



UNIVERSITY OF  
SAN FRANCISCO

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Office of Assessment  
and Accreditation Support

# 2023 Admitted Graduate Student Survey Report - CAS

February 2024

# Table of Contents

- GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SURVEY .....3**
  - PURPOSE ..... 3
  - ORIGINATORS ..... 3
  - DATA COLLECTION ..... 3
  - ABOUT THIS REPORT..... 3
- KEY FINDINGS.....4**
  - DECISION TO ATTEND OR NOT ATTEND USF ..... 4
  - APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS..... 4
  - COLLEGE CHARACTERISTICS..... 4
  - FINANCIAL FACTORS ..... 4
  - COST OF ATTENDANCE ..... 4
- DEMOGRAPHICS.....5**
  - SCHOOL/COLLEGE ..... 5
  - PROGRAM..... 5
  - INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS..... 5
- DECISION TO ATTEND OR NOT ATTEND USF .....5**
  - PARTICIPANTS WHO BEGAN ATTENDING USF..... 6
    - At what point decided to attend USF* ..... 6
  - PARTICIPANTS WHO DID NOT BEGIN ATTENDING USF ..... 7
    - At what point decided not to attend* ..... 8
    - Attending another college or university* ..... 9
    - Primary reason for not attending any college or university* ..... 10
- APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS.....10**
- COLLEGE CHARACTERISTICS .....12**
  - ALL CAS PARTICIPANTS..... 12
    - Level of Importance of Characteristics in Choosing College or University*..... 12
    - Rating of USF Characteristics* ..... 14
  - THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND USF ..... 16
    - Factors that influenced decision not to attend USF*..... 16
    - Rating of institution they are attending*..... 18
    - Rating of institution they are attending vs. ratings of USF* ..... 18
  - THOSE WHO BEGAN ATTENDING USF ..... 20
    - Factors that influenced decision to attend USF*..... 20
- FINANCIAL FACTORS.....22**
  - FINANCIAL AID/ASSISTANCE ..... 22
    - Applied for federal financial aid* ..... 22
    - Type of aid received from USF*..... 22
    - Aid from another college or university* ..... 23
  - COST OF ATTENDANCE ..... 23
- ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS .....23**

## General Information about the Survey

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this survey was to learn how applicants admitted to USF graduate programs perceive USF and the areas that influenced their decisions to attend, or not attend.

### ORIGINATORS

The survey was developed by the Office of Assessment & Accreditation Support in collaboration with the Office of Graduate Enrollment.

### DATA COLLECTION

**Survey Population:** The survey was sent to 2222 people who were admitted in summer and fall 2023 to graduate programs in the College of Arts & Sciences, School of Education, School of Management, and the School of Nursing & Health Professions. The School of Law did not participate. Four survey invite emails were returned making the total number who received the survey 2218.

**Instrument:** Qualtrics

**Period:** September 13, 2023 – October 12, 2023

**Response Rate:** 20% (452 responses)

Because the survey was anonymous, the distribution list only included email address for those admitted in summer and fall 2023 and did not include additional information, such as how many of the 2222 people the survey was sent to were admitted to the College of Arts & Sciences; therefore, a response rate specific to the College of Arts & Sciences cannot be calculated.

### ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report is specific to those participants who indicated they were admitted to programs within the College of Arts & Sciences.

## Key Findings

### DECISION TO ATTEND OR NOT ATTEND USF

70% of CAS participants accepted their offer of admission to USF. Of these, 75% began attending, though this is down 14% from 2022.

90% of those who began attending USF agreed or strongly agreed that they made the right decision to attend. While the highest proportion (44%) of those who did not begin attending agreed or strongly agreed that they made the right decision not to attend USF, the majority (62%) of those participants who accepted their offer, but did not begin attending disagreed or strongly disagreed that they made the right decision not to attend.

Of those who accepted their offer, but did not begin attending, 75% are not attending any college or university at this time.

### APPLICATION AND ACCEPTANCE TO OTHER INSTITUTIONS

USF was the first choice of 63% of all CAS participants and the first choice of 79% of those who began attending USF.

The highest proportion of participants applied to 5 or more institutions (32%) and the highest proportion of participants were admitted to all of the institutions they applied to (whether they applied to two, three, four, or five or more institutions).

### COLLEGE CHARACTERISTICS

The top three characteristics that CAS participants indicated were extremely or very important when choosing a college or university were job outcomes/career opportunities (89%), academic rigor (88%), and financial cost (87%). When asked to rate characteristics of USF, 83% rated academic rigor as excellent or good and 82% rated location as excellent or good.

Out of 30 factors to select from, the highest percentage (62%) of those who did not accept their offer of admission or accepted their offer, but did not begin attending USF, rated financial cost as a factor that influenced their decision not to attend USF.

Those who began attending another college or university, on average, rated all characteristics of the college they are attending higher than they rated the same characteristics of USF.

The highest percentage (59%) of CAS participants who began attending USF indicated that academic rigor and job outcomes/career opportunities influenced their decision to attend USF.

### FINANCIAL FACTORS

51% of CAS participants indicated that they applied for federal financial aid at USF and the majority (85%) of those who applied for federal financial aid received aid.

Of those who began attending USF, the highest proportion (51%) applied for federal financial aid at USF and 77% received a scholarship from USF.

### COST OF ATTENDANCE

73% of those who chose to attend another college or university indicated that the cost of attendance at USF is higher than the institution they are attending.

## Demographics

### SCHOOL/COLLEGE

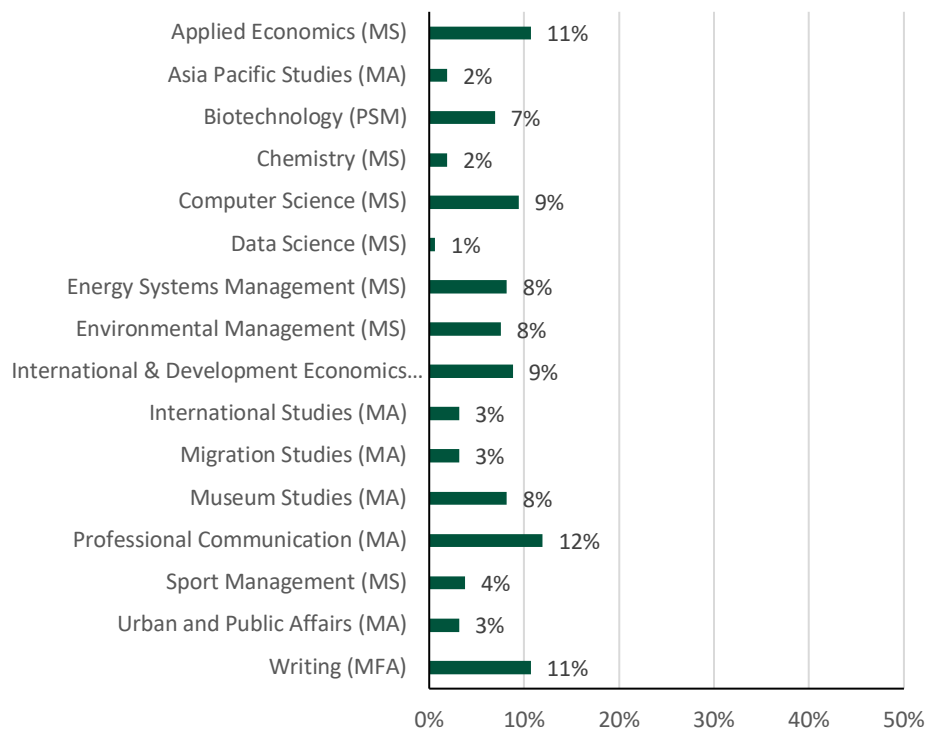
35% ( $n = 159$ ) of participants indicated they were accepted to the College of Arts & Sciences (up 1% from 2022).

### PROGRAM

New this year, participants indicated which program they were admitted to.

- The highest proportion (**12%**) of participants admitted to CAS indicated they were **admitted to Professional Communication (MA)** program.

The following figure details the proportion who selected each program.



### INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Participants indicated whether or not they were an international student and, if so, if they were living outside the US when they applied to USF.

- **47%** of CAS participants indicated they **were international students** (up 1% from 2022).
- Of those, **84%** indicated they were **living outside the US when they applied to USF** (down 3% from 2022).

## Decision to Attend or Not Attend USF

Participants were asked to indicate whether or not they accepted their offer of admission.

- **70%** of CAS participants **accepted** their offer of admission (down 2% from 2022)

- **30%** of CAS participants **did not accept** their offer of admission

Those who indicated that they accepted their offer of admission were then asked whether or not they began attending USF. Of the CAS participants who accepted their offer of admission (and responded to this question):

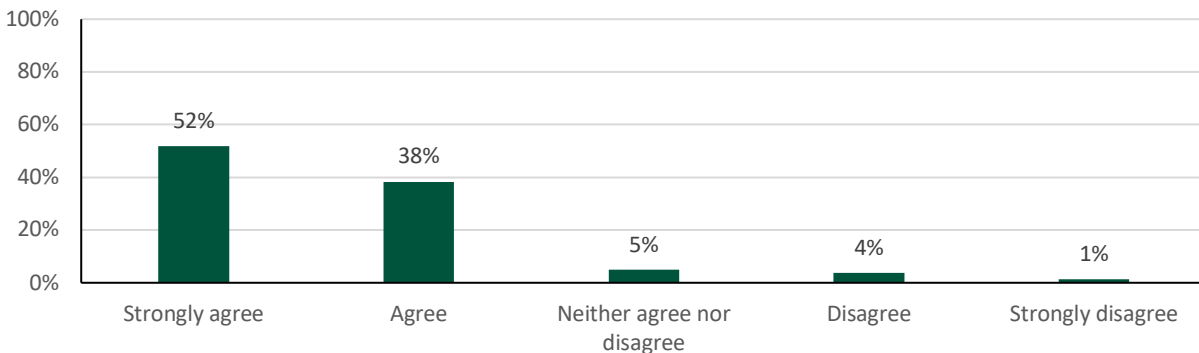
- **75% began attending** USF (down 14% from 2022)
- **25% did not begin attending** USF

### PARTICIPANTS WHO BEGAN ATTENDING USF

Participants who indicated they began attending USF were asked the extent to which they agreed with the following statement using a 5-pt. scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*): I made the right decision to attend USF.

- The highest proportion of CAS participants (**90%**) **Agreed** or **Strongly Agreed** that they made the right decision to attend USF (unchanged from 2022).

The following figure details the proportion of CAS participants who selected each response option.

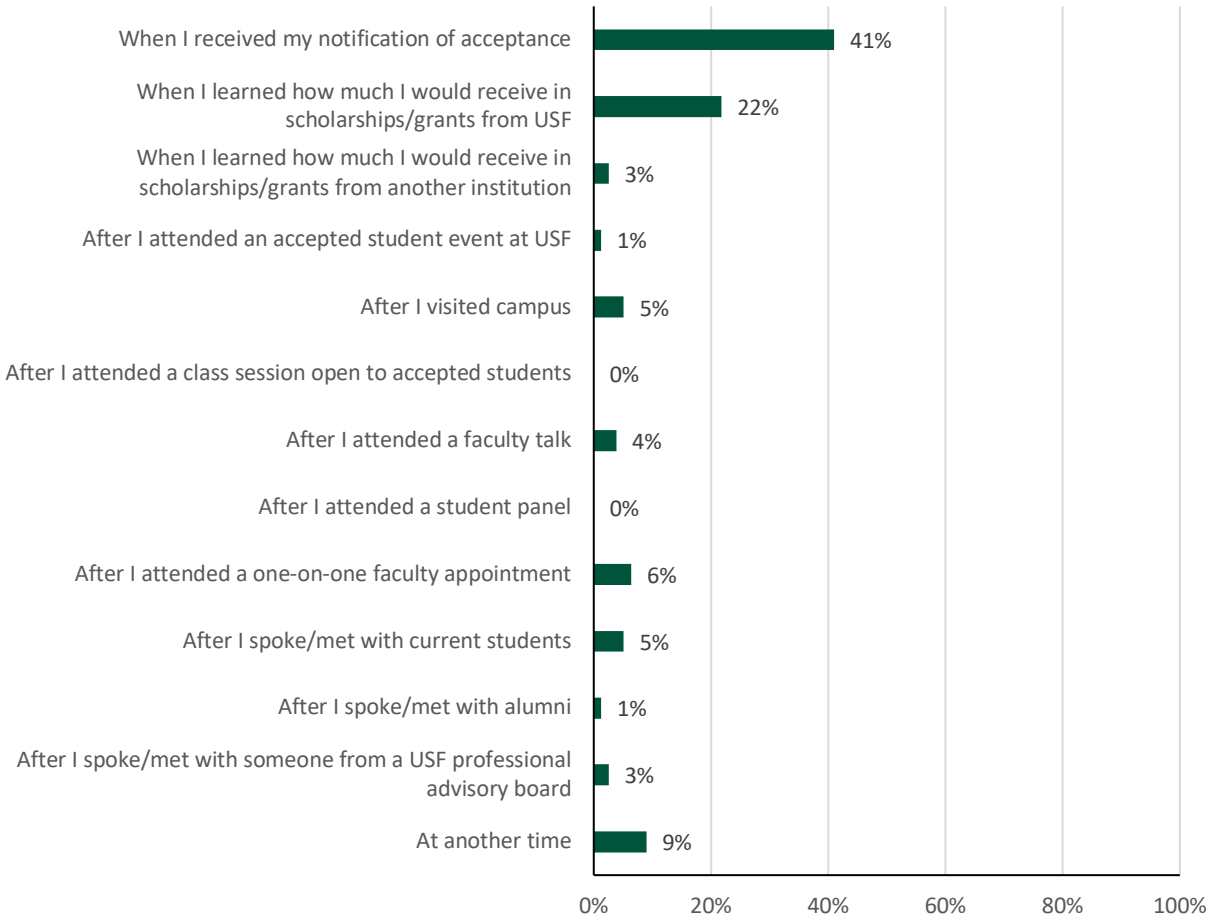


### At what point decided to attend USF

Participants who began attending USF were asked to indicate at what point they decided to attend USF using the following response options: When I received my notification of acceptance; When I learned how much I would receive in scholarships/grants from USF; When I learned how much I would receive in scholarships/grants from another institution; After I attended an accepted student event at USF; After I visited campus; After I attended a class session open to accepted students; After I attended a faculty talk; After I attended a student panel; After I attended a one-on-one faculty appointment; After I spoke/met with current students; After I spoke/met with alumni; After I spoke/met with someone from a USF professional advisory board; and At another time. Participants' responses to *At another time* can be found in **Appendix A, 1.1**.

- The highest proportion (**41%**) of CAS participants selected when I received my notification of acceptance (down 6% from 2022).

The following figure details the proportion of CAS participants who selected each response option.



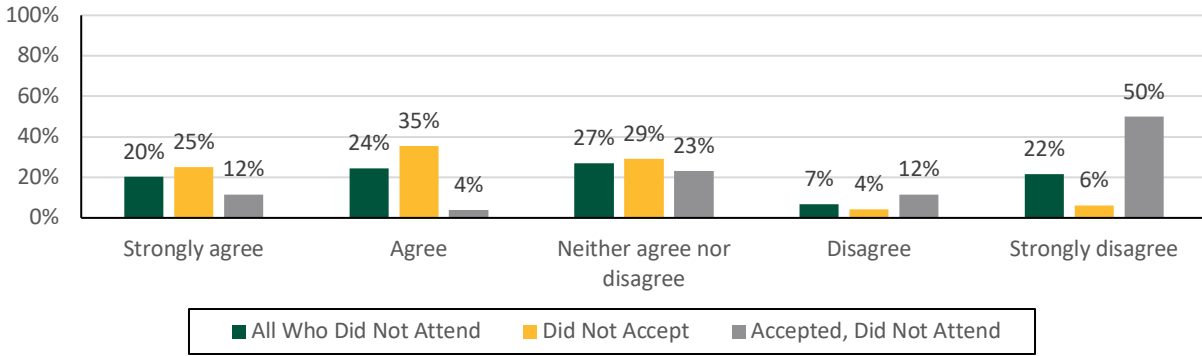
### PARTICIPANTS WHO DID NOT BEGIN ATTENDING USF

CAS participants who indicated they did not begin attending USF were asked the extent to which they agreed with the following statement using a 5-pt. scale (1 = *Strongly Disagree*, 5 = *Strongly Agree*): I made the right decision not to attend USF.

- The highest proportion (**44%**) **Agreed** or **Strongly Agreed** that they made the right decision not to attend USF (down 5% from 2022).
- Of those who **did not accept their offer of admission**, the highest proportion (**60%**) **Agreed** or **Strongly Agreed** that they made the right decision not to attend USF (down 1% from 2022).
- Of those who **accepted their offer, but did not begin attending** USF, the highest proportion (**62%**) **Disagreed** or **Strongly Disagreed** that they made the right decision not to attend USF (up 21% from 2022).

The following figure details the proportion of all CAS non-attending participants<sup>1</sup> who selected each response option and is further disaggregated by all those who did not accept their offer of admission and those who accepted their offer of admission, but did not begin attending.

<sup>1</sup> All non-attending participants includes those who did not accept their offer of admission and those who accepted, but did not begin attending.



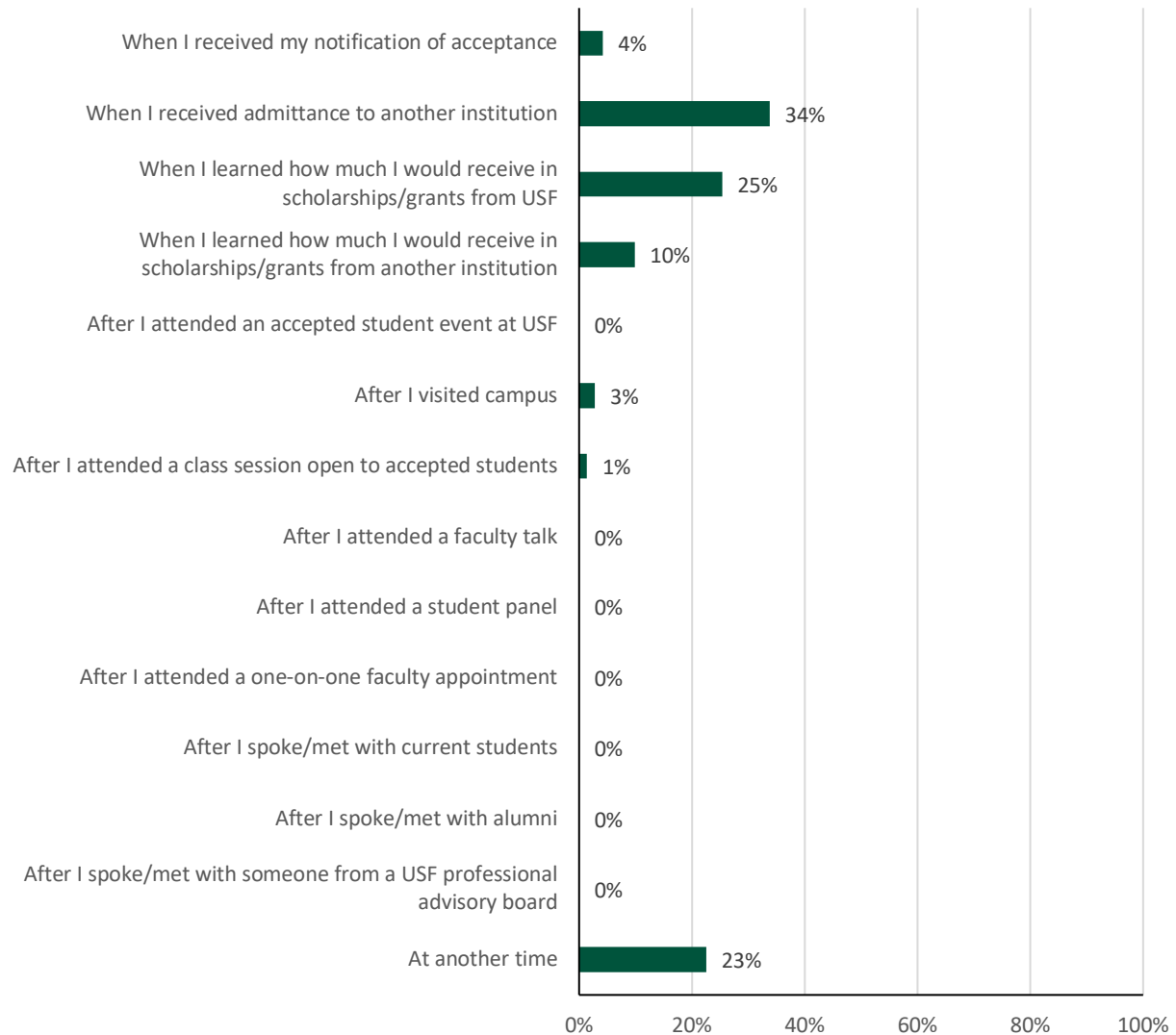
### At what point decided not to attend

Participants who did not accept their offer of admission or accepted their offer, but did not begin attending USF, were asked to indicate at what point they decided not to attend USF from the following response options: When I received my notification of acceptance; When I received admittance to another institution; When I learned how much I would receive in scholarships/grants from USF; When I learned how much I would receive in scholarships/grants from another institution; After I attended an accepted student event at USF; After I visited campus; After I attended a class session open to accepted students; After I attended a faculty talk; After I attended a student panel; After I attended a one-on-one faculty appointment; After I spoke/met with current students; After I spoke/met with alumni; After I spoke/met with someone from a USF professional advisory board; and At another time. When I received my notification of acceptance; and At another time. Participants' responses to *At another time* can be found in **Appendix A, 1.2**.

- The highest proportion (**34%**) of CAS participants selected when I received admittance to another institution (down 1% from 2022).

The following figure details the proportion of CAS participants who selected each response option.





### Attending another college or university

Those who did not accept their offer of admission or accepted their offer, but did not begin attending USF were asked to indicate if they chose to attend a college or university other than USF or if they are not attending any college or university at this time.

The below data indicate the proportion of CAS participants who selected each response option:

- Not attending any college or university at this time = **39%** (up 2% from 2022)
- Chose to attend a college or university other than USF = **61%**
- Of those who accepted their offer, but did not begin attending the highest proportion (**75%**) are not attending any college or university at this time.
- Of those who did not accept their offer, the highest proportion (**79%**) are attending a college or university other than USF.

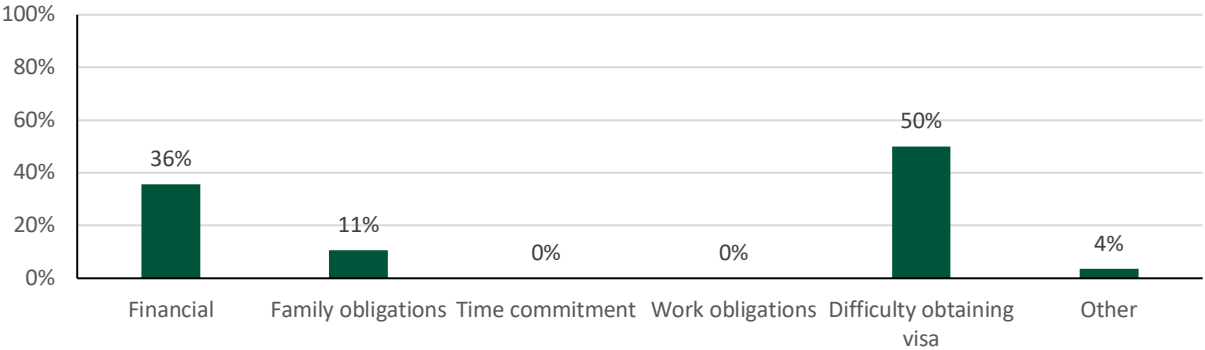
Participants who indicated that they chose to attend a college or university other than USF were asked to indicate in an open text field the name of the college or university they began attending. Participants' responses can be found in **Appendix A, 1.3**.

### Primary reason for not attending any college or university

Those who indicated they are not attending *any* college or university at this time were asked to indicate the primary reason for that decision using the following response options: Financial; Family obligations; Time commitment; Work obligations; Difficulty obtaining a visa; and Other.

- The highest proportion (**50%**) of CAS participants indicated the primary reason they are not attending any college or university at this time is due to **difficulty obtaining a visa**. Whereas the highest proportion of CAS participants in 2022 (58%) indicated they were not attending any college or university due to financial reasons.

The following figure details the proportion of CAS participants who selected each response option.

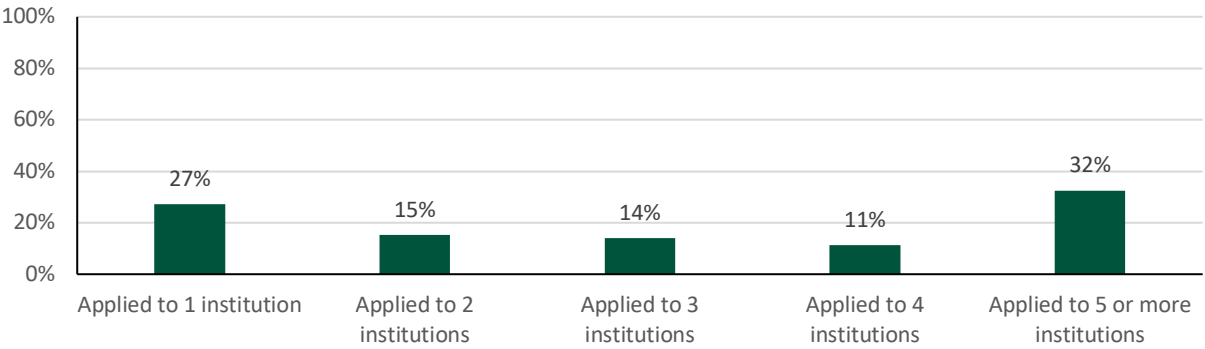


### Application and Acceptance to Other Institutions

Participants indicated how many institutions, including USF, they applied to from the following response options: 1; 2; 3; 4; and 5 or more.

- The highest proportion (32%) of CAS participants indicated that they applied to 5 or more institutions. The highest proportion in 2022 (29%) applied only to USF.

The following figure details the proportion of CAS participants who selected each response option.



Those who indicated they applied to more than one institution were asked to indicate how many they were admitted to from the following response options: 1; 2; 3; 4; and 5 or more.

Of those CAS participants who indicated they:

- **Applied to two institutions:** the highest proportion (**76%**) were admitted to **both institutions** (up 6% from 2022).
- **Applied to three institutions:** the highest proportion (**75%**) were admitted to all **three institutions** (up 25% from 2022).
- **Applied to four institutions:** the highest proportion (**47%**) were admitted to all **four institutions** (up 16% from 2022).
- **Applied to five or more institutions:** the highest proportion (**37%**) were admitted to **five or more institutions** (down 6% from 2022).

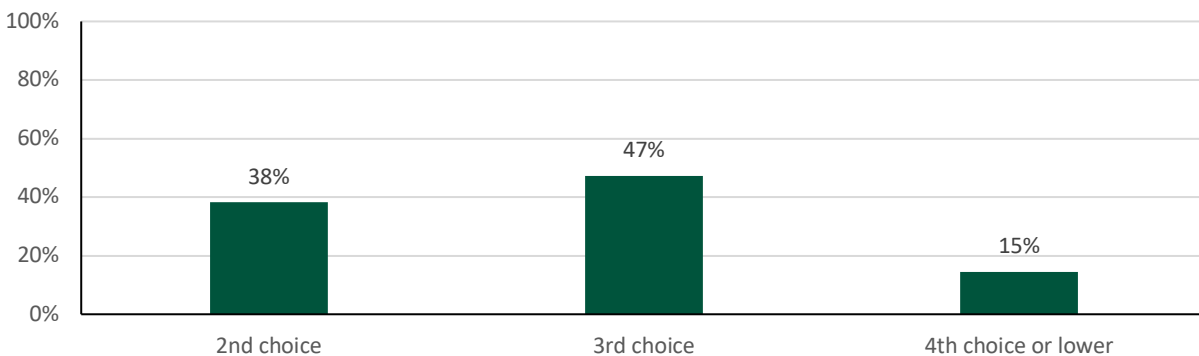
Participants then indicated whether or not USF was their first choice. The data below indicate the percentage of CAS participants who indicated that USF was their first choice:

- All CAS participants = **63%** (up 5% from 2022)
- CAS participants who accepted their offer of admission = **77%** (up 5% from 2022)
- CAS participants who began attending USF = **79%** (up 6% from 2022)
- CAS participants who chose to attend another college or university = **26%** (up 7% from 2022)

Those who indicated USF was not their first choice were asked to indicate if it was their 2<sup>nd</sup> choice, 3<sup>rd</sup> choice or 4<sup>th</sup> choice or lower.

- Of the 37% of CAS participants who indicated that USF was not their first choice, the highest proportion (47%) indicated it was their **3<sup>rd</sup> choice**.

The following figure details the proportion of participants who indicated that USF was their 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, or 4<sup>th</sup> choice or lower.



Participants who indicated that USF was not their first choice were asked to indicate their top 3 choices to which they were admitted using an open text field. Participants' responses can be found in **Appendix A, 1.4**.

## College Characteristics

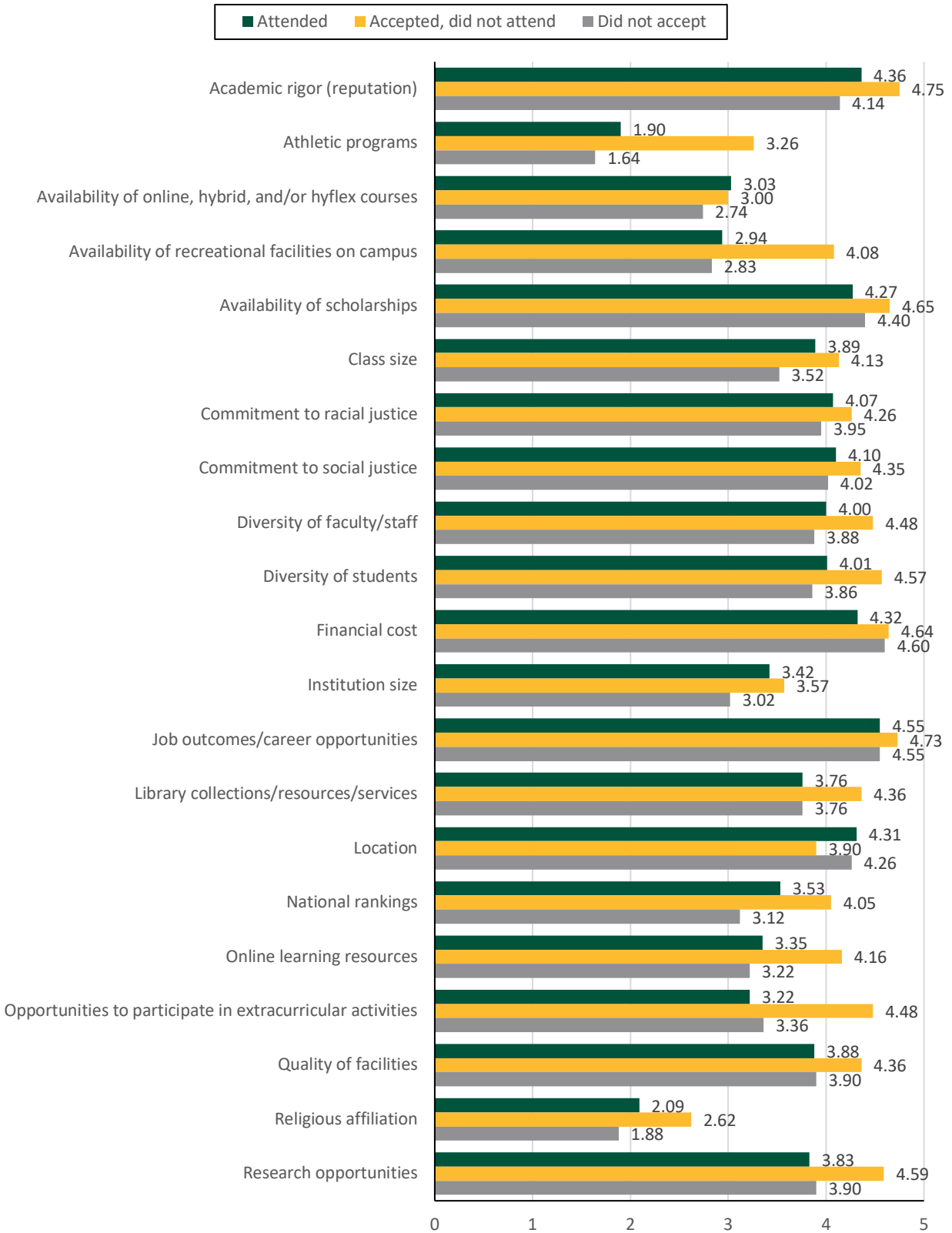
### ALL CAS PARTICIPANTS

#### Level of Importance of Characteristics in Choosing College or University

All participants indicated the level of importance each of the following characteristics had in choosing a college or university using a 5-pt. scale (*1 = Not at all important, 5 = Extremely Important*): Academic rigor (reputation); Athletic programs; Availability of online, hybrid, and/or HyFlex courses; Availability of recreational facilities on campus; Availability of scholarships; Class size; Commitment to racial justice; Commitment to social justice; Diversity of faculty/staff; Diversity of students; Financial cost; Institution size; Job outcomes/career opportunities; Library collections/resources/services; Location; National rankings; Online learning resources; Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities; Quality of facilities; Religious affiliation; and Research opportunities.

- The highest percentage (**89%**) of CAS participants indicated that **Job outcomes/career opportunities** were **Extremely** or **Very Important** in choosing a college or university (unchanged from 2022). Of these:
  - **51%** began attending USF (down 12% from 2022)
  - **31%** did not accept their offer of admission (up 2% from 2022)
  - **18%** accepted their offer of admission, but did not begin attending (up 11% from 2022)

The following figure details CAS participants' average level of importance of each characteristic, disaggregated by those who began attending; those who did not accept their offer of admission; and those who accepted their offer of admission, but did not begin attending.



## Rating of USF Characteristics

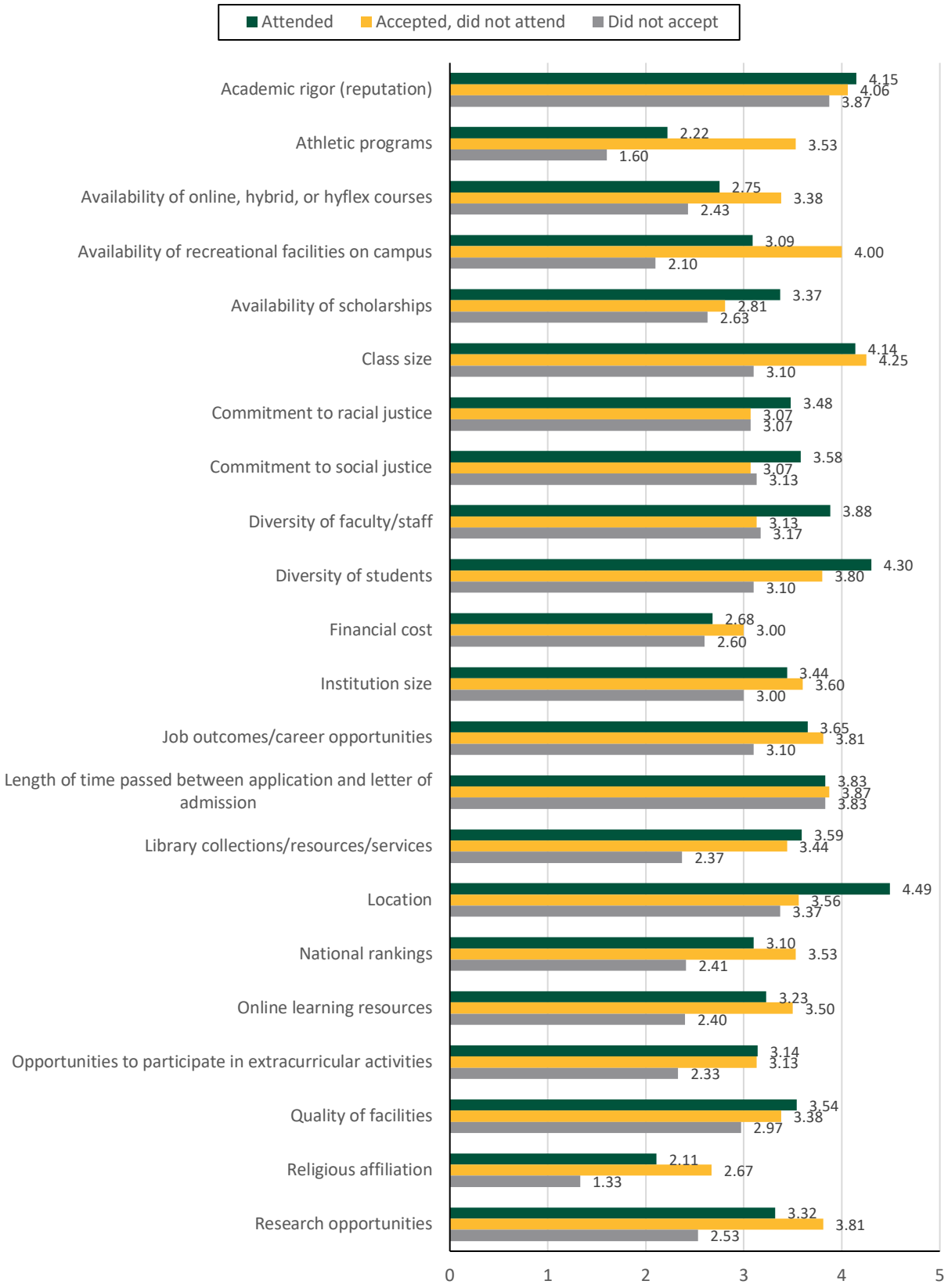
All participants (whether they began attending USF or not) were asked to rate the following characteristics of USF using a 6-pt scale (0 = *No opinion*, 5 = *Excellent*): Academic rigor (reputation); Athletic programs; Availability of online, hybrid, or HyFlex courses; Availability of recreational facilities on campus; Availability of scholarships; Class size; Commitment to racial justice; Commitment to social justice; Diversity of faculty/staff; Diversity of students; Financial cost; Institution size; Job outcomes/career opportunities; Length of time passed between application and letter of admission; Library collections/resources/services; Location; National rankings; Online learning resources; Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities; Quality of facilities; Religious affiliation; and Research opportunities. This rating gauges participants' perception of USF.

The below data indicate the percentage of CAS participants who rated each characteristic as **Excellent** or **Good**:

- Academic rigor (reputation) = **83%** (down 1% from 2022)
- Athletic programs = **39%** (up 2% from 2022)
- Availability of online, hybrid, or hyFlex courses = **50%** (down 2% from 2022)
- Availability of recreational facilities on campus = **56%** (up 9% from 2022)
- Availability of scholarships = **41%** (down 4% from 2022)
- Class size = **80%** (up 1% from 2022)
- Commitment to racial justice = **68%** (down 5% from 2022)
- Commitment to social justice = **69%** (down 4% from 2022)
- Diversity of faculty/staff = **72%** (up 2% from 2022)
- Diversity of students = **78%** (up 7% from 2022)
- Financial cost = **27%** (down 4% from 2022)
- Institution size = **61%** (down 2% from 2022)
- Job outcomes/career opportunities = **68%** (down 3% from 2022)
- Length of time passed between application and letter of admission = **80%** (up 9% from 2022)
- Library collections/resources/services = **67%** (up 10% from 2022)
- Location = **82%** (up 4% from 2022)
- National rankings = **53%** (down 3% from 2022)
- Online learning resources = **56%** (unchanged from 2022)
- Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities = **56%** (up 6% from 2022)
- Quality of facilities = **61%** (up 2% from 2022)
- Religious affiliation = **33%** (down 5% from 2022)
- Research opportunities = **59%** (up 12% from 2022)

The **majority of characteristics** (19 out of 22) were rated by the highest percentage of participants as either **Excellent or Good** with the exception of Athletic programs and Religious affiliation, which the highest percentage of participants rated as No Opinion and **Financial cost** which the highest percentage of participants rated as **Average**.

The following figure details CAS participants' average rating of each characteristic of USF, disaggregated by those who began attending; those who did not accept their offer of admission; and those who accepted their offer of admission, but did not begin attending. This rating gauges participants' perception of USF.



## THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND USF

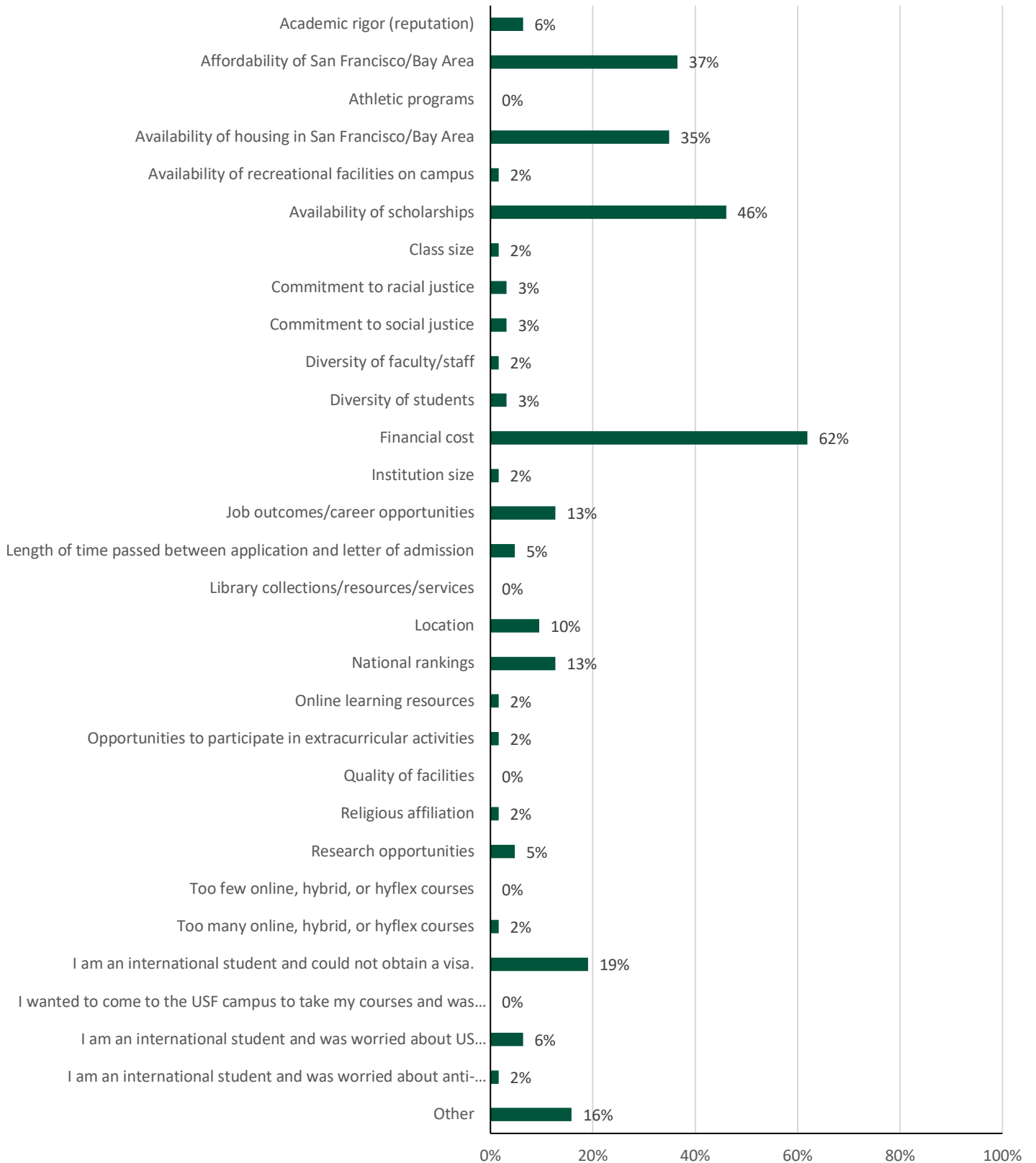
### Factors that influenced decision not to attend USF

Those who did not accept their offer of admission or did not begin attending USF were asked to indicate the factors that influenced their decision not to attend USF from the following response options: Academic rigor (reputation); Affordability of San Francisco/Bay Area; Athletic programs; Availability of housing in San Francisco/Bay Area; Availability of recreational facilities on campus; Availability of scholarships; Class size; Commitment to racial justice; Commitment to social justice; Diversity of faculty/staff; Diversity of students; Financial cost; Institution size; Job outcomes/career opportunities; Length of time passed between application and letter of admission; Library collections/resources/services; Location; National rankings; Online learning resources; Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities; Quality of facilities; Religious affiliation; Research opportunities; Too few online, hybrid, or HyFlex courses; Too many online, hybrid, or HyFlex courses; I am an international student and could not obtain a visa; I wanted to come to the USF campus to take my courses and was unable to due to COVID-19; I am an international student and was worried about US immigration policy; I am an international student and was worried about anti-immigrant hostilities/violence in the US; and Other. Participants could select all that apply. Participants' responses to Other can be found in **Appendix A, 2.1**.

- Of participants that did not accept their offer of admission or accepted their offer, but did not begin attending USF, the highest percentage (**62%**) indicated that **financial cost** was a factor that **influenced their decision not to attend USF** (down 3% from 2022).

The following figure details the percentage of participants that selected each response option.





### Rating of institution they are attending

Those who indicated that they began attending a college or university other than USF were asked to rate the following characteristics of the institution they are attending using a 6-pt. scale (*0 = No opinion, 5 = Excellent*): Academic rigor (reputation), Athletic programs; Availability of online, hybrid, or HyFlex courses; Availability of recreational facilities on campus; Availability of scholarships; Class size; Commitment to racial justice; Commitment to social justice; Diversity of faculty/staff; Diversity of students; Financial cost; Institution size; Job outcomes/career opportunities; Length of time passed between application and letter of admission; Library collections/resources/services; Location; National rankings; Online learning resources; Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities; Quality of facilities; Religious affiliation; and Research opportunities.

The below data indicate the percentage of participants who rated the below characteristics as **Excellent** or **Good**:

- Academic rigor (reputation) = **71%** (down 29% from 2022)
- Athletic programs = **36%** (up 7% from 2022)
- Availability of online, hybrid, or hyFlex courses = **42%** (down 1% from 2022)
- Availability of recreational facilities on campus = **72%** (up 24% from 2022)
- Availability of scholarships = **56%** (down 17% from 2022)
- Class size = **64%** (down 26% from 2022)
- Commitment to racial justice = **74%** (down 7% from 2022)
- Commitment to social justice = **75%** (down 11% from 2022)
- Diversity of faculty/staff = **69%** (down 17% from 2022)
- Diversity of students = **69%** (down 2% from 2022)
- Financial cost = **53%** (up 3% from 2022)
- Institution size = **67%** (up 2% from 2022)
- Job outcomes/career opportunities = **69%** (down 31% from 2022)
- Length of time passed between application and letter of admission = **67%** (up 5% from 2022)
- Library collections/resources/services = **78%** (up 11% from 2022)
- Location = **67%** (down 19% from 2022)
- National rankings = **56%** (down 25% from 2022)
- Online learning resources = **66%** (down 1% from 2022)
- Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities = **67%** (up 29% from 2022)
- Quality of facilities = **66%** (up 4% from 2022)
- Religious affiliation = **14%** (unchanged from 2022)
- Research opportunities = **61%** (down 1% from 2022)

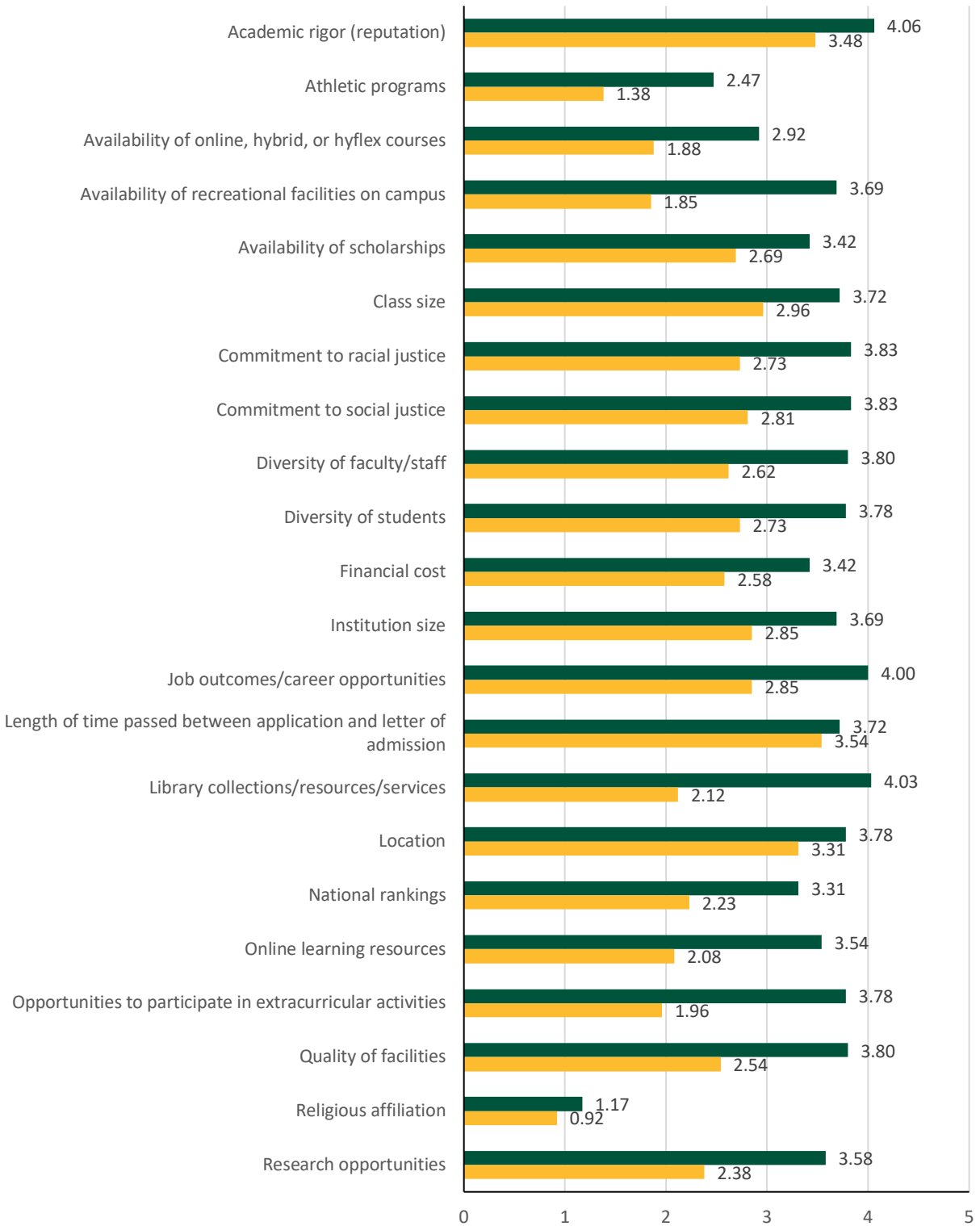
The **majority of characteristics** (20 out of 22) were rated by the highest percentage of participants as either **Excellent or Good** with the exception of Athletic programs and Religious Affiliation, which the highest percentage of participants rated as No Opinion.

### Rating of institution they are attending vs. ratings of USF

On average, participants who attended another college or university rated the characteristics of the college or university they are attending higher than they rated the same characteristics of USF.

The below figure details participants' average rating of each characteristic of the college or university they are attending and compares it to the ratings they gave USF.

■ How those who attended another college or university rated that college or university  
■ How those who attended another college or university rated USF



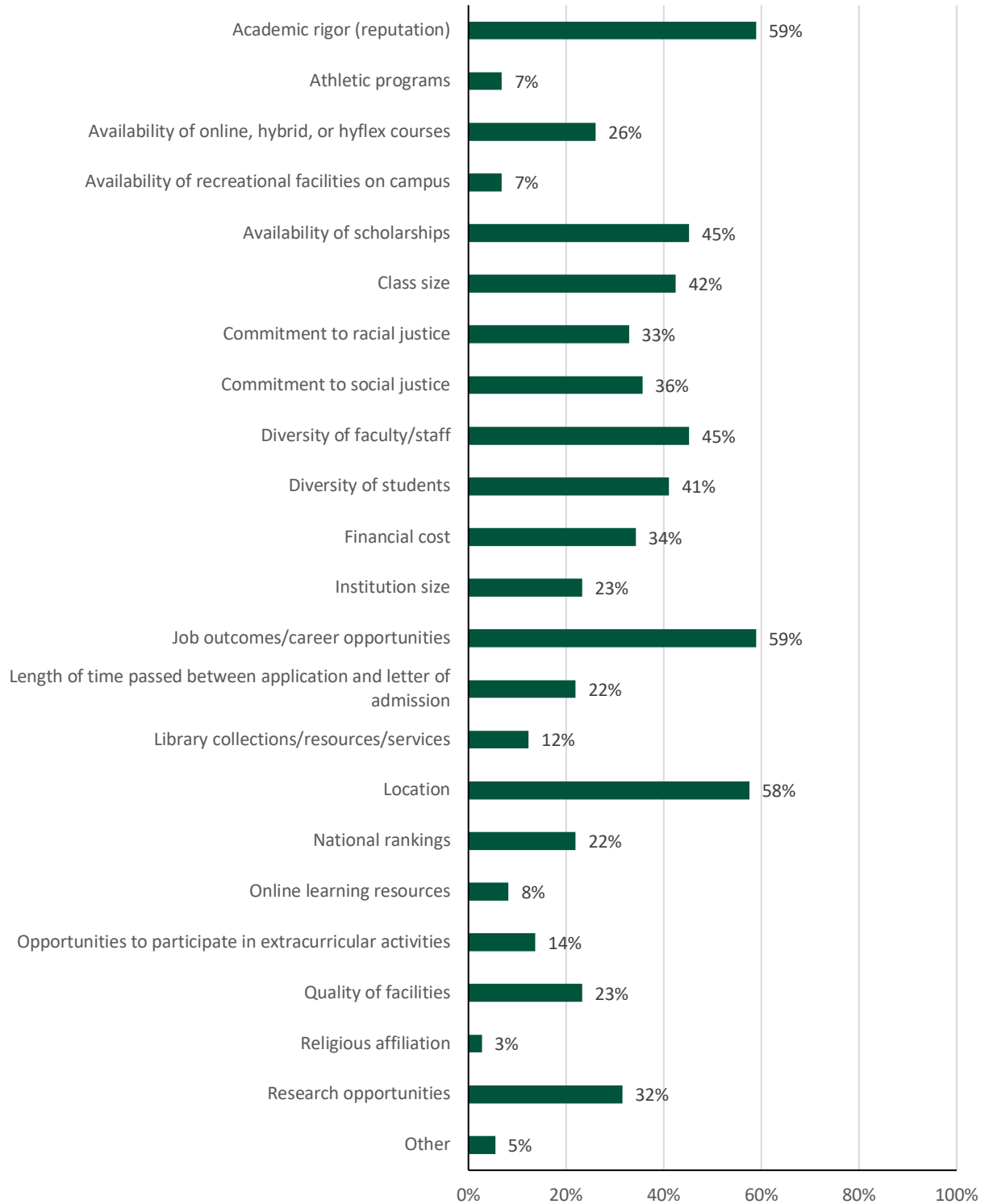
## THOSE WHO BEGAN ATTENDING USF

### Factors that influenced decision to attend USF

Participants who indicated that they began attending USF were asked to select the factors that influenced their decision to attend USF from the following response options: Academic rigor (reputation); Athletic programs; Availability of online, hybrid, or HyFlex courses; Availability of recreational facilities on campus; Availability of scholarships; Class size; Commitment to racial justice; Commitment to social justice; Diversity of faculty/staff; Diversity of students; Financial cost; Institution size; Job outcomes/career opportunities; Length of time passed between application and letter of admission; Library collections/resources/services; Location; National rankings; Online learning resources; Opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities; Quality of facilities; Religious affiliation; Research opportunities; and Other. Participants could select all that apply. Participants' responses to Other can be found in **Appendix A, 2.2**.

- The highest percentage (**59%**) of participants who began attending USF indicated that **Academic rigor (reputation)** and **Job outcomes/career opportunities** influenced their decision to attend (down 11% from 2022).

The following figure details the percentage of participants that selected each response option.



## Financial Factors

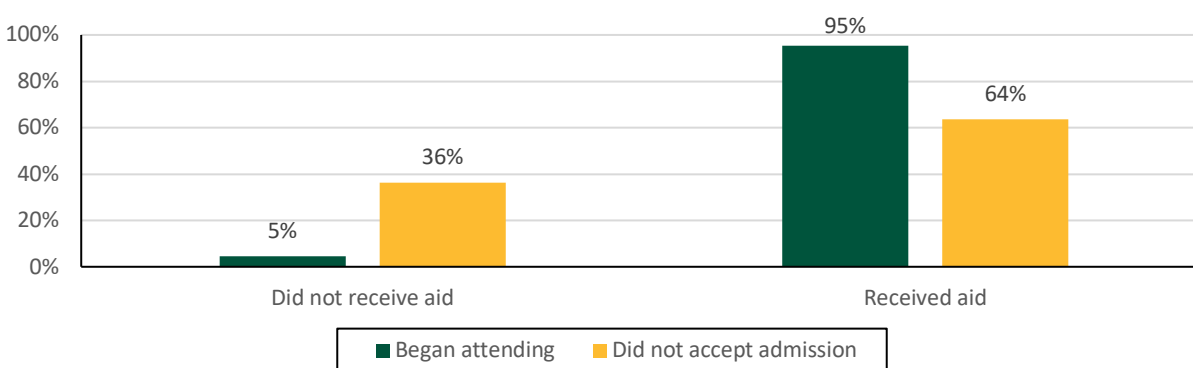
### FINANCIAL AID/ASSISTANCE

#### Applied for federal financial aid

Participants indicated if they applied for federal financial aid (Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loans and/or Direct Plus Loans) at USF and, if so, whether or not they received federal financial aid<sup>2</sup>.

- **51%** of CAS participants indicated that they **applied for federal financial aid at USF** (up 18% from 2022).
- **49%** of CAS participants indicated that they **did not apply for federal financial aid at USF**.
  - Of CAS participants who **began attending USF**, the highest proportion (**51%**) **applied for federal financial aid at USF** (up 5% from 2022).
  - Of CAS participants who **did not accept their offer of admission to USF**, **50%** applied for federal financial aid at USF and **50%** did not.
- The majority (**85%**) of CAS participants who applied for federal financial aid at USF received aid (down 10% from 2022).

The following figure details the proportion of participants who received aid or not, disaggregated by those who began attending and those who did not accept their offer of admission.<sup>3</sup>



#### Type of aid received from USF

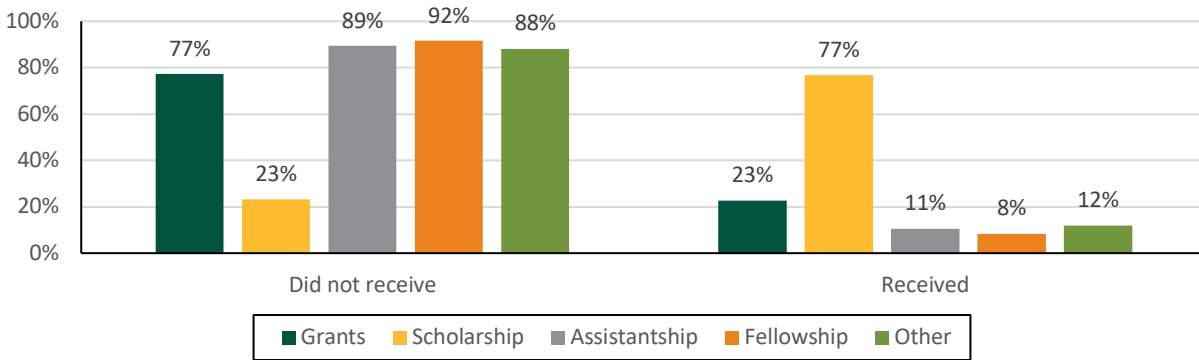
Participants indicated if they received any of the following from USF: Grant; Scholarship; Assistantship; Fellowship; and Other. Participants' responses to Other can be found in **Appendix A, 3.1**.

- Of those CAS participants who received a grant, scholarship, assistantship, fellowship or other, the highest percentage (**77%**) of participants **received a scholarship** from USF (up 3% from 2022).

The below figure details the percentage of CAS participants that received or did not receive each kind of aid.

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<sup>2</sup> No participants who accepted their offer of admission, but did not begin attending responded to this question; therefore, the data are not disaggregated by this demographic.



### Aid from another college or university

Those who indicated that they chose to attend a college or university other than USF were asked if the institution they are attending offered them more financial assistance than USF. Participants could select Yes; No; or I did not apply for financial assistance at the institution I am attending. Fewer than 8 participants responded to this question; therefore, the results are excluded from this report.

### COST OF ATTENDANCE

Participants who indicated that they chose to attend a college or university other than USF were asked if the cost of attendance at USF is higher or lower than the institution they are attending.

- 73% of CAS participants indicated that the **cost of attendance at USF is higher** than the institution they are attending (down 15% from 2022).

### Additional Thoughts

Participants were asked if there was anything else they'd like to tell USF. Participants' responses can be found in **Appendix A, 4**.