



# Newly Released National Findings From the Alumni Attitude Study©

*April, 2008*

*Presented by:*



The slides in this handout are part of a more complete and comprehensive oral presentation. For an in-depth understanding of the information provided herein, you should view these slides in combination with that presentation. For questions contact Rob Shoss at PEG, Ltd.

# About The Alumni Attitude Study<sup>©</sup>



- **Cooperative development of the instrument**
  - ✓ *Greater need for feedback as part of partnership model versus pricing issues to do one-up research*
  - ✓ *85% remains the same from original instrument*
  - ✓ *Smaller versions available*
  - ✓ *Custom-designed instruments have some comparable questions*
  
- **Samples were extracted by the individual schools to reflect (as much as possible) the individual school's alumni population and demographics**
  
- **Survey distributed to over 800,000 alumni via email (with some schools opting to also use mail and telephone) over last 4 years**  
*(average response rate of 15% to 20%)*
  
- **A branded survey was emailed to each individual with a link to a secure site for survey completion**
  
- **Survey questions can be divided into five areas:**
  - ✓ *Demographics*
  - ✓ *Loyalty*
  - ✓ *Overall experience*
  - ✓ *Student experience*
  - ✓ *Alumni experience*

# Underlying Design Principles for AAS



## Actionable Results

Actionable results begin with careful question wording, construction, and order. Results can and should guide an organization toward those improvement opportunities that would have the most impact.

## Prioritized Improvement Opportunities

The true measure of a survey's efficacy is in the extraction of action items that can be implemented to enhance the alumni relationship. Properly structured survey research will assist the organization in identifying improvement opportunities and understanding the implications of their implementation.

## Enhanced Brand/Image Recognition

It is very important to brand your survey as an institutional communications piece. All communications represent opportunities to increase brand awareness and goodwill among the alumni population. These branding benefits accrue even among those that do not complete the survey. The specific elements (logos, colors, etc.) of the brand are introduced and reinforced.

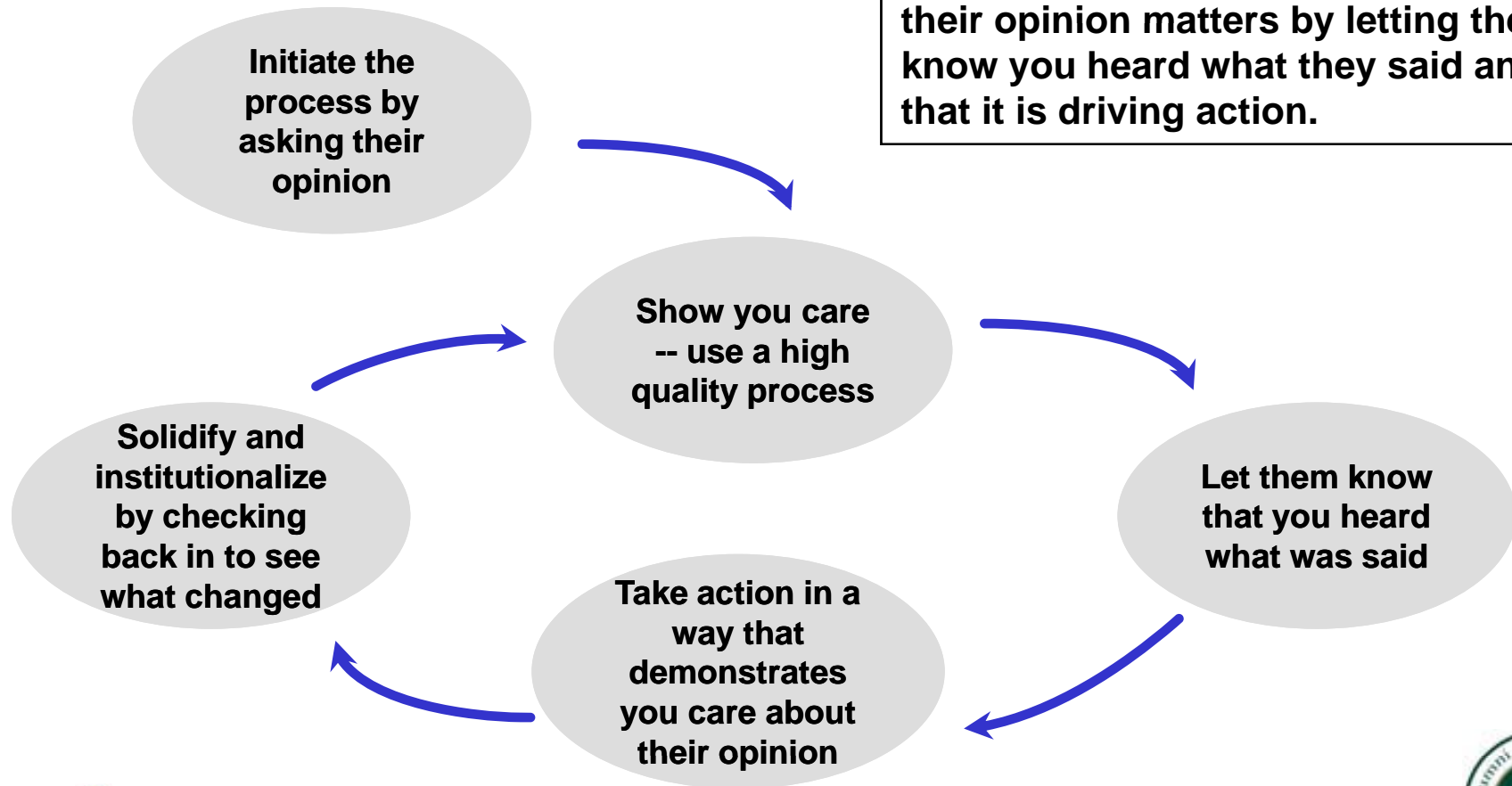
## Alumni Partnership

By directly asking for their input in a professional, deliberate way, the university demonstrates to alumni that their opinions are important. The institution is entering into a different type of relationship – one in which alumni input is highly valued. Implementing all elements of the Alumni Partnership Model<sup>®</sup> will further enhance this relationship.

# Alumni Partnership Model<sup>©</sup>



The survey process should be another part of your partnering process with alumni. Show them that their opinion matters by letting them know you heard what they said and that it is driving action.



# Statistical Considerations



## Confidence Interval

- Computation based on number of responses and variation of responses
- Assumes random distribution and ability to respond
- Response percentage is not part of the consideration for this calculation

## Non-Response Bias

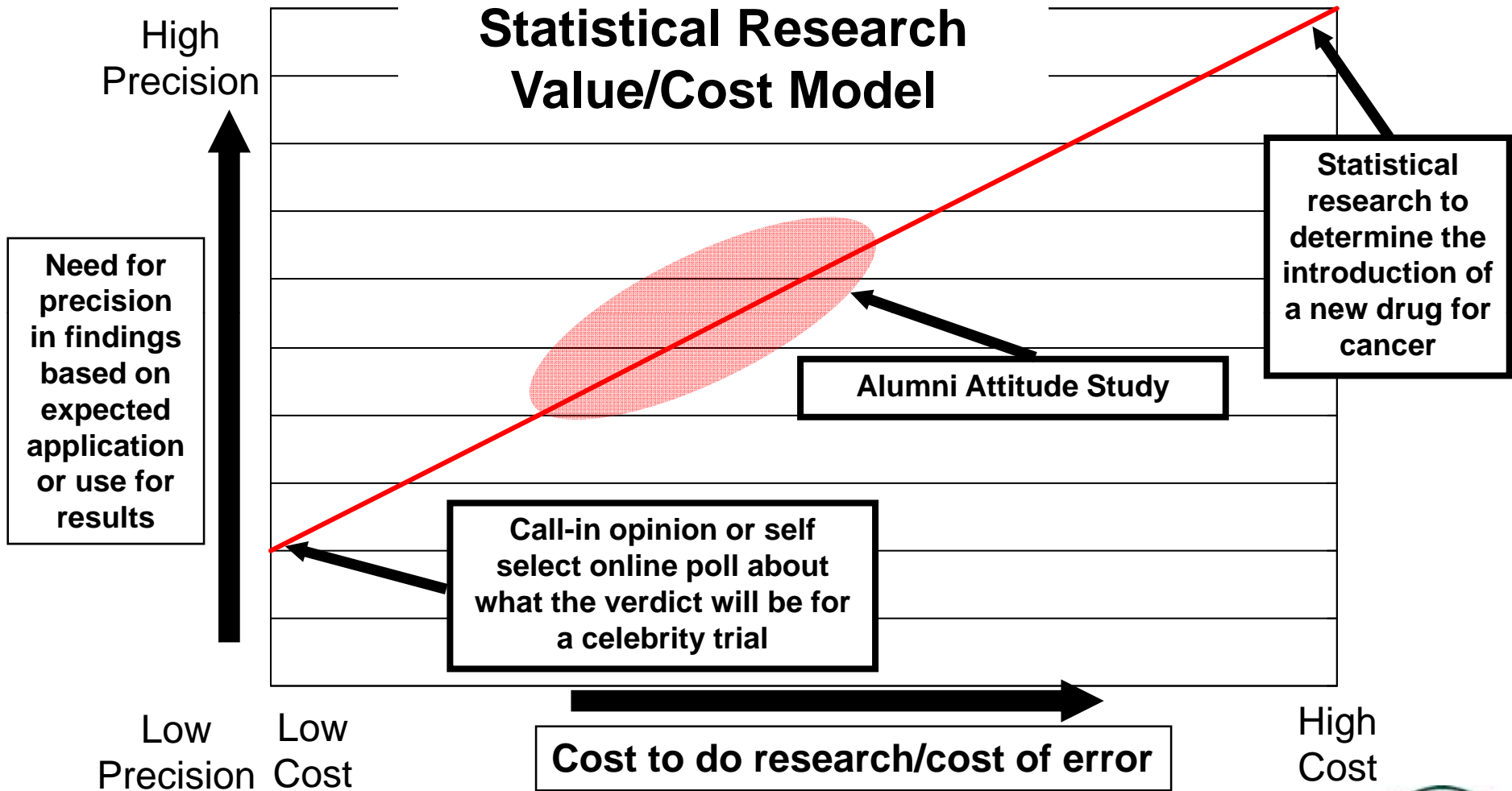
- A low survey response rate and corresponding high non-response rate causes concern about differences between respondents and non-respondents
- Exists in both internet and phone surveys as well as mail
- Consistency of ranking for question groups helps alleviate concern
- Distribution across membership status, age, and gender also helps reduce concern

## Selection Bias

- A survey will be more representative of the entire population if sample selection is truly random and each member of the population has an equal opportunity to be selected
- Possibly more of an internet issue currently for some schools
- Approximately 82% of college graduates have access to the internet and email\*

\* Source: “*The Ever-Shifting Internet Population*”, The Pew Internet & American Life Project, April 16, 2003.

# When Enough is Enough



# Founding Participants



Baylor

University of Georgia

Iowa State University

Indiana University

Kansas State University

Lehigh University

University of Michigan

University of Nebraska

Northwestern

Oklahoma State

SUNY Buffalo

# The Alumni Attitude Study<sup>©</sup> Questionnaire



- Structure of Survey
  - *Student experience*
  - *Overall experience*
  - *Alumni experience*
  - *Demographics*

- Categories of Analysis
  - *Loyalty*
  - *Communication*
  - *Programs*
  - *Giving*
  - *Branding on Campus*



# Questions about Student Experience



- **Student participation**
- **Importance/performance – student experience**
  - Academics / classes
  - Attending athletic events
  - Exposure to new things . . .
- **Qualitative responses**
  - Name and discuss one person who had a special impact on you as a student
  - Name and discuss one program which had a special impact on you as a student

# Questions about Alumni Experience



- **Willingness to financially support the school**
- **Importance/Performance - Communications**
  - Web site (both alumni and university)
  - Communications regarding services and benefits
  - Alumni magazine . . .
- **How often do you do things:**
  - Attend events
  - Read Alumni magazine
  - Visit school web site
- **What impacts your opinion of the university**
  - Value and respect for degree
  - Accomplishments of each – students, alumni, and/or faculty
  - Success of athletic teams
- **Barriers to participation**
- **Qualitative questions:**
  - What is most important to you about being an alumnus/a
  - What is the most meaningful thing the association can do for you in the next 5-10 years

# Question about Overall Experience



- **Loyalty**
- **How well did degree prepare you for:**
  - Current work status
  - Responding to new career opportunities
  - Contributing to community . . .
- **Importance/level of school support – alumni activities**
  - Mentoring
  - Identifying job opportunities for graduates
  - Recruiting students . . .

# School Participation by Year



## 2002

**Baylor**  
**Nebraska**  
SUNY Albany  
Central Washington  
**Missouri**  
New Mexico University  
University of Pittsburgh  
Spelman College  
**St. John's**  
**Syracuse**  
**Central Florida**  
**University of Kansas**  
Montana, University of  
**Western Michigan State**

## 2003

University of Colorado  
Drake University  
George Mason  
Montana State  
**North Dakota State**  
Ohio University  
Portland State  
**Cincinnati, University of**  
University of California (9)  
West Virginia University

## 2004

Boise State  
Brandeis  
Cincinnati  
Jacksonville State  
Kent State University  
**Linfield College**  
**Missouri**  
**Nebraska**  
Oregon  
Purdue  
**RIT**  
Southern Miss. State  
UMass Lowell  
Weber State University

**Red – Follow-up surveys**



# School Participation by Year



## 2005

**North Dakota State**  
**UCSD**  
**Baylor**  
 Colorado State  
 Georgetown  
 George Washington  
**Lehigh University**  
 Niagara University  
**RIT**  
**Syracuse**  
 Houston, University of  
 Utah, University of  
 Ithaca  
  
 New York University  
  
 Texas Christian  
  
 Southern Methodist

## 2006

University of Alaska  
 Buffalo State  
**Central Florida**  
**University of Kansas**  
 Mercer  
 Oakland University  
 Plymouth State  
 UNLV  
**Western Michigan**  
 Winthrop  
 Wisconsin La Crosse  
 Southern Illinois  
**George Washington**  
  
 Concordia University

## 2007

Southwest Minnesota  
 Southern Polytechnic  
 Bryant University  
 Montana State Billings  
 American University  
 Emporia State  
 Florida International  
 Georgia Tech  
 National Louis University  
 Oregon State  
 Rensselaer Poly  
 USC  
 Berea College  
 University of Alaska  
 Comm.

## 2007 (Continued)

East Carolina University  
 Sigma Nu  
 Widener University  
 Whitworth  
**St. John's**  
 Cedarville  
 Barry University  
 Northern Iowa University  
 Santa Clara Law School  
 Florida State

**Red – Follow-up surveys**





## Internally Generated

- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Giving Status
- Degree Type
- Membership Status
- Age
- Graduation Year
- Activities as Student

## Optionally Provided by Institution

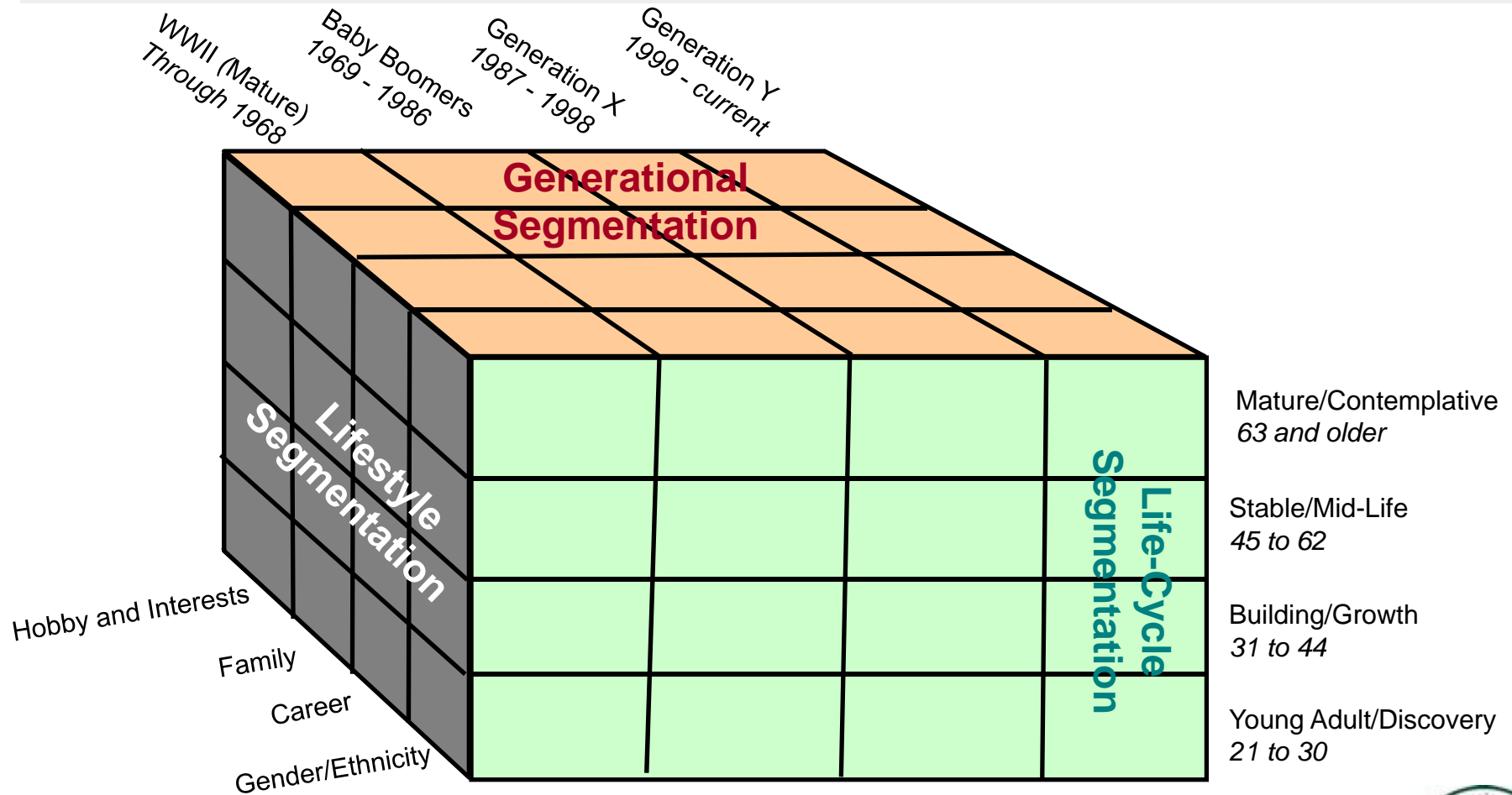
- College
- Giving level
- Campus
- Actual Degree
- Giving Program Involved
- Alumni Activities
- Volunteering Status
- Major

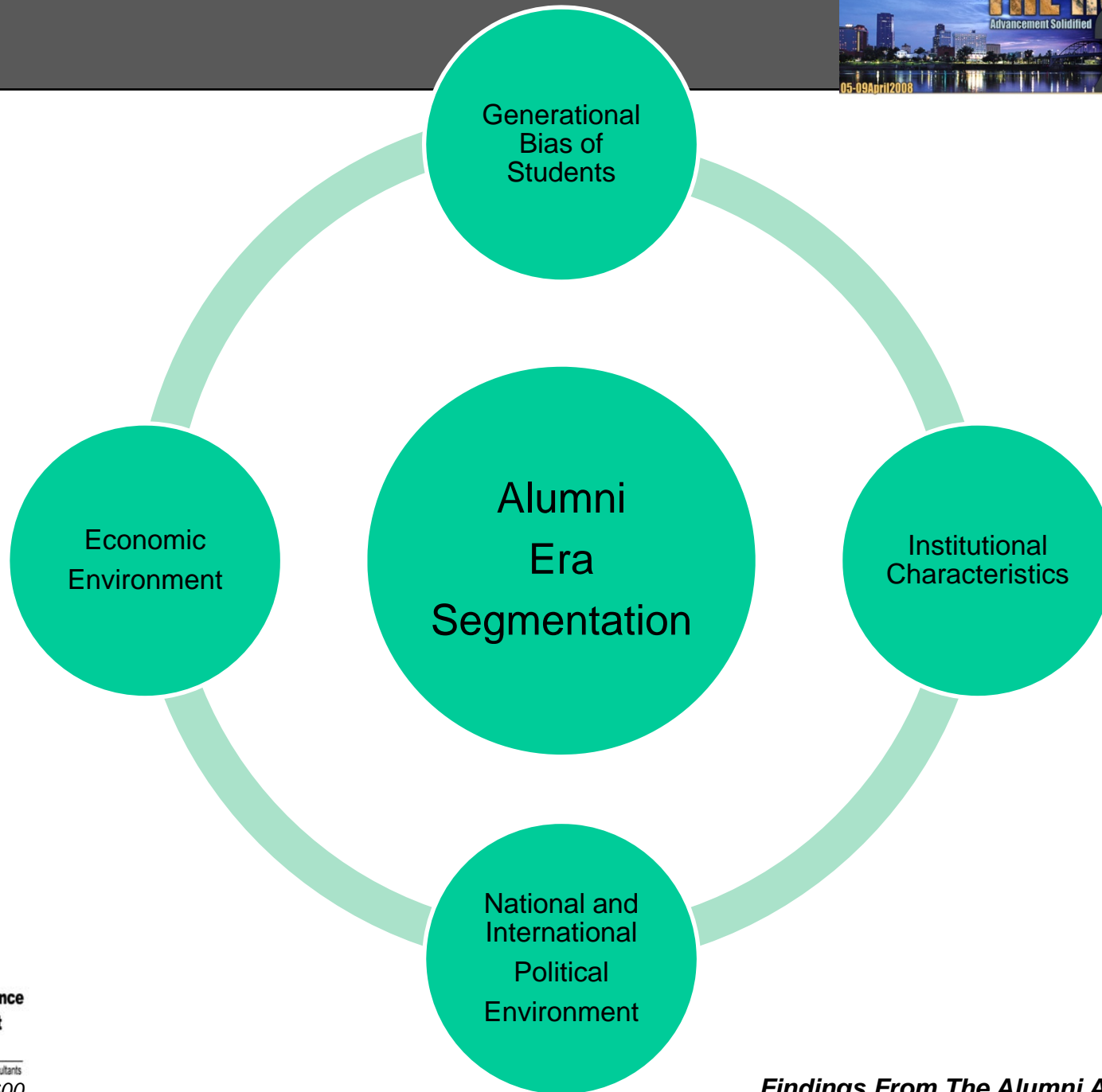


# Initial Alumni Segmentation Model<sup>©</sup>



*It is important to consider generational, stage of life, and lifestyle market segmentation.*





# Current Alumni Segmentation Model<sup>©</sup>



Grad Year →

WWII/Post WWII\*  
- 1963

Woodstock/Vietnam  
1964 - 1973

Post-Watergate  
1974 - 1980

Yuppie/End Cold War  
1981 - 1993

Electronic Revolution/  
Dot-com  
1994 - 2000

Post-9/11  
2001 -

Age ↓

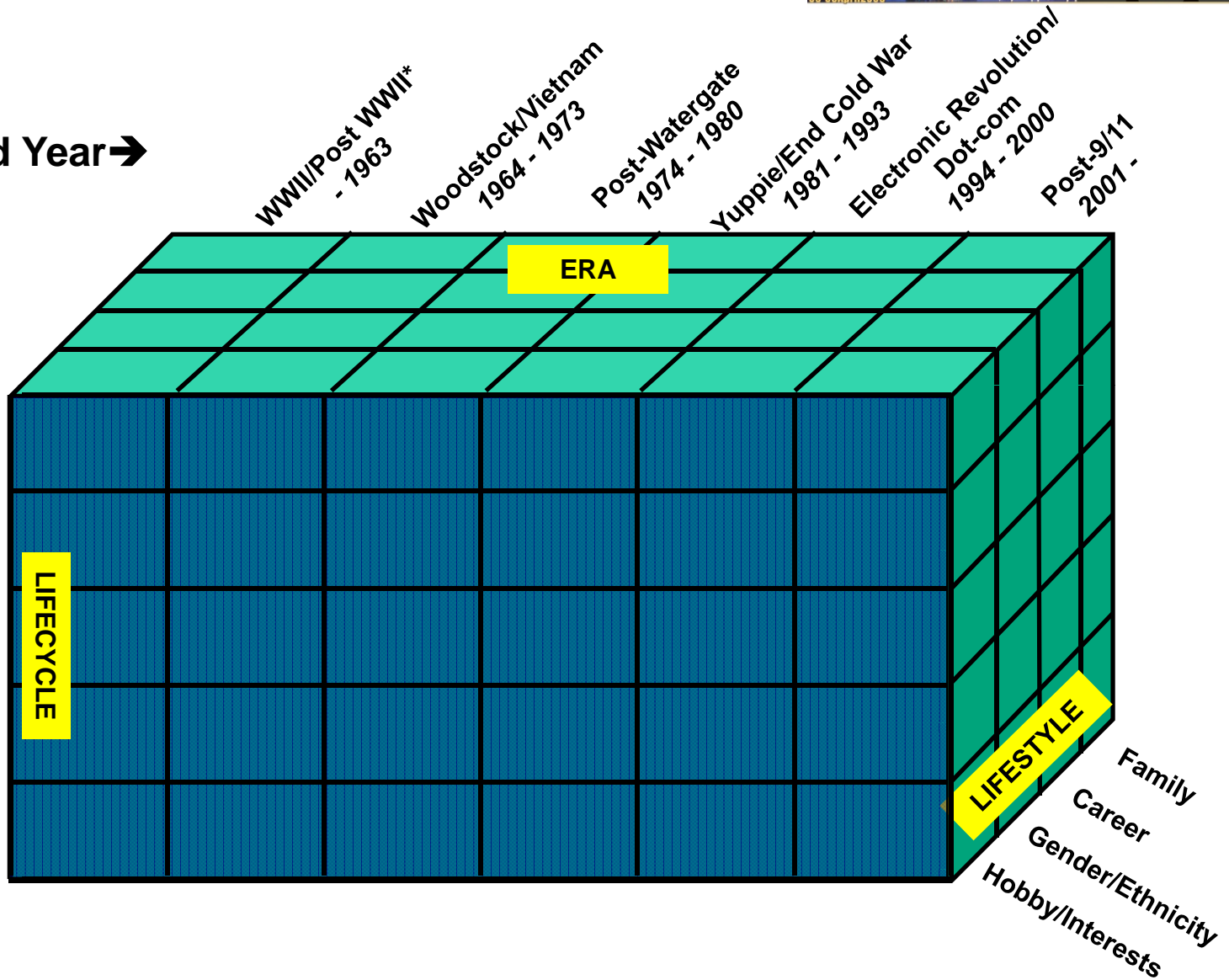
Mature/Contemplative  
63 and older

Stable/Mid-Life  
45 to 62

Building/Growth  
31 to 44

Young Adult/Discovery  
26 to 30

Recent Graduates  
21 to 25

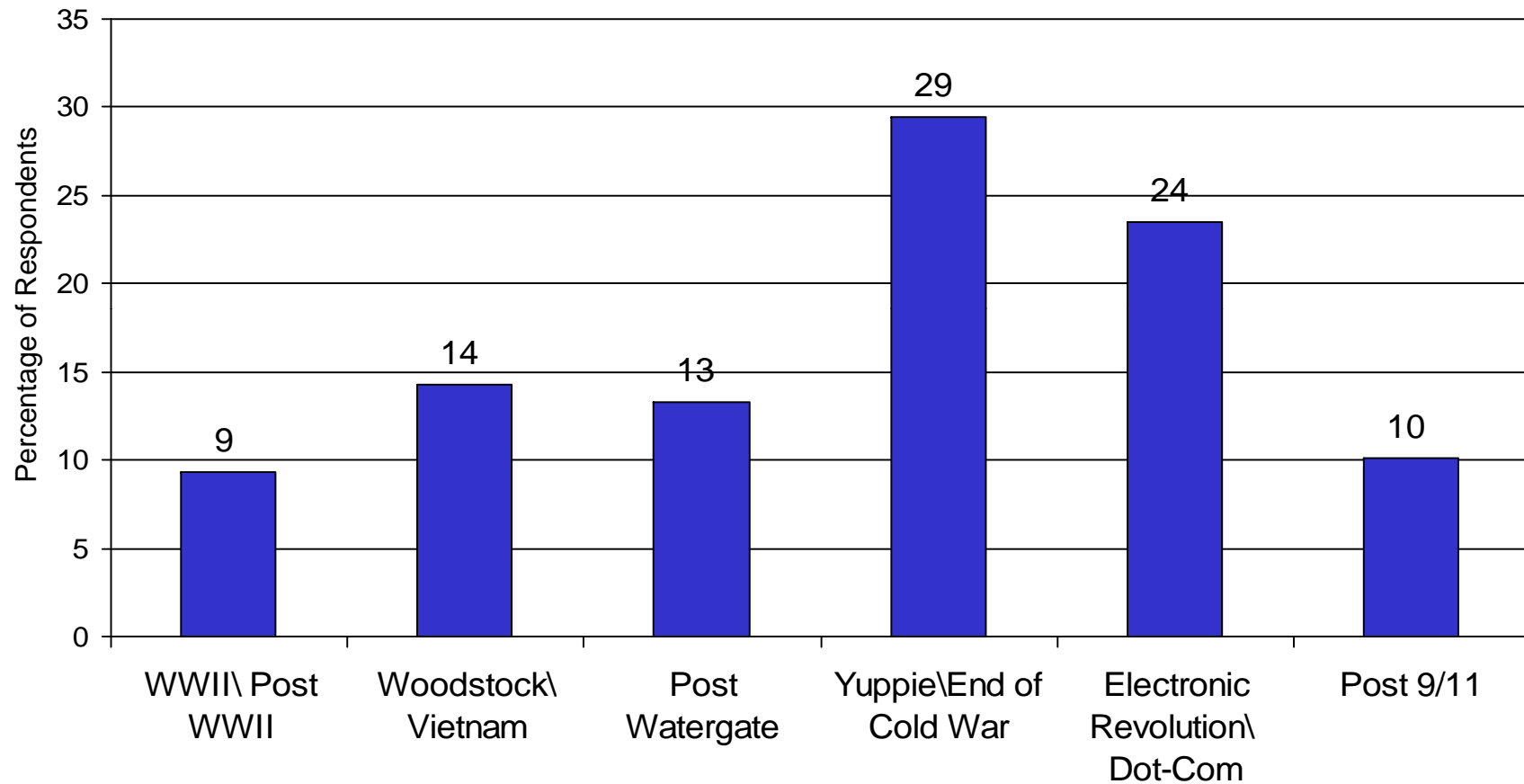


## Some Key Findings

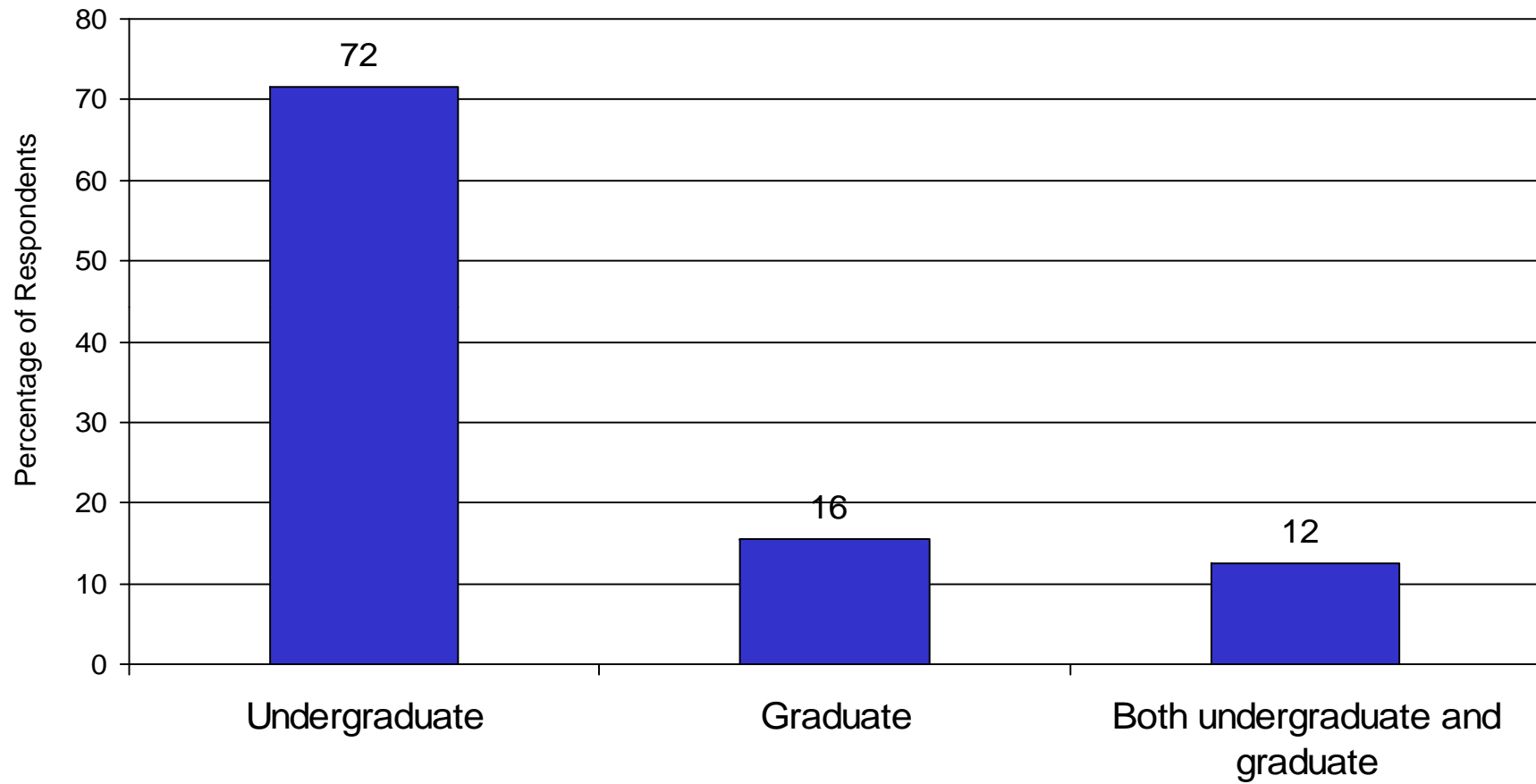


- 1. Communicate to alumni about how the diploma is increasing in equity**
- 2. Provide opportunities for alumni to provide feedback and engage in activities**
- 3. Job and career related activities**
- 4. Communicate differently with younger alumni (30 and under)**
- 5. Branding presence on campus**
- 6. Engaging out-of-state alumni**

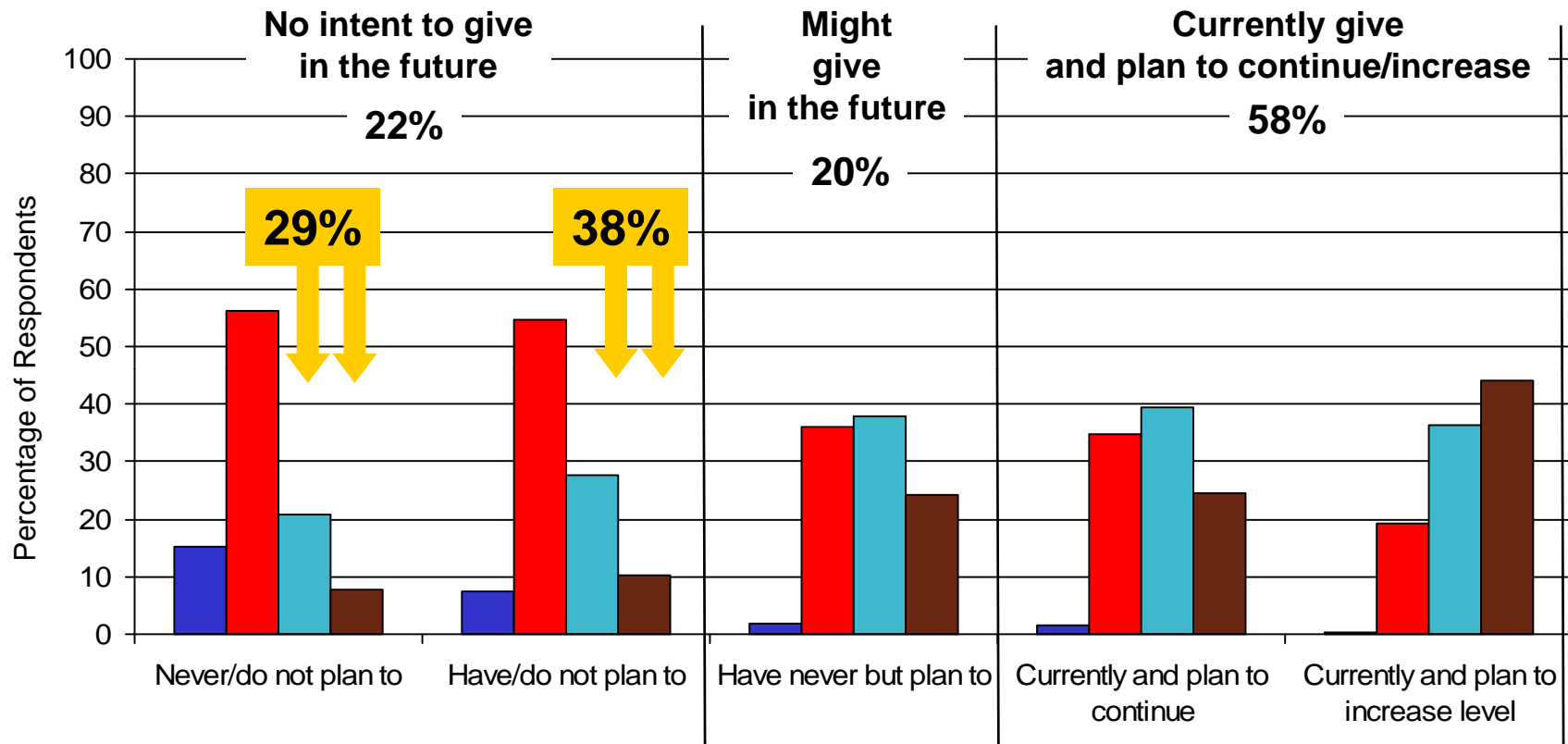
# Study Results: Distribution & Response By Era



# Study Results: Distribution & Response By Degree



**Intent to Financially Participate  
combined with Willingness to Promote  
the University to Others**



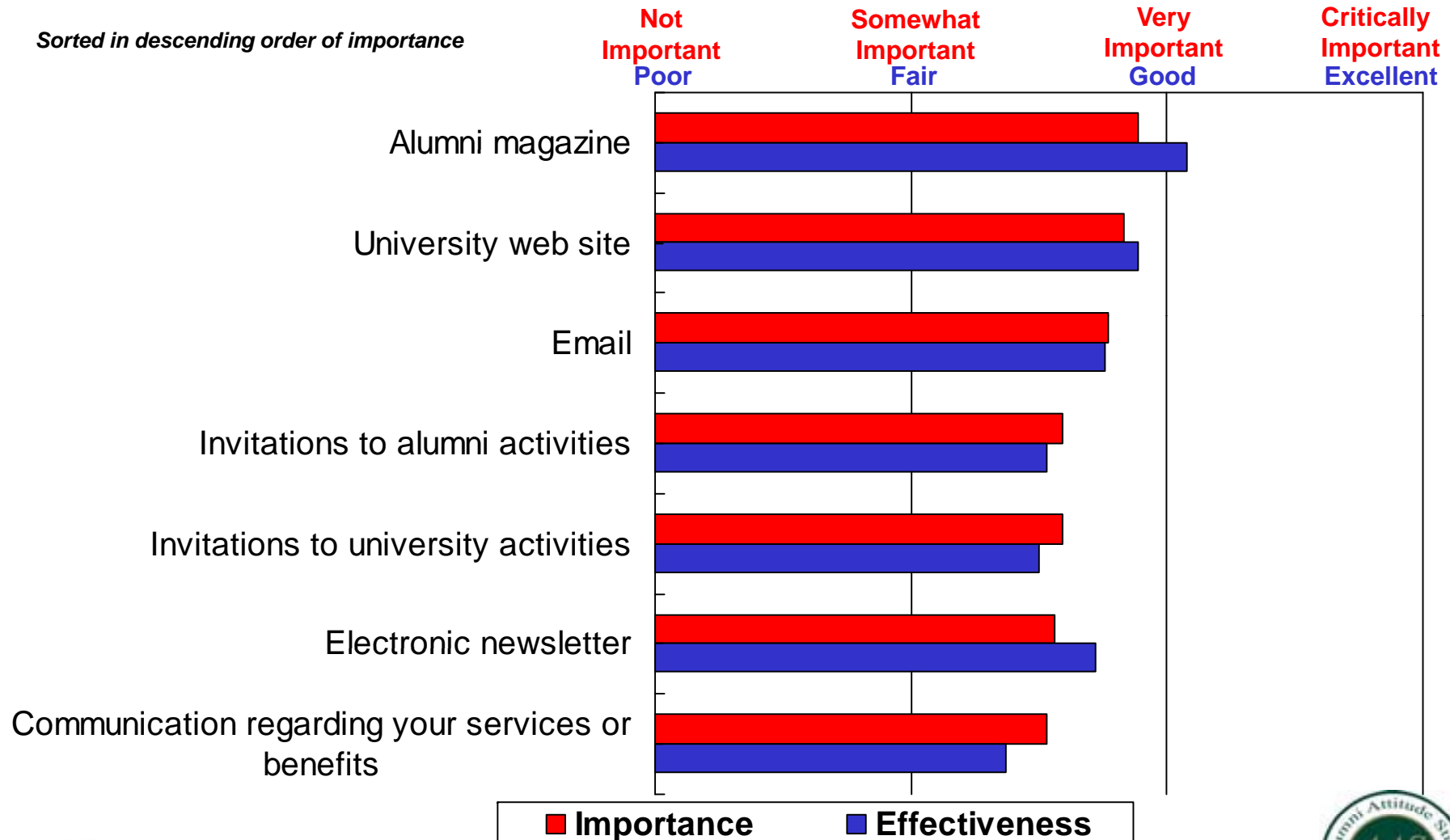
**Q02 How often do you promote the university to others?**



*For each of the communication methods listed below, please tell us how important that method is to you and also rate the alumni association's effectiveness in utilizing that method.*

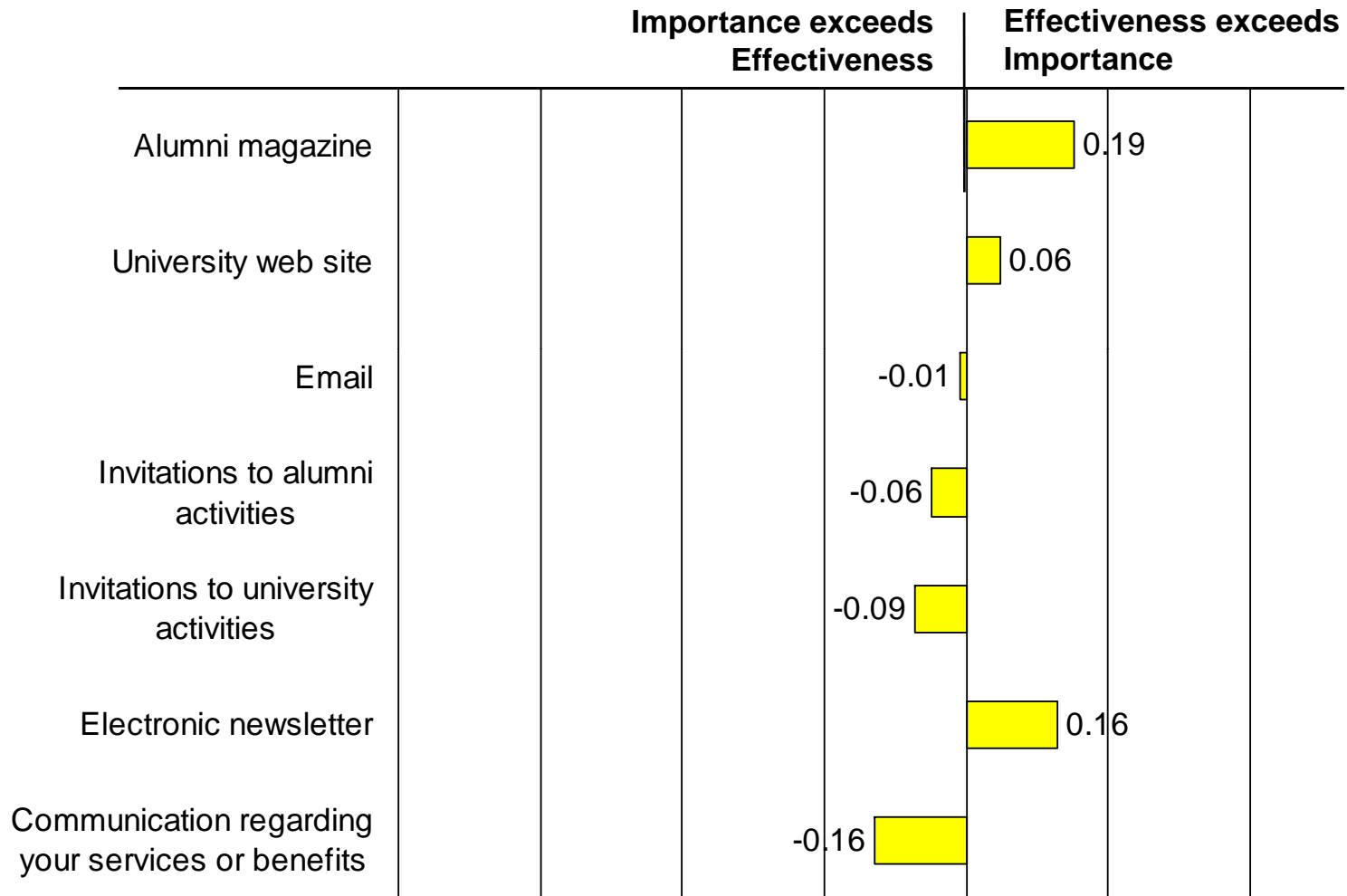


Sorted in descending order of importance



Please tell us how important that method is to you and also rate the alumni association's effectiveness...

*Agitation Gap Analysis*

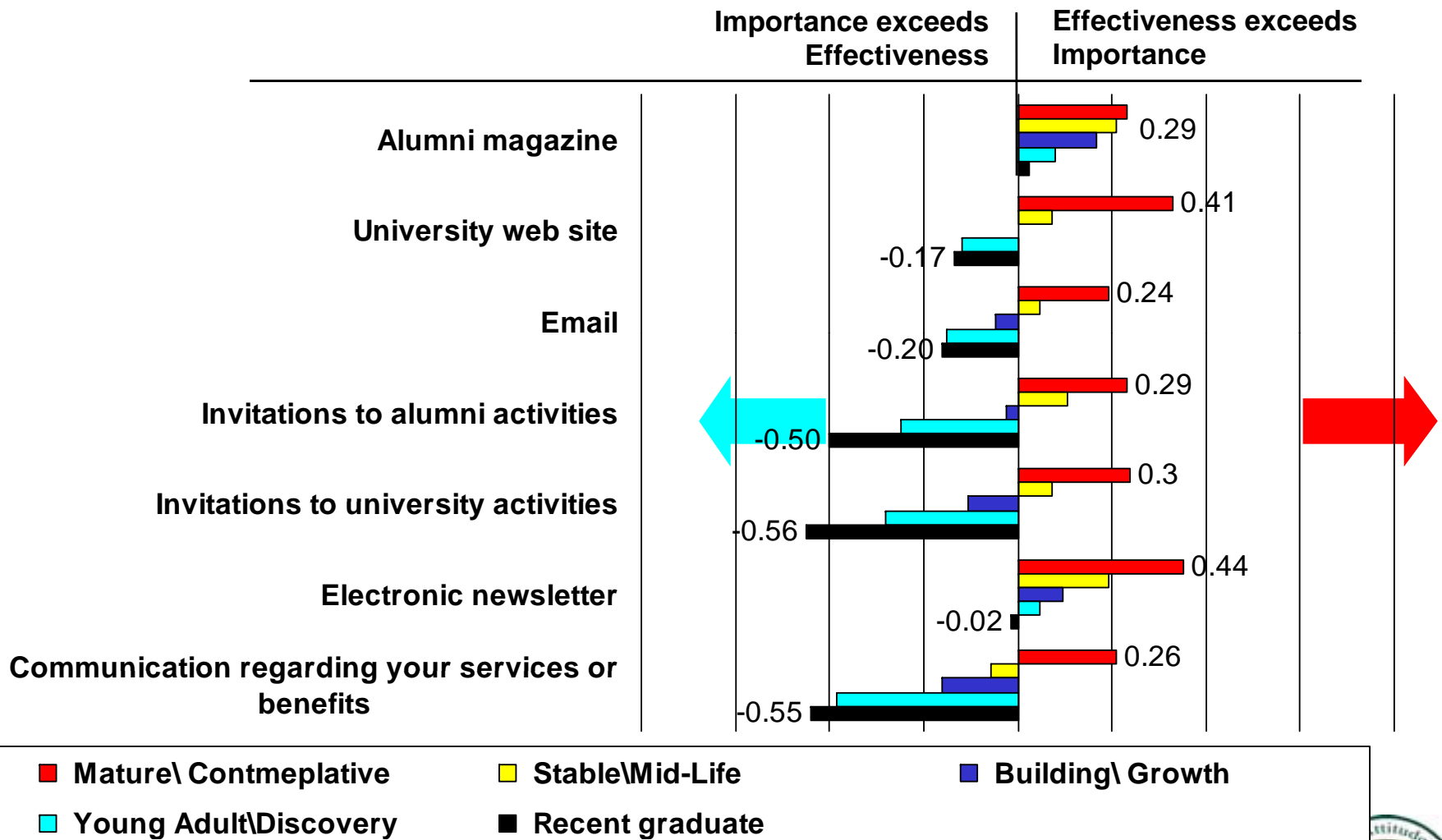


Sorted in descending order of importance



Please tell us how important that method is to you and also rate the alumni association's effectiveness...

Gap Analysis By Life-Cycle



Sorted in descending order of importance

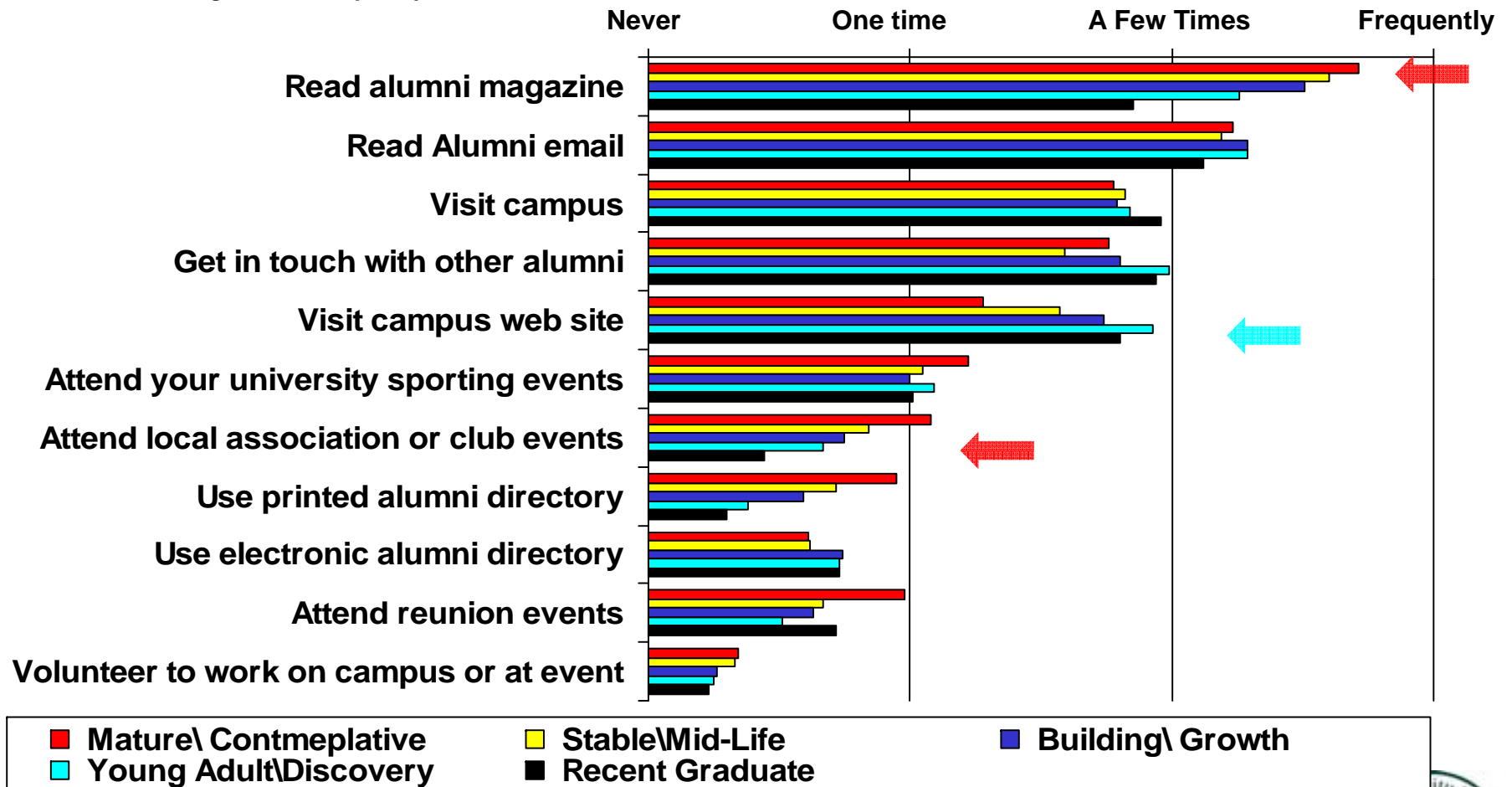


# In your relationship with the university, please describe how often you do or have done the following.

*By Life-Cycle*



Sorted in descending order of frequency

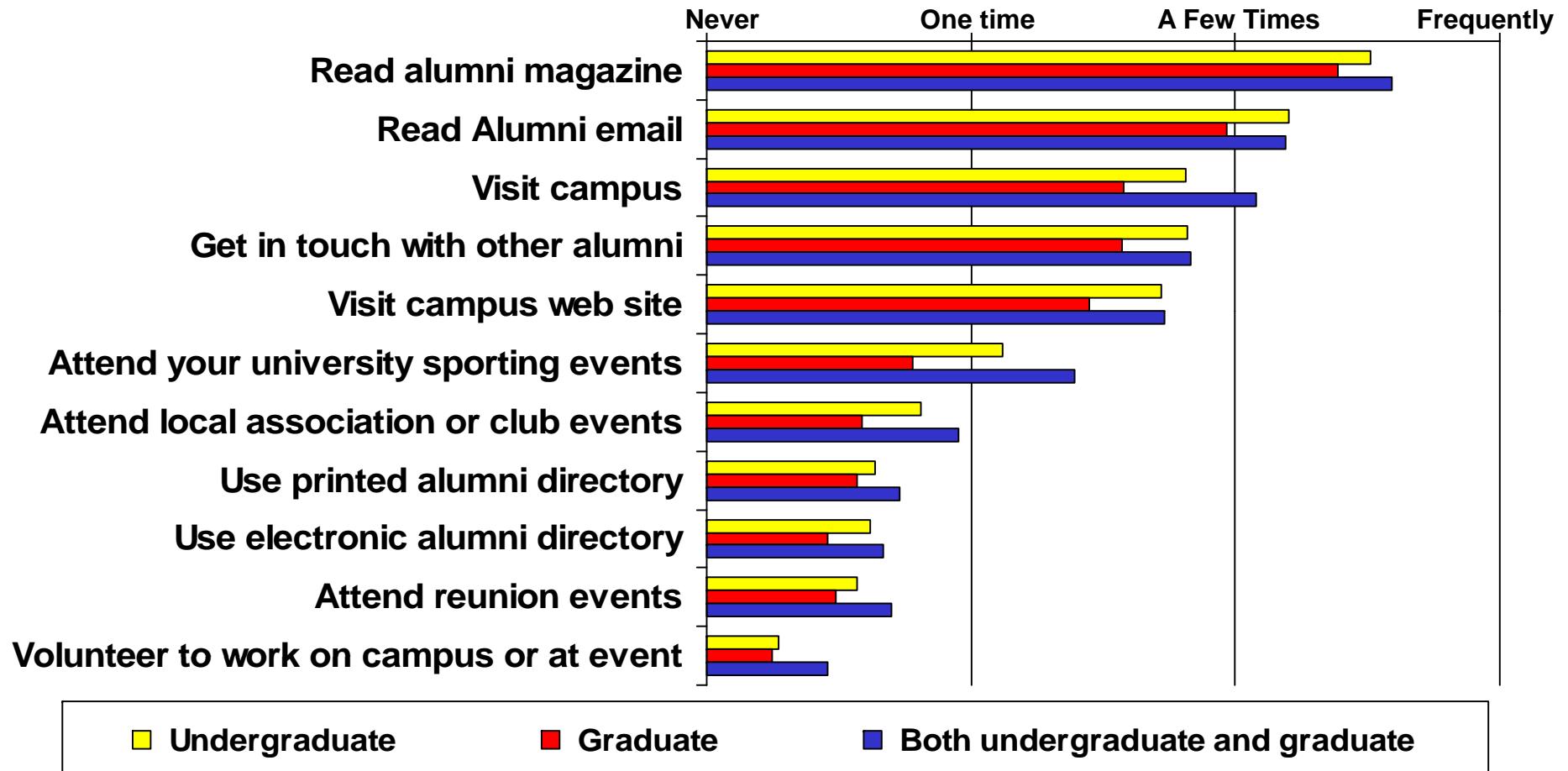


# In your relationship with the university, please describe how often you do or have done the following.

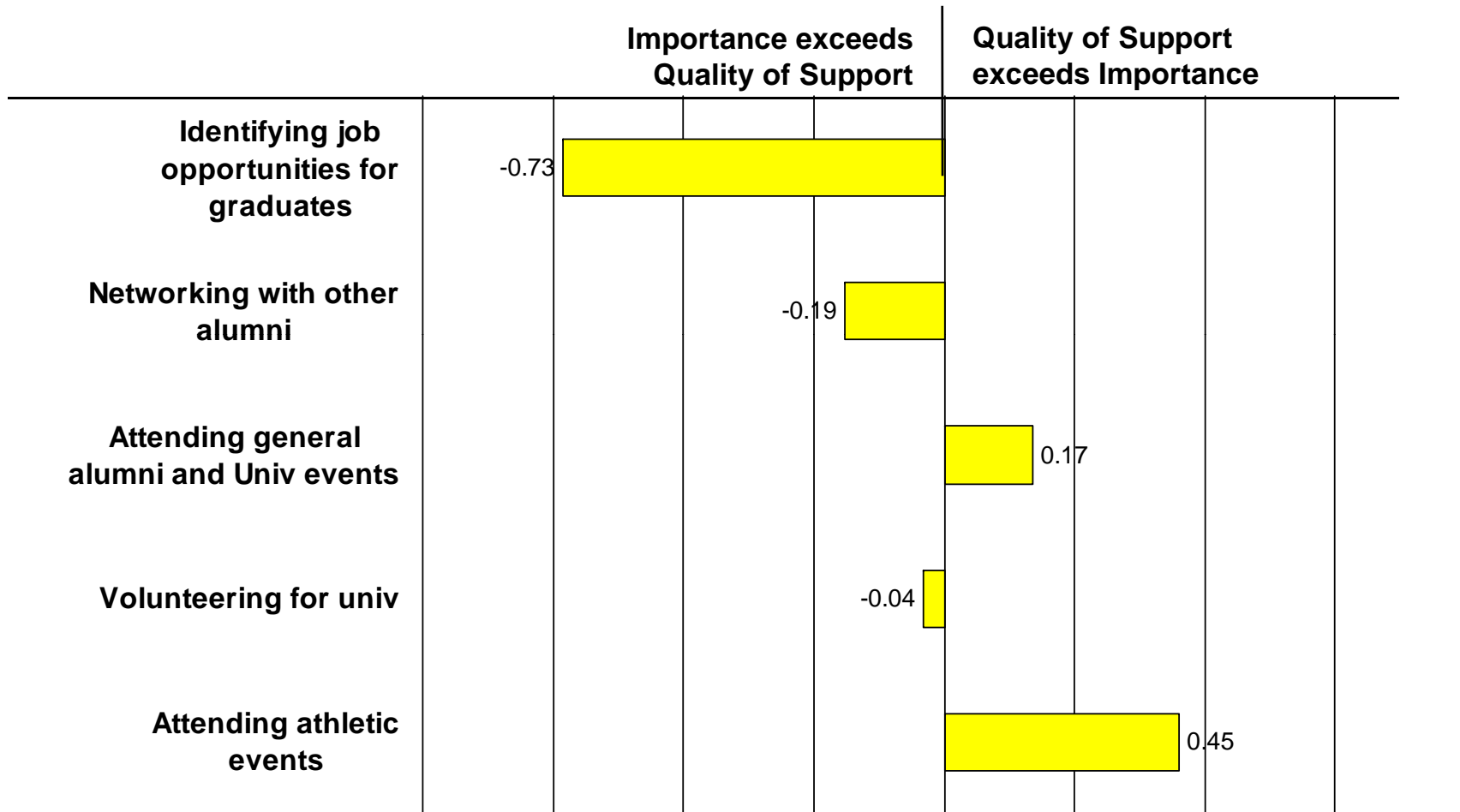
*By Degree*



Sorted in descending order of frequency



How important is it for you and alumni in general to do the following and how well does the university do at supporting alumni in doing them?



Sorted in descending order of importance

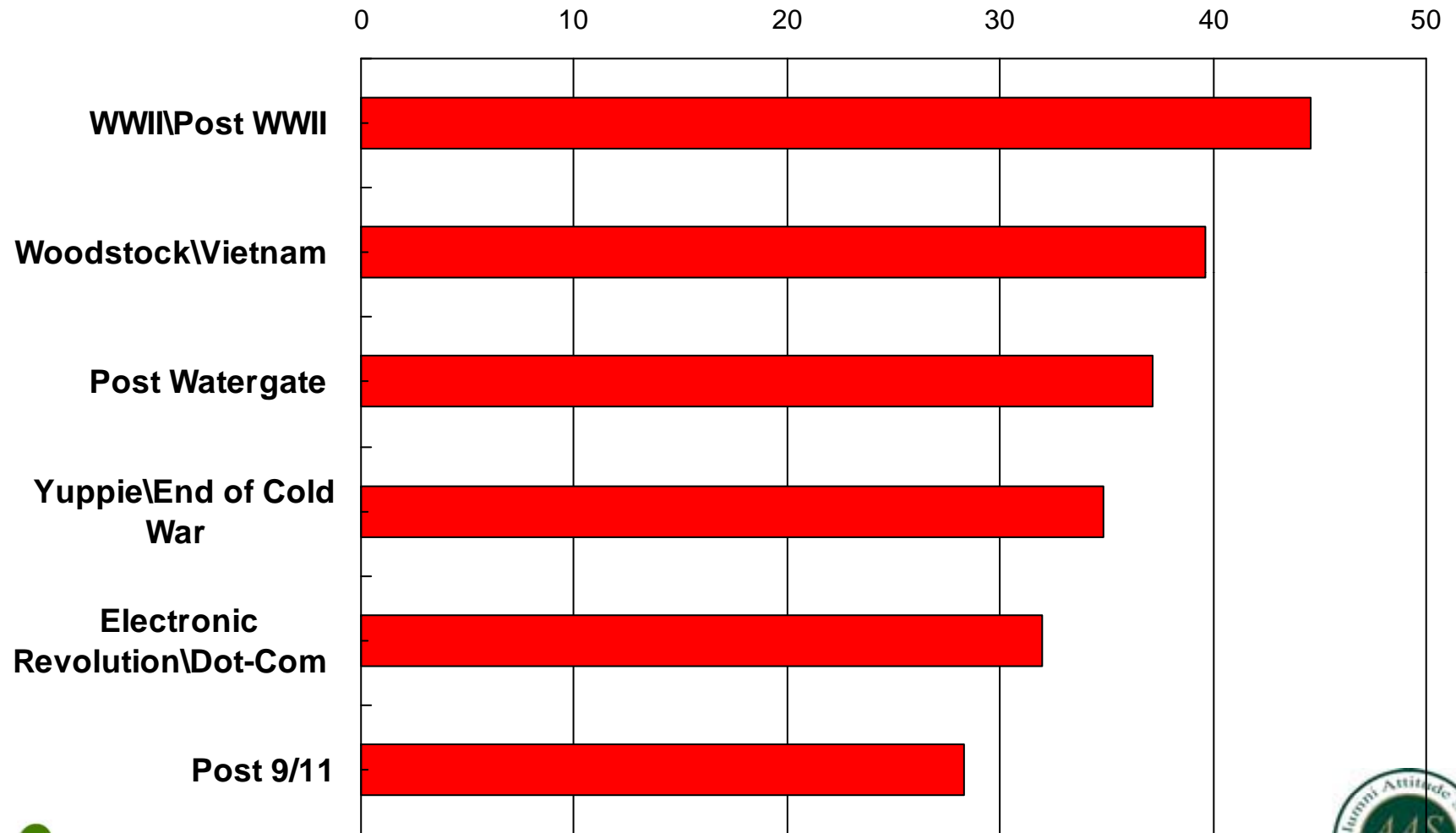


# How well did the highest degree earned from the university prepare you for your current work status?

By Era

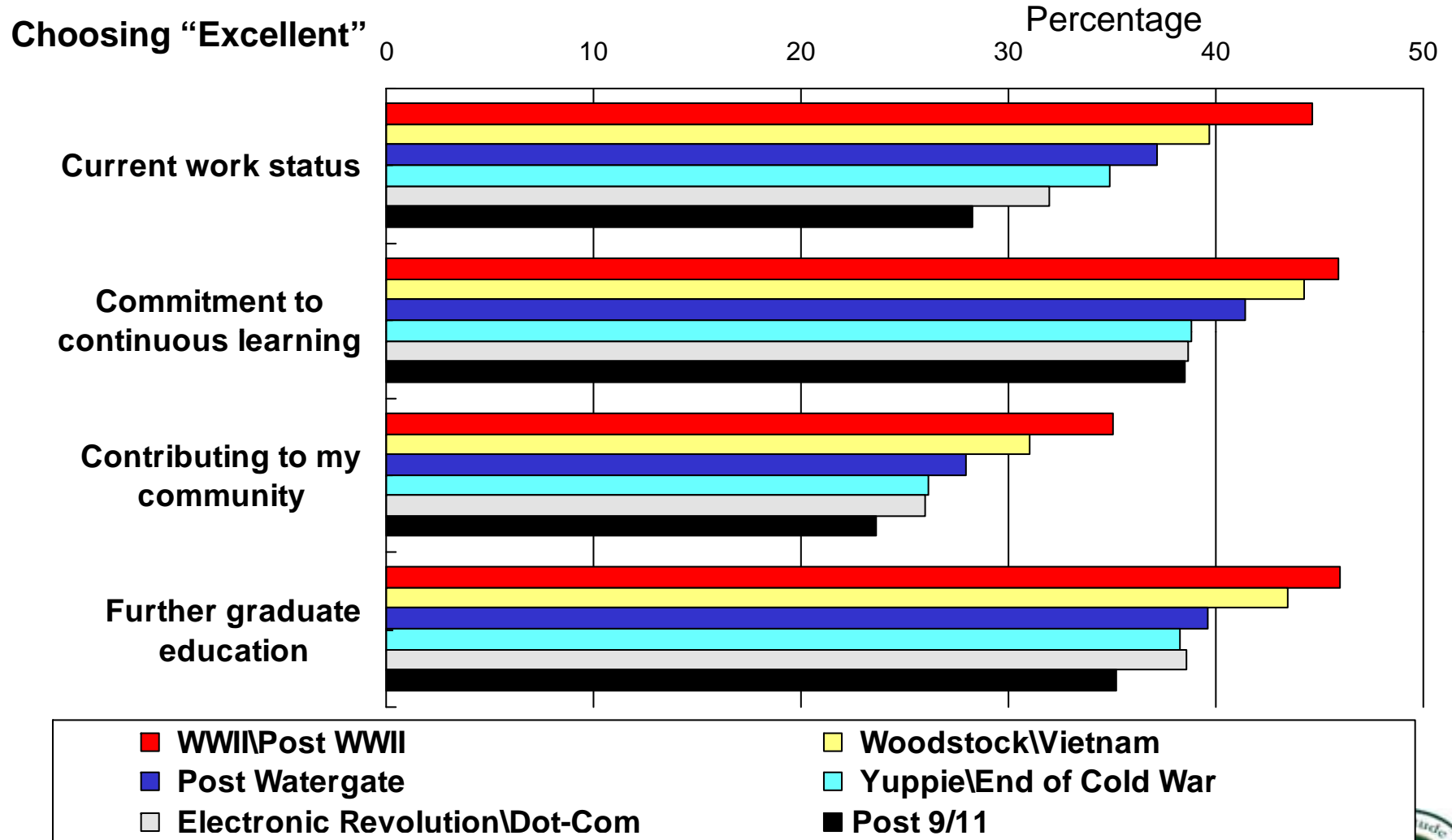


## Percentage Choosing "Excellent"



# How well did the highest degree earned from the university prepare you for each of the following?

By Era

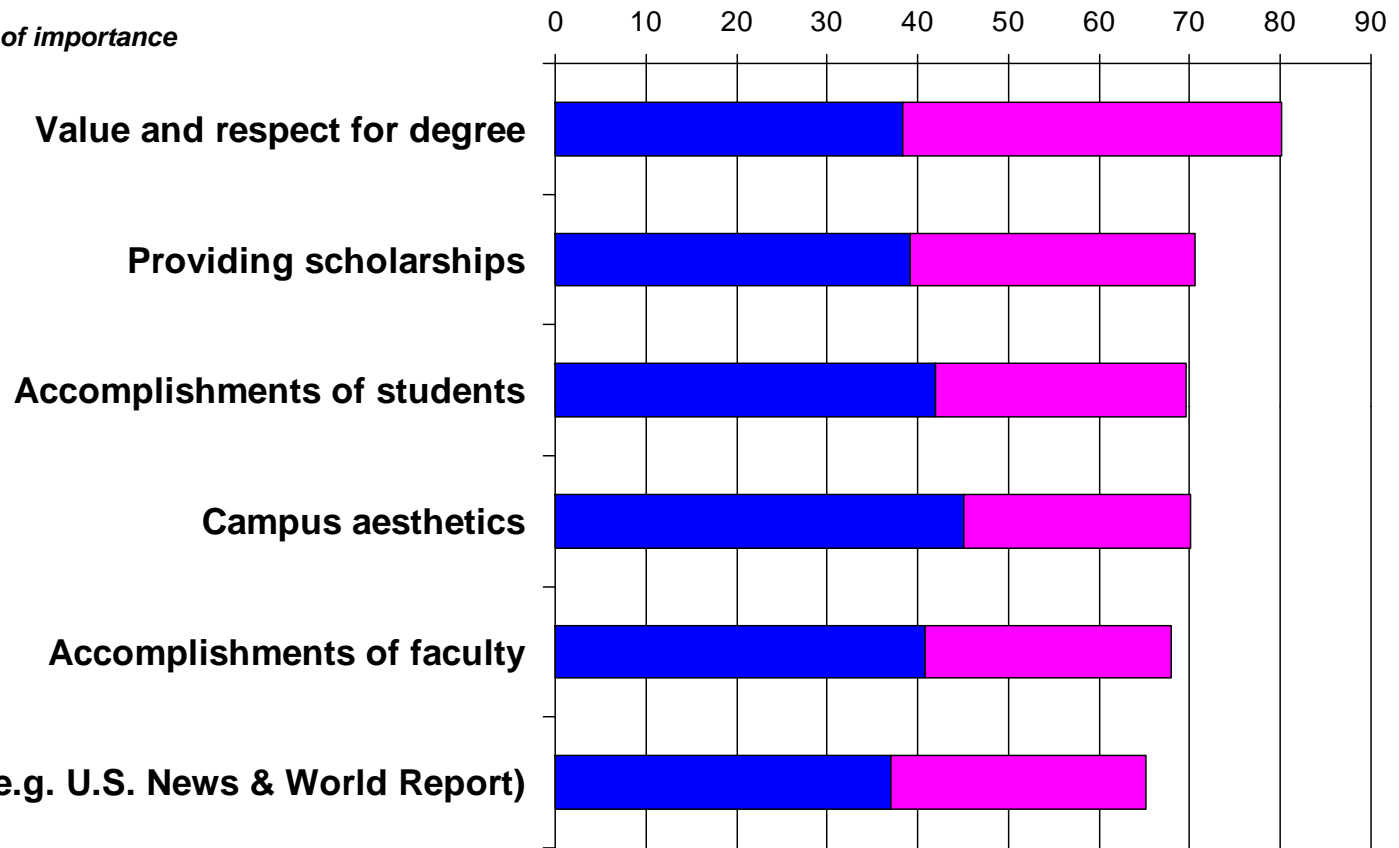


**Q18. Please indicate how much each of the following impacts your overall opinion of the university.**

*Frequency*



*Sorted in descending order of importance*



■ Significantly impacts my opinion

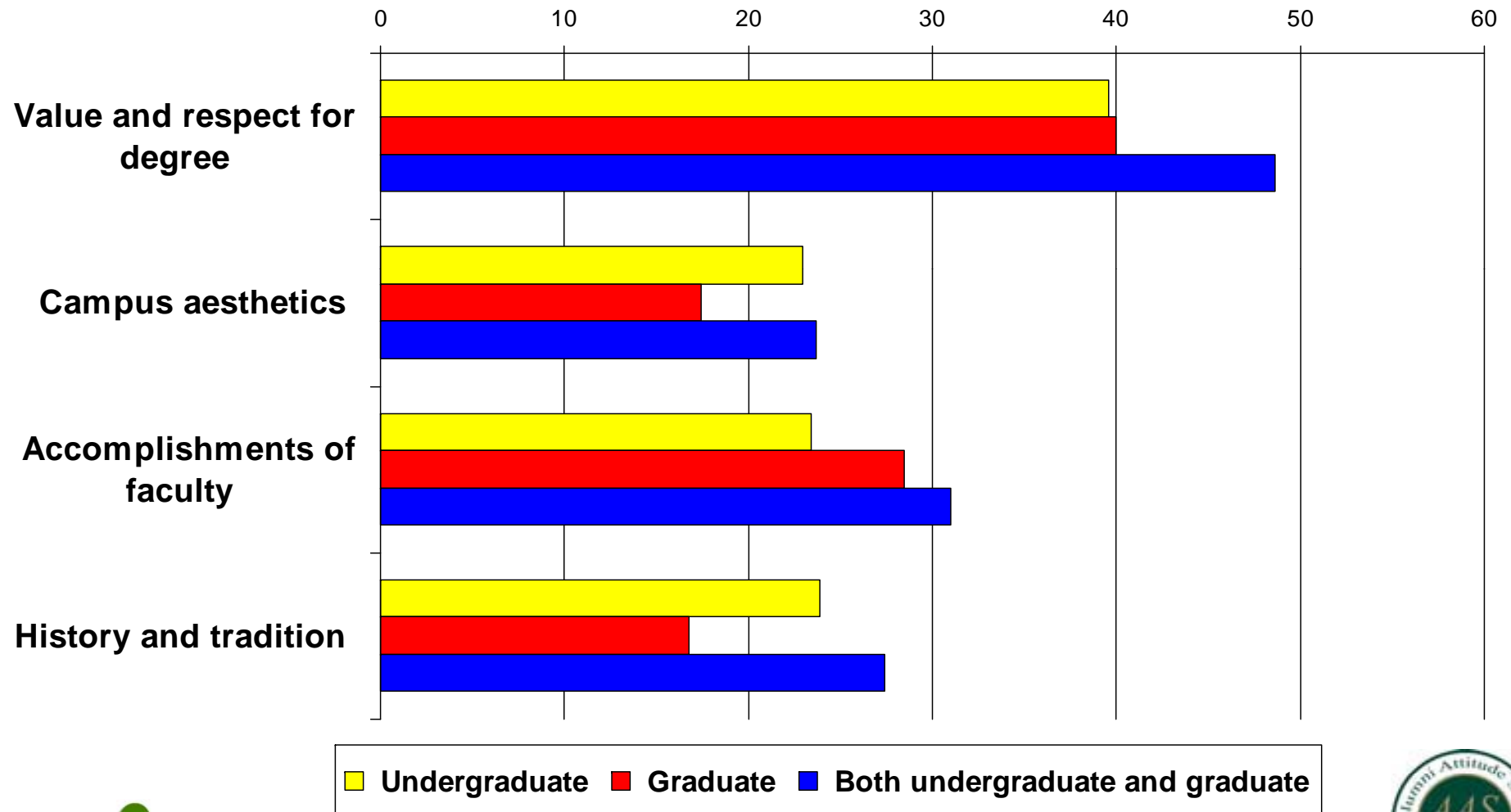
■ Critically impacts my opinion

Please indicate how much each of the following impacts your overall opinion of the university.

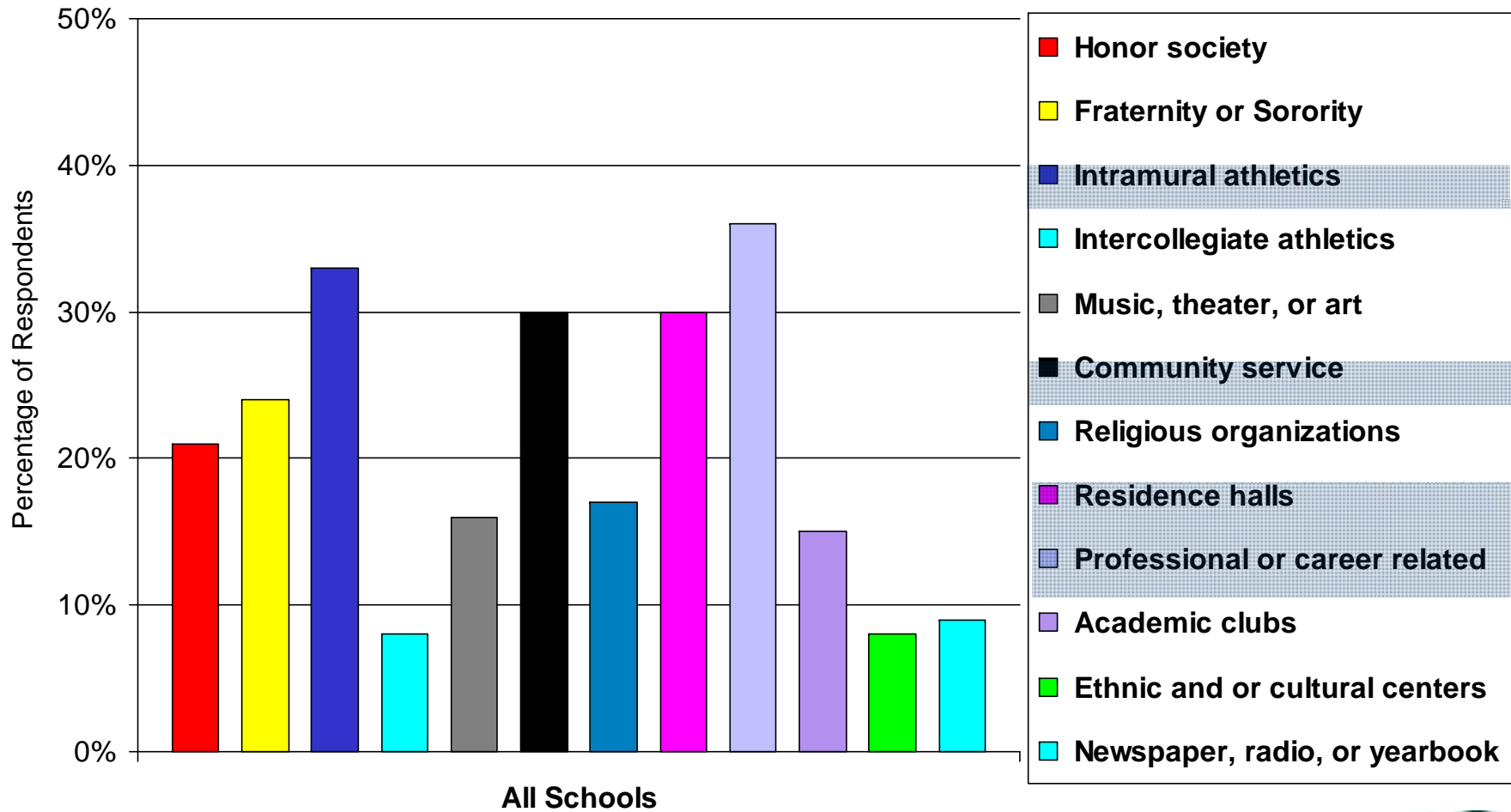
*Degree*



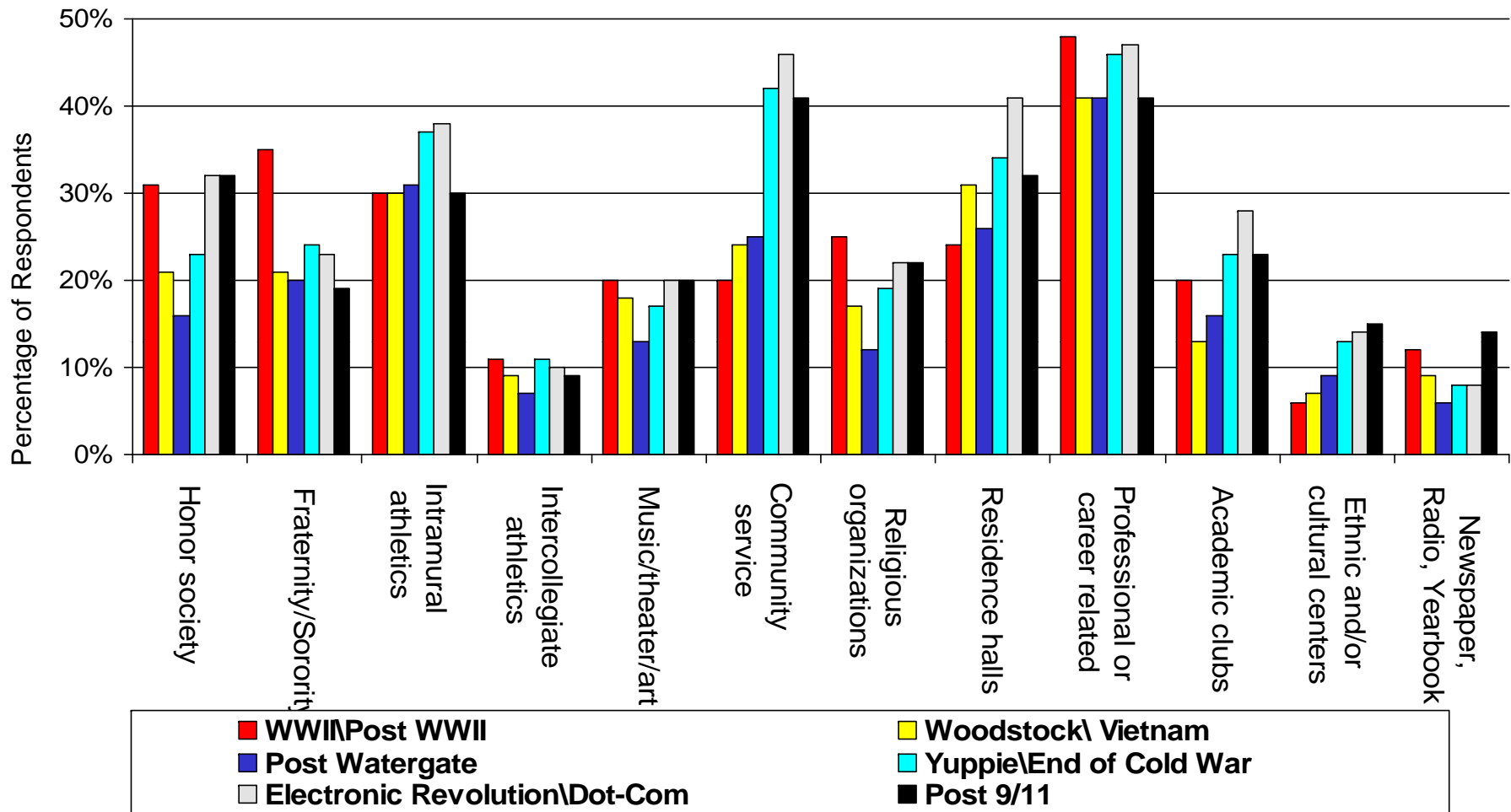
**Critically Impacts Decision**



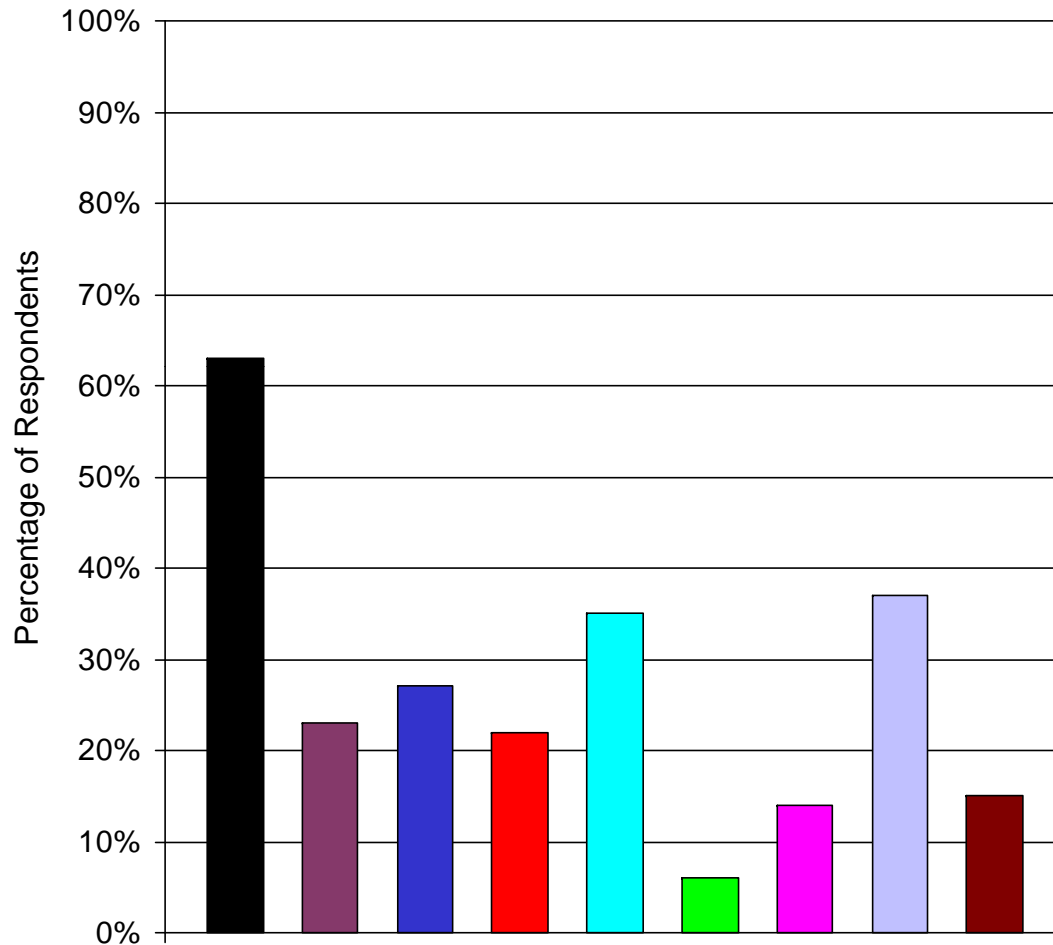
# Q09 In which of the following organizations did you participate as a student?



# Q09 In which of the following organizations did you participate as a student? *By Era*

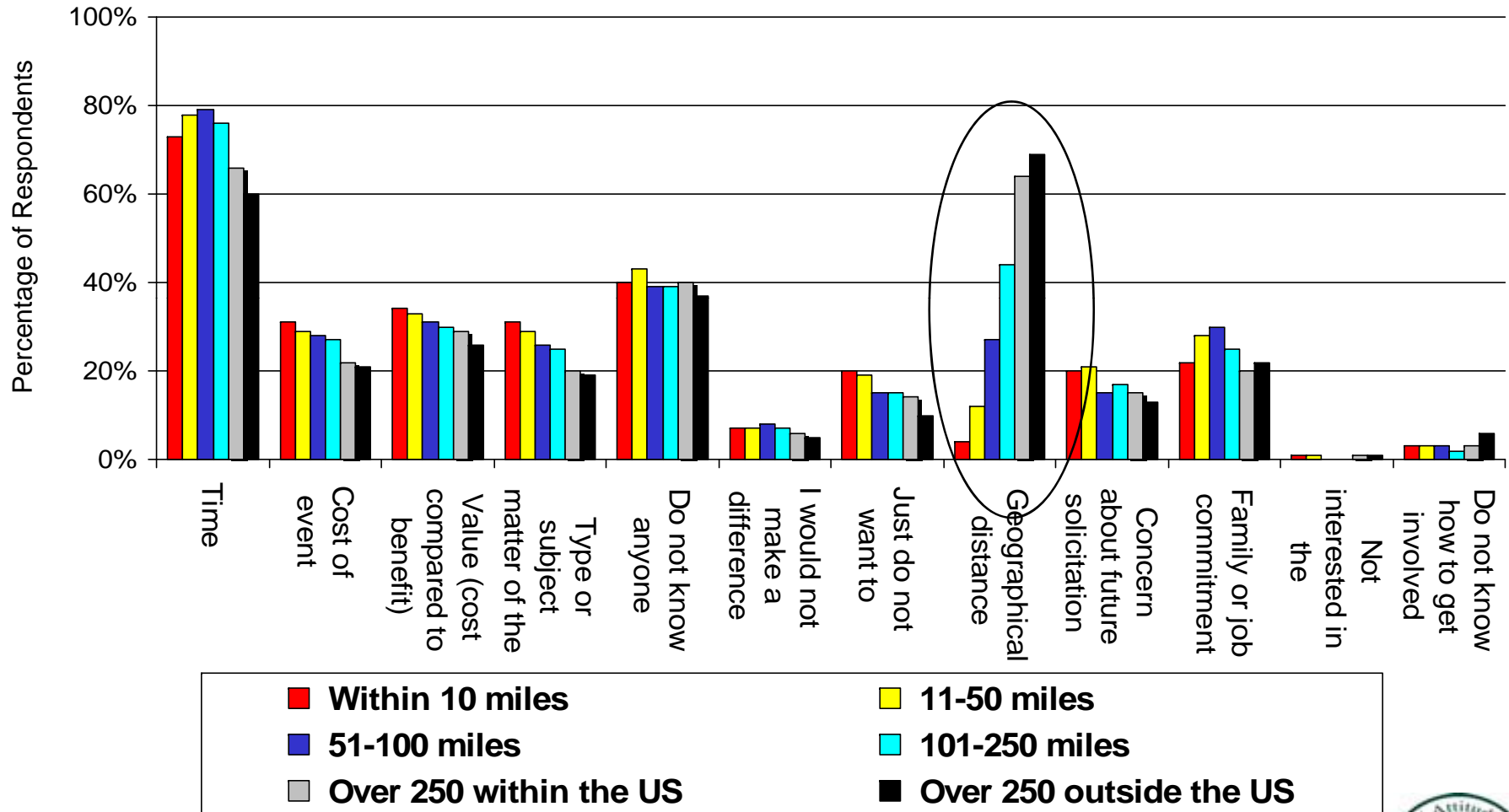


# Q13. What are barriers to your participation in alumni activities?



- Time
- Cost of event
- Value (cost compared to benefit)
- Type or subject matter of the event
- Do not know anyone
- I would not make a difference
- Just do not want to
- Geographical distance
- Concern about future solicitation

# Q14. What are barriers to your participation in alumni activities? *By Distance from School*

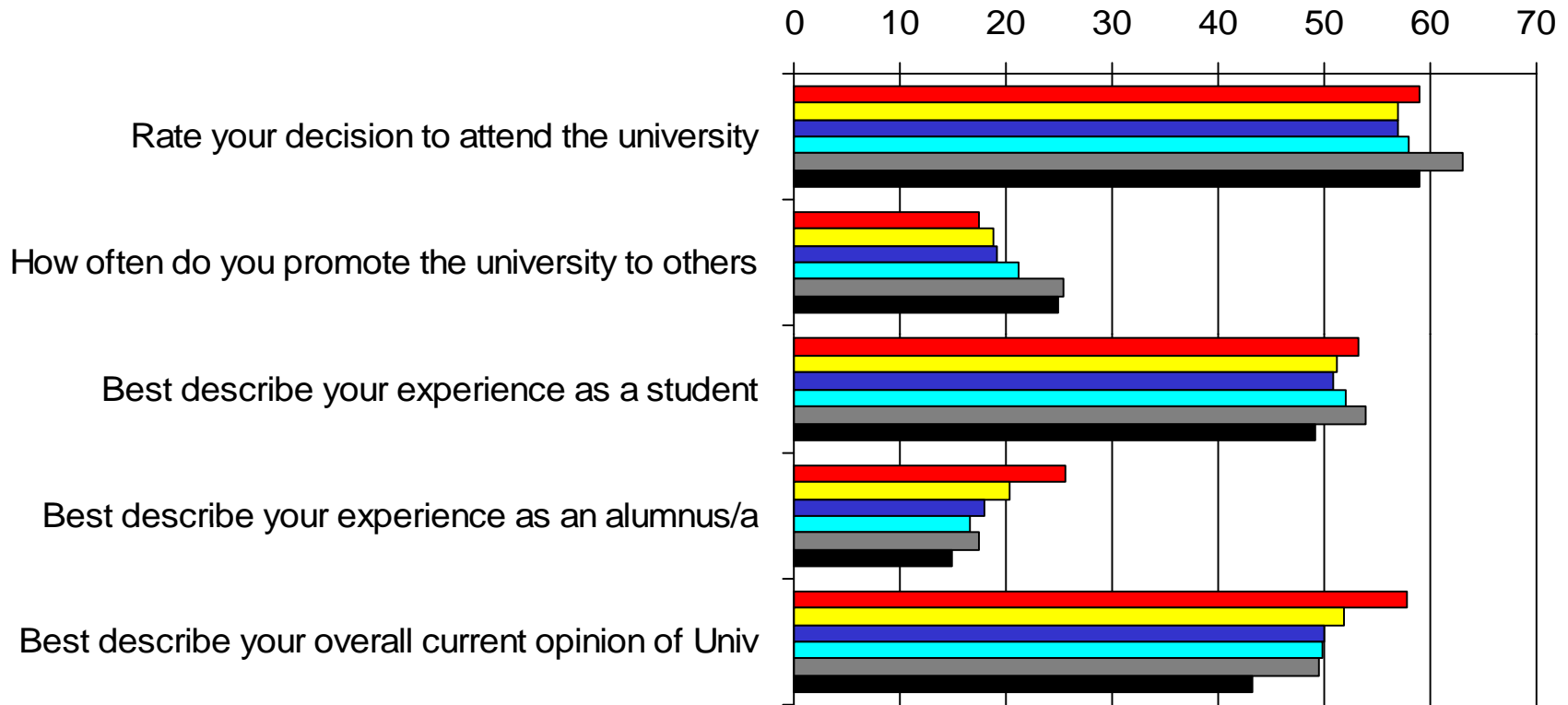


# Loyalty Questions - "Top Box"

Era



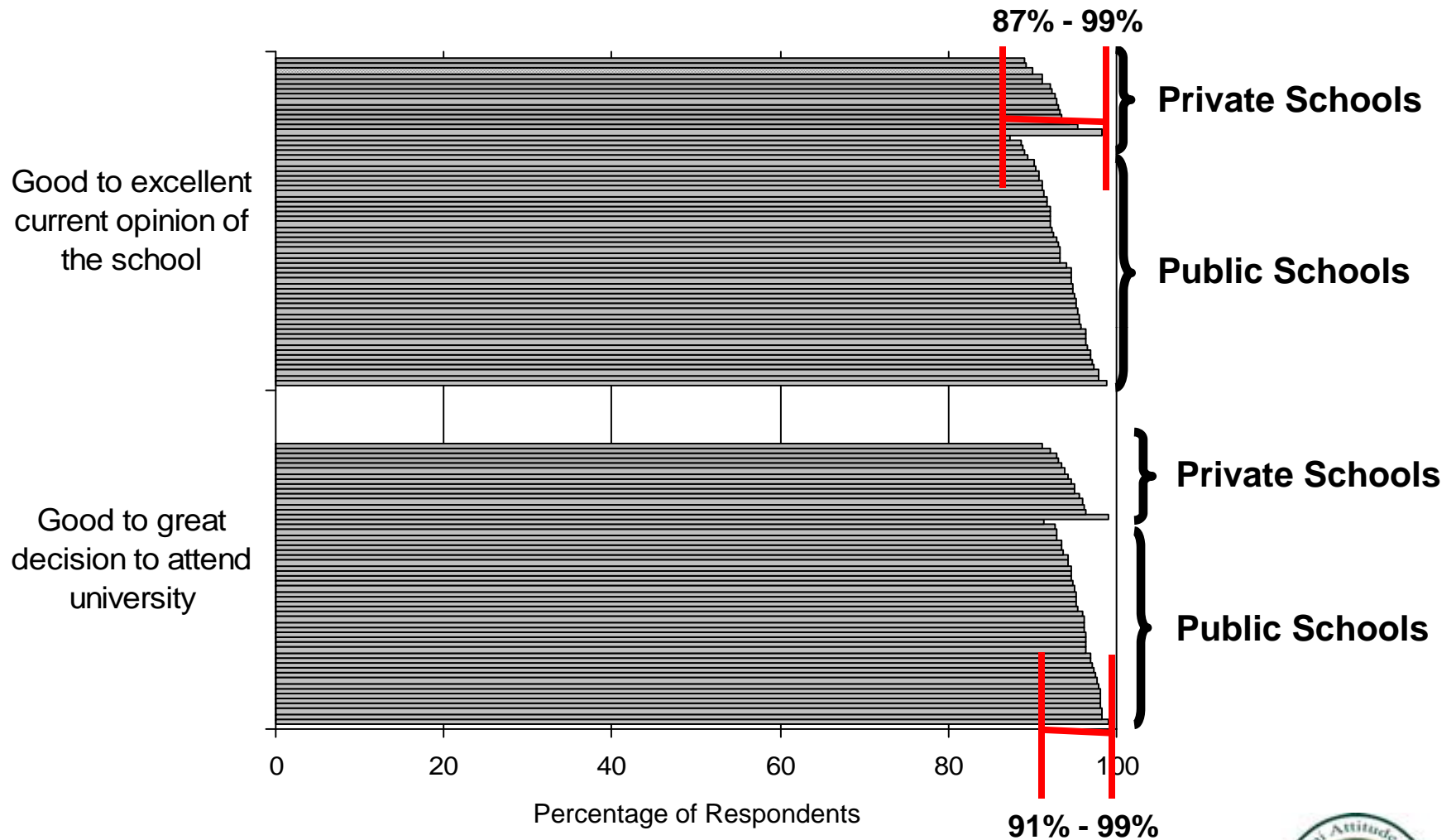
Percentage selecting "top box"



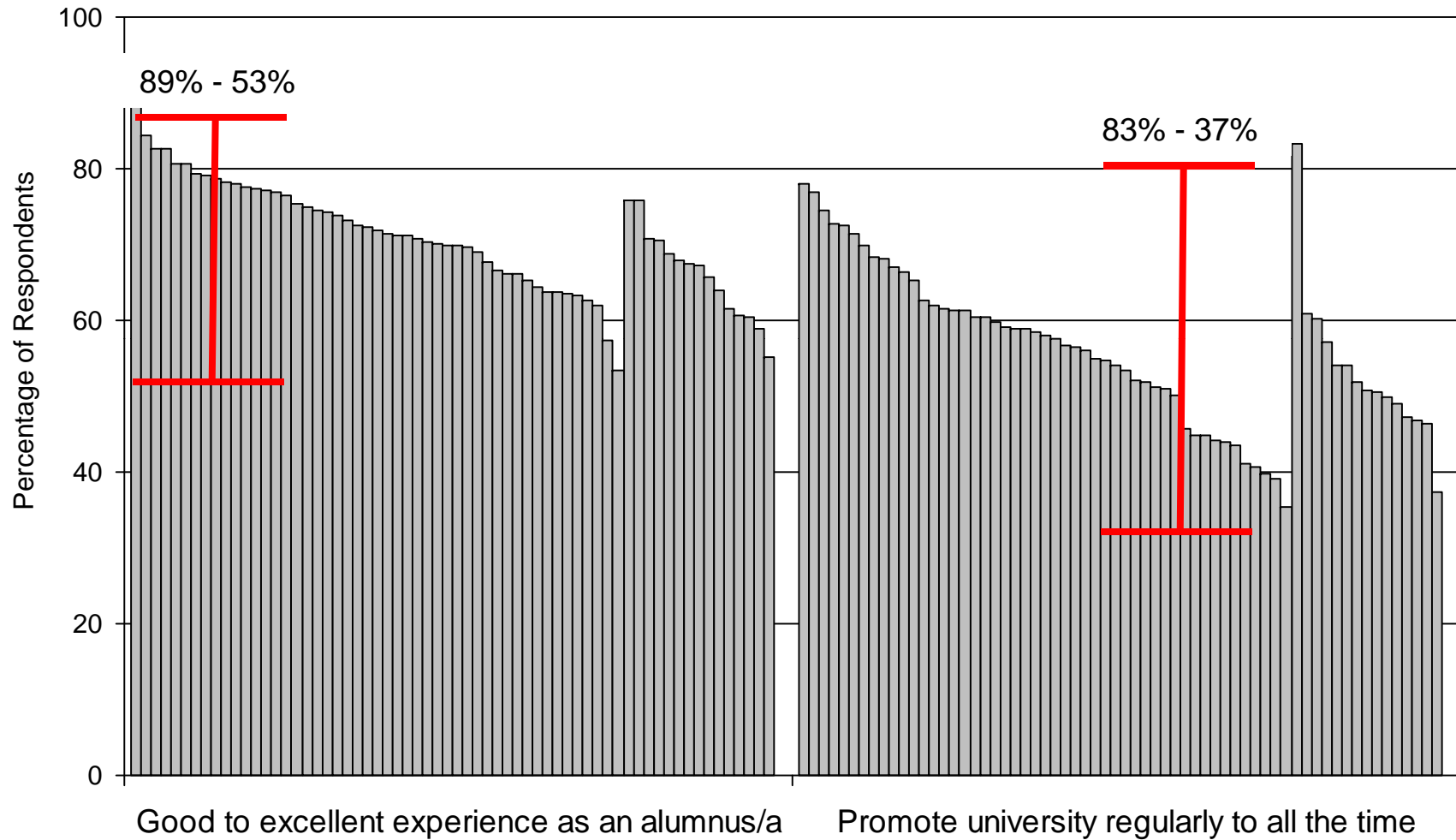
- **WWI/Post WWII**
- **Woodstock/Vietnam**
- **Post Watergate**
- **Yuppie/End of Cold War**
- **Electronic Revolution/Dot-Com**
- **Post 9/11**



*How would you rate your decision to attend the university? & Best describe your overall current opinion of the university? By School*



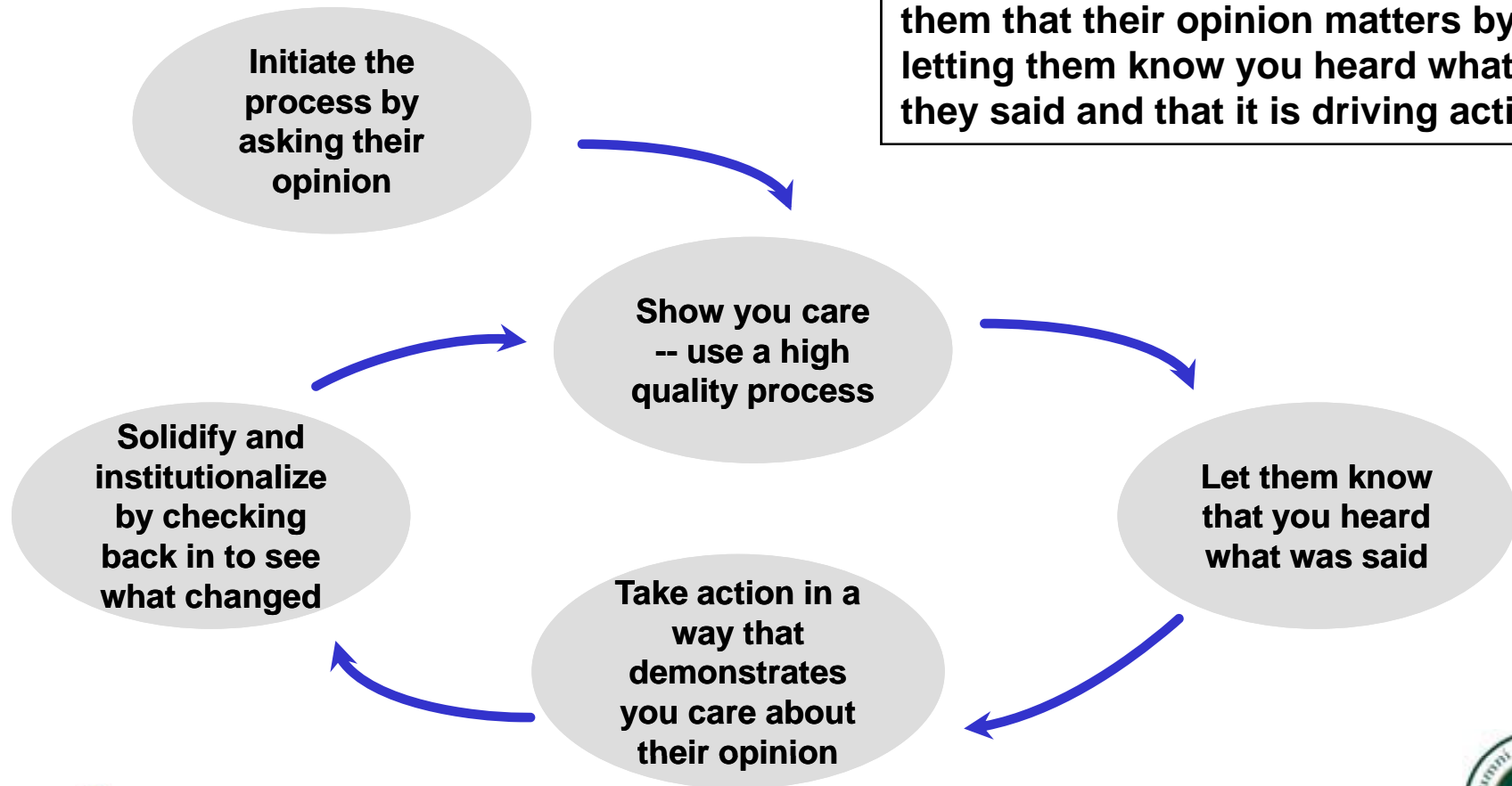
**Best describe your experience as an alumnus/a?  
& How often do you promote the university to others?  
By School**



# Alumni Partnership Model<sup>©</sup>



The survey process should be another part of your partnering process with your alumni. Show them that their opinion matters by letting them know you heard what they said and that it is driving action.





# Discussion:

## Taking Action on Alumni Feedback

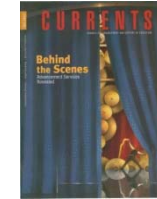


## Additional information



### CASE Currents articles

- **2007 October Page 40**  
**Dues and Don'ts**  
*To charge dues or not, that is the alumni association's question*
- **2005 March Page 54**  
**CONVERSATION PIECE**  
*Alumni surveys provide helpful data—and encourage communication between alumni and alma mater*
- **2004 May/June Page 18**  
**The Ones to Watch**  
*With their large numbers and economic influence baby boomers shape alumni programs to their tastes*



### Upcoming presentations

- **CASE District III Conference** February 17 – 20, 2008 – Atlanta, MA
- **CASE District IV Conference** April 5 – 9, 2008 – Little Rock, AR
- **CASE Senior Alumni Relations Professionals** April 16 – 18, 2008 - St. Pete Beach, FL
- **Past Participant Workshop** February, 2008 - Teleconference





***Robert Shoss***

Tel: (713) 527-0078

Fax: (713) 524-4324

rshoss@pegltd.com

[www.pegltd.com](http://www.pegltd.com)

