

Aiken Technical College

2008 Survey of Entering Student Engagement
(SENSE)



SENSE Overview

- Designed to help community colleges focus on the “front door” experience
 - Focuses on the first 4-6 weeks of the students’ college experience
- Questions examine:
 - First impressions, expectations, and goal commitment
 - Entry processes
 - Orientation and student success courses
 - Classroom experiences and academic support



Respondents

- Administered at 89 community colleges from 29 states and the Marshall Islands, and yielded 57,547 usable surveys
- 51 community colleges classified as small (<4,500 credit students)
- Administered during 4th or 5th week of the 2008 Fall semester (562 total first-time freshmen students enrolled ATC fall 2008)
- Random selection of all first-college-level English and math courses and all developmental education courses
- ATC: 338 entering students surveyed; 225 returning students surveyed (563 total respondents)

ATC Respondents (Entering Students Only)

Item	ATC Respondents	Small College	SENSE Cohort
Total respondents	338	12,783	57,247
Gender			
Male	32%	39%	42%
Female	68%	61%	58%
Race or Ethnicity			
Black or African American, non-Hispanic	37%	10%	13%
White, non-Hispanic	49%	73%	63%
Enrollment Status			
Part-Time	33%	63%	62%
Full-Time	67%	37%	38%
Age			
18 to 19	23%	22%	23%
20 to 24	37%	29%	33%
25 to 29	13%	14%	15%
30 to 39	17%	17%	16%
40 to 49	8%	11%	9%
50 and Over	3%	7%	5%



Six Design Principles:

Features of a College Designed for Student Success

- Describes critical elements of engagement for entering students
- Should be integrated into the critical time period for entering students – the period that begins with initial contact and ends as the student successfully completes the earliest weeks of college

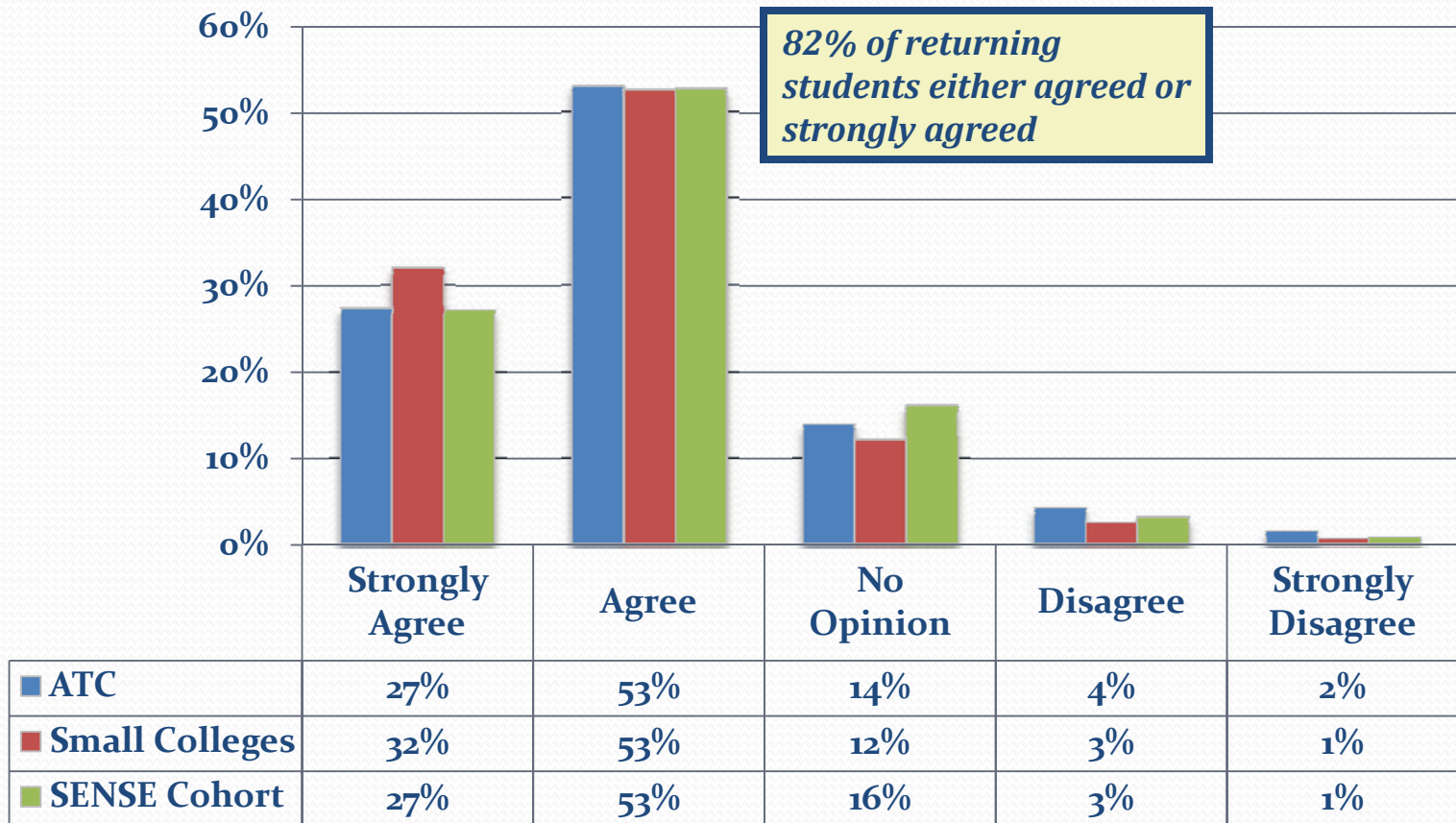


1. Personal Connections

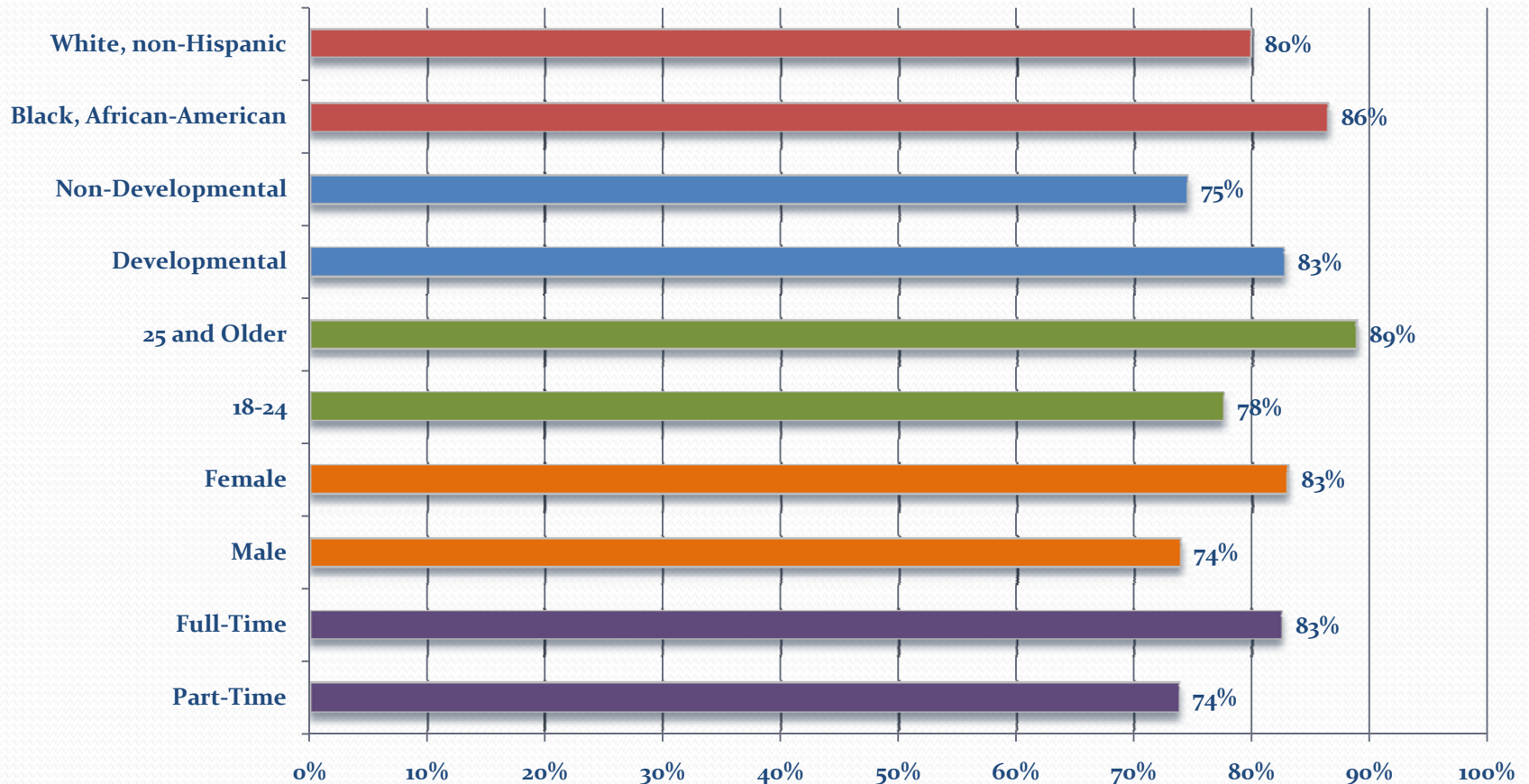
Imagine a college at which every student is intentionally connected to an individual person who feels responsible for that student's success – and that these connections are made before completion of the intake process.

First Impressions

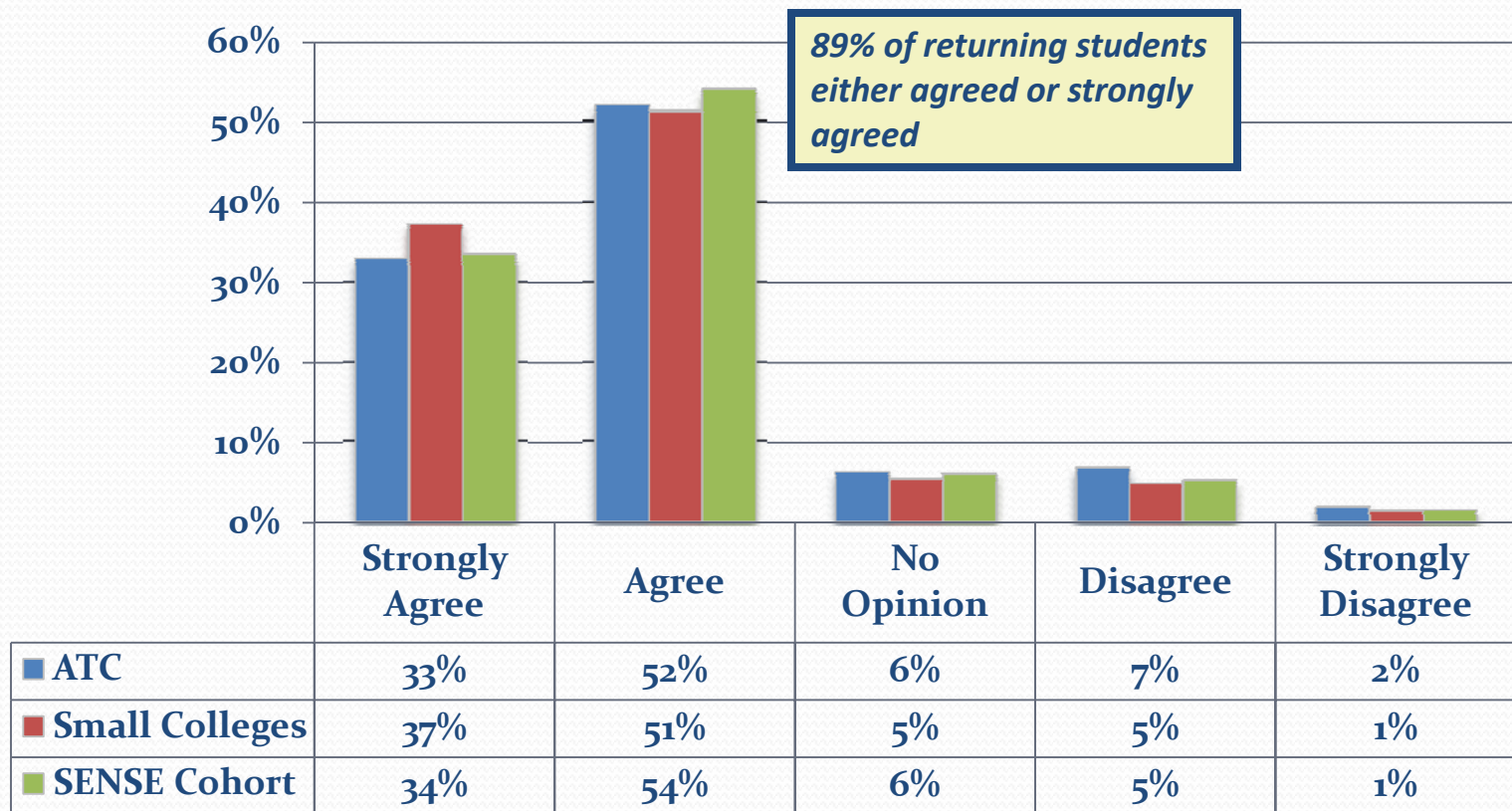
The very first time I came to Aiken Technical College, I felt welcome.
(All entering students)



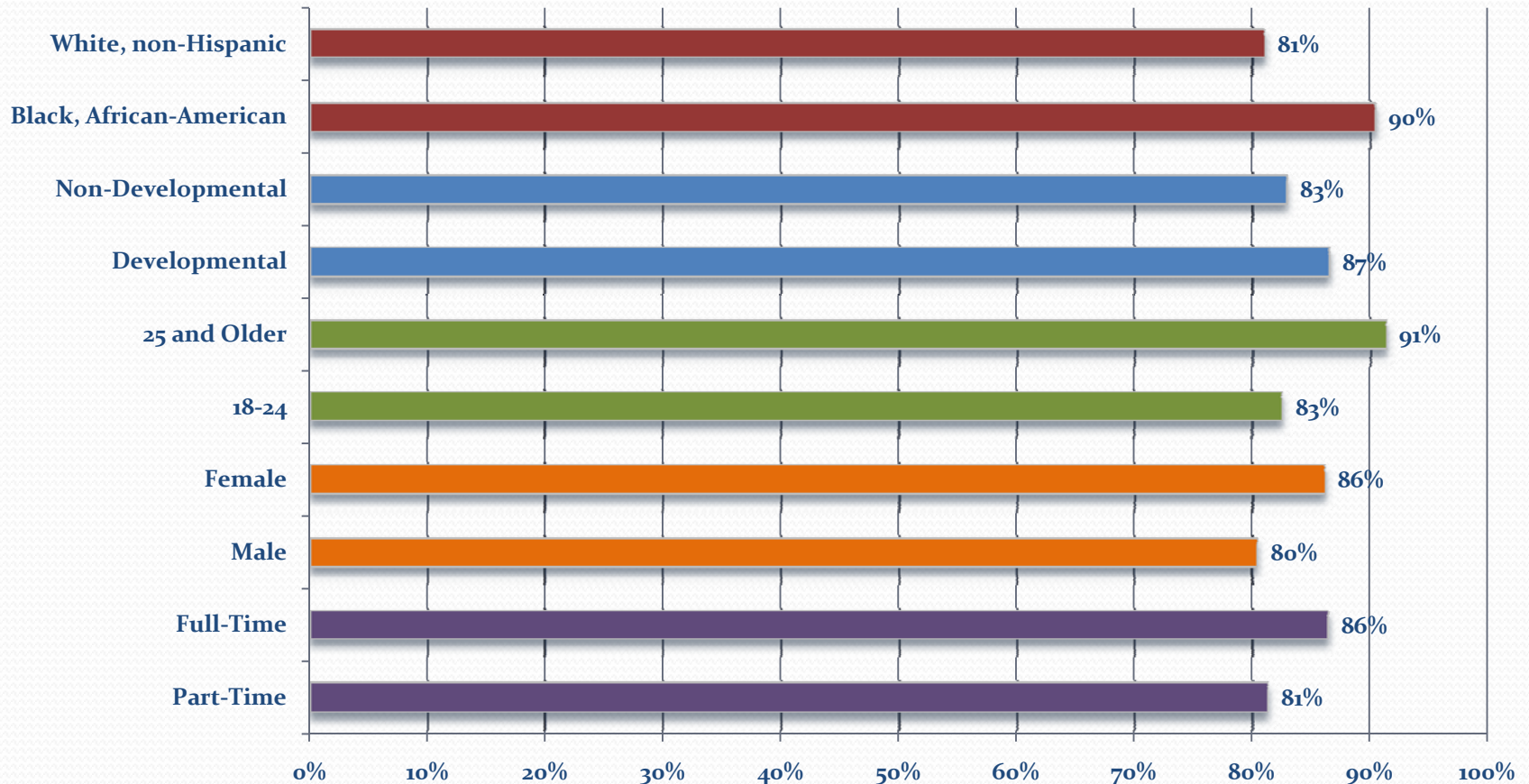
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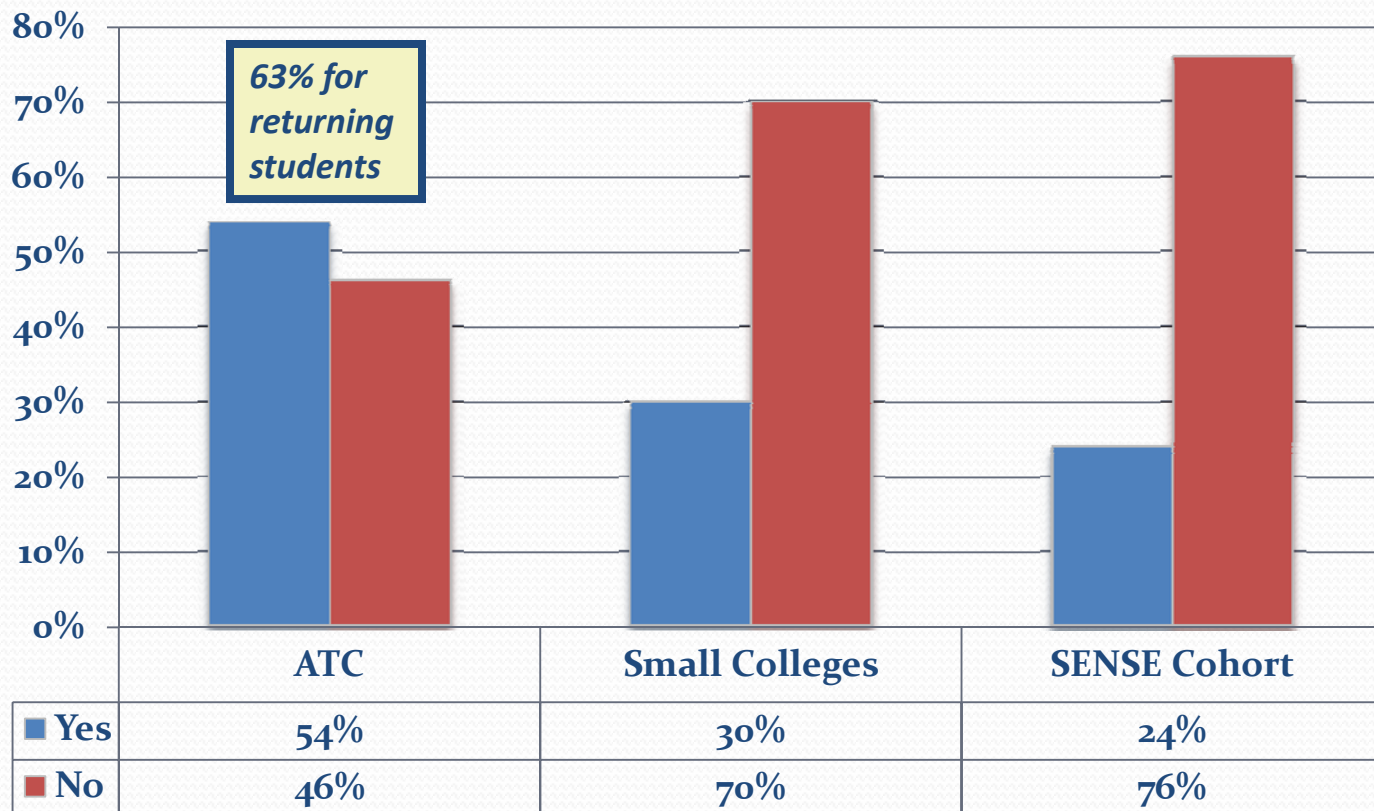
I was able to get the information I needed to register for classes. (All entering students)



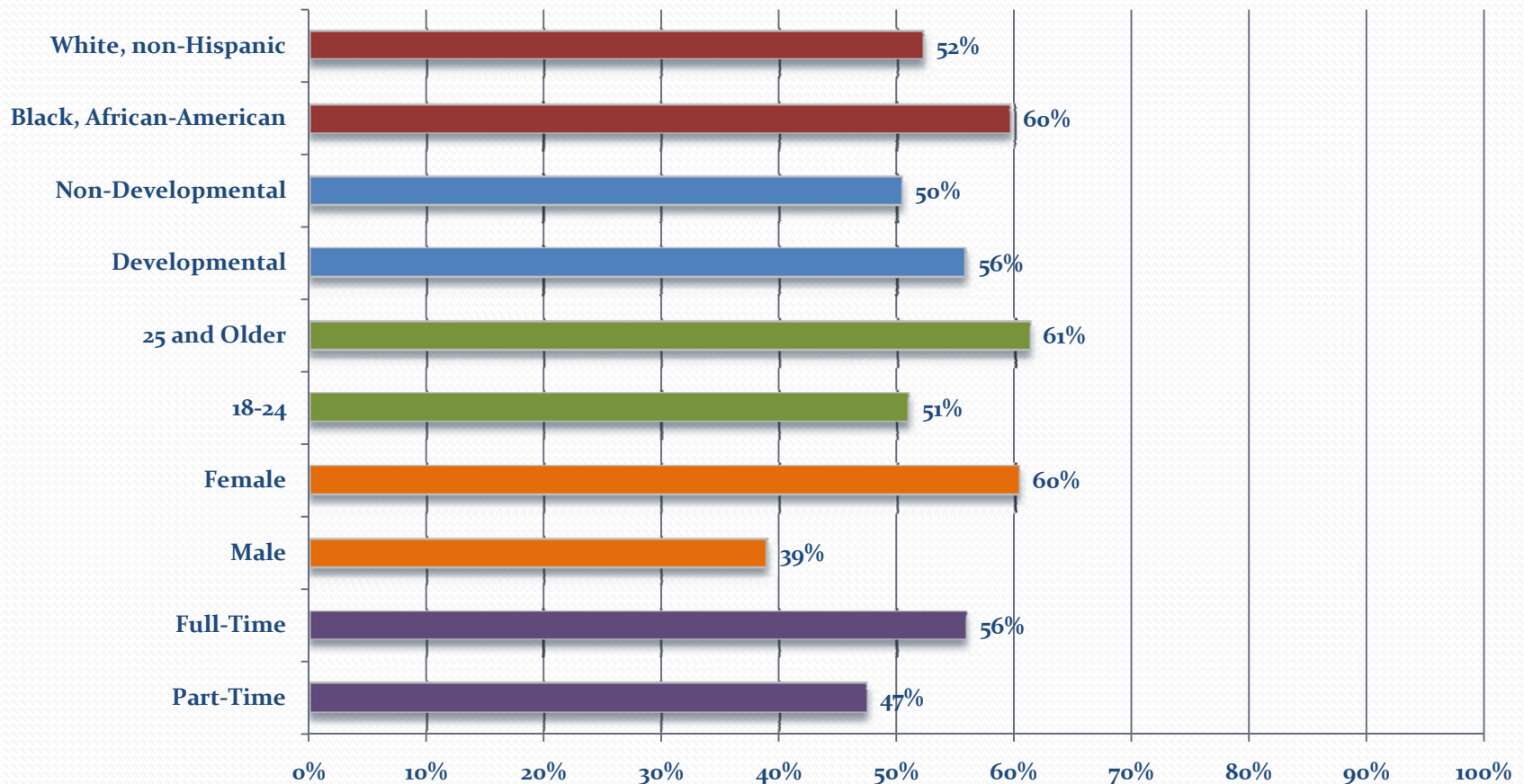
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Was a specific person assigned to you so you could see him/her each time you needed information/assistance?



Was a specific person assigned to you so you could see him/her each time you needed information or assistance. (All entering students)



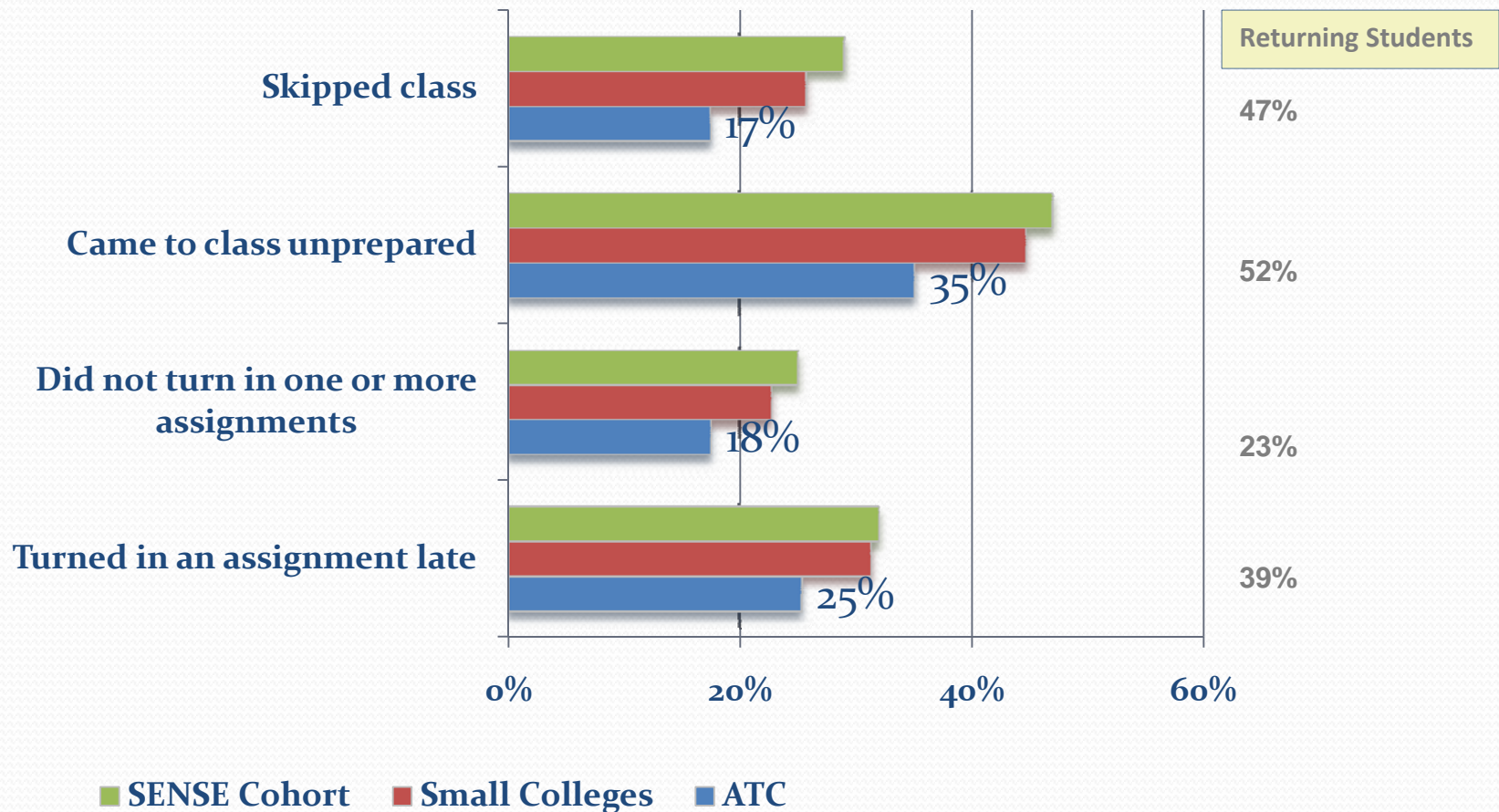


2. High Expectations and Aspirations

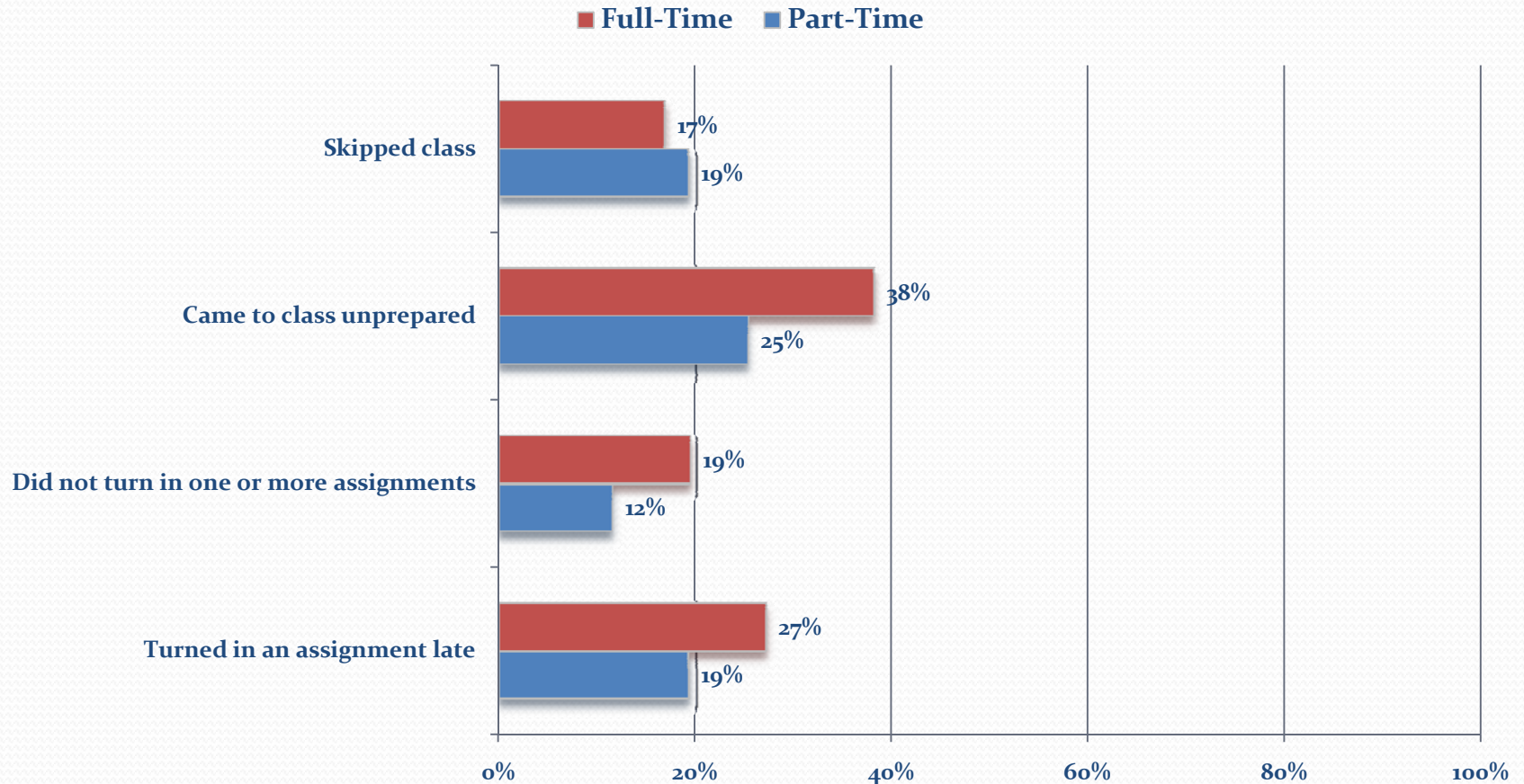
Imagine a college at which every student is clear about the college's high expectations for performance – and every student has high aspirations for his or her own success.

“No one rises to low expectations.” (Vincent Tinto)

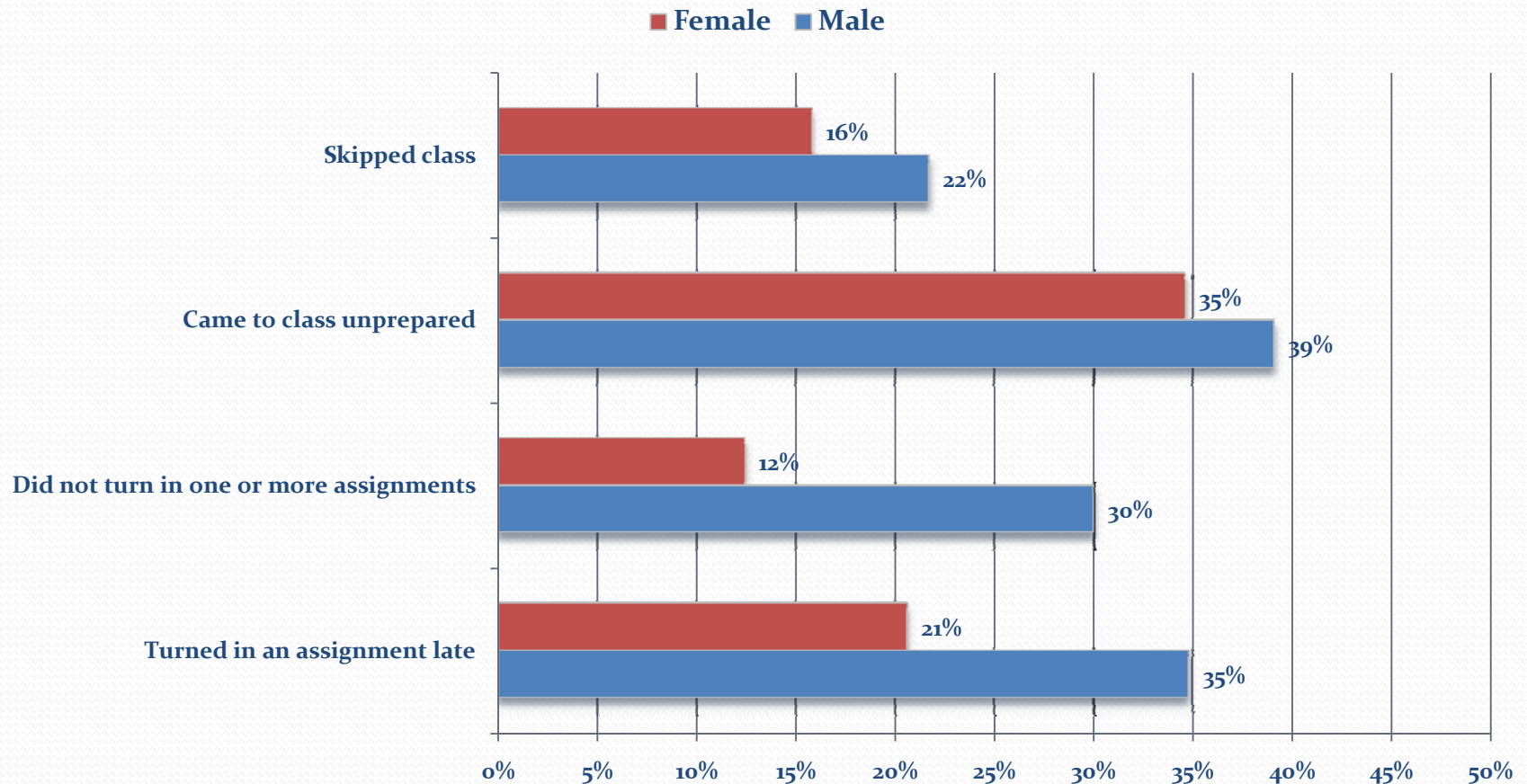
Percentage of students who, at least once during their first three weeks of college:



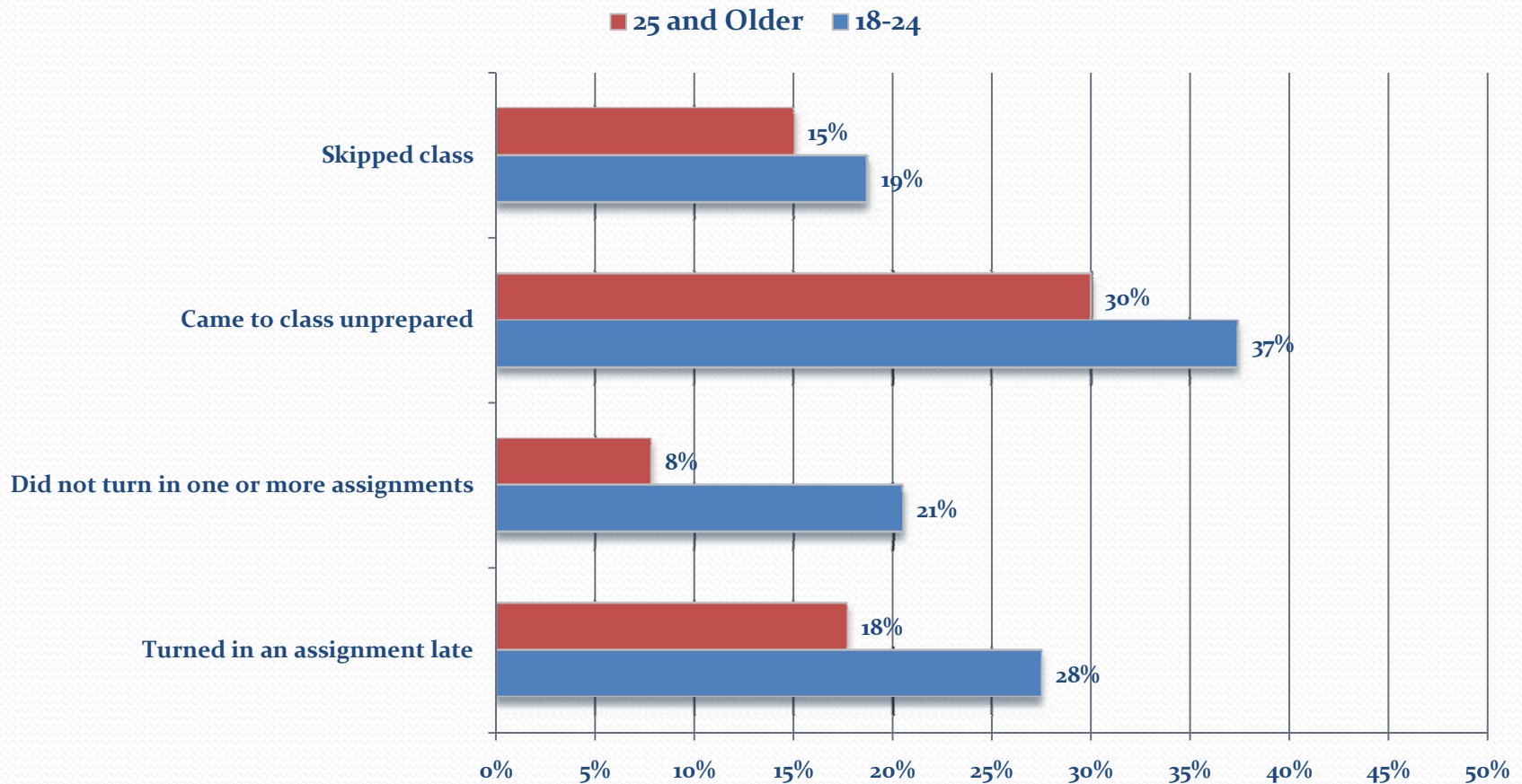
Percentage of students by ENROLLMENT STATUS who, at least once during their first three weeks of college: (All entering students)



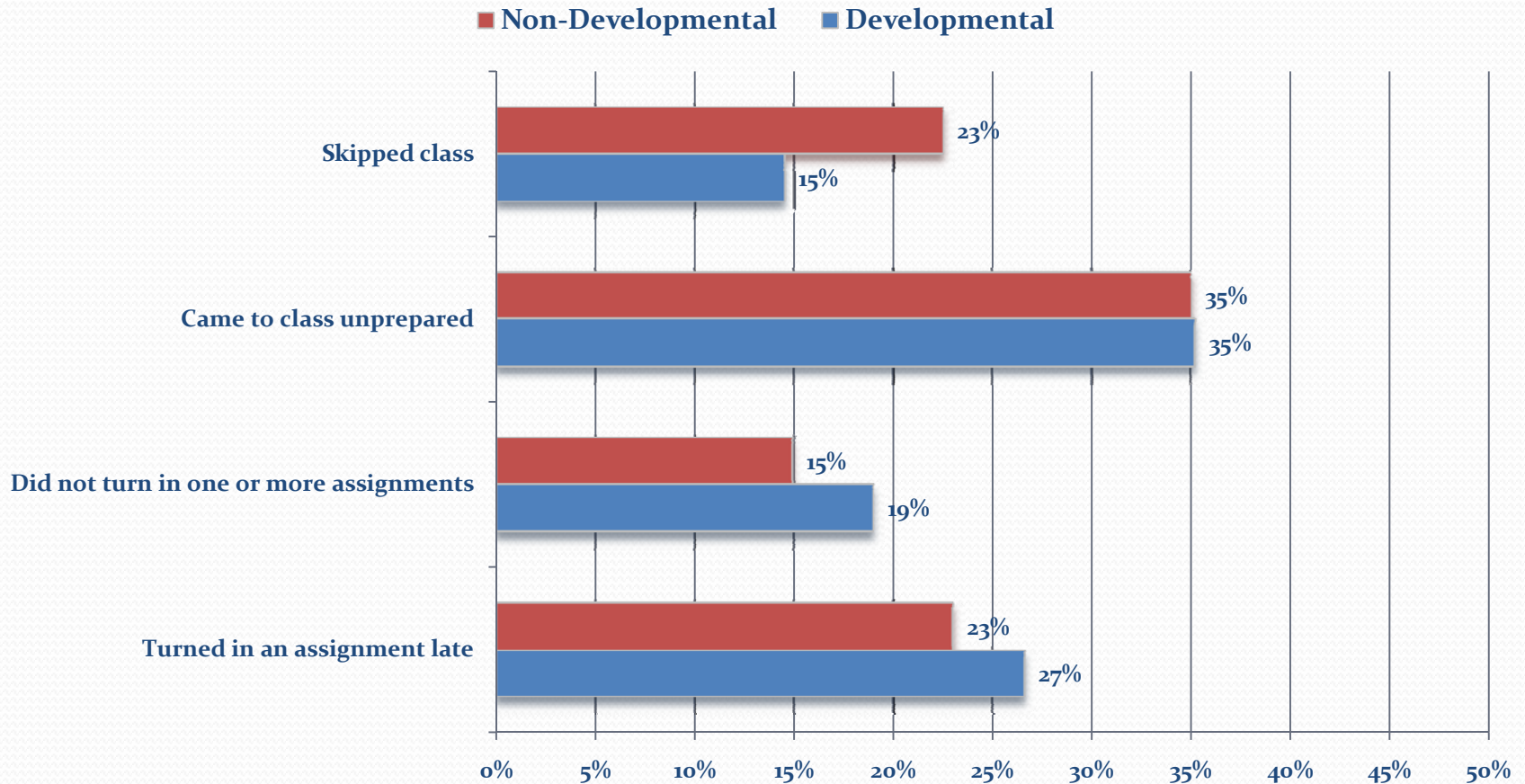
Percentage of students by GENDER who, at least once during their first three weeks of college: (All entering students)



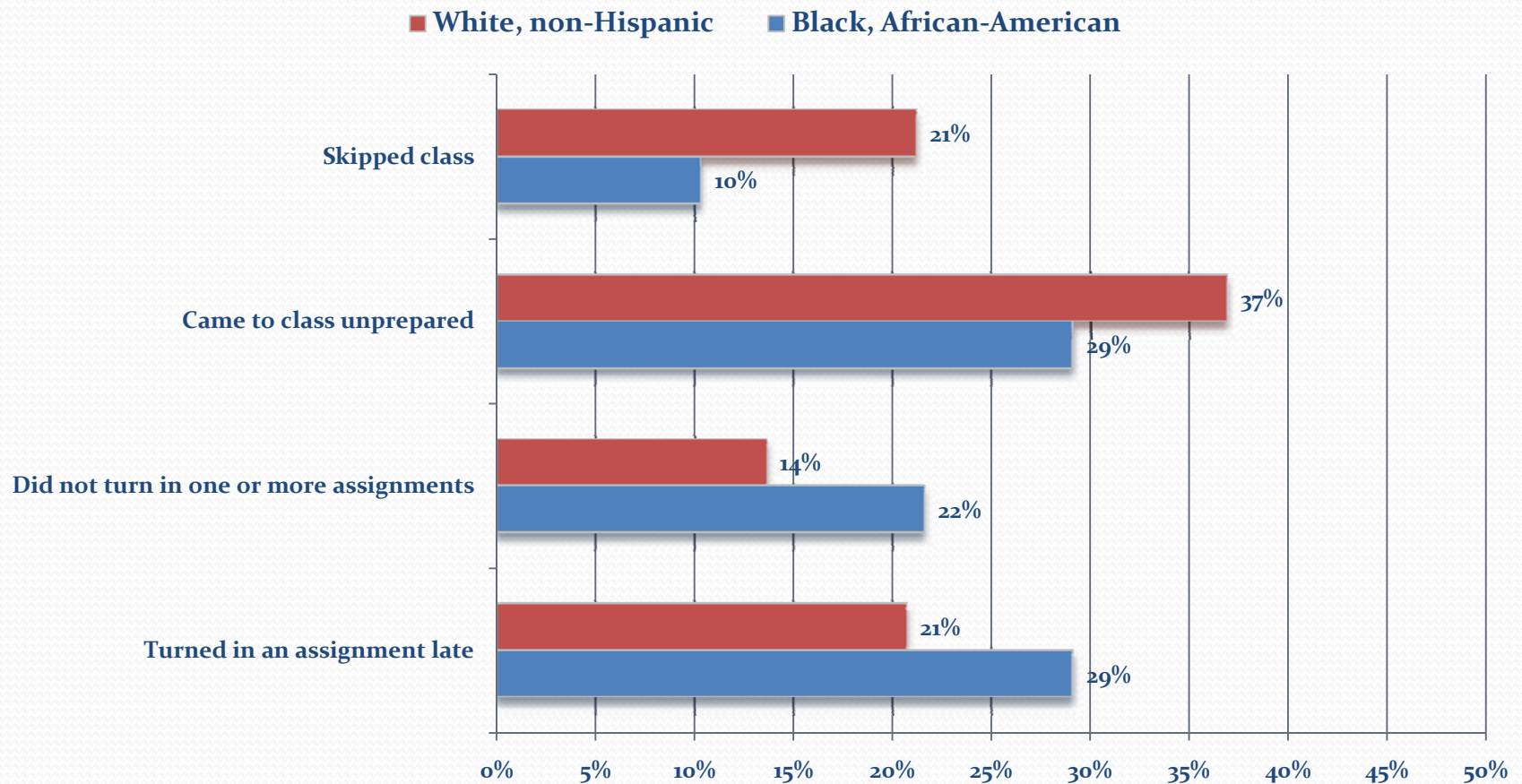
Percentage of students by TRADITIONAL /NON-TRADITIONAL AGE who, at least once during their first three weeks of college: (All entering students)



Percentage of student by DEVELOPMENTAL STATUS who, at least once during their first three weeks of college: (All entering students)



Percentage of students by RACE/ETHNICITY who, at least once during their first three weeks of college: (All entering students)

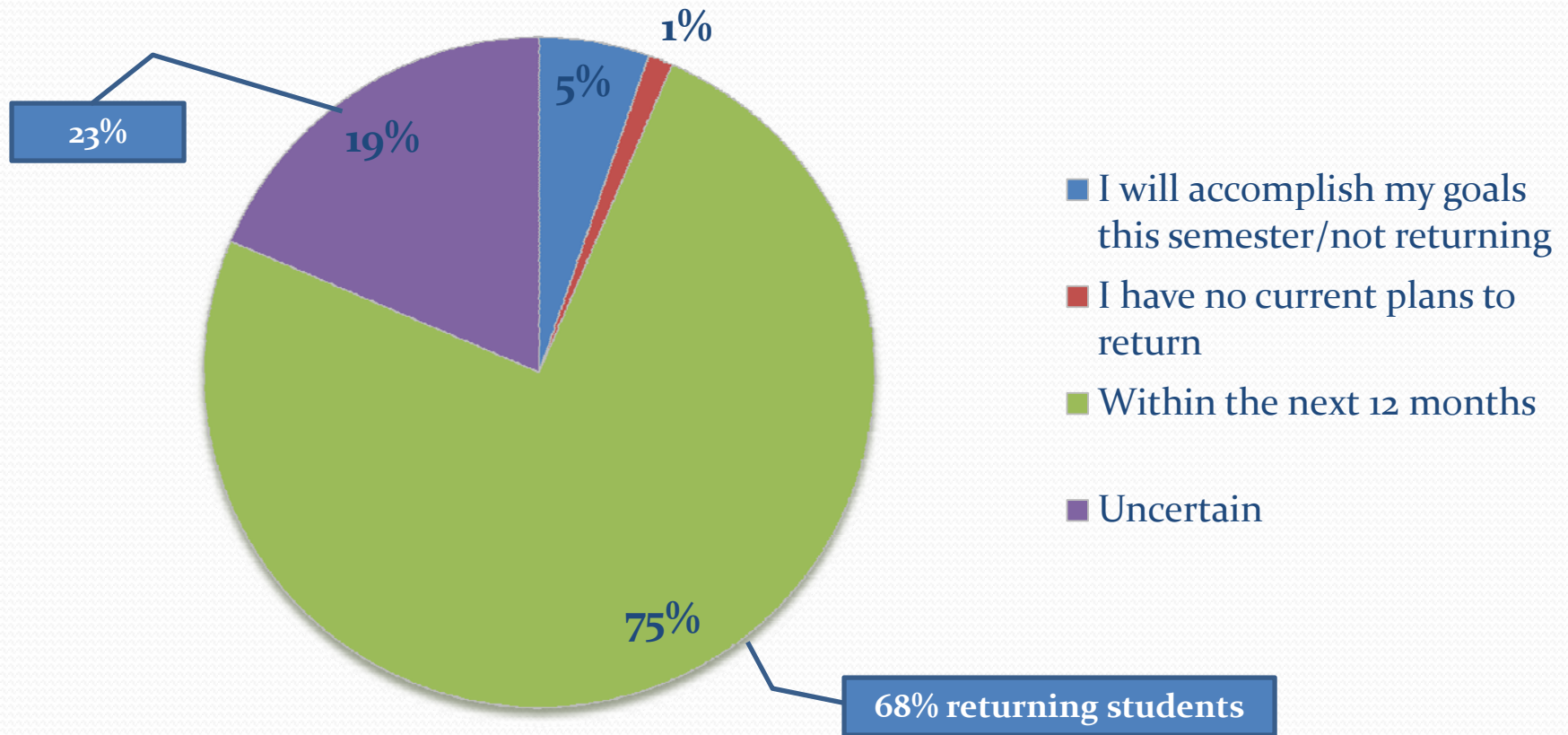




3. A Plan and a Pathway to Success

Imagine a college at which every entering student, in the first three weeks of college, defines his or her educational goals and develops a plan for attaining them. Imagine further that these plans are updated regularly, with guidance, as students progress.

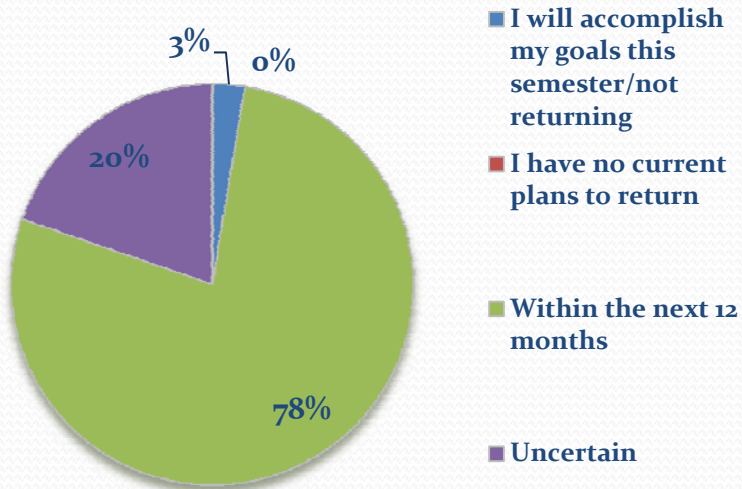
When do you plan to take classes at ATC again?



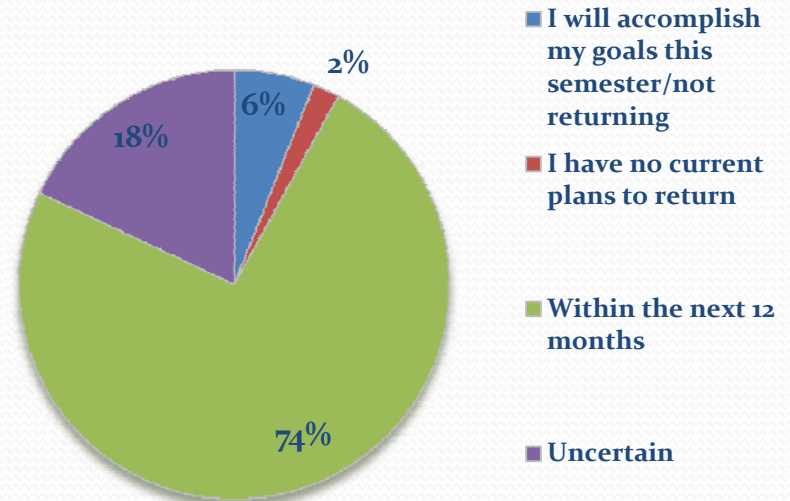
When do you plan to take classes at ATC again?

By ENROLLMENT STATUS (All entering students)

Part-Time



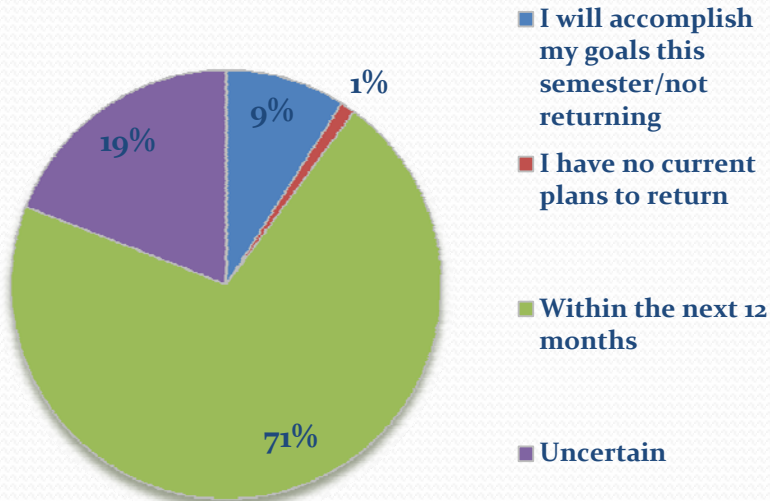
Full-Time



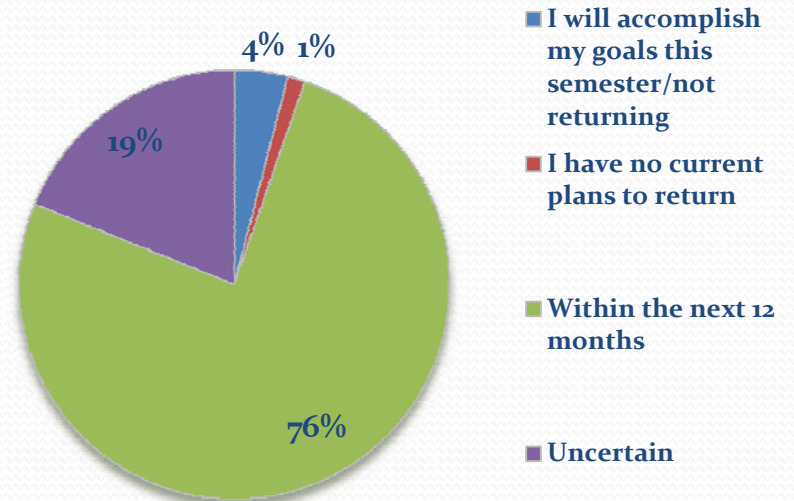
When do you plan to take classes at ATC again?

By GENDER (All entering students)

Male



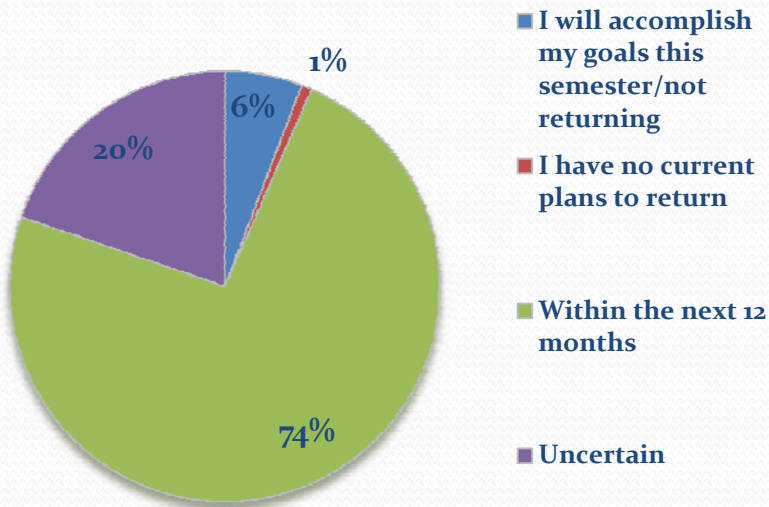
Female



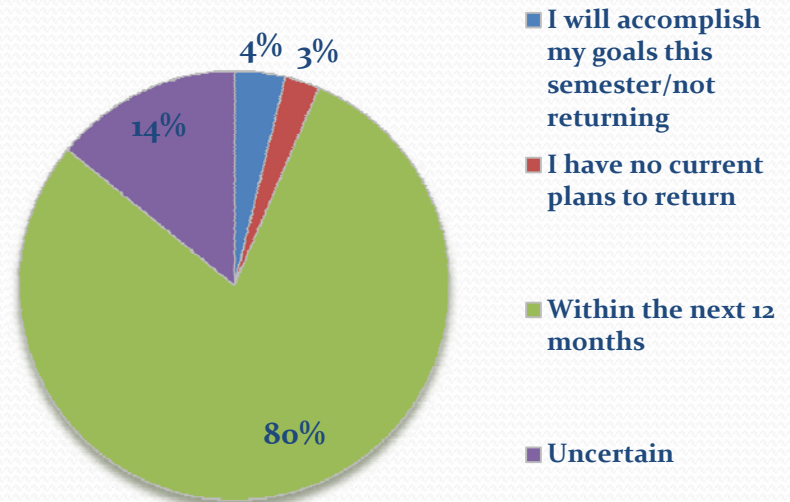
When do you plan to take classes at ATC again?

By TRADITIONAL/NON-TRADITIONAL AGE (All entering students)

18-24



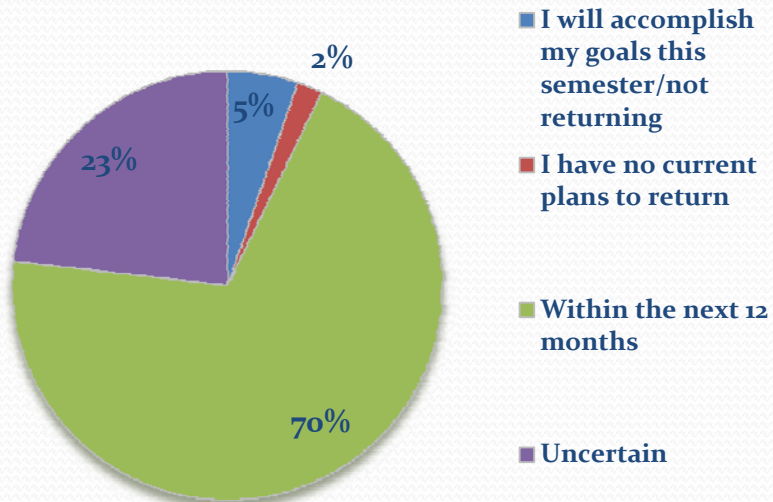
25 and Older



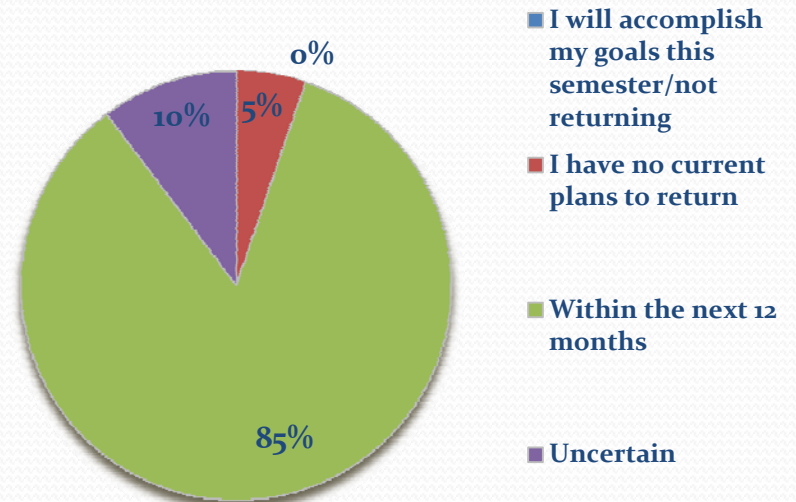
When do you plan to take classes at ATC again?

By DEVELOPMENTAL STATUS (All entering students)

Developmental



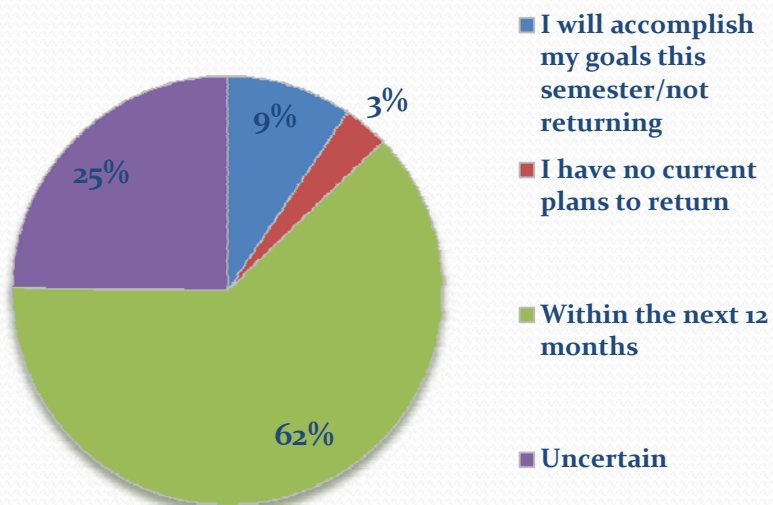
Non-Developmental



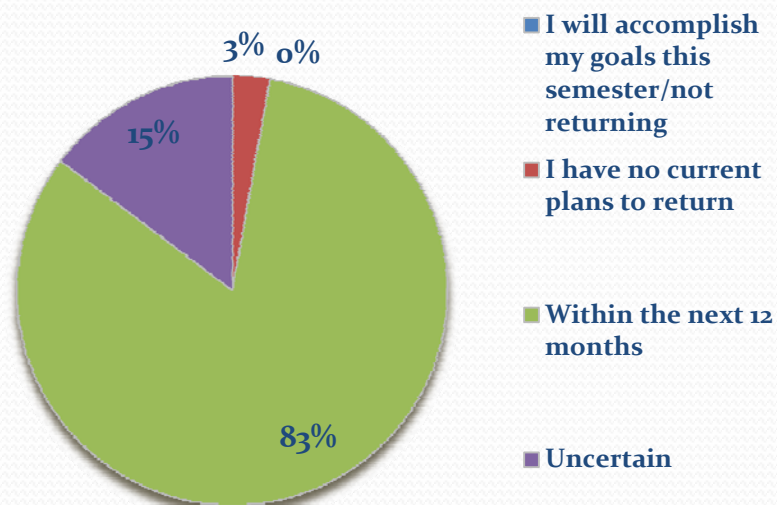
When do you plan to take classes at ATC again?

By RACE/ETHNICITY (All entering students)

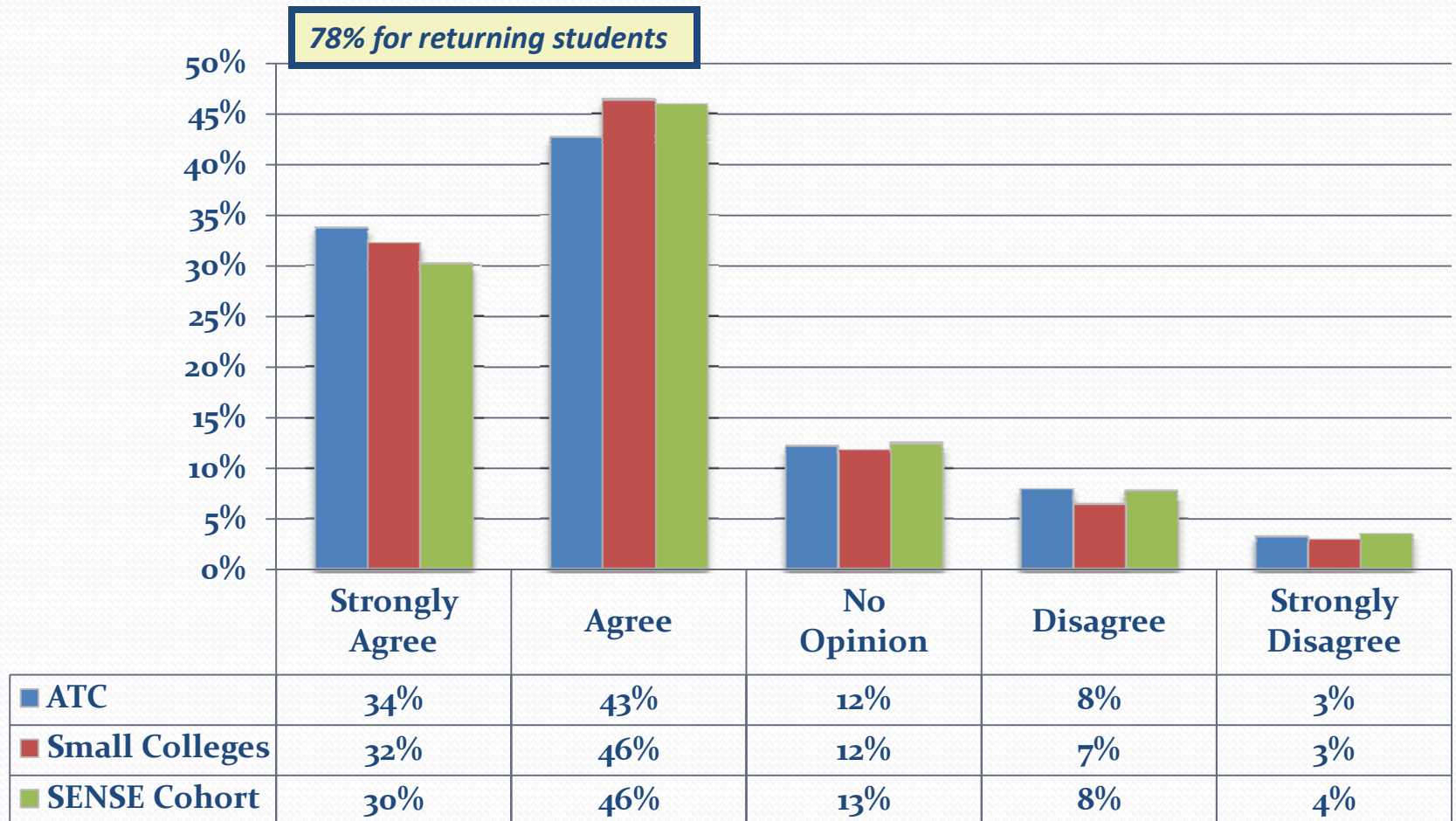
Black, African-American



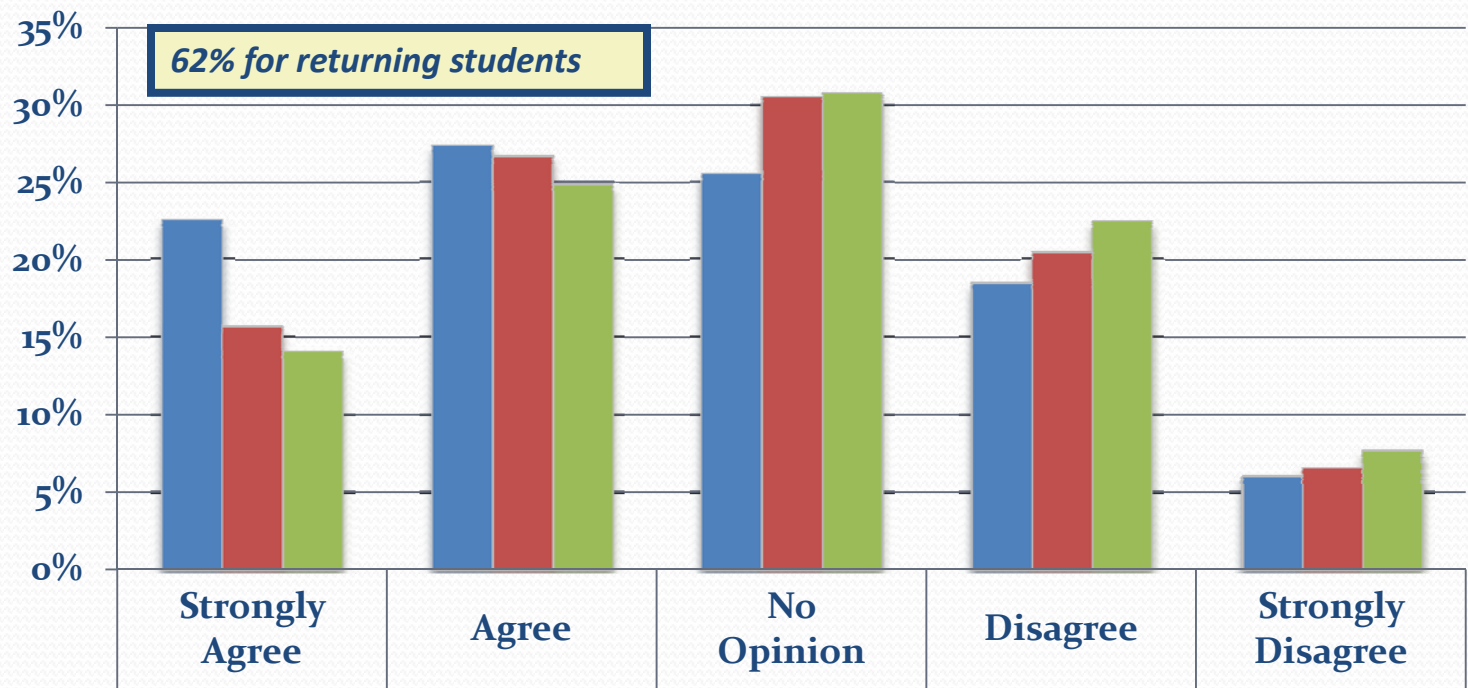
White, non-Hispanic



An advisor helped me to identify the courses I needed to take during my first semester.



An advisor helped me to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them.



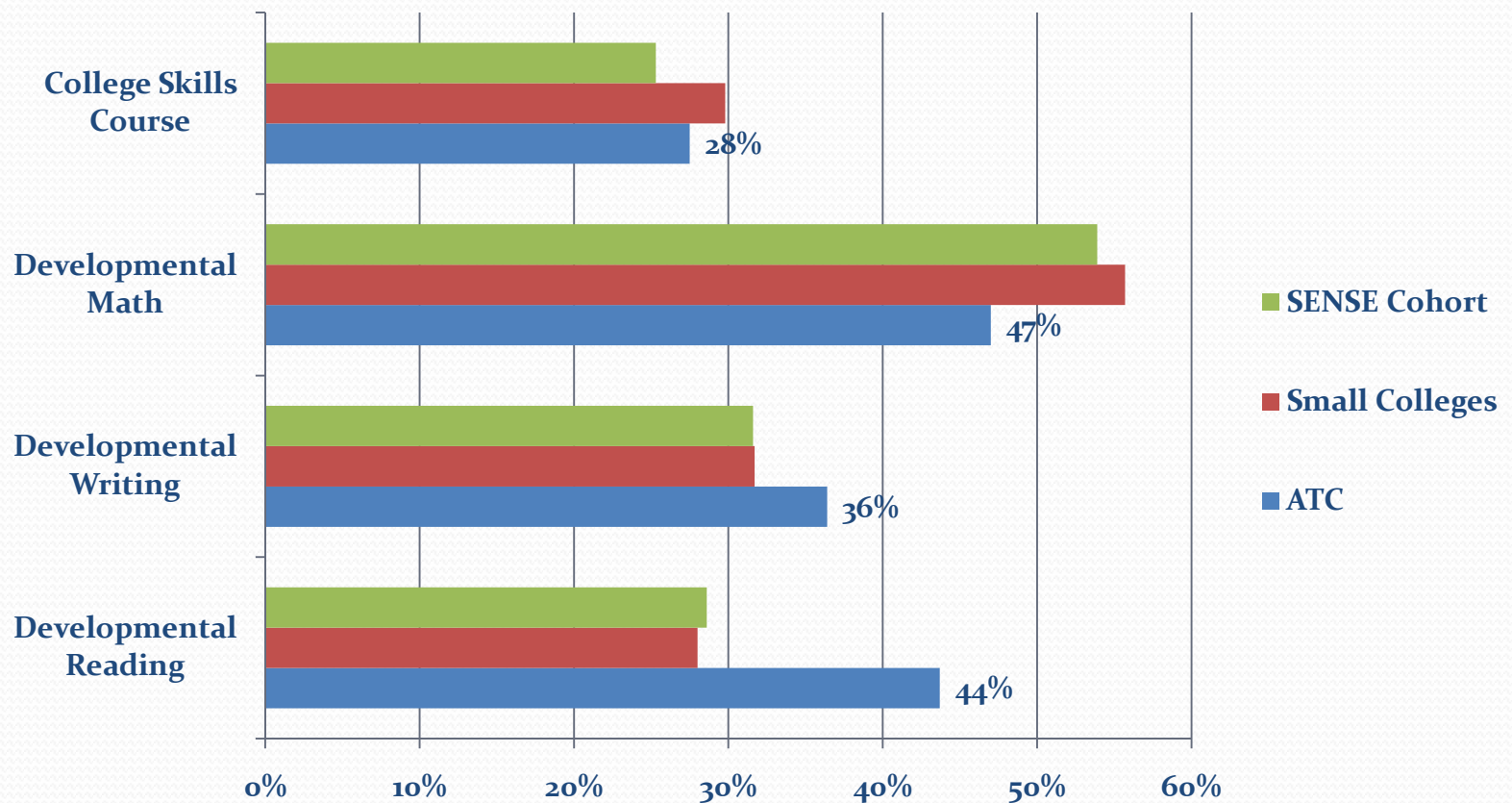
■ ATC	23%	27%	26%	19%	6%
■ Small Colleges	16%	27%	31%	21%	7%
■ SENSE Cohort	14%	25%	31%	23%	8%



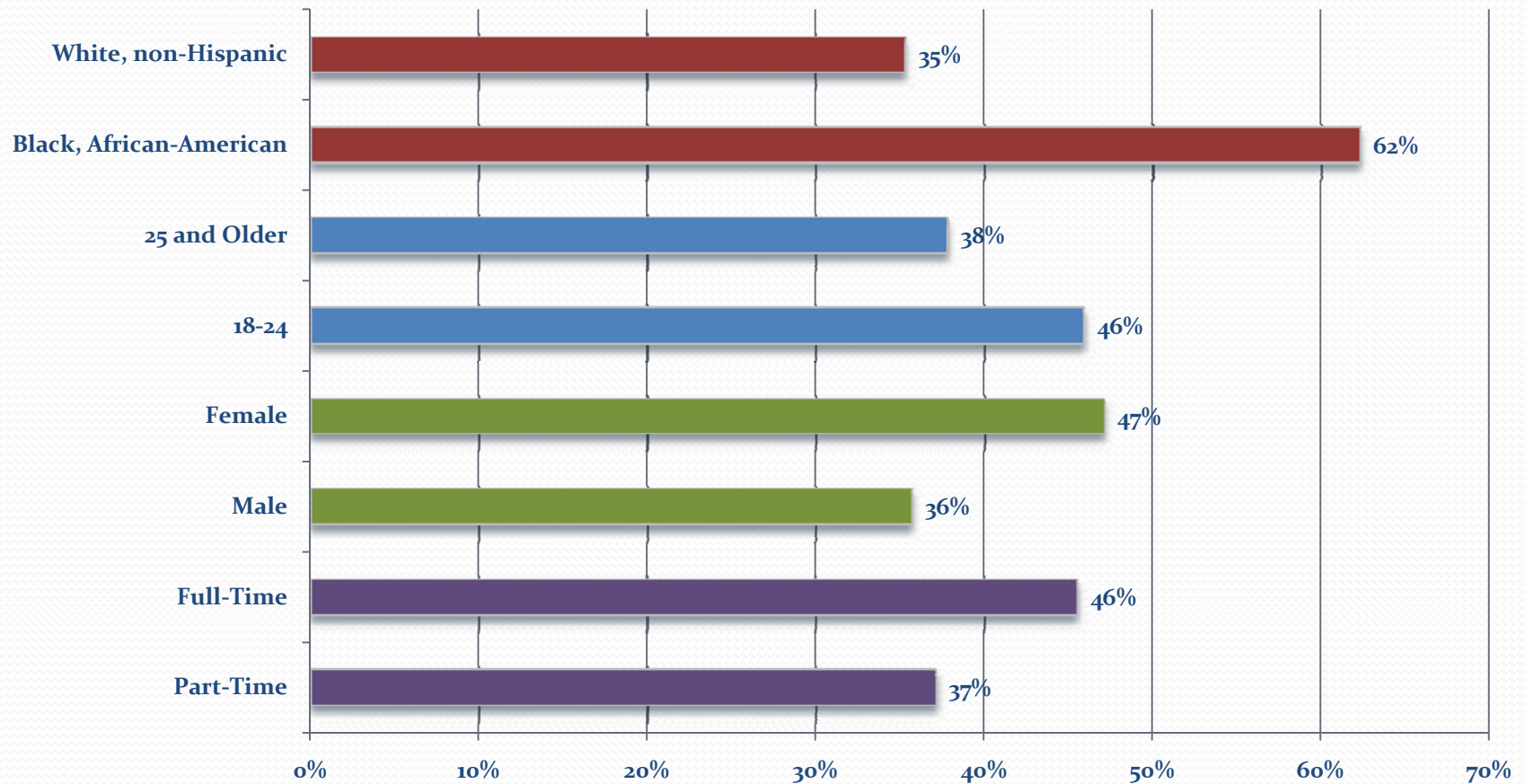
4. An Effective Track to College Readiness

Imagine a college at which all academically under-prepared students have an effective, efficient path to completing developmental education and beginning college-level work.

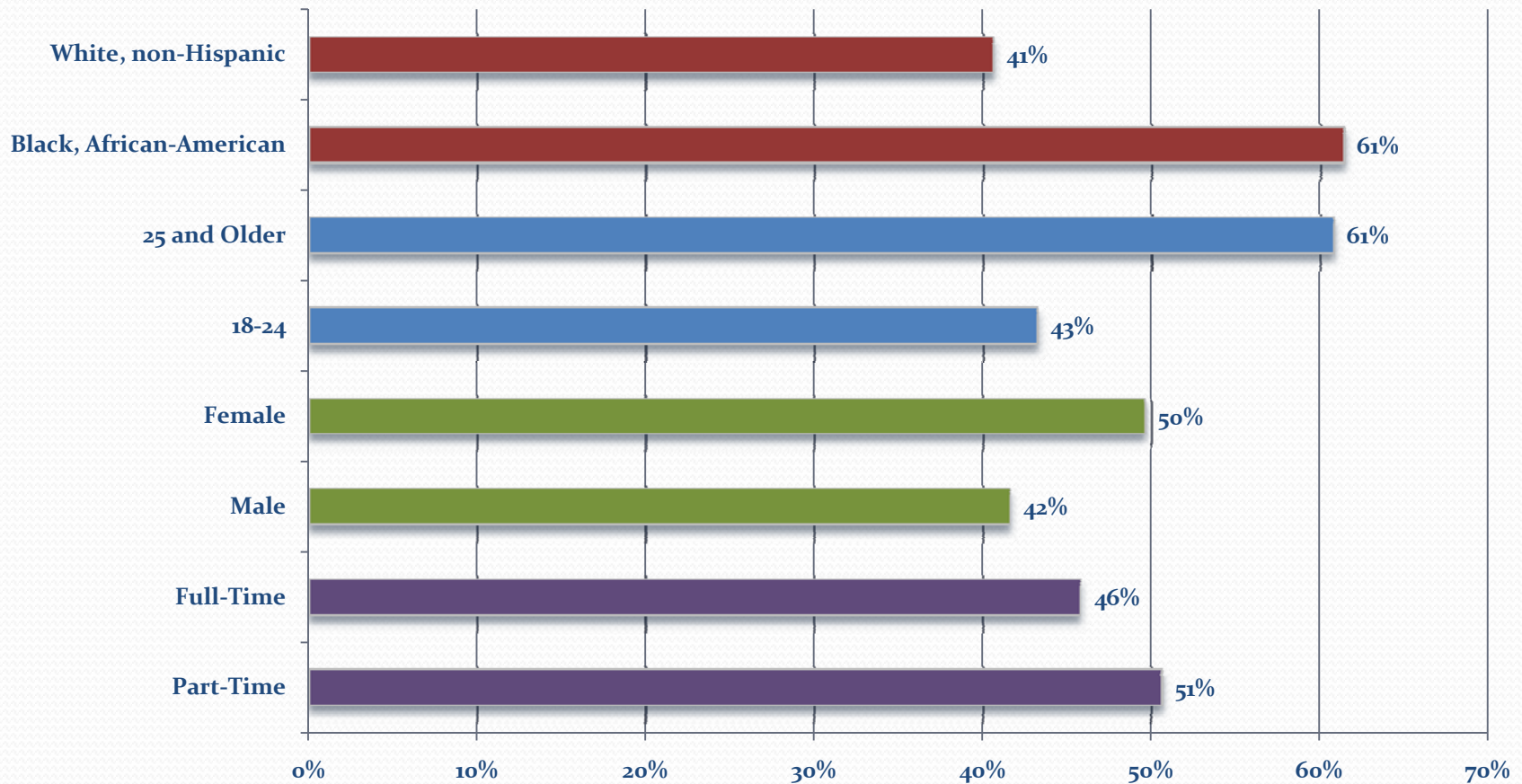
Enrolled in this course during my first semester at this college:



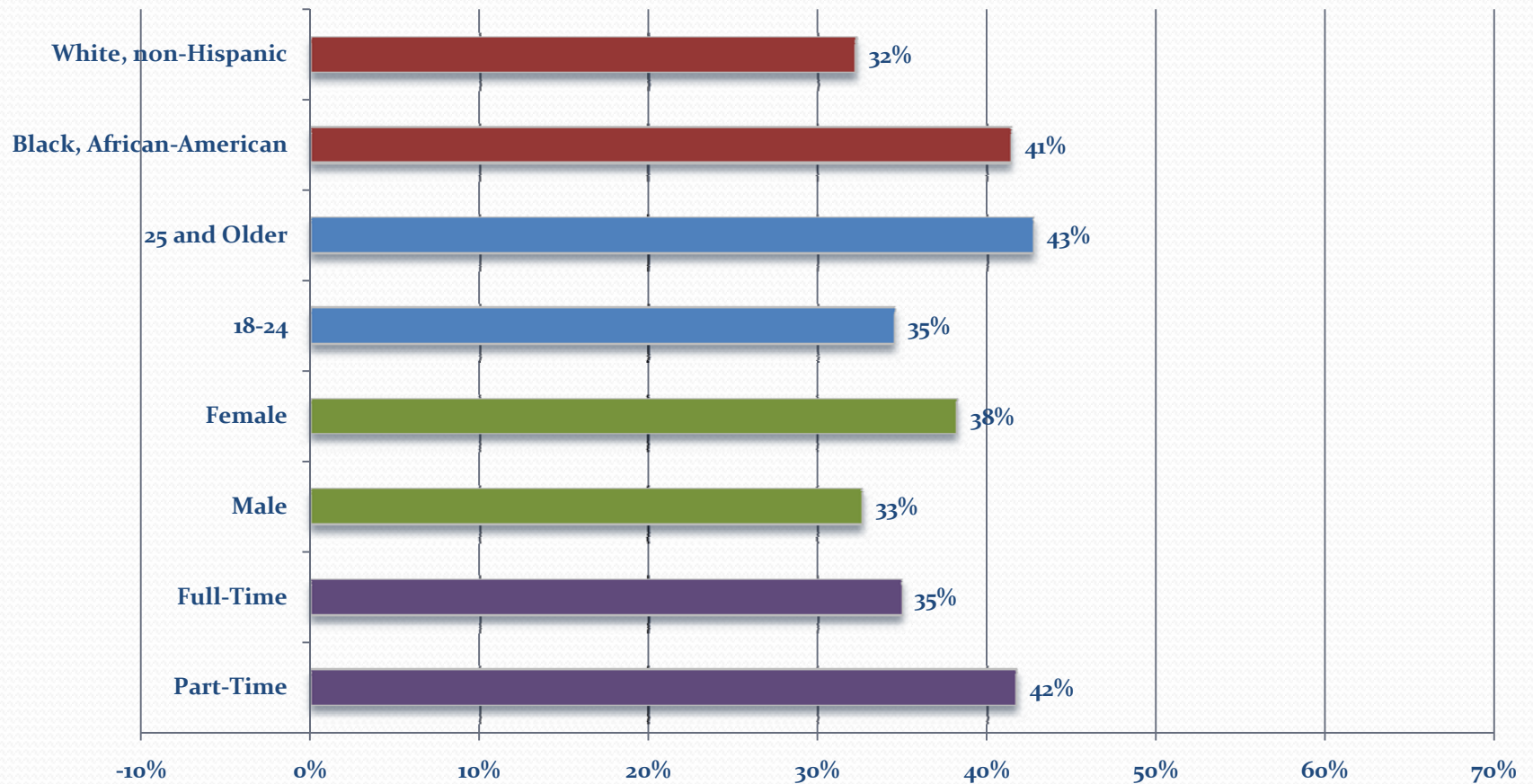
Enrolled in DEVELOPMENTAL READING in my first semester at Aiken Technical College. (All entering students)



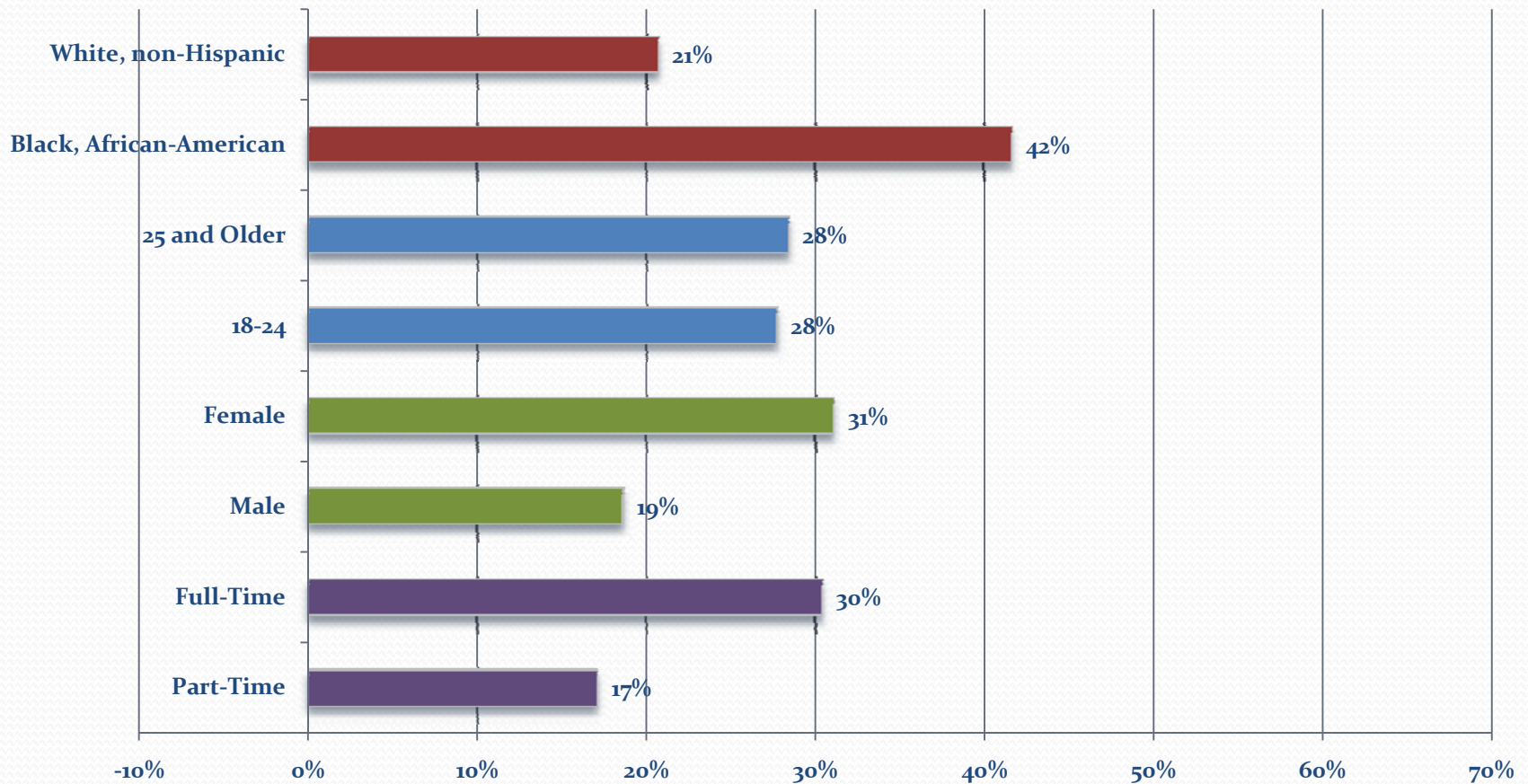
Enrolled in DEVELOPMENTAL MATH during my first semester at Aiken Technical College. (All entering students)



Enrolled in DEVELOPMENTAL WRITING during my first semester at Aiken Technical College. (All entering students)



Enrolled in COLLEGE SKILLS COURSE during my first semester at Aiken Technical College. (All entering students)





5. Engaged Learning

Imagine a college at which engaged learning is intentional, inescapable, and the norm for all students.



Are ATC students engaged?

- 73% of entering students say they are NOT enrolled in a student success course
- 98% say they are NOT enrolled in a learning community
- 85% report NEVER participating in a required study group outside of class
- 29% say they NEVER worked with other students on a project or assignment during class, and 70% NEVER did so outside of class
- 23% report NEVER asking for help from an instructor regarding questions or problems related to class
- 65% report NEVER participating in supplemental instruction



Orientation Program for Entering Students

- 3% of entering students took part in an online orientation prior to the beginning of classes
- 29% attended an on-campus orientation program prior to the beginning of classes
- 2% enrolled in an orientation course as part of their course schedule during their first semester
- 15% reported being unaware of a college orientation course

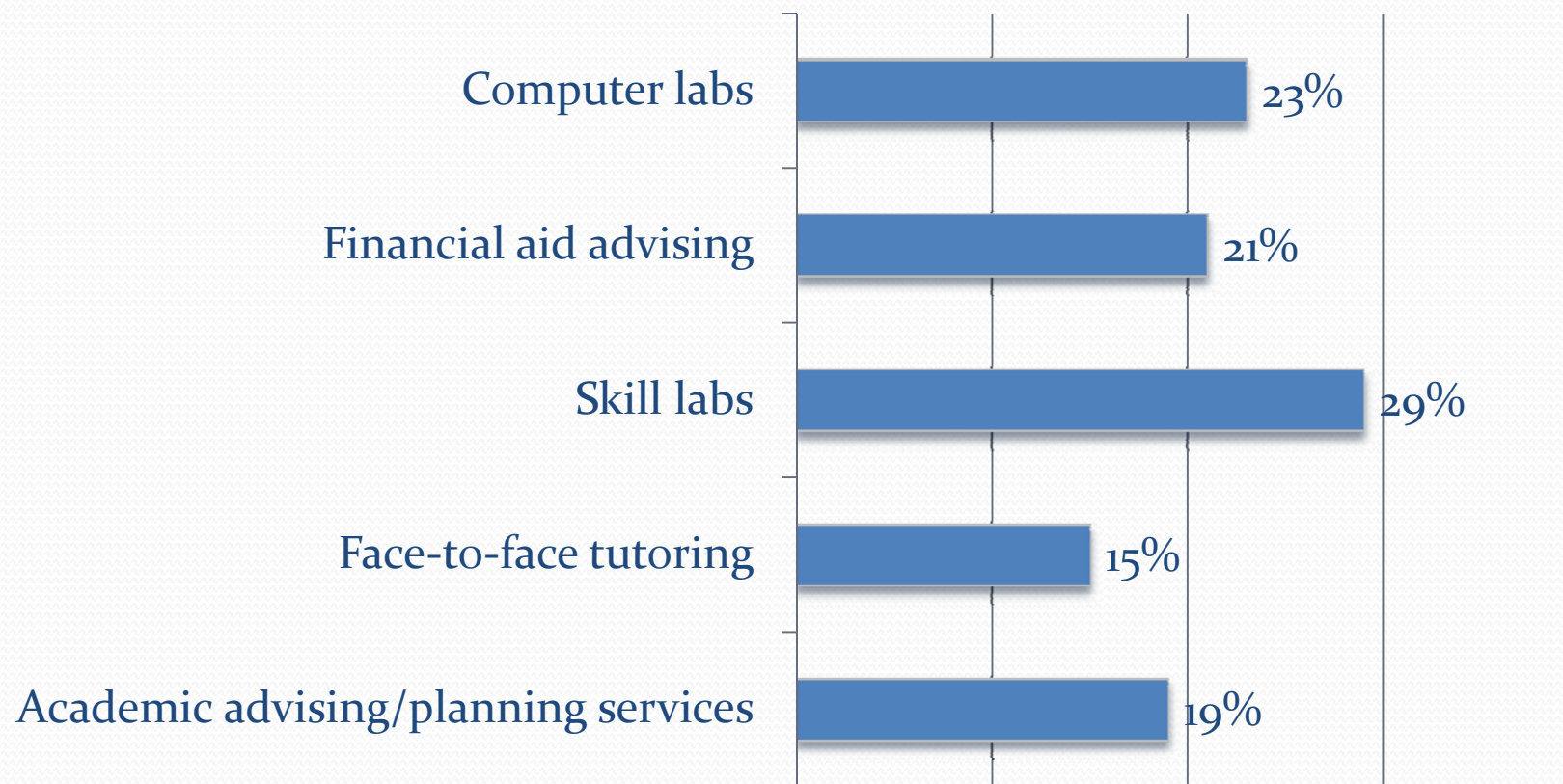


6. An Integrated Network of Financial, Social, and Academic Support

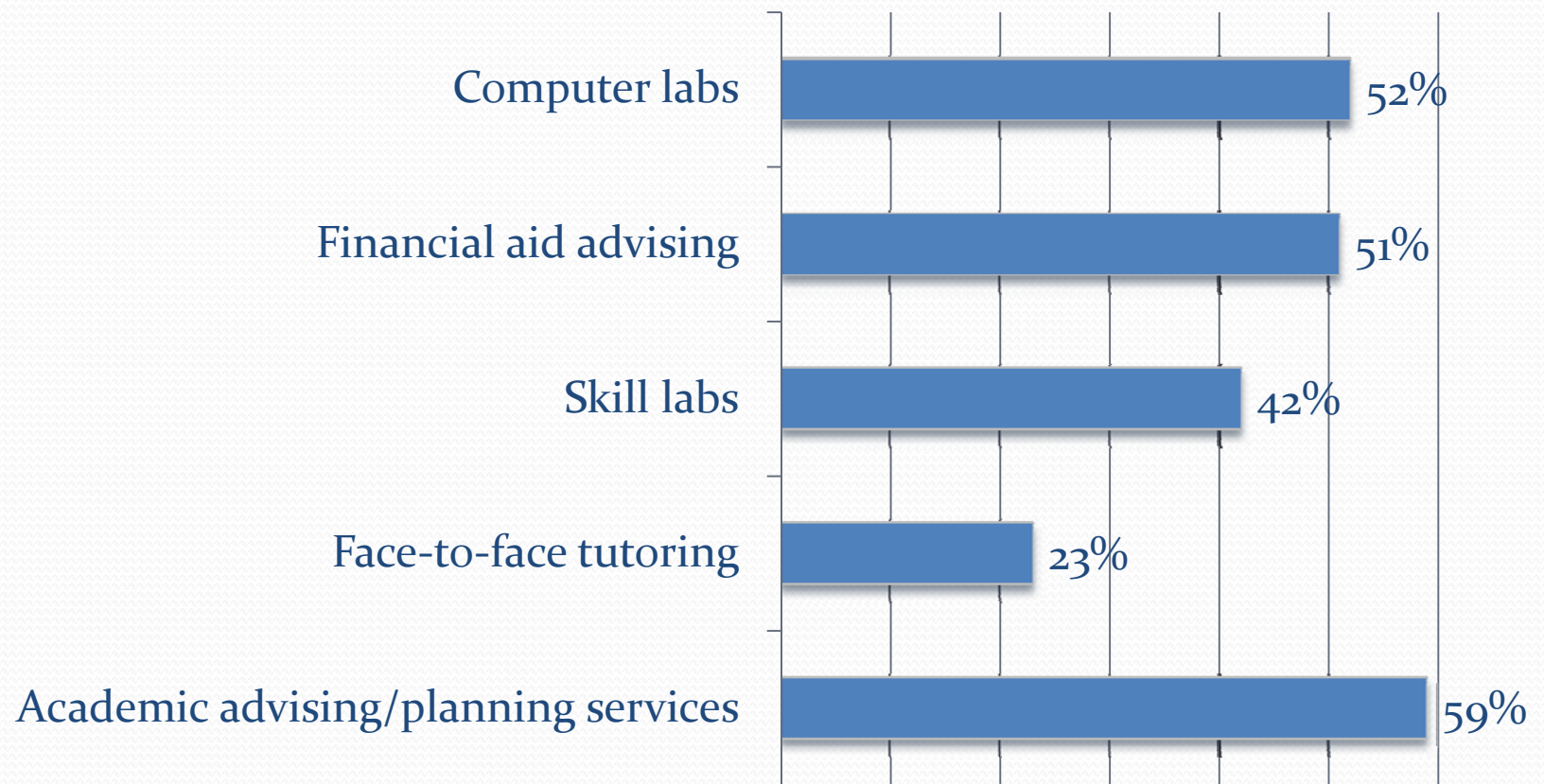
Imagine a college at which every entering student is met with a personalized network of financial, academic, and social support.

Entering students are most likely to succeed when expectations are high and they receive the support they need to achieve at high levels.

Percentage of our entering students who are UNAWARE of particular support services during their first three weeks of college:



Percentage of our entering students **SATISFIED** with selected support services during their first three weeks.



Main source of academic advising:

MAIN source of academic advising (academic goal-setting, planning , course recommendations, graduation requirements, etc.) from the time of your decision to enter ATC through the end of the first three weeks	ATC Entering	ATC Returning
Instructors	25%	31%
College Staff (not instructors)	13%	15%
Friends, Family or Other Students	48%	37%
College Web-Site	7%	9%
Other College Materials	4%	4%



Additional Significant Findings

➤ Interpersonal Relationships

- 43% reported at least one college staff member knew their name
- 84% reported at least one instructor knew their name
- 49% indicated that instructors had activities to introduce students to one another



➤ Financial Assistance

- 61% reported ATC provided them with adequate information about financial assistance
- 86% applied for financial assistance
- 67% received an offer of financial assistance
- 57% received financial assistance before classes began
- 33% indicated they applied for financial assistance 3 or more months before classes began – 35% 1 or 2 months before classes began



➤ **Academic Advising**

- 70% reported an academic advisor was available when it was convenient for the student
- 66% reported an academic advisor helped them select a course of study, program, or major
- 50% indicated an academic advisor helped them to set academic goals and to create a plan for achieving them



➤ Instruction

- 93% reported instructors clearly explained course grading policies
- 92% reported instructors clearly explained course syllabi
- 67% rated their “Quality of Relationship” with instructors as a 6 or 7 on a 7-point scale (available, helpful, sympathetic)
- 32% reported they NEVER received prompt written or oral feedback from instructors on their performance during the first three weeks



Next Steps?

For more information. . .

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 - Donald Miles
 - Extension 1381 or milesd@atc.edu
 - Rebecca Guthrie
 - Extension 1383 or guthrier@atc.edu