



Students, alumni, and  
administrators agree:

**Data-driven  
communications  
make a difference**



# Methodology

**500** 

college students,  
ages 18+



**502** 

alumni, graduated within the  
last five years



**300** 

administrators



Admission/  
recruitment

Student  
success/  
registrars/  
advisors

Alumni  
relations/  
development

The survey fielding was managed by Wakefield Research via email invitation and online survey among U.S. college students, alumni, and administrators between July 19 and August 2, 2018.

The margin for error for results is +/- 4.4 percentage points for the college students and alumni samples and +/- 5.7 percentage points for the administrators sample at the 95% confidence level.

# Personal connections with applicants can lead to increased enrollment—and future donations

**97%**



**of admissions and recruitment administrators...**

agree that students who have a more personalized recruitment process are more likely to enroll

**97%**



**of advising administrators...**

agree that students who had a personalized recruitment experience are more likely to be engaged with their college

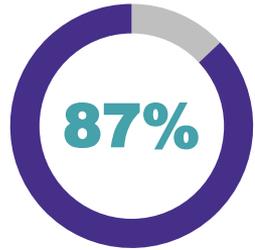
**98%**



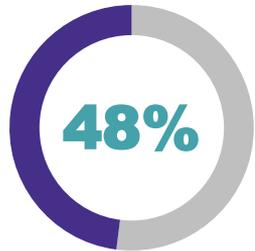
**of advancement administrators...**

agree that alumni who had a personalized college experience are more likely to donate

# Communication weighs heavily in the enrollment decision



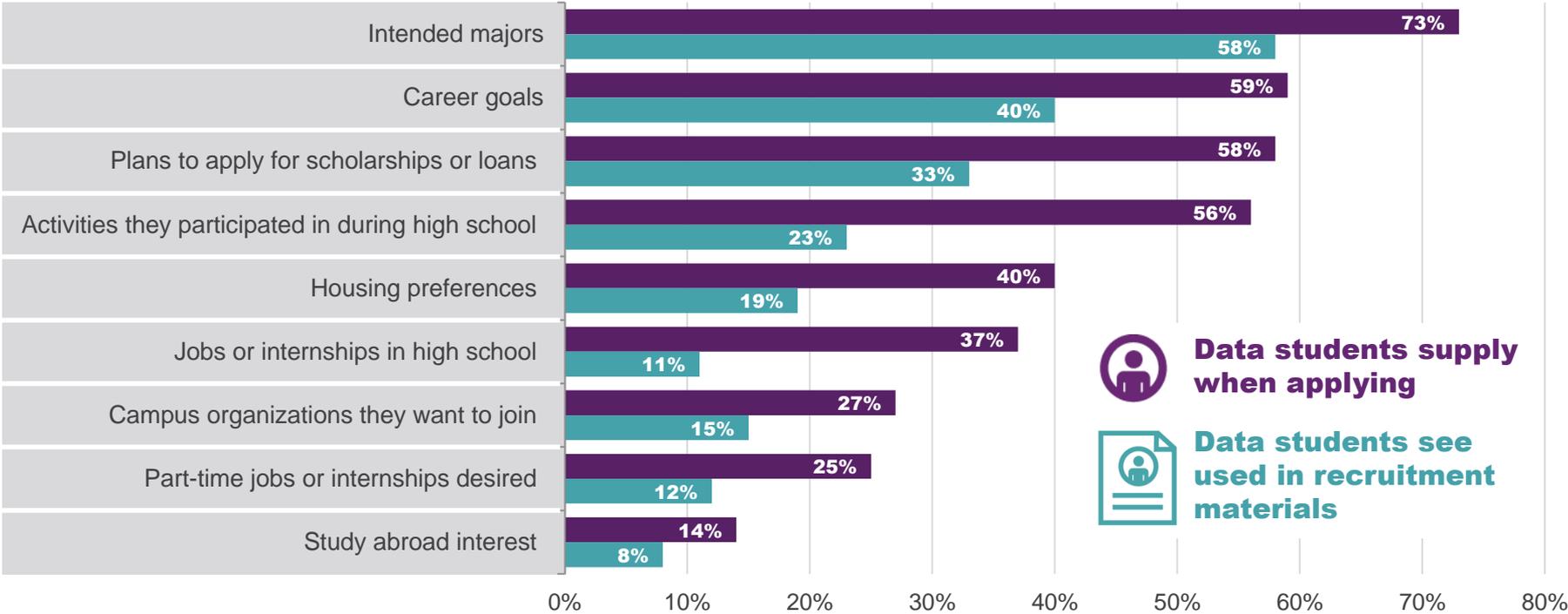
of students who received personalized communications during their application process **agree that it was an important factor in their choice of school**



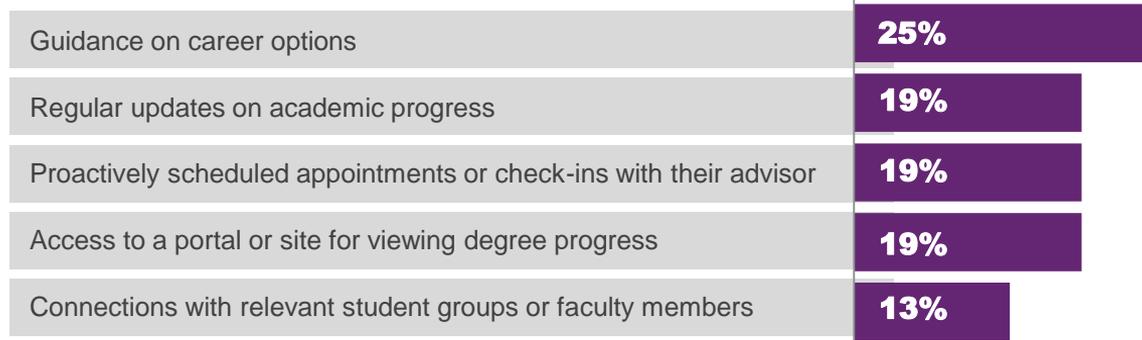
of students who applied to multiple colleges **decided against attending a school because of poor communication** during the application process



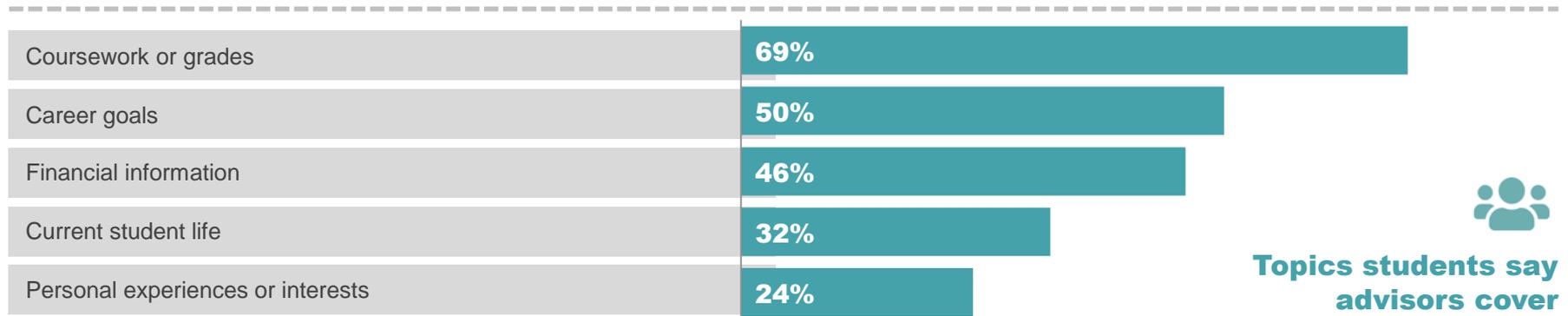
# Students are supplying the data, but how is it being used?



# Students crave advice...



**Advising services that students think present the greatest positive impact on success**

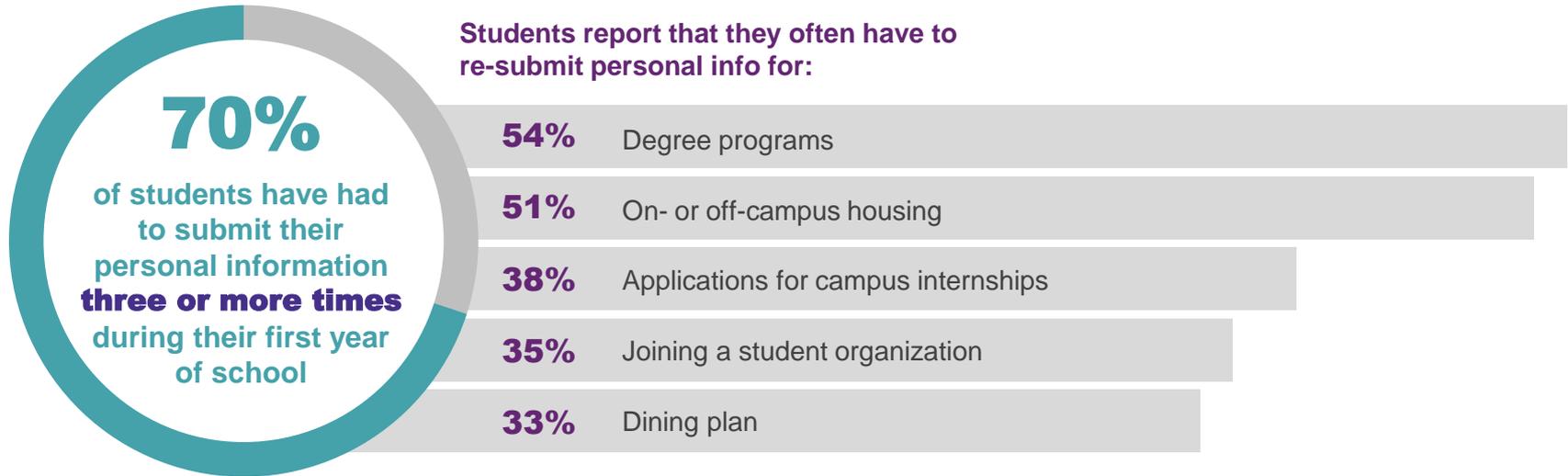


**Topics students say advisors cover**



...but often struggle to get it

## Students report having to talk to **up to four people** to answer an advising question



# Attending college is a significant life milestone, connecting alumni with their alma mater for life

## Many are still involved with their colleges:



**41%**  
attend social or athletic events



**26%**  
network with other alumni



**24%**  
are members of their alumni associations



**22%**  
volunteer at college-sponsored events



**19%**  
donate money



**13%**  
participate in prospective student interviews; mentor students

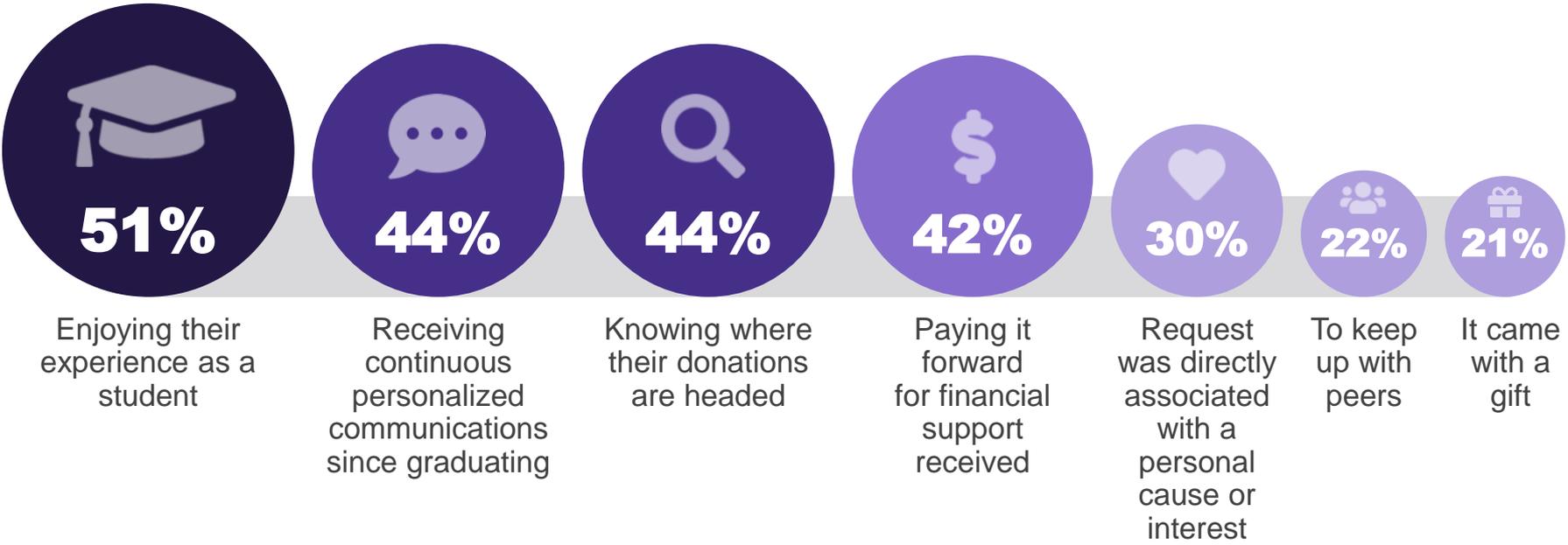
**89%**  
would be more likely to take advantage of post-grad opportunities if they involved the groups or activities they participated in while in college



**20%**  
report not being involved with their alma mater post-graduation

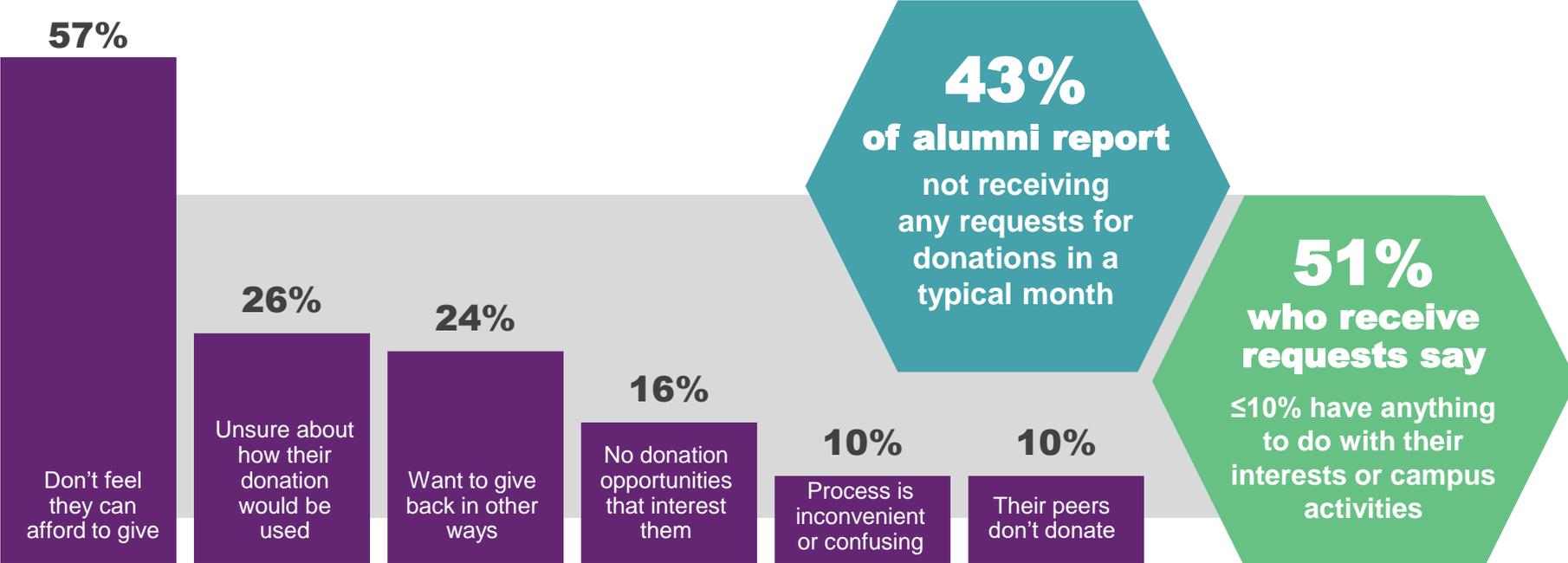
# Alumni who donate do so with the best of intentions

## Reasons for giving include:

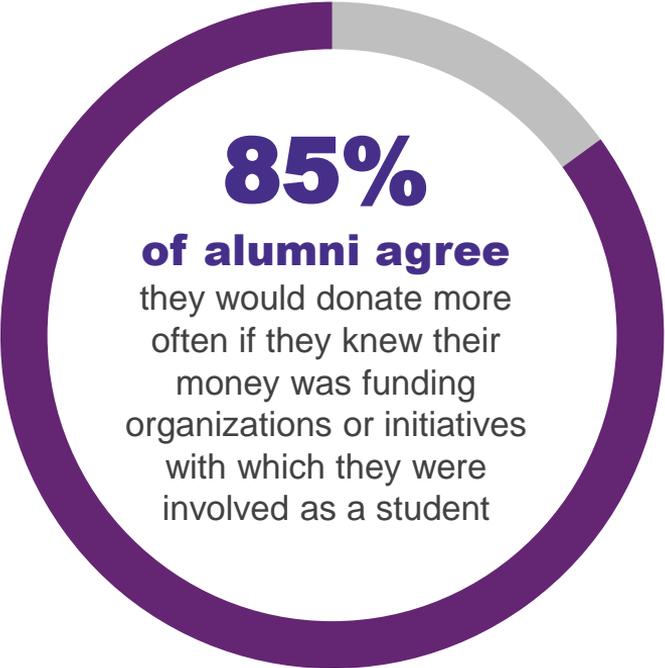


# Affordability is only one factor in the donation decision process

## Why alumni don't give:



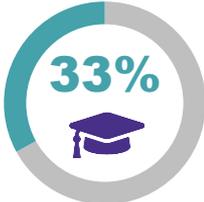
# Schools could take better advantage of alumni's willingness to give



## Alumni *could* be persuaded to donate, if provided the proper motivation:



Details about where the donation would go



Knowing the donation would go to a cause or interest they had while in school



Getting a gift, like tickets to a game, in return



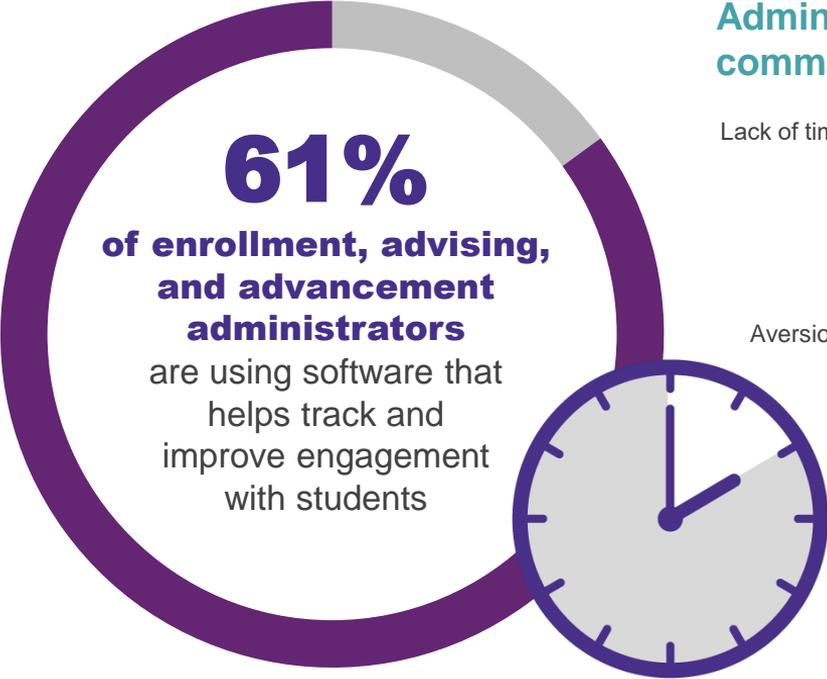
Seeing peers donate



Continuous personalized communication

Answers from those who have not donated

# Administrators are using tools to improve engagement, but it's not enough



## Administrators face obstacles when it comes to updating communication strategies, including:



More than 1/3 of student advisors spend **20+ hours per week** manually communicating with students

# Administrators still need more data



**95%**

**of advisors...**

wish they had access to more complete and up-to-date information on students' financial, academic, and student life data



**95%**

**of advancement officials...**

believe they would have a better relationship with alumni if they had access to more data across the student lifecycle

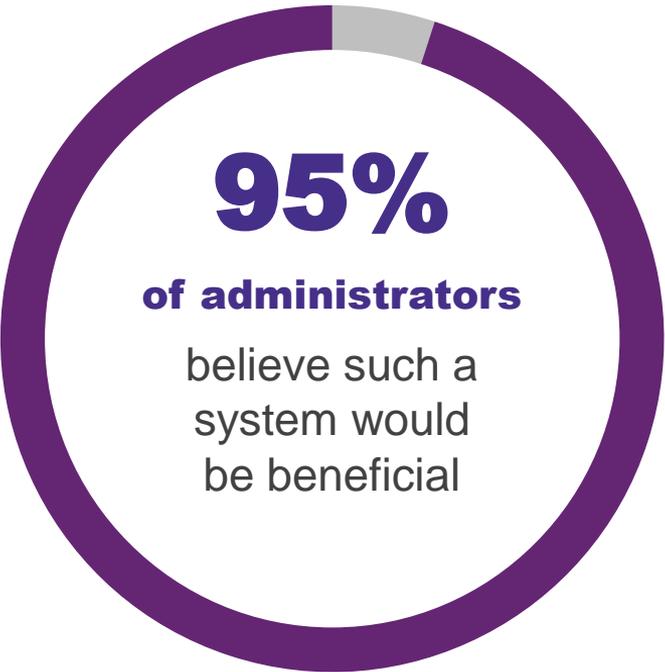


**87%**

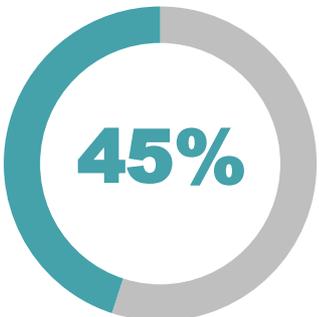
**of administrators...**

think their colleges and universities will not be able to stay competitive without integrating their data across departments in the next five years

# Administrators want to use CRM because they understand the power of personalized information



Answers from those who don't have a CRM at their institution



cited **inter-departmental visibility** as the top benefit of implementing a CRM system

Followed by:



Greater process automation or efficiency



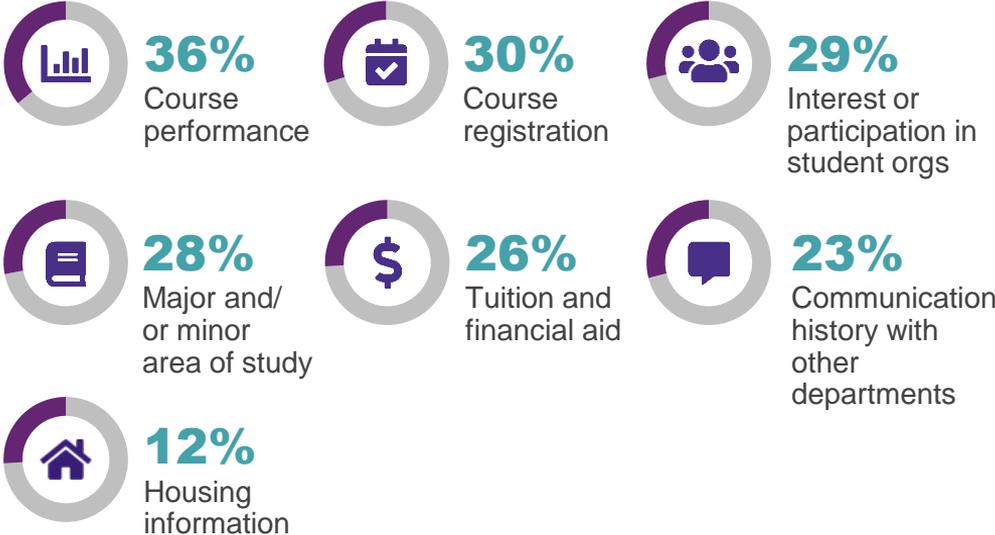
Increased monetary donations



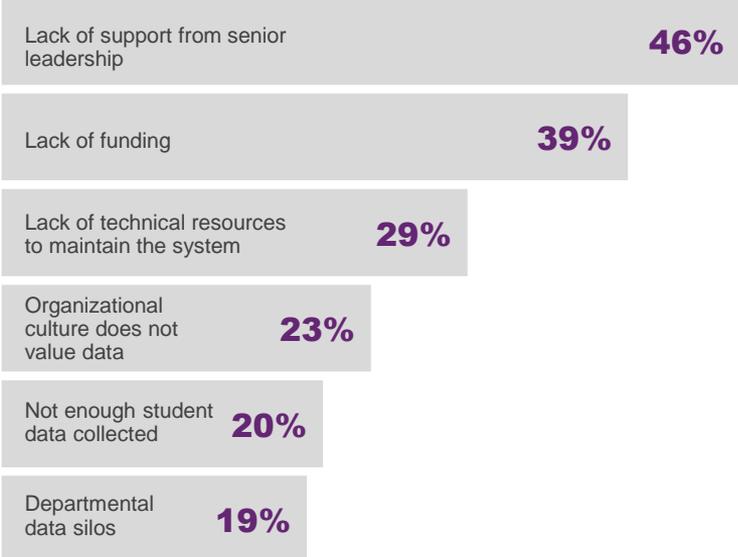
Increased number of applications

# Administrators will need to overcome obstacles to access much needed data

## Data that administrators think would help them better serve students and alumni:



## Top obstacles institutions face in acquiring CRM



Answers from those who don't have a CRM at their institution

# Today's connected students are driving a new experience on campus

They share a lot of personal information and expect a personalized experience across all areas of the student lifecycle—admissions, advising, and advancement—in return.

Institutions that personally connect with applicants can look forward to increased enrollment. And students are more likely to get the most out of their college experience—from classes and clubs to housing and financial aid—if data is used to inform conversations. When students enjoy their experience, they become alumni who donate to their institution, especially when they receive requests that relate back to their interests.

The integration of data across departments to tailor communication with students and alumni is vital to improving the student experience as well as long-term student loyalty and future giving.





Inspired by the transformative impact of education, Ellucian develops solutions that power the essential work of colleges and universities. As the world's leading provider of software and services designed for higher education, Ellucian works with more than 2,500 institutions in nearly 50 countries—enhancing operations and enriching the experience for over 18 million students.

Ellucian provides student information systems (SIS), finance and HR, recruiting, retention, analytics and advancement software solutions. With more than 1,400 institutions subscribing to Ellucian's cloud services and SaaS offerings, the company is one of the largest providers of cloud-based solutions in higher education. Ellucian also supports the higher education community with a range of professional services such as application software implementation, training, education, and management consulting.

Ellucian brings power, passion, and performance to bear for higher education, and its ability to better our world.

**Visit Ellucian at [www.ellucian.com](http://www.ellucian.com)**