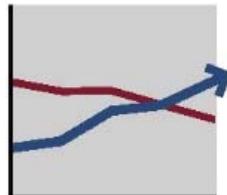


Telephone Survey of 402 Non-Returning NDSU Students

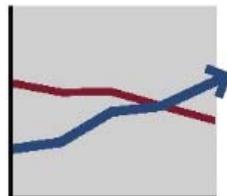
March 23 – April 8, 2015



**HARSTAD STRATEGIC
RESEARCH, INC.**

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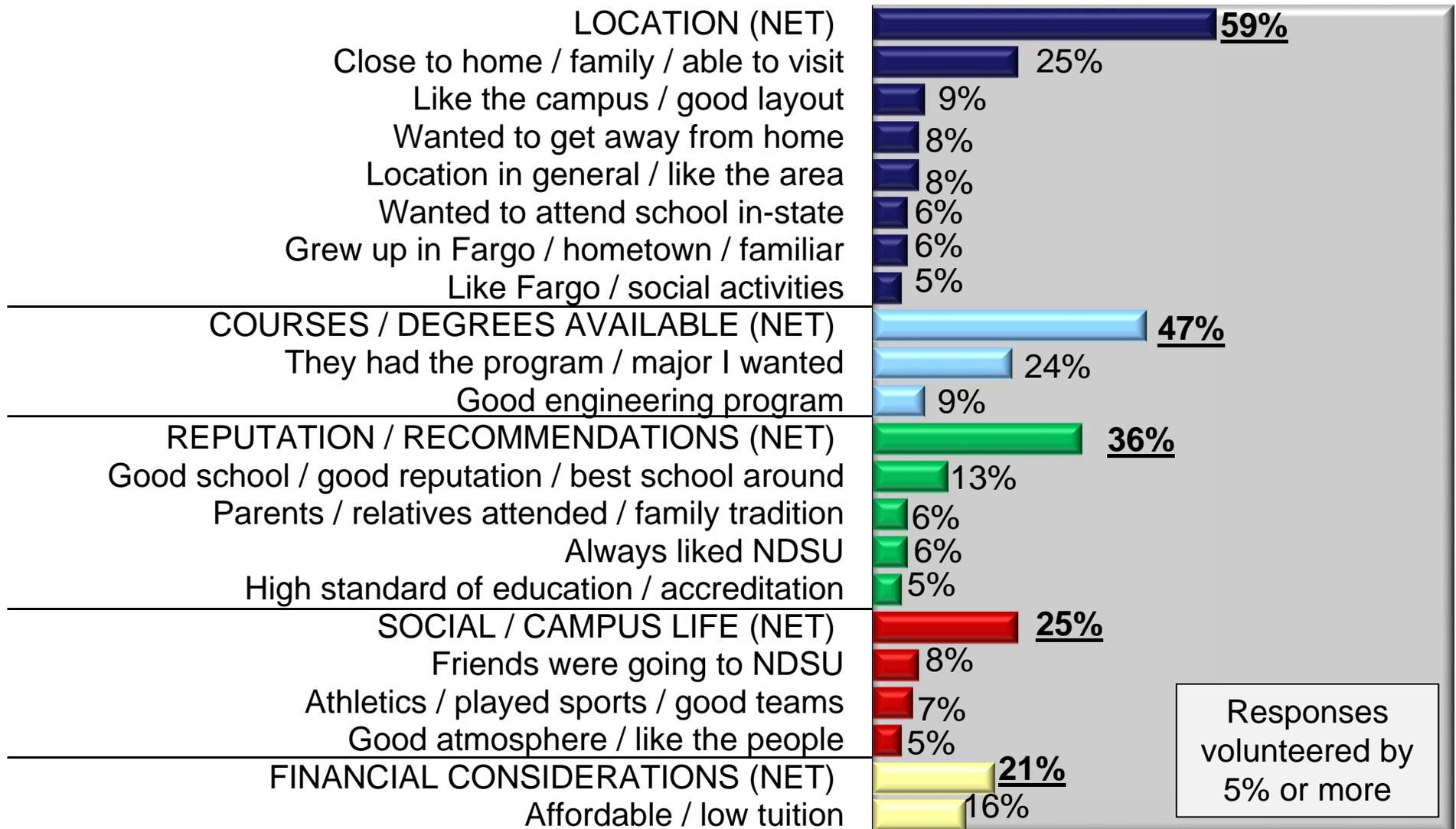
- **Reasons for Leaving NDSU**
- **Impressions of NDSU Across Key Dimensions**
- **Perceptions of Teaching at NDSU**
- **Perceptions of Advising and Support Services at NDSU**
- **Perceptions of Current School**



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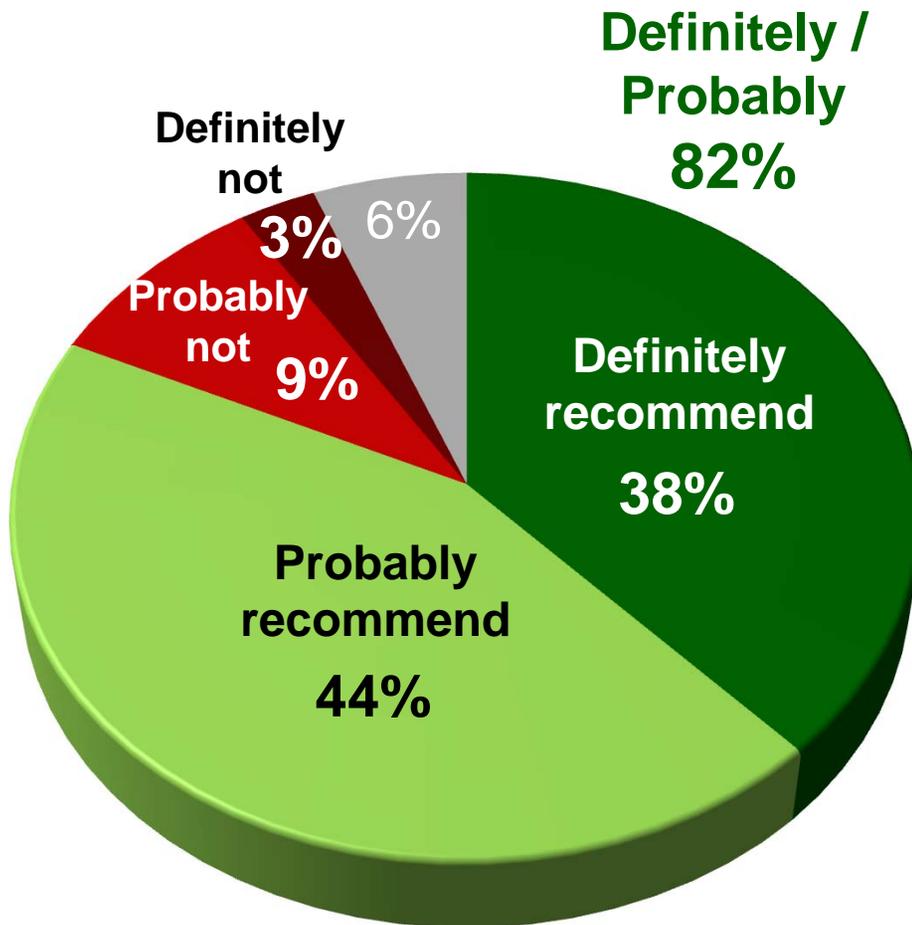
Volunteered top reasons for having attended NDSU emphasize its location, its academic standing, and its reputation in general

Q1. What are the main reasons you chose to attend NDSU?

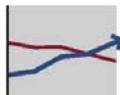


Overwhelmingly, non-returning students say that they would still recommend NDSU to a friend – including nearly 2-in-5 who would ‘definitely’ recommend it

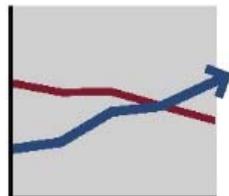
Q2. How likely is it that you would recommend NDSU to a friend?



	Def. Recommend	Probably	Not Recommend	Def / Prob. Recomm.
All Students	38%	44%	12%	82%
Currently enrolled elsewhere	35%	43%	20%	78%
Not presently enrolled	40%	45%	14%	85%
Left in good standing	36%	45%	18%	81%
Left in bad standing	40%	44%	15%	84%
NDSU GPA 3.0 to 4.0	37%	39%	23%	76%
NDSU GPA 2.0 to 2.9	32%	54%	12%	86%
NDSU GPA under 2.0	42%	41%	16%	83%



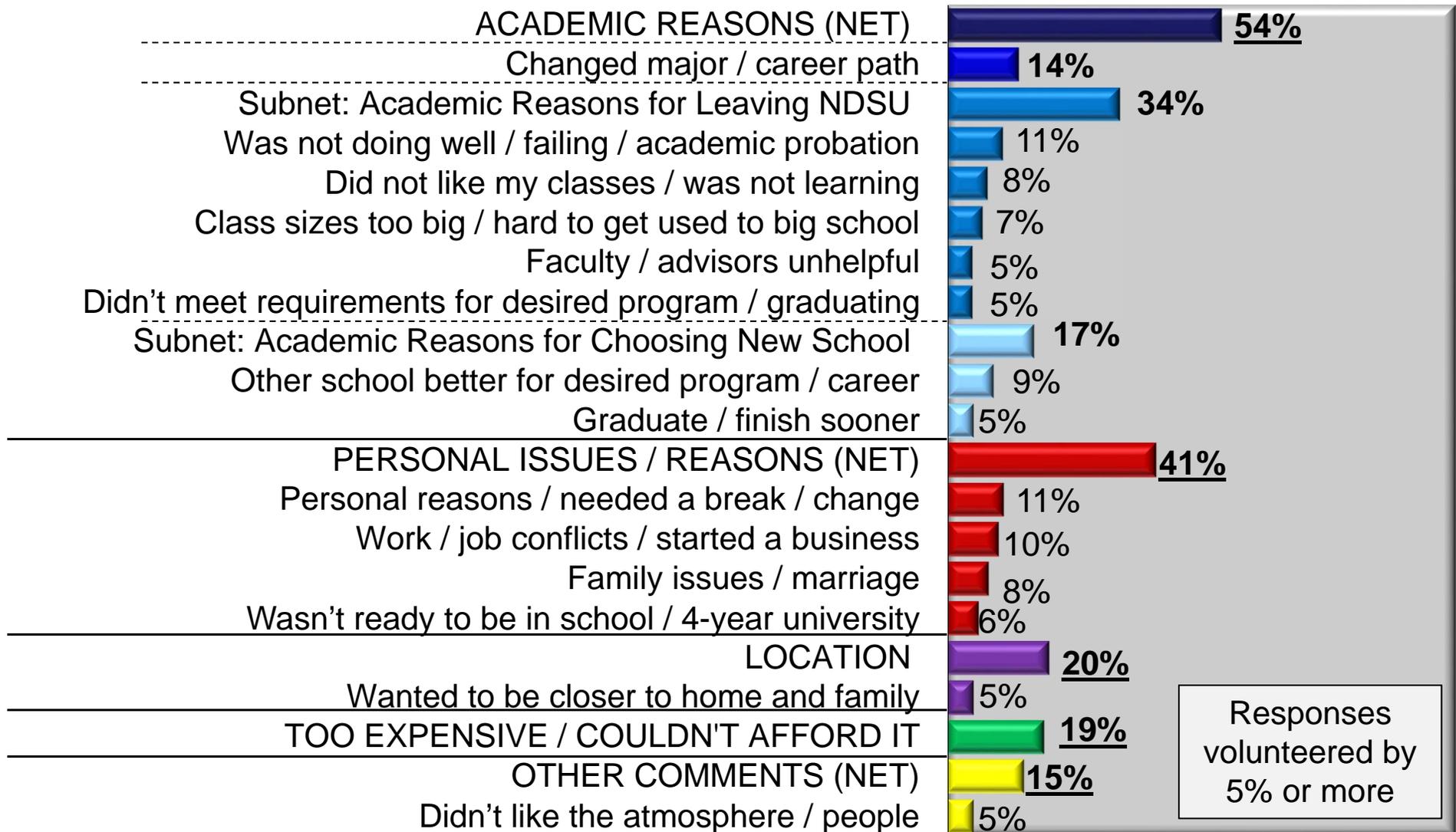
Reasons for Leaving NDSU



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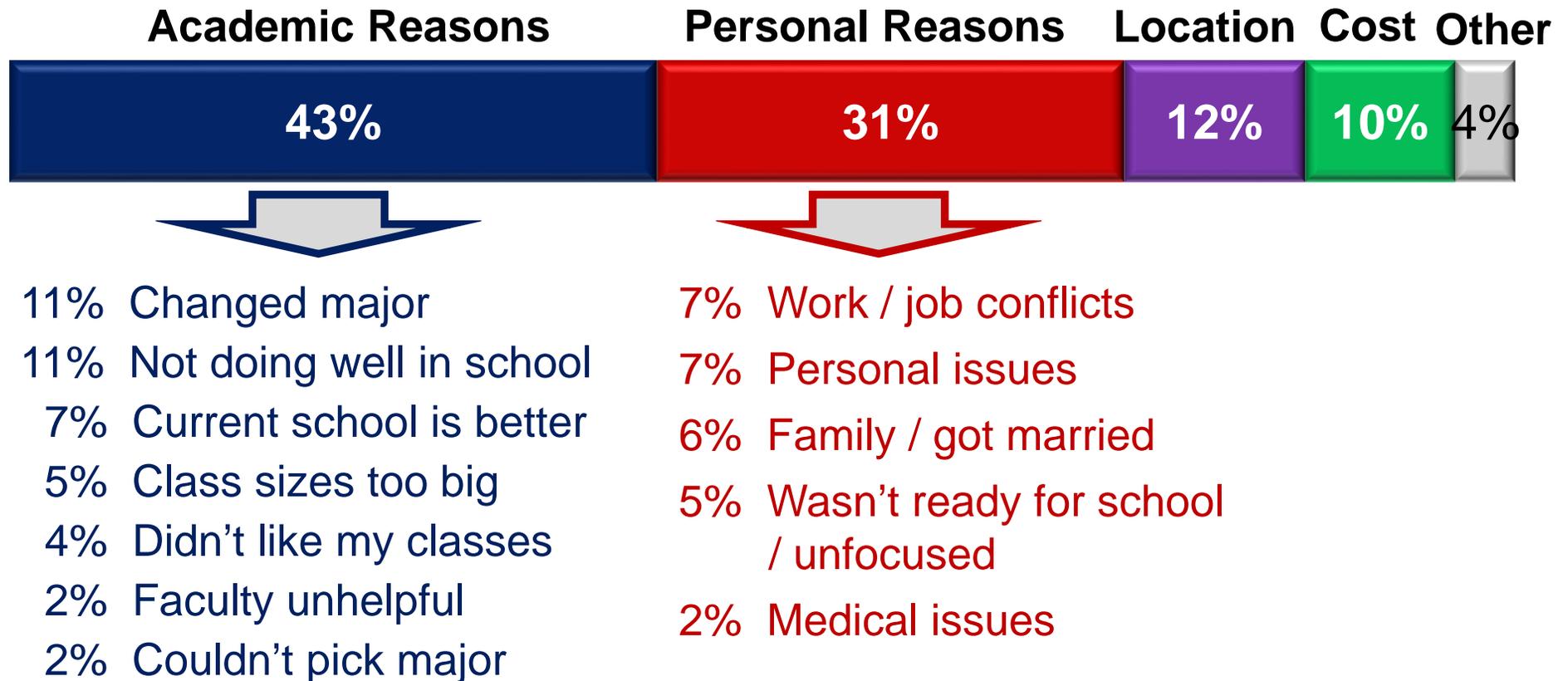
Students' volunteered reasons for not returning to NDSU focus on academics and personal issues in general

Q2a. What were the main reasons you chose to leave NDSU?



Students' single top volunteered reason for not returning to NDSU focuses primarily on academics and various personal issues

Q2a. What were the main reasons you chose to leave NDSU?
FIRST VOLUNTEERED COMMENT ONLY



*Examples of verbatim responses from students
who left NDSU for academic reasons*

I **didn't know what I wanted** to go to school for. I **changed my major** three times.

Faculty were **completely unhelpful**. They were actually very rude at many points.

Why did you leave NDSU?

They **don't give out the help** that pretty much all other colleges do. I was taking classes at a 2-year college in the same town and the amount of help I received there was completely different.

For me personally the **class sizes** were too big. I can learn better at a smaller college or university. I prefer **feeling like a person not a number**.



*Examples of verbatim responses from students
who left NDSU for personal reasons*

My family back home. [...]
There **wasn't much to do on campus**. I drove home just about every weekend.

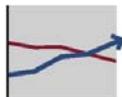
I became **unsure about what I wanted to do**. I became indecisive and had to **take some time off** to figure it out.

Why did you leave NDSU?

Working became a priority instead of study

For personal reasons, I **didn't feel I was taking school seriously**.

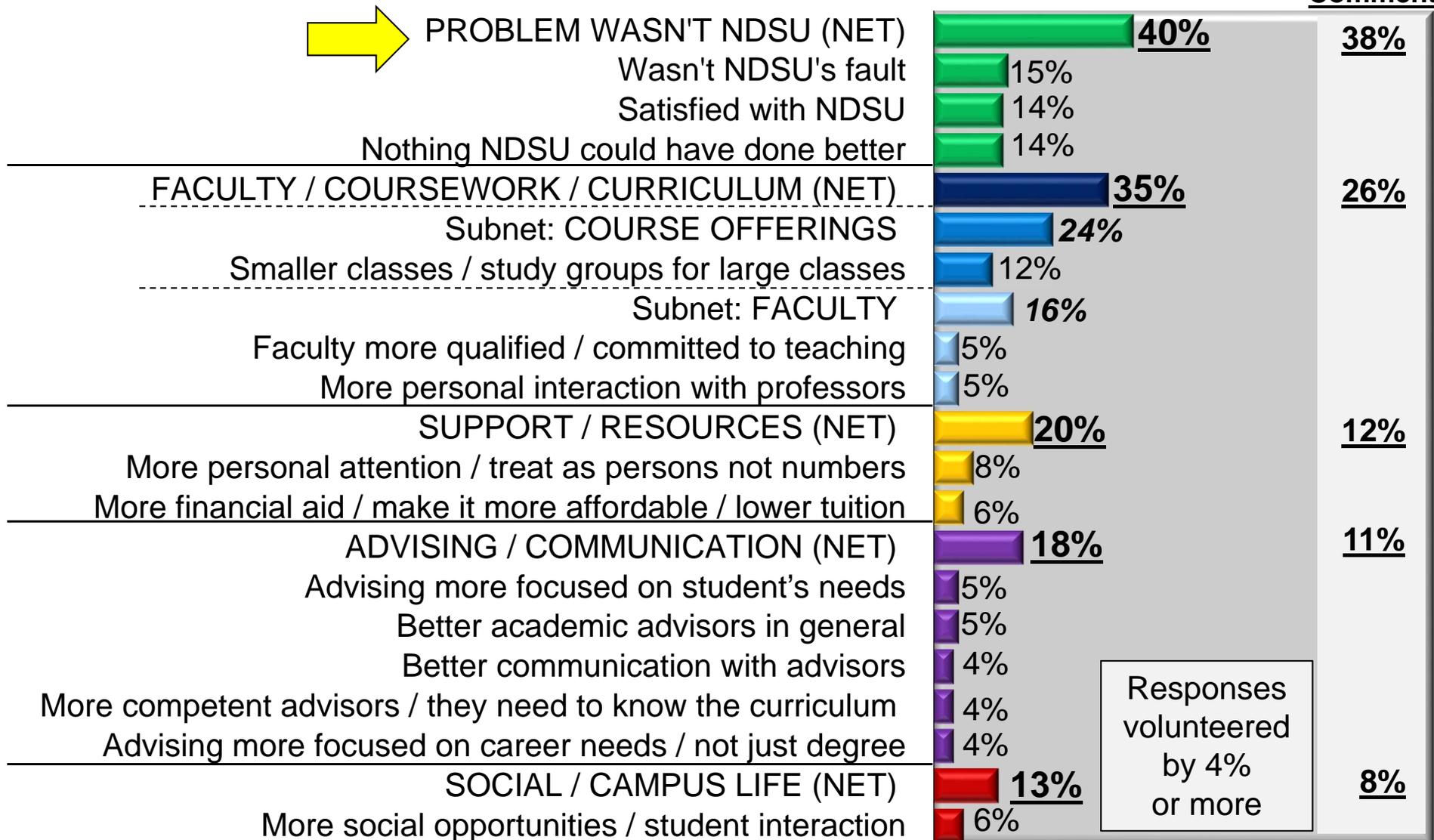
During my freshman year I had a **mental illness** thing. I was diagnosed with **depression** and I thought it would be best to take a break and really deal with it.



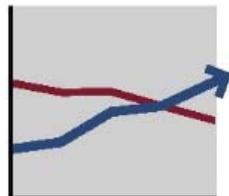
While 2-in-5 students volunteer that there was nothing NDSU could have done to keep them from leaving, others volunteer improvements related to class sizes and teaching effectiveness followed by advising and support services

Q9/11. Thinking back, what could NDSU have done better for you?

Single Top Comment



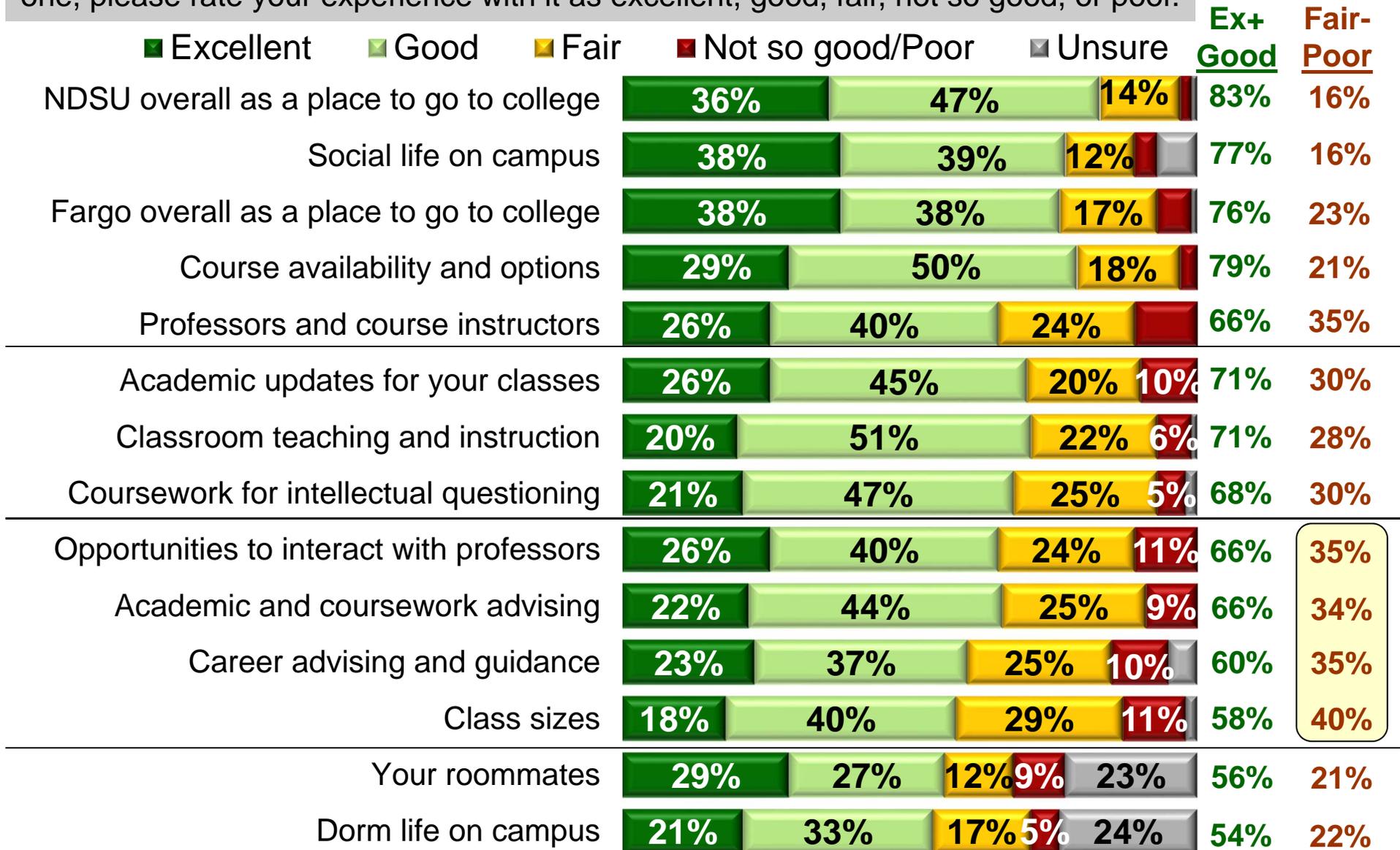
Impressions of NDSU Across Key Dimensions



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A majority of students rate NDSU 'excellent or good' on all 14 dimensions tested, though at least 1/3rd give lower ratings on interactions with professors, advising, and class size

Q3. Next, I'm going to ask you to rate several aspects of life at NDSU. For each one, please rate your experience with it as excellent, good, fair, not so good, or poor.



Regression analysis reveals the importance of students' perceptions of Fargo and campus social life on overall ratings of NDSU

Rating NDSU overall as a place to go to college

Fargo overall as a place to go to college

(38% excellent, 6% not so good or poor; standardized beta = .20)

Coursework encourages intellectual questioning and curiosity

(21% excellent, 5% not so good or poor, standardized beta = .19)

Academic and coursework advising

(22% excellent, 9% not so good or poor, standardized beta = .18)

Classroom teaching and instruction

(20% excellent, 6% not so good or poor, standardized beta = .16)

Opportunities to interact with professors and course instructors

(26% excellent, 11% not so good or poor, standardized beta = .12)

Social life on campus

(38% excellent, 4% not so good or poor, standardized beta = .12)

Linear regression model ($R^2=.48$, $n=401$, $df=394$) controlling for standing ($p=ns$) and re-enrollment (standardized beta= $-.08$, $p=.04$).

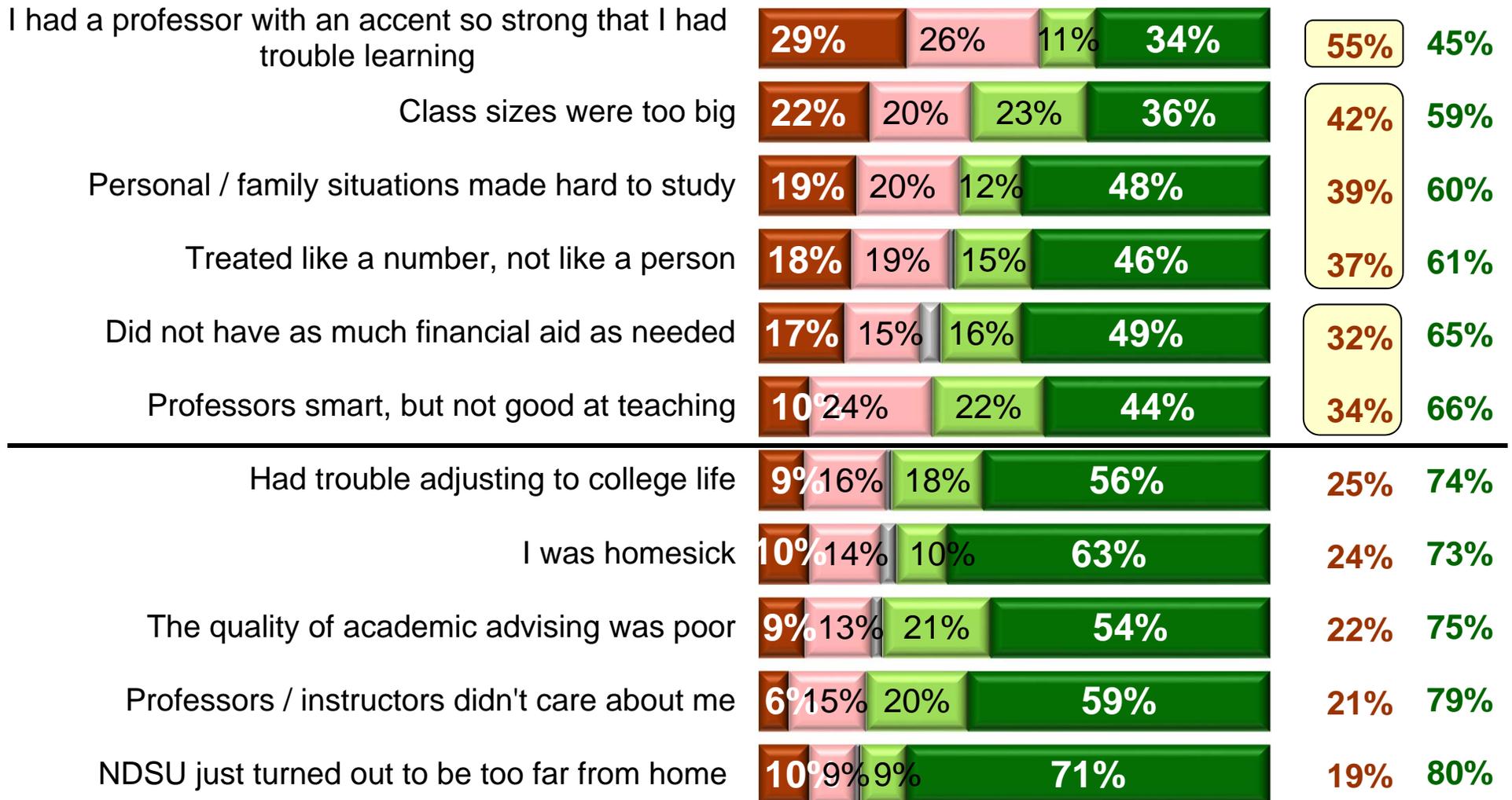
- These regression findings suggest that perceptions of Fargo and social life on campus help foster positive perceptions of NDSU among non-returning students.
- The effects of coursework, advising, and teaching are significant but a little weaker.
- Note that the academic standing of non-returning students is not associated with ratings of NDSU.

Only 6 of the 21 concerns about NDSU tested resonate with 1/3rd or more of non-returning students (1st of 2 slides)

Q10. I'm going to read you some statements that may or may not apply to your experience at NDSU. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each statement about NDSU.

■ Comp / Mostly Agree ■ Smwht Agree ■ Smwht Disagr. ■ Comp / Mostly Disagree

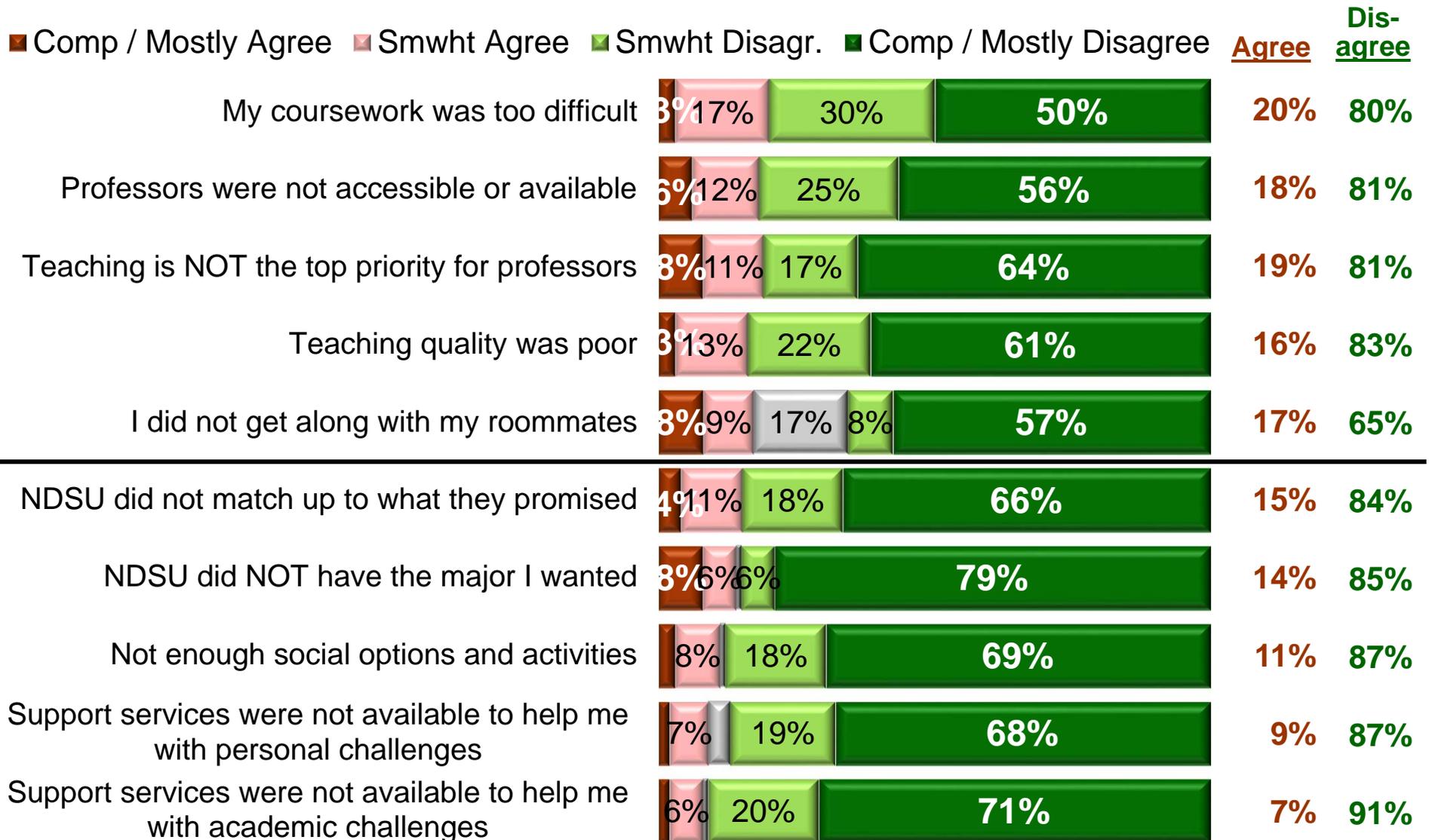
Agree **Dis-agree**



Subgroups analysis of the top 6 top testing concerns about NDSU

	% Agree		<u>Slightly more likely to be:</u>
I had a professor with an accent so strong that I had trouble learning	29%	26%	Studied Science/Math/Engineering Men GPA < 2.0
Class sizes were too big	22%	20%	Left for academic reasons Felt like treated like a number at NDSU
I had personal or family situations that made it hard for me to study	19%	20%	Non-white Left NDSU in bad academic standing Left as Junior/Senior Didn't have enough financial aid
I was treated like a number at NDSU, not like a person	18%	19%	Visited with professors less often Left NDSU for academic reasons Class sizes too big Women
I did not have as much financial aid as I needed	17%	15%	Non-white Left NDSU for financial reasons GPA < 2.0
The professors were smart but just not good at teaching or helping us learn	10%	24%	Non-white Left NDSU for academic reasons Left in good standing & enrolled elsewhere

Sizable majorities of non-returning students reject 15 of the 21 concerns about NDSU tested (2nd of 2 slides)



Linear regression models suggest that specific concerns can have a disproportionate effect on broad evaluations of academics at NDSU

When non-returning students have the following negative attitudes ...

- Teaching quality was poor.
- NDSU did not match up to what they promised



... it may result in weaker ratings and a less positive impression of NDSU overall

Coursework that encourages intellectual questioning and curiosity

- The quality of academic advising was poor.
- I was treated like a number at NDSU, not a person.
- NDSU did not match up to what they promised.



Academic and coursework advising

- Teaching quality was poor.
- I was treated like a number at NDSU, not a person.



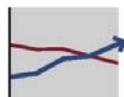
Classroom teaching and instruction

- I was treated like a number at NDSU, not a person.
- Professors were not accessible or available for me.
- Class sizes were too big.



Opportunities to interact with professors and course instructors

Linear regression models with the attitudes regressed on the ratings. The models excluded attitudinal statements asked of a partial sample. Attitudes associated with the ratings at $p = .01$ or $p > .01$ were retained in the models.



When students perceive that they are being treated 'like a number' they are more likely to be critical of NDSU across key dimensions

When non-returning students have the following negative attitudes ...

- Teaching quality was poor.
- NDSU did not match up to what they promised



... it may result in weaker ratings and a less positive impression of NDSU overall

Coursework that encourages intellectual questioning and curiosity

- The quality of academic advising was poor.
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Academic and coursework advising

- Teaching quality was poor.
- I was treated like a number at NDSU, not a person.



Classroom teaching and instruction

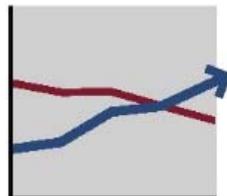
- I was treated like a number at NDSU, not a person.
- Professors were not accessible or available for me.
- Class sizes were too big.



Opportunities to interact with professors and course instructors

- 38% agree with the statement, "I was treated like a number at NDSU, not a person."
- This feeling appears to be particularly powerful. It is *negatively* associated with ratings of advising, teaching, and interaction with professors at NDSU and indirectly impacts their overall view of NDSU.
- *(In other words, the more a student feels he/she is being treated like a number, the more likely he/she agrees with critical statements about advising, teaching and interaction with professors at NDSU).*

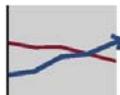
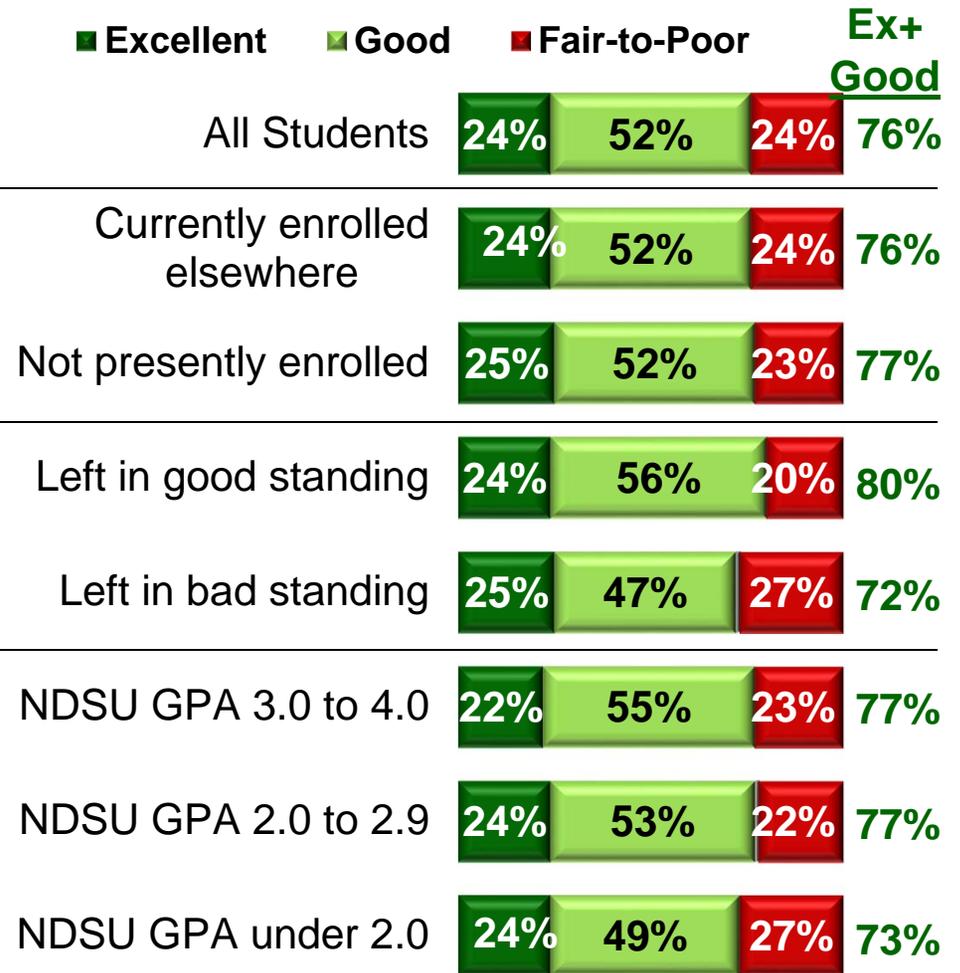
Perceptions of Teaching at NDSU



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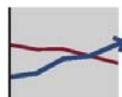
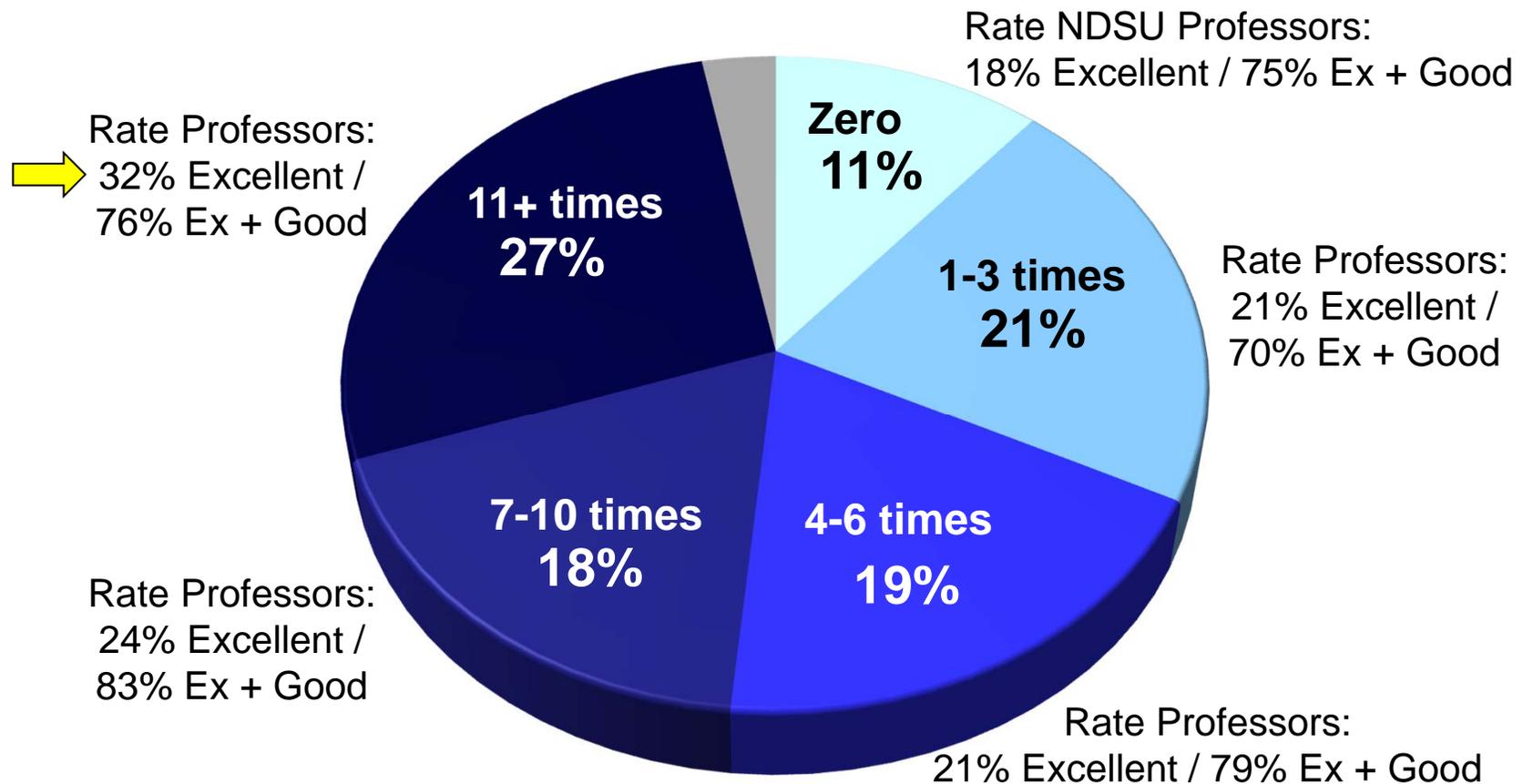
Non-returning students remain overwhelmingly positive about their professors and course instructors at NDSU

Q4. How would you rate your professors and course instructors at NDSU?



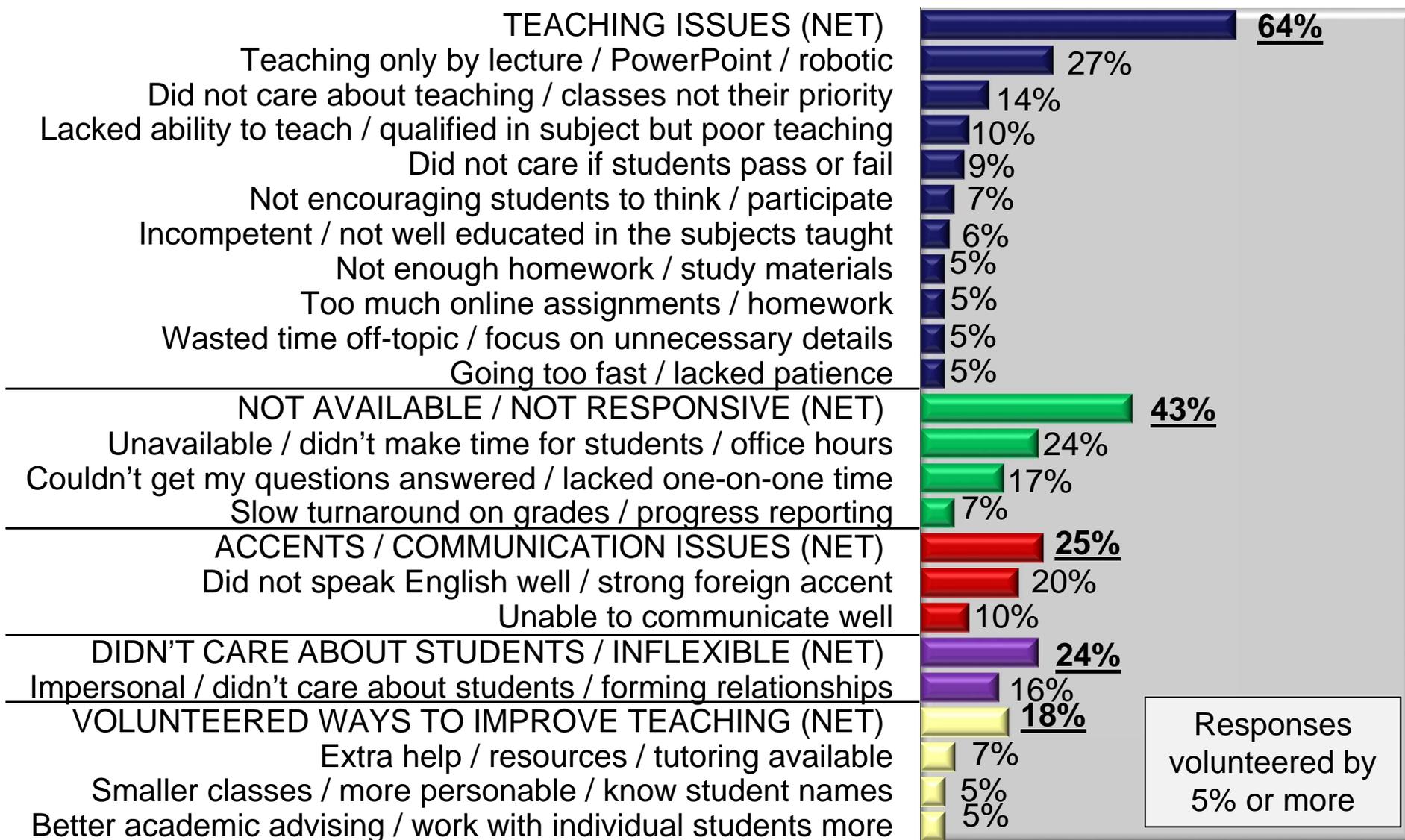
Most students recall interacting with professors outside of class at NDSU – and those who did most often are slightly more positive about their professors

Q5. And during your time at NDSU, approximately how many times during your last one or two semesters did you interact with professors or course instructors outside of class regarding coursework, research, or other special projects?



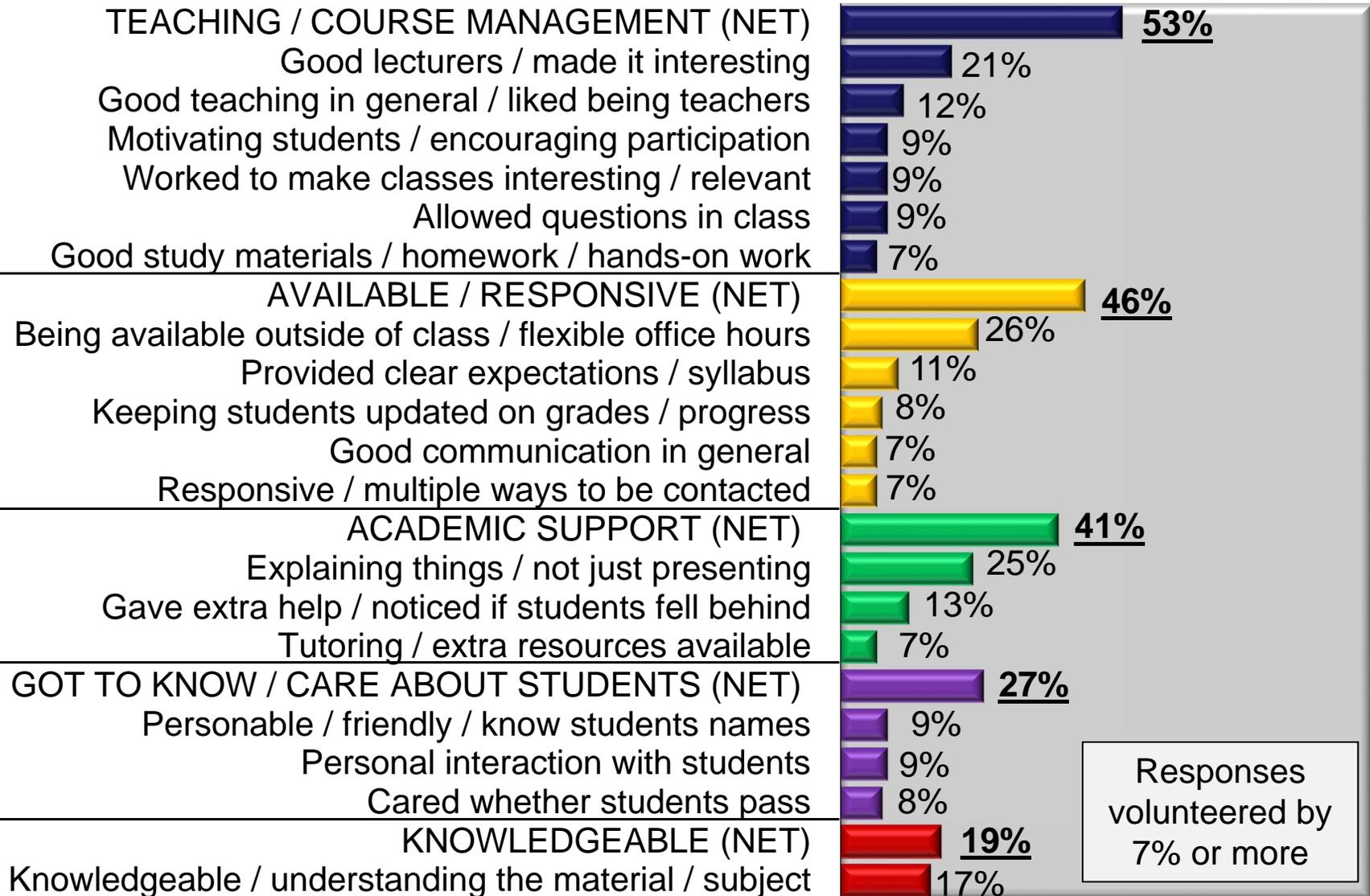
Volunteered concerns about teaching at NDSU asked among the 24% who rate their NDSU professors as fair, not so good or poor

Q4a. What doubts, concerns, or frustrations did you have about your professors and course instructors at NDSU?

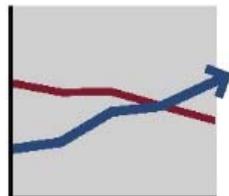


Volunteered examples of what NDSU professors do well among the 76% who rate their NDSU professors as excellent or good

Q4b. What did your professors and course instructors do well at NDSU?



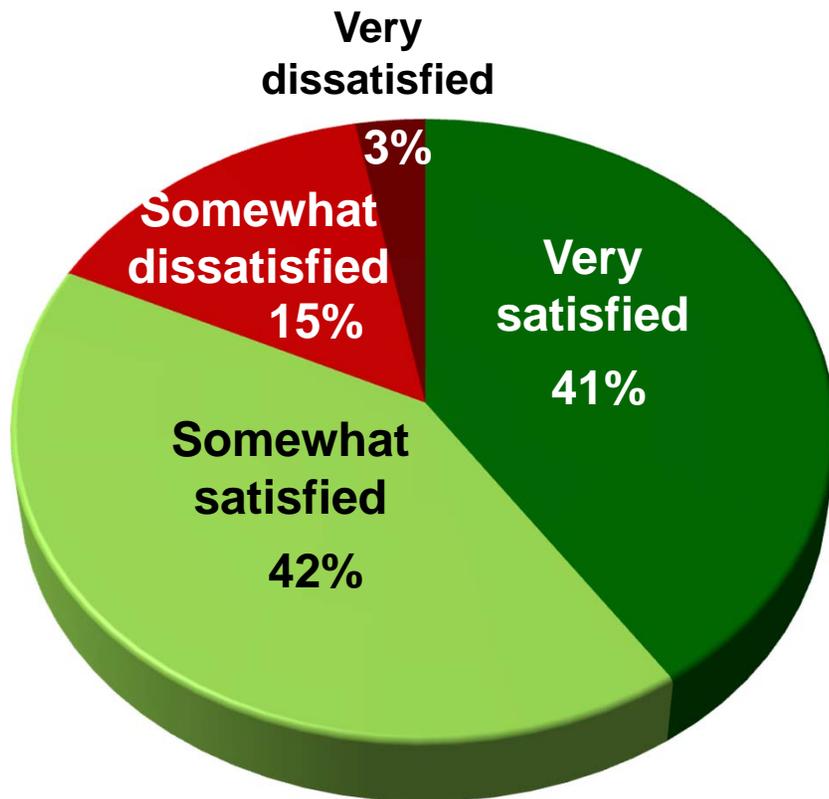
Perceptions of Advising and Support Services at NDSU



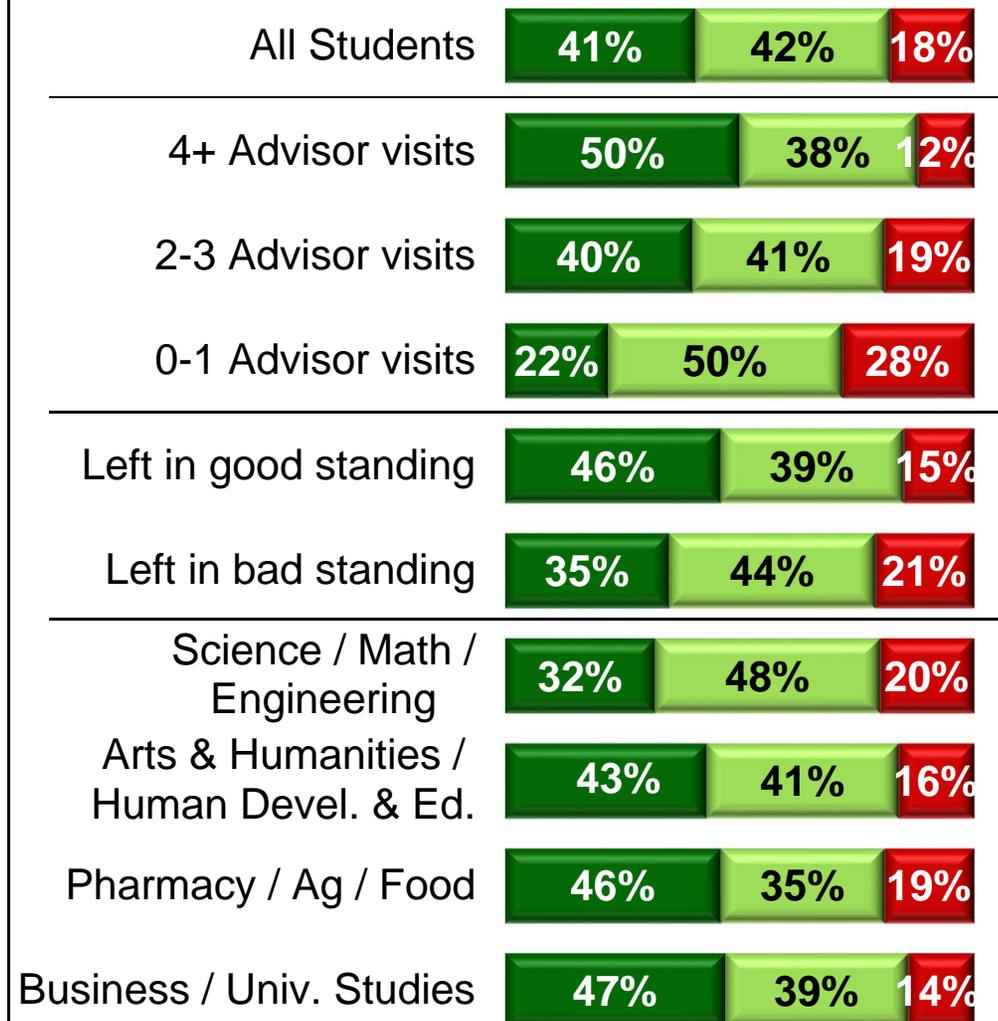
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Students report basic satisfaction with advising at NDSU across key subgroups

Q7b. And how satisfied were you with your academic advising visits in your last one or two semesters at NDSU? *[Asked among the 91% of students who recalled visiting an advisor]*

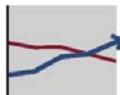
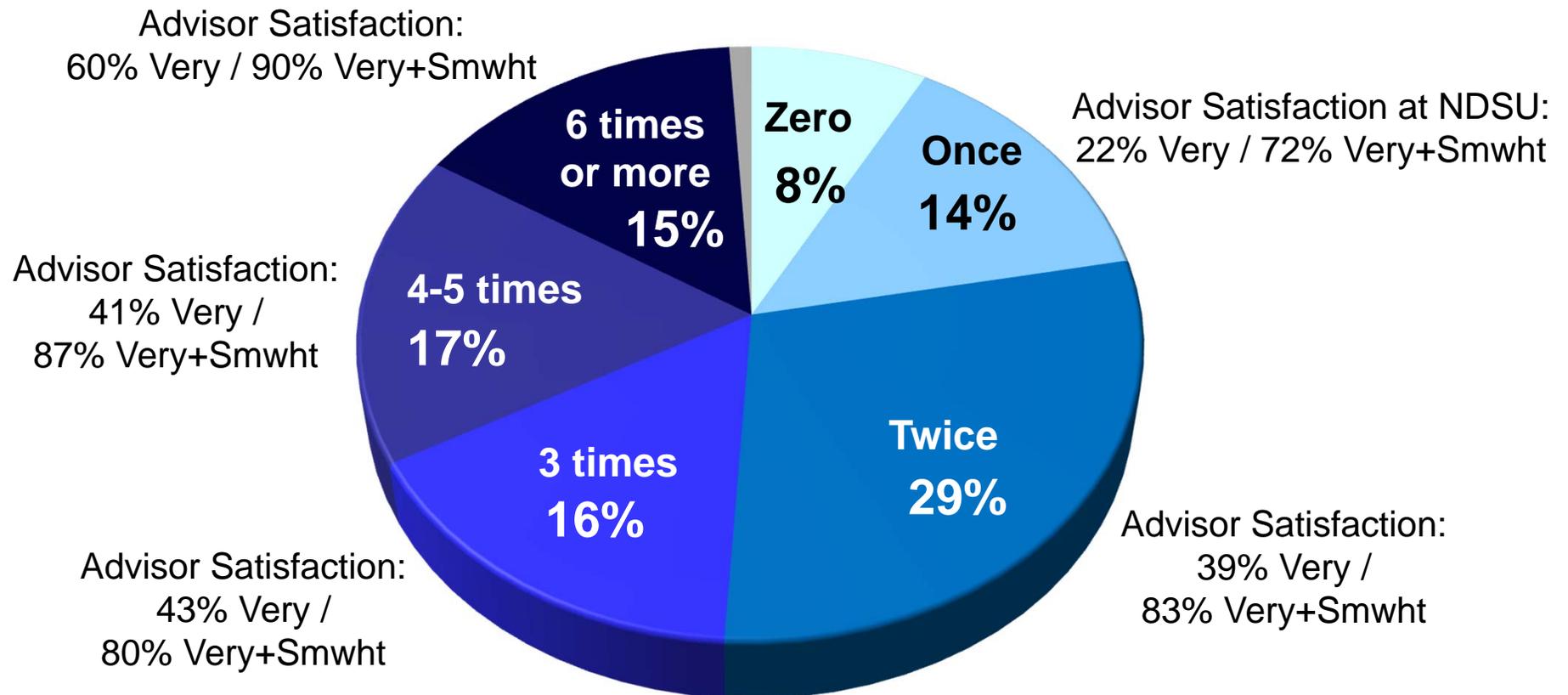


■ Very satisfied ■ Somewhat ■ Dissatisfied



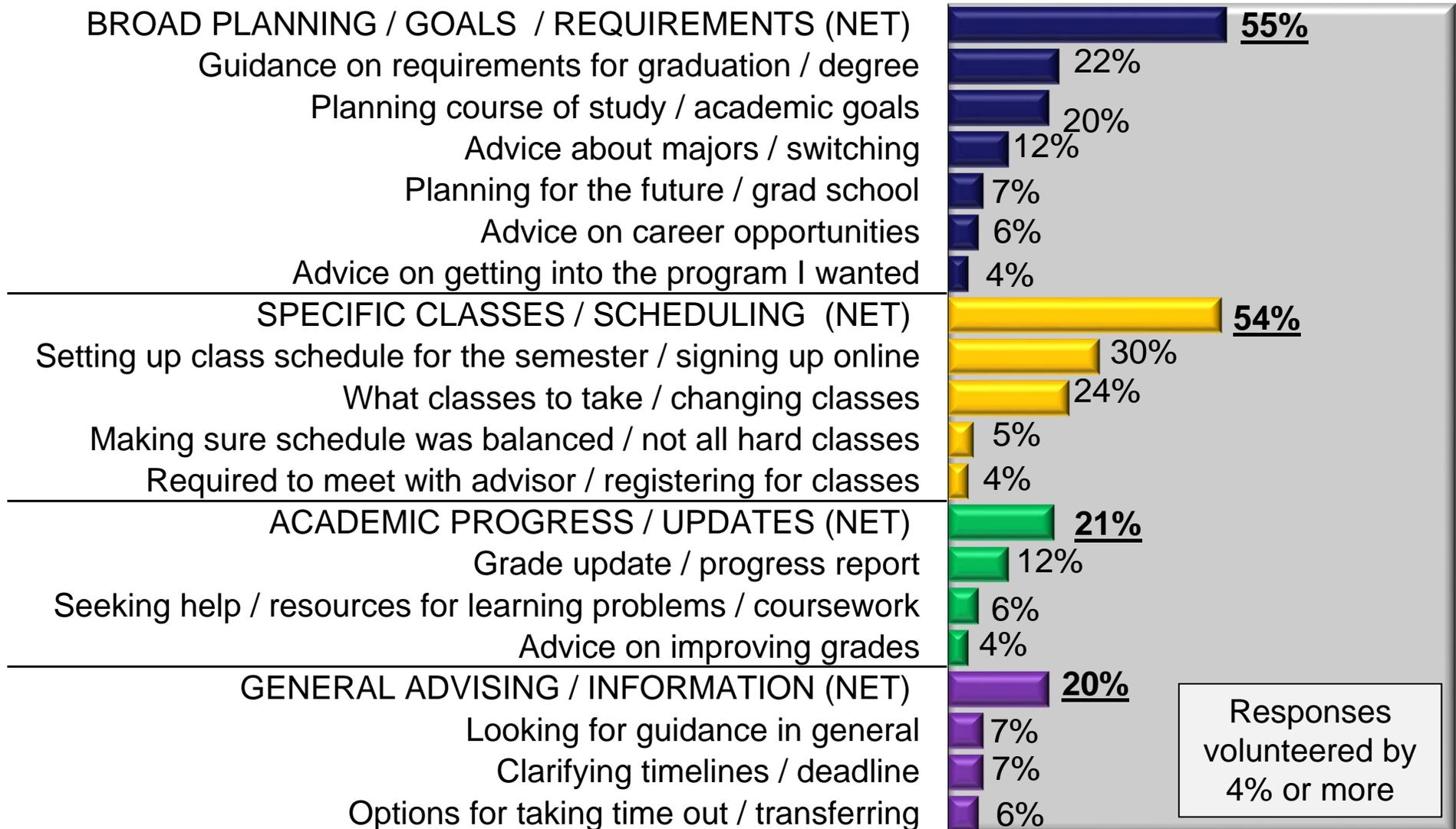
Nearly all students recall visiting an academic advisor at NDSU. Those who went more often were most satisfied with their advising.

Q6. How many times did you visit an academic advisor during your last one or two semesters at NDSU?



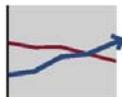
Volunteered reasons for visiting an advisor among the 91% who recall visiting an advisor at NDSU

Q7a. What were you hoping to address or accomplish when you visited your academic advisor?



Concerns about advising at NDSU are not immediately top-of-mind for non-returning students, but they tend to come up after only minimal prompting

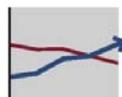
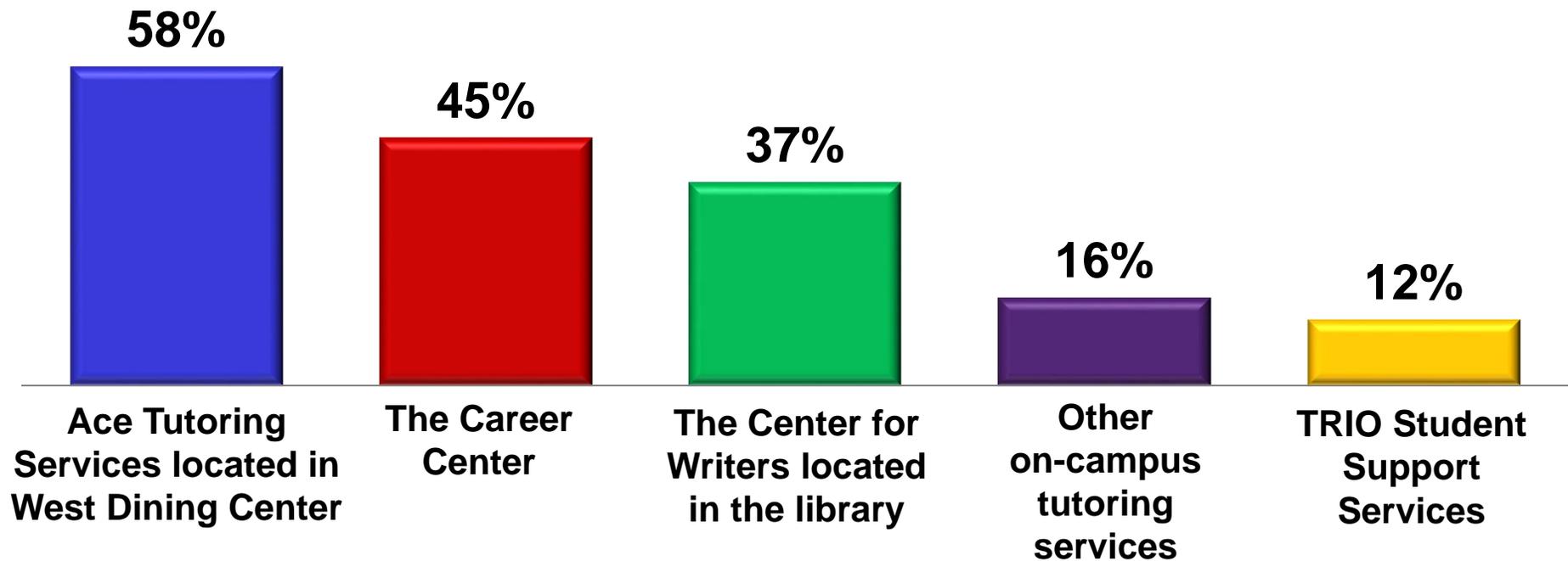
1. In the initial open-ended question about reasons for leaving NDSU, less than 1% of non-returning students volunteer reasons related to advising or support services.
2. Nevertheless, after hearing questions that mention advising, about a quarter of non-returning students volunteer that NDSU could have done more around advising and support services to keep them from leaving.
3. The take-away is that while advising is not students' number-one, top-of-mind reason for leaving NDSU, it is a factor that comes up when prompted and should be addressed on campus.



Most students report taking advantage of the support services at NDSU – particularly tutoring, writing, and career services

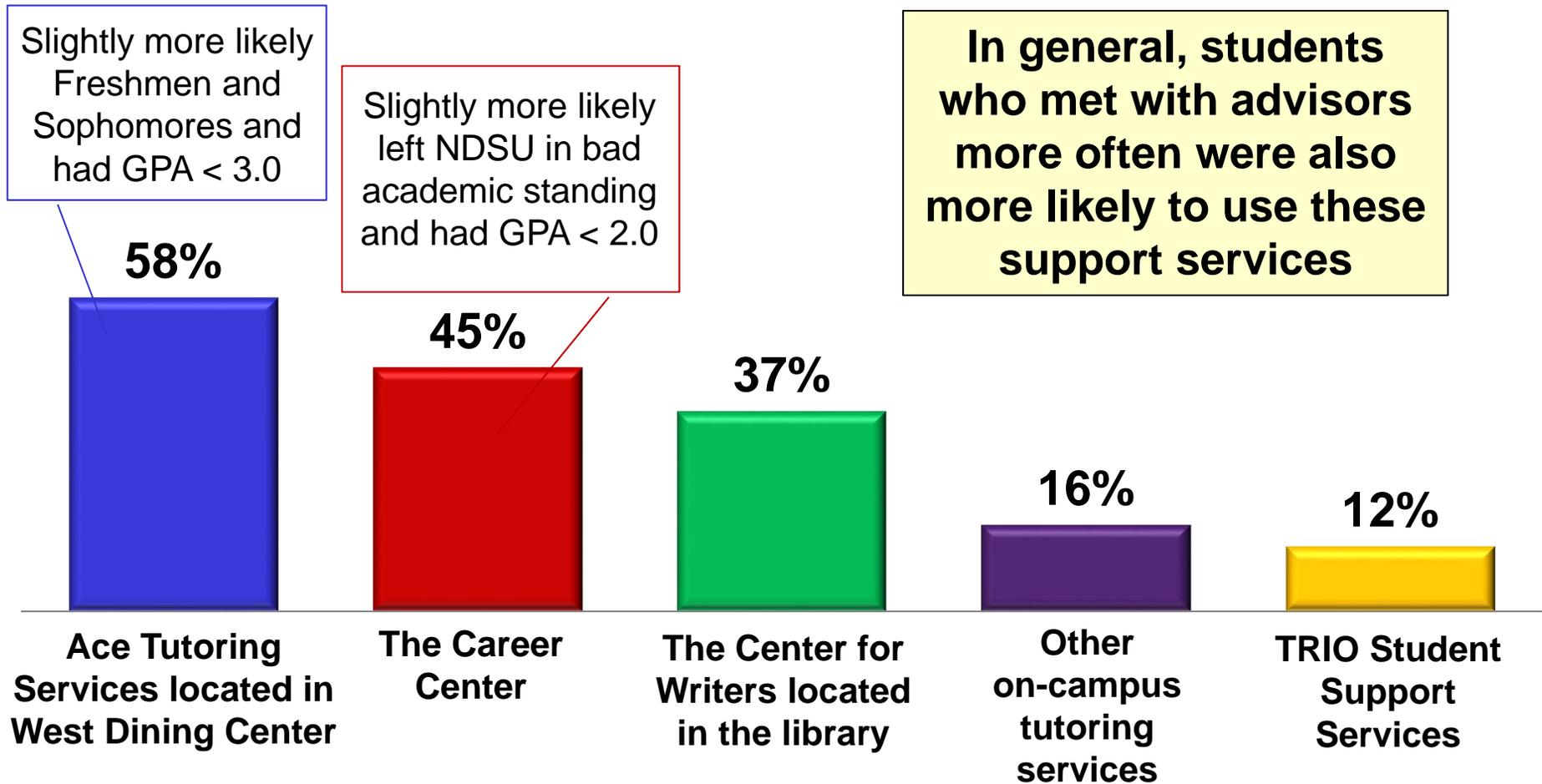
Q8. Next, I'm going to read you five support services available for students at NDSU. Please tell me which ones you visited at least once while you were at NDSU.

% of non-returning students who visited:



Most students report taking advantage of the support services at NDSU – particularly tutoring, writing, and career services

Q8. Next, I'm going to read you five support services available for students at NDSU. Please tell me which ones you visited at least once while you were at NDSU.



Among users, satisfaction is highest with the Center for Writers. Satisfaction with Ace and other tutoring services is less pronounced.

Q8a/b/c. And how satisfied were you with [read name] – very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied? **[Asked among those who used each service]**

Ace Tutoring Services



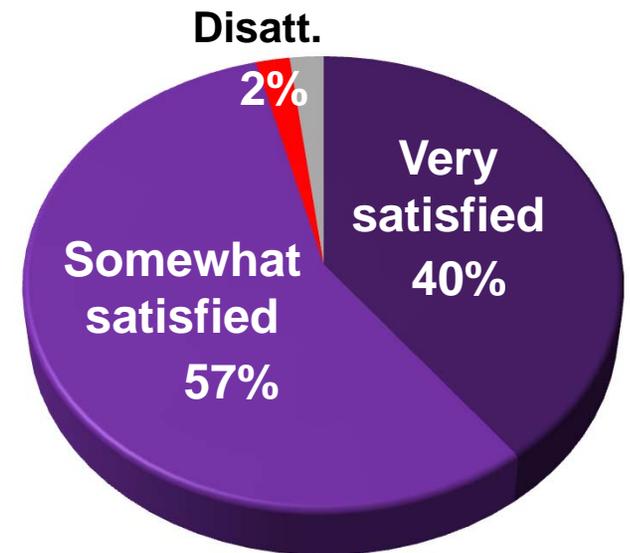
Asked among the 58% who used the service

The Center for Writers



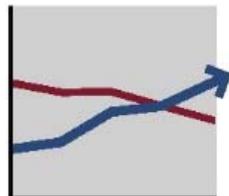
Asked among the 37% who used the service

Other on-campus tutoring services



Asked among the 16% who used the service

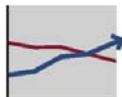
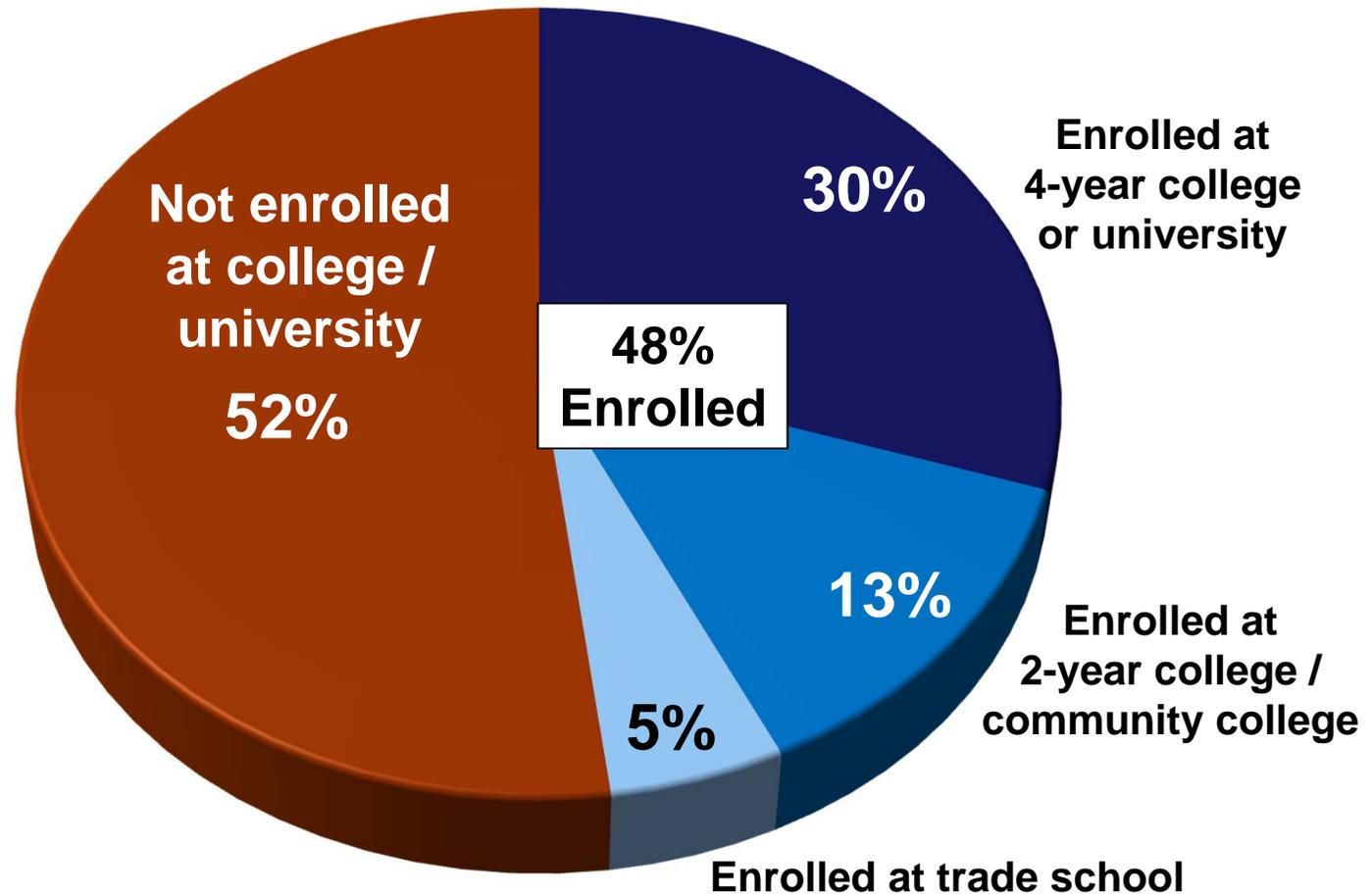
Perceptions of Current School



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Just under half of non-returning students report being currently enrolled at another school

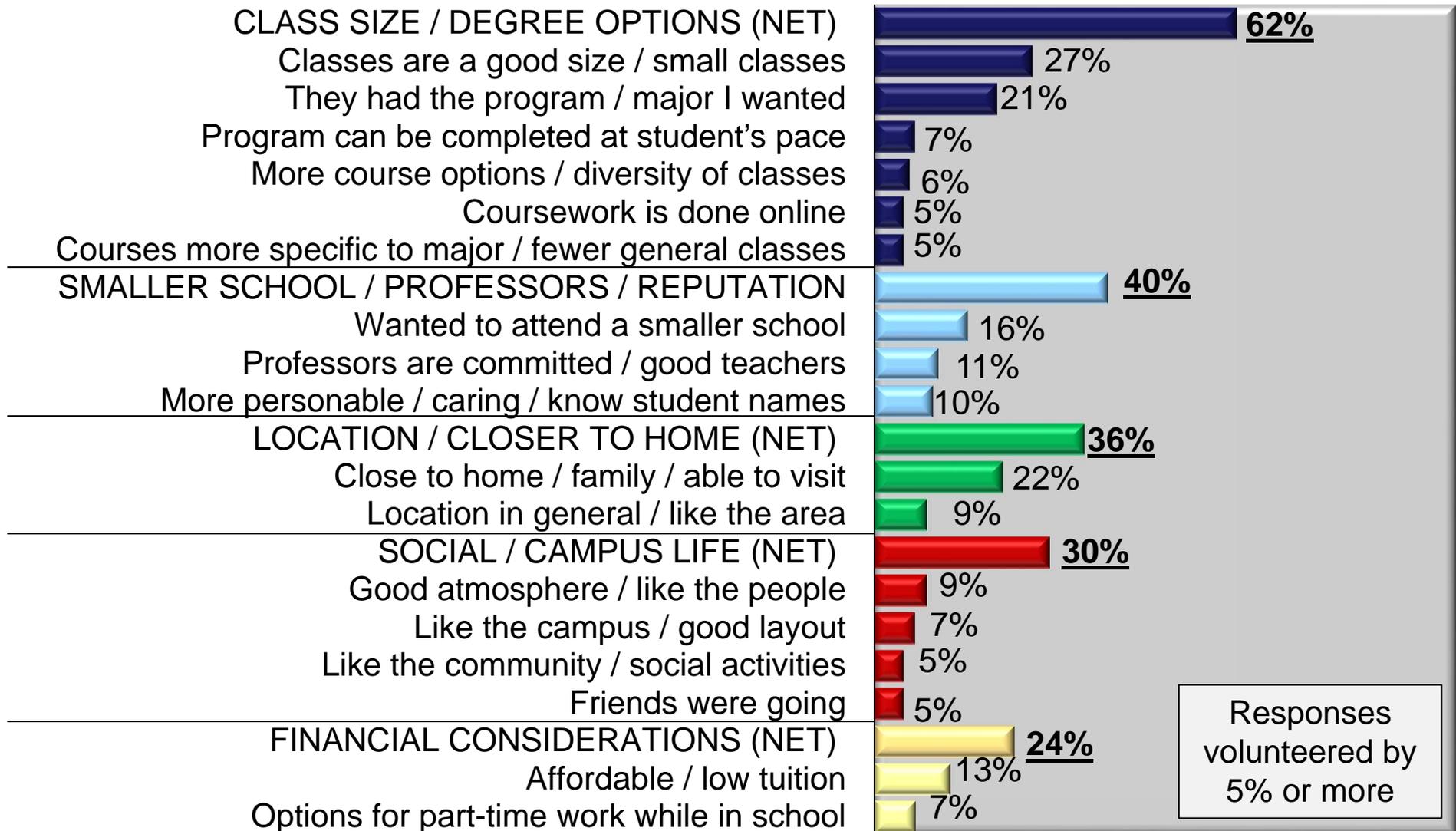
B. Are you currently enrolled and attending classes at a 2 or 4-year college or university, or a trade school or technical program?



The top volunteered appeals of students' new schools include smaller class sizes and teaching, followed by proximity to home

Q11b. What appealed to you about your new school?

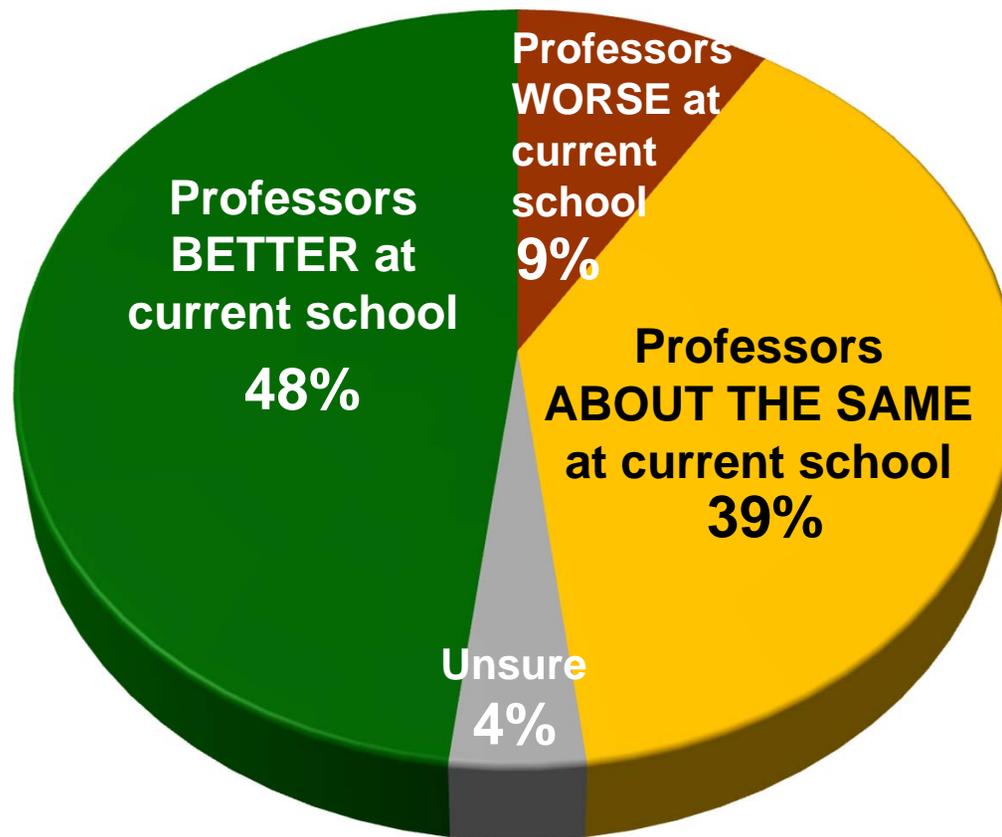
[Asked among the 48% who are currently enrolled at a different school]



While a plurality of students enrolled elsewhere say their new professors are 'better' than at NDSU, a significant 2/5th say they are the same

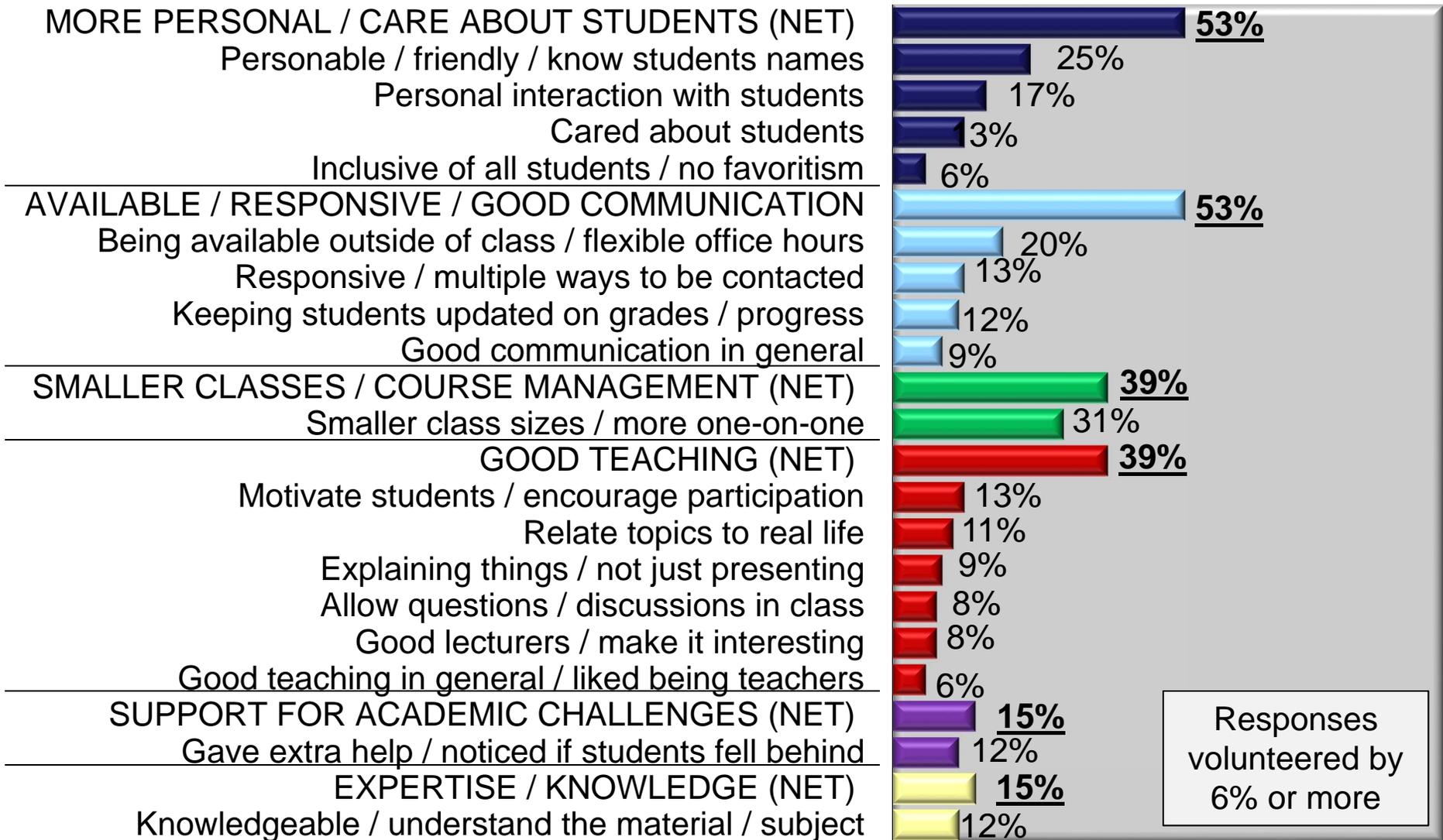
Q12. Thinking about the professors and course instructors at your new school, are they better than those at NDSU, worse, or about the same?

[Asked among the 48% who are currently enrolled at a different school]



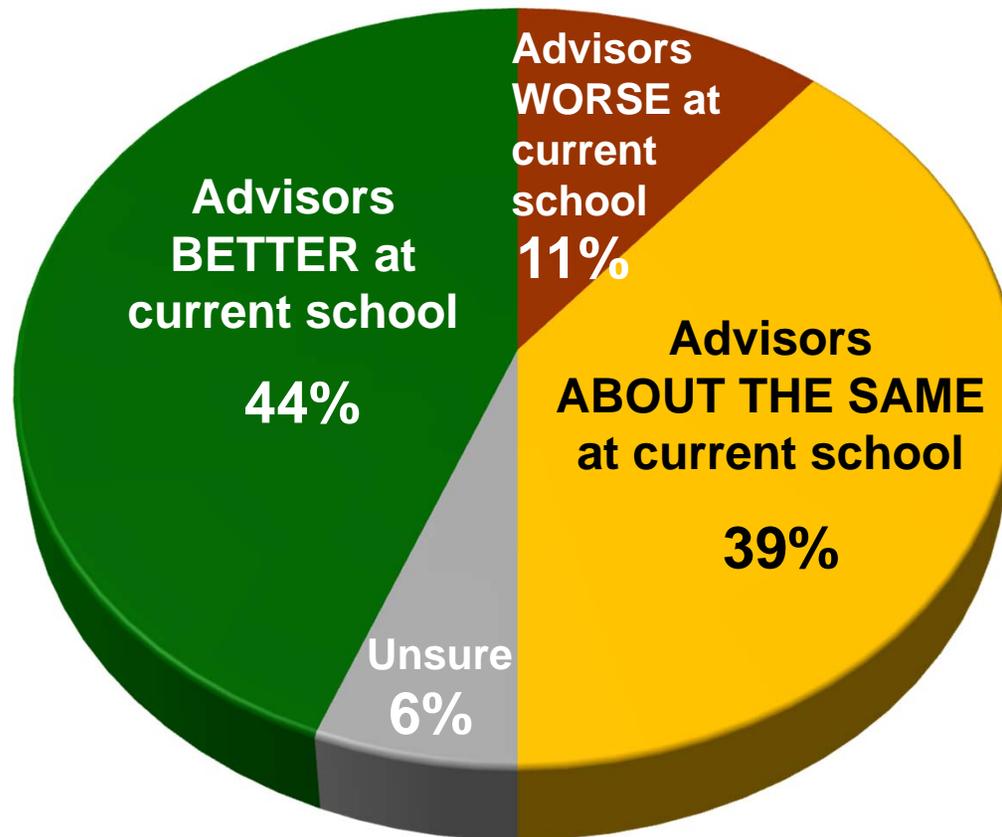
Students volunteer that professors at their new schools offer more personal attention and greater availability than professors at NDSU

Q12a. How are the professors and course instructors at your new school better than at NDSU?
[Asked among the 48% who are currently enrolled at a different school]



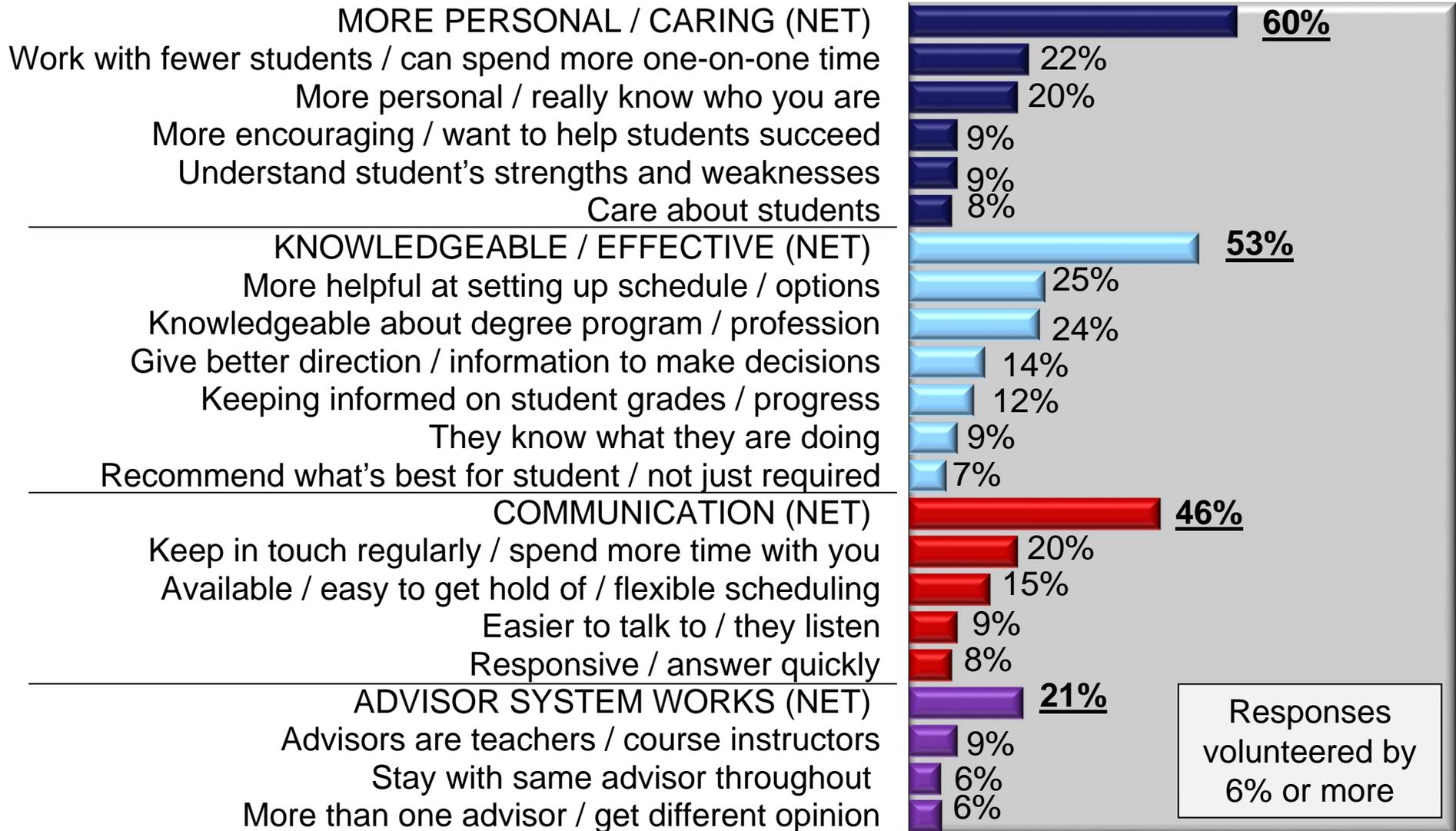
Students enrolled at other schools are split on whether their new advisors are better or the same as at NDSU

Q13. And thinking about the academic advisors at your new school, are they better than those at NDSU, worse, or about the same?
[Asked among the 48% who are currently enrolled at a different school]



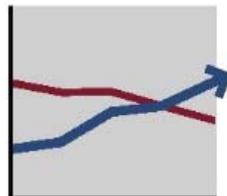
Students volunteer that advisors at their new schools offer more personalized attention and are more knowledgeable and effective than advisors at NDSU

Q13a. How are the advisors at your new school better than at NDSU?
[Asked among the 48% who are currently enrolled at a different school]



Telephone Survey of 402 Non-Returning NDSU Students

March 23 – April 8, 2015



**HARSTAD STRATEGIC
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Field office calling statistics

Total non-returning students on file:	3,463
Total phone numbers on file:	6,158
Average number of phone numbers per student on file	1.8
Average number of call attempts per student on file	3.7
Total number of call attempts	12,980
Completed interviews	<u>402</u>
<i>Completes on cell phones</i>	316
<i>Completes on home phones / landlines</i>	86
Cooperation rate	50%

