



# NAVIGATING THE CHALLENGES

Former Foster and Homeless  
Youth at FIU



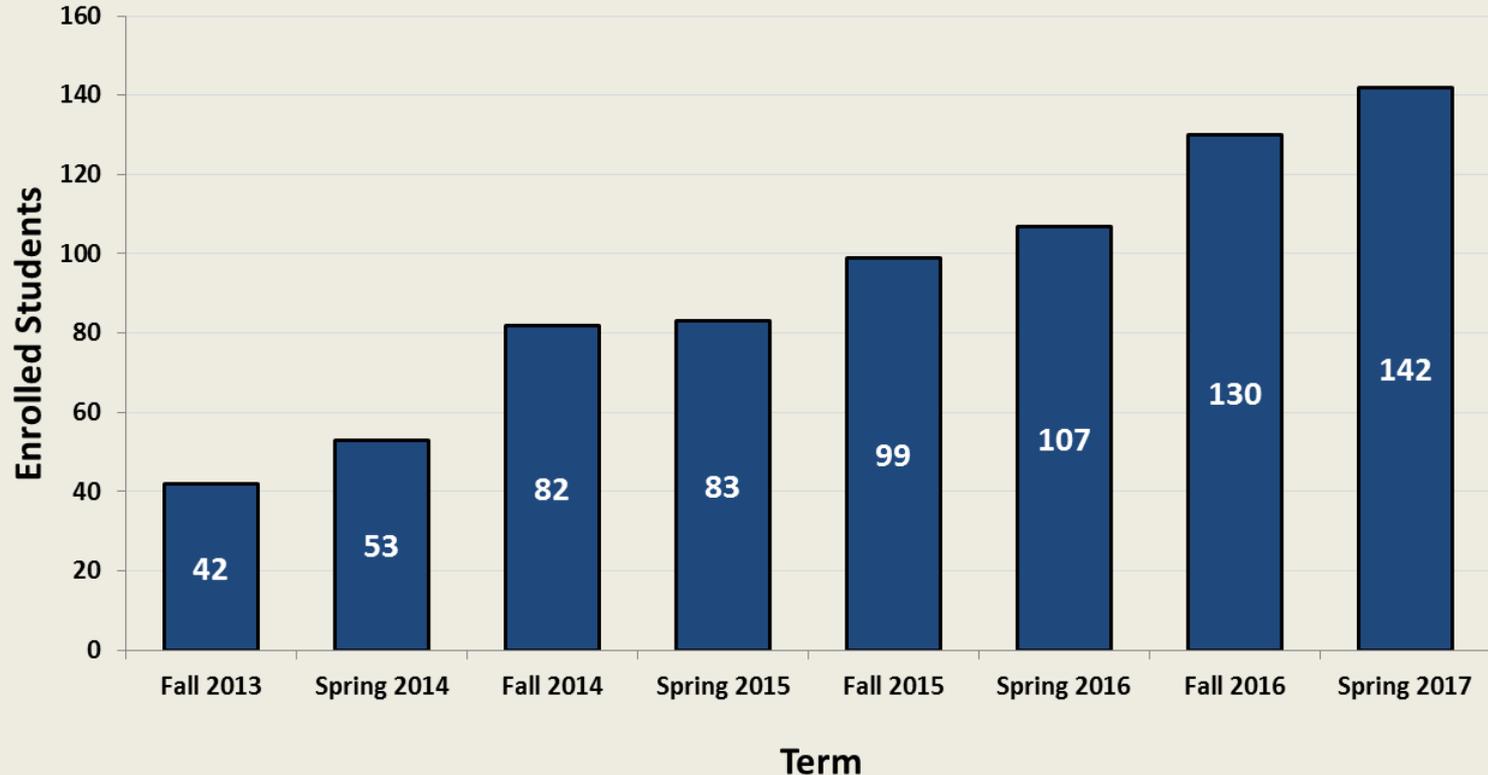
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# Research Protocol

- Academic analysis
  - *Student demographics*
  - *GPA, credits earned*
  - *Retention & graduation*
- Survey of FPP students
  - *Student obstacles*
  - *Use of services*
- Semi-structured interviews
  - *Transition to university*
  - *Challenges to academic success and persistence*

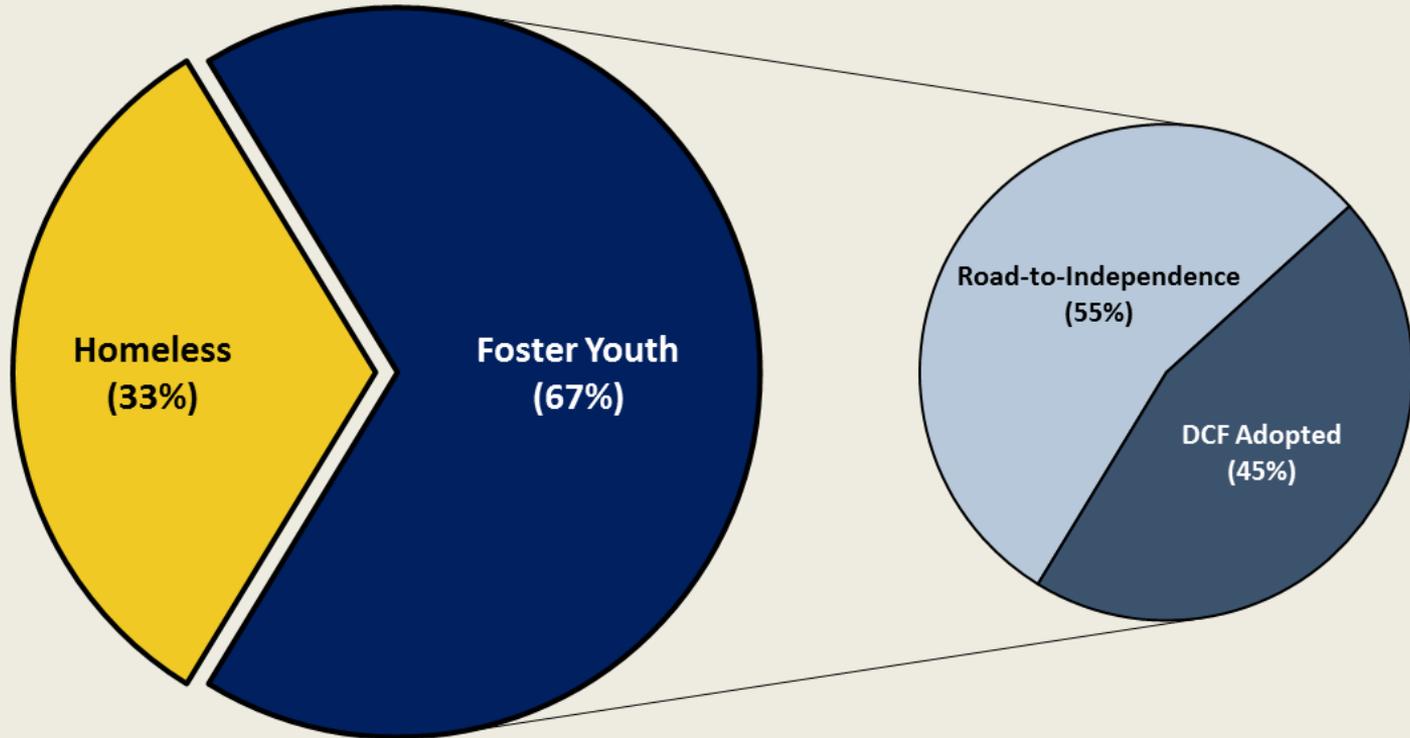
# FPP Growth Fall 2013 - Spring 2017

## FPP Students Enrolled per Term



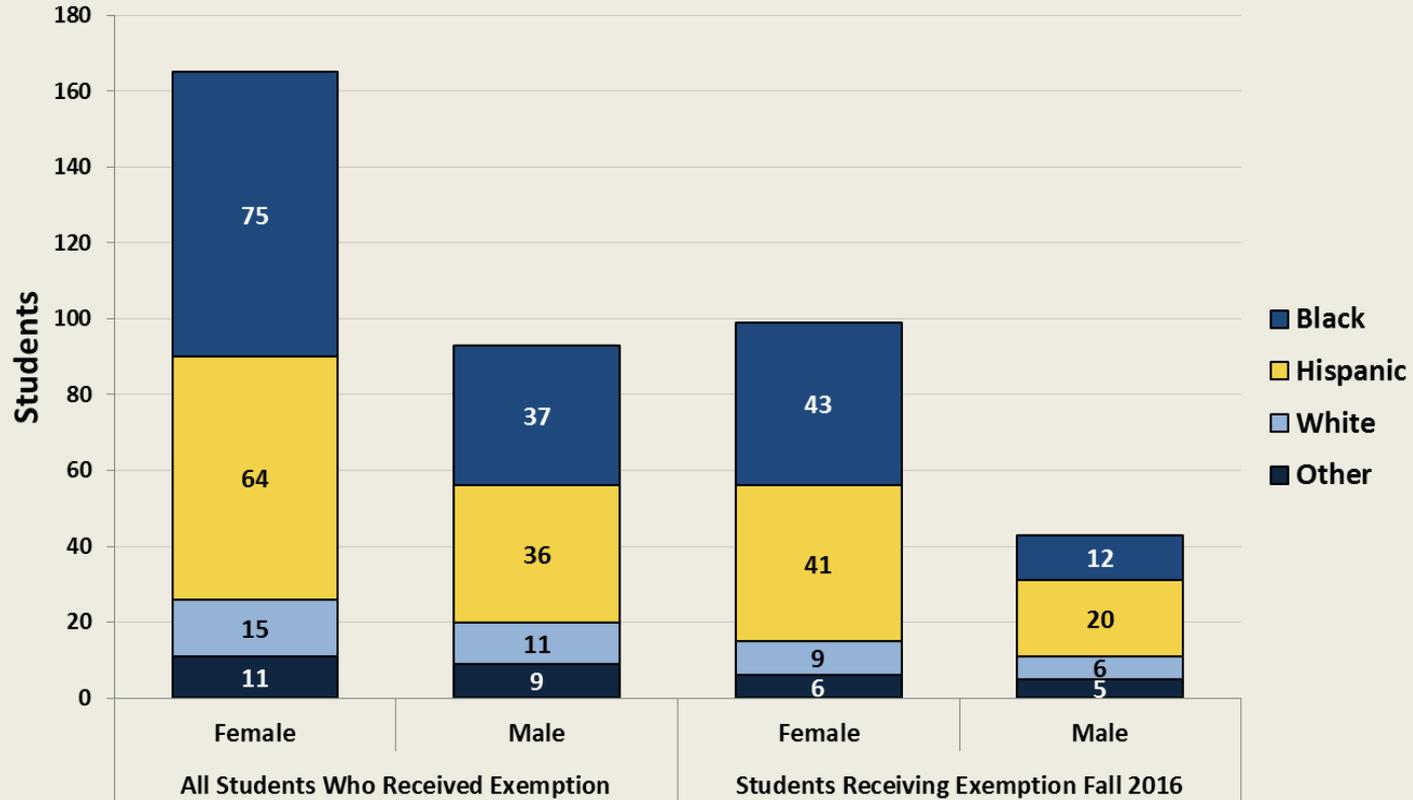
# FPP Student Exemption Type

**Type of Waiver Received since 2013 (n=258)**



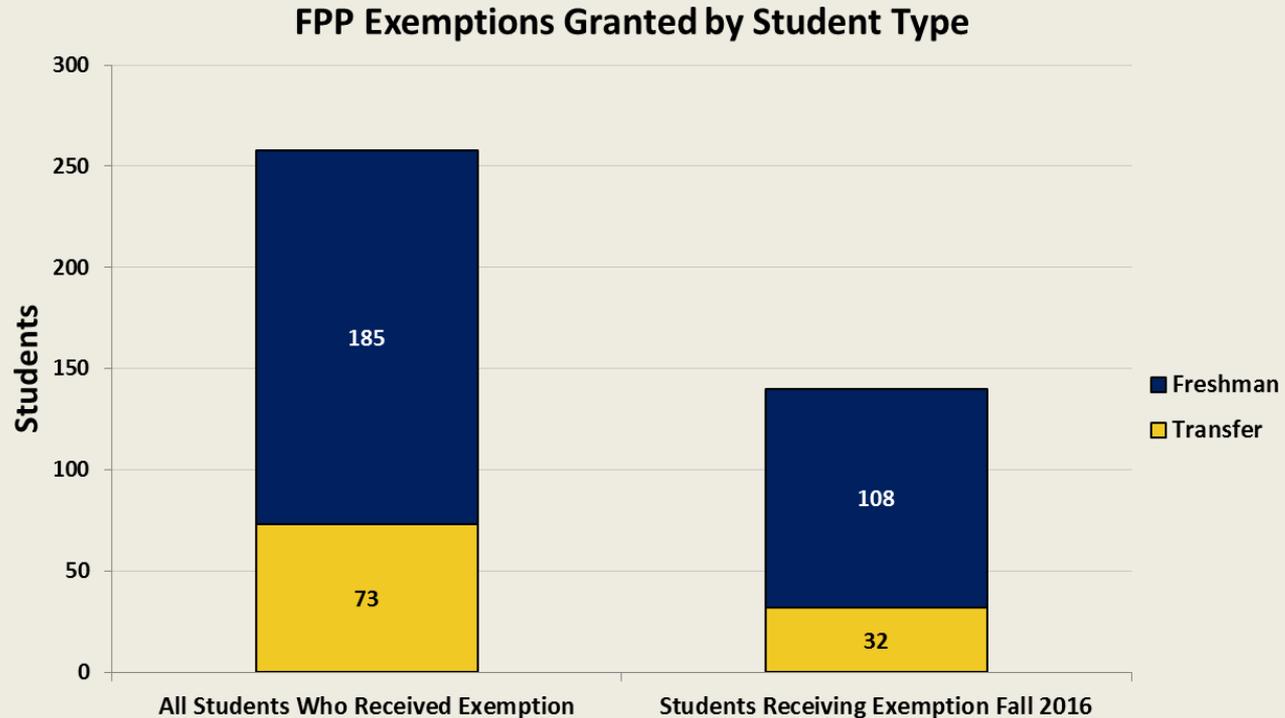
# FPP Demographics

## FPP Students by Gender and Race/Ethnicity



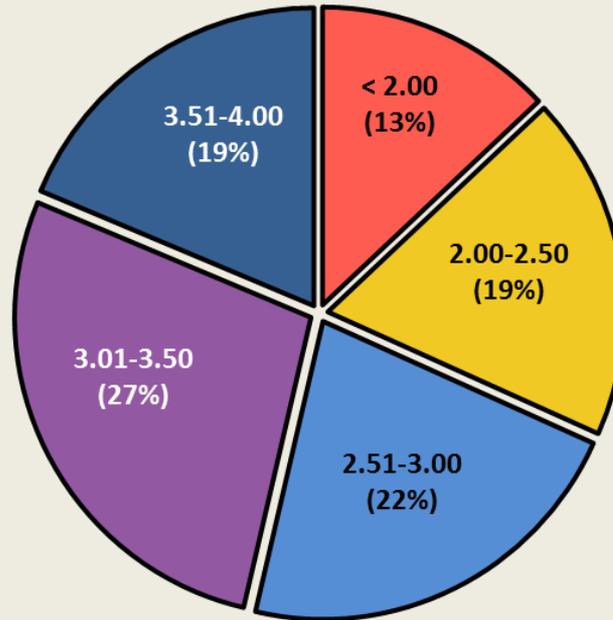
# FPP Student Admission Pathways

- Most FPP students are admitted as Freshmen.



# FPP Student GPAs

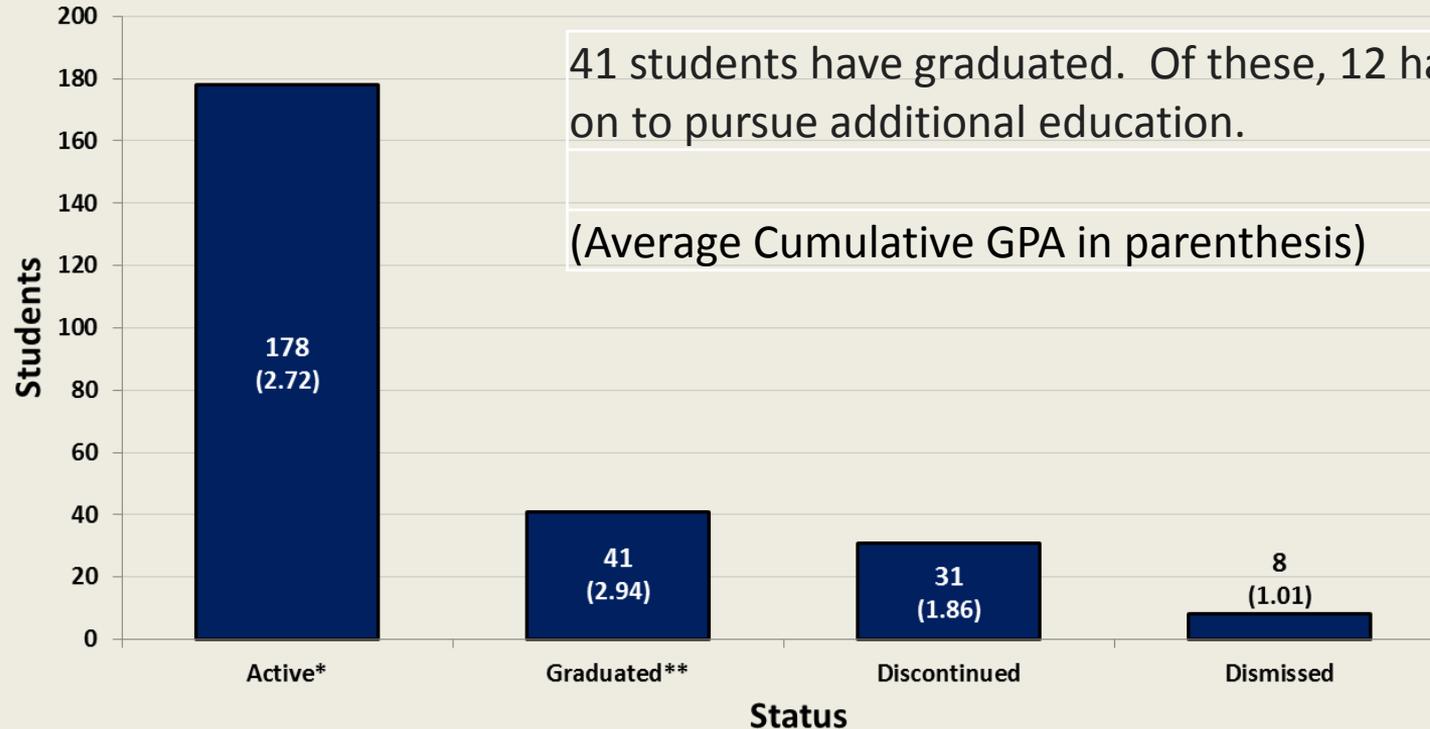
**Students Receiving Exemption (Fall 2016)**



46% of the students currently receiving exemptions have cumulative GPA's over 3.00

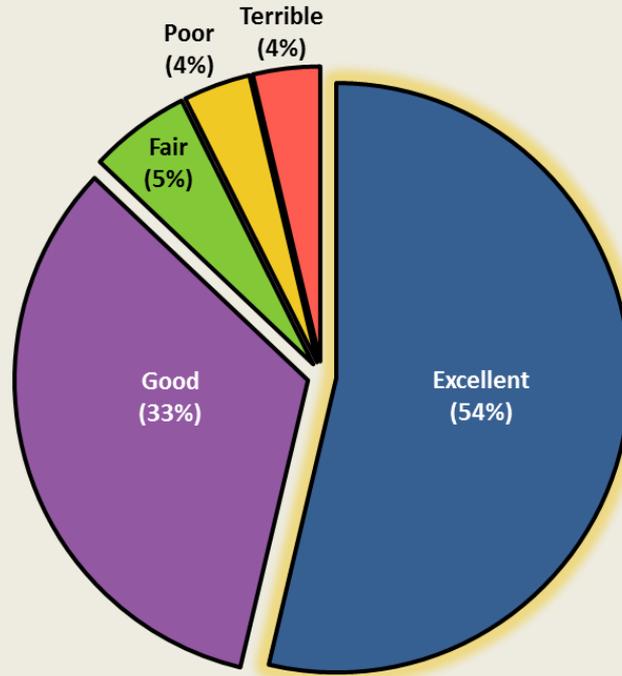
# FPP Students' Academic Outcomes

Status of All Students Who Have Received a Waiver Since 2013 (n=258)



# FPP students rate their FIU experience

How would you rate your FIU experience so far?



Over 50% of FPP students rated their FIU experience “Excellent”

# What do you like the most about being a student at FIU?

- Resources and Support
- Path to Success
- Organizations and Leadership Opportunities

# What do you like the most about being a student at FIU? – Organizations and Leadership Opportunities

- It's going to events, meeting people, and getting into different clubs that has been helpful so far.
- My experience at FIU has been pretty good, one of a kind. I have been a part of many organizations and learned a lot from the people involved as well as classes.
- FIU has given me a lot of opportunities that I've taken advantage of: receiving a fellowship, and now I am a leader for alternative breaks.

# What do you like the most about being a student at FIU? – Path to Success

- The experience of being a college student and living on campus to experience the college environment.
- The ability to attain any level of success you want, opportunities everywhere.
- I love the fact that I will be able to graduate with a bachelor's from an accredited university.
- That I see myself succeeding here.

# What do you like the most about being a student at FIU? – Resources and Support

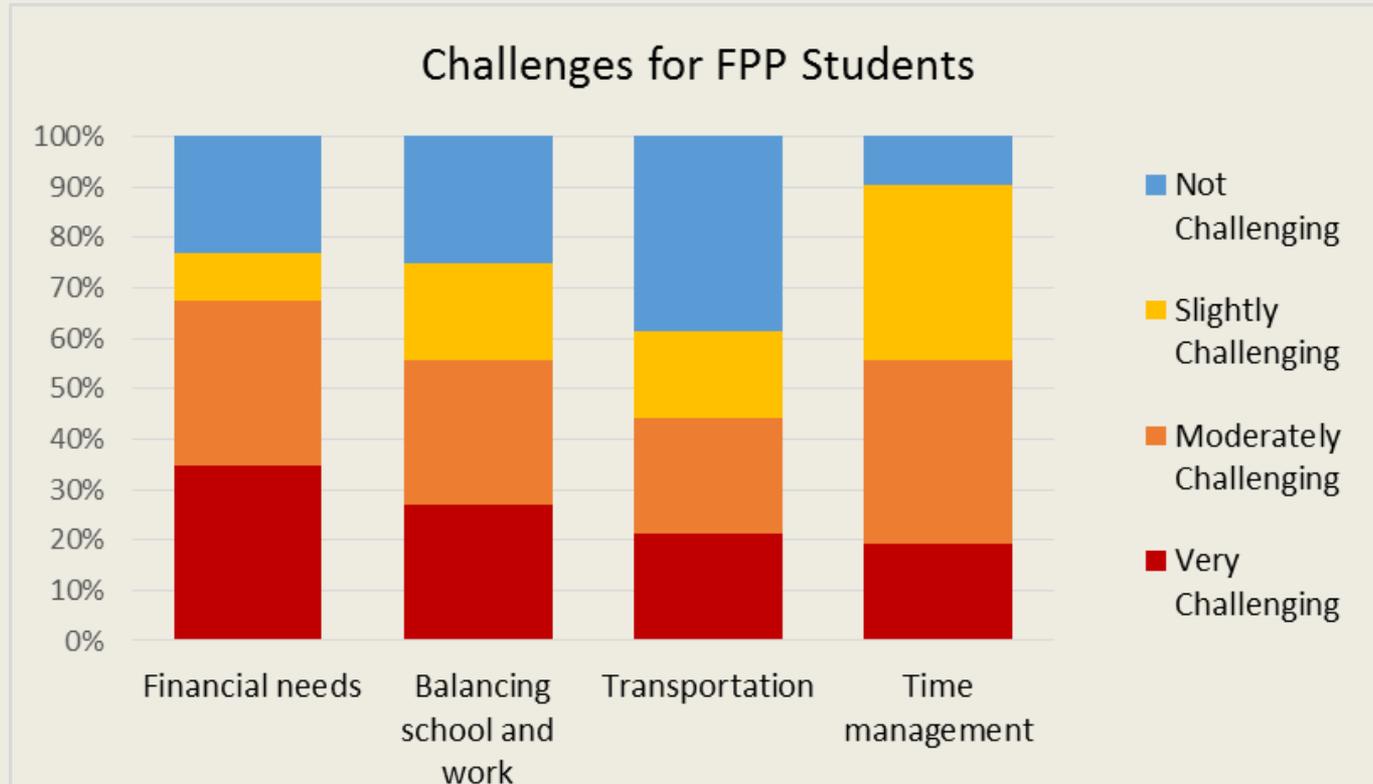
- I like that FIU has an amazing amount of resources and amazing faculty members that I can go to whenever I'm struggling or when I am in need of assistance
- Having all of its resources at my disposal. FIU has the best support programs for people struggling to get through school financially, academically, or mentally.
- **EVERYTHING!** The people here are so supportive and amazing. Its really made my transition to FIU easier.

# What do you like the most about being a student at FIU? – Some Students Struggle to Adjust

- I don't participate in much. School has been the hardest thing for me, some days I feel motivated to continue and others I'm really depressed. I've had difficulty passing classes and attending classes.

# Challenges for FPP Students

Financial need was the most common obstacle experienced by FPP students (35% found financial needs to be very challenging)

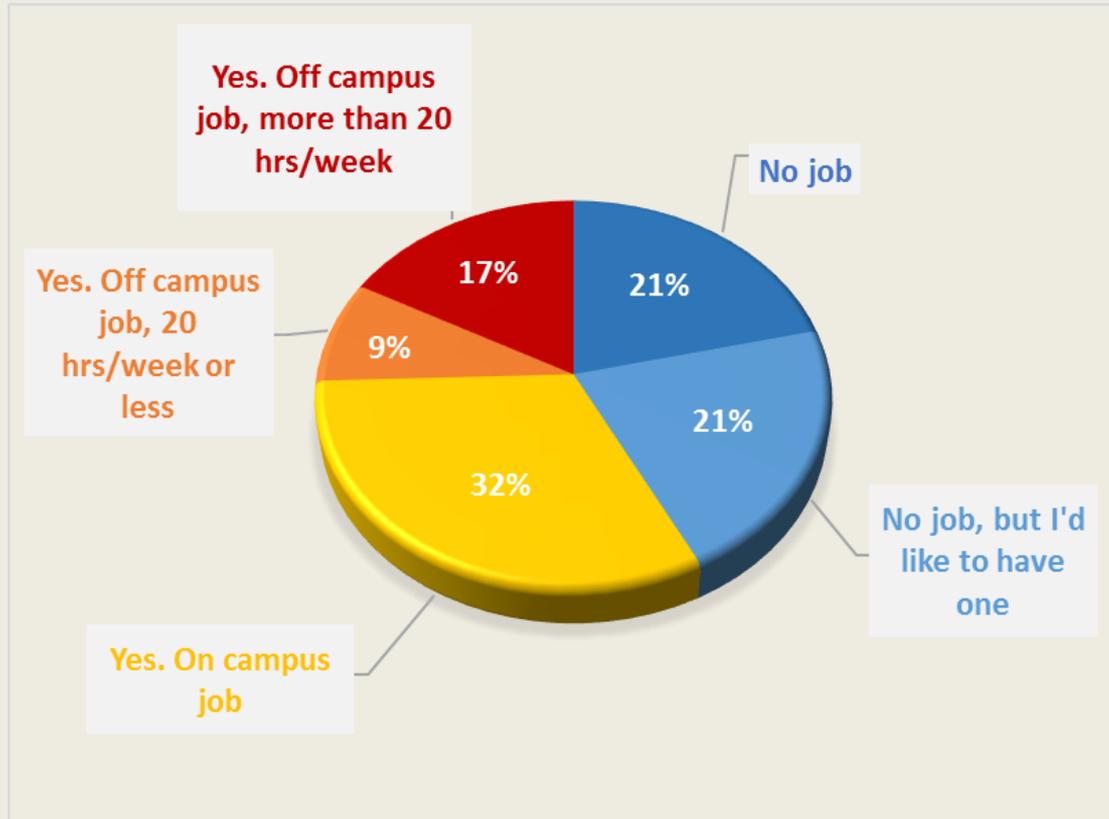


# Financial Struggles

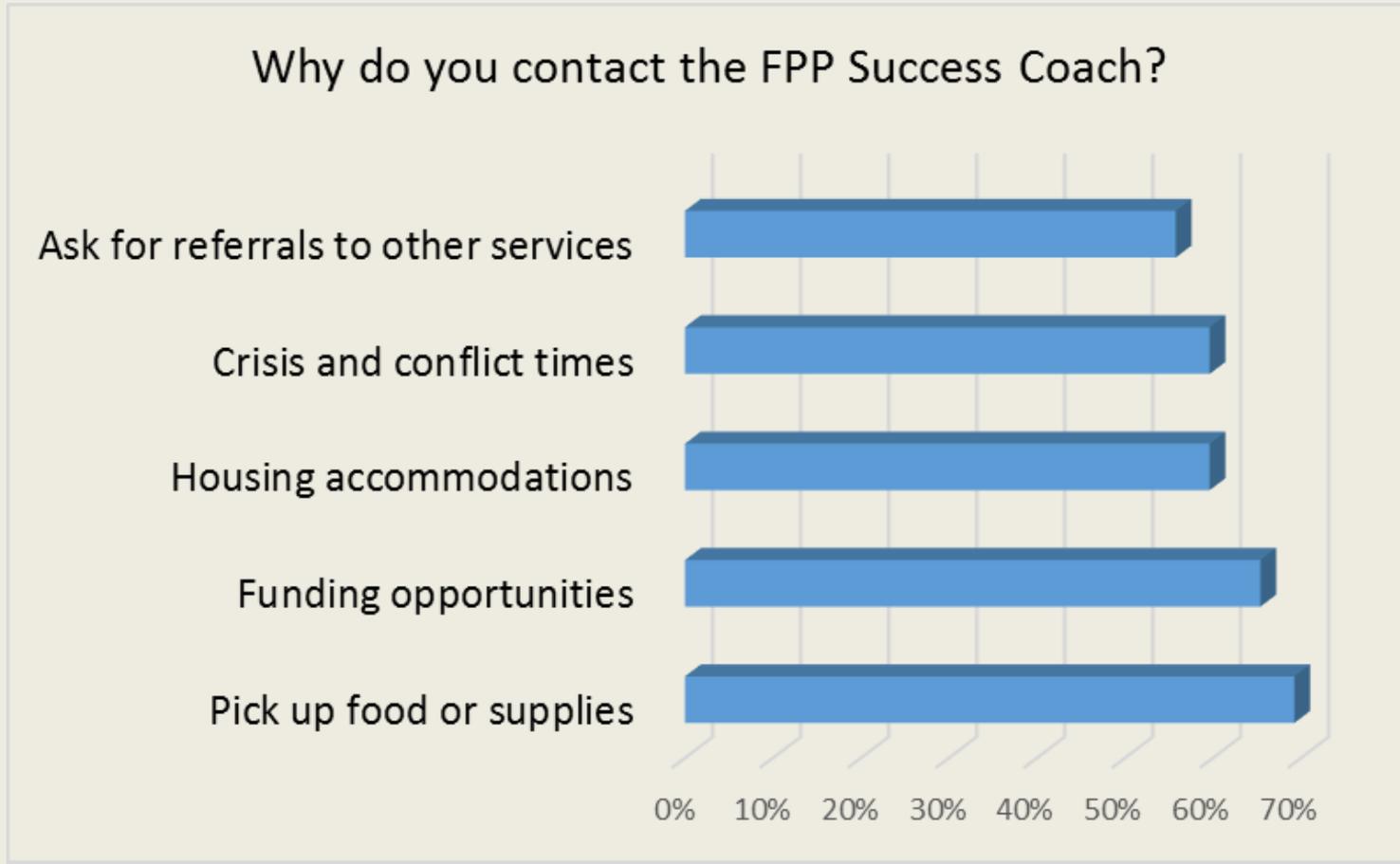
- There were times I couldn't go to school full-time. It was like pick a struggle. Go to school full time and not be able to work, or go to work full time and have a guaranteed paycheck and go to school half time. So ... I decided to go to school half time for that semester and I work full time.
- The job I am working now is not covering enough. I have to seek other jobs in order to make ends meet. My other job has been taking a toll, but if I don't do it, I won't have the money to pay my medical bills.

# FPP Student Employment

58% of FPP students are employed. 32% have on-campus jobs.



# Why students contact FPP Success Coach



# Why students contact FPP Success Coach

- Just to talk
- Daily check up
- Someone to talk to
- To say "hi"
- Just sit down and update them on my progress

# Need to Connect

- Well for me, I grew up in foster care so I always had this thing where I feel alone. Some people they are into video games, drugs or whatever, but like I always want to find somebody that I can be with and I think that's an obstacle that I have. But I've been doing like changing my routine, and changing a lot of things I've been doing so that I can get away from that feeling of being lonely and stuff. That is just a personal thing that has gotten in my way.

# If you were going through a personal hardship, how likely would you go to these sources for help or support?

## Source of support for personal hardship: Very Likely



54% of students are "very likely" to seek support from the FPP coach when going through a personal hardship.

# Personal and Emotional Support

- The FPP program helped me transition from where I was in my personal life. It really helped me because I met people who were kind of in the same situation and who wanted better for themselves as well. That kind of really helped me.
- My mentors...I didn't really need much help with my academics, but I think more so like my personal life and my emotions and things like that and especially being around people that came from the same situation I'm from giving me that extra, "it's okay". You know, reassuring me that if I need them, they are always willing to help, or help me study.

# Supporting Former Foster and Homeless Students

- Being a student at FIU ... makes me proud. The fact that they have created a program to better ensure the success of former foster youth makes me feel super.

# Acknowledgments

We thank  
Florida International University  
**Fostering Panther Pride**  
and  
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