

# Undergraduate Adult Learners:

Does Institutional Data Tell Their Story of Success?

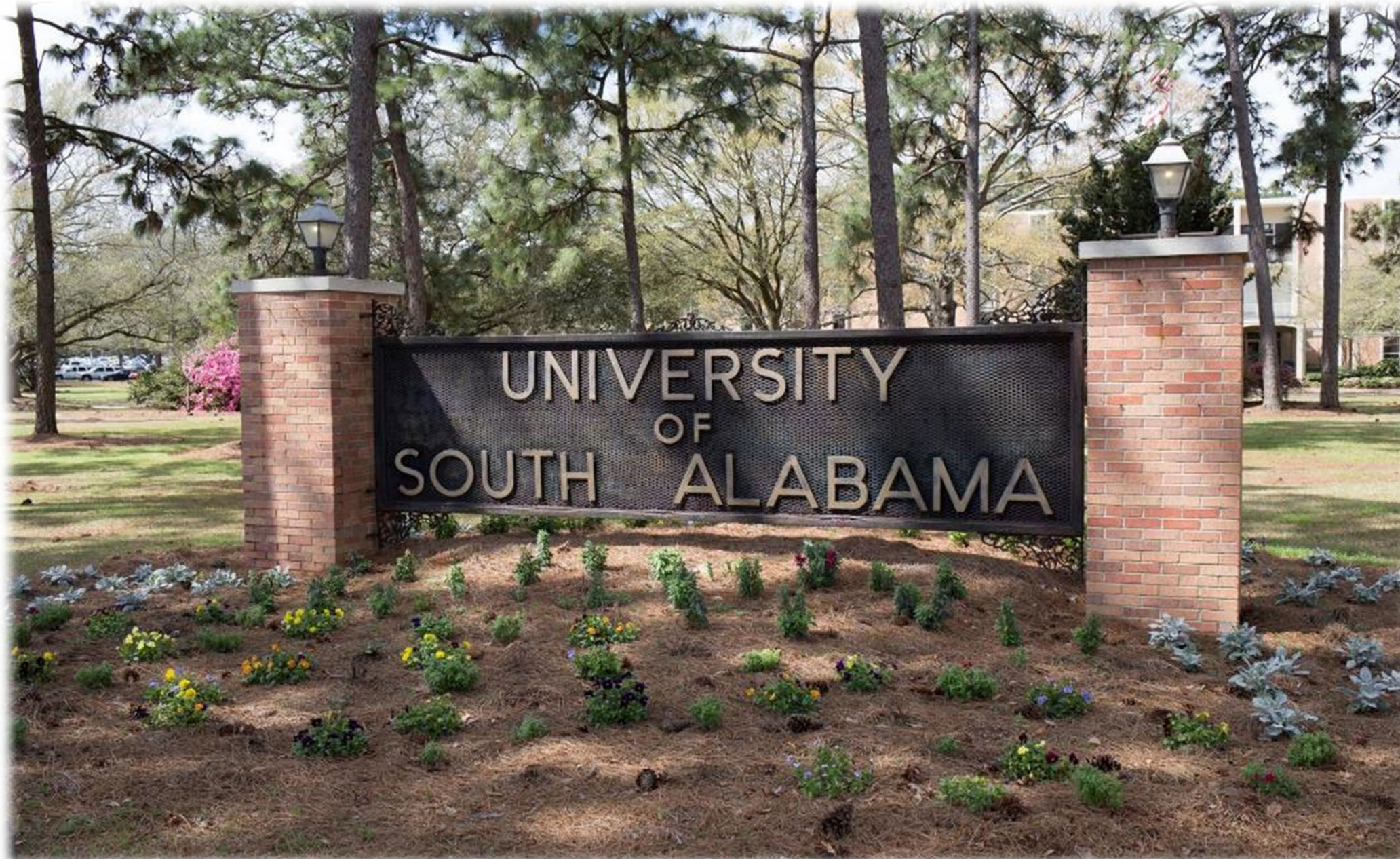
Presenter:

Naima Wells, Associate Director of University Assessment





# University of South Alabama



The University of South Alabama (USA) was founded in 1963 and is located in Mobile, AL.

USA is a community of leaders and learners who support and challenge one another through academic experiences, research and service that advance the Gulf Coast region and the world.



South encourages creativity and discovery by linking experiential learning to real-world applications.

Nearly 14,000  
students

Over 125  
academic  
programs



# Presentation Goal

The goal of this presentation is to discuss administrative data and relationships to student success performance indicators that could potentially be used to predict adult undergraduate outcomes and behaviors.

01

## Methodology

Data extraction and Exploratory data analysis.

02

## Demographics

Class Level, College, Sex, etc.

03

## Administrative Data

Fall 2020 – Fall 2021 USA Student Census and Graduating Student Data





# Characteristics of Adult Learners

Adult learners constitute an increasing segment of students enrolled in colleges and universities and are typically characterized by being over the age of 25 and possessing characteristics that separate them from the traditional learner population (Lodewyck, 2021).

## Known As:

- Non-traditional students
- Returning students
- Mature learners
- Adult returners

## Usually:

- 25 or older
- Employed full-time
- Financially independent
- Supporting dependents

## Diverse:

- Education levels
- Experiences
- Backgrounds
- Stages in life

## Need:

- Flexibility
- Autonomy
- Financial support
- Clear expectations



# Methodology



## Data Extraction

Administrative data were extracted from University of South Alabama (USA) student census and graduating student reports for fall 2020, spring 2021, and fall 2021.



## Inclusion Criteria

Inclusion criteria required that students be enrolled during fall 2020, classified as an undergraduate, and 25 years old or older during fall 2020 semester.

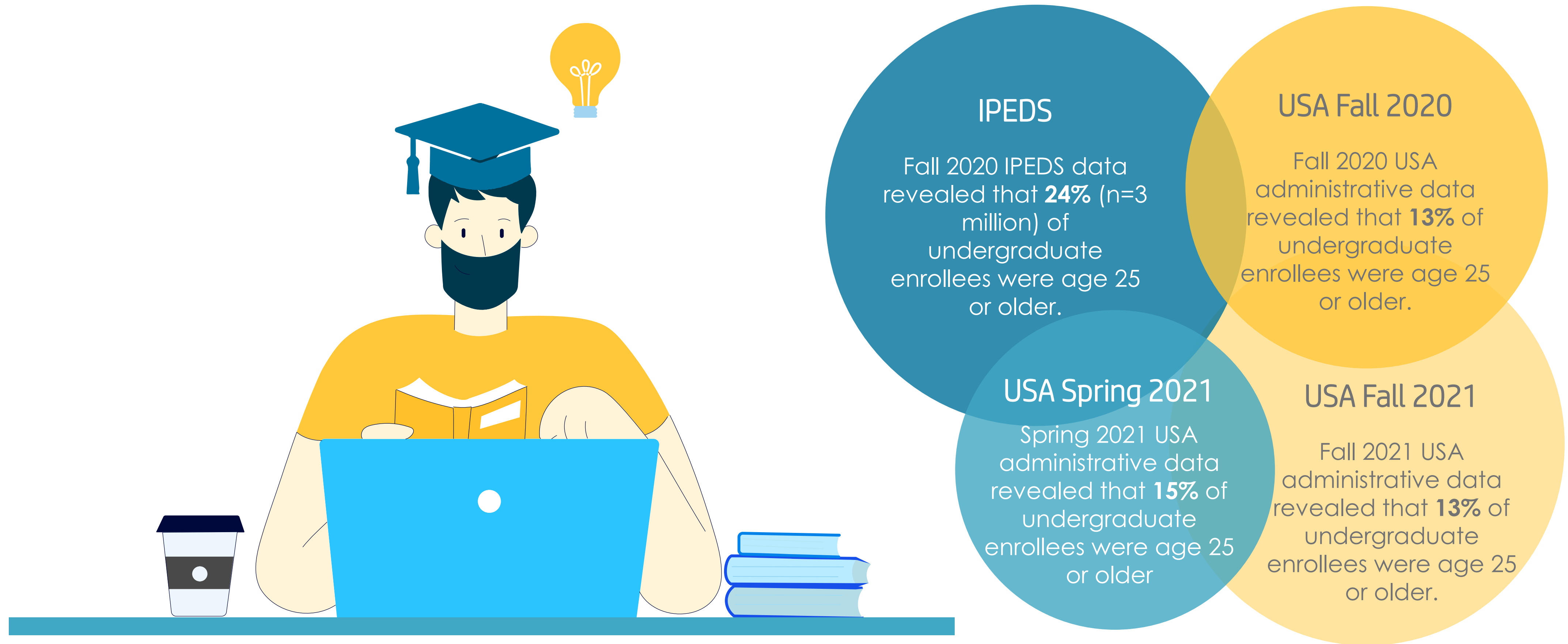


## Process

Data for enrolled adult undergraduate students age 25 or older at the time of the fall 2020 census were transformed, cleaned, analyzed, and reported (n=1,219).

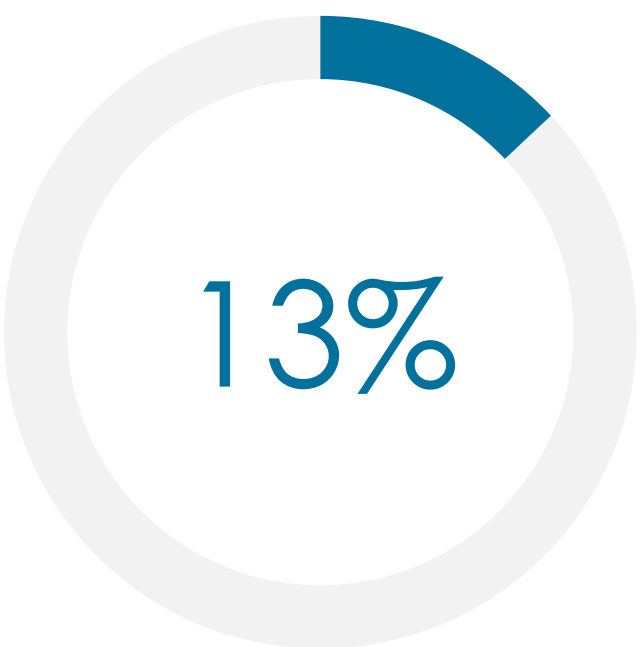
# USA Adult Undergraduates

It is estimated that the number of American adults possessing some college, but no degree is close to 47 million (Braverman, 2017).



# Adult Undergraduate Enrollment

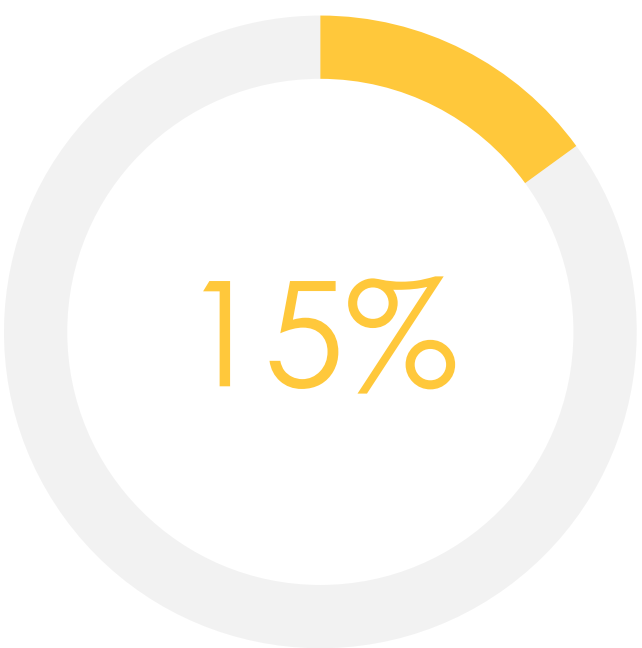
These data are representative of **adult undergraduate** enrollments for fall 2020 - fall 2021.



Fall 2020

9,050    1,219

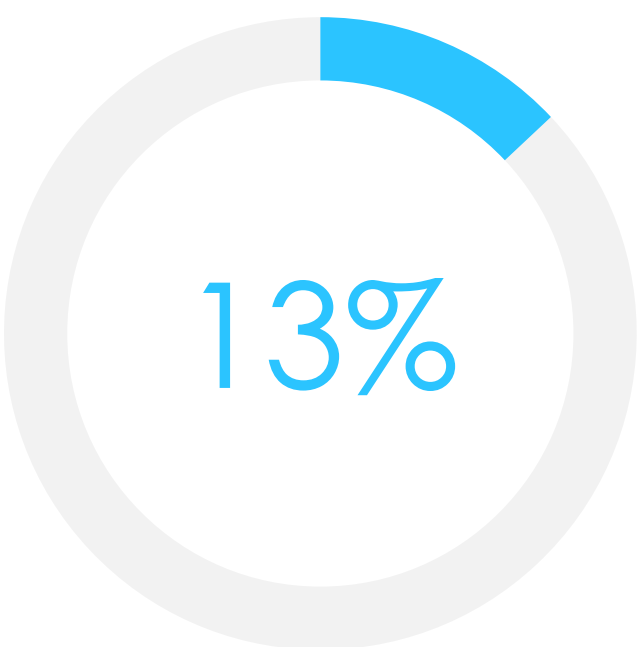
Enrolled    Adult



Spring 2021

8,227    1,193

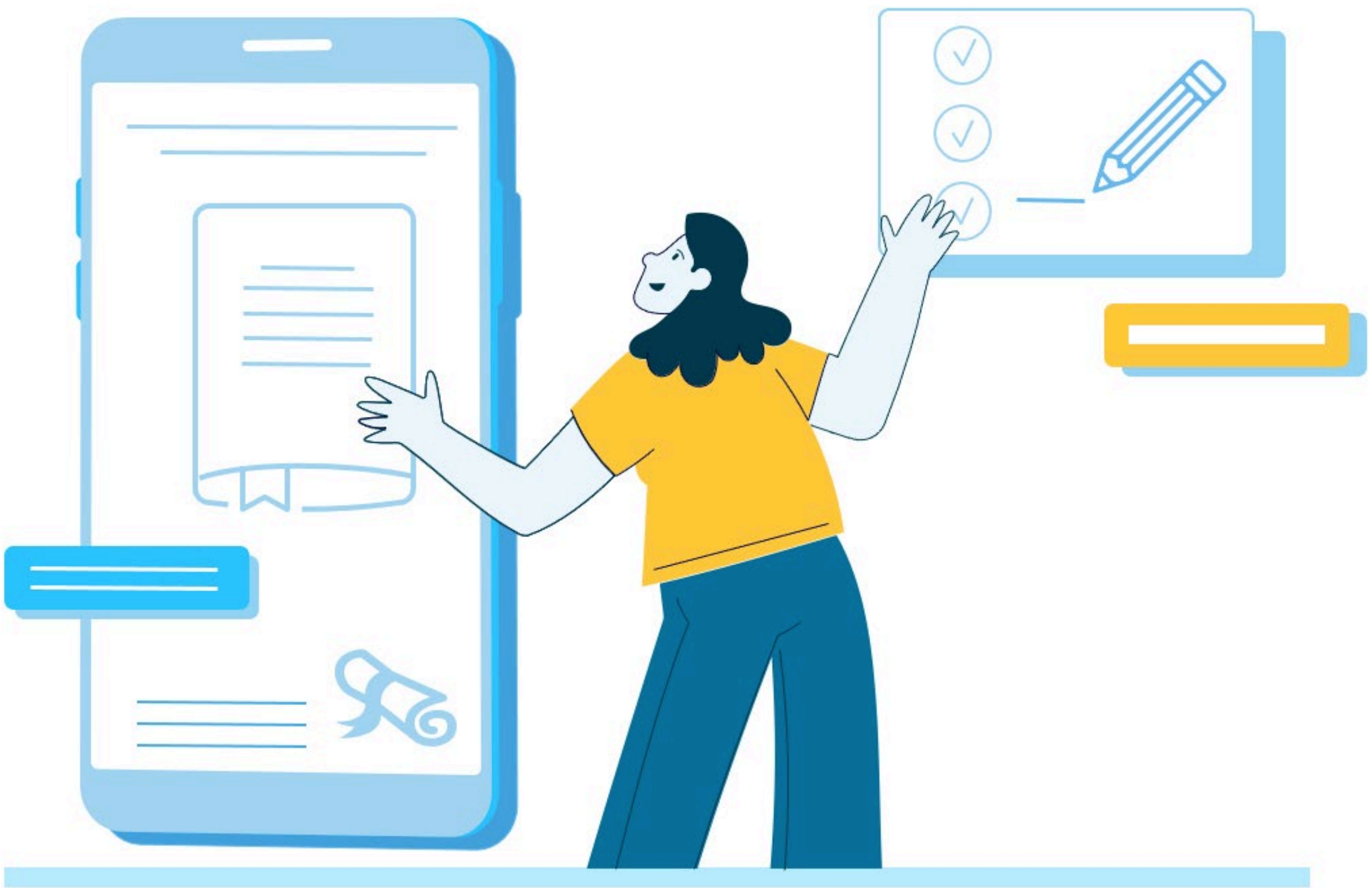
Enrolled    Adult



Fall 2021

8,833    1,133

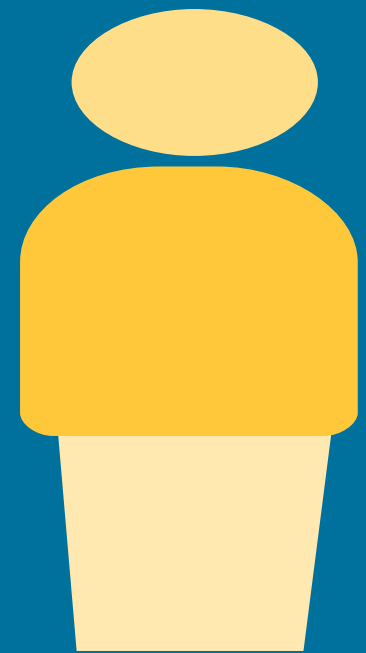
Enrolled    Adult



# Demographics:

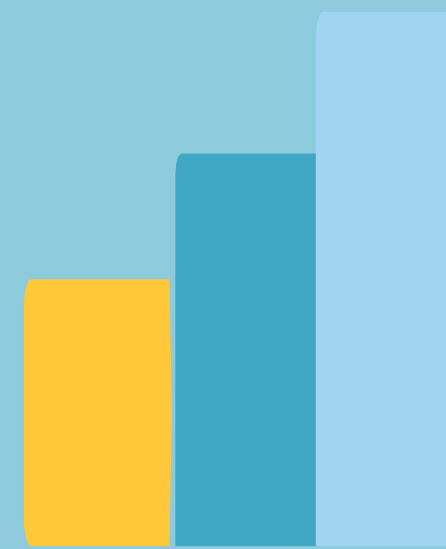
Fall 2020 adult undergraduates age 25 years or older (n=1,219)

Minority (n=406)



33%

Avg. Age (n=1219)



$\mu = 32$   
years old

Female (n=701)



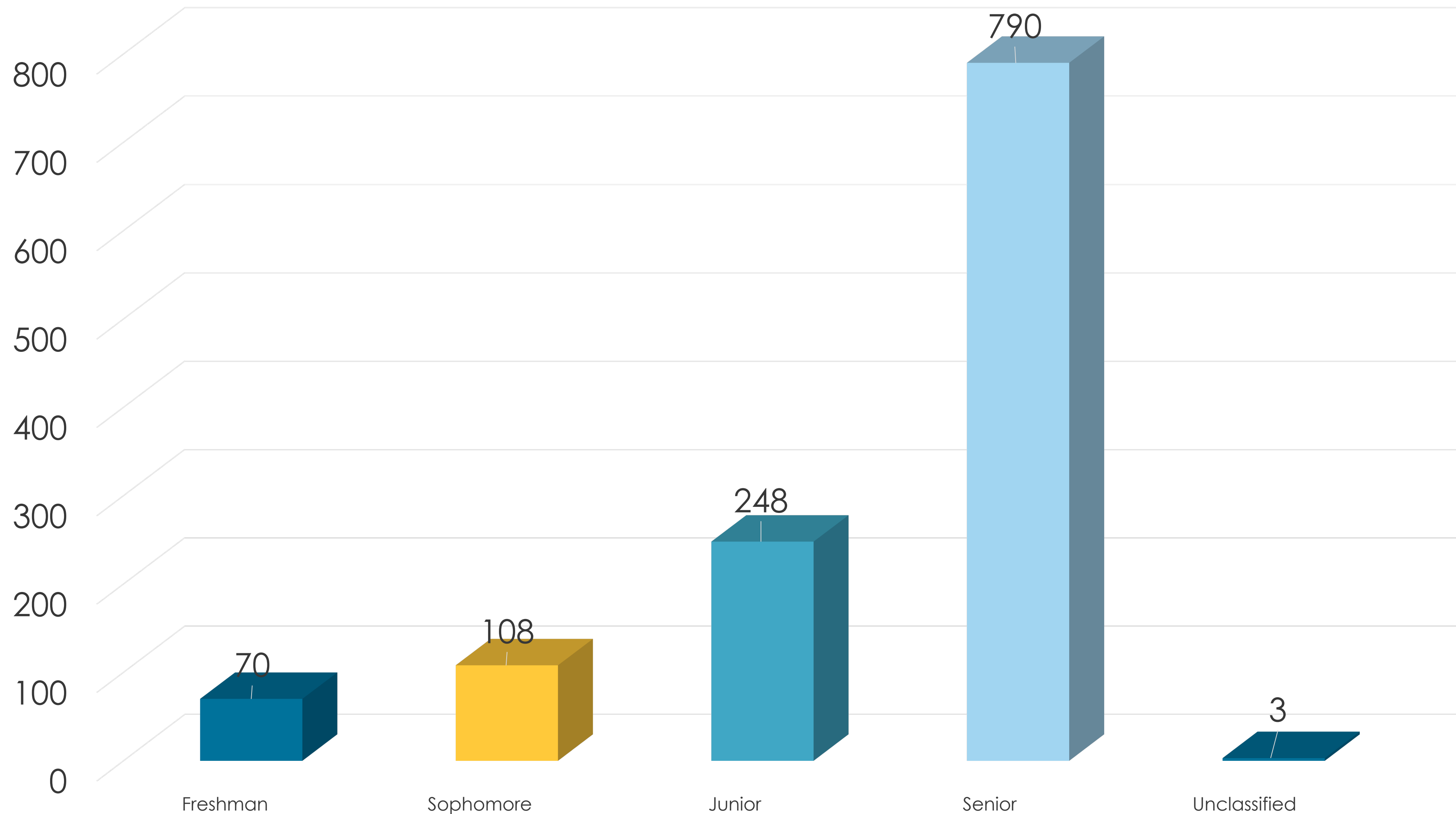
58%

Excludes: unknown, non-resident alien, or white students.



# Demographics: Class

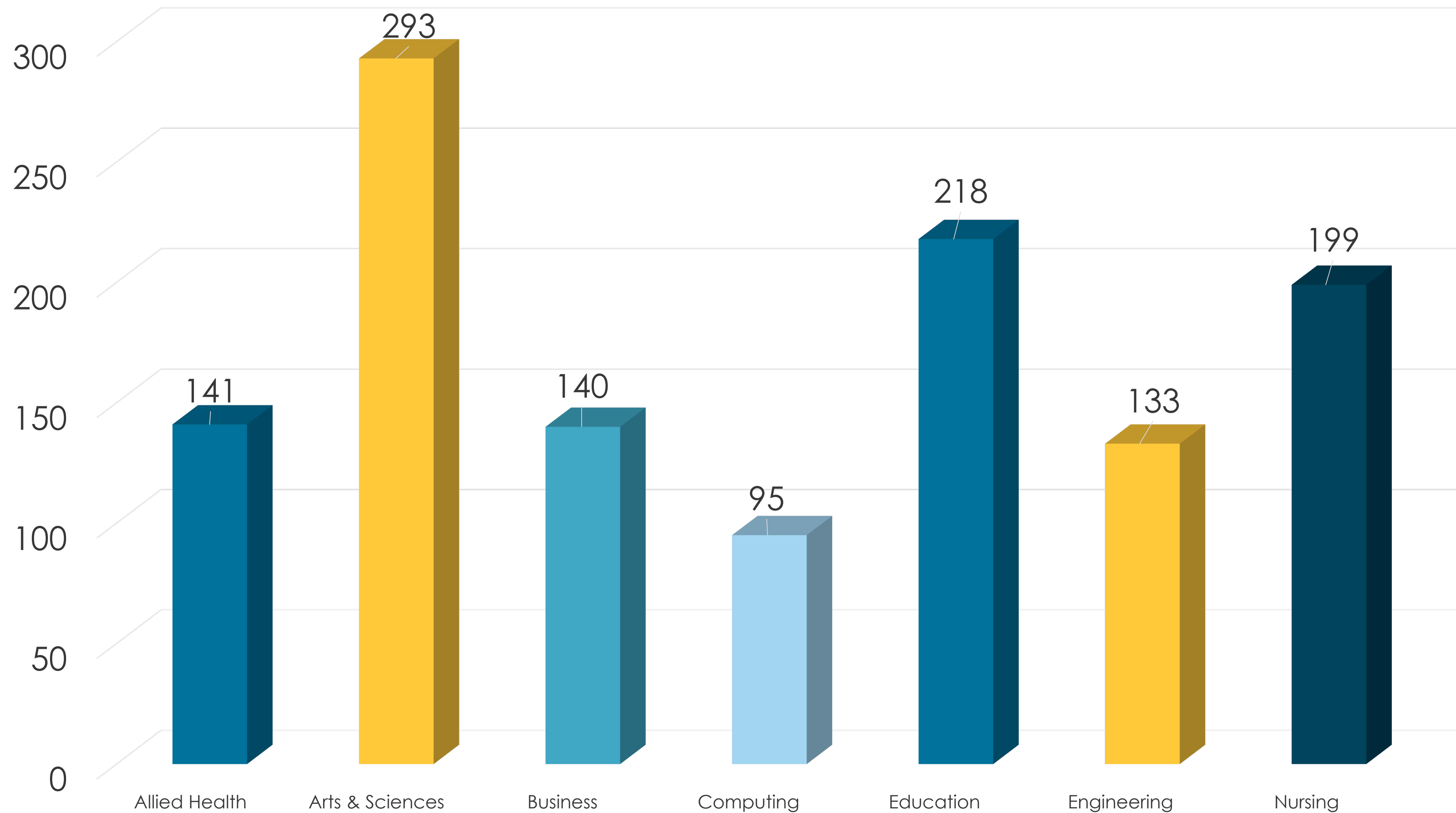
Fall 2020 adult undergraduate class levels (n=1,219)





# Demographics: College

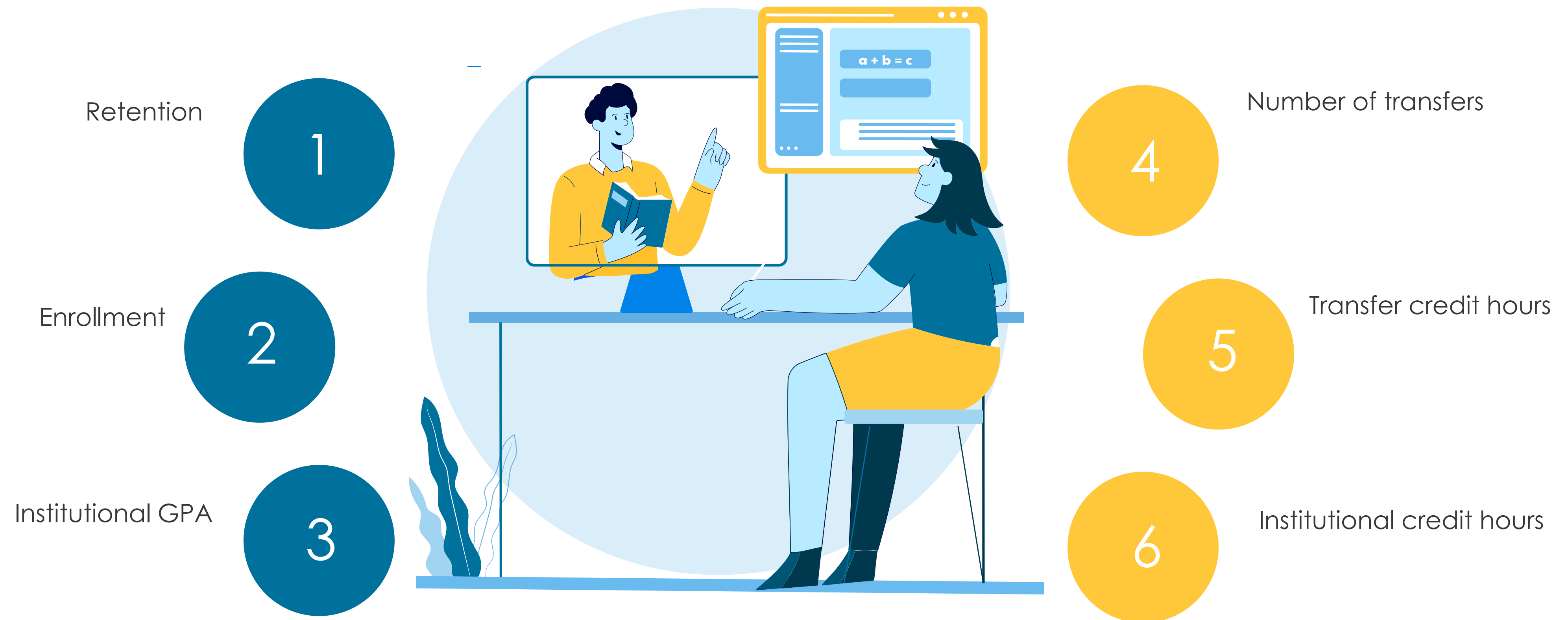
Fall 2020 enrollment in six colleges and one school at USA (n=1,219)





# Performance Indicators

Can key performance indicators predict adult undergraduate outcomes and behaviors?

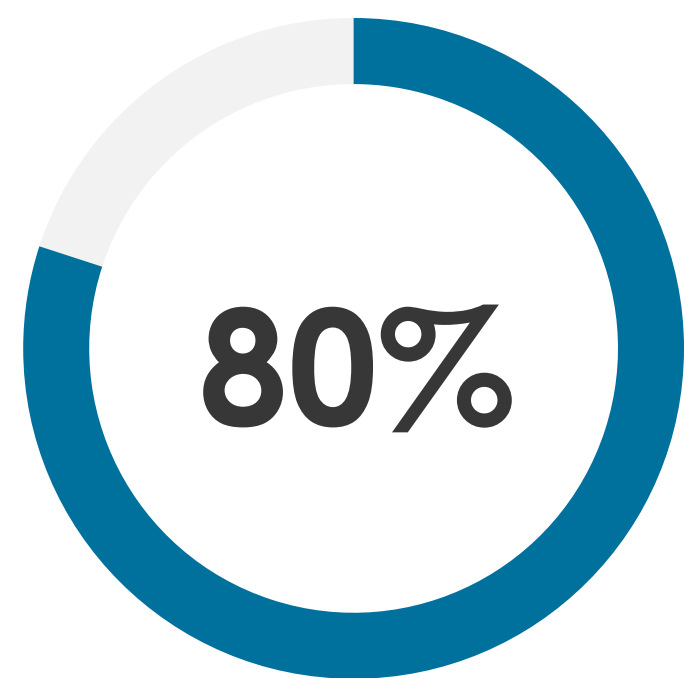




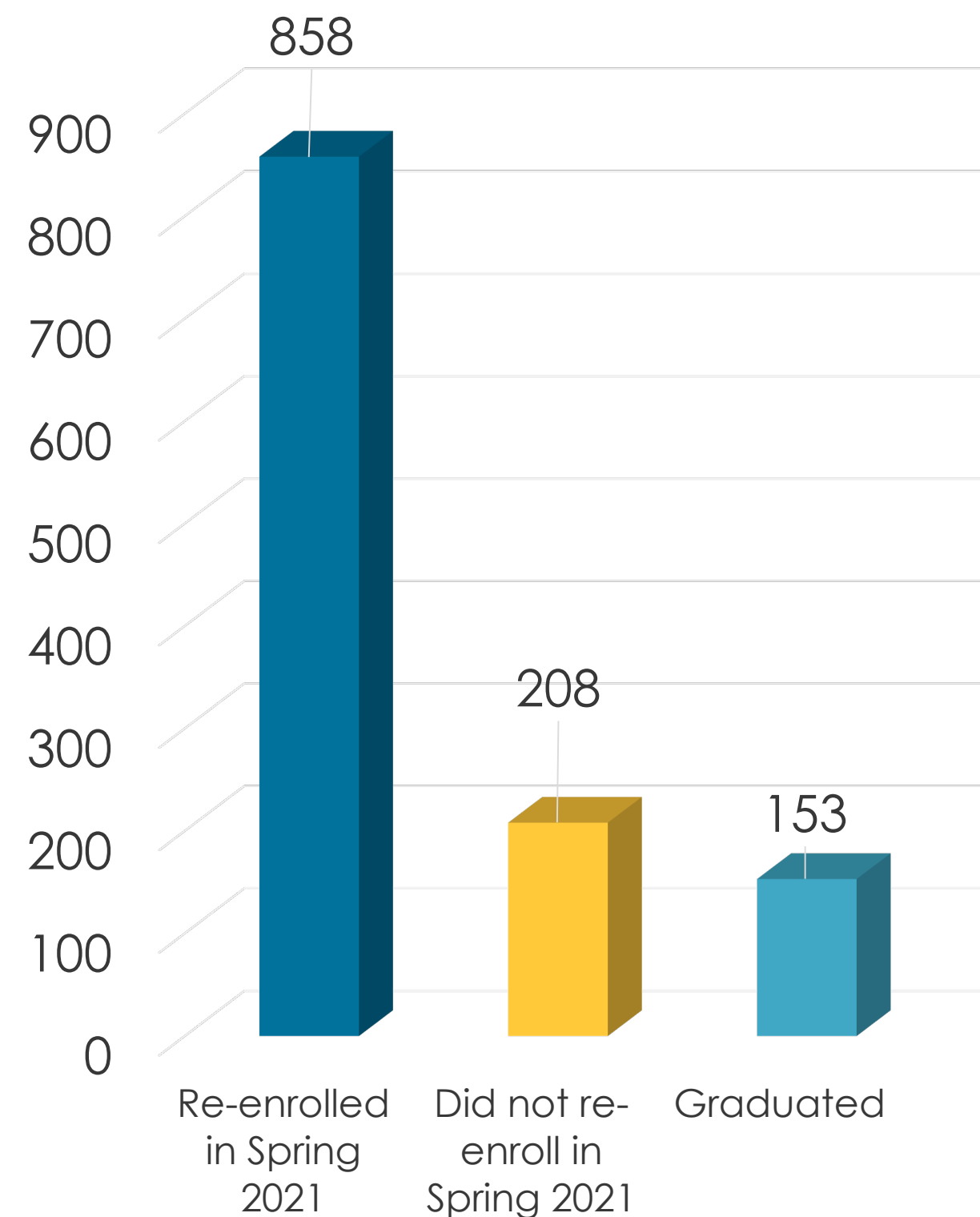
# Indicator: Retention Comparison

Fall 2020 adult undergraduate semester and year retention (n=1,219)

## Semester Retention

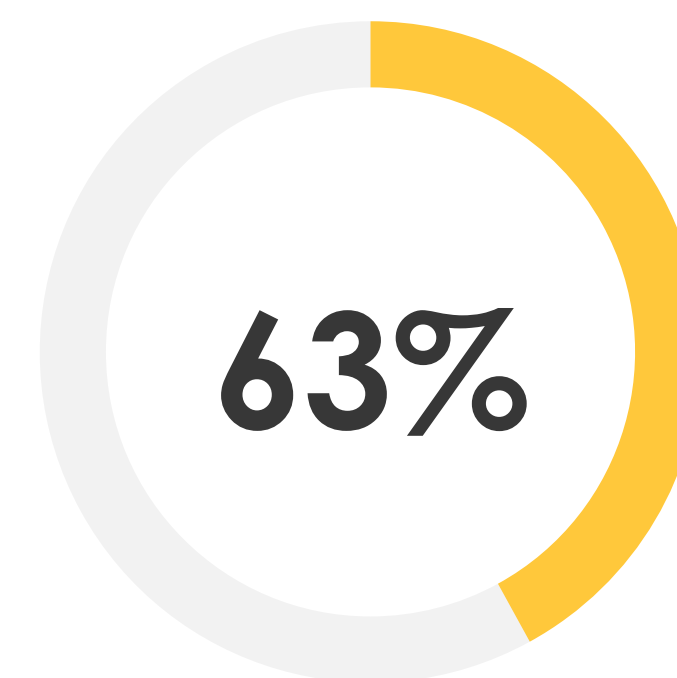


**Note »** Semester retention rate excludes students who graduated fall 2020.

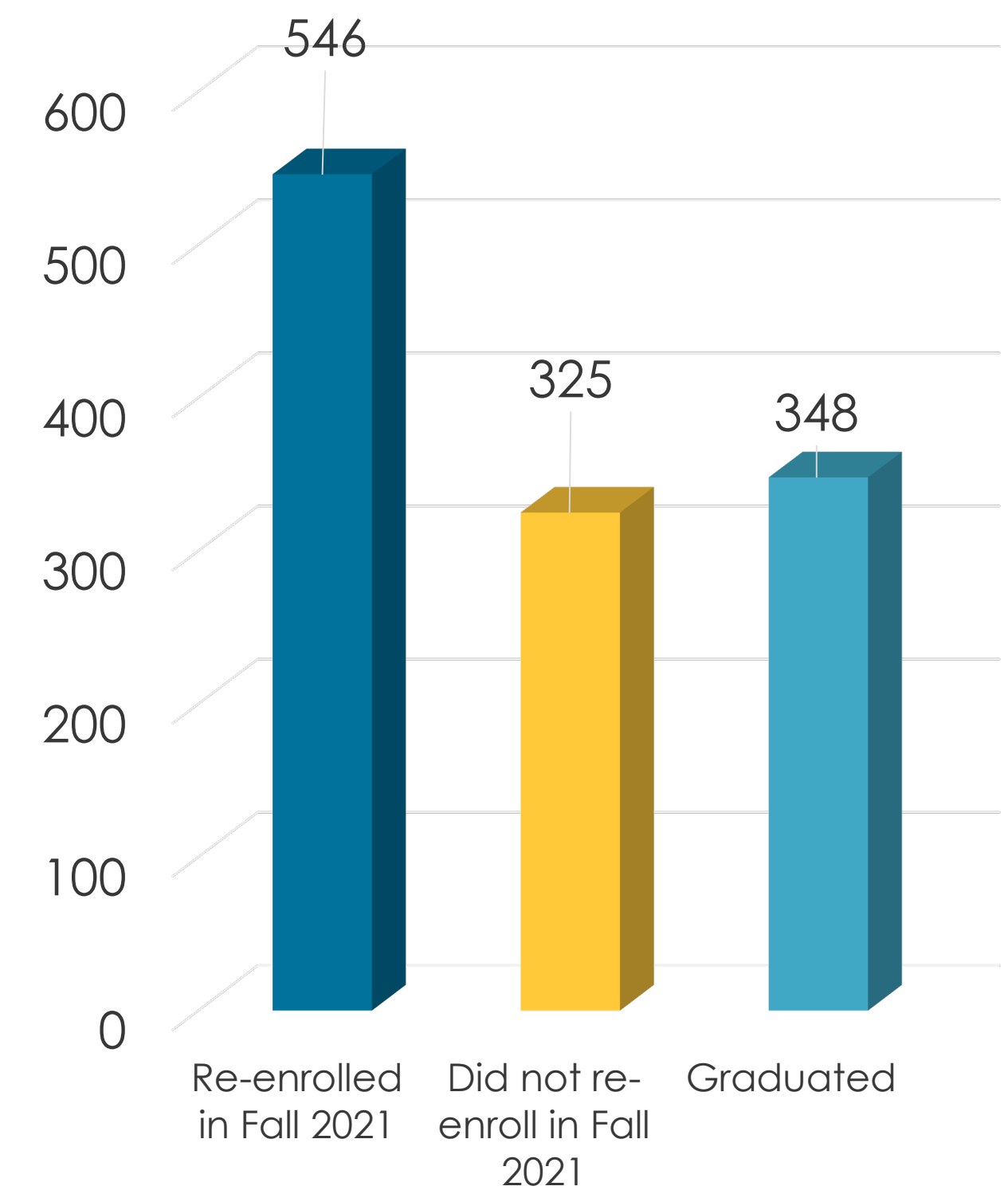


**vs.**

## Year Retention



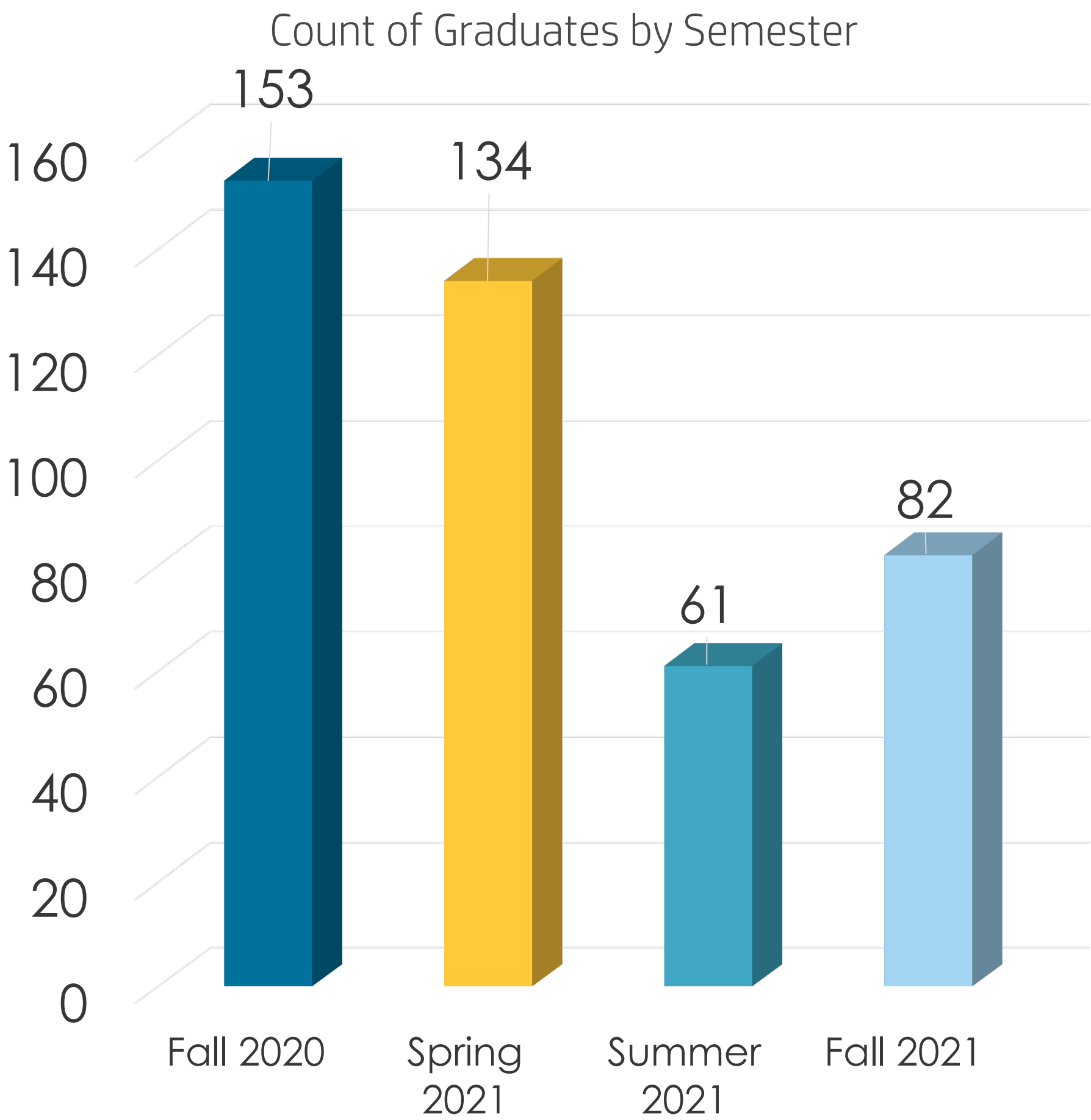
**Note »** Year retention rate excludes students who graduated fall 2020, spring 2021, or summer 2021.



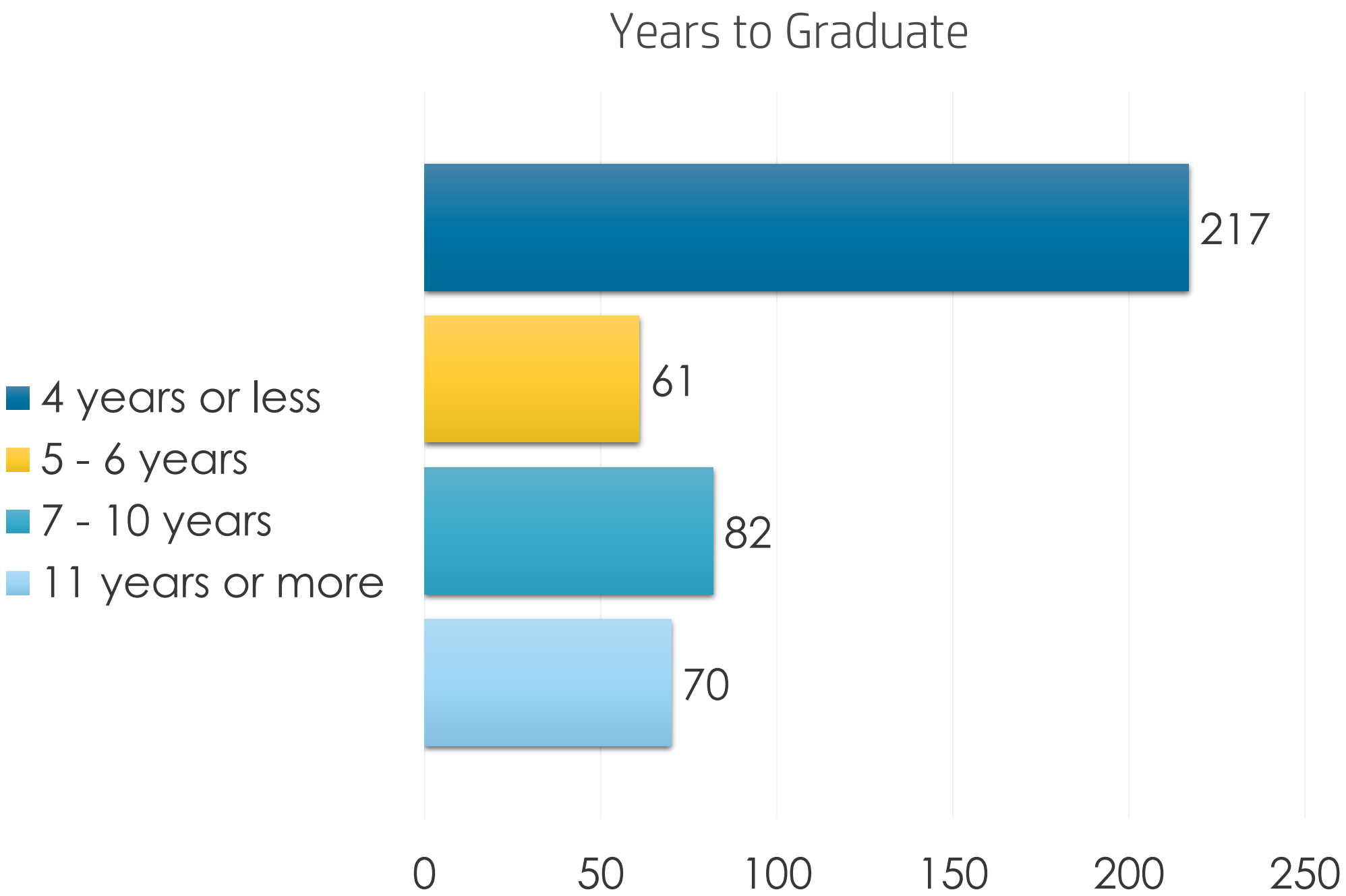
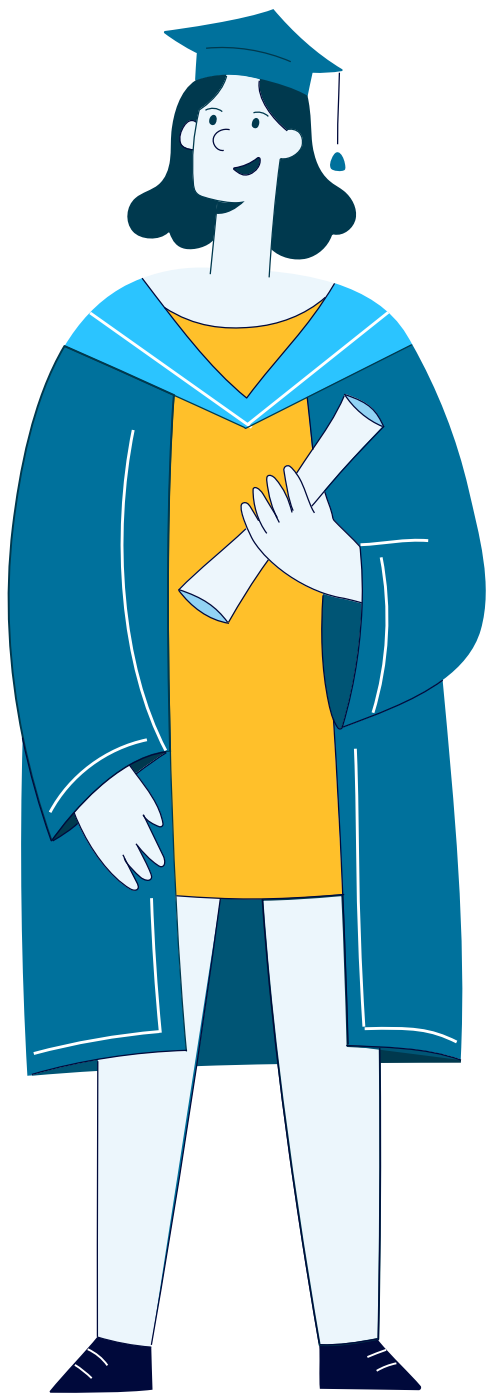


# Indicator: Attrition Rates

Thirty-five percent of the 1,219 adult undergraduates graduated between fall 2020 and fall 2021



35% of 1,219



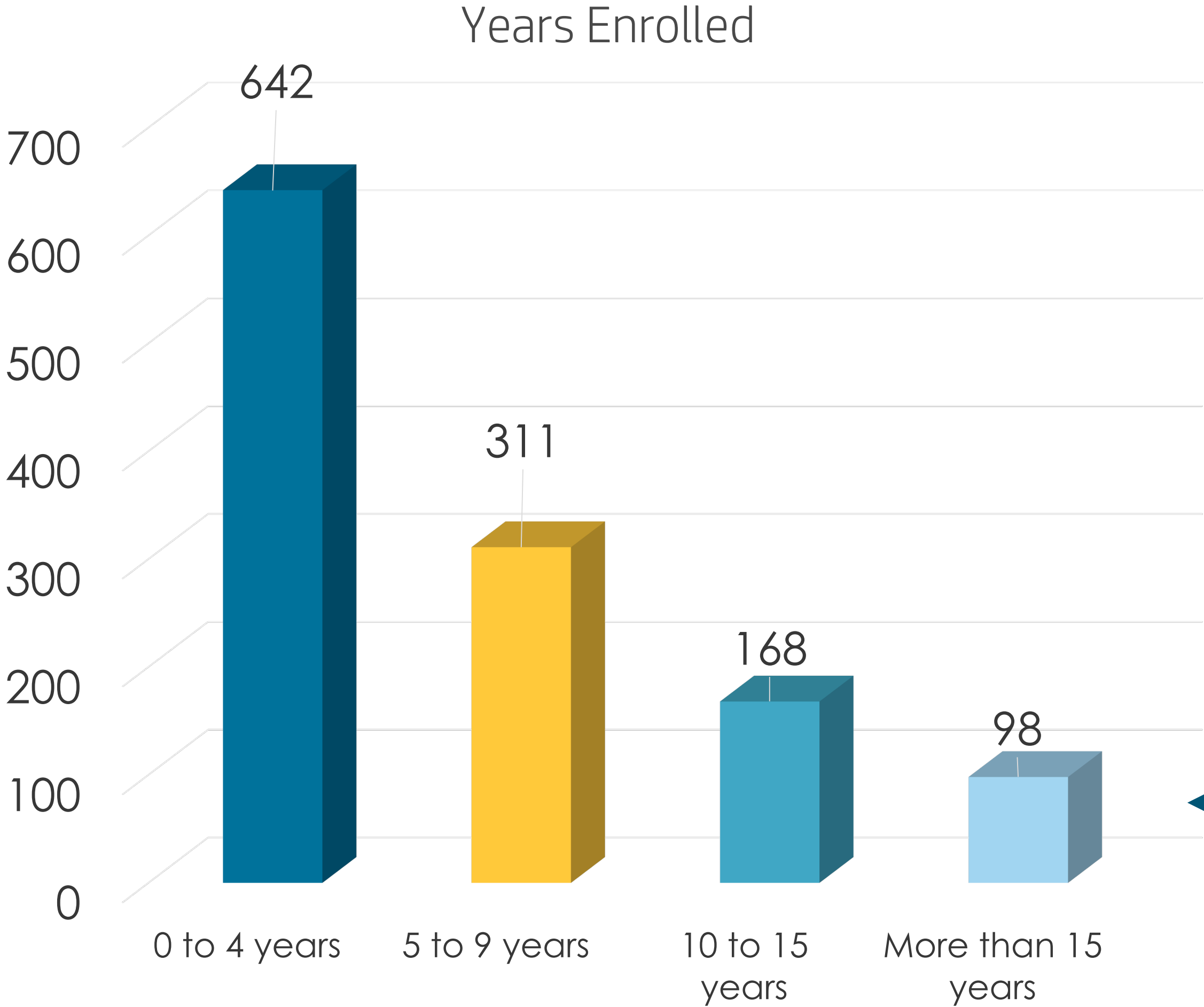
Years to Graduate				
N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
430	0	30	5.95	5.521

Computed by subtracting original entering enrollment year from graduation year.



# Indicator: Enrollment

Fall 2020 adult undergraduate years of enrollment.



Years Enrolled				
N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1219	0	53	6.1403	6.6932

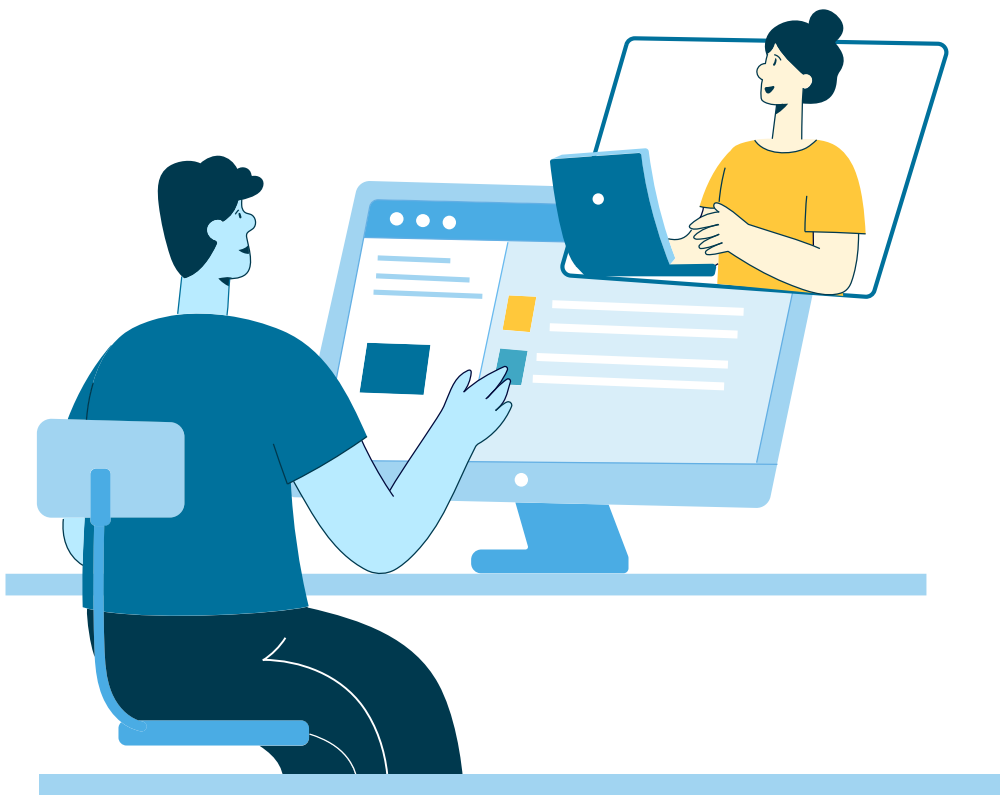
Computed by subtracting initial USA admission year from 2020.

What do you think could contribute to students continuing for so many years?



# Indicator: Institutional GPA

Fall 2020 adult undergraduate years of average GPA.



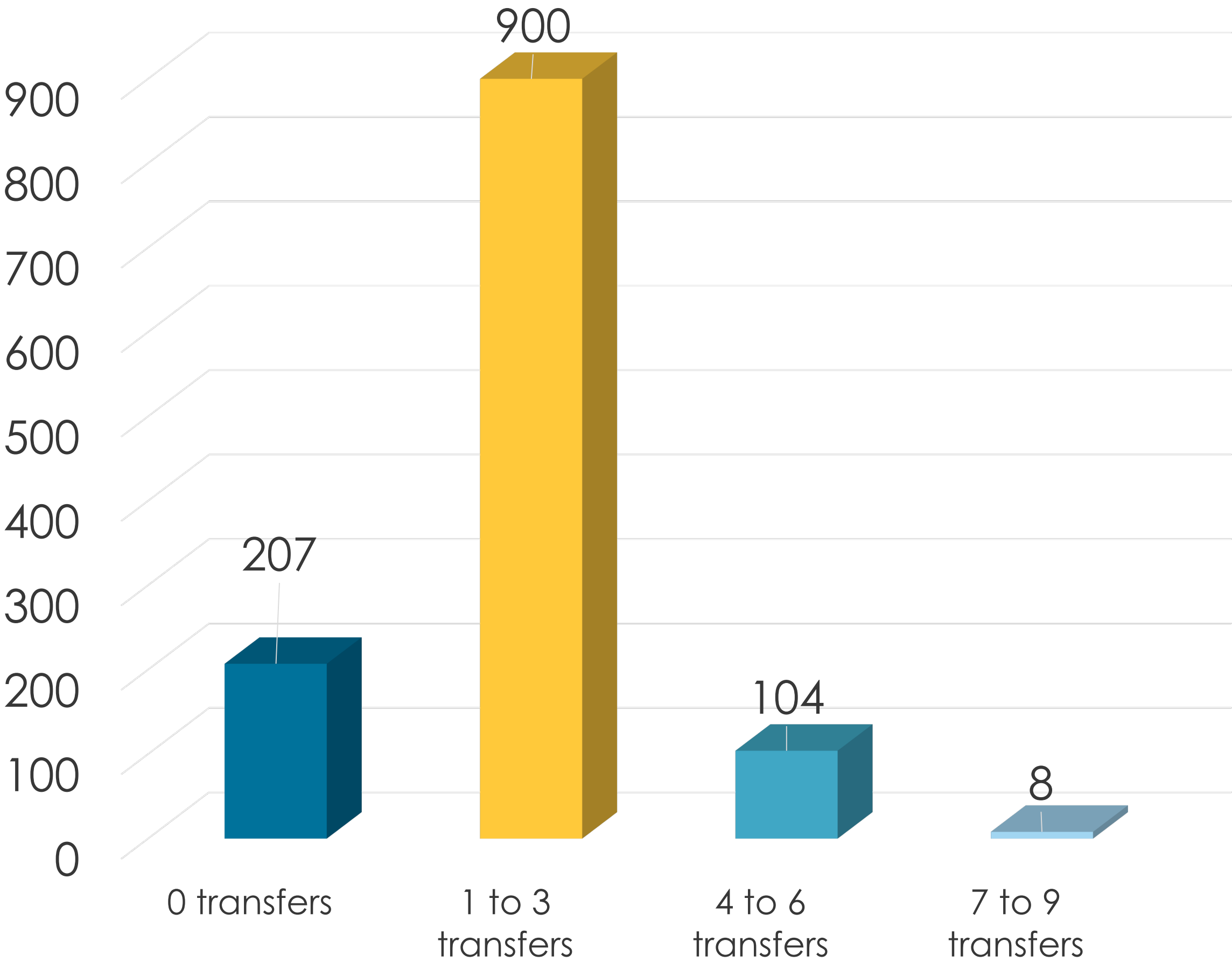
Average Institutional GPA				
N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1084	0	4.00	<b>2.974</b>	.7698

**11%** of adult undergraduates enrolled fall 2020 did not have an institutional GPA at the time of the fall census.

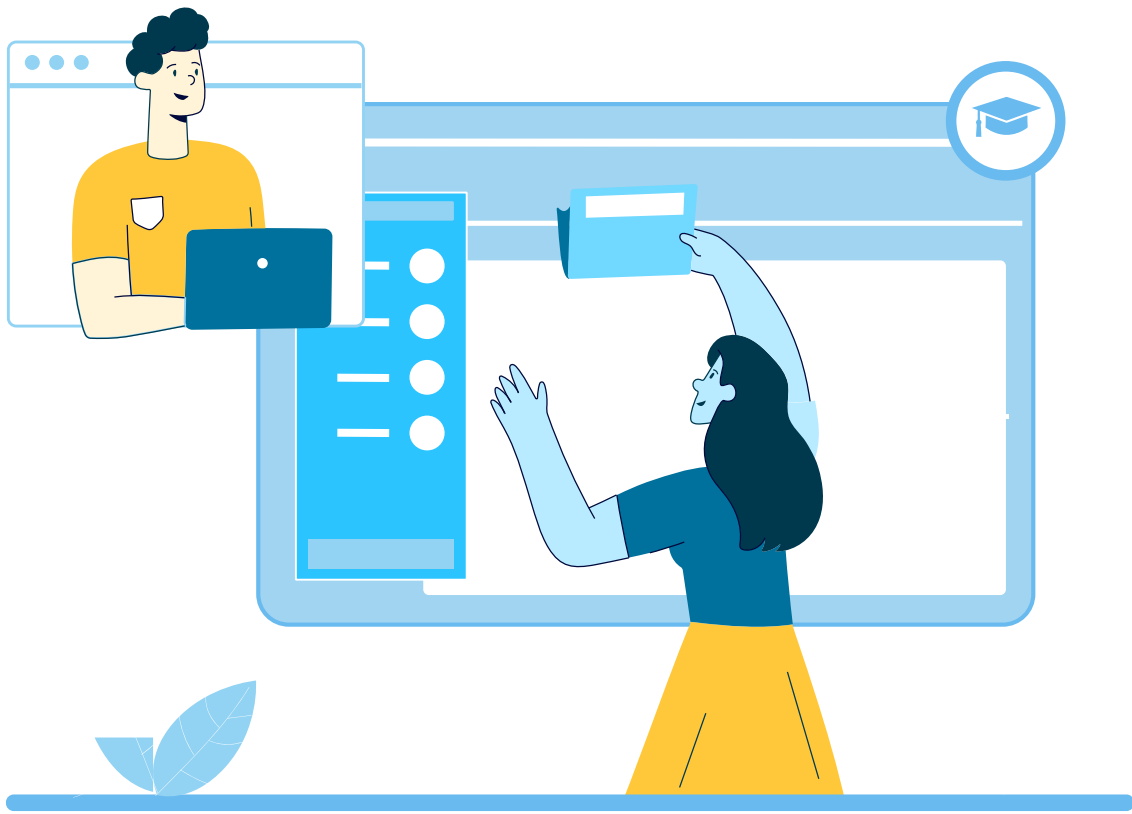
# Indicator: Number of Transfers

Fall 2020 adult undergraduate transfer students and average number of transfers.

Number of Transfer Students (n=1,012)



**83%** of adult undergraduates enrolled fall 2020 had at least one institutional transfer.



Average Number of Institutional Transfers				
N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1219	0	9	1.68	1.359

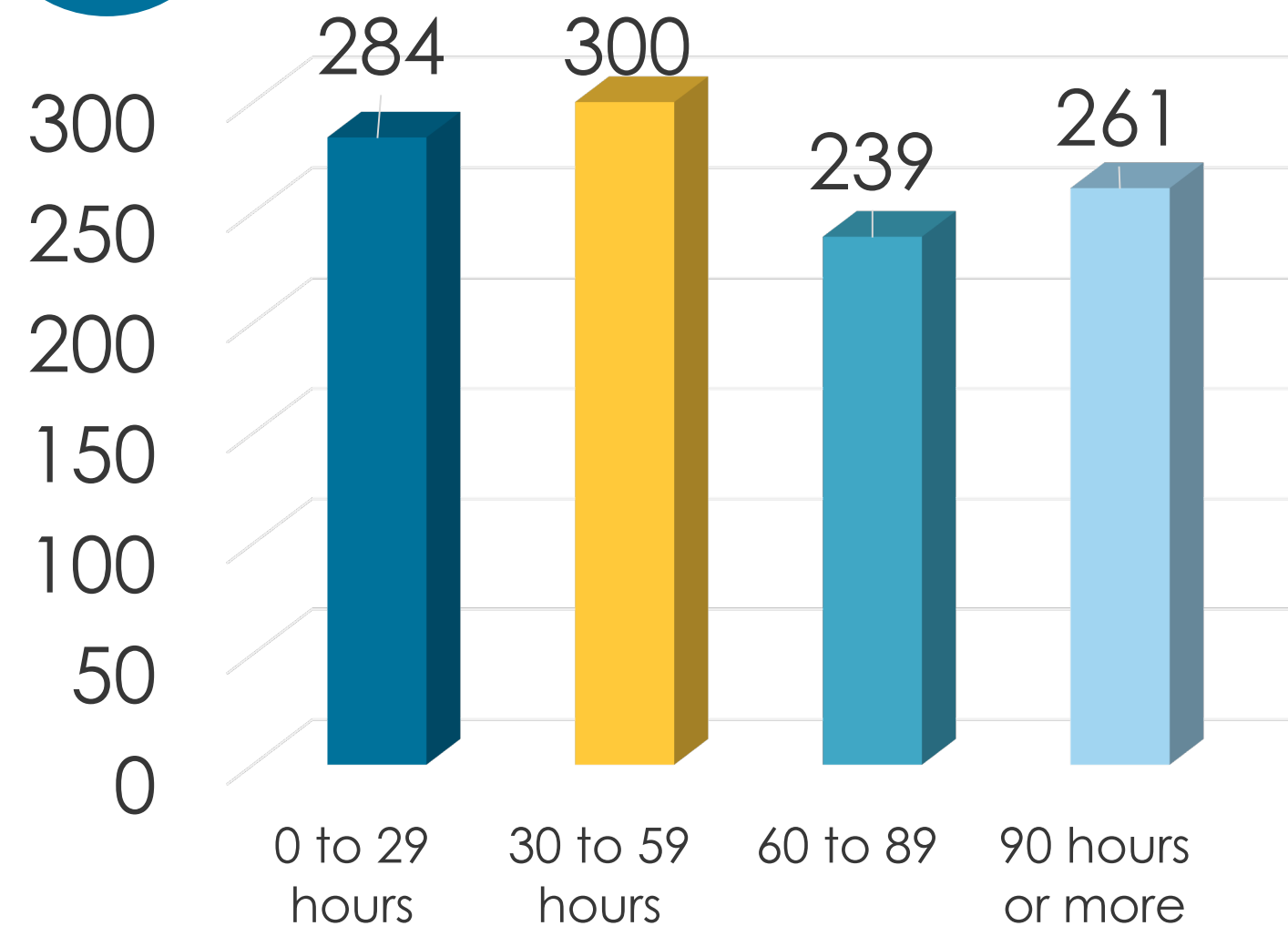


# Indicator: Hours Earned

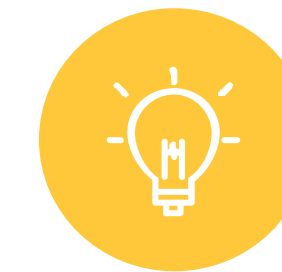
Fall 2020 adult undergraduate institutional and transfer credit hours earned.



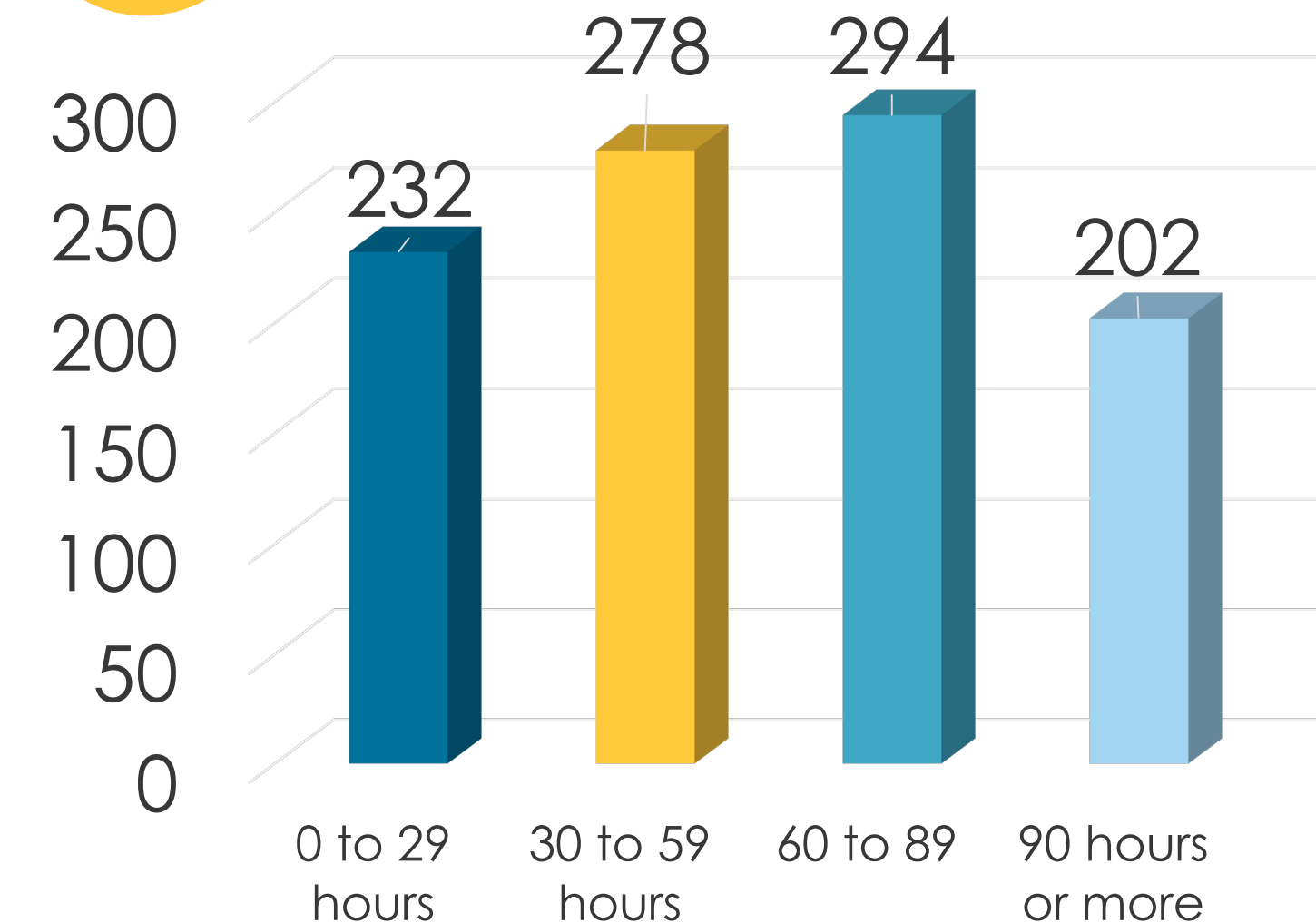
## Institutional Hours Earned



vs.



## Transfer Hours Earned



### Average Institutional Hours Earned

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1084	0	218.38	62.6577	43.7745

11% of adult undergraduates enrolled fall 2020 did not have institutional credit hours at the time of the fall 2020 census.

### Average Transfer Hours Reported

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1006	0	235.00	63.1647	43.0504

83% of adult undergraduates enrolled fall 2020 had reported transfer credit hours.

# Continued Research

Plans for further research are being developed.



There's much  
more to discover.

01

## Institutional Data:

view patterns, identify trends, comparative research, correlational research, predictive analysis, develop additional research questions.

02

## Individual Data:

track student progress, social integration, perceptions data, engagement with co-curricular activities and student support services.



# Questions and Discussion?

