
Florida State University PhD Completion Project Phase II

Nancy Marcus

*CGS Summer Workshop
July 2009*



The Graduate School

Florida State University

- Context
 - Research University (VH)
 - Liberal arts tradition
 - 25% of faculty in STEM fields
 - 8,370 graduate students
 - ~20% of student body
 - ~20% minorities
 - ~11% international
 - 73 doctoral programs
 - 2,309 advanced graduate (28%)
 - 368 PhDs (07-08); 36% increase from 03-04



Florida State University

- Decentralized Organization
 - The Graduate School
 - Enrollment targets
 - Dissertation checklists
 - University-wide fellowships
 - Professional development workshops
 - Responsible Conduct of Research
 - Admissions & Records
 - Demographics
 - Enrollment dates and status
 - Courses completed
 - Candidate for degree dates
 - Institutional Research
 - Retention and completion data updated annually for various cohorts (e.g. discipline, major, gender, ethnicity)
 - Departments and Colleges
 - Committee composition
 - Annual reviews
 - Required courses
 - Discipline specific milestones



Project Goals

- Increase PhD retention and completion by:
 - Developing and implementing a web-based system to track graduate student progress
 - Expanding the Professional Development Workshop Series
 - Develop a workshop for faculty focused on mentoring students
 - Assess the annual review process and recommend improvements
 - Conduct surveys to gain student feedback on their doctoral education, student services, and their experiences
 - Implement the e-mentoring service Mentornet



Evaluation

- Assess impact of interventions on doctoral retention and graduation
- Assess whether students who participate in activities (e.g. PFF, workshops) are more likely to advance to candidacy, graduate in a timely fashion and place effectively
- Assess whether participants in faculty training programs are more likely to have students graduate and place effectively

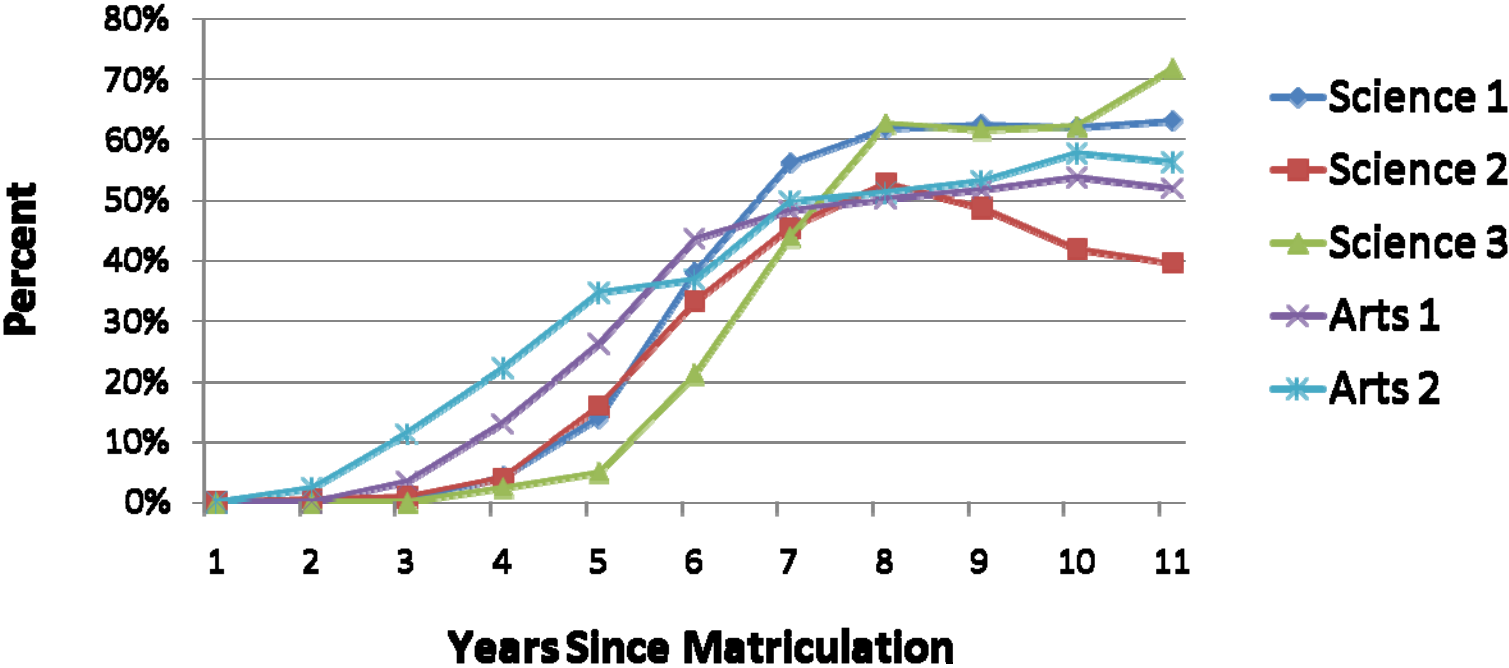


Other Project Responsibilities

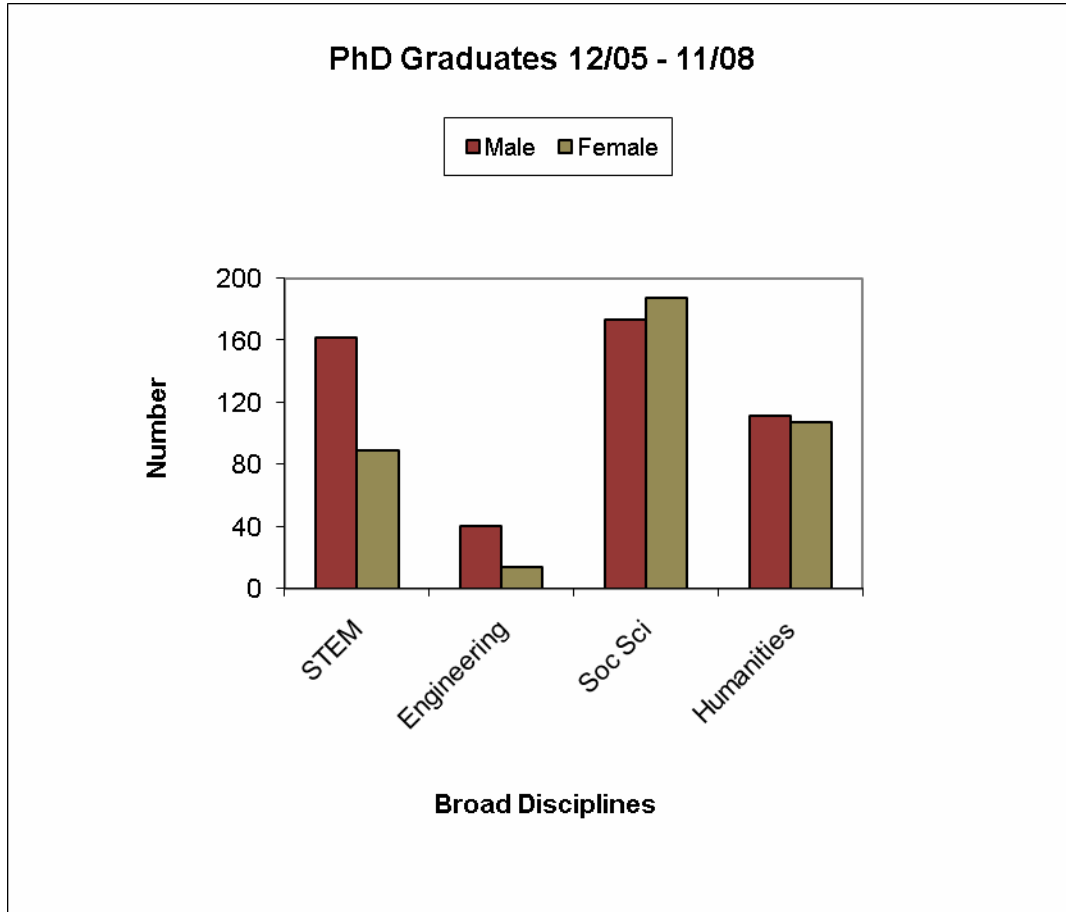
- Send data to CGS
 - Retention and completion data
 - PhD Exit Survey results
 - Administered as part of checklist for ETD and graduation clearance
 - Survey of “PhD completers”



Graduation Rate



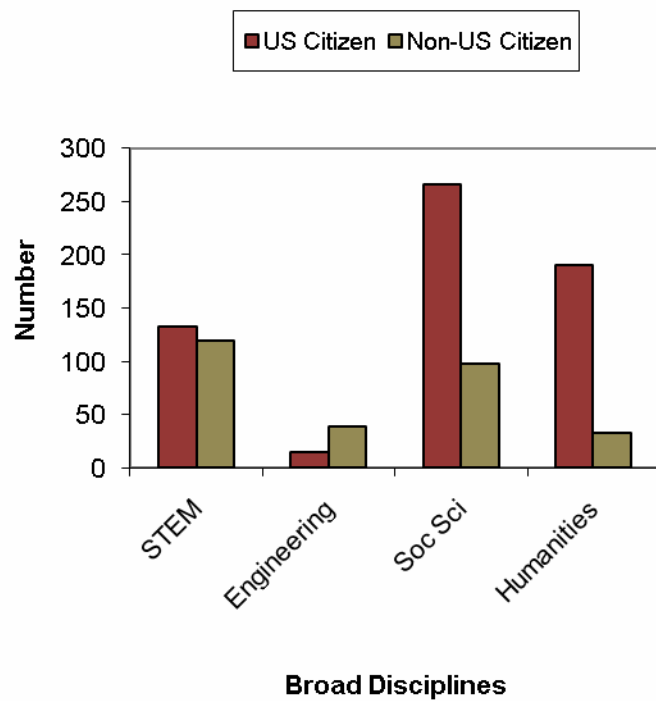
PhD Exit Survey



Male	Female
486	397
56%	48%



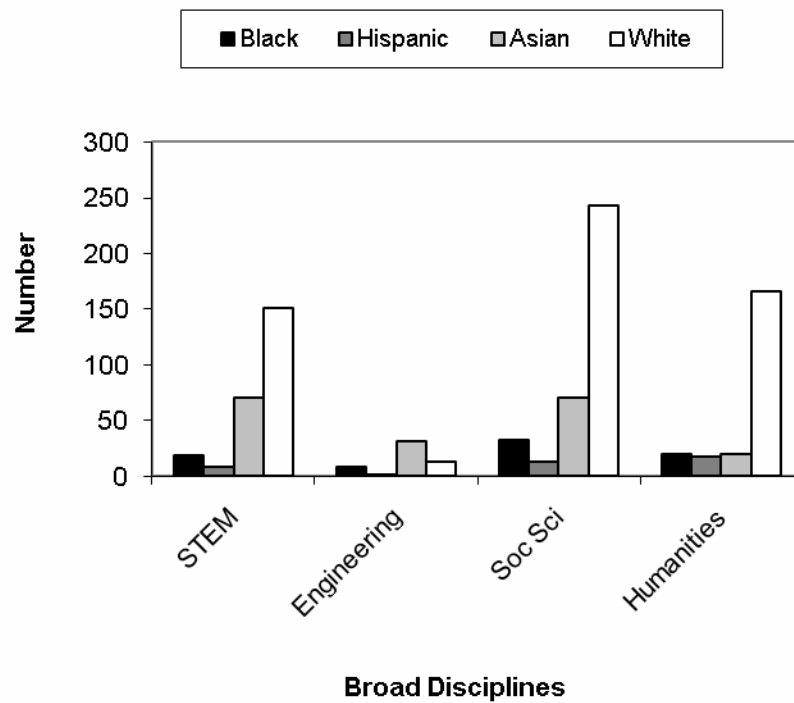
PhD Graduates 12/05 - 11/08



US	Non-US
603	287
67%	33%



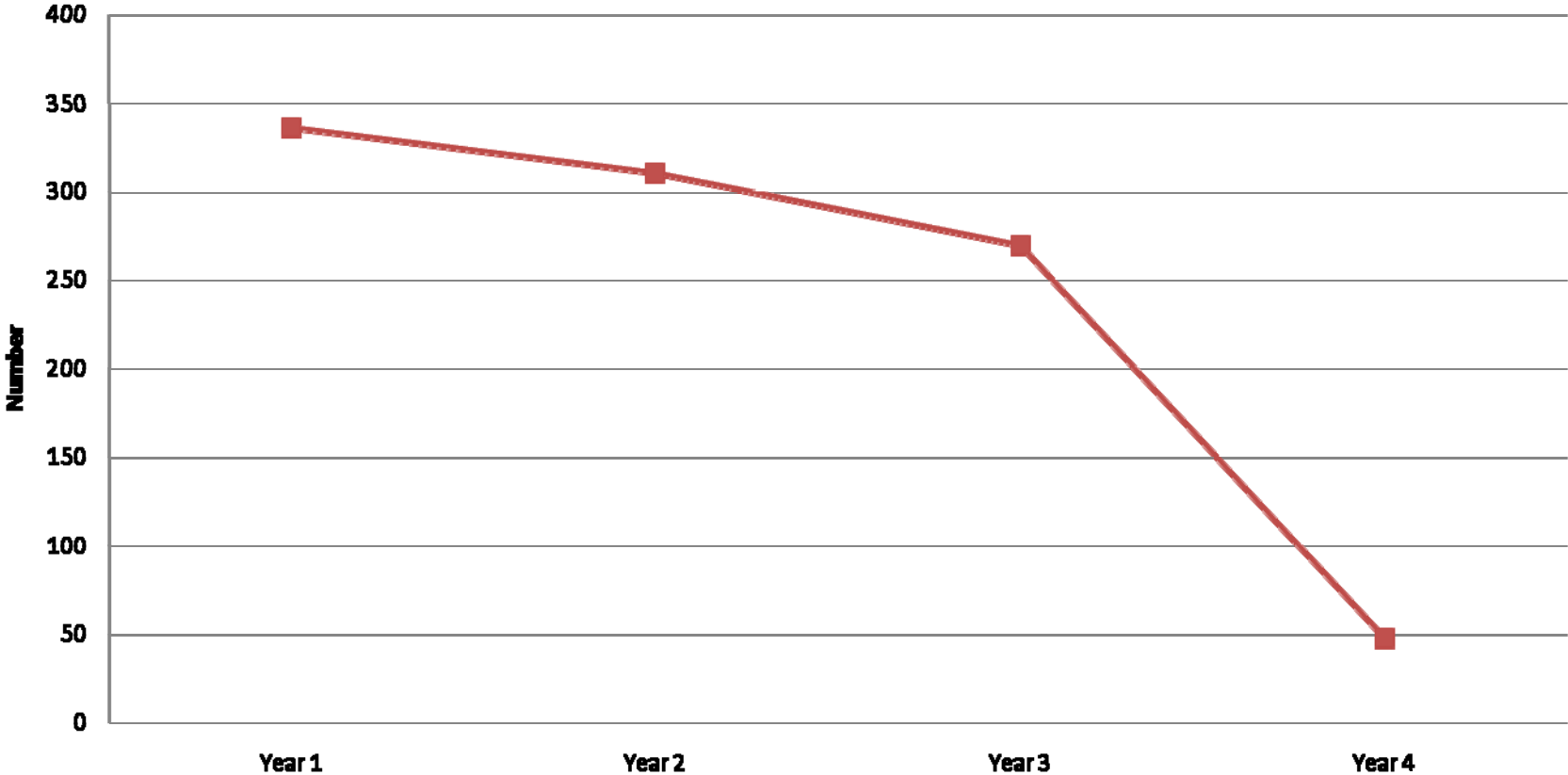
PhD Graduates 12/05 - 11/08



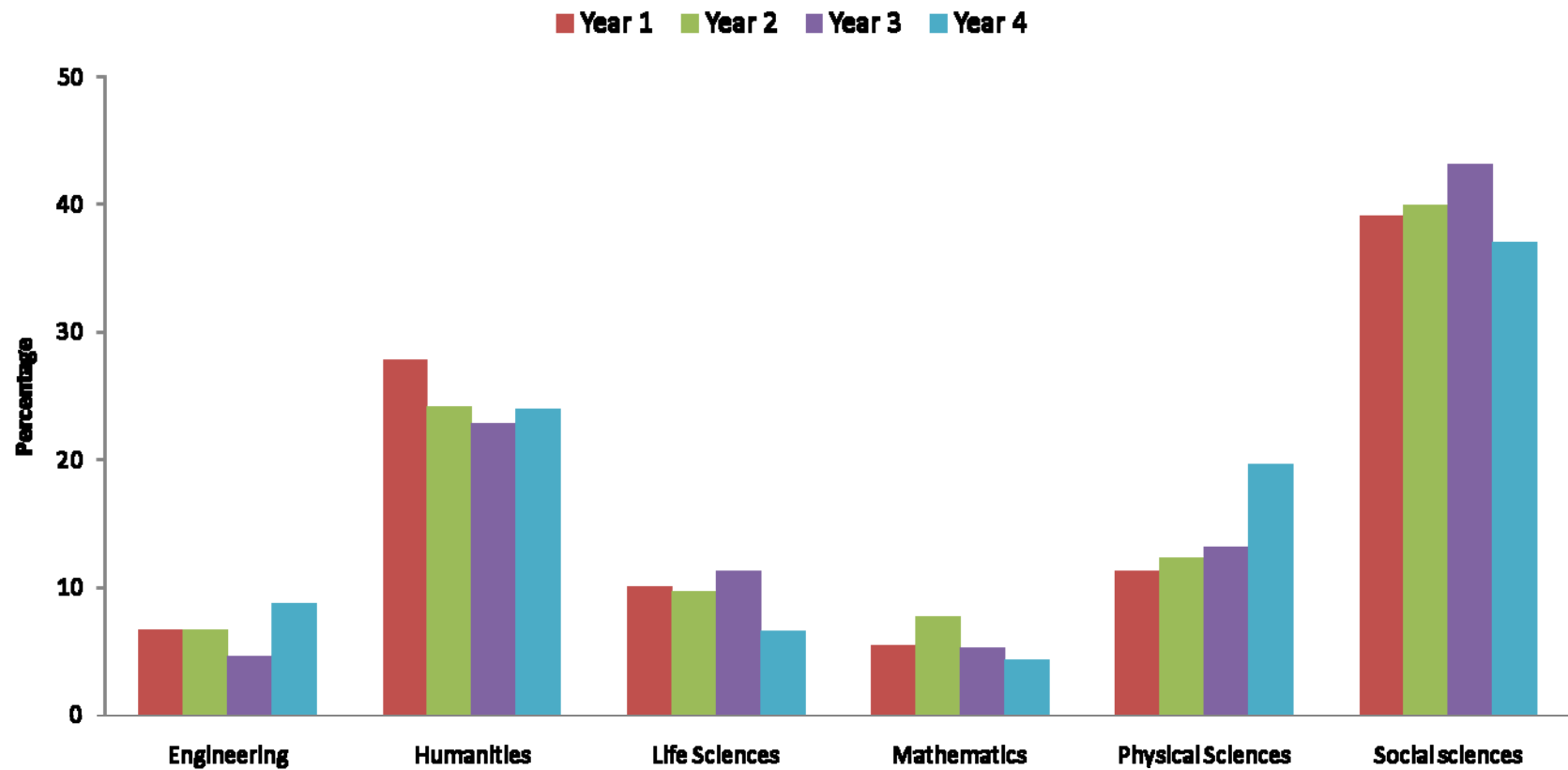
Black	78	9%
Hispanic	39	4%
Asian	190	22%
White	572	65%



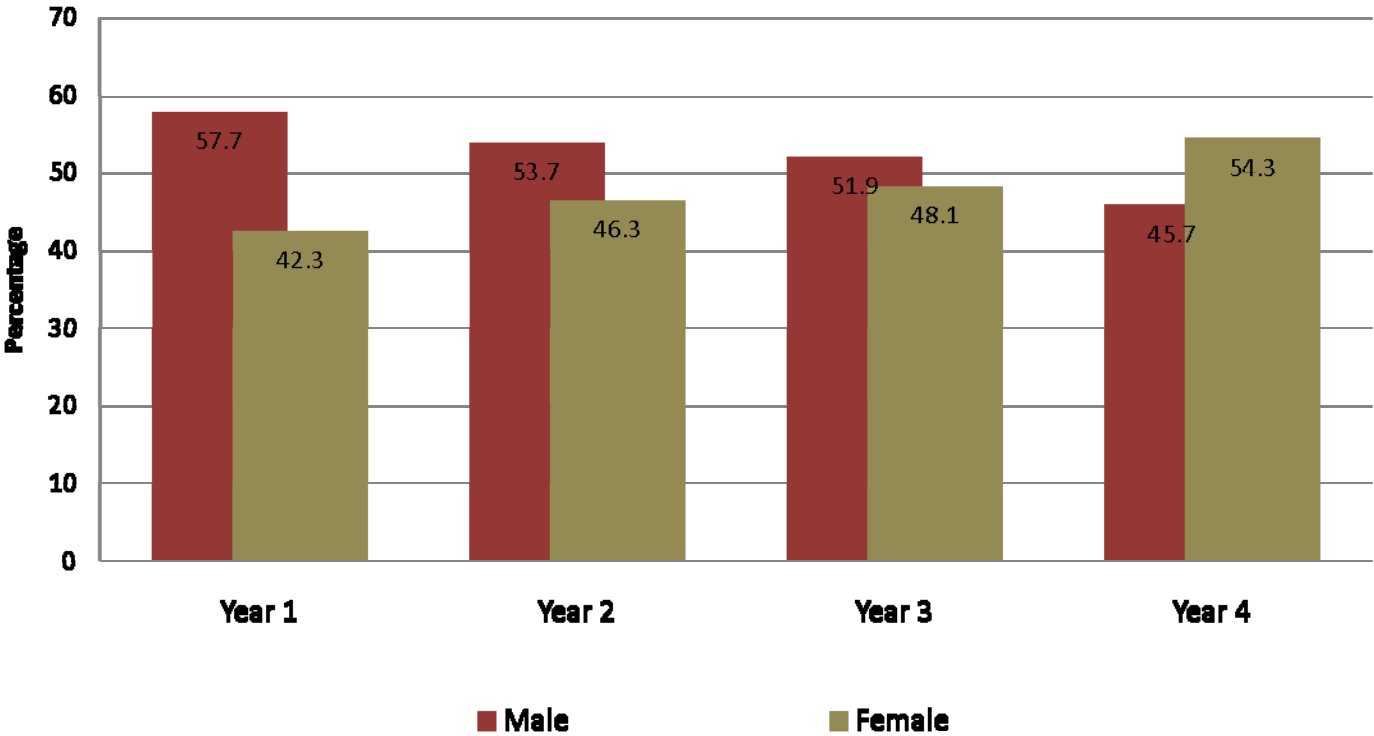
Number of responses



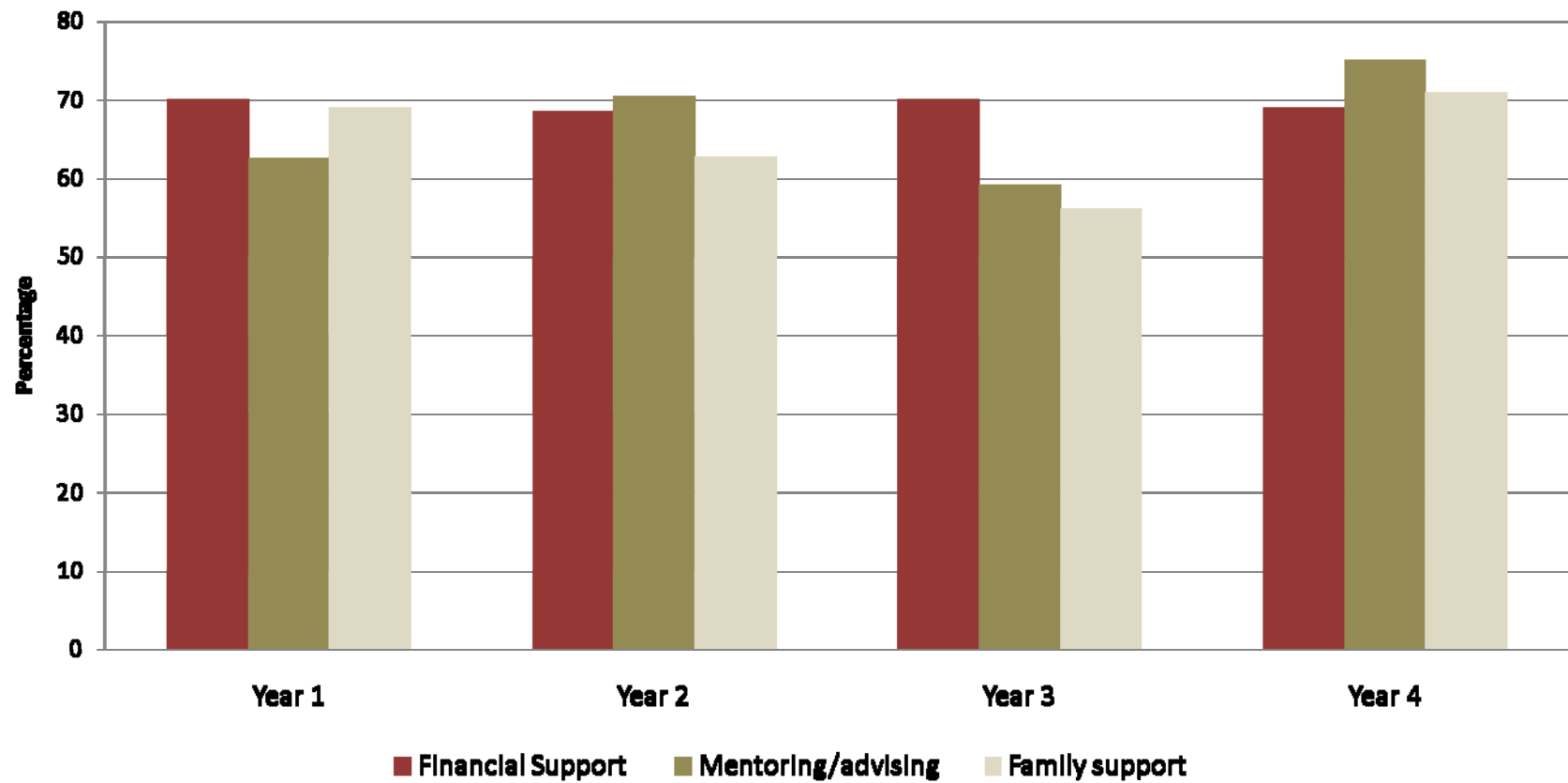
% Response by broad discipline



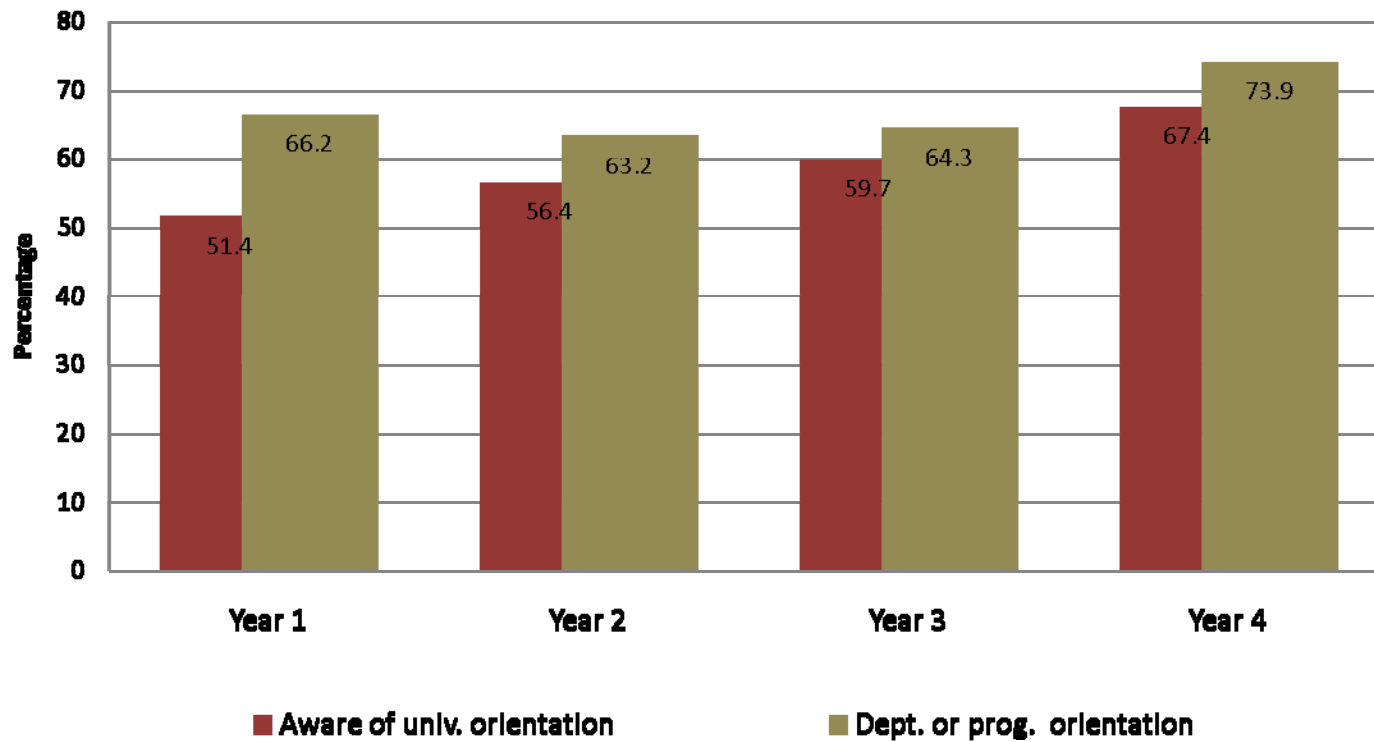
Gender



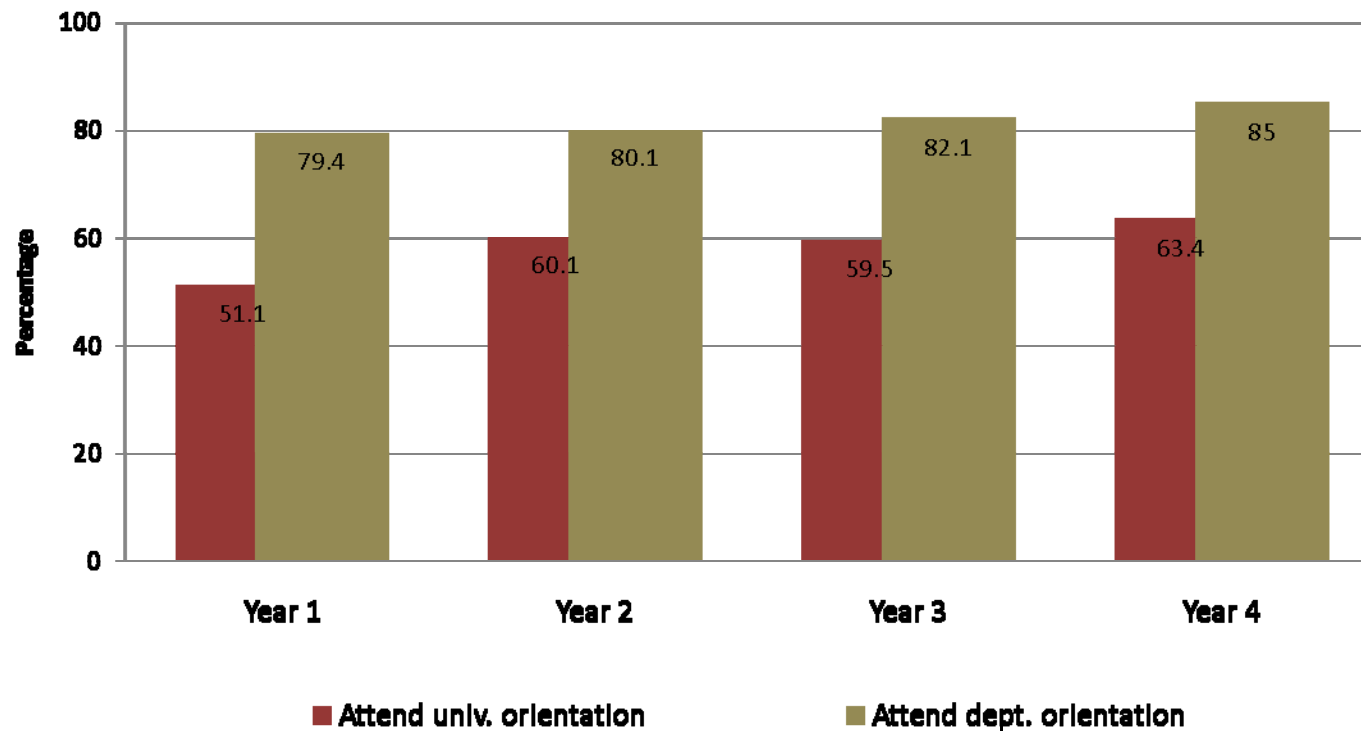
Main factors contributing to completion



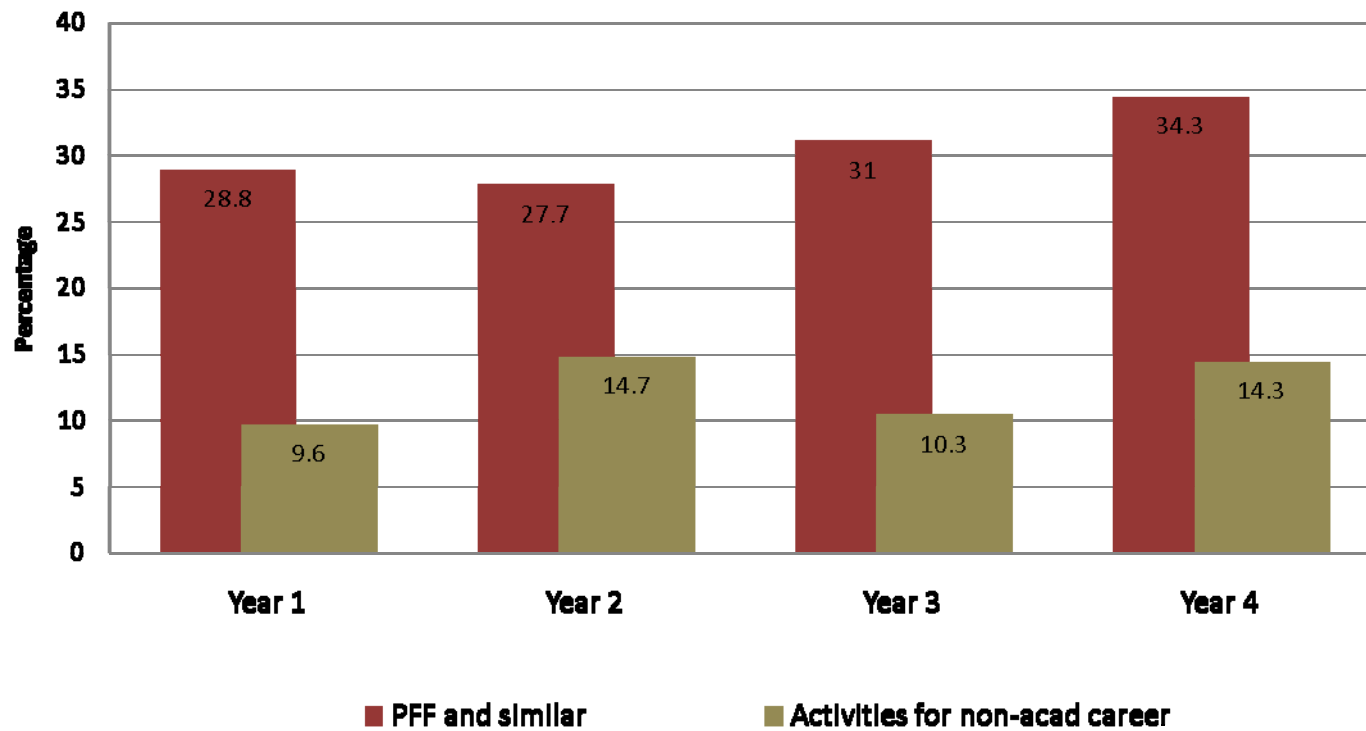
Aware of orientation



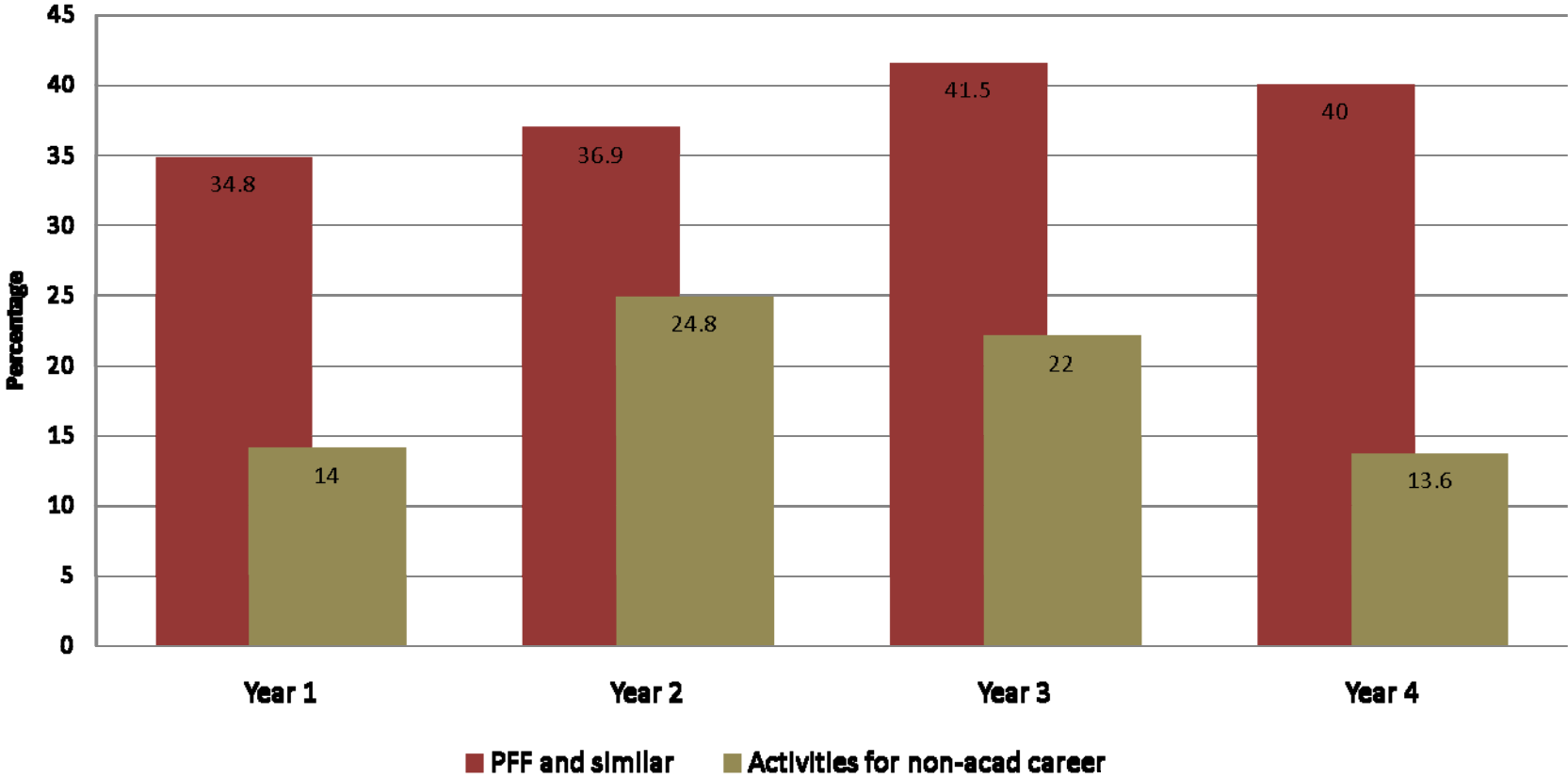
Attend orientation

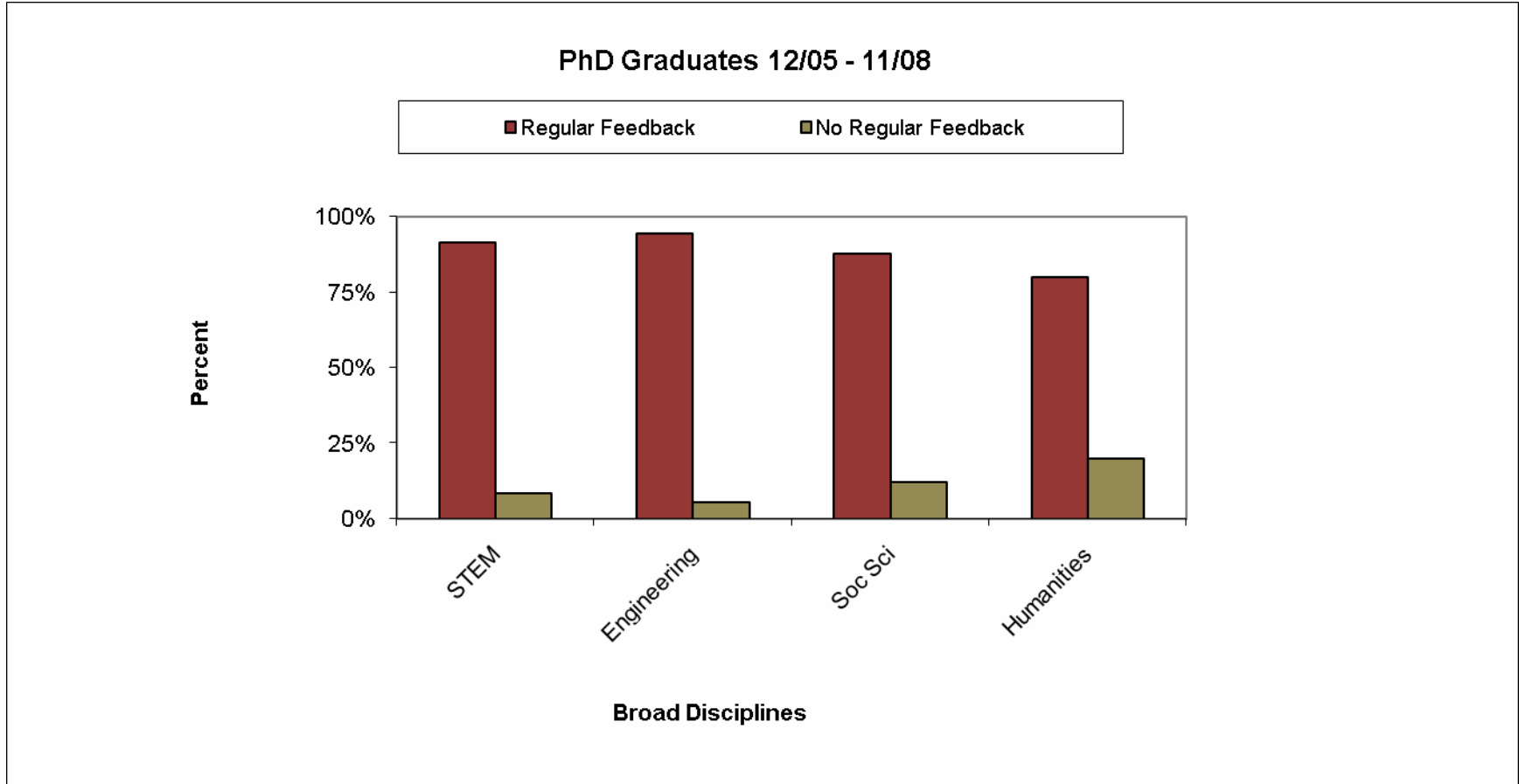


Participated in

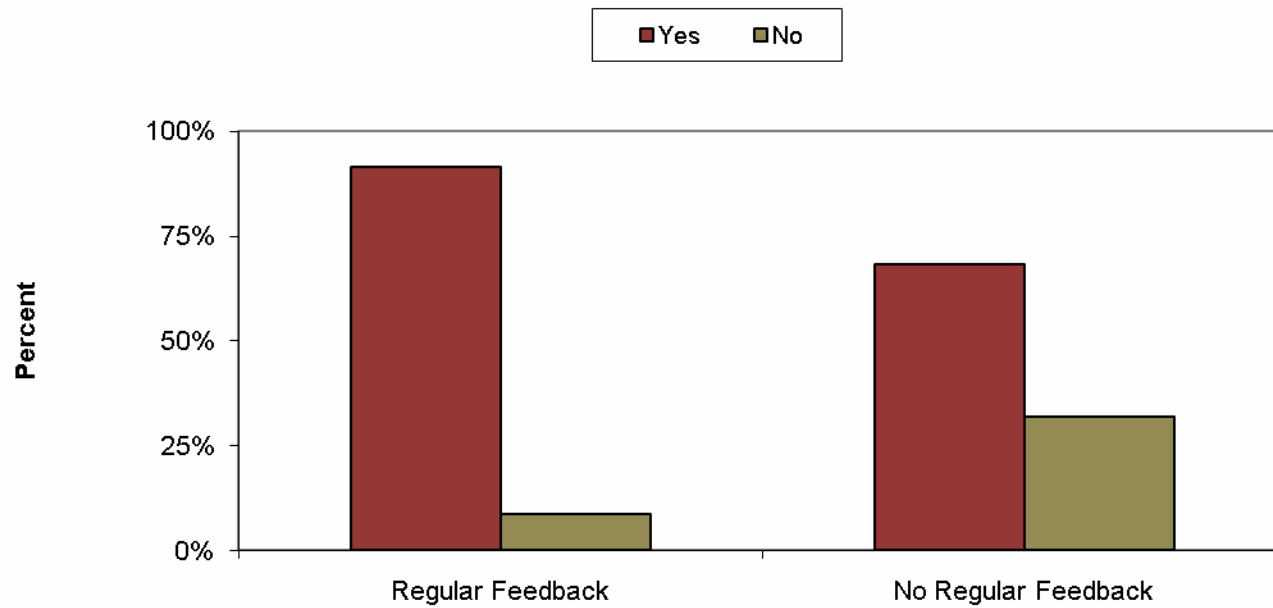


Useful? Yes





Were the requirements of your program presented to you in clear written form?



“non-completers”

Methodology

- Define the “non-completer”
 - Not registered for more than 2 consecutive semesters
- Develop a cover letter; online survey; phone script
 - To identify obstacles to completion and reduce attrition
- Received IRB approval November 2008
- Spring 2009 contacted 26 students



“non-completers”

Results

- 12 doctoral students were reached
- 2 completed the survey
- None wanted to be contacted by phone



“non-completers”

Next steps

- Expand to include other degree programs
- Identify and contact non-completers sooner
- Currently we have identified 33 additional students who we will be contacting by email



The Future

- Evaluating responses of the PhD exit survey on the basis of demographic and disciplinary categories

