

SFU

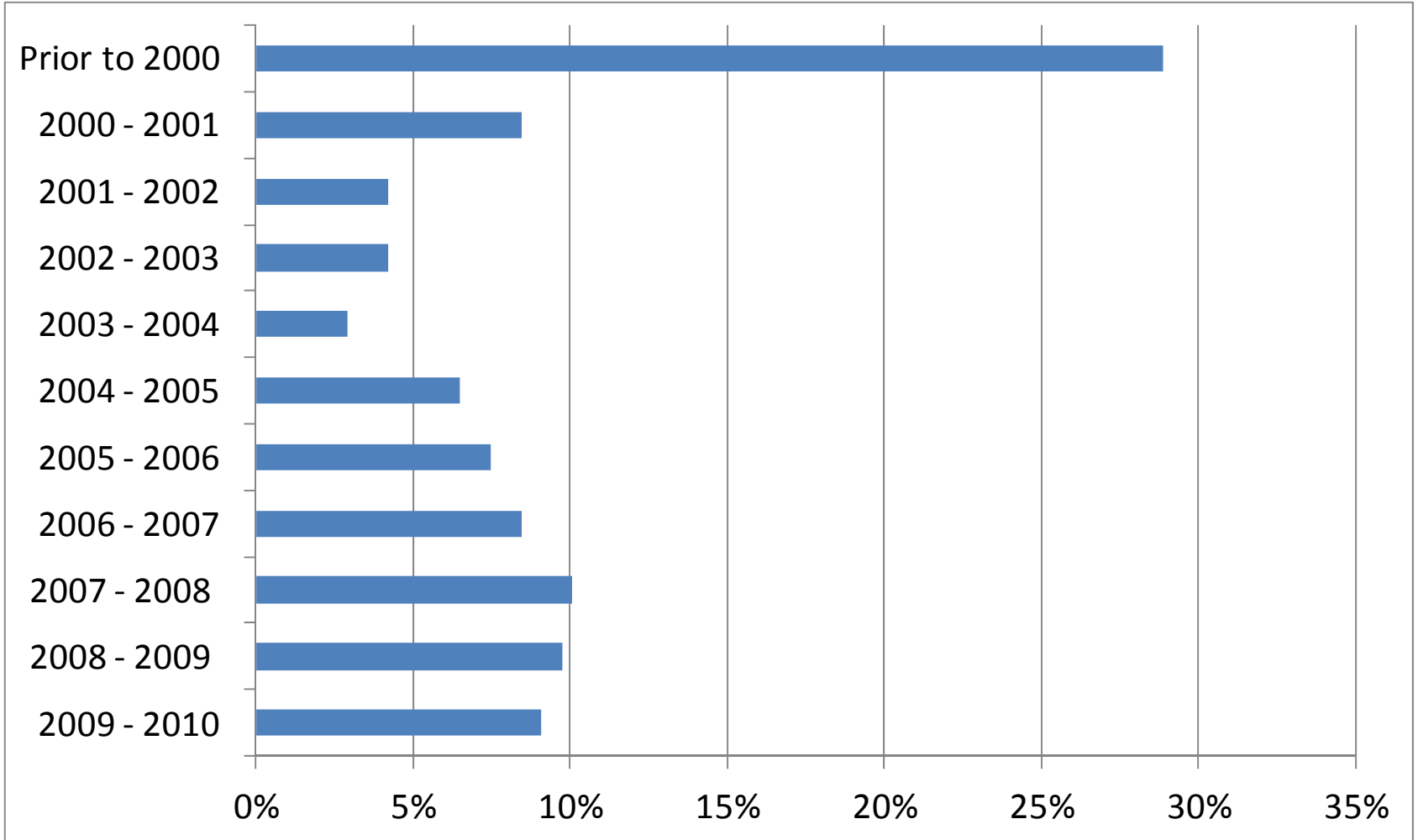
SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY



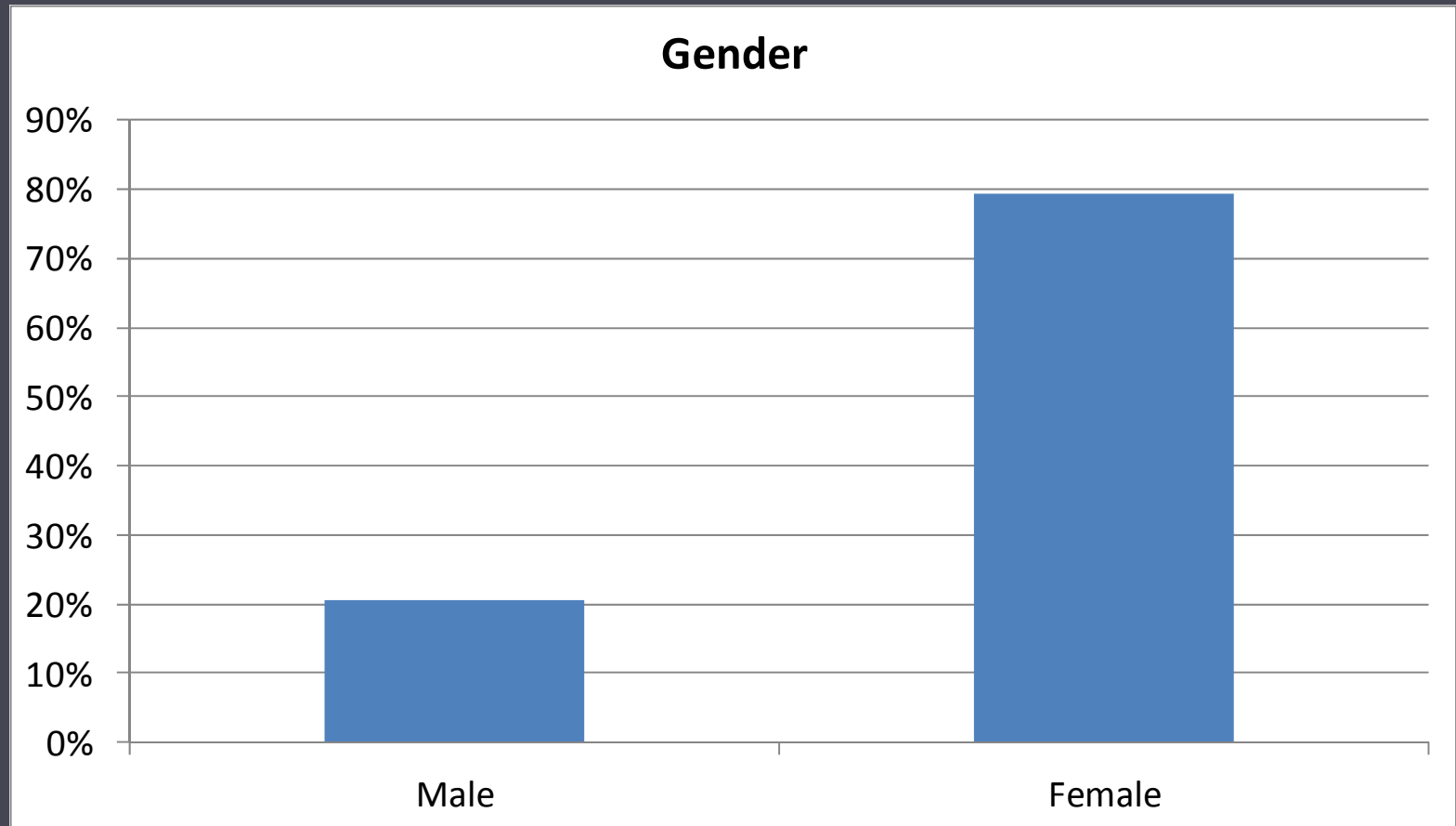
“LIFE AFTER A BA IN PSYCHOLOGY”



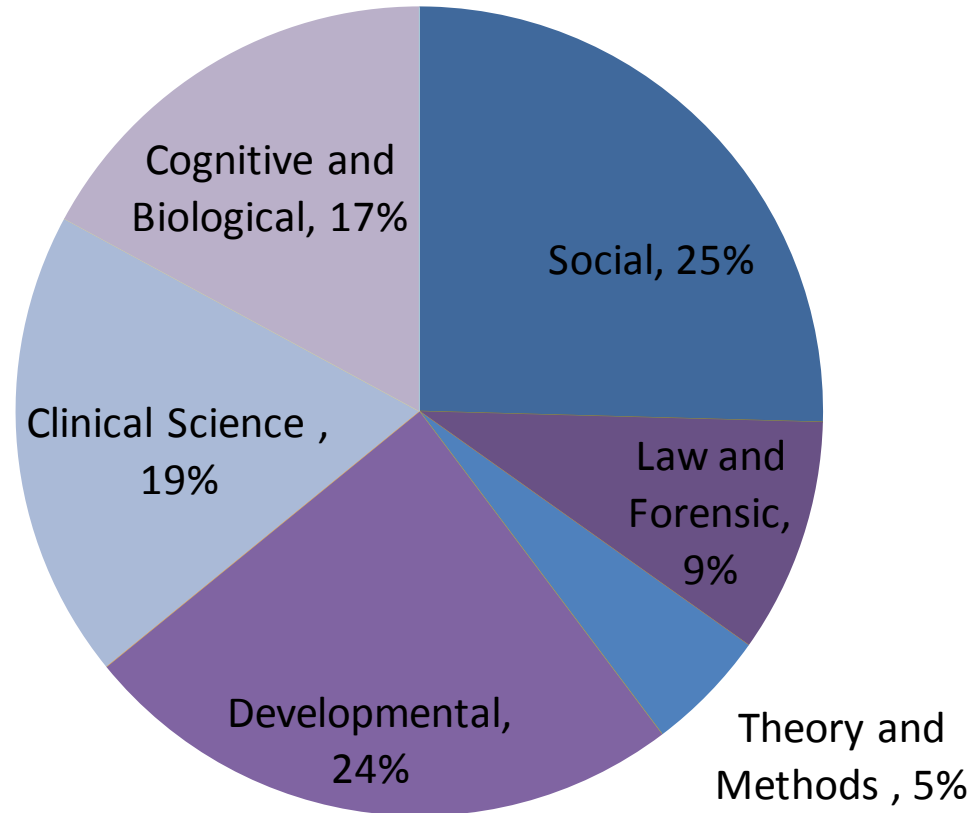
When did you graduate with a BA degree in Psychology?



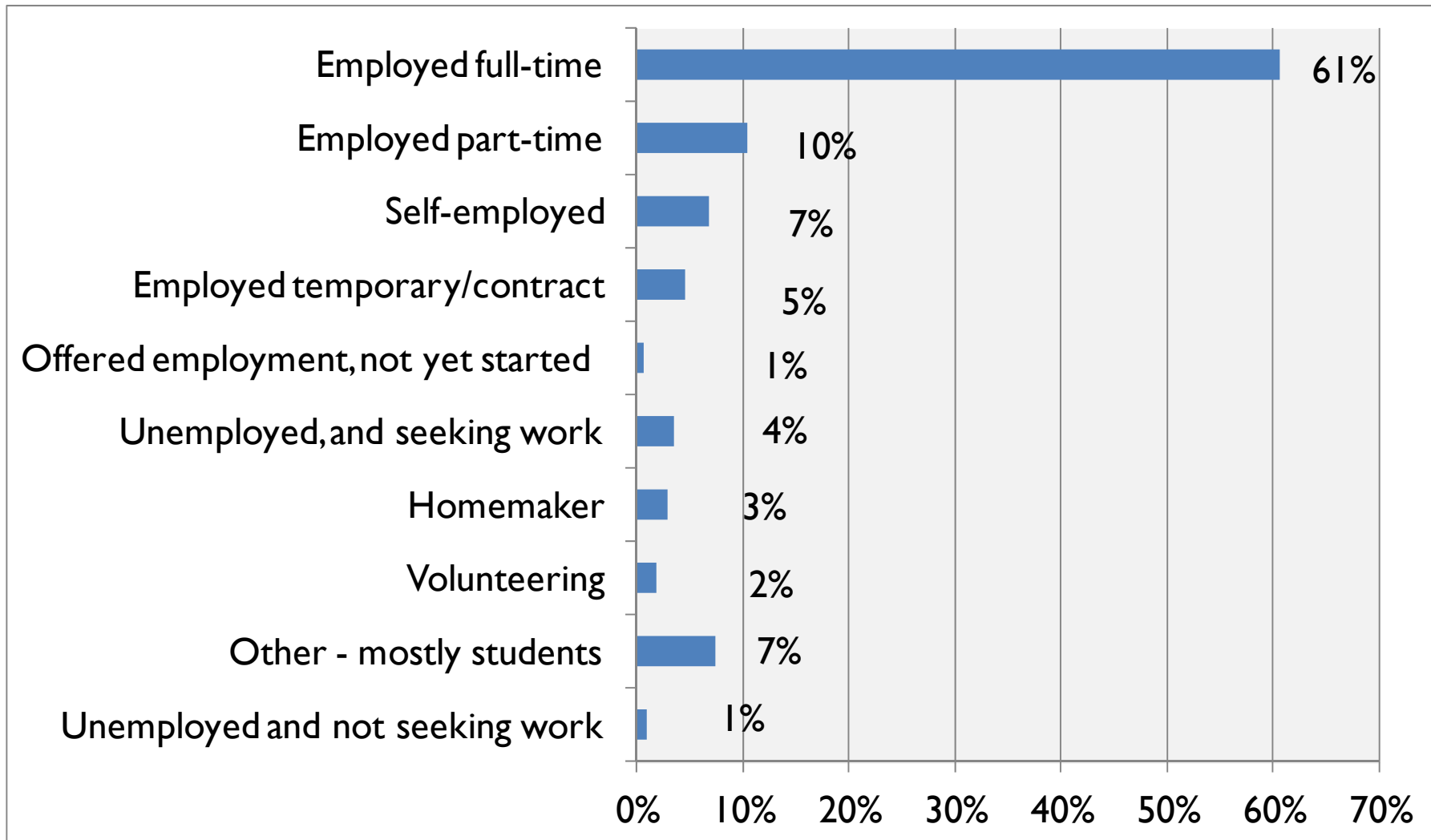
ALUMNI SURVEY RESULTS



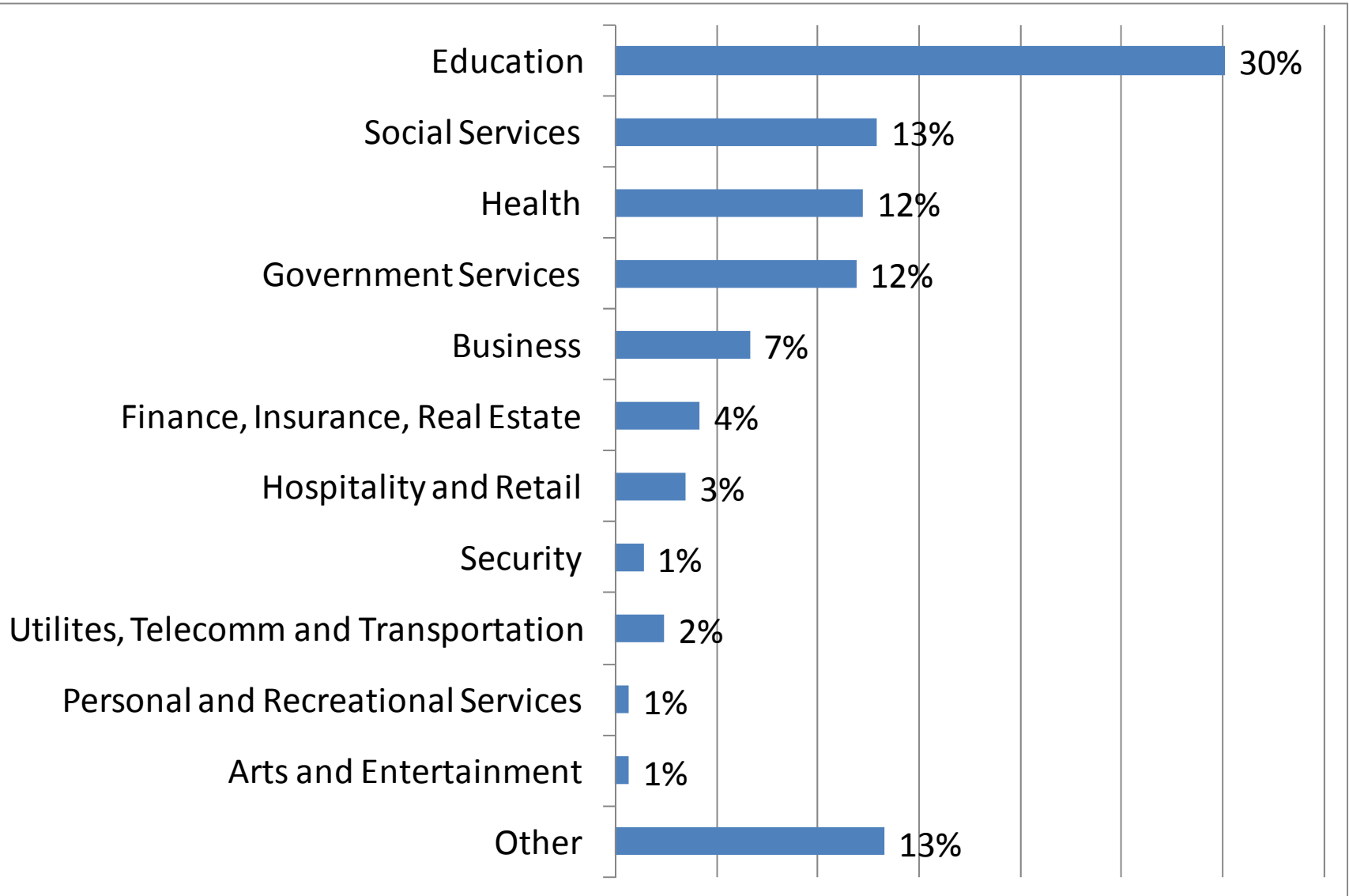
What was your area of concentration in the field of Psychology?



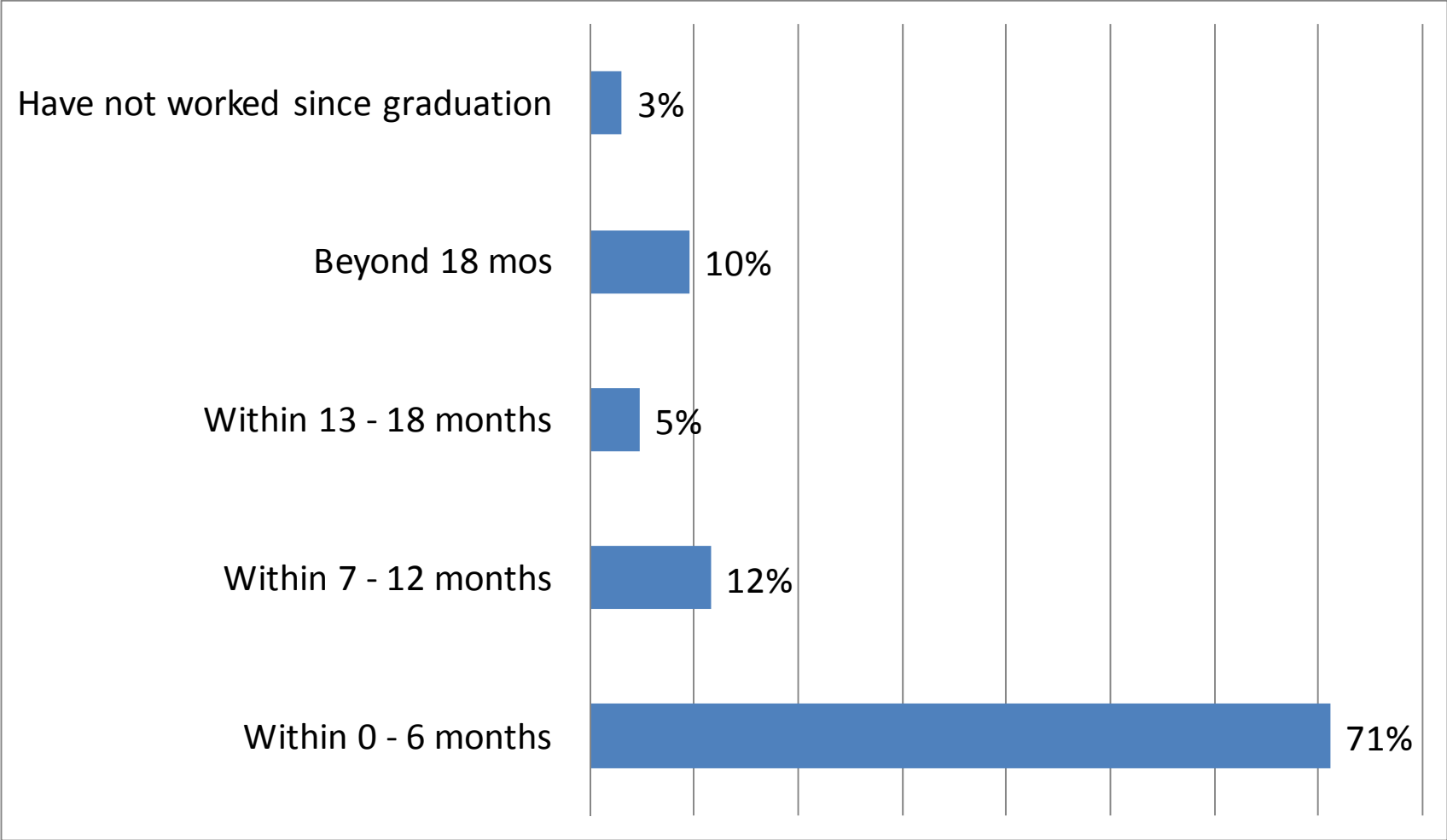
Category that best describes current situation:



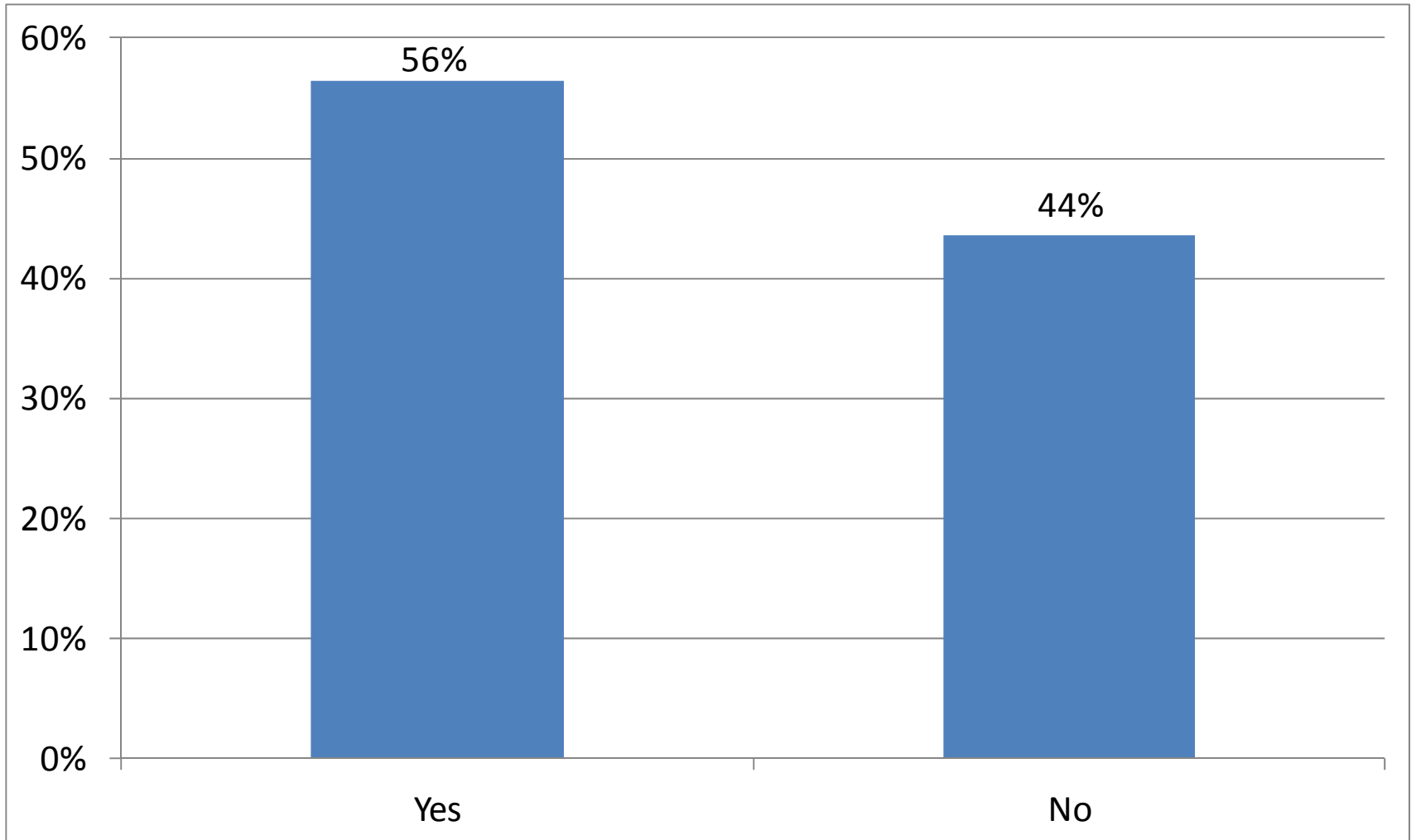
Employment setting that best describes your current work:



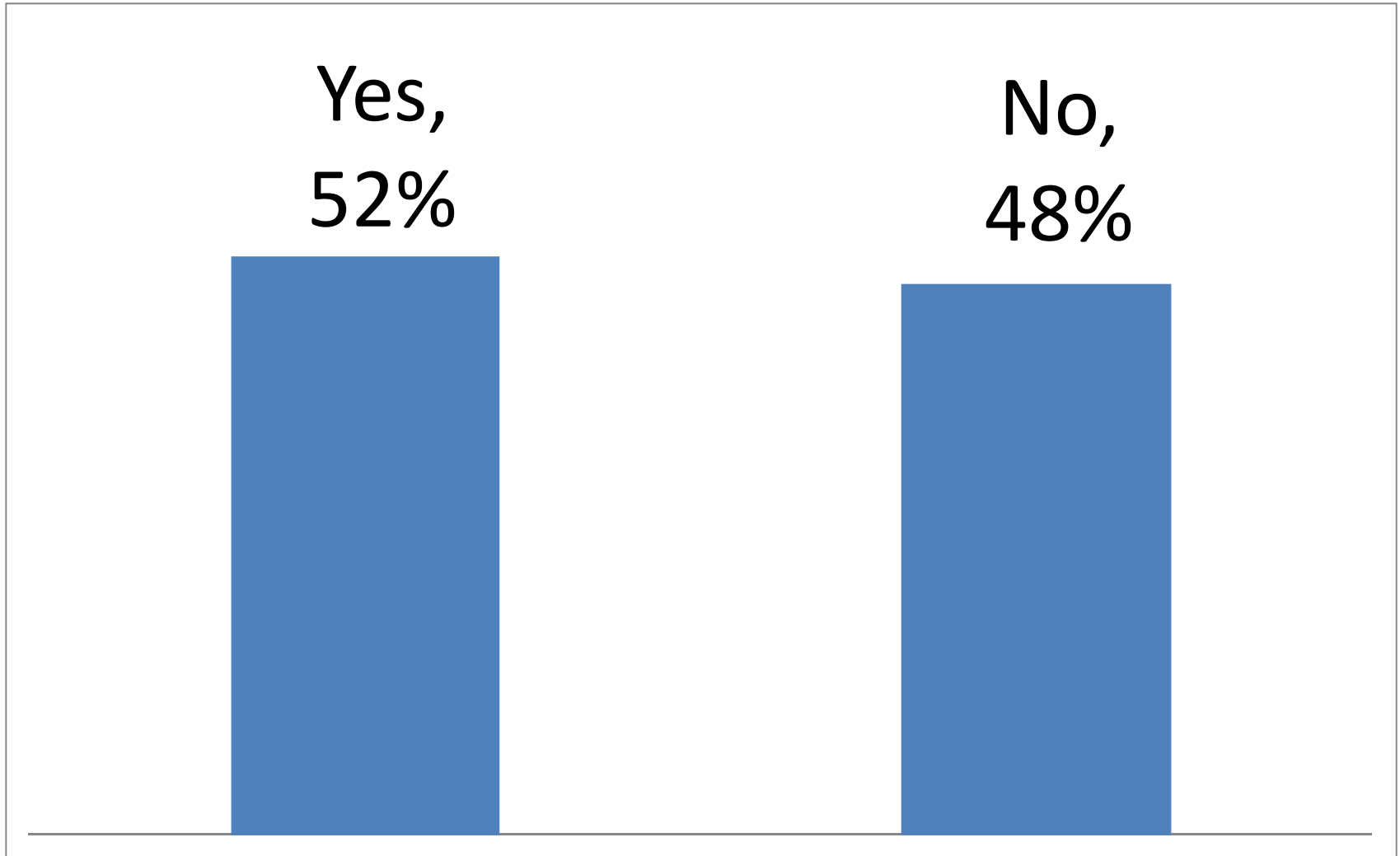
How soon after completing your degree did you secure work?



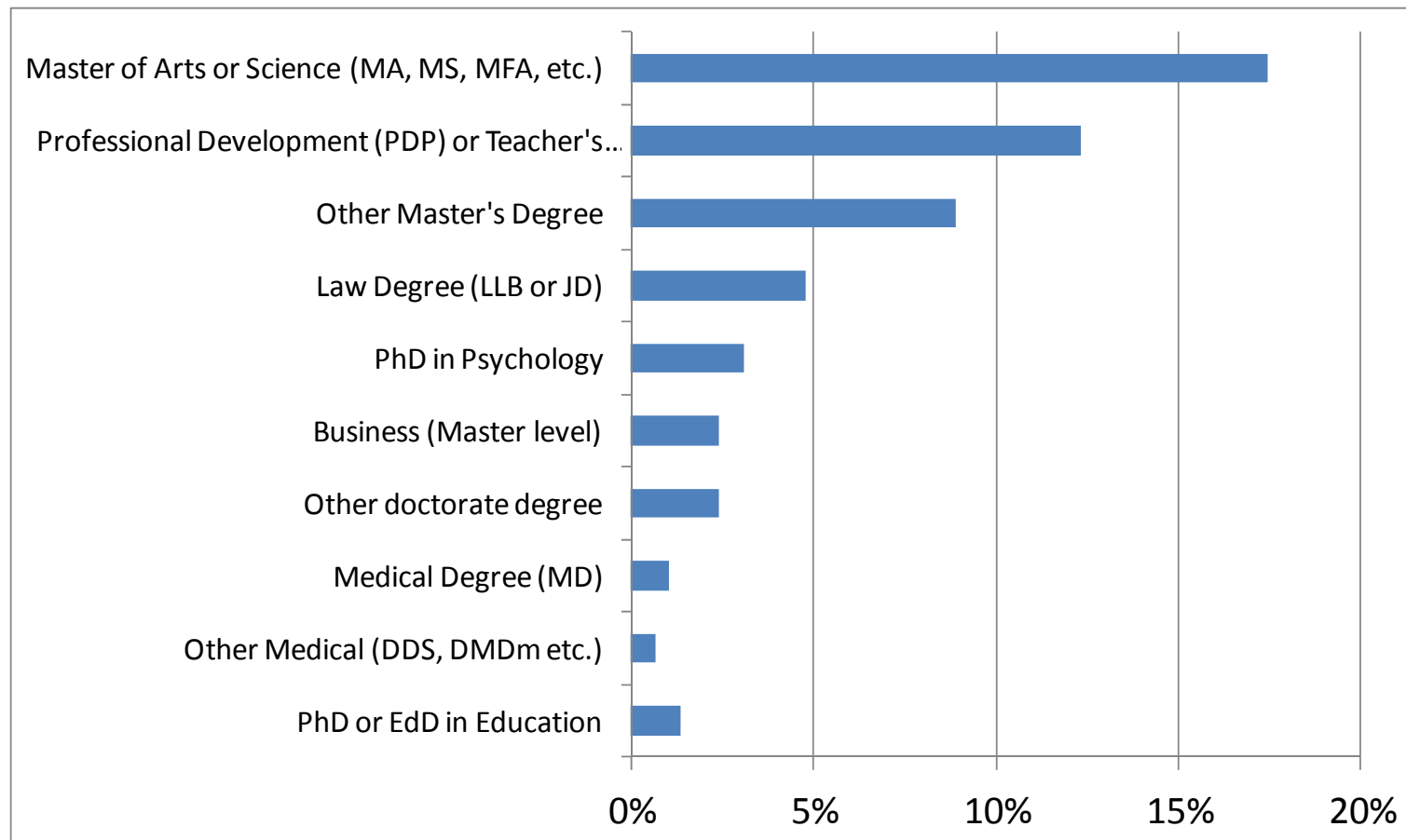
Did you know what type of work you wanted to do before you graduated?



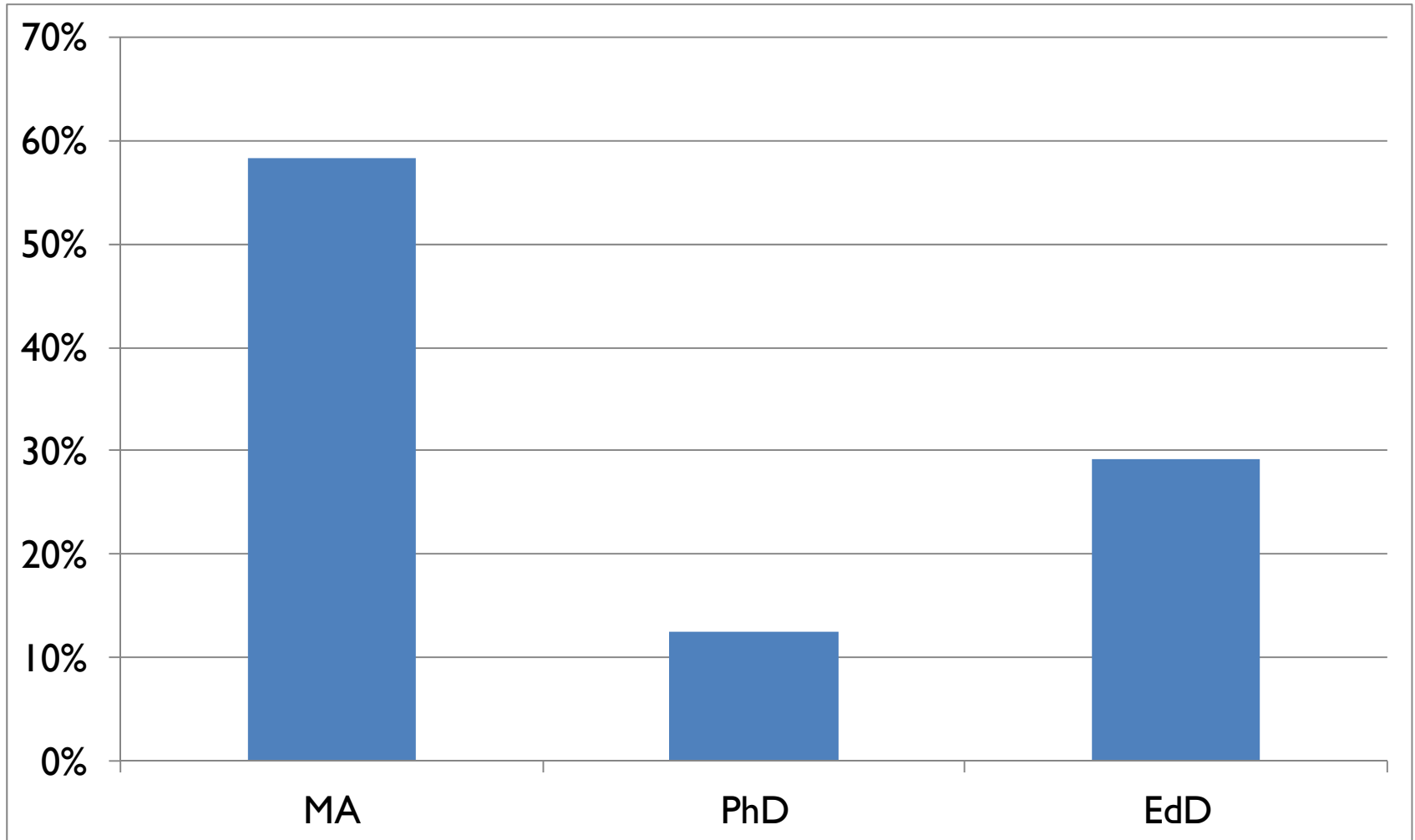
If yes, are you currently working in it now?



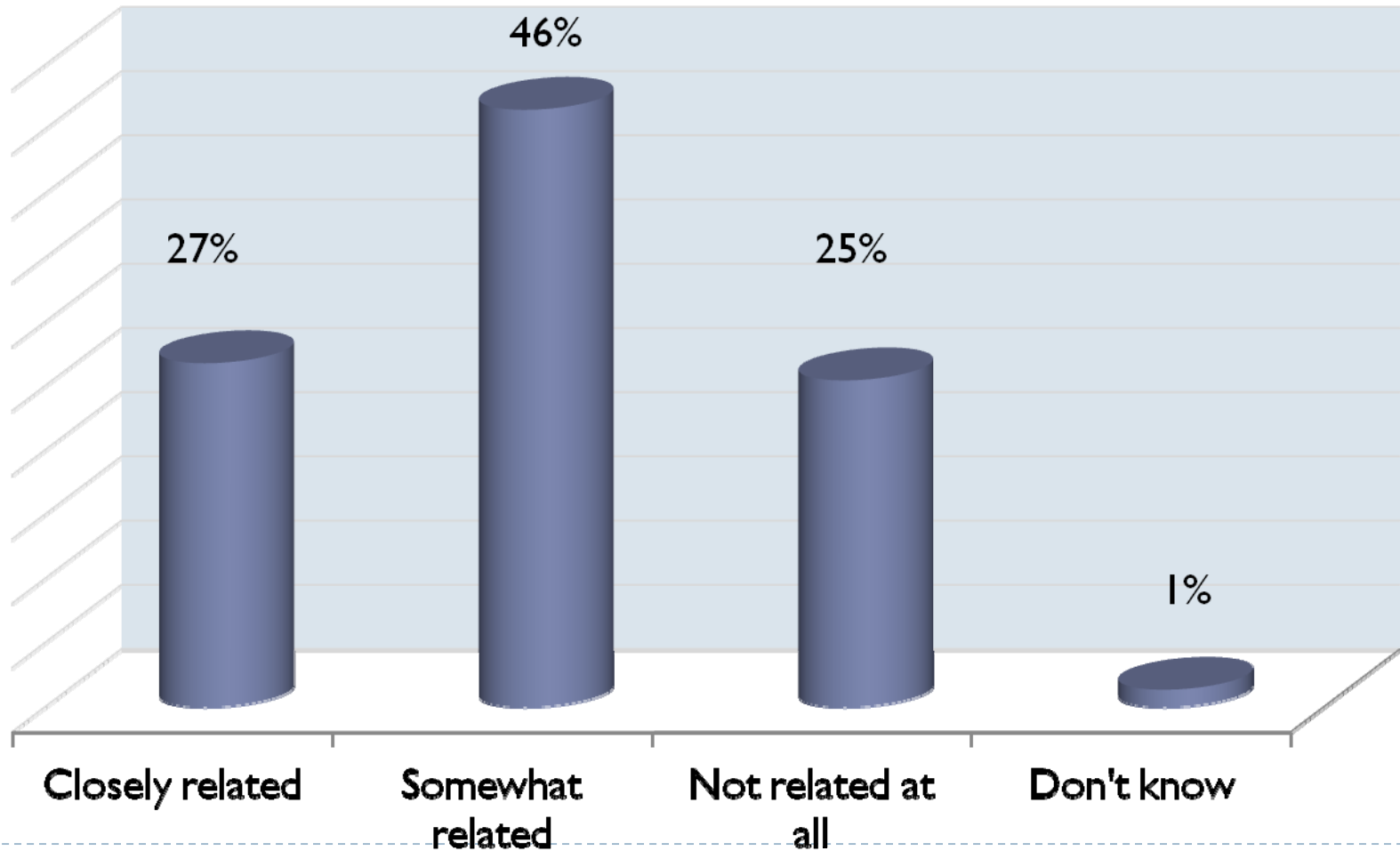
Degree holders who have received a post baccalaureate degree or other degree at any other institution (159 of 292 pursued post baccalaureate degree).



Those who pursued another Psychology degree (N =24)

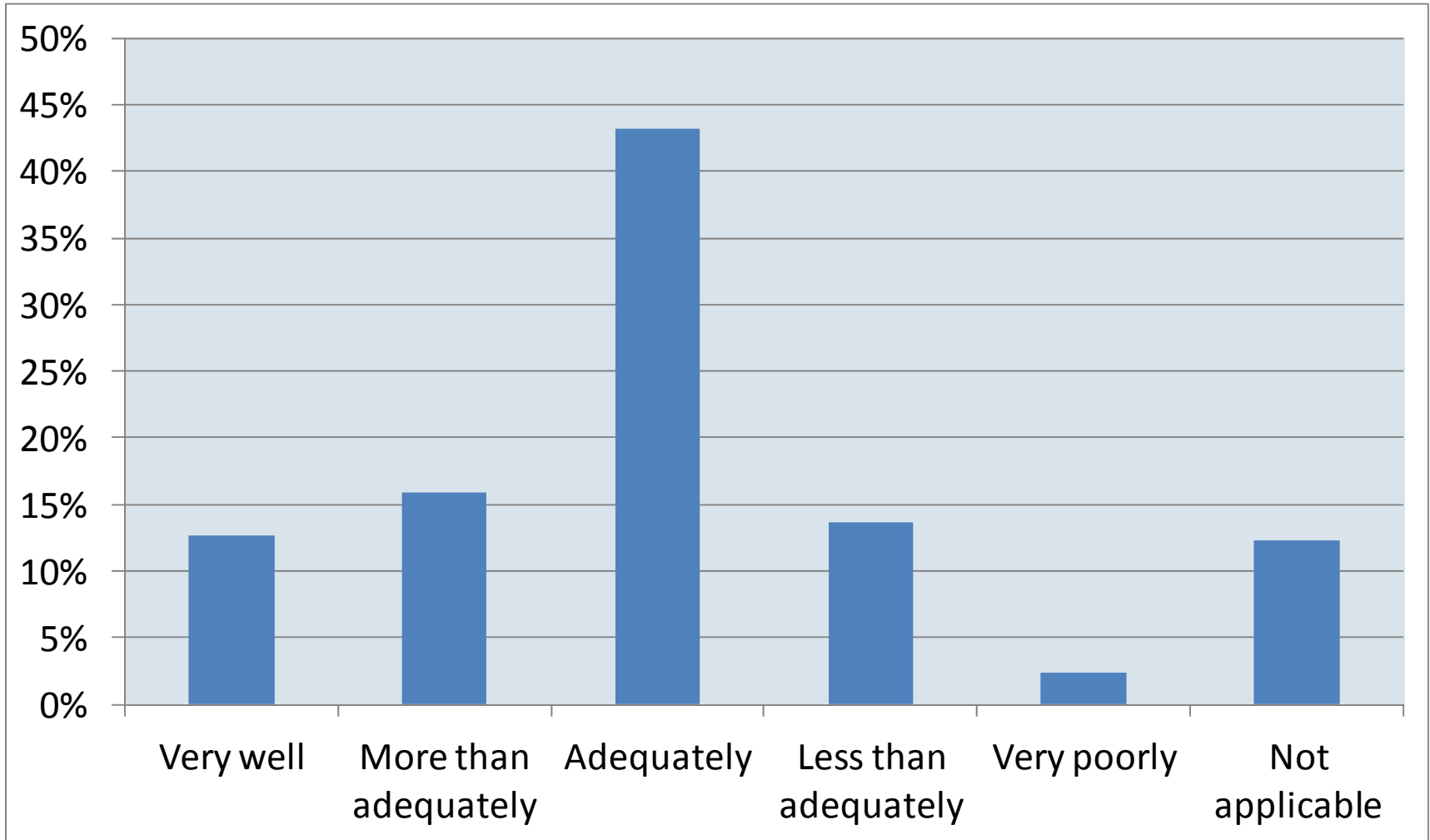


How related is your current position to your psychology major (or area of concentration)?

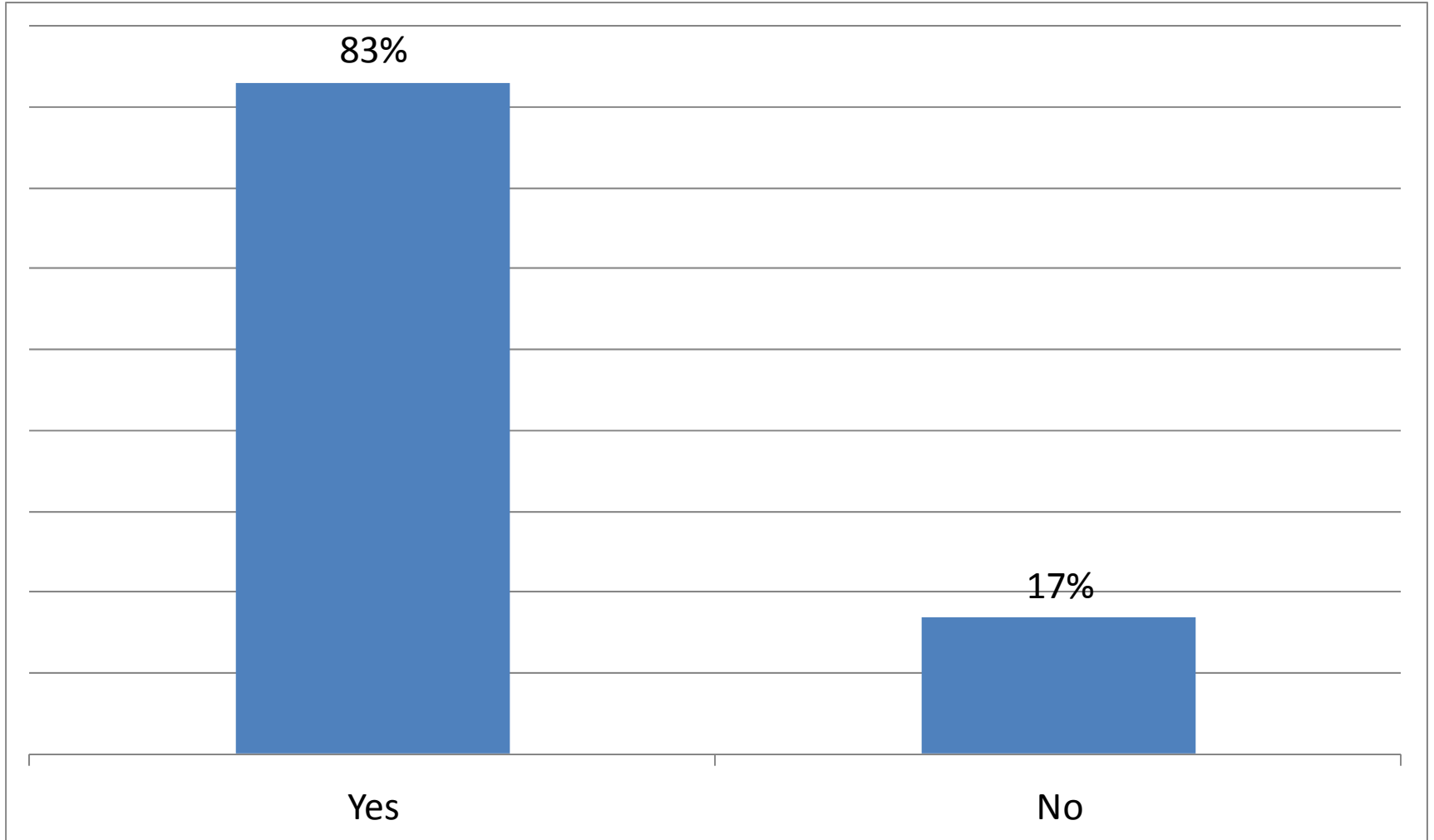


How well did your undergraduate degree prepare you for your current career?

(Note: Responses for very well, more than adequately, and adequately make up 70%.)



Overall, do you believe that courses taken in Psychology were helpful to your career?



Which courses have proved to be the most useful to your career?

- ▶ Virtually all are mentioned, but most frequently:
 - ▶ Developmental
 - ▶ Social
 - ▶ Abnormal and psychopathology
 - ▶ Methods and statistics
 - ▶ Psychopharmacology
 - ▶ Cognitive
 - ▶ Forensic

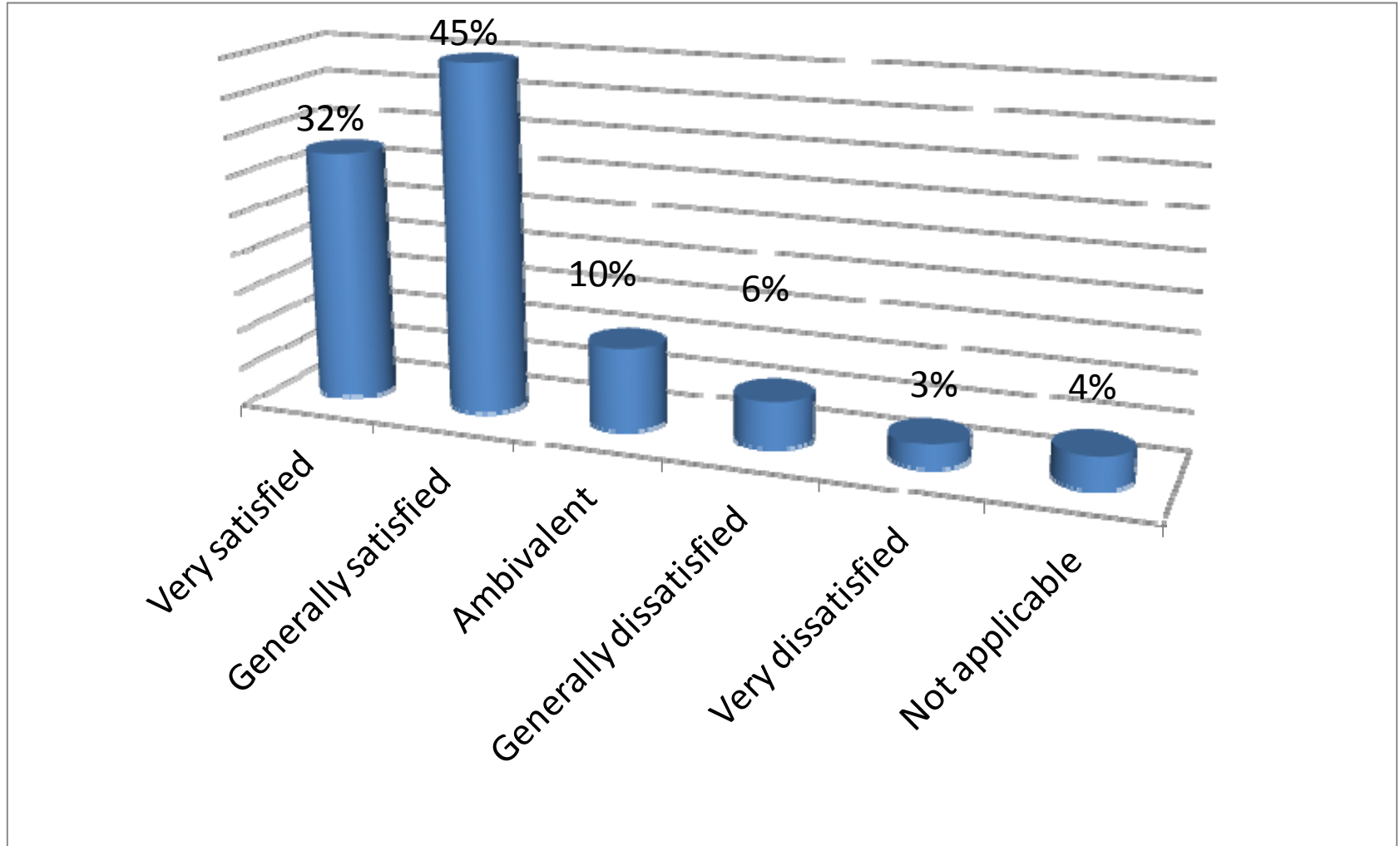


Which courses have proved to be the most relevant to your life in general?

- ▶ Again, many different courses, but those receiving the highest number of votes:
 - ▶ Social
 - ▶ Human relationships, health, sports,
 - ▶ Developmental
 - ▶ Child development
 - ▶ Moral development
 - ▶ Abnormal
 - ▶ Psychopathology
 - ▶ Methods and Statistics

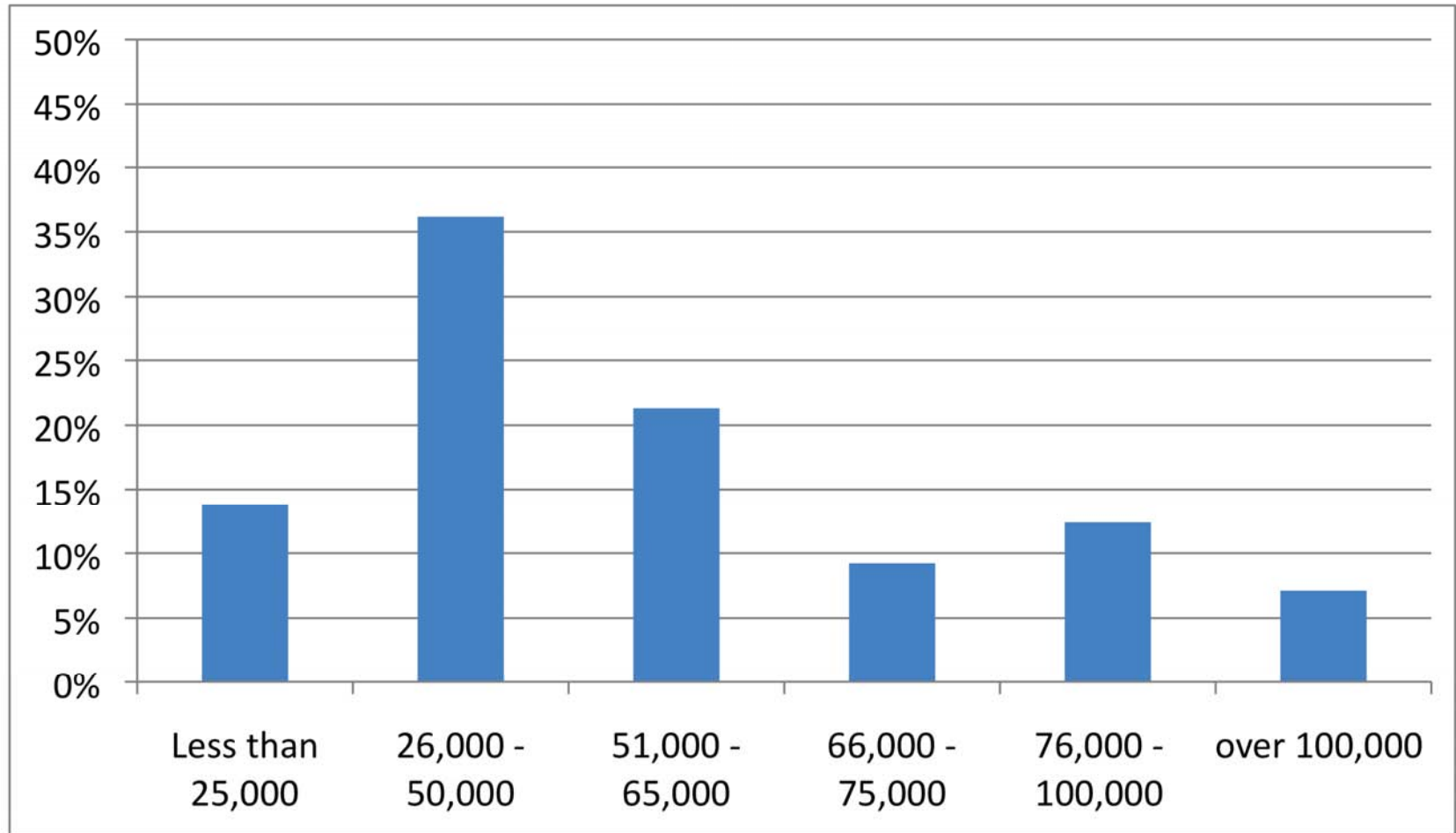


Overall, how satisfied are you with your career so far?



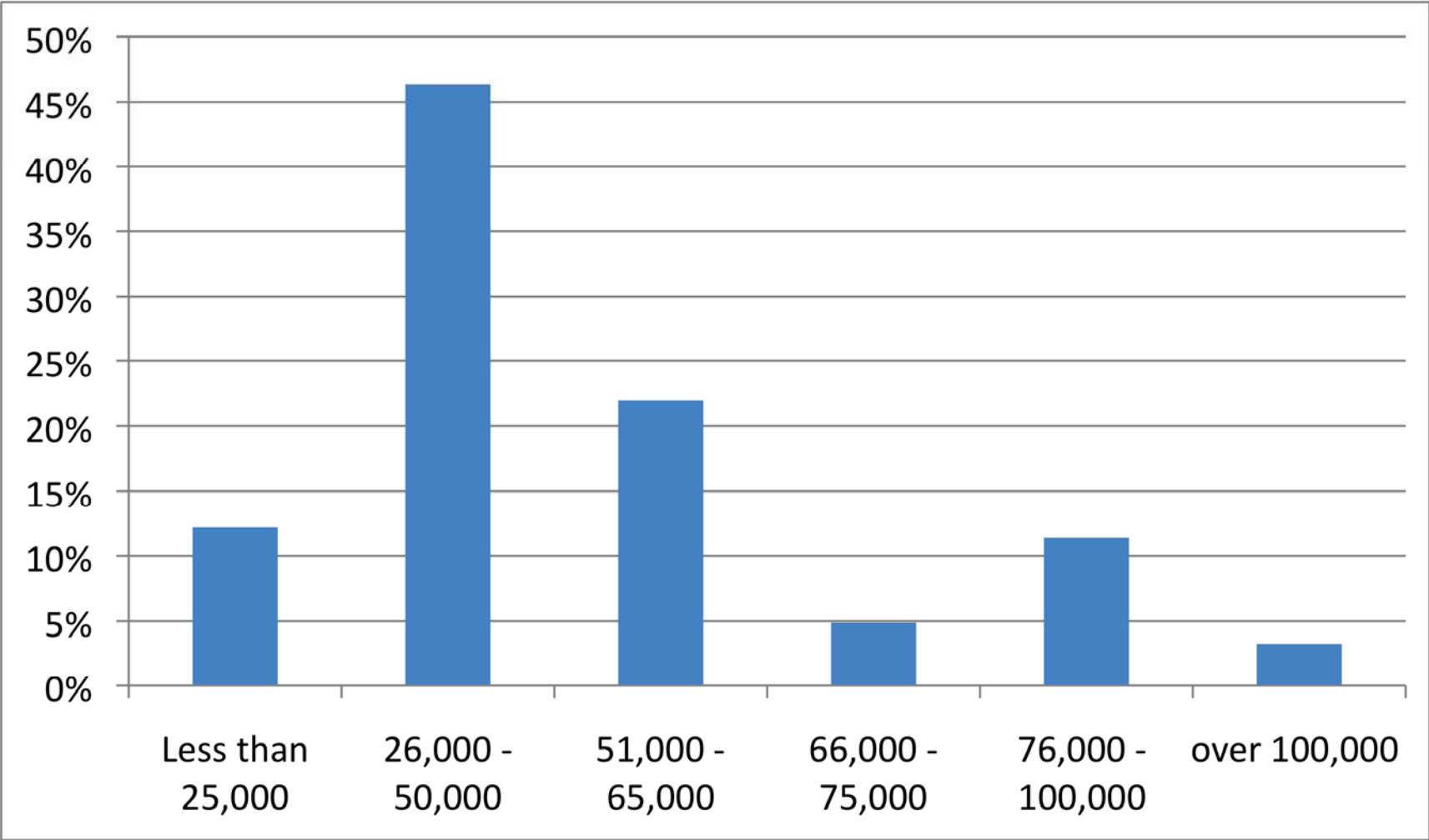
Gross annual salary (N= 282)

Mdn = \$50,000; Mean = \$52,250+



Gross Annual Salary BA degree (N = 123)

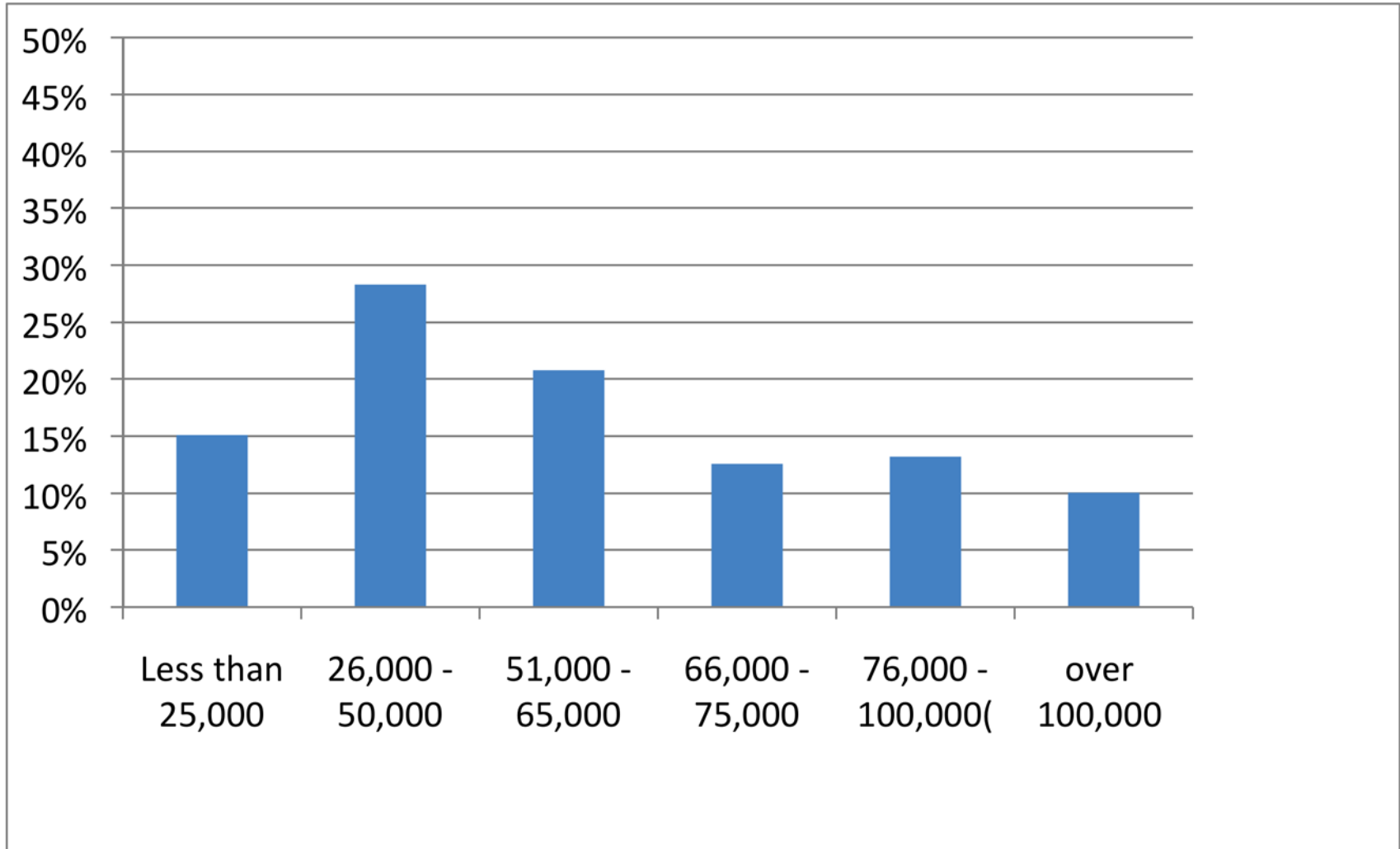
Mdn = \$46,000; Mean = \$ 48,000+



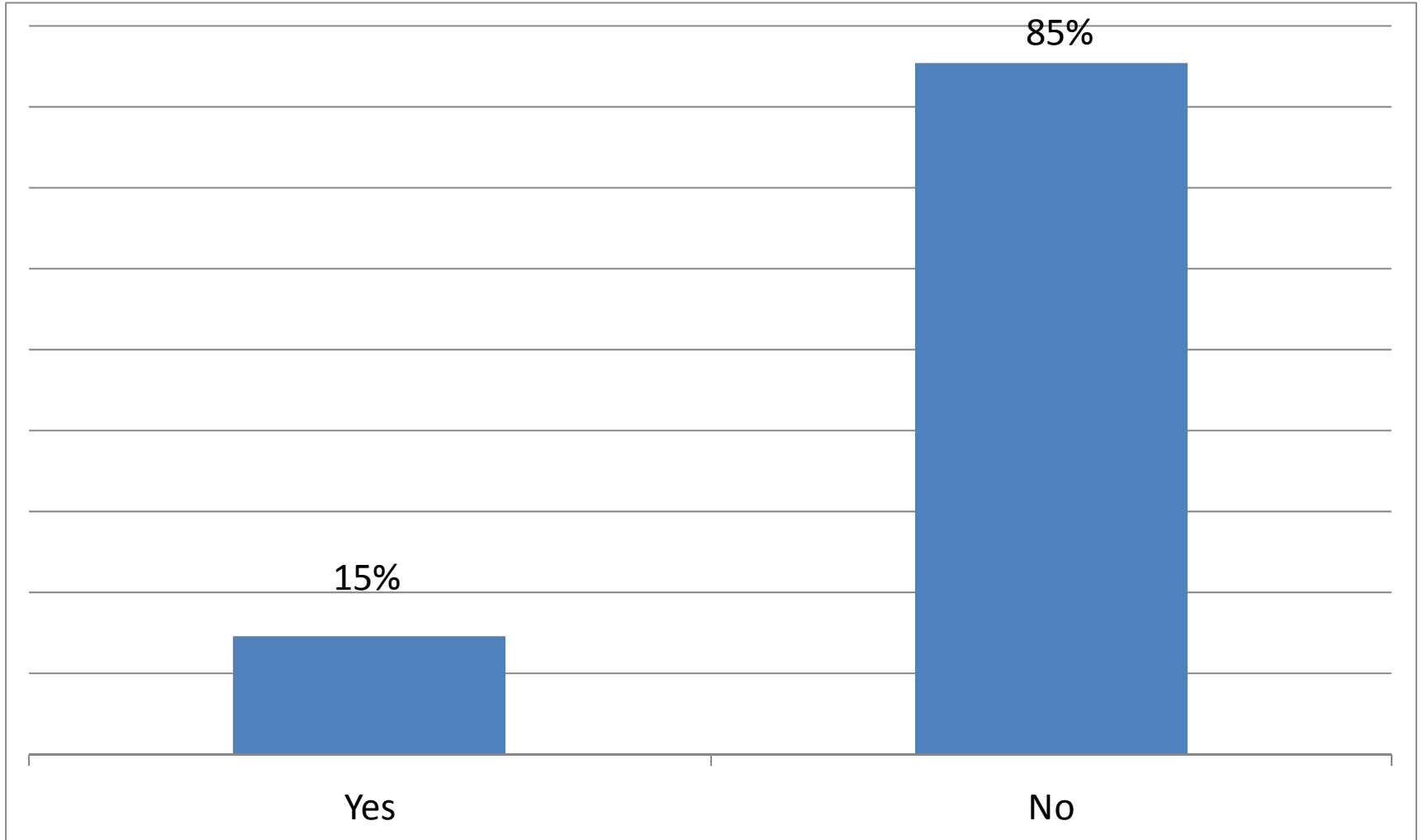
Gross Annual Salary of Post Baccalaureate

Degrees (N=159). Mdn = \$56,000; Mean = \$55,500+

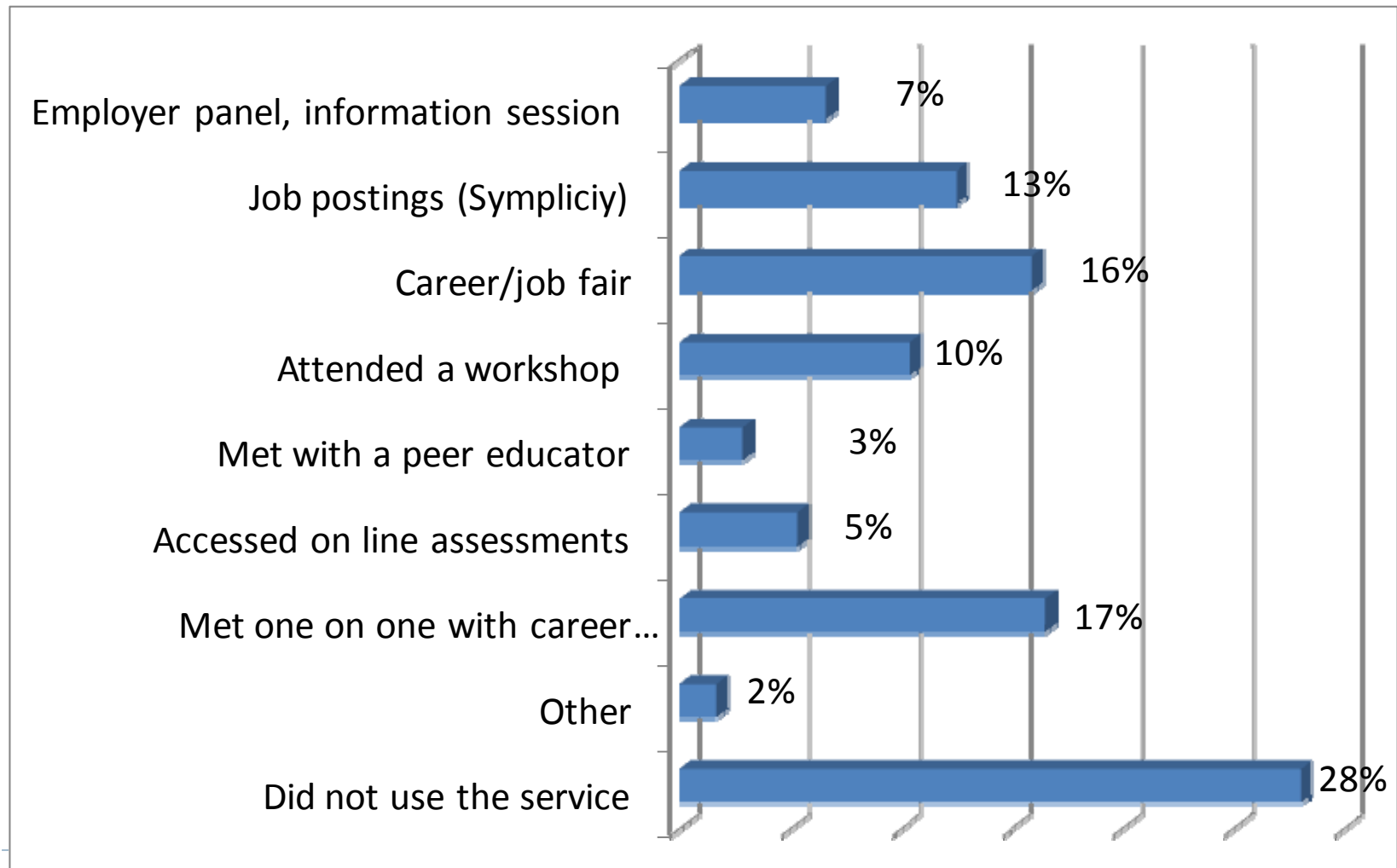
(Note that the lower salary mostly represents students working toward post Bacc Degree)



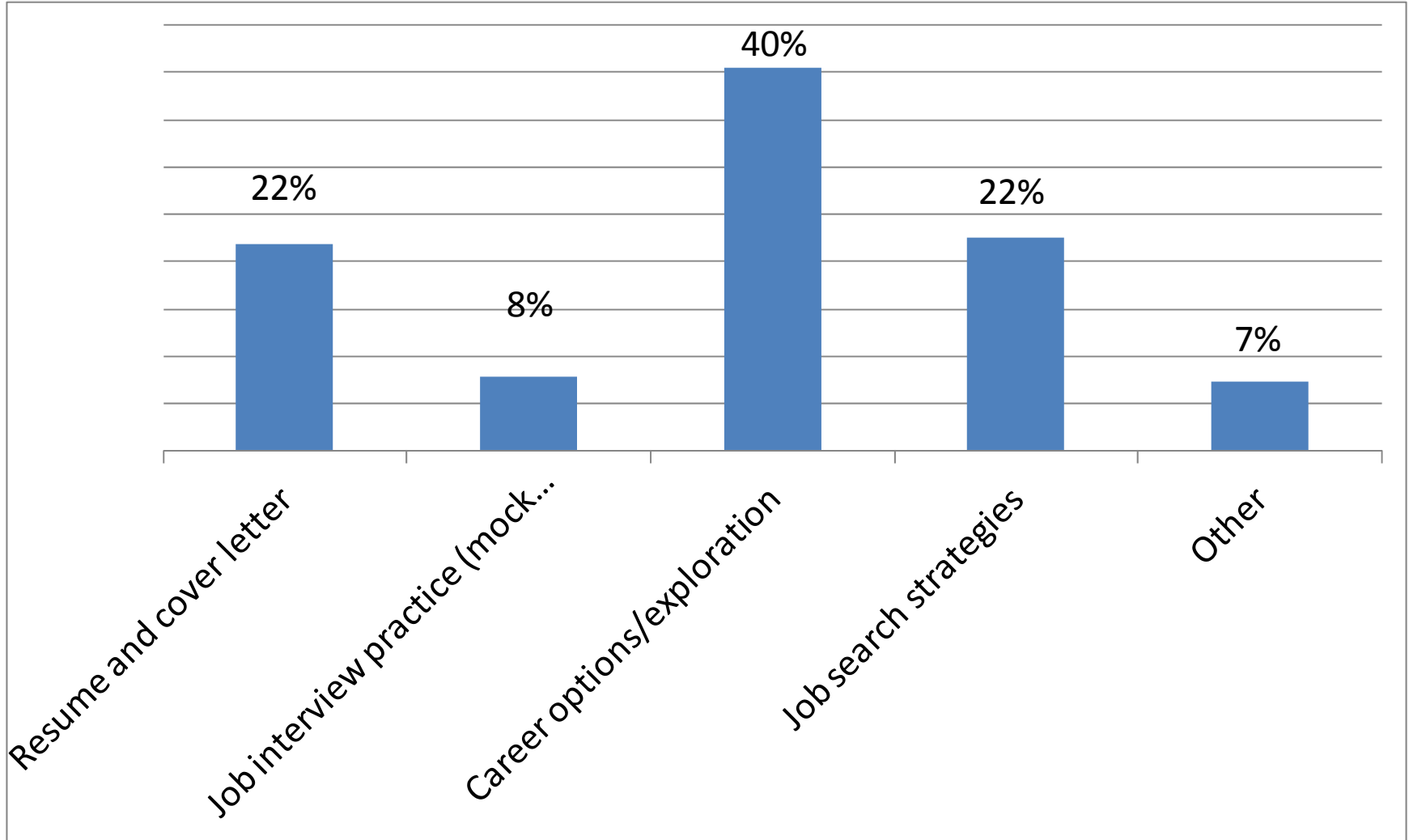
Did you enroll in a co-op education program?



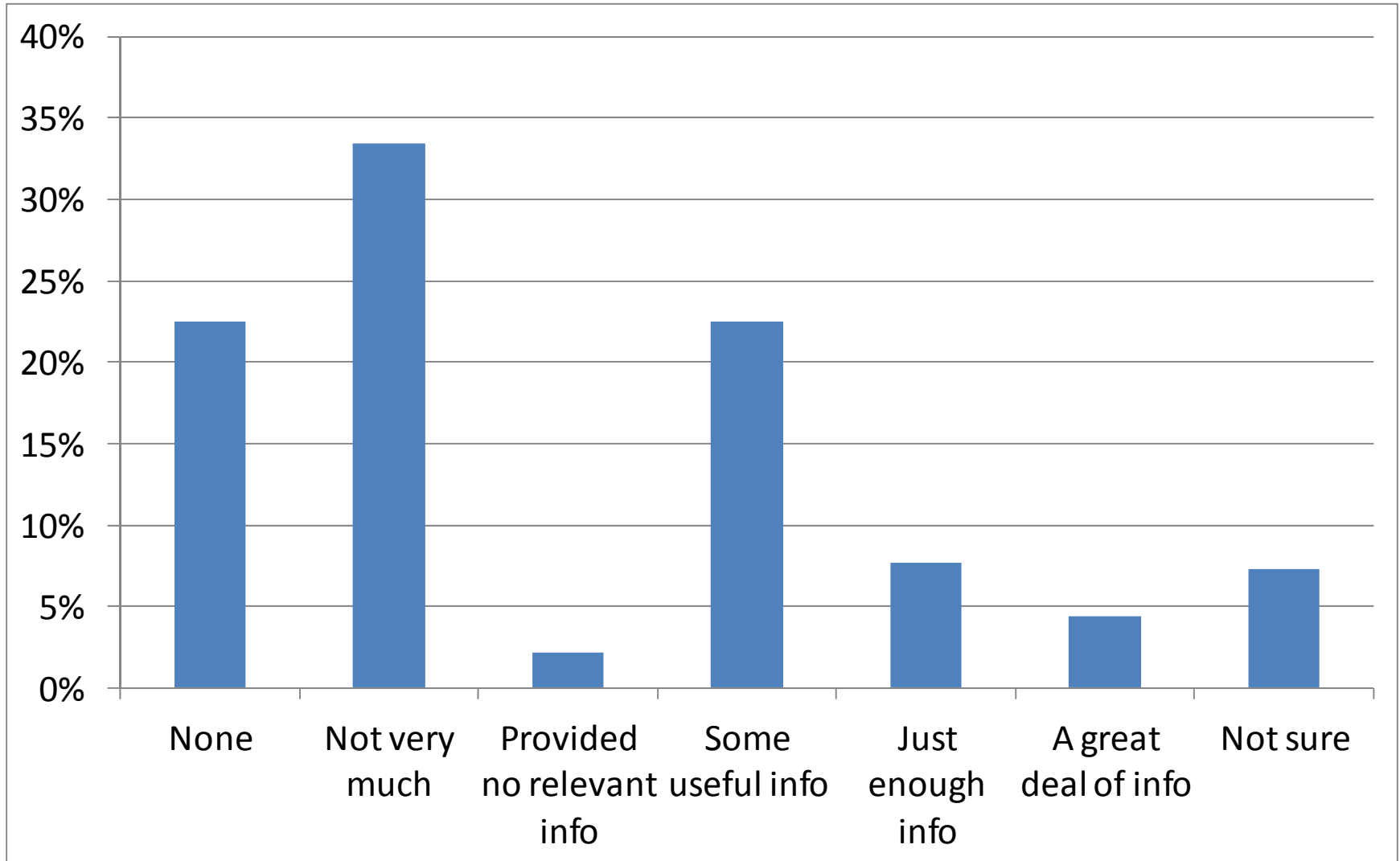
SFU Career Services offers a number of career-related service to students and recent graduates. **What services did you use as a student or recent graduate?**



If you have used Career Services in the past, what were the reasons for your visit(s)? Check all that apply. (N = 178)



To what extent do you think the staff and faculty of the Psychology Department provided you with useful information concerning your career beyond the BA degree?



Examples of Certificates or Diplomas after BA Degree

- ▶ Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education
 - ▶ Certificate in French Language proficiency
 - ▶ Liberal Arts Certificate through SFU
 - ▶ Coaching Certificate through The Coaches Training Institute
 - ▶ Certificate in health and fitness
 - ▶ Diploma in Guidance Studies - Counselling Psychology
 - ▶ Probation Officer Certificate
 - ▶ Certificate in Human Resource Management
 - ▶ Journalism Certificate
 - ▶ Certificate from BCIT - High Tech Professional program
 - ▶ Interior Design
 - ▶ Career Development Practitioner Certificate
 - ▶ Early Childhood Education Diploma; Family Support Certificate
 - ▶ Youth Probation Officer
 - ▶ Child Sexual Abuse Support Worker Certificate (Justice Institute)
 - ▶ Diploma in Foundation of Thai Massage
 - ▶ Drug and Alcohol Certificate from the Justice Institute
-



Examples of Certificates and Diplomas (cont'd)

- ▶ TESOL Certification
- ▶ Writing & Publishing Certificate
- ▶ Recreation therapy
- ▶ Adult Education
- ▶ Accounting CGA

Examples of Other Bachelor degrees and Diplomas

- ▶ Bachelor of Music Therapy
 - ▶ BA in Justice Studies
 - ▶ 2nd BA (History)
 - ▶ BSc Nursing (applied science)
 - ▶ Liberal Arts
 - ▶ BSc Computer Science
 - ▶ Law Degree (LLB)
-



Examples of Post baccalaureate Degrees or Diplomas

- ▶ Diploma in Education
- ▶ Postgrad diploma in Statistics
- ▶ Graduate Diploma BA
- ▶ Sustainable Community Development Post Bac Diploma Leadership
- ▶ Graduate Degree in Art Therapy

Examples of Master's Degrees

- ▶ MEd in Counselling Psychology
 - ▶ Master of Social Work
 - ▶ Master of Public Health (MPH)
 - ▶ Masters of Occupational Therapy, MOT
 - ▶ MBA
 - ▶ MA Psychology
 - ▶ MA Linguistics
 - ▶ MA Social Science
 - ▶ Master of Communications
 - ▶ BFA and an MA in Expressive Arts Therapy
-



▶ **Thank you for your attention!**



Comments from respondents on co-op education:

- ▶ I did not complete the co-op program and in fact it may have only been for my second bachelor degree. I did like having work experience before finishing school.
 - ▶ I didn't but I did work through out my degree with Burnaby parks and rec which helped me a great deal in terms if basic skills and gaining opportunities to move up
 - ▶ Yes, on top of the experience I gained (which my first employer told me was what landed me the job) I also learned a great deal about what I liked and disliked about the workplace, and the people I work with.
 - ▶ It allowed me to gain practical work experience and the ability to undertake real world research and analyses.
 - ▶ Absolutely. It was great for networking for future jobs. It helped me decide whether I would be able to handle the job I wanted to do (work in a prison as a criminal psychologist).
 - ▶ yes, increased employability through networking and practical skills
 - ▶ Mostly no benefit. I could have set up work terms on my own, without having to pay so much money. I rarely received helpful answers to my questions and rarely asked questions. The first work term was the most useful then after that co-op was not useful.
 - ▶ it helped clarify what I did not want to do after graduation.
 - ▶ Without a doubt, I know that I would not have been able to get a job or career as quickly as I have without the co-op program. It is really the highlight of my degree and where I learned the most job relevant skills. It developed my career path and without having access to those jobs and those work terms, I probably wouldn't know what to do with my degree or how to apply my degree. I found that the Psyc program is geared towards those who would like to go into research. It was difficult to find direct connections to jobs I wanted in the future without co-op.
 - ▶ I wish I did. It would've been a fantastic way to build your own network of connections - potential employers and colleagues who share the same view/on the same path.
-



Comments from respondents on co-op education (cont'd):

- ▶ yes, but it's way too competitive. That's why if psych dept could offer something similar at the course level, that would really benefit current and future students.
 - ▶ Yes, it was integral to my later success. I would recommend it to all students, to learn the work skills and transferable skills to compliment the academic skills.
 - ▶ I explored numerous careers and managed to focus on something more specific and completely different than I had originally intended. It also directly helped me bridge into my current full time position.
 - ▶ Possibly could have secured a job that was related to my areas of studies or at least have gained the experience to put on my resume.
 - ▶ Yes. It was incredibly beneficial in that it provided an opportunity to gain "real world" experience.
 - ▶ n/a
 - ▶ I did not participate in a co-op program while a student at SFU; however I did have a mentor in the mortgage industry after graduation. That experience was instrumental to my current success as a mortgage broker.
 - ▶ Yes - source of work experience for resume-building, networking opportunity, learned more about what I am/am not looking for in a career
 - ▶ I did not enroll in Co-Op but I worked on campus in the various labs as research assistant. This helped me develop my skills, choose my career path, and not to mention the glorious references I received that helped me get the job.
 - ▶ Yes. Helped pay the bills while going to school and taught me how to work in an office environment
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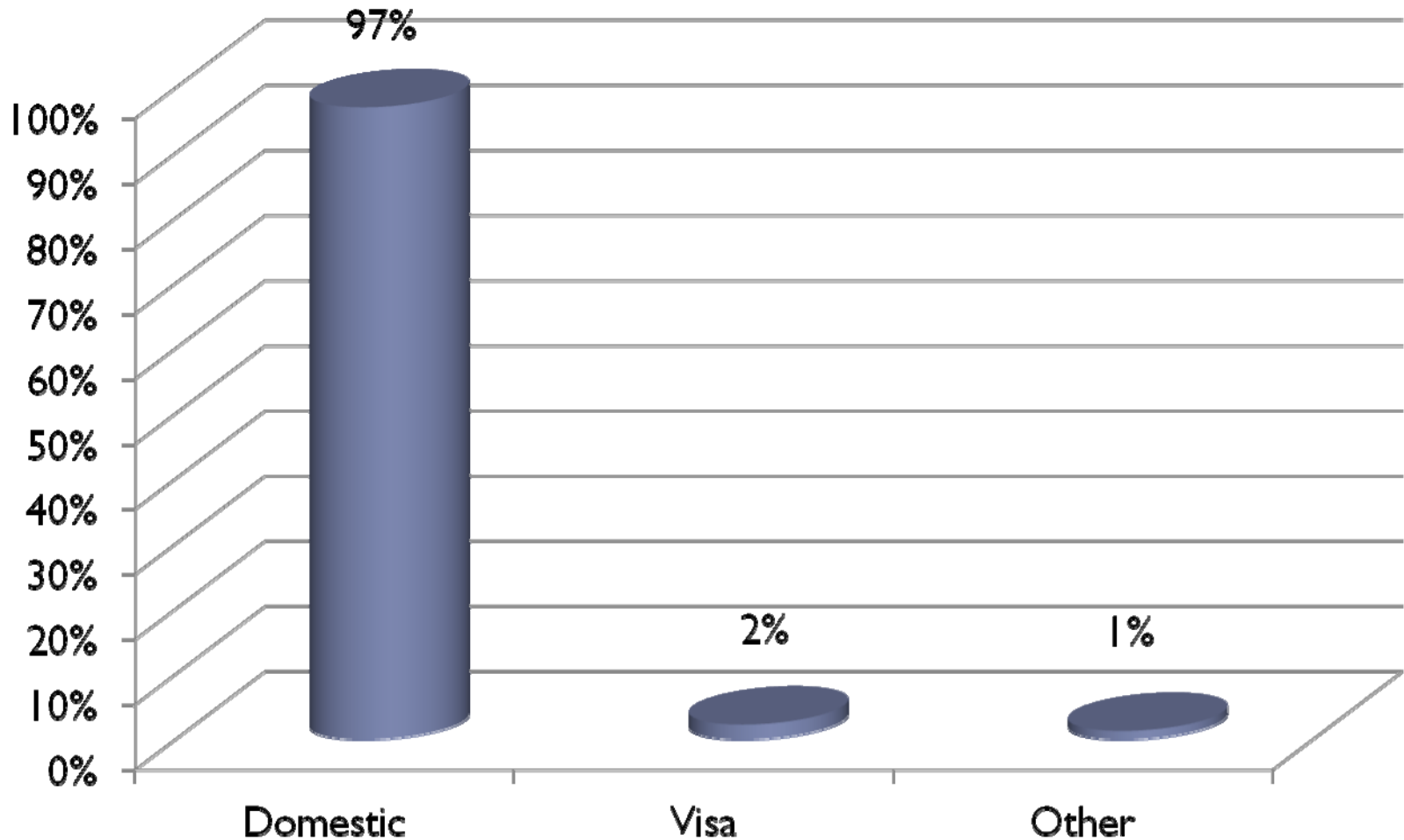
Did not pursue a post-baccalaureate
degree approximately 47%



Reasons why unemployed

Student, mat leave,
retired, volunteering,
in between jobs, stay
at home parent

During your time at SFU which category best describes you?



Feedback on the question: If you received information that assisted you in your career, please indicate if it was from a faculty or staff:

- ▶ I found that staff and faculty were very focused on research and academic careers. The departmental assistant did send out a lot of emails for Behavioural Interventionist positions. At some point, I thought that was one of the few career choices I had. The most useful career event I attended was organized by students in the psychology student union. They put together a networking event for psychology students to find out what kinds of career are available to them and had professionals come to that event.
- ▶ I attended a seminar on the kinds working conditions, salary, and lifestyle academics can expect. I learned some information that proved useful.
- ▶ I struggled to find information on what to do after graduating with my BA. I knew that I wanted to go on to do my Masters and PhD but soon realized that doing so in Psychology was not the best option for me. It would have taken me almost three years to do a Masters in Psychology (one year to upgrade my BA to BA honors) and 2 for the Masters. Instead, I was able to complete my MBA in one year instead and discover a field where I can combine my Psychology background and new business skills. The Psychology department played no role in helping me make or realize this possibility, but instead Sam Thiara from the Business undergraduate department helped me realize this after I sought him out for support.
- ▶ I had a couple of useful conversations with faculty about their counseling careers that provided more information about possible career directions, but on the whole I didn't see a lot of obvious opportunities for career exploration at the BA level.
- ▶ The professors in my honors program spent a lot of time with me discussing my options and what a career in academia would look like and how to get there.
- ▶ SFU staff did not provide any information regarding career options; however, many faculty members are happy to answer students' questions if they are approached. I was lucky enough to spend some time speaking to one of my psychology professors who provided me with some guidance on accreditation and graduate programs in Counselling Psychology.
- ▶ Real world application, experiences, examples. Anything related to research/stats.
- ▶ I believe the sessions were called "What to do with a BA in Psychology".

Feedback on the question: If you received information that assisted you in your career, please indicate if it was from a faculty or staff: (cont'd)

- ▶ I mentioned to my SFU Arts Co-op Coordinator that I wanted to learn about fund-raising. At the time, fund-raising was not an organized profession in Canada. One year after I graduated with my BA I received a call from the SFU Arts Co-op Office providing a lead on fund-raising training. I pursued the lead in partnership with SFU and was awarded a \$42,000 fellowship from the McConnell Family Foundation to do a one-year position. This opportunity launched my fund-raising career. Following the fellowship I held fund-raising positions at Canadian Mental Health Association and Science World.
 - ▶ There was a lot of discussion around graduate studies work, however I decided not to take that route. Had I done so, the information would have been very useful.
 - ▶ Faculty - information about how to apply to grad school, help with applications, help preparing myself for an academic career (e.g., research experience, publications) Staff - help with application process
 - ▶ honours seminar. all information related to grad school. the program seemed to suggest, at that time, that grad school was the only option
 - ▶ Information received from staff responsible for SFU Nightline; the training was invaluable; the experience prepared me for my first post-university career with the Crisis Intervention and Suicide Prevention Centre of BC.
 - ▶ Career Centre helped a lot.
 - ▶ it was somewhat thin in terms of career support - it seemed that much of psych was to move towards counselling and grad school... I didn't have the grades so I stumbled into available jobs through want ads and started my career that way. It could have been much better.
 - ▶ Rec'd info from Co-op program, but not from the Psyc dept.
 - ▶ Pamphlets that explain what careers a BA in PSYC generally leads to -- but at that point I was already almost done my degree.
 - ▶ Faculty - description of what life is like while pursuing a phd. A bit of a reality check for those of us who might have been thinking "of course I'm getting a phd, what else would I be doing here?". The proportion of students thinking this seems to gradually decline as you move on from 1st to 4th year.
-



Cont'd

- ▶ Since Counselling Psychology was under the Education Department, I spoke more with professors from the Education Department about pursuing my career and they gave me all the relevant information. They informed me of what I needed to become a clinical counsellor and gave me advice on how to apply for graduate school.
 - ▶ I wish the faculty would do a better job of preparing their students for the Masters program from the beginning. At times I found it difficult to understand the path in becoming a successful candidate for a MA in Psychology.
 - ▶ Dr. Hart took time out to sit down with me and discuss my options, which at the time felt quite limited; I found him to be extremely helpful. Dr. Bruce Alexander, who was retired when I graduated, also provided a great deal of assistance, despite the fact that he had no obligation to do so - also greatly appreciated. However, I really had to seek out these connections, and I don't know that other students would have the same experience - there is no structure set up for faculty to become involved with students.
 - ▶ The only information I recall receiving was from a Faculty member who told me I would never get into the counselling program at SFU so I shouldn't bother trying. He was right but he did not give me any alternative suggestions or direction. I did end up with that degree just from a different institution. There are other options.
 - ▶ It was from a faculty member. It was useful because I was unaware of that specific profession and what it entailed.
 - ▶ David Cox was helpful primarily as a support
 - ▶ both - basically what I learned was that BA in psych was not sufficient, I needed to undertake a MA or even PH.D in psych (if I want to become a psychologist). However, I came to explore different options through trial and errors. Talking to both faculty and staff, again, were good starting point.
 - ▶ The department held a talk on career options after psychology and the focus was on clinical and counselling psychology. That was my first exposure to the option of counselling psychology and I knew then it was a good fit for me and I pursued it after that experience.
 - ▶ Faculty, got me into grad school
-



Cont'd

- ▶ Faculty, Staff and Administrators at SFU strive to encourage students to be independent thinkers. In the psychology department I learned to use applied psychology in a pragmatic multi disciplinary manner towards problem solving.
- ▶ Faculty. Helped me open my horizons beyond a narrow focus on psychology
- ▶ The honours information session was interesting because I learned a bit more about the benefits for post-graduate life
- ▶ not really wasn't prepared or helped much with jobs
- ▶ Faculty- I remember 3 professors in particular- David Cox, Richard Wright and Thomas Spalek. I took third year-fourth year courses with them and all of them took ten minutes out of their time during a lecture talking about career after a degree in psychology. Thomas Spalek actually took us on a field trip to his lab during one of lectures and demonstrated the research that he is doing. It was comforting to know that there are careers out there that would accept you with a bachelor's degree as well.
- ▶ It's a long time ago, but I think I got some brochures about typical careers with a BA in Psychology from a staff member.
- ▶ I have talked to my TAs about post grad work, and they have provided insights about this.
- ▶ I completed a battery of tests in the in house counselling department so I could see if my plan was within a reasonable scope of the outcome of the testing.
- ▶ faculty's attitude about there being nothing with a BA in Psych was not helpful....
- ▶ Prior to returning to school at age 46 I did a Career Exploration at Kwantlen College. The data said Psychology, Psychologist, and research among other things. I pursued Psych courses, worked in the Psych Lab and Student Services. A faculty member & Staff members in the Counselling & Advising Department provided valuable feedback on my queries. A faculty member was asked if he knew a student who could handle research in a correctional environment. I had already moved up to SFU for my last two years coursework. I was hired by the Addictions Research Division, CSC to finish off the data collection on a national study. The career exploration report combined with the psych coursework proved a "perfect fit" for me. I was hired full-time as a contractor by the Regional Research Committee immediately the national study ended. I reduced my course work to part-time, worked full time and graduated in May 2005. I then became an indeterminate employee. SFU faculty and staff did offer valuable feedback for me but I had already done the "spade-work" beginning prior to my first courses in Psych, Sociology, Philosophy, English and Academic Writing at the college. P.S. I carried my original 1969 letter of rejection from SFU in my pocket when I received my BA degree from SFU 36 years later.

What are we going to do with our degree?



Occupations of Alumni

- ▶ Researcher, Centre for the Study of Gender Social Inequities and Mental Health
 - ▶ Manager, Communications and Finance for a Research Centre
 - ▶ Labour and Employment Lawyer Editor in Chief of a local start-up fashion magazine
 - ▶ Coordinator, Provincial/Territorial Partnerships (I work for a non-profit society. Responsibilities include liaising with partner organizations across Canada, creating collaborative provincial/territorial government funding proposals, some grant administration and responding to requests from the general public.)
 - ▶ Court Support Victim Services
 - ▶ Community Services Coordinator
 - ▶ Revenue Development Coordinator - coordinate fundraising campaigns for a Not for Profit organization
 - ▶ Clinical Counsellor
 - ▶ Manager, Alumni Relations
 - ▶ Customer Service Representative Career advisor
 - ▶ Career counseling for youths Lawyer
 - ▶ Occupational Therapist
 - ▶ Partner at a law firm. lawyer
 - ▶ Psychology Research Assistant, Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services (currently working full-time as an RA for YFPS, a division of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (BC Government) which provides mental health and custody services to youth)
 - ▶ Academic Advisor
 - ▶ Mortgage Broker
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Occupations of Alumni

- ▶ MBA student Project Coordinator
 - ▶ Employment & Assistance Worker
 - ▶ Soon to be stay at home mom
 - ▶ Student Registrar
 - ▶ Career Advisor at Art Institute
 - ▶ IT Support Technician
 - ▶ Senior Manager Human Resources
 - ▶ Quality Control technician
 - ▶ Translator ABA Therapy: work one on one with children diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder
 - ▶ Assistant professor
 - ▶ Speech Language Pathologist
 - ▶ Probation Officer
 - ▶ Senior International Student
 - ▶ Senior Manager Human Resources
 - ▶ LST Teacher Business and Policy Analyst at SFU in Student Services. I assist in the support and improvement of business processes related to Student Services functions, including Admissions, Records and Registration, Financial Aid and Awards, etc.
 - ▶ Research Assistant - Literature search and review
 - ▶ Database Management - Data Analysis (qualitative and quantitative)
 - ▶ Student Development Officer
-



Occupations of Alumni

- ▶ Motivational Speaker
- ▶ Media Literacy Coordinator
- ▶ Photographer and owner of photography studio
- ▶ Co-Owner of a digital marketing agency
- ▶ Interior Designer
- ▶ Settlement Program Officer
- ▶ Senior Joy Club Lumber Trader - China Region
- ▶ Executive Assistant
- ▶ Highschool teacher
- ▶ Administrative Assistant/Records Coordinator
- ▶ ESL Individual Services Coordinator
- ▶ Research Associate Director
- ▶ Communications and Government Relations
- ▶ Disability Advisor
- ▶ Mental Health
- ▶ Senior Business Officer, Western Economic Diversification Canada, Government of Canada- implement economic development programs, business analysis, provide advise to Minister and senior executive on matters related to the Government of Canada and the Department etc.



Occupations of Alumni

- ▶ Land title examiner -examine documents related to land -ensure documents pass inspection according to statutes
 - ▶ Executive Director of Non-Profit Society
 - ▶ Digital Solutions Manager
 - ▶ Development Interventionist
 - ▶ Assistant Language Teacher
 - ▶ Case Manager in a Mental Health
 - ▶ Child and Youth Advocate for Representative for Children and Youth
 - ▶ Registered Psychologist
 - ▶ BC Region Policy Advisor for the federal government
 - ▶ Program Advisor
 - ▶ Senior Portfolio Administrator
 - ▶ Program Consultant, Health Canada Program Management for public health-related projects and initiatives
 - ▶ Insurance Department Manager
 - ▶ Program Manager, Co-operative
 - ▶ Canadian Forces:Veteran's Transition liaison
 - ▶ Program Director for a non profit overseeing counselling, victim assistance, and parenting programs
 - ▶ Art therapist in private practice
 - ▶ HR Assistant with the Federal government
-



Occupations of Alumni

- ▶ QA Analyst I will be working with a mobile software development team to ensure the robustness of software applications in their target markets. This is a SFU Coop Practicum employment in the SFU Computer Science Program
- ▶ Elementary Counseling Support Worker - run small groups with students in K-7 who require social, emotional, & behavioural support
- ▶ Medical Office Manager
- ▶ Clinical Supervisor for the Vancouver Drug Court Treatment & Resource Centre
- ▶ English literacy tutor
- ▶ Youth Supervisor, Burnaby Youth
- ▶ Corrections Youth Supervisor
- ▶ Occupational Health & Safety Associate at Providence Health Care
- ▶ Architect Child and Youth Mental
- ▶ Recreation Aide Executive Director for a hospice society
- ▶ Private adult English teacher in Guatemala
- ▶ Project advisor at BC health authority.
- ▶ Senior Associate in Tax/Accounting
- ▶ MCFD Youth Probation Officer (supervision of youth on probation or bail) and continued delegation as an MCFD Child Welfare Social Worker (did for 13 years prior to probation)
- ▶ Admissions Recruiter,



Occupations of Alumni

- ▶ Fines Assistant -- work at SFU Library with patron records, lost books, etc.
- ▶ Student in a MA/PhD program Service Design & Quality Improvement Specialist
- ▶ Liquor Store Manager
- ▶ Ministry of Attorney General - In Court Services - Court Clerk
- ▶ Faculty Associate, SFU, Department of Education
- ▶ Volunteer crime victim support worker (domestic violence, elder abuse)
- ▶ Office Manager
- ▶ Youth centre supervisor
- ▶ Co-op Coordinator
- ▶ Registration and Records Clerk
- ▶ Strategy Manager in Security
- ▶ Human Resources Assistant
- ▶ Program Assistant for the Student Affairs
- ▶ Ph.D. Student in Psychology Teaching Assistant Research Coordinator
- ▶ Acute Operations, Lower Mainland Integrated Protection Services
- ▶ Private Banking Associate | RBC Wealth
- ▶ Teacher

