



STITCHING THE GAPS:

**UNDERSTANDING CHANGING
REFERENCE SERVICE NEEDS
THROUGH STUDENT FEEDBACK**

Rebekah Glendinning, MI

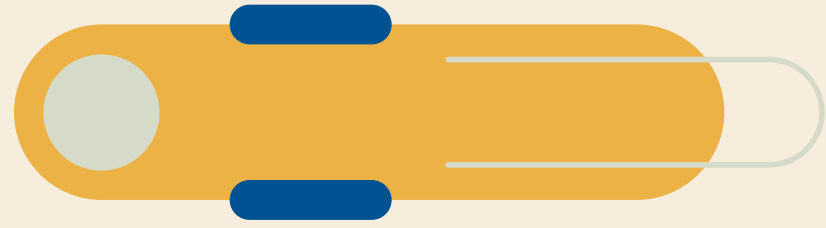
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HELLO!

Rebekah Glendinning, MI

Liaison Librarian: Computer Technology, ECE, Social & Community Services, Deaf & Deafblind Studies, Media & Performing Arts





AGENDA OVERVIEW



Background



Project Context



Methodology

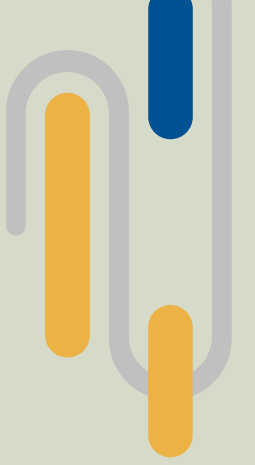


Results & Implications



What next?

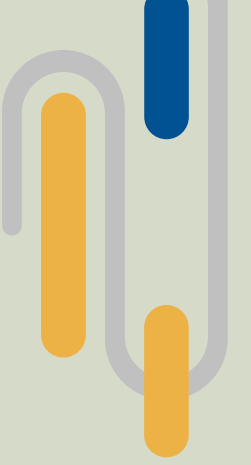
REFERENCE SERVICES @ THE GBC LLC



- We offer:
 - Traditional ref desk staffed by Library Technicians
 - Phone & email reference
 - Live-chat & proactive live-chat via our website
 - Appointments with Librarians (in-person & online)
- We've experimented with:
 - Roving reference
 - Mobile ref desk



CHANGES AT THE REF DESK



What?

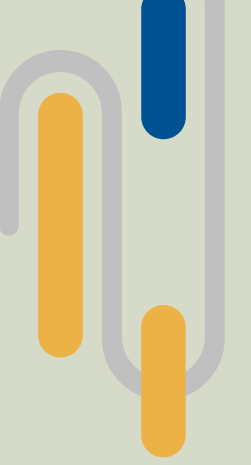
- Changes in frequency of ref desk interactions.
- Changes in the type of questions.

Why? (From the Literature)

- Library instruction
 - Students already know how to search
- Librarian collaboration & integration within assignments
- Improvements to search interfaces (Library website, Google)



PROJECT CONTEXT



Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Project (SoTL)

- Research project required as part of GBC's New Faculty Academy
- Opportunity to focus on our reference services for potential service & space redesign
- SoTL Project imposed time & personnel constraints on the research





THE QUESTIONS

Research Needs?

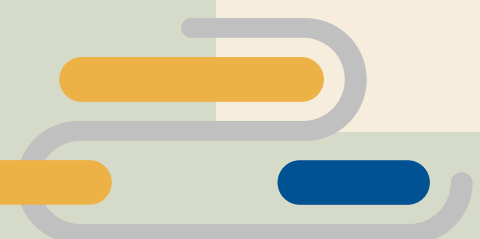
What do students need from research help at GBC?

Reference in the college context?

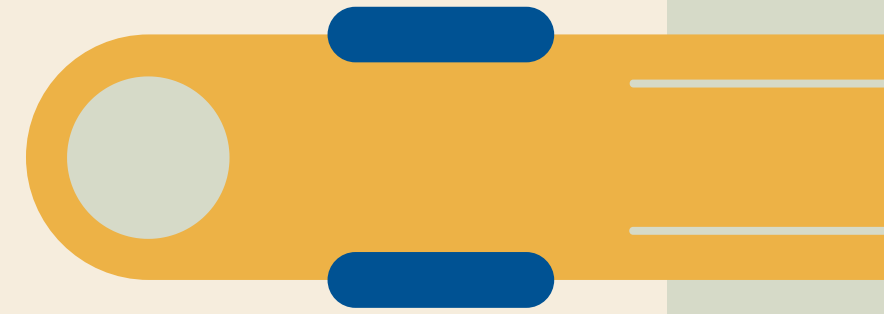
Is there anything unique to the college experience that should influence our reference services?

What about our current services?

Student satisfaction with our services? What are barriers to accessing our services?

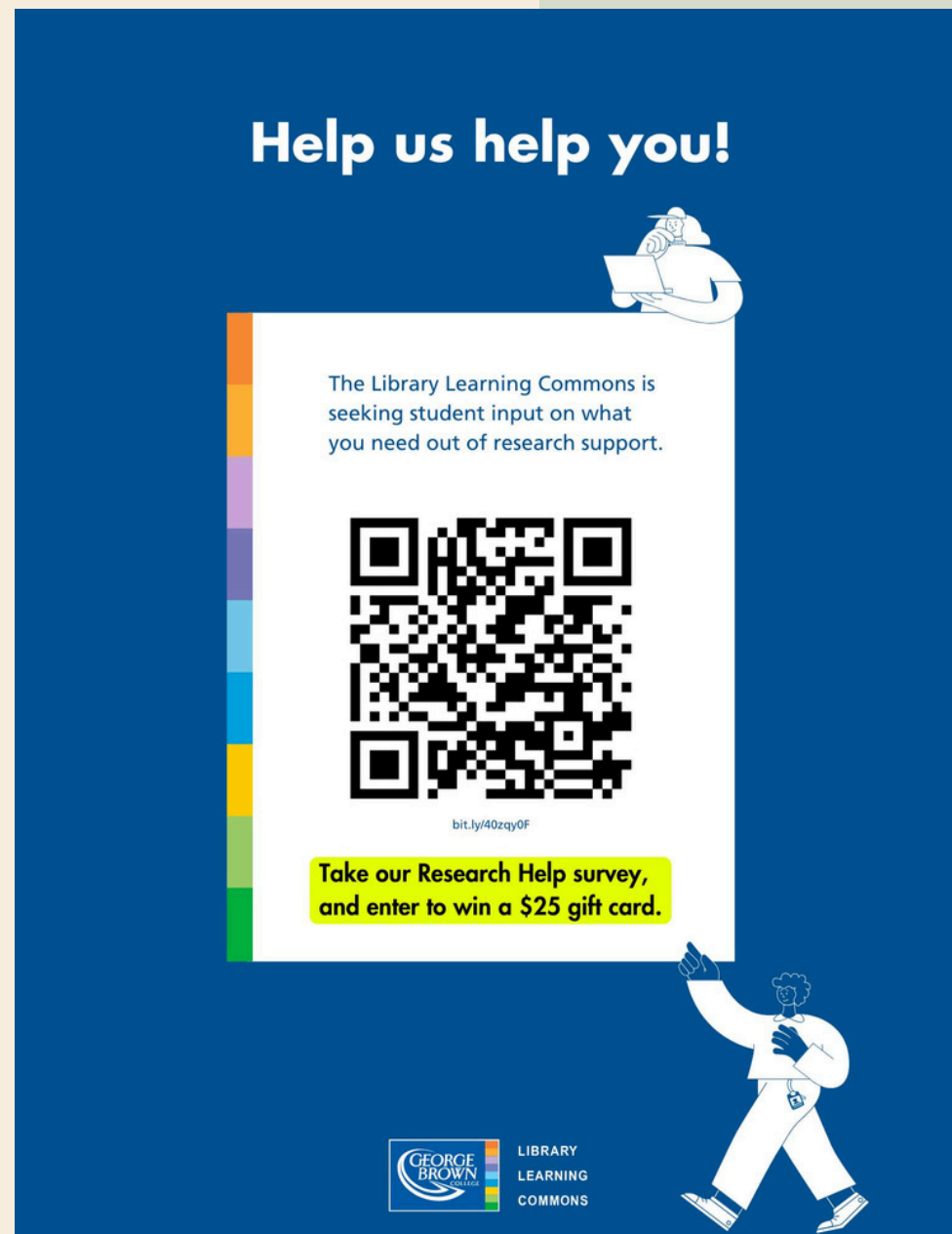


METHODOLOGY

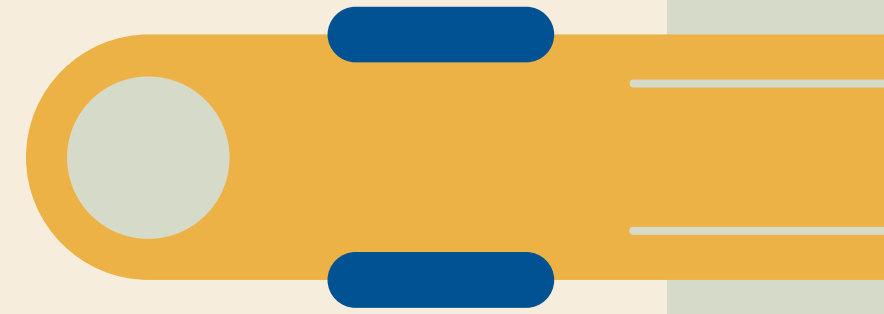


Survey via MS Forms

- 10 question survey
- Collected qualitative & quantitative data
- Was promoted heavily by:
 - Posters/flyers
 - Recommended at the reference desk & at the end of Librarian one-shots
 - Notification for faculty posted in our Learning Management System (D2L Brightspace)
- Received 193 responses



METHODOLOGY



Focus Groups/Structured Interviews

- Planned to have 2 focus groups with 5 students each.
- Unfortunately, it was very difficult to arrange focus groups.
- Timing is everything (even with snacks & incentives)!
- Conducted 5 structured interviews instead.
- Asked more in-depth questions about students research processes.

RESEARCH TIMELINE

September

Conducted
Literature Review &
Submitted Proposal
for Ethics Review

November

Obtained Ethics
Approval &
Permission to Collect
Student Data

January

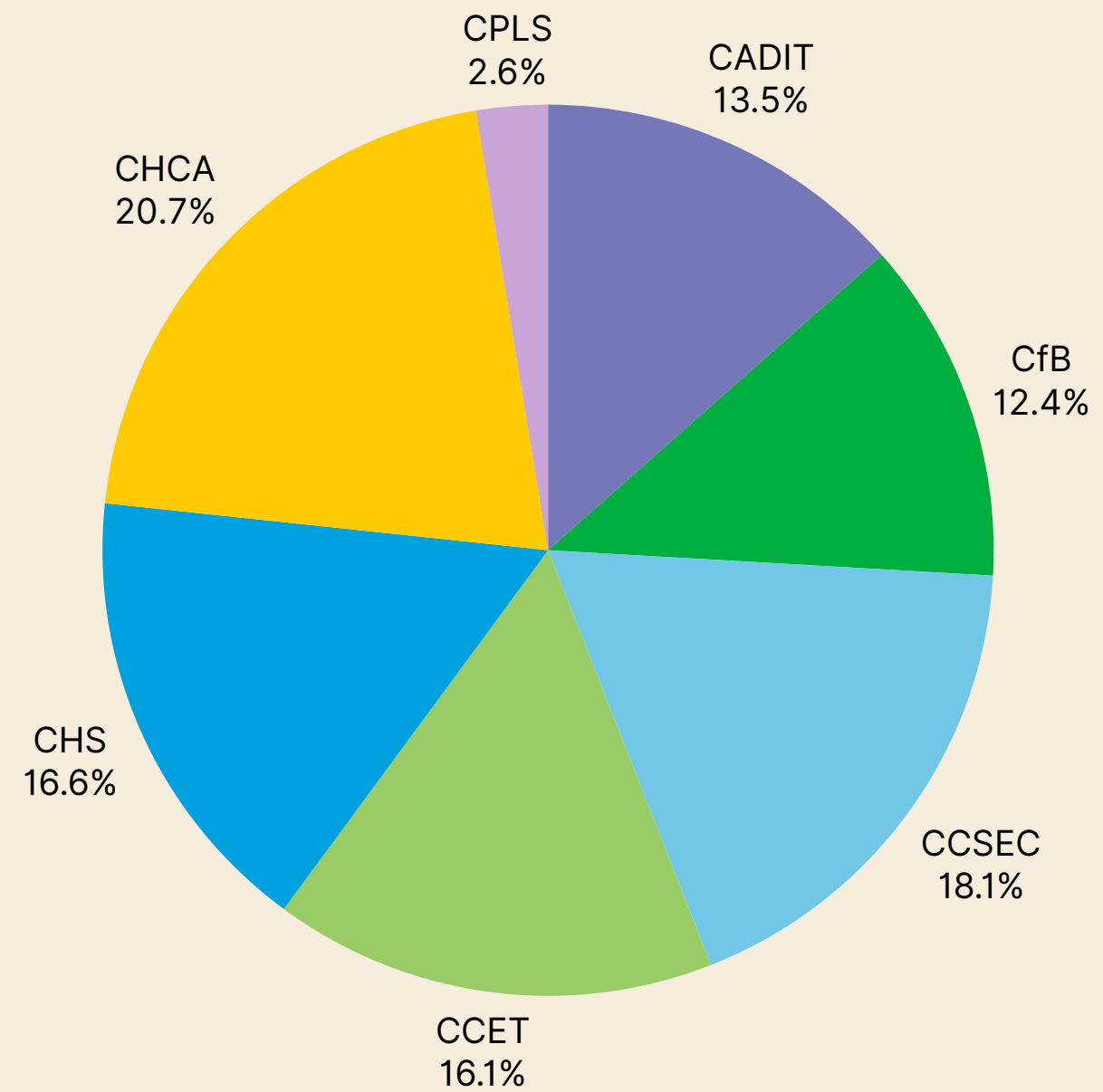
Launched Survey
& Started Promoting

March

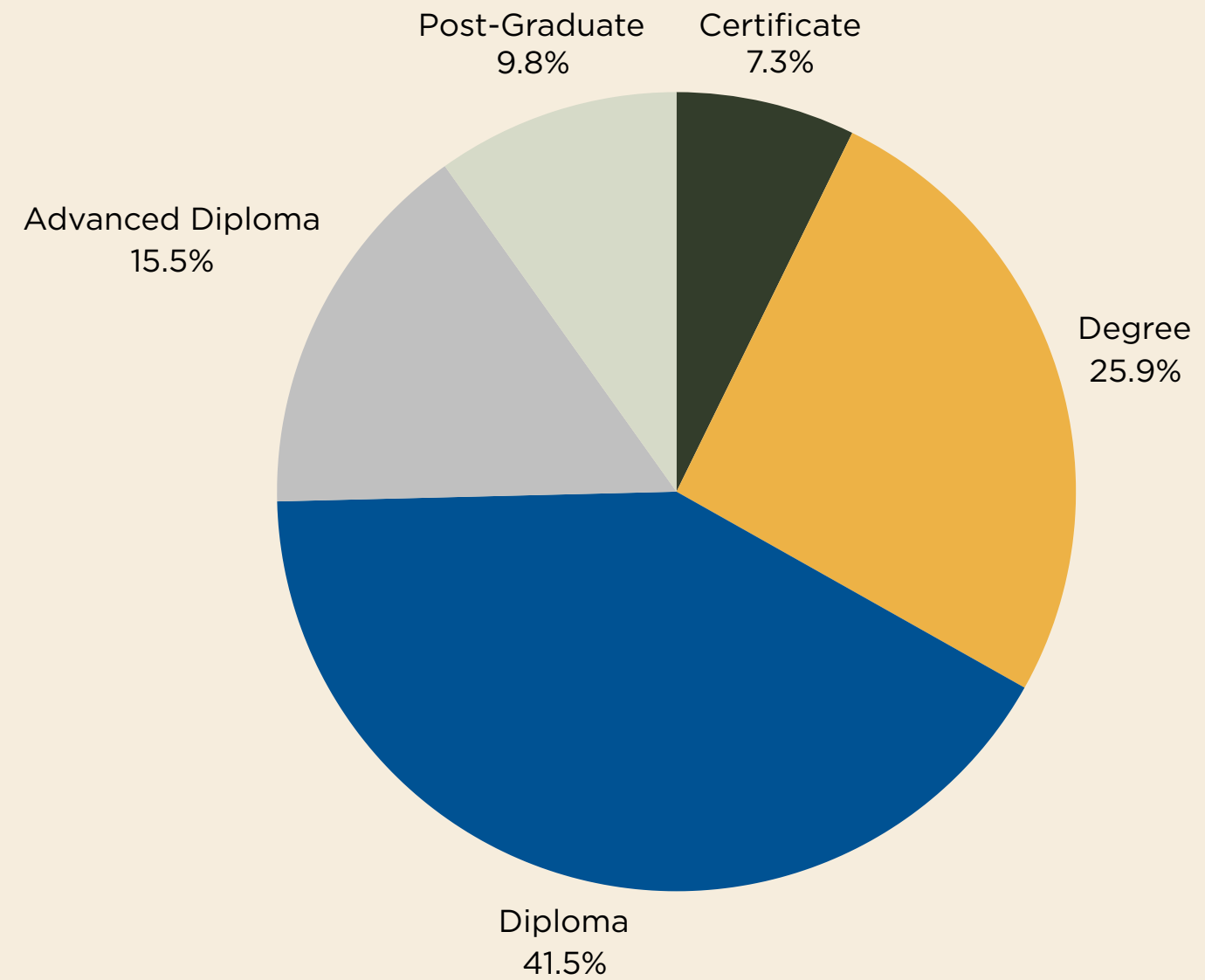
Closed Survey
&
Conducted
Interviews

Data Analysis

STUDENT REPRESENTATION



Program Area from Survey Responses



Credential Type from Survey Responses

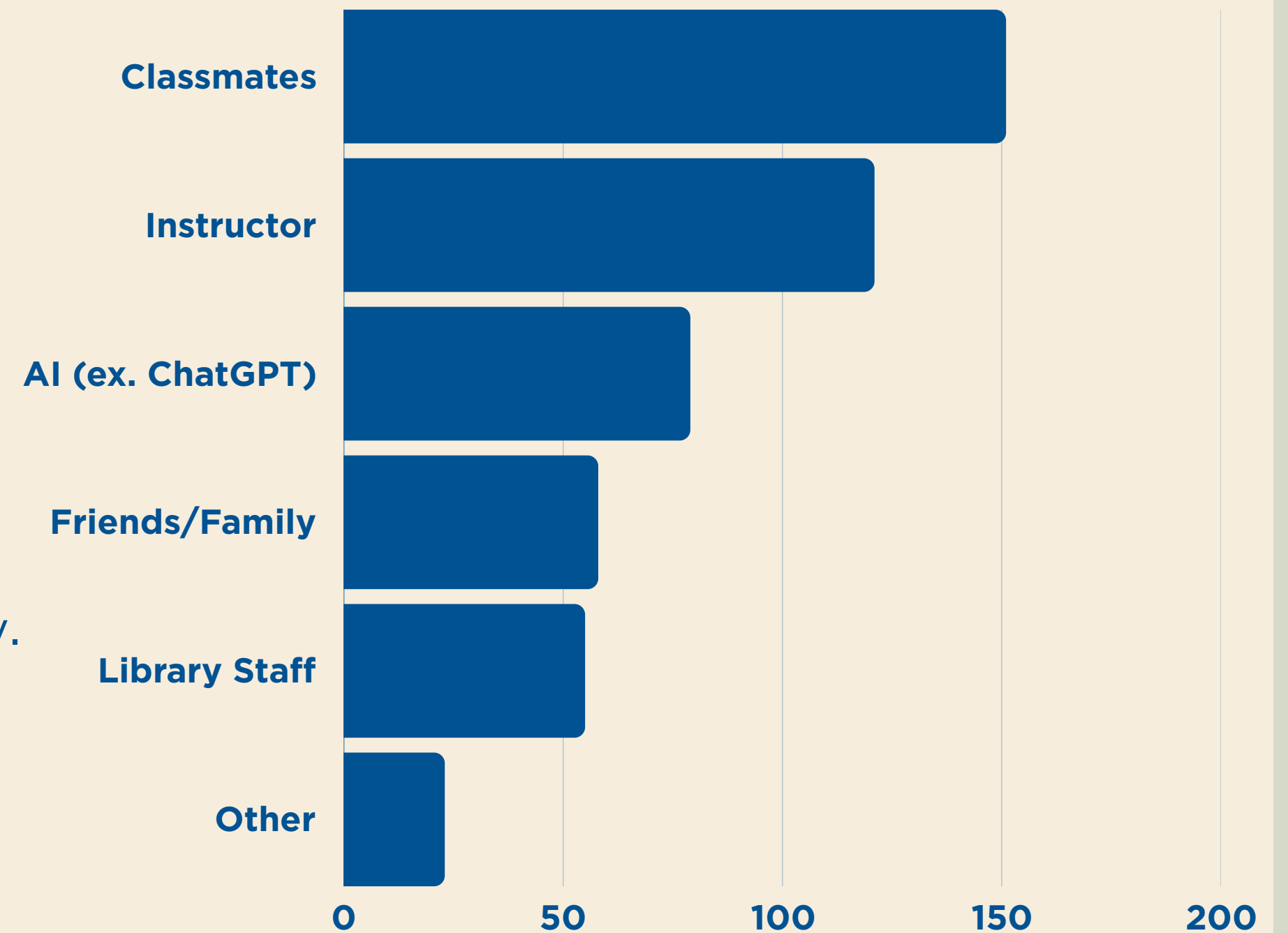
APPROACHES TO RESEARCH: OVERVIEW

- Students complete a wide variety of research assignments, but don't think of them that way.
- Research tasks within assignments are often referred to as “find” or “choose”.
- Students seek support choosing the “right” sources, with a focus on evaluation and credibility.

HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR



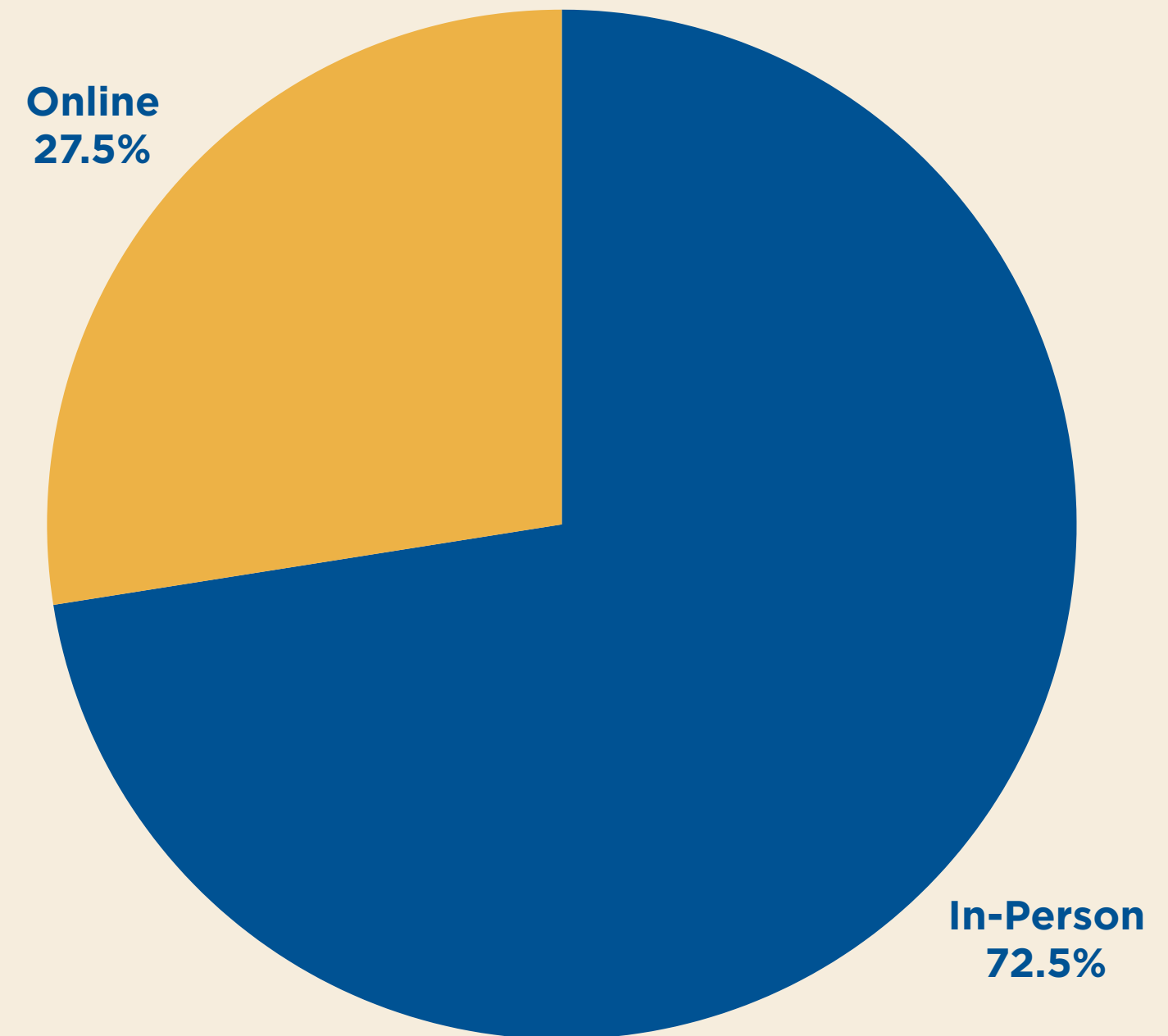
- Students go to peers & instructors first for help.
- They are also the primary referrers to the library.



HELP-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR

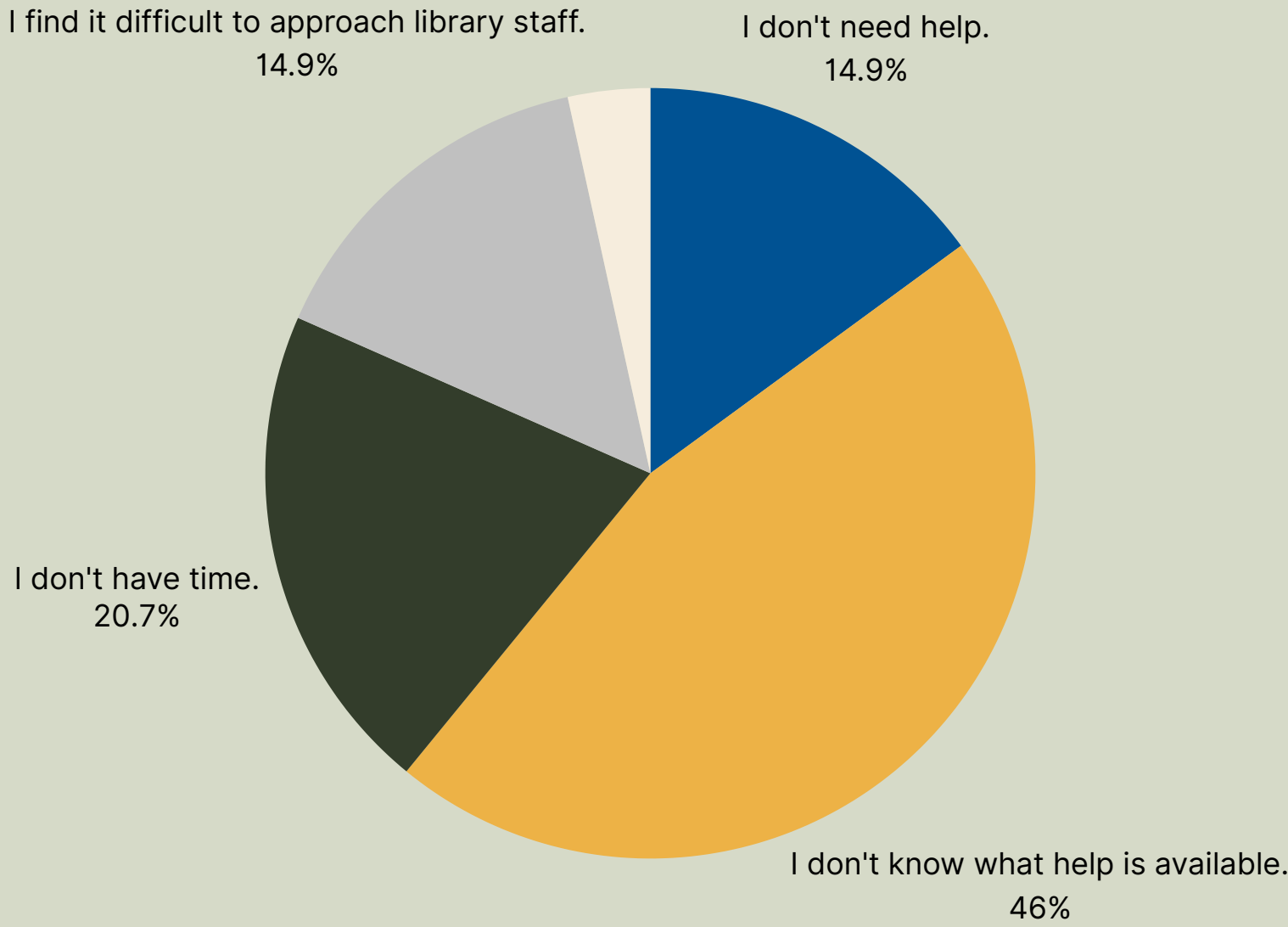


- Preference for **in-person** support is strong (72%).
- Students want to be able to talk through a question or problem.



AWARENESS & BARRIERS

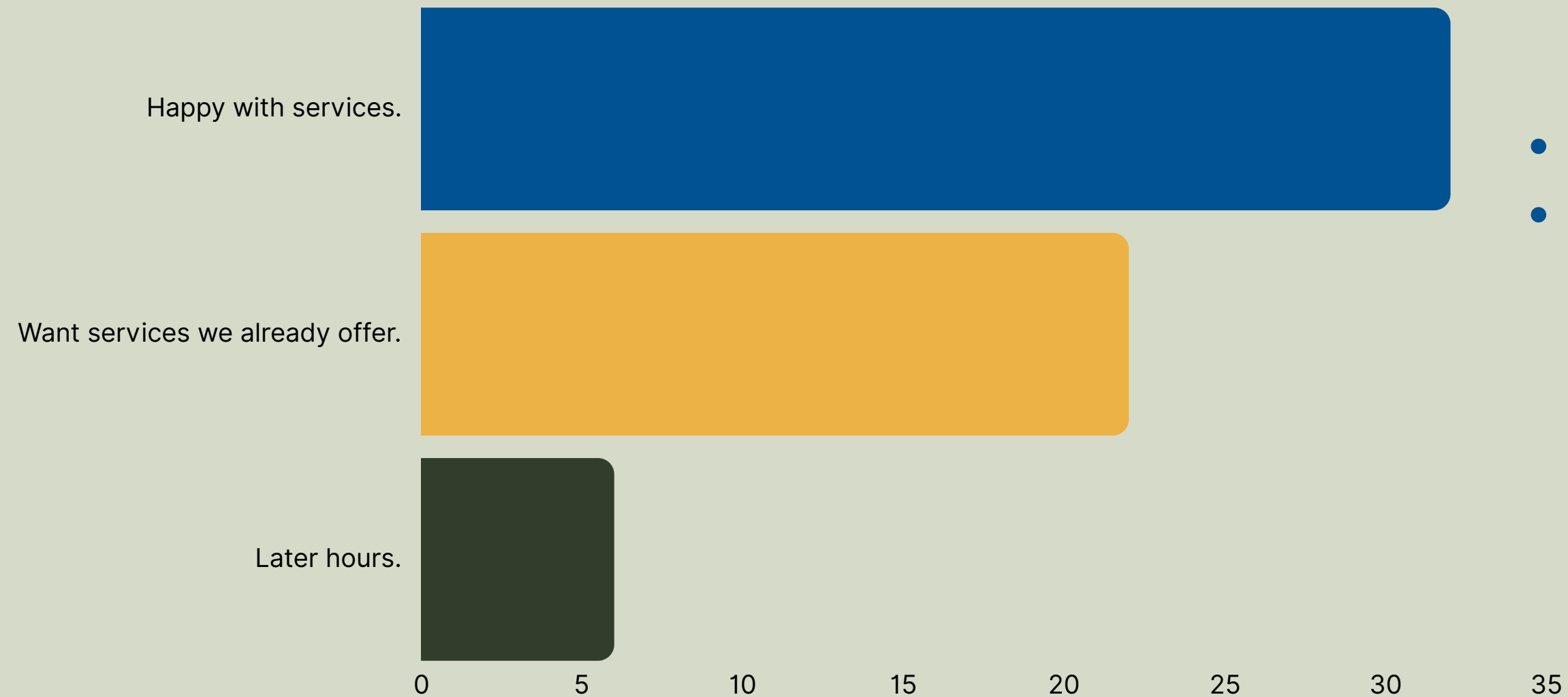
Question: What is stopping you from going to the library for research help?



- **58%** have never gone to the library for research help.
 - Of those, **65%** did not know that the library offers research help.
- Of students who are aware the library offers research help but don't access it, **46%** responded they didn't know **what kind** of help we offered.

SERVICE SATISFACTION

Open text question: Is there anything you would change about the research help offered by the library?



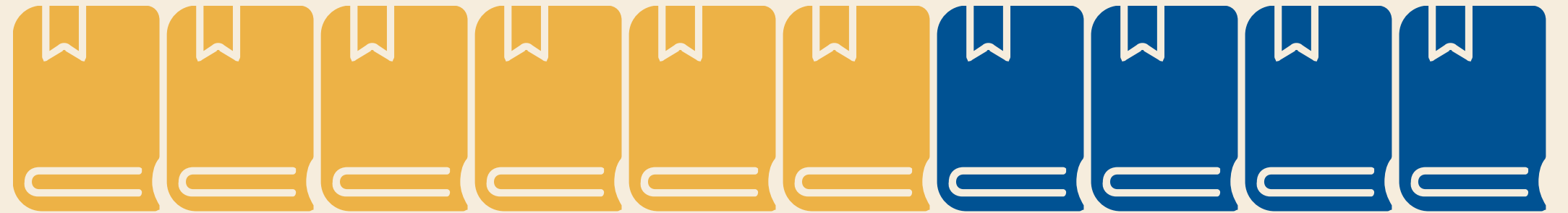
- General satisfaction with services.
- Again, indicates a lack of awareness of what we offer.

COMMUNICATION GAPS

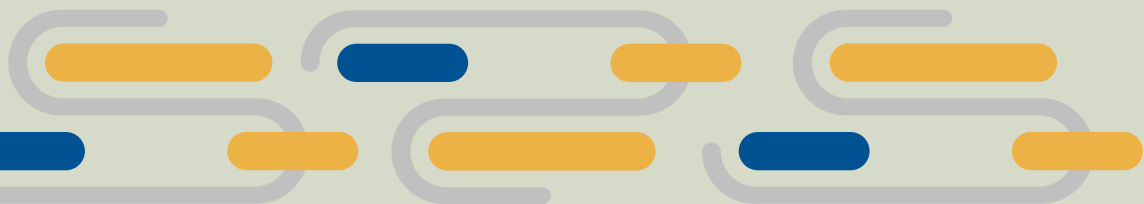


- Both quantitative and qualitative data indicates a lack of awareness of our services.
- Surprisingly, students recommended email communication for outreach over social media.

Question: Do you have any suggestions for how the library could better promote its research help services to students?



60% of students mentioned email communications.



KEY TAKEAWAYS



- Students are not aware of the services we provide!
- “Research help” is a vague & outdated phrase.
- Students want direct and clear communication from us.
- Students value having in-person support.

Start by amplifying awareness, not a total service redesign (yet).



First-Year Personal Librarian Program

Every 1st Year Student Paired with a Librarian

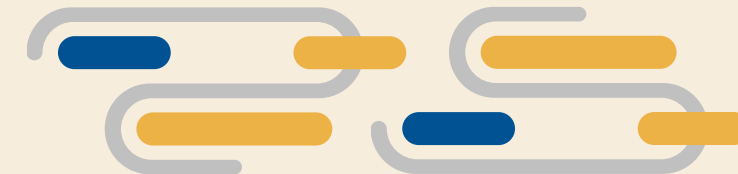
Librarians have volunteered to take this on on-top of our liaison & functional roles.

Email Communications Throughout the Year at Key Times

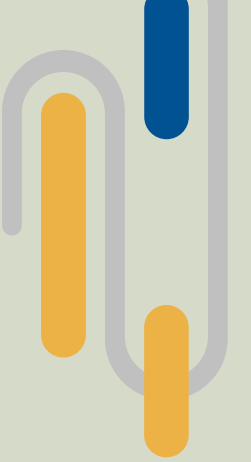
Emails will contain information about our services, events, and other helpful resources.

Building Institutional Literacy & Community

Familiarize students with what we do, how to access both our services and everything else the college has to offer.



NEXT STEPS



This project is just a starting point...

- Launch 1st-Year Personal Librarian Program
- Space redesign at SJ Campus
- Embedded reference?





THANK YOU!

QUESTIONS?