



**MAGUIRE
ASSOCIATES**

*Advancing
Higher Education
Through Insight
and Innovation*

Analyzing Students' College Choices in a Time of Change

**National Association for College Admission Counseling
58th National Conference
September 27, 2002**

Moderators:

**Kathy Dawley, Maguire Associates
Baird Johnson, Fastweb**

Panelists:

**Bob Massa, Dickinson College
Barbara Fritz, Gettysburg College
Rich Avitabile, (formerly) NYU
Sharon Alston, American University**

Session Overview: Using Student & Parent Feedback and Practitioner Insights to Explore:

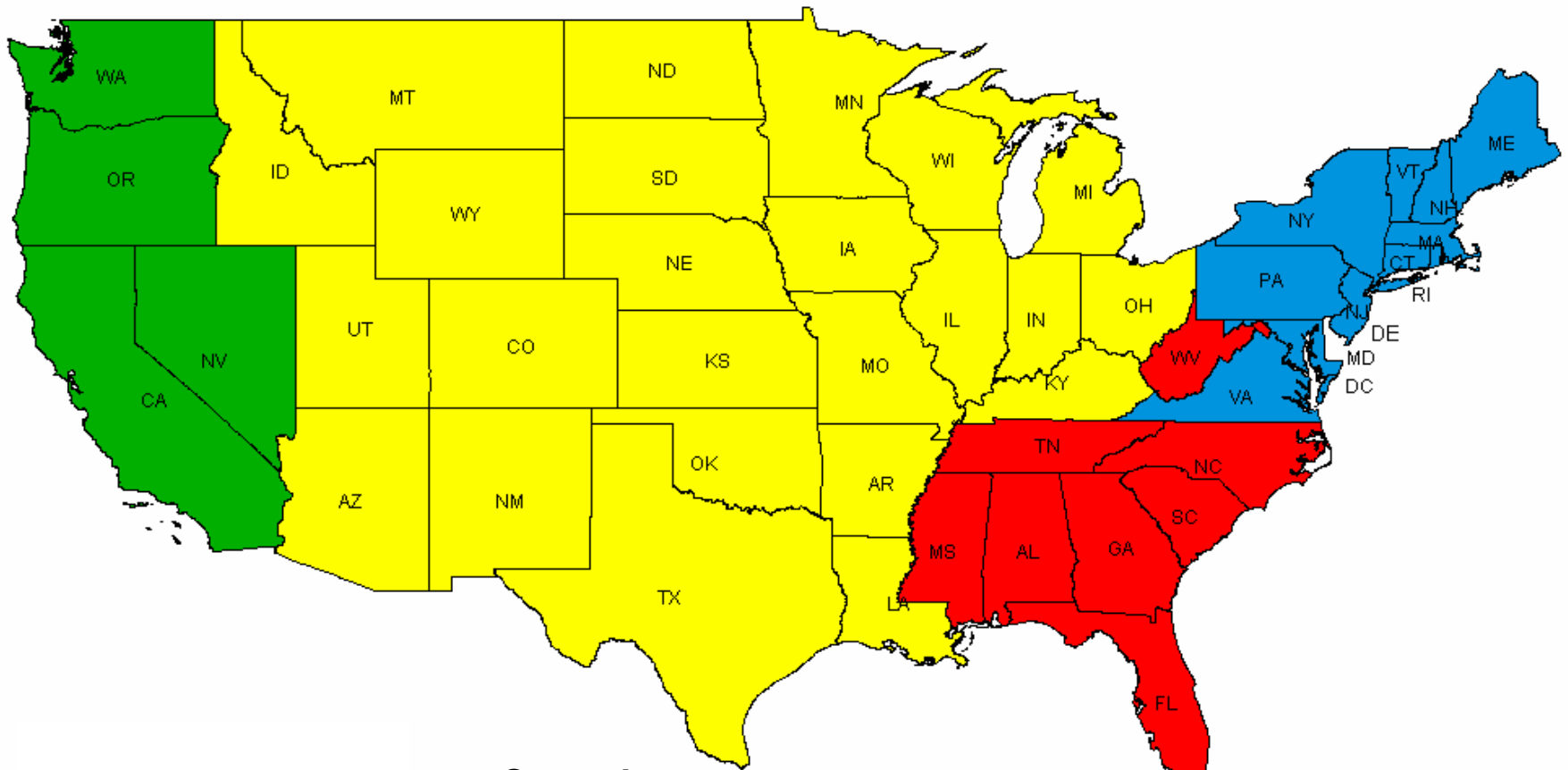
- The Role of the Economy
- The Role of Parents
- Geographic Diversity
- Ethnic & Socioeconomic Diversity

The 2002 College Decision Impact Survey: Methodology

- On-line survey executed by Maguire Associates in partnership with FastWeb
- Sample: FastWeb database of students
- Recruited via e-mail
- Screened to identify seniors in high school who are thinking about attending college in next year or two
- March 2002: 73,307 high school seniors surveyed
- June/July 2002: 21,112 students and 9,363 parents completed a follow-up survey
- Incentive: Drawing for a \$500 scholarship

Geography: State of Residency

(n=73,307 students)



West

18%

n=12,898
CA, OR, WA,
NV, AK, HI

Central

43%

n=31,900

UT, MN, WI, IL, IN, OH, NE, NM,
AZ, CO, OK, KS, MO, LA, TX, AR,
MT, IA, ID, KY, ND, SD, WY, MI

Southeast

16%

n=11,669

AL, TN, GA, FL,
NC, MS, SC, WV

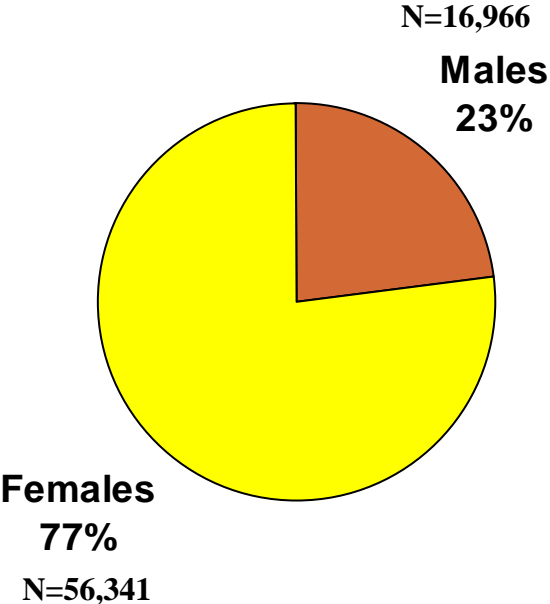
Northeast

23%

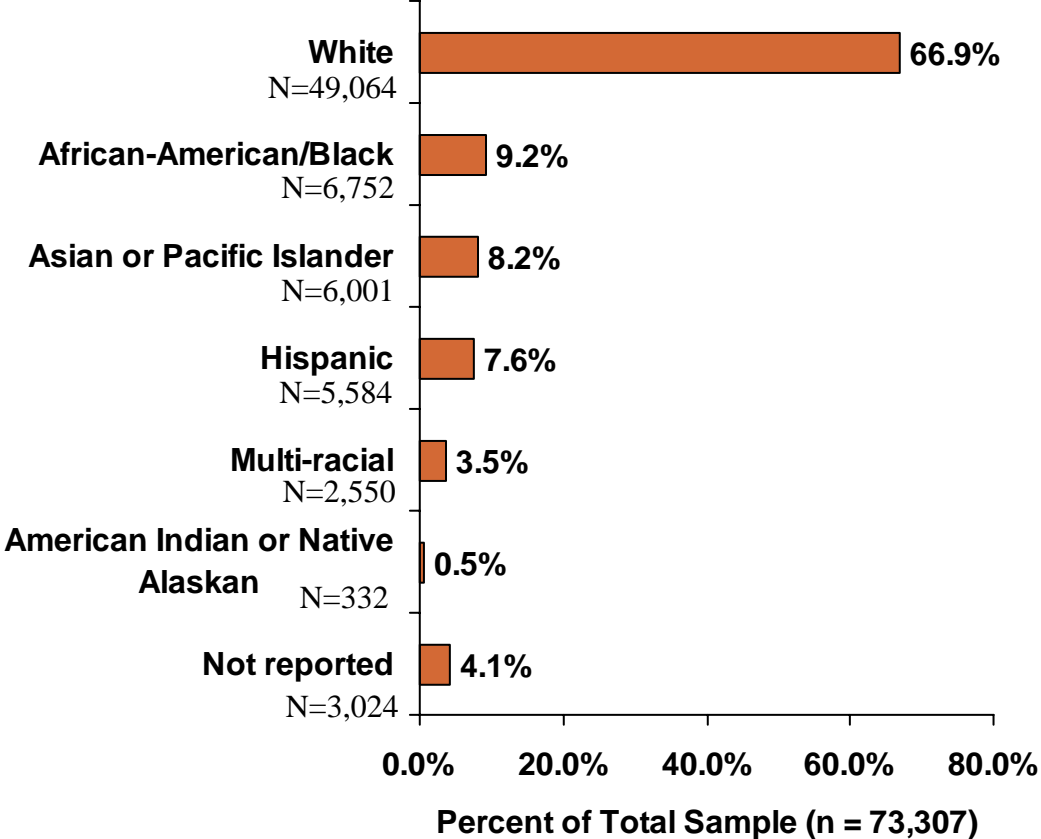
n=16,801

PA, NJ, NY, MD,
DC, MA, CT, VA,
NH, VT, ME, RI, DE

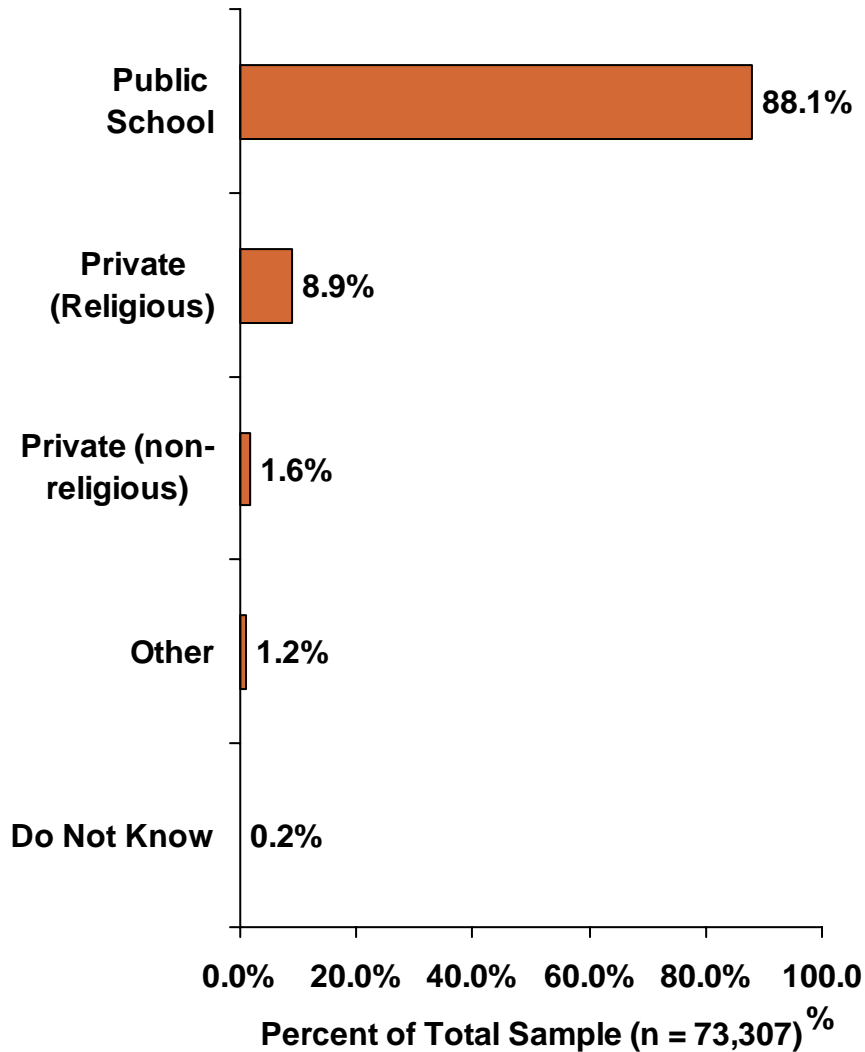
Gender



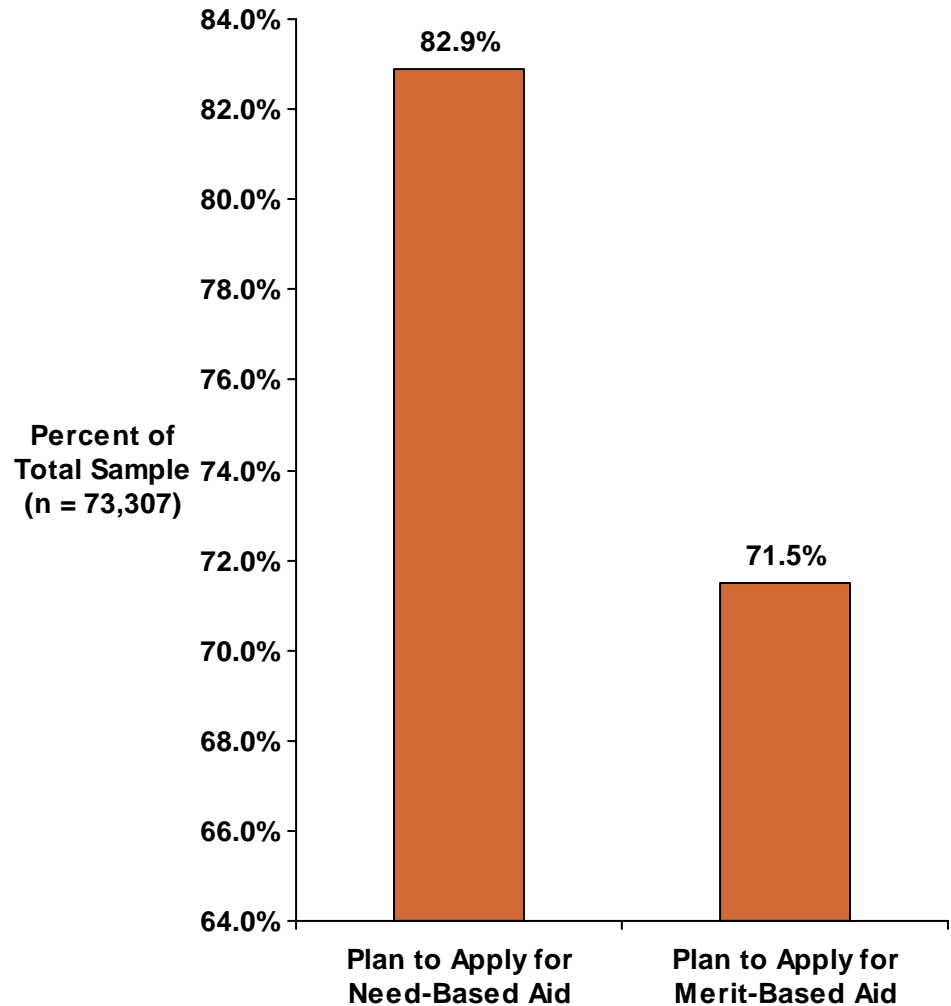
Ethnicity



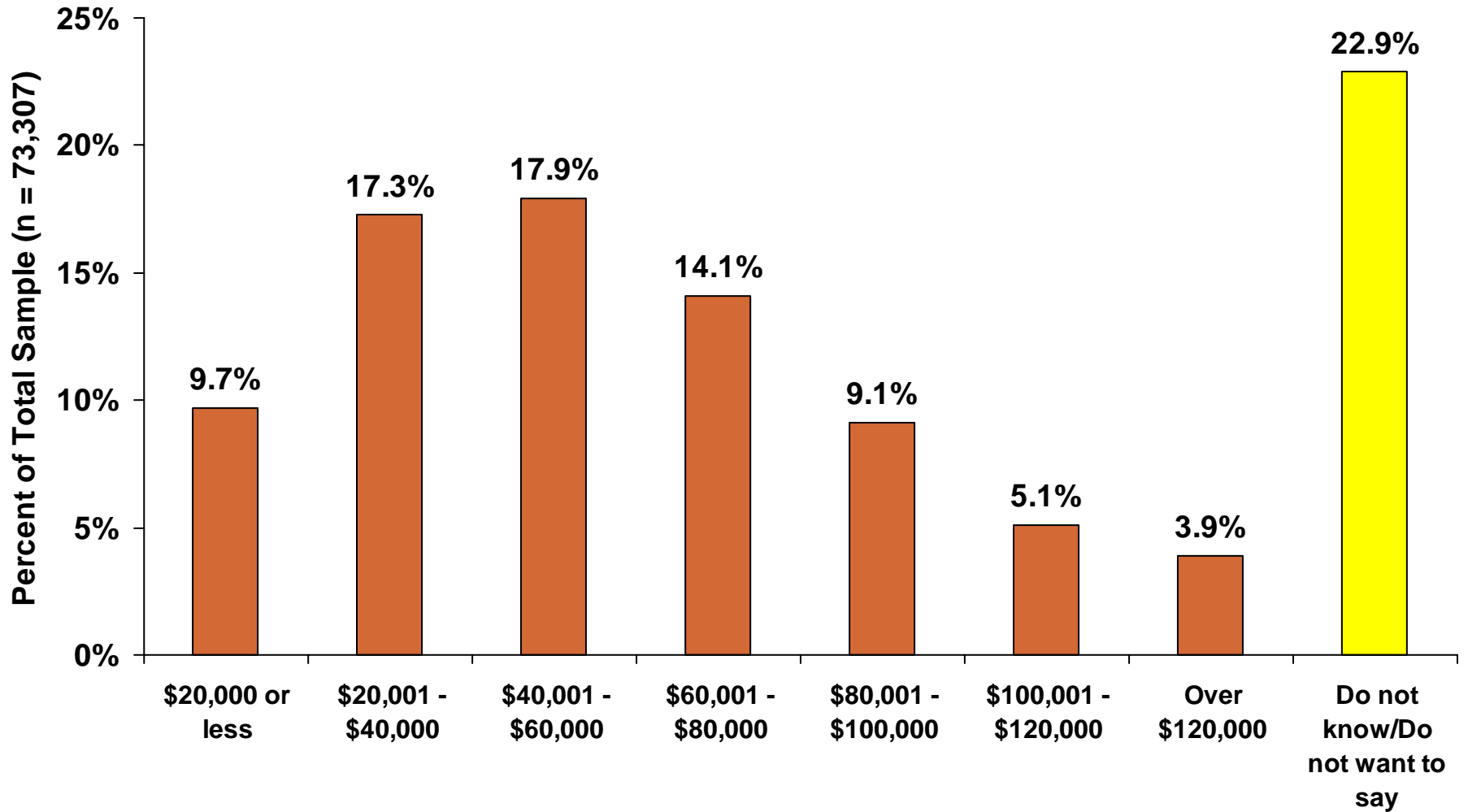
Type of High School



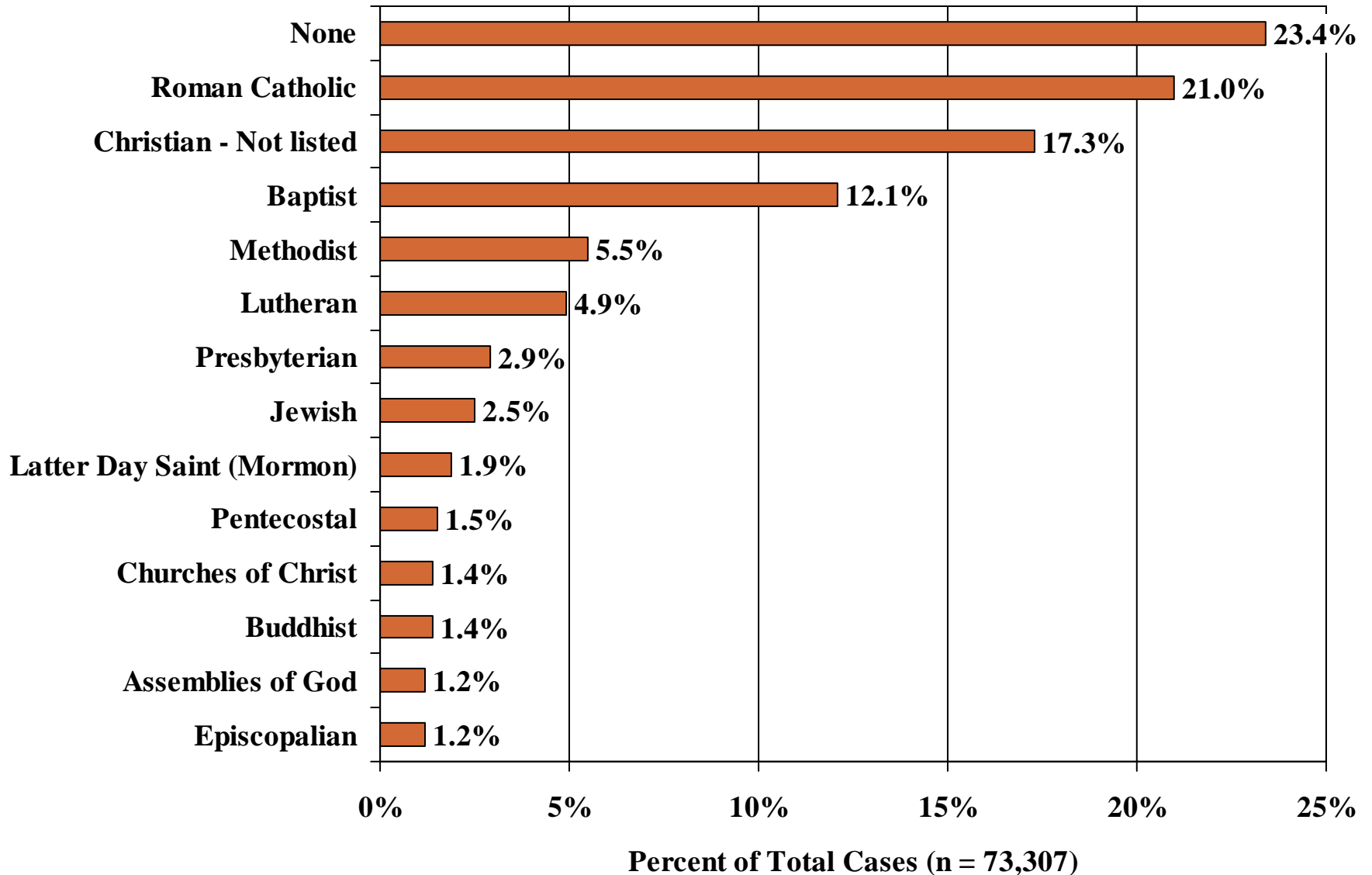
Plan to Apply for Aid?



Family Income



Religion - Top Responses

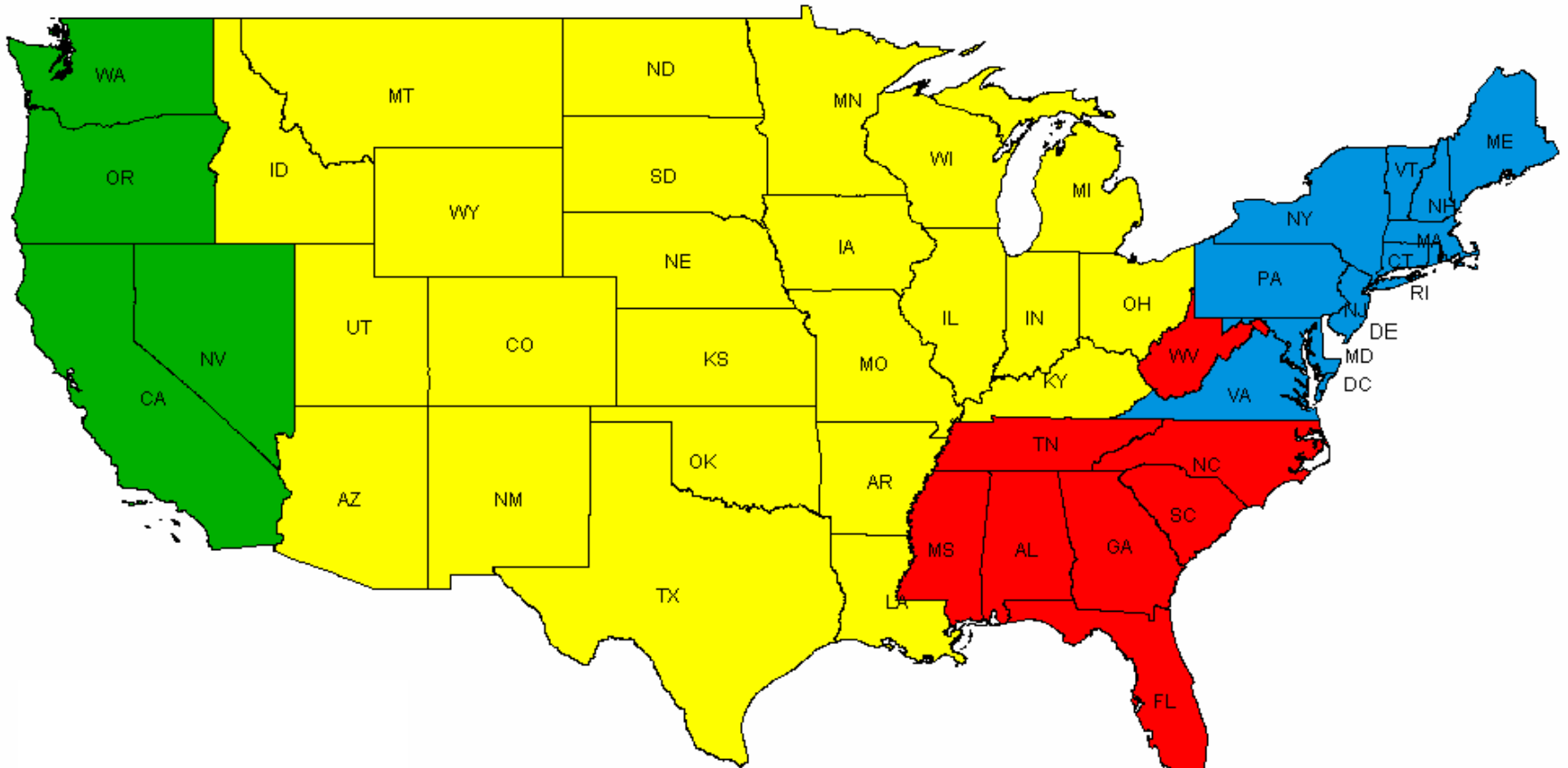


Academic Ability of the Students

	<u>Mean</u>	
High School GPA	3.51	
PSAT – Math	57.8	
PSAT – Verbal	57.1	
SAT – Verbal	569	} Composite = 1149
SAT – Math	580	
ACT	24.3	

Geography: Parents' State of Residency

(n=9,286 parents)



West

17%

CA, OR, WA,
NV, AK, HI

Central

46%

UT, MN, WI, IL, IN, OH, NE, NM,
AZ, CO, OK, KS, MO, LA, TX, AR,
MT, IA, ID, KY, ND, SD, WY, MI

Southeast

16%

AL, TN, GA, FL,
NC, MS, SC, WV

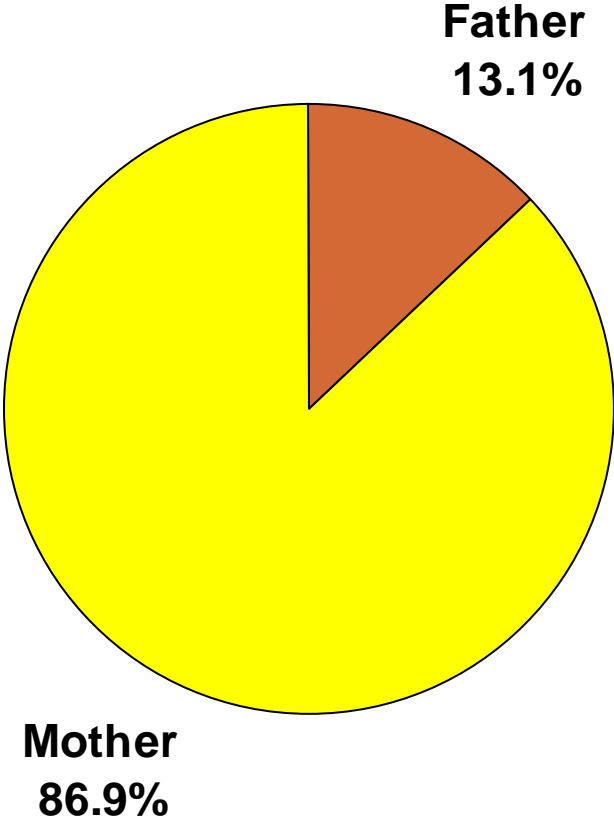
Northeast

22%

PA, NJ, NY, MD,
DC, MA, CT, VA,
NH, VT, ME, RI, DE

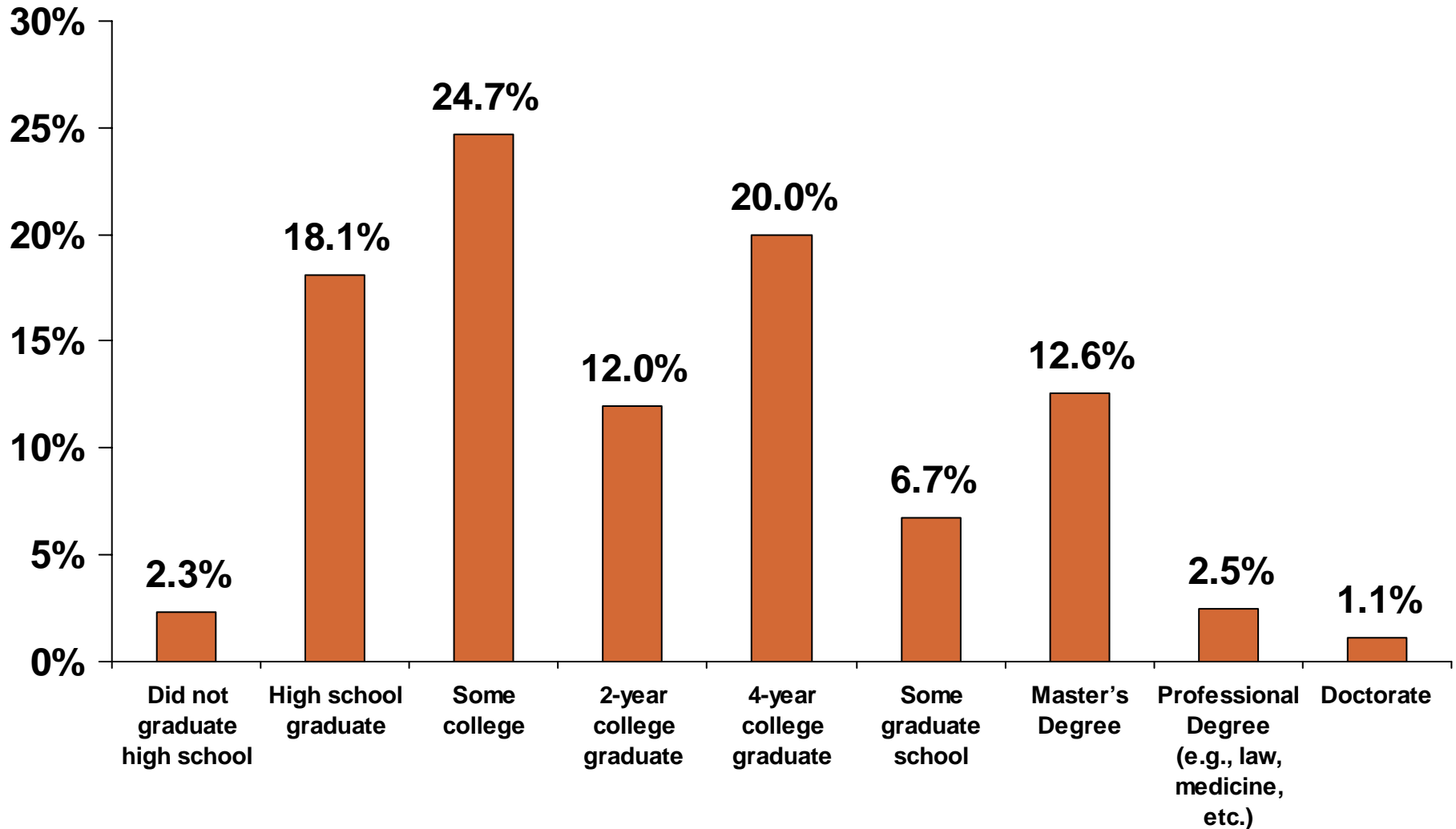
Gender of Parents

(n = 9,147)



Highest Level of Education of Parents

(n = 9,147)



Effect of the U.S. Economy

Commentator:

Bob Massa
Dickinson College

In general, students' concerns about the economy lessened between the application stage and final enrollment. Economic concerns vary considerably by region of the country and income and ethnic profiles. Higher-ability students are less influenced by the economy.

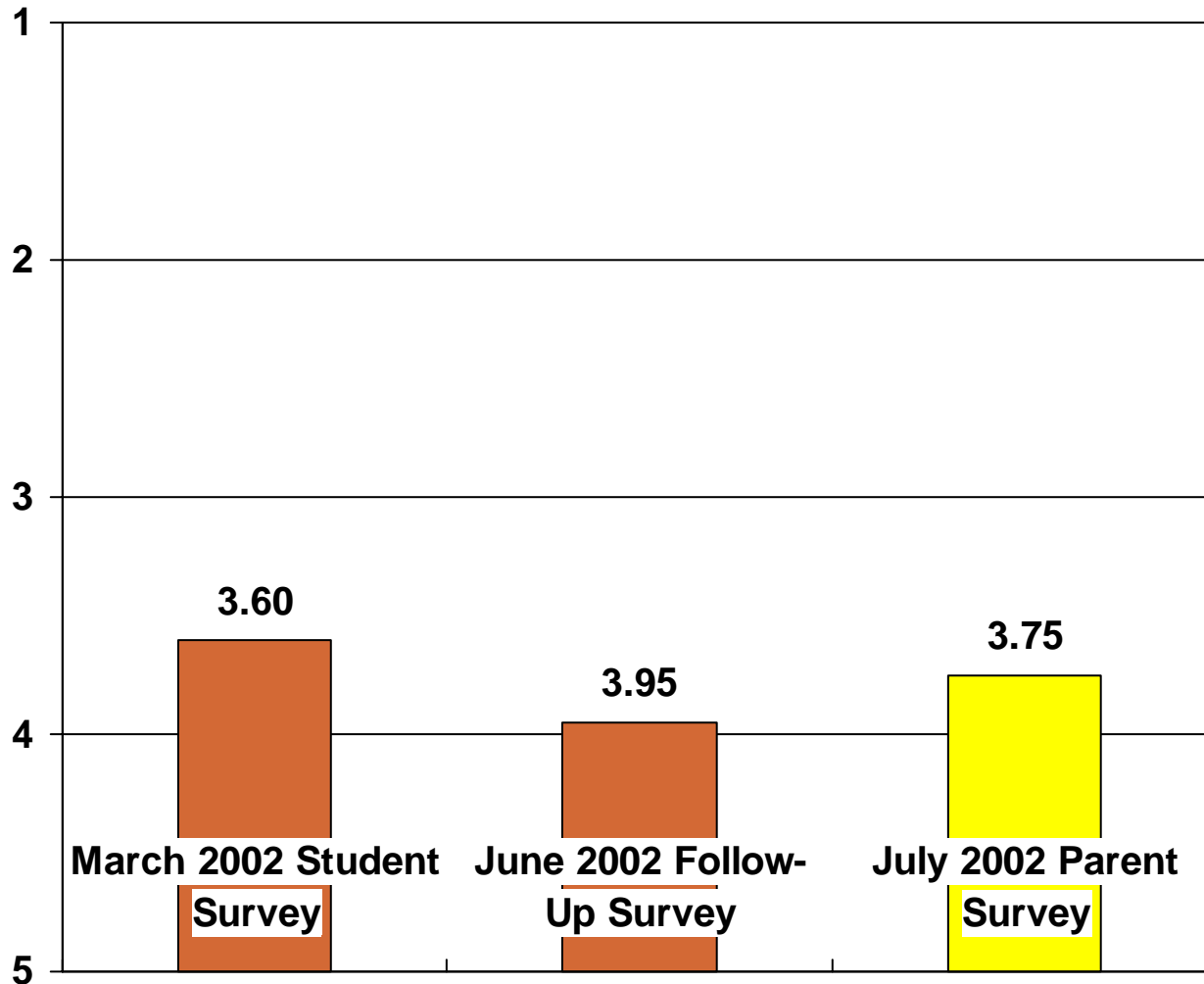
Compared to the national average, the economy is of greatest concern among students from:

- Most states in the South
- New Jersey

The economy is of moderately greater concern among students from:

- New York
- Illinois

Influence of the State of the U.S. Economy on the College Decision Process

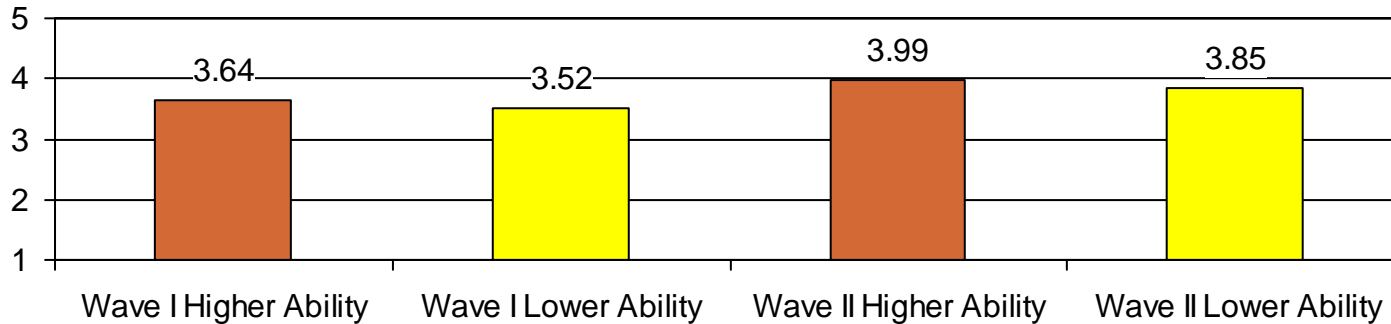


- Overall, while students and their parents are somewhat concerned about the economy, they expect that their college decisions will be relatively unaffected by those perceptions.
- Between March and June 2002, students seem to indicate that the economy had less of an effect on their school choice process.
- There are no meaningful differences by selectivity of first-choice school.
- Among students whose first choice is very or most selective, no meaningful differences are found in terms of students' residency (Northeast vs. other).

Scale: 1 = Will/Did Heavily Influence Choice/Preference and 5 = Will/Did Not at All Influence Choice/Preference

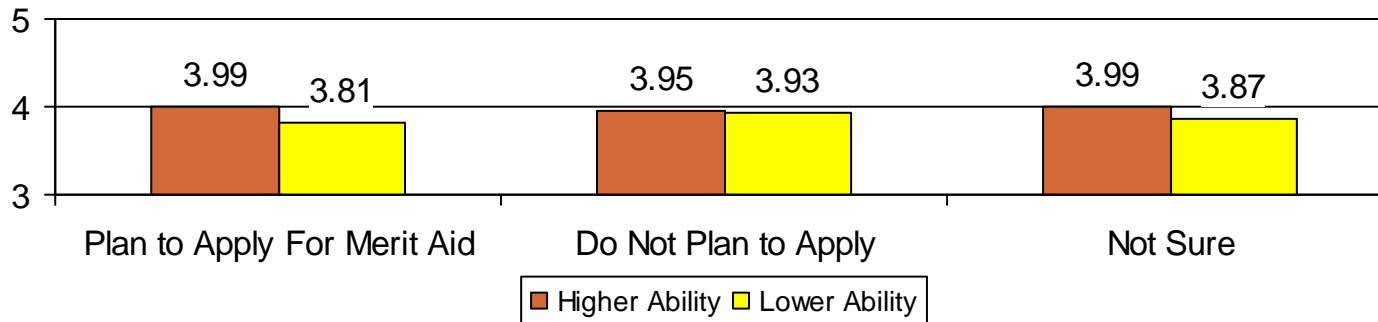
Differences in Profile of Students in Terms of Influence of U.S. Economy

Level of Influence of Perceptions of the Economy on College Selection



Lower ability students (GPA < 3.50) are more influenced by the economy.

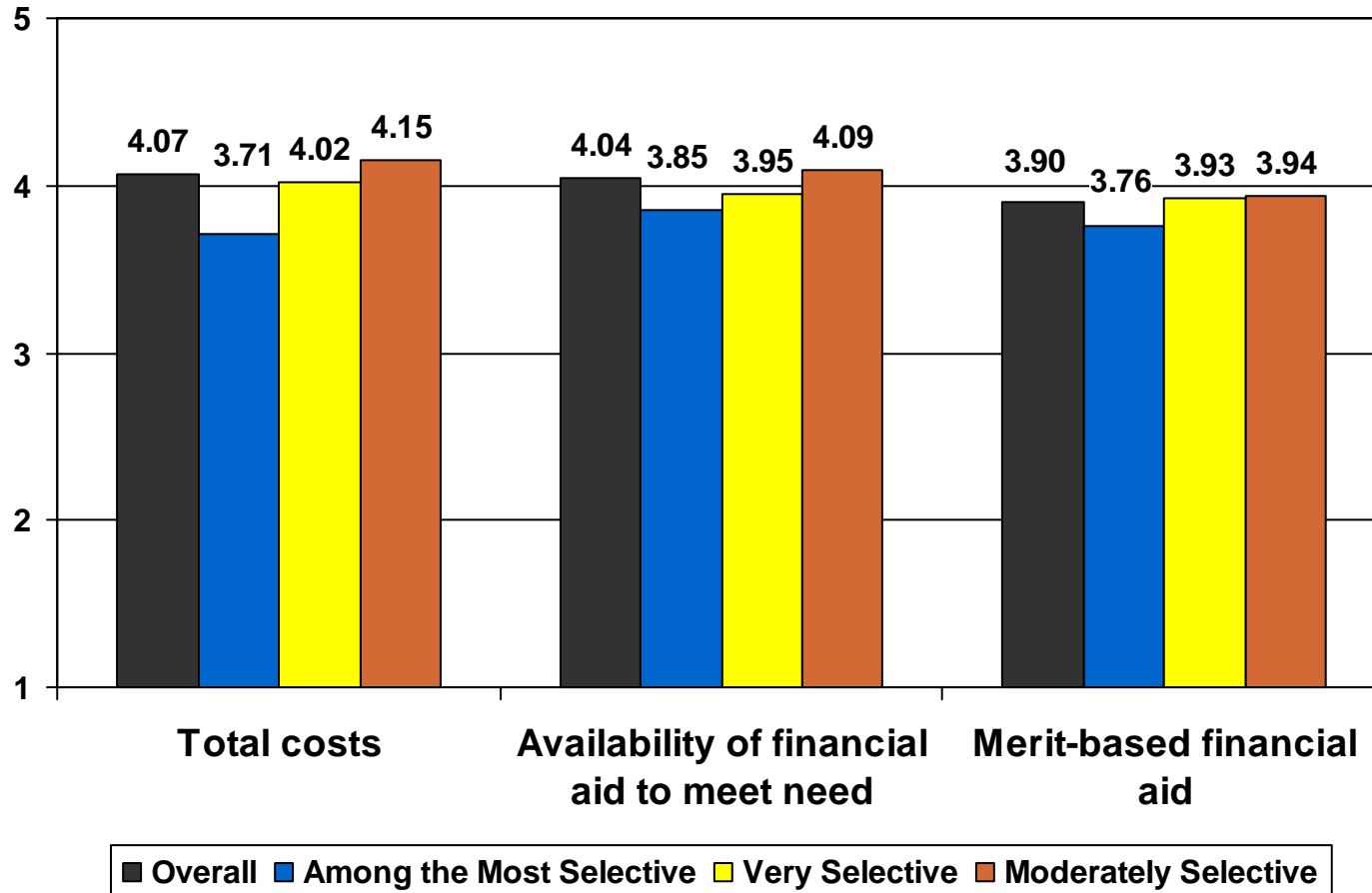
Influence of Perceptions of the U.S. Economy on Final College Selection by Whether or Not Intend to Apply for Merit-Based Financial Aid



Among those who do not plan to apply for financial aid, there is no difference in the perceived influence of the U.S. economy on students college choice.

Role of Total Costs and Financial Aid in College Choice Decision Making

Importance of Selected Characteristics by the Selectivity of Students' First-Choice School



The more selective a student's first-choice school, the less importance he/she places on total costs and financial aid.

Other Findings:

- Higher ability students place more import on merit-based aid and less on total costs and availability of need-based aid.
- Students who reside outside the Northeast place more importance on total costs and merit-based financial aid.

Scale: 1 = Not at All Important and 5 = Extremely Important

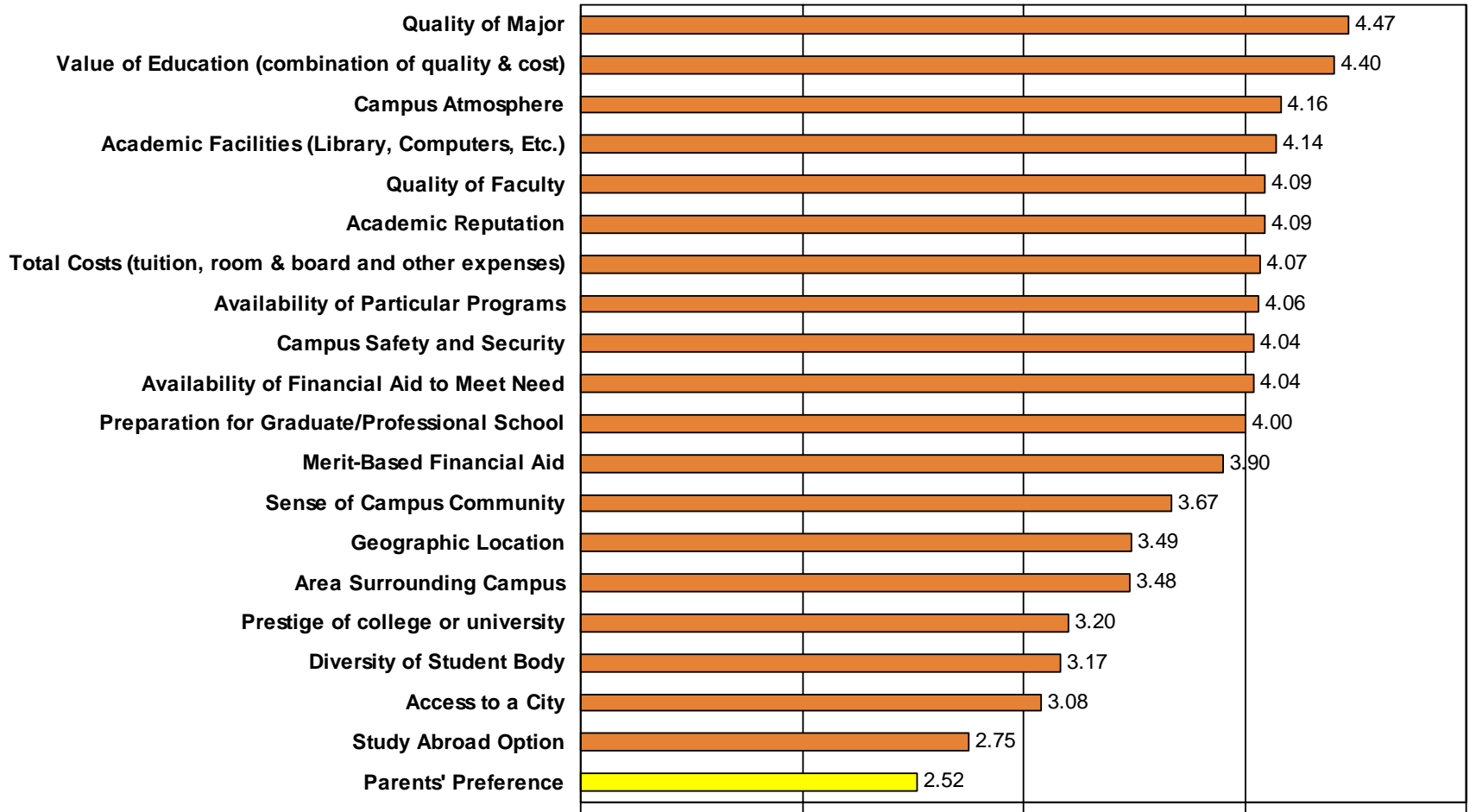
The Role of Parents

Commentator:

Barbara Fritze
Gettysburg College

Parents are concerned about the economy; students who are more attuned to parental input are likely to allow these concerns to influence changes in their preferred institutions.

Among the 20 characteristics tested for importance, parents' preference receives the lowest mean rating:



Scale: 1 = Not at All Important to
5 = Extremely Important

1

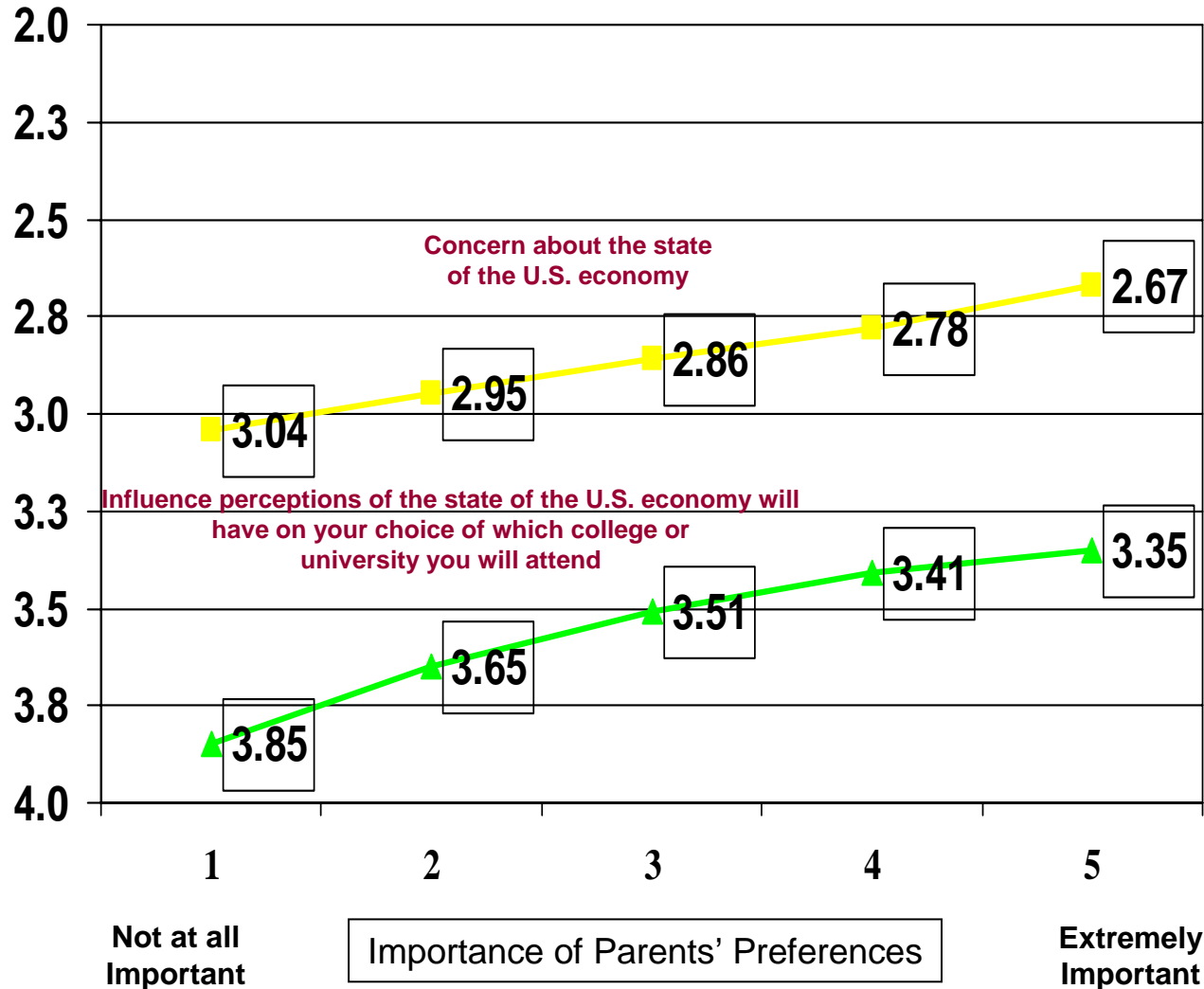
2

3

4

5

Concern and Influence of the State of the U.S. Economy by Students' Assessment of Importance of Parents' Preference

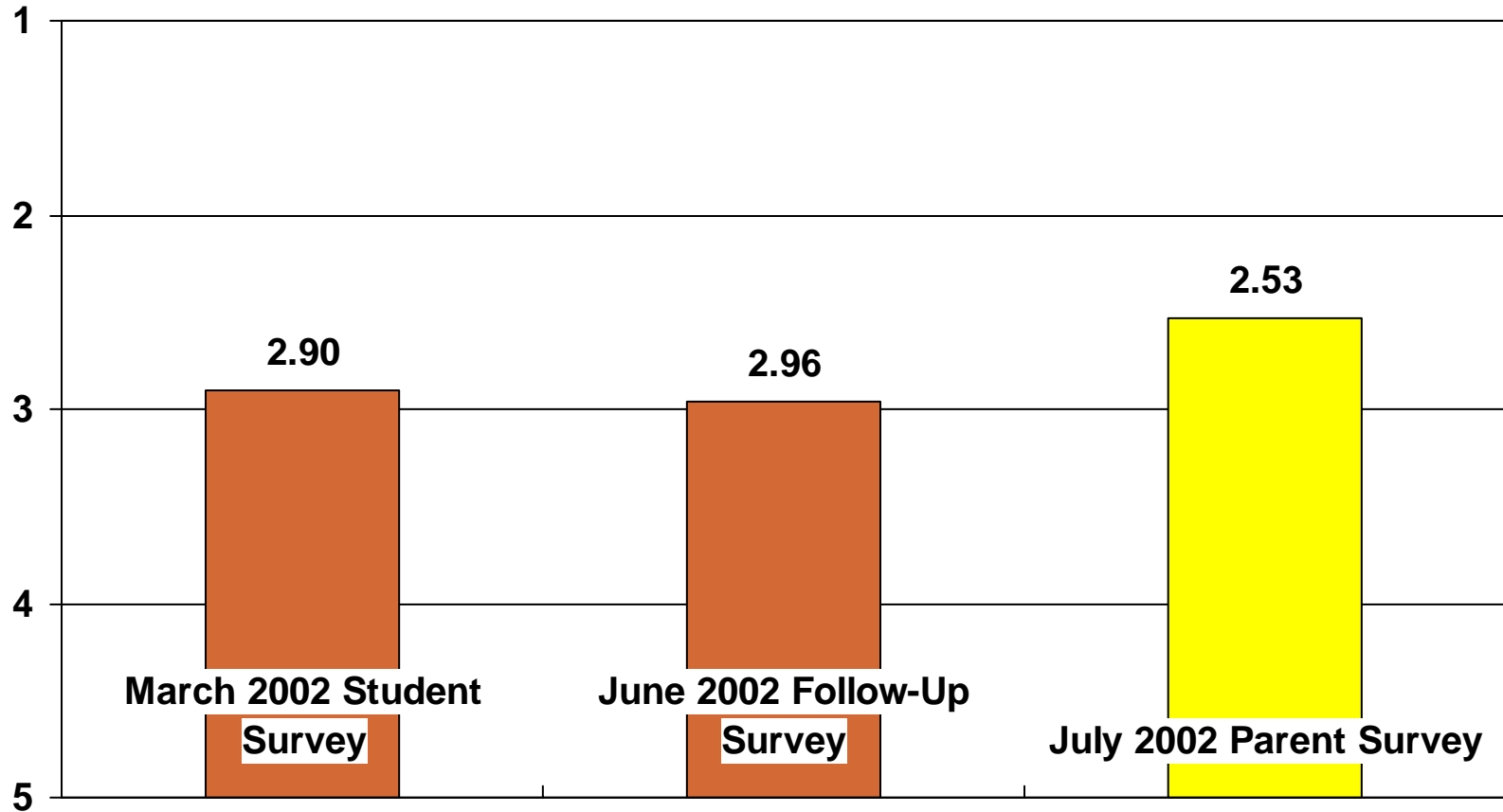


As students evaluate their parents' preference as more important to them, they are more concerned about the economy and rate their perceptions of the state of the U.S. economy as more influential in their decision making.

Scale A: 1 = Extremely Concerned and 5 = Not at All Concerned

Scale B: 1 = Will Heavily Influence Choice and 5 = Will Not at All Influence Choice

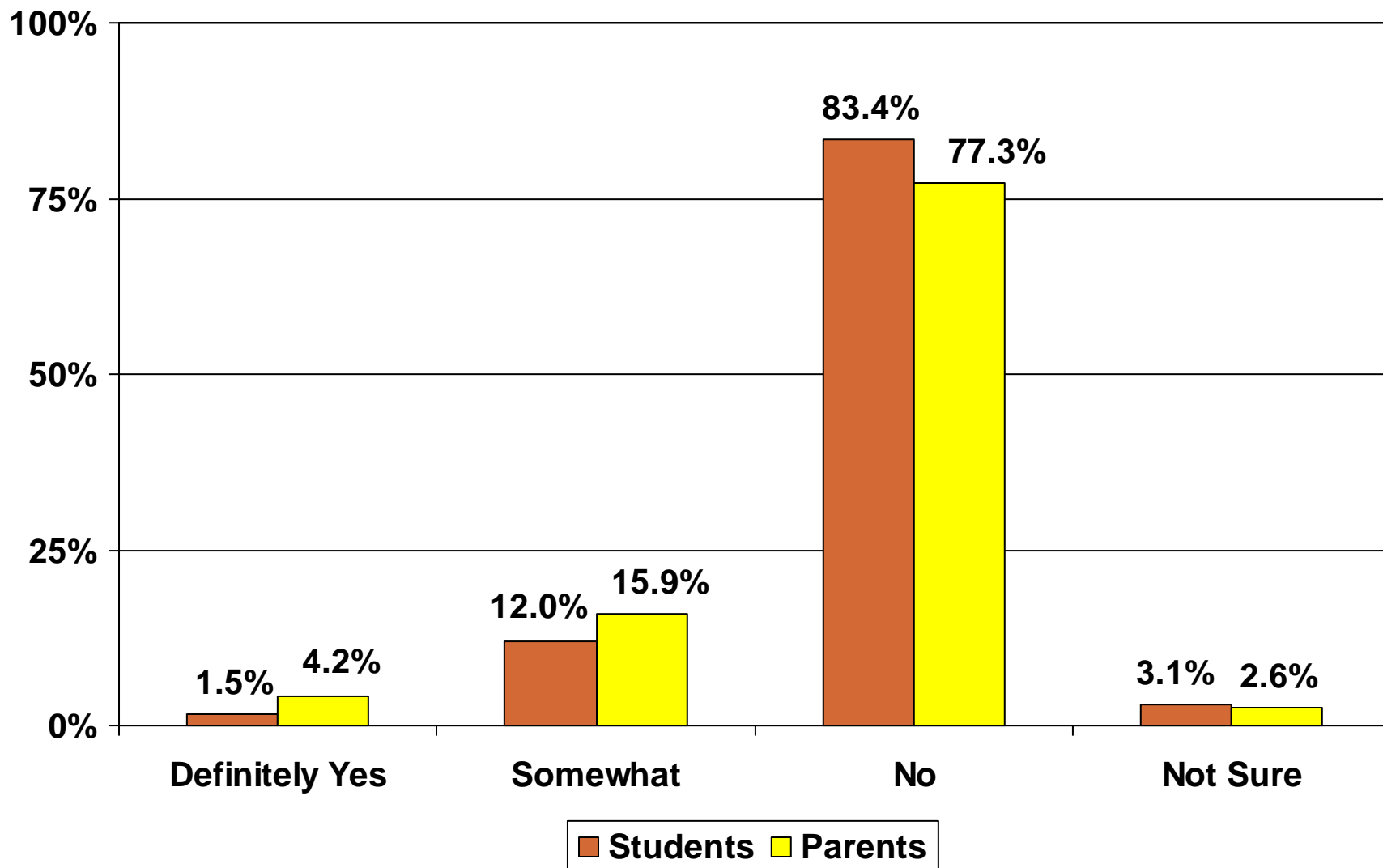
Students' and Parents' Level of Concern Regarding the State of the U.S. Economy



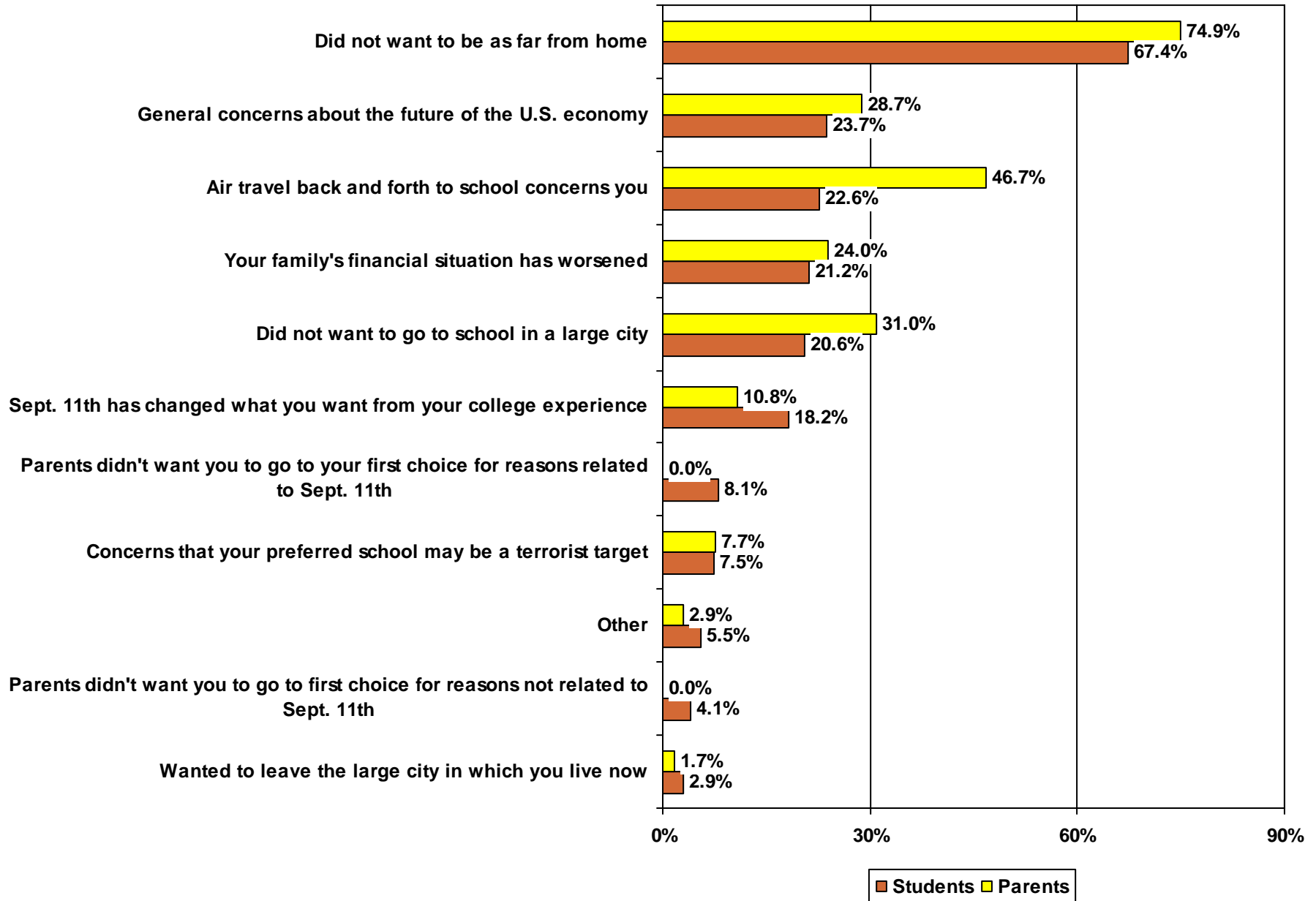
Not surprisingly, parents are more concerned about the economy.

Scale: 1 = Extremely Concerned and 5 = Not at All Concerned

Did September 11th Affect Final Selection of School? (June/July)



How September 11th Affected Final Selection of School - June/July



Geographic Diversity

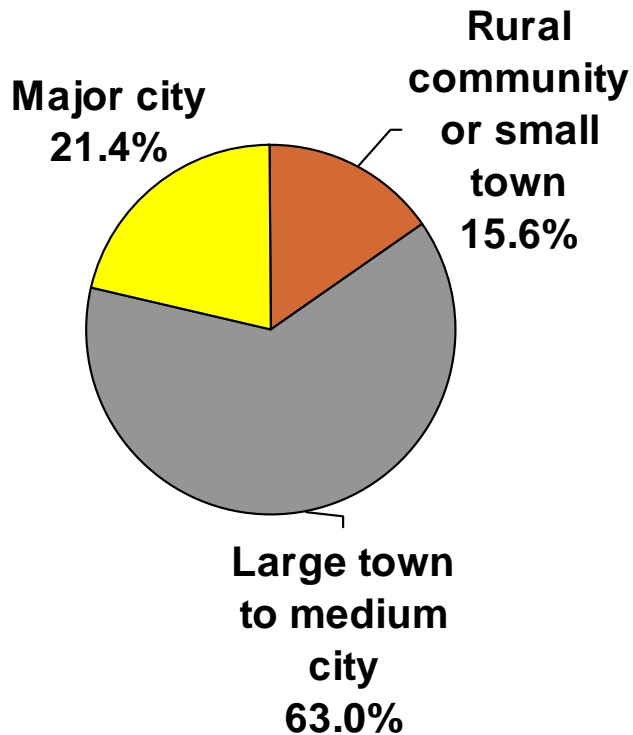
Commentator:

**Rich Avitabile
(formerly) New York
University**

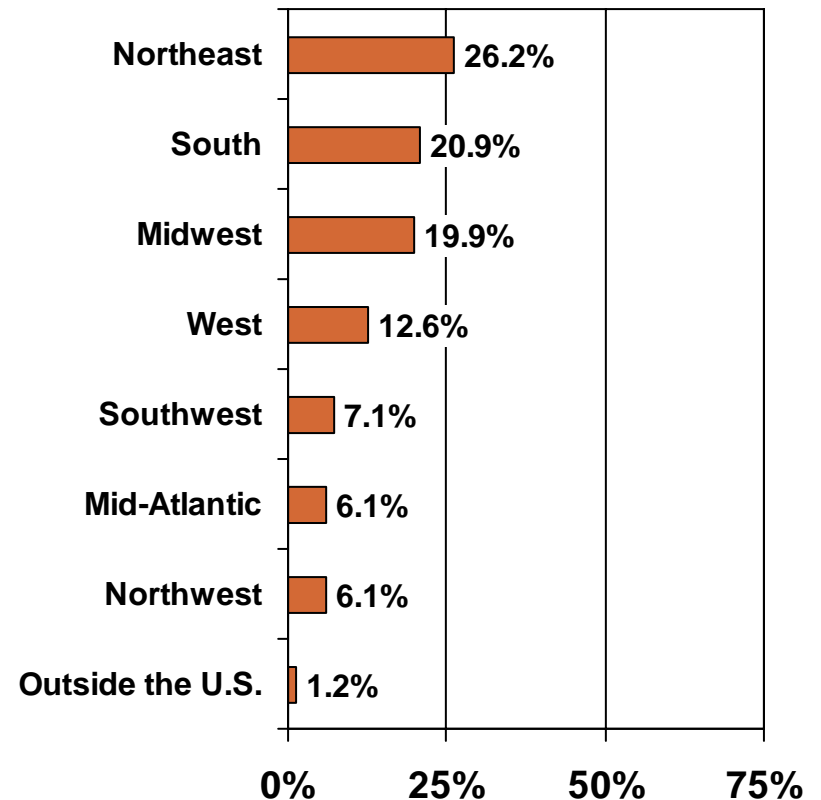
While the events of 9/11 had limited overall effect on student mobility, students in the Northeast and those considering a setting in a major city were more impacted.

Geographic Preferences

Which of the following best reflects the setting of school you would most prefer to attend?

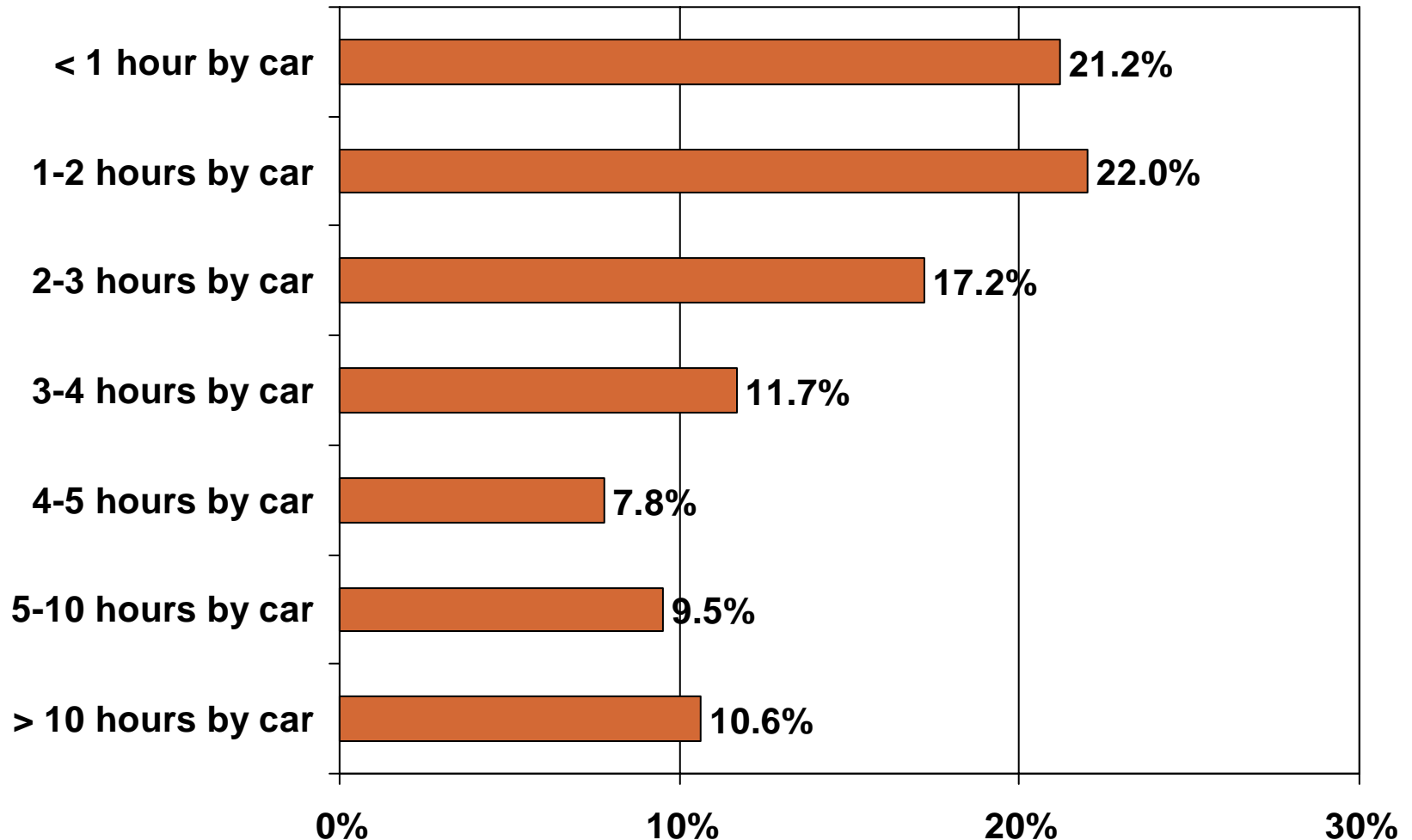


Where would you most like to go to school?

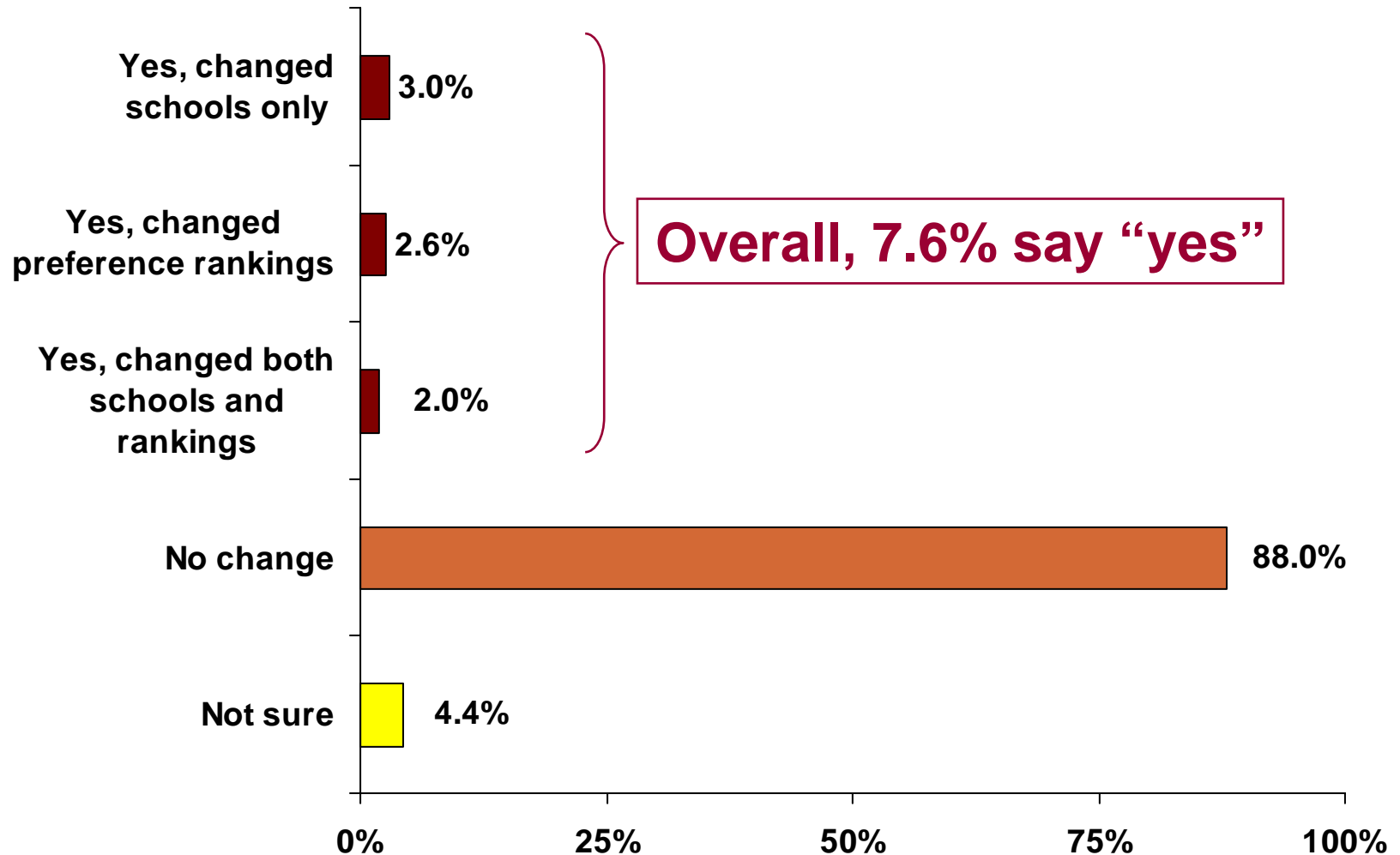


Geographic Preferences

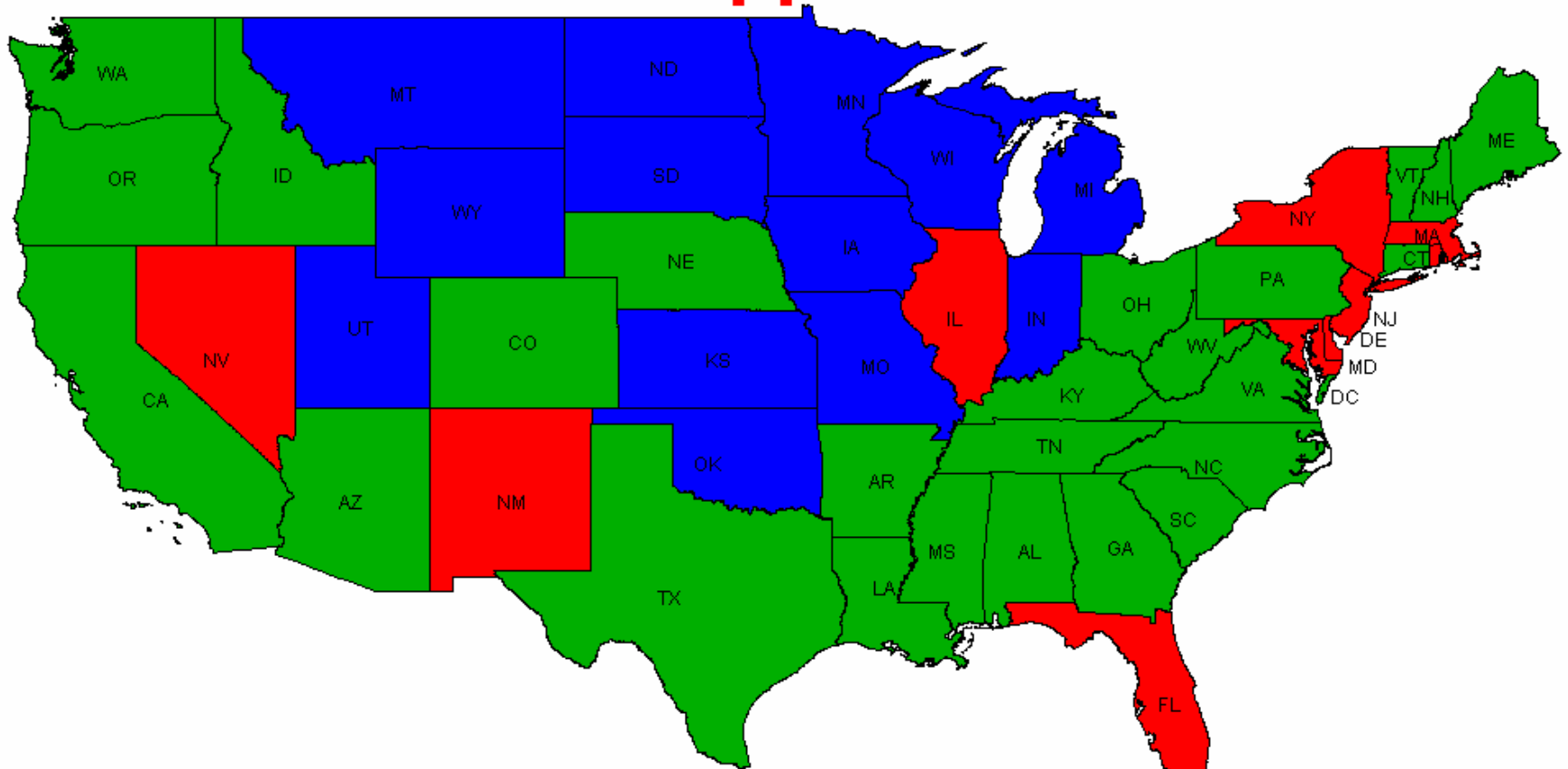
Ideally, how far from your permanent home would your college/university be?



Have the events of September 11th changed your mind in terms of (1) the schools to which you applied or (2) the rankings of your preferences or (3) both?



Regional Effect of September 11th on Selection of Application Schools



National Average = 7.6%

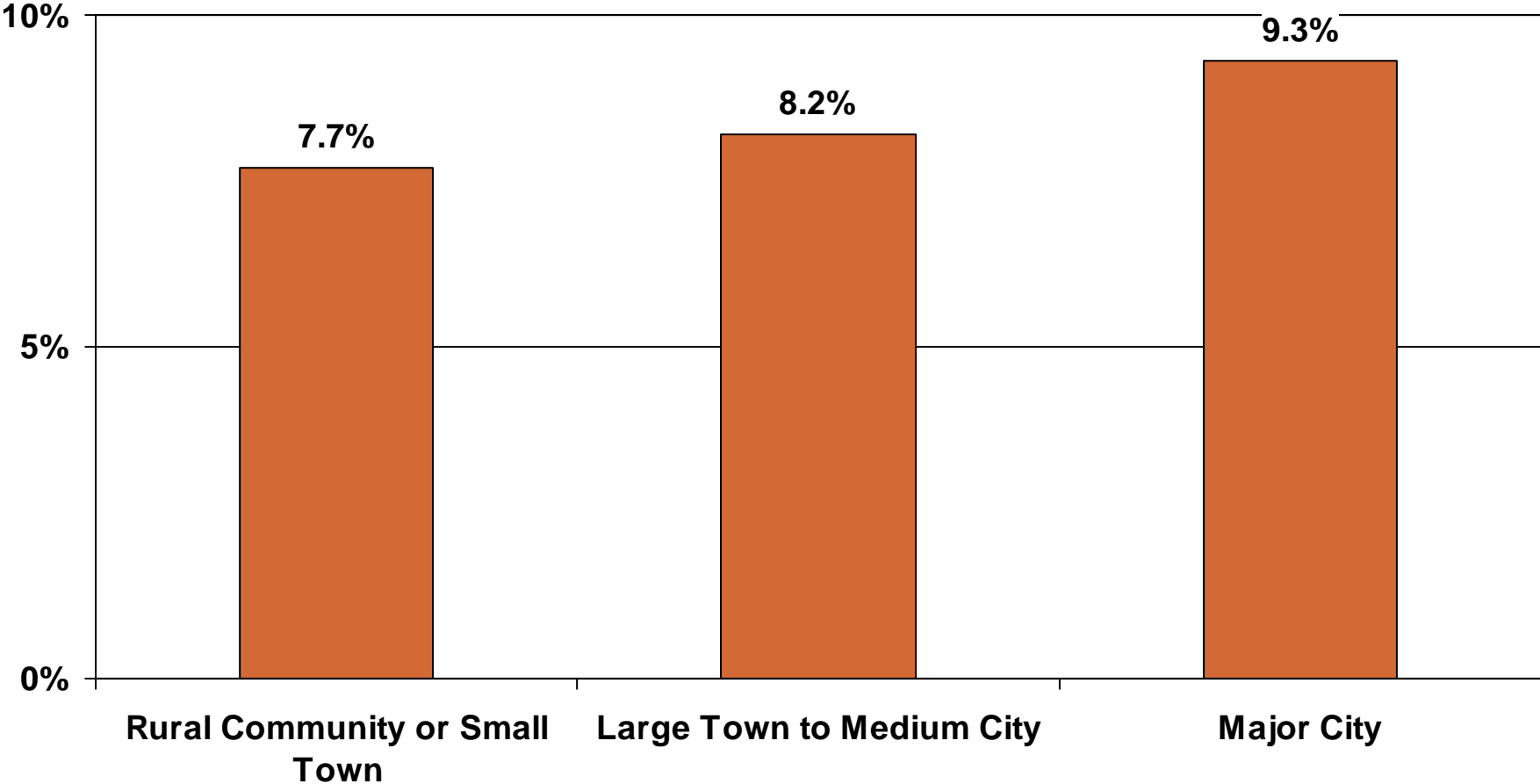
- 1.9% - 5.9%
- 6.0% - 8.4%
- 8.5% - 11.2%

Compared to the national average, 9/11 had a stronger effect on the college choices of students from:

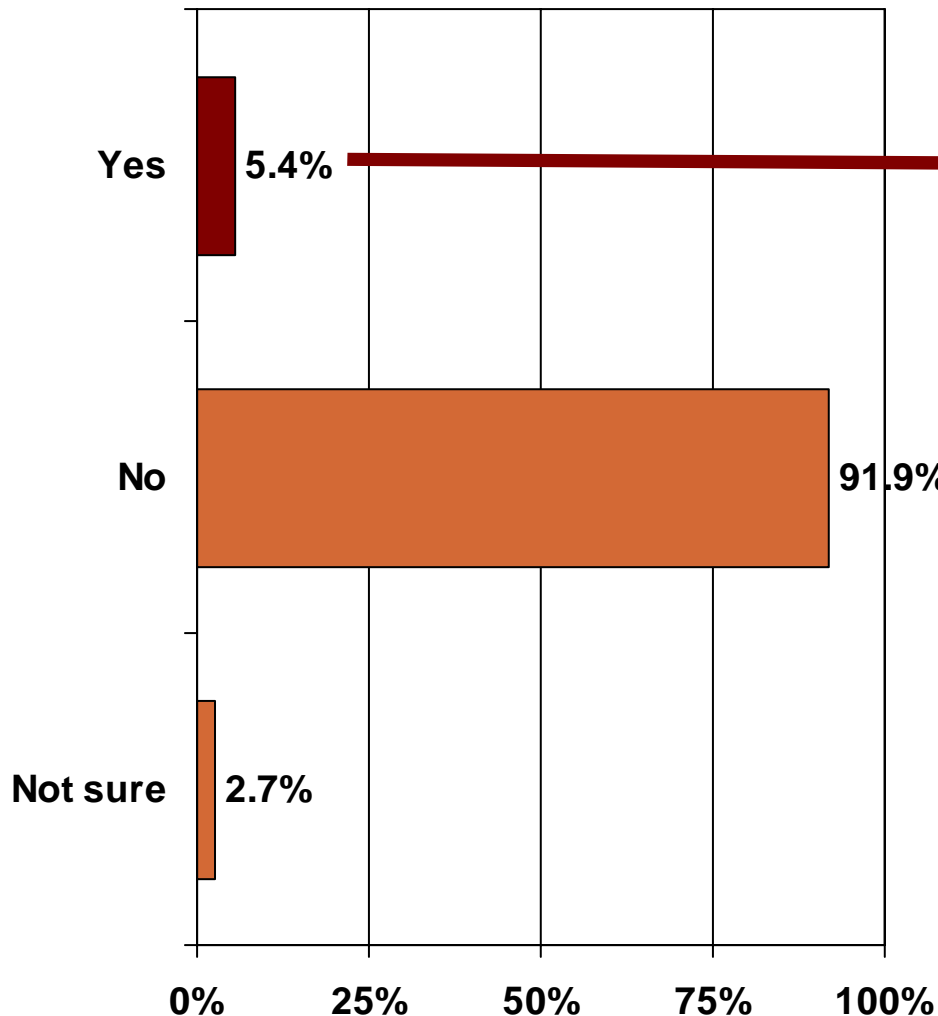
- Many states in the Northeast
- Illinois
- Nevada
- Hawaii
- New Mexico
- Florida

Effect of September 11th on Selection of Application Schools By Preferred College Location

(Among Students' who Cited a First Choice School that is Most/Very Selective)



Have the events of September 11th affected students' first-choice institution?



Main Effect(s) of September 11th on Preferred Institution

- Close to home or family/Not far from home or family (54%)
- Avoid large city/Want small town (13%)
- Financial reasons (12%)
- Change in values/What want out of college (10%)
- Concerns – physical, psychological, safety, somewhere safe/familiar (7%)
- Affected what major or career wants to pursue (5%)
- Avoid large schools/choose smaller schools (5%)
- Concerns about travel to school (4%)

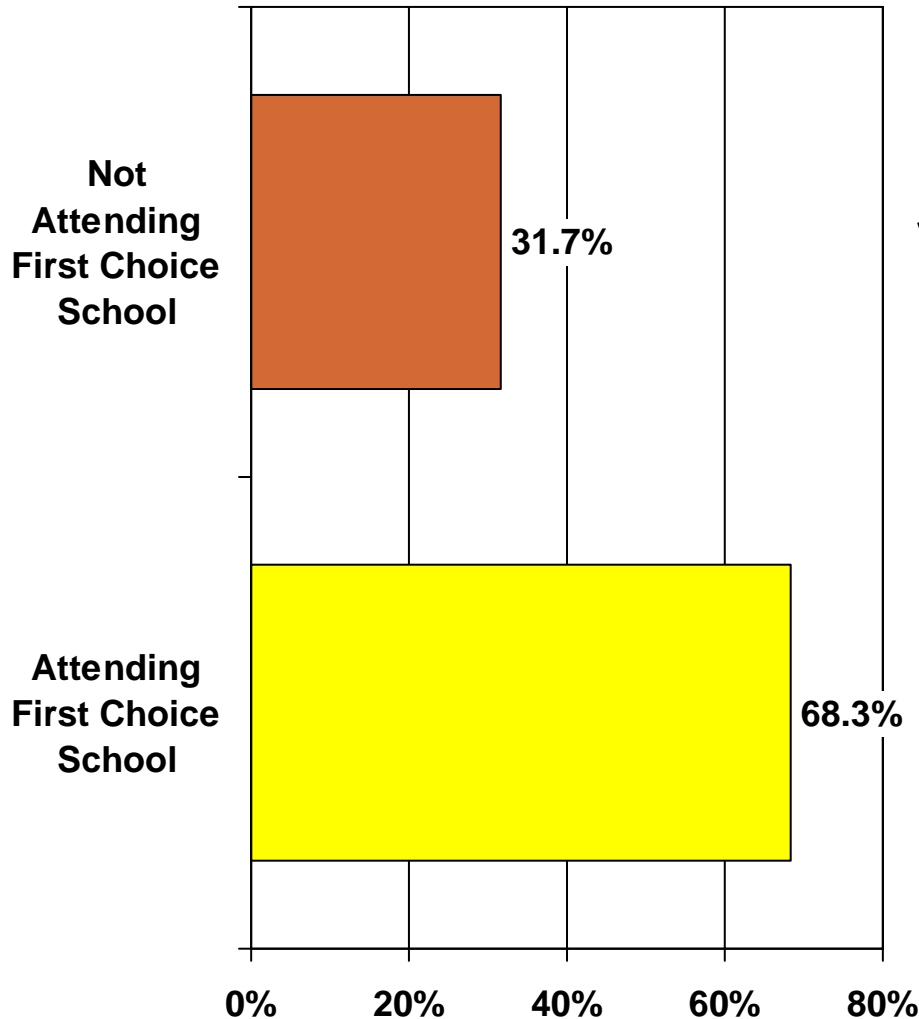
Ethnic & Socioeconomic Diversity

Commentator:

Sharon Alston, American
University

Ethnic minorities, particularly African American students, were disproportionately impacted in the percentage of students who did not enroll at their first-choice schools.

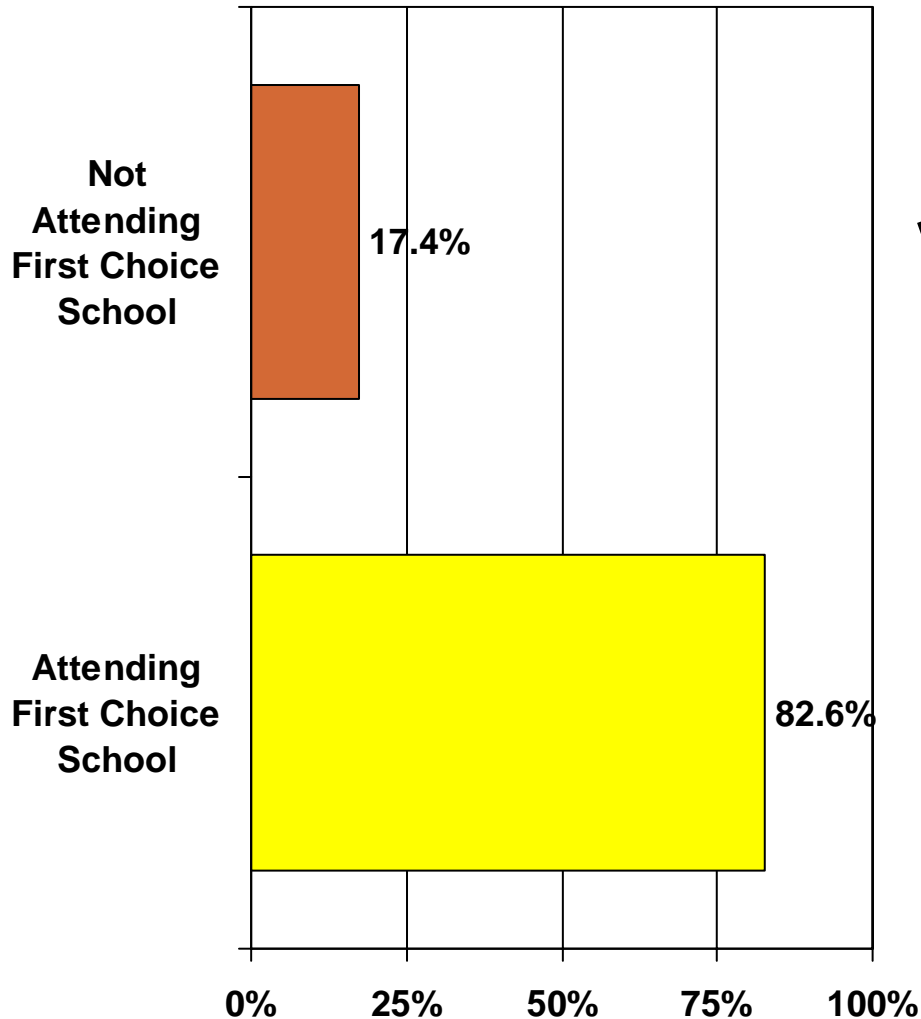
Is Student Attending His/Her First-Choice School?



Top Reasons for Attending a School Other than First Choice

- Financial package was not sufficient to afford first choice (42%)
- Student was not accepted at first choice (36%)
- Parent did not want student to attend this school (5%)
- Close to home/Convenient/First choice too far away (3%)

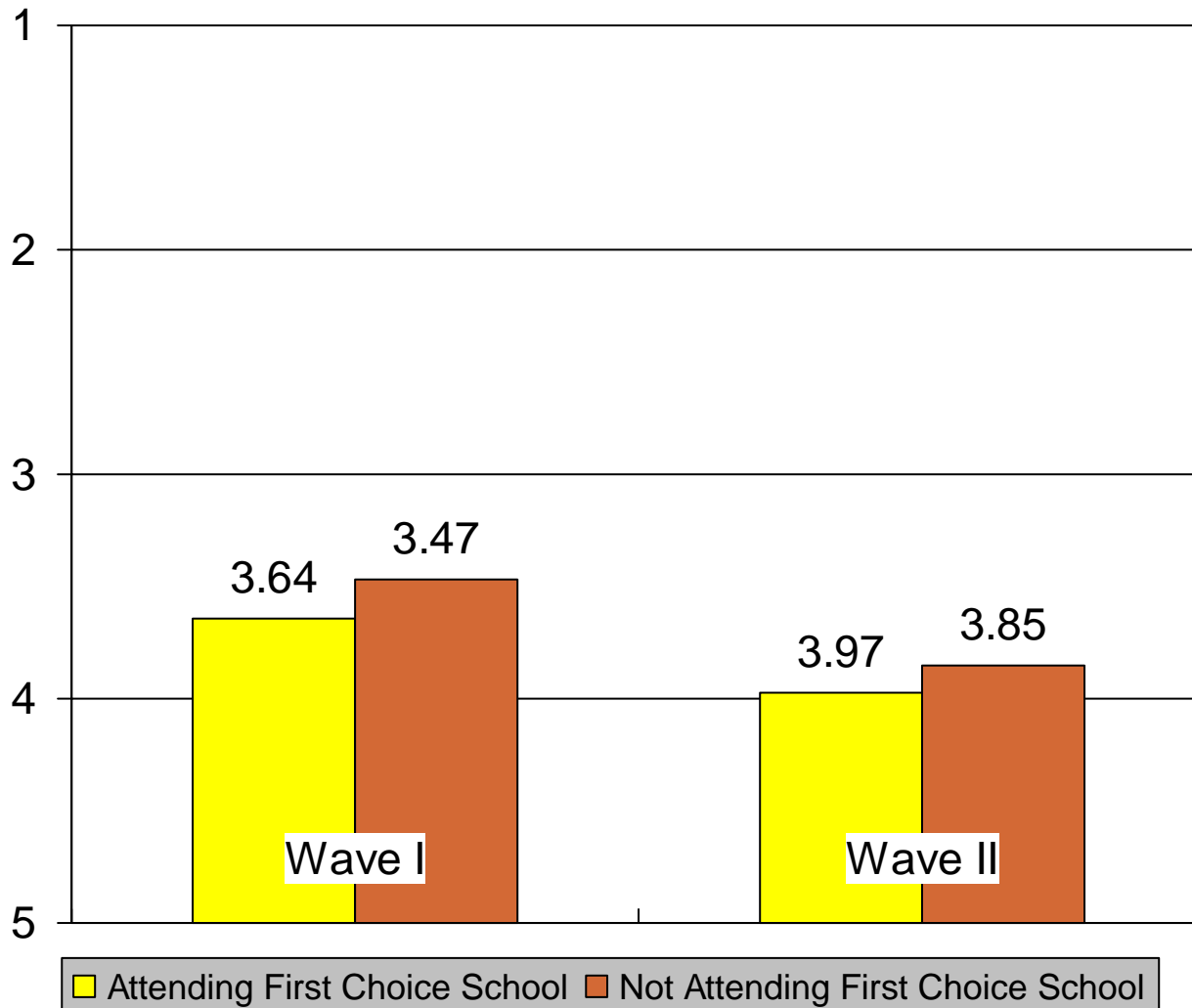
Is Child Attending Parents' First-Choice School?



Top Reasons for Attending a School Other than First Choice

- Financial package was not sufficient to afford first choice (38%)
- Student did not want to attend this school (34%)
- Student was not accepted at first choice (19%)
- Close to home/Convenient/First choice too far away (2%)

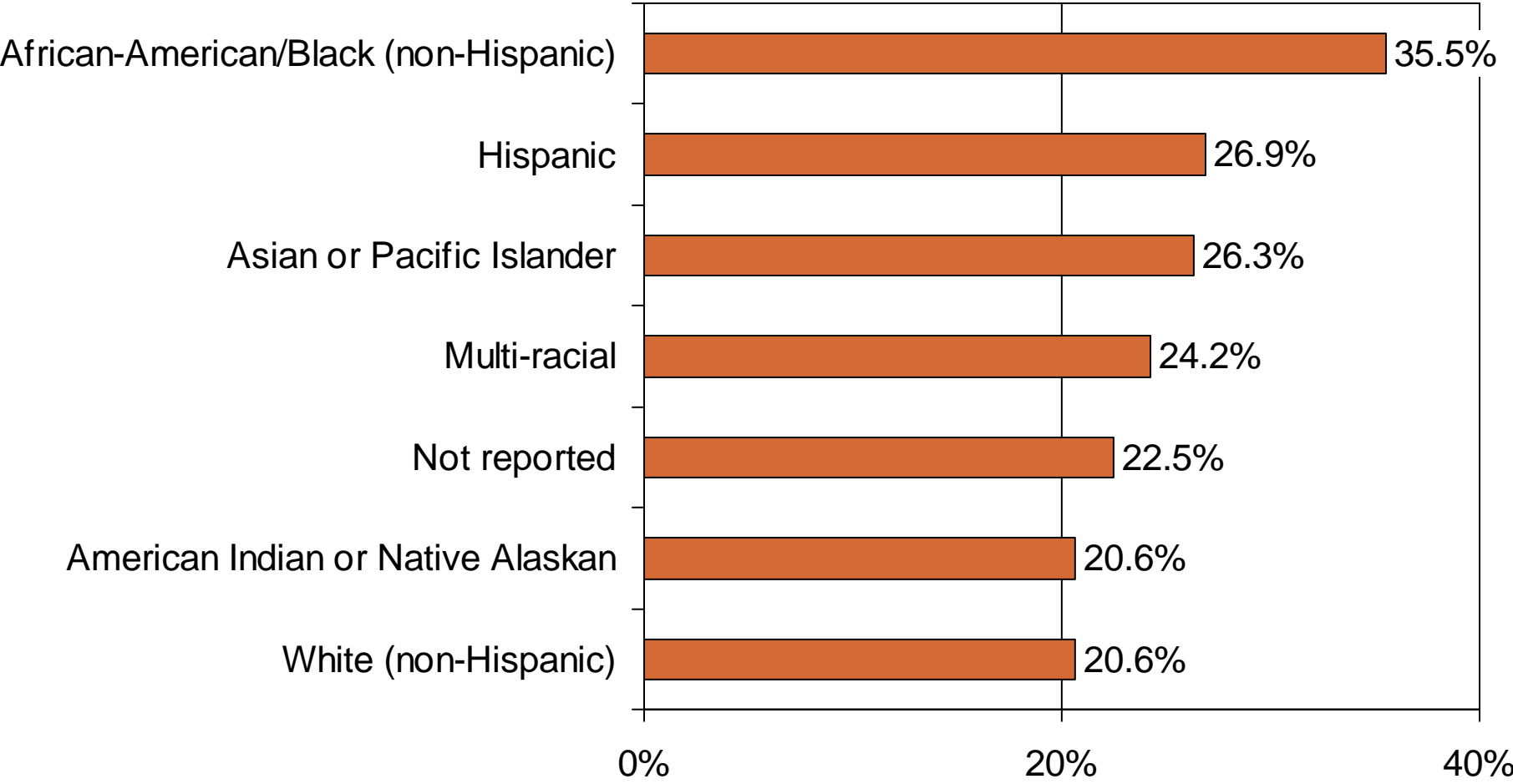
Influence of the State of the U.S. Economy by Whether Student is Attending His/Her First-Choice School



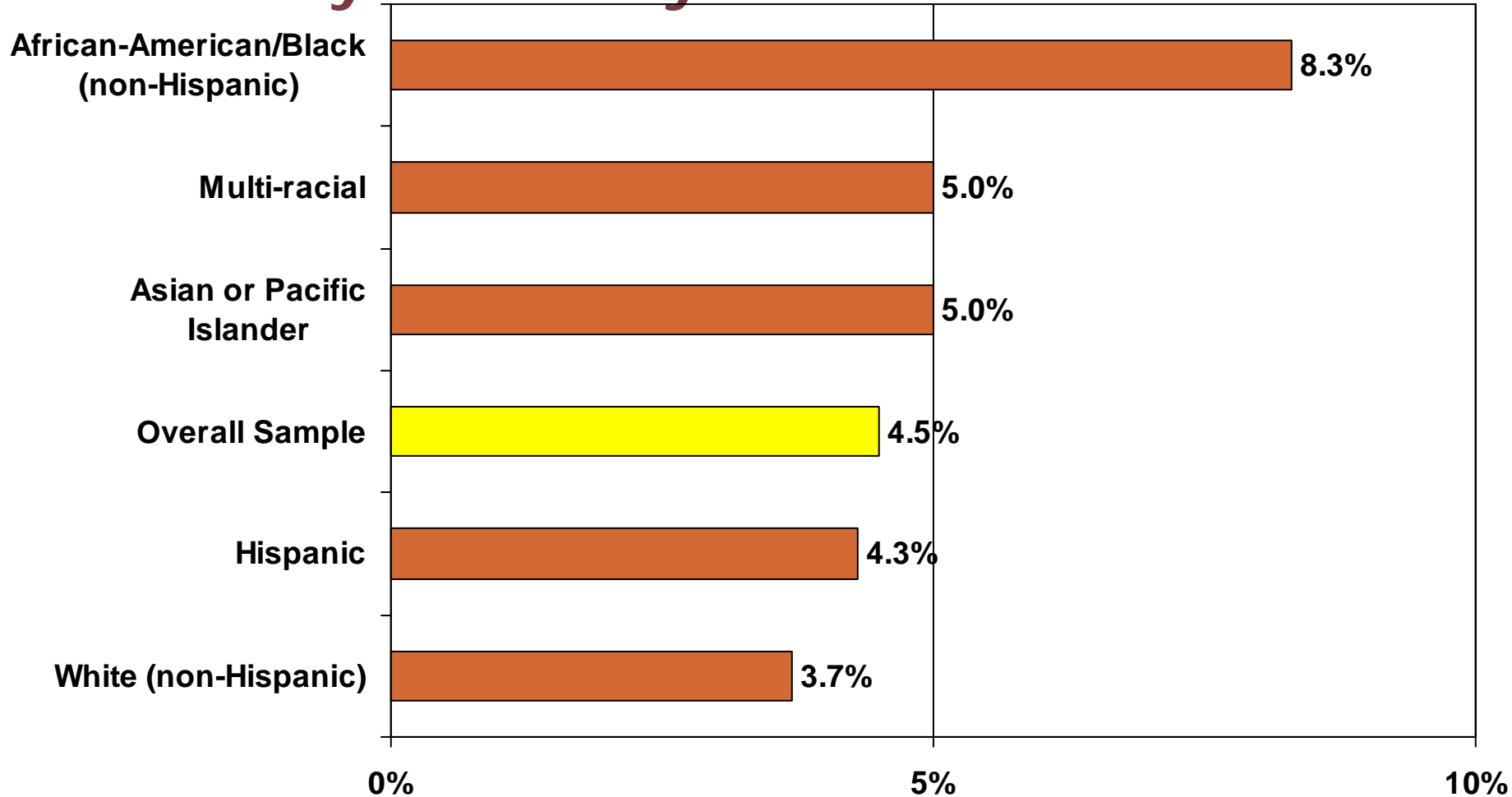
Those who are not attending their first-choice school say economy had more of an effect on their final enrollment decisions.

Percent of Students Who are Not Attending Their First-Choice School by Ethnicity

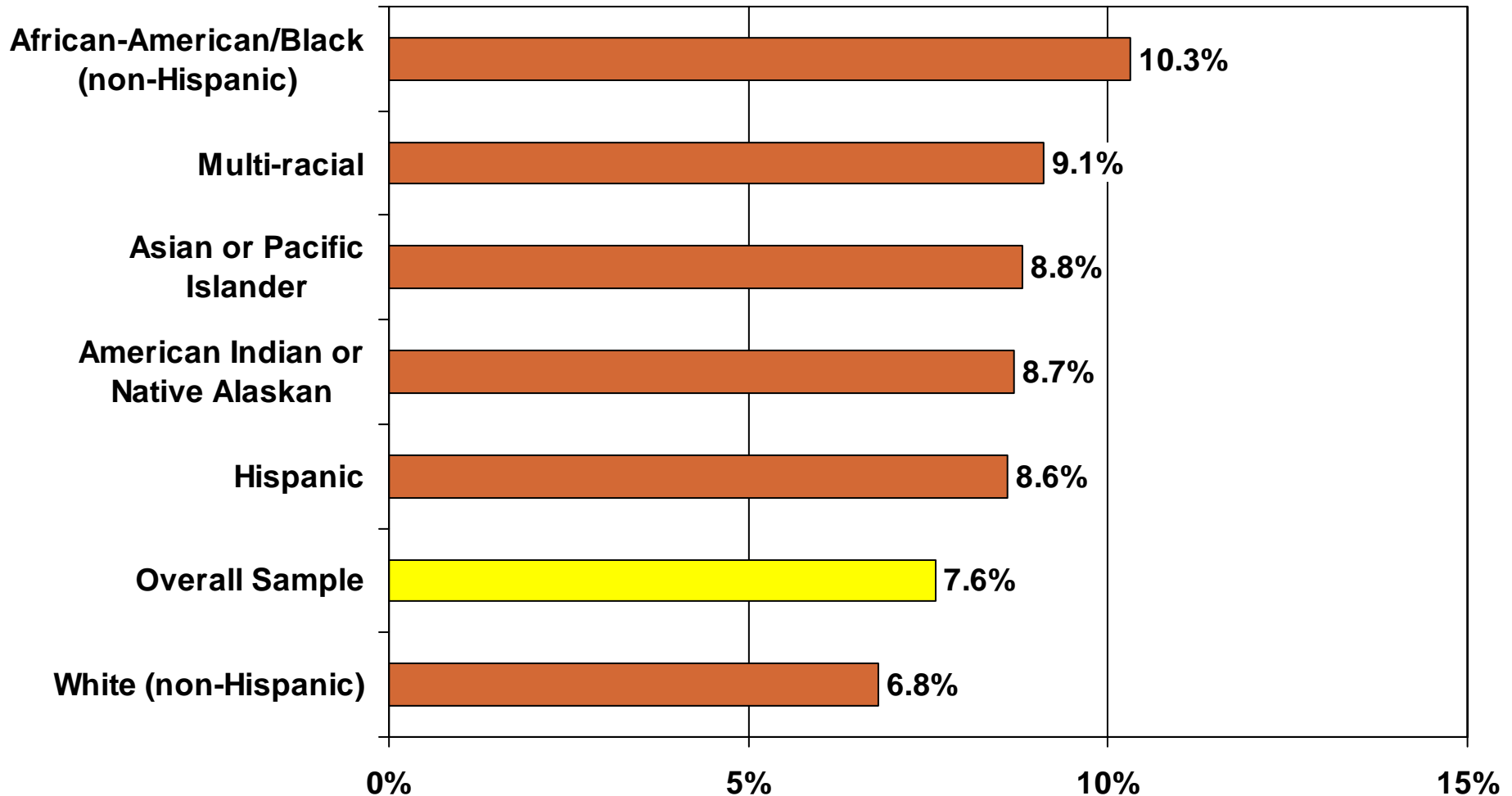
(Among Accepted Applicants Only)



Among Those Not Attending First-Choice School, Students Citing “Parent did not want student to attend” as a Major Reason by Ethnicity:



Effect of September 11th on Selection of Application Schools By Ethnicity



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