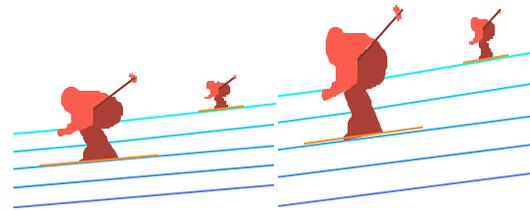


All-Level Programs Research Project

Fall 1998 to Spring 1999

prepared by
Lee Lytle, Academic Dean and
Andrea Meld, Research Associate



ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine how well freshmen do in All-Level programs. Students in six All-Level and two Core programs completed surveys at the beginning of Fall 1998, at the end of Fall 1998, and at the end of their program. The surveys included questions about social involvement, adjustment to life at Evergreen, academic progress, and overall student satisfaction. SAT scores, high school GPAs and retention data were also analyzed.

Survey results and retention data indicate that freshmen in All-Level programs did as well or better than their counterparts in Core programs. However, All-Level and Core programs provide freshmen with different experiences. Freshmen in All-Level programs reported more challenge and a heavier workload; they had greater difficulty understanding faculty expectations at the beginning of their programs. Freshmen in Core programs reported more structure, social opportunities, connection with other students, and faculty support.

The majority of freshmen, whether in All-Level or Core, were satisfied with the quality of instruction (86%) and their overall college experience (84%). Most freshmen reported a good deal of progress in academic areas, except for math and computer skills.

First-year transfer students did as well in Core programs as they did in All-Level programs in terms of retention, satisfaction, and self-reported academic progress.

Freshmen and first-year transfer students should be made aware of the differences between All-Level and Core programs and choose the type of program that works best for them. Faculty and staff who advise freshmen and first-year transfer students should also understand the differences between All-Level and Core programs.

Table of Contents

	PAGE
Introduction.....	7
Why did we conduct this study?	7
How can this information be used?	7
Design of the All-Level Study.....	8
Summary and Conclusions.....	9
Implications for Teaching, Learning and Support in All-Level Programs	11
 <u>Survey Results</u>	
The Beginning of Fall Quarter 1998	13
The End of Fall Quarter 1998	29
The End of the Program	47
 The Connection between SAT Scores and Retention.....	 57

Note: Program-Specific Information is available upon request.
Please contact Lee Lyttle (ext. 6678) or Andrea Meld (ext. 6676).

Introduction

Why did we conduct this study?

In this report, we focus on a particular type of learning community at The Evergreen State College: the All-Level Program. All-Level programs purposely include students at all class levels, from freshmen to seniors. The All-Level programs that participated in the study were *Contested Realities*, *Images in Context*, *Love/Violence*, *Natural Histories*, *Oceans*, and *Russia*. *Fictional Sociology* was the only All-Level program not included in the study.

Another type of learning community at Evergreen is the Core program which is designed to give freshmen and other students new to the college a foundation in developing college-level knowledge and skills. Two Core programs, *Forests* and *Making of Modern America*, participated in order to compare and contrast student needs, attitudes, and academic progress between the two program types.

The programs varied a great deal in subject matter and teaching approach by the faculty teams. It was not the intent of this study to compare, evaluate, or analyze the content of the programs. Instead, the following more general questions guided the research:

- Do freshmen do as well in learning communities composed of students from freshmen to senior levels (All-Level programs) as they do in learning communities composed mostly of other freshmen (Core programs)?
- How does the mix of freshmen in All-Level programs influence student learning for advanced students?
- How does involvement in the learning community provided by an All-Level program relate to student satisfaction, academic progress, and retention?
- In addition to class level, what other factors have an effect on student experiences in learning communities?

How can this information be used?

The 1996 Long-Range Curriculum Report recommended an evaluation of All-Level programs. This report satisfies the need for an evaluation of All-Level programs and indicates that All-Level programs work well for freshmen.

Students who are new to Evergreen, both freshmen and transfer students, go through an adjustment period when they are learning how to be effective learners. In All-Level programs these students are integrated with more experienced students. This can present both problems and valuable opportunities for students and faculty. While this study is only a snapshot, a single-year look at All-Level programs, many of the issues and patterns of student performance in these programs are more perennial. It is hoped that the faculty and the people across the college who support new students will find insights on how to better: 1) advise new students about which type of program might work best for them; 2) design programs that acknowledge and even exploit the adjustment issues that new students have; and 3) provide the type of support services that new students need to become effective college-level learners.

Design of the All-Level Study

Six All-Level and two Core programs volunteered to participate in this study. Students completed a series of three related surveys throughout the 1998-99 academic year: 1) at the beginning of Fall 1998, 2) at the end of Fall 1998, and 3) at the end of each program (either at the end of Winter 1999 or Spring 1999, depending on whether a program ran two or three quarters.) During Winter 1999, students who withdrew from learning communities or changed programs were interviewed by phone. We were able to carry out this plan for the study with one important exception: only students from one Core program were able to participate Spring quarter. The overall design of this study is shown below:

All-Level Study 1998-99

week	Fall 1998	Winter 1999	Spring 1999
1			
2	Survey 1: Fall 1998		
3	Return results for each program to faculty	Phone interviews w/ students who changed programs or withdrew from TESC	
4		Feedback to Faculty	
5	E-mail comments from students	Faculty Focus / Discussion Group	
6	Post results at Faculty Retreat Display	Edit final draft of Summative Survey	Present initial results to wider audience
7			
8	Survey 2: End of Fall 1998 (around Thanksgiving)		Survey 3: End of Program Sp 1999 (3-quarter programs)
9	Return results for each program to faculty	Faculty Survey (response rate insufficient to analyze)	Survey Spring Only, All-Level
10		Survey 3: End of Program W 1999 (2-quarter programs)	
		Feedback to Faculty -- Summative Survey	Feedback to Faculty -- Summative Survey

Retention data, SAT scores, and high school grade point averages were obtained from academic records at Evergreen.

Caveats of this study: The results from each survey should be considered separate snapshots reflecting on student experiences at three different points in the academic year. The response rate was high; about 80% of the students enrolled in these programs completed each survey. However, the group of students who completed each form varied somewhat from one survey to the next (e.g. different students may have been absent that day, dropped out, and so on). Therefore, the first survey should not be viewed as any kind of pre-test instrument; the second and third surveys should not be viewed as post-tests.

Summary and Conclusions

All-Level compared with Core. Freshmen students at Evergreen appear to do as well, if not better, in All-Level programs as they do in Core programs, as measured by surveys at three points in the academic year and actual retention data. The two groups, however, reported somewhat different experiences. At the beginning of Fall quarter, fewer All-Level freshmen (57%) were comfortable understanding faculty expectations than those in Core (81%), but this disadvantage vanished by the end of Fall. More Core freshmen (60%) found time for relaxation and recreation than those in All-Level programs (40%). More (93%) freshmen in Core placed importance on developing friendships in their program, compared to freshmen in All-Level programs (79%), and placed greater importance on studying with other students (78% compared with 61%).

At the End of Fall 1998, freshmen in All-Level programs reported having a heavier workload than did Core freshmen. More Core freshmen were more satisfied with opportunities for creative expression, such as art, music and dance (73% compared with 53%). Core freshmen felt more connected to other students in their programs and reported more progress in getting along with people of different backgrounds and using computers. However, freshmen in All-Level and Core programs were similar in terms of the amount they learned compared to what they had expected, and overall satisfaction with their programs.

All-Level programs required more work and provided greater challenge. Core programs tended to provide more structure, social opportunities, support from faculty, connection to other students, and assistance with writing, study habits, and computer skills.

End of Fall Survey

Percent reporting 4 or 5 on scale (1 = lowest possible, 5 = highest possible)	All-Level Freshmen (n = 69)	Core Freshmen (n = 47)
Program required heavy workload	60% *	27%
Feel connected to other students in program	35% *	56%
Progress getting along with people of different backgrounds	43% *	64%
Progress in computer skills	10% *	24%
Amount learned compared to expected	60%	57%
Overall satisfaction with program	52%	61%

* Differences are statistically significant.

Retention. Actual retention rates of all freshmen who enrolled in All-Level programs in Fall 1998 are slightly higher than retention rates of their counterparts who enrolled in Core programs, although this difference is not statistically significant.

	Fall 1998 to Winter 1999 Retention		Fall 1998 to Spring 1999 Retention
All Level	81% stayed in same program	91% stayed at TESC	86% stayed at TESC
Core	73% stayed in same program	86% stayed at TESC	81% stayed at TESC

Academic Progress at the End of Program. Freshmen reported a good deal of progress in most academic areas, except for math skills and using computers. Almost all students reported that they feel responsible for their own education and learn well independently. The majority report a good deal of progress in being engaged and responsible for their own education, learning independently, the ability to put ideas together, and understanding cultural and gender differences. They also made progress in writing, speaking and problem solving. Students reported considerably less progress in math and computer skills. Differences between freshmen in Core and All-Level programs were not significant.

Percent of Freshmen Reporting (n = 89)	A good deal of progress	Some progress	None at all
Responsible for own education	80%	18%	2%
Learning independently	78%	21%	1%
Ability to put ideas together	78%	20%	2%
Understanding culture/gender differences	62%	29%	9%
Collecting information to solve problems	58%	40%	2%
Working cooperatively with others	57%	38%	5%
Writing clearly and effectively	55%	43%	2%
Speaking clearly and effectively	48%	45%	7%
Applying theory to solve practical problems	48%	39%	13%
Using computers	23%	45%	32%
Math / quantitative skills	2%	32%	66%

Overall Student Satisfaction. Regardless of whether they were in Core or All-Level programs, the majority of students from all three groups (freshmen, first-year transfer students, and other, TESC-experienced students), were satisfied with the overall quality of instruction, their overall college experience, the amount of contact with faculty, and their interaction with other students.

Student satisfaction at End of Program (All students surveyed, n = 259)	Low	In the middle	High
Overall quality of instruction	3%	13%	84%
Overall college experience	6%	13%	81%
Amount of contact with faculty	6%	19%	75%
Interaction with other students	10%	20%	70%

Reasons for Changing Programs or Dropping Out. Students who changed programs or withdrew from the college Winter 1999 were interviewed by phone. The most frequent reasons for changing programs or leaving the college were related to program content: for example, the program was not interesting, it did not match their interests, or it did not meet their expectations. Although average SAT scores and high school GPAs were somewhat lower for students who dropped out of the college, SAT scores and high school GPA did not correlate with retention.

Some Surprises:

- Whether a student got into their first-, second-, or third-choice program made little difference in their performance, satisfaction, or retention.
- Self-rated math skills of entering freshmen were higher than expected; 49% of Core freshmen and 39% of All-Level freshmen rated their math skills as somewhat or very strong. The average SAT math score for Fall 1998 freshmen was 530 (above the re-centered national mean of 500).

Implications for Teaching, Learning and Support in All-Level Programs

- ***Students in both Core and All-Level programs reported making little progress in math or quantitative reasoning skills.*** Most freshmen (66%) reported no progress in math at all at the end of their programs. New freshmen and first-year transfer students bring with them different levels of math skills. Students need greater opportunity to develop their math and quantitative skills at Evergreen.
- ***Thirty-two percent of all freshmen reported no progress in using computers.*** Similarly, 22% of first-year transfer students and 20% of other students reported no progress in using computers. Like math skills, each student starts with different proficiencies. Faculty need to explore ways to differentially challenge each student.
- ***Students, particularly freshmen, need more help in developing good study habits;*** 46% of freshmen reported that their study habits interfered with learning at the end of Fall quarter. However, we did not define "study skills" in any of the surveys, or break it down into component skills. Different "experts" on study skills offer various approaches to improving study skills. Further research should be done on what kinds of study skills are most important for students at Evergreen.
- At the beginning of Fall 1998, fewer of the freshmen in All-Level programs (57%) were comfortable understanding faculty expectations, compared with freshmen in Core programs (81%). Similarly, fewer of first-year transfer students in All-Level programs (53%) were comfortable understanding faculty expectations, compared with those in Core programs (74%). In contrast, most of the experienced students in All-Level programs (74%) reported understanding faculty expectations. Since ***faculty expectations are not clear to freshmen and first-year transfer students in All-Level programs, faculty need to explore several ways to make sure that students understand program requirements and other expectations.***
- ***New students who choose an All-Level program should be prepared to take the initiative to understand the faculty expectations, work out college adjustment issues, place less emphasis on socializing, and perform well academically with less guidance.***
- ***Program content really matters.*** "If a student is interested in the subject matter they will do O.K. regardless" is a common perception among faculty teaching in Core and All-Level programs. Conversely, students who are not interested in the subject matter can sabotage a program. Interviews with students indicated that the most frequent reason for changing programs or dropping out was that program content failed to meet their expectations or match their interests. Clearly, the match between student interest and program content is crucial. ***Student discussions with faculty before enrolling in a program, advising, orientation, and catalog descriptions need to be enhanced or improved.***
- ***Most students surveyed reported they had made strong friendships this year (79%),*** including friends whose background was different from their own (81%). For most (84%), friends had been supportive. Yet, ***fewer reported feeling connection to other students in their program (42%) or a sense of community as students at Evergreen (55%).***
- At the beginning of Fall 1998, ***over half of all students surveyed, including 52% of the freshmen, reported that they were not comfortable balancing the demands of their program and work schedule.*** At the end of Fall quarter, ***32% of first-year transfer students reported that concerns about finances interfered with their learning.*** Nine of the 16 students surveyed who dropped out of the college Winter 1999 reported difficulty budgeting their resources and paying for tuition.
- ***At the end of fall quarter 29% of all students reported that their living situation interfered with their learning.*** This could be a complex issue and further study by Housing may need to be done.

The Beginning of Fall Quarter
1998





Profile of Fall 1998 Freshmen in All-Level and Core Programs



The information shown on this page is based on academic record data. The freshmen in the programs that participated in the All-Level study represent Fall 1998 freshmen with one exception: those freshmen in the All-Level program that did not participate in the study, *Fictional Sociology*, had a significantly higher verbal SAT score than the other All-Level freshmen and in the study, and freshmen, overall.

Fall 1998 Freshmen	number	High School GPA	number	Ave. SAT Verbal	Ave. SAT Math
Core in Study	64	3.06	56	587	537
Core Not in Study	208	3.07	197	578	533
All-Level in Study	74	3.15	66	582	523
All-Level Not in Study	18	3.22	16	641 *	550
Other Programs	65	3.16	59	612	551
Enrolled PT or in Modules	9	2.77	10	595	518
Total	438	3.10	404	588	535

* Statistically significant difference

Fall 1998 Freshmen	number	Female	Male	Asian American	African American	Native American	Hispanic Latino	White
Core Program in Study	67	60%	40%	3%	3%	5%	3%	86%
Core Program Not in Study	223	57%	43%	3%	1%	3%	3%	90%
All-Level Program in Study	80	61%	39%	1%	3%	3%	3%	90%
All-Level Program Not in Study	20	70%	30%		10%			90%
Other Programs	72	57%	43%	3%		1%	3%	93%
Enrolled PT or in Modules	17	59%	41%	6%		6%		88%
Total	479	59%	41%	3%	2%	3%	3%	90%

All-Level programs participating in study: *Contested Realities, Images in Context, Love/Violence, Natural Histories, Oceans, and Russia*.
Core programs participating in study: *Forests* (Beginning of Fall and End of Fall, only), *Making of Modern America*

Differences between Student Groups at the Beginning of the Fall Term

Overall, freshmen, first-year transfer students, and experienced students gave similar answers to survey questions, as did freshmen in All-Level compared with those in Core programs. However, the significant differences between students groups that did occur are reported below:

Significant differences between freshmen in All-Level and Core programs

Compared with freshmen in Core, All-Level freshmen gave less importance to developing friendships and studying with other students. All-Level freshmen were less comfortable finding relaxation and recreation, and understanding faculty expectations.

<i>Percent reporting:</i>	All-Level Freshmen (54)	Core Freshmen (83)
Somewhat or very important		
Developing friendships	79%	93%
Studying with other students	61%	78%
Somewhat or very comfortable		
Finding time for relaxation and recreation	40%	60%
Understanding faculty expectations	57%	81%

Significant differences between All-Level freshmen and experienced (other) All-Level students

Compared with All-Level students who had been Evergreen students for more than one year, freshmen in All-Level programs were less comfortable understanding faculty expectations, but a greater proportion rated their math skills as somewhat or very strong .

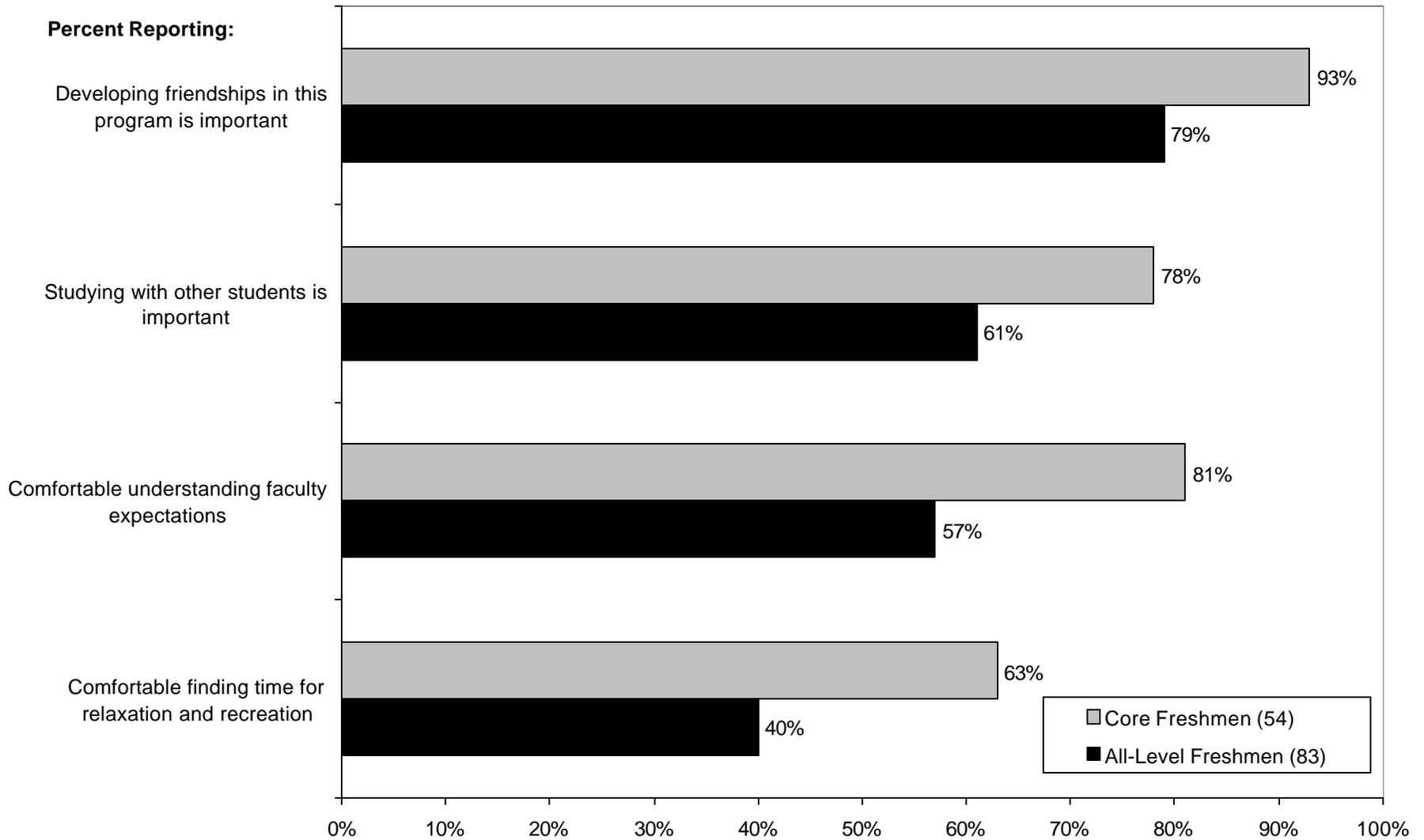
<i>Percent reporting:</i>	All-Level Freshmen (54)	All-Level Other Students (121)
Comfortable understanding faculty expectations	57%	74%
Math skills are somewhat or very strong	39%	18%

Significant differences between first-year transfer students in All-Level and Core programs

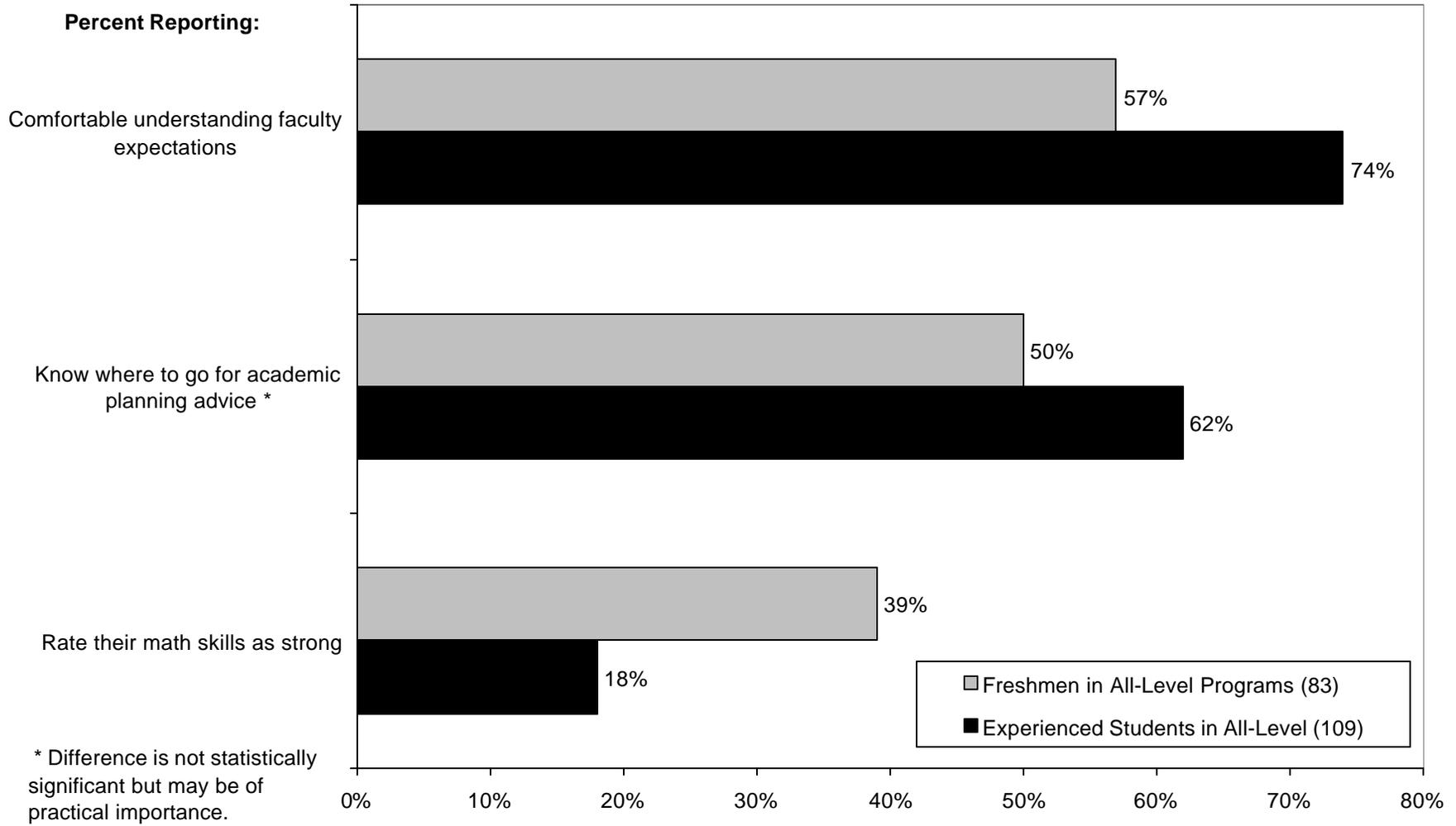
Compared with those in Core, first-year transfer students in All-Level programs were less comfortable understanding faculty expectations, but more comfortable knowing where to go for academic advice. A greater proportion of All-Level first-year transfer students reported strength in math skills.

<i>Percent reporting:</i>	All-Level 1st Year Transfer (104)	Core 1st Year Transfer (31)
Somewhat or very comfortable		
Understanding faculty expectations	53%	74%
Knowing where to go for academic advice	55%	36%
Math skills are somewhat or very strong	28%	10%

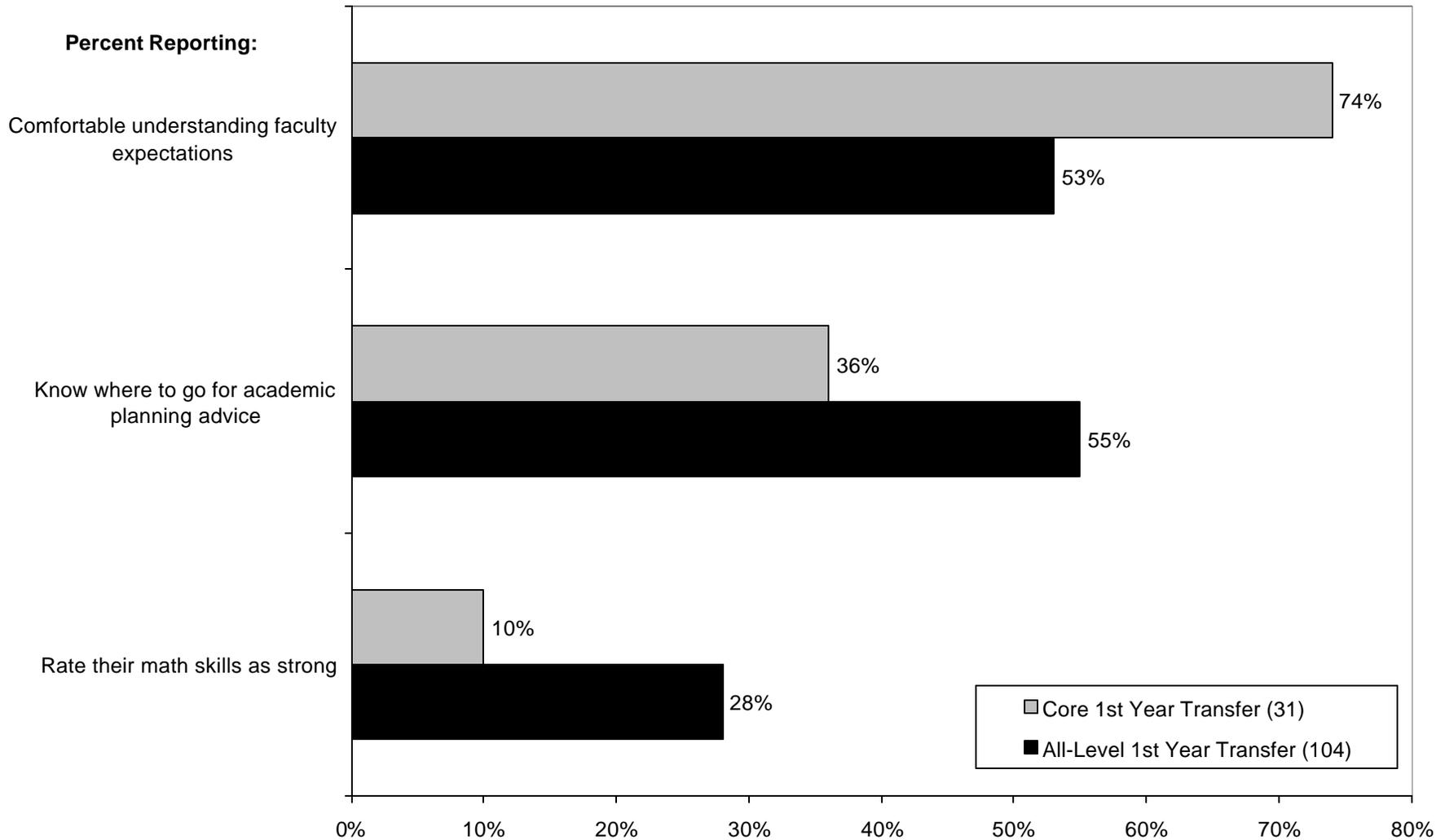
Significant Differences between All-Level and Core Freshmen at the Beginning of Fall 1998



Significant Differences between Freshmen in All-Level Programs and TESC Experienced Students in All-Level Programs, Fall 1998



Significant Differences between First-Year Transfer Students in All-Level and Core Programs at the Beginning of Fall 1998



What was important to students at the beginning of the year. (Percent reporting somewhat or very important)

Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
Developing friendships in the program	84%	Talking with faculty outside of class	84%	Talking with faculty outside of class	89%
Talking with faculty outside of class	83%	Developing friendships in the program	82%	Developing friendships in the program	70%
Studying with other students	68%	Studying with other students	73%	Parties, potlucks, dinner with friends	66%
Parties, potlucks, dinner with friends	66%	Parties, potlucks, dinner with friends	65%	Exercise, sports, other recreation	63%
Exercise, sports, other recreation	64%	Exercise, sports, other recreation	56%	Studying with other students	59%
Involvement with student groups	62%	Involvement with student groups	54%	Involvement with student groups	44%

Student comfort with adjusting to life at Evergreen (Percent reporting they are somewhat or very comfortable in these areas)

Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
Living away from home / in new setting	85%	Program matches my interests	79%	Living away from home / in new setting	90%
Settling into the right living situation	72%	Living away from home / in new setting	73%	Settling into the right living situation	82%
Balancing program demands with family	72%	Settling into the right living situation	69%	Having background and skills to do well	81%
Program matches my interests	77%	Having background and skills to do well	69%	Balancing program demands with family	75%
Having background and skills to do well	67%	Balancing program demands with family	62%	Program matches my interests	78%
Understand faculty expectations	66%	Understand faculty expectations	58%	Understand faculty expectations	74%
Know where to go for academic advice	53%	Know where to go for academic advice	50%	Know where to go for academic advice	64%
Time for relaxation and recreation	49%	Time for relaxation and recreation	48%	Balancing program demands with work	53%
Balancing program demands with work	48%	Balancing program demands with work	44%	Time for relaxation and recreation	41%

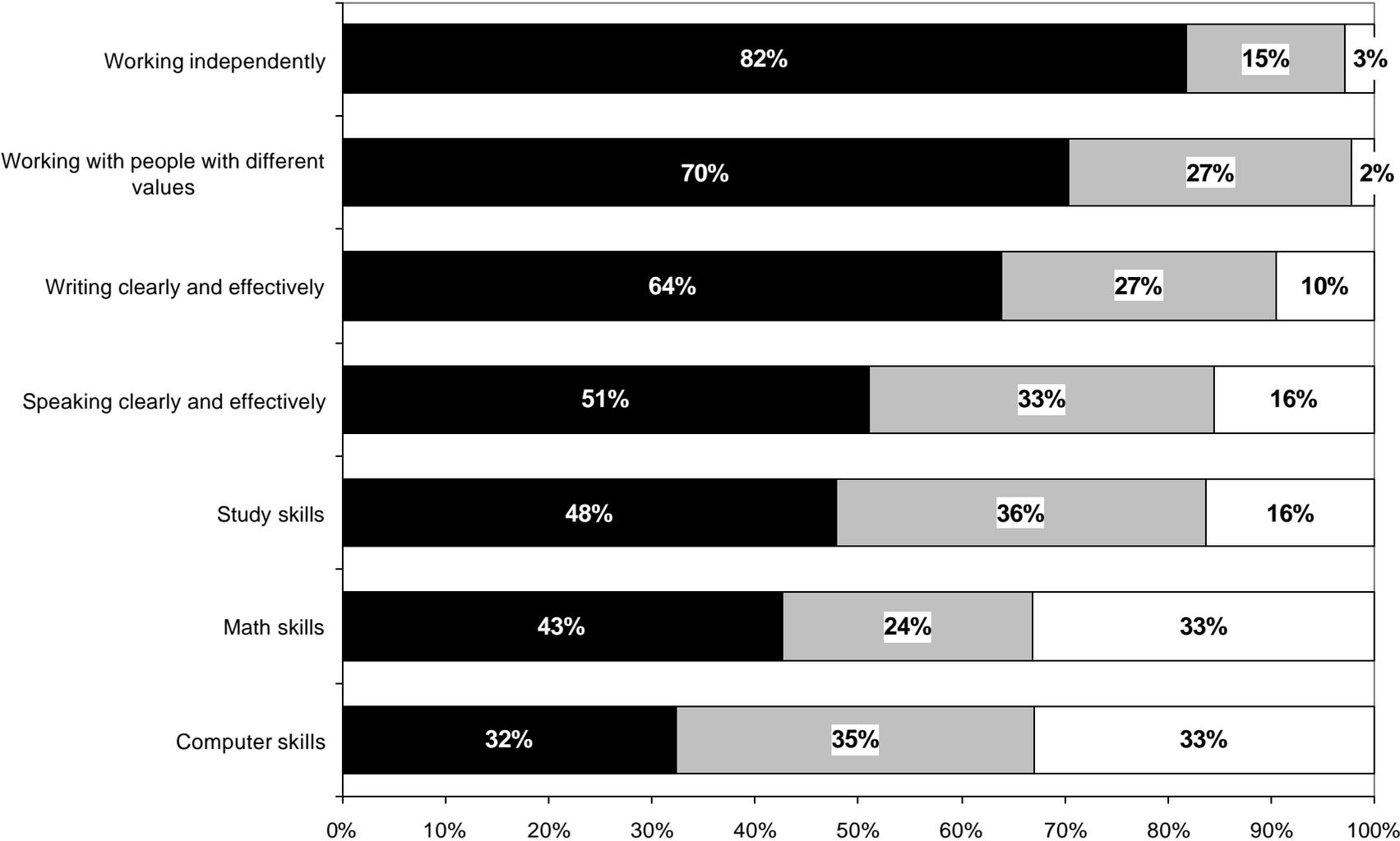
Perceived academic strengths and weaknesses (Percent reporting somewhat or very strong)

Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
Work independently	82%	Work independently	86%	Work independently	79%
Work with people with different values	70%	Work with people with different values	71%	Work with people with different values	65%
Write clearly and effectively	64%	Write clearly and effectively	60%	Write clearly and effectively	61%
Speak clearly and effectively	51%	Speak clearly and effectively	54%	Speak clearly and effectively	52%
Study skills	48%	Study skills	47%	Study skills	44%
Math skills	43%	Computer skills	35%	Computer skills	34%
Computer skills	32%	Math skills	24%	Math skills	19%

Freshmen	137	54 in Core and 83 in All-Level
1 st -year transfer	135	31 in Core and 104 in All-Level
Other TESC students	129	8 in Core and 121 in All-Level

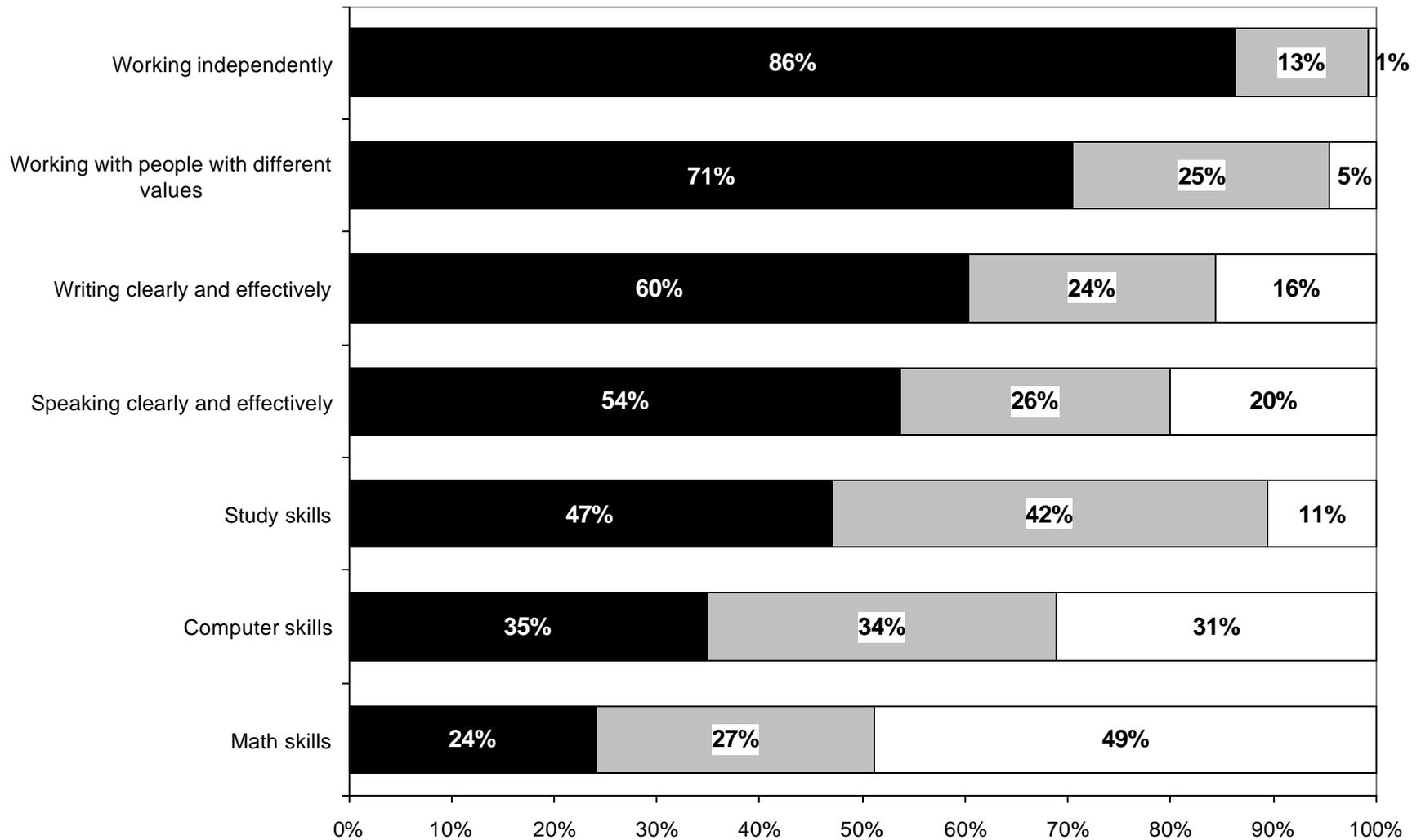
**Fall 1998 Freshmen
Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses
(n = 137)**

■ Strong □ In the middle □ Weak



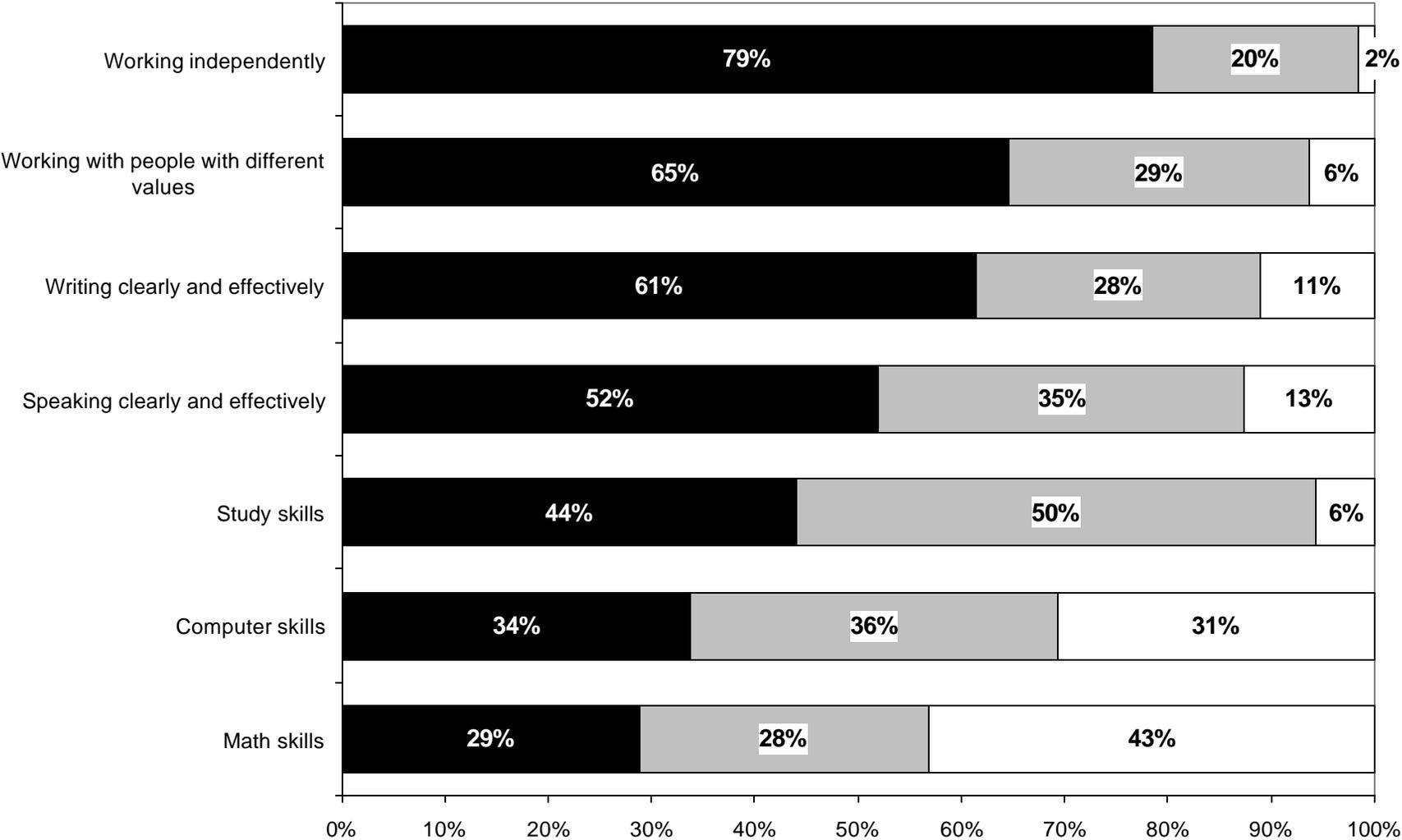
**Fall 1998 First-Year Transfer Students
Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses
(n = 135)**

■ Strong ■ In the middle □ Weak



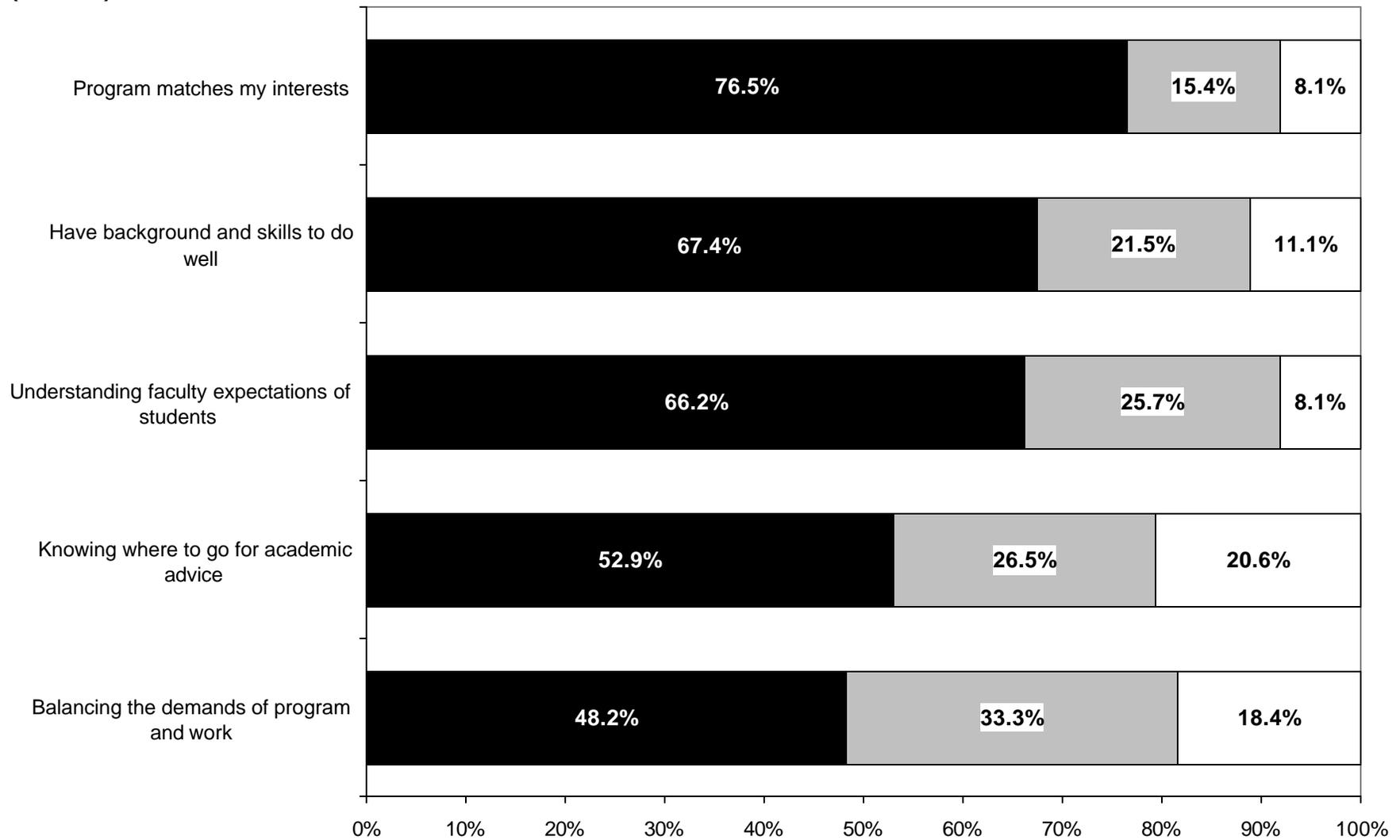
**Fall 1998 Other Students
Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses
(n = 129)**

■ Strong ■ In the middle □ Weak



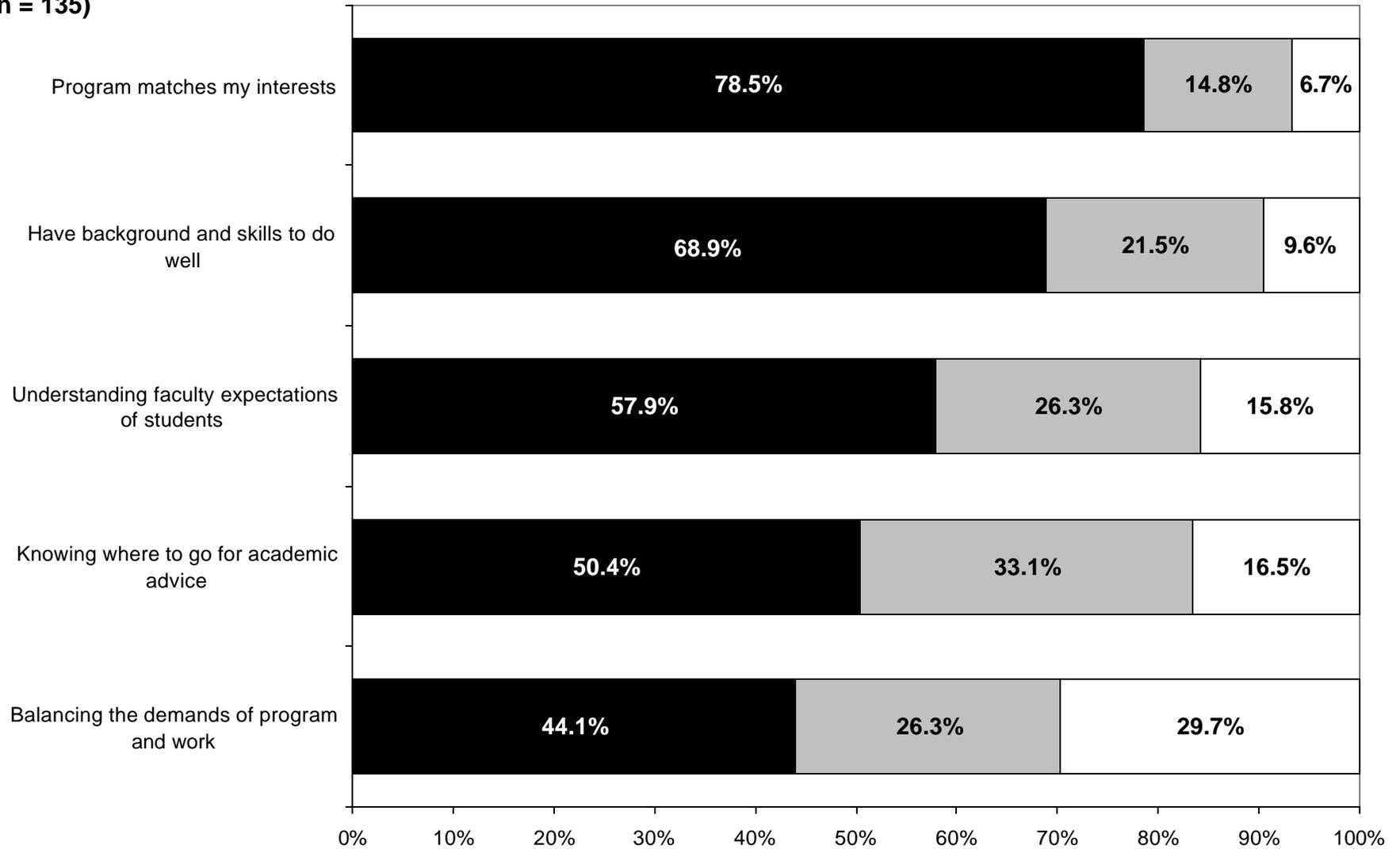
**Fall 1998 Freshmen
Adjusting to life at Evergreen
(n = 137)**

■ comfortable □ In the middle □ uncomfortable



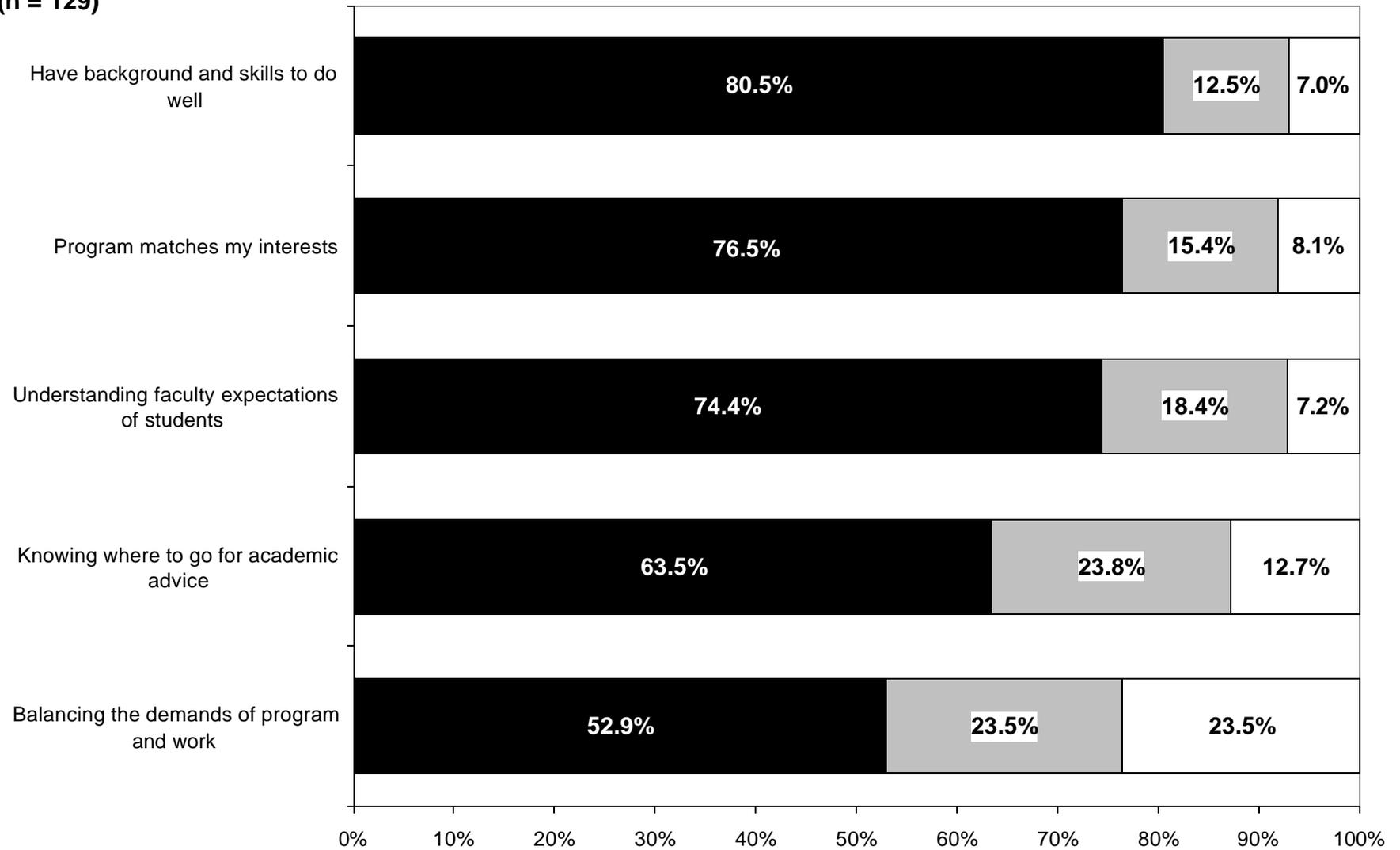
**Fall 1998 First-Year Transfer Students
Adjusting to life at Evergreen
(n = 135)**

■ comfortable □ In the middle □ uncomfortable



**Fall 1998 Other Students
Adjusting to life at Evergreen
(n = 129)**

■ comfortable □ In the middle □ uncomfortable



Representative Comments from Freshmen at the Beginning of Fall

What are the three most important things that you hope to learn or get out of this program?

At the moment, I'm still attempting to get into the swing of things at Evergreen, so this is a difficult question to answer. Of course, as will all my academic learning, I hope to have a better understanding of myself and my place in our world from the program. Perhaps also a better understanding of history and the historical narrative.

I want more knowledge, not just about the content of the program, but also about people and their lives and experiences. I want to learn history and get over my irrational fear of it and also improve my writing skills. I definitely want to learn as much from fellow students as I do from professors.

I sincerely hope to improve my writing skills; my high school education was lacking in that area and I know I need to work on it. . . My reading needs to improve; I hope to be able to read faster while still understanding and being able to process the information. . . I hope to become more comfortable speaking out, voicing my opinions/feelings, and overcoming fear of public speaking.

I hope to understand or at least come up with a long-term goal. . . I hope to get information (seek out information) about how I can use the skills/interests I have to shape a career path.

Broad general education. . . The ability to explore different types of biological sciences and find what I like best and pursue for later education. . . Well-rounded sense of the world and things around me.

What are three of your main concerns (if any) about being in this program?

I hope that I will be able to keep up on the reading. . . I feel that a lot of the students have a more dynamic basis or knowledge about the plants here than I do. . . Being able to manage my time so that I can get everything done to my satisfaction and be happy.

Difficulty level -- will I be able to do well/my best with the time I have?
... Unfamiliarity with Evergreen's learning environment.

I feel like I don't understand what the teachers want me to do and neither do they. I have trouble knowing what to analyze. I feel like all we do is analyze things that I feel are unimportant and I hope this will not be a waste of my time.

Evaluations. . . Subject of discussions. . . Expectations of other students as well as faculty being too high/low.

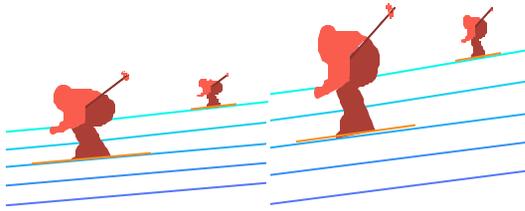
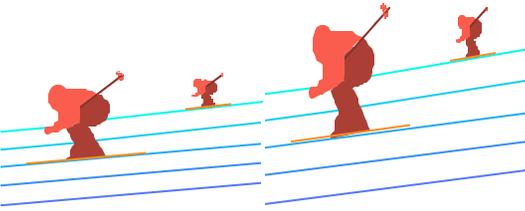
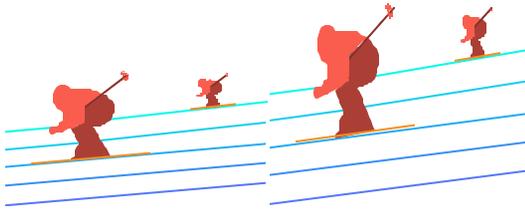
I feel sometimes like I have not a clue about what is going on either in workshop or seminar; it gets frustrating knowing I have done my work and reading and still am clueless.

Can I complete all the work (papers, reading)? . . Will I satisfy myself with the work I've done? . . Will this whole experience be worth while?

I am concerned about whether or not I will use much of what I am learning in the future.

*

The End of Fall Quarter 1998



Differences between Student Groups at the End of the Fall Term

Significant Differences between Freshmen in All-Level and Core Programs

Freshmen in All-Level programs were less satisfied with the opportunities they had Fall Quarter for creative expression such as art, music or dance. They reported less progress getting along with people of different backgrounds and using computers. Freshmen in All-Level programs felt less connected with the other students in their program and reported that the work load had been heavier for them.

<i>Percent reporting:</i>	All-Level Freshmen (69)	Core Freshmen (47)
Satisfied with opportunities for creative expression	53%	73%
Progress getting along with people of different backgrounds	43%	64%
Progress in using computers	10%	24%
Connected with other students in program	35%	56%
Program workload is heavy	60%	27%

Significant differences between All-Level freshmen and experienced (other) All-Level students

A greater proportion of freshmen in All-Level programs reported study habits and feeling unsettled about being at Evergreen interfered with their learning.

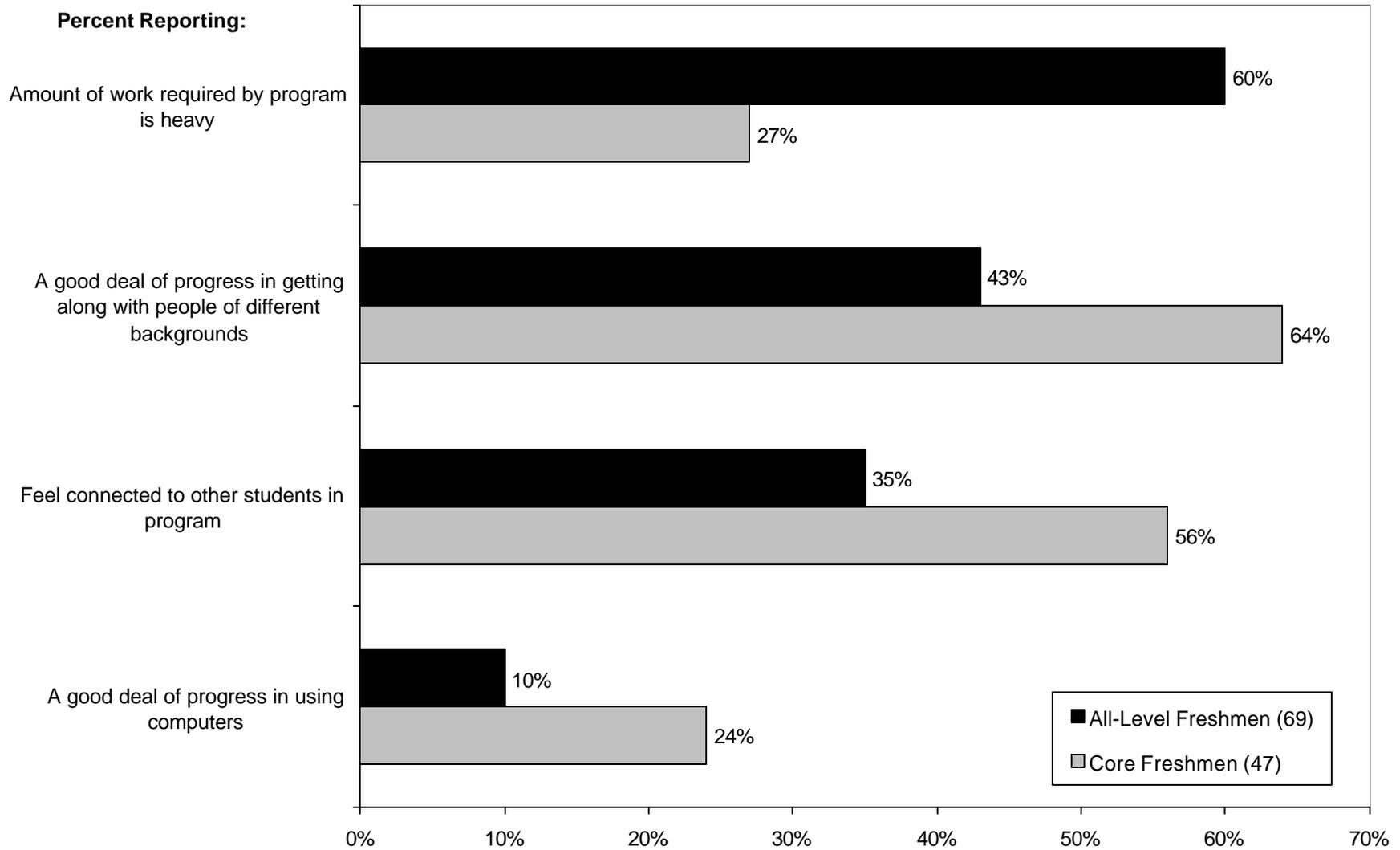
<i>Percent reporting:</i>	All-Level Freshmen (69)	All-Level Other Students (104)
Study habits interfered with learning	51%	29%
Unsettled about being at Evergreen	23%	3%

Significant differences between first-year transfer students in All-Level and Core programs

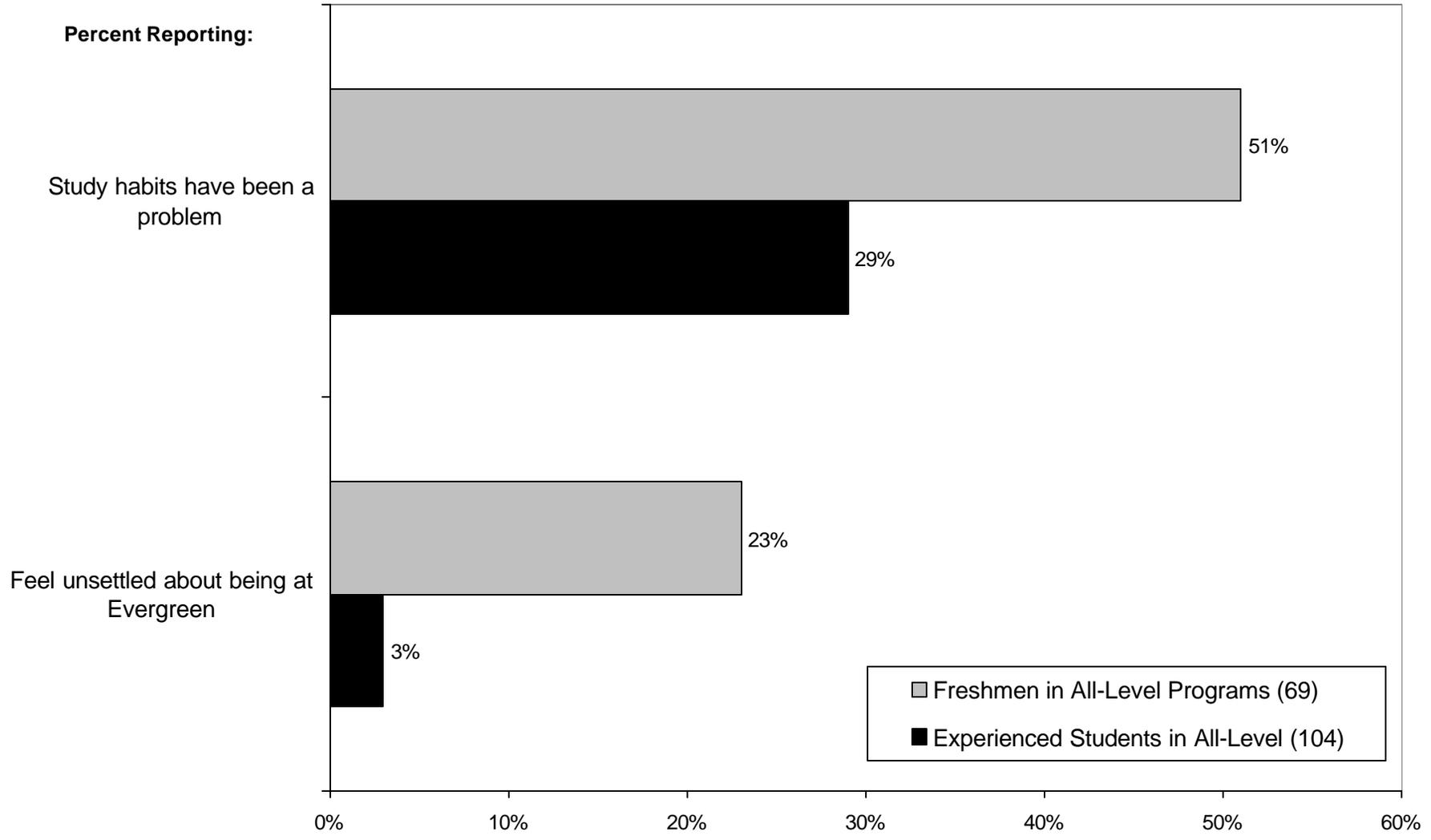
A greater proportion of first-year transfer students in Core were satisfied with opportunities to meet new people and make new friends compared to those in All-Level programs.

<i>Percent reporting:</i>	All-Level 1st Year Transfer (83)	Core 1st Year Transfer (23)
Satisfied with opportunities for meeting new people and making new friends	80%	96%

Significant Differences between All-Level and Core Freshmen at the End of Fall 1998



Significant Differences between Freshmen and TESC Experienced Students at End of Fall 1998



Progress in Academic Areas, So Far (Percent reporting 4 or 5, on scale where 1 = none at all, 5 = a great deal)

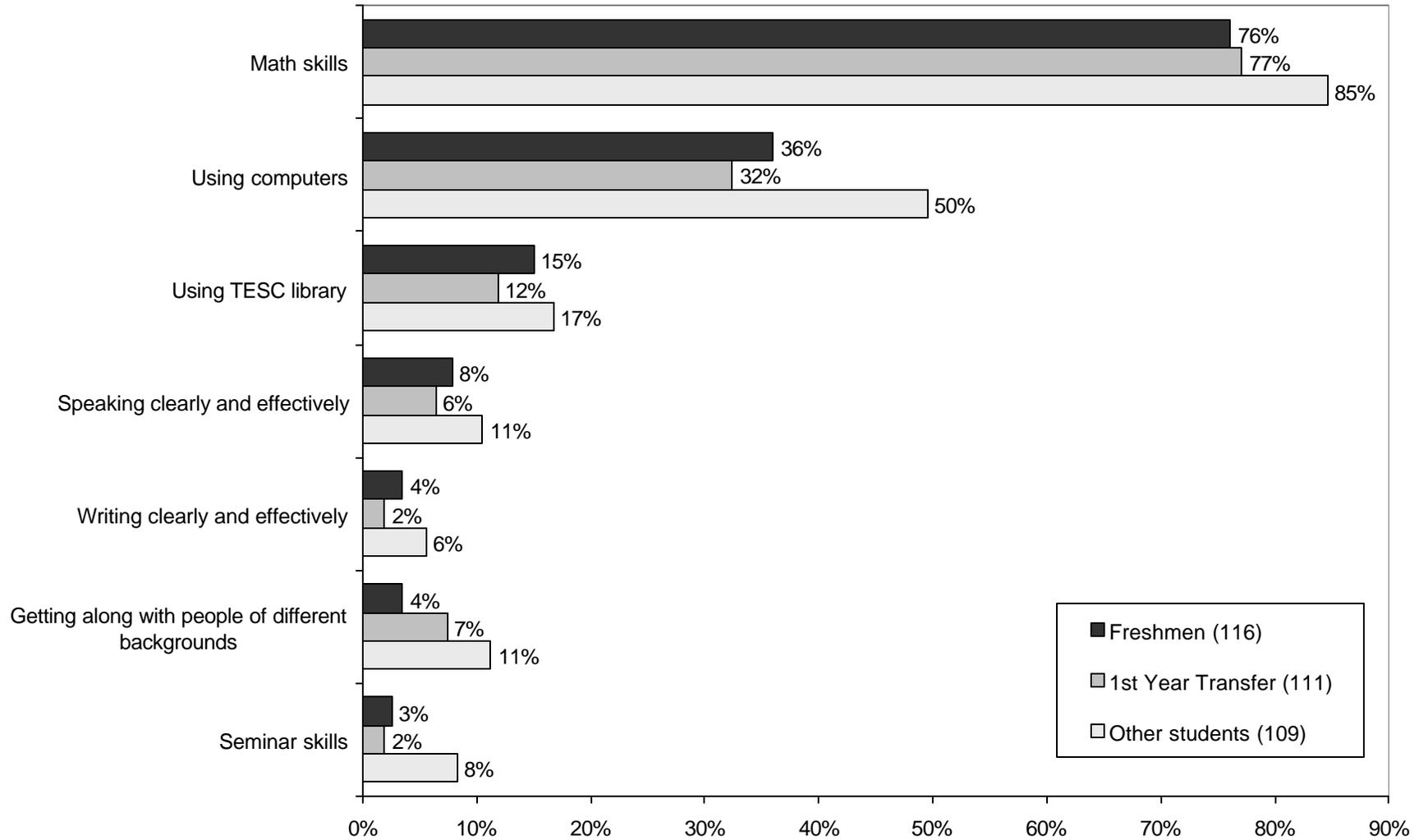
Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
Seminar skills	54%	Seminar skills	55%	Write clearly and effectively	41%
Get along with different kinds of people	52%	Get along with different kinds of people	51%	Seminar skills	39%
Write clearly and effectively	37%	Write clearly and effectively	39%	Get along with different kinds of people	36%
Using the TESC library	31%	Speak clearly and effectively	39%	Using the TESC library	32%
Speak clearly and effectively	30%	Using the TESC library	24%	Speak clearly and effectively	30%
Use computers	16%	Use computers	12%	Use computers	16%
Math skills	2%	Math skills	3%	Math skills	1%

Problems that Interfered with Learning

Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
My study habits	46%	My study habits	38%	My study habits	28%
My living situation	28%	My living situation	32%	My living situation	27%
Personal relationship problems	23%	Financial problems	32%	Personal relationship problems	21%
Physical environment of classrooms	20%	Personal relationship problems	23%	Problems in seminar group	19%
Unsettled about being at Evergreen	19%	Unsettled about being at Evergreen	22%	Financial problems	17%
Financial problems	18%	Problems in seminar group	19%	Physical environment of classrooms	16%
Family problems	17%	Physical environment of classrooms	15%	Family problems	13%
Program requirements confusing	16%	Family problems	14%	Poor relationship with faculty	9%
Problems in seminar group	15%	Program requirements confusing	8%	Program requirements confusing	8%
Poor relationship with faculty	10%	Poor relationship with faculty	3%	Unsettled about being at Evergreen	4%

Freshmen	116	47 in Core and 69 in All-Level
1 st -year transfer	111	28 in Core and 83 in All-Level
Other TESC students	109	5 in Core and 104 in All-Level

**Percent of Students Reporting No Progress in these Areas
at the End of Fall 1998**



Opportunities for Social Involvement (Percent reporting 3 or 4, on a scale where 1 = very dissatisfied, 4 = very satisfied)

Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
Conversations with friends	90%	Conversations with friends	94%	Conversations with friends	90%
Meeting new people, making friends	86%	Meeting new people, making friends	84%	Talking to faculty outside of class	75%
Parties, potlucks, dinners with friends	80%	Talking to faculty outside of class	79%	Meeting new people, making friends	73%
Talking to faculty outside of class	79%	Parties, potlucks, dinners with friends	71%	Student groups and organizations	69%
Exercise, sports, and recreation	75%	Student groups and organizations	69%	Parties, potlucks, dinners with friends	66%
Studying with other students	70%	Studying with other students	66%	Exercise, sports, and recreation	64%
Student groups and organizations	66%	Exercise, sports, and recreation	62%	Creative expression (music, art, dance)	60%
Creative expression (music, art, dance)	61%	Creative expression (music, art, dance)	62%	Studying with other students	58%

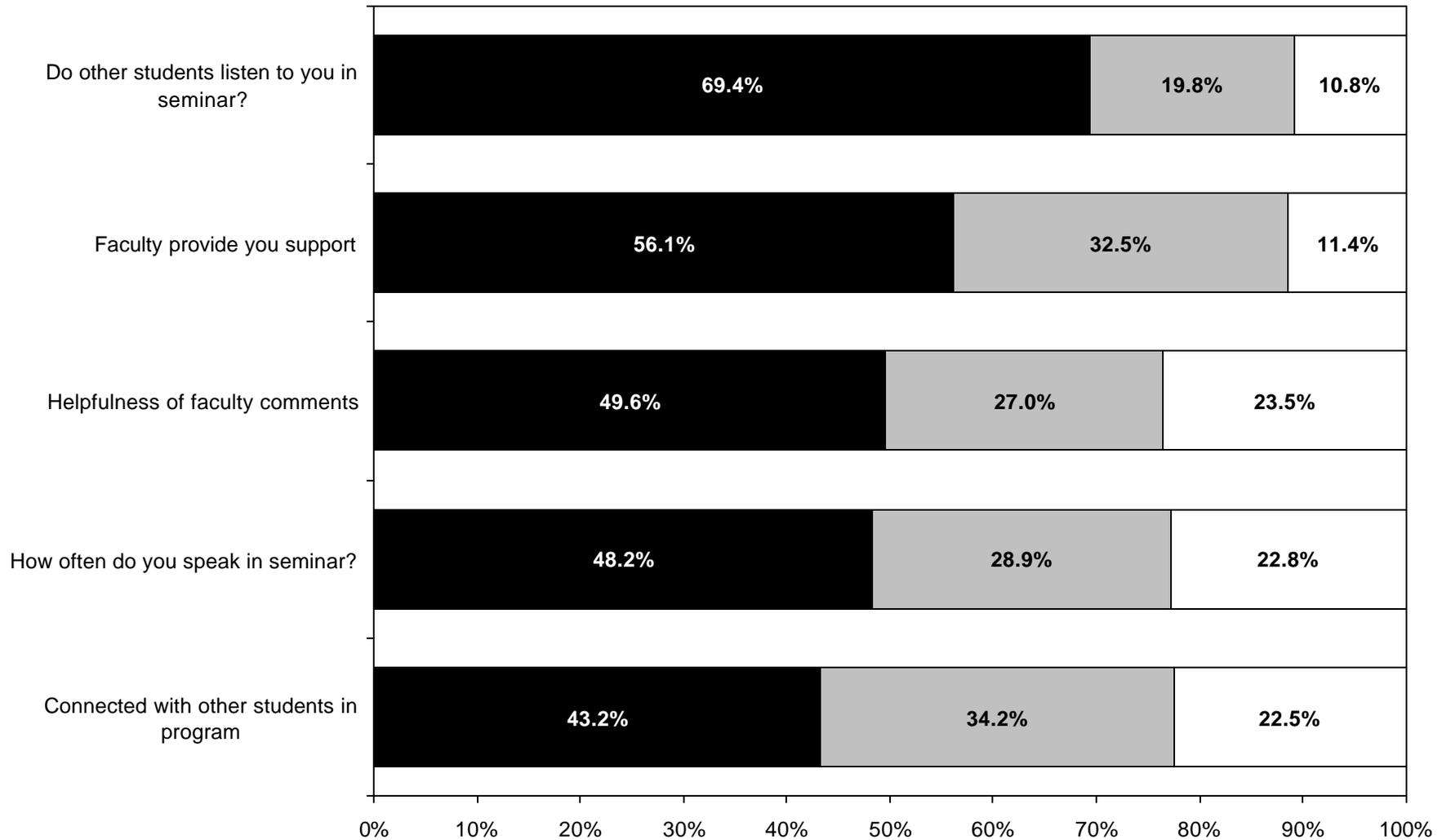
Experiences in the Program (Percent reporting 4 or 5, on a scale where 1 = lowest possible, 5 = highest possible)

Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
Students in seminar listen to you	70%	Students in seminar listen to you	68%	Students in seminar listen to you	59%
Individual support from faculty	56%	Program components come together	66%	Program components come together	56%
Overall satisfaction with program	56%	Program is challenging	65%	Overall satisfaction with program	54%
Faculty comments helpful	50%	Overall satisfaction with program	65%	Individual support from faculty	53%
Speak up often seminar	48%	Individual support from faculty	61%	Program is challenging	50%
Program components come together	47%	Program workload is heavy	59%	Program workload is heavy	49%
Program workload is heavy	46%	Amount learned compared to expected	59%	Amount learned compared to expected	49%
Amount learned compared to expected	45%	Faculty comments helpful	55%	Speak up often seminar	47%
Program is challenging	44%	Speak up often seminar	55%	Faculty comments helpful	45%
Connected with students in program	43%	Connected with students in program	54%	Connected with students in program	29%

Freshmen	116	47 in Core and 69 in All-Level
1 st -year transfer	111	28 in Core and 83 in All-Level
Other TESC students	109	5 in Core and 104 in All-Level

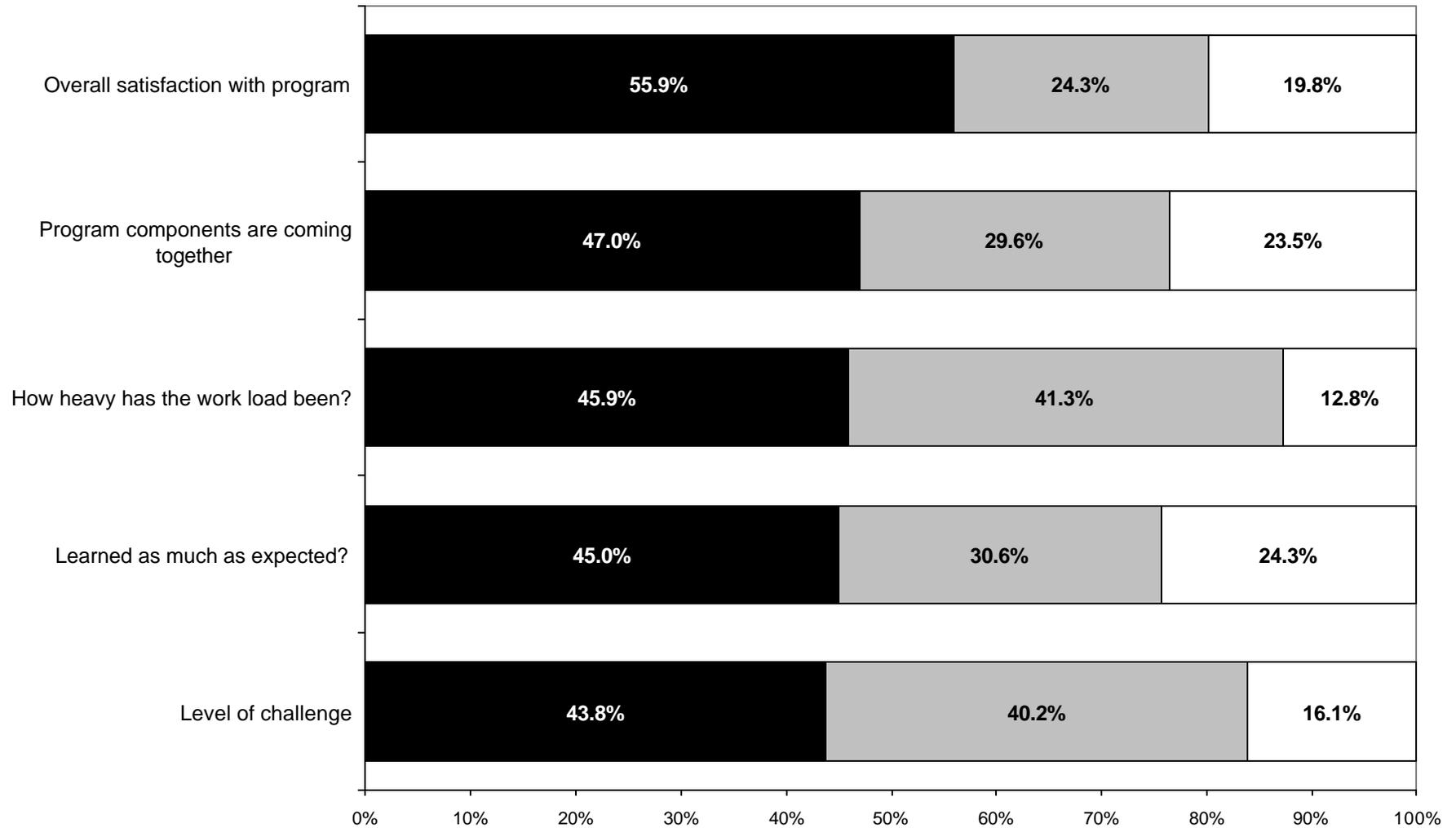
Freshmen Experience in Program at the End of Fall 1998 (n = 116)

■ rated high □ rated in the middle □ rated low



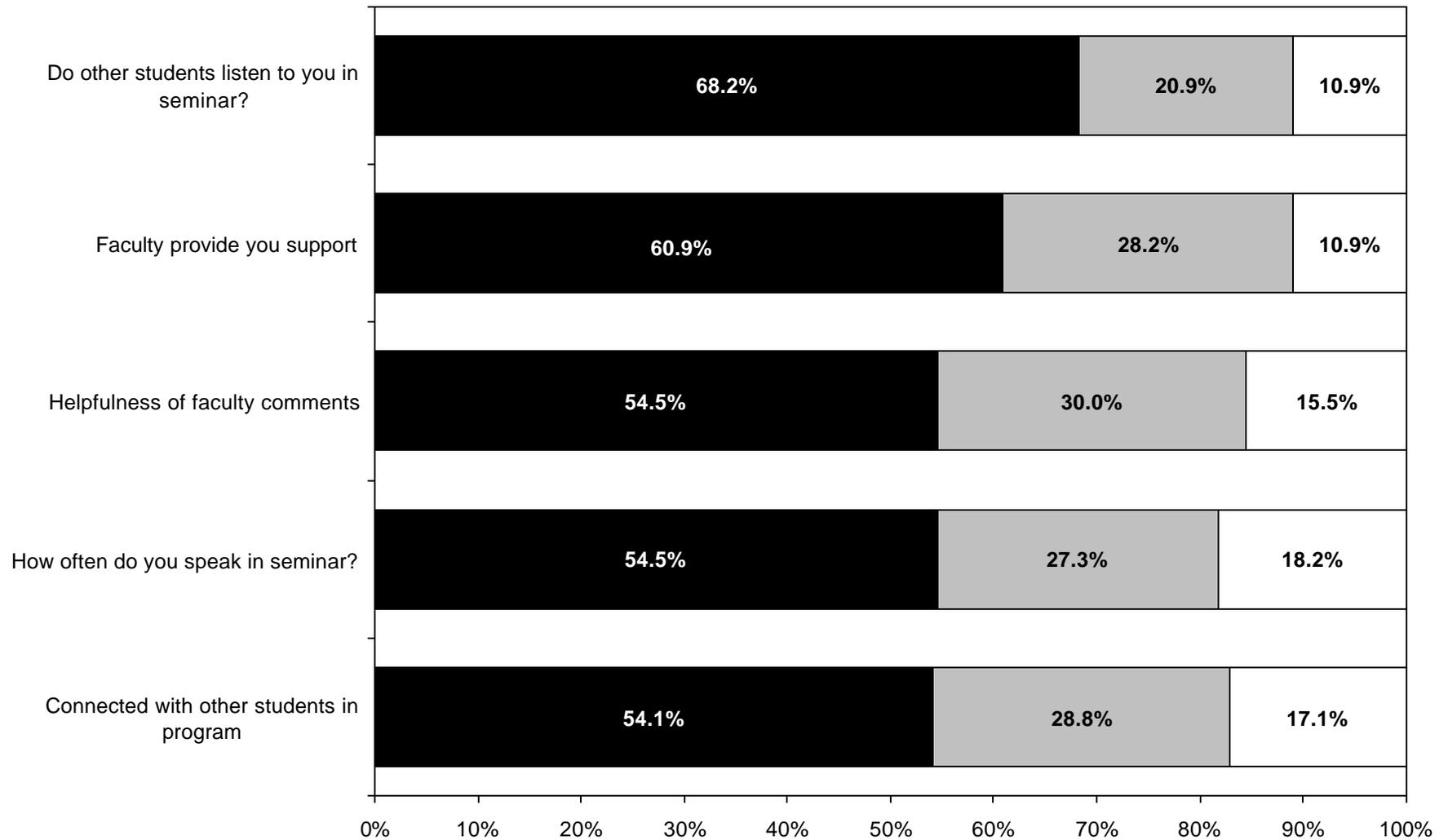
**Freshmen Satisfaction with
Program at the End of Fall 1998
(n = 116)**

■ rated high □ rated in the middle □ rated low



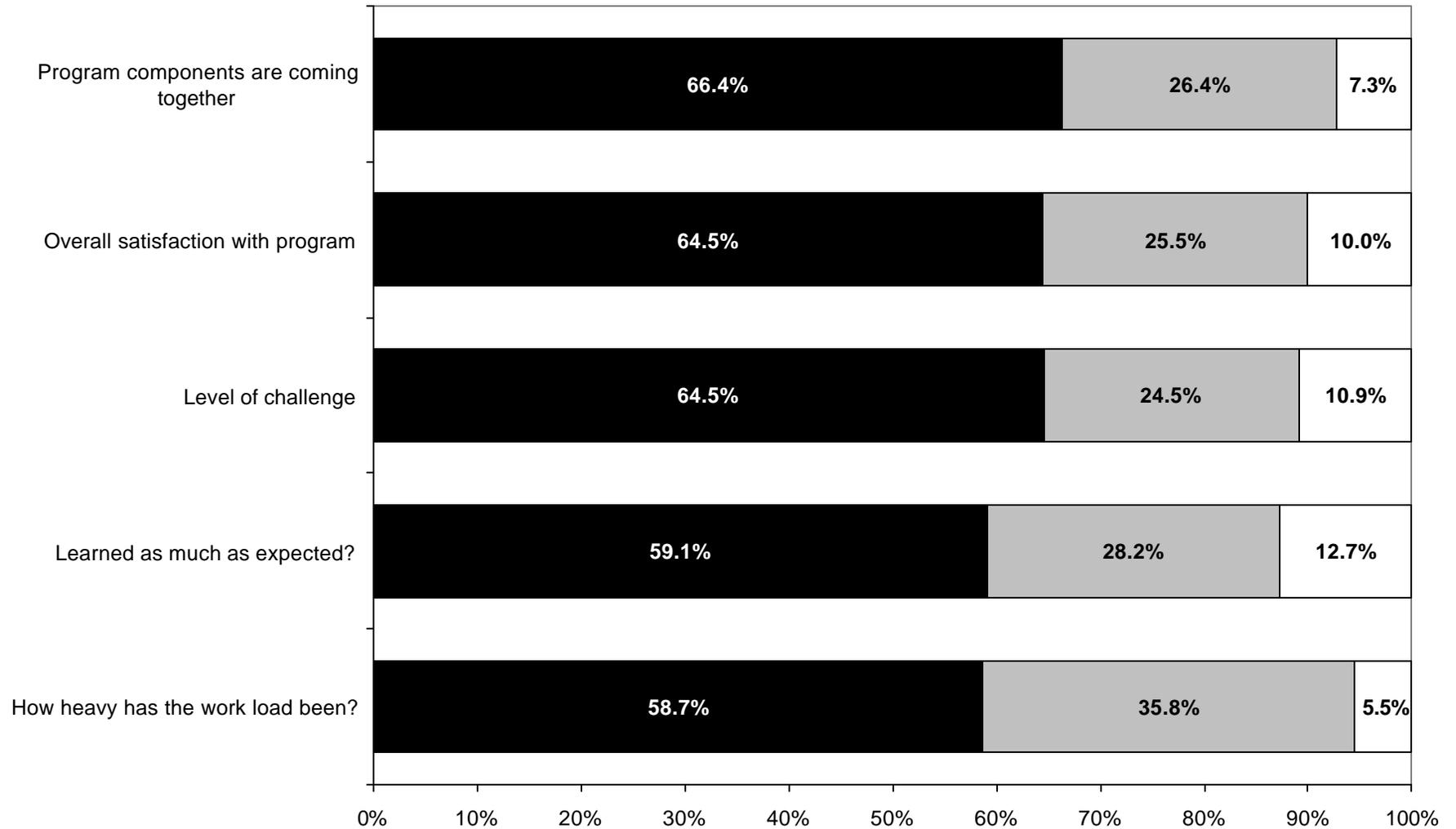
1st Year Transfer Student Experience in Program at the End of Fall 1998 (n = 111)

■ rated high □ rated in the middle □ rated low



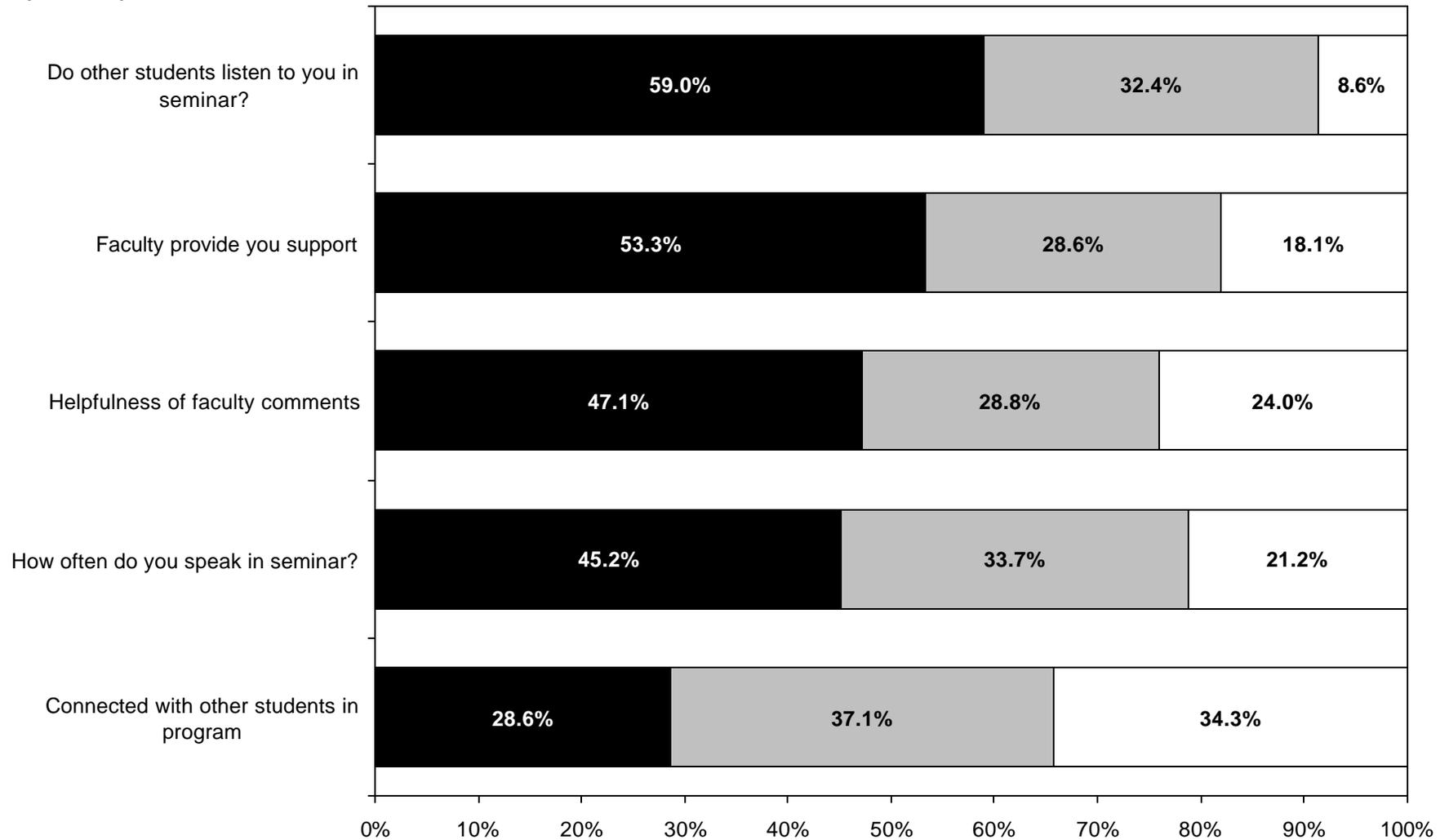
1st Year Transfer Student Satisfaction with Program at the End of Fall 1998 (n = 111)

■ rated high ■ rated in the middle □ rated low

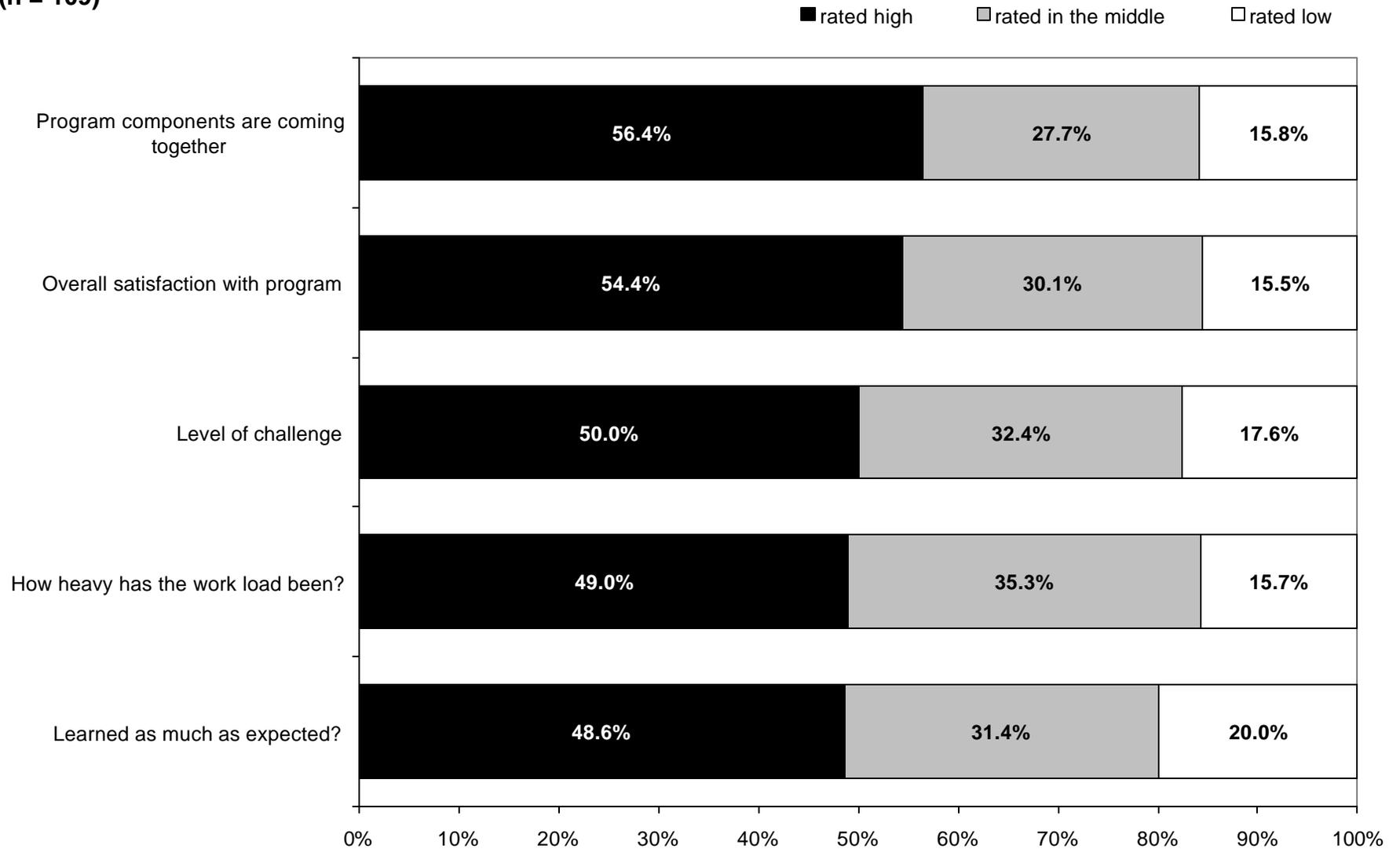


**TESC Experienced Students
Experience in Program
at the End of Fall 1998
(n = 109)**

■ rated high □ rated in the middle □ rated low



TESC Experienced Students Satisfaction with Program at the End of Fall 1998
(n = 109)



Representative Comments from Freshmen at the End of Fall Quarter

What have been some of the highlights in this program this quarter?

Just the general theme of our class. . . I enjoy everything we discuss and read. I believe this class is really good for a better understanding of the universe especially among different people.

Being part of an enthusiastic community of individual/intentional learners. . . The retreat and getting to know program members and apply some of what we had been looking at. . . Writing seminars and feedback.

This quarter I have found that the personalities of my classmates and teachers have been a highlight. . . I like seminar but it's a little large.

A number of the labs have been interesting/informative; trips have been very enlightening and have pulled lectures together somewhat.

Seminar; field trips; the chance to meet w/experts and authors; reading material.

The synthesis days where we connect everything all the random pieces we've been learning.

Seminar: I've never been in a class like this before. It's a little overwhelming. I'm a shy person so sometimes I don't speak up when I have a thought or an idea.

Getting the chance to work with students from all different educational backgrounds and learning in an open environment.

A wonderful seminar group; out-of-class study groups.

Things that have gotten in the way of your learning this quarter:

The size of the class is too big and most people don't come prepared; seminar needs to be more organized as not enough people talk.

Feeling out of place in this environment at times.

There has been a feeling of rushing and it has sort of taken over the fact that this kind of work we're doing needs to be thought out! I feel there is too much to take in.

The work load has been a challenge considering that this is the first time that I've had a chance to work with many of these subjects.

My prioritization and organization; I don't know how to research and write more efficiently/effectively.

Trouble finding motivation to do work and learn on my own

Short days -- not enough hours to adequately complete assignments.

I feel like there is nothing very important or interesting (to me) in this class and that nothing relates or has a point of usefulness.

Continual papers due -- one after the other; would like some type of grace period to catch my breath (figuratively).

Student Retention within a Program and the College after Fall Quarter

Winter 1999 Freshmen Retention. Freshmen who were enrolled in All-Level programs had a somewhat higher rate for retention within their programs and at the college compared to their counterparts in Core for Winter 1999. However, the magnitude of this difference is very small.

	N of students	Same Program	Changed Program	Retained at TESC	Withdraw / On Leave
Core programs in study	67	77.6%	10.4%	88.0%	11.9%
Core programs not in study	223	72.2%	17.0%	89.2%	10.8%
Core programs, total	290	73.4%	15.5%	88.9%	11.0%
All-Level programs in study	80	76.3%	12.5%	88.8%	11.3%
All-Level program not in study	20	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
All-Level programs, total	100	81.0%	10.0%	91.0%	9.0%
Other academic programs	72	73.6%	16.7%	90.3%	9.7%
Enrolled part-time or in module	17	64.7%	23.5%	88.2%	11.8%
Overall freshmen retention	479	74.7%	14.8%	89.5%	10.4%

Students who changed programs after Fall Quarter

Student interviewers phoned students in All-Level and Core programs who changed programs Winter 1999 to find out why they had changed programs. Of 82 students who changed programs, 44 were contacted and completed interviews. Students who changed programs were at all class levels. Although most were in their first year at Evergreen, over half were transfer students. Most (55%) reported that the program they enrolled in Fall 1998 had been their first choice. Given a list of reasons for changing programs, the reasons most frequently given were related to content, that is, *the content was not what they had expected* (64%) and *the program did not match their interests* (59%). However, when asked an open-ended question, which was the most important reason for changing programs, 24% of the students interviewed said *the most important reason for changing programs was disappointment with their evaluation*. The next most frequent open-ended responses were *the program did not match their interests* and *the program was not challenging enough*.

First year	Second year	Third year or more
21 47.7%	14 31.8%	9 20.5%

Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
9 20.5%	12 27.3%	2 27.3%	12 27.3%

Started college at Evergreen	Transferred here from another college
19 43.2%	25 56.8%

When you enrolled last Fall, was this program your first, second, or third/last choice?

First choice	Second choice	Third or last choice
24 54.5%	9 20.5%	11 25.0%

Important reason for changing program (Check as many as apply)	number	percent
The content of the program was not what I expected	28	63.6%
The program did not match my interests	26	59.1%
My overall experience in seminar was negative	20	45.5%
Disappointed with the quality of instruction	20	45.5%
The program was not challenging enough	19	43.2%
Wanted more direction and support from faculty	17	38.6%
Needed more help with writing skills	11	25.0%
Amount of required work was overwhelming	11	25.0%
Dissatisfied with my evaluation	8	21.6%
Did not connect with other students in the program	7	18.9%
Program was too difficult	7	18.9%
Program required too much math	2	5.4%

Which <u>one</u> was most important? (Open-ended question)	number	percent
Disappointed with my evaluation	9	24.3%
Program did not match my interests	8	21.6%
Program was not challenging enough	7	18.9%
The content of the program was not what I expected	5	13.5%
Needed more help with writing skills	2	5.4%
Program was too difficult	2	5.4%
Wanted more direction and support from faculty	2	5.4%
Amount of required work was overwhelming	1	2.7%
Did not connect with other students in the program	1	2.7%
I was disappointed with the quality of instruction	0	
Program required too much math	0	
My overall experience in seminar was negative	0	

Students who withdrew or took leave from the college after Fall Quarter

Student interviewers also contacted students who had withdrawn from Evergreen by phone. Of the 38 students in All-Level or Core programs who dropped out Winter 1998, 16 completed interviews. Of the students who dropped out, 13 were in their first year and 3 in their second year at Evergreen. Half were transfer students. Ten out of the 16 reported that their Fall 1998 program had been their first choice. The most frequent reasons for dropping out were that *the program was not what they expected, the program did not match their interests, and the program was not challenging enough*. Concerns related to *graduate school or employment after graduation and wanted more traditional education* were most frequently given as reasons for withdrawing. Over half of the students who withdrew reported that *budgeting money, being able to afford tuition, and obtaining a source for financial aid* were difficult.

Freshman 7	Junior 4	Sophomore 5	Senior 0
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Started college at Evergreen 8	Transferred here from another college 8
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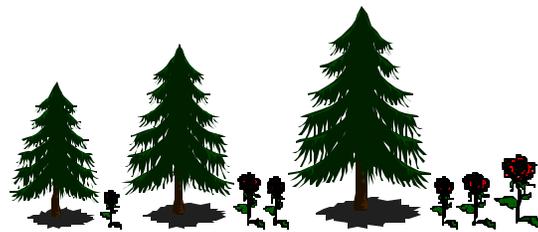
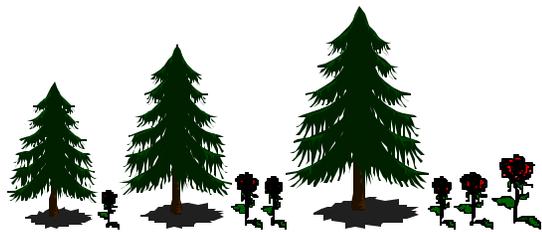
First choice 10	Second choice 3	Third or last choice 3
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Important reason for dropping program	number		number
The content of the program was not what I expected	9	Dissatisfied with my evaluation	5
The program did not match my interests	7	Needed more help with writing skills	4
The program was not challenging enough	7	Did not connect with other students in the program	4
My overall experience in seminar was negative	5	Amount of required work was overwhelming	3
Disappointed with the quality of instruction	5	Program was too difficult	2
Wanted more direction and support from faculty	5	Program required too much math	0

Concerns related to withdrawing or taking leave	number		number
Graduate school or employment after graduation	14	Lack of tolerance towards various political views	3
Wanted a more traditional college education	9	Wanted to travel	2
Wanted to take a break from school	9	Lack of tolerance for different sexual orientations	2
Wanted to move to a different location	6	Racial/ethnic tension on campus	1
Conflicts with roommates	3	Sexual harassment on campus	1
Decided to leave because of a family situation	4	Difficulties arranging transportation to Evergreen	1
Problems related to health or wellness	4	Lack of tolerance towards different religious views	1
Drug or alcohol use on campus	3		

Financial aspects that were difficult	number
Budgeting money	10
Being able to afford tuition and fees	9
Obtaining a source for financial aid	8
Getting a sufficient amount of financial aid	7
Finding work (either part-time or full-time)	7
Job demands conflicted with college work	5

The End of the Program Winter or Spring 1999



Differences between Student Groups at the End of the Program

Significant differences between freshmen in All-Level and Core programs

A greater proportion of All-Level freshmen were satisfied with the amount of contact with faculty. However, since only one of the two Core programs was able to participate in the End of Program Survey this finding should be interpreted with caution.

<i>Percent reporting:</i>	All-Level Freshmen (65)	Core Freshmen (24)
Satisfied with amount of contact with faculty	83%	50%

Significant differences between All-Level freshmen and experienced (other) All-Level students

A greater proportion of All-Level freshmen reported they had enjoyed a wide variety of social activities on campus, compared with more experienced (other) students in All-Level programs.

<i>Percent reporting:</i>	All-Level Freshmen (65)	All-Level Other Students (83)
A variety of social activities on campus	52%	33%

Social Experiences as a Student at Evergreen this Year *(Percent somewhat or strongly agree)*

Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
Developed strong friendships this year	84%	Friends have been a source of support	84%	Friends have been a source of support	83%
Friends have been a source of support	84%	Developed strong friendships this year	82%	Made friends with students with interests/ backgrounds very different from own	71%
Made friends with students with interests/ backgrounds very different from own	80%	Made friends with students with interests/ backgrounds very different from own	77%	Developed strong friendships this year	70%
Felt sense of community at Evergreen	56%	Felt sense of community at Evergreen	66%	Felt sense of community at Evergreen	44%
Variety of social activities on campus	51%	Variety of social activities on campus	38%	Variety of social activities on campus	36%

Satisfaction with College Experiences and Services at Evergreen this Year *(Percent somewhat or very satisfied)*

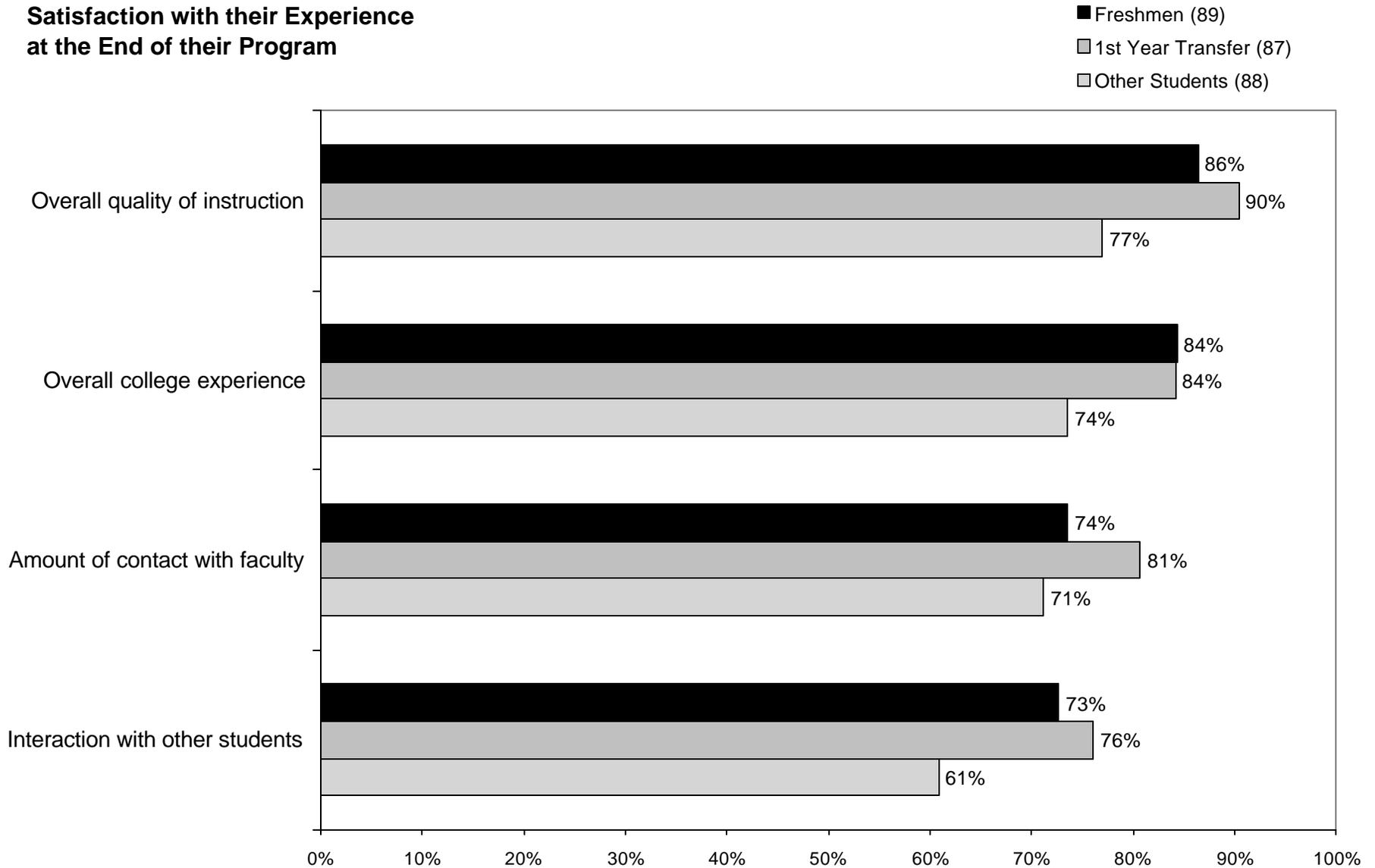
Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
Overall quality of instruction	86%	Overall quality of instruction	90%	Overall quality of instruction	77%
Overall college experience	84%	Overall college experience	84%	Overall college experience	74%
Amount of contact with faculty	74%	Amount of contact with faculty	81%	Amount of contact with faculty	71%
Interaction with other students	73%	Interaction with other students	76%	Library facilities	65%
Library facilities	68%	Library facilities	71%	Interaction with other students	61%
Computer facilities	51%	Financial aid services	49%	Computer facilities	48%
Financial aid services	44%	Academic advising	39%	Financial aid services	31%
Academic advising	37%	Computer facilities	38%	Academic advising	25%

Progress in Academic Areas at End of Program *(Percent reporting 4 or 5 on 5-point scale where 1 = not at all, 5 = a great deal)*

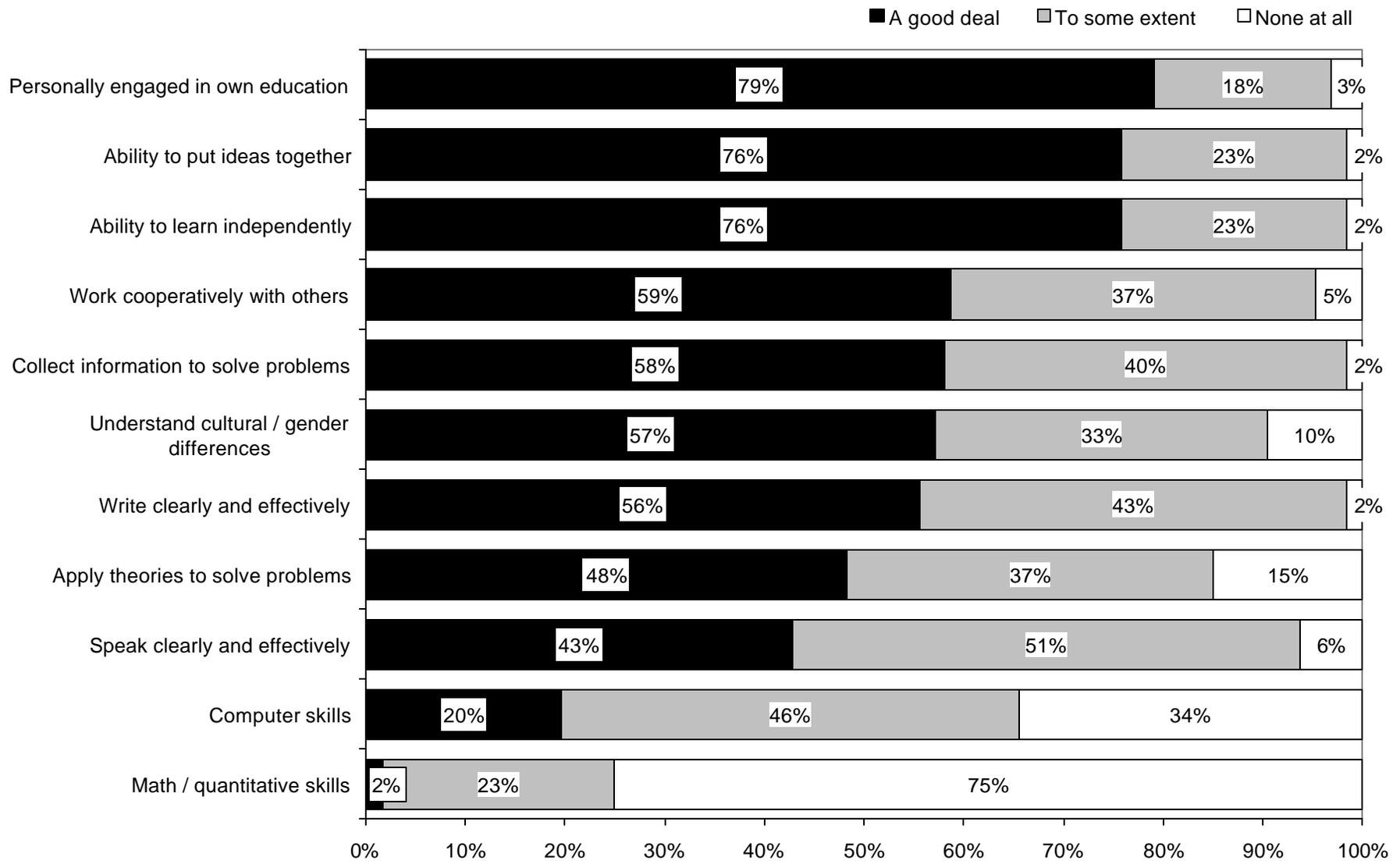
Freshmen		First-Year Transfer Students		Other Students	
Responsible for own education	80%	Ability to put ideas together	80%	Ability to put ideas together	82%
Learn independently	78%	Responsible for own education	79%	Responsible for own education	80%
Ability to put ideas together	74%	Learn independently	79%	Learn independently	78%
Understand culture and gender differences	62%	Understand culture and gender differences	72%	Understand culture and gender differences	69%
Collect information to solve problems	58%	Work cooperatively with others	67%	Work cooperatively with others	58%
Work cooperatively with others	57%	Write clearly and effectively	63%	Write clearly and effectively	55%
Write clearly and effectively	55%	Collect information to solve problems	61%	Speak clearly and effectively	54%
Speak clearly and effectively	48%	Apply theory to solve practical problems	56%	Collect information to solve problems	55%
Apply theory to solve practical problems	48%	Speak clearly and effectively	53%	Apply theory to solve practical problems	50%
Using computers	23%	Using computers	24%	Using computers	24%
Math skills or quantitative reasoning	2%	Math skills or quantitative reasoning	7%	Math skills or quantitative reasoning	8%

Freshmen	89	24 in Core and 65 in All-Level
1 st -year transfer	87	12 in Core and 75 in All-Level
Other TESC students	88	5 in Core and 83 in All-Level

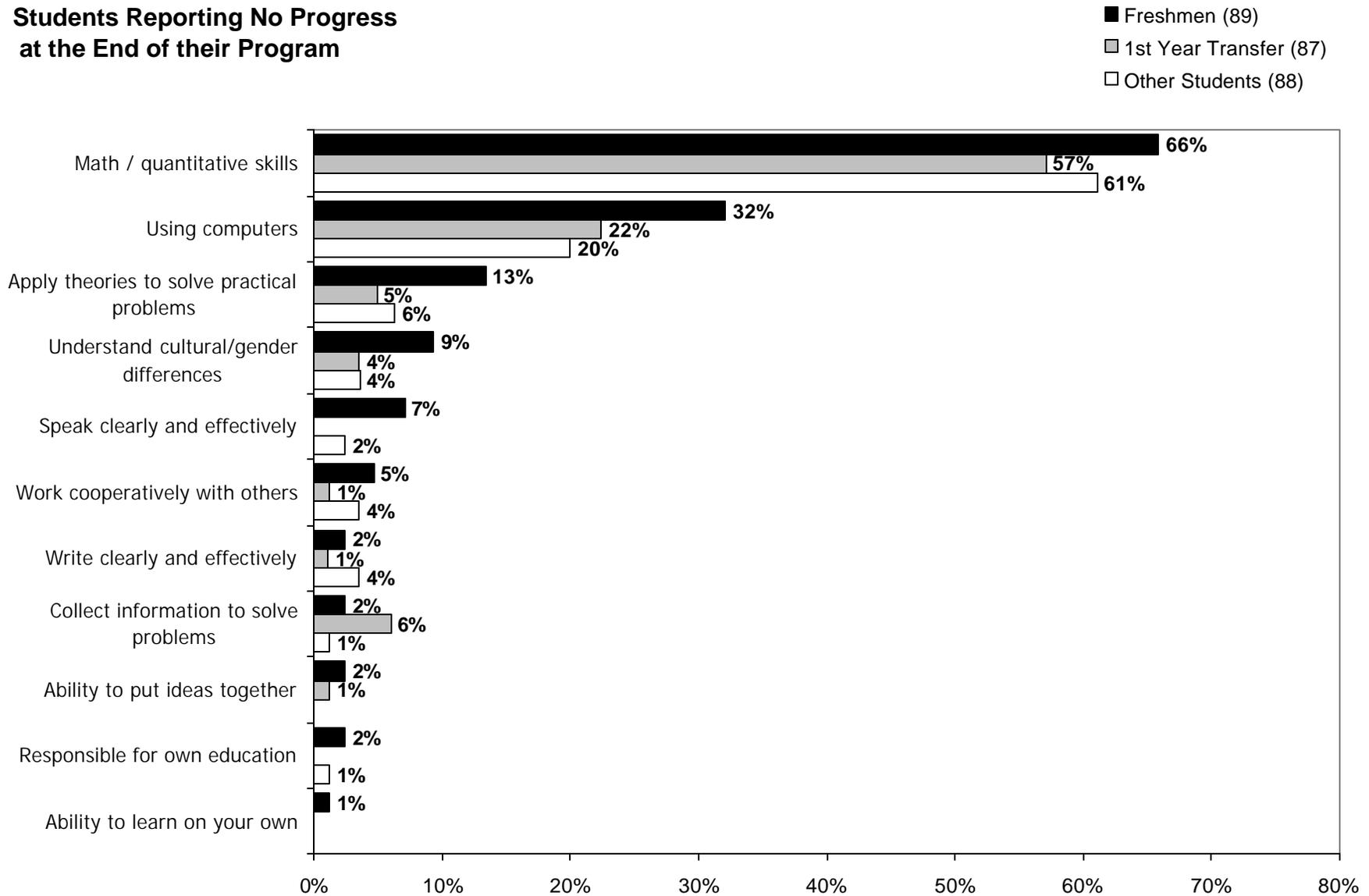
Percent of Students Reporting Satisfaction with their Experience at the End of their Program



**Academic Progress of All-Level Freshmen
at End of 1998-99 Programs (n = 65)**



Students Reporting No Progress at the End of their Program



Representative Comments from Freshmen at the End of the Program

List the three most important things that you were able to accomplish in this program:

Become familiar w/an Evergreen program;
have enough time for extracurricular activity;
appreciate interesting reading materials.

Better writing skills;
independent project;
because it's so big and such a huge part of me, I have to list my independent project twice.

Improved my reading skills incredibly;
work on my public speaking;
coming to class almost all the time.

Become familiar w/an Evergreen program;
have enough time for extracurricular activity;
appreciate interesting reading materials

The notion that things are not as simple as they seem;
two independent projects

Learned to love to read;
learned to analyze books more carefully in order to write better papers;
learned to value others' opinions more.

I was able to help others understand the material;
I learned about my social constructions and how they effect my views;
I took a class (economics) that I normally would not have taken and learned valuable information.

Became much more comfortable speaking in seminar;
able to read more in depth;
stopped procrastinating!

Suggestions for ways to improve the program and Other Comments

This program was a good experience overall but I feel like many of the students in it had a very apathetic approach to learning which got very frustrating.

Perhaps do some kind of workshop where people are encouraged to look more closely at who they are and how they represent themselves, and do it twice -- once in the beginning of the year and once at the end.

It's been tough for me because I don't know the metric system. Wish I did.

Tougher restrictions on papers/projects.

Make clear connections of the work earlier in the program.

More attention to the different levels of students.

More class participation during lectures.

Evergreen needs to work on structural foundation for its classes; not all students are motivated; it is difficult to follow through w/things when other students don't bother and never feel consequences.

Somehow try to make it a little less intense/depressing (don't know if possible); maybe include more films; in terms of our spring project, some more instruction in the media technology would have been really helpful.

The lectures should be given by all three faculty at the same time, working together w/their respective backgrounds, to illustrate one point or explain one subject; the lectures, films, reading and seminars should be tied together more effectively.

Student Retention within Program and the College at the End of the Year

Spring 1999 Freshmen Retention

The information in the table below comes from student records. Freshmen enrolled in All-Level programs were retained at the college from Fall 1998 to Spring 1999 at a somewhat higher level than freshmen in Core. (Note: many programs met Fall to Winter, only).

	Number	Same Program	Changed Program	Retained at TESC	Withdrew / On Leave
Core programs in study	67	64.2%	19.4%	83.6%	16.4%
Core programs not in study	223	28.3%	52.5%	80.8%	19.3%
Core programs, total	290	36.6%	44.8%	81.4%	18.6%
All-Level programs in study	80	31.3%	52.5%	83.8%	16.3%
All-Level program not in study	20	----	95.0%	95.0%	5.0%
All-Level programs, total	100	25.0%	61.0%	86.0%	14.0%
Other academic programs	23	31.9%	48.6%	80.5%	19.4%
Enrolled part-time or in module	17	58.8%	17.6%	76.4%	23.5%
Overall freshmen retention	479	34.2%	47.8%	82.0%	18.0%

The Connection between SAT Scores and Retention

Fall to Winter Retention

Freshmen who stayed in the same program Fall 1998 to Winter 1999 tended to have somewhat higher SAT scores and high school grade point averages than those who changed programs or left the college. However, these differences are not high enough to be statistically significant.

Winter 1999		SAT Verbal	SAT Math	High School SGPA
Same Program as Fall	Mean	591	537	3.12
	N	302	302	328
Changed Program	Mean	592	540	3.01
	N	62	62	65
Withdrew / On leave	Mean	559	507	3.06
	N	40	40	45
Total	Mean	588	535	3.10
	N	404	404	438

Fall to Spring Retention

Comparing freshmen who stayed in the same program Fall 1998 to Spring 1999 (note: many programs only ran Fall to Winter), with those who left the college, the greatest difference is in SAT math scores: 541 compared with 516. While this difference is not statistically significant, it does suggest that their differences in academic preparation in math may have some effect on student performance and retention.

Spring 1999		SAT Verbal	SAT Math	High School SGPA
Same Program as Fall	Mean	589	541	3.12
	N	141	141	150
Changed Program	Mean	592	537	3.09
	N	190	190	209
Withdrew / On leave	Mean	574	516	3.08
	N	73	73	79
Total	Mean	588	535	3.10
	N	404	404	438