CSU 2023 SWOT Survey Report
December 2023

A SWOT survey was distributed in November of 2023 to the following CSU stakeholder groups: students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, and the Columbus business community. We received a surprisingly large number of responses to the survey from all groups (totaling 1,610), suggesting a collective stakeholder interest in CSU's future. As shown in Exhibit A to this document, the respondents included 650 students (40%), 490 alumni (30%), 195 faculty (12%), 167 staff (10%), 24 CSU administrators (2%), and 79 from the local community (5%). The data from this SWOT survey can be used to make more informed decisions regarding CSU's next strategic plan. It identifies stakeholder perceptions of CSU's top strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and offers recommendations for strategies to increase student success and grow the university.

SWOT Summary Table

The table below presents the key takeaways from the SWOT survey. Based on data from over 1,600 stakeholder responses, it lists the most important areas of focus in each of the four SWOT categories. The following pages include detailed analyses of each SWOT category and survey question.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
➢ Good value: Cost compared to other institutions ➢ Caring, dedicated, and professionally-respected faculty ➢ Campus diversity ➢ Flexible program offerings (on campus and online) ➢ Positive reputation in the region ➢ Faculty-to-student ratio	➢ Name visibility and awareness outside of the local area ➢ Perceived campus safety ➢ Course registration and class choice ➢ Student recruitment, retention, and graduation rates ➢ Faculty and staff salaries, turnover, and campus morale ➢ Student on-campus engagement
OPPORTUNITIES	**THREATS**
➢ Fastest growing jobs in the U.S. are in STEM, healthcare, education, and business ➢ Majority of college students are attending for career reasons ➢ New, innovative, and cost-effective educational pathways ➢ Increase in the global demand for online/hybrid courses ➢ Georgia's continued population growth ➢ Nearby Ft. Moore recruitment	➢ Impact of low unemployment and inflation concerns ➢ Perceived violent crime rate in the Columbus area ➢ Impact of reductions in financial aid/support ➢ Students' perceived value of a college degree is declining ➢ Stagnant growth in the Columbus area ➢ Lingering impacts of the pandemic (decline in student engagement and learning)

CSU'S TOP STRENGTHS

To determine survey respondents' perception of CSU's top strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, respondents were asked to first name then rank their top five in each category. The following chart shows CSU's top strengths for <u>all</u> stakeholder groups combined. As indicated on the chart below, CSU's top strength by far (and point of differentiation) is its **value relative to other (especially larger) institutions**. This is influenced and affected by CSU's **campus diversity, positive reputation, faculty-to-student ratio, dedicated/caring faculty, and nationally accredited programs**.

All Respondents: Strengths are the things that we believe CSU does better than most of its peers. From the list below, choose what you believe to be CSU's TOP 5 STRENGTHS.

1368 Responses
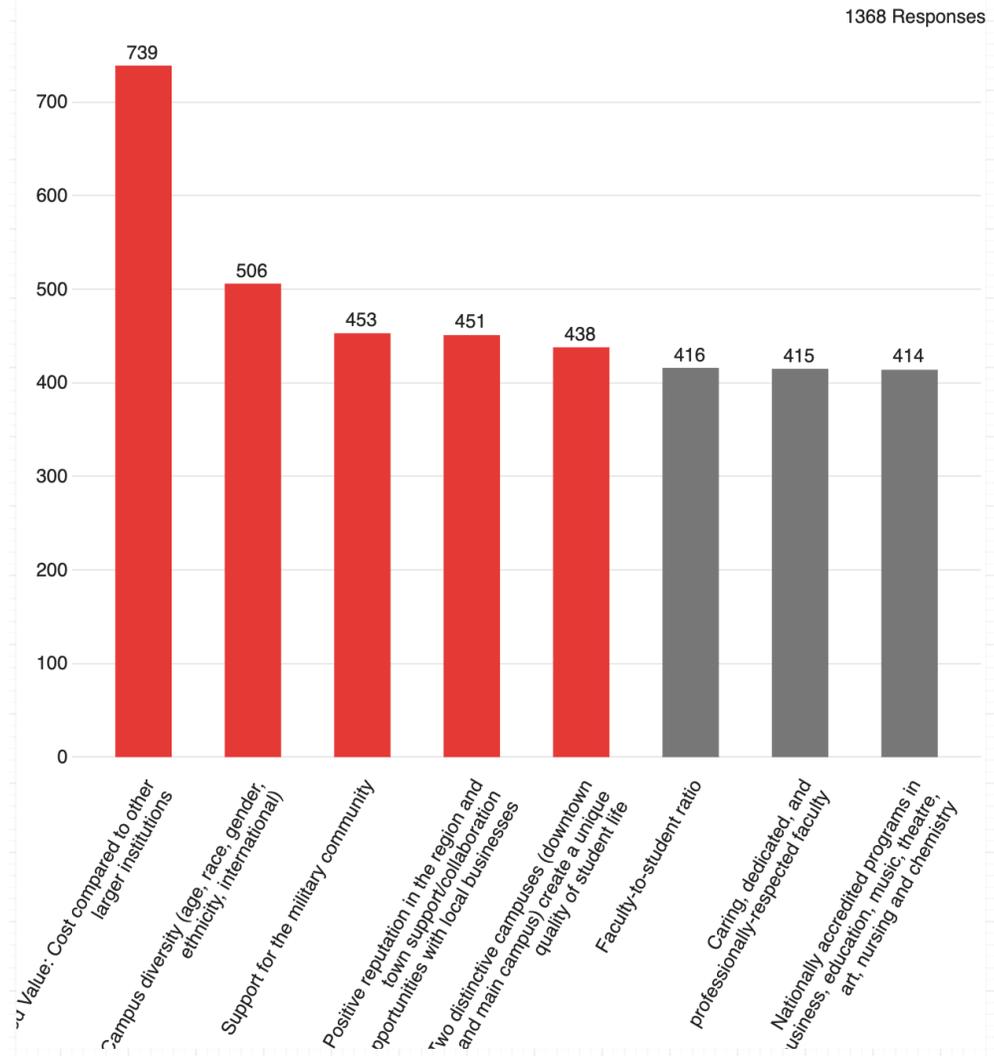
Students are CSU's primary stakeholders. They are central to our mission, and they are our customers but also our "product." Therefore, for each of the four SWOT categories, student rankings were broken out and compared to all respondents to examine potential differences in perception. As can be seen in the tables below, student rankings were very similar to all respondents with the main exceptions being that students assign a higher value on the number of online program offerings and ease of registration and class choice. Interestingly, "course registration and class choice" was listed as *both* a strength and a weakness and will be discussed in more detail later in the Weaknesses section.

All Respondents: From the five strengths that you selected, please rank order them by most important (1) to least important (5).

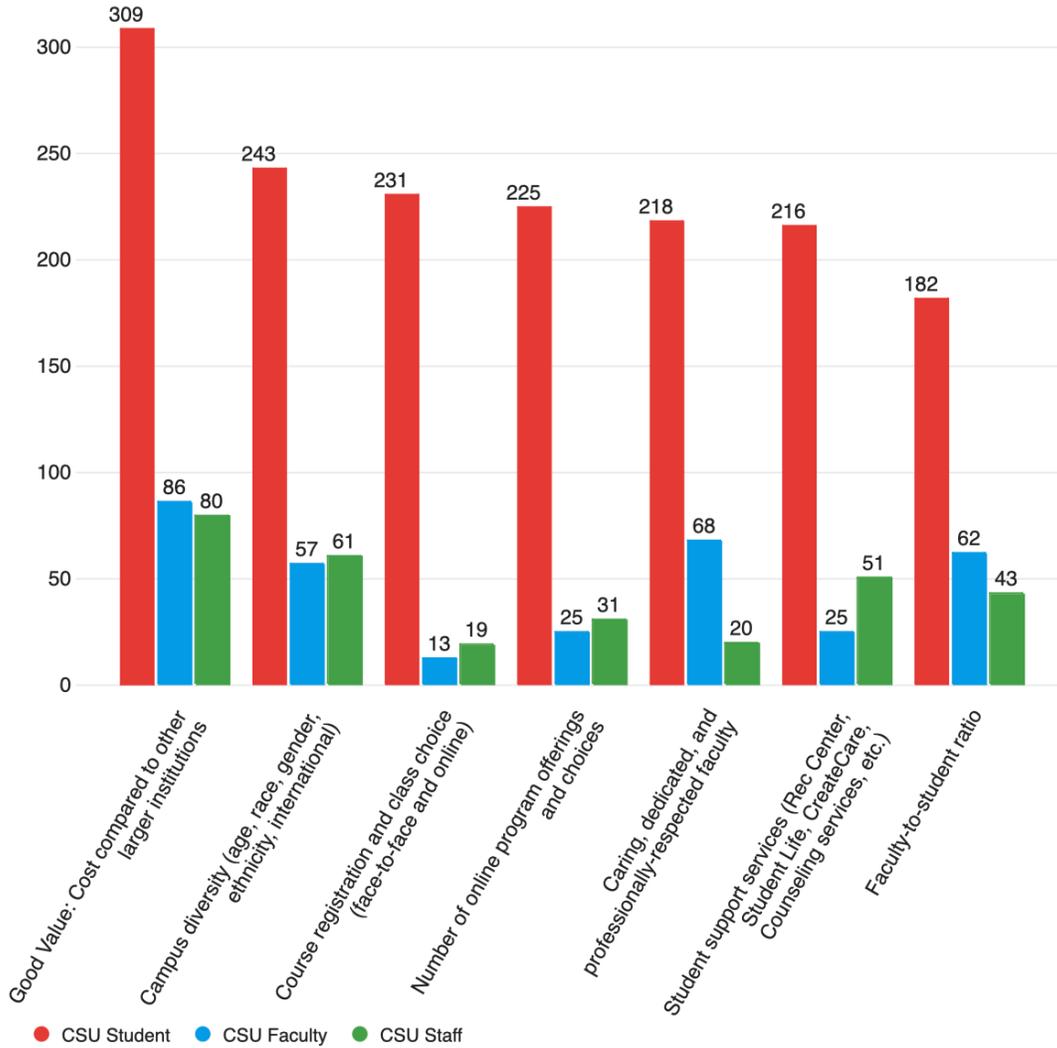| Field	Mean	Responses
		1089 Responses
Good Value: Cost compared to other larger institutions	2.54	596
Caring, dedicated, and professionally-respected faculty	2.78	332
Nationally accredited programs in business, education, music, theatre, art, nursing and chemistry	2.87	314
Positive reputation in the region and town support/collaboration opportunities with local businesses	2.93	353
Campus diversity (age, race, gender, ethnicity, international)	3.24	396
Faculty-to-student ratio	3.29	339
Support for the military community	3.61	352
Two distinctive campuses (downtown and main campus) create a unique quality of student life	3.87	364

Students Only: From the five strengths that you selected, please rank order them by most important (1) to least important (5).

Field	Mean	Responses
		449 Responses
Good Value: Cost compared to other larger institutions	2.68	247
Caring, dedicated, and professionally-respected faculty	2.81	172
Campus diversity (age, race, gender, ethnicity, international)	3.17	187
Number of online program offerings and choices	3.20	177
Course registration and class choice (face-to-face and online)	3.37	180
Faculty-to-student ratio	3.48	151
Student support services (Rec Center, Student Life, CreateCare, Counseling services, etc.)	3.77	168

The chart below is a comparison of student responses to faculty and staff. In this chart, responses are ordered by student count. All respondents listed CSU's value (compared to other institutions) as its top strength. Campus diversity and dedicated faculty were also listed by both students and faculty to be some of CSU's top strengths.

Faculty/Staff versus Students: From the list below, choose what you believe to be CSU's TOP 5 STRENGTHS.

1368 Responses

| Strength	CSU Student	CSU Faculty	CSU Staff
Good Value: Cost compared to other larger institutions	309	86	80
Campus diversity (age, race, gender, ethnicity, international)	243	57	61
Course registration and class choice (face-to-face and online)	231	13	19
Number of online program offerings and choices	225	25	31
Caring, dedicated, and professionally-respected faculty	218	68	20
Student support services (Rec Center, Student Life, CreateCare, Counseling services, etc.)	216	25	51
Faculty-to-student ratio	182	62	43

CSU'S TOP WEAKNESSES

The following chart shows CSU's top weaknesses for <u>all</u> stakeholder groups combined. As indicated on the chart below, CSU's top weakness by far is its **lack of name awareness outside of the local area**. One student commented that CSU was a "hidden gem." **Faculty and staff salaries, student retention and graduation rates, campus morale, and student on-campus engagement** were also included in CSU's top five weaknesses. It is important to note that campus morale could have a big impact on CSU's future success since it could affect faculty/staff turnover. *CSU's experienced and dedicated faculty and staff is one of its strengths.* Retention of CSU's experienced faculty and staff is therefore important to student recruitment, retention, and graduation. Faculty/staff turnover caused by salary and/or morale issues could pose a barrier to CSU's growth in the future, so this should be a top priority.

All Respondents: Weaknesses are CSU's internal challenges and areas that need improvement to remain competitive. These are obstacles that may hold us back from future growth. From the list below, choose what you believe to be CSU's TOP 5 WEAKNESSES.
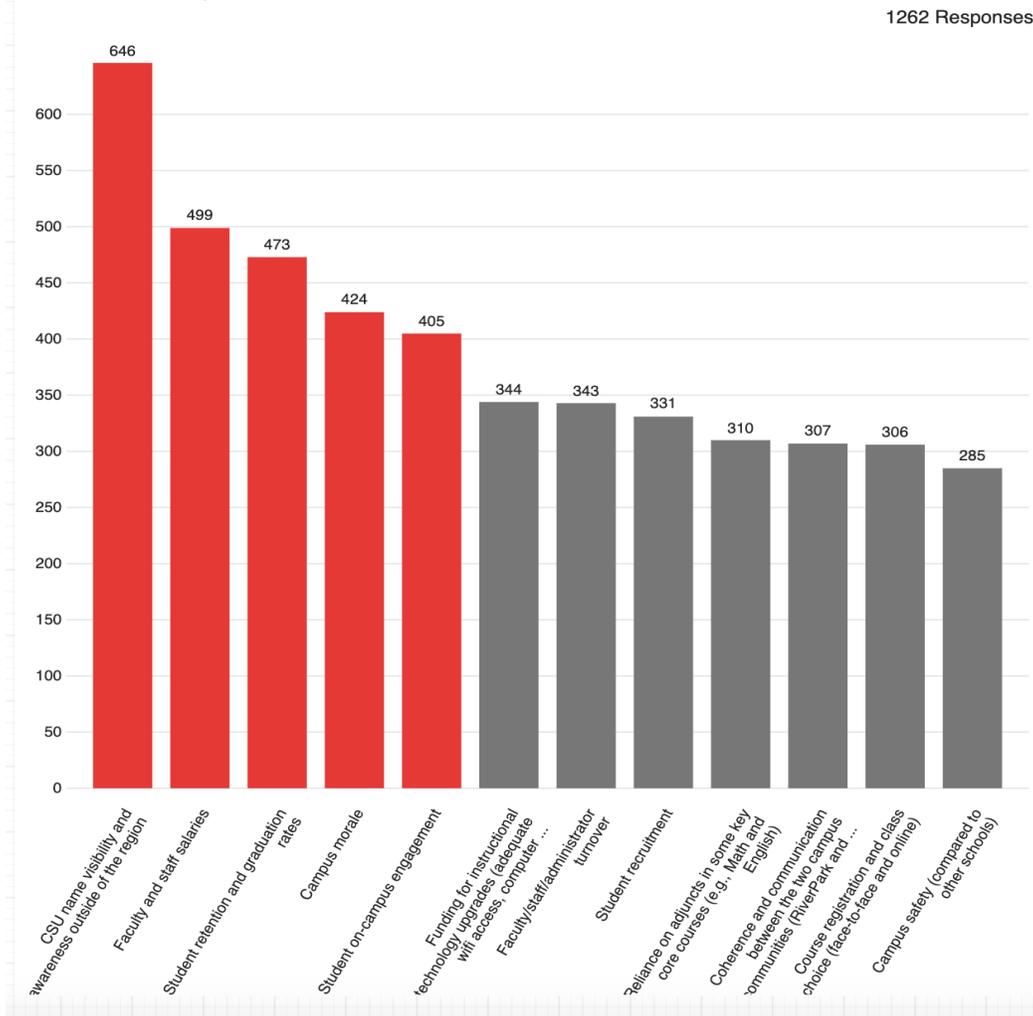
1262 Responses

In the tables below, student rankings were broken out and compared to all respondents to examine potential differences in perception. CSU name awareness is listed as a top weakness by most respondents. Although campus safety wasn't included in the top five for most respondents, it is very important to a large % of students. In fact, it is the <u>most</u> important issue for the 36% of students who included it in their top five. "Course registration and class choice" was listed as a top weakness by some and as a strength by others. It is discussed in more detail on the following pages.

All respondents: From the five weaknesses that you selected, please rank order from most important (1) to least important (5).

1244 Responses

| Field	Mean	Responses
Campus safety (compared to other schools)	2.38	280
Student retention and graduation rates	2.66	467
Course registration and class choice (face-to-face and online)	2.73	299
Faculty and staff salaries	2.73	490
CSU name visibility and awareness outside of the region	2.95	639
Campus morale	3.04	419
Faculty/staff/administrator turnover	3.09	338
Student on-campus engagement	3.25	399

Students Only: From the five weaknesses that you selected, please rank order from most important (1) to least important (5).

527 Responses

Field	Mean	Responses
Campus safety (compared to other schools)	2.21	188
Course registration and class choice (face-to-face and online)	2.51	188
Faculty training and quality control for online courses	2.94	156
Student retention and graduation rates	2.99	171
Funding for instructional technology upgrades (adequate wifi access, computer equipment, etc.)	3.12	154
Campus morale	3.22	157
CSU name visibility and awareness outside of the region	3.27	237
Student on-campus engagement	3.28	162

The chart below is a comparison of student responses to faculty and staff. In this chart, responses are ordered by student count. All of these respondents listed CSU's lack of name visibility and awareness as one of the top weaknesses. For students, course registration/class availability and campus safety were also top concerns. Surprisingly, many students share employees' concern about salaries (most likely because it affects turnover and the quality and availability of classes).
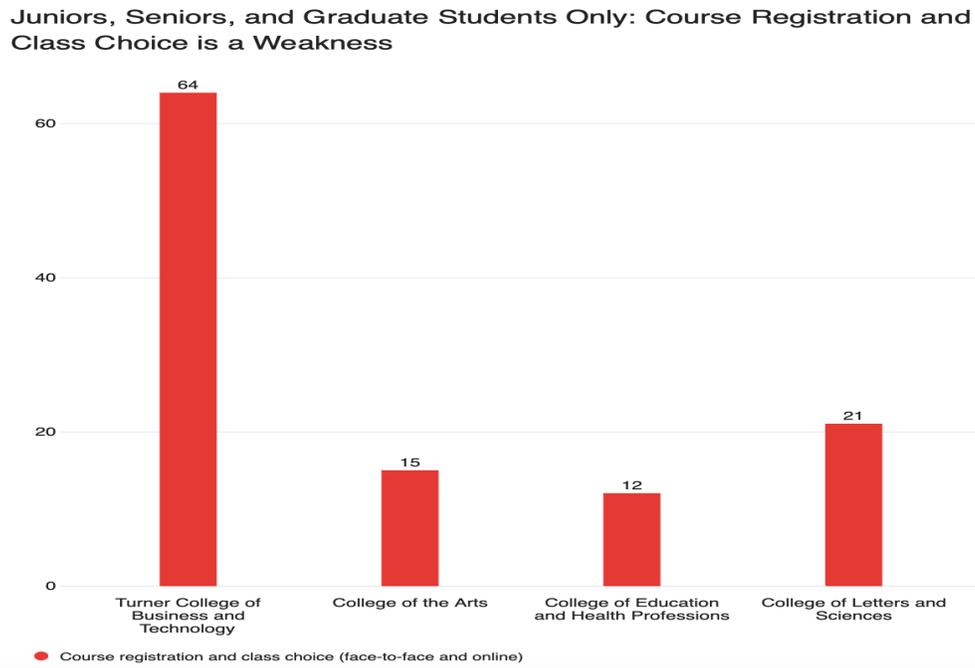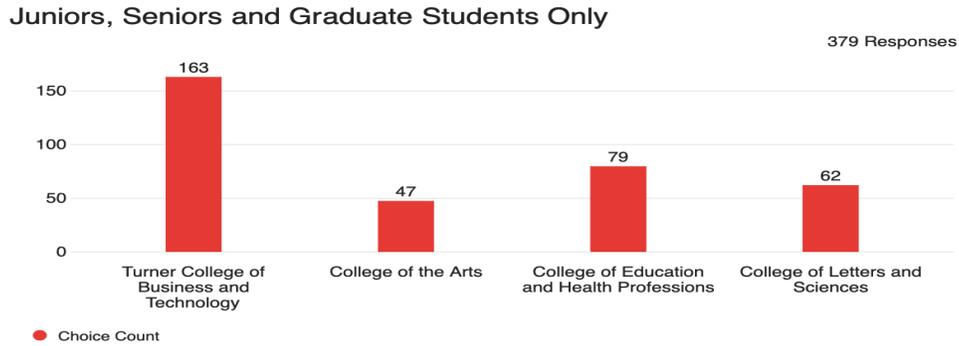

Top Weaknesses: Faculty/Staff versus Students

849 Responses
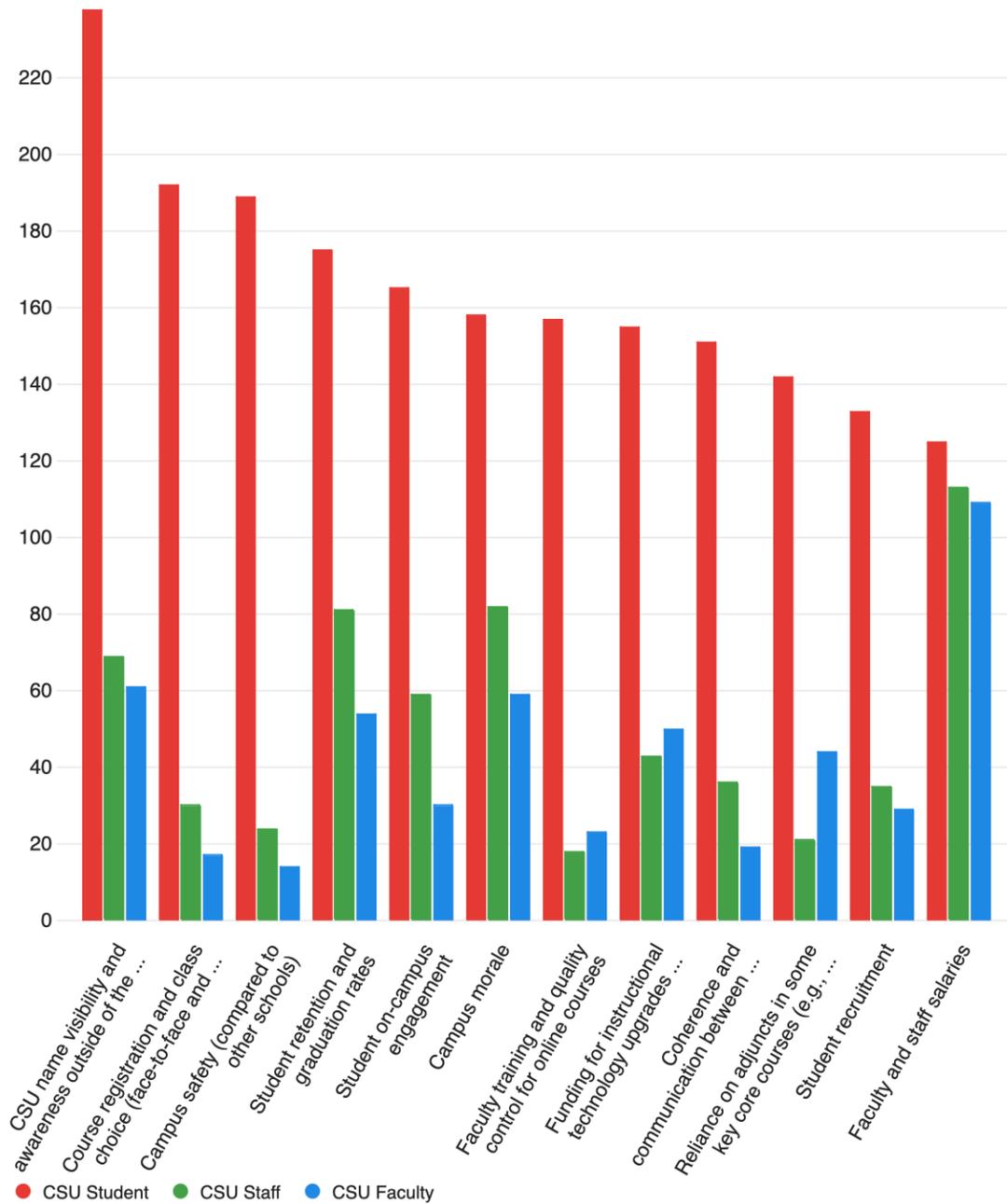
WEAKNESS ANALYSIS:
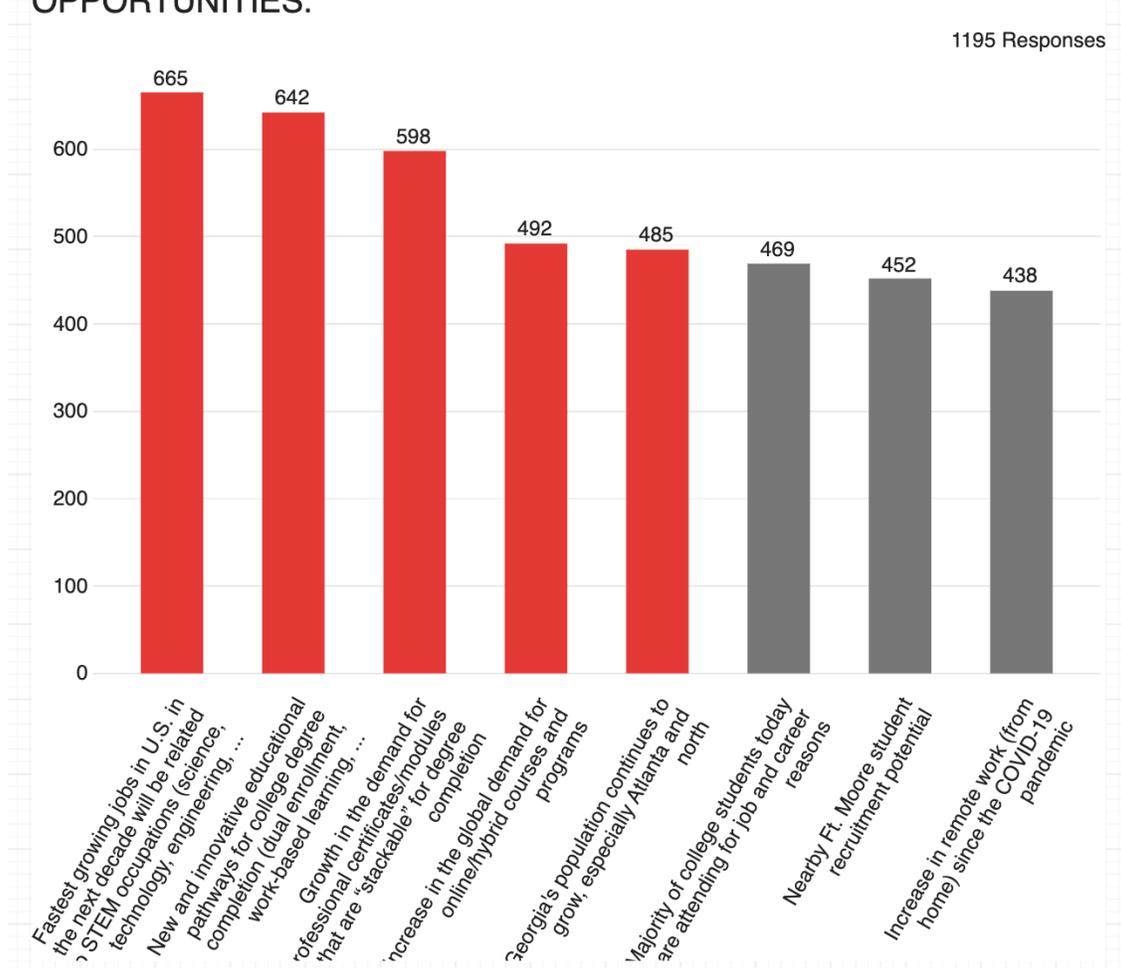# COURSE REGISTRATION AND CLASS CHOICE

Course registration and class choice is seen as a strength by some students and a weakness by others. Class availability and scheduling could affect student progression and graduation, so it is important to student success. To better understand the data, a breakdown of student responses by college was conducted (since lower-level students take the same A-E core, only upper-level student responses were included in this analysis). Of the upper-level students who listed "course registration and class choice" as one of CSU's top weaknesses, the majority (64) come from the Turner College. These 64 responses represent 39% of the total upper-level survey respondents from the Turner College (163). The second largest % came from the College of Letters and Sciences, with 34% of the total responses from that college (21 out of 62). However, *it is important to note that about the same % of respondents from these two colleges indicated that class choice is one of the college's top strengths.* Recent budget cuts, faculty turnover, and instructor shortages in some key discipline areas may explain the mixed results.

Juniors, Seniors and Graduate Students Only

379 Responses

College	Choice Count
Turner College of Business and Technology	163
College of the Arts	47
College of Education and Health Professions	79
College of Letters and Sciences	62

● Choice Count

Juniors, Seniors, and Graduate Students Only: Course Registration and Class Choice is a Weakness

College	Count
Turner College of Business and Technology	64
College of the Arts	15
College of Education and Health Professions	12
College of Letters and Sciences	21

● Course registration and class choice (face-to-face and online)

CSU'S TOP OPPORTUNITIES

The following chart shows CSU's top opportunities identified by all stakeholder groups combined. As indicated on the chart below, CSU's top opportunities involve **investing in areas that allow students the best chance for career success**, such as STEM, healthcare, business, and education. Respondents are also interested in **new and innovative educational pathways that are career-focused** and offer less costly paths to college degree completion, such as dual enrollment programs (high school/college and undergraduate/graduate school), internships and work-based learning programs, and certificate-based credit. Students are also interested in **hybrid courses and online programs** that will allow us to take advantage of Georgia's growth and attract students living in Atlanta and north.

All Respondents: Opportunities are trends that are occurring outside the university in the external environment over which CSU has little control, but could help us in determining appropriate growth strategies. From the list below, choose what you believe to be CSU's TOP 5 OPPORTUNITIES.

1195 Responses

Opportunity	Responses
Fastest growing jobs in U.S. in the next decade will be related to STEM occupations (science, technology, engineering, …	665
New and innovative educational pathways for college degree completion (dual enrollment, work-based learning, …	642
Growth in the demand for professional certificates/modules that are "stackable" for degree completion	598
Increase in the global demand for online/hybrid courses and programs	492
Georgia's population continues to grow, especially Atlanta and north	485
Majority of college students today are attending for job and career reasons	469
Nearby Ft. Moore student recruitment potential	452
Increase in remote work (from home) since the COVID-19 pandemic	438

In the tables below, student rankings were broken out and compared to all respondents. Career-focused curriculum in the high job demand areas (STEM, healthcare, education, and business) is the most important opportunity identified by most respondents. Students' highest priority is investing in new and innovative pathways for college degree completion to reduce the time and cost for a college education.

All Respondents: Rank order the five opportunities that you selected, from most important (1) to least important (5).

1186 Responses

Field	Mean	Responses
Fastest growing jobs in U.S. in the next decade will be related to STEM occupations (science, technology, engineering, math), healthcare, education, and business	2.90	661
Majority of college students today are attending for job and career reasons	2.94	465
Growth in the demand for professional certificates/modules that are "stackable" for degree completion	2.95	594
New and innovative educational pathways for college degree completion (dual enrollment, work-based learning, certificate-based credit, etc.)	2.95	639
Increase in the global demand for online/hybrid courses and programs	3.00	487
Georgia's population continues to grow, especially Atlanta and north	3.10	482
Nearby Ft. Moore student recruitment potential	3.12	449

Students Only: Rank order the five opportunities that you selected, from most important (1) to least important (5).

498 Responses

Field	Mean	Responses
New and innovative educational pathways for college degree completion (dual enrollment, work-based learning, certificate-based credit, etc.)	2.94	255
Majority of college students today are attending for job and career reasons	2.96	258
Fastest growing jobs in U.S. in the next decade will be related to STEM occupations (science, technology, engineering, math), healthcare, education, and business	2.99	253
Growth in the demand for professional certificates/modules that are "stackable" for degree completion	2.99	261
Increase in the global demand for online/hybrid courses and programs	3.03	228
Georgia's population continues to grow, especially Atlanta and north	3.30	201

The chart below is a comparison of student responses to faculty and staff. In this chart, responses are ordered by student count. Students are entering college today mainly for job and career reasons. Faculty, staff, and students agree that CSU should invest in more majors with high job growth potential (e.g., STEM, healthcare, business, education). They are looking for new and innovative pathways for college degree completion, more flexibility in course scheduling (such as hybrid and online programs), and ways to reduce college costs (such as grants, scholarships, work-study programs, and partnerships with other institutions).
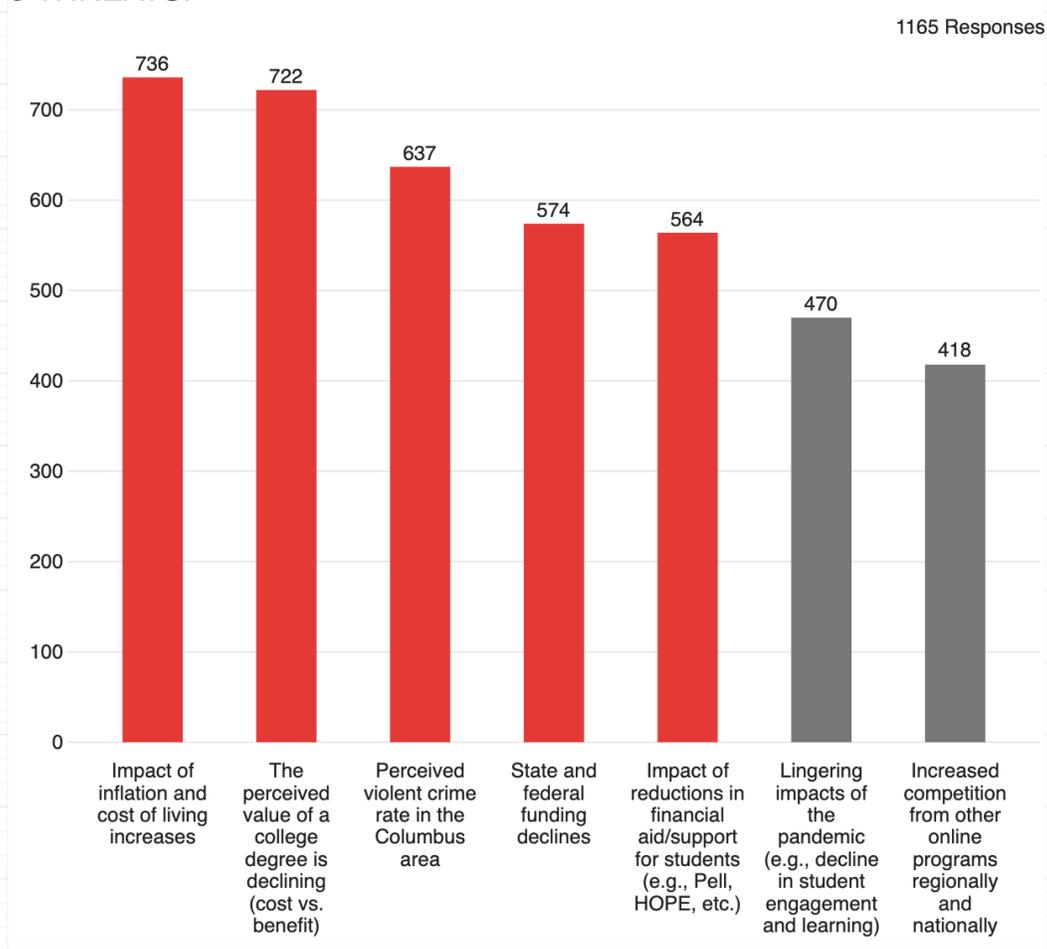
Q7 - Opportunities are trends that are occurring outside the university in the external environment over which CSU has little control, but could help us in determining appropriate growth strategies. From the list below, choose what you believe to be CSU's TOP 5 OPPORTUNITIES. Choose five from this list (if you don't see one or two of your top five in this list, please add them). - Selected Choice
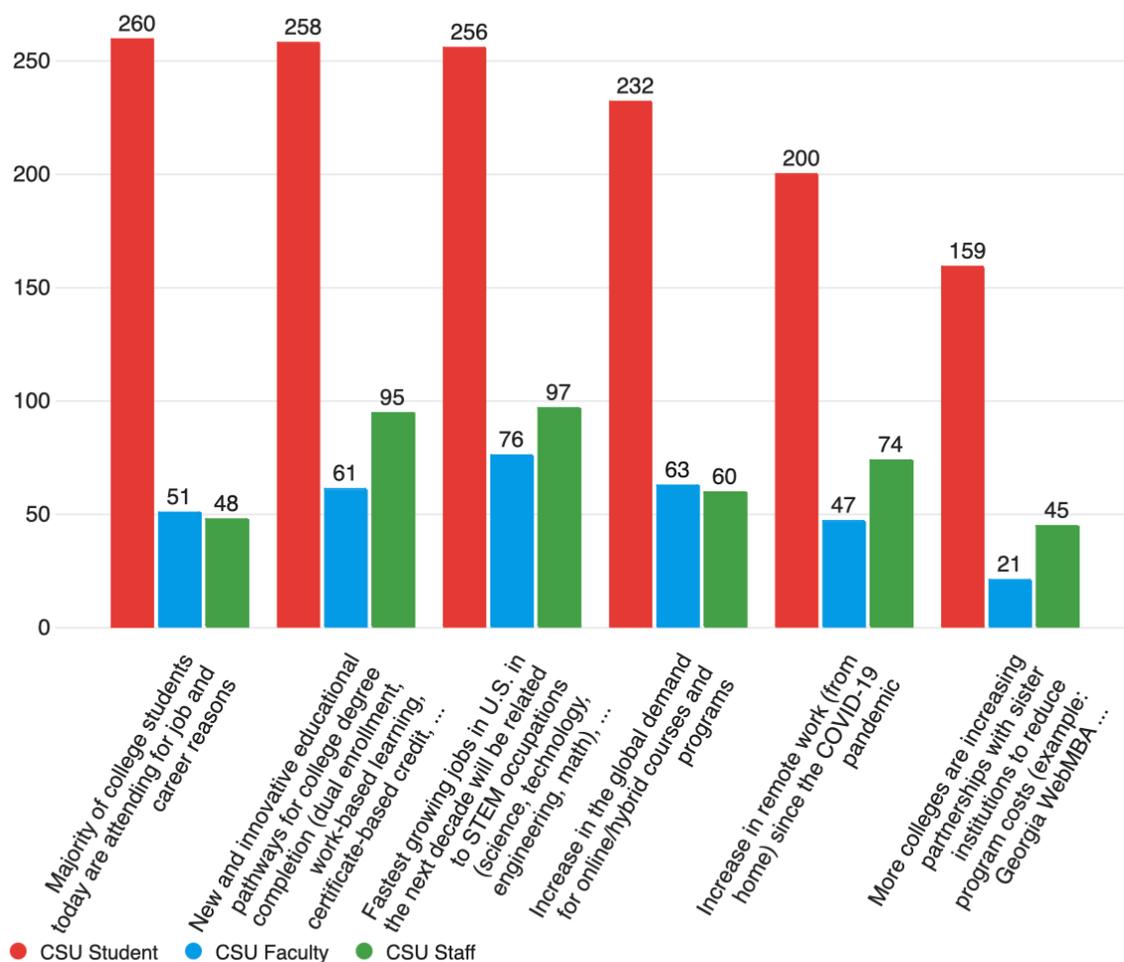
CSU'S TOP THREATS

The following chart shows CSU's top threats identified by <u>all</u> stakeholder groups combined. As indicated on the chart below, CSU's top threats include the **potential impact of inflation and cost of living increases**. That, combined with **low unemployment** along with the **declining perceived value of a college degree**, means that CSU will need to work on ensuring degrees are **career-focused** (to increase the perceived ROI) and reducing the cost for students through scholarships, grants, innovative degree pathways, etc. The **perceived violent crime rate in the Columbus area** is also one of the top threats cited by survey respondents.

All Respondents: Threats are trends that are occurring outside the university in the external environment over which CSU has no control, but require a response/strategy to minimize their impact on our future success. From the list below, choose what you believe to be CSU's TOP 5 THREATS.

1165 Responses

Threat	Responses
Impact of inflation and cost of living increases	736
The perceived value of a college degree is declining (cost vs. benefit)	722
Perceived violent crime rate in the Columbus area	637
State and federal funding declines	574
Impact of reductions in financial aid/support for students (e.g., Pell, HOPE, etc.)	564
Lingering impacts of the pandemic (e.g., decline in student engagement and learning)	470
Increased competition from other online programs regionally and nationally	418

In the tables below, student rankings were broken out and compared to all respondents. Students were mostly in agreement with all other respondents on CSU's future threats. Their most-cited concern was the impact of inflation and cost of living increases. Students' concern about the violent crime rate in Columbus is surprising and will need to be addressed in some way since it may become a barrier to CSU's future growth.
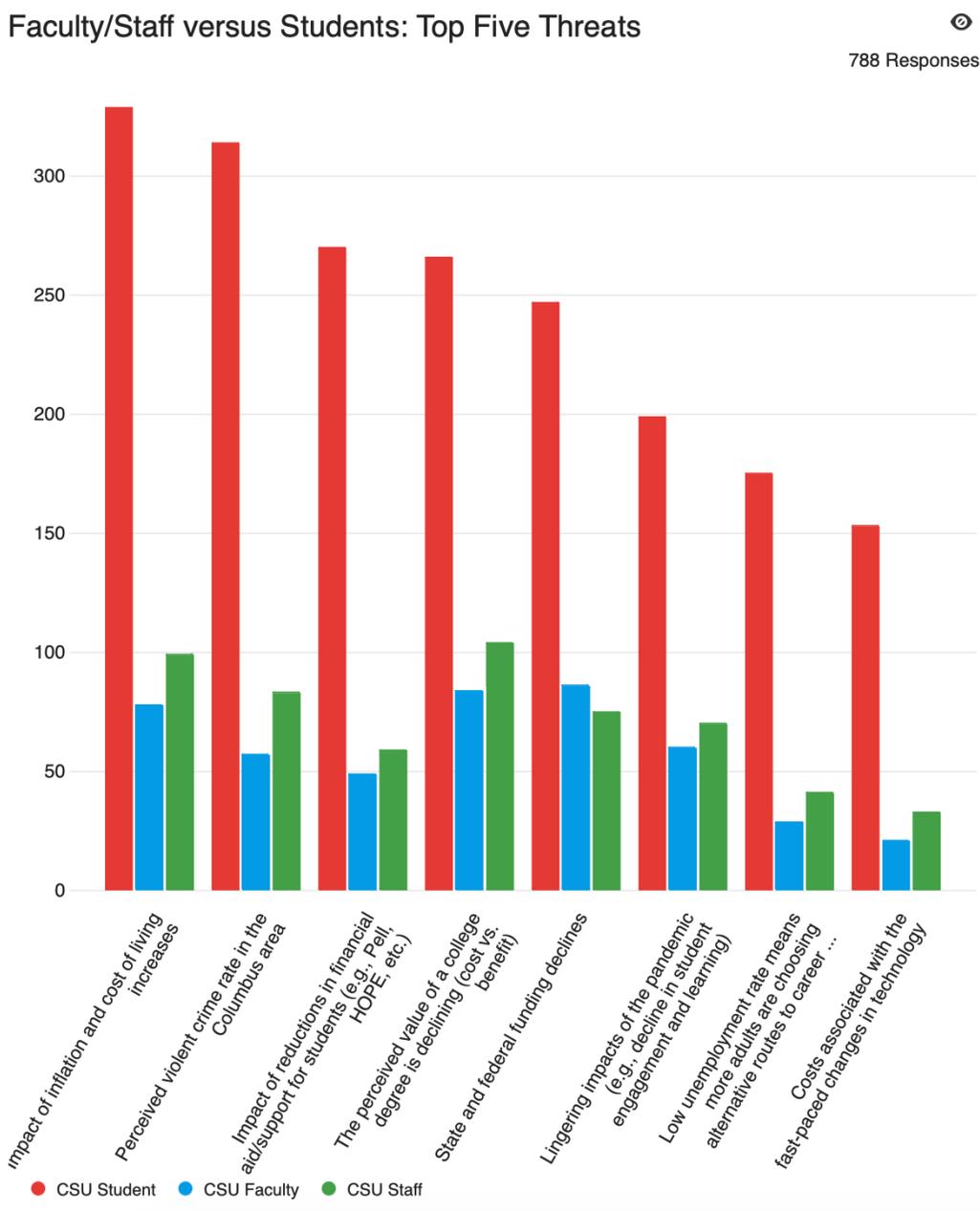
All Respondents: Rank the top threats from most important (1) to least important (5).

1164 Responses

Field	Mean	Responses
The perceived value of a college degree is declining (cost vs. benefit)	2.80	721
Impact of inflation and cost of living increases	2.81	735
Perceived violent crime rate in the Columbus area	2.82	636
State and federal funding declines	2.93	574
Impact of reductions in financial aid/support for students (e.g., Pell, HOPE, etc.)	2.98	564
Increased competition from other online programs regionally and nationally	3.30	417
Lingering impacts of the pandemic (e.g., decline in student engagement and learning)	3.34	469

Students Only: Rank the top threats from most important (1) to least important (5).

490 Responses

Field	Mean	Responses
Impact of inflation and cost of living increases	2.66	329
Perceived violent crime rate in the Columbus area	2.76	314
The perceived value of a college degree is declining (cost vs. benefit)	2.93	266
Impact of reductions in financial aid/support for students (e.g., Pell, HOPE, etc.)	2.96	270
State and federal funding declines	3.15	247
Low unemployment rate means more adults are choosing alternative routes to career success	3.39	175
Lingering impacts of the pandemic (e.g., decline in student engagement and learning)	3.50	199

The chart below is a comparison of student responses to faculty and staff. In this chart, responses are ordered by student count. Students are focused on the cost and return on investment of a college degree. They are entering college today mainly for job and career reasons. To increase the perceived ROI and value of a college degree, CSU will need to invest in areas that assist students in their careers. Additionally, security measures that increase students' sense of safety and address their concerns over the violent crime rate in Columbus are highly recommended.

Faculty/Staff versus Students: Top Five Threats

788 Responses

Legend: CSU Student (red), CSU Faculty (blue), CSU Staff (green)

Categories (x-axis):
- Impact of inflation and cost of living increases
- Perceived violent crime rate in the Columbus area
- Impact of reductions in financial aid/support for students (e.g., Pell, HOPE, etc.)
- The perceived value of a college degree is declining (cost vs. benefit)
- State and federal funding declines
- Lingering impacts of the pandemic (e.g., decline in student engagement and learning)
- Low unemployment rate means more adults are choosing alternative routes to career ...
- Costs associated with the fast-paced changes in technology

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The two open-ended questions on the survey were analyzed using AI to uncover common themes. The charts below summarize the main themes found in the comments using Claude AI.

QUESTION #1

What do you think should be CSU's highest priority in the next strategic plan?

1

The responses emphasized priorities around the student experience, including retention, engagement, support services, and career outcomes.

2

There were also consistent themes of improving campus conditions for learning and working, expanding offerings, and building strategic partnerships.

3

Addressing budget constraints and the value proposition of a CSU degree also emerged as key issues to tackle in the strategic plan.

QUESTION #2:

What do you think is(are) the MOST IMPORTANT change(s) that CSU should make to better serve its stakeholders?

The key themes that emerged emphasize enhancing the student experience, expanding program delivery modes, building strategic partnerships, addressing budget constraints, and improving campus conditions for learning and working.
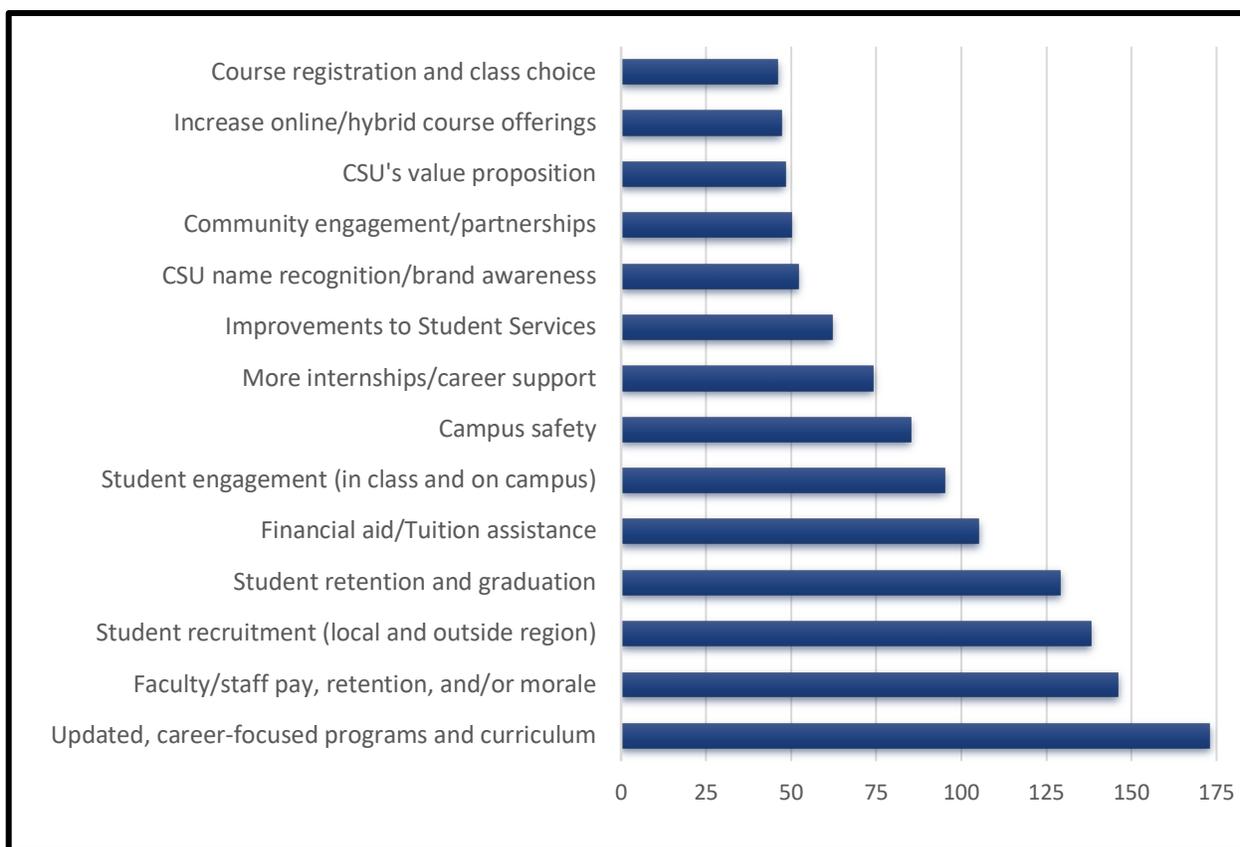
There is also an emphasis on supporting student outcomes for career success and strengthening ties between the university, community, and corporate partners.

CONTENT ANALYSIS OF OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

A hand count of the top responses to the first question found that **student success** and **faculty/staff retention and/or morale** were what most respondents felt should be CSU's highest priority in the next strategic plan. The top responses centered around the following three themes: **updates to our programs and curriculum** (mainly to ensure students had the appropriate knowledge and skills needed to be successful in the workplace today); **faculty/staff retention and morale**; and **student recruitment, retention, and graduation**. Students are concerned about the ROI and value of their degrees due in part to inflation and the rising cost of a college degree. They are also concerned about campus safety, the quality of instruction (especially online), and student support services due the high levels of faculty/staff turnover in recent years from budget cuts. There is a general concern about campus morale and student engagement (on campus and in class) which can affect retention and graduation. Students are requesting more internships, career support, more class choices (on campus and online), and better communication and advising. For example, some students commented that it would be nice to have a schedule of classes published for the entire academic year in advance since some required courses are only offered once a year.
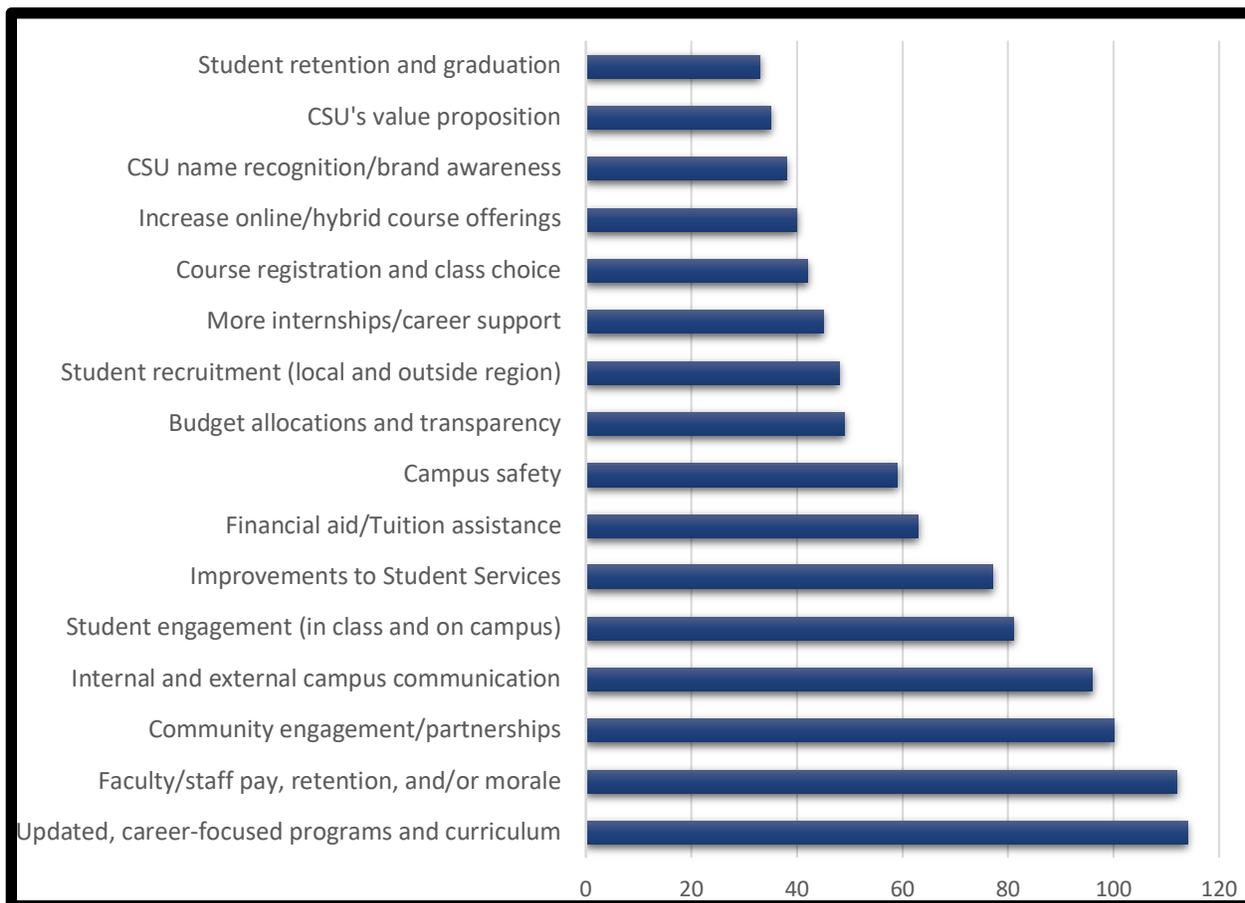
QUESTION #1:
What do you think should be CSU highest priority in the next strategic plan?

QUESTION #2:
What do you think is(are) the MOST IMPORTANT changes that CSU should make to better serve its stakeholders?

Bar chart showing responses (horizontal axis 0 to 120), categories from bottom to top:
- Updated, career-focused programs and curriculum: ~114
- Faculty/staff pay, retention, and/or morale: ~112
- Community engagement/partnerships: ~100
- Internal and external campus communication: ~96
- Student engagement (in class and on campus): ~81
- Improvements to Student Services: ~77
- Financial aid/Tuition assistance: ~63
- Campus safety: ~59
- Budget allocations and transparency: ~49
- Student recruitment (local and outside region): ~48
- More internships/career support: ~45
- Course registration and class choice: ~42
- Increase online/hybrid course offerings: ~40
- CSU name recognition/brand awareness: ~38
- CSU's value proposition: ~35
- Student retention and graduation: ~33

Similar to the first question, the top responses to this question focused on **improvements/updates to our programs** and **faculty/staff retention and morale.** However, this question generated more responses regarding **community engagement/ partnerships** and **better internal/external communication**. A sampling of some of the comments in each of the top 10 response categories in included in Exhibit B of this report.

STRATEGY SUGGESTIONS FROM THE SWOT ANALYSIS

The **most important** part of a SWOT analysis is acting on its conclusions. Here are recommendations for the top strategic priorities coming from the SWOT analysis.

Priority #1: Correct the most important WEAKNESSES first -- these are barriers to growth and could work against us in the future, using strategies such as:
- Improving CSU's visibility and name awareness outside of Columbus
- Improvements and communication regarding campus safety measures
- Investing in efforts to reduce faculty/staff turnover and improve campus morale
- Scheduling classes that are at the most convenient times for students
- Investing in student services that increase retention and graduation (advising, course scheduling, financial aid, student wellness, *etc.)*
- Investing in better online and mobile technology to improve campus-wide communication and increase student engagement

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Priority #2: Grow by matching our STRENGTHS to OPPORTUNITIES, using strategies such as:
- Investing in degree programs that are in high job demand areas
- Ensuring degrees are career-focused (e.g., cross-disciplinary programs that embed needed job skills such as communication/professionalism, technology, business)
- Investigating innovative and cost-effective degree pathways
- Expanding online program offerings to take advantage of potential student growth outside of the Columbus area
- Investing in faculty training to improve student engagement and maintain/ improve online teaching quality
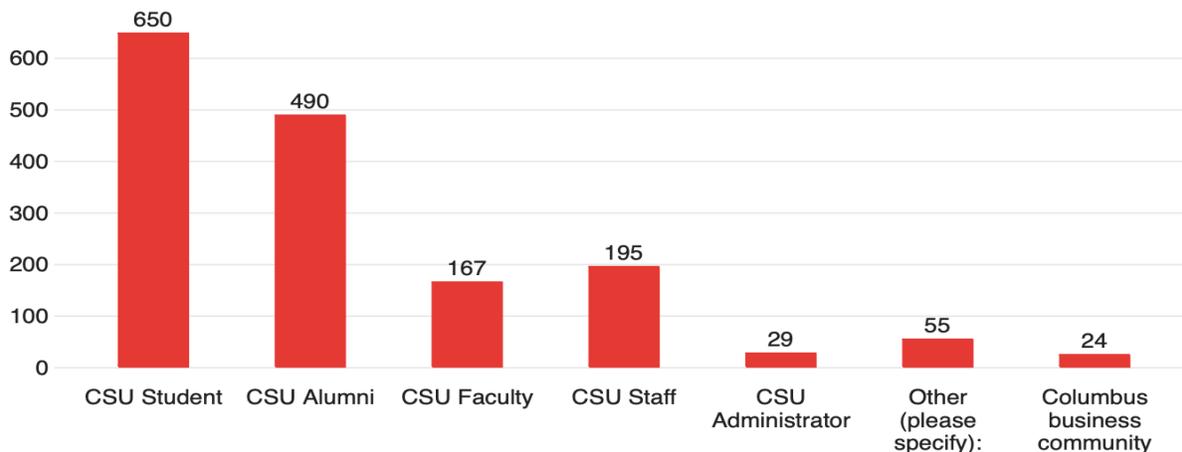- Increasing recruitment efforts inside and outside of the Columbus area

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Priority #3: Defend against critical external THREATS, using strategies such as:
- Reducing college degree costs for students through more grants, scholarships, work-study programs, etc.
- Increasing efforts and communication to reduce students' safety concerns
- Focusing on efforts to increase student on-campus engagement and learning
- Increasing investments to improve degree ROI perceptions (e.g., investing in the career services area to improve students' post-graduation job success)

EXHIBIT A
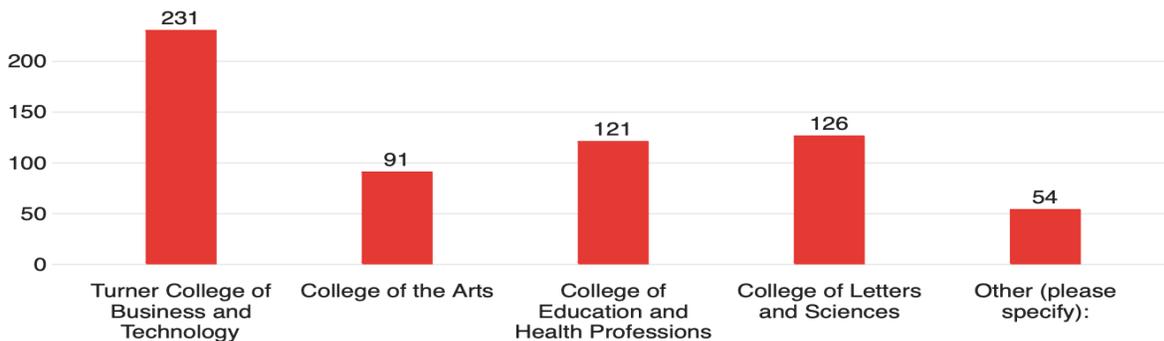**Breakdown of Survey Respondents**

To which of the following CSU stakeholder groups do you belong?

1610 Responses

Group	Count
CSU Student	650
CSU Alumni	490
CSU Faculty	167
CSU Staff	195
CSU Administrator	29
Other (please specify):	55
Columbus business community	24

For Students: In which college is your major area of study?

623 Responses

College	Count
Turner College of Business and Technology	231
College of the Arts	91
College of Education and Health Professions	121
College of Letters and Sciences	126
Other (please specify):	54

Choice Count

For CSU Faculty: In which college are you currently employed and primarily teach?

165 Responses

College	Count
Turner College of Business and Technology	41
College of the Arts	30
College of Education and Health Professions	32
College of Letters and Sciences	52
Other (please specify):	10
Honors College	1
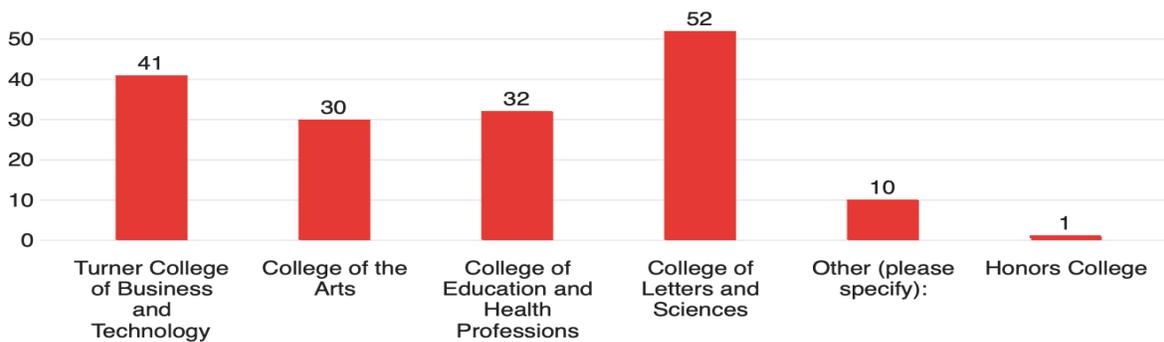
Choice Count

Students Only: What is your military connection?

110 Responses

Bar chart — Choice Count:
- Active military: 16
- Veteran: 40
- Military spouse: 19
- Military dependent: 35

● Choice Count
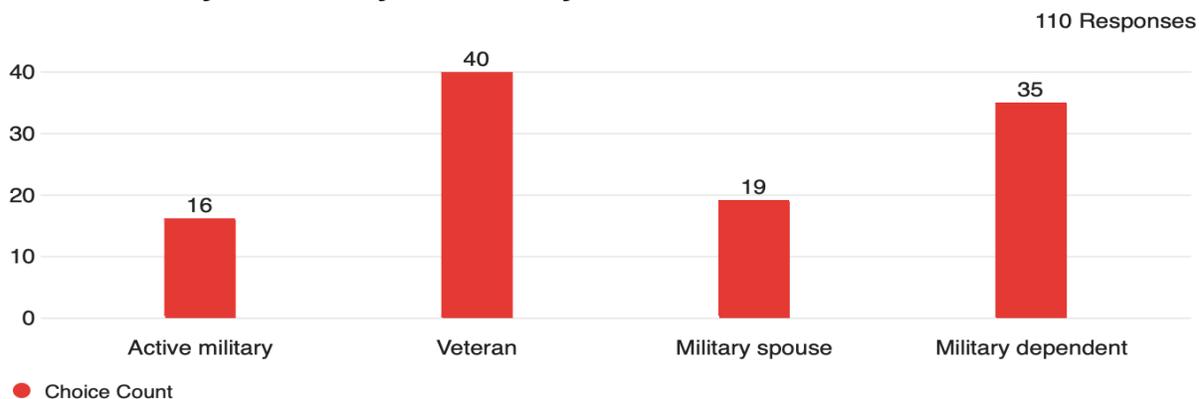
For Students: What is your current academic level?

620 Responses

Bar chart — Choice Count:
- Freshman: 149
- Sophomore: 92
- Junior: 98
- Senior: 179
- Graduate Student: 102

● Choice Count
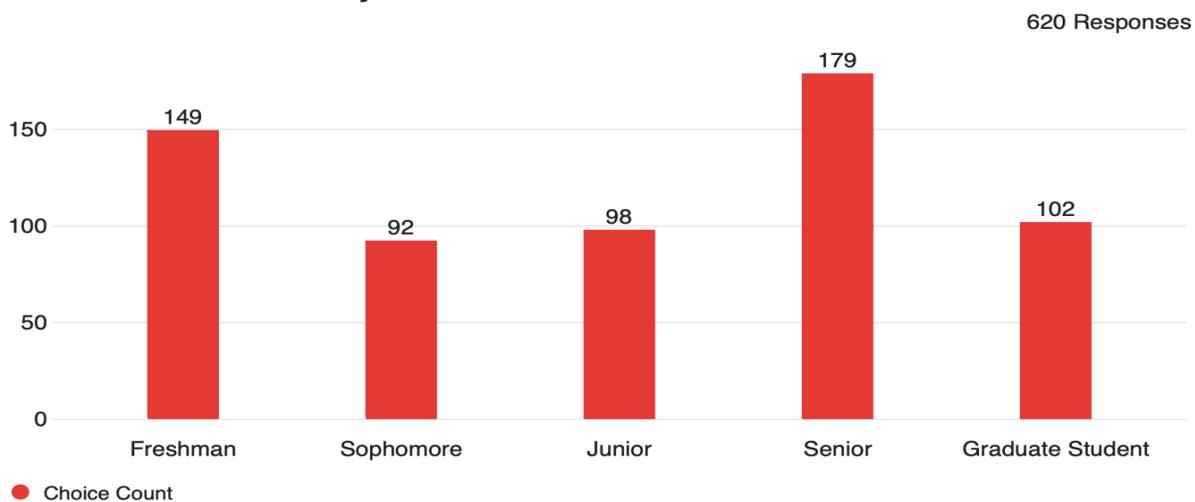
Students Only: Are you in the Honors program?

616 Responses

Bar chart — Choice Count:
- Yes: 63
- No: 553

● Choice Count

EXHIBIT B
Sampling of Comments in the Open-Ended Questions

1) **Updated, career-focused programs and curriculum:**
   - *"Remove outdated course material in degree requirements."*
   - *"I think more **programs** should create "stackable" degrees."*
   - *"Create **programs** that meet the demands of the future job market."*
   - *"Provide more majors and provide them with more hands-on experiences."*
   - *"Provide cross-collaboration courses that encourage engagement, job skills, and foster curiosity to become lifelong learners."*
   - *"Ensure that every student is career ready."*

2) **Faculty/Staff pay, retention, and/or morale:**
   - *"Employee disengagement and budget cuts leading to staffing cuts have shifted workloads and responsibilities and increased burnout for employees regularly called to carry the extra loads - often without any compensation or addressing workload imbalance within departments."*
   - *"Improve internal processes to help retain employees who leave over frustration with not being able to get things done. Look at increasing positions in areas that had reduction during the pandemic but have now rebounded to pre-pandemic levels in throughput but now with less people therefore adding stress to employees and resulting in employees leaving."*
   - *"Provide competitive salaries to faculty and staff. Faculty have only two opportunities to receive raises in their entire academic/ professional journey (tenure/promotion, promotion to full prof). This does not work for incentivize them to continue excelling at what they do."*
   - *"Better professor salaries = higher retention rates/more quality professors"*
   - *"I recommend hiring more faculty and staff. There are too few employees with too many duties and responsibilities. This directly impacts student retention and graduation."*
   - *"Increase faculty salary and benefits to counteract inflation and housing costs."*
   - *"Hiring an appropriate amount of staff for departments to ensure everything from student support to marketing have opportunities to thrive."*
   - *"Take a hard look at how reductions in faculty and front-line staff have impacted student recruitment, retention, and program support."*

3) **Community Engagement/Partnerships**
   - *"Emphasis on communicating CSU's positive impact on stakeholders. Getting stakeholders engaged in CSU's development and success. Stakeholders want to know that they are valued, that they can contribute to the university's overall success."*
   - *"More outreach to the military community at Ft. Moore as well as other military communities on a global scale."*
   - *"Engage the alumni with current students."*
   - *"Build on its existing community and surrounding area relationships Involve the community in more of what CSU does to improve lives of students "*
   - *"Collaboration with other institutions in Georgia (Georgia Tech, Mercer medical school, UGA, etc.) to expand the program, offerings of CSU, and enhance the programs currently offered."*
   - *"There seems to be a small group of dedicated CSU supporters, and everyone else in Columbus ignores CSU. We should engage Columbus more and let everyone know that we are "their"*

university. If people who make their lives here feel connected to the university, like they have a kind of attachment or stake in it, I think we would be much more successful."

4) Internal/External Campus Communication

- *"Increase awareness of both the campus activities and student resources."*
- *"There needs to be some type of transparency when it comes to the state of the university. While serving in the Student Government Association I used it as an opportunity to get to know CSU a little more. I've been saddened with what I found but also filled with hope because it could have been worse if it wasn't for a few brave souls."*
- *"Involve students more when making decisions as well as staff and faculty members who are in the weeds with the students on a daily basis -- what are their experiences to include good and bad."*
- *"Open, honest and timely communication with stakeholders is needed. CSU should be the first place where the news media and local citizens look for objective, well-reasoned information."*
- *"CSU's administration should do a better job of listening to faculty when it comes to creative problem solving of university problems. The university hires some of the smartest people on the planet. They should consider listening to them."*
- *"Listen to those that are on the ground level, in the midst of implementing the changes and policies, take heed of their feedback and suggestions."*
- *"Clear and concise communication. We'd like to see the results of the SWOT analysis, an annual report that the annual goals are met and any updates to the SWOT."*
- *"Set up robust mechanisms for collecting student feedback and reinforce the importance and value of that feedback culturally."*
- *"There aren't just siloes at CSU, there are buckets. So many small buckets all over campus. To the point that we don't know who does what, and who their back up is. If a staff person leaves, sometimes there is no back up and the tasks don't get done because no one knows that task needs to be done."*
- *"Scheduled (quarterly, for example) open forums with leaders in surrounding communities to address the future of CSU."*

5) Student Engagement (in class and on campus)

- *"We need to re-think how we engage with our online students and ensure a consistent learning experience for all students."*
- *"Provide social opportunities for students and promote the growth of extracurriculars."*
- *"Provide cross-collaboration courses that encourage engagement and foster curiosity to become lifelong learners."*
- *"More CREATIVE community outreach. More events with faculty and students together to foster better understanding and relationships. Give students opportunities for open, uncensored dialog about current local, national, and global events."*
- *"As an online student I often felt left out of campus events such as guest speakers. Which is strange as many of these things could be recorded or streamed online. CSU could take advantage of this and us it to showcase the talent of the speakers as well as the technology used to film the events."*
- *"A lot of community comes from student involvement, but I feel like most activities planned for us are not fitting our taste. For example, our homecoming events are lacking in things to do and involvement. People are not attending these events because they are not fun or relevant. There*

should be a designated tailgating area widely advertised. There is currently a large disconnect between what students want and what campus organizations provide."

- *"I live downtown and feel disconnected from other students. I feel as if all housing should be on campus and students commute to class on campus. feel it would be safer to have all collected students in one area because it brings students together."*
- *"I would like to see clubs that pertain to the largest degree programs with a communal goal. Intellectual sports teams or so. Ideally a robotics club funded by the school that doubles as an informal study group. It would spread brand recognition and encourage the life on campus feeling."*
- *"Increase funding for student experiences at professional conferences."*

6) Improvements to Student Services
- *"More advisement, better advisement."*
- *"Re-establish CSU's focus on students."*
- *Revamp the Financial Aid dept. to make it easier to access. It shouldn't take 2 days to get a call back."*
- *"Expand the concierge format to provide a personalized student experience. Improve school spirit and develop annual traditions that bring alumni back to campus year after year."*
- *"Hire more staff in support services (counseling, tutoring, accommodations, etc.) to help retain students encountering barriers for success."*
- *"Better financial aid and Bursar's staffing. Anytime I have an issue, I must go in person to the financial aid office for something that takes them a few clicks to fix. This really is disheartening for a Graduate Student because I attended CSU in my undergraduate year. I have spent every year at CSU at the beginning of the semester arguing with financial aid staff to simply do their job."*
- *"Create a support system that helps students stay between their freshman year and sophomore years. This includes having the right administrative support structures that do not frustrate students when trying to accomplish simple tasks like understanding their financial aid package, recognizing that students may not even understand their own responsibilities and meeting them where they are, having more integrated resources that allow the faculty teaching to be able to forward students to a HUMAN BEING for assistance. This also includes shifting our campus culture to be focused on helping one another from a faculty/staff standpoint. I think many people are so exhausted that they only have the energy to focus on the must-dos on their list."*
- *"Assistance for students who are struggling with classes."*
- *"Truly making student life accommodating to all their students, such as hours of the Cafeteria, store/on campus food options, hours of resources such as library and computer lab hours, developing more computer lab & study room area options."*
- *"Students complain continuously about basic processes (financial aid, career help, tutoring, access to information, scholarships, counseling, etc.) that are hard to access and not available to online students."*

7) Financial Aid/Tuition Assistance
- *"More scholarships to increase attractiveness - most other schools offer scholarships. I have been at CSU for 2 years and have a 4.0 but have never received funding or scholarships from the school."*

- *"Don't charge for parking twice, we pay online and then we pay it again later because it shows up in the invoice for tuition. Don't charge the student for items on their invoice that they do not use."*
- *"Bring tuition costs down. I'm still $28k in student debt from CSU and I only attended 1.5 years from 2012-2013. I did graduate, but in the end, the debt wasn't worth it."*
- *"Revamp the Financial Aid dept. to make it easier to access. It shouldn't take 2 days to get a call back."*
- *"Better financial aid and bursar's staffing. Anytime I have an issue, I have to go in person to the financial aid office for something that takes them a few clicks to fix. This really is disheartening for a Graduate Student because I attended CSU in my undergraduate year. I have spent every year at CSU at the beginning of the semester arguing with financial aid staff to simply do their job."*

8) Campus Safety
- *"Make the downtown campus safer for students."*
- *"Better security hosting local events that show off talents of students besides art."*
- *"Help the campus be more safe. With all that has happened in this semester and around town, I feel like it is time for the city to do something about all the crimes that have been going on."*
- *"I guess making the campus seem a lot more safe. This semester alone has had a lot of incidents and situations occur leading to most not considering the campus all that safe."*

9) Budget Allocations and Transparency
- *"Better use of current resources and creation of more innovative resources."*
- *"Review fund allocation to make sure spending decisions are made with overall customer experience in mind."*
- *"Focus on mission-critical expenses, create and maintain learning specialized environments and create a better on-campus student experience."*
- *"More money directed to instruction (especially full-time lines)."*
- *"Far too much of the budget is allocated to administrative salaries for positions that do not directly serve students. Most days it is a miracle if the computers, projectors, and printers work."*
- *"A few poorly implemented and supported campus "efficiency" initiatives have significantly slowed down and decreased transparency/clarity over critical work functions."*
- *"Cut costs in the right areas, not always from the bottom. Look at the top and make adjustments throughout the chain."*
- *"Curb wasteful spending and redirect resources to students' needs."*

10) Student Recruitment
- *"Target one or more border states as a priority for recruitment to pull students from out of state-target a new state every 3-5 years until all border states have brand recognition-it is an investment that will take time to payoff. We can't continue to rely on our local area."*
- *"I think CSU is well positioned to work more closely with military leaders from Fort Moore and motivate more active-duty personnel to use their tuition assistance (TA) to attend college while in the service. I am relatively surprised that I haven't seen more active-duty soldiers on CSU campus utilizing TA and attending classes. I believe this is an important revenue stream for CSU and the military would gain and retain more educated personnel."*
- *"Focus on locals first, extending outward from the radius of the campuses while increasing the offerings of online courses."*

- *"Make the CSU more identifiable in the state and region. Use students to recruit students."*
- *"Better recruiting in area high schools."*
- *"I would be going into the middle schools and working with the students there at the 8th grade level. I would follow them all the way through HS and offer these children opportunities to come to CSU at an early stage in their academic career, not allowing them to even think about UGA or Tech. We have a great campus. Let's show them at an early age. We need to be recruiting - recruiting - recruiting. It is all about outreach."*
- *"While focusing on recruiting local high school students, we MUST go outside of the MSA and focus efforts for first-year students."*
- *"Take a hard look at how reductions in front-line staff have impacted student recruitment and program support and develop a plan to provide relief. Develop and expand key international links where we already have a pipeline for international students who desire to come to CSU."*