



PART-TIME FACULTY SURVEY, PFT, SPRING 2013

**CONTINGENCY AND ITS IMPACT ON
STUDENT SUCCESS**

Survey designed and conducted by Cynthia Mahabir

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

- All 197 part-time colleague-respondents
- The multiple department chairs who assisted me in reaching part-time faculty members in their departments
 - The PFT
 - The cute hummingbird below.



Introduction

The focus of this survey was on the nature of contingent employment and its impact on student success in the Peralta Community College District. The responses complement findings from two national surveys: The Coalition on the Academic Workforce's 'A Portrait of Part-Time Faculty Members' (2012), the joint New Faculty Majority-Center for the Future of Higher Education's 'Who is Professor "Staff" '? (2011), and also augment the growing body of empirical and policy-based literature on the urgency of addressing contingent employment in higher education to improve student success (e.g. Adrianna Kezar et al.'s 'Imperative for Change').

The survey was conducted in early March, 2013. The questionnaire contained 44 questions. A total of 197 part-time (contingent) faculty members (about 30% of the Spring 2013 part-time faculty) responded. About 70% of Peralta's faculty are part-time.

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The data here are organized under five sub-headings: general profile of respondents, measures of contingency, the impact of contingency on student success, expectations for the next five years, and steps for reducing contingency for part-time faculty at Peralta. To underscore the part-time faculty-student experiential reality of our contingent faculty and add a human workplace context to the data, I have included excerpts from the narratives shared by respondents on the open-ended questions in the survey.

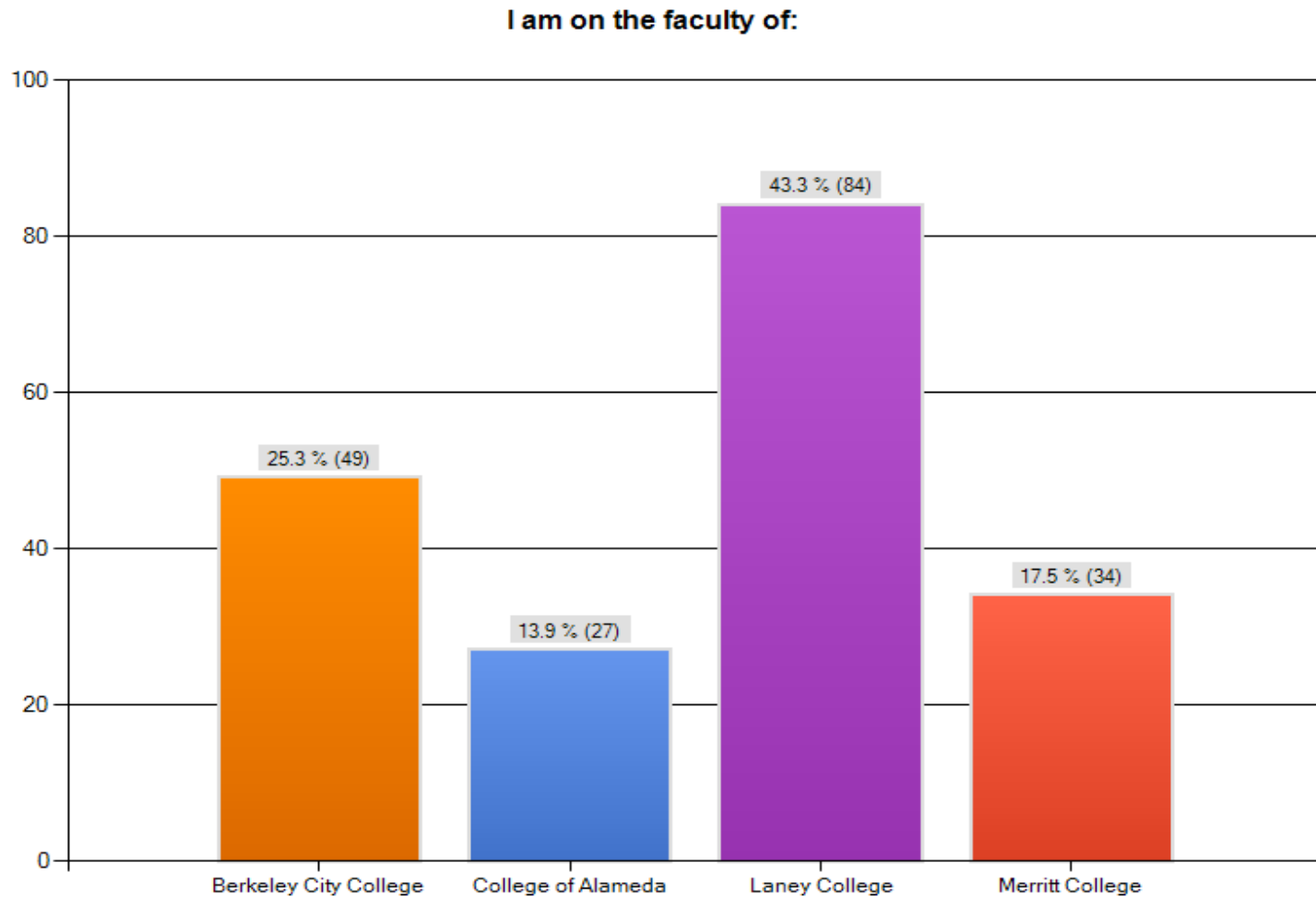
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A. General Profile of Respondents

Among several features, the profile indicates that most of the respondents are long-term employees (**not temporary**) in the District (37.3% with 10 or more years of service to Peralta, 36.7% with 5-9 years of service), part-time employment is the primary source of income for most, most have master's degrees, many engage in a significant number of on-campus and off-campus hours in professional development activities, and most are at the part-time faculty salary ceiling of Column E, Step 7.

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1. College: Most respondents were from Laney, followed by BCC.



2. **PFT Members: A lot = 163 out of 188**

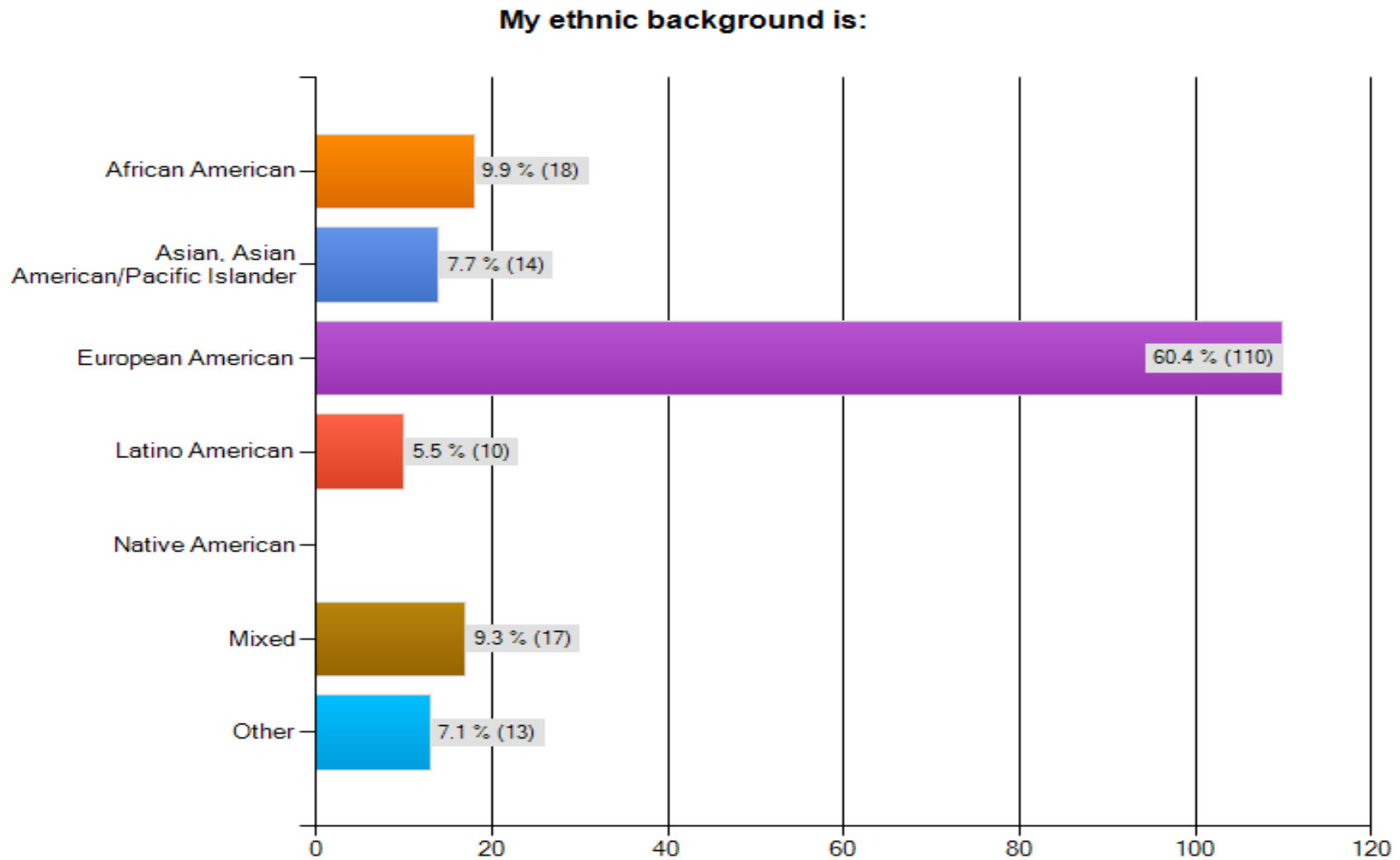
3. **Gender: A lot of WOMEN = 125 out of 192;**

65 MEN;

2 OTHER

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4. Ethnicity: Mostly European American (white) = 110 out of 181



5. Education/Highest degree:

- **Mostly master's degrees = 122 out of 184**
- Ph.D. = 33
- Bachelor's degree = 21
- ABD = 8

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6. Teaching areas:

- Humanities = 75 out of 186
- Natural sciences (including math) = 45
- Social sciences = 23
- Technical career areas = 33
- Professions: business, health care, etc. = 17
- Other: PE, counseling, etc. = 16

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7. Part-time employment is primary source of income:

141 out of 195

8. Length of employment at Peralta:

- **More than 10 years = 62 out of 192**
- Five – nine years = 81
- One semester – four years = 50

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9. Length of part-time employment in community college system:

- One – five years = 61 out of 190
- Six – ten years = 63
- **More than ten years = 66**
 - 32 = 11-15 years;**
 - 9 = 16-20 years;**
 - 11 = 21-25 years.**

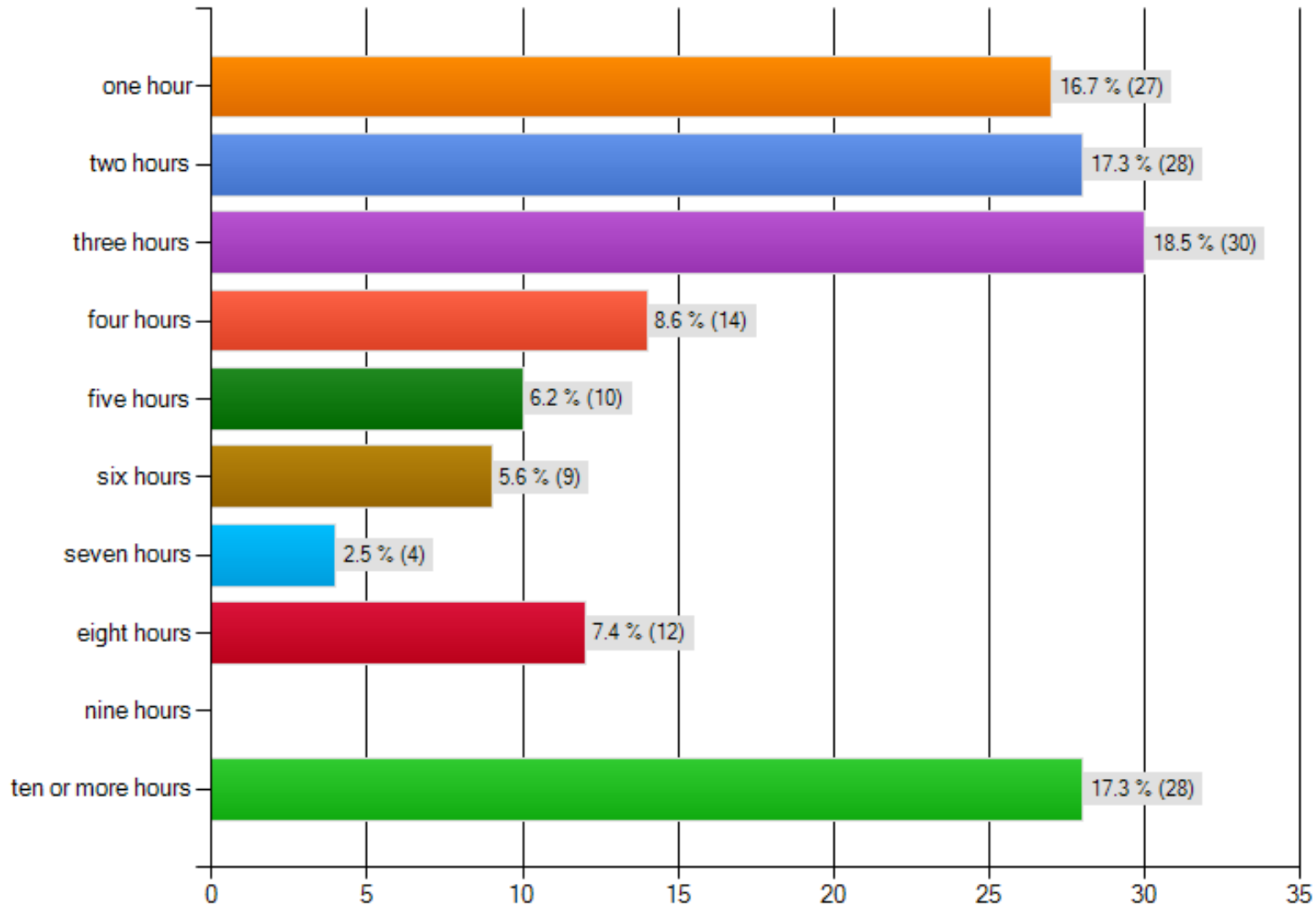
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10. Current salary placement:

- Mostly **Column E** = 80 out of 156
- Mostly **Step 7** = 96 out of 159

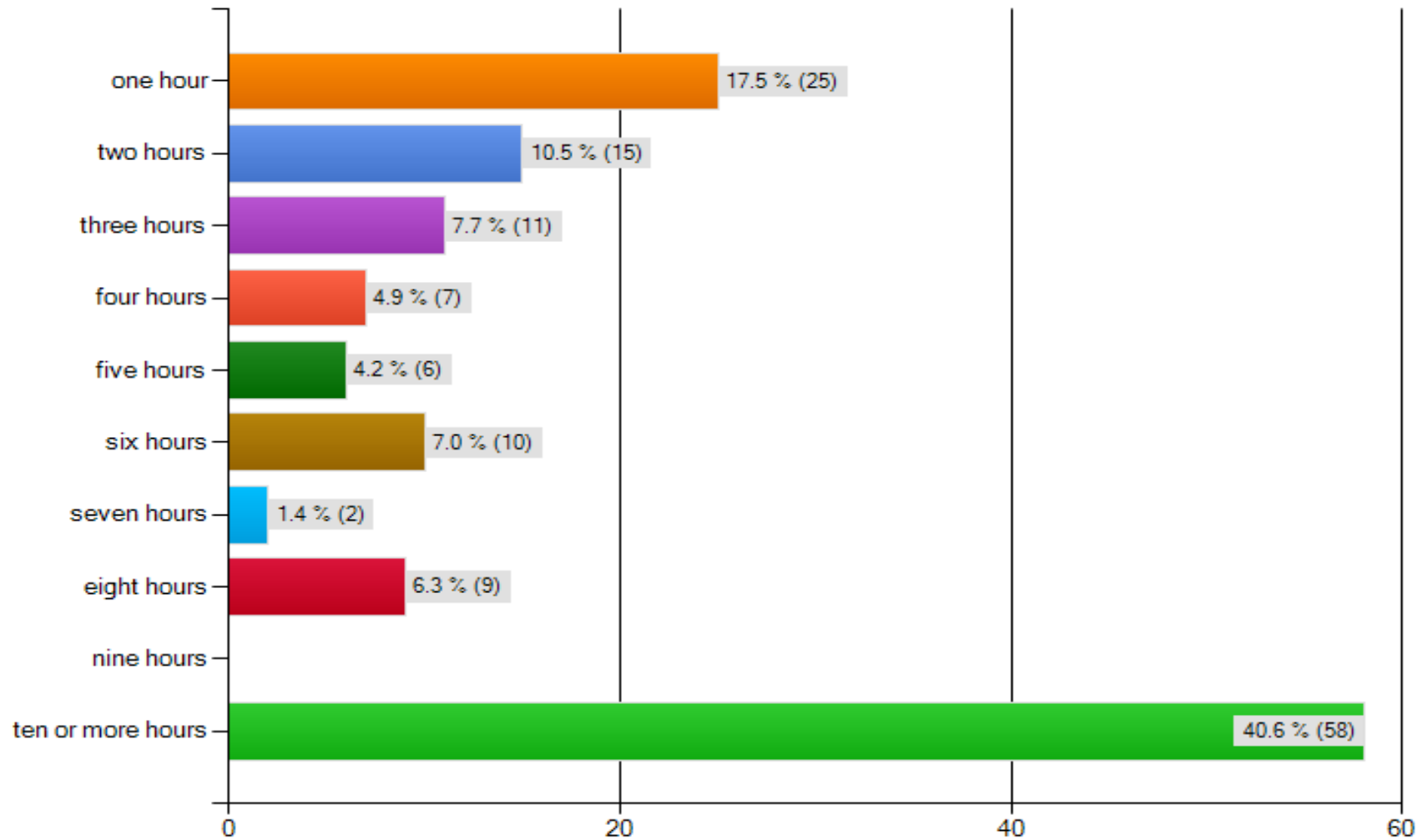
11. Professional development hours in ON-CAMPUS activities:

In the Fall 2012 semester, I completed _____ in professional development activities ON CAMPUS at Peralta.



12. Professional development hours in OFF-CAMPUS activities

In the Fall 2012 semester I completed ____ in OFF-CAMPUS professional development activities.



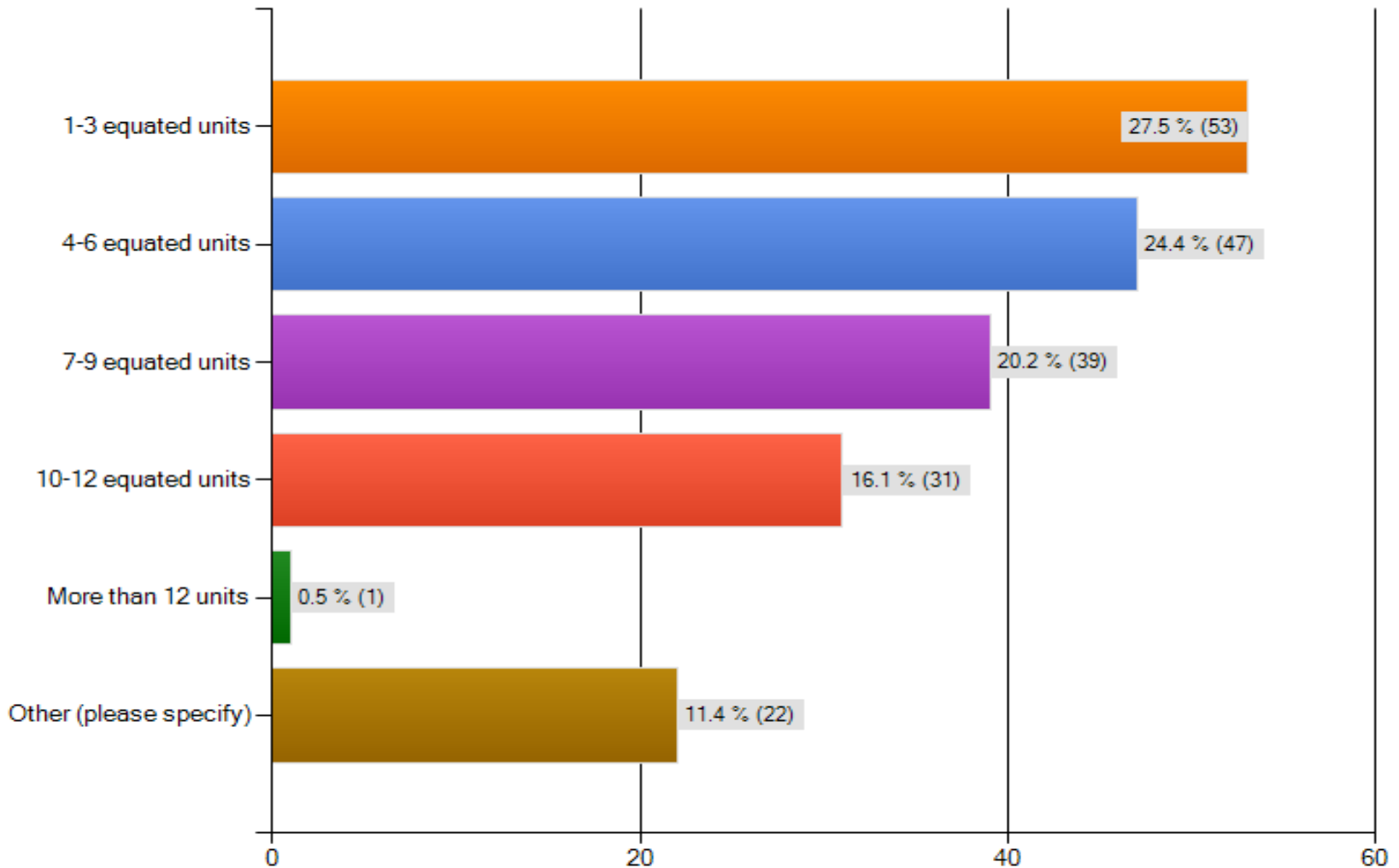
B. Measures of Contingency

On the measures of contingency, a majority was assigned between 1-6 equated units in the Fall 2012; 33.5% are employed in two or more college districts with workloads of between 1- 10 or more units; many provide varying amounts of unpaid time in extra office hours, DSPS accommodation; many do not have office space to meet with students or computer access on campus; and a sizable number is unable to get medical insurance coverage.

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1. Teaching load at Peralta in Fall 2012: A majority was assigned between 1-6 equated units (100 out of 193)

In the Fall 2012 semester I taught at Peralta:



2. Number of community college districts where employed: 62 out of 185 in two or more districts

- One = the majority-123 out of 185
- Two = 47
- Three = 12
- More than three = 3

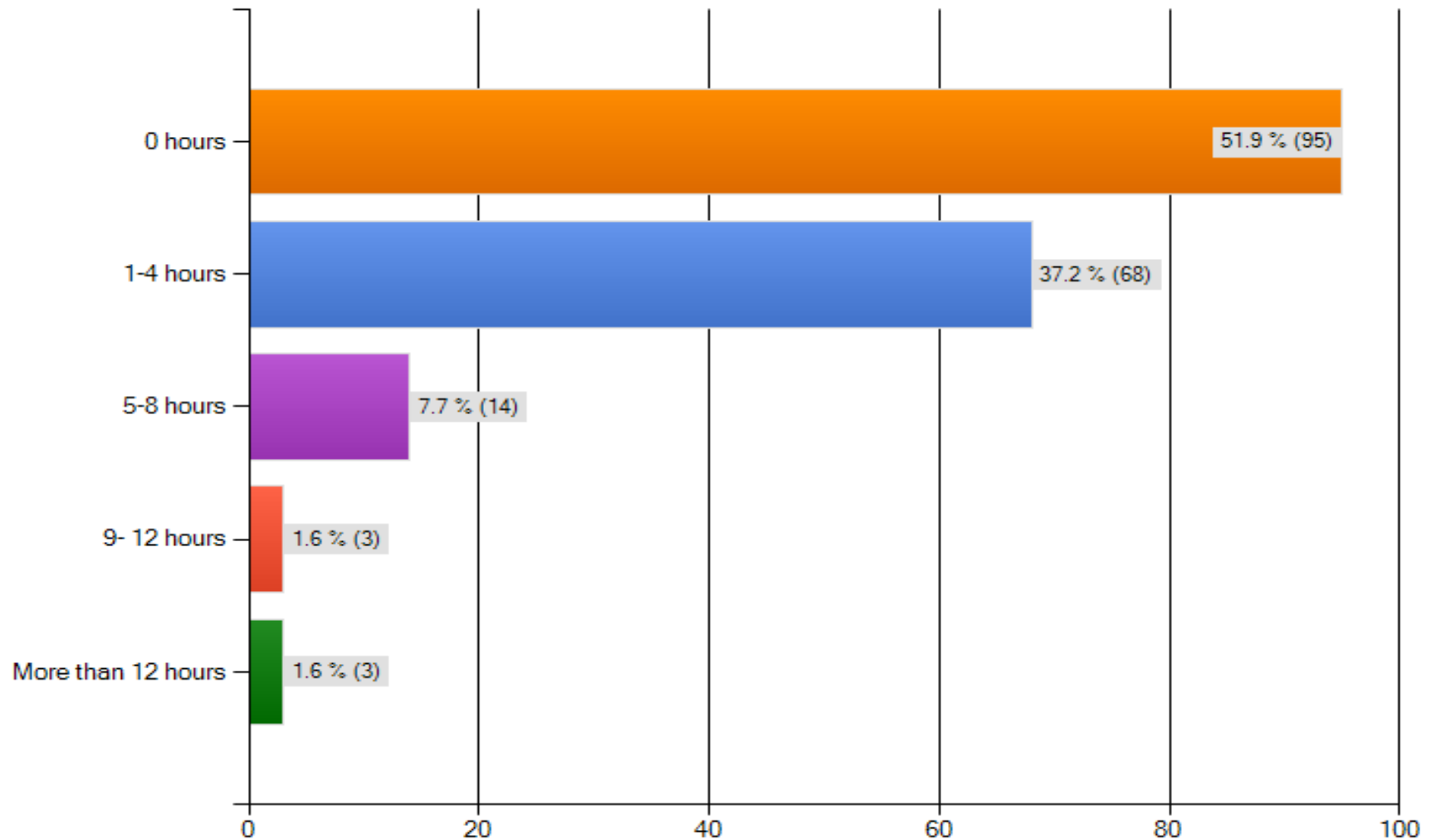
3. Number of equated units in districts **other than Peralta**:

- 1-6 units = 43 out of 78
- 7-9 units = 15
- 10 or more units = 20

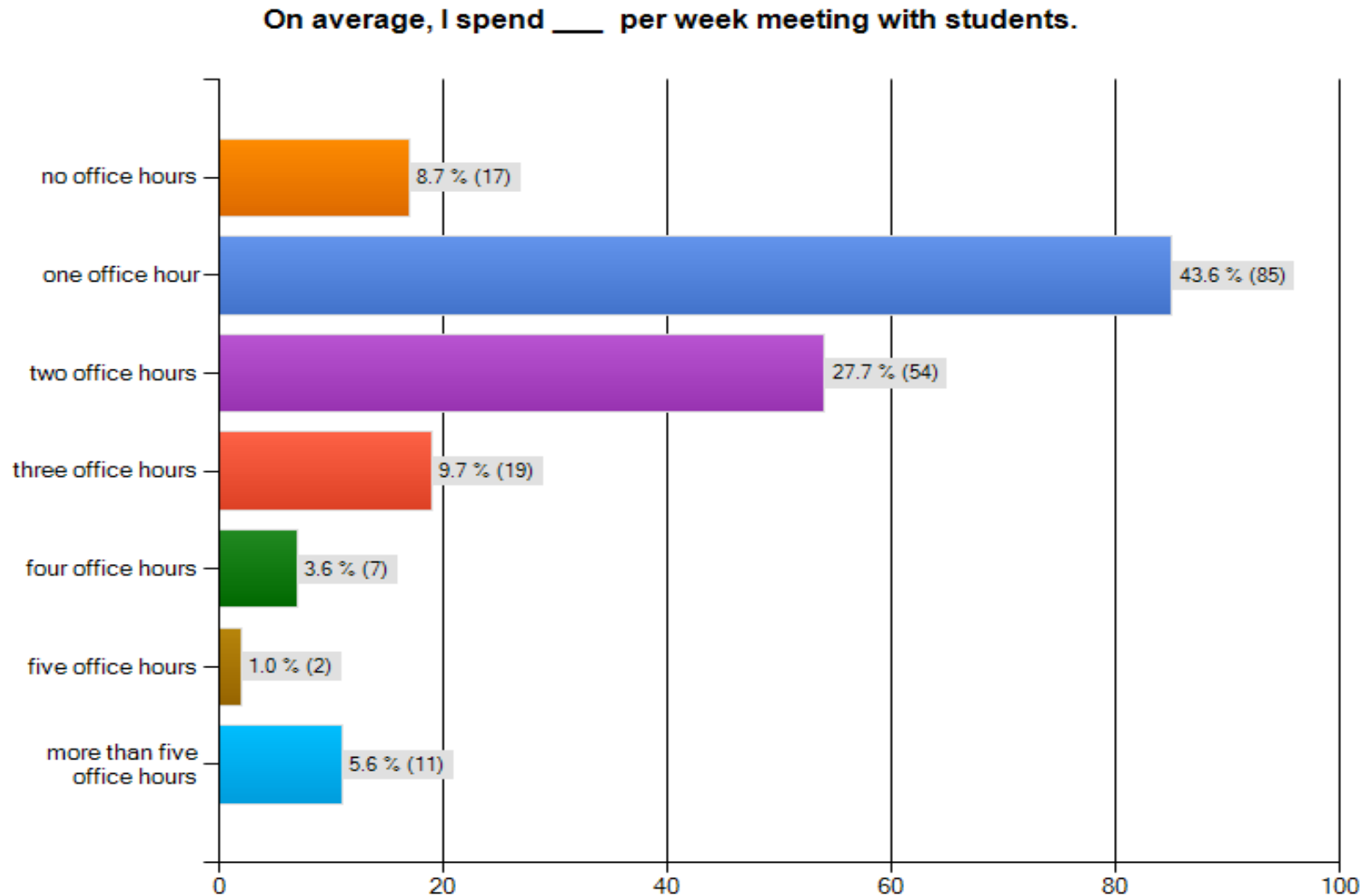
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4. Unpaid hours per semester for DSPS accommodation:
68 out of 183 = 1-4 hours. 20 = 5 or more hours.

On average, I spend ____ in unpaid time complying with DSPS accommodation requests by proctoring exams and helping DSPS students outside of class.

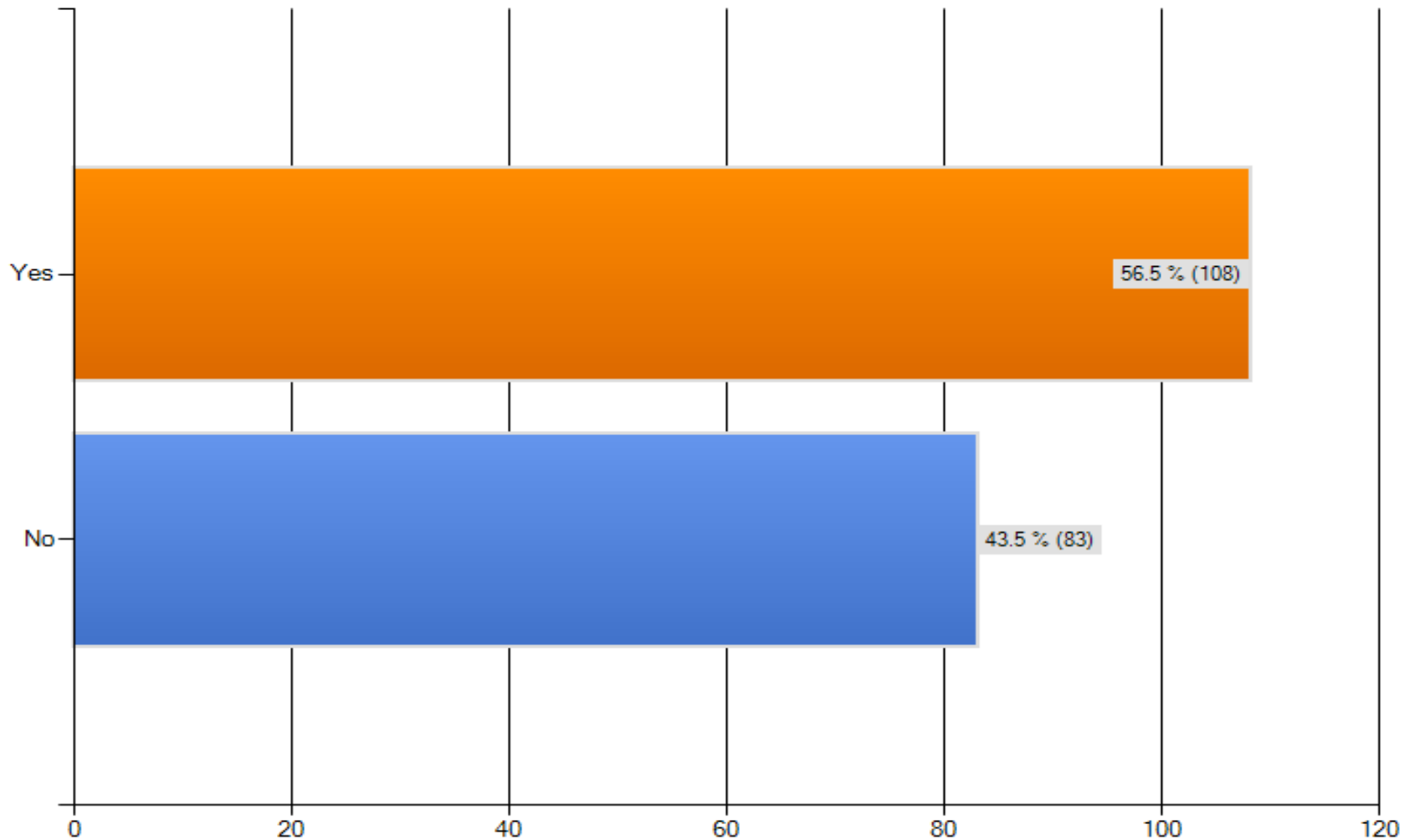


5. Office hours with students: **1 hour = 85 out of 195; 2 hours or more = 93.** [Compensation limited to one office hour per week and only for part-time instructors with a .4 teaching load]



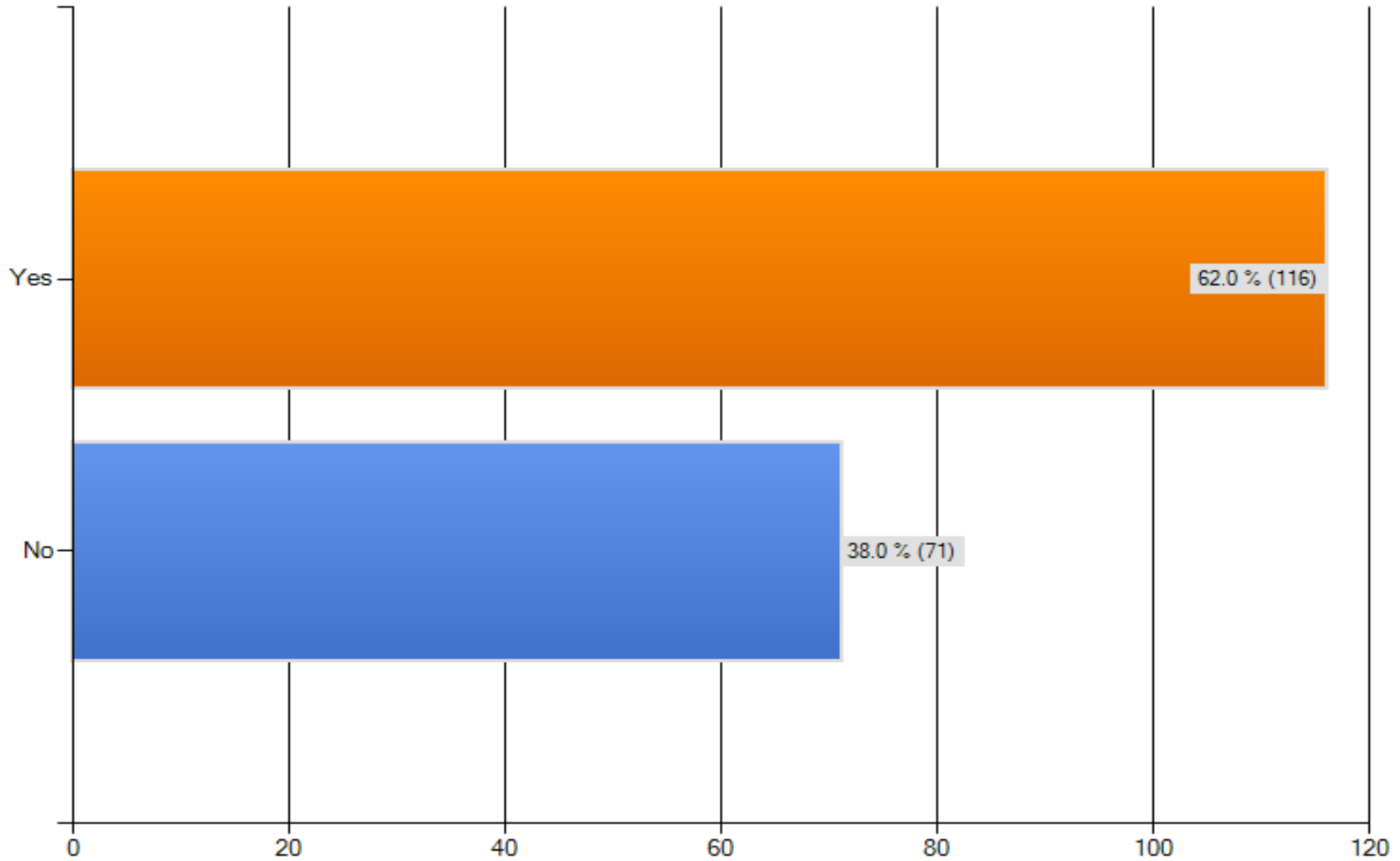
6. Office Space: 108 out of 191 have office space but 83 do not.

I have office space at Peralta to meet with students.

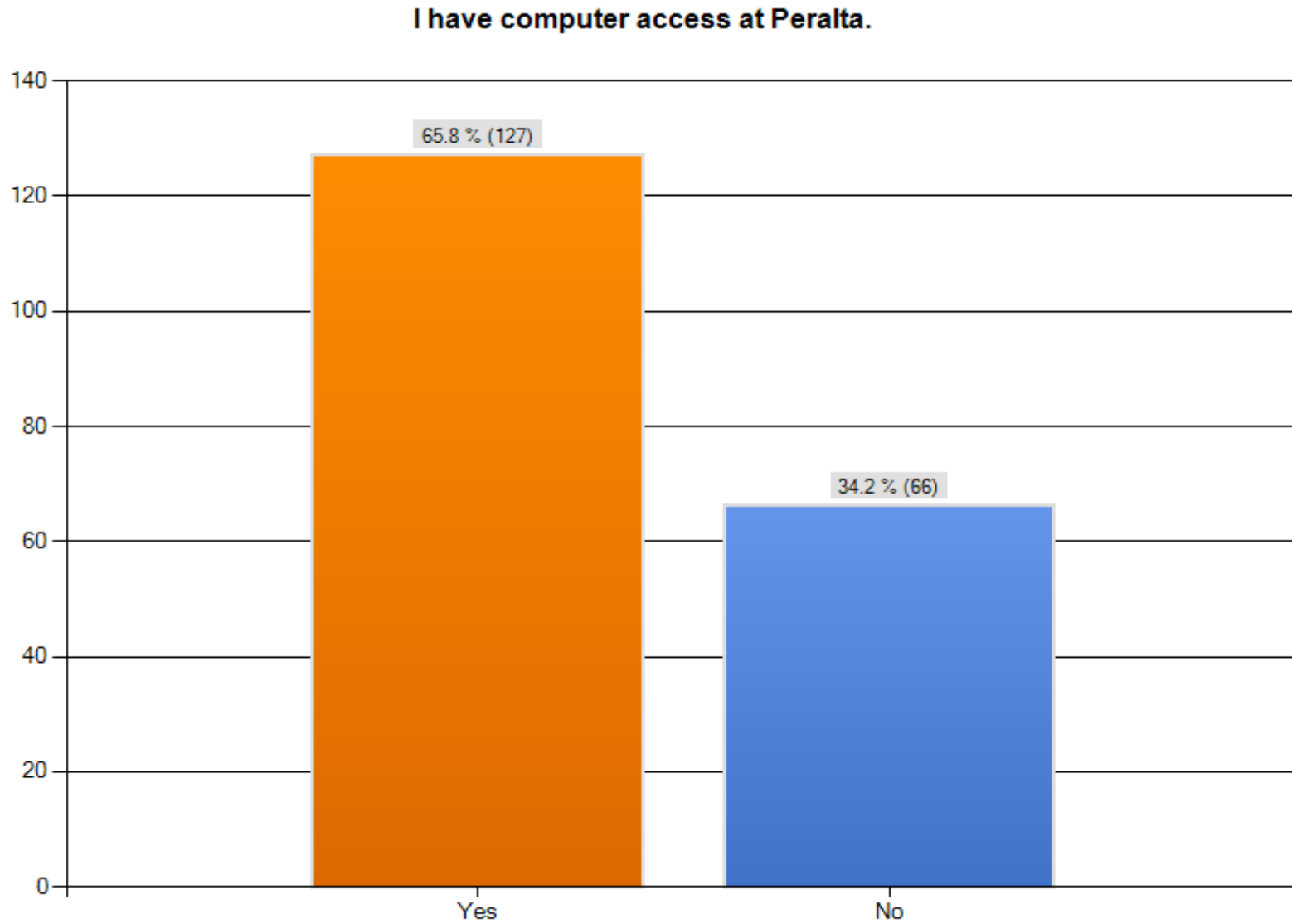


7. Paid office hours: **116 out of 187 are paid** but 71 are not.

I am paid for office hours at Peralta.

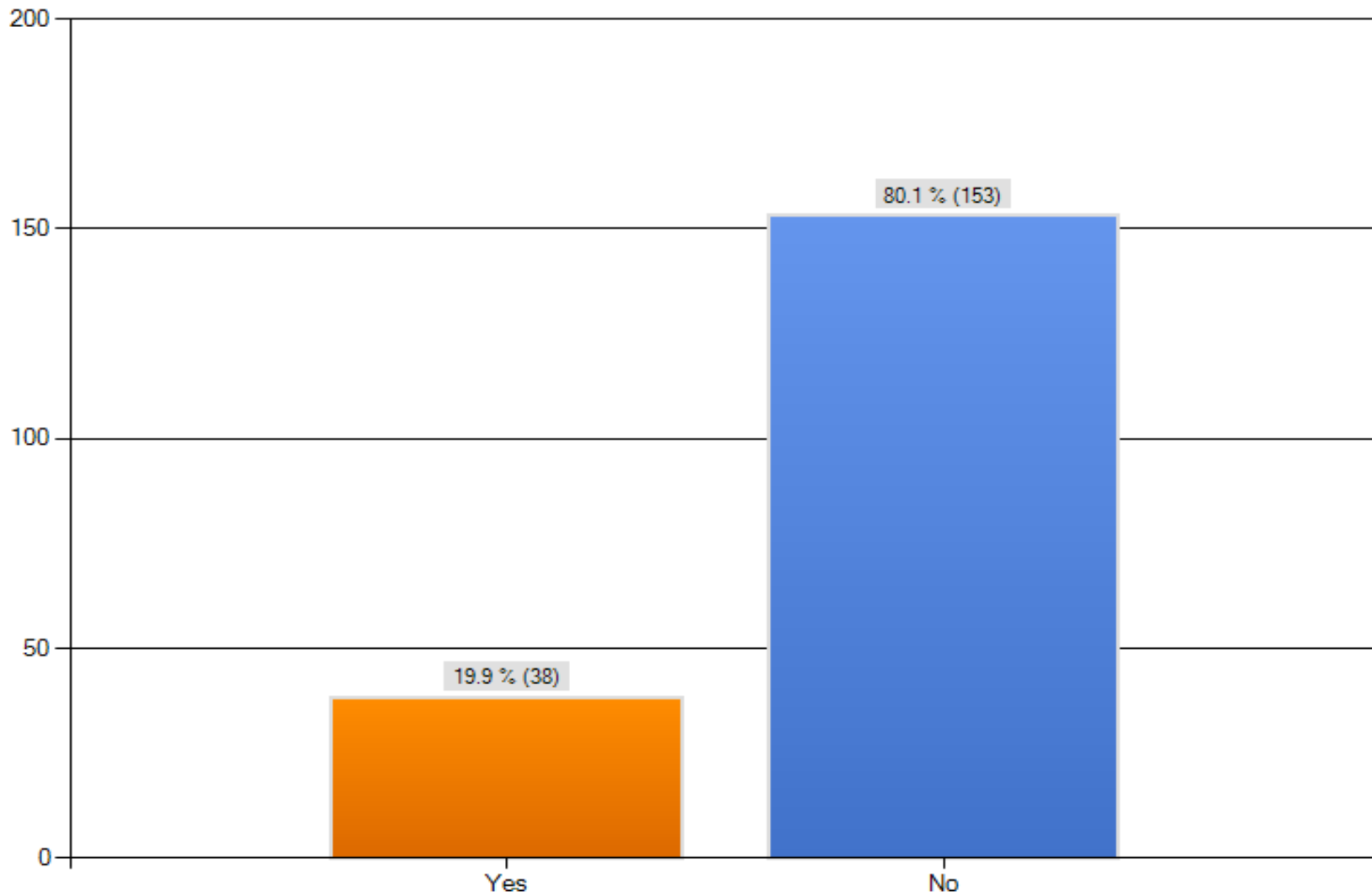


8. Computer access: **127** out of **193** have access but 66 do not.



9. Voice mail: No voice mail = 153 out of 191

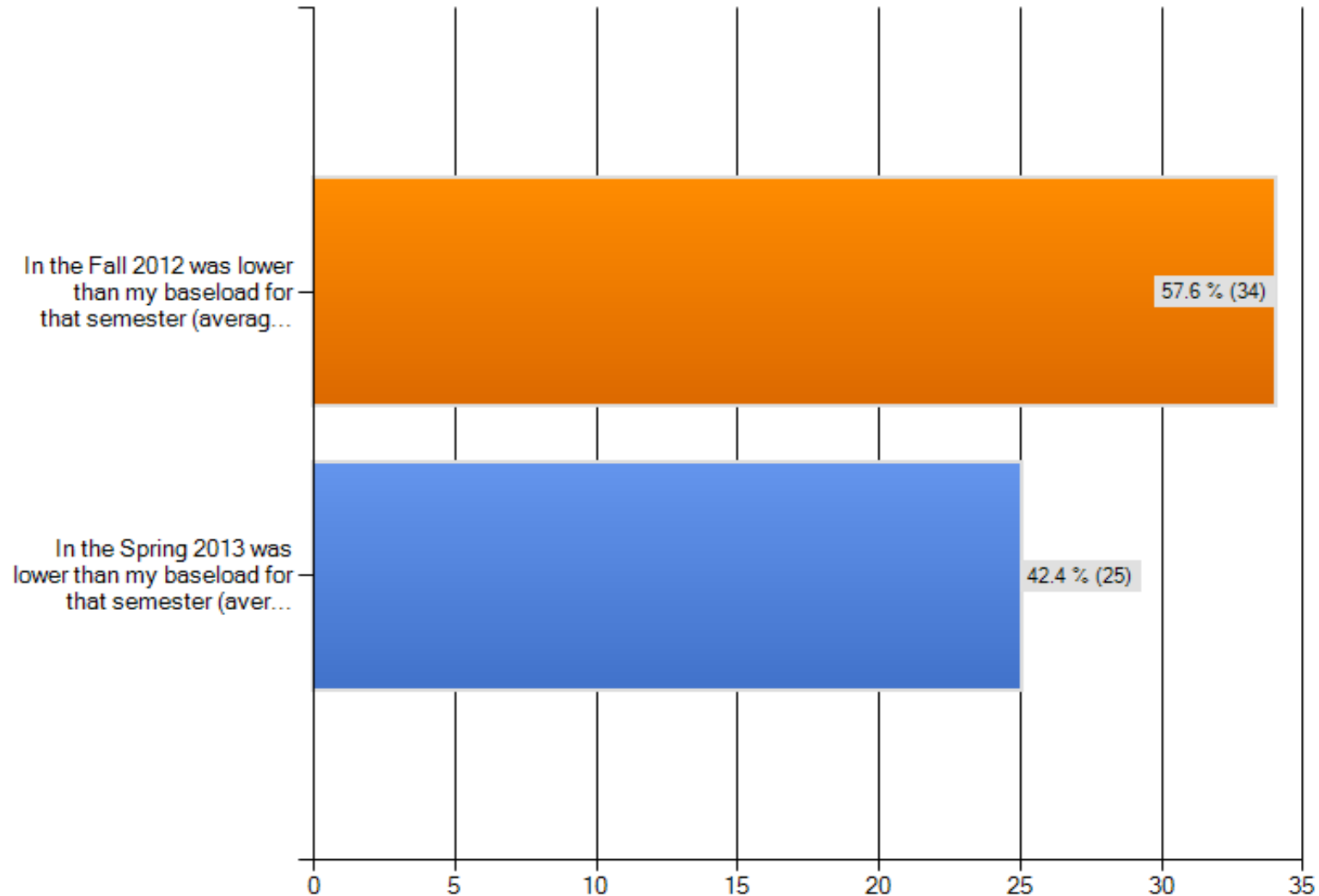
I have a voice mail box at Peralta.



10. Decreases in baseload for Fall '12, Spring '13:

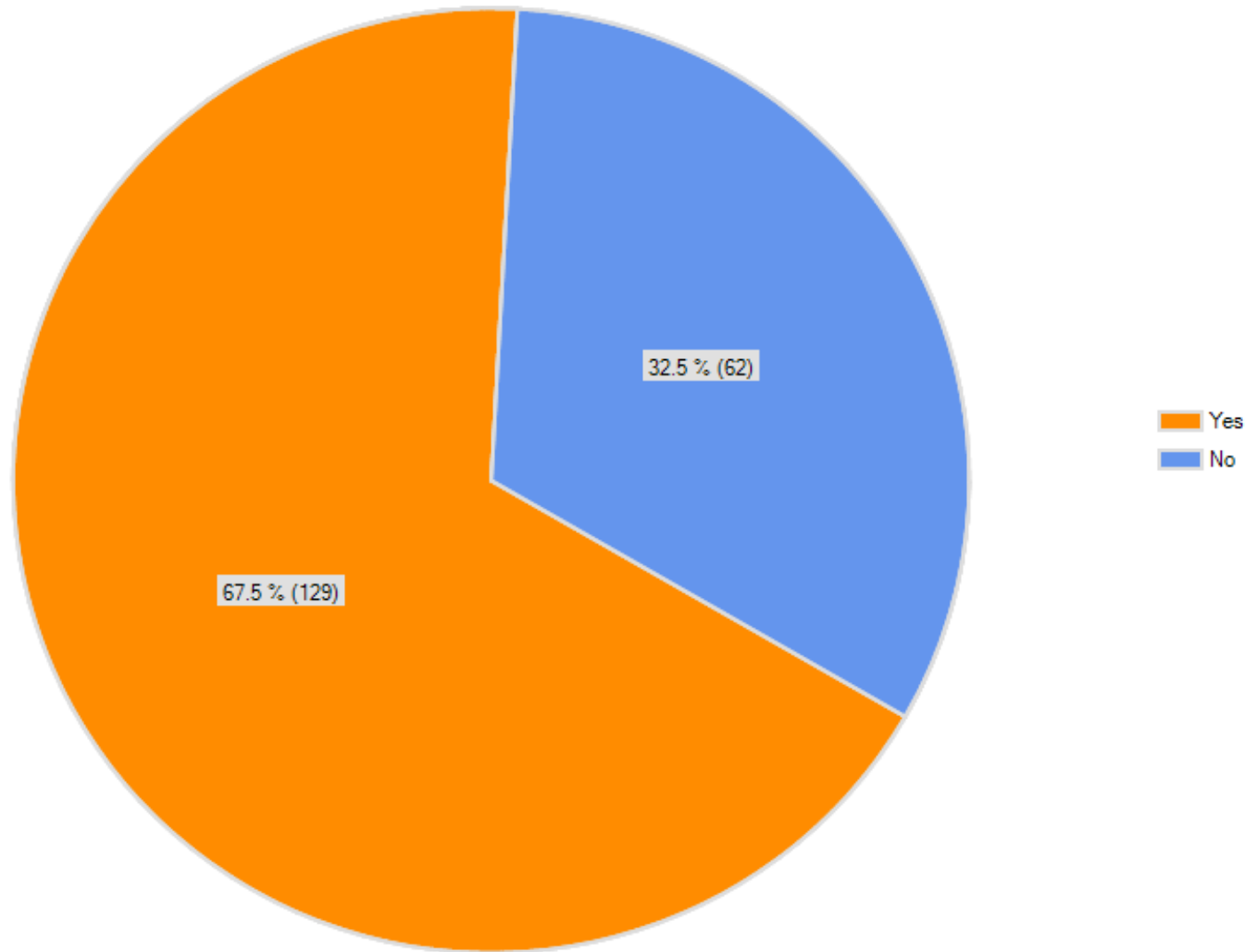
34 out of 59 with decreases in Fall '12; 25 in Spring '13

My class assignment:



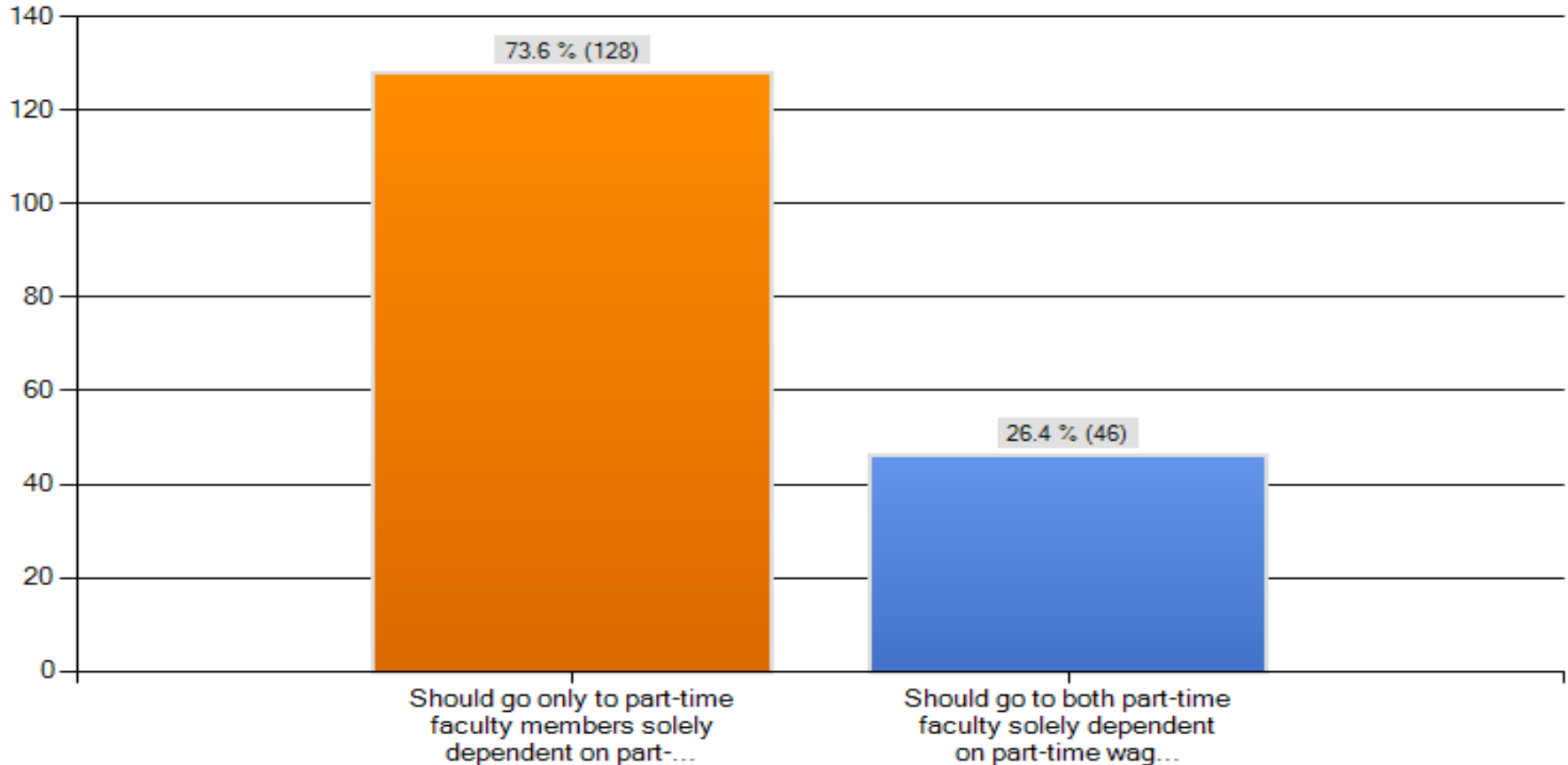
11. Full-Time appointment desired:
129 out of 191 want full-time appointments.

I would like to have a full-time faculty appointment.

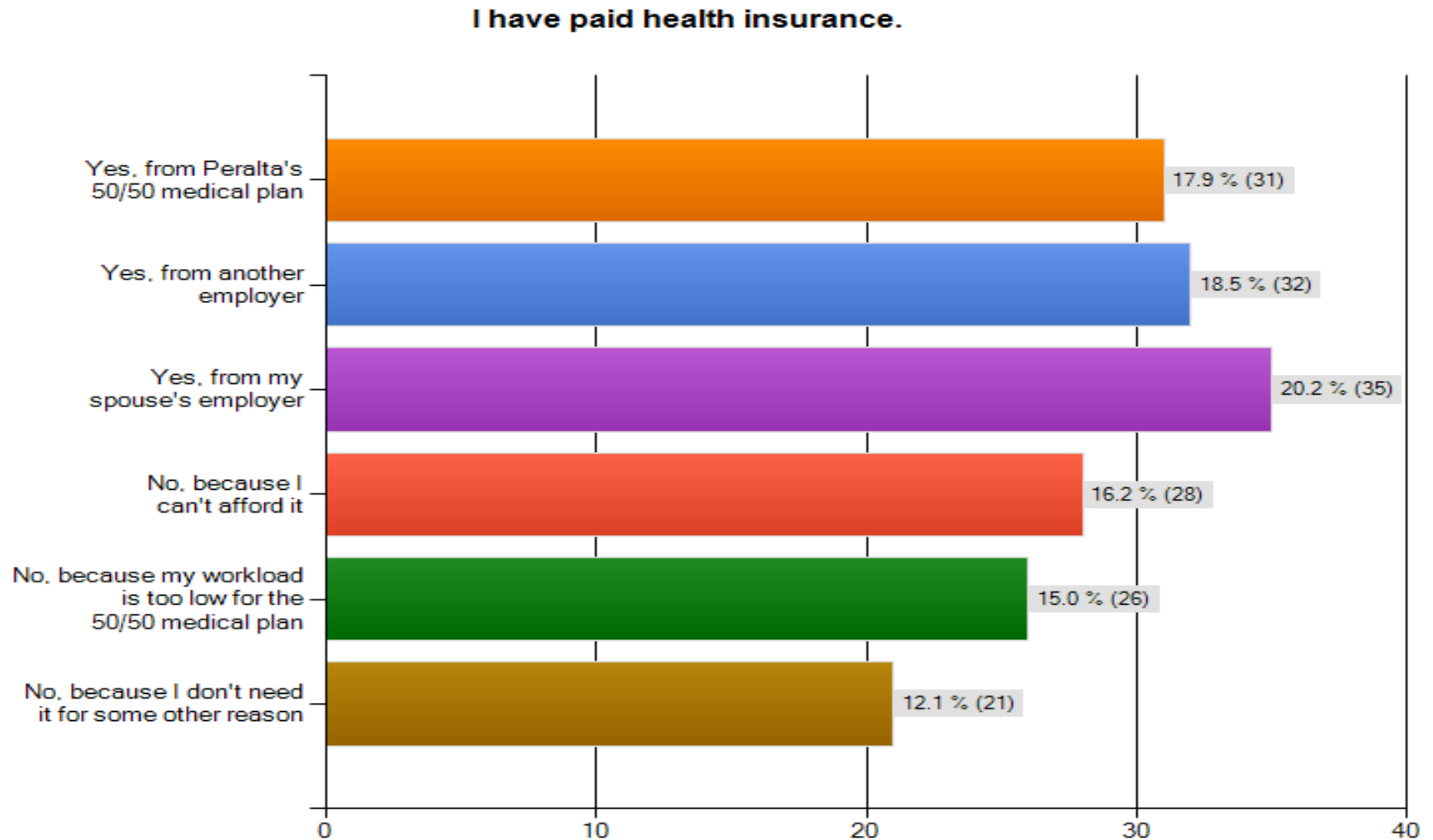


12. Parity compensation: Only to part-time faculty solely dependent on part-time wages = 128 out of 174

Parity pay: Beginning in 2001-2002, as a result of the advocacy of statewide PT faculty activists, the State has been allocating funds to community colleges for the purpose of assisting community college districts in making part-time faculty compensation more comparable to full-time faculty compensation for similar work, that is, to close the wide gap in compensation. At Peralta, full-time faculty members (who receive full compensation and benefits) who teach over their regular contract load (called 'extra service' in the PFT-PCCD contract) during regular semesters and in summer school, also receive a parity pay check. In my view, parity pay:

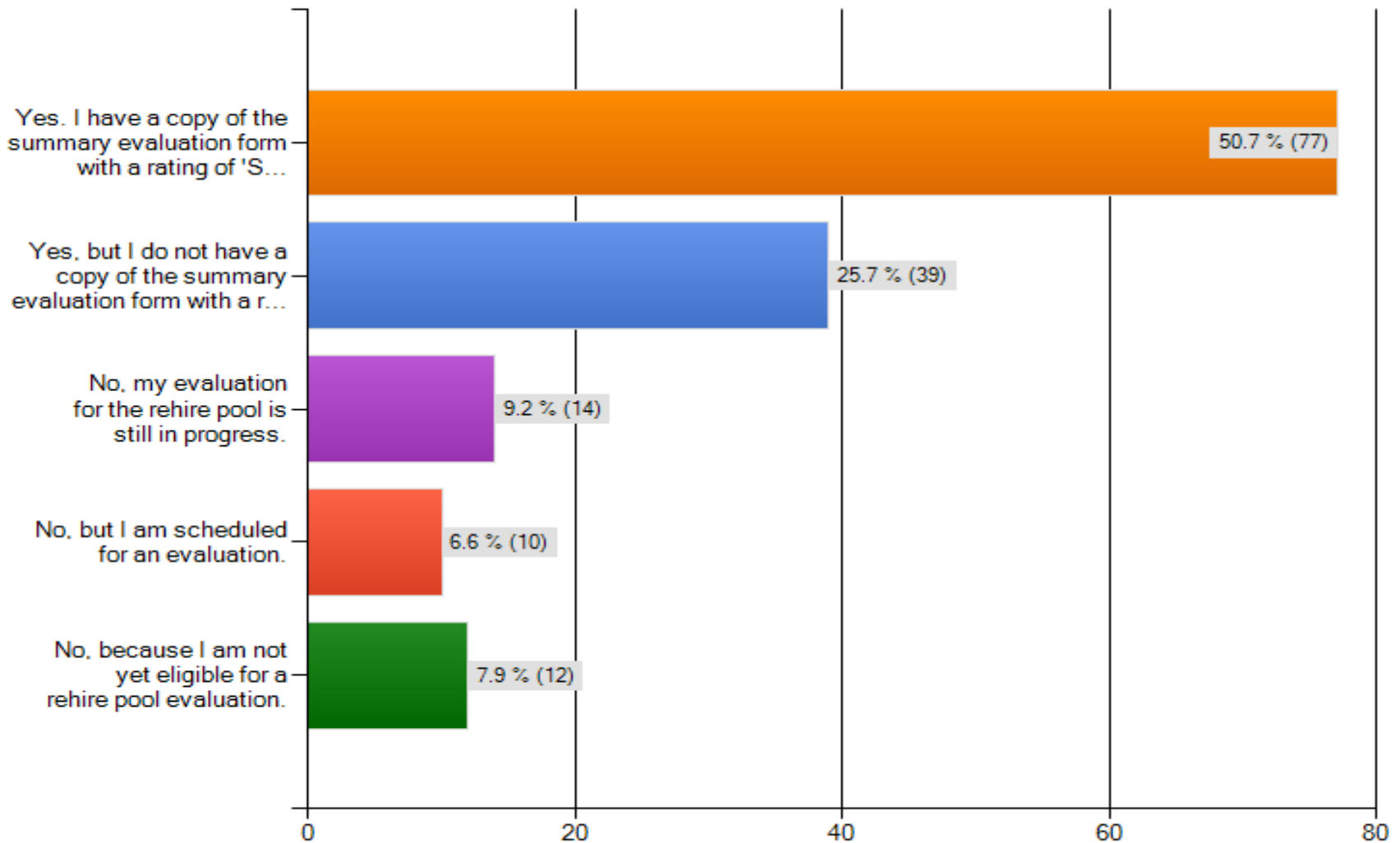


13. Health insurance: Out of 172 respondents, 54 unable to get coverage under the 50/50 plan because income or workload is too low.



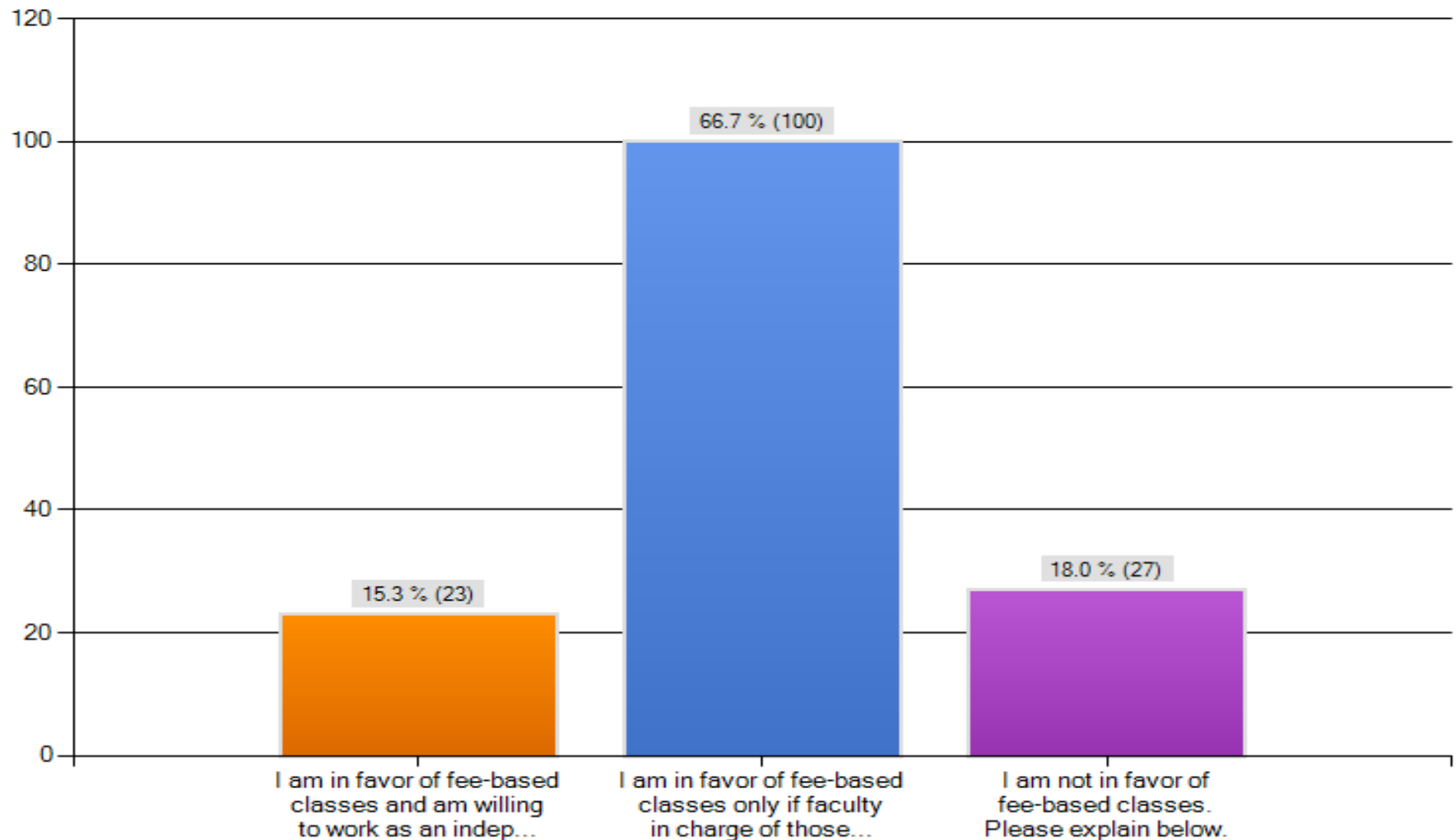
14. Rehire Pool: Only 77 out of 152 respondents are in the rehire pool, with an additional 39 claiming to be in the pool.

I am currently in the Part-Time Faculty Rehire Pool.



15. Fee-Based Employment: A majority (100 out of 150) are in favor of fee-based classes only if faculty in charge of these classes are protected by our union, 27 oppose fee-based classes, and 23 are in favor of them.

On the introduction of fee-based classes at Peralta,



C. Effect of Part-Time Teaching on Student Success?:

On the impact of contingency on student success, many respondents (134) wrote about the grave limits on time they wish they had to work with our students because of the adverse effects of job insecurity, the imperative of constantly running to different campuses to earn a living, the inadequacy of paid office hours and office space, etc.

Out of 134 responses, for most respondents –the answer (about whether they felt that part-time teaching affected student success) was overwhelmingly yes. The impact was described as negative impact, and significantly so although many also noted their professional and personal desire to help students succeed.

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Effect of Part-Time Teaching on Student Success (cont'd):

A sample of the responses:

- 1. 'The current circumstances under which I teach do not allow ANY compensation for correcting papers or evaluating students' work outside of class. Students must be properly evaluated in order to gauge their progress.'**
- 2. 'I am always on the run and have limited time for the students.'**
- 3. 'One office hour a week is not enough time to handle student needs. Students rely on the availability of instructors for direction and guidance about individual coursework.'**

Effect of Part-Time Teaching on Student Success (cont'd):

4. 'If I was full-time at one place, instead of running around to three different institutions, checking four different e-mails, I could provide my students with my full attention. My students need academic advising from instructors. They need career advice. If I had an office I would be on campus and my students could drop by any time and talk to me. My students from previous semesters would know where to find me. They would feel that there is someone there who cares about their future and academic success. The part-time system is really unfair to the students. They are not getting the attention and stability that they need. So many teachers get fed up with this system and stop caring. I want to see my students succeed and my fear is that the stress of this job will turn me into so many others I see. Instructors get tired and stop caring about their students.'

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Effect of Part-Time Teaching on Student Success (cont'd):

5. 'I love my students and want them to have the best educational opportunities possible. Consequently, I spend a lot of time grading papers, developing lesson plans and meeting with them to tutor them as well as to provide extra-curricular opportunities for them on campus. However, I am NOT paid for most of that time. I am worried that this is not economically sustainable for me.'

6. 'Lack of job security has led to a drop in morale in the past. Knowing that whether or not I do a good job I still may not be rehired negatively affects the amount of time I am willing to dedicate to students beyond the normal requirements.'

7. 'A lack of respect, overwork and underpayment not only have a massive effect on the learning experience, but will have a negative effect on the FUTURE OF THIS STATE.'

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Effect of Part-Time Teaching on Student Success (cont'd):

8. 'I am a very dedicated teacher and other than having to work around absent or terrible support services, I think I give my students a big bang for their time and money! But I pay a huge price in my personal life.

If we really want to serve our students well, we should provide more job security to part-time teachers, stop class cancellation, and provide the classrooms with the necessary equipment and help. Smaller class size = better student retention and better student learning outcomes. Increase the number of equated hours each part-time teacher is allowed to work. Install the equal-work-for-equal-pay system. A happy teacher= a better teacher. It's that simple.

Effect of Part-Time Teaching on Student Success (cont'd):

9. 'I believe that my teaching has a profound effect on all of my students' learning experiences. My years of experience and subject knowledge are excellent.'

10. 'Marginalized students of Oakland still represent my motivation to be a teacher, although more secure and guaranteed work would allow me to enhance student learning experiences through creative programming and experiential learning. As a part-timer, I have no incentive, other than my students' experiences, to create programs and community partnerships that can be usurped or appropriated by senior faculty.'

Effect of Part-Time Teaching on Student Success (cont'd):

11. 'I just don't have the time to give them between the many jobs I have teaching – PERIOD – and it's odd that the culture of Peralta's administrators is, "We must do all we can to help these students who come from less educated backgrounds", but there is no support for the part-time faculty to achieve this goal, only the expectation that we put in a full-time job without being compensated enough to pay the rent, let alone health care, groceries, transportation, etc. It's physically impossible, especially when we are asked to work as one of the full-timers around us takes paid vacations.'

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Effect of Part-Time Teaching on Student Success (cont'd):

12. 'When I am treated poorly by administrators because of my lowly part-time status, I try my damndest not to let this affect my teaching, but I fear it might due to my subconscious feelings. Is there any bitterness in my voice when I talk about the college? Do I subconsciously make assignments less demanding so I am not working like a dog for little respect and pay? I hope not. We are on the front lines fulfilling the college's mission, yet we are often treated poorly. Think how well the mission could be fulfilled if we were treated with respect and dignity.'

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D. Expectations for Next Five Years

Out of 131 responses, most reflected either pessimism about a better, fairer workplace or hope for full—time, tenure-track positions or an increase in work hours and salary advancement. A sample of the voices of respondents:

- 1. 'I have no expectations for the next five years because I do not expect that the Peralta system will ever acknowledge the dedication and time of its part-time faculty. It's a dead-end job that I hope to quit one day.'**
- 2. 'To be given more class assignments, to be compensated for non-teaching campus activities, job security, salary increases.'**
- 3. 'That I move up on the pay schedule, not remain stuck at the same level.'**
- 4. 'Receive the hours I need in order to survive economically and to be able to support and strengthen the department's vision.'**

Expectations for Next Five Years (cont'd)

5. 'The most I can expect is getting one class or two per semester, so I am trying to figure out how to make ends meet. In a perfect world, I would expect a full-time job as the teacher I was trained to be.'
6. 'I expect to be asked to put up even more volunteer hours that I already do, without any reasonable expectations for a promotion or a salary increase.'
7. 'To be treated fairly by the dean and the department coordinators and with a modicum of respect as a colleague and a professional; that recently-hired part-timers do not leap-frog over me, and are allocated classes before I am allocated mine, even though they are way down in the preferential pool; that students' complaints are thoroughly investigated by the coordinators; that, on receiving a student complaint, the coordinators have enough respect to talk to me first, to let me have a chance to explain, or to have my say before hauling me to the dean's office to answer the "charges" against me ...'

Expectations for Next Five Years (cont'd):

8. 'I'm not sure. I am realizing that I can't stay at a job with no security much longer, and even though I love teaching, I'm looking for other employment that has security and health benefits.'
9. 'Part-timers continue to be slighted, in pay, benefits and in workload as we take the brunt from class with less administrative support due to cutbacks in personnel and the wrong attitude. There is no administrator who is there for teachers – they support only students. How are we supposed to mitigate student disruptions when there is not enough DSPS staff to serve the students.'
10. 'I hope to be hired full-time. Hope to win the lottery, too!'
11. 'My expectation is that the District will improve; one must hope for positive change. A teacher serves best when the reason for her/his work is provided on a daily basis with students who want to learn. Class sizes, counseling issues, and departmental duties weigh upon a part-time teacher. As new assessment methods are enacted part-time teachers need compensation for the work of managing departments, i.e. TaskStream, Curricunet, program reviews, outlines, etc.'

E. Reducing Contingency of Employment

On policy changes for reducing the contingency of employment, respondents recommended the establishment of seniority in the part-time faculty rehire pool, equal pay for equal work, access to full-time positions, better retirement benefits, respect from full-time faculty and administrators, equal participation in shared governance.

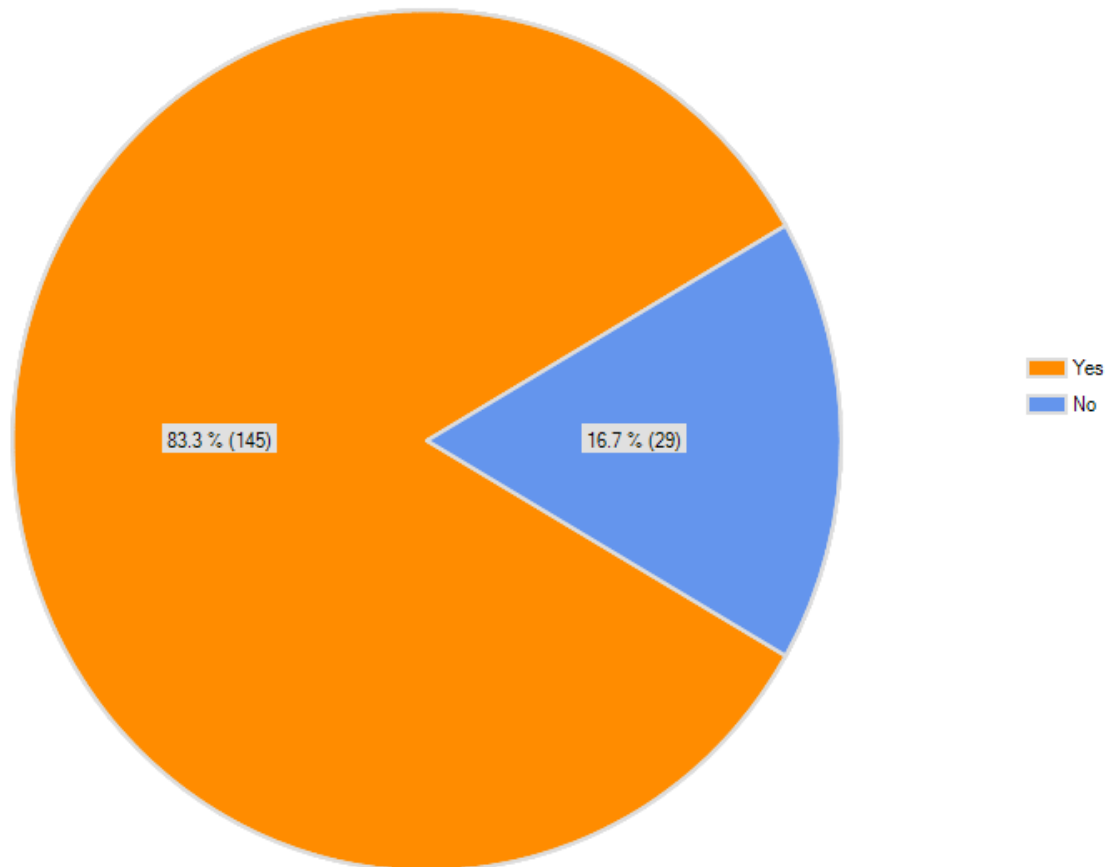
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Reducing contingency of employment

1. Establish seniority in rehire pool.

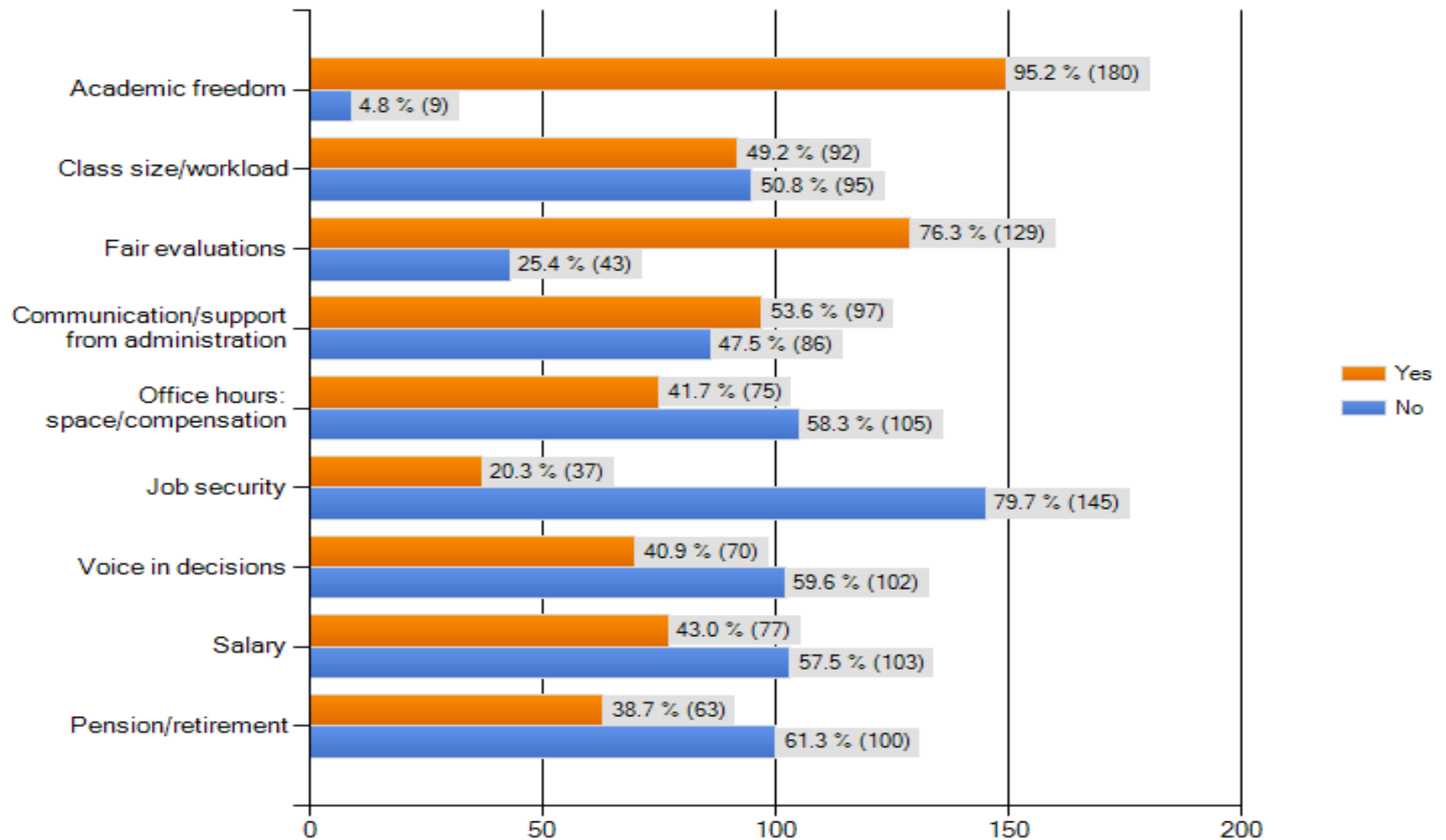
145 out of 174 favor seniority by date of hire.

I am in favor of having seniority by date of hire in the Part-Time Faculty
Rehire Pool for class assignments.



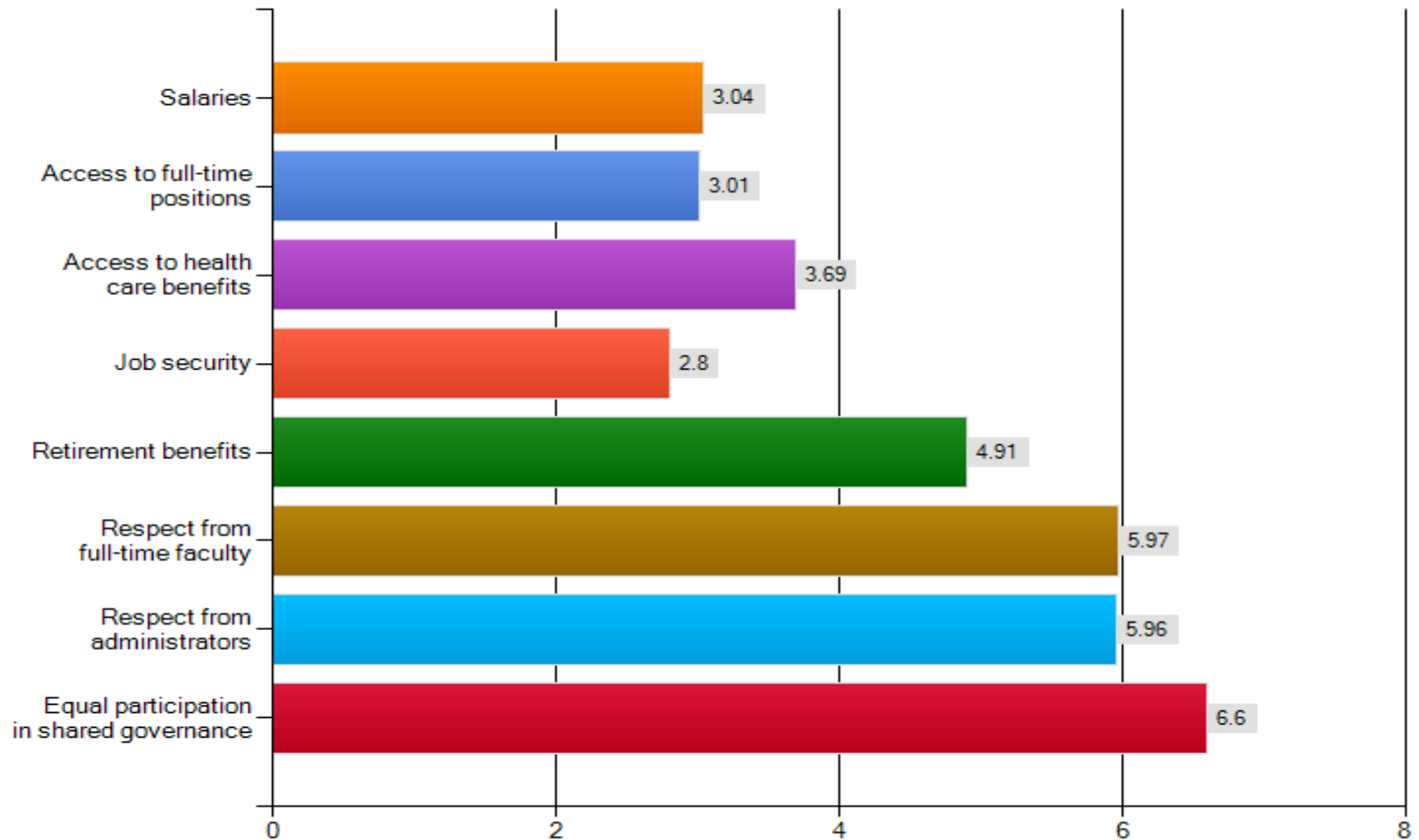
2. Working conditions: Most respondents satisfied with academic freedom; most are dissatisfied with job insecurity, office hours, salary, voice in decisions, retirement, class size and workload

I am satisfied with the following working conditions at Peralta:



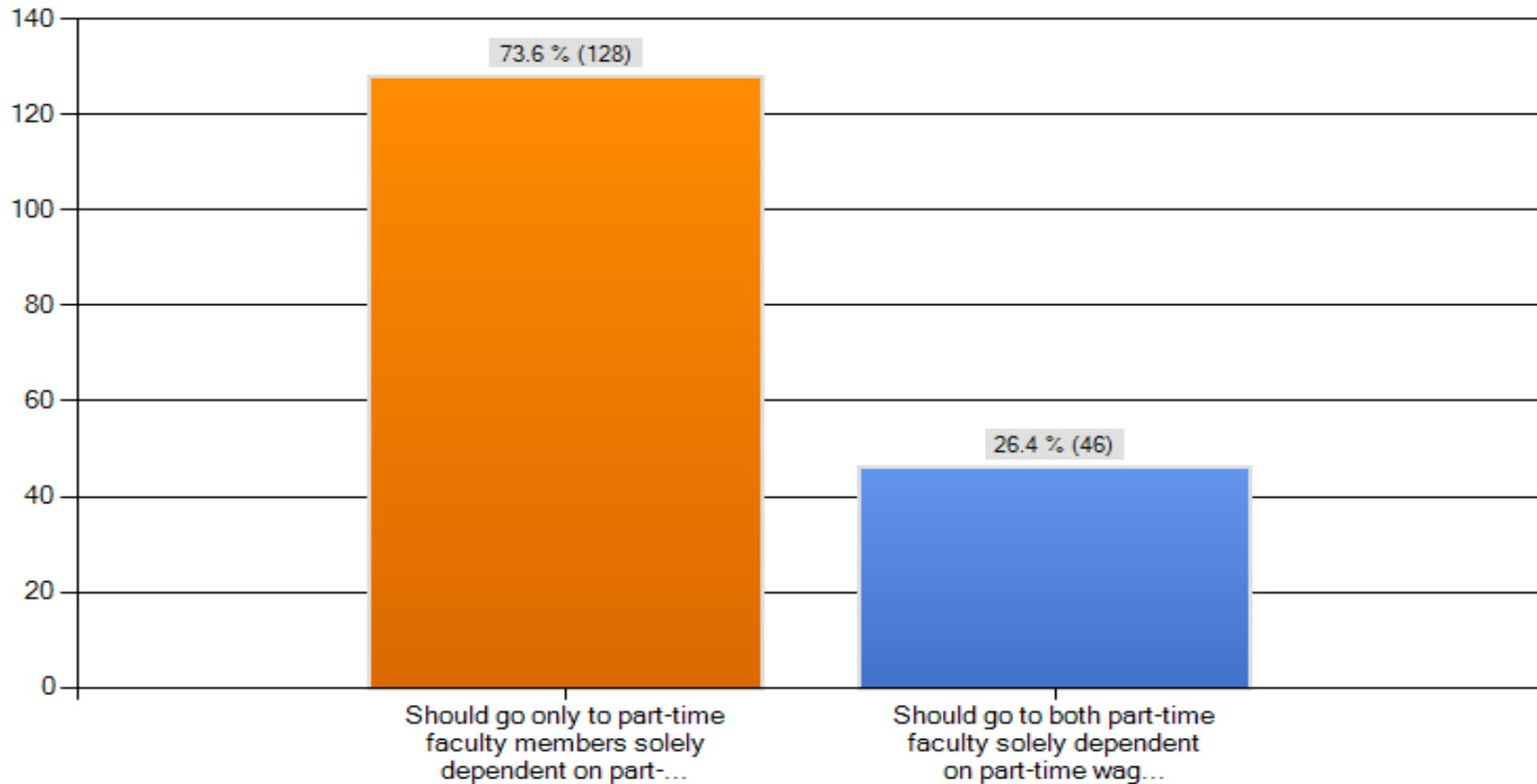
3. Improvements: Highest ranked -- Salaries, access to full-time positions, access to health care benefits, job security

I would say that improvements are most needed in [Rank from 1 (highest) to 8 (lowest)]:



4. Parity Pay: A majority favor parity pay to Part-Time faculty members solely dependent on part-time wages = 128 out of 174 respondents.

Parity pay: Beginning in 2001-2002, as a result of the advocacy of statewide PT faculty activists, the State has been allocating funds to community colleges for the purpose of assisting community college districts in making part-time faculty compensation more comparable to full-time faculty compensation for similar work, that is, to close the wide gap in compensation. At Peralta, full-time faculty members (who receive full compensation and benefits) who teach over their regular contract load (called 'extra service' in the PFT-PCCD contract) during regular semesters and in summer school, also receive a parity pay check. In my view, parity pay:



5. Issues as a part-time faculty member at Peralta that are of most concern to respondents:

- **Job security & respect ['I feel like a step-child']**
- **Higher salaries ['Equal pay for equal work']**
- **Full-time appointments**
- **Compensation for non-teaching activities [e.g., helping students outside of class, department and SLO meetings, DSPS accommodations at Laney]**
- **Fairness in class assignments**
- **Cap on teaching hours [67% of FT load]**
- **Underloads [as in under baseloads for Part-Time Rehire Pool faculty]**
- **Excessive class size [e.g. a case of 160-180 for one class with one part-time instructor]**
- **Affordable health insurance**

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CONCLUSION on the Impact of Contingent Employment on Student Success

The responses from the survey correspond with key findings reported by Adrianna Kezar, Daniel Maxey & Lara Badke (University of Southern California) in their comprehensive study entitled 'The Delphi Project on the Changing Faculty and Student Success' with a shorter policy document entitled 'The Imperative for Change: Understanding the Necessity of Changing Non-Tenure-Track Faculty Policies and Practices'. They highlight three imperatives:

- The **STUDENT LEARNING** imperative,
- The **EQUITY** imperative,
- The **RISK MANAGEMENT** imperative

And very importantly, Kezar and her associates conclude, '... there are a variety of reasons to be concerned about the policies and practices related to non-tenure-track faculty. There is a great need for institutions to systematically review their policies and practices to better understand their impact on student learning, equity, and risk management. Whenever possible, the review of policies and practices and planning for their revision or replacement should be part of a collaborative process, where non-tenure-track faculty and other stakeholders can voice their concerns and contribute efforts to resolve them' ('The Imperative for Change', p.11).

In 2010, Gary Rhoades, Director of the Institute for the Future of Higher Education, delivered to the AAUF a speech entitled 'We are all contingent' (<http://vimeo.com/11632234>). The PFT and our part-time faculty are eager to join our full-time colleagues, administrators, trustees and other policy-makers to advance the twin mission of student success and faculty equity.

