
Dallas County Community College District

Brand Equity Study



February, 2008



Background & Methodology



Background & Methodology

Background

- Crescent Research, Inc. was commissioned by the Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD) to conduct a Brand Equity Study.

- The purpose of the study was to measure the general public's awareness and perception of the District in terms of the following areas:
 - DCCCD brand awareness
 - Awareness of individual campuses
 - Educational quality
 - Curriculum
 - Affordability
 - Campus environment
 - Student satisfaction levels
 - Likelihood to attend for non-students
 - DCCCD Advertising

Background & Methodology

Methodology

- A total of **1,049** interviews were conducted and completed with consumers residing within Dallas County.
 - **DCCCD Students** – 472 Online Interviews.
 - 346 Interviews with current DCCCD students.
 - 126 Interviews with previous DCCCD students.
 - Random mix of ethnicity, age, gender and school attended.
 - **Non-DCCCD Students** – 527 Online Interviews and 50 Phone Interviews.
 - 340 Interviews with Caucasians.
 - 237 Interviews with Non-Caucasians.
 - Random mix of ethnicity, age, gender, education and service area residing in.
 - Phone survey was administered to capture non-Internet accessible individuals and to provide some Hispanic respondents with the option of completing the survey in English or Spanish.

Background & Methodology

Methodology

- All survey questionnaires were developed jointly, and final approval was given by DCCCD.
- Student sample was provided by DCCCD; non-student sample was provided by e-Rewards, a local online sample provider.
- Crescent Research hosted the online survey on their dedicated server, programmed the questionnaires, generated the appropriate data banners and developed the final report.
- Statistical significance testing was conducted at the .05 level.
- Survey results were weighted by ethnicity and education to conform with Dallas County Census Data and to provide accurate inferences and conclusions.



Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Awareness and Familiarity

- As would be expected, students were more aware of colleges and universities in general as compared to non-students. Overall student awareness of Dallas County Community Colleges was extremely high (97%). Individual awareness levels for each Dallas County Community College was as follows:
 - o Brookhaven College - 92%
 - o Richland College - 92%
 - o El Centro College - 90%
 - o Eastfield College - 81%
 - o North Lake - 79%
 - o Mountain View College - 78%
 - o Cedar Valley College - 69%

- Although non-students were more aware of State/Private Colleges and Universities such as SMU (88%), UNT (87%), UTD (86%) and UTA (86%), 82% stated that they were aware of Dallas County Community Colleges.

Executive Summary

Awareness and Familiarity

- Non-student awareness of individual Dallas County Community Colleges was **significantly** lower than that of students:
 - o El Centro - 77%
 - o Brookhaven College - 74%
 - o Richland College - 68%
 - o Eastfield College - 60%
 - o Mountain View College - 60%
 - o North Lake - 48%
 - o Cedar Valley College - 33%

- Both students and non-students 35 years of age or older were **significantly** more aware of Dallas County Community Colleges, as compared to younger individuals between the ages of 18 and 34 years old.

Executive Summary

Awareness and Familiarity

- In general, students were much more familiar with Dallas County Community Colleges than they were with State, Private or Technical/Vocational Schools. Almost half (48%) of the students mentioned that they were “very familiar” with Dallas County Community Colleges and 80% were at least “somewhat familiar.”
- Student familiarity with individual Dallas County Community Colleges varied considerably:

DCCC College	Very Familiar	At Least Somewhat Familiar
Richland	41%	67%
Eastfield	35%	59%
North Lake	31%	58%
Brookhaven	30%	61%
El Centro	30%	59%
Mountain View	27%	55%
Cedar Valley	23%	49%

Executive Summary

Awareness and Familiarity

- In contrast, non-students were most familiar with SMU, although their familiarity with local schools in general was much lower than students. Only 12% were “very familiar” with Dallas County Community Colleges and 40% were at least “somewhat familiar.” Non-Caucasians were more familiar with the schools than their ethnic counterparts.
- Non-student familiarity across all seven DCCC schools was fairly consistent:

DCCC College	Very Familiar	At Least Somewhat Familiar
El Centro	15%	44%
Mountain View	13%	42%
Cedar Valley	13%	39%
Richland	12%	44%
Eastfield	12%	39%
Brookhaven	10%	36%
North Lake	8%	39%

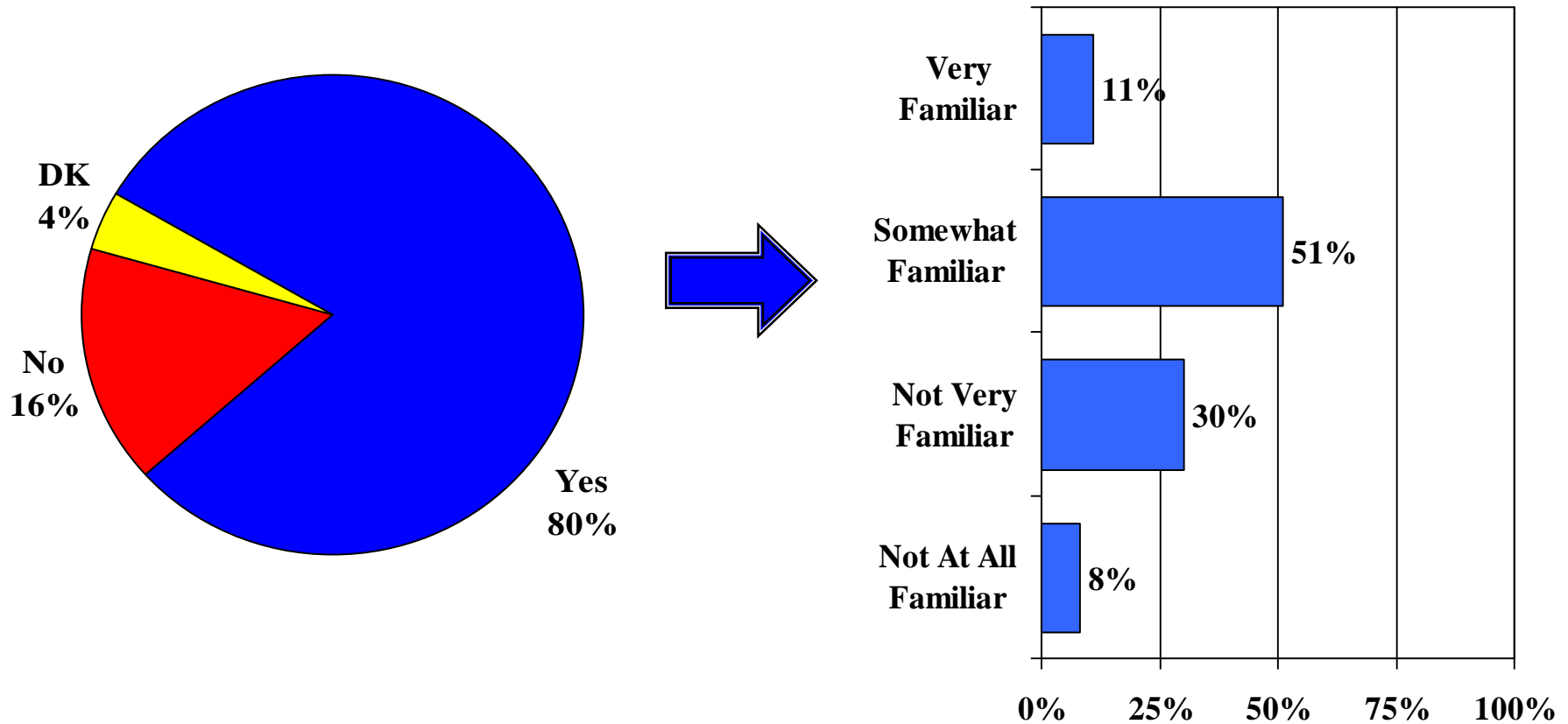
Executive Summary

Awareness and Familiarity

- In general, 80% of non-students were aware of the existence of community colleges within Dallas County; Caucasians, African-Americans and those 35+ years of age were **significantly** more aware. More than 60% were at least “somewhat familiar” with the community colleges.
- Forty-four percent of non-students were aware of the Dallas County Community College District and more than half noted that they were at least “somewhat familiar” with DCCCD. Non-Caucasians were **significantly** more familiar with the institution.

Non-Student Awareness/Familiarity with Community Colleges

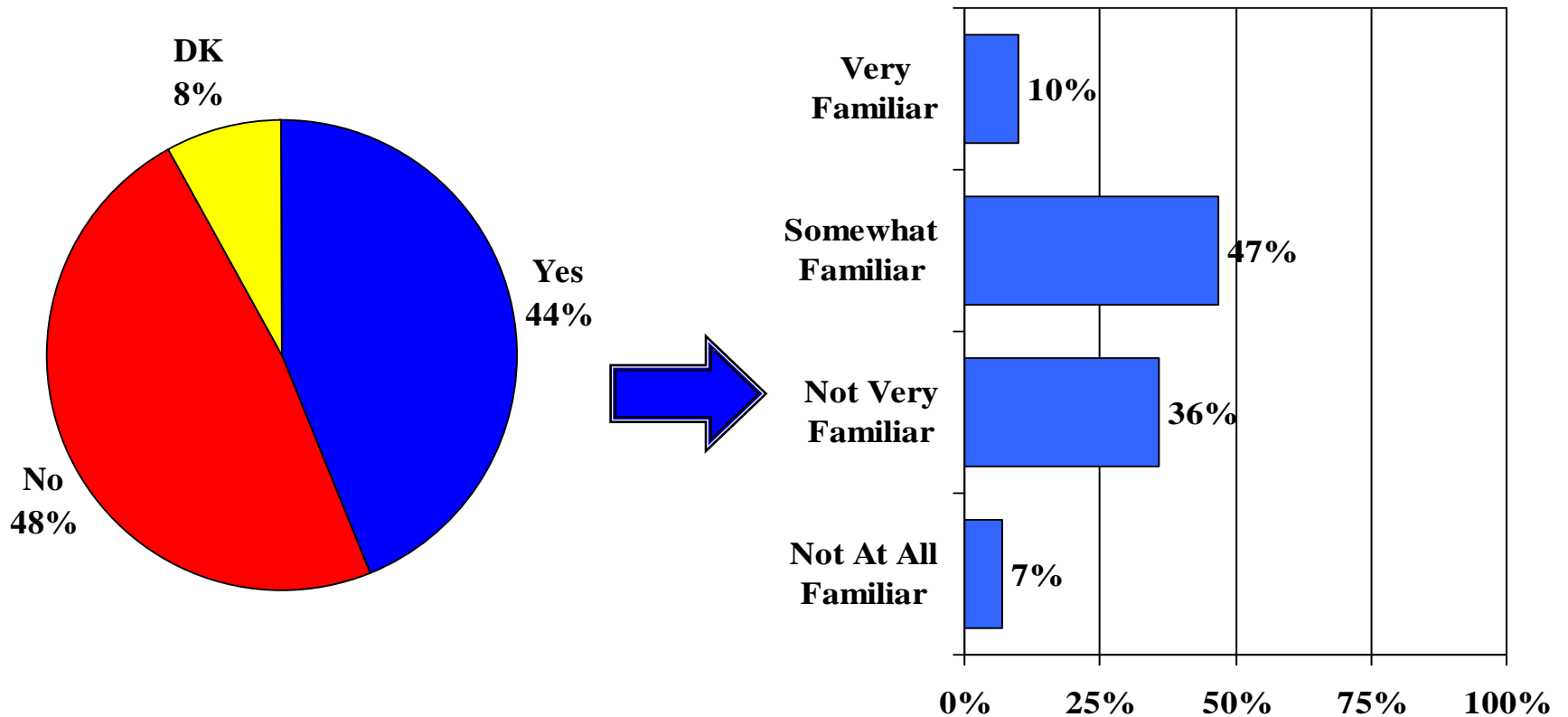
Eighty percent of non-students were aware of community colleges in Dallas County. Caucasians, African-Americans and those 35+ years of age were significantly more aware. Over 60% were at least somewhat familiar with the community colleges and Non-Caucasians were significantly more familiar than their Caucasian counterparts.



Q14NS. Are you aware of the community colleges in Dallas County? Q15NS. How familiar are you with the community colleges in Dallas County? Base = 629 and 505

Non-Student Awareness/Familiarity with DCCCD

Forty-four percent of the non-students were aware of the Dallas County Community College District. Individuals who were 35+ years of age, Caucasian, African American and who had some college experience or less were significantly more aware. More than half of the non-students were at least somewhat familiar with DCCCD; Non-Caucasians were significantly more prone to be very familiar with the educational institution.



Q16NS. Are you aware of the Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD)? Q17NS. How familiar are you with the Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD)? Base = 627 and 295

Executive Summary

Knowledge of Colleges & Universities

- The main vehicles for students to learn about colleges and universities was the Internet (69%), followed by word of mouth (63%) and family and friends (57%).
 - Non-Caucasians were **significantly** more likely to learn via the Internet and through community fairs and events.
 - Caucasians were **significantly** more likely to learn directly from friends or family.

- Similarly, non-students obtained information regarding schools from family or friends (56%), word of mouth (52%) and TV (49%). **Significant** differences included:
 - Males and African-Americans were more likely to learn through TV.
 - Caucasians were more likely to learn via word of mouth.
 - Caucasians and Hispanics were more likely to obtain information through co-workers.
 - Individuals 18 to 34 were more likely to learn via the Internet.

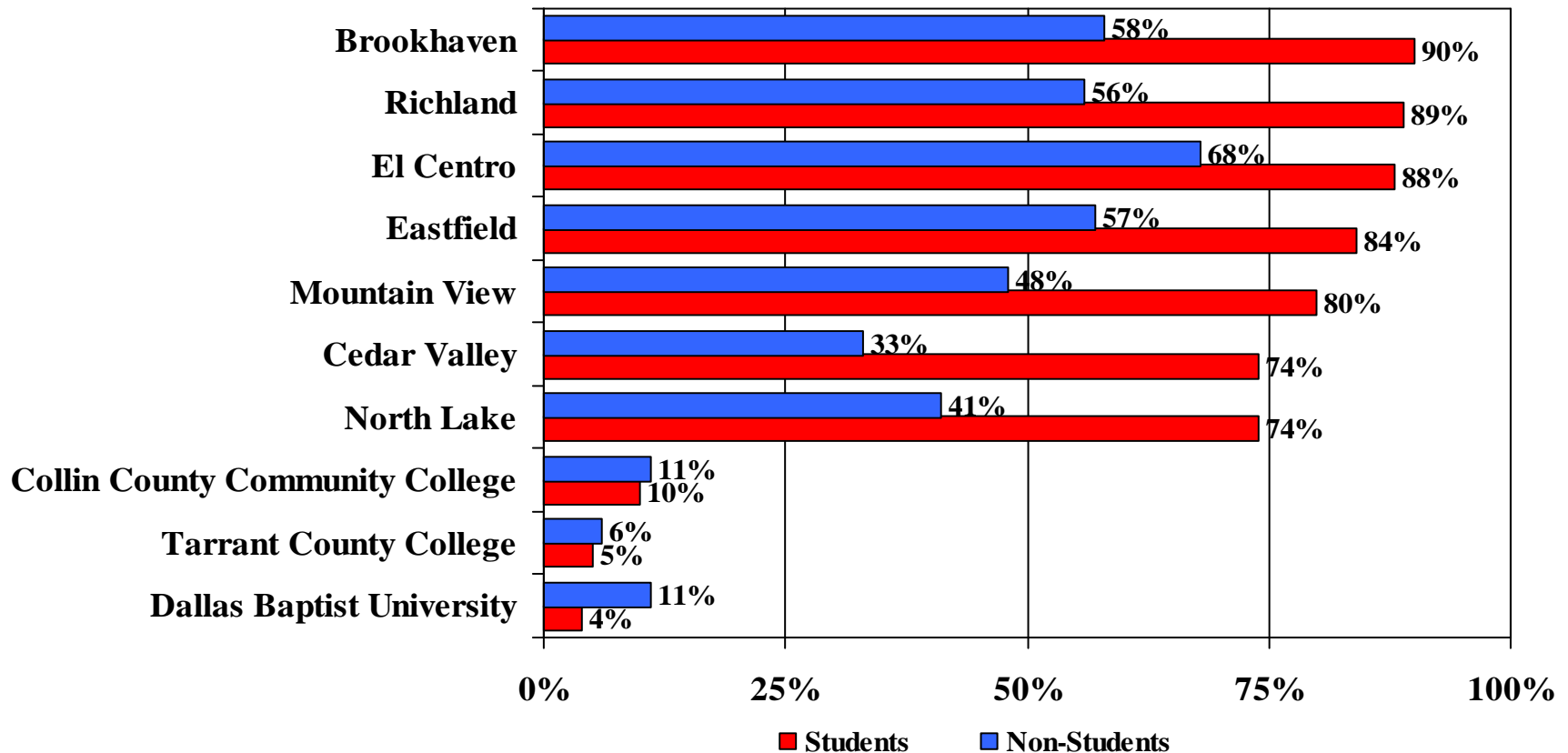
Executive Summary

Knowledge of Colleges & Universities

- The majority of students were able to identify all seven colleges that are part of the DCCCD. Identification varied from close to 90% for Brookhaven, Richland and El Centro to 74% for Cedar Valley and North Lake.
- Non-students were **significantly** less likely to categorize the colleges correctly as part of the DCCCD. El Centro was viewed as part of the umbrella organization by 68% of the individuals; only 33% mentioned Cedar Valley. Females were more knowledgeable about the seven schools being a part of DCCCD, as were Caucasians and African-Americans.
- Over 50% of the non-students stated that they have never attended a DCCCD school, primarily because they had been enrolled in another college or university, or they had lived outside of Dallas County at the time.

Knowledge of Schools That are Part of DCCCD

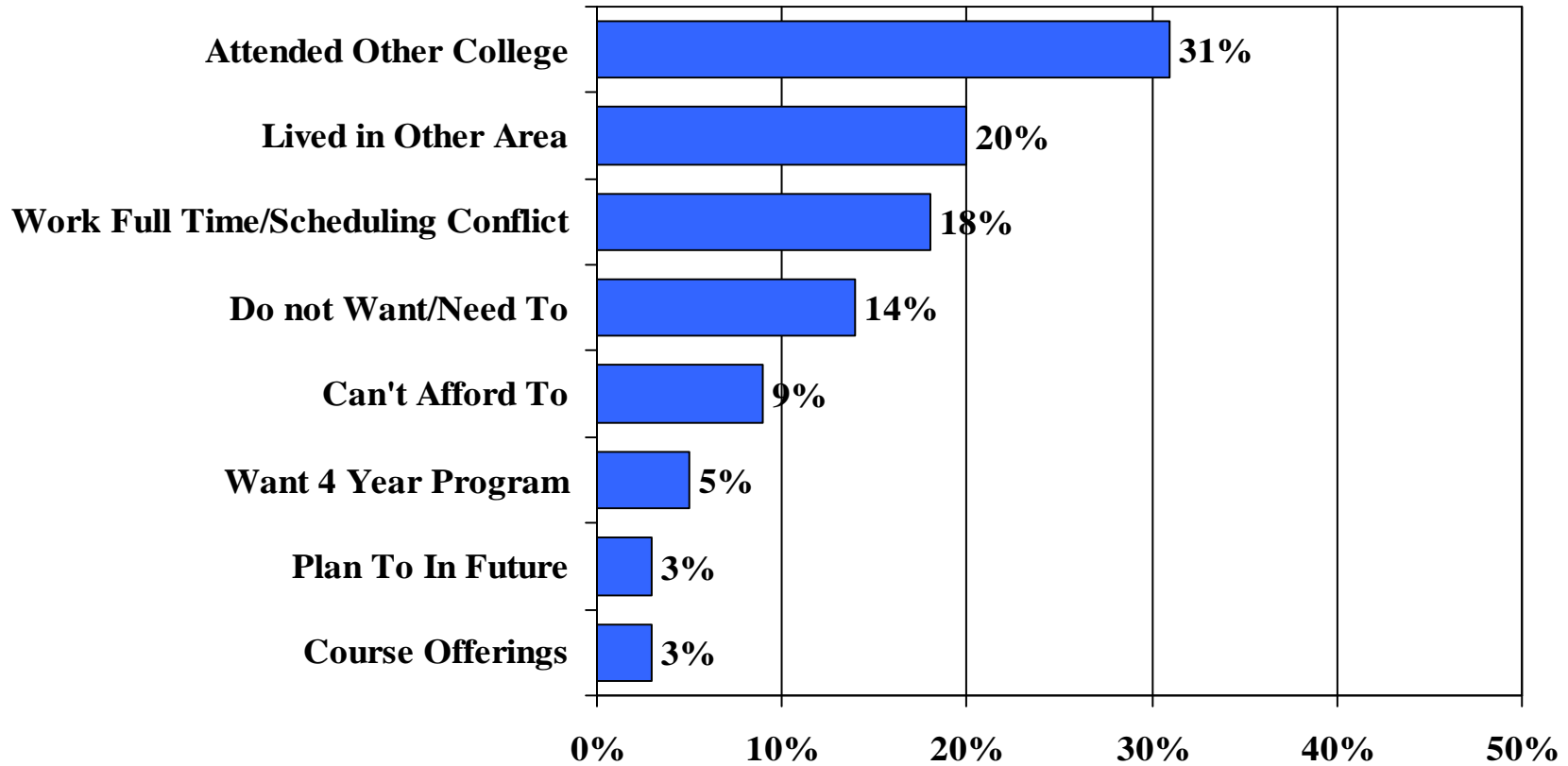
The majority of students were able to identify all seven colleges as part of the DCCCD. Ironically, one in ten also included Collin County Community Colleges as a member of the group. Non-students were much less likely to correctly identify DCCCD schools. Females were more knowledgeable about the seven schools being part of DCCCD as were Caucasians and African-Americans.



Q15S/Q20NS. Which of the following schools are part of the Dallas County Community College District? Base = 540 (S) and 606 (NS)
 Note: Percentages 4% and under are not labeled.

Why Non-Students Never Attended DCCC

Over 50% of the non-students have never attended a Dallas County Community College, either because they attended another college to receive their degree, or else lived outside the area. A significantly greater percent of younger individuals 18 to 34 have attended elsewhere and older non-students have not found the need to attend. Similarly, a significantly larger percent of the Other ethnicity cited a full work schedule and lack of funds which prevented them from attending.



Q22NS. Why have you never attended a Dallas County Community College?

Base = 574

Executive Summary

Enrollment Decisions

- Although many factors were important in deciding where an individual would attend school, “convenient locations” (95%) and “affordability” (94%) were cited most often by students. Non-students mentioned “quality of faculty” (94%) and “variety and quality of curriculum” (93%) most frequently. Other factors that were considered pertinent by both groups included “the ability to transfer credits,” “the quality of campus,” and “the reputation of the school.”

- When compared to other educational institutions, students rated Dallas County Community Colleges very high compared to their non-student counterparts.
 - Students rated DCCCD as **significantly** better than State, Private and Technical/Vocational schools with regard to:
 - Affordability of education.
 - Convenient campus locations.
 - Ability to transfer credits.
 - Ability to upgrade skills and gain additional degrees.
 - Convenience of taking online courses/distance learning.

Executive Summary

Enrollment Decisions


- Similarly, students rated DCCCD on par with State and Private colleges and Universities, but **significantly** better than Technical/Vocational schools for the following:
 - Variety and quality of curriculum.
 - Quality of campus and facilities.
 - Quality of faculty.
 - Reputation of the institution.

- In contrast, non-students rated State/Private Colleges and Universities **significantly** better than DCCCD on all factors with the exception of “affordability of education” and “convenient campus location.”

Student Comparison of DCCC to Other Institutions

Students rated DCCCD consistently higher than State/Private and Technical/Vocational Schools on virtually all attributes, but most prominently with regard to the affordability of education and convenient campus locations.

Top 2 Box Scores (Significance at .05 level)	DCCCD (A)	State and Private Colleges/Universities (B)	Technical and Vocational School (C)
Affordability of Education	79% BC	36%	28%
Convenient Campus Location	77% BC	47%	30%
Ability to Transfer Credits	73% BC	61%	25%
Upgrade Skills/Additional Degrees	69% BC	55%	34%
Online Courses/Distance Learning	67% BC	45%	26%
Variety/Quality of Curriculum	65% C	64% C	28%
Quality of Campus & Facilities	63% C	63% C	26%
Quality of Faculty	62% C	61% C	26%
Reputation of the Institution	61% C	64% C	24%
Financial Aid/Scholarship Programs	54% BC	47%	26%
Employment After Graduation	51%	57% C	34%
Student Clubs and Organizations	39%	52% AC	19%

 - Significantly greater than Tech/Vocational

 - Significantly greater than all other schools

Q17S./18S./19S. Compared to other educational institutions in the Dallas area, how would you rate...? Base = 508

Non-Student Comparison of DCCC to Other Institutions

Non-Students rated State/Private Colleges and Universities consistently higher than both DCCCD and Technical and Vocational Schools on all attributes except affordability of education and convenient campus locations, in which DCCCD excelled.

Top 2 Box Scores (Significance at .05 level)	DCCCD (A)	State and Private Colleges/Universities (B)	Technical and Vocational School (C)
Affordability of Education	41% BC	29%	28%
Convenient Campus Location	46% BC	40% C	28%
Ability to Transfer Credits	34% C	47% AC	19%
Upgrade Skills/Additional Degrees	38% C	50% AC	29%
Online Courses/Distance Learning	32% C	41% AC	24%
Variety/Quality of Curriculum	32% C	57% AC	23%
Quality of Campus & Facilities	29%	58% AC	23%
Quality of Faculty	27% C	58% AC	23%
Reputation of the Institution	30% C	58% AC	24%
Financial Aid/Scholarship Programs	28%	45% AC	24%
Employment After Graduation	24%	50% AC	26%
Student Clubs and Organizations	17%	46% AC	14%

 - Significantly greater than Tech/Vocational - Significantly greater than all other schools

Q24NS./25NS./26NS. Compared to other educational institutions in the Dallas area, how would you rate...? Base = 592

Executive Summary

DCCCD Advertising

- Eighty-eight percent of the students and three-quarters of non-students have heard or seen advertising for Dallas County Community Colleges.
 - The majority of students have viewed advertising via TV (58%), Internet (53%) and Direct Mail (51%).
 - Non-students were predominantly aware of advertisements through TV (57%), Radio (48%), Direct Mail (45%) and Newspaper (43%).

- The primary message heard or seen most often by both students and non-students (70% and 66%, respectively) was that Dallas County Community Colleges provide an opportunity to start or continue ones education.
 - Students also heard messages related to “affordability” (64%), “convenient locations” (63%) and “continuing education classes (60%), especially among females and African-Americans.
 - Similarly, non-students cited “continuing education classes” (58%), “being successful in life” (51%) and “convenient locations” (51%).

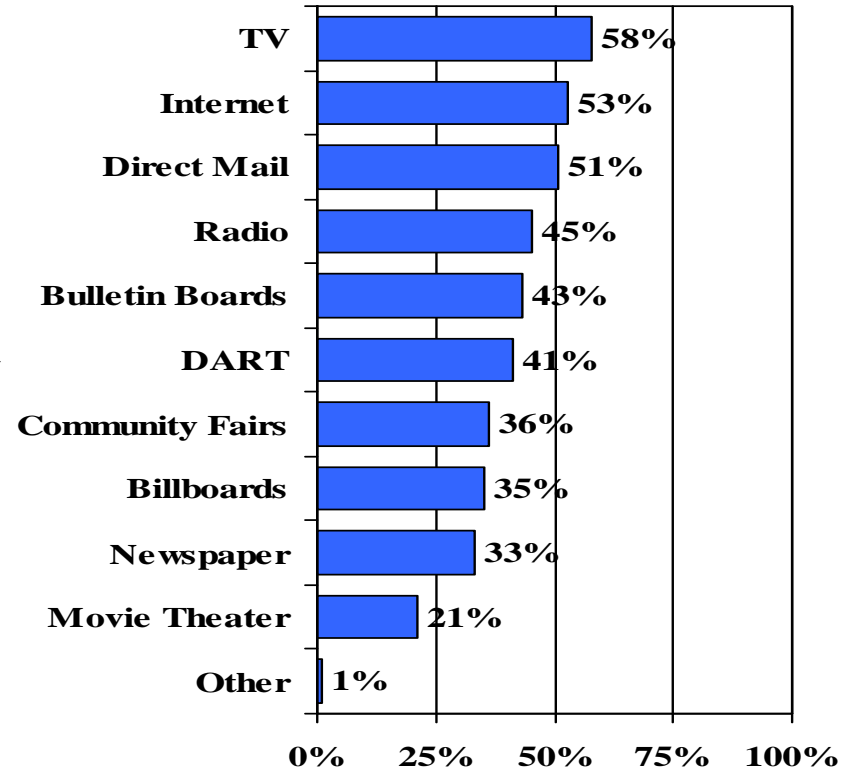
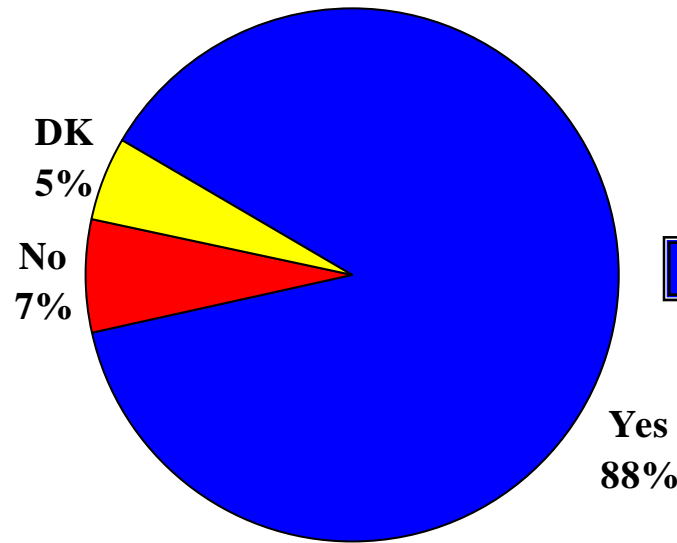
Executive Summary

DCCCD Advertising

- Over 70% of both students and non-students have heard or seen DCCCD advertising in English; more than one-quarter also saw advertising in both English and Spanish.
- Almost half of the students stated that the DCCCD advertising that they heard or saw positively affected their perception of the institution either somewhat or a lot; 41% of the non-students echoed that response. A **significantly** greater percent of females and Non-Caucasian students noted that the advertising changed their perception a lot.

DCCC Advertising Heard or Seen by Students

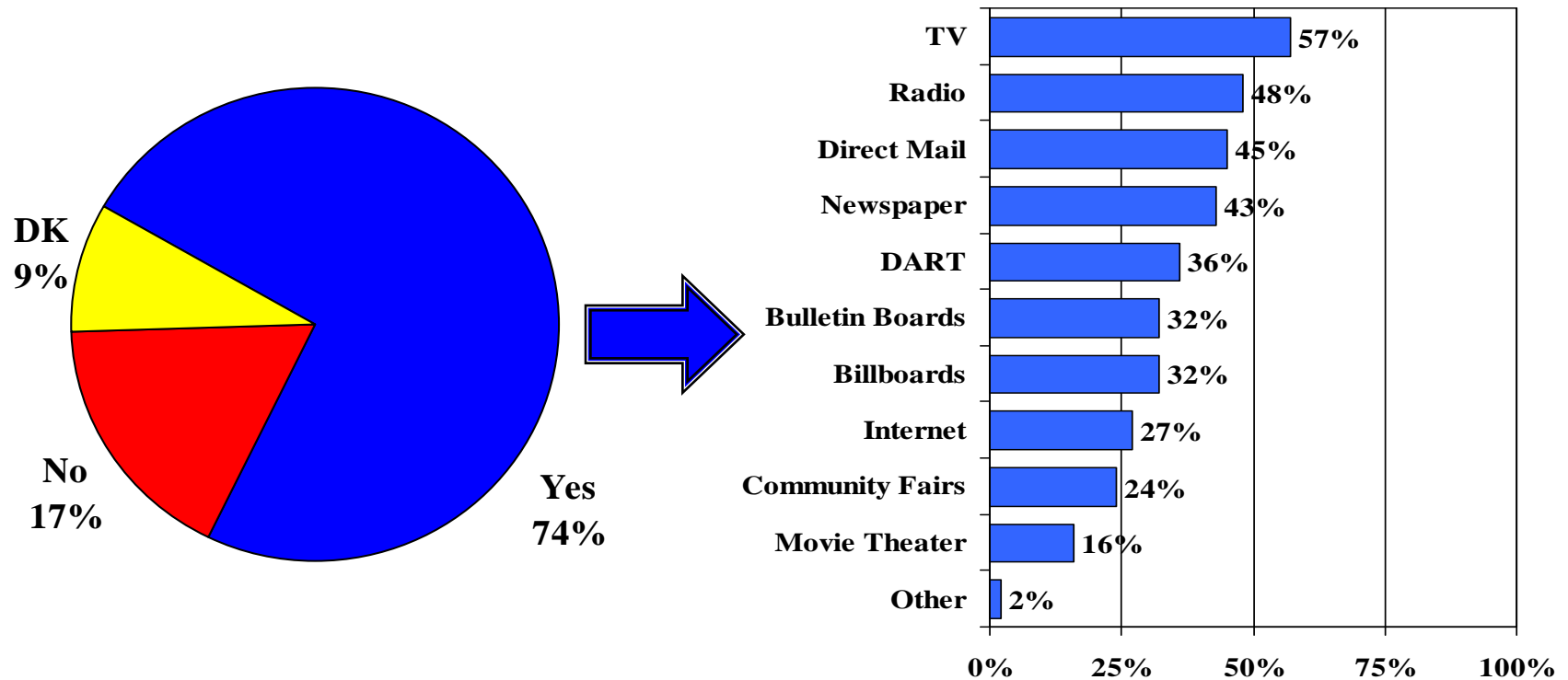
Almost 90% of students have heard or seen advertising for Dallas County Community Colleges, primarily through TV, the Internet and Direct Mail to the home. A significantly greater percent of African-Americans have heard or seen advertising on TV, direct mail and DART; Caucasians and Hispanics have viewed significantly more advertising in movie theaters; Hispanics have seen significantly more advertising via community events, billboards and bulletin boards in grocery stores and schools.



Q20S. Have you ever heard or seen any advertising for the Dallas County Community Colleges? Q21S. What forms of advertising have you heard, or seen, regarding Dallas County Community Colleges? Base=499/440

DCCCD Advertising Heard or Seen by Non-Students

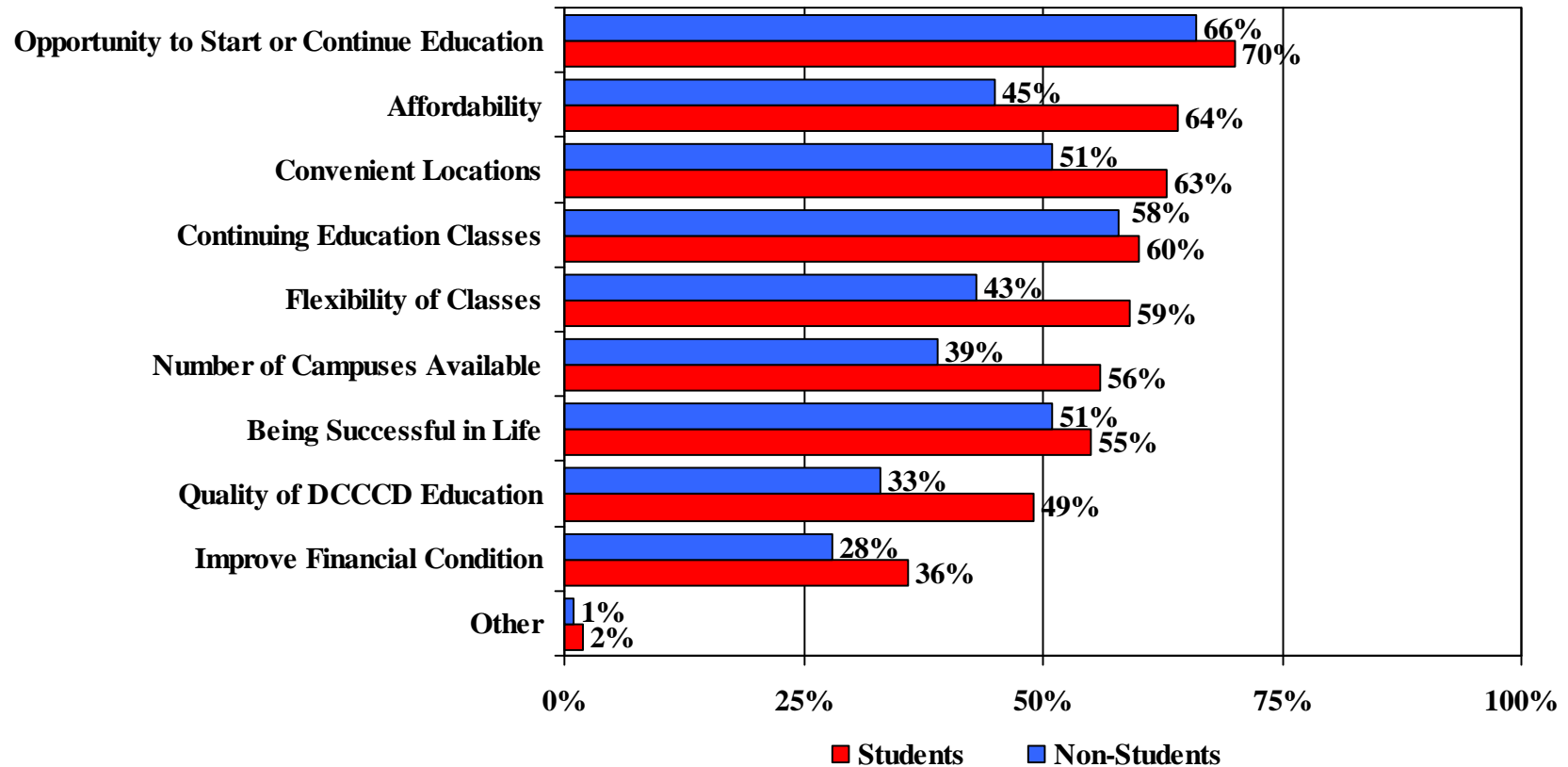
Three-quarters of the non-students, and significantly more of those 35+ years old, have heard or seen advertising for Dallas County Community Colleges, primarily by means of TV, radio, direct mail, newspaper and DART buses and trains. A significantly greater percent of males, African-Americans and individuals 35+ saw the ad on TV, and significantly more Non-Caucasians noticed the advertising on billboards and bulletin boards, in the newspaper, and at community events or fairs.



Q27NS. Have you ever heard/seen any advertising for the Dallas County Community Colleges? Q28NS. What forms of advertising have you heard/seen, regarding Dallas County Community Colleges? Base=589/435

Primary Advertising Messages Heard or Seen

The primary advertising message most often heard or seen was that DCCC provided an opportunity to either start, or continue, one's education. Affordability and convenience were also noted as other prominent messages, significantly so by both female and African-American students. Significantly more male and Hispanic non-students heard or saw the "be successful" message, Caucasians the "convenient locations" message and African-Americans the "flexibility of classes" theme.



Q24S/Q31NS. What were the primary messages that you recall hearing or seeing in the advertising for Dallas County Community Colleges?
 Base = 440 (S) and 435 (NS)

Executive Summary

Curriculum & Tuition

- Most of the students and over half of the non-students recognized that Dallas County Community Colleges offer a full range of college curriculum. Overall, individuals were least knowledgeable regarding the school offering ESL and pre-professional courses.
 - A **significantly** larger percent of Caucasian non-students were aware of the basic curriculum and continuing education.
 - Hispanics were more aware of ESL courses.

- Almost three-quarters of both current and previous students took basic curriculum courses; 43% were enrolled in online courses and 7% took ESL classes.
 - The appeal of the curriculum at Dallas County Community Colleges was the ability to take day and evening courses (70%), the ability to take campus and online courses (57%), the variety of courses/classes available (57%) and the knowledge level/teaching ability of faculty (55%).
 - **Significantly** more African-Americans and Hispanics enjoyed the freedom to take day and evening classes, and more African-Americans took the option of online classes.

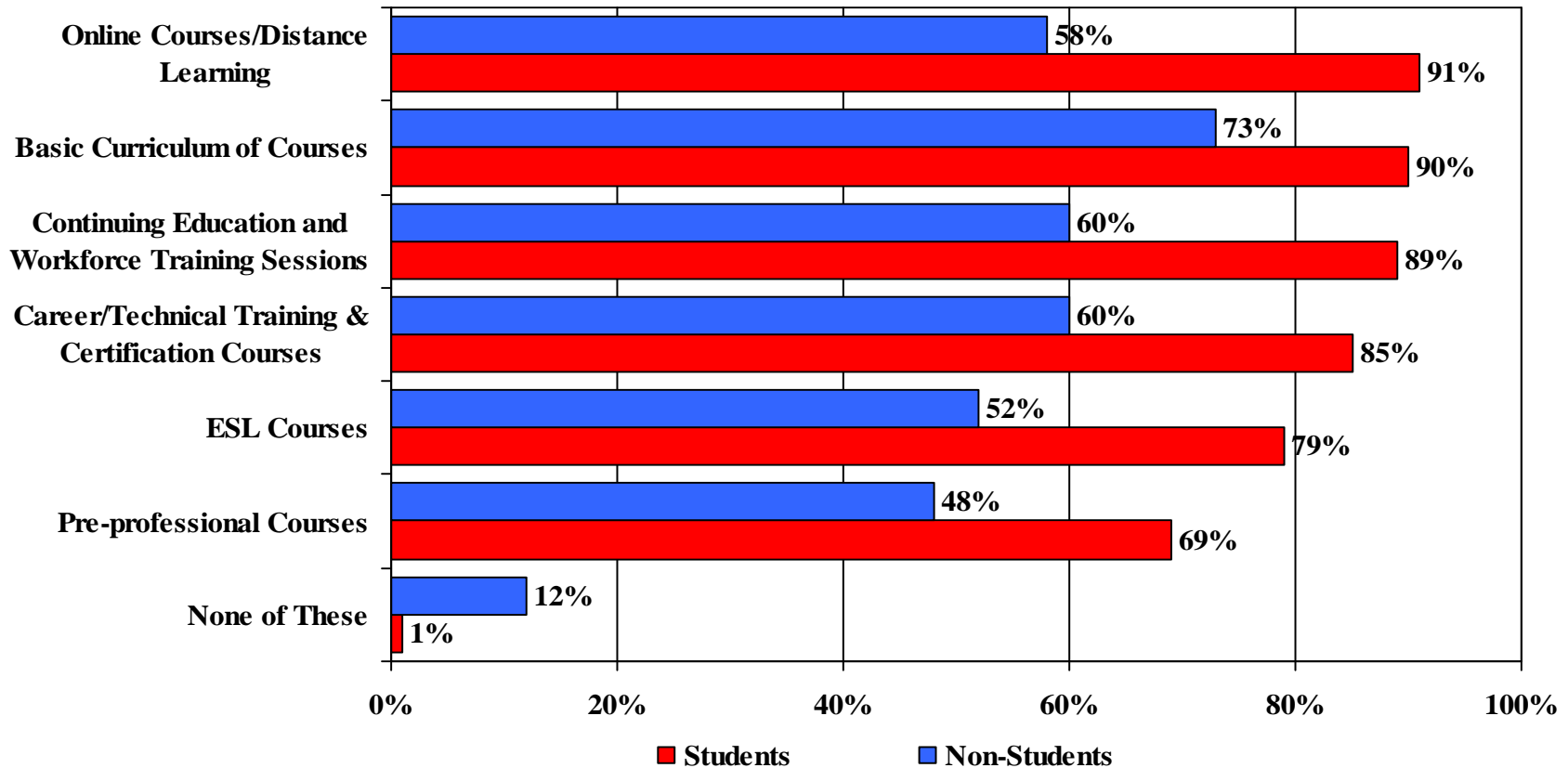
Executive Summary

Curriculum & Tuition

- o Twenty-five percent of the students had no suggestions regarding changes to the curriculum or courses at DCCCD. However, 16% would like additional and very specific courses added to the curriculum that they could take.
- The Basic Curriculum/Courses offered by DCCCD was rated the highest by students in terms of both quality of education (Top 2 Box Score of 70%) and quality/experience level of faculty (Top 2 Box Score of 67%); ESL was rated the lowest (Top 2 Box Scores of 60% and 61%, respectively).
- Non-students rated Basic Curriculum/Courses the highest in terms of both quality of education (Top 2 Box Score of 42%) and quality/experience level of faculty (Top 2 Box Score of 39%). However, all non-student ratings were **significantly** lower as compared to their student counterparts.
- Non-students estimated the tuition for one course (3 credits) to be an average of \$201 and the tuition for one semester (12 credits) to be an average of \$790.

Knowledge of Curriculum Offered at DCCC

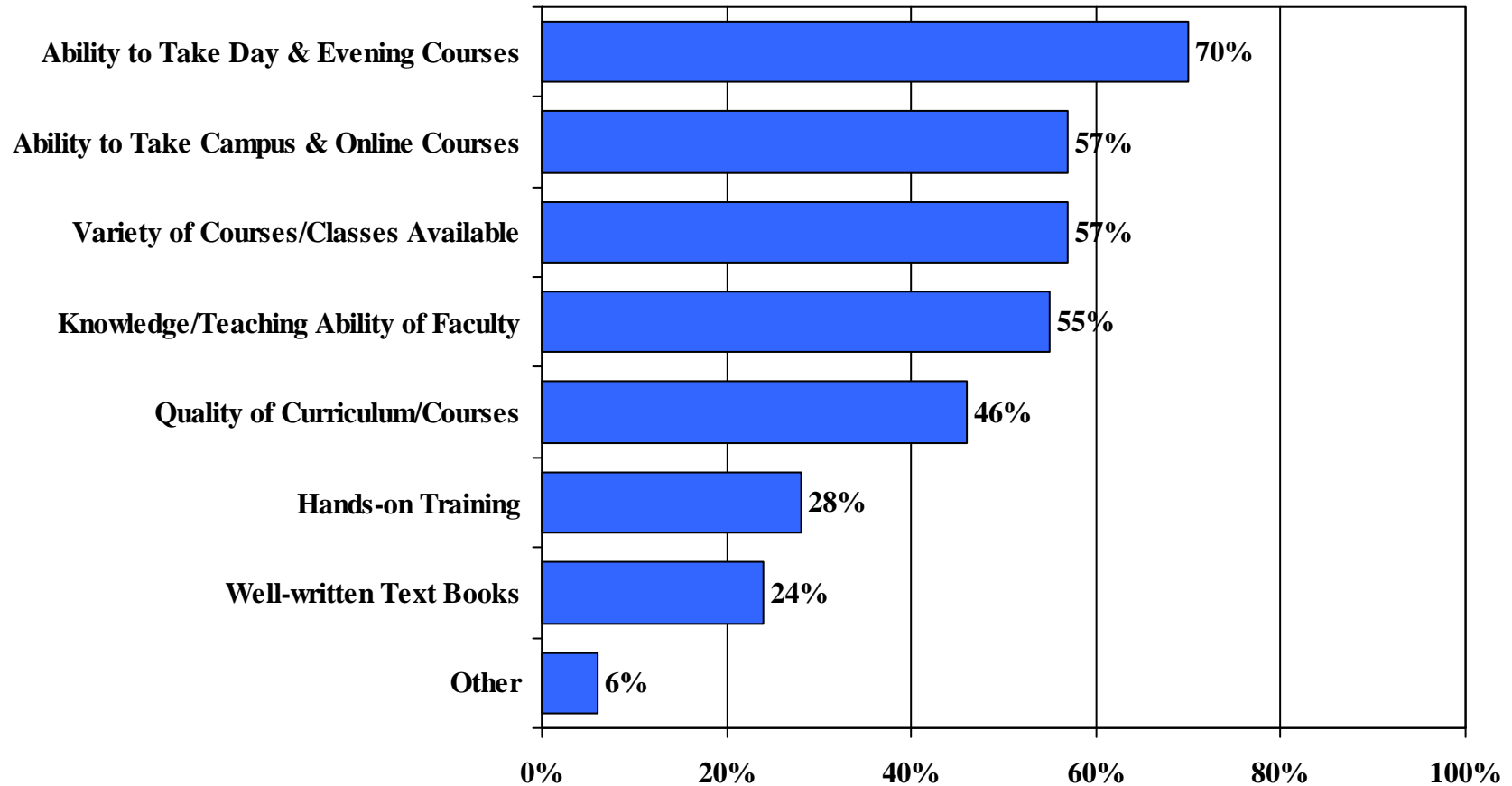
Approximately 90% of the students recognized that Dallas County Community Colleges offer a full range of college curriculum. In contrast, a significantly smaller percent of non-students knew that the school provided the six major types of curriculum. In addition, a significantly larger percent of Caucasian non-students were aware of the basic curriculum and continuing education, while Hispanic non-students were significantly more aware of DCCC's ESL courses.



Q27S/Q34NS. Which of the following types of curriculum/courses are currently offered at Dallas County Community Colleges?
 Base = 580 (S) and 587 (NS)

Appeal of Curriculum and Courses to Students

Students most enjoyed the flexibility of being able to attend classes that best fit their schedule and lifestyle. Significantly more African-Americans and Hispanics liked the freedom to take day and evening classes; significantly more African-Americans enjoyed the option of campus-based vs. online, as well as the variety of courses available.

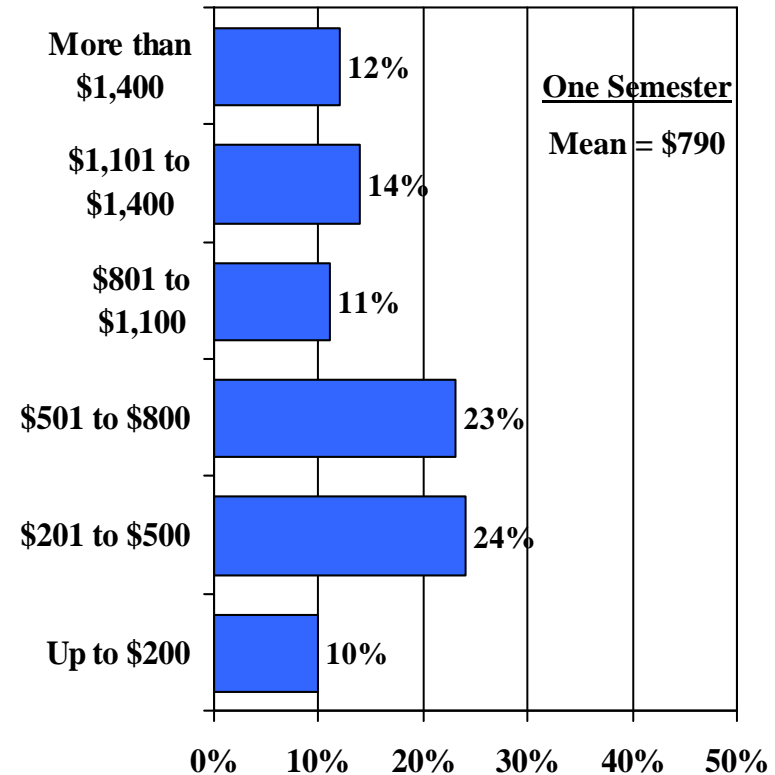
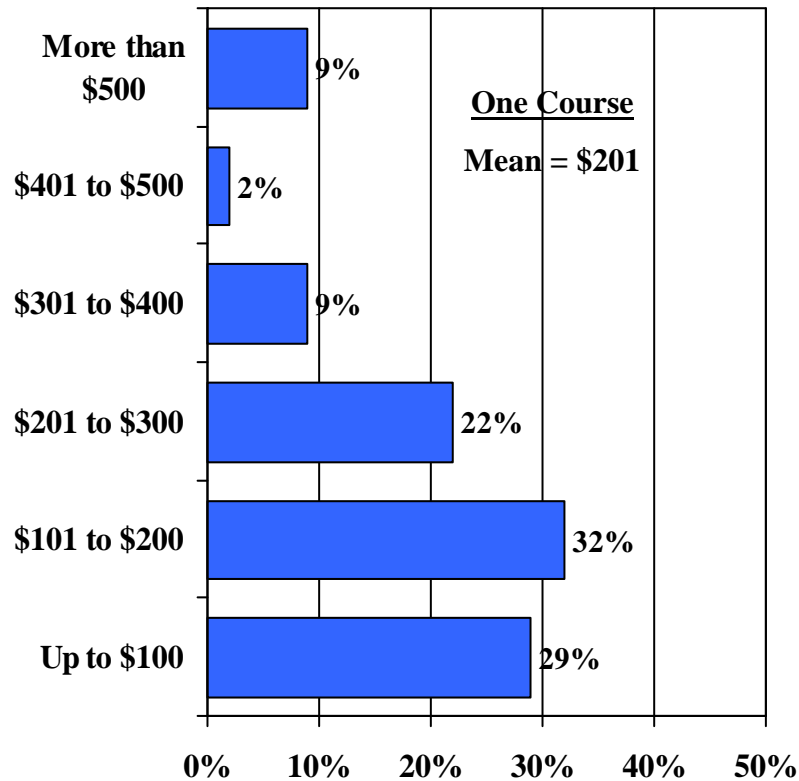


Q29S. What do/did you like most about your curriculum/courses?

Base = 580

Non-Student Expectations of Tuition

Non-Students estimated the cost for one course to be \$201, and \$790 for a full semester of four courses. A significantly greater percent of non-Caucasians estimated higher than their Caucasian counterparts for one course, and a significantly smaller percent of Hispanics estimated lower than either Caucasians or African-Americans for a full semester.



Q37NS. How much would you expect to pay for tuition if you enrolled in one course (3 semester hours) at a Dallas county Community College for one semester? Q38NS. How much would you expect to pay if you enrolled for one semester with four courses (12 semester hours) at a Dallas county Community College for one semester? Base = 583

Executive Summary

Brand Equity & Image

- Students, especially females and African-Americans, noted that Dallas County Community Colleges could be “described exactly” as affordable (68%), convenient (66%), a good value (60%) and diverse (60%). Non-students mentioned the same descriptors but **significantly** less often.
- Very few non-students viewed DCCCD as an institution that could be described as “high quality” or providing a “university experience.”
- Both students and non-students cited the predominant strengths of DCCCD as being affordable, convenient, flexible, diverse, a good value, and that the school is designed for everyone. Students also mentioned high quality as an important strength.
- However, students felt that the school did not provide a university experience nor was it inclusive in nature. Non-students mentioned the same lack of a university experience coupled with not offering a high quality of education.

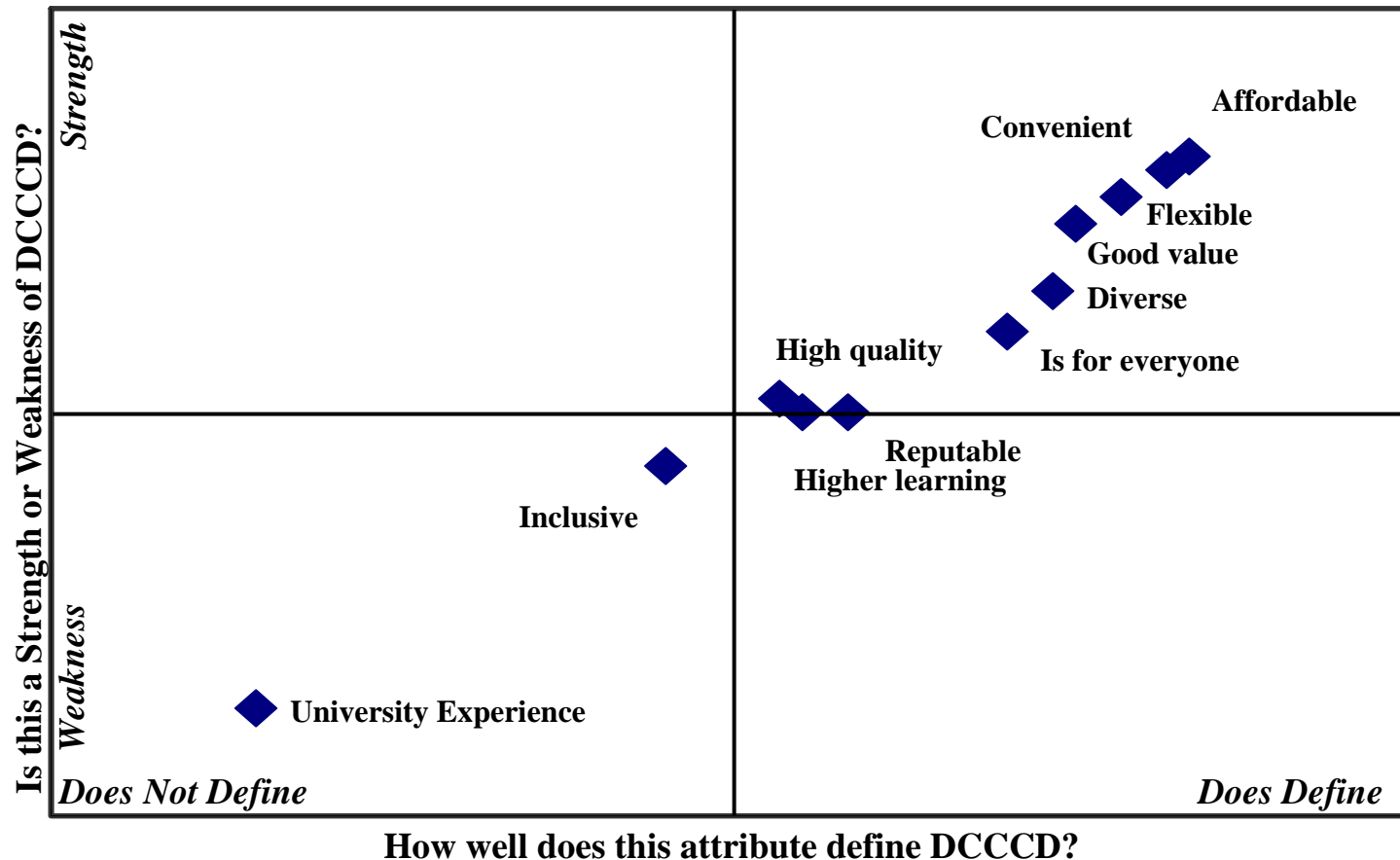
Executive Summary

Brand Equity & Image

- More than half of the students cited the cost of education at Dallas County Community Colleges as being much better than that at other educational institutions. Fifty-six percent of the non-Students felt that the cost of education at DCCCD was much better than that at Private Colleges and Universities and 26% noted that the cost was much better than State schools.
- Both students and non-students stated that faculty and campuses at DCCCD were at parity with Private and State Colleges and Universities, although slightly better than those at Technical and Vocational schools.

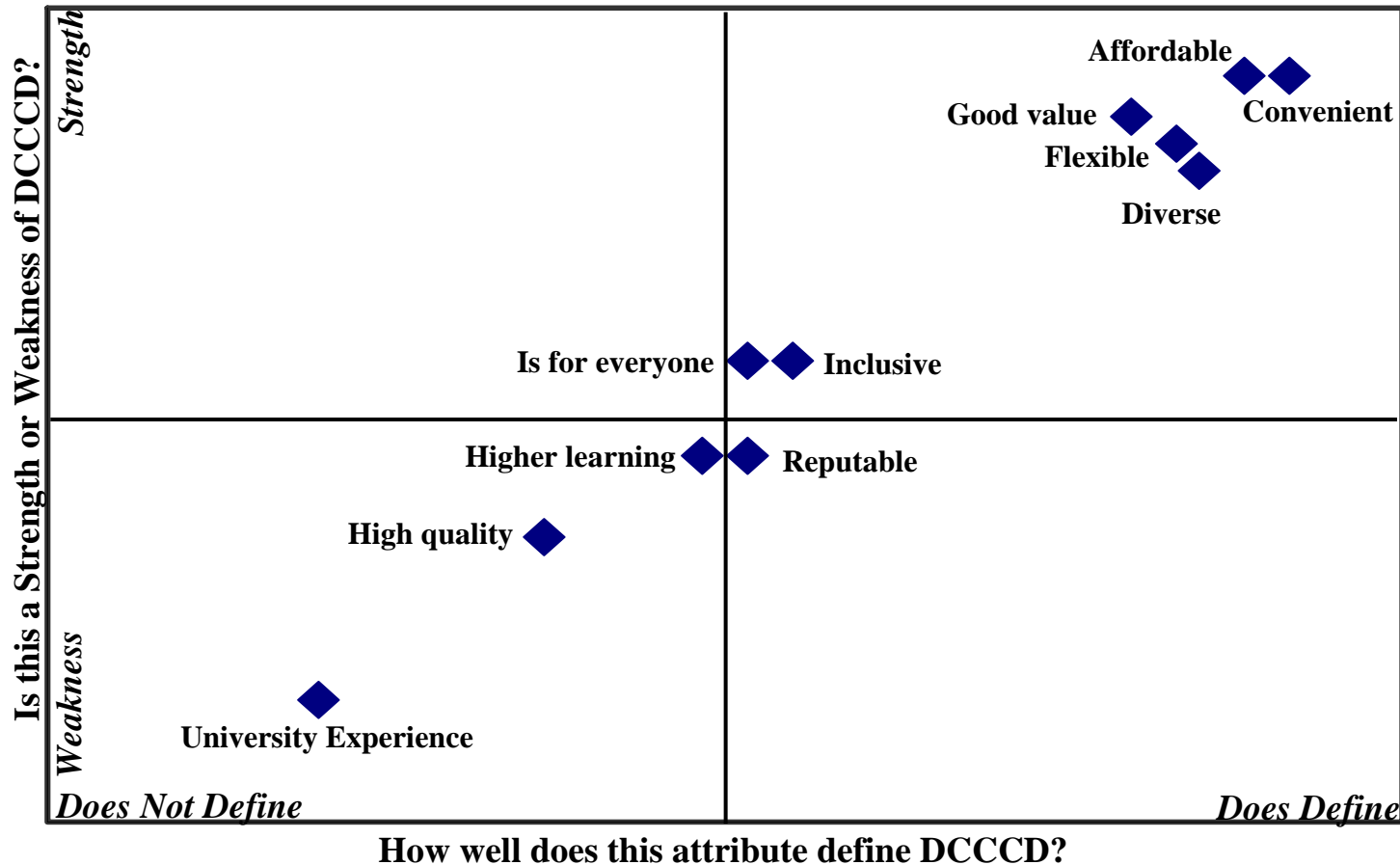
Quadrant Analysis – Perceptual Map for Students

The Students noted the predominant strengths of Dallas County Community College as being “affordable,” “convenient,” “good value,” “flexible,” “diverse,” “is for everyone,” and “high quality.” Weaknesses were defined as “university experience” and “inclusive”.



Quadrant Analysis – Perceptual Map for Non-Students

The Non-Students cited the predominant strengths of Dallas County Community College as being “affordable,” “convenient,” “good value,” “flexible,” “diverse,” “inclusive” and “is for everyone.” Weaknesses were defined as “university experience,” “high quality” and “higher learning.”



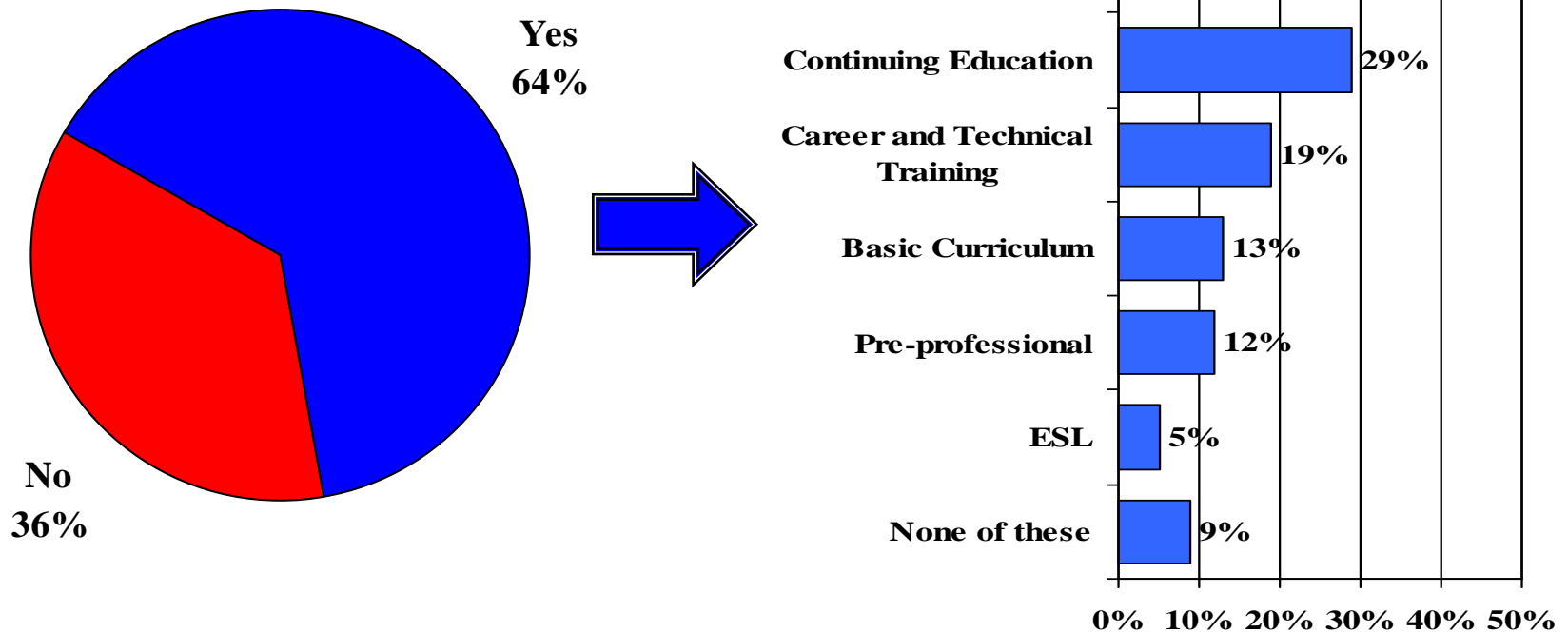
Executive Summary

Future Enrollment

- Almost two-thirds of the non-students have considered taking courses in the future. Most would opt to take either online offerings (29%) or continuing education classes (29%).
- More than 40% of the non-students were at least “likely” to enroll in State Colleges and Universities, or Community Colleges. Fifteen percent were “extremely likely” to enroll at DCCCD in the future and 35% would be at least “very likely.”
- Half of both students and non-students have siblings that have attended college. Over one-third have a mother or father who have done so.
- Over 65% of the students and 58% of the non-students stated that family members have been at least “somewhat involved” in their decision to take future courses. Less than 30% cited “no involvement” by family members in the decision.

Types of Courses Non-Students Considered Taking

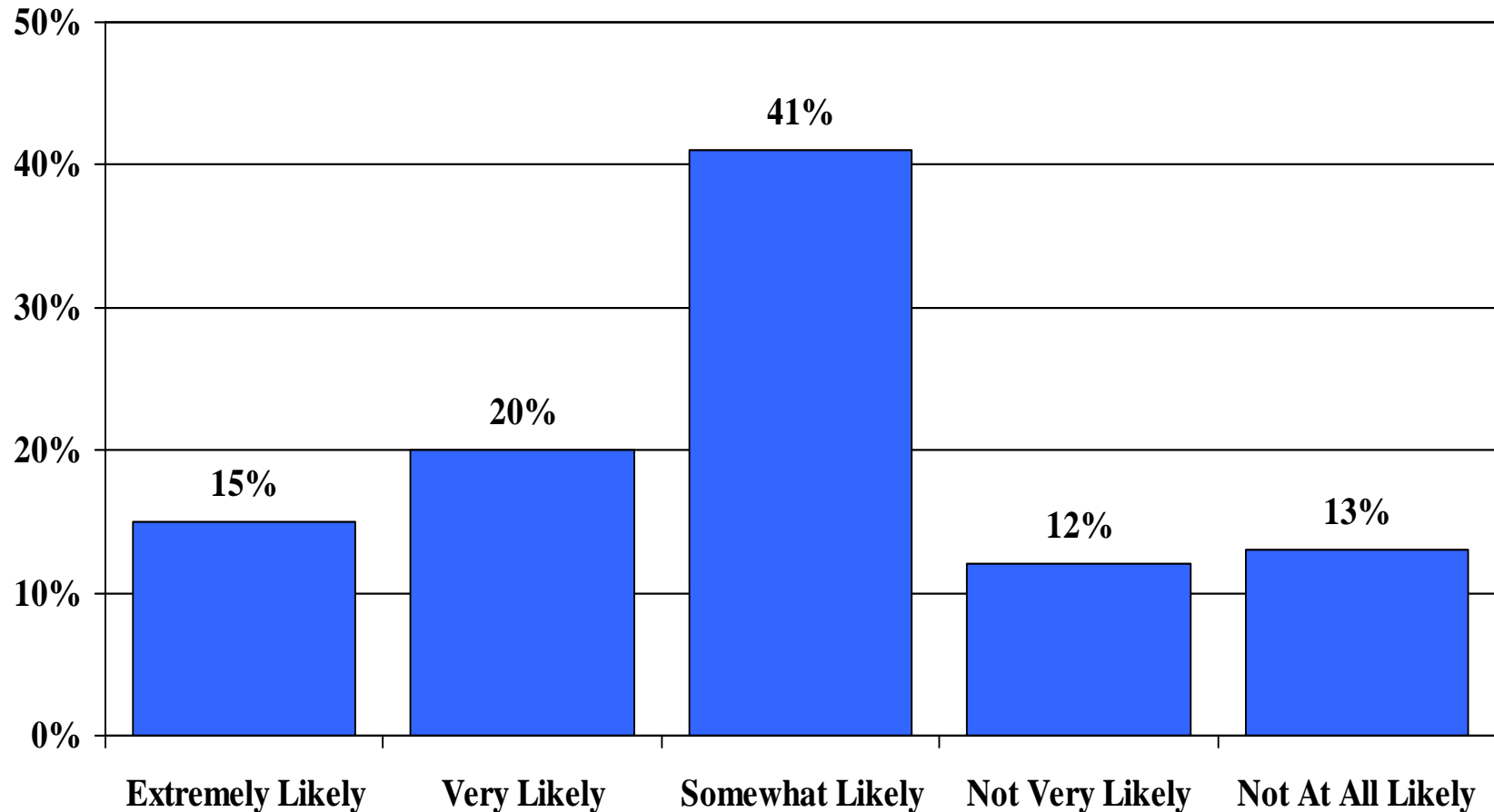
Almost two-thirds of the Non-Students have considered taking courses in the future. More than half would opt to select either online courses or continuing education and workforce training. A significantly greater percent of African-Americans and Hispanics would pursue continuous education, Hispanics would take basic curriculum, African-Americans would pursue pre-professional courses and Other ethnicities would elect to enroll in career and technical training classes.



Q44NS. Have you considered taking any types of college credit courses or continuing ed. courses in the future? Q45NS. Which of the following types of courses have you considered taking? Base = 369

Non-Student Likelihood to Enroll at DCCCD

More than one-third of the non-students would be at least very likely to enroll at DCCC in the future. A significantly greater percent of African-Americans would be extremely likely to attend as compared to Hispanic non-students.



Q49NS. If you were to decide to enroll in college courses, how likely would you be to consider enrolling in a Dallas County Community College? Base = 577

Executive Summary

Student Satisfaction

- Student satisfaction was highest (92%) with regard to the affordability of their education. They also gave high marks for the variety and quality of courses (83%) and the quality of the faculty (81%). Female students, Non-Caucasians, and those 35 to 64 years of age had a **significantly** higher level of satisfaction with most of the factors evaluated, as compared to their counterparts.
- Seventy percent of students prefer to take courses on campus; one-third also prefer online classes. A **significantly** greater percent of females and African-Americans would prefer to take online courses.
- Almost half of the students have communicated with an Advisor during the current school semester. A **significantly** greater percent of younger students (18 to 34) and both Hispanics and African-Americans have done so.

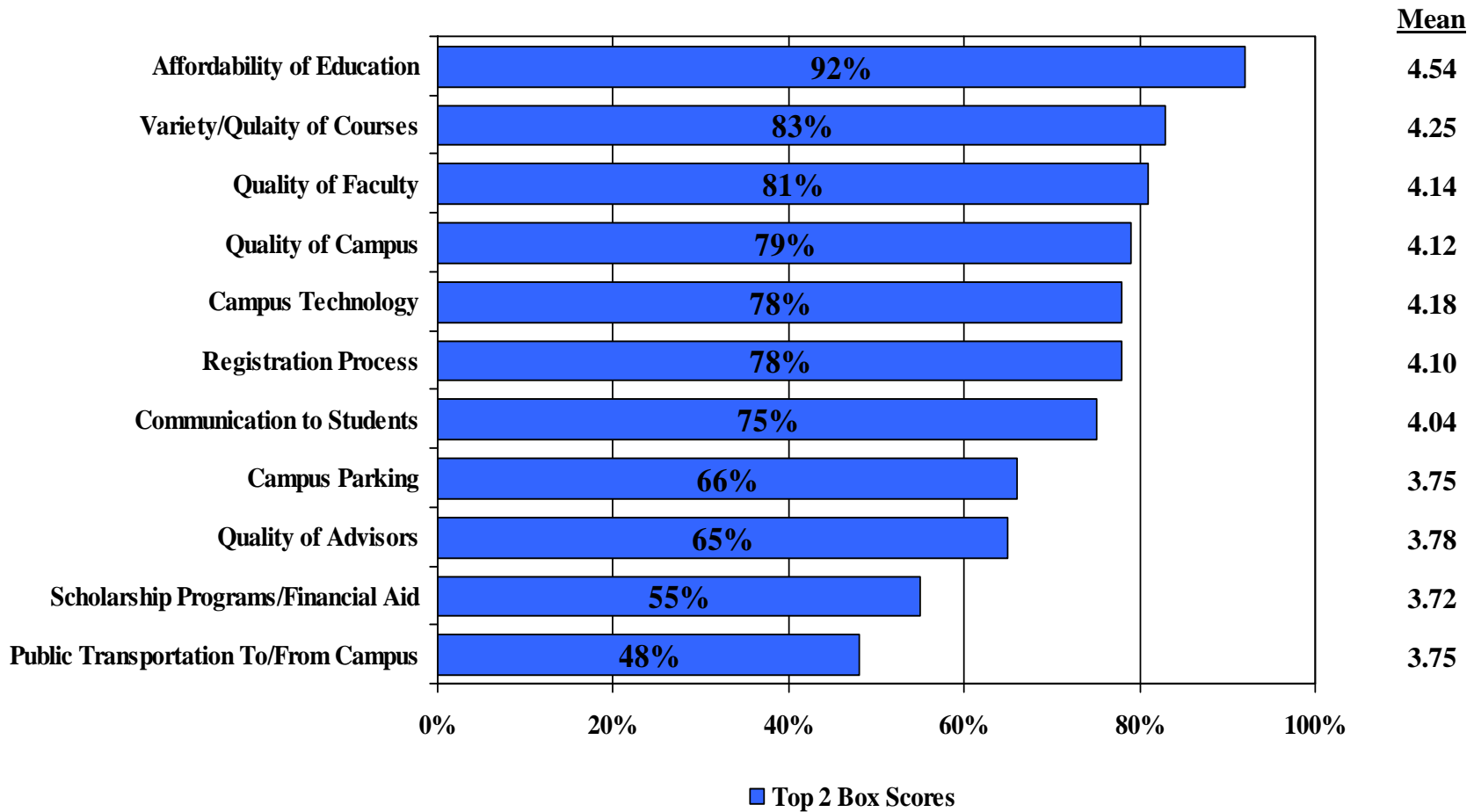
Executive Summary

Student Satisfaction

- Approximately 30% of the students felt that there was nothing else that Dallas County Community Colleges could do to provide a better college experience. However, an additional 20% felt that the school need more effective, friendly and helpful faculty and advisors.

Student Level of Satisfaction with DCCCD

Student satisfaction was highest with regard to affordability, variety and quality of courses, and the quality of the faculty. In particular, students who were female, 35 to 64 years of age and Non-Caucasian had a significantly higher level of satisfaction for most of the factors.

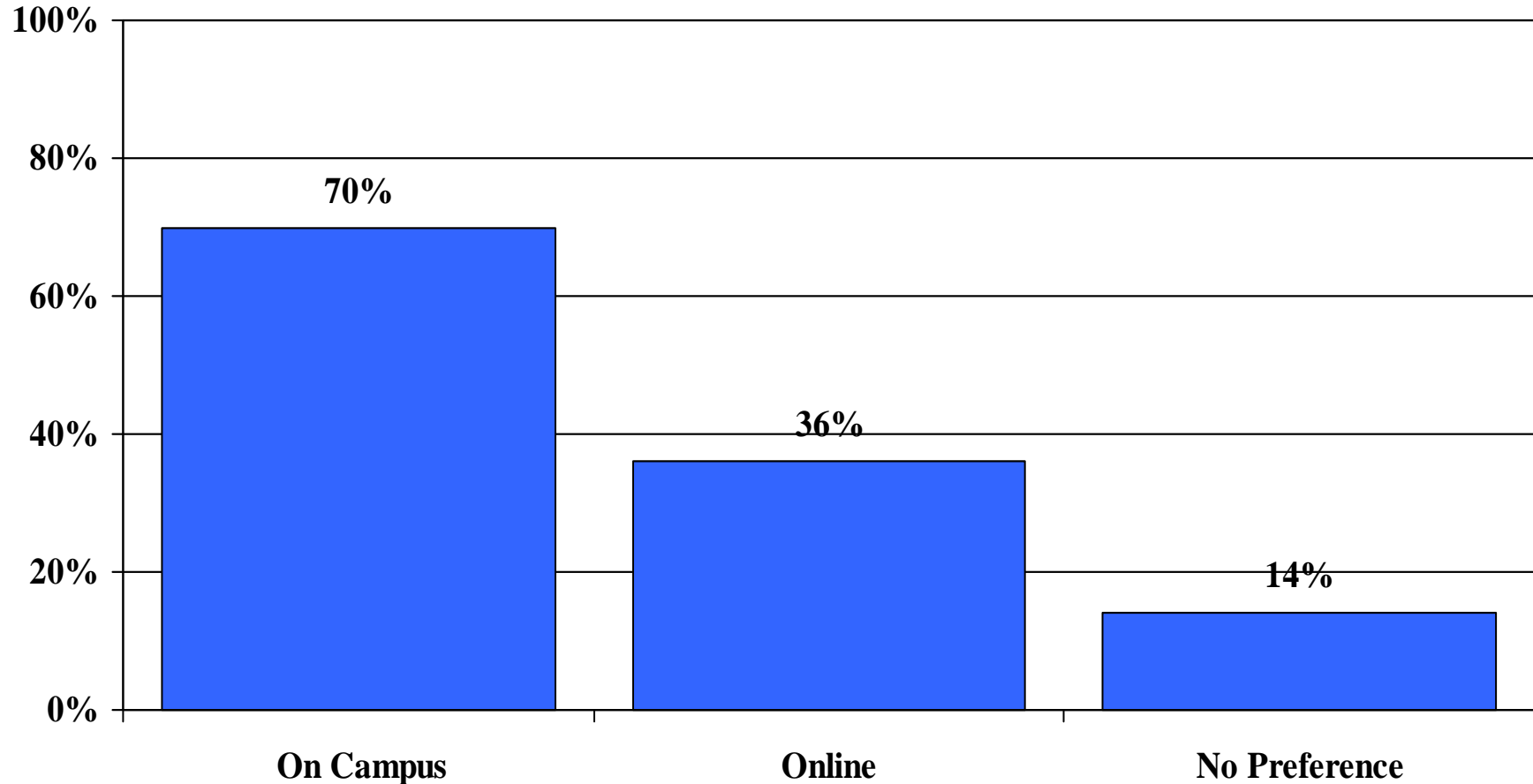


Q41S. How would you rate your level of satisfaction with Dallas County Community Colleges on...?

Base = 458

Student Preference for Taking Courses

The majority of students prefer to take courses on campus although one-third also prefer to take courses online. A significantly greater percent of Females and African-American students would prefer to take online courses.



Q42S. How would you prefer to take courses at Dallas County Community College?

Base = 456



Strategic Considerations



Strategic Considerations

Perceived Shortcomings of DCCCD

1. **Analysis of brand image and equity information suggests that DCCCD needs to develop appropriate strategies and tactics to address the perceived shortcomings of the institution in an effort to optimize future enrollment.**
 - ❑ Non-students view DCCCD as an institution that **lacks the high quality** that larger colleges/universities exhibit. However, once enrolled and familiar with what DCCCD has to offer, students cite “high quality” as a strength. Hence, advertising and promotional efforts need to be undertaken to communicate the “quality” message to non-students as a motivator to enroll in the school.
 - ❑ Students and non-students agree that DCCCD does not offer its enrollees a **“university experience,”** nor is it **“inclusive in nature.”** An all-inclusive, university experience may never be completely possible due to the inherent nature of a community college. However, a concerted effort needs to be made to evaluate and enhance college services and activities that would ultimately promote a better persona of “higher learning.”

Strategic Considerations

Incremental Growth

2. **DCCCD needs to target unpopulated zip codes within Dallas County as a potential source for incremental student growth.**
 - Approximately 60% of the Dallas County zip codes used in this study as sample for non-students are residential in nature; the remaining 40% are currently unpopulated. These unpopulated or non-residential areas are comprised corporations, business parks and warehouse districts.
 - Since employees routinely enjoy attending college or university classes near their workplace at the end of the work day, DCCCD needs to actively canvas these zip codes for potential students. Consideration should be given to contacting Human Resource Departments in these particular businesses in an attempt to negotiate corporate alliances with DCCCD and promote enrollment.