



Council of Graduate Schools

Advocacy, Research, and Innovation

Ph.D. Completion: Findings from the Exit Surveys

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Ph.D. Completion – Exit Survey

- **Data**
 - 1406 surveys from completers
 - 18 institutions
 - Collected from May 2006 through August 2008
- **Survey topics**
 - Major factors contributing to completion
 - Aspects of selection/admission processes
 - Availability and quality of mentoring and advising
 - Extent and adequacy of financial support
 - Program environment
 - Curricular processes and procedures
 - Research experiences



Limitations

- **No demographic data to ensure confidentiality of respondents**
- **No data on populations by broad field or institution**
 - Findings not generalizable to larger population of completers
 - Unable to use statistical tests to identify significant differences
- **Two different forms – long form and short form**
 - Reduced sample size for questions not on short form
 - Slightly different wording on some questions
- **Very small sample size of noncompleters (n=59)**



Institutions in the Sample

Arizona State University	University of California, Los Angeles
Cornell University	University of Louisville
Florida State University	University of Maryland, Baltimore County
Fordham University	University of Michigan
Howard University	University of Missouri–Columbia
Marquette University	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
North Carolina State University	University of Notre Dame
Pennsylvania State University	Western Michigan University
Université de Montréal (Canada)	Yale University

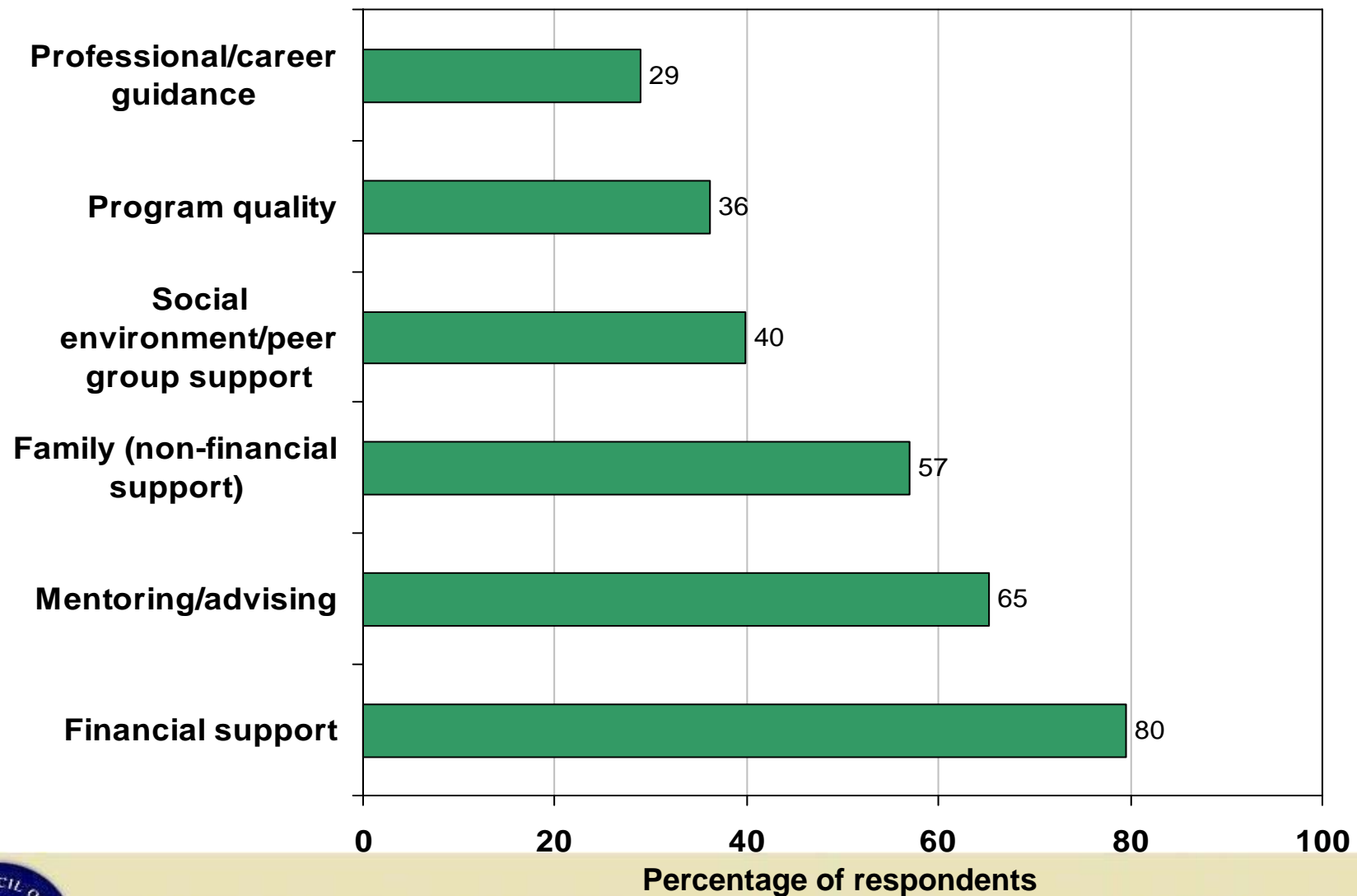


Number and Percentage of Respondents, by Broad Field of Study

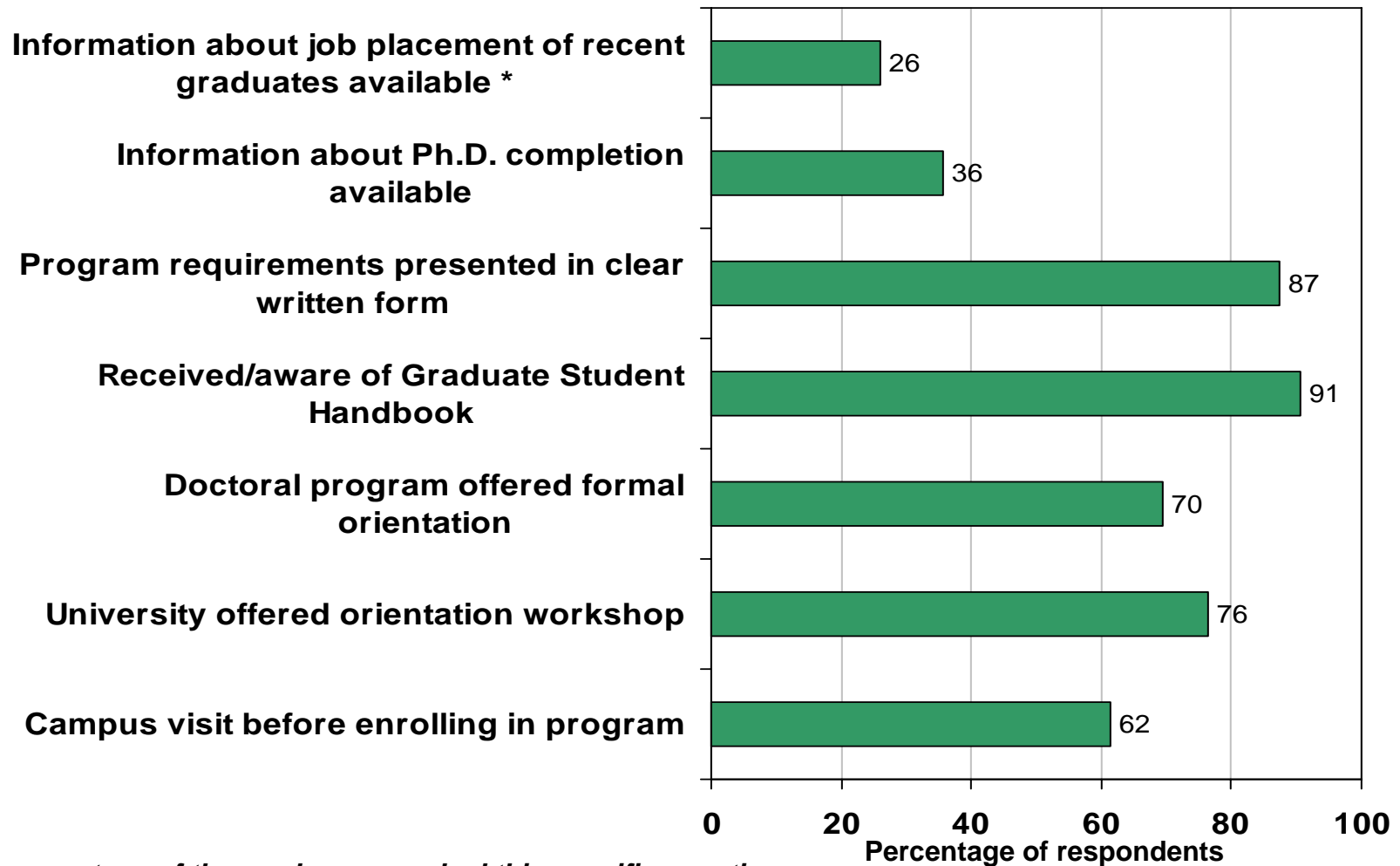
Broad Field of Study	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Total
Engineering	227	16%
Life Sciences	205	15%
Mathematics & Physical Sciences	359	26%
Social Sciences	294	21%
Humanities	321	23%
Total	1,406	100%



Main Factors Contributing to Respondents' Ability to Complete the Doctoral Degree



Various Aspects of Selection and Admissions

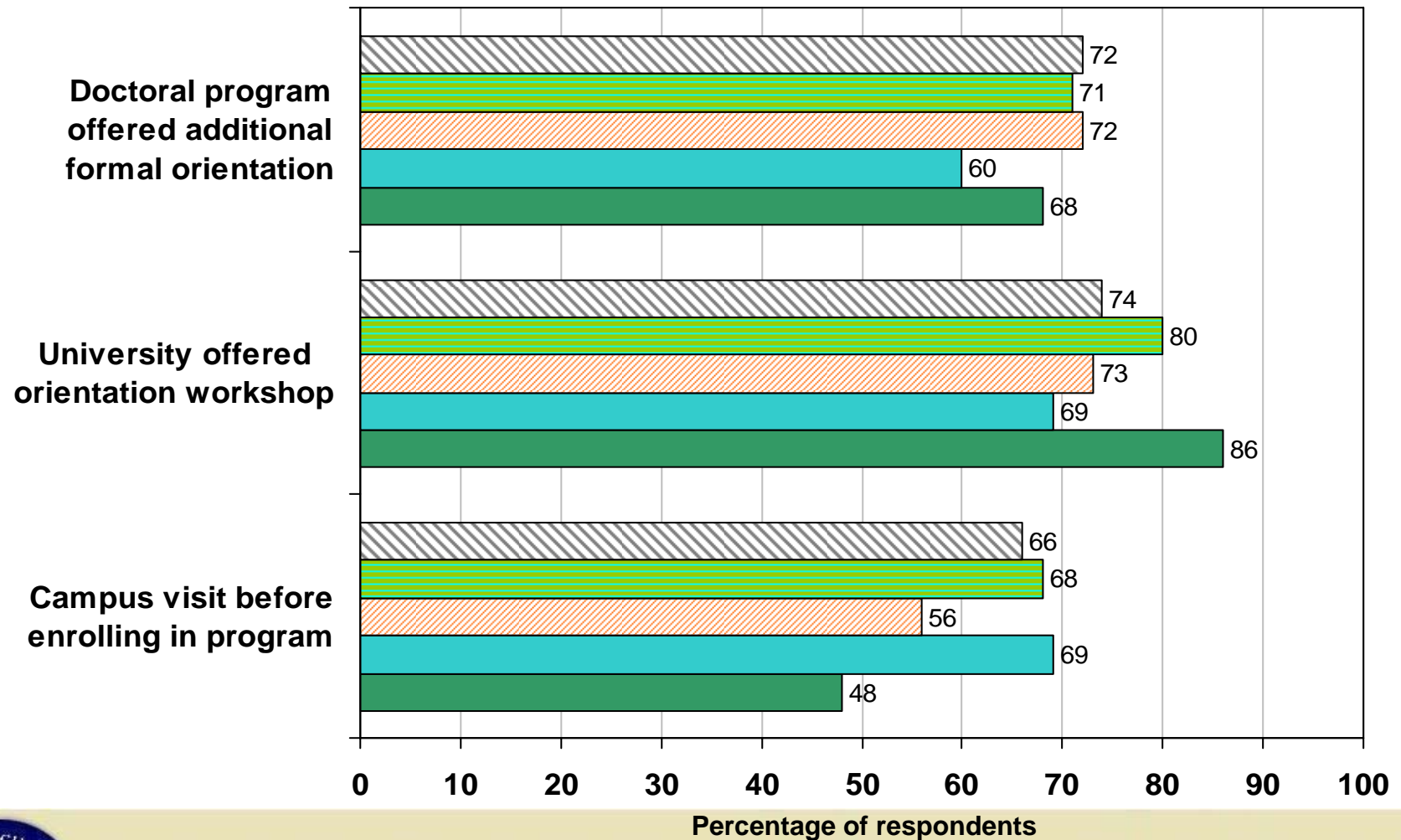


Note: *As a percentage of those who were asked this specific question



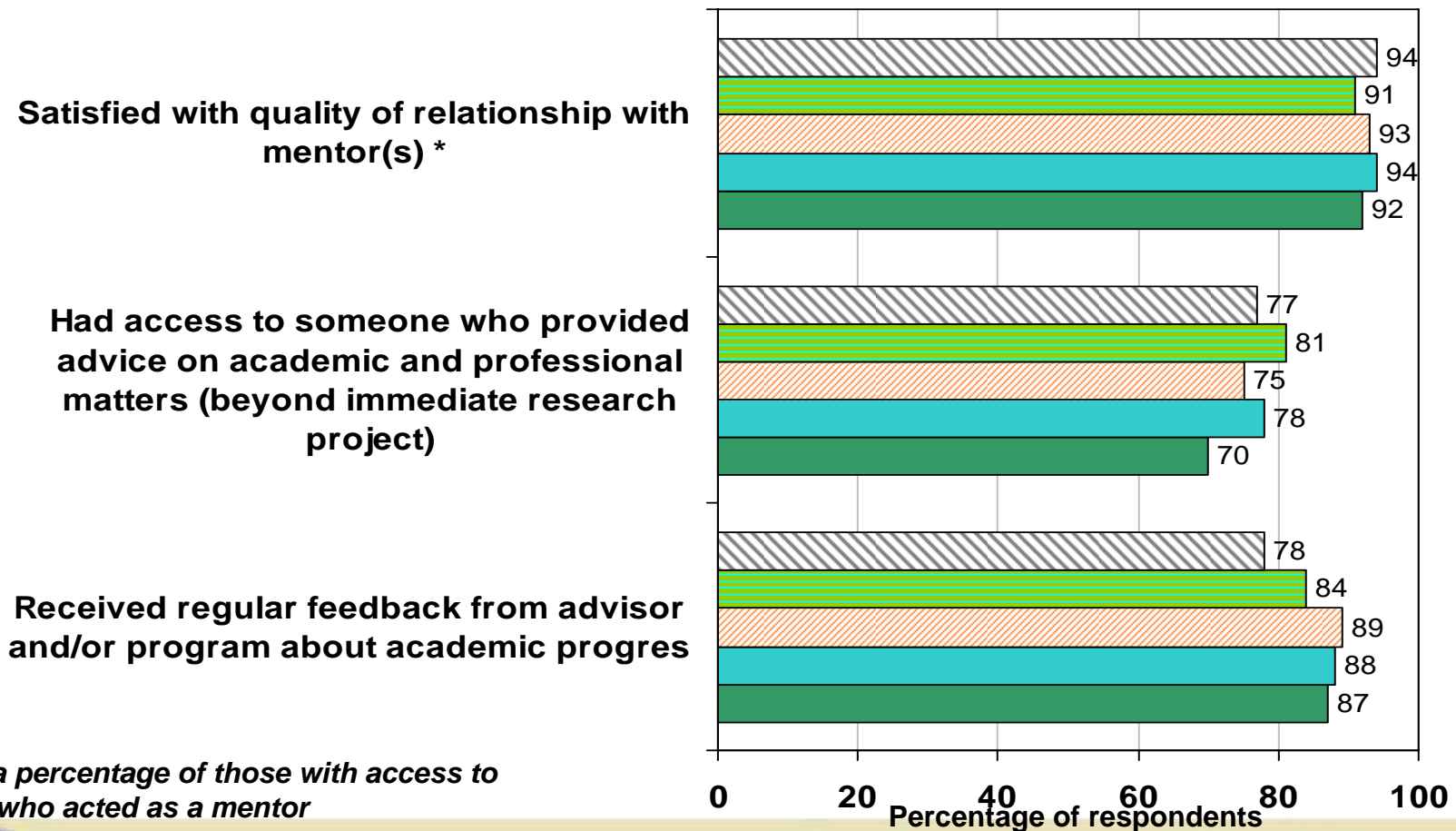
Various Aspects of Selection/Admissions, by Broad Field

■ Engineering ■ Life Sciences ■ Mathematics & Physical Sciences ■ Social Sciences ■ Humanities



Access to Feedback and Mentor, and Satisfaction with Mentor Relationship, by Broad Field

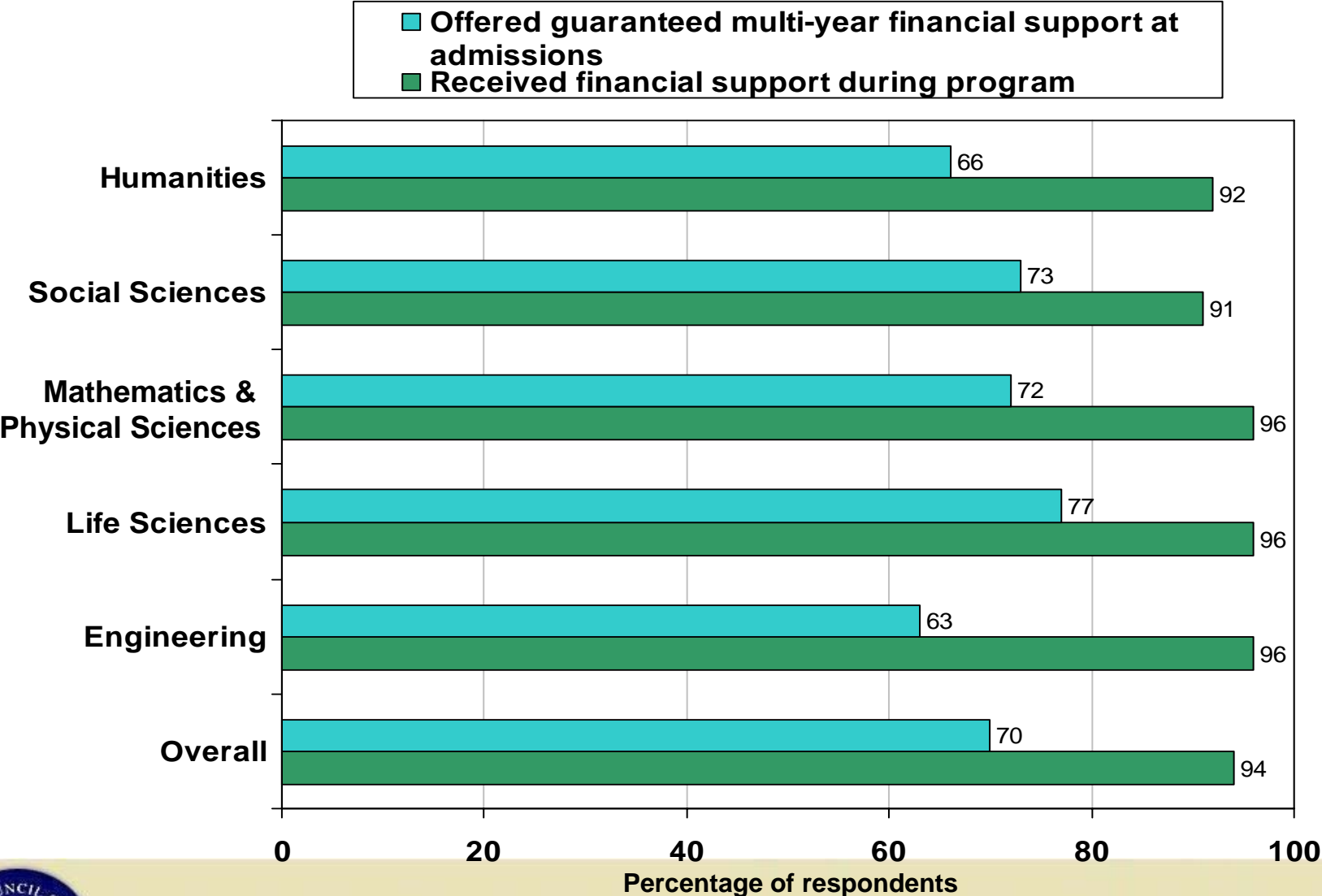
■ Engineering ■ Life Sciences ■ Mathematics & Physical Sciences ■ Social Sciences ■ Humanities



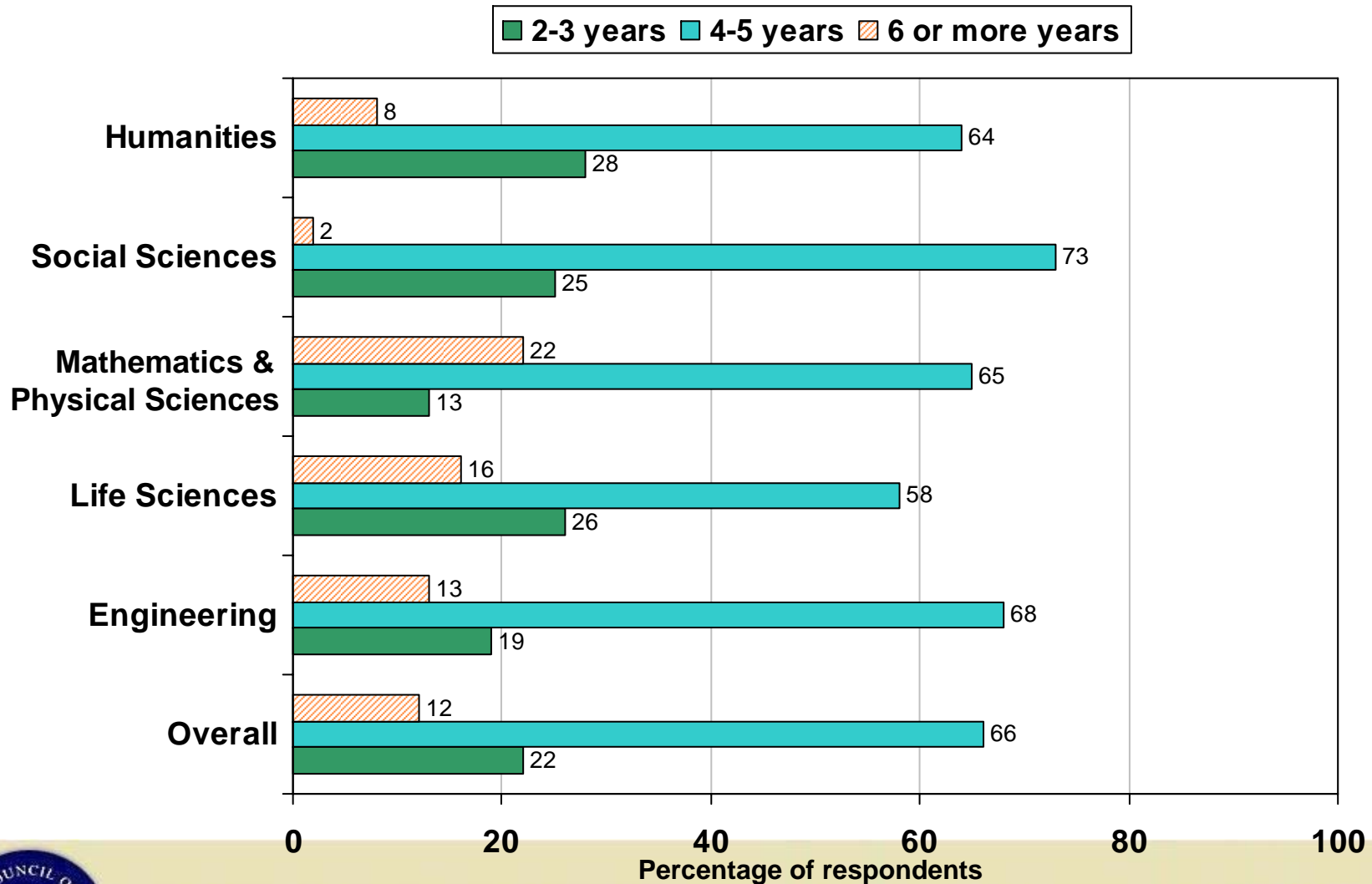
Note: *As a percentage of those with access to someone who acted as a mentor



Financial Support During Program, by Broad Field

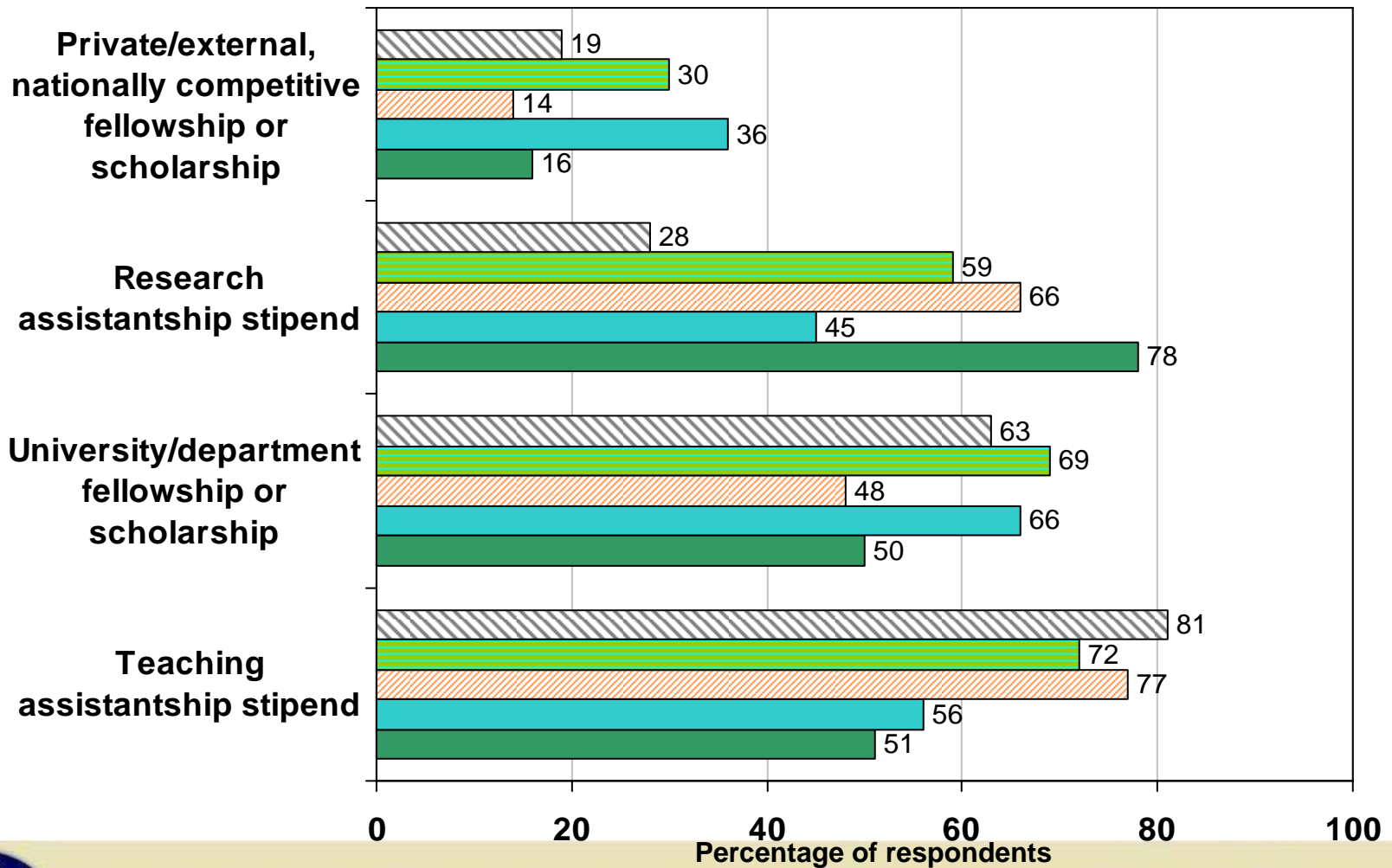


Number of Years of Guaranteed *Multi-Year* Financial Support, by Broad Field



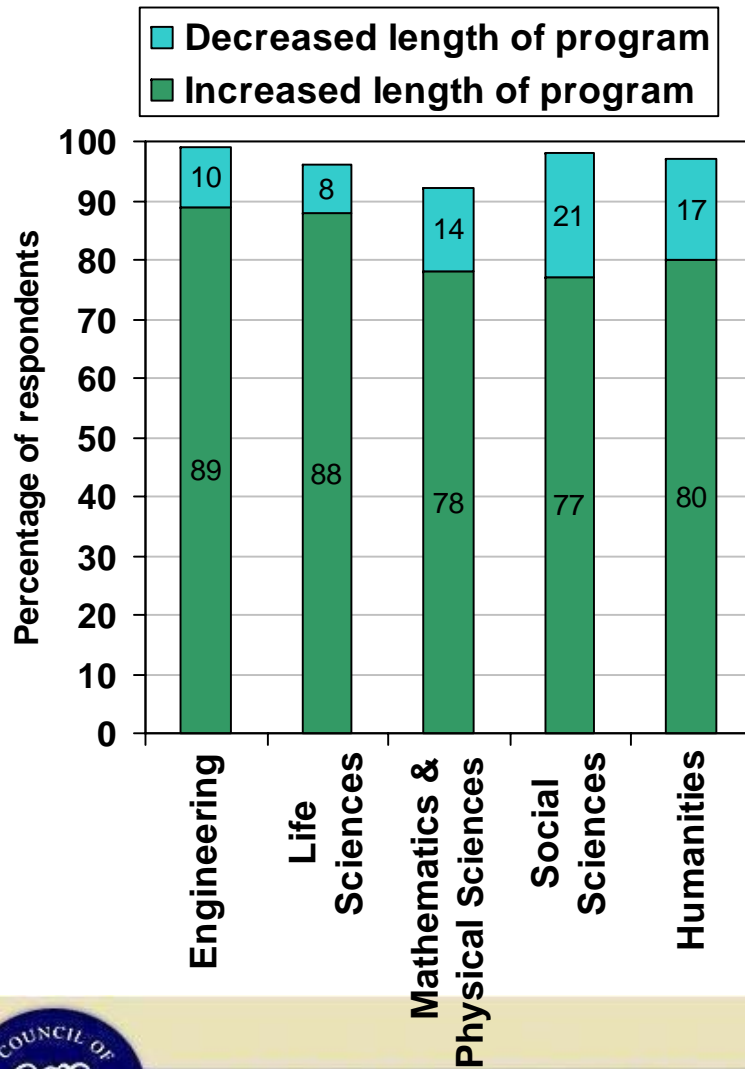
Type of support, By Broad Field

■ Engineering
 ■ Life Sciences
 ■ Mathematics & Physical Sciences
 ■ Social Sciences
 ■ Humanities

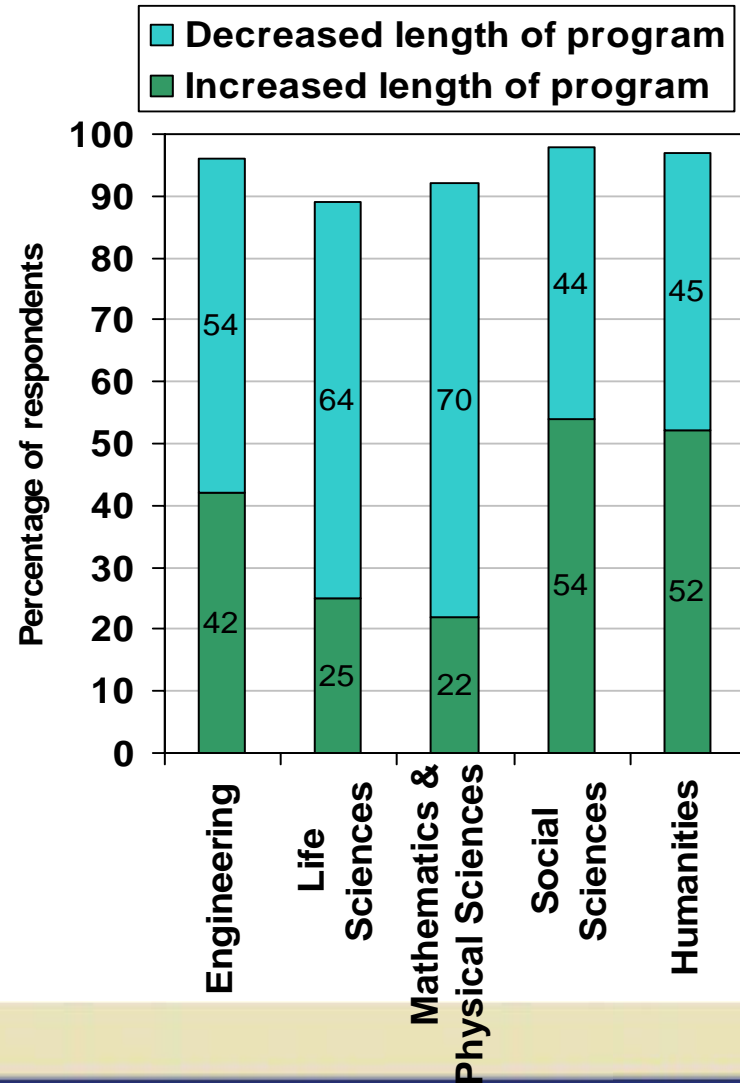


Effect of Teaching/Research Assistantships on Length of Program, By Broad Field

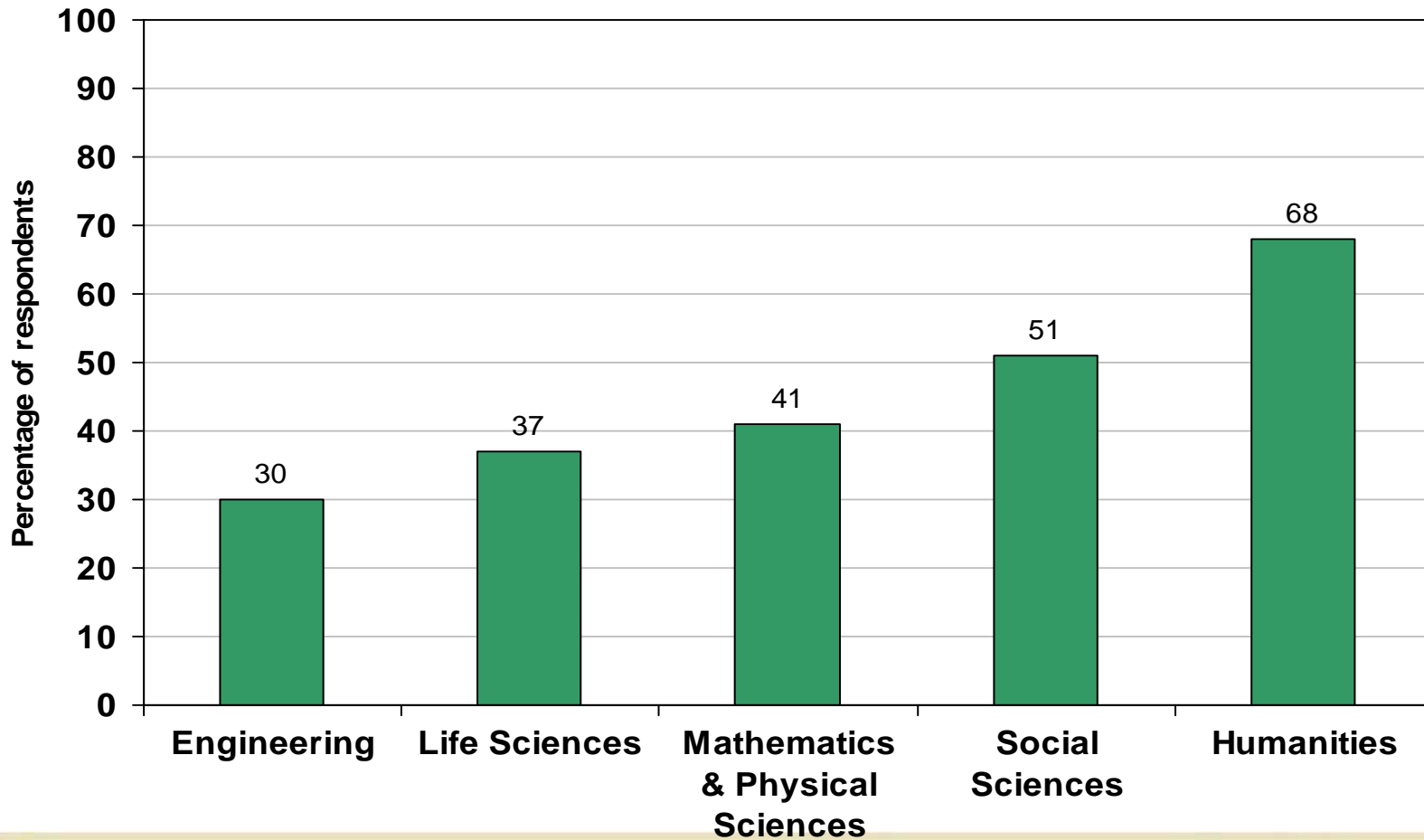
Teaching Assistantship



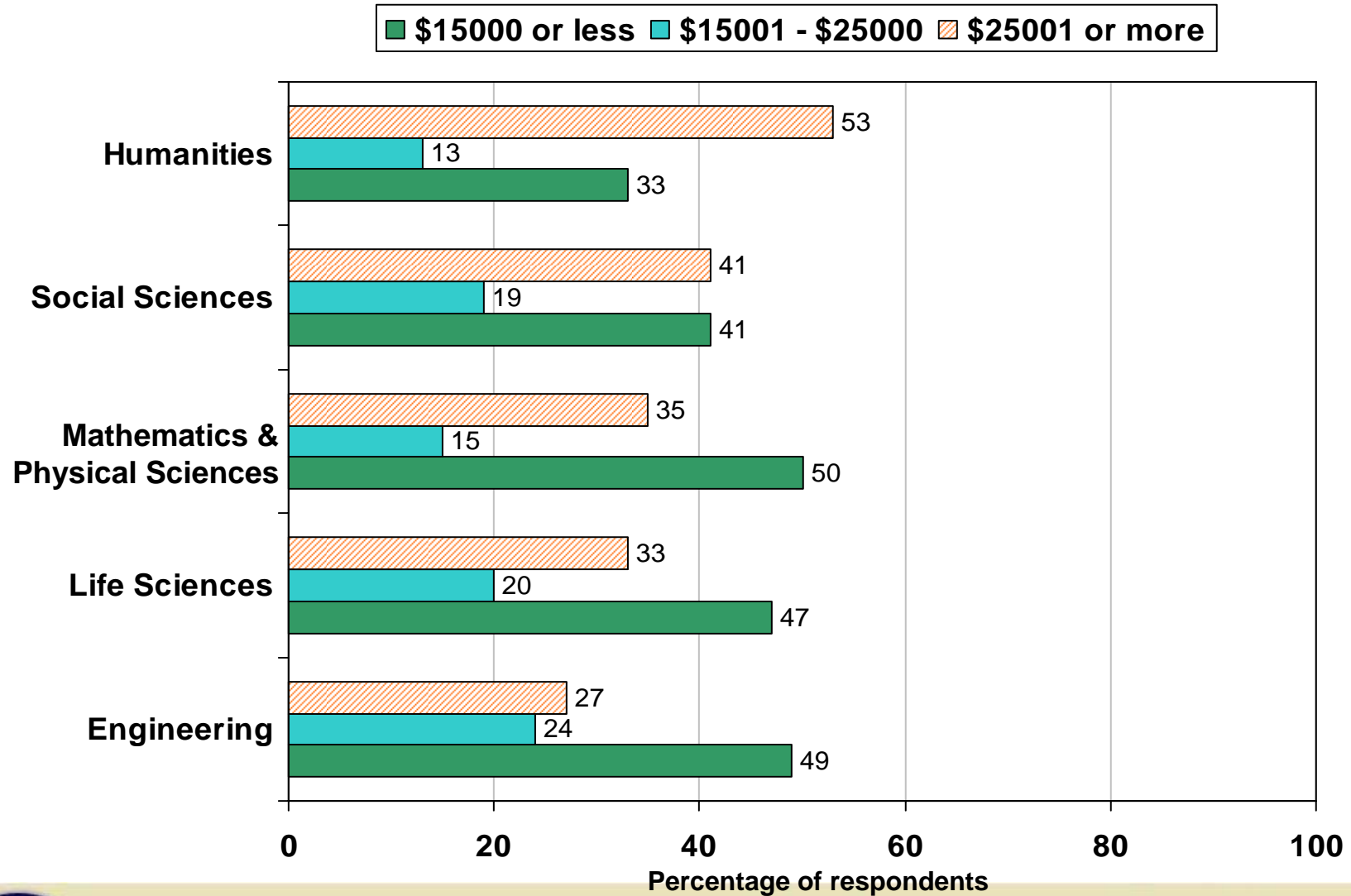
Research Assistantship



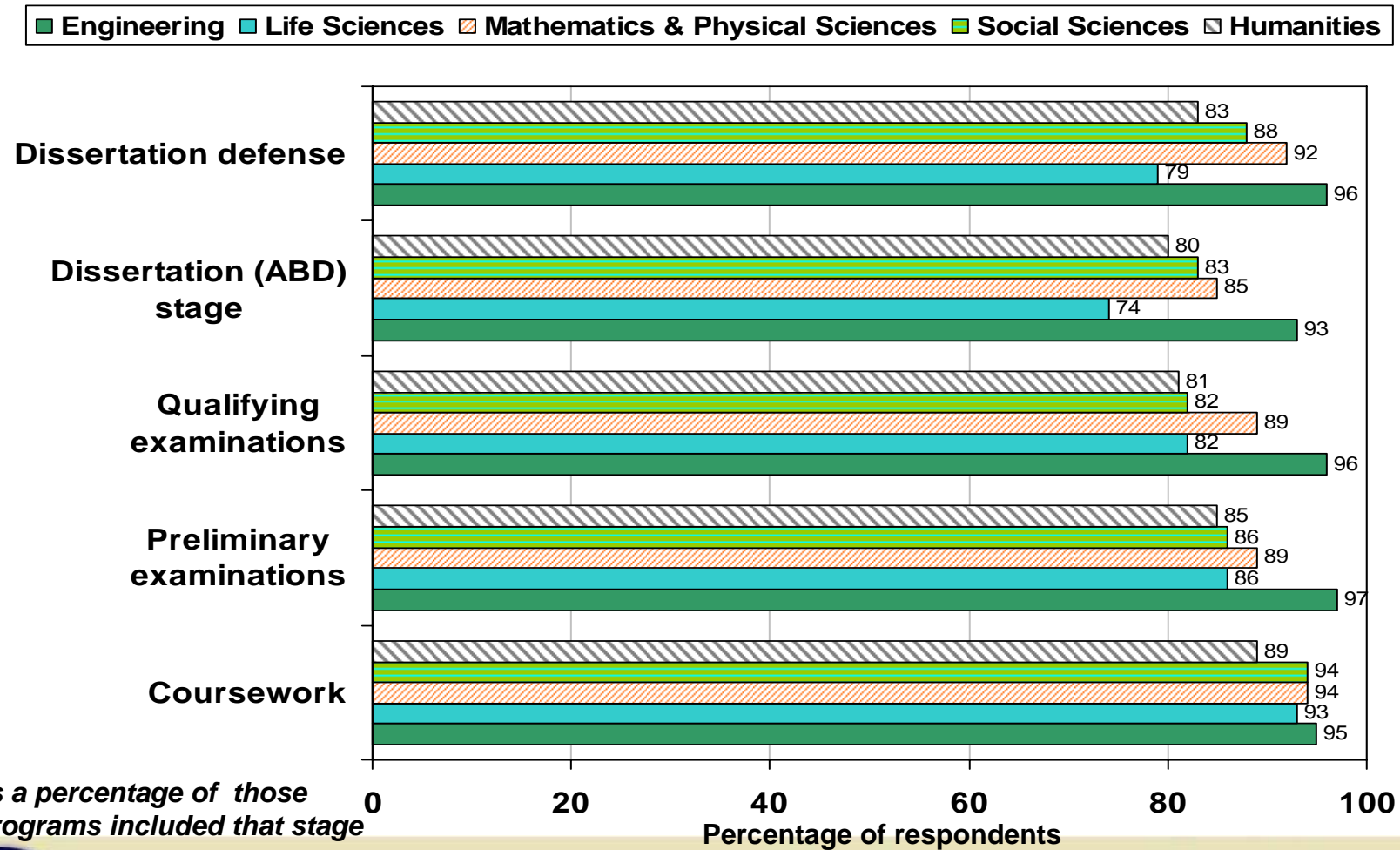
Percentage of Respondents Who Took Loans, By Broad Field



Amount of Loan, By Broad Field



Program Expectations Clearly Articulated During Various Stages*, by Broad Field



Research and Publications Opportunities While in Doctoral Program

■ Engineering ■ Life Sciences ■ Mathematics & Physical Sciences ■ Social Sciences ■ Humanities

