

# COMMUNITY SURVEY ANALYSIS

Prepared for Imperial Valley College

July 2015

In the following report, Hanover Research presents the results of a survey administered to community members in California's Imperial Valley region to assess community members' perceptions of the College.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND KEY FINDINGS

## INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This report presents the findings of a survey administered to community members in California's Imperial Valley region. Online and paper versions of the survey were available in English and Spanish, and Hanover used an email distribution list supplied by the Imperial Valley College (IVC) Foundation to invite many online participants. In total, the final sample for the analysis includes 464 respondents.

The survey gathered information about community members' perceptions of IVC. The results will help IVC leaders to better understand current perceptions of the College and factors that influence these opinions, including perceived strengths and opportunity for improvement.

The Key Findings section of this report highlights insights from an analysis of the survey results. The Figures and Tables section presents charts of aggregate results for each question, as well as a selection of coded open-ended responses about why respondents are likely or unlikely to recommend IVC to prospective students. An accompanying data supplement includes full aggregated responses, as well as segmented results by respondents' connection to the Imperial Valley and their familiarity with IVC.<sup>1</sup>

## KEY FINDINGS

### FAMILIARITY WITH AND RELATIONSHIP TO IVC

- **IVC is well-known among members of the surrounding community, though for some, this sense of familiarity may be based on historical knowledge or name recognition alone.** Among all respondents, 76 percent considered themselves to be either "very familiar" or "extremely familiar" with IVC, though only 55 percent agreed that they have "stayed up to date on developments at Imperial Valley College in the last three years."
- **Some respondents have no direct relationship with IVC (just 11% are current IVC students, 42% attended IVC in the past, and 16% work at IVC), but nearly all (97%) know someone who attends or used to attend IVC.** Furthermore, of all respondents, 72 percent would consider attending IVC for a course or program in the future, which reinforces IVC as a well-known educational provider in the region.
- **These personal connections are the most commonly cited way that respondents have heard of IVC, although the College's online presence is also important.** Between 48 and 57 percent have heard of IVC through a past student or an IVC employee, followed by general word-of-mouth (41%) and the College's website (31%). When asked to name the channels by which they most prefer to receive information about IVC, respondents generally prefer email (46%), followed by postings to the college's website (36%) and social media (34%).

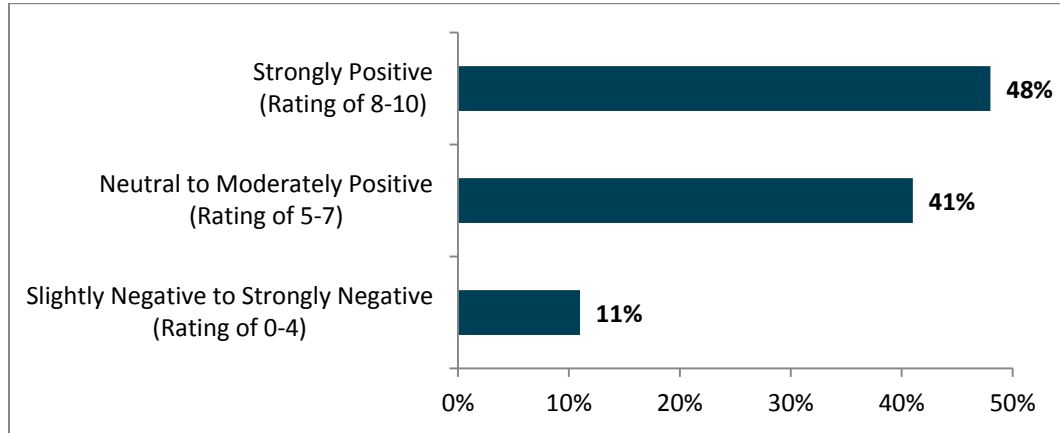
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<sup>1</sup> Statistically significant differences across groups are calculated at the 95 percent confidence level.

## PERCEPTIONS OF IVC

- **Respondents generally have favorable impressions of IVC, with 48 percent rating the institution at an eight, nine, or 10 on a zero (very negative) to 10 (very positive) scale.** A slightly smaller group (41%) had neutral to moderately positive views of IVC, and 11 percent had slightly to strongly negative views. The average rating was a 7.04.

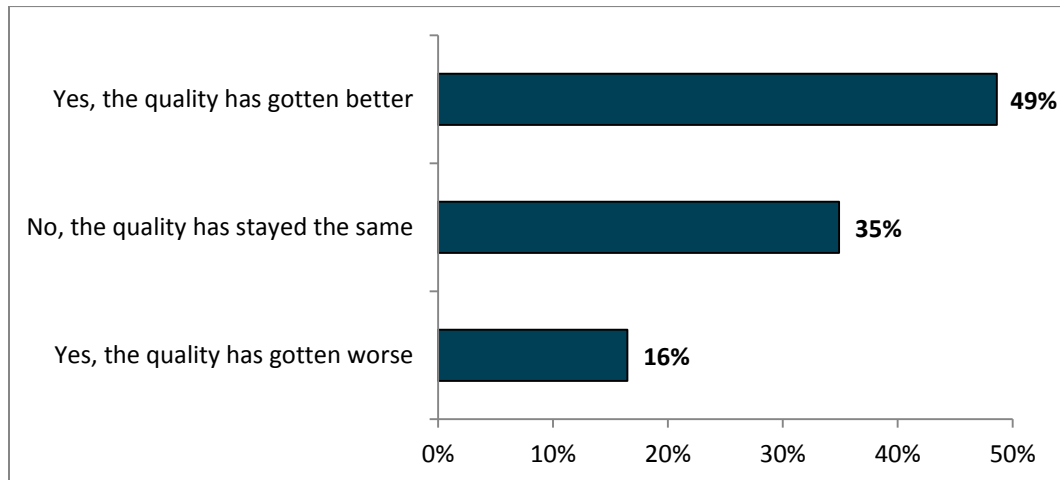
**Figure I: Respondents' Overall Ratings of IVC**



N=462

- **Most respondents who have been following developments at IVC over the last three years think that quality has stayed the same or improved.** About half (49%) believe that overall quality has gotten better, and just over one-third of respondents (35%) think that the institution's quality has remained the same. Just one in six respondents (16%) believed that quality has declined.

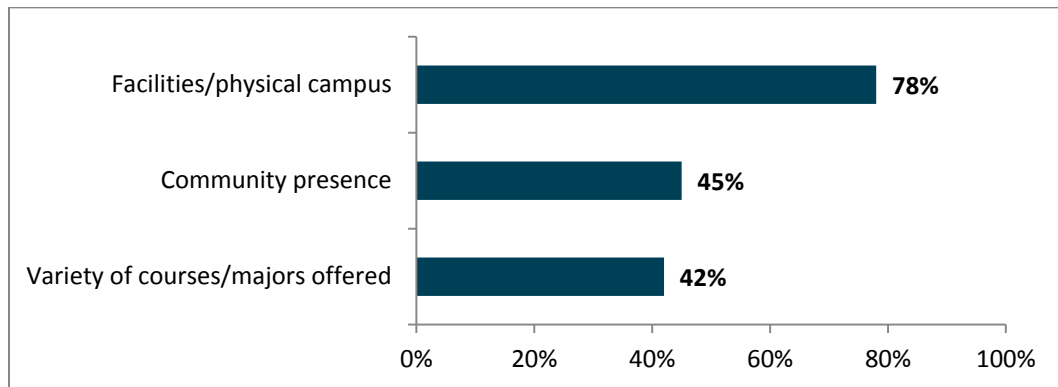
**Figure II: Has your opinion of Imperial Valley College's overall quality changed over the past three years?**



N=255

- **Physical campus/facilities enhancements in particular have contributed to respondents' perceptions of improved quality in the last three years.** More than three-quarters (78%) of respondents who have followed developments at the College over the last three years indicate that IVC has bettered its facilities and physical campus. Other commonly selected reasons for perceptions of improved quality include a stronger community presence (45%) and a greater variety of courses and majors offered (42%).

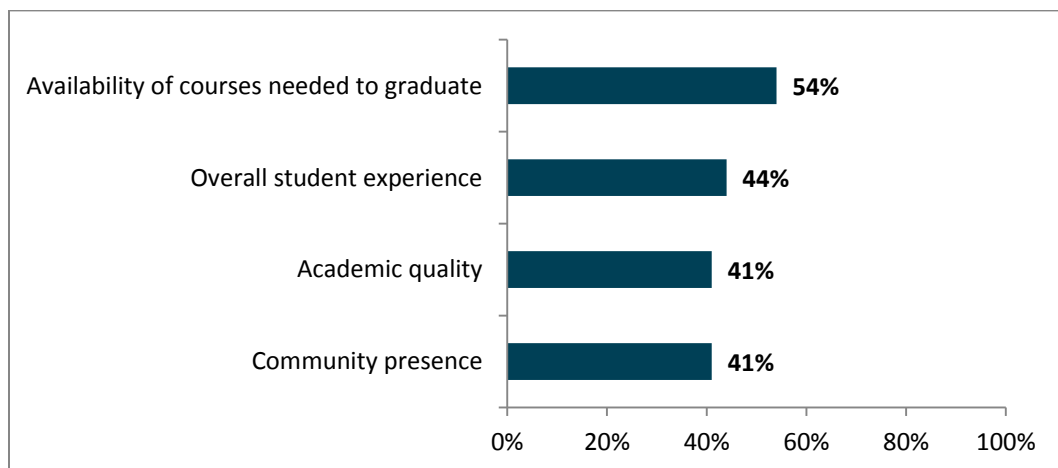
**Figure III: Commonly Cited Areas of Improvement among Respondents Closely Following IVC Who Believe that Overall Quality Has Improved**



N = 121

- **Of the 41 respondents who believe that quality has declined in the last three years, more than half (54%) cite availability of courses needed to graduate as a reason that quality has declined.** Other commonly noted reasons contributing to perceptions of declining quality include the overall student experience (44%), community presence (41%), and academic quality (41%).

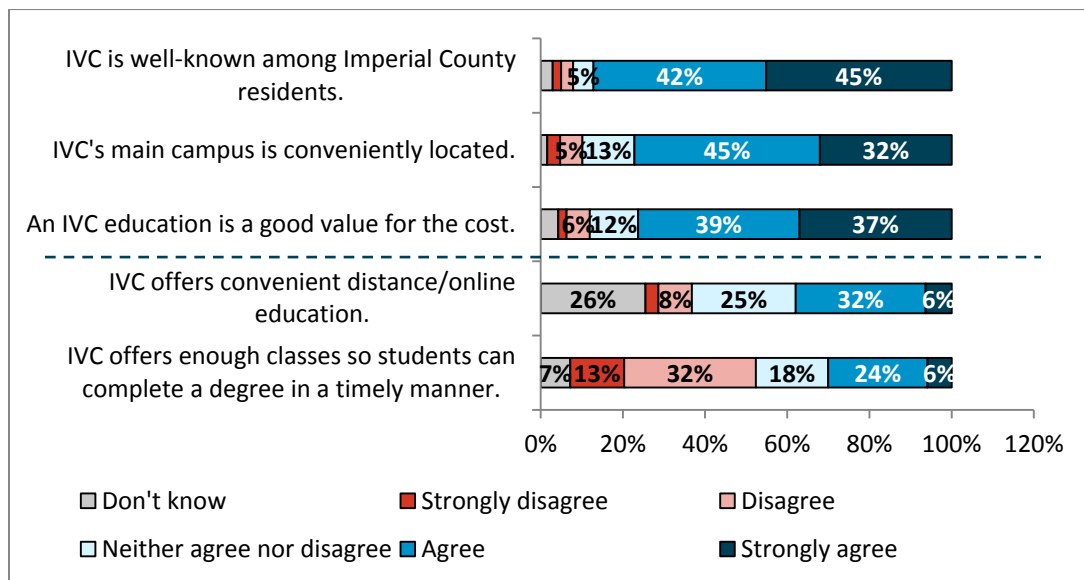
**Figure III: Commonly Cited Areas of Decline Among Respondents Closely Following IVC Who Believe that Overall Quality Has Declined**



N = 41

- **Community members:**
  - **Largely agree that IVC is well-known in Imperial County** (87% of all respondents “agree” or “strongly agree”), that its **main campus is conveniently located** (77%), and that “an IVC education is a **good value for the cost**” (76%). These themes recur throughout the analysis.
  - **Less often agree that “IVC offers convenient distance/online education”** (38%) or that **class offerings are sufficient to allow for timely degree completion** (30%), a theme that emerges repeatedly as well. In fact, just under half (45%) of respondents *disagree* that enough classes are offered so that students can graduate on time. In contrast, about one-quarter of respondents do not know whether IVC offers convenient distance/online education, and another quarter neither agrees or disagrees with the statement, suggesting that improved communication about current distance learning opportunities may be as important as any actual enhancements.

**Figure IV: Statements about IVC Receiving Greatest and Least Agreement**



N=443

## INSTITUTIONAL STRENGTHS

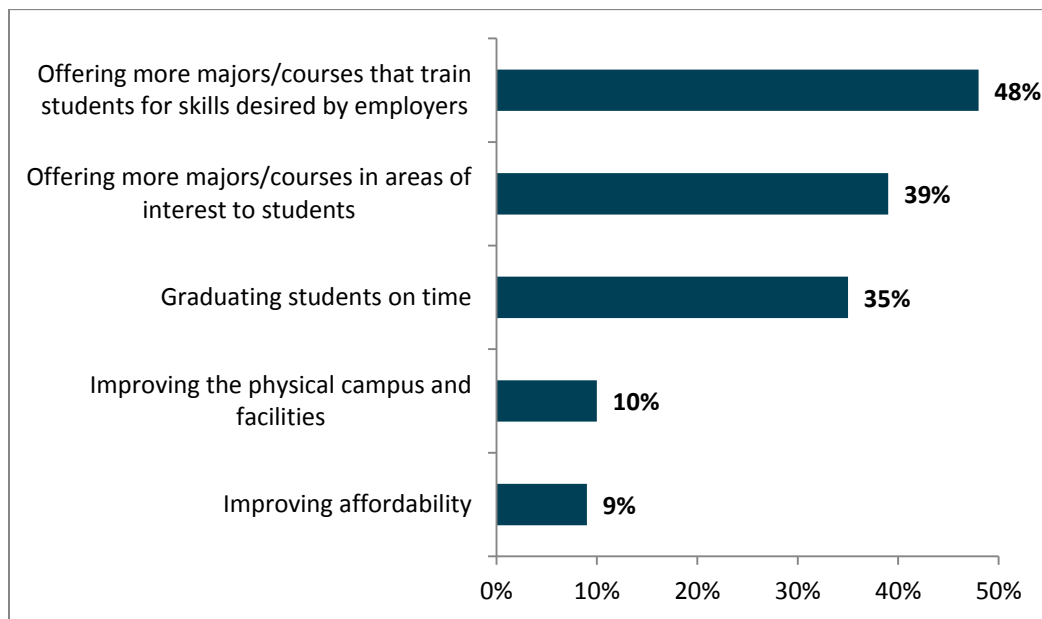
- **“Affordability” is IVC’s most noted strength, chosen by more than three-quarters (78%) of respondents when asked to choose up to three attributes that best describe IVC.** (The next-most-popular attribute, “inclusive,” is selected by about one-third (36%) of respondents.) The theme of affordability is echoed elsewhere: nearly eight in 10 (78%) believe that students study at IVC for its affordability, and of those who are more likely to recommend IVC to others, affordability and value is the most commonly cited reason (noted by 56% of such respondents).

- **Surveyed community members are generally likely to recommend IVC to someone considering college.** When asked to rate their likelihood of recommending IVC to others on a zero (very unlikely) to 10 scale (very likely), 59 percent of respondents chose an eight or higher, indicating a relatively high likelihood of recommending IVC. Just 10 percent consider themselves unlikely to recommend IVC to others (zero to four rating). Of this minority, poor preparation for transfer/future studies/the workforce, difficulty getting into required classes/lengthy time to degree completion, and concerns about academic quality emerge as top reasons for not recommending IVC.

### INSTITUTIONAL AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- **Respondents emphasize a strong need for increasing course offerings and making more sections of commonly needed courses available.** Community members' responses reiterate a common concern about the difficulty of students getting into classes and lengthy time-to-graduation. These factors are also cited as reasons that dissuade respondents from recommending IVC to others.
- **Further building on the theme of improving class offerings and graduation rates, the top three factors cited by all respondents as areas for improvement by IVC are related to course offerings and graduation.** Few respondents recognize a need for IVC to improve its affordability or physical campus, which were noted as top areas of improvement in recent years.

Figure V: Selected Responses Regarding Ways to Improve IVC

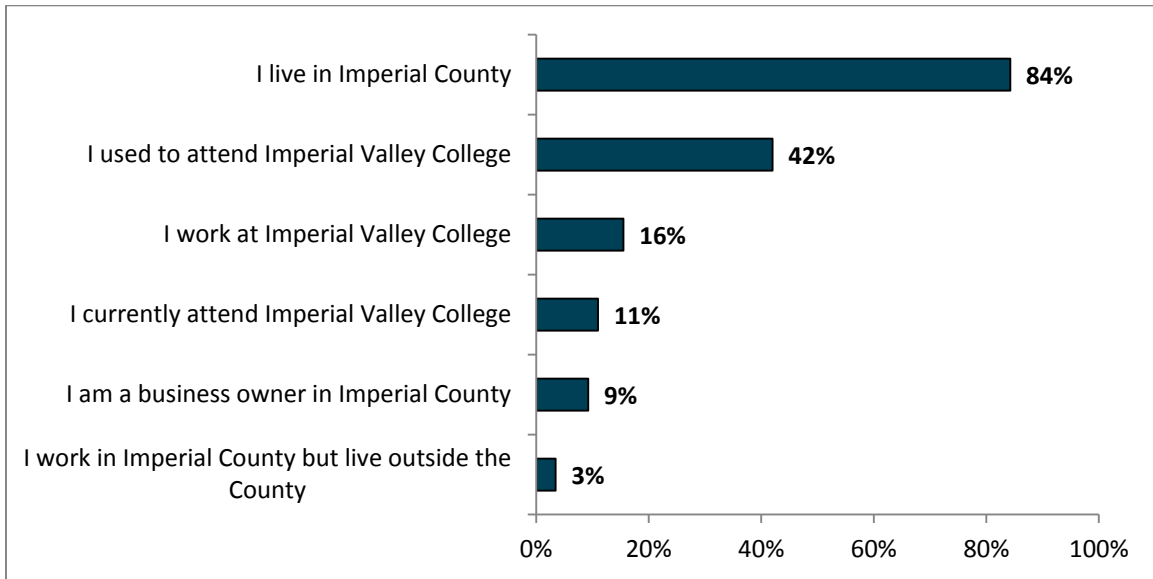


N=421

## FIGURES AND TABLES

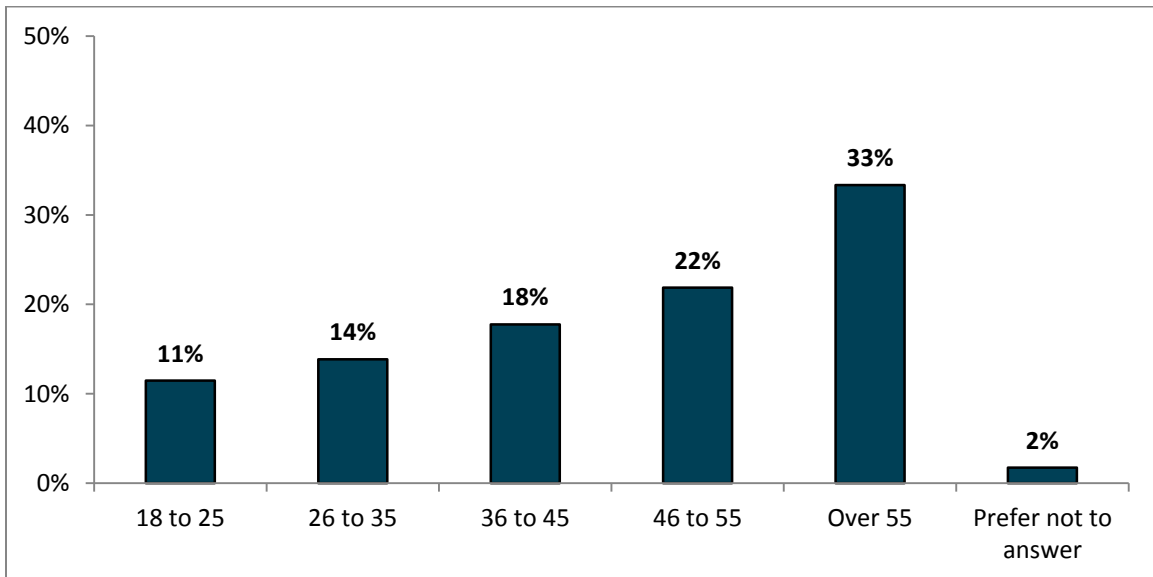
### RESPONDENT BACKGROUNDS

Figure 1: Which of the following describe you? Please select all that apply.



N=464

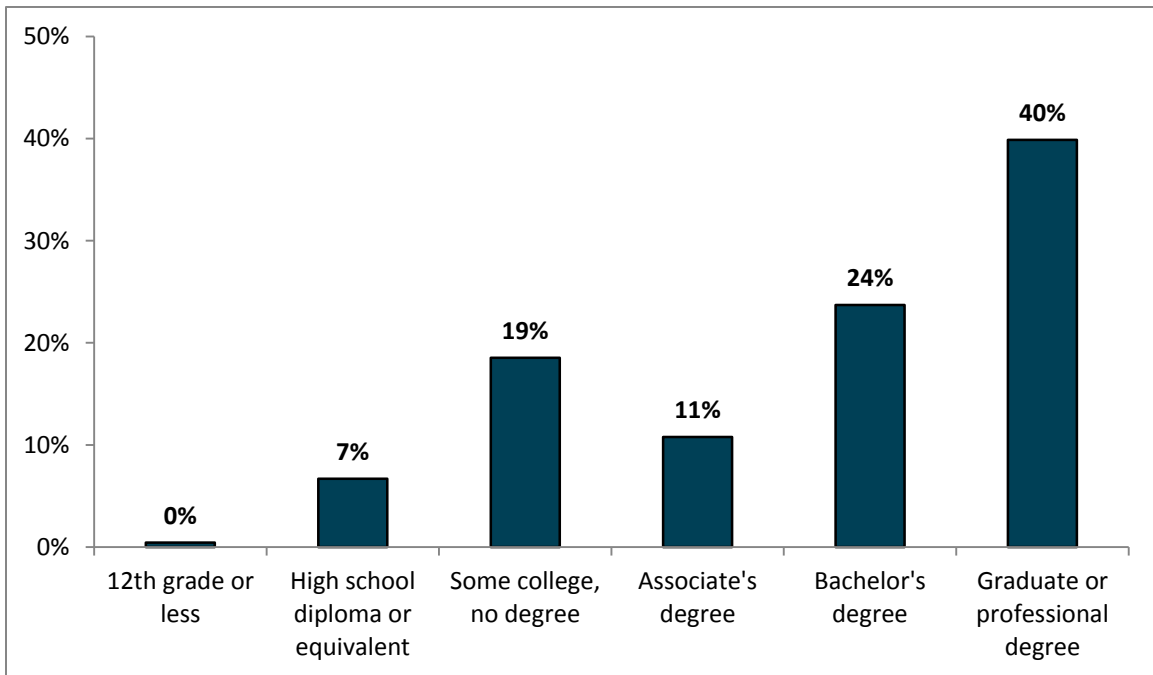
Figure 2: How old are you?



N=462



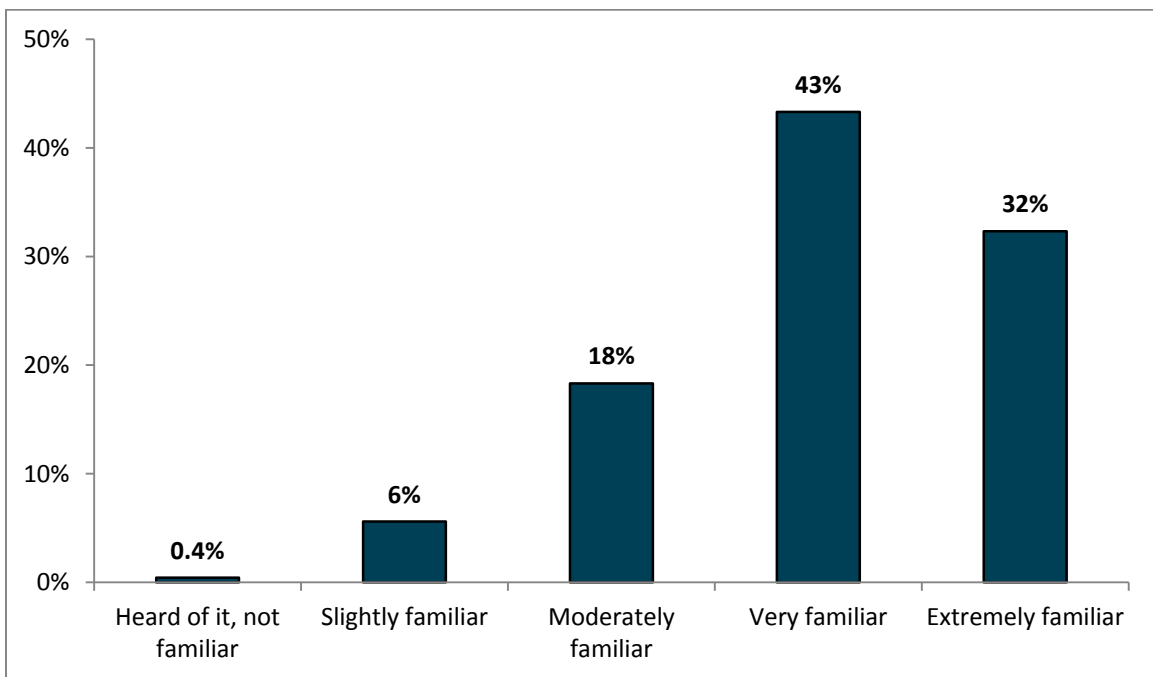
**Figure 3: What is your highest level of education?**



N=464

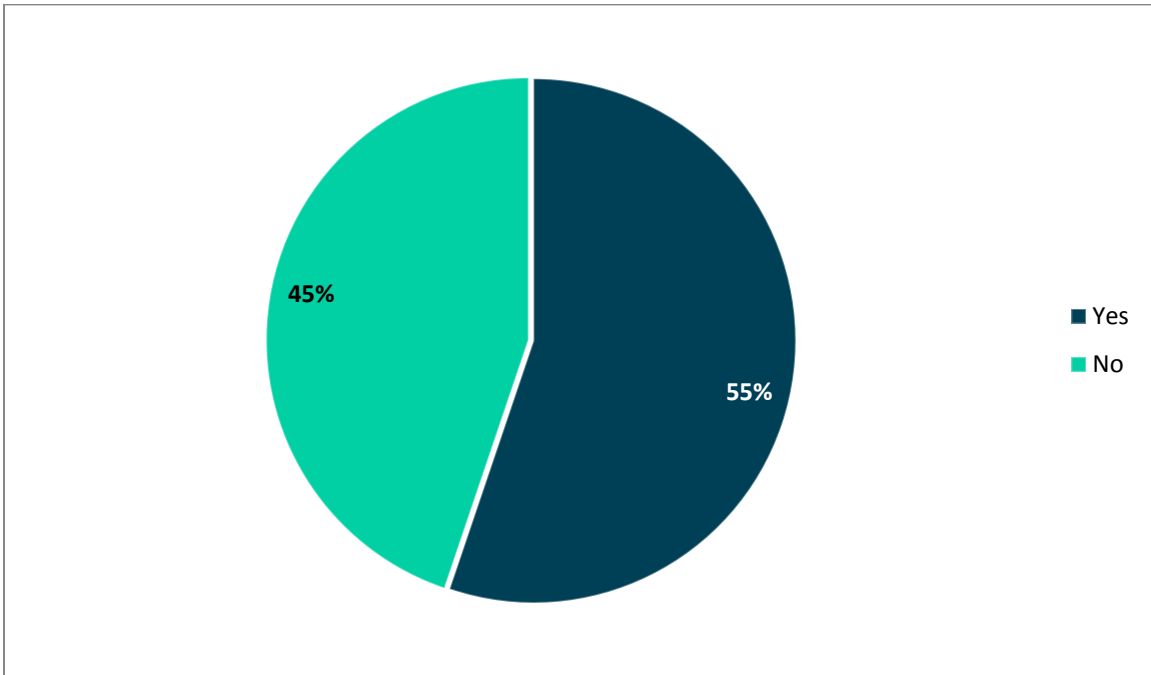
## FAMILIARITY WITH IVC

**Figure 4: How familiar are you with Imperial Valley College (IVC)?**



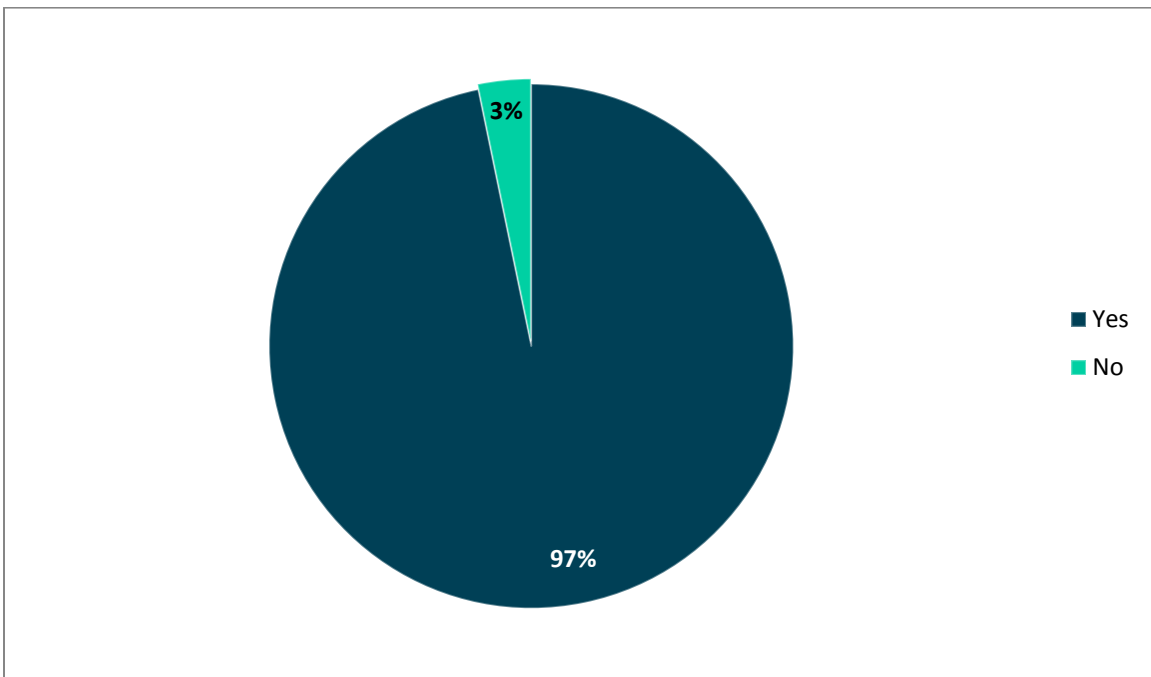
N=464; Note: Respondents who selected "heard of it, not familiar" did not answer perception questions about IVC, but jumped straight to questions about communication channels.

**Figure 5: Have you stayed up to date on developments at Imperial Valley College in the last three years?**



N=462

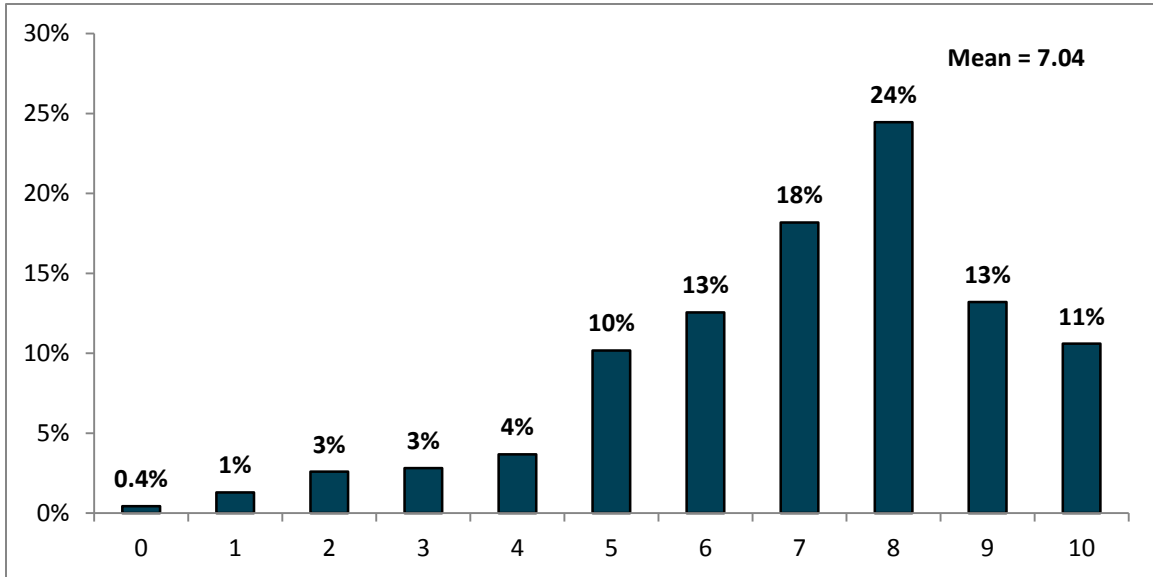
**Figure 6: Do you know someone who attends or has attended Imperial Valley College?**



N=462

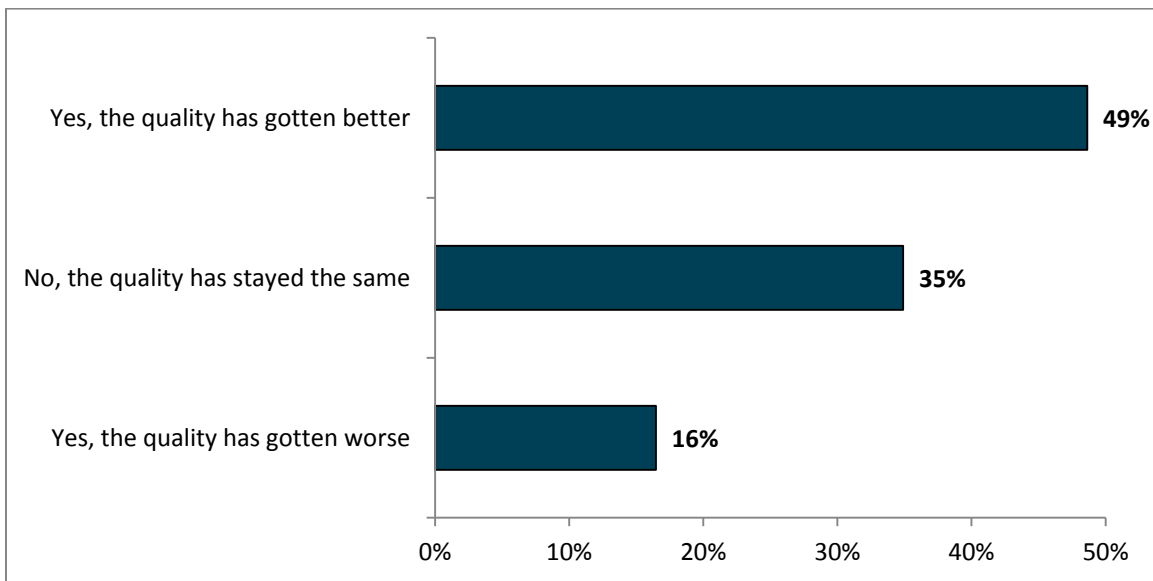
### PERCEPTIONS OF IVC

**Figure 7: On a scale from 0 (very negative) to 10 (very positive), what is your overall opinion of Imperial Valley College?**



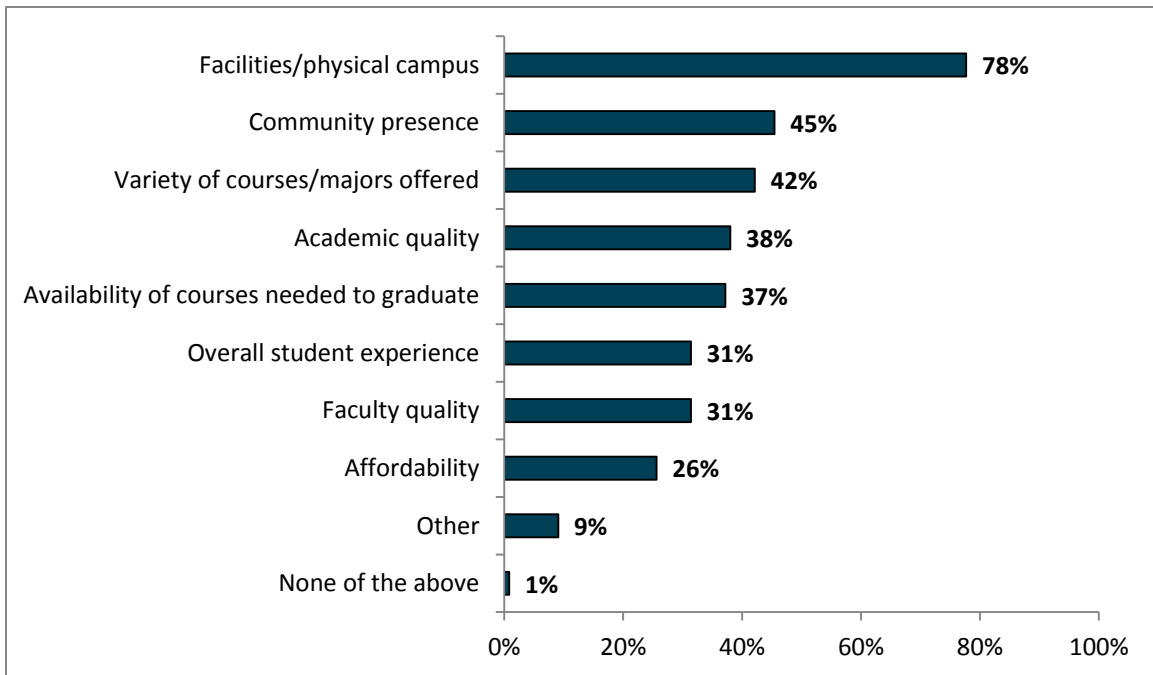
N=462

**Figure 8: Has your opinion of Imperial Valley College's overall quality changed over the past three years?**



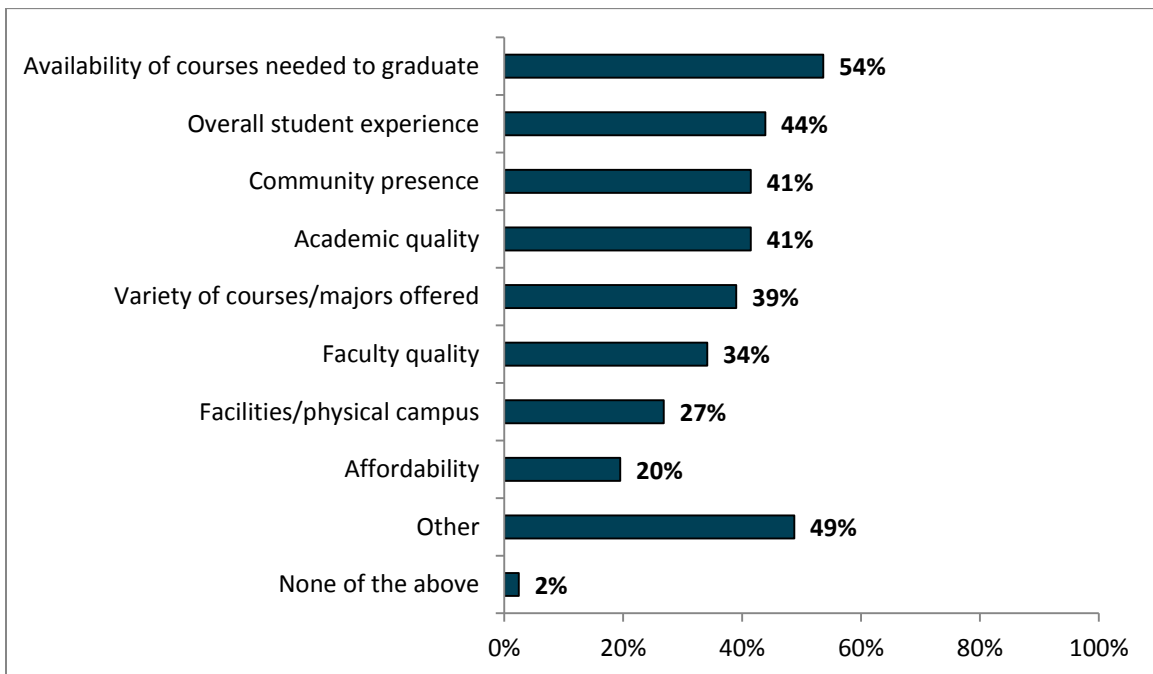
N=255

**Figure 9: In what ways has IVC's quality gotten better? Please select all that apply.**



N=121

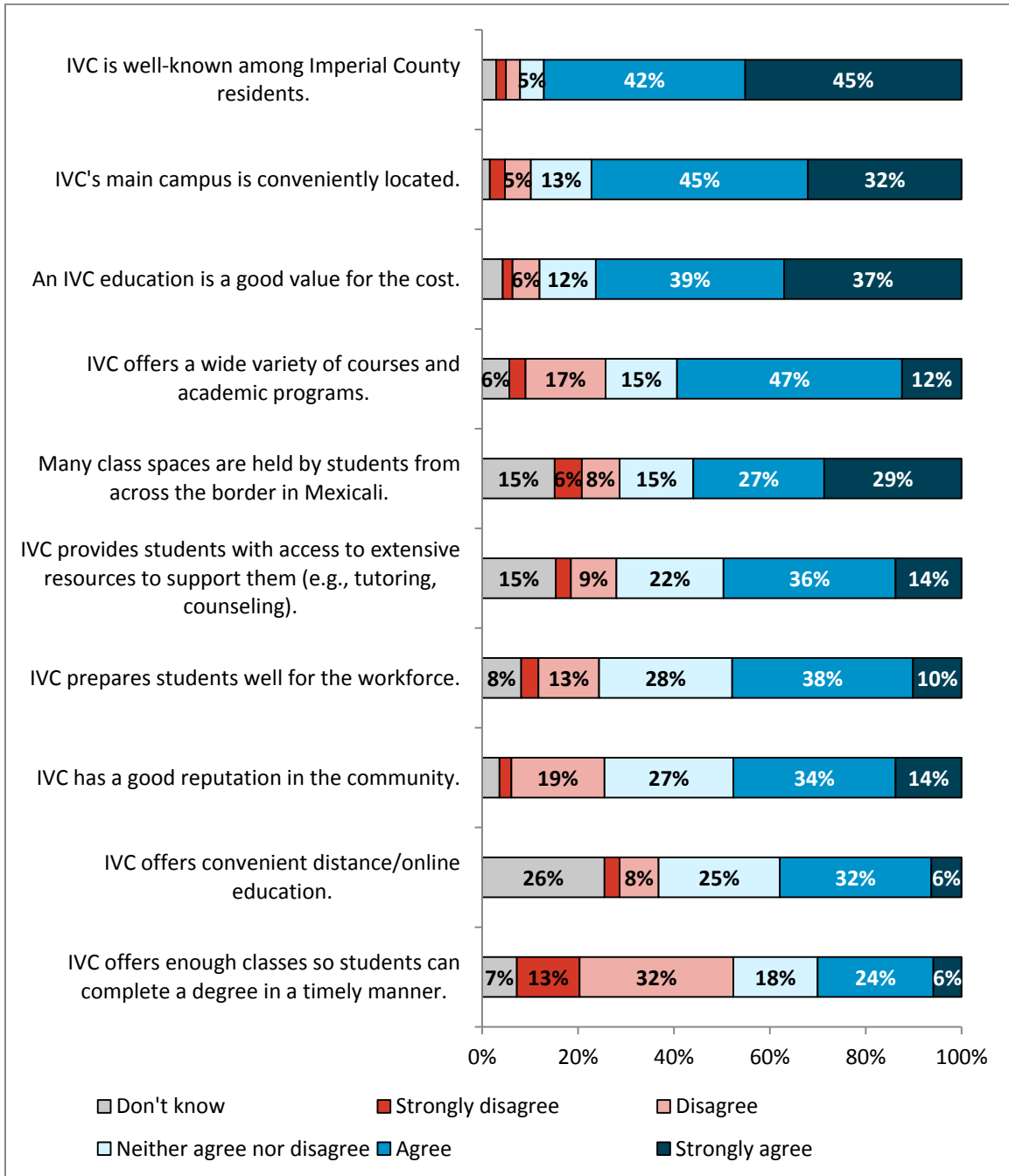
**Figure 10: In what ways has IVC's quality gotten worse? Please select all that apply.**



N=41; Among respondents who selected "other," five cited administration/poor leadership, and three specified employee morale.

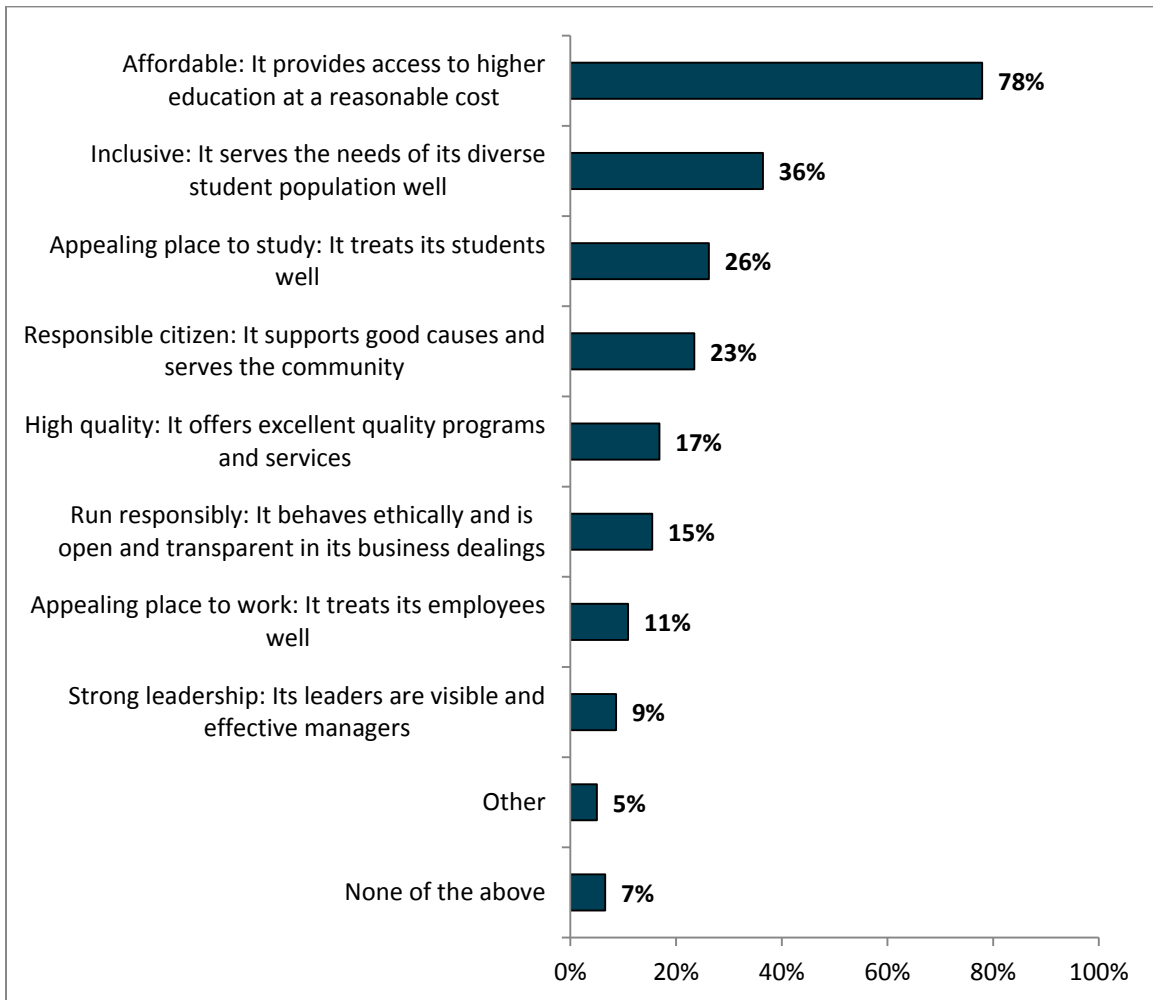
**Figure 11: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Imperial Valley College?**

*Sorted by % Agree +% Strongly Agree*



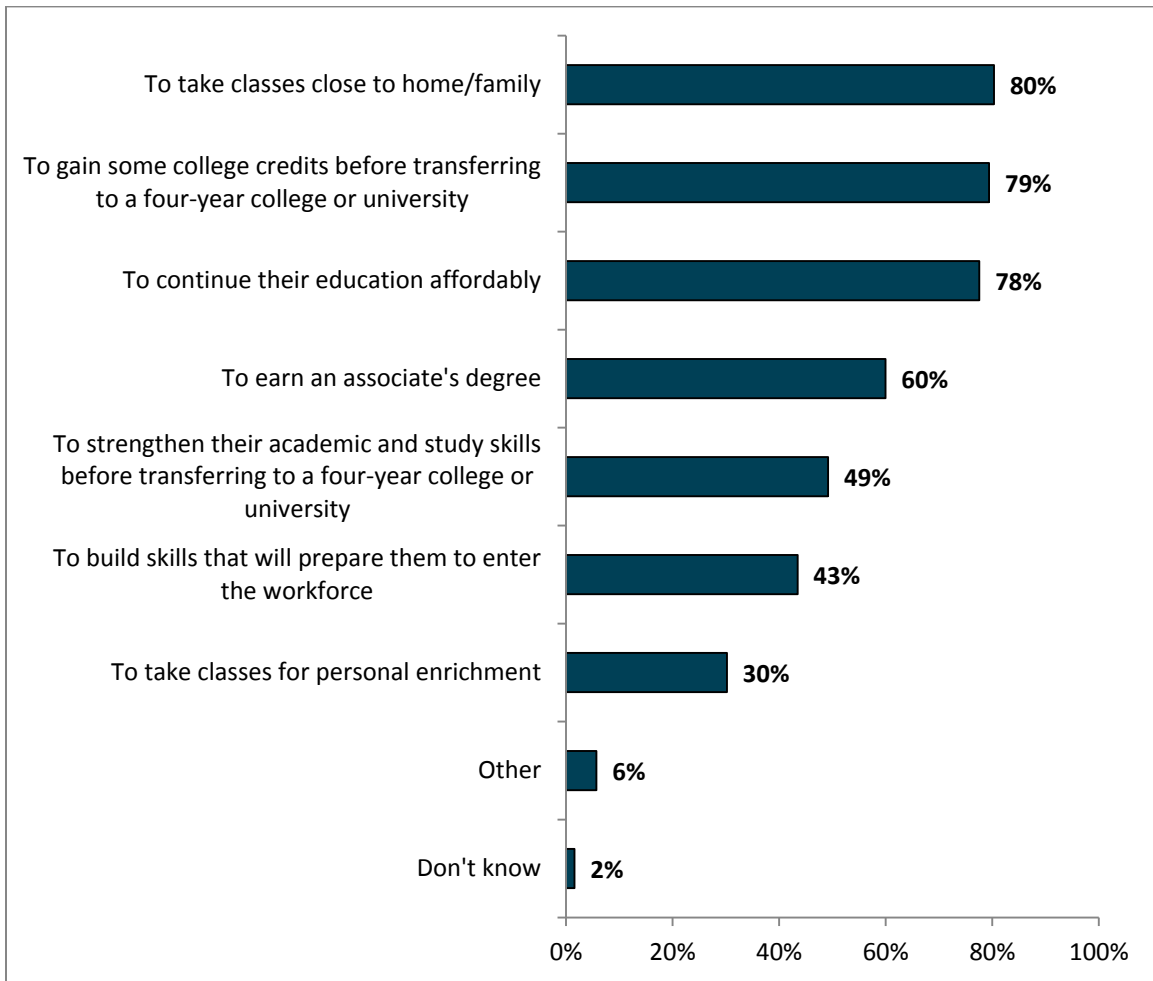
N=443

**Figure 12: Which characteristics best describe Imperial Valley College? Please select up to three options.**



N=439

**Figure 13: In your opinion, why do students attend Imperial Valley College? Please select all that apply.**



N=437

**Figure 14: In your opinion, how can IVC better serve the community?**

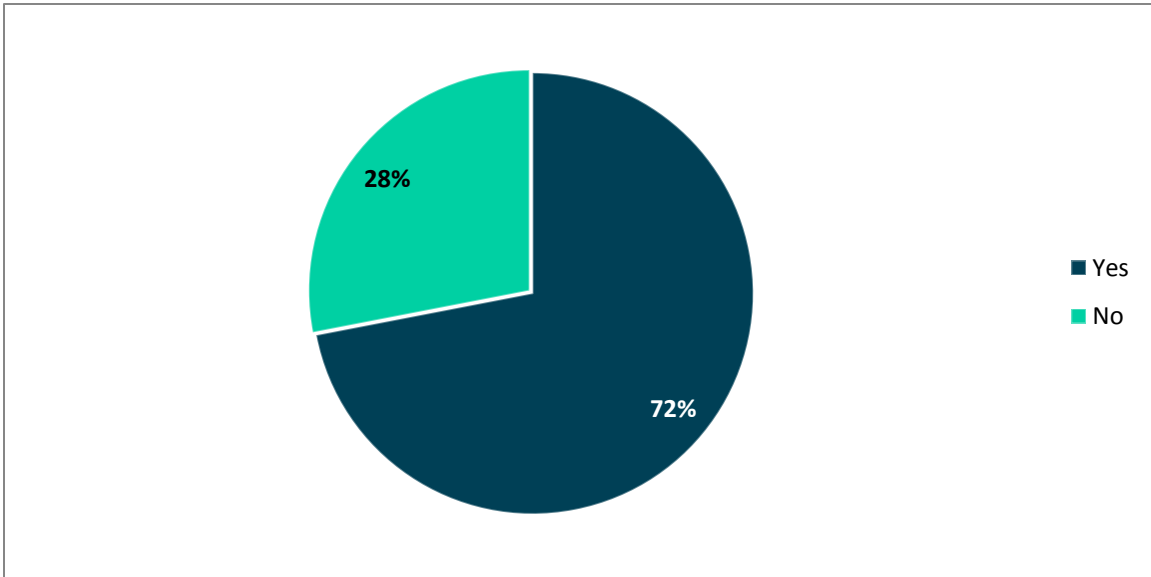
OVERALL OPINION OF IVC (0=VERY NEGATIVE, 10=VERY POSITIVE)	SAMPLE RESPONSES
2	I've always heard <b>how difficult it is to graduate in the normal 2 years due to inability to get into required classes for graduation.</b> To better serve, I would suggest get the students in and out with a degree within the time frame other CC do.
3	Have <b>better communication with students and community.</b> Try to be in top of their academics and faculty. <b>Renew their faculty and their teaching methods.</b> Try to be more comprehensive with their students. Try to compete and excel with other community colleges in the state. Try to bring another community college to the region.
3	<b>Improve the vocational offerings</b> that have a associates degree tied to them (not just a certificate). <b>Form better partnerships</b> with the business community to better prepare students for the jobs that are local, now and in the future. <b>Educate all staff as to what is actually going on in the business community.</b> I have been appalled at the lack of knowledge of local business / industry and familiarity with the surrounding community held by most counselors and teaching staff.
5	IVC could serve students better by <b>opening more classes</b> of impacted subjects in order to give more students the opportunity to <b>take all the classes they need in time.</b>
6	By offering <b>more courses</b> needed by the students in order to <b>graduate or transfer in a more timely manner.</b>
6	IVC can do <b>more outreach</b> by promoting themselves. Have <b>better partnerships with other colleges and universities.</b> Have more classes to complete more and different programs of study. <b>Facilitate the travel for students to campus and off campus.</b> For instance, more bus routes to increase the flow of students.
6	Limited class schedules make it nearly impossible to complete an AA in two years. Classes are full the day registration opens. Either <b>diversify requirements or offer more sessions of required classes.</b>
7	<b>Add more classes</b> that are difficult for students to get into. My daughter experienced having to wait for a required class until her third semester.
7	By <b>offering more transferable courses</b> so students don't have to wait for the following semester, then that semester is full. This ongoing cycle.
7	Continue to <b>improve the delivery of instruction</b> by your teachers. Honestly, many teachers at IVC could use better teaching methods that are more engaging and dynamic.
7	Finding ways to ensure that students planning to transfer to 4-yr schools can <b>get the classes they need.</b> There's a perception that it's <b>just too hard to get the classes you need for transfer.</b>
7	<b>Have more, better, more frequent vocational classes at more varied times &amp; dates.</b> Maybe the option of condensed classes, so a person could choose between a semester class or a 10-day all day long class
7	I believe there is an opportunity to use local media outlets to <b>share information</b> about IVC's departments, educational opportunities, etc. in a way that <b>communicates with our community.</b>



OVERALL OPINION OF IVC (0=VERY NEGATIVE, 10=VERY POSITIVE)	SAMPLE RESPONSES
7	When my kids attended <b>classes were always full or over-enrolled</b> . This could possibly be due to enrollment from Mexicali. This needs to be limited to actually let Valley kids take advantage of a local education. Also, there needs to be <b>more coordination between IVC and 4 year universities to make sure credits transfer</b> . My kids took many classes at IVC that ended up not transferring. Becomes very costly for a parent or student who is paying for an education.
8	<b>Availability of those classes</b> that are regularly full the first day of class
8	<b>Better selection of classes. More rigor. Greater number of classes.</b>
8	Continue to develop <b>more transfer degrees</b> and <b>form partnerships with local employers</b> to adequately prepare students for the workforce.
8	<b>External campus sites</b> need to be reactivated. We reached a large number of community members through those sites.
8	<b>Improve the access to more Imperial Valley residents</b> . There are too many people that need education and cannot get to IVC. <b>Increase the communication regarding funds available</b> to help students with expenses of materials and classes.
8	Offer <b>more classes that are in high demand</b> or level; <b>give STEM a priority</b>
9	By having <b>extended campuses</b> like they used too. Open branches in Calexico, El Centro, and Brawley.
9	Many students left the valley to attend other colleges due to the fact that <b>students could not get the classes they need it</b> . Also, there has been many rumors that IVC is not fiscally sound.
9	<b>More transportation options</b> for students to get to school. Bus schedules are not well aligned with class start and end times
9	The opportunity for students to <b>take their coursework during a two year period and transfer</b> . Offer Imperial Valley (first) residents the <b>opportunity to gain access to financial aid</b> .
9	We are an agricultural community with limited agricultural classes. I would seem like at excellent area to <b>teach ag related classes</b>
10	By offering <b>more viable vocational programs</b>
10	<b>Continue to expand course options</b> . Convey a <b>consistent message from counselors</b> to students to avoid confusion or incorrect course choices

### INTEREST IN IVC

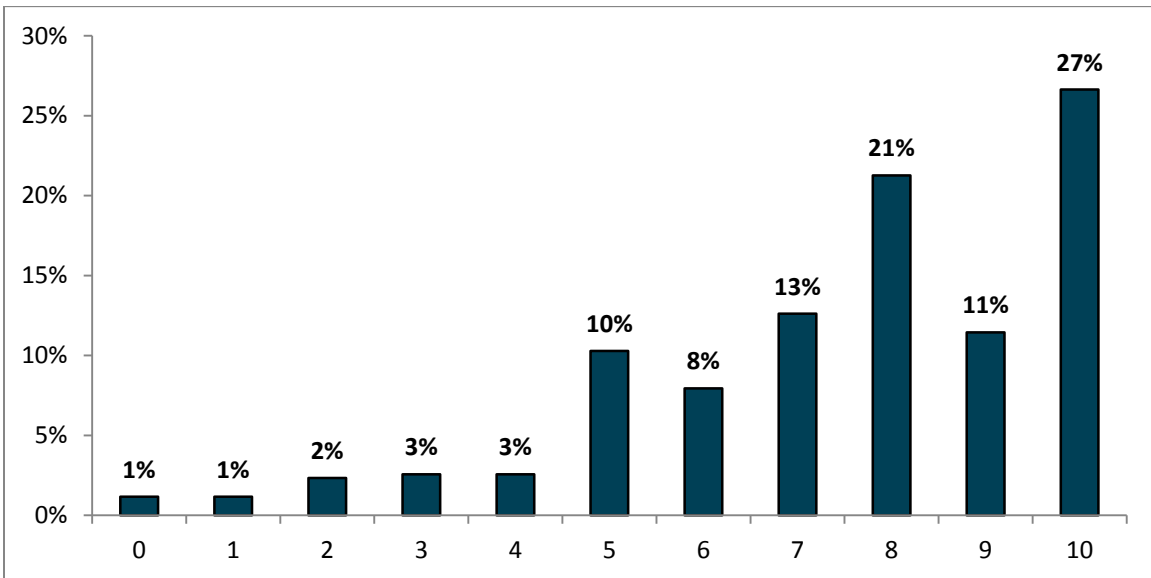
Figure 15: Would you consider attending Imperial Valley College for a course or program in the future?



N=428

### RECOMMENDING IVC

Figure 16: On a scale from 0 to 10, how likely are you to recommend Imperial Valley College to someone considering college? (0=not at all likely, 10=extremely likely)



N=428

**Figure 17: Please explain why you are likely to recommend Imperial Valley College.**  
*Among Respondents who Selected Six through 10*

REASON	PERCENT MENTIONING ATTRIBUTE	SAMPLE RESPONSES
<b>Affordability/Value</b>	56%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value of the quality of education for the cost is unmatched.</li> <li>It's the most affordable choice in the valley.</li> </ul>
<b>Location/Convenience</b>	39%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>College is close to home for many students.</li> <li>Close to home and affordability.</li> </ul>
<b>Preparation for Transfer/Future Studies</b>	27%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly so that students prepare and experience college before attending a university. Also to better prepare them for a better life in this community.</li> <li>It is a great beginning to higher learning.</li> </ul>
<b>Good Quality Education/Quality of a Specific Education</b>	17%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I commenced my higher education at this institution and I highly value it.</li> <li>Great Nursing Program</li> </ul>
<b>Career/Workforce Preparation</b>	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepares you for the workforce</li> </ul>
<b>Only Opportunity to Continue Education</b>	10%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is tremendous need for advanced education in this area.</li> <li>It is the only local option.</li> </ul>
<b>Affiliation as Alumni, Employee, Students</b>	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am very familiar with the college. I served on the Board for 12 yrs and have remained in touch with the staff there since I retired...</li> <li>I have been employed here for more than 20 years and am an IVC graduate</li> </ul>
<b>Quality/Qualified Instructors</b>	8%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>IVC has many conscientious and hard-working faculty.</li> </ul>
<b>Variety of Academic Programs</b>	3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I am likely to recommend IVC because people are capable of getting Associates degrees in many areas</li> </ul>
<b>Attractive Campus/ Quality Facilities</b>	3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The campus is a very attractive one that is conducive to learning.</li> </ul>
<b>High-Quality Administrators</b>	2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>he success is mainly because of the support staff and all the services offered to students who are serious about learning the tools taught in the classroom.</li> </ul>
<b>Small Class Sizes</b>	2%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The classes are smaller than those of a university.</li> </ul>
<b>High Retention Rate</b>	1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The retention rate is really high, that's why it's a maybe.</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Theoretically, I would recommend IVC to someone whose goals and abilities match what IVC offers.</li> </ul>

N=258; Note: Respondents were able to share multiple reasons

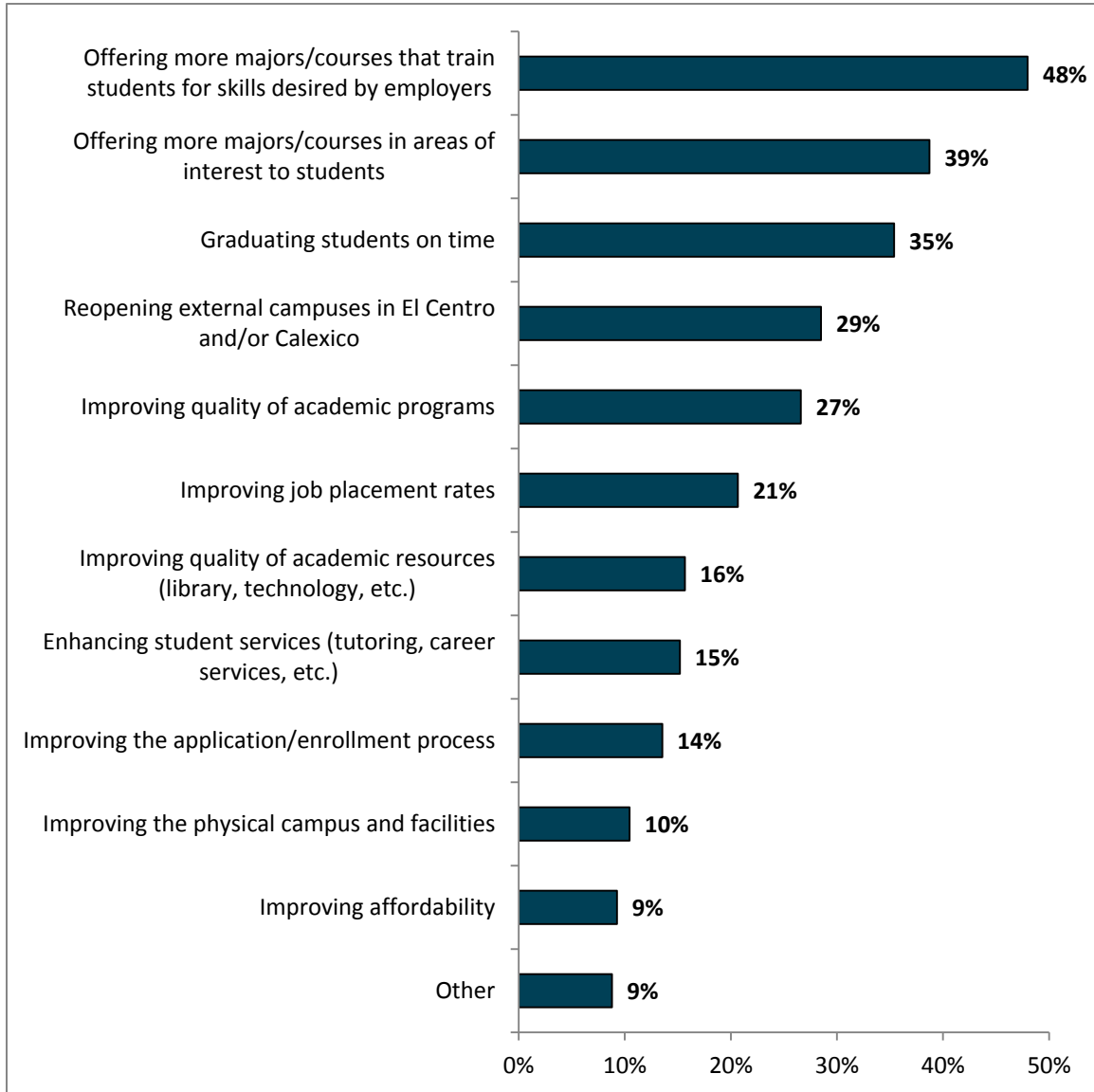
**Figure 18: Please explain why you are *unlikely* to recommend Imperial Valley College.**  
*Among Respondents who Selected Zero through Four*

REASON	PERCENT MENTIONING ATTRIBUTE	EXAMPLE RESPONSES
<b>Poor Preparation for Transfer/Future Studies</b>	21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor history of student preparation. If no other option, attend.</li> <li>• It takes forever to transfer. The classes are somehow watered down.</li> </ul>
<b>Difficulty Getting into Required Classes</b>	21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the inability to obtain your general classes or classes for your major. Due to students who have [to] take the classes more than once take up the space.</li> <li>• No guarantee of getting your needed classes.</li> </ul>
<b>Poor Academic Quality</b>	21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Due to the low level of quality of education</li> </ul>
<b>Lengthy Time to Graduation/Transfer</b>	21%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on my past experience. Why would I recommend something that doesn't allow one a fair chance of obtaining a degree in a timely manner when the University of Phoenix also has a campus located in Imperial Valley and seems to give everyone who wants to attend a chance to.</li> </ul>
<b>Limited Academic Program/Course Offerings</b>	18%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of quality offerings.</li> </ul>
<b>Poor Workforce/Career Preparation</b>	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am unlikely to recommend IVC because it lacks the classes and resources to prepare for the workforce.</li> </ul>
<b>Unhelpful Staff</b>	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My experience with IVC was very negative and discouraging. People working there lack professionalism and interest in students and their needs.</li> </ul>
<b>Better Alternatives Available</b>	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I would only recommend it if all other options had been exhausted.</li> </ul>
<b>Unaffordable/Lack of Value</b>	9%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is hard for middle class parents to qualify for financial help. As a parent of a current student at IVC, my child was not getting the right information from IVC Counselors on obtaining AA and applying to a University after the AA.</li> </ul>
<b>Lack of Outreach</b>	3%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ineffective program and lack of outreach. The attitude is that the community is here to serve the department.</li> </ul>
<b>Other</b>	--	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It depends upon who the student is and what kind of degree they are seeking.</li> </ul>

N=34; Note: Respondents were able to share multiple reasons

## FACTORS AFFECTING PERCEPTIONS

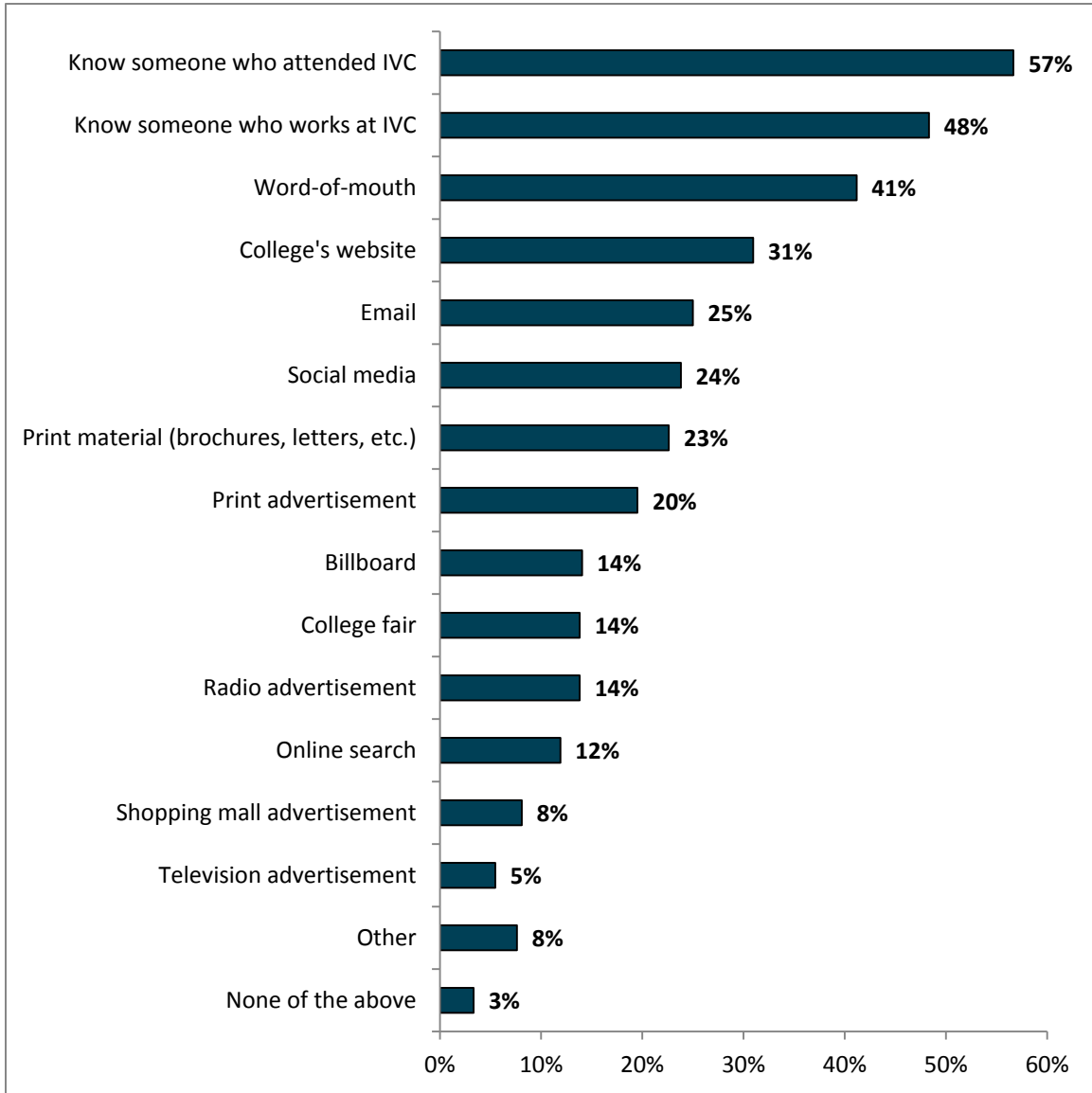
**Figure 19: In your opinion, which are the most important areas in which you would like to see Imperial Valley College improve? Please select up to three factors.**



N=421

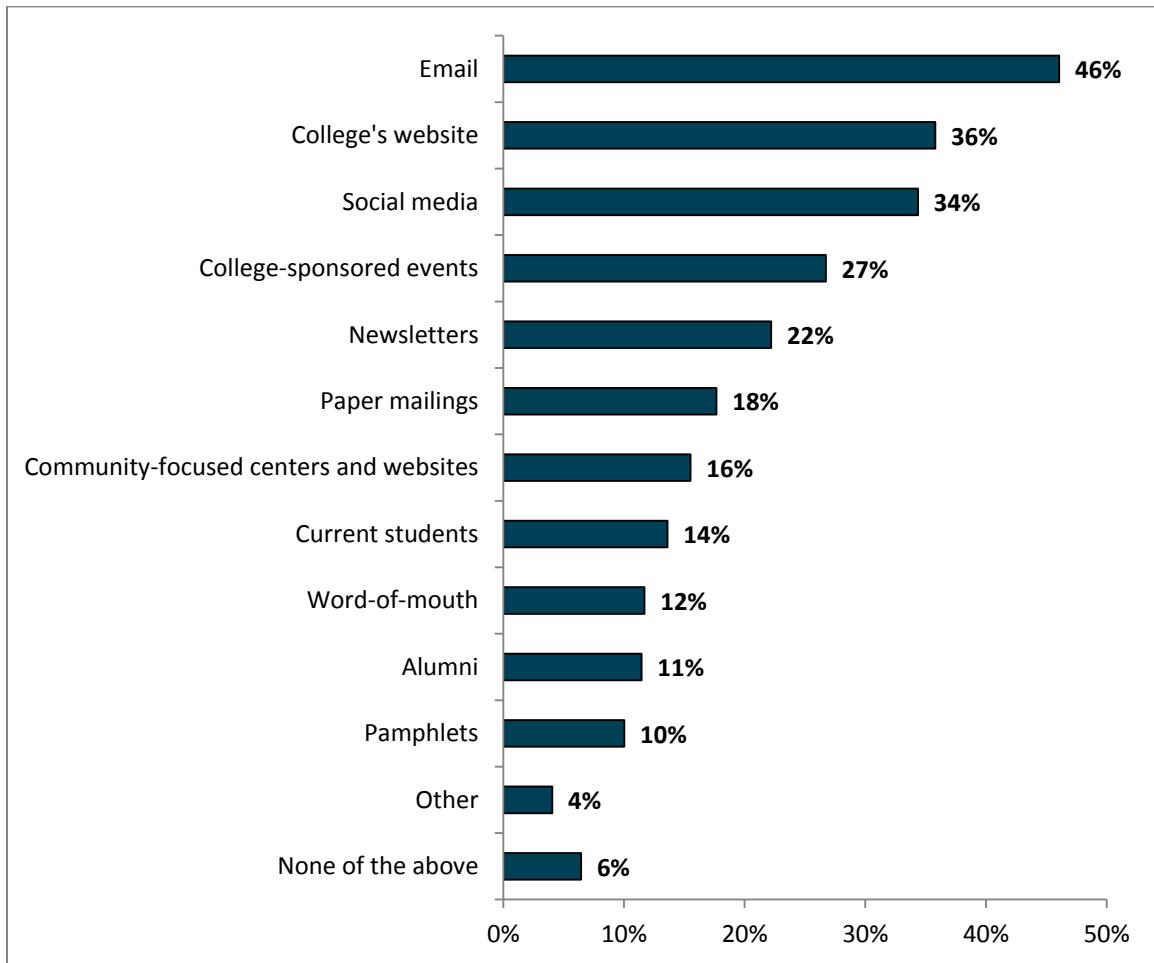
## COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

**Figure 20: How have you heard about Imperial Valley College in the last 12 months?  
Please select all that apply.**



N=420

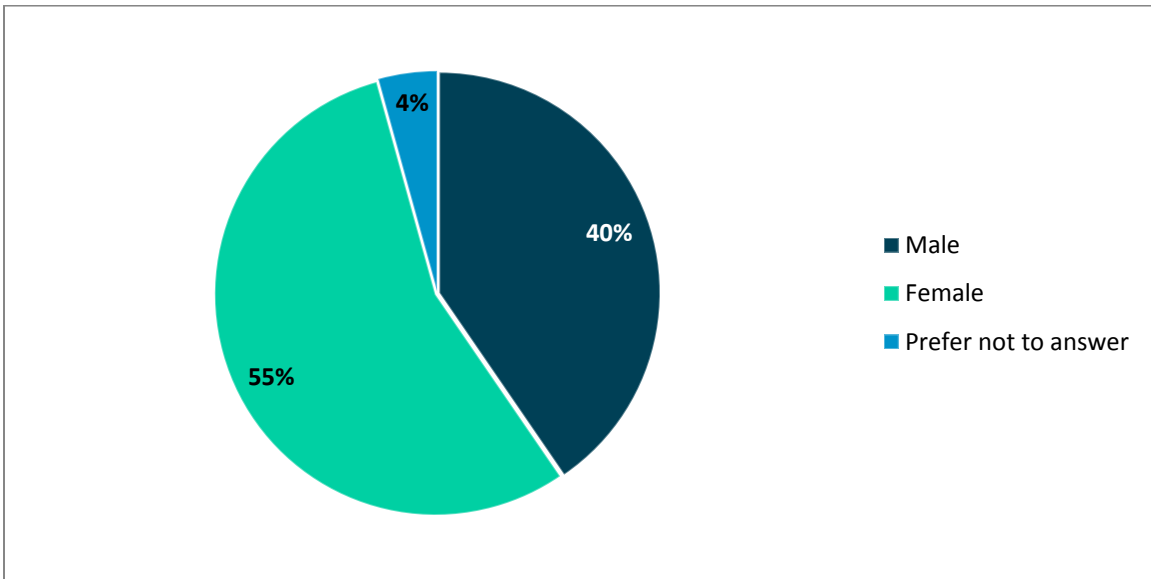
**Figure 21: What would be your preferred form(s) of communication to receive news about Imperial Valley College? Please select all that apply.**



N=419

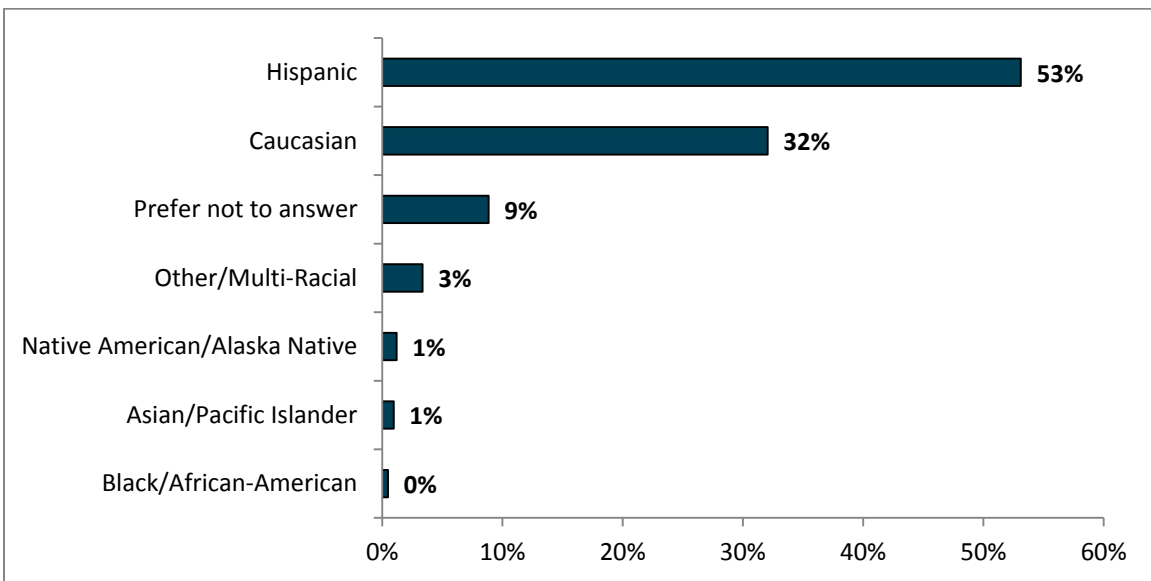
## DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure 22: Distribution by Sex



N=418

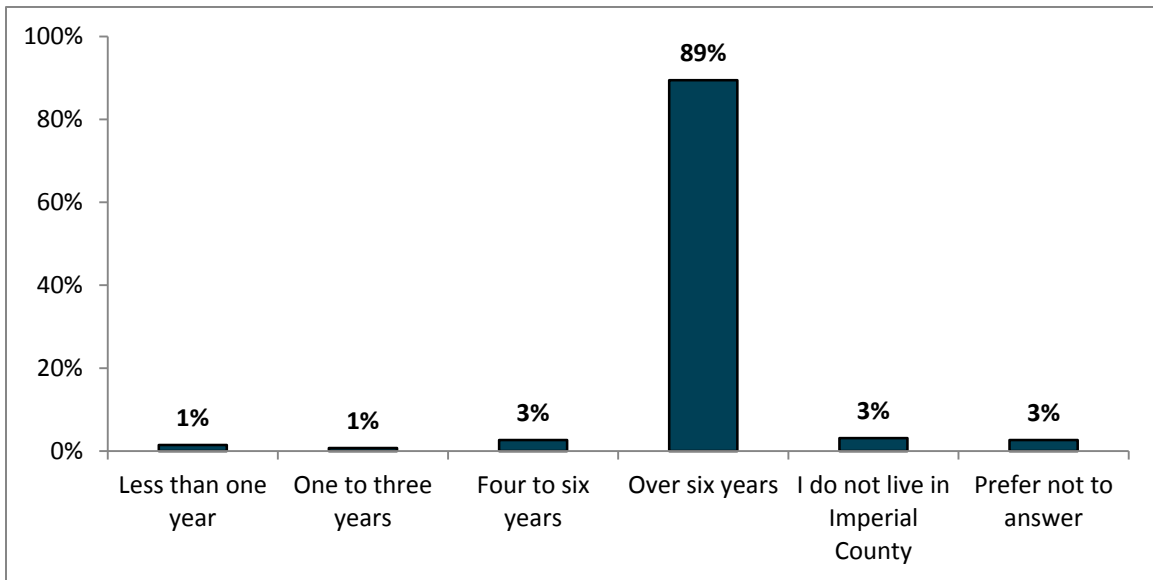
Figure 23: Distribution by Race/Ethnicity



N=418

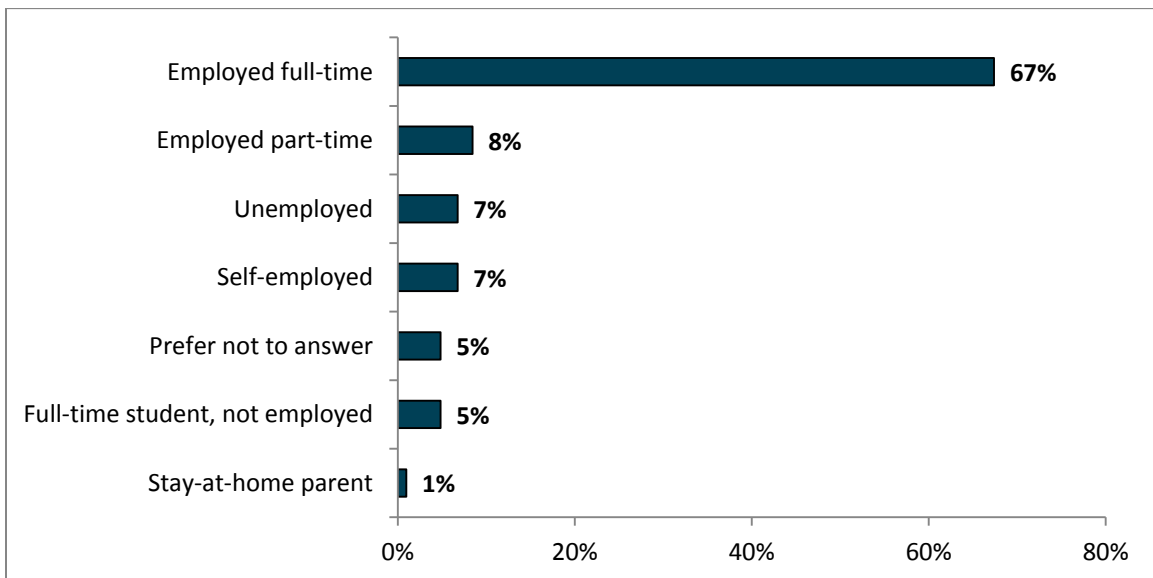


**Figure 24: Distribution by Duration Living in Imperial Valley**



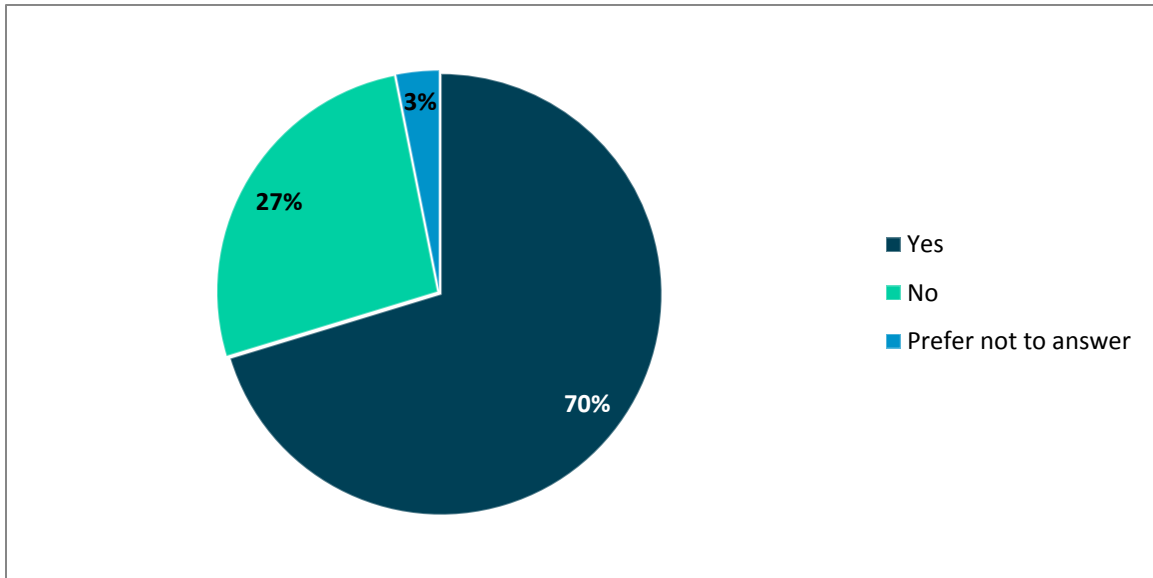
N=418

**Figure 25: Distribution by Employment Status**



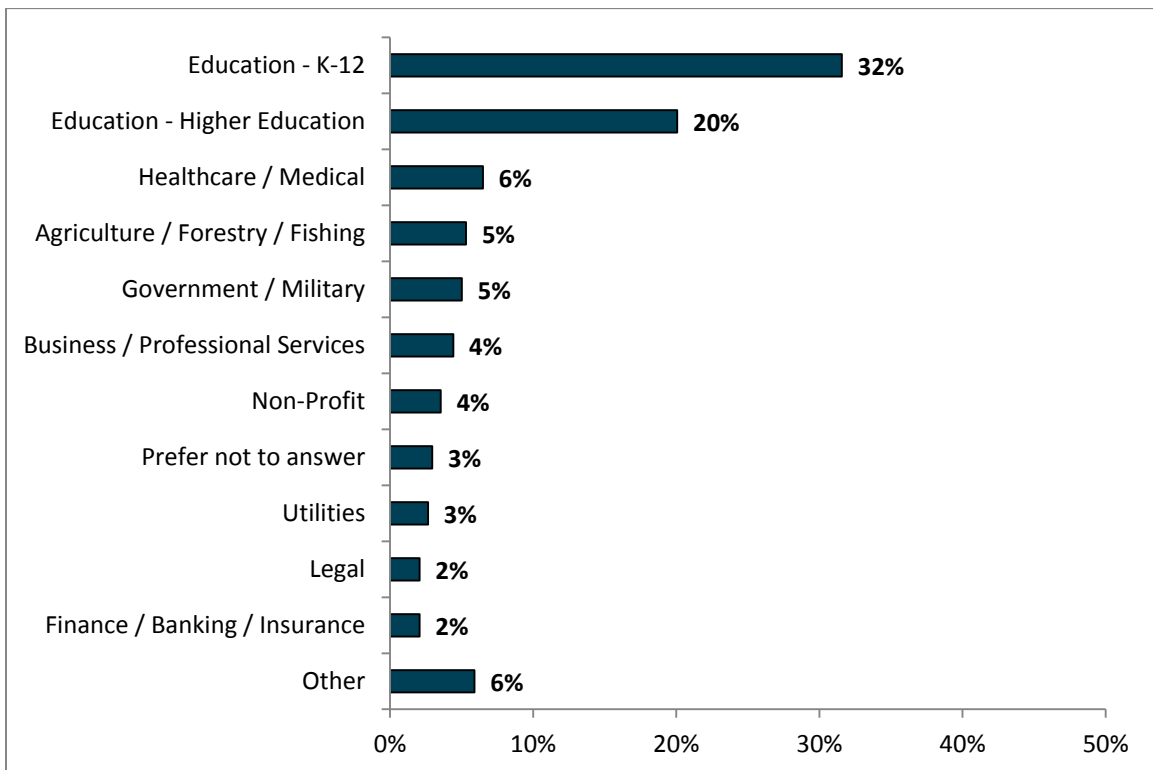
N=414

Figure 26: Distribution by Parental Status



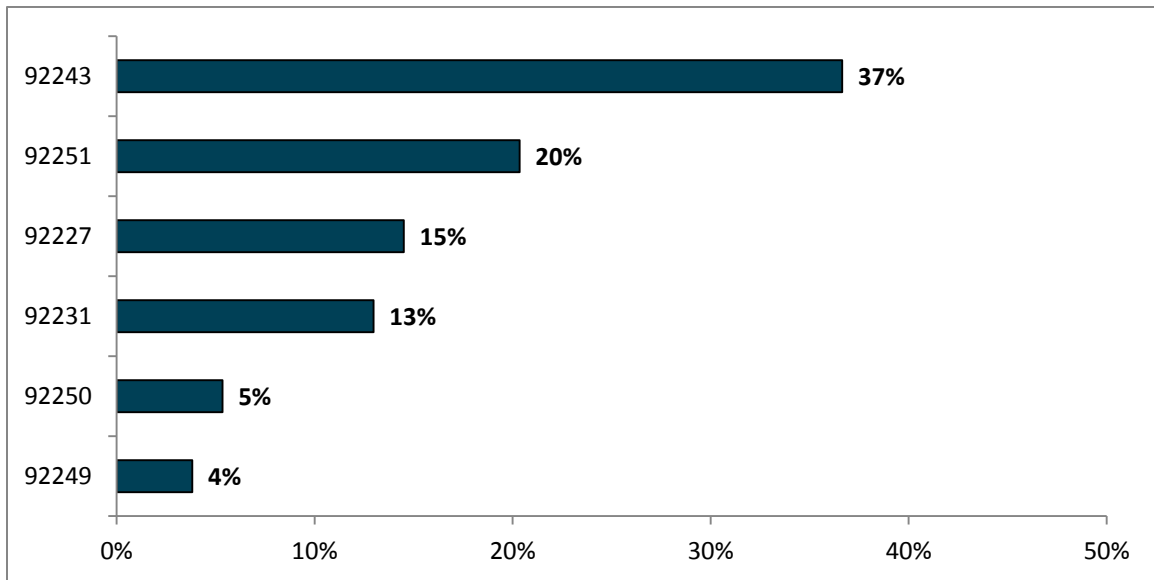
N=414

Figure 27: Distribution by Industry



N=339

**Figure 28: Most Common Respondent Zip Codes**



N=393

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