



The Graduate Leadership Council 2006 Annual Report

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Presentation Overview

Introduction:

Description & Purpose of the GLC
Graduate Student Survey

Topics:

Graduate Student Contribution

Graduate Student Life

Healthcare

Activity Fee

U-PASS, Legal Services, Other Possible Uses

Student Satisfaction

Dismissal Guidelines, Diversity, Childcare

Graduate Leadership Council

Composition: The GLC consists of delegates from graduate student organizations recognized by The Graduate School.

GSA: Graduate Student Association

CGSA: Chicago Graduate Student Association

BGSA: Black Graduate Student Association

CSSA: Chinese Students & Scholars Association

G-SALSA: Graduate Student Association for Latino and Spanish Activities

Queer Pride

Purpose of the GLC:

- to promote a successful graduate educational experience, and act as a platform for voicing common graduate student concerns.
- to facilitate communication and interaction between the graduate students and university administration.
- to assist TGS and the University in planning and implementing policies, events, and initiatives that concern graduate students.

Graduate Student Survey

- Sent to all students in TGS via e-mail in October
- 963 graduate students took the survey
- 32.1% of all graduate students
- 254 written responses to final survey question soliciting concerns for GLC to review

Graduate Student Contribution to Northwestern

Graduate Student Contribution

- Excellence and success of Northwestern University requires the cooperation of:
 - Faculty
 - Staff
 - Students (graduate and undergraduate)
- NU community includes 3000 graduate students
 - Diverse research interests
 - Integral part of Northwestern

Graduate Student Contribution

Areas of impact



Research



High-impact publications
Patents
Millions of dollars in research grants
and funding

**Teaching/
Mentoring**



Professors focus on course content
Interest in academic careers
Preparation for teaching

Graduate Student Contribution: Research

- collaboration between faculty and graduate students
 - Faculty determine the research focus
 - Graduate students perform the research
- GLC survey showed that **61%** of graduate students perform the majority of the research in their lab or office
- Majority of students spend most of their time on research

Graduate Student Contribution: Research

- *Joseph H. Solomon* (Mitra J. Hartmann, BME) developed robotic whiskers that sense in 3D; featured in *Nature*
- *Changhong Ke* (Horacio Espinosa, ME) created a nanotube bistable switch that was featured in *Small*; NU has filed patent application and is seeking to partner with a company for commercial development
- Extramural funding
 - 12.5% of grad students are awarded extramural grants and fellowships (NSF, Javits, DOD, Fulbright)
 - Grant writing experience

Graduate Student Contribution: Teaching / Mentoring

- Collaboration between graduate students and undergraduates
 - Research mentors
 - Teaching assistants
 - Tutors
- Survey reveals that **71%** of graduate students interact with undergraduates in some context
- Most graduate programs having teaching assistantship requirements

Graduate Student Contribution: Teaching / Mentoring

- In 2004-05 the history department recognized 4 students for the Lacey Baldwin Smith Prize for Teaching Excellence
- *Sorine Maruster* (Economics) was awarded Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award in 2005-06
- *Johannes Pollanen* (Physics and Astronomy) was given the Excellence in Teaching Award

“He had a way of explaining physics so that it was simple and understandable. He taught his section with enthusiasm and seemed to genuinely want to be there and to help the students...”

Graduate Student Contribution

- Graduate students impact research and teaching / mentoring
- Issues impacting graduate student life are important to the entire NU community
 - *Living expenses*
 - *Health insurance*
 - *Diversity*
 - *Transportation*
 - *Legal representation*
 - *Childcare*

Addressing these issues will work to:

Maintain and increase the productivity of current graduate students

Recruit the brightest, most capable students

Graduate Student Life

- Population Distribution
- Work Life
- Finances

Population Distribution

By degree of study:

- 85% P.h.D. students
- 15% Master's

By place of study

- 80% Evanston campus
- 17% Chicago campus
- 3 % both campuses

Graduate Students' Work Life

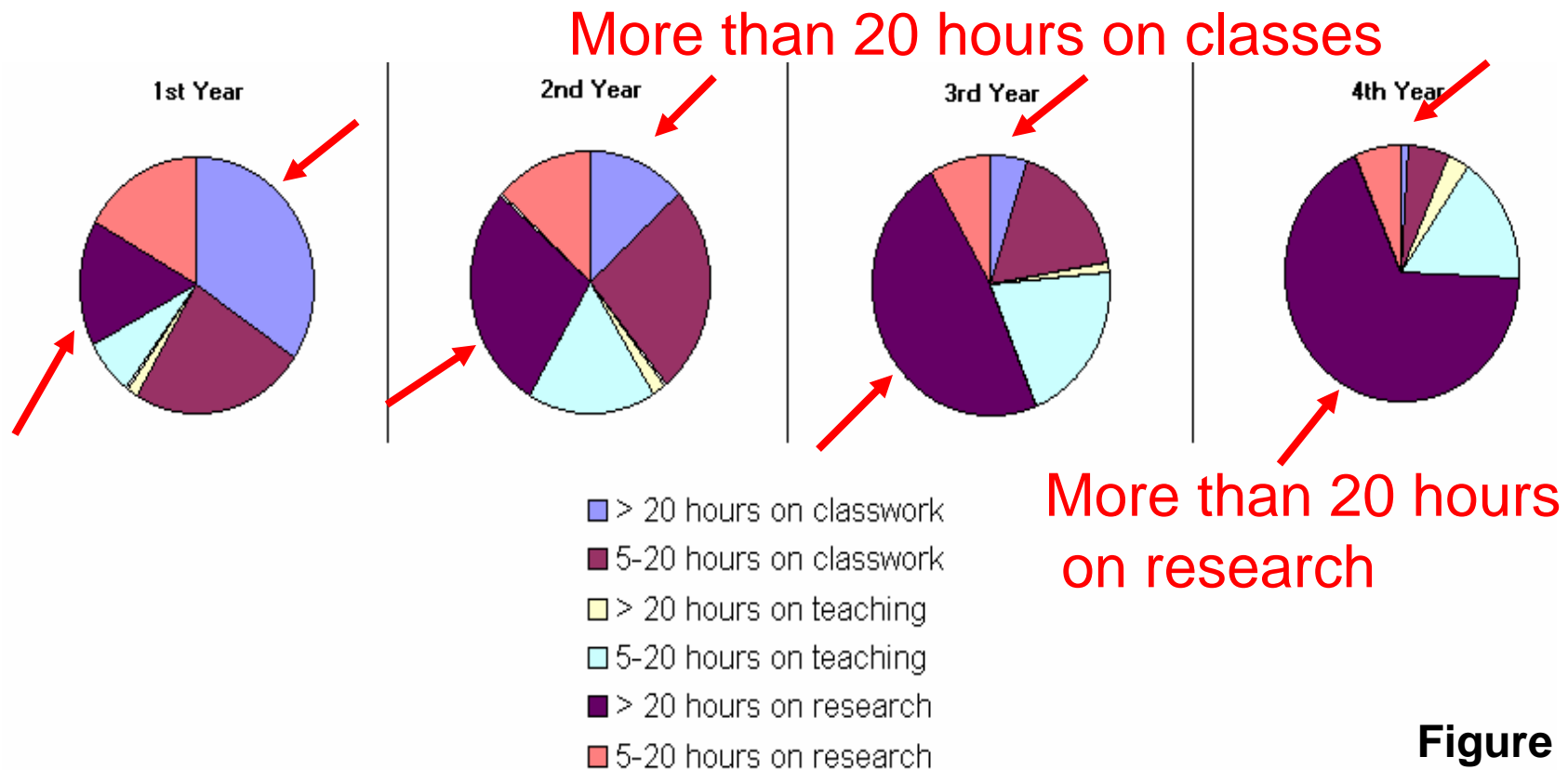
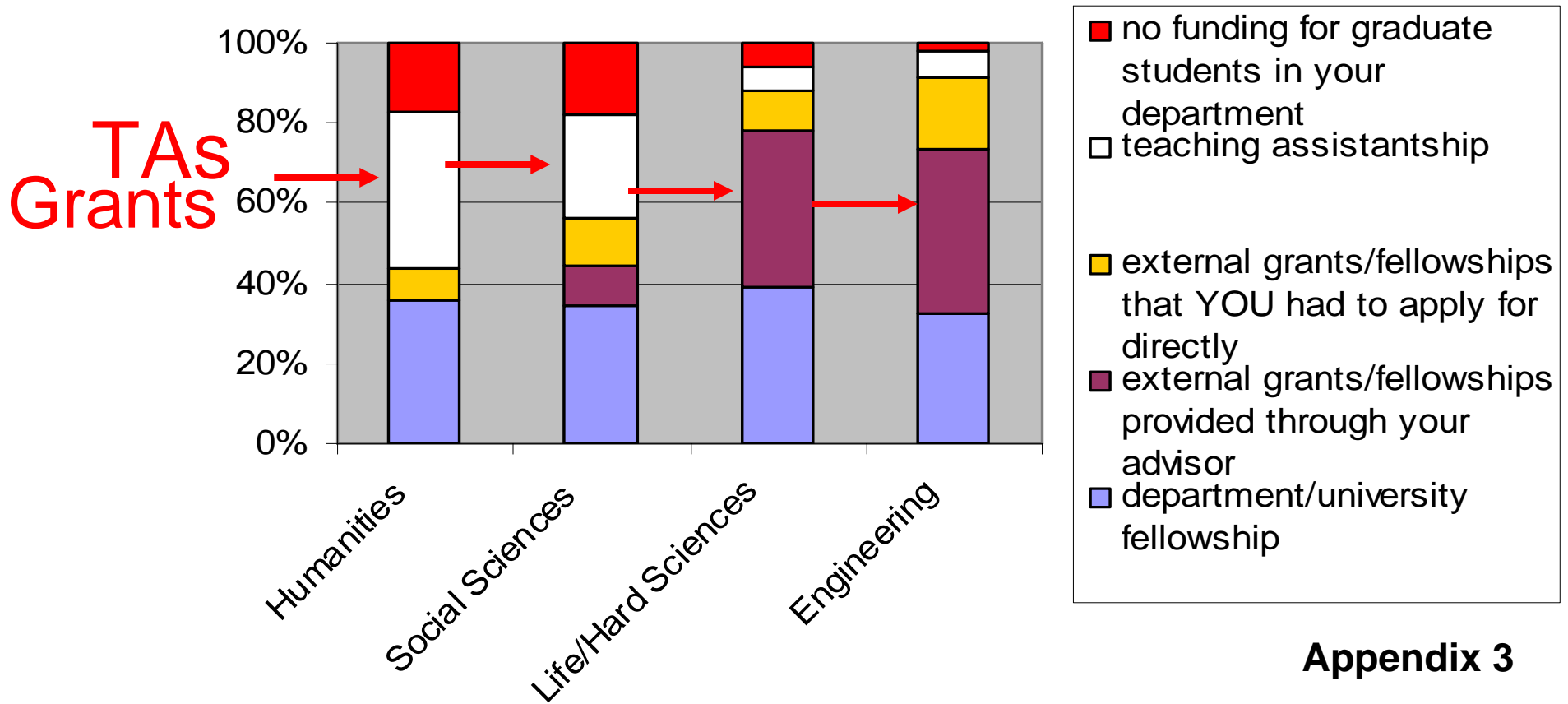


Figure 1

- Upper year students spend most of their time on research
- Students in earlier years spend more time on classwork and teaching.

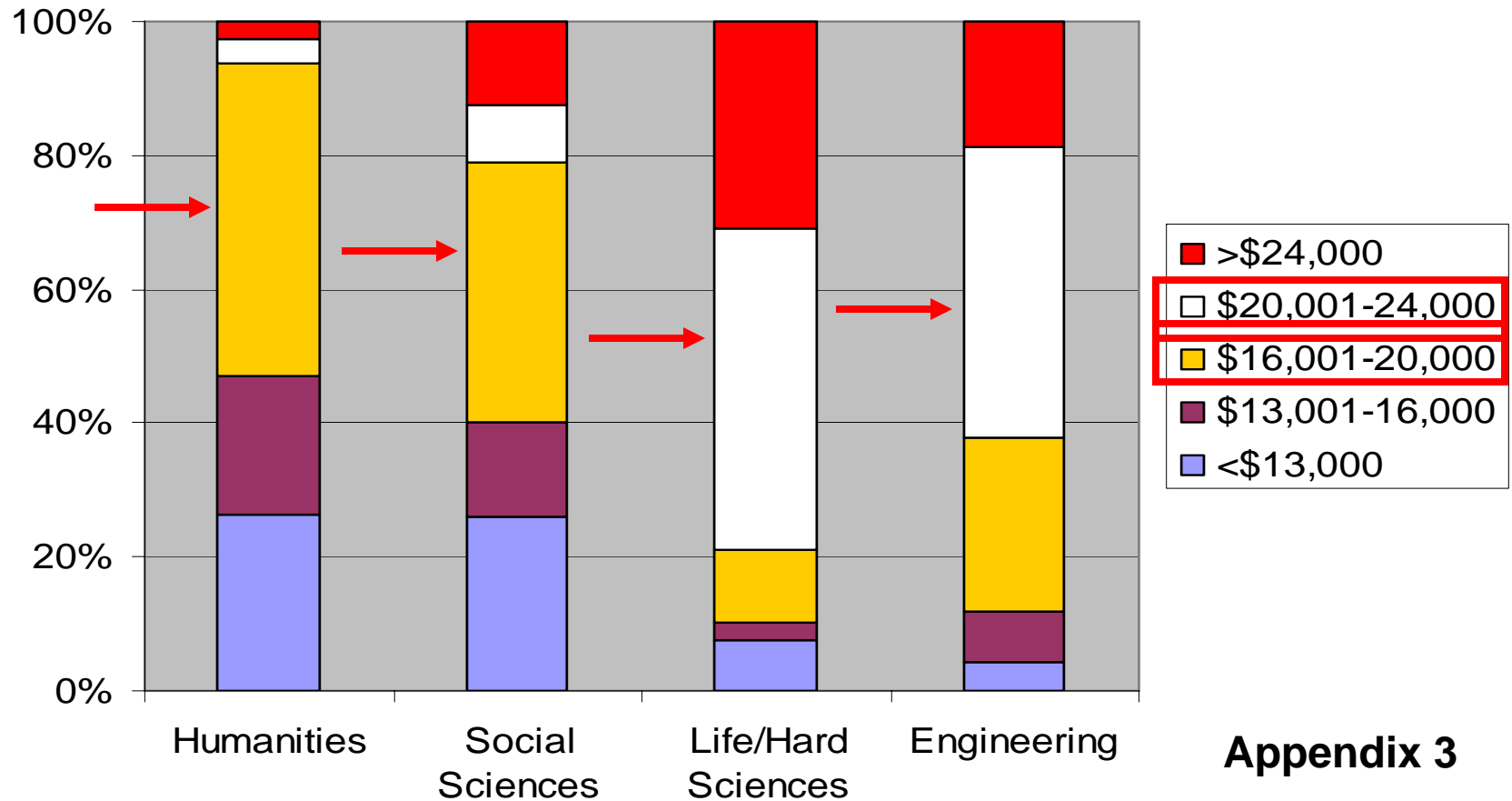
Source of Funding



Appendix 3

- Science and Engineering students funded from external grants and fellowships, mainly.
- Humanities and Social Sciences funded by fellowships and TA positions

Discipline Affects Stipend



- Science and Engineering students better funded than Humanities and Social Sciences

Base Stipend

- Base stipend for all departments: \$1,595 for fellows and \$1,645 for Graduate Assistants
- Last year: 4% increase, bigger than previous years' 2-3%
- One of the biggest among Big 10 universities
- Cost living in Evanston: 50% higher than national average

Graduate Student Expenditures

- Main expenses: rent (41%) & health insurance (13%)
- Lower stipend students pay much greater proportion of income on rent

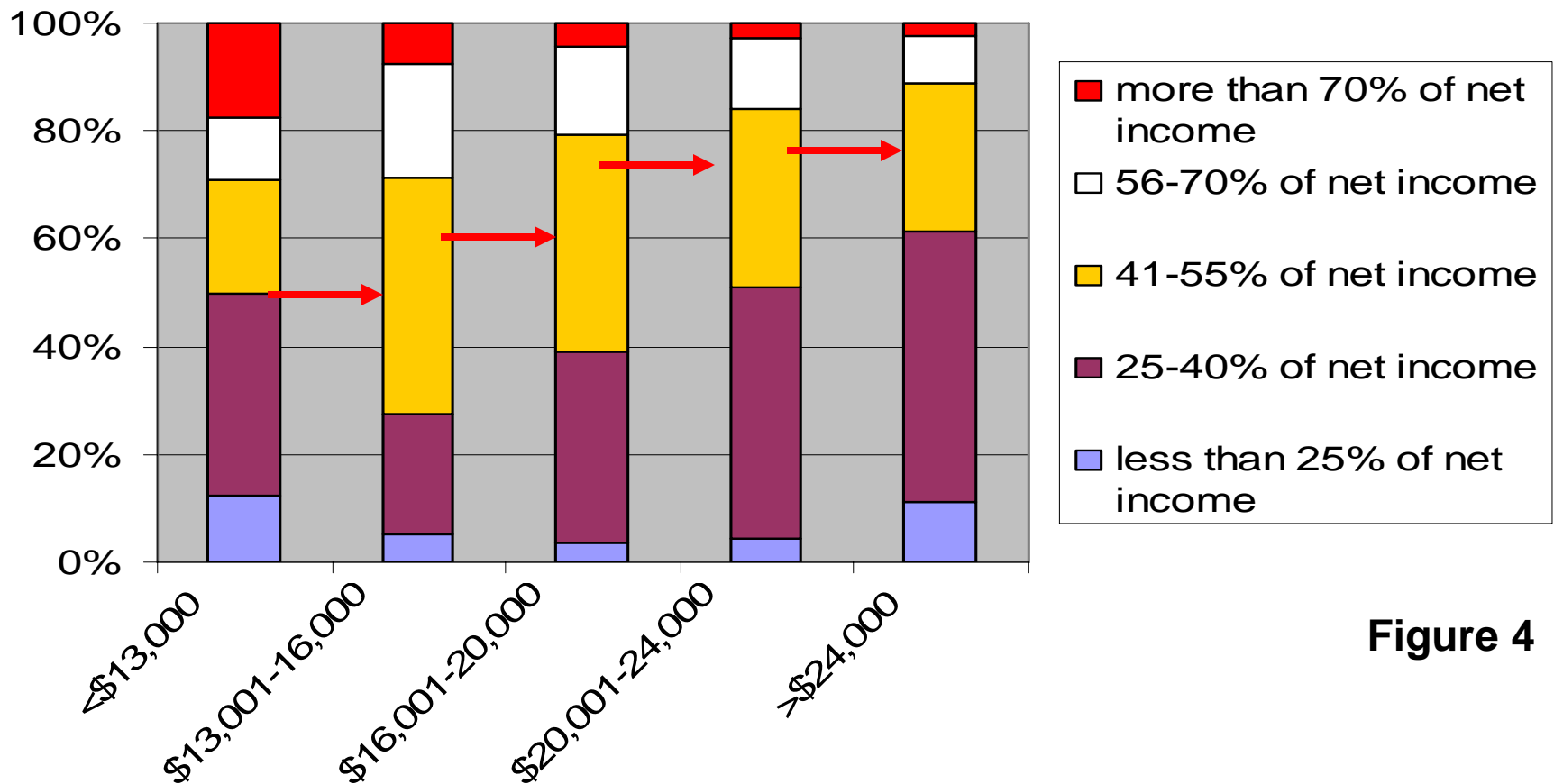


Figure 4

Cost of Living in Engelhart vs. Evanston

Engelhart

- **One bedroom \$1100.00**
 - **Services included**
 - **Furnished**

Evanston average

- **One bedroom \$925**
 - **Gas \$15**
 - **Electricity \$20**
 - **Cable & internet \$70**
- **Total: \$ 1030**

Prices are comparable to each other

Healthcare

Health Insurance - Summary

- Northwestern offers a 2-tier health insurance system

	Basic	Comprehensive
Total Cost	\$1896	\$2664
Student Cost	\$948	\$1716
Deductible	\$2000	\$0

Table 1

Health Insurance - Summary

- Quality of care rated as “excellent” or “fair”
 - Prescription and mental health coverage above average
- 3X more likely to switch from basic to comprehensive
 - \$2000 deductible can cause financial strain

Health Insurance - Cost

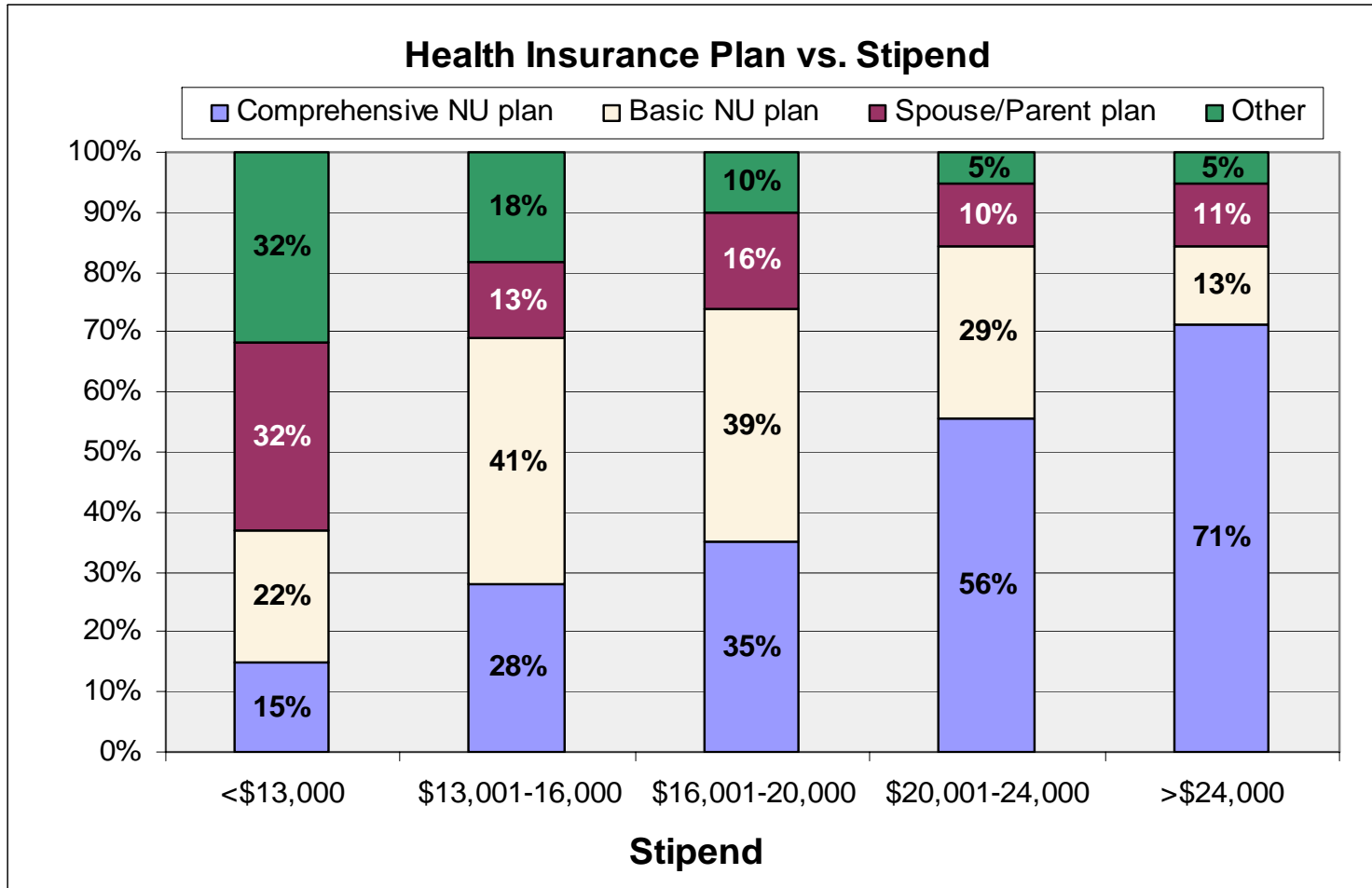
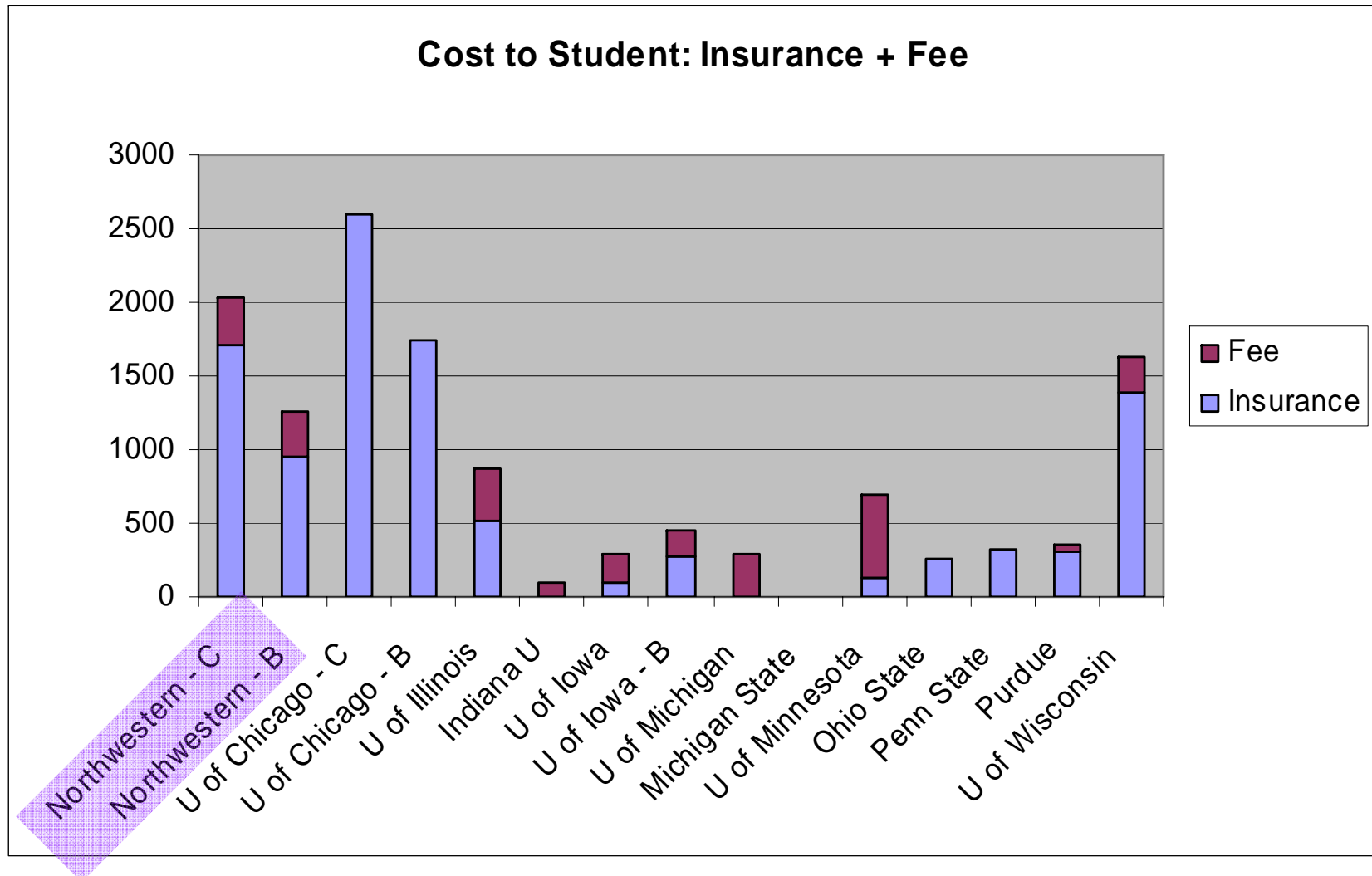


Figure 6

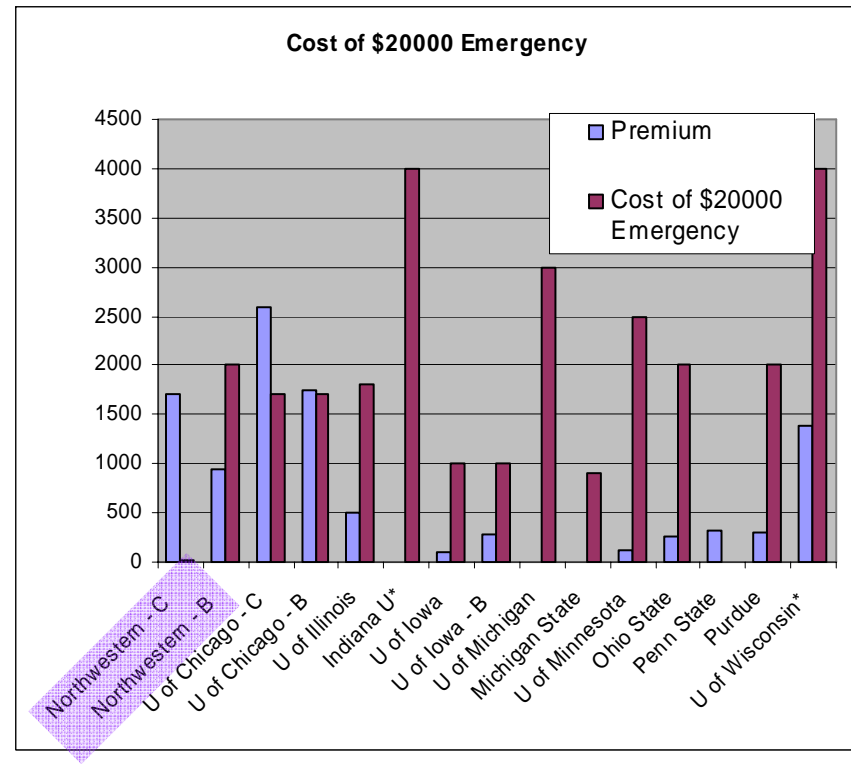
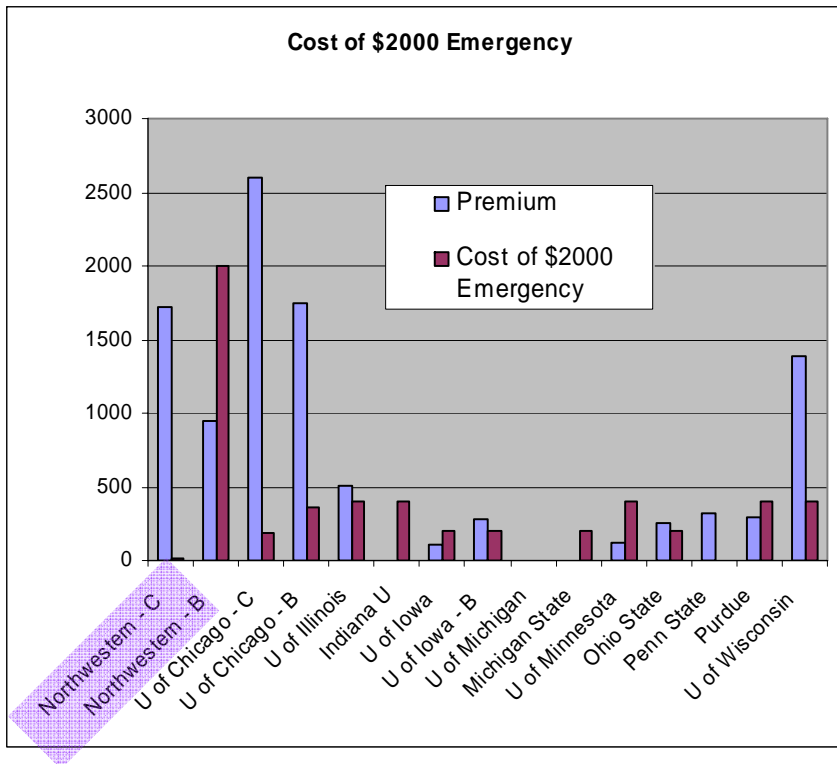
- Higher stipend students prefer the comprehensive plan
- Low stipend students prefer non-NU plans due to high premiums

Health Insurance - Cost



- NU plans cost the most compared to other Big10 institutions

Health Insurance - Deductible



- Compared to other Big10 institutions, NU students on the basic plan pay a large amount for a minor emergency but a comparable amount for a \$20,000 emergency
- NU students on the comprehensive plan are covered for emergencies, no deductible

Health Insurance - Suggestions

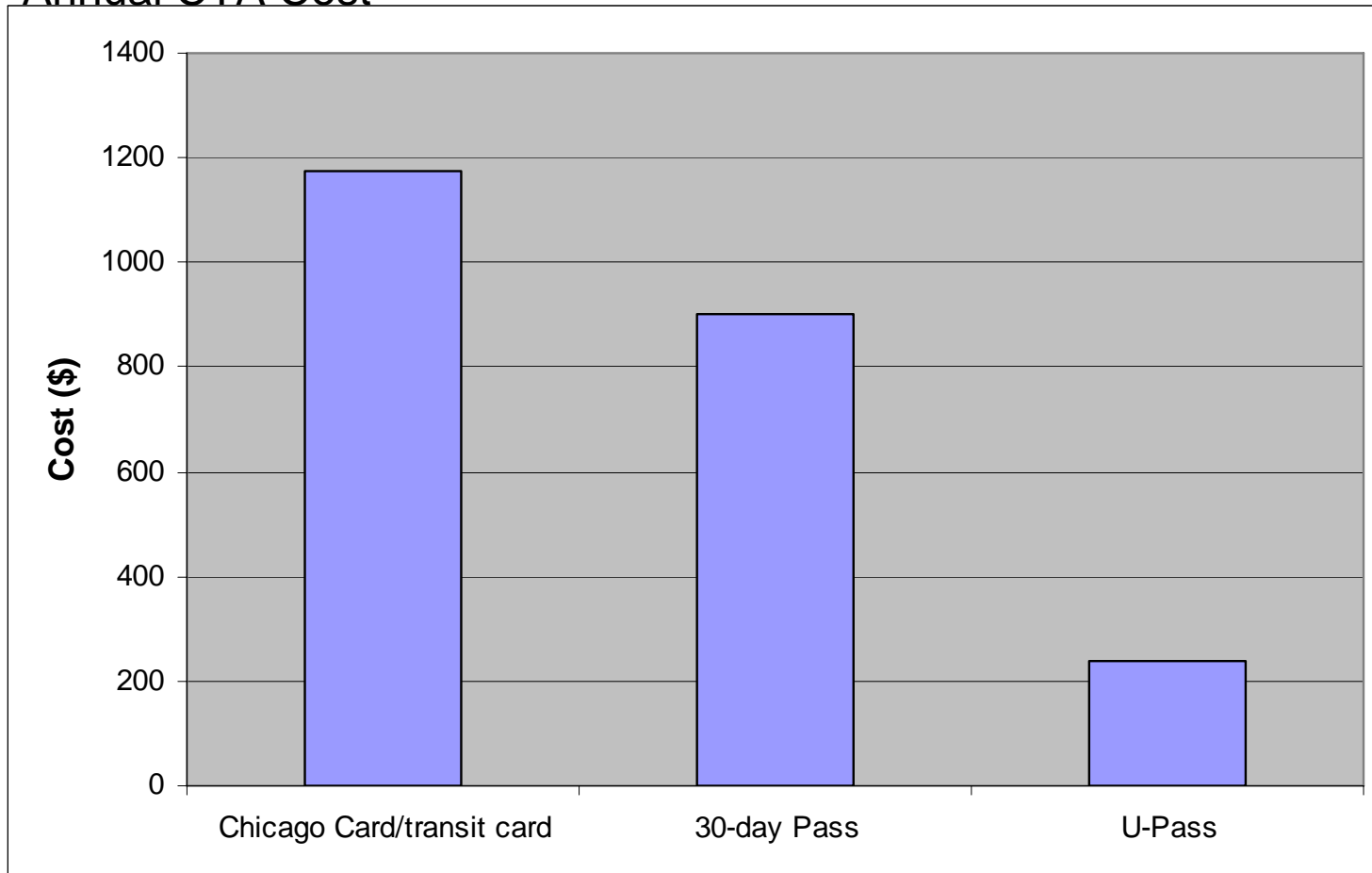
- Single, comprehensive plan
- 80% coverage / 20% out of pocket with \$2000 out of pocket maximum
 - For minor injuries/illness spread out cost to student
- Examine possibilities for providing more affordable dependent coverage
- Cover an annual physical for graduate students
- Move towards complete coverage for all graduate students

Student Activity Fee

- U-Pass
- Legal Services
- TGS Community Building
- Graduate Student Newspaper
- GLC Delegates

U-Pass Cost Comparison

Annual CTA Cost



- U-Pass offers significant savings for Chicago area students

CTA Usage at NU

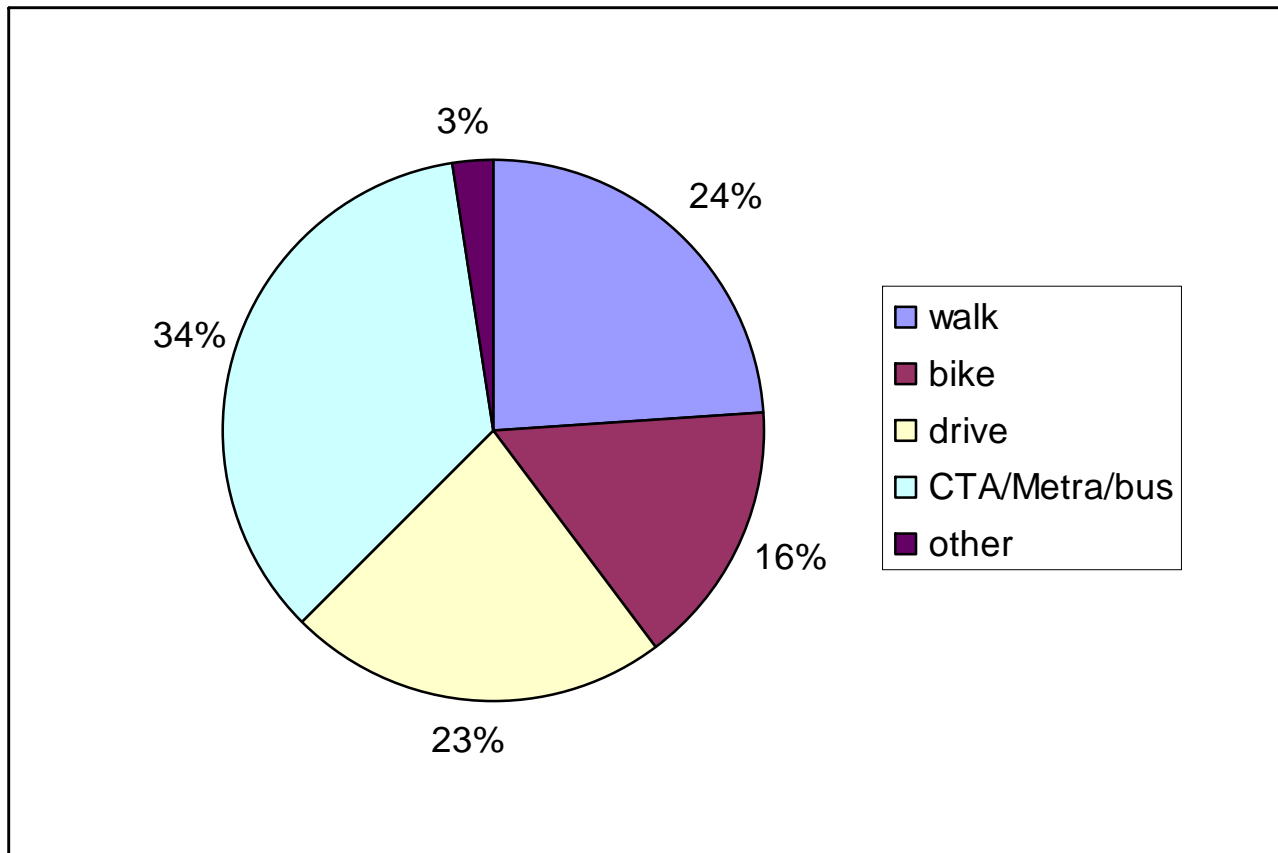


Figure 9

- CTA users are the largest group of NU graduate student commuters, according to GLC survey

U-Pass Support

Question: Would you be willing to pay \$50-60 per quarter for U-Pass?

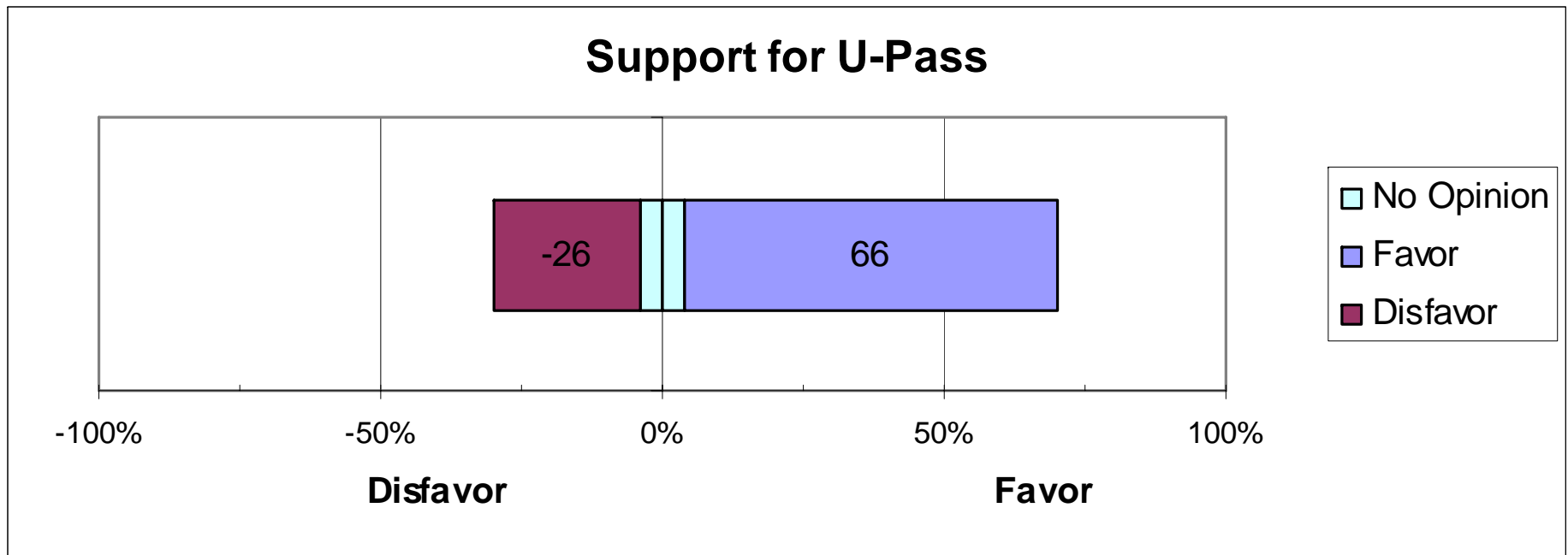


Figure 10

- The majority of NU students are willing to pay for U-Pass

Legal Services

Legal Services: An Unmet Need

- 16% students had legal dispute

Legal disputes were primarily traffic violations, landlord/tenant issues

- 25% students willing to pay

- Previous attempts to solve legal issue delayed

including use of NU Law School Alumni

– Thank you, Trustee Harris!

Student Legal Services

- Established by ASG
- Lawyer on campus
- Common issues covered
 - Notary public, landlord/tenant disputes, traffic violations
- 1 appointment, 1 hour

TGS Community Building & Social Events
Graduate Student Newspaper
“At Large” GLC Delegates

TGS Community Building & Social Events

- TGS Night Out
- Community Grant Proposals:
Sushi, Curling, Swing Dancing...
- Graduate Student Organizations

Graduate Student Newspaper

- Political/Policy Debate
- Community
- Dissemination of Policy Information
 - E.g. Interviews with the Dean.
- Articles of general interest
 - E.g. Childcare or landlord/tenant issues.

At Large Delegates with Paid Stipends: Current GLC System

- **GLC** composed of Graduate Student Leaders (or delegates) from Graduate Associations
- Divided into committees
- Serve Voluntarily, in addition to full time jobs.
- **Propose:** Adding “At Large” delegates elected directly from graduate population, with stipend.

At Large Delegates with Paid Stipends: Proposed Addition

Entire graduate student voting

- Would give attention to timely issues
e.g. UPASS and other GLC actions.

Stipend

- Higher level of responsibility/culpability
- Less conflict with research/teaching work (due to funding).
- \$1000-2000/sem, or \$12 K to \$20 K/year

Activities Fee Approved by...

TGS

Provost

Board of Trustees Budget Committee

Thanks to all involved!

Graduate Student Satisfaction

- Student Rights: Dismissal Guidelines
- Diversity
 - Student Opinion of Diversity
 - Cultural Holidays
- Childcare

Dismissals

Issues that Lead to Dismissal Problems

- Minimal TGS wide requirements
- Departments historically handled dismissal guidelines almost entirely
(normal for universities).
- Departments usually sided with advisor
 - Effectively “one person dismissal”

Proposed TGS Dismissal Policies

1. Written notification prior to any event that can result in dismissal (e.g. exams).
2. Dismissals must be approved by 3 other faculty.
3. Department funding during appeal for 4 weeks
4. Standardized wording regarding “dismissal” to be published in information about exams etc.

New TGS Dismissal Policies

1. Qualifying Exams: Publish what, when, and remediation possibilities in program guide
2. Dismissals must be approved by the Program Chair and Associate Dean
3. If appeal ruled in student's favor, department funding until new advisor (5 weeks)
4. Standardized Wordings: "Good academic standing," "Probation" and "Exclusion"

Diversity

- Student opinions and actions toward a more diverse NU
- Cultural Holidays

Student Opinion on Diversity

- Only 36% of students feel diversity of *faculty* at NU is sufficient.
- Similar need for increases in *student* diversity.
 - Only 46% of respondents were satisfied with the NU student diversity

Efforts to Promote Diversity

- BGSA, G-SALSA, and CSSA work to make their graduate student populations visible, meet needs of community and networking
- Student Life and Multicultural Affairs funds recruitment trips, holds quarterly receptions, and assigns buddies for incoming students of color
- Faculty Diversity Committee (formed in 2000) promotes measures to create a more diverse NU

Specific Efforts this Year

- Graduate School Orientation:
60 incoming students of color welcomed and invited to a panel called “Success for Special Interest Groups”

Recruitment: More than 13 students have already been to universities to recruit graduate students of color

Additional Steps

- Students continue to document discrimination based on gender, race, religious affiliation, disability, and sexual orientation.
- NU must persist in eliminating discrimination in all forms.

Cultural Holidays

Cultural Holidays

- Purpose: To gain similar recognition to that of religious holidays
- NU-recognized religious but not cultural holidays allowed days off
- Graduate student population includes students from many different countries

Cultural Holidays

- Cultural holidays important role in many graduate students' lives, but not afforded same protections as religious holidays
- Popular cultural holidays:
Chinese New Year
Korean Moon Festival
and Cinco De Mayo



Cultural Holidays

"Consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the University community to observe their religious holidays." - Provost

Cultural Holidays

- The University Chaplain maintains a calendar of common religious holidays to aid in the avoidance of academic scheduling conflicts
- GLC proposed giving cultural holidays similar treatment to religious holidays
- The University Chaplain was supportive of GLC proposal
 - we expect that this policy will be recommended to the Provost and hopefully adopted in the near future.

Childcare

Childcare Needs of Graduate Students

- Similar to needs of other members of the NU community – blocked by access and affordability
- Approximately 4% of graduate students are parents (~ 120 students)
- Costs of care in Evanston/Chicago are high, and can account for as much as 90% of a graduate student's income
- Contributes to drop out rate, especially among female graduate students

Childcare

“We have concluded that the assistance provided by Northwestern University in helping all members of its community meet the challenges of raising families is woefully inadequate and far less than that afforded by many of the institutions it considers its peers. Significant efforts must be made to help all members of the community including faculty, staff, and students, find solutions to these challenges.”

-Provost's Childcare Committee Report, 2002

Committee's Recommendations

- “We recommend that Northwestern University establish childcare facilities on or near the Evanston and Chicago campuses in FY05.”
- “We recommend that Northwestern University work to accommodate the childcare needs of our students as fully as possible, consistent with their student status, and at minimum, immediately afford them the services of the Office of Child and Family Resources.”

These recommendations were made by the Childcare Committee in 2002

Evanston Childcare Locations

Provider	Ages	Hours	Cost / mo.
Baby Toddler Nursery	6 wks – 5 yrs	7:30 am – 5:30 pm	\$1200 infants \$1232 after 2 yrs
Child Care Center of Evanston	2 – 5 yrs	7:30 am – 5:30 pm	\$800
Child Time	6 wks – 5 yrs	6:30 am – 6:30 pm	\$1072 infants \$1316 2 – 3 yrs \$840 after 3 yrs
ENH Child Development Center (1 year waiting list)	6 wks – 5 yrs	6:00 am – 7:00 pm	\$1080 infants \$800 after 2 yrs (part time)
McGaw YMCA	6 wks – grade 5	7:00 am – 6:00 pm	\$1404 infants \$1260 toddlers \$1134 after 2 yrs
Total Child Center	2 – 5 yrs	7:00 am – 6:00 pm	\$868

Childcare Solutions at Other Institutions

<i>University</i>	<i>Cost of Care</i>
Berkeley	\$0 - \$35/day, \$6000 annual subsidy
Michigan	\$500/month after subsidy
Cornell	\$5000 annual subsidy
Princeton	\$24,000 available in scholarships

- Onsite care with reduced fees and reserved spaces for graduate students
- On-campus childcare centers where childhood development classes can observe children
- Time share programs – parents trade time for reduced cost

Recommendations

- Provide access to university facilities such as Office of Child and Family Resources
- Develop on-campus childcare options, as described in 2002 by the Provost's Childcare Committee
- Provide resources for funding childcare, such as FSA and Dependent Care Matching
- Improve family friendliness of university facilities (e.g. changing rooms throughout campus)

Summary

Graduate Student Contribution
Graduate Student Life

Healthcare

Activity Fee

U-PASS, Legal Services, Other Possible Uses

Student Satisfaction

Dismissal Guidelines, Diversity, Childcare

Acknowledgements

Northwestern University Board of Trustees
Student Affairs Committee

The Graduate School

Penny Warren

Bill Jones

Simon Greenwold

Andrew Wachtel

Division of Student Affairs

Cate Whitcomb

Burgie Howard

Office of Risk Management

Chris Johnson