

Academic Resourcefulness and Transfer Student Success: Preliminary Findings

Deborah Kennett, Ph.D., Trent University

Karen Maki, M.Sc., Higher Education Consultant

Christopher Quinn-Nilas, M.A. candidate, Trent University

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Presentation Outline

- Background
- Method
- Overview of Academic Resourcefulness
- Survey Findings
- Preliminary conclusions and recommendations
- Questions and discussion

Background

Drewes, Maki, Lew, Willson & Stringham. (2012). *An Analysis of CAAT Transfer Students' Academic Performance at Trent University*

- Transfer students perform at least as well as direct entry students , measured by GPA and retention
- Articulation students performed even better

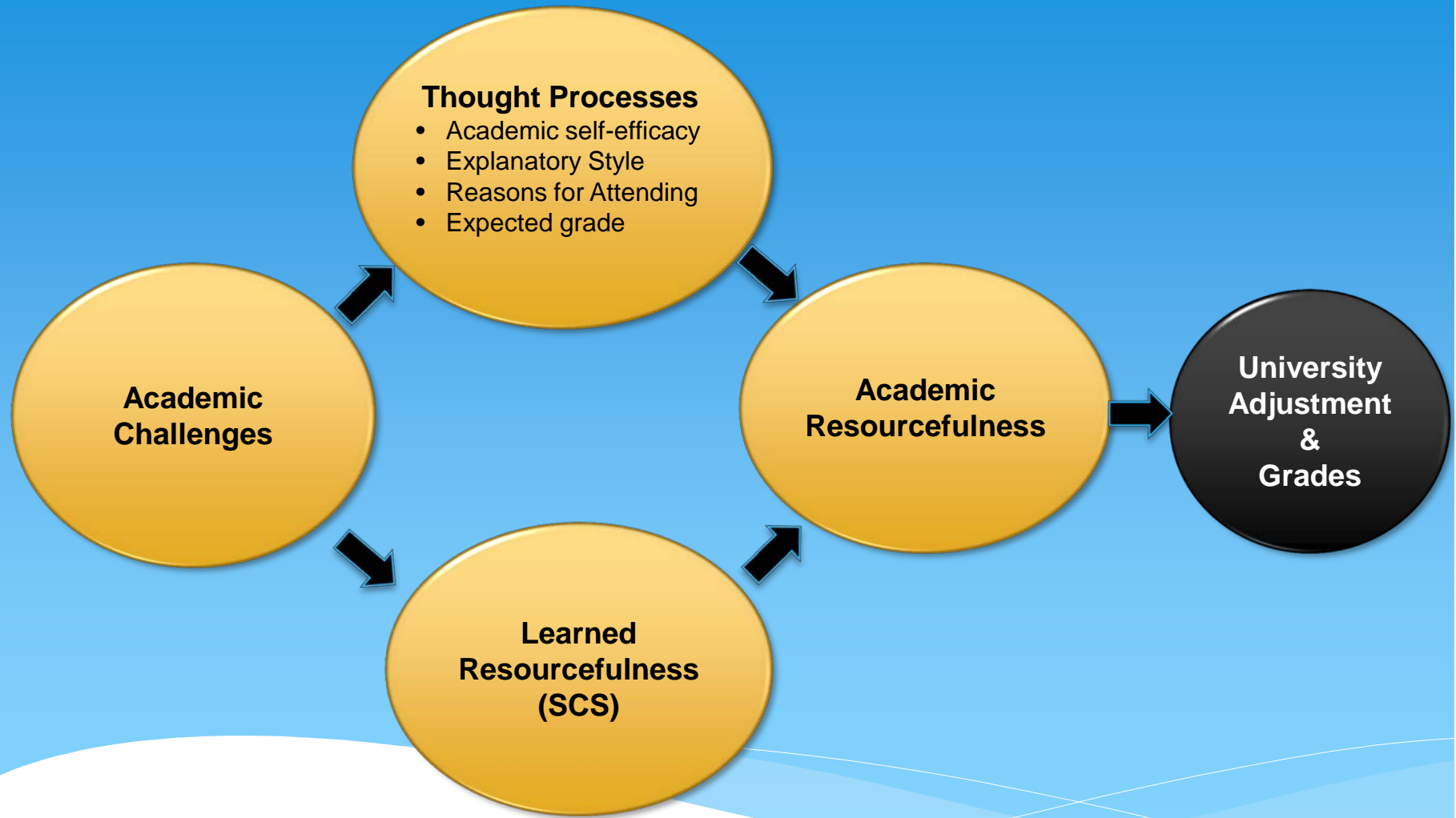
Why?

- Self-selection?
- Quality of programs? Better preparation?
- Higher than average academic ability?
- Individual factors?

Methodology

- **Survey-based design**
 - All Trent University undergrads invited to participate (N = 7661)
 - Pilot
 - Incentives and reminders
- **Survey contained:**
 - Demographics
 - Use of time and academic resources
 - Specific questions for transfer students
 - Well-established scales: general and academic resourcefulness, explanatory style for failure, reasons for attending university, university adjustment
- **Supplementary data from Institutional Research office**

Overview of Academic Resourcefulness



Rosenbaum's Theory of Learned Resourcefulness (1980; 1990; 2000)

- **When motivated to make changes or cope with adversity, highly resourceful people self-regulate through**
 - use of positive self-instruction,
 - application of problem-solving strategies,
 - delaying of immediate gratification
 - recognition self-change takes a lot of effort

Rosenbaum, continued

36-item Self-Control Schedule (SCS)

Example items...

“When I realize that I am going to be unavoidably late for an important meeting, I tell myself to keep calm”

“When I try to get rid of a bad habit, I first find out all the reasons why I have the habit”

“I finish a job that I have to do before I start doing things I really like”

“If I carried the pills with me, I would take a tranquillizer whenever I felt tense and nervous” (reverse coded)

Normative Mean is around 23 (S.D. = 25), range = -108 to +108

Self Efficacy and Preparedness

Positive thoughts about self facilitate the use of learned resourcefulness (Kennett, 1994; Kennett & Reed, 2009)

Example items for Self-Efficacy...

“My study skills are excellent compared to other students.”

“I think I will receive good grades”

Example items for Preparedness...

“Academic writing” (extremely unprepared to extremely prepared)

“Time management”

Explanatory Style for Academic Disappointment

Highly resourceful students attribute academic disappointments to...

- Difficulty of the task
- And, not to a lack of ability or effort

(Kennett & Keefer, 2006, Kennett & vanGulick, 2002)

Reasons for Attending University

Students have varied reasons for attending university (Kennett, Reed & Lam, 2011; Kennett, Reed & Stuart, 2013)

- Internal reasons (“I like learning”)
- Other people (“Family expectations”)
- Attain a better Job
- University Features (location, varsity sports, student services)
- Delay responsibilities

Reasons for Attending University

Transfer students may have other specific reasons for attending university

For example...

- Secure career advancement/change
- Pathway existed from previous program
- Trent offered me transfer credits

Allocation of Time and other Responsibilities

Students need to manage their time and effectively juggle both academic and non-academic responsibilities, including...

- Attending class
- Working off campus
- Providing care for dependent children
- Providing care for other dependents
- Volunteering

Academic Resourcefulness

Studies show that academically resourceful students are better adjusted at university and attain higher grades by ...

- Employing self-talk (“*Unafraid about being wrong in class*”)
- Delaying immediate gratification (“*Successful meeting deadlines*”)
- Utilizing problem solving strategies (“*Benefit from comments received on written work*”)

(Kennett, 1994, Kennett & Keefer, 2006; Reed, Kennett et al., 2011)

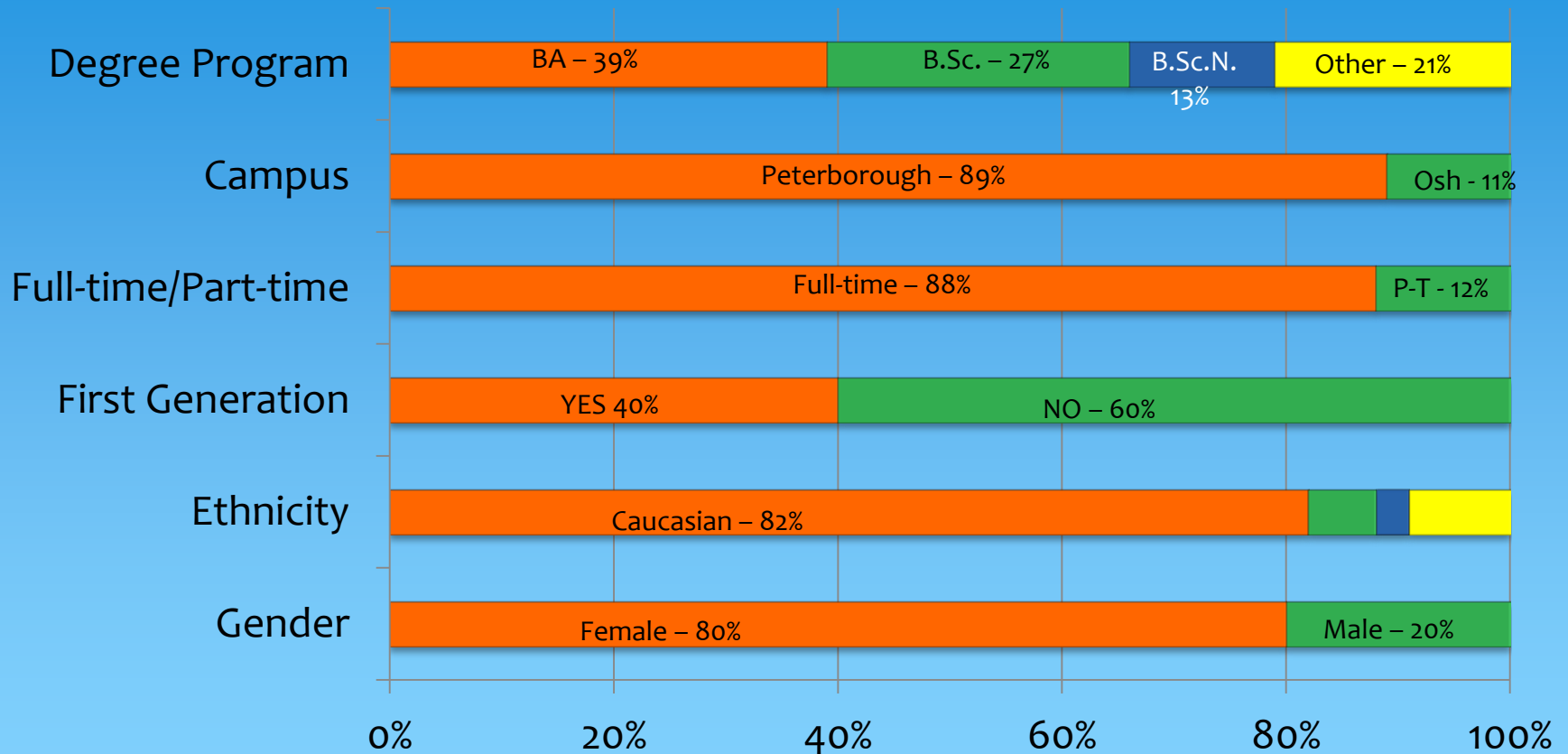
University Adjustment

Highly adjusted students...

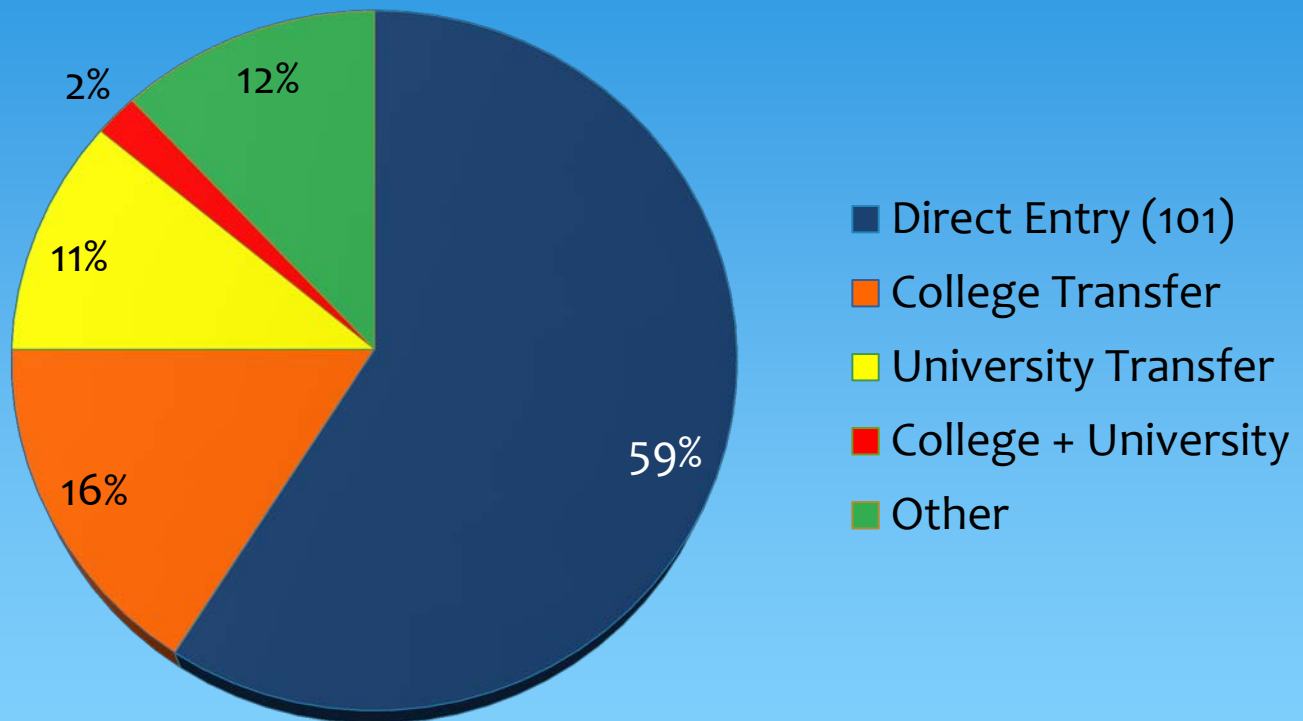
- *Are satisfied with their way of life*
- *Are not missing someone to talk to freely with from time to time*
- *Rarely feel bored or lonely*
- *Find life as a student pleasant*
- *Feel very much at home*

Results - Demographics

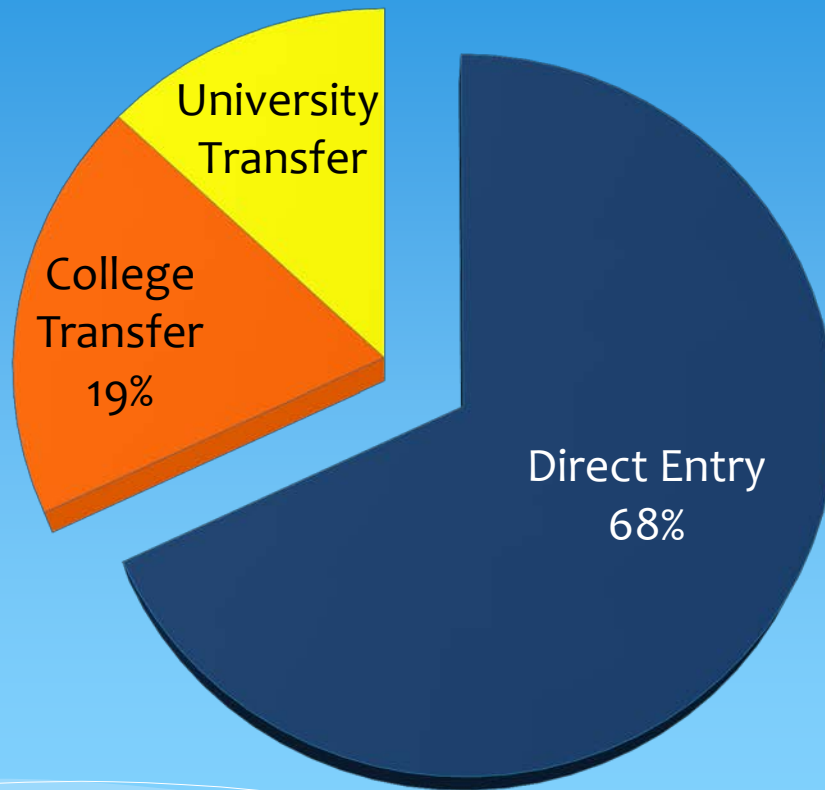
1545 responses = 20% response rate



Results – Entry Type



Revised Distribution by Entry Type



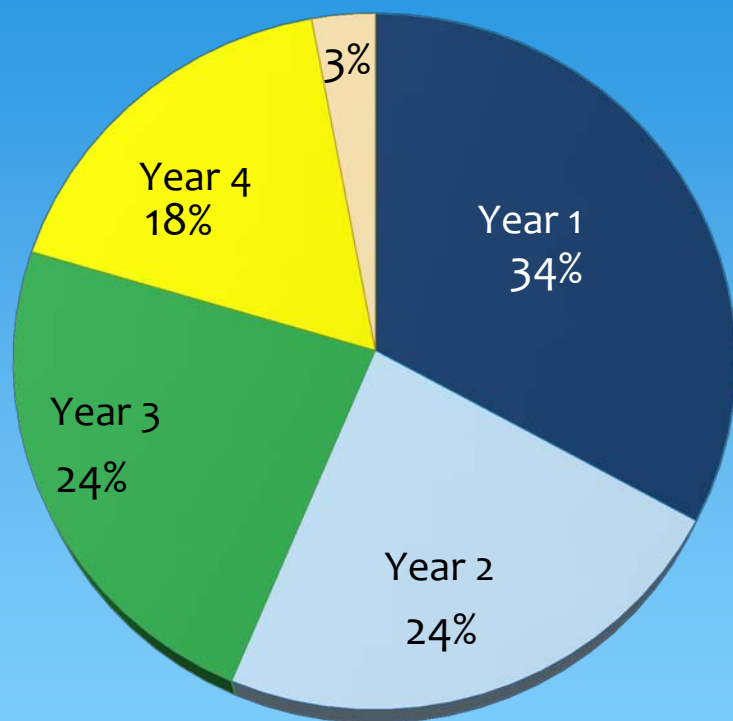
Average number of Transfer Credits received:
College – 5.05

Gender Distribution by Entrance Type

	Male	Female
Direct High School n = 740	19%*	81%*
University Transfer n = 141	13%*	87%*
College Transfer n = 202	24%*	76%*

*p < 0.05

Results – Number of Credits



■ Year 1 (0-5 credits)

□ Year 2 (6-10 credits)

■ Year 3 (11-15 credits)

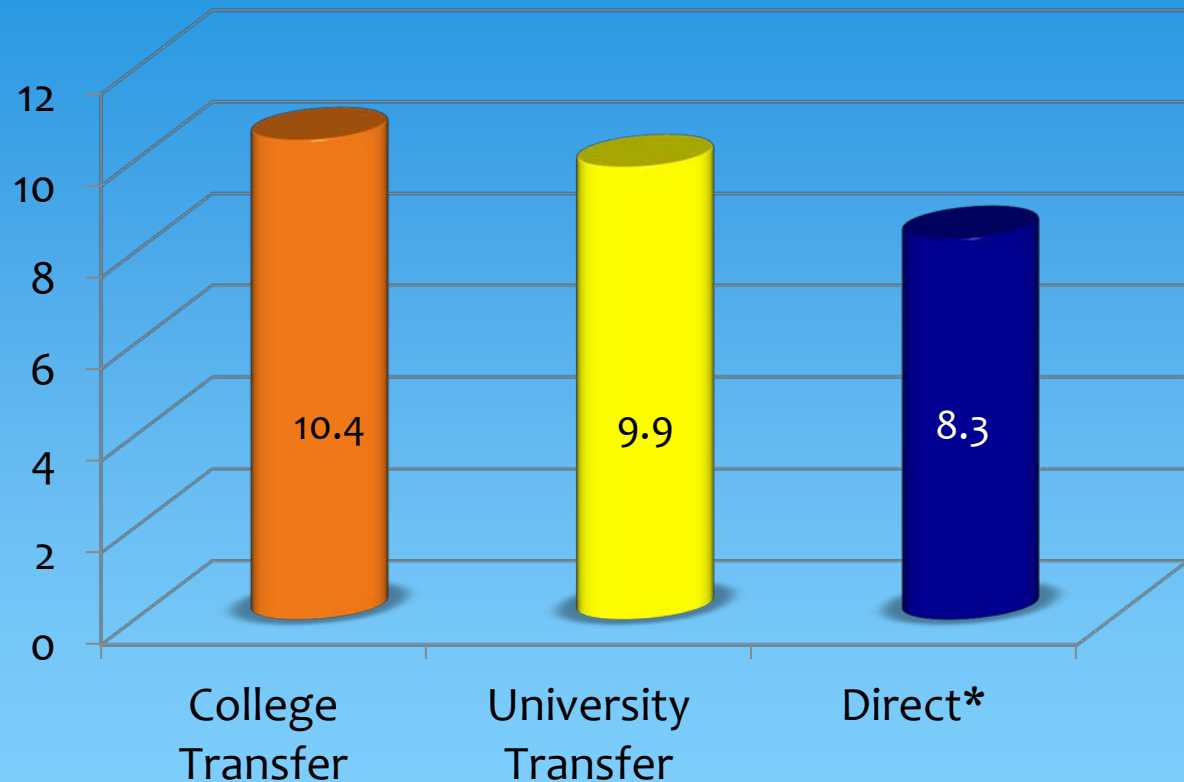
■ Year 4 (16-20 credits)

■ Year 5 (>20 credits)

Mean = 9.12 (SD = 7.33)

Median = 7.5

Results – Credits Achieved by Group



* $p < 0.01$

Results - Age

	N	Mean	Median	Range
Sample		21.9	21	17-59
Direct High School	743	19.68*	20	17-41
College	203	26.18*	24	19-56
University	141	25.38**	23	19-59

*p < 0.05
 **p < 0.001

Results – How much time do you spend...

	Mean Range in Hours
Attending class	15-20
Preparing for class	11-15
Work for pay on campus	0-5
Work for pay off campus	5-10
Co-curricular activities	0-5
Relaxing, exercise, social	10-15
Care of dependent children	0-5
Care of other dependents	0-5
Volunteering	0-5
Commuting	5-10

Results – How much time do you spend...

	Mean Range in Hours	Findings
Attending class	15-20	D > UT > CT
Preparing for class	11-15	
Work for pay on campus	0-5	
Work for pay off campus	5-10	CT > UT > D
Co-curricular activities	0-5	D > UT = CT
Relaxing, exercise, social	10-15	D = UT > CT
Care of dependent children	0-5	CT > UT > D
Care of other dependents	0-5	CT = UT > D
Volunteering	0-5	D = UT > CT
Commuting	5-10	

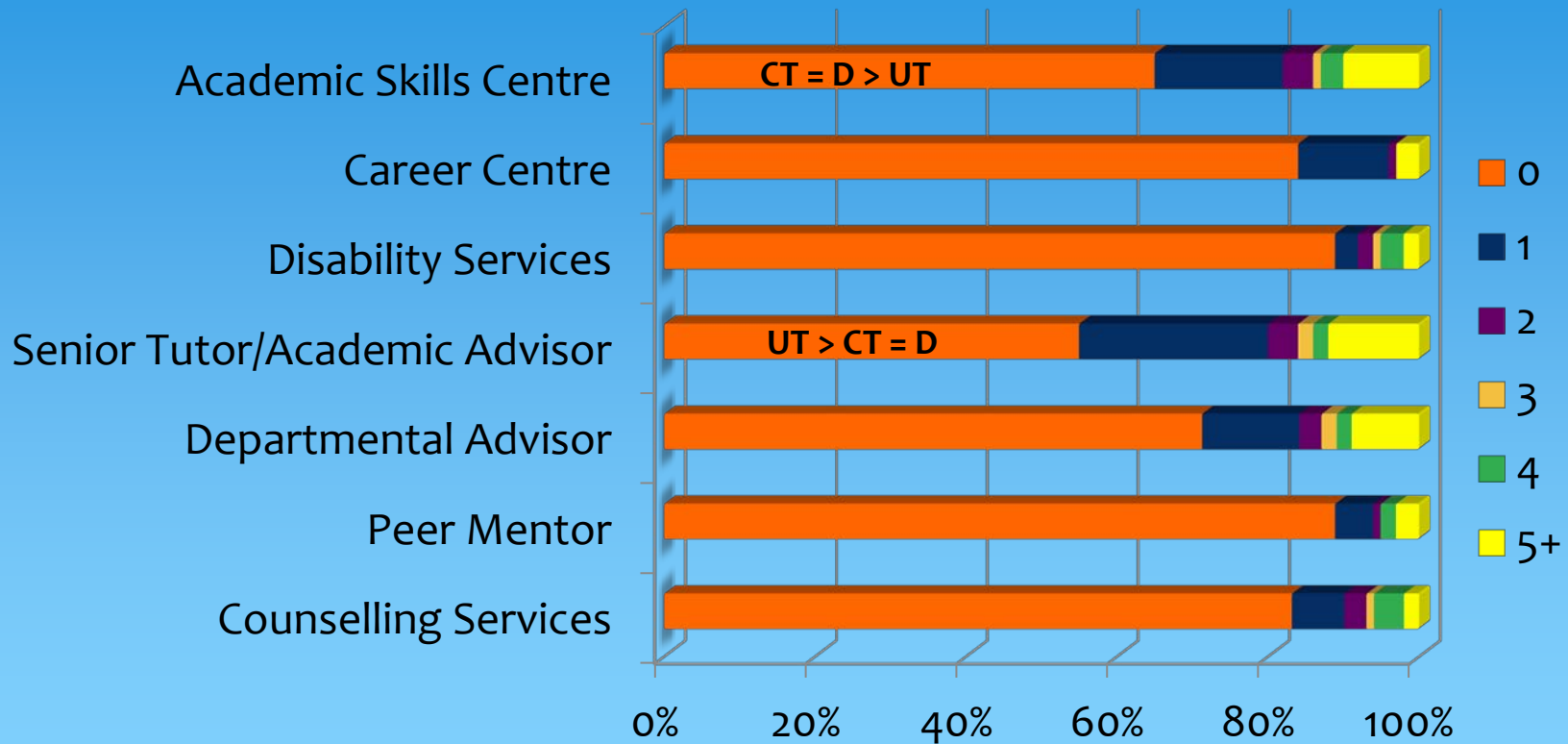
Results – How well prepared...

	Extremely Unprepared to Somewhat Unprepared	Somewhat Prepared to Extremely Prepared	Findings
Foundation Knowledge in my discipline	17%	83%	
Academic Reading	23%	77%	
Academic Writing	24%	76%	
Time Management	27%	73%	
Library Research	39%	61%	
Preparing Lab Reports	45%	55%	
Awareness re Application Process	37%	63%	
Awareness of Services	42%	58%	

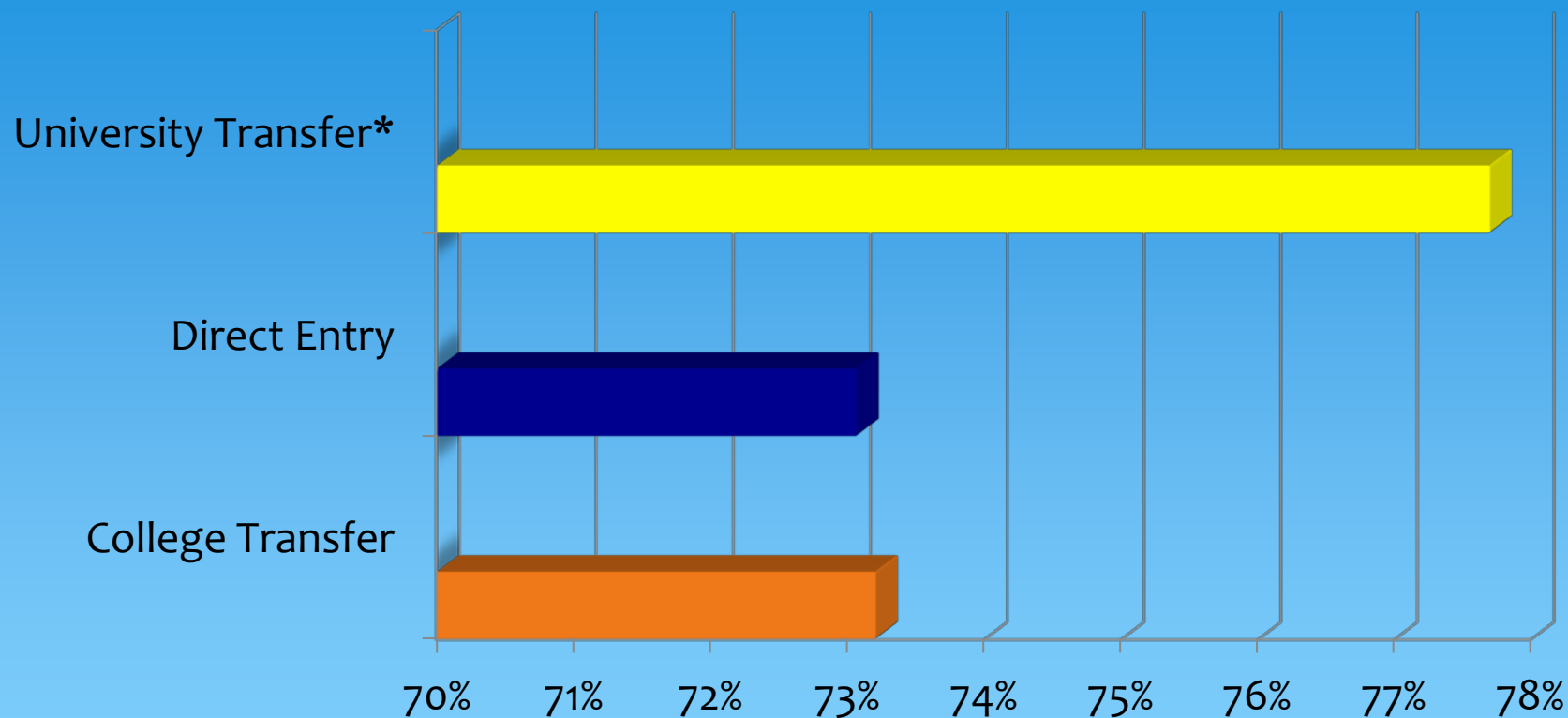
Results – How well prepared...

	Extremely Unprepared to Somewhat Unprepared	Somewhat Prepared to Extremely Prepared	Findings
Foundation Knowledge in my discipline	16%	83%	
Academic Writing	23%	75%	UT > CT = D
Academic Reading	23%	77%	UT > CT = D
Preparing Lab Reports	45%	54%	CT > UT = D
Library Research	39%	61%	CT = UT > D
Time Management	28%	73%	UT > CT = D
Awareness re Application Process	37%	63%	UT > CT = D
Awareness of Services	42%	58%	UT > CT = D

How many times per term do you use the following services?

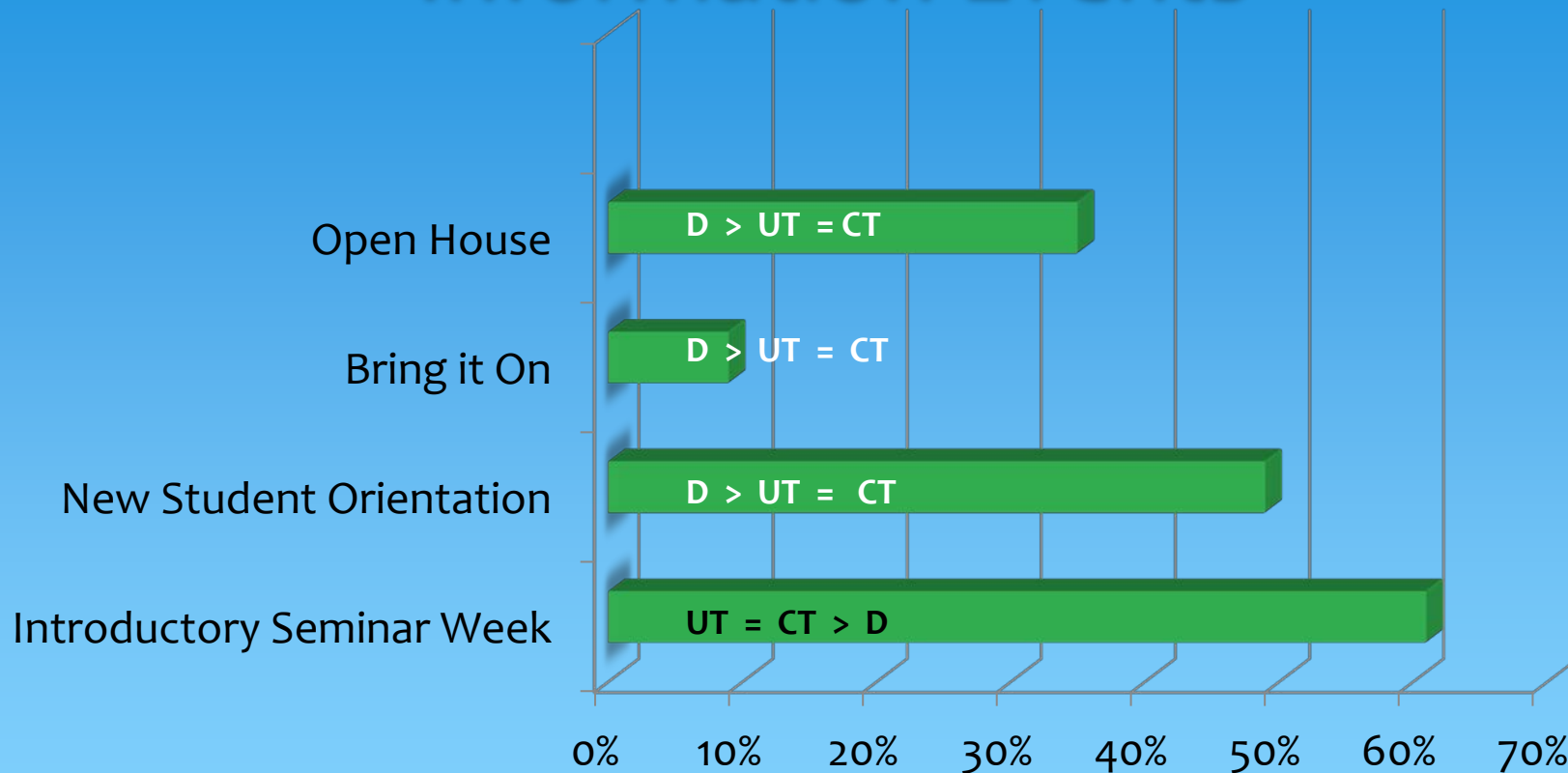


Cumulative Grades by Entry Type

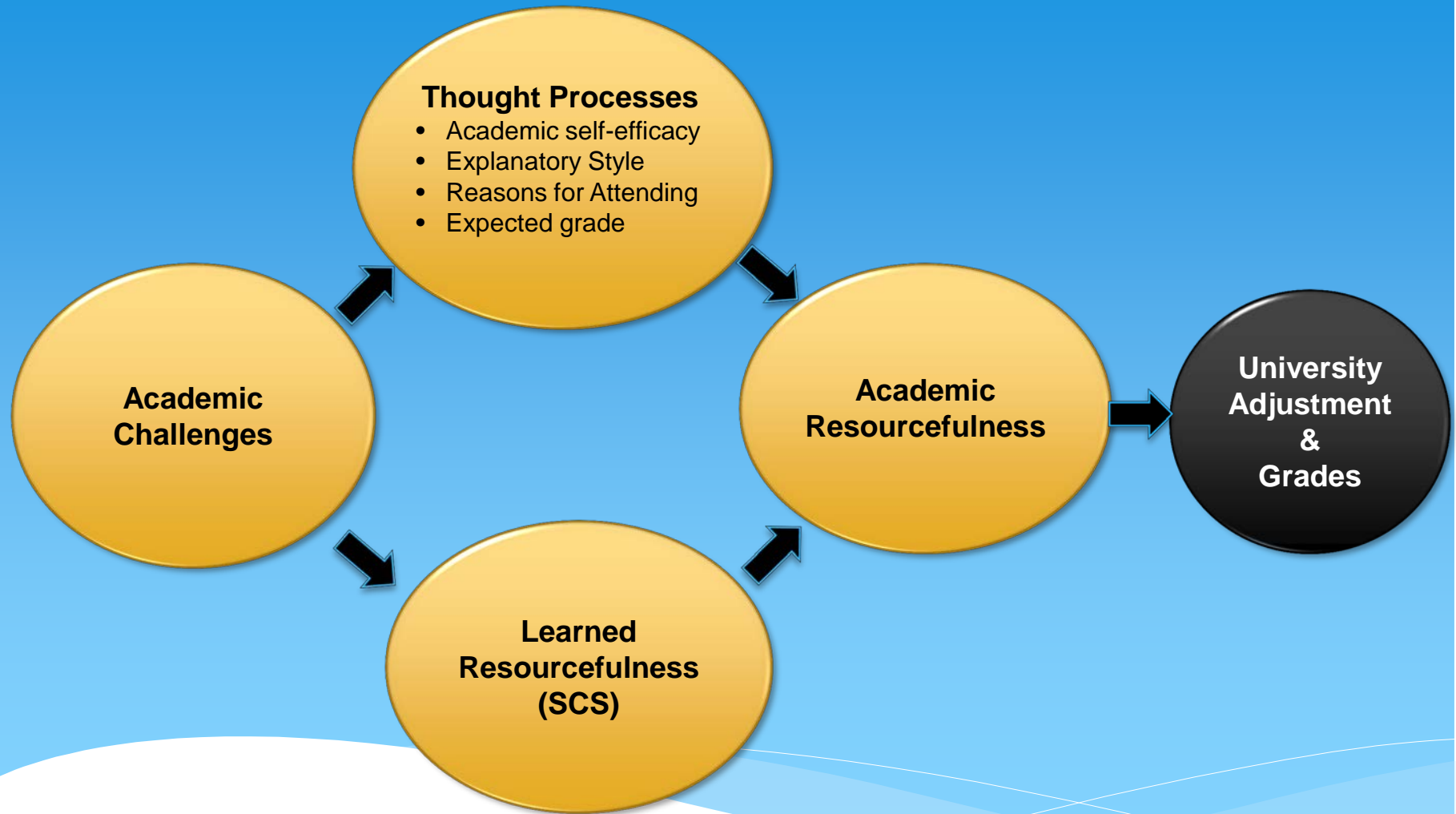


* $p < 0.01$

Participation in New Student Information Events



Overview of Academic Resourcefulness



Results – Learned Resourcefulness...

VARIABLES	GROUP DIFFERENCES
General Learned Resourcefulness	CT = UT > D
Academic Self-Efficacy	UT > CT = D
Academic Resourcefulness	UT > CT = D
University Adjustment	
Grades	UT > CT = D

Results – Explanatory Style...

VARIABLES	GROUP DIFFERENCES
Lack of effort	D = CT > UT
Task Difficulty	
Not Lack of Ability	UT > CT = D
Bad luck	D = CT > UT
Grade	

Results – Reasons for Attending...

VARIABLES	GROUP DIFFERENCES
Internal reasons	D > CT = UT
Other people	D > UT = CT
University's features	D > CT > UT
Delay Responsibilities	
Attain a better job	

Results – Other Reasons...

VARIABLES	GROUP DIFFERENCES
Scholarship opportunities	D > CT > UT
Pathway existed from previous program	CT > UT > D
Secure career change/advancement	CT > UT > D
Can't find a job	UT = CT > D
University's size	D > CT = UT
Trent offered me transfer credits	UT > CT > D

Limitations

- These are preliminary findings
 - Deeper analysis ahead (prediction models, group differences)
 - Year end grades to come
 - Consider other variables to control for
- Generalizability needs to be tested
 - Based on a Trent sample, with institution specific entrance requirements and policies for direct and transfer students
- Question refinements (eg. foundation skills)
- Further research into WHY students transferred

Conclusions & Implications

Preliminary Conclusions

- ✓ College and University Transfer students are well prepared for academic success
 - Debunks deficits based thinking about college transfers
- ✓ College transfer students have a different life profile (work, dependents)
 - University transfers and direct entry students have more discretionary time

A few implications for practice...

- ✓ Plan outreach/information for transfer students in accordance with life profile (eg. Website, access to advisors, targeted info sessions)
- ✓ Engage with transfer students through advising versus 'events'
- ✓ Build on strengths transfer students have developed

Questions and Discussion?

Thank you...

Dr. Deborah Kennett

dkennett@trentu.ca

Karen Maki

kemaki@gmail.com