

# Preliminary Findings from a National Survey of Efforts to Improve Undergraduate Student Success and Retention



**BETSY BAREFOOT, EDD**  
**DREW KOCH, PHD**

**GARDNER INSTITUTE FOR EXCELLENCE IN  
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION**

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE  
FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE  
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# The Survey Instrument



- Developed and piloted in 2009-2010; administered in fall 2010
- Included 90 questions (with embedded branching) on seven areas of undergraduate education

Summer bridge programs

Pre-term orientation

Targeted seminars

Learning communities

Early warning/early alert systems

Service learning

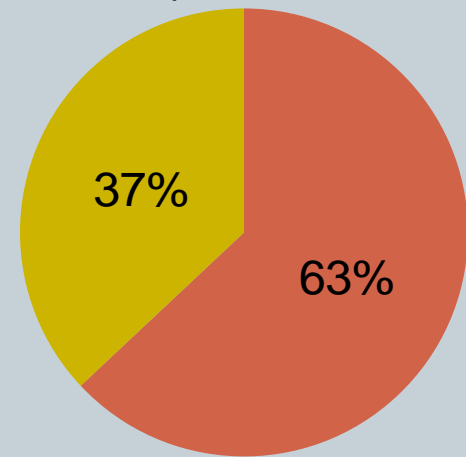
Undergraduate research

# Electronic Survey Specifics



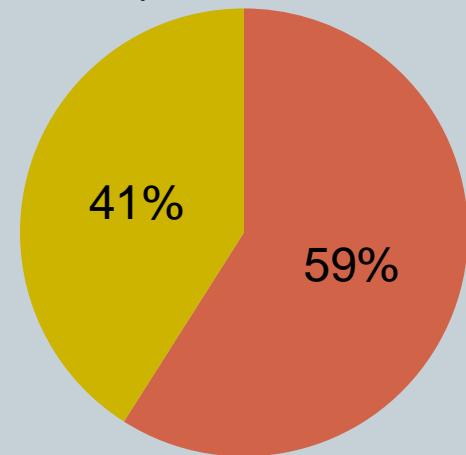
- Survey recipients population: 1373 Chief Academic Officers

Recipients' Profile



- Survey respondents: 527 (CAOs or their surrogates)

Respondents' Profile



- Response rate: 38.4%

# Survey Specifics



- Survey respondents were representative of all four-year institutions by size with one exception:
  - Institutions in the under-1,000-student category were under-represented in the response pool.
- High correlation between size and public/private status
- In this presentation, data reported by public/private status.

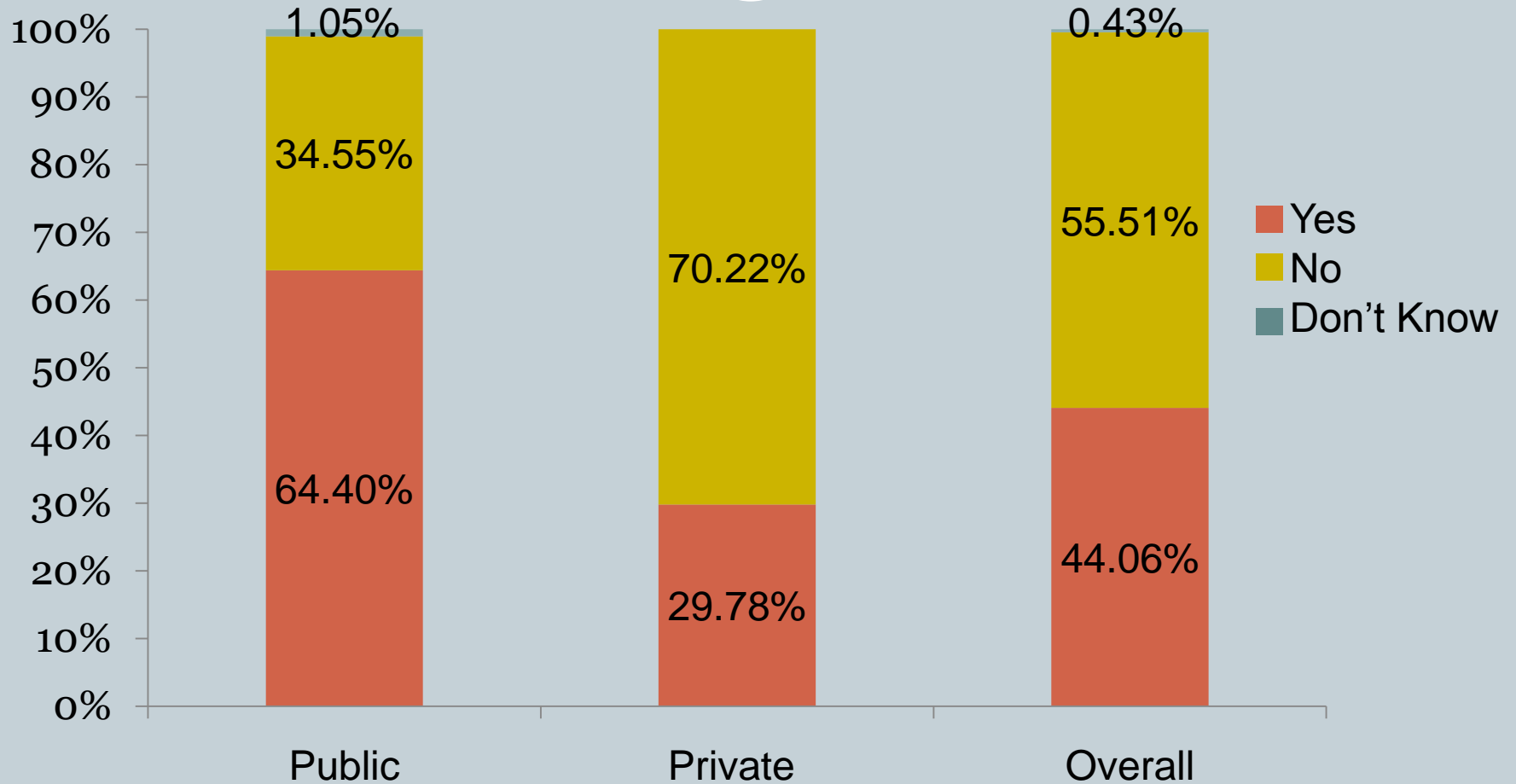
# Overall Pattern of Questions



- Existence of initiative at first- through senior-year level (as appropriate); student participation rates
- Requirements or options for participation
- Characteristics of initiatives
- Goals
- Research-based outcomes
- Perception of cost-effectiveness

<http://www.jngi.org/uploads/File/EnhancingStudentSuccessandRetentionSurveyInstrument.pdf>

# Area 1: Summer Bridge Programs



*Chi-square: 59.08; p-value 0.00*

# Students Required to Participate in Summer Bridge



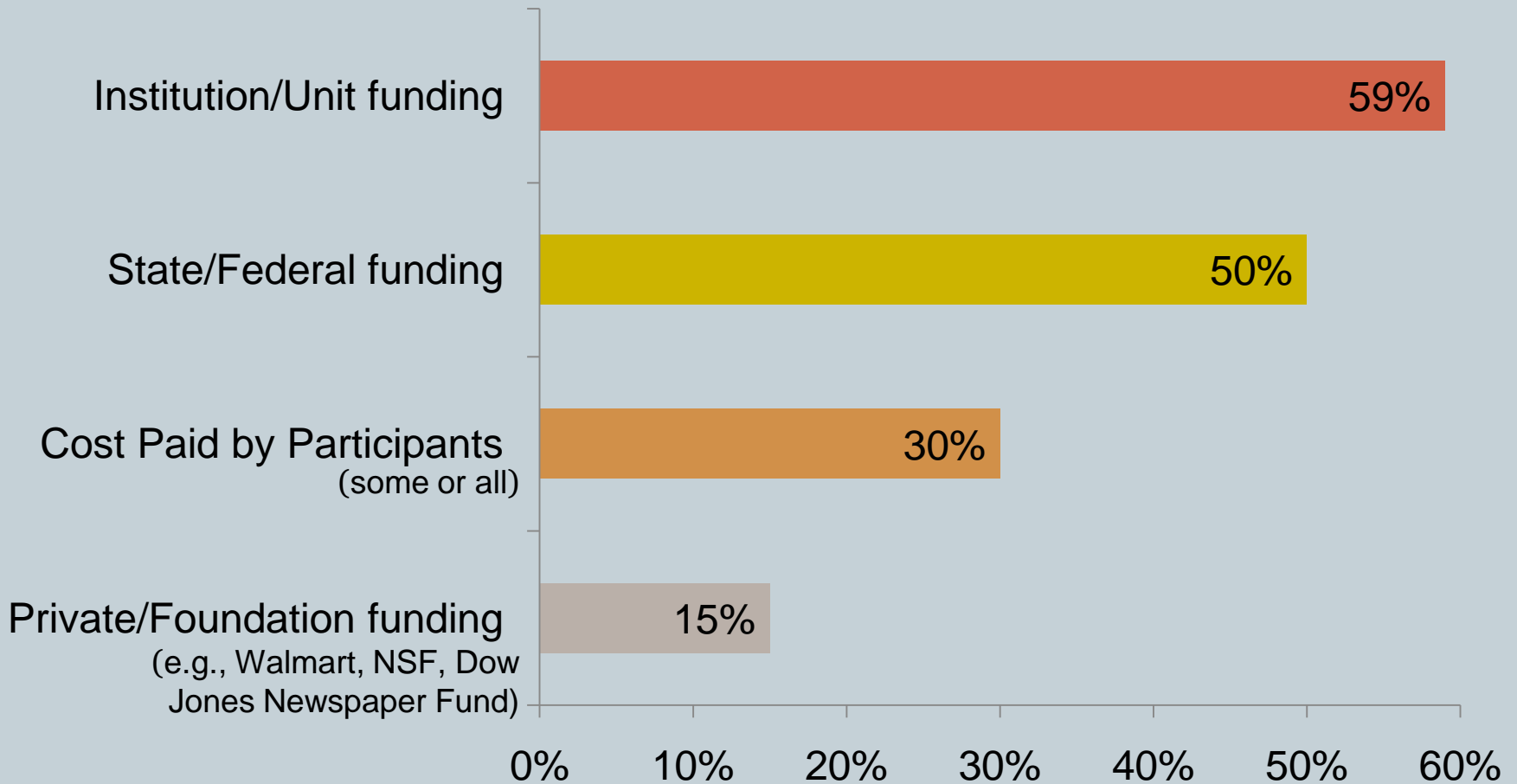
Types of Students	% of All Respondents
Provisionally-admitted students	48%
Students eligible for EOP programs	38%
Developmental students	36%
<p>“Others”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>“Students new to American sign language”</li><li>Scholarship recipients</li><li>First-generation students</li></ul>	

# Students Who Can Participate in Summer Bridge (but are not required to do so)

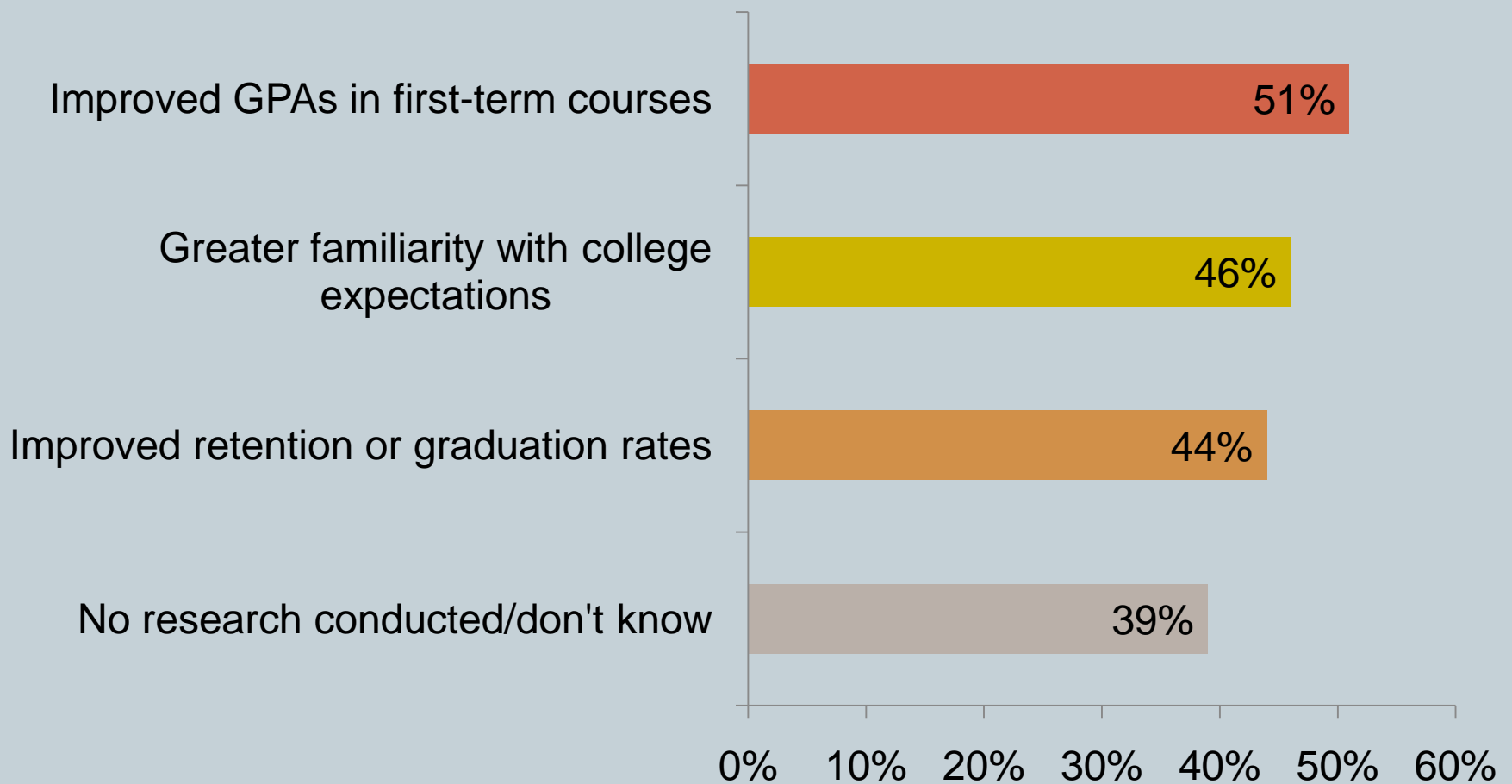


Types of Students	% of All Respondents
Students eligible for state/federal EOP programs	30%
All students	29%
STEM Students	24%
“Others” Cadets entering a military program High school students (to attract them to the institution) Students in certain majors (engineering, agriculture)	

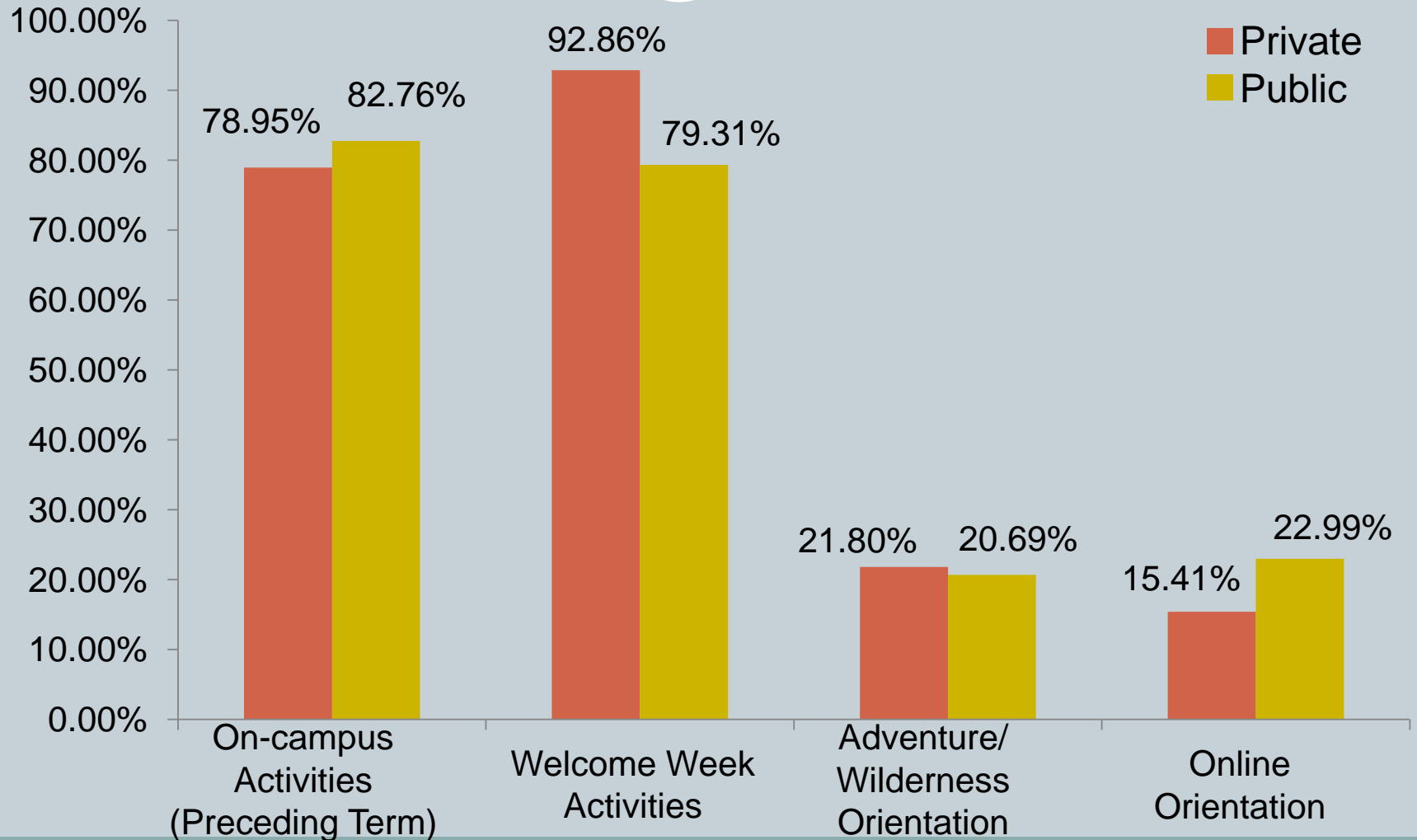
# Summer Bridge Funding



# Selected Outcomes of Summer Bridge Programs

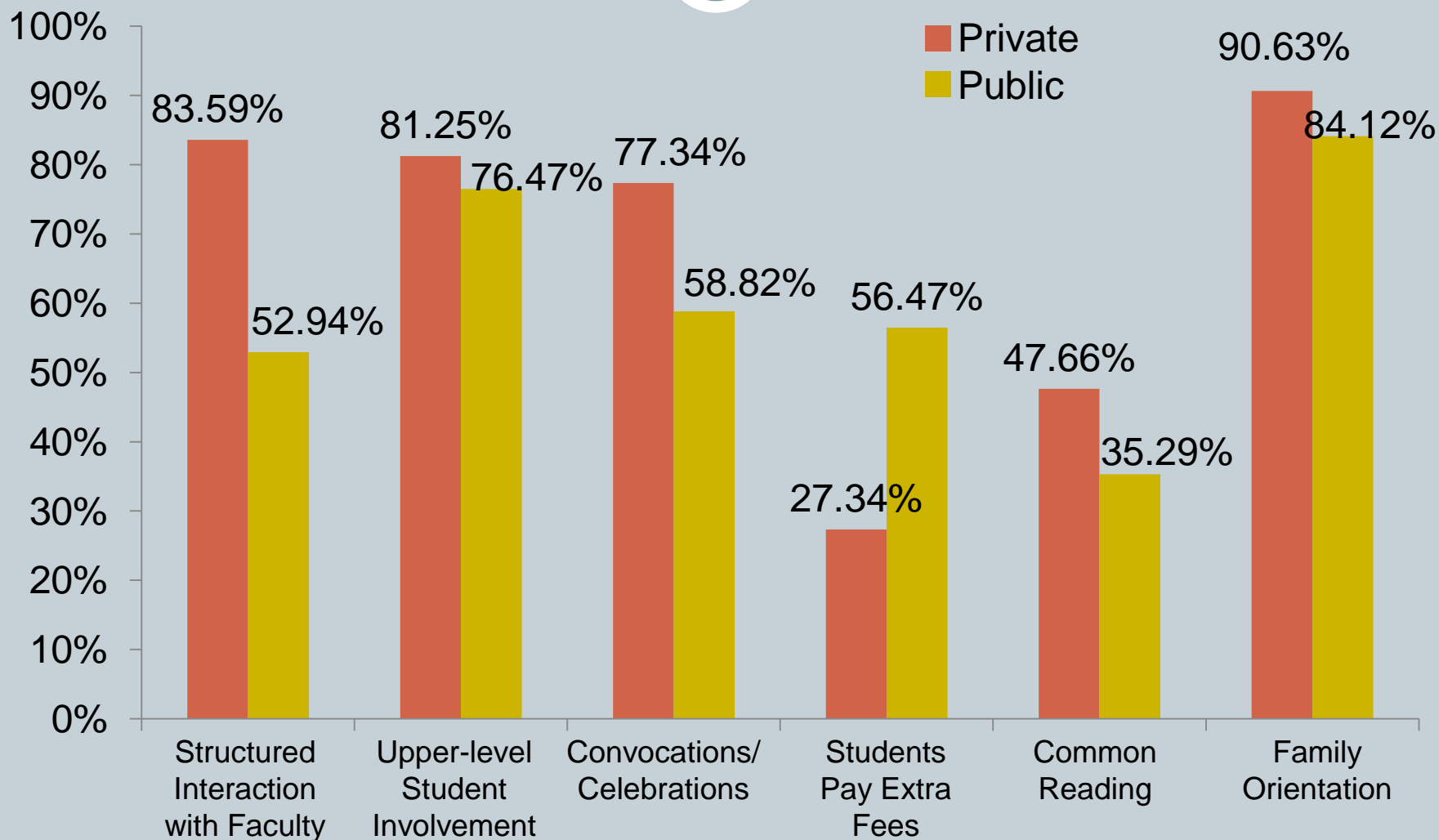


# Area 2: Pre-term Orientation



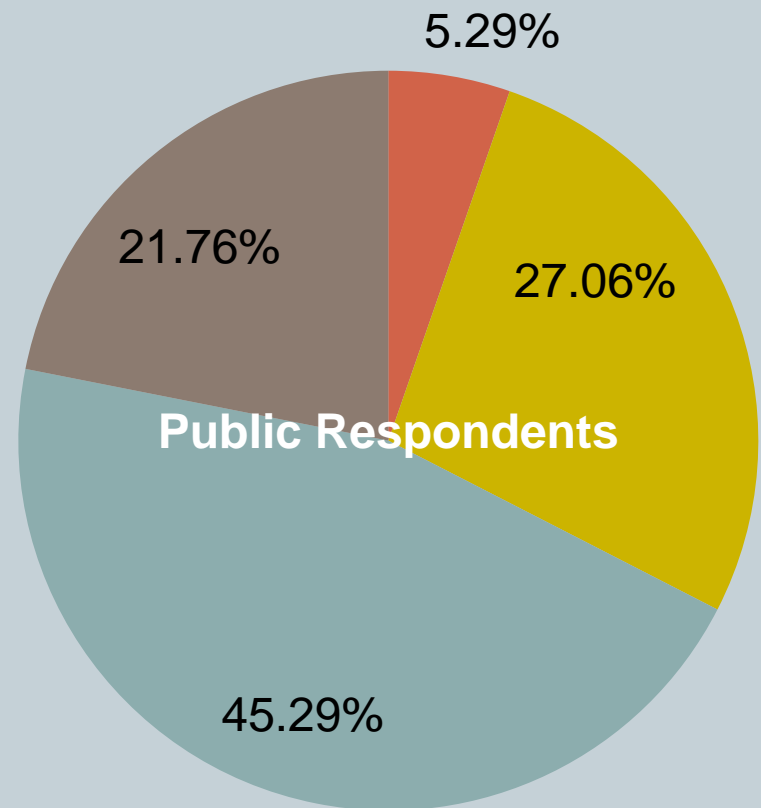
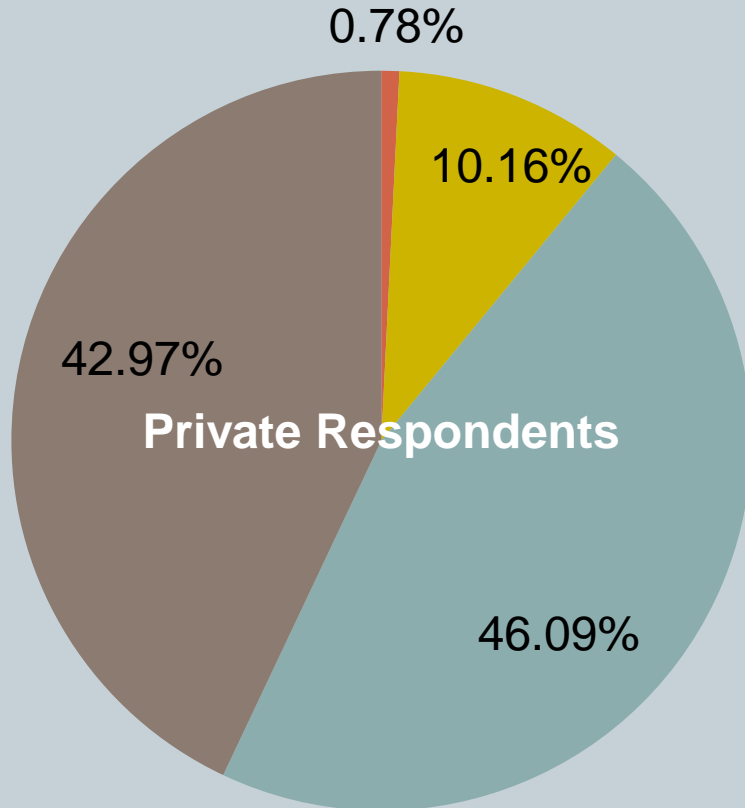
Other: spiritual retreats, service activities, dinner cruise/dance on the Ohio River

# Activities in Orientation



*Chi-square: 75.84; p value 0.00*

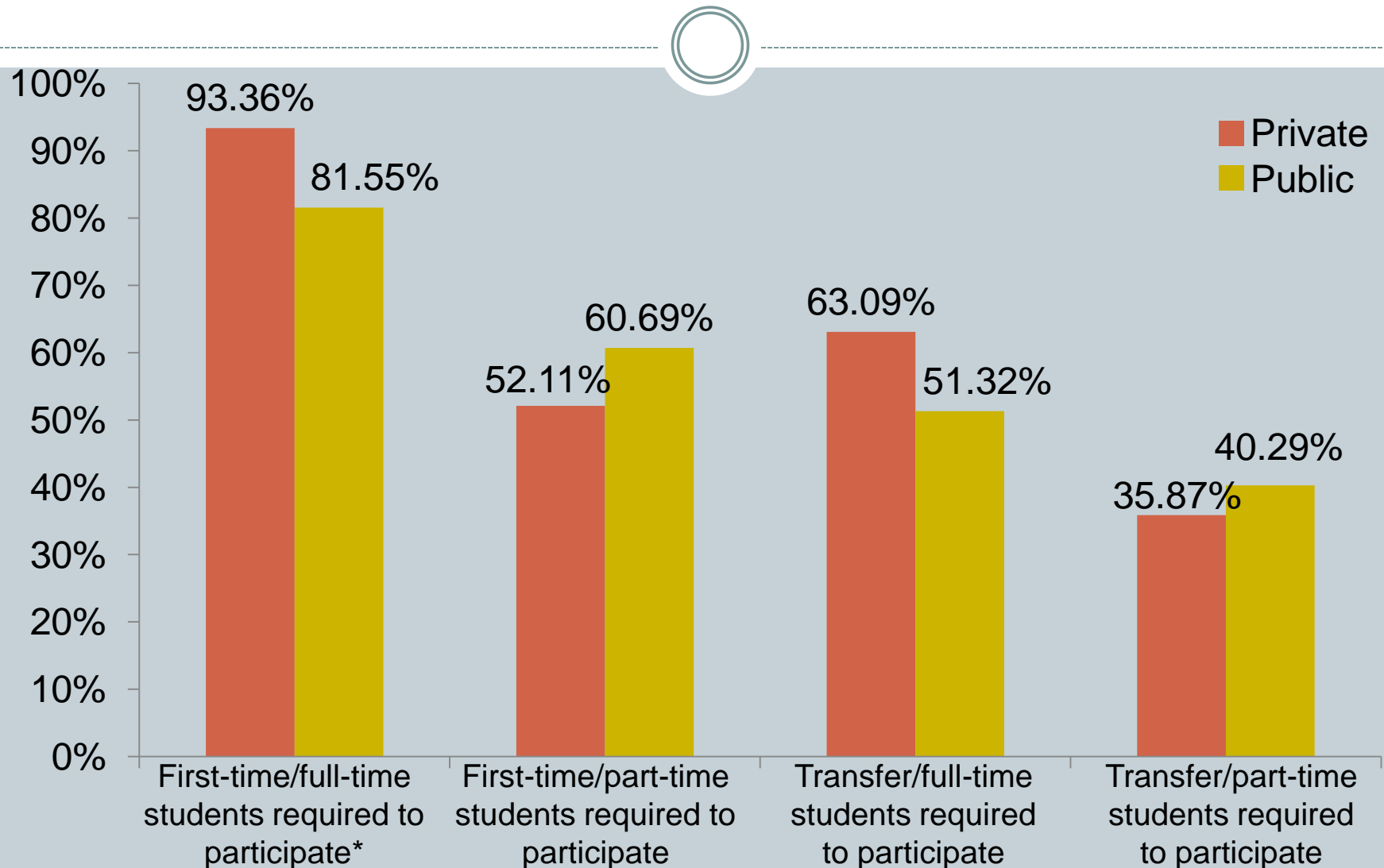
# Combined Length of Orientation Activities



Less than 4 hours    4-8 hours    2 to 3 days    More than 3 days

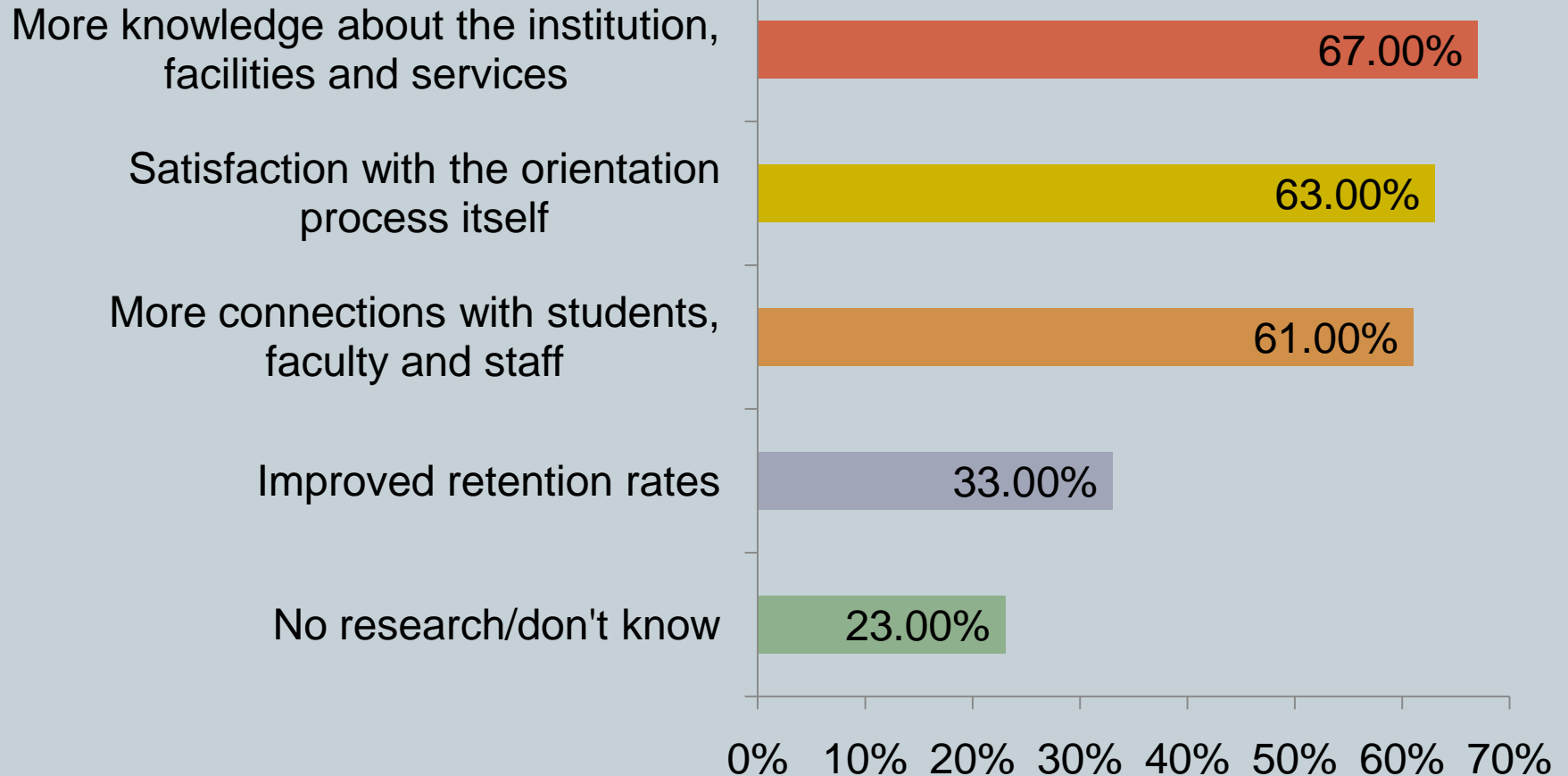
*Chi-square: 40.16; p value 0.00*

# Required Orientation



\*Chi-square: 15.65; p value 0.00

# Selected Outcomes of Orientation

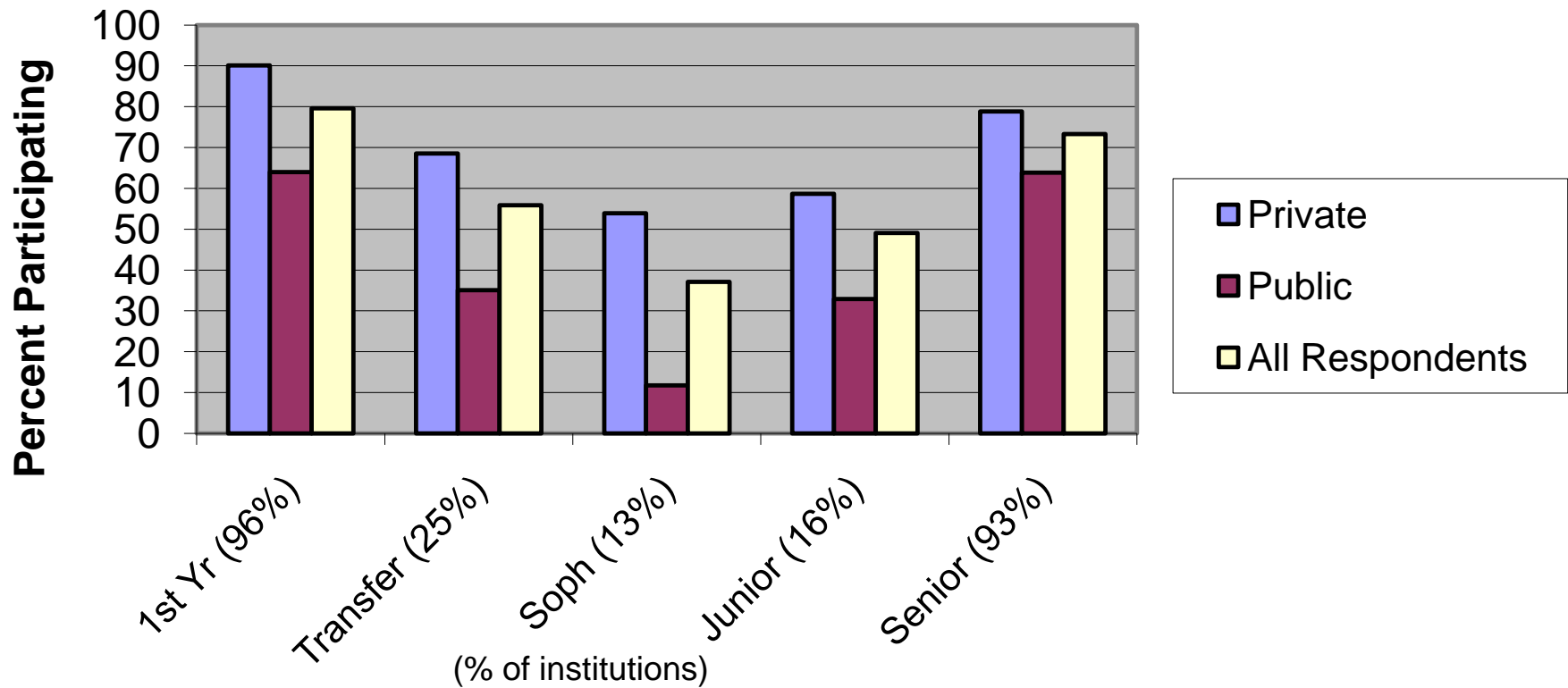


# Area 3: Academic/Transition Seminars

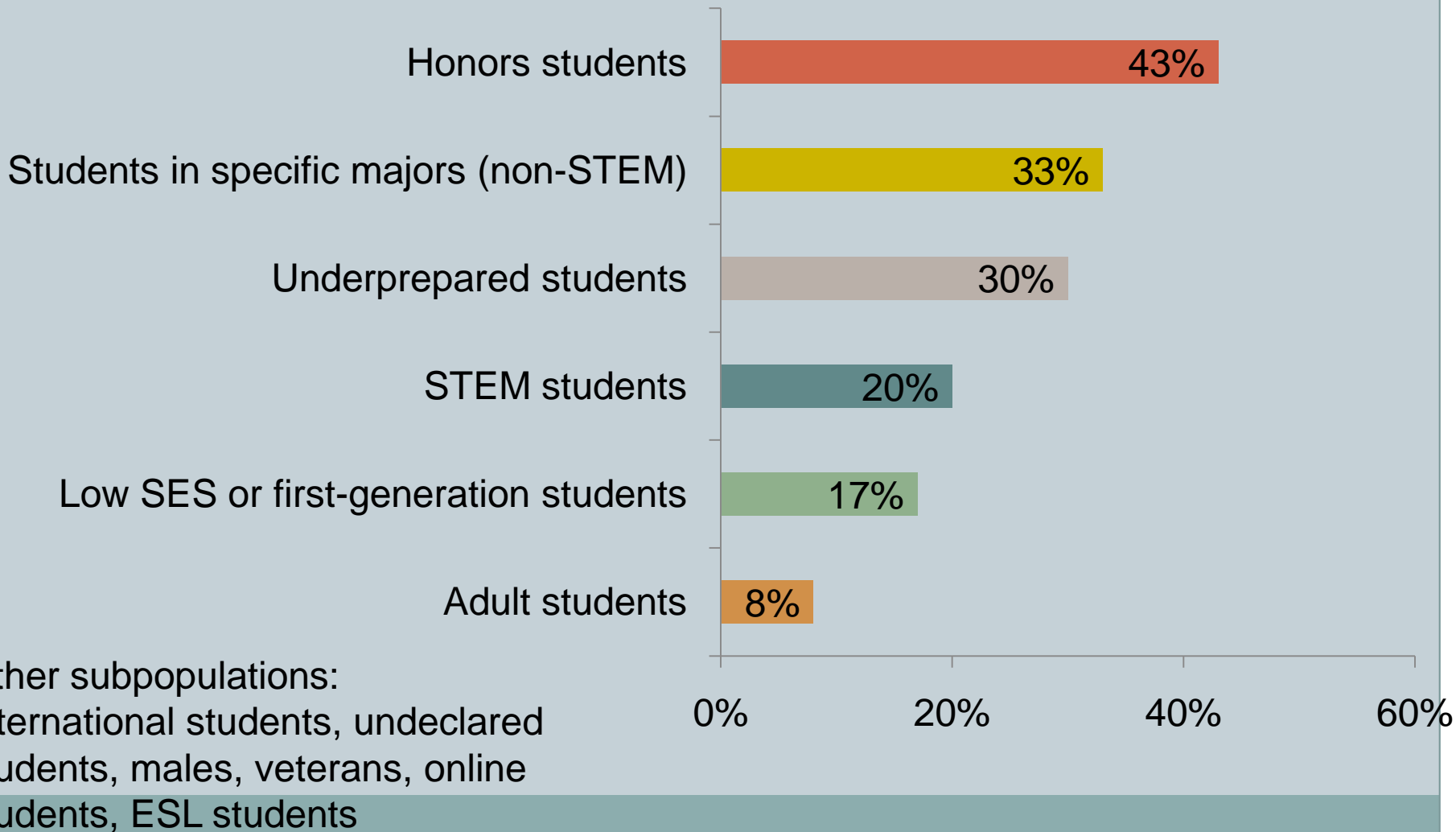


Seminar level	% of Private Respondents	% of Public Respondents	% of All Respondents
First-year seminars	97.25%	95.39%	96.49%
Transfer seminars	27.85%	21.71%	25.34%
Sophomore seminars	14.35%	11.84%	13.32%
Junior seminars	16.67%	14.09%	15.62%
Senior seminars	93.52%	91.28%	92.60%

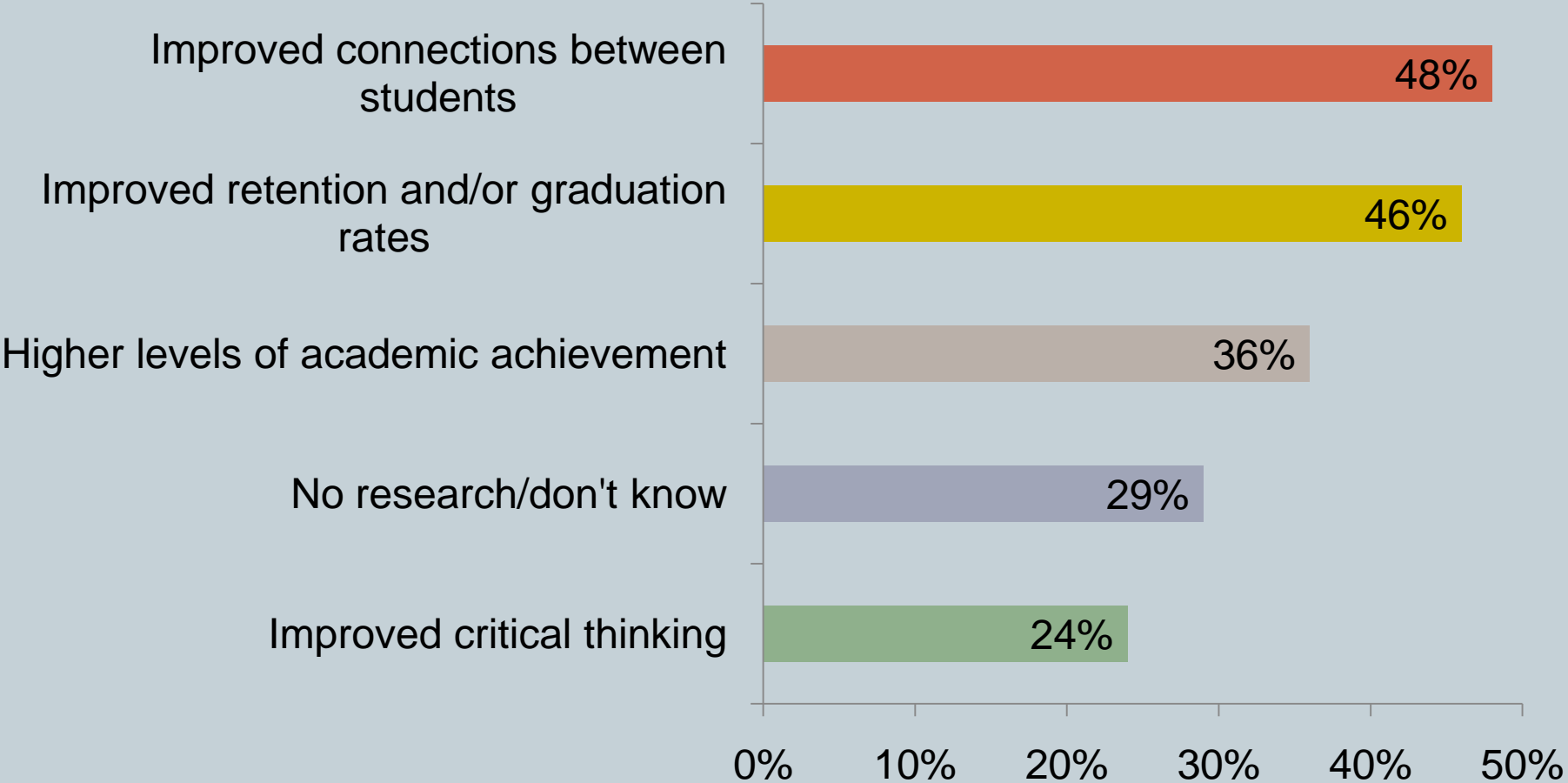
# Average Student Participation in Academic/Transition Seminars



# First-Year Seminars for Student Subpopulations



# Selected First-Year Seminar Outcomes



# Sophomore Seminars



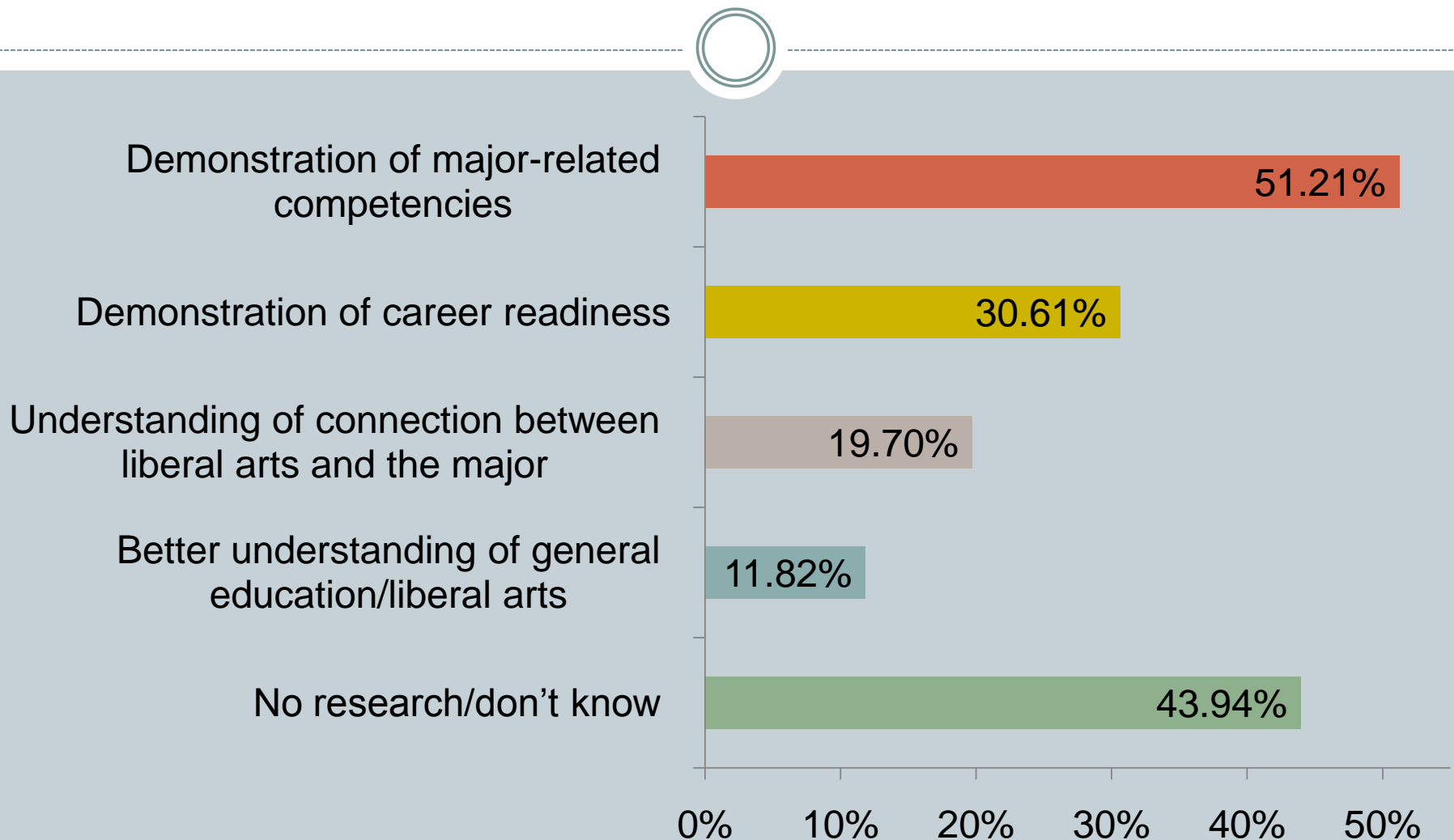
- Wide variety of course types
  - Some “owned” by the institution, some by departments
- Sample descriptions
  - Disciplinary methodology
  - American issues
  - Academic major/career selection
  - Research opportunities/graduate school preparation
  - Leadership
  - Culture and diversity
  - Engaged citizenship
  - Honors

# Junior Seminars



- Sample descriptions
  - Honors courses
  - Extensive writing courses
  - Research methodology
  - Interdisciplinary focus
  - Problem-based course
  - Resume building
  - Critical thinking
  - Linking academic major and career preparation
  - Capstone for general education requirements

# Selected Senior Seminar Outcomes – Goals

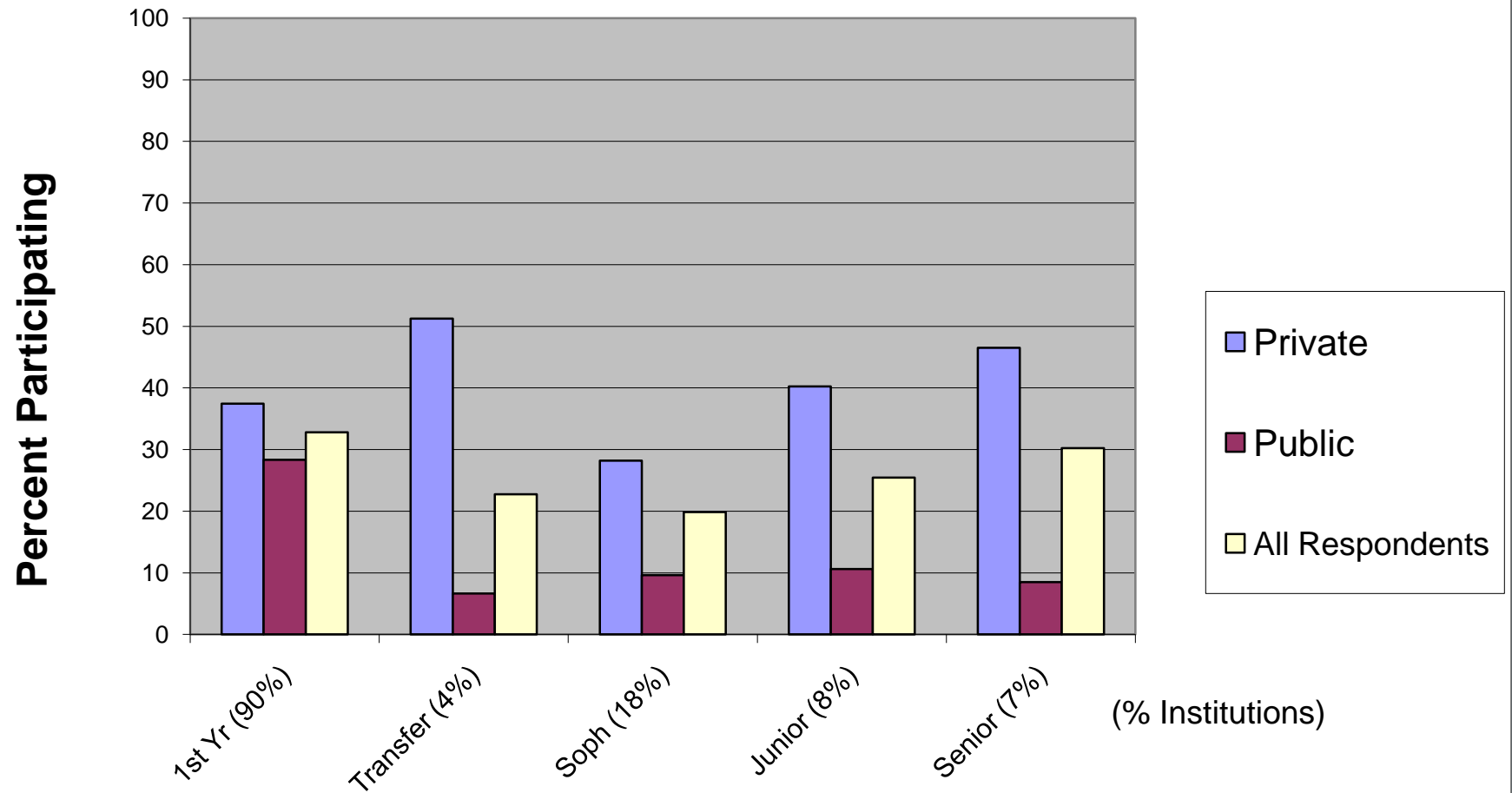


# Area 4: Learning Communities



<b>Learning Community Level</b>	<b>% of Private Respondents</b>	<b>% of Public Respondents</b>	<b>% of All Respondents</b>
First-year learning communities	84.96%	95.12%	90.25%
Transfer learning communities	3.54%	4.88%	4.24%
Sophomore learning communities	19.64%	17.21%	18.38%
Junior learning communities	8.04%	7.38%	7.69%
Senior learning communities	8.04%	6.67%	7.33%

# Average Student Participation in Learning Communities



# Selected Characteristics of First-Year Learning Communities



Characteristics	% of All Respondents
Students are co-enrolled/faculty work closely together	60%
Students are co-enrolled/faculty have limited interaction	30%
Student affairs professionals are involved	48%
Learning communities connected to residential living	56%
Each learning community has a common intellectual theme	52%
One of the courses is a first-year seminar	58%
Other Characteristics: Embedded librarian	Learning community takes place in Ireland.

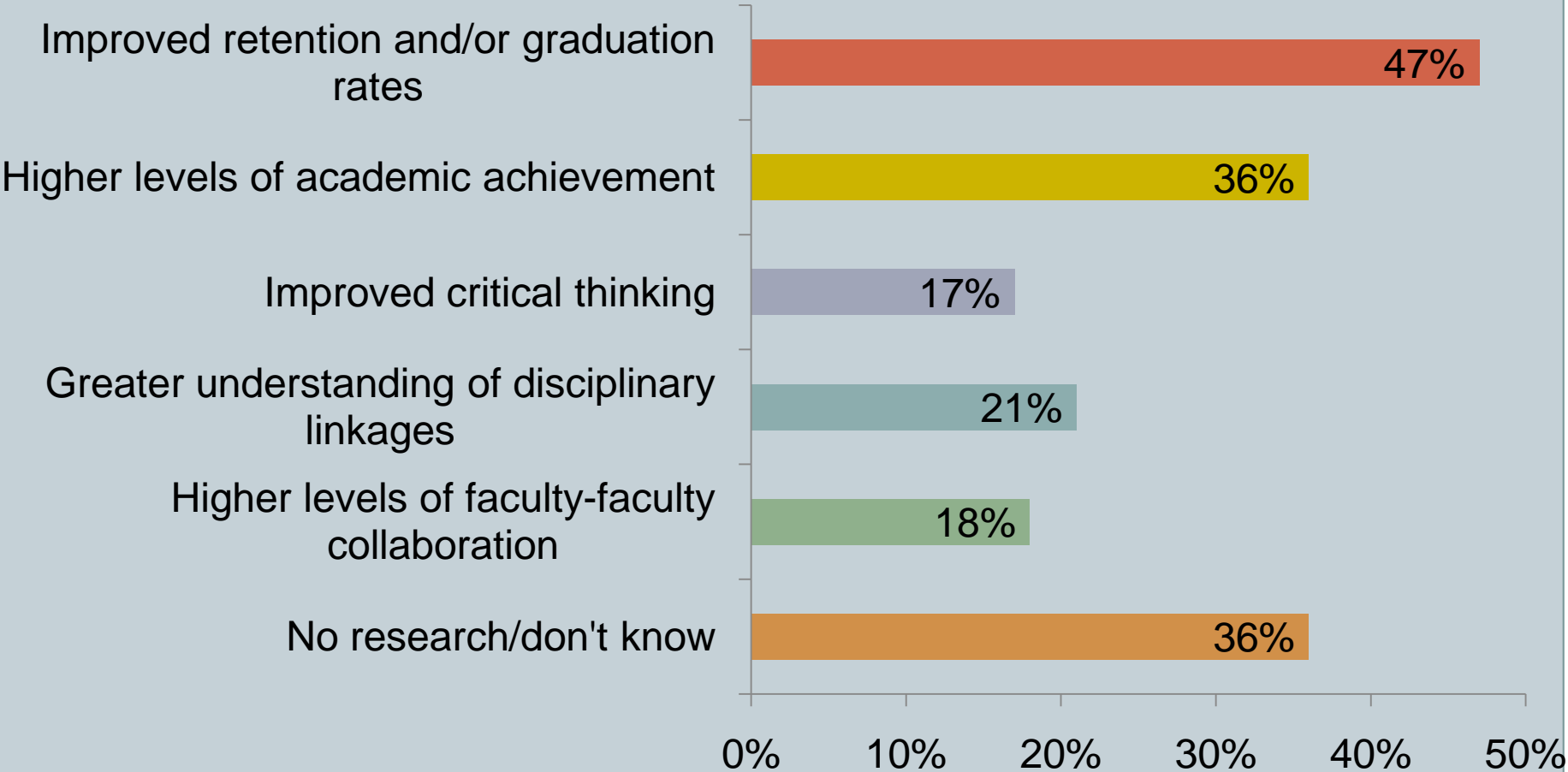
# Learning Communities for Student Sub-Populations



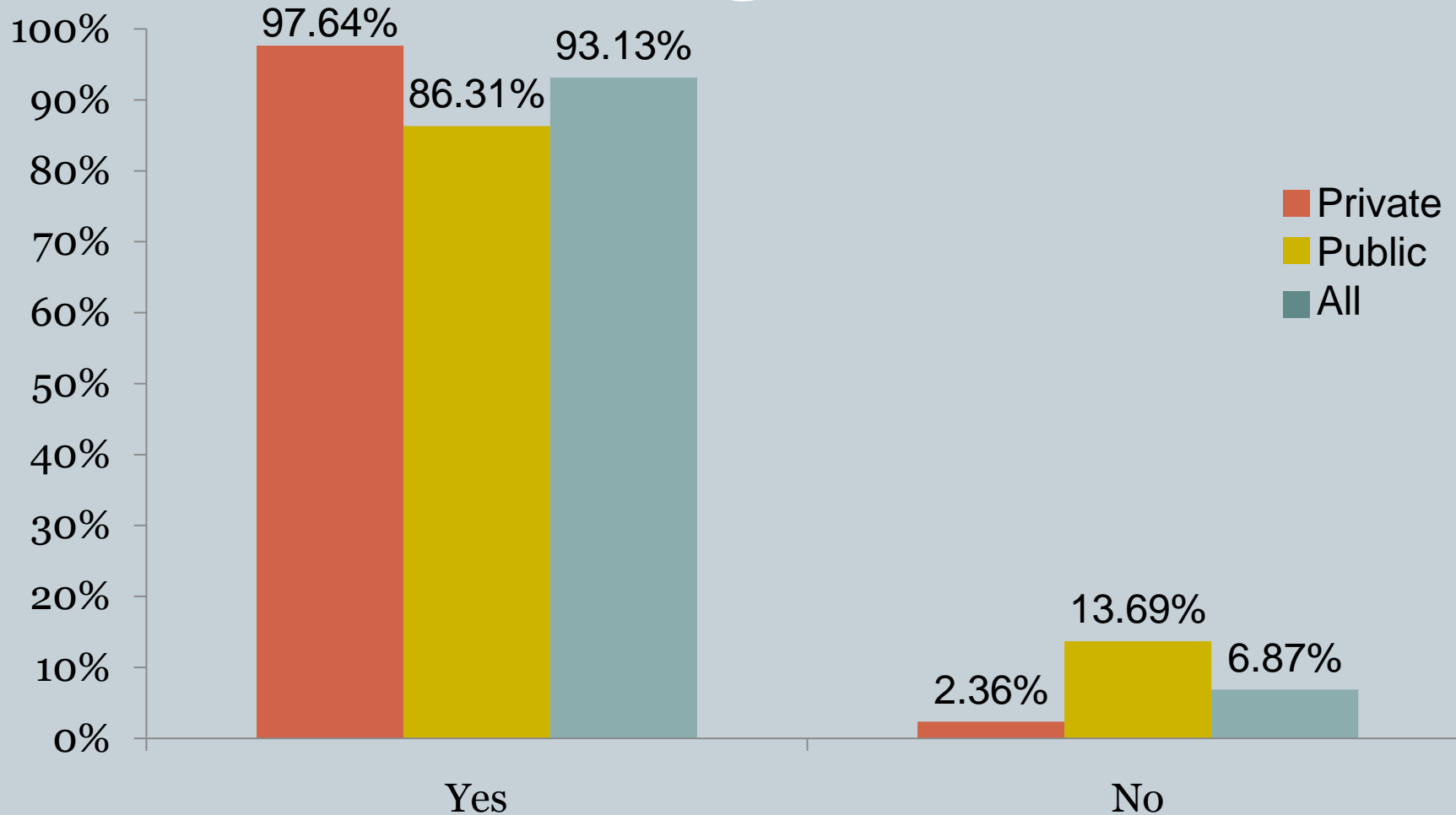
*Chi-square: 31.29, p value 0.00*

Subpopulations	% of Private Respondents	% of Public Respondents	% of All Respondents
Honors students	44.04%	56.67%	50.66%
Developmental/ remedial students	20.18%	35.00%	27.95%
ESL students	8.26%	8.33%	8.30%
STEM students	11.93%	35.00%	24.02%
No learning comm. for sub-populations	33.94%	13.33%	23.14%
Other subpopulations: Appalachian students Certain majors	Single mothers Women in science	International students First-generation students	

# Select Learning Community Outcomes



# Area 5: Early Warning/Academic Alert Systems



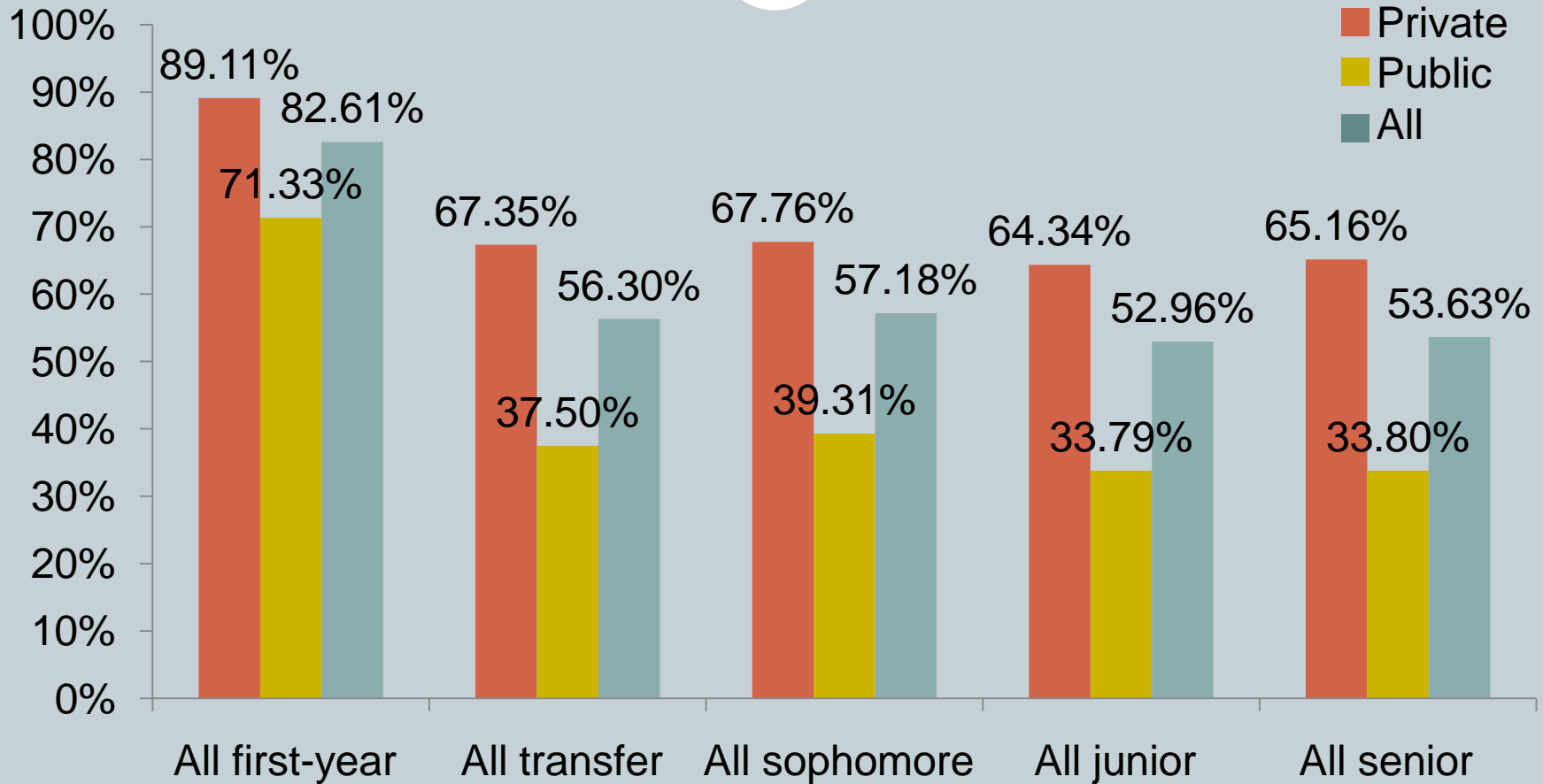
*Chi-square: 20.28 , p value 0.00*

# Selected Characteristics of Early Warning Systems



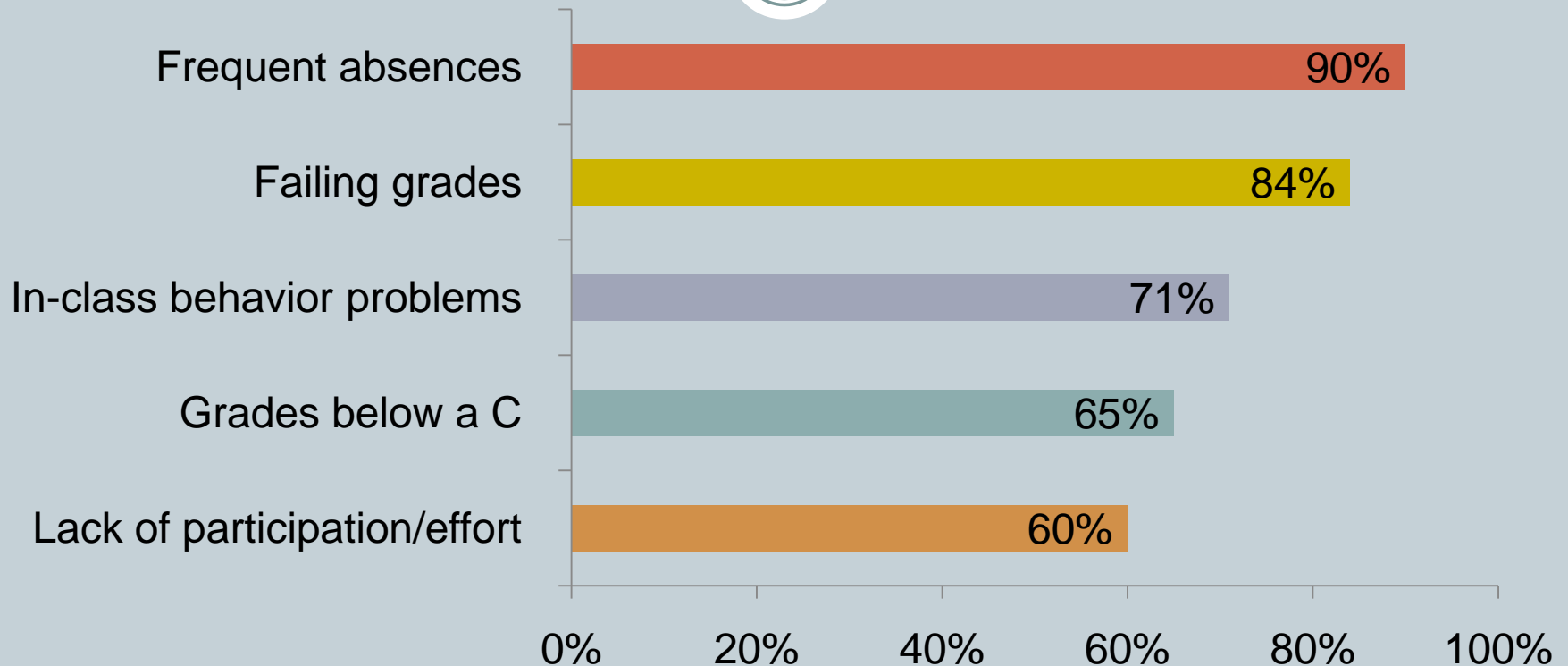
Characteristics	% of All Respondents
Institutional monitoring ongoing throughout the term	70%
Institutional monitoring only before or at midterm	18%
Students contacted by phone, letter, or electronically	91%
Students contacted face to face	61%
Students contacted within residence halls	39%
Students' families are notified (with waiver of privacy rights)	17%
Students are required to obtain assistance	39%

# Institutions that Monitor **All** Students by Year of Enrollment?



*When only “some” students are monitored, the most likely candidates are athletes, provisional/developmental/EOP students, some scholarship students, students in “gateway” courses.*

# Behaviors that Trigger Early Warning Action



## Other behaviors:

Out-of-class behavioral problems  
Health issues  
Releasing FAFSA to another school  
Talk of transferring

Residence hall behavior  
Non-attendance in chapel  
Being cut from an athletic team

# Selected Employees Involved in Early Warning



Employees	% of All Respondents
Academic advisors	89%
Faculty/instructors	89%
Athletic Department staff	74%
Residence hall staff	52%
Upper-level students (peer mentors)	27%
EOP staff	23%

## Other employees:

Vice presidents of academic  
and student affairs

Financial aid officer

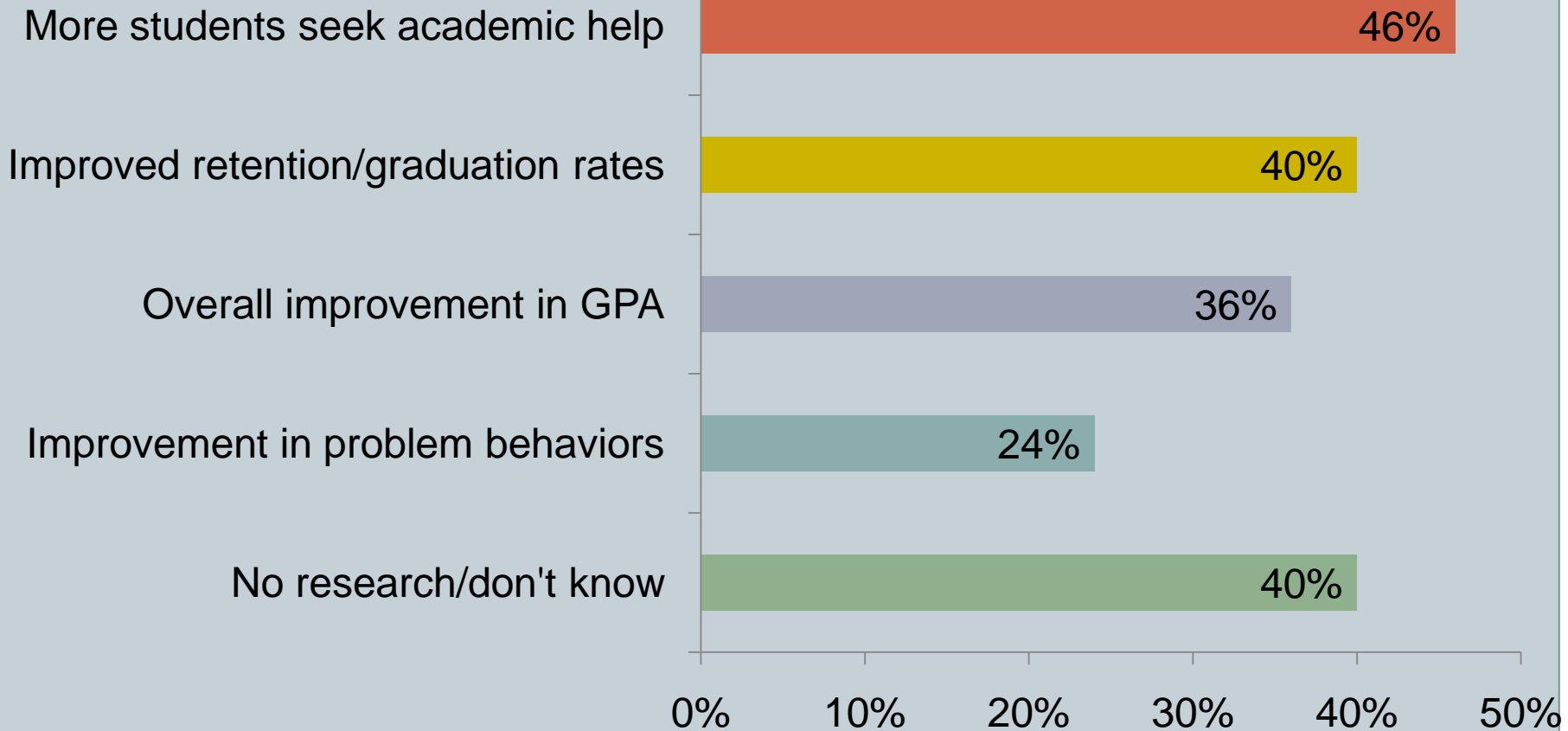
Campus ministries staff

Director of safety and security

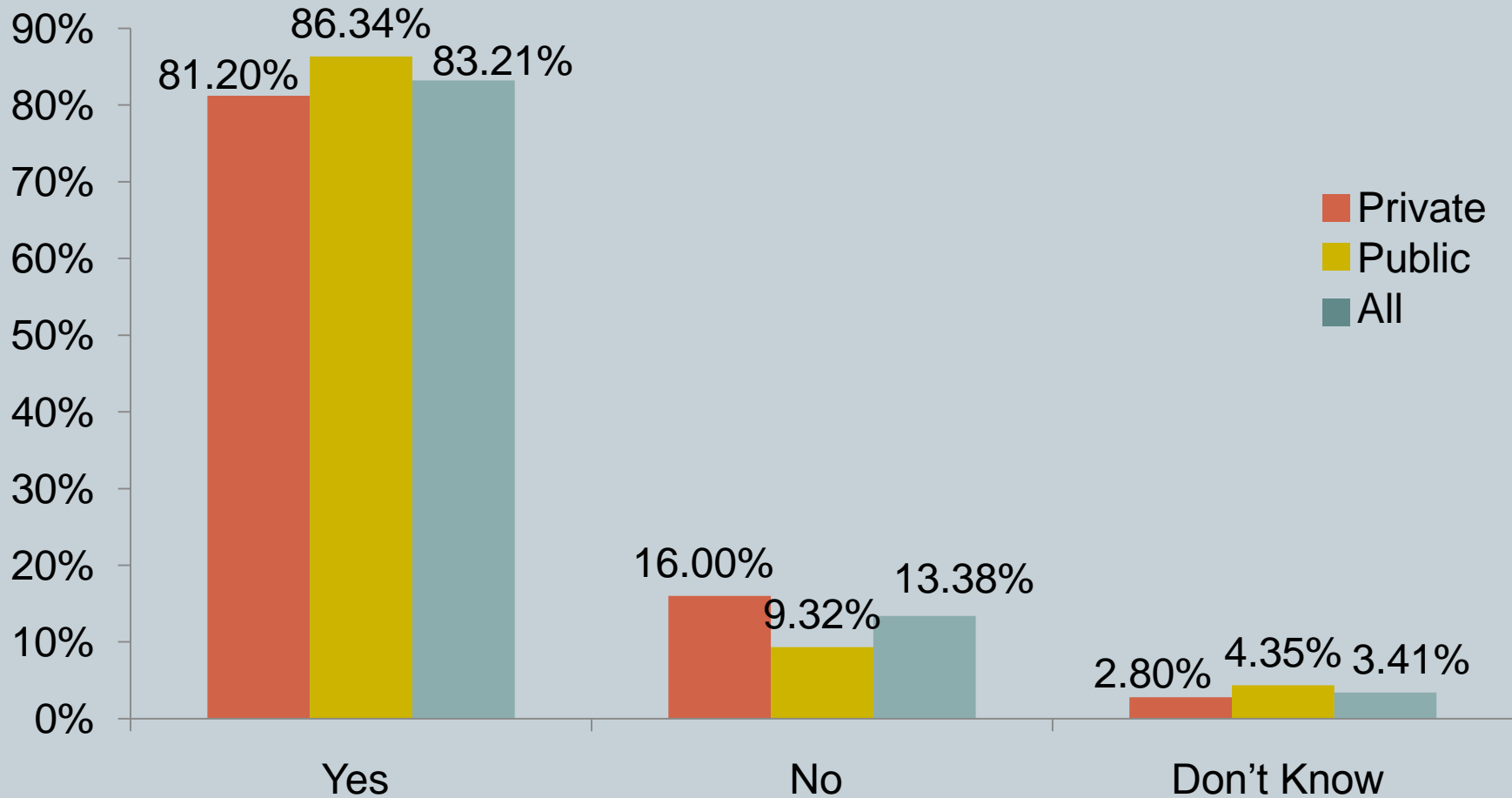
Student employment officer

Oversight committee

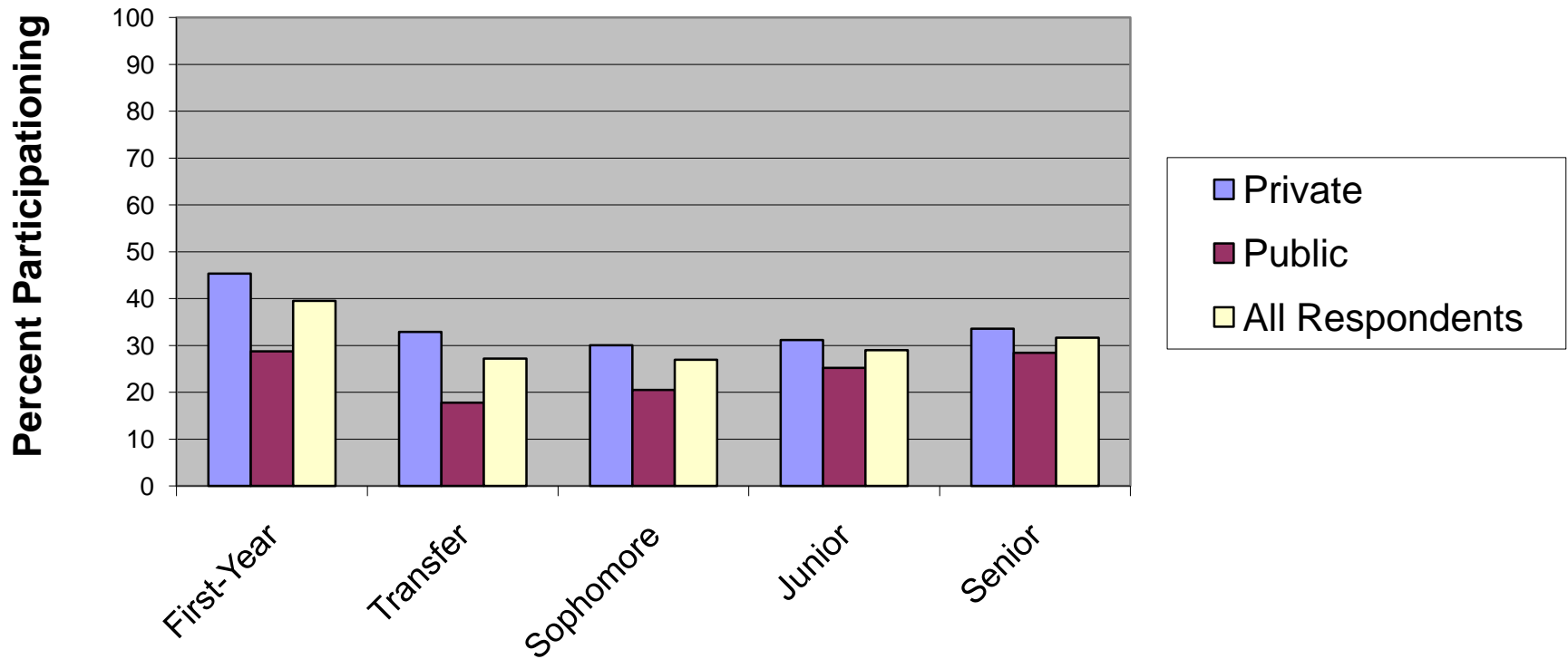
# Early Warning Outcomes



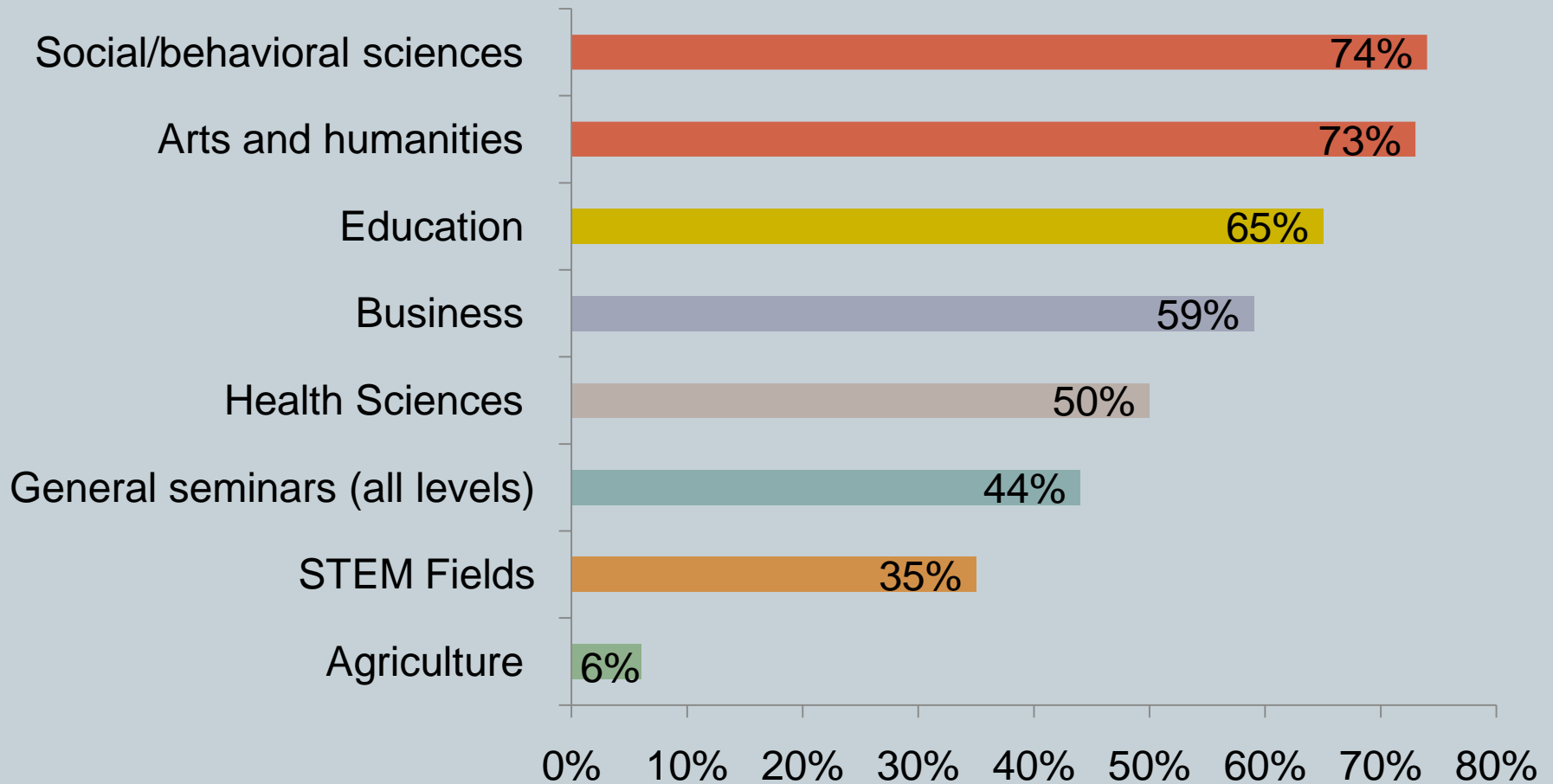
# Area 6: Service Learning



# Average Student Participation in Service Learning



# Academic Areas for Service Learning

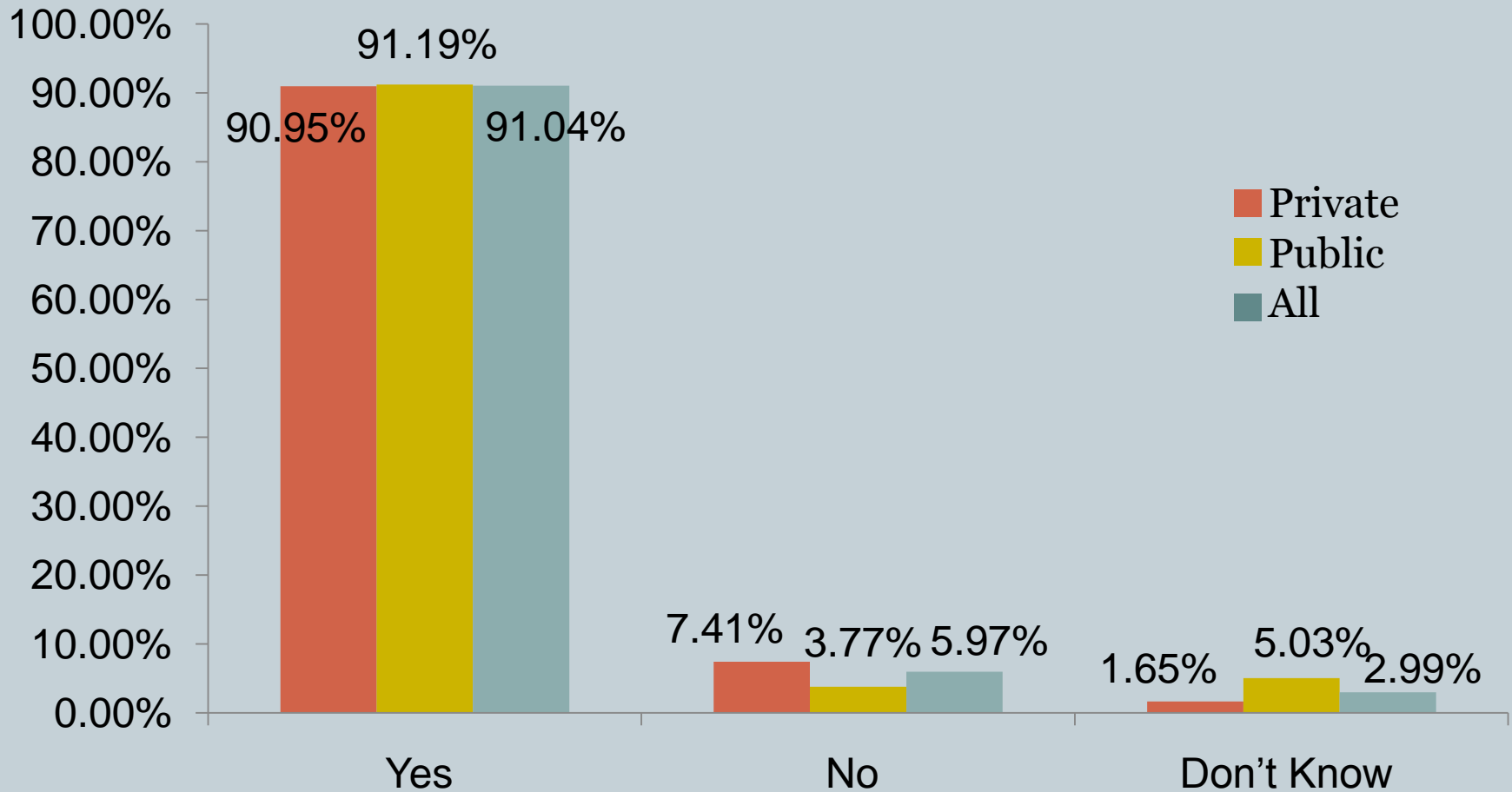


# Service Learning Outcomes

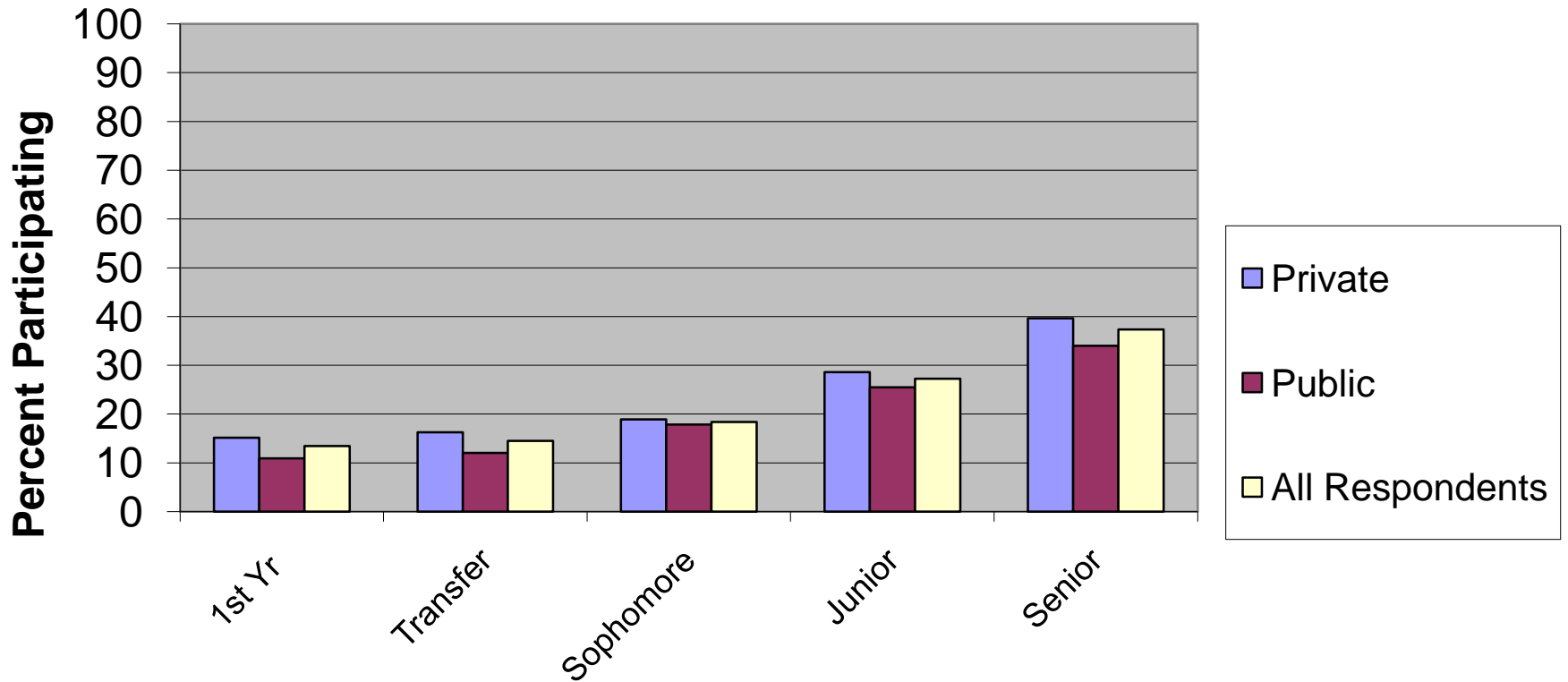


Reported Outcomes	% of All Respondents
Increased civic awareness	32%
Improved ability to see the connection of the discipline to real-world situations	30%
Increase level of service to community	29%
Increased awareness of diversity issues	23%
Increased camaraderie	20%
Improved retention/graduation rates	13%
No research/don't know	36%

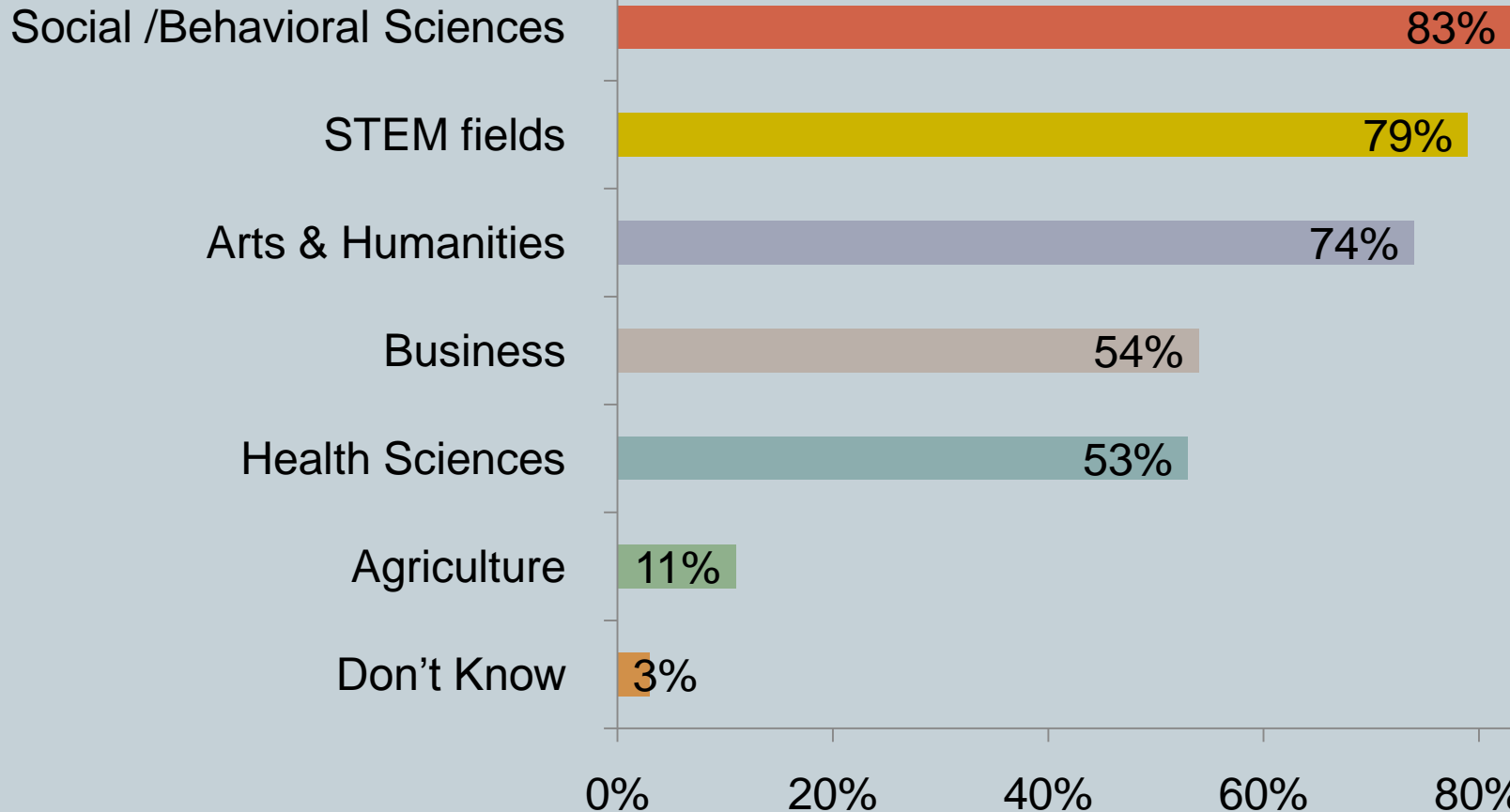
# Area 7: Undergraduate Research



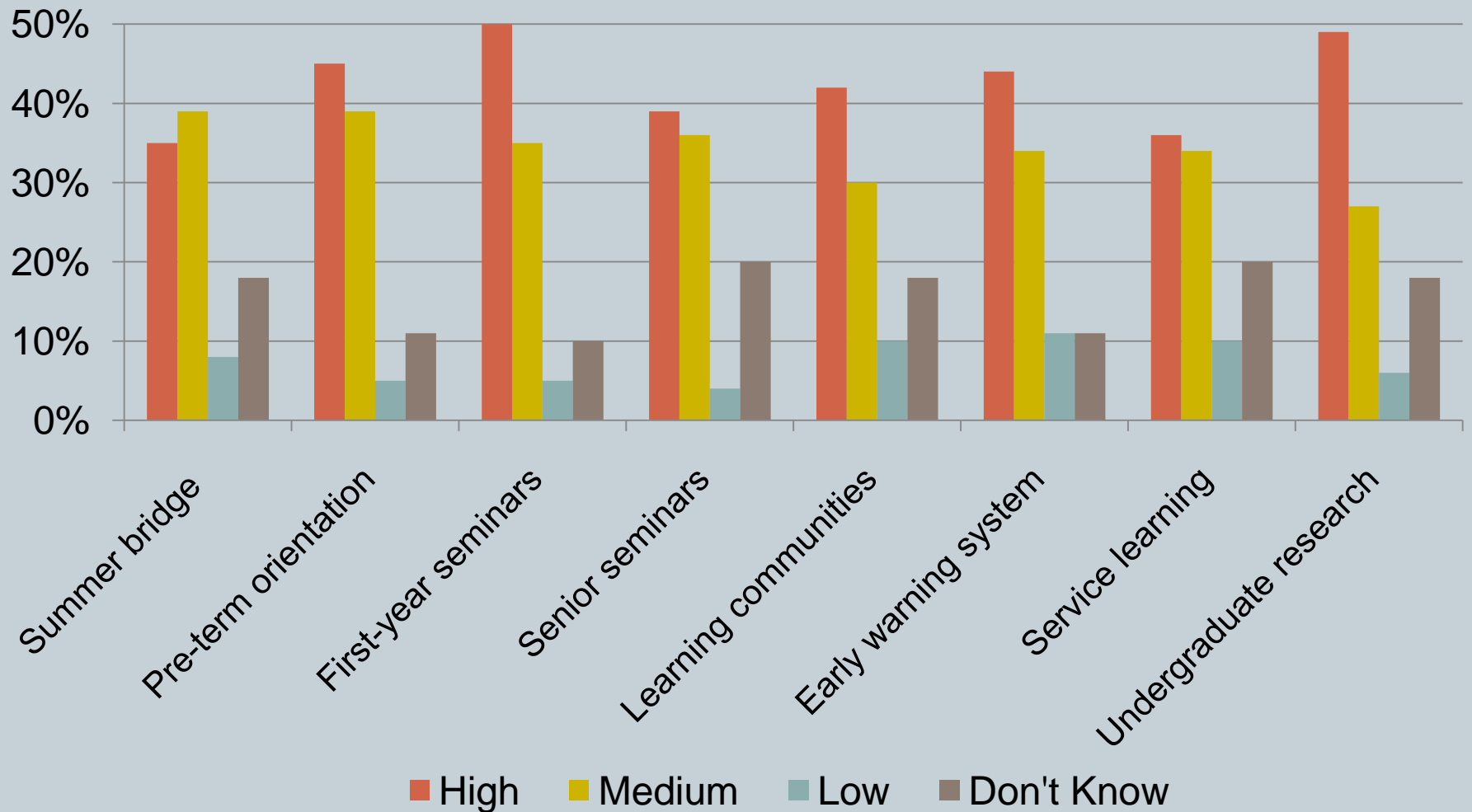
# Average Student Participation in Undergraduate Research



# Academic Areas in which Undergraduate Research Is Offered



# Perceived Cost Effectiveness of Initiatives



# Summation



- Implications
- Next Steps
- Questions

# Contact Information



**Betsy Barefoot, Vice President & Senior Scholar**  
**barefoot@jngi.org 828-475-6018**

**Drew Koch, Vice President for New Strategy,  
Development & Policy Initiatives**  
**koch@jngi.org 765-838-8025**

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