



## Strategic Planning 2014



## 2014 Strategic Planning Survey

FEBRUARY 10, 2014

For Information about the  
Samford University 2014 Strategic Planning Survey  
please contact:

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## Think Boldly. Act Decisively.


In the fall of 2013 Samford University began creating a strategic plan that will guide us over the next decade and beyond. Unlike traditional plans, we are creating an evolutionary document. The Samford Strategic Plan will do more than map a course or place us in a position to respond to the challenges facing higher education. Our plan will be uncommonly anticipatory. It will define guideposts while providing agility not usually associated with educational institutions.


As part of our strategic process, the University is conducting a series of in-depth interviews across the broad spectrum of Samford's stakeholders. It's our intent that these deeply thoughtful discussions become a never-ending conversation. To date, we've engaged 38 individuals in dialogue lasting, on average, almost three hours each. We eagerly await the discourse to come.


In concert with this ongoing conversation, in January 2014 Samford launched the most comprehensive, furthest reaching survey in our 174 year history. The findings of that survey are highlighted in this report. In addition to the findings presented herein, we received more than 260 pages of comments: survey respondents were extremely generous with their time and insight.


So what is the Samford family telling us?


 **Samford's family deeply cares.** Whether in praise or candid feedback, the well-being of our remarkable institution is at the forefront of thoughts expressed.


 **We believe in the opportunities ahead.** With calm resolve and grounded perspective, confidence in the future of Samford University is exceptionally high. Opportunities abound and we are well-positioned to benefit from them.


 **Challenges facing Samford are real, complex and respected.** The Samford family has neither a Pollyanna-ish nor pessimistic perspective. Challenges confronting the University from without and within are recognized for what they are: intricate tests that require nuanced answers.

 **Be true to ourselves.** Know who we are, take pride in who we are, and become more of who we are.

 **Samford can change the world.** We seek to grow in our mission, touching even more lives and backgrounds than we have in the past.

 **With grace and humility, be proud of our family.** This is a time of opportunity, a chance to proudly stand on the foundation laid by those before us. It's time to tell the world – and sometimes ourselves – of Samford's remarkable students, faculty and alumni.

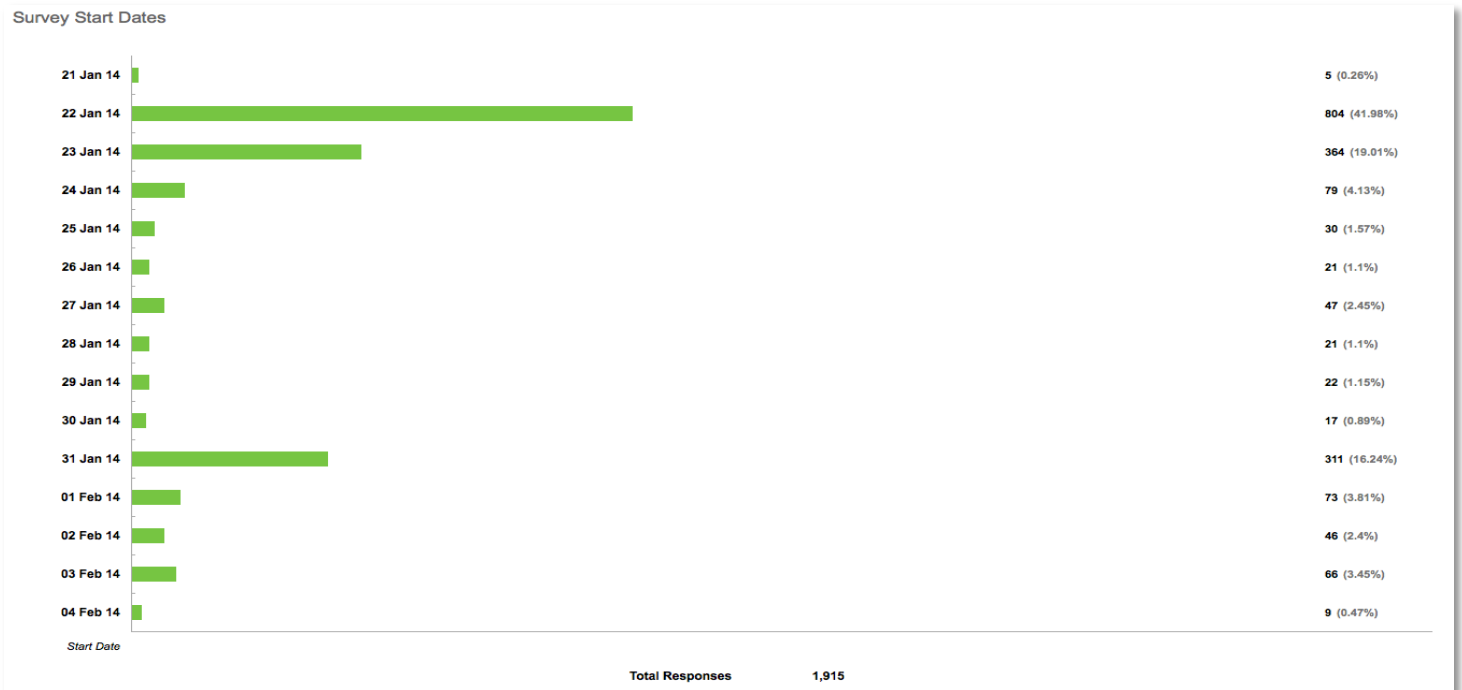
 **The time is now.** There is an overwhelming sense of urgency, but not the kind borne of desperation or doubt. Rather, excitement is in the air. Samford no longer will stand for being anyone's secret. It's time to be confident and intentional.

 **No false choices.** Adapting to changes around us, or merely improving ourselves, shouldn't be held hostage to an either/or mentality. It's not whether we should or should not, but ensuring that if we do, we do so brilliantly.

And so, we are left with a clear mission: **think boldly, act decisively.** As we move forward in our planning effort, and with great care, we will keep our mission clearly in mind.

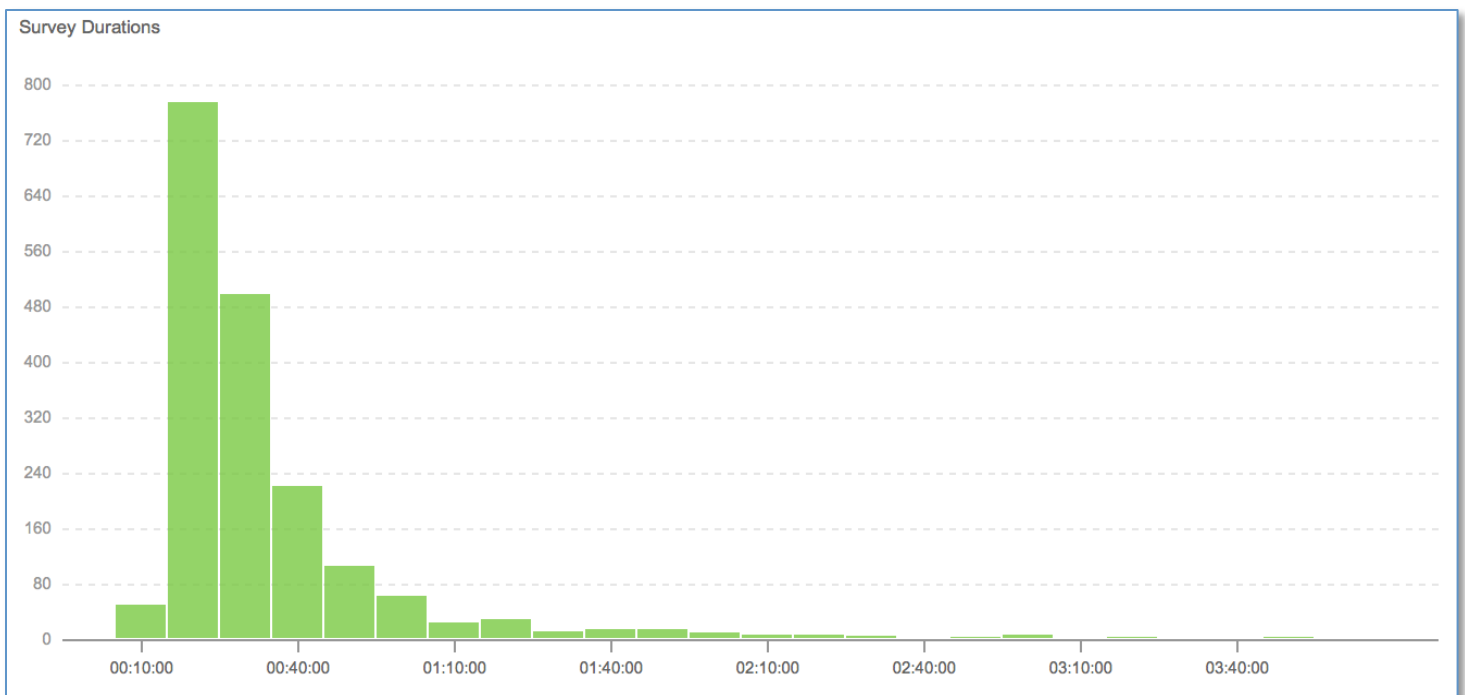
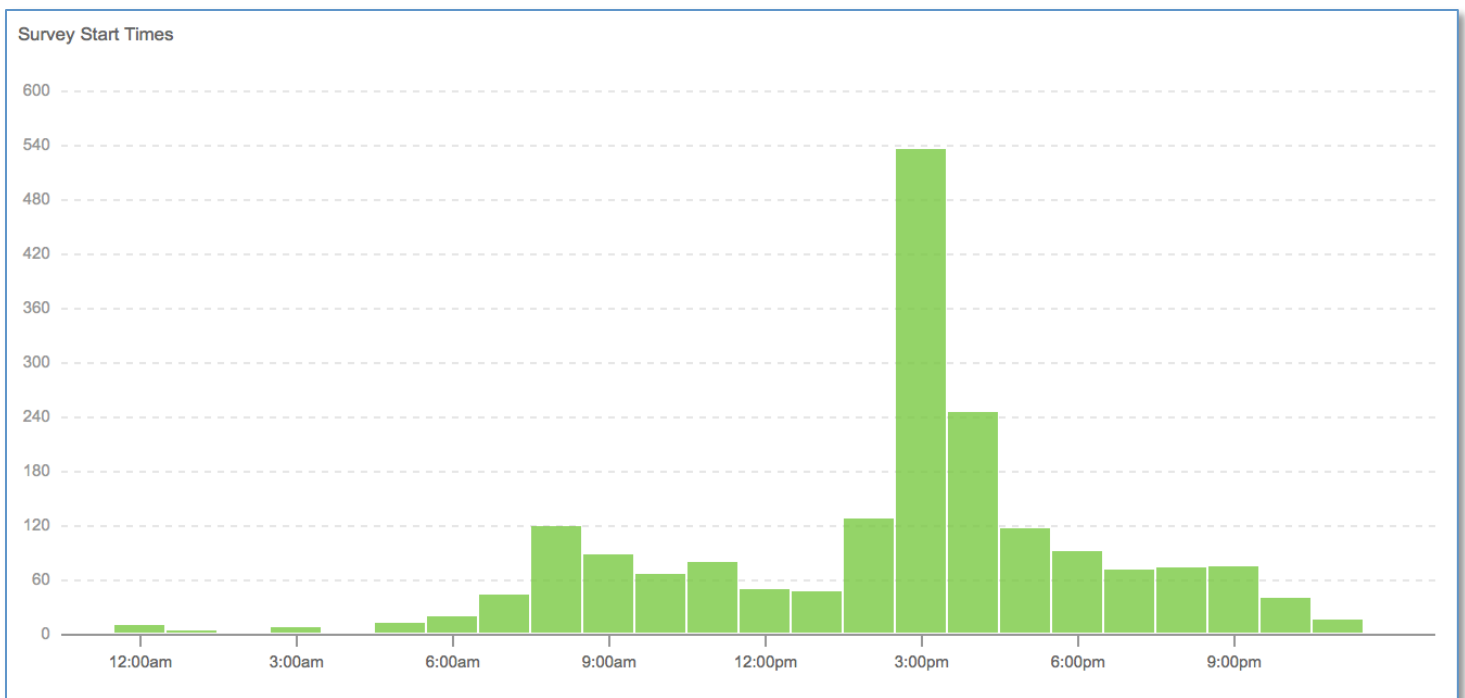
# Survey Statistics

Survey Dates: January 22 to February 4, 2014  
Total Respondents: 1,915



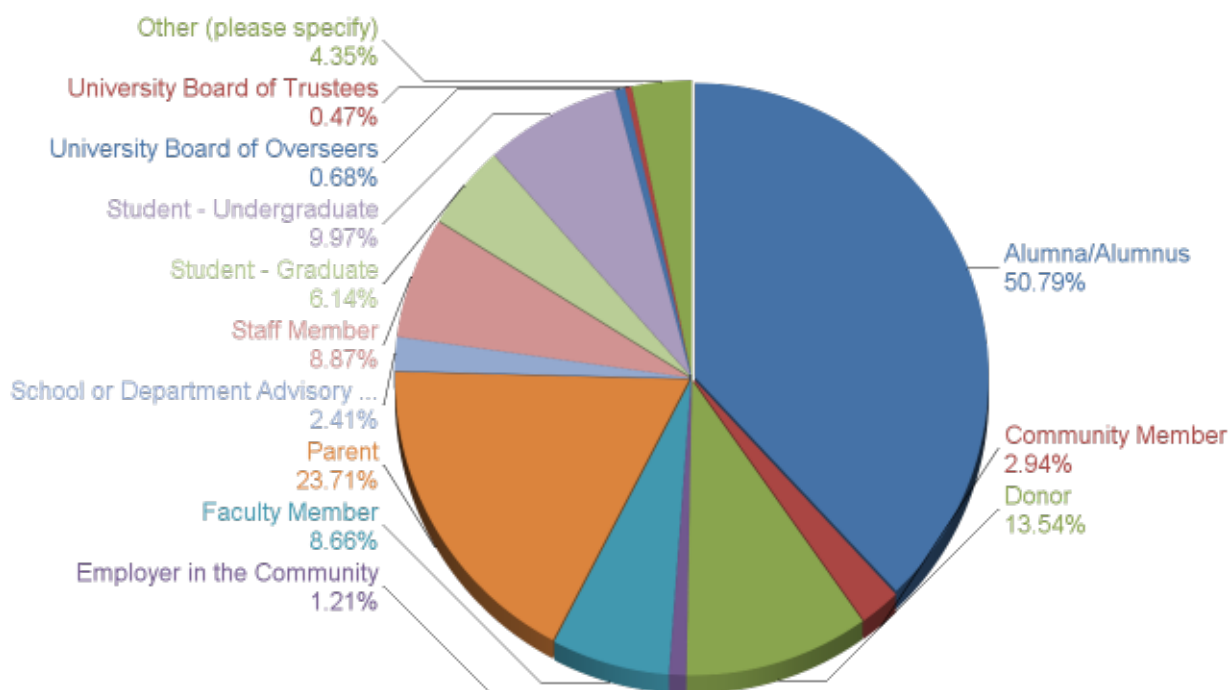
- Survey distributed via e-mail to 34,485 contacts on January 22, 2014
- 30% of recipients opened the e-mail; 6% clicked on the survey link
- Survey reminder sent to 29,511 contacts on January 31, 2014
- 30% of recipients opened the reminder e-mail; 3.2% clicked on the survey
- **In total, 5.5% of email recipients took and completed the survey**
- **99% of respondents beginning the survey completed the survey**
- Of the 3,053 that clicked on the survey link, 62.7% took the survey

Survey Dates: January 22 to February 4, 2014  
Total Respondents: 1,915



# Survey Responses

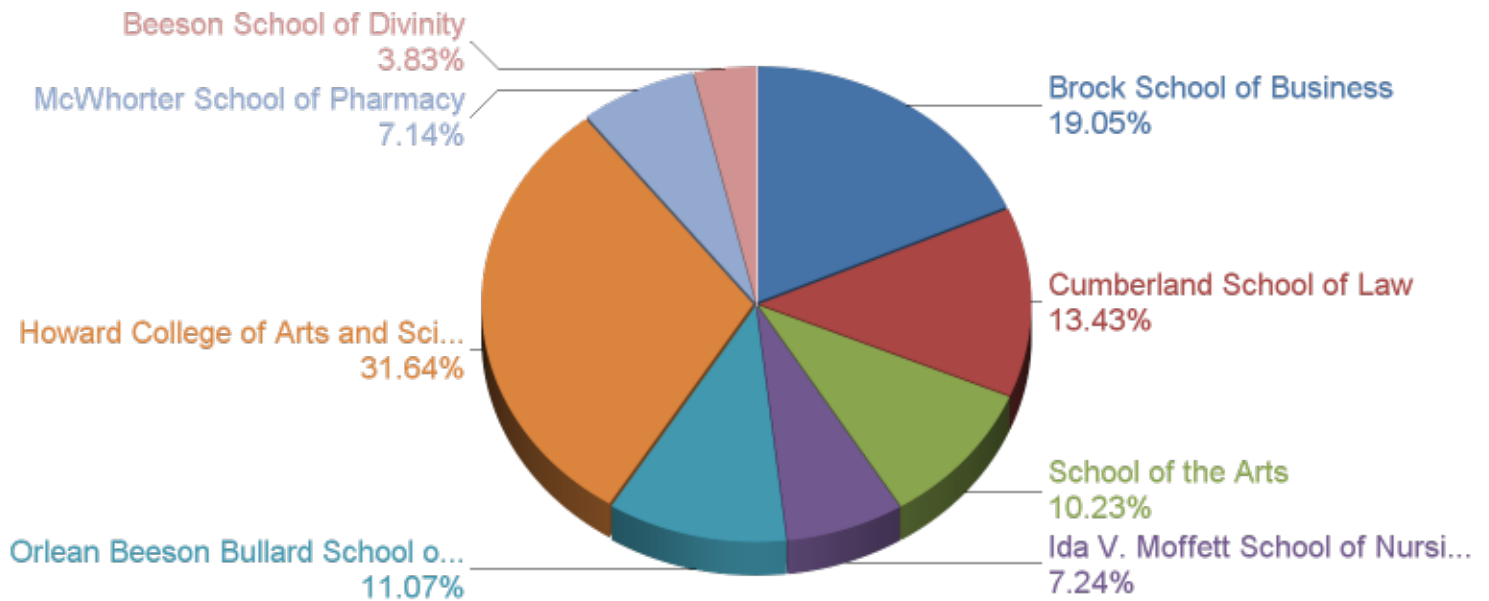
Please identify your relationship with Samford University. If you have more than one relationship, please identify your two PRIMARY relationships.



#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Alumna/Alumnus		968	50.79%
6	Parent		452	23.71%
3	Donor		258	13.54%
10	Student - Undergraduate		190	9.97%
8	Staff Member		169	8.87%
5	Faculty Member		165	8.66%
9	Student - Graduate		117	6.14%
13	Other (please specify)		83	4.35%
2	Community Member		56	2.94%
7	School or Department Advisory Board Member		46	2.41%
4	Employer in the Community		23	1.21%
11	University Board of Overseers		13	0.68%
12	University Board of Trustees		9	0.47%
	Total		2549	100.00%

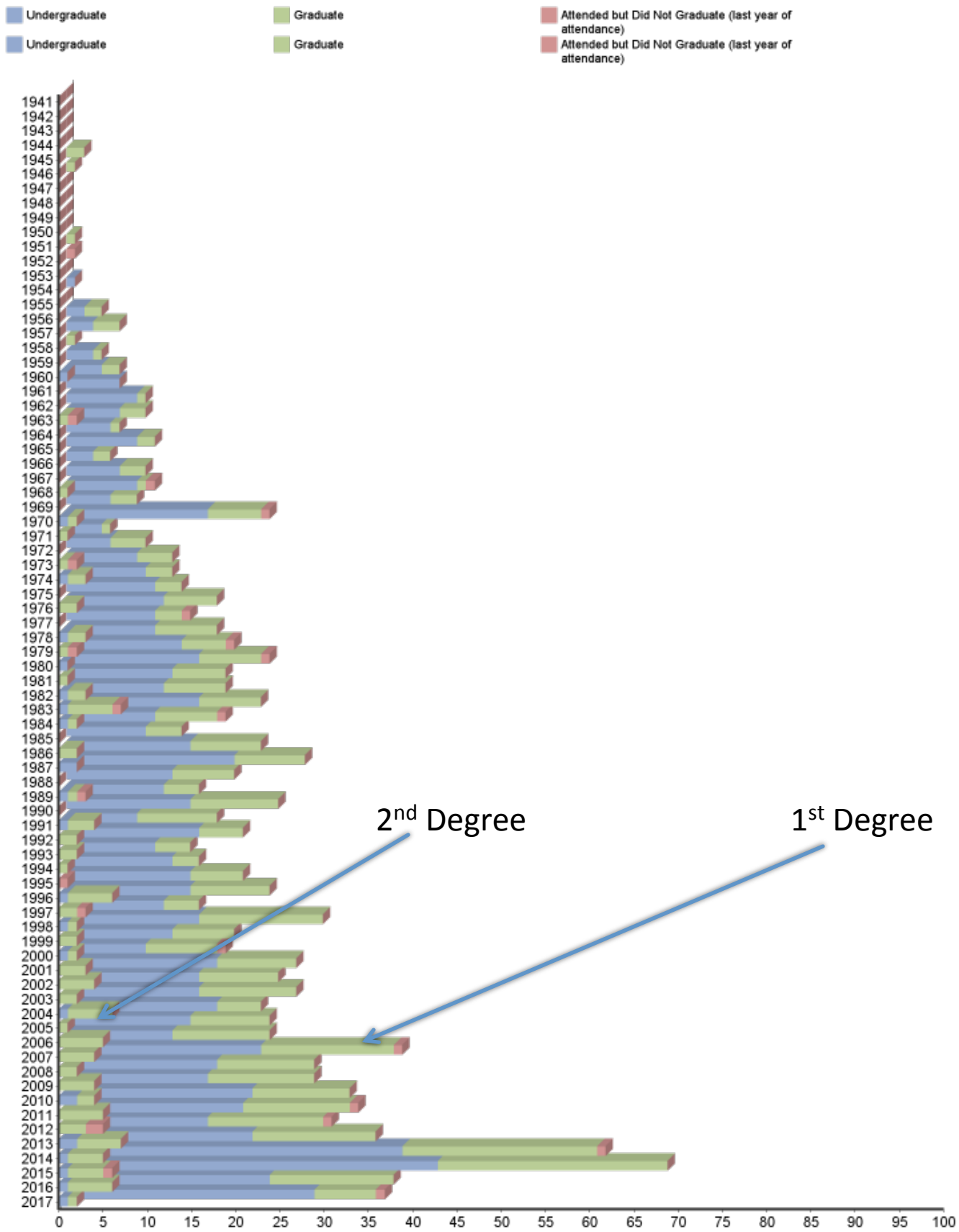


With which school(s) are you primarily affiliated?

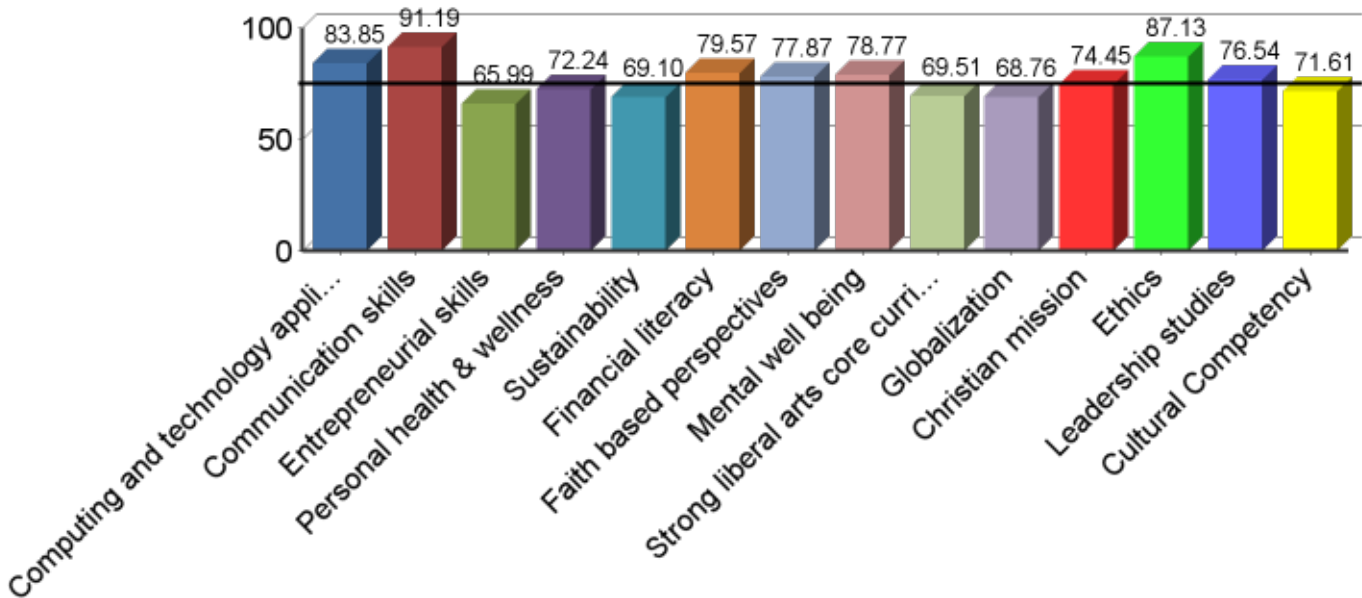


#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
6	Howard College of Arts and Sciences		603	31.64%
1	Brock School of Business		363	19.05%
2	Cumberland School of Law		256	13.43%
5	Orlean Beeson Bullard School of Education and Professional Studies		211	11.07%
3	School of the Arts		195	10.23%
4	Ida V. Moffett School of Nursing		138	7.24%
7	McWhorter School of Pharmacy		136	7.14%
10	Other (please specify)		114	5.98%
8	All Schools Equally		97	5.09%
9	Beeson School of Divinity		73	3.83%
	Total		2186	100.00%

If you are a graduate of Samford University, please enter the year you graduated. If your are currently enrolled, please enter your expected year of graduation.

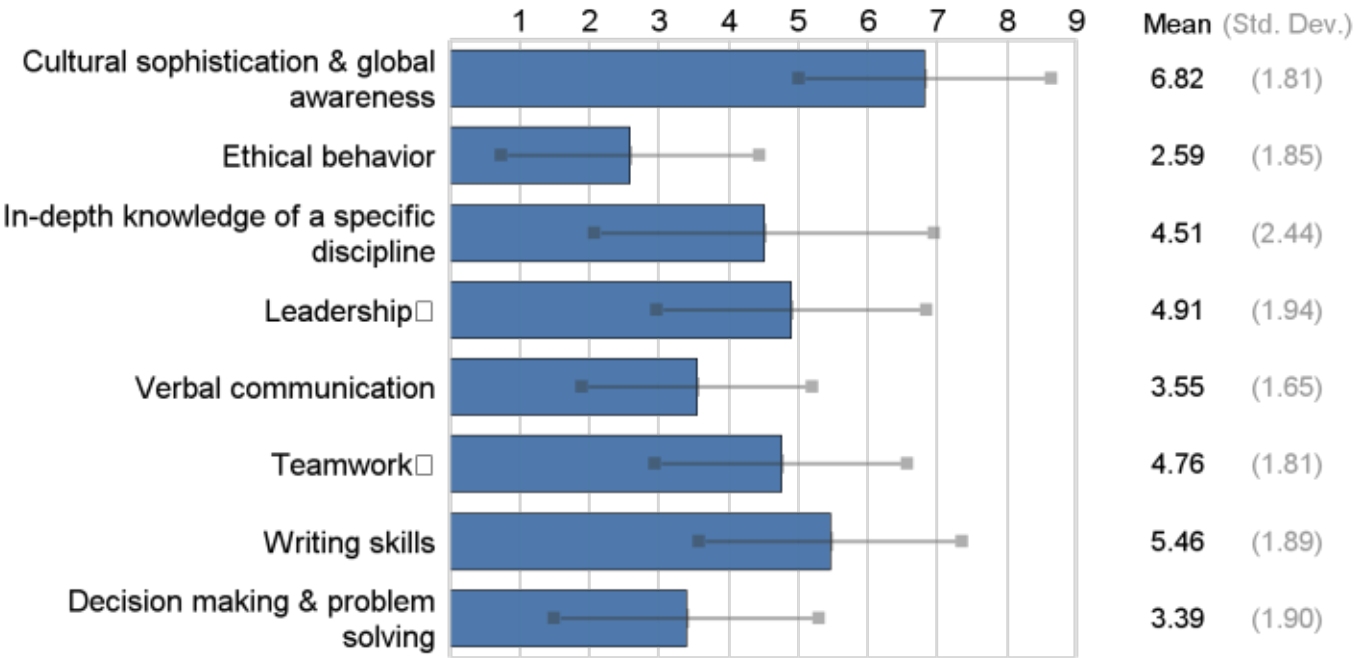


Please indicate your opinion as to the importance of each of the following areas of study or skill sets in terms of its importance to a well-rounded education that will prepare students for a successful career in today's environment. Drag the bar to your desired response level.



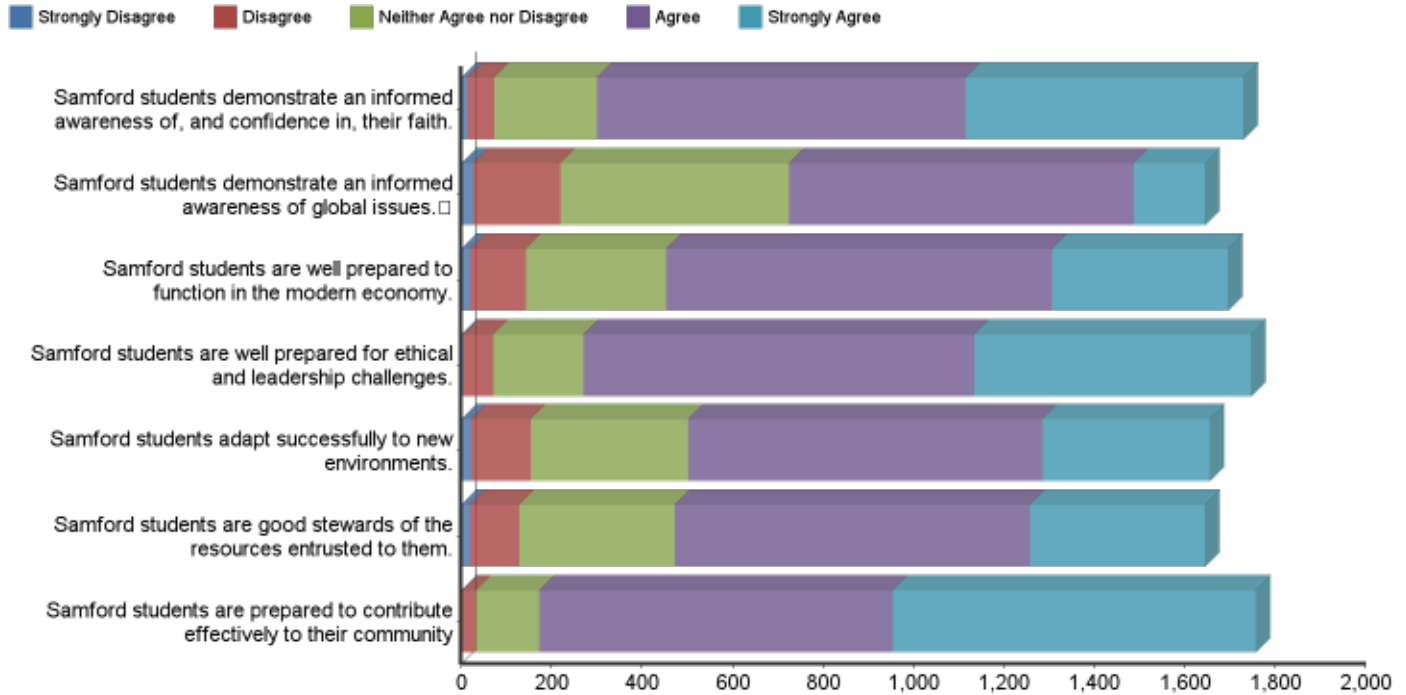
#	Question	Responses	Mean
2	Communication skills	1895	91.19
12	Ethics	1878	87.13
1	Computing and technology application	1883	83.85
6	Financial literacy	1873	79.57
8	Mental well being	1855	78.77
7	Faith based perspectives	1850	77.87
13	Leadership studies	1864	76.54
11	Christian mission	1834	74.45
4	Personal health & wellness	1850	72.24
14	Cultural Competency	1838	71.61
9	Strong liberal arts core curriculum	1837	69.51
5	Sustainability	1793	69.10
10	Globalization	1824	68.76
3	Entrepreneurial skills	1841	65.99

Imagine you are hiring a recent graduate. Please rank the following skills in order of importance to your hiring decision. Drag the items to order them with the most important on top.



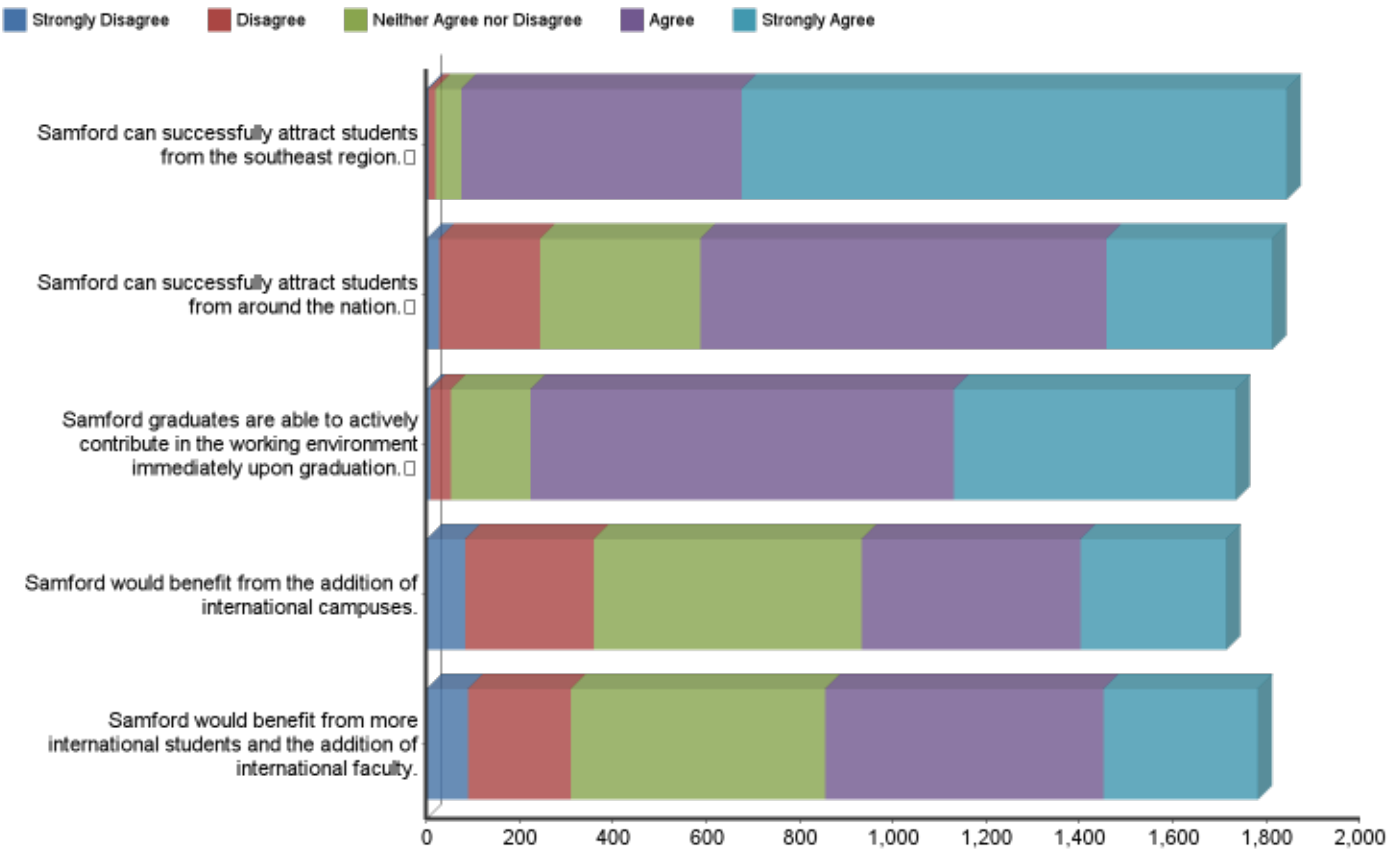
#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Mean
2	Ethical behavior	798	359	225	184	145	104	74	17	2.59
8	Decision making & problem solving	345	404	337	290	238	147	88	57	3.39
5	Verbal communication	217	374	370	370	317	191	53	14	3.55
3	In-depth knowledge of a specific discipline	297	260	195	175	190	223	314	252	4.51
6	Teamwork	67	169	285	314	331	386	248	106	4.76
4	Leadership	105	162	225	252	333	357	344	128	4.91
7	Writing skills	36	134	184	234	258	345	457	258	5.46
1	Cultural sophistication & global awareness	41	44	85	87	94	153	328	1074	6.82
	Total	1906	1906	1906	1906	1906	1906	1906	1906	-

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you feel a question does not apply to you or that you lack sufficient information, please check "NA".



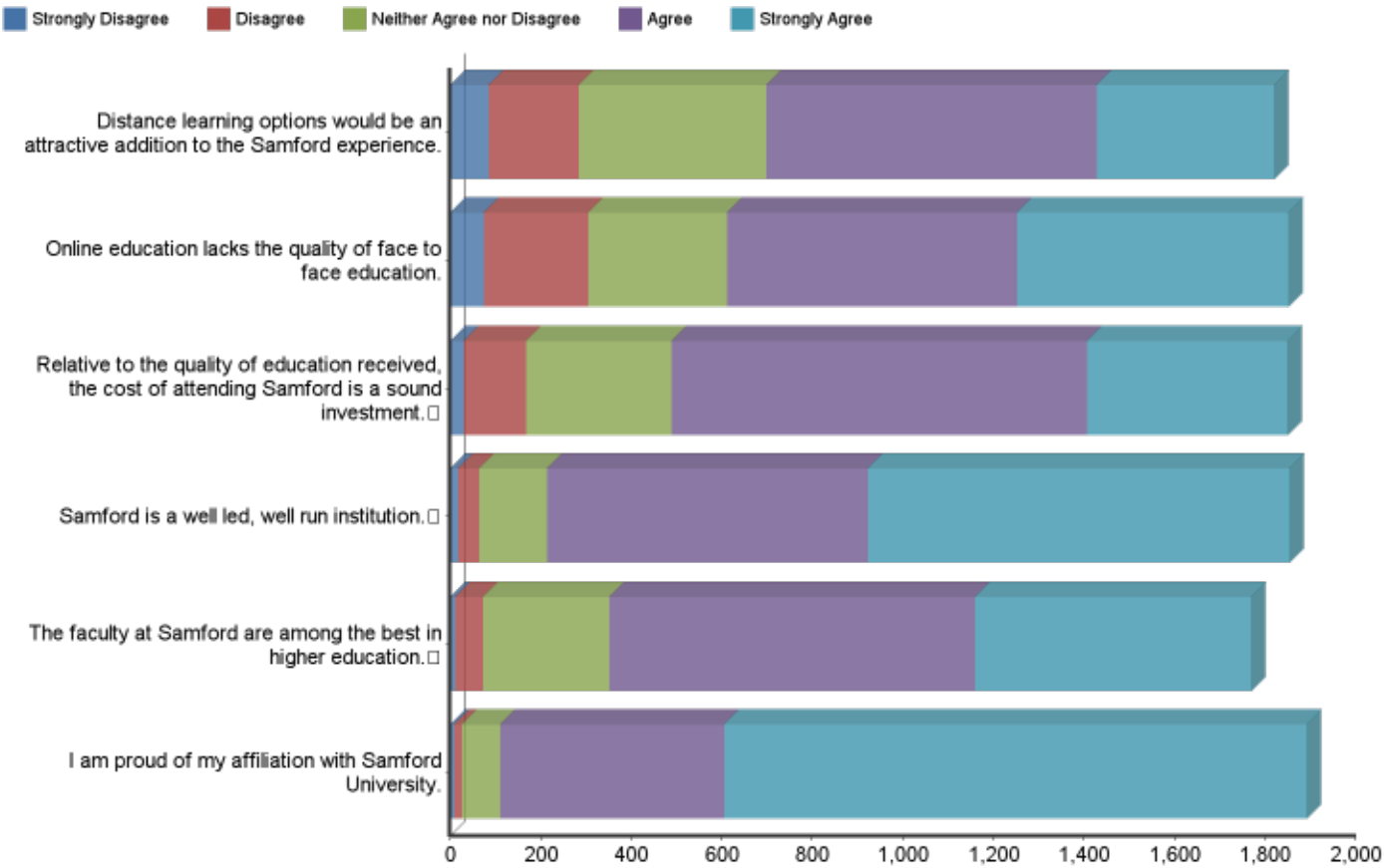
#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response	Average Value
7	Samford students are prepared to contribute effectively to their community	3	28	140	783	805	1759	4.34
4	Samford students are well prepared for ethical and leadership challenges.	5	66	199	863	614	1747	4.15
1	Samford students demonstrate an informed awareness of, and confidence in, their faith.	13	60	227	814	617	1731	4.13
3	Samford students are well prepared to function in the modern economy.	20	122	310	854	390	1696	3.87
6	Samford students are good stewards of the resources entrusted to them.	19	108	345	785	388	1645	3.86
5	Samford students adapt successfully to new environments.	21	131	349	784	370	1655	3.82
2	Samford students demonstrate an informed awareness of global issues.	26	192	507	762	158	1645	3.51

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you feel a question does not apply to you or that you lack sufficient information, please check "NA".



#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response	Average Value
1	Samford can successfully attract students from the southeast region.	5	14	55	600	1169	1843	4.58
3	Samford graduates are able to actively contribute in the working environment immediately upon graduation.	9	42	172	906	606	1735	4.19
2	Samford can successfully attract students from around the nation.	26	216	344	871	355	1812	3.72
5	Samford would benefit from more international students and the addition of international faculty.	89	219	545	597	332	1782	3.48
4	Samford would benefit from the addition of international campuses.	82	276	574	470	313	1715	3.38

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you feel a question does not apply to you or that you lack sufficient information, please check "NA".



#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response	Average Value
6	I am proud of my affiliation with Samford University.	9	16	84	495	1288	1892	4.61
4	Samford is a well led, well run institution.	16	48	149	708	933	1854	4.35
5	The faculty at Samford are among the best in higher education.	10	61	280	808	611	1770	4.10
3	Relative to the quality of education received, the cost of attending Samford is a sound investment.	29	139	320	917	445	1850	3.87
2	Online education lacks the quality of face to face education.	73	232	306	641	601	1853	3.79
1	Distance learning options would be an attractive addition to the Samford experience.	84	199	415	730	393	1821	3.63

## Qualitative Questions Ranked by Average Score

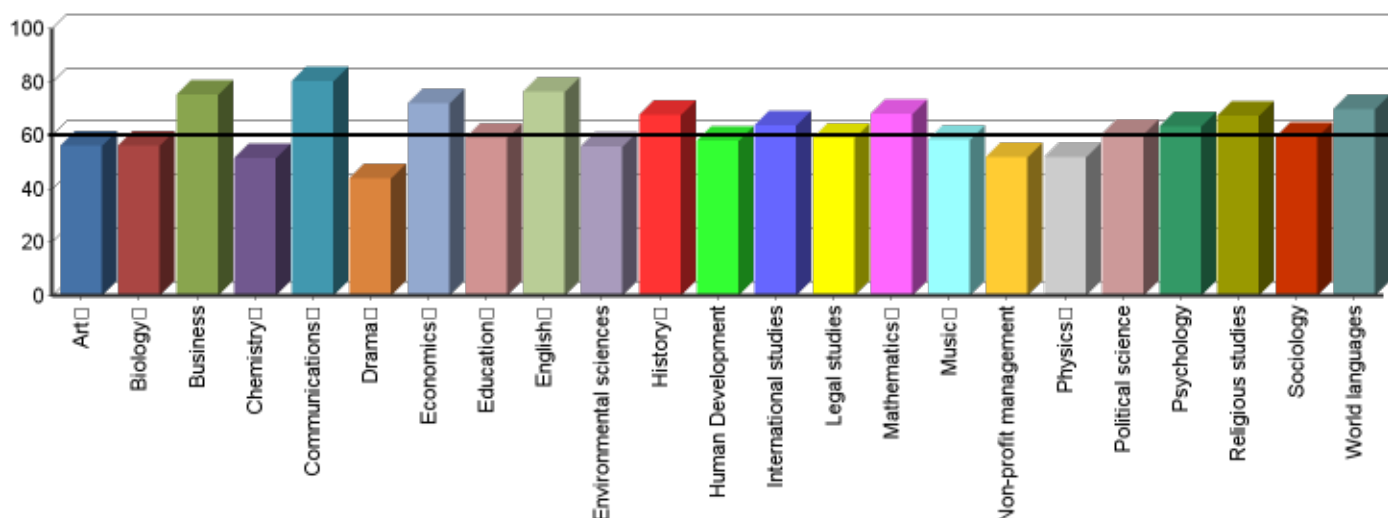
#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response	Average Value	Agree / Disagree Ratio
1	I am proud of my affiliation with Samford University.	9	16	84	493	1282	1884	4.605	71.0
2	Samford can successfully attract students from the southeast region.	5	14	55	599	1162	1835	4.580	92.7
3	Samford University has a bright future.	1	18	82	701	1088	1890	4.512	94.2
4	Samford changes the lives of its students for the better.	4	15	134	730	983	1866	4.432	90.2
5	Samford is a well led, well run institution.	16	48	149	707	926	1846	4.343	25.5
6	Samford students are prepared to contribute effectively to their community	3	28	140	780	800	1751	4.340	51.0
7	If I had a chance to do it over again, I would attend/support Samford.	25	63	183	532	987	1790	4.337	17.3
8	Samford graduates are able to actively contribute in the working environment immediately upon graduation.	9	42	172	901	604	1728	4.186	29.5
9	Samford students are well prepared for ethical and leadership challenges.	5	66	199	858	611	1739	4.152	20.7
10	Samford students demonstrate an informed awareness of, and confidence in, their faith.	13	60	226	810	614	1723	4.133	19.5
11	The faculty at Samford are among the best in higher education.	10	61	280	803	608	1762	4.100	19.9
12	Samford has compelling options that make for a strong social life while attending.	25	138	294	815	448	1720	3.885	7.7
13	Relative to the quality of education received, the cost of attending Samford is a sound investment.	29	139	319	910	445	1842	3.870	8.1
14	Samford students are well prepared to function in the modern economy.	20	122	309	850	387	1688	3.866	8.7
15	Samford students are good stewards of the resources entrusted to them.	19	108	345	780	387	1639	3.859	9.2
16	Samford students adapt successfully to new environments.	21	131	349	779	368	1648	3.814	7.5
17	Online education lacks the quality of face to face education.	73	232	303	638	600	1846	3.791	4.1



## Qualitative Questions Ranked by Average Score

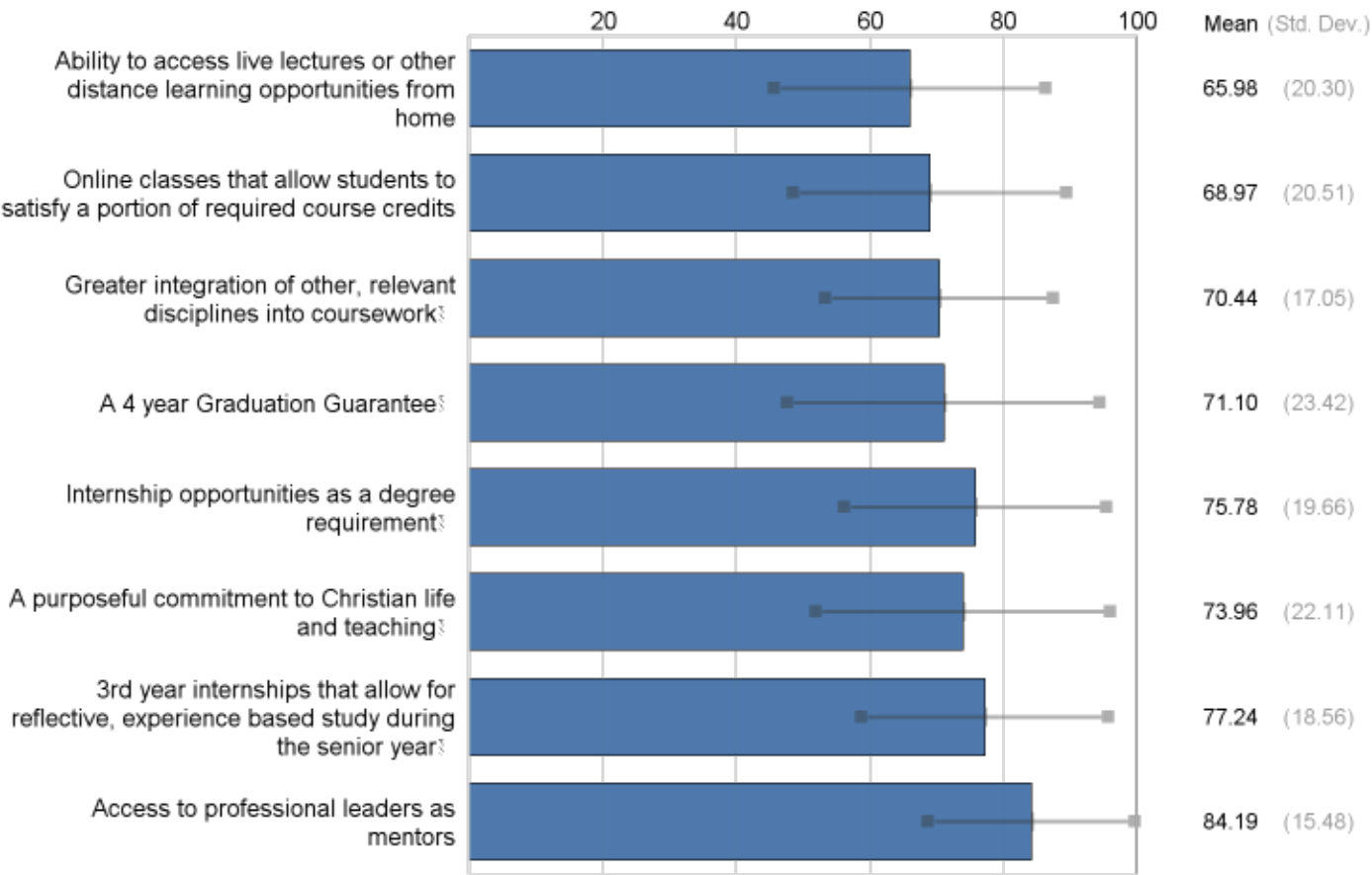
#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response	Average Value	Agree / Disagree Ratio
18	Samford can successfully attract students from around the nation.	26	216	342	868	352	1804	3.723	5.0
19	Samford's outreach into the community is significantly above other universities.	28	134	540	565	389	1656	3.696	5.9
20	Samford has a robust offering of international experiences.	22	121	495	736	293	1667	3.694	7.2
21	Distance learning options would be an attractive addition to the Samford experience.	84	199	415	726	390	1814	3.628	3.9
22	Samford students demonstrate an informed awareness of global issues.	26	192	505	758	158	1639	3.506	4.2
23	Samford would benefit from more international students and the addition of international faculty.	89	218	544	595	329	1775	3.483	3.0
24	Samford would benefit from the addition of international campuses.	82	276	572	468	311	1709	3.380	2.2
25	Samford has a diverse student body.	169	543	399	537	157	1805	2.983	1.0

Which of the following disciplines do you feel are excellent complements to a primary field of study? Drag the bar to your desired level of response.



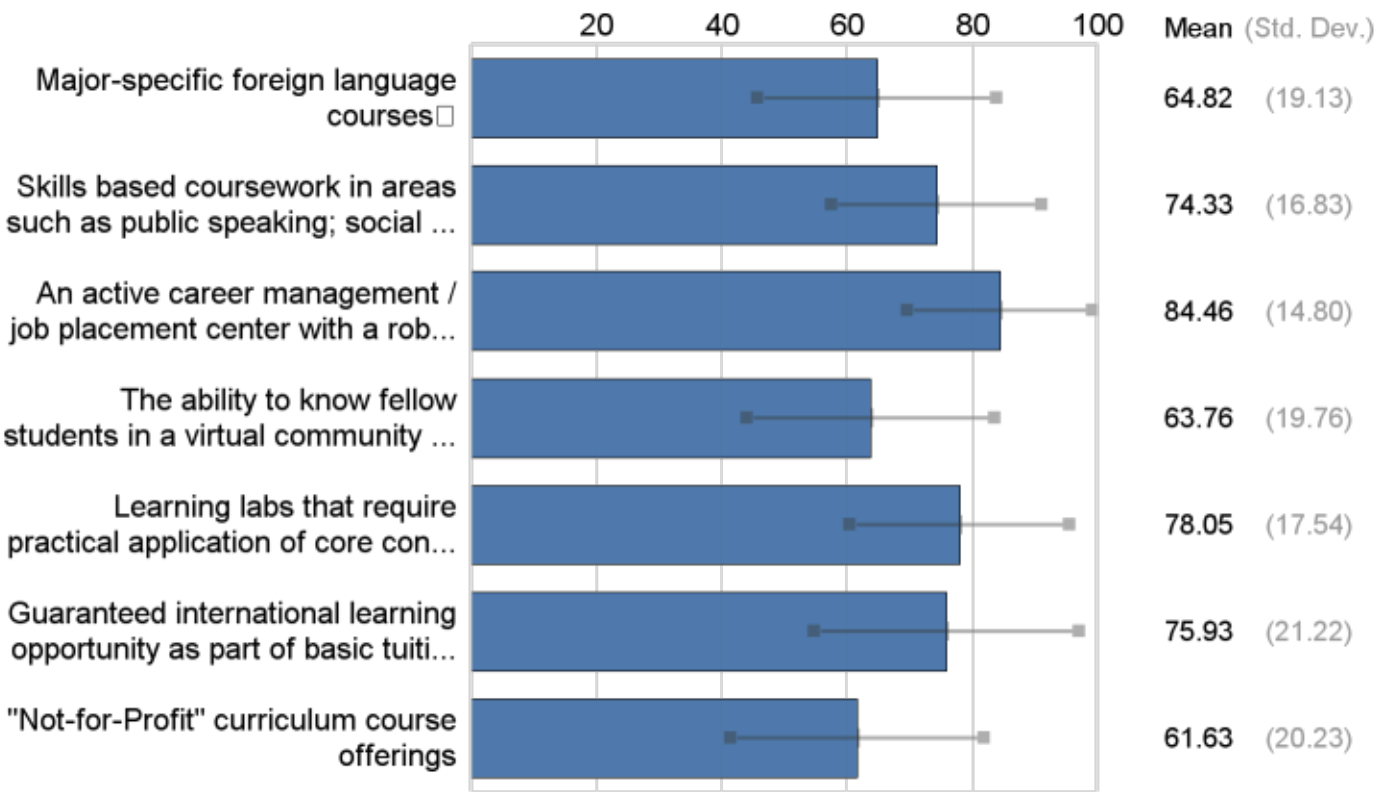
#	Question	Responses	Mean
9	Communications	1790	80.11
10	English	1759	76.21
11	Business	1778	75.34
5	Economics	1774	71.79
8	World languages	1751	69.88
6	Mathematics	1739	68.01
19	History	1730	67.47
2	Religious studies	1732	67.19
20	International studies	1668	63.59
22	Psychology	1701	63.23
12	Political science	1673	60.45
23	Sociology	1650	59.35
15	Education	1638	59.14
17	Legal studies	1659	59.00
3	Music	1679	58.32
21	Human Development	1625	57.74
18	Biology	1629	56.26
1	Art	1664	56.14
4	Environmental sciences	1623	55.64
7	Physics	1601	51.81
16	Non-profit management	1593	51.71
14	Chemistry	1603	51.55
13	Drama	1567	43.82

Please indicate the extent to which you believe the following items might impact a prospective student's decision to attend Samford University, either as an undergraduate or a graduate student. Drag the bar to your desired response level.



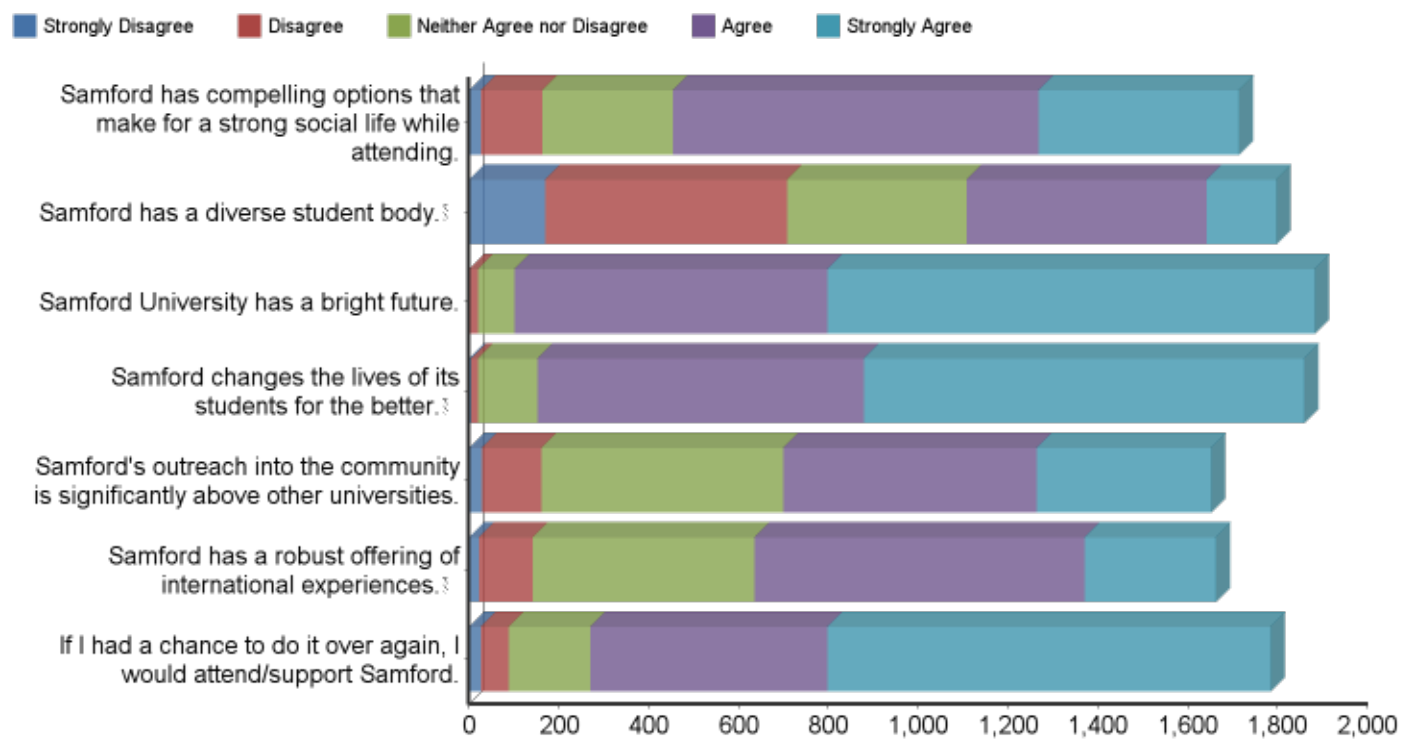
#	Question	Responses	Mean
8	Access to professional leaders as mentors	1877	84.19
7	3rd year internships that allow for reflective, experience based study during the senior year	1855	77.24
5	Internship opportunities as a degree requirement	1864	75.78
6	A purposeful commitment to Christian life and teaching	1827	73.96
4	A 4 year Graduation Guarantee	1811	71.10
3	Greater integration of other, relevant disciplines into coursework	1818	70.44
2	Online classes that allow students to satisfy a portion of required course credits	1851	68.97
1	Ability to access live lectures or other distance learning opportunities from home	1840	65.98

Please indicate the extent to which you believe the following items might impact a prospective student's decision to attend Samford University, either as an undergraduate or a graduate student. Drag the bar to your desired response level.



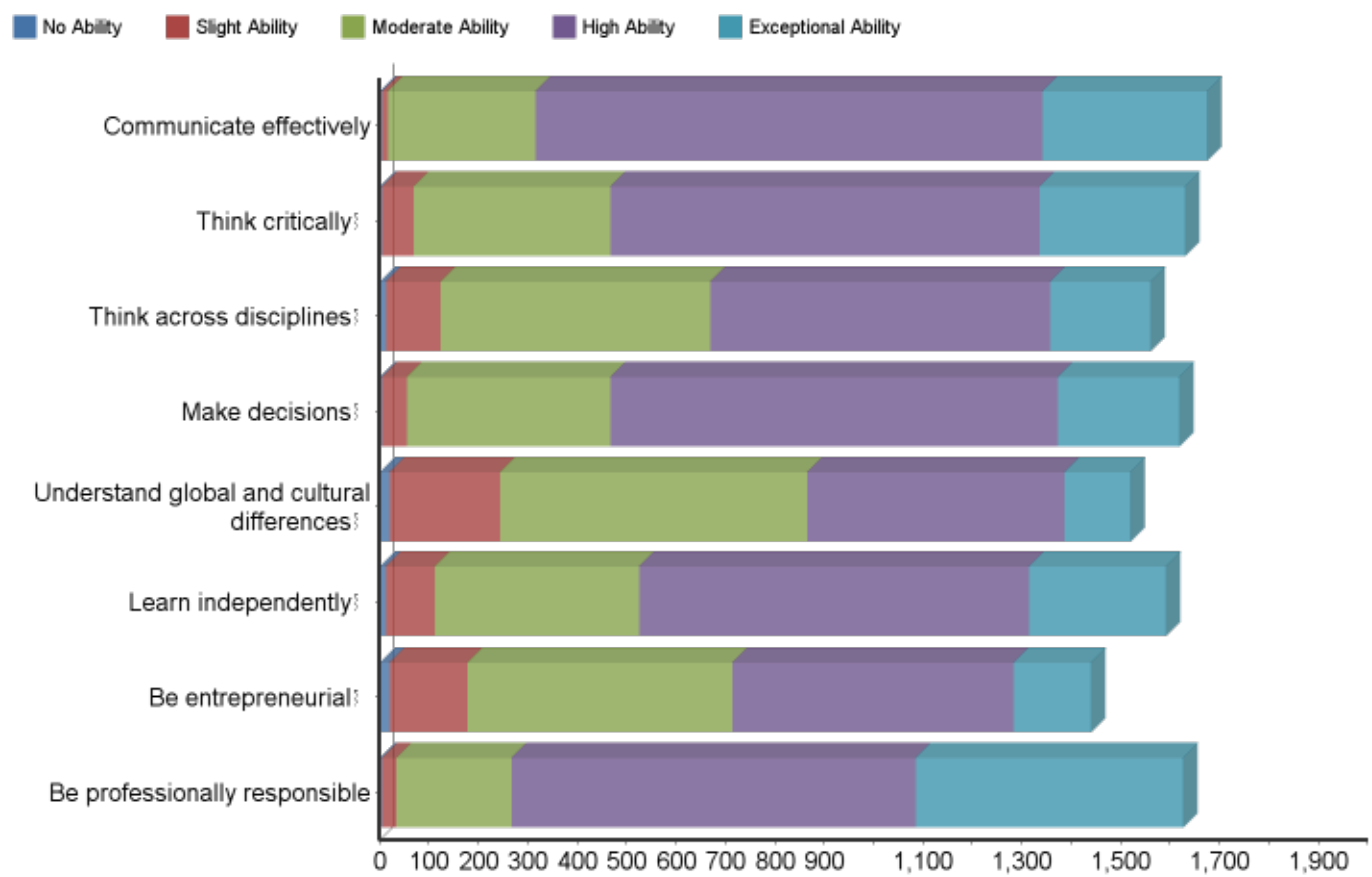
#	Question	Responses	Mean
3	An active career management / job placement center with a robust offering of on-campus job interviews	1884	84.46
5	Learning labs that require practical application of core concepts (e.g.; trading rooms; micro finance fund; mock court rooms, operating theaters, etc.)	1860	78.05
6	Guaranteed international learning opportunity as part of basic tuition	1820	75.93
2	Skills based coursework in areas such as public speaking; social media; selling skills; basic business	1869	74.33
1	Major-specific foreign language courses	1814	64.82
4	The ability to know fellow students in a virtual community prior to making an acceptance commitment	1817	63.76
7	"Not-for-Profit" curriculum course offerings	1782	61.63

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. If you feel a question does not apply to you or that you lack sufficient information, please check "NA".



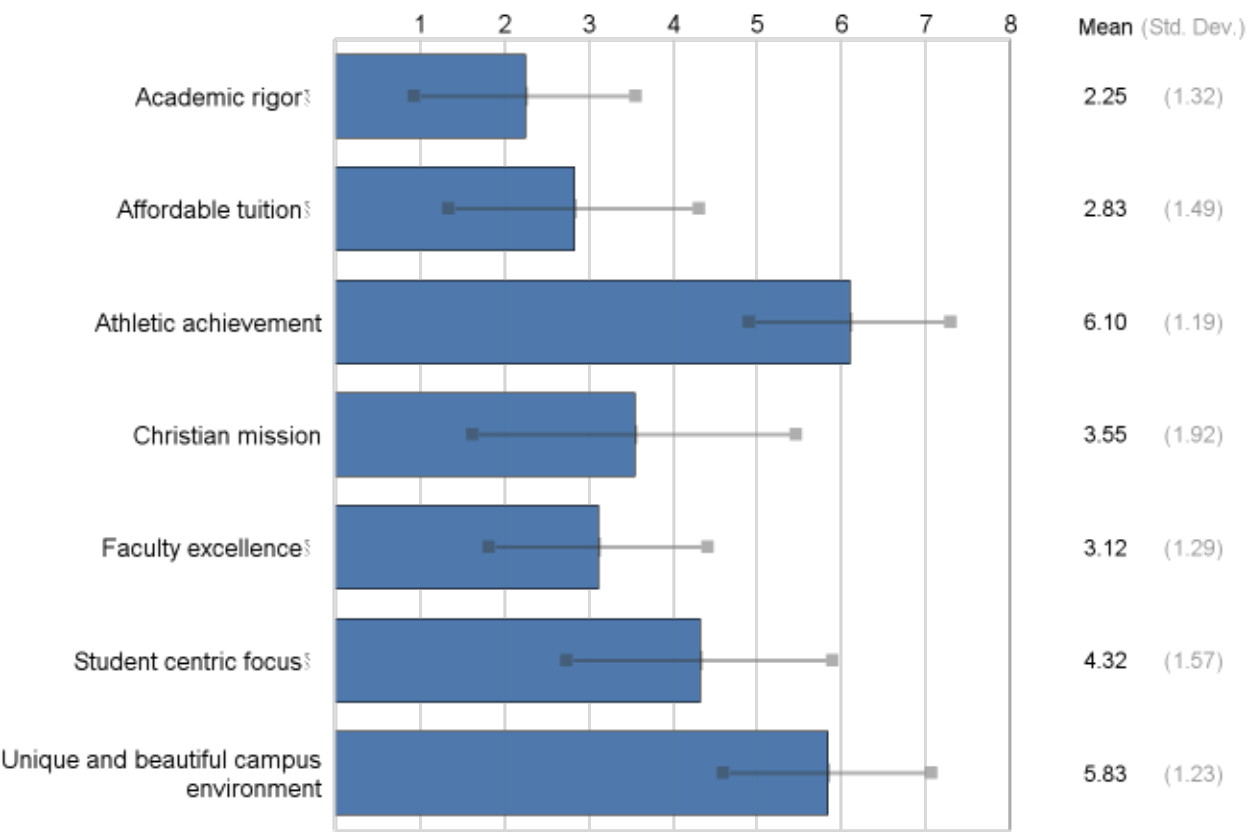
#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response	Average Value
3	Samford University has a bright future.	1	18	82	696	1086	1883	4.51
4	Samford changes the lives of its students for the better.	4	15	132	727	982	1860	4.43
7	If I had a chance to do it over again, I would attend/support Samford.	25	63	181	529	986	1784	4.34
1	Samford has compelling options that make for a strong social life while attending.	25	138	290	814	446	1713	3.89
5	Samford's outreach into the community is significantly above other universities.	28	133	537	564	389	1651	3.70
6	Samford has a robust offering of international experiences.	22	120	493	734	293	1662	3.70
2	Samford has a diverse student body.	169	539	398	536	156	1798	2.98

Please rank the following in terms of your perception of Samford students' ability to perform the following tasks. If you feel you don't have the knowledge to appropriately respond, please check N/A.



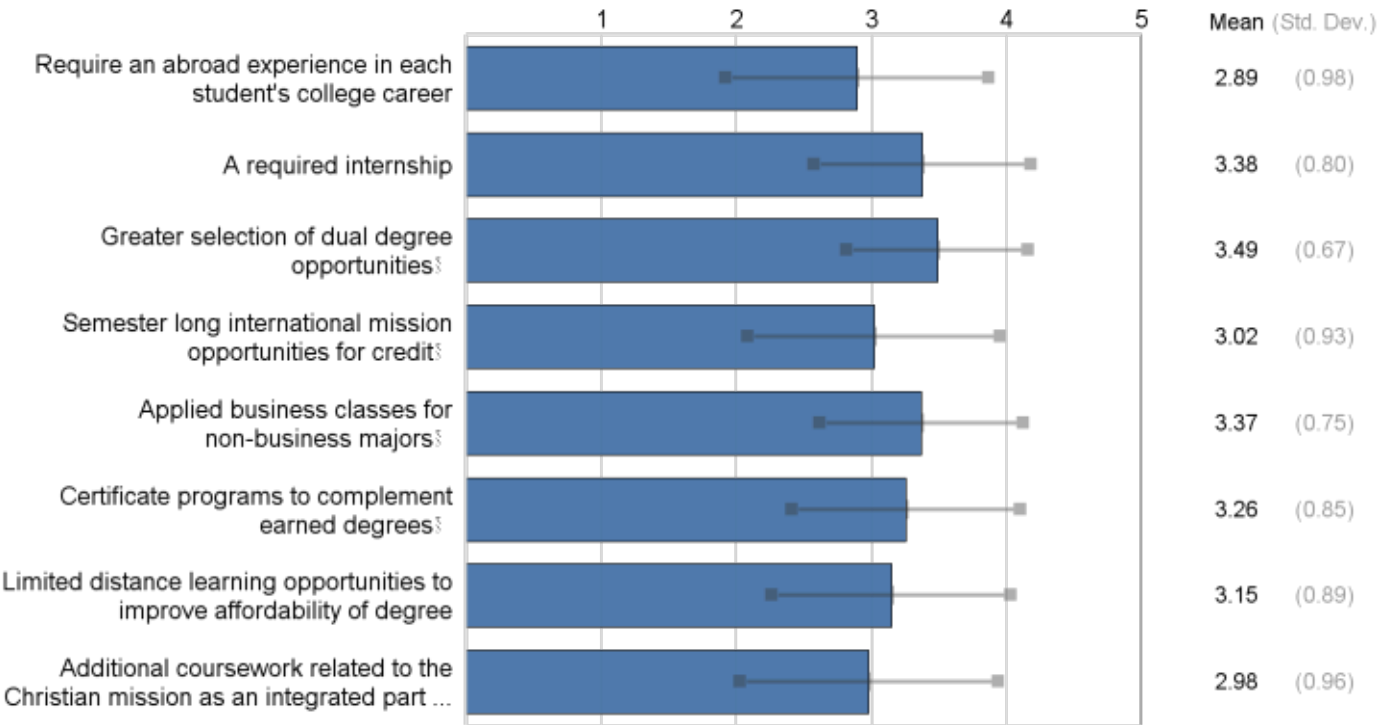
#	Question	No Ability	Slight Ability	Moderate Ability	High Ability	Exceptional Ability	Response	Average Value
8	Be professionally responsible	3	30	234	818	541	1626	4.15
1	Communicate effectively	3	13	298	1027	334	1675	4.00
2	Think critically	4	64	398	870	295	1631	3.85
4	Make decisions	4	51	411	906	248	1620	3.83
6	Learn independently	11	99	415	788	279	1592	3.77
3	Think across disciplines	12	111	546	688	204	1561	3.62
7	Be entrepreneurial	20	156	537	569	159	1441	3.48
5	Understand global and cultural differences	20	223	622	520	135	1520	3.35

Samford faces complex challenges as well as wonderful opportunities. Balancing these challenges requires dedicated focus on what matters most. Please rank the following characteristics in terms of their importance for Samford's continued success. Drag the items to order them with the most important on top.



#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Responses	Mean
1	Academic rigor	704	526	361	187	79	36	13	1906	2.25
2	Affordable tuition	415	478	429	318	162	73	31	1906	2.83
5	Faculty excellence	188	466	542	447	182	68	13	1906	3.12
4	Christian mission	444	210	246	340	324	216	126	1906	3.55
6	Student centric focus	130	167	216	376	604	293	120	1906	4.32
7	Unique and beautiful campus environment	13	37	63	123	321	695	654	1906	5.83
3	Athletic achievement	12	22	49	115	234	525	949	1906	6.10
	Total	1906	1906	1906	1906	1906	1906	1906	-	-

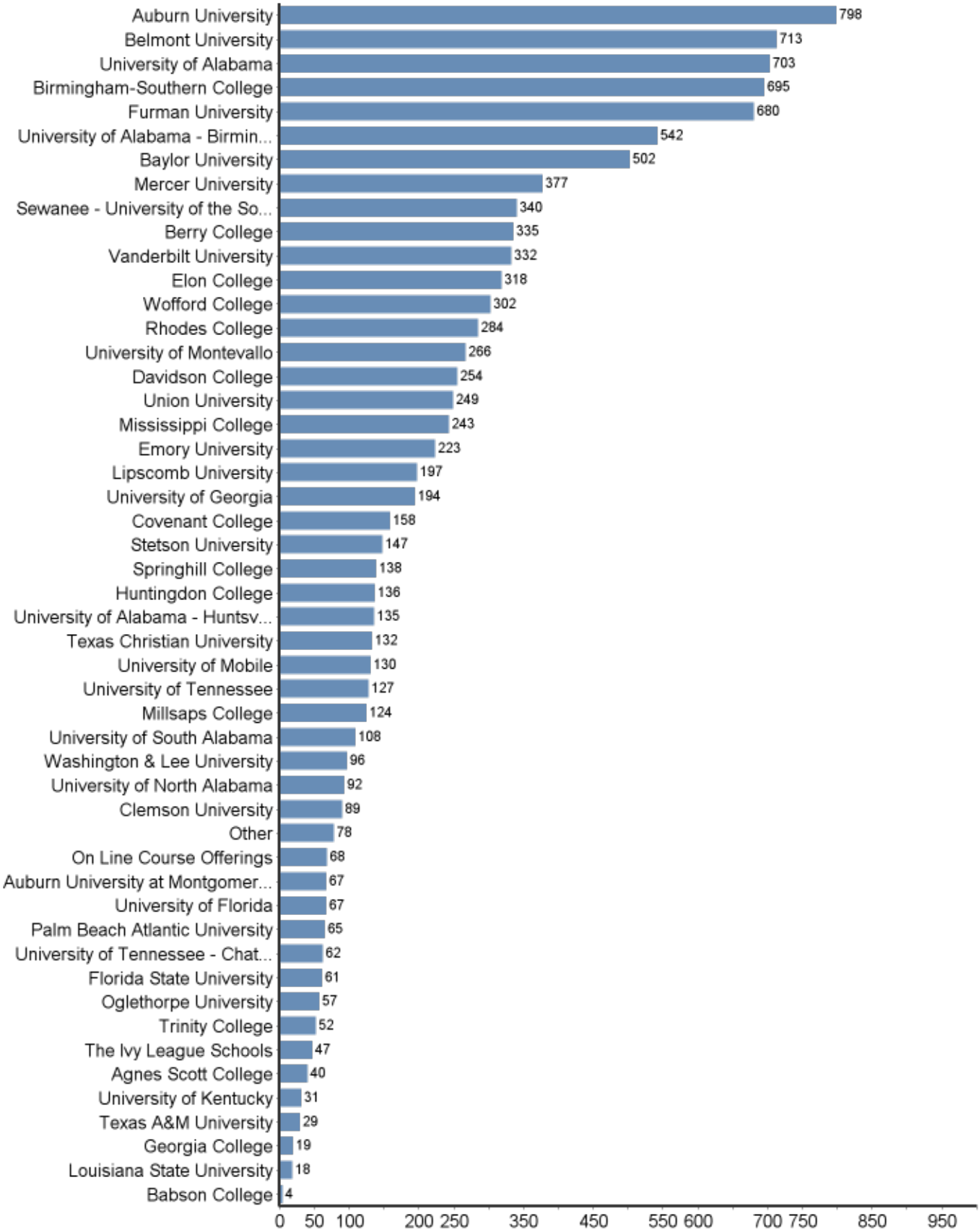
How valuable would the following additions be to the Samford curriculum? If you feel you don't have the knowledge to appropriately respond, please check N/A.



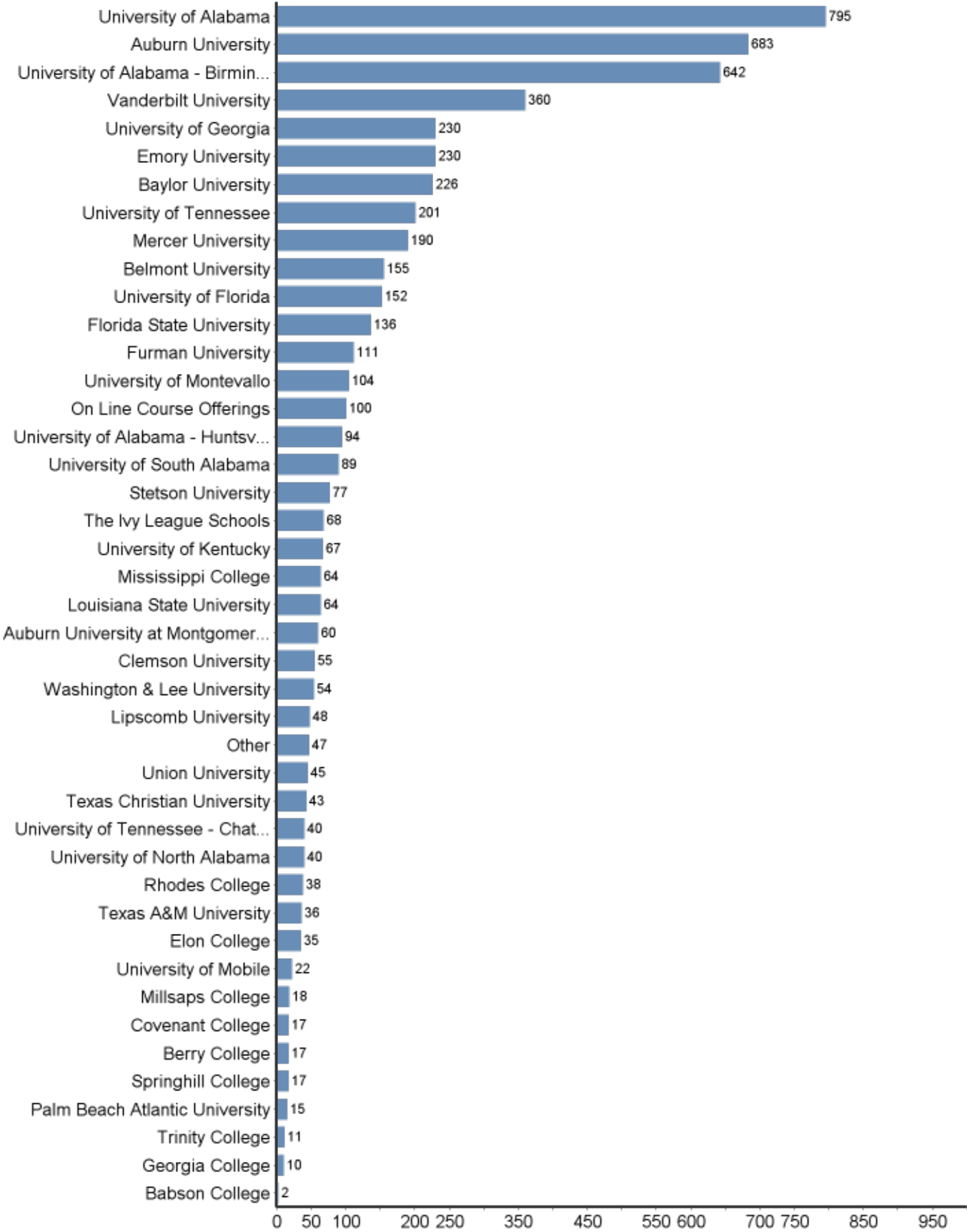
#	Question	Not Valuable at all	Somewhat Valuable	Moderately Valuable	Extremely Valuable	Response	Average Value
3	Greater selection of dual degree opportunities	14	70	387	644	1115	3.49
2	A required internship	29	105	285	519	938	3.38
5	Applied business classes for non-business majors	29	121	456	645	1251	3.37
6	Certificate programs to complement earned degrees	54	159	431	584	1228	3.26
7	Limited distance learning opportunities to improve affordability of degree	79	198	495	552	1324	3.15
4	Semester long international mission opportunities for credit	108	250	502	492	1352	3.02
8	Additional coursework related to the Christian mission as an integrated part of professional practice	129	264	509	498	1400	2.98
1	Require an abroad experience in each student's college career	147	210	482	376	1215	2.89

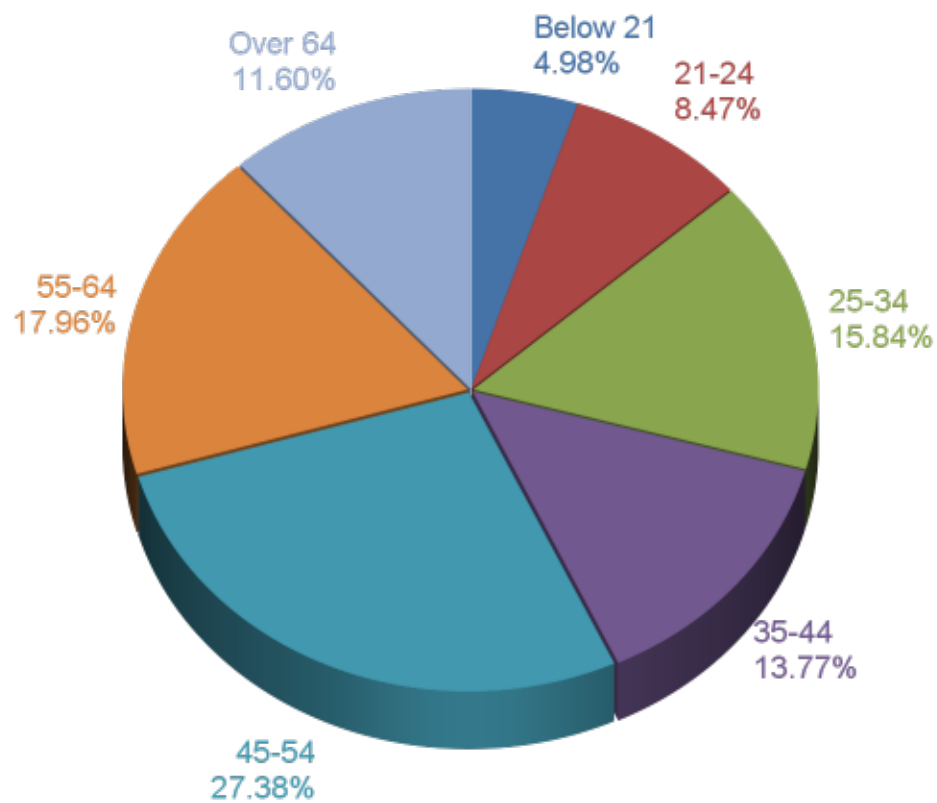


Which of the following institutions do you consider to be among Samford University's most direct competitors for UNDERGRADUATE student enrollment? If you don't feel qualified or comfortable answering, you may skip this question.

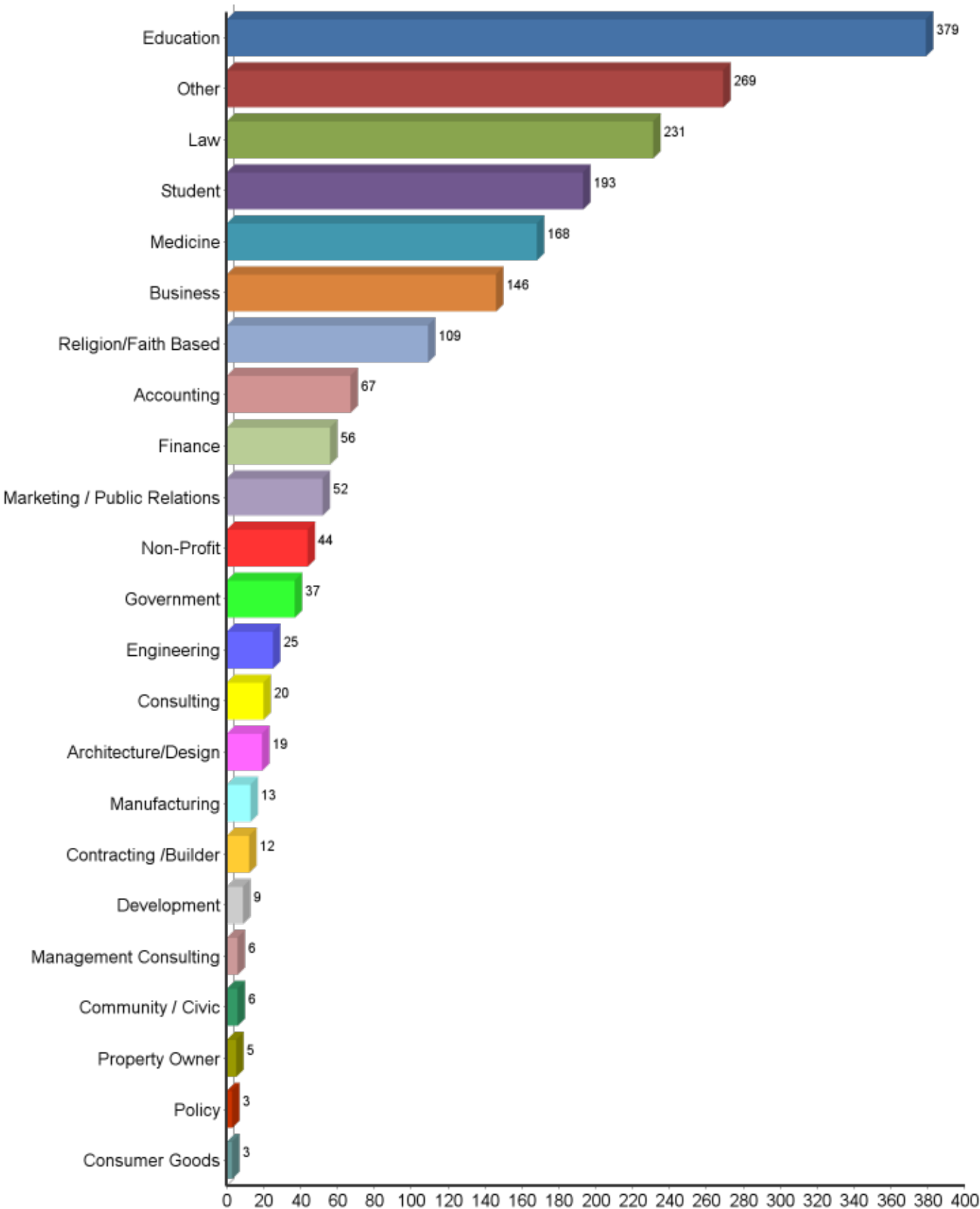


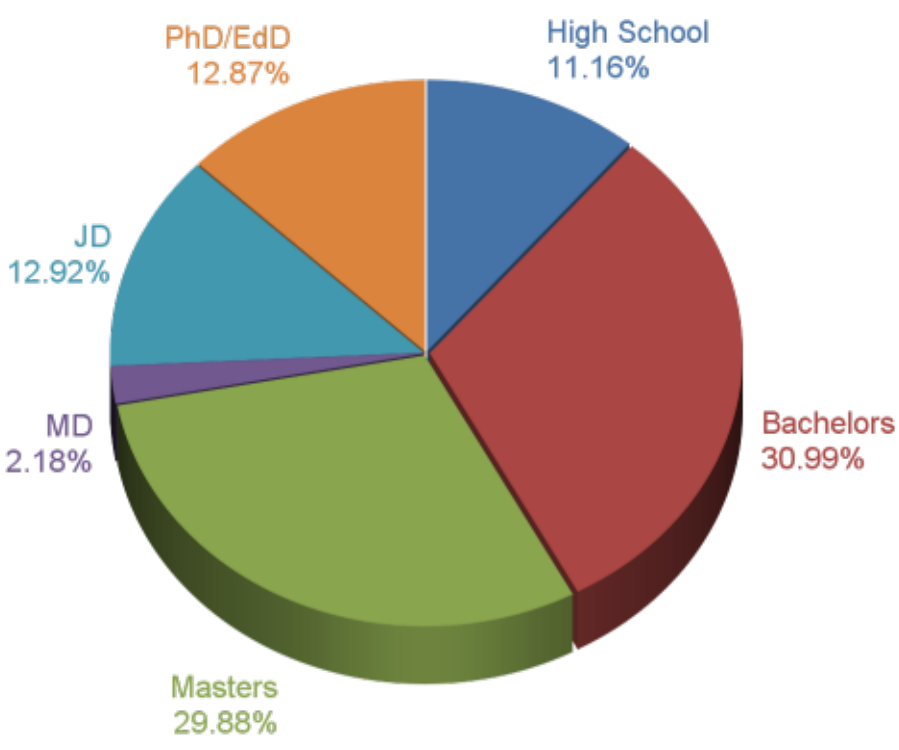
Which of the following institutions do you consider to be among Samford University's most direct competitors for GRADUATE student enrollment? If you don't feel qualified or comfortable answering, you may skip this question.



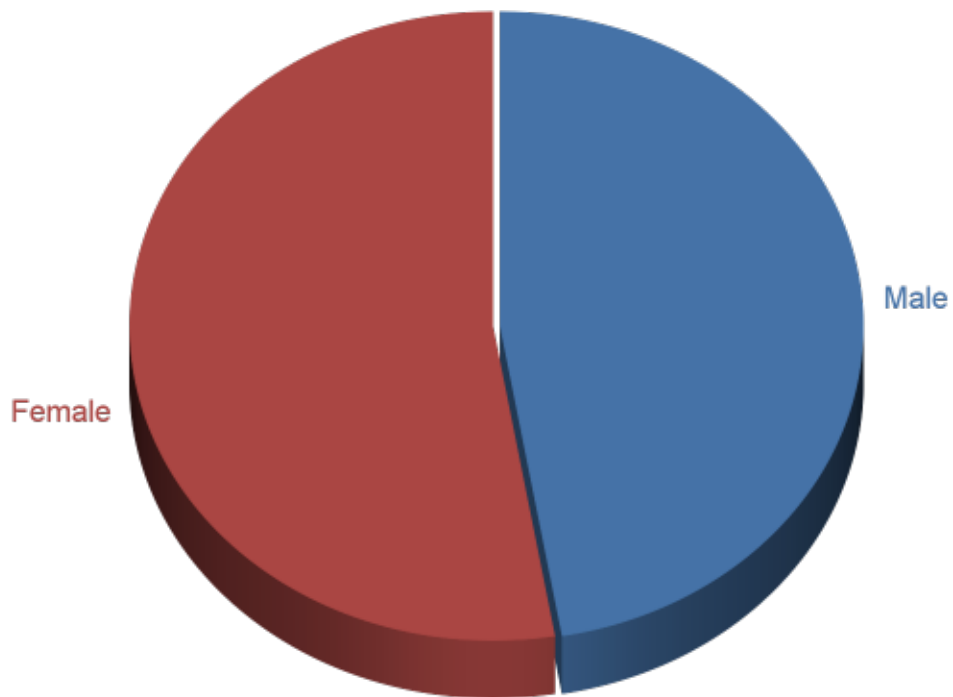


#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Below 21	<div></div>	94	4.98%
2	21-24	<div></div>	160	8.47%
3	25-34	<div></div>	299	15.84%
4	35-44	<div></div>	260	13.77%
5	45-54	<div></div>	517	27.38%
6	55-64	<div></div>	339	17.96%
7	Over 64	<div></div>	219	11.60%
	Total		1888	100.00%

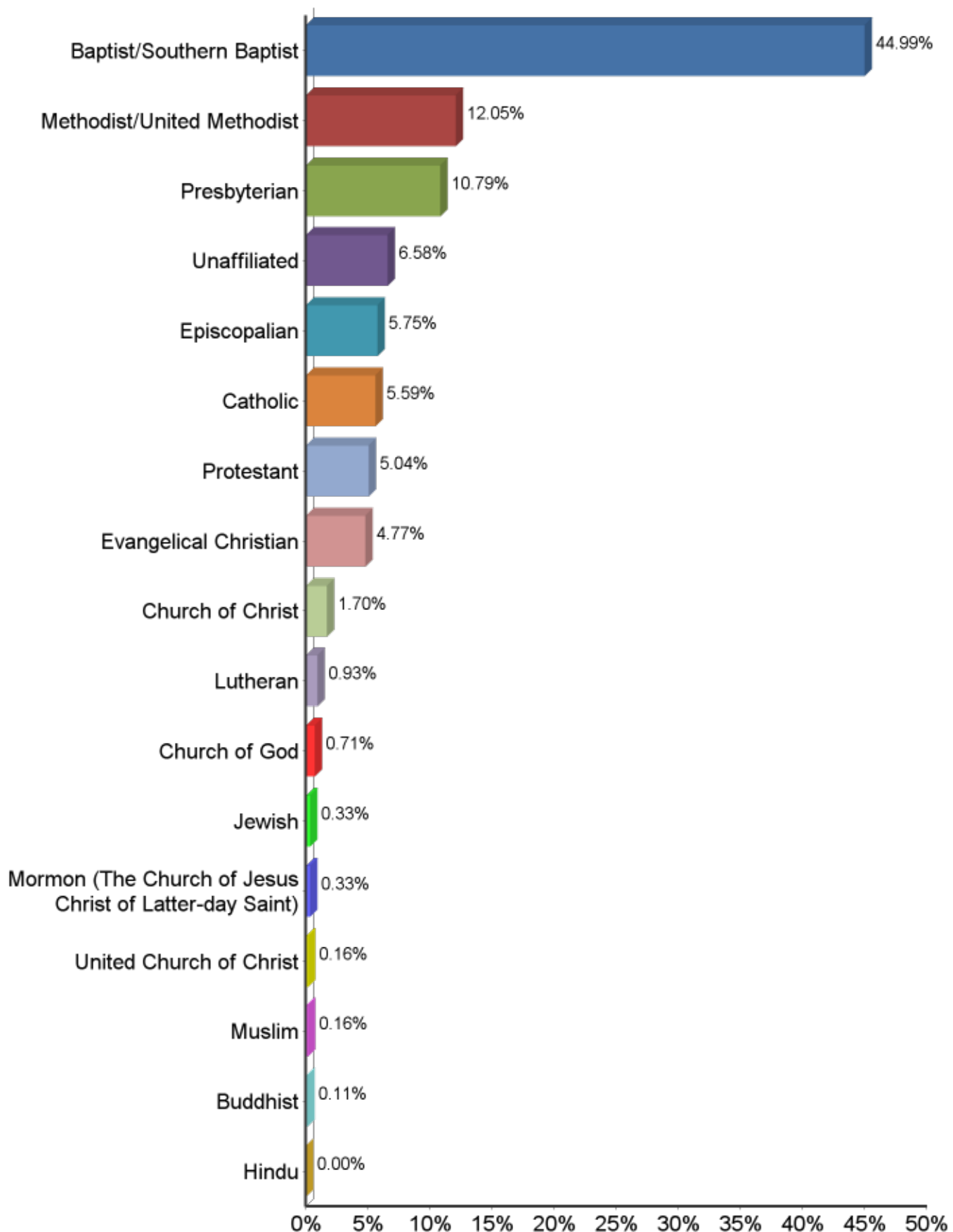


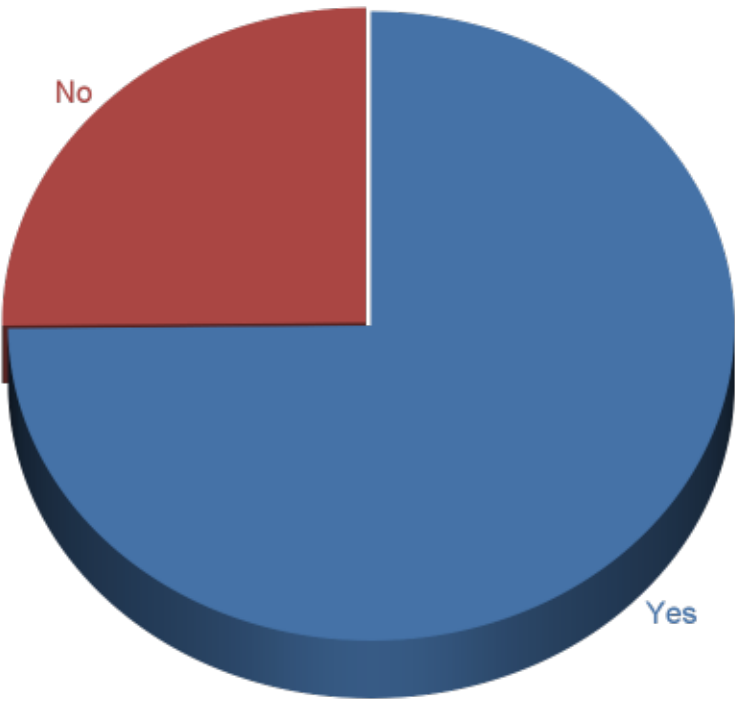


#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	High School	<div></div>	210	11.16%
2	Bachelors	<div></div>	583	30.99%
3	Masters	<div></div>	562	29.88%
4	MD	<div></div>	41	2.18%
5	JD	<div></div>	243	12.92%
6	PhD/EdD	<div></div>	242	12.87%
	Total		1881	100.00%



#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Male	<div></div>	891	47.27%
2	Female	<div></div>	994	52.73%
	Total		1885	100.00%





#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes	<div></div>	1411	74.85%
2	No	<div></div>	474	25.15%
	Total		1885	100.00%



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