

# Communication and Subject Preference Among Freshmen in a College of Agriculture

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# Background

- SIU is a Carnegie 1 doctoral granting university
- Member of the Non-land-grant Agriculture and Renewable Resources Universities
  - 17,964 students, (13,306 undergrad; 4,030 grad; 2013)

Colleges of:

Agricultural Sciences

Applied Sci. & Arts

Business

Educ. & Human Serv.

Engineering

Liberal Arts

Mass Comm. & Media Arts

School of Medicine

Science

School of Law



# Background

- The College of Agricultural Sciences offers baccalaureate degrees in:
  - Agribusiness Economics (6 specializations)
  - Agricultural Systems (6 specializations)
  - Crop, Soil and Environmental Mgmt. (2 spec.)
  - Horticulture (3 spec.)
  - Animal Science (3 specializations)
  - Hospitality and Tourism Mgmt.
  - Human Nutrition and Dietetics
  - Forestry ( 5 spec.)

# Approach

- Recruitment and Retention are **KEY**
- Mandatory UCOL (University College) for all incoming freshmen
- The COAS closed admittance to only those in the college
  - Retains the highest retention & graduation rates among all colleges

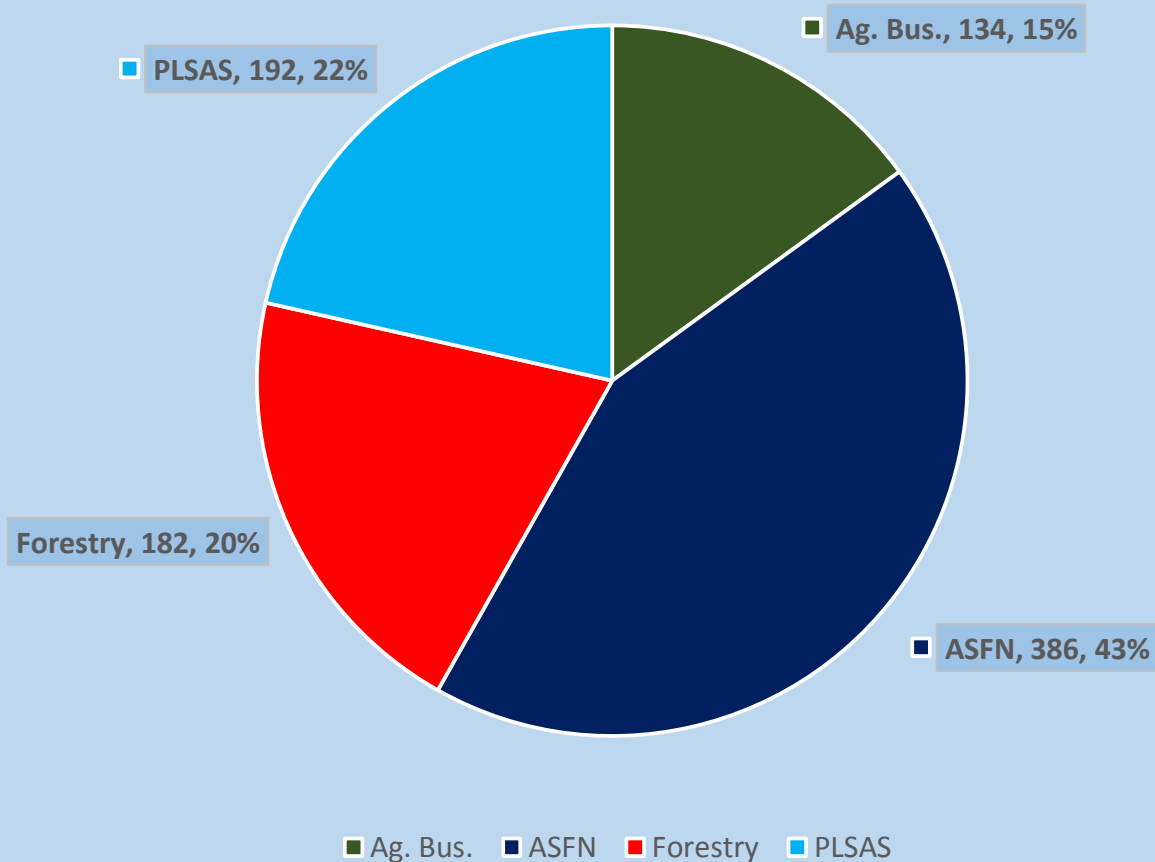


# Approach

- The purpose of this study was to:
  1. Elucidate the best manner of communication for undergraduate students
  2. Discern the areas of interest for said communications

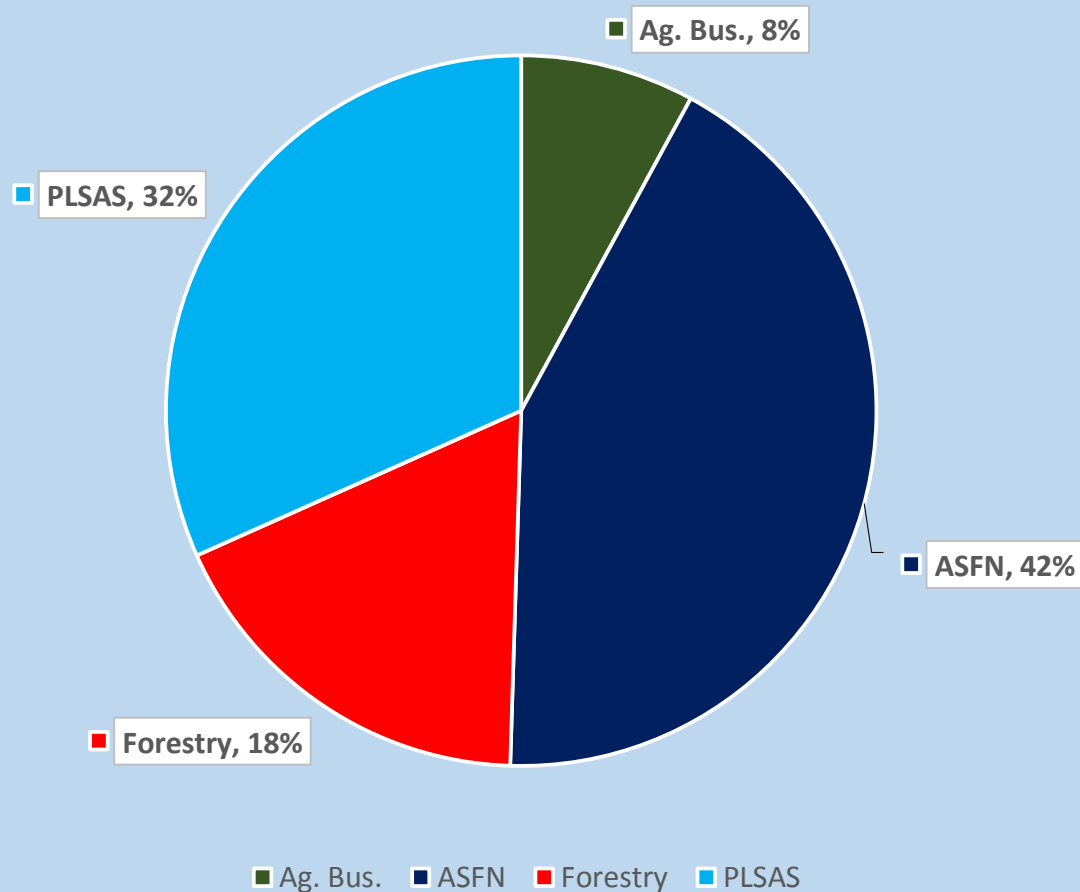
# COAS Enrollment

- Distribution of students enrolled in COAS



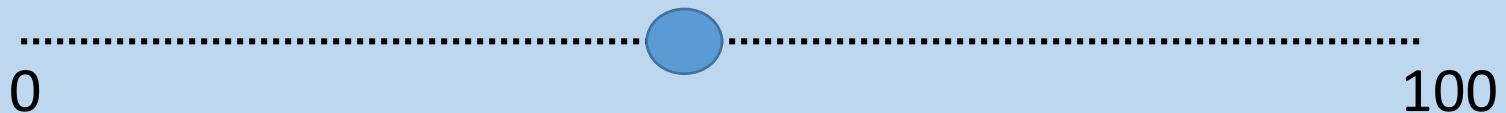
# Material & Methods

- Program distribution of participants



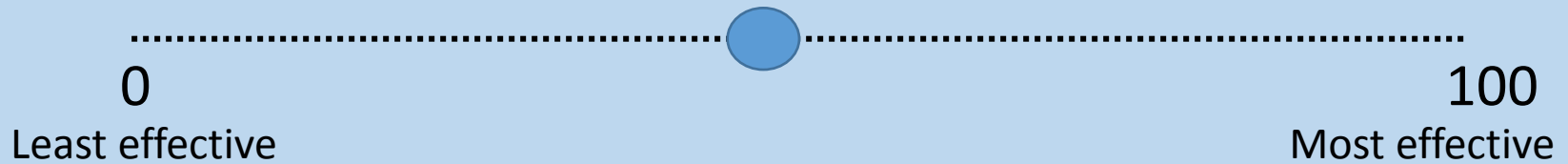
# Material & Methods

- 120 Freshmen students enrolled in the UCOL 101 class Fall 2013
- Given an online survey instrument with a sliding scale to indicate degree of preference





# How effective does the COAS communicate with our students?



- $76.30 \pm 22.46$



# As students, which form(s) of communication do you prefer?

ITEM	Value	Std. Deviation
List serve by dept.	76.30	30.95
Weekly newsletter e-mail	56.61	34.72
COAS list-serve (current)	55.74	34.70
Posted flyers	44.27	32.98
Facebook Posts	37.18	33.86

# As students, in what areas are you interested in receiving information?

ITEM	Value	Std. Deviation
Scholarships	85.42	23.72
Internships	82.49	23.42
Local Job Postings	71.16	32.99
Advisement	67.79	31.85
Externships	52.42	39.91
Other*	9.02	22.57

\*Registered student organization information; Jobs both local and “home”

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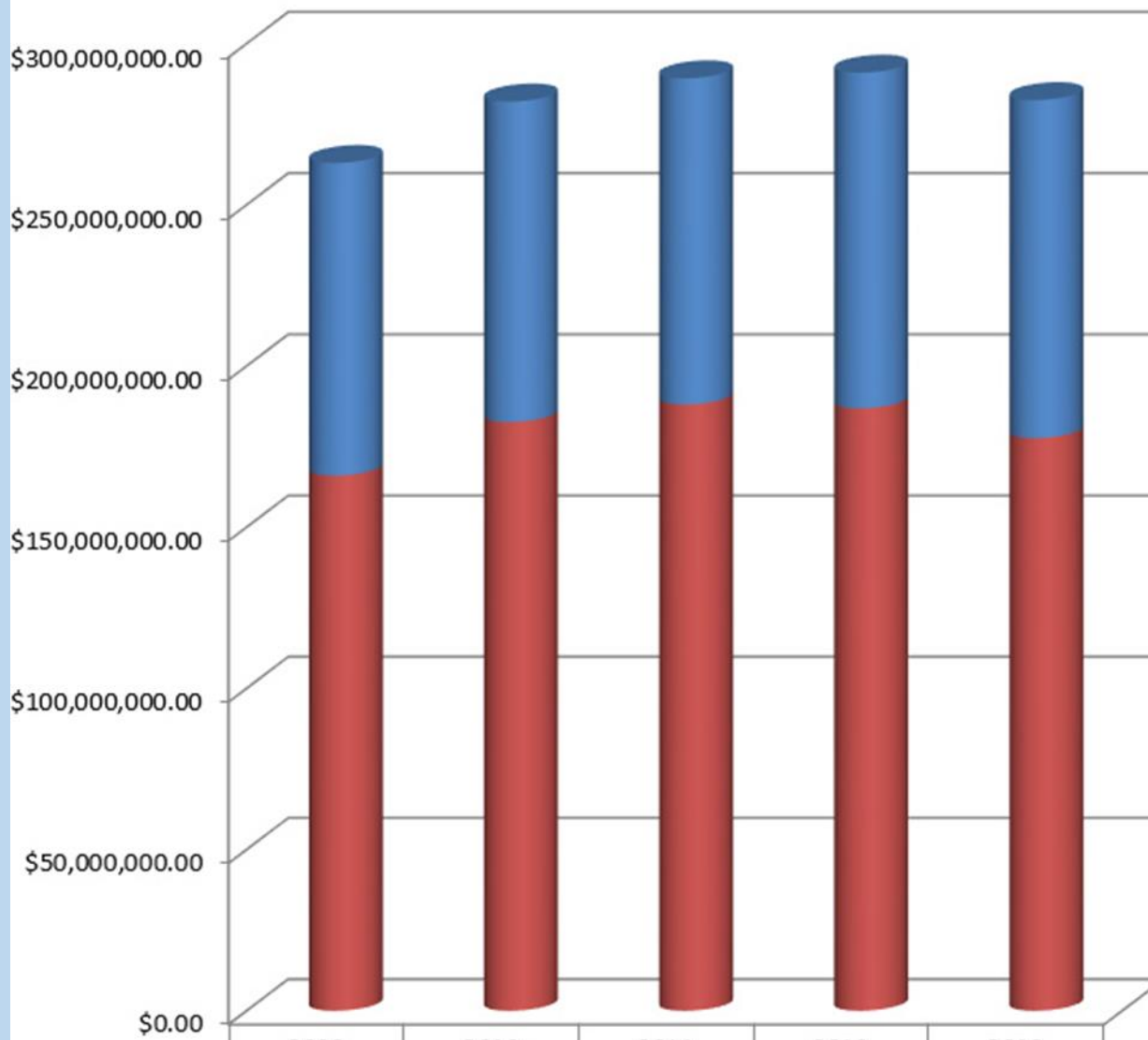
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# Financial Need

- Financial concerns are important to COAS freshmen
- At the University level, the following may explain the importance of both financial considerations as well as retention

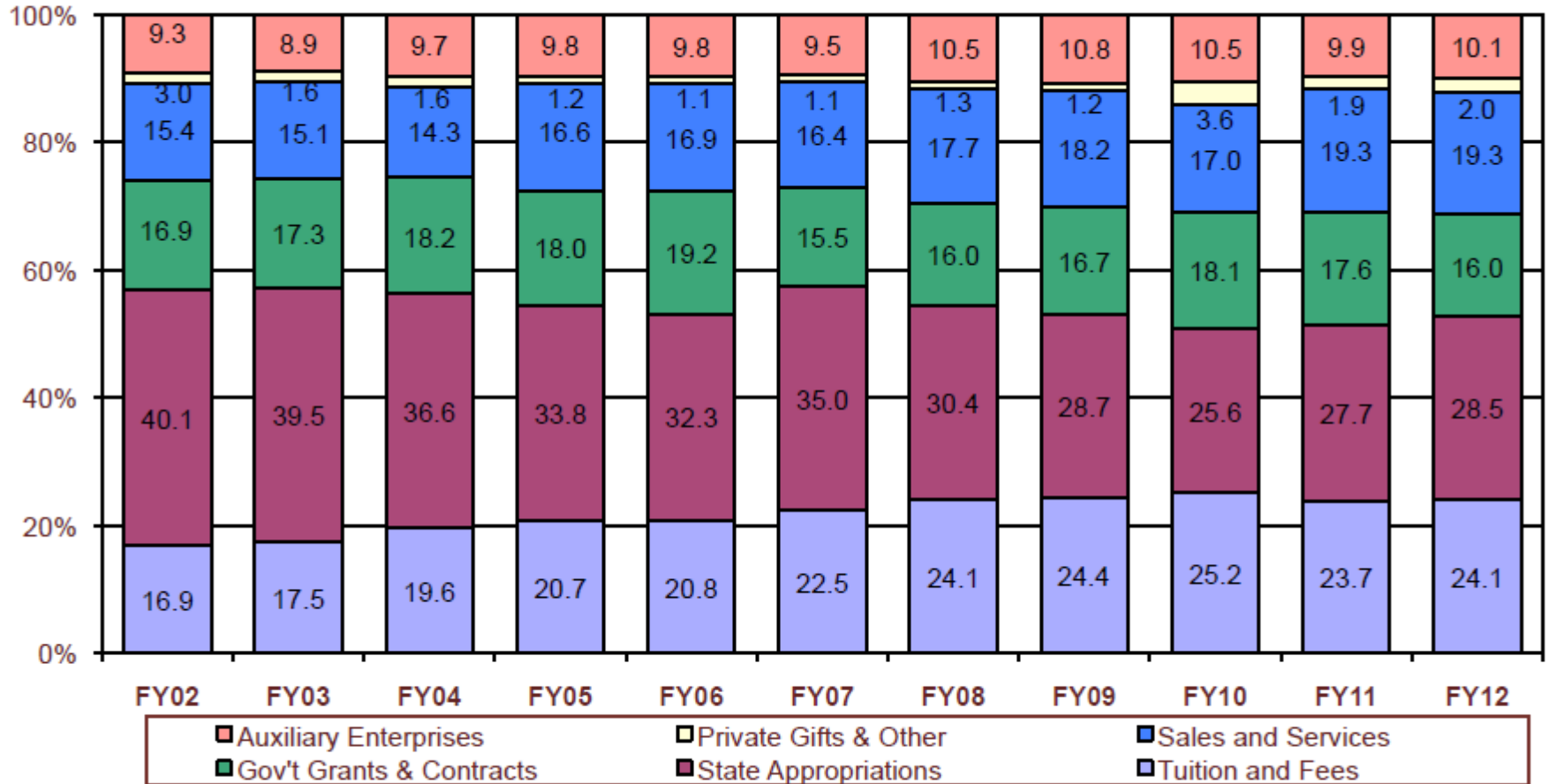
## Student Financial Aid: Total Dollars Administered FY2009-2013



	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Graduate	\$96,950,688	\$99,383,935	\$101,147,575	\$104,114,407	\$104,825,477
Undergraduate	\$166,030,874	\$182,664,678	\$188,100,667	\$186,895,327	\$177,662,729

# State Support for SIUC

SIU Carbondale Revenue Sources & Percents of Total Revenue  
FY02 - FY12



NOTES: New Government Accounting Standards applied (GASB 3435) per Accounting Services and initiated with FY2002 data.

SOURCE: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) Finance Survey/Institutional Research/Accounting Services.

# Recruitment & Retention

- One of the most important aspects of the educational experience at SIUC.
- Effective and useful communication is paramount to create the “feel” of inclusivity for the college.



# What influenced your decision to attend the COAS?

ITEM	Value	Std. Deviation
Curriculum	62.52	34.97
Cost of college degree	59.67	38.31
Campus Community	54.65	35.72
Faculty	46.76	38.63
COAS recruitment	39.65	37.76
Family	32.84	35.68

# Millennial perspective

- Work values comparison among Boomers (HS senior 1979) GenX (1991) and GenMe (2006)
  - Leisure values increased among 3 generations
  - Extrinsic values (status, money, respect) peaked with GenX but still higher among GenMe than Boomers
  - Social values (friends and affiliative aspects) declined
  - Intrinsic (meaning and interest in work) values were relatively consistent across generations

# Summary

- The COAS has instituted department-specific list serve messages for communication
  - efficacy may be questioned
- Financial concerns remain a high priority for incoming students
- Interest in intern/externships is greater than expected, and timely from the employer's perspective



# Questions?

