



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS

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CAL Class of 2019 Students: Krystal Brown, Aileen Cerrillos, Bianca Herrera, and Charity Kenney

BACKGROUND

- The College of Arts and Letters (CAL) graduation rates increased across the board between 2017 and 2018, exceeding all of our four annual target growth benchmarks and putting us on track to reach our Graduation Initiative 2025 goals.
 - However, despite this improvement, CAL has sizable achievement gaps.
- Last year we found sizable gaps by first generation status and probation experience among First Time Freshman (2014 Entry), but we were unable to study indicators of financial need such as Pell Grant receipt.
- Students also reported experiencing, multiple, often severe, barriers in the domains of family, work, and physical/mental health issues.
- Two areas for continued study emerged as we shared these results with faculty within CAL:
 - 1) issues of financial need and work-school balance, including Pell Grant receipt and transfer students, and
 - 2) querying the tradeoffs students make with respect to graduation timing and high impact practices.

PROJECT AIMS

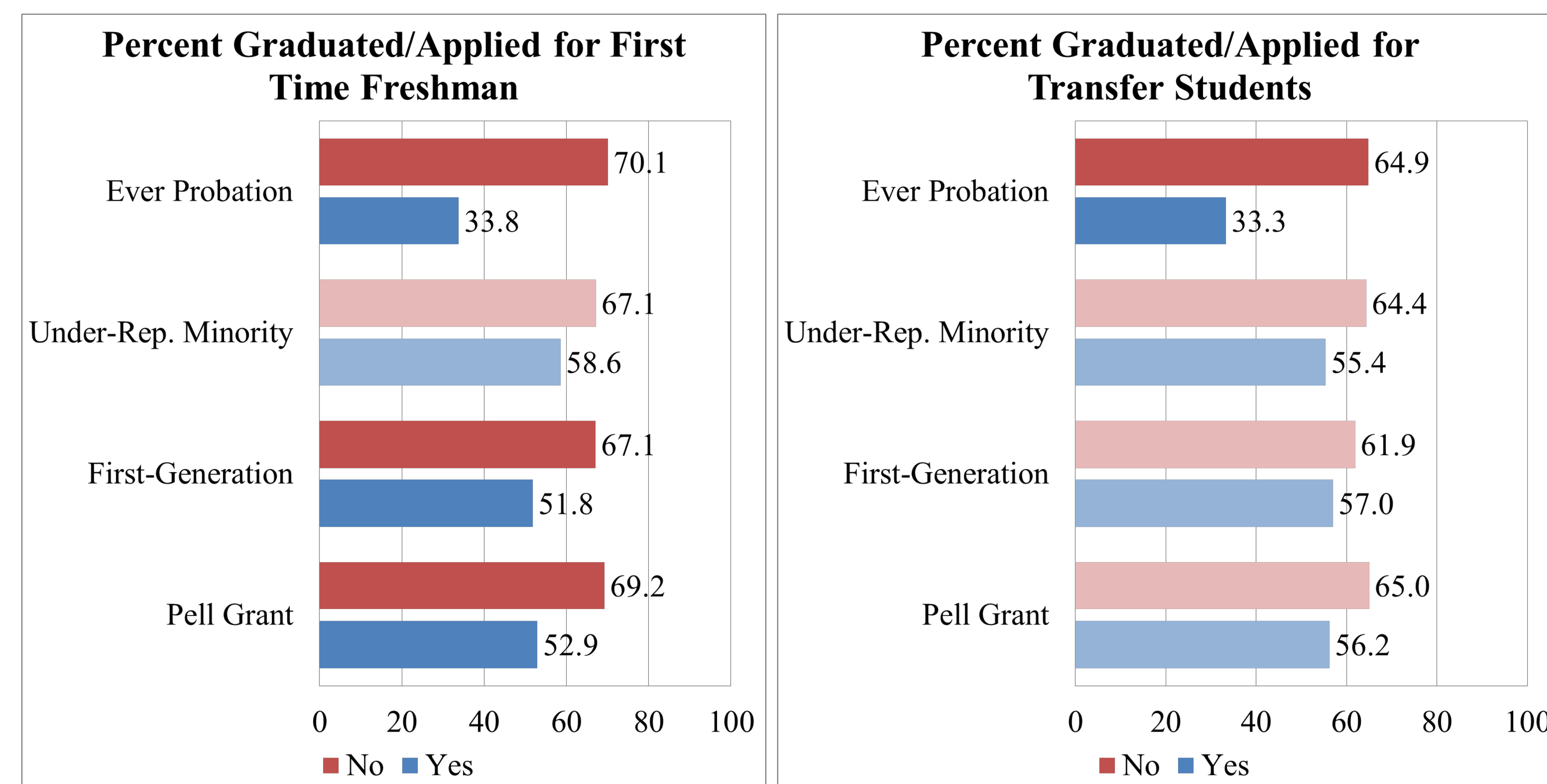
- Aim 1: Understand student decision-making around graduation timing; ascertain how barriers and/or high impact practices figure into course and graduation planning.
- Aim 2: Extend our disparity analysis of graduation timing and barriers within the College of Arts and Letters to include transfer students and Pell Grant receipt.
- Aim 3: Revisit our senior survey to query an additional cohort of students.

METHODS

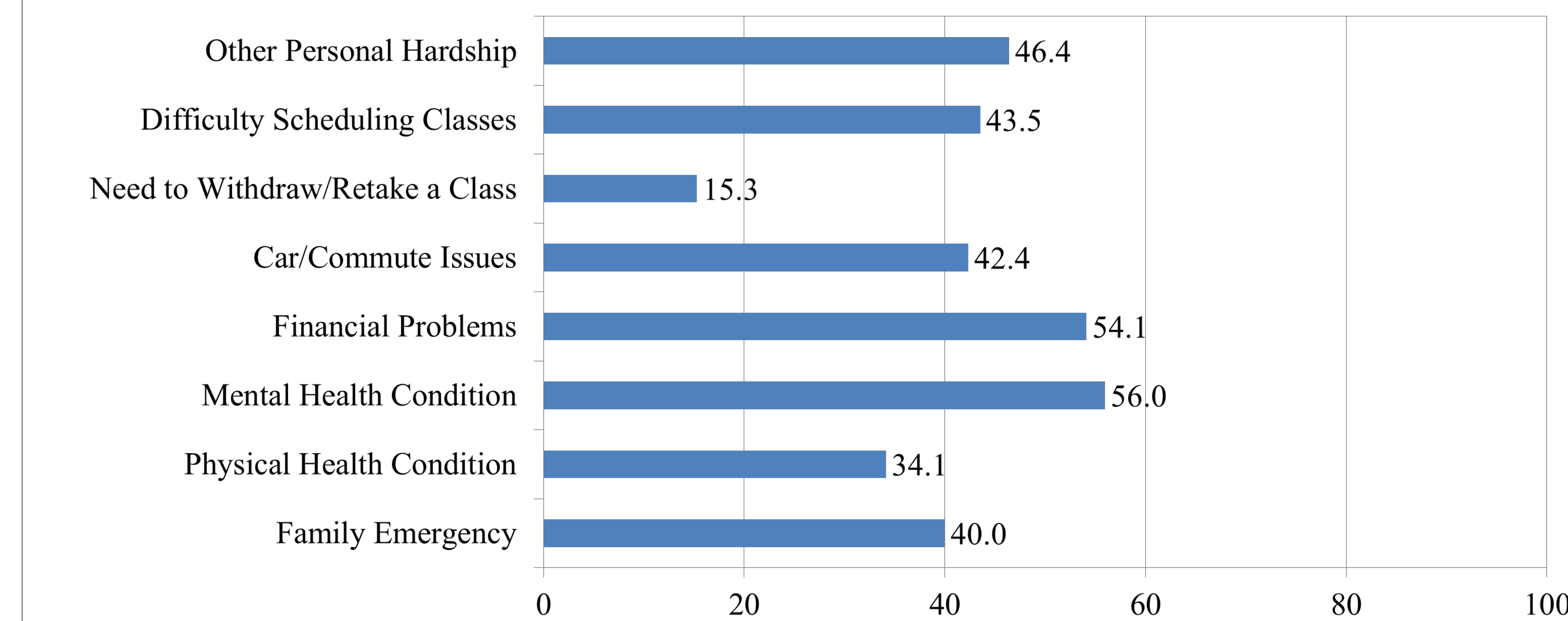
- CSULB's graduation research initiative, which included an analysis of administrative data and a student survey, served as a model for our data collection and analysis.
- Sampling frame:
 - Members of the 2015 FTF cohort and 2017 Transfer cohort who were enrolled in Fall of 2018 as CAL majors (or CAL second majors).
- Used administrative data (N=1,041) and a student survey (N=92) to understand patterns and barriers.
- As our sample is comprised of students who remained enrolled into their fourth year, our estimates should be considered underestimates of the barriers students face.

FINDINGS

Inequalities and Student Challenges



% Reporting Hardship Sometimes/Often



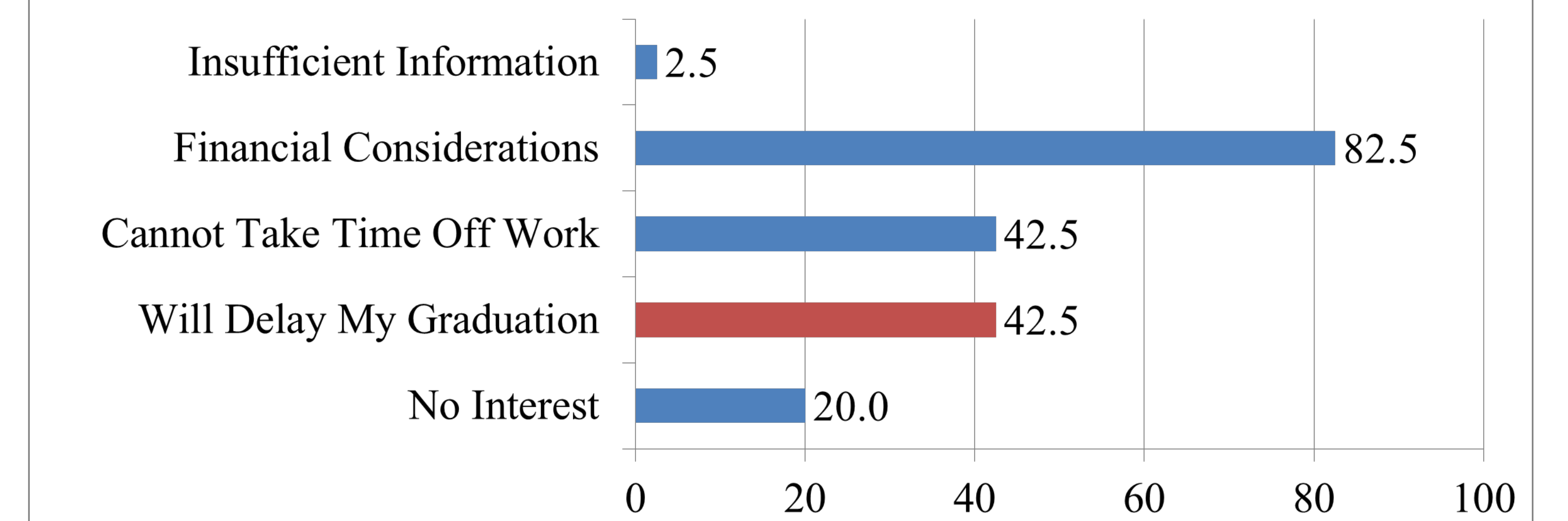
CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- Our initiatives need to be flexible to students' own timelines, only 63% agree/strongly agree that it is important to graduate in four years.
- Unequal socioeconomic resources and academic difficulties drive the most persistent and wide-spread graduation gaps. Continued attempts at intervention pre-probation should continue. Our findings support further research and resources to address financial need.
- Critical student hardships in the areas of mental health and financial need necessitate additional solutions.
- Connecting students to study abroad funding or providing lower cost opportunities may facilitate greater participation.
- Addressing student concerns that study abroad will delay their graduation is critical.
- Providing more information and finding creative ways to work with students' time demands can enhance internship and research engagement.

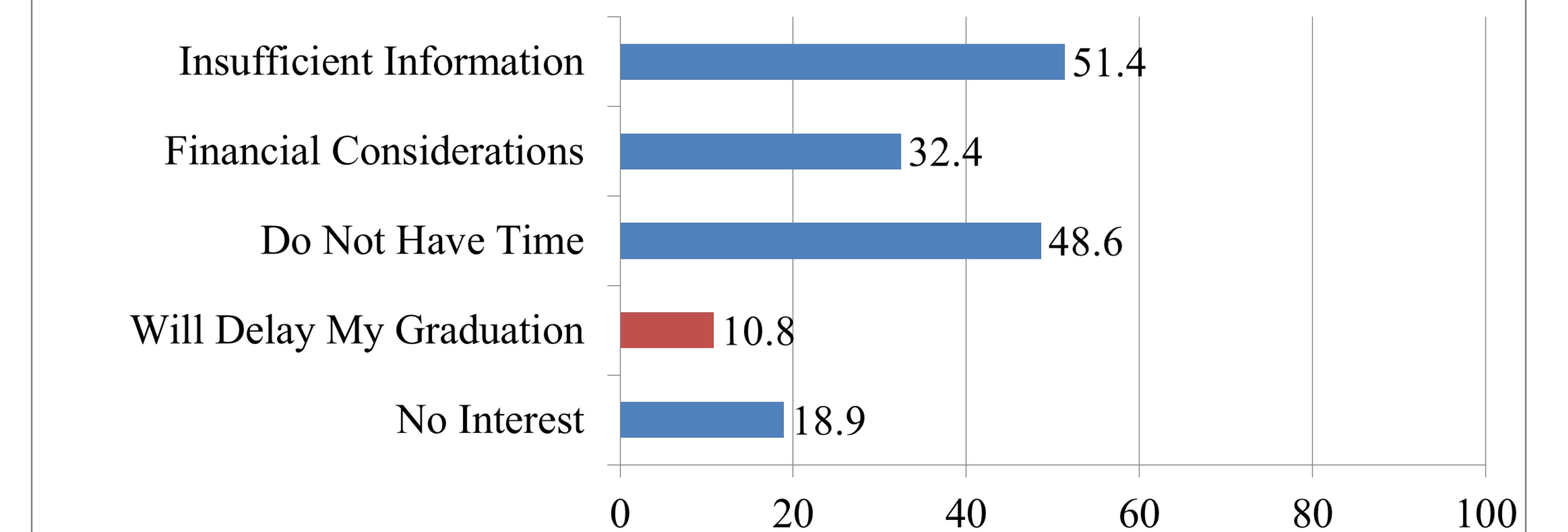
Trade-offs Between High Impact Practices and Graduation Timing?

- Approximately 60% of those who studied abroad applied to graduate, whereas 81.8% of those who did not study abroad applied.
- However, applications were similar by research experience and far more students who engaged in an internship applied compared to those who had not completed an internship.

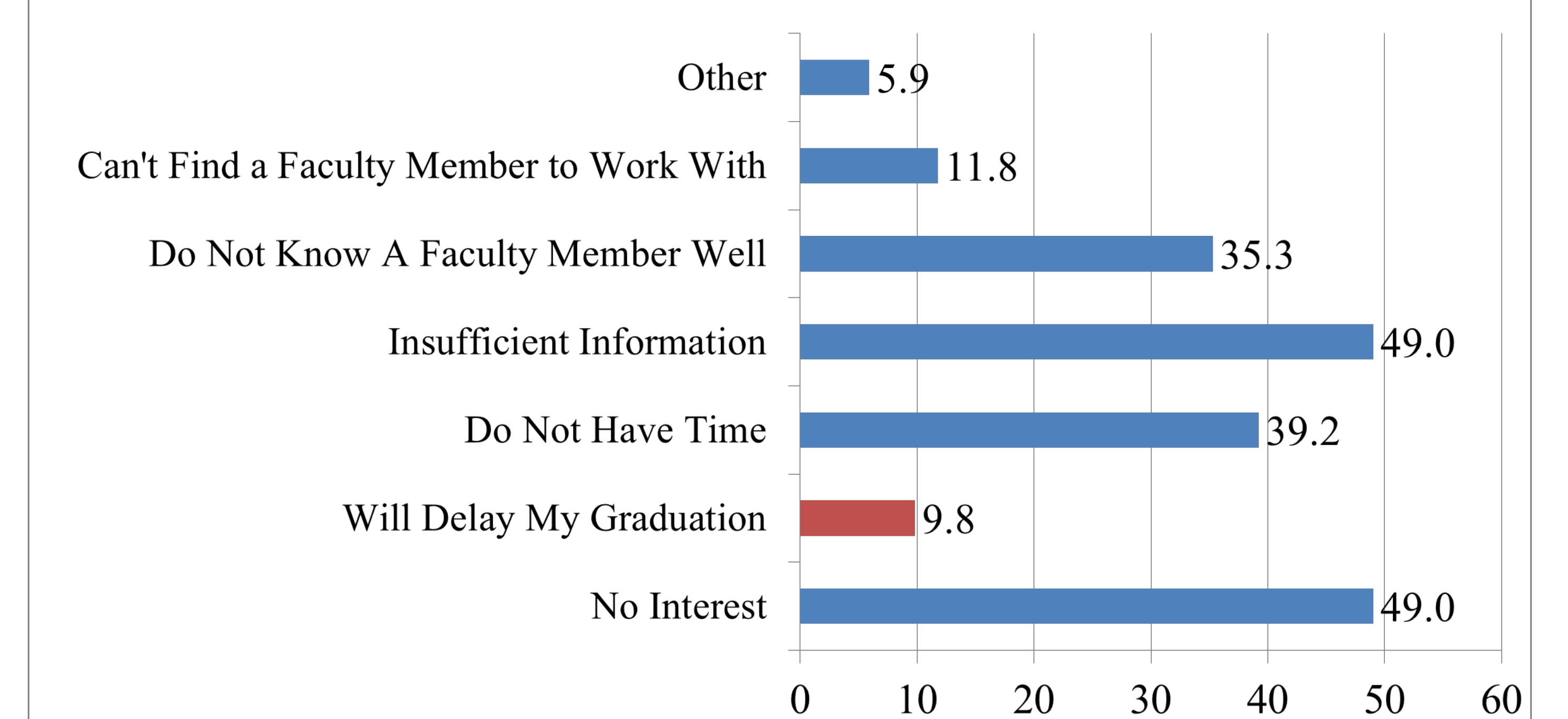
Why Students Decide Not to Engage in Study Abroad



Why Students Decide Not to Engage in an Internship



Why Students Decide Not to Engage in Research



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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