



NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE® AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

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Examining the Landscape of Transfer
Programs:
Results from the National Survey of Transfer
Student Initiatives

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Agenda

1. Overview of transfer and transitions
2. Presentation of findings from NSTSI
3. Discussion of practices, trends, and innovations among transfer student initiatives and opportunities and obstacles associated with support



Why Attend to Transitions?

- Great attention given to the challenges of entering higher education
- Poor transition can lead to negative student experiences, failing, and withdrawing
- Efforts to plug leaks in the academic pipeline began with an attention to transition points, including throughout the transfer pipeline



Transfer Transitions

- Institutional neglect of transfer students is common (Tobolowsky & Cox, 2012)
- Transfer students face:
 - Issues associated with transfer and applicability of credits
 - Forging social and academic connections
 - Navigating campus culture
 - Maintaining motivation and focus toward academic goals



Transfer Transitions

- Common institutional strategies:
 - Supplemental instruction
 - Transfer orientation
 - Recruitment
 - Developmental education
 - Learning communities
 - Advising
 - Peer mentors
 - Assessment



Transfer Transitions

- Common systemic strategies associated with transfer:
 - Transfer centers
 - Articulation agreements
 - Partnerships
 - Course alignment
 - Dual, or concurrent, enrollment
 - Tuition guarantee



Pause and Reflect

- How are your institution's policies, programs, and practices for student success shaping transfer/transfer-intending students' expectations and transitions?



2021 National Survey of Transfer Student Initiatives (NSTSI)

- Institution-/program-level survey distributed in fall 2021
- Online instrument
 - General info about institutional attention to transfer and transfer-intending students
 - Extended modules on academic advising, orientation, and college student/transfer student success courses
- NSTSI is part of a larger mixed-methods project
 - Interviews with transfer personnel will be conducted in Spring 2022

2021 NSTSI Objectives

- Objectives:

- To determine what academic and social support services institutions offer to transfer and transfer-intending students
- To understand the most prevalent and salient transfer-specific issues institutional agents report students and staff face
- To explore the role that transfer programs play in students' transitions
- To understand the ways in which institutions do or do not promote a transfer receptive culture (Jain et al., 2011)



Overview of the 2021 NSTSI: Sample

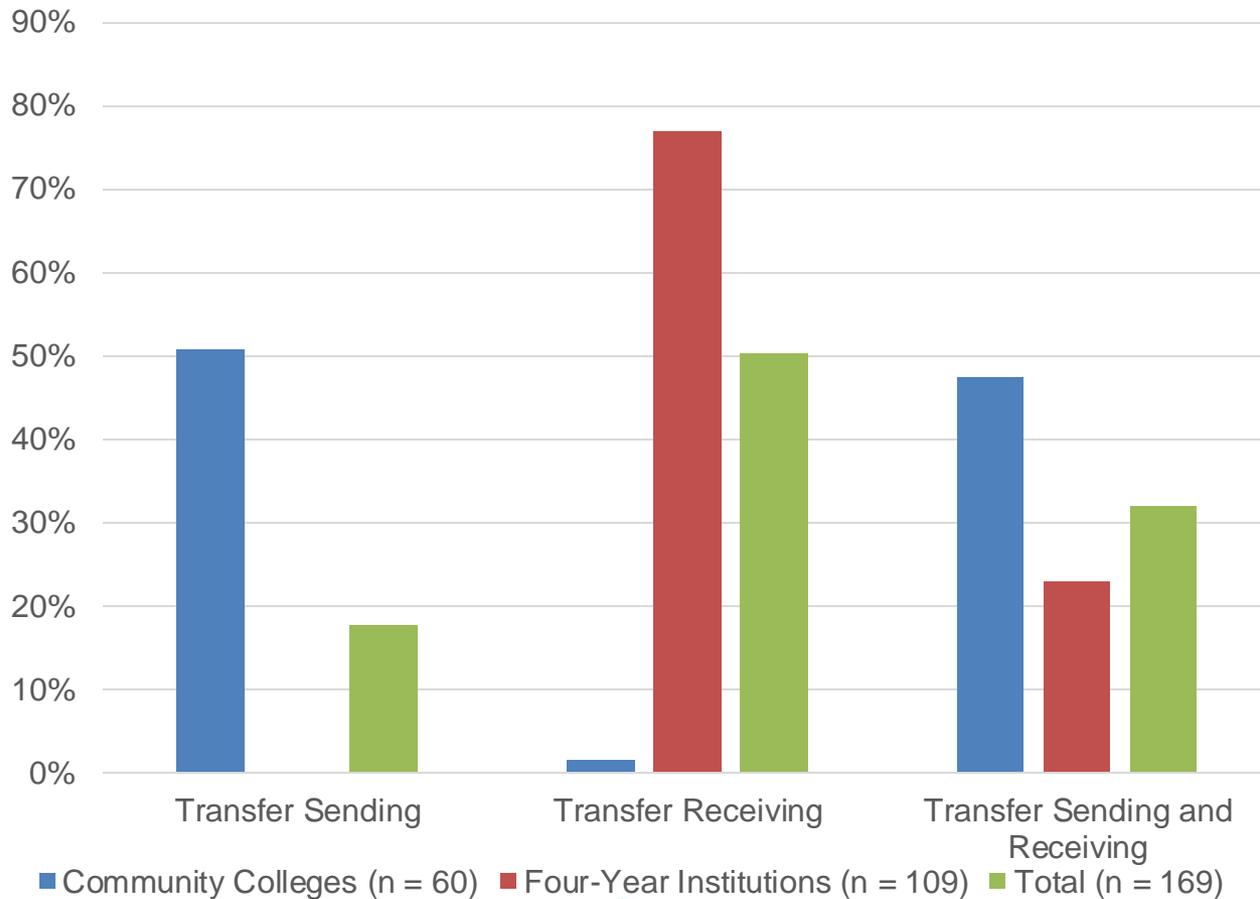
- 169 institutions participated, including 110 4-year institutions and 59 community colleges
 - Private four-year institutions overrepresented
 - Majority of the sample (55.6%) are institutions with enrollment of <1,000 or 1,000-4,999
 - MSIs underrepresented
 - 1 HBCU
 - 22 HSIs
- 110 institutions reported offering at least one transfer initiative

2021 NSTSI: Results

- Institutional descriptions
- Transfers in institutional strategic plans
- Equity and transfer
- Transfer initiatives, objectives, and issues



Results from 2021 NSTSI: Institutional Descriptions

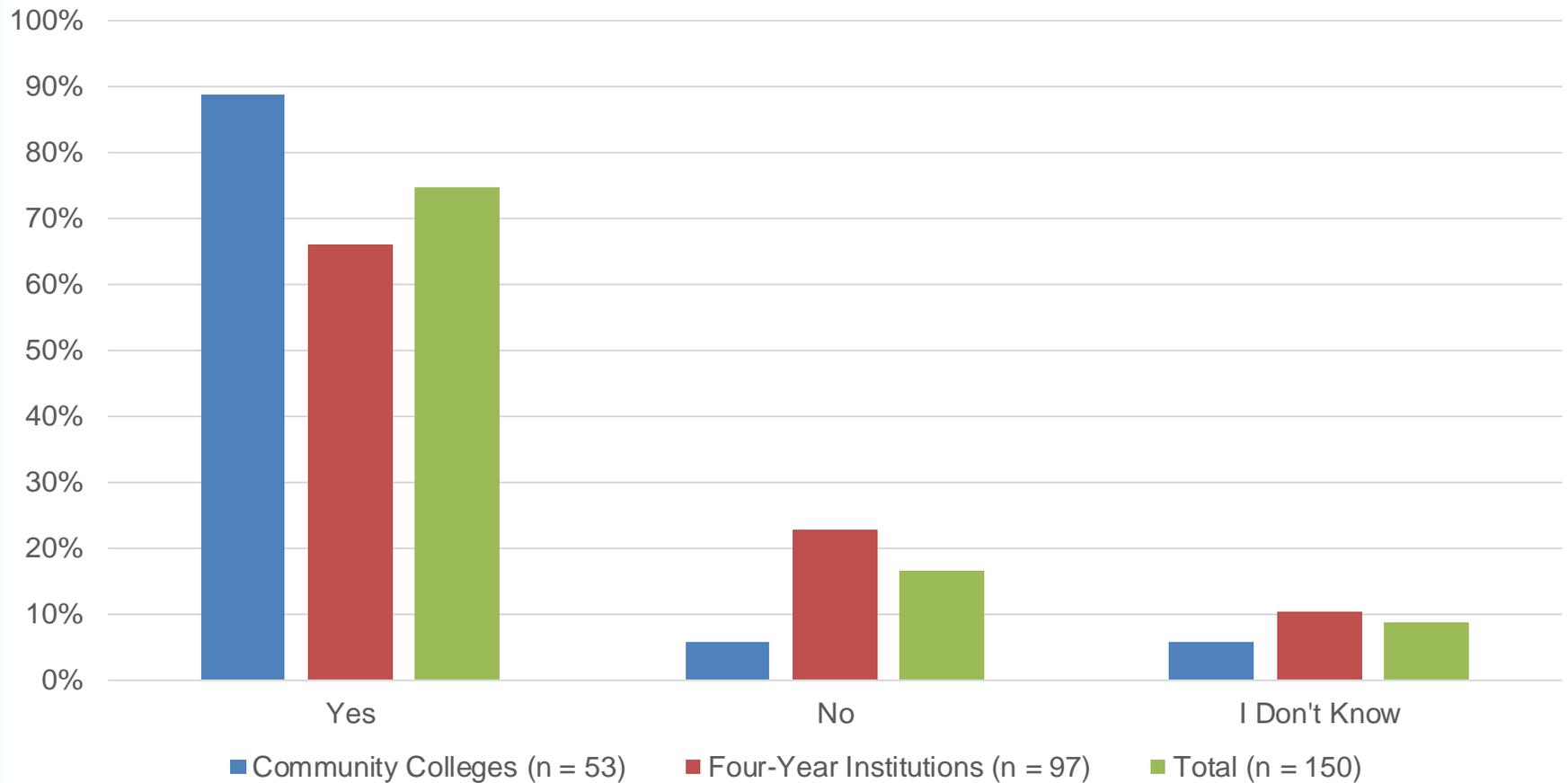


Results from 2021 NSTSI: Institutional Descriptions

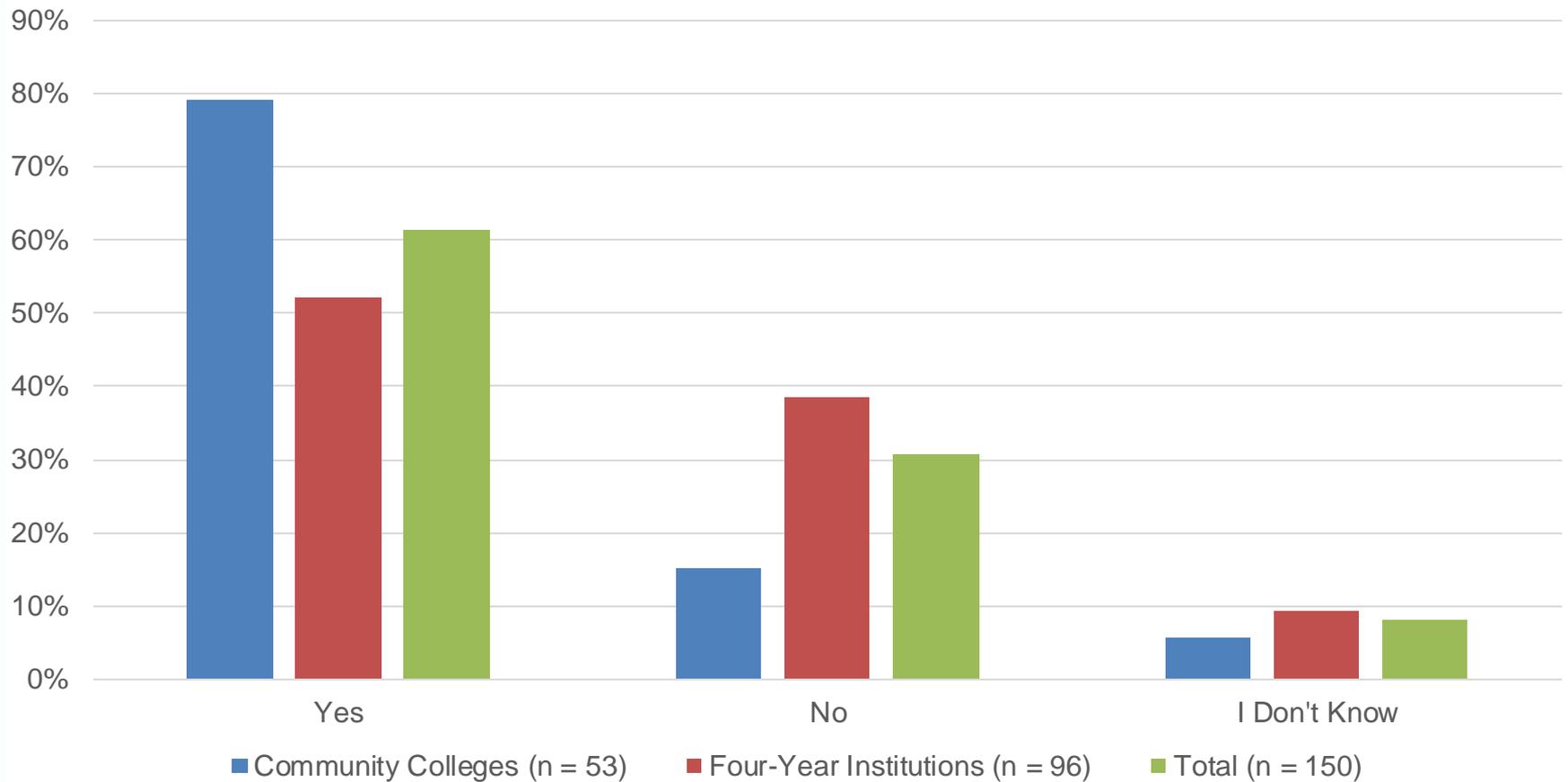
- What does it mean to be a transfer sending institution?
- Transfer receiving?
- Both receiving and sending?



Results from 2021 NSTSI: Transfers in Institutional Strategic Plans



Results from 2021 NSTSI: Equity and Transfer



Transfers Represent Diverse Backgrounds and Experiences

- “Transfer students are not a homogeneous population...when you disaggregate the data, you find there are different sub-groups, so one must consider tailoring resource support to different student needs...it is not one-size fits all.”
 - Associate Provost, four-year institution

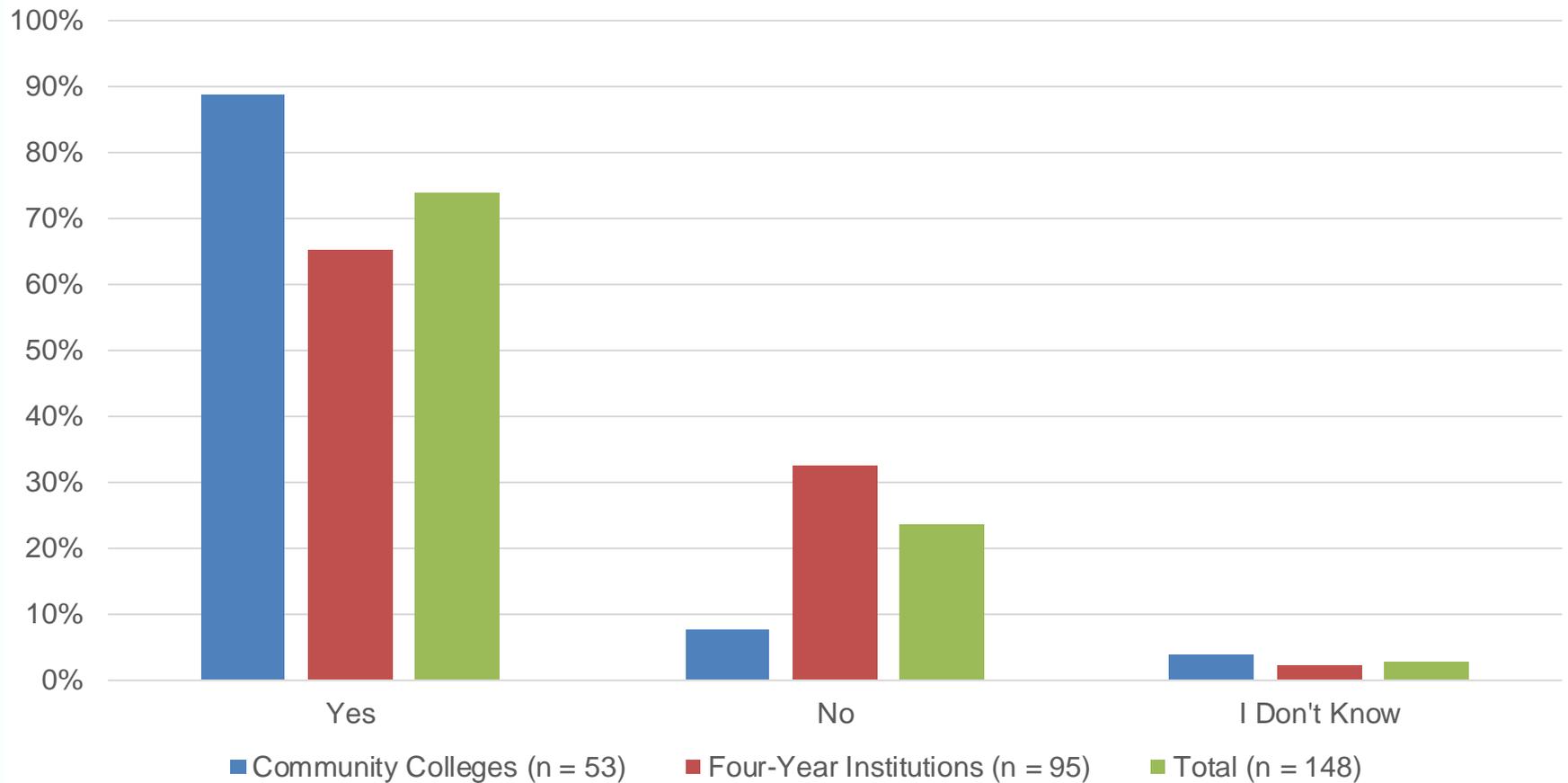


Pause and Reflect

- Does your institution have specific goals associated with equity and transfer?
 - If so, what are these?
 - If not, what goals would you create?



Results from 2021 NSTSI: Initiatives for Transfer



Results from 2021 NSTSI: Reasons for Not Offering Transfer Initiatives

Reason	Overall % (n = 38)
Lack of expertise	18.42
Lack of funding	36.84
Lack of staff or faculty buy-in	28.95
Limited time	34.21
Not an institutional priority	34.21
Not a large enough population of transfer/transfer-intending students	36.84



Transfer Issues: Insufficient Human Resources and Transfers Not a Priority

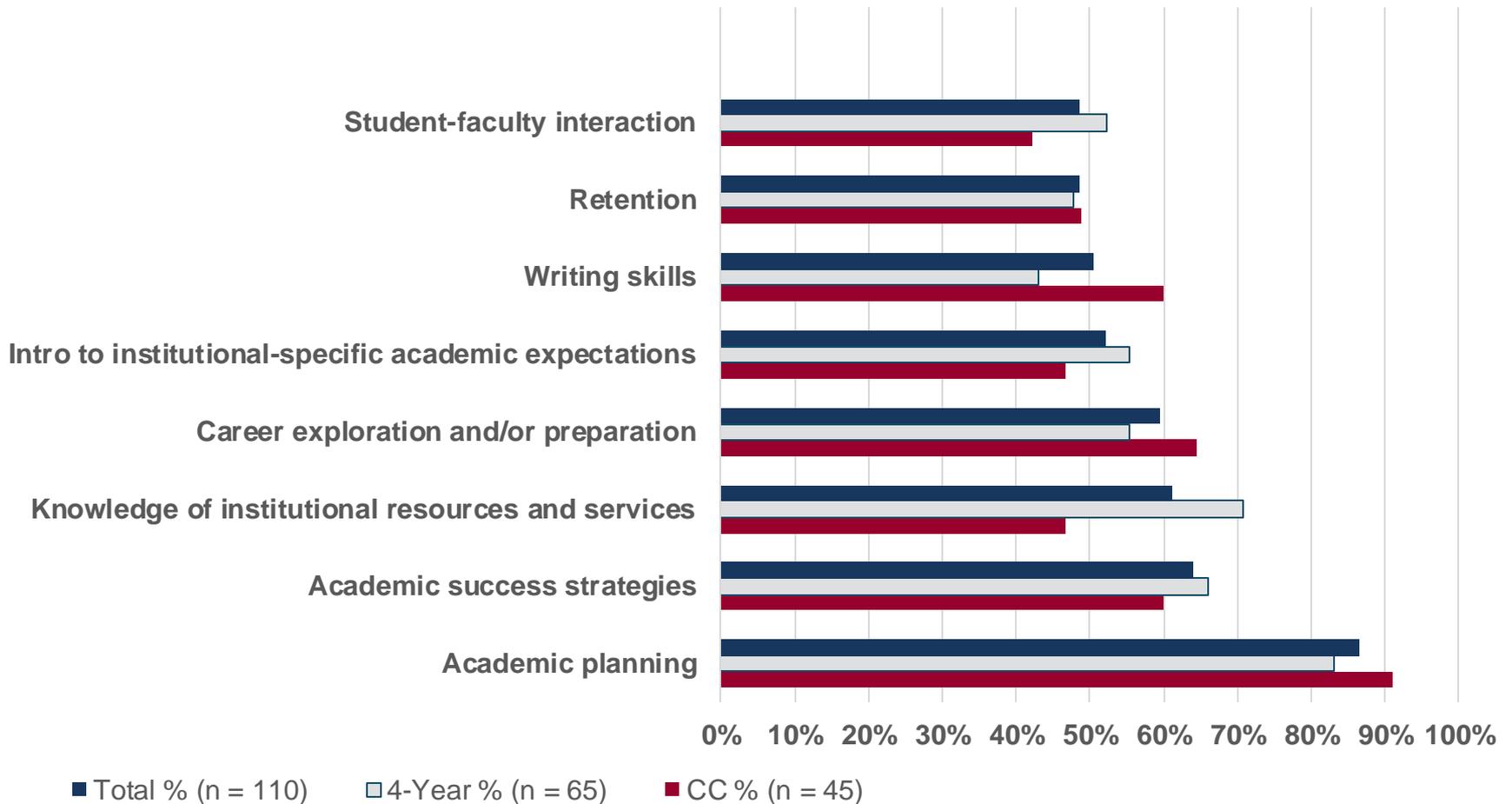
- “We face challenges recruiting faculty to work on cross-institutional and state-level work related to course development and curricular pathways due to constraints on faculty's time and efforts.”
 - Participant at a transfer-receiving four-year
- “Faculty mindset around supporting transfer students and creating transfer-friendly policies is lacking. Senior leadership would love to grow transfer support and student-facing staff would love to see transfer support increase, but faculty barrier is very real.”
 - Participant at a transfer receiving four-year



Results from 2021 NSTSI: Transfer Initiatives

Transfer-Specific Initiatives	CC (n = 44)	4-Year (n = 65)	Overall% (n = 109)
Guided pathways	84.09	47.69	62.16
Financial aid	63.64	67.69	65.77
Institution-wide orientation	52.27	76.92	66.67
Standardized policies for awarding of transfer credit	59.09	73.85	67.57
Academic program maps	75.56	61.54	67.57
Informational sessions about navigating transfer	81.82	64.62	71.17
Articulation and/or admissions agreements	93.18	84.62	87.39
Academic advising	91.11	89.23	90.09

Results from 2021 NSTSI: Objectives Associated with Initiatives



Results from 2021 NSTSI

- Transfer receptive culture:
 - “Institutional commitment by a four-year college or university to provide the support needed for students to transfer successfully—that is, to navigate the community college, take the appropriate coursework, apply, enroll, and successfully earn a baccalaureate degree in a timely manner” (Jain et al., 2011)



Results from 2021 NSTSI: Administrative Issues

	High Commitment	Low Commitment
Highest reported	Intra-institutional coordination (45.50)	Inadequate staffing (65.62)
Lowest reported	Lack of institutional commitment (29.04)	Lack of information about transfers' needs (45.58)



Results from 2021 NSTSI: Student Issues

	High Commitment	Low Commitment
Highest reported	Financial aid (51.99)	Social connections and sense of belonging (54.45)
Lowest reported	Academic advising (32.04)	Basic needs insecurity (39.17)



Financial Aid Issues

- “[The greatest issue facing transfers is] lack of scholarships for part-time transfer students.”
 - Participant at a transfer-receiving four-year
- “Scholarships/aid is probably the biggest resource issue we have with respect to transfer-in students.”
 - Participant at a transfer-receiving four-year
- “4-year schools do not understand the community college student. They don't do enough on financial aid (showing the student they can afford the school).”
 - Participant at a transfer-sending community college



Transfer Sense of Belonging

- “Our mid-academic year transfer students (those coming in January) often struggle because they missed out on the social connections that often occur in the fall semester. They see other peers seemingly already settled at the university and feel lost and unsure of how or who to ask for help.”
 - Participant at a transfer-receiving four-year



Results from 2021 NSTSI

- Questions for discussion:
 - Which of these issues do you see on your campus?
 - How has COVID impacted the issues that you see on your campus?
 - How has short- and long-term planning efforts been impacted?



Questions?



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