

The Transfer Transition

*The Development and Outcomes
of the 2005 UCLA
Transfer Student Survey*

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Background & Purpose

- The number of community college students transferring to public institutions in CA grew an average of 5.5% annually between 1999 and 2005.
- The number of transfers at UCLA has also grown & represents the institutions with the highest proportion of transfer students in the UC system
 - Fall 1995: 2,194 transfers
 - Fall 2005: 3,150 transfers (over 40% of new students)
- Enhancing support for transfer students is part of the Student Affairs strategic plan
- Understanding of source of transfer students' challenges is critical to the support of these students

Survey Development

- Needed baseline data
- Reviewed other national and institutional surveys dedicated to community college students and transfers:
 - CCSSE
 - Transfer Student Questionnaire (TSQ) at Iowa State
 - Making a Successful Transfer (MAST) at Ball State
- Interest in comparability to data collected on direct-entry student population
- Requested permission from HERI to adapt the CIRP Freshman Survey to the perspective of transfers.
- Further developed with input from colleagues in Student Affairs and The UCLA College.

Transfer Student Survey-Content

- Demographics
- Family Characteristics
- Self-Concept
- Academic Background
- Past Behaviors & Time Allocation
- Reasons for Going to College
- Financial Concerns
- Expectations for College
- Anticipated Living Situation
- Educational Aspirations

Administration & Response Rate

- 2005 Transfer Student Survey (TSS)
 - On-line administration
 - First 3 weeks of Fall Quarter
 - 1,140 transfer student respondents
 - 42% response rate
- 2005 CIRP Freshman Survey (CIRP)
 - Paper administration
 - During Orientation
 - 2,874 respondents who entered directly from HS
 - 65% response rate

Categories of 2005 TSS Findings

- Personal Background
- Academic Background
- Financial Status & Employment
- Plans for UCLA & Beyond
- Student Responses to Open-Ended Questions

Section 1:

Summary of Findings on Personal Background

Demographic Data

- UCLA transfers and direct-entry students tend to start college at a traditional age (18-20 years old).
- Transfer to UCLA appears to be a path of access for lower-SES students more than for under-represented racial & ethnic groups.
 - Few significant differences in the racial/ethnic composition of transfers & direct-entry students
 - Transfers tend to have greater financial concerns than direct-entry students

High Domestic Demands Among Transfer Students

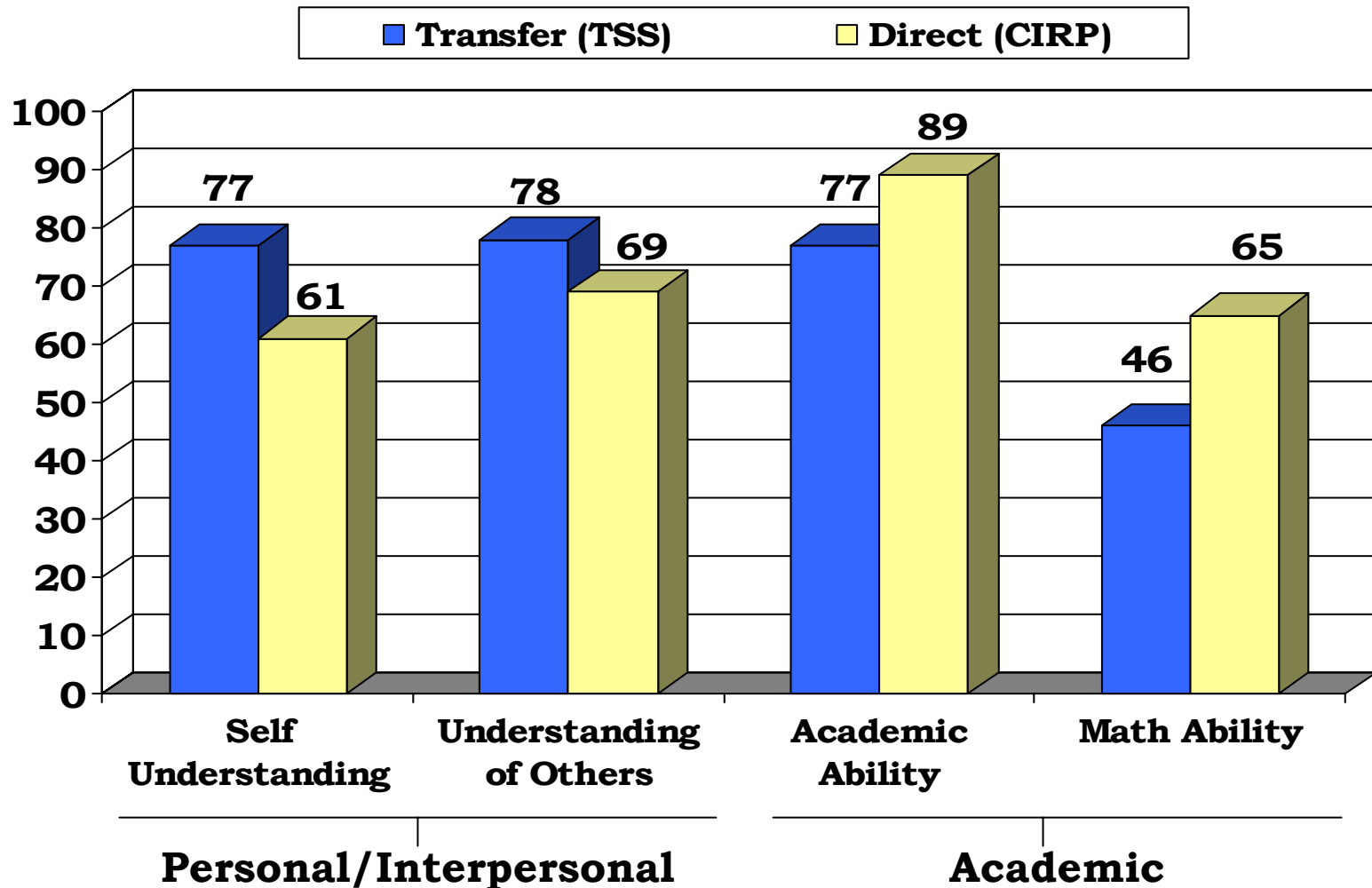
| Domestic Issues | % of TSS |
|--|-----------------|
| Married or living with partner | 11 |
| Have dependent children | 4 |
| Plan to live with family or other relatives | 22 |
| Missed Class due to family responsibilities | 38 |
| Spent 3+ hours a week on household/childcare duties | 35 |
| Spent 3+ hours a week on other family responsibilities | 41 |

Moderate Levels of Health & Wellness Among Transfers

| Indicators of Health and Wellness During the Past Year | % of TSS |
|---|-----------------|
| Drank beer, wine or liquor | 62 |
| Spent 3+ hours per week exercising or playing sports | 55 |
| Frequently felt overwhelmed by all I had to do | 25 |
| Frequently felt depressed | 11 |
| Sought consultation for a mental health condition | 9 |
| Smoked cigarettes | 8 |
| Took prescribed medication for a mental health condition | 6 |

Different Conceptions of Abilities & Self-Concept

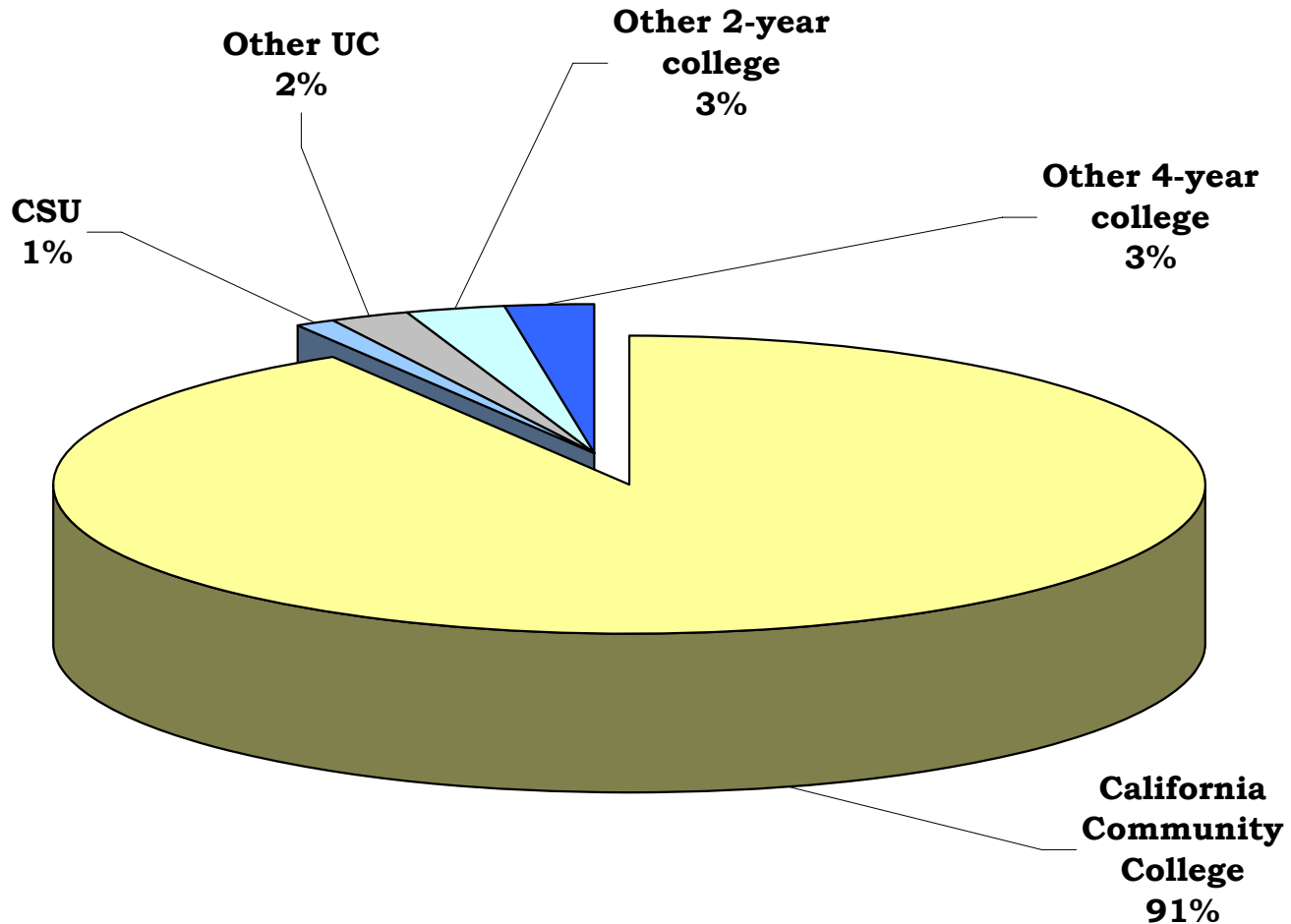
% of students rating themselves at least “above average” in:



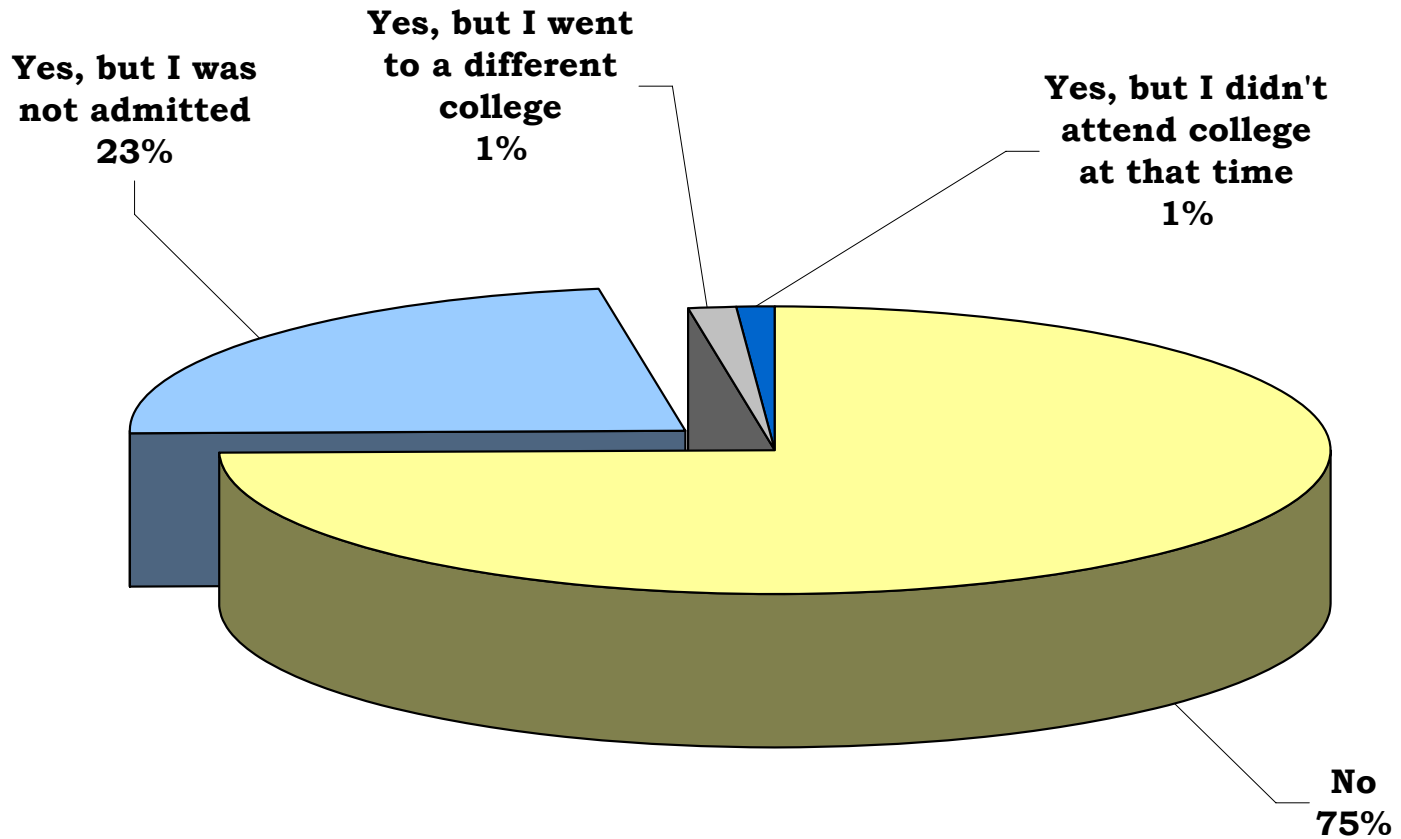
Section 2:

Summary of Findings on Academic Background

Most TSS Respondents Come from CA Community Colleges



25% of TSS Respondents Previously Applied to UCLA



“Very Important” Reasons for Going to College

| Top 5 reason for attending college: | Transfer (TSS) | Direct (CIRP) |
|--|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Learn more about things that interest me | 85% | 84% |
| Gain a general education & appreciation of ideas | 80% | 73% |
| To prepare myself for graduate/ professional school | 77% | 76% |
| To be able to get a better job | 74% | 70% |
| To be able to make more money | 66% | 65% |

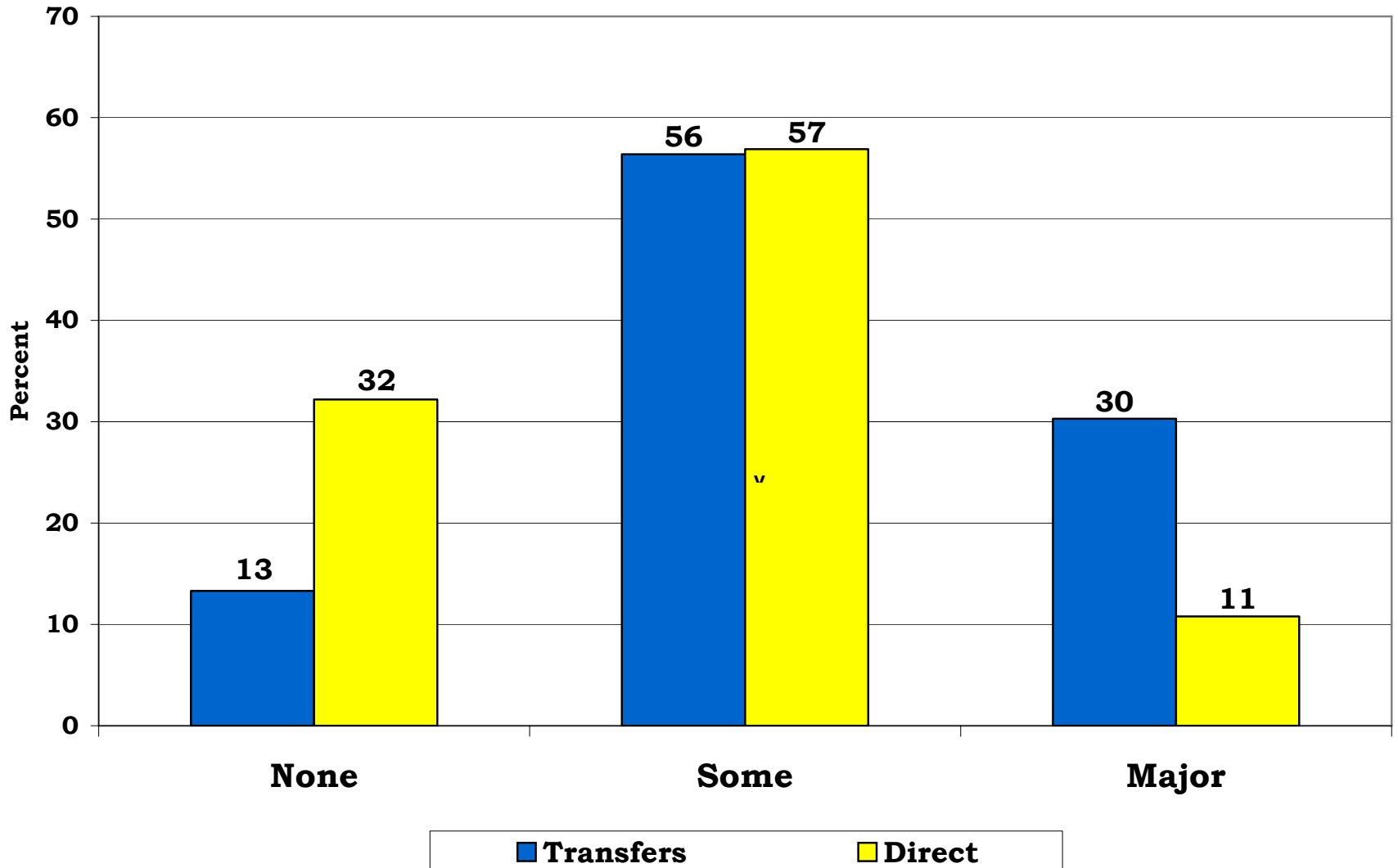
High Academic Performance & Preparation Among Transfers

- Transfer GPA is comparable to that of students who enter directly from high school
- 87% consulted with an academic advisor at their previous college about transferring
- Percent of transfers who feel that their coursework at the previous college where they took the most classes:
 - Developed critical & analytical skills 89%
 - Was intellectually challenging 86%
 - **Prepared me for UCLA's academic standards 85%**
 - Demanded extensive reading 73%
 - Demanded intensive writing assignments 73%

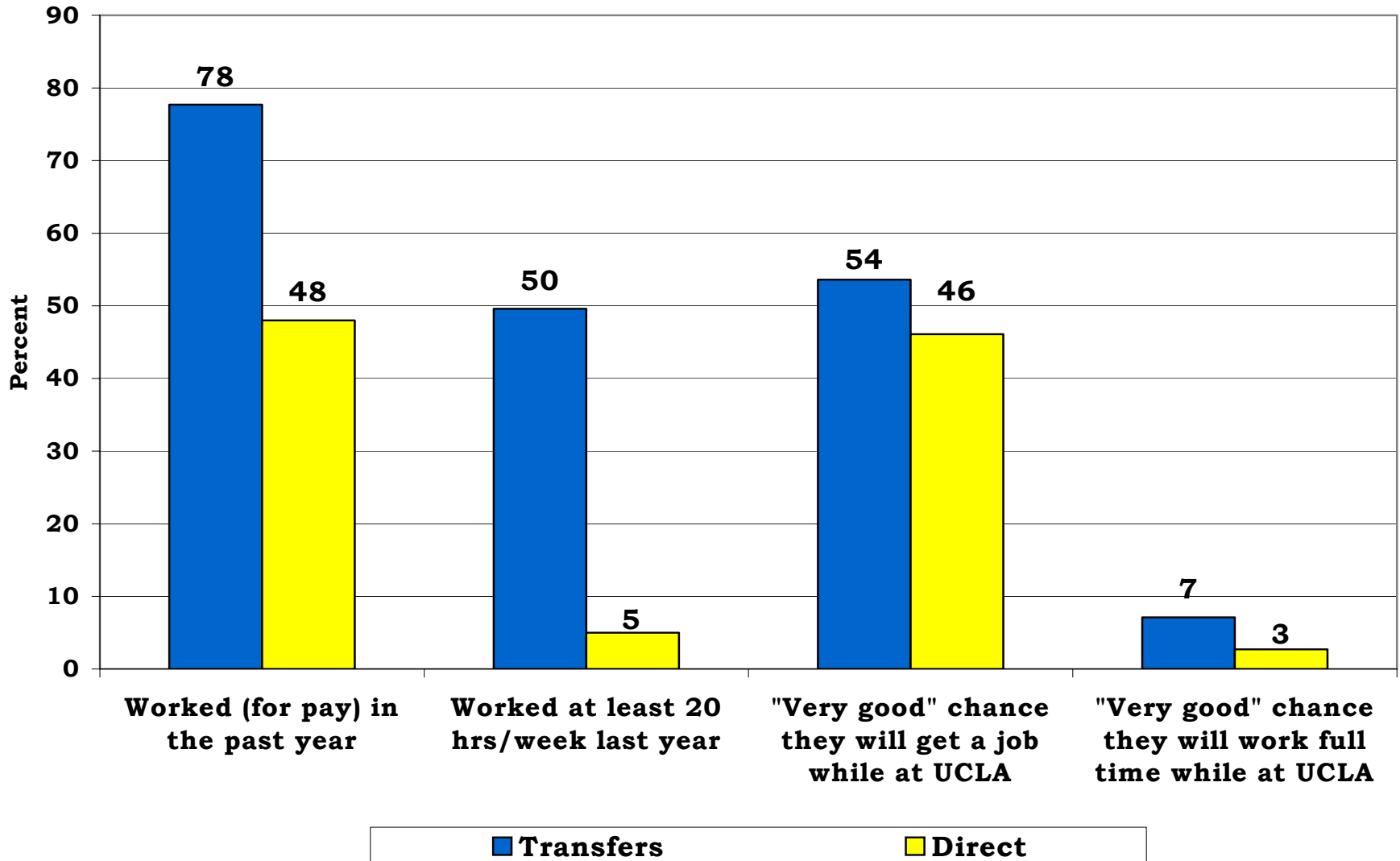
Section 3:

Summary of Findings on Financial Status & Employment

Financial Concerns Higher Among Transfer Students



Transfers Have Greater History & Expectations of Employment



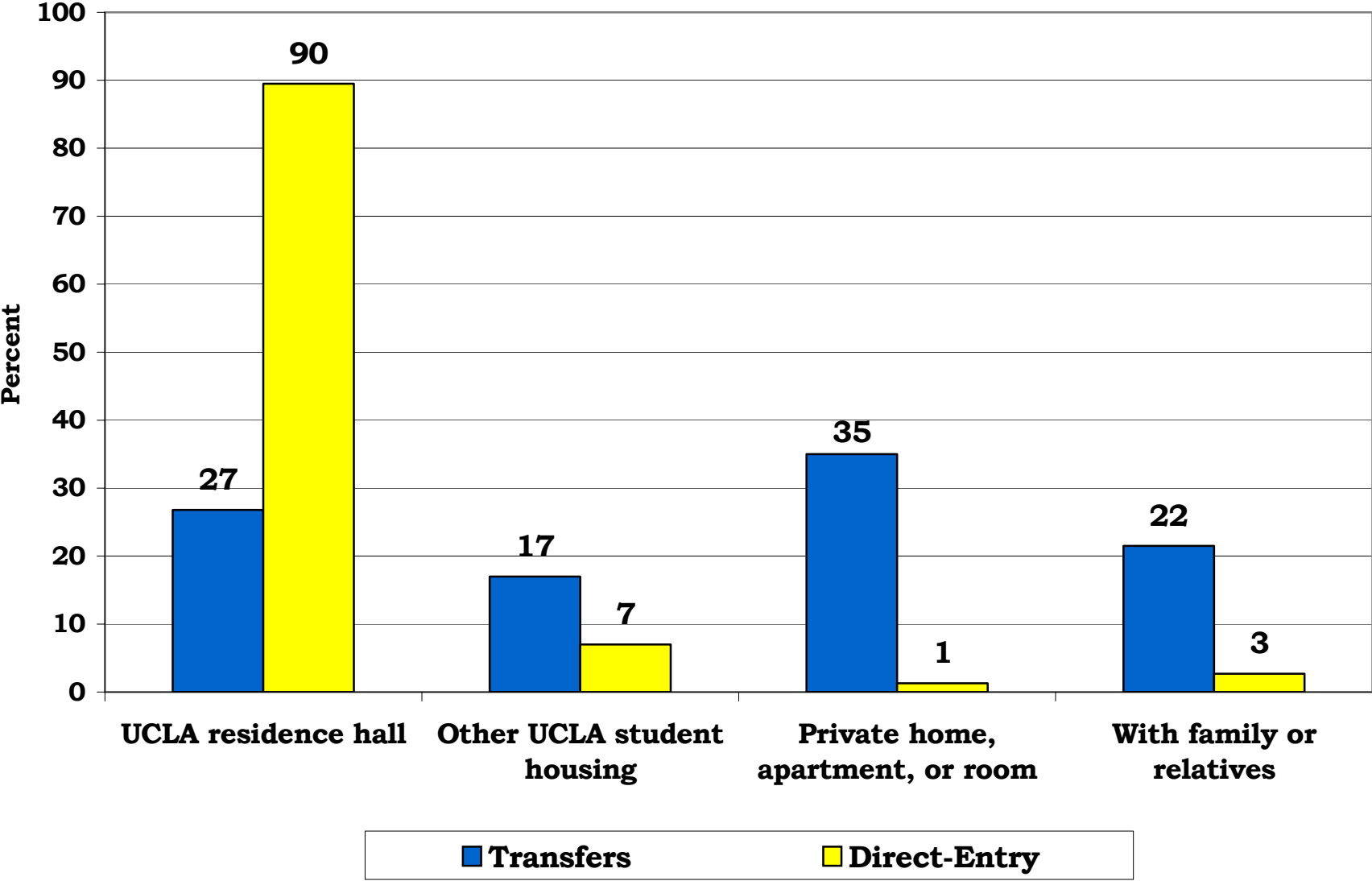
Financial Issues are Top Reasons for Employment at UCLA

| Primary Purpose for Seeking Employment in College | % of TSS |
|--|-----------------|
| To help pay for my college education | 42 |
| To earn spending money | 22 |
| To gain job experience relate to my anticipated career | 13 |
| To take care of personal/family obligations | 10 |
| To gain general job experience | 5 |
| To have something to do | 1 |
| Not Applicable: I do not plan to work | 8 |

Section 4:

Summary of Findings on Plans for UCLA & Beyond

Most Transfers Live Off-Campus



Radii of Commuting Among Transfers

| Distance of Residence from Campus | % of TSS |
|--|-----------------|
|--|-----------------|

Private home, apartment, or room

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Less than 10 miles from campus | 24 |
| 11 to 30 miles from campus | 8 |
| More than 30 miles from campus | 4 |

With family or relatives

| | |
|--------------------------------|----|
| Less than 10 miles from campus | 6 |
| 11 to 30 miles from campus | 11 |
| More than 30 miles from campus | 5 |

Different Expectations About College by Entry Status

| Student estimates to: | % TSS | % CIRP | Diff. |
|---|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| <i>Percentages favor transfer students</i> | | | |
| Earn at least "B" average | 74 | 59 | 15 ** |
| Change career choice | 12 | 22 | -10 ** |
| Change major field | 7 | 28 | -21 ** |
| Need special tutoring or remedial work | 12 | 33 | -21 ** |
| <i>Percentages favor direct-entry students</i> | | | |
| Participate in student government | 6 | 10 | -4 ** |
| Communicate regularly with your professors | 29 | 35 | -6 * |
| Play varsity/intercollegiate athletics | 2 | 8 | -6 ** |
| Cross-cultural socialization | 74 | 81 | -7 ** |
| Participate in student clubs/groups | 41 | 54 | -13 ** |
| Participate in a study abroad program | 21 | 35 | -14 ** |

Equal Aspirations for an Advanced Degree

| Highest Degree Intended | % TSS | % CIRP | Diff. |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Less than a Bachelor's degree | 7 | 0 | 7 ** |
| Bachelor's degree | 7 | 9 | -2 |
| Master's degree | 29 | 37 | -8 ** |
| Doctorate | 27 | 26 | 1 |
| Medical/Dental degree | 12 | 19 | -7 ** |
| Law degree | 16 | 8 | 8 ** |
| Other | 3 | 1 | 2 |

Section 5:

Summary of Qualitative Inquiry on the Transfer Student Experience

Summary of Responses to TSS Open-Ended Item

| Thematic Area | # of Comments |
|---|----------------------|
| <i>Overall Impressions of Institutional Environment/Campus Culture</i> | 144 |
| Positive Comments (71) | |
| Beaurocratic/Confusing (17) | |
| <i>Transition Services/Programs</i> | 106 |
| Suggestions for improvements to Transfer Orientation (26) | |
| Need more assistance/information during transition to UCLA (17) | |
| <i>Academic Experiences</i> | 100 |
| Level of preparation for UCLA academics (19) | |
| A lot of academic resources/opportunities (18) | |
| <i>Personal Experiences</i> | 70 |
| Honor/pride to be a UCLA student (20) | |
| Financial challenges (13) | |
| <i>General Campus Services/Programs</i> | 68 |
| Experiences with campus staff (positive and negative) (24) | |
| <i>Social Experiences/Integration</i> | 33 |
| Need more opportunities to meet people (especially transfers) (19) | |

Psychometric Properties of TSS

- TSS designed as an omnibus survey, but was organized into seven main themes or constructs
- To measure how consistently individuals answered a group of items Cronbach's Alpha was used
- Used Exploratory Factor Analyses to address issues of construct validity
- Reliability scores for the instrument ranges from moderate to high (Cronbach Alpha of .55 to .85)
- Plan to conduct modified test-retest reliability with 2005 and 2006 TSS data

Discussion Questions

- What stands out to you from the findings?
- What is relevant to the transfer student support & programming that you plan and conduct?
- What else do you wish that you knew? Do you have suggestions for other survey items?

“Transitions” Study

- Followed 20 incoming transfer students through Fall Quarter, through email journals, interviews, and focus groups.
- Allowed us to “see” transition experiences *as they happened*.
- Findings focus on:
 - Academic challenges and engagement
 - Relationships with faculty and teaching assistants
 - Social and personal experiences
 - Suggestions for support services for transfers students in transition

Current Reports & Future Directions

- Report of 2005 Transfer Student Survey (TSS) & the “Transitions” report are available on the UCLA SAIRO web site:

www.sairo.ucla.edu/transferstudents/studentdata.html

- The 2006 TSS is currently in the field
 - Refined & updated instrument
 - Merge the 2006 TSS with post-test data for more advanced analyses of “pathways to success”