



Office of International Education
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



Lost in Translation: Engaging students through post-return activities

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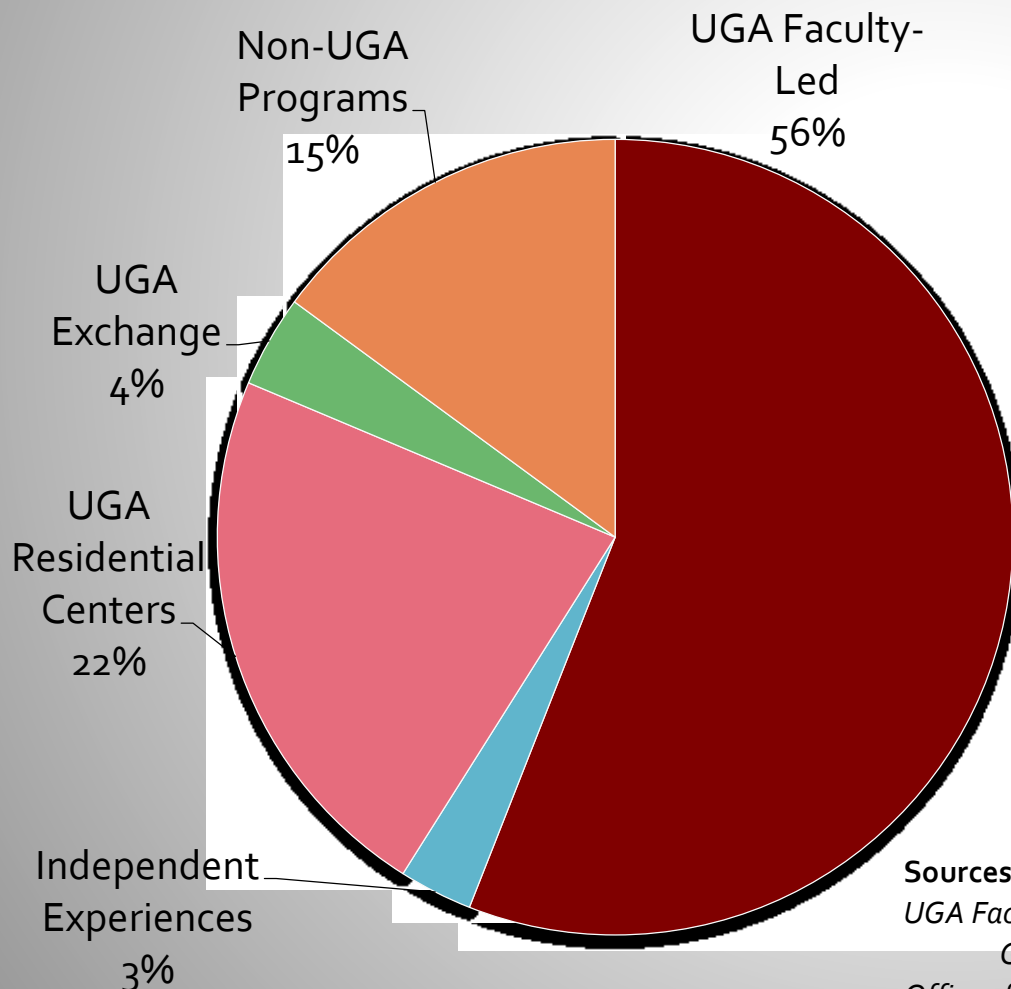
Overview



- Education Abroad at UGA
- Engagement at UGA upon return
- Students returning from international activities
 - Feedback from UGA students
 - Lessons learned
 - Plans for the Future
- Barriers to post-return engagement
- Discussion

Education Abroad at UGA

2015-2016 Academic Year



- 2,600+ students participated in international activities for academic credit
- 300-500 engaged in not-for-credit international experiences

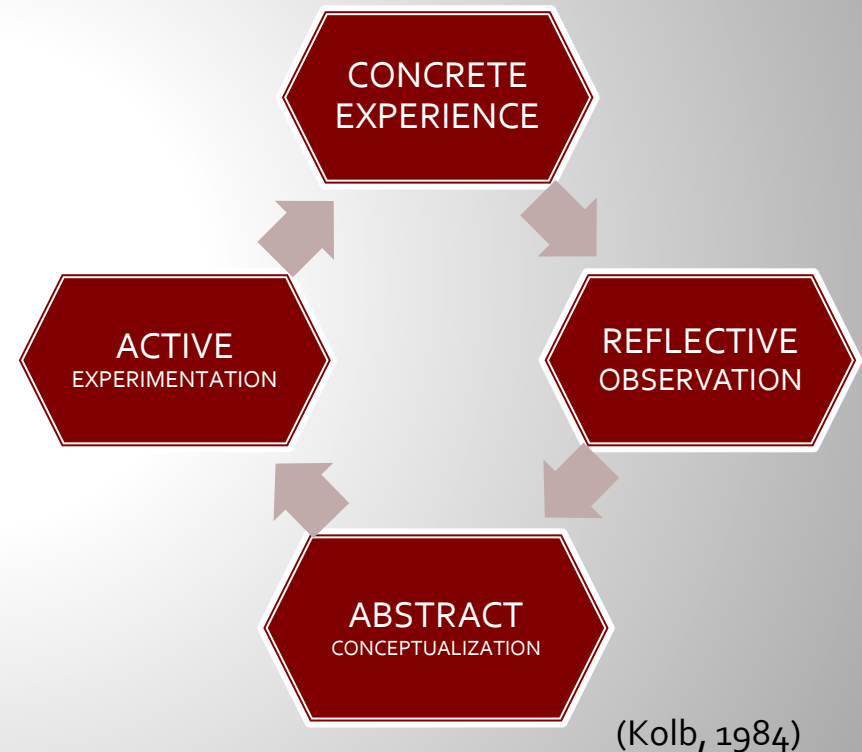
Sources:

UGA Fact Book. Publication. Office of Institutional Research, University of Georgia. Office of Institutional Research, 2015. Web. 14 Sept. 2016.
Office of International Education GoAbroad Portal Statistics from 2015-2016.

Study abroad experiences are complex!




- Student modes of meaning making can exist on a continuum from simplistic to complex (Perry, 1981)
- Level of structure, diversity, experiential learning, and personalism of study abroad activities act as challenge and support variables (Knefelkamp, 1999)



Engagement Upon Return




■ Reflection

- **Re-entry workshop** 
- Reflection exercises
- Return assignments


■ Peer Discussion

- Returned student panel
- Post-return group meetings
- **Junior Advisor opportunities** 

■ Continued Involvement

- Volunteering at sponsored events
- Options to go abroad again
- **Student organizations** 

■ Development

- Return conferences
- Career Center collaboration
- **Certificate programs** 

Life After Study Abroad

Re-entry workshop



- Top challenges of returned students
- Overview of reverse culture shock
- Strategies for readjusting
- Practice reflection
- Returned student panel

REFLECTION

PEER
DISCUSSION

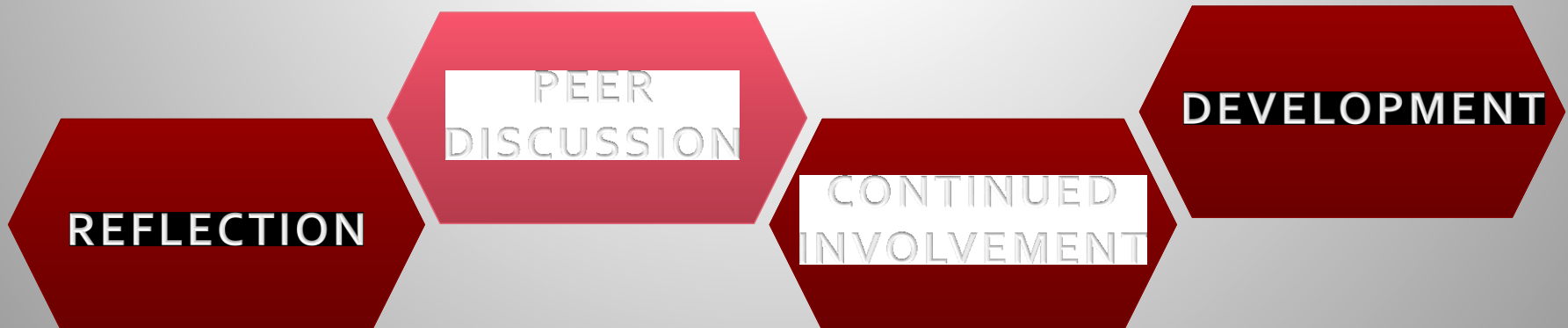
CONTINUED
INVOLVEMENT

DEVELOPMENT

Junior Education Abroad Advisors



- Employment opportunity for returned students
 - Walk-in advising
 - Classroom presentations
 - Information sessions
- Students hone their ability to speak about their experience in a professional way and share their knowledge with peers

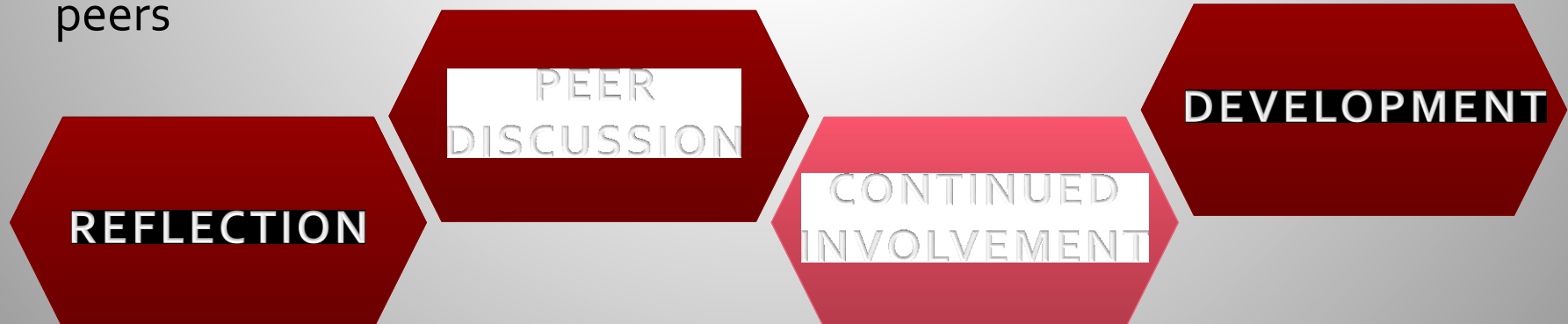


Education Abroad Ambassadors

Student-run organization

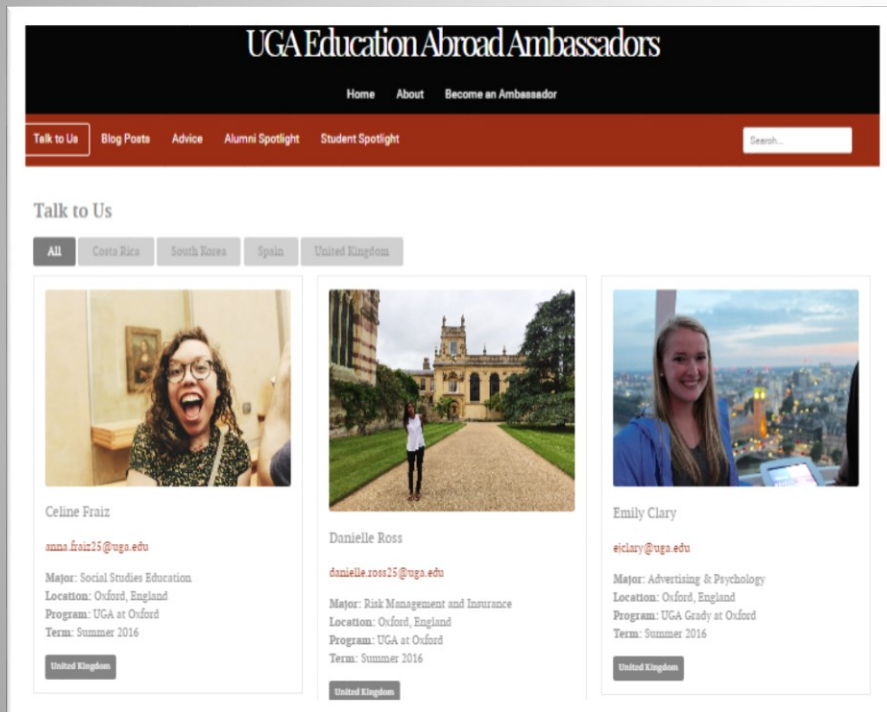


- Student organization for returned students
 - Outreach for study abroad activities
 - Scholarship fundraising
 - Workshops and campus events
 - Participate in social and service activities
- Students promote study abroad across campus to increase awareness of study abroad experiences and form a globally-minded community of peers



EAA Magazine

Education Abroad Ambassadors



- Study abroad digital magazine
 - “Talk to Us” Page
 - Blog posts, advice, recipes, packing lists, etc!
 - Reports on study abroad statistics at UGA
- “The people behind study abroad”

Global Education & Leadership Certificate

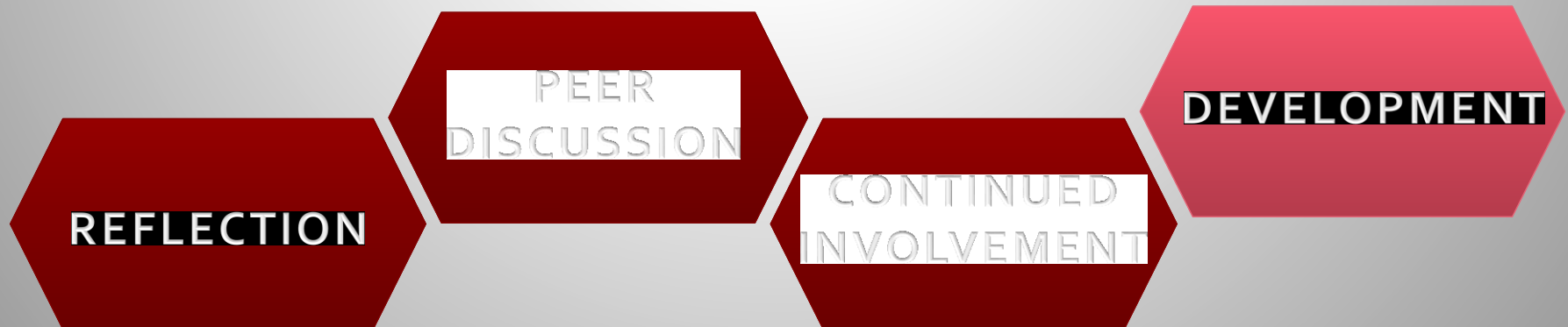


REQUIREMENTS

- Cultural involvement
- Post-return integration
- UGA involvement
- Global involvement
- Advising
- Capstone project

CURRENT STATUS

- Launched Spring 2016
- 24 applicants
- On average 1 year to complete upon return
- No academic credits

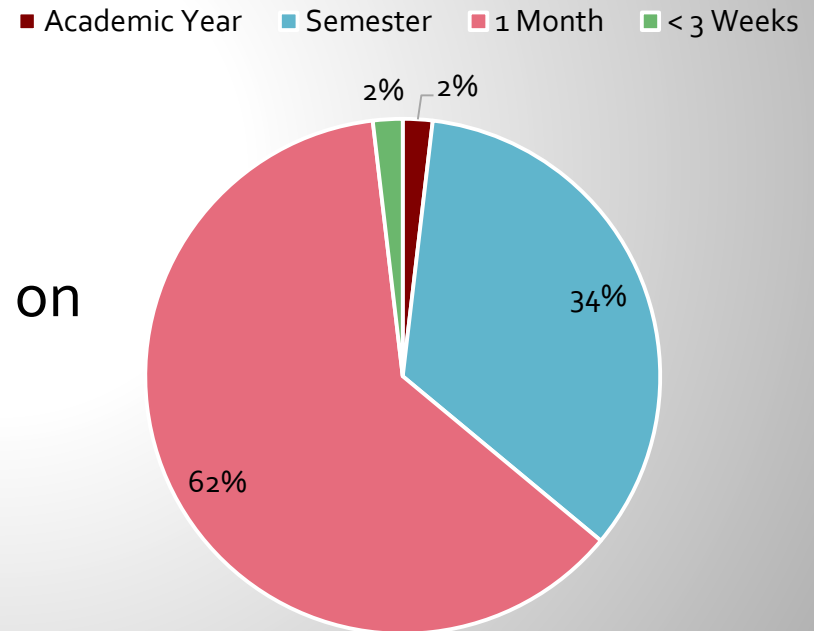


Survey of Returned Students

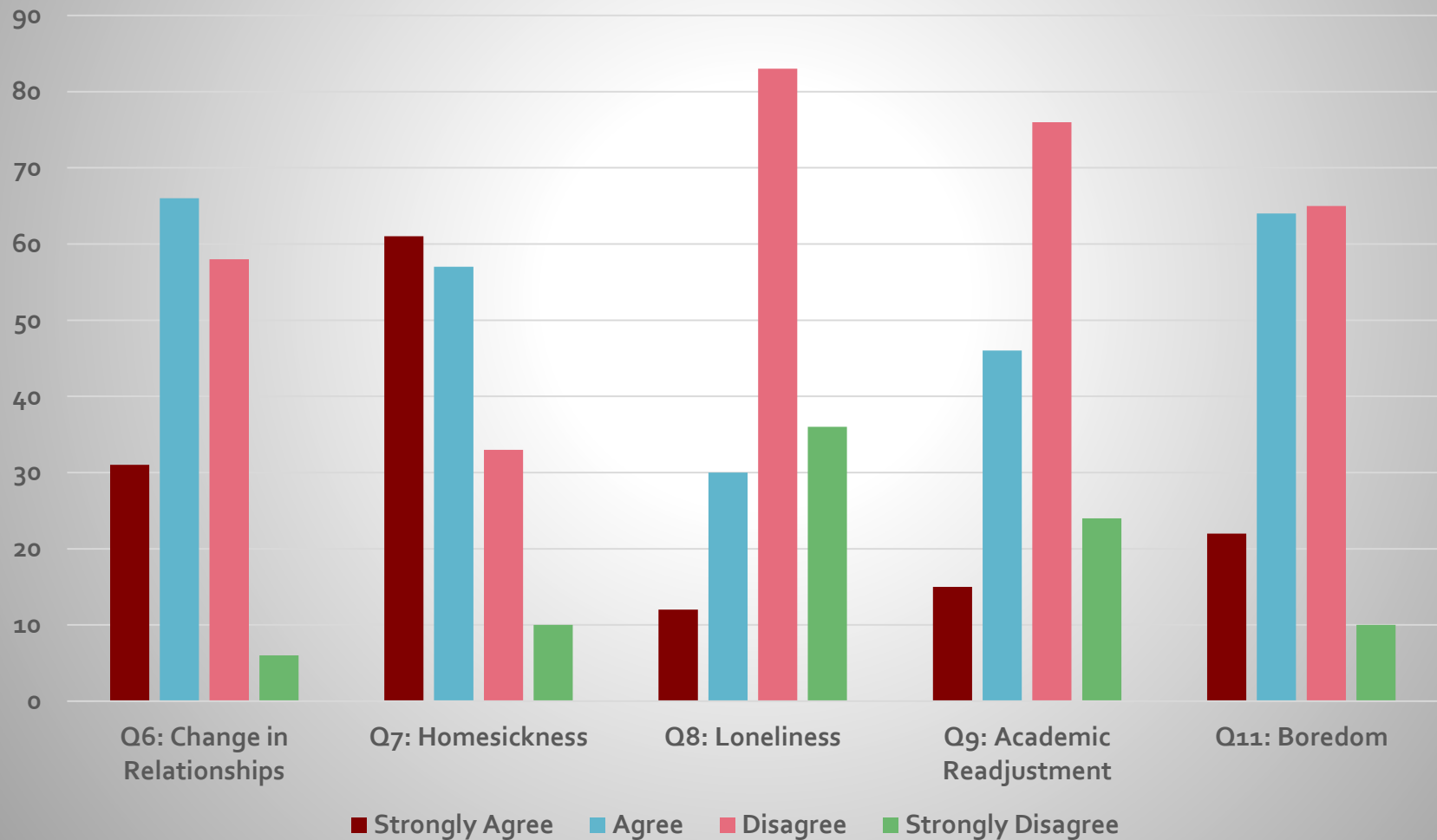


- 161 responses/ 2150
 - 7% response rate
- Surveyed recently returned students (2015-2016)
- Questions involving statements on a Likert-type scale
- Assessed return experiences, interest in return activities, influence on goals

Study Durations of Respondents



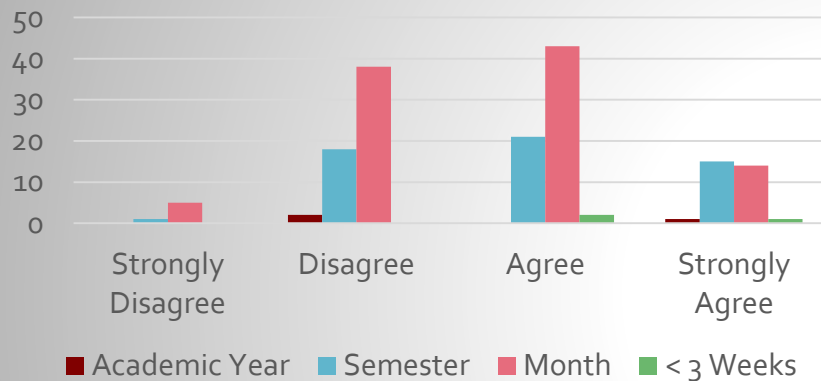
Upon return from my program, I experienced a period of...



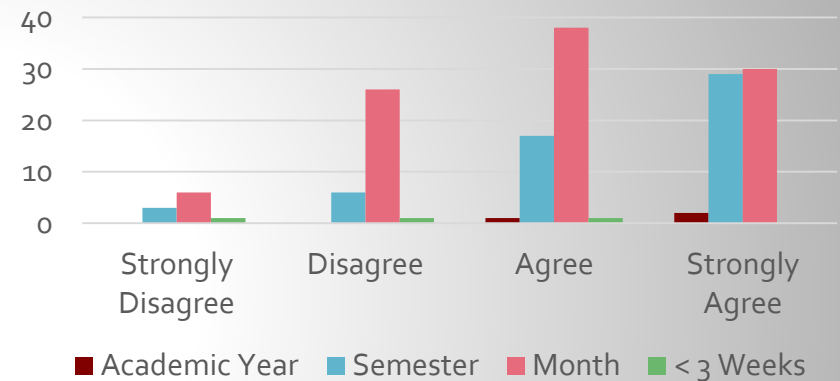
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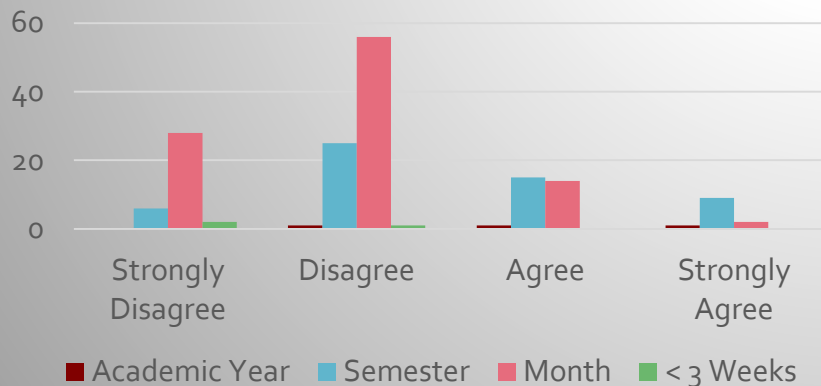
Q6: Change in Relationships



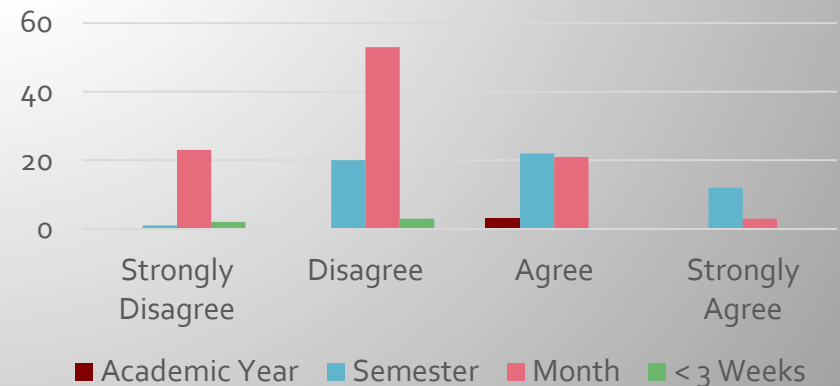
Q7: Homesickness



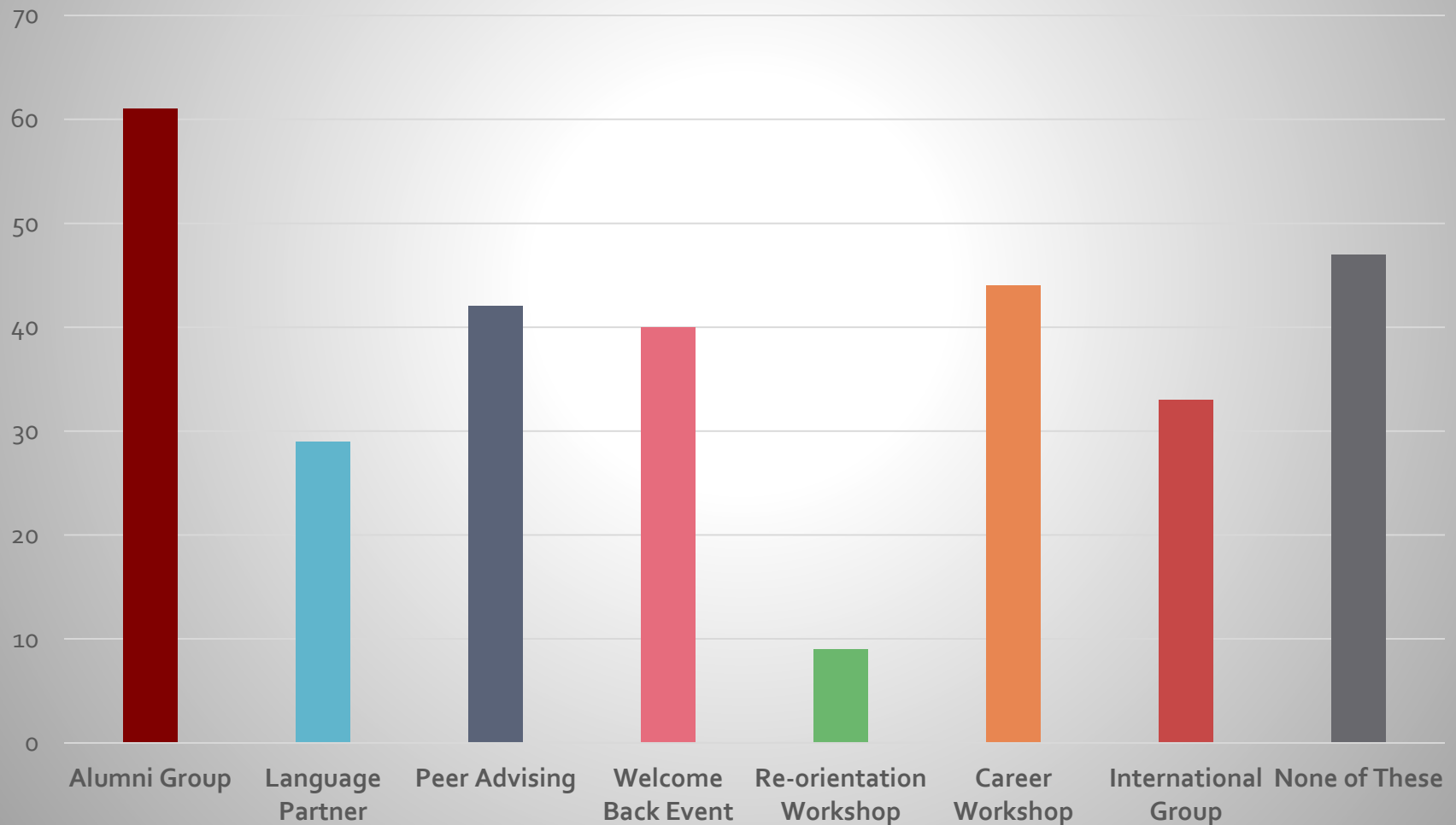
Q8: Loneliness



Q9: Academic Readjustment



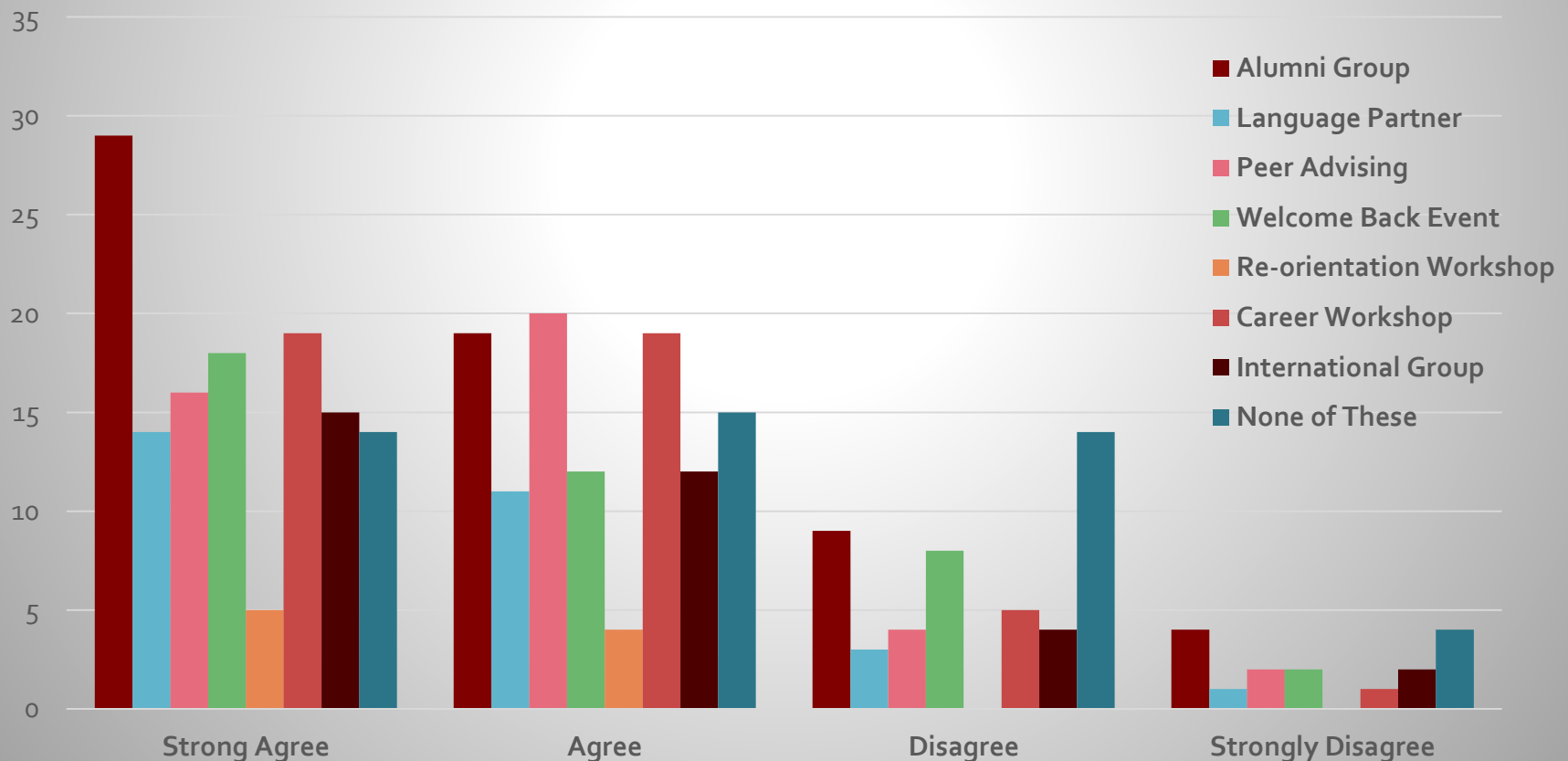
Q16: Are there any general opportunities in which you would have wanted to participate upon return?



Homesickness + Interest



Students who agreed or strongly agreed that they experienced a period of homesickness upon their return tended to be more interested in post-return study abroad activities:



Other Interesting Findings...



- **100%** of respondents did not attend a re-entry workshop
 - **77%** were not aware of it, but **33%** would have been interested in attending had they known
- Study abroad influence on goals:
 - **60%** of respondents indicated their **academic** goals changed
 - **84%** of respondents indicated their **personal** goals changed
 - **64%** of respondents indicated their **professional** goals changed
- Multiple students commented that “readjustment counseling” would have been a desired resource upon return from study abroad

Lessons Learned Overall



- Students abroad for longer programs are more likely to experience loneliness and homesickness upon return
- Significant interest in social opportunities
- More interest in career workshop vs. re-orientation
- Students prefer to receive information about opportunities via email or listserv
- Be more intentional about return advising and support
- Continue to assess experiences of students upon return

Plans for the Future



- Welcome back event for all students
- Re-entry workshop series
 - Optional hour-long sessions for reflection, reverse culture shock, career integration
 - Strongly encourage new EA Ambassadors to attend
- Study abroad alumni listserv
- Offer return advising

Barriers to Post-Return Engagement



- Student participation
 - Demonstrating value of attending
 - Effective way of informing about opportunities
- Funding for activities
- Staff availability
- Data supporting need
 - Determining what programming students want
- Effectiveness of programs delivered





Questions? Comments?
Thank you!

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