



SUMMER COURSES AND STUDENT SUCCESS

UNC Board of Governors
Committee on Strategic Initiatives
January 25, 2018

Why Do Some Students Take Longer Than Four Years to Graduate?

FEDERAL & STATE POLICIES

- Financial aid definition of “full time” = 12 hours
- Lack of access to summer courses

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

- Taking fewer than 30 credits per year
- Taking courses outside of degree program
- Changing majors
- Additional minors/majors



INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES

- Transfer policies
- Acceptance policies for AP exams
- Course offerings (how often and at what times)
- Degree program credit requirements

OTHER CAUSES

- Work demands
- Family commitments
- Financial issues
- Illness

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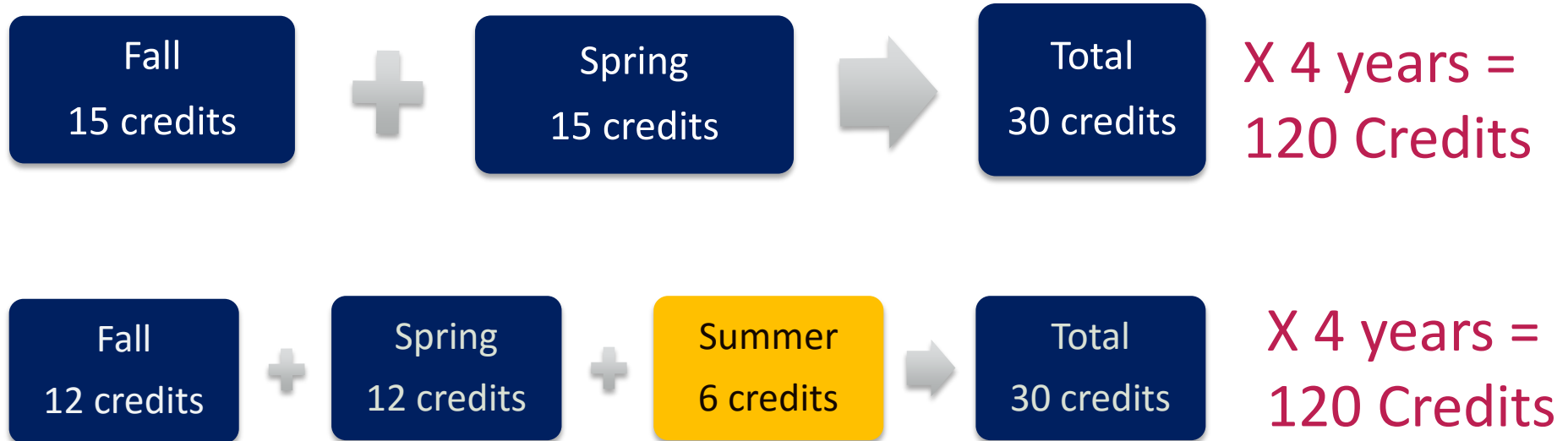
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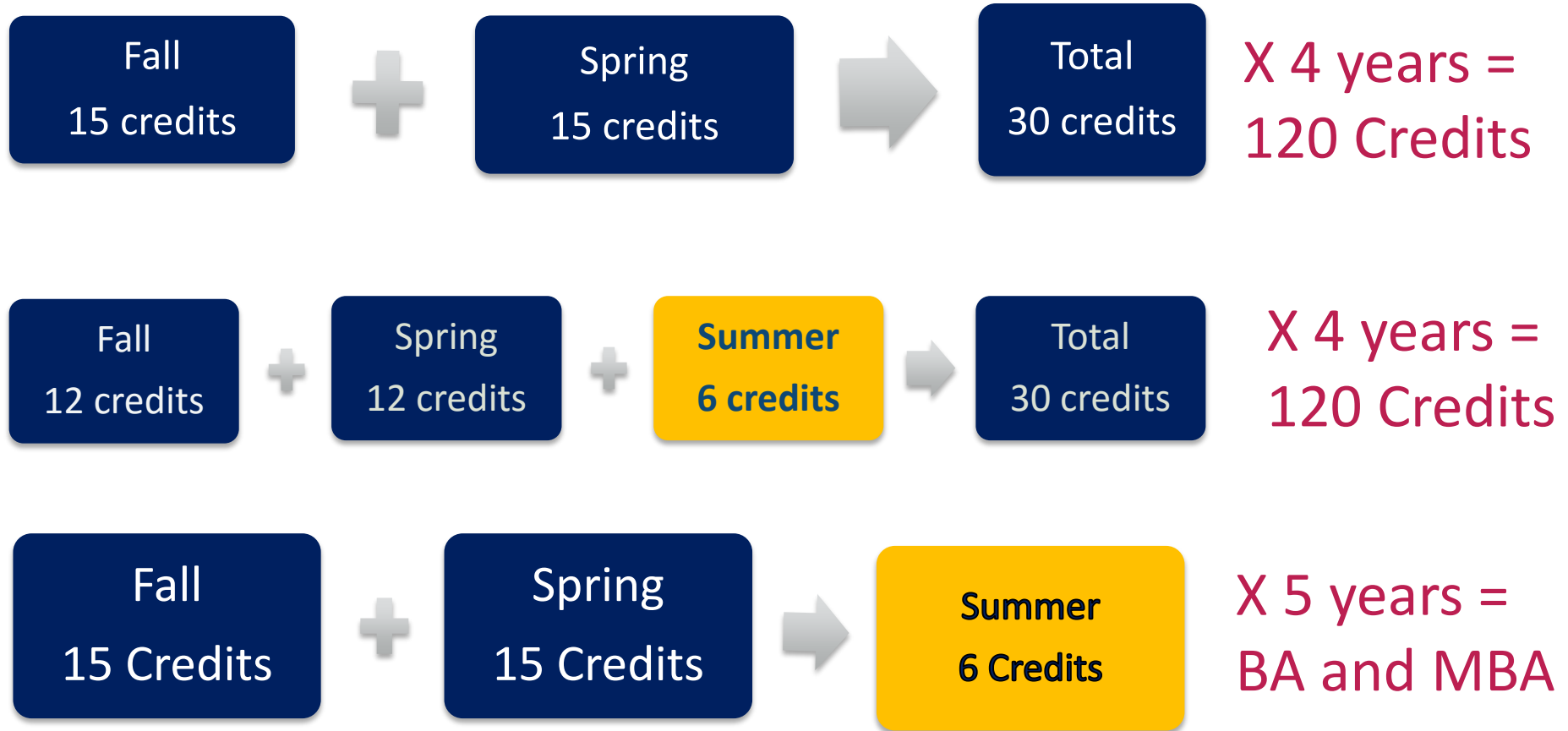
Traditional Expectation to “Finish in Four”



There is More Than One Way to Earn 30 Credits Per Year



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Why Do Some “Full-Time” Students Earn Fewer Than 30 Credits Per Academic Year?

- They don’t attempt 30 credits.
- Financial aid rules.
- Academic difficulties.
- Work hours.
- Lack of access to courses year-round (i.e., summer session).

Federal and State Financial Aid Rules

- The amount of federal aid students receive is tied to “enrollment intensity.”
- Definition of “full-time” undergraduate: “For a program that measures progress in credit hours and uses standard terms..., **12 semester hours or 12 quarter hours per academic term.**”
- Like most states, North Carolina has adopted the federal definition for its state-based aid programs (UNC Need-based Grant; Lottery Scholarship).

Access to Summer Courses

- In NC, summer credit hours delivered in-person are not funded through state appropriations.
- Institutions have flexibility to set summer tuition prices.
- Financial aid has not always been available to cover costs of summer courses (summer Pell Grants are back; state aid is first-come, first-served).
- Faculty are compensated for teaching in the summer, but summer teaching typically does not count toward a faculty member's teaching load.
- In 2016-17, 7.6% of all undergraduate credit hours were delivered in the summer.

Key Questions

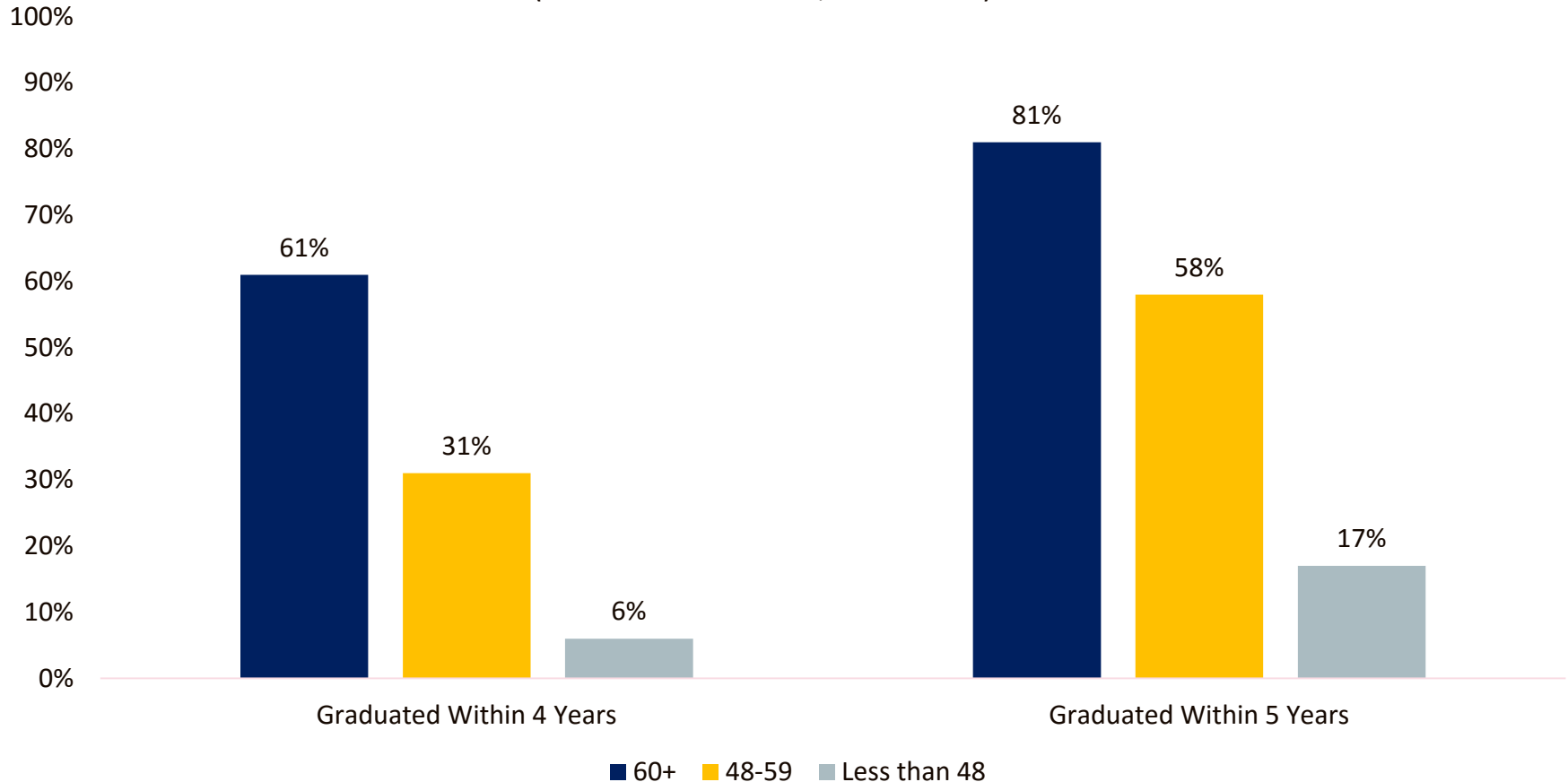
- How does credit accumulation early in college shape student success?
- How many UNC students attempt and earn 30 credits per year to stay on track to graduate on-time?
- How many students use summer to earn credits and stay on track to a degree?
- How does taking summer courses relate to student success?
- How does use of summer vary across institutions?
- What are the implications for policy?

Data

- Dataset tracks incoming first-time, full-time students (“freshmen”) who started in 2011 through spring of 2017.
- The analysis describes enrollment and credit accumulation among 31,146 students.
- **Limitation:** does not include transfer students, but that analysis is underway and will inform our next meeting.

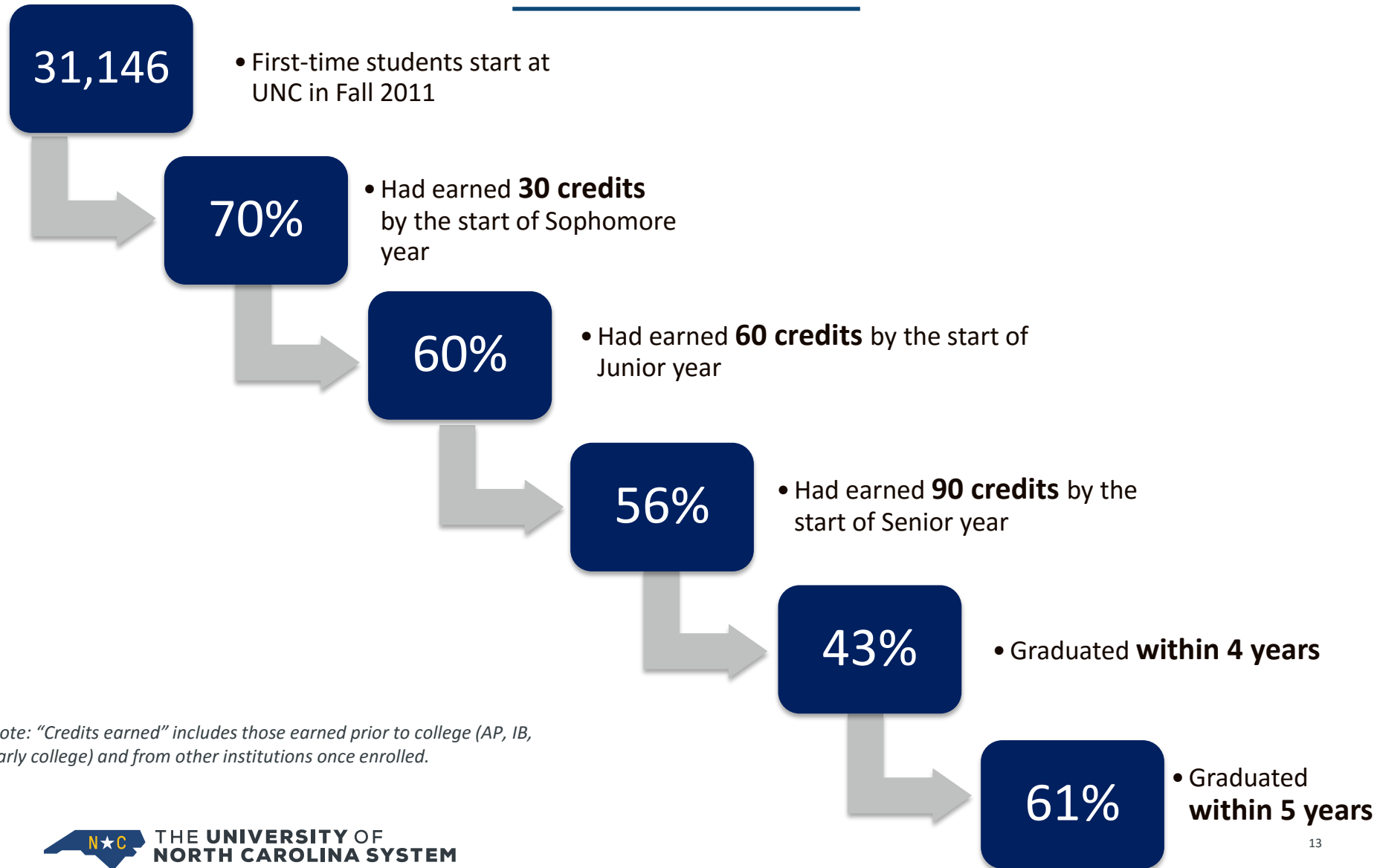
Momentum Matters: Earning 60 Credits By Start of Junior Year Is Closely Tied to Student Success

Graduation Rates by the Number of Credits
Earned In First Two Years
(Full-Time Freshmen, 2011 Class)



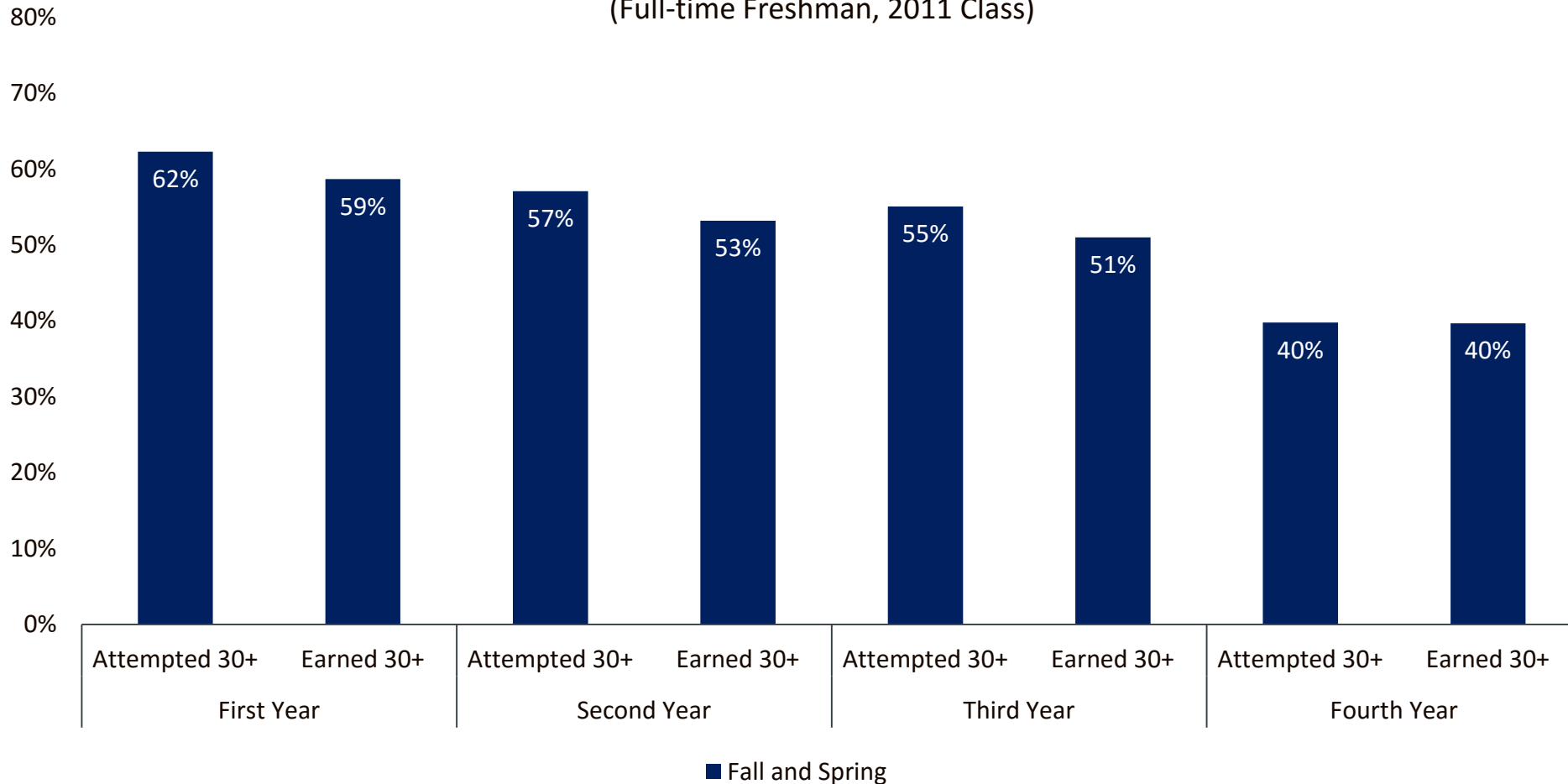
Number of credits earned in first two years

How Many Students Start and Stay On-Track to Earn a Degree in Four Years?



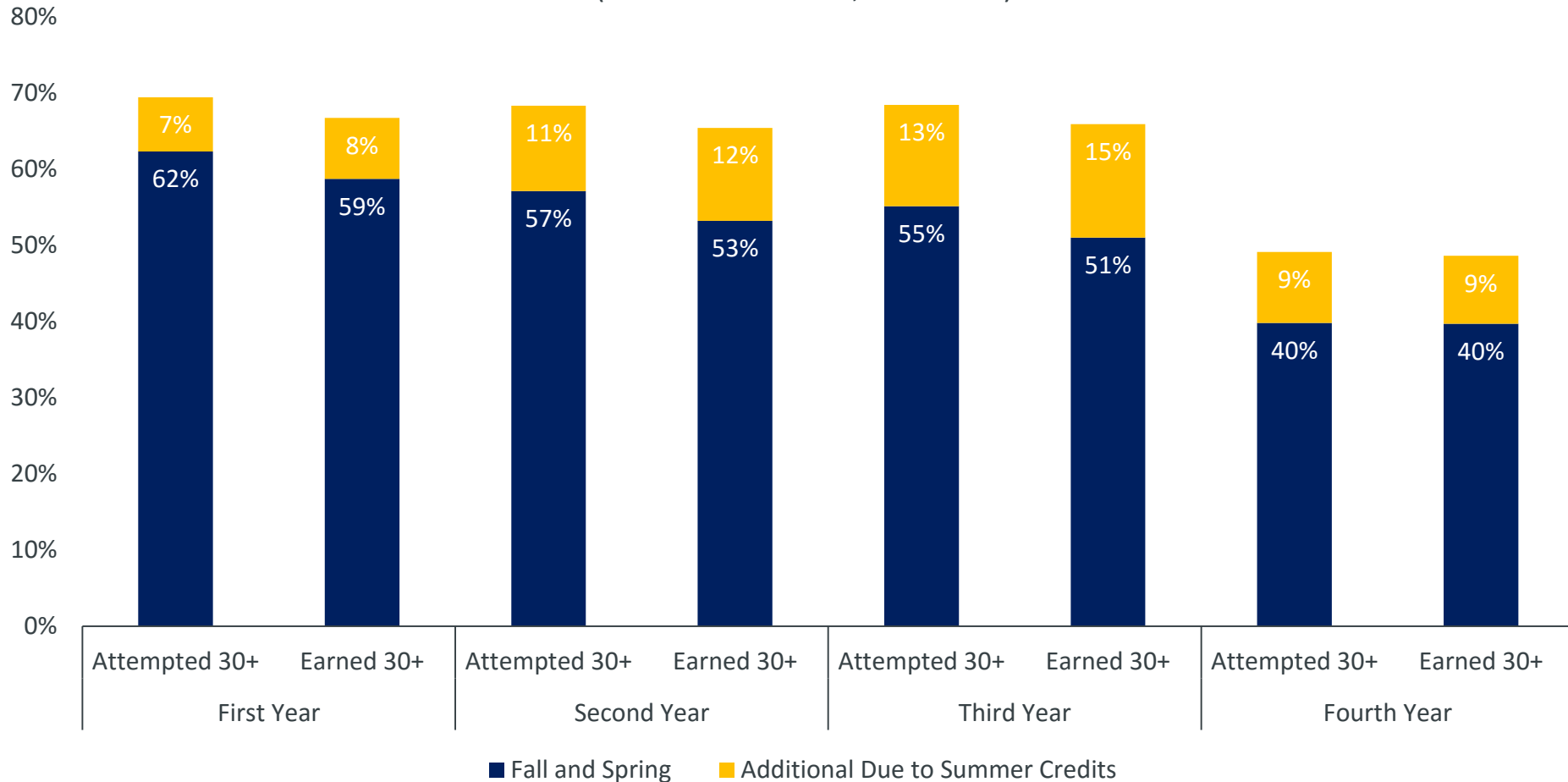
How Many Students Attempt and Earn 30 Credits Over Fall and Spring?

Percentage of Enrolled Students That Attempted and Earned
30 Credits in Fall and Spring
(Full-time Freshman, 2011 Class)



How Many Students Attempt and Earn 30 Credits Over Fall, Spring, and Summer?

Percentage of Enrolled Students That Attempted and Earned 30 Credits Fall and Spring vs. Fall, Spring, and Summer (Full-time Freshman, 2011 Class)



How Many Students Rely on Summer Session to Stay on Track?

- Among 2011 freshmen who had earned 60 credits by the start of their junior year:

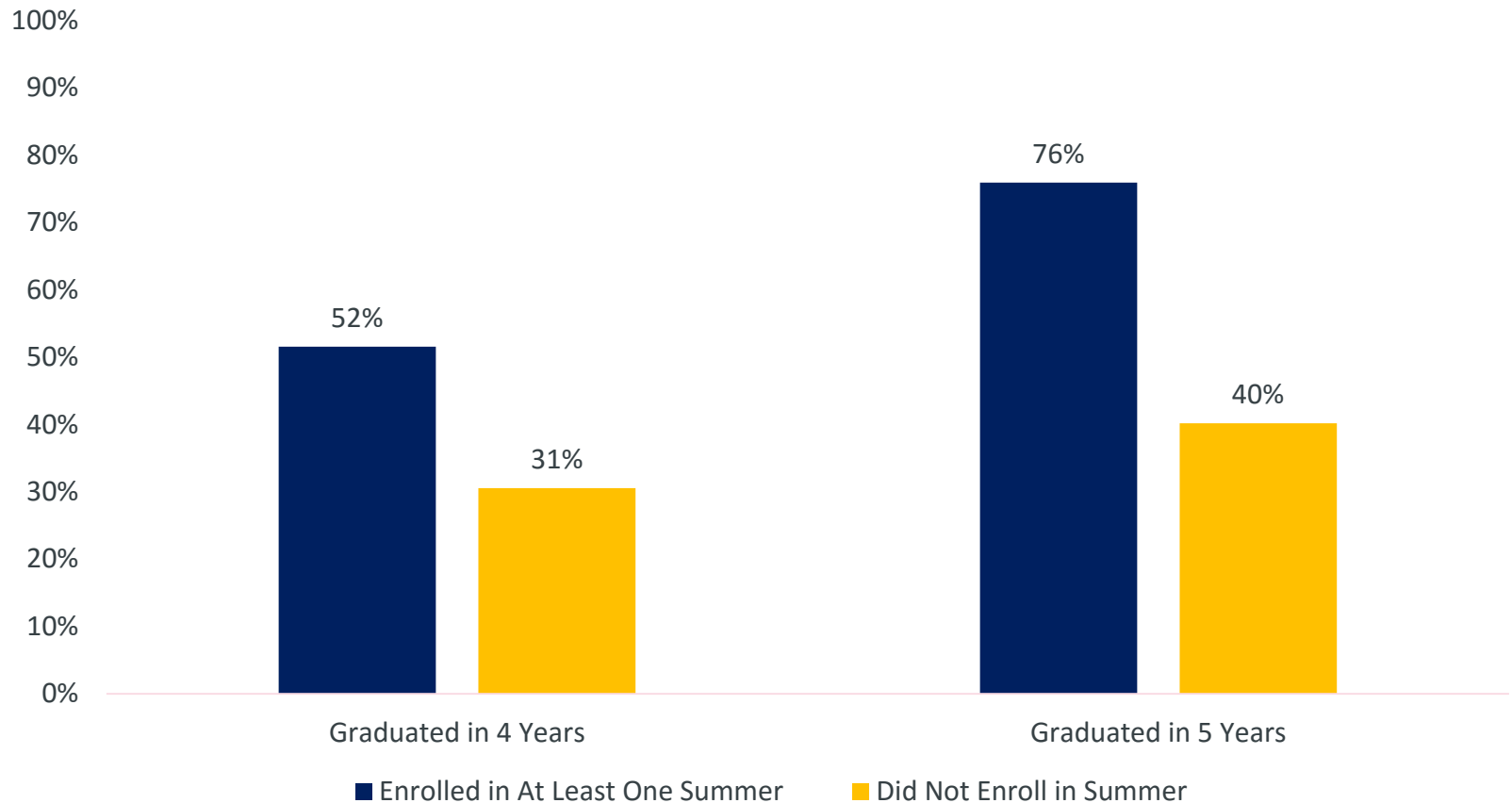
52% had earned 3 or more credits in summer sessions *before their junior year.*

- Among freshmen who graduated in four years:

68.5% earned 3 or more credits in summer sessions.

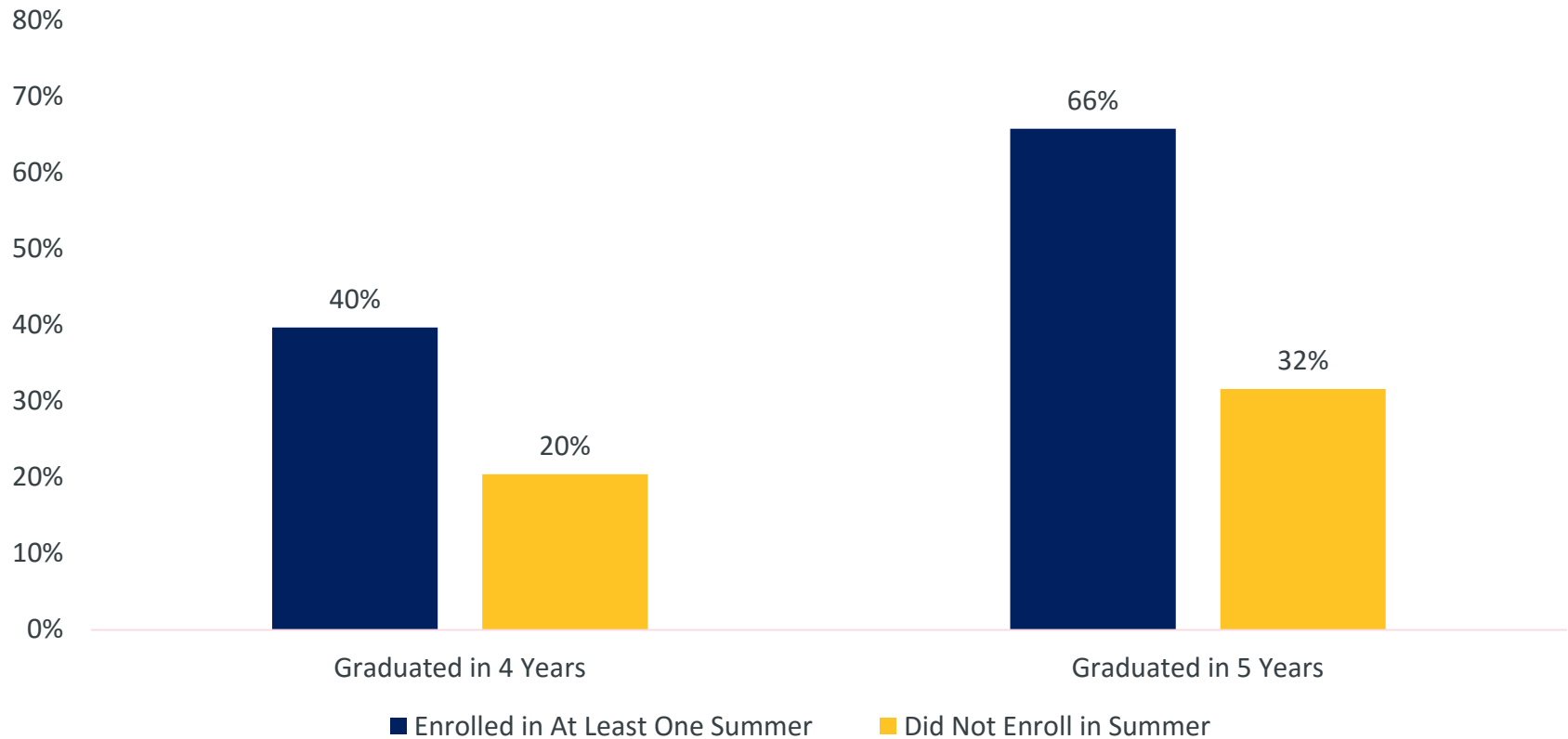
Students Who Enroll in Summer Courses Are More Likely to Complete and Do So More Quickly

Graduation Rates By Summer Enrollment
(Full-Time Freshmen, 2011 Class)



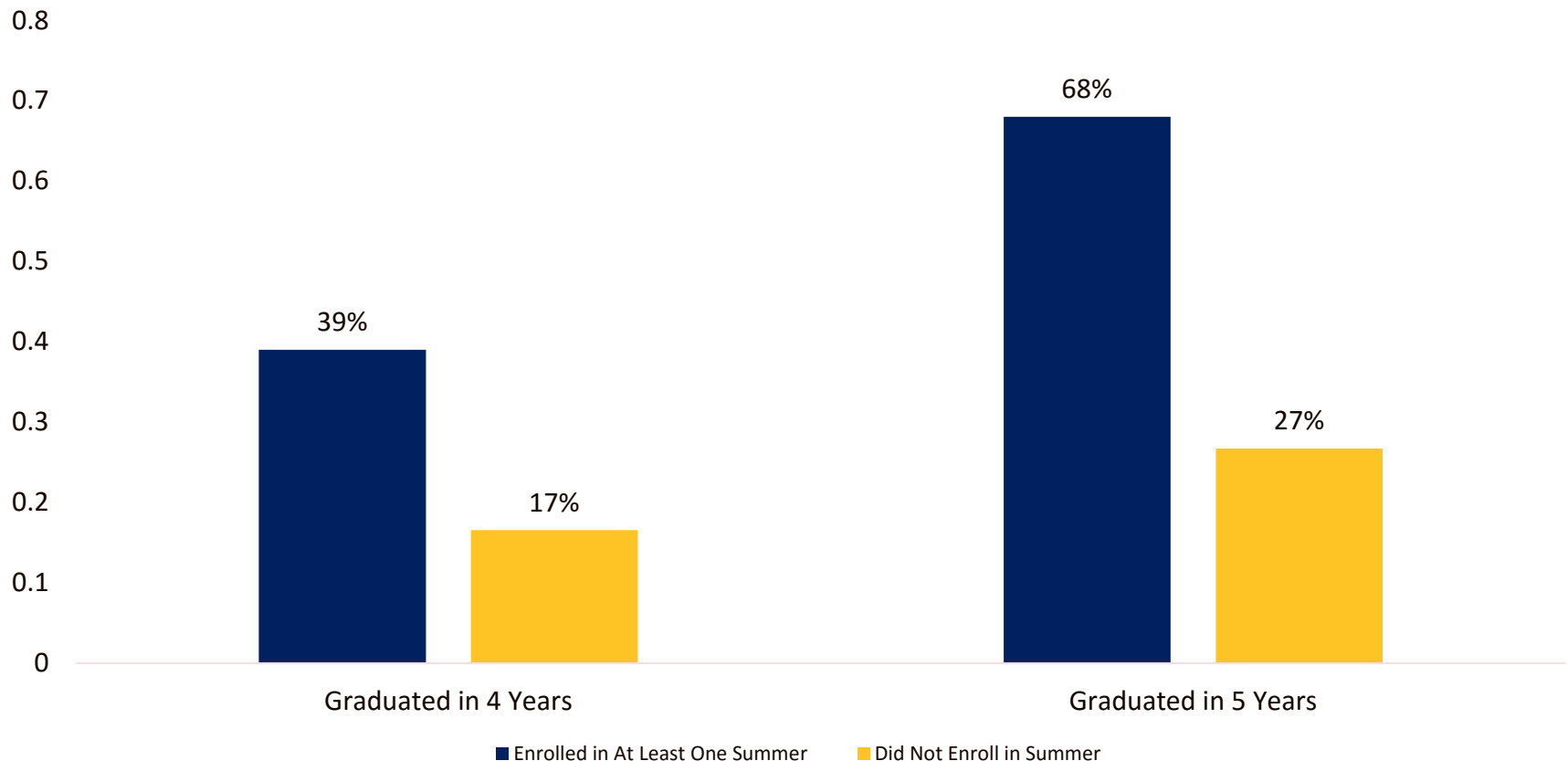
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Graduation Rates Among **Pell Recipients**,
By Summer Enrollment
(Full-time Freshman, 2011 Class)



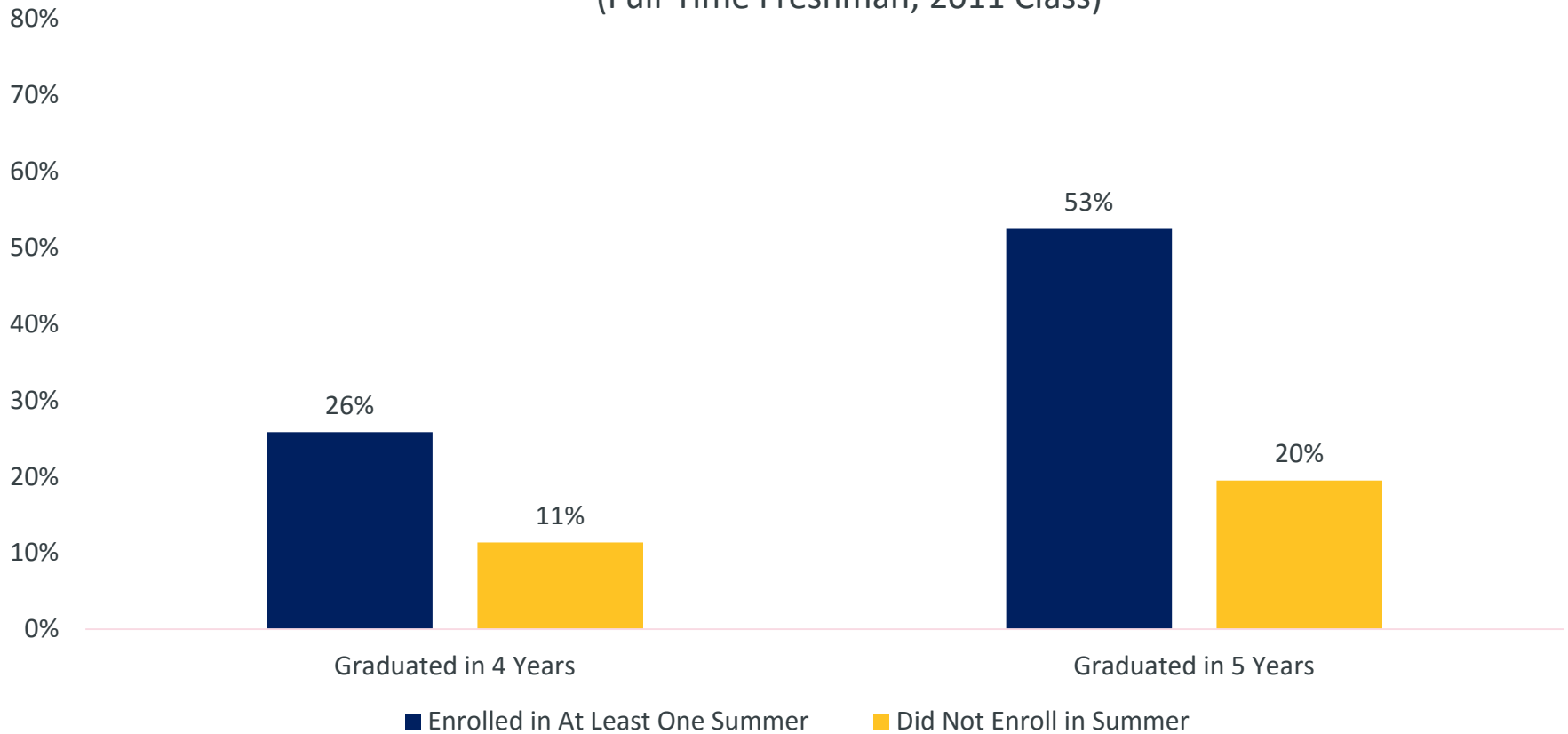
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Graduation Rates Among **Students with SAT Scores Below the Median,**
By Summer Enrollment
(Full-Time Freshman, 2011 Class)



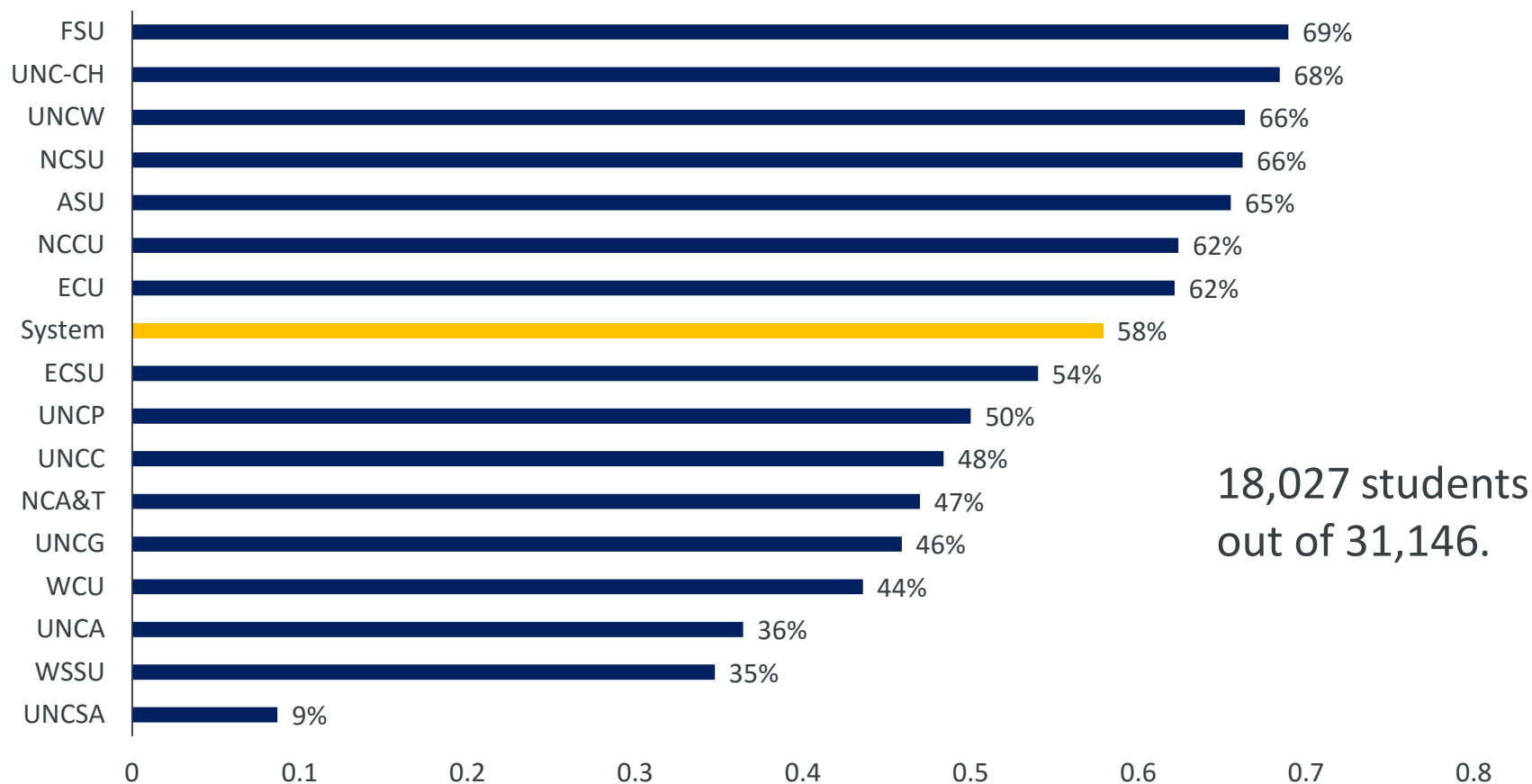
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Graduation Rates Among **Students at
Minority-Serving Institutions**, By Summer Enrollment
(Full-Time Freshman, 2011 Class)



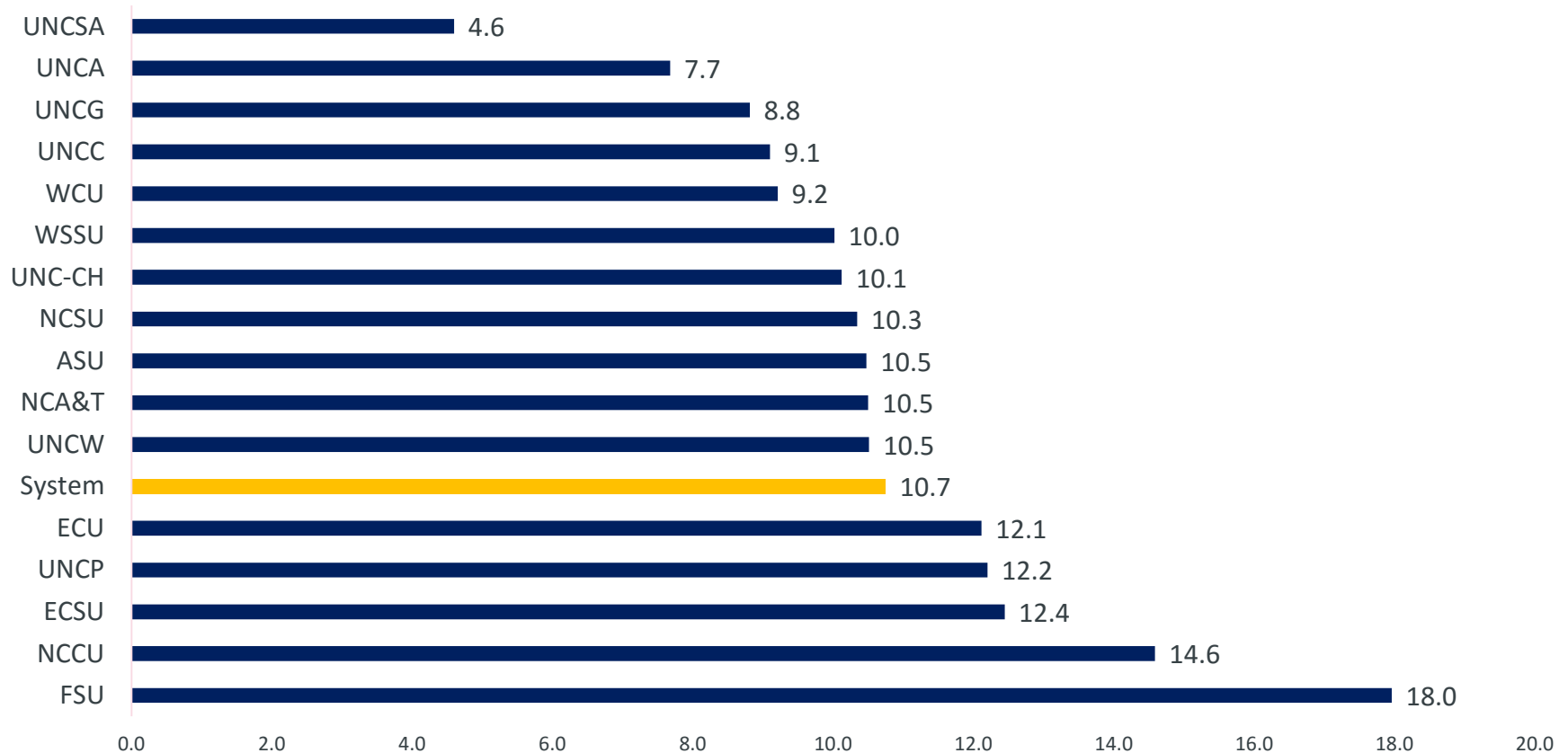
How Many Students Enroll in Summer Courses?

Proportion of Students Enrolling in at Least One Summer Course,
By Institution
(Full-Time Freshmen, 2011 Class)

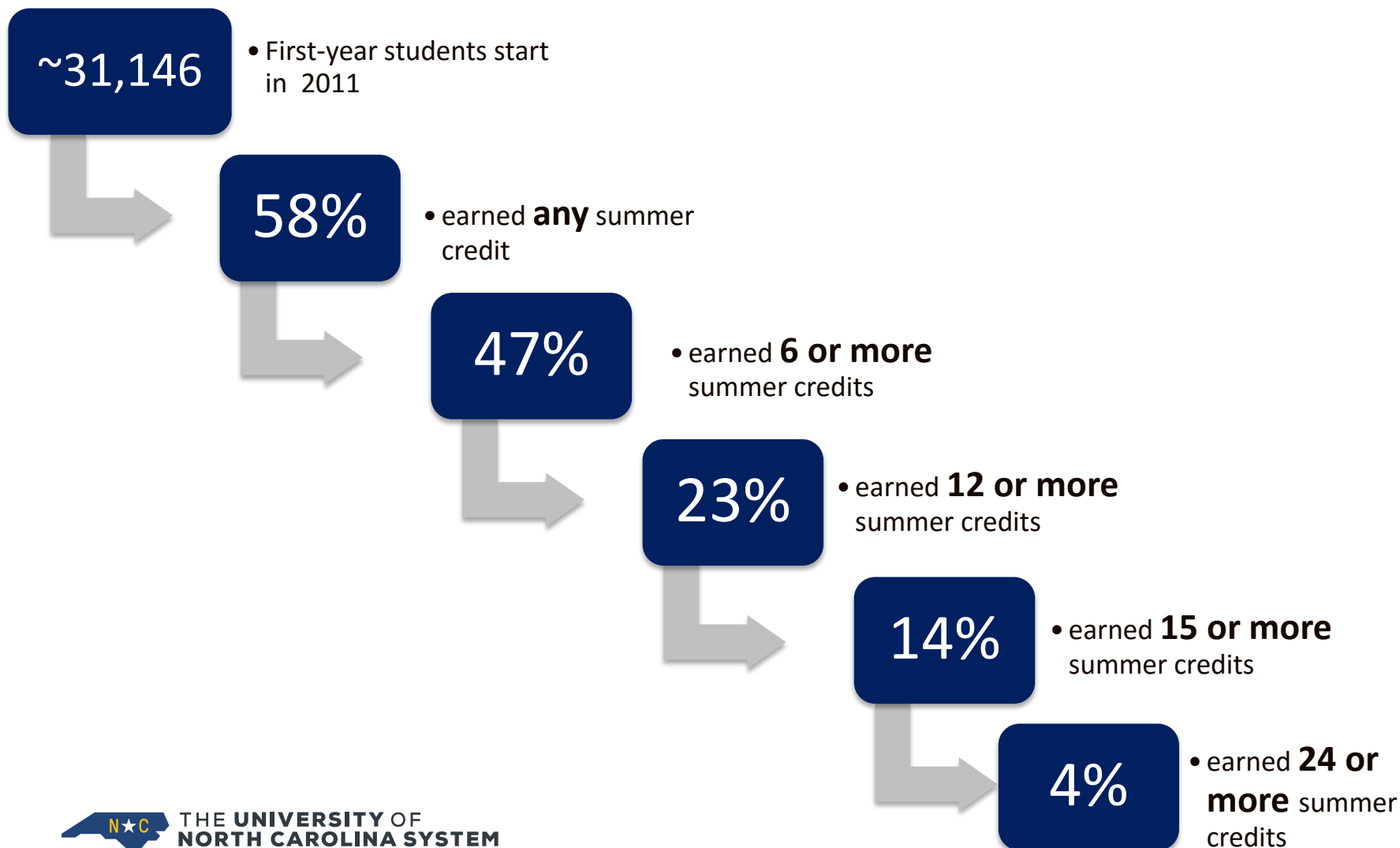


How Many Credits Do Summer Enrollees Earn in Summer?

Average Number of Summer Hours Earned Over Career,
Among Those Who Enrolled in Any Summer
(Full-time Freshman, 2011 Class)

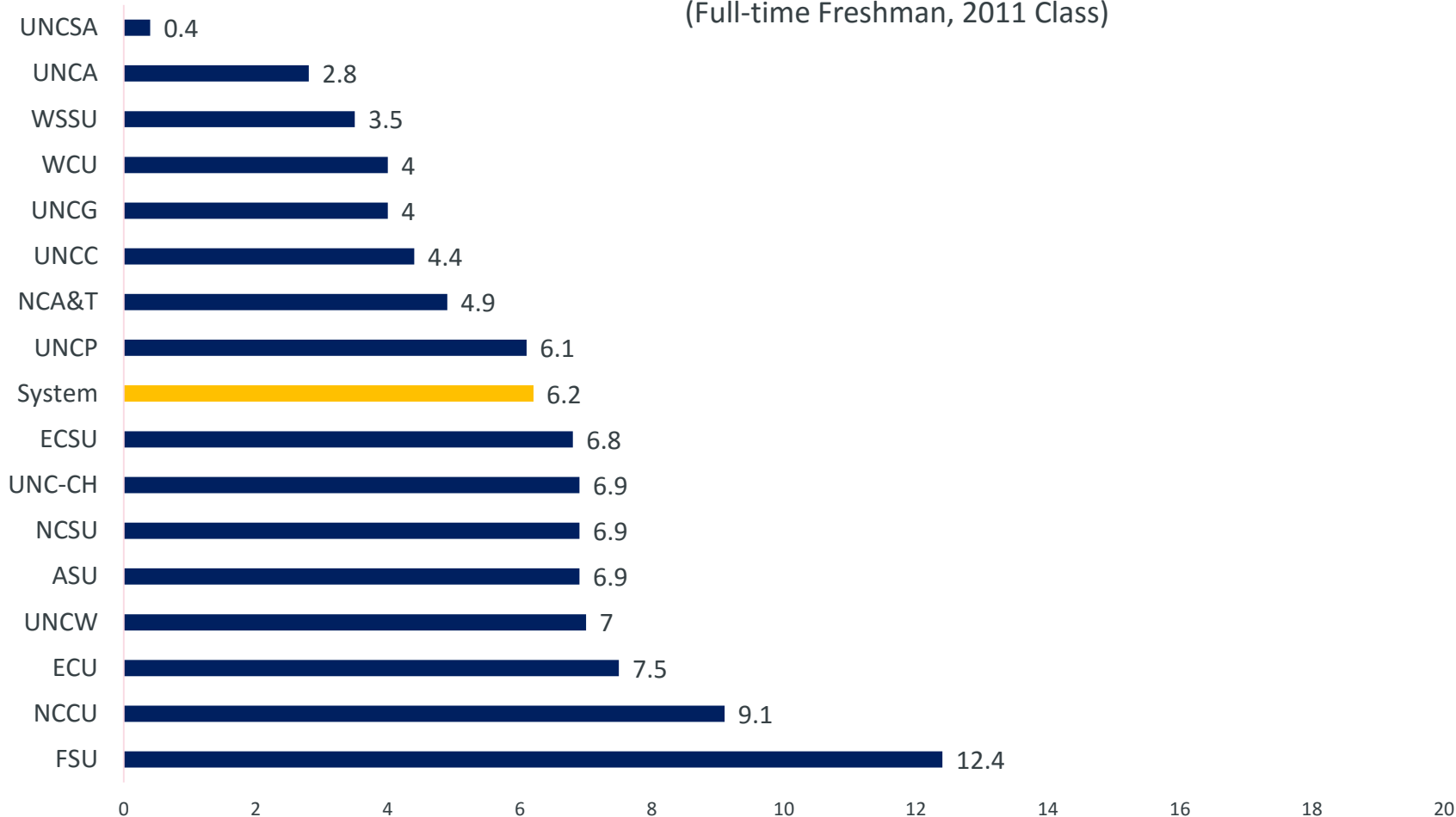


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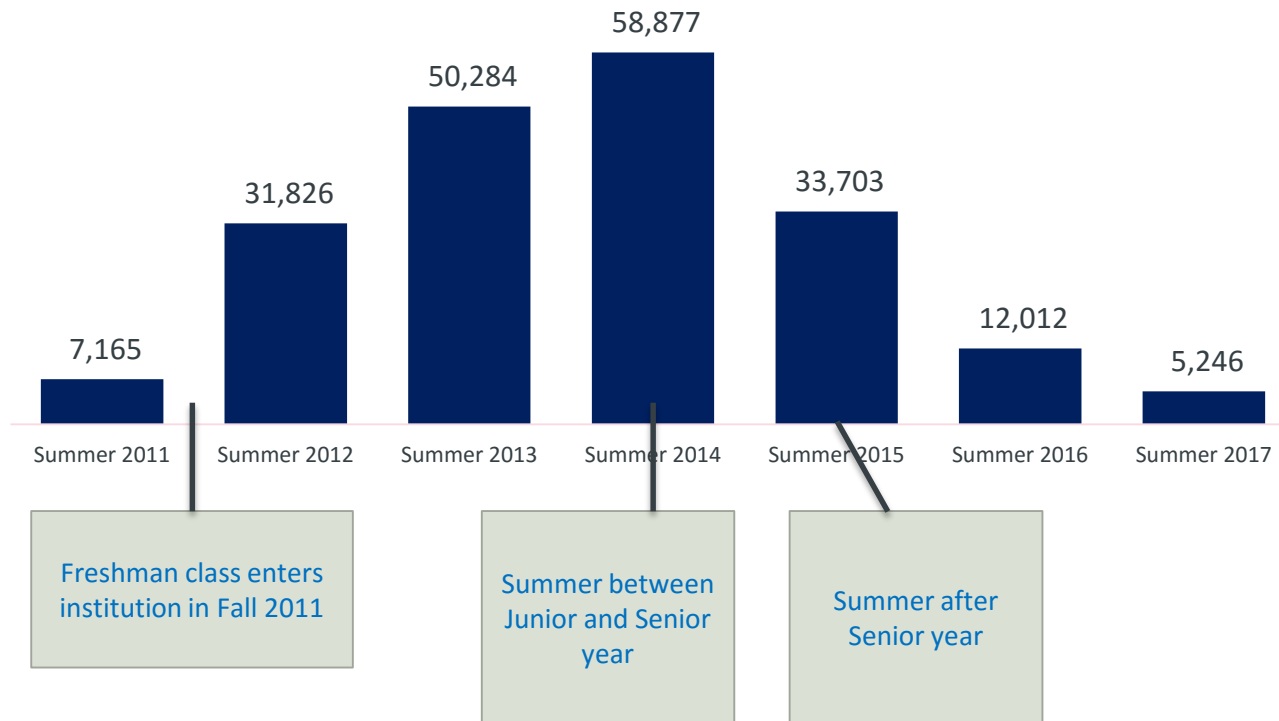
How Many Credits Do Students Earn in Summer?

Average Number of Summer Credits Earned, **Across All Students**
(Full-time Freshman, 2011 Class)



When Do Students Enroll in Summer Courses?

199,112 Total Attempted Hours in Summer
By the 2011 Full-Time Freshman Class



Questions to Consider at Our Next Meeting

1. What can we do to encourage more students to enroll in 30 credits per academic year?
2. What are other states doing to encourage students to earn 30 credits per academic year?
3. What can we do to improve access to summer courses?
4. How many summer credits are earned online vs. in-person? How do success rates vary across the two?
5. What are the costs and benefits of different approaches to funding summer courses?

THANK YOU

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