Outreach to Non-Degree Seeking Graduate Students: Aspects of Student Focused Critical Librarianship and Fostering an Inclusive Research Community

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Introduction

- We aim to demonstrate the importance of instructional outreach and programming to non-degree seeking graduate students
- Data reflects a recent study we conducted surveying 43 students
- We will argue that these students present a conduit to aid in university graduate matriculation, student success, and a potentially influential alumni network

Main Points

- Sought to gauge their:
    - motivations for enrolling as non-degree seeking students
    - familiarity with library spaces and services
    - needs for success in their courses.
- Our goals for this work are:
    - assess the needs and gaps in knowledge of non-degree seeking students
    - determine an appropriate and beneficial library intervention to aid in their work
    - establish a closer connection between the Graduate School administration
    - market library services to both traditional and non-traditional graduate students.

Non-Degree Student Profile

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Advancing graduate education.
Enhancing the graduate student experience.

About · **Admissions** · **Graduate Programs** · **Funding** · **Policies** ·   **Students** · **Faculty & Staff** · **Alumni & Friends** ·

+ SHARE

Non-Degree Admissions

If you wish to take graduate courses without pursuing a graduate degree, you have three options:

1. Non-Degree Seeking Student,

2. Visiting Graduate Student Status, or

3. Golden Identification Cardholder Status (for Senior Citizens)

Please be advised that the application instructions below are only for the status of Non-Degree Seeking Student or Visiting Graduate Student. Registration as a Non-Degree Seeking Student or Visiting Graduate Student in any particular course is subject to the approval of the department offering that course. Before applying, we advise that you contact the academic department(s) in which you are interested in taking courses, for guidance on which courses are eligible for Non-Degree registration.

ADMISSIONS

- Choose Maryland
- Student Stories
- List of Programs (A to Z)
- Admissions Requirements
- Application Process
- International Admissions
- Non-Degree Admissions
- Admissions Fee Waiver Eligibility
- Admissions FAQs

1. Non-Degree Seeking Student,

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**Non-Degree Seeking Student**

To qualify as a Non-Degree Seeking Student, you must:

- Have achieved a cumulative 3.0 (on a 4 point scale) average for work done at the undergraduate level; OR

- Have earned a master's, doctoral, or a post-baccalaureate professional degree (MD, JD, DVM, etc.) from a regionally accredited institution; OR

- Have attained a score that places you in the upper 50th percentile of an appropriate national standardized aptitude examination, such as the GRE, GMAT, or Miller Analogies Test; OR

- Provide a letter of support from the graduate director of the degree program in which you plan to take a course.

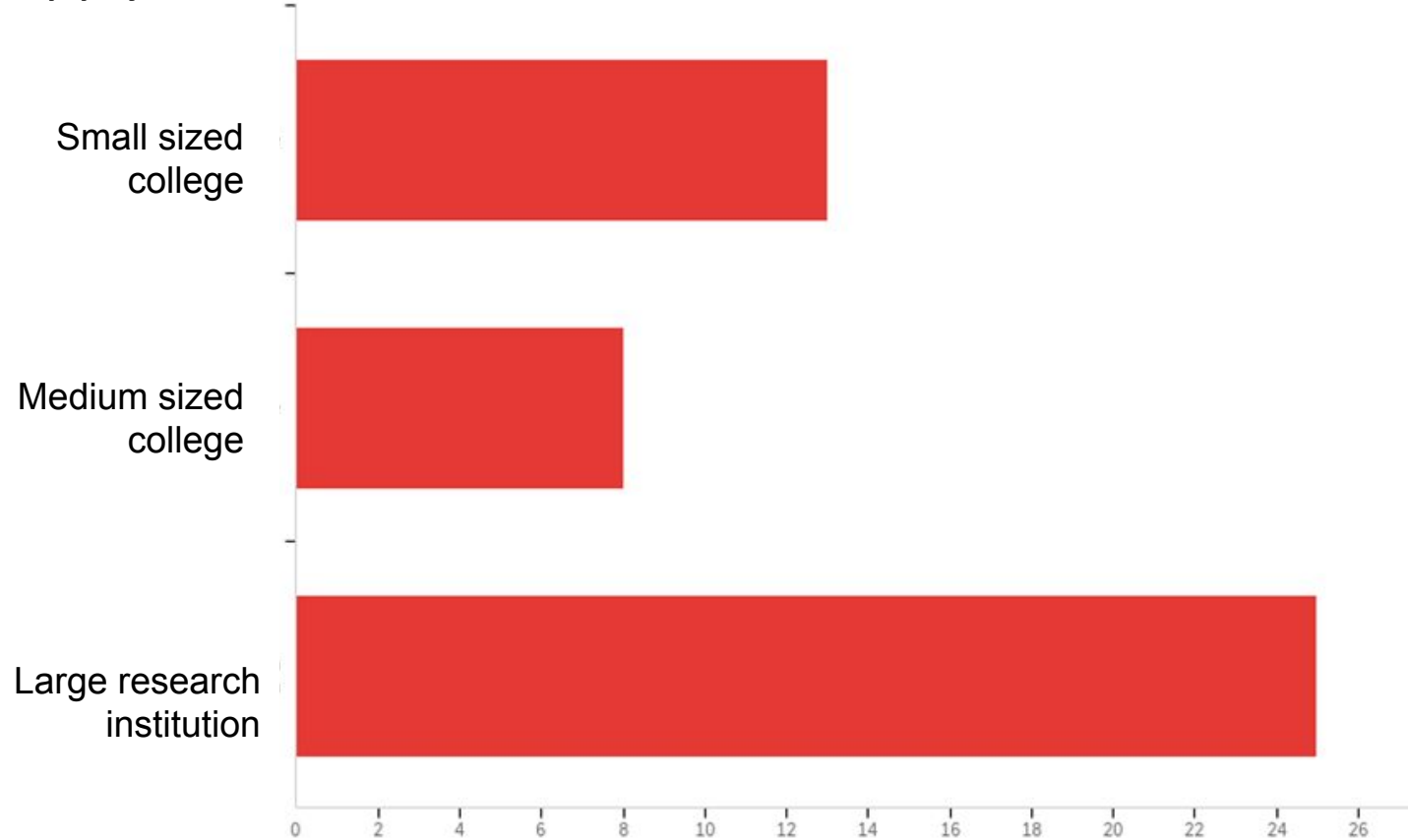- Submit a personal statement.

Participant Age

Average = 53

Range = 23-86
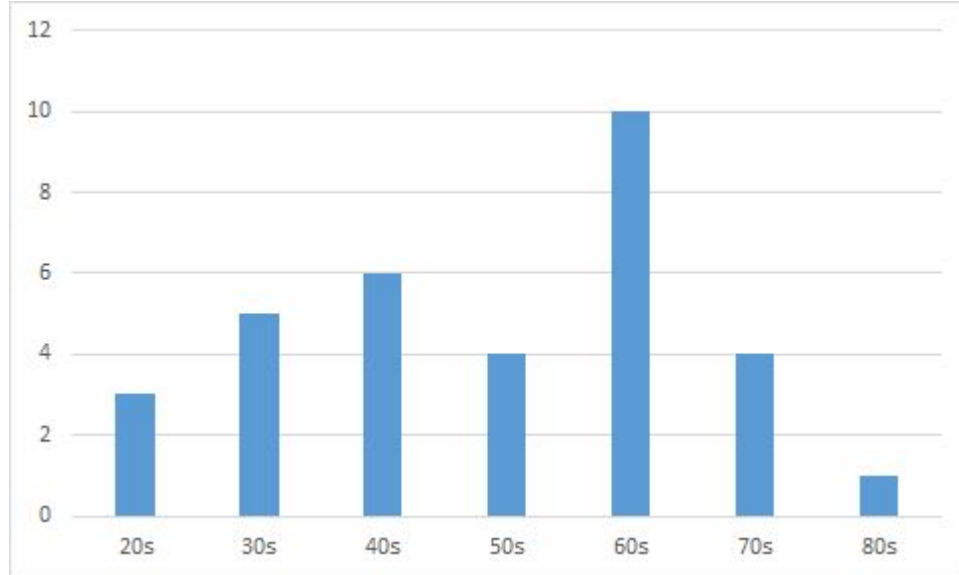
"How would you classify your previous institution(s)? Please select all that apply"
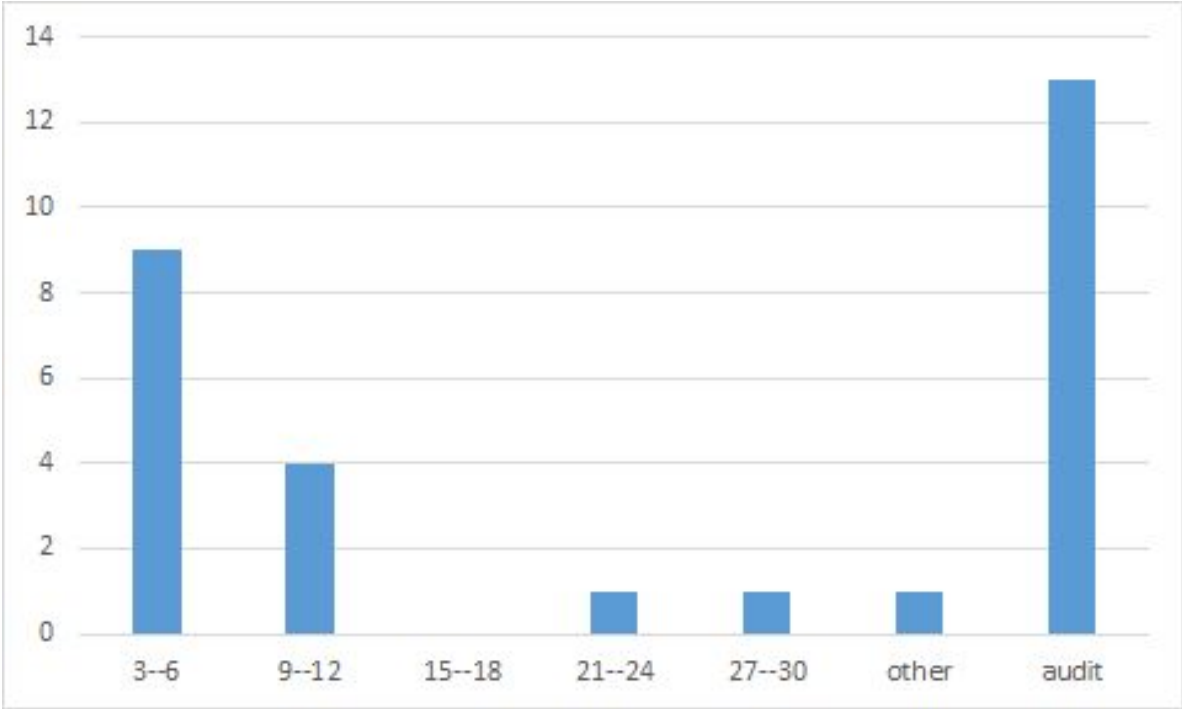
"Please list any previous higher educational institutions that you attended. (List all that apply.)"
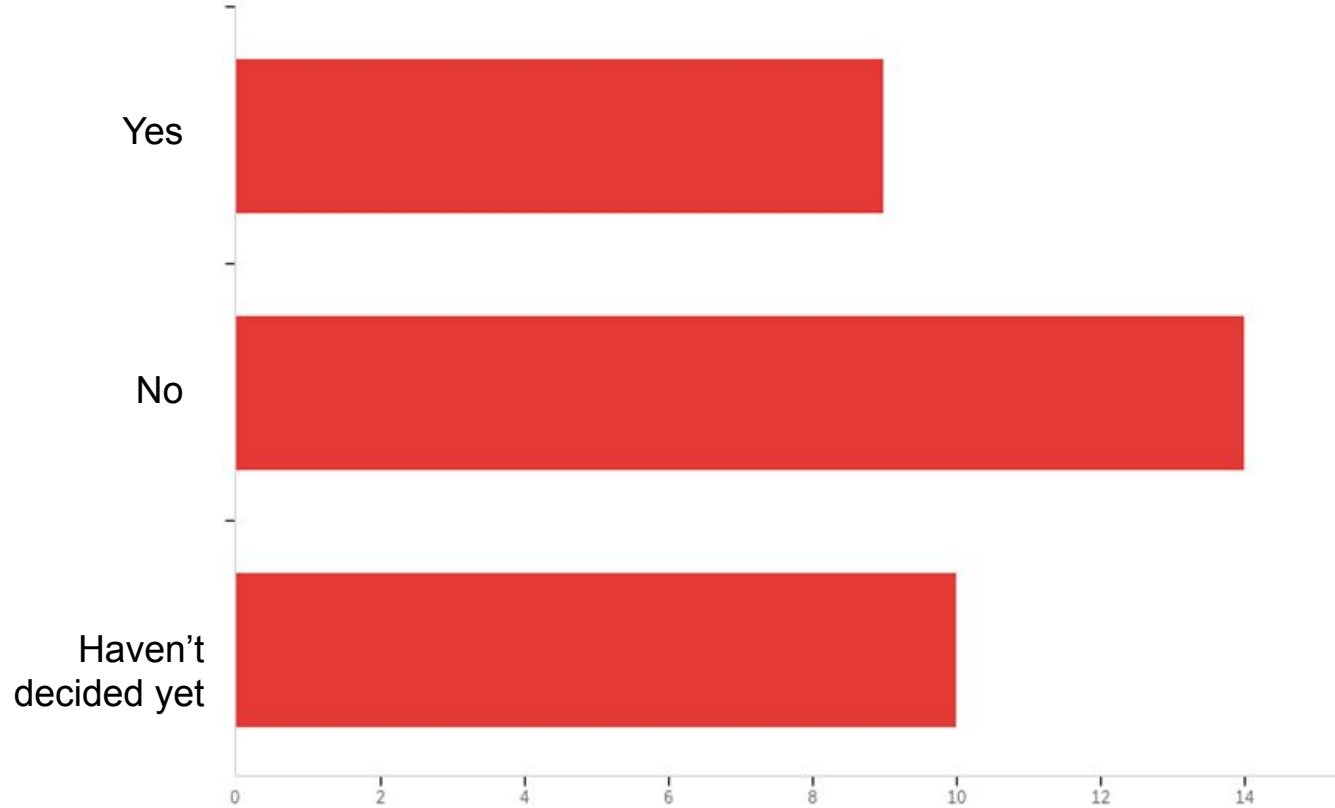
"What is your primary area of study?"

"How many credits have you earned towards your degree?"

"Are you planning on pursuing a full graduate degree or certificate at the University of Maryland?"

"What factors are influencing your decision?"

quality of education

I have the luxury of learning without the requirement of taking exams

These are some questions I need to answer: 1. Am I intellectually up to the challenge of pursuing a graduate degree? 2. Am I able, willing and motivated to dedicate the hours required to pursue the degree? 3. What would be the cost and can I afford it?

Identifying the most rewarding field of study.

To do what?

time and need

Life situation

Having to work full-time, kids, scheduling
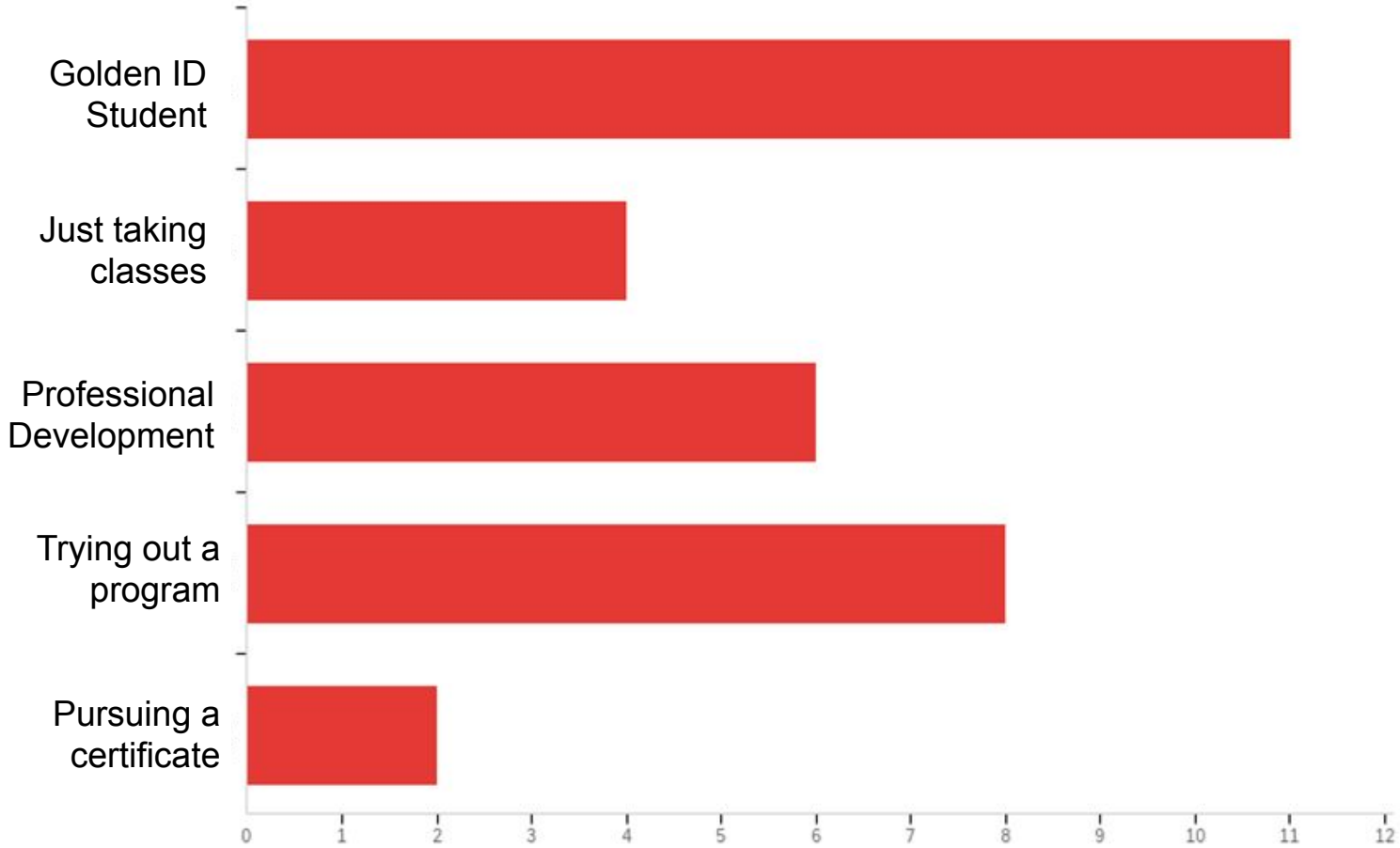
I would take a Religion masters if it were offered.

Available funding

One PhD is enough for me

Only personal satisfaction

usefulness at retirement age

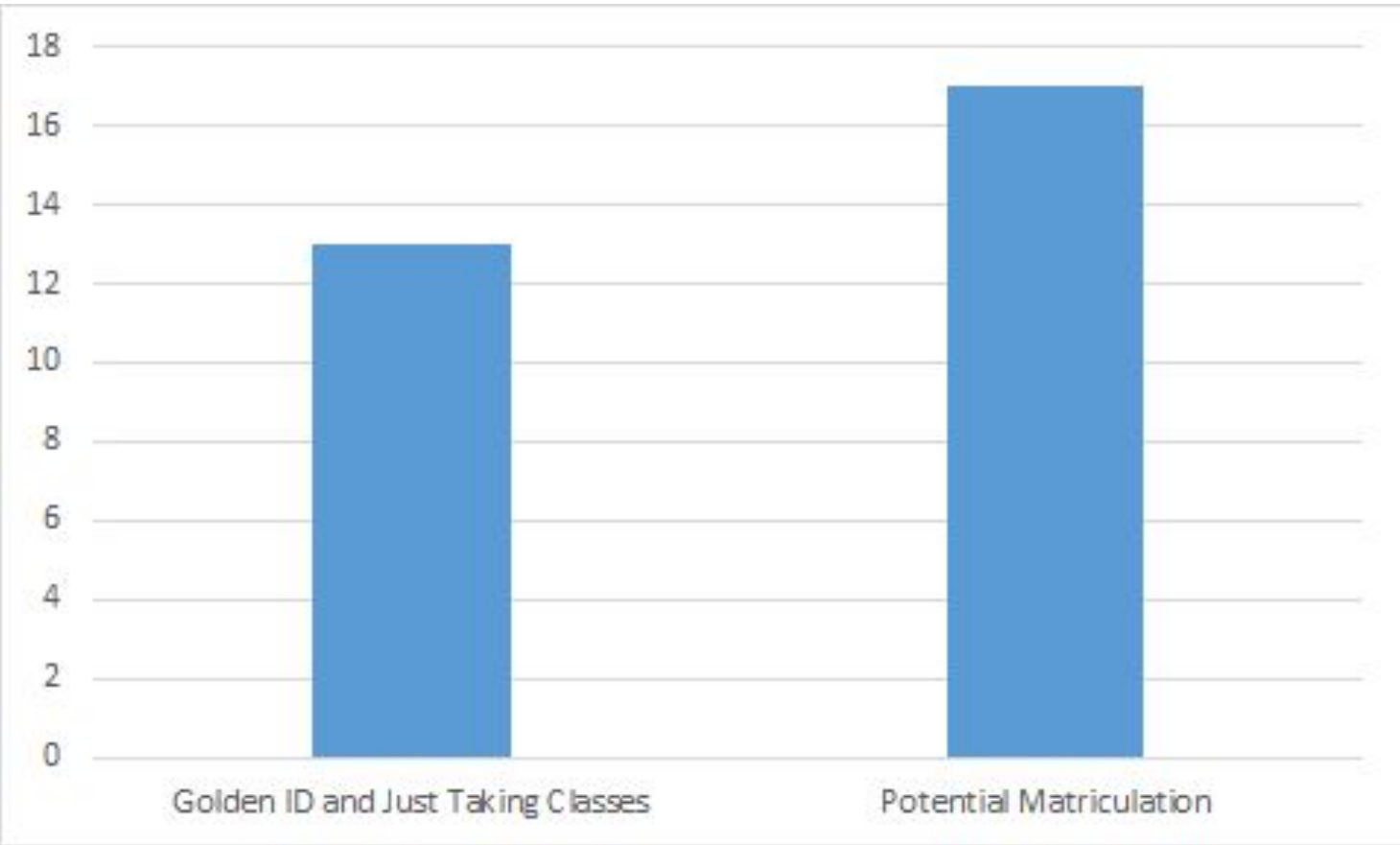# "How would you self-identify? Please select all that apply"

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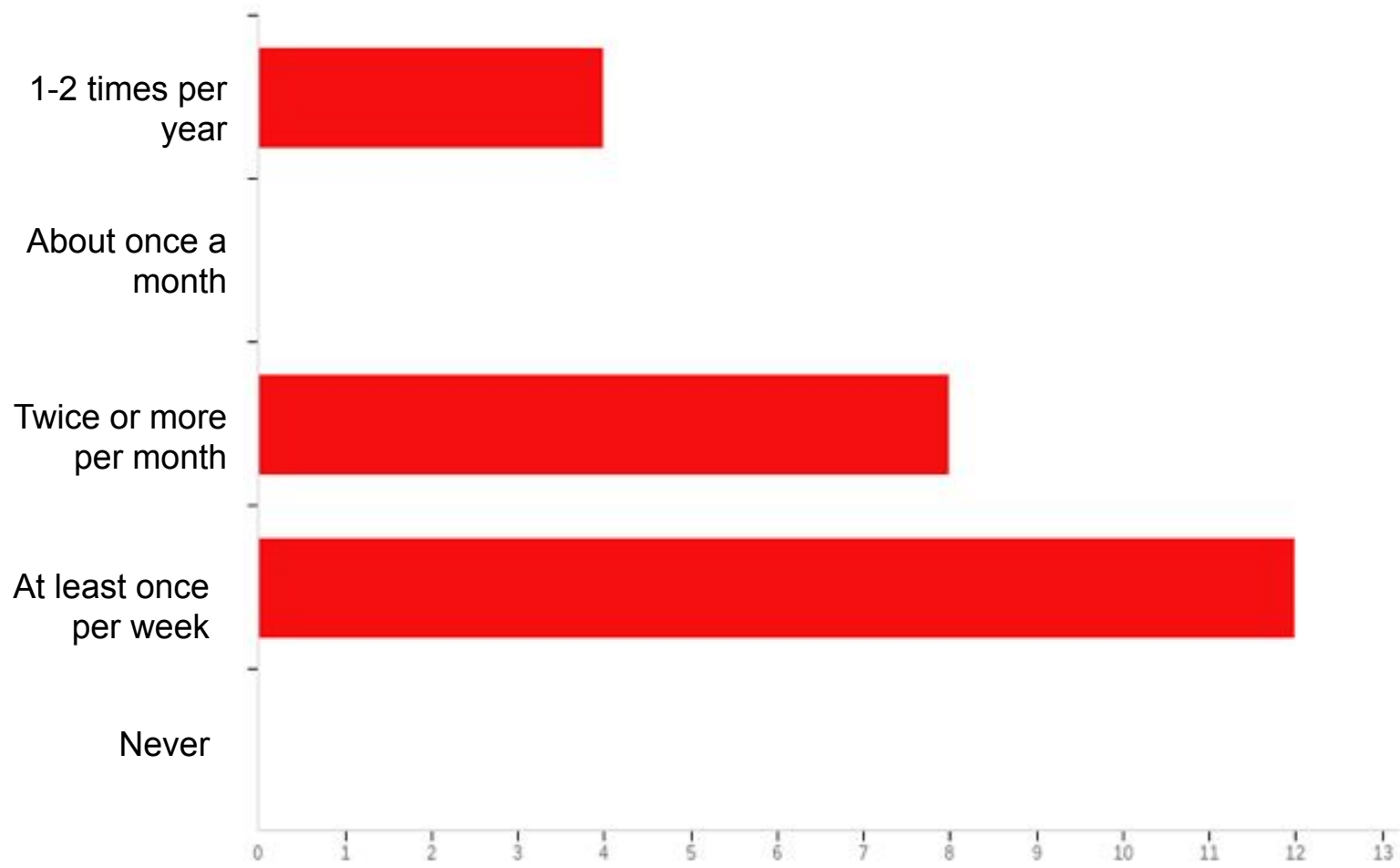|			
4	Golden ID Student	35.48%	11
5	Just taking classes	12.90%	4
6	Professional development	19.35%	6
7	Trying out a program	25.81%	8
8	Pursuing a certificate	6.45%	2
	Total	100%	31

"How would you self-identify? Please select all that apply"

Library Experience

"How often did you use the library at your previous institution(s)?"

"What differences between your previous institution's library and UMD's have you noticed?"

| **Prevalence of Online Resources**	**How the Library is Used**	**Change Over Time**
"**Degree of automatization** due to pervasiveness of Internet" "Superior Search Interface"	"...In the intervening decades McKeldin has become the undergraduate library, although changes in technology mean that it functions as a **de facto student union**..."	"**The last time I made regular, substantial use of an academic library was in 1970.** It would be easier to describe the similarities than the differences between an academic library in 1970 and the UMD library of today."

"What is something that you liked at your previous institution that you wish the UMD Libraries did/had/provided, etc.? Why?"
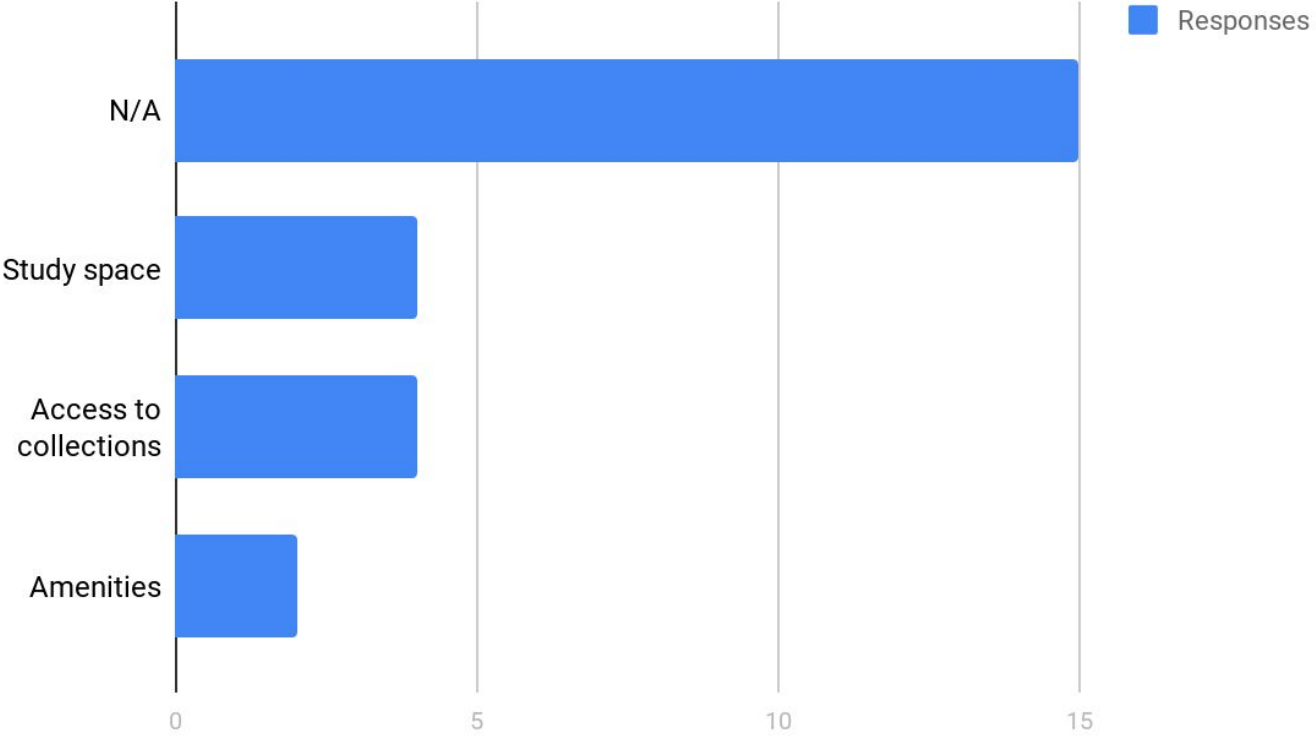
"Which of the following terms are you unfamiliar with? Please select all that are unfamiliar."

Top 4 Unfamiliar Terms:

1. Makerspace (17)
2. Research Commons (14)
3. Information Literacy (11)
4. Research Cycle (10)

So What?

Why care?

   A. Potentially influential alumni network

   B. Potential students

   C. Continuing students

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Why care?

A.   Potentially influential alumni network

Based on the data we collected:
1)   Highly educated cohort
2)   Mostly in professional careers
3)   Older population
4)   Leisure time for enrichment
5)   Motivated, but disconnected

Why care?

A. Potentially influential alumni network

B. Potential students

C. **Continuing students**

Why care?

A. Potential Students & Continuing Students

Based on the data we collected:
1) Nearly 52% of respondents were trying a program, working towards a certificate, or otherwise engaged in professional development
2) Almost half of respondents aged 40 and younger
3) Exploring seems common

Next Steps

Next steps
A. Partner with strategic communication
B. Targeted library services / resources

Next steps

A. **Partner with strategic communication**

B. Targeted library services / resources

Opportunities:
- We have an opportunity to engage a cohort coveted by alumni relations offices and donation campaigns
- We can partner with development and communications offices across campus to deliver information and target advertisements for library workshops
- Demonstrate the continued and innovative value of libraries to an influential group
- Demonstrate creativity to university administration in areas of fundraising and student engagement
- Potential to develop external partnerships and resources

Next steps

A. Partner with strategic communication

B. Targeted library services / resources

According to our data:

- Skilled group of students with high research aptitude
- Many noted unfamily with navigating newer resources
- Skepticism regarding some resources
- Misunderstanding of library/general information landscape
- Feelings of being out-of-touch, unskilled, etc.
- Multiple mentions desirous of library workshops
- Opportunity for librarians to work with experienced researchers

So we will:

- Fall 2020: workshops aimed at specific non-degree groups
- Develop these workshops to focus on the needs observed in this study
- Conduct assessment to ensure our projected needs match actual needs
- Begin working more closely with the Graduate School for marketing workshops and library services in general

Thank you!

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