



# Factors Impacting Texas PT and PTA Students' Membership in TPTA and APTA

Ashley McCoy, SPT; Lynne Hughes PT, PhD(c)

Angelo State University

## Background Information

- The Texas Physical Therapy Association (TPTA) represents 4,100 members but only ~25% of licensees.
- This lack of involvement in the Association has become a great concern for both APTA and TPTA leaders.
- Few existing studies have been performed which look at APTA membership of students and no studies have been performed which look at TPTA specifically.
- The TPTA is currently promoting professionalism and encouraging 100% student membership through the Reach 100 campaign.

# Purpose

- Therefore, it is imperative that we know the factors keeping students from joining the organization.
- The purpose of this study is to determine the factors impacting student physical therapists' and student physical therapist assistants' decisions to join and maintain a membership in the APTA by surveying all PT and PTA students across the state of Texas.

# Subjects

- In the Spring of 2010, at the time of the survey, there were approximately 1149 PT students and 558 PTA students for an estimated total of 1707 students.

# Methods

- An online survey on the factors affecting state and national association membership was created at SurveyMonkey.com.
- The survey consisted of multiple choice questions with some questions providing an “other” response and a chance for the respondent to provide a written answer.
- A pilot study of the survey was conducted with 6 PT and PTA students and first year professionals to solicit feedback and comments prior to disseminating the survey to all students.
- An email invitation containing a link to the survey was distributed to faculty and/or students at all PT and PTA schools in Texas.

# Data Analysis

- All responses were collected through SurveyMonkey.
- SurveyMonkey filters were used to categorize responses
- Chi-square analysis was used to determine significant differences ( $P < 0.05$ ).

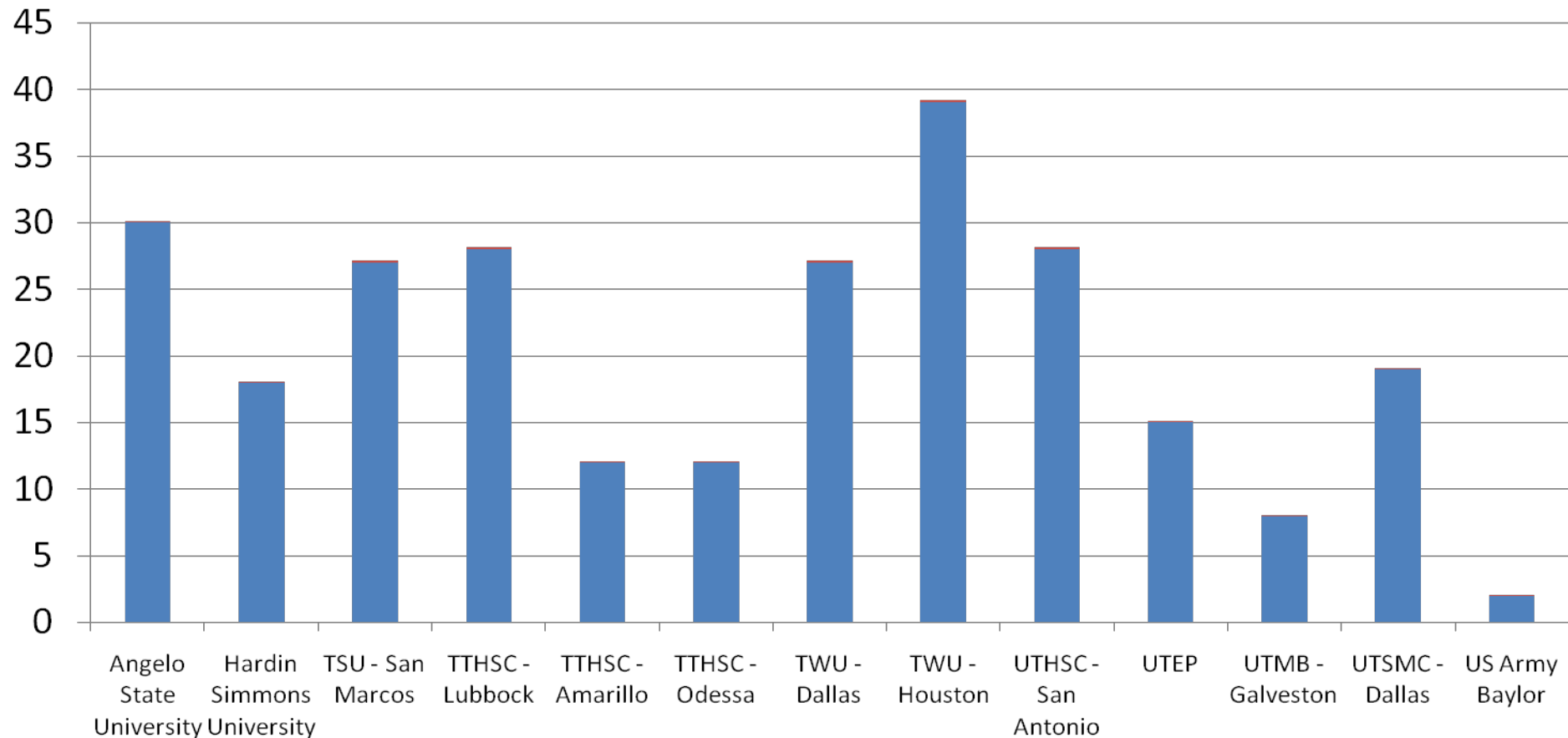
# Results

- A total of 479 students (~28%) responded to the survey invitation .
- 28 of the 31 campuses had at least 1 respondent.
- The respondents included 233 PT students, 120 PTA students; and 126 respondents were unknown because they did not answer the question inquiring about which program they attended.
- Therefore, the results were left combined reflecting a total of PT and PTA student participants.

# School Responses

- All PT schools had at least 1 respondent.

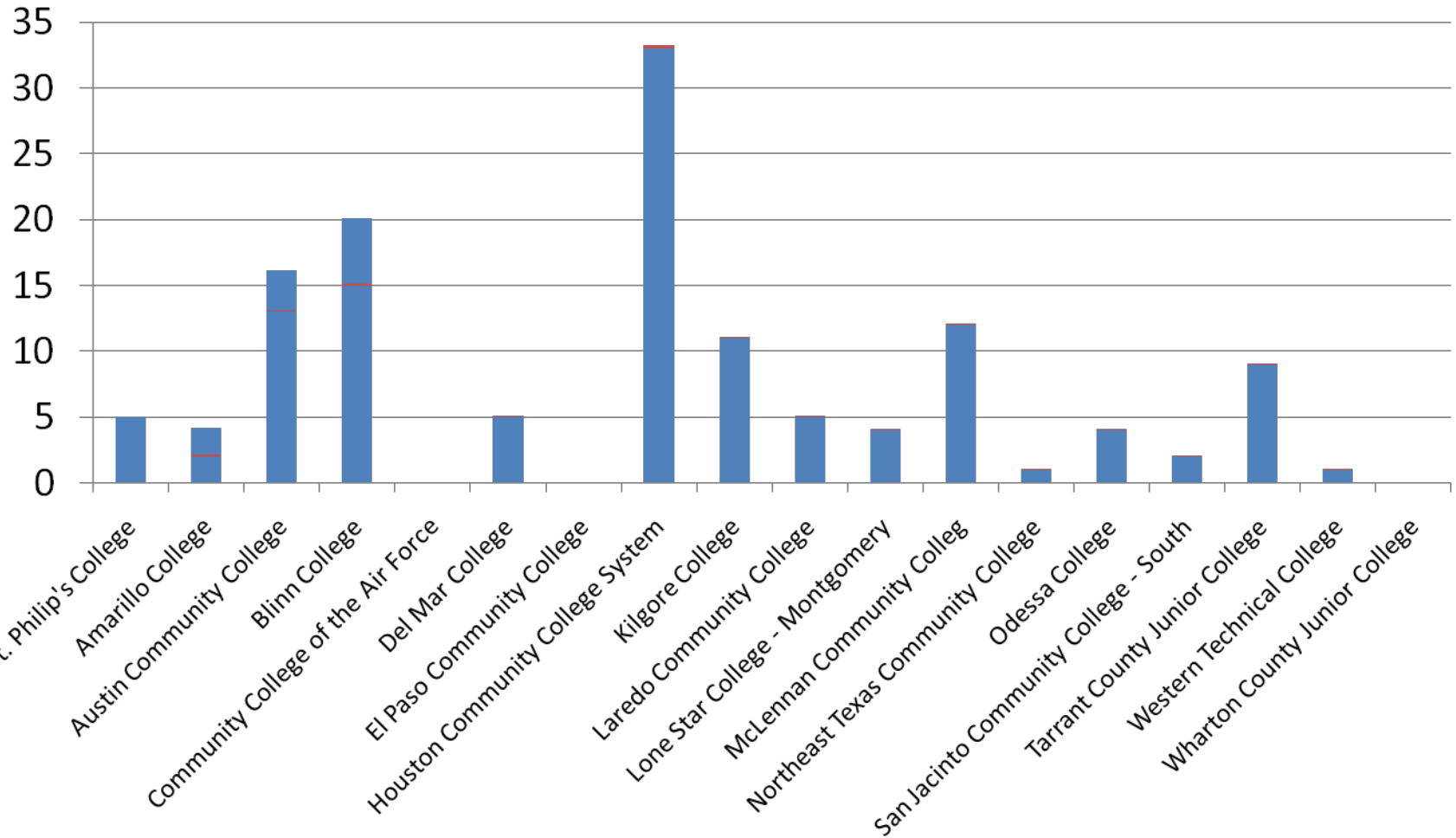
Number of responses from each PT school





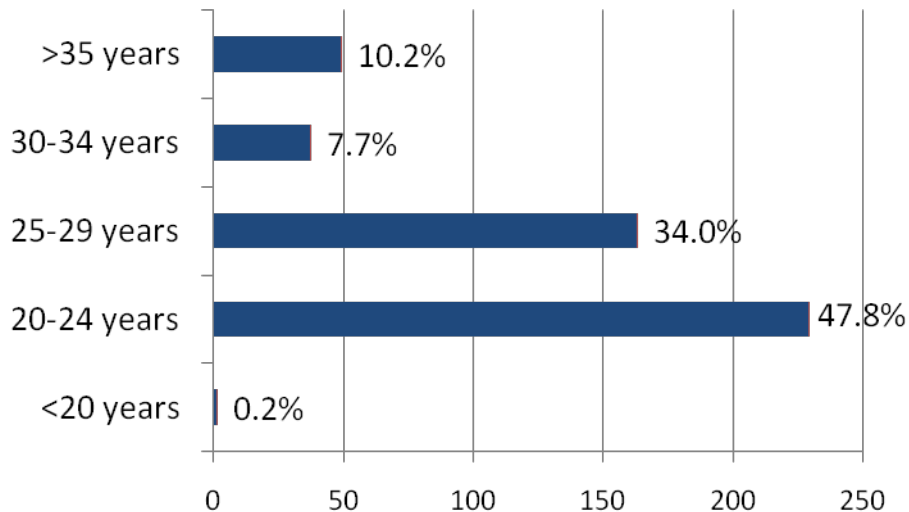
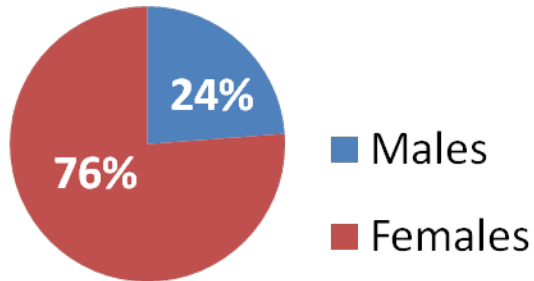
# School Responses

## Number of responses from each PTA school



# Participant Demographics

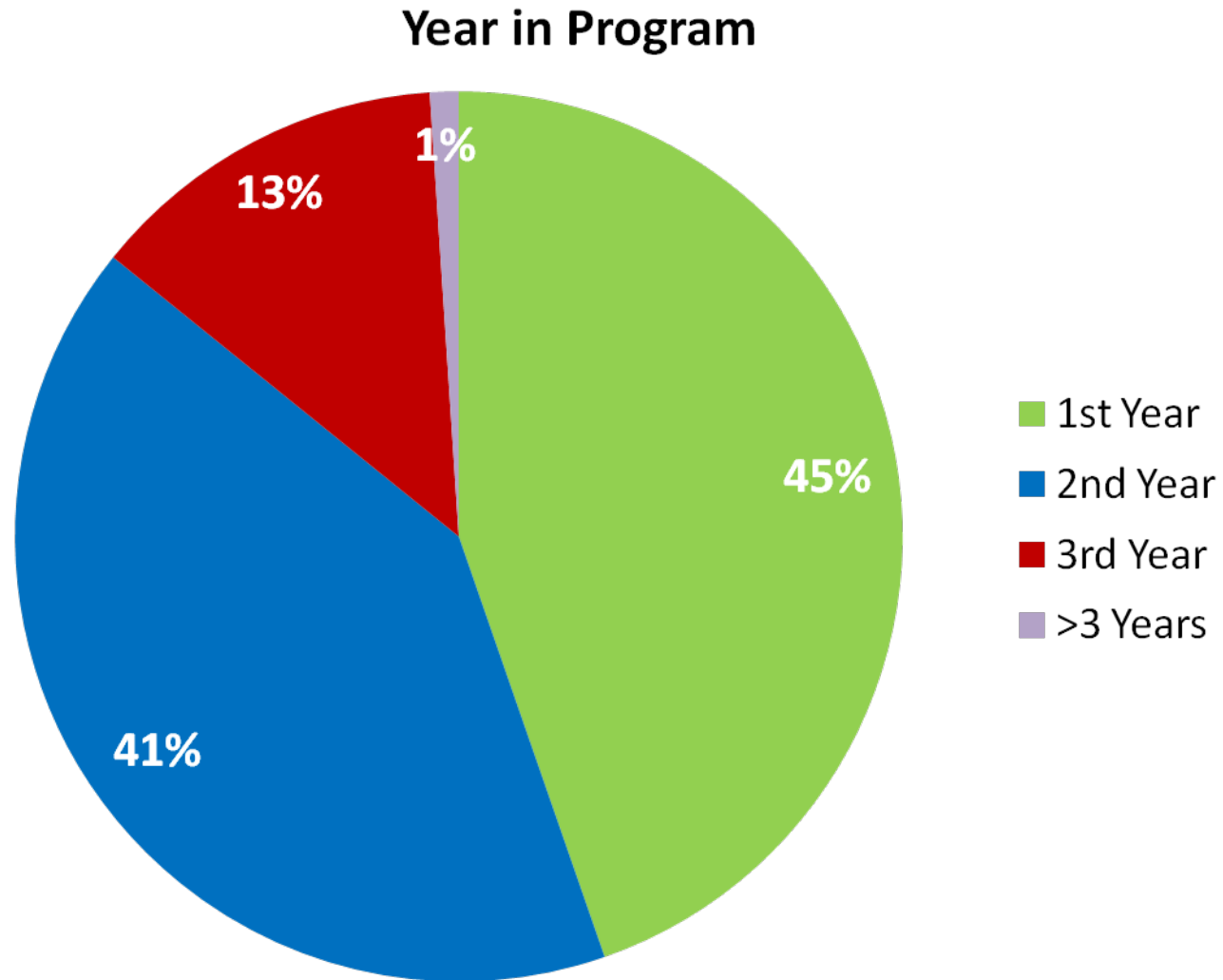
## Gender



## Ethnicity

Caucasian	325 (67.9%)
Hispanic	91 (19.0%)
Asian	33 (6.9%)
African-American	19 (4.0%)
Other (Mixed)	5 (1.0%)
American Indian or Alaska Native	4 (0.8%)
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Island	2 (0.4%)

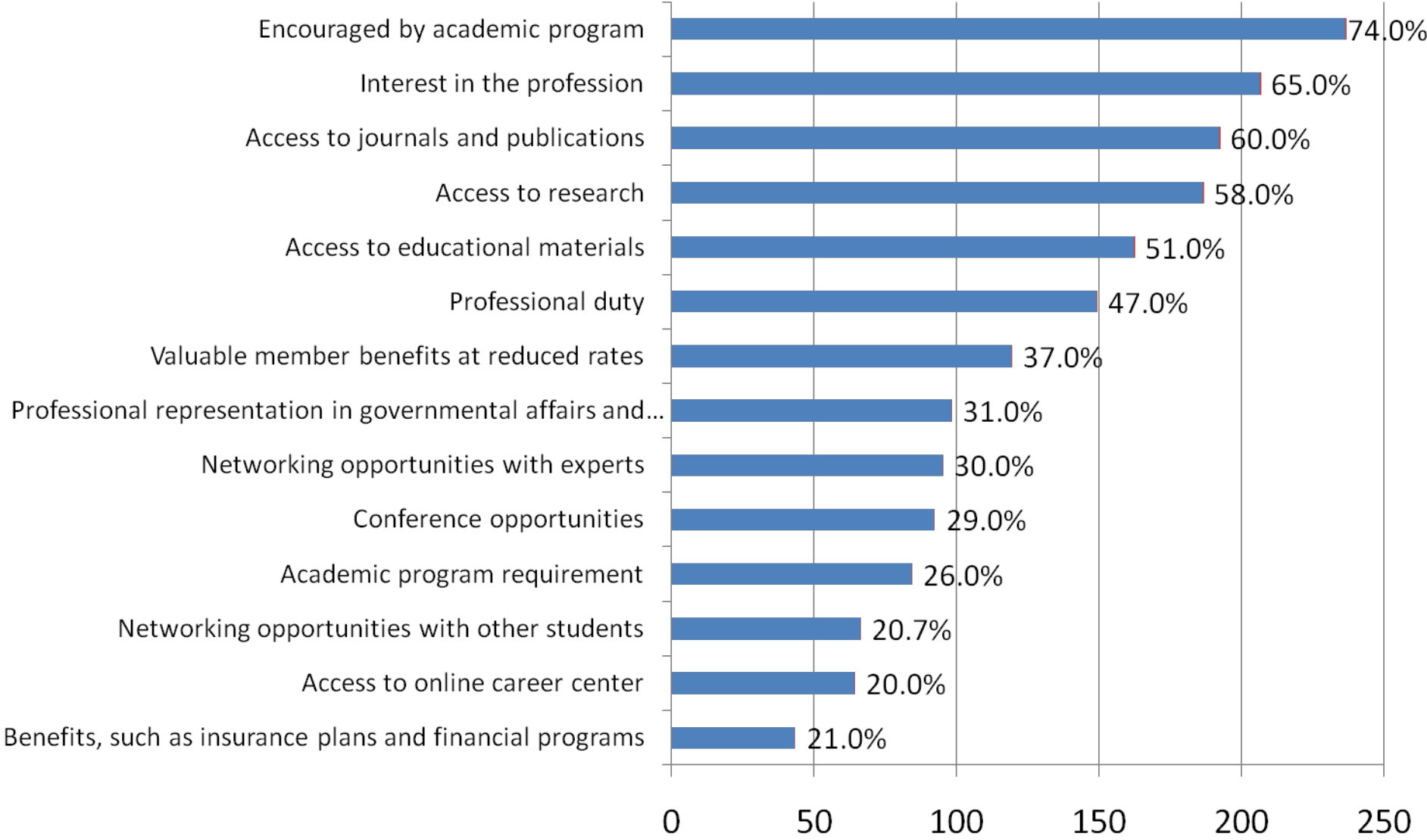
# Participant Demographics



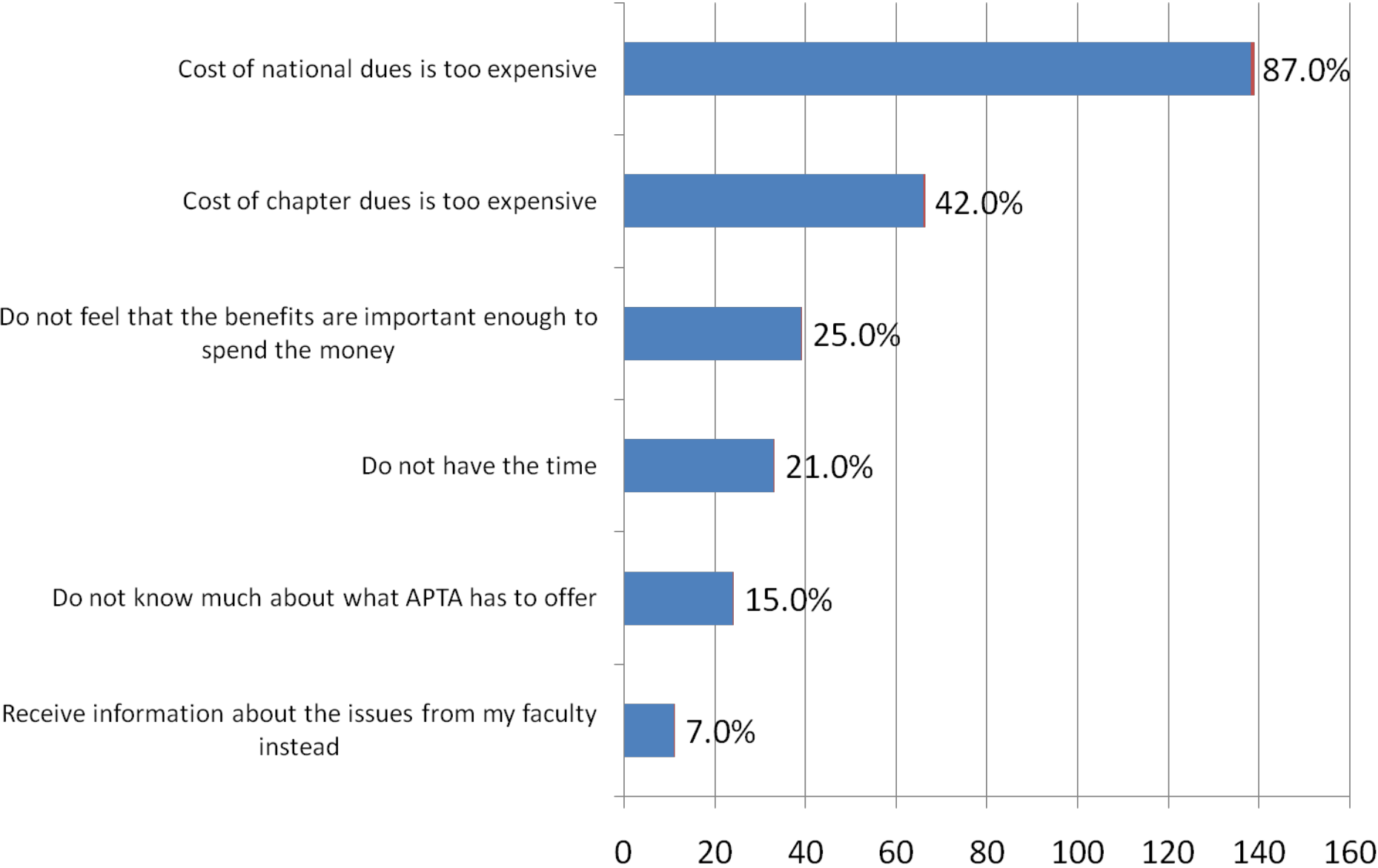
## APTA/TPTA Membership

- 320 students (67%) reported being members of APTA and TPTA
- 158 students (33%) reported being non-members
- No association between age (30 and over vs 29 and under) or ethnicity (Caucasian vs Minority) and membership were not found.

# Reasons given why students are members of APTA and TPTA.



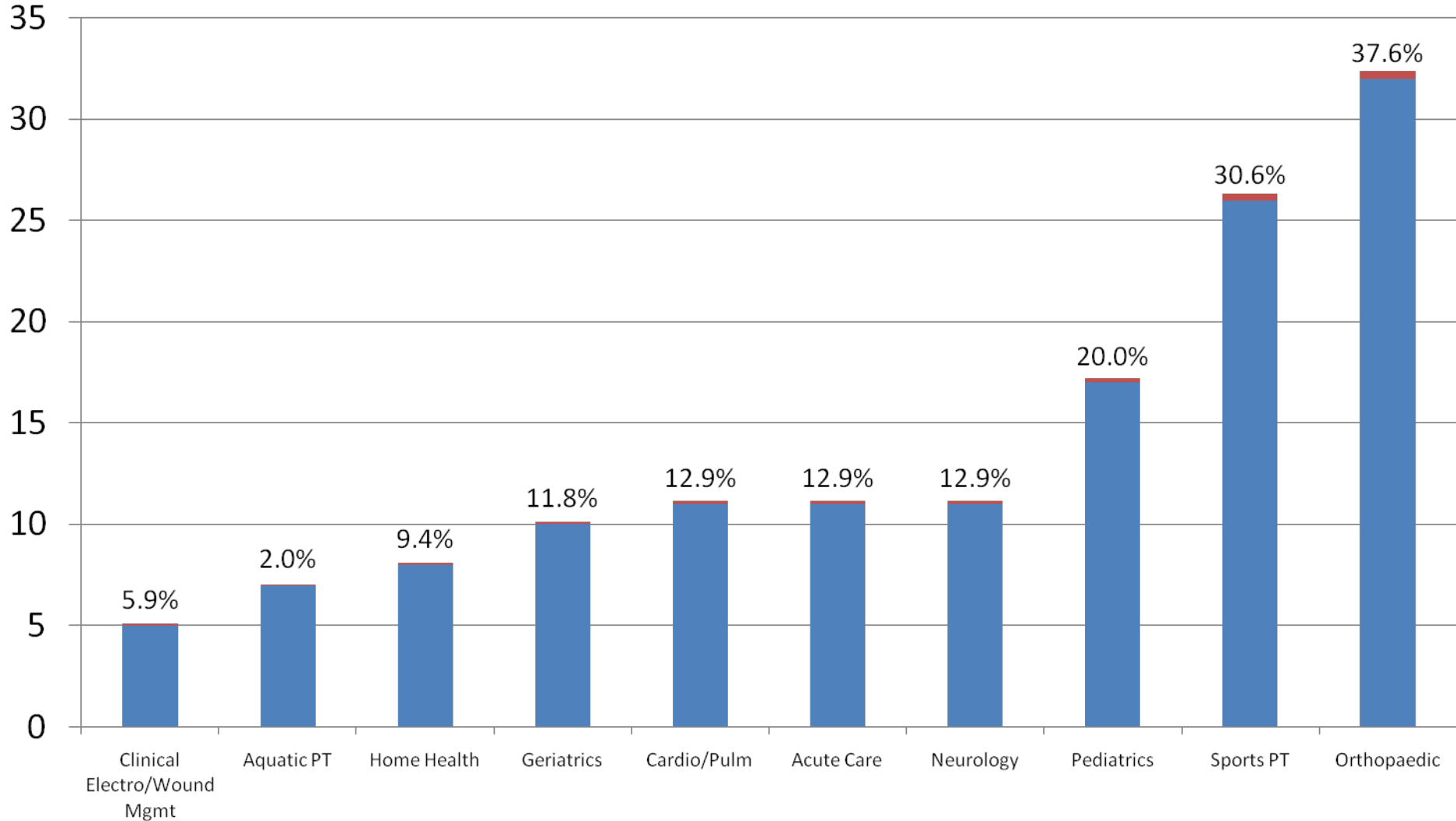
# Reasons given why students are NOT members.



## Section Membership

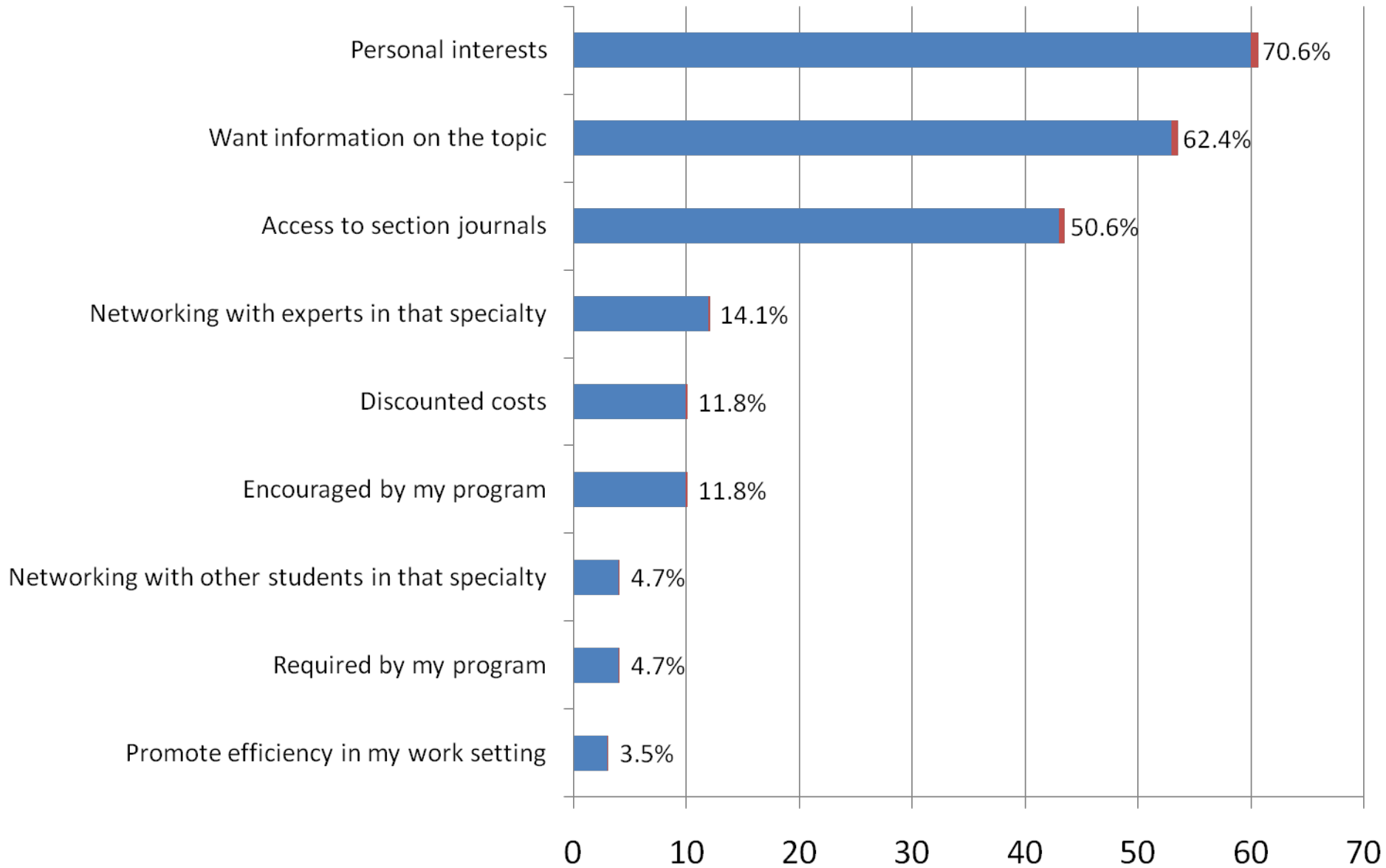
- Most students (368 or 77%) were not current section members while 85 students (18%) were section members.
- The most common sections for student membership were the Orthopaedic section (32 out of 85 students, 38%) and Sports Physical Therapy section (26 students, 31%).
- There was at least 1 student member in each of the 18 sections, except for Hand Rehabilitation.

# Top 10 Section Membership Numbers

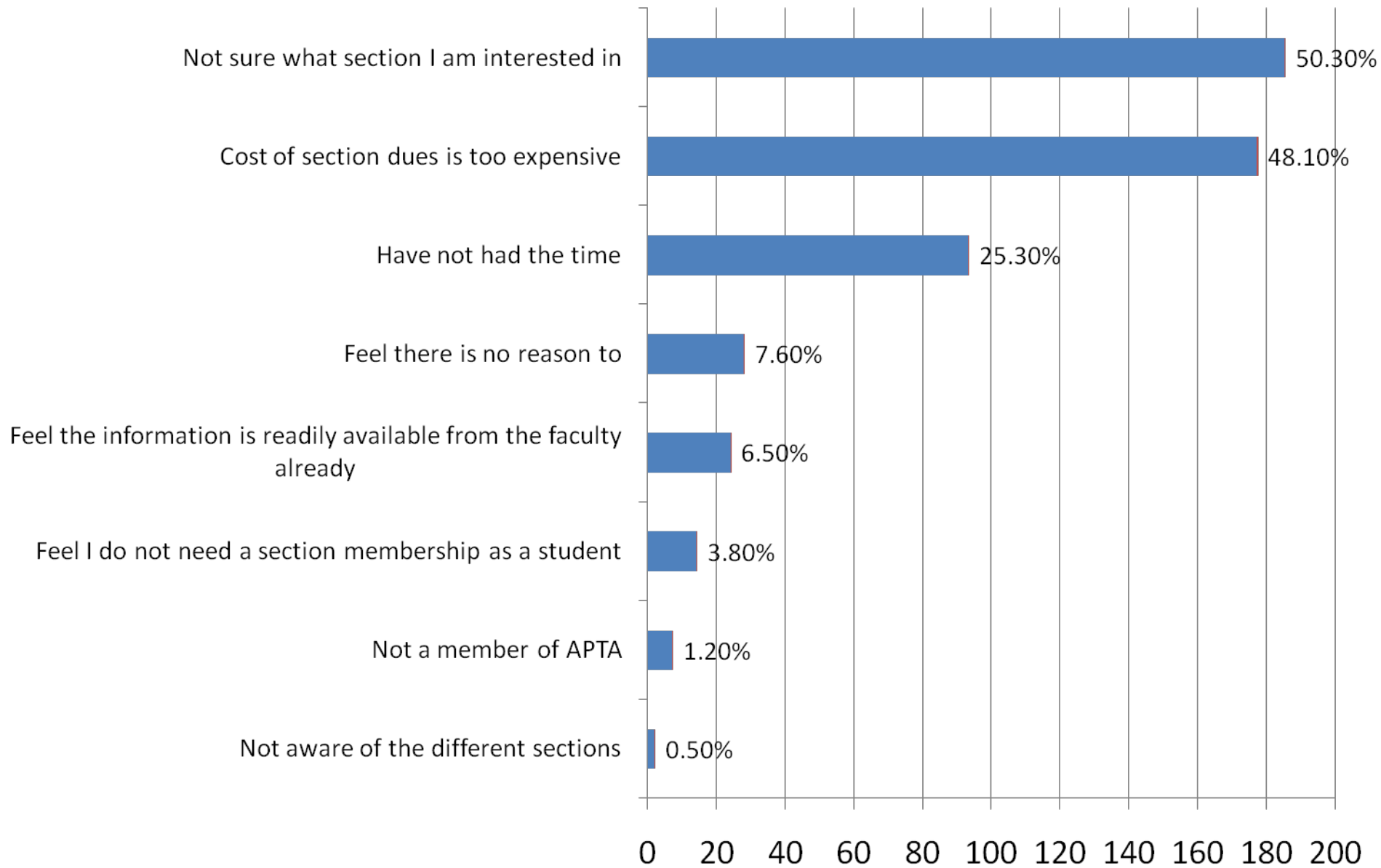




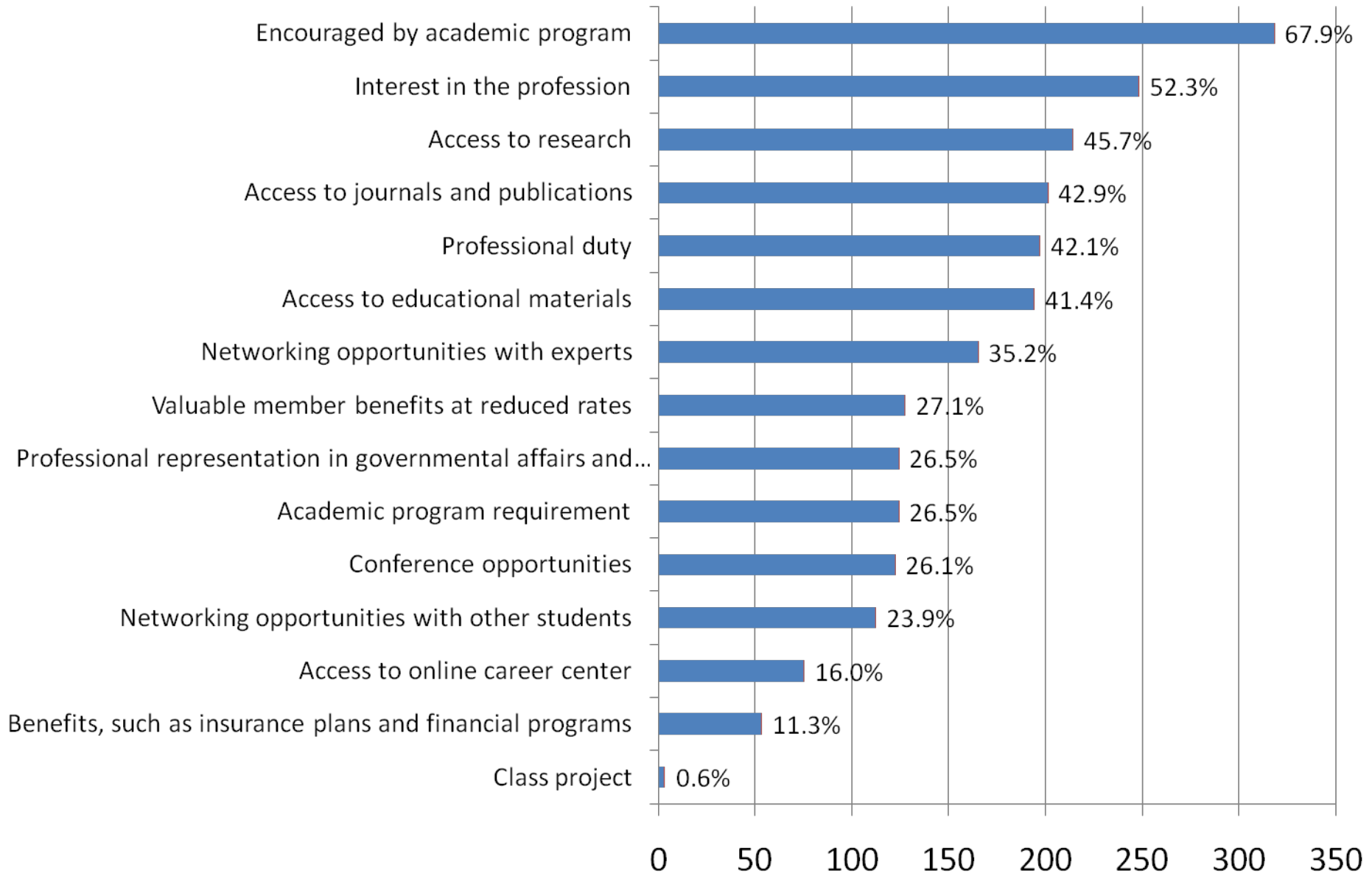
# Reasons given why students are *SECTION* members.



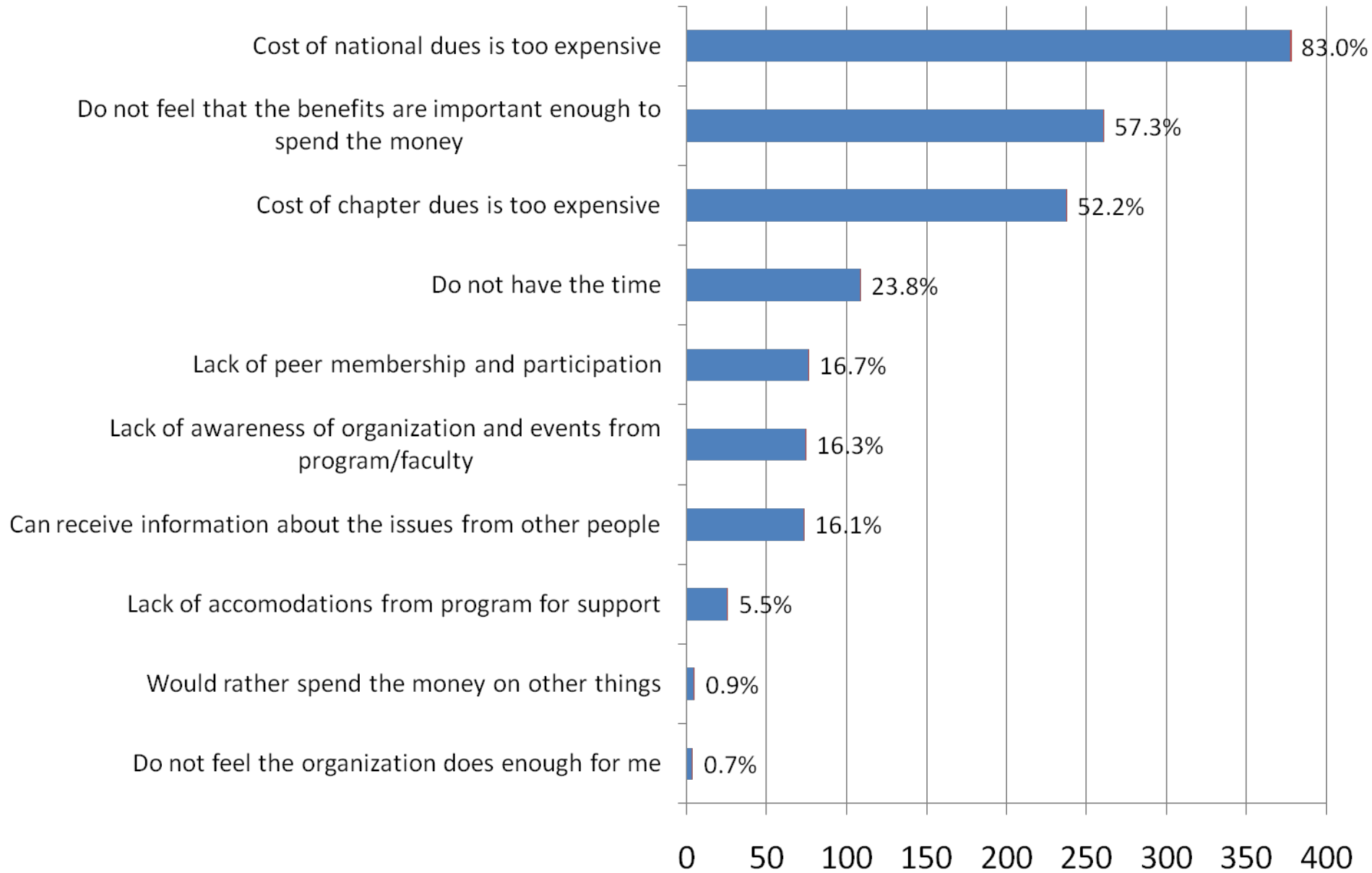
# Reasons given why students are NOT *SECTION* members.



# Reasons given classmates are involved in TPTA/APTA.



# Reasons given why classmates are *NOT* involved.



# District Involvement

- Out of 477 responses, 279 students have attended a district meeting.

Benefit of Continuing Education	
Low Benefit	39 (13.9%)
Somewhat Low Benefit	26 (9.3%)
Neutral	76 (27.0%)
Somewhat High Benefit	81 (28.8%)
High Benefit	59 (21.0%)

Benefit of Business Portion	
Low Benefit	48 (17.8%)
Somewhat Low Benefit	65 (24.2%)
Neutral	91 (33.8%)
Somewhat High Benefit	43 (16.0%)
High Benefit	22 (8.2%)

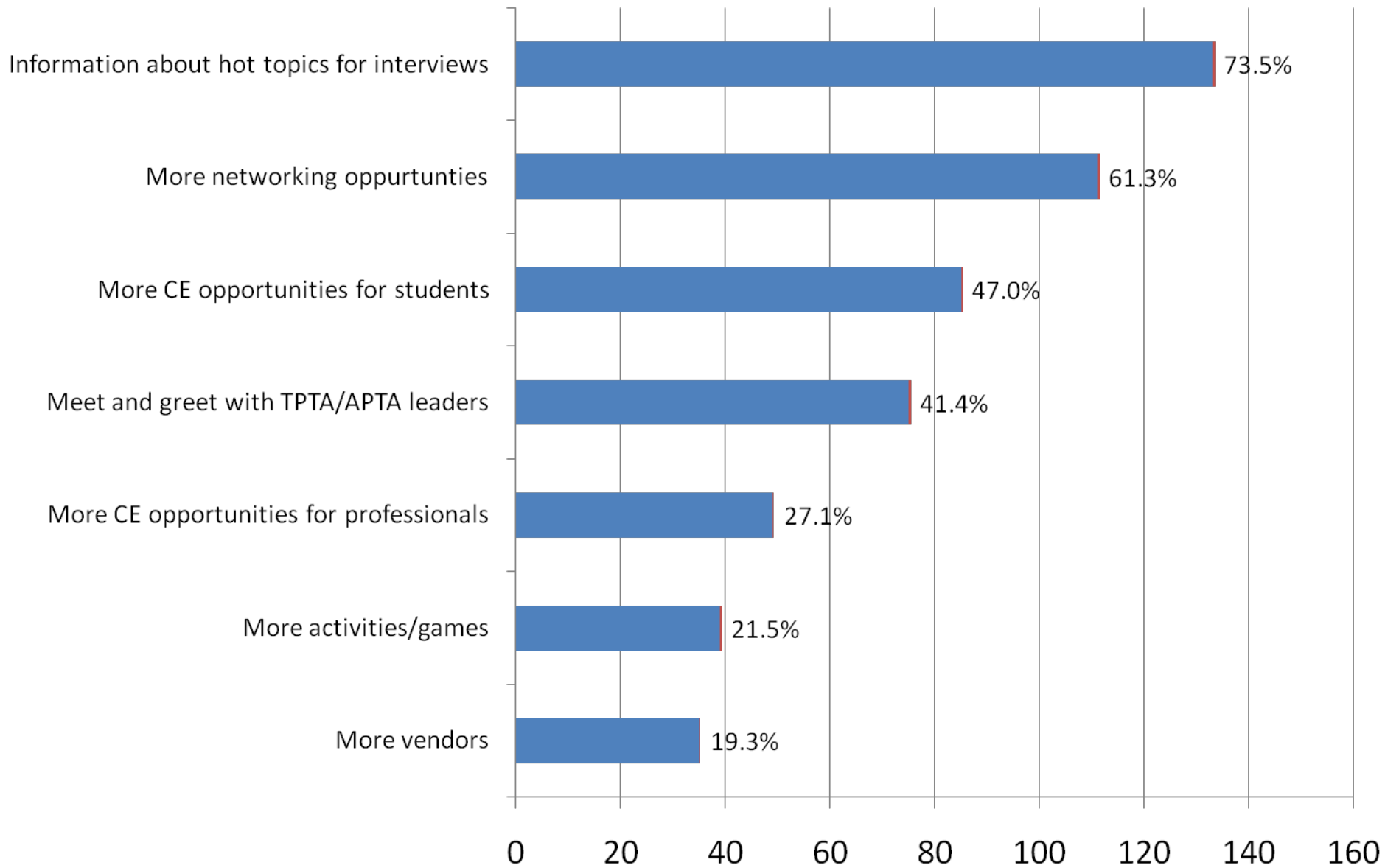
# State Involvement

- 205 students reported that they have participated in at least one TPTA event

Attendance at TPTA Events	
Student Conclave	175 (85.4%)
Student Assembly	84 (41.0%)
Annual Conference	63 (30.7%)
Board of Directors Meeting	11 (5.4%)

Perceived Benefit of Activities	
Vendors	154 (78.2%)
Clinical ed opportunities for students	144 (73.1%)
Student assembly	89 (45.2%)
Activities/games	67 (34.0%)
Volunteer opportunities	34 (17.3%)

# Activities wanted at TPTA Student Conclave.



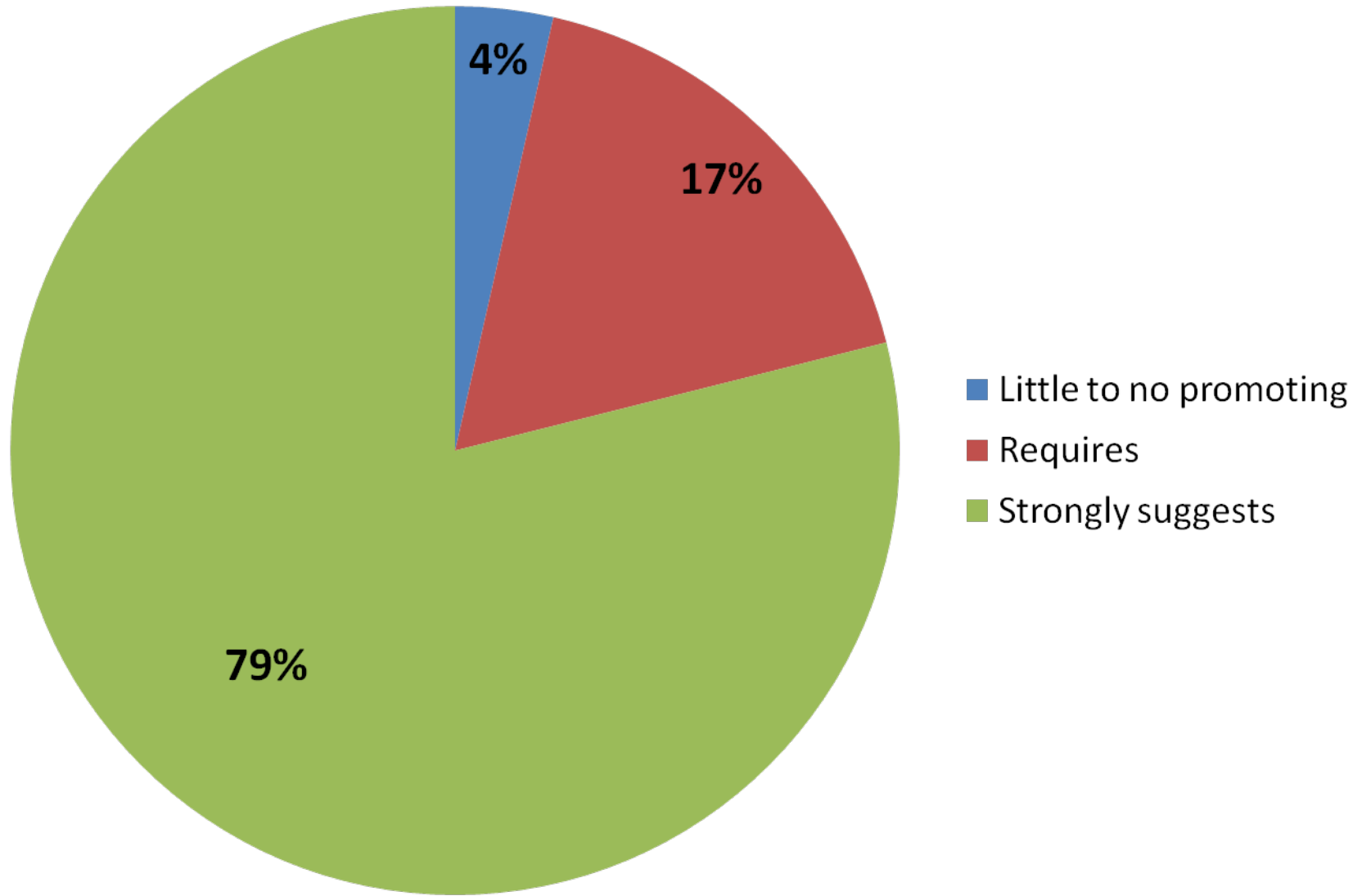
# National Involvement

- 71 students have reported attending an APTA event

<b>Attendance at APTA Events</b>	
Annual Conference	37 (52.1%)
Student Conclave	23 (32.4%)
Combined Sections Meeting	23 (32.4%)
Student Assembly	8 (11.3%)



# How PT/PTA programs promote membership



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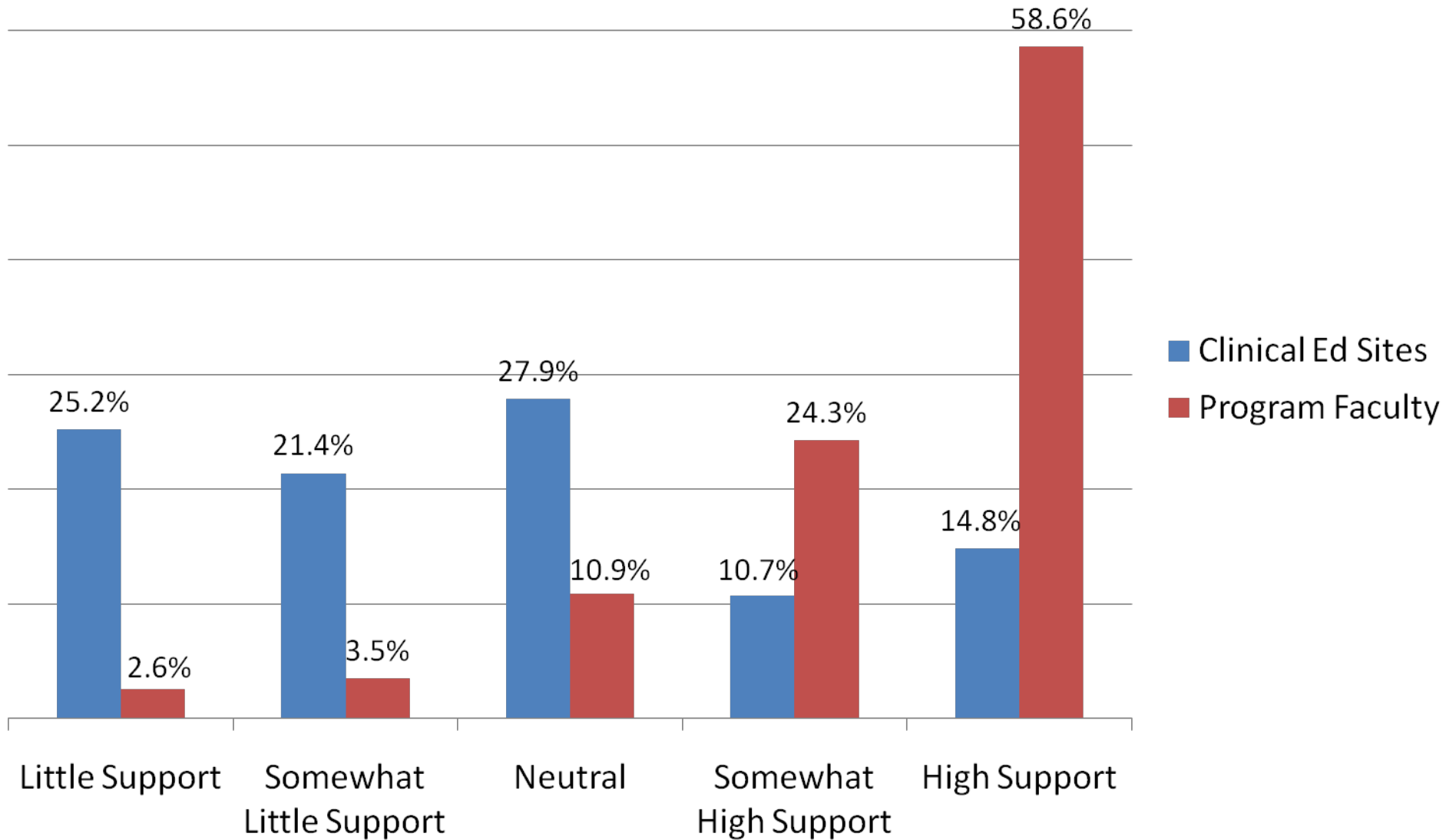
## Program Assistance With Dues

Students held responsible for total cost of dues	431 (91.1%)
Program pays for both APTA and TPTA dues	32 (6.8%)
Program helps pay for APTA dues	7 (1.5%)
Program helps pay for TPTA dues	3 (0.6%)

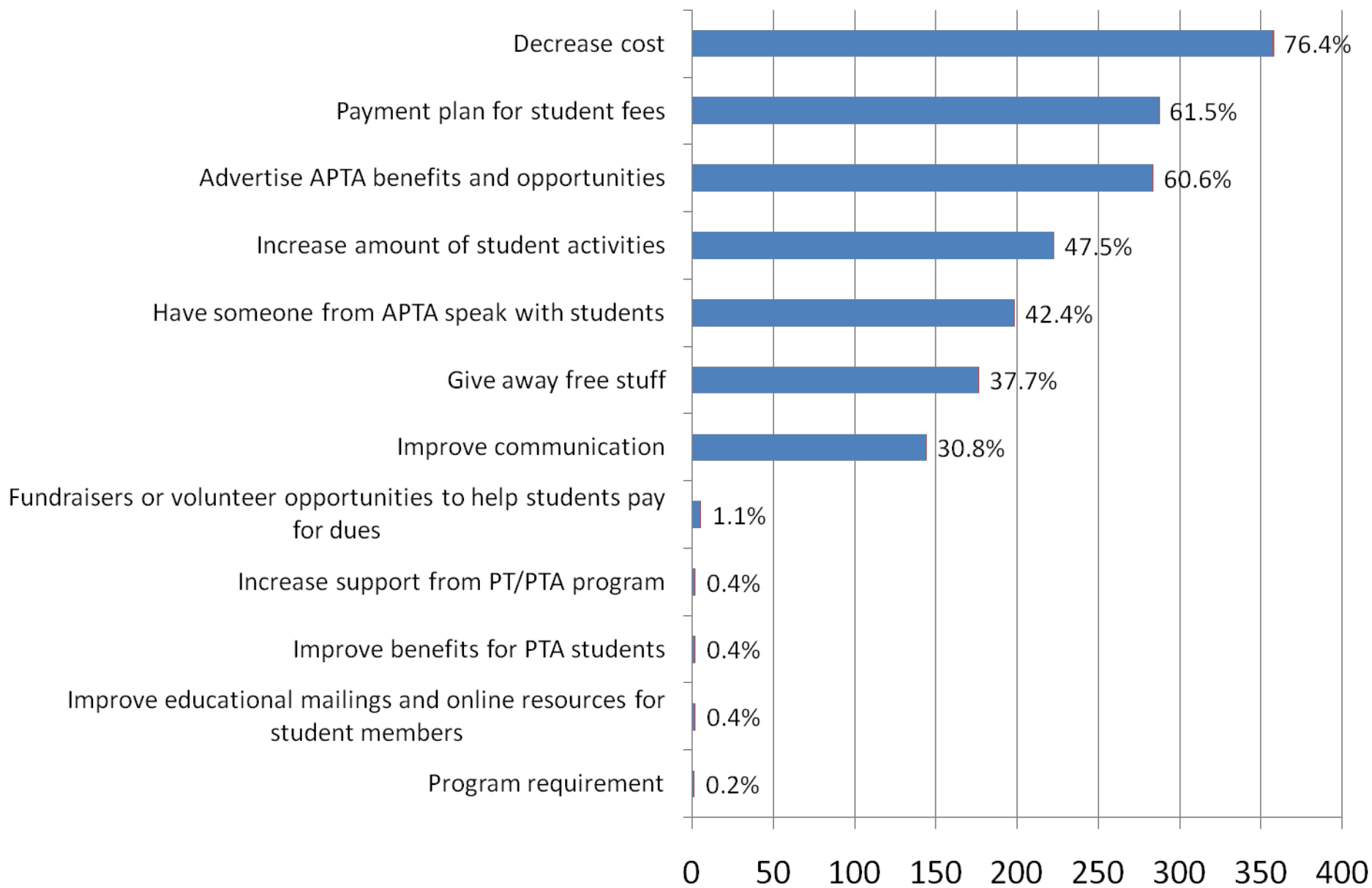
## TPTA Liaison at School

Unsure	162 (34.0%)
Yes, a student member	101 (21.2%)
Yes, both a faculty member and a student	100 (21.0%)
Yes, a faculty member	90 (18.9%)
No	24 (5.0%)

# Comparison of membership promotion between clinical education sites and program faculty



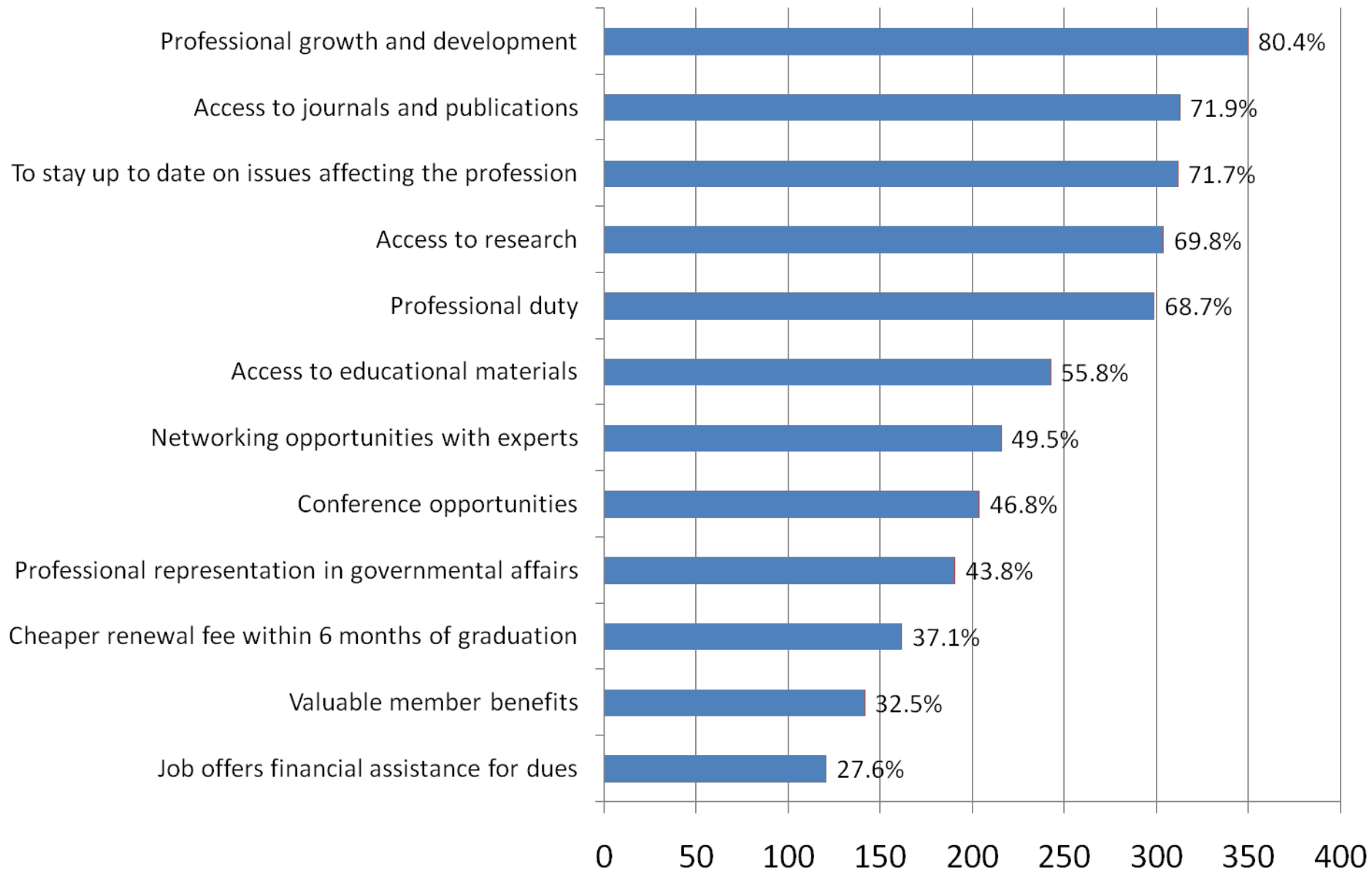
# Strategies students would use to increase membership



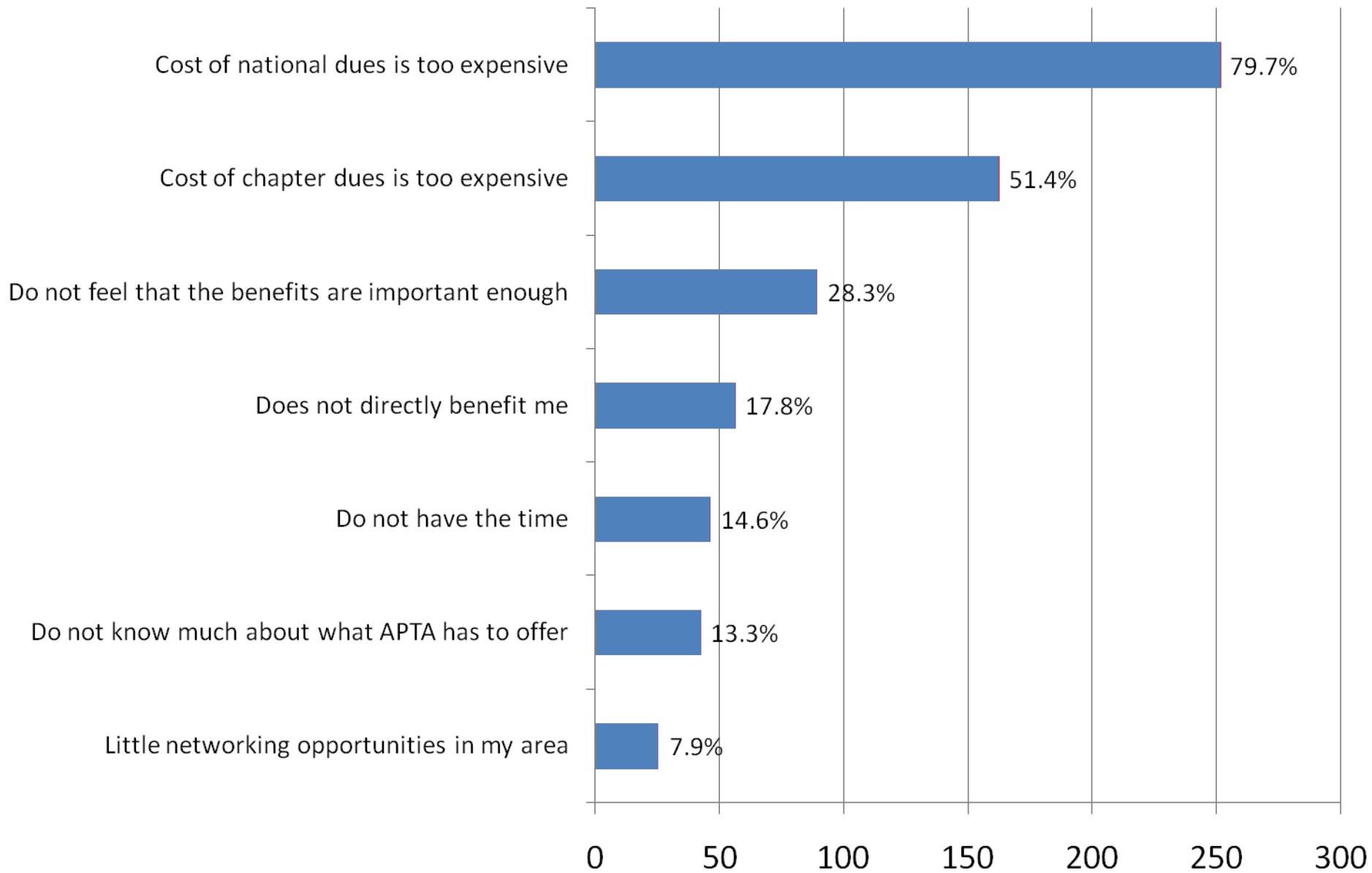
## Will students maintain membership after graduation?

- Out of 449 responses, 331 students reported that they plan to maintain their membership after graduation.
- 10 students stated that they will not, and
- **108 students are unsure.**

# Why students would maintain their membership

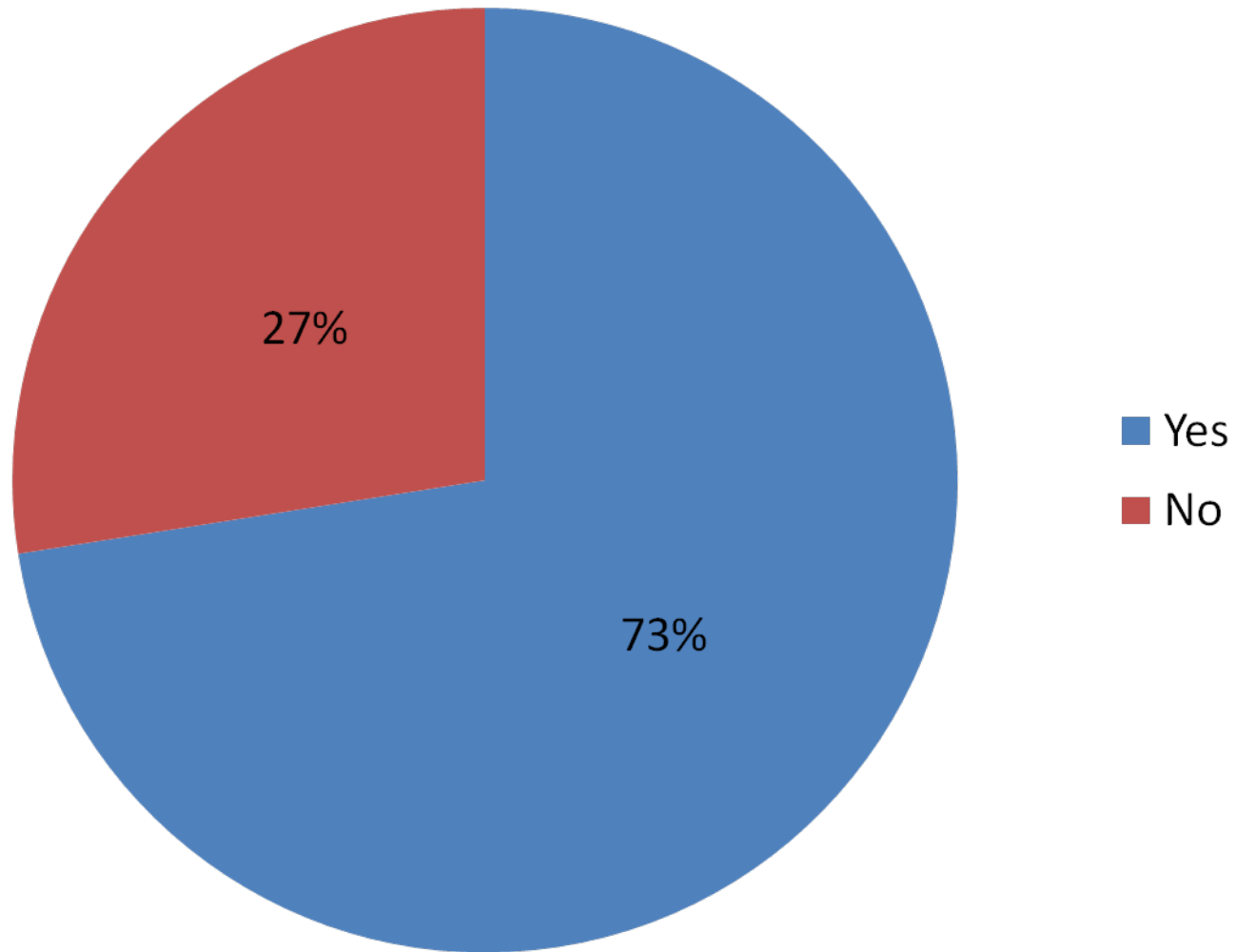


# Why students would discontinue membership



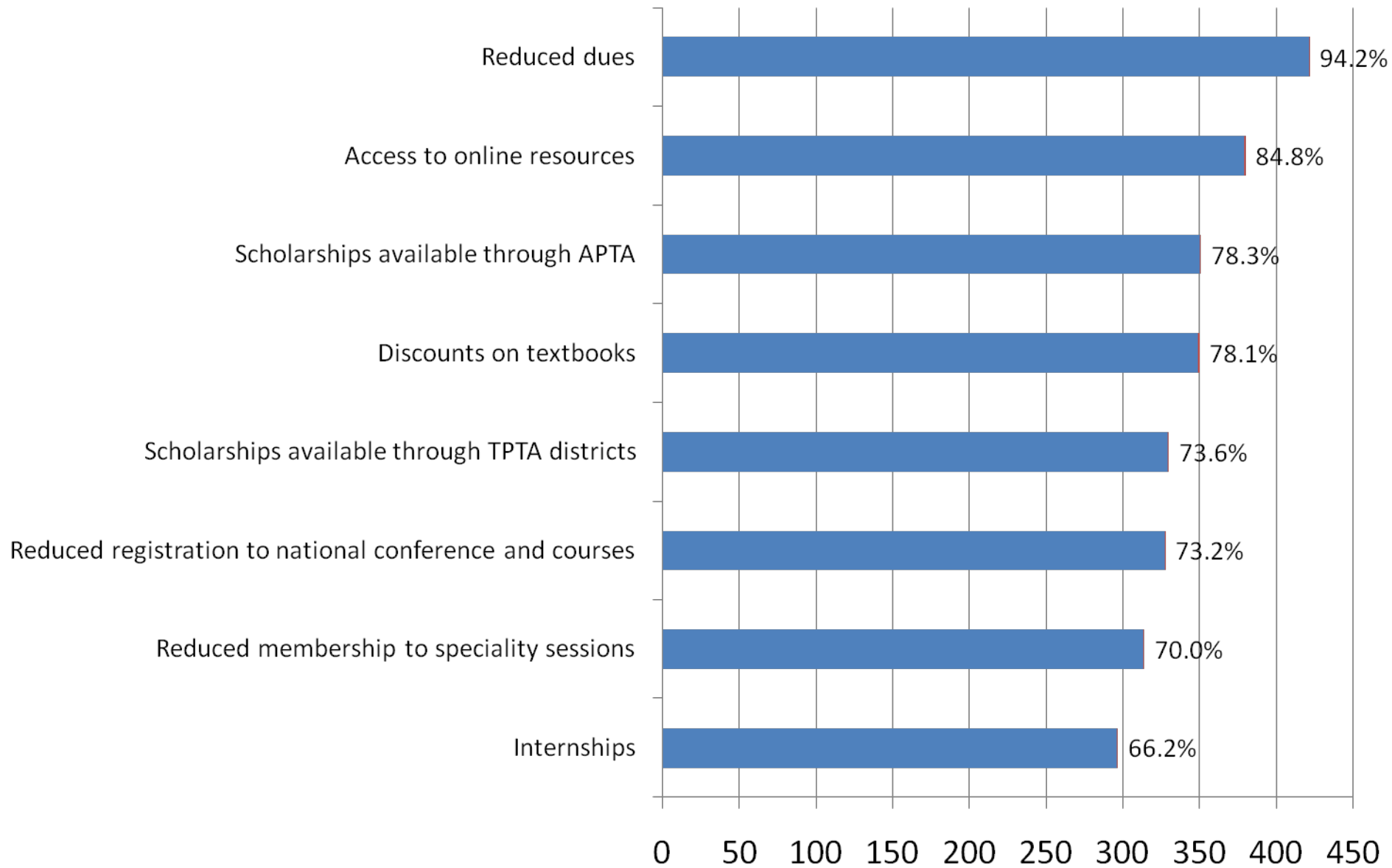
# Students' perception of APTA benefits

Are you aware that APTA offers student benefits?





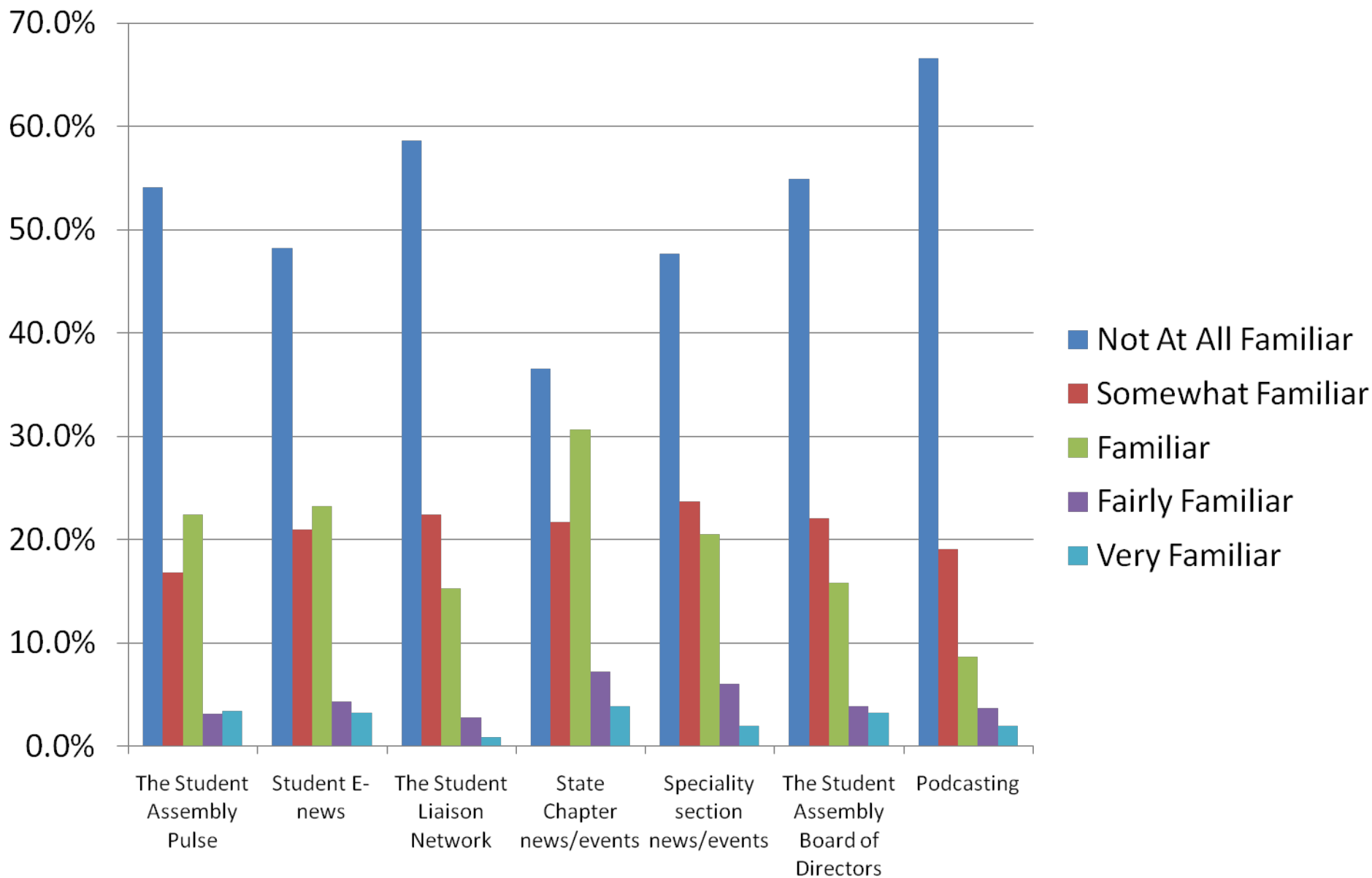
# Importance of student benefits offered by APTA



## Other benefits recognized by students

- Insurance plans
- Networking
- Advocacy at governmental levels
- Legislative representation
- Online career center

# Student familiarity with communication avenues



# Discussion

- Although there was a low response rate from individual programs, the total number of participants (n=479) is significant.
- The most common reason (n=254) given for student membership was the encouragement by their academic program.
- Students also stated that programs strongly suggest APTA/TPTA membership and that their program faculty have 'somewhat high' to 'high' promotion of membership.
- These results indicate that Texas faculty are strongly encouraging the students to participate in APTA and TPTA.
- Cost of national dues remains the conventional response (n=138) from students as to why they do not have a membership and was also the most frequent rationale (n=248) for why students might discontinue membership.

# Conclusion

- The large majority of Texas PT and PTA program faculty are strongly suggesting student membership.
- However, only about a quarter of clinical sites are encouraging membership with the same intensity.
- Although students are being encouraged to join, there is still a large number of students that do not belong to APTA and TPTA and/or do not see the benefit of belonging.
- Less than half of the total student respondents have participated in a state event (Student Conclave/AC or a BOD meeting).
- It is very important that program faculty, along with clinical faculty, support student participation in these activities since participation may develop value in membership.

## Contact Information

If you have questions or comments regarding this survey, you may contact:

Ashley McCoy SPT  
amccoy@angelo.edu

or

Lynne Hughes PT  
lhughes@angelo.edu