

Interrogating the Anthropocene: Assessing Public Attitudes and Exploring Educational Responsibilities

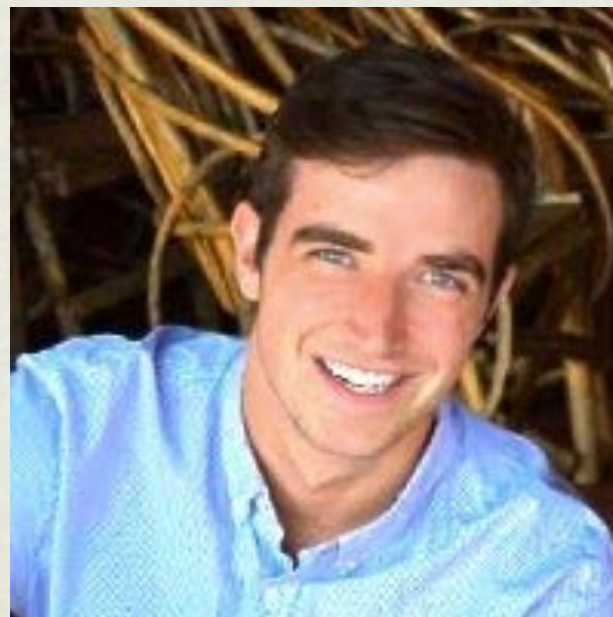
Susan Findley, Tyler Groff, Carly Kimiecik, Catherine Mazanek,
Matthew Meeks, Abbie Schultheis, and Thomas Yarcusko



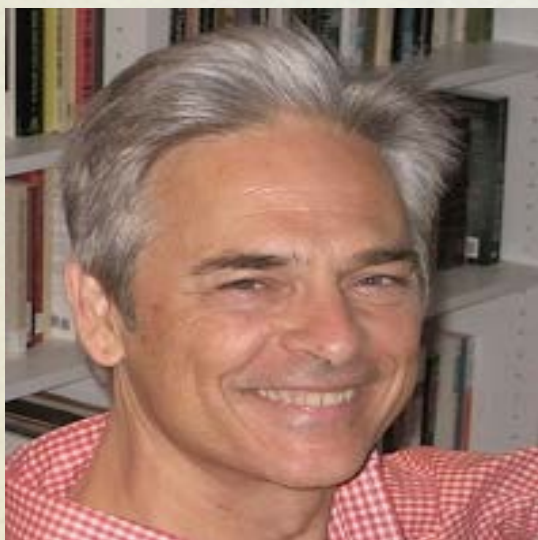
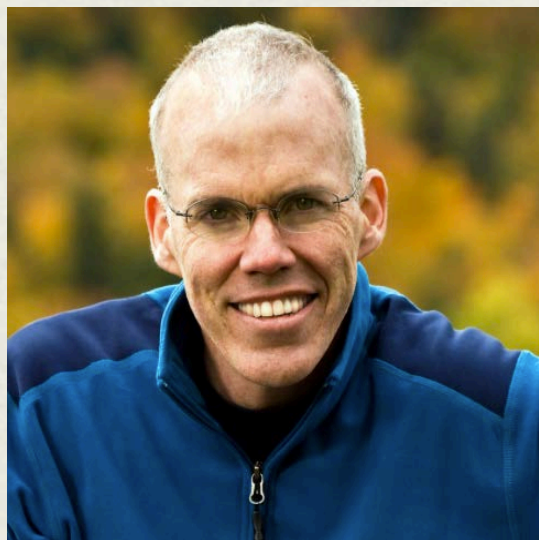
Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

-Margaret Mead

Who We Are



Where we came from

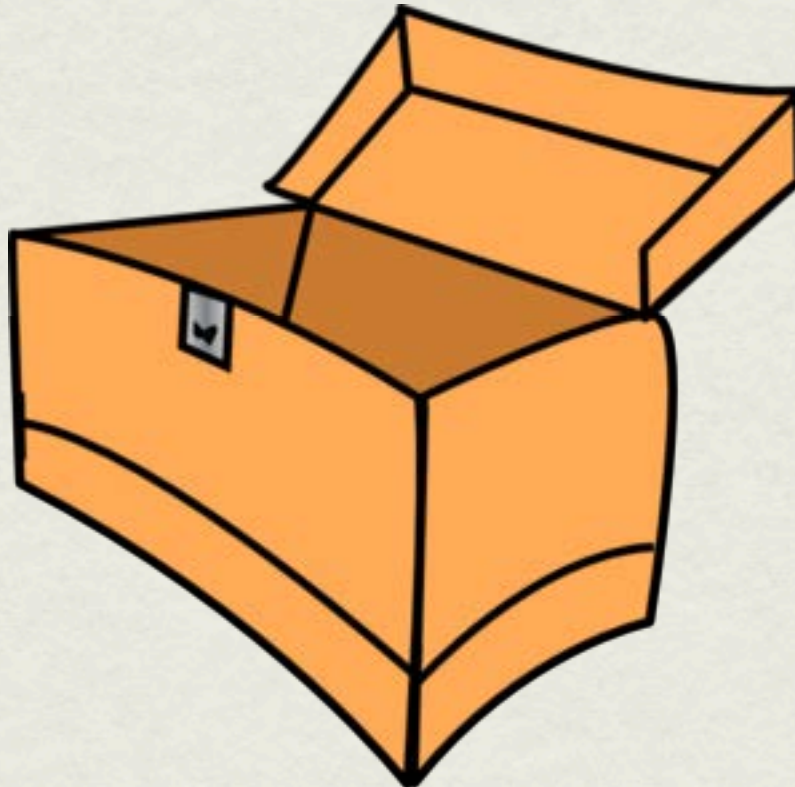


Website
Design

Quantitative
data analysis

Qualitative
data analysis

Critical
Thinking



Interdisciplinary
Inquiry

Data
Collection

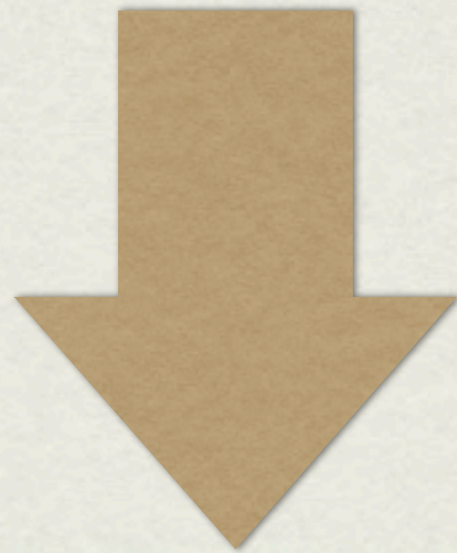
Interviewing

Human
Subject
Research

Team
Collaboration

The Questions

How do we begin to talk about the current geologic epoch in which we are living?



How do we bridge the discussion gap in an effort to include students and scholars?

Preliminary Hypotheses and Questions of Study

1. To what extent are students aware of the Anthropocene?
2. Are students concerned about environmental issues?
3. If there exists a difference in environmental knowledge, is it based upon undergraduate education?
4. How do students feel about the future of our environment?

Methods

- Rapid Assessment Procedure

- 5 minute oral survey conducted
- qualitative and quantitative questions

- Study Subjects

- All Miami Students, faculty, or staff - 18 years of age, consent required
- Voluntary
- n = 300

- Statistical Analysis

Altman Scholar Survey ID Number _____

Obtain consent and confirm the subject is at least 18 years of age before continuing.

1. Are you a Miami Student, Faculty or Staff (skip question 3 if not a student)? (circle one) Student Faculty Staff

2. With what gender do you identify? (circle one) Male Female Other

3. If student: How many years have you been a student? (circle one)
1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th Other Graduate

4. In what college are you currently studying/employed? (circle one)
a. Arts and Science (this is also Western and Undecided)
b. Education
c. Engineering
d. Business
e. Health and Society

5. Have you ever heard of the term "Anthropocene"? (circle one) Yes No

6. If yes or no, what do you think this term means?

7. For the following options, on a scale of 1-5 (1 being not important, 5 being extremely important) rate the importance of the following categories:
Climate Change
1 2 3 4 5
Biodiversity Loss
1 2 3 4 5
Urban and Agricultural Land Use Change
1 2 3 4 5
Chemical Pollution
1 2 3 4 5
Freshwater Use
1 2 3 4 5
Food Production
1 2 3 4 5
Population
1 2 3 4 5

8. On a scale of 1 - 5 (1 being unsustainable, 5 being highly sustainable), how would you rate your own impact on the environment?
1 2 3 4 5

9. How would you rate your classmates' impact on the environment?
1 2 3 4 5

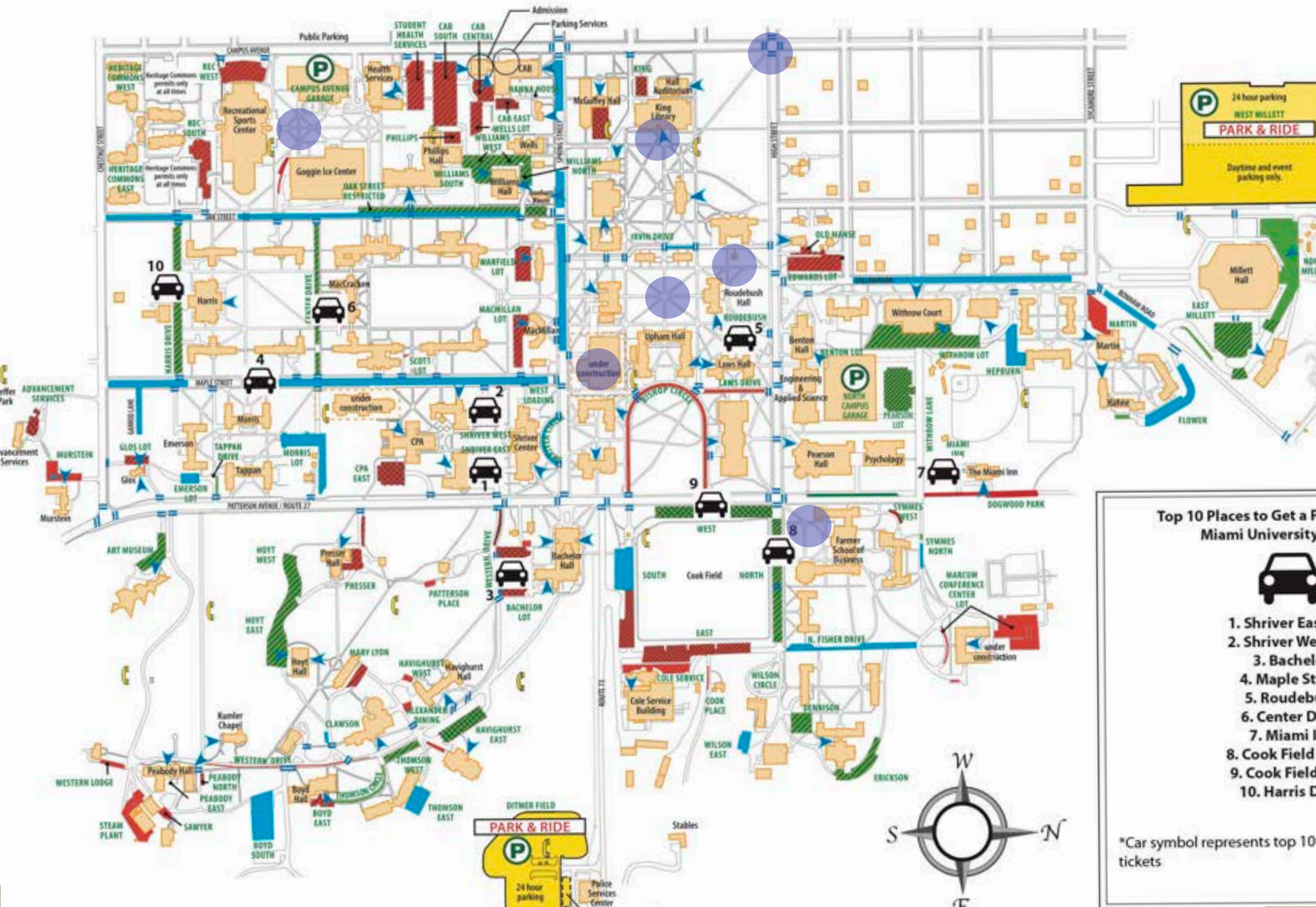
10. How informed do you feel about sustainability and environmental issues? (1 uninformed, 5 extremely informed)
1 2 3 4 5

11. If student, have you ever taken/taught a class on the environment, sustainability, or ecology? (circle one) Yes No

12. Why or why not?

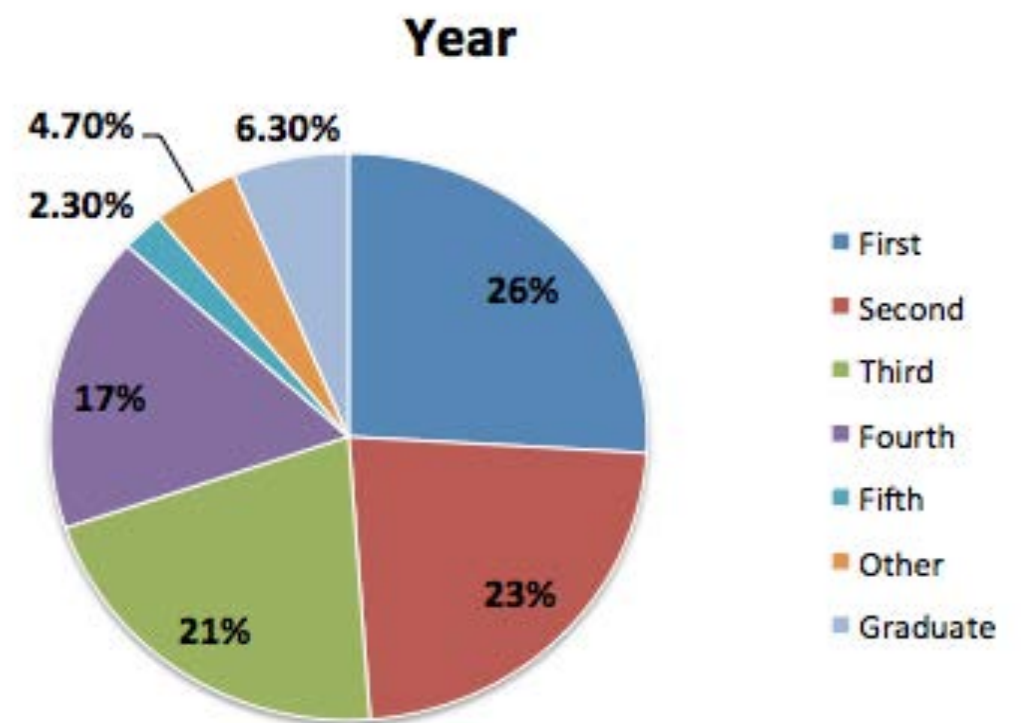
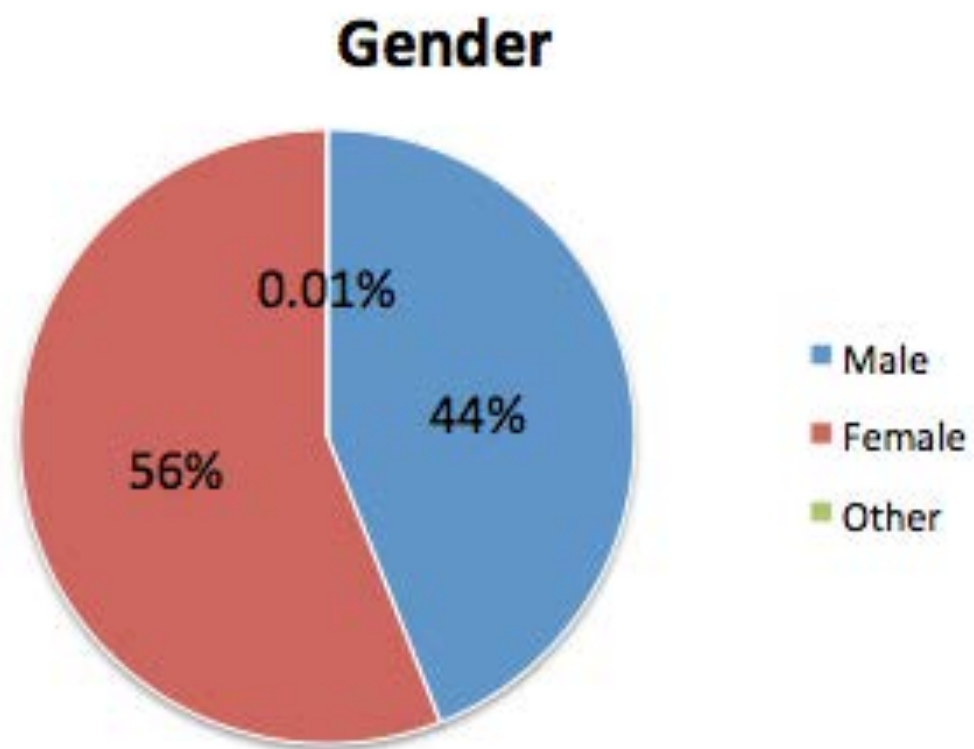
13. Do you think Miami University should be responsible for ensuring students are environmentally literate by the time they graduate? (Circle One) Yes No

14. Is your outlook for the future of the environment generally positive or negative? (Circle One) Positive Negative

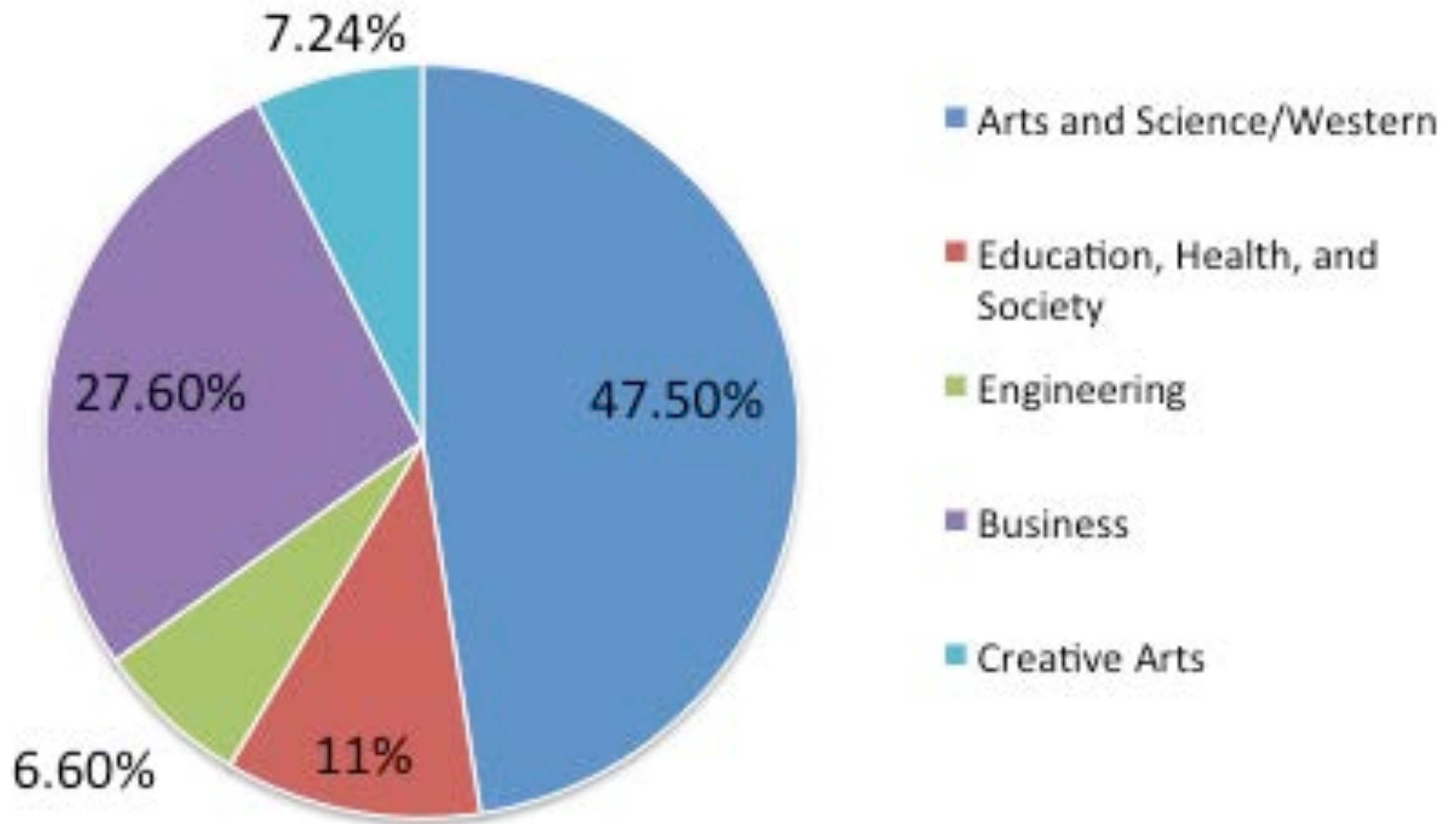


Results

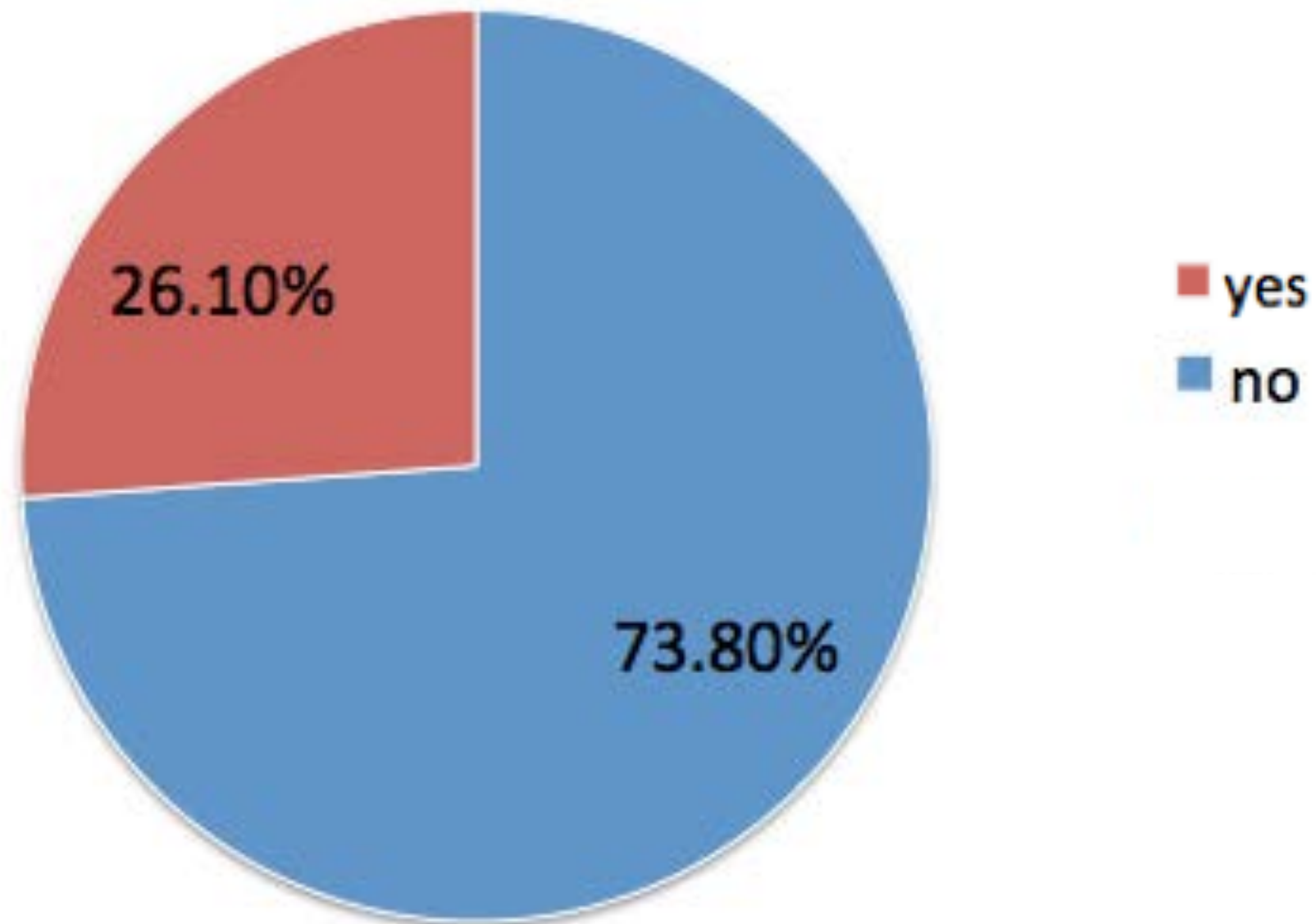
- Study Demographics



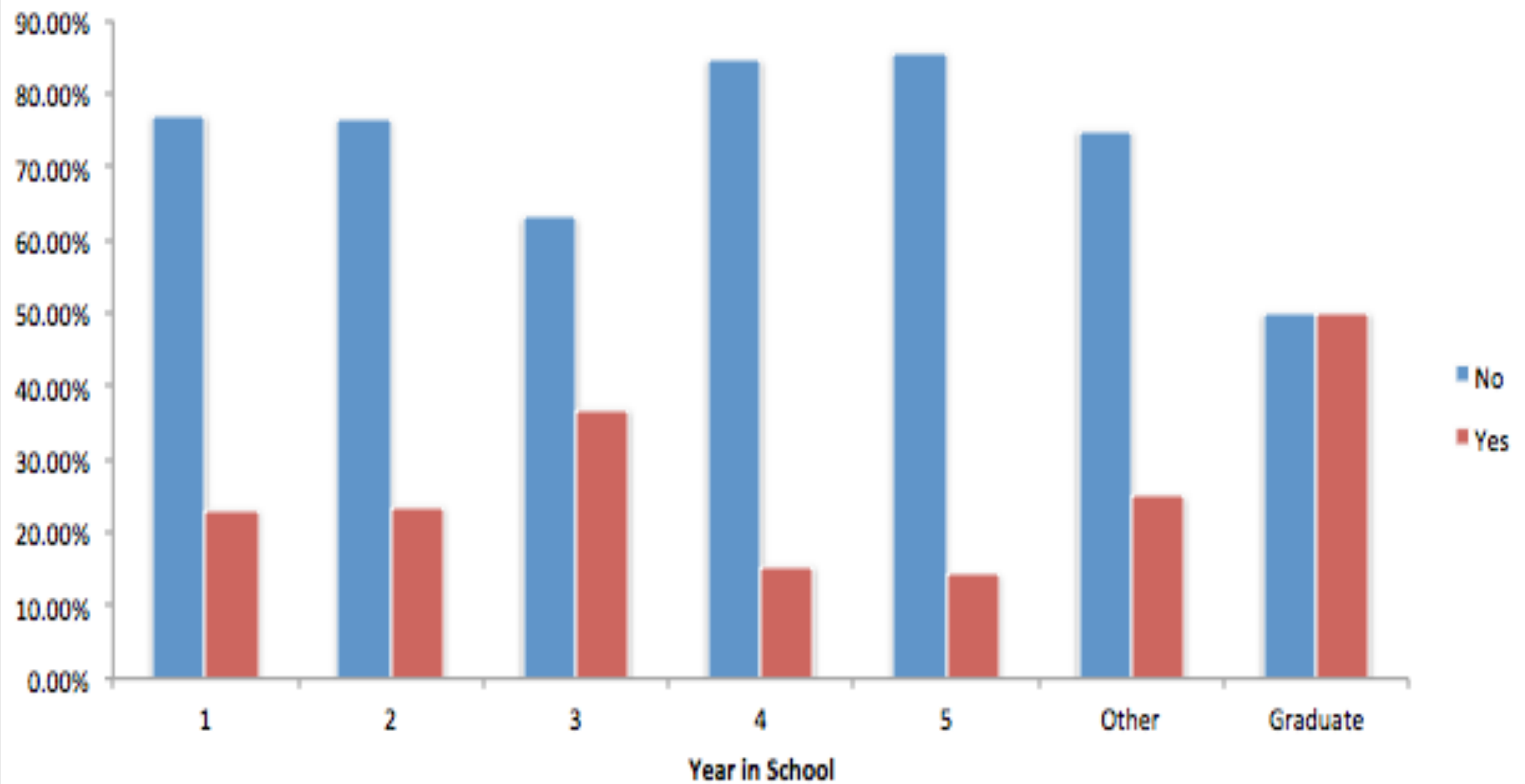
School



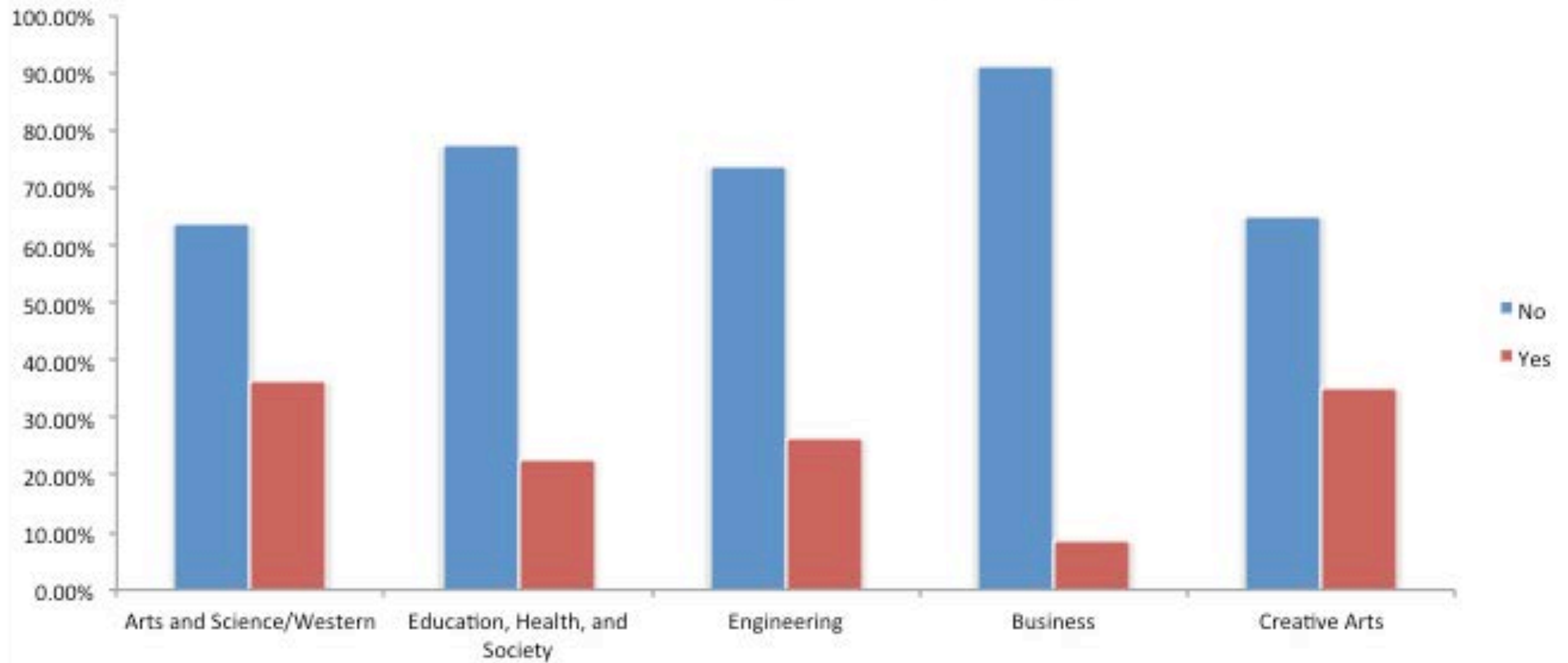
Have you heard of the term "Anthropocene"?



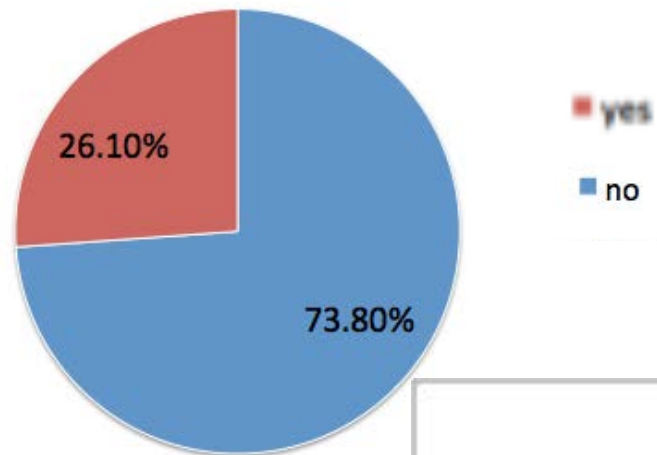
Heard of Anthropocene per year at Miami



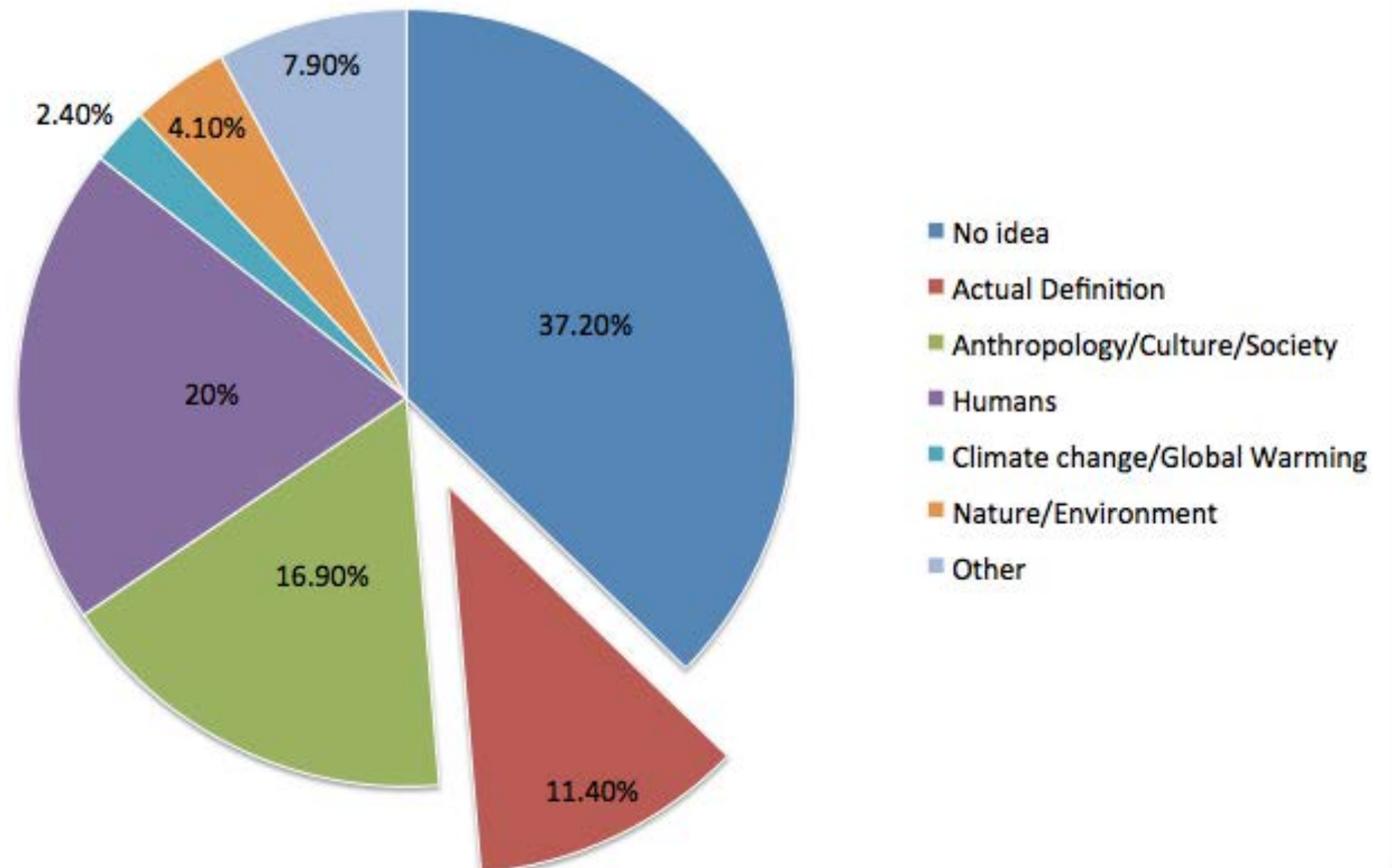
Heard of Anthropocene by College



Have you heard of the term "Anthropocene"?

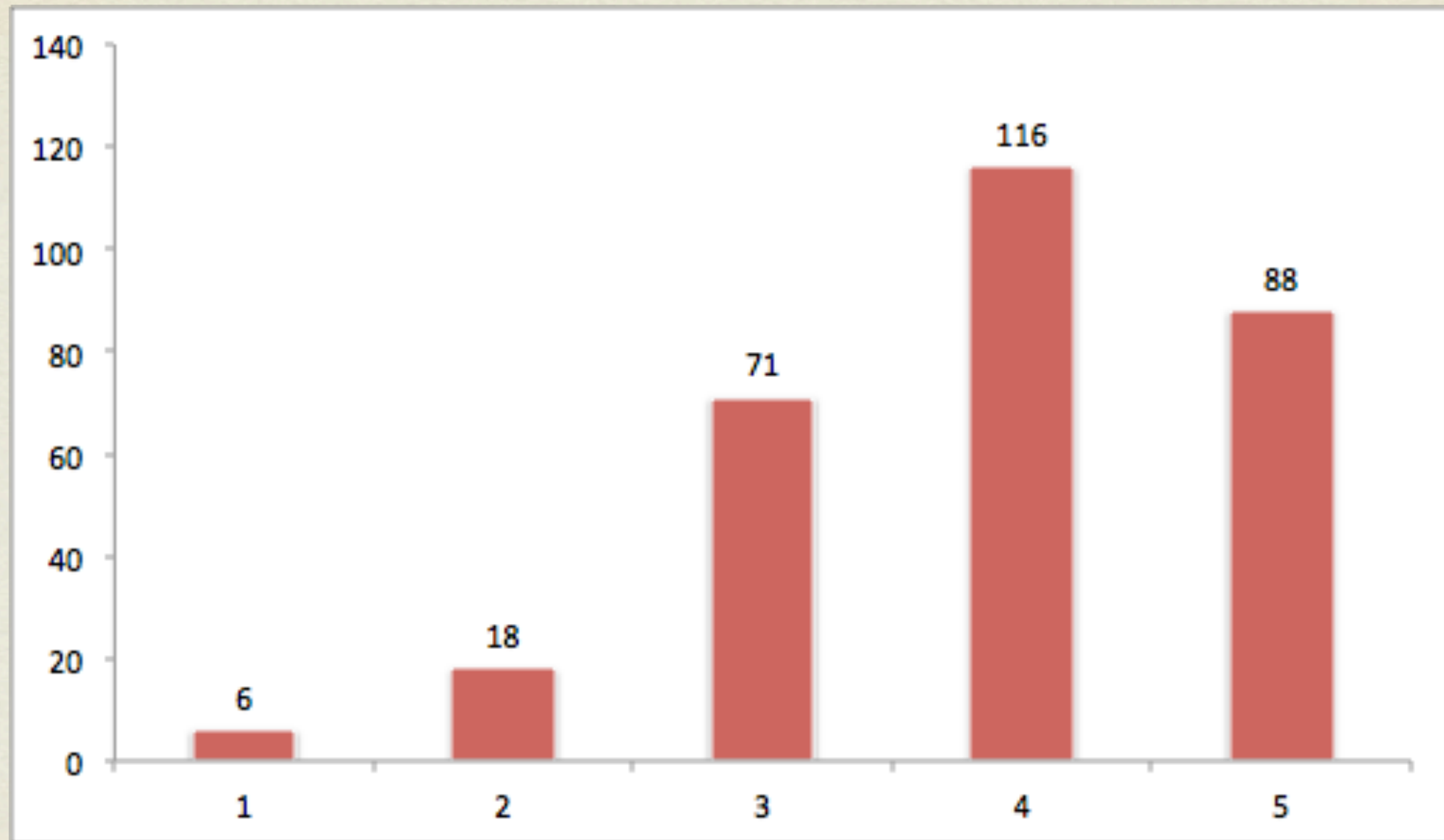


Anthropocene Definitions



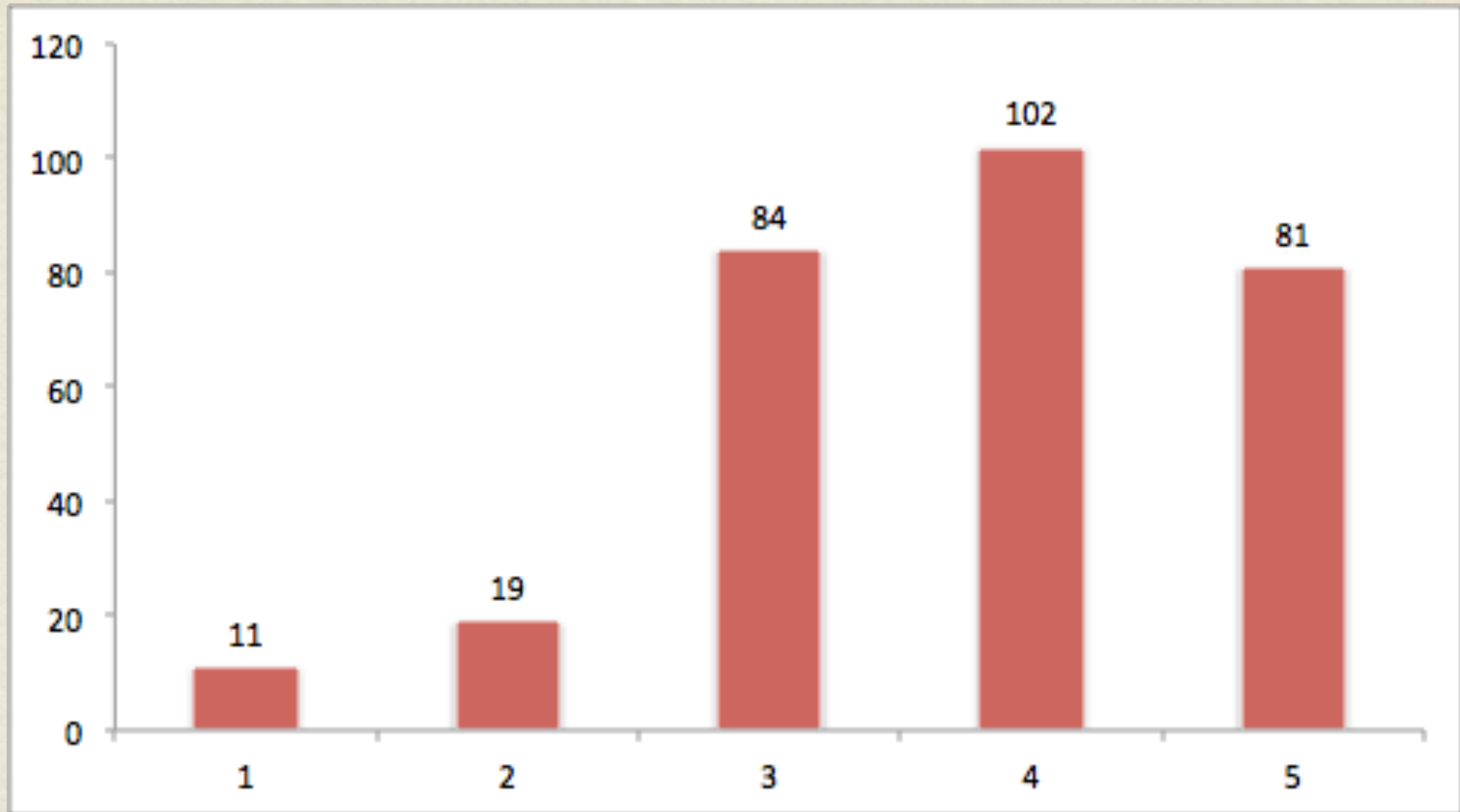
Planetary Boundaries

Climate Change



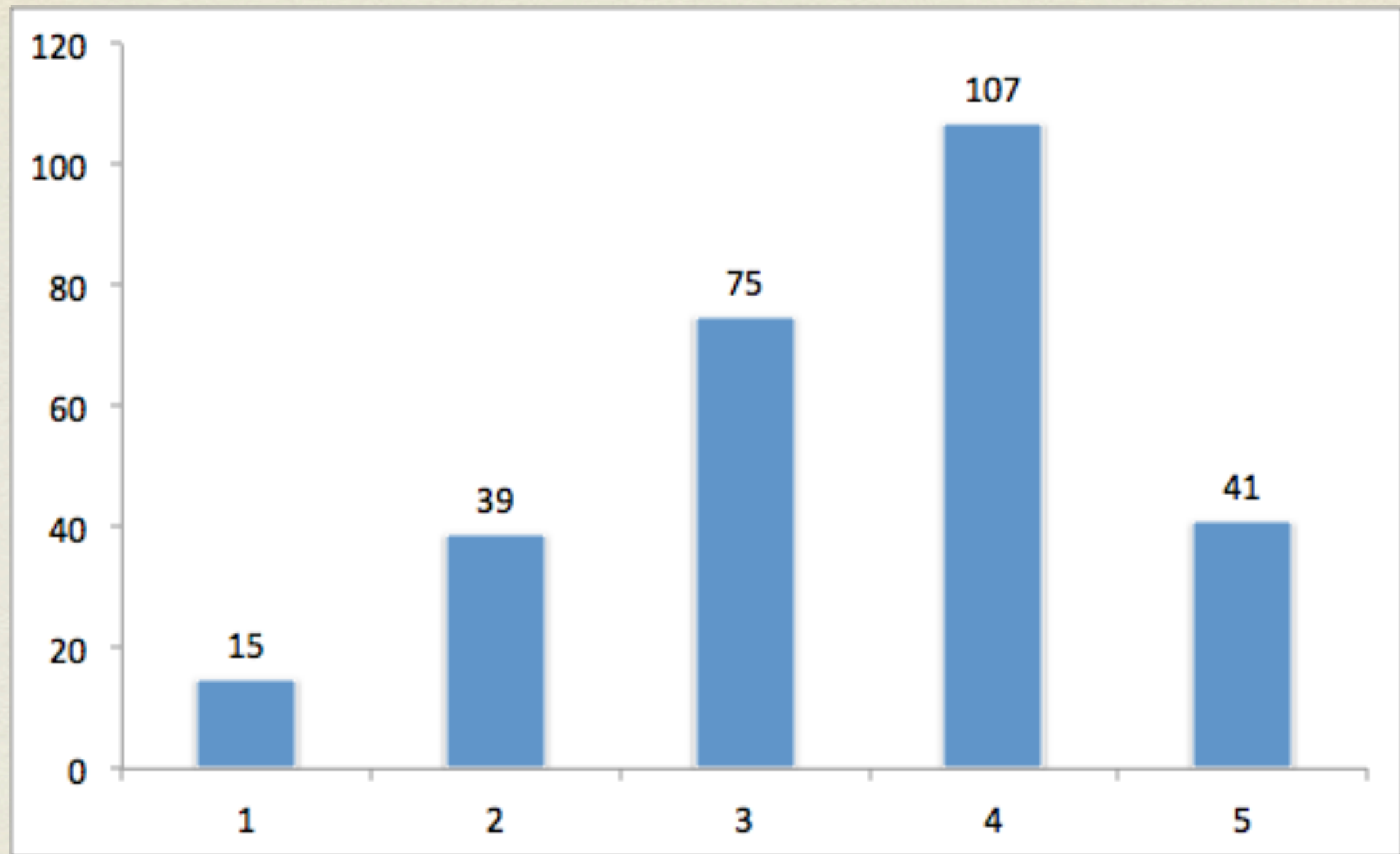
- Average = 3.87

Biodiversity Loss



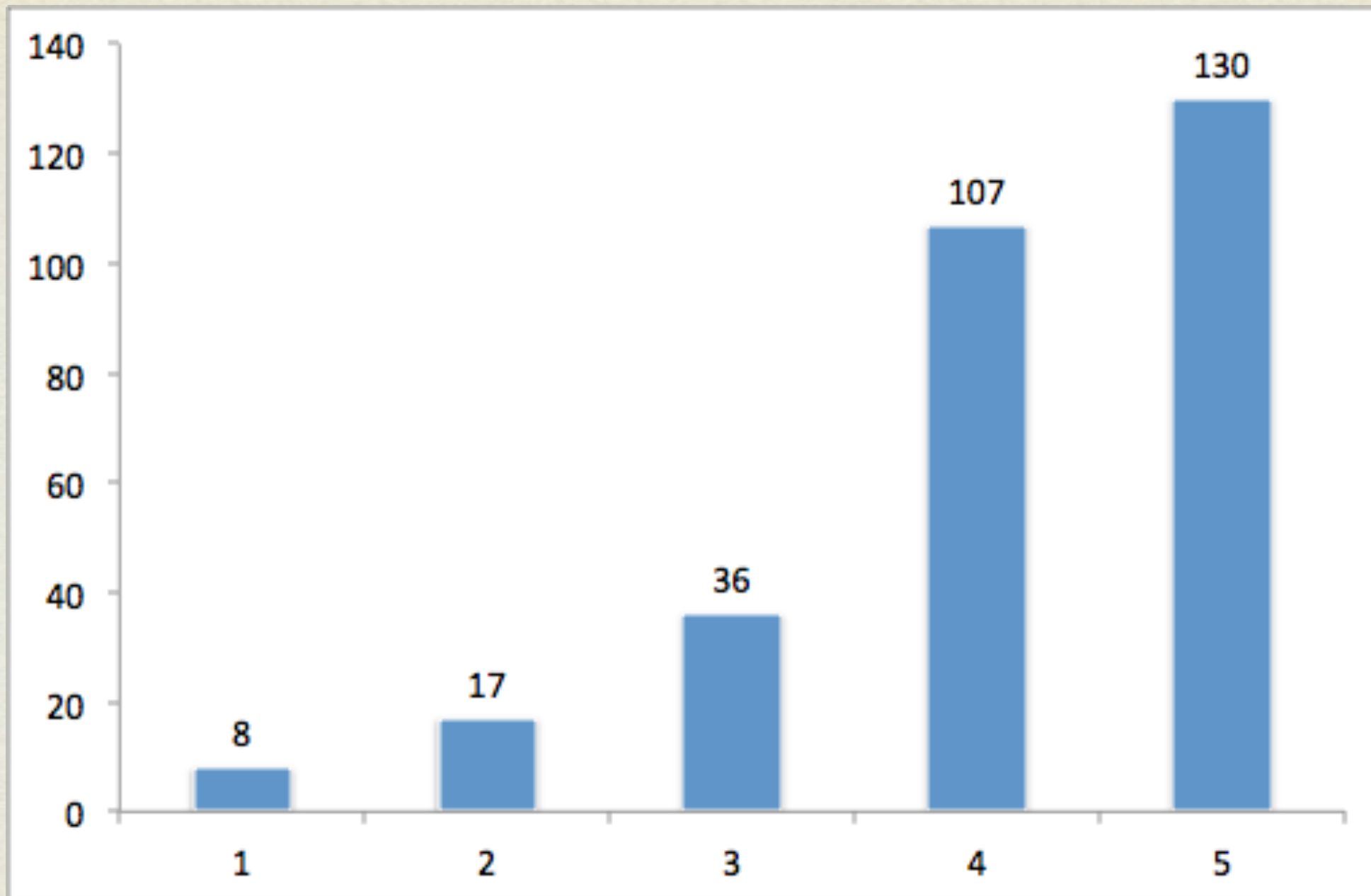
- Average = 3.76

Urban and Agricultural Land Use Change



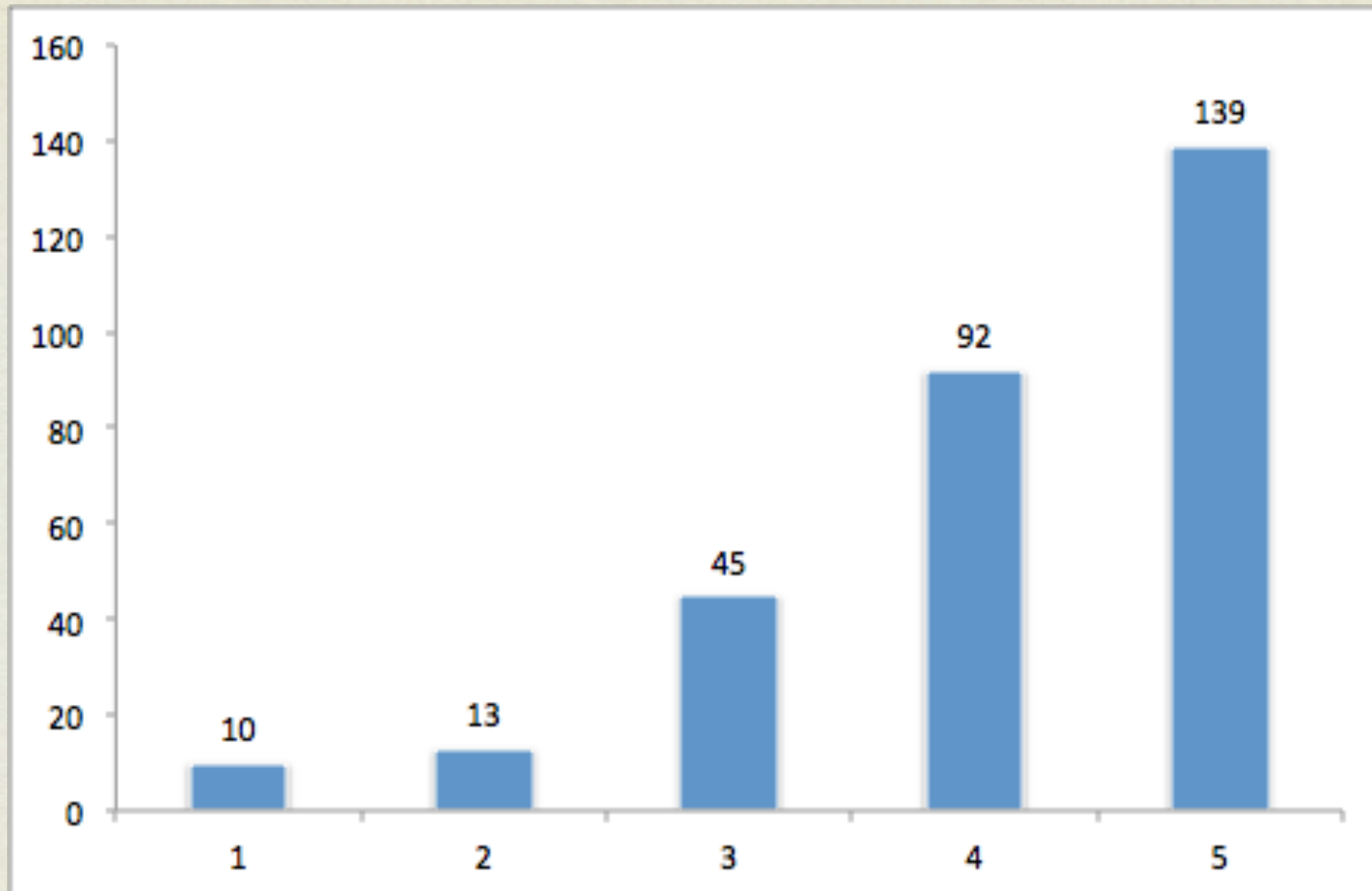
- Average = 3.54

Chemical Pollution



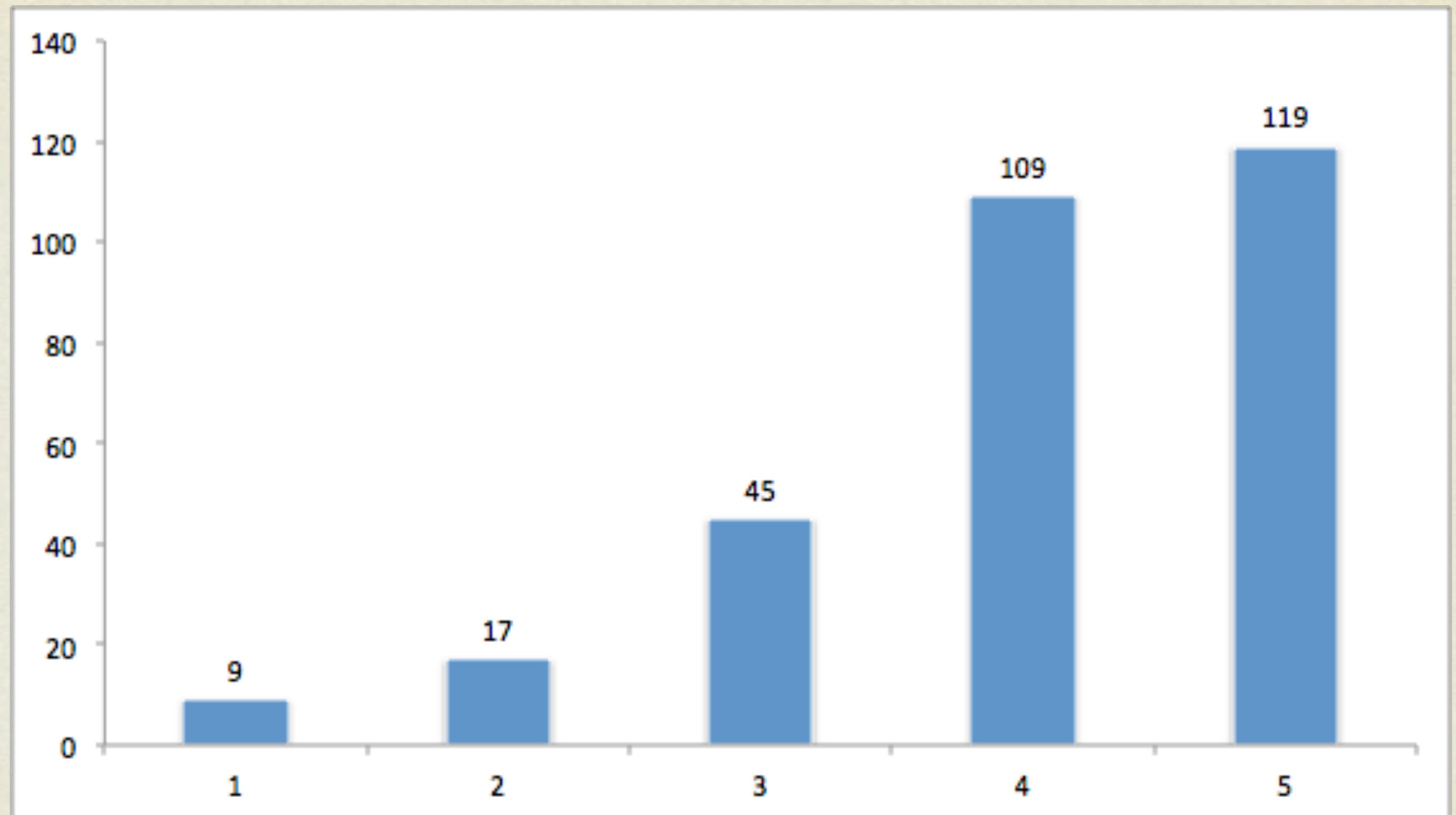
- Average = 4.12

Freshwater Use



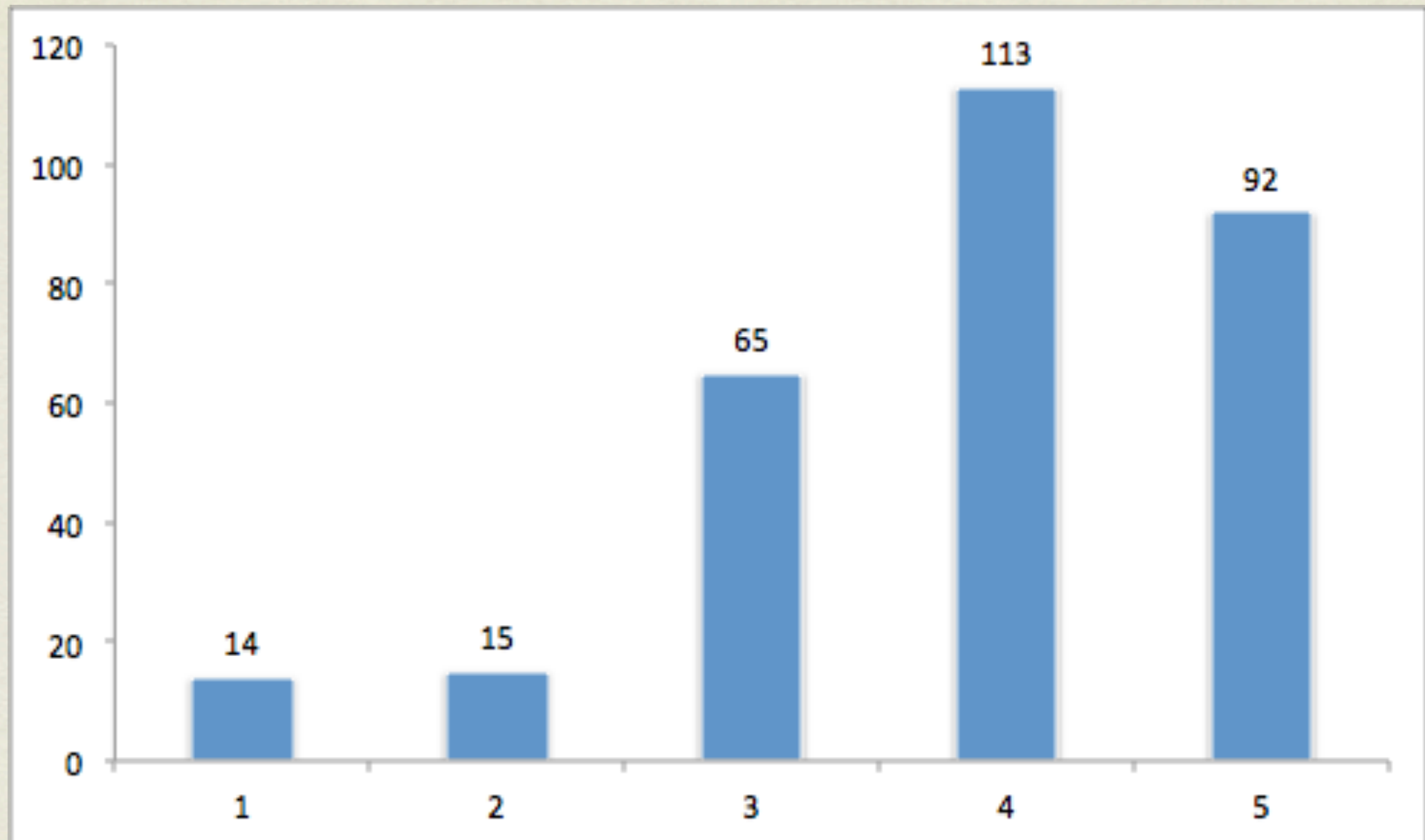
- Average = 4.13

Food Production



- Average = 4.04

Population



- Average = 3.85

(1 = not important at all, 5 = extremely important)

- Climate Change = 3.87
- Biodiversity Loss = 3.76
- Urban and Agricultural Land Use Change = 3.54
- Chemical Pollution = 4.12
- Freshwater Use = 4.13
- Food Production = 4.04
- Population = 3.85

Personal Responsibility

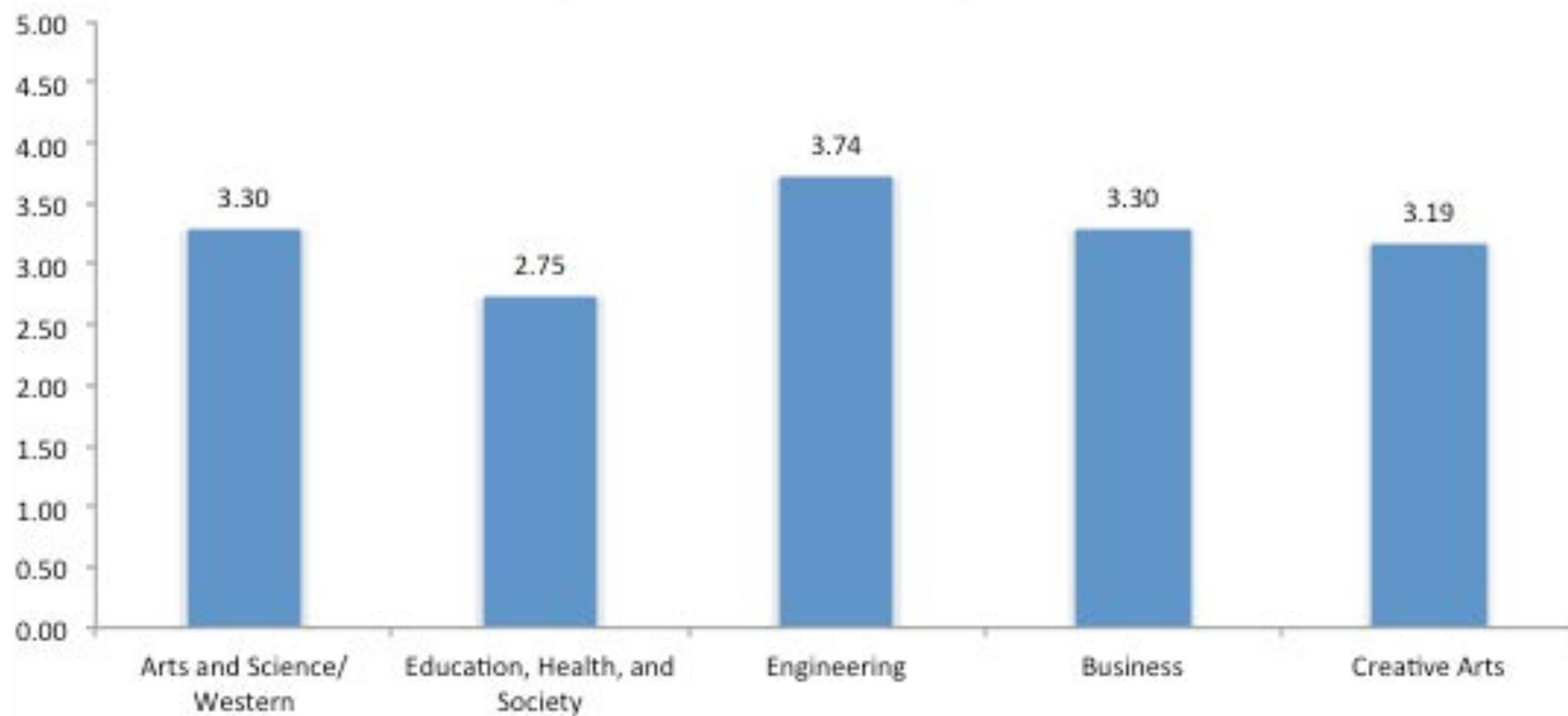
- How would you rate your own impact on the environment? Average = 3.11
- How would you rate other's impact on the environment? Average = 2.57

(1=highly unsustainable, 5 = highly sustainable)

On average students perceived themselves to live more sustainable lifestyles than their peers.

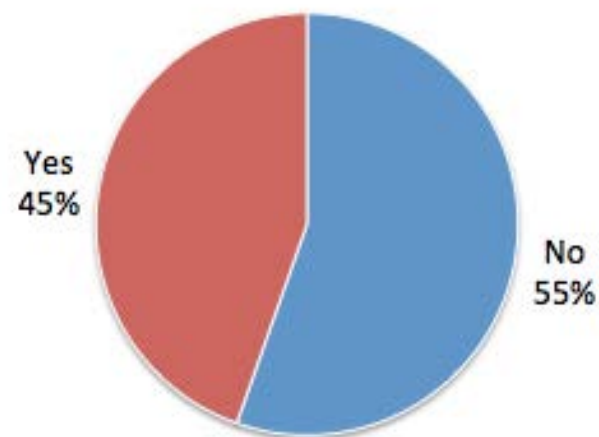
- How informed do you feel about sustainability and environmental issues (1 = not informed at all, 5 = extremely informed)
- Average = 3.25

Average Informed Score per School

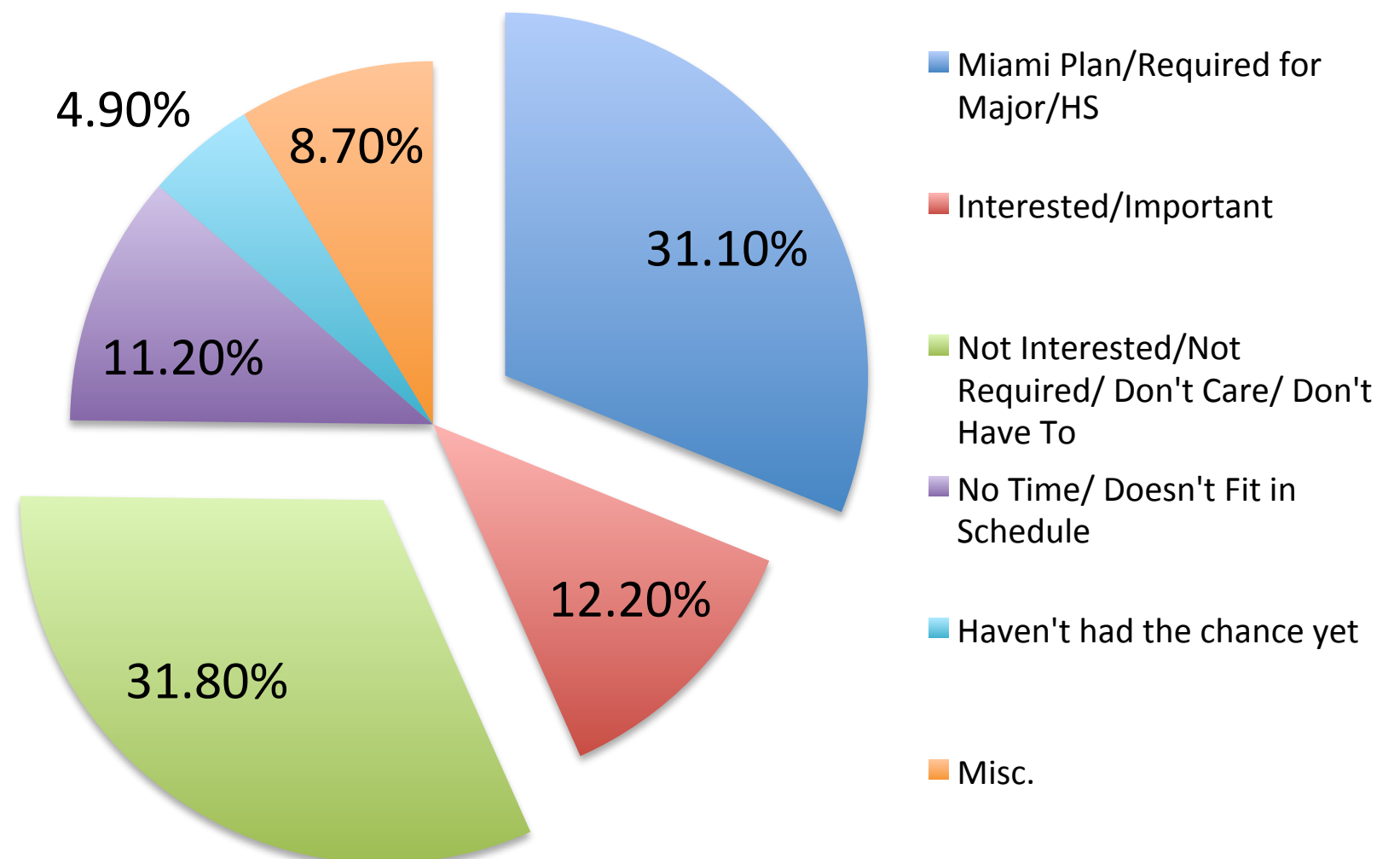


Class at Miami

Have you taken a class on the environment, ecology or sustainability?



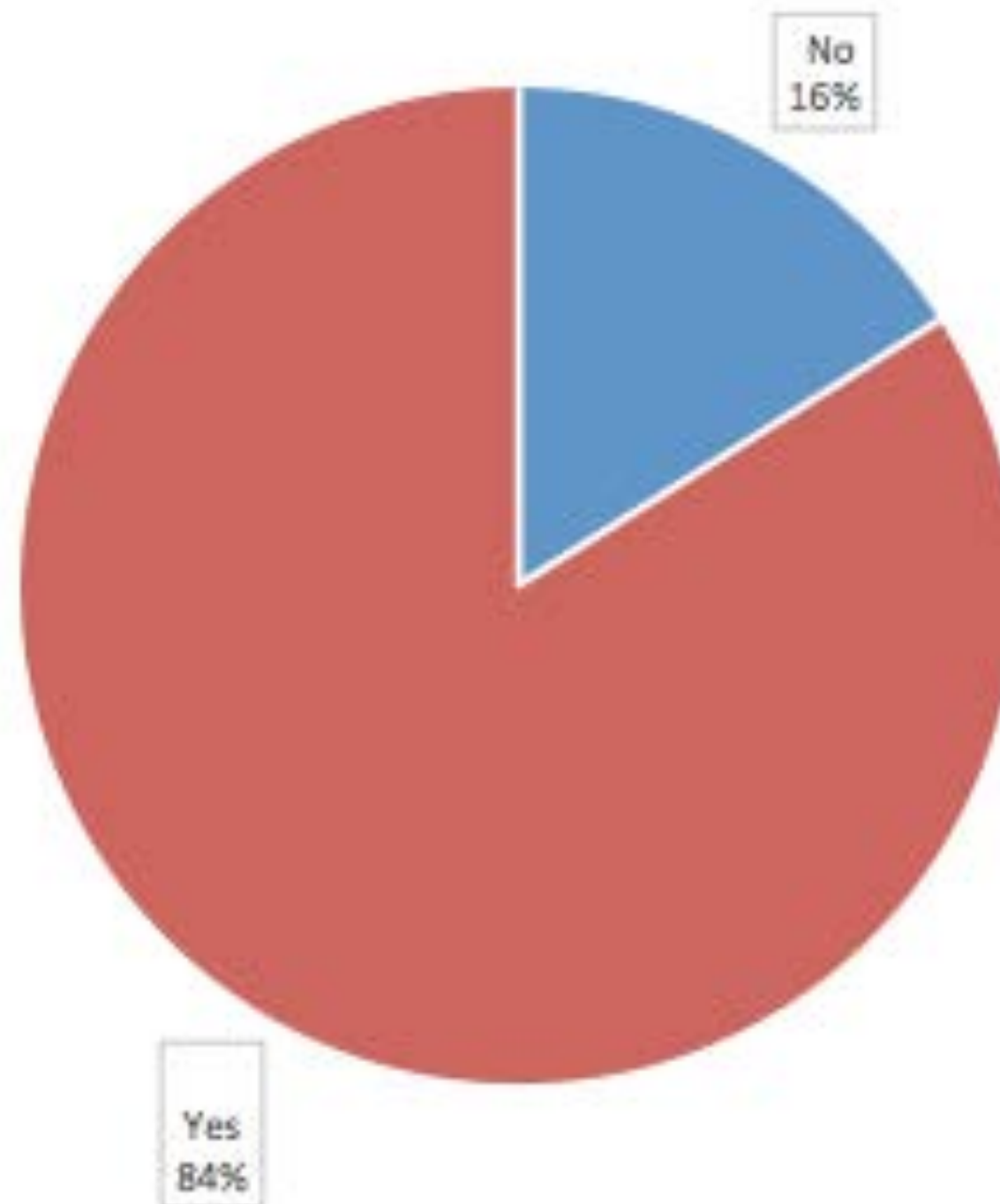
Why did/didn't you take a class?



- How informed do you feel about sustainability and environmental issues if you **have** taken a class?
 - Average = 3.55
- How informed do you feel about sustainability and environmental issues if you **have not** taken a class
 - Average = 3.01

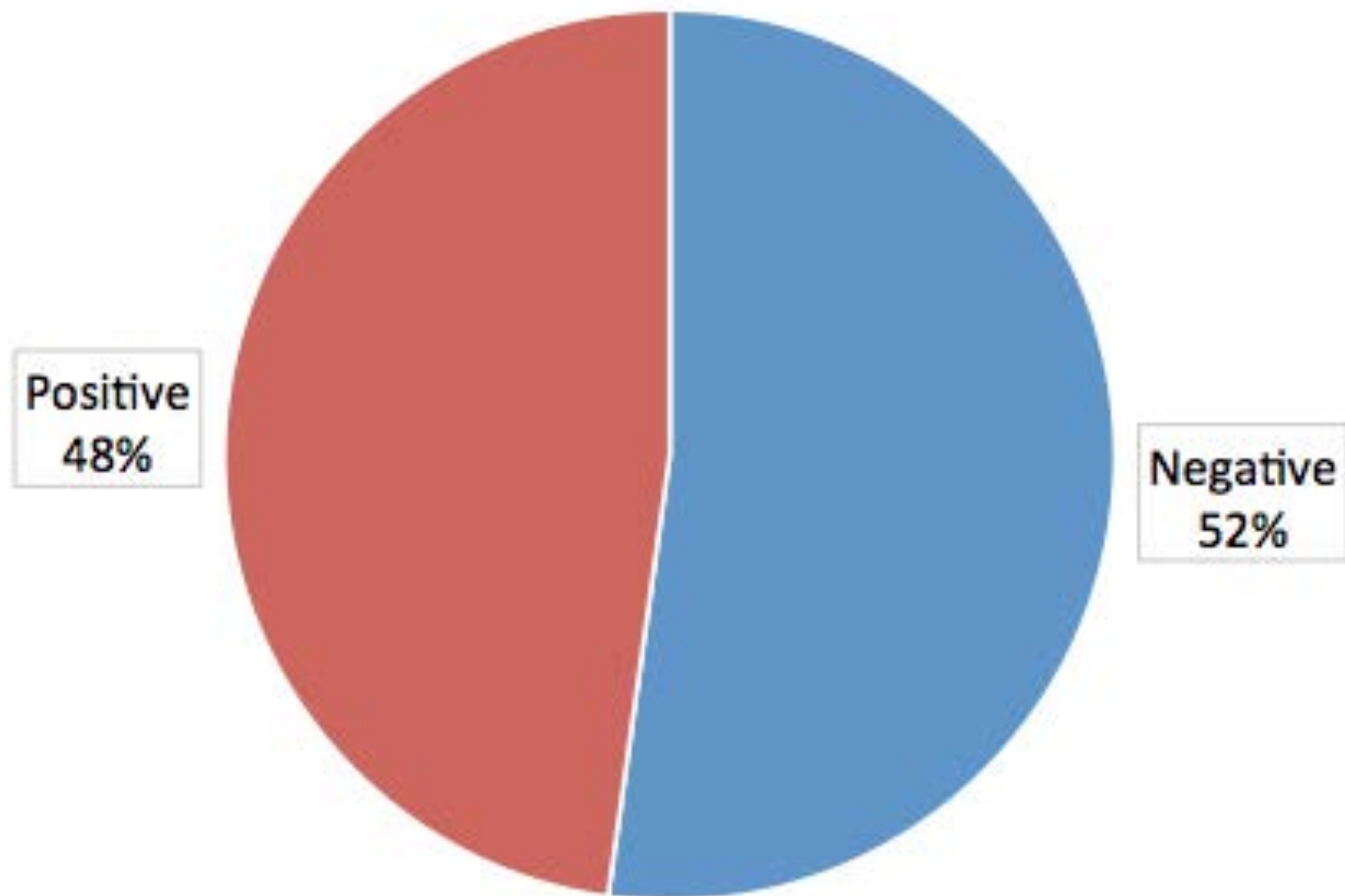
Miami's Responsibility

Do you believe that Miami University should be responsible to ensure that students are environmentally literate by the time that they graduate?



The Future

Overall, is your outlook for the future of the environment generally positive or negative?



- Individuals are 8.3 times more likely to hear of the term Anthropocene if they have taken a class on environment and sustainability.
- Individuals are 2.9 times more likely to believe Miami University should make students environmentally literate if they had heard of the term “Anthropocene”

Preliminary Hypotheses and Questions of Study

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4. How do students feel about the future of our environment?

Blog

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