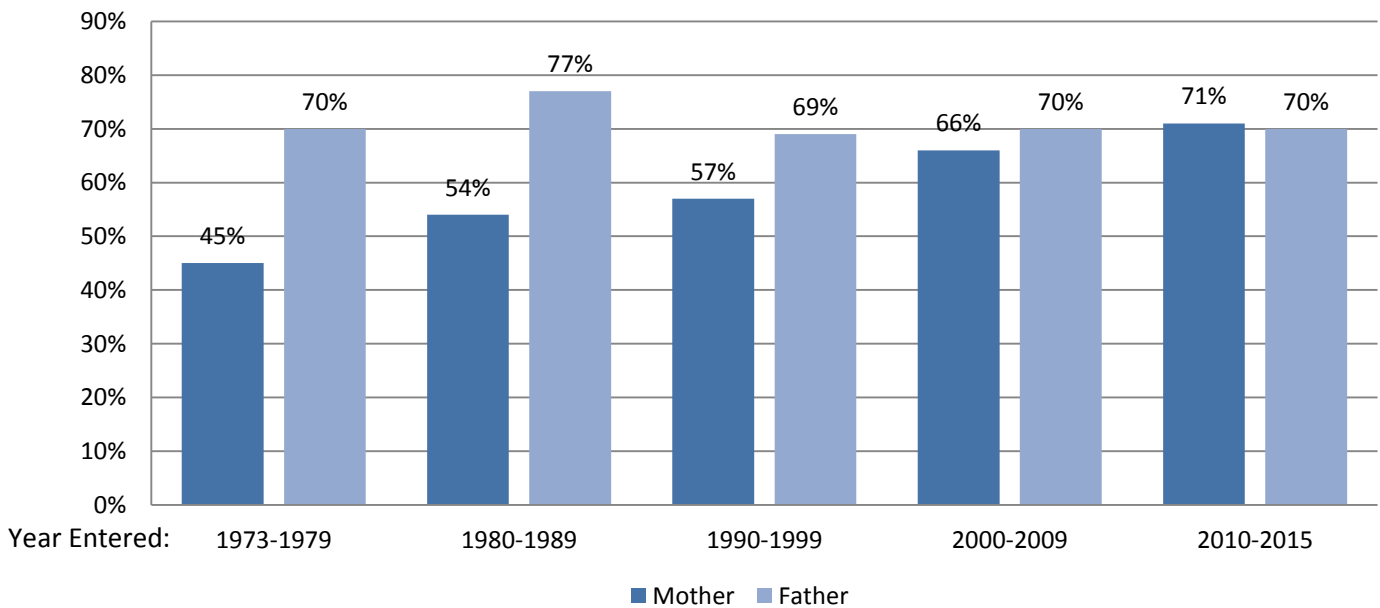


**Institutional Research Update (April 2016)**

This month's Institutional Research Update focuses on changing educational attainment and career patterns of parents of first-year students at Saint Mary's College over the last forty years. This note draws on longitudinal data from the Higher Education Research Institute's (HERI) CIRP Freshman Survey of Saint Mary's first-year students. Saint Mary's has participated in this widely used national survey in every year but two since 1973 and is administered to first-years prior to beginning classes in August of each year. The note will explore educational attainment patterns and career patterns for both mothers and fathers of Saint Mary's first-year students.

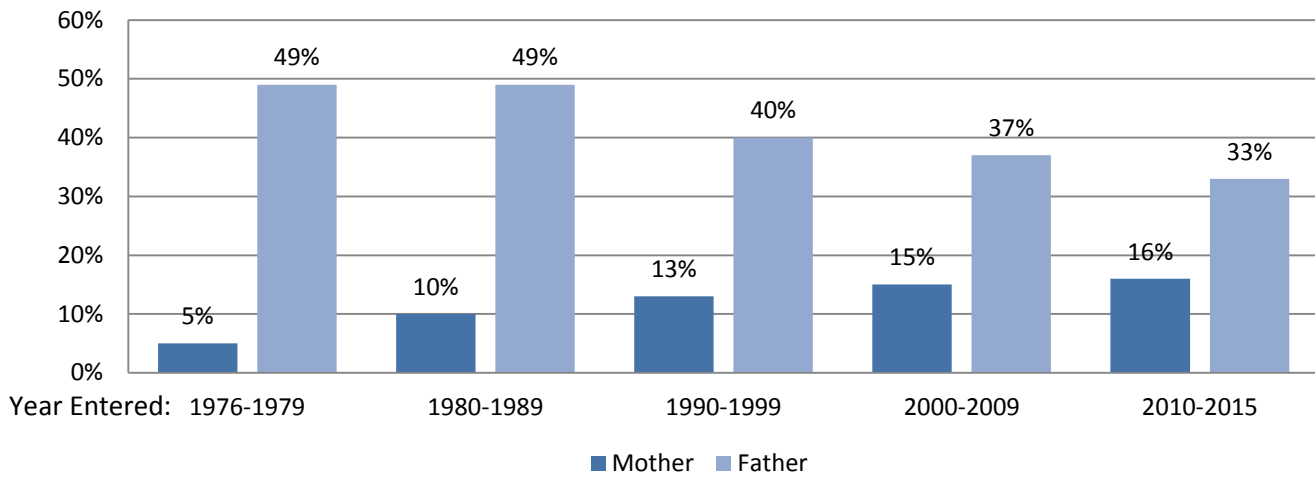
**Chart 1: Parental Educational Attainment of Saint Mary's First-Years (First Years Entering 1973 to 2015)**

**Percentage of First-Year Student Parents with College Degree or Higher**



- From 1973 to 1979, 45% of mothers of first-years had earned a college degree or higher. This had increased to 71% for first-years beginning in 2010 through 2015.
- Rates of college degree or higher attainment for fathers of first-years have remained relatively consistent at about 70% except for the 1980's when it averaged 77%.
- While a notable gender gap in educational attainment of at least a college degree existed in the 1970's between mothers and fathers, this gap has since evaporated with the parents of recent first-year classes.

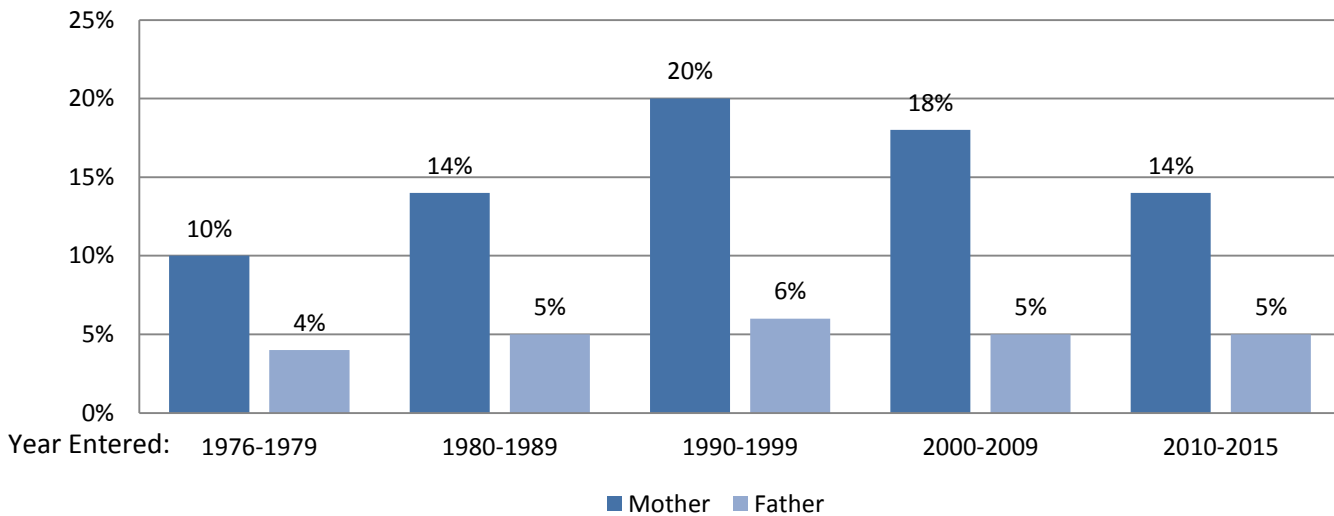
**Chart 2: Percentage of First-Year Parents with Business Related Careers (First Years Entering 1976-2015)**



Note: "Business" occupations include such occupations as accounting, management, business sales, business owner, and finance.

- The proportion of fathers of Saint Mary's first-years with careers in business have declined from about half of fathers in the late 1970's and 1980's to a third of fathers in 2010-2015.
- Conversely, the proportion of first-year mothers with a career in a business related field has increased from 5% in 1976-1979 to 16% in 2010-2015.

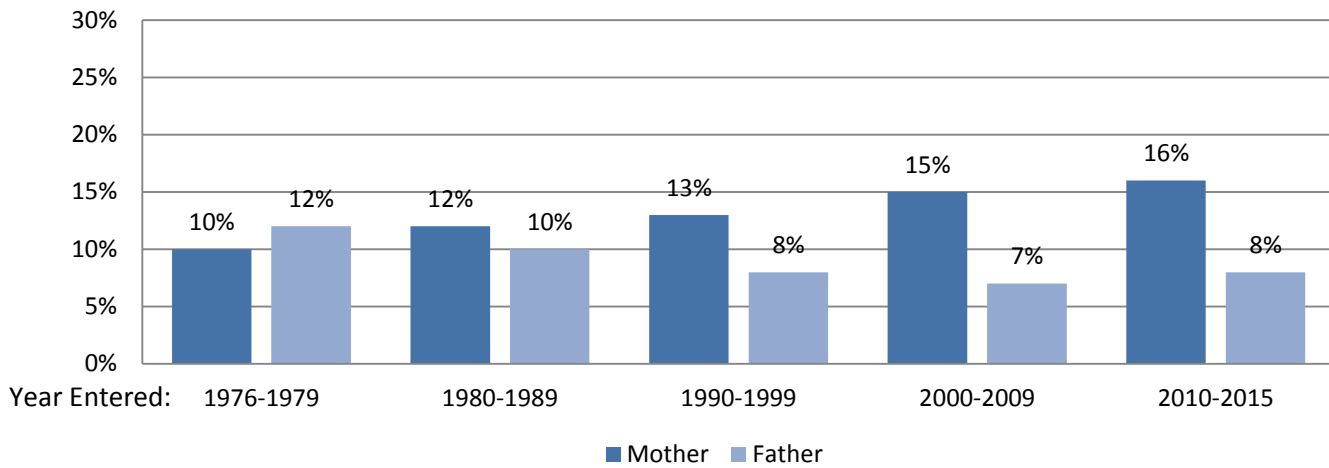
**Chart 3: Percentage of First-Year Parents with Education Related Careers (First Years Entering 1976-2015)**



Note: Education related occupations include such occupations as elementary/secondary k-12 teacher/admin, librarian and college faculty/admin.

- The share of first-year mothers with an education related career peaked in the 1990's with about a fifth of first-year mothers employed in an education related field. Employment of fathers in education related field has remained steady as a proportion of all first-year fathers.

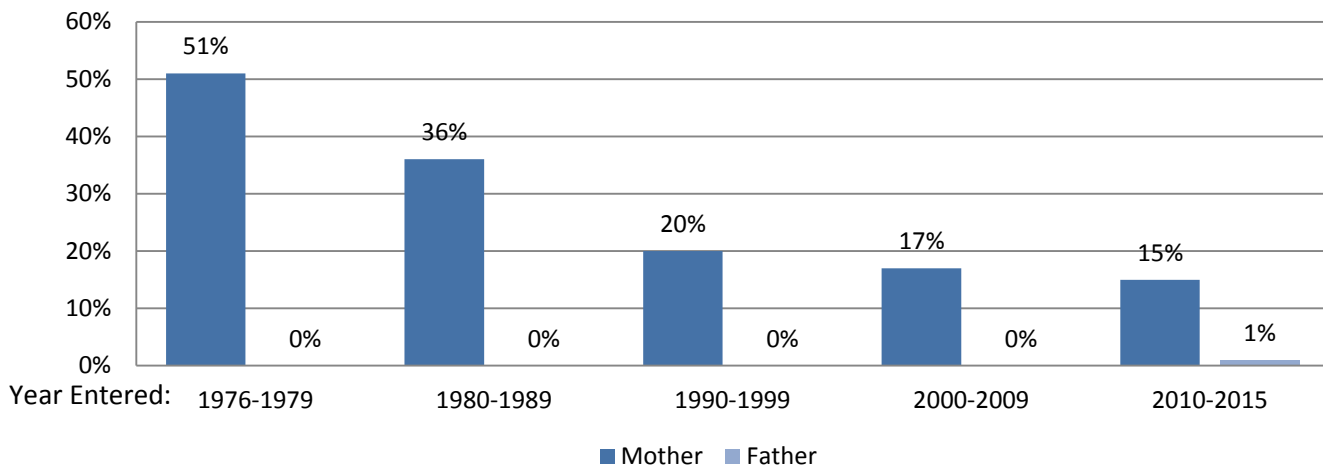
**Chart 4: Percentage of First-Year Parents with Careers in Health Care (First Years Entering 1976-2015)**



Note: Health care related occupations include such occupations as medical doctors/dentists, nurses, and other health care professions.

- The proportion of first-year students with mothers working in health care professions has increased since the late 1970's from 10% to 16% of first-year mothers.
- Fewer fathers of first-year students are working in the health care industry compared to the late 1970's (12% of fathers of first-years beginning in 1976-1979 vs. 8% in 2010-2015).

**Chart 5: Percentage of First-Year Parents who are a Homemaker/Stay-at-Home-Parent (1976-2015)**



Note: In years 1976 to 2012, the CIRP Survey used "homemaker (full-time)" as the survey descriptor language. Beginning in 2013, the language changed to "Homemaker/Stay at home parent".

- From 1976 to 1979, approximately half of first-year mothers were reported by their children to be "full-time homemakers". This share has steadily declined over the forty years to 15% of mothers of first-years entering between 2010-2015 reported to be homemakers/stay-at-home parents.
- There is some evidence that the prevalence of stay at home fathers is increasing as 3% of Saint Mary's first-years in 2015 reported their father was a stay-at-home parent.