

# **NATIONAL SURVEY OF DNP PROGRAMS COMMONALITIES AND DIFFERENCES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DNP PROJECT**

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## **Project Team:**

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# Purpose of Presentation

Share results of a national survey that explored practices regarding

- makeup of DNP project committees/teams,
- use of group DNP projects, and
- DNP scholarly project final products

Facilitate discussion focused on conclusions and next steps

Provide examples of program scholarly project practices that are specific to

- policy,
- clinical practice,
- administration and
- Informatics

Demonstrate ways DNP prepared nursing professionals collaborate to influence change by sharing the work of this project team's collaborative study

# Objectives:

**At the conclusion of the presentation, participants will be able to:**

1. Discuss the commonalities and differences among DNP programs across the United States.
2. Identify specific national practices related to the makeup of DNP Project Committee/Teams, makeup of DNP project committees/teams, use of group DNP projects, and DNP Scholarly Project final products
3. Recognize key findings from the national survey that need further exploration and attention.

# From Collegial Discussion to Exploration



**JMU**  
School of Nursing



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**  
COLLEGE OF NURSING



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# Guided by the Evidence: Our Integrative Review Team



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# Special Thanks!

**Rosalie Mainous, PhD, AACN Staff Liaison**  
Director of Academic Nursing Development





# Project Timeline



## October 2017

- Question Posted on AACN Discussion Board
  - 61 replies representing 44 Colleges/Universities

## December 2017

- Conference call with DNP Faculty from across the United States
  - Over 40 faculty participated
  - Topic generated tremendous interest and passionate discussion

# Project Timeline continued...



## January 2018

- Session held at AACN Doctoral Education Conference
- Approximately 50 conference attendees participated in the 7am meeting
- 2 subgroups were formed
  - Literature Review
  - Survey Development



# Project Timeline continued...

## Spring 2018

- Literature Review Subgroup
- Survey Subgroup
- Core Project Team Group

## Summer 2018

- Survey development
- WebEx planning sessions

## Fall 2018

- IRB
- Survey Deployment
- Quantitative and Preliminary Qualitative Data Analysis

## Spring 2019

- Extensive Qualitative Data Analysis

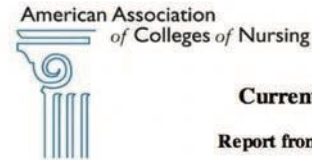


# Purpose of National Survey

- **To collect information to describe current practices related to :**
  - Makeup of DNP project committees/teams,
  - Use of group DNP projects, and
  - DNP Scholarly Project final products.

# Framework for Inquiry:

## AACN August 2015 Report from the Task Force on the Implementation of the DNP



### **The Doctor of Nursing Practice: Current Issues and Clarifying Recommendations**

**Report from the Task Force on the Implementation of the DNP**

**August 2015**

#### Introduction

The AACN Position Statement on the Practice Doctorate in Nursing (AACN, 2004) changed the course of nursing education by recommending that advanced nursing practice education be moved to the doctoral level. A decade later, the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) is widely recognized as one of the discipline's two terminal degrees and the preferred pathway for those seeking preparation at the highest level of nursing practice. Across the nation, the number of DNP programs continues to grow as more schools transition advanced nursing practice programs to the doctoral level. A recent national study commissioned by the AACN Board of Directors and conducted by RAND Corporation found that there is near universal agreement among the nursing community on the value of DNP education in preparing nurses to meet future healthcare needs (Auerbach, 2015). Despite this strong support for the practice doctorate, variability exists among DNP programs, which are currently offered in 49 states.

The national dialogue about the DNP has amplified the need to clarify and restate how advanced nursing practice is defined. Advanced nursing practice, (defined in the Glossary) is any form of nursing intervention that influences healthcare outcomes for individuals or populations, including the provision of direct care or management of care for individual patients or management of care populations, and the provision of indirect care such as nursing administration, executive leadership, health policy, informatics, and population health. Also, it is important to remember that the DNP is an academic degree, not a role.

Considering the changing landscape in health care and higher education over the last ten years as well as the dramatic growth of DNP programs, the AACN Board of Directors convened a task force to review the current state of DNP programs, clarify curricular and practice expectations as outlined in the Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice (DNP Essentials), and highlight practice scholarship and academic partnership opportunities. Naturally, a professional transition of this magnitude has generated many questions and provides an opportunity for reflection.

The DNP Implementation Task Force presents this white paper as an important resource for the evolution of the practice doctorate in nursing. The paper includes recommendations to describe and clarify the characteristics of DNP graduate scholarship, the DNP project, efficient use of resources, program length, curriculum considerations, practice experiences, and collaborative partnership guidelines. Following the task force's recommendations are a glossary, references, a list of task force members and appendices to provide examples that support the individual recommendations.

# Research Questions:

- What are the commonalities in the implementation of DNP Projects among DNP programs in the United States?
- What are the differences in the implementation of DNP Projects among DNP programs in the United States?
- What are the specific practices in DNP Programs across the United States related to the makeup (composition) of DNP project committees/teams, current practices related to group projects and required DNP Scholarly Project final products?

# Integrative Review: Guiding Questions

1. What is the name of the DNP project?
2. Who makes up the DNP project team?
3. Individual vs. group projects?
4. Have the recommendations from the AACN August 2015 report from the Task Force on the Implementation of the DNP project been adopted?



# Identifying Our Body of Evidence: Methods

- 40 pieces of literature identified
- Reviewed for content addressing guiding questions
- 27 articles included in review
- Critically appraised by two appraisers and disparities resolved with third appraiser
- Evaluation/summary table created and housed on cloud-based platform for accessibility by the team



# Results: The 27 “Keepers”

- Earliest piece of literature: 2001
- Eight published prior to 2015
- Seventeen published on or after 2015
- No date on two pieces of literature
- **Levels of Evidence** (Melnik & Fineout-Overholt, 2014):
  - Level 6 (Single qualitative or descriptive studies): N=5
  - Level 7 (Expert Opinion): N=22





# Project Design

- Exploratory, descriptive study
- Descriptive Statistics



# Population

Nursing faculty/administrators who are designing, implementing and evaluating DNP program practices

- United States DNP programs were identified on the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) website of program listings



**American Association  
of Colleges of Nursing**

*Celebrating 50 Years as the  
Voice of Academic Nursing*

# Methodology



- Subjects were recruited via email
  - AACN Website listing of schools with DNP Programs ► searched school websites ► DNP Program contact email
- 27 Question Survey via Qualtrics



qualtrics.

# Results

Demographics

DNP Project Team Makeup

Group Project Practices

DNP Scholarly Project

# Survey Response

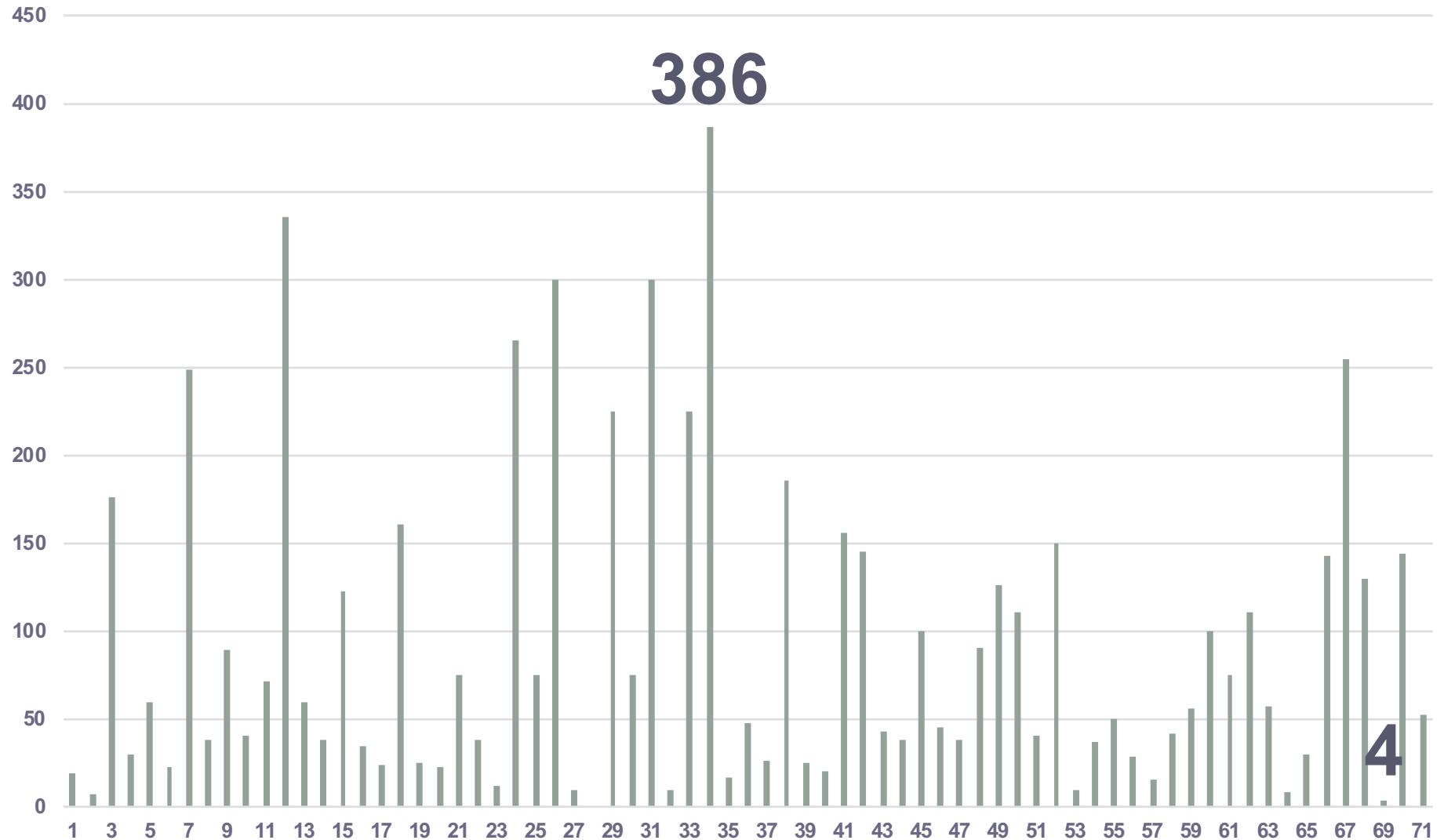
- 287 Emails Sent



- 74 Responses

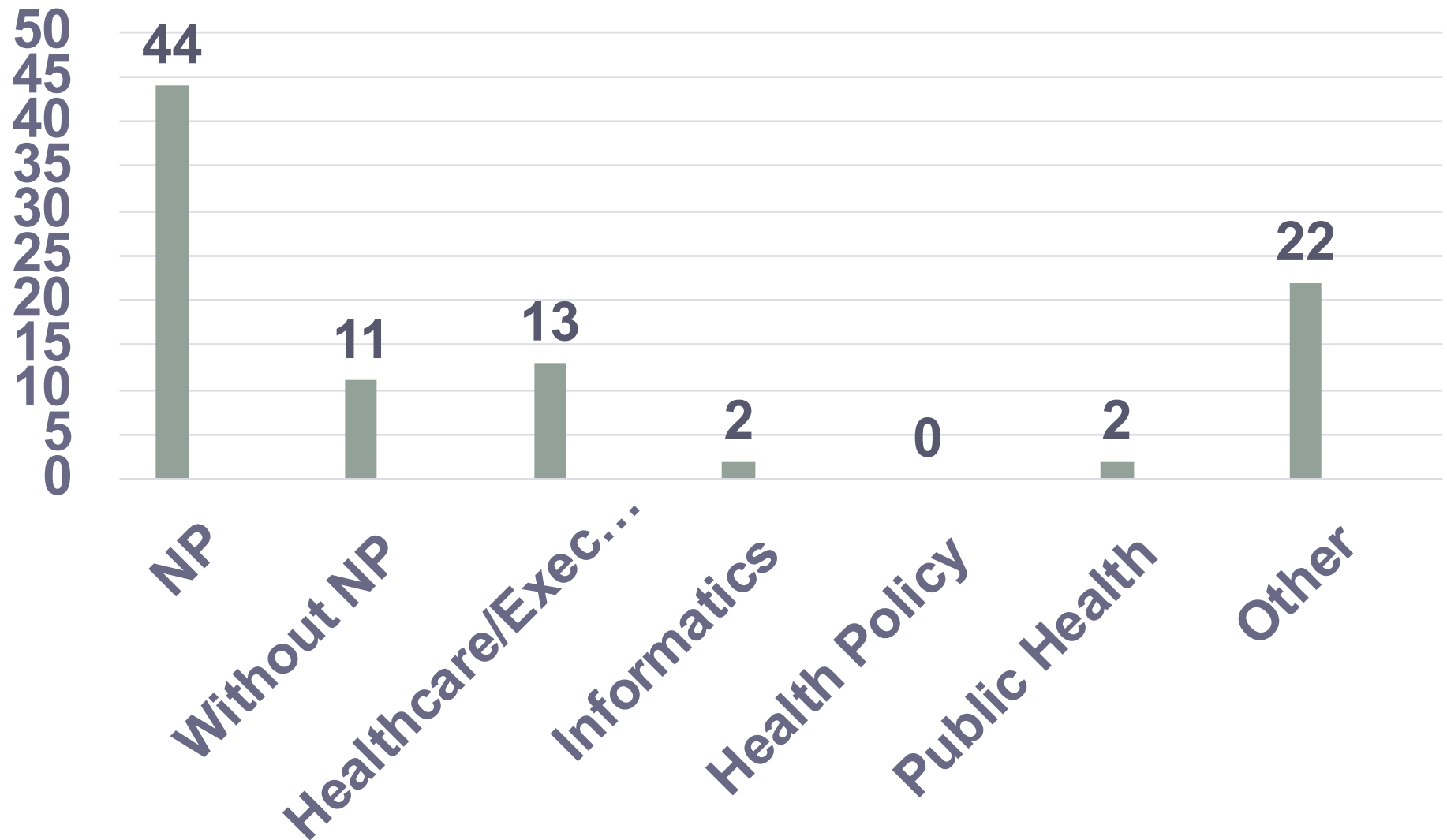


# Number of DNP Students in Program



# BSN-DNP Programs

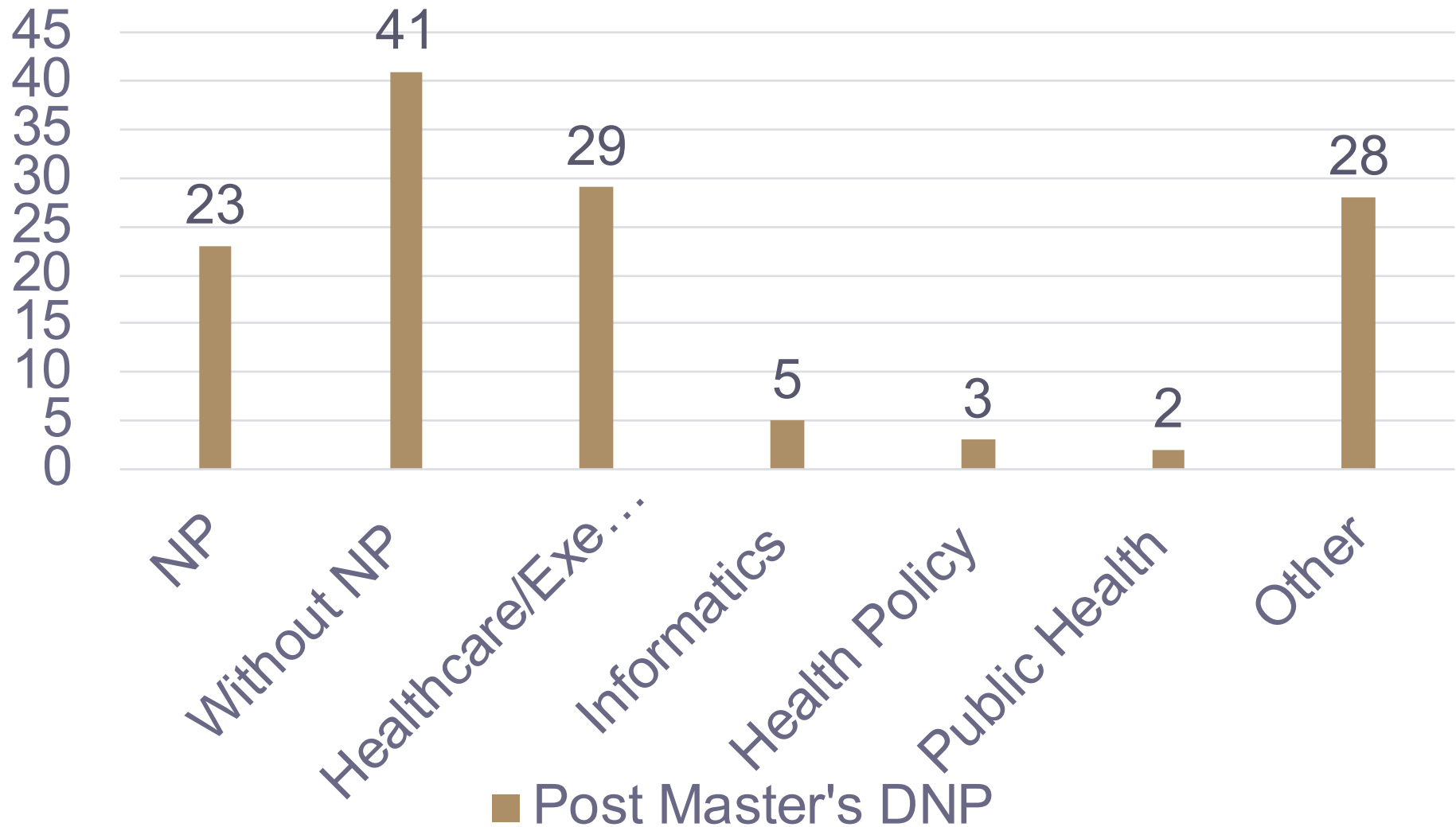
## Types of Programs and Specialties





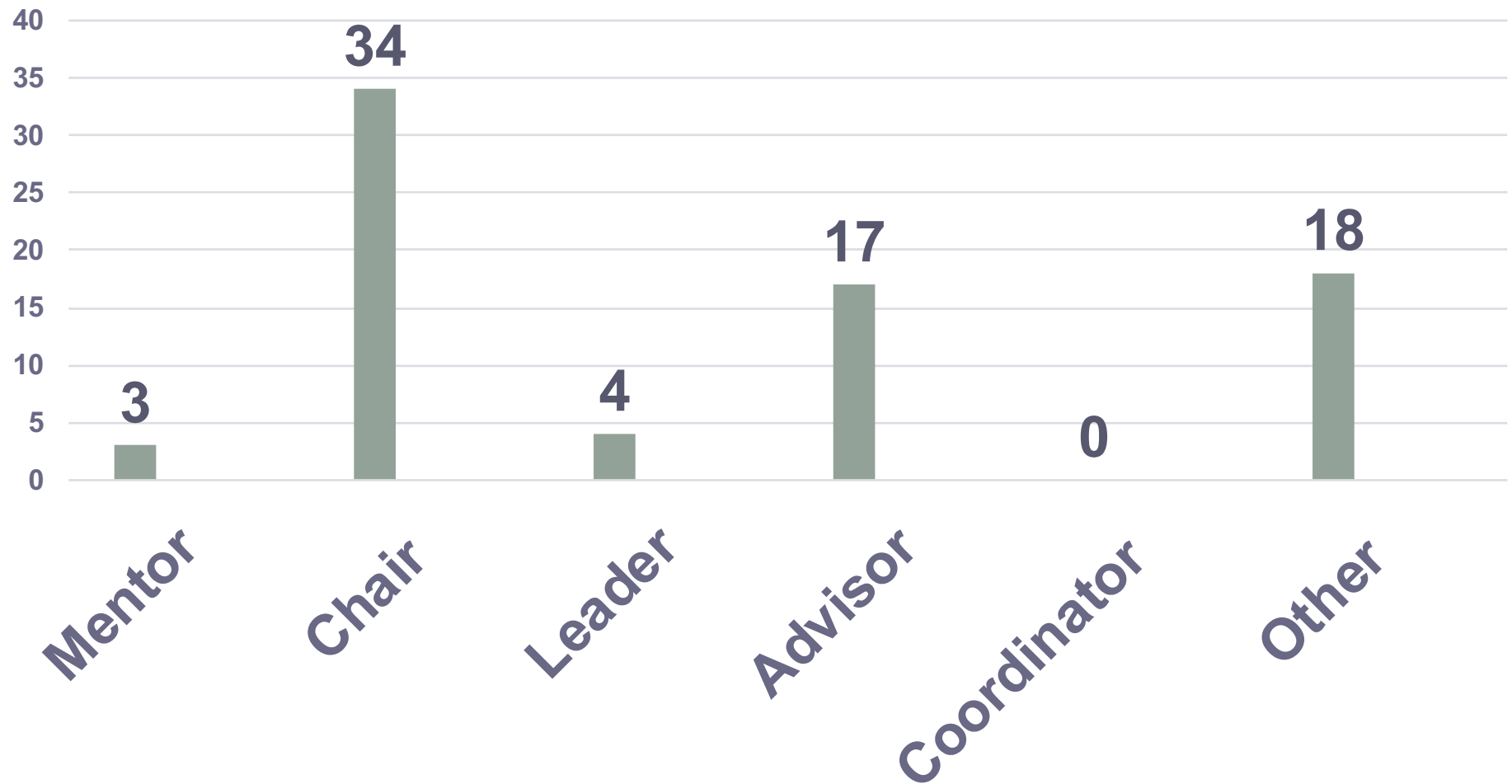
# Post Master's DNP

## Types of Programs and Specialties

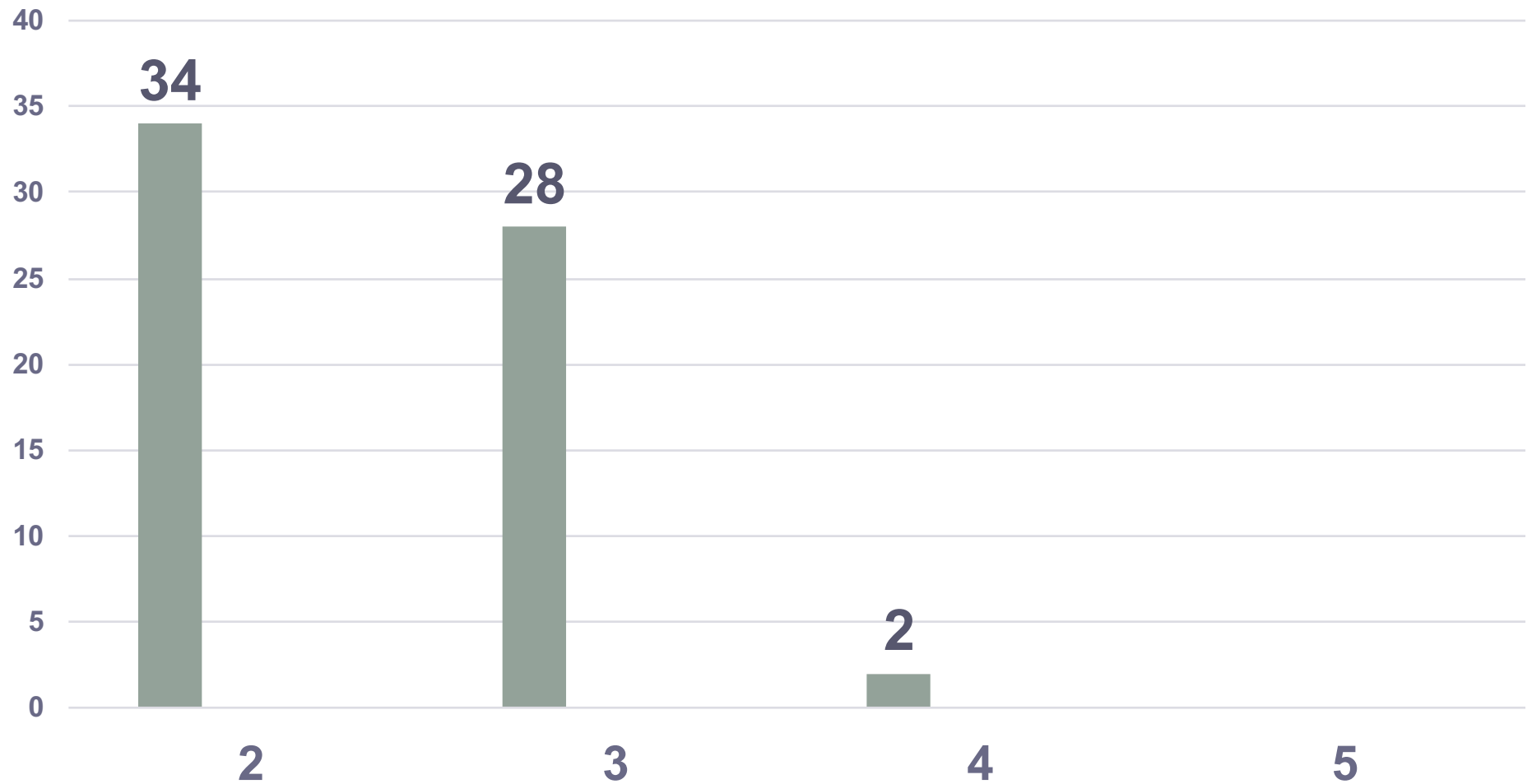


# DNP Project Team Makeup

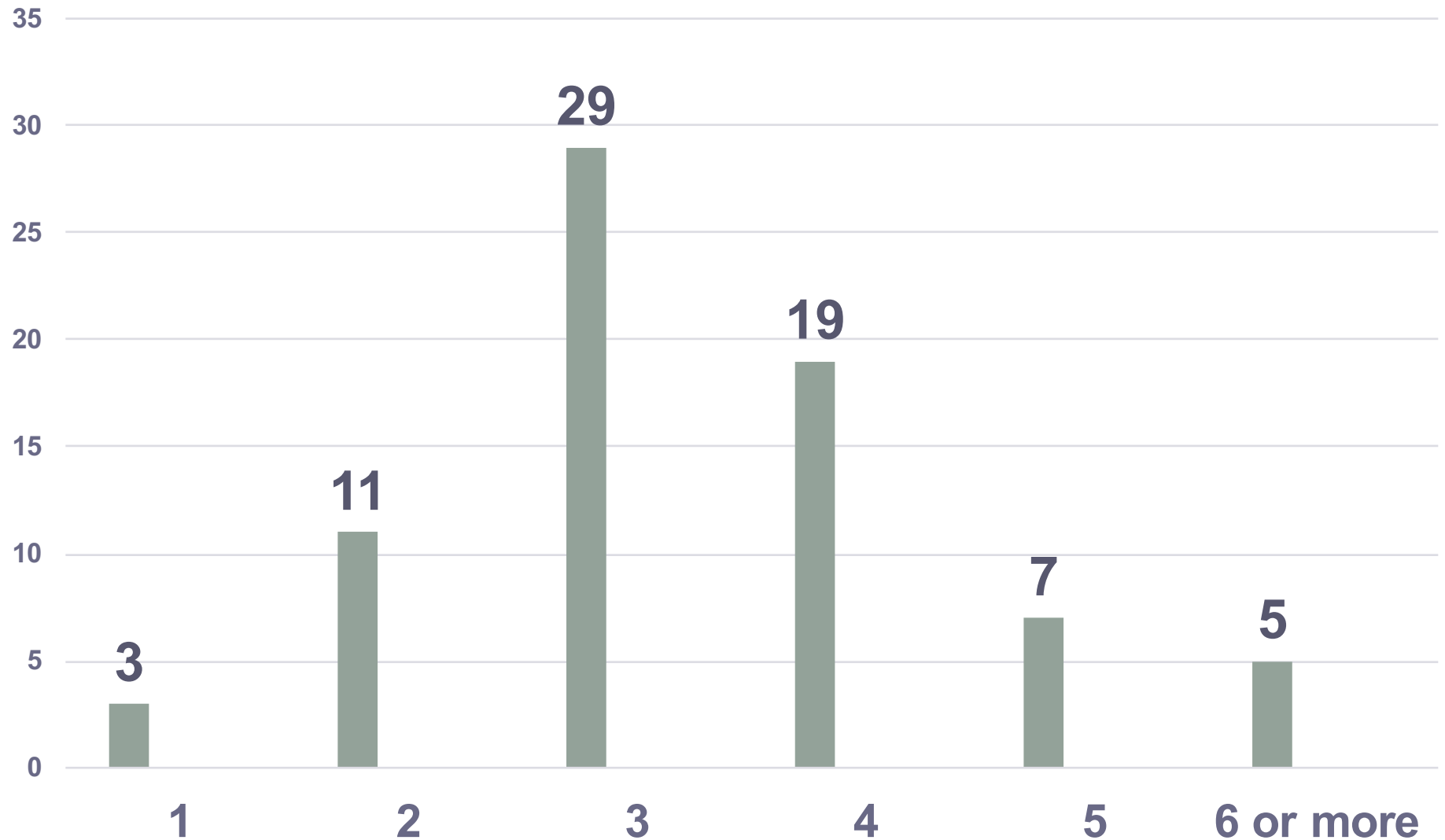
Title for Faculty Leader of DNP Project



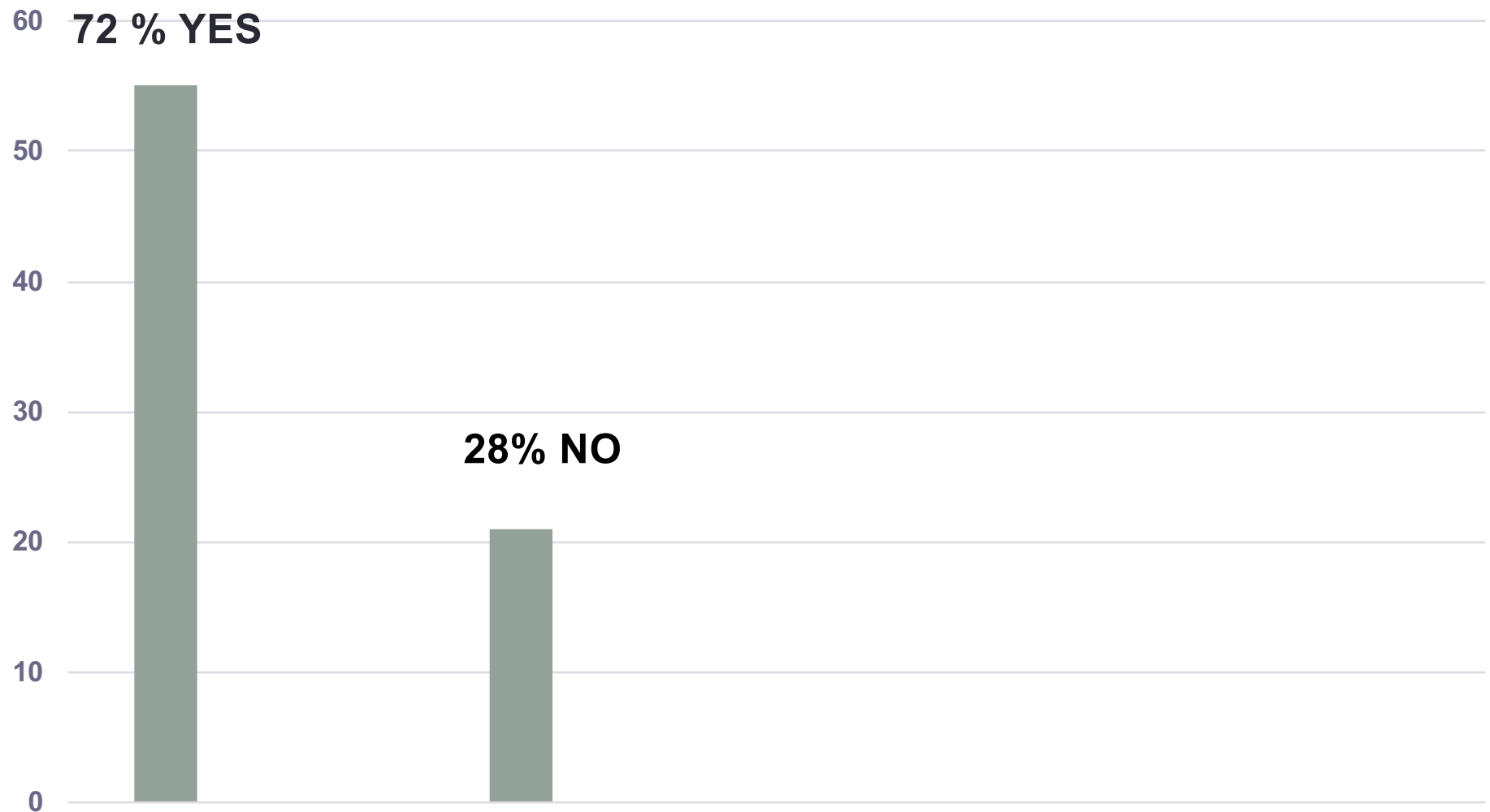
# Minimum Number of DNP Project Team Members



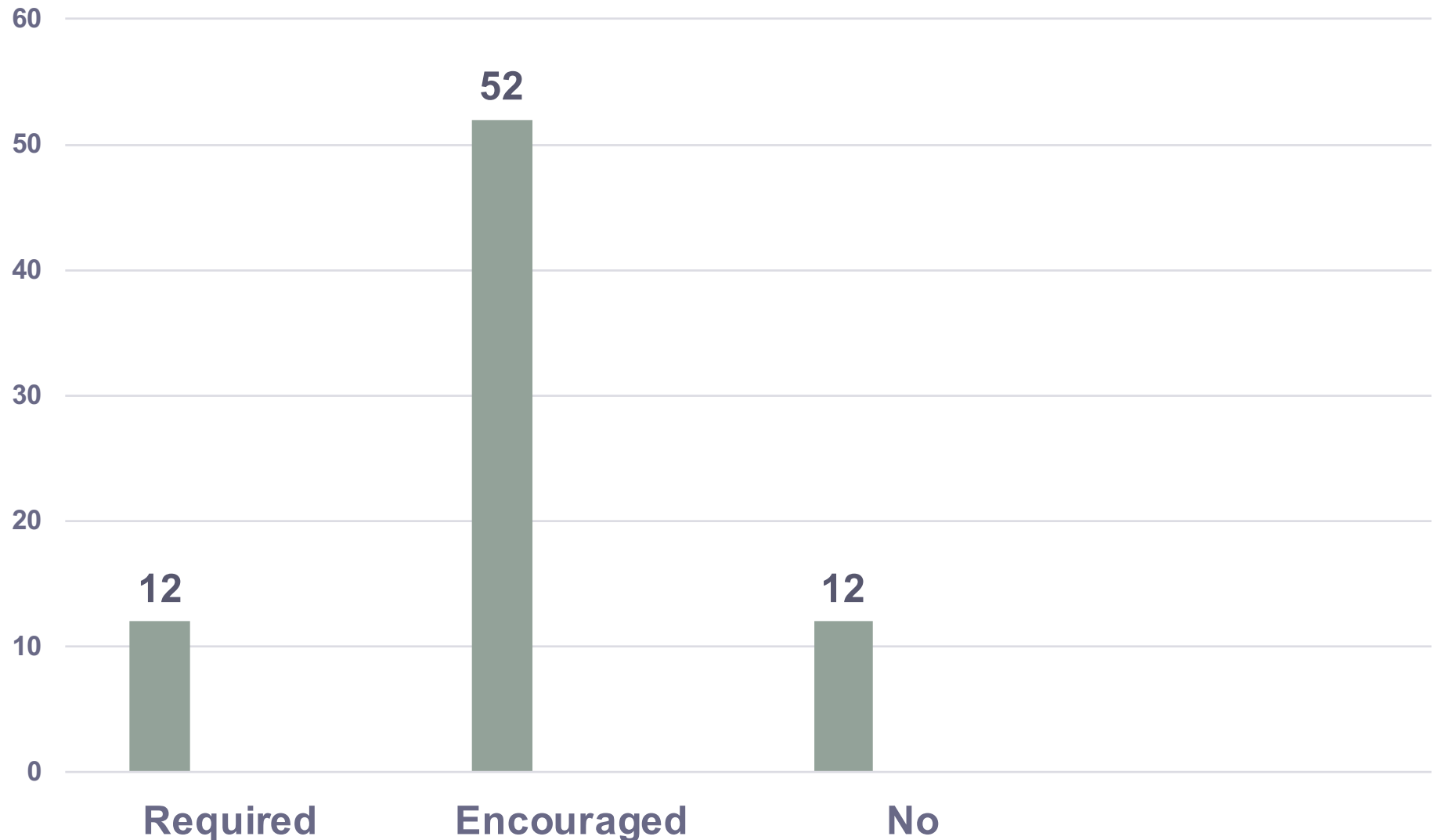
# Maximum Number of Individuals on DNP Project Team



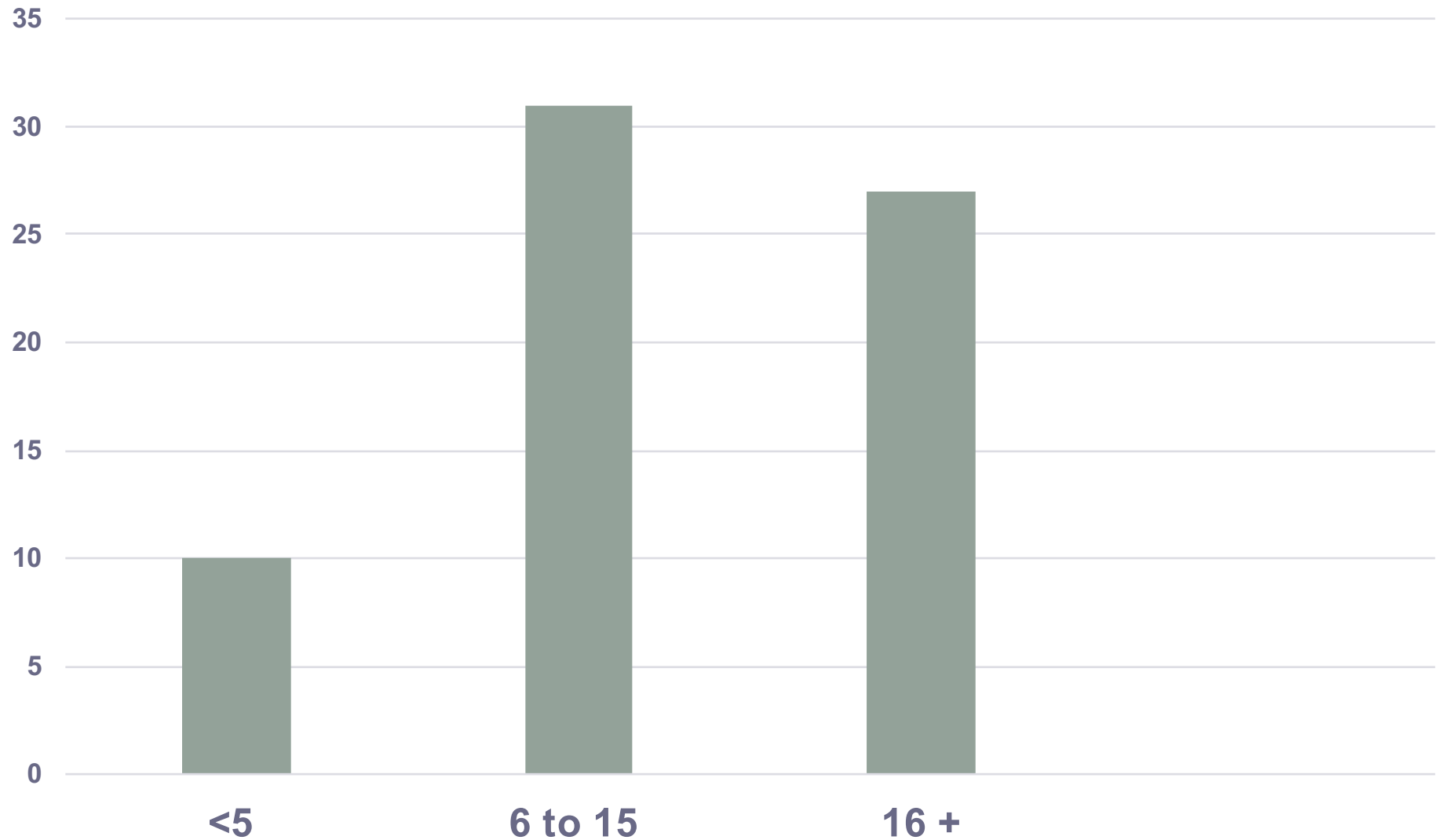
# Is DNP project faculty member involvement included in faculty workload?



# Are DNP project topics linked to faculty interest and/or expertise?

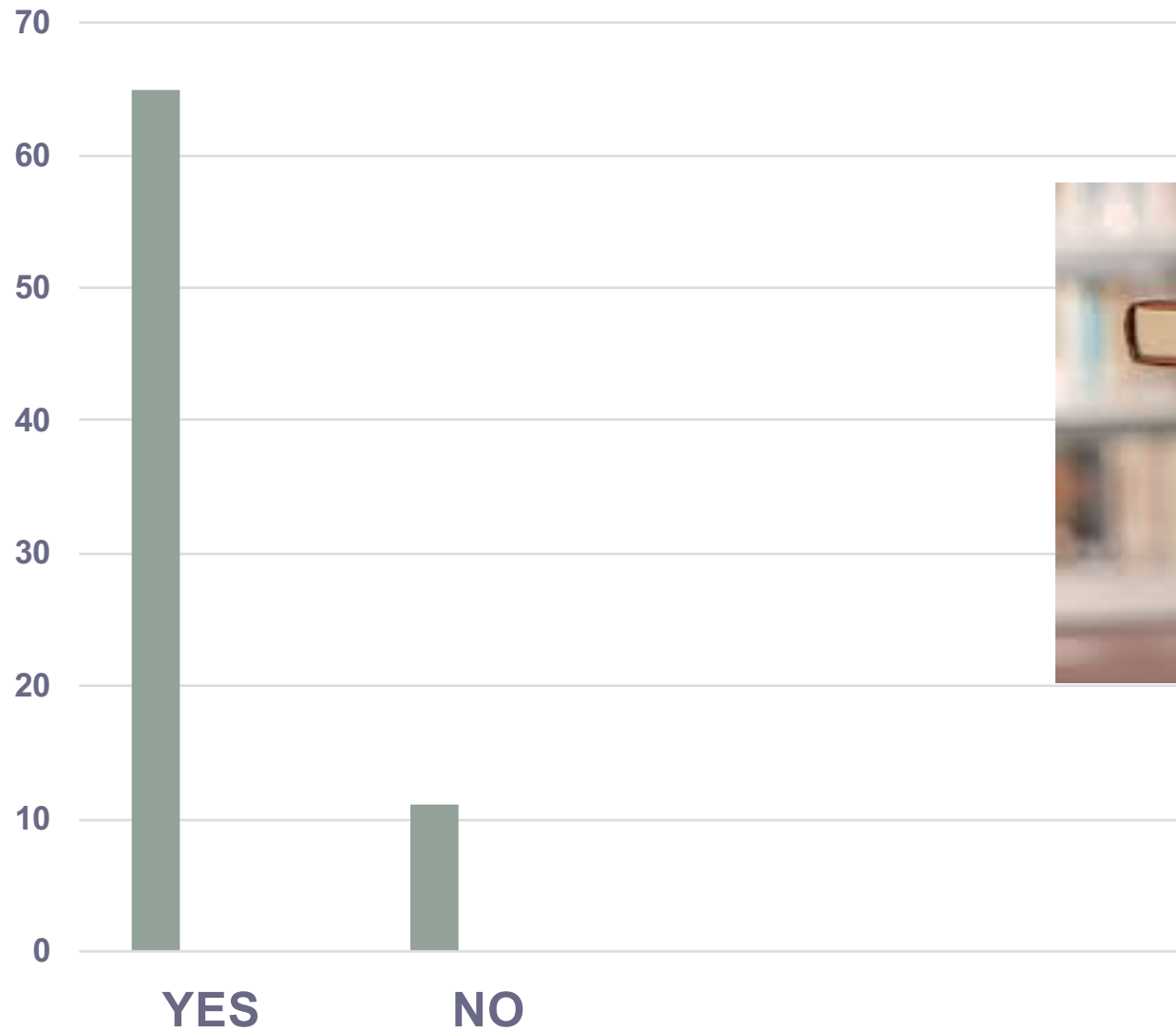


# # of DNP Projects Lead/ Facilitated

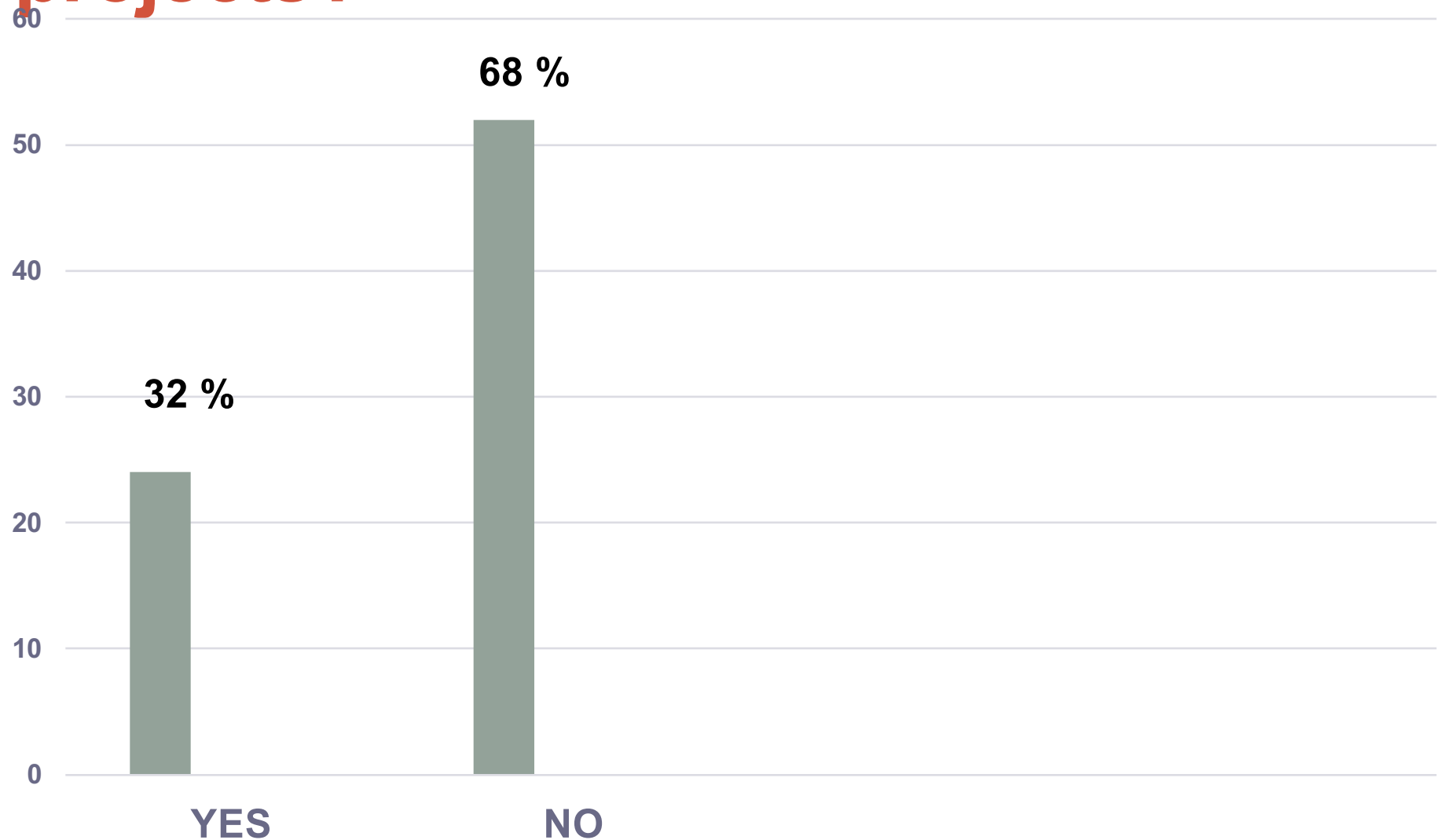




# Do you teach courses in the DNP plan of study?



# Does your program offer the option for students to engage in group DNP projects?



# DNP Group/ Team Projects

- Variability in-
  - How group projects are defined
  - How the work is divided among the group
  - Stage of planning/implementing group projects

# DNP Scholarly Product *Presentations*– What do most require?

- In person
- Public
- Large group
- Poster and/or
- Podium



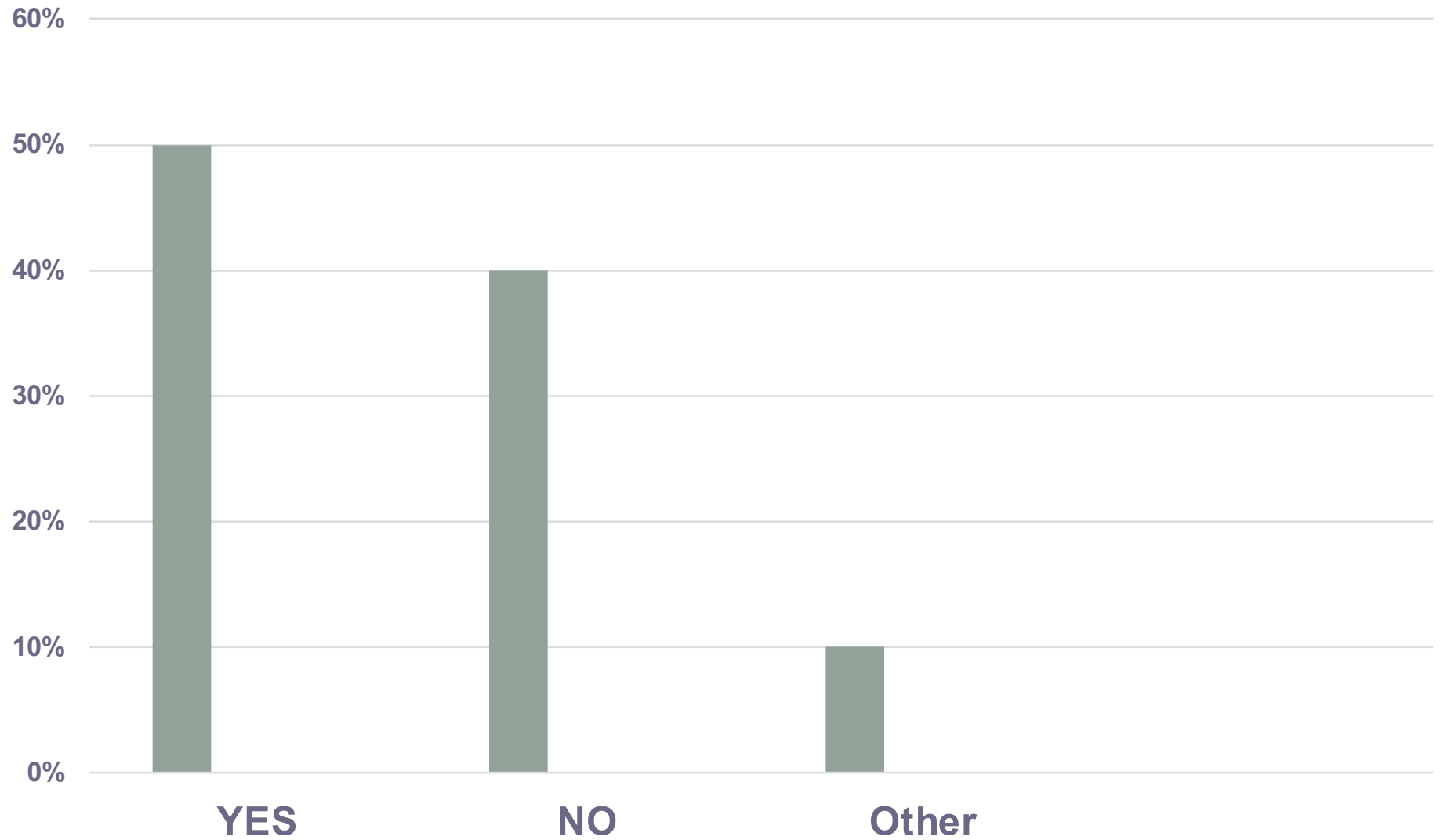
# DNP Scholarly Product *Publications*



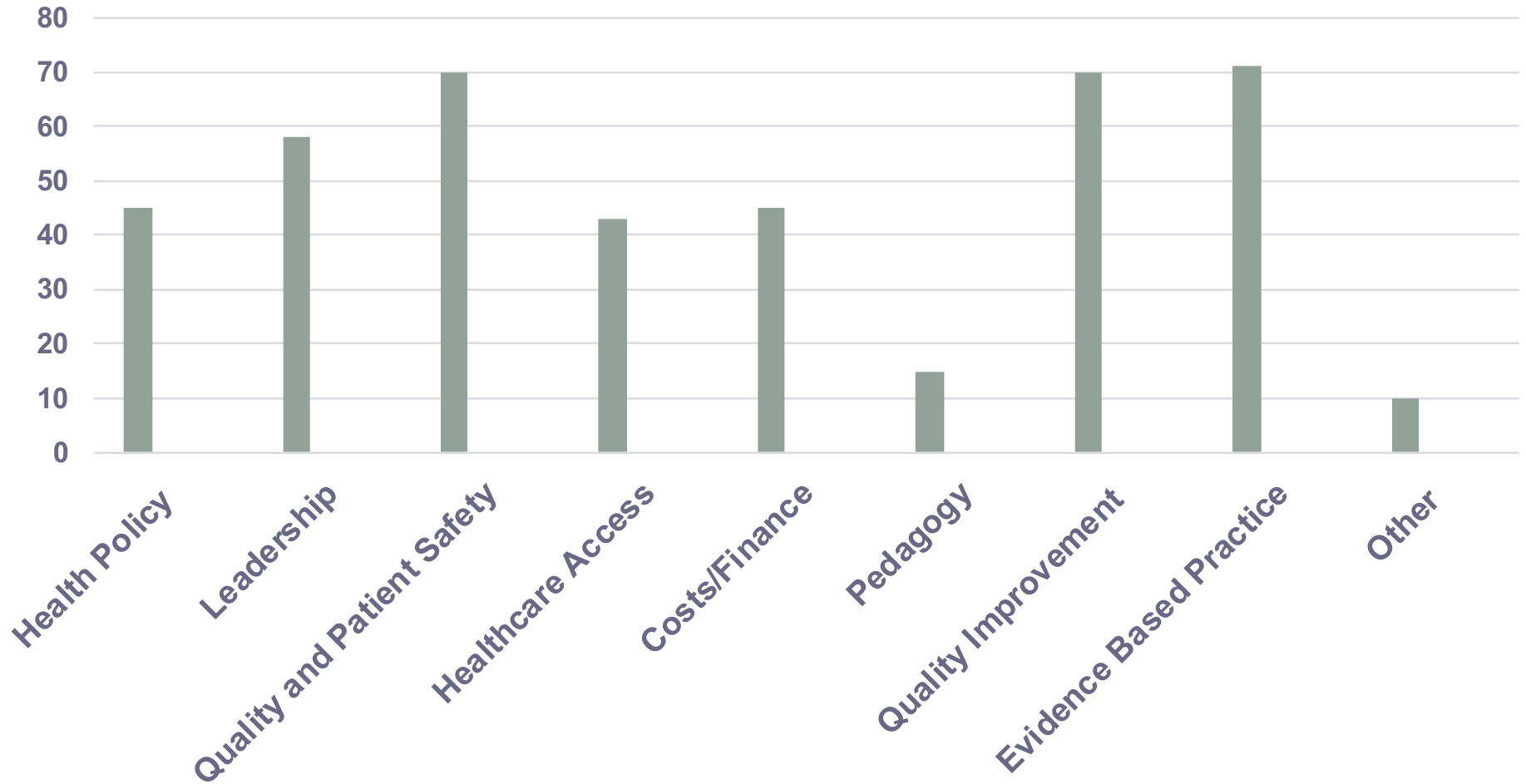
## What do most require?

- 38% require a scholarly document of publishable quality
- 22% require a document similar to the traditional dissertation
- 12% require a scholarly document that has been submitted for publication
- 5% require a scholarly document that has been accepted for publication

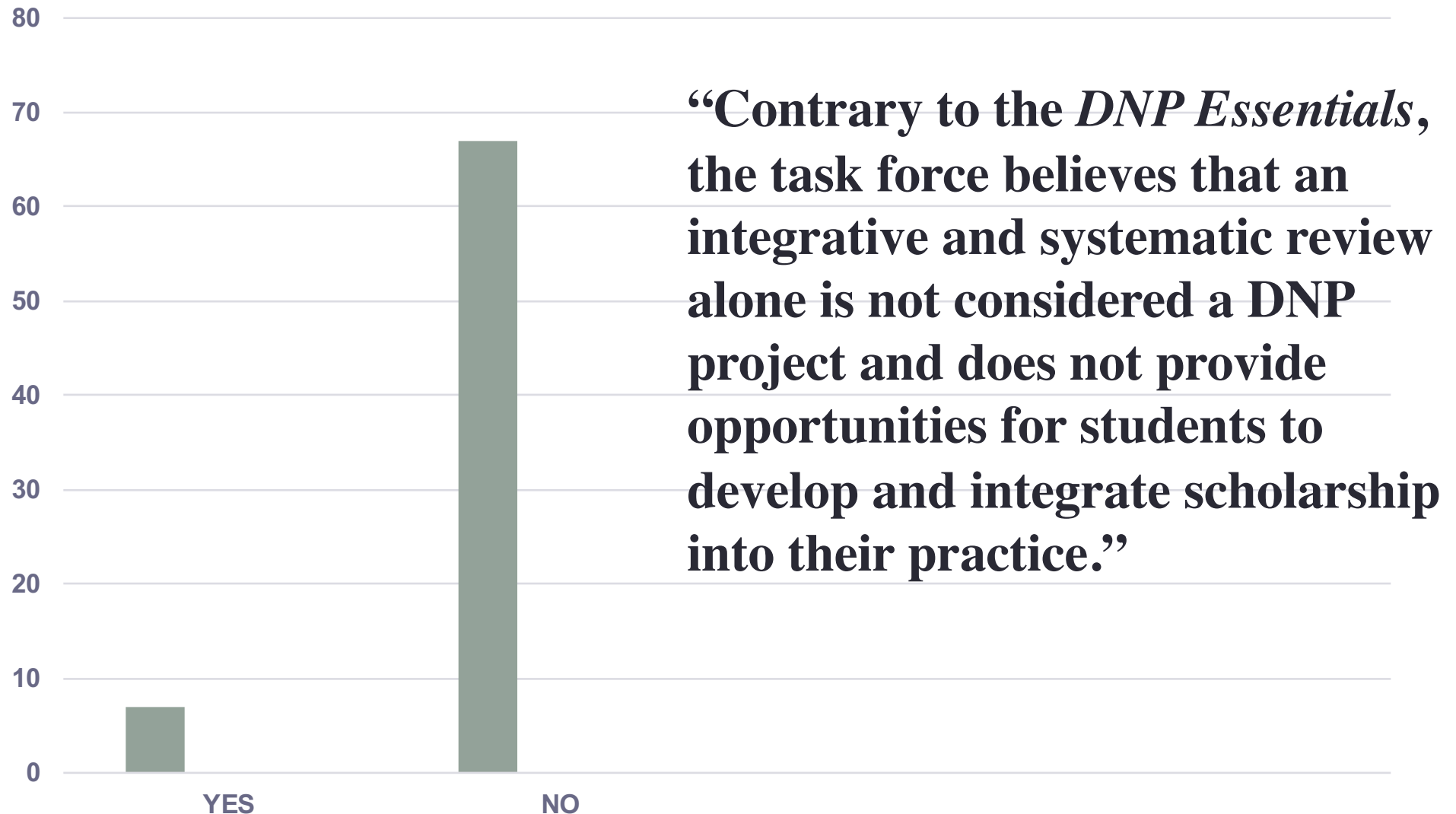
# Require a Portfolio



# Topics represented in DNP projects

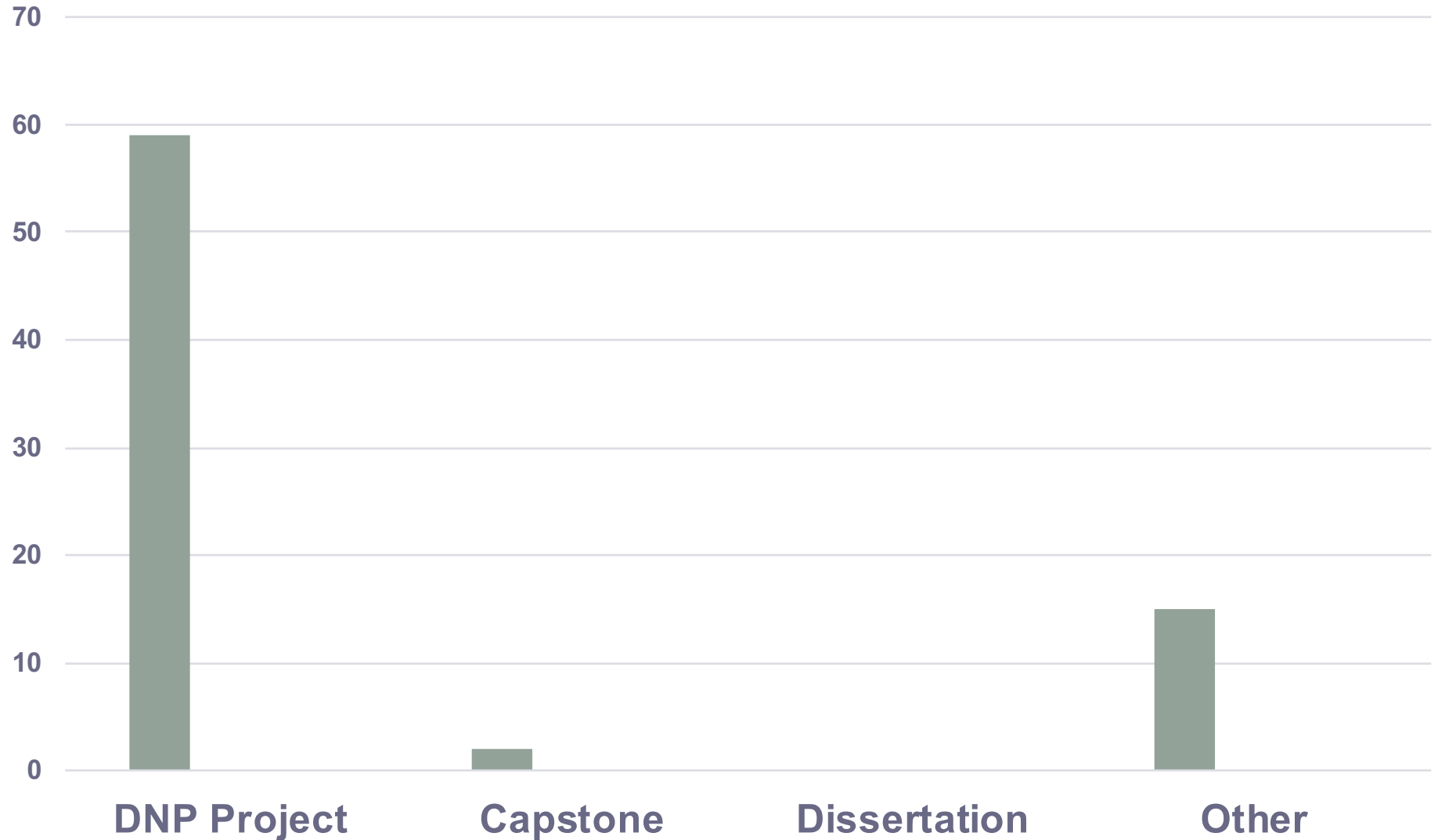


# Allow Systematic Literature Review as Project





# What do you call your DNP Scholarly Project?



# Number of DNP Students/Faculty

- DNP Faculty Chair ranged from 0-12 students/semester
- DNP Faculty as a Project Team/Committee member ranged from 0-8 students/semester



# Results:

## Qualitative Themes

- Feedback and insights from questions generating much discussion
- **Major areas of focus:**
  - Faculty Workload
  - Strengths of DNP Project Team
  - Challenges
  - DNP Project and Curriculum Integration
  - Group Projects

# Faculty Workload

**Is DNP project faculty member involvement included in faculty workload? Elaborate on faculty workload distribution regarding DNP projects**

- Credit:
  - Yes (72.3%)
  - No (27.6%)
- 52 comments/feedback on survey . . . wide variation of credit and workload distribution.
- **Theme:** *Workload determination is challenging and confusing—difficult to explain and how decided upon*
- **Theme:** *Workload variation*

# Strength of DNP Project Team

**Describe the strengths regarding your program's DNP faculty project team structure: (70 responses)**

- **Theme:** *Relationship of faculty team with student includes faculty expertise and support*
- **Theme:** *Project team make-up with experienced and content expert faculty*
- **Theme:** *Form and function important to successful projects*

# Challenges with DNP Project Team

**Describe challenges experienced with your DNP faculty project team structure: (72 responses)**

- **Theme:** *Students, Students, and More Students*
- **Theme:** *So much to do, so little time: How do you manage it all?*
- **Theme:** *Experience and Expertise: How much is enough?*
- **Theme:** *We need structure and consistency in project work*

# DNP Project and Curriculum Integration

If the DNP project is linked to a course, provide a brief description of how the DNP project is incorporated into the course. (68 responses)

- **Theme:** *Start early, and stay focused*
- **Theme:** *Coursework, project work, practice: How do we integrate for greater effectiveness and efficiency*

# Group Projects

**If your program offers the opportunity to engage in group DNP projects (select all that apply): (over 40 responses)**

- Yes: 31.5%
- No: 68.4%
  
- **Theme:** *Teams can work with clear, well-defined roles, responsibilities, structure*
  
- **Theme:** *Impact and sustainability*



# Conclusions Related to Research Questions

## Commonalities in the implementation of DNP Projects among DNP programs in the United States:

### Demographics

- Offer BSN-DNP and Post MSN DNP programs
- Teach courses in the DNP Program

### DNP Project Team Makeup

- 2-3 members plus the student
- Chair is the most common title for the faculty project lead
- 72% of programs provide workload consideration for DNP project work

### Group Project Practices

- 68% did not engage in group/team DNP projects

### DNP Scholarly Project

- Dissemination In person, public, podium/poster presentation
- Similar topics/categories of project types

# Conclusions Related to Research Questions

**What are the differences in the implementation of DNP Projects among DNP programs in the United States?**

## **DNP Project Team Makeup**

- Maximum number of project team members highly variable
- Only 12 programs require projects to be linked to faculty interests
- Number of projects lead/facilitated – highly variable

## **Group Project Practices**

- Programs are in various stages of implementing group/team projects
- Details around implementation are highly variable

## **DNP Scholarly Project**

- Differences in scholarly project publication requirements
- About 50% use a portfolio

# Conclusions Related to Research Questions

**Specific practices related to the makeup of DNP project committees/teams, current practices related to group projects and required DNP Scholarly Project final products:**

Shared in the preliminary qualitative results

# Overall Conclusions

- Many similarities in what we call projects, who is on project teams and types of projects.
- Wide variations in facets of the project from the planning, implementation, evaluation and dissemination phases.
- Faculty Workload remains a concern specific to how time/credit/workload allocated.
- The practice mentor's role/impact needs further exploration.
- Project format and more structured guidance for the DNP Project is desired by some.
- Execution of group/team projects needs further exploration.
- DNP project outcomes and sustainability needs further study.

# Discussion/Next Steps.....

