

2016 NACTA Conference

**Student Recruitment:
What is it that REALLY
makes them say YES?**





**Savannah Koehl,
Dwayne Pavelock,
Shyam Nair, and
Bethany Whitten**

**Sam Houston State
University**





**Agricultural Sciences and
Engineering Technology
Ambassadors**



Introduction

- ◆ Budget changes are becoming detrimental to organizations
 - ★ \$33,000 to \$0 in three years



Introduction (cont.)

- ◆ **Recruiters must understand:**
 - ★ **Best practices**
 - ★ **Return on investment (ROI)**



The BIG Questions

- ◆ **Student recruiters wonder...**
 - ★ **Why does a student come to SHSU?**
 - ★ **Why does a student choose another institution?**
 - ★ **Why would a student leave SHSU?**
 - ◆ **Retention is also an issue**



The BIGGER Questions

- ◆ What are recruiters doing now that works?
- ◆ What can we do differently?



The BIGGEST Question

- ◆ What makes a student say “YES!”?



Methodology

- ◆ Population = First-semester freshmen and transfer students in Fall 2015
- ◆ 249 students surveyed within first two weeks of semester



Contents of Instrument

◆ Demographics

- ★ Transfer or Freshman
- ★ Distance from SHSU
- ★ Gender
- ★ Ethnicity
- ★ Major and Minor

◆ Major Questions

- ★ Deciding factor in choosing SHSU
- ★ Deciding factor to NOT choose SHSU
- ★ Deciding factor in leaving SHSU



Findings

Students		
Transfer	117	47.0%
Freshman	109	43.8%
No Response	23	9.2%



Findings (cont.)

Gender		
Male	114	45.8%
Female	135	54.2%



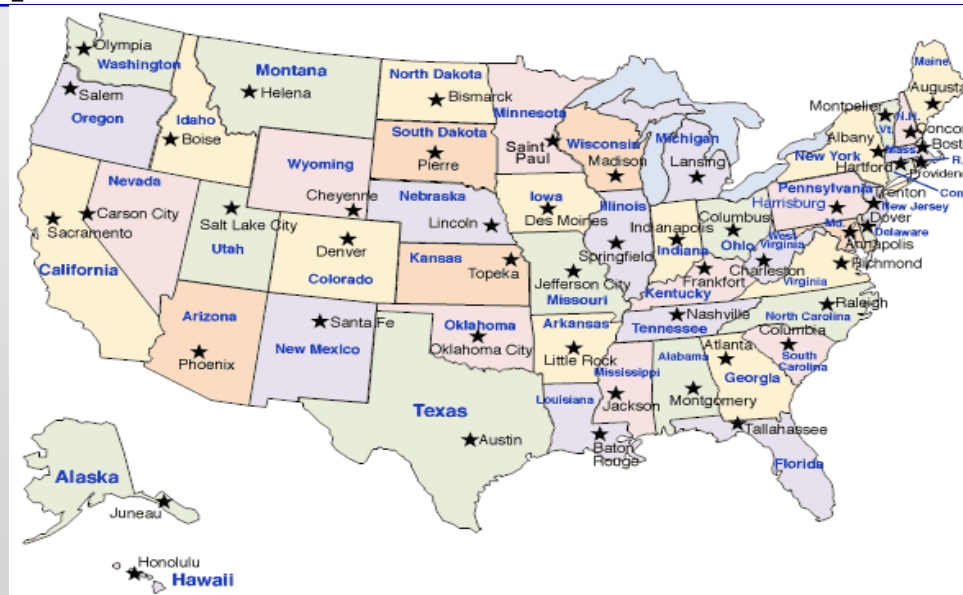
Findings (cont.)

Ethnicity		
African American	15	6.0%
Asian American	1	0.4%
Caucasian	181	72.7%
Hispanic	37	14.9%
Native American	2	0.8%
More than one ethnicity	11	4.4%
No Response	2	0.8%

Findings (cont.)

Hometown Distance from SHSU

50+ miles from SHSU	189	75.9%
<50 miles from SHSU	58	23.3%
No Response	2	0.8%

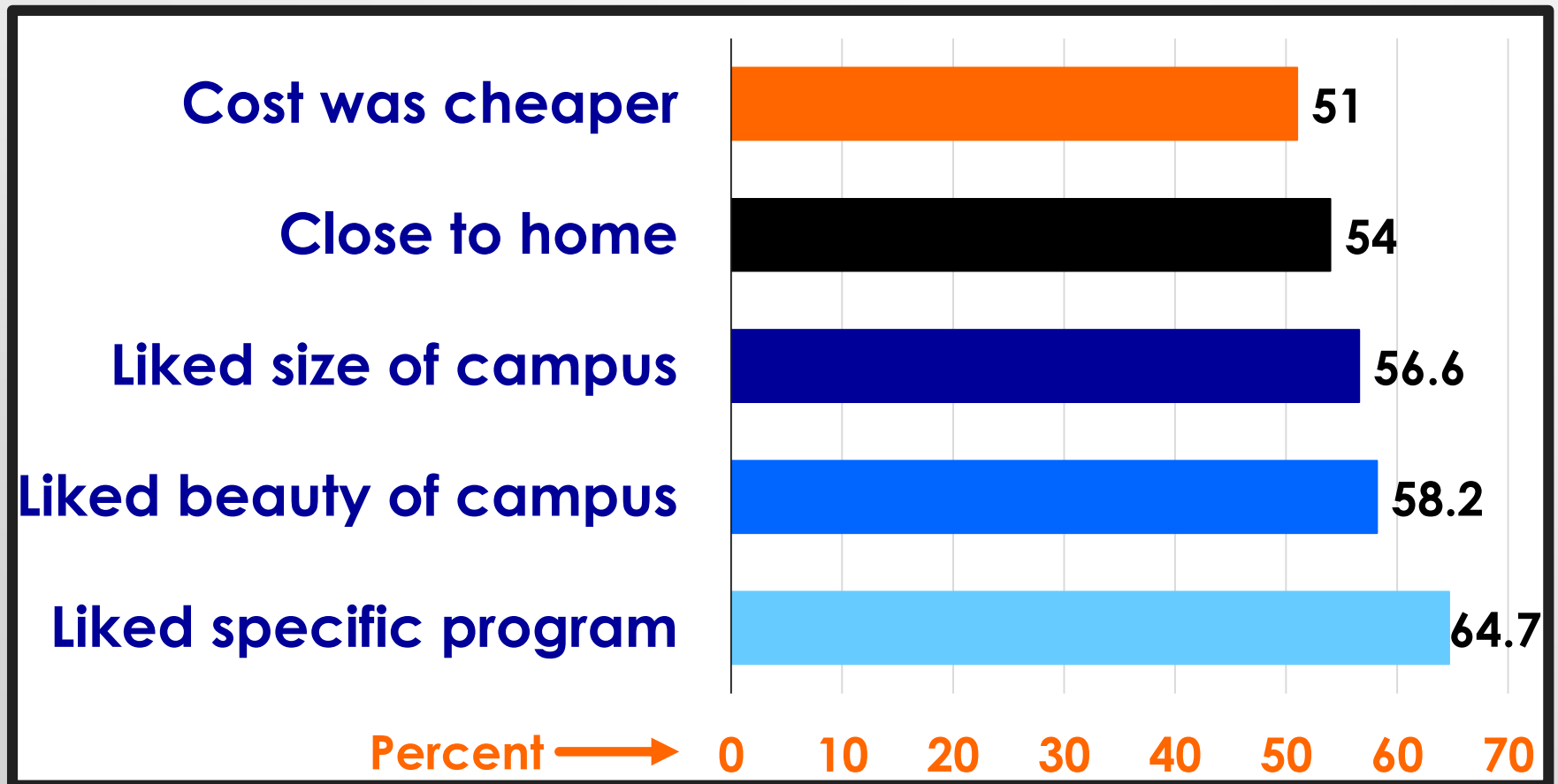


Findings

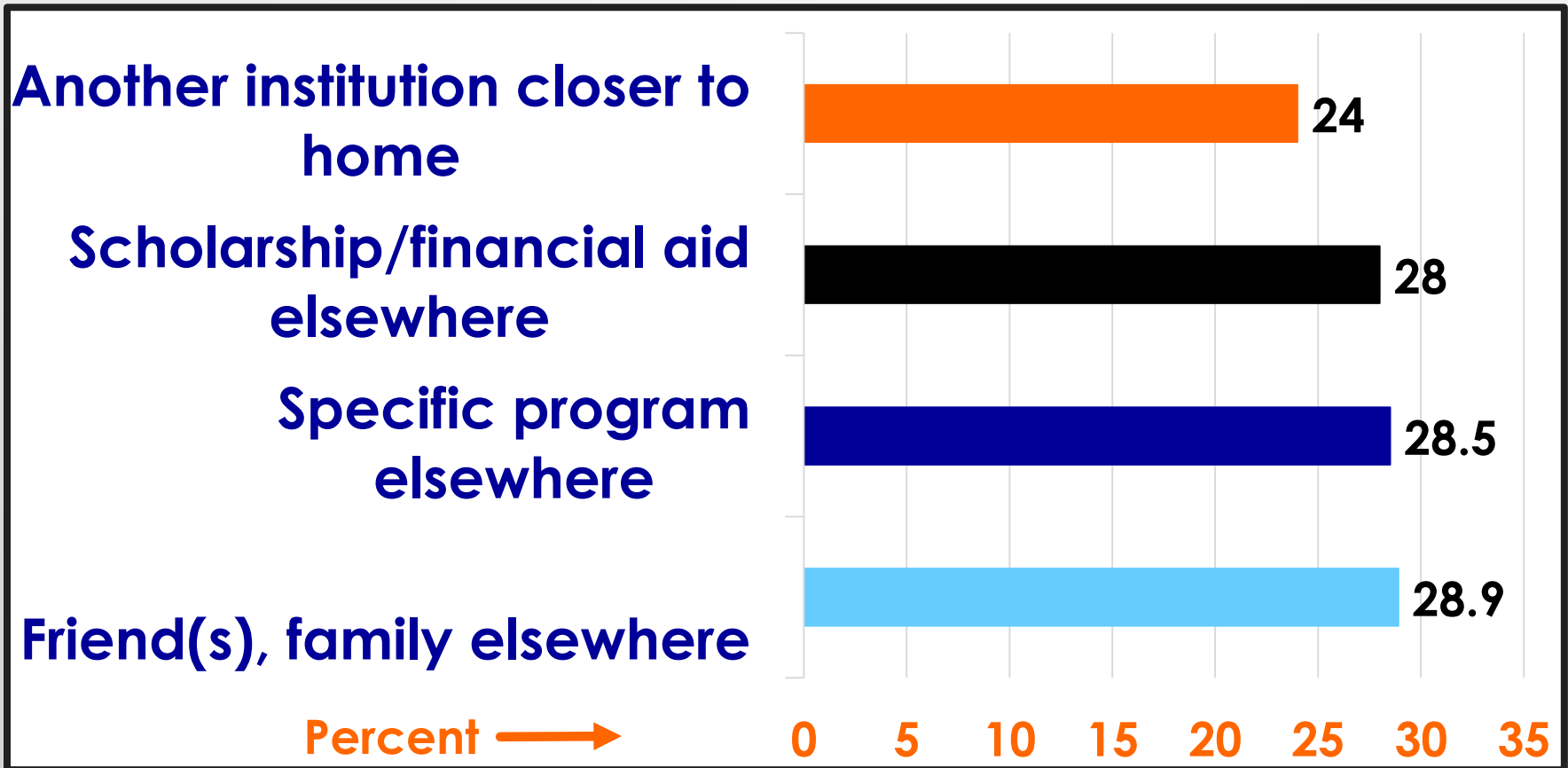
- ◆ **Students were asked to identify the SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT reason, then...**
 - ★ **Other factors or reasons that were important...**
- ◆ **Findings reveal but SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT and “other factors”**



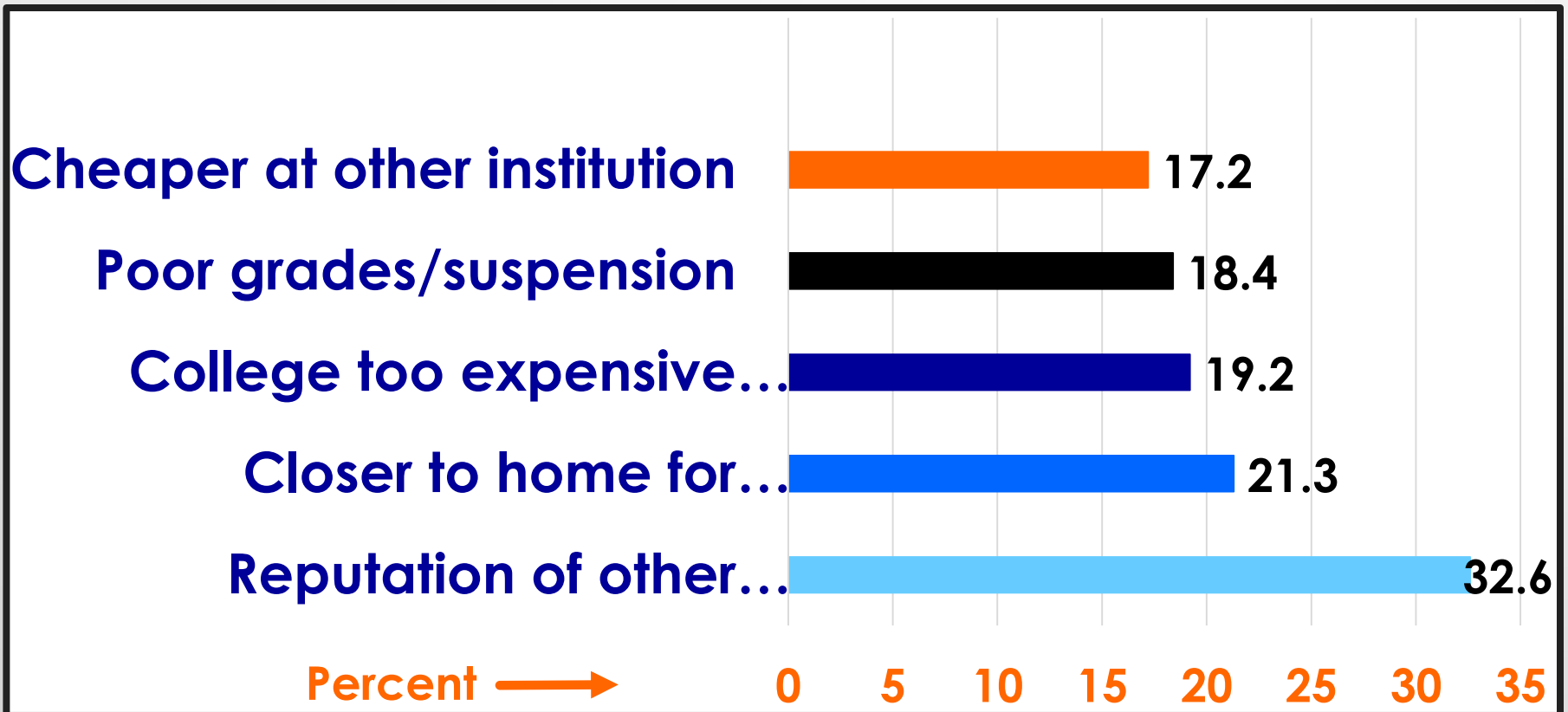
Findings: Why SHSU?



Findings: Why Not SHSU?



Findings: Why Leave SHSU?



Conclusions

- ◆ Students likely to choose a university primarily based on desired major
- ◆ The size and beauty of a campus were shown to be major influences



Conclusions (cont.)

- ◆ **Cost and proximity to home are major considerations**
 - ★ **Even though hometown of more than three-fourths of population was 50+ miles from campus**



Conclusions (cont.)

- ◆ **Why students consider another institution**
 - ★ **Who they know to be attending or formerly attended another institution (family, friends)**
 - ★ **Financial reasons**
 - ★ **Specific program at another institution**

Conclusions (cont.)

◆ Students would leave...

- ★ Desire to attend another institution
(reputation of specific program)

- ★ Financial

 - College too expensive altogether

 - Cheaper to attend elsewhere



Conclusions (cont.)

- ◆ **For beginning freshmen:**
 - ★ Having been on campus for an FFA or 4-H event was an important factor ($p < 0.05$)
- ◆ **“Reputation of the department”**
 - ★ Important factor for Caucasion students compared to African-American ($p < 0.10$) and Hispanic students ($p < 0.01$)



The BIG Picture

- ◆ **In all three cases, importance lies in:**
 - ★ **Desired major or program**
 - ★ **Location**
 - ★ **Financial considerations**



Implications and Recommendations

- ◆ Recruiting efforts should almost always include the promotion of specific programs that are available
- ◆ Activities that bring students to campus provide positive results



Implications and Recommendations (cont.)

- ◆ Attending events off-campus is important for awareness purposes
- ◆ Showcasing the “physical” side of the campus is good IF it’s worthy of such





Thank You!

Questions?

