

San Diego Miramar College Graduation Survey Spring 2018

Prepared by

Miramar College Office of Planning, Research, & Institutional Effectiveness

June 2018

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COLLEGE



Roadmap

- Purpose of study
- Instrument & research method
- Summary of respondent characteristics
- Student goals for attending SDMC
- Student experience at SDMC
- Service use and satisfaction at SDMC
- Plans for the future and alumni service wants
- Next steps

Purpose of study

- The purpose of this study was three-fold: (1) provide Student Services with information for Program Review as recommended in the Accreditation report, (2) further understand graduates' experiences as San Diego Miramar College (SDMC) students to inform institutional planning, and (3) learn more about students' post-graduation plans.
- This study was conducted by the Office of Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness in collaboration with Dr. Cheryl Barnard, Dean of Student Affairs.

Instrument & Research Method

Design: Online survey

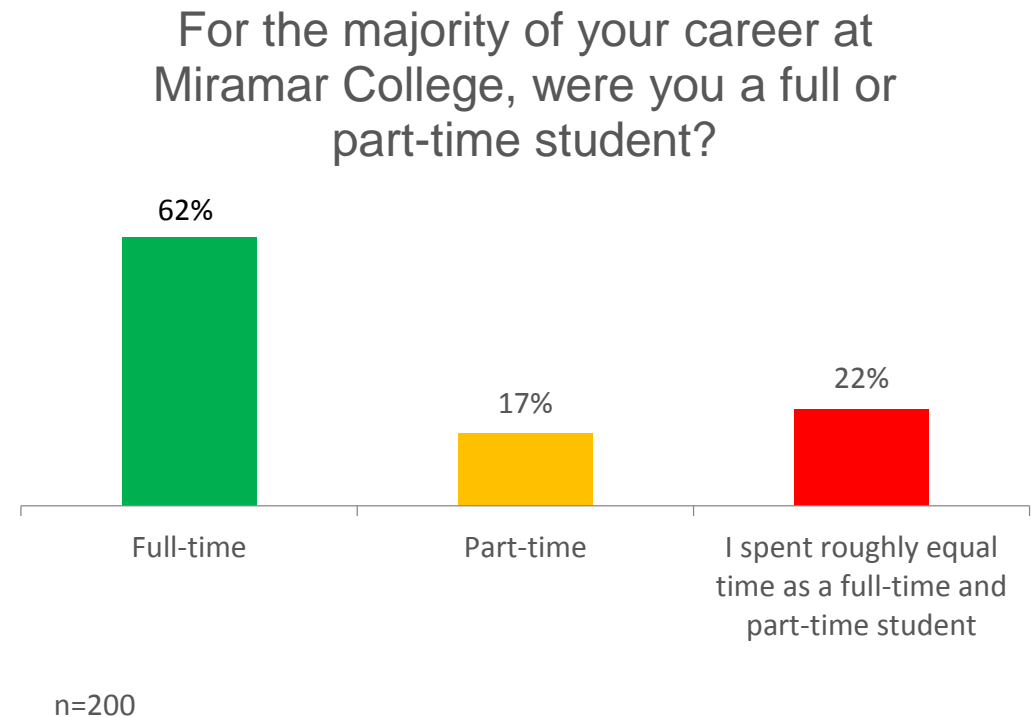
Target Population: Candidates for SDMC degrees and certificates in Spring 2018

Sampling: Census of degree/certificate candidates

Administration: Distributed via individualized invitations to participate sent to student email addresses

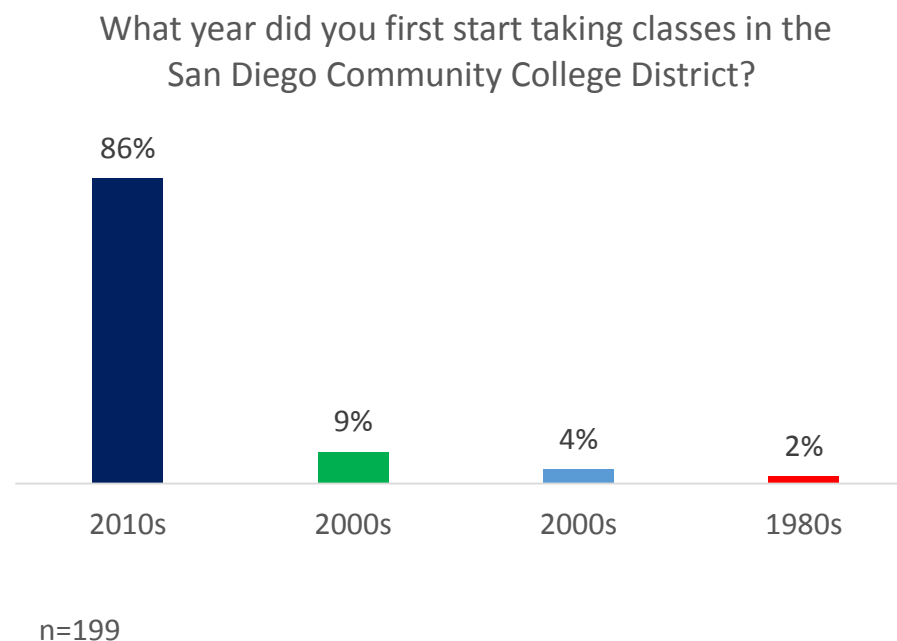
Respondent Characteristics

- 200 students responded to the survey (16.5% response rate), with 76% completing the survey.
- FT students were overrepresented in this study, as compared to the number of FT students attending SDMC.
- Two-thirds of respondents reported that they remained employed (FT or PT) throughout the majority of their education at SDMC/in the SDCCD.



Student Trajectories in SDCCD

- The majority of respondents took their first course in the SDCCD in the 2010s (86%). The median start year was 2015, and the mode was 2016.
- The majority of respondents took courses at other colleges in addition to SDMC. Sister colleges Mesa College and City College were the most heavily trafficked (64% and 36%, respectively).



Student Trajectories in SDCCD

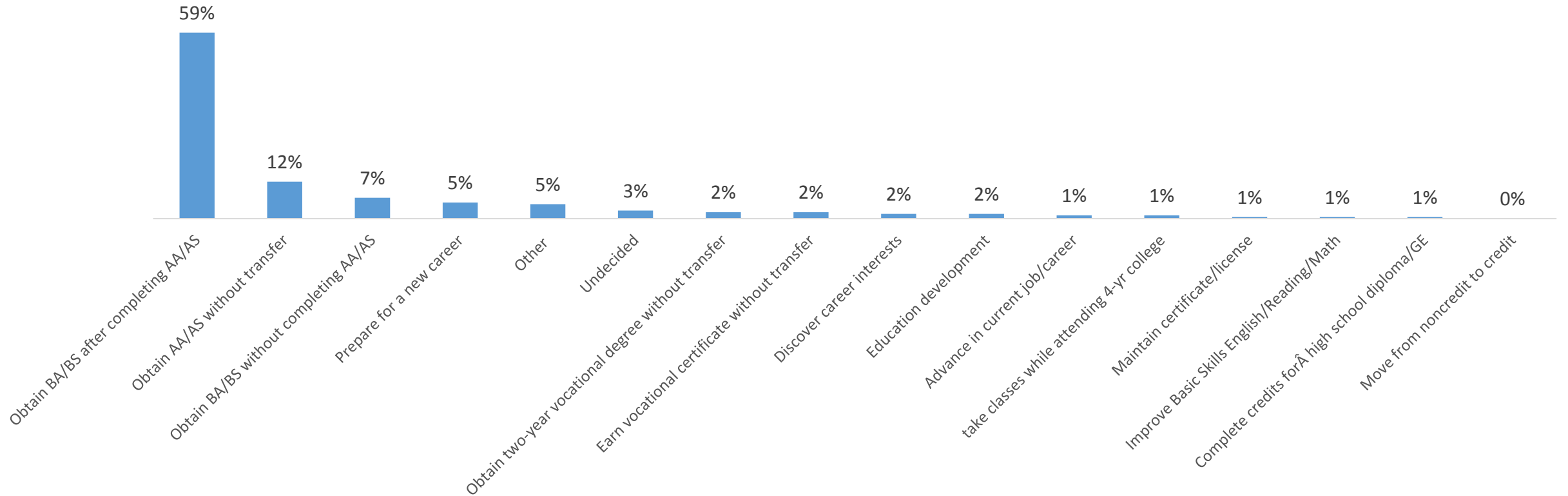
- The majority of respondents reported earning one degree or certificate from SDMC in the past *five* years.
- However, some people reported all certificates and degrees earned. Responses revealed that “graduates” can always return, such as one person who earned an AA and certificate and then returned a decade later to receive two certificates in a separate field. Another individual reported earning 6 associates degrees (max reportable) over a multi-decade period. Indeed, almost 11% of respondents reported that they were planning to continue their education at SDMC to seek additional credentials, degrees, or take additional courses for other reasons.

Goals for attending Miramar College

- The majority of respondents (59%) reported that their primary goal for taking courses at SDMC/in the SDCCD was to obtain a bachelor's degree after earning an associate's degree. Thus, the students who participated are not representative of the majority of students who attend Miramar, who attend community college with a wider array of goals.
- Roughly a third of students reported shifting their goals while attending SDMC, such as deciding to pursue a different major or deciding to pursue an associate's degree for transfer on their way to pursuing a bachelor's degree. Several students (n=4) reported that institutional barriers, such as poor advice from counselors, had delayed them from reaching or caused them to change their goal.

Primary Goals for *first* attending

What was your primary goal when you began taking courses at Miramar College/in the San Diego Community College District?



n=197

Goal change

- 32% (n=63) of respondents reported that their goals changed while attending SDMC. Below are the reasons reported:

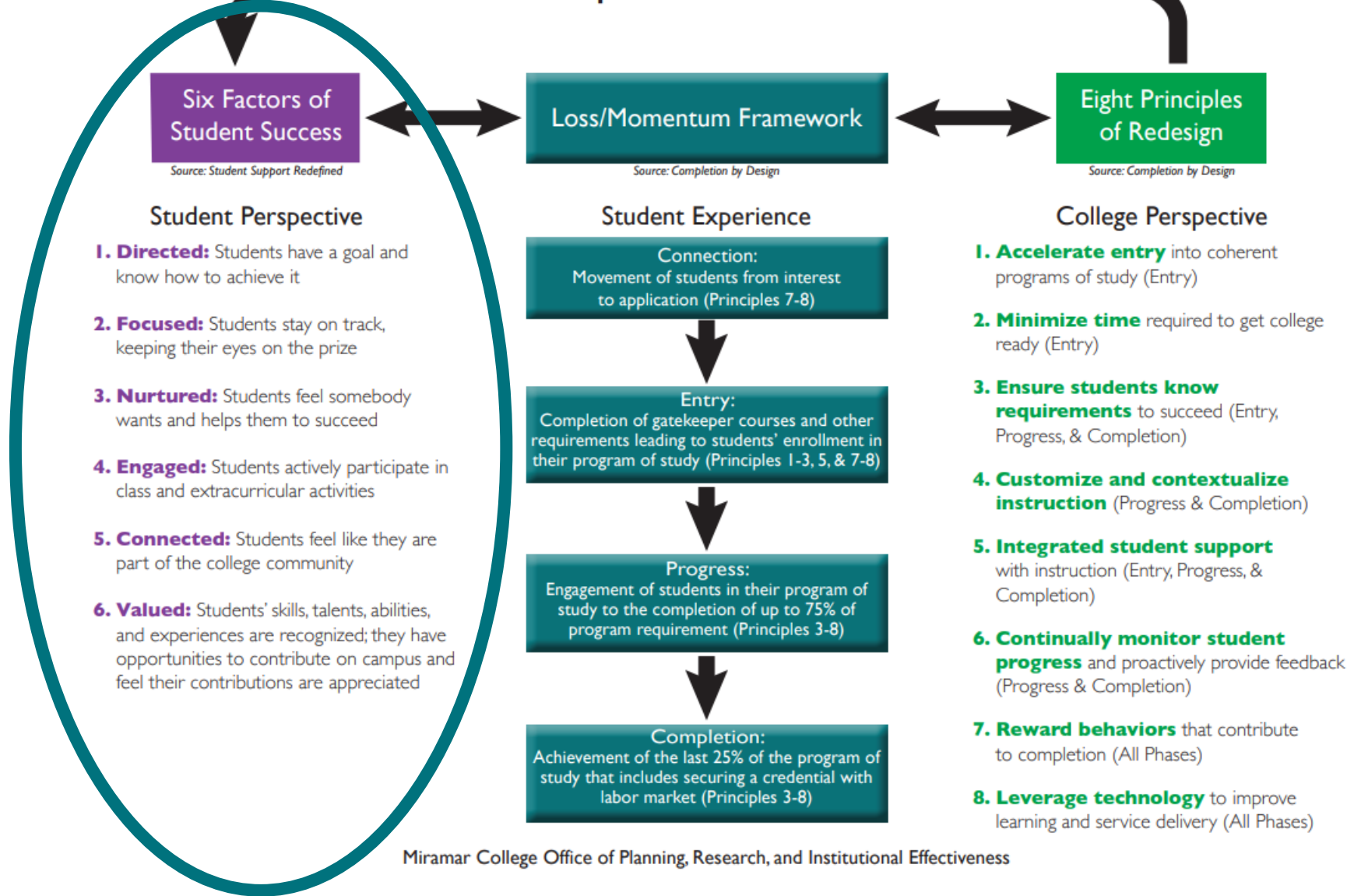


Student Experience at Miramar College

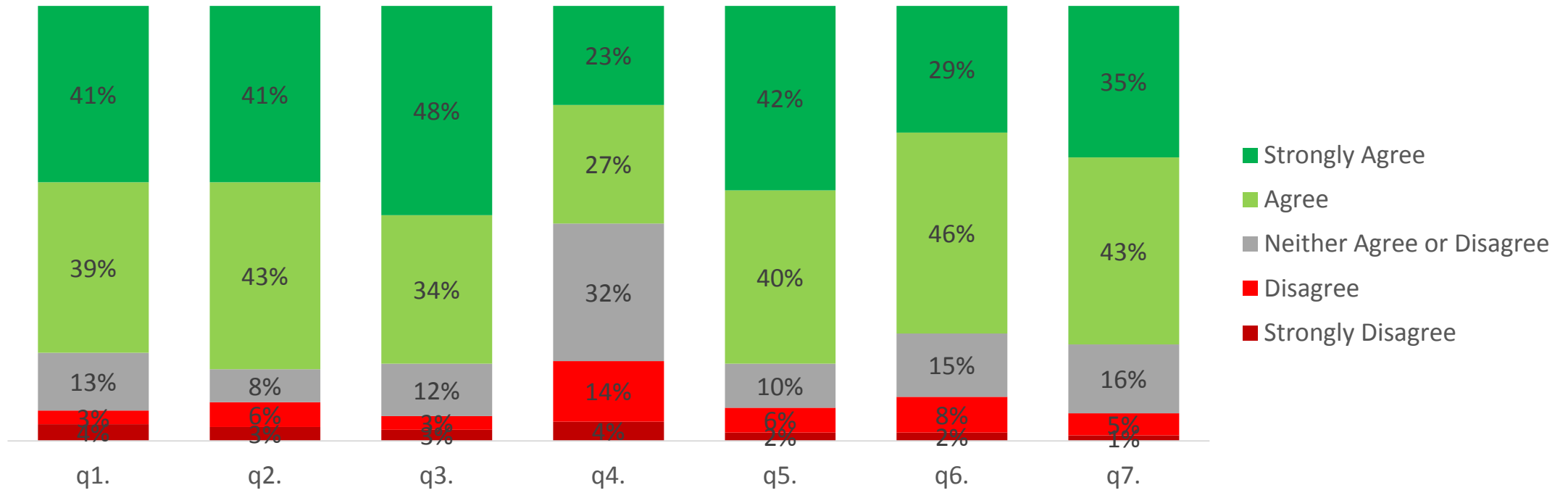
- We examined how well SDMC supported the “Six Factors of Student Success” through the students’ eyes.
- Results indicated that the majority of respondents felt directed, focused, engaged, nurtured, valued, and connected.
- The majority of respondents felt SDMC prepared them for the next steps of their educational and personal journeys.
- However, there were several areas where improvement is needed.
- In interpreting results, it is important to keep in mind that award earners are likely to be more positive about their experience at SDMC than the general student body.

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Roadmap to Student Success



Student Experience at Miramar College



q1. I received assistance in identifying my educational and personal goals from faculty and/or staff.

q2. I received assistance identifying how to reach my educational and personal goals from faculty and/or staff.

q3. I received assistance mapping out the courses that I needed to achieve my educational objective (e.g., degree, certificate, transfer).

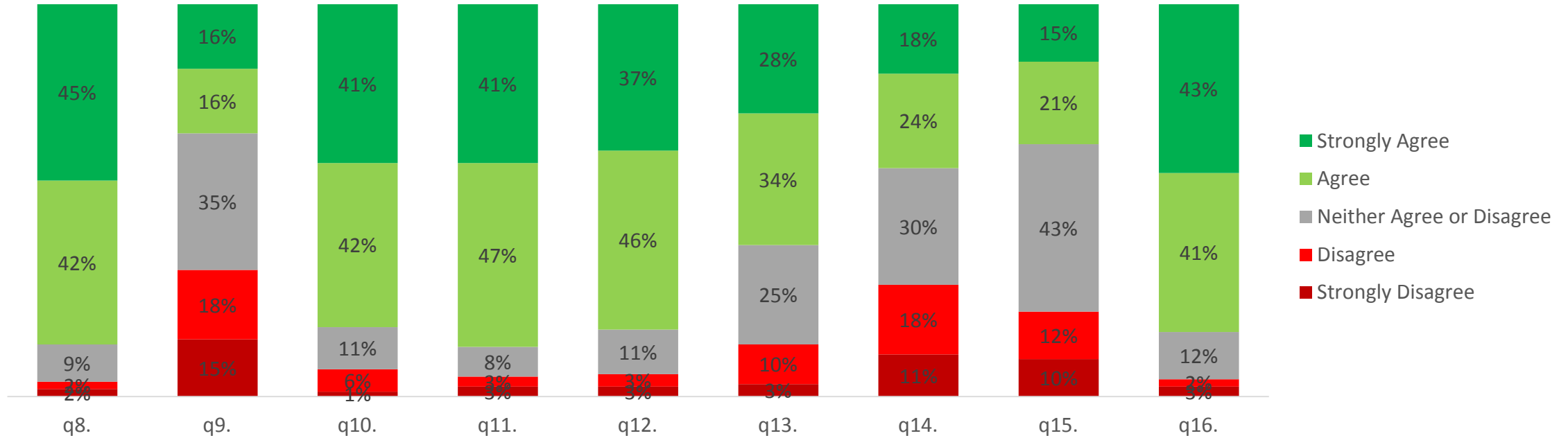
q4. I have received opportunities to engage in career exploration.

q5. Miramar College provided me with adequate resources to track my own progress toward meeting my educational goals.

q6. In my courses, I received regular feedback on my performance and progress from faculty.

q7. I was held to high expectations regarding my academic performance.

Student Experience at Miramar College



q8. Overall, I found the instruction I received at Miramar College to be interesting and engaging.

q9. I became involved in extracurricular activities that were meaningful to me.

q10. If I was ever struggling in a course, I felt comfortable approaching my professor for help.

q11. I feel like the faculty at Miramar College cares about me and wants me to achieve my goals.

q12. I feel like the staff at Miramar College cares about me and wants me to achieve my goals.

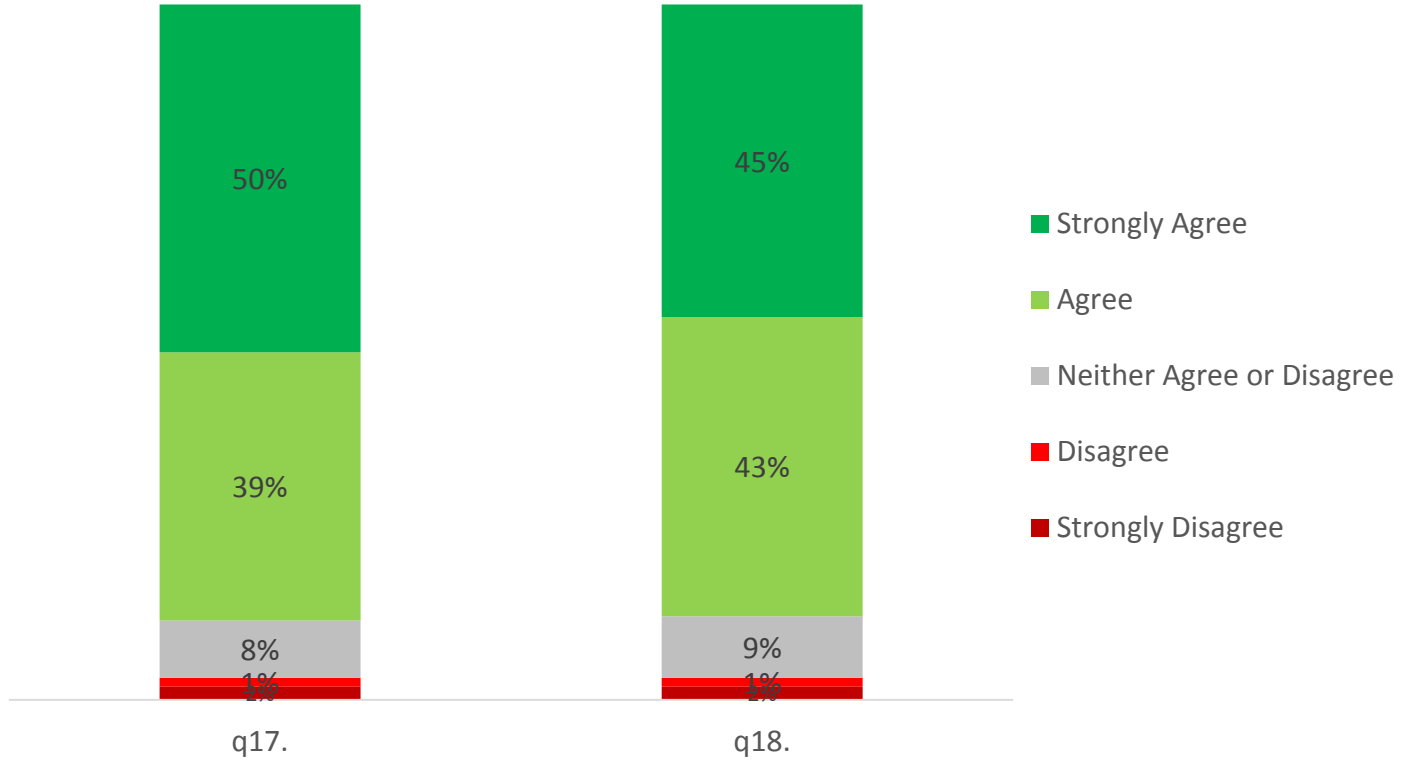
q13. If I was ever struggling in a course, I was directed toward services to increase my success (e.g., Academic Success Center).

q14. I feel like I am part of a larger campus community.

q15. I feel like I have a voice on campus.

q16. I feel like this is a campus that respects and cultivates diversity.

How do students summarize the preparation they received?



q17. I feel like I have gained meaningful knowledge, skills, and experience during my education at Miramar College.
q18. As a result of my education at Miramar College, I feel prepared for the next step of my educational and personal journey.

What we do well in supporting students in meeting their career and personal goals

- **We have caring, supportive, and knowledgeable classroom instructional faculty who center teaching and students in their work.**

“Miramar college has provided professors with engaging classes and a true care for each student. I always felt supported in the classroom and learned many things that are not only applicable to academics, but also to life in general.”

“Good professors that are passionate and interested in what they're teaching (and getting students involved in the subject) really make the school so much better (Shoutout to [three instructors]). I feel like these professors (and professors like them) are important to educational foundations because they provide students with not only academic knowledge, but they also make us believe in our intellectual ability.”

“I really liked all of my professors - they were all great at teaching their subject, and seemed like they all really enjoyed the subject matter, which really does a lot for classroom morale”

“Outstanding rigorous classes and materials. Top notch instruction focused on teaching (and not publish or perish)”

What we do well in supporting students in meeting their career and personal goals

- **We have caring, supportive, and knowledgeable classified professionals who center students in their work.**

“Great staff who support and help in every way they can. Everything seemed accessible and easily navigable. “

“The helpful faculty in the Student Services building were able to help me with not only educational plans, but they were willing to listen to my problems with school anxiety and answer questions regarding my transfer. I found it a safe place to vent my problems as a college student and they were able to direct me to the resources I needed to ease my anxiety. I also found it nice how they told me that I could always come in and see them if I needed anything else. I always thought that the counseling window was only meant for educational planning. I don't qualify for DSPS so it was nice to talk to someone about my anxiety.”

“When at times it was stressful trying to figure out school and whether or not I could attain an associate's degree, I was able to find help and receive good feedback from counselors and staff when I was my own worst critic. I was able to find an ear that would listen and that really helped me since you can get lost in trying to figure out your life/school. Staff gave reassurance on that school was the right thing for me.”

What we do well in supporting students in meeting their career and personal goals

- **We have high quality wrap-around services to support student success.**

“I cannot stress how amazing the Academic Success Center has helped me obtain and maintain a high GPA enough. Along with the Math Lab, they’ve been phenomenal. Also, resource centers such as the library and ILC computer lab allowed me to do research and complete assignments, all while providing a safe and quiet place to study.”

“Miramar has given me access to wonderful professors who are passionate about their discipline and care about students' success. There are many resources available to help struggling students or aid in transfer/course planning services. Personally, I was given the opportunity to explore different courses to find what truly interested me “

- **We offer flexibility and support for working professionals and students with complex needs.**

“Miramar college offered fast track classes and online classes which help me manage time with the classes I need in a good time frame.”

“Miramar college has allowed me to build a schedule around my job, which helped my success.”

What we could do better in helping students meet their career and personal goals

everything hold commencement after finals
offer more student clubs and events more tutors to help with advanced courses offer more language classes
increase helpfulness and friendliness of staff offer more career fairs and seminars
increase availability of counseling appointments offer more weekend courses more supervision of student workers offer more challenging courses
offer more online classes more support from professors in the learning process greater communications about the need to register for commencement Saturday hours for the English Center
offer more online courses better assistance in helping students make transfer plans offer regular scheduled check-ins with students on their status and progress make classroom learning more engaging
offer more resources to help students remove red tape and bureaucracy to improve student material and learning technology support improving GPA greater promotion of support services
be transparent about work study opportunities greater insight into what happens after a student transfers from SDMC to another college intentionally facilitate a stronger student life/student culture
offer more career assistance allow students to display their expected honors during graduation, even if final grades not submitted provide more consistent feedback to students across the campus (student services)
offer more slots for students to take necessary courses at the college-level, create more intentional opportunities for students to connect with professionals in their fields that do not rely on individual professors' willingness/ability to reach out to their networks

better training and supervision of staff in the counseling center

make room for students with shorter tenure at SDMC to become as involved in student clubs and government as students with longer tenure increase friendliness of staff
offer more tutoring options keep student bulletins updated and create centralized system where students can learn about events happening on campus
better support from administrators for students who report unprofessional behavior from a professor offer more courses on the pathway to transfer
provide more opportunities for students to network with professionals in their desired field more appointment availability in the counseling center
offer faster internet improve knowledge to support students who eventually want to go to medical school hire students
offer study abroad opportunities hold more college application meetings to better fit student scheduling needs provide greater access to research opportunities for science majors offer phone call advising
heavier advertisement of career services greater accountability for instructors in how they treat and teach students better planning and communication with students
accept more transfer credit longer meeting periods for counseling walk-in appointments offer more classes connect students to internship opportunities
offer more healthy eating opportunities on campus better training of tutors in the PLACE more support in the transfer process
make fewer changes to degree requirements more programs for STEM majors better text book buy back offers
greater clarity about degree requirements offer more hands-on experience

no feedback

n=104

Challenges students faced to receiving their degrees/certificates

- **Difficulty balancing school with work/parenting**

“Towards the end of my educational journey I had to work full-time for the first time in 3 years, the online classes allowed me to work and finish school at the same time.”

“Single mom and working full time is not easy. Adding school to that mix can be extremely stressful and exhausting at times. I think a focus on how to help adult learners succeed would be a great resource to have.”

- **Learning how to be successful as a student**

“Mostly personal challenges such as time management led to self discipline and reassurance from encouraging staff members.”

- **Health/mental health challenges**

“A lot of mental health problems with depression and anxiety. Between work and school life gets stressful. My teachers were really helpful and understanding. They made me feel comfortable to talk to them and ask for help or extensions when I needed them. Before I used to not show up to class or would miss assignments and just tell myself I'd do better next time. When I started being open with my teachers they responded with positive encouragement. They helped me realize that it's not impossible and if I need help or an extension just ask. People are more than willing to help if you just ask. And before I really was just trying to get through everything by myself. The sense of community that Miramar provided me with helped me overcome these challenges.”

Challenges students faced to receiving their degrees/certificates

- **Problems mastering academic materials**

“Yes, I struggled to pass a couple of my classes & had to retake them. I overcame them by realizing that the courses that I was taking for my original major were subjects that are not my strong suit & realized I needed to take a different path. Therefore, change my major that is better suited to my talents.”

“I really struggled with my Math and Accounting courses. I got tutoring from the Math Lab and Academic Success Center.”

- **Problems getting courses transferred**

“It was challenging getting my previous classwork from another college transferred and accepted into my degree program. The [redacted] department in particular rejected all my requests because of the age of my previous coursework, even though the one [redacted] class I took from SDCCD of the same age was accepted. (The departments of psychology, sociology, math, and P.E. all accepted my transfer requests.) The counselors [name redacted], and especially [name redacted], went the extra mile to help me overcome these challenges.”

“Admissions office lost 4 different transcripts in 2 months (and I did confirm the mailing address 3 times) before I finally walked my transcript, but too late to graduate May 2017, had to wait for Fall 2017.”

Challenges students faced to receiving their degrees/certificates

- **Receiving contradictory advice from SDMC staff**

“Yes. The student services building said that my petition to get into a class was okay with just a signature, but then the vice president said I needed to put more information in like my educational plan. I almost didn't graduate this year! GET IT TOGETHER!!!!!!!!!!”

“I had a very hard time trying to get my degree after completing my courses. The counselor who did my education plan did not inform me that I had to submit petitions to substitute courses. I was denied graduation because of this. After visiting the counselor to figure out the issue, I had to inform him that some of my courses were "substitute courses" which was when I was told about having to petition for substitution. That's something he should've already known by looking at my transcripts. He said he would submit my petitions and cc'd me on the email. I was given the run-around for months by the counseling office and the evaluators, [redacted] and [redacted]. My attempts to contact them to follow up if my petitions were received and approved were ignored. It took months of trying to reach out and submitting the petitions several times until I finally received a response. I needed my degree to show my boss, because I was going to get a raise depending on if I finished my education. I received the degree long after completing the courses, which prolonged getting the raise at work. It was an incredibly stressful and frustrating experience to end my time at Miramar College.”

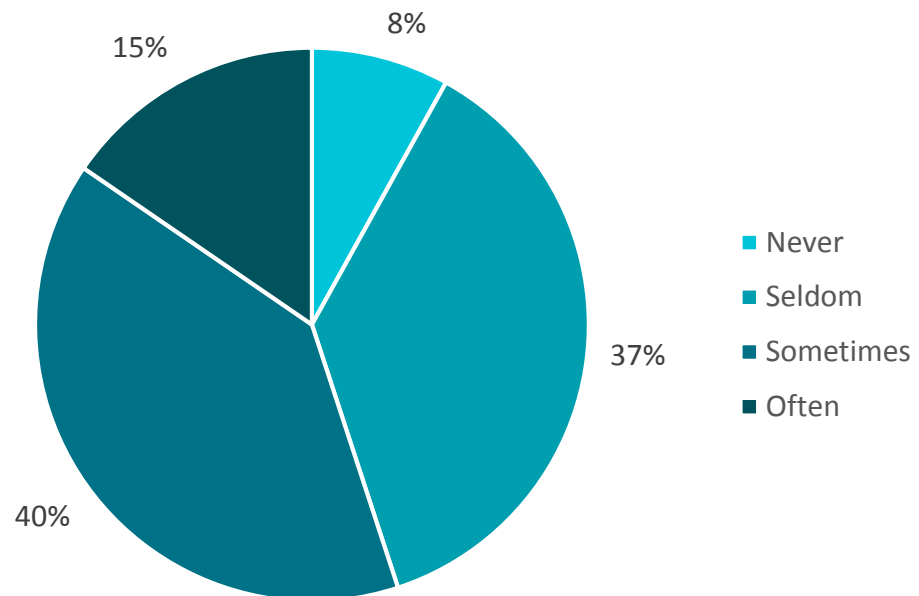
Service use and satisfaction

- Students were fairly knowledgeable regarding the services that SDMC offers, but there remains room for outreach, particularly by mental health services and the student affairs office. Keep in mind that award earners may be *more aware* of services than the general student body.
- The most frequently used services by respondents were counseling, admissions & records, financial aid, and the transfer center.
- The majority of students seemed pleased with the services offered on SDMC's campus. However, further research is needed to understand the *whys* behind students' reported satisfaction levels.

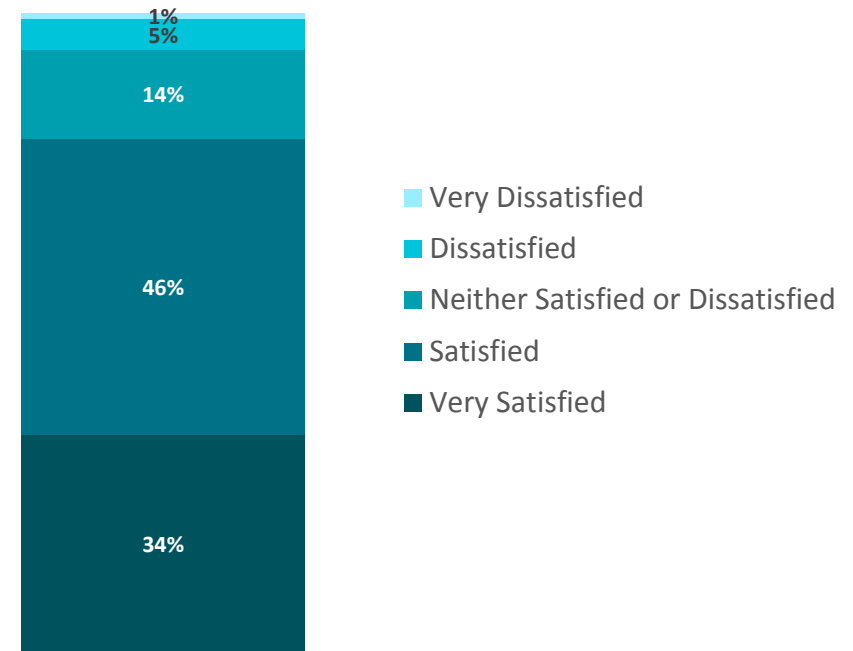
Admissions and Records

97% *know of this service*

use of this service



satisfaction with this service

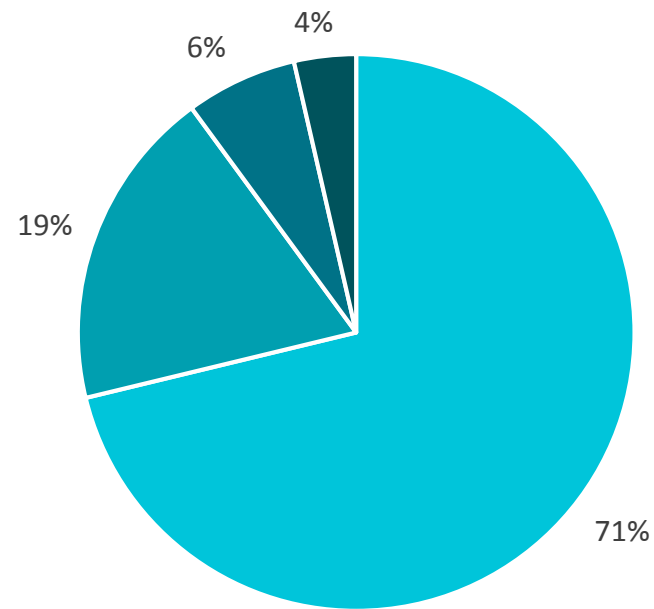


Admissions & Records (Registration)

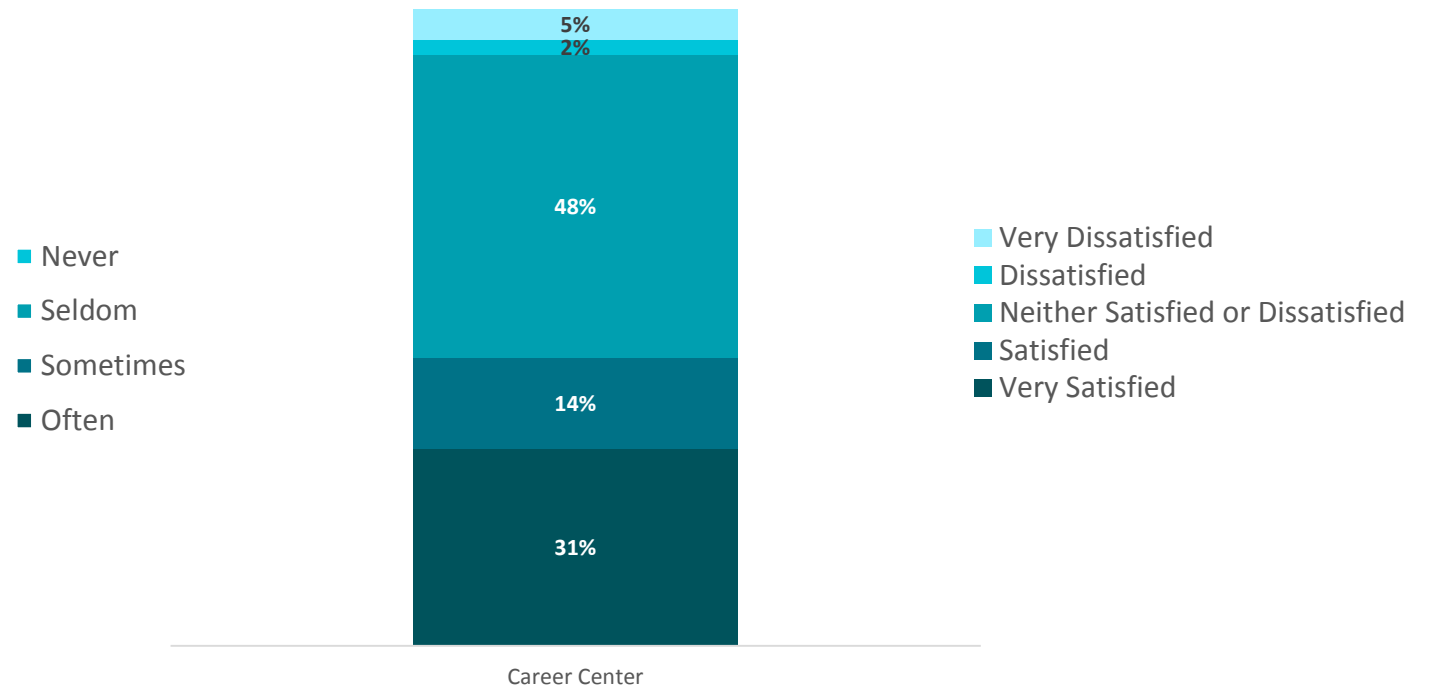
Career Center

80% *know of this service*

use of this service



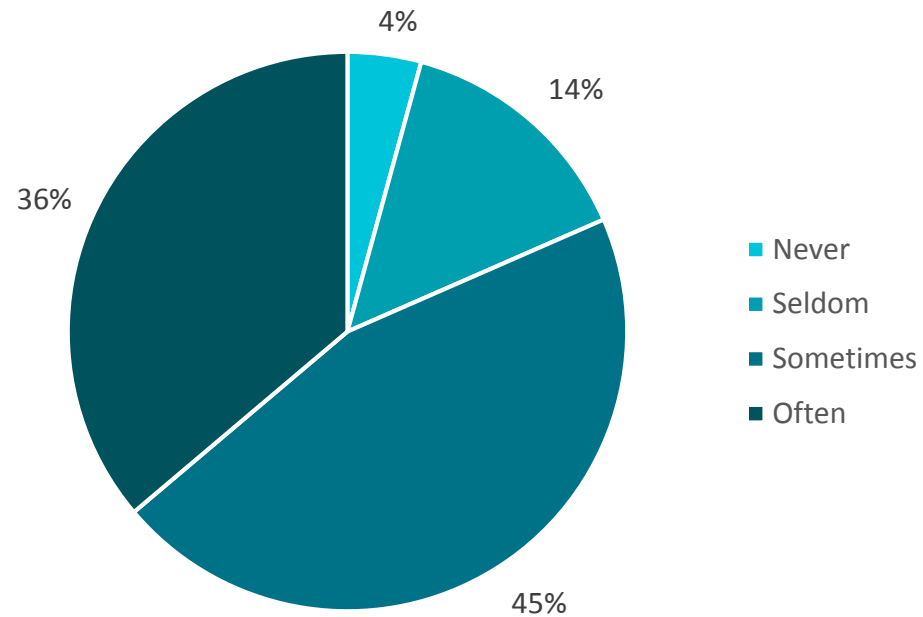
satisfaction with this service



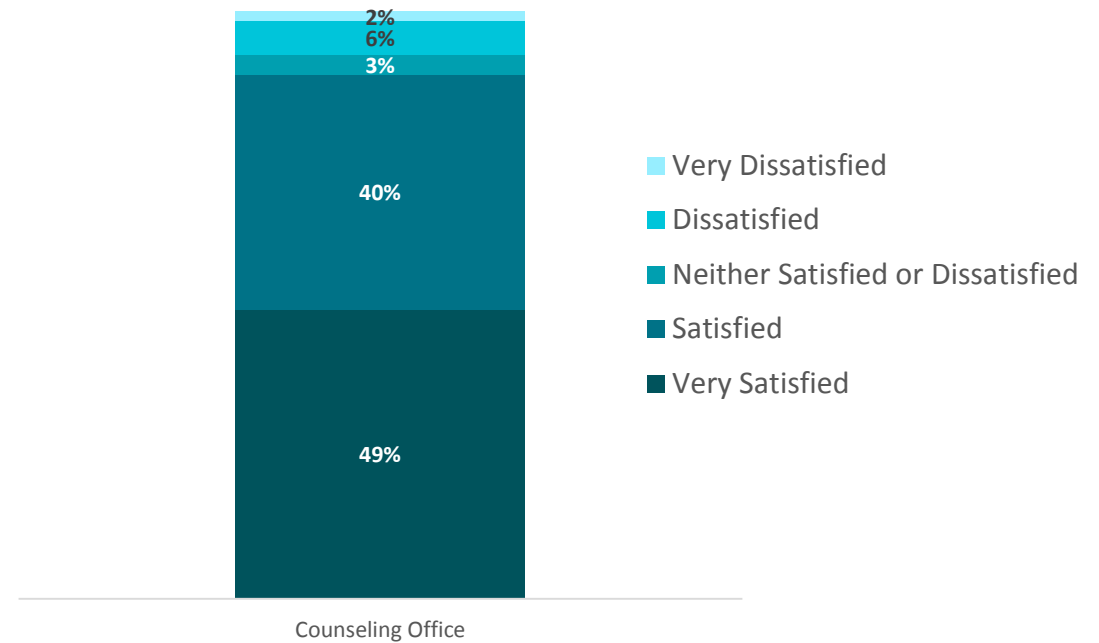
Counseling Office

99% *know of this service*

use of this service



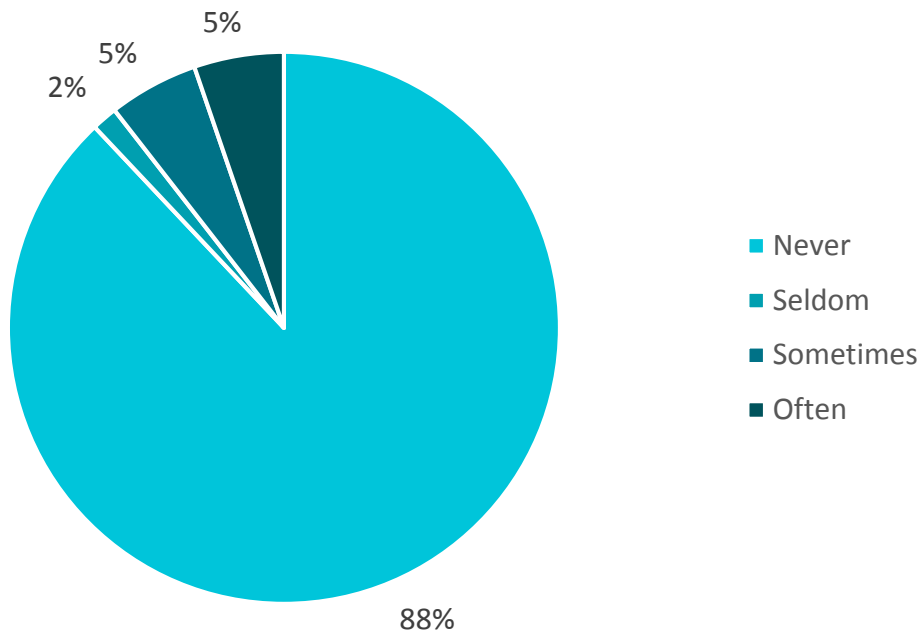
satisfaction with this service



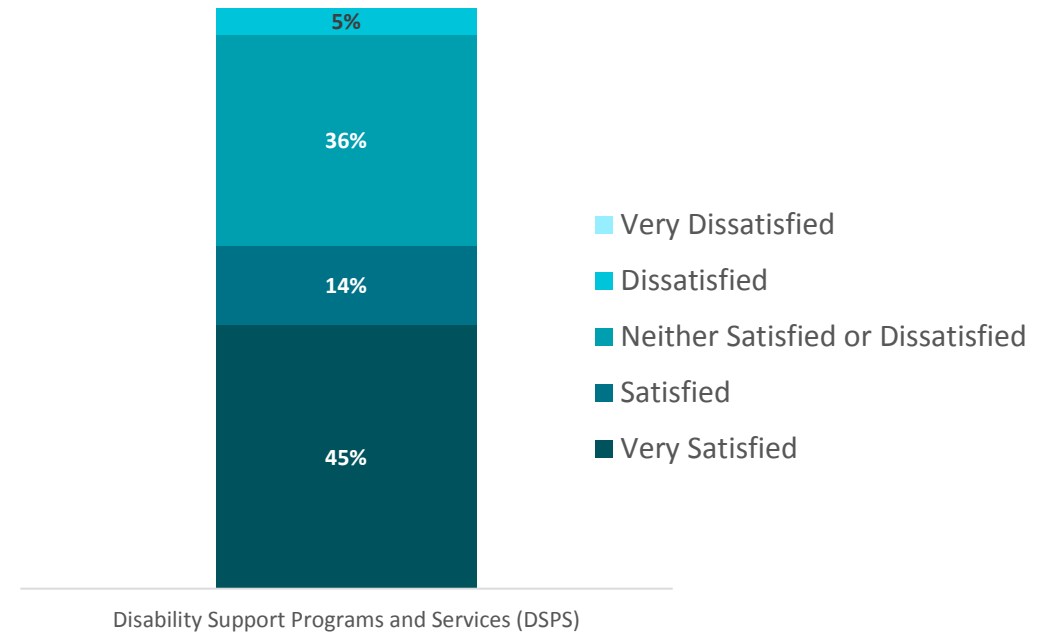
Disability Services

85% *know of this service*

use of this service



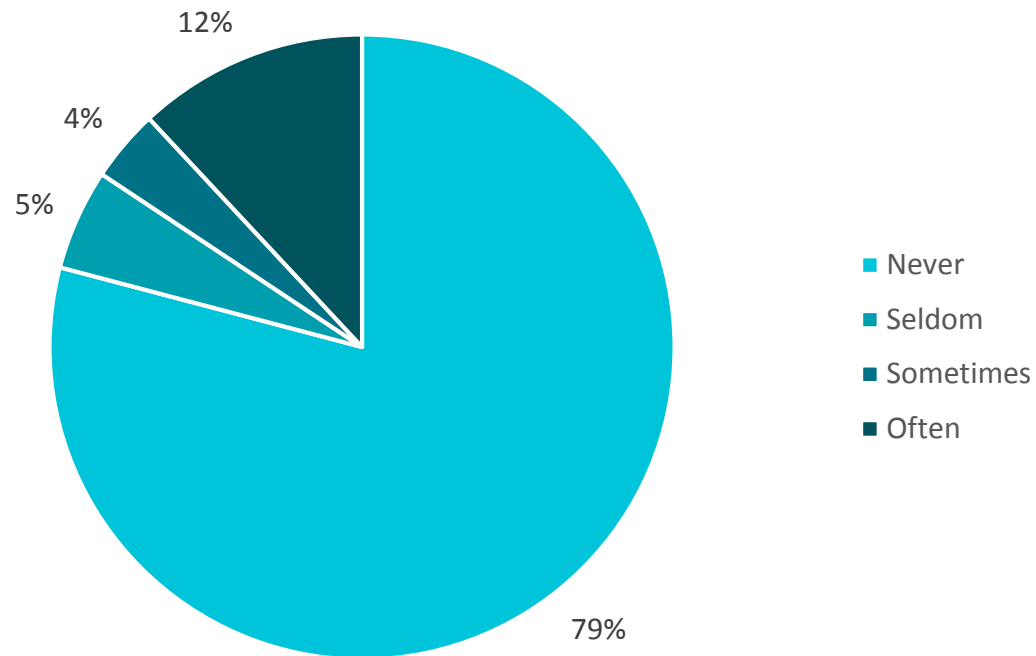
satisfaction with this service



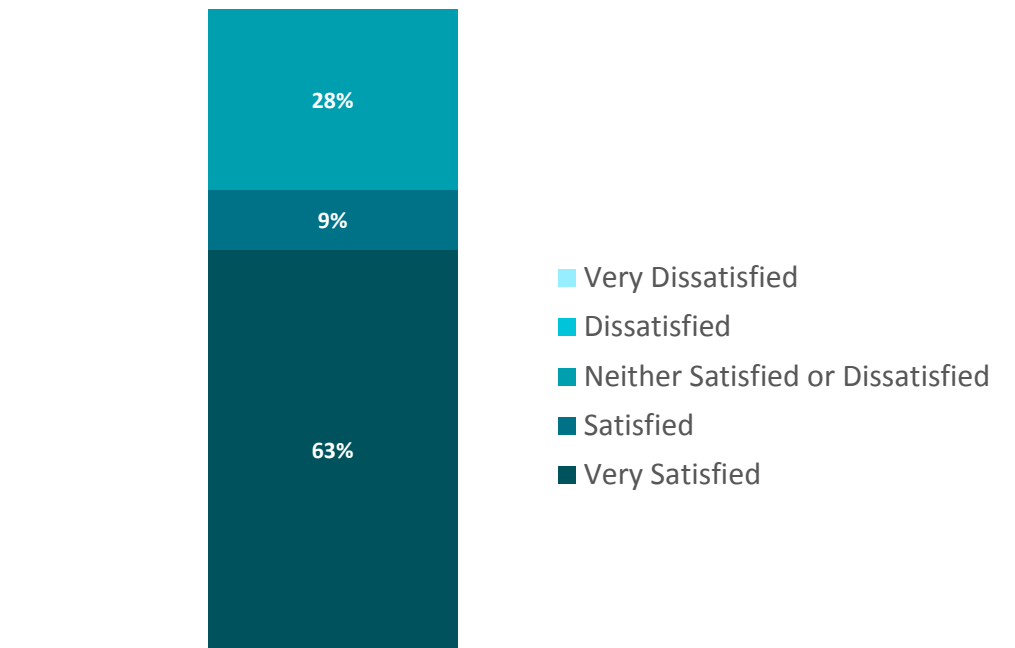
EOPS

74% know of this service

use of this service



satisfaction with this service

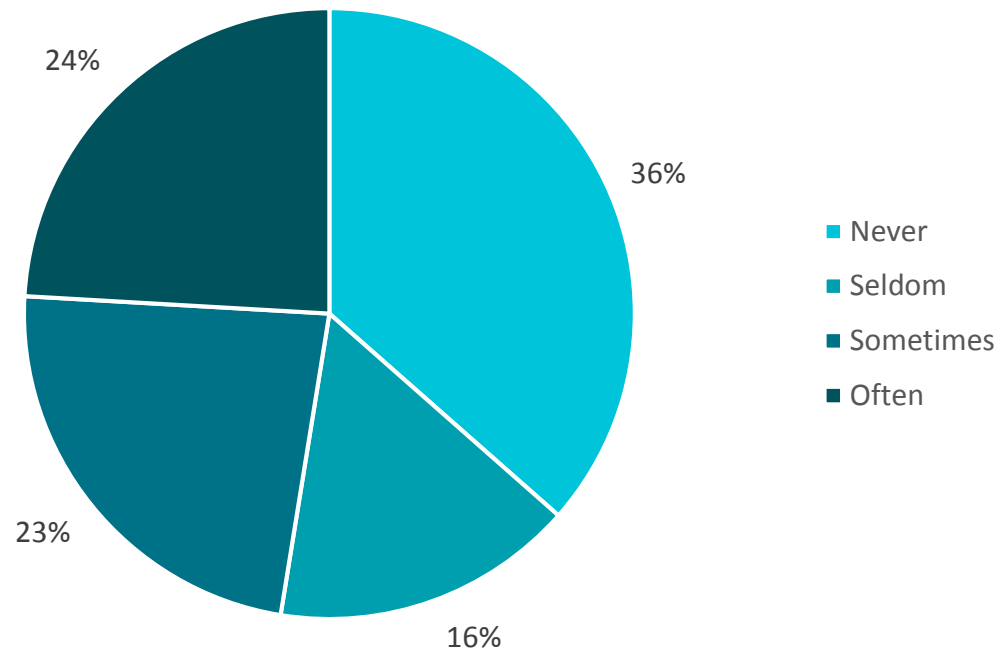


Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)

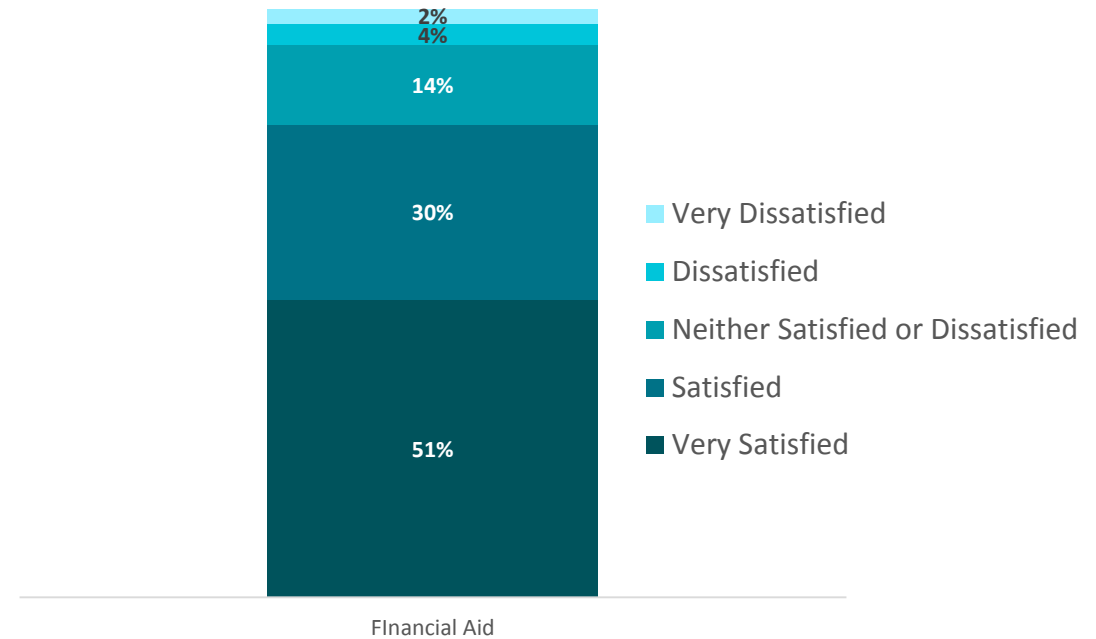
Financial Aid

96% *know of this service*

use of this service



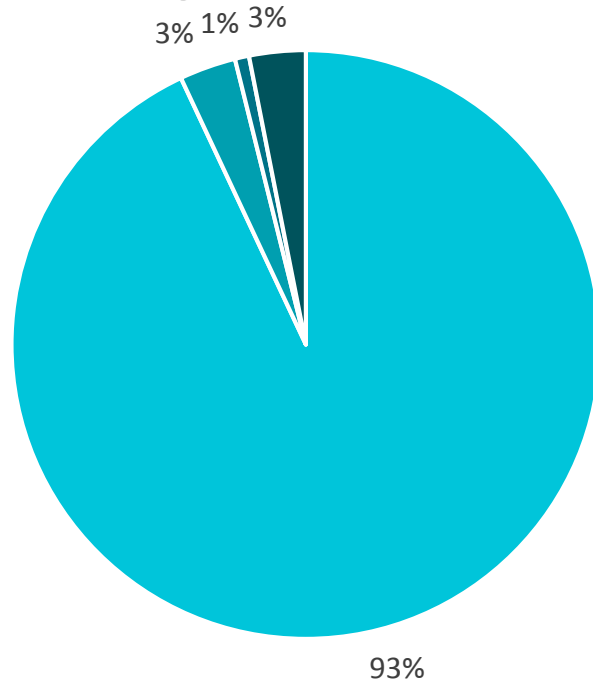
satisfaction with this service



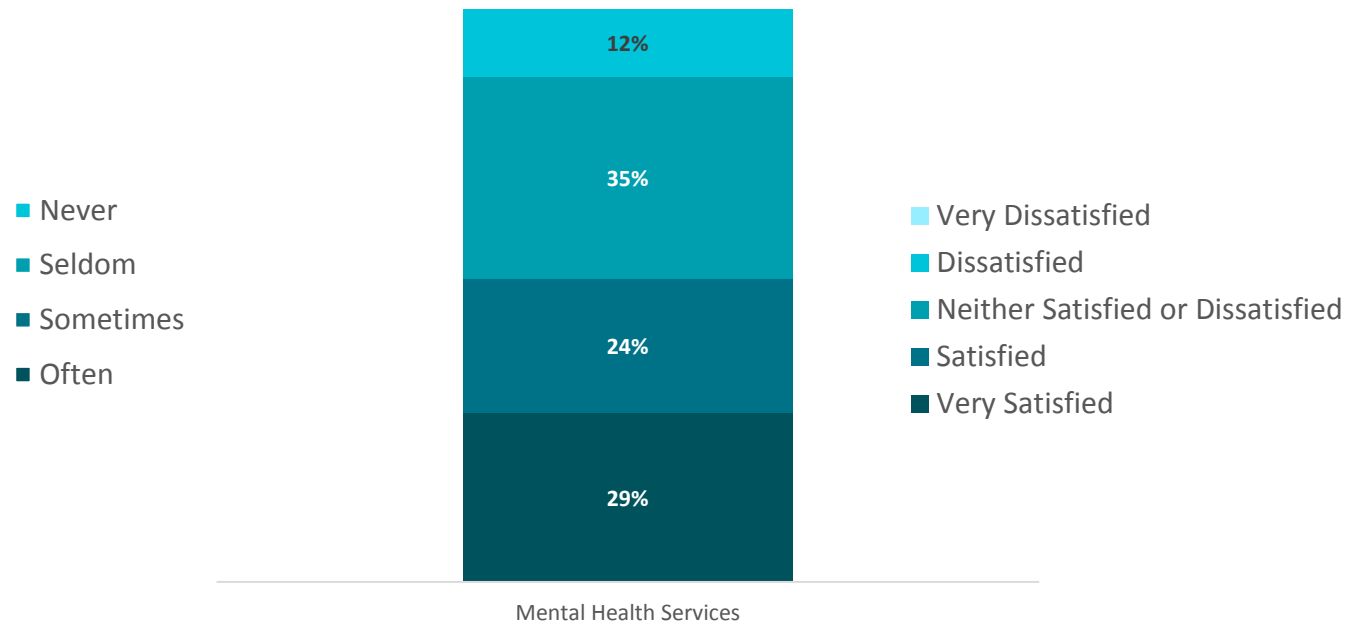
Mental Health Services

50% *know of this service*

use of this service



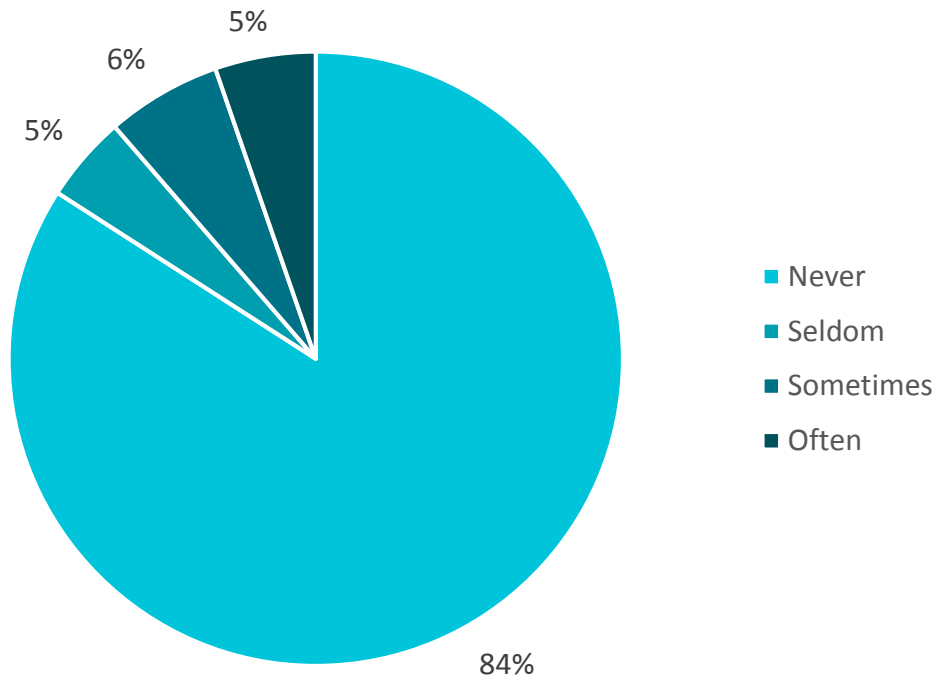
satisfaction with this service



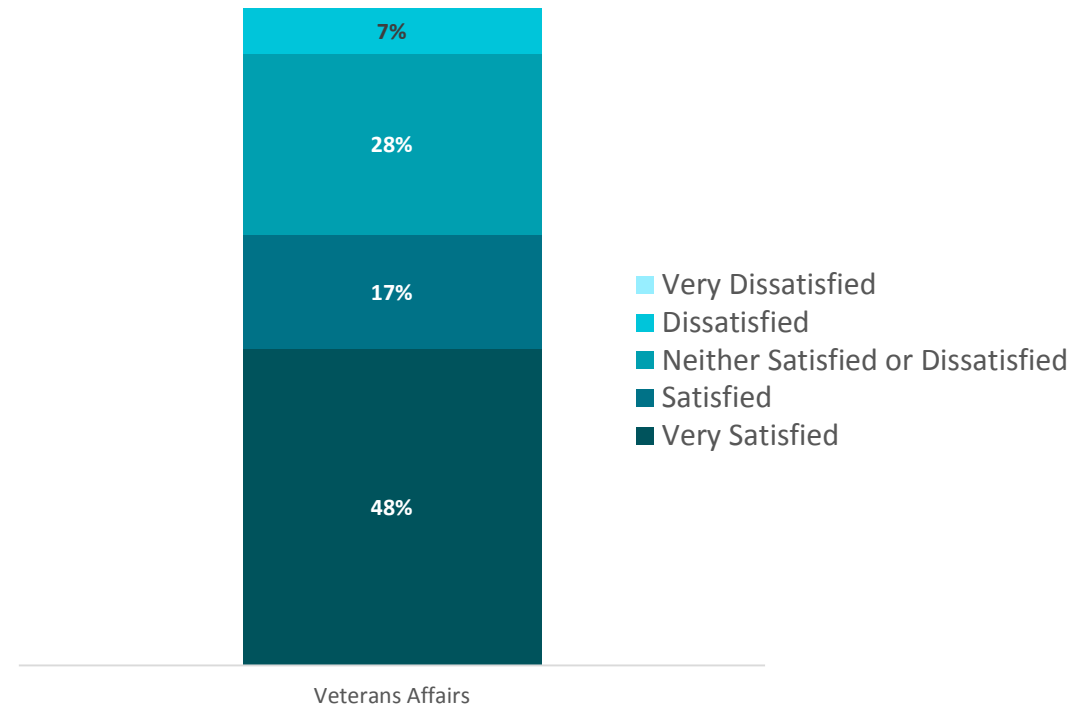
Veteran Affairs

74% know of this service

use of this service



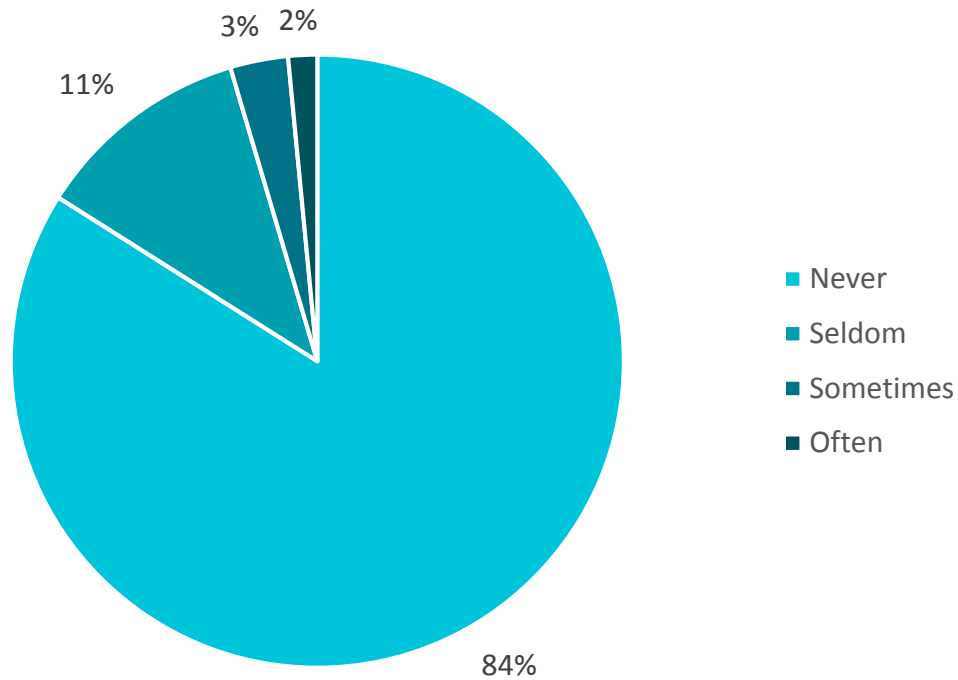
satisfaction with this service



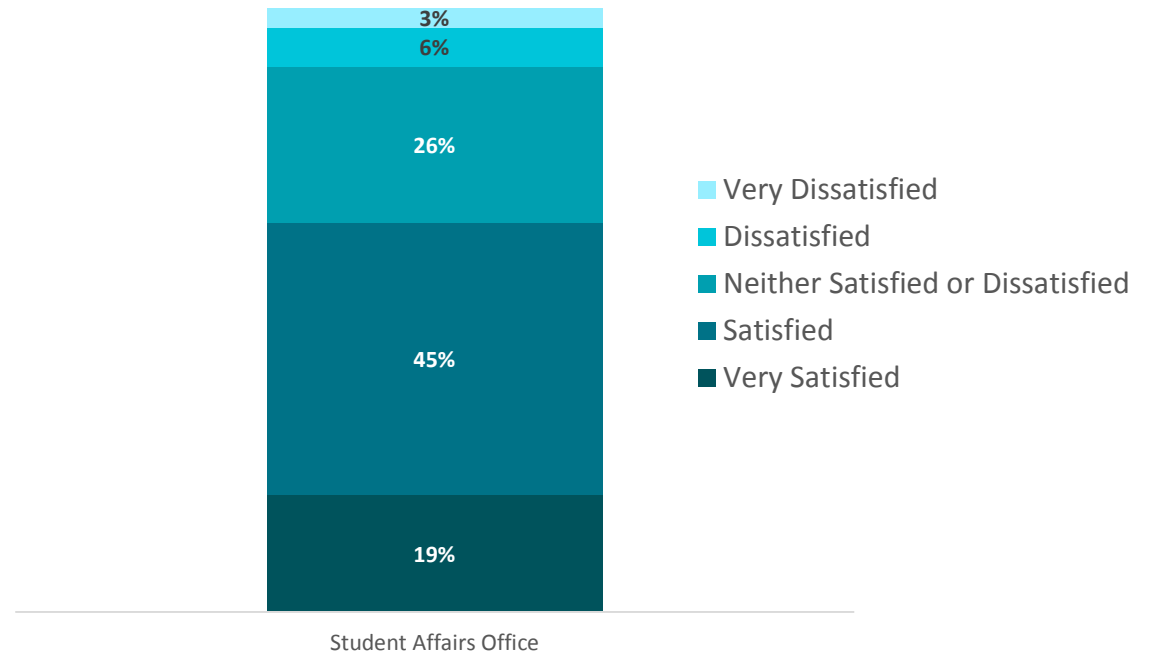
Student Affairs Offices

63% know of this service

use of this service



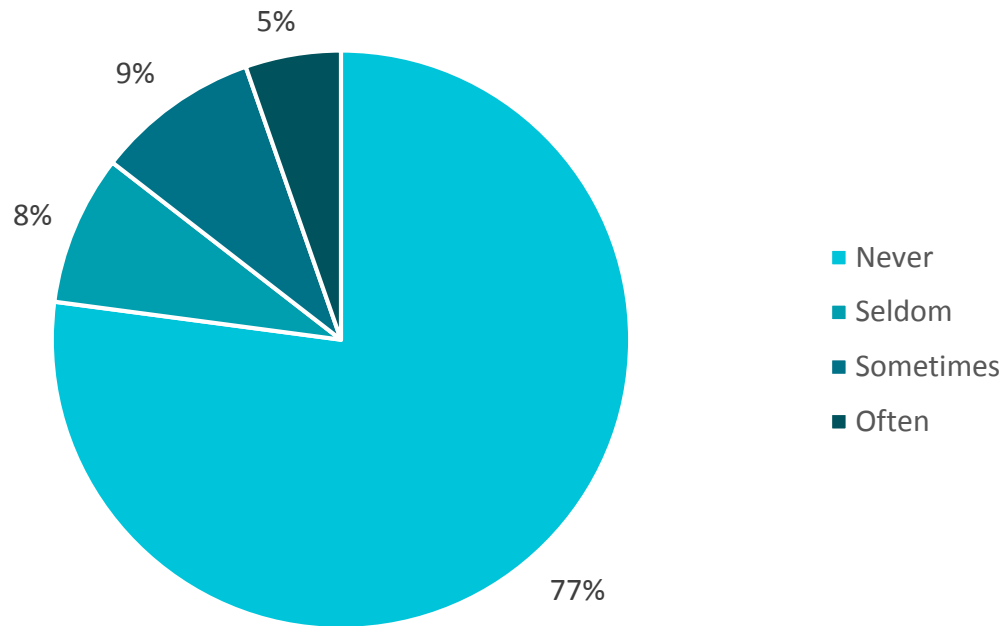
satisfaction with this service



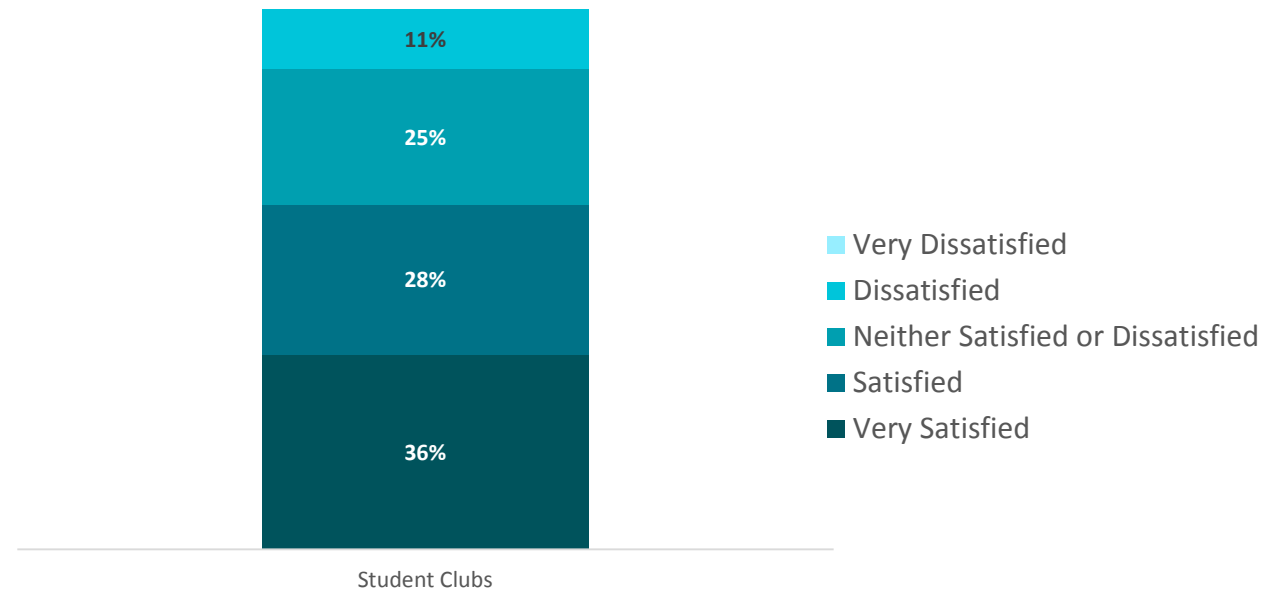
Student Clubs

76% know of this service

use of this service



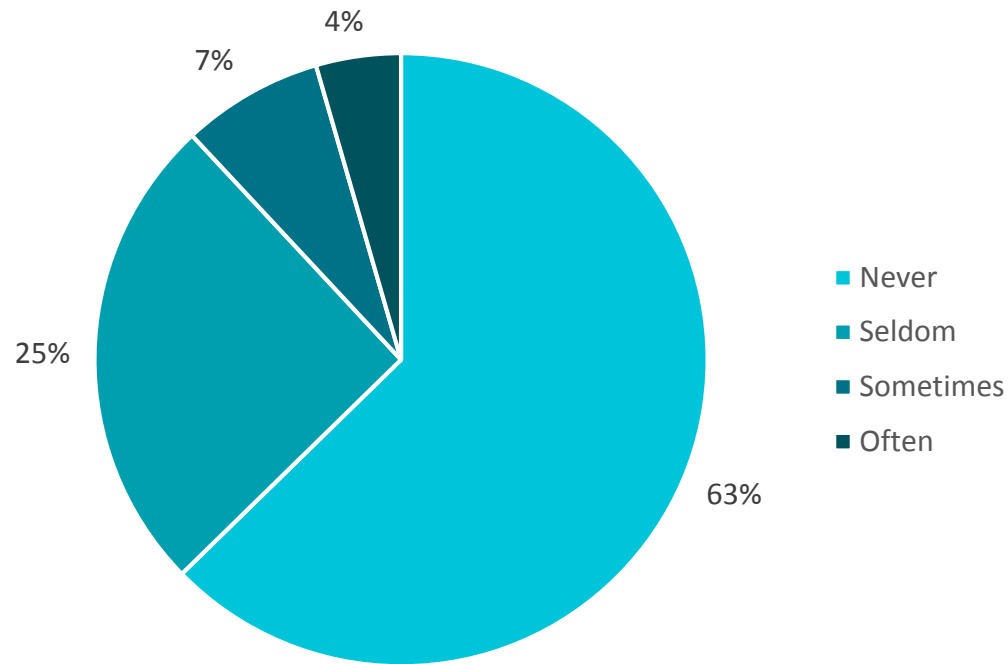
satisfaction with this service



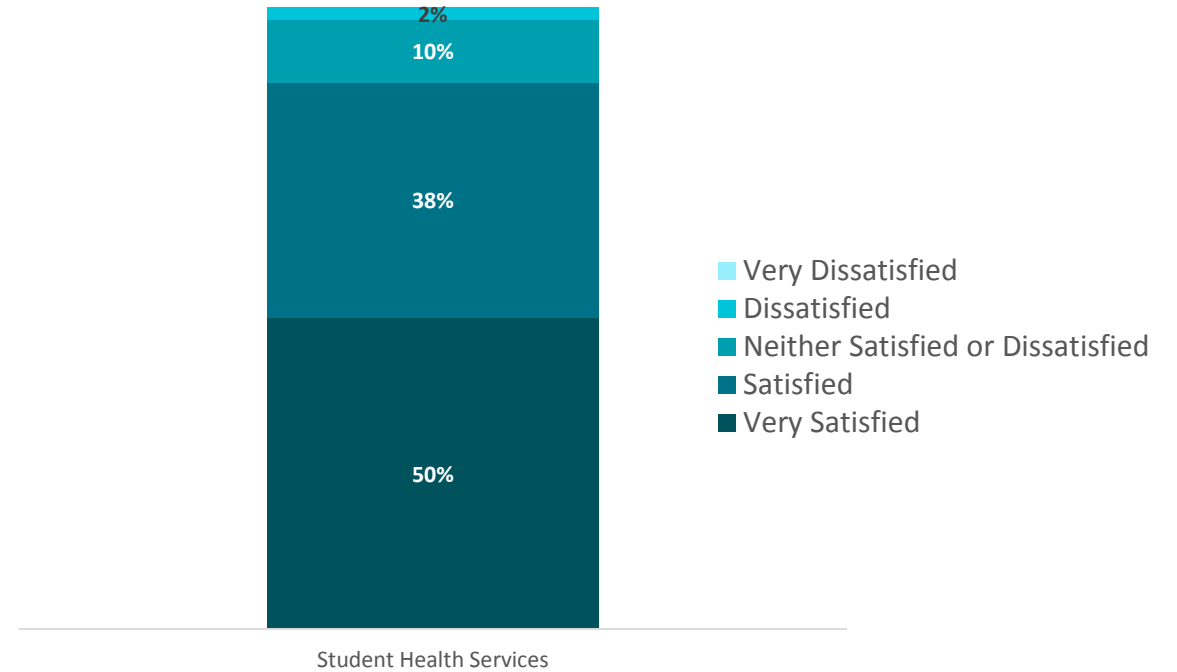
Student Health Services

84% *know of this service*

use of this service



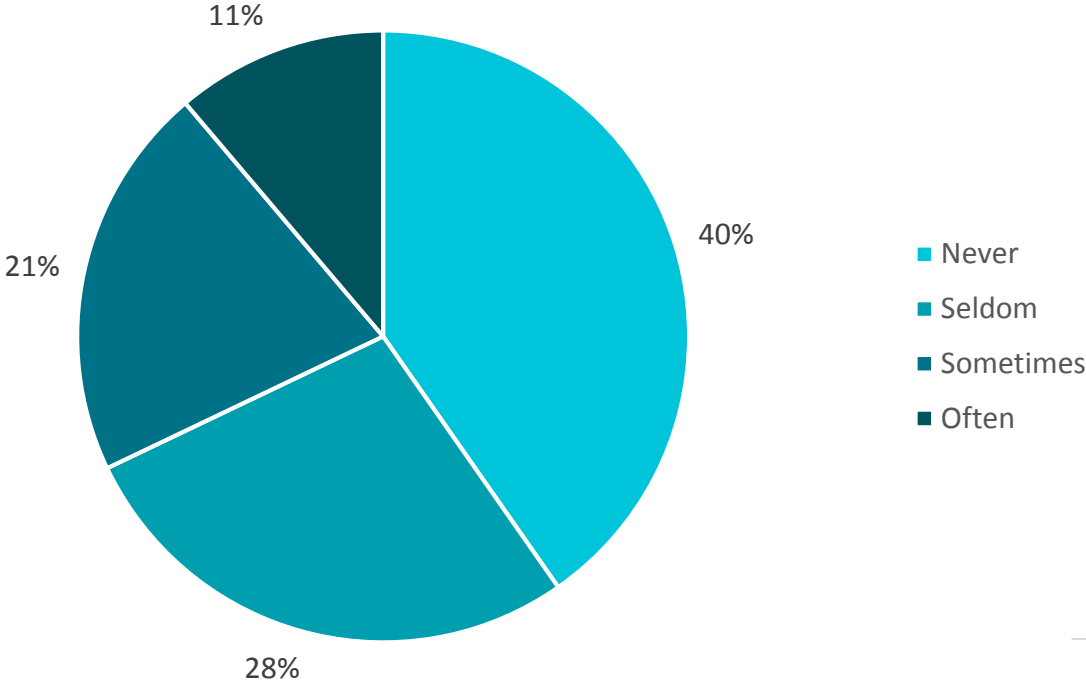
satisfaction with this service



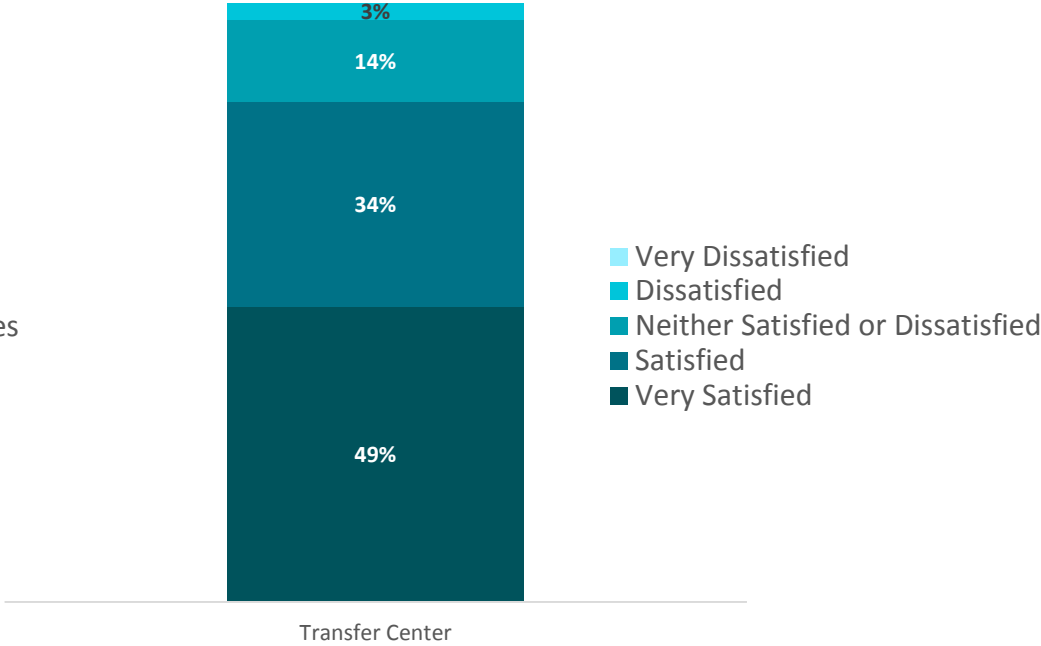
Transfer Center

83% *know of this service*

use of this service



satisfaction with this service

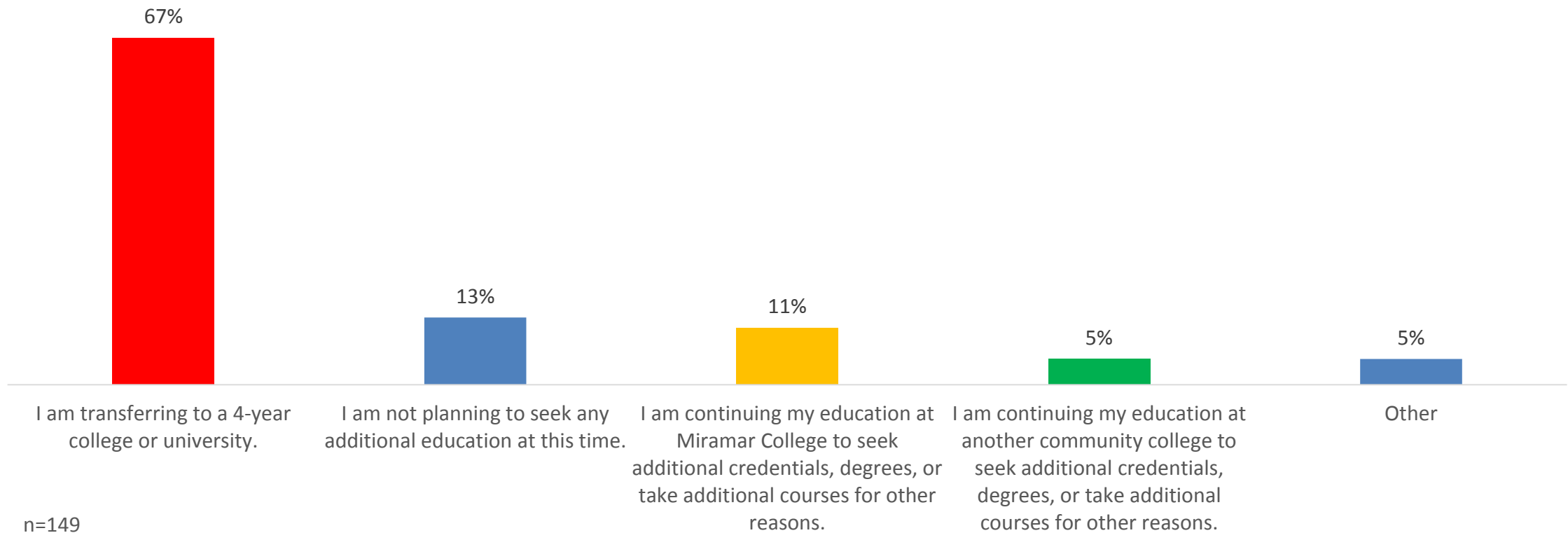


Students' Plans for the Future

- Within the next six months, the majority of respondents plan to continue their education at a 4-year college or university (67%).
- Respondents' six-month employment plans vary.
- Respondents provided a wide array of responses regarding how SDMC has shaped their career and educational plans and opportunities, including helping them meet concrete goals (transfer, enter new career) to helping them with personal improvement (increased knowledge, increased sense of empowerment, greater confidence).

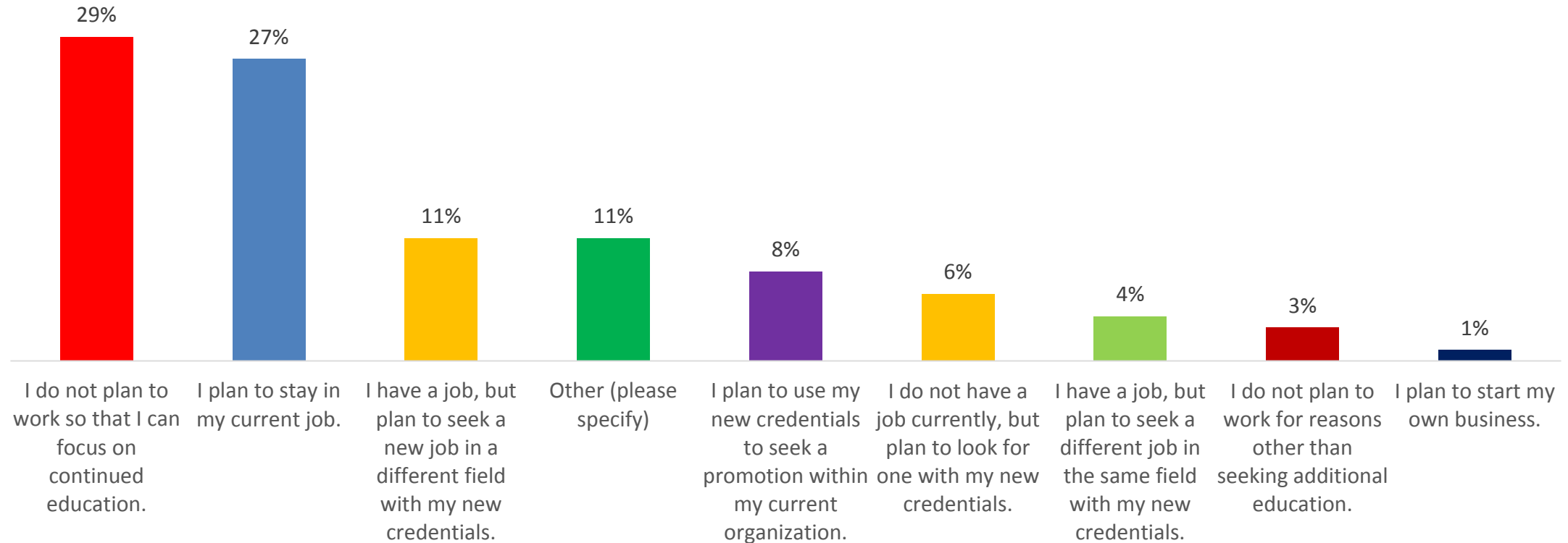
Educational Plans

What are your educational plans for the next 6 months?



Employment Plans

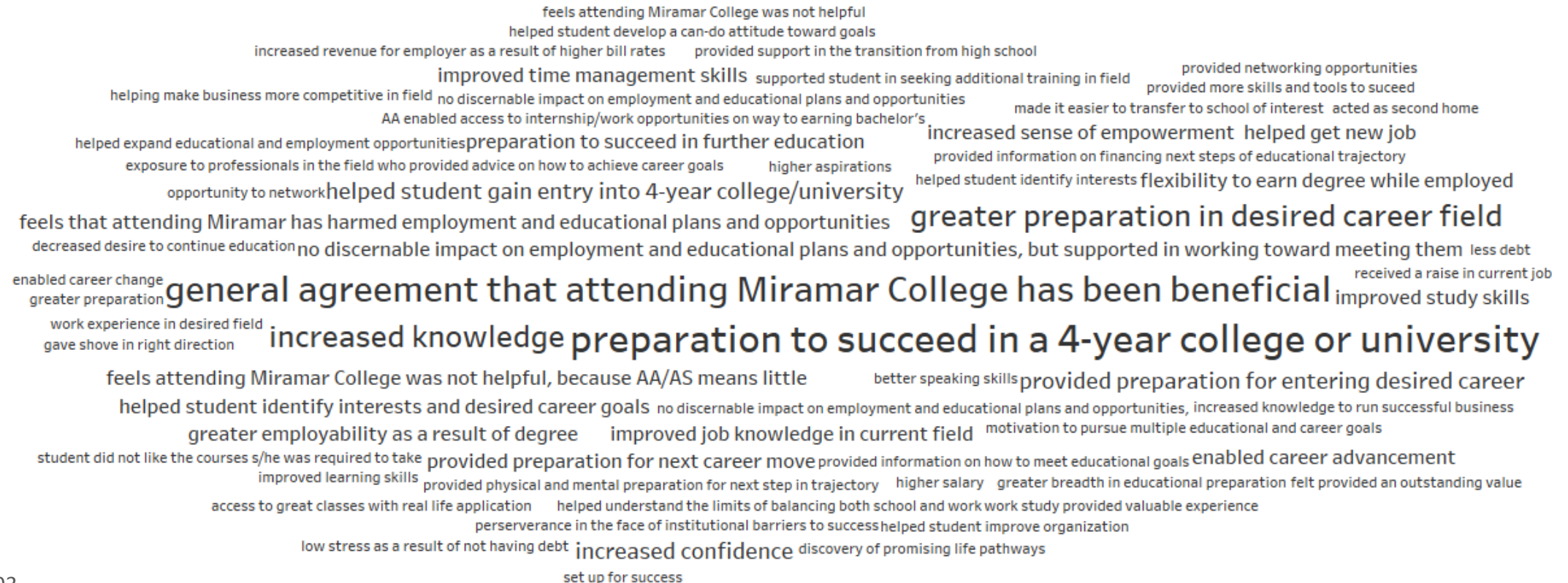
What are your employment plans for the next 6 months?



n=150

Perceptions how SDMC has shaped plans & opportunities

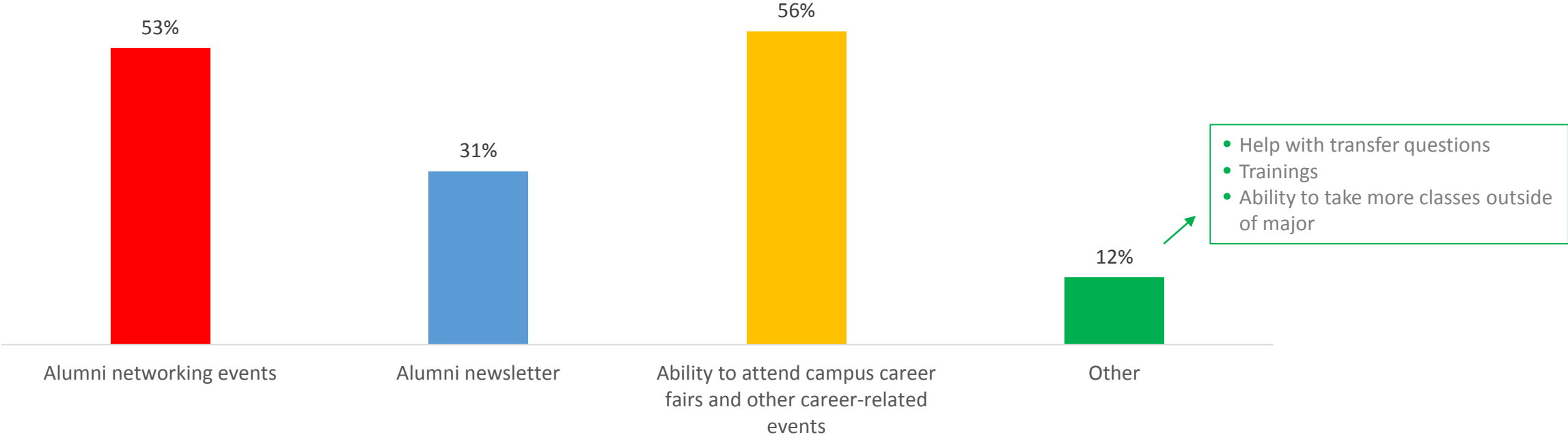
How do you perceive that your experience attending Miramar College has shaped your employment and educational plans and opportunities?



n=93

How Miramar College Can Support Alumni

If you are no longer planning to remain a Miramar College student, which of the following supports and services would be helpful to you?



n=102

Next Steps

- PRIE is currently conducting in-depth interviews and focus groups with students about their experiences at Miramar College, with an eye to what we are doing well and could do better to support the six factors of student success.