Branch Campus Enrollment Trends & Marketing Practices Survey Summary

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SUMMARY

During the spring and summer of 2017, a survey was conducted in order to evaluate the enrollment trends and marketing practices at university branch campuses throughout the United States. This survey was administered through the research committee of the National Association of Branch Campus Administrators (NABCA). A total of 72 responses were received from administrators at four-year public, four-year private, and two-year public institutions.

The purpose of this survey was to learn more about the current state of enrollment at branch campuses, as well as the forecast for enrollment in 2017. In addition, the survey was designed to ascertain what is and is not working as it relates to marketing at branch campuses from a strategic and tactical standpoint.

Following is a summary of the key findings from the survey. This information should be very helpful to branch campus leaders who are evaluating their enrollment and marketing activities and advocating for change in these areas.

What has been the overall enrollment trend at your campus for the Fall of 2016 compared to the Fall of 2015?
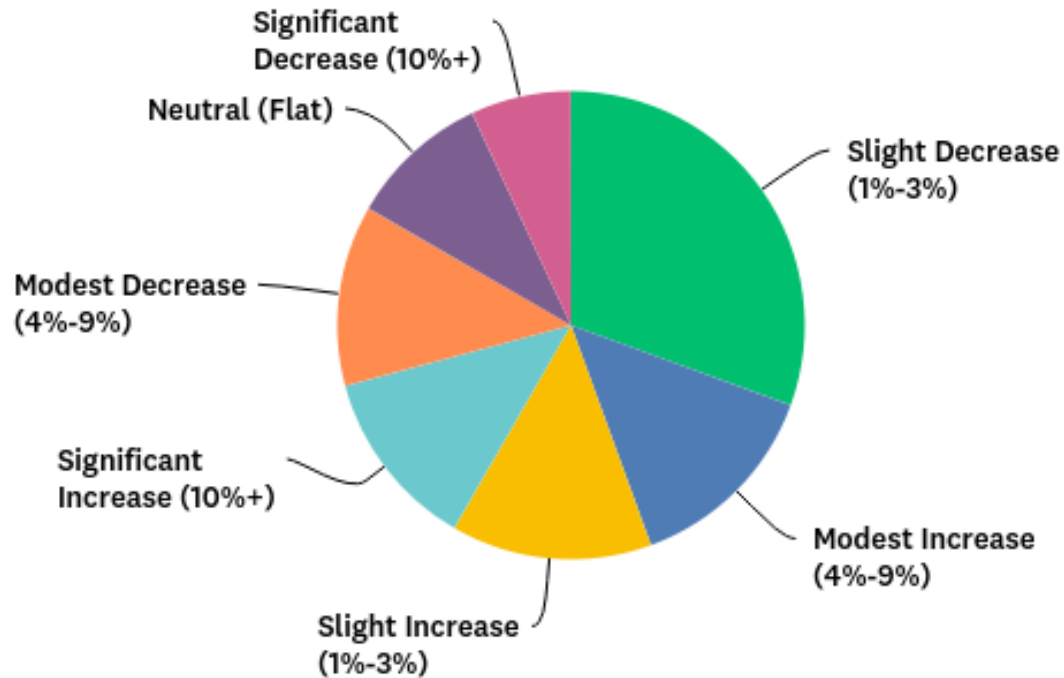
What has been the overall enrollment trend at your campus for the Fall of 2016 compared to the Fall of 2015?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Slight Decrease (1%-3%)	30.56%	22
Modest Increase (4%-9%)	13.89%	10
Slight Increase (1%-3%)	13.89%	10
Significant Increase (10%+)	12.50%	9
Modest Decrease (4%-9%)	12.50%	9
Neutral (Flat)	9.72%	7
Significant Decrease (10%+)	6.94%	5
TOTAL		72

What is your current anticipated enrollment forecast for Fall of 2017?

Signficicant Decrease (10%+)

Modest Decrease (4%-9%)

Slight Decrease (1%-3%)

Slight Increase (1%-3%)

Neutral (Flat)
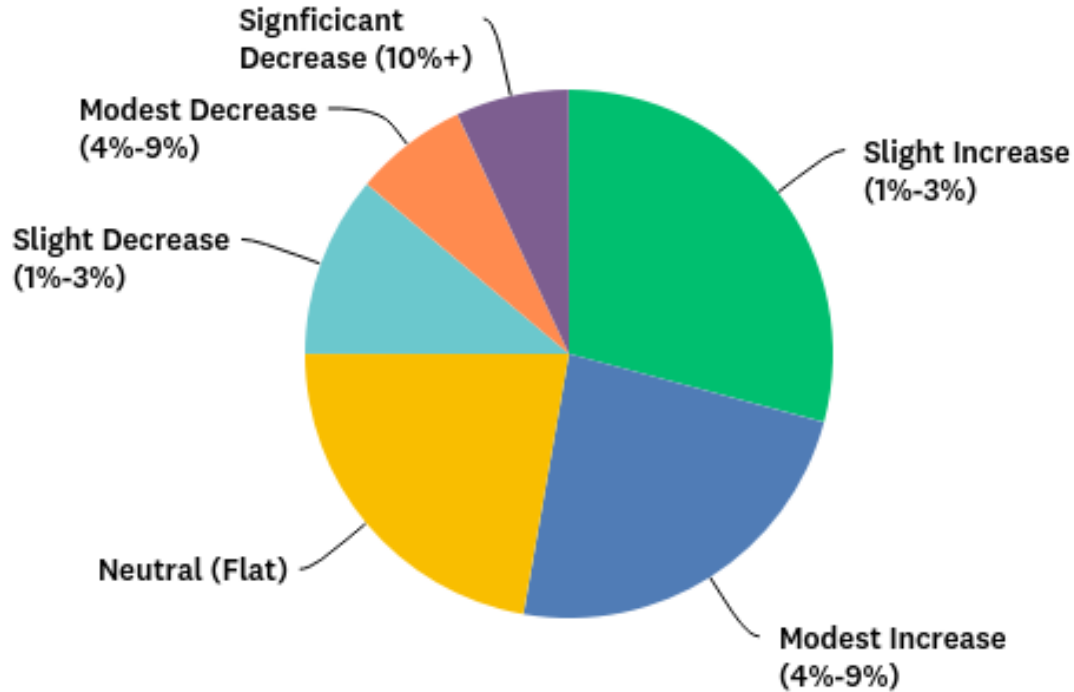
Modest Increase (4%-9%)

What is your current anticipated enrollment forecast for Fall of 2017?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Slight Increase (1%-3%)	29.17%	21
Modest Increase (4%-9%)	23.61%	17
Neutral (Flat)	22.22%	16
Slight Decrease (1%-3%)	11.11%	8
Modest Decrease (4%-9%)	6.94%	5
Signficicant Decrease (10%+)	6.94%	5
TOTAL		72

Who sets the annual enrollment goals for your campus?

Other (please specify)

Main Campus Administrator

Branch Campus Administrator
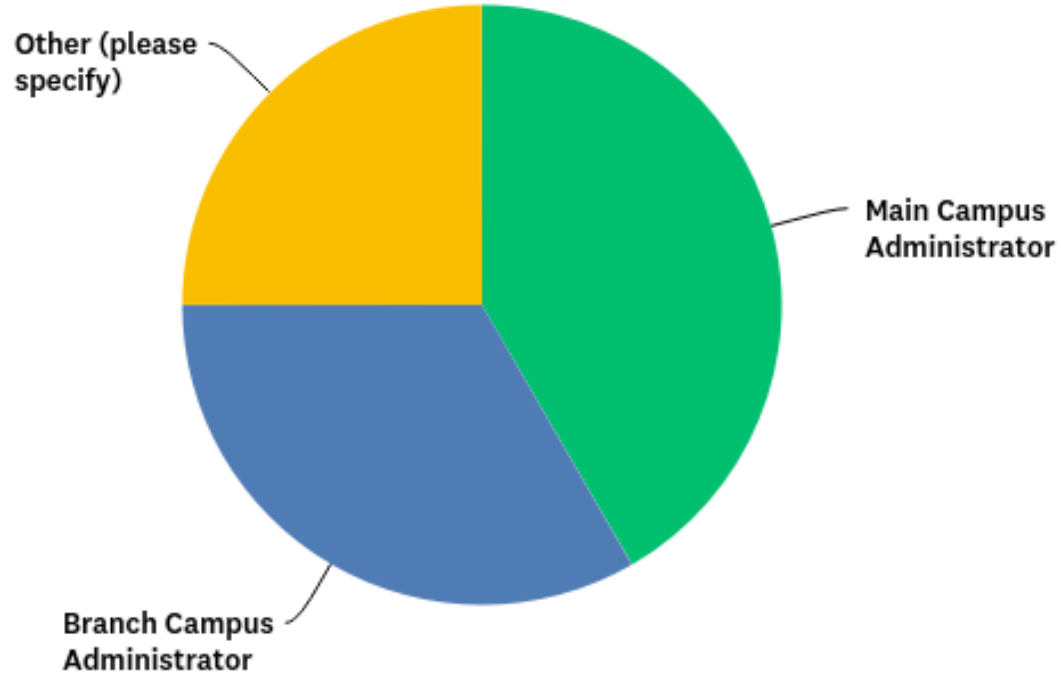
Who sets the annual enrollment goals for your campus?

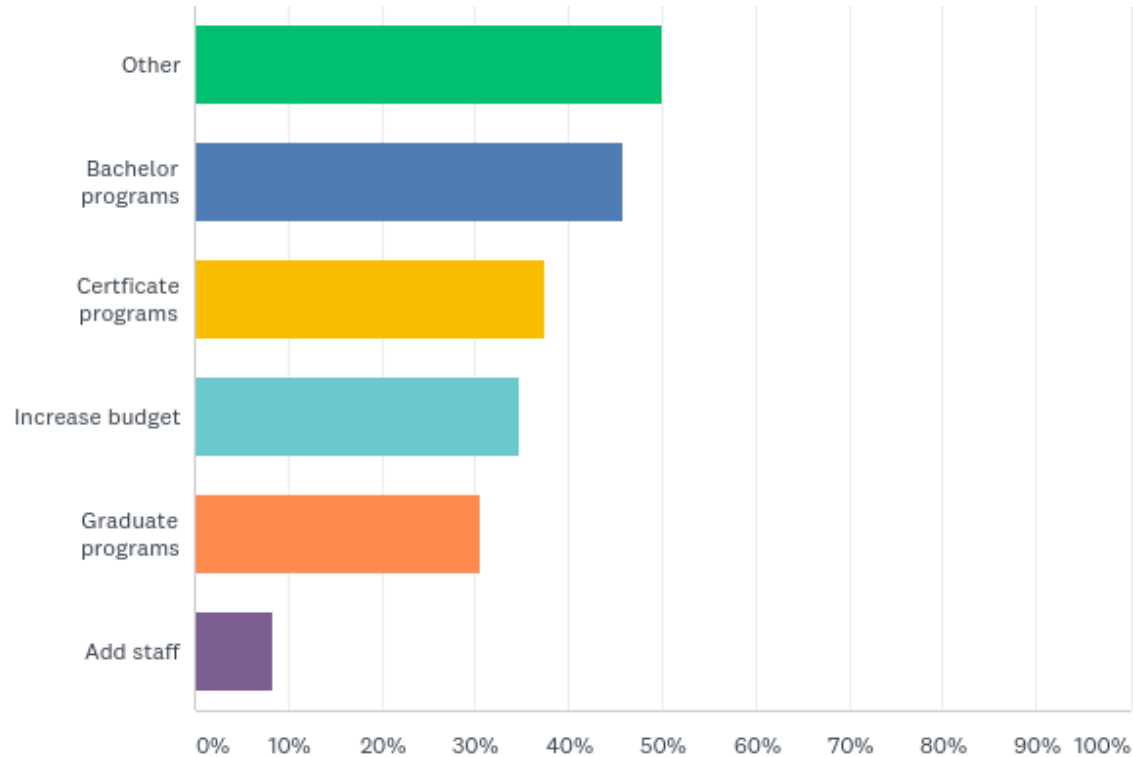| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Main Campus Administrator	41.67%	30
Branch Campus Administrator	33.33%	24
Other (please specify)	25.00%	18
TOTAL		72

What are the top 3 enrollment challenges currently facing your campus? (select only 3)
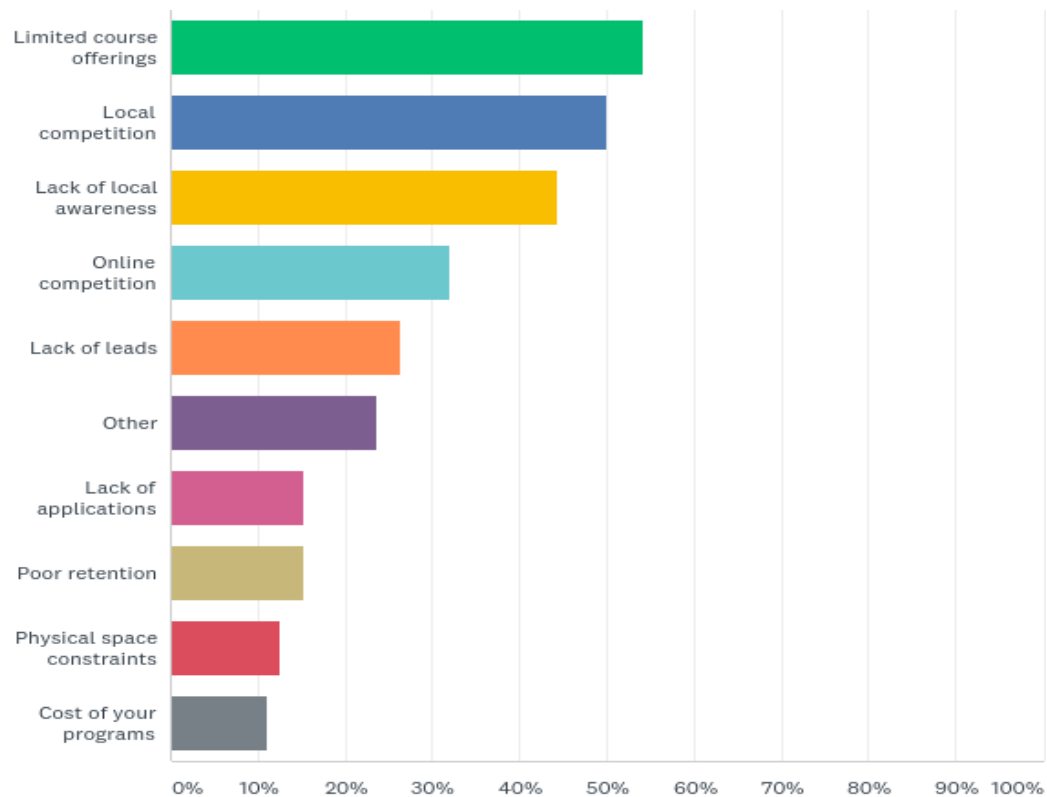
What are the top 3 enrollment challenges currently facing your campus? (select only 3)

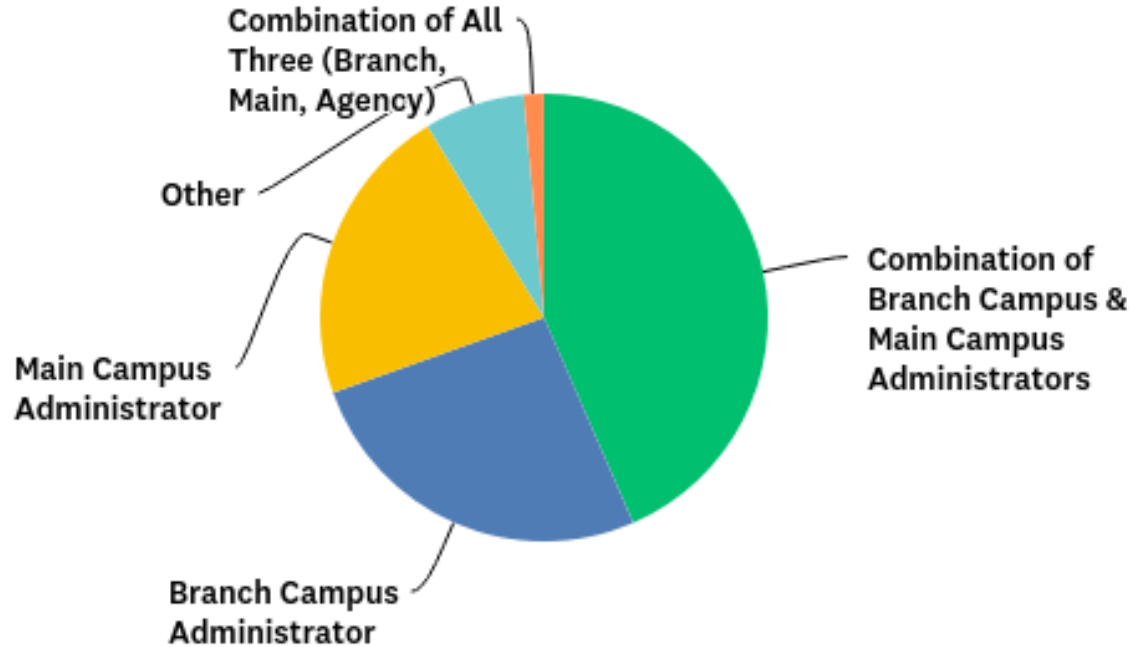| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Limited course offerings	54.17%	39
Local competition	50.00%	36
Lack of local awareness	44.44%	32
Online competition	31.94%	23
Lack of leads	26.39%	19
Other	23.61%	17
Lack of applications	15.28%	11
Poor retention	15.28%	11
Physical space constraints	12.50%	9
Cost of your programs	11.11%	8
Total Respondents: 72		

What are your current plans for growing enrollment at your campus? (select all that apply)

What are your current plans for growing enrollment at your campus? (select all that apply)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Other	50.00%	36
Bachelor programs	45.83%	33
Certficate programs	37.50%	27
Increase budget	34.72%	25
Graduate programs	30.56%	22
Add staff	8.33%	6
Total Respondents: 72		

Who is responsible for managing and directing the marketing activities and advertising budget at your campus?

Combination of All Three (Branch, Main, Agency)

Other

Main Campus Administrator

Branch Campus Administrator

Combination of Branch Campus & Main Campus Administrators

Who is responsible for managing and directing the marketing activities and advertising budget at your campus?

Answered: 69   Skipped: 3

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Combination of Branch Campus & Main Campus Administrators	43.48%	30
Branch Campus Administrator	26.09%	18
Main Campus Administrator	21.74%	15
Other	7.25%	5
Combination of All Three (Branch, Main, Agency)	1.45%	1
TOTAL		69

What is the current annual advertising budget for your campus?

$1,000,000 or more

$500,000 - $999,999

$200,000 - $299,999

$50,000 - $99,999

$49,999 or less
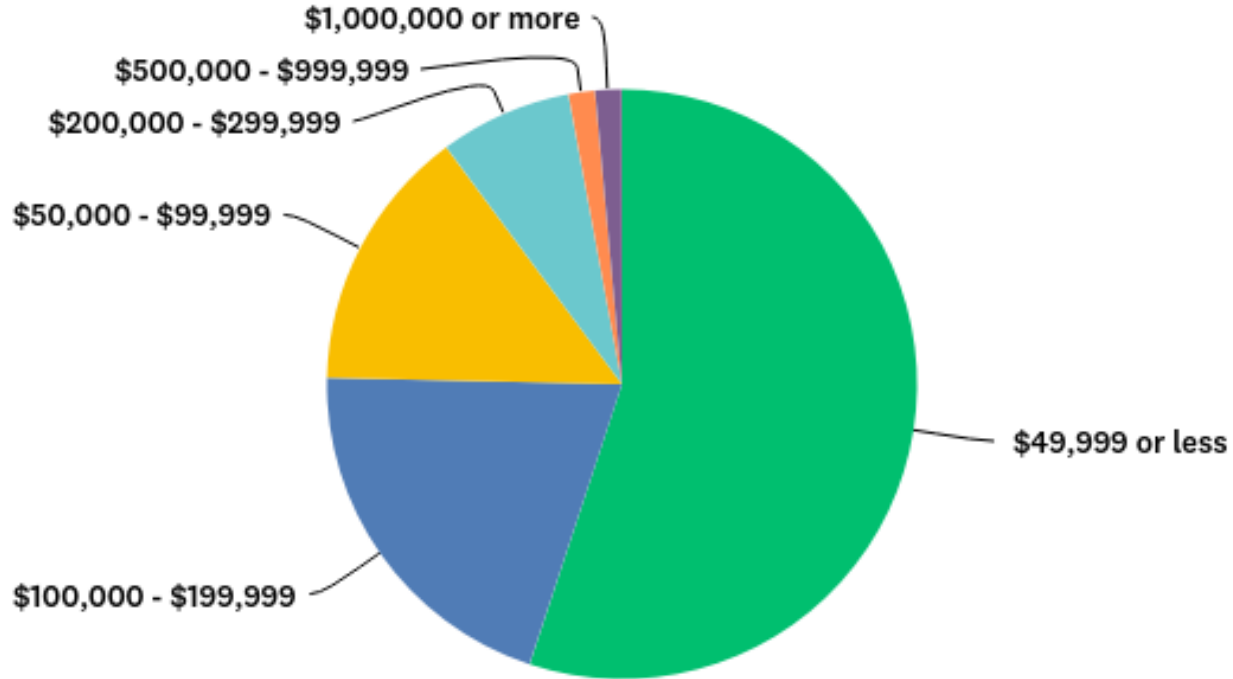
$100,000 - $199,999

What is the current annual advertising budget for your campus?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
$49,999 or less	55.07%	38
$100,000 - $199,999	20.29%	14
$50,000 - $99,999	14.49%	10
$200,000 - $299,999	7.25%	5
$500,000 - $999,999	1.45%	1
$1,000,000 or more	1.45%	1
TOTAL		69

What is the current forecast for your advertising budget for the 2017-18 academic year?

Significant Increase (10%+)

Significant Decrease (10%+)

Modest Decrease (4%-9%)

Modest Increase (4%-9%)

Slight Decrease (1%-3%)

Neutral (Flat)
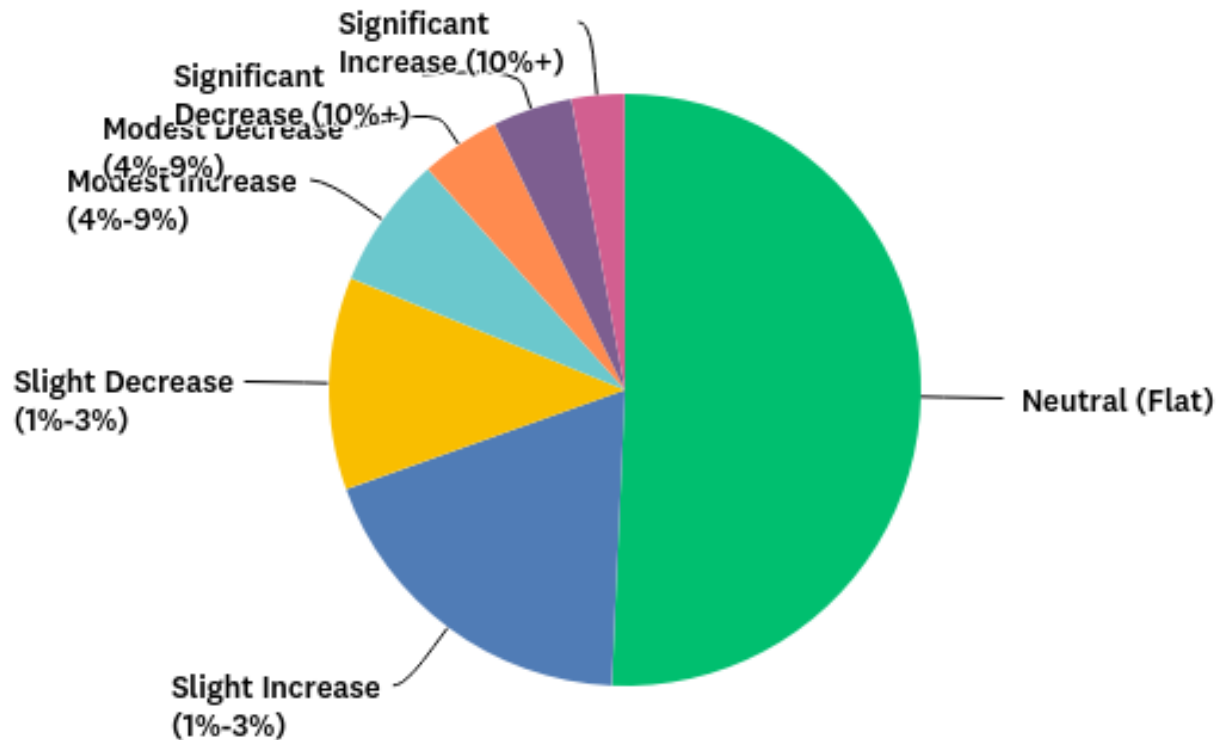
Slight Increase (1%-3%)

What is the current forecast for your advertising budget for the 2017-18 academic year?

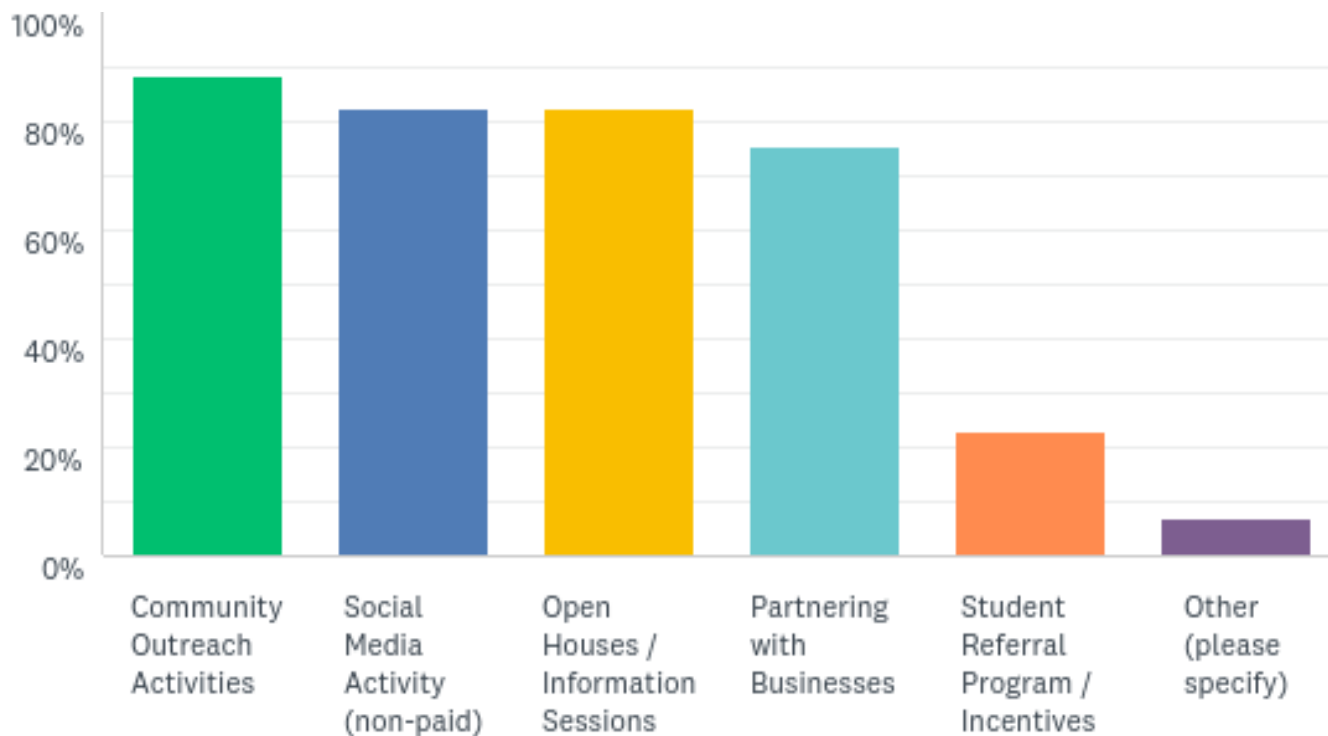| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Neutral (Flat)	50.72%	35
Slight Increase (1%-3%)	18.84%	13
Slight Decrease (1%-3%)	11.59%	8
Modest Increase (4%-9%)	7.25%	5
Modest Decrease (4%-9%)	4.35%	3
Significant Decrease (10%+)	4.35%	3
Significant Increase (10%+)	2.90%	2
TOTAL		69

Please identify your top 3 most effective paid advertising methods for generating qualified inquiries/leads: (select only 3)
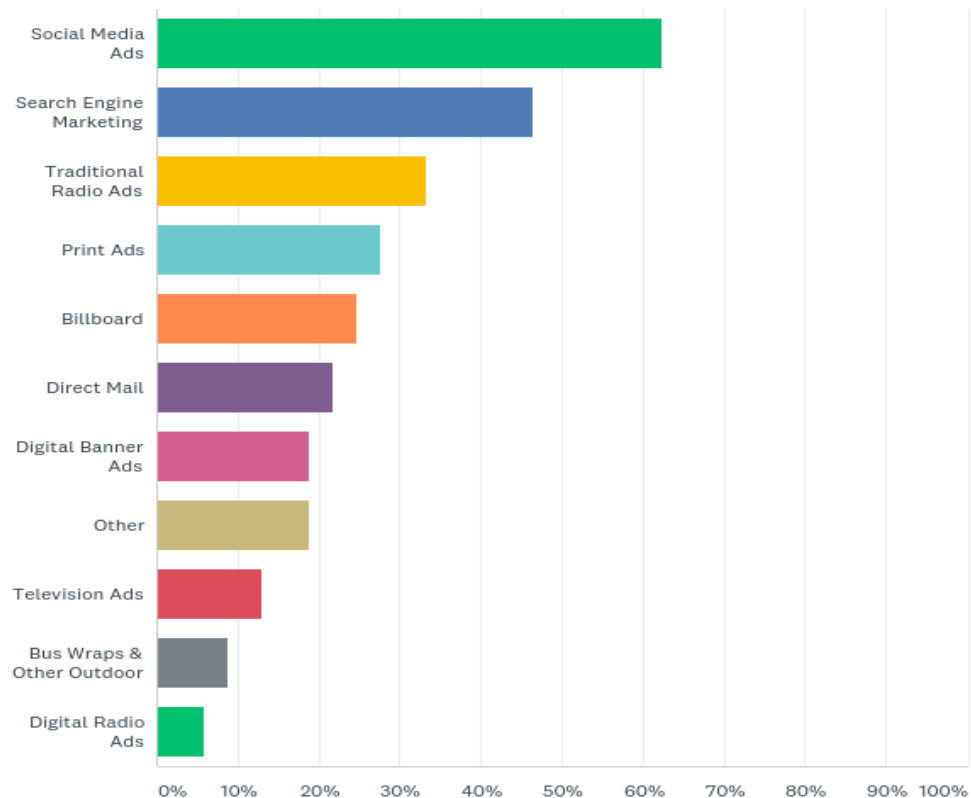
Please identify your top 3 most effective paid advertising methods for generating qualified inquiries/leads: (select only 3)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Social Media Ads	62.32%	43
Search Engine Marketing	46.38%	32
Traditional Radio Ads	33.33%	23
Print Ads	27.54%	19
Billboard	24.64%	17
Direct Mail	21.74%	15
Digital Banner Ads	18.84%	13
Other	18.84%	13
Television Ads	13.04%	9
Bus Wraps & Other Outdoor	8.70%	6
Digital Radio Ads	5.80%	4
Total Respondents: 69		

What other marketing tactics do you utilize in addition to paid advertising? (select all that apply)

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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Community Outreach Activities	88.41%	61
Social Media Activity (non-paid)	82.61%	57
Open Houses / Information Sessions	82.61%	57
Partnering with Businesses	75.36%	52
Student Referral Program / Incentives	23.19%	16
Other (please specify)	7.25%	5
Total Respondents: 69		

What are the greatest strengths of the current marketing strategy for the programs at your campus? (open-ended)

TOP THEMES

1) Community involvement

2) Brand name recognition of the institution

3) Social media

What are the most significant challenges or frustrations you have regarding the way your programs are currently being marketed? (open-ended)

TOP THEMES

1) Inadequate funding for branch campus marketing

2) Institutional marketing that is focused solely on the main campus

3) Limited input on the marketing being conducted at the branch campus

4) Insufficient staff dedicated to marketing the branch campus

What is currently the biggest obstacle to enrollment growth at your campus? (open-ended)

TOP THEMES

1) Lack of new degree programs

2) Increased local and online competition

3) Lack of local awareness for the branch campus

If left completely up to you, what specific actions would you take in order to increase enrollment over the next year? (open-ended)

TOP THEMES

1) Add more degree programs

2) Increase the marketing budget and marketing activities

3) Hire more personnel to expand capacity, both in marketing and community outreach

Typically, accrediting bodies use the term "branch campus" to refer to a site which offers complete programs, has its own faculty, and has its own administrative and budgetary structure. Terms such as "additional location" are used for locations offering at least 50% of the courses in a program. Locations offering less than 50% of a program may be referred to as "other instructional sites." In that light, which of the following terms bests describes your location?

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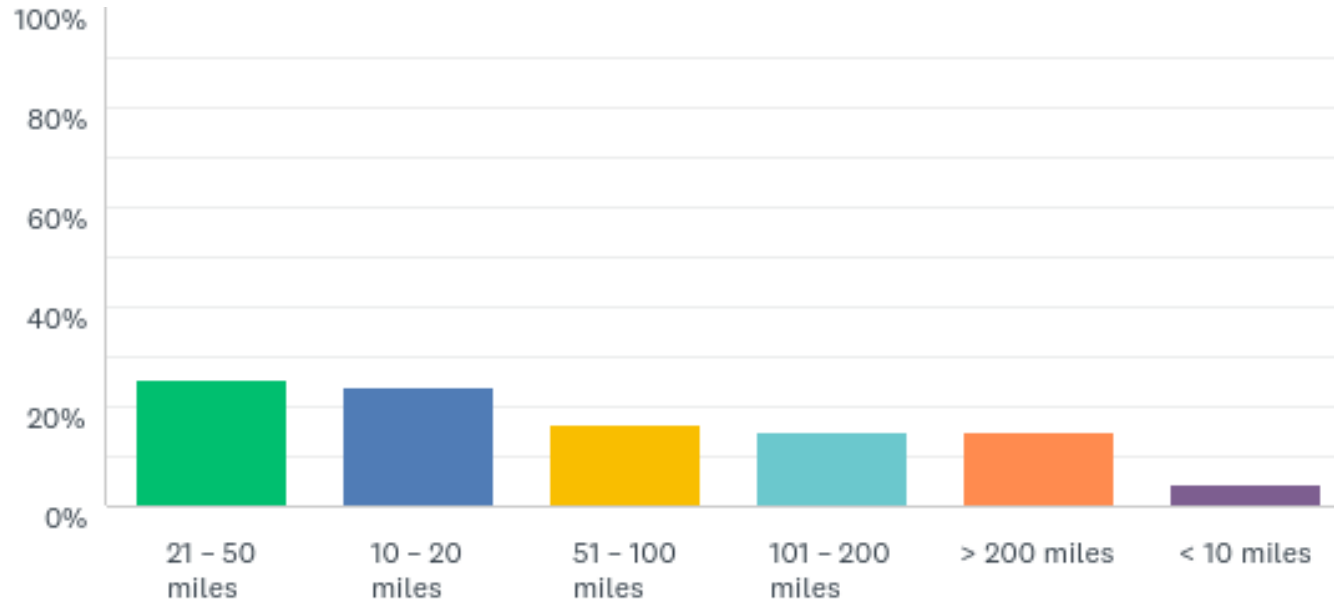| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Branch Campus	61.19%	41
Additional Location	26.87%	18
Other Instructional Site	11.94%	8
TOTAL		67

The parent institution of my site is best described as:
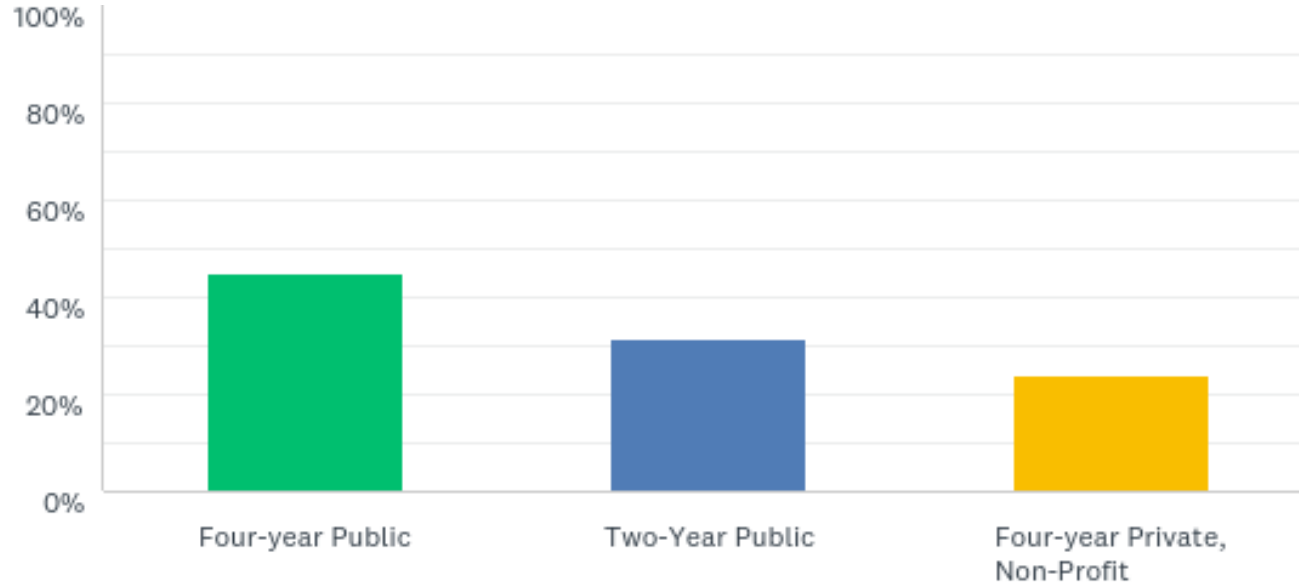
The parent institution of my site is best described as:

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Four-year Public	44.78%	30
Two-Year Public	31.34%	21
Four-year Private, Non-Profit	23.88%	16
TOTAL		67

How far is the site from the main campus?

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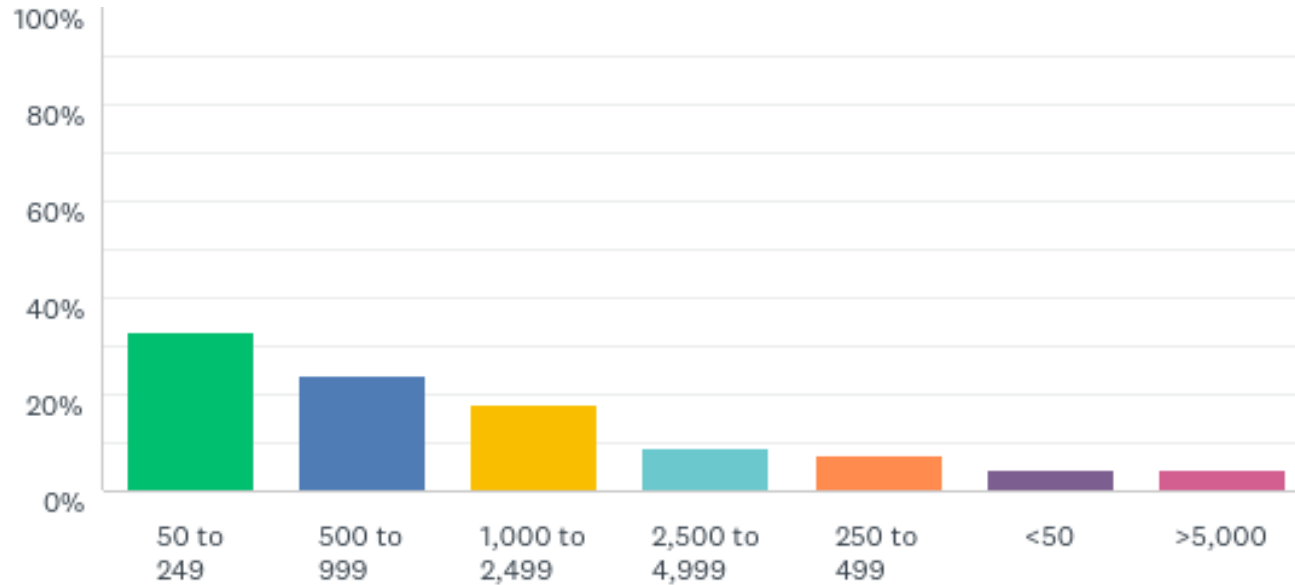| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
21 – 50 miles	25.37%	17
10 – 20 miles	23.88%	16
51 – 100 miles	16.42%	11
101 – 200 miles	14.93%	10
> 200 miles	14.93%	10
< 10 miles	4.48%	3
TOTAL		67

In the most recent fall semester, the FTE (full-time equivalent) at this site was:
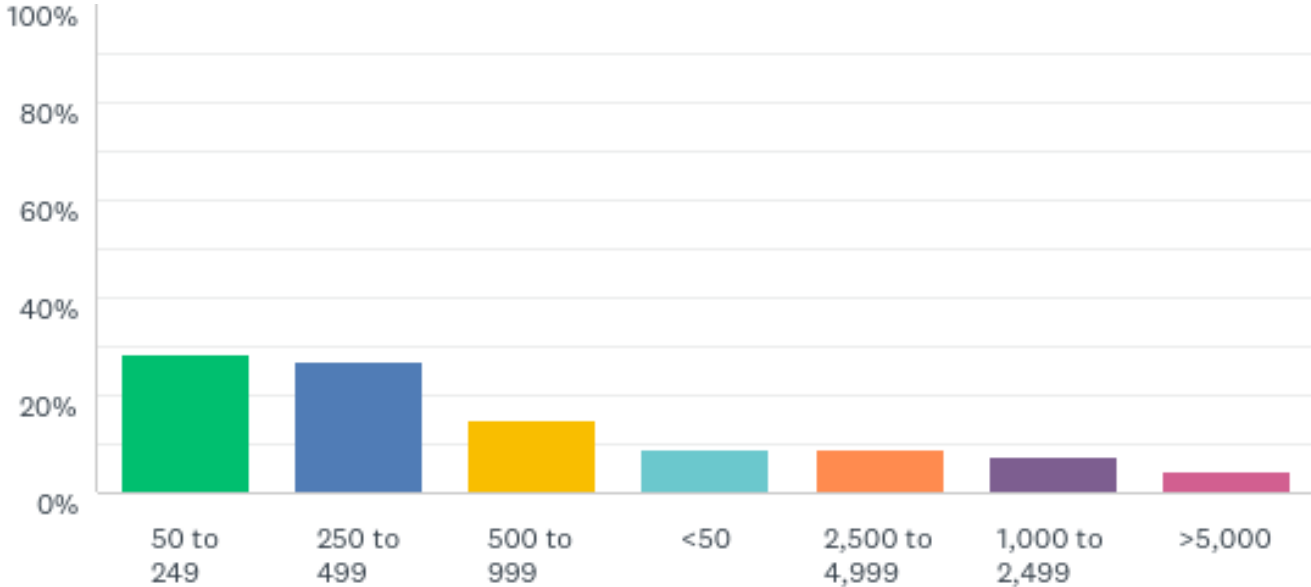
In the most recent fall semester, the FTE (full-time equivalent) at this site was:

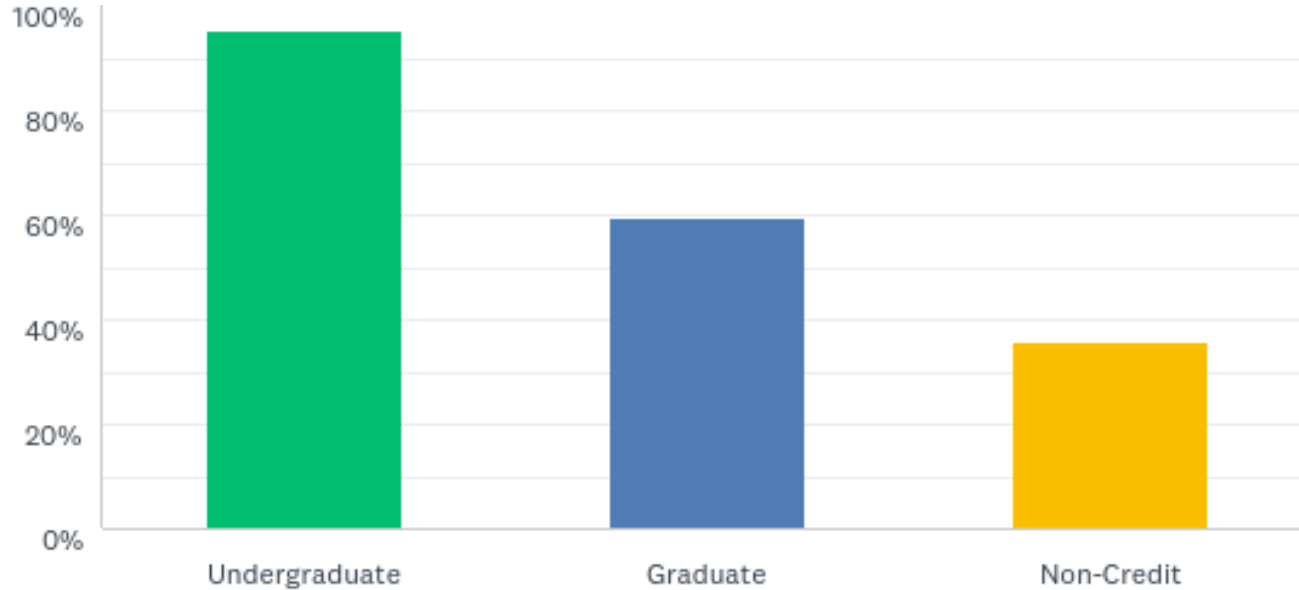| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
50 to 249	28.36%	19
250 to 499	26.87%	18
500 to 999	14.93%	10
<50	8.96%	6
2,500 to 4,999	8.96%	6
1,000 to 2,499	7.46%	5
>5,000	4.48%	3
TOTAL		67

In the most recent fall semester, the unduplicated headcount (enrollment) at this site was:

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ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
50 to 249	32.84%	22
500 to 999	23.88%	16
1,000 to 2,499	17.91%	12
2,500 to 4,999	8.96%	6
250 to 499	7.46%	5
<50	4.48%	3
>5,000	4.48%	3
TOTAL		67

What types of programming are offered at this site: (select all that apply)

What types of programming are offered at this site: (select all that apply)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Undergraduate	95.52%	64
Graduate	59.70%	40
Non-Credit	35.82%	24
Total Respondents: 67		