

The Outlook According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2009)

Between 2007 and 2018 enrollment is projected to increase:

9 percent for students who are 18 to 24 years old

25 percent for students who are 25 to 34 years old

12 percent for students who are 35 years old and over

More of the story:

12 percent for undergraduate students

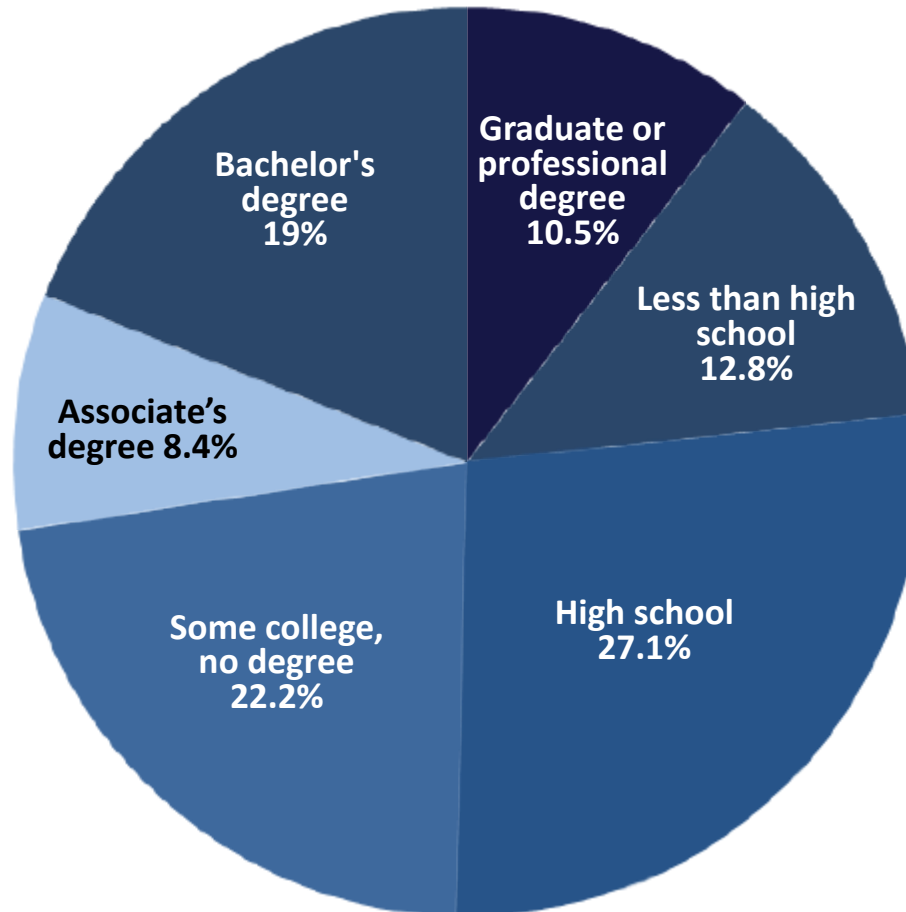
18 percent for graduate students

20 percent for first-professional students (dentistry, medicine, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, podiatric medicine, veterinary medicine, chiropractic, law, and theology)



Lumina Foundation – “The BIG Goal”

Levels of education for the U.S. population, ages 25–64



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 American Community Survey

Today's Adult Students

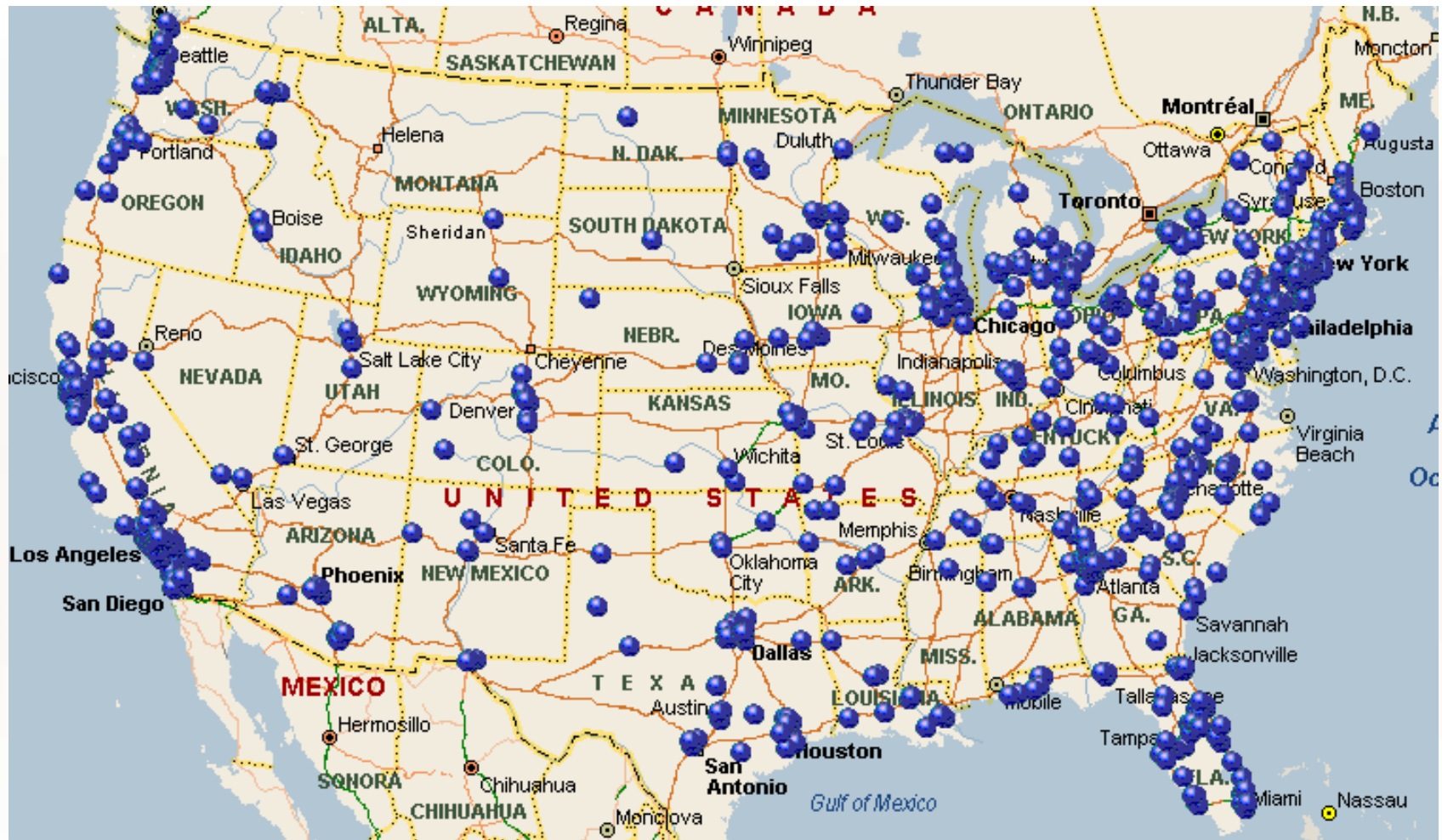
- Only 16% of college students fit the traditional model: age 18–22 years old, attending college full-time, and living on-campus
- The “over 25” population is the fastest-growing student segment in higher education and has consistently increased during the last three decades
- Despite this information, the majority of opportunities within higher education were/are designed with a traditional-aged student in mind



2012 Adult Students TALK™ Research



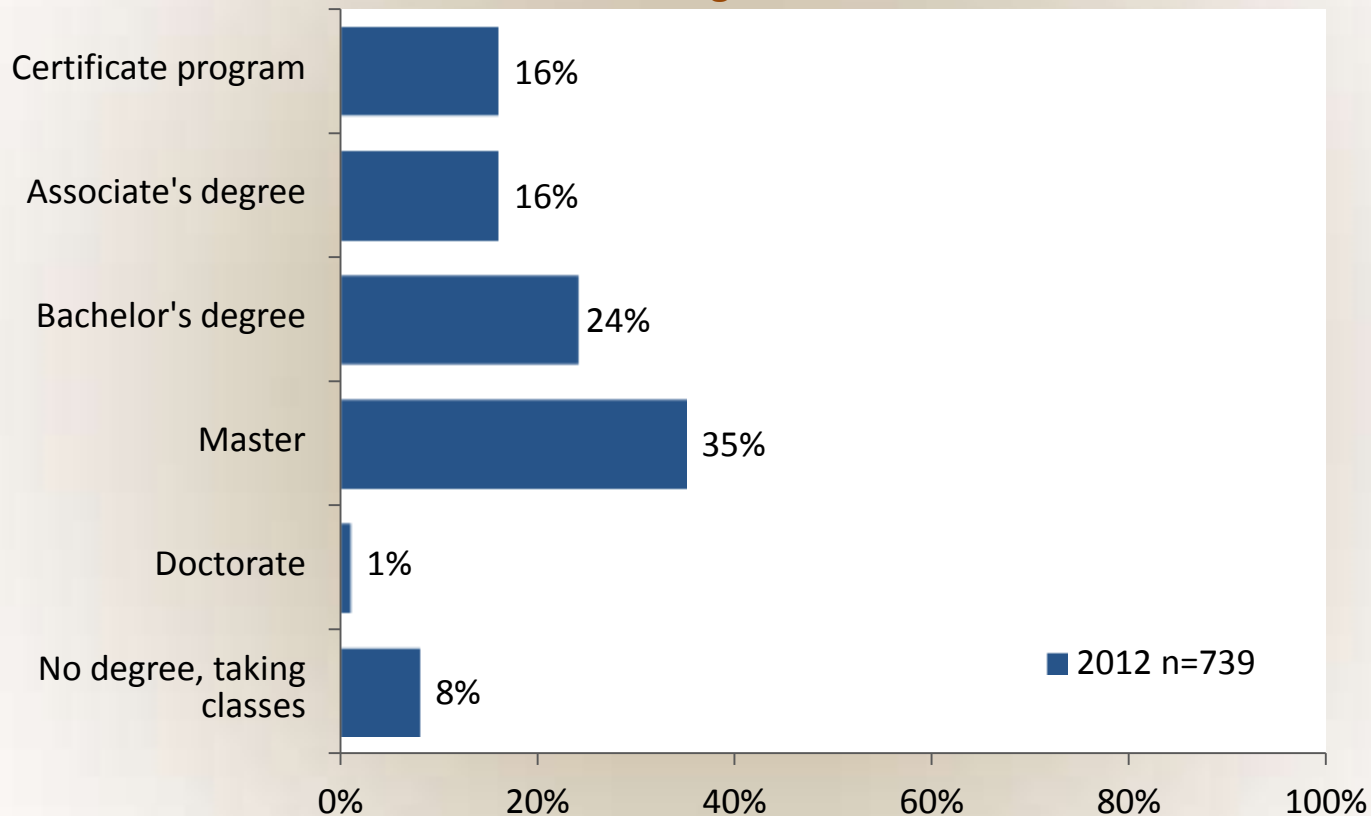
Geographic Distribution of Respondents



- Surveys completed in Hawaii and Alaska as well

Degree of Interest

What type of program or degree are you likely to pursue?
Single choice.



- The top four programs listed are the ones we will focus on in this report; there were too few cases of doctorate students in the overall survey to look deeper into this type of student

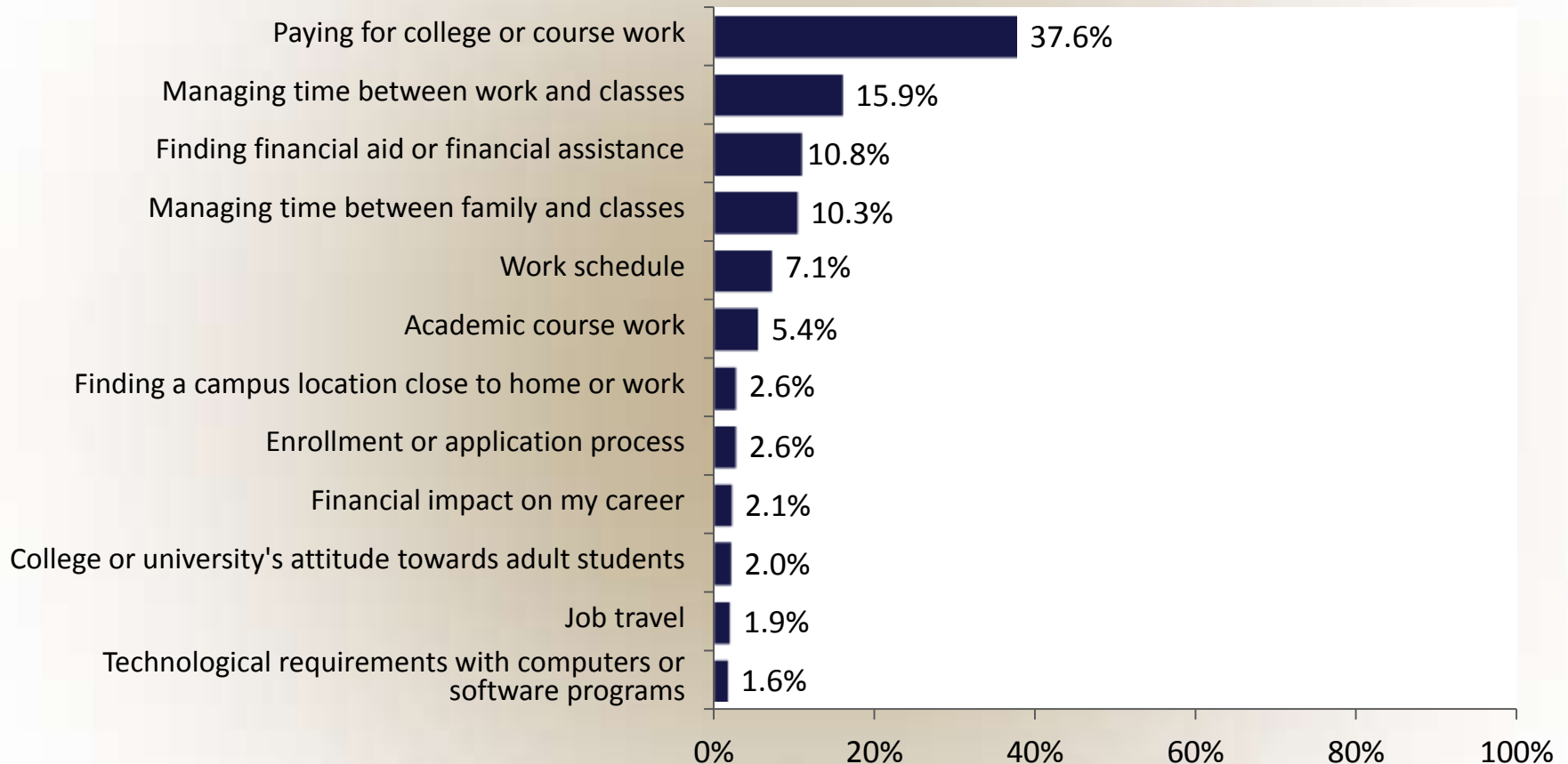
Certificate Program



Adult Student Challenges: Certificate Students

MAX DIFF

Which factor is most challenging to you? N=119

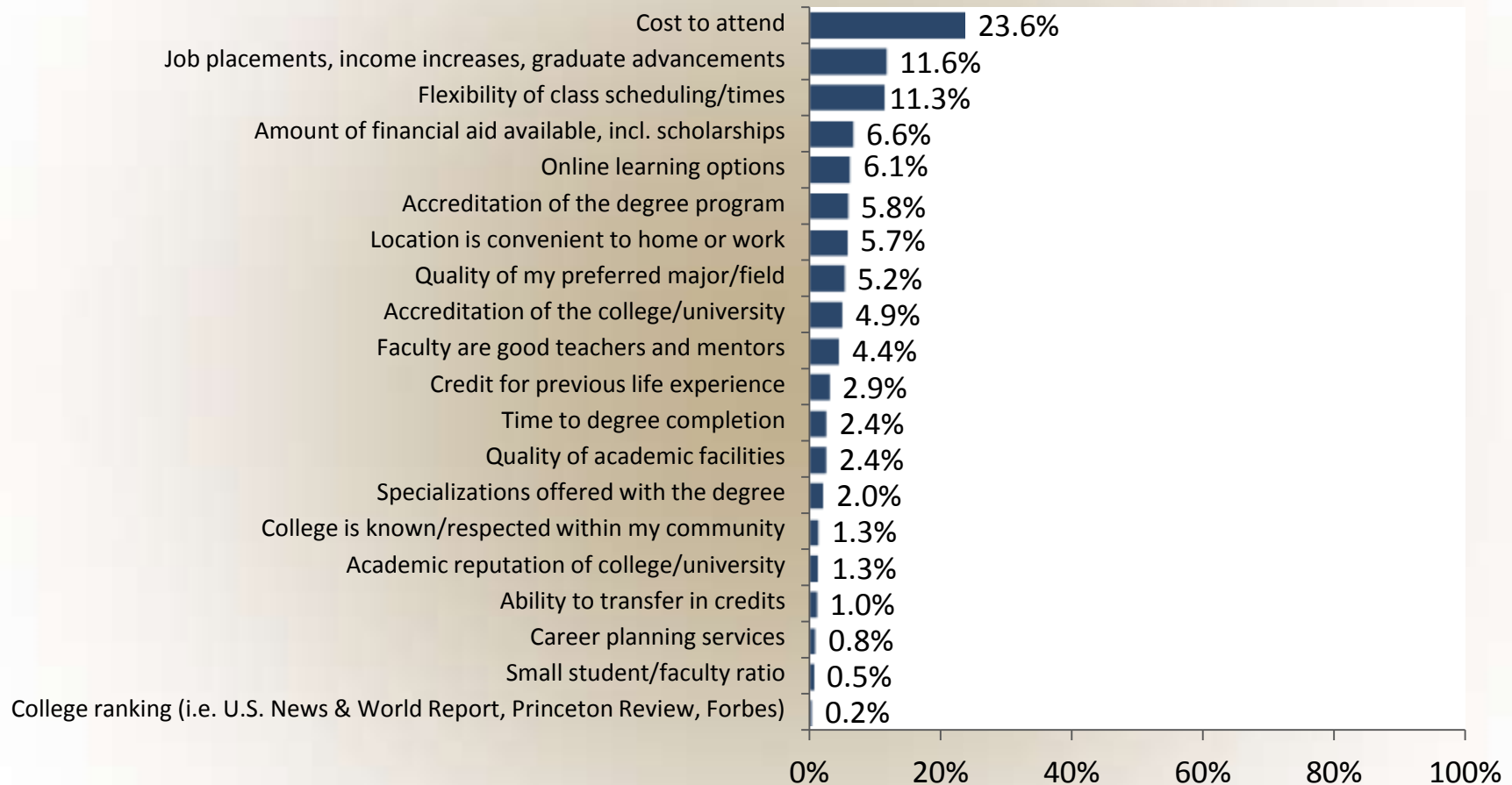


- Paying for college courses is the most challenging issue facing certificate students; managing time between work and classes is half as challenging as just finding the money to do it

College Selection Criteria: Certificate Students

MAX DIFF

Which factor is most important to you? N=119

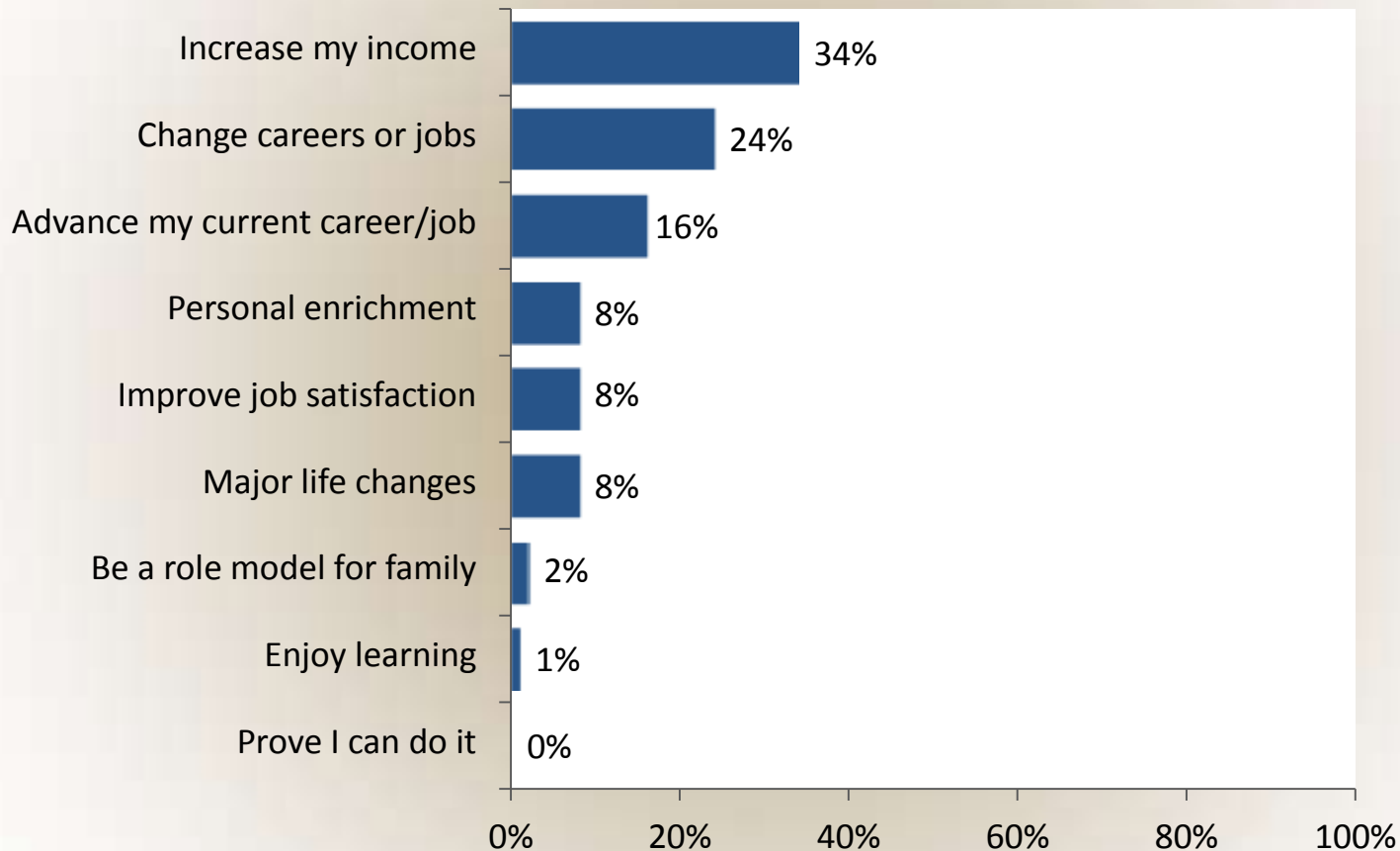


- The most important college selection factor to prospective students is cost; student outcomes (job placements, income increases, career advancements) and flexible class scheduling are half as important in selecting a school as the overall cost to attend



Motivations for Education: Certificate Students

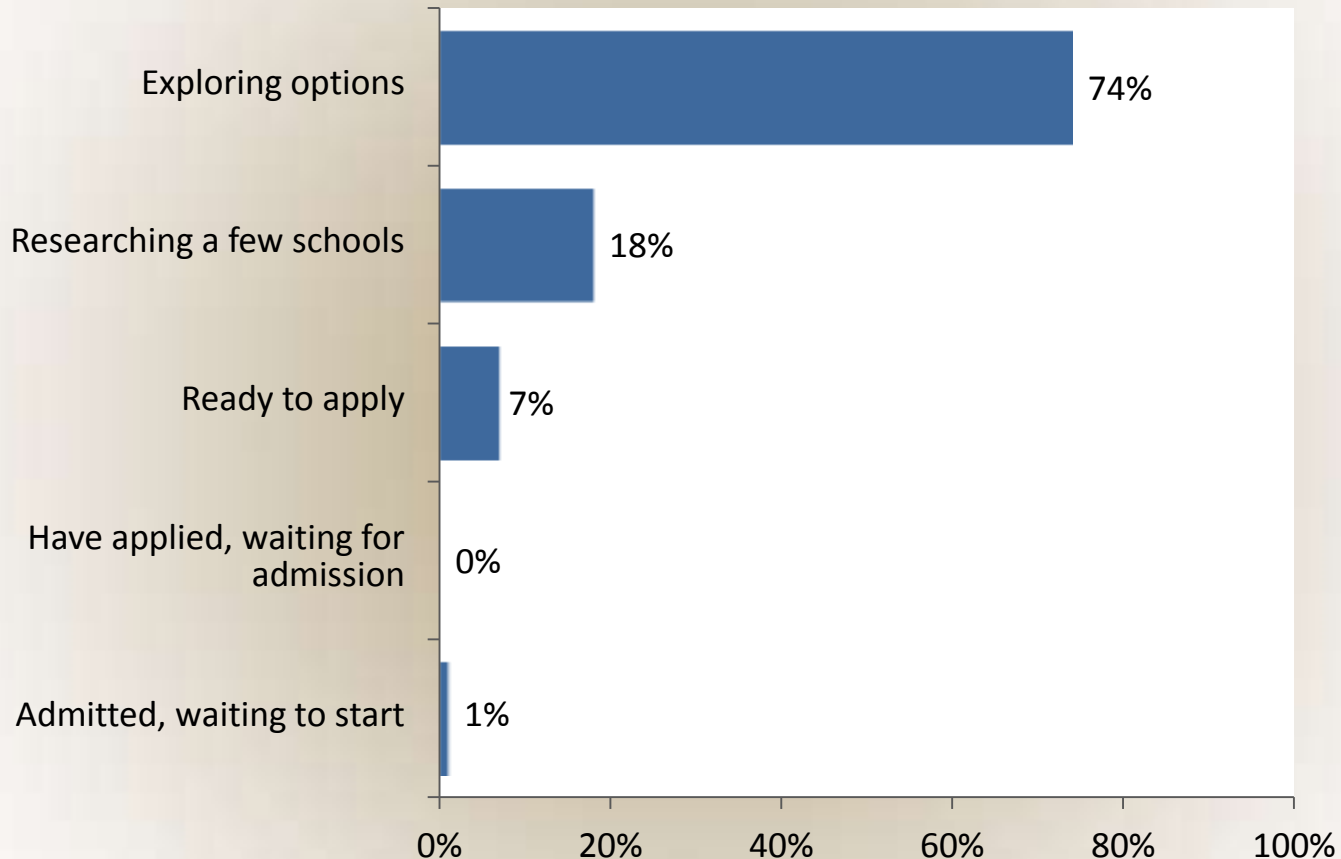
Please rank your top three motivations for pursuing additional education. N=119



- Adults are very motivated by improving their economic or career status when considering going back to school

Enrollment Timeline – Certificate Students

Where are you in the process right now? N=119

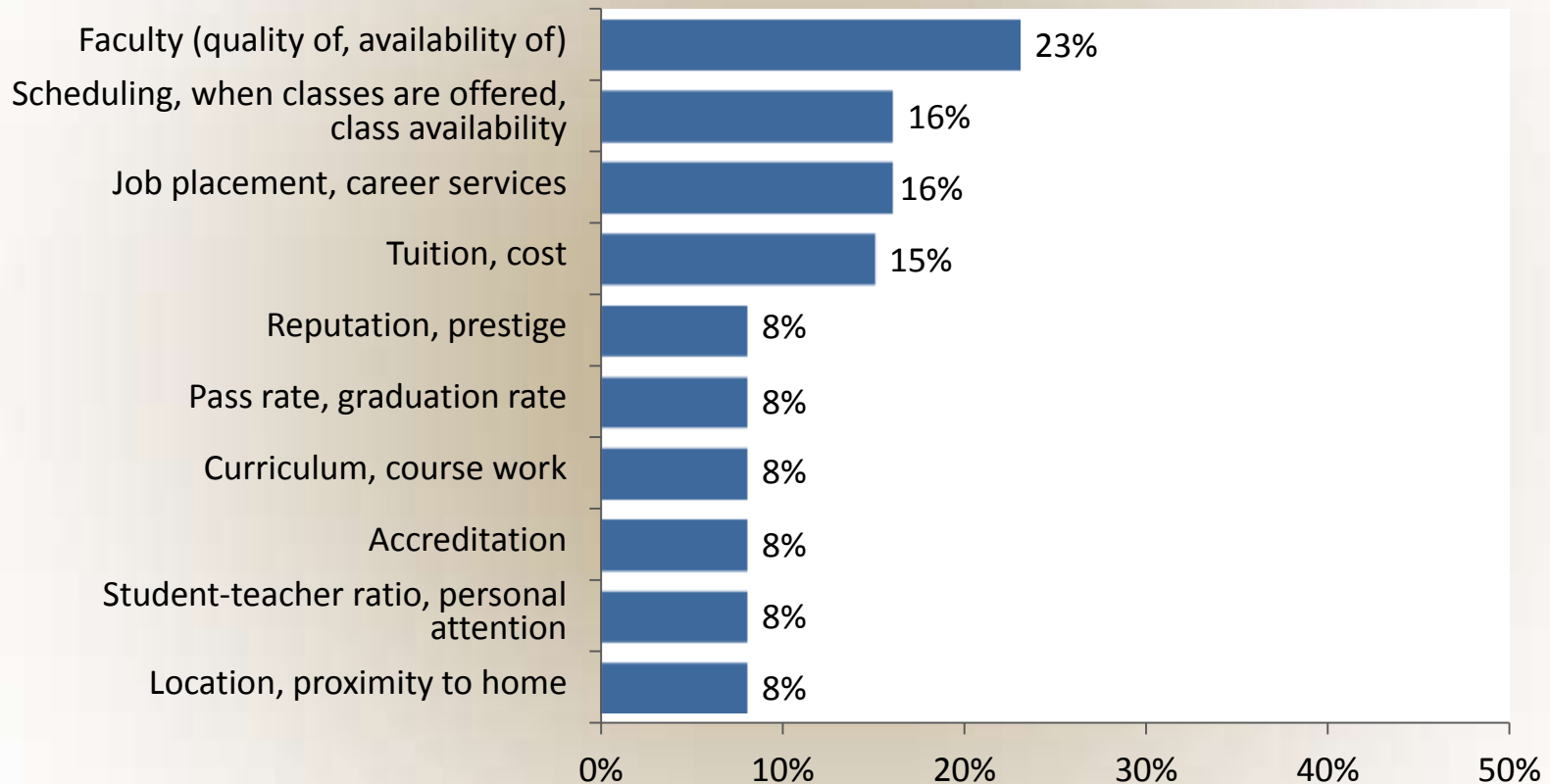


- Certificate seekers are mainly exploring options right now with no definite plans; there are more certificate seekers in this stage than those of any other degree program. Most likely they just apply and start



Defining Quality: Certificate Students

How would you assess the quality of a program? What factors or characteristics would you look at? Unaided. Top mentions listed. N=119

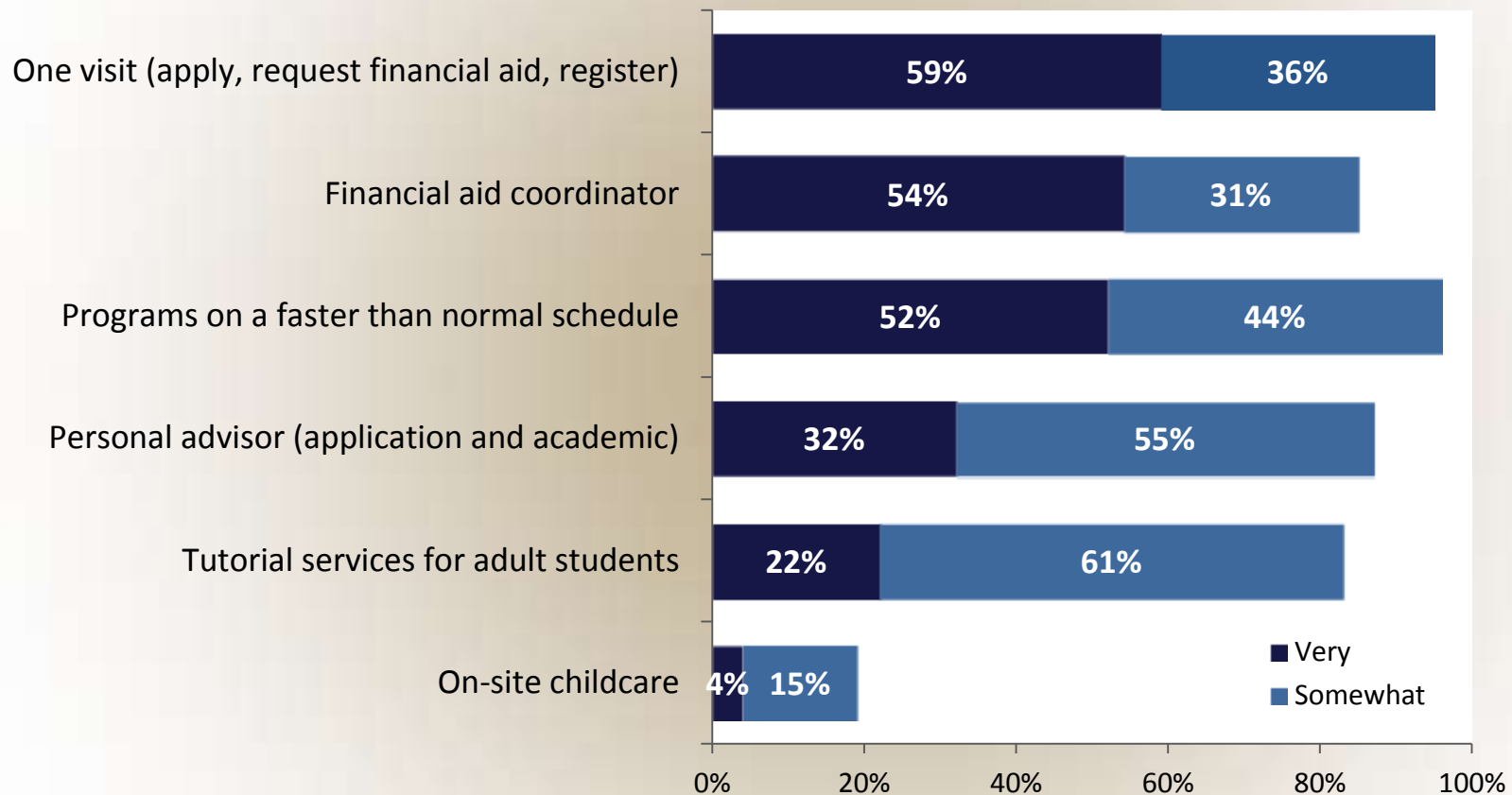


Note: Multiple mentions.



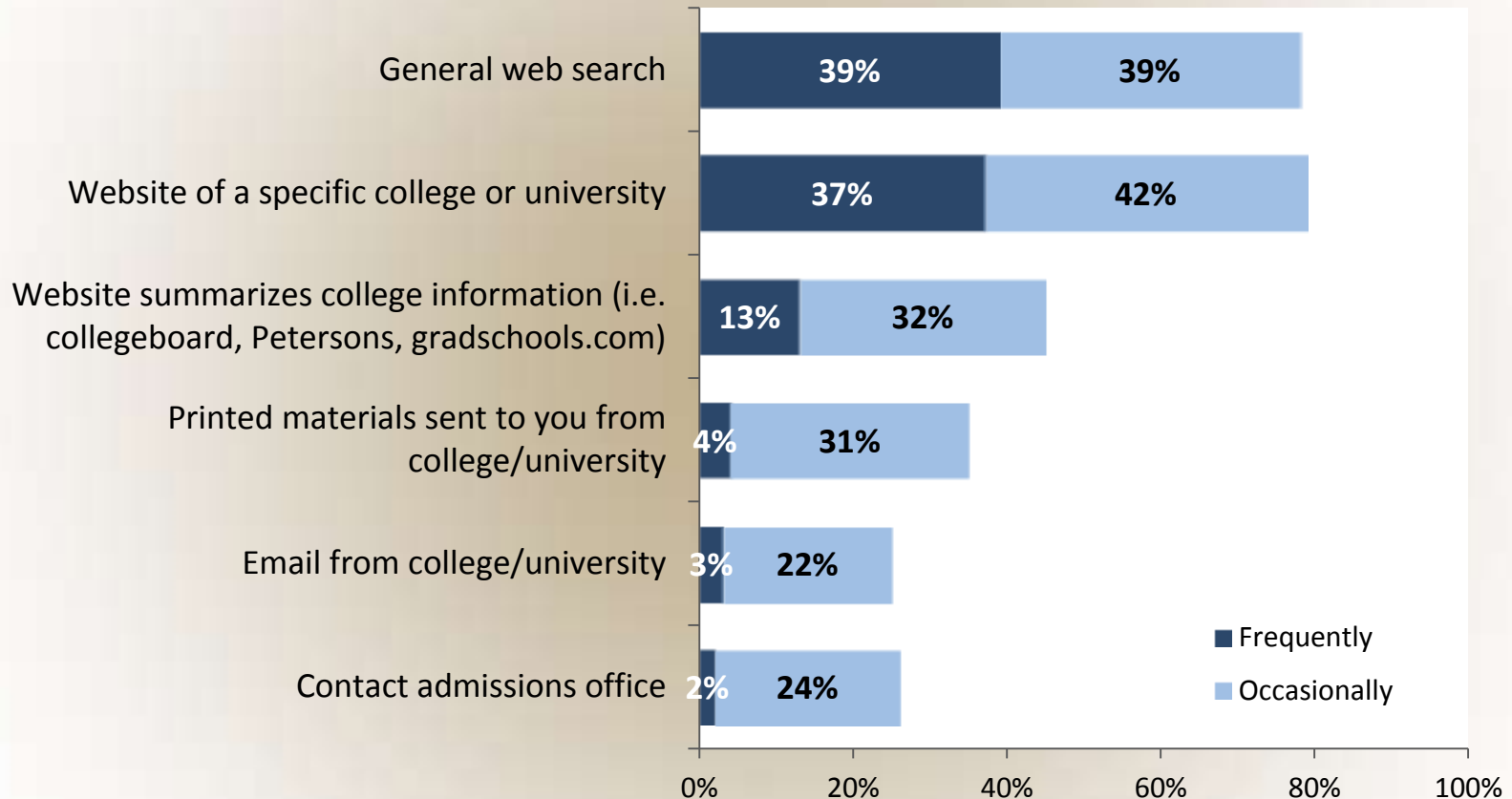
Services to Consider – Certificate Students

Please indicate your interest level in a college that provides this option. Very/Somewhat interested displayed. N=119

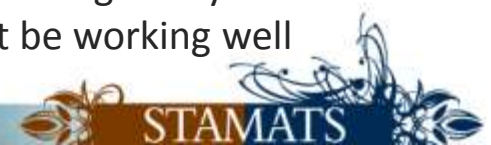


Information Sources Used – Certificate Students

How frequently have you used the following information sources in your search for a college or university? N=119

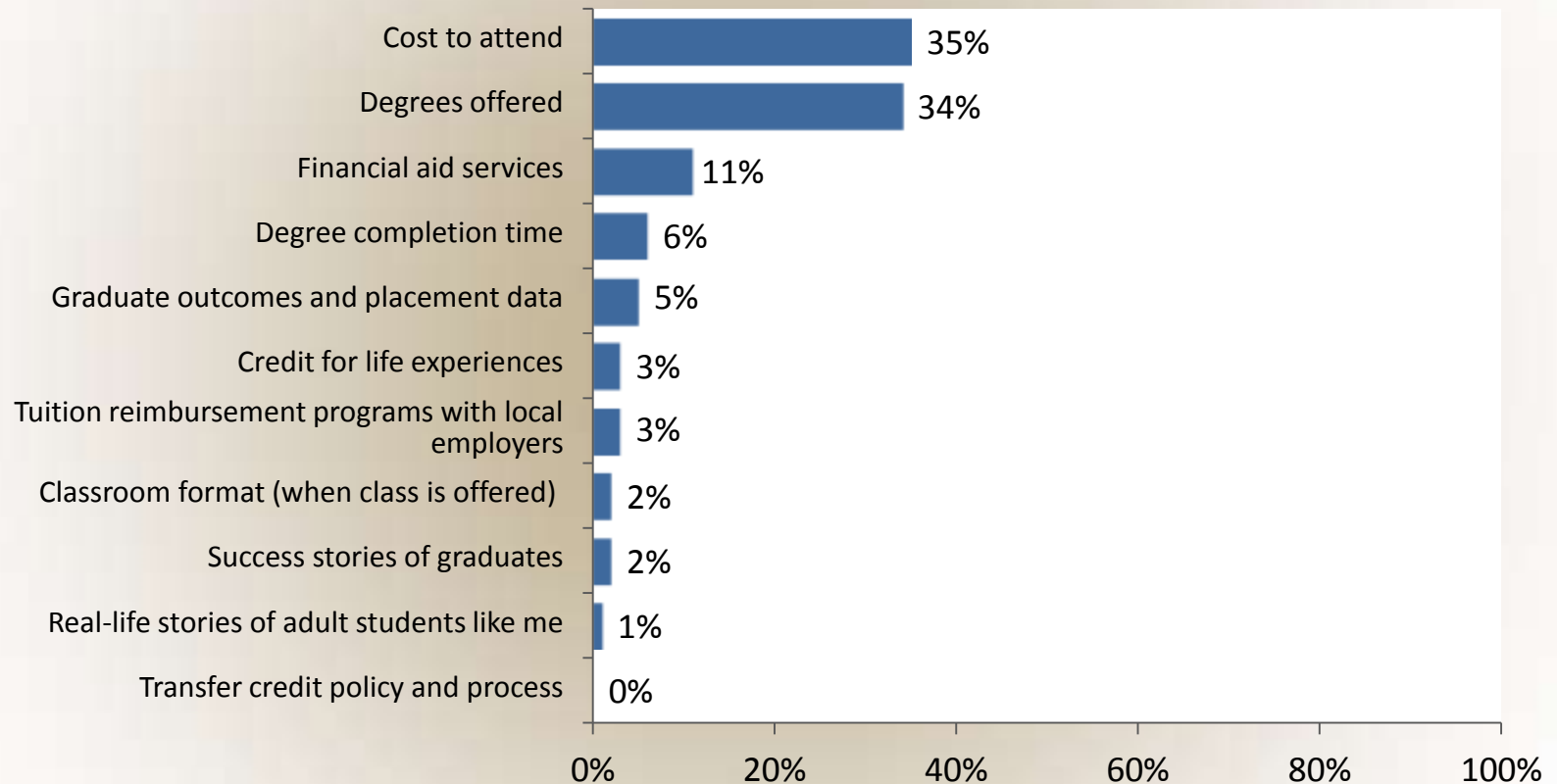


- Students most frequently conduct general web searches with search engines to find out about colleges or universities they might like to attend and they also go straight to your website; this suggests that your Search Engine Optimization (SEO) must be working well to capture early leads



Website Information Sought: Certificate Students

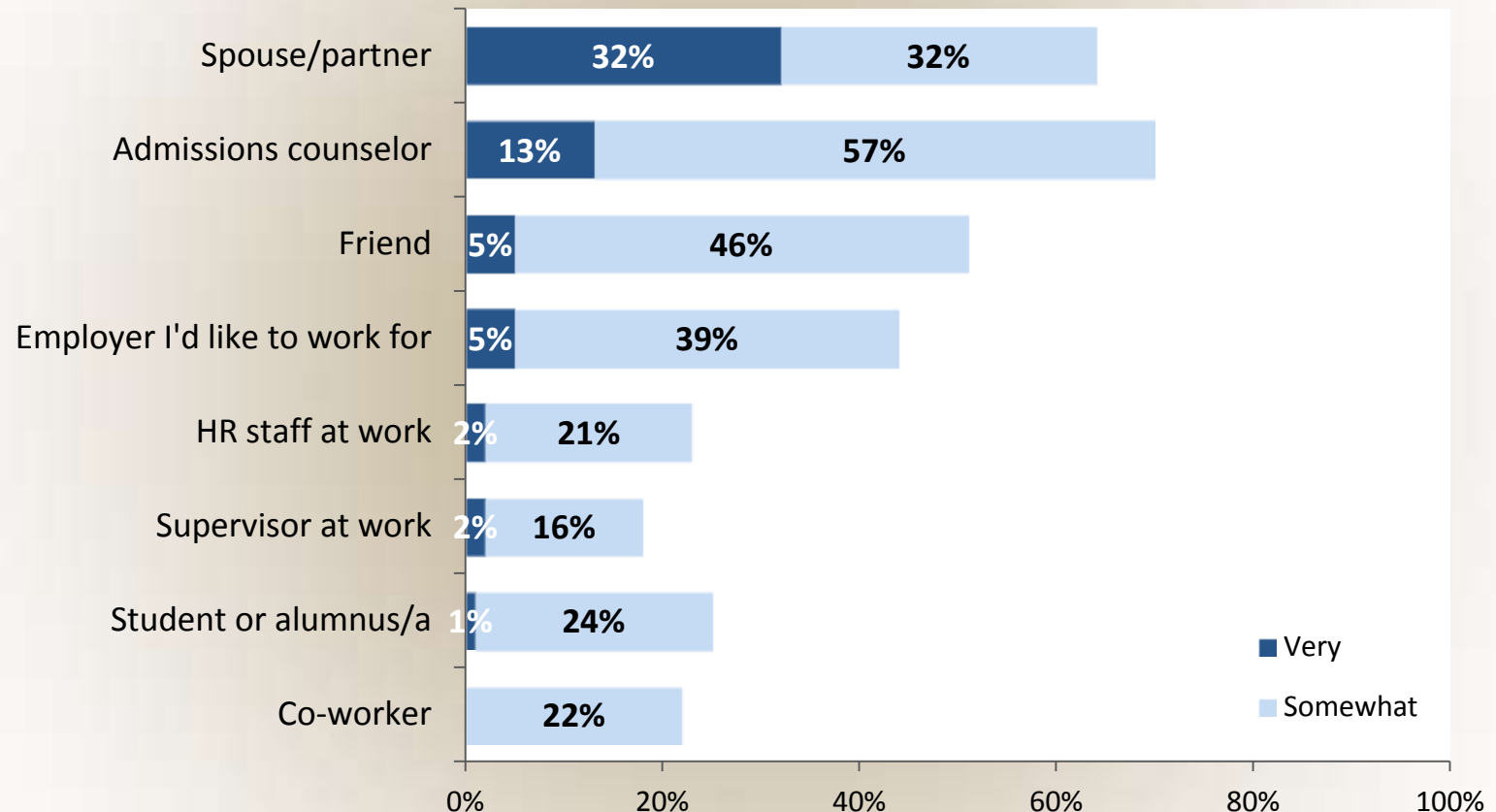
Please rank the most important pieces of information you are looking for on the website of a college or university program you might consider attending. Top mentions listed. N=119



- The most often mentioned website information that students are looking for when reviewing a website from a college or university are the cost to attend and the degrees offered

Influencers – Certificate Students

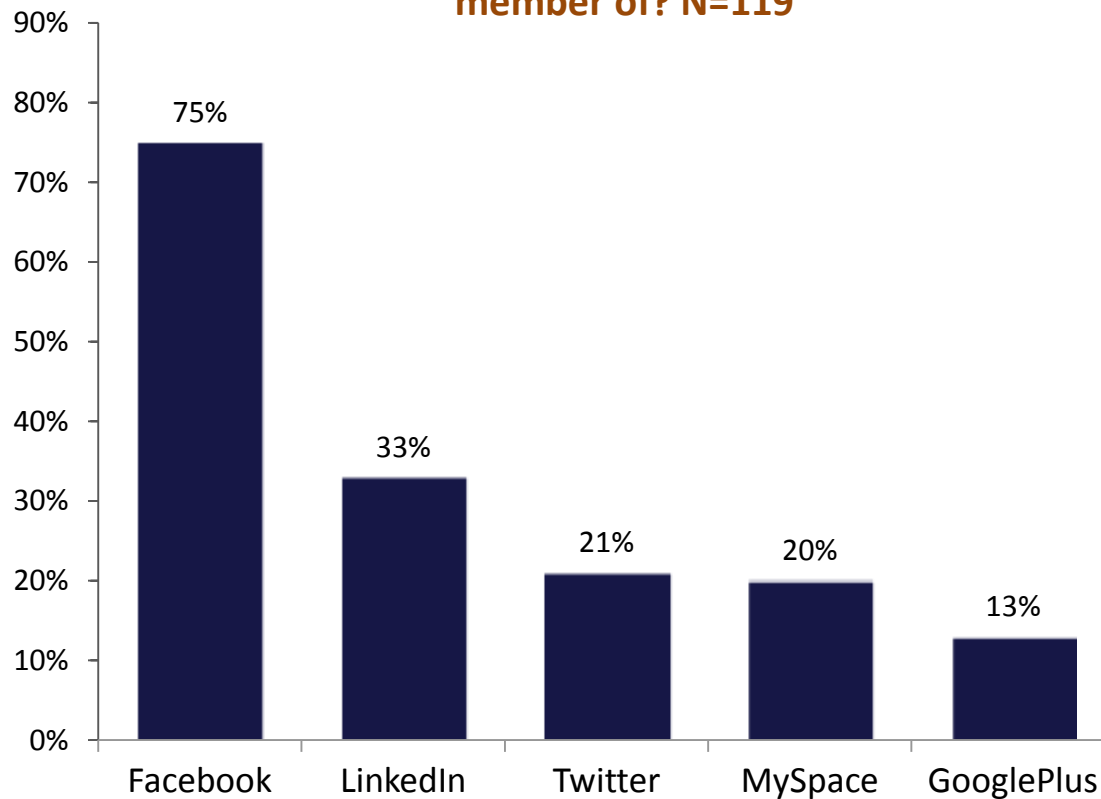
Please indicate how involved each of the following people will be in your choice of a college. Very/Somewhat involved displayed. N=119



- Adult students most likely have a spouse or partner “very” involved in the decision process; the admissions counselor at the school or a friend may be somewhat involved but other types of influencers seem to have less impact overall

Social Media Use – Certificate Students

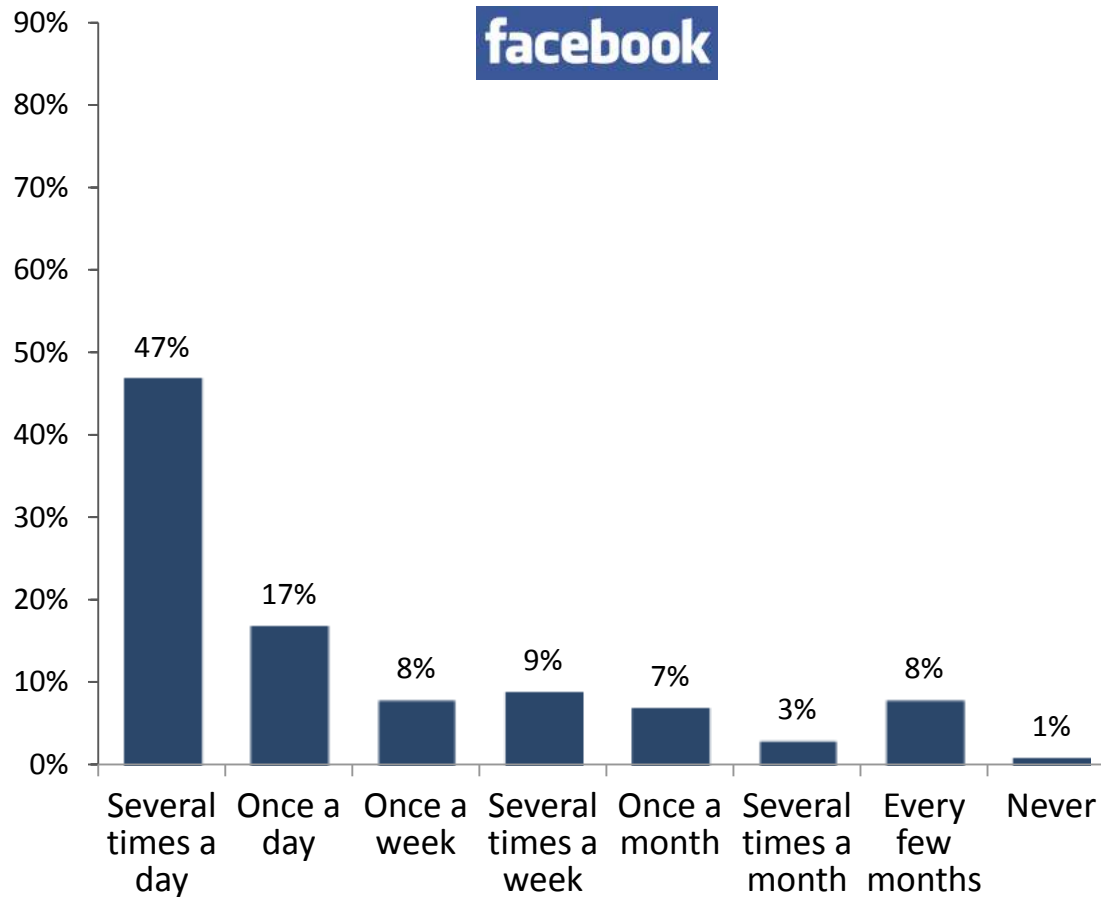
Which of the following social media platforms are you a member of? N=119



- Facebook is the most prevalent social media platform for adult students overall
- No significant differences exist in Facebook membership by degree type

Facebook Usage Frequency – Certificate Students

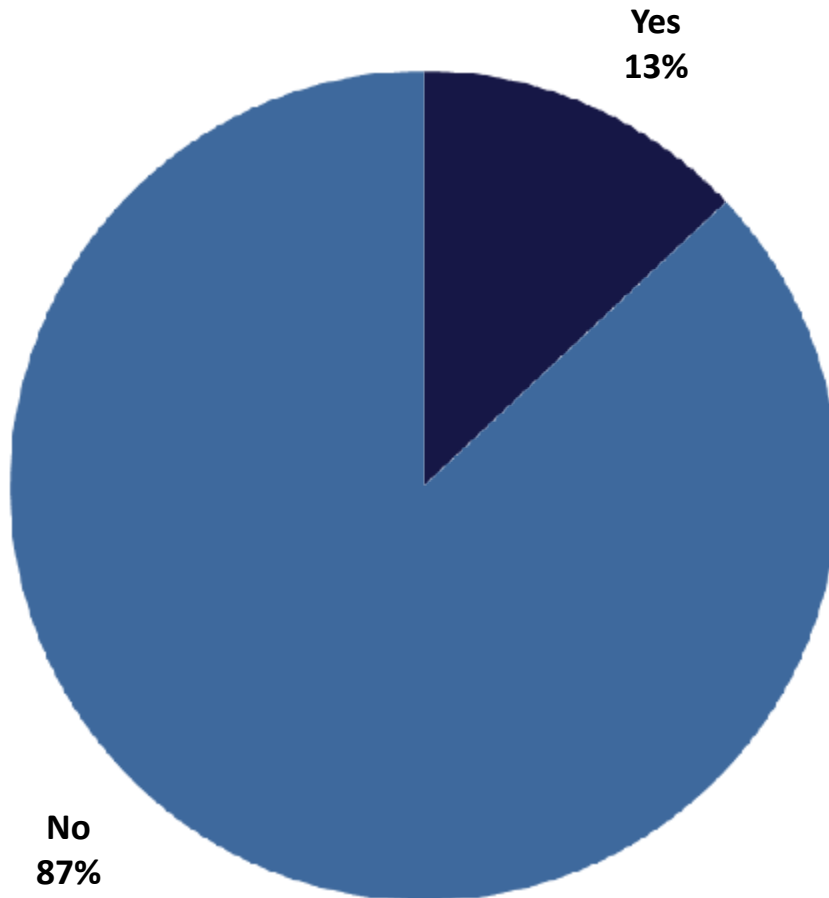
How often do you visit your profile? Base: Members. N=89



- Six in 10 Facebook members are checking their profile on Facebook at least once a day, most of them are checking in several times a day
- With such frequent usage, you may be able to get a message, event, or promotion quickly to Facebook users

Visited Facebook of College/University – Certificate

Have you ever visited the Facebook of a college or university you were interested in attending? N=119



- While 75% of adult students are Facebook members; only one in 10 has actually visited the Facebook page of a college or university of interest
- More 25- to 34-year-old certificate seekers have visited than older age groups
- Among all degree types, there is no significant difference in visiting the Facebook page of a prospective college or university

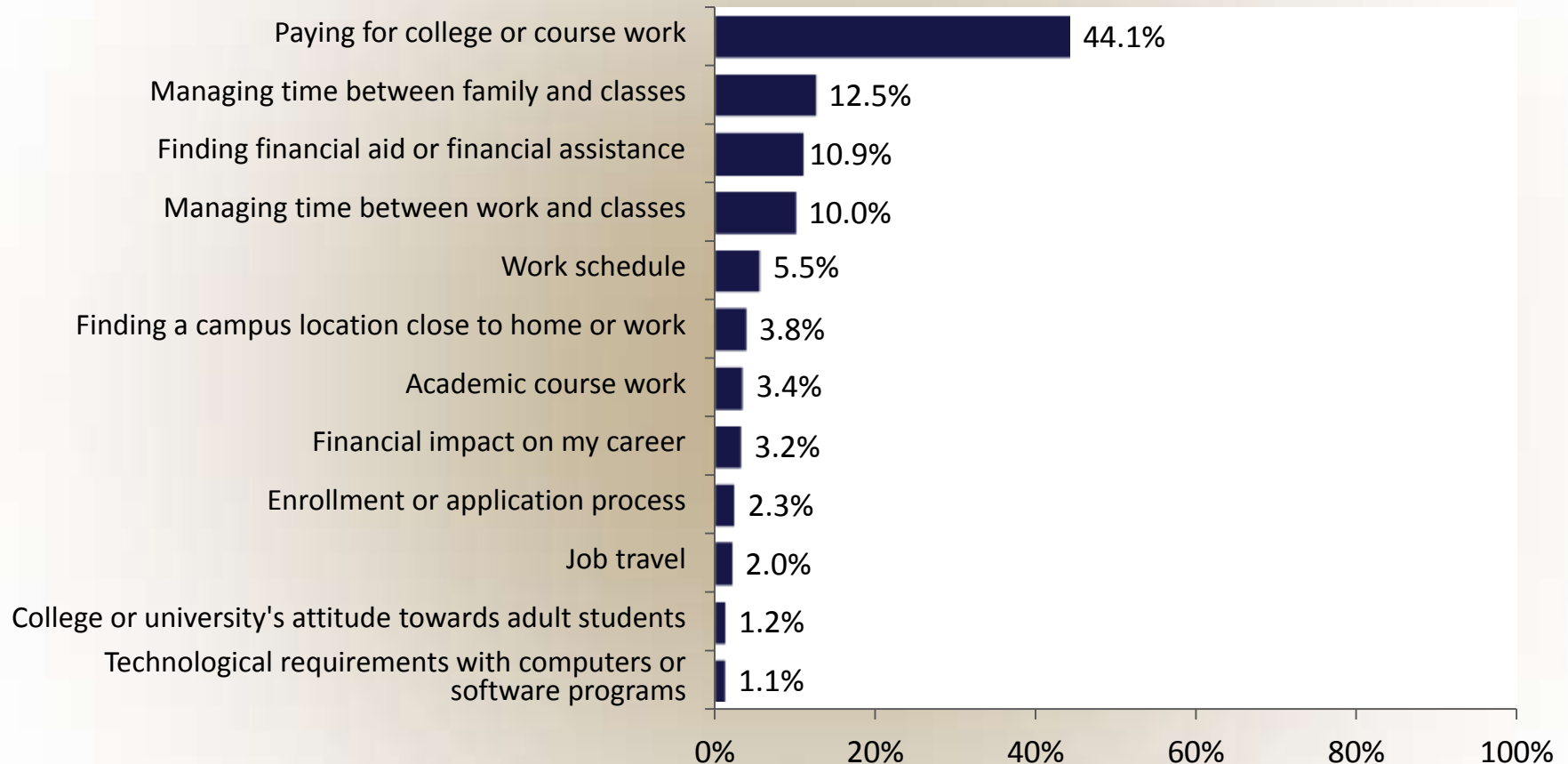
Associate's Degree Seekers



Adult Student Challenges: Associate's Degree Students

MAX DIFF

Which factor is most challenging to you? N=117



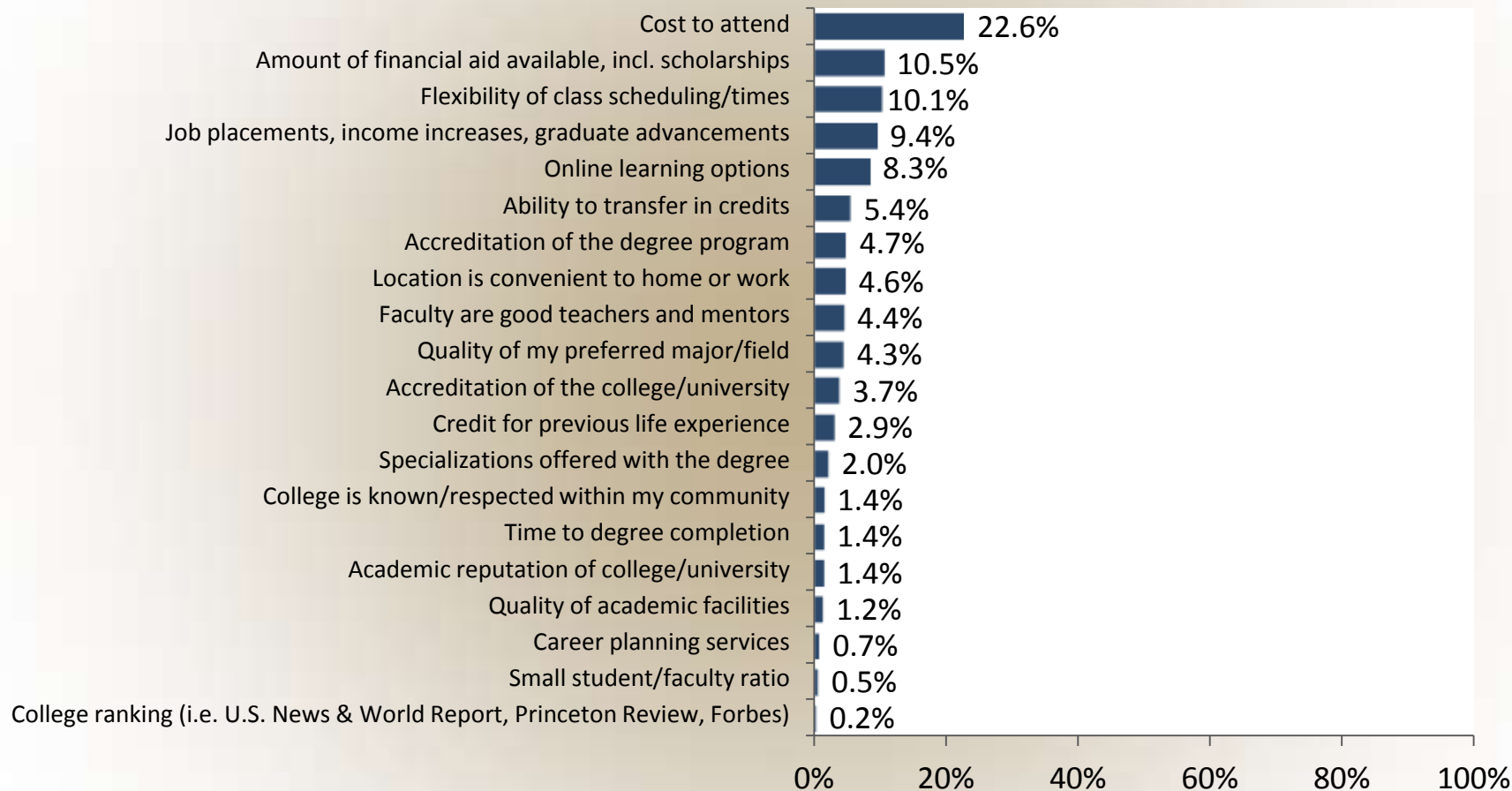
- Paying for college courses is the most challenging issue facing associate degree students; managing time between family and classes or work is half as challenging as just finding the money to do it



College Selection Criteria: Associate's Degree Students

MAX DIFF

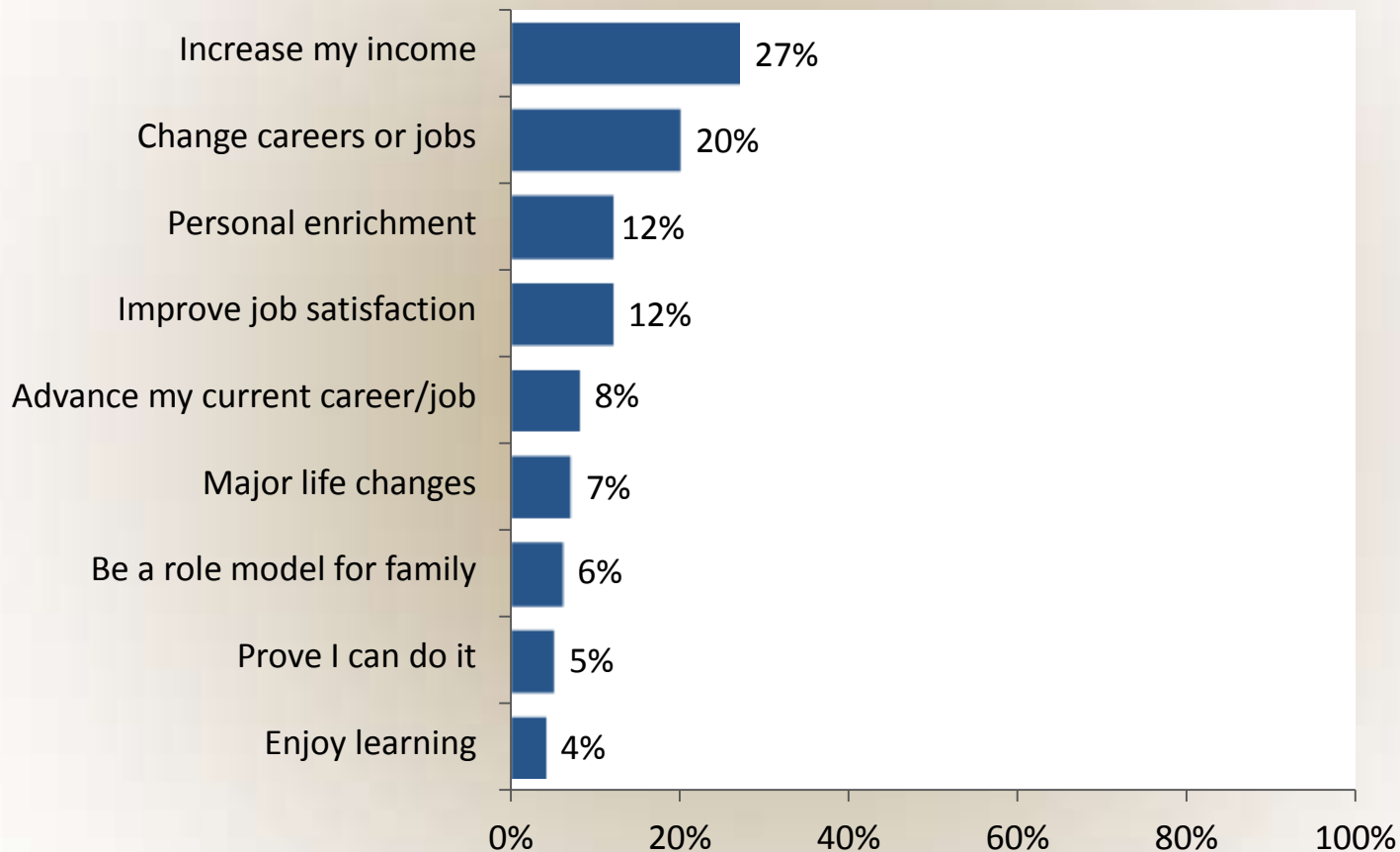
Which factor is most important to you? N=117



- The cost to attend is the most important college selection criteria; the amount of financial aid available is half as important followed by flexible class scheduling

Motivations for Education: Associate's Degree Students

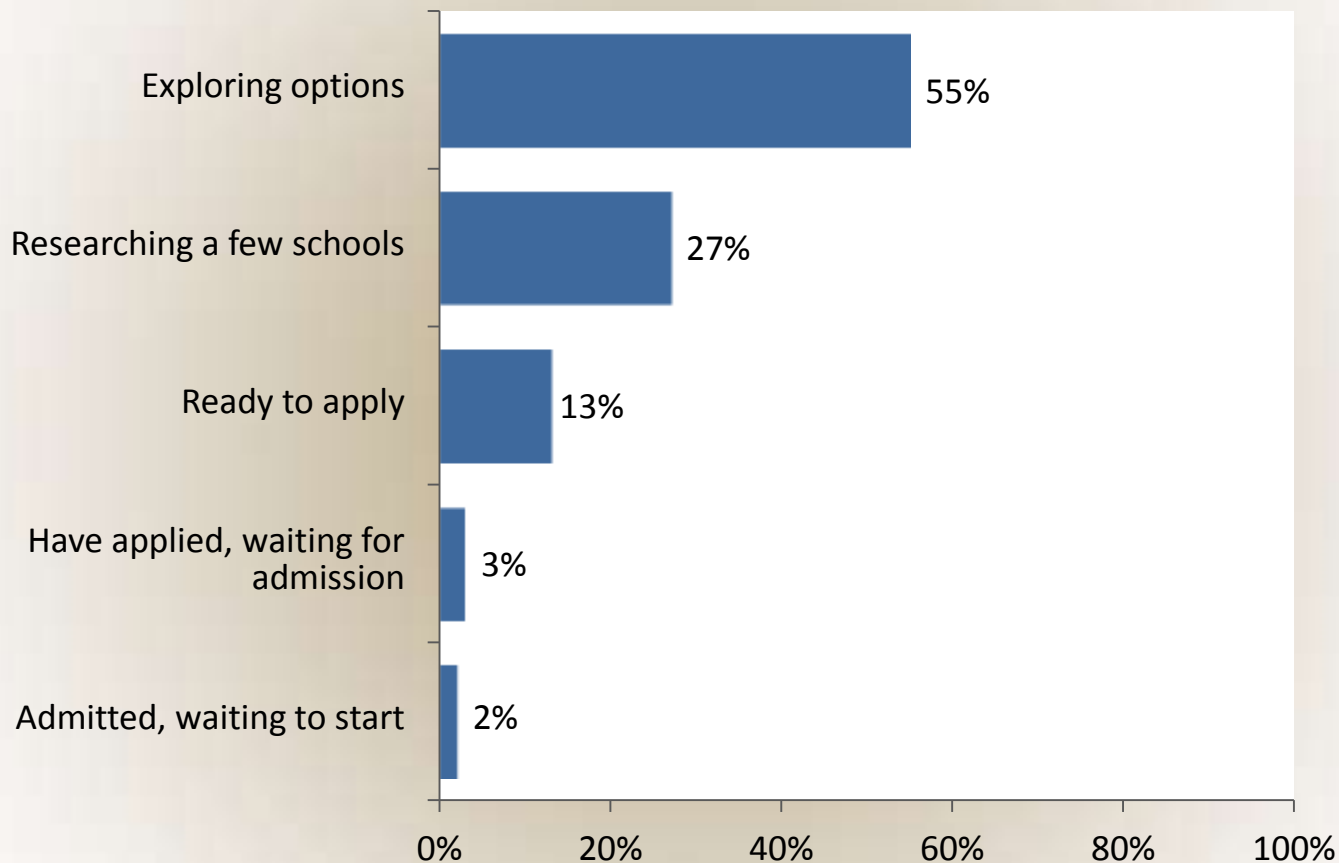
Please rank your top three motivations for pursuing additional education. N=117



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Enrollment Timeline – Associate’s Degree Students

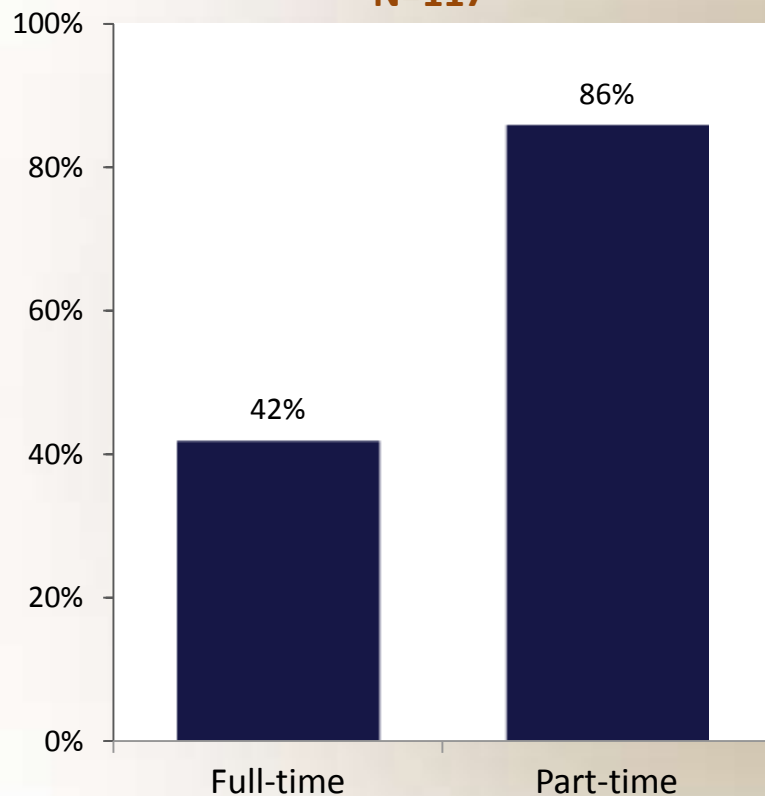
Where are you in the process right now? N=117



Full-time or Part-time – Associate's Degree Students

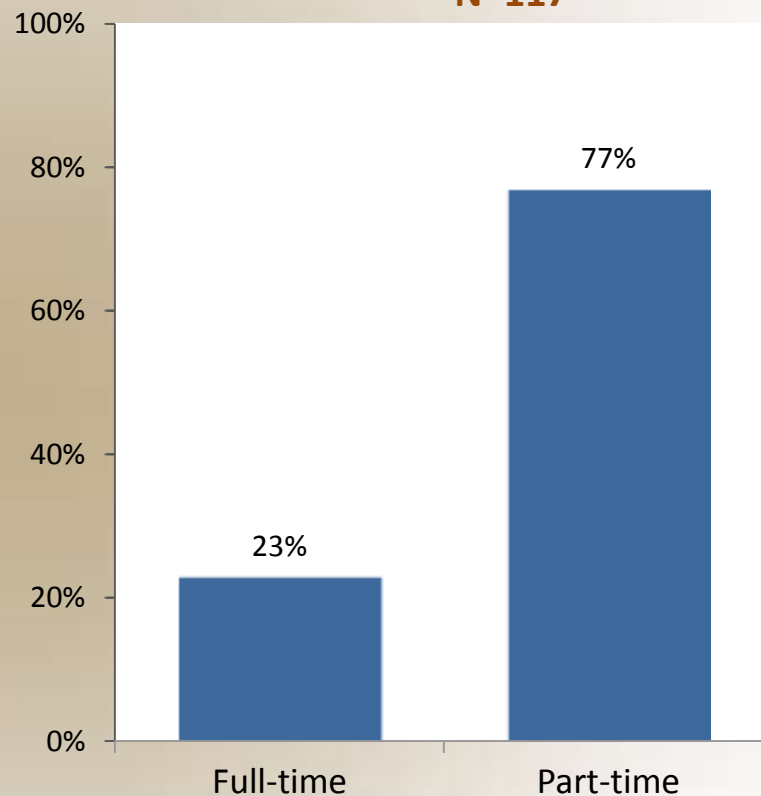
Are you considering going back to college...?

N=117



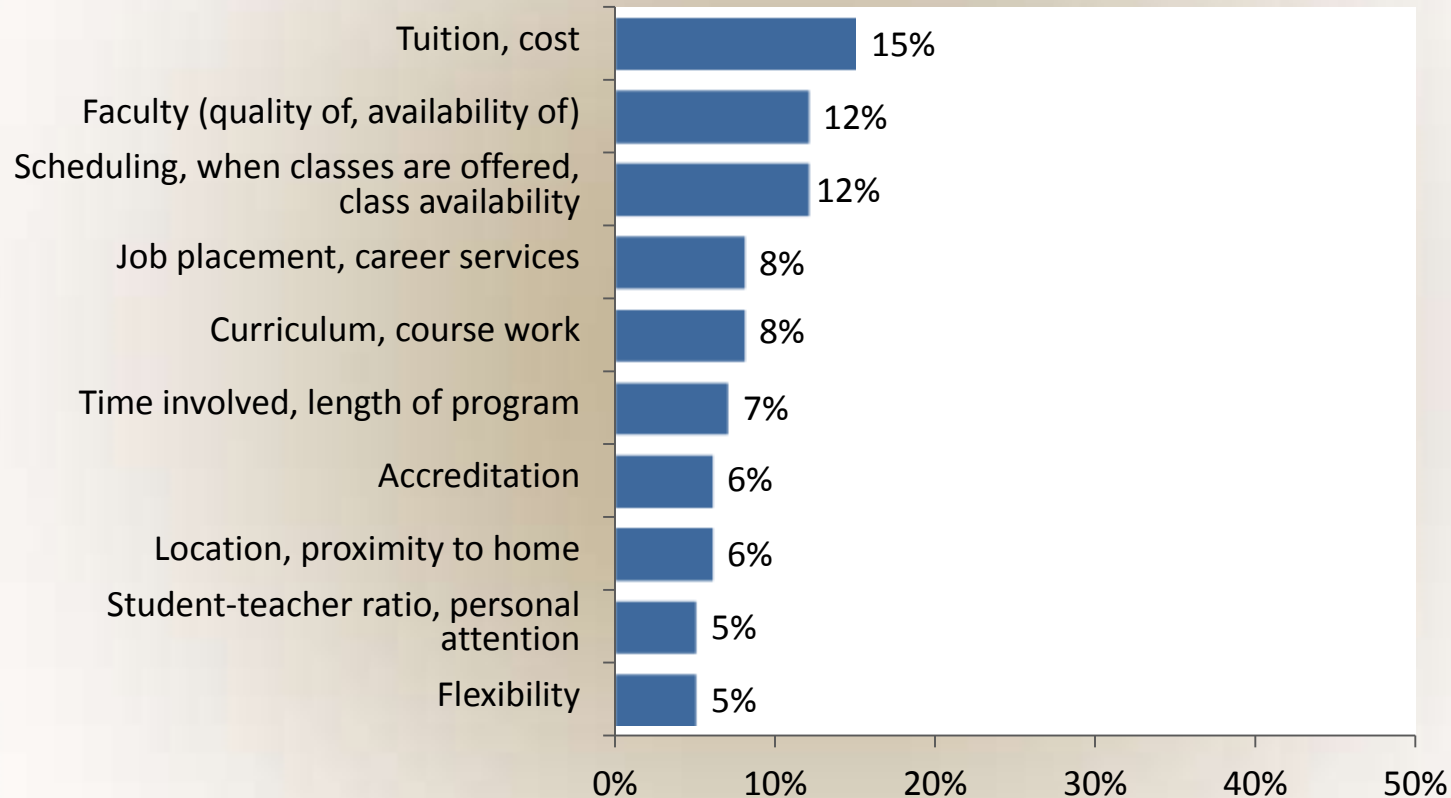
Are you more likely to continue your education...?

N=117



Defining Quality: Associate's Degree Students

How would you assess the quality of a program? What factors or characteristics would you look at? Unaided. Top mentions listed. N=117



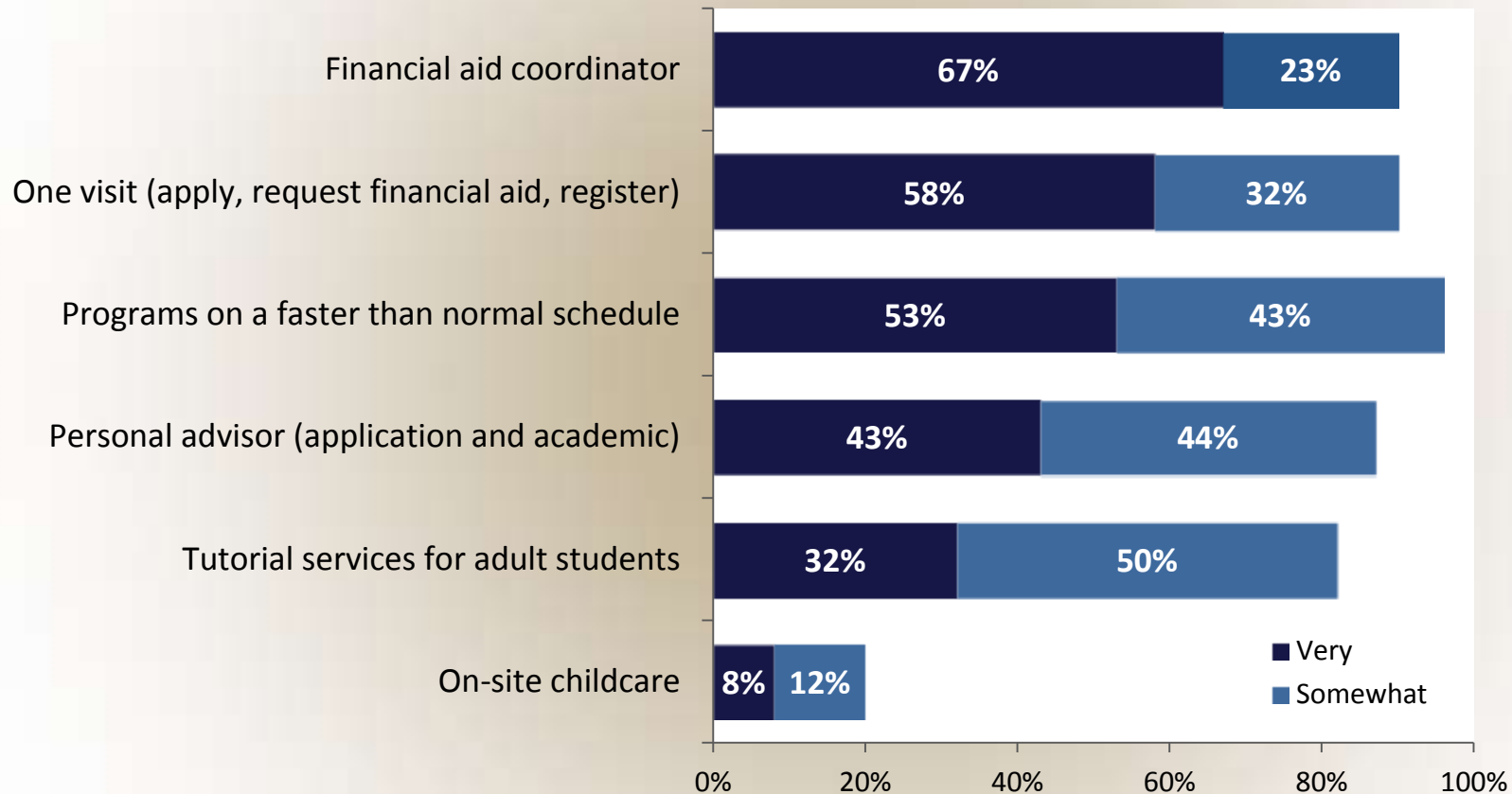
- Associate and certificate students are mostly looking at cost, faculty, and flexible scheduling to assess the quality of a program

Note: Multiple mentions.



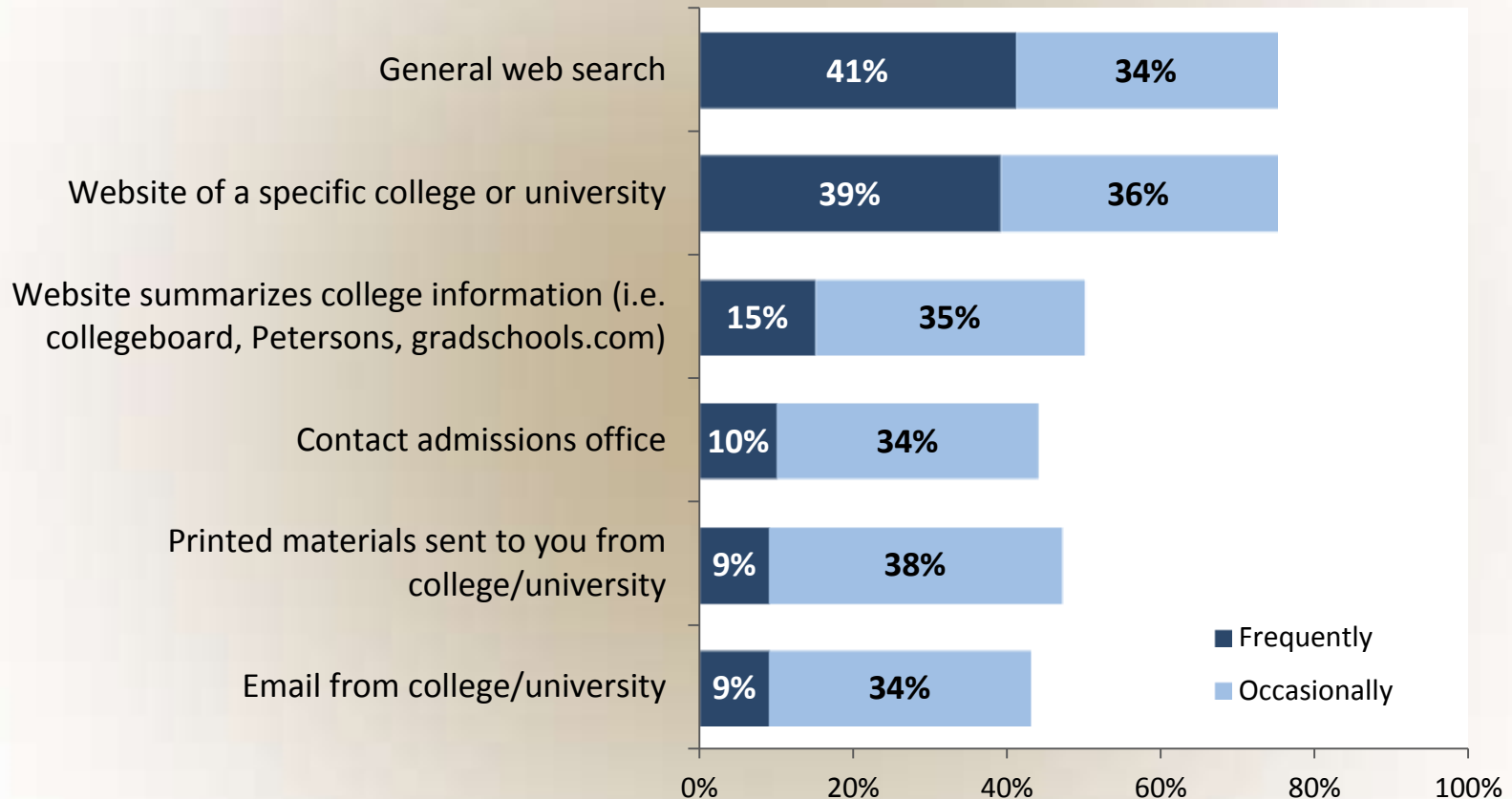
Services to Consider – Associate’s Degree Students

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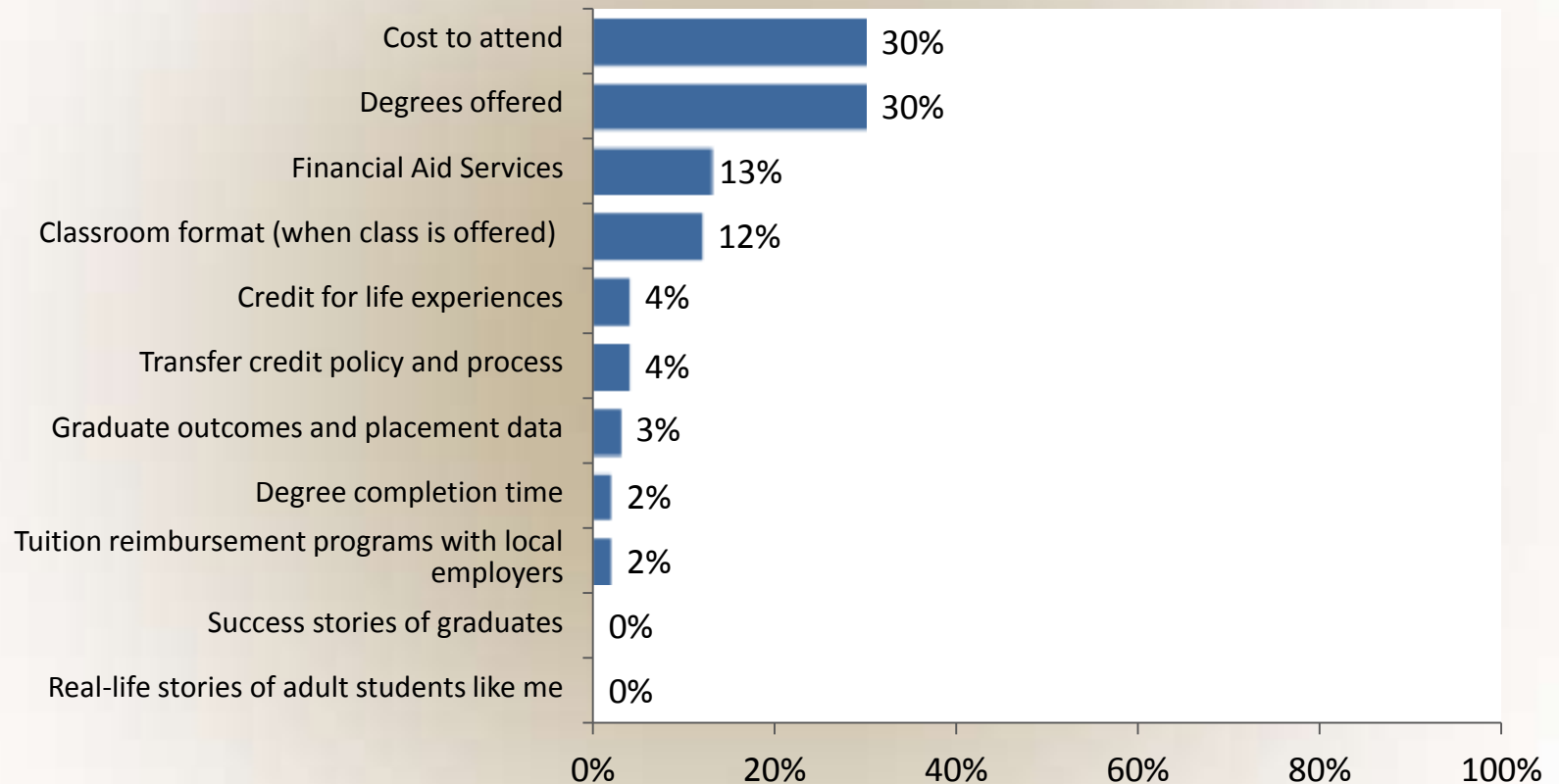
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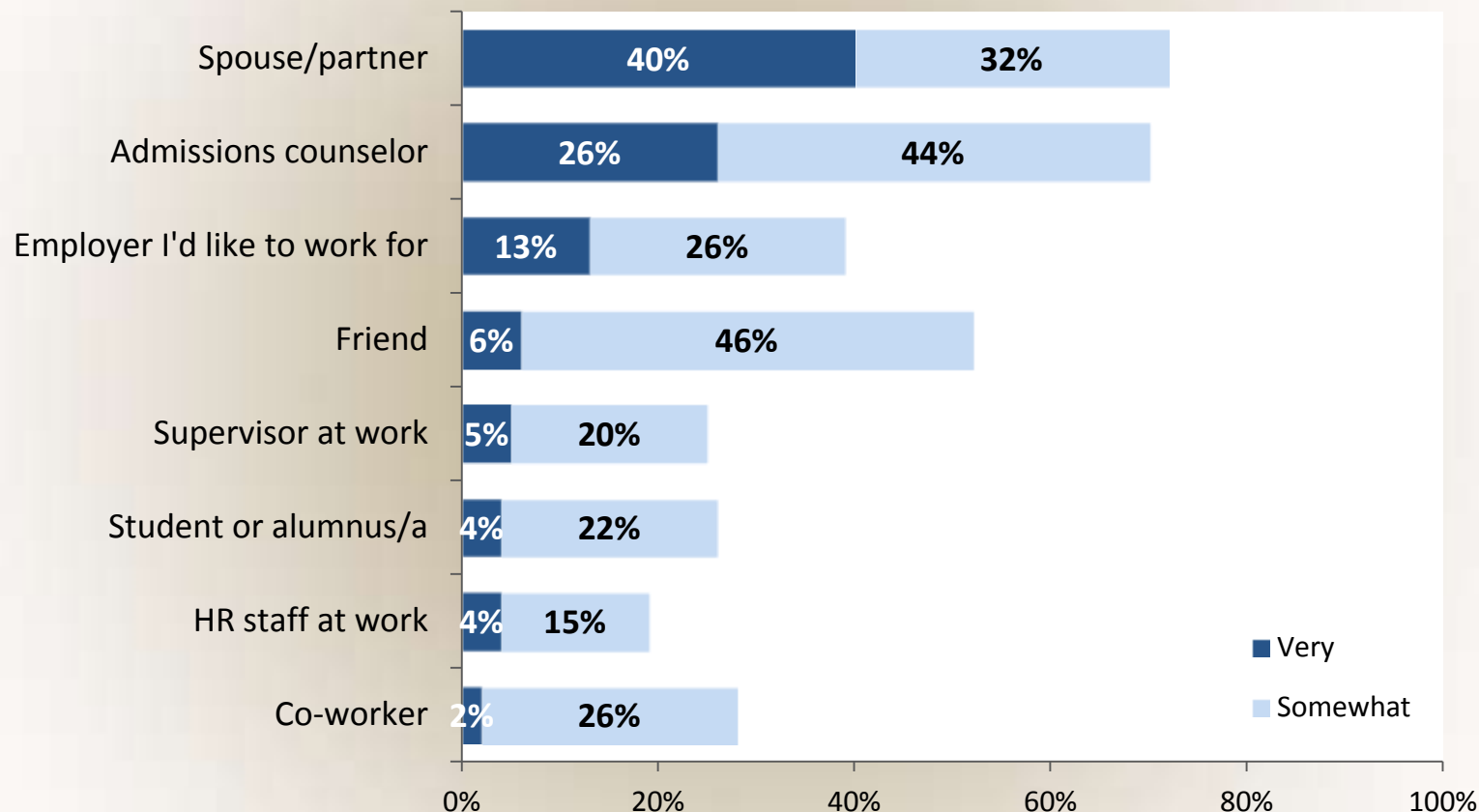
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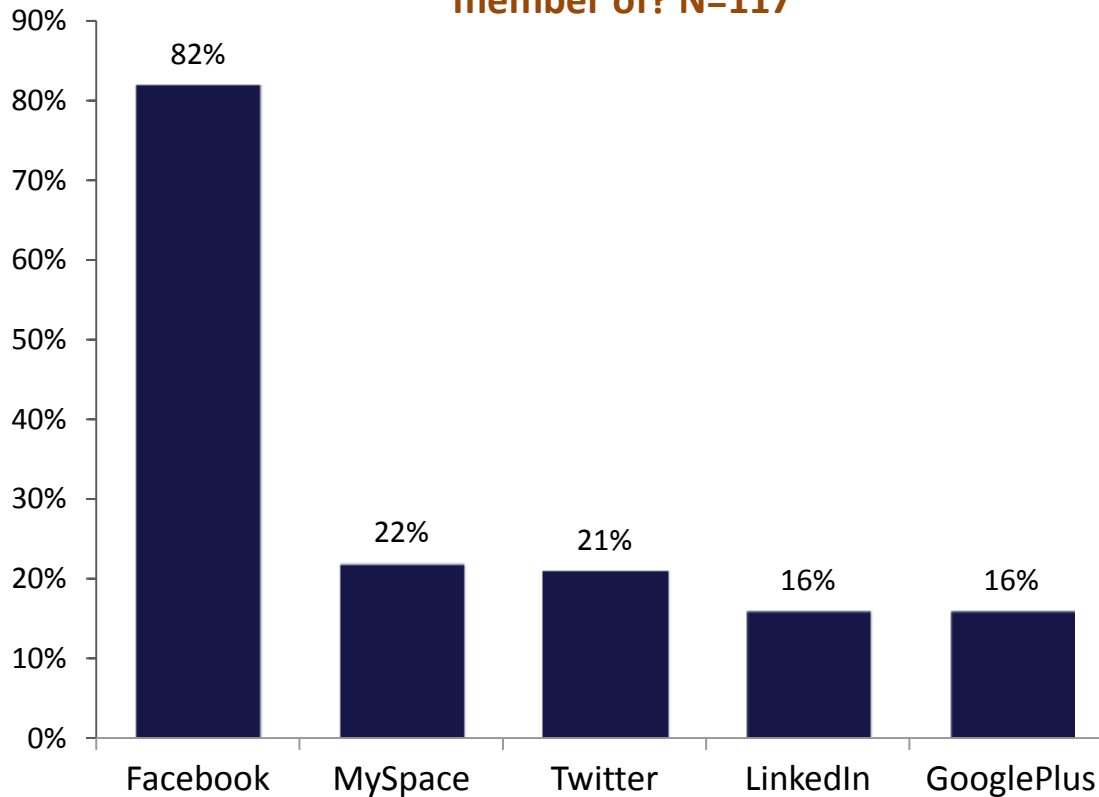
Influencers – Associate's Degree Students

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Social Media Use – Associate’s Degree Students

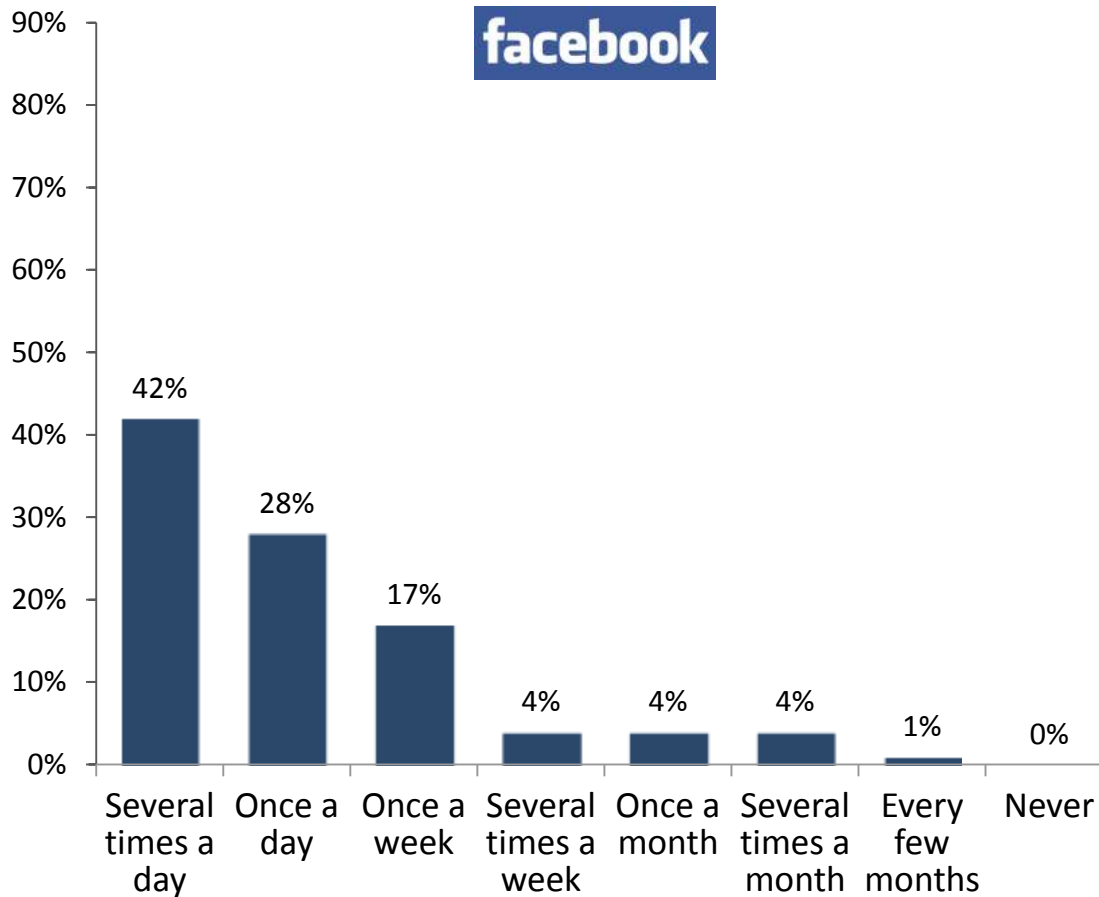
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Facebook Usage Frequency – Associate’s Degree Students

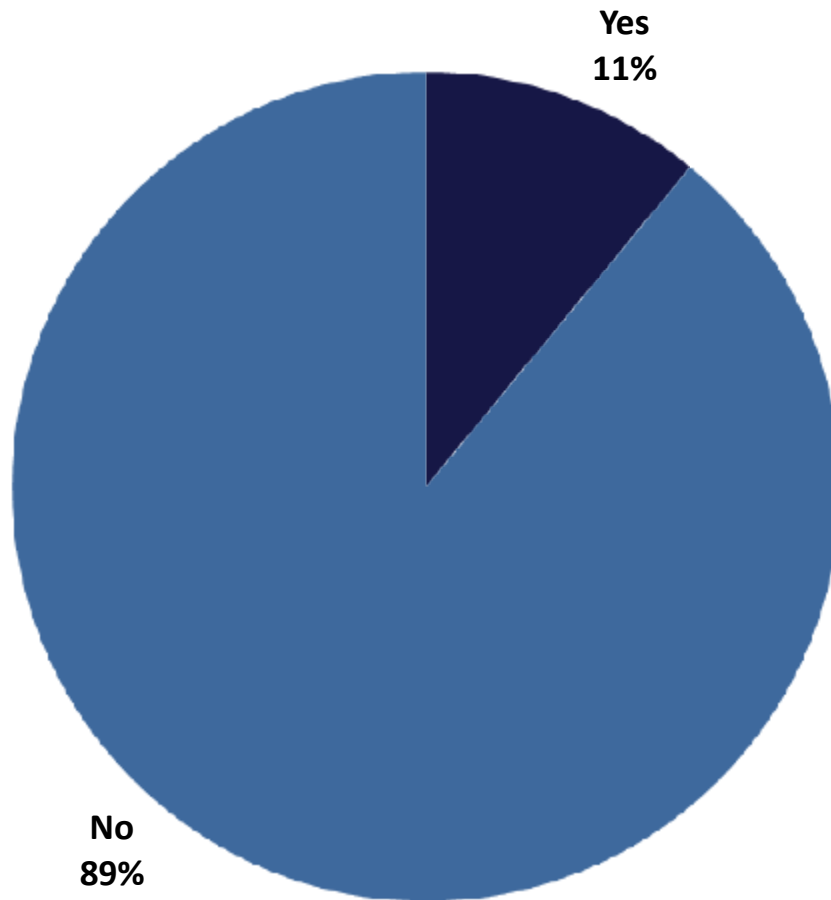
How often do you visit your profile? Base: Members. N=96



- The majority of associate’s degree seekers on Facebook are checking in at least once a day

Visited Facebook of College/University – Associate’s Degree Students

Have you ever visited the Facebook of a college or university you were interested in attending? N=117



- Among all adult students who took the survey, 16 percent had ever visited the Facebook page of a college or university they were interested in attending
- The answers from associate’s degree seekers do not significantly differ between those of certificate, bachelor’s, or graduate degree seekers