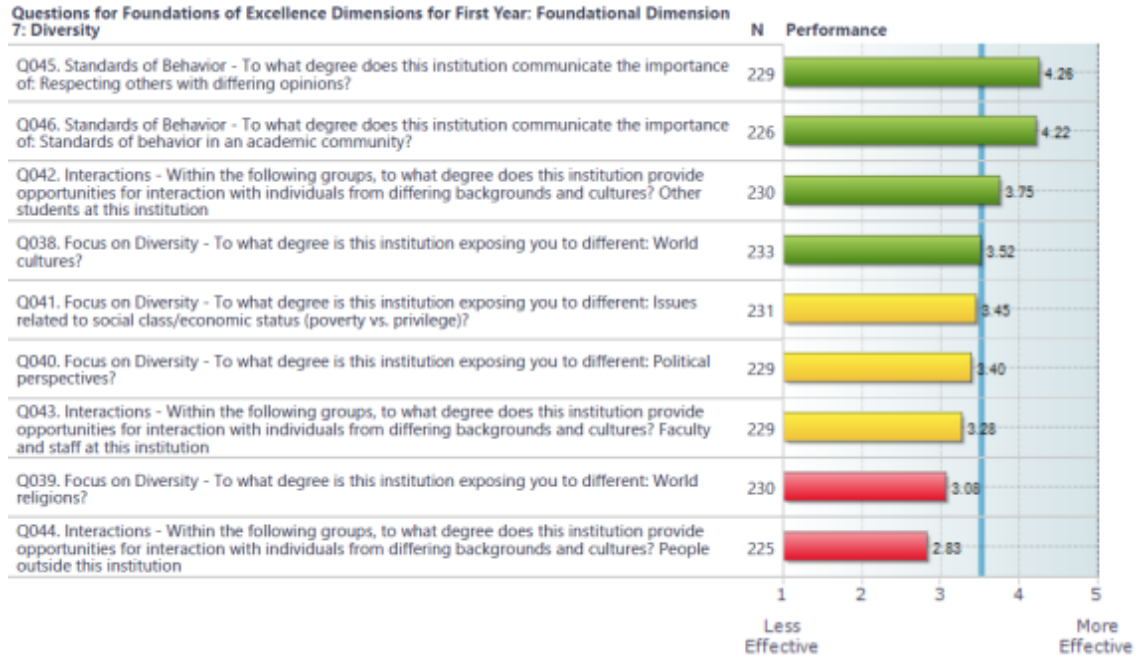
### Dimension 8: Roles and Purposes



- = Your institution has a higher mean than the goal (3.5).
- = Your institution is within .25 of the goal (3.5).
- = Your institution has a lower mean than the goal (3.5) by more than .25.

## Appendix B.7. Student Survey Results on Questions Related to:

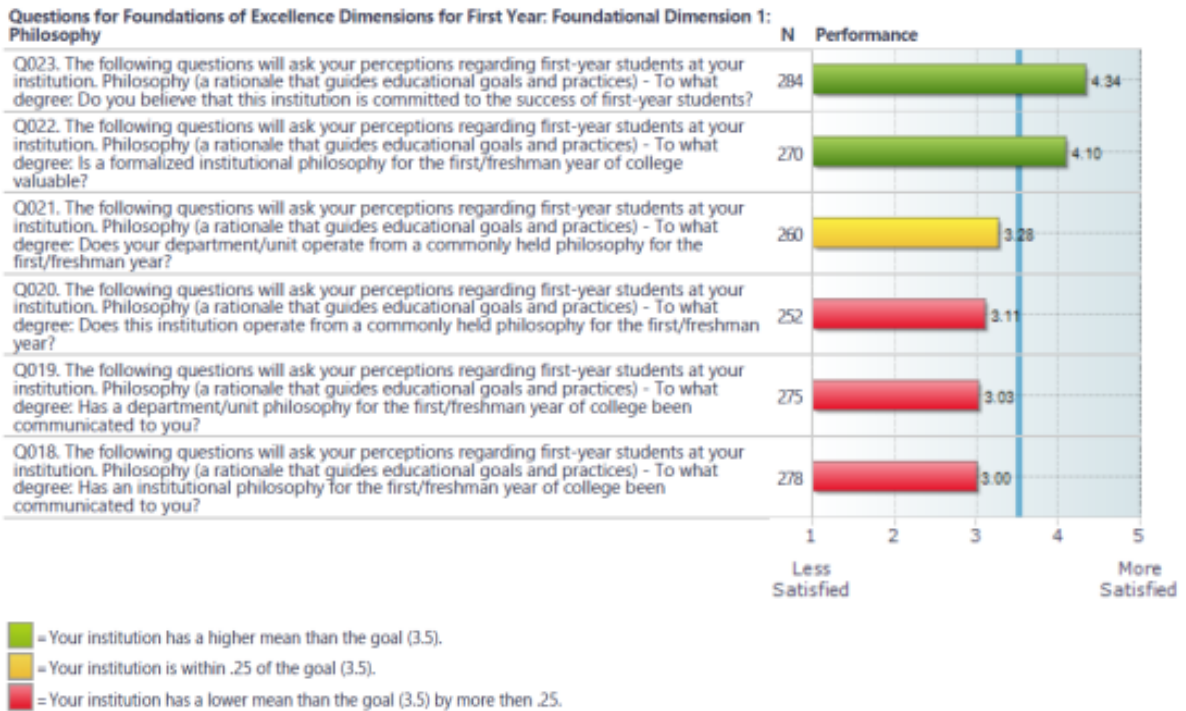
### Overall Evaluation of Institution





Appendix C.1.  
Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

Dimension 1: Philosophy



Appendix C.2.

# Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

## Dimension 2: Organization



- = Your institution has a higher mean than the goal (3.5).
- = Your institution is within .25 of the goal (3.5).
- = Your institution has a lower mean than the goal (3.5) by more than .25.



## Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

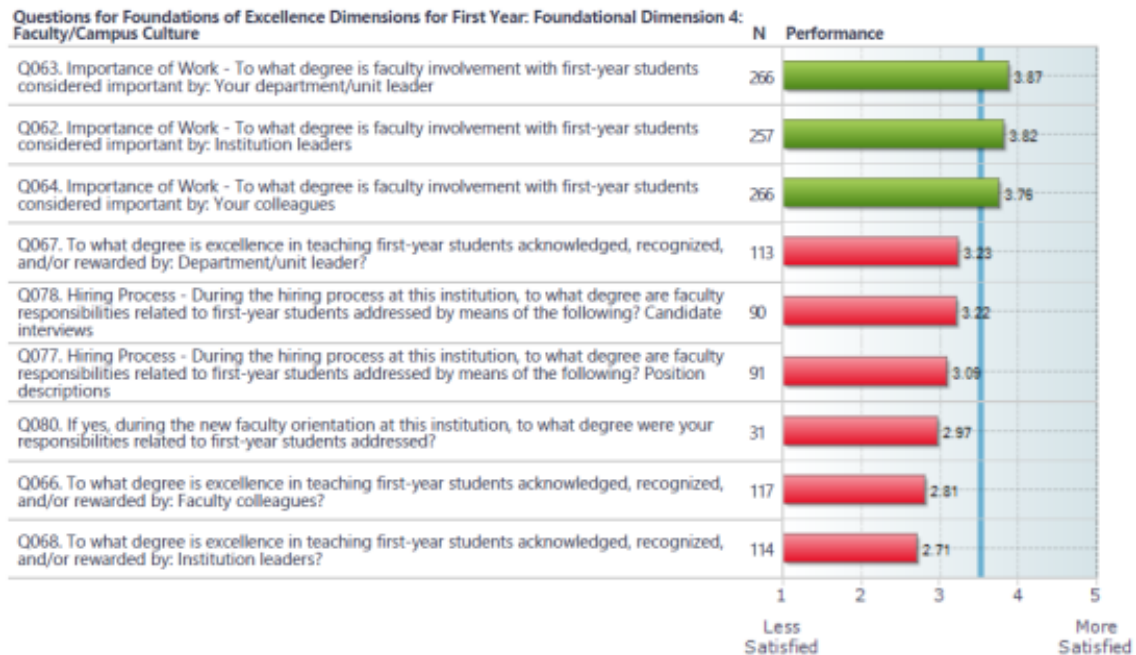
### Dimension 3: Transitions



## Appendix C.4.

## Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

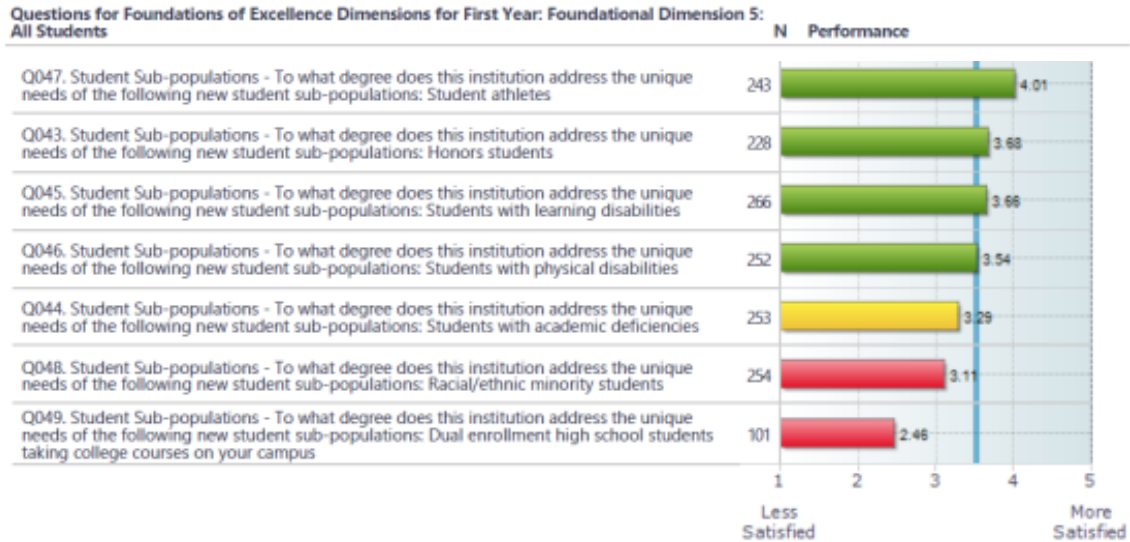
### Dimension 4: Faculty/Campus Culture





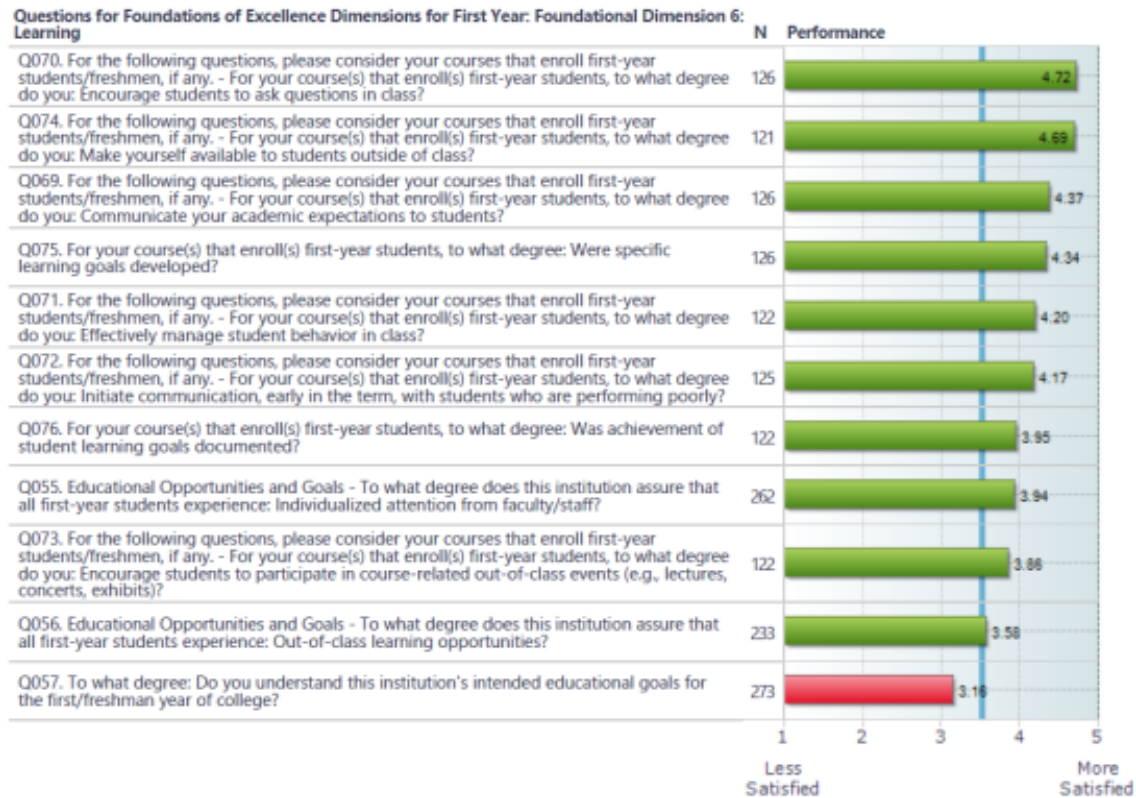
## Appendix C.5. Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 5: All Students



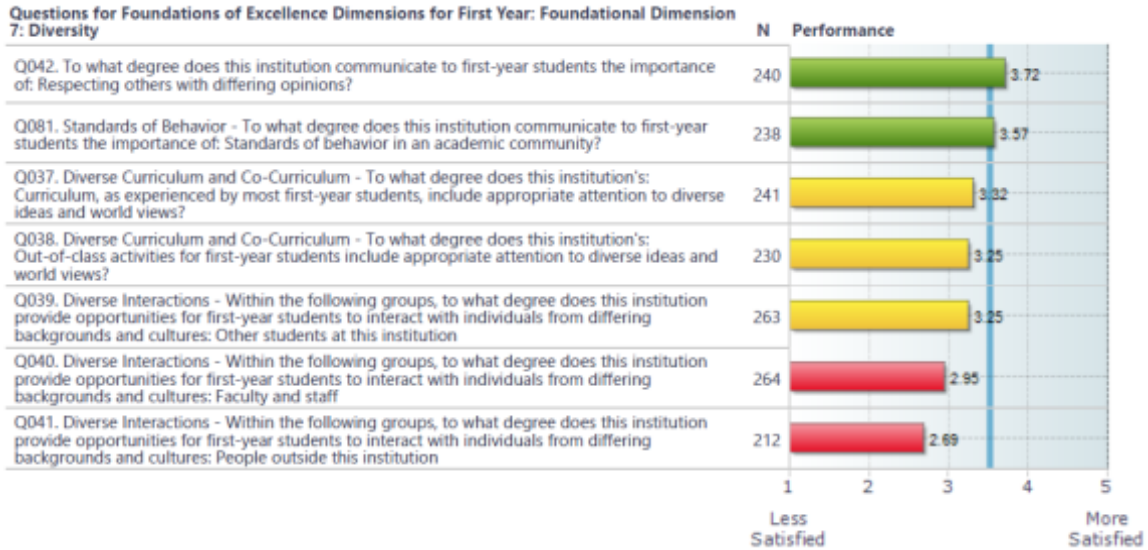
## Appendix C.6. Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 6: Learning



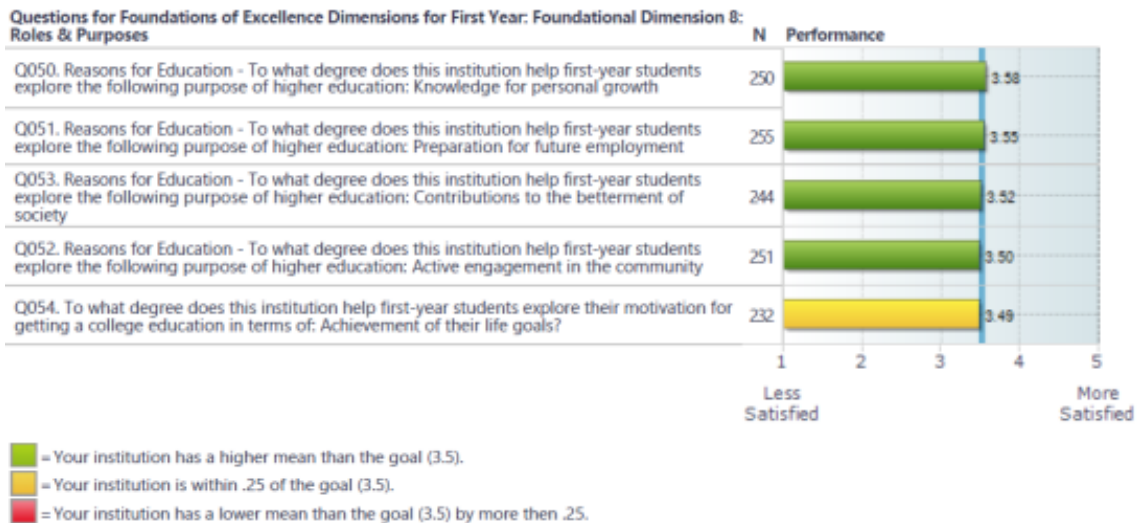
## Appendix C.7. Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 7: Diversity



## Appendix C.8. Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 8: Roles and Purposes



## Appendix C.9. Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Dimension 9: Improvement

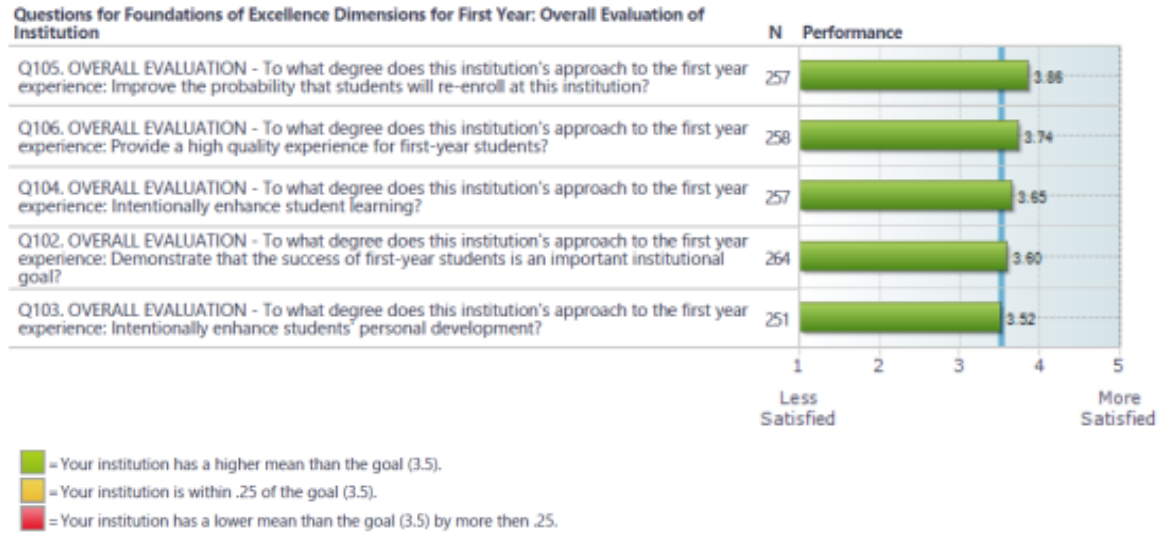


- = Your institution has a higher mean than the goal (3.5).
- = Your institution is within .25 of the goal (3.5).
- = Your institution has a lower mean than the goal (3.5) by more than .25.



## Appendix C.10. Faculty/Staff Survey Results on Questions Related to:

### Overall Evaluation of Institution



## Appendix D.1. Foundations of Excellence® Philosophy Dimension Report

11/30/2016

**Foundations Institutions approach the first year in ways that are intentional and based on a philosophy/rationale of the first year that informs relevant institutional policies and practices.**

The philosophy/rationale is explicit, clear and easily understood, consistent with the institutional mission, widely disseminated, and, as appropriate, reflects a consensus of campus constituencies. The philosophy/rationale is also the basis for first-year organizational policies, practices, structures, leadership, department/unit philosophies, and resource allocation.

### Section 1: Executive Summary

We found no evidence of an explicit written philosophy for the first year of college at CSB and/or at SJU, nor for any department or unit of the colleges. That said, our faculty and staff have demonstrated and expressed a high level of commitment to the success of our first-year students, and they believe that a formalized institutional philosophy would be valuable.

We identified guiding documents that we then used to draft a starting model of institutional philosophy for the success of first-year students.

We recommend that this draft be reviewed by various stakeholders, and after approved disseminated throughout the campus community.

**Section 2: Philosophy Dimension Committee**

Name	Title	Committee Role
Karen Erickson	Academic Dean	Committee Member
Emily Esch	Associate Professor of Philosophy	Committee Member
Mary Geller	CSB Vice President for Student Development	Committee Member
Doug Mullin	SJU Vice President for Student Development	Committee Member

**Section 3: Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee**

We found no evidence of an explicit written philosophy for the first year of college at CSB and/or SJU, nor for any department or unit of the colleges. Nonetheless, FOE survey results show that nearly nine out of 10 (88.7 percent) of faculty and staff reported a “High” or “Very High” level of belief that the institution is committed to the success of first-year students. We interpret this to mean that even though we currently have no written philosophy statement, faculty and staff of our institutions “get it” that our colleges truly are highly committed to the success of our first-year students. The commitment of our faculty and staff to the success of our first-year students is reflected in the overall retention rates of our first-year students (95 percent overall from fall-to-spring, 86.6 percent from fall-to-fall). This compares with an overall fall-to-fall retention rate of 71 percent for four-year private colleges and 65 percent for four-year public colleges nationwide. Even our subpopulations of students have fall-to-fall retention rates above 80 percent (84.2 percent for women; 89.1 percent for men; 96.9 percent for international students; 80.6 percent for Hispanic/Latino students; 88.9 percent for American Indian/Alaska Native students; 84.6 percent for Asian-American students; 82.9 percent for Black/African-American students; 100 percent for Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander students; and 87.1 percent for white students).

In general, we attribute these strong retention rates to supportive campus cultures which include the strong dedication and hard work of our faculty and staff in promoting the success of our first-year students. Nonetheless, we recognize that the changing demographics of our student body are becoming more and more reflective of our national diversity. We believe that relational skills and pedagogies will need to become more accommodating to the ever-changing learning and developmental needs of these new populations of students.

We believe that a clearly articulated and widely promulgated philosophy of the first year will be of tremendous help to faculty and staff as they plan, implement, and assess the effectiveness of curricula and programming for first-year student success. Indeed, over three-fourths of faculty and staff (77.8 percent) surveyed indicated that a formalized institutional philosophy for the first year of college would be highly or very highly valuable.

The Philosophy Dimension Committee thus put significant energy into reviewing institutional guiding documents and identifying elements of a sound philosophy for first-year students that reflects our institutional character. We then drafted, vetted, and revised the following model philosophy which we offer for consideration:

**The CSB/SJU Catholic, Benedictine, residential, liberal arts education begins with a first-year program designed to launch a successful college experience for all students through integrated student learning inside and outside the classroom. Formed in and informed by community, first-year students develop critical thinking and leadership skills, love for learning, respect for persons, and responsible actions in service to others.**

#### Section 4: Recommended Grade & Rationale

Recommended Grade: D

Rationale: This grade reflects how we see we have done institutionally in terms of accomplishment versus potential. We see tremendous openness and even desire among faculty and staff for us to adopt a philosophy. We also believe there is much consensus about what should be included in the philosophy.

#### Section 5: Recommendations for Action

PI	Recommendation	Description	Priority
PI 1.1 Philosophy/Rationale	1. Review Philosophy	Review philosophy draft and receive feedback from steering committee, student development directors, student senates, the academic affairs leadership team, presidents' cabinets	High
PI 1.2 Content	1. Develop, review, and disseminate philosophy	Draft of philosophy completed in fall 2016; will be reviewed by steering committee and other groups as listed in the report.	High
PI 1.3 Dissemination	1. Dissemination of Philosophy	Upon approval, the first-year philosophy should be disseminated via website and sent to student development directors, faculty curriculum committees, department chairs, honors director, director of general education, student senates, admission, and the presidents' cabinets, and other relevant offices.	High
PI 1.4 Suggested Review of Institutional Documents	1. Resources	Orientation of students, faculty, staff should include attention to the philosophy of first-year. Philosophy should also inform decisions on curriculum and other programming.	High



## Appendix D.2.

# Foundations of Excellence® Organization Dimension Report

12/7/2016

{ Foundations Institutions create organizational structures and policies that provide a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated approach to the first year. }

These structures and policies provide oversight and alignment of all first-year efforts. A coherent first-year experience is realized and maintained through effective partnerships among academic affairs, student affairs, and other administrative units and is enhanced by ongoing faculty and staff development activities and appropriate budgetary arrangements.




---

### Section 1: Executive Summary

All of the components of a strong first-year experience exist. Our central finding is that coordination and integration of the first-year experience could make the biggest difference in students first-year experience. We recommend a centralized first-year experience structure directed by a person whose main role is to organize and facilitate information sharing and collaboration on services/programs.

### Section 2: Organization Dimension Committee

Name	Title	Committee Role
Mike Ewing	Director of Counseling & Health Promotion	Committee Chair
Hannah Kooima	Student FYF Co-Director	Committee Member
Johnny Kroehle	Student FYF Co-Director	Committee Member
Sarah Pruet	ESL Coordinator/Instructor	Committee Chair

### Section 3: Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

The committee determined that elements of a first-year experience exist with limited coordination among and between the elements. Administrative and academic units offer programs and services for first-years, but there is a lack of a unifying mission for a cohesive first-year experience across the institutions. In addition, there is no person or unit with ongoing responsibility for the organizational leadership and management of the first-year experience. Very few members of the community (students, faculty, staff) know all of what is available to assist first-years with their transition to college life and the CSB/SJU community.

The transition from being prospective students to being enrolled students appears to be effectively managed by Admission and Financial Aid. Students receive information (from Admission) about campus resources during the summer prior to matriculation, and students are expected to participate in the four-day orientation program facilitated by Student Activities and Leadership Development. However, students would benefit from more information and training on CSB/SJU communication systems and expectations for engagement in the information systems and technology utilized by academic and administrative units (Outlook, CANVAS, etc.). The posting of midterm grades for all first-year students is broadly understood and provides an early warning mechanism for identifying students who may be struggling with the transition to college. In addition, the Student Support Team provides an additional early warning mechanism, although the SST is not limited to focusing on first-year students. First-Year Seminar (FYS) professors serve as the academic advisors for first-year students which has the strength of the students seeing their academic advisors two-three times per week. One weakness of this design is that some FYS professors do not know the CSB/SJU curriculum in as much detail as is needed to effectively advise first-year students.



The overall effectiveness of the first-year experience is impacted by the limited coordination and integration of the elements comprising the first-year experience. Better oversight, coordination and integration could make current beneficial tools like midterm grades more powerful. FYS professors have summer training sessions, but ongoing training focused on first-year student development and trouble shooting would be helpful for all faculty who teach first-year students. The Learning Enhancement Services (LES) provides a good model, but its voluntary nature prevented the saturation necessary to develop general faculty awareness and skill in responding effectively to first-year student needs. Building on the LES example to develop training sessions relevant to all faculty with first-year students will facilitate the timely use of existing resources.



Some referral and intervention mechanisms exist, but without a first-year experience director, no one monitors the referral/intervention traffic to insure that referrals are followed up systematically and effectively. Academic Advising staff and others do what they can, but don't have time to track all concerns expressed, and students' problems that touch both academic and residential dimensions (which is common) may get lost between the two because of miscommunication or, more likely, lack of communication. A first-year experience director could be based in an existing area – academic advising, counseling, the libraries or learning commons, for example – and could have some routine duties in addition to first-year experience oversight (which should be the majority of the job description), but must be in regular communication with students, faculty and staff in all areas on a regular basis.

Policies governing the awarding of AP/IB/PSEO/CIS credits vary by department and can seem arbitrary and confusing to students and parents. This is another area where a central source of accurate information for students, parents, and faculty and staff will alleviate frustration.

Like credit-transfer policies, the process for choosing a post-FYS advisor varies by department. Departmental variation is problematic when it appears to students and parents as haphazard and difficult to navigate, so a well-informed first-year experience director can clarify the steps students need to take depending on their chosen department or undecided status. FYS professor/advisors do a generally good job helping students with registration, but all would benefit from the recommended central person/office consistently well-informed about the policies of the registrar's office, financial aid, health-related registration holds, and the other areas that most commonly generate questions and anxiety among students and parents.

#### **Section 4: Recommended Grade & Rationale**

Recommended Grade: C

Rationale: The programs and services that comprise an effective first-year experience exist but are not fully and efficiently integrated and coordinated.



**Section 5: Recommendations for Action**

<b>PI</b>	<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Priority</b>
PI 2.1 Description	1. Staffing	Add a staff member with significant responsibility for FY services coordination. This person should be housed in an existing department needing more staffing.	High
PI 2.1 Description	2. Ask A Resource Person	Add a section to the CSB/SJU website that lists and describes the resources available to first-year students. And – include a “Ask a Resource Person” button (similar to what the librarians do). Perhaps this could be staffed by the Info Desks.	High
PI 2.2 First-Year Students	2. Early Warning	In addition to midterm grades and registration holds, develop an electronic “concern about a student” reporting process. For example, clicking an icon takes the user to a Forms Manager (or similar) survey to complete to route to the identified resource (e.g., Student Support Team).	High
PI 2.3 Integration	1. Staffing and Training	See previous. The recommended additional staff person would take the lead on cross-training and faculty/staff awareness.	High
PI 2.4 Effectiveness	1. Staffing and Organizational Structure	As noted in previous sections, adding a staff member is an essential ingredient to facilitating the improvements needed.	High
PI 2.6 Financial Resources	1. Director of FY	Funding for the position.	High
PI 2.7 Policy	1. Communication	Collect information on all of these areas and provide links on one FY student resource page.	High
PI 2.7 Policy	3. Website Clean Up	There are some outdated websites and forms that are still active on the CSB/SJU website – we recommend cleaning these up.	High

## Appendix D.3. Foundations of Excellence® Transitions Dimension Report

1/26/2017

{ Foundations Institutions facilitate appropriate student transitions through policies and practices that are intentional and aligned with institutional mission. }

Beginning with recruitment and admissions and continuing through the first year, institutions communicate clear curricular and co-curricular expectations and provide appropriate support for educational success. They are forthright about their responsibilities to students as well as students' responsibilities to themselves and the institution. They create and maintain curricular alignments with secondary schools and linkages with secondary school personnel, families, and other sources of support, as appropriate.



### Section 1: Executive Summary

### Section 2: Transitions Dimension Committee

Name	Title	Committee Role
Theresa Anderson	Academic Advisor	Committee Chair
Karen Backes	Dean of Admission	Committee Member
Imani-Jireh Johnson	CSB Sophomore	Committee Member
John Kendall	FYS Instructor	Committee Chair
Kyhl Lyndgaard	Director of FYS/Writing Center	Committee Member
Maxwell Martin	SJU Sophomore	Committee Member

### Section 3: Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

Using the student and faculty surveys as a starting point for gauging the success of the first-year transition, there are some clear successes, some areas for improvement and important discrepancies between faculty and student assessments of transition matters. Comparison with staff survey responses indicate that staff ratings are closer in consistency to student rating than to faculty ratings.

### Positive ratings by students

Communication of some straightforward information (available majors, financial aid opportunities, etc.) appears to be functioning well from the general student perspective. There seems to be some difference in experience, though, for first-generation college students and underrepresented students. The comparatively small number of respondents in these groups requires caution in generalizing the data. Students across these three groups appear to be unified in their assessment of how well they are connected with faculty outside of class – only 33.6 percent of all student responders rate this as high or very high (22.2 and 26.3, respectively, for first-generation and underrepresented respondents).

### Discrepancies between faculty and student ratings

Comparisons between the faculty (instructors, assistant/associate/full professors) and student survey responses belies some important disconnections. The areas rated most successful by faculty were not nearly as well regarded by students:

- a. Faculty rated the degree to which they discuss what it takes for students to be academically successful overwhelmingly high/very high (88.4 percent compared to 57.2 percent in the student survey) and what students' future enrollment plans are (88.4 percent compared to 35.9 percent for students). To a lesser extent, a gap also appears between faculty ratings of assistance with course selection (76.7 percent high/very high) and student ratings of the same (50 percent high/very high)
- b. Areas in which student ratings were substantially more positive than faculty ratings include important of standards of behavior (85.8 percent of students rated high/very high compared to 50.7 percent of faculty), ethical conduct (84.4 percent compared to 52.6 percent), and academic honesty (86.1 percent compared to 61.4 percent).



**Staff Ratings (no academic appointment)**

- a. Students, staff and faculty are closely aligned in their assessments of how well the institution connects student to academic support outside the classroom, with 58.7 percent, 54.3 percent and 52.3 percent, respectively, assigning high or very-high ratings.
- b. Overall rankings of the effectiveness of academic advising are aligned as well – 63.7 percent of student respondents are highly or very-highly satisfied; 65.2 percent of faculty and 67.9 percent of staff also rate advising effectiveness as high or very-high.
- c. Note that all five respondents to questions 88-91 offered very high ratings on each item. These responses beg a couple of questions: 1) are the respondents in roles specifically susceptible to conversations about future plans, academic success, and course selection and 2) why did other staff not answer questions 89 and 90, in particular?

**Opportunities to improve faculty experiences**

- a. Of 241 respondents, nearly half (47.7 percent) indicate need to better connect students with academic support outside the classroom.
- b. Additional consideration must be given to adequate training for advising first-year students. The low ratings (43.4 percent indicated that adequate training is non-existent – moderate) are challenging to interpret given that only 53 responded to the question.

**Opportunities to improve student experiences**

A broad review of evidence sources, admission materials and practice, and web-based information paints a picture of an institution that offers personal attention and ample support services to help students navigate the first year of college. Yet nearly half of student respondents offer lackluster – not at all, slightly, moderate – ratings in the categories of requirements for specific majors (50.2 percent), assistance with course selection (50 percent), learning what it takes to be academically successful (42.8 percent), and discussing future enrollment plans (64.1 percent).

To a large extent, these findings bear some relationship to the areas that faculty identified in their survey as needing the greatest improvement: academic support outside the classroom, standards of behavior in an academic community and adequate faculty training to address student needs.

**Section 4: Recommended Grade & Rationale**

Recommended Grade: B-

Rationale: Several important support structures for the first-year transition are embedded in the CSB/SJU experience (uniform First-Year Seminar learning goals, nearly universal introduction to the campus writing centers and libraries, participation in new student orientation, residential housing and programming specific to each class year). Other existing supportive experiences require student awareness that the services exist and would be beneficial, and also require student initiative to access (Academic Advising, Counseling, Career Services, Financial Aid). Yet other logical services may be difficult to locate (tutor information), or are perhaps not evident at all (study skills development, requirements for acceptance to most majors). Without a coordinated, identifiable focus for the first-year transition, faculty and staff may also miss pointing students to valuable resources (library's important resources for first-year students, for instance). To the extent that students seek out these departments, they may have the benefit of something like a first-year transition experience, though it then is happening one student at a time. This is neither a comprehensive nor a sustainable model.

## Section 5: Recommendations for Action

### 1. Label the first-year experience

- High Priority

In addition to the work of the philosophy dimension, develop a title for the first-year at CSB/SJU. This should be short, easily remembered and known by students/faculty/staff; academic and other campus departments should be able to tie goals and programming to this title.

### 2. Address challenges of Outlook email use

- Medium Priority

Teach CSB/SJU students to effectively utilize Outlook for official communications (sorting/filtering messages, write with appropriate professionalism, timely responses). 2. Implement a one-stop online bulletin board for extra- and co- curricular events. Eliminate the use of Outlook email for such announcements. Note that a similar tool is already in effect for “official” and “personal” bulletin board items. We anticipate that education and training will be required to transition students to using this tool.

### 3. Articulate acceptance to major requirements

- Medium Priority

For each academic department web site, clearly articulate the requirements for acceptance to major (number of credits, specific courses if required, major GPA at time of application to major). Because this is basic academic information, we rate this has high priority.

### 4. Further research: How do families of historically underrepresented students feel included?

- Medium Priority

The committee compared student responses to Q29 of the survey: ... to what degree has this institution helped your family feel a part of your college experience? All students: 57 percent reported high or very high. The same was reported by 52.9 percent of U.S. students of color and 44 percent of first-generation students. Whether these are indicative differences is uncertain because of low numbers of students of color and first-generation students completing the survey.

### 5. Evaluate design of parent experiences and information

- Medium Priority

Review experiences and information to determine effectiveness in reaching parents who have differing levels of experience with collegiate environments, have differing English language backgrounds, have local/remote access to visiting campus, are from differing economic situations. Address assumptions or hidden curricula related to parent information and engagement.

Though beyond the scope of this first year of transition, the institution may want to evaluate the inclusive nature of other campus family traditions such as the CSB Father/Daughter Dance and SJU Mom Prom.





6. Address early/late new student enrollment

- Low Priority

Evaluate if and what problems exist in communicating sufficient and appropriate information to early/late matriculating students and their families. Presumably, the families of early enrollees will receive all intended communications at appropriate times, though a lag between time of enrollment, the launch date for most enrollment activities (May 1), may leave some families/students feeling disconnected. Students who matriculate well after May 1 (and their families) will have a very short period of time to receive, digest and respond to enrollment information. All new students have access to the Forms Portal which guides them through completion of required materials.

Success in web site organization and addressing any hidden curriculum issues for families can help mitigate some of these effects indirectly. Until we have data on the extent to which students/families are affected, we rate this low priority.

7. Develop policy and staffing for communication with college access and coaching programs

- Medium Priority

College access programs are increasingly important in connecting with historically underrepresented students through the admission process. As these programs add college coaching to their services, they are requesting staff support from CSB/SJU, typically in Admission or Academic Advising along with data from the Registrar's Office. CSB/SJU are in need of policy and practice to manage contact with programs and their students effectively.

8. Articulate behaviors that lead to student success and build in self-assessment opportunities
  - High Priority

While the successes of CSB/SJU students are noted as fellowships awarded, ACT/SAT scores, degree completion rates, etc., the behaviors of a successful student do not appear to be articulated institutionally. Student success behaviors include social interactions, academic habits, self-care, etc. In reviewing the student survey, the committee noted sharp differences between the high and very-high ratings of all students (72.3 percent), first-generation college students (55.6 percent) and American students of color (52.6 percent) Q21-communicating academic expectations. Again, we urge caution in interpreting this data due to the low n of the latter two groups, but note that the discrepancies in ratings warrant attention.
9. Add general academic/study skills to available resources
  - High Priority

Students who are seeking specific support for writing or math have access to specific resources for developing those skills. However, students who are seeking general study skills guidance do not have access to a similar resource.
10. Explore opportunities to increase connection with continuing students
  - Low Priority
11. Encourage major exploration and research
  - High Priority

Build in structure by which students explore major interests in a thoughtful, informed and reflective manner. Explore motivation, strengths, weaknesses, etc., and increase understanding of the opportunities broadly available at CSB/SJU. Students may need to explore major and career as separate questions to be bridged through course, experiential and other opportunities.
12. Create opportunities to explore reasons for attending CSB/SJU, available opportunities, educational goals
  - Low Priority

As an institution with high retention and persistence, it is often assumed that students have made a well-informed decision to attend. As evidenced in the student survey and corroborated by the student representatives on this committee, consideration of transferring can appear to be an off-limits conversation. That in itself can be harmful to retention efforts.





## Appendix D.4.

# Foundations of Excellence® Faculty Dimension Report

January 18, 2017



**Foundations Institutions make the first college year a high priority for the faculty.**

These institutions are characterized by a culture of faculty responsibility for the first year that is realized through high-quality instruction in first-year classes and substantial interaction between faculty and first-year students both inside and outside the classroom. This culture of responsibility is nurtured by chief academic officers, deans, and department chairs and supported by the institutions' reward systems.

### Section 1: Executive Summary

The Faculty Dimension Committee met regularly over the course of two months during which it reviewed the FoE guidelines for its work, the related performance indicators for the faculty dimension, and relevant evidence addressing the performance indicators.

1. The committee finds that, while many faculty members excel in pedagogical, advising, and out-of-class engagement with first-year students, a gap exists between (1) institutional expectations/goals for effective faculty engagement and (2) a “culture of responsibility [that] is nurtured by chief academic officers, deans, and department chairs and supported by the institutions’ reward systems.”
2. The widest perception gap exists between institutional leaders and faculty teaching courses with high enrollments of first-year students. The gap between unit-level (departmental) leaders and faculty teaching courses is substantially narrower.
3. The committee specifically notes that institutional reward systems in forms such as funding for professional development, campus-wide structures of faculty support (e.g., LES sessions, Thursday Forums, Fall Faculty Forums, etc.), and specific protocol for faculty review, rank, tenure, and promotion lack specific rewards/targets/expectations for excellence in engaging first-year students as pedagogues, advisers, and in out-of-class experiences.
4. The committee notes some difference in structural support for faculty teaching First-Year Symposium (FYS) and those teaching courses with high enrollments of first-year students.
5. A majority of committee recommendations therefore address strategies for closing the gap between expectations and a culture of concrete rewards which incentivize faculty excellence in engagement with the first-year experience. Such rewards include clarity about the status of first-year teaching in annual reviews of probationary faculty as well as in tenure and promotions processes; they also suggest further rewards external to review, rank and tenure which motivate and recognize excellence in engaging first-year students. In related ways, the committee also recommends clearer practices of assessment of first-year student learning with a concrete way of enabling departments/units acting to act on insights gained from such assessment.

**Please find specific report narrative related to Performance Indicators 4.1-4.4 in Section 3 as well as complete Recommendations for the Faculty Dimension in Section 5.**

## Section 2: Faculty Dimension Committee

Name	Title	Committee Role
Shawn Colberg	Assistant Professor of Theology	Committee Chair
Laura Hammond	Assistant Director ELCE	Committee Member
Josephine Nistler	CSB Senior	Committee Member
Terri Rodriguez	Associate Professor of Education	Committee Chair
Allison Spenader	Associate Professor of Education	Committee Member

## Section 3: Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

### Performance Indicator #4.1: Importance of the First Year

#### Narrative

While excellence in teaching and advising is encouraged, supported, and rewarded for all faculty in all areas, we see no convincing evidence that the first year is either specifically prioritize or incentivized/rewarded. We further note that a substantial number of faculty teaching in First-Year Symposium are term/adjunct faculty who, while many or all excel in their work, do not qualify for the regular forms of incentives, rewards, and assessment offered to tenure/tenure-line faculty. Based on the evidence, it appears that working with first-year students, at best, “counts” the same as working with others for tenure/tenure-line faculty, and it may be the case that teaching courses for majors and minors provides intrinsic rewards which teaching courses for first-year non-majors and minors may not. Faculty/staff survey indicates that advising of first-year students falls heavily on staff; we are not sure to what extent faculty should be/are rewarded for first-year advising. Further, minimal encouragement or reward is offered for student/faculty engagement outside of the classroom.

#### Assigned Scores

To what degree does the institution make the first year a priority?

- For Faculty Teaching Assignments - **Low**
- For Resource Allocation to Support First-Year Instruction - **Medium**
- By Rewarding High Quality Instruction for First-Year Students - **Low**
- By Rewarding Substantial Out-of-Class Faculty Interaction with First-Year Students - **Very Low/None**
- By Rewarding Faculty Excellence in Advising First-Year Students: - **Low**

#### Survey Results

Perceptions of reward:

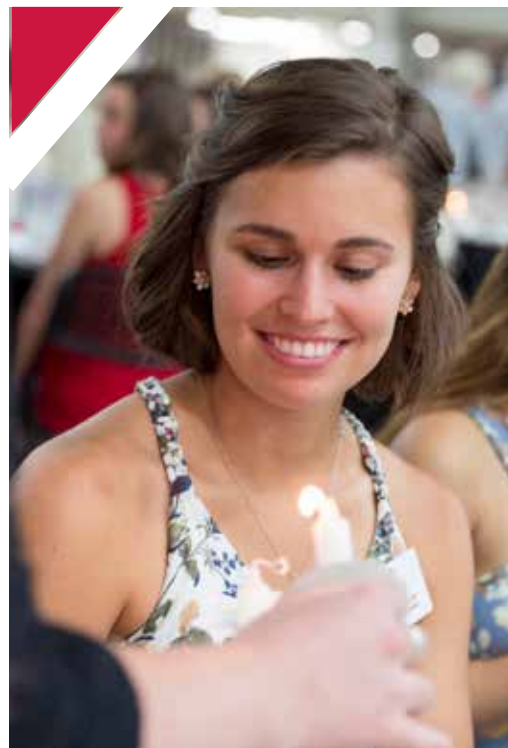
- Question 66:** The number of faculty who believe teaching first-year students is rewarded by colleagues = 41 percent slightly/not at all; 32 percent moderately; and 26 percent high/very high
- Question 67:** The number of faculty who believe teaching first-year students is rewarded by dept. unit leader = 26 percent slightly/not at all; 28 percent moderately; and 45 percent high/very high
- Question 68:** The number of faculty who believe teaching first-year students is rewarded by institution leaders = 40 percent slightly/not at all; 36 percent moderately; and 23 percent high/very high

**Performance Indicator #4.2: Campus-Level Encouragement****Narrative**

First and foremost, we are unaware of coordinated institutional assessment of pedagogies of engaged teaching in first-year courses. Of the evidence we do have, the faculty survey shows that faculty do not perceive senior academic leaders encouraging or rewarding them for pedagogical training and success with first-year students. Aside from resources provided through the FYS Director, minimal formal developmental support exists for faculty that is targeted toward teaching first-year students. FDRC funds are accessible to faculty; however, such funds are not specifically targeted toward classes or teachings assignments that have high enrollment of first-year students. LES was the home for faculty development of pedagogies, but funding cuts have diminished even those resources. Faculty members are encouraged to attend Thursday Forums, but only some are focused on pedagogy and hardly any on first-year pedagogies of engagement. A set of workshops focused on teaching FYS is established and funded by the institution, but we wonder if it meets the pedagogical needs of faculty and whether it provides encouragement for teaching FYS. Our assessment is based primarily on institutional support of FYS, as opposed to other courses with high first-year student enrollment.

FYS faculty are likely more knowledgeable about curricular learning goals for first-year students. We perceive that faculty teaching courses with high first-year enrollment outside of FYS are less aware of first-year learning goals than FYS. It is not clear that CSB/SJU has developed inclusive campus-wide learning goals for first-year students. Lastly, we wonder what campus-wide learning goals might entail (e.g., confined to coursework or the entirety of the first-year experience) in the context of this work.

We acknowledge support provided at the annual fall faculty forum regarding demographics of first-year students. The work completed through the Mellon Grant seeks to positively impact faculty ability to understand and support typically under-served students which includes those in their first year. We nevertheless conclude that more work could be done to assess first-year student study skills and abilities, possible mental health and addiction concerns, and other dimensions that characterize first-year students in the context of generational trends. We identify specifically that President Hinton, especially through her vision from Fall 2016 and her eco-system, has worked to help faculty understand and support first-year students.



### Assigned Scores

To what degree do senior academic leaders encourage faculty to do the following?

- Use Pedagogies of Engagement in First-Year Courses - **Low**
- Understand Campus-Wide Learning Goals for the First Year - **Very Low/None**
- Understand Characteristics of First-Year Students at [these campuses] - **Medium**
- Understand Broad Trends and Issues in the First Year - **Low**

### Survey Results

**Question 62:** Faculty express a lower yet positive perception of encouragement from senior academic leaders.

**Question 68:** The number of faculty who believe teaching first-year students is rewarded by institution leaders = 40 percent slightly/not at all; 36 percent moderately; and 23 percent high/very high. Faculty who have taught first-year students do not feel as though they are acknowledged or rewarded for working with first-year students.

### Performance Indicator #4.3: Unit-Level Encouragement

#### Narrative

On the whole, we find that faculty members are strongly encouraged to teach in an engaging way at the unit-level. Much of this encouragement comes from faculty/course evaluations by students and the annual review for probationary faculty members by department chairs. We are aware that some departments hold regular conversations about effective pedagogy for courses with high first-year enrollments. We recommend that departments isolate pedagogy for the first year as a critical area of focus.

Annual reports by academic departments communicate to faculty peers unit-level support for first-year courses like FYS. Outside of departmental reporting, up until the summer of 2016, FYS was not required to submit an annual report for review by APSAC. Institutional reporting specifically targeted at first-year focused courses is increasing but could be improved. Further, we are unclear as to whether or not the information collected translates into useful feedback that is communicated back to departments.

Course evaluations were also considered as an important indicator of departmental engagement with the first-year teaching, advising and out-of-class engagement. Chairs review student faculty/course evaluation surveys, but first-year seminar and first-year courses are not targeted in particular. In review of probationary faculty, the chair can choose to include first-year focused course evaluations in his/her annual review.

On the whole, our committee was unable to identify an over-arching source of information regarding current, departmental support and understanding for discipline-specific trends and issues related to entry-level courses. We are unsure what means of support exist for faculty professional development (e.g., attendance at conferences), specifically for first-year students.

**Assigned Scores**

To what degree do unit-level academic administrators encourage faculty to do the following?

- Use Pedagogies of Engagement in First-Year Courses - **High**
- Understand Unit-Level Learning Goals Entry-Level Courses - **Medium**
- Understand the Discipline-Specific Trends and Issues Related to Entry-Level Courses - **N/A**

**Survey Results**

**Question 67:** Nearly 75 percent of respondents felt that there is acknowledgement, recognition, and/or reward around excellence in teaching first-year students by department/unit leaders.

**Performance Indicator #4.4: Expectations****Narrative**

Although it is noted in position descriptions and embedded in the interview process, the committee wonders if or how first-year teaching responsibilities are communicated more generally beyond the hiring process and orientation (aside from teaching FYS). Additionally, we were unsure about the extent to which non-classroom activities (e.g., advising, out-of-class interaction) are communicated during the hiring process. Anecdotal evidence suggests that practices in job descriptions and interviews vary widely according to department and the role of a given department in teaching first-year students.

Based on our review of the survey, we were unable to find, in the faculty survey, specific evidence about responses from full-time, part-time and adjunct faculty members except as it pertains to the specific instance of the hiring process. We feel that an examination of data across rank and tenure status would provide helpful insight regarding differences in expectations communicated around engagement with the first-year. On a related point, only full-time faculty are required to attend the fall, faculty workshop. Information about involvement with first-years that is communicated at this event would not be communicated to adjunct or part-time faculty.



### Assigned Scores

To what degree are expectations for involvement with first-year students clearly communicated to the following groups?

- Newly Hired Full-Time Faculty - **Medium**
- Newly Hired Part-Time/Adjunct Instructors - **N/A**
- Continuing Full-Time and Part-Time/Adjunct Faculty - **N/A**

### Survey Results

**Question 77:** In position descriptions, 68 percent of respondents felt that faculty responsibilities related to first-year students were addressed.

**Question 78:** During the interview process, a majority of respondents felt that faculty responsibilities related to first-year students were addressed; (only 30 percent felt that it was not).

**Question 80:** 65 percent of respondents felt that responsibilities related to first-year students were addressed during the new faculty orientation.

### Section 4: Recommended Grade & Rationale

Recommended Grade: B-/C+

Rationale: The committee generally rated specific aspects of performance indicators in the medium to low categories. Important here is that, more often than not, the committee could not find compelling evidence that generally strong institutional practices or structures for pedagogy, advising, and out-of-class engagement targeted the first-year experience specifically; in that sense, a lack of specificity about excellence in the FoE, rather than a lack of commitment to the performance areas, seems to be a primary concern. A second and important rationale is that a concrete structure of rewards does not exist to support aspirations for faculty excellence in the FoE specifically. Finally, the committee observes varying commitments to excellence between FYS and courses serving the Common Curriculum which have high first-year enrollments.



**Section 5: Recommendations for Action****Foundations of Excellence® PI Recommendations****Recommendations for Faculty, prioritized by section (4.1-4.4)**

PI	Recommendation	Description	Priority
PI 4.1 Importance of the First Year	1. Provide Faculty Incentives to Teach Courses with High First-Year Enrollments	Institutional leaders develop and institute incentives that enhance the experience of teaching courses with high first-year enrollments; such incentives could include automatically-added professional development funds, a one-sixth research release to balance high loads of first-year teaching, the option of teaching more than one section of a course to reduce total course preparations, or the offering of a discipline specific course to faculty who prioritize teaching courses with high first-year enrollments. These and other incentives would provide concrete support for the institutional prioritization of teaching first-year students.	High
PI 4.1 Importance of the First Year	2. Recognition of Teacher(s) Who Excel in First-Year Teaching with Award	Similar to the Adviser and Teacher of the Year Awards presently offered by CSB/SJU, institutional leaders should institute an award that recognizes instructors who excel in first-year teaching using criteria such as the use of pedagogies of engagement, success in advising, and out-of-class interaction with first-year students. Such an award would demonstrate institutional commitment to recognizing and rewarding first-year teaching excellence.	High
PI 4.1 Importance of the First Year	3. Affirmation of Growth/Service/Success in First-Year Teaching in Annual Review Process for Probationary Faculty	Institutional leaders develop and institute one-to-two criteria in the Annual Review process that measures, recognizes, and affirms teaching courses with high first-year enrollments; this may include FYS, but it should also include courses that serve the faculty member's locus of appointment/department to the extent that it serves first-year students as part of its curricula. Noting this as not only service but also departmental service would affirm that the institution recognizes and rewards efforts by teachers to serve first-year students.	High

PI	Recommendation	Description	Priority
PI 4.1 Importance of the First Year	4. Affirmation of Growth/Success in First-Year Teaching in Third-Year Review, Tenure, and Promotion Processes	Institutional leaders develop and institute one-to-two criteria in the Third-Year Review, Tenure, and Promotion protocols that measure, recognize, and affirm teaching courses with high first-year enrollments; this may include FYS, but it should also include courses that serve the faculty member's locus of appointment/department to the extent that it serves first-year students as part of its curricula. Criteria might include growth by faculty members in pedagogies of engagement, professional development practices, and advising. Noting this as not only service but also departmental service would affirm that the institution recognizes and rewards efforts by teachers to serve first-year students.	High
PI 4.1 Importance of the First Year	5. Develop Points of Integration Between Academic Advising and Faculty Teaching Courses with High First-Year Enrollments	While Academic Advising provides strong support to first-year students and faculty teaching FYS, it could further engage other faculty teaching courses with high first-year student enrollments to inform, train, and assist them in the work of advising first-year students formally or informally. Such support might include sharing informational items with all faculty with first-year students enrolled in their classes on topics such as mid-term grades, course registration, and/or DegreeWorks training specific to first-year students; or it may include workshops on items specific to first-year student experiences.	Medium
PI 4.1 Importance of the First Year	6. Grants for Creative "Out-of-Class" Experiences	Institutional Leaders develop and offer grant opportunities that foster creative "out-of-class" experiences for faculty and first-year students. Grants might support class dinners, field trips, service projects, or other community-building experiences that leverage the classroom experience for out-of-class experiences. These could also be natural places to engage the Catholic/Benedictine pillars of CSB/SJU and SD2020.	Medium



PI	Recommendation	Description	Priority
PI 4.2 Campus-level Encouragement	1. Targeted Professional Development for First-Year-Focus and FYS Faculty	Targeted professional development options, as well as funding, should be identified to support faculty teaching not only FYS, but also those teaching courses with high first-year enrollment. It appears we do have campus support, largely through FYS for development, LES and Thursday Forum session support pedagogy broadly, and grants are offered through FDRC for faculty as a whole – but there isn't funding or resources targeted at faculty teaching courses with high first-year enrollment (FYS and non-FYS). The Mellon Grant seeks to positively impact faculty around serving typically under-served student populations and we wonder if/how that will continue and if there could be more geared toward engagement and support provided for faculty teaching students in the first year.	High
PI 4.2 Campus-level Encouragement	2. Create Assessment Strategy For Pedagogies of Engaged Teaching in First-Year Courses.	Based on the lack of evidence in our research, we are unaware of institutional assessment of pedagogies of engaged teaching in first-year courses. This should be assessed moving forward, as well as feedback loops created so improvements can be made based on assessment.	High
PI 4.2 Campus-level Encouragement	3. Clearly Publish and Disseminate Campus-Wide Learning Goals for First-Year Students	The committee felt that it is unclear what campus-wide learning goals entailed in the context of this work (e.g., is this confined to coursework or the entirety of the first-year experience), thus we seek clarification and wonder if there is broader confusion about learning goals amongst first-year focused faculty members and others.	Medium
PI 4.2 Campus-level Encouragement	4. CSB and SJU Create and Disseminate First-Year Student Characteristics and Incentives to Learn About the Group	We recommend that both campuses create and share statistics around first-year student characteristics and trends in the first year. Previously, only CSB senior leadership has done so. Further, we would ask that adjunct and part-time faculty members are incentivized or required to attend, so that all faculty members receive information about first-year students.	Medium

PI	Recommendation	Description	Priority
PI 4.3 Unit-level Encouragement	1. Department Teaching Award for First-Year Courses	Institute a departmental teaching award for effectively engaging first-year pedagogies that are grounded in discipline specific trends and issues related to first-year courses in that field.	Medium
PI 4.3 Unit-level Encouragement	2. Department Professional Development of First-Year Courses Travel Funding	Institute a separate pool for funding travel to conferences that promote effectively engaging first-year pedagogies that are grounded in discipline specific trends and issues related to first-year courses in that field.	Medium
PI 4.3 Unit-level Encouragement	3. Departmental Annual Report Focus Area: Assessment of Entry-Level Learning Goals	Create an assessment process (perhaps articulated in the Chair Handbook and included in the SEAL) directing chairs to explicitly facilitate discussion of feedback (from the Annual Report) related to entry-level unit learning goals and assessment of engaging pedagogies for first-year students.	Low
PI 4.3 Unit-level Encouragement	4. Rotation of Faculty Assignments to Teach First-Year Students	Create a policy (articulated in the Chair and the Faculty Handbooks) that all full-time faculty teach first-year students on a regular/rotating basis as the normal course of their teaching assignments, whether in the department or FYS. Such assignments would deepen faculty connections to first-year students, introduce first-year students to faculty in the disciplines, and enhance all faculty's development of pedagogies of engagement for first-year students.	High
PI 4.4 Expectations	1. Clear Articulation of How Newly Hired Faculty Can Support First-Year Students.	Newly hired faculty would benefit from some clear guidelines for best practices working with first-year students. While not all faculty will teach first-year students at the time of hire, many (perhaps most) will do so at some point in their careers. We also believe it would be beneficial to know best practices for engaging with first-years outside of classes.	Medium

PI	Recommendation	Description	Priority
PI 4.4 Expectations	2. Incentivize Professional Development for Part-Time and Adjunct Faculty in Best Practices for Involvement with First-Years	We recognize that part-time and adjunct faculty may receive less training in effective practices for working with first-year students. Since some training comes during the faculty workshop at the start of the academic year, we recognize that many part-time faculty miss out. This training should involve other aspects of supporting first-years, including advising and involvement in campus activities.	Medium
PI 4.4 Expectations	3. Regularly Assess Faculty Perceptions of Training and Support to Work with First-Years	We were unable to discern how full- and part-time faculty experience their training and support for work with first-years. Do they feel equally prepared and supported? We would like to see more data about this so that we can further develop recommendations on how to best support faculty who teach first-year students.	Medium



## Appendix D.5.

# Foundations of Excellence® All Students Dimension Report

12/20/2016

**Foundations Institutions serve all first-year students according to their varied needs.**

The process of anticipating, diagnosing, and addressing needs is ongoing and is subject to assessment and adjustment throughout the first year. Institutions provide services with respect for the students' abilities, backgrounds, interests, and experiences. Institutions also ensure a campus environment that is inclusive and safe for all students.

### Section 1: Executive Summary

The All Students Committee members discussed at length the question, “Are the academic, social, personal, and psychological needs of CSB/SJU students being met?” In reviewing the student and staff/faculty survey and resources, we are pleased to see high rankings, though we do have concerns as noted by anecdotal comments from the committee and from data from other surveys that show areas for potential improvement, as noted in the recommendations.

Similar to many other institutions, CSB and SJU have many different sub-populations and we attempted to provide evidence, when available, to document the work being done to support all students.

Other than FYS, Orientation, FYF, first-year student housing and residential curriculum most other programs and services (academic advising, tutoring, SAS, etc.) are being provided holistically for all students at the institutions. The report below lists a number of recommendations to expand the first-year experience both broadly and specifically.

### Section 2: All Students Dimension Committee

Name	Title	Committee Role
Mike Connolly	SJU Dean of Students	Committee Chair
Kari-Shane Davis Zimmerman	Associate Professor of Theology	Committee Member
Elizabeth Erickson	CSB Student Senate President	Committee Member
Matt Lindstrom	Professor of Political Science	Committee Member
Kaitlyn Ludlow	CSB Senior	Committee Member
Ramond Mitchell	SJU Student Senate President	Committee Member
Jody Terhaar	CSB Dean of Students	Committee Chair

### Section 3: Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

#### PI 6.1 Academic Needs of Individual Students

Many resources are dedicated to identifying and addressing the academic needs of first-year students broadly, and to some degree, on an individual student basis. The application process requires that students provide high school academic information and test scores to help determine their qualifications for admission. Application information also helps to identify students who may need additional support or services and those who need to be reviewed for conditional acceptance. Placement tests for math and language help identify appropriate courses and ESL is taught for students for whom English is not their first language.

Once a student is admitted they begin receiving information regarding enrollment, registration, orientation, housing, honors program, etc. It is up to the student to seek out additional information and make contact with campus resources. Much of the contact with students happens on an “individual” basis via email, social media, text messages, mailings, and phone calls. Summer orientation was a program that allowed for more personal contact with students and an opportunity to talk directly with students and their families and this committee believes there is value in exploring the options we may have for reintroducing a summer orientation program that would include registration for fall semester classes.

The current process used to register for fall semester classes serves the institution well, but students are disconnected from the process and this is a missed opportunity to help them better understand the academic experience and expectations at CSB/SJU and liberal arts education we provide. It also leaves many feeling confused and uncertain about the registration process for spring semester. It would also be beneficial to include additional academic components in the new student orientation program that takes place prior to the start of classes. Students are missing direct contact with faculty members and would perhaps also benefit from more concrete information regarding study skills, time management, talking with faculty, utilizing office hours, etc. This information can be introduced during orientation, but that will not be sufficient in terms of actual skill development or academic success.

FYS faculty serve as academic advisors for first-year students. Given the small class size and frequent contact, the role of the FYS faculty member as advisor is critical. The survey seems to indicate that more could be done to build skill, capacity and confidence for FYS faculty in their role as advisors and the important role that advising has for supporting and meeting the individual academic needs of students. The Academic Advising Office provides a great deal of support for FYS faculty in their role as advisors and there is an opportunity for greater partnerships with student development to support the full scope of needs a student may have.

An Academic Skills Center will be part of the Learning Commons in the new SJU library. The committee sees this as an opportunity to support the academic needs of individual students. Locating key support services (Math Skills, Writing Center, Student Accessibility Services, etc.) together will make it easier for students to access the resources. It is important to ensure these areas are staffed appropriately given the level of student needs and institutional expectations. While some areas have had additional hires, others have reduced staff. The Academic Skills Center will be an opportunity to evaluate the most effective means of providing services and utilizing staff resources.



### PI 6.2: Social/Personal Needs of Individual Students

CSB and SJU are relatively small campuses that place great value on community and providing support for individual students. There are a number of barriers students may face to college success and CSB/SJU have many programs and structures to address those barriers. Some of these programs and structures include the following:

- New Student Orientation
- Parent Orientation
- Residential Life residential curriculum and staffing model for first-year housing
- FYS class structure and advising model
- Student Support Team
- Student Conduct process and educational sanctions
- Residential and campus programming
- Student Health and Counseling services (including individual counseling and peer education)
- Retention Committee
- Zimride, Enterprise Car Share and Campus Connections bus transportation
- Bussing to St. Cloud on weekends
- Partnership with Executive Express for transportation to airport
- Student Employment
- Healthy Relationship programming
- Annual surveys to gather information regarding student health, and drug/alcohol use
- Robust Intramural and Club Sport program and significant involvement in Intercollegiate athletics

The committee identified a need to provide better information to those who work with first-year students so they are aware of the many resources available.

Student mental health issues present significant challenges for students in regard to their academic and social success at CSB/SJU. Residential Life, Academic Advising and Counseling work together to assist students and connect them with appropriate resources. The counseling center at CSB/SJU includes highly-qualified and professional staff, but they are limited in number. For the past several years, a waiting list for appointments has been needed due to high demand for services, but limited availability of appointments. The committee recommends that the current staffing structure and service model of counseling be reviewed to determine if it is resourced appropriately to meet student and institutional needs.

The alcohol culture at CSB/SJU is a large part of the social experience for many students and seems to be valued by both current students and alumnae/i. Survey data indicates it is a culture that also has a negative impact on retention and academic success, and contributes to harm experienced by students. A task force has been established with the purpose of identifying strategies to reduce high-risk alcohol use.

The committee identified a gap in the education/information provided to students (first-year and others) regarding financial knowledge and literacy. This includes basic skills such as money management as well as larger issues such as loans, financing a college education, and work-study/student employment.

### **PI 6.3: Student Experiences**

The survey data indicated relatively positive responses from students, faculty and staff regarding the individual attention students receive, but the committee felt this could be improved. As noted previously, individual attention is something CSB/SJU value and strive to provide. All first-year students have FYS, but each FYS class is different. There is value in that difference, but also inconsistency that can impact the student learning experience. The committee recognizes however, that faculty members approach this in different ways and that there is a balance between student responsibility and faculty responsibility. Advisor workload varies greatly. Some faculty have 20-40 advisees while others may have five or fewer or even none. There were also questions about how advising is rewarded with the faculty system.

The role of staff in providing individual attention to students is different from that of faculty. Interactions with staff are usually initiated due to a need or question rather than the type of regular contact that happens in a classroom. It is dependent on a student seeking help and knowing who to contact. While students receive multiple messages about the help and support that is available to them, it also necessary for students to take initiative to engage and seek help, assistance and support. Not all students feel comfortable reaching out or may not even know how to reach out. This was identified as a particular concern for first-generation college students and conditionally admitted students.

The Academic Skills Center will be very important in terms of the academic support students receive outside the classroom and Academic Advising will continue to play a very important role.

In terms of opportunities for campus involvement, the committee felt CSB/SJU were doing quite well. Each fall there is an annual Involvement Fair that provides an opportunity for new first-year students (and returning students) to sign up for different clubs and organizations. CSB/SJU have a robust student activities program, many clubs and organizations available for students to join, a high percentage of students participate in intramural programs and club sports, and there are a multitude of events every week. The challenge we have is a lack of coordination among the campus entities that can result in duplication or competition. Students get a very clear message that involvement is important, but the focus for students frequently shifts to quantity of involvement rather than quality of involvement. This can result in students who are overcommitted and unable to follow through on their obligations or students who experience burnout.

The committee talked at length about the ways in which we are and are not an inclusive campus and the different experiences students have in terms of inclusion. There are many well-intentioned things happening both inside and outside the classroom, but there is a lack of communication and coordination that diminished the efforts, effectiveness and impact. The survey data, although limited in terms of participation, seems to indicate that underrepresented students perceive inclusion at CSB/SJU differently and less positively than the majority of students. Our campus is increasingly diverse in terms of racial identity, socio-economic status, religious identify/faith affiliation, and identity. There seems to be a genuine commitment to inclusion, but the experiences of students vary.

The committee discussed that need for a more comprehensive climate survey for CSB and SJU. While a climate survey was done a few years ago, the data and results where difficult to find. The committee felt that a campus climate survey would help us identify our strengths and weaknesses and identify strategies to make necessary changes. There is an opportunity to build diversity into the classroom experience to help students gain the skills they need to talk about inclusion. Not all majors provide an opportunity for students to learn how to engage in dialogue, how to ask questions, how to listen, etc. This is something that could be present throughout the four-year academic curriculum. As a community we seem to be more comfortable talking about international-based diversity (international students, study abroad, being a member of the global community) than we are talking about domestic-based diversity.







#### PI 6.4: Subpopulations

In regards to sub-populations the committee found elements that there are a number of very strong programs in place to both support and enhance the student experience such as international student orientation, international student graduation and staff dedicated in admission, advising, and student development to work with these student populations. However, career advising for international students is lacking. The process for international students to work in the U.S. is different (OPT) and companies may not want to take that on so the options are limited.

While CSB and SJU have some initiatives specifically targeted towards first-generation students, there is not a unified or comprehensive approach to serve all first-generation students. For instance, some first-generation students, based on admittance to a specialty program may have more access to mentoring, advising, and student funds, while others may not and are left on their own.

CSB/SJU recently finalized a policy regarding gender non-conforming students that was approved by both Boards of Trustees. There is an active student group, PRiSM, that includes students who identify as GLBTQ+ and allies. Each spring the institution plans a Lavender Graduation for students and their allies. While we are doing some good things in regard to support GLBTQ+ students, there is always room for improvement. As institutions that serve young men and young women, we need to be aware of policies and practices that reinforce the gender binary and traditional gender roles. The committee identified the Gender Studies curriculum and faculty as strengths in this regard.

#### PI 6.5: Physical and Psychological Safety

The faculty/staff and student survey indicated that there is a strong sense of safety on both campuses. This finding is also supported in other surveys that have been conducted with students. Security and Life Safety provide escorts, medical assistance, and general security services. Each campus has “blue light” phones that can be utilized in an emergency. This same sense of “safety” may not extend to the broader surrounding community, particularly for international students and students of color. Questions did arise about the level of staffing in Security and Life Safety and the perception that they are in a continuous mode of hiring staff. The location of the SJU Life Safety Office was noted as not ideal and the lack of signage makes the office nearly impossible to find.

CSB/SJU have clearly written policies and procedures for Human Rights. An annual report is completed each year to document the number and types of complaints that are received.

#### **Section 4: Recommended Grade & Rationale**

Recommended Grade: B-

Rationale: The committee found that overall, CSB and SJU are doing moderately well in serving the needs of all first-year students. However, there are areas for improvement, including better coordination of services, stronger communication with students and among those providing services to first year students, and better assessment to identify which strategies, programs and initiatives have the best impact and greatest effectiveness.

#### **Section 5: Recommendations for Action**

##### **1. Incorporate additional academic components in new student orientation program**

- Medium Priority

Faculty involvement via small group and 1:1 contact with new students

##### **2. Explore options for a summer orientation program**

- Medium Priority

Summer orientation could include registration for classes, contact with faculty, academic skills, student employment, parent programming, etc. The last CSB/SJU summer orientation program was July 2006.

##### **3. Summer bridge program for underprepared students**

- Low Priority

Offer optional/voluntary summer bridge program for underprepared students that focuses on academic readiness and transition to college

##### **4. Determine focus and purpose of Academic Skills Center**

- High Priority

CSB/SJU have not had an academic skills center but one is now planned as part of some restructuring in academic affairs. Support for students who need remedial or supplemental instruction should be included.

##### **5. Develop a transition plan for conditionally admitted students**

- Medium Priority

Establish a mentoring team for conditionally admitted students to include academic advising and student development. Contact and support for students would begin upon admission and continue through the first semester.

##### **6. Develop a resource reference for faculty and staff to utilize for making referrals**

- Medium Priority

This resource would identify campus resources and contact information for faculty and staff to utilize when assisting students.

##### **7. Determine if current model of counseling is meeting student needs**

- High Priority

Student mental health issues are significant and student needs due to mental health are increasing. Evaluate current staffing levels, hours of service, types of services and programs, etc., to determine what gaps exist and what additional resources may be needed.

**8. Address high-risk behavior related to alcohol use**

- High Priority

The student alcohol culture at CSB/SJU negatively impacts student academic success and retention. An alcohol task force has been established to address high-risk alcohol use and make recommendations.

**9. Explore effectiveness of current tutoring model and services**

- High Priority

There is no centralized or general tutoring available to students at this time, but this could become part of the new Academic Skills Center. Academic departments coordinate tutoring for their discipline. There is a wide range of approaches to departmental based tutoring.

**10. Develop and implement a campus climate survey.**

- High Priority

We need a better understanding of the campus climate in regard to inclusion and a well-developed survey and focus groups could assist with this.

**11. Build capacity of students, faculty and staff to engage conversations and actions that promote inclusion.**

- Medium Priority

**12. Improve coordination and communication among student clubs, departments, and academic programs for the scheduling of programs and events.**

- Medium Priority

There is no shortage of opportunities for students to be involved on campus. The challenge is communication and scheduling. We need a better system/structure in place that emphasizes quality over quantity and a calendar that assists in coordinating scheduling of events to avoid overlap and duplication.

**13. Staffing stability for Security and Life Safety**

- Medium Priority



## Appendix D.6.

# Foundations of Excellence® Learning Dimension Report

1/17/2017

{ Foundations Institutions deliver intentional curricular and co-curricular learning experiences that engage students in order to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with the desired outcomes of higher education and the institution's philosophy and mission. }

Whether in or out of the classroom, learning also promotes increased competence in critical thinking, ethical development, and the lifelong pursuit of knowledge.

### Section 1: Executive Summary

Over the course of two months, we met regularly to collect information on six performance indicators related to learning among first-year students. Our findings are summarized below. For details about each one, see our performance indicators in Section 3.

1. We do not have learning goals specifically for first-year students with the exception of FYS. These goals need to be developed.
2. Placement for first-year students, especially among students with low ACT scores, needs to be evaluated.
3. Once first-year learning goals have been developed, we have the opportunity to reinforce these learning goals and values across the institutions and departments and close the loop with common assessment.
4. Programs need to be developed to help faculty determine what are effective tools for uncovering the reasons for DFWI rates in their courses and what pedagogies best address those reasons.
5. While CSB/SJU incorporates many high-impact programs for students, most are not created specifically for first-year students. We should develop and assess such programs for first-year students, for example, learning communities.
6. While students report high levels of engagement, we are not systematic about how we measure the effectiveness of pedagogy on engagement.

We rate our institutions with a CD for learning, and our recommendations to improve are in Section 5.



## Section 2: Learning Dimension Committee

Name	Title	Committee Role
Dana Drazenovich	Instructor of FYS	Committee Member
Katie Furniss	Visiting Assistant Professor of Biology	Committee Member
Sarah Gewirtz	Information Literacy Librarian	Committee Chair
Mary Korman	CSB Senior	Committee Member
Anne Sinko	Assistant Professor of Mathematics	Committee Chair
Angie Whitney	Director of ELCE	Committee Member

## Section 3: Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

### Learning Indicator 1: Learning Goals

College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University (CSB/SJU) has created the Undergraduate Learning Goals based on their core values and mission. These goals have been established for students throughout their four years on campus, yet goals are not in place specifically for first-year students (or sophomores, juniors and seniors). Even the Common Curriculum Learning Goals which has a set of goals for each part of the curriculum (FYS, Ethics Seminar, Divisional Requirements, Departmental Requirements, Experiential Learning, Gender Learning, Intercultural Learning and the Capstone) neglect first-year students except FYS. This two-semester course goals address the Undergraduate Learning Goals "that call for the development of clear thinking and communication skills, while helping students establish patterns of life-long learning and integrating knowledge of self and the world." Furthermore, according to the Faculty Survey, 64 percent of faculty "moderately" to "not at all" understand the intended learning goals for first-year students.

As a committee we decided to rate the established common learning goals and measured outcomes for common learning goals as low simply because there are established goals for all students but nothing specific for first-year students. We recognize that each academic department has learning goals established which are articulated through their mission statements, values or courses, and there are learning goals established for our undergraduates and the common curriculum, but again, nothing specific for the first-year students.





### Learning Indicator 2: Engaging Students

According to the Faculty Survey, 89 percent of faculty whose courses enroll first-year students develop specific learning goals. In our discussions with departmental chairs/faculty, it became clear that departments decide if they will document their instructional methods used in each course as well as evaluate their effectiveness in engaging students in learning; individual faculty may do this but their department may not. First-year students, however, do rate their professors as using highly effective teaching methods (an average of 3.91 on a five point Likert scale with 219 responses) though it should be noted that the students taking the survey have not completed their first semester of their first year of college. There are five target courses we studied in depth.

**CHEM 125:** The Chemistry Department documents instructional methods, evaluate the effectiveness of their instructional methods in engaging students, and this documentation and evaluation occurs across all sections of each course. (No elaboration was given on how they do these things.)

**Score: Very High**

**FYS 100:** Syllabi are collected from all sections of FYS (though some faculty do not share their syllabus) to document the instructional methods used in each course. The FYS director does approximately 15 faculty evaluations and does six class visits per semester to determine the effectiveness of the instructional methods at engaging students.

**Score: Medium**

**MATH 124:** Each department member who teaches 124 uses different methods. While the instruction methods used in any given semester could be determined this information is not documented. Course evaluations at the end of the semester contain some questions regarding engagement. Faculty will also visit classes as a part of mentoring colleagues which provides a perspective on student engagement although this varies from semester to semester.

**Score: Low**

**PSYC 111:** Classes use active learning strategies, but do not document the types, frequency, etc. Lab methods are documented and universal across all sections. Perception of knowledge acquired and engagement is self-reported for labs. Recently, the psychology department assessed their labs for critical thinking skills. In Fall 2016, they developed a more focused instruction on challenging topics and on how those topics are delivered and plan to evaluate this at the end of the semester.

**Score: Low**

**THEO 111:** As of the writing of this report we do not know how they engage their students in the classroom.

**Learning Indicator 3: Course Outcomes**

Documentation and consistent assessment of learning outcomes varies greatly across departments and designations. Many of the high enrollment courses for first-year students, being associated with the common curriculum, are assessed regularly, although not always. Furthermore, it appears to this committee as if much of this assessment is content oriented. The five targeted courses are again considered.

**CHEM 125:** They reported that they document and evaluate across all sections of each course.  
**Score: Very High**

**FYS 100:** They assess the research essay that happens in the spring semester that every first-year student must write. In the past they have completed discussion assessment of the papers, but will be restructuring this process.  
**Score: High**

**MATH 124:** Each year, one of the three common curriculum mathematics outcomes is evaluated via common questions. Exactly how this is accomplished varies from course to course.  
**Score: High**

**PSYC 111:** Labs have the same critical thinking test. Instructor information for each student is collected in order to compare how instructor's students performed on the test. These results are used so that instructors with strong student results can provide information on successful instructional tools.  
**Score: Very Low/None**

**THEO 111:** All sections of THEO 111 share common learning goals for students. An assessment schedule has been created and one goal is assessed each year.  
**Score: High**



**Learning Indicator 4: Courses with High DFWI Rates**

We do not have a common campus-wide response to D/F/W/I rates, since there can be numerous reasons for a high D/F/W/I rate, and since some students will have dropped a course before the W is applied. It is something that is addressed on a case-by-case basis, working with department chairs and advisors (faculty and academic advising). Some curricular revisions are guided by this factor, some C&PD fund requests look to meet student needs, some advising practices are developed to address this information, etc., but there is nothing systematic.

**CHEM 125:** The DFWI rates are low for Chem 125 for first-year students. The department made this a particular focus for the last 10 years. Changes were made during that time which included research-based instructional strategies common to all sections, evening office hours, Chem 115 (required for FOCUS students, but also open to other underrepresented groups in the sciences), common assignments among all classes (to create a learning community), and splitting the course (Chem 125) and the lab (Chem 201).

**Score: High**

**FYS:** FYS has a very low rate of DFWI (comfortably under five percent) so they do not have anything specifically in place. Students are encouraged to develop relationships with their peers but also their professors. Staff are given training on how to help students who are struggling. Arguably, the format of FYS and some of the practices, such as more than 800 out of 950 first-year students using the Writing Center contribute to the low rate.

**Score: N/A**

**PSYC 111:** The psychology department provides daily tutoring several times each day, however, there is no attendance requirement. Surveys have been performed to determine how much students studied before an exam, methods used to study, and what they thought were effective methods. Lab instructors reach out to students that are struggling in lab (not attending or not turning in homework) as well as to their class instructors. Instructors are proactive about trying to meet with students that have attendance issues or low grades on exams.

**Score: High**

**MATH 124:** The department has had discussions about student preparation for college level mathematics. However, these discussions tend to consider all students and are not focused on first-year students. There has also been discussion about the appropriateness of Math 124 for first-year students. While the student surveys do not list particular mathematics courses, it should be noted that of the 256 responses, 165 first-year students felt their preparation was about right in mathematics with 22 saying their course was difficult and three reporting it was too difficult given their level of preparation. The other 69 responses included easy and too easy.

**Score: Medium**

**THEO 111:** As of the writing of this report we do not know how they engage their students in the classroom.



**Learning Indicator 5: Placement**

This year's first-year students who responded to the survey say they generally feel prepared for their courses with the vast majority of students ranking their courses about right, easy, or too easy for their level of academic preparedness across all areas (reading, writing, mathematics, library research, and computing). These results are listed in the Table 1 below. Academic advising, faculty, and staff seem to have another perspective. Since academic advising has very little information about a student, specifically ACT score, high school grades, perhaps a placement test, or other related information, to enroll them in their first semester classes, the student's listed desired major or career often determines which courses a student takes regardless of preparation. There are also very limited honors courses for students who need an above-average academic challenge. We do offer a limited number of skills courses for students who need remedial help with writing or mathematics, although first-year students are rarely enrolled in these courses. These limited courses are often too full for the number of students who need them, particularly the writing skills course. We do offer extra writing courses to ESL students.

**Table 1: Student survey results regarding the difficulty of a course based on their preparation**

	Too easy	Easy	About right	Difficult	Too difficult
Reading	5	22	198	36	1
Writing	4	32	178	44	4
Mathematics	25	45	165	22	3
Library research	9	31	172	47	3
Computing	12	35	188	25	2

Table 2 provides a breakdown by category of the percentage of students reporting ACT scores that receive a score of 20 or less. We chose 20 as the cut off because students who do not score at least a 21 on the ACT do not immediately qualify to register for a mathematics course. Some of these students will qualify to register for a mathematics course based on an exam, but others will eventually enroll in a skills course.

	2014	2015
Composite	10.4%	12.9%
English	16.9%	23.2%
Mathematics	13.5%	17.2%
Reading	16.1%	19.2%
Science	10.9%	11.3%

**Table 2: Percentage of ACT scores of incoming first-year students scoring 20 or less by category for the years 2014 and 2015. Note that this percentage is based on reported ACT scores and not the entire first-year class as some students do not report an ACT score.**

**Learning Indicator 6: Special Learning Opportunities**

First-year students do not have opportunities to develop leadership skills within their first year on campus except the Bonner Leadership Program in which only 10 students per year are accepted after an application and interview process (Fall 2016 had 110 applications). They have many opportunities to join clubs and organizations, but would not be able to become leaders until their sophomore year within these groups. There are many events that take place for first-year students to participate in through student development, residential life, student affairs, etc., but other than First-Year Orientation nothing specific to these students. Furthermore, the challenge we came across in our research was that service-learning outcomes are evaluated but are not parsed by year. Each department operates differently to meet their specific mission.

**FYS 100:** They assess the research essay that happens in the spring semester that every first-year student must write. In the past they have completed discussion assessment of the papers but will be restructuring this process.

**Score: High**

**Learning Communities:** The Honors program and FOCUS.

**Score: High**

**Leadership Programs/Courses:** The Bonner Leadership Program consistently measures their perceptions of leadership but it is the primary piece they measure. Furthermore, we did not find any other programs that helped develop first-year student's leadership skills.

**Score: Low**

**Service-Learning:** Service-Learning measures their learning outcomes, however, they don't parse out what year students are.

**Score: Very Low/None**

**Student Affairs:** The Orientation Program has very highly articulated learning outcomes.

**Score: Very High**

**Residence Life:** SJU residence life noted that they do not do a great job of assessing, though they do some. They complete a national benchmarking survey every three years and add some questions that are specific to the Residential Curriculum: To what extent has living in on-campus housing provided you with opportunities for (career development and exploration, personal growth, community development, intercultural competence, growth in spirituality)? It should be noted we did not hear back from CSB Residence Life.

**Score: Low**

**Out-of-Class Activities:** For out-of-class activities linked to academic courses or programs, our committee was unable to find anything for this category that is specific to first-year students. Programs with regular out-of-class activities, for example nursing and education, have these activities later in a student's academic career. Currently, we measure outcomes for internships, but academic-based internships aren't completed by first-year students.

**Score: N/A**

#### Section 4: Recommended Grade & Rationale

Recommended Grade: C/D

Rationale: We do not have specific learning goals for first-year students with the exception of FYS. Course outcomes tend to be well-developed and assessed, however, these outcomes are broadly applied to all students and not just first-year students. We have only a little scaffolding for students who need extra time with reading, writing, and mathematics. Furthermore, we need to document learning outcomes, engagement, pedagogies, assessments, and programs in order to help us make decisions going forward with regards to our program for first-year students.

#### Section 5: Recommendations for Action

##### 1. Create Learning Goals Specifically for First-Year Students (**High**)

With the development of the Making Connections Learning Outcomes and the First-Year Experience, we have an opportunity to create learning goals specifically for our first-year students. These goals could then be used by all academic departments. One challenge will be faculty involvement in developing, supporting and agreeing on learning goals for first-year students. Another will be developing courses that can address first-year learning goals for the first-year students even though the course may enroll students of all years. Furthermore, should such learning goals apply even if only one first-year student is enrolled? What if courses vary greatly from semester to semester with one semester running a course with 70 percent first-year students and the next running the same course with five percent first-year students?

##### 2. Placement for First-Year Students (**High**)

Classes for ESL and bilingual students are currently being held for those that need extra help with their reading and writing. We have an opportunity to help all students who would benefit from an additional reading, writing or math courses during their first term. Students could work on these skills by enrolling in an appropriate course during their second semester. With the development of a new curriculum, this may be even more important than it already is under the current curriculum. Also, we could provide an auto-enrollment for students in their first year who do not meet a required standard (for example, a high enough ACT score, similar to how mathematics placement is currently handled). Of course, this requires extra resources to be spent on these courses. Furthermore, we need to determine if the data from 2014 and 2015 is an emerging trend or random variation.

##### 3. Reinforcement and Assessment of First-Year Learning Outcomes (**Medium**)

We have the opportunity to reinforce commonly identified learning outcomes and values across the institutions and departments for first-year students. For example, reinforcing information literacy exposure from FYS to writing in a 100-level science course to writing in a 100-level psychology course. There can be significant challenges associated with accurately and consistently assessing skills, such as critical thinking and discussion. We recommend that as part of the development of the new curriculum we develop and include assessment of the first-year learning goals that work to reinforce these outcomes across the institutions and departments.



#### 4. Addressing DFWI Rates (**Medium**)

Programs need to be developed to help faculty determine what are effective tools for uncovering the reasons for DFWI rates in their courses; determine what pedagogies best address those reasons; and, help them develop courses with those pedagogies. New and returning faculty workshops need to be developed that provide them with resources so they know how to help a student who is struggling. LES workshops should be brought back but make them accessible so that more faculty can attend (webcast, multiple meetings, Skype, faculty forum/community forum). A challenge is that DFWI rates can be variable which could lead to judgment of faculty or a program without looking at the complex issues like student preparation and readiness to college (transition to college, personal issues, etc.).

#### 5. Development & Assessment of Programs for First-Year Students (**Medium**)

The development of a formal assessment system would be ideal but would require each area to coordinate their learning goals/outcomes to that of the campus, especially if learning goals/outcomes were created specifically for first-year students. Our committee found that there is an opportunity for more learning communities. We determined that more opportunities for leadership programs for first-year students was needed. SJU & CSB Senate have two first-year student representatives. Could there be more organizations on campus that could create leadership opportunities? More events targeted to first-year students could incorporate leadership opportunities for them.

#### 6. Engagement & Pedagogy (**Low**)

Consideration of engagement could lead us to an opportunity to define what we want engagement to be at our institutions, which will allow us to be systematic about how we approach engagement with our students. However, one of the major challenges will be measuring the effectiveness of pedagogy on engagement. With our commitment to academic freedom in the classroom, it is not uncommon for departments to not document which pedagogy is employed from section to section and year to year. Even if such documentation were kept, we do not currently have standard measurements designed to assess how the pedagogy influences engagement (versus other confounding variables).



## Appendix D.7.

### Foundations of Excellence® Diversity Dimension Report

1/18/2017

Foundations Institutions ensure that all first-year students experience diverse ideas, worldviews, and cultures as a means of enhancing their learning and preparing them to become members of pluralistic communities.

Whatever their demographic composition, institutions structure experiences in which students interact in an open and civil community with people from backgrounds and cultures different from their own, reflect on ideas and values different from those they currently hold, and explore their own cultures and the cultures of others.

#### Section 2: Diversity Dimension Committee

Name	Title	Committee Role
Carol Brash	Associate Professor of Art	Committee Chair
Matt Davis	Admission Representative	Committee Member
Sarah Haas	CSB Sophomore	Committee Member
Deborah Pembleton	Assistant Professor Global Business	Committee Member
Joe Rogers	Director Global Education	Committee Chair
Annika Turner	Manager Short-Term Education Abroad	Committee Member

The Diversity Dimension team was tasked with establishing to what degree the College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University ensures that its first-year students "experience diverse ideas, world views, and cultures as a means of enhancing their learning and preparing them to become members of pluralistic communities." In addressing this task, the committee used the Foundations of Excellence template, which is divided into three intersecting spheres: Diverse Ideas, Interactions, and Behaviors.

#### Performance Indicator 7.1: Diverse Ideas

To what degree does the institution assure that first-year students experience diverse ideas and world views through the following:

- **Initiatives based in the curriculum**  
Based on the evidence discussed below, we rated CSB/SJU low here.
- **Initiatives based in the co-curriculum (campus sponsored out-of-class activities)**  
Based on the evidence discussed below, we rated CSB/SJU medium here.
- **Initiatives integrated across the curriculum and co-curriculum (e.g., service learning, arts and cultural experiences)**  
Based on the evidence discussed below, we rated CSB/SJU very low here.

## Current situation

The College of Saint Benedict/Saint John's University is a Catholic and Benedictine, residential, liberal arts college. Originally, it was two separate schools founded and sponsored by the Sisters of Saint Benedict (College of Saint Benedict) and monks of the Order of Saint Benedict (Saint John's University). Although the classes are co-ed, the campuses maintain distinct identities as a campus committed to the growth and development of undergraduates identifying as women (College of Saint Benedict) and undergraduates identifying as men (Saint John's University). As CSB/SJU recently developed a transgender student policy, the absence of any survey questions about the diversity of gender development and the inclusion of LGBTQ viewpoints and LGBTQ students was disturbing to us. These are important diversity factors that must be considered.

CSB/SJU has multiple ways of addressing disparities between women and men. For instance, there are two sections of First-Year Seminar for women only and a section for men only and there are the FoCUS/STEM scholarships and academic support for women in majors not traditionally accepting of and/or completed by women. These in particular would address at least some of the first-year students. CSB/SJU also has both an Institute for Women's Leadership and a Men's Development Institute which have programming addressed at the larger student body.

There are little to no resources for addressing disparities experienced by those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer. There is a Gender Studies department which offers classes that are more inclusive. In the last year, a policy for gender-nonconforming students was proposed. If one goes to the A-Z index, it is very easy to see the commitment to "women" and "men". LGBTQ students, staff, and faculty are invisible there. PRISM, a student club for LGBTQ students and allies, is active on campus, but to find them, you would first have to know that they are a club and go to the student club website.

We also noted that with a Catholic Benedictine identity, CSB/SJU has the additional challenge of balancing the inclusion of an understanding of Catholic and Benedictine thought while maintaining an openness to other religious and spiritual points of view. Around 40 percent of our first-years identify as something other than Catholic. There are many classes that address religion/spirituality, but only a handful that are outside of the Christian tradition. Many are open to first-year students, but none are required for first-year students.

It is the same situation with the Intercultural Competency requirement in the Common Curriculum – many of those courses would be open to, but not required of first-years. First-years fulfilling their IC requirement would be exposed to diverse ideas in a classroom.

There are a wide array of co-curricular opportunities for interacting with diverse ideas and the Student Development Learning Goals indicate a commitment to this in student life. There is little to no evidence for coordination between the curricular and co-curricular activities, although their written goals are similar. There is also no way to ascertain how many of these opportunities first-students utilize.

**Summarize Institutional Resources/Evidence**

Based on the evidence (primarily the FoE survey), we find that the degree to which the diversity of ideas, cultures, and worldviews are a part of the current first-year experience is neither a great strength nor a glaring weakness, in the eyes of students, faculty and staff. However, there is much room for improvement that could come through an integrated, intentional, and student-centered strategy to ensure that every student has meaningful engagement with diversity throughout the first year.

In general, the faculty and staff are less positive about the extent to which diverse cultures, perspectives and worldviews are incorporated into the first-year experience at CSB/SJU than are the students. Less than half of the faculty and staff describe the extent to which students experience diverse ideas and worldviews in and outside of the classroom to be high or very high, while roughly 18 percent feel the exposure is either slight or not at all. This is supported to some extent by the results of last year's FYS paper assessments. The papers are assessed by a group of faculty readers after calibration activities. Only the top highest scores in each section are assessed. So for the top student writers at the end of their first year, in the category "Ability to address different points of view", only 15 percent were rated "Exceptional," 49 percent were rated "Acceptable," and 36 percent were rated "Unacceptable." More than a third of the TOP students wrote papers that did not demonstrate an ability to address different points of view.





### **Recommendations**

Because they are all high priority, we have listed them in descending order of importance.

#### **1. Diversity: Additional surveys for first year diversity assessment**

- High Priority

This is in addition to the concern about the absence of LGBTQ concerns in the survey as noted above.

We have inquired about whether or not the first-year information could be extrapolated from Intercultural Competency assessment survey. Last year's survey was not gathered in a way that would allow for that. However, this year's survey will have be able to be broken down by cohort, so we anticipate that there will be additional useful information this spring.

The first-year intake survey (shared by Jon McGee) is not helpful to our current charge, but if paired with a survey done at the end of the first year (or perhaps the IC survey will do this) we might be able to discern change in the first-year students regarding diversity and take advantage of information from surveys in future years.



## 2. Diversity: Increase curricular and co-curricular coordination of goals and actions

- High Priority

We put this ahead of the other recommendations since it is the key to their success.

A common reading for first-year students to discuss was one suggestion for coordinating these goals. Some ideas that were explored were having a reading assigned over the summer before coming to campus. Orientation leaders would incorporate related activities into orientation and Resident Assistants would facilitate discussion on their floors. RAs would get additional training – part of their responsibility would be to finding ways to support diversity and build community on their floor. However, some students will not read/participate without a grade attached. So – perhaps a single common reading for all sections of FYS? Then the RAs could follow up with discussion/activity on the floor – ideally with sister/brother dorm.

Whatever actual material and format are chosen (common reading, role play, both, etc.), this needs to be a coordinated effort between curricular and co-curricular units. This disconnect between curricular and co-curricular units was frequently cited as an obstacle in the surveys.

## 3. Diversity: Create Learning communities

- High Priority

This is a high-impact practice that CSB/SJU does not currently use. Our recommendation started from a suggestion from one the FoE surveys that first-years should not be allowed to select their own roommates. The rationale was to build a diverse community from the room up and expose students to different points of view.

- Discussion: We concluded that it was best to have options. Mandatory assignment could negatively impact some students and recruitment.
- Compromise: Learning communities could be a way to build diversity and community while allowing for some freedom of choice.
- Discussion: Also mentioned above – a common reading for students to discuss was one suggestion for building a learning community (see above).

## 4. Diversity: Provide safe spaces to rehearse for life – IE: RAD

- High Priority

Another related recommended activity is to have first-years all participate in RAD (Reflection, Action, Dialogue – modelled on The Theater of the Oppressed.) This could be as part of orientation or FYS or both. The RAD materials are based on the experiences of actual students facing racial and cultural tensions at CSB/SJU and are designed to allow a safe space for students to explore and discuss these issues through role play. We recommend that some sort of interactive role play around diversity for first-year students. We recommend that they be given a safe space to rehearse for life.

## 5. Diversity: Identify further areas for support and accommodations of gender, non-conforming students

- High Priority

We support the recommendations made by CSB and SJU Vice Presidents for Student Development, Mary Geller and Doug Mullin, as summarized in their report “Developing Policies for Gender Non-Conforming Students.” Essentially it allows each student to self-identify which campus will be her/his home – even those who experience a change in identity.

As noted in the report, there are many areas of campus for which we need to identify support and accommodations, for instance: residential life, athletics, recreation, registrar, information technology services, etc.

**Performance Indicator 7.2: Interactions**

To what degree does the institution structure opportunities for first-year students to interact with individuals from backgrounds and cultures different from their own within the following categories?

- **Faculty/staff at the institution**  
Based on the evidence below, we rated this low.
- **Other students at the institution**  
Based on the evidence below, we rated this low.
- **Individuals outside the institution**  
Based on the evidence below, we rated this very low.

**Current situation**

Historically, our students, staff, and faculty were of European ancestry, reflecting the largely German American community. Due to an increasingly more focused commitment to becoming more accessible to students of underrepresented groups, our student body is slowly becoming more diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, religion and socioeconomic background. The institutional commitment is evident in programs like the Intercultural LEAD program, Intercultural Directions Council, Intercultural and International Student Services, and other initiatives. While recruitment and retention of students of more diverse backgrounds is increasing, the staff and faculty demographics have been slower to change. For instance, out of hundreds of faculty, to our knowledge there is only one African American. Again there is no way to identify how these programs impact the first-year students directly.

Being in a rural area with no mass transit system to connect us to a large urban center also provides a significant obstacle to our diversity goals, especially regarding engaging with wider communities off-campus. This area of engagement was most consistently ranked low by all groups. Providing these opportunities means providing access to transportation. Providing occasional opportunities is doable, but sustaining interaction with the diverse communities around us will be more challenging. We also noted that despite the growing Somali population in the community, we have difficulty recruiting and retaining Somali students, staff, and faculty, although there are starting to be more interactions with the community in nearby Saint Cloud (for instance, a busload of students visited the local mosque last year.)

Although recruitment of students from underrepresented groups has been slowly increasing, we have not kept pace with recruiting faculty and staff. Again, our location will make this challenging due to the limited or lack of access to diverse foods, places of worship, and cultural activities for many communities. Successes in student recruitment are not uniform and this is also something that is concerning; for instance, although socioeconomic gap is narrowing for women, it is increasing for men.

This past year, faculty have been able to receive inclusivity training via a Mellon grant. We applaud the work so far, but recommend that it be expanded to include staff.

## Summarize Institutional Resources/Evidence

Faculty/staff cite a lack of opportunity for first-year students to interact with diverse people:

1. From within the faculty and staff (36.4 percent say it is only slight or not at all) and 2. From within the community outside of campus (45.8 percent say it is slight or not at all). Students do not see diversity among faculty and staff as a strength (only 38.9 percent listed it as high or very high), but they did not see it as great of a weakness as did faculty/staff (only 18 percent listed it as slight or not at all). Nearly 41 percent of students indicated that exposure to diverse people from outside of the campus community was only slight or not at all, while only 23 percent saw it as high or very high.

So the survey highlighted a lack of visibility of the bit of diversity we do have in our staff and faculty (although we are not as diverse as we would like).

One comment from the surveys reminded faculty to not single out the minority student to represent an entire group – this is one of the very issues addressed in faculty Mellon workshops this year and demonstrates the need to continue this very important training.

## Recommendations

### 1. Diversity: First-year day of service

- High Priority

We discussed recommending a first-year day of service. Small groups would go into the local community for service. We would need to develop further connections to the Saint Cloud, Saint Joseph, Cold Spring, Avon, and other surrounding communities. Although orientation was our first suggestion, after discussion we realized that might be logistically challenging and might be better suited to another time in fall semester. This would be an opportunity early on for students to recognize diversity in the community. If the community relationships are developed, our hope would be that these would not just be a single day of service, but would grow into a deeper relationship through service learning opportunities in other classes (or even better, through student initiative.)

### 2. Diversity: Recruitment of faculty and staff from underrepresented groups

- High Priority

See above.

### 3. Diversity: Highlight the diversity of our faculty and staff

- High Priority

See above.





### Performance Indicator 7.3: Behaviors

To what degree does the institution convey to first-year students the standards of behavior it expects for participants in a diverse, open, and civil campus community?

Based on the evidence below, we rated this as Medium.

#### Current situation

From the evidence below we can infer that diversity does not show up more frequently because it does not play a significant role in the current first-year experience, or that if it does play a role it is neither intentional nor coordinated across units. The most often mentioned weakness in the survey of faculty and staff is the lack of coordination between academic affairs and student development. This suggests that a plan will be most effective if it involves intentional coordination and integration between these two units. We also acknowledge the opportunities for diversity training provided through the implementation of a Mellon Grant on campus this year. We hope to utilize and build on the enthusiasm generated by the Mellon grant activities.

The word “community” came up at least 50 times under “strengths” in open-ended questions. Our community is diverse and layered; many surveys mention its importance here, but there is no clarity as to what “community” means. Since it is a strength, we should leverage this. We recommend starting by defining and making clear what “community” means here. In accordance with our Benedictine identity, this should emphasize being an open, respectful person. The definition should include our Benedictine identity without appearing to be (or in fact being) indoctrination. This will mean having open conversations about what it means to be a Bennie or a Johnnie and who decides what it means to be a Bennie or a Johnnie. We recommend that the definition evolve, bring in new ideas stick to the core values, but also expand and be inclusive.

The recent example of an unfortunate lack of clarity around community and undocumented students is how the Presidents’ recent statement on sanctuary law on our campuses left many vulnerable students on campus feeling anxious about the support they might receive here.

### Summarize Institutional Resources/Evidence

Faculty/staff were less positive on the extent to which the institutions communicated the importance of respecting others with differing opinions (65 percent said high to very high) and standards of behavior in an academic community (55 percent said high to very high). The student survey indicated that 82 percent of the students said the communication from the institutions regarding respect for others with differing opinions was high or very high, while 85.6 percent of the students said that communication regarding standards of behavior in an academic community was high or very high.

In general, intercultural students were more dissatisfied (and also less satisfied) with the first-year experience in terms of diversity, with one exception in which the larger group was more dissatisfied. When comparing the results of intercultural students to those of all the students, there were three particular areas with a greater than five percent difference in the slight to not at all category (indicating dissatisfaction): Q040 exposure to different political perspectives (26.3 percent of intercultural students indicated it was addressed slightly to not at all, compared to 16.2 percent of students overall), Q042 opportunities for interacting with fellow students of differing backgrounds and cultures (21.1 percent of intercultural students and 10 percent of all students indicated these were slight to not at all), and Q044 opportunities for interacting with individuals from outside the institution of differing backgrounds and cultures (23.5 percent of intercultural students and 40.9 percent of all students responded that these opportunities were slightly or not at all present). This indicates a range of experience among first-years regarding diversity on our campuses which needs to be explored further.

With respect to the open-ended questions and how they relate to diversity, it was clear that not many people surveyed associated the value of diverse ideas, cultures, and worldviews with the first-year experience at CSB/SJU. It was a topic that did not show up on the first faculty/staff question that asked for general reflections on the first-year experience. In the case of the second question (strengths of the first-year experience), only seven out of 187 respondents mentioned the commitment to diverse cultures or ideas as one of the three greatest strengths. These were normally statements of support for the ethos of the community being welcoming to all. In the case of the third question (regarding weaknesses of the current model), 18 out of 180 respondents mentioned a concern regarding diversity as one of the three main weaknesses. These were statements of the belief that current support for our growing diverse student body needed to be strengthened; that majority students at CSB/SJU were not confronting their own privilege or being challenged to become more inclusive in any systematic way; noting the lack of actual diversity particularly in the faculty and staff; the need for diversity training on the part of faculty, staff, and students to create empathy and understanding for students of color, students not from Minnesota or the Midwest, first generation students, and other underrepresented students; and perhaps most important to our charge – an uncomfortableness to name, bring up, or challenge “the way that it’s always been done” to help improve the campus. These concerns extended through all parts of campus and the current first-year experience, including transportation to/from the airport, how housing is assigned, the availability of food service and residence halls during breaks, and the exclusion of students through current inclusion efforts such as Intercultural LEAD.

## Recommendations

### 1. Diversity: Continue Mellon inclusivity training and expand to include staff

- High Priority

See above.

### 2. Diversity: Leverage our strength in community

- High Priority

See above.

### 3. Diversity: Clarify protection for undocumented students

- High Priority

We support the recommendations of the Joint Faculty Senate, as reflected in the minutes from December 14, 2016:

“The JFS appreciates and endorses the Presidents’ signing of both the Pomona petition and ACCU statement on DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals). We pledge our ongoing support to the efforts our Presidents’ are making on behalf of DACA students within our community.

As the term “sanctuary campus” has no clearly agreed upon legal meaning, we understand the presidents’ reluctance to claim this status for CSB/SJU. That said, we ask the presidents to articulate what “protect student privacy as required by Federal Law” means for CSB/SJU, as our internal and external constituencies – including, most pertinently, current and future DACA students at our institutions – deserve greater clarity from these Catholic and Benedictine schools of higher learning.

There is a difference between protecting student privacy because Federal Law requires it, and affirmatively and proactively protecting student privacy should these Federal protections cease. We understand that responding to every possible hypothetical shift in Federal Law would not be productive, but in this current climate there is a clear risk to many of our current and future students. It is wise to plan ahead so that our institutions can be proactive, rather than reactive, in the likely event that these risks become a reality.

While “we have no legal ability to set ourselves apart from the laws of our state and federal government,” we do have an ethical and moral obligation to protect our students and their families to our fullest legal ability. Therefore, we ask our presidents’ to make a clear statement that CSB/SJU will not provide any type of assistance in identifying, apprehending, and deporting students of alleged undocumented status except insofar as such assistance is clearly required by law or court order.”

## Conclusion

We gave CSB/SJU a C in Diversity.

We have many strengths but we are inconsistent in using them and we are not coordinating our efforts across campus. There are also still several members of our community who are not being included in all we have to offer.

## Appendix D.8.

# Foundations of Excellence® Roles and Purposes Dimension Report

12/13/2016

{ Foundations Institutions promote student understanding of the various roles and purposes of higher education, both for the individual and society. }

These roles and purposes include knowledge acquisition for personal growth, learning to prepare for future employment, learning to become engaged citizens, and learning to serve the public good. Institutions encourage first-year students to examine systematically their motivation and goals with regard to higher education in general and to their own college/university. Students are exposed to the value of general education as well as to the value of more focused, in-depth study of a field or fields of knowledge (i.e., the major).

### Section 1: Executive Summary

The Roles and Purposes Dimension Subcommittee performed an analysis of available evidence reflecting current CSB/SJU practices for articulating the role and purposes of higher education and found that results are mixed. There is strong evidence of clear attention to articulating the value of education for personal growth and serving the public good. There is moderate attention to effectively communicating the purpose of education for future employment and to promote engaged citizenship. There is also moderate performance with regard to communicating the rationale for the required common curriculum courses, major requirements, and required competencies (e.g., library literacy, writing). Current practices reflect low or non-existent attention to engaging first-year students in conversations about their motivations for pursuing higher education and articulating the rationale of requirements for getting into a major. The committee identified 10 recommendations for improving conversations with first-year students about roles and purposes of higher education. Those recommendations are organized by performance indicator (i.e., not rank ordered) and labeled as high, medium, or low priority.

### Section 2: Roles and Purposes Dimension Committee

Name	Title	Committee Role
Kyle Becker	SJU Sophomore	Committee Member
Chris Bolin	Instructor of FYS and English	Committee Member
Karyl Daughters	Associate Professor of Communication	Committee Chair
Megan Dierberger	CSB Sophomore	Committee Member
Jason Kelly	Assistant Dean & Director Academic Advising	Committee Chair
Erica Rademacher	Assistant Director of Career Services	Committee Member

### Section 3: Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee

#### PI 8.1 Purposes

To what degree does the campus effectively communicate to first-year students its vision for the following purposes of higher education?

- Knowledge acquisition for personal growth - **High**
- Learning to prepare for future employment - **Medium**
- Learning for engaged citizenship - **Medium**
- Learning for serving the public good - **High**

#### Current situation

The committee concluded that while there are many ways in which the institution communicates and provides a forum for discussing all four values stipulated in 8.1 (personal growth, future employment, engaged citizenship, serving the public good), a relatively small group of first-year students receive and actively engage in these conversations. Therefore, there is room for growth in increasing student participation in current campus opportunities. Based on student perceptions, as indicated in FoE survey items Q063, Q064, Q065, and Q066, 8.1 is an area of strength with an average of 73.4 percent of participants rating the institutions high or very high in communicating the connection between their education and the stated outcomes. Faculty, staff, administrative perspective, as indicated in FoE survey items Q050, Q051, Q052, and Q053, shows performance of 8.1 slightly lower with 57 percent rating the institutions high or very high in communicating the connection between their education and the stated outcomes.

The perceptions captured in the FoE survey are informative however, the committee's final assessment is a result of reviewing a broader field of evidence. For example, in a content analysis of 51 First-Year Seminar syllabi, we discovered that 21 (41 percent) addressed personal growth as part of the course description, none of the syllabi addressed the connection between college education and future employment, 12 (29 percent) of the syllabi addressed engaged citizenship, and finally, 13 (25 percent) of the FYS syllabi addressed the connection between college education and service to the public good. Other evidence from Career Services and Experiential Learning and Civic Engagement show that there are several options for first-year students to engage in conversations about purposes of higher education but a minority of students (and mostly CSB students) are taking advantage of these opportunities. The following is a list of examples with participation statistics indicated when available.

#### Career Services

- "Who am I" appointments with career counseling professional (140 total student appointments in 2015-2016, 100 CSB and 40 SJU)
- "Help I need a major" and "Fall in to your future" events (CSB specific events)
- One-on-one Career Services appointments with a master's level professional career counselor: 309 total appointments (58 percent with CSB students) with a total of 149 discreet students (62 percent CSB)



### Experiential Learning and Civic Engagement (ELCE)

- Bonner Leader Program (12 first-year students in 2015-2016, eight CSB and four SJU)
- Intercultural-LEAD (25-30 first-year students each year)
- Community Kitchen (five-10 first-year student volunteers)
- Service-Learning in EDUC 111 (According to Adia Zeman in ELCE, approximately 10 percent of first-year students participate in service-learning) With regard to future employment specifically, ample resources are available to promote understanding of the connection between college education and future employment but those resources are not systematically delivered to all first-year students. Current practices require students to be proactive in seeking out the information. As a result, some of the messaging may be misinterpreted. For example, the student members of the Roles and Purposes Committee suggested that talk about the Johnnie and Bennie networks gives the impression that they don't need to worry about finding a job – the network will give them one. The assessment of the committee is that this may be particularly problematic for SJU students given the evidence that shows an engagement gap between CSB and SJU students. It is the assessment of the committee that we are effectively communicating the importance and values associated with personal growth. As stated previously, engagement with the opportunities is mixed. This is related to our overall concern about the extent to which the institutions are intentional and explicit in communicating these values. Evidence demonstrates that current CSB/SJU practices rely more heavily on modeling, or passively communicating these values, rather than engaging in explicit conversations about the connections between college education and the outcomes of personal growth, future employment, community engagement, and public good. In our discussions the committee was particularly concerned about the phasing out of the ATLAS program as one mechanism that has historically communicated messages about personal growth and future employment to first-year students. In terms of community engagement and public good specifically, the committee observed that being a first-year student is currently a limiting factor. Conversation about community engagement and the public good is stronger in the junior- and senior-year experience.





### PI 8.2 Motivation

To what degree does the institution intentionally provide opportunities for first-year students to examine their personal motivation for pursuing higher education?

**Low**

#### Current situation

Based on student perceptions as indicated in the FoE survey item Q062, 8.2 is the weakest area with 41.9 percent of students indicating high or very high. Faculty, staff, and administrators have a slightly more positive view with 53 percent of respondents rating efforts high or very high in this area (FoE survey item Q054). Other evidence discussed for PI 8.2 include first-year advising sessions, CSB/SJU first-year survey, and admission materials. It was the assessment of the committee that these experiences and materials do not include specific attention to or reflection on the motivation behind achieving a college education.

CSB/SJU has a lot of capacity to accomplish this and we are likely having some form of this conversation informally with students but there is no evidence of standardized forms of these conversations occurring on a regular basis. In sum, the committee assessment is that we are not currently engaging in conversation about motivations for pursuing a college education and believe any FYX plan or curriculum would benefit from purposeful reflection on this topic. There is a growing national conversation about the value of a college education generally and the value of a liberal arts education in particular. This leads to discussions about the utility of a college education for individuals. As this conversation continues to grow, the need for engaging with students about their motivation for pursuing a college education will also grow. Motivation theory suggests that individuals are more likely to do something (and do it well) if they know why they are doing it (Howey, 2008). Therefore, these conversations are needed to help reveal student's intrinsic motivation for pursuing a college education.

Howdy, S. C. (2008). *Factors in Student Motivation*. Retrieved from the NACADA Clearing house of Academic Advising Resources Web site: <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Motivation.aspx>

### PI 8.3 Rationale

To what degree does the campus effectively communicate its rationale for the following?

Required courses (e.g., core curriculum, distribution, and general education) **Medium**

Required competencies (e.g., library skills, computing, writing) **Medium**

Requirements for entry into majors **Very Low/None**

#### Current situation

This performance indicator has three elements which are addressed in turn.

### **Required courses**

The committee considered admission office meeting procedures, common syllabi content, and academic advising sessions in FYS when reflecting on CSB/SJU performance in communicating the rationale for the common curriculum. The assessment of the committee is that as a result of these practices students likely know what the requirements are but may not necessarily understand the rationale behind them. For example, Admission and Academic Advising representatives explain requirements clearly but there is no specific forum for reflecting on why these requirements exist (e.g., explaining the philosophy of a liberal arts education). It is certainly expected that this type of reflection may be happening in some advising and admission meetings but we did not find any evidence of systematic or institutional mechanisms for such discussions.

### **Required competencies**

For this performance indicator the committee reflected on FYS sessions with librarians and engagement with the writing center. The required competencies stated as part of FYS are writing, speaking, information literacy, and critical thinking. Committee members with experience teaching FYS explained that the rationale for these skills are often discussed in the context of developing these skills in the class. In addition, CSB/SJU librarians traditionally visit every section of FYS at least once to discuss the value of research skills and competencies. Representatives from the writing center also regularly visit FYS sections (although not necessarily in all FYS sections) and first-year education classes. Some FYS courses require students to visit the writing center. It is the view of the committee that CSB/SJU have a limited number of competencies for first-year students (e.g., speaking, writing, library research skills) and they are addressed almost exclusively in FYS. The committee could identify no stated computing competencies. If FYS competencies are removed or reduced, our rating for this item would go down dramatically.

### **Requirements for getting into a major**

The committee reviewed Academic Advising programs and several departmental websites to assess CSB/SJU effectiveness in communicating the rationale(s) behind requirements for getting into a major. Academic Advising at CSB/SJU coordinates and helps promote group advising sessions for first-year students where requirements for majors are shared. The rationale for requirements may or may not be shared at that time. Current major websites list requirements while explicit rationale for requirements will vary by major and is generally limited. Most departmental sites don't provide any rationale for entrance requirements. As a result of this review, the committee concluded that we are not doing a good job in this area right now. In our discussion the committee spent some time reflecting on why it is important to communicate rationale for major requirements to faculty and first-year students. Responses included: to prepare FYS instructors to have more productive conversations with first-year students; to help first-year students be successful in their intended major; and, to insure that first-years don't fall behind their cohort. Perhaps most importantly, these kinds of conversations could serve as an artifact that promotes a culture of academic rigor. In other words, these conversations could serve to frame and establish expectations (e.g., Entry into a major is a privilege that must be earned). The committee identified several strategies (see below) that we believe could greatly improve CSB/SJU performance in this area.

## Section 4: Recommended Grade & Rationale

Recommended Grade: C+

Rationale: CSB/SJU is addressing some aspects of roles and purposes of higher education well while failing to address others. There is a strong foundation for meeting the goals of roles and purposes and we believe there are low cost strategies that could be implemented to significantly improve CSB/SJU performance in this dimension.

## Section 5: Recommendations for Action

### PI 8.1 Purposes

#### 1. Four-year academic and professional development program

- High Priority

The committee recommends revisiting or replacing the use of the ATLAS program. The program promotes explicit conversations about connections between college education and personal growth and future employment. The loss or phasing out of the existing program suggests we are moving in the wrong direction in terms of roles and purposes and the FYX.

#### 2. Peer-to-peer engagement programs

- Medium Priority

We need to explore opportunities for peer-to-peer engagement. This should be considered across the organizational structure, e.g., greater utilization of student employees in academic and student affairs offices, peer programs in student clubs, peer mentoring in athletic programs/teams, multi-year student housing. This could result in a more sustainable model to help promote engagement among students across their time at CSB/SJU and would address all of the performance indicators in 8.1.

#### 3. Increase use of alumnae/i in the first-year experience

- Low Priority

Utilize alums (particularly young alums) to establish mentor programs. This primarily addresses future employment.

### PI 8.2 Motivation

#### 1. One-on-one advising point of discussion

- High Priority

Implement a standardized conversation about personal motivations for pursuing higher education to be included in first-year one-on-one advising, whether conducted with faculty or Academic Advising. This could also be incorporated into a peer-to-peer discussion or mentoring opportunity.

#### 2. FYS/FYX faculty development

- Medium Priority

Within the current FYS system – add some instruction to FYS faculty to explain the value of having discussions about the motivation for pursuing higher education with students within the context of the course and in one-on-one advising sessions. This could be included as part of the annual FYS workshop. Or – in a new FYX model – include motivation for pursuing higher education as one element of the FYX curriculum.

**3. FYS/FYX content**

- Medium Priority

Based on the analysis, the committee determined that it is also necessary to include discussion about motivations as part of any FYS/FYX curriculum. This would be in addition to the one-on-one advising sessions (the first recommendation) to improve breadth and depth of understanding on this topic.

**PI 8.3 Rationale****1. Required Courses – Syllabi statement**

- High Priority

Require faculty of all common curriculum courses to include statements in their syllabi about the goals of common curriculum and the the liberal arts. This is relatively easy and low cost recommendation. Faculty will need to be given the rationale for including the statements so there is understanding of the goals and objectives of explicitly communicating the rationale for required courses to students.

**2. Competencies – Retain a first-year competency course**

- High Priority

We need to do a better job articulating competencies and the rationale for them. It is important to retain a first-year instructional experience that includes these competencies and a discussion of the rationale for these competencies.

**3. Major Requirements – Standardized Departmental Curriculum Sheets**

- High Priority

Each department should be required to have a curriculum sheet that includes a rationale for requirements for getting into the major. On the same publication, departments should state requirements for entry into the major (e.g., 2.0 GPA) and for continuing in the major (e.g., maintaining a 2.0 GPA) where if they are not maintaining requirements they can be put on probation within the major/department. Include a rationale for these ongoing requirements. This publication should also have a complete check-list for requirements for the major to help students facilitate the construction of their four-year academic plan.

**4. Required Courses – Academic Advising FYS visits**

- Medium Priority

Make explicit that academic advising will include this discussion in their FYS visits. The committee believes this is already happening in some sessions. We recommend making this practice explicitly stated in Academic Advising materials as part of the content that will be covered during Academic Advising visits to FYS classes.



## Appendix D.9.

# Foundations of Excellence® Improvement Dimension Report

11/16/2016

 **Foundations Institutions conduct assessment and maintain associations with other institutions and relevant professional organizations in order to achieve ongoing first-year improvement.**

This assessment is specific to the first year as a unit of analysis – a distinct time period and set of experiences, academic and otherwise, in the lives of students. It is also linked systemically to the institutions' overall assessment. Assessment results are an integral part of institutional planning, resource allocation, decision-making, and ongoing improvement of programs and policies as they affect first-year students. As part of the enhancement process and as a way to achieve ongoing improvement, institutions are familiar with current practices at other institutions as well as with research and scholarship on the first college year.

### Section 1: Executive Summary

In general, CSB/SJU has not been an assessment driven organization. We have pockets of systematic assessment processes but there is no central driving philosophy or force. This is true for efforts targeted at first-year programming as well. Below you will find our current situation, our rating in each of these categories and our recommendations regarding our first-year signature programs related to systematic assessment, assessment results being used to improve existing practices, institutional dissemination of key first-year data to faculty/staff, recent assessment activities designed to improve campus understanding of student success factors for first-years and strategies to improve the first-year experience.

### Section 2: Improvement Dimension Committee

Name	Title	Committee Role
Shannon Essler-Petty	Assistant Professor of Education	Committee Member
Lori Klapperich	Assistant Director Health Promotion	Committee Chair
Phil Kramer	Director of OARCA	Committee Member
Barb May	Associate Dean	Committee Chair
Laura Taylor	Assistant Professor of Theology	Committee Member
Chris Wing	Academic Review	Committee Member





### **Section 3: Narrative on General Situation and Findings of the Dimension Committee**

#### **Improvement**

##### **PI 9.1 Assessment**

#### **Academic Support Services with emphasis on First-Year Students' Success - Low**

- Academic Advising
- Writing Center
- Math Center

#### **First Year Orientation - Medium**

#### **First Year Residence Halls - Medium**

- CSB Residential Curriculum
- SJU Residential Curriculum

#### **First-Year Seminar (FYS) - Medium**

#### **Student Accessibility Services - Very Low/None**

## Current Situation

Our priority programs are in various stages of developing an assessment process, from nothing at all to having a system ready to be implemented. Below please find a summary of the current situation for each.

**The First Year Seminar (FYS)** has an assessment plan in place to evaluate the learning goals as part of the Common Curriculum. There are two major artifacts assessed: discussion skills and a final research paper. The discussion skills assessment process is meant to meet the goals “Students will improve their discussion skills by...” and “Students will improve their public speaking ability by...” The research paper is assessed with a rubric that looks for the student’s ability to construct a clear argument, address different points of view, and use evidence effectively to support the claims in the paper. This assessment is targeted to support the following FYS designated goals: “Students will improve their writing by...” and “Students will improve their critical thinking by...” and “Students will improve their understanding of information literacy by...” Data is not provided publicly but given to those faculty teaching FYS.

FYS faculty have additional tasks. They are the first-year student’s advisors and work on community building in the course, along with metacognition (learning how to learn). This material is not assessed directly but faculty feedback on some of these “non-academic goals” was provided. This suggests some informal, indirect assessment of these goals. The director leads a May workshop for FYS instructors and gets feedback on the workshops. This allows for continual training supported by the needs of faculty.

FYS assesses the academic goals (the goals and assessment methods are currently being discussed) and does limited indirect assessment of non-academic goals. Non-academic goals could be better developed so they could be better assessed. It is for these reasons that FYS is ranked as “high.”

**First Year Orientation (FYO)** has goals and conducts assessment (survey-based). The goals appear to be more like mission statements and difficult to assess (a survey may not be able to understand whether students have met these goals). They recently evaluated data from FY2016 (low response rate). Results are disseminated to interested and involved staff, faculty, and students.





**CSB Residential Curriculum** has goals specific to first-years including Leadership for the Common Good, Respect for All Persons, and Developing a Meaningful Life Purpose. They are broken down into more manageable, measurable objectives listed below. Although they do have a national survey they are a part of every three years (Benchworks) in which they can add some of their own questions, they are not currently assessing these objectives. National survey results are disseminated to staff, as well as the Student Development Dean and Vice President.

- Recognize and locate student development and academic department resources
- Identify healthy alternatives to consuming alcohol (on- and off-campus)
- Recognize and identify two-to-three components of a healthy relationship
- Examine personal values/morals and how they affect others in the community
- Demonstrate time management skills and formulate a personal schedule
- Develop a self-care plan encompassing stress management techniques

In sum, CSB first-year goals are quite specific and could be measurable. They flow from the pillars identified. But, they are not currently doing assessment on those specific goals. A more general assessment is being done through a national survey tool. They have a process they could work through, but aren't currently assessing so we have rated them as medium.

**SJU Residential Curriculum** also has goals for the first-year cohort. See below. The actual goals are not written in a way that is measurable. They use the same national survey (Benchworks) every three years and created some questions that specifically ask how much residents feel they have grown in each of the five areas of our residential curriculum as a result of living on campus. Copies of these questions were not obtained for this report. Any results are reported back to staff and the Student Development Dean and Vice President.

- Career Development & Exploration: Students will be introduced to the Career Services Office and its resources.
- Community Engagement: Students will gain awareness of the positive impact of community engagement.
- Intercultural Competence: Students will recognize the value of the diverse components of community.
- Personal Growth: Students will be able to identify personal growth through participation in residential opportunities.
- Spirituality: Students will recognize opportunities to explore their spirituality.

In sum, SJU has goals for the first-year cohort but they are very broad and not very measurable. They indicate they have added questions to the national survey tool that ask residents how they feel they have grown in each of the five areas of the residential curriculum as a result of living on campus. It is difficult to tell how meaningful the data would be with such broad goal statements. The specific goals either lack assessment or have such broad assessment data. Because they have some key pieces in place, even if improvement is needed, we have rated them a medium.

**Academic Support Services:**

**Academic Advising** has a mission and set of objectives, as well as a four-year advising curriculum. There are no specific goals or objectives for first-year students. These are not necessarily outcomes but tasks to be completed at each year. Because they are new, they have not been assessed.

**Math Skill Center** has no goals related to first-year students. They do record the number of incoming students who are not math proficient at the beginning of fall semester and also again at the end of spring semester.

**Writing Center** has a goal of each first-year student visiting at least once. Tutors are sent into FYS classrooms. Evaluations are sent after students visit the center.

CSB/SJU Writing Center Annual Report does not include specific information regarding first-year only. But, information provided indicates they have 80 percent of first-year students come to the writing center for at least one appointment with a peer writing tutor (750 individual first-year students came in last year). Most come back for at least one additional appointment. This is in line with goals for first-year students. Tutors were sent into 66 classes last year in various formats of group tutoring. The majority were for First-Year Seminar classes. Therefore, it is very likely that additional first-year students beyond the 750 mentioned above have had some exposure to the Writing Center. These first-year usage statistics are very good compared to other colleges, and most of the goals for improvement are around extending the reach of the Writing Center to sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Every time a student comes in for an appointment, they are automatically sent an evaluation survey via the online scheduler, WOnline. Data from the completed surveys is used for assessment. There is a “task team” of four peer tutors that review the survey results periodically with the director (approximately three times per semester). Information is used to shape practices and ongoing tutor training topics. In addition to staff meetings, a for-credit course that tutors must complete before they work as peer tutors, has been offered this year for the first time.

Because of the overall lack of assessment, we have ranked Academic Support Services low.

**Student Accessibility Services (SAS)**, responsible for developing appropriate accommodations for individuals with documented disabilities, indicates that at this point in their development, they have not gone through the process of developing official learning goals for the department. They do, however, make attempts to reach out to first-year students even in the admission process to get them appropriately connected with the office. They participate in a college fair for Students with Disabilities, as well as meeting with prospective students and their families when they come to campus. Questions are asked on the advising and registration form, as well as the housing form, to help identify students who may qualify and benefit from accommodations.

We have ranked Student Accessibility Services low in assessment due to their lack of learning goals and assessment process at this time.

### PI 9.2 Use of Assessment

To what degree have assessment results been used to improve existing practices across the following initiatives?

- Academic Support Services with emphasis on First-Year Students' Success - **Low**
- First-Year Orientation - **High**
- First-Year Residence Halls - **High**
- First-Year Seminar (FYS) - **Medium**
- Student Accessibility Services - **N/A**

#### Current situation

Informal assessment data from the **First Year Seminar** (FYS) is used both to alter the training of FYS faculty and also to alter the assessment process, teaching pedagogies and strategies. Meetings are held with faculty to discuss the results (from surveys and assessment). It might be suggested that action items as a result of assessment are collected and documented to help in future strategies for any changes. FYS just submitted its first annual report. This would be a good place (or an assessment report) to document and address suggested changes. Because there is an informal process in place with some information that can be used in future practices, they have received a medium rating.

There is a systematic process for utilizing data from the **First Year Orientation** survey. Changes are made in response to collected data, although the information may not be as valuable as it could be due to how the goals are written, they are using it). They have received a high rating.

The assessment information from the Benchworks assessment collected every three years by **CSB Residential Life** has informed strategic priorities for facilities, as well as how to determine priorities for programming initiatives and shape policy enforcement. Specific goals of the residential curriculum have not been assessed so could not contribute to future plans. Because they have a basic system in place, disseminate that information and utilize the results to plan for the future, they have given them a high rating on the use of assessment. Improvements in what information is collected in the process could be made.

**SJU Residential Life** uses the Benchworks assessment to help inform which program areas are having an impact on students. It also informs how programming is positively impacting students' experiences at SJU. It is unclear how first-year goals are assessed in this process and whether they provide any usable information. SJU Residential Life has a basic system in place, disseminate that information and utilize the results to plan for the future so they have been given a high rating on the use of assessment. Improvement to the wording or their goals and how they collect information regarding them can be made.

### Academic Support Services:

Because **Academic Advising** has not assessed any of their goals and objectives and does not have any specific first-year learning goals, they do not use assessment data to inform their practices.

It is unclear if the **Math Skill Center** uses the information about incoming students who are not math proficient to look at the practices and services in any way. They do not have any specific first-year learning goals.

The **Writing Center** appears to use individual student evaluation to make changes to their process and services. There isn't any broader assessment at this time.

Because most of academic support services do not have learning goals for first-years, they cannot assess and thus, cannot utilize for future practice. They have been given a low rating.

Because **Student Accessibility Services (SAS)** does not have any program/office goals related directly to first-year students the questions regarding use of assessment of these goals are not applicable.

### PI 9.3 Dissemination of Data

To what degree does your institution routinely disseminate to faculty and staff the following first-year student data?

- Demographic characteristics - **Medium**
- Academic profile of entering students - **Low**
- Intended majors - **Medium**
- Retention and graduation rates - **Low**



### Current Situation/Committee Discussion Notes

We collect a lot of information about our first-year students as they enter CSB/SJU. We have limited information about our students during their first year (we do not do a survey while in the middle of their first year). Demographic characteristics and major/minor information is reported via email to some individuals but not all (coordinate cabinet, department chairs – but not all faculty – and some staff). The academic profile and retention rates can be identified but are not reported directly to faculty and staff. Though Institutional Planning and Research (IPR) does not publish a detailed compendium of the academic profile of new entering students, IPR does report first-to-second year retention rates as well as the mean ACT score and high school GPA in the fall enrollment summary posted on the IPR website.

#### PI 9.4 Understanding

To what degree have recent assessment activities improved campus understanding of the way that the following factors impact student success?

- Student allocation of their time - **Low**
- Student/student connections - **Very Low/None**
- Student/faculty connections - **Very Low/None**
- Student use of campus services - **Very Low/None**
- Student class attendance patterns - **Very Low/None**
- Patterns of student involvement - **Very Low/None**



#### Current situation

Again, we collect a lot of information about our first-year students as they enter CSB/SJU. We have limited information about our students during their first year (we do not do a survey while in the middle of their first year). There are campus wide assessments in the student development area (general health survey, alcohol and other drug survey and sexual violence campus climate survey) that first-year students participate in but not all of the information stated above is collected. It probably could be collected through one of these sources.

Currently, the majority of faculty/staff who indicated they worked directly with first-year students, did not indicate that information on these items improved their understanding of first-years. But, they were not asked if information about these factors was available to them or if they had information on their importance. There is information on the Institutional Planning and Research web page that could help the understanding of some of these factors. It is unclear if faculty and staff who work with first-year students know this information exists or access it in any way.

**PI 9.5 Strategies**

To what degree have the following strategies been used by your campus to improve the first year?

- Attendance at higher education meetings (e.g., conferences, institutes, workshops) - **Low**
- Participation in multi-campus initiatives focused on the first year - **Very Low/None**
- Broad campus exposure to external experts - **Very Low/None**
- Broad exposure to campus-based knowledge/expertise about the first year - **Low**

**Current situation**

There are no known deliberate strategies regarding the first-year student at this time. There has been limited faculty/staff involvement in meetings or professional development as it relates to first-year students. (We do not know of any intentional encouragement to attend meetings or undergo professional development as it relates to first-year students. We have not been aware of a specific strategy or plan (until SD2020) relating to first-year students. A group CSB/SJU faculty and student development staff attended the First-Year Experience Conference in February of 2016. First-year Seminar Professors have been offered professional development as part of the Mellon Grant and there is an annual faculty workshop for FYS.

There are no known multi-campus initiatives focused on the first year. There have been no known external experts brought to campus regarding first year students and limited exposure to campus-based knowledge about the first-year. Knowledge about first-years is either obtained through 10th day numbers or via the Institutional Planning web site.

**Section 4: Recommended Grade & Rationale**

Recommended Grade: D+

Rationale: Because we are everywhere from not having a mission and vision to measurable goals but no assessment process to assessment process but poorly written goals and more informal processes, it seems that we have fallen just above failing entirely. All signature programs would benefit from a central first-year philosophy and a common set of factors or goals for success.



**Section 5: Recommendations for Action**

The recommendations below have all been determined to be of high priority. All recommendations provide the basis for developing a FYX program that is supported by assessment and built for evaluation and measurable improvement. Number four could happen after the program is developed but is a key in the process of assessment and improvement.

1. Priority programs for first-year students need assessable goals that are directly related to the first-year experience philosophy.

Goals need to be simple, clear, and measurable. These can be used to establish an assessment plan (a timeline and mechanism for assessment). Some of these programs have goals (in some cases, difficult to assess) and others have no goals.

2. Identify and define institutional first-year outcomes from which priority programs build their individual goals and assessment plans.

Evidence from assessment will identify whether the programs are successful and will inform changes and next steps in a first-year program. The first-year program as an entity becomes a part of the “program review” process. It would be helpful to have a common set of outcomes for some programs, particularly those that are broader than first-year. For example, a goal that articulates outreach efforts to first-year students from all programs could be beneficial.

3. Each signature program should have established methods of utilizing assessment data that is included in program review.

There should be documentation that suggests that the assessment process is driving decisions and changes.

4. We need an accessible system that allows all faculty and staff access to information about CSB/SJU first-years (demographic characteristics, academic profile of entering students, intended majors, and retention and graduation rates). In addition, access needs to be communicated and provided to all faculty and staff along with a rationale describing the reasons for importance and connected back to the first-year philosophy.
5. The institution as a whole needs to determine what measurable outcomes indicate success for first-year students (student allocation of their time, student/student connections, student/faculty connections, student use of campus services, student class attendance patterns, and patterns of student involvement). If the listed outcomes are indicators, or whatever indicators are chosen, they need to be integrated in a formal assessment process that connects to the first-year program.
6. If we establish an institutional first-year program, we need to identify best practices for improvement in this area.
7. Once best practices are identified, institutional development opportunities for appropriate faculty and/or staff need to be facilitated.

## Appendix E

### FYX Lab Prototype Learning Outcomes

Based on discussions of the Steering Committee, the Project Liaisons have drafted learning outcomes and a potential for-credit first semester lab course. We recommend that the FYX Implementation Task Force use this to start their discussions around programming.

#### Understanding the Value of a Liberal Arts Education

Students will demonstrate their understanding of key concepts of a liberal arts education, including critical thinking, moral reasoning, socially responsible leadership, the various ways disciplinary and interdisciplinary programs in the arts, humanities, natural and social sciences construct knowledge and create meaning.

#### Developing a Meaningful Life Purpose

Students will reflect on their core values as they map out their personal, academic, and professional goals and articulate potential pathways to reach these goals.

#### Service and Leadership for the Common Good

Students will recognize their obligation to function as informed, responsible citizens of their local, regional, and national communities and, ultimately, the world. They will conduct themselves in ways that demonstrate respect for those who are less powerful socially, economically, and politically.

#### Engagement with the Community

Students will demonstrate their knowledge of academic, co-curricular, and social opportunities on campus. Students will develop an awareness of their own identity and place within a diverse community.

#### Persistence and Academic Achievement

Students will identify and apply strategies to effectively manage time and priorities. Students will identify and apply study skills and learning strategies appropriately.

#### Intercultural Agility

Students will recognize the ways that diverse perspectives, cultures, and values contribute to our knowledge and appreciation of the world. Students will effectively engage with people whose cultural identity differs from their own.

#### Gender

Students will demonstrate an understanding, acceptance, and respect for their own identity as a gendered person and of persons who have a gender identity that is different from their own.

#### Physical and Spiritual Wellbeing

Students will develop habits for sustaining healthy living and relationships and for making good decisions. Students will demonstrate their knowledge of a holistic approach to physical and spiritual wellbeing.



## FYX Lab Prototype Design

### First-Year For-Credit Lab connected to First-Year Seminar

There will be seven-to-eight required sessions (A and B mods). Each session will be 80 minutes on either Tuesday or Thursday. Each session will be repeated multiple times with around 50 students in each section.

The lab is graded S/U. The sessions are designed via the flipped classroom method. Each lab session will include a preview video or activity to be completed in advance and made available to faculty teaching FYS in order to link to lab content. Each session will be facilitated by appropriate staff.

Each session is grounded in specific Benedictine Values and includes at least two of the above learning outcomes.

#### Liberal Arts in the Catholic Benedictine Tradition

Benedictine Values: Listening, Stability

Learning outcomes: Understanding the Value of a Liberal Arts Education; Service and Leadership for the Common Good

#### Health and Wellness

Benedictine Values: Respect for Persons, Community Living, Stability, Moderation, Peace

Learning outcomes: Physical and Spiritual Wellbeing; Engagement with the Community

#### Diversity and Inclusion

Benedictine Values: Respect for Persons, Community Living, Justice, Hospitality

Learning outcomes: Intercultural Agility; Engagement with the Community

#### Gender

Benedictine Value: Respect for Persons, Community Living, Justice

Learning outcomes: Gender; Intercultural Agility; Engagement with the Community

#### Career and Major Exploration

Benedictine Value: Dignity of work

Learning outcomes: Developing a Meaningful Life Purpose; Persistence and Academic Achievement

#### Making the Most of Your College Education

Benedictine Value: Community Living, Stewardship

Learning outcomes: Engagement with the Community; Understanding the Value of a Liberal Arts Education; Service and Leadership for the Common Good; Persistence and Academic Achievement

#### Civic Engagement for the Common Good

Benedictine Value: Community Living, Justice, Hospitality, Stewardship

Learning outcomes: Service and Leadership for the Common Good; Engagement with the Community; Understanding the Value of a Liberal Arts Education

## Appendix F: Current Practices Inventory (CPI)

### Appendix F.1. Demographics of the First-Year Cohort Fall 2014

The following tables capture the profile of the first-year class at the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University. Understanding the profile of any given cohort is key to the delivery of learning outcomes.

While most of our students remain the traditional age 18-22-year-old and are first-time enrollees, we do have a significant number of new transfer students whose needs differ and need accommodation. Our gender split mirrors the national average on college campuses with approximately 10 percent more women than men. Another important profile factor to note approximately 20 percent of the first-year cohort identify a non-white nodding to the increase in diversity of a cohort in a myriad of ways.

#### Defining the First-Year Student Cohort

First-Year Students	Summer 2014	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Total First-Time for 2014 - 2015
First-Time (non-transfer)	0	986	10	996
New Transfer FY	0	48	22	70
Continuing FY	0	1	657	658
Other FY	0	0	309	309
<b>Total First-Year Students by Term</b>	0	1,035	998	
<b>Unduplicated FY Cohort</b>				<b>1,066</b>

First-Year Students	Fall 2014	Spring 2015	Total First-Time for 2014 - 2015
First-Time Full-Time (non-transfer)	974	9	983
First-Time Part-Time (non-transfer)	12	1	13
New Transfer FY Full-Time	46	22	68
New Transfer FY Part-Time	2	0	2
Continuing FY Full-Time	1	655	656
Continuing FY Part-Time	0	2	2
Other FY Full-Time	0	308	308
Other FY Part-Time	0	1	1
<b>Total First-Year Students by Term</b>	<b>1,035</b>	<b>998</b>	



## FY Cohort Gender Information

	Number	% of Total
Female	585	54.9 %
Male	481	45.1 %

## FY Cohort Race Information

	Number	% of Total
Nonresident alien	41	03.8 %
Hispanic or Latino	66	06.2 %
American Indian or Alaska Native	11	01.0 %
Asian	50	04.7 %
Black or African American	38	03.6 %
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	6	00.6 %
White	854	80.1 %

## FY Cohort Student Profile

	Number	% of Total
Enrolled as an international student	41	03.8 %
Entered as a first-generation college student	268	25.1 %
Entered as a veteran	0	00.0 %
Entered while on active duty in the military	0	00.0 %
Lived on campus at your institution	1,040	97.6 %
Pell Eligible	0	00.0 %
Played on an intercollegiate athletic team at your institution	232	21.8 %

## Appendix F.2. Retention Data

### Retention Status by Race/Ethnicity

	Retained (%)	Student Chooses to Leave the Institution (%)	Institution Requires Student to Leave (%)
Nonresident alien	96.9 %	03.1 %	00.0 %
Hispanic or Latino	80.6 %	18.3 %	01.1 %
American Indian or Alaska Native	88.9 %	11.1 %	00.0 %
Asian	84.6 %	15.4 %	00.0 %
Black or African American	82.9 %	14.3 %	02.9 %
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	100.0 %	00.0 %	00.0 %
White	87.1 %	12.6 %	00.3 %

## Appendix F.3

### High Enrollment Courses for First-Year Students

Course	Title	Terms	Sections	Enrollment	D,F,W,I Rate
FYS 100	FIRST YEAR SEMINAR	1	47	819	02.6 %
FYS 101	FIRST YEAR SEMINAR	1	47	765	04.3 %
THEO 111	THE BIBLICAL TRADITION (TH)	2	28	457	04.6 %
BIOL 101	FOUNDATIONS OF BIOLOGY (NS)	1	13	354	11.3 %
ECON 111	INTRO TO ECONOMICS (SS)	2	13	301	06.6 %
CHEM 125	INTRO/CHEM STURCT/PROPERT (NS)	2	13	296	11.8 %
PSYC 111	INTRO PSYCHOLOGY (SS)	2	14	263	09.1 %
ACFN 111	PRINCIPLES I	2	12	262	12.2 %
HISP 211	INTERMEDIATE SPAN I	3	22	232	01.7 %
HISP 112	BEGINNING SPANISH II	2	16	202	02.0 %
BIOL 201	INTERMED CELL BIOL & GENETICS	1	9	156	10.3 %
NUTR 125	CONCEPTS OF NUTR SCIENCE (NS)	2	6	151	02.6 %



## Appendix F.4.

### High DFWI Courses for First-Year Students

Course	Title	Terms	Sections	Enrollment	D,F,W,I Rate
MATH 124	PROBABILITY & STAT	3	17	93	23.7 %
MATH 119	CALCULUS I (MT)	2	6	85	20.0 %
ACSC	MATH PREPARATION I	2	7	62	21.0 %
ESSS 204	SPORTS NUTRITION	2	4	41	19.5 %
CSCI 150	INTRO: SCIENCE/COMPUTING (NS)	2	3	32	25.0 %
PSYCH 221	APPLIED BEHAVIORAL STATISTICS	2	4	24	20.8 %
MUSC 111	COMP MUSICIANSHIP I	1	2	15	20.0 %
ENVR 175	INTEGRATED ENVR SCIENCE I (NS)	2	2	13	30.8 %
MUSC 150	MUSIC THRU HIST (FA)	3	2	11	36.4 %
LATN 111	INTRODUCTION TO LATIN I	1	1	11	27.3 %
ACSC 115	EFFICIENT WRITING	2	2	9	22.2 %
HIST 115	EAST ASIA SINCE 1800 (HM)	1	1	9	22.2 %

### High DFWI Courses for First-Year Students

Course	Title	Terms	Sections	Enrollment	D,F,W,I Rate
GEND 381	SEX & GENDER: GLOBAL PERSPECT	1	1	1	100.0 %
HIST 351	AMERICAN REVOLUTION (HM)	1	1	2	50.0 %
MUSC 150	MUSIC THRU HIST (FA)	2	2	11	36.4 %
ACFN 325	INTERMEDIATE ACCOUNTING 1	2	4	3	33.3 %
ASTR 211	SOLAR SYSTEM (NS)	1	1	3	33.3 %
ESSS 258	HUM ANAT/PHYSIOLOGY/ESSS	1	1	3	33.3 %
MUSC 227L	PERCUSSION MAJORS	2	2	3	33.3 %
ENVR 175	INTEGRATED ENVR SCIENCE I (NS)	2	2	13	30.8 %
LATN 111	INTRODUCTION TO LATIN 1	1	1	11	27.3 %
CSCI 150	INTRO: SCIENCE/COMPUTING(NS)	2	3	32	25.0 %
ESL 108	ESL WRITING II	1	1	8	25.0 %
PHYS 105	PHYSICS FOR LIFE SCIEN I (NS)	2	4	4	25.0 %

