

**STAMATS**

*Promises kept.*

# **Recruiting Next Year's Adult Students: Current Trends and Recent Successes**

## **2010 Stamats *Adult StudentsTALK™***

Presented by  
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# About Stamats

Stamats is recognized and respected as the nation's higher education integrated marketing thought leader. Our comprehensive array of innovative services has set the standard for pairing insightful, research-based strategic counsel with compelling creative solutions.

**We promise our clients the highest level of professional service and attention to detail in the industry because, in the end, we know our success is measured entirely by theirs.**

## **Research, Planning, and Consulting Services**

- Image, perception, and brand studies
- Recruiting, marketing, brand, and academic program marketability audits
- Tuition pricing elasticity and brand value studies

## **Creative Services**

- Creative concepting
- Web strategies
- Recruiting and advancement publications



# **Understanding the Adult Student and Their Role in Higher Education**

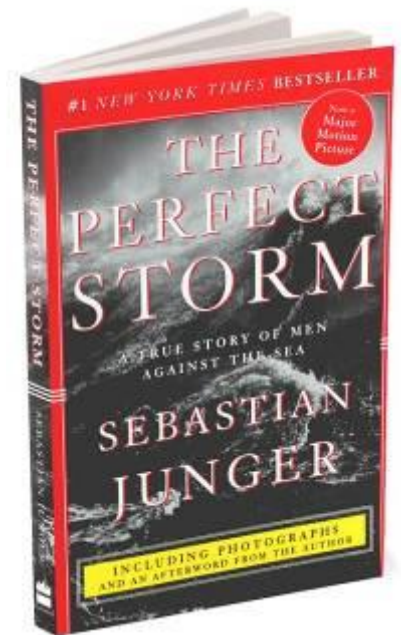


# The Perfect Storm

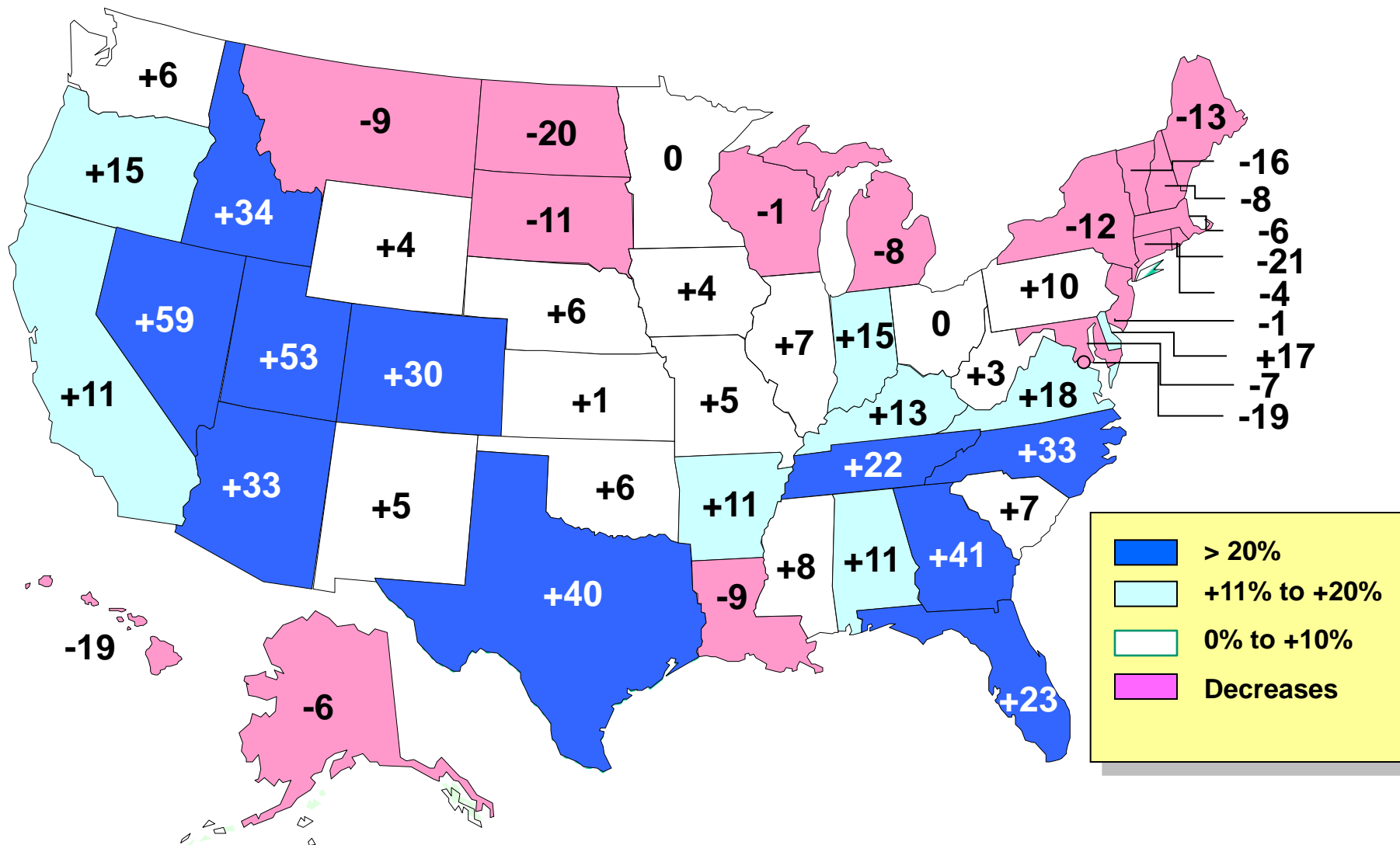
- A confluence of three gales:
  - Changing demography
  - Rising cost to attend
  - Increased competition for students

...and a fourth—the economy

- Add to the confluence:
  - Colleges and universities increasingly unable (unwilling) to make the tough decisions that will truly differentiate them from their competitors
  - The rise in for-profit education and their intentional efforts to serve underserved populations



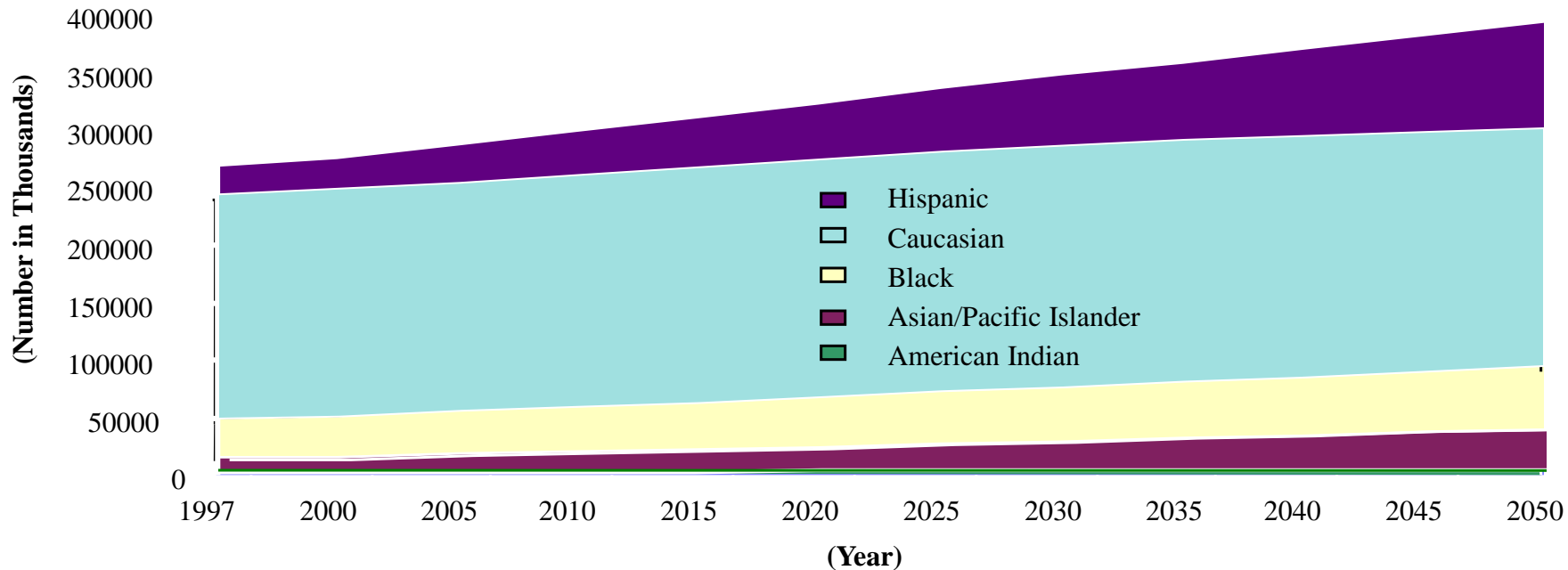
# Projected Change in H.S. Graduates to 2018 – 19



Source: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, December 2008



# U.S. Population Growth by Ethnicity



- Minority population rising to about 50% of population by 2050
- 76% of Asian Americans have college degrees (only 67% of whites, 9% of blacks, and 7% of Hispanics have degrees)

Sources: *U.S. Census Data, The College Board*



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

**Between 2007 and 2018, enrollment is projected to increase:**

9% for students who are 18 to 24 years old

25% for students who are 25 to 34 years old

12% for students who are 35 years old and over

**More of the story:**

12% for undergraduate students

18% for graduate students

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



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

## And even more of the story:

4% for students who are white

26% for students who are black

38% for students who are Hispanic

29% for students who are Asian or Pacific Islander

32% for students who are American Indian or Alaska Native

14% for students who are nonresident aliens



# Education Required for Professional Success

- Recent polls by Public Agenda indicate 55% of Americans consider higher education “absolutely necessary for success” in today’s economy, a 24% increase from a similar poll in 2000
- Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce estimates:
  - 2018-63% of all jobs will require some form of postsecondary education or training
  - mid-’70s-less than 30% of jobs required anything beyond a high school diploma
- Bureau of Labor statistics (2009)
  - 5.2% of four-year college graduates were unemployed
  - 9.7% unemployment for those with only a high school diploma

Jamie Merisotis – CEO/President Lumina Foundation



# For-Profit Institutions

- 9% of all U.S. four-year college and graduate students attend for-profit institutions
  - About 22% of two-year college students attend for-profits
- U of Phoenix is America's biggest college—nearly 400,000 students
- 37% of students at for-profits are minorities, and almost 50% are first generation in their families to pursue higher education
- Spend up to one-third of the operational budget on marketing
  - Apollo Group spent \$228.6 million in one quarter to capitalize on the recession.



**Source:** *Eduventures and Chronicle 2020: Students*



# Today's Adult Students

## No Clear Definition

21-year-old working full-time, taking part-time classes

37-year-old widow returning to college full-time

53-year-old returning to school via NAFTA

30-year-old veteran wanting to take advantage of his educational benefits

44-year-old professional earning a master's degree via an evening program

19-year-old single mom living at home with parents and working full-time job while attending evening classes

67-year-old taking classes for personal enrichment

39-year-old earning a certificate through the local college for work



# 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



# So What...

We are more important than we have ever been before,

AND

many senior administrators are (finally) realizing it!



# BUT...

It will be more difficult than it has been before.  
Gone are the days of build it and they will come

**OR**

being the only game in town.

Today's successful adult student  
programs will need to be

**innovative**, **nimble**, and **progressive** in their thinking.

It is truly a time for creating the next phase  
of adult education.



**2010 Stamats *Adult Students TALK™*  
Research**



# Methodology and Audience Information



# Methodology

- A web-based survey of 700 adults **interested in continuing their education** (in 2009 we surveyed 408 participants)
- The sample was intentionally drawn to look at both undergraduate- and graduate-degree seekers
- Respondents were members of an online panel and were:
  - Between the ages of 25 and 54
  - Currently at a level of education that was a GED/high school diploma or higher but had not yet completed a graduate degree
  - Somewhat or very likely to continue their education within the next three years

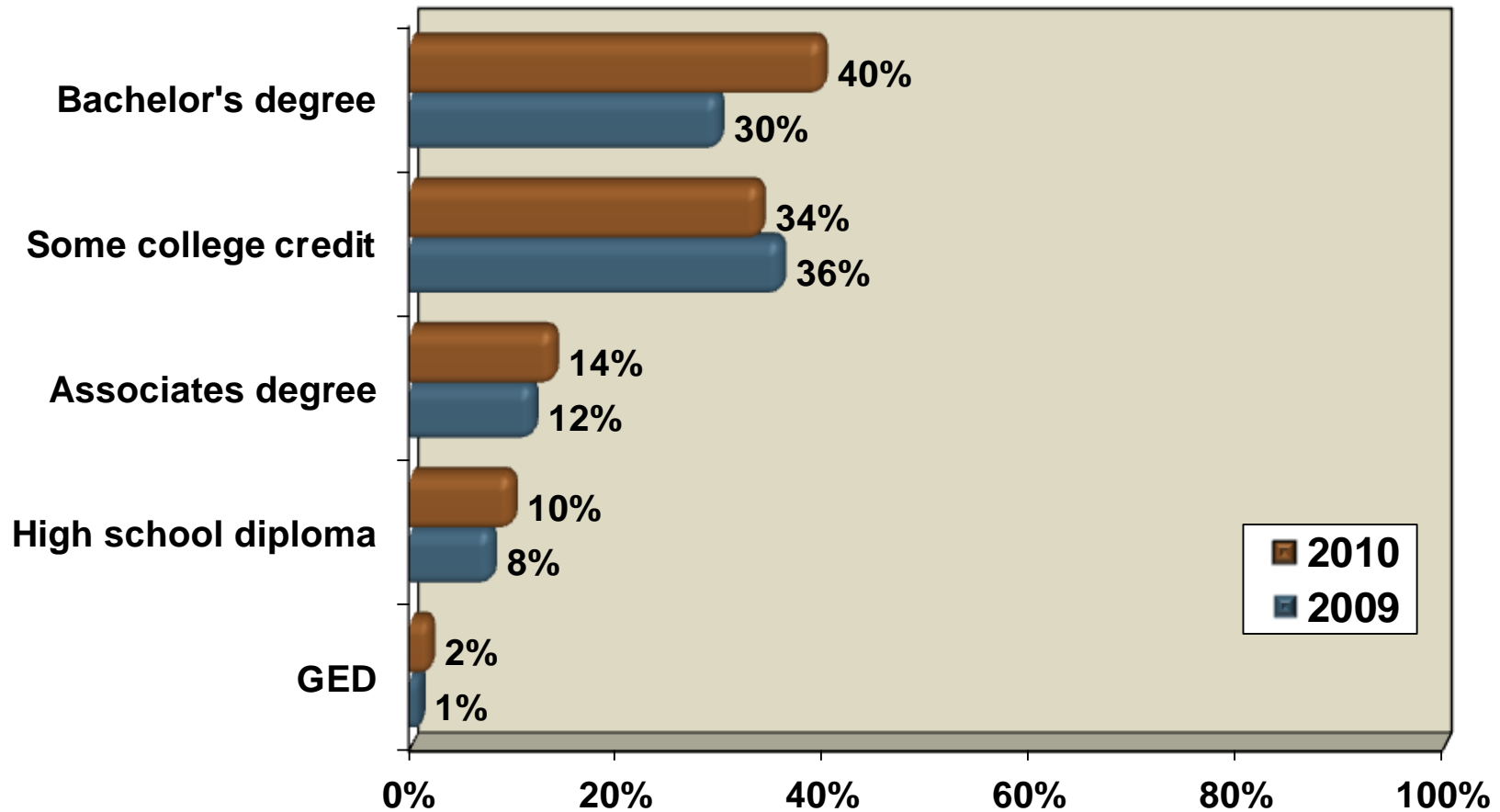


# Methodology

- To better reflect U.S. Census data, the 2010 survey set quotas for completed interviews on the following demographics:
  - Gender (50% female; 50% male)
  - Age (3 age brackets)
  - Regions
  - Education level (50% had a technical, associate, or bachelor's degree; 50% did not)
  - There are meaningful differences in the 2010 to 2009 results
- In addition, questions in the survey instrument were updated
- Together, these changes do not make it possible to track data on every question



# Demographics—Education Level of Respondent

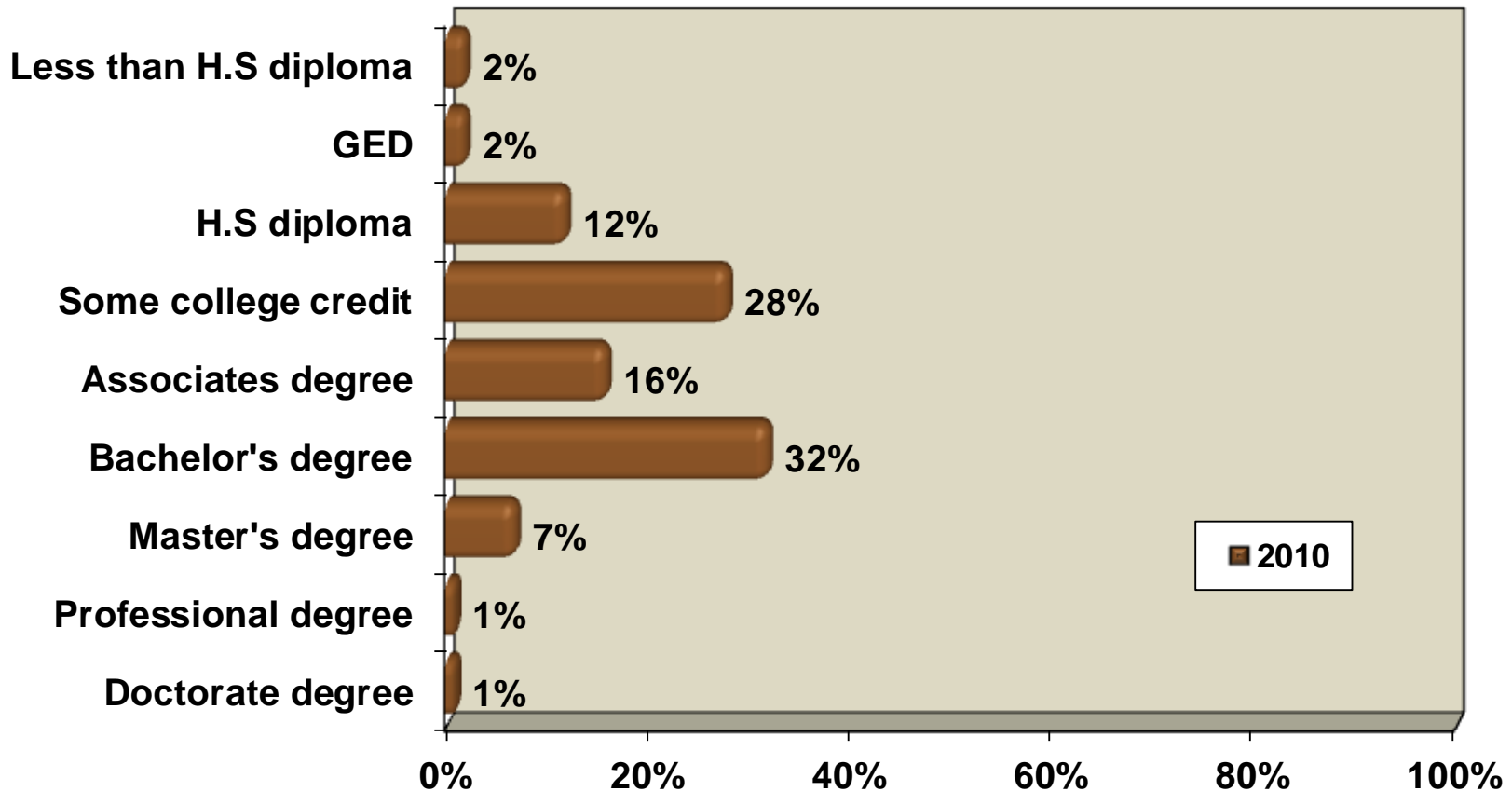


- In 2010, a quota for education level was introduced, whereas this was not the case in the 2009 survey; thus, a larger number of participants with a bachelor's degree in 2010



# Demographics—Education Level of Spouse

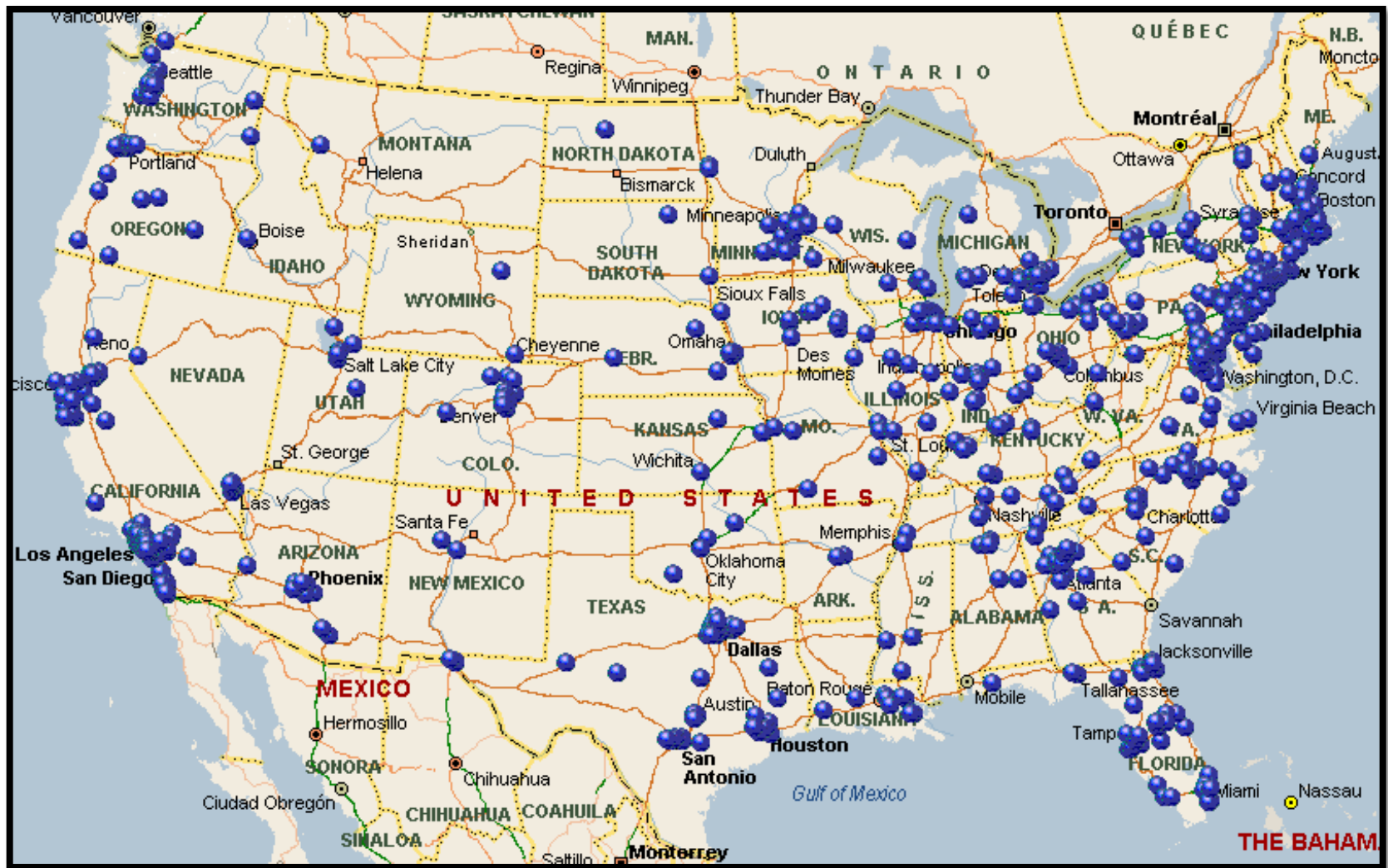
What is the highest level of education held by your spouse?



- Of the married students going back to school, 6 in 10 have a spouse with less than a bachelor's degree; those returning to school could be the only member of the household with a four-year degree



# Geographic Distribution of Respondents



Surveys completed in Hawaii and Alaska as well

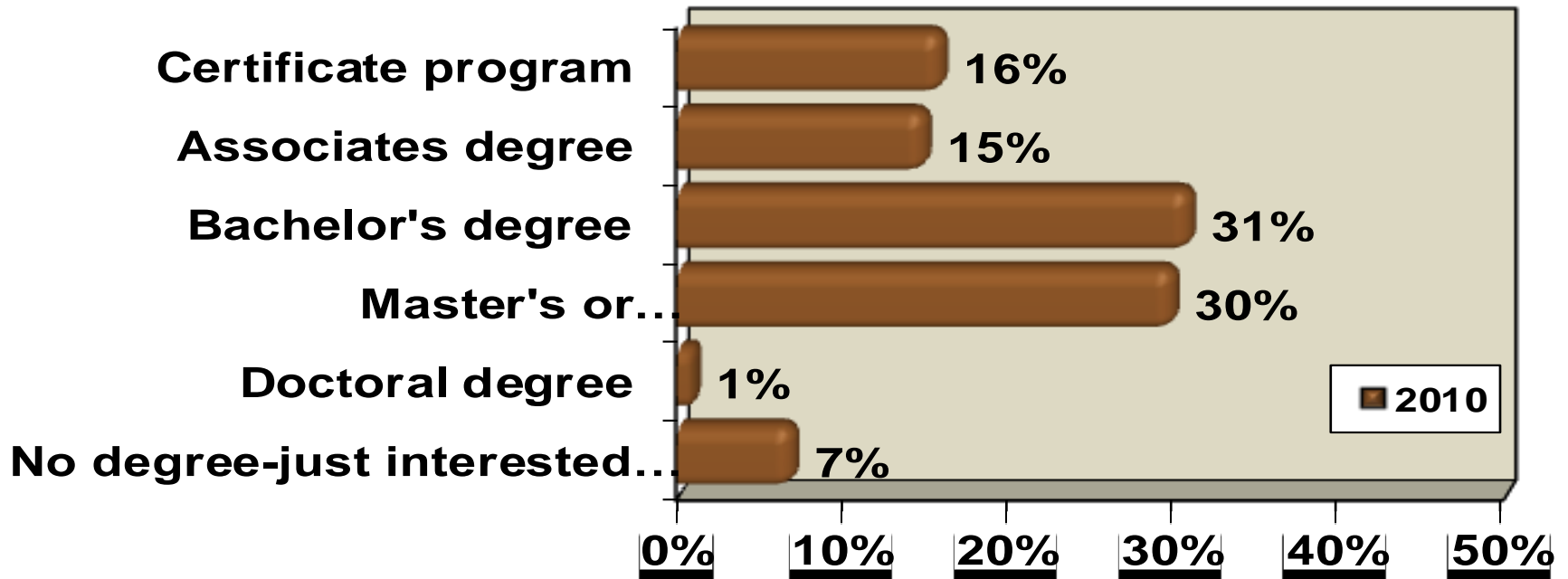


# **2010 *Adult Students* TALK™ Results**



# Degree of Interest

What type of degree are you likely to pursue?



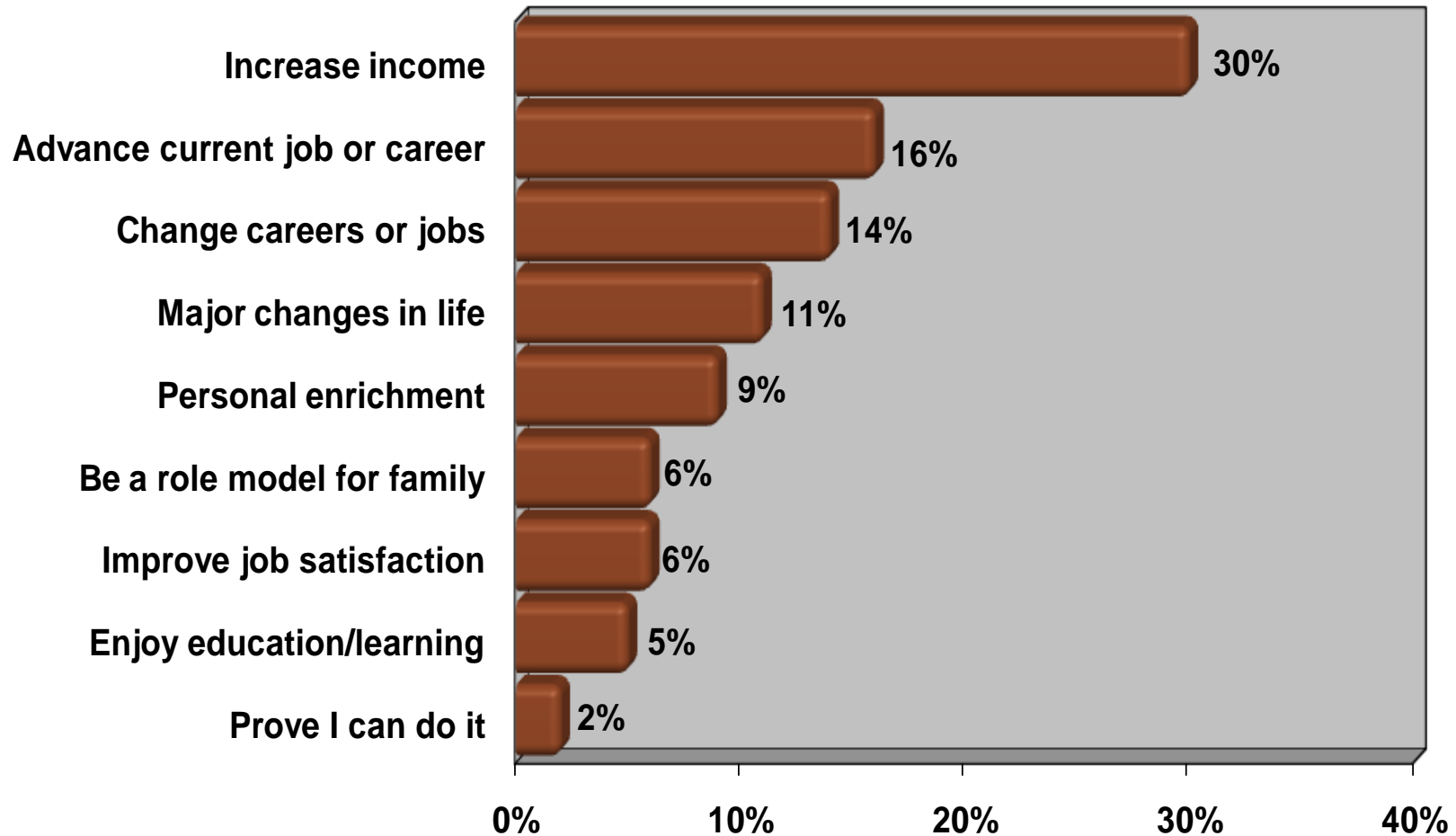
- Equal proportion of students interested in getting a bachelor's or a master's degree in 2010



# Certificate Program



# Factor Importance Motivations for Education: Certificate Students

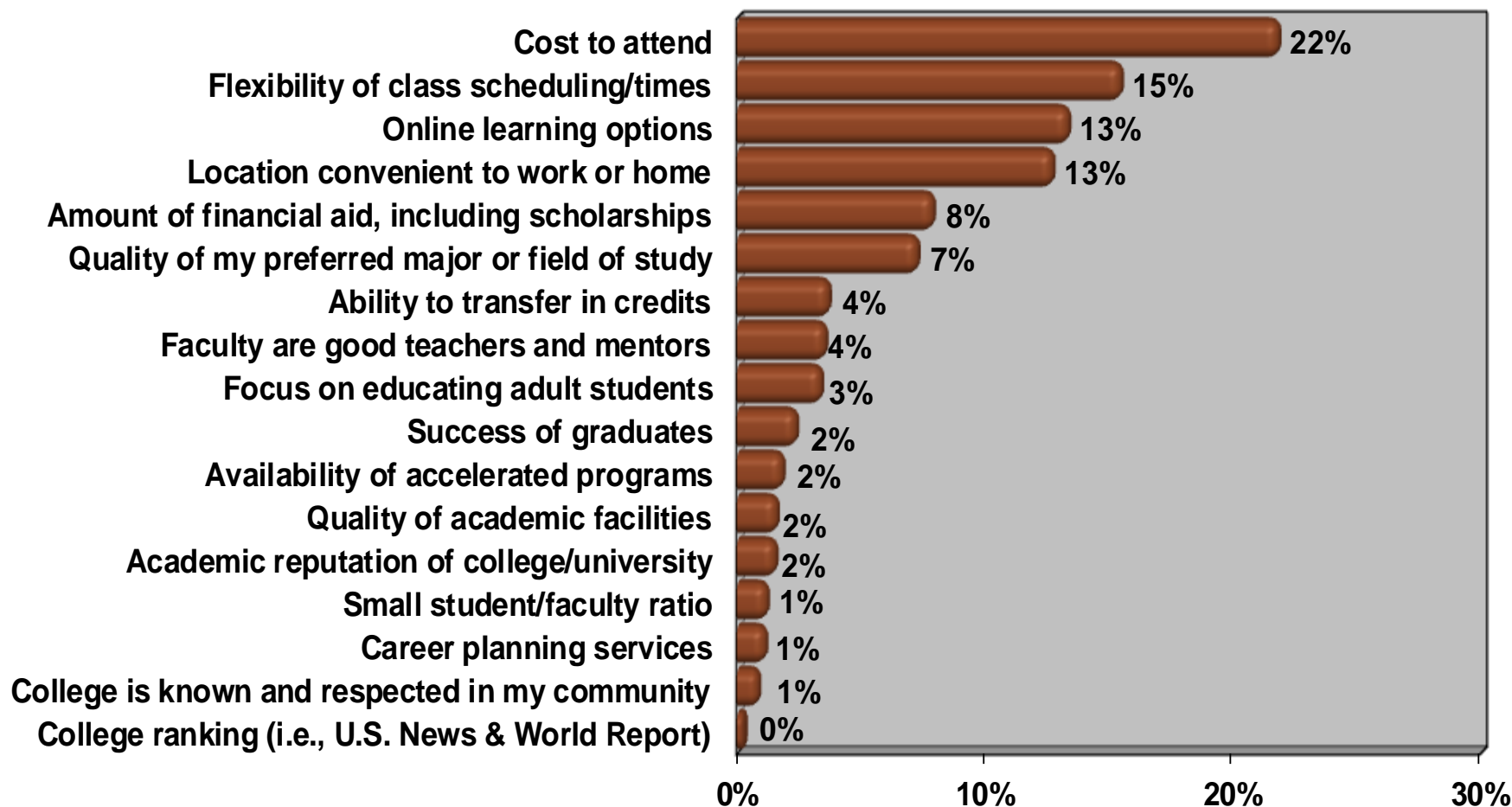


- Monetary gain is the main motivation for certificate seekers, followed by advancing their career
- Personal enrichment is one-third as important as increasing the student's income

Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Factor Importance When Selecting Colleges to Consider: Certificate Students



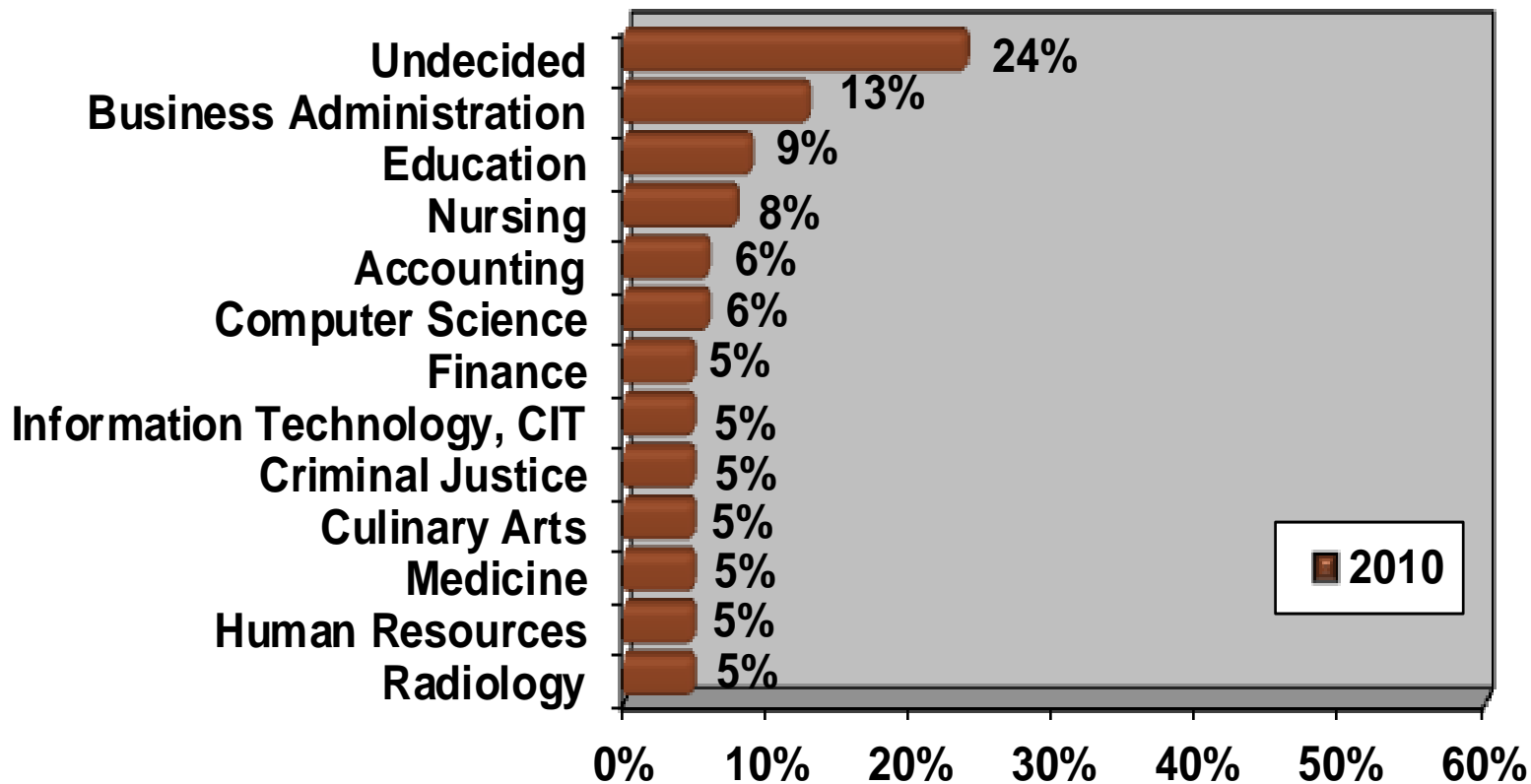
- Cost determined to be the most important factor overall, followed by flexibility in class scheduling and class times

Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Certificate Programs of Interest (*Top Mentions*)

What majors might you consider?

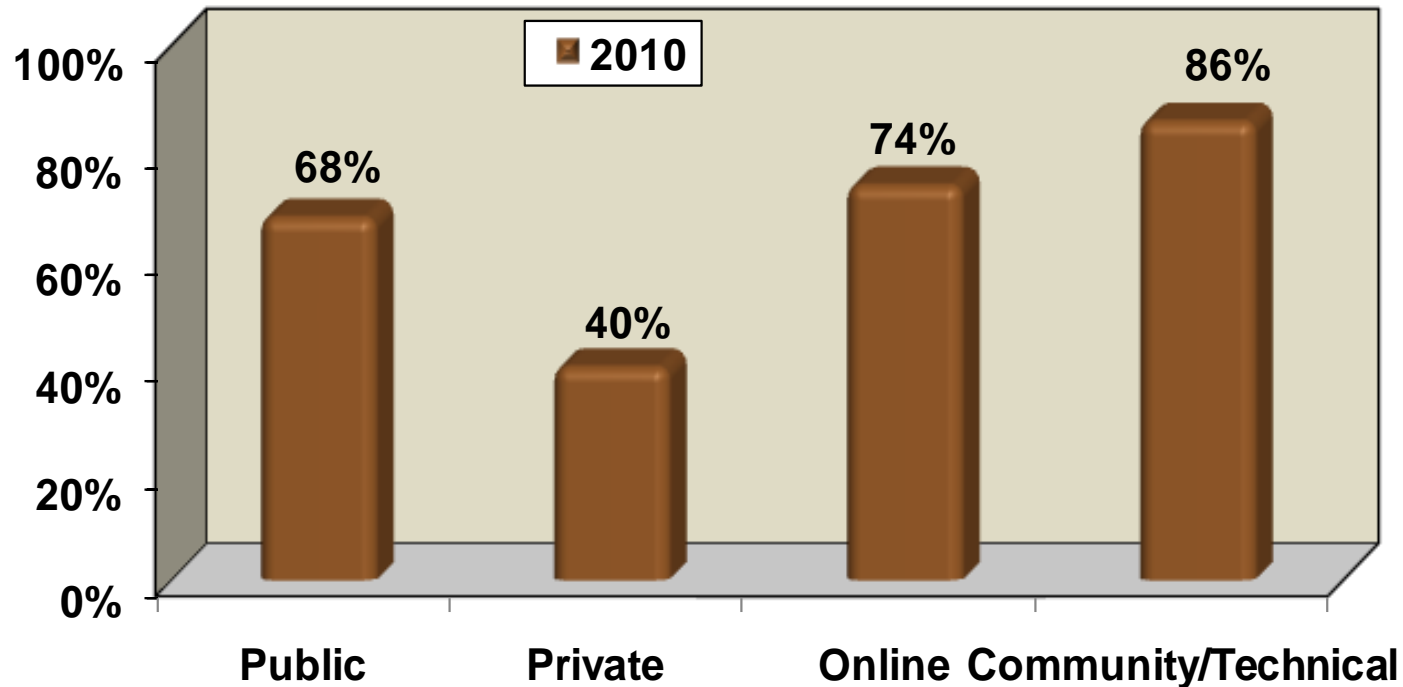


Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Preferred Type of School: Certificate Students

Percent who would consider an institution that is:

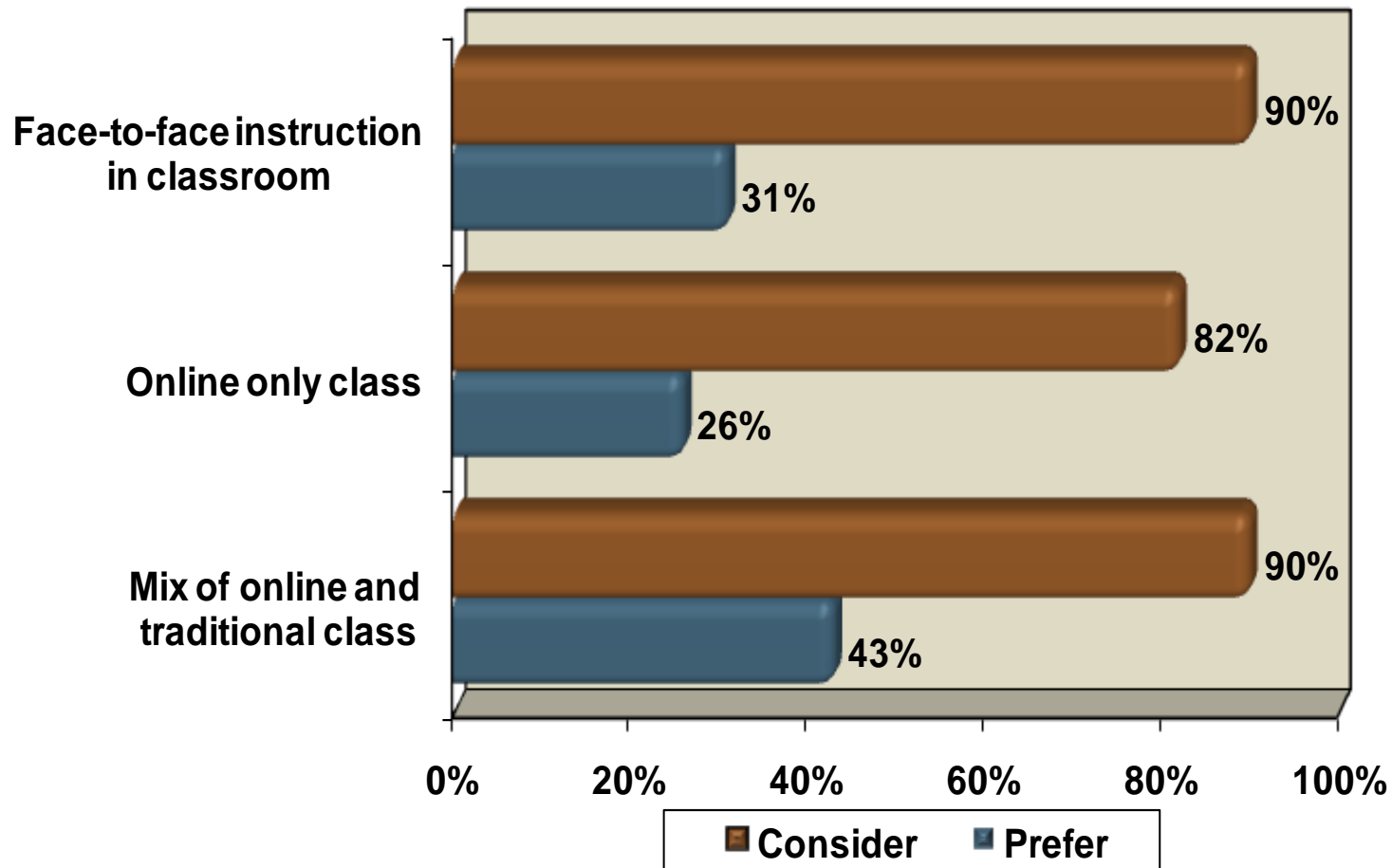


- Community and technical schools as well as online degree programs are widely considered the place to get a certificate

Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Preferred Course Format: Certificate Students

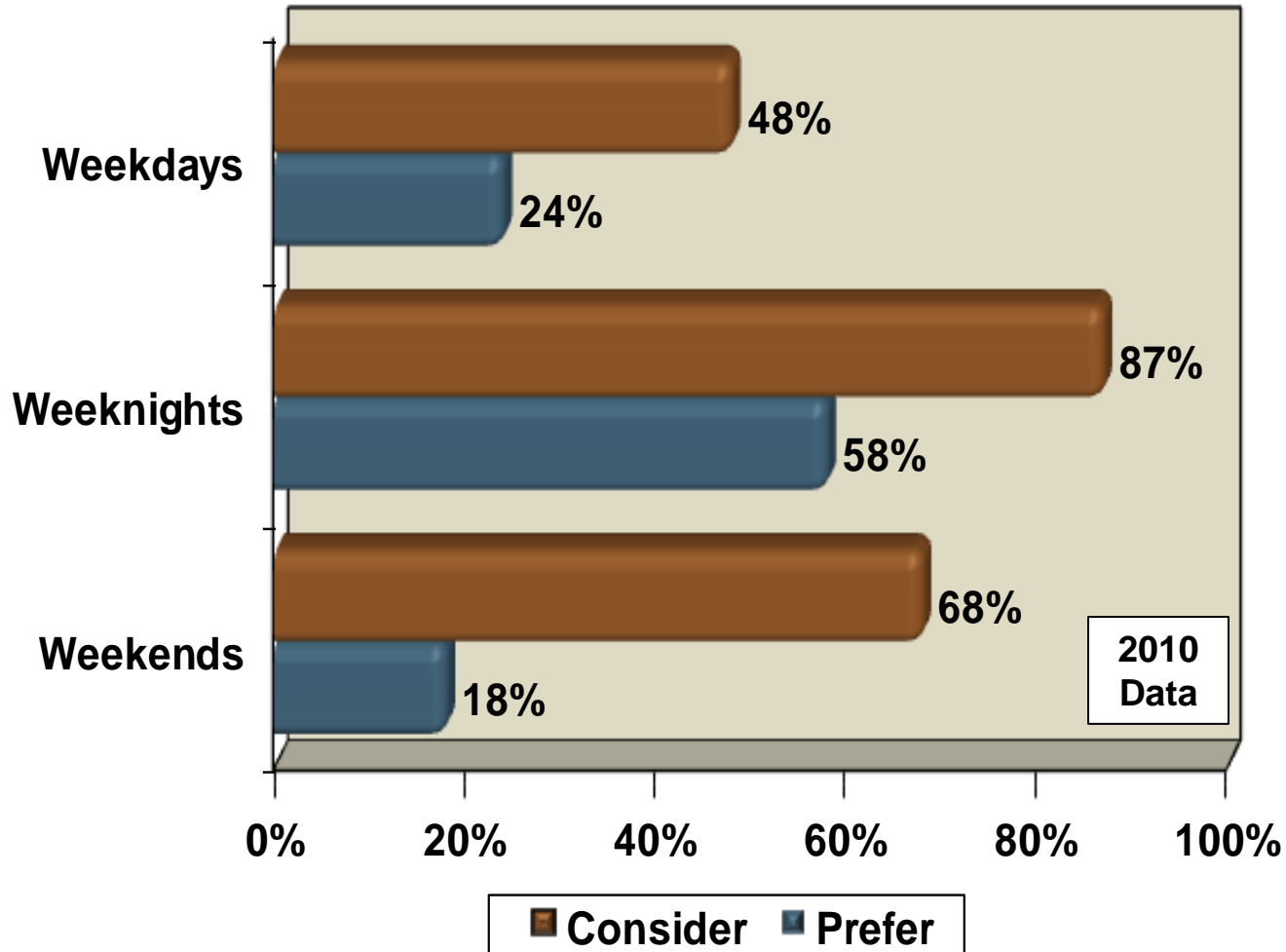


- Certificate seekers consider all course formats in nearly equal numbers
- Course preference is for a mix of online and traditional classroom time

Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Preferred Class Time: Certificate Students



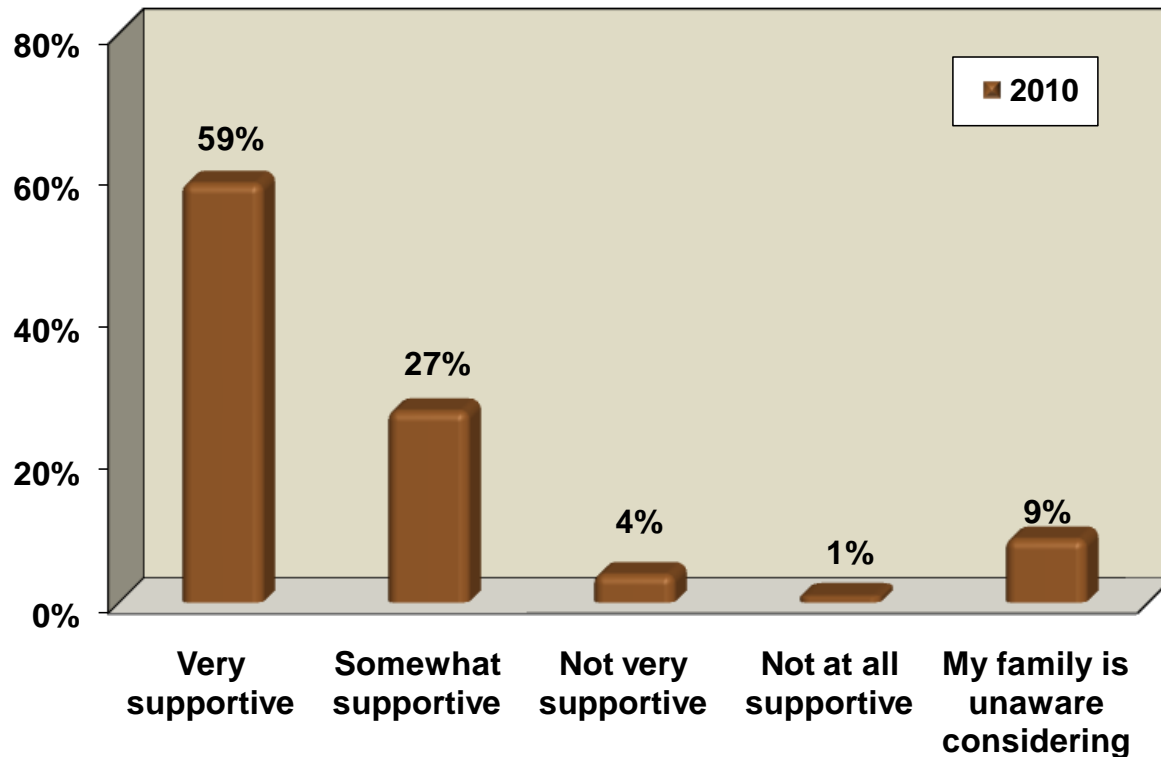
- Weeknights are widely considered and what the majority prefer for achieving a certificate degree

Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Support of Family in College Plans: Certificate Students

In general, how supportive is your immediate family about your decision to continue your education?



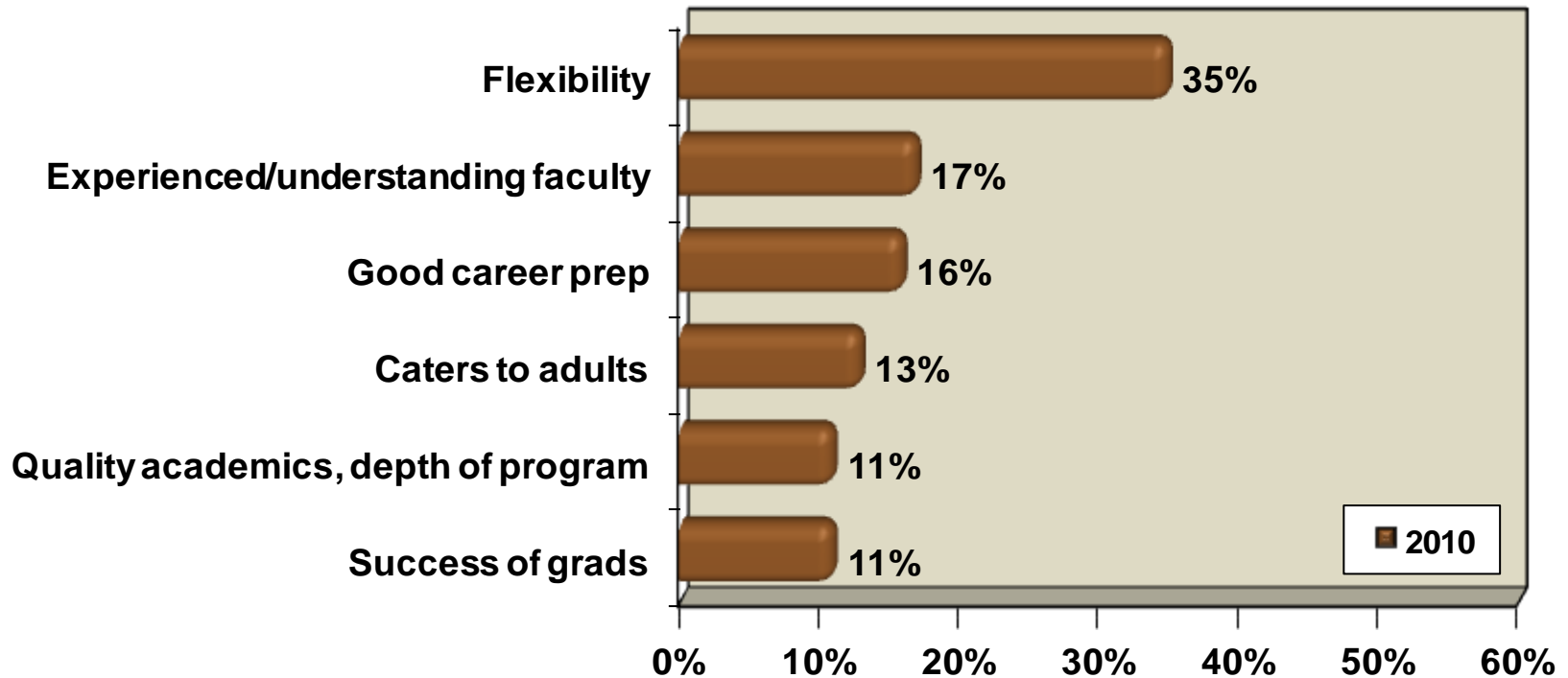
- Families are largely supportive of student's desire to seek an educational certificate

Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Defining a Quality Adult Education Program: Certificate Students–Unaided Responses

When thinking about the quality of a college's adult education program, how would you define the quality of a program?



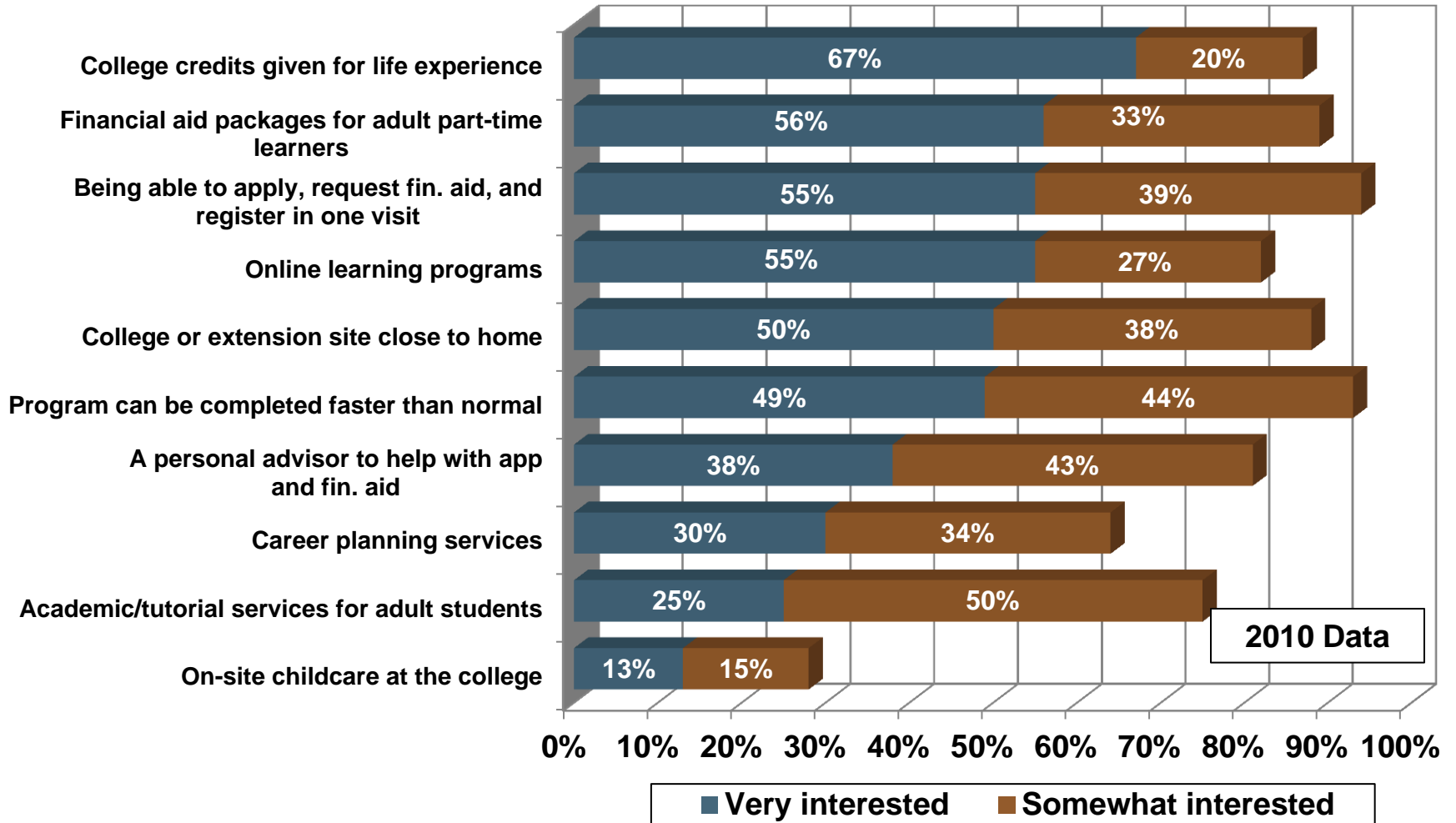
- Flexibility in scheduling largely defines quality of an adult education program for certificate seekers

Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



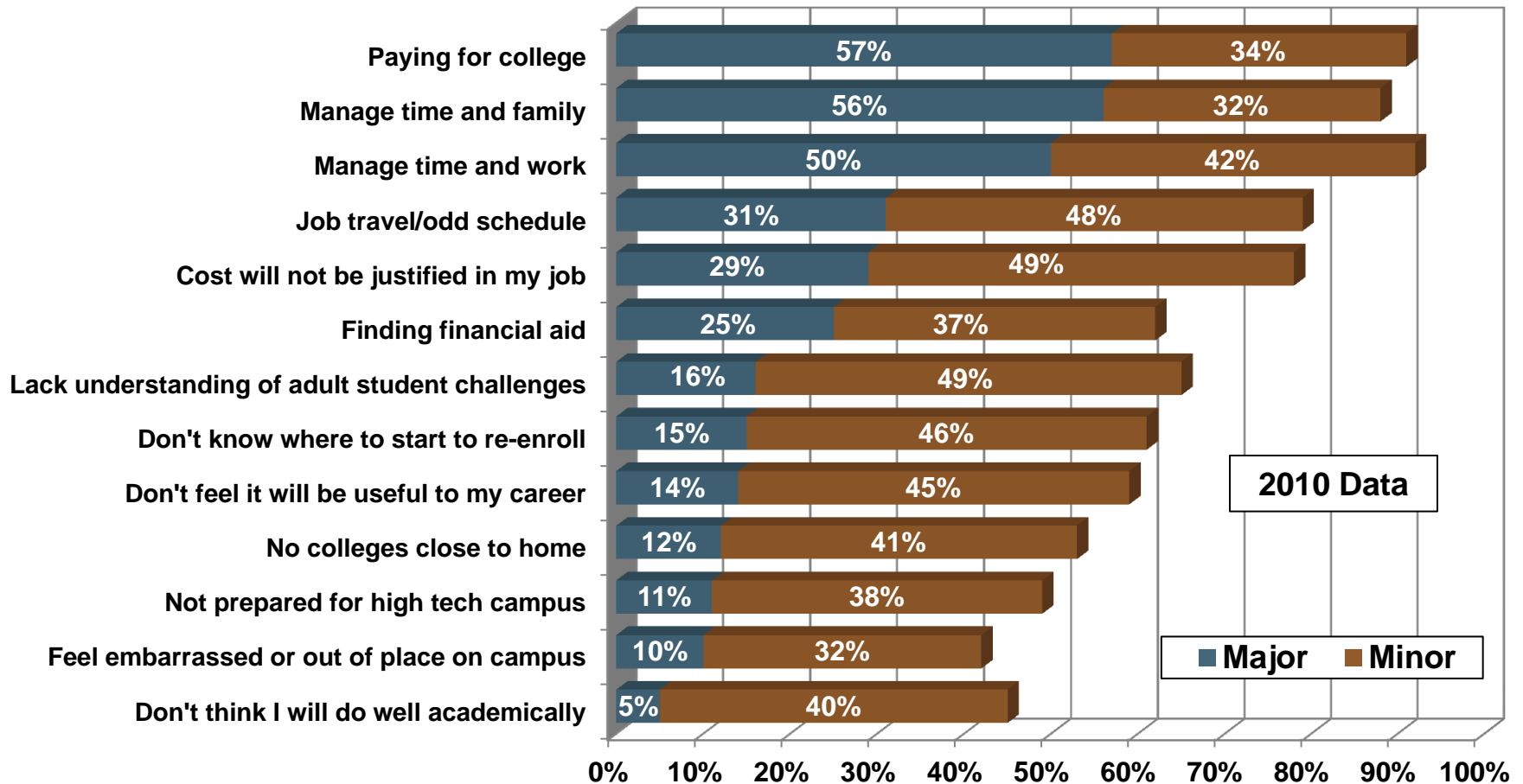
# Adult Services to Consider: Certificate Students

For each option, please indicate your interest level in a college that provides this option.



# Concerns of Adult Students: Certificate Students

For each reason, please indicate how much of a concern the item is to you.

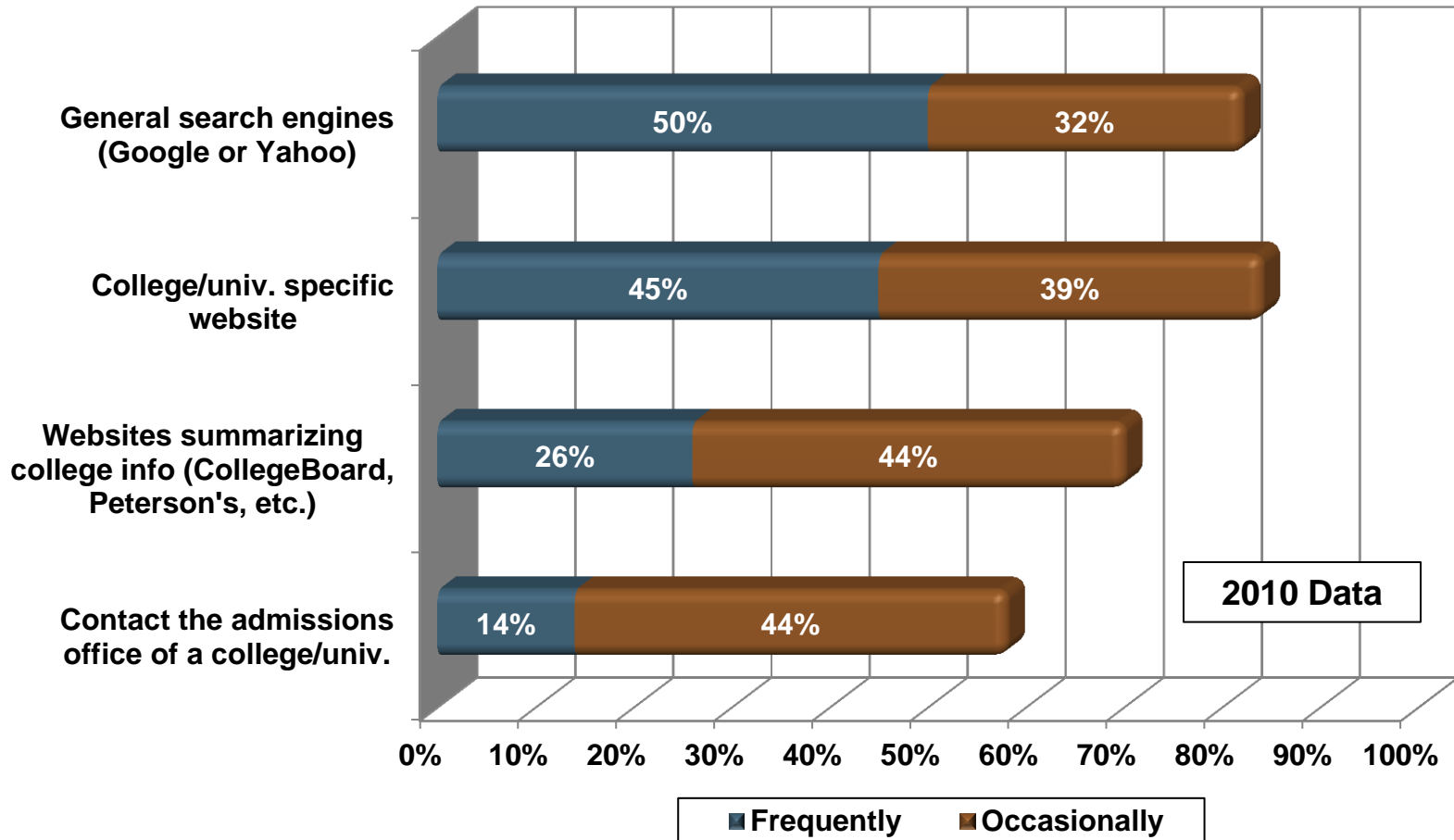


Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Sources of Information: Certificate Students

How frequently would you use the following information sources in your search for a college or university?

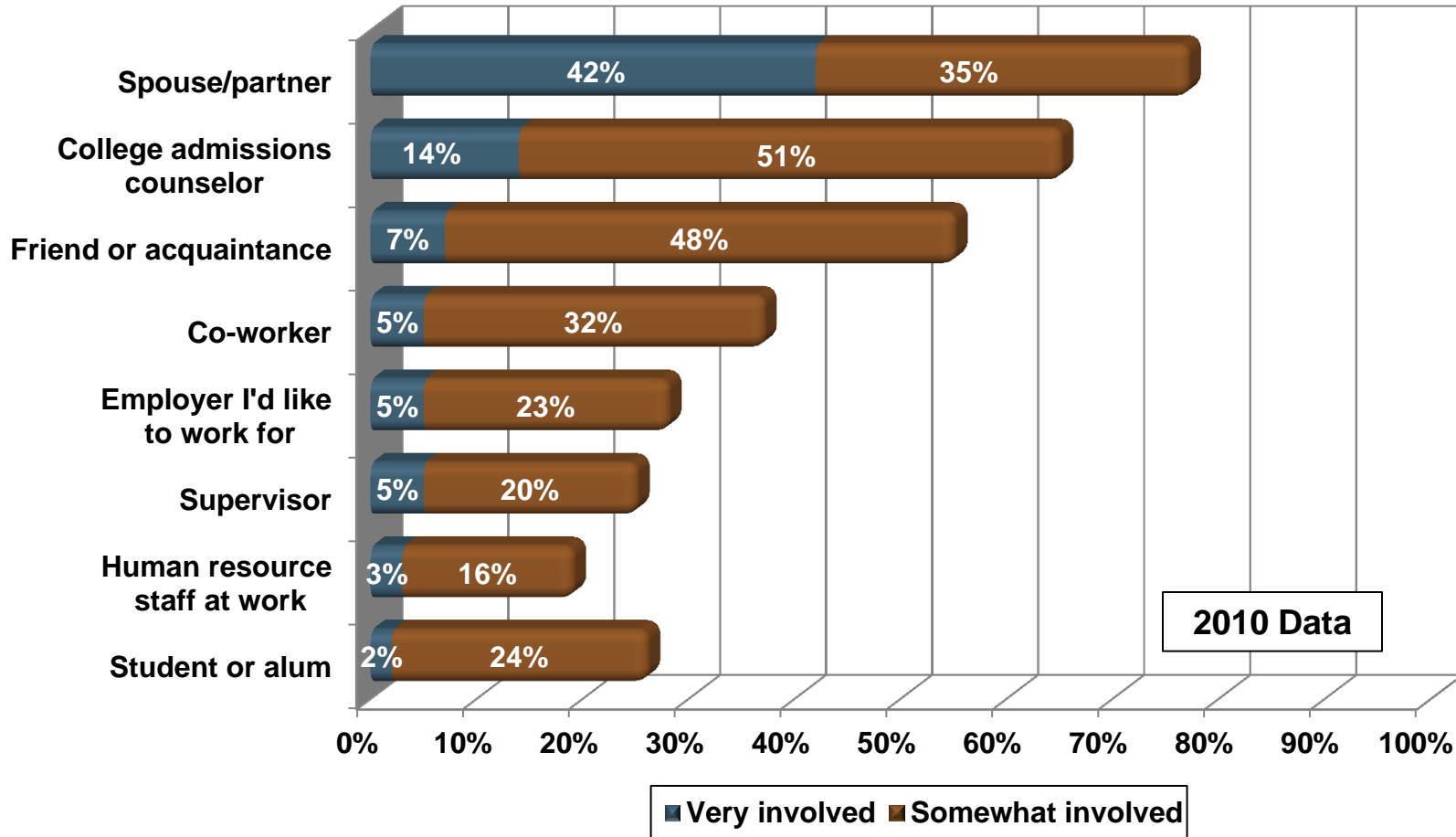


Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Influencers: Certificate Students

Please indicate how involved each of the following people will be in your choice of a college.



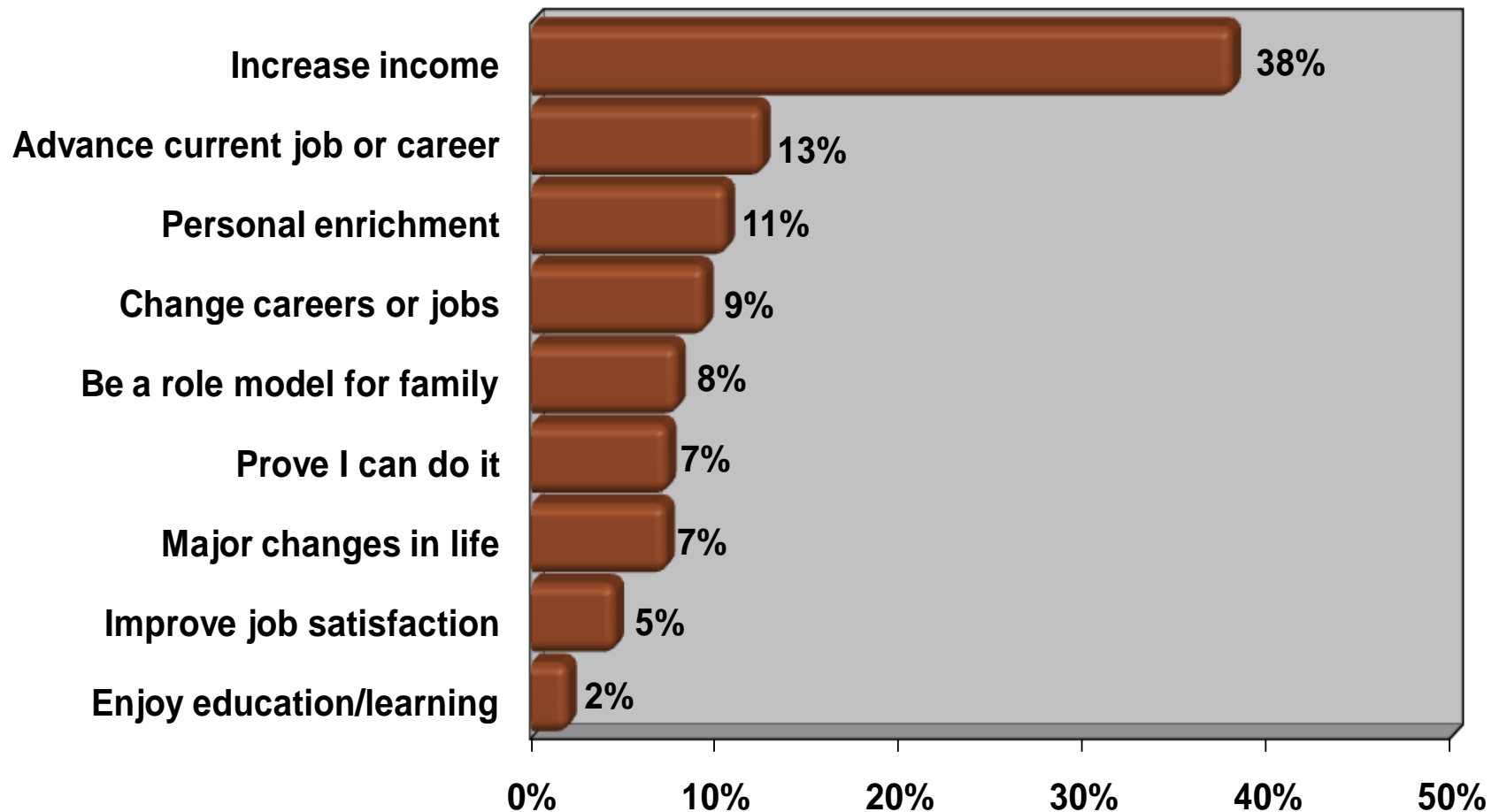
Base: Certificate program seekers (n=111)



# Associate Degree Seekers



# Factor Importance Motivations for Education: Associate Degree Students

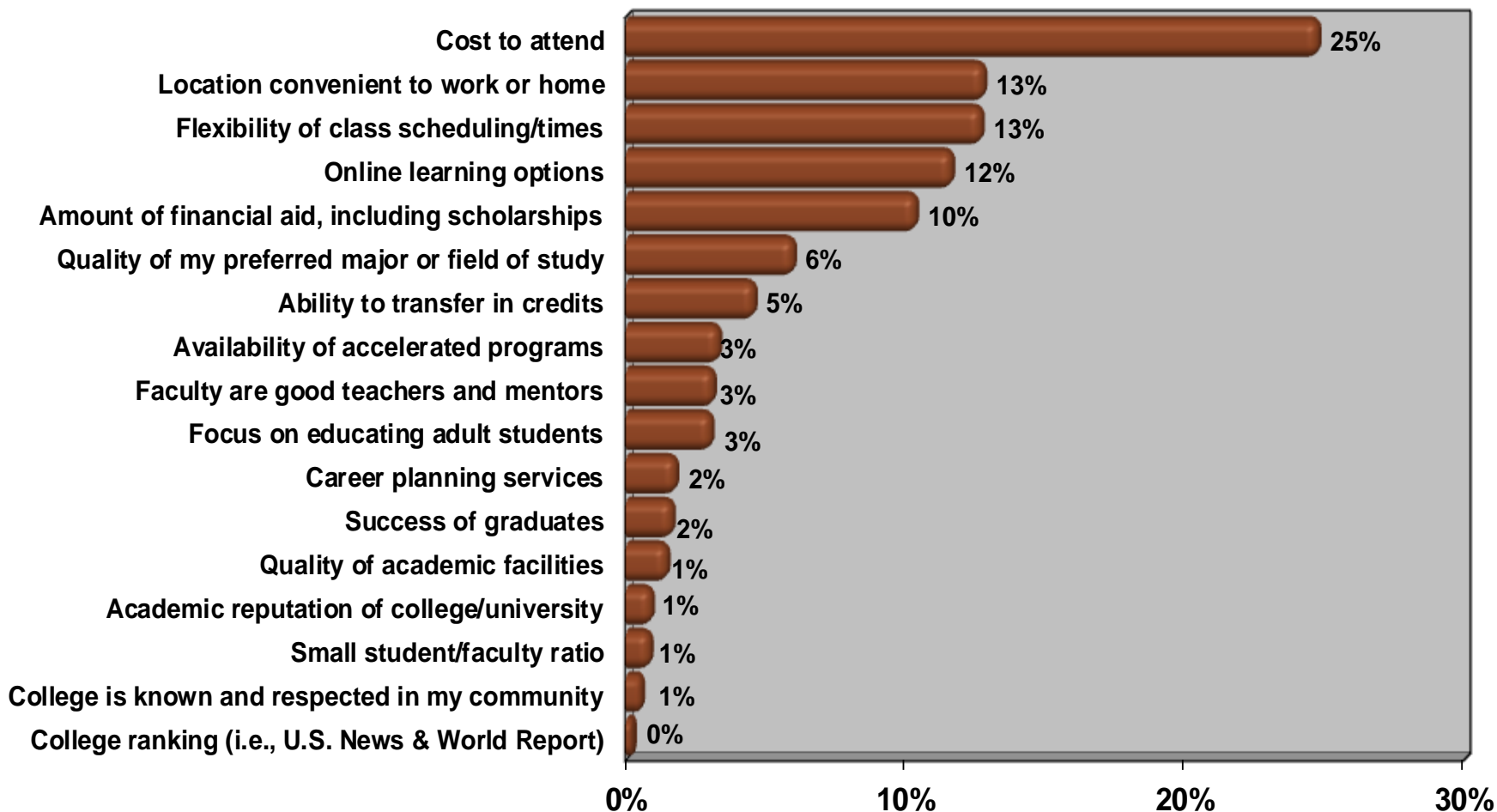


- Monetary gain is the main motivation for associate degree seekers
- Advancing career is one-third as important as increasing income

Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



# Factor Importance When Selecting Colleges to Consider: Associate Degree Students

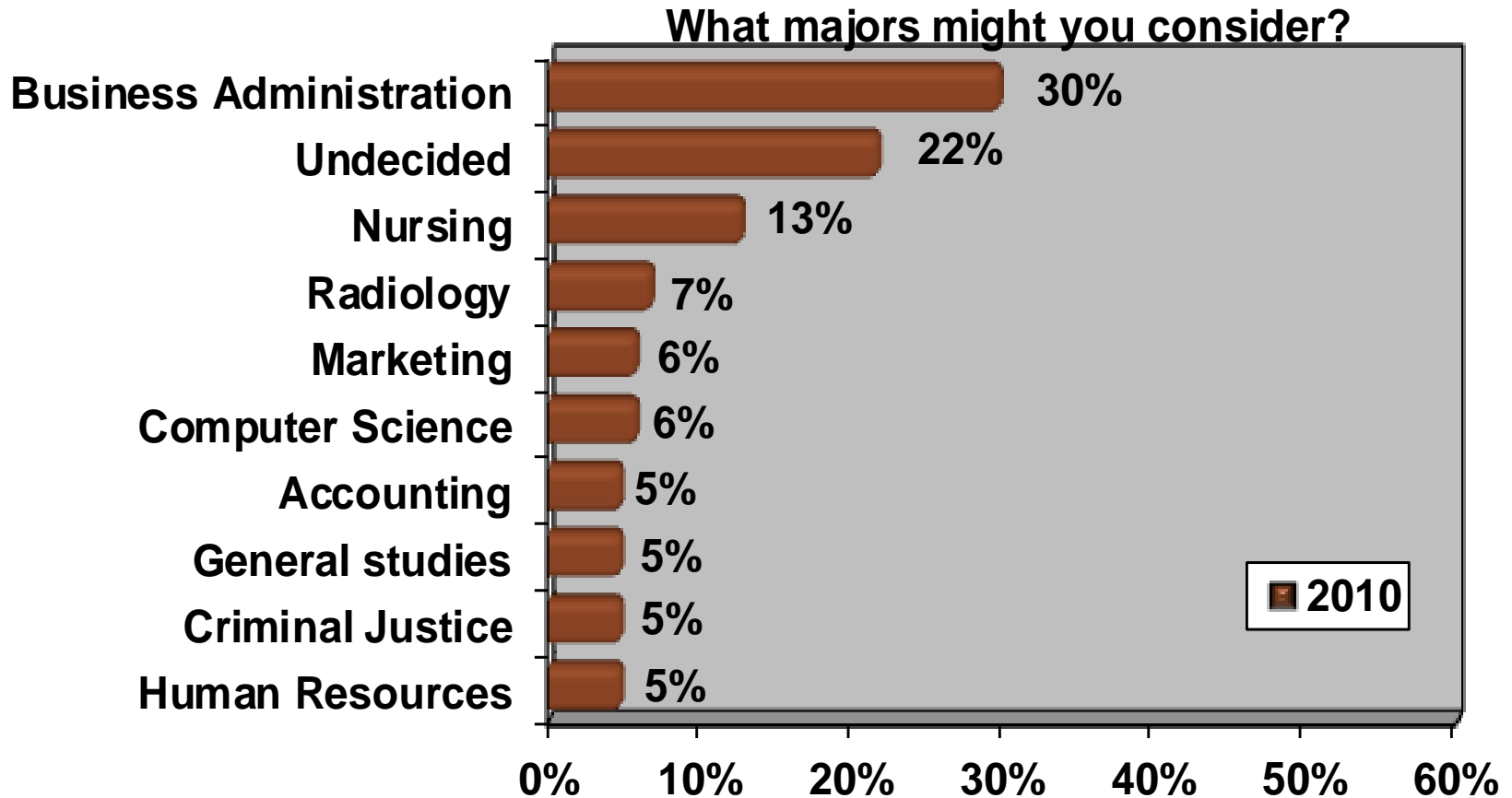


- Cost determined to be the most important factor overall; location to home or work is half as important as the cost to attend

Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



# Associate Programs of Interest (*Top Mentions*)



- Business majors drive interest in associates degree programs. Education and nursing continue to be staples for associate degrees

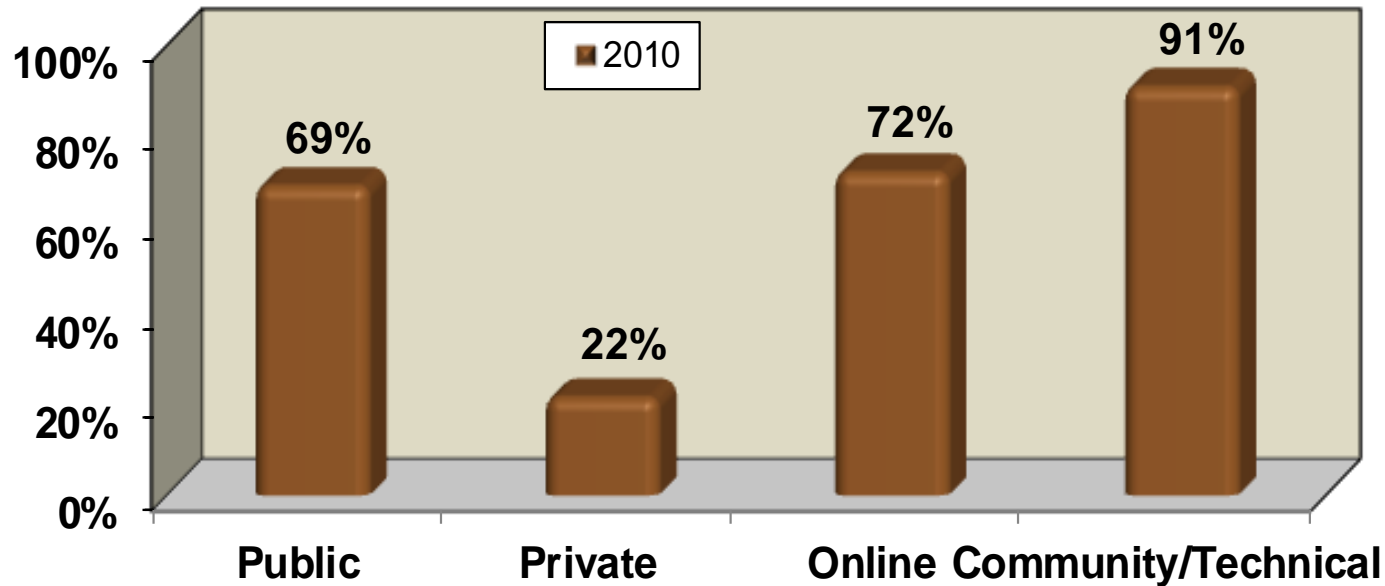
Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



# Preferred Type of School: Associate Degree Students

Would you consider going to a...?

*"Yes" responses only*

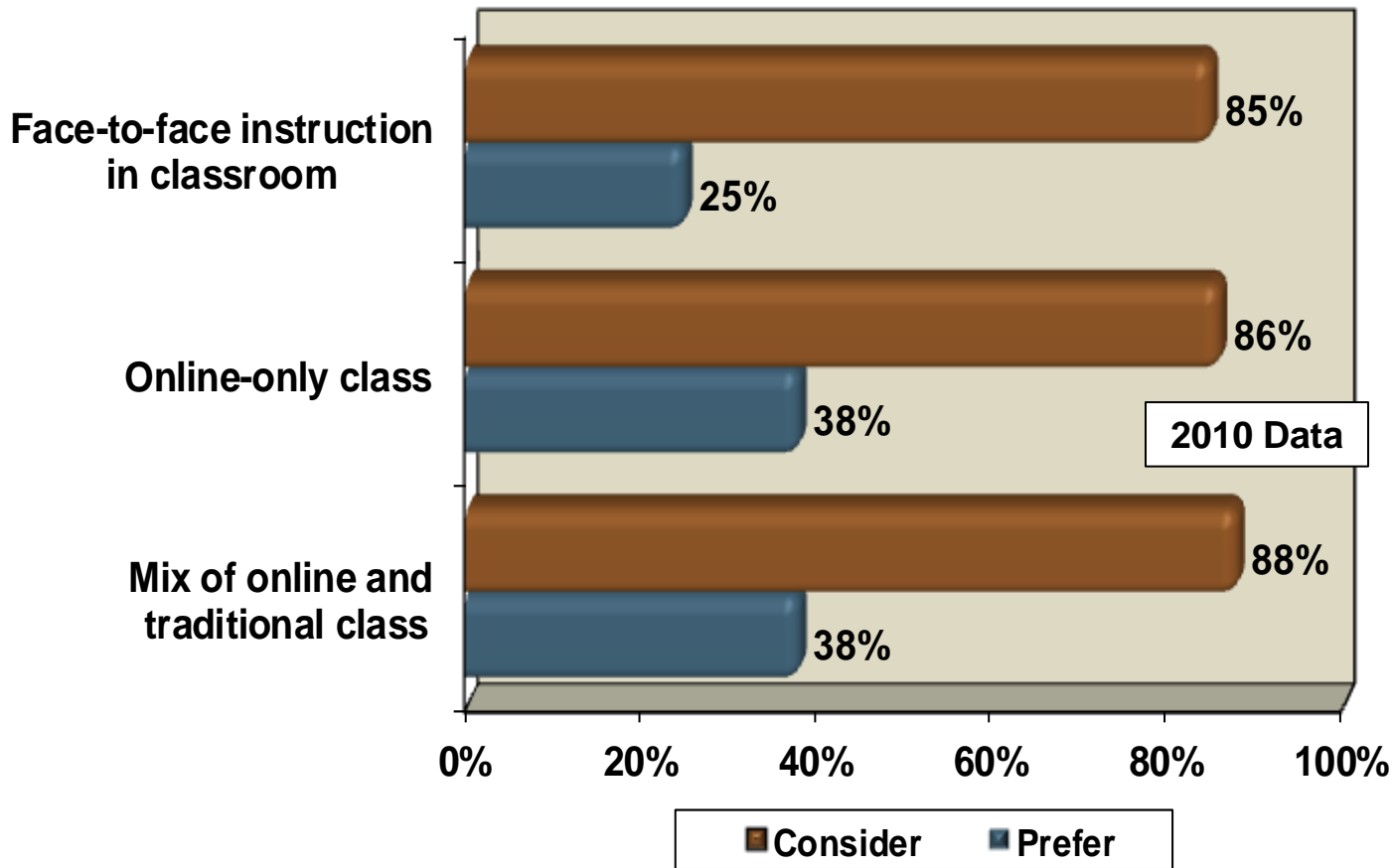


- Community and technical colleges are widely preferred for an associates degree; online degree options are as popular as public schools
- Very few consider a private school for an associates degree

Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



# Preferred Course Format: Associate Degree Students

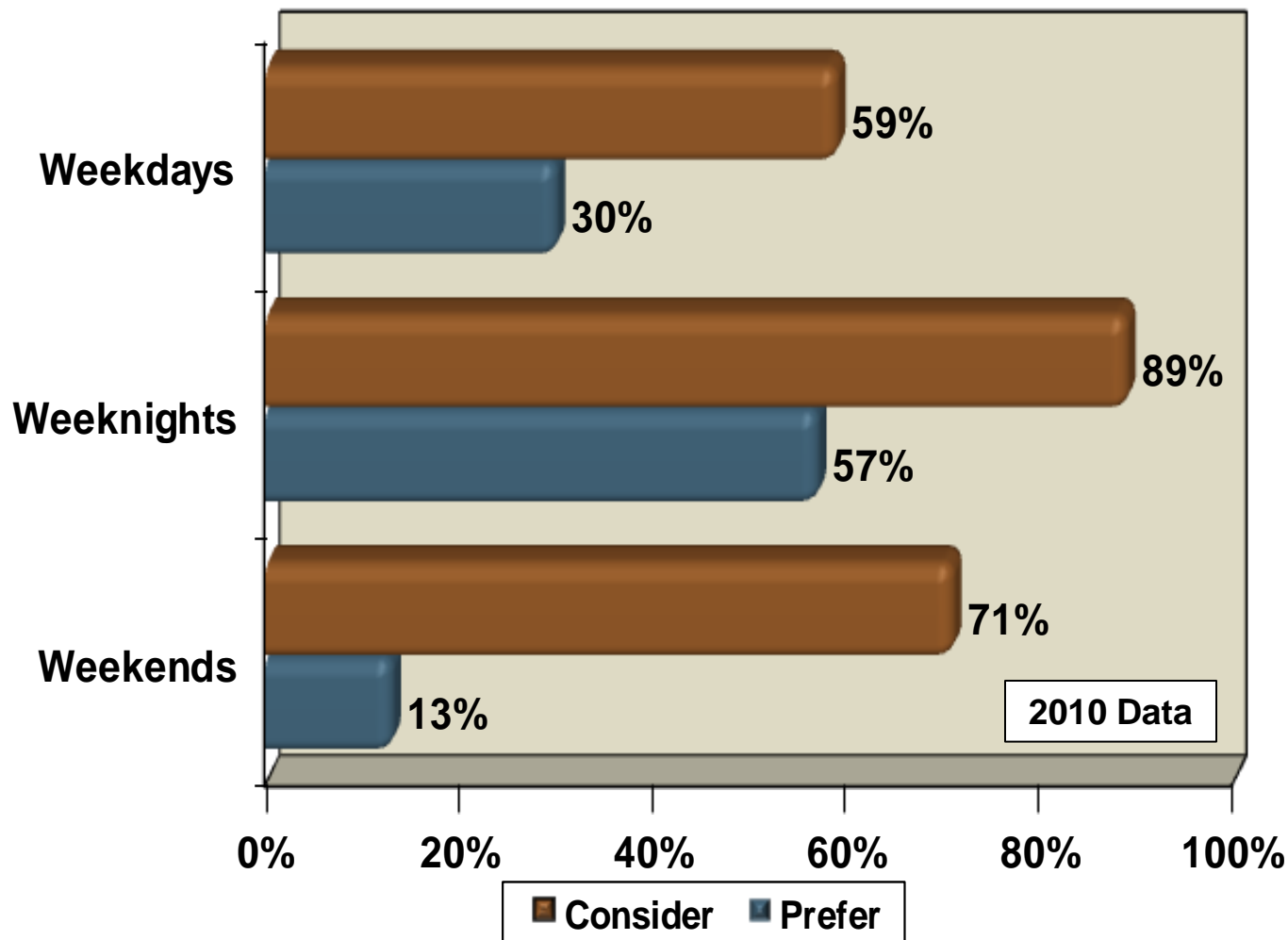


- All classroom formats would be considered, and associate degree seekers lean more toward online course formats either completely online or a mix of online and traditional class time than purely a face-to-face class experience

Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



# Preferred Class Time: Associate Degree Students



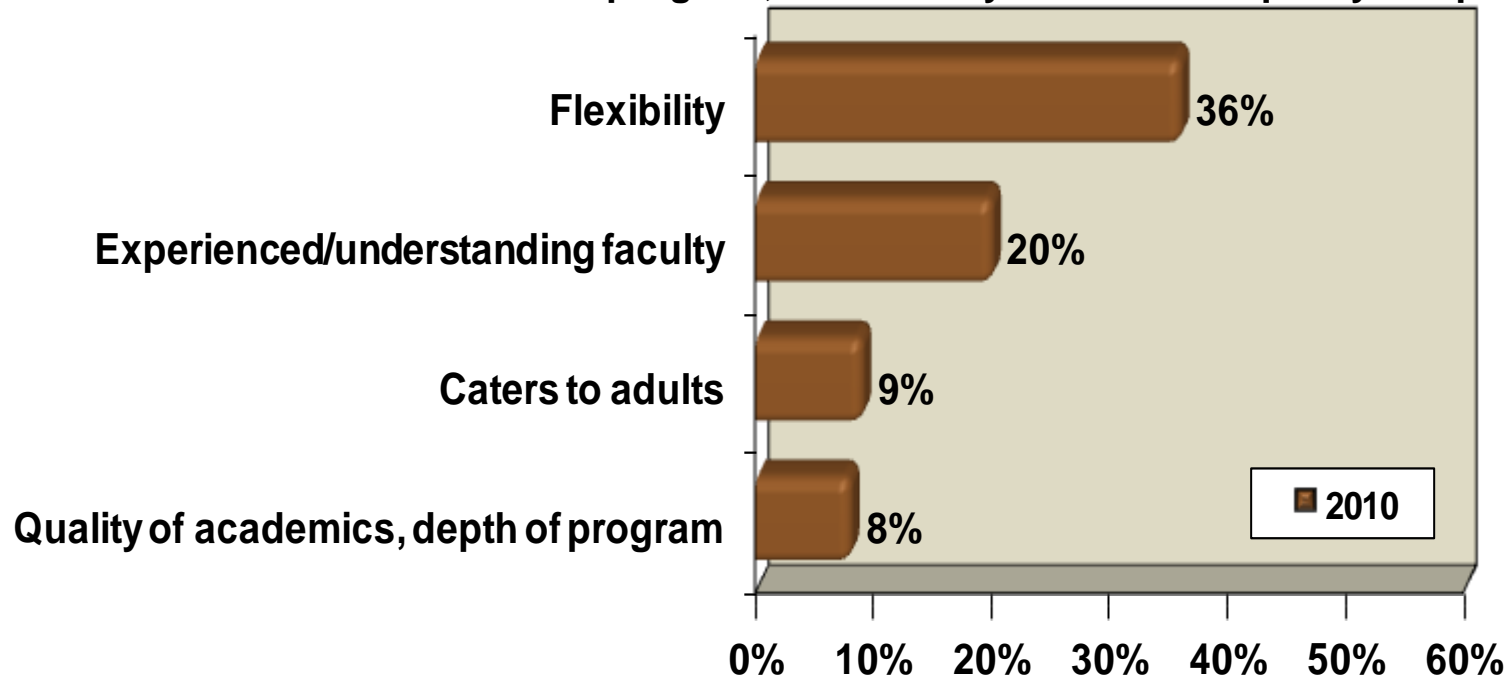
- Weeknights receive the largest consideration and preference

Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



# Defining a Quality Adult Education Program: Associate Degree Students–Unaided Responses

When thinking about the quality of a college's adult education program, how would you define the quality of a program?



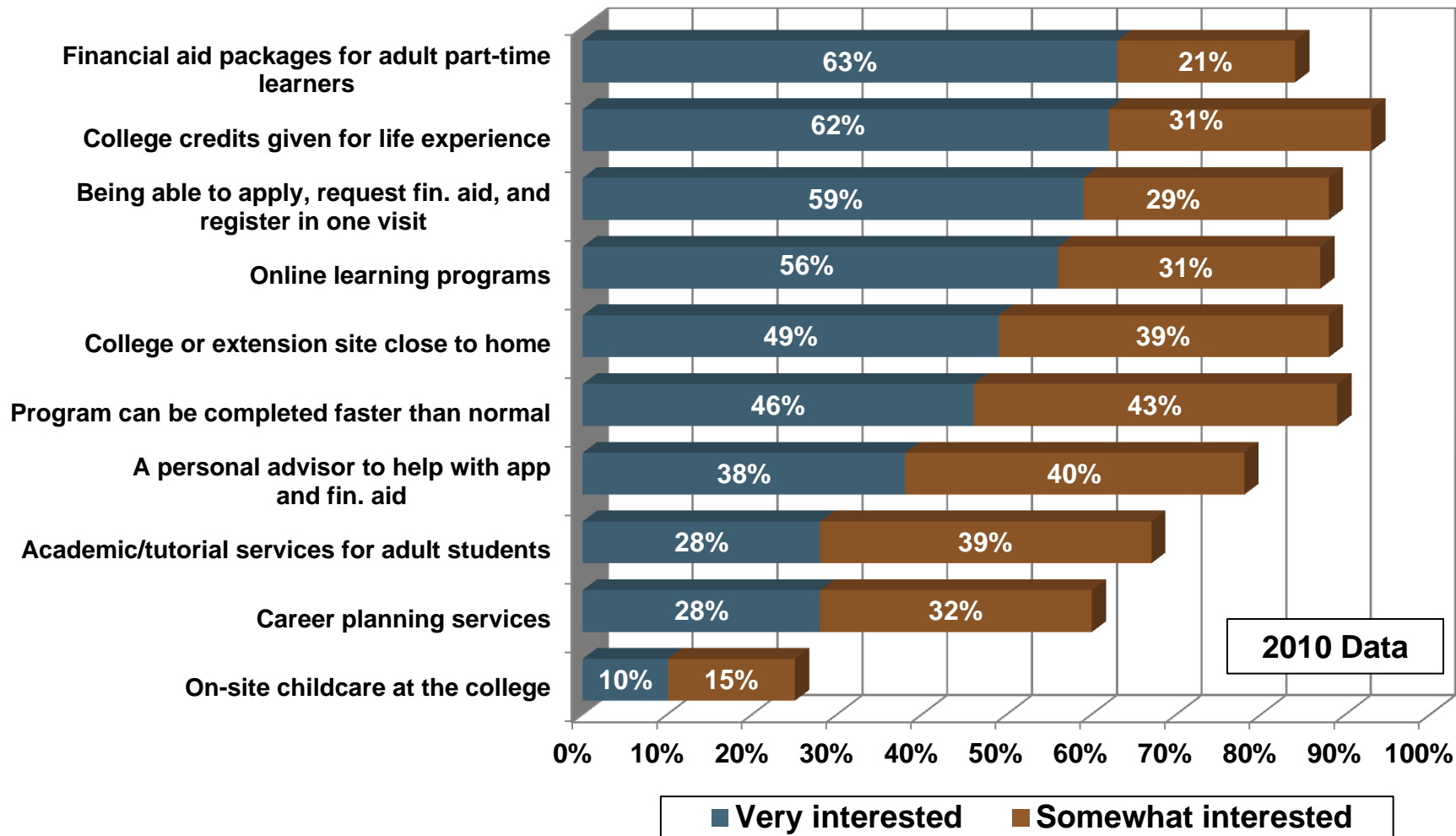
- Flexibility in scheduling and having experienced faculty are top-of-mind for associate degree seekers

Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



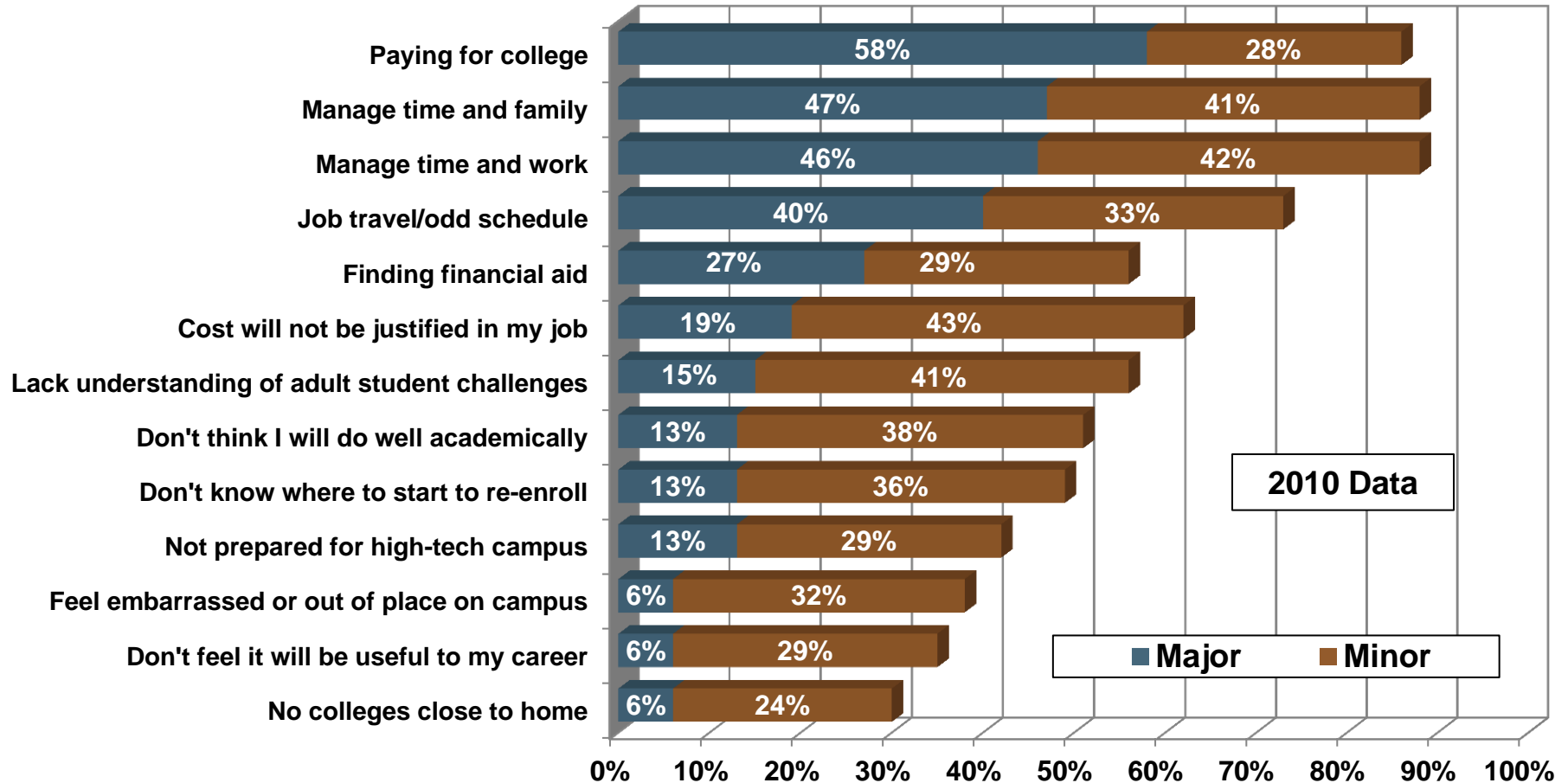
# Adult Services to Consider: Associate Degree Students

For each option, please indicate your interest level in a college that provides this option.



# Concerns of Adult Students: Associate Degree

For each reason, please indicate how much of a concern the item is to you.

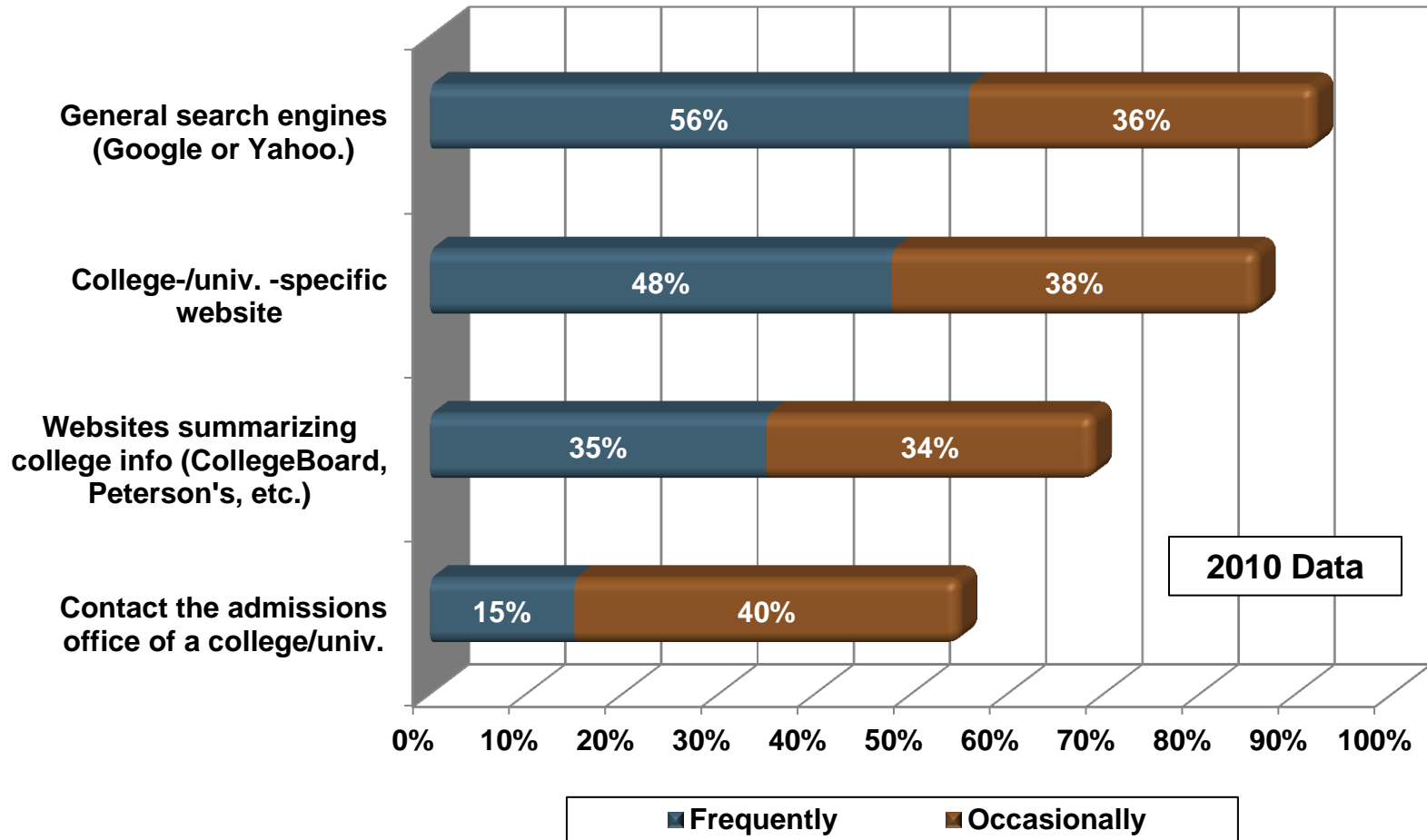


Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



# Sources of Information: Associate Degree Students

How frequently would you use the following information sources in your search for a college or university?

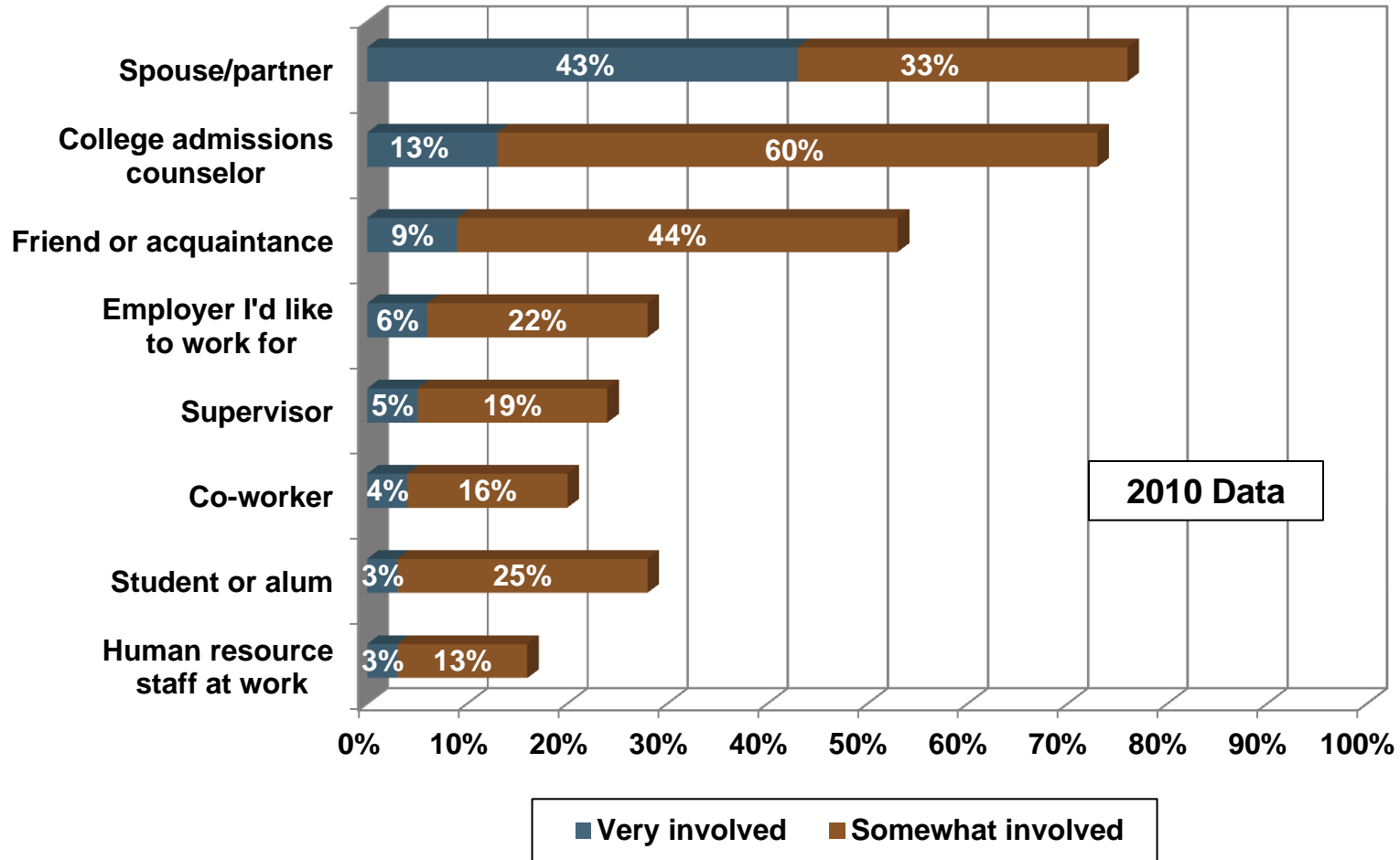


Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



# Influencers: Associate Degree Students

Please indicate how involved each of the following people will be in your choice of a college.



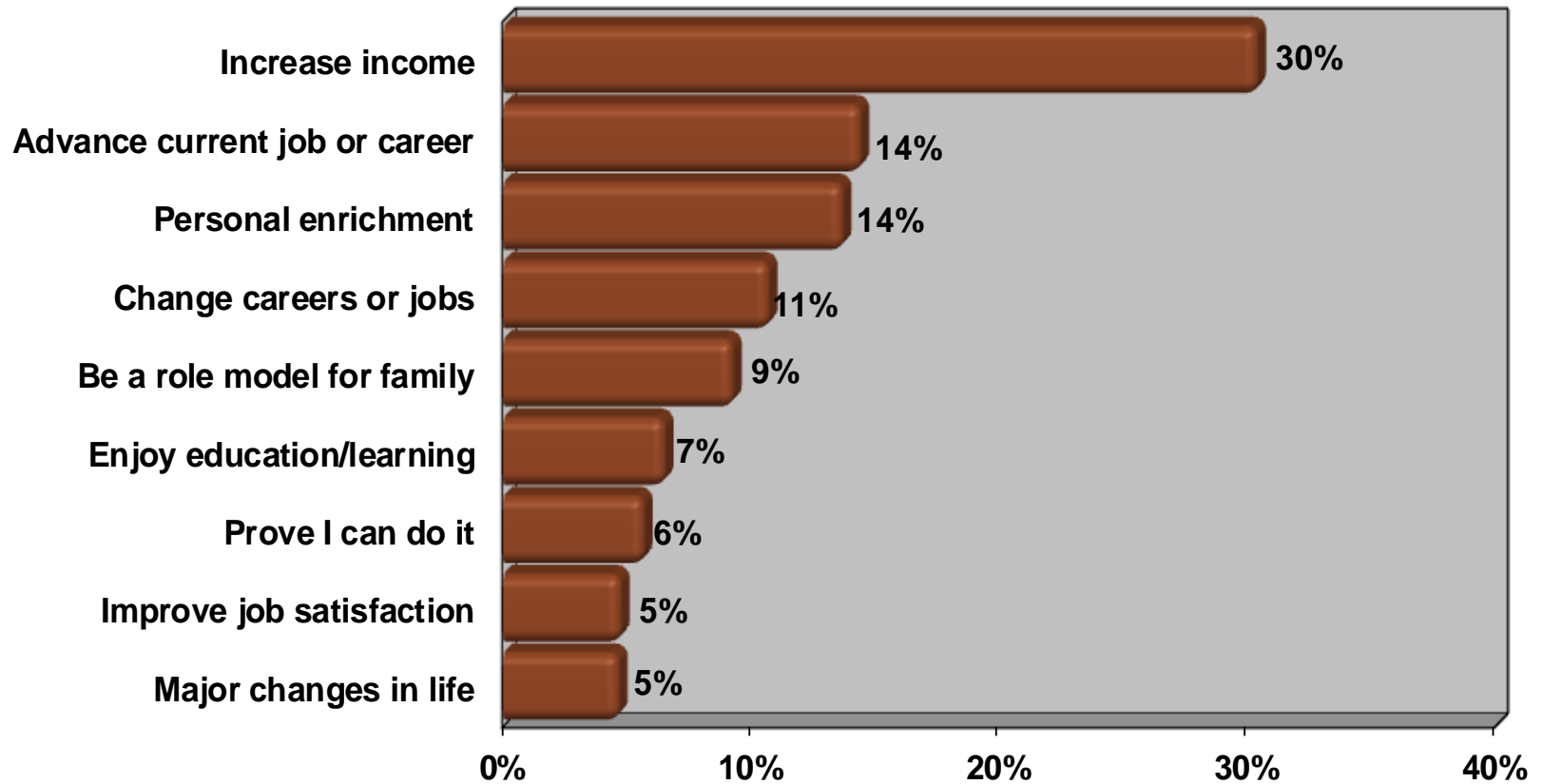
Base: Associate Degree seekers (n=104)



# Bachelor's Degree Seekers



# Factor Importance Motivations for Education: Bachelor's Degree Students

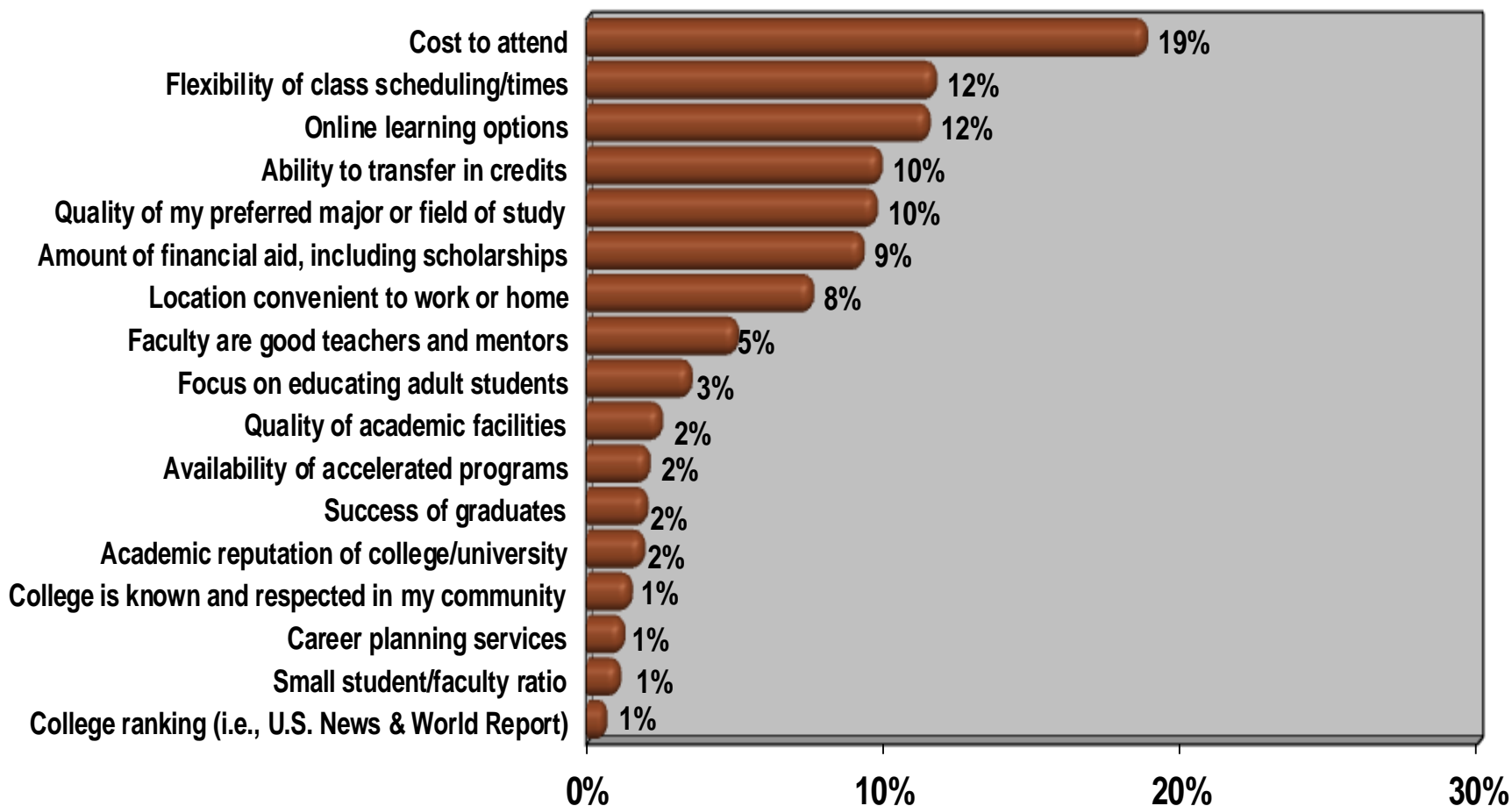


- Monetary gain is the main motivation for bachelor's degree seekers, followed by advancing their career
- Personal enrichment is about half as important as increasing the student's income

Base: Bachelor degree seekers (n=215)



# Factor Importance When Selecting Colleges to Consider: Bachelor's Degree Students



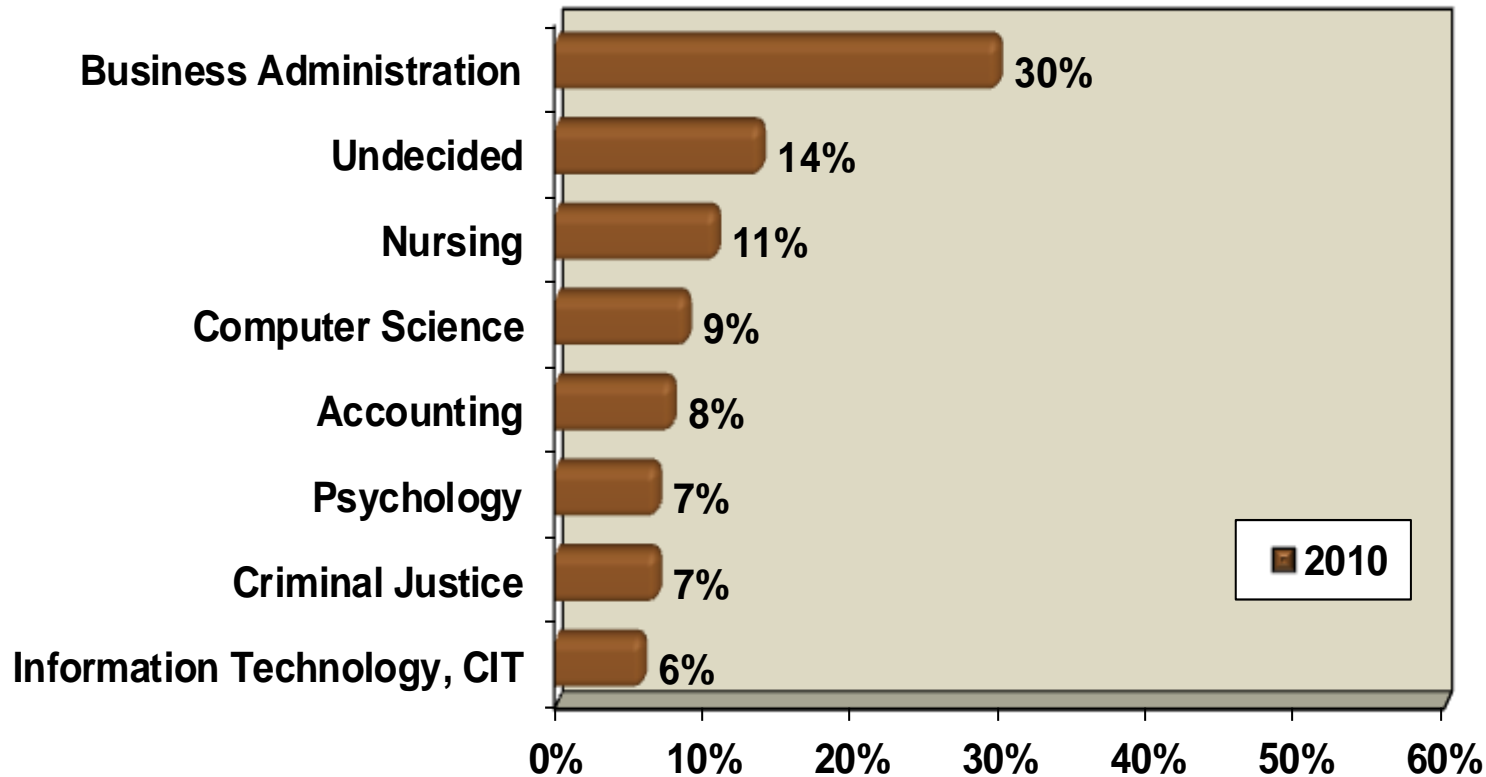
- Cost determined to be the most important factor overall, followed by flexibility in class scheduling, and online learning options; the ability to transfer credits is half as important as the cost to attend

Base: Bachelor degree seekers (n=215)



# Bachelor's Programs of Interest (*Top Mentions*)

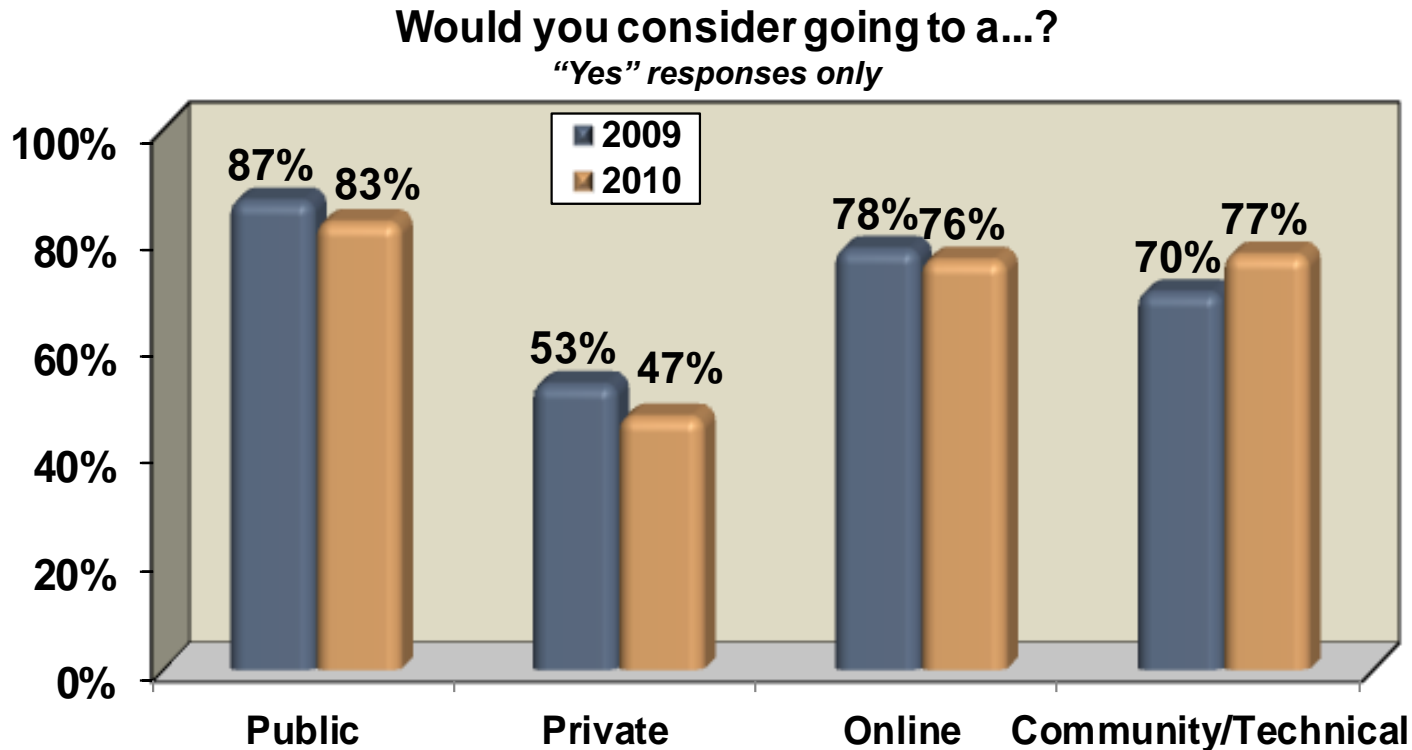
What majors might you consider?



- Business-type majors make up over one-third of top interest in 2010; other popular majors named have practical or realistic job applications, such as nursing, computer or IT-related fields, criminal justice, and psychology



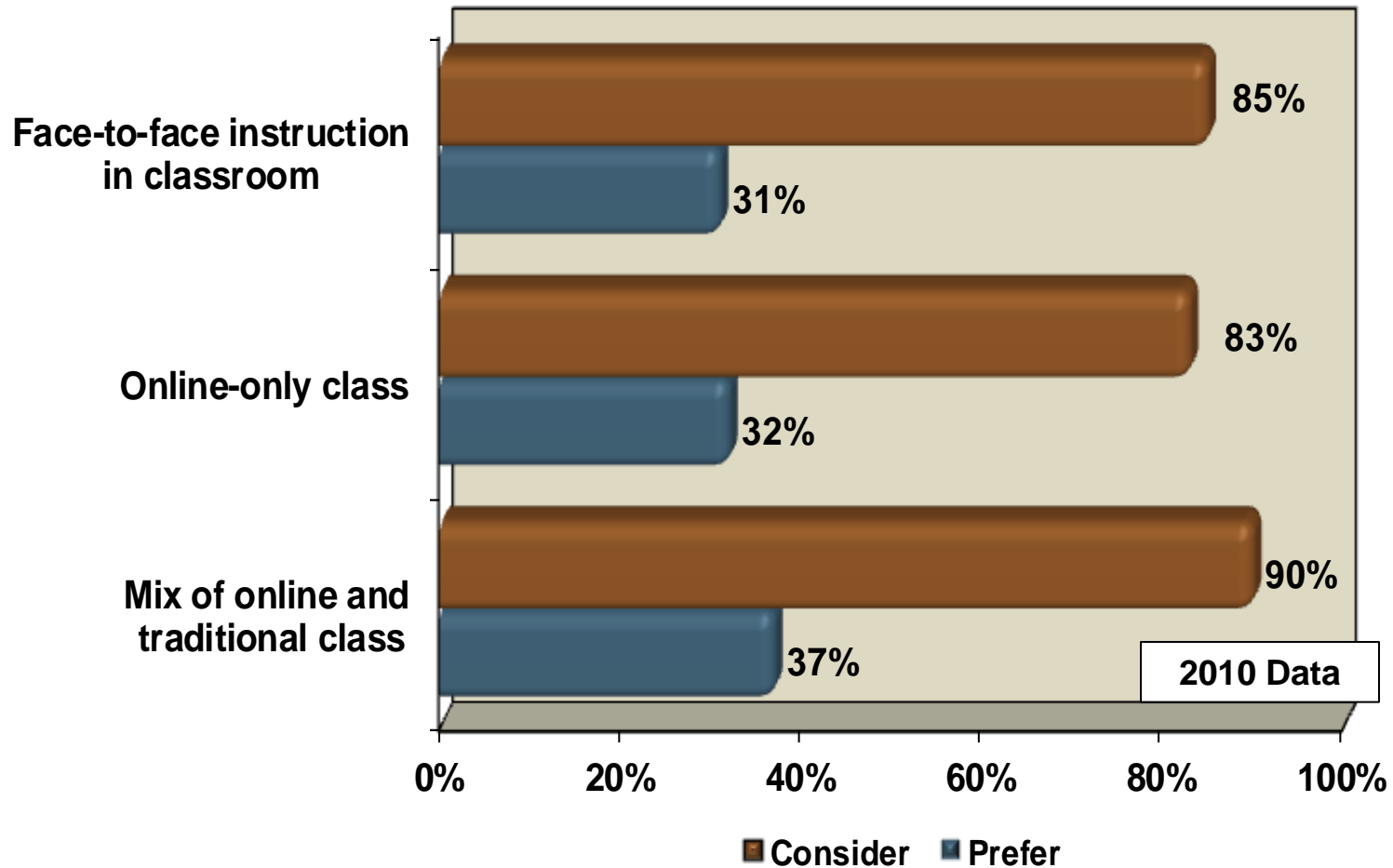
# Preferred Type of School: Bachelor's Degree Students



- Public college or university remains the top choice for most; private schools receive the least amount of consideration
- More are considering a community or technical school than in 2009



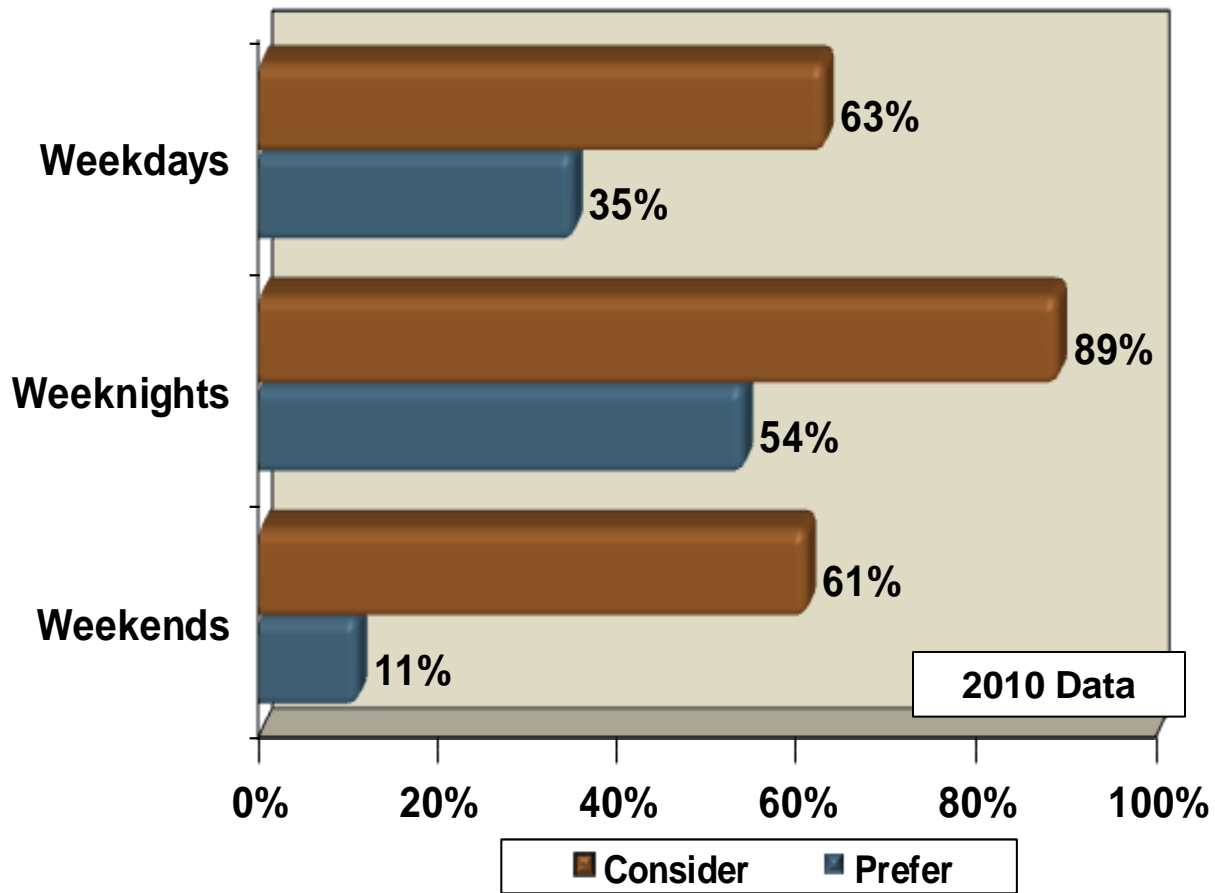
# Preferred Course Format: Bachelor's Degree Students



- Large numbers will consider every course format, yet there is nearly an even split when it comes to preference for a particular format
- A mix of online and traditional classroom time is favored slightly over the traditional class or an online only classroom experience



# Preferred Class Time: Bachelor's Degree Students

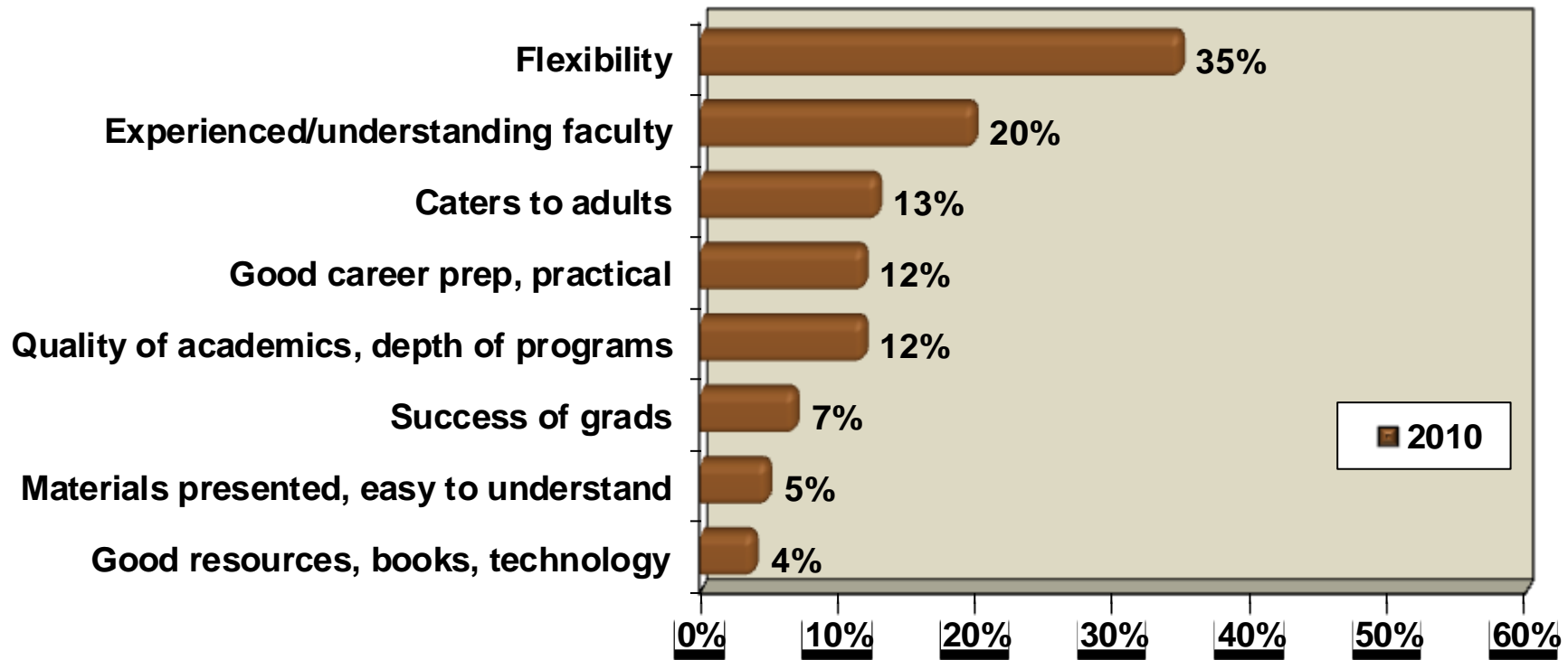


- Weeknights are considered and preferred by the greatest number of bachelor's degree students
- While weekend courses are considered by more than half, more prefer weekdays over weekends



# Defining a Quality Adult Education Program: Bachelor's Degree Students: Unaided Responses

When thinking about the quality of a college's adult education program, how would you define the quality of a program?

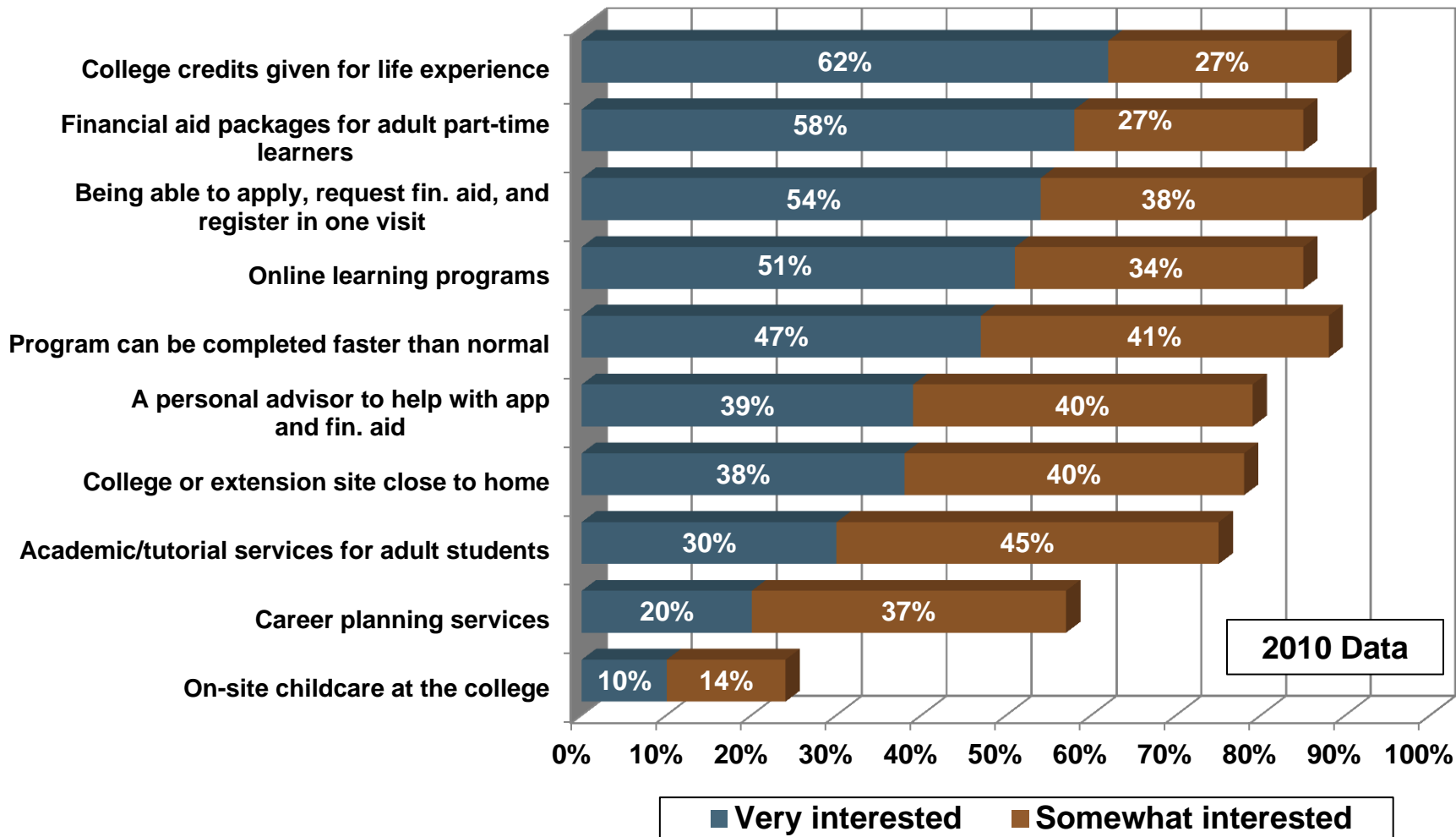


- Flexibility and faculty with good experience in their field define quality to adult students seeking bachelor's degrees



# Adult Services to Consider: Bachelor's Degree Students

For each option, please indicate your interest level in a college that provides this option.

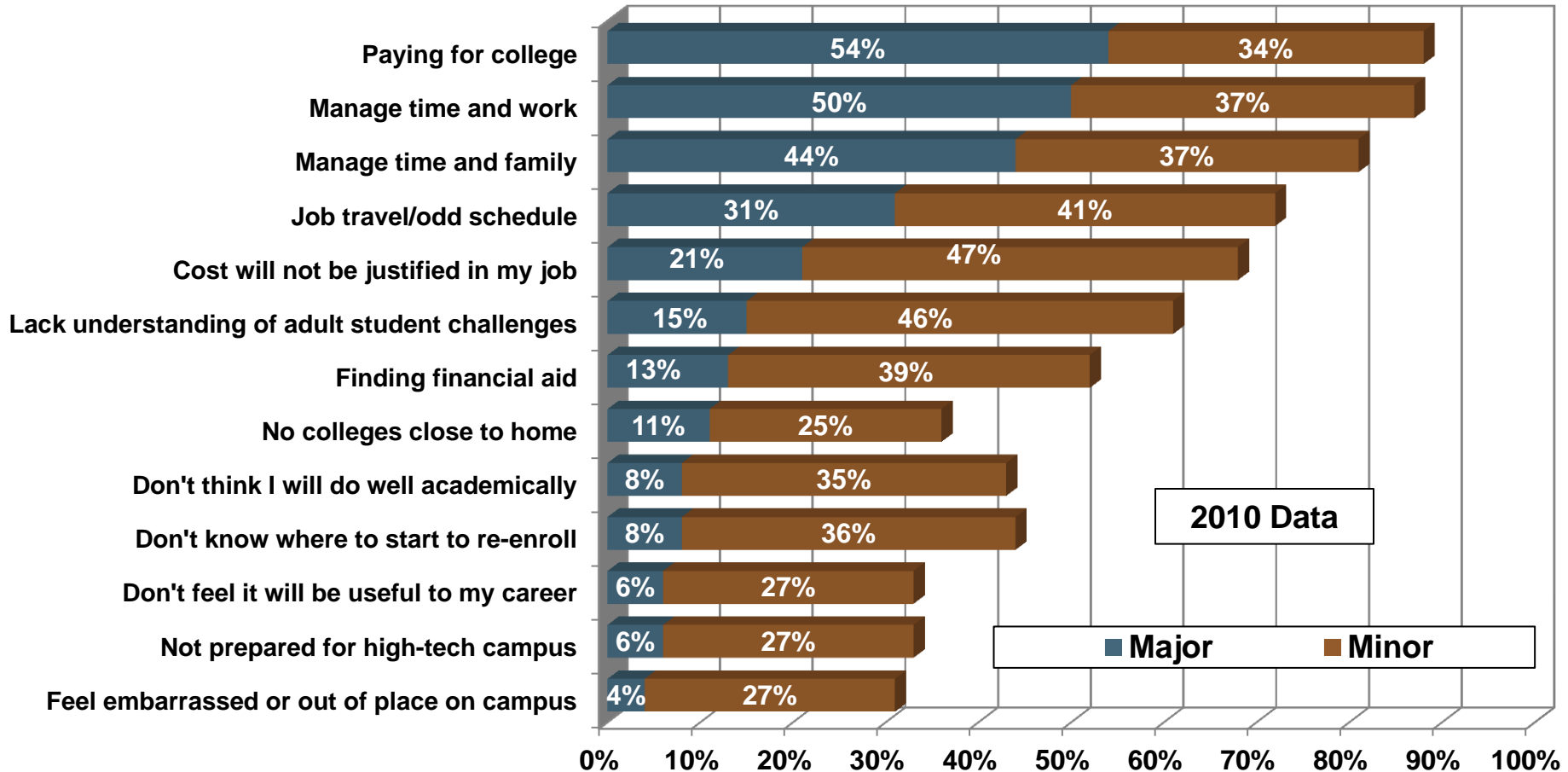


- College credit for life experiences and financial aid appeal to more than half of adult students



# Concerns of Adult Students: Bachelor's Degree Students

For each reason, please indicate how much of a concern the item is to you.

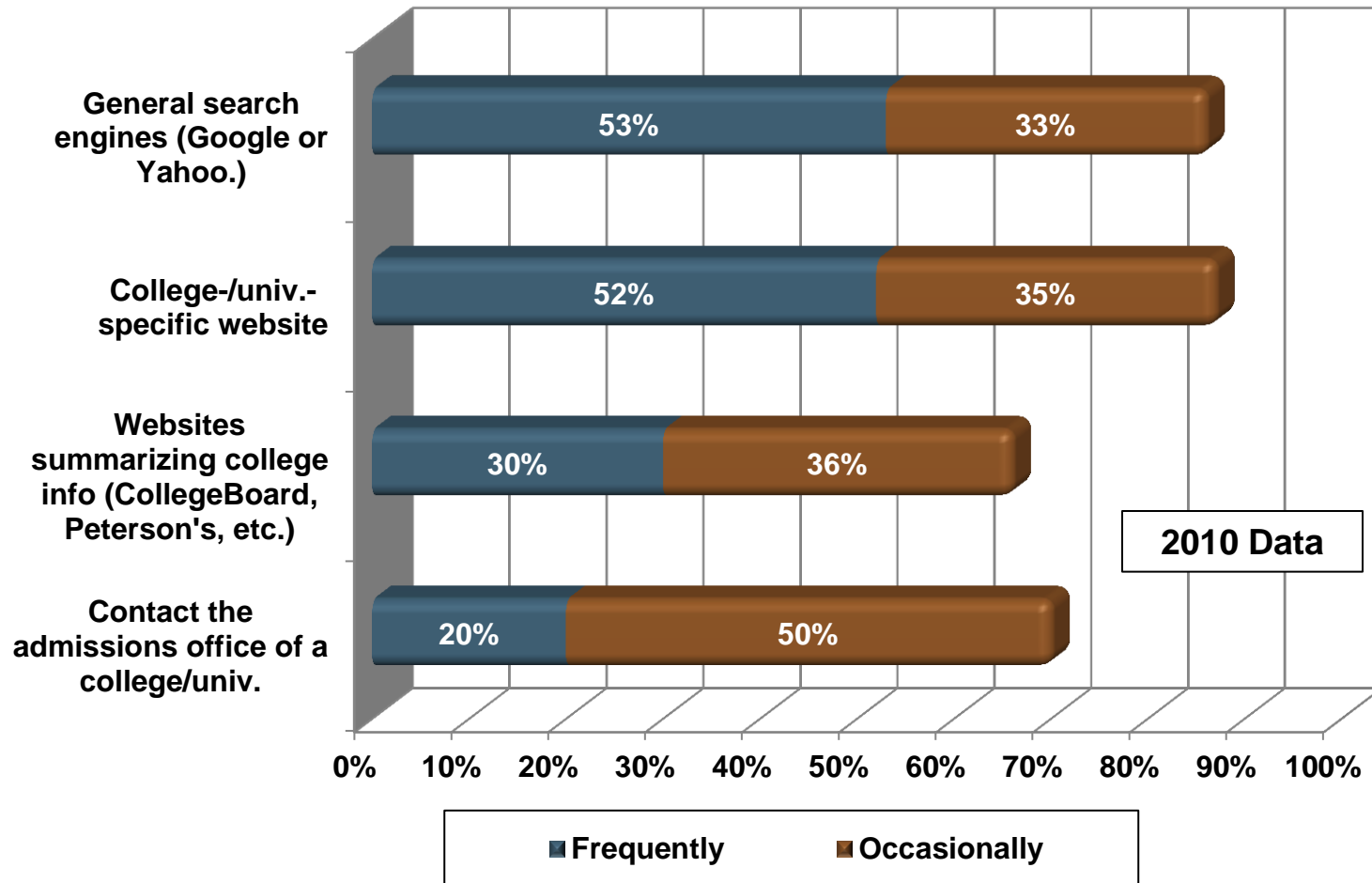


- Managing the time for college, work, and family as well as paying for college are the main concerns
- Of lesser concern are feelings of being out of place or ill-prepared academically or technologically



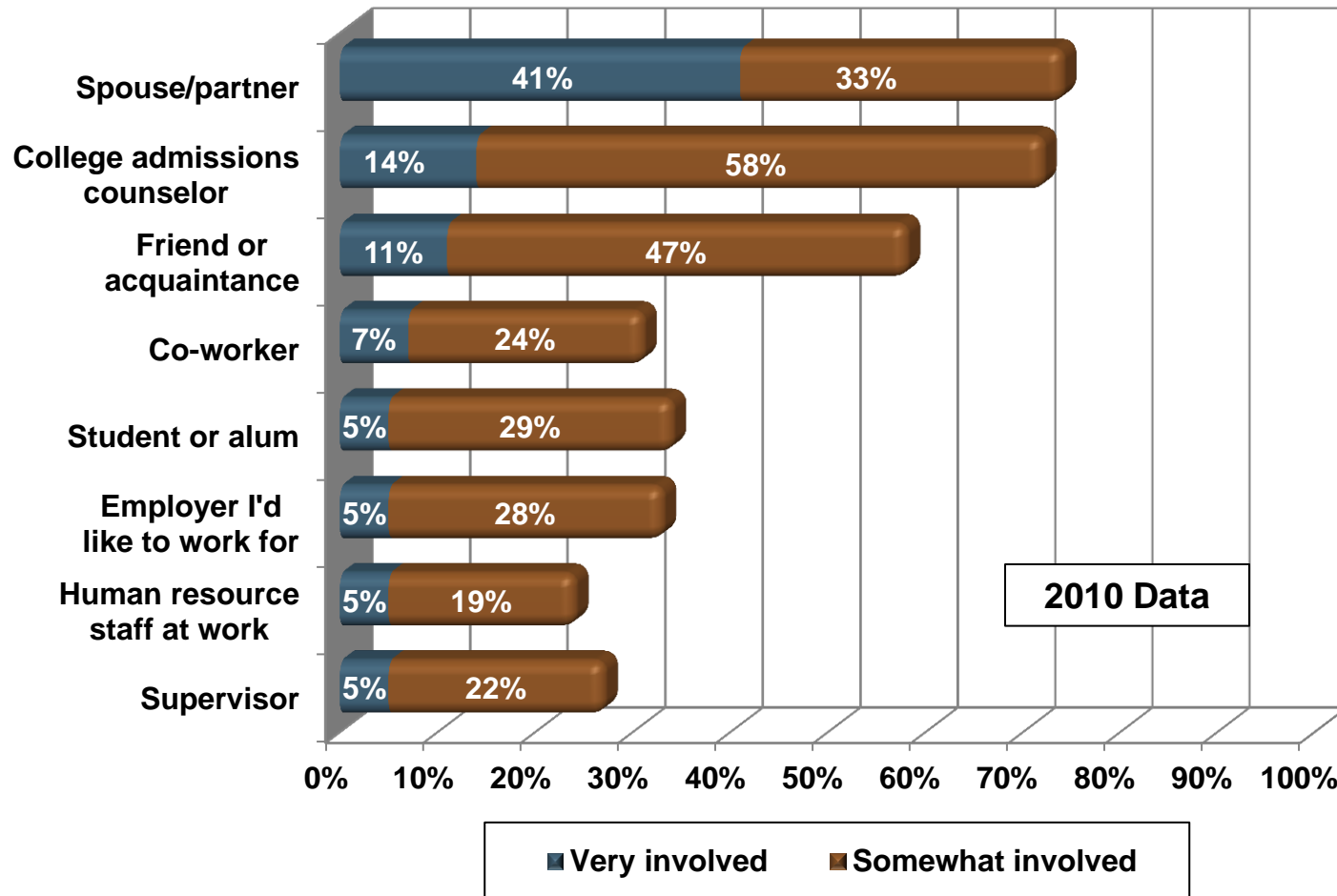
# Sources of Information: Bachelor's Degree Students

How frequently would you use the following information sources in your search for a college or university?



# Influencers: Bachelor's Degree Students

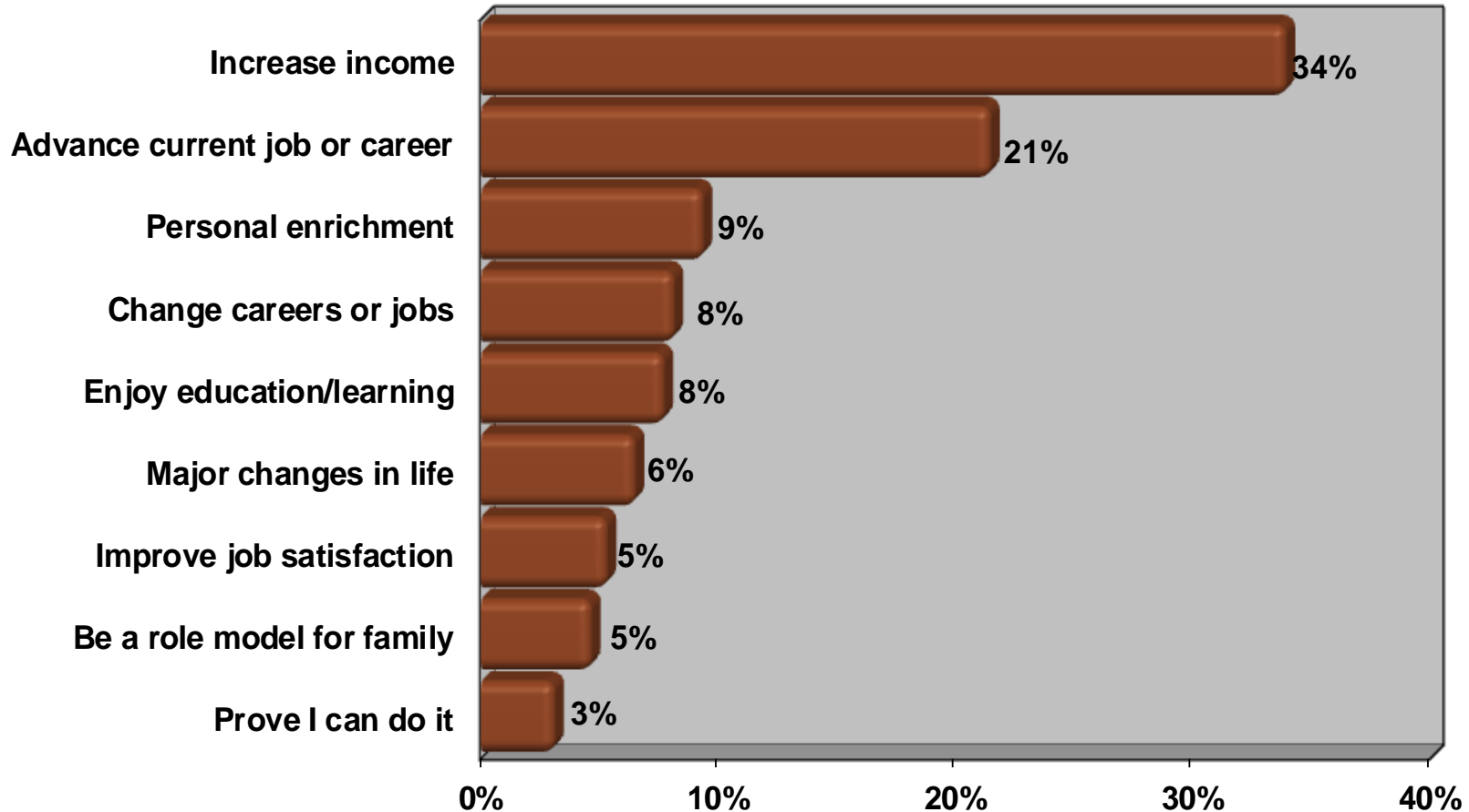
Please indicate how involved each of the following people will be in your choice of a college.



# Graduate Degree Seekers



# Factor Importance Motivations for Education: Graduate Students

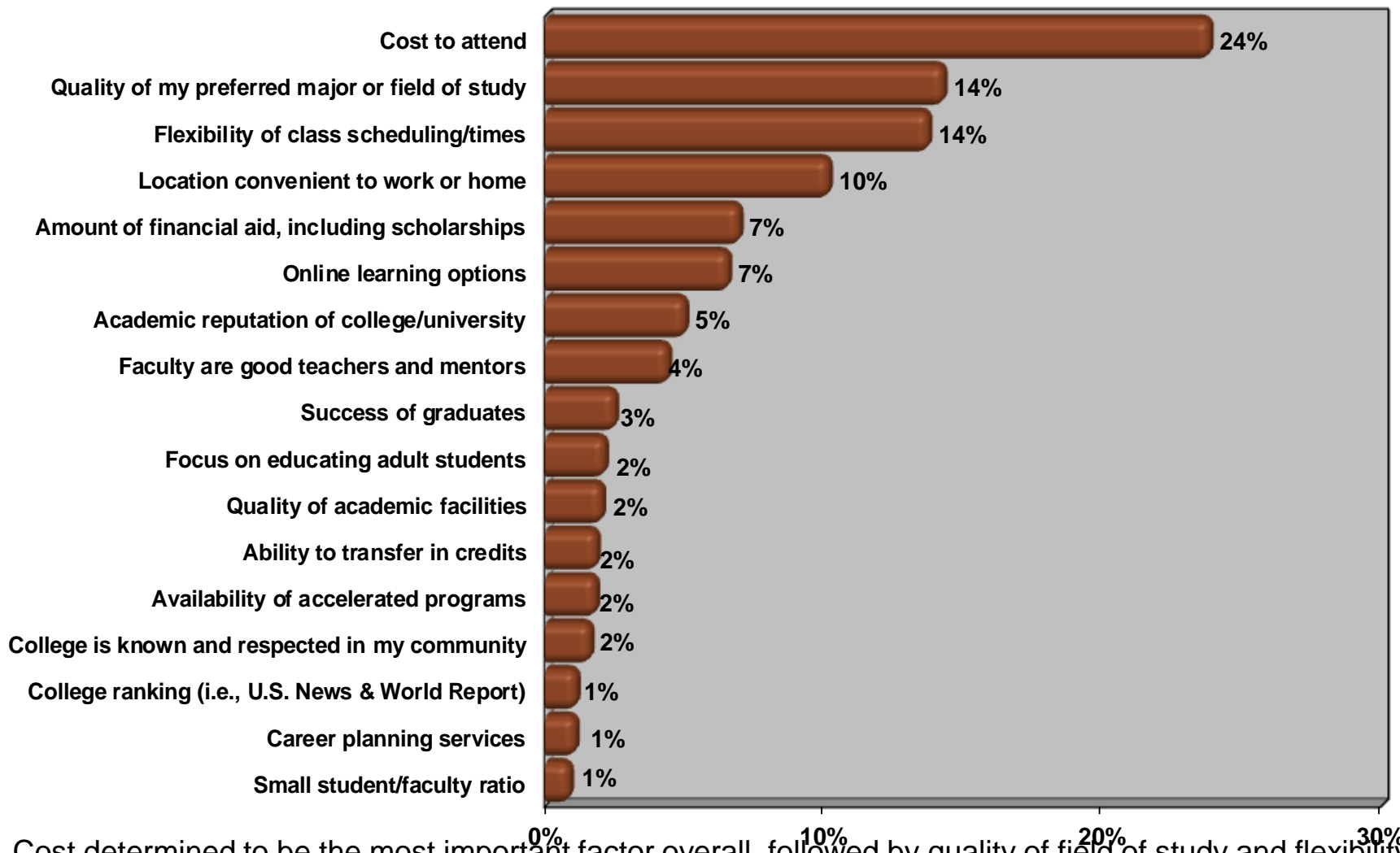


- Monetary gain is the main motivation for graduate degree seekers followed, by advancing their career
- Personal enrichment is one-third as important as increasing the student's income

Base: Graduate degree seekers (n=209)



# Factor Importance When Selecting Colleges to Consider: Graduate Students

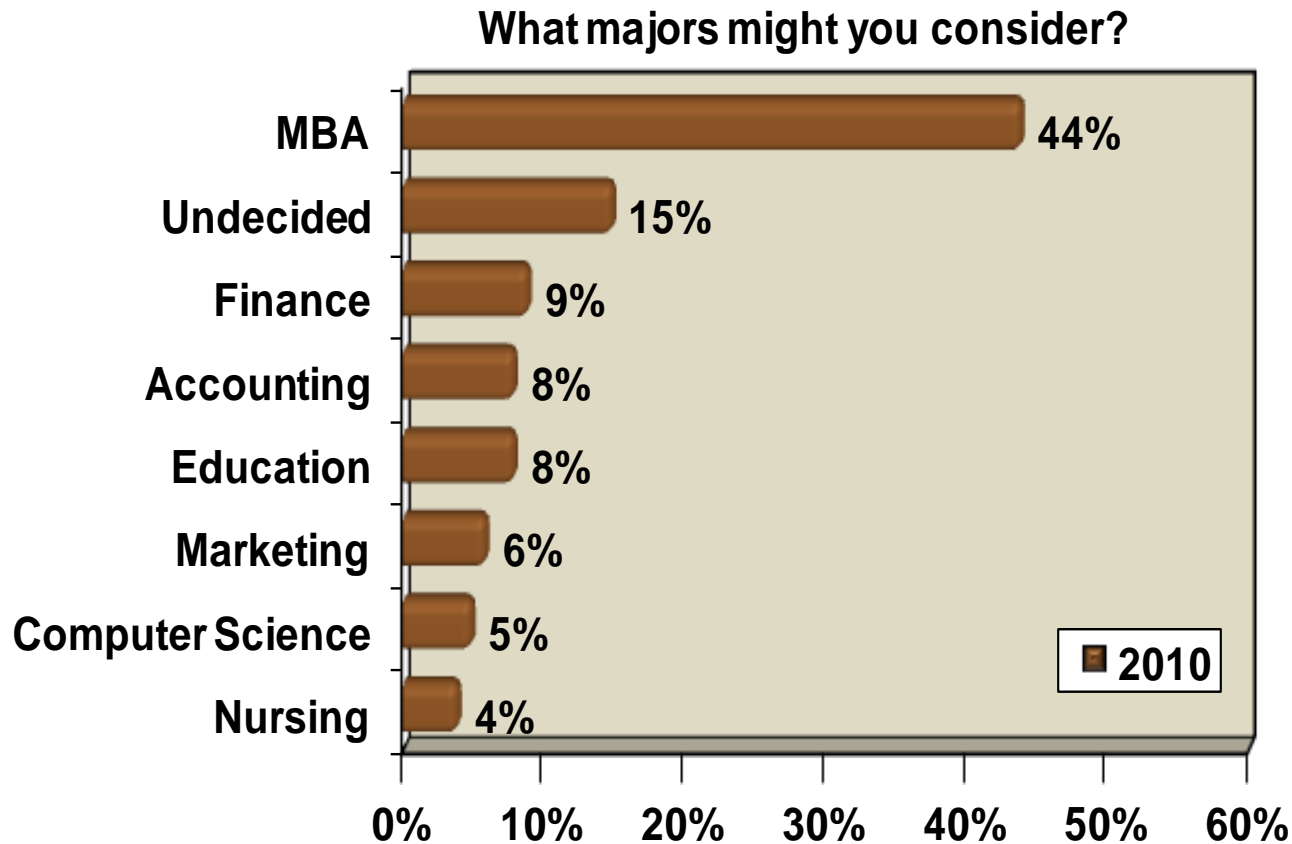


- Cost determined to be the most important factor overall, followed by quality of field of study and flexibility in class scheduling; location to home or work is half as important as the cost to attend

Base: Graduate degree seekers (n=209)



# Graduate Programs of Interest (*Top Mentions*)

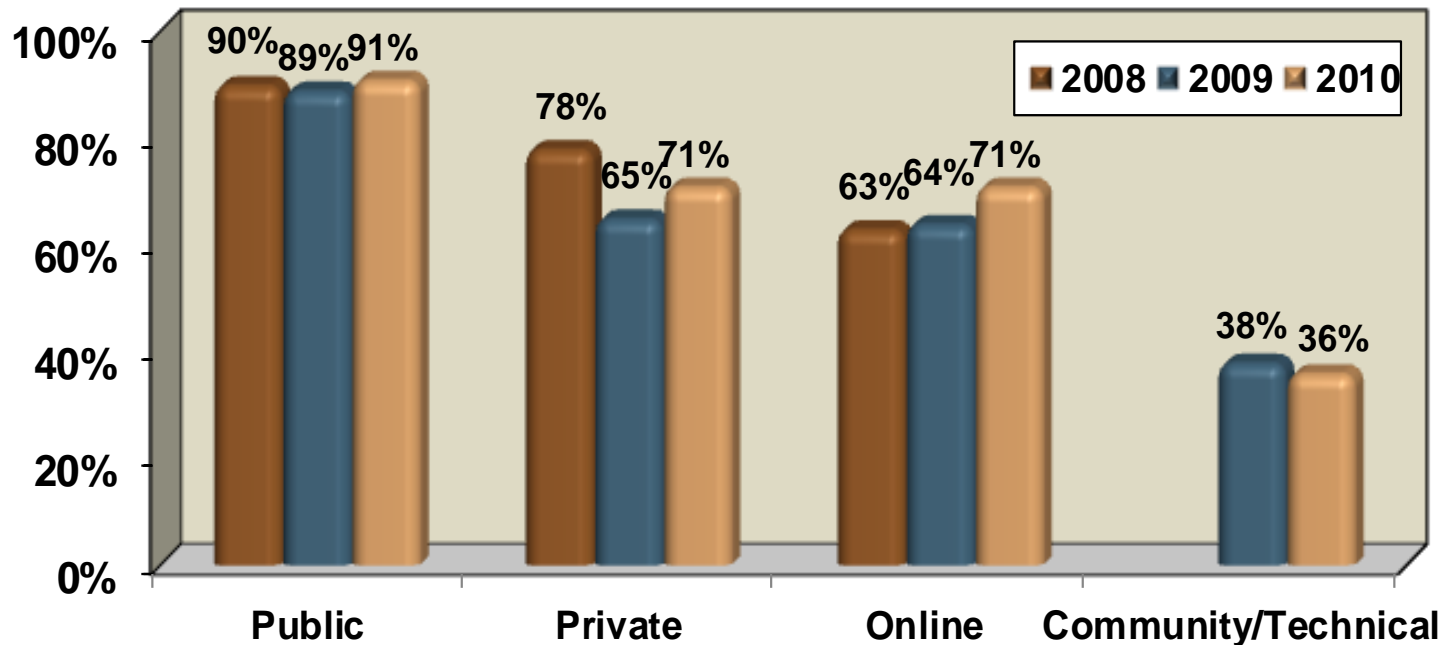


- Business majors drive interest in graduate degree programs. Education and nursing continue to be staples for advanced degrees



# Preferred Type of School: Graduate Students

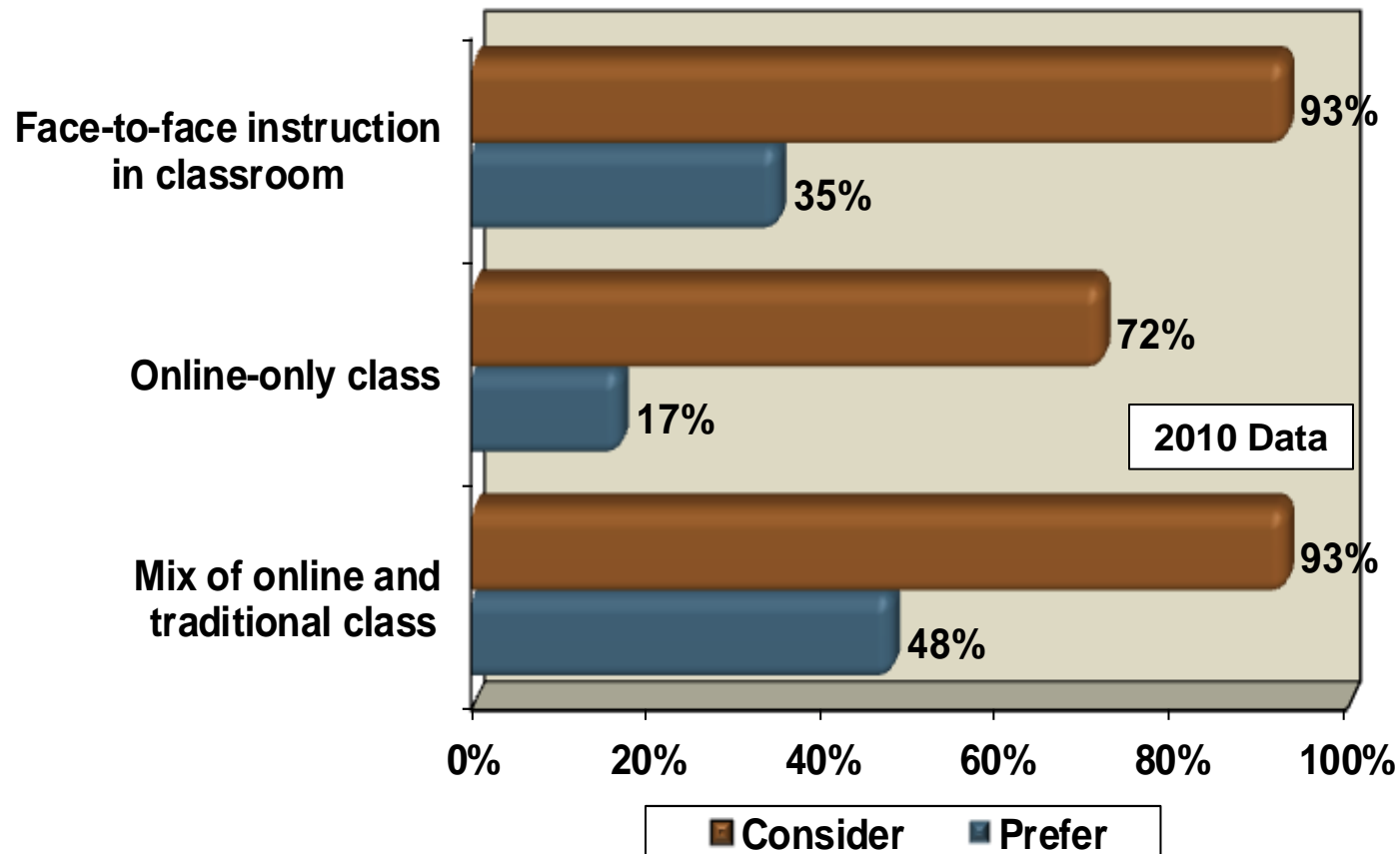
Would you consider going to a...?  
"Yes" responses only



- Public college or university remains the top choice for most, and there is strong consideration for private schools as well
- Online program interest grows in 2010, whereas community/technical school consideration remains roughly the same



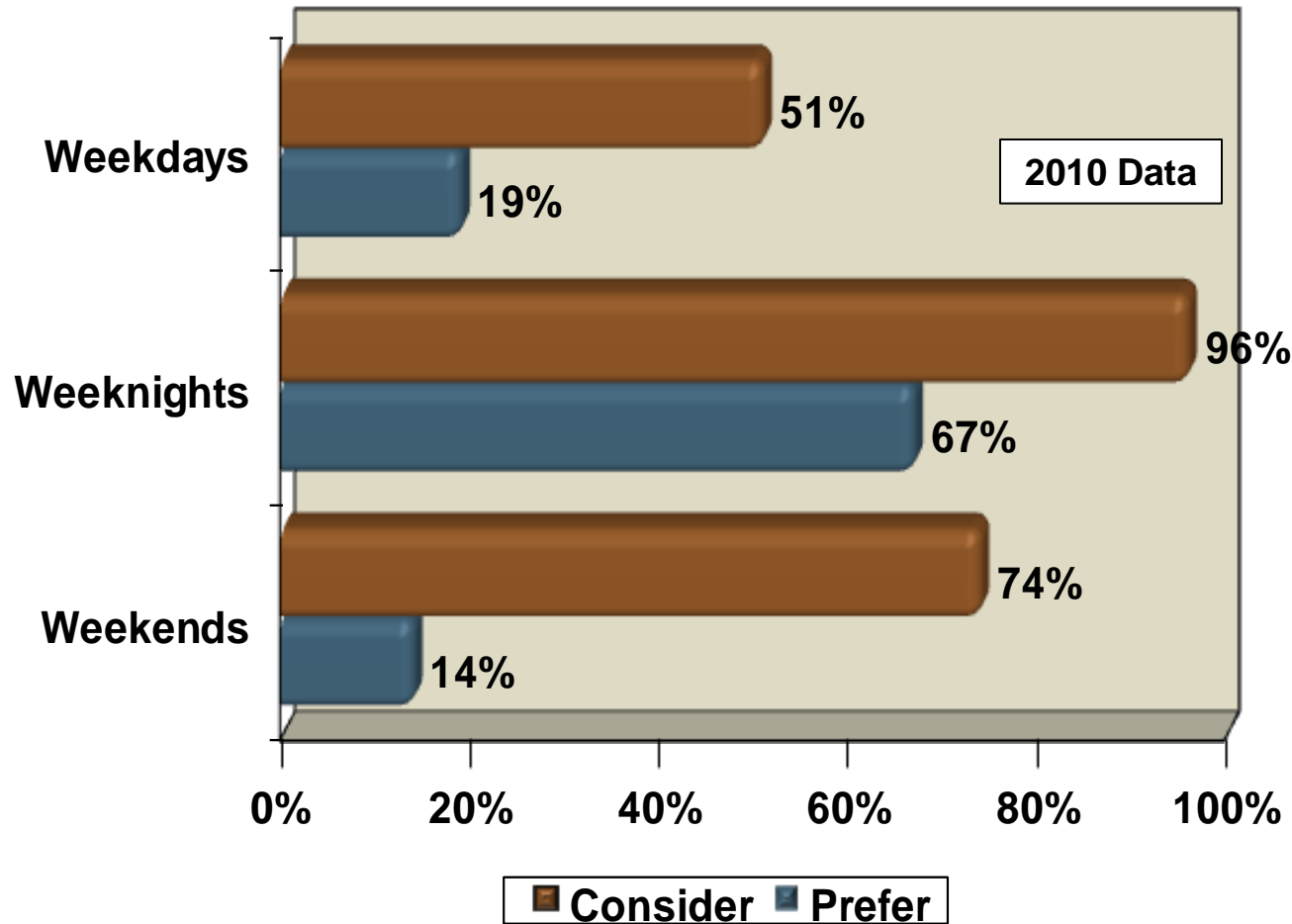
# Preferred Course Format: Graduate Students



- While large numbers will consider courses online, nearly half prefer to take a mix of courses in the classroom and online rather than purely an online class format
- Preference for courses that offer a mix of online and traditional classroom time is greater than the traditional classroom format alone



# Preferred Class Time: Graduate Students

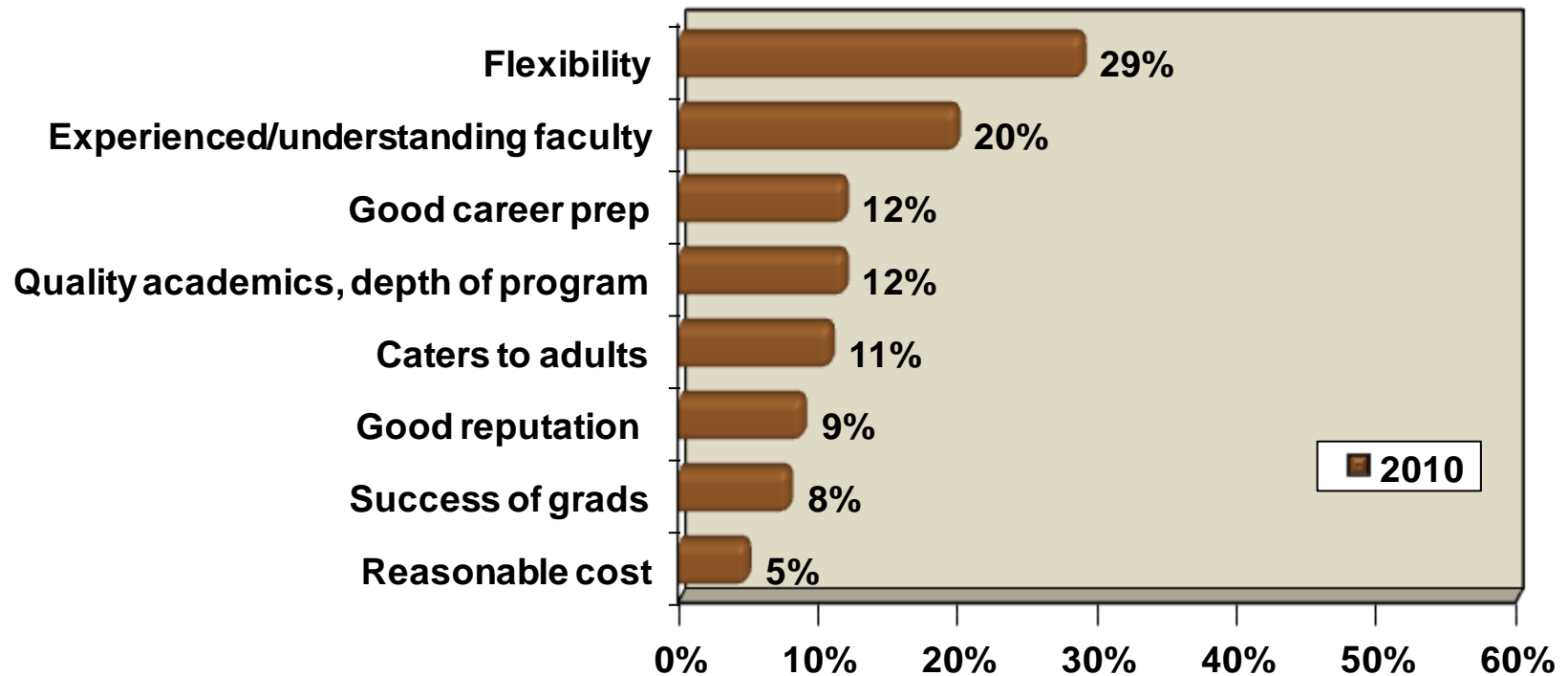


- Weeknights are by and large the preferred class time for graduate students
  - While half consider weekdays, few prefer it
  - Weekend courses also receive wide consideration, but little preference
  - Getting course work done at night is the most appealing option



# Defining a Quality Adult Education Program: Graduate Students–Unaided Responses

When thinking about the quality of a college's adult education program, how would you define the quality of a program?

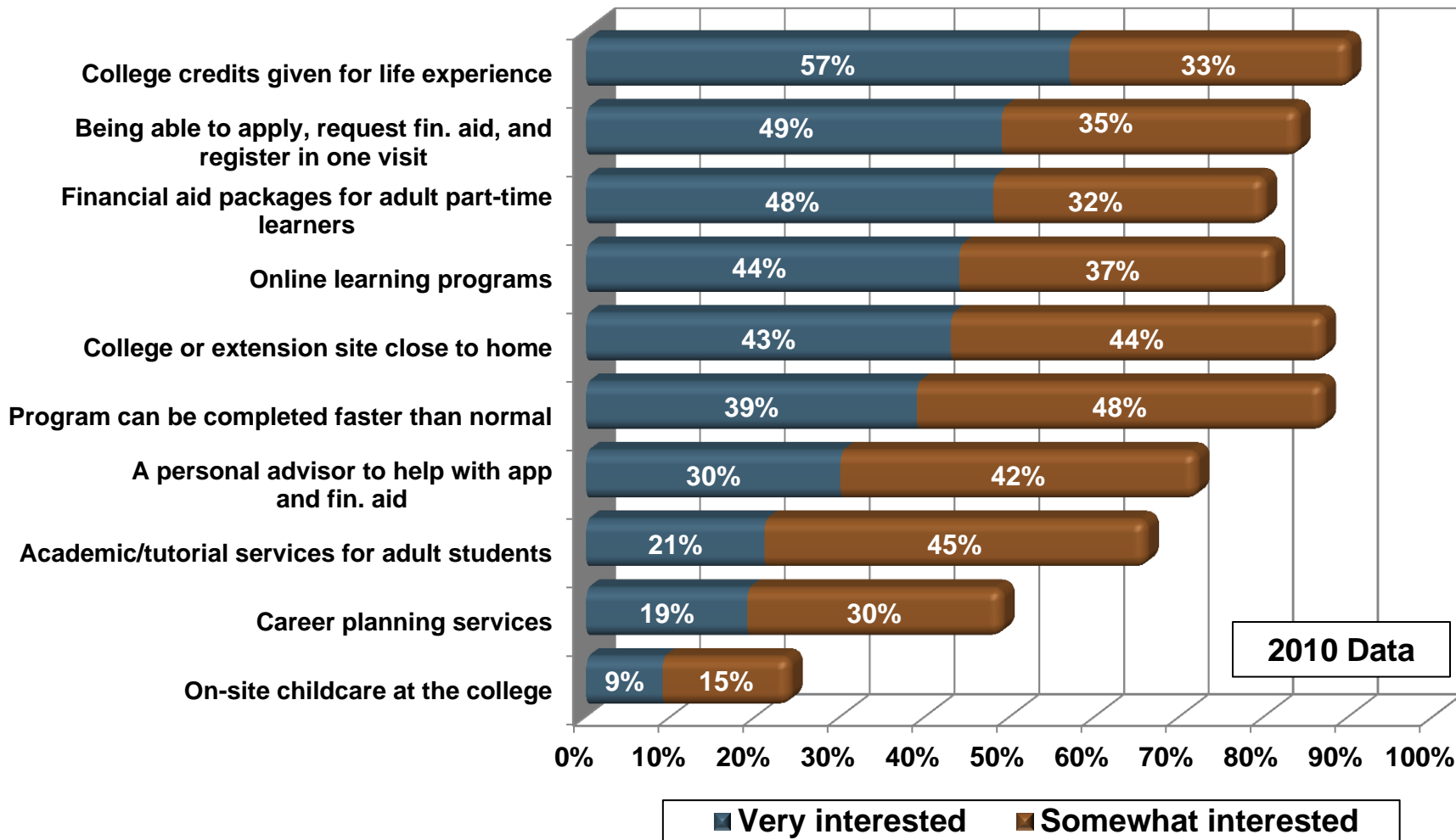


- Flexibility in scheduling and having experienced faculty are top factors when graduate students describe the quality of a college or university program for adults



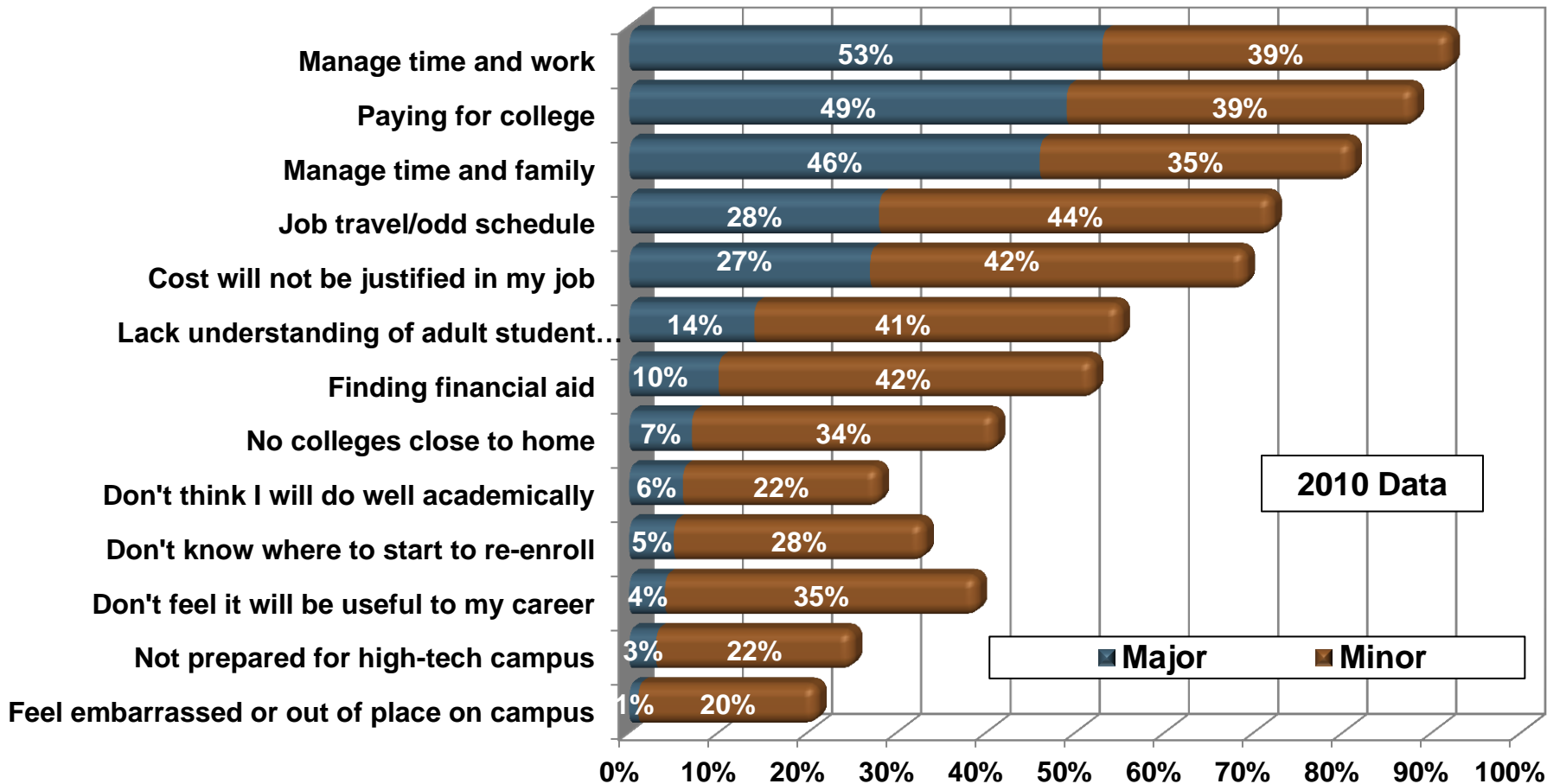
# Adult Services to Consider: Graduate Students

For each option, please indicate your interest level in a college that provides this option.



# Concerns of Adult Students: Graduate

For each reason, please indicate how much of a concern the item is to you.

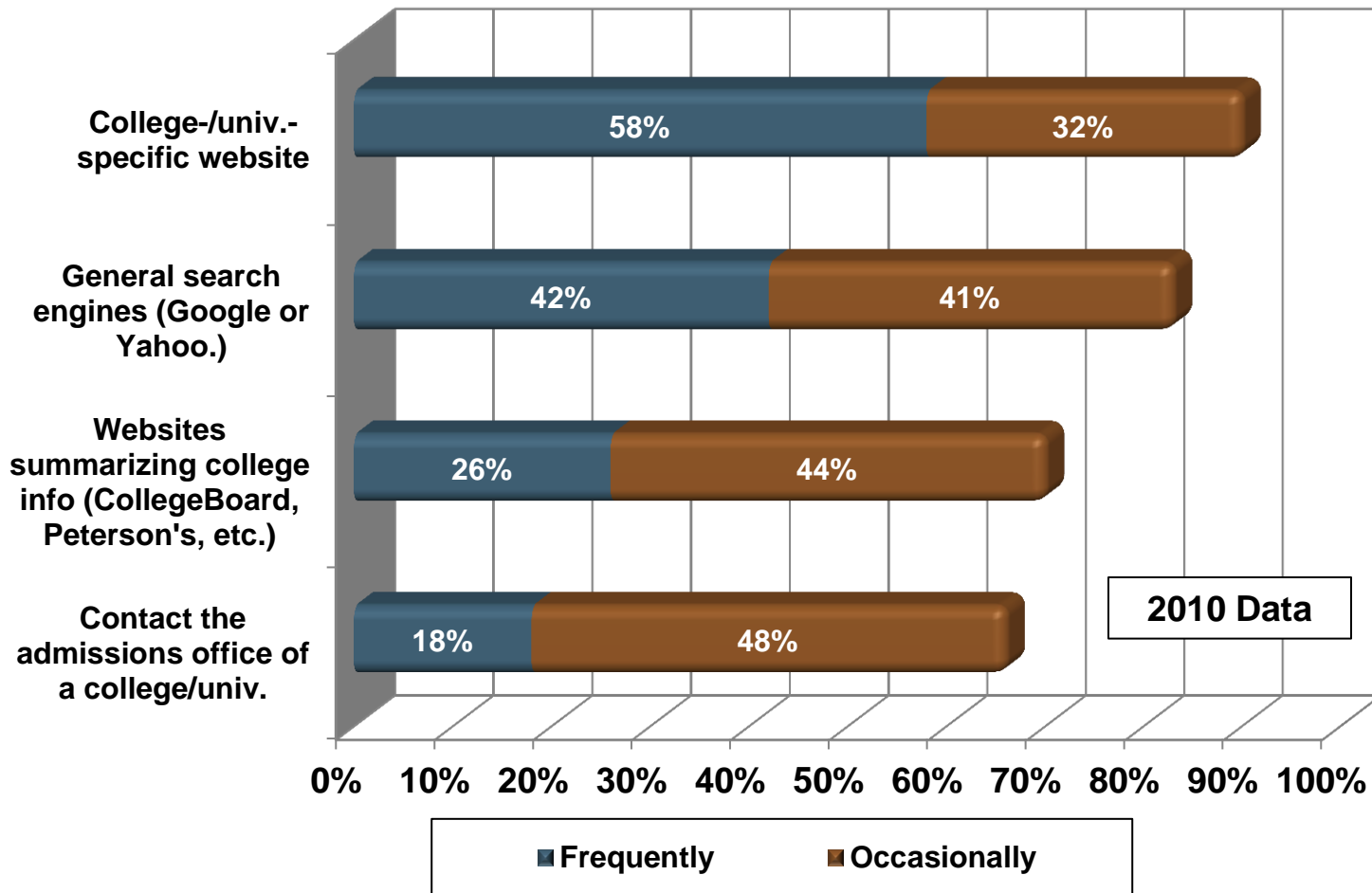


- Managing the time for college, work, and family as well as paying for college are the main concerns as they have been in the past two years of research on adult graduate students
- Of lesser concern are feelings of being out of place and ill-prepared academically or technologically



# Sources of Information: Graduate Students

How frequently would you use the following information sources in your search for a college or university?

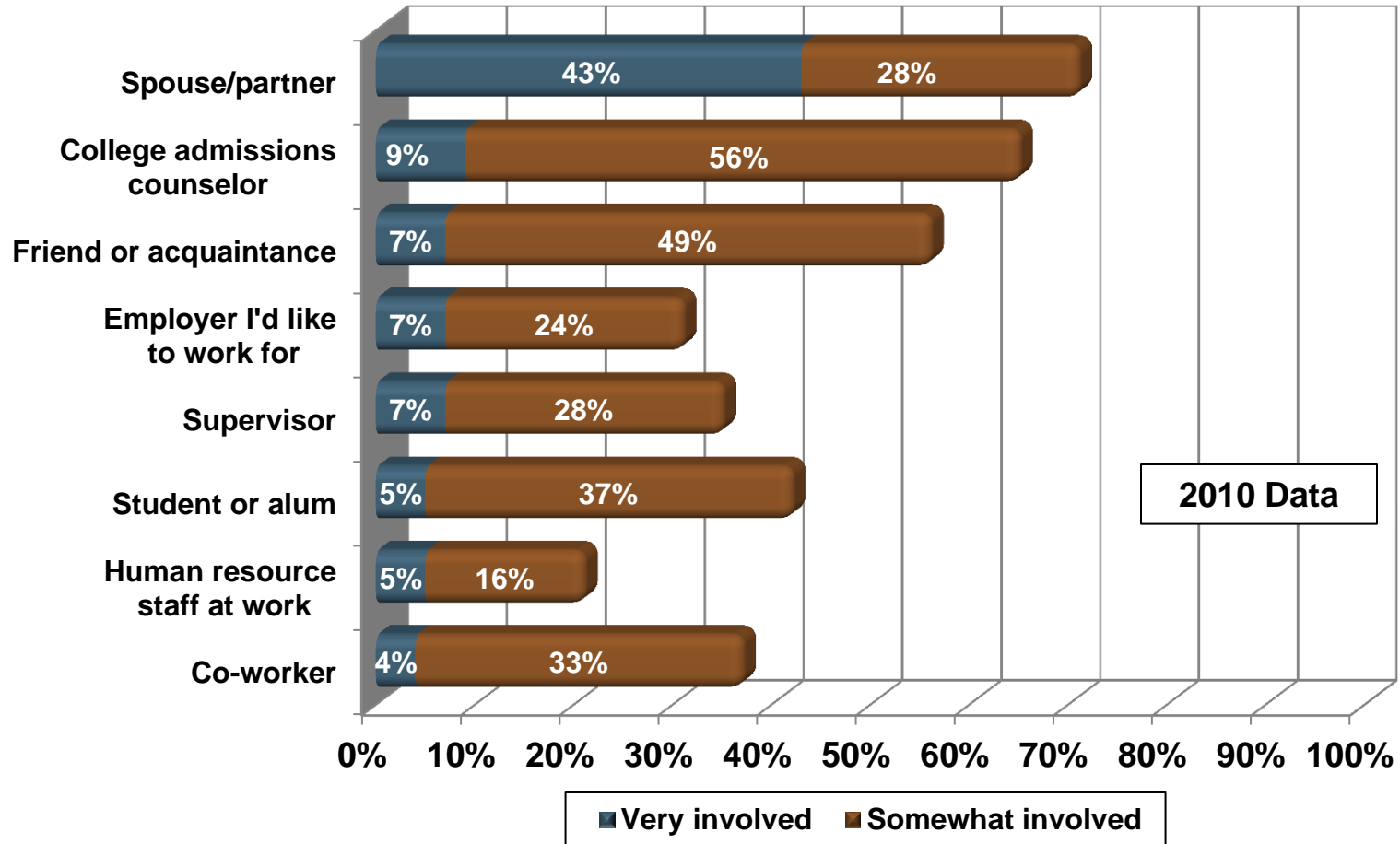


- Your college website is the No. 1 source of information when researching college options; other web research options are being used less frequently than going straight to the source



# Influencers: Graduate Students

Please indicate how involved each of the following people will be in your choice of a college.



# Parting Thoughts



# Parting Thoughts...

- All adult students are not the same
  - Certificate
  - Associate
  - Bachelor's
  - Graduate
- Flexibility is king when serving adult students
- Blended delivery of online and face-to-face holds strong interest across audiences
- Your digital presence is key regardless of who you serve (particularly institutional website and search engine optimization)



# Parting Thoughts...

- Your students will more than likely be part-time (unless your schedule only feels part-time)
- There are two big barriers to overcome for every student
  - Time and money, money and time
- All audiences are motivated by the same three things
  - Increase income
  - Advance in career
  - Personal enrichment
- Quality is defined by adult students as
  - Flexibility
  - Experienced/understanding faculty



# Parting Thoughts...

- Your recruitment staff members play a HUGE role in your success with adult students
  - Do they understand the influence they have?
  - Do they capitalize on the opportunity?
  - In our competitive market, good recruiters are worth their weight in gold
  - Have you evaluated your process?
  - Have you invested in your people's skills?



# Parting Thoughts...

- How will you use this information?
  - In planning
  - In marketing
  - In recruitment
  - In scheduling
  - In program development
  - In program delivery
  - In leading the conversation about adult students at your institution



*Thank you!*

