



2014 New Student Survey Report

Last Updated: January 27, 2015

Prepared by Institutional Research and Decision Support

Survey Administration: The survey was administered between November 10, 2014 and December 14, 2014. All new undergraduate students, including first time-freshmen and transfer students, were invited to complete the survey. The survey was revised in 2014 to focus on student educational plans, transition to college life, and utilization of services provided by UC Merced. In addition, this year the survey was administered after mid-semester grades were released. In previous years, the survey closed before students received their mid-semester grades.

Response rate: Of the 1659 students invited to participate, 601 (36%) started but may not have completed the survey and 534 (32%) completed the survey. Because students could choose not to answer particular items, response rates for individual items varied.

Student characteristics: Please refer to the table below. The students who responded to the survey appear to be roughly representative of the first-year students on campus (i.e., the invitees) with regard to background and demographic characteristics. However, we did note that females were more likely to respond to the survey than males. Additionally, more transfer students responded to the survey than we would have expected.

Comparison of demographic/background factors for survey invitees and respondents

Demographic Characteristic	# Invited (of 1659 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 601 total)	% Responded
Transfer Students	108	6.5%	57	9.5%
Gender				
Female	831	50.1%	345	57.4%
Male	818	49.3%	253	42.1%
Decline to State	10	.6%	3	.5%
Race/Ethnicity				
International	94	5.7%	34	5.7%
Hispanic	793	47.8%	292	48.6%
African American	79	4.8%	24	4.0%
American Indian	5	.3%	3	.5%
Asian	392	23.6%	139	23.1%
Pacific Islander	10	.6%	3	.5%
White	204	12.3%	73	12.1%
Multi-racial	71	4.3%	28	4.7%
Unknown	11	.7%	5	.8%
First Generation Students	1131	68.2%	415	69.1%
Pell Grant Eligible Students	1040	62.7%	376	62.6%
On-Campus Housing Residents	1248	75.2%	430	71.5%
English Only as First Language	531	32.0%	190	31.6%

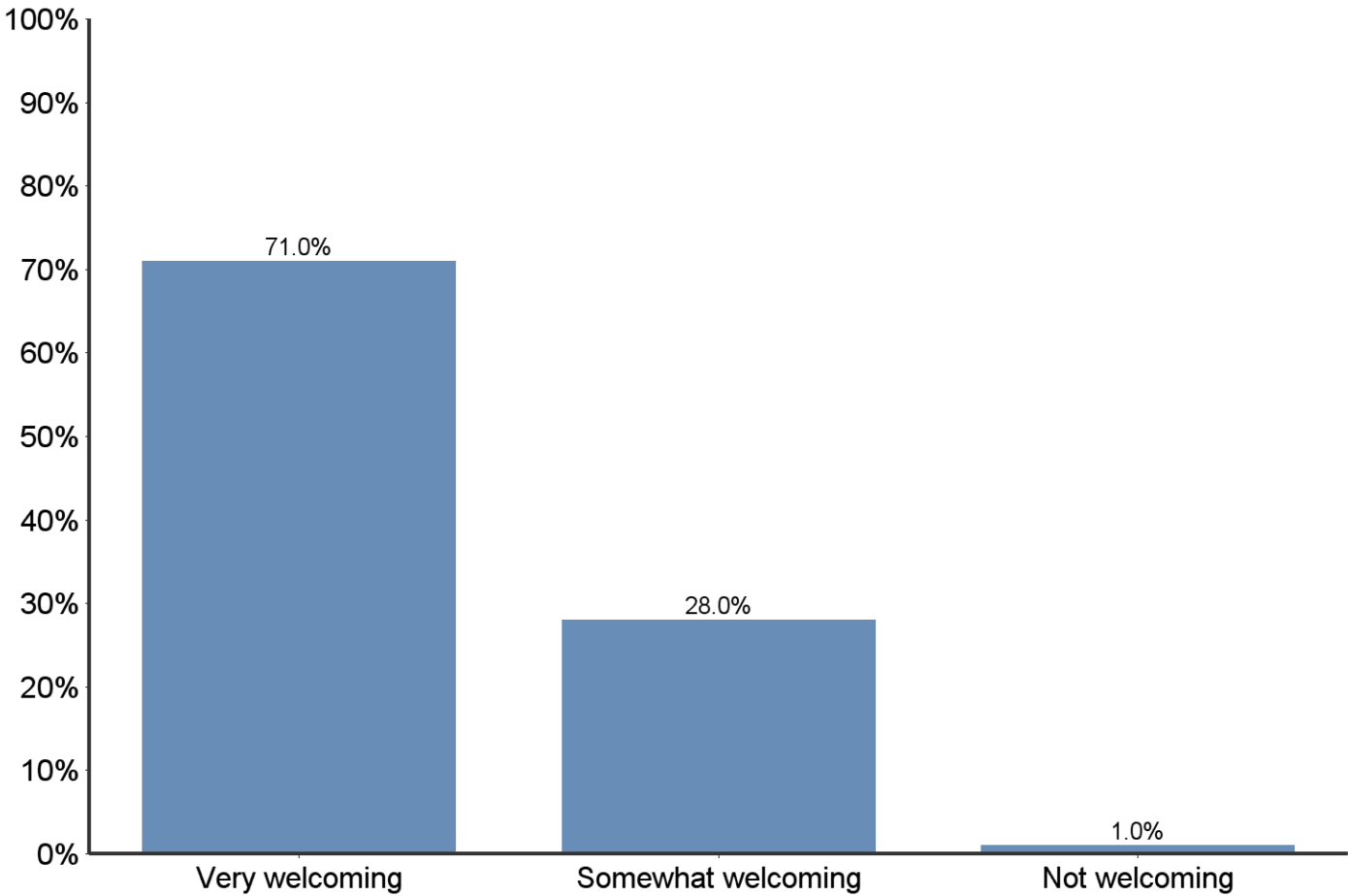
Number of Respondents by School

School	Number Respondents	Percent
SSHA – Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts	134	22.3%
ENGR – Engineering	147	24.5%
NS – Natural Sciences	187	30.1%
UND - Undeclared	133	21.1%

Number of Respondents by Major/Program

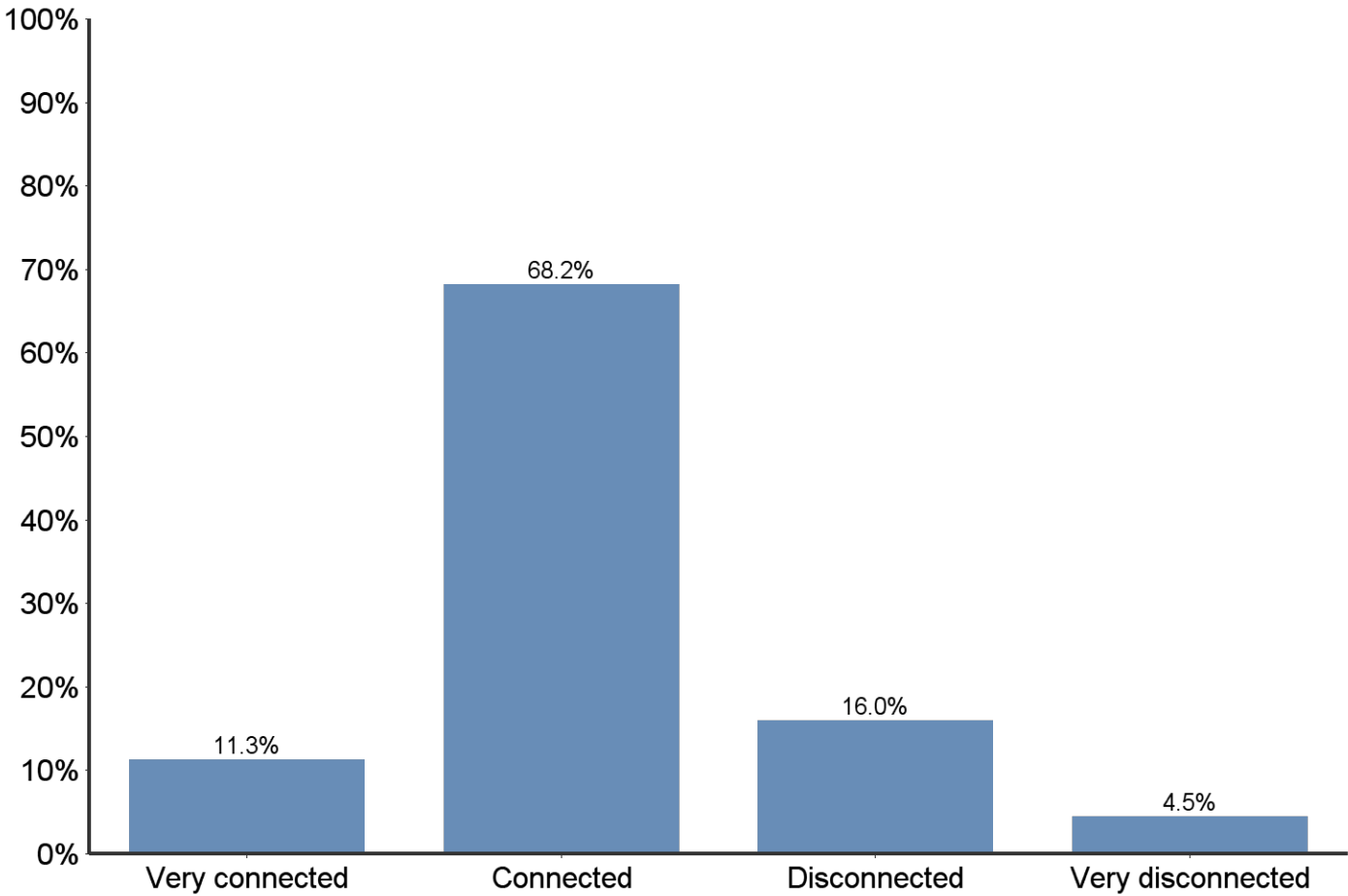
Major/Program	Number Respondents	Percent
ANTH – Anthropology	8	1.3%
BENG – Bioengineering	21	3.5%
BIOS – Biological Sciences	133	22.1%
CHEM – Chemical Sciences	24	4.0%
COGS – Cognitive Science	2	.3%
CSE – Computer Science & Engineering	59	9.8%
ECON – Economics	3	.5%
ENG – English	6	1.0%
ENVE – Environmental Engineering	10	1.7%
ESS – Earth Systems Science	3	.5%
HIST – History	3	.5%
MATH – Applied Mathematical Sciences	8	1.3%
ME – Mechanical Engineering	33	5.5%
MGMT – Management & Business Economics	12	2.0%
MSE – Materials Science & Engineering	4	.7%
PH – Public Health	4	.7%
PHYS – Physics	11	1.8%
POLI – Political Science	12	2.0%
PSY – Psychology	66	11.0%
SOC - Sociology	8	1.3%
SPAN – Spanish	1	.2%
UENG – Undeclared Engineering	20	3.3%
UNS – Undeclared Natural Sciences	8	1.3%
USHA – Undeclared SSHA	9	1.5%
UND – Undeclared	133	22.1%

When you arrived at UC Merced, how welcoming did you find the campus environment?



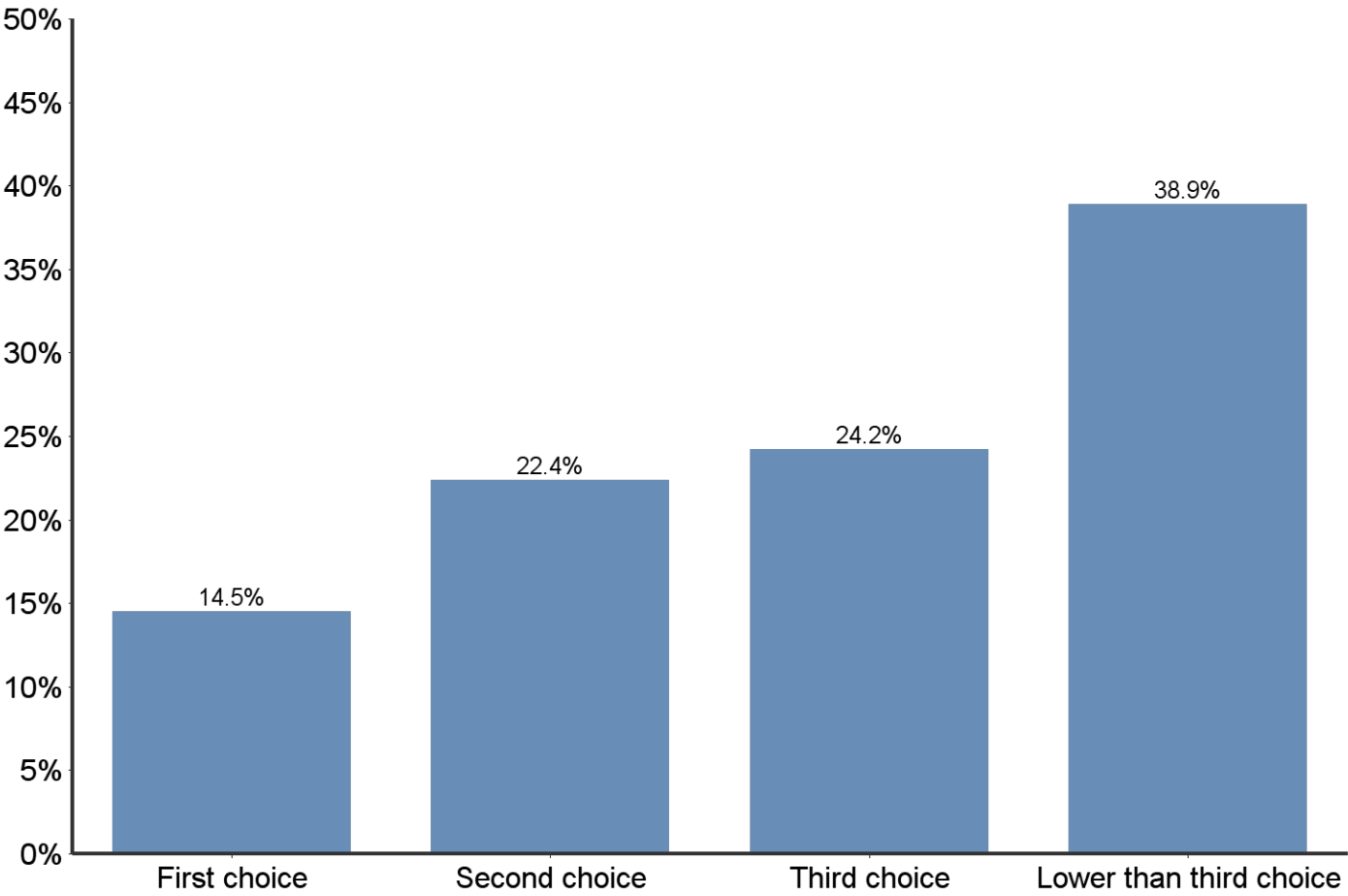
Answer	Frequency
Very welcoming	427
Somewhat welcoming	168
Not welcoming	6
Total	601

Today, how connected to or disconnected from UC Merced do you feel?



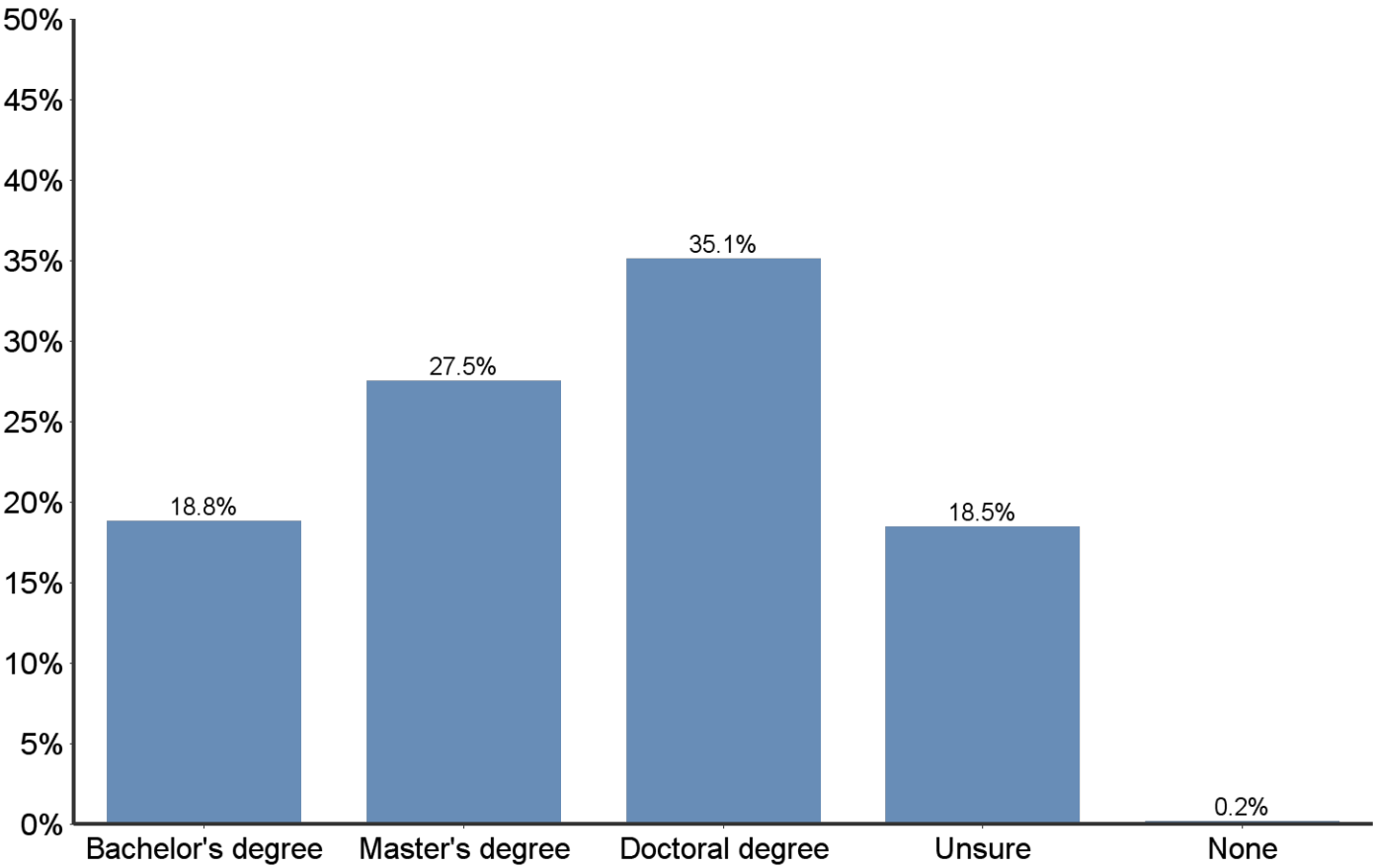
Answer	Frequency
Very connected	68
Connected	409
Disconnected	96
Very disconnected	27
Total	600

When you applied to colleges, was UC Merced your:



Answer	Frequency
First choice	87
Second choice	134
Third choice	145
Lower than third choice	233
Total	599

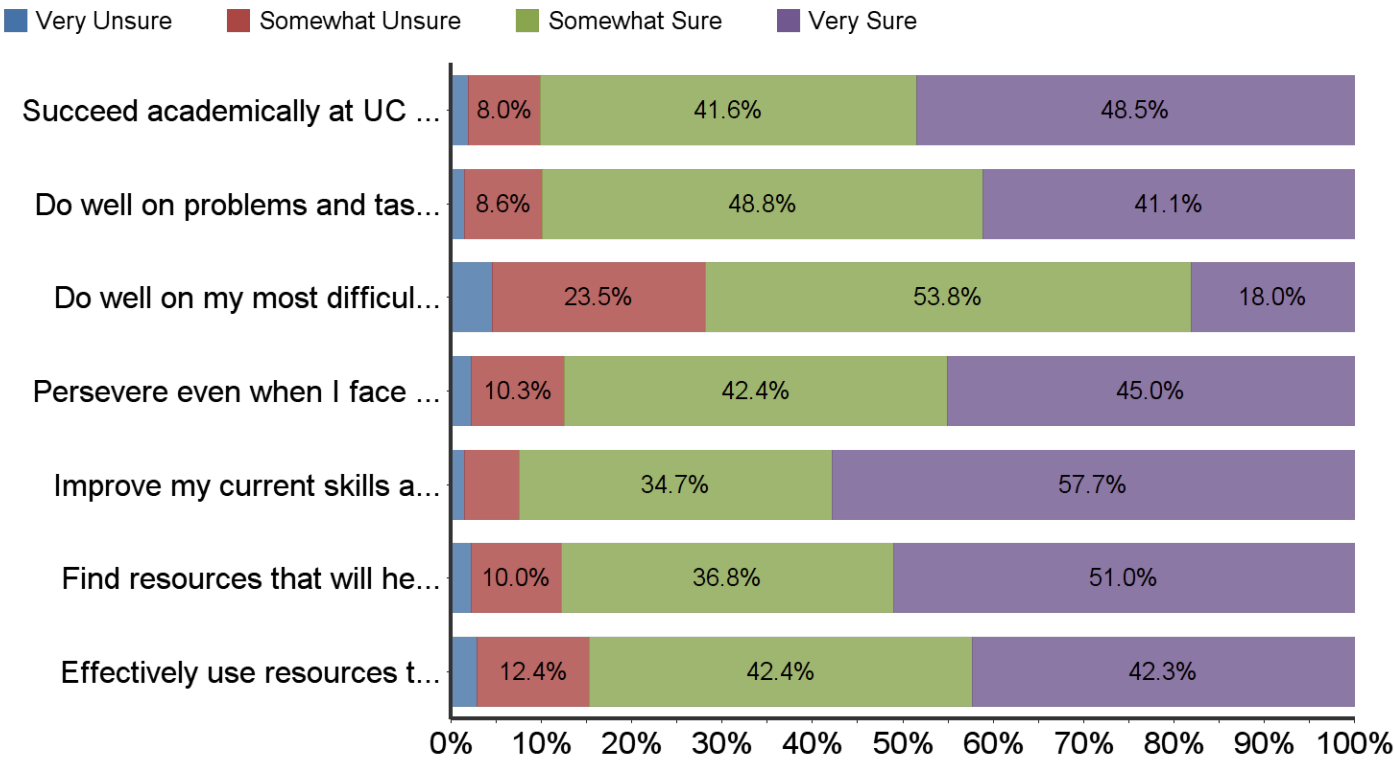
What is the highest degree you intend to eventually obtain?



Answer	Frequency
Bachelor's degree	113
Master's degree	165
Doctoral degree	211
Unsure	111
None	1
Total	601

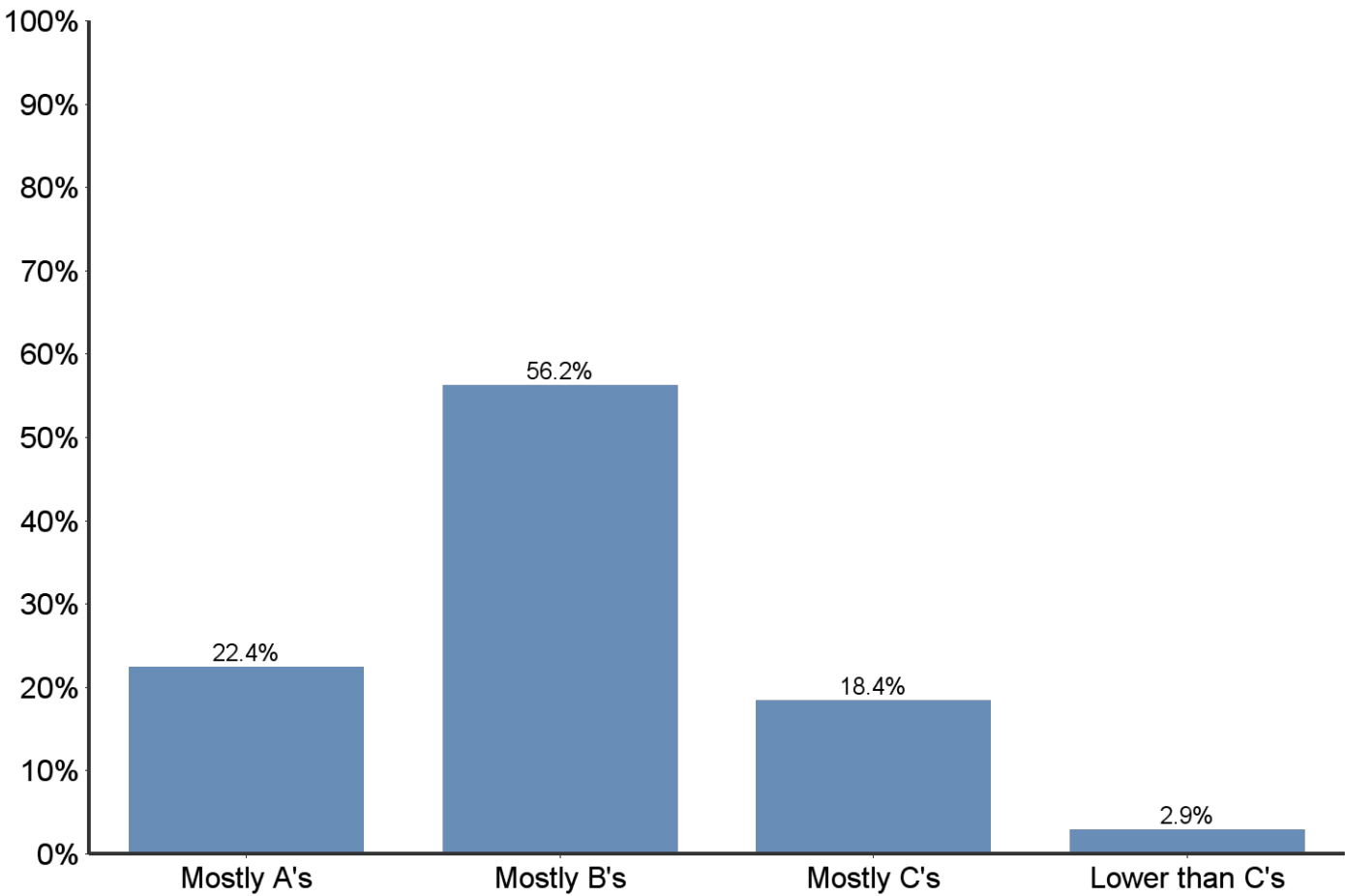
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How sure are you that you can do each of the following:
 Note: To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table below the figure.

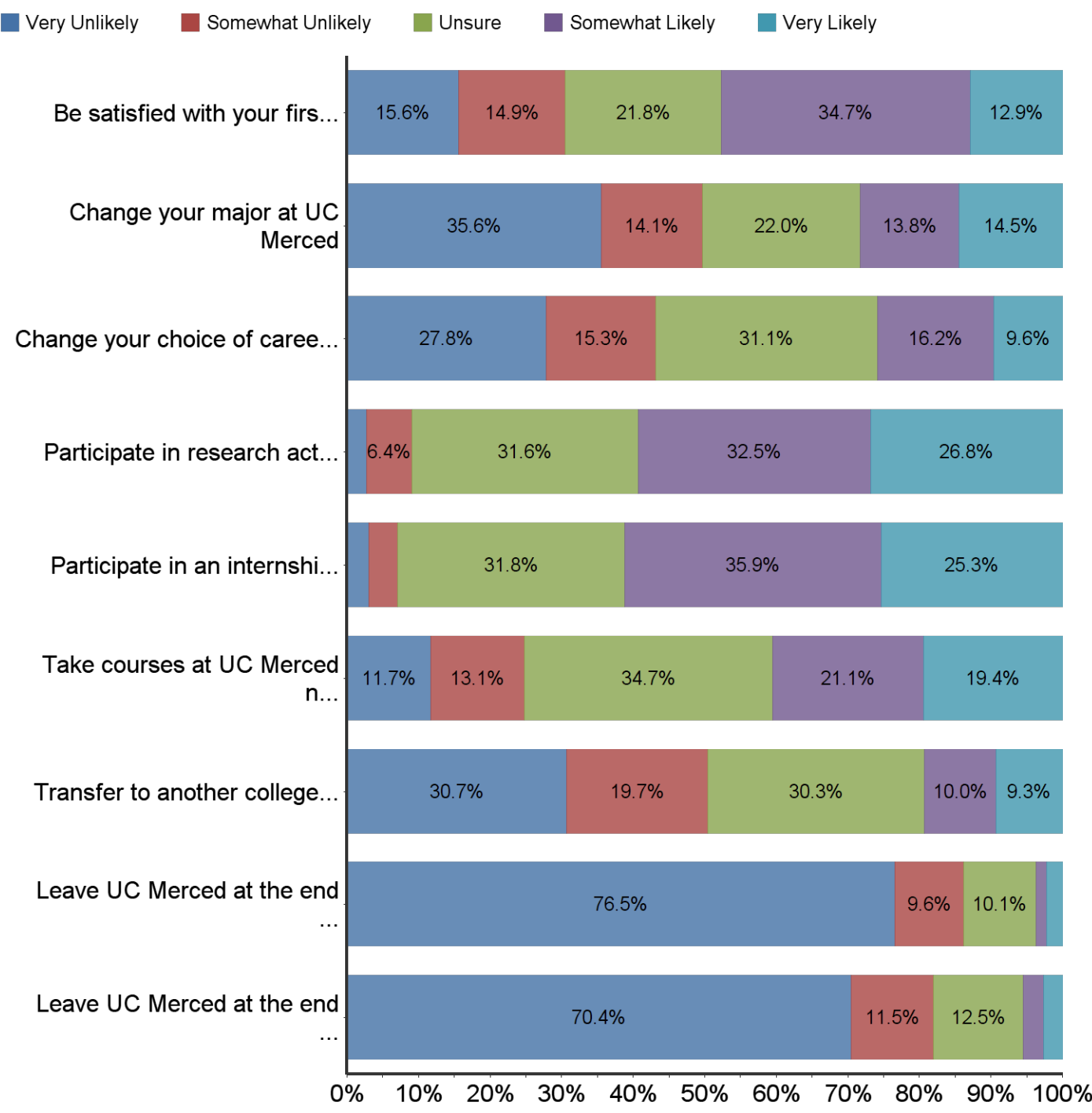


#	Question	Very Unsure	Somewhat Unsure	Somewhat Sure	Very Sure	Total Responses
1	Succeed academically at UC Merced	11	47	243	283	584
2	Do well on problems and tasks assigned in my courses	9	50	285	240	584
3	Do well on my most difficult course	27	137	313	105	582
4	Persevere even when I face academic challenges and obstacles	13	60	247	262	582
5	Improve my current skills and abilities	9	35	202	336	582
6	Find resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	13	58	214	297	582
7	Effectively use resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	17	72	247	246	582

8 What do you think your final course grades will be this semester?



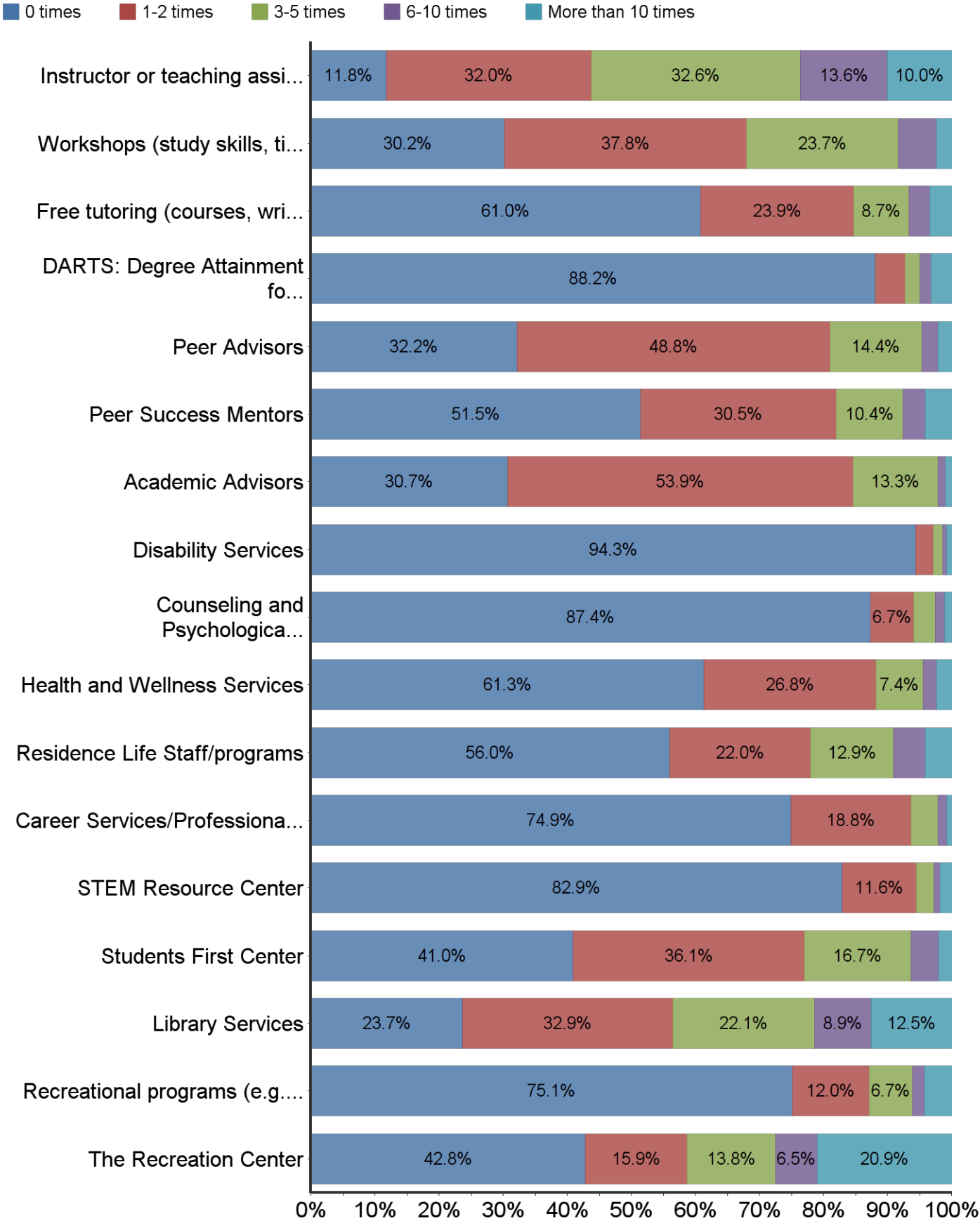
Answer	Frequency
Mostly A's	130
Mostly B's	326
Mostly C's	107
Lower than C's	17
Total	580



How likely are you to:

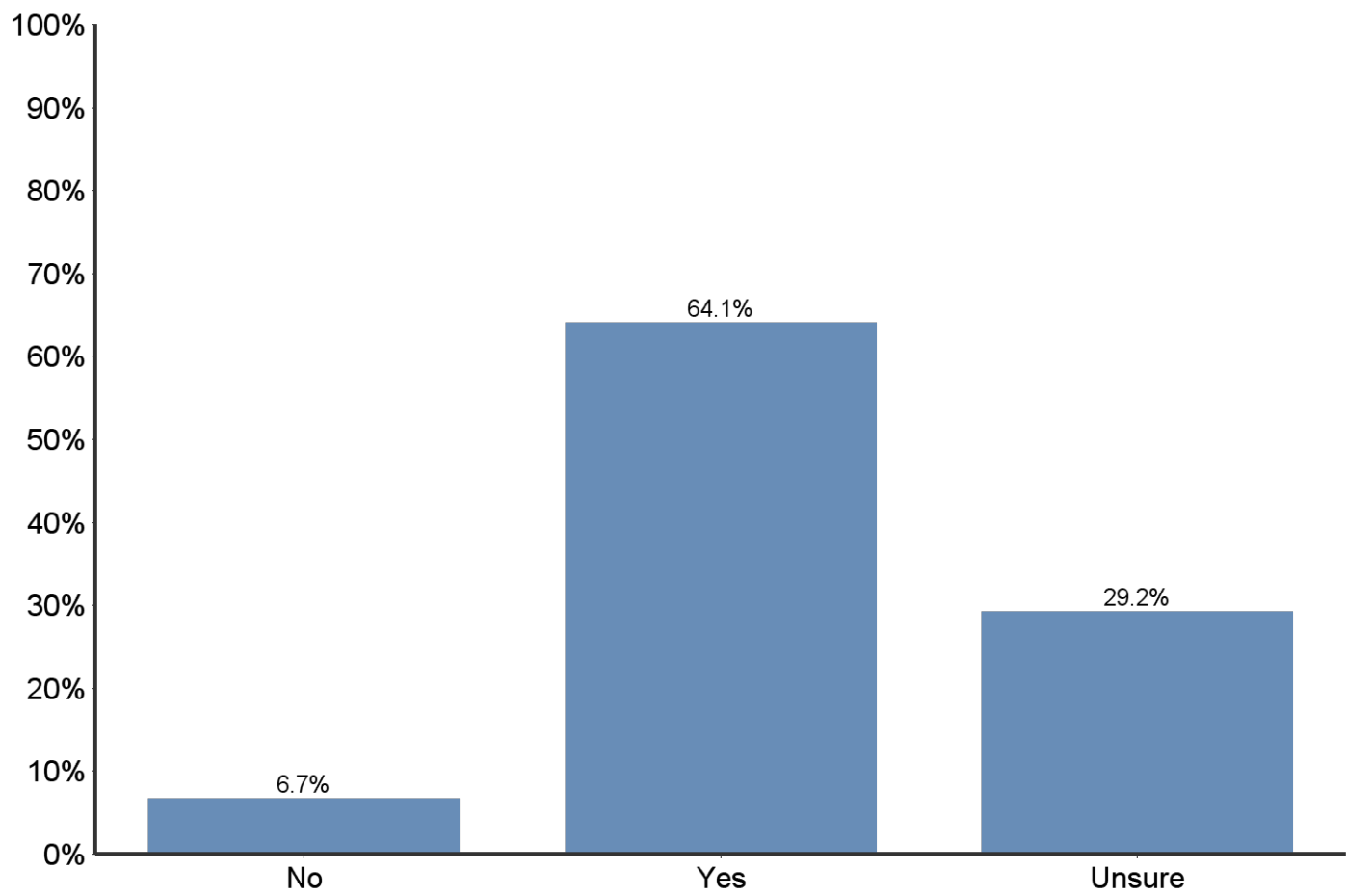
#	Question	Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely	Number Responses
1	Be satisfied with your first semester GPA at UC Merced	91	87	127	202	75	582
2	Change your major at UC Merced	207	82	128	80	84	581
3	Change your choice of career while at UC Merced	162	89	181	94	56	582
4	Participate in research activities with a faculty member at UC Merced	16	37	184	189	156	582
5	Participate in an internship at UC Merced	18	23	185	209	147	582
6	Take courses at UC Merced next summer	68	76	202	123	113	582
7	Transfer to another college before graduating	178	114	176	58	54	580
8	Leave UC Merced at the end of this semester	445	56	59	9	13	582
9	Leave UC Merced at the end of this academic year	410	67	73	17	15	582

11 How often have you connected with each of the following UC Merced campus resources this semester?
 Note: To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table below the figure.



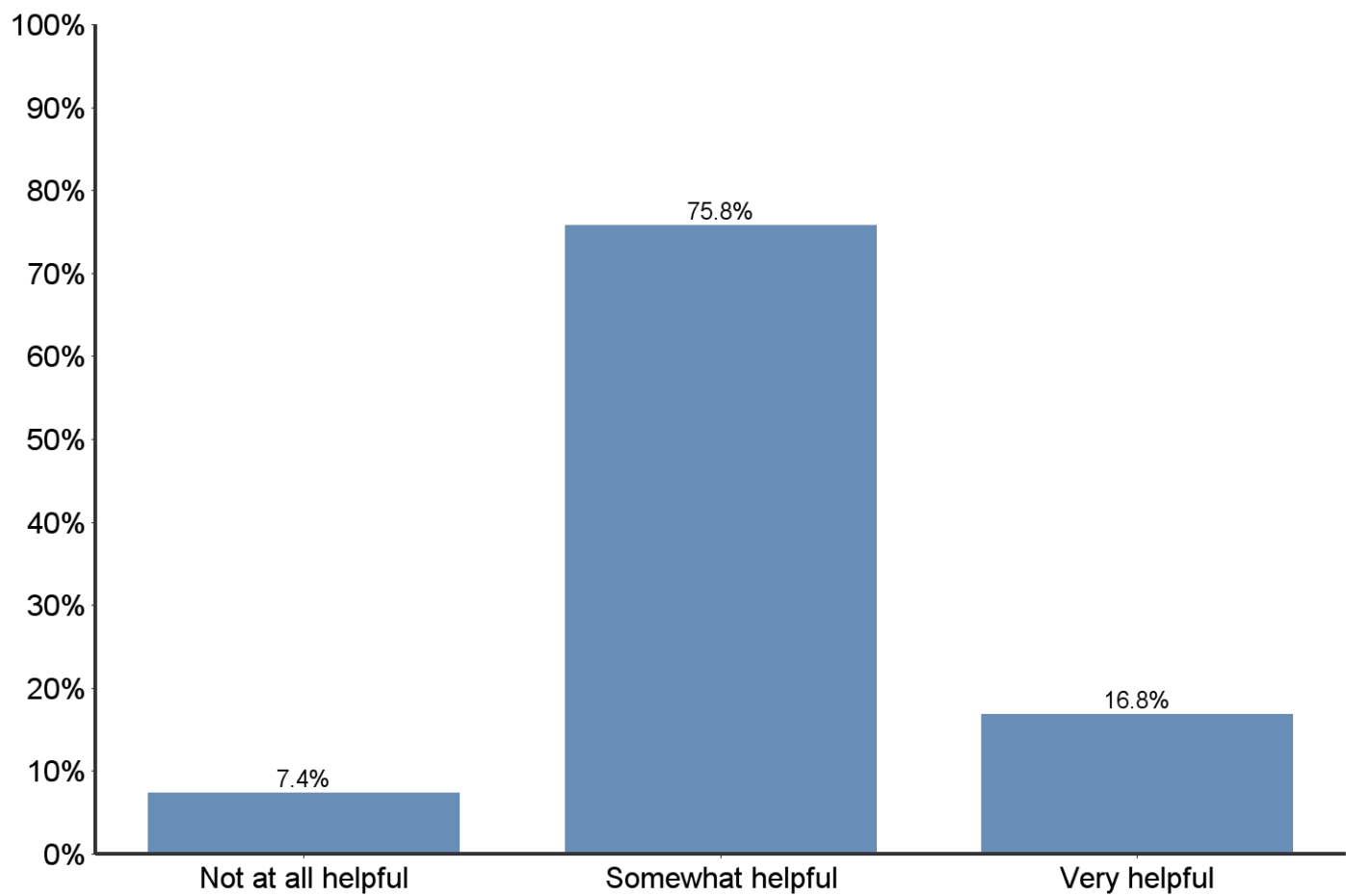
How often have you connected with each of the following UC Merced campus resources this semester?

#	Question	0 times	1-2 times	3-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times	Total Responses
1	Instructor or teaching assistant (office hour, appointment, etc.)	67	182	185	77	57	568
2	Workshops (study skills, time management, writing)	171	214	134	34	13	566
3	Free tutoring (courses, writing)	345	135	49	18	19	566
4	DARTS: Degree Attainment for Returning and Transfer Students	500	26	13	10	18	567
5	Peer Advisors	183	277	82	14	12	568
6	Peer Success Mentors	292	173	59	20	23	567
7	Academic Advisors	174	305	75	7	5	566
8	Disability Services	531	16	8	4	4	563
9	Counseling and Psychological Services	494	38	19	8	6	565
10	Health and Wellness Services	346	151	42	12	13	564
11	Residence Life Staff/programs	316	124	73	28	23	564
12	Career Services/Professional Advancement	423	106	24	8	4	565
13	STEM Resource Center	470	66	16	5	10	567
14	Students First Center	231	203	94	24	11	563
15	Library Services	133	185	124	50	70	562
16	Recreational programs (e.g., outdoor trips, intramural sports)	426	68	38	11	24	567
17	The Recreation Center	242	90	78	37	118	565



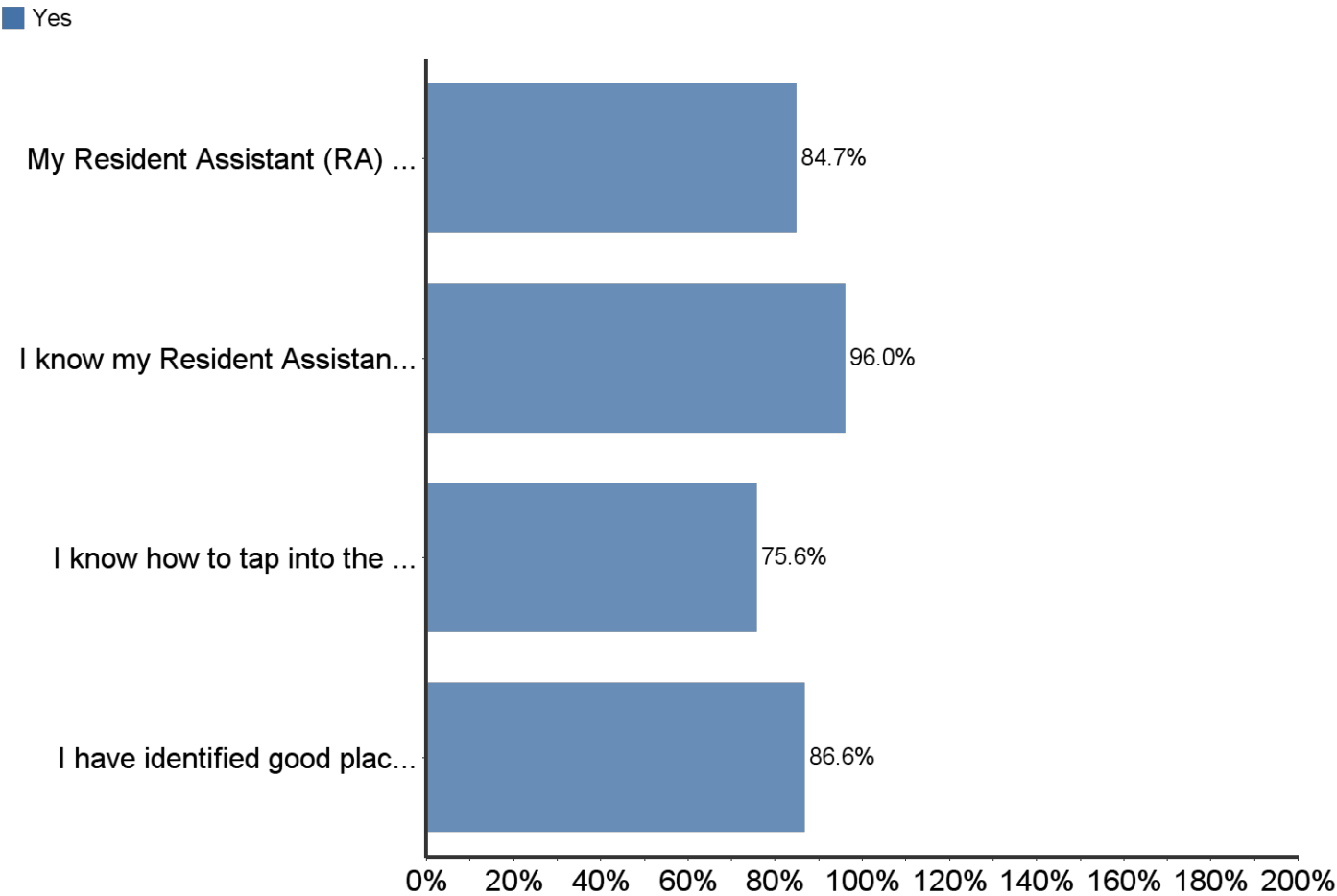
Answer	Frequency
No	38
Yes	364
Unsure	166
Total	568

Have you found these emails from the Students First Center helpful?
Note: Only students who said they had received emails could answer this question.

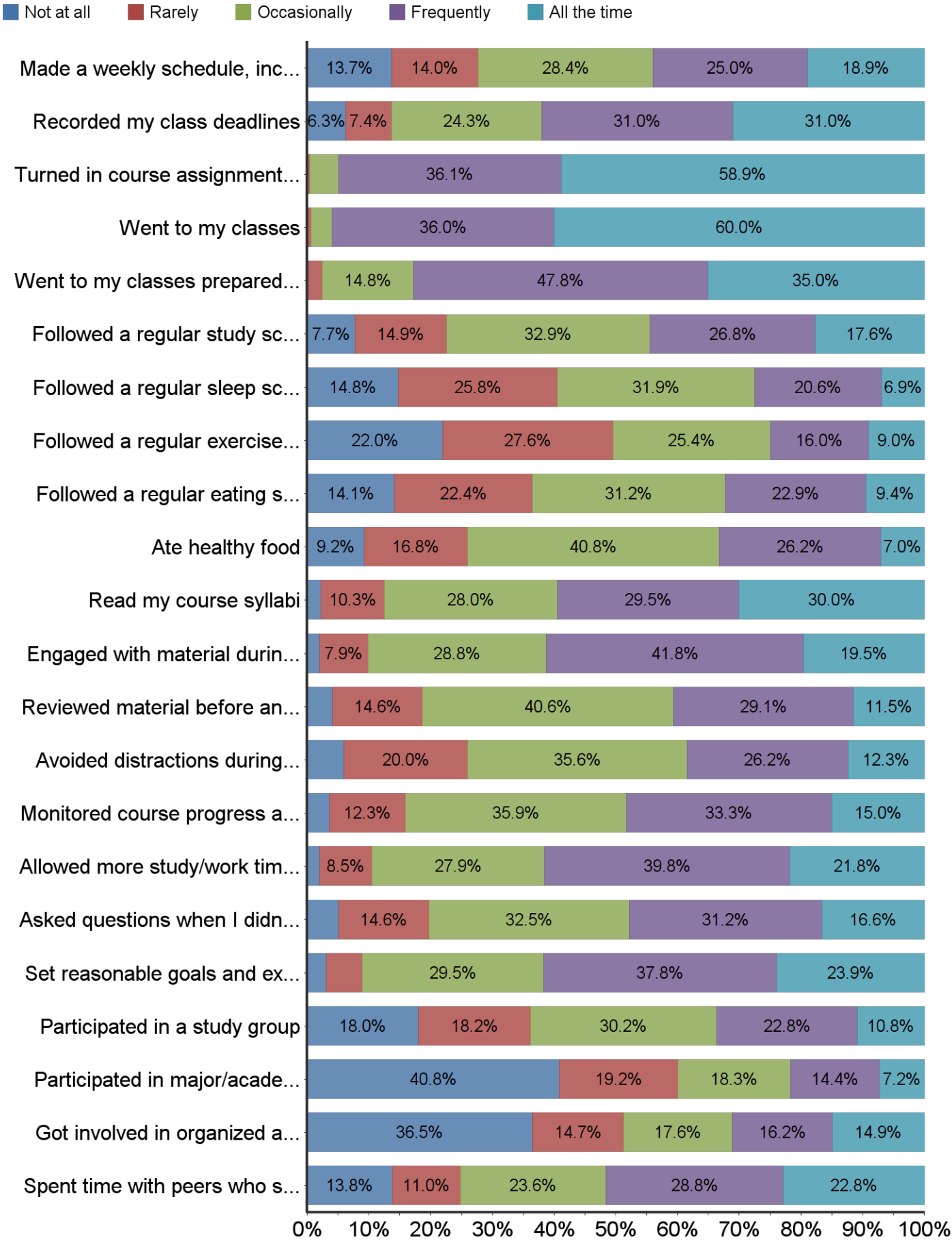


Answer	Frequency
Not at all helpful	27
Somewhat helpful	276
Very helpful	61
Total	364

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements about your experience so far living in a residence hall on campus.
Note: Only students living in a residence hall could answer these questions. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table below the figure.



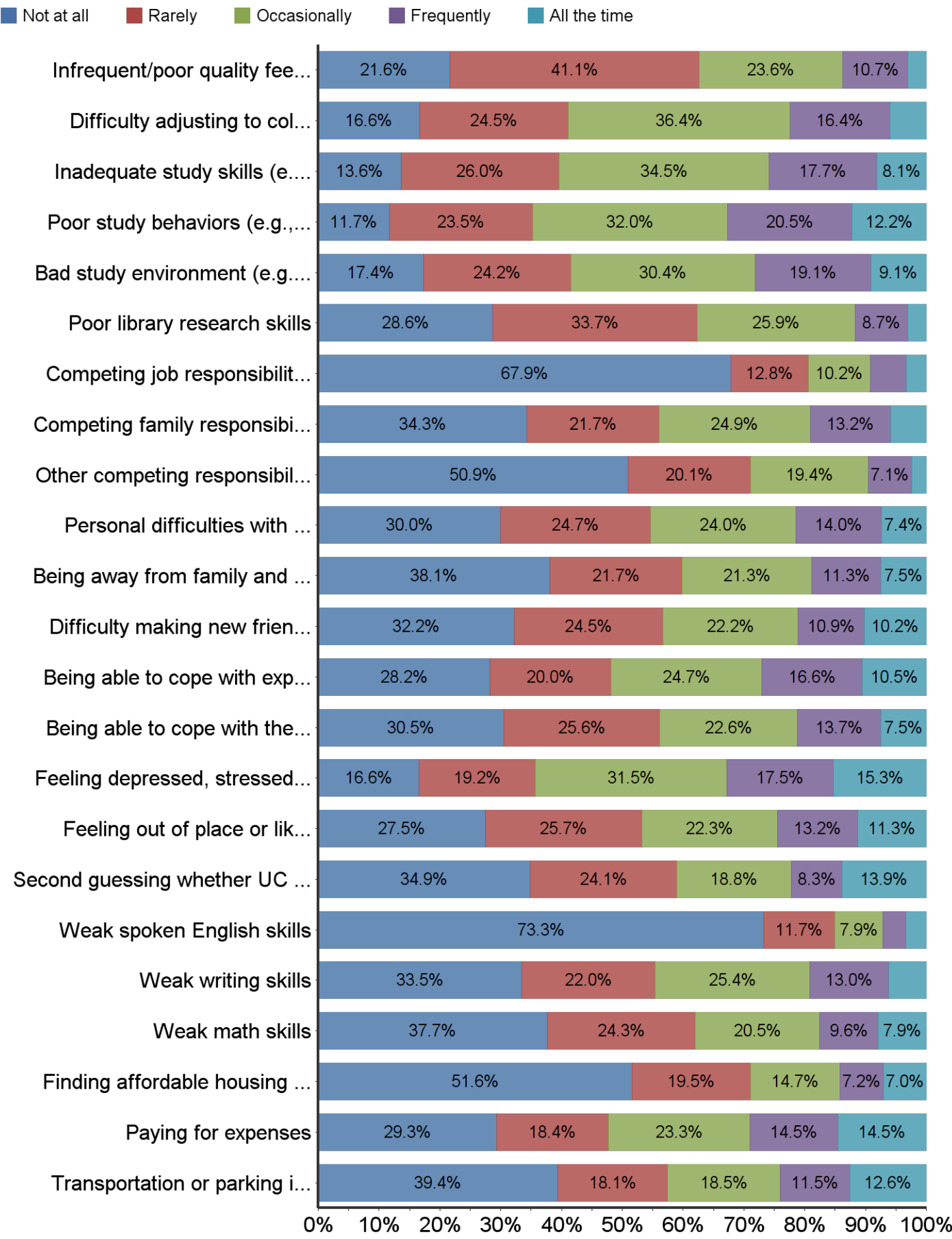
#	Question	No	Yes	Total Responses
1	My Resident Assistant (RA) knows my name	62	343	405
2	I know my Resident Assistant's (RA's) name.	16	389	405
3	I know how to tap into the resources provided to students who live in the residence halls.	99	306	405
4	I have identified good places to study in the residence hall spaces.	54	349	403



How often have you done each of the following this semester?

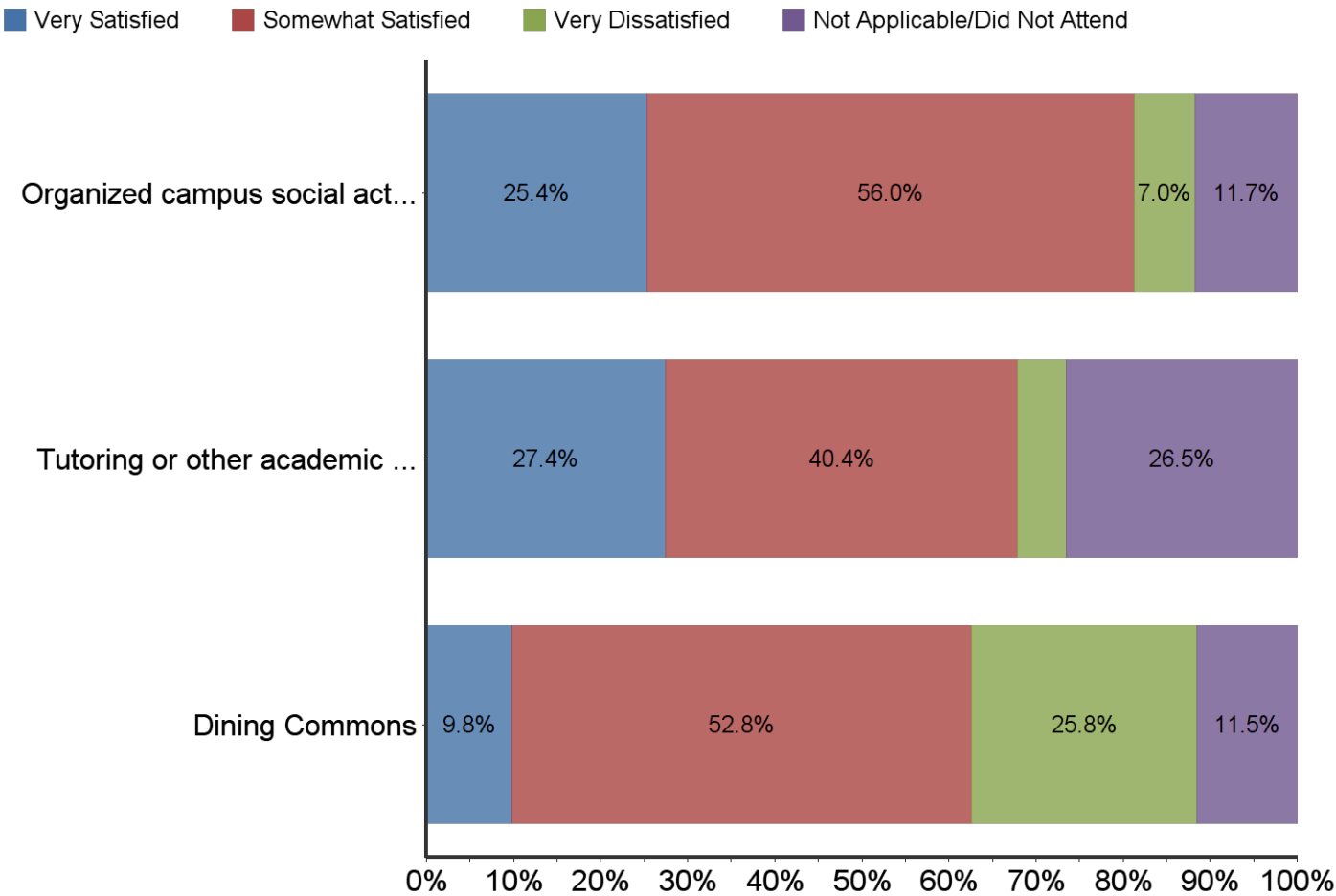
#	Question	Not at all	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	All the time	Total Responses
1	Made a weekly schedule, including weekends, to help manage my time	76	78	158	139	105	556
2	Recorded my class deadlines	35	41	135	172	172	555
3	Turned in course assignments on time	1	1	26	199	325	552
4	Went to my classes	1	2	19	200	333	555
5	Went to my classes prepared (e.g., having read assignments)	1	12	82	265	194	554
6	Followed a regular study schedule	43	83	183	149	98	556
7	Followed a regular sleep schedule	82	143	177	114	38	554
8	Followed a regular exercise schedule	122	153	141	89	50	555
9	Followed a regular eating schedule	78	124	173	127	52	554
10	Ate healthy food	51	93	226	145	39	554
11	Read my course syllabi	12	57	155	163	166	553
12	Engaged with material during study sessions (i.e., I didn't just skim)	11	44	160	232	108	555
13	Reviewed material before and after class	23	81	226	162	64	556
14	Avoided distractions during study sessions (e.g., texting friends, checking Facebook)	33	111	197	145	68	554
15	Monitored course progress and made changes when needed	20	68	199	185	83	555
16	Allowed more study/work time for difficult classes and assignments	11	47	155	221	121	555
17	Asked questions when I didn't understand something	28	81	180	173	92	554
18	Set reasonable goals and expectations for myself	17	32	164	210	133	556
19	Participated in a study group	100	101	168	127	60	556
20	Participated in major/academic-related clubs, organizations, or activities	227	107	102	80	40	556
21	Got involved in organized activities outside the classroom (e.g., athletics, clubs, work)	203	82	98	90	83	556
22	Spent time with peers who support my academic success	77	61	131	160	127	556

18 During your first semester at UC Merced, how often have each of the following been obstacles to your school work or academic success?
 Note: To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table below the figure.



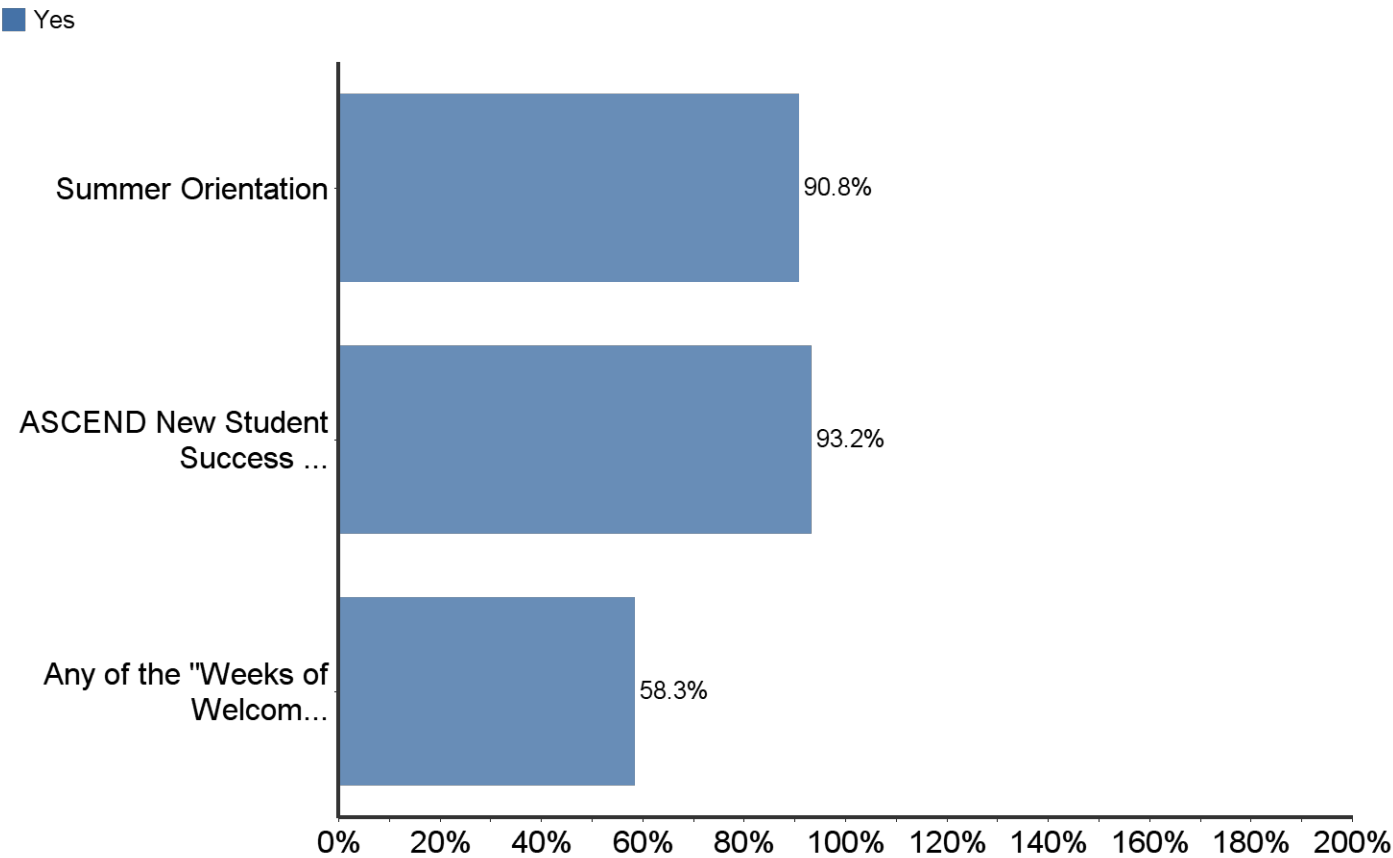
During your first semester at UC Merced, how often have each of the following been obstacles to your school work or academic success?

#	Question	Not at all	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	All the time	Total Responses
1	Infrequent/poor quality feedback from instructors	115	219	126	57	16	533
2	Difficulty adjusting to college-level work (e.g., coursework, exams, papers)	88	130	193	87	32	530
3	Inadequate study skills (e.g., knowing how to start, how to get help, organize material)	72	138	183	94	43	530
4	Poor study behaviors (e.g., wait until last minute, easily distracted, too much social time, too much web surfing)	62	125	170	109	65	531
5	Bad study environment (e.g., noisy roommate, poor Internet access, inadequate computer/software)	92	128	161	101	48	530
6	Poor library research skills	151	178	137	46	16	528
7	Competing job responsibilities (i.e., paid employment)	361	68	54	32	17	532
8	Competing family responsibilities	182	115	132	70	31	530
9	Other competing responsibilities (e.g., athletics, clubs, internship)	271	107	103	38	13	532
10	Personal difficulties with family, intimate relationships, or friends	159	131	127	74	39	530
11	Being away from family and friends: being “homesick”	202	115	113	60	40	530
12	Difficulty making new friends at UC Merced	171	130	118	58	54	531
13	Being able to cope with expectations of parents and family	150	106	131	88	56	531
14	Being able to cope with the values and expectations of friends when they differ from your own	162	136	120	73	40	531
15	Feeling depressed, stressed, or upset	88	102	167	93	81	531
16	Feeling out of place or like you just don’t fit on campus	146	136	118	70	60	530
17	Second guessing whether UC Merced was the right choice for you	184	127	99	44	73	527
18	Weak spoken English skills	389	62	42	20	18	531
19	Weak writing skills	178	117	135	69	33	532
20	Weak math skills	200	129	109	51	42	531
21	Finding affordable housing while a student at UC Merced	273	103	78	38	37	529
22	Paying for expenses	156	98	124	77	77	532
23	Transportation or parking issues	209	96	98	61	67	531



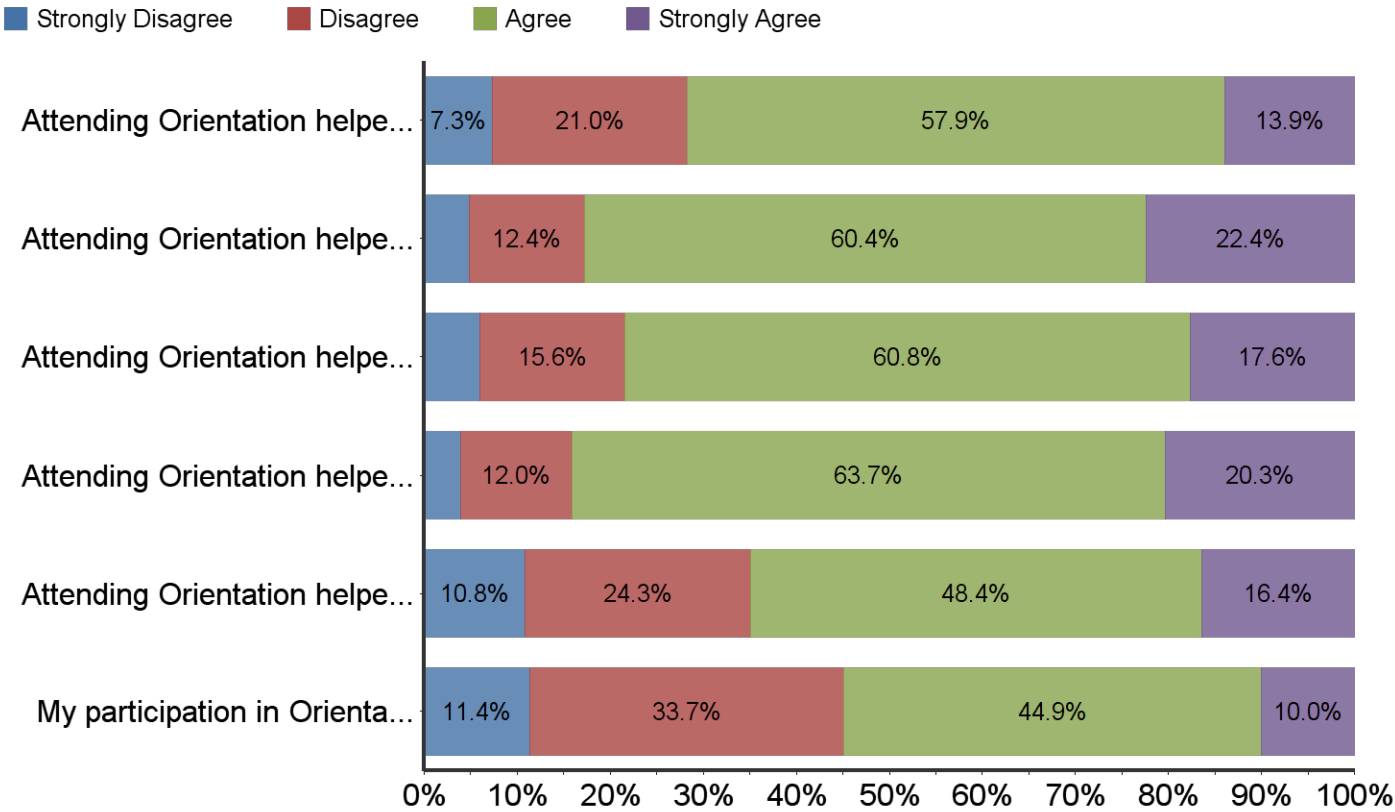
#	Question	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Applicable/Did Not Attend	Total Responses
1	Organized campus social activities	135	298	37	62	532
2	Tutoring or other academic assistance	146	215	30	141	532
3	Dining Commons	52	280	137	61	530

Did you attend the following welcome and social activities at UC Merced?



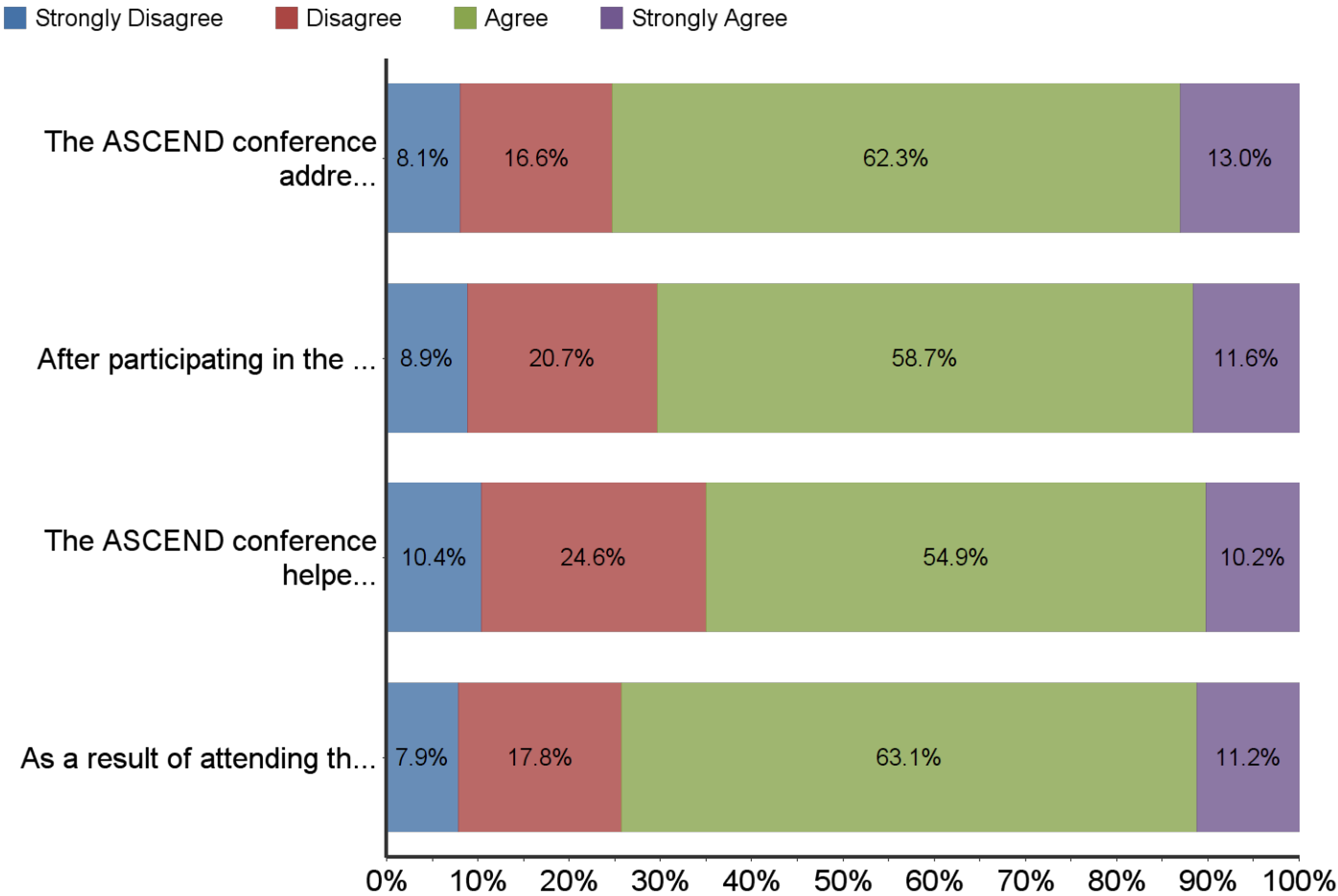
#	Question	No	Yes	Total Responses
1	Summer Orientation	49	482	531
2	ASCEND New Student Success Conference	36	495	531
3	Any of the "Weeks of Welcome" (WOW) campus activities	222	310	532

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Summer Orientation?
Note: Only students who said they attended Summer Orientation could answer this question. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table below the figure.



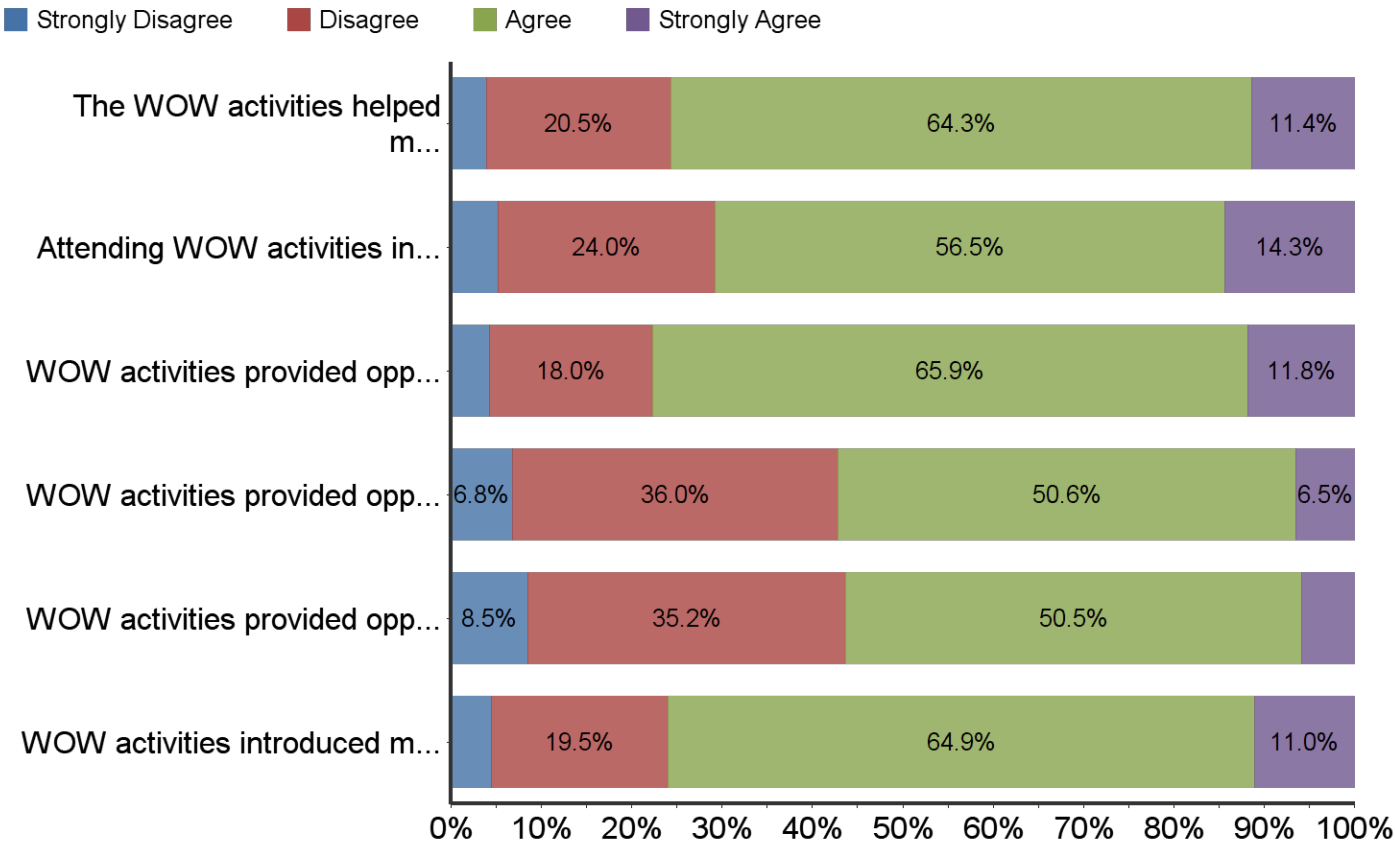
#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses
1	Attending Orientation helped me understand the differences between the school I previously attended and UC Merced.	35	101	279	67	482
2	Attending Orientation helped me understand the importance of using campus resources to support my academic success.	23	60	291	108	482
3	Attending Orientation helped me understand the importance of using campus resources to become more socially connected.	29	75	293	85	482
4	Attending Orientation helped me understand the importance of using campus resources to support my well-being.	19	58	307	98	482
5	Attending Orientation helped me make connections with other UC Merced students.	52	117	233	79	481
6	My participation in Orientation encouraged me to meet regularly with my academic advisor.	55	162	216	48	481

23 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the ASCEND New Student Success Conference.
Note: Only students who said they attended ASCEND could answer this question. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table below the figure.

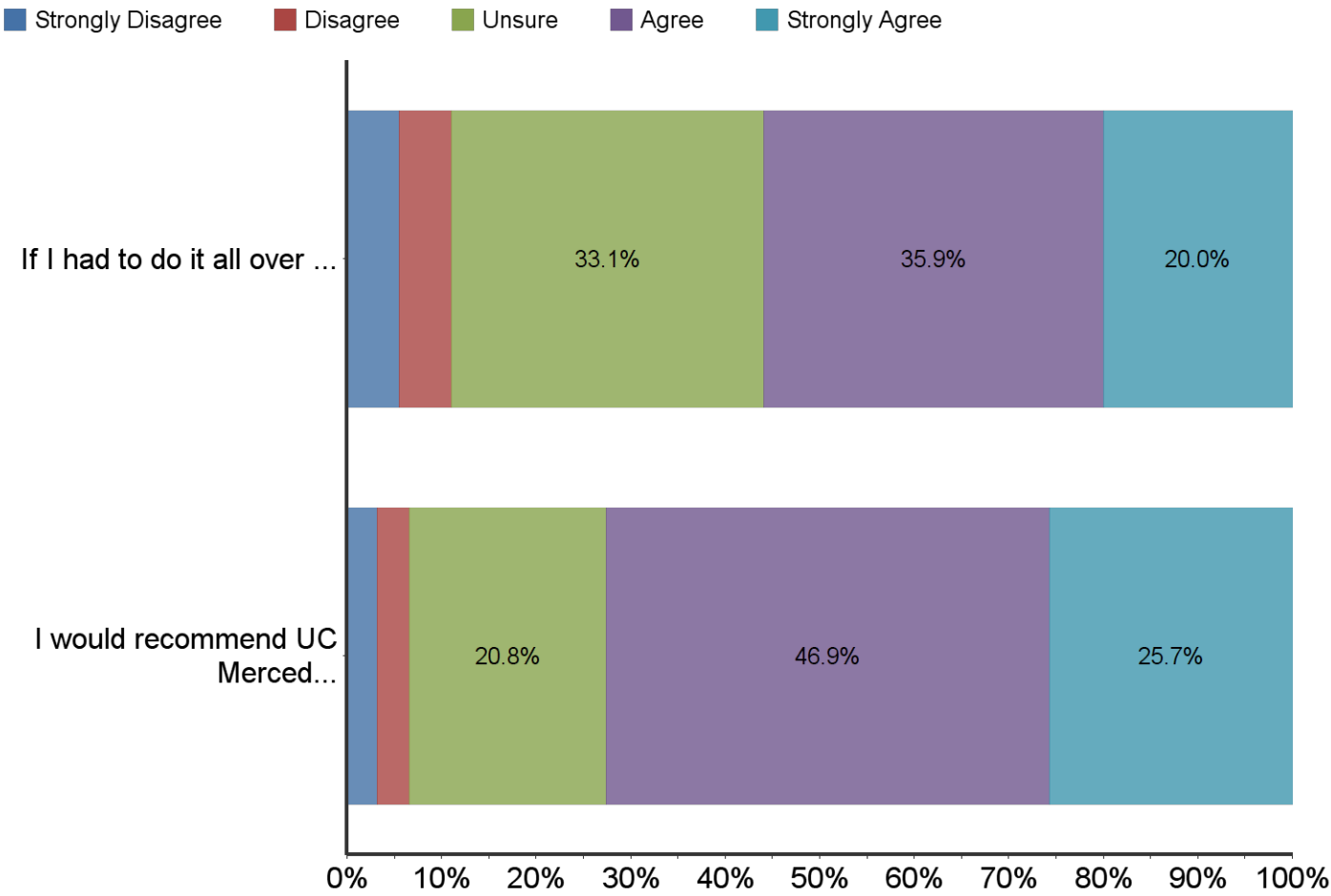


#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses
1	The ASCEND conference addressed questions I had about college.	40	82	308	64	494
2	After participating in the ASCEND conference, I felt more prepared to begin classes at UC Merced.	44	102	289	57	492
3	The ASCEND conference helped increase my confidence about connecting with UC Merced personnel (e.g. staff, faculty, TAs)	51	121	270	50	492
4	As a result of attending the ASCEND conference, I know how to access the campus resources (e.g. tutoring, financial aid, job search) available to support my success at UC Merced.	39	88	311	55	493

24 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the “Weeks of Welcome” (WOW) campus activities you attended?
Note: Only students who said they attended WOW activities could answer this question. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table below the figure.



#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses
1	The WOW activities helped me feel connected to UC Merced.	12	63	198	35	308
2	Attending WOW activities increased my UC Merced pride.	16	74	174	44	308
3	WOW activities provided opportunities for me to network with other UC Merced students.	13	55	201	36	305
4	WOW activities provided opportunities for me to network with UC Merced faculty.	21	111	156	20	308
5	WOW activities provided opportunities for me to network with UC Merced staff.	26	108	155	18	307
6	WOW activities introduced me to campus resources and opportunities.	14	60	200	34	308



#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total Responses
1	If I had to do it all over again I would still choose UC Merced	29	29	175	190	106	529
2	I would recommend UC Merced to someone else who wants to attend college	17	18	110	248	136	529