

Virginia Course Materials Survey 2021

JMU initial results, March 2022



JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY®



“I pay for school on my own as well as everyday things such as rent, groceries, etc. and when textbooks can cost almost \$500 that is a month of my rent. I take my chances on not having the book because I definitely need a place to live”

- JMU STUDENT RESPONSE

Virginia Course Material Survey at JMU

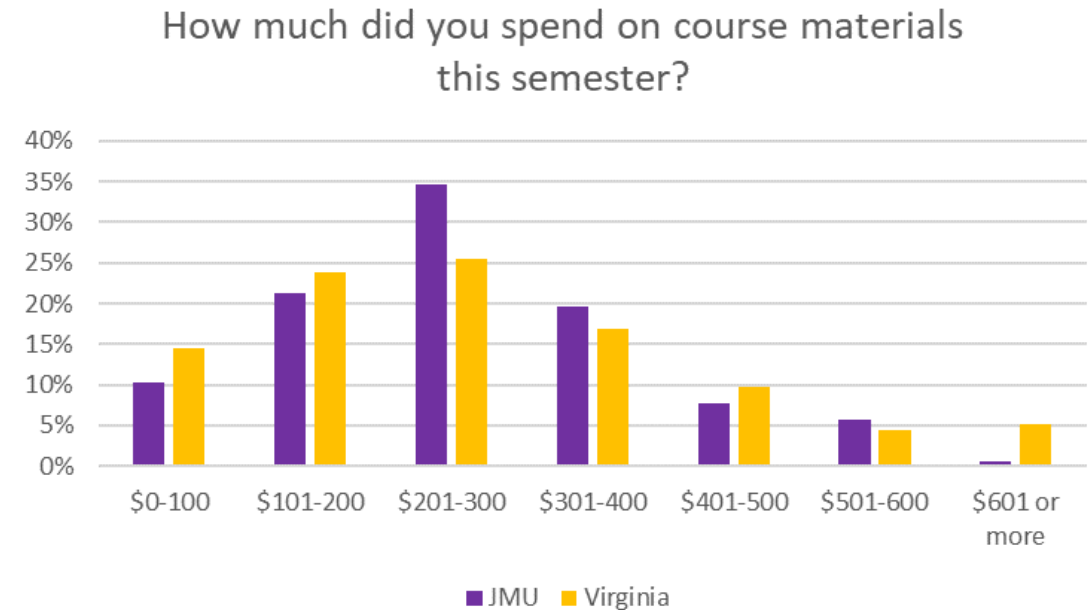
- Open from October 25, 2021 – November 5, 2021
- Received 235 valid JMU student responses
- Across the state, forty-one Virginia higher education institutions participated with more than 5,600 student responses
- Survey questions address two research questions
 - What is the impact of course material costs on educational equity among Virginia students?
 - What course content materials do students find to be most beneficial to their learning?
- Total Virginia results and a copy of the survey instrument are available at <https://vivalib.org/va/open/survey>

Examining the Impact on Students

- Survey questions
 - How much did you spend on course materials this semester?
 - How worried were you about meeting your course material costs this semester?
 - What measures have you taken to reduce your required course material costs throughout your college career?
 - In your academic career, has the cost of required course materials ever caused you to ...

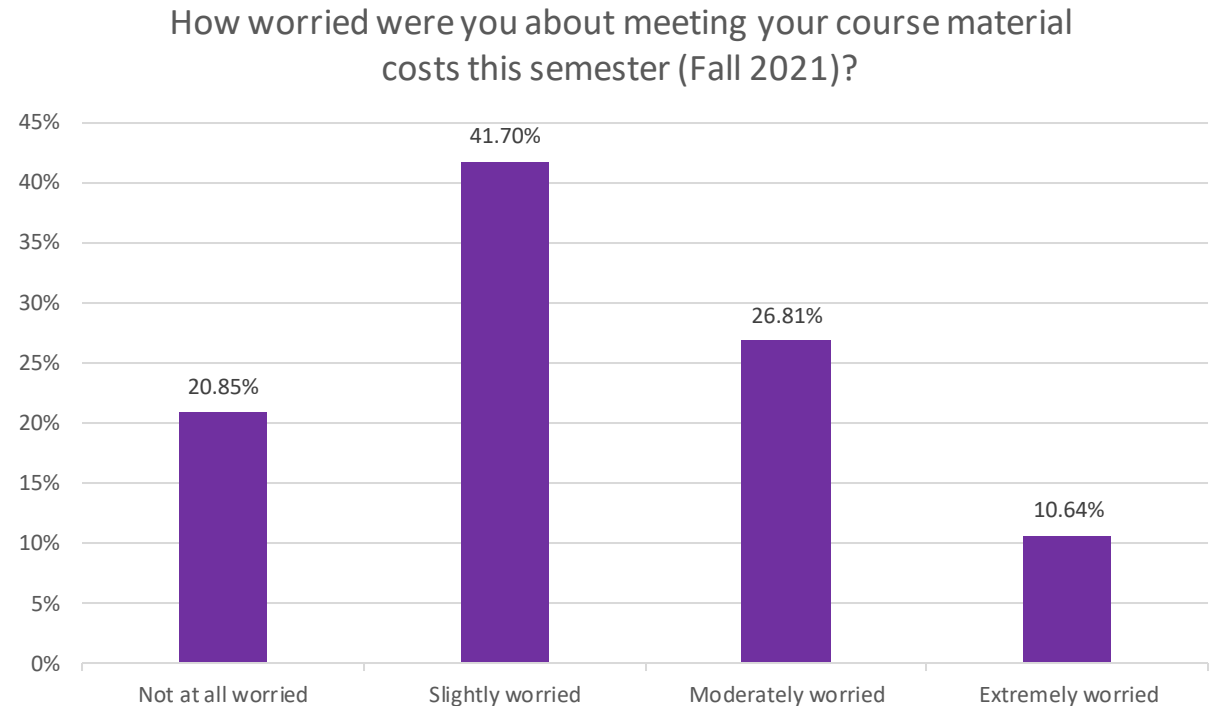
Course Materials Expenditures

A notable departure from the pattern was the large percentage of JMU students (34%) who spent \$201-\$300 compared to the Virginia average (25%) who reported spending the same amount in the current semester.



Worry about Course Material Costs

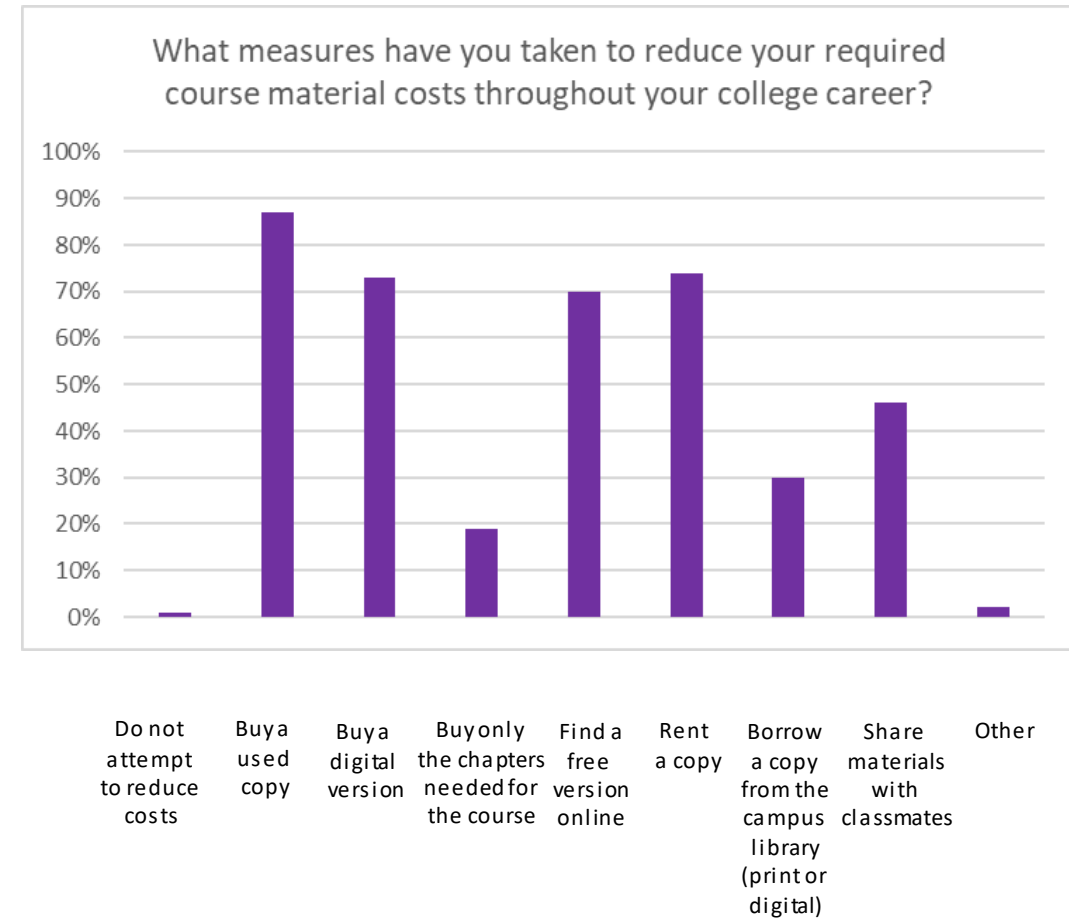
10% of all JMU student respondents were “Extremely Worried” about meeting their course material costs, and 79% had some level of worry.



Measures to Reduce Costs

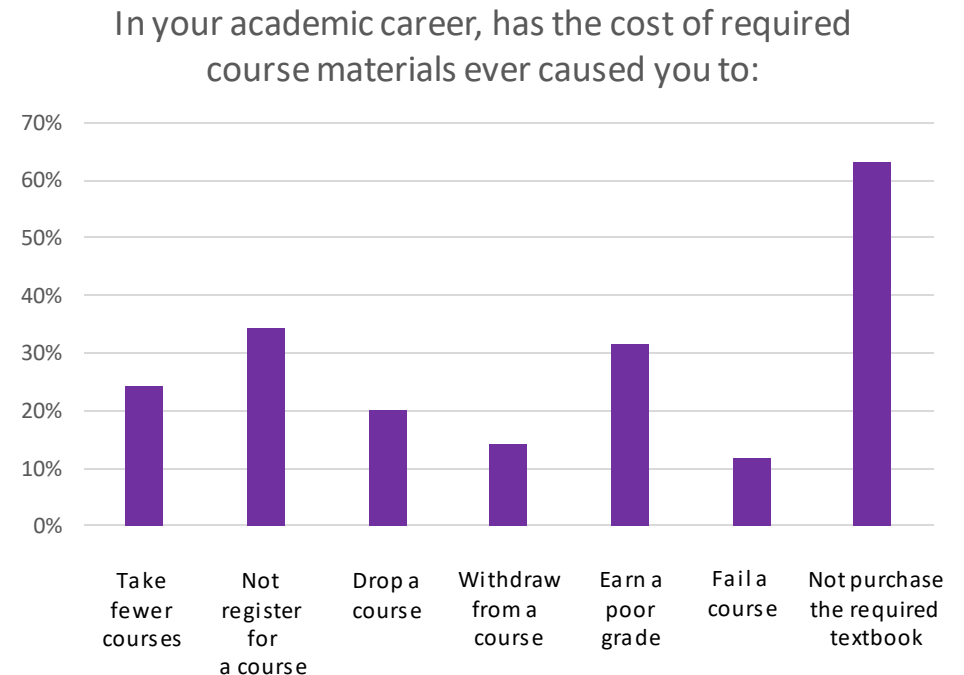
More than 99% of students attempt to reduce their course material costs.

The most common approaches to reducing costs include buying used copies or digital versions and renting copies.



Impact while seeking a degree

The results show the deep impact of course material costs on JMU students' academic careers, from progress (24% have taken fewer courses) to opportunity (34% have not registered for a specific course) to success (32% have earned a poor grade and 12% have failed).

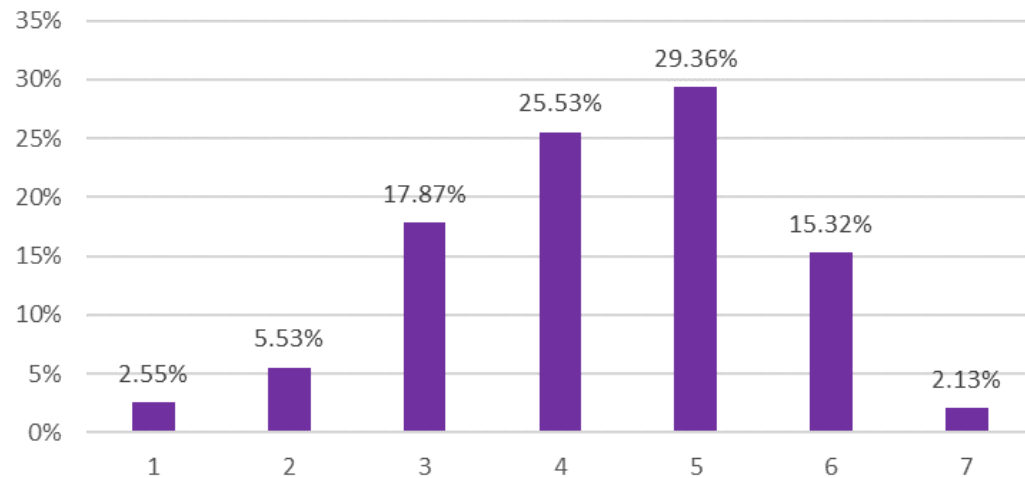


Examining Course Materials

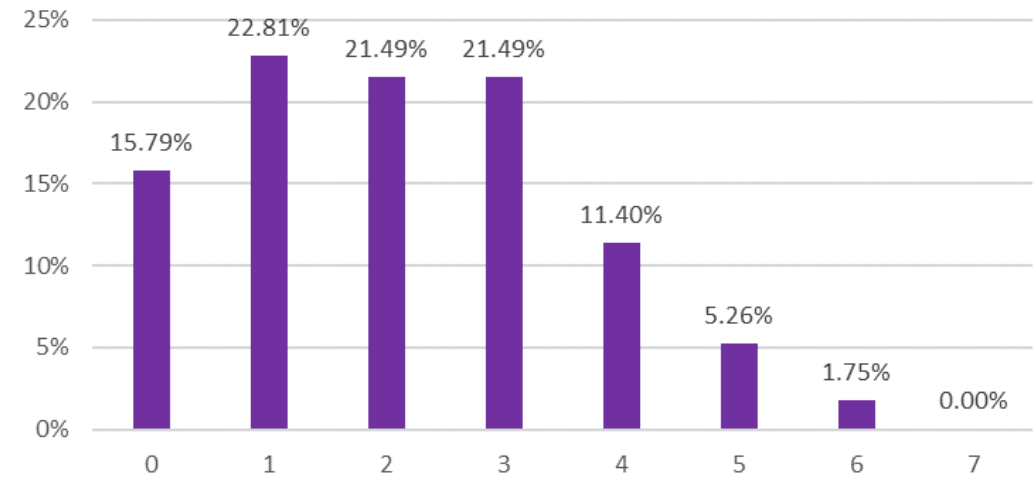
- Survey questions
 - During the current semester, how many courses required you to buy course materials?
 - When you have other options for getting your course materials (like renting), why would you choose to buy them?
 - How important are the following characteristics that make textbooks and course materials worthwhile to buy and own?
 - If the cost is the same, which format do you prefer for your course materials?

Required Materials

During the current semester, how many courses required you to buy course materials?



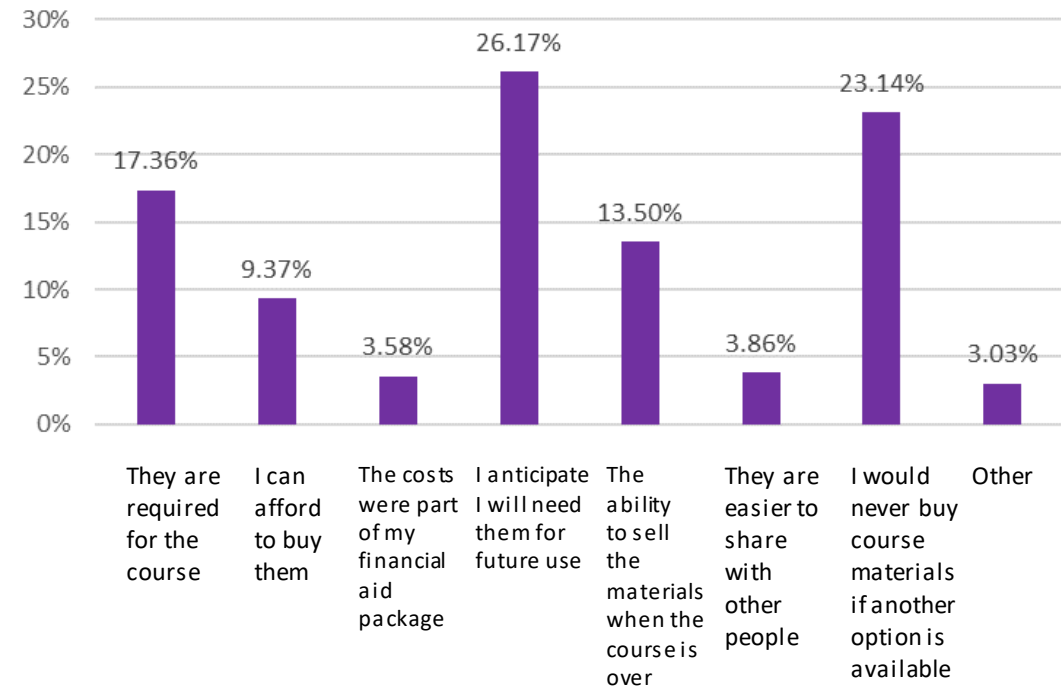
For how many of these courses did you actually buy (as opposed to rent) materials?



Course Materials Value

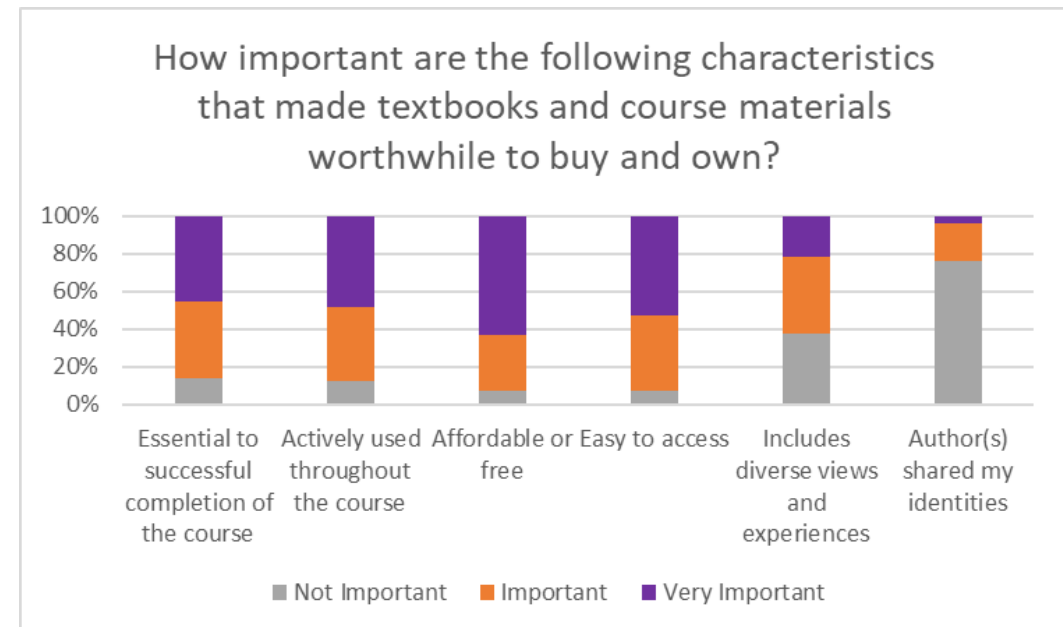
The most commonly cited reason to buy (rather than rent) course materials was anticipation of future use.

When you have other options for getting your course materials (like renting), why would you choose to buy them?



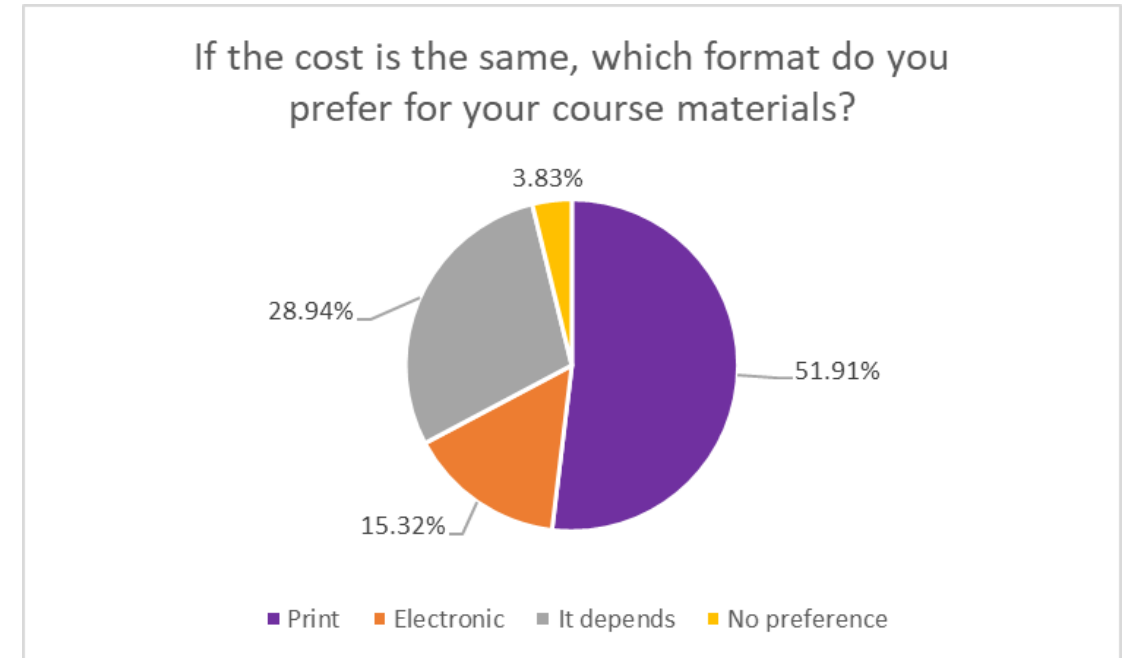
Course Materials Value

The most important characteristics that made course materials worthwhile to buy and own were that they were affordable/free, easy to access, actively used throughout the course, and essential to successful completion of the course.



Print vs. Electronic

Slightly more than half of respondents preferred the print format for course materials, although over a quarter said that it depends.

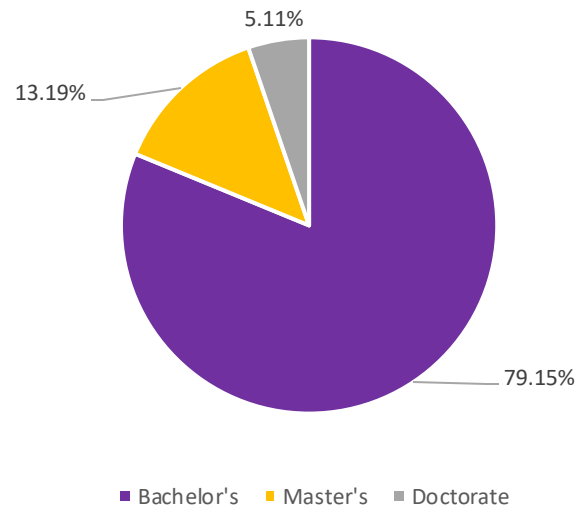


Survey Demographics

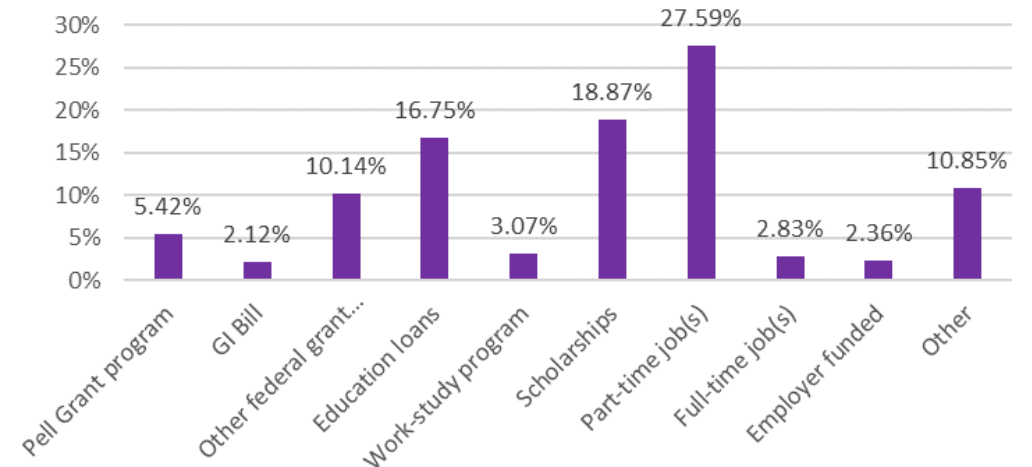
- Survey questions
 - Response by Degree Type and Funding Sources
 - Response by Race/Ethnicity and Gender Identity

Demographics

Response Count by Degree/Award



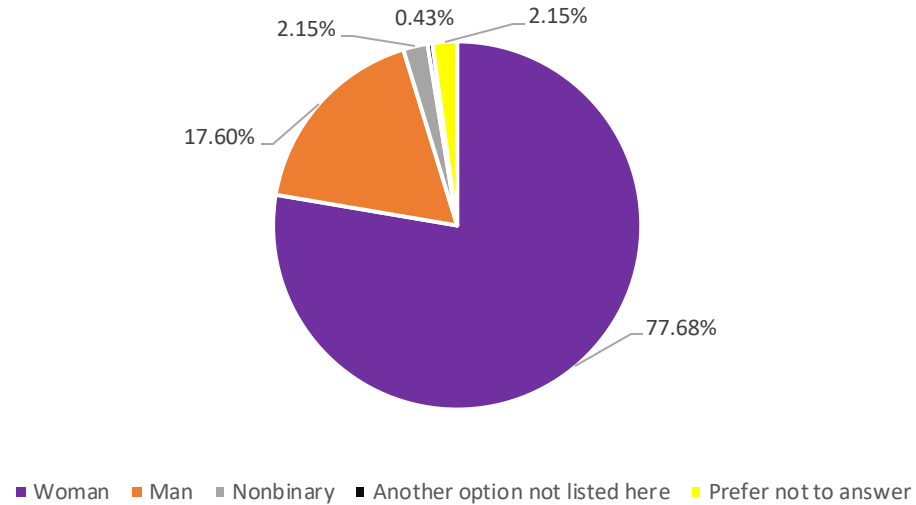
Which of the following sources are you using to fund your education?



The most common funding sources were part-time job(s), scholarships, and education loans.

Demographics

How do you describe your gender identity?



Which race/ethnicity do you identify with?

