



The Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*)

Overview of 2023 Survey Results Joliet Junior College

Introduction

The Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*), is a product and service of the Center for Community College Student Engagement. Administered during the 4th and 5th weeks of the fall academic term, *SENSE* asks students to reflect on their earliest experiences with the college. *SENSE* serves as a complementary piece to the [Community College Survey of Student Engagement \(CCSSE\)](#), with a more specific focus on early student experiences.

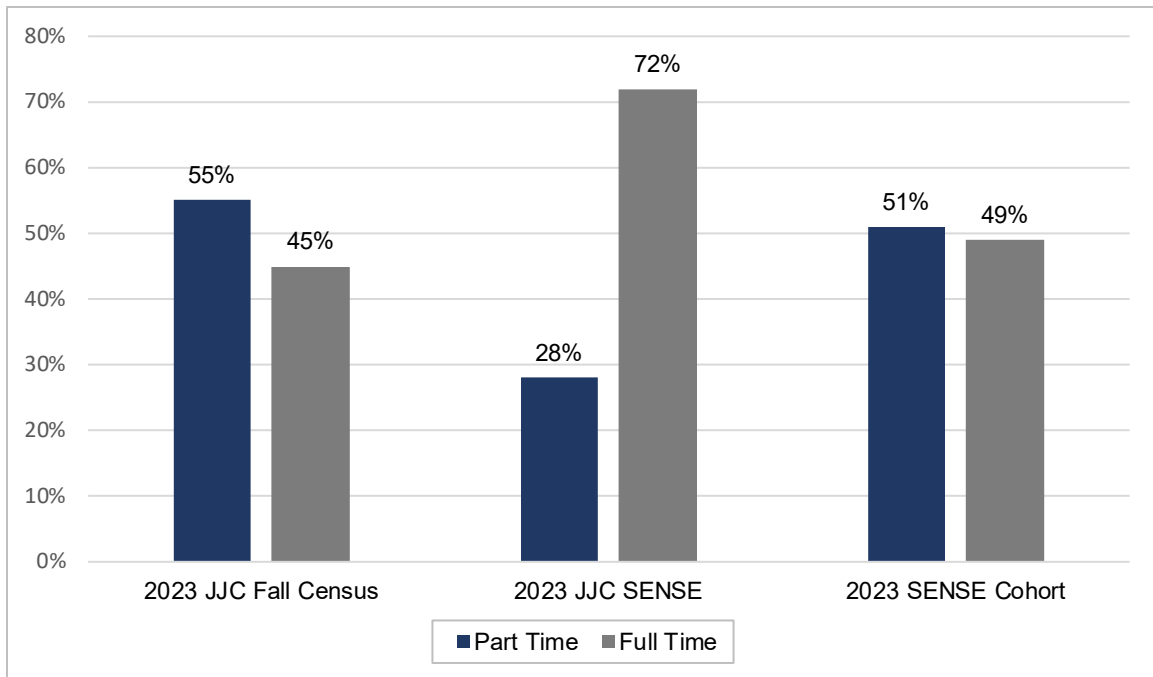
SENSE Member Colleges

SENSE data analyses are based on a three-year cohort of entering student data from participating colleges. This approach increases the total number of institutions and students contributing to the national data set, which in turn increases the reliability of the overall results. In addition, the three-year cohort approach minimizes the impact, in any given year, of statewide consortium participation. If a college participated more than one time in the three-year period, the cohort includes data only from that college's most recent year of participation.

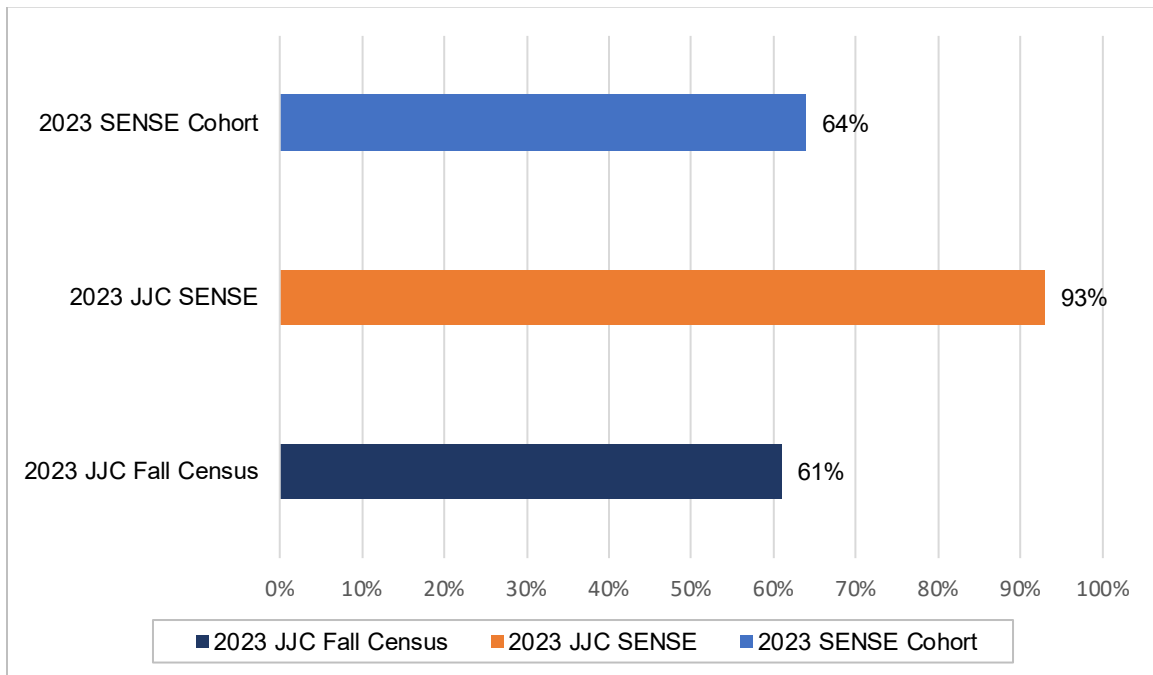
SENSE utilizes a three-year cohort (2021 through 2023) of participating colleges in all of its data analyses, including the computation of benchmark scores. This cohort is referred to as the 2023 *SENSE* Cohort. The 2023 *SENSE* Cohort includes [160 institutions](#) from 39 states and the Marshall Islands. Seventy-six are classified as small (<4,500 credit students), 38 as medium (4,500-7,999), 30 as large (8,000-14,999), and 16 as extra-large institutions (15,000+ credit students).

2023 Student Respondent Profile

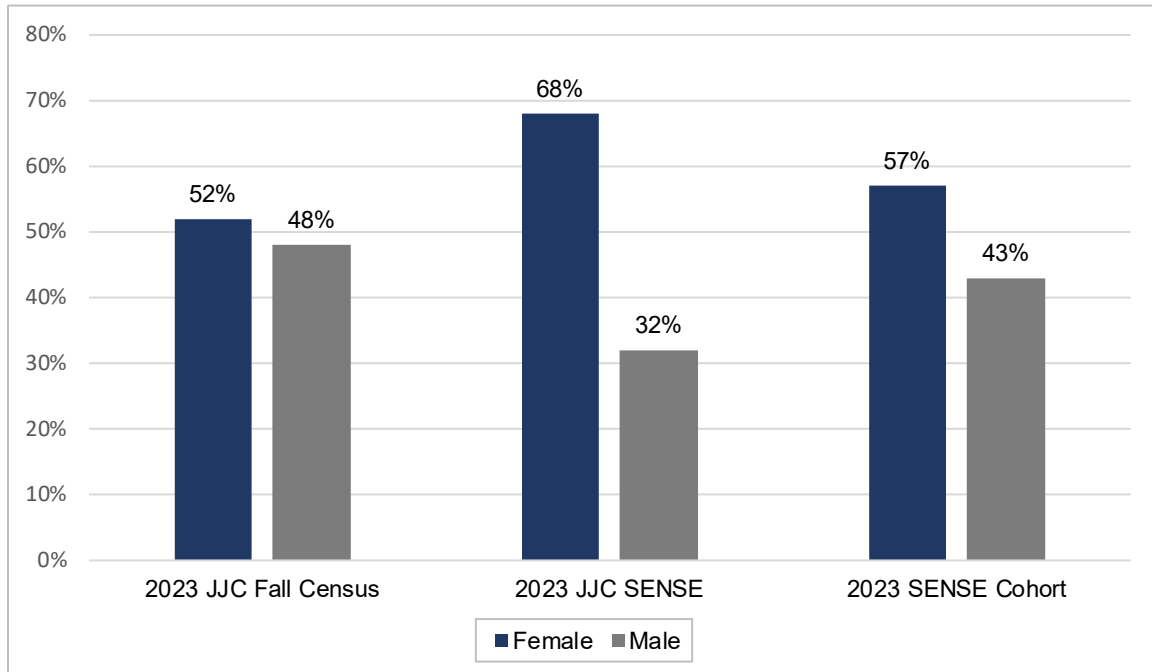
Part Time and Full Time Students by Comparison Group



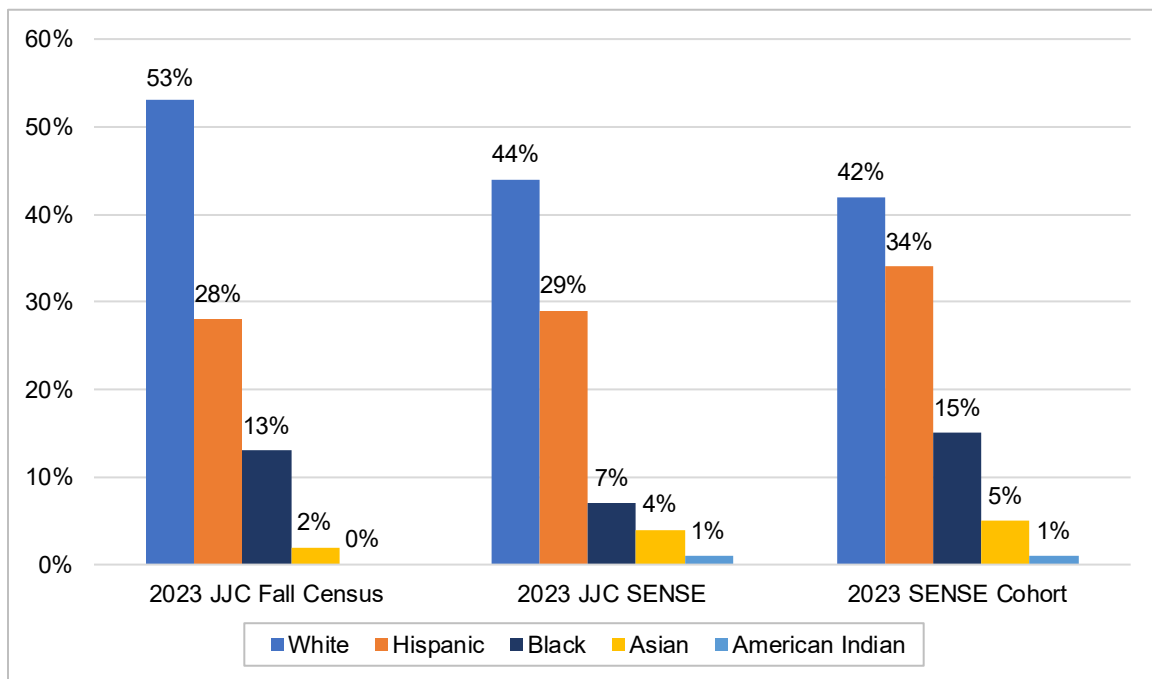
Students Age 18-24 Years Old by Comparison Group



Female and Male Students by Comparison Group

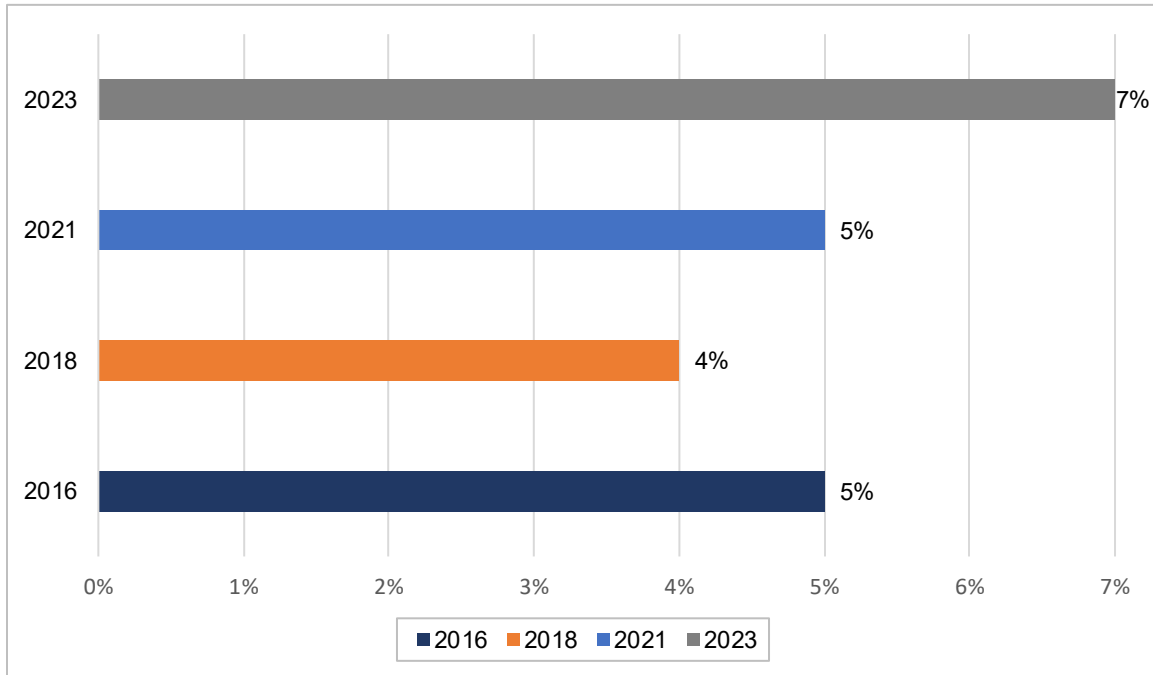


Racial/Ethnic Identification by Comparison Group



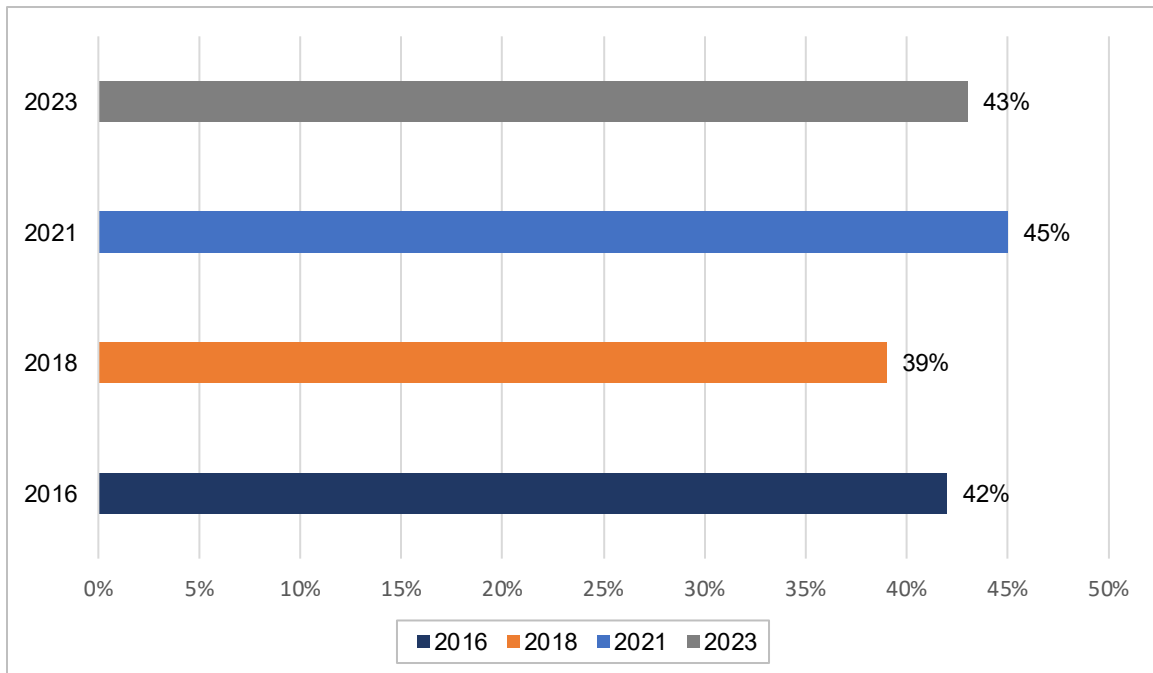
International Respondents by SENSE Administration

7% of our 2023 SENSE entering students responded yes to the question, “Are you an international student or nonresident alien?”

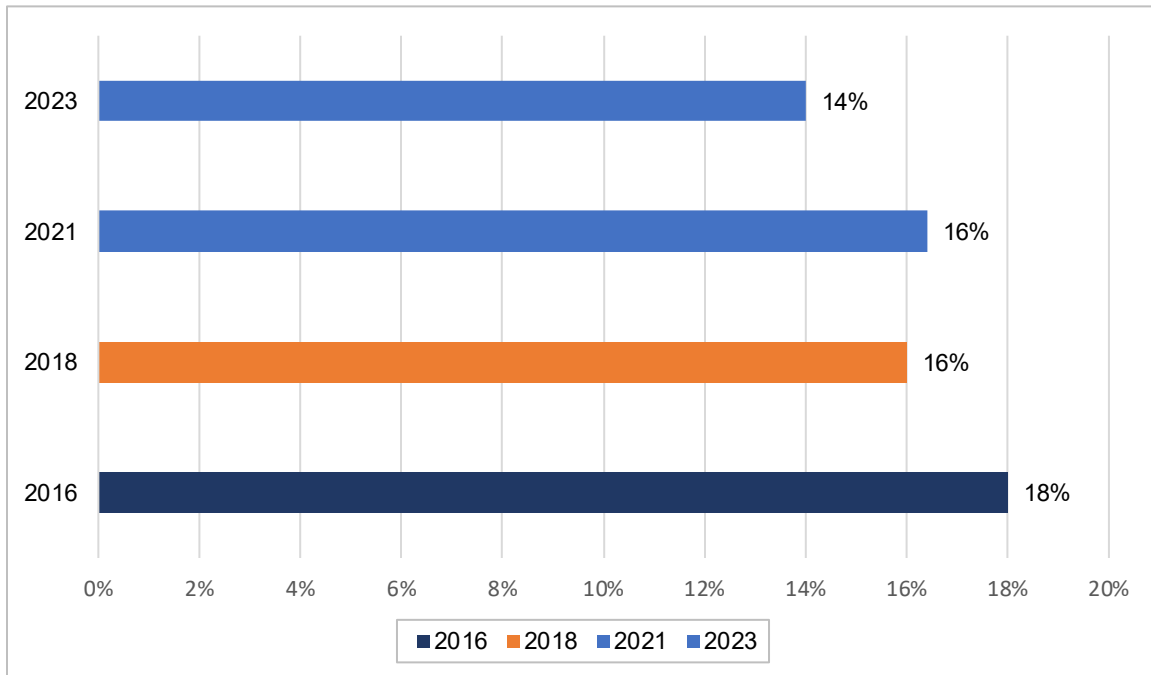


First-Generation Respondents by SENSE Administration

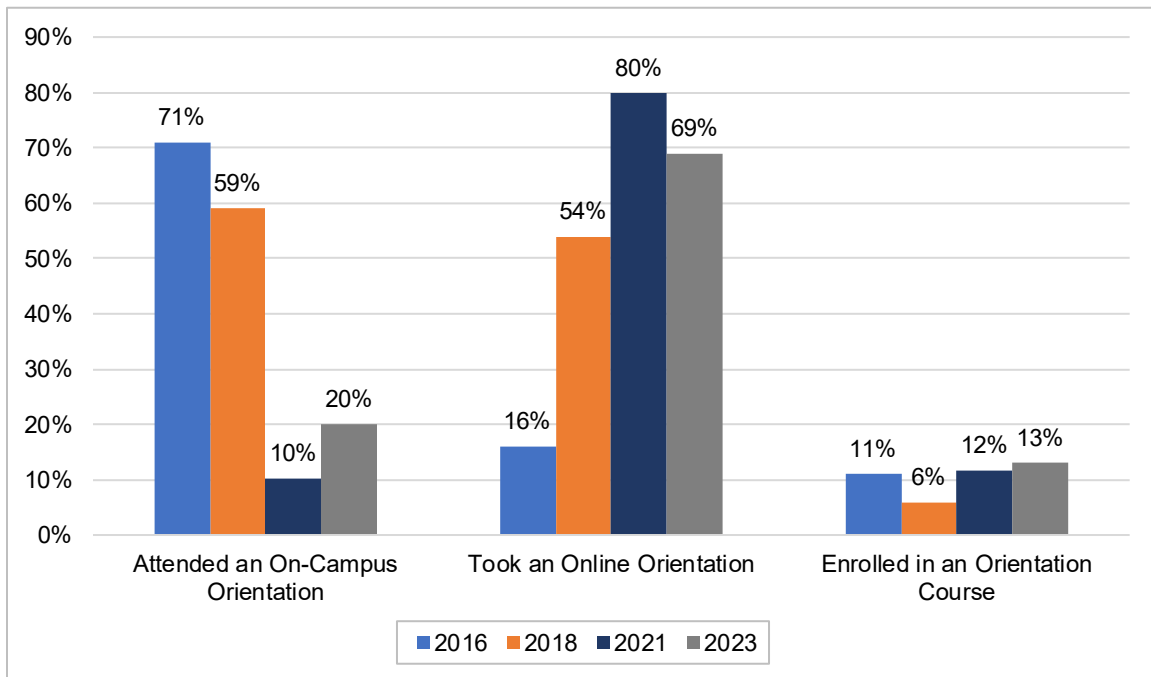
43% of 2023 SENSE entering student respondents indicate that neither parent has college experience; accordingly, these students are considered "first-generation."



Non-Native English Speaking Respondents by SENSE Administration

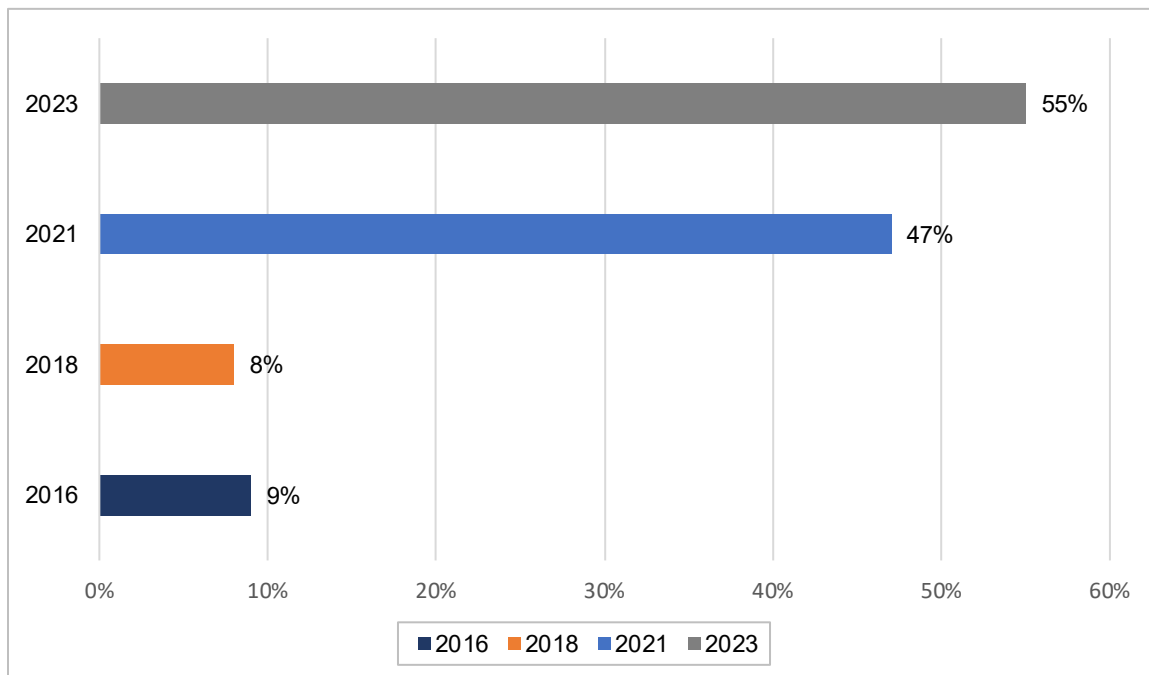


Orientation Attendance by SENSE Administration

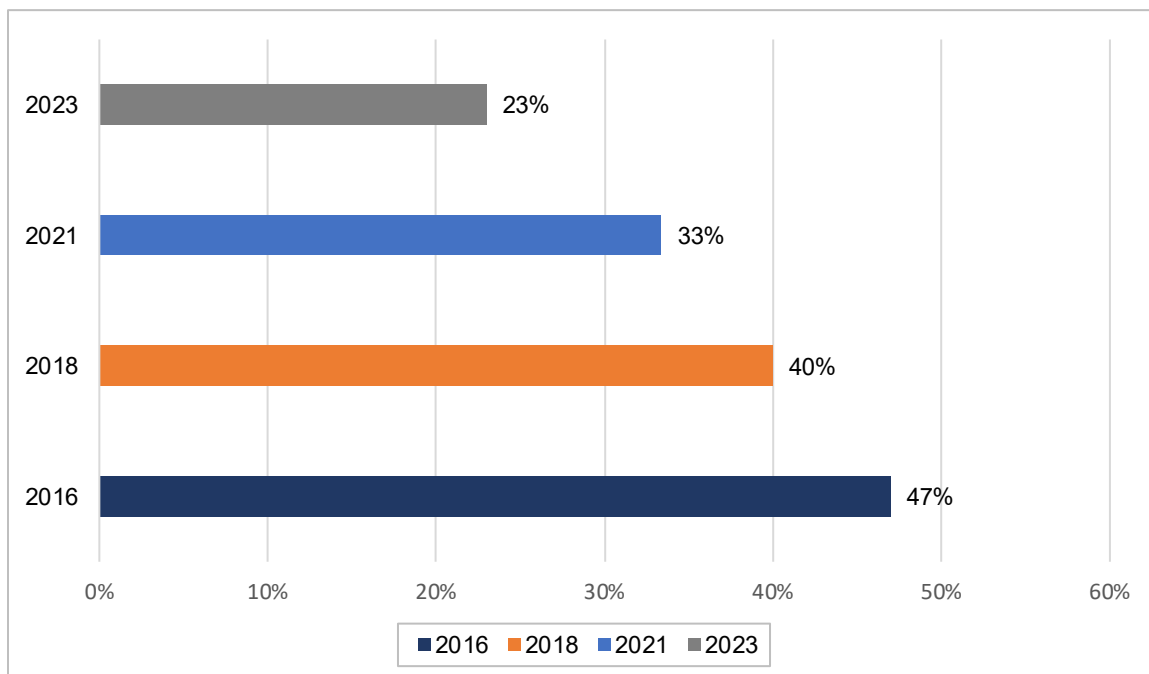


Courses Dropped by SENSE Administration

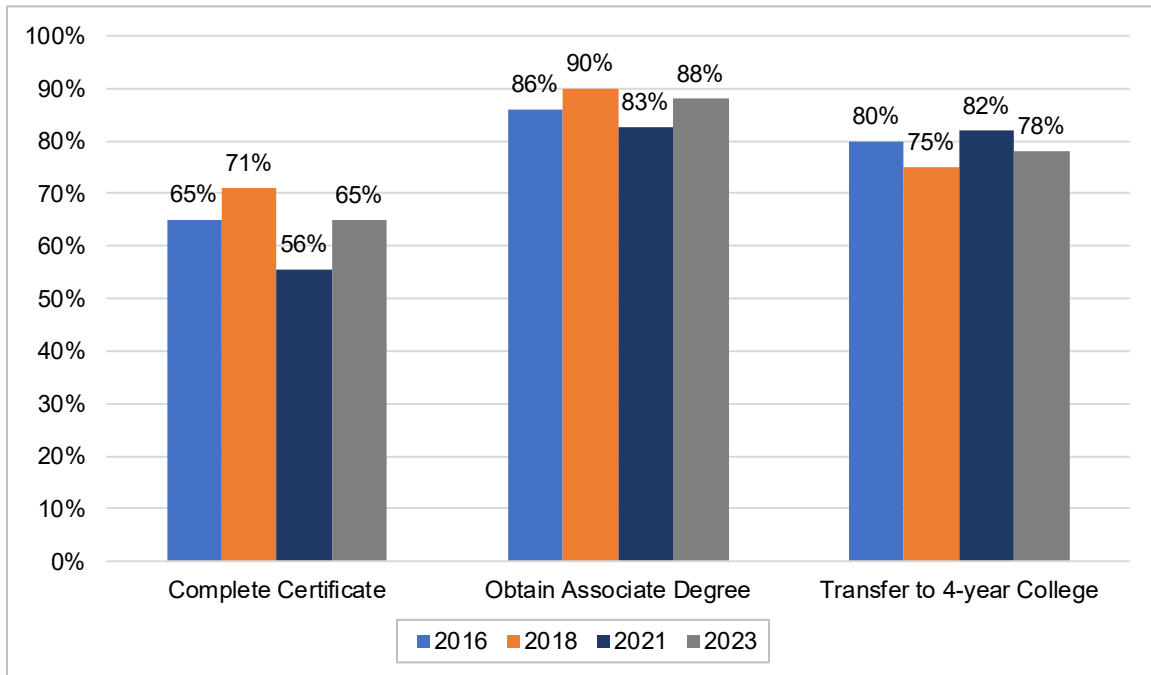
55% of SENSE 2023 entering student respondents report dropping at least one course after the first day of class



Students Who Work 21 or More Hours Per Week by SENSE Administration



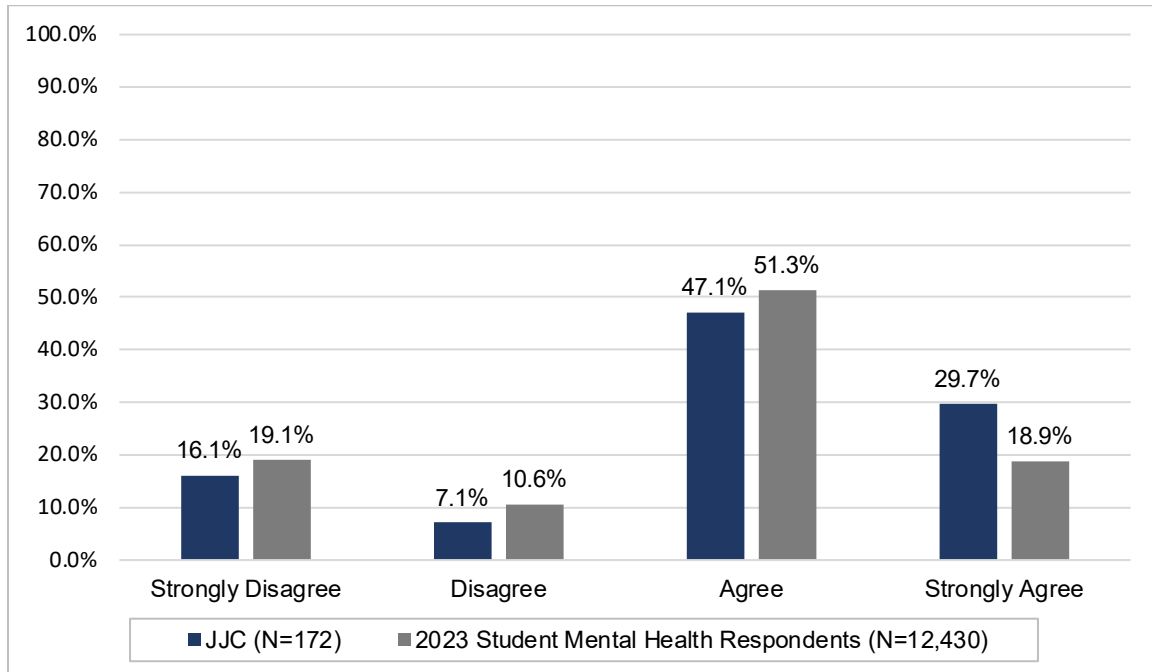
Goals for Attending JJC by SENSE Administration



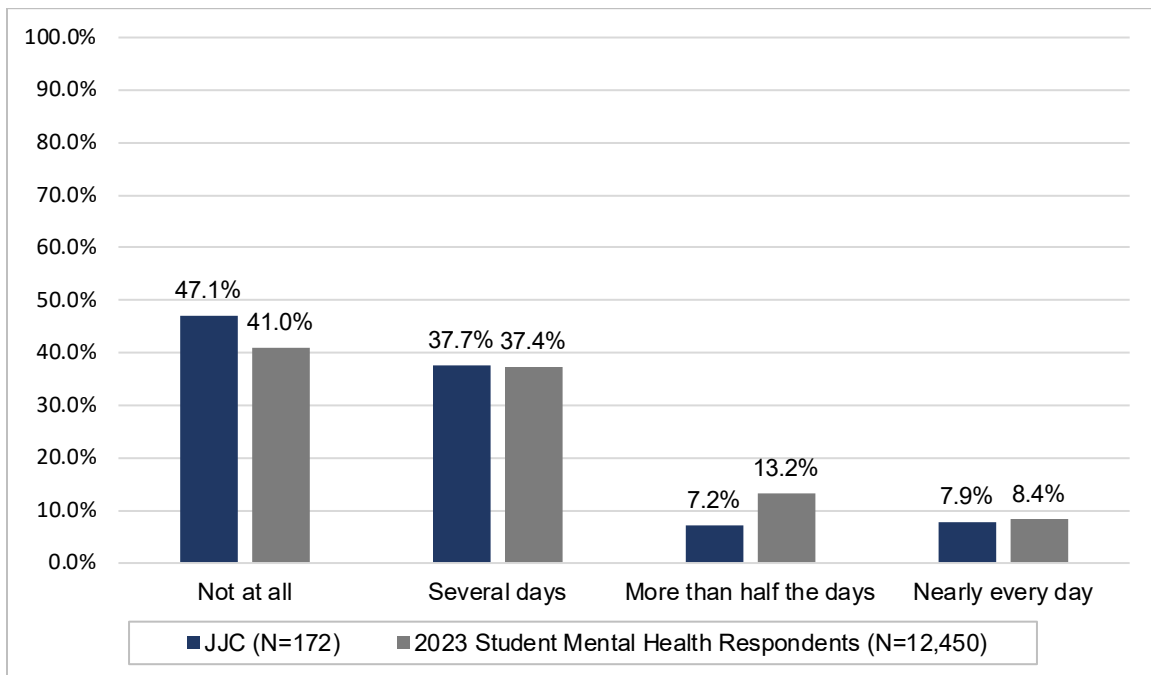
Student Mental Health and Well Being

The Center adds special-focus items to *SENSE* each year to augment the core survey, helping participating colleges and the field at large to further explore fundamental areas of student engagement. The 2023 special-focus items elicit new information around the topic of students in need. Frequency results from twelve special-focus items for your college and the 2023 *SENSE* Student Mental Health and Well Being item-set respondents are displayed below.

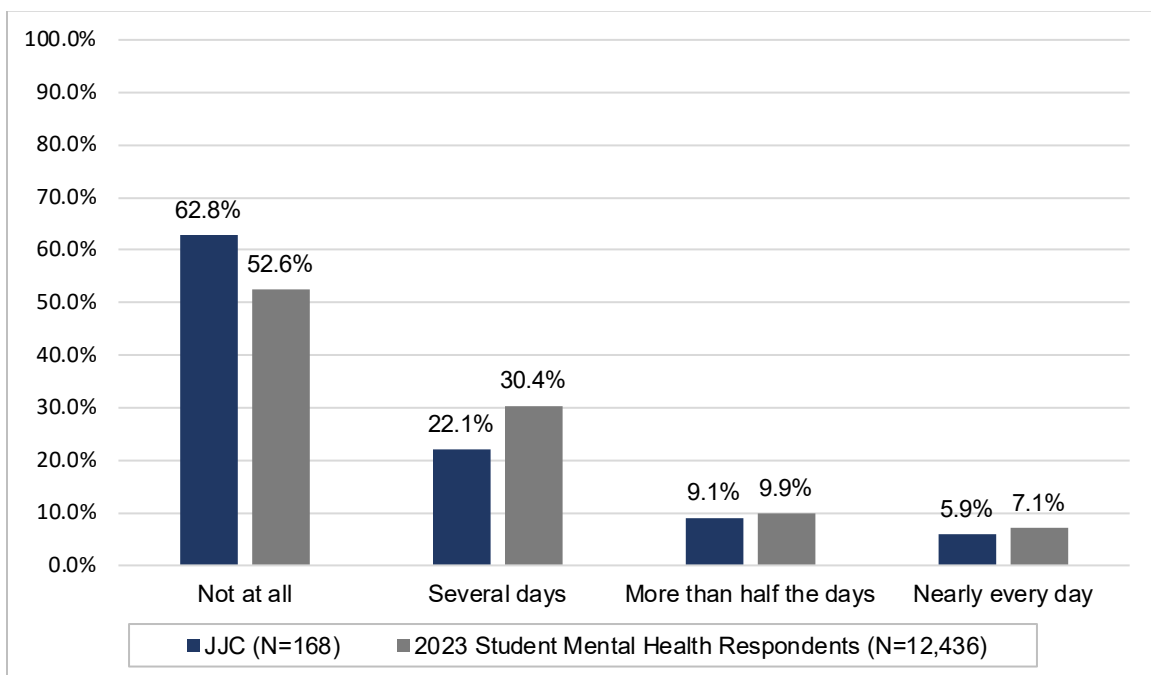
At this college, I feel that students' mental health and emotional well-being is a priority.



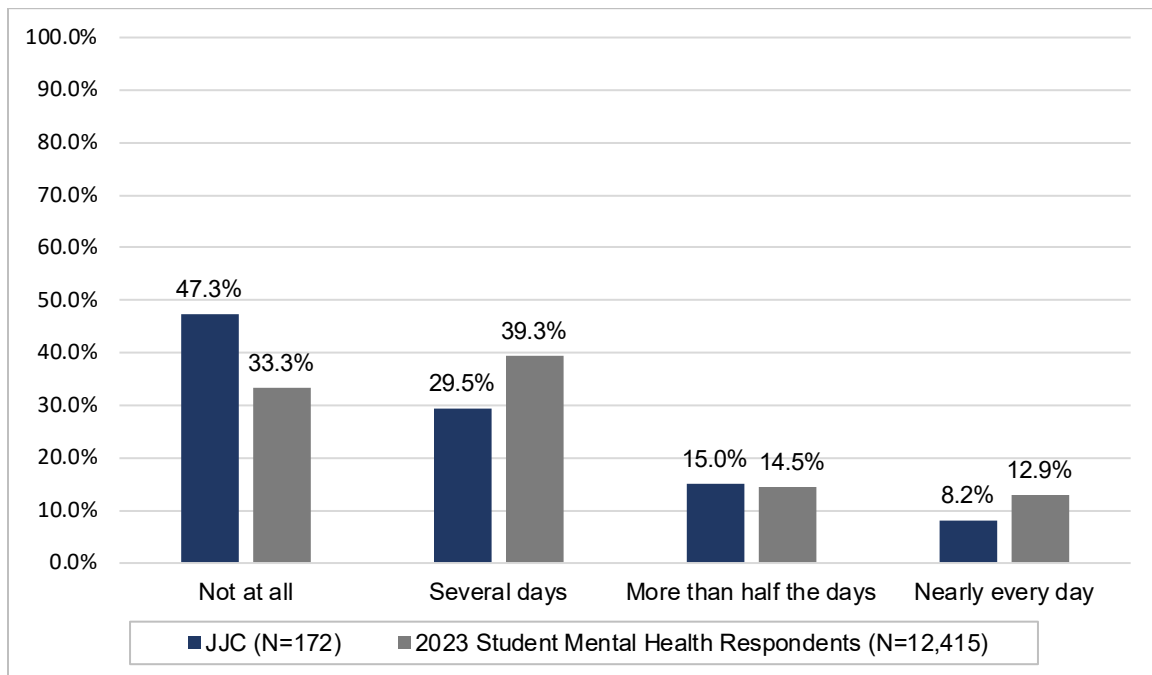
Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by having little interest or pleasure in doing things?



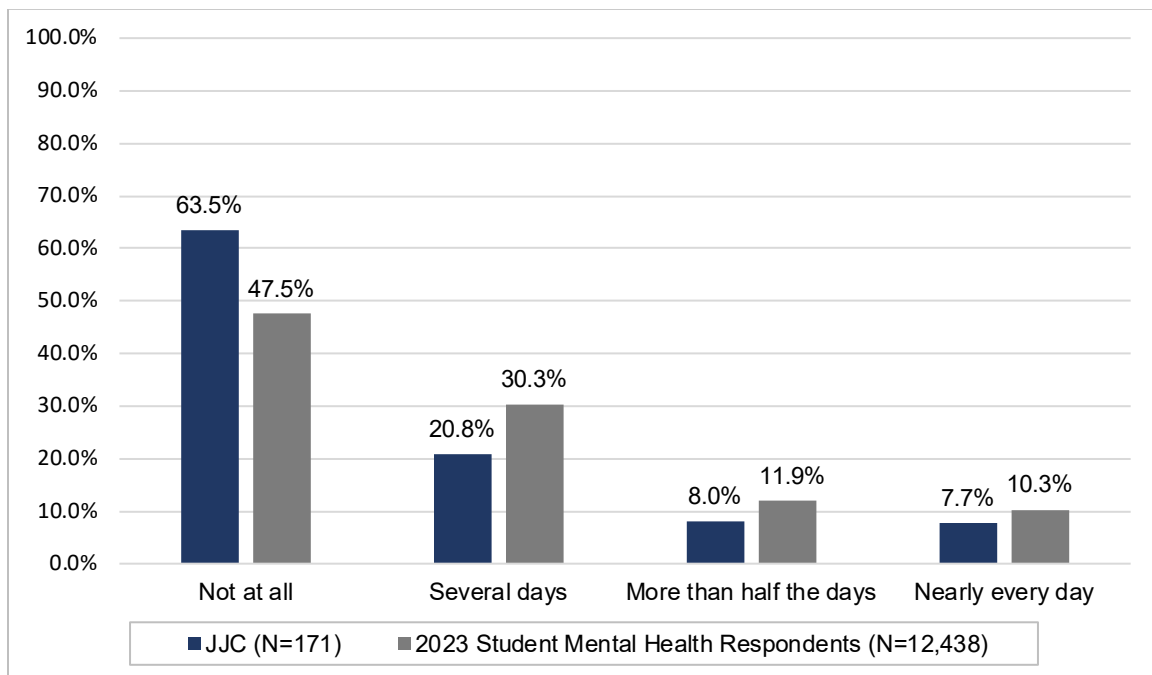
Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by feeling down, depressed, or hopeless?



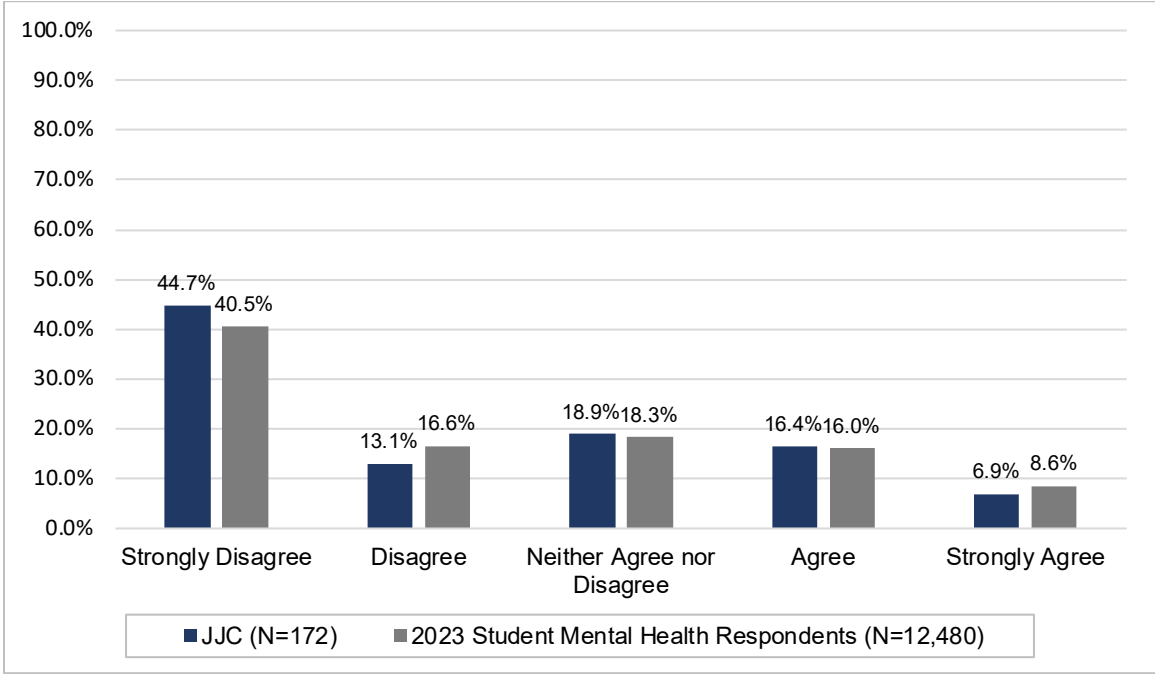
Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge?



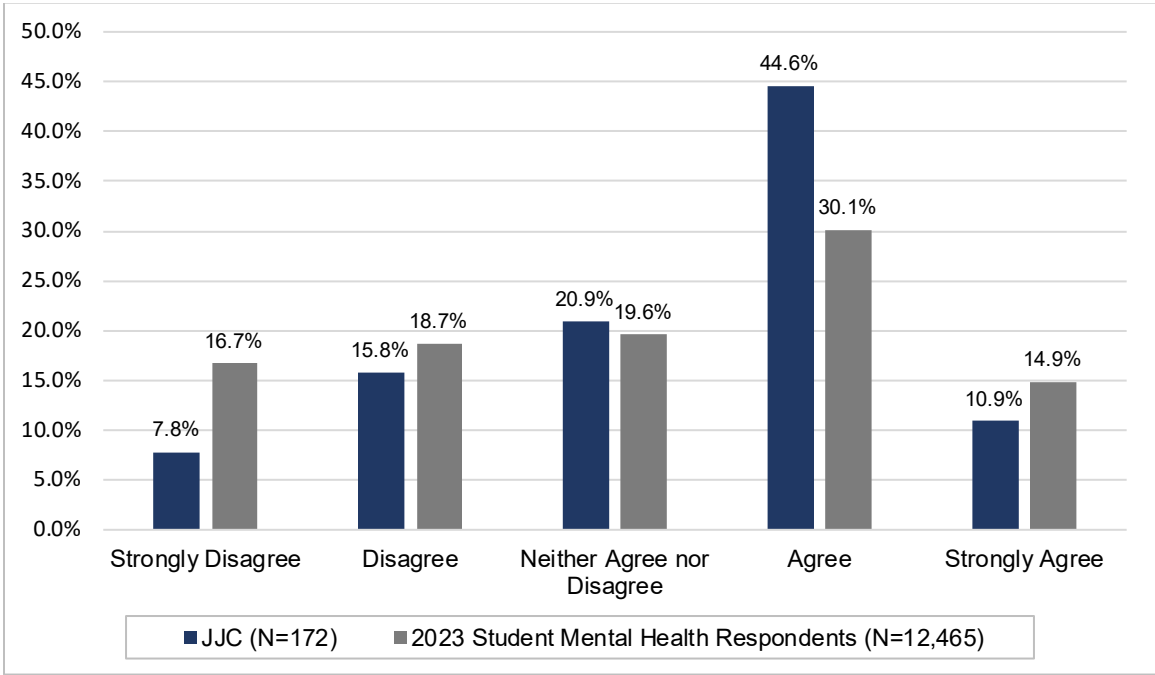
Over the last 2 weeks how often have you been bothered by not being able to stop or control worrying?



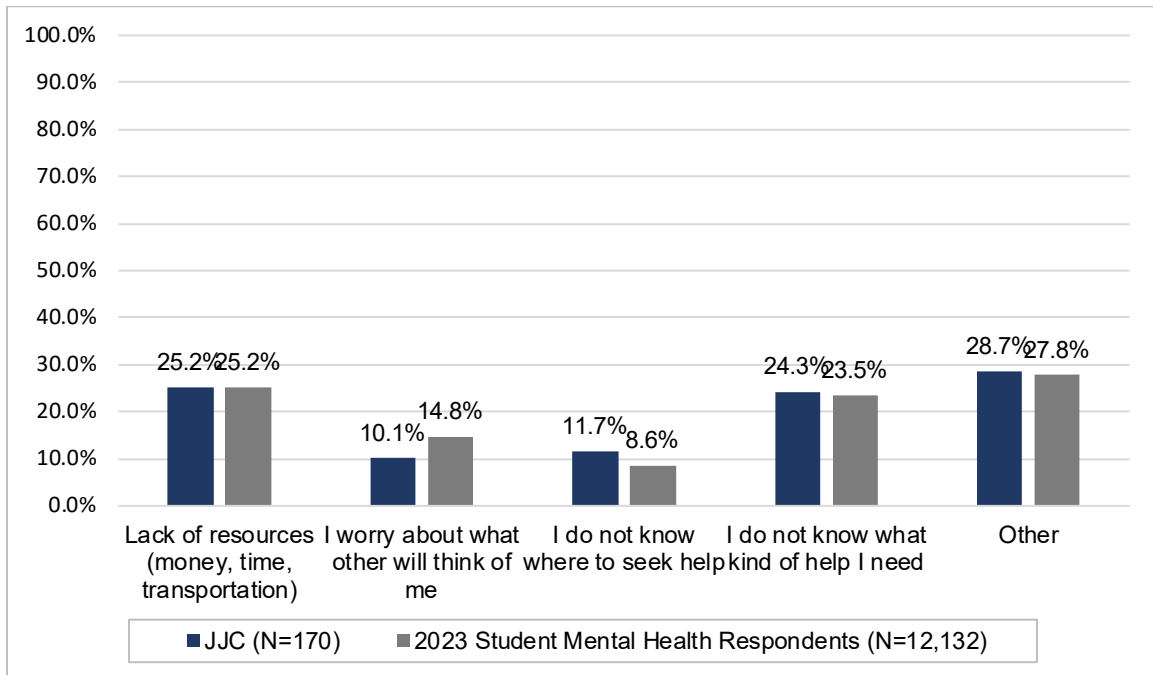
In the past 12 months, I have needed help for emotional or mental health problems such as feeling sad, blue, anxious, or nervous.



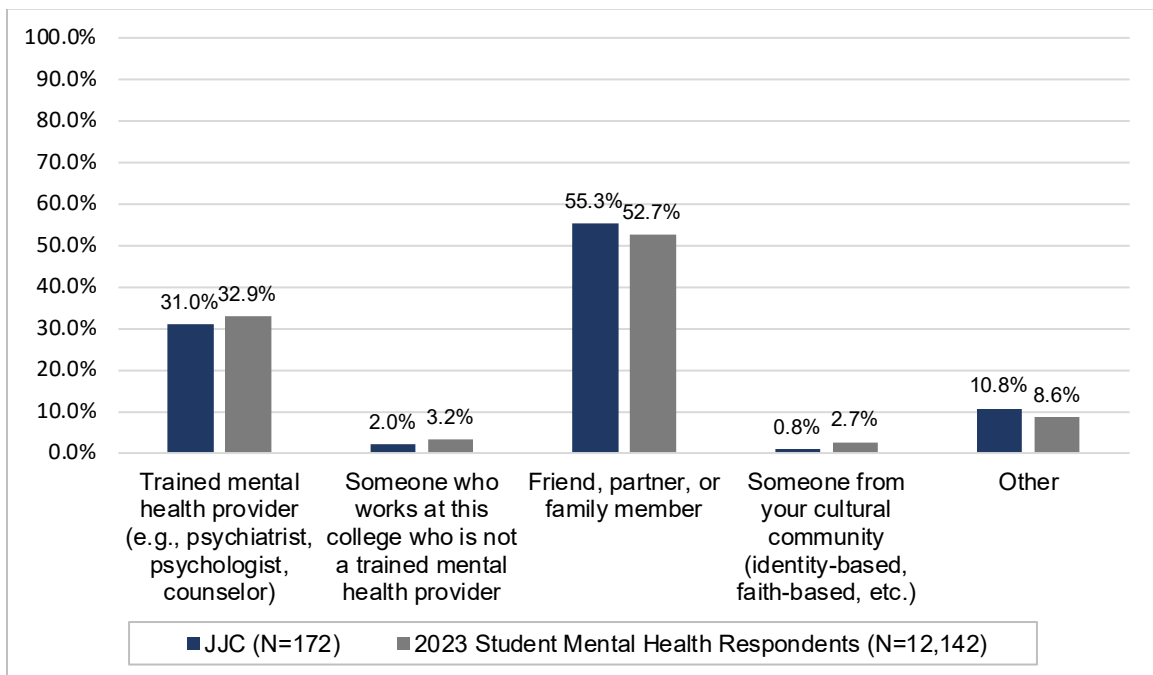
If you needed to seek professional help for your mental or emotional health while attending this college, you would know where to go.



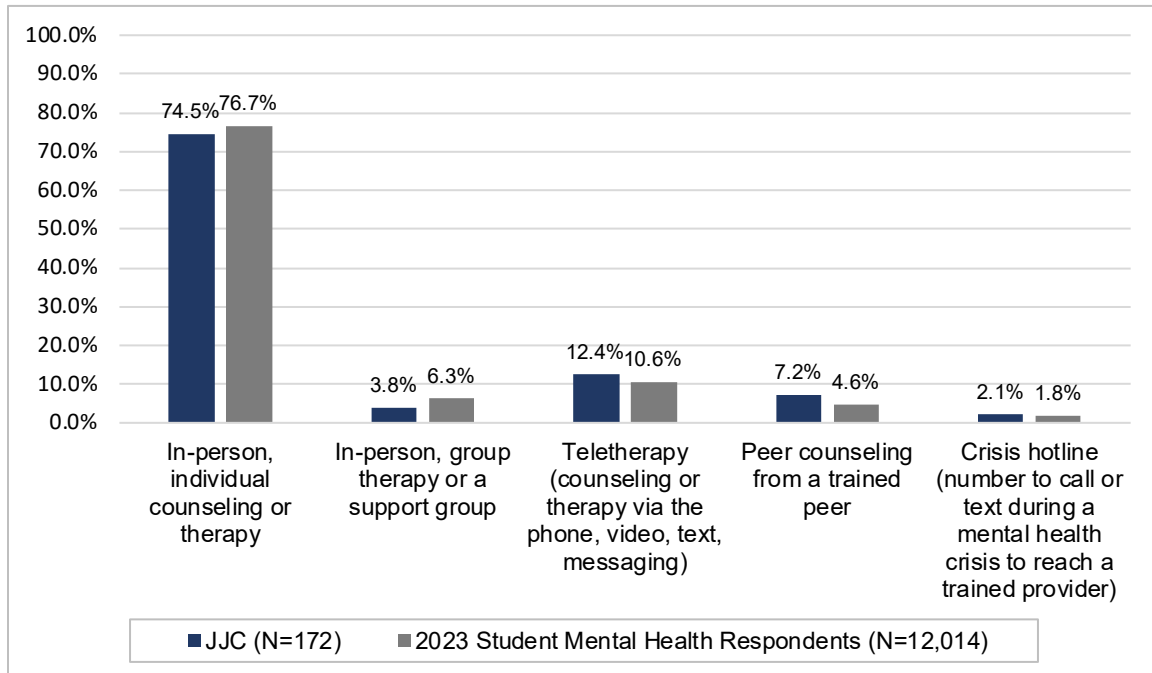
If you needed help with your mental health and emotional well-being, what would be the greatest barrier that would keep you from seeking that help?



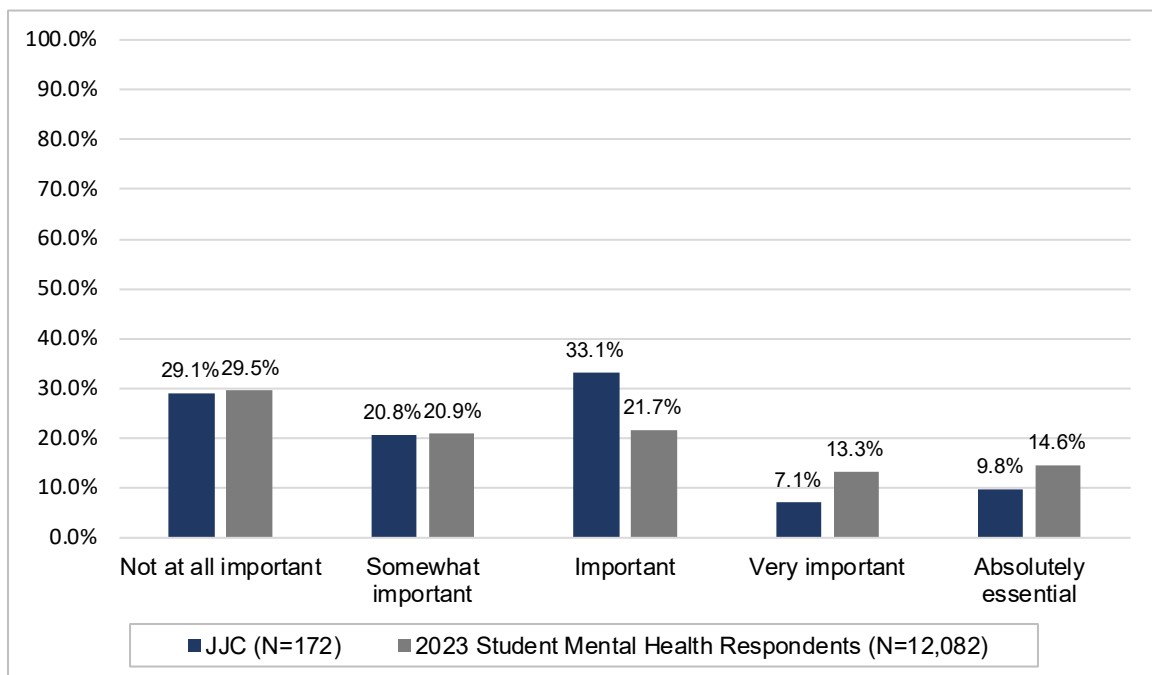
If you were experiencing emotional or mental health problems such as feeling sad, blue, anxious, or nervous, whom would you most prefer to talk to about this?



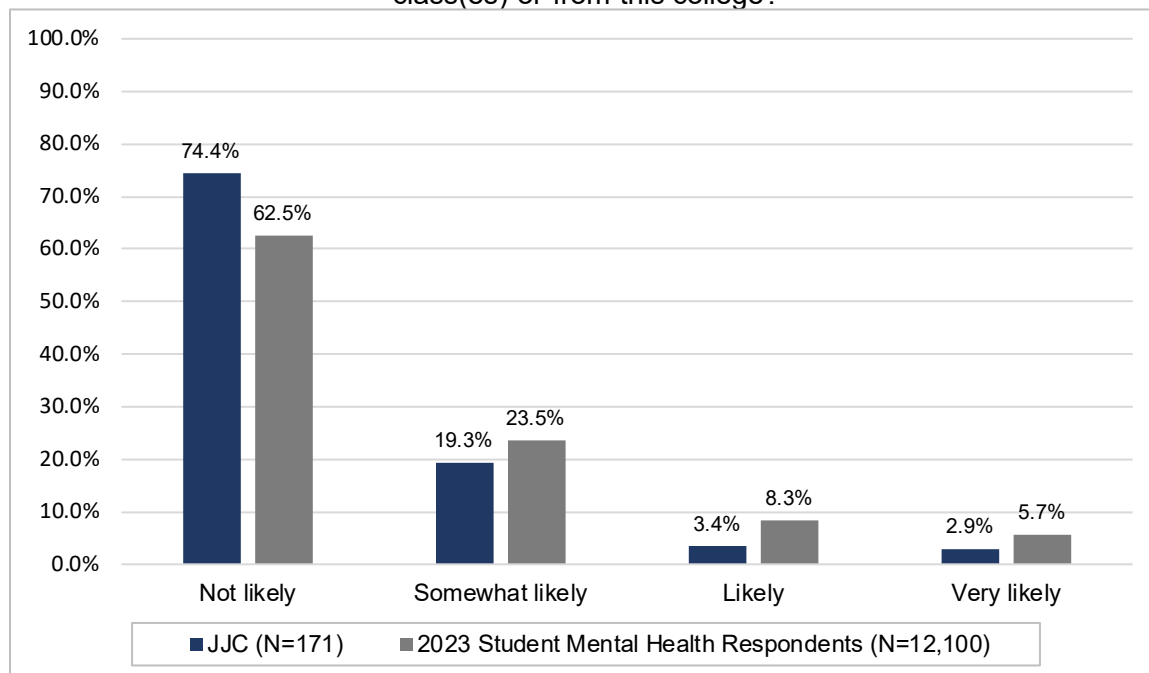
If you were experiencing emotional or mental health problems such as feeling sad, blue, anxious, or nervous, which of the following supports from a trained mental health provider would you most prefer to use?



If you needed help with your mental health and emotional well-being, how important is it to you that your mental health provider understands your cultural community (racial/ethnic identity, gender identity, religious identity, LGBTQIA+ identity, etc.)?



How likely is it that issues with mental health or emotional well-being would cause you to withdraw from class(es) or from this college?



SENSE Benchmarks of Effective Educational Practice

To assist colleges in their efforts to reach for excellence, the Center reports national benchmarks of effective practice with entering students in community colleges. Research shows that the more actively engaged students are—with college faculty and staff, with other students, and with the subject matter—the more likely they are to learn and to achieve their academic goals.

SENSE benchmarks are groups of conceptually related survey items that focus on institutional practices and student behaviors that promote student engagement early in the college experience—and that are positively related to student learning and persistence. Each individual benchmark score is computed by averaging the scores on survey items that make up that benchmark. Benchmark scores are then standardized so that the mean (the average of all participating students) is always 50 and the standard deviation is 25. The six benchmarks of effective educational practice with entering students in community colleges are early connections, high expectations and aspirations, clear academic plan and pathway, effective track to college readiness, engaged learning, and academic and social support network.

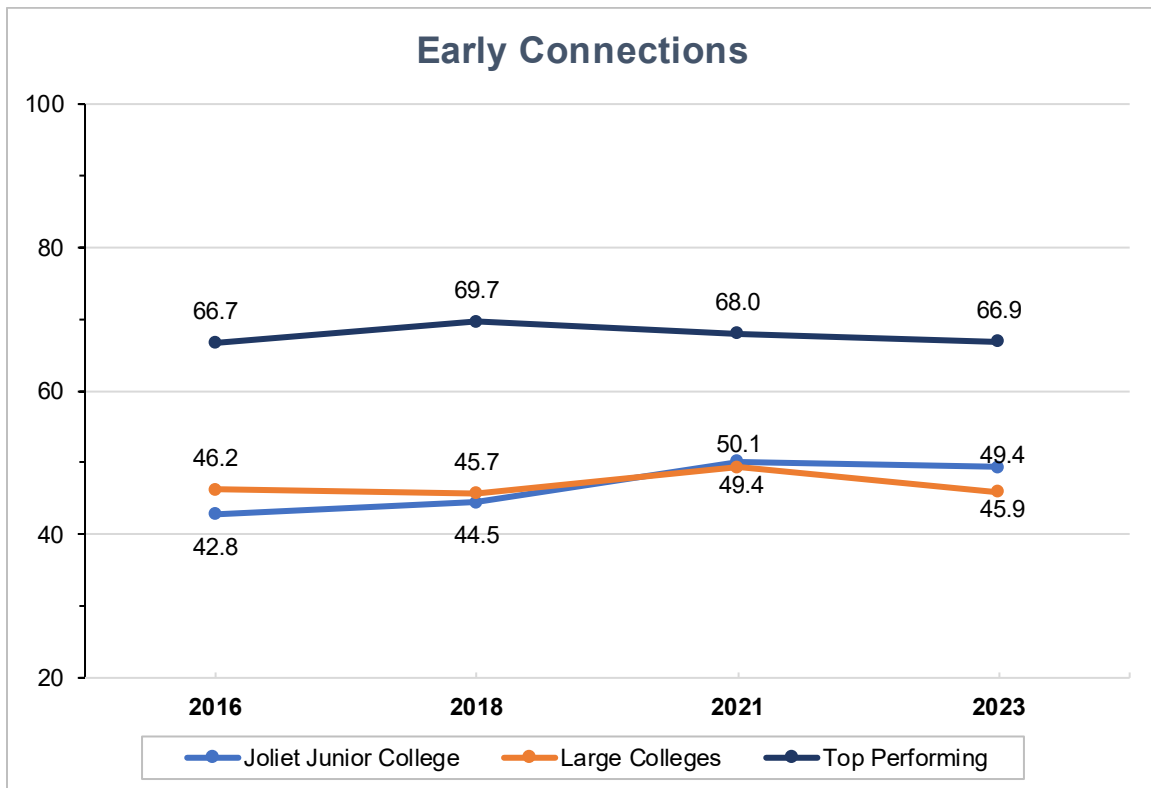
Benchmarks are used to compare each institution's performance to that of similar institutions, the *SENSE* Cohort and with the Top-Performing Colleges*.

*The Top-Performing Colleges are those that scored in the top 10 percent of the cohort by benchmark.

Early Connections

When students describe their early college experiences, they typically reflect on occasions when they felt discouraged or thought about dropping out. Their reasons for persisting almost always include one common element: a strong, early connection to someone at the college.

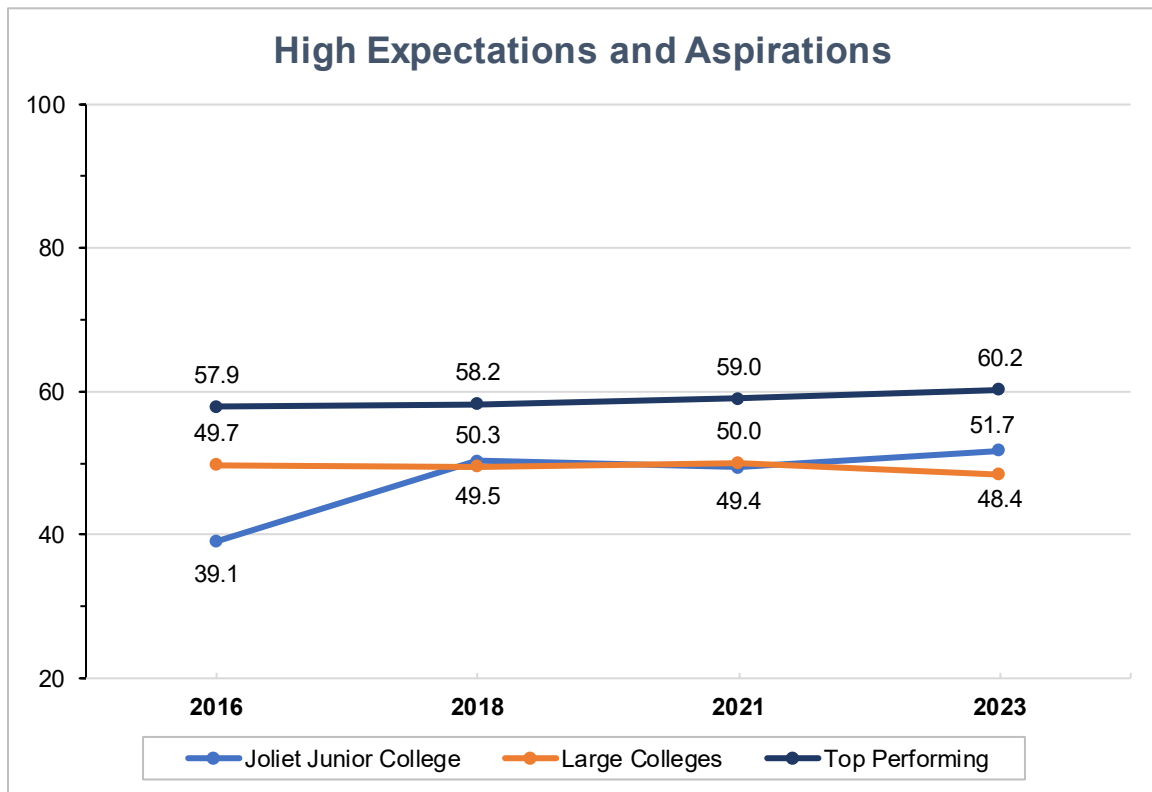
- 18a Agreement: The very first time I came to this college I felt welcome
- 18i Agreement: The college provided me with adequate information about financial assistance (scholarships, grants, loans, etc.)
- 18j Agreement: A college staff member helped me determine whether I qualified for financial assistance
- 18p Agreement: At least one college staff member (other than an instructor) learned my name
- 23 Was a specific person assigned to you so you could see him/her each time you needed information or assistance?



High Expectations and Aspirations

Nearly all students arrive at their community colleges intending to succeed and believing that they have the motivation to do so. When entering students perceive clear, high expectations from college staff and faculty, they are more likely to understand what it takes to be successful and adopt behaviors that lead to achievement. Students then often rise to meet expectations, making it more likely that they will attain their goals. Often, students' aspirations also climb, and they seek more advanced credentials than they originally envisioned.

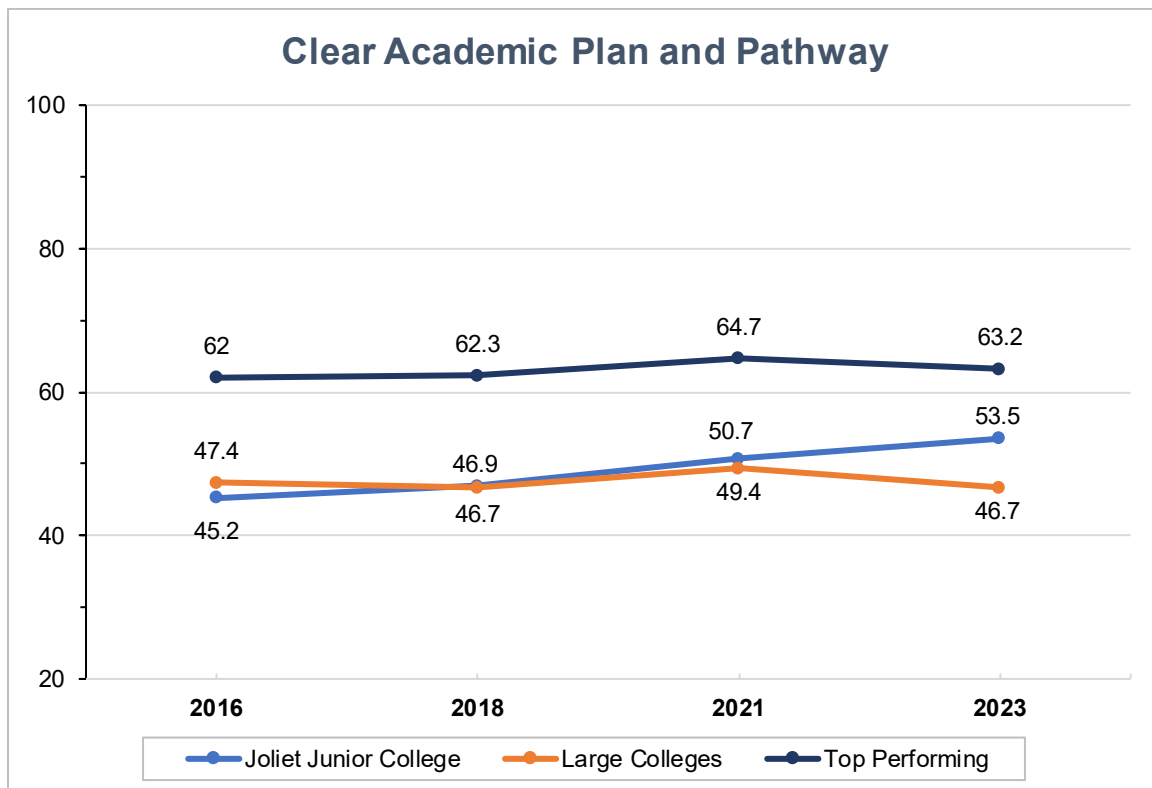
- 18b Agreement: The instructors at this college want me to succeed
- 18t Agreement: I have the motivation to do what it takes to succeed in college
- 18u Agreement: I am prepared academically to succeed in college
- 19c Frequency: Turn in an assignment late
- 19d Frequency: Not turn in an assignment
- 19f Frequency: Come to class without completing readings or assignments
- 19s Frequency: Skip class



Clear Academic Plan and Pathway

When a student, with knowledgeable assistance, creates a road map—one that shows where he or she is headed, what academic path to follow, and how long it will take to reach the end goal—that student has a critical tool for staying on track. Students are more likely to persist if they not only are advised about what courses to take, but also are helped to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them.

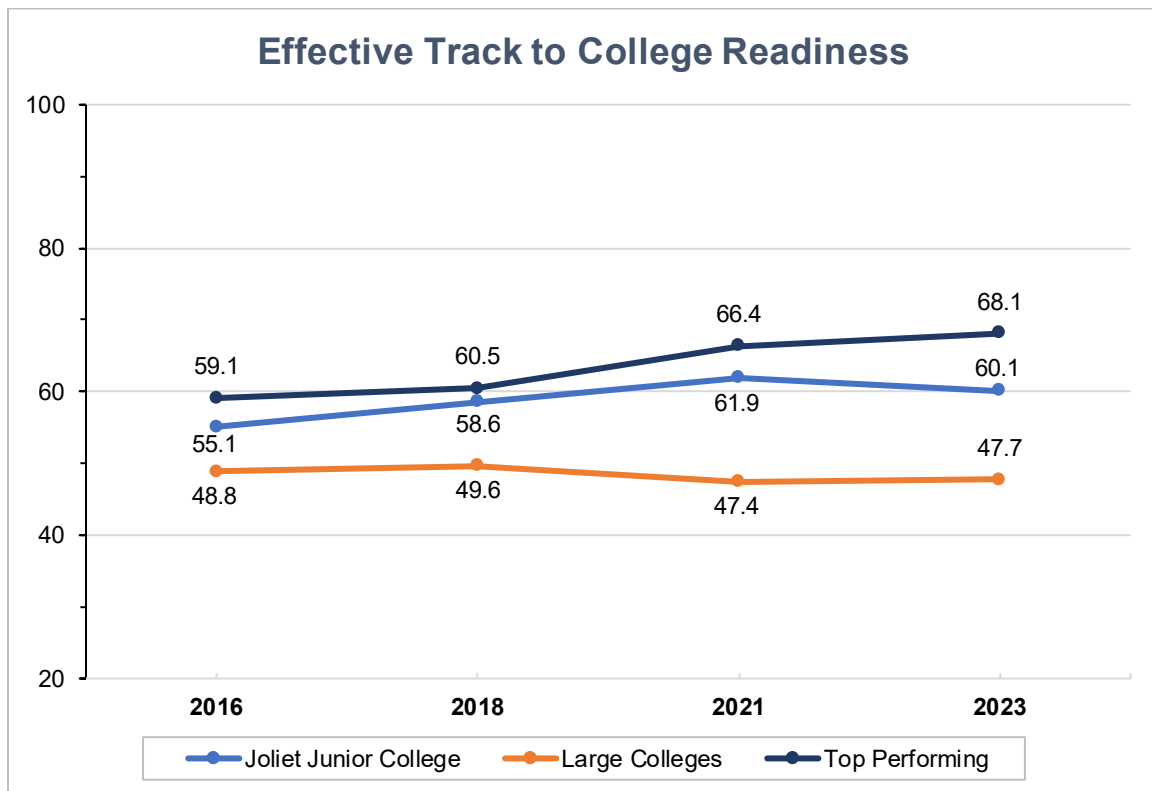
- 18d Agreement: I was able to meet with an academic advisor at times convenient for me
- 18e Agreement: An advisor helped me to select a course of study, program, or major
- 18f Agreement: An advisor helped me to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them
- 18g Agreement: An advisor helped me to identify the courses I needed to take during my first semester/quarter
- 18h Agreement: A college staff member talked with me about my commitments outside of school (work, children, dependents, etc.) to help me figure out how many courses to take



Effective Track to College Readiness

Nationally, more than six in 10 entering community college students are underprepared for college-level work. Thus, significant improvements in student success will hinge upon effective assessment, placement of students into appropriate courses, and implementation of effective strategies to ensure that students build academic skills and receive needed support.

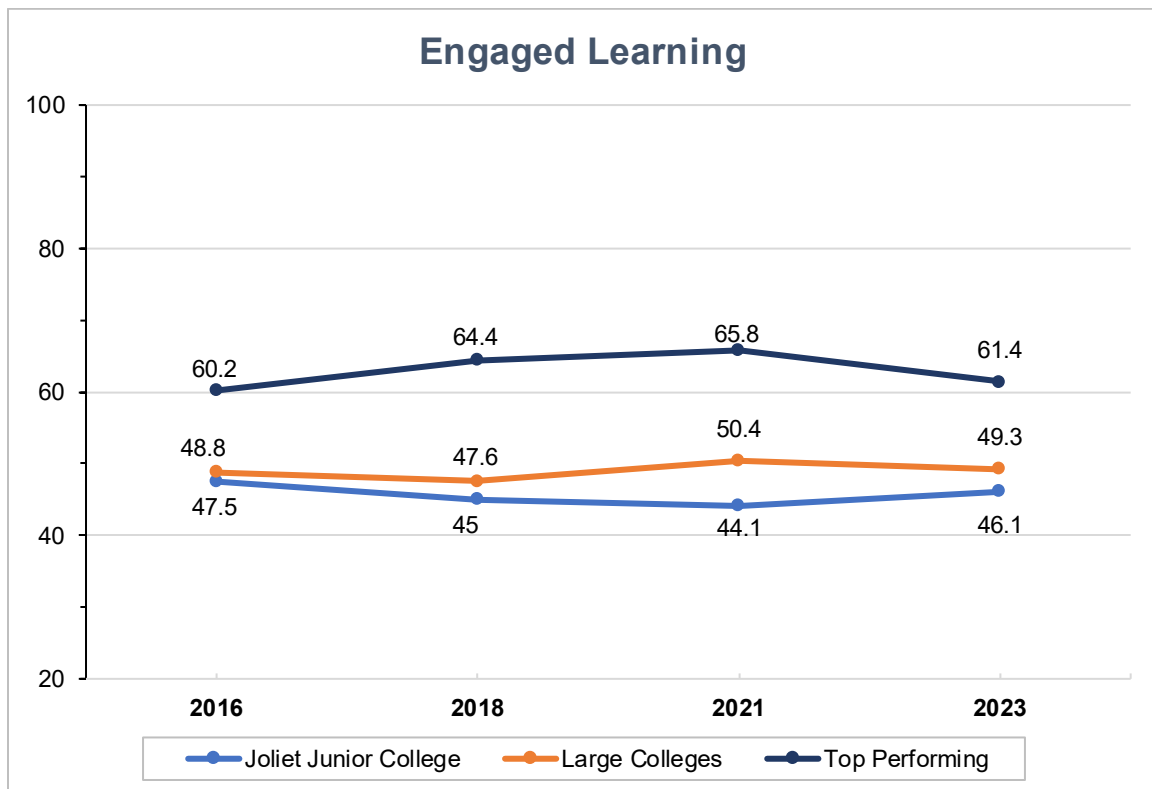
- 12a Before I could register for classes I was required to take a placement test (COMPASS, ASSET ACCUPLACER, SAT, ACT, etc.) to assess my skills in reading, writing, and/or math
- 12b I took a placement test (COMPASS, ASSET ACCUPLACER, SAT, ACT, etc.)
- 14 This college required me to enroll in classes indicated by my placement test scores during my first semester/quarter
- 21a Agreement: Within a class or through another experience at this college, I learned to improve my study skills (listening, note taking, highlighting readings, working with others, etc.)
- 21b Agreement: Within a class or through another experience at this college, I learned to understand my academic strengths and weaknesses
- 21c Agreement: Within a class or through another experience at this college, I learned skills and strategies to improve my test-taking ability



Engaged Learning

Instructional approaches that foster engaged learning are critical for student success. Because most community college students attend college part-time, and most also must find ways to balance their studies with work and family responsibilities, the most effective learning experiences will be those the college intentionally designs.

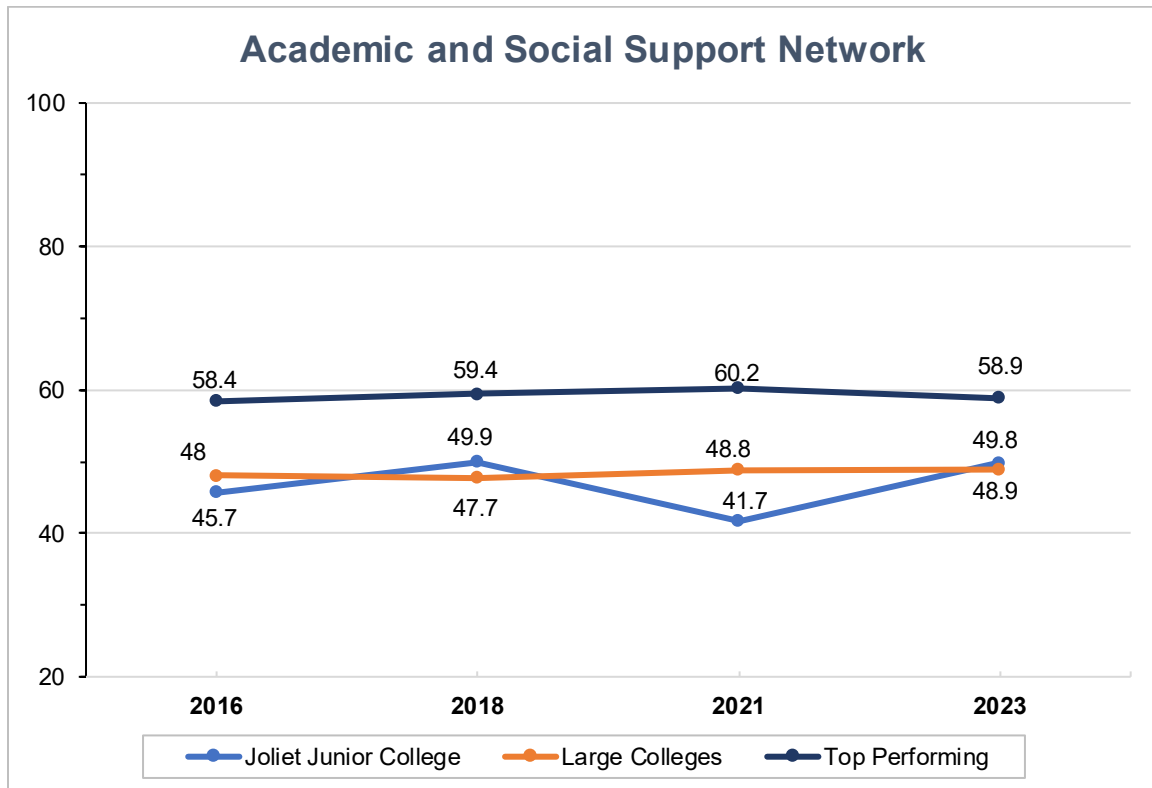
- 19a Frequency: Ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions
- 19b Frequency: Prepare at least two drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
- 19e Frequency: Participate in supplemental instruction (extra class sessions with an instructor, tutor, or experienced student)
- 19g Frequency: Work with other students on a project or assignment during class
- 19h Frequency: Work with classmates outside of class on class projects or assignments
- 19i Frequency: Participate in a required study group outside of class
- 19j Frequency: Participate in a student-initiated (not required) study group outside of class
- 19k Frequency: Use an electronic tool (e-mail, text messaging, Facebook, MySpace, class Web site, etc.) to communicate with another student about coursework
- 19l Frequency: Use an electronic tool (e-mail, text messaging, Facebook, MySpace, class Web site, etc.) to communicate with an instructor about coursework
- 19m Frequency: Discuss an assignment or grade with an instructor
- 19n Frequency: Ask for help from an instructor regarding questions or problems related to a class
- 19o Frequency: Receive prompt written or oral feedback from instructors on your performance
- 19q Frequency: Discuss ideas from readings or classes with instructors outside of class
- 20d2 Frequency of use: Face-to-face tutoring
- 20f2 Frequency of use: Writing, math, or other skill lab
- 20h2 Frequency of use: Computer lab



Academic and Social Support Network

Students benefit from having a personal network that enables them to obtain information about college services, along with the academic and social support critical to student success. Because entering students often don't know what they don't know, colleges must purposefully create those networks.

- 18l Agreement: All instructors clearly explained academic and student support services available at this college
- 18m Agreement: All instructors clearly explained course grading policies
- 18n Agreement: All instructors clearly explained course syllabi (syllabuses)
- 18o Agreement: I knew how to get in touch with my instructors outside of class
- 18q Agreement: At least one other student whom I didn't previously know learned my name
- 18r Agreement: At least one instructor learned my name
- 18s Agreement: I learned the name of at least one other student in most of my classes

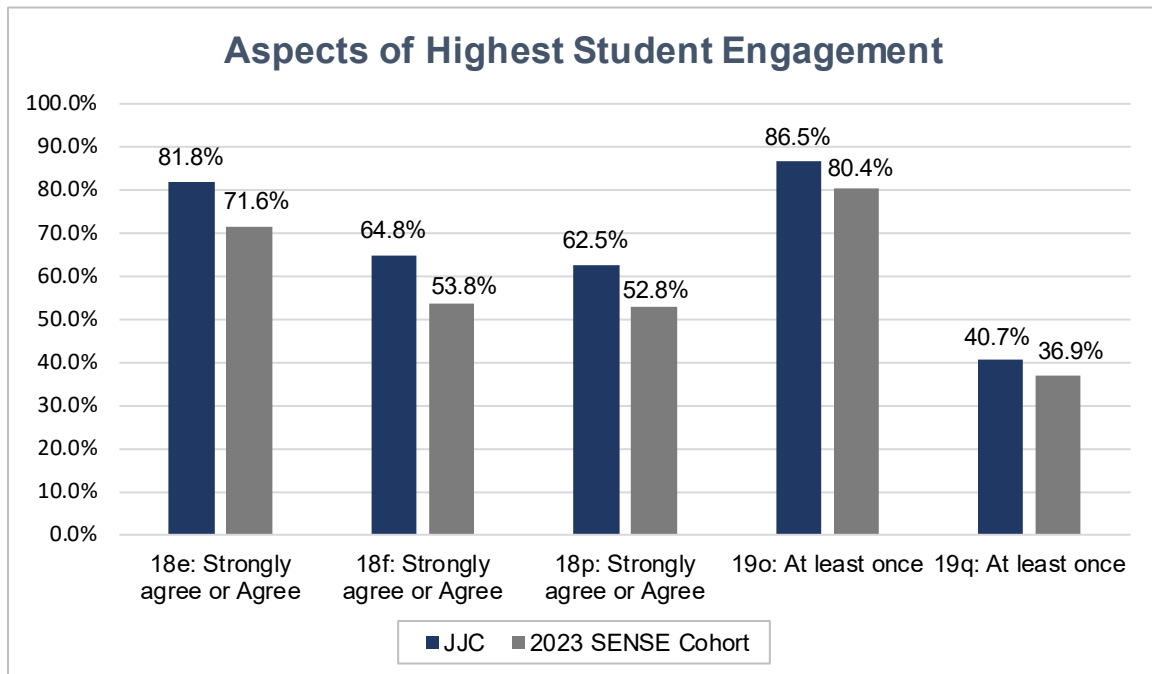


Aspects of Highest Student Engagement

Benchmark scores provide a manageable starting point for reviewing and understanding *SENSE* data. One way to dig more deeply into the benchmark scores is to analyze those items that contribute to the overall benchmark score. This section features the five items across all benchmarks (excluding those for which means are not calculated) on which the college scored most favorably and the five items on which the college scored least favorably relative to the 2023 *SENSE* Cohort. The items highlighted below reflect the largest differences in mean scores between the institution and the 2023 *SENSE* Cohort.

Below are the aggregated frequencies for the following items on which the college performed most favorably relative to the 2023 *SENSE* Cohort.

Benchmark	Item #	Item
Clear Academic Plan & Pathway	18e	An advisor helped me to select a course of study, program, or major
Clear Academic Plan & Pathway	18f	An advisor helped me to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them
Early Connections	18p	At least one college staff member (other than an instructor) learned my name
Engaged Learning	19o	Frequency: Received prompt written or oral feedback from instructors on your performance
Engaged Learning	19q	Frequency: Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class

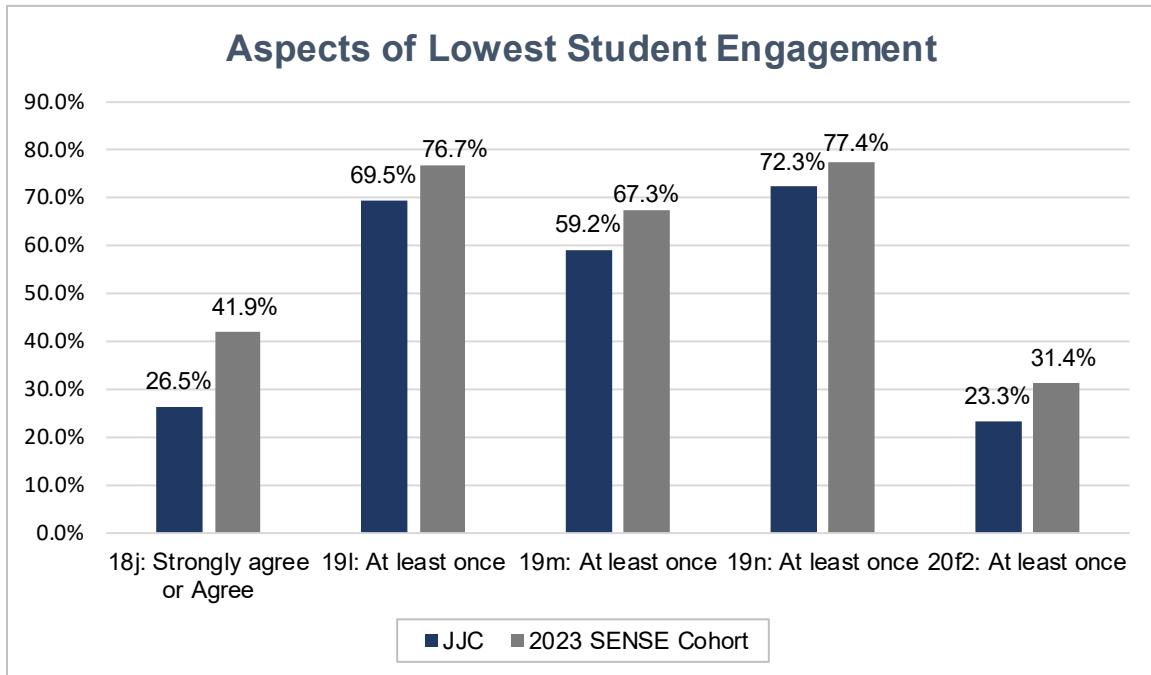


Aspects of Lowest Student Engagement

This section features the five items across all benchmarks (excluding those for which means are not calculated) on which the college scored least favorably relative to the 2023 *SENSE* Cohort. The items highlighted below reflect the largest differences in mean scores between the institution and the 2023 *SENSE* Cohort.

Below are the aggregated frequencies for the following items on which the college performed least favorably relative to the 2023 *SENSE* Cohort.

Benchmark	Item #	Item
Early Connections	18j	A college staff member helped me determine whether I qualified for financial assistance
Engaged Learning	19l	Frequency: Used an electronic tool to communicate with an instructor about coursework
Engaged Learning	19m	Frequency: Discussed an assignment or grade with an instructor
Engaged Learning	19n	Frequency: Asked for help from an instructor regarding questions or problems related to a class
Engaged Learning	20f2	Frequency: Used writing, math, or other skill lab



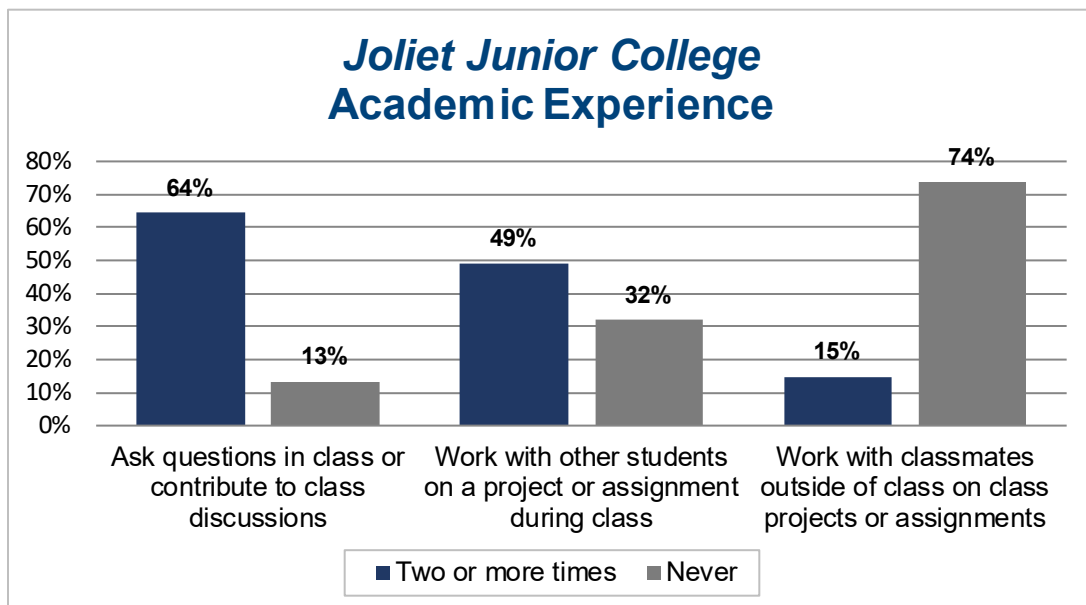
Selected Findings

Academic Experience

A positive academic experience is a product of many ingredients, one of which is the amount of time and energy students invest in their academic work and spend collaborating with others. *SENSE* asks students to respond to several survey items in order to gauge how actively they are involved in their education. Students are given the opportunity to mark *never*, *once*, *two or three times*, or *four or more times* in response to items such as the following:

- Item 19a—Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions
- Item 19g—Worked with other students on projects during class
- Item 19h—Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare assignments

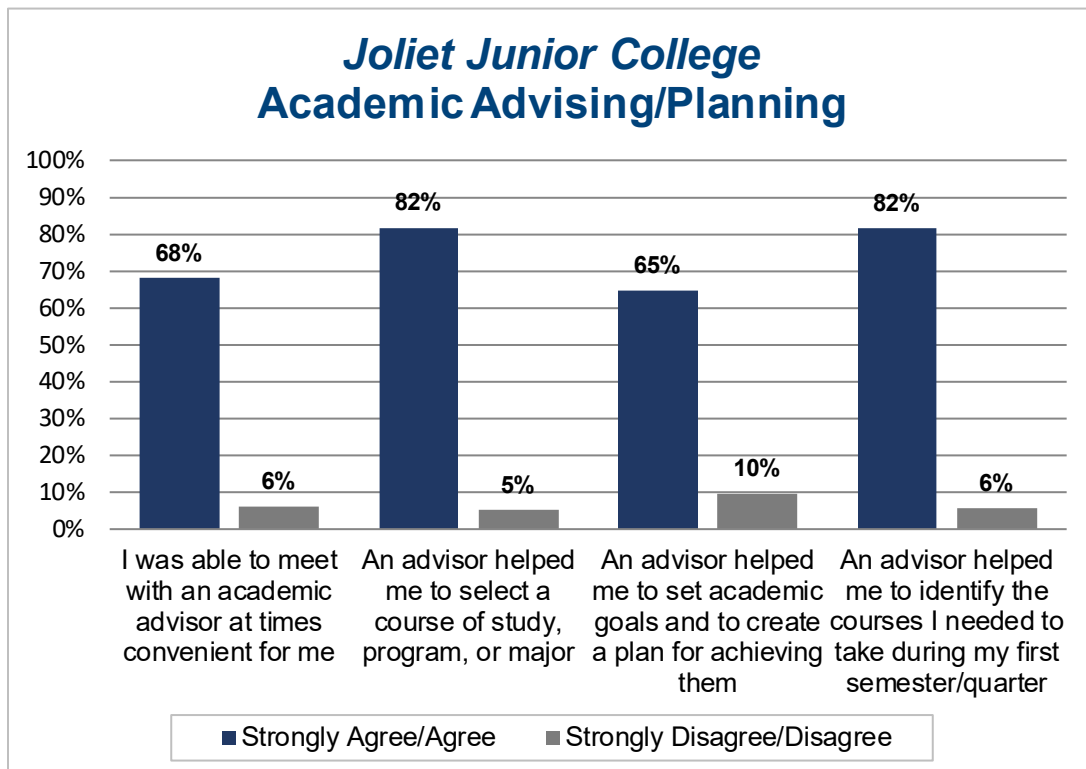
While some students are highly involved in their academic experience (those who marked *two or more times*), others are less engaged, as illustrated by their responses of *never*, as displayed in the following graph.



Academic Advising/Planning

Connected colleges effectively connect with their students and encourage them to build relationships with faculty, staff and other students, that are essential to student success. *SENSE* asks students to respond to several survey items in order to gauge how much they utilized the help of an advisor. Students are given the opportunity to mark *strongly disagree*, *disagree*, *neutral*, *agree* or *strongly agree* in response to items such as the following:

- Item 18d— I was able to meet with an academic advisor at times convenient for me
- Item 18e—An advisor helped me to select a course of study, program, or major
- Item 18f—An advisor helped me to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them
- Item 18g—An advisor helped me to identify the courses I needed to take during my first semester/quarter



Barriers to Persistence

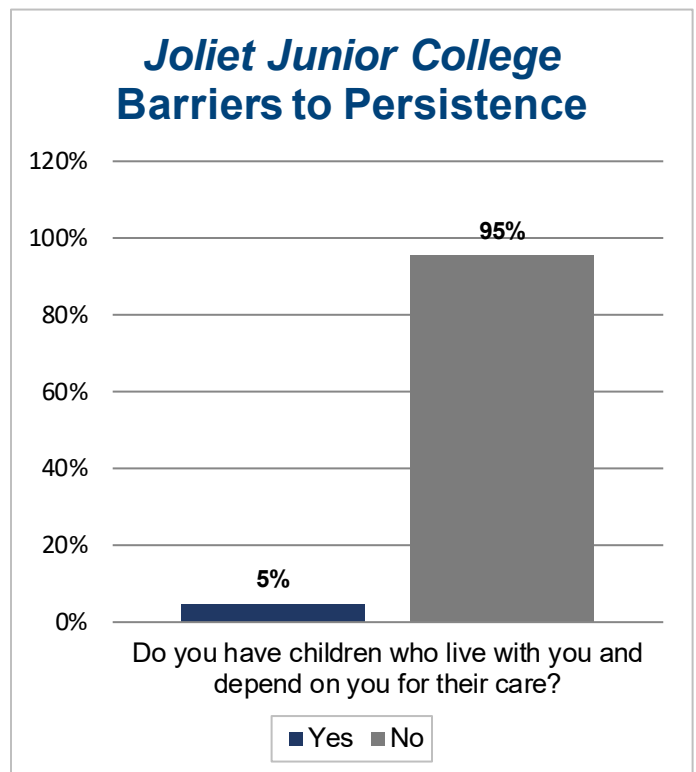
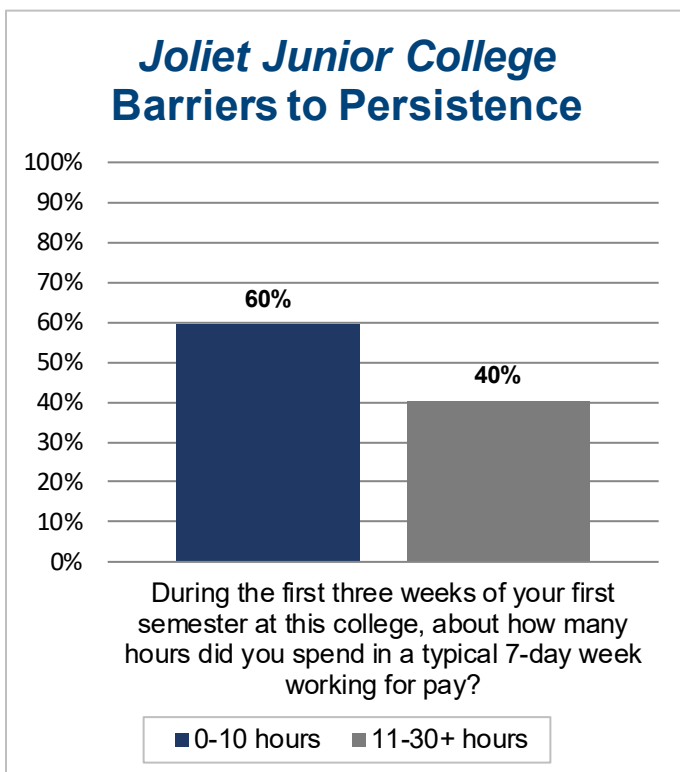
SENSE asks students to respond to several survey questions in order to gauge what the biggest barriers are to student persistence. Students are given the opportunity to mark *none*, *1-5 hours*, *6-10 hours*, *11-20 hours*, *21-30 hours* or *More than 30 hours* in response to:

- Item 24b—During the first three weeks of your first semester at this college, about how many hours did you spend in a typical 7-day week working for pay?

Students are given the opportunity to mark *yes* or *no* in response to:

- Item 32—Do you have children who live with you and depend on you for their care?

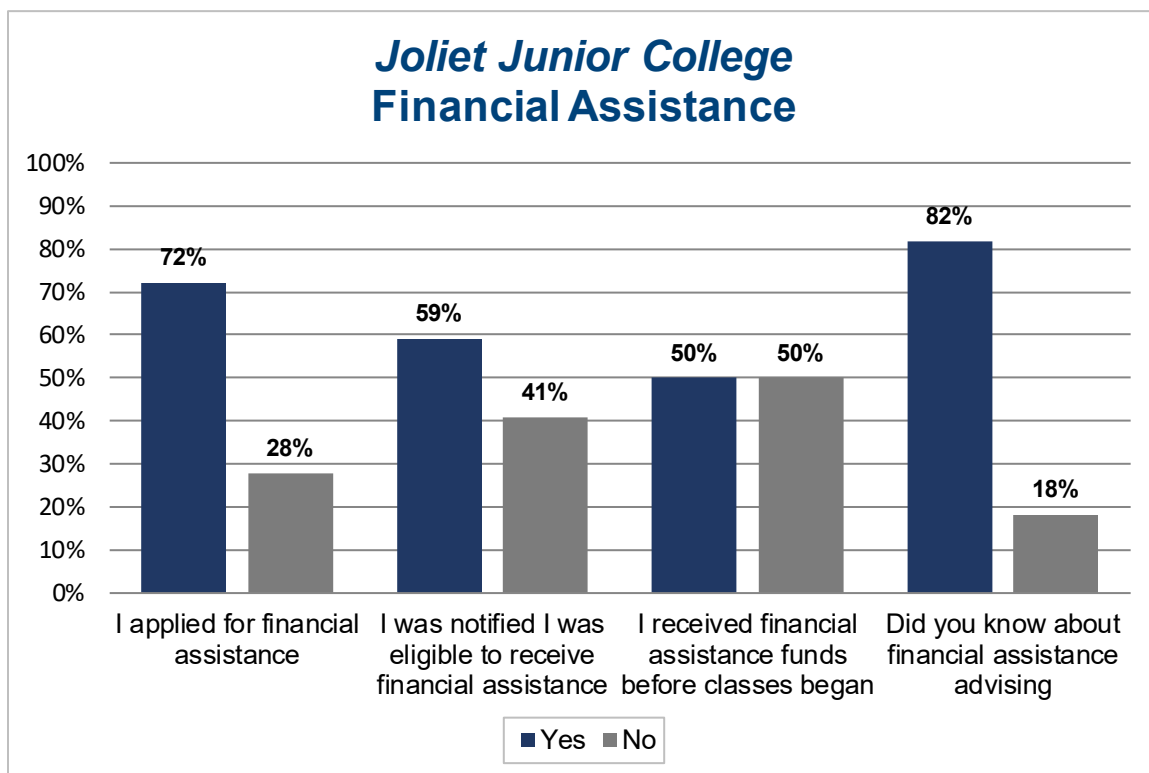
Two of the largest concerns towards student persistence are family and finances. While some students go to school full time without the responsibility of a full time job or family obligations, other students will oftentimes work full-time jobs and have family responsibilities during their tenure as a student, as displayed in the following graphs.



Financial Assistance

SENSE asks students to respond to several survey items in regard to financial assistance to determine if students received help with college costs. Students are given the opportunity to mark *yes* or *no* in response to the following items:

- Item 15a—I applied for financial assistance.
- Item 15b—I was notified I was eligible to receive financial assistance.
- Item 15c—I received financial assistance funds before classes began.
- Item 20.1g—Did you know about financial assistance advising?



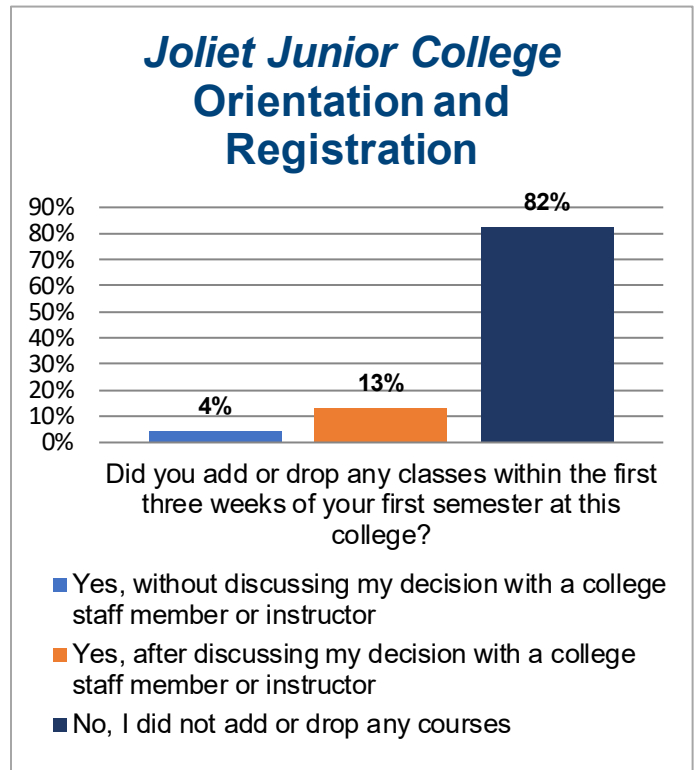
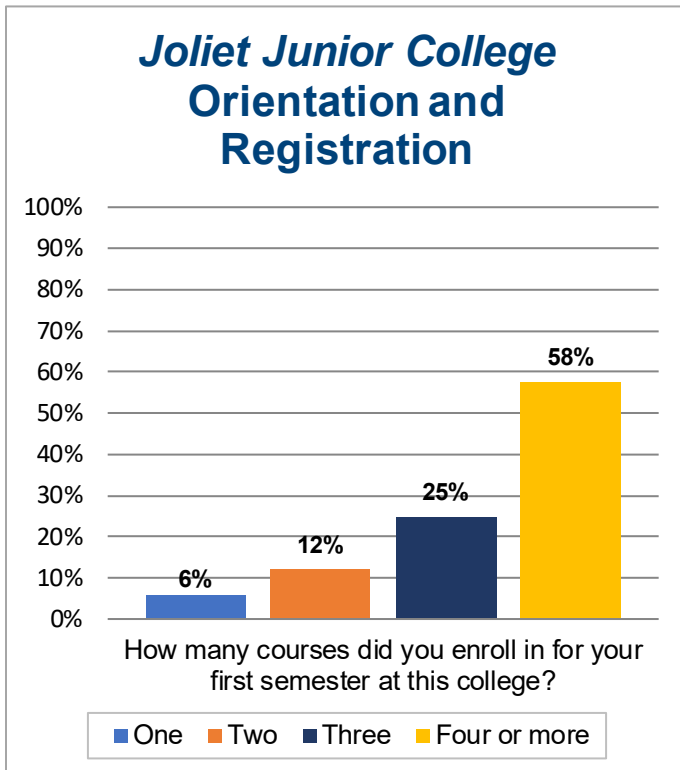
Orientation and Registration

SENSE asks students to respond to several survey questions in order to determine registration trends at Joliet Junior College. Students are given the opportunity to mark *one, two, three, or four or more* in response to:

- Item 7—How many courses did you enroll in for your first semester/quarter at this college?

Students are given the opportunity to mark *yes, without discussing my decision with a college staff member or instructor, yes, after discussing my decision with a college staff member or instructor, or no, I did not add or drop any courses* in response to:

- Item 8—Did you add or drop any classes within the first three weeks of your first semester/quarter at this college?



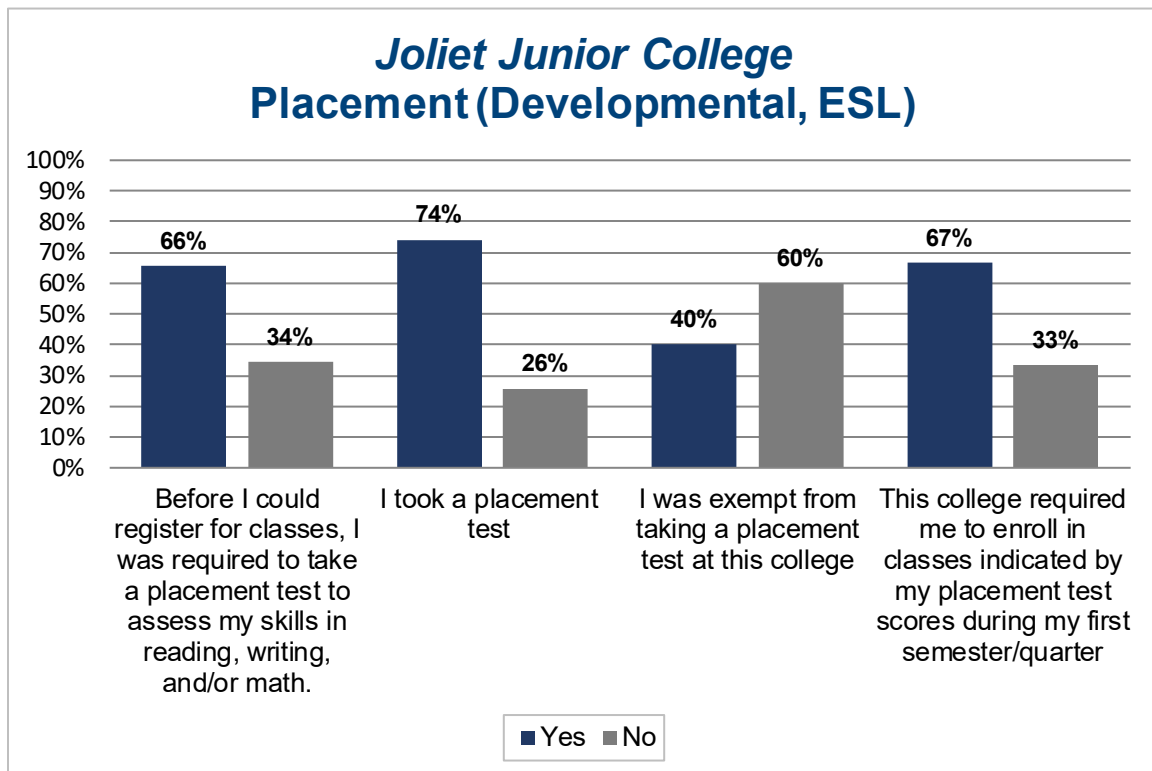
Placement (Developmental, ESL)

SENSE asks students to respond to survey items in order to better understand students' experience with placement testing at Joliet Junior College. Students are given the opportunity to mark *yes* or *no* in response to the following items:

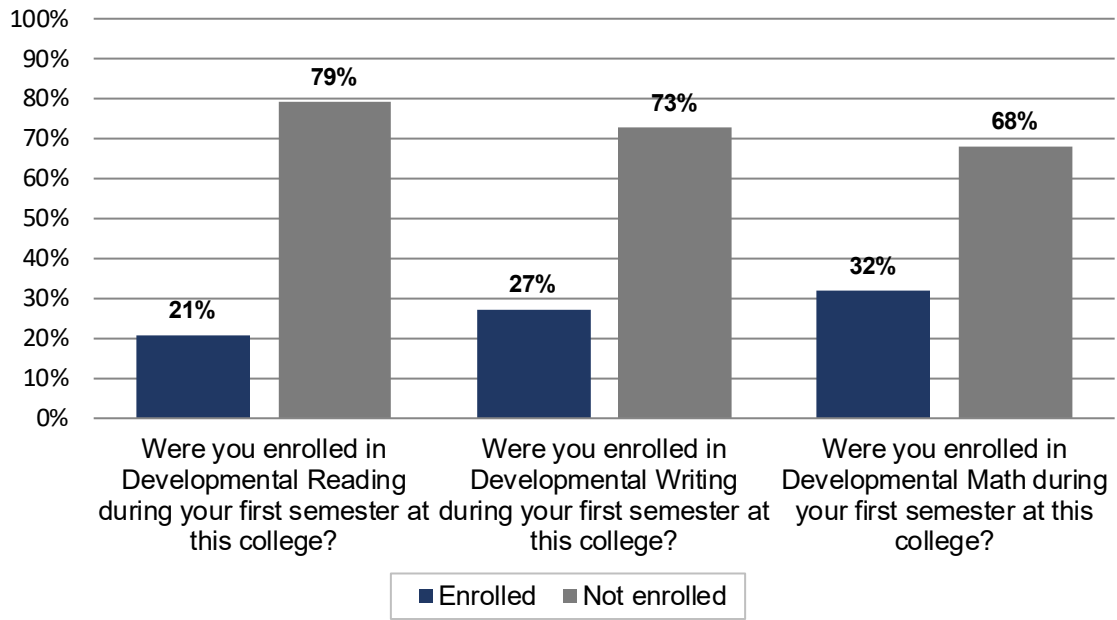
- Item 12a—Before I could register for classes, I was required to take a placement test (COMPASS, ASSET, ACCUPLACER, SAT, ACT, etc.) to assess my skills in reading, writing, and/or math.
- Item 12b—I took a placement test (COMPASS, ASSET, ACCUPLACER, SAT, ACT, etc.).
- Item 12c—I was exempt from taking a placement test at this college.
- Item 14—This college required me to enroll in classes indicated by my placement test scores during my first semester/quarter.

Students are given the opportunity to mark *enrolled* or *not enrolled* during their first semester at this college in the following areas:

- Item 17a—Developmental Reading
- Item 17b—Developmental Writing
- Item 17c—Developmental Math



Joliet Junior College Placement (Developmental, ESL)

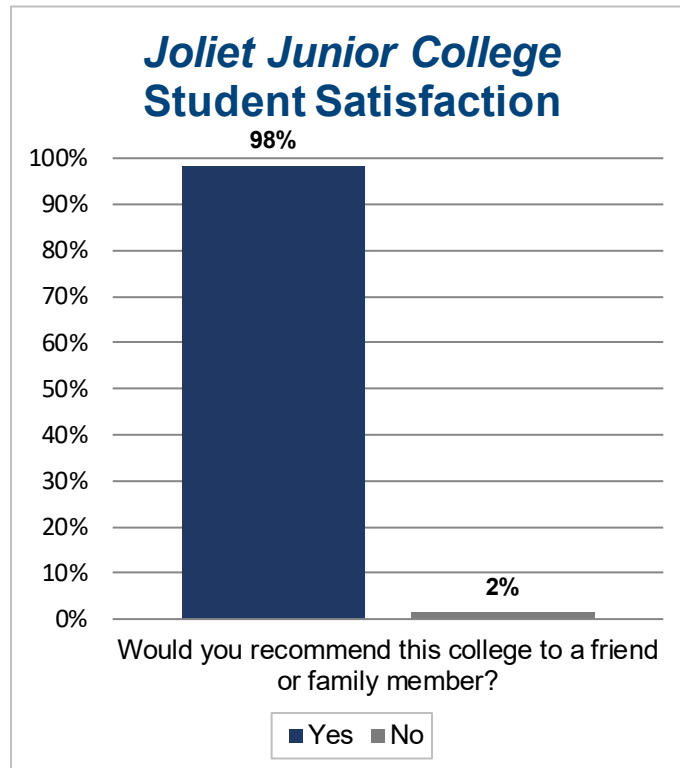


Student Satisfaction

SENSE asks students to respond to a survey item in order to gauge how satisfied they are with Joliet Junior College. Students are given the opportunity to mark *yes* or *no* in response to the following item:

- Item 27—Would you recommend this college to a friend or family member?

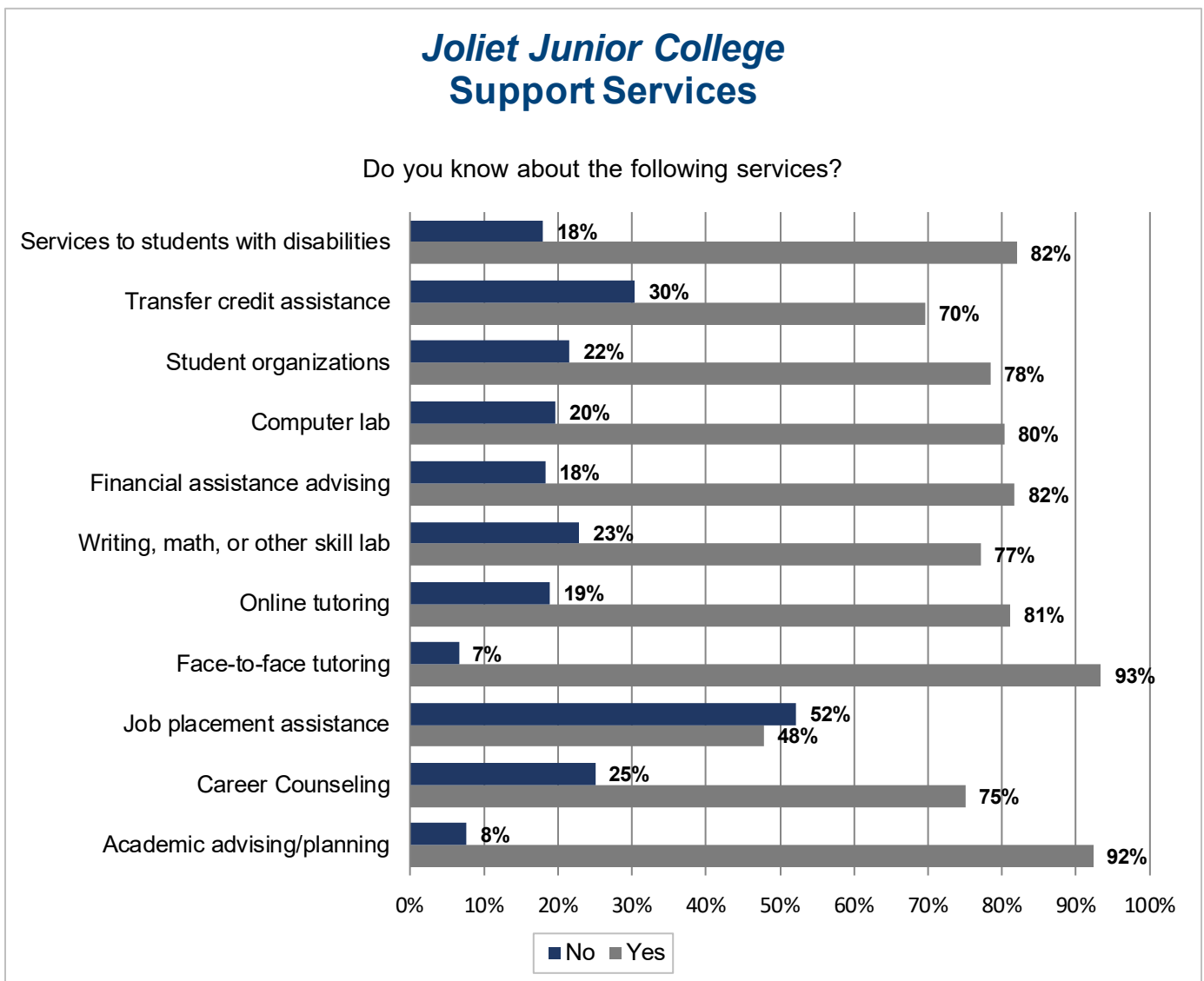
When students are more satisfied (those who marked *yes*) with their college of choice, the college tends to have better student retention and persistence.



Support Services

SENSE asks students to indicate whether they know about the various student services provided by Joliet Junior College. Students are given the opportunity to mark *yes* or *no* in response to whether they know about the following services:

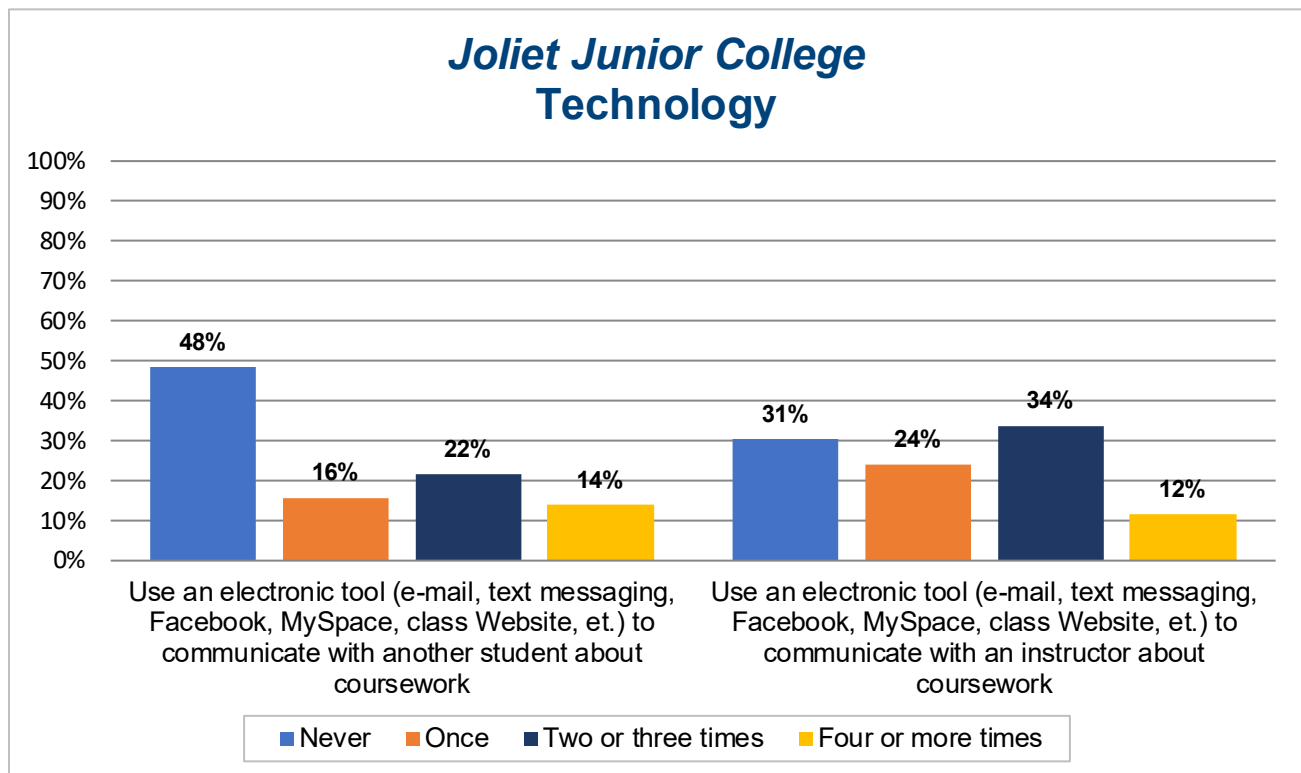
- Item 20.1a—Academic advising/planning?
- Item 20.1b —Career counseling?
- Item 20.1c —Job placement assistance?
- Item 20.1d—Face-to-face tutoring?
- Item 20.1e—Online tutoring?
- Item 20.1f—Writing, math or other skill lab?
- Item 20.1g—Financial assistance advising?
- Item 20.1h—Computer lab?
- Item 20.1i—Student organizations?
- Item 20.1j—Transfer credit assistance?
- Item 20.1k—Services to students with disabilities?



Technology

SENSE asks students to respond to survey items in order to determine how often they did certain activities. Students are given the opportunity to mark *never*, *once*, *two or three times* or *four or more times* in response to how often they did the following:

- Item 19k—Use an electronic tool (e-mail, text messaging, Facebook, MySpace, class Website, et.) to communicate with another student about coursework.
- Item 19l — Use an electronic tool (e-mail, text messaging, Facebook, MySpace, class Website, et.) to communicate with an instructor about coursework.

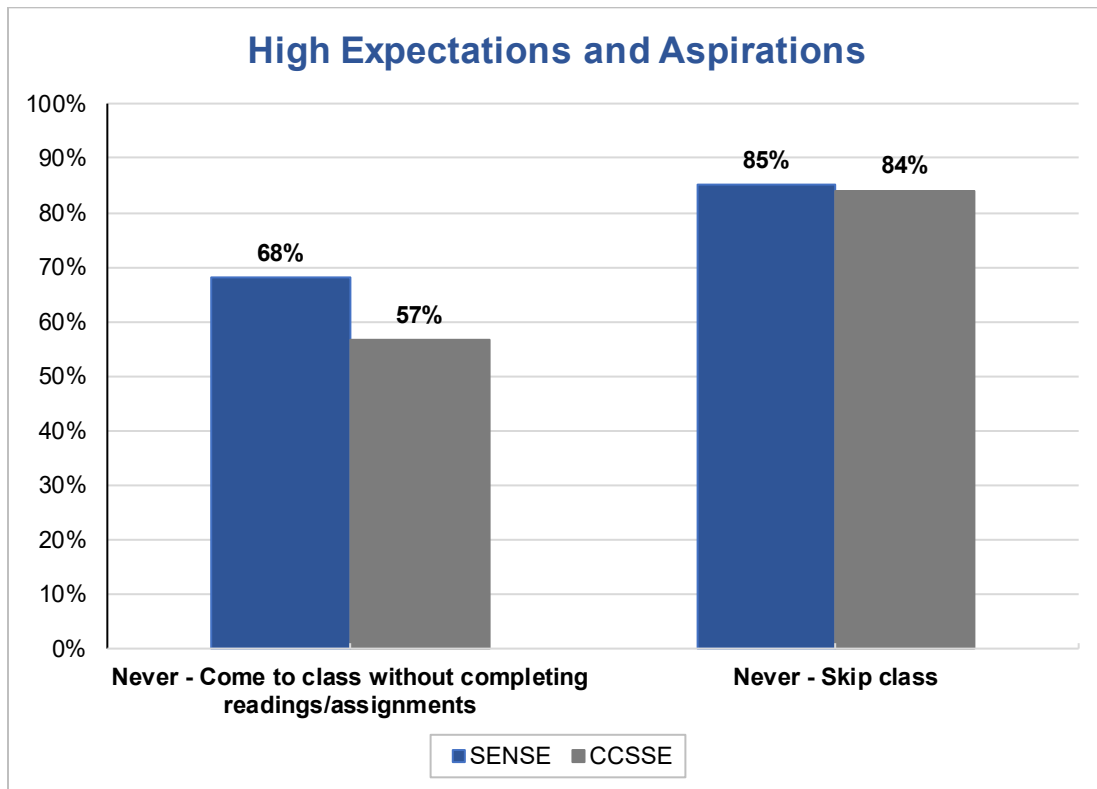


SENSE/CCSSE Crosswalk

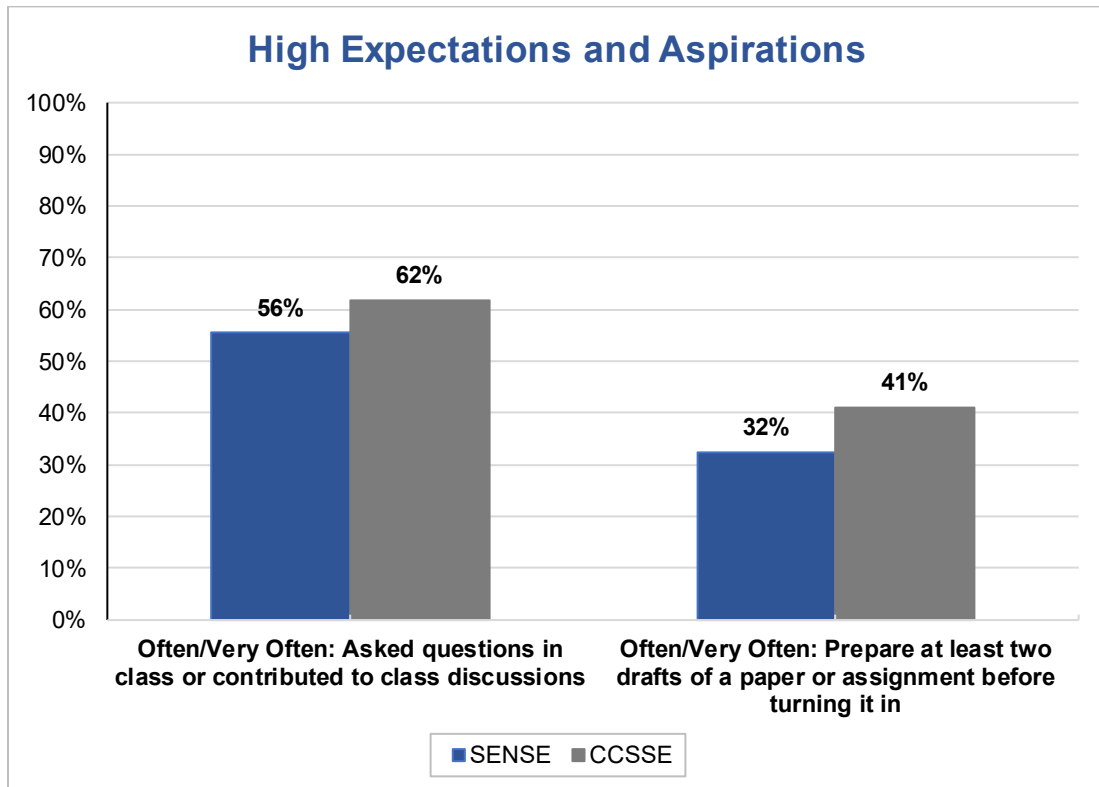
Connecting Center Data

Linking similar items that are asked on both SENSE and CCSSE. SENSE helps community colleges focus on the “front door” of the college experience. Grounded in research about what works in retaining and supporting entering students, SENSE collects and analyzes data about institutional practices and student behaviors in the earliest weeks of college. CCSSE provides information on student engagement, a key indicator of learning. CCSSE is administered in the spring to a sample of community college students at participating institutions, asks questions that assess institutional practices and student behaviors that are correlated highly with student learning and retention. This crosswalk shows a comparison of specific institutional practices and student behaviors for two distinct student populations: entering students (SENSE) and returning students (CCSSE).

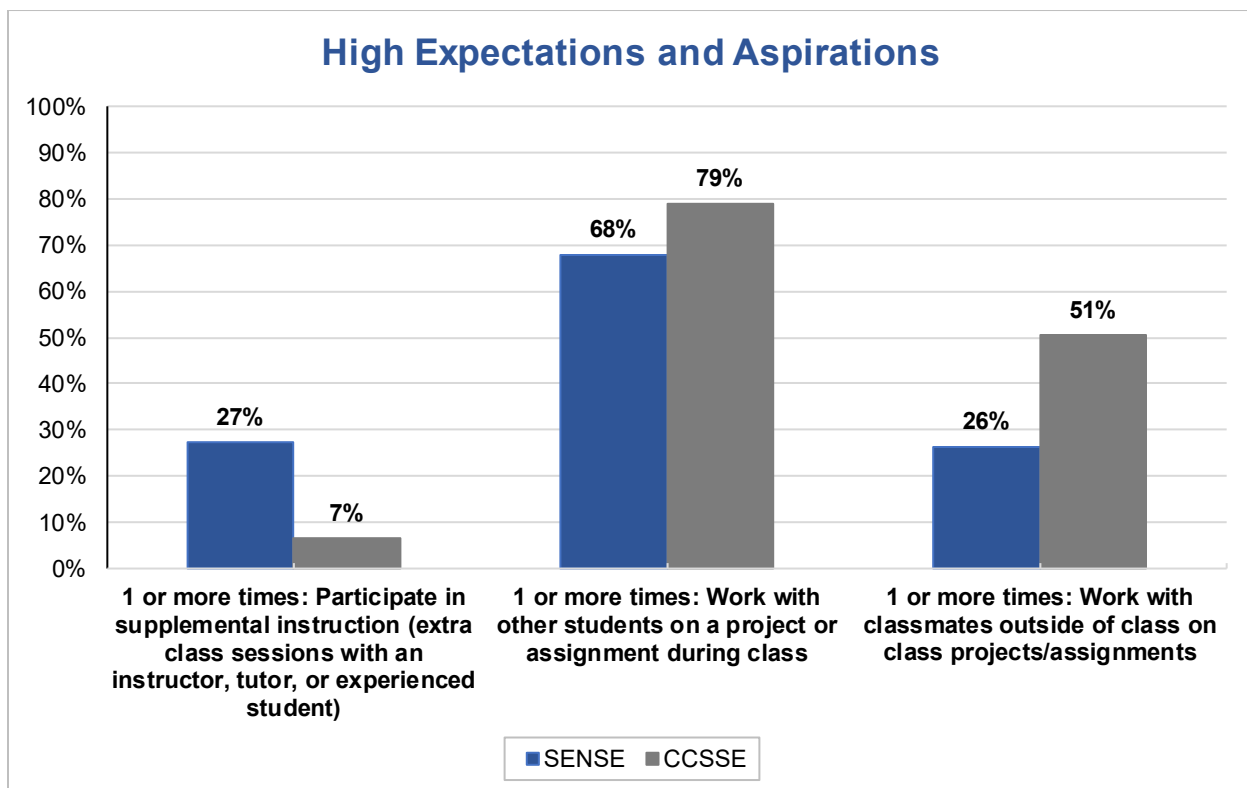
- SENSE:19f Frequency: Come to class without completing readings or assignments
- SENSE:19s Frequency: Skip class
- CCSSE:4e Frequency: Come to class without completing readings or assignments
- CCSSE:4s Frequency: Skip class



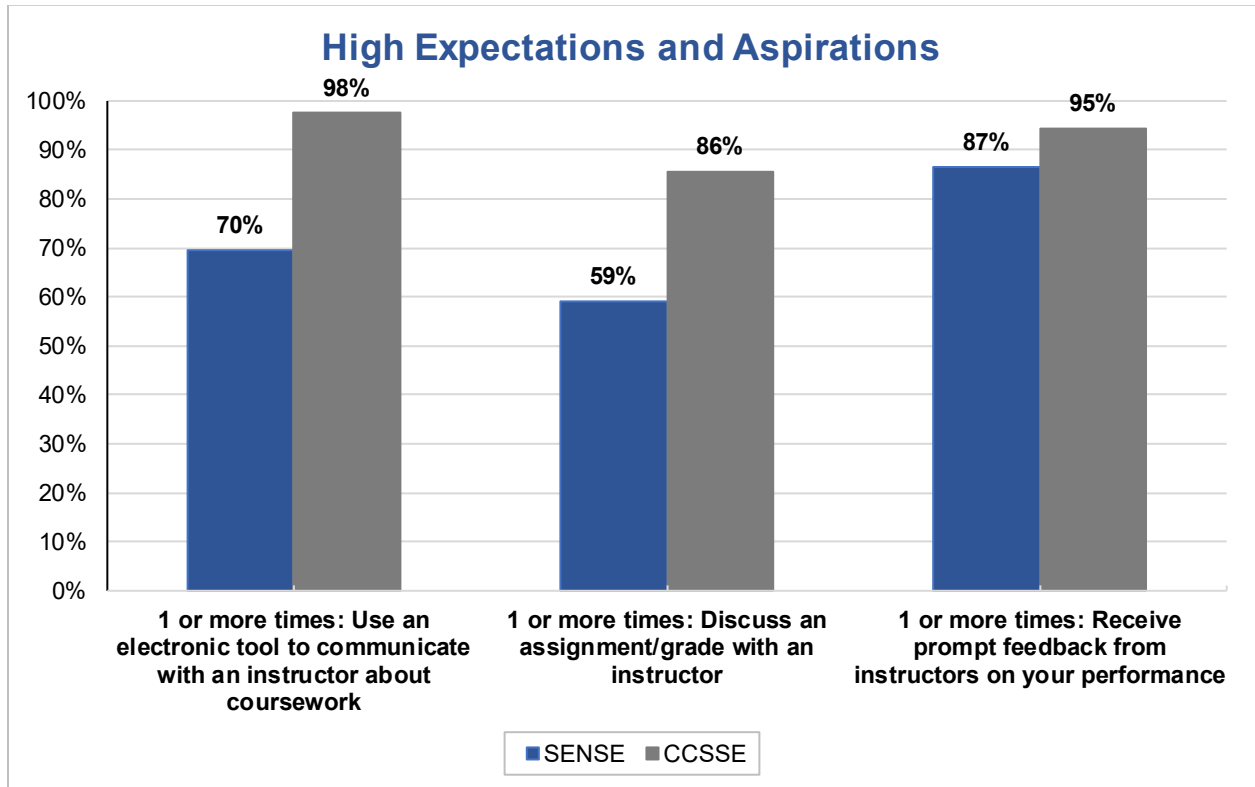
SENSE:19a Frequency: Ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions
 SENSE:19b Frequency: Prepare at least two drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in
 CCSSE:4a Frequency: Ask questions in class or contribute to class discussions
 CCSSE:4c Frequency: Prepare at least two drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in



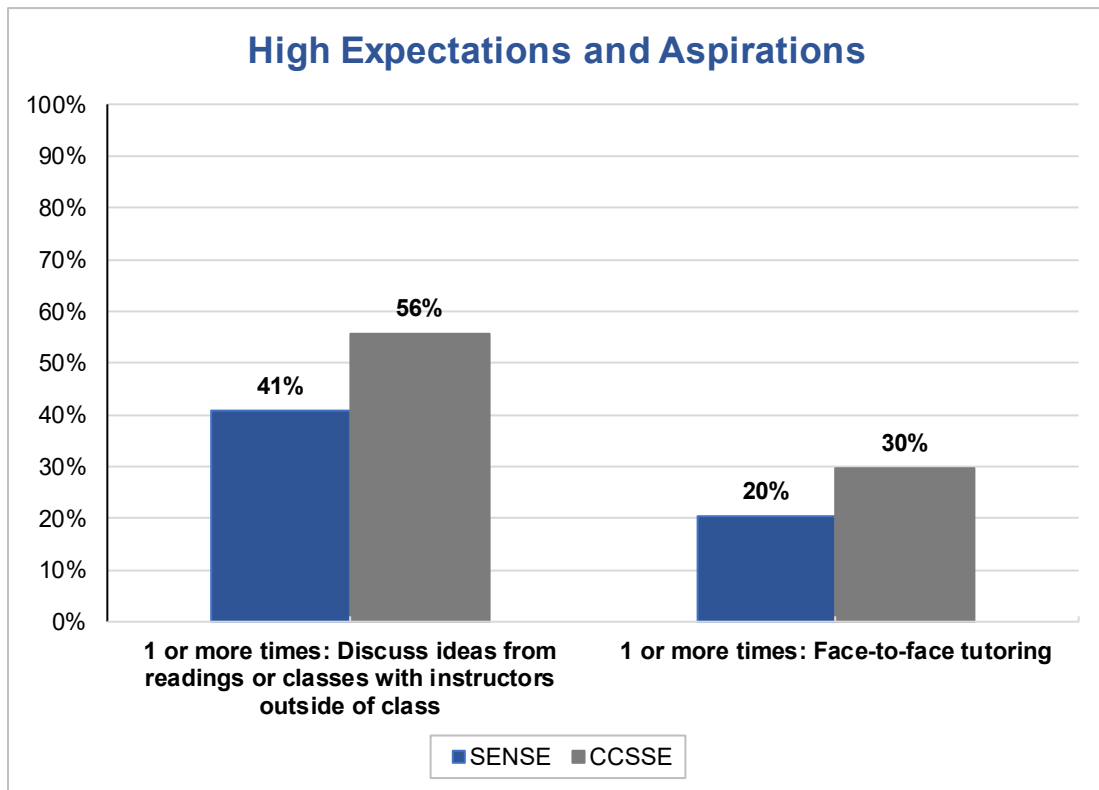
- SENSE:19e Frequency: Participate in supplemental instruction (extra class sessions with an instructor, tutor, or experienced student)
- SENSE:19g Frequency: Work with other students on a project or assignment during class
- SENSE:19h Frequency: Work with classmates outside of class on class projects or assignments
- CCSSE:22 Frequency: Participate in supplemental instruction (extra class sessions with an instructor, tutor, or experienced student)
- CCSSE:4f Frequency: Work with other students on a project or assignment during class
- CCSSE:4g Frequency: Work with classmates outside of class on class projects or assignments



SENSE:19l Frequency: Use an electronic tool to communicate with an instructor about coursework
 SENSE:19m Frequency: Discuss an assignment/grade with an instructor
 SENSE:19o Frequency: Receive prompt feedback from instructors on your performance
 CCSSE:4j Frequency: Use an electronic tool to communicate with an instructor about coursework
 CCSSE:4k Frequency: Discuss an assignment/grade with an instructor
 CCSSE:4n Frequency: Receive prompt feedback from instructors on your performance



SENSE:19q Frequency: Discuss ideas from readings or classes with instructors outside of class
 SENSE:20d2 Frequency: Face-to-face tutoring
 CCSSE:4m Frequency: Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with instructors outside of class
 CCSSE:12.1d Frequency: Peer or other tutoring



SENSE:20f2 Frequency: Writing, math, or other skill lab
SENSE:20h2 Frequency: Computer lab
CCSSE:12.1e Frequency: Writing, math, or other skill lab
CCSSE:12.1h Frequency: Computer lab

