

# Columbia Engineering Graduate Student Quality of Life Survey



9<sup>th</sup> Annual  
**Graduate Student Town Hall  
Meeting**  
**April 26, 2018**



# Introduction



- Key Survey Highlights
- Survey Design and Analysis Methodology
- Results and Key Insights
  - Overview
  - Academics and Mentoring
  - Academic Integrity
  - Professional Development
  - Career Development
  - Student Life
  - Libraries and Facilities
- Question and Answer Panel

# Survey Overview



# Strategy to improve the response rate



**50% increase in Survey Response**

## Tiered Gifts

- First 350 students receive Columbia Engineering T-shirts
- Next 250 students receive Movie tickets
- Next 200 students receive Columbia Engineering Mug

## Bumper Gifts



## Promotions

- Coffee Hours in Mudd
- Continuous reminders through SurveyMonkey and newsletter
- Fliers in Mudd and other buildings
- Blurb on all EGSC/GSA Eventbrite tickets

Engineering Graduate Student Council (EGSC) Leadership

Graduate Student Affairs (GSA) Office and Dean's office

# Survey Design and Analysis



- Likert scale
- Randomized sections, options in matrix questions
- Format:
  - 1) State the research question
  - 2) Explore potential hypotheses
  - 3) Conduct appropriate statistical analysis
  - 4) Draw statistical conclusions
  - 5) Draw research conclusions

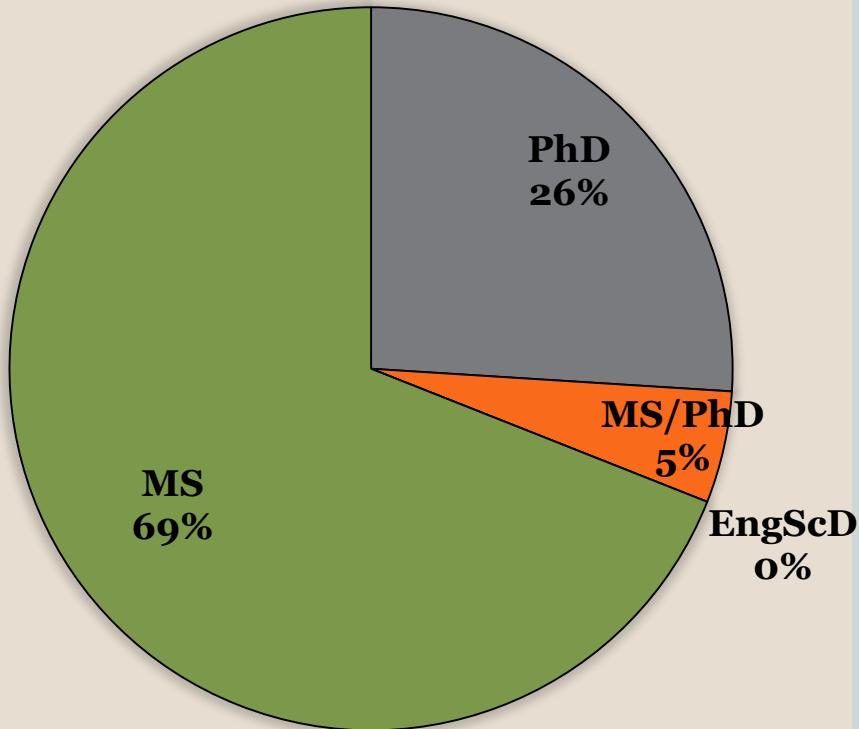
# Demographics



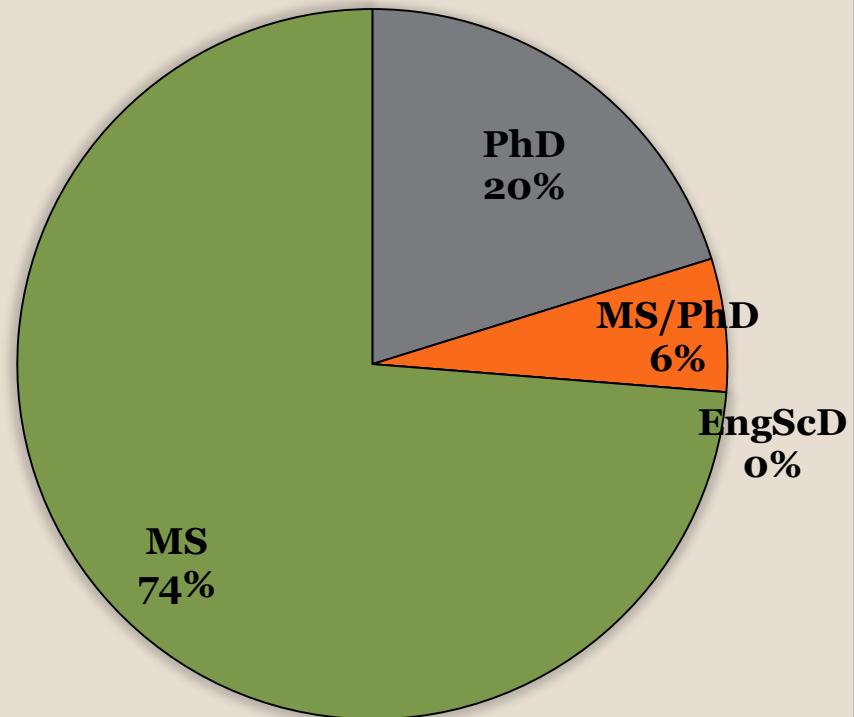
**SURVEY RESPONDENTS ARE  
REPRESENTATIVE OF DEGREE  
PROGRAMS AND  
DEPARTMENTS**

# Representation by Degree Program

2018 Student Body



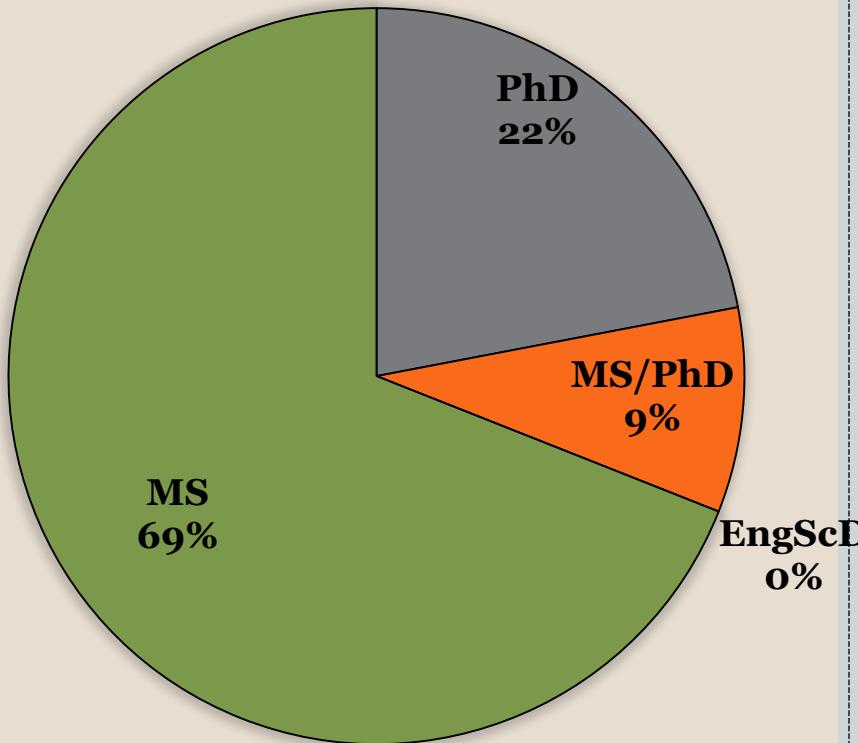
2018 Survey



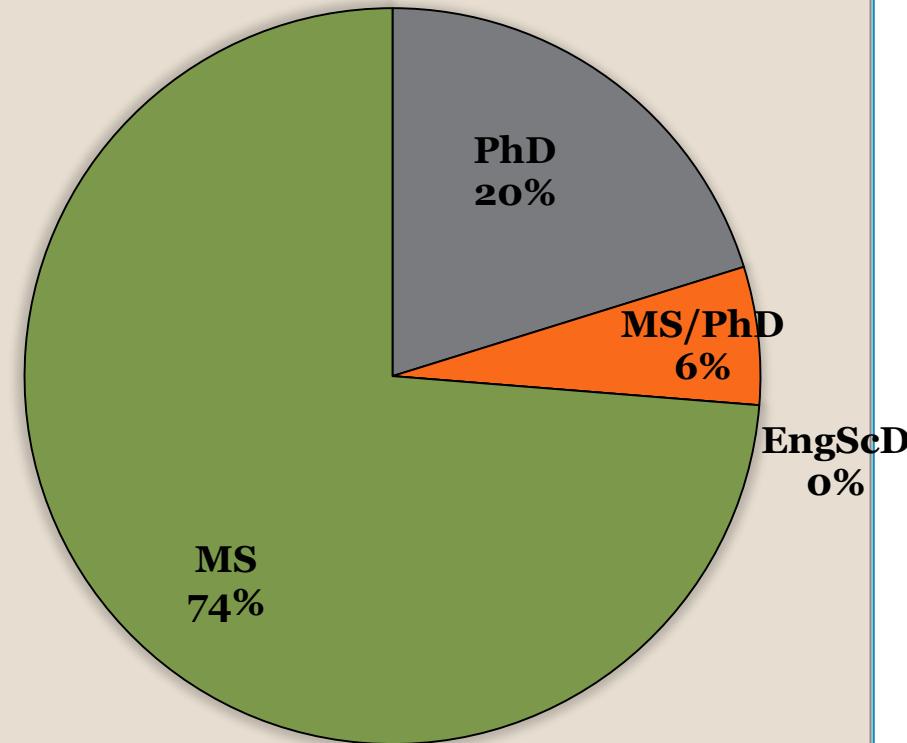
# Representation by Degree Program



2017 Survey

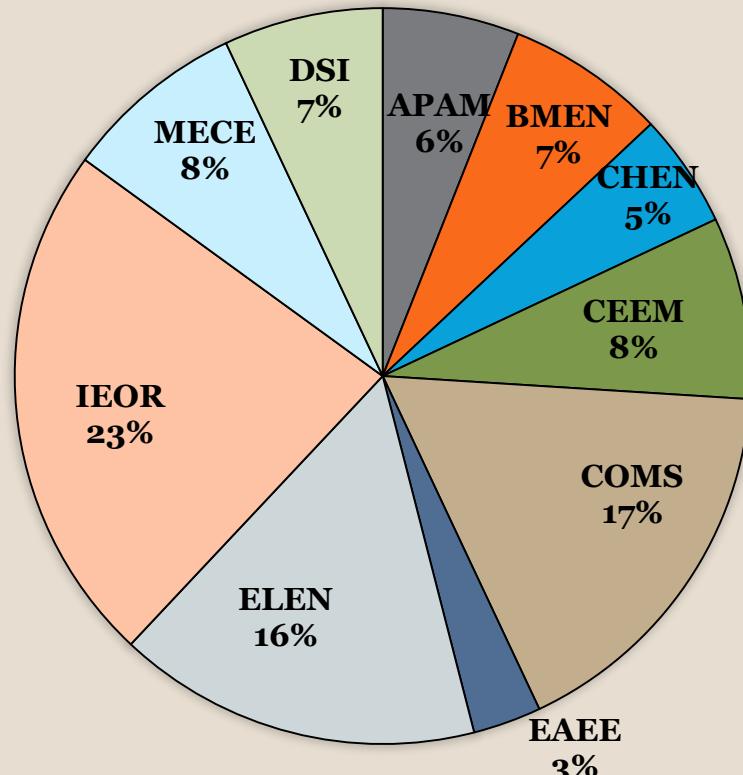


2018 Survey

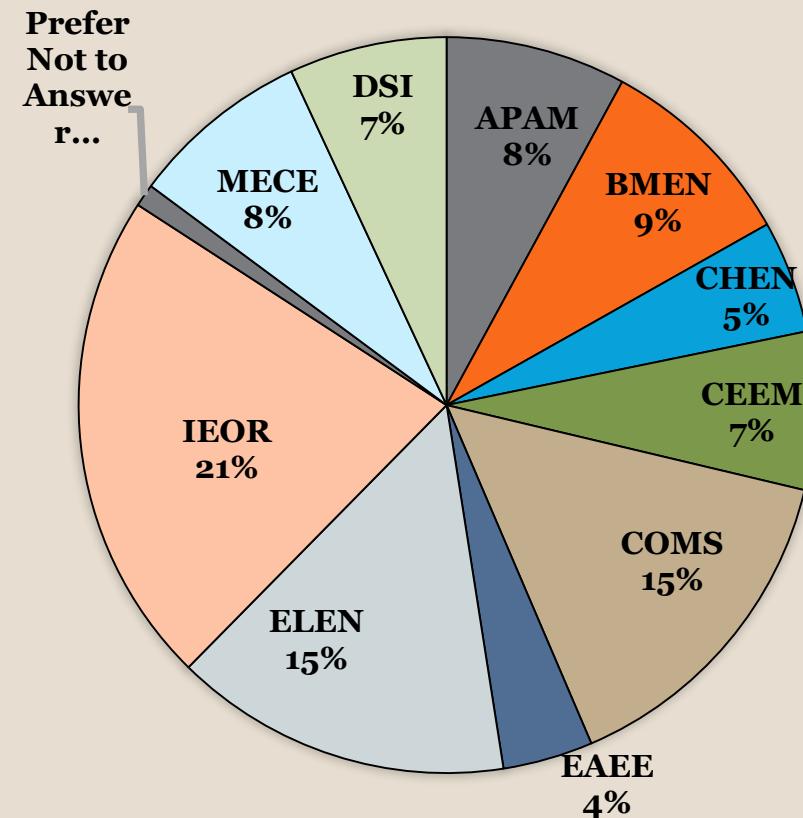


# Representation by Department

2018 Student Body

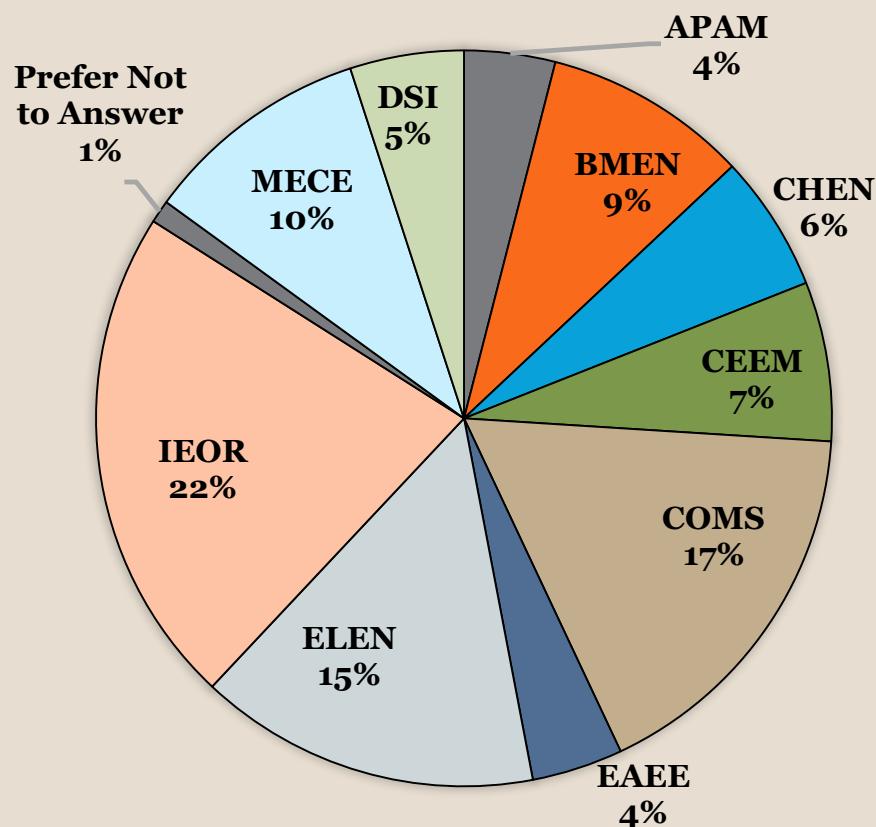


2018 Survey

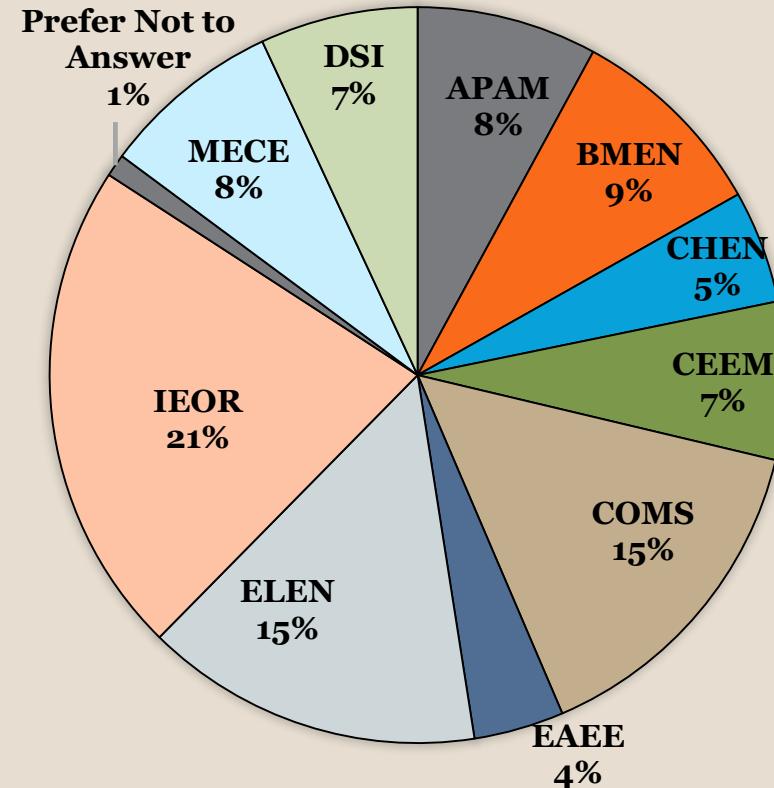


# Representation by Department

## 2017 Survey



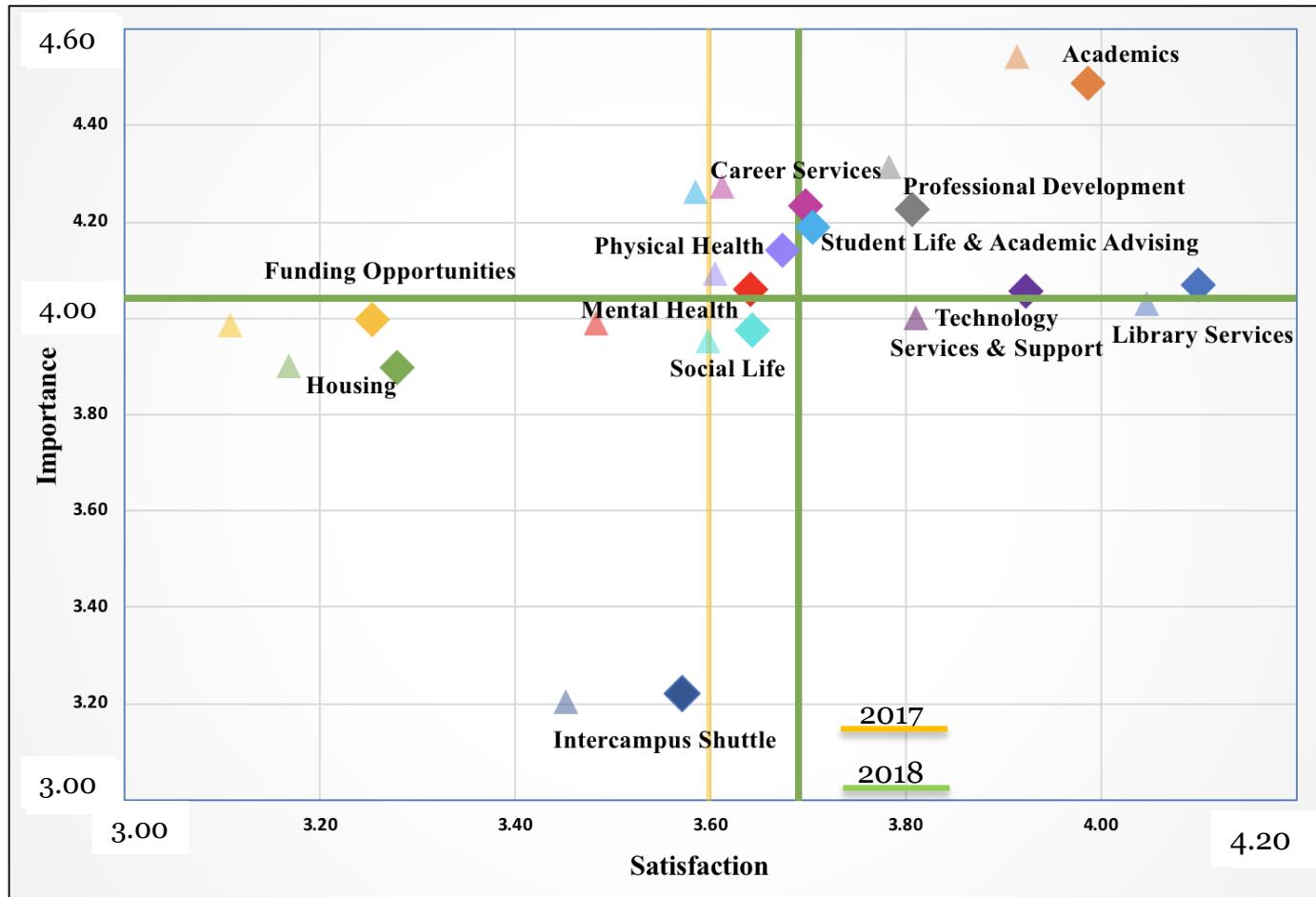
## 2018 Survey



# Overview of Student Satisfaction



# Importance vs. Satisfaction



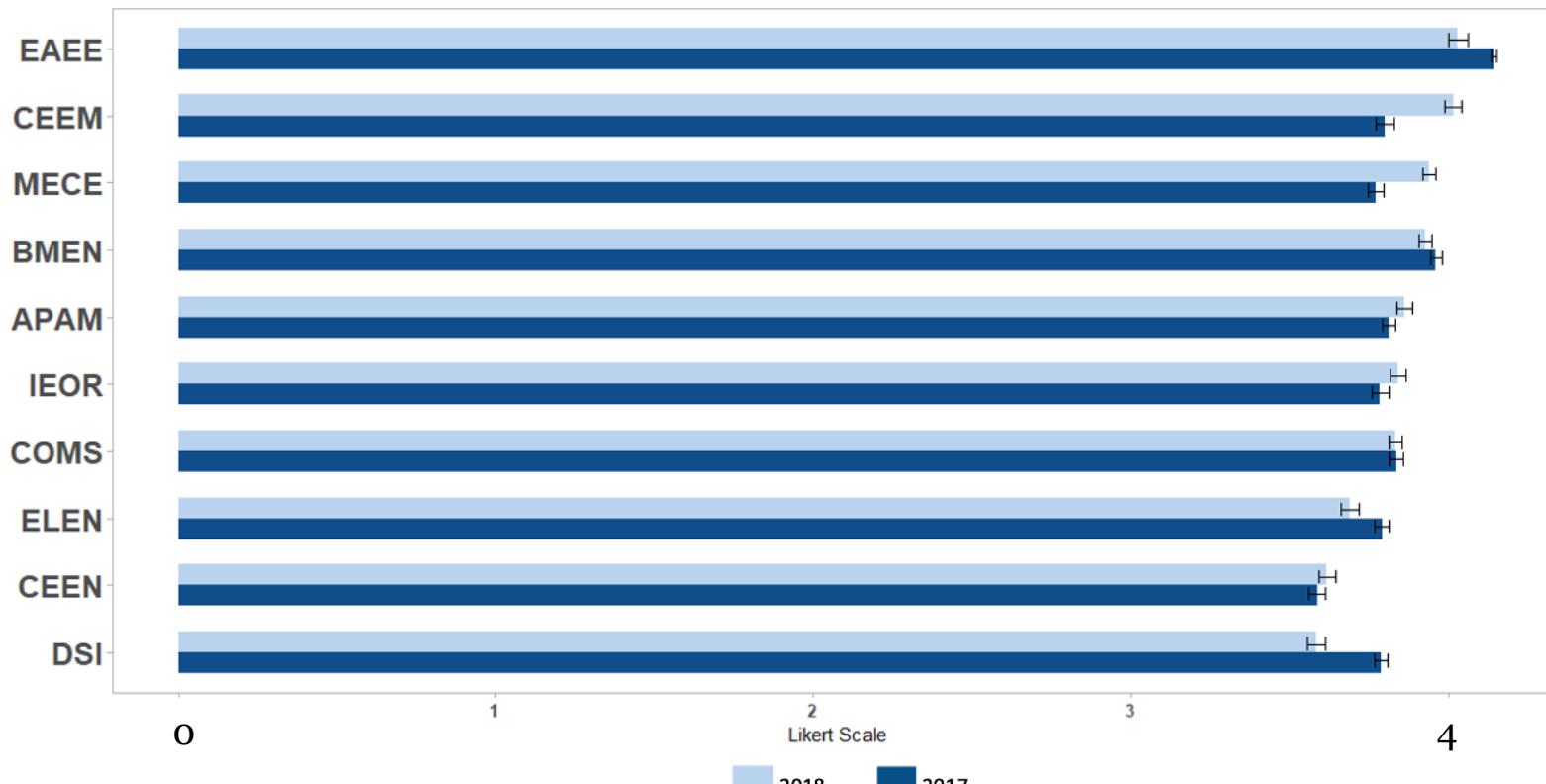
Strongly Disagree = 1

Strongly Agree = 5

# Overall Student Satisfaction



Degree	Average Score 2017	Average Score 2018
Doctoral	3.73	3.87
M.S.	3.86	3.82



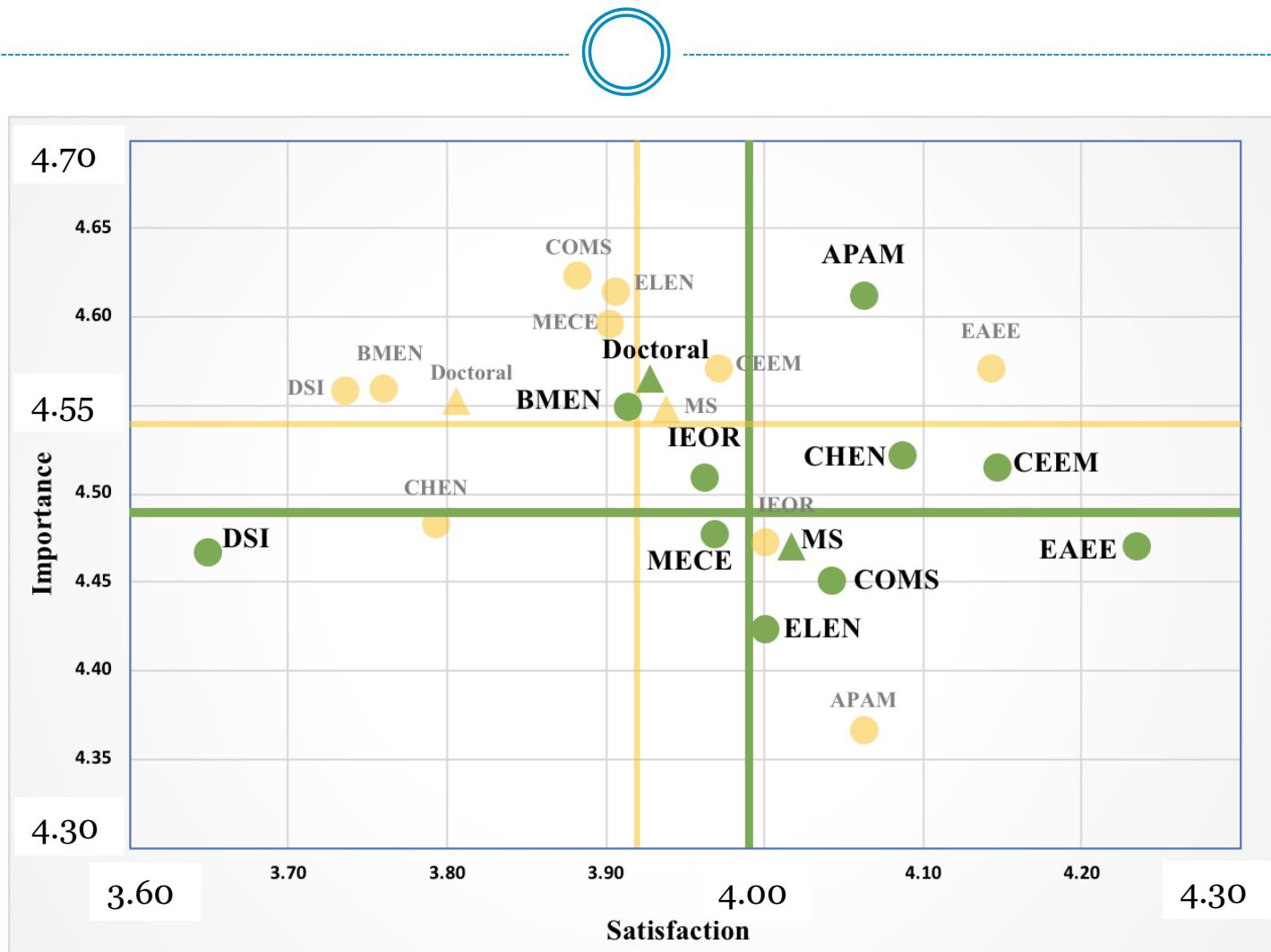
Error bars are the standard error of the mean

# Academics

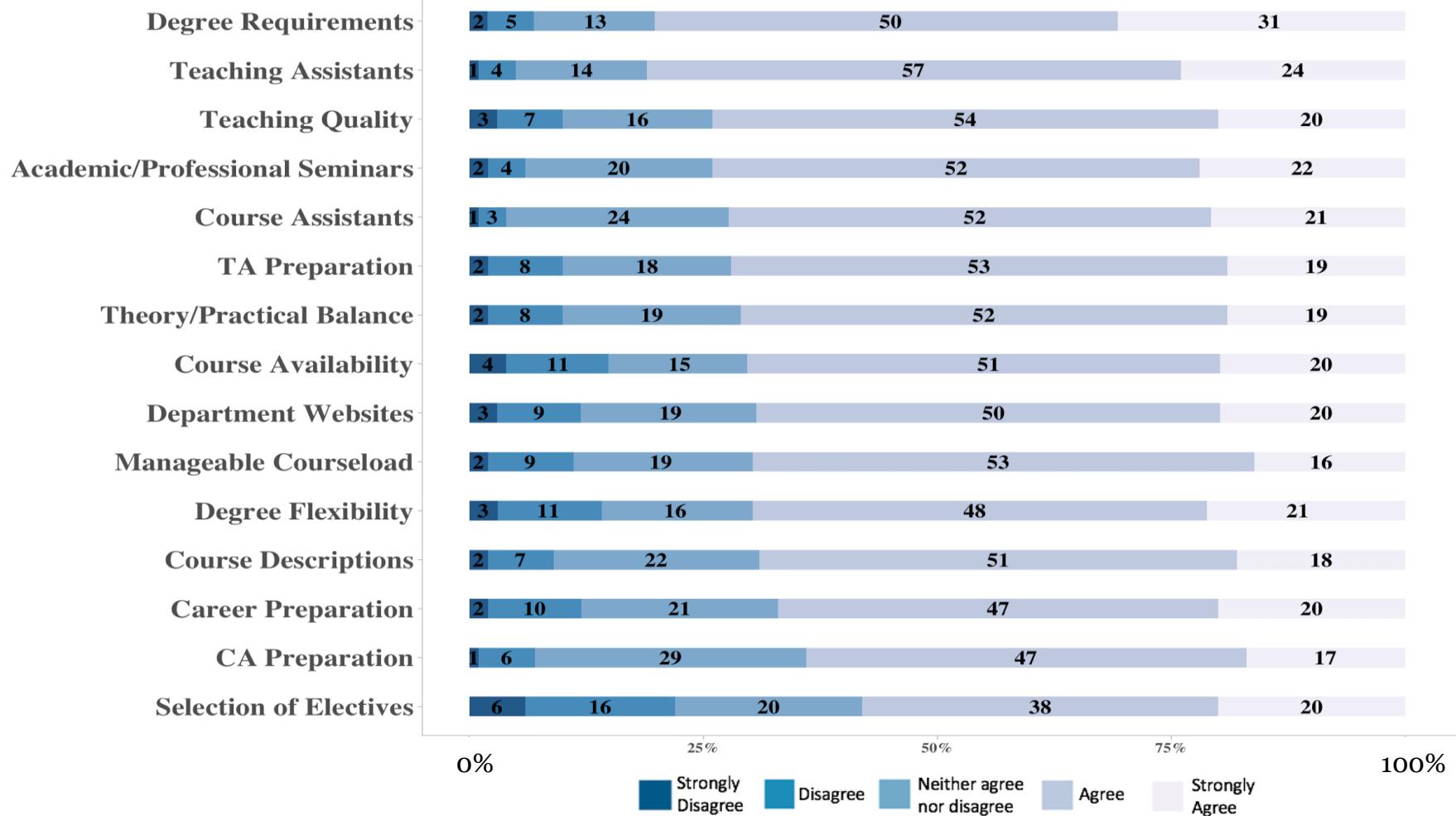


**STUDENT SATISFACTION  
WITH ACADEMICS AND  
COURSEWORK**

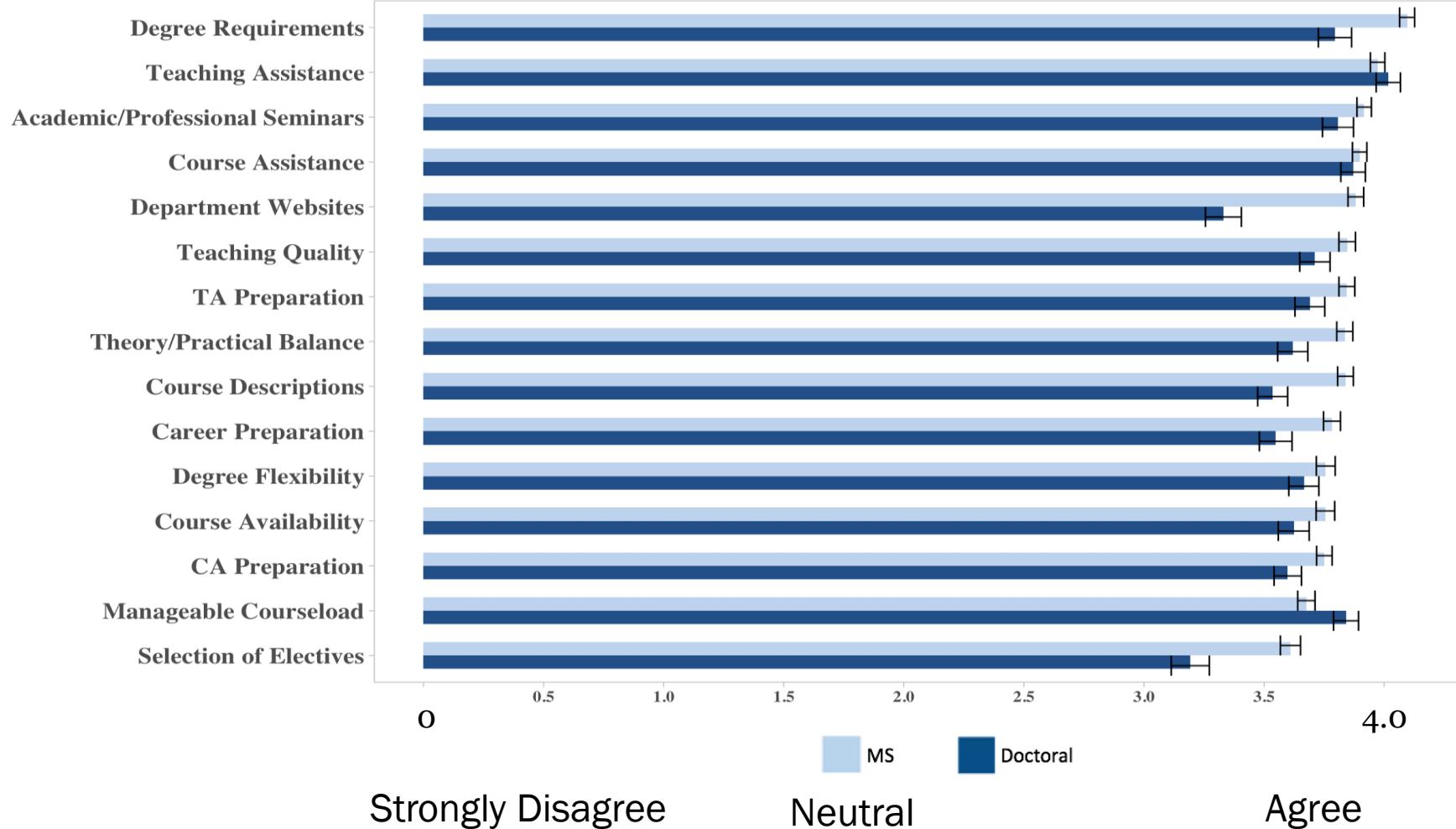
# Academics: Importance vs. Satisfaction



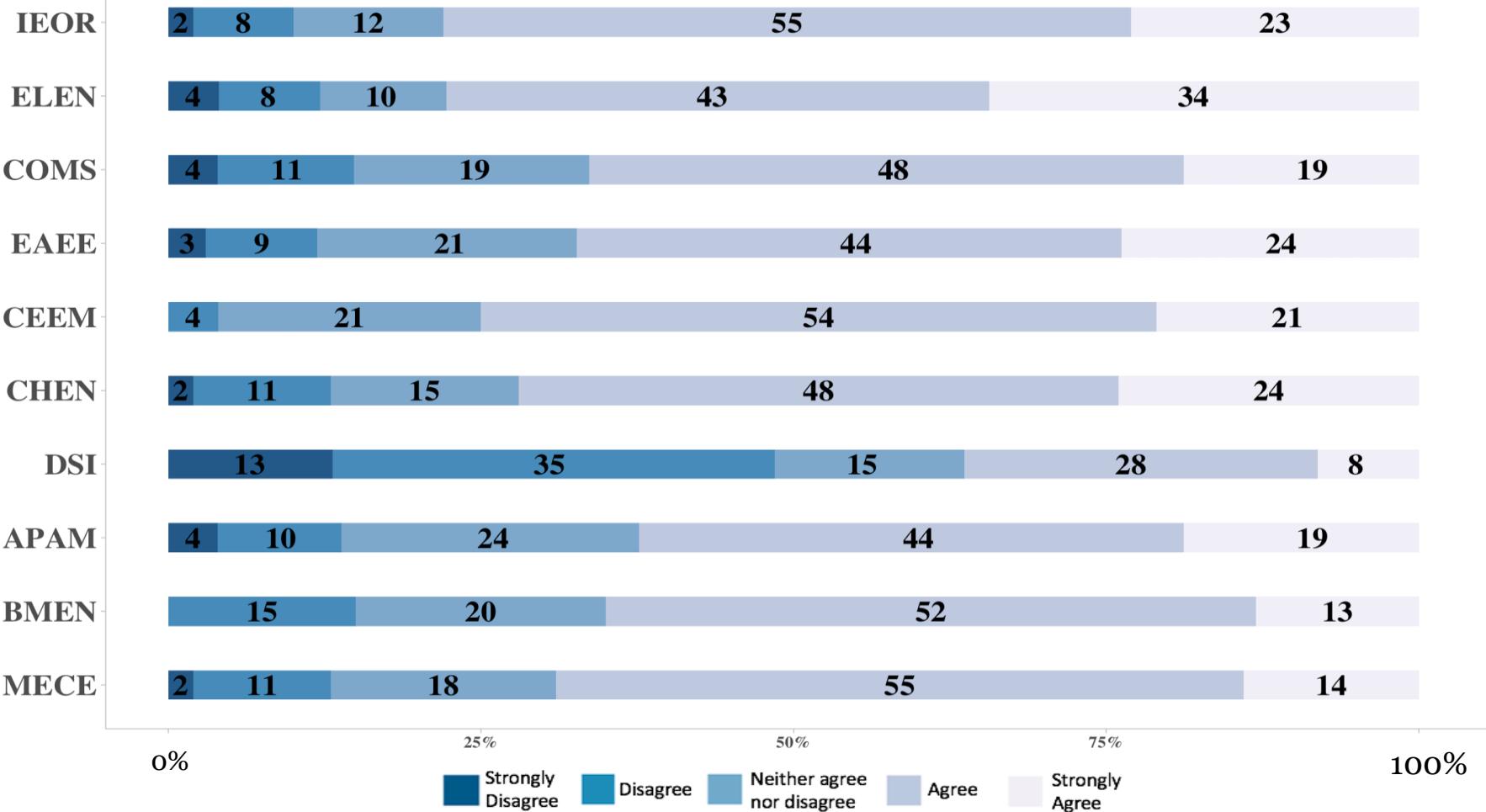
# SEAS Classes and Academics



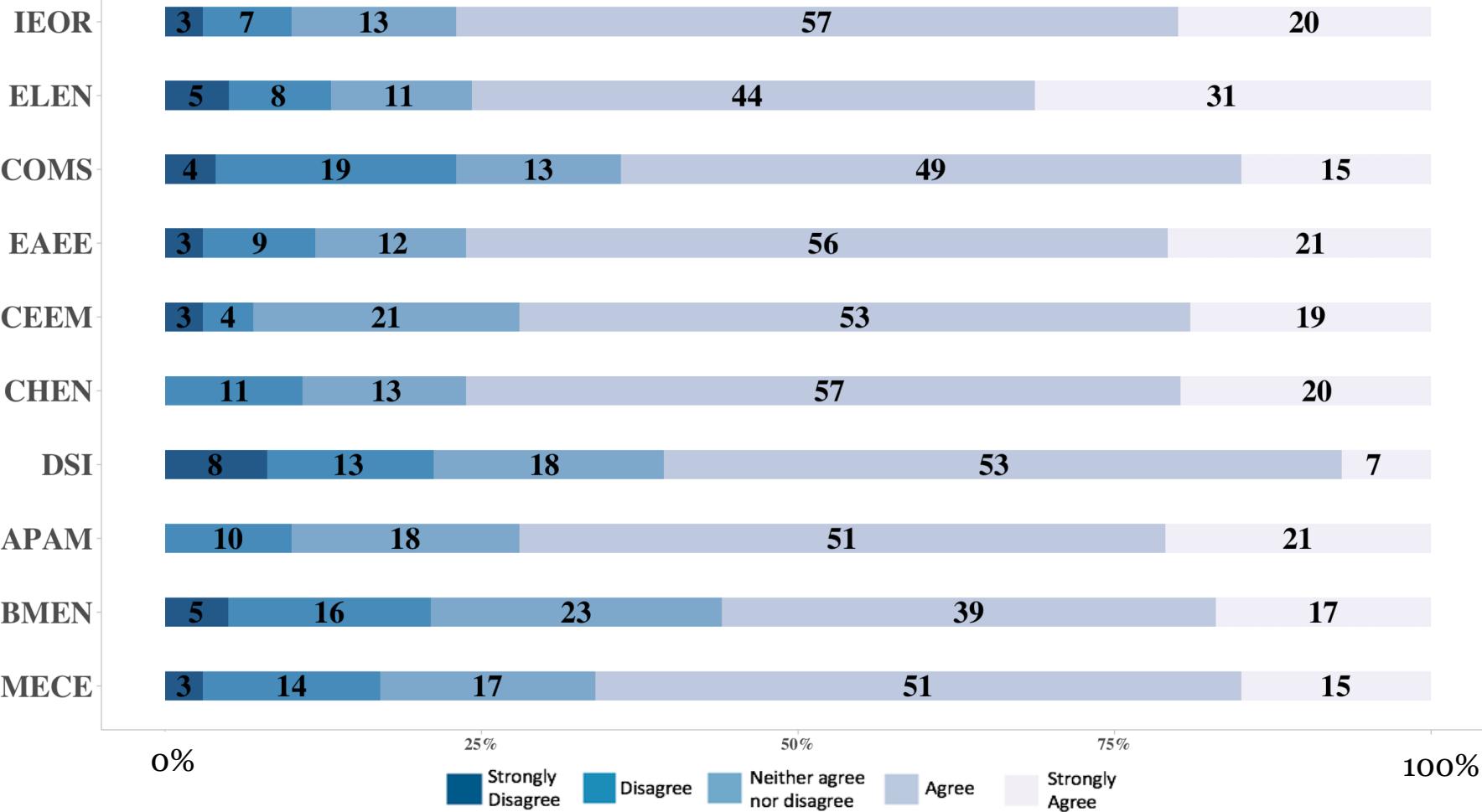
# SEAS Classes and Academics



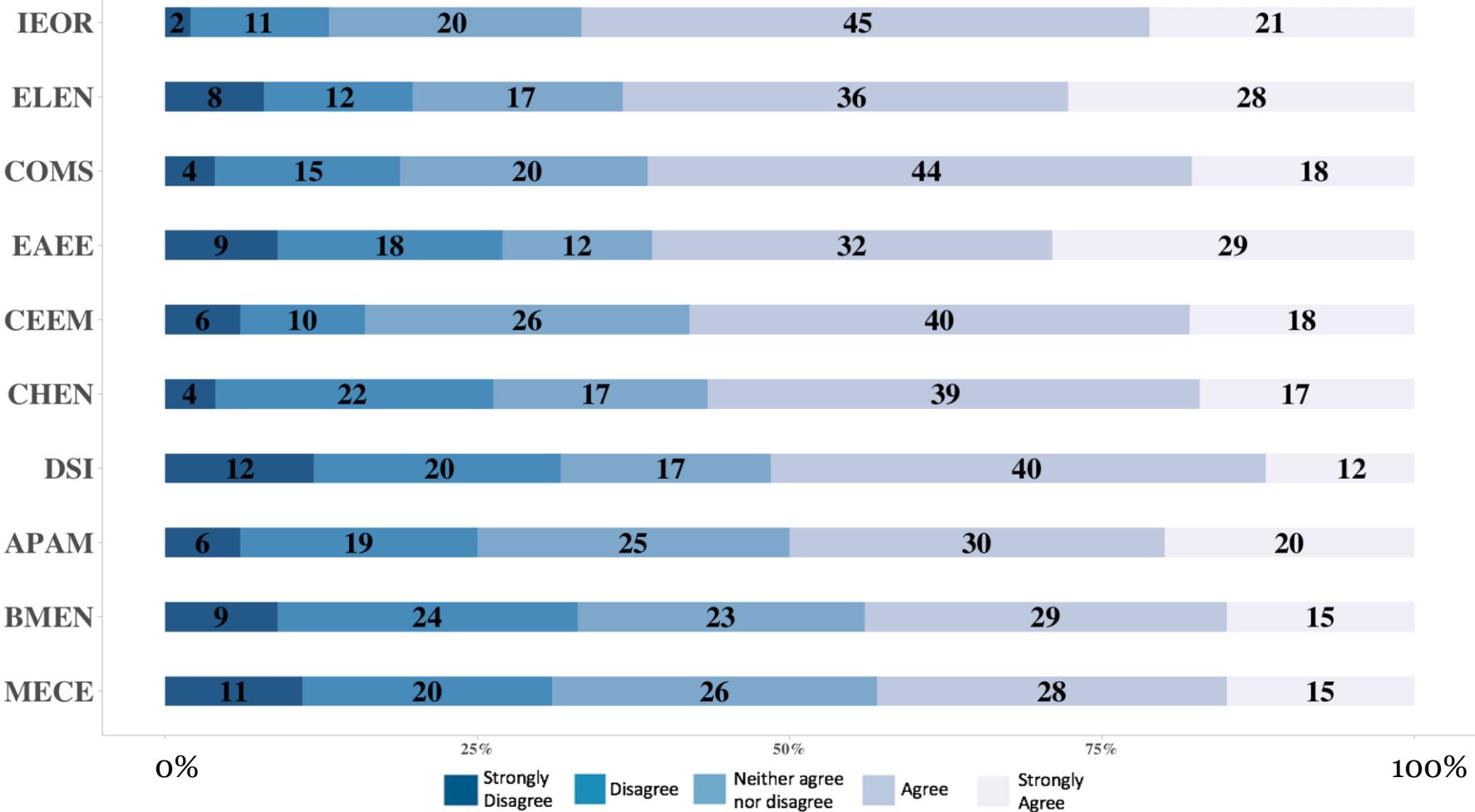
# Degree Flexibility



# Course Availability to Fulfill Degree Requirements



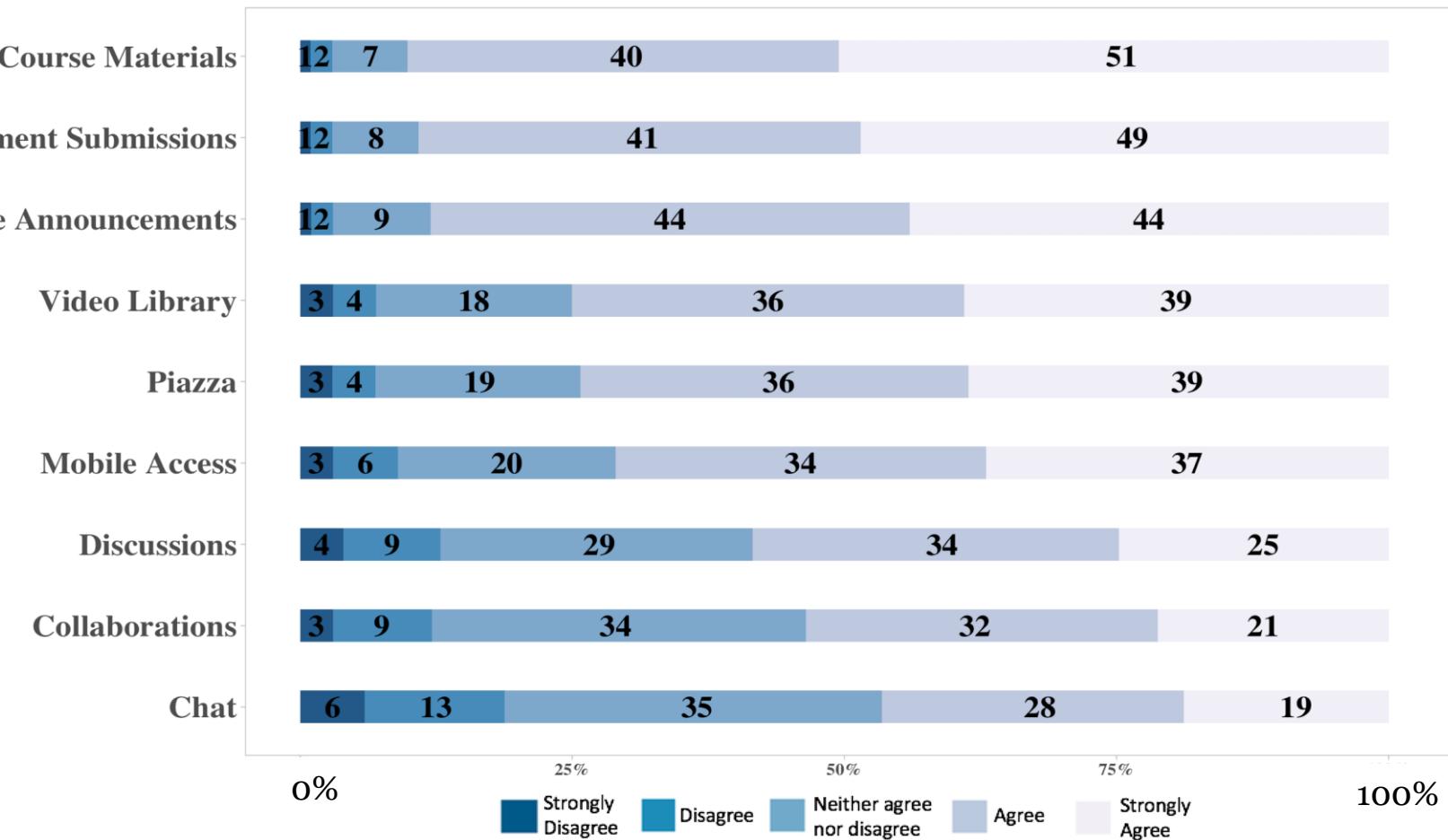
# Selection of Electives



# Canvas



“I find the following features of Canvas useful”:



# Canvas: Comments



- User Experience

- “I think Canvas could be a very useful tool, but many courses under-utilize it. It seems many professors do not take full (if any) advantage of Canvas. If they did, I would more strongly agree that it is a useful and convenient tool.”
- “There are no email confirmations that an assignment was submitted.”
- “Limited information available on mobile application.”
- “Canvas gives a quick overview and status of course progress.”
- “It is easy to use, and also find classmates on the website.”
- “Introduce auto-submit functionality for timed quizzes.”

# Canvas: Comments

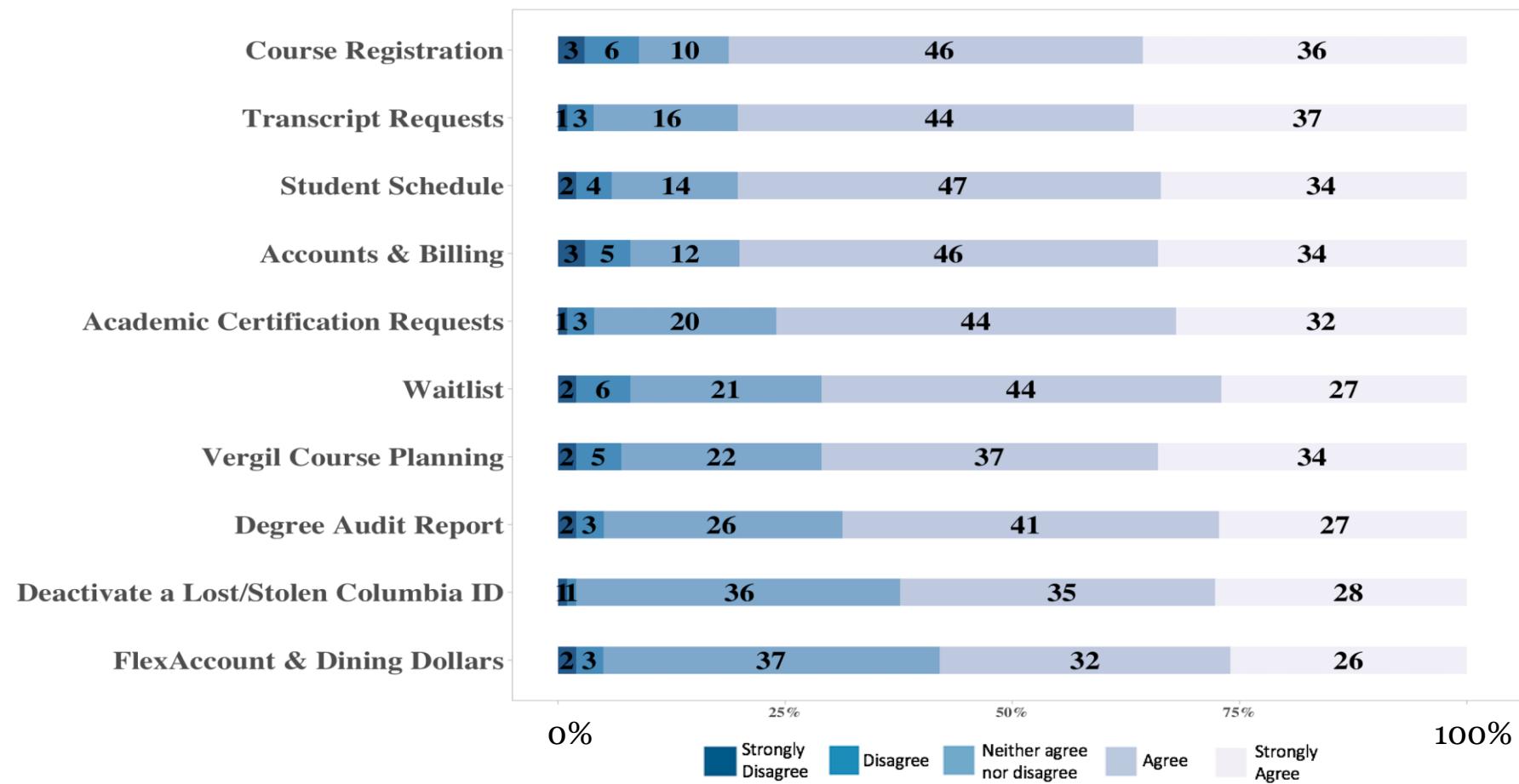


- Use by professors/instructors/teaching assistants
  - "Each professor uses Canvas differently and generally uses very few of its features. No one uses discussions or collaborations, as we use Piazza."
  - "A lot of professors don't really organize the stuff that they upload, so you have to search through the announcements to find the homework assignment pdf, instead of just having it clearly labeled in the files section. It's not necessarily Canvas's fault though."
- TA Experience
  - "Mobile app isn't very useful to use as a TA."
  - "I have used Canvas both as a TA and a student. I strongly dislike it as a reliable means of communication between the students and the instructor/TA because it focuses more on "fancy" requirements and yet does not have basic feature incorporated that would allow a managed communication through comments/discussions/assignments/questions. Until recently, it did not even allow you to directly view the courses you were taking for just the semester."

# Student Services Online



“I find the following features of SSOL useful”:



# SSOL: Comments



- Why is course registration only open during business hours? Is it powered by a human?"
- "The transcript requests take too long to process."
- "The waitlist might be long even though some students opt out of the course till some instructor add students to it."
- "For the course registration part, the search box could be improved if it allows comparison of two or more courses' information."
- "FlexAccount and Dining Dollars does not show the details."
- "SSOL is outdated and inconvenient. It takes too long to update. I imagine the backend can't be changed but the UI could use an update as well."
- "Good to see what I am expected to cover and what is covered as a PhD."
- "Why isn't the course registration plate form 24/7 available during registration periods?"

# Trivia Time!



See reverse side for applicable restrictions.

# Academic Integrity



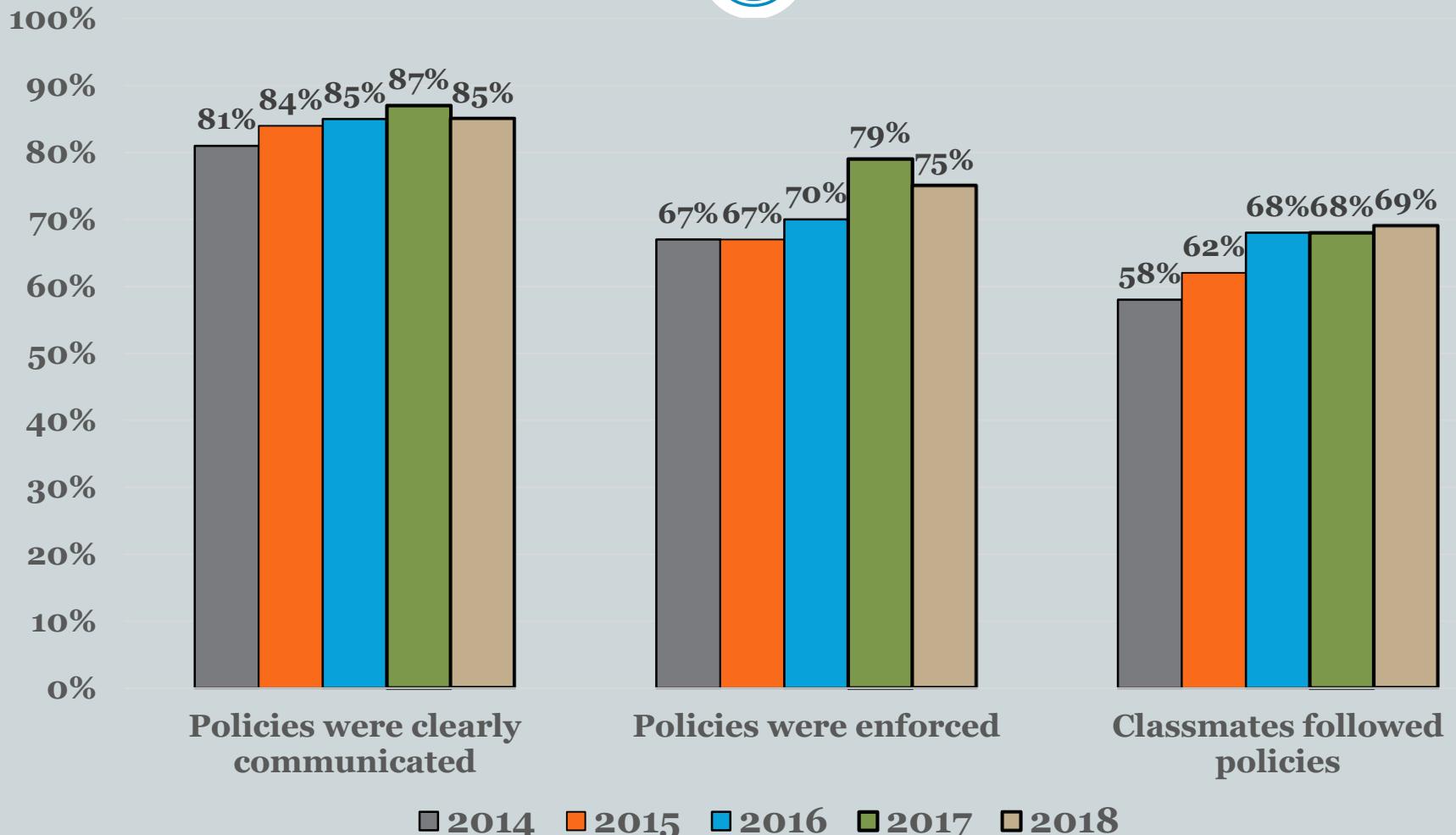
# Code of Honor



- Academic Code of Honor passed in March 2014 by COI, EGSC, and ESC
- Presented to incoming students at orientation of August 2014
- Added the online Academic Integrity Module in August 2015

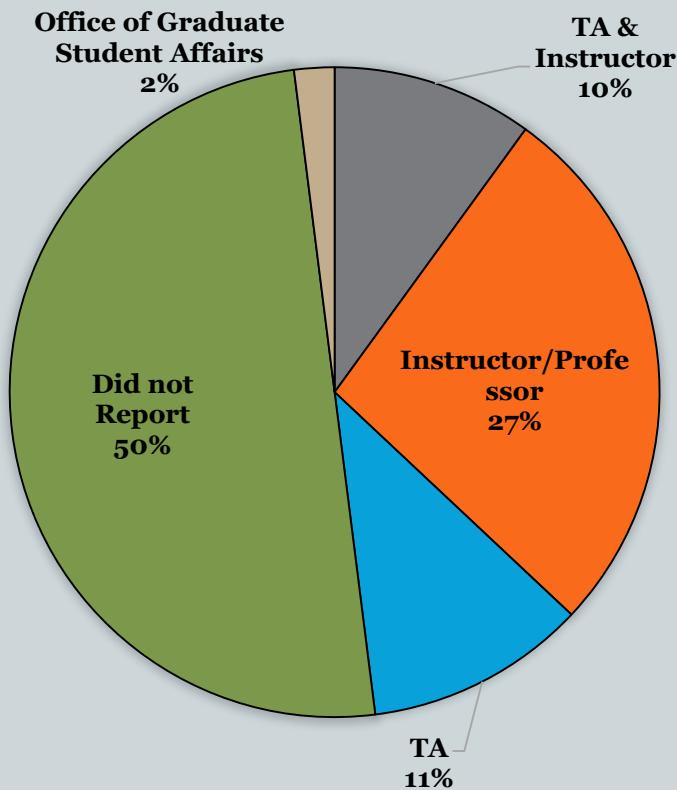
**“We, the engineering graduate students of Columbia University, pledge to uphold the values of integrity, honesty, and dignity in the pursuit of common scholastic goals, both at Columbia and beyond.”**

# Academic Integrity Policies

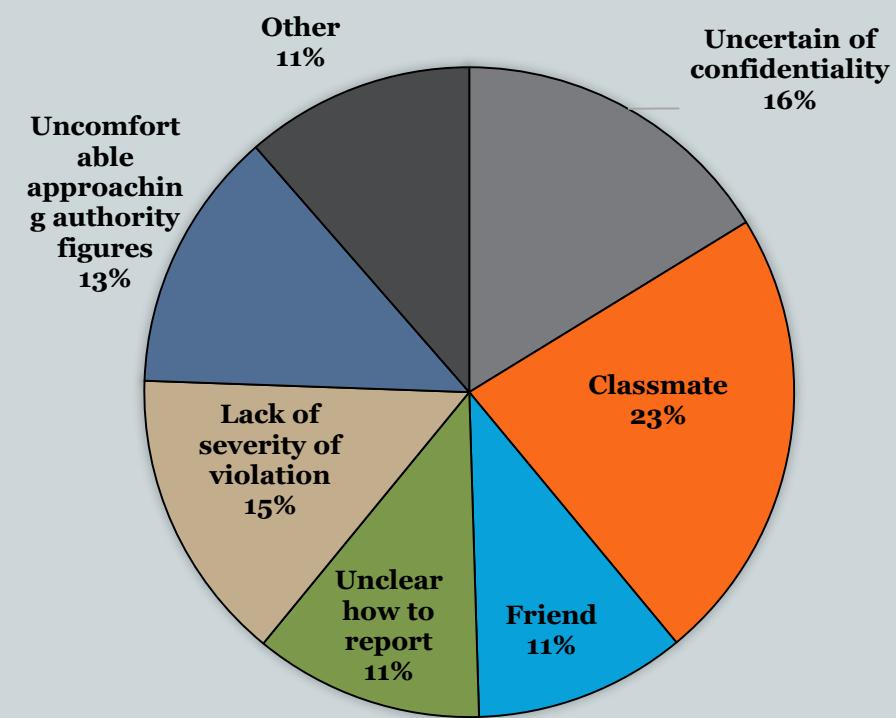


# Academic Integrity: Reporting

Reporting:



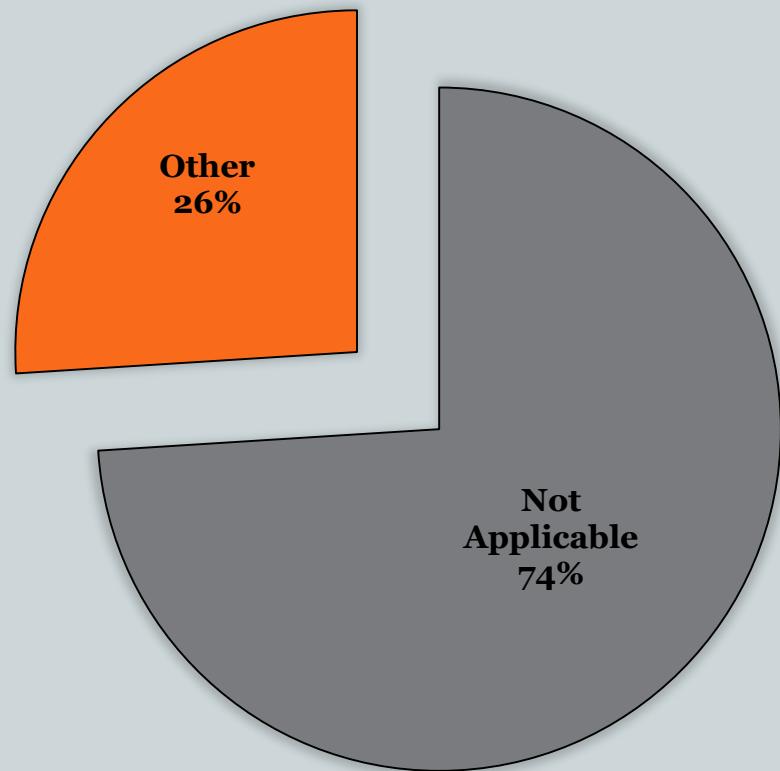
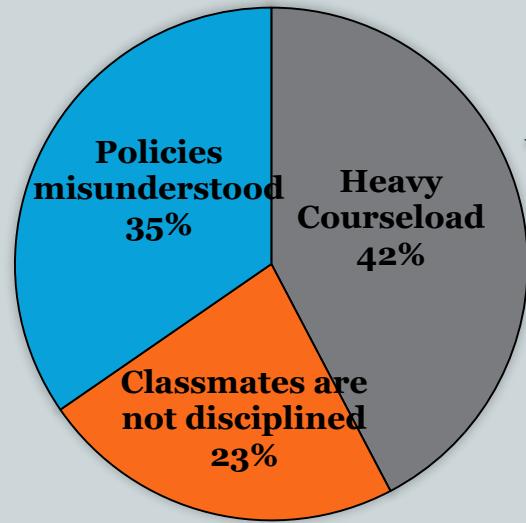
Reasons for not reporting:



# Academic Integrity: Rationale

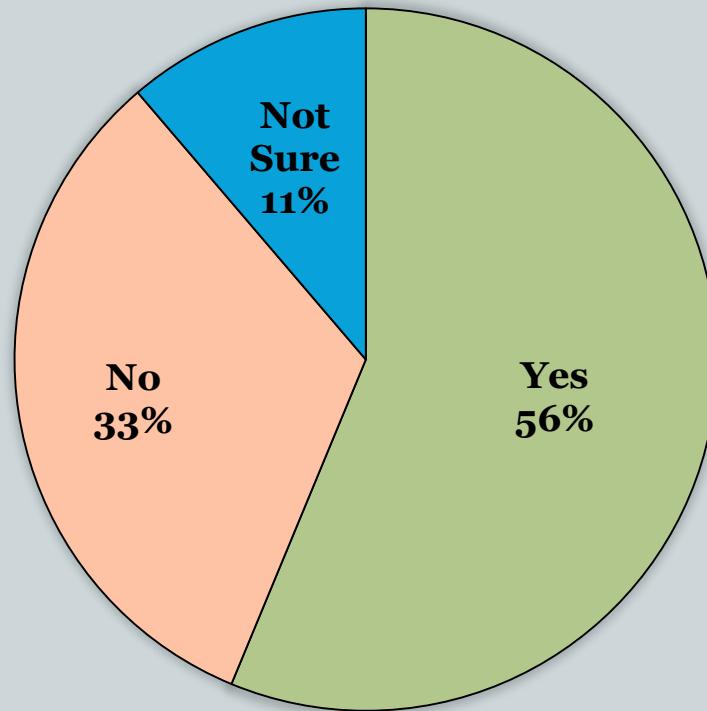


“Which of the following are reasons why you would violate Academic Integrity policies?”



# Academic Integrity: Reporting

“Do you believe that peer reporting should play a role in enforcing Academic Integrity policies?”



# Academic Integrity: Comments

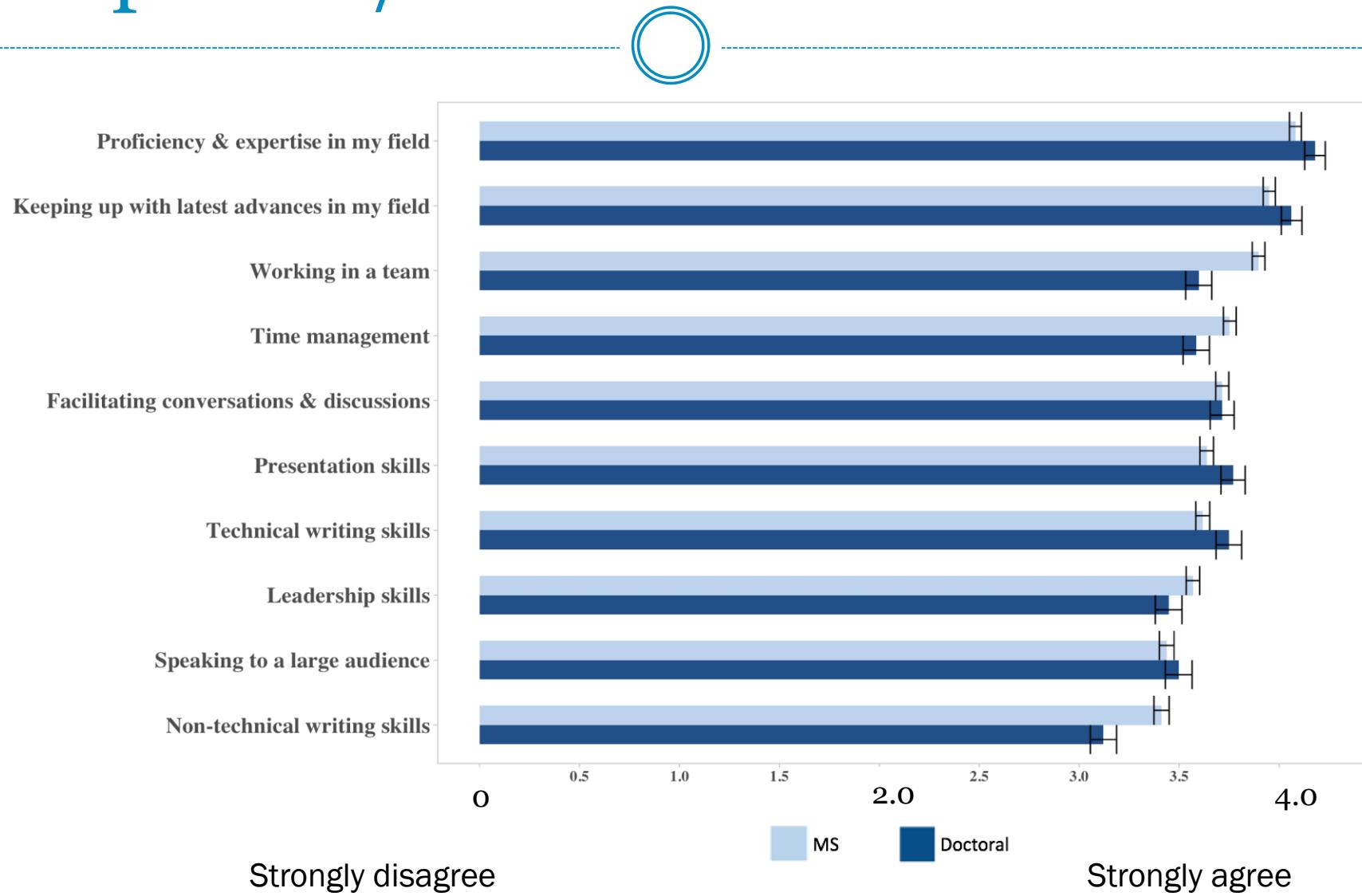


- “Enforce [the Academic Integrity Policy], and consistently...different instructors are different levels of strict...if a student got away with it in one class, they're going to think they can get away with it in another class.”
- “I find many students do not have a clear sense of plagiarism. And the enforcement is not executed.”
- “Encourage professors not to recycle exams and homework assignments.”
- “Have a special classroom for midterms/finals where people can't sit next to each other.”
- “I think the underlying intent of the policy needs to be clear, and if students choose to cheat, they understand that their own understanding and learning is negatively impacted.”

# Professional Development



# Improved/Enhanced Skills at SEAS



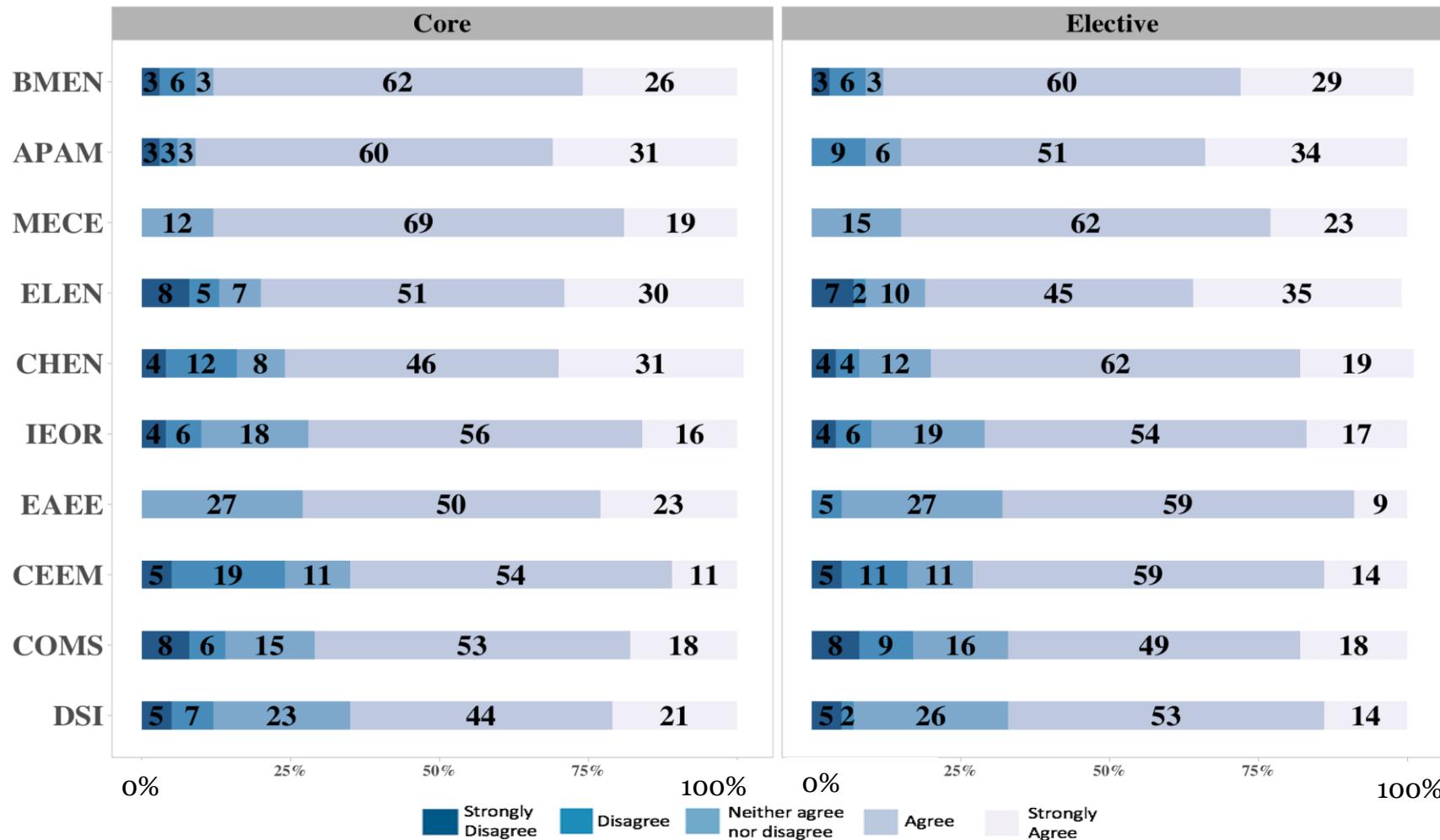
Strongly disagree

MS

Doctoral

Strongly agree

# Professional Development & Leadership Program (PDL)



# Career Development

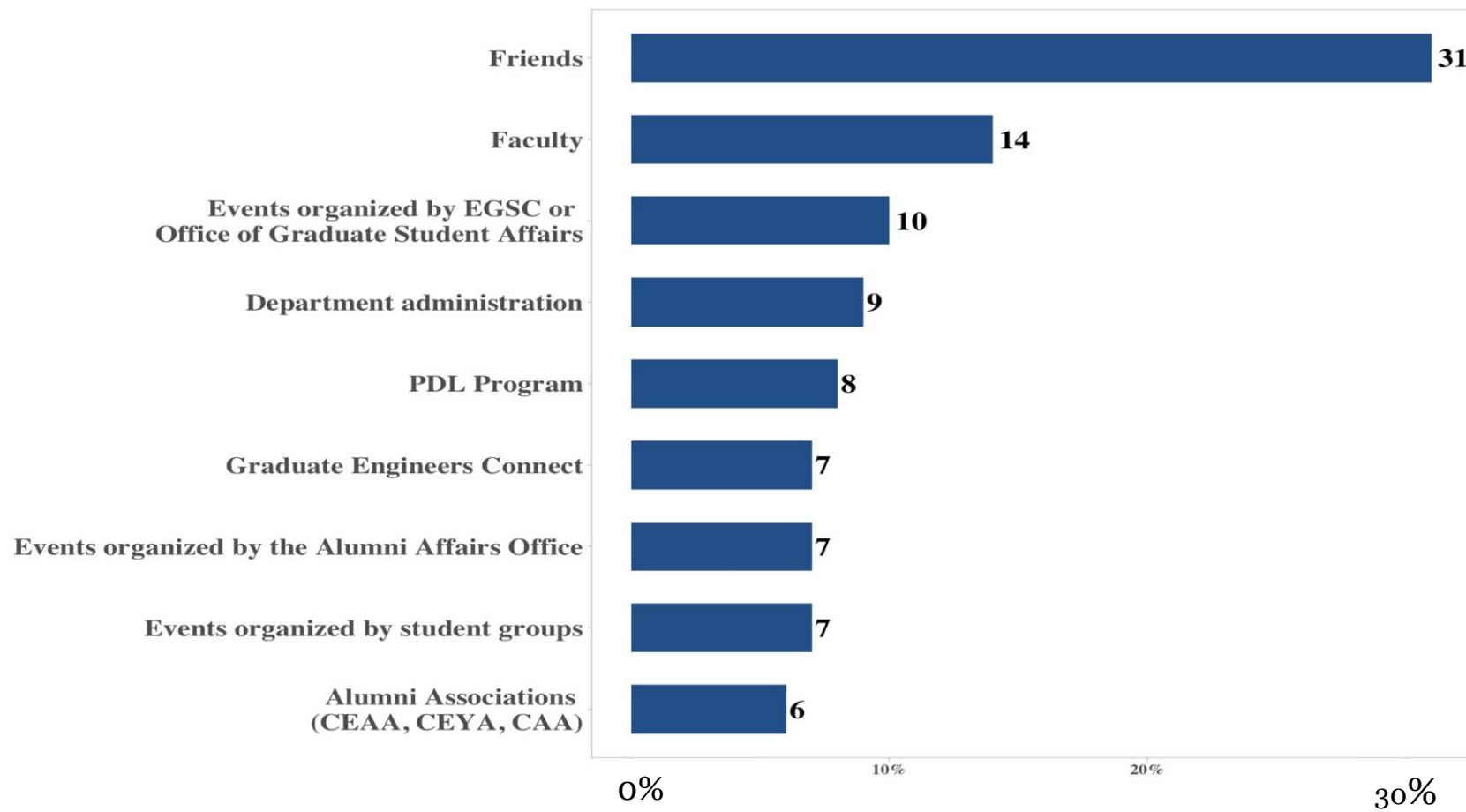


**NETWORKING  
AND  
CAREER DEVELOPMENT**

# Alumni Networking: Connections



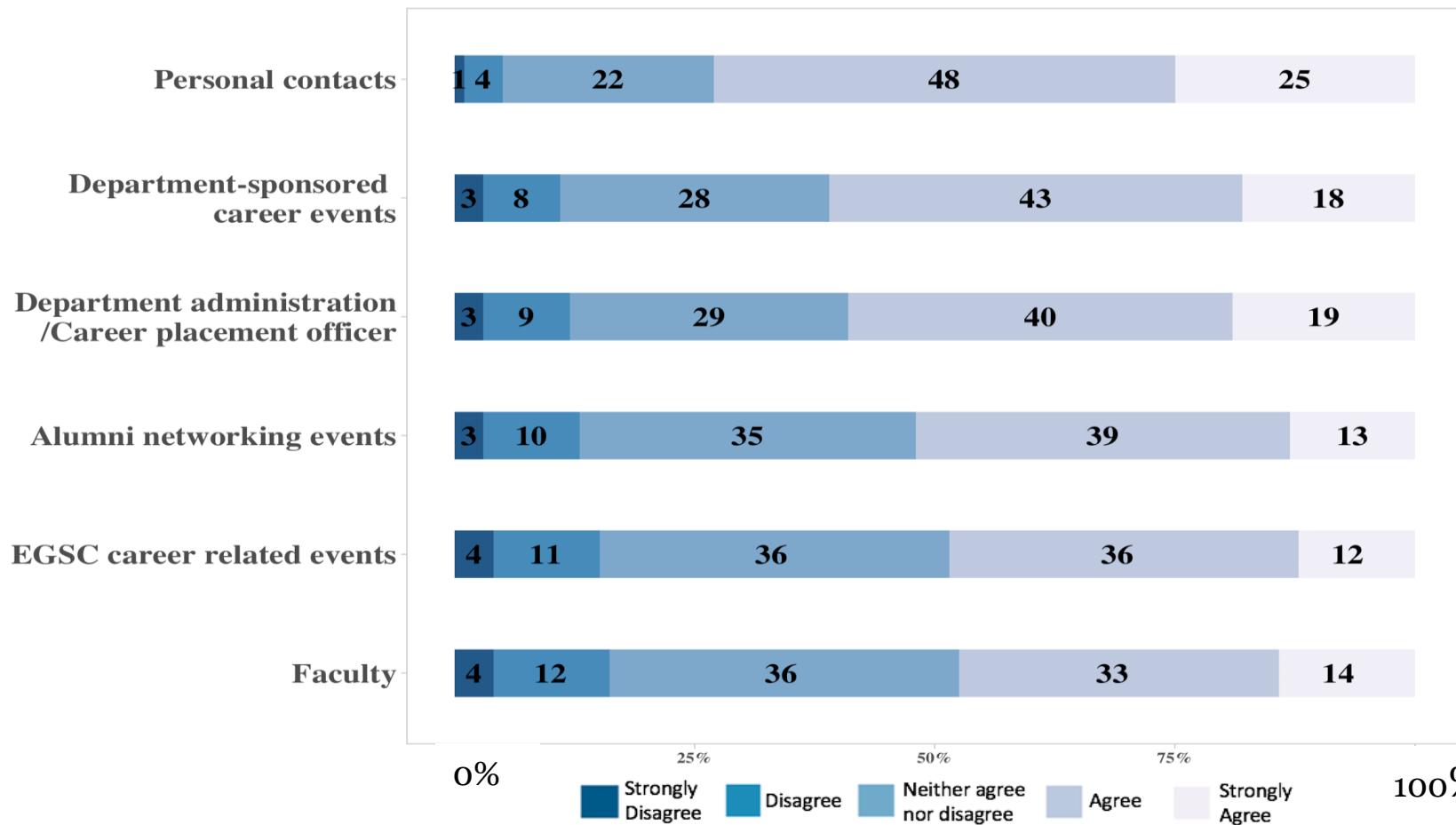
64.8% of students are actively developing alumni contacts.



# School and Department Career Activities



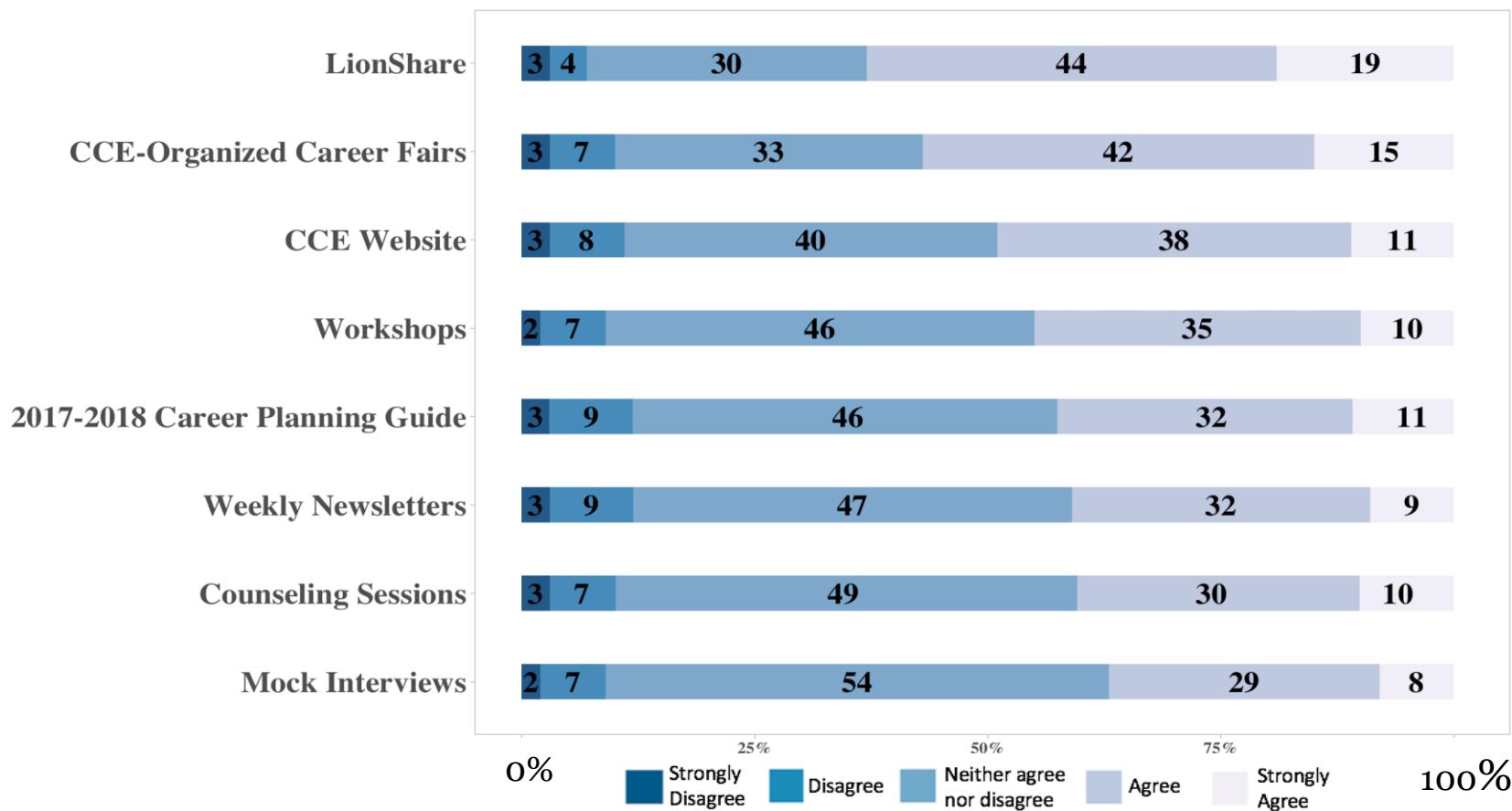
“The following have been useful in my job search”:



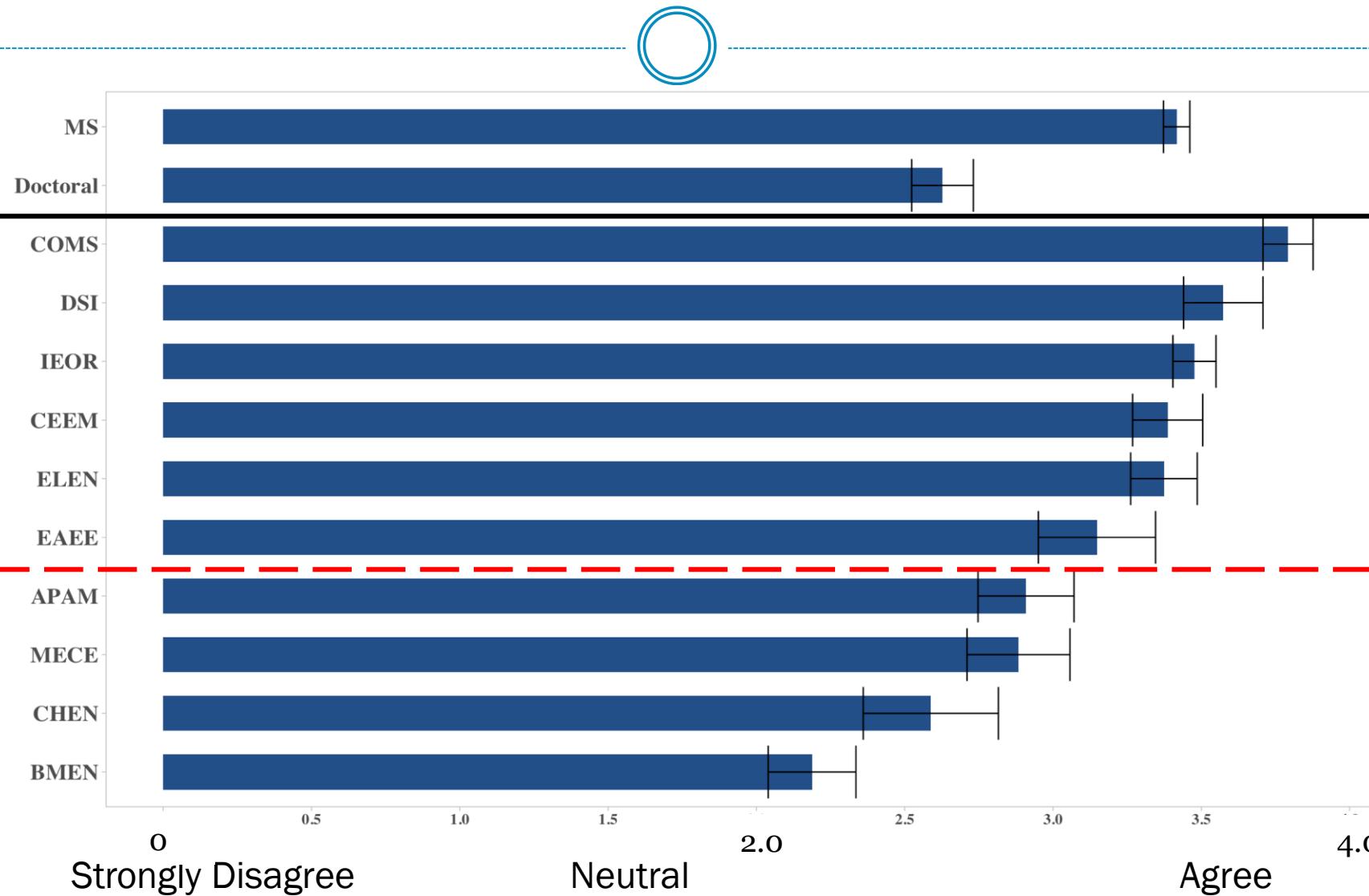
# Center for Career Education (CCE)



“The following resources provided by CCE have been useful in my job search and application process:”



# Relevance of Career Fairs



# Career Development: Comments



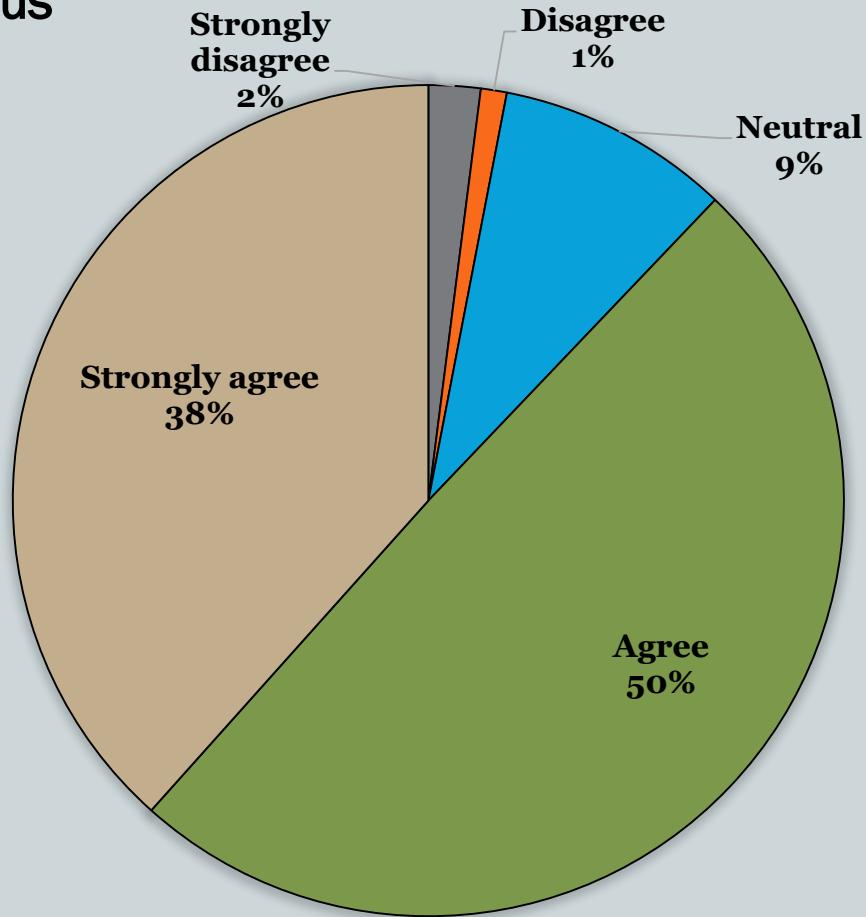
- International Students' specific:
  - "Focus on bringing in more employers that hire internationals".
  - "Maybe, 6-8 month co-ops need to be allowed to improve opportunities for international students."
- Field diversity:
  - "You need to do more to support people who aren't pursuing careers in finance, consulting, or computer science. It feels like all the on-campus interviews are for those three industries and nothing else."
  - "Department specific events would be helpful, or perhaps just better recruitment of biomedical and chemical engineering companies." "...more BME/Biotech-related employers at the career fairs - most times there are barely 3 or so". "... healthcare technology, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology need better representation at the career fairs"
- "Big Name" Companies:
  - "The Career Fair and Engineering Career Fair fails to bring in top companies or companies interested in computer hardware. Also too late in the fall semester "
  - "Please bring more companies to the career fair. The spring fair had very limited companies visiting us."
  - "...not sure why big companies like LinkedIn, Quora, Salesforce, Uber ... don't visit Columbia while they always visit other top universities"

# Student Life

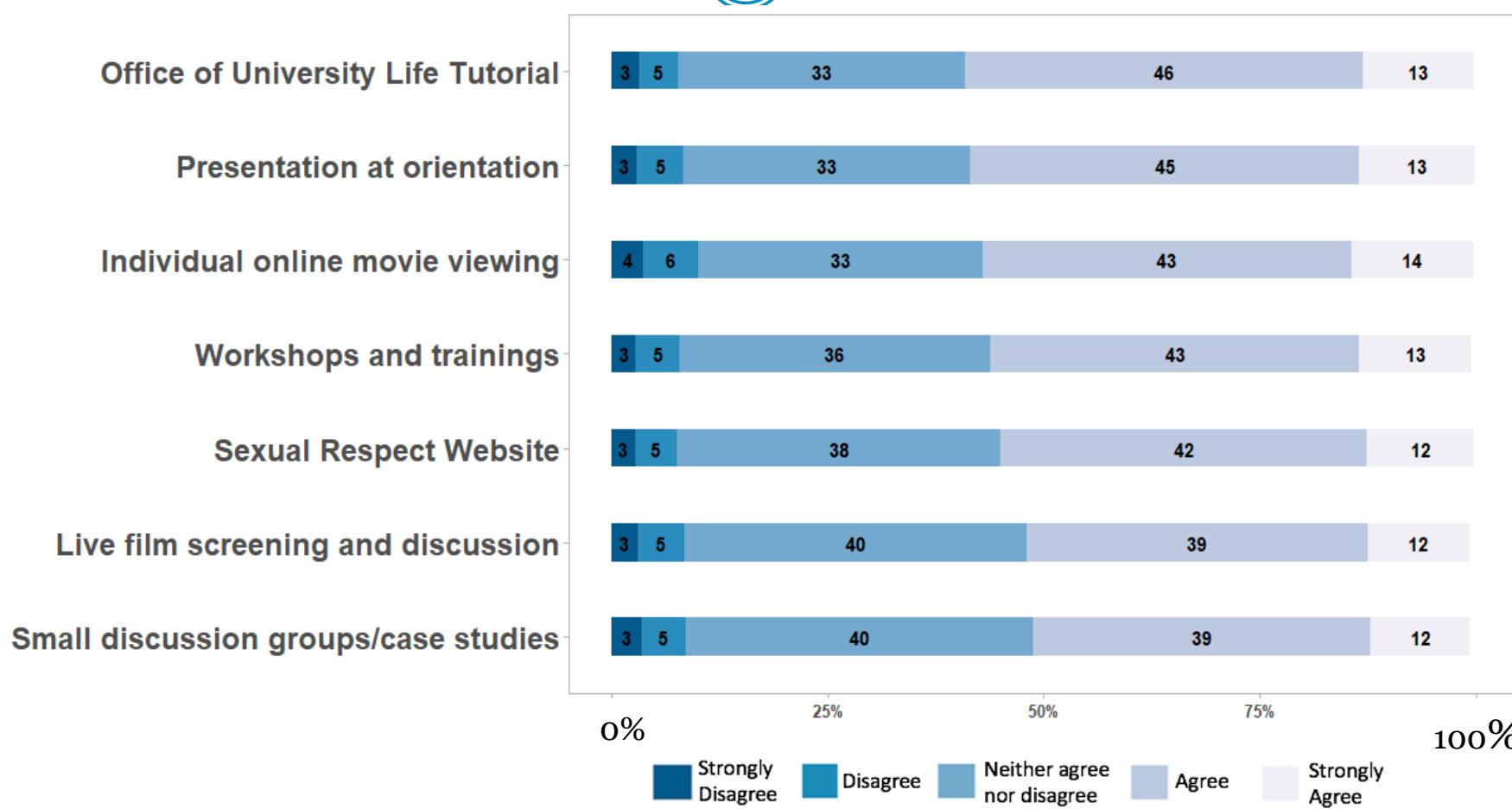


# Safety

“I feel safe on campus”

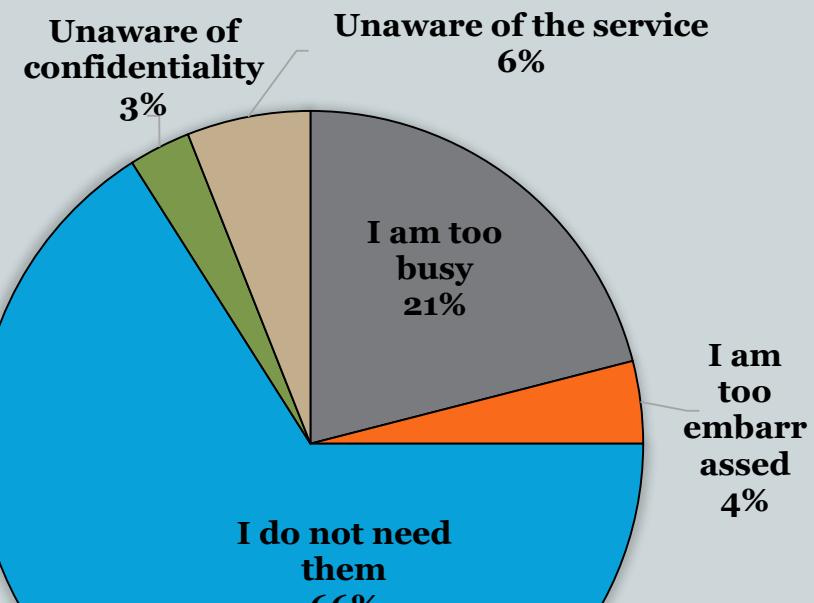
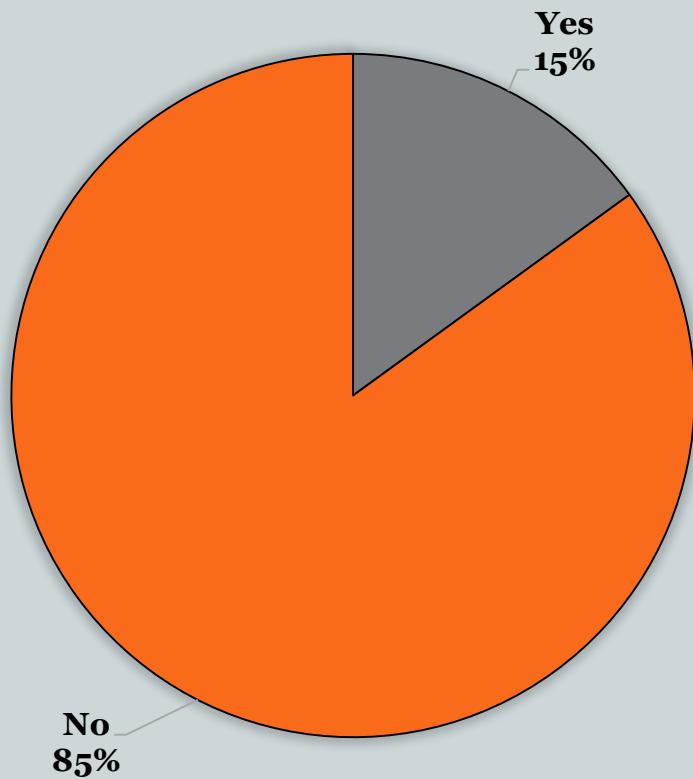


# SVR and Gender Based Misconduct



# Health Services: Columbia Psychological Services

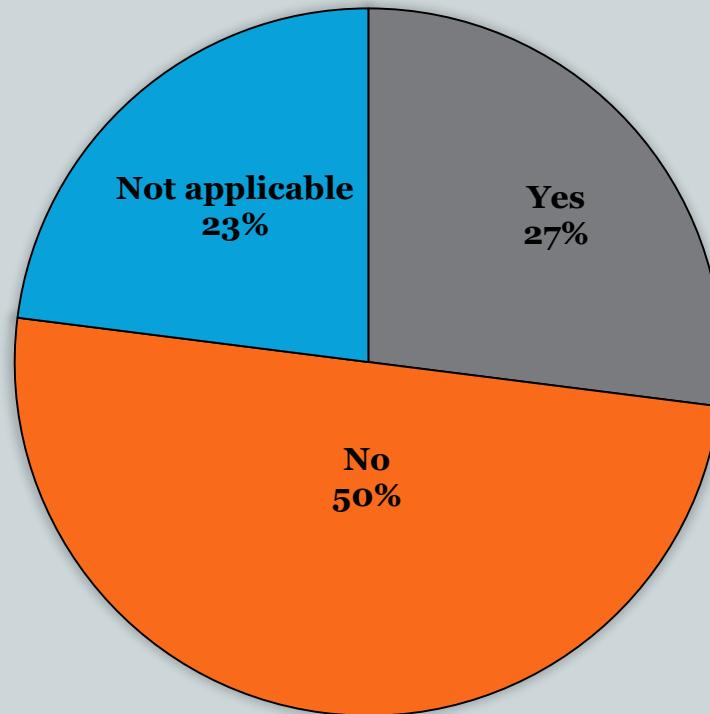
## Use of Services



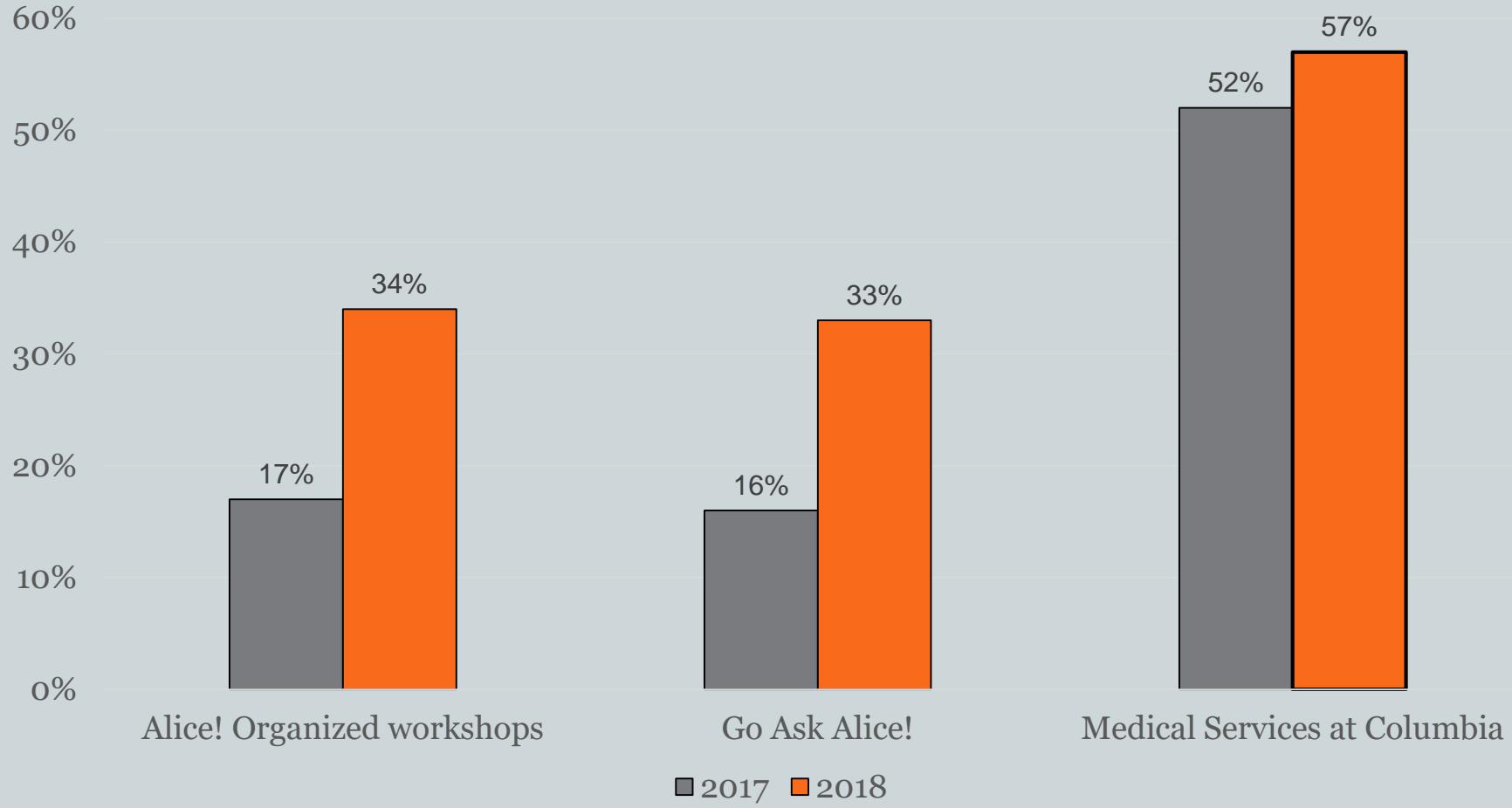
# Dental Insurance



“Have you ever deferred needed dental work while at Columbia due to lack of dental insurance?”



# Health Services: Usefulness



# Health Comments



- **Dental Insurance:**
  - “I am not satisfied with the dental plan, the only health insurance at Columbia I even utilize because it is cheaper for me to fly back to Chicago and get the dental procedures I need.”
  - “...should be included in student health care like many other schools do.”
  - “The dental insurance plan offered is not cost effective. It costs just as much as paying for a cleaning and exam once per semester out of pocket.”
  - “I was told that we have access to free annual teeth cleanings, but I don't see that listed as a service anywhere. The minimal dental care we do have should be made clearer.”
  - “I would appreciate increase coverage of Columbia dental insurance plan.”
- **Appointments:**
  - “The time schedule is limited. The next available appointment will be three months later.”
  - “Very inconvenient hours (early to close!)”
  - “I really don't understand why it is not possible to schedule appointments more than 18 hours in advance.”
- **Insurance:**
  - “I do not know the health service. I pay so much money for insurance. But it seems the waste of money. Please give more specified information about health services.”
  - “The health services are not great, the service is poor, and it is hard and time-consuming to get a referral even for good reasons (follow-up from a known doctor, competent doctor, second opinion after failure to diagnose anything..).”
  - It will be great if they can assist a little bit after graduation until we find a job covering an insurance.

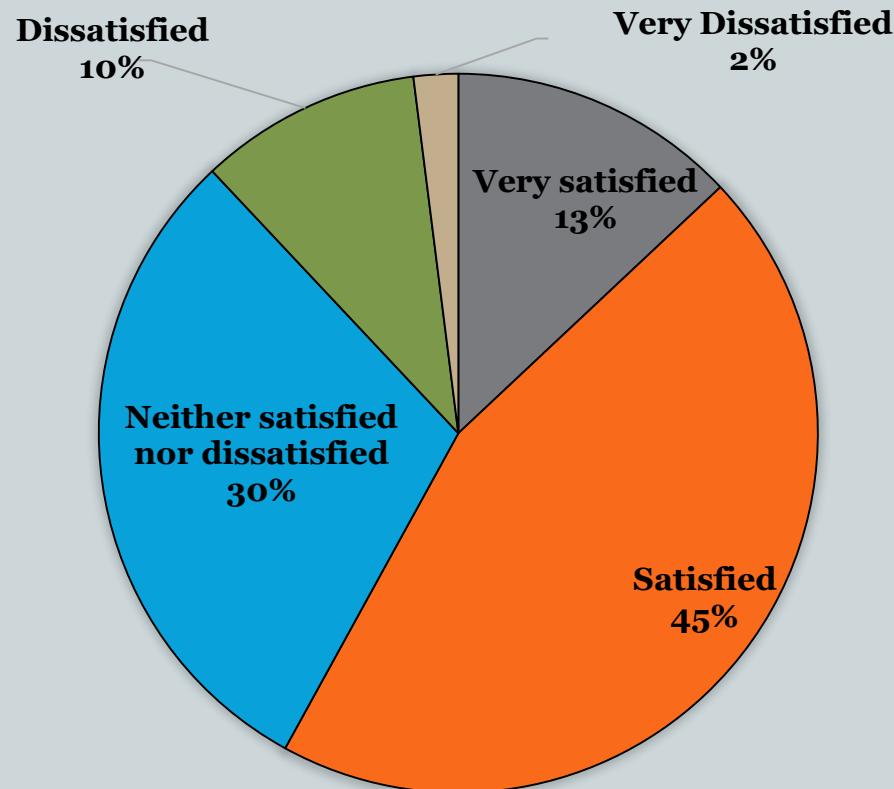
# Trivia Time!



See reverse side for applicable restrictions.

# Social: Satisfaction

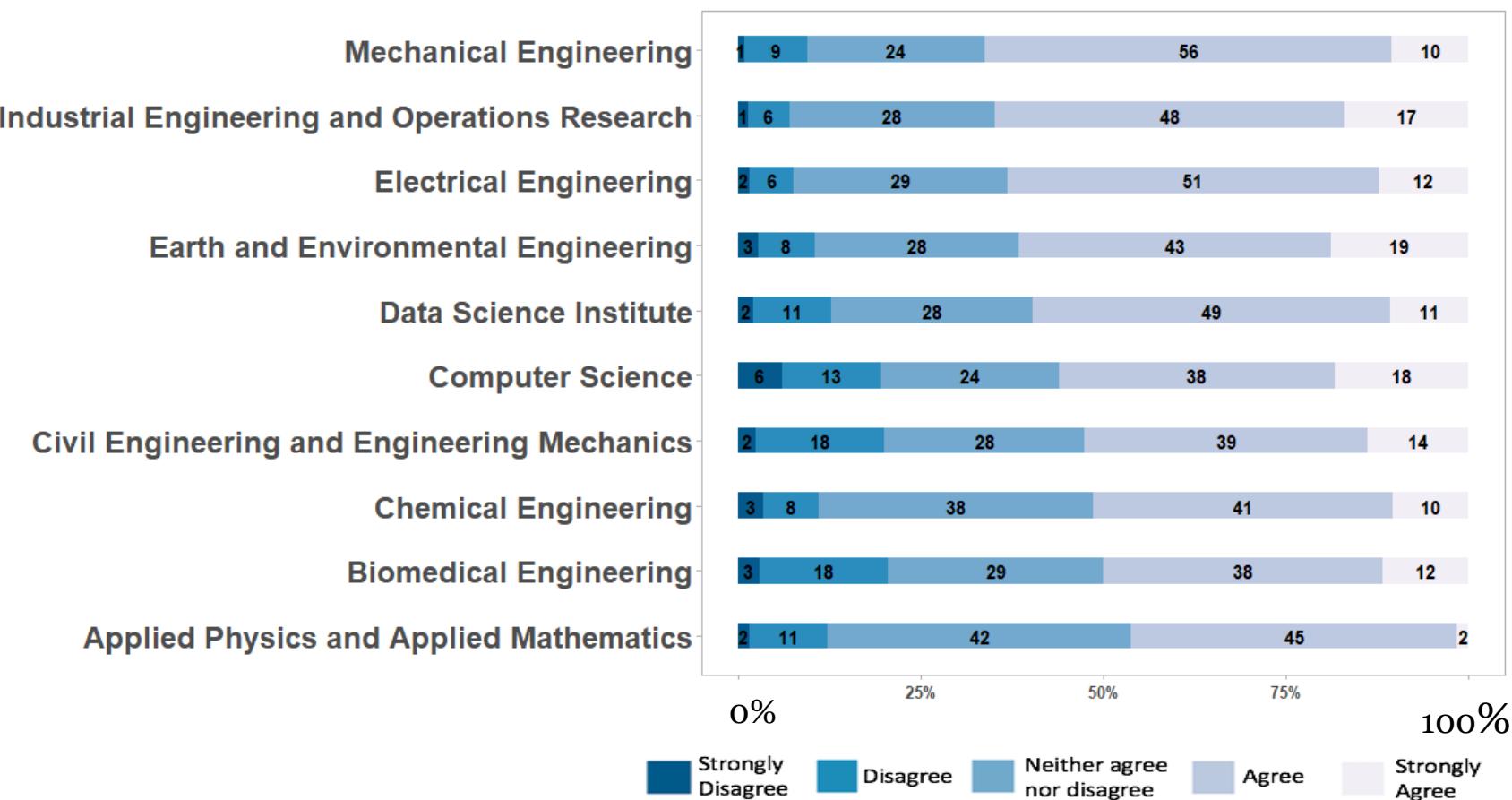
I am satisfied with the overall sense of community:



# Social: Satisfaction



I am satisfied with the overall sense of community:



# Social : Satisfaction with Community Building Efforts



Number of social events and programs within SEAS



Diversity of social events and programs within SEAS



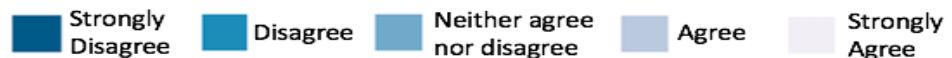
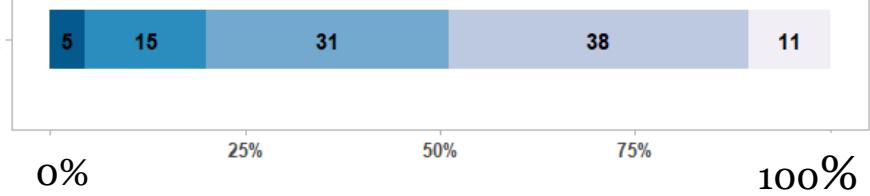
Pricing of tickets for EGSC/GSA events



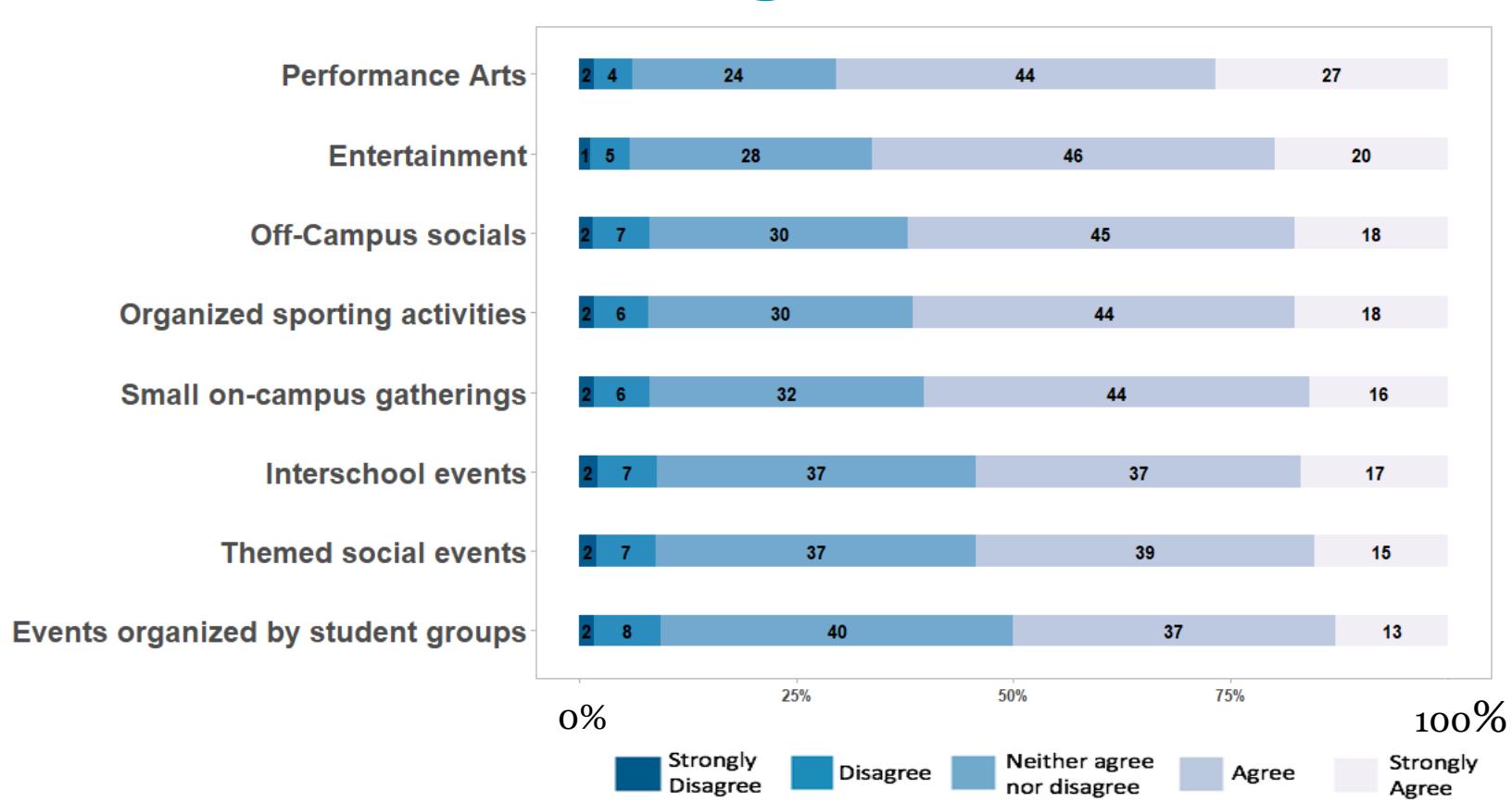
Diversity of student groups within SEAS



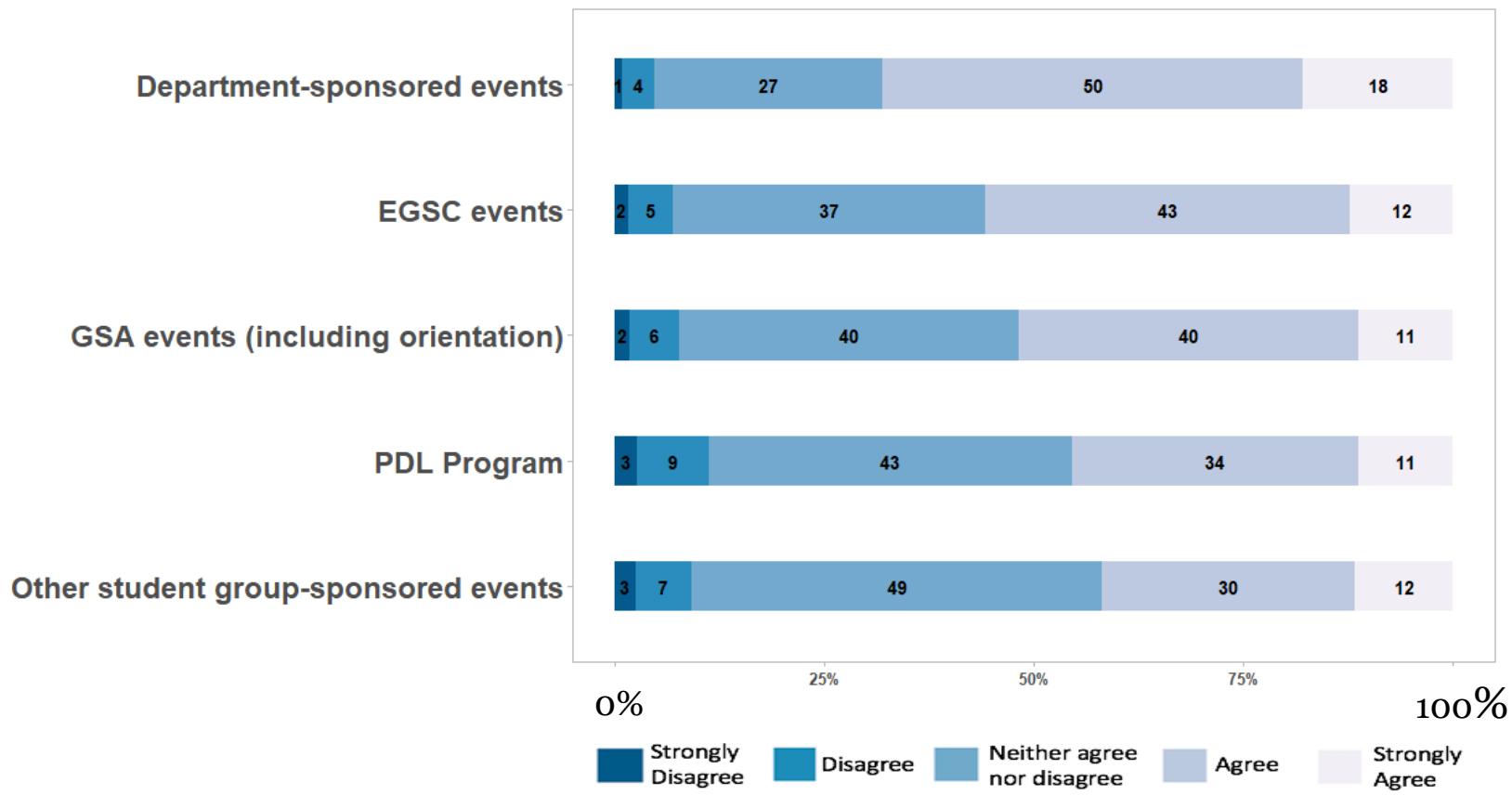
Number of tickets available for EGSC/GSA events



# Social: Event Preference



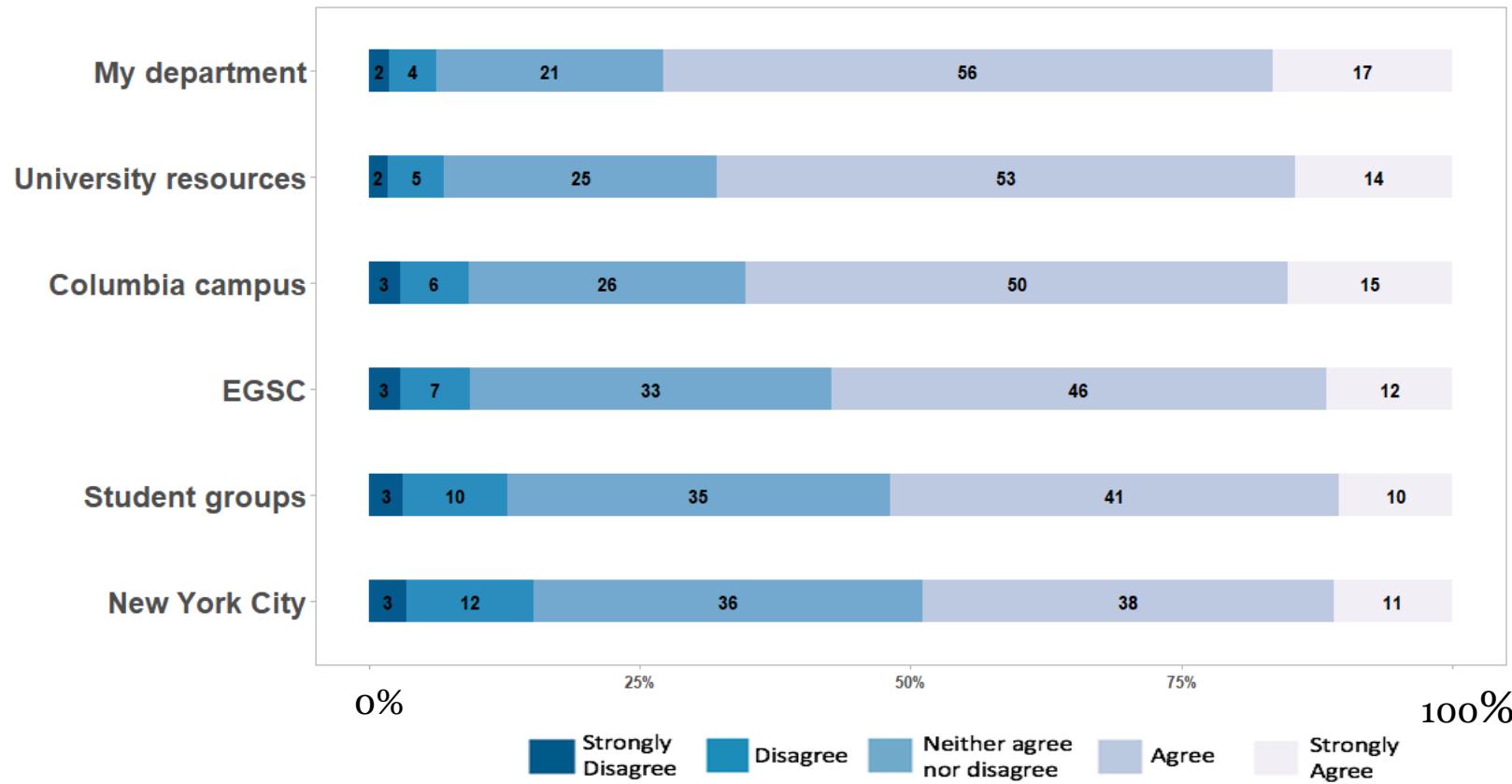
# Social: Peer Networking



# Orientation Programming



“Orientation helped me become acclimated with”:



# Orientation: Comments



- Tours:
  - “A guided tour in the buildings so that new students get to know what resources we have”
  - “A more general tour of the campus would be helpful...so I know where other departments/schools are physically located.”
- Housing:
  - “Better help with housing search. Based upon my interaction with a lot of students...I feel like students from some departments have lower chances of getting UAH housing than others”
- Organization:
  - “I wasn't really aware of which orientation events were applicable to me or not (PhD orientation? department orientation? MS orientation?)”
  - “I was already grappling with the housing search and then I only found out about the departmental orientation after I landed for the SEAS orientation”

# Orientation: Comments

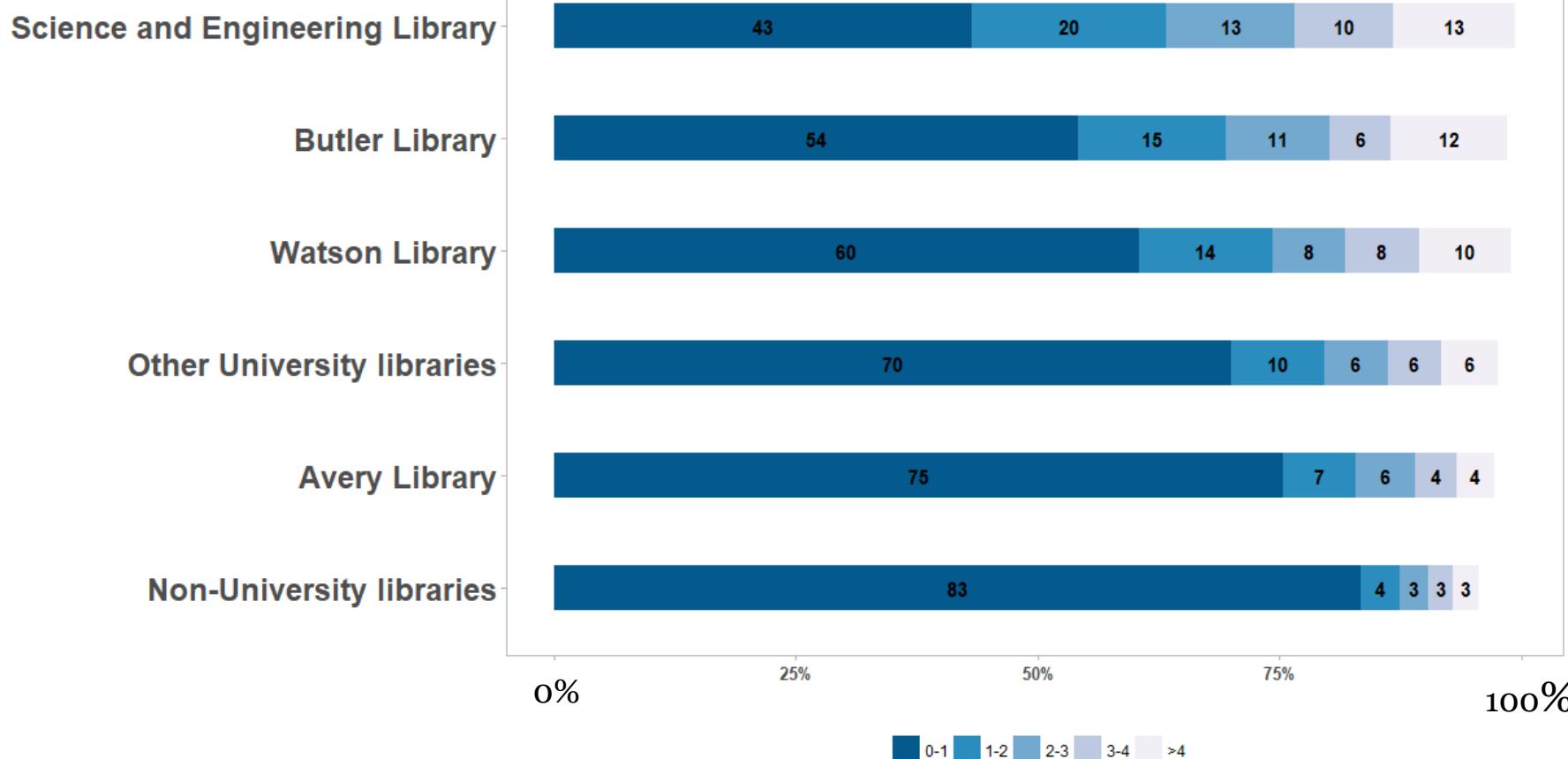


- Networking:
  - “More focus on networking and getting to know one another”.
  - “More social aspect so students can meet peers”
  - “...team-building exercises within the particular PhD class or specific year”
  - “departmental orientations...where PhD students are introduced to one another and the faculty”
- Advising:
  - “My advising session was rushed and unhelpful”
  - “the short meeting with an "adviser" during orientation is not adequate at building a feeling of support from the faculty”

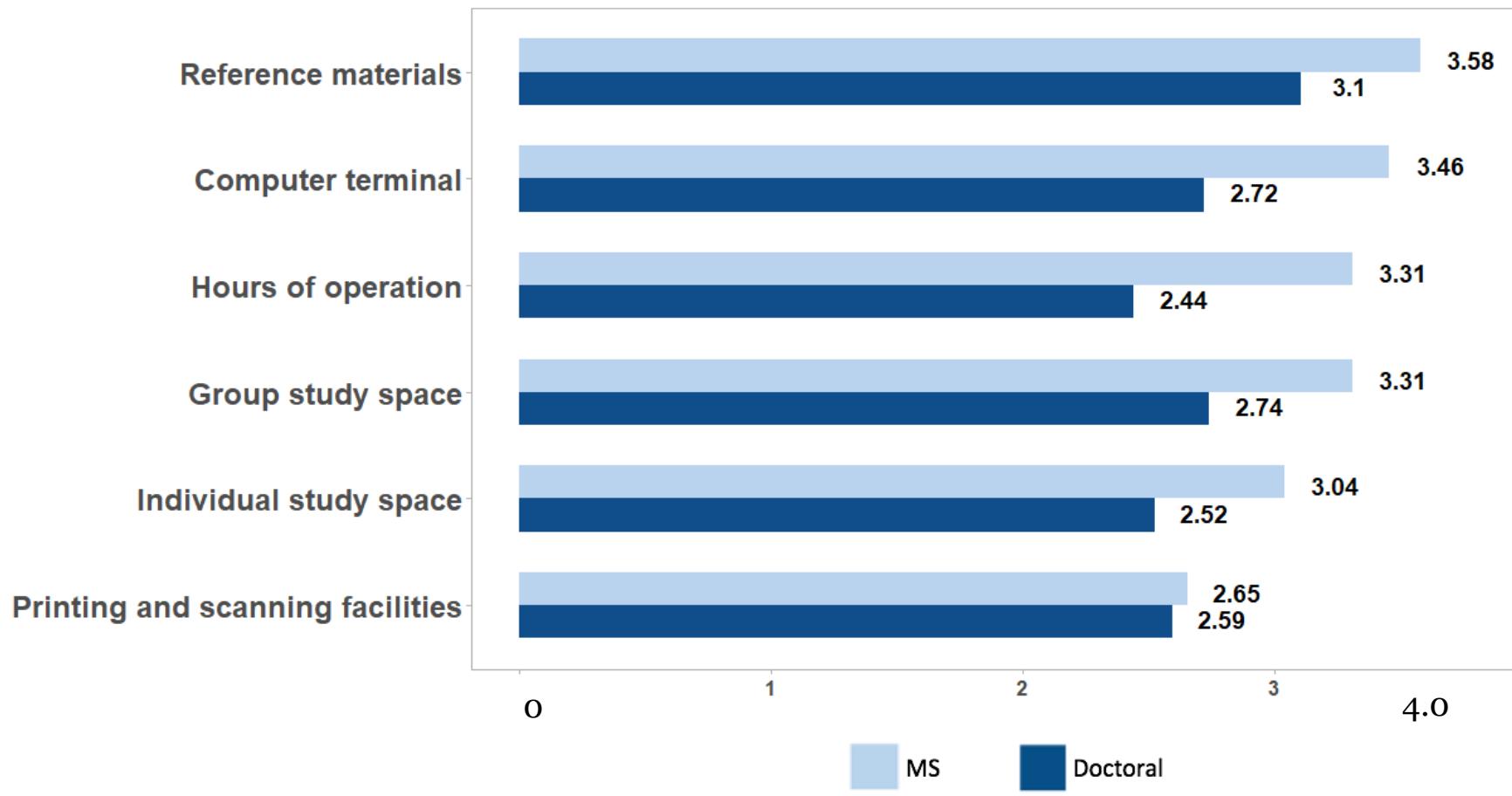
# Libraries/Facilities



# Library frequency use



# Library Space Satisfaction- SEL



# Library Services: Comments



- Library hours:
  - “A 6-7am open time would be preferred...9am is extremely late for an academic library opening”
  - “Maybe provide some 24 hour available study room”
- Space issues:
  - “Group study rooms are sometimes difficult to access at times...have to book a room more than 3 days in advance”
  - “...ban students from leaving stuff everywhere...people go to engineering library and leave their items on cubbies to ‘reserve’ them all day”
- Other issues:
  - **Outlets:** “More power outlets are needed for the workspace tables”
  - **Printing:** “library printers are too often broken and don't work”; “Color printing in NWC”
  - **CVN students:** “what can I even use?”; “Additional info on remote access would be good.”

# Space & Technical Facilities: Satisfaction



Overall cleanliness of classrooms in the Mudd building



Speed of wireless internet in Mudd and CEPSR



Coverage of wireless internet in Mudd and CEPSR



Cleanliness of laboratory and office space



Speed of wired internet in Mudd and CEPSR



Department lounge



Availability of software in libraries/labs



Availability software for personal laptop



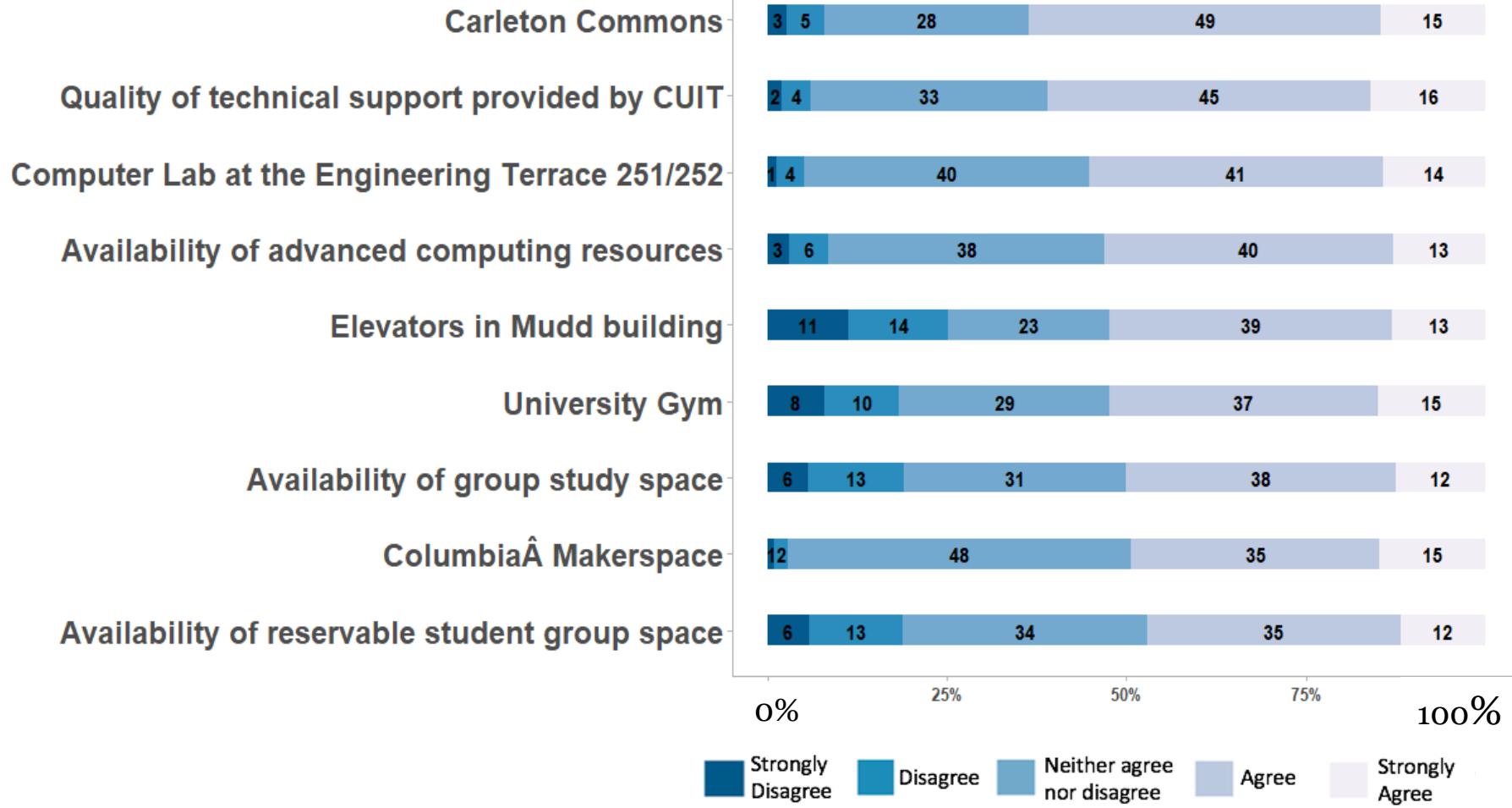
Quality and maintenance of equipment in labs



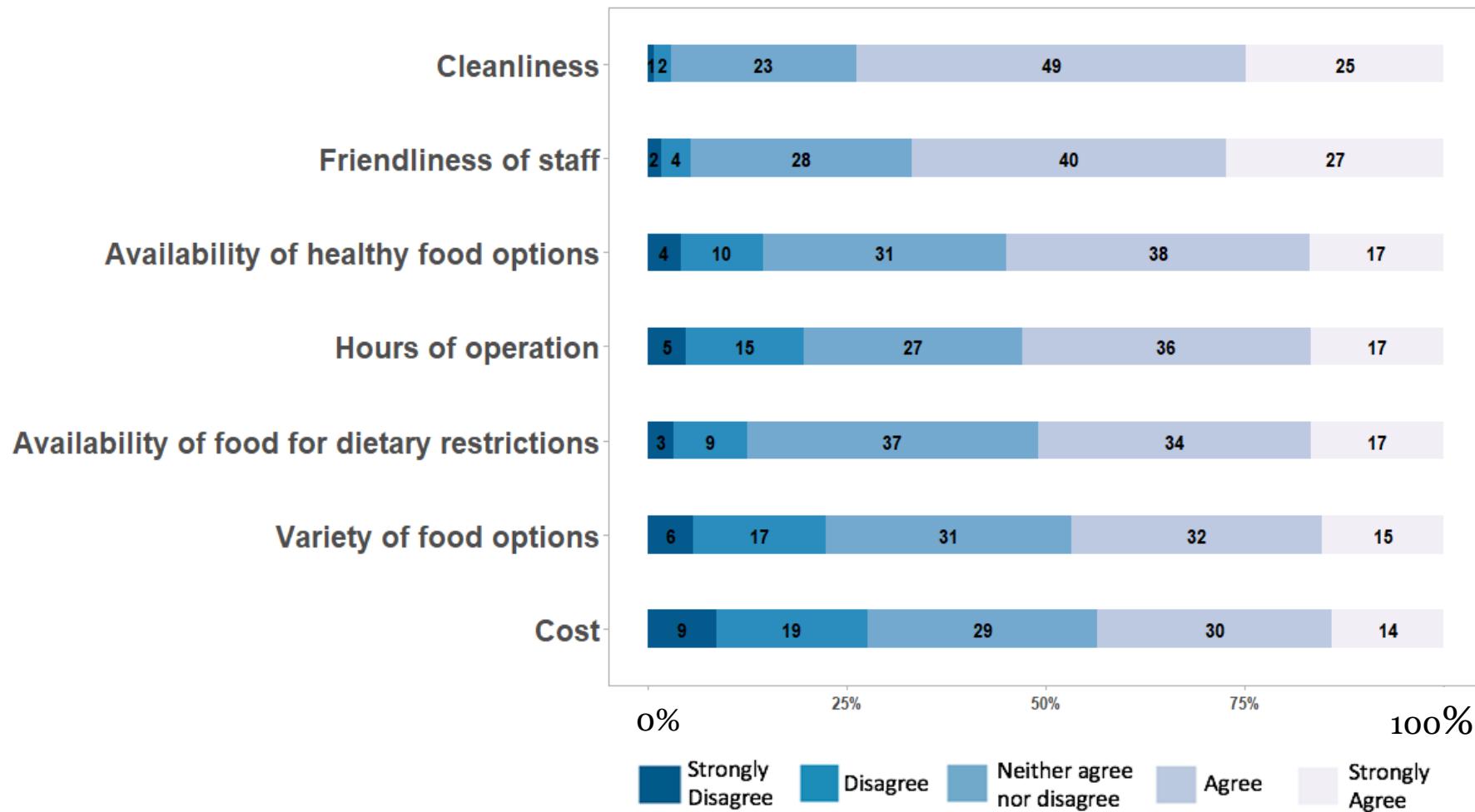
0% 25% 50% 75% 100%

Strongly Disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly Agree

# Space & Technical Facilities: Satisfaction

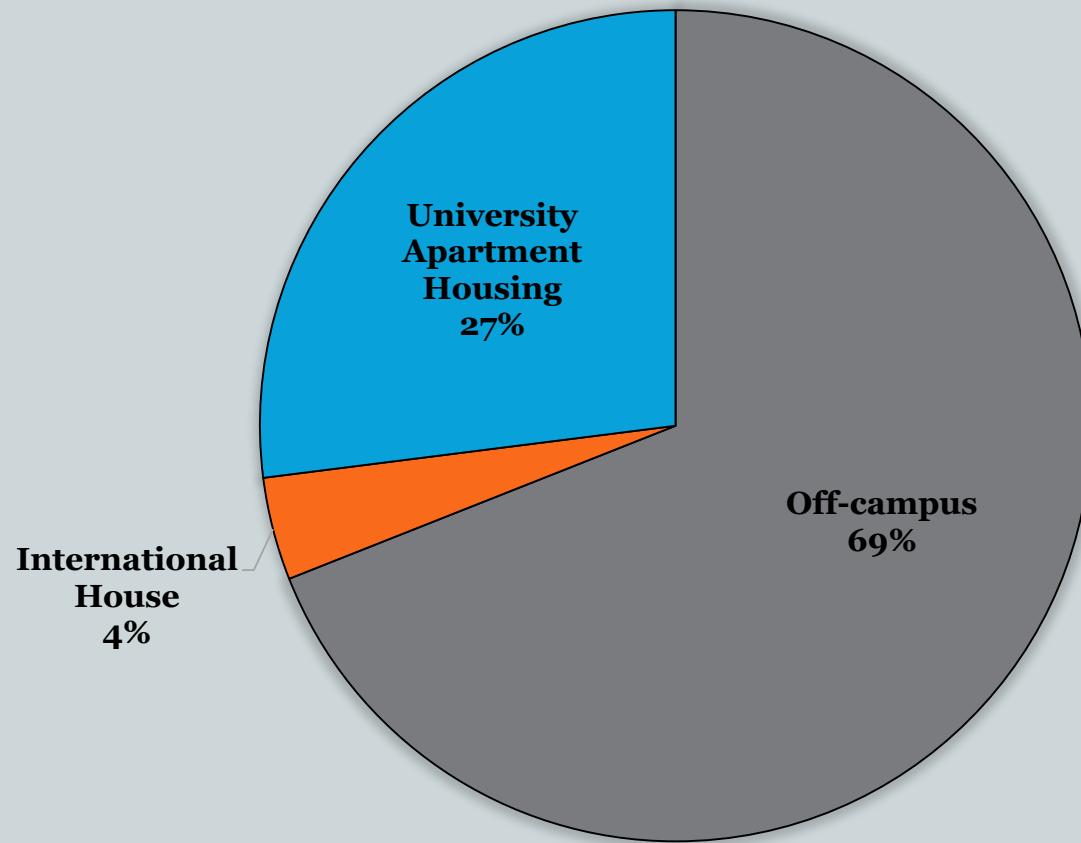


# Blue Java Café: Satisfaction

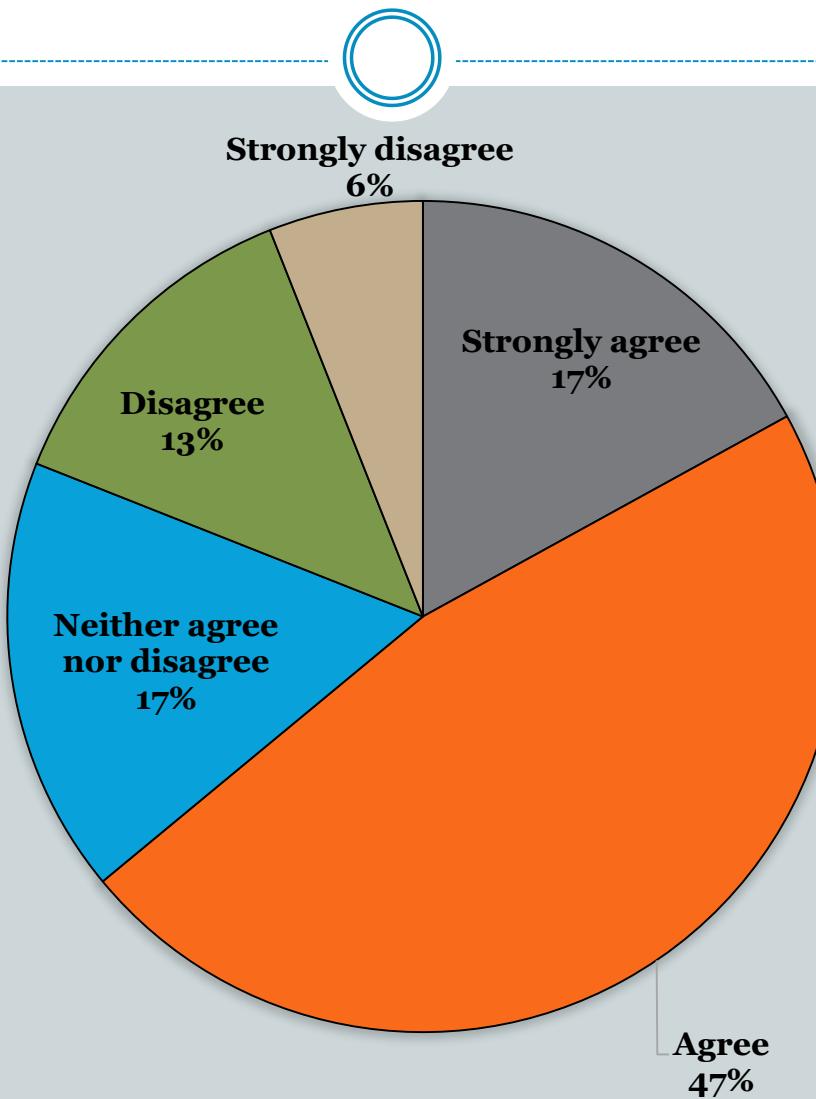


# Housing

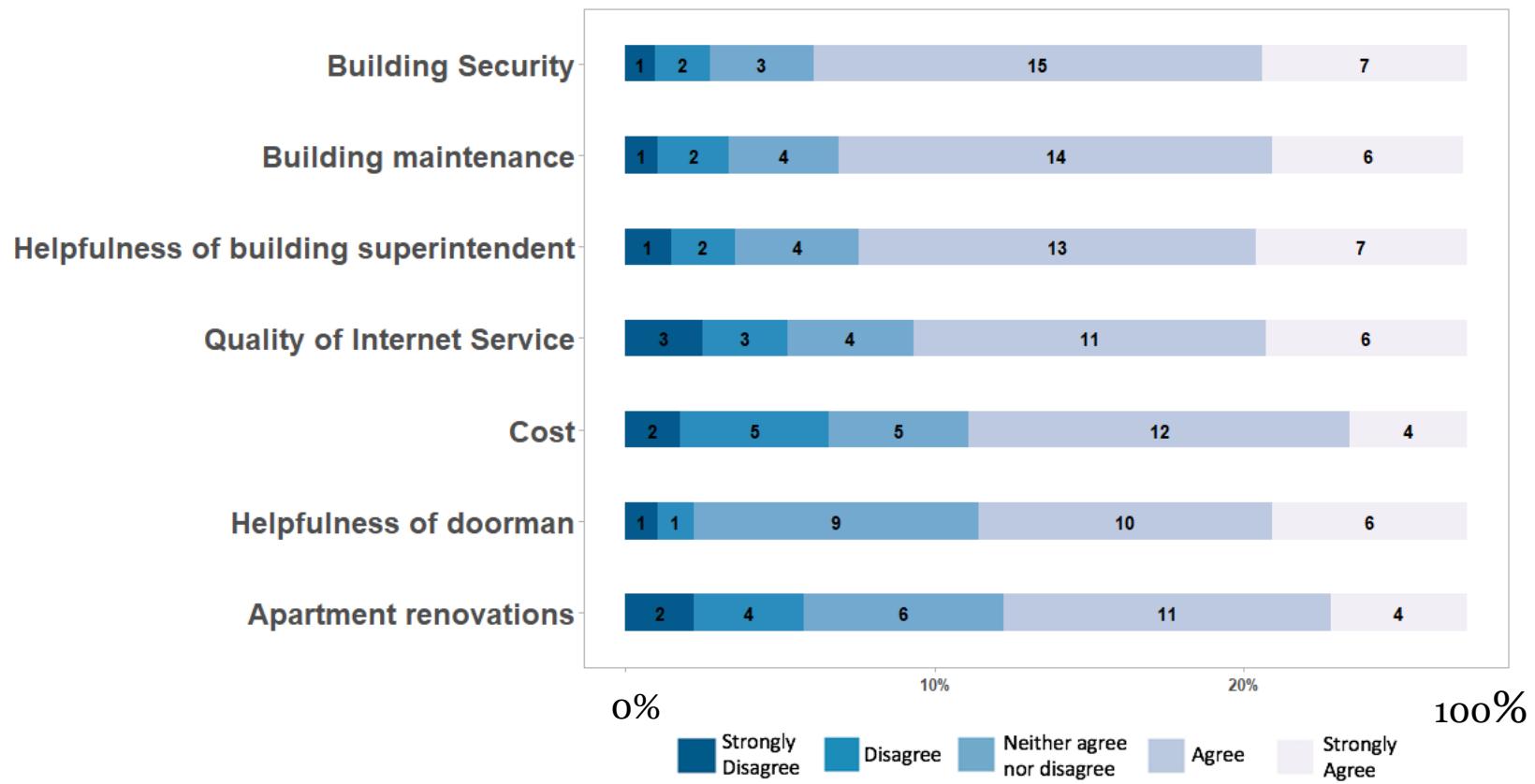
- “Where do you reside?”



# SATISFACTION WITH UAH APPLICATION PROCESS



# Housing: UAH



# Thank You!

