2024

Online Education Trends Report

Prepared by BestColleges

BestColleges' 10th annual Online Education Trends Report provides the latest online learning experience data with insights from students and school administrators.

2024 Online Education Trends Report

An Annual Survey of Students and School Administrators

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Executive Summary

BestColleges' 10th annual Online Education Trends Report is part of a long-term initiative to track trends in online learning. This report represents our eighth year of original data collection through two online surveys. Participants include 1,001 online students and 184 college and university administrators. Findings are presented in five categories: the online learning experience, marketing online programs and recruiting online students, online student satisfaction, artificial intelligence in online education, and planning for the future.

Key Findings

The Online Learning Experience

- Dealing with unexpected life events (25%) and paying for higher education (24%) are the top challenges to online program completion, as reported by online program graduates.
- The biggest concern about the online learning experience is work-life-school balance, reported by 29% of student respondents overall and more than one-third (34%) of prospective students.
- 77% of students currently enrolled in fully online programs are enrolled full time. Of that group, 53% are also employed either full time (43%) or part time (10%).

Marketing Online Programs and Recruiting Online Students

- Making a decision about online enrollment can be challenging. Prospective students' top concerns are *tuition costs and program fees* (52%) and *finding a program that meets [their] needs and interests* (34%).
- Online program graduates say that if they could go back, they would *do more research about program costs and financial aid* (27%), *compare more programs* before enrolling (26%), *have better technology resources* (20%), and *better understand how long it would take to complete the program* (19%).
- Online students say that skills-based training and education are important to them (88%), and 58% of prospective students would consider microcredential and certificate programs in the future.

Online Student Satisfaction

- Student perception of the potential return on investment (ROI) of online learning continues to be strong — 93% of all students say their online degree has or will have a positive ROI.
- 97% of prospective online students, currently enrolled online students, and online program graduates would recommend online education to others.
- 81% of student respondents say that online is better than or equal to on-campus learning.

Artificial Intelligence in Online Education

- Most administrators (73%) see artificial intelligence as a beneficial innovation in online education, and 58% of currently enrolled online students say they are already using it to complete class assignments and exams.
- Existing institutional policies for faculty use of AI are only reported by 17% of administrators, but 66% say there is training available for those interested in exploring the use of AI tools for online teaching.
- Use of AI in online program admissions seems to be in the early stages, but 41% of students surveyed say they would trust schools to use it to sort applications, and 39% would trust schools to use AI to make admissions decisions.

Planning for the Future

- 40% of administrators say their institutions are planning to increase online program development budgets in the coming year; this is a decrease from 47% in 2023, but an increase from 35% in 2021, the first full year of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- College and university administrators predict the most online enrollment growth over the next five years will be in health professions (29%), computer sciences (26%), and business (15%) programs.
- Most online program graduates (73%) say their programs prepared them for employment after graduation, and 31% say they were *extremely well* prepared.

Introduction

Project Goals

This BestColleges annual report series, now in its 10th year, strives to identify and track long-term trends in online education at U.S. colleges and universities. This year's findings come from two surveys used to collect input from 1,001 online students and 184 school administrators. While we've collected data since 2017, we only include data from the past six years in this report. This report allows for a comparison of pre-pandemic, pandemic-era, and post-pandemic responses. You can view the data from prior years of the initiative on the BestColleges research hub.

In past years, this report included students enrolled in both online and on-campus courses and students taking hybrid courses. The student respondents included in this report are currently enrolled in fully online programs or are graduates of fully online programs. We continue to report responses from prospective online students who identified themselves as seriously considering online programs but were not yet enrolled at the time of the survey.

Methodology

Data Collection

Two online surveys were conducted between February and April 2024. All data are self-reported.

BestColleges partners with survey providers to reach broader audiences. These partners use screening tools like Relevant ID and manually review data for consistency and accuracy. The first survey was fielded by Pure Spectrum, in partnership with GLG Research, using a quota sampling approach to provide a sample that represented the four continental U.S. geographical regions (i.e., Midwest, Northeast, South, and West). Additional quotas were implemented to encourage sex/gender and ethnic/racial diversity. This survey collected data from 1,001 students (currently enrolled, graduates, and prospective students). All items in this survey were required.

The second survey, fielded by the BestColleges outreach team, collected feedback from school (i.e., college and university) administrators. This year, 184 administrators representing two- and four-year institutions responded to questions presented via the Qualtrics platform. While we include findings from this survey, there are limitations to interpreting and generalizing the results due to the small sample size. A screening question was used to include only administrators working at institutions that currently offer online courses and programs. All items in this survey were optional.

Participants responding to our outreach team's survey requests are not compensated. However, some of our survey partners and their panel and expert networks do compensate participants in different ways.

Definitions

We provided the following definition to school administrator and student survey participants:

Online courses and programs: *courses and programs which were designed to be delivered online and take place predominantly online with no required face-to-face sessions, but may incorporate on-site activities such as residencies, fieldwork, and practicum requirements.*

Participants

Students

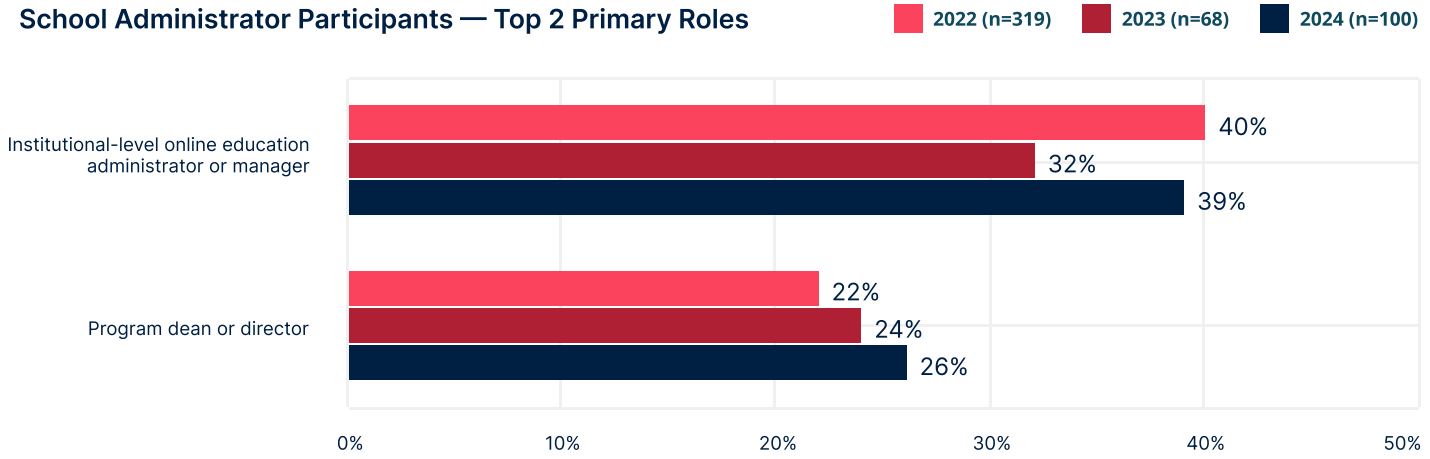
Students responding to the survey selected their status via a screening question. This report presents the findings of those who selected one of the following three response options:

- *I am an online student enrolled in a fully online program designed for online delivery:* 34% (n=342)
- *I graduated from a fully online program:* 30% (n=305)
- *I am seriously considering online programs but have not yet enrolled:* 35% (n=354)

School Administrators

For the second year in a row, this study relies on a smaller sample size of school administrators (n=184) than in previous years. It is important to acknowledge that this sample does not allow for the generalization of these findings, although it does provide insight for further discussion and future research.

As in previous years, school administrator participants represented a variety of professional roles. Of the 100 participants who voluntarily identified their primary roles, the top two roles were *institutional-level online education administrator or manager* and *program dean or director.* This is similar to the representation in previous years.

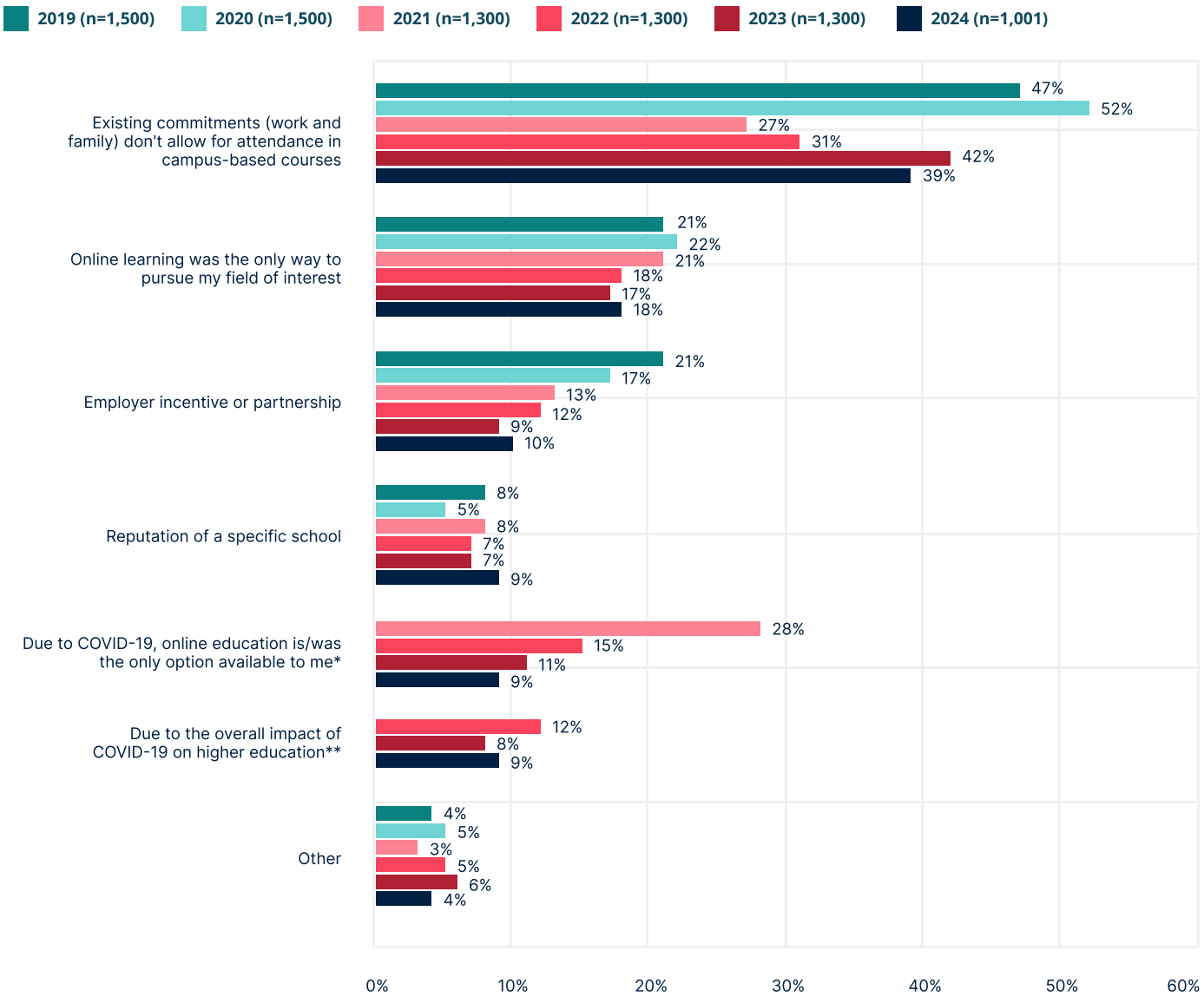


The Online Learning Experience

Online vs. On-Campus Programs

Convenience and flexibility have long been viewed as advantages of online learning. This year, as in all previous years of this survey, existing work and family commitments are the biggest motivator of online enrollment, selected by about one-third (39%) of the online students surveyed. The trend of choosing online over on-campus learning related to the COVID-19 pandemic, which was first reported in 2021, continues to decline.

Reasons for Choosing Online Over On-Campus Learning Options — By Report Year



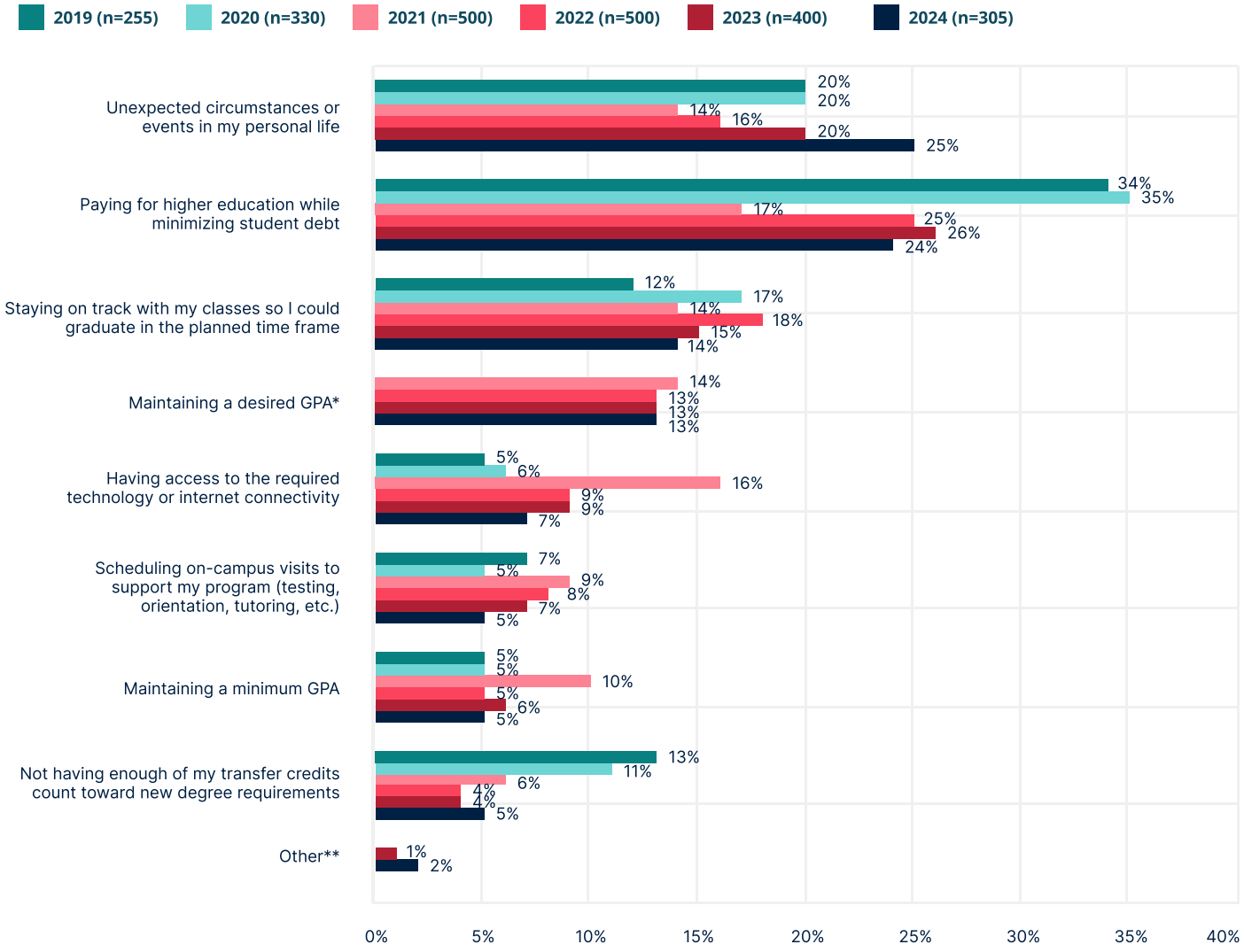
*Response option added in 2021. **Response option added in 2022.

Challenges to Reaching Graduation

Many students choose online programs due to work schedules. At the time of this year's survey, 77% of students currently enrolled in fully online programs are enrolled full time. Of that group, 53% are also employed either full time (43%) or part time (10%). Adding college studies to a work schedule can be challenging, however.

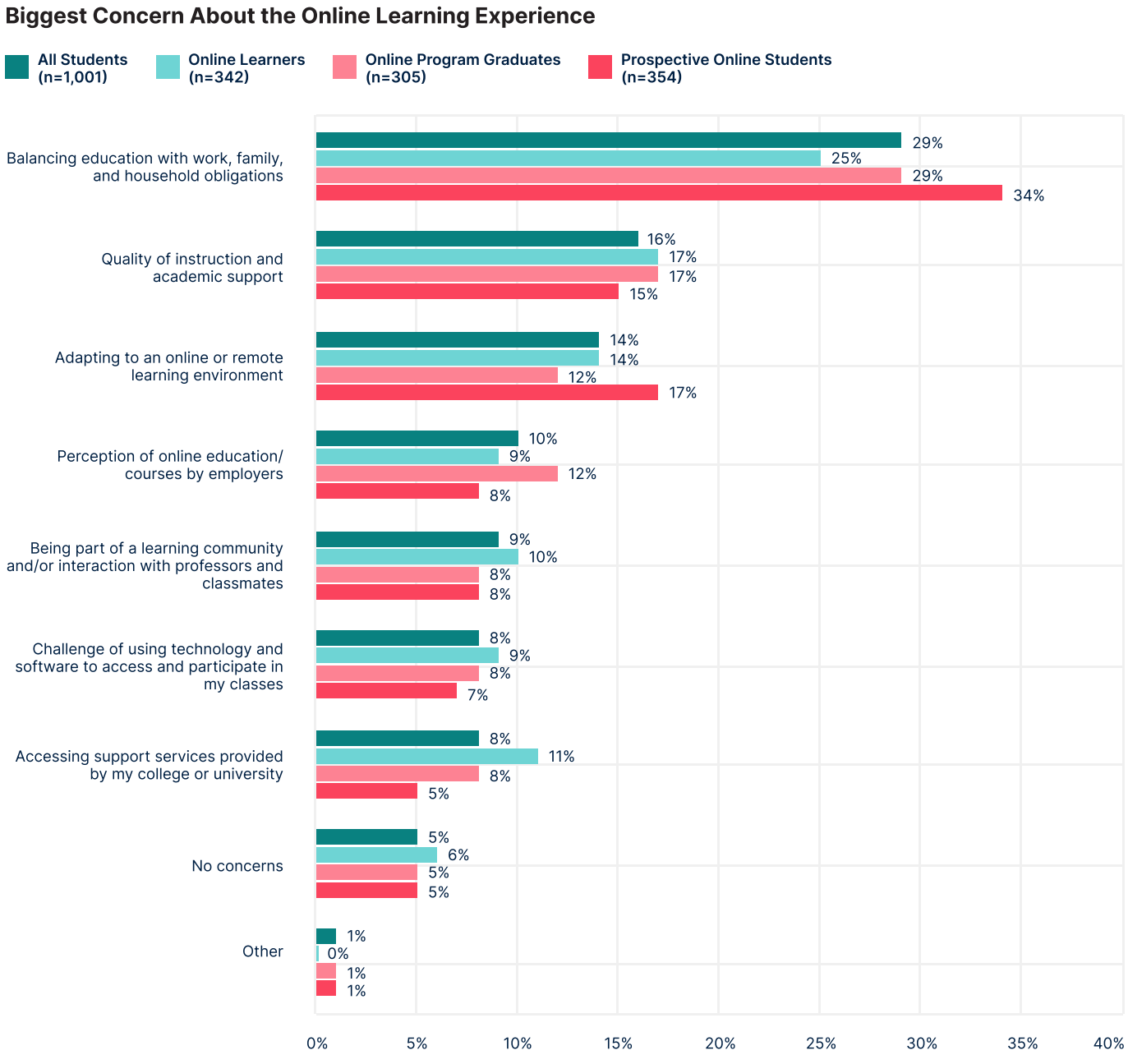
This year, online program graduates share that their biggest challenge to reaching graduation is *unexpected circumstances or events in [their] personal life* (25%), followed by *paying for higher education while minimizing student debt* (24%) and *staying on track with [their] classes so [they] could graduate in the planned time frame* (14%). While the order changes somewhat, these three challenges have been the top three for the past three years of the report.

Biggest Challenge to Completing an Online Program (Program Graduate Responses Only)



*Response option added in 2021. **Response option added in 2023.

We also asked student participants about their concerns related to pursuing an online education. The top response for all student categories is *balancing education with work, family, and household obligations.*



While few participants selected other concerns, many of those who did identified challenges related to managing schoolwork with personal health issues, such as ADHD and other disabilities. There is some evidence that online learning options may benefit students with disabilities (Visloskly and Hunziker, 2020). More research could further inform decisions about program design and development to meet the needs and preferences of these students.

Student Demographics

We used quotas with our survey partner to encourage broad representation across sex/gender and race/ethnicity. However, the majority of the students who responded to the survey were white (73%), the highest percentage since we began this initiative. Other trends identified include:

- Less than one-third of prospective online students (25%) and more than one-third of currently enrolled online students (39%) are 18-27 years old.
- 77% of current online students are enrolled in their online program full time.
- 53% of all students surveyed are employed — a decrease from 68% in 2023 but an increase from 27% in 2019.
- 12% of prospective students and 14% of graduates are unemployed and looking for work, the largest percentage in the history of this initiative.
- 48% of all students surveyed report an annual household income under $50,000 this year, which is similar to pre-pandemic years but lower than during the pandemic. Women are more likely to report income under $50,000 (54% vs. 39%), while men are more likely to report income levels over $125,000 (17% vs. 7%).
- 50% of all student respondents and 64% of currently enrolled online students identify as first-generation students (i.e., the first person in their immediate family to attend college with neither parent having earned a college degree). These two groups share similar experiences, concerns, and perceptions overall.

Annually we ask school administrators, "What is the most significant trend in online student demographics at your institution?" This year, 85 participants shared responses to this open-ended item. The top three themes, with selected responses, are provided below.

Age

Forty-two percent of those responding share that age is a significant demographic trend. Of this group, 31% say their online students are getting younger, and 69% say they are getting older.

- “Increase in adult learners who are working professionals working toward a promotion or next-level job in their field”
- “Adult learners returning to school after extended breaks”
- “The undergraduate students are getting younger … more and more traditional aged freshmen are applying to fully online degrees.”
- “High school students taking college classes”

Diversity

Eighteen percent of administrators who responded to this question share specific needs or characteristics they are seeing in their applicants and enrolled students. These range from gender and ethnicity to students with disabilities or first-generation status.

- “98% Hispanic and first generation students”
- “Students from all walk[s] of life are interested in online learning.”
- “Increase in minority and marginalized students”
- “Many of our online students also have disability accommodations.”

Course Delivery Preferences

Another 18% of administrators share that students in their online courses or programs are motivated to enroll by the perceived benefits of the format, often citing flexibility and convenience.

- “Students are combining a mix of online and face-to-face but not choosing fully online or fully face-to-face.”
- “Campus students wanting flexibility for schedules.”
- “Two-thirds of our students are enrolled in at least one online course every semester.”
- “The on-campus student population is refusing to come back to campus.”

Additionally, 9% of administrators indicate demographic trends related to location. These respondents mention increased international enrollment in their online offerings, as well as more students who reside near their campuses but choose to enroll online. And 6% share readiness issues, such as students enrolling in their online programs without previous work experience or with weak academic or technology skills. One respondent hypothesizes a correlation between a lack of readiness and the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Seeking Work-Life Balance, Online Students Are Met With Many Challenges to Reaching Graduation

The convenience of online learning continues to motivate students who are already managing other commitments, including jobs. Other concerns related to staying on track academically and not going into debt need to be actively addressed as institutions develop support services for these learners.

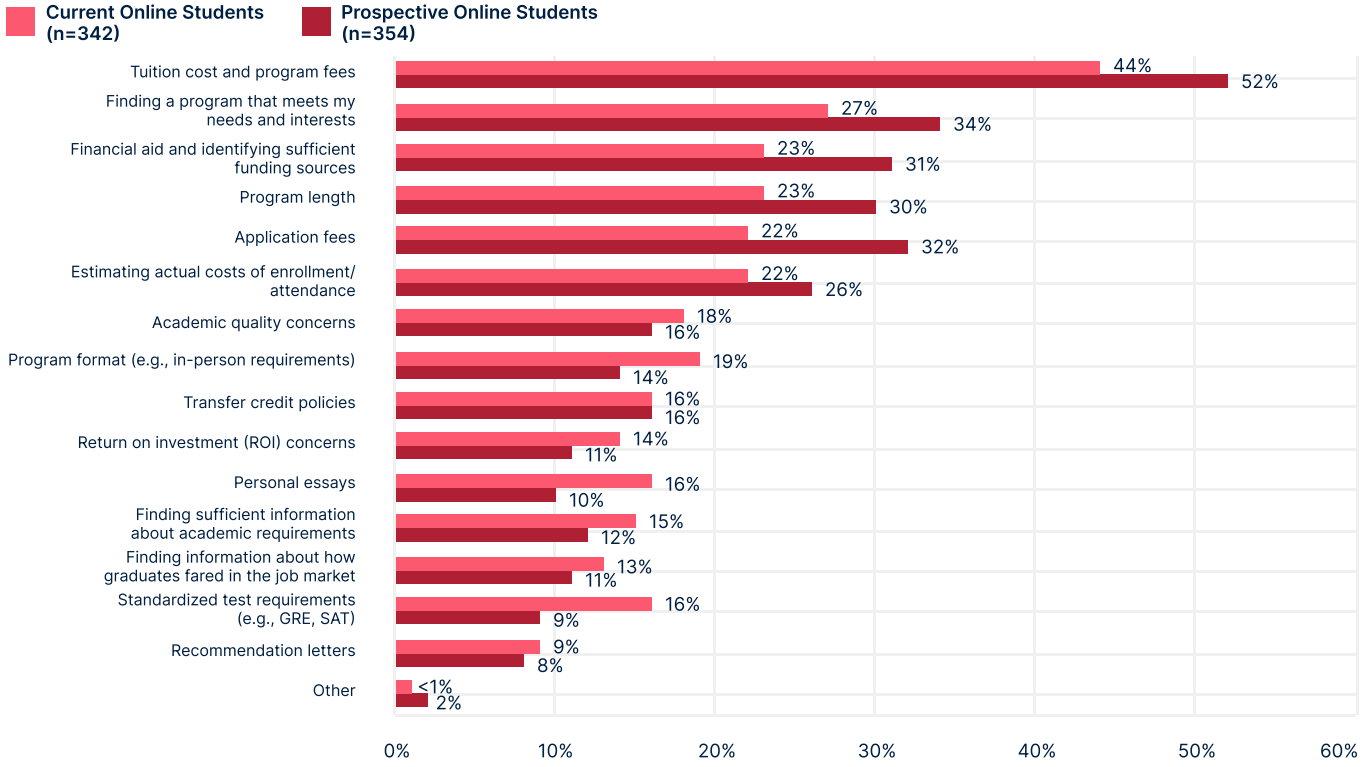
Marketing Online Programs and Recruiting Online Students

Student Research and Decision-Making

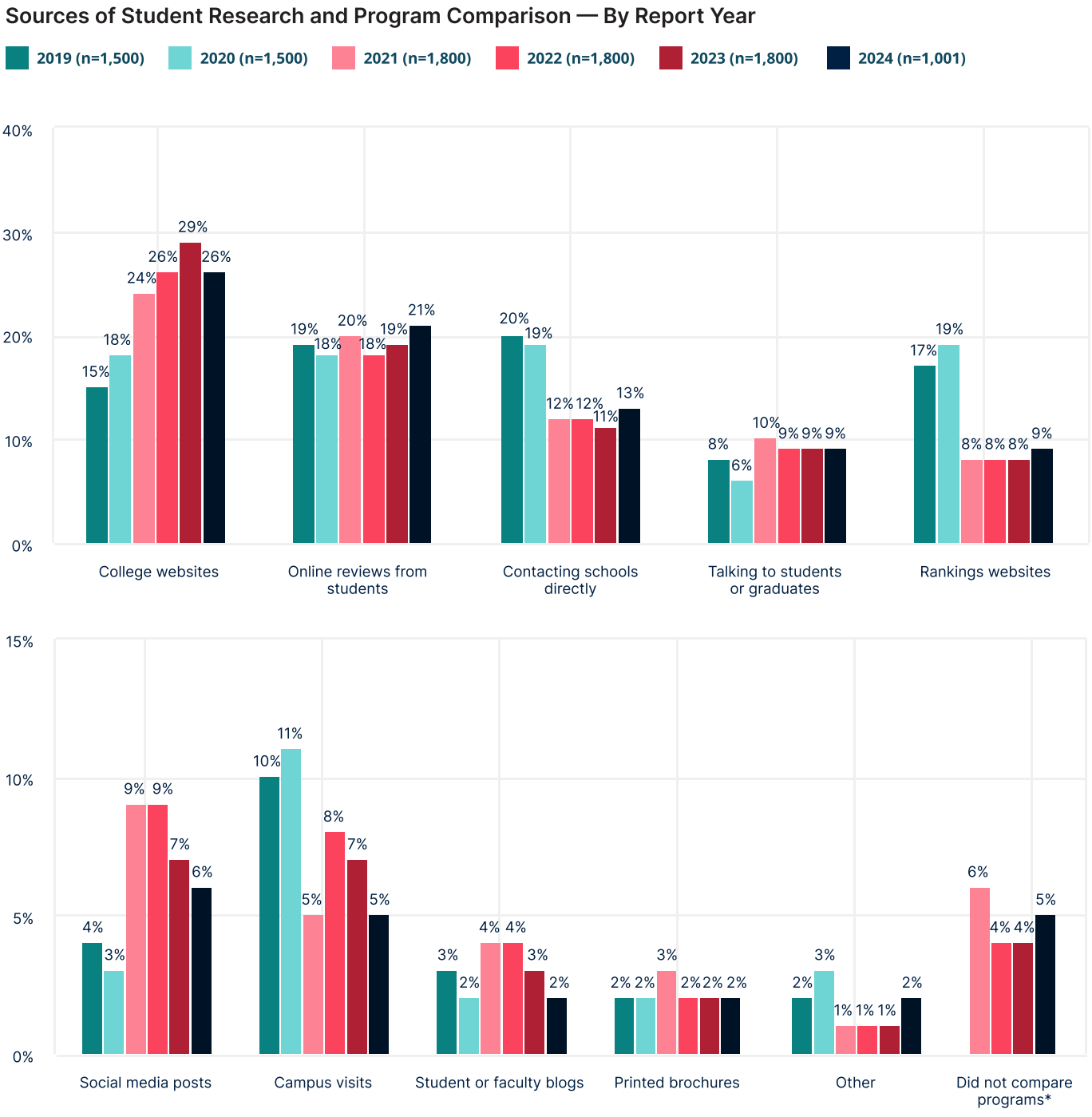
Current and prospective student participants were asked to identify their biggest challenges related to making the decision to enroll in an online program. The top challenges have been similar over the previous five years of this report, including concerns related to the financial aspects of enrollment and finding programs that are a good fit for students' needs and interests.

The survey item was expanded this year to include a more comprehensive list of specific potential challenges. Overall, current and prospective students' concerns are similar. However, prospective students are slightly more concerned about financial challenges (e.g., tuition costs, financial aid, application fees), and current students are slightly more concerned about other aspects of the admissions process (e.g., program format, personal essays, and standardized tests).

Biggest Challenges Students Face When Choosing an Online Program — Current and Prospective Students



When asked about the sources of information they rely or relied on to research and compare college programs, the student participants' responses again remain consistent with those in previous years. They primarily rely on *college websites* (26%), *online reviews from students* (21%), and *contacting schools directly* (13%).



*Response option added in 2021.

Before the pandemic, more students were *contacting schools directly* — 20% in 2019 compared to 12% in 2021. This trend continues, with only 13% *contacting schools directly* in 2024. The use of *ranking websites* and *campus* visits to gather information has also declined since before the pandemic, while the use of *college websites* has increased (15% in 2019 vs. 26% in 2024).

Advice From Online Graduates

Would you do anything differently if you could go back and change your college choice? While 29% of participants indicate they wouldn't do anything differently, many identify actions they would take given the opportunity to do so. The top responses include: *do more research about cost and financial aid* (27%), *compare more programs* (26%), and *have better technological resources* (20%). Many (19%) would have also done more research about how long it would take to graduate.

*Response option added in 2021.

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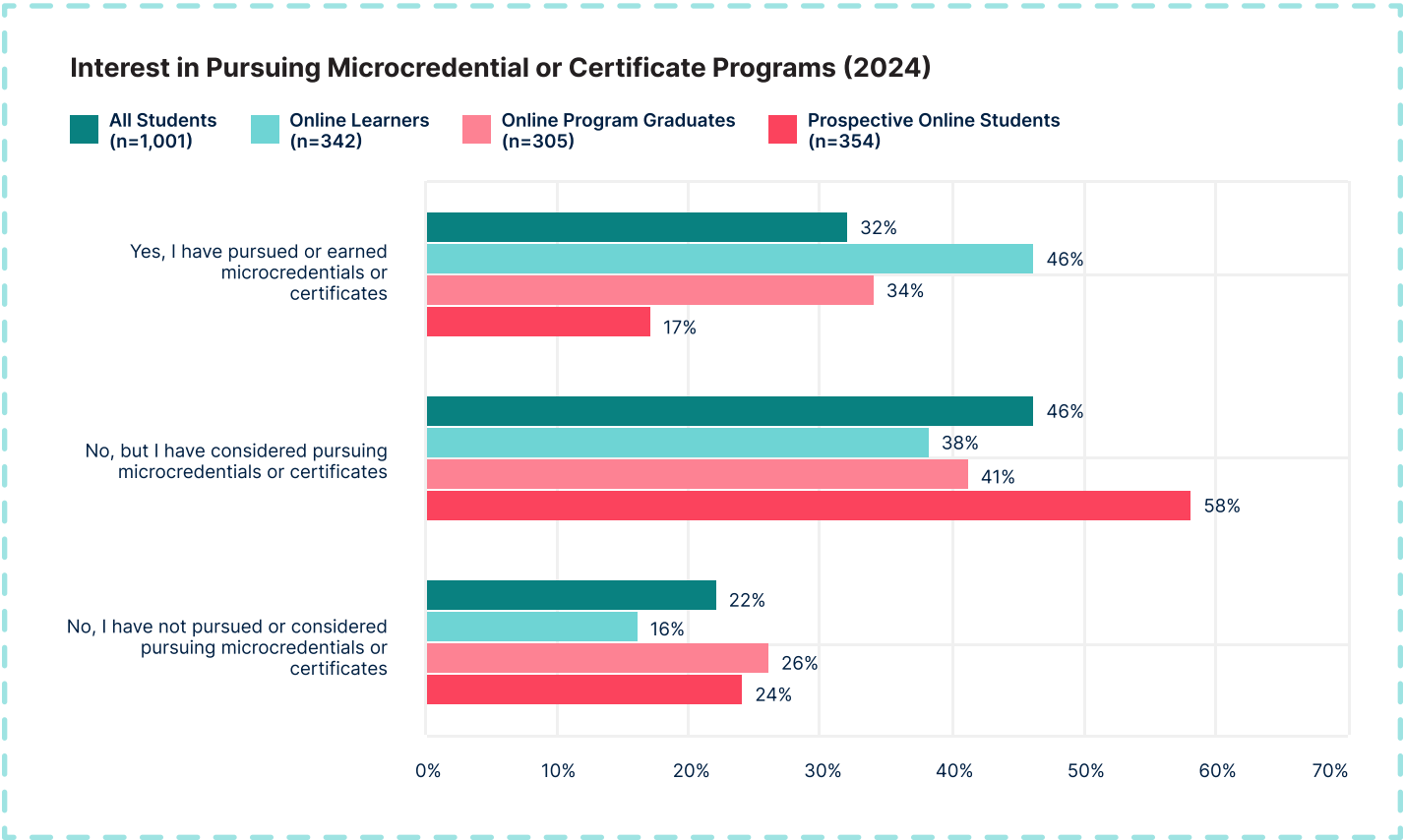
Meet Online Students Where They Are With What They Need

To reach prospective students, institutions must focus on providing details about the financial aspects of enrollment as well as what kinds of personalized support they can expect while enrolled. School websites and program webpages should be accurate, up-to-date, and easy to use.

Microcredentials

Online learning features a variety of contexts and program types. Among these are microcredentials, such as certificates and stackable learning opportunities, which allow students to "stack" credits to earn progressively higher credentials or degrees. These programs often teach specific skills and serve as alternative pathways to workforce education and training that are shorter and potentially less expensive than traditional degree programs (Viano, 2023).

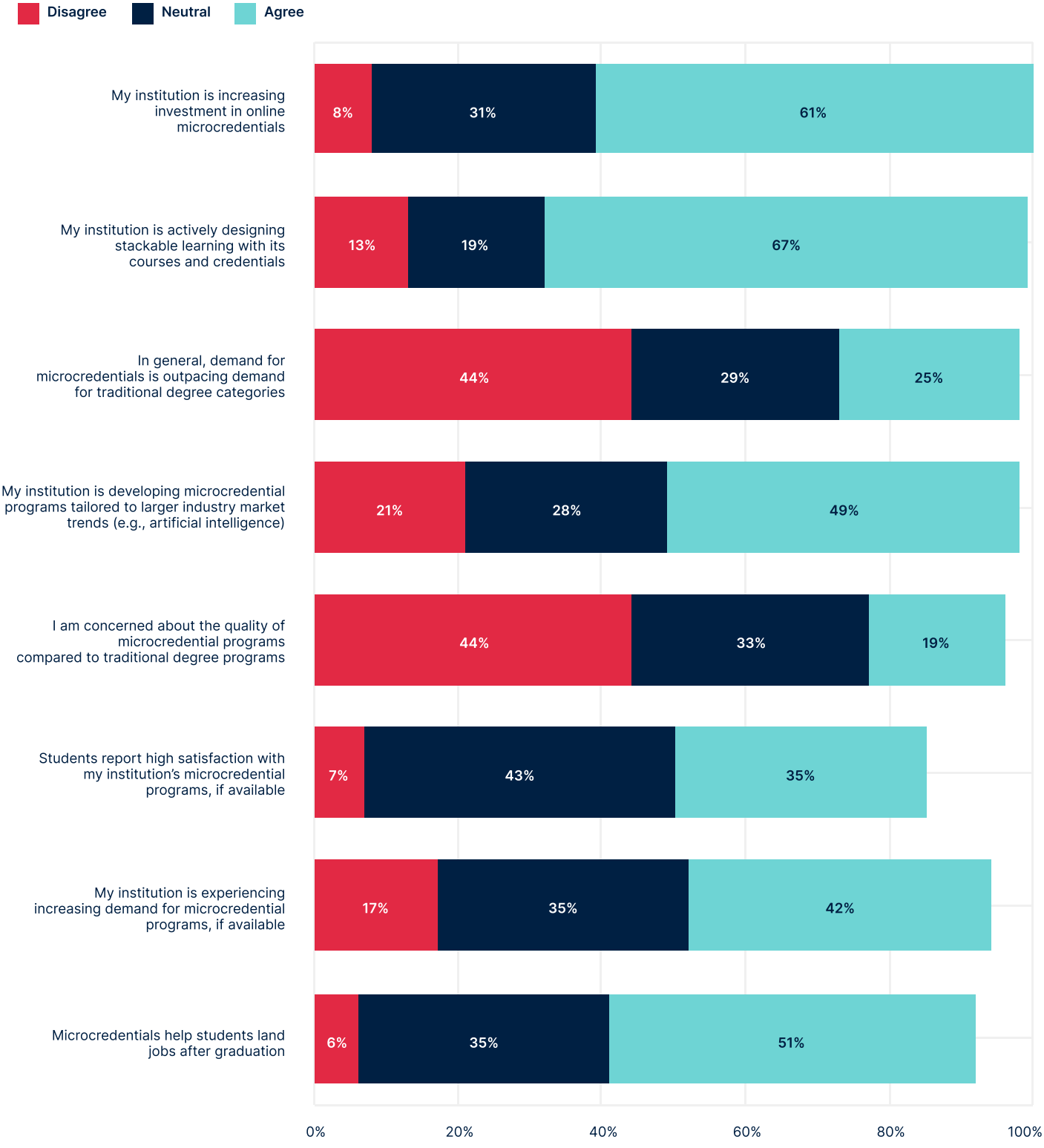
Of the 1,001 students surveyed, a large majority (88%) say that skills-based training and education are important to their career development — 47% say it is *extremely important*. But only 38% of students say they are familiar with microcredentials, and 41% with stackable credentials or stackable learning. However, 65% believe that these types of programs are important in today's job market. A little less than half (46%) say they haven't pursued these programs but would consider doing so in the future, including 58% of prospective online students.



Of the 103 administrators who responded to a question about microcredential programs, a majority (71%) share that their institutions currently offer them. A smaller number (n=72) share their insights about the demand for and satisfaction with microcredential programs. About two-thirds say their schools are increasing investment in these programs (61%) and actively designing these programs (67%). However, only about half say these programs are developed with industry market trends in mind (49%) or that these programs help students find employment after graduation (51%).

Perception of Microcredential Programs — School Administrators

(n=72)



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Career and Employment Goals Make Microcredentials Attractive to Students

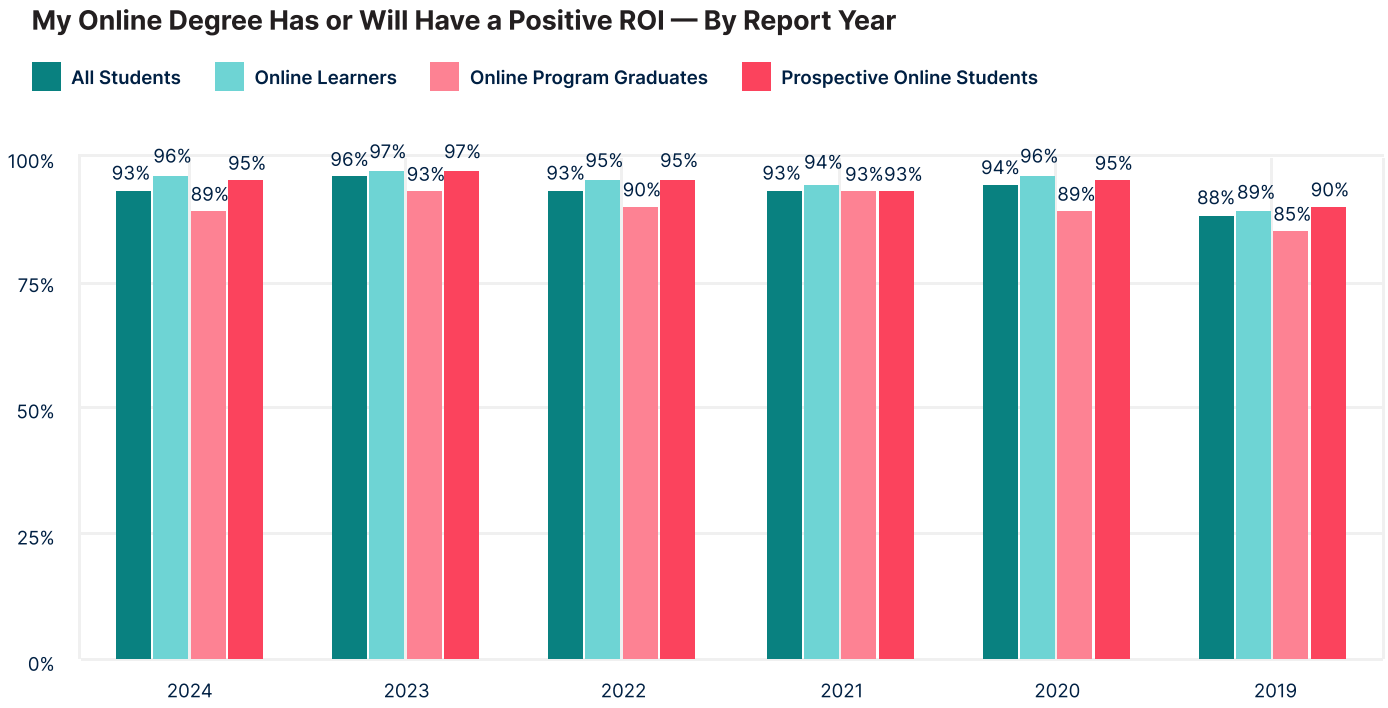
Short-term, skills-based learning is new to many students, but investing in these programs could attract those concerned about the cost of time and money required for traditional degree programs. Program design and development should consider hiring trends and be coordinated with institutional career development services.

Online Student Satisfaction

Student satisfaction is just one way to gauge the quality of the student experience. We asked participants to share their satisfaction or anticipated satisfaction with online learning through three lenses: perceived return on investment (ROI), willingness to recommend online education to others, and perceived comparison of online learning to on-campus learning.

Return on Investment

Student perception of ROI is encouraging among this year's participants, with 93% saying their degree will have or has had a positive ROI. The percentages are down slightly from 2023, but the responses to this question have been strong in every year of this project.

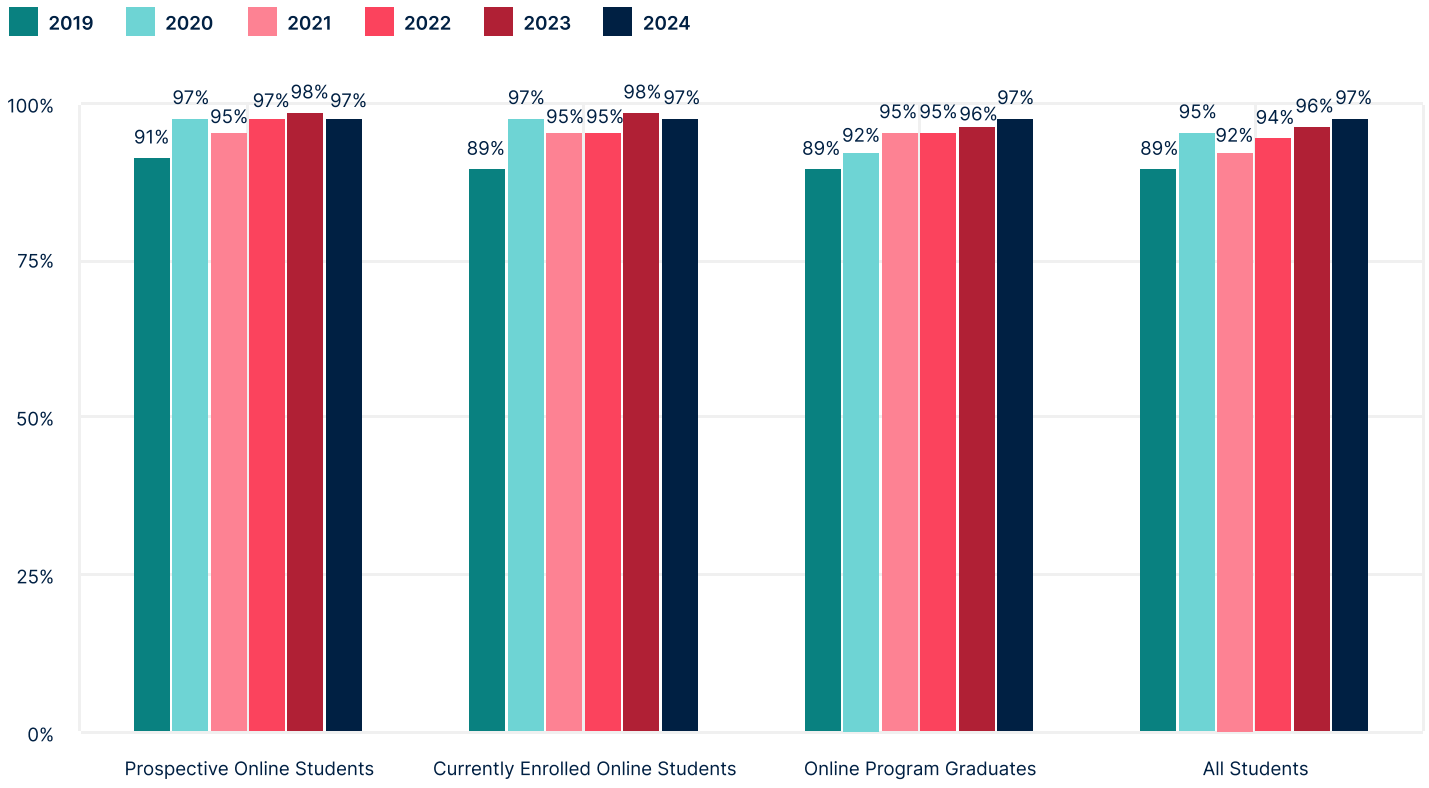


This year, as in previous years, online graduates (89%) are slightly less likely than current students (96%) and prospective students (95%) to expect a positive return. This group's expectations were higher during the pandemic years of 2021-2023.

Recommending Online Education to Others

When asked if they would recommend online education to others, the student response was overwhelmingly positive — 97% would recommend online education in every student category. Since the pandemic, students have been more willing to recommend online learning, and that trend continues this year.

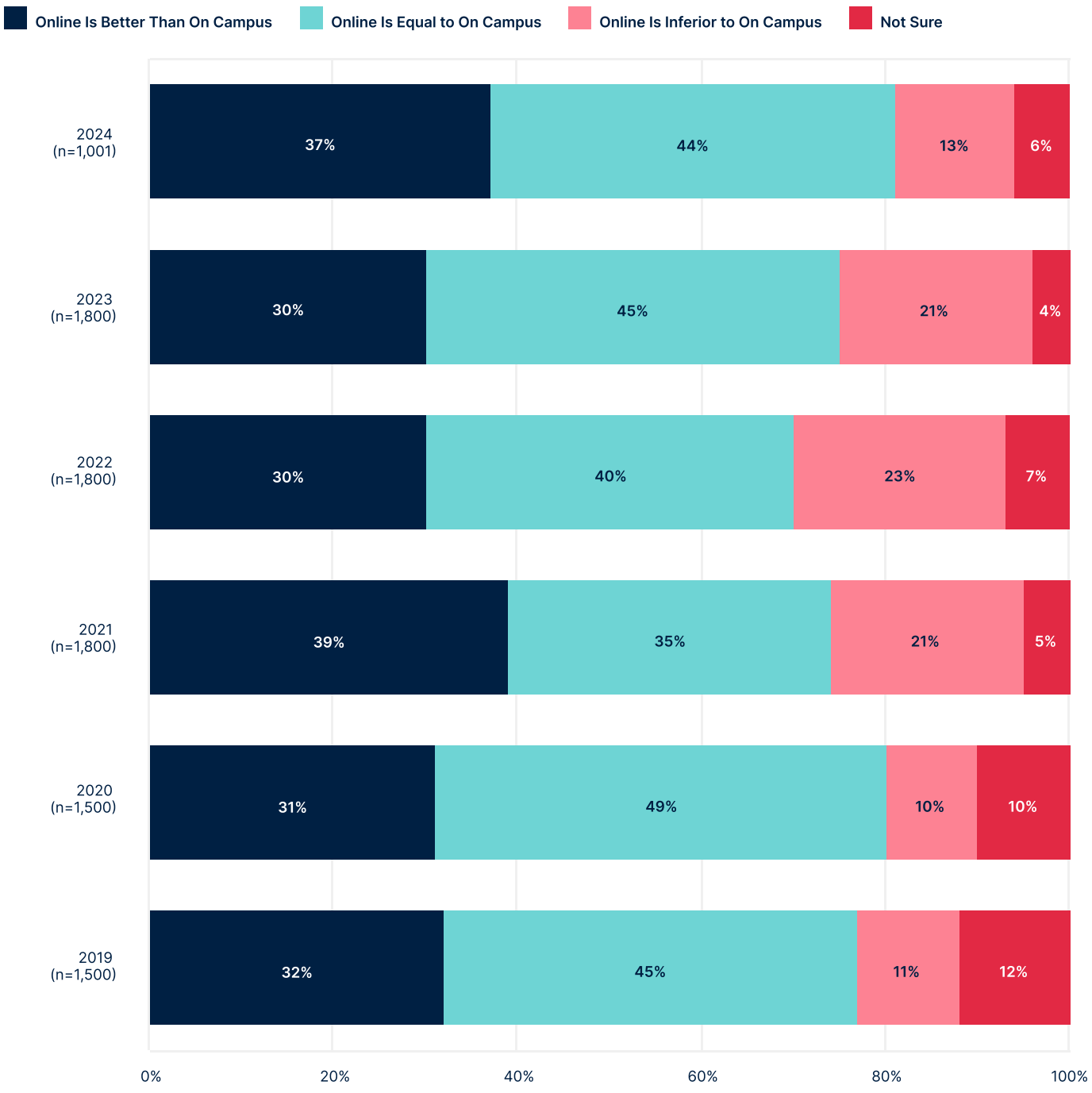
Students Who Would Recommend Online Education to Others — By Report Year



Perception of Online Education

The six years of data provided below show a steady trend of satisfaction with online education, as indicated by a positive comparison between online and on-campus learning. This year, 81% of the students surveyed say that online education is better than or equal to on-campus learning. The percentage of students indicating that they are unsure about the comparison of modalities has decreased during and since the pandemic, shifting from 12% in 2019 to 6% in 2024.

Perceptions of Online Education, All Student Categories — By Report Year



Positive perceptions of online learning are similar not only across enrollment status but also across race/ethnicity, gender, and household income level. There are some small differences across age groups/generations, as student respondents 60 and older (n=44) are less likely to think an online degree will have a positive ROI or that online learning is better than on-campus learning.

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Student Satisfaction With Online Education Is Positive and Steady

Overall, students who make the decision to enroll in online programs do so with high expectations for the value of the experience. This holds for those who are currently enrolled and those who have graduated from these programs. Tapping into these recommendations at the institutional level may be helpful for those conducting outreach to older potential applicants.

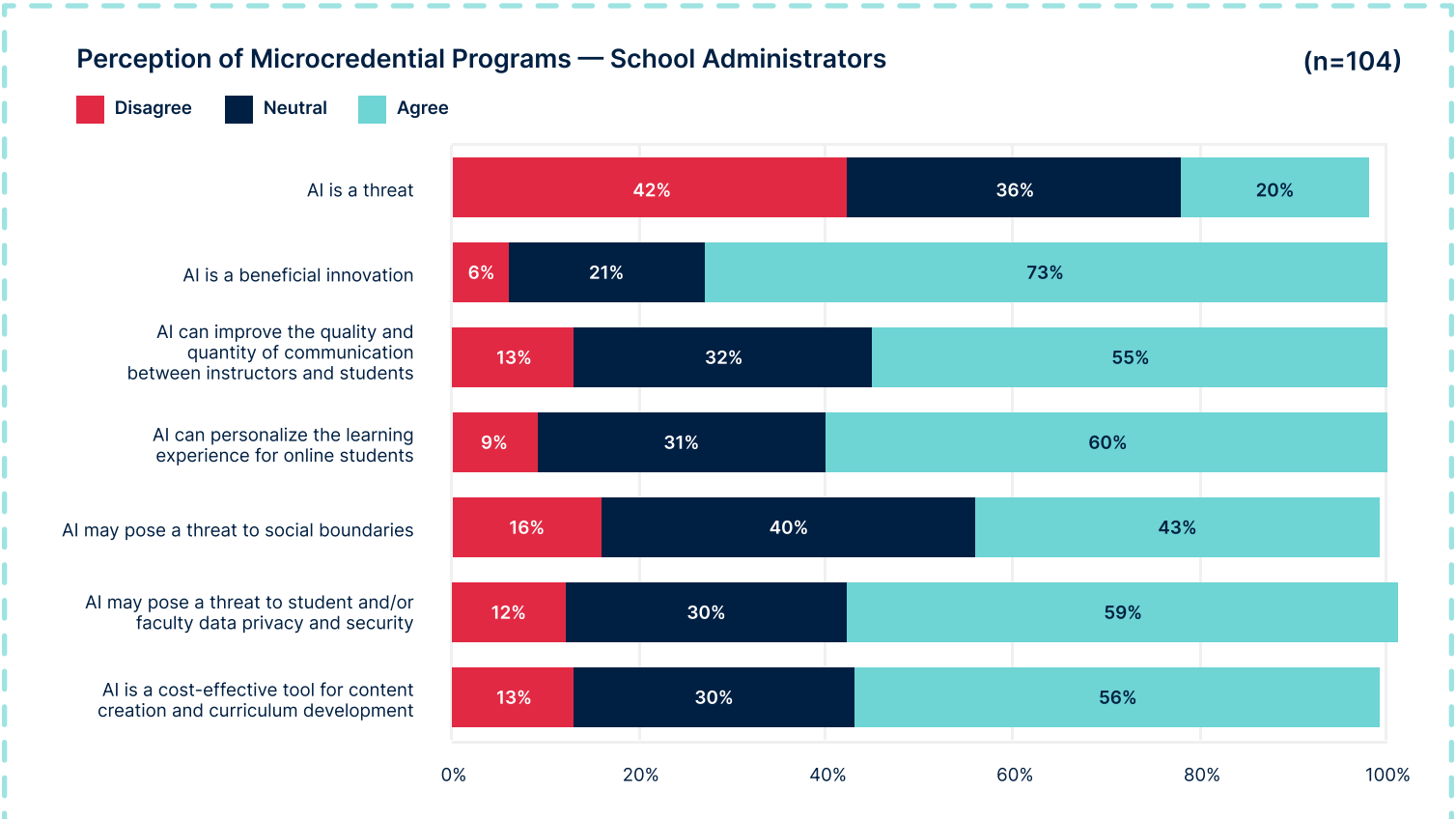
Artificial Intelligence in Online Education

Artificial intelligence (AI) applications, such as ChatGPT, have made headlines across many industries during the past year. Higher education overall and individual institutions face challenges and decisions related to the use of these new, easily accessible tools by staff, faculty, and students.

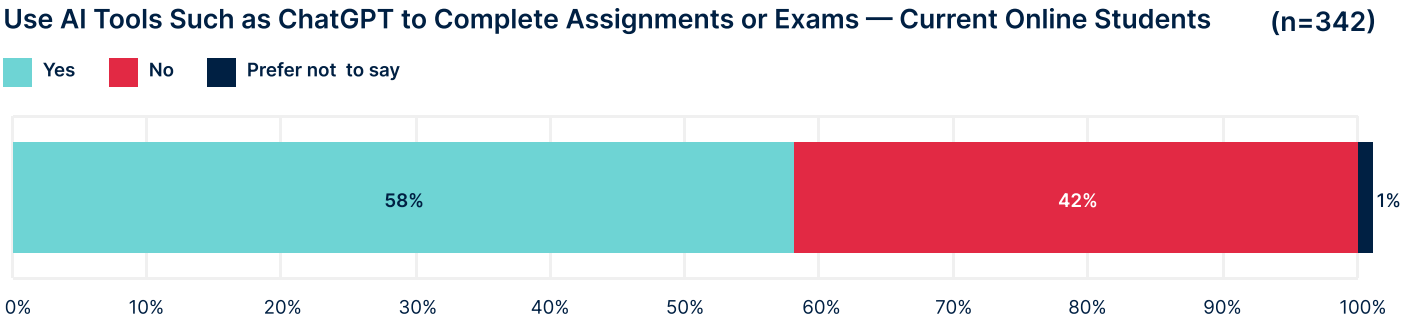
Perceptions and Use of AI Tools

Many early adopters and thought leaders predict the widespread use of AI in higher education for a variety of purposes (Hié and Thouary, 2023). We asked participating school administrators to share their overall perception of some of these potential uses in online education specifically.

Almost three-quarters (73%) of administrators see AI as a beneficial innovation in online education. They also anticipate challenges, however. Forty-three percent have concerns about its potential threat to social boundaries, and 59% think it could pose data privacy and security issues.



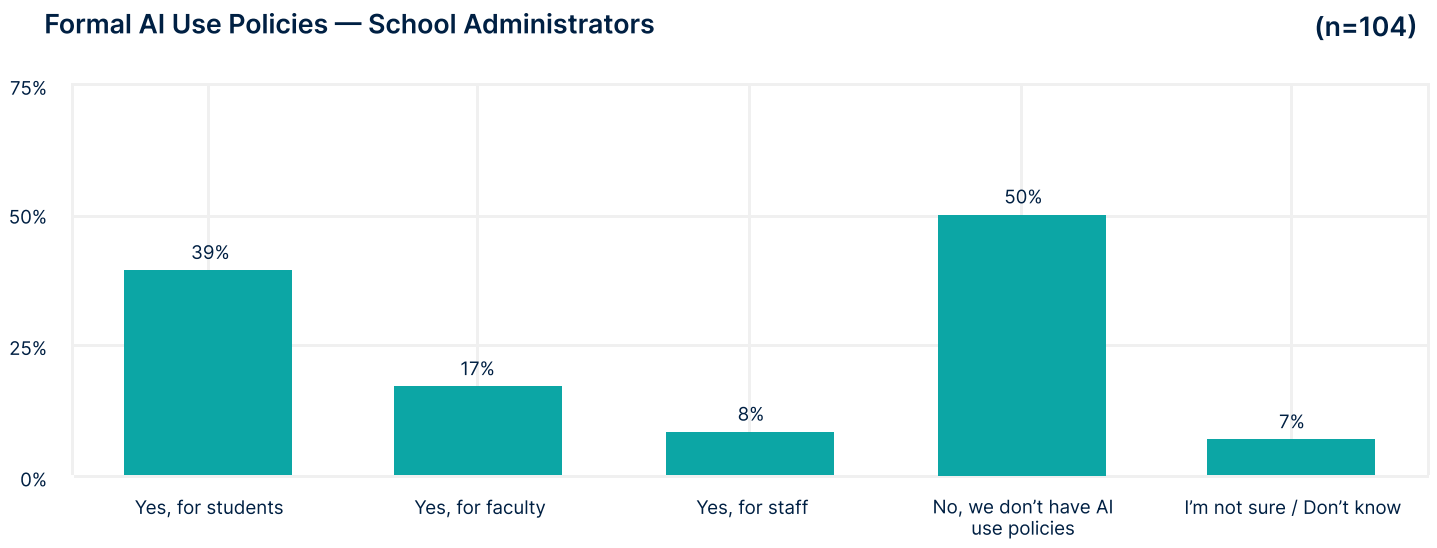
We also asked students about their perceptions and use of AI related to their online coursework. Of the students currently enrolled in online programs, 58% say they have used *AI tools such as ChatGPT to help complete assignments or exams.* Men are more likely than women (60% vs. 41%) to say they have done so.



A majority (58%) of currently enrolled online students say that their assignments or exams are screened with AI detection tools, and 46% say that their instructors or schools generally allow students to use AI in these ways.

Policies and Training

Has your institution developed formal AI use policies? Half (50%) of administrator respondents indicate that their institutions have not; however, those that have are more likely to prioritize addressing student use (39%) over faculty (17%) or staff (8%) use.



While formal policies may not yet be widespread, two-thirds (66%) of participating school administrators (n=104) share that training is available for faculty members who want to explore the use of AI in their online teaching.

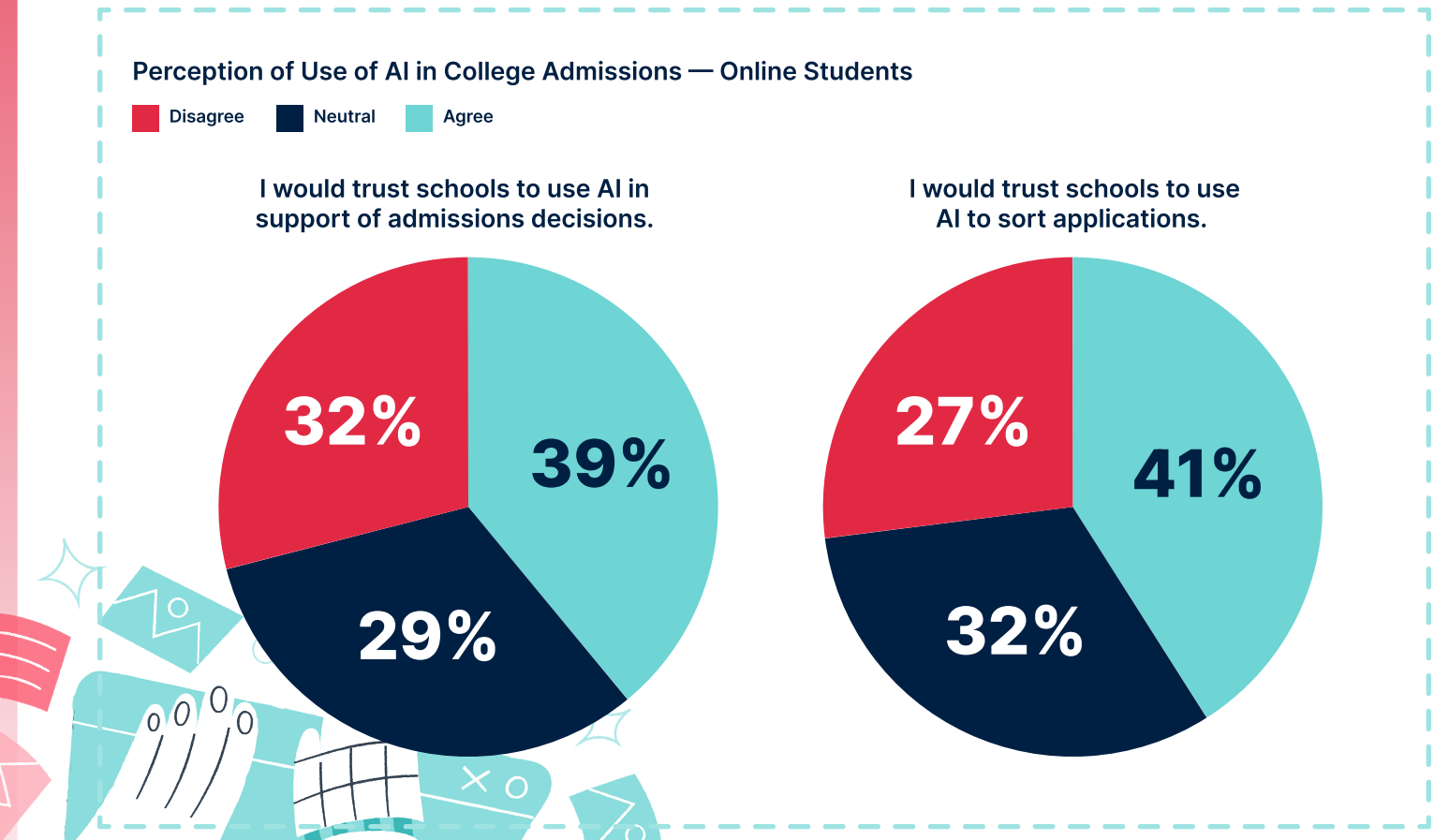
Students share a different perspective on AI policy and training. Fifty-six percent of those currently enrolled in online programs say that their *instructors or school provide guidelines for the ethical use of AI tools such as ChatGPT on assignments and exams*.

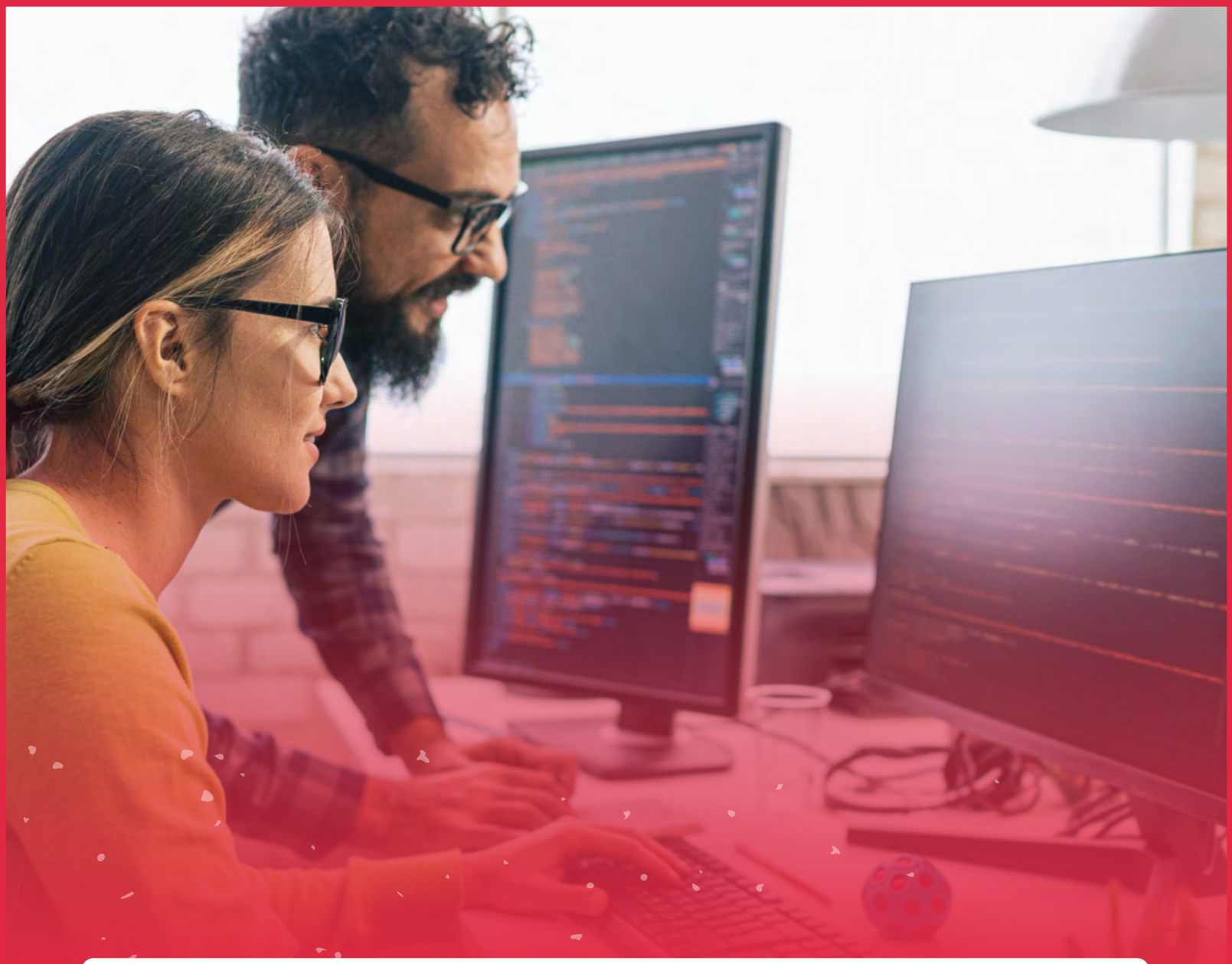
Admissions

About half (49%) of school administrators say that their institution does not use AI in any part of the college admissions process. However, 38% don't know or are unsure if this is happening at their school. Of the very small number of participants indicating that their institutions do use AI in admissions (n=14), none share that final admissions decisions are made with AI. *Sorting applications* is the top use reported (n=4). Of the seven participants selecting "other," all indicate some action related to communication with applicants or potential applicants, such as the use of chatbots and tools to personalize email responses to applicants.

Our findings vary from other current research in this area that have larger sample sizes. For example, a recent study conducted by Intelligent (2023) found that AI for admissions is most often used to "review letters of recommendation" (73%) and "review transcripts," while 62% of respondents said AI is used to "communicate with applicants." The Intelligent study also found that in most of the institutions already using AI in admissions (87%), AI "sometimes or always" makes final admissions decisions, even while 66% of the education professionals surveyed were "very or somewhat concerned" about the use of AI in admissions.

When BestColleges asked online students about the use of AI in college admissions, their responses were split. While 39% agree that they would trust schools to use these tools in support of admissions decisions, 32% disagree. However, they are slightly more likely to agree (41%) than disagree (27%) that they trust schools to use AI to sort applications.





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AI Adoption in Higher Education Brings Benefits and Ethical Concerns

While many higher education professionals and students acknowledge the benefits of AI tools in their work, there are also challenges related to ethical use, privacy, and plagiarism. Institutions that have initiated training and policies for stakeholders must strive to stay current, and those that have not yet addressed these areas must do so quickly.

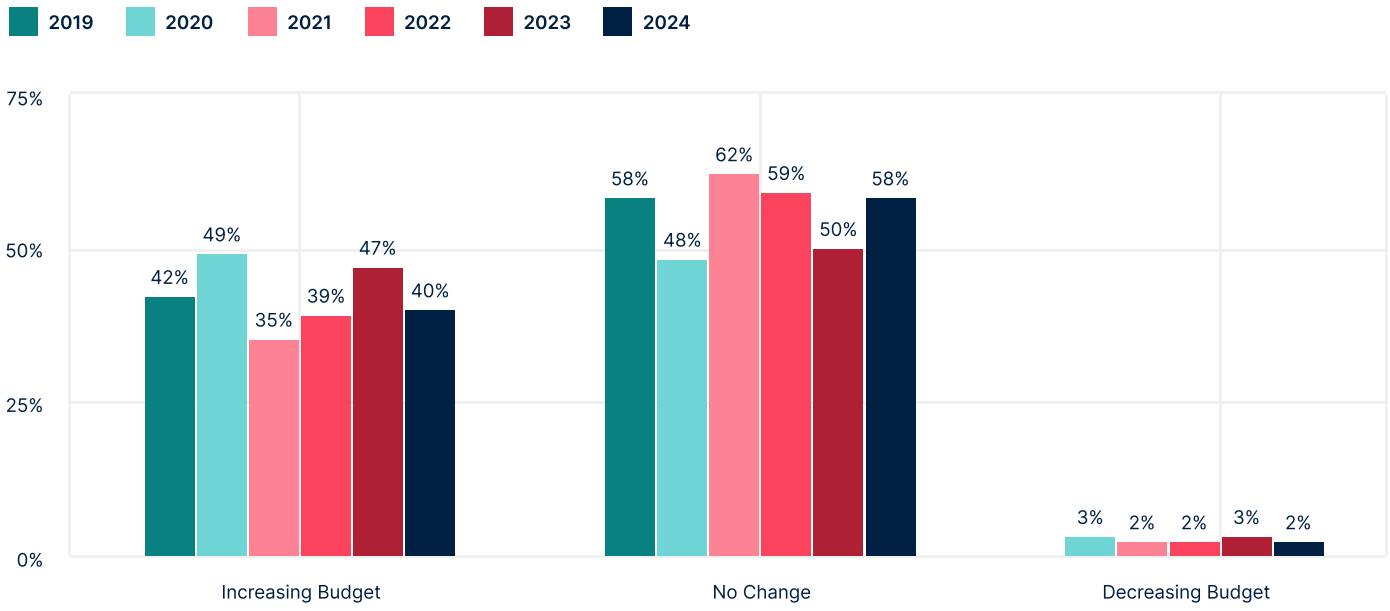
Planning for the Future

Budget Planning

Institutional budgets are notoriously strained with many priorities, changing enrollment trends, and college closures (Bauman, 2024; Moody, 2023; National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, 2024). This annual survey asks school administrators to share their institution's financial plans related to the support of online program development.

This year, only 2% of responding administrators say that their schools are decreasing online program budgets. However, 58% indicate *no change,* while 40% say their budgets will increase.

School Budget Planning for Online Program Development — By Report Year



Enrollment Demand

This annual study asks school administrators to indicate the academic disciplines that will most likely experience online enrollment growth over the next five years.

The top three disciplines have been the same, although appearing in a different order, over the past six years. The fields with the most growth between 2024 and 2029 are predicted to be: *health professions and related programs*, including *nursing* (29%); *computer and information sciences and support services and other technology fields* (26%); and *business, management, marketing, and related services* (15%).

Top Fields of Study for Online Enrollment Growth in the Next Five Years — By Report Year

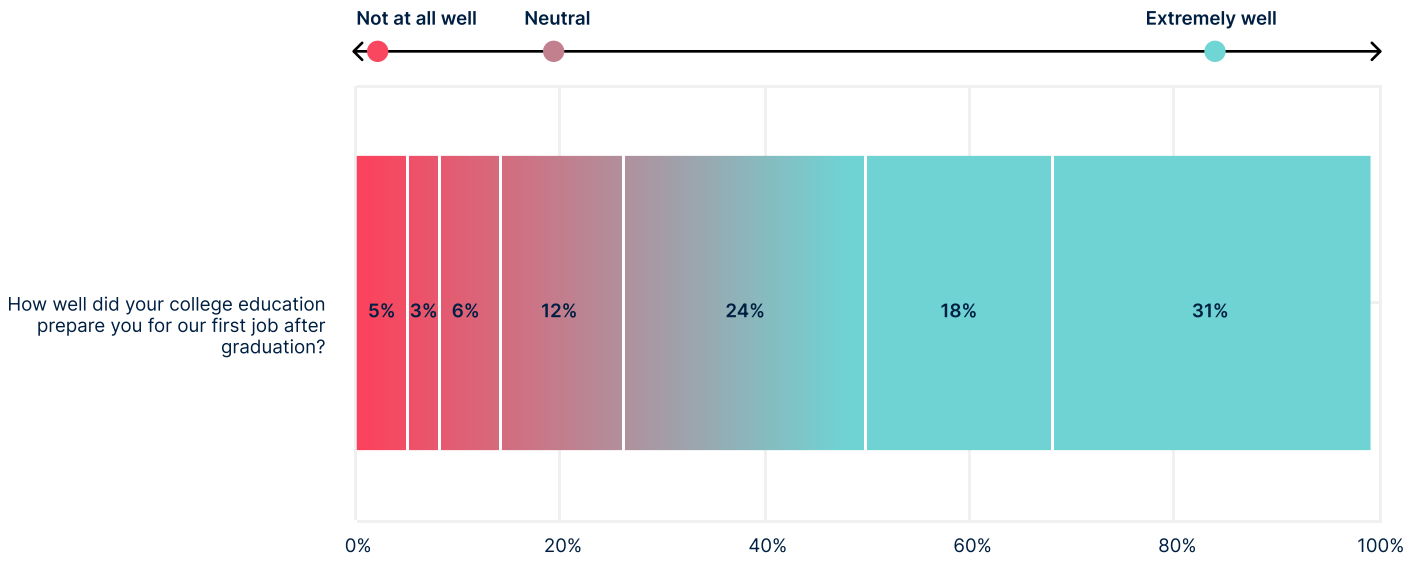
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5
2024	Health Professions (29%)	Computer Sciences (26%)	Business (15%)	Humanities and Liberal Arts (8%)	Education (6%)
2023	Health Professions (30%)	Computer Sciences (20%)	Business (18%)	Human Services (Counseling, Psychology, Social Work) (14%)	-
2022	Computer Sciences (26%)	Business (24%)	Health Professions (21%)	Human Services (Counseling, Psychology, Social Work) (8%)	Education (6%)
2021	Computer Sciences (25%)	Health Professions (25%)	Business (20%)	Human Services (Counseling, Psychology, Social Work) (8%)	Humanities and Liberal Arts (6%)
2020	Business (20%)	Health Professions (20%)	Computer Sciences (16%)	Faith-Based Topics (8%)	Human Services (Counseling, Psychology, Social Work) (7%)
2019	Health Professions (30%)	Business (26%)	Computer Sciences (13%)	Education (6%)	Faith-Based Topics (4%)

These top fields are also the top ones that student participants say they've enrolled in or are considering enrolling in: *business, management, marketing, and related services* (22%); *health professions and related programs,* including *nursing* (18%); and *computer and information sciences and support services and other technology fields* (12%).

Preparation for Work After Graduation

Online students are preparing for the future, too. We asked online program graduates how well their education prepared them for their first job after graduation. A majority (73%) say it prepared them well, with almost one-third (31%) saying it prepared them *extremely well*.

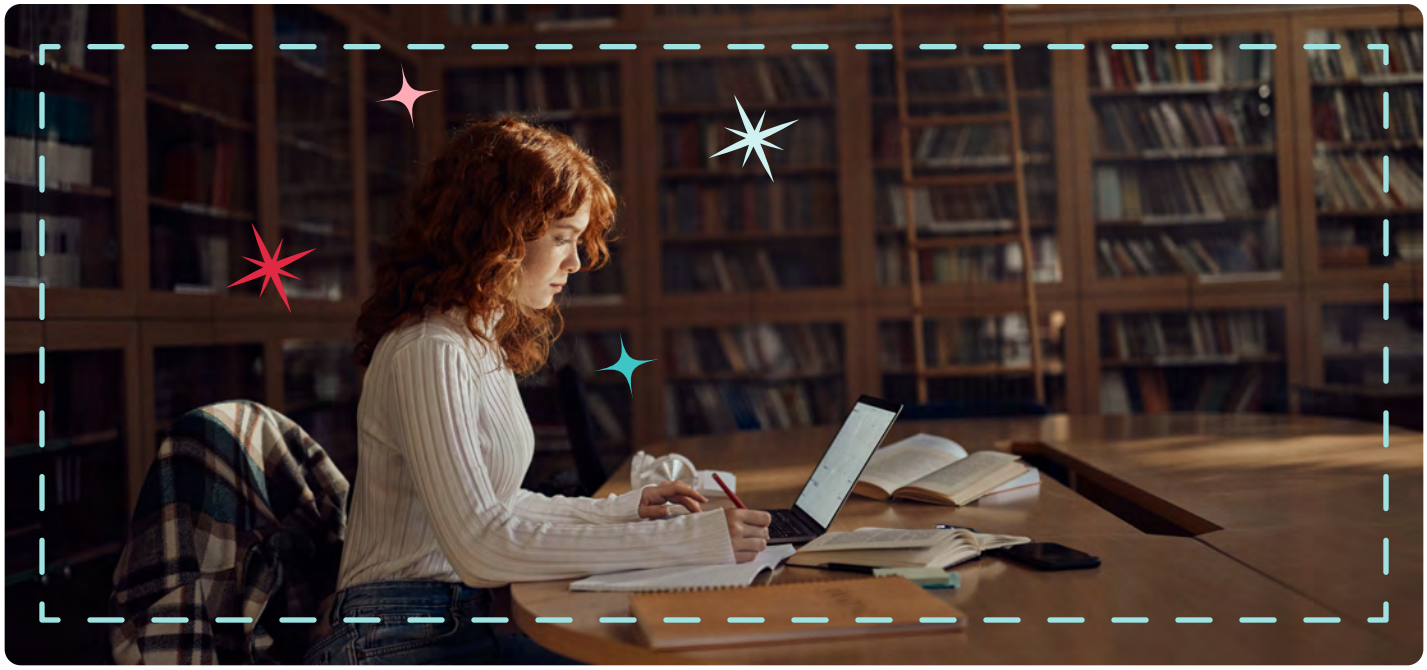
Education and Employment Readiness — Online Program Graduates **(n=305)**



BestColleges INSIGHT

Online Education Success Requires Purposeful and Effective Institutional Support

Higher education is changing faster than ever before for all stakeholders. Planning for the future should include a focus of all resources on the development of programs and services that not only meet the needs and preferences of students but also serve to prepare those students to prosper in a rapidly changing world of work.



Conclusion

Institutions face many challenges as they work to establish and maintain high-quality online programs. Decisions about the allocation of resources and adoption of innovations, like artificial intelligence and new learning formats, must include conversations about finances and ensure online programs are viable and valuable.

The insights in this year's report can provide reference points for college and university decision-makers at all levels as they work to support a diverse population of online learners.

Seeking Work-Life Balance, Online Students Are Met With Many Challenges to Reaching Graduation

The convenience of online learning continues to motivate students who are already managing other commitments, including jobs. Other concerns related to staying on track academically and not going into debt need to be actively addressed as institutions develop support services for these learners.

Meet Online Students Where They Are With What They Need

To reach prospective students, institutions must focus on providing details about the financial aspects of enrollment as well as what kinds of personalized support they can expect while enrolled. School websites and program webpages should be accurate, up-to-date, and easy to use.

Career and Employment Goals Make Microcredentials Attractive to Students

Short-term, skills-based learning is new to many students, but investing in these programs could attract those concerned about the cost of time and money required for traditional degree programs. Program design and development should consider hiring trends and be coordinated with institutional career development services.

Student Satisfaction With Online Education Is Positive and Steady

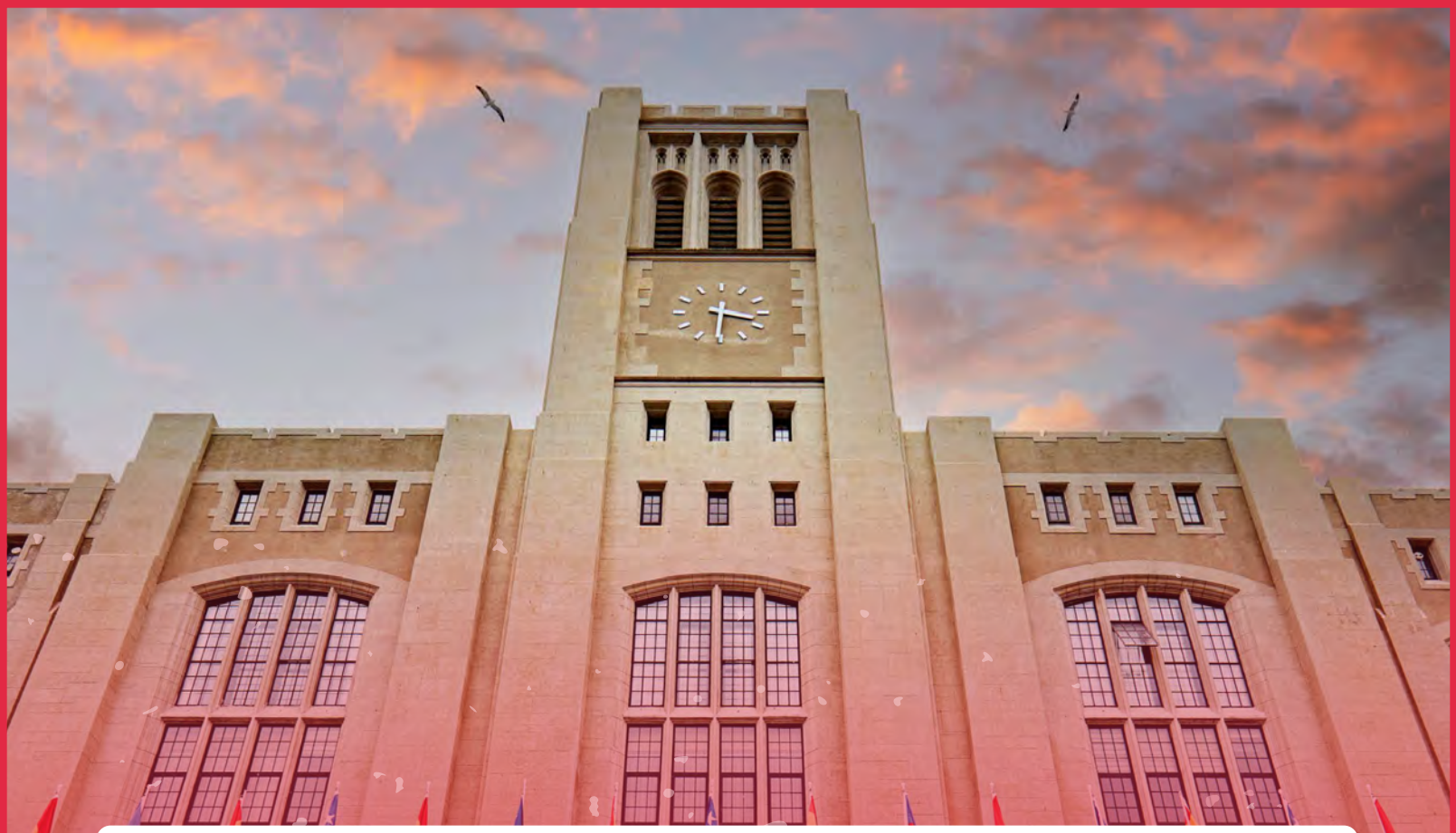
Overall, students who make the decision to enroll in online programs do so with high expectations for the value of the experience. This holds for those who are currently enrolled and those who have graduated from these programs. Tapping into these recommendations at the institutional level may be helpful for those conducting outreach to older potential applicants.

AI Adoption in Higher Education Brings Benefits and Ethical Concerns

While many higher education professionals and students acknowledge the benefits of AI tools in their work, there are also challenges related to ethical use, privacy, and plagiarism. Institutions that have initiated training and policies for stakeholders must strive to stay current, and those that have not yet addressed these areas must do so quickly.

Online Education Success Requires Purposeful and Effective Institutional Support

Higher education is changing faster than ever before for all stakeholders. Planning for the future should include a focus of all resources on the development of programs and services that not only meet the needs and preferences of students but also serve to prepare those students to prosper in a rapidly changing world of work.



Contributors

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Online Education Advisor for BestColleges

Melissa A. Venable, Ph.D., is a contributing writer for BestColleges. In this role, she leads this annual survey research project reporting online education trends found through student and school administrator feedback. Melissa is an adjunct online faculty member at Saint Leo University and a certified career coach with a background in career development services. She earned her doctorate in instructional technology at the University of South Florida, where her research interests focused on online education and support services for online students.

About BestColleges

BestColleges empowers students to make smarter educational decisions and find schools that best fit their needs through proprietary research, user-friendly guides, and hundreds of unique college rankings. As a trusted education advisor, BestColleges also provides a wide array of college planning, financial aid, and career resources to help students realize life goals and overcome educational challenges as they prepare for careers after college.

Data Notes

1. Percentages reported in this document have been rounded, resulting in some totals adding up to just under or over 100.
2. Several charts and descriptions present results for questions in which survey participants could select more than one response.
3. Findings reported from school administrators are based on the number of participants responding to each question; all questions, except a screening question related to the delivery of online programs, were optional.
4. Data are self-reported.

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Appendix

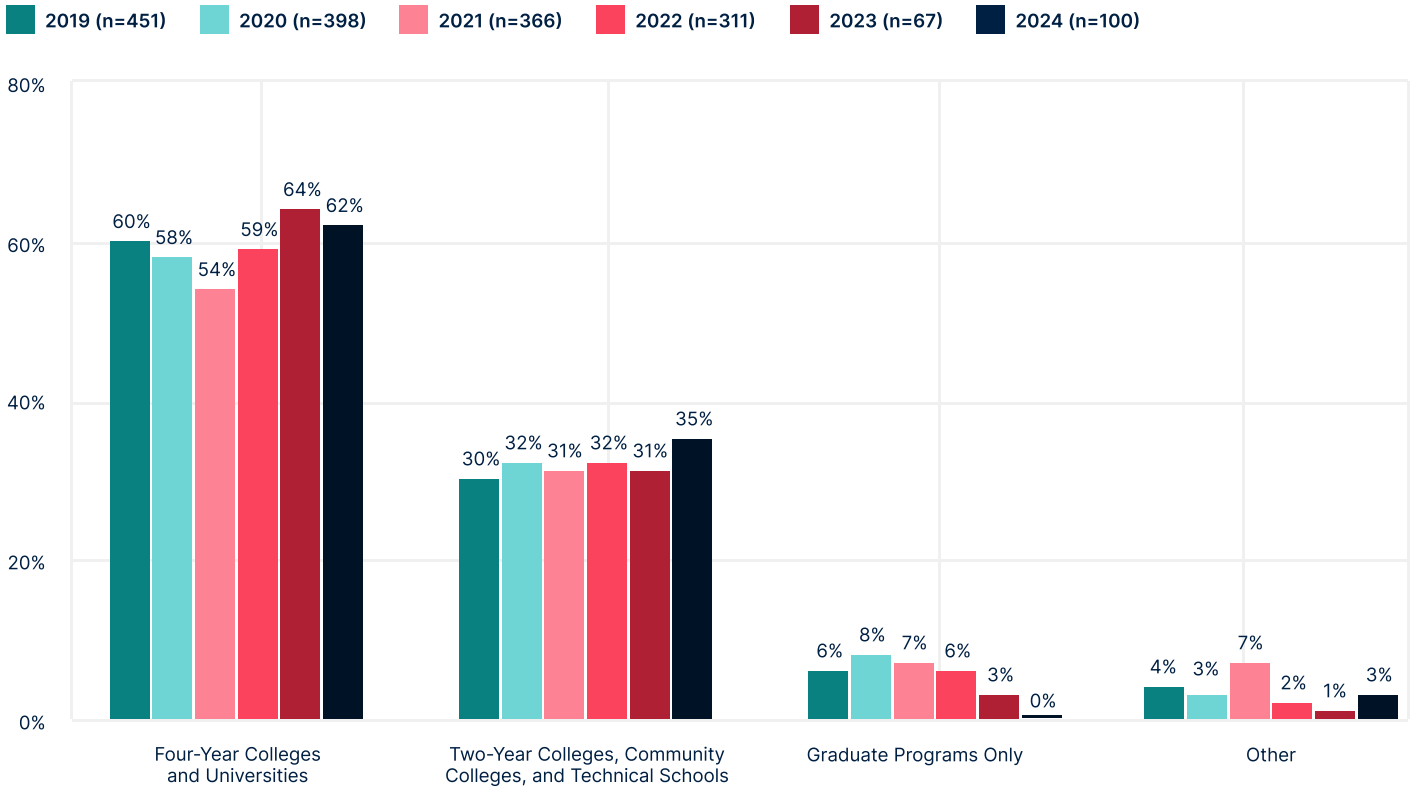
Participant Demographics

While we've collected data for this initiative since 2017, only data from the past six years are included in this report. You can view the data from prior years of the initiative on the BestColleges research hub.

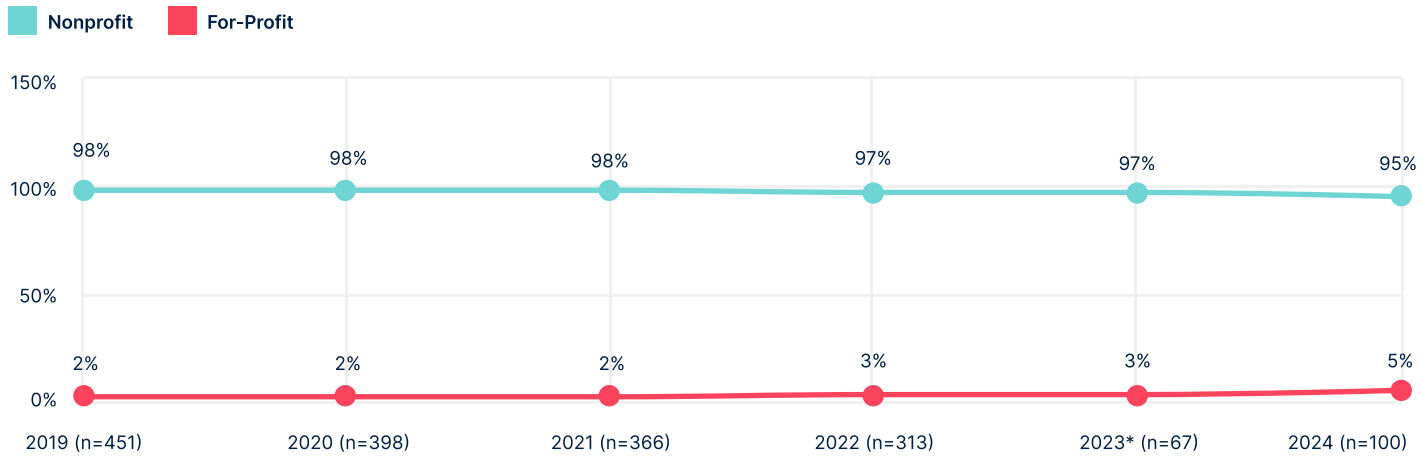
School Administrator Participants

Data Collection - BestColleges, Qualtrics

Institutional Classification



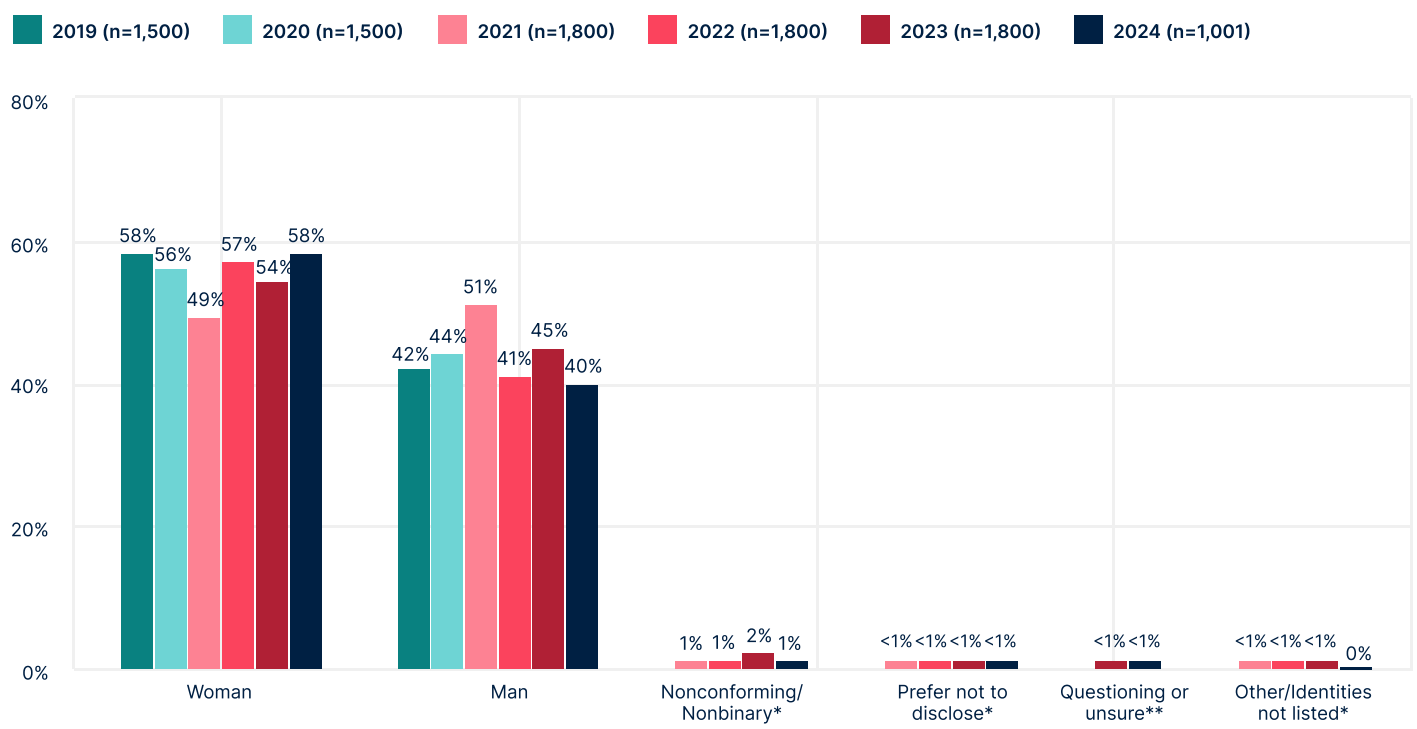
Institution Type



Student Participants

Data Collection - Pure Spectrum

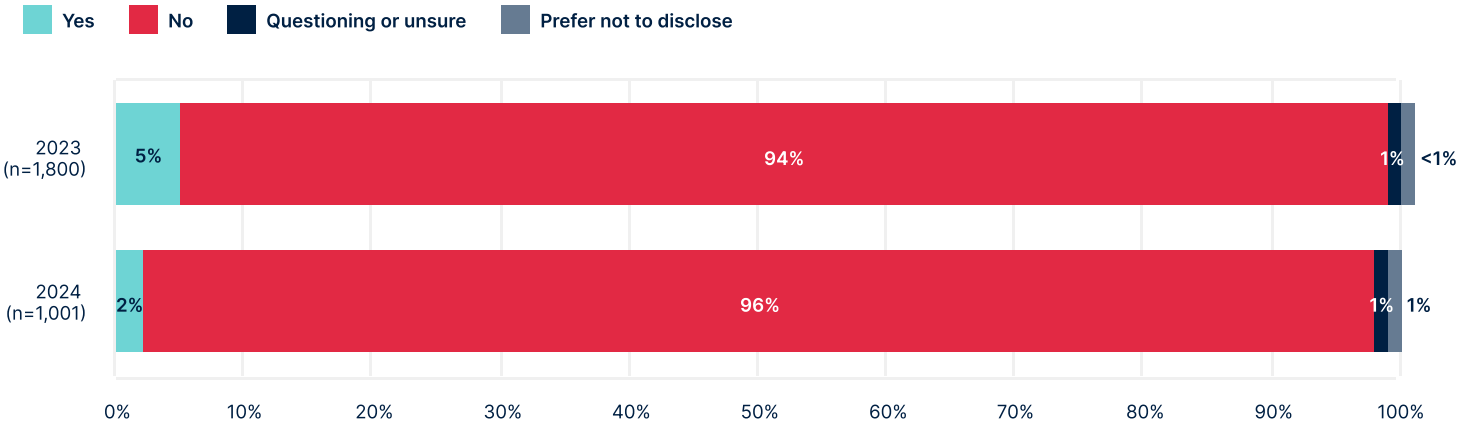
Sex/Gender



*Response option added in 2021. **Response option added in 2023.

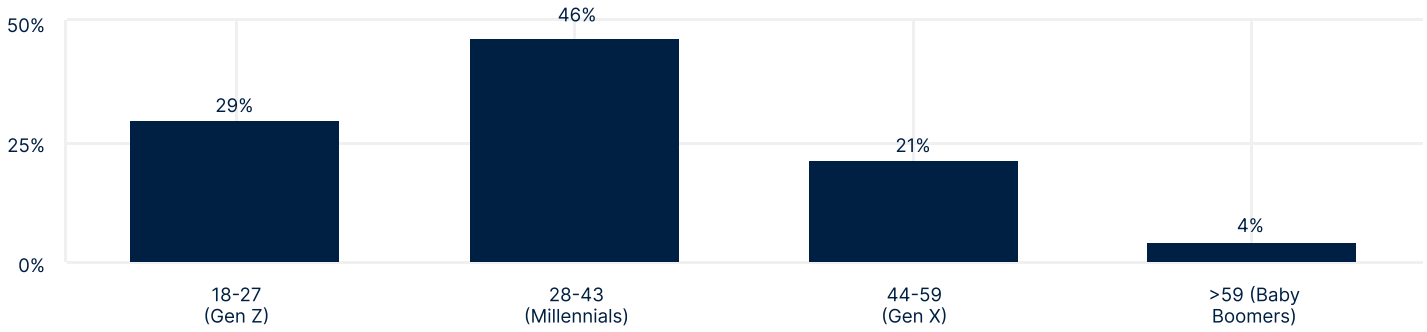
Note: From 2017-2022, "male" and "female" were response options instead of "man" and "woman." In 2023, we revised our survey demographic questions to be more inclusive.

Do you identify as transgender?



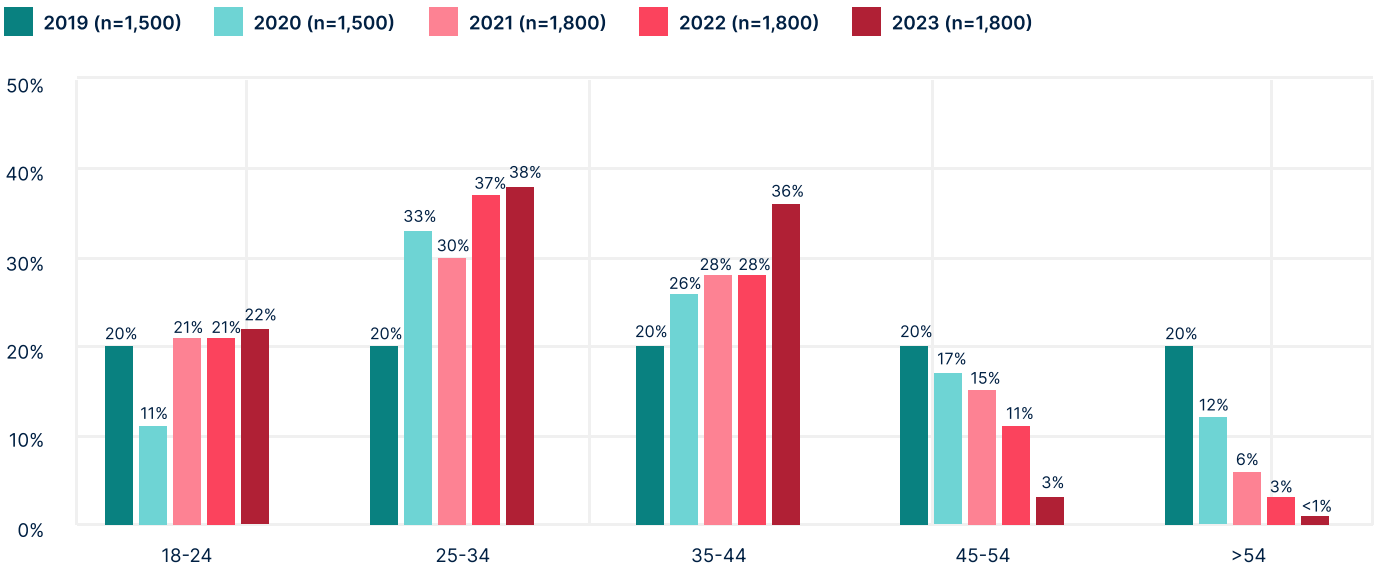
Age: 2024 Report*

2024 (n=1,001)

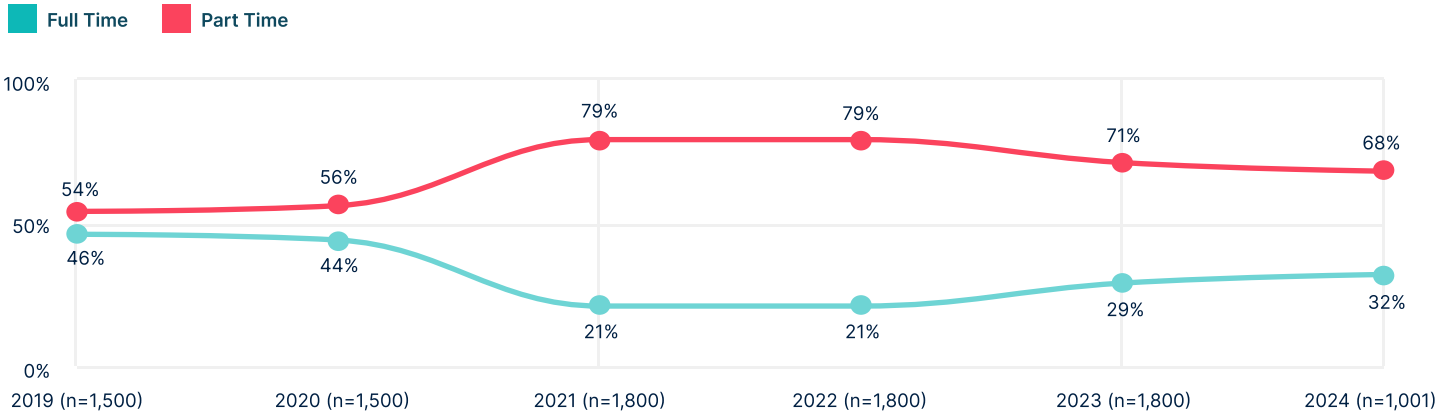


*Age categories reconfigured in 2024 to reflect age ranges by generation. Data related to age collected in previous years is presented below.

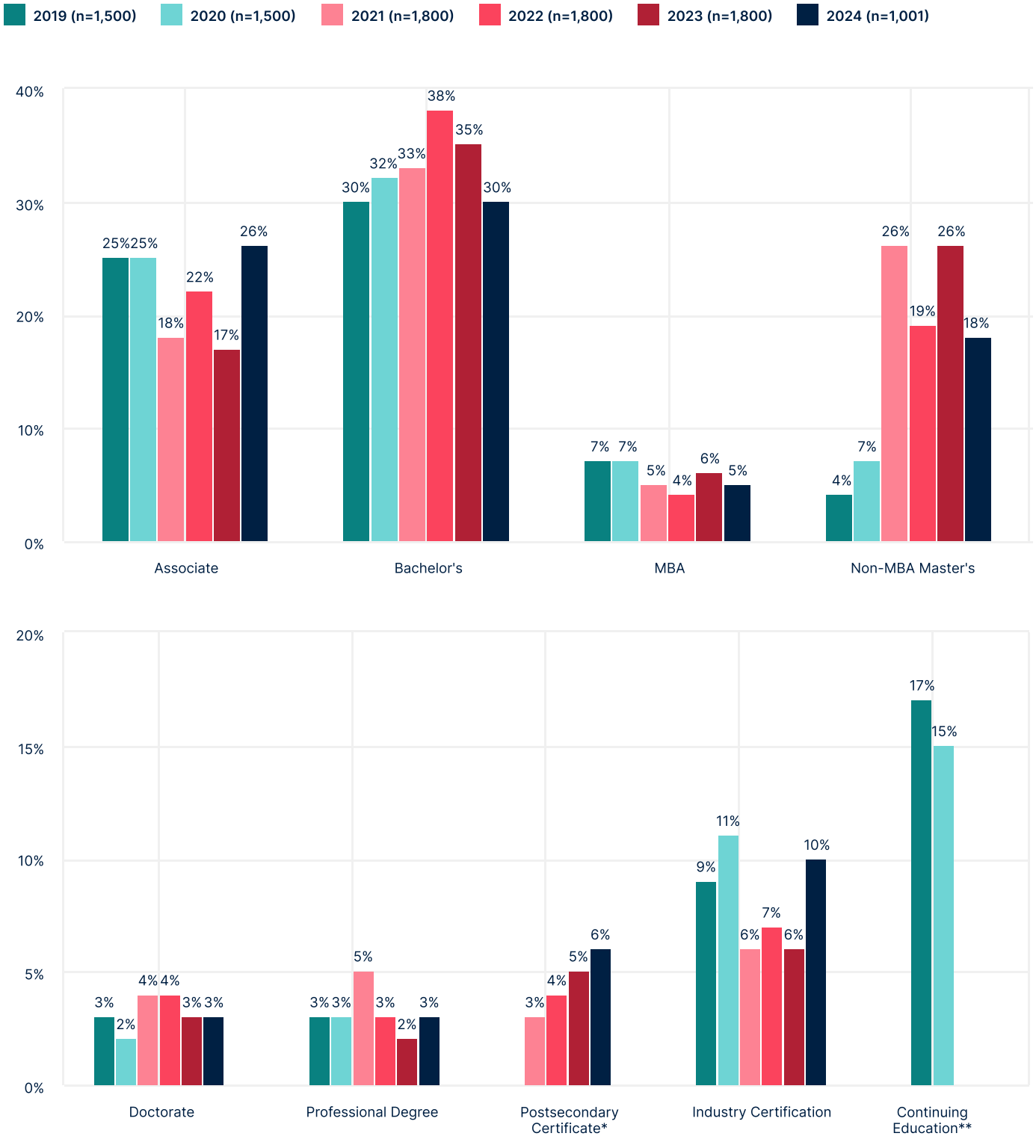
Age: 2019-2023 Reports



Enrollment Status



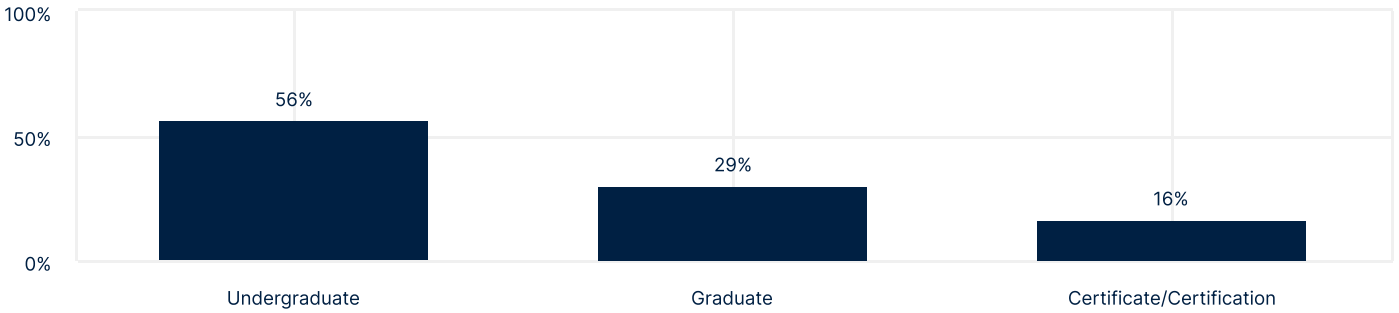
Online Degree Pursuing, Completed, or Interested In



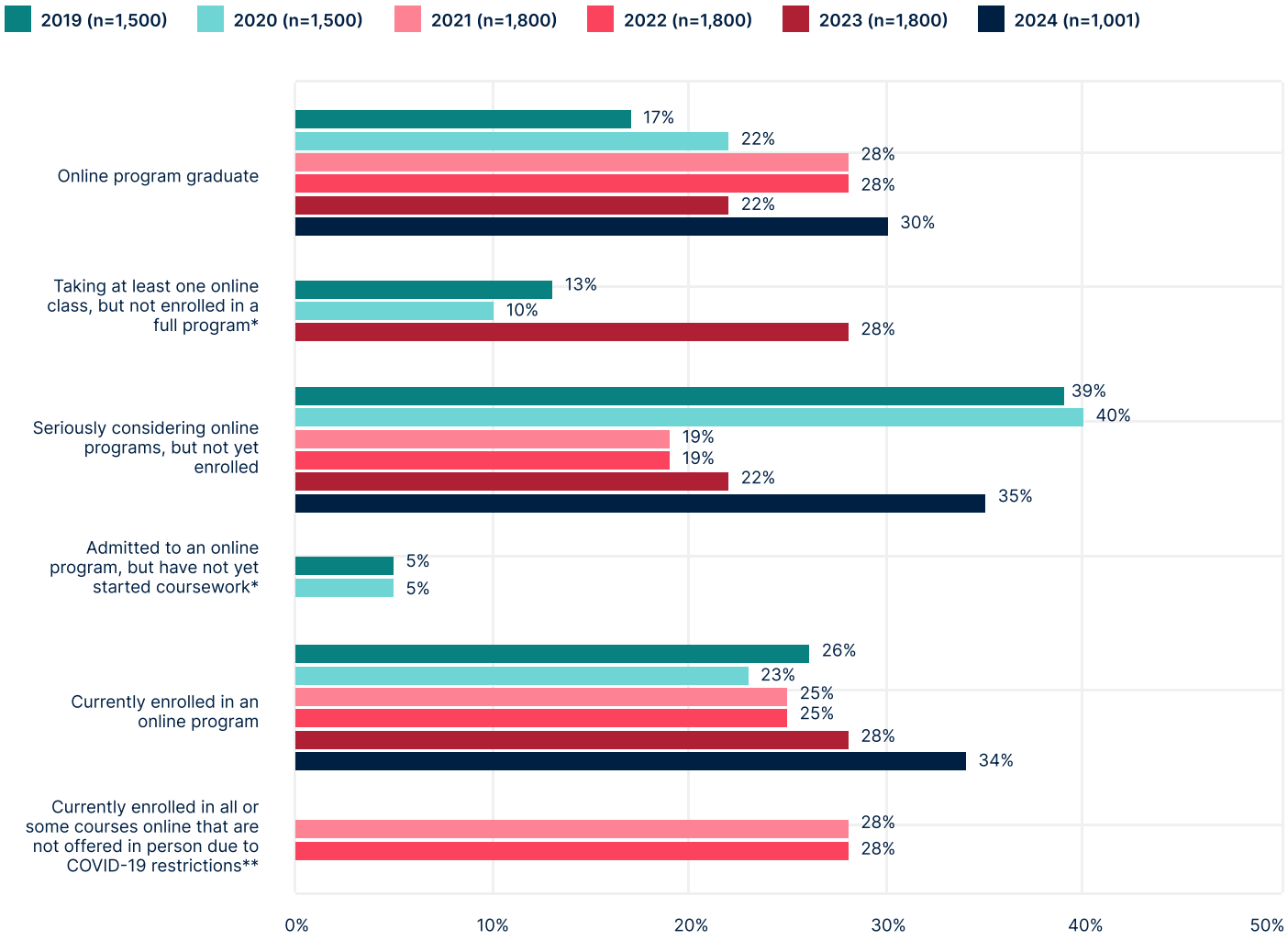
*Response option added in 2021. **Response option removed in 2021.

Enrollment Level

2024 (n=1,001)

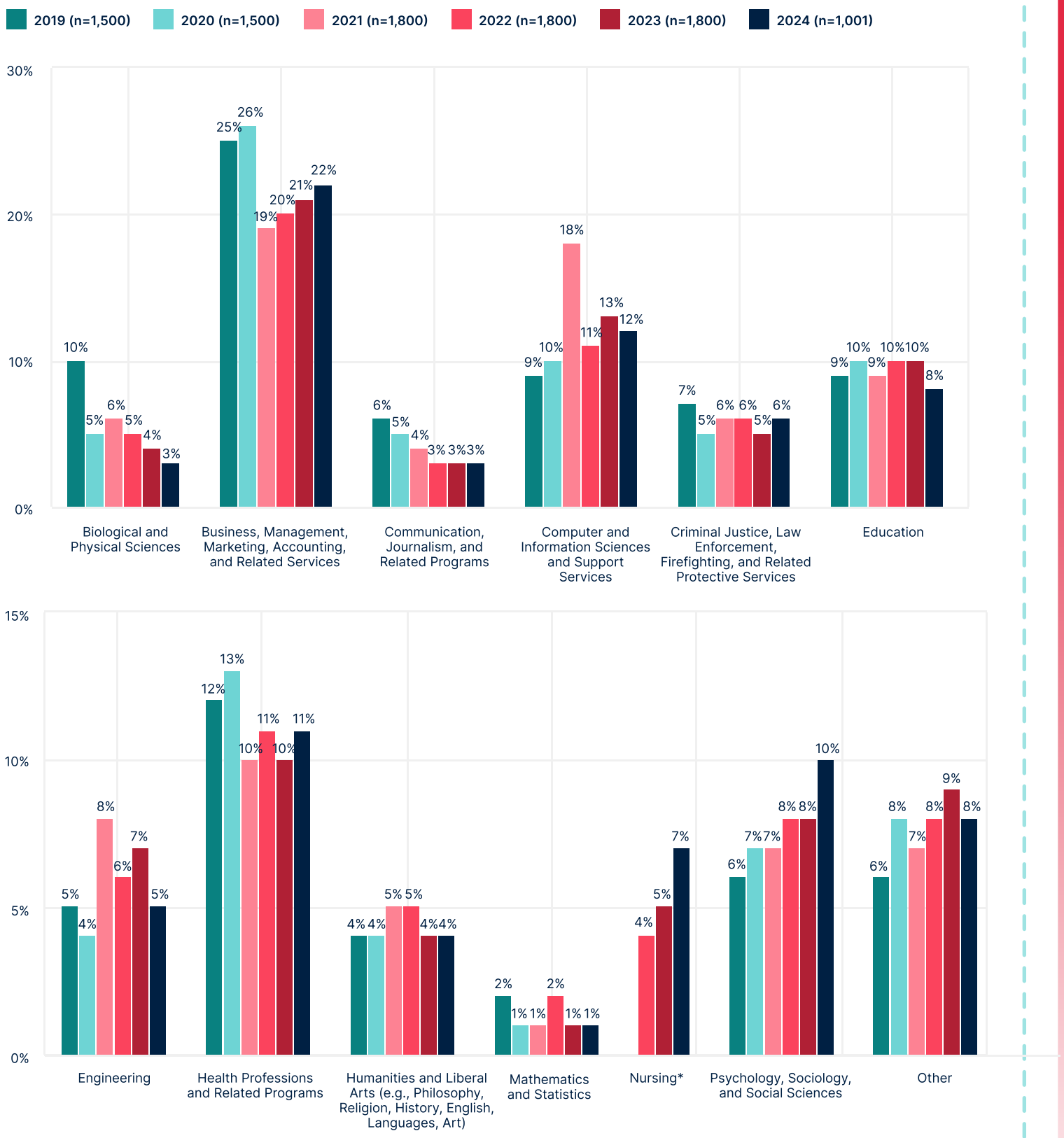


Student Status



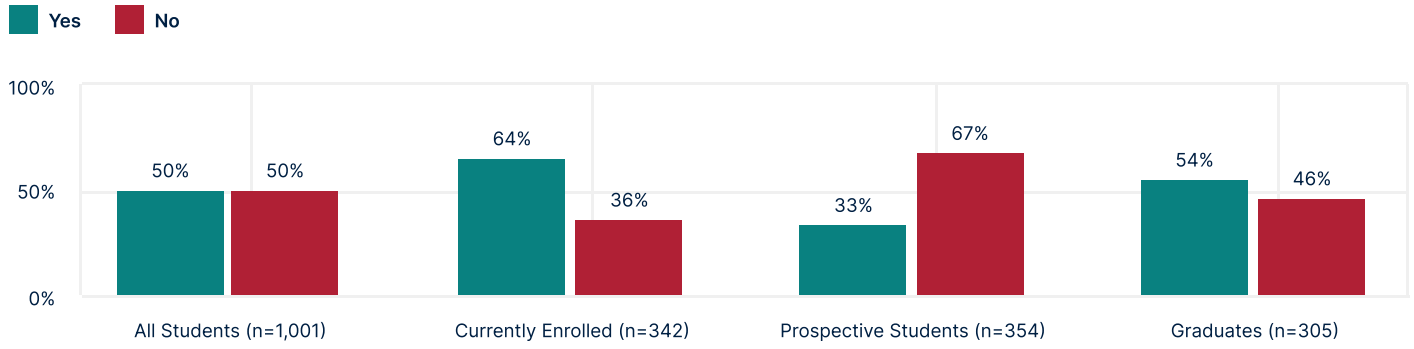
*Response option removed in 2021, returned in 2023, removed in 2024. **Response option removed in 2021. ***Response option added in 2021, removed in 2023.

Field of Study/Intended Field of Study

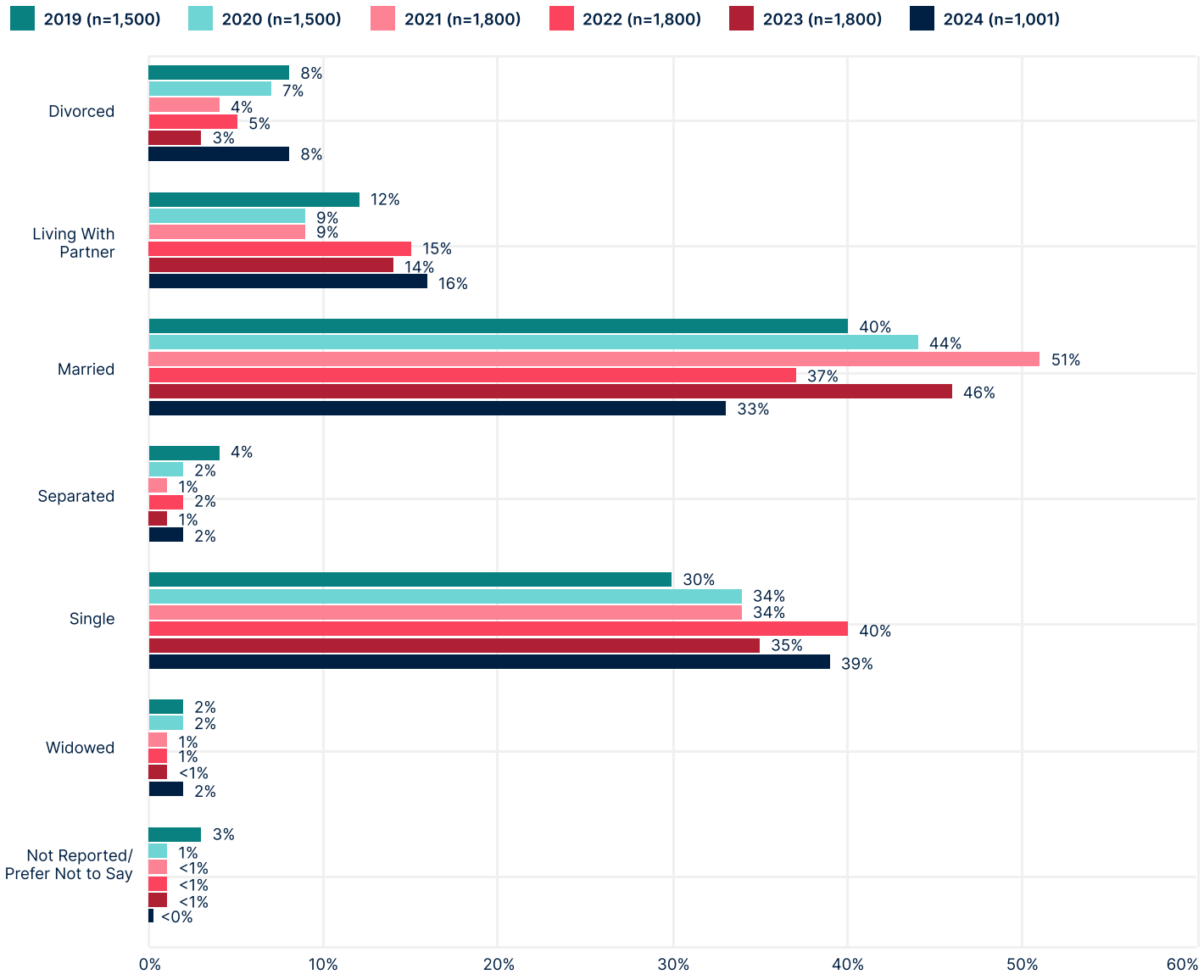


*Response option added in 2022. Prior to 2022 included in "Health Professions and Related Programs."

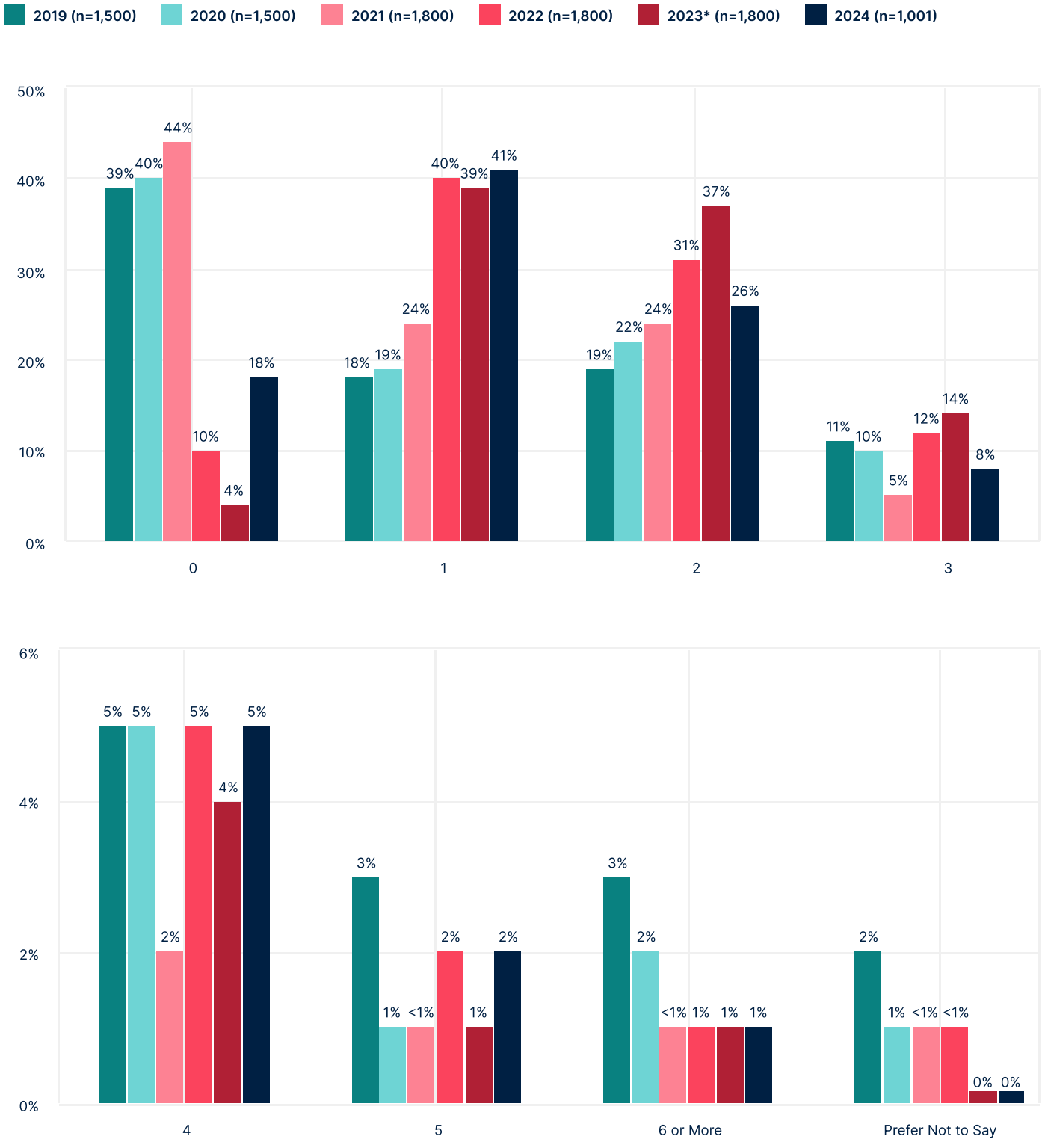
First-Generation Status - 2024



Marital Status

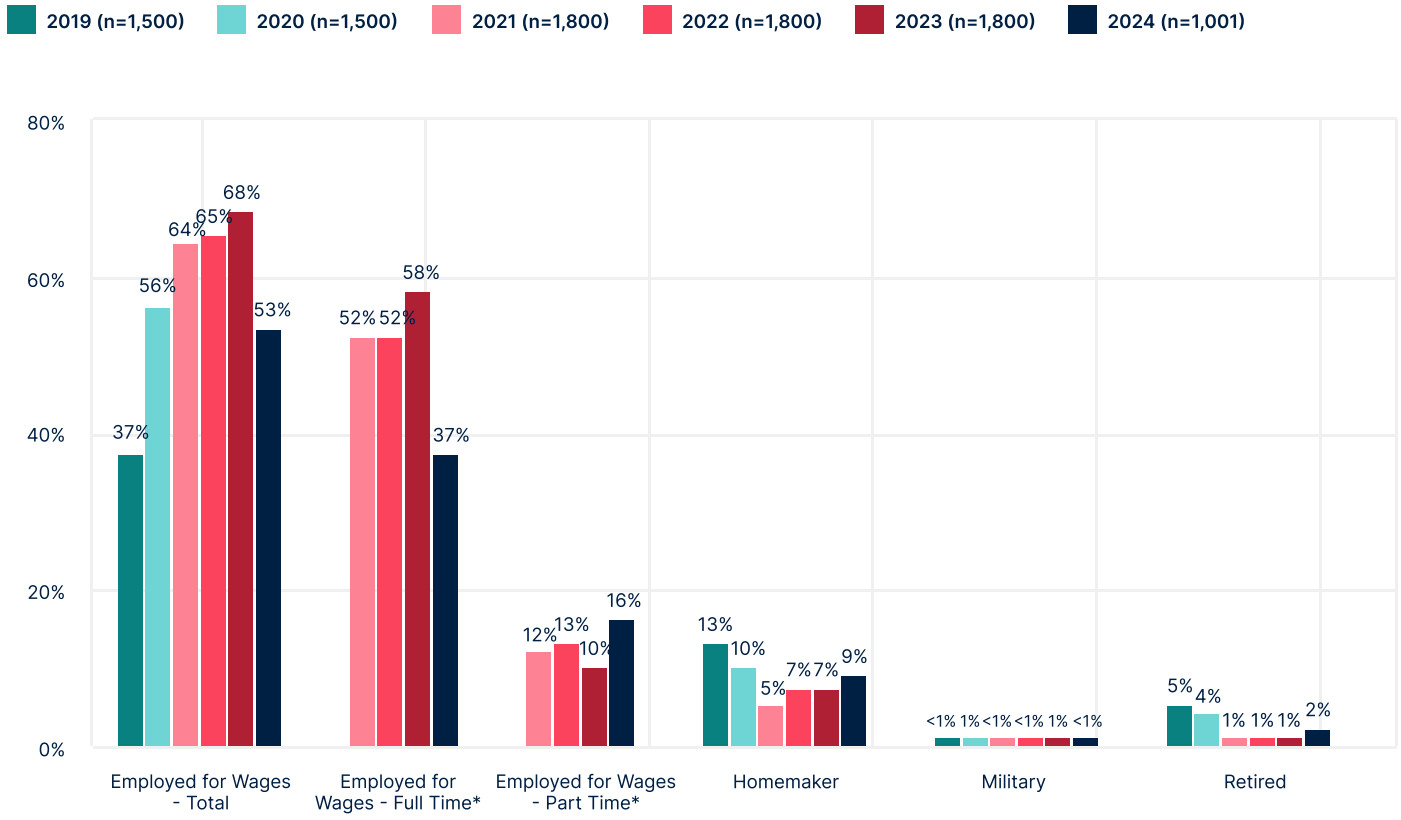


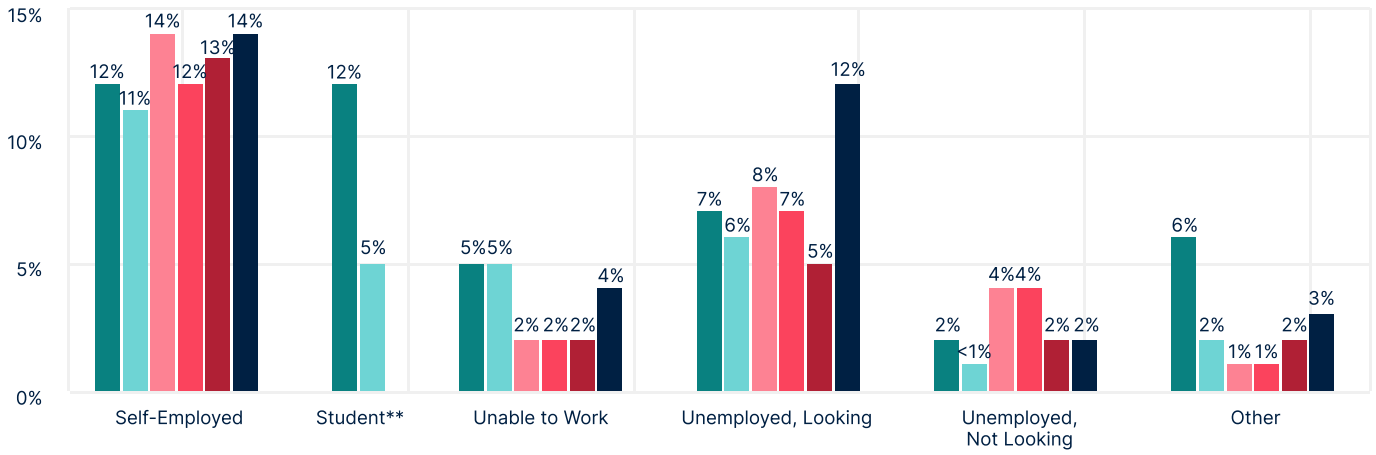
Number of Children



*Survey item revised in 2021 to reflect the number of children under the age of 18 living at home.

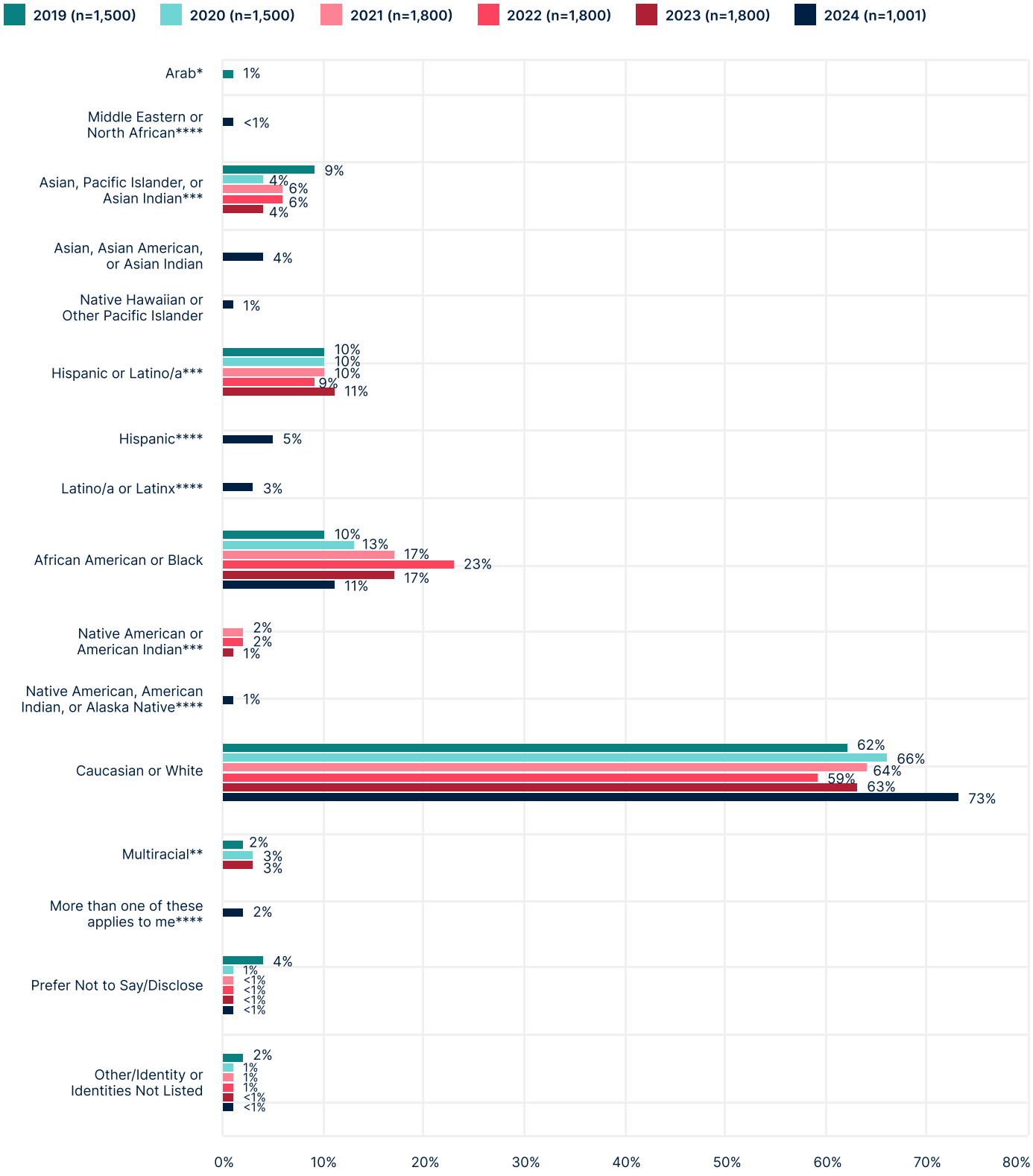
Employment Status





*Response option added in 2021. **Response option removed in 2021.

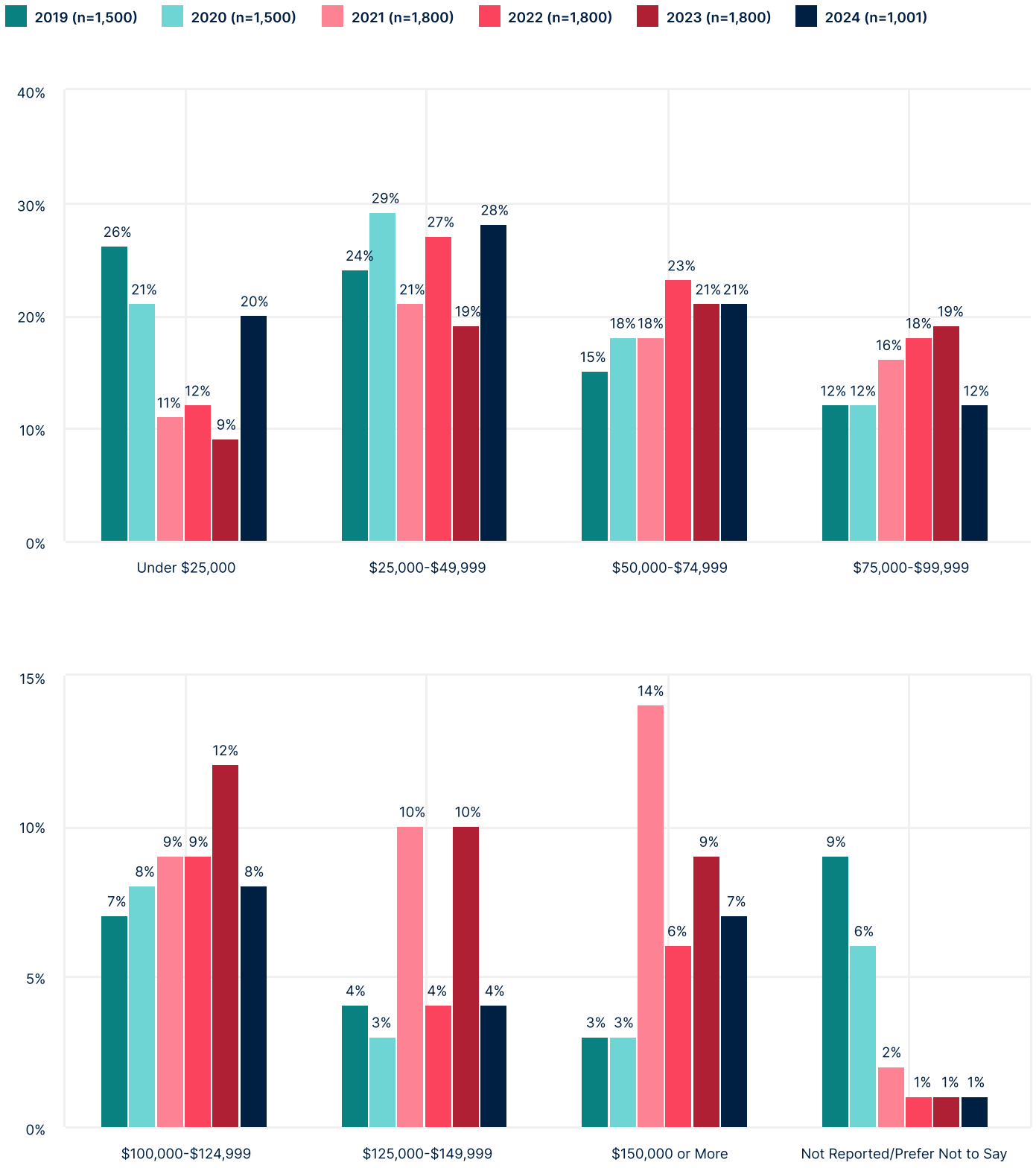
Race/Ethnicity

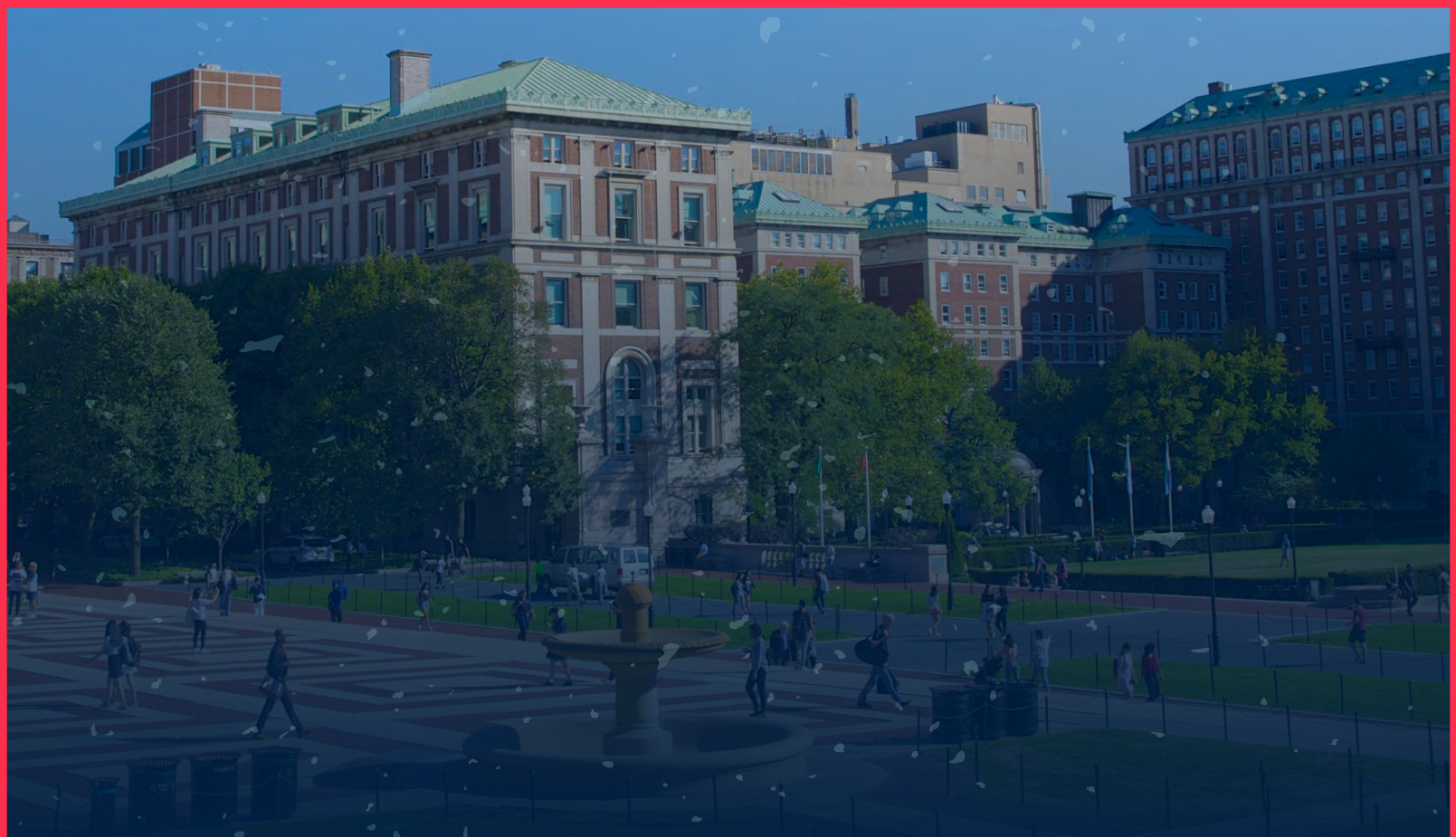


*Response option removed in 2021. **Response option removed in 2021, returned in 2023, removed in 2024.

***Response option removed in 2024. ****Response option added in 2024.

Annual Household Income





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