



GRAYASSOCIATES

Data • Insights • Strategy

Demand For Higher Education Programs

Results through June 2018

www.GrayAssociates.com

ABOUT ASLANIAN MARKET RESEARCH

Carol Aslanian “wrote the book” (*Americans in Transition*) on why people 25+ go back to college and is a leading expert on the demands, preferences, and motivations of adult/post-traditional/online students.



CAROL ASLANIAN
President and Founder

AMR STAFF HAVE PRODUCED:

- 250+ Market Analyses for colleges and universities
- 6 Major Reports on trends in adult/post-traditional learning
- 7 National Studies on the demands and preferences of online learners
- 90 Professional Development Seminars for enrollment leaders

Clients: Higher Education Institutions and Stakeholders

**Program and Market
Evaluation Data**

Student Demand

Employment

Competition

Wages

Demographics

Placement Rates

Employer Requirements

Advanced Analytics

Predictive Models

Geo-Analytics

Programs

- Program Evaluation System
- Program profiles
- Program location

Place

- Market selection
- Location selection
- Campus consolidation

Price

- Price elasticity
- Price positioning
- Price optimization

Projects

- Business strategy
- Strategy implementation
- Complex analytics

1. Student Demand Trends: Inquiries, Conversions, and Searches



- National
- Online and On-campus
- City and Program

2. Gray's Program Scorecard

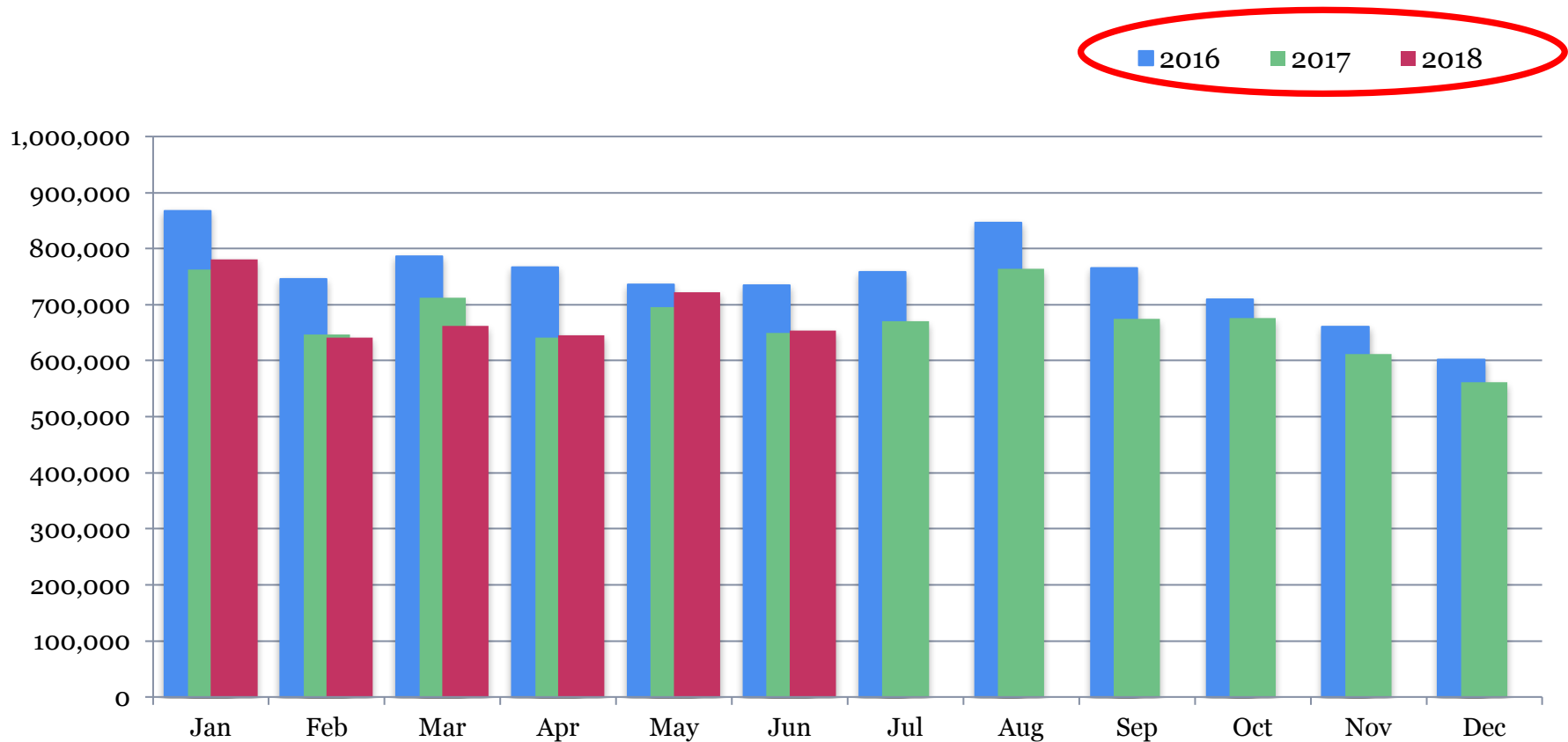
3. Aslanian Market Research: Post-Traditional Graduate Students

4. Summary



Gray has tracked demand for several years.

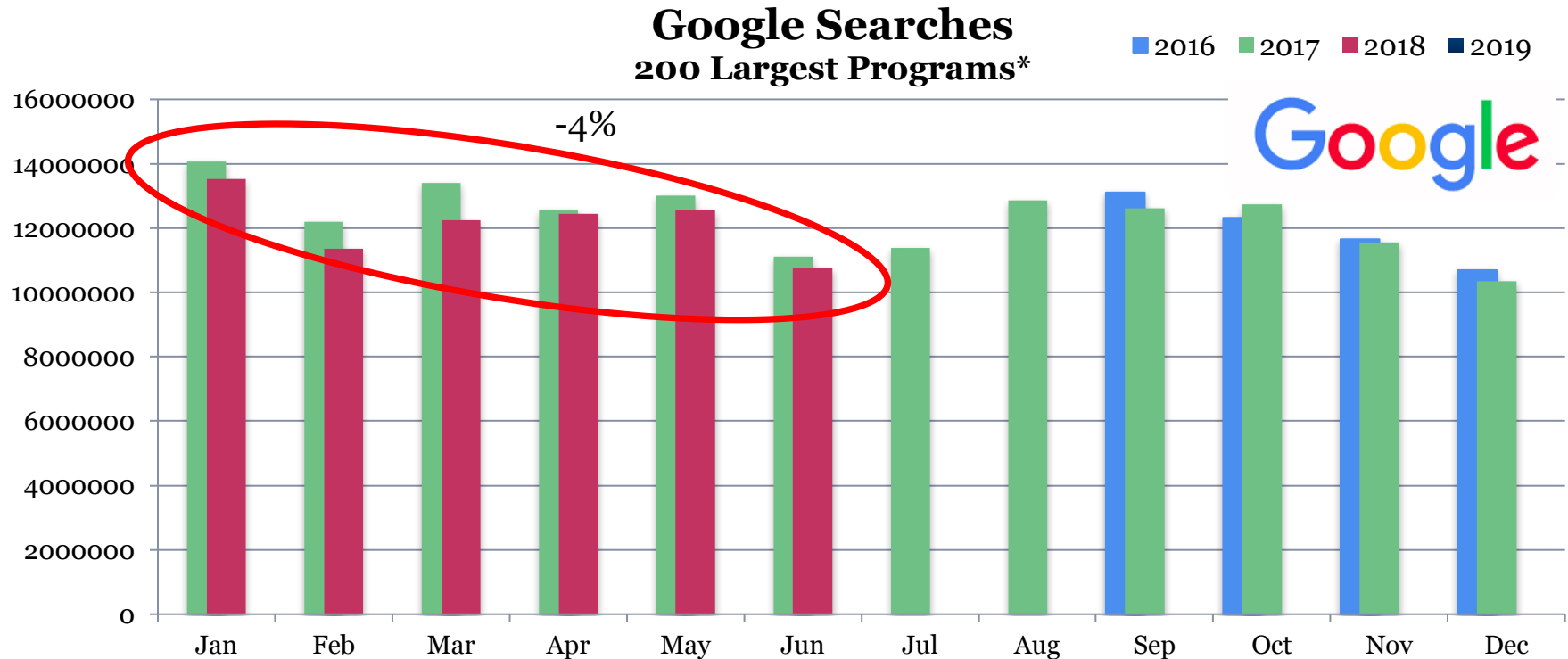
- We started tracking inquiries in 2012 and Google search volumes in September 2016.
- In our webinars, we share data for the last three years.



Source: GrayReports – *Inquiry Trends*, Gray's Program Evaluation System

Program searches on Google are down 4% this year (January through June).

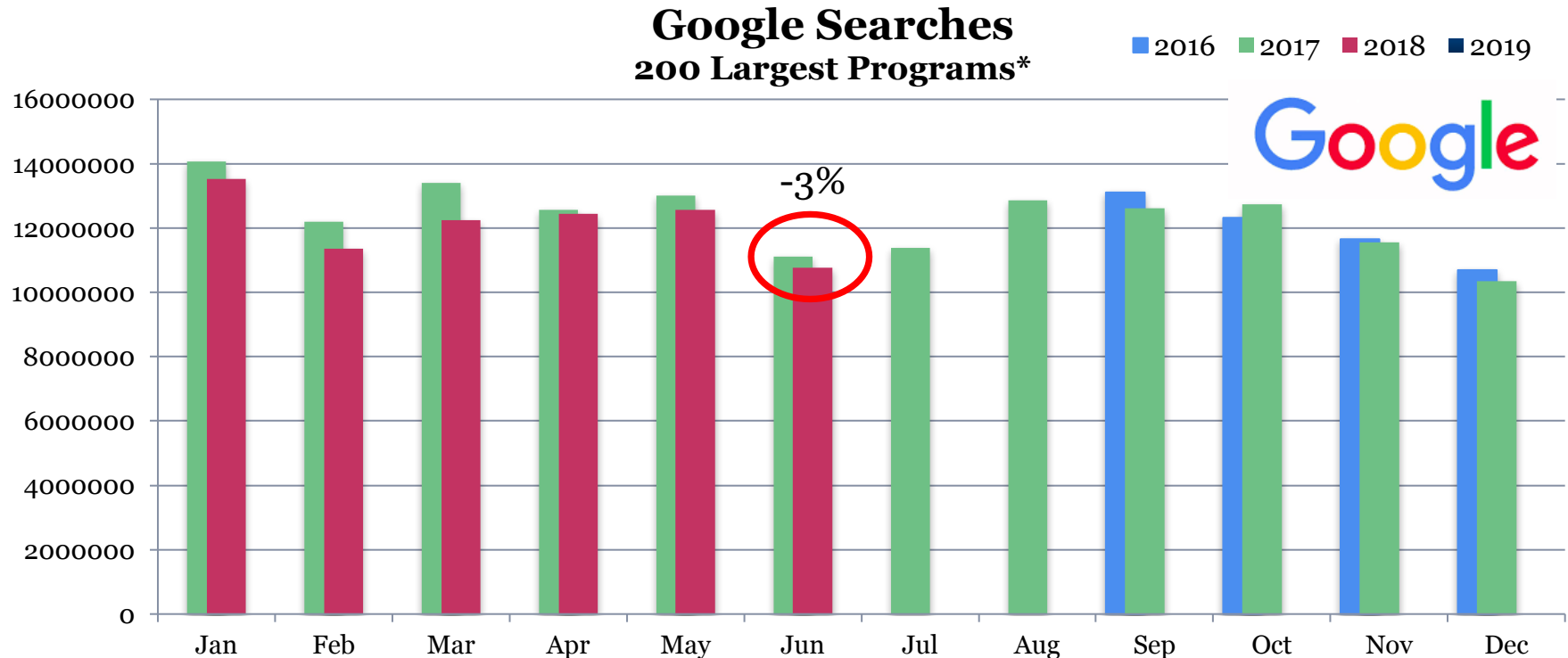
- Gray tracks search volume for the 200 largest higher education programs.
 - In 2016, these programs produced 67% of all completions.
 - We track approximately 25 keywords for each program.
- Year-to-date searches have fallen 4%.



*Google Searches for 25 keywords for each of the 200 largest programs based on IPEDS completions

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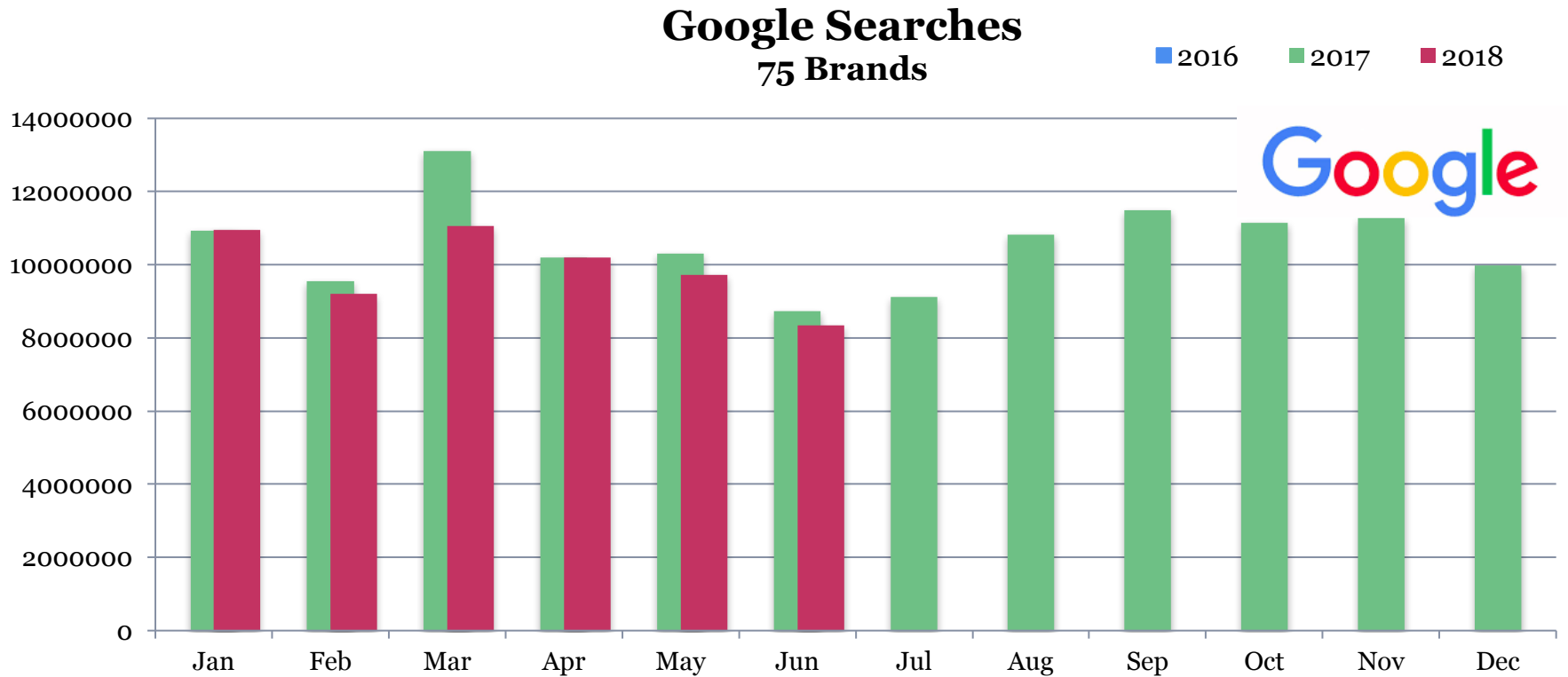
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 - We track approximately 25 keywords for each program.
- Searches fell 3% for June.



*Google Searches for 25 keywords for each of the 200 largest programs based on IPEDS completions

Brand searches continue to fall 5% year-over-year.

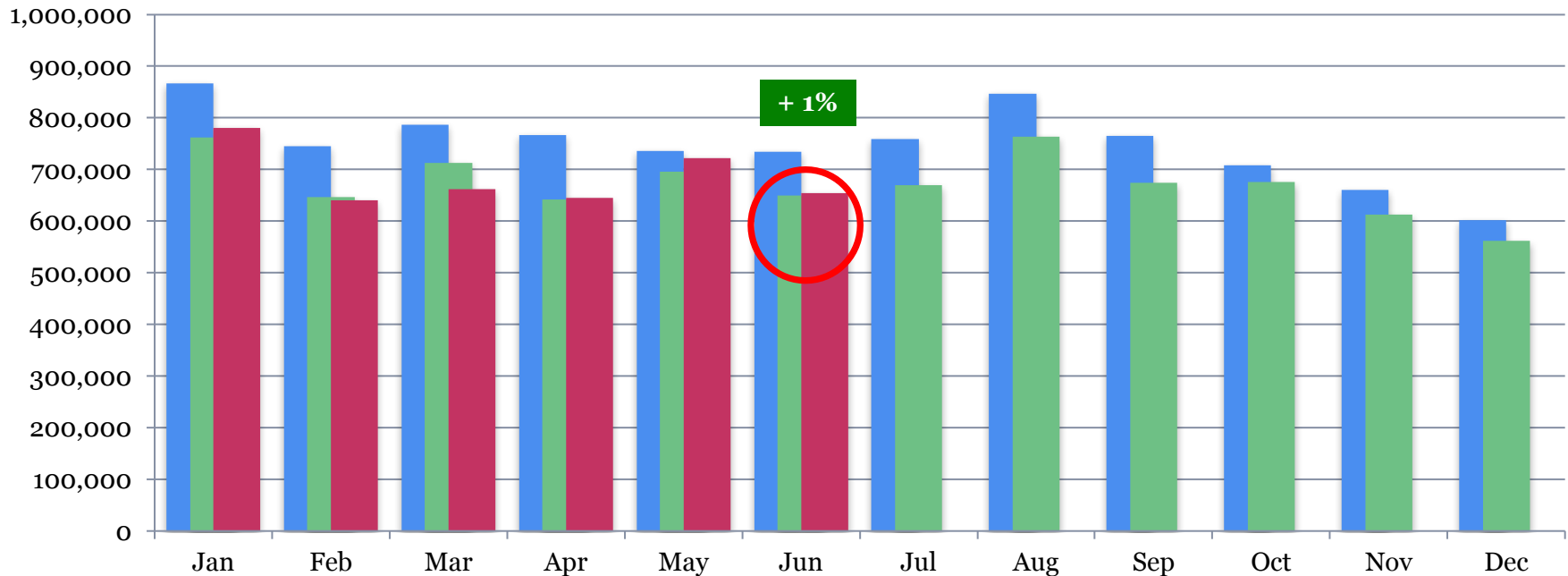
- Gray tracks search volume for a sample of 75 higher-education brands.
- June searches decreased by 5%, in line with this year's average.



Inquiries continue to increase slightly year-over-year in 2018.

- April volume rose 1% year-over-year.
- May volume rose 4% year-over-year.
- June volume rose 1% year-over-year.

National Inquiries
All Programs and Award Levels ■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018

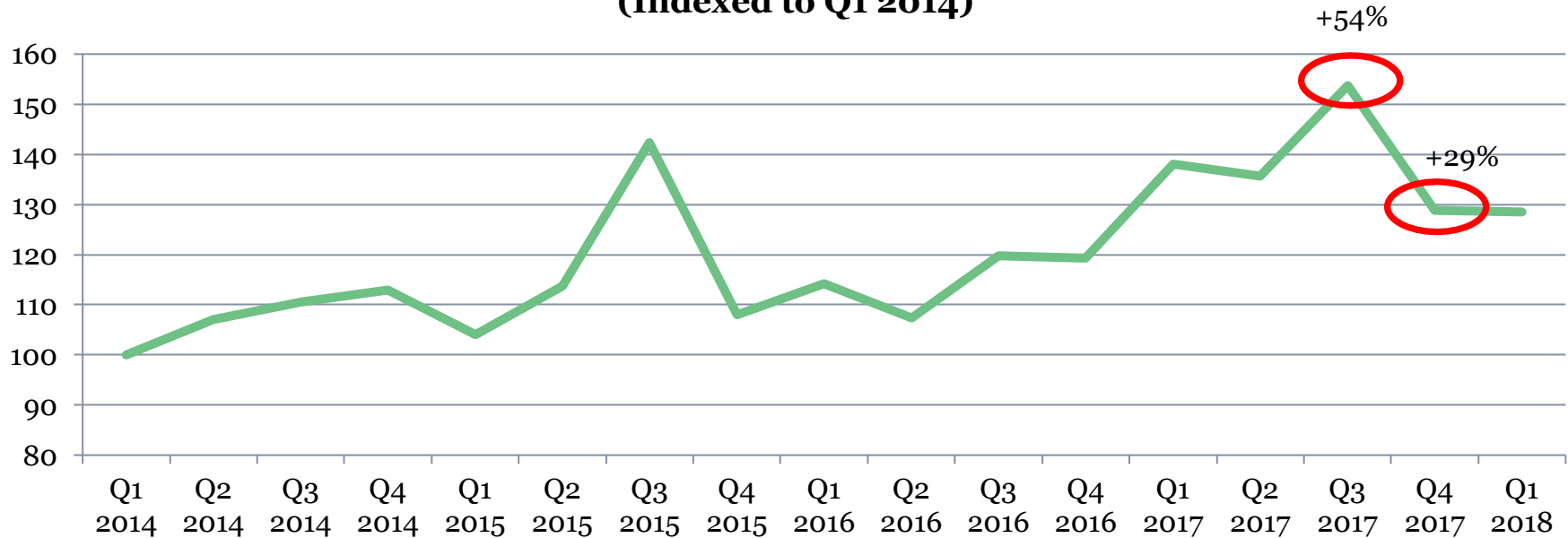


Source: GrayReports – *Inquiry Trends*, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

In 2017 and Q1 2018, conversion¹ rates were well above our 2014 baseline.

- Q3 2017 beat the baseline by 54%.
- Since then, conversion rates have fallen, but are still beating the baseline by 29%.
- However, conversion rates in Q1 2018 are 7% below last year.

Overall Inquiry Conversion Rates: Trends (Indexed to Q1 2014)



1. Conversions are counted in the month in which the associated inquiry was received (i.e., a January inquiry that converts in March is counted as a January conversion). Typically, the conversion rate will rise for three months or more after the month in which the inquiries were received.

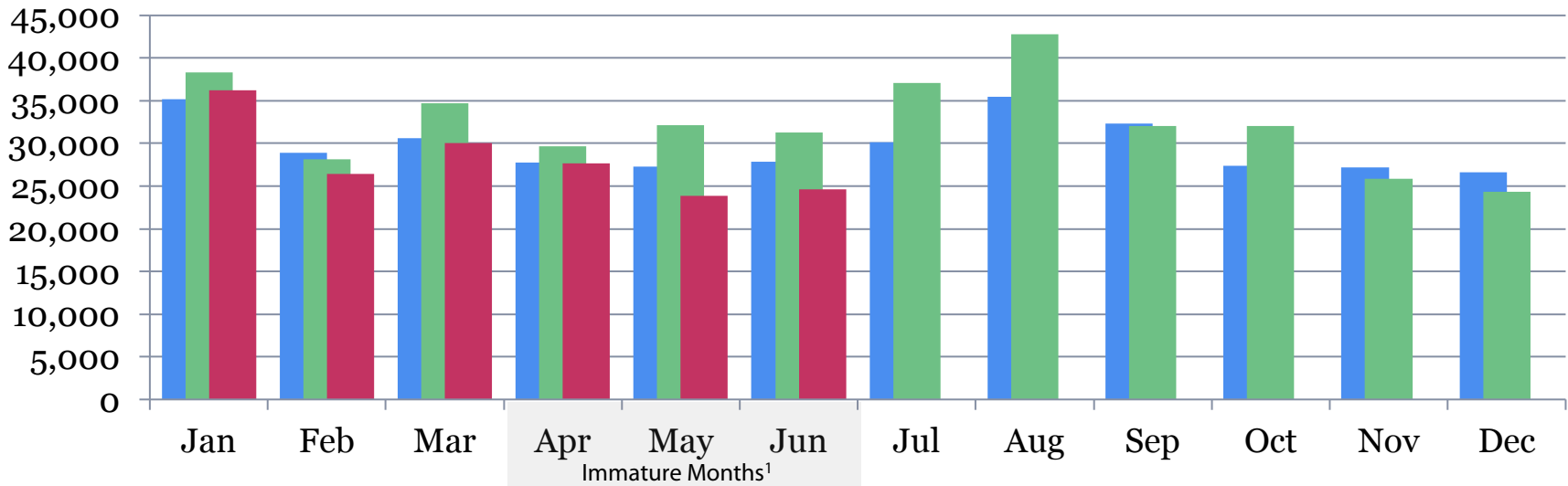
Source: GrayReports – *Inquiry Trends*, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

For March 2018 inquiries, total conversions fell 13% year-over-year.

- As Q2 matures, conversions are likely to beat last year.

Total Inquiry Conversions All Programs and Award Levels

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018



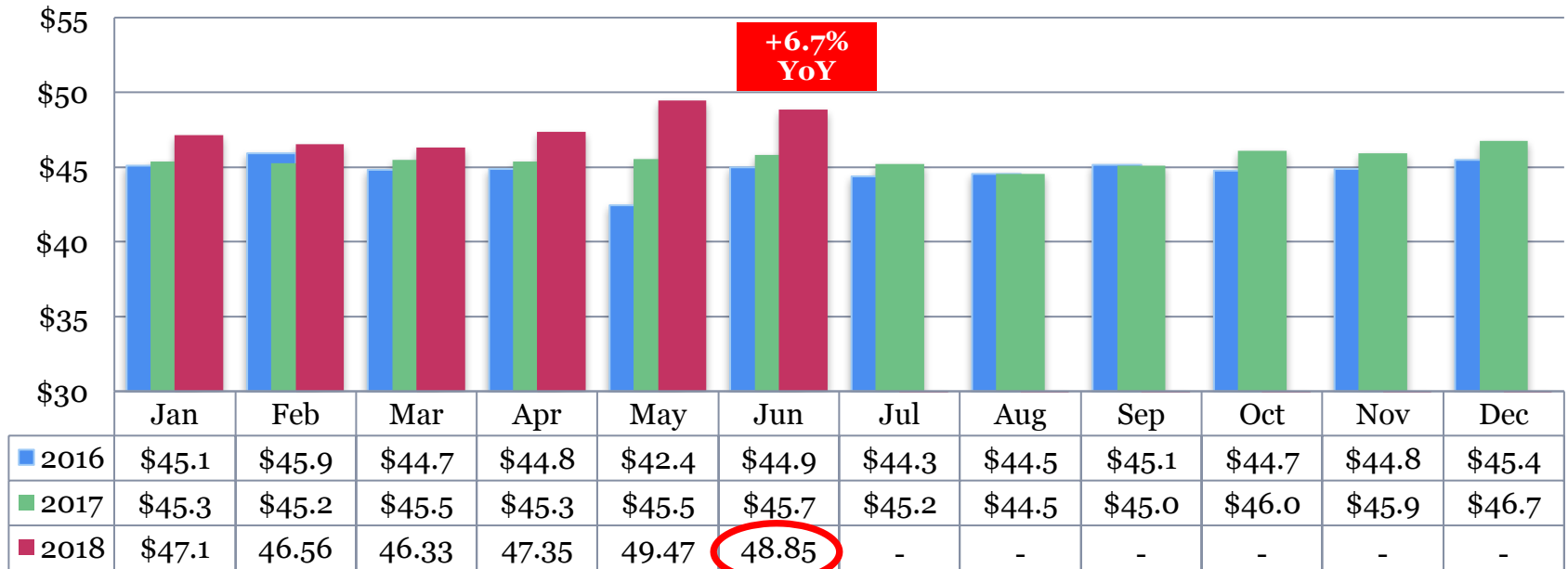
1. Conversions are counted in the month in which the inquiry is received (i.e., an inquiry that is received in January and converts in March will be counted as a January inquiry). Typically, the application rate will rise for at least three months after the month in which the inquiries are received.

Source: GrayReports – *Inquiry Trends*, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

For 15 out of the past 16 months, the average price paid per inquiry has risen year-over-year.

- In June, prices fell from May’s high of \$49.47 to \$48.85.
- But they are up 6.7% year-over-year.

Average Price per Inquiry for PPI All Programs and Award Levels

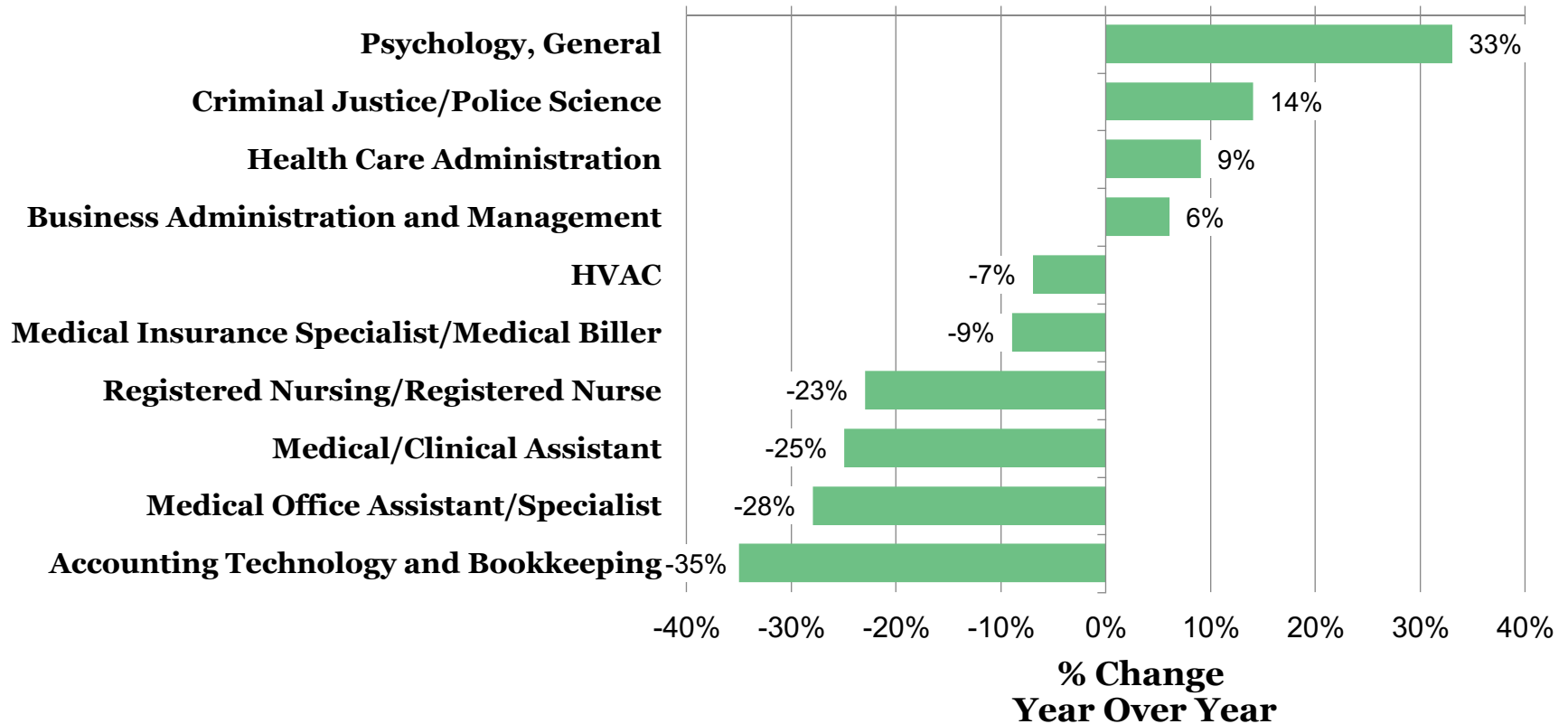


Note: PPI means “Pay per Inquiry.” Inquiry price is the average price per inquiry from PPI.

Source: GrayReports – *Inquiry Trends*, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

In June, year-over-year spending dropped for 6 of the 10 programs with the largest budgets.

June 2018 Inquiry Budget Trends 10 Programs With the Largest Budgets



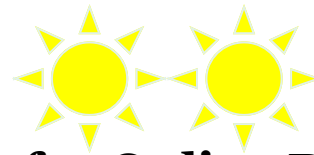
Source: GrayReports – Inquiry Trends, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

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Inquiries for online programs grew 8% year-over-year in June.

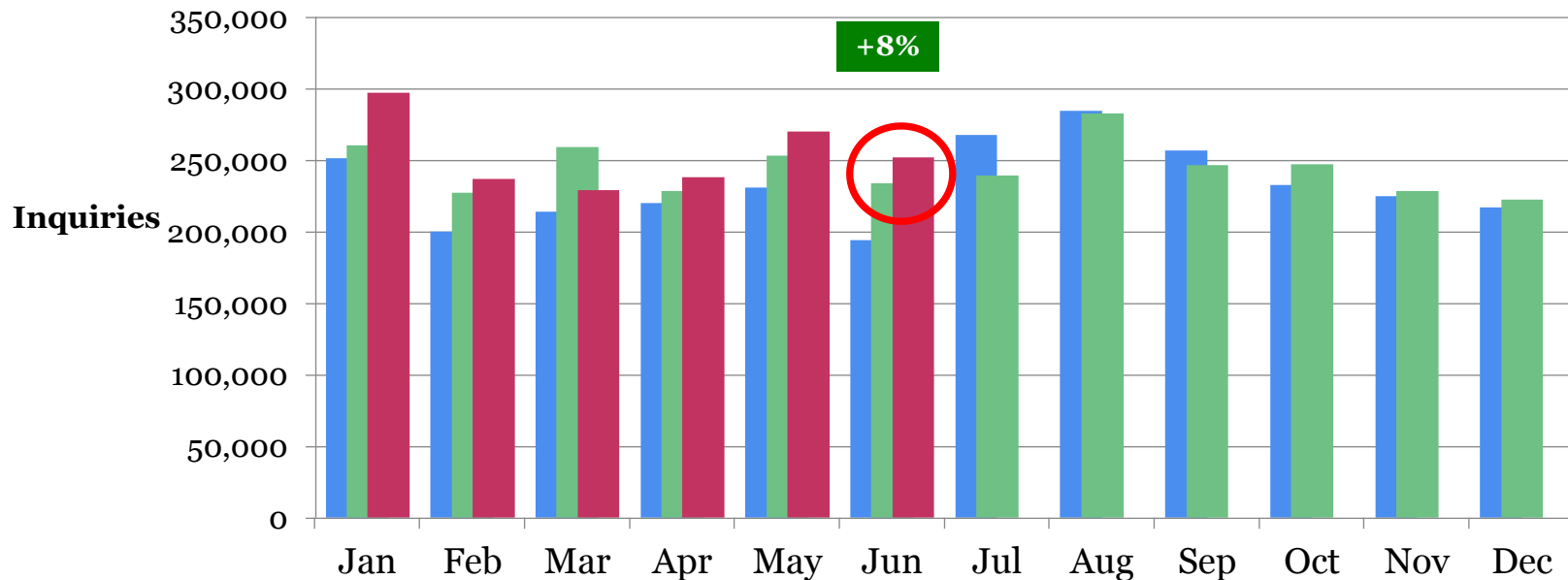
- Inquiries for online programs have risen five of six months this year.



Inquiries for Online Programs

All Programs and Award Levels

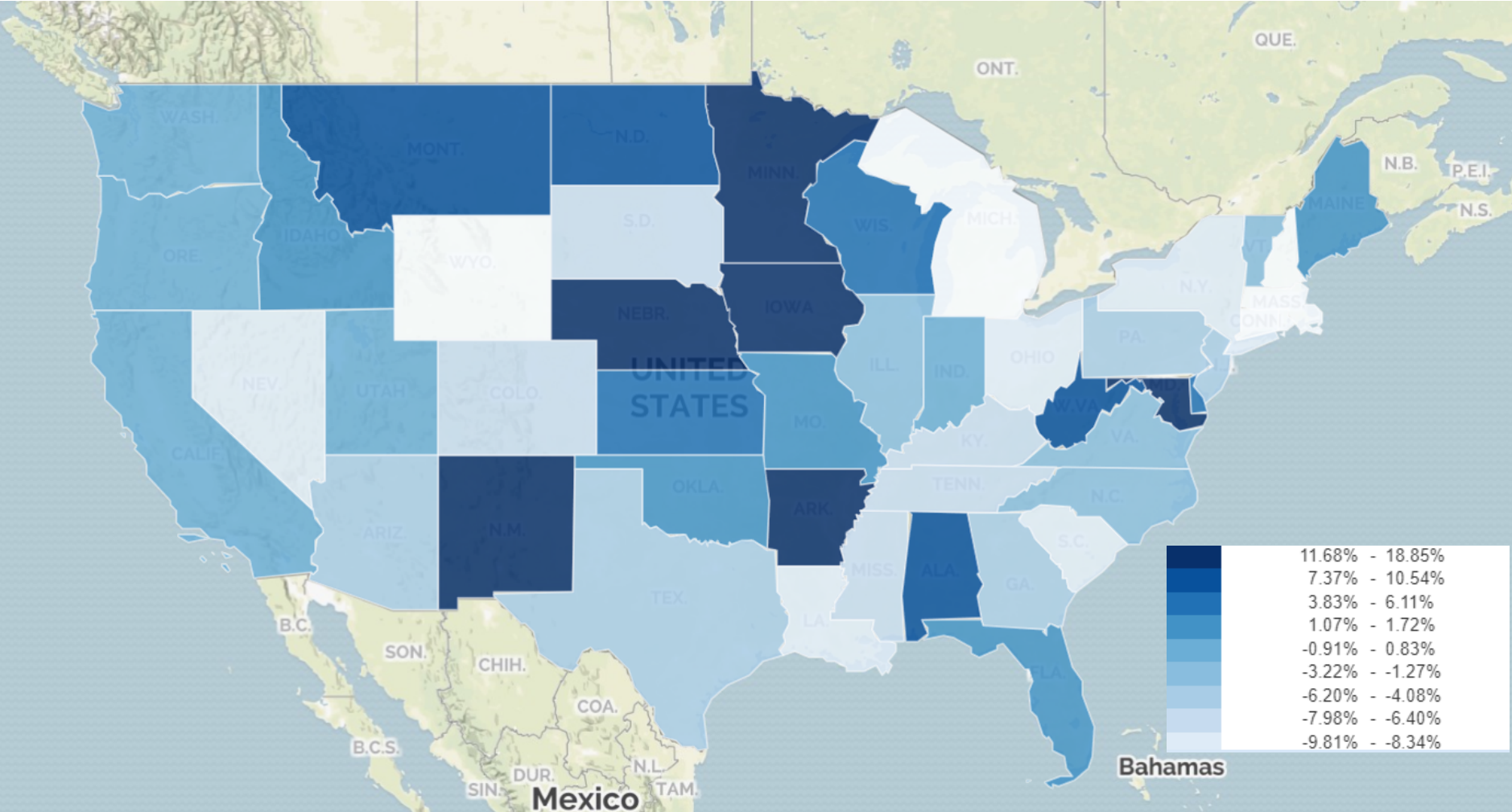
2016 2017 2018



Source: GrayReports – Inquiry Trends, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

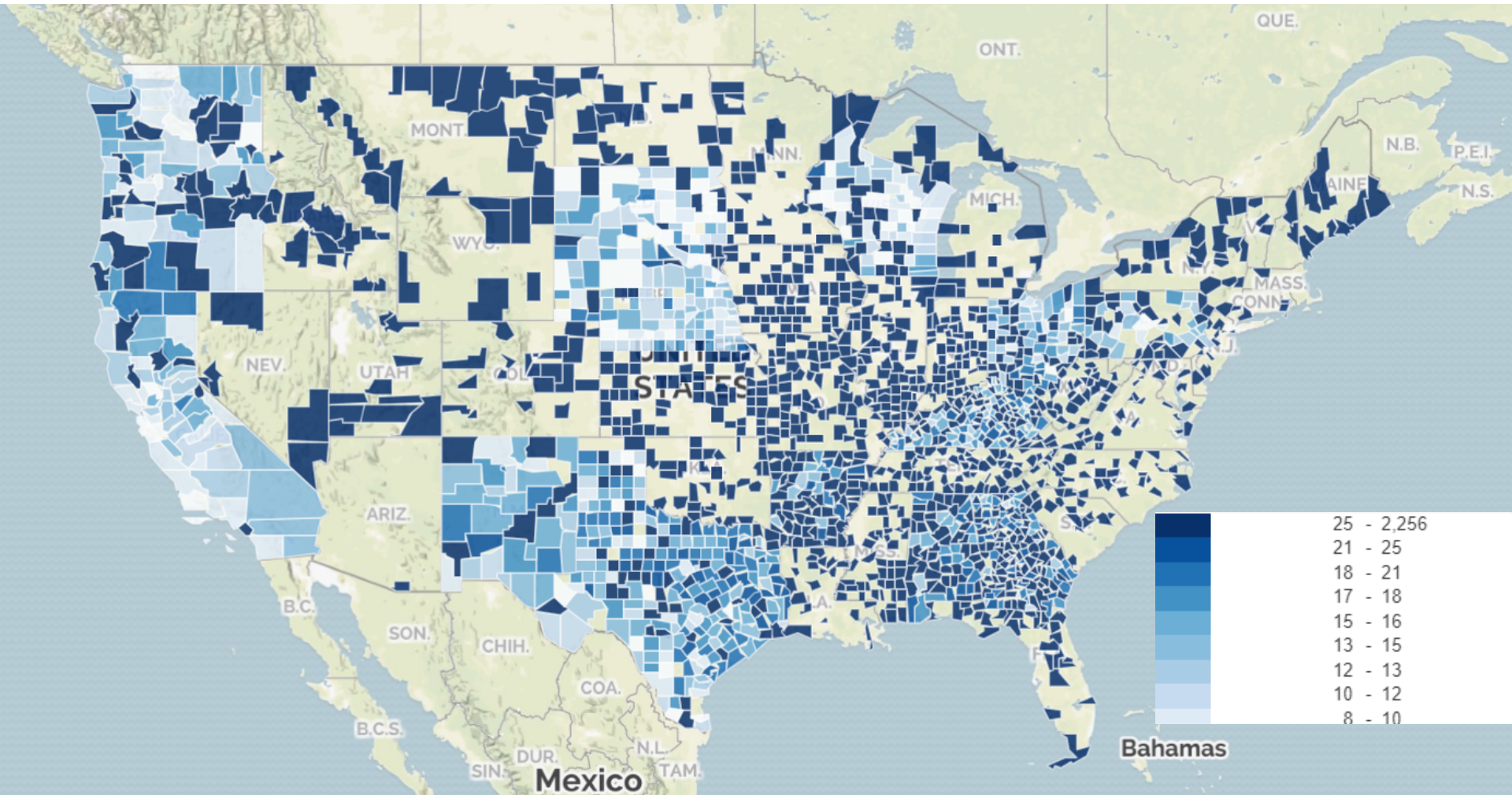
Heat Map of Online Year-over-Year Inquiries – by State **GRAYASSOCIATES**

Year-over-year, June inquiries grew most quickly in Minnesota, Iowa, Nebraska, New Mexico, Arkansas, and Maryland.



Source: GrayReports – Inquiry Trends, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

Inquiries per capita tend to be highest in rural areas. The top five counties in 2018 per capita inquiries are located in Virginia (2), Georgia (2), and New Mexico (1).

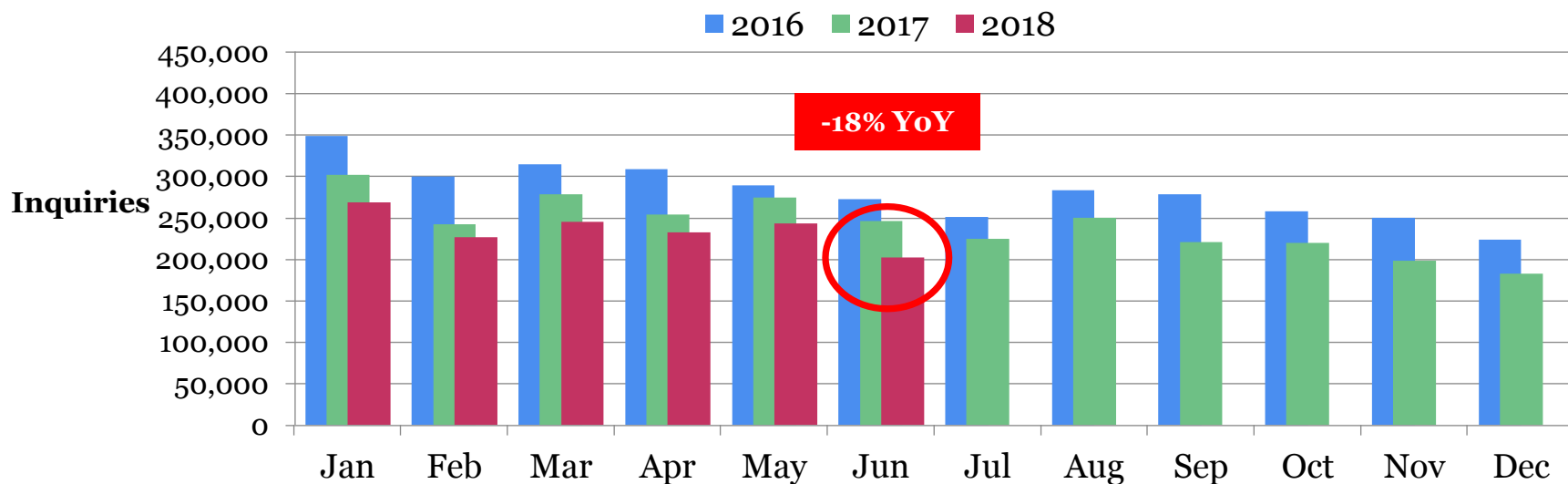


Source: GrayReports – Inquiry Trends, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

In June, **inquiries for on-campus programs** dropped 18% year-over-year.

Inquiries for On-Campus Programs

All Programs and Award Levels



Source: GrayReports – Inquiry Trends, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

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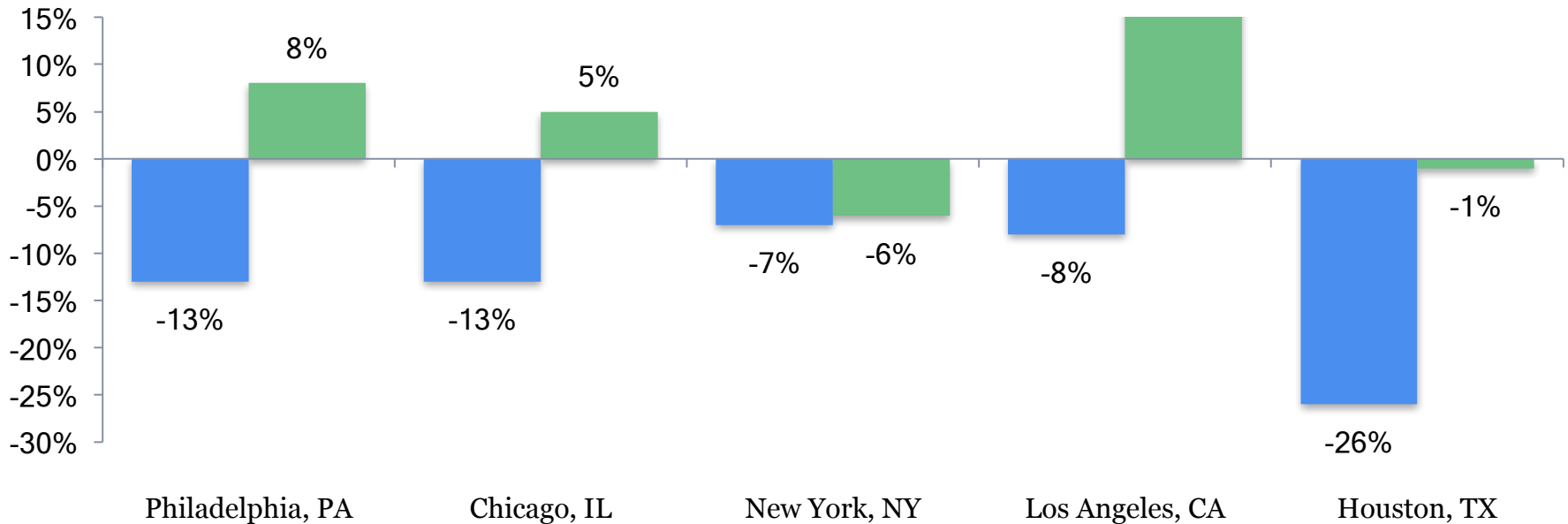


In June 2018, three of **The Big 5 Cities** grew inquiries year-over-year.

- Los Angeles was up the most this month (17%).

Five Cities With the Most Inquiries Since January 2012 Year-over-Year Change in June Inquiries

■ 2017 YoY % Change ■ 2018 YoY % Change



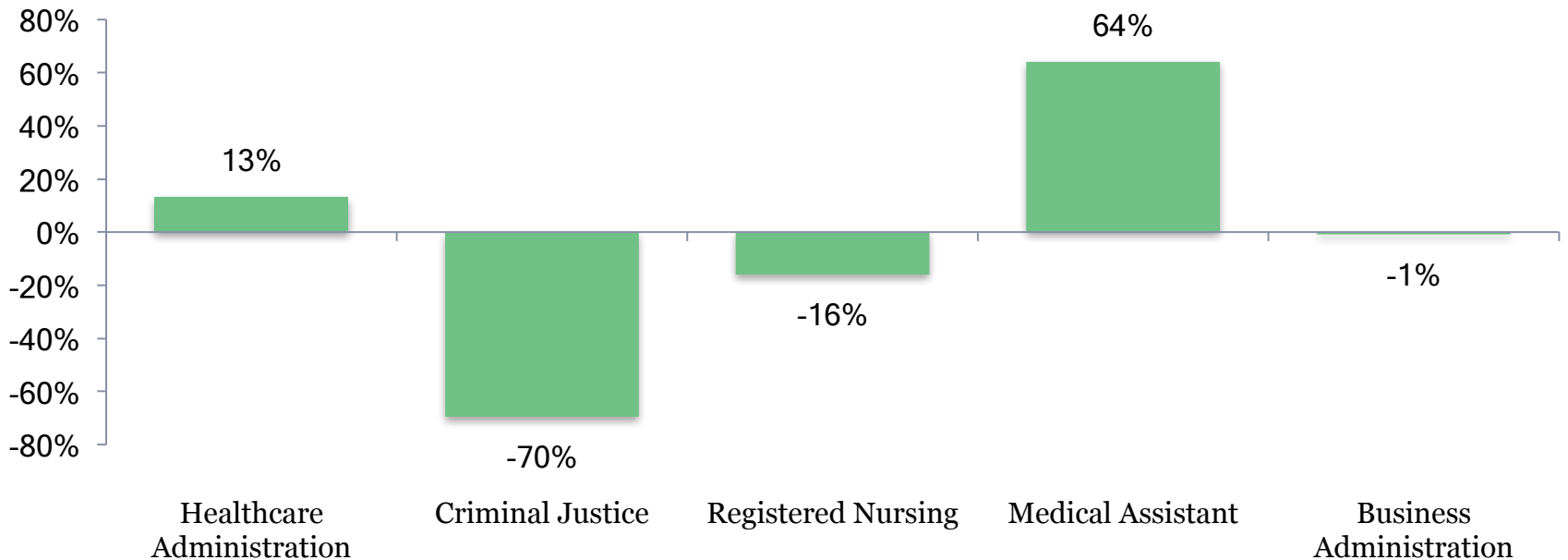
Note: The market for each city is defined as a 15-mile radius around the population center of its CBSA.

Source: GrayReports – *Inquiry Trends*, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

The Big 5 Programs fared poorly in June.

- Inquiries for three of The Big 5 fell—CJ fell 70%.
- Healthcare Administration and Medical Assisting grew—M.A. was up 64%.

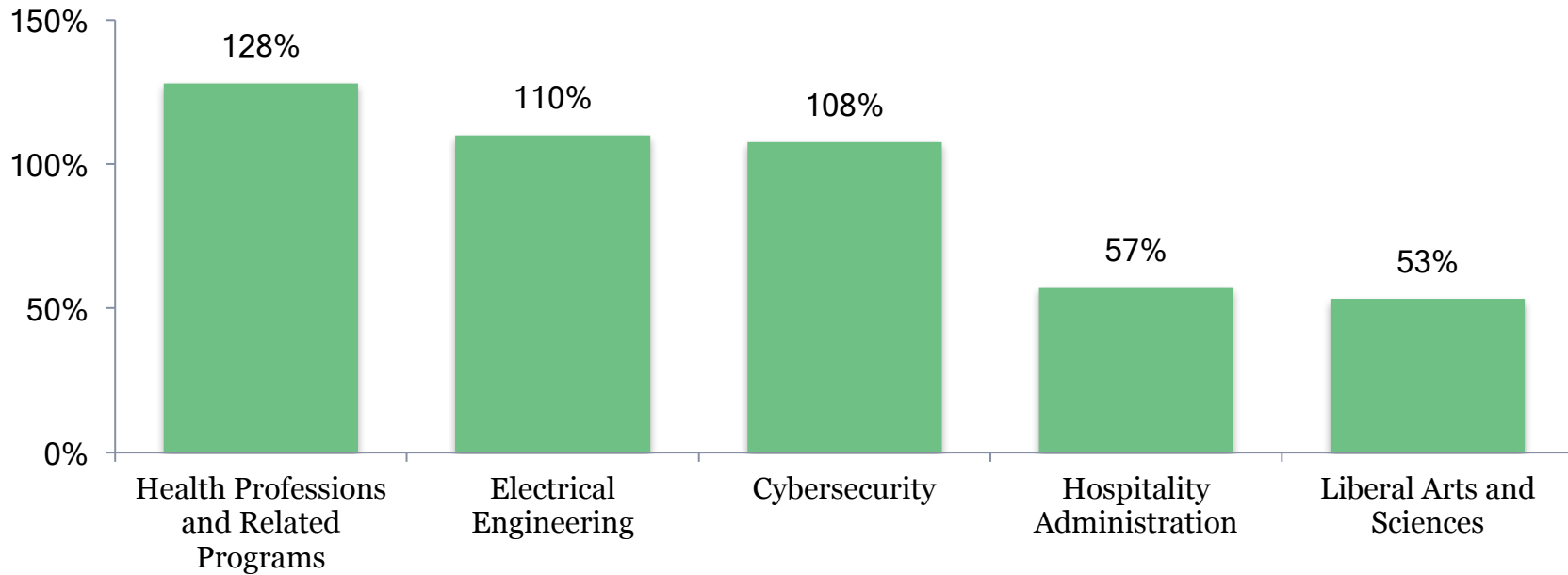
**Five Largest Programs Since January 2012
Year-over-Year Change in June Inquiries**



Source: GrayReports – *Inquiry Trends*, Gray’s Program Evaluation System

All five of the fastest-growing programs¹ grew 50% or more.

The Fast 5 Programs Year-over-Year Change in June Inquiries

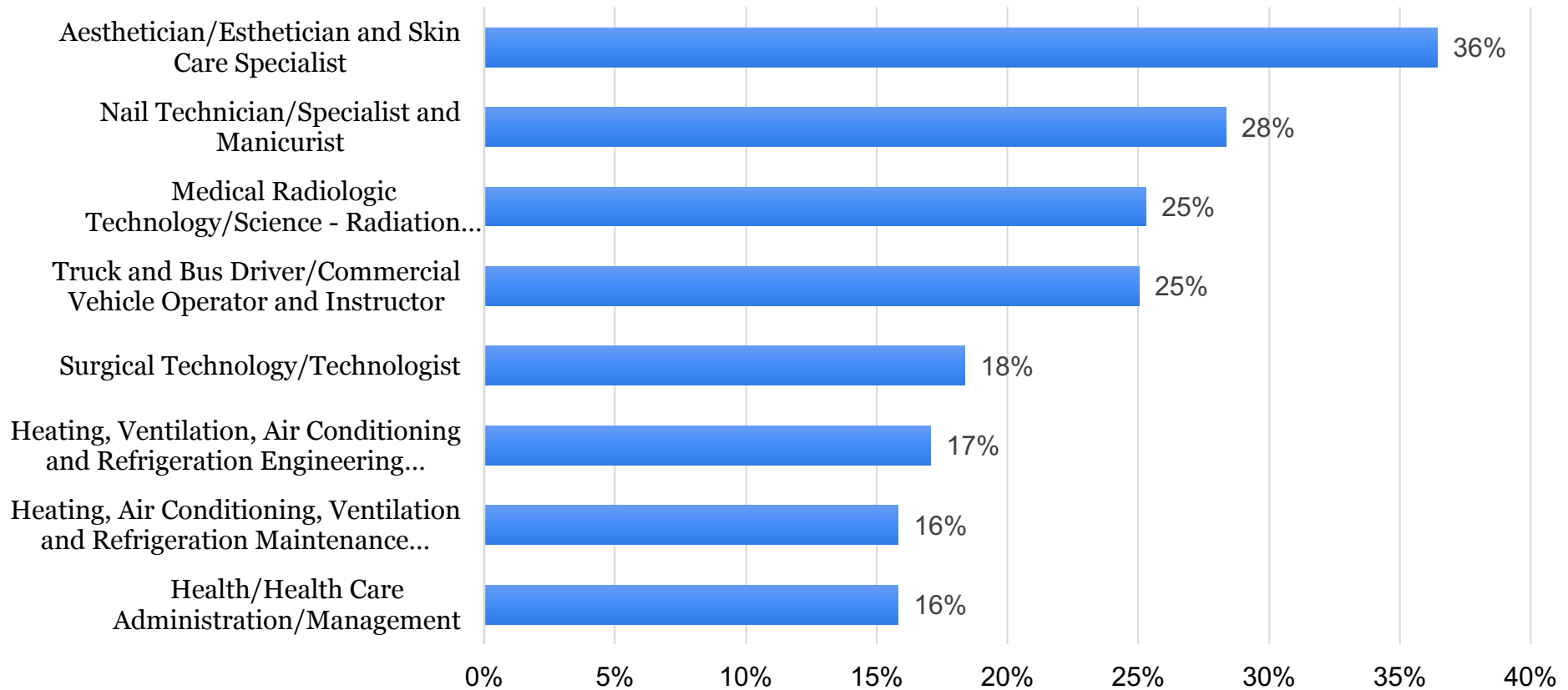


1. Includes the 75 programs with the highest volume since January 2012.

Source: GrayReports – *Inquiry Trends*, Gray's Program Evaluation System

Searches for Aesthetician programs continued their rapid growth.

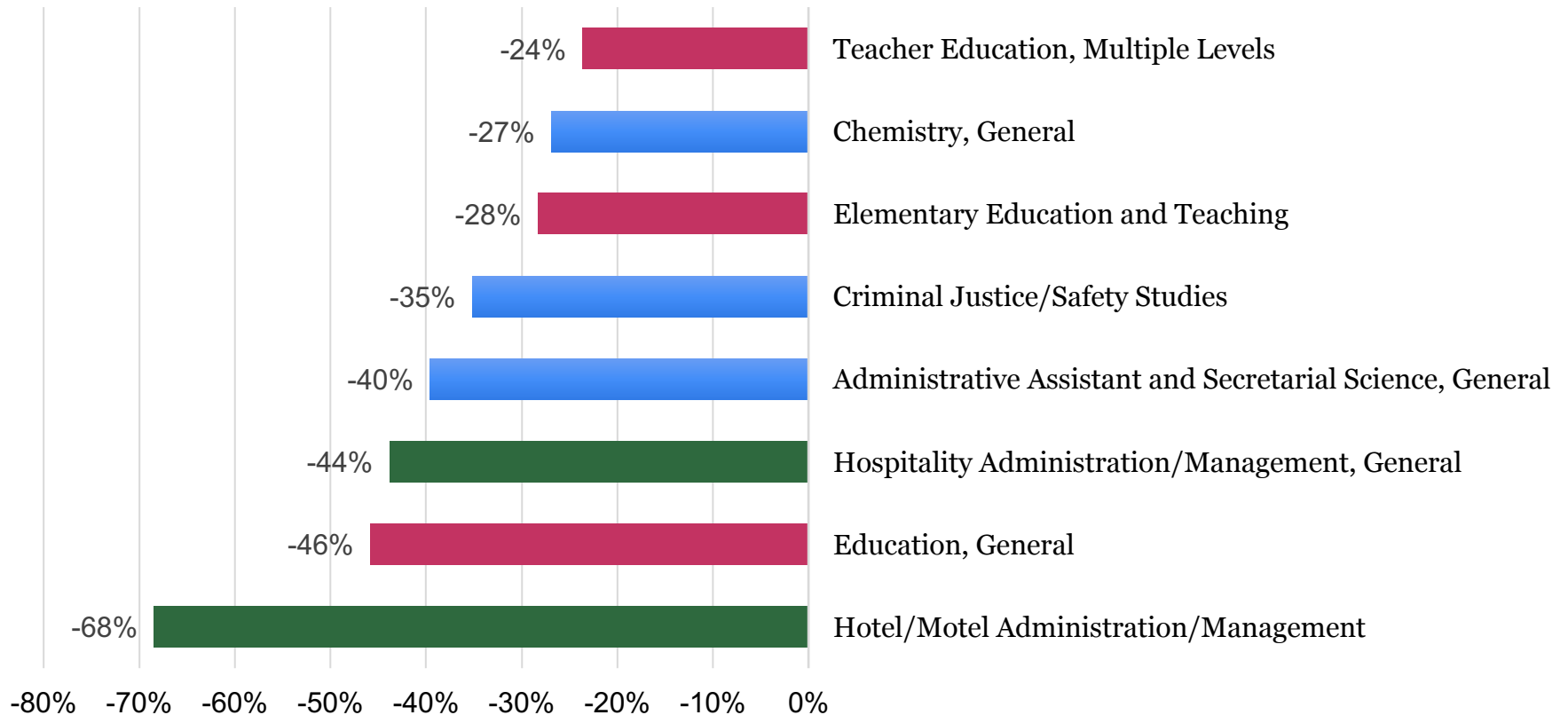
**Fastest-growing Programs
June Google Searches**



Search volumes for several teaching programs fell over 20%.

- Hospitality-related programs also fared poorly.

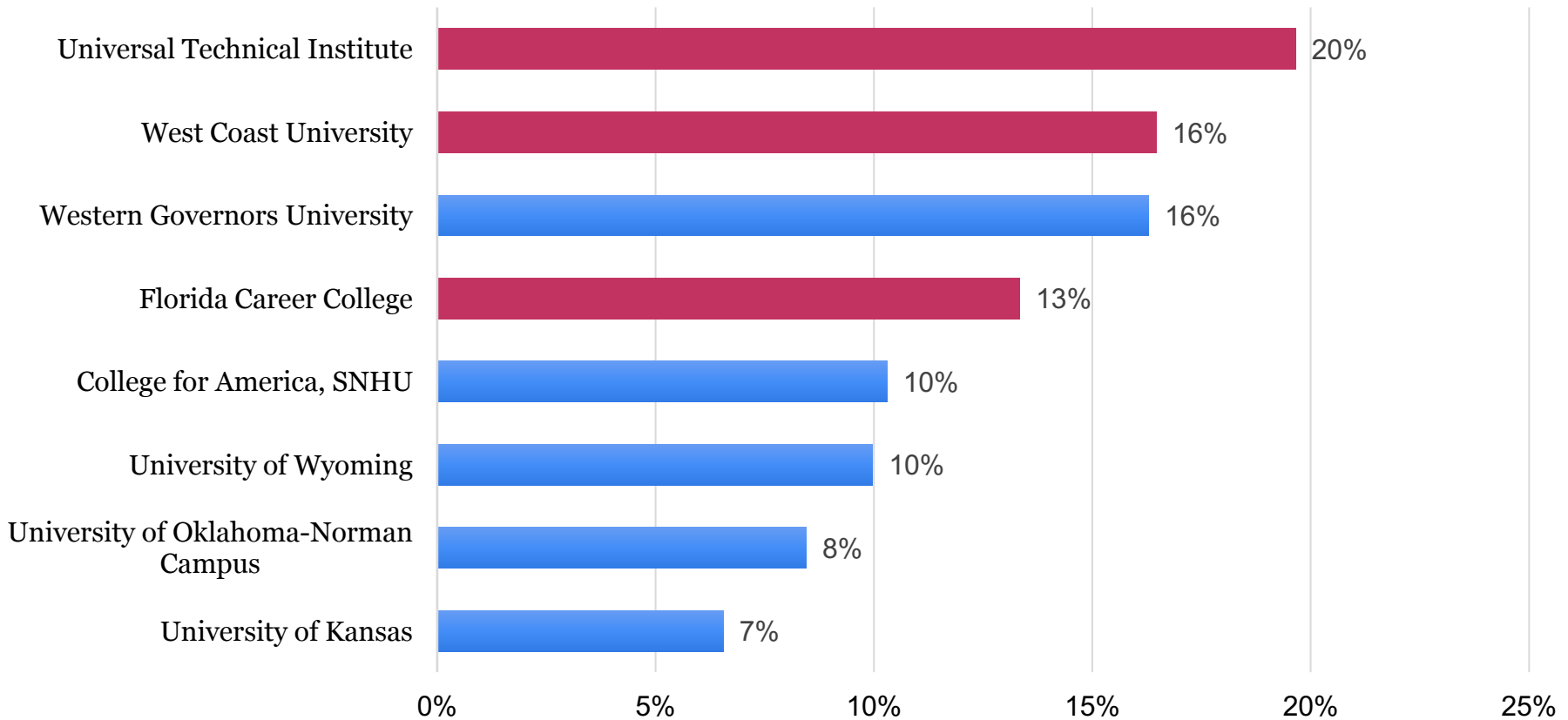
Fastest-declining Programs June Google Searches



The fastest-growing brands include very different schools.

- Three of the top 10 are for-profits.

Fastest-growing Brands
Google Searches



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Program Scorecard: 51.0701 - Health Care Admin/Management

GRAYASSOCIATES

Overall Score 7

Category	Criterion	Value	Score	Total
Inquiries	Total	227,695	4	14
	Online	161,147	2	
	Unit Change	6,065	2	
	% Change	2.7%	0	
	Certificate	1.8%		
	Associates	30.8%		
	Bachelors	51.3%		
	Masters	15.5%		
	Doctoral	0.3%		
Google Search*	Total	119,450	2	-4
	Unit Change	-4,181	-1	
	% Change	-3.4%	0	
Completions	Total	23,623	3	-4
	Unit Change	2,481	2	
	% Change	12%	2	
Institutions	Total**	583	-1	-4
	YoY Change**	10	0	
Cost Per Inquiry	Average**	\$54	1	-4
Market Saturation	Completions Per Capita**	0.31	0	
Google Search*	Cost Per Click**	\$57	-2	-4
	Comp. Index**	0.90	-2	
Program Size	Average	41	0	-4
	Median	7	0	
	Unit Change	1	0	
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National Distance Education Competition	DE Institutions**	282		-4
	% of Institutions	48%	0	
	DE Completions**	14,424		
	% of Completions	61%	0	

Percentiles:	< 40%	40%+	70%+	90%+	95%+	98%+
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Job Postings* 	Job Postings	26,821	2	-3
	JP w/ EDU	21,291		
	% JP HS	6%		
	% JP AA	14%		
	% JP BA	48%		
	% JP MA	24%		
	% JP Doc	8%		
	Unit Change	-1,660	0	
	% Change	-5.8%	-1	
BLS*	JP Per Grad*	1.1	-2	-3
	Total	62,436	0	
	Job Openings	1,727	0	
Nat'l ACS Wage (Bachelors)	CAGR	2.1%	-1	-3
	Wages	\$58,270	2	
Nat'l GE (2-Yr)	Age < 30	\$36,774	-3	-3
	Age 30-60	\$74,349	0	
Placement Rates	Wages	NA	0	-3
	Certificate			
	Associates		0	
National Percent of Workforce	No College	9%	0	0
	Certificate	15%	0	
	Associates	12%	0	
	Bachelors	32%	0	
	Graduate	32%	0	
Percent of All Completions	Certificate	1%	0	0
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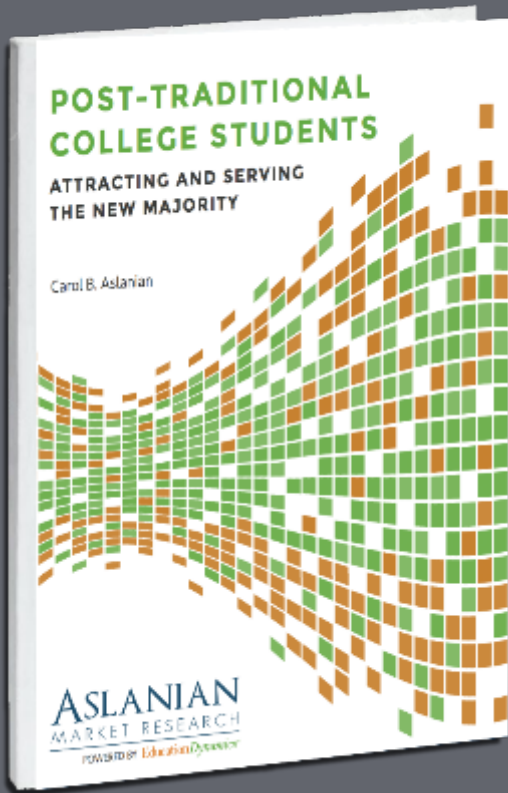
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WHO ARE POST-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS? Two Reports

Available Here: educationdynamics.com/e-books



Undergraduate Report, 2017



Graduate Report, 2018

A woman with short brown hair and glasses is looking upwards and to the right. She is wearing a dark blue jacket over a white top. The background is a blurred classroom or lecture hall with a wooden ceiling and a large window. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

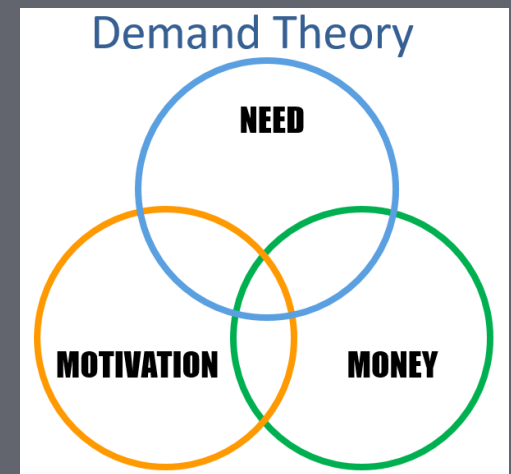
WHO ARE Post-Traditional Graduate Students?

- Not enrolled in a daytime, full-time or residential degree program
- Not necessarily “adult learners”
- More than 70% of the graduate student population

WHO ARE POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS?

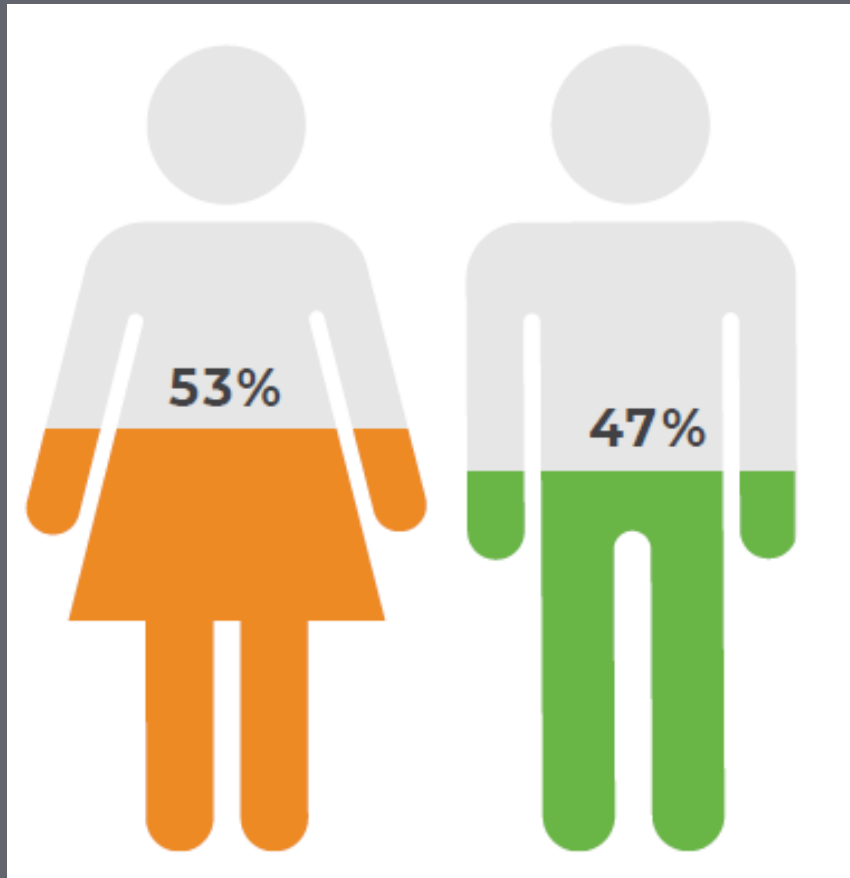
National Study Methodology

- 1,500 students nationwide
- Any age ... **but if under 25**: not full-time, day, residential (*this is our post-traditional screening criteria*)
- Enrolled in graduate study in past three years, currently enrolled, or plan to enroll in next 12 months
- Study of demand – not need.



WHO ARE POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS?

Demographics

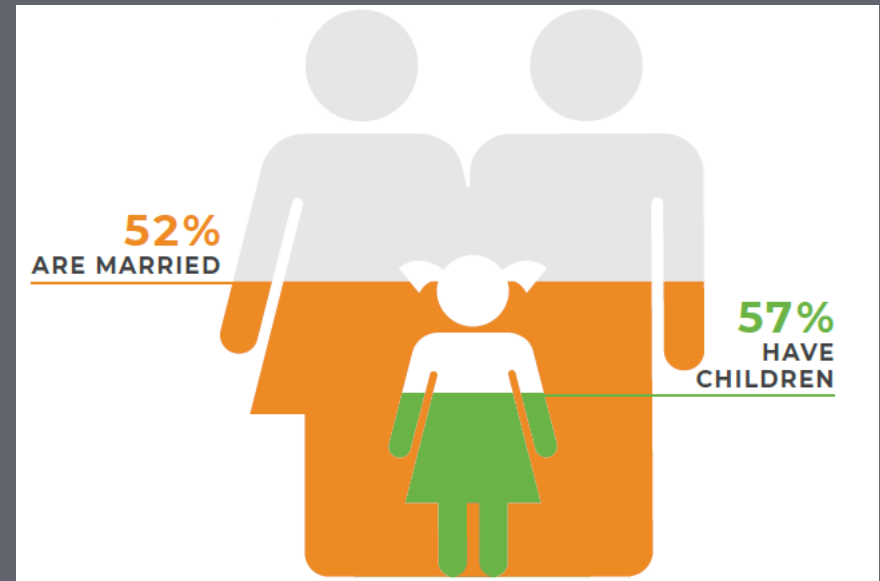
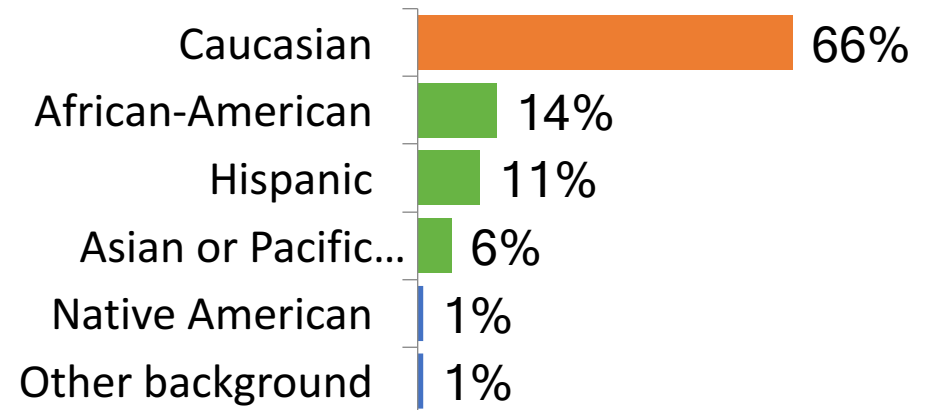


Age	Percentage
22 or younger	2%
23-24	3%
25-29	26%
30-34	23%
35-39	16%
40-44	9%
45-49	7%
50-55	7%
Over 55	6%

WHO ARE POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS?

Demographics

Employment Status	
Employed full time	71%
Employed part time	12%
Not employed	13%
Retired	3%



RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

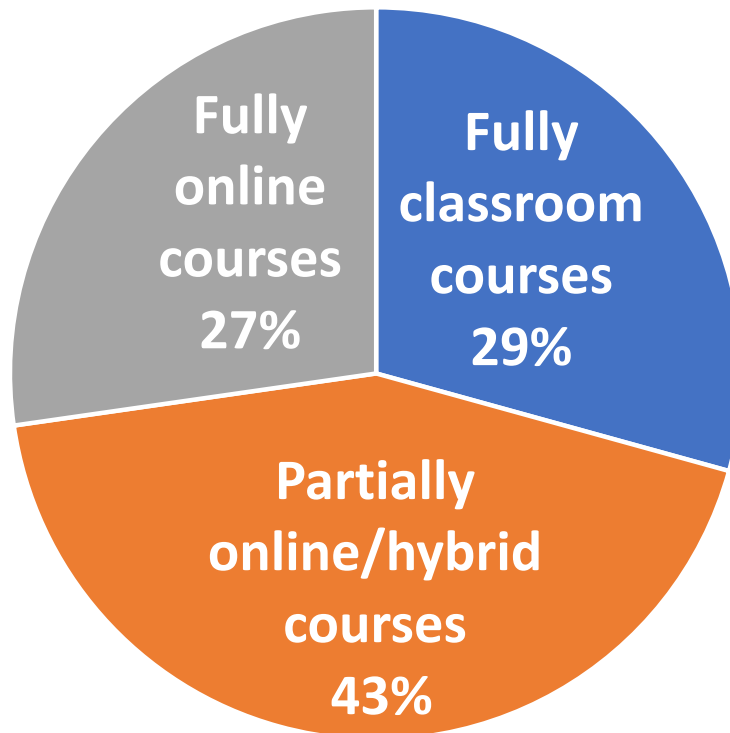
Trends – How Far Is Their Online Institution?

Distance from Institution	Online Graduate Students
Less than 50 miles away	53%
50 to 100 miles away	19%
101-250 miles away	5%
More than 100 miles away	7%
More than 250 miles away	10%
Not sure	7%

***Key Takeaway:** Online students prefer to study at an institution that is local and known to them.*

RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

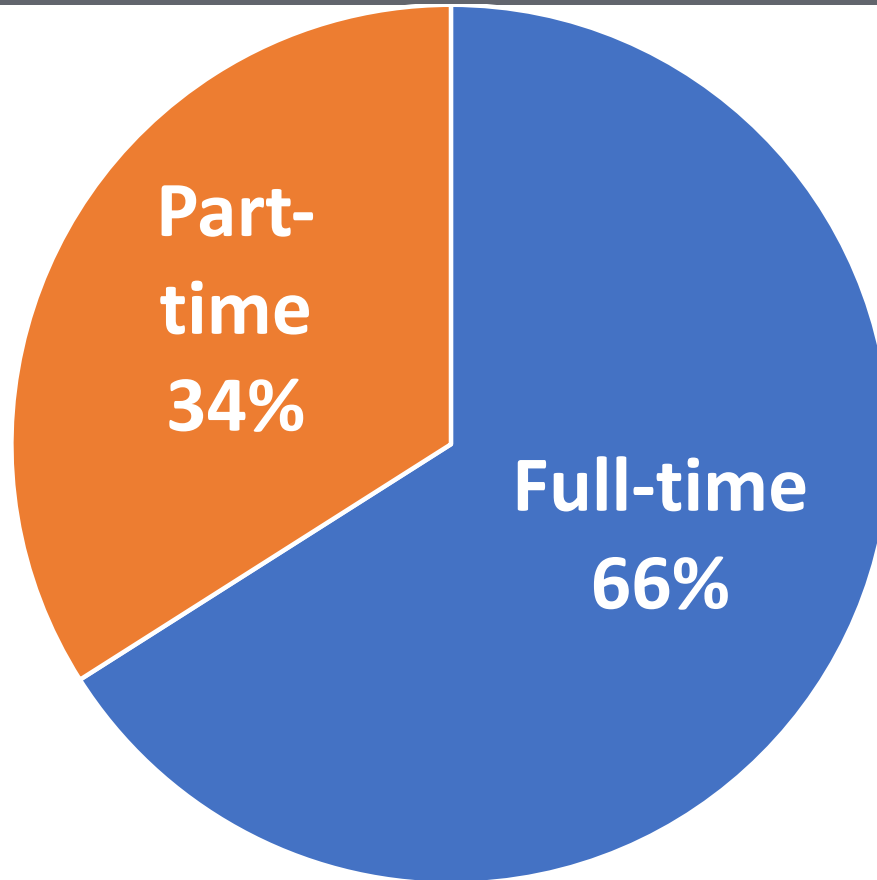
Trends – Preferred Course Format



Key Takeaway:
Majority of post-traditional graduate students prefer some level of online study.

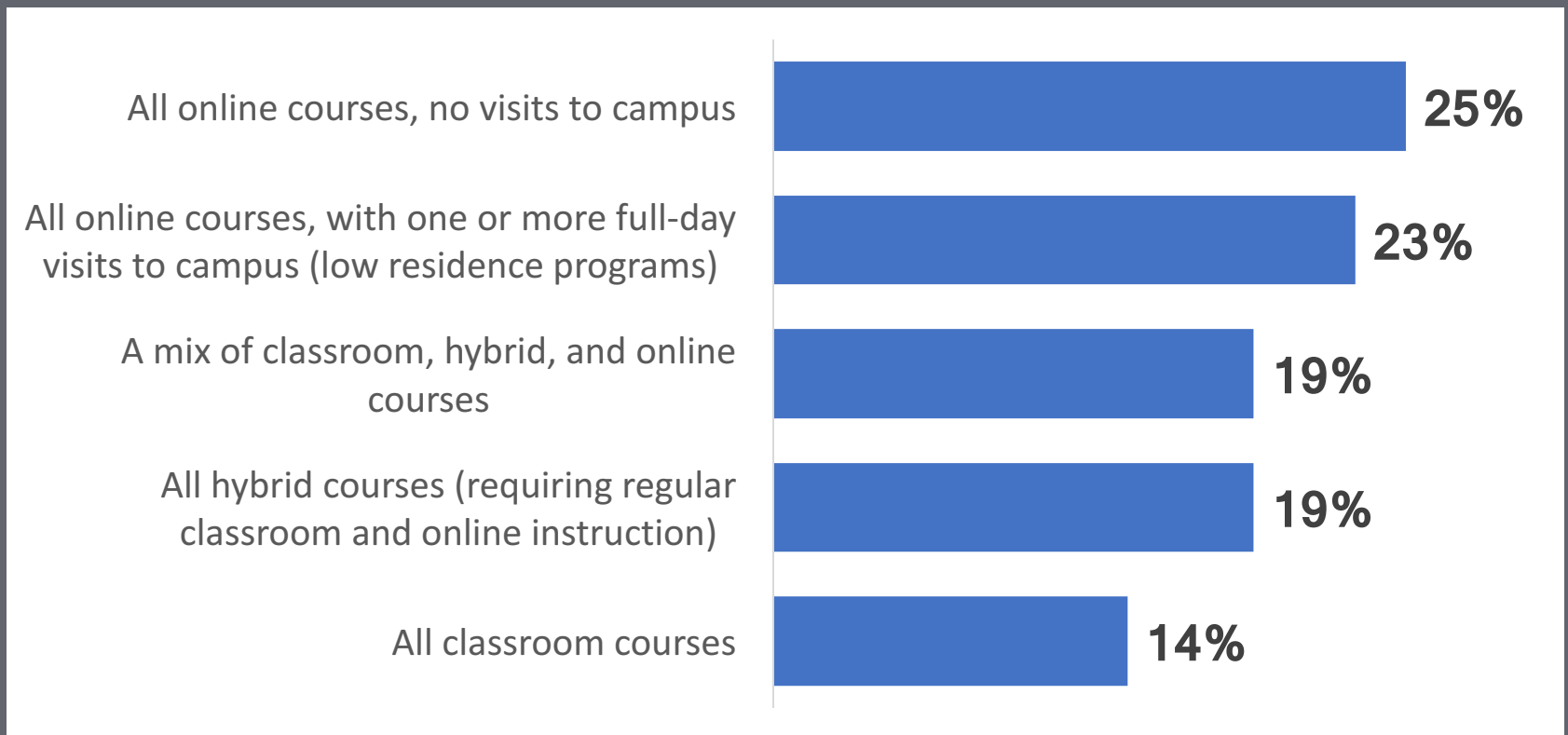
POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Full vs Part Time



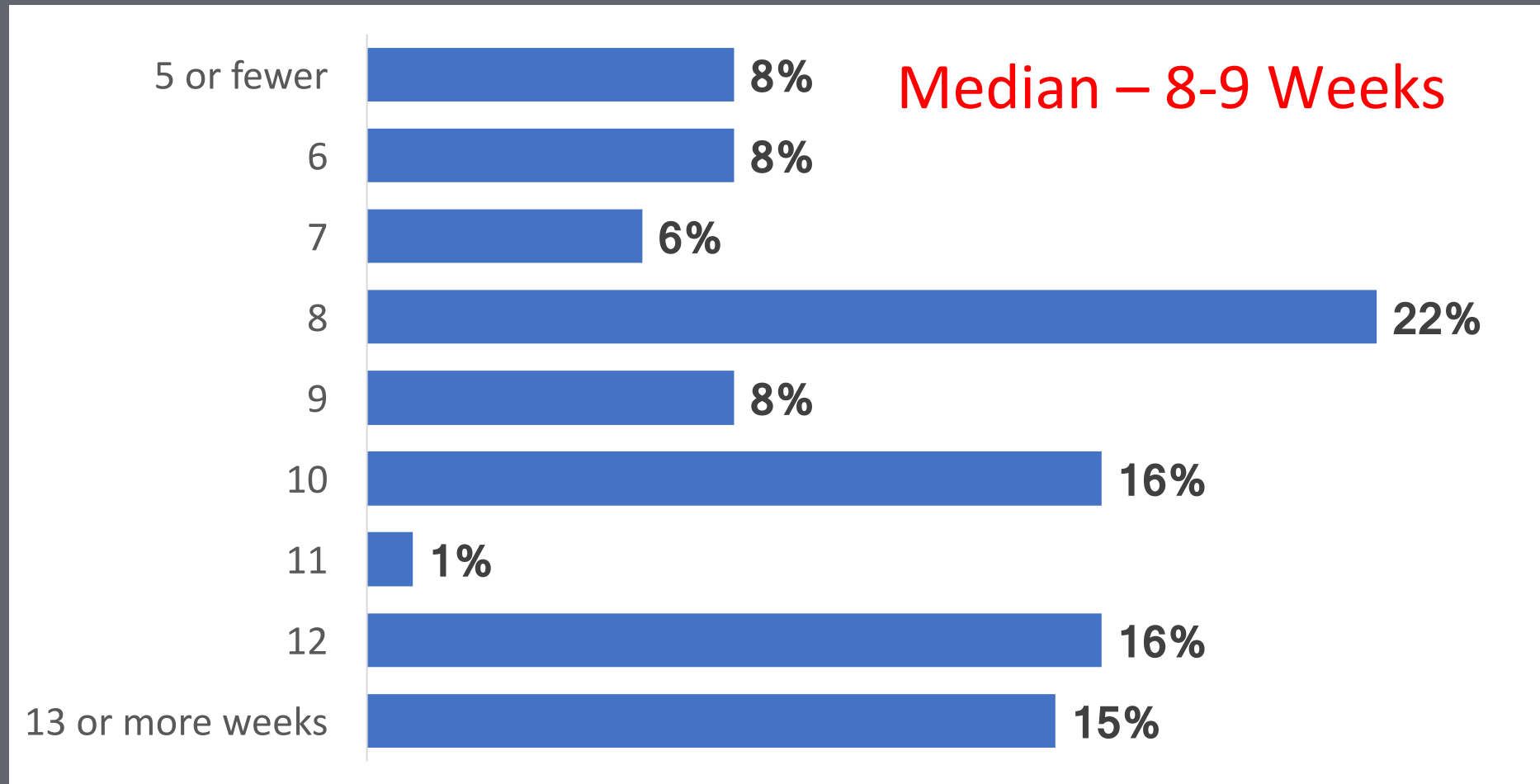
POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Trends in Recent/Current Program Format



RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

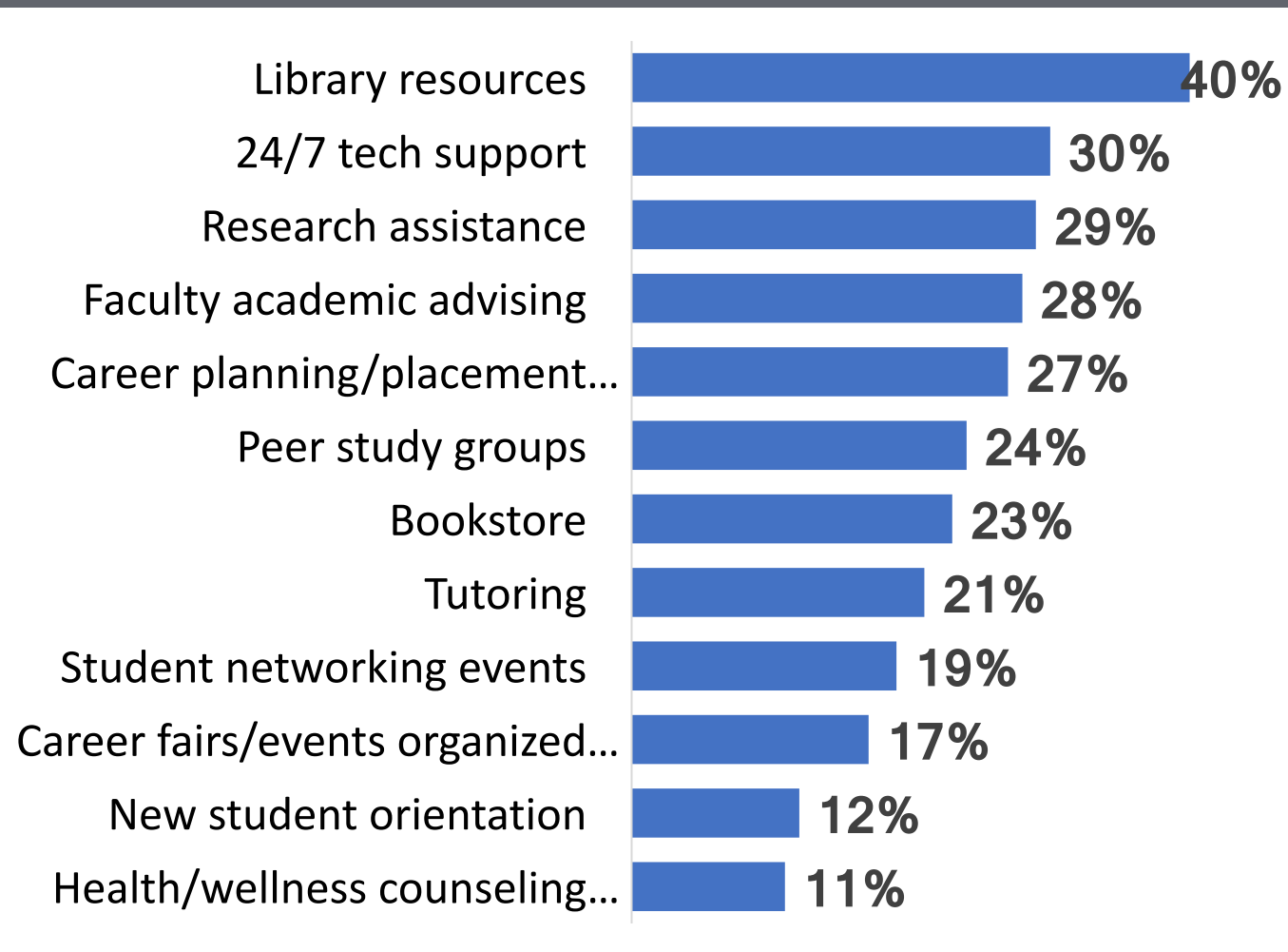
Trends – Preferred Course Length



RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Trends – Importance of Support Services

*Key Takeaway:
Enrollment
(and retention)
depend on
students'
ability to
complete their
studies.*



RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Trends – How do they pay?

Course Payment Methods	Used Payment Method	Primary	Secondary Methods
Personal/family funds	47%	66%	34%
Student loans	38%	56%	44%
Private loans (from a bank)	22%	51%	49%
Government grants	27%	59%	41%
Private third-party scholarships	11%	40%	60%
Employer tuition support benefits	24%	61%	39%
Other	1%	86%	14%

Key Takeaway: Unlike past decades, post-traditional graduate students are far more likely to rely on loans, grants and other sources today.

RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Trends – Most Important Factors in Enrollment

	Post-Traditional Graduate Students
Cost of tuition and fees	52%
Reputation of the college or program	36%
Professional accreditation of my program	34%
Availability of online programs	32%
Length of time to complete my studies	30%
Location where my courses are offered/available	29%
Availability of flexible formats (online, hybrid, low-residence...)	26%
Availability of accelerated courses	20%
Availability of graduate assistantships	16%
Recommendations of friends, family, associates	13%
Recommended by my employer	11%

RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Trends – Marketing Channels

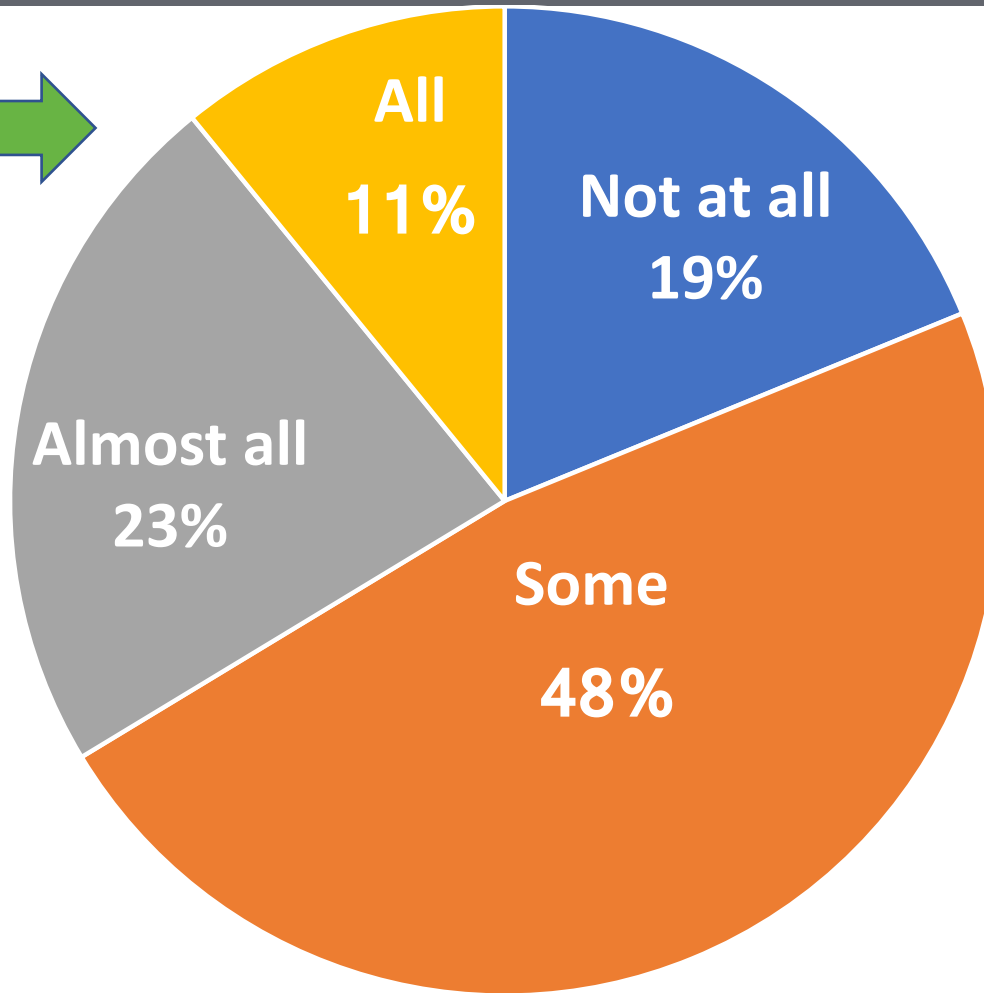
Top Marketing Channels	Post-Traditional Graduate Students
Commercials (Television)	36%
Email	29%
Search engines (paid and organic)	27%
College Fairs	22%
Display Advertisements	22%
Social Media Advertising	20%

***Key Takeaway:** Ensure that your marketing mix has both traditional and new media. You can no longer avoid digital marketing!*

RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Trends – Mobile Presence Matters for Search!

Mobile
Heavy



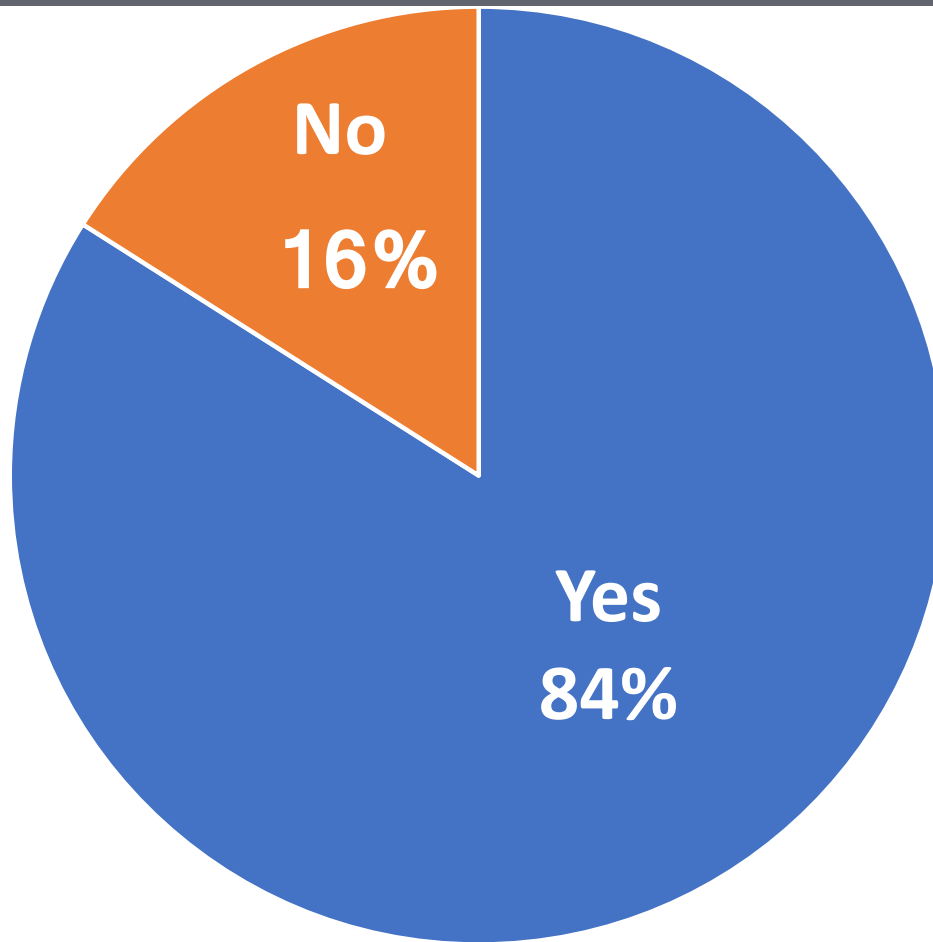
RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Trends – How Many Schools?

Number of Institutions	Post-Traditional Graduate Students	
	Considered/Inquired	Applied
1	21%	40%
2	35%	41%
3 or more	44%	19%

RECRUITING POST-TRADITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENTS

Trends – Enrollment in 1st Institution to Offer Acceptance



Key Takeaway:
Success relies on your ability to optimize your contact/enrollment strategy. You are competing for students as you never have before.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

CONTACT US FOR A FREE STRATEGY DISCUSSION

For additional information, support resources or questions,
please contact Carol Aslanian at

caslanian@educationdynamics.com

or **201-377-3321**

You can also visit our website: **educationdynamics.com**

Referenced Reports: **educationdynamics.com/e-books**

1. Student Demand Trends: Inquiries, Conversions, and Searches
 - National
 - Online and On-campus
 - City and Program
2. Gray's Program Scorecard
3. Aslanian Market Research, a Division of EducationDynamics
4. Summary



- The decline in total inquiries seems to be slowing.
 - Google search volumes are off just 3%
 - Gray inquiries are flat
 - This reflects declining interest in on-ground and rising demand for online.
- Conversion rates and conversions are now declining year-over-year.
- Prices for inquiries are rising.
- Non-traditional graduate students are a unique segment.
 - Employed, married and raising kids
 - Prefer local online with some on-campus work.
- In this environment, you will need:
 - Great data to inform decisions on programs and markets to invest in.
 - The ability to take share, so you can sustain enrollment in a declining market.

Please feel free to contact:

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Please join us next month!



**August Webcast
(July Results)
Thursday, August 23rd at 2:00 PM EDT**

