Sharing Experiential Learning **Data, Trends and Best Practices**

2024

Experiential Learning Benchmark Report

Published October 21, 2024

Presented by

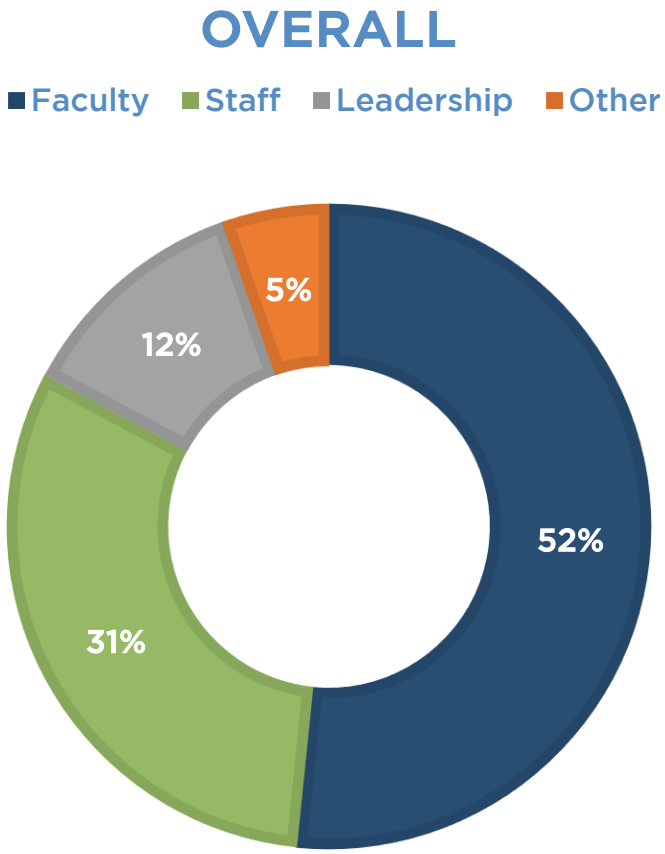
EduSourced

Edusourced.com

Feedback Loop

getfeedbackloop.com

2024 Survey Participants



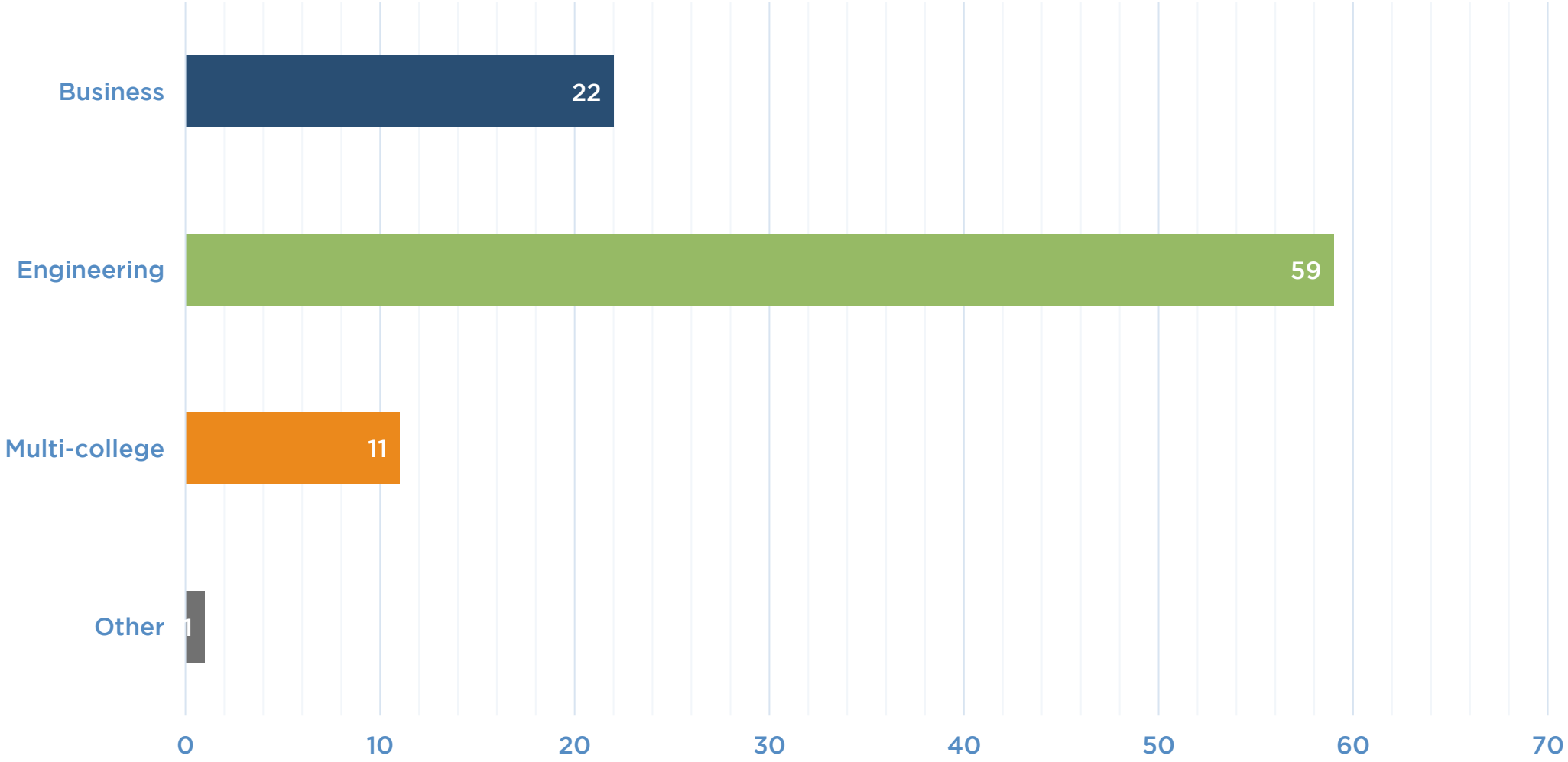
93

Participants

82%

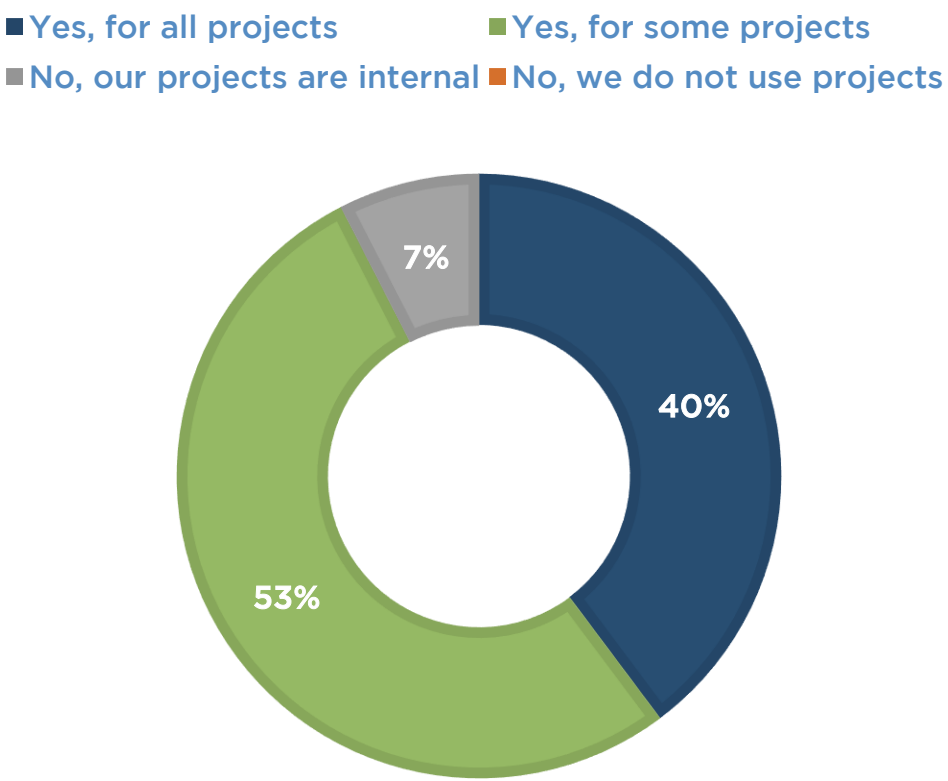
Directly Involved with Experiential

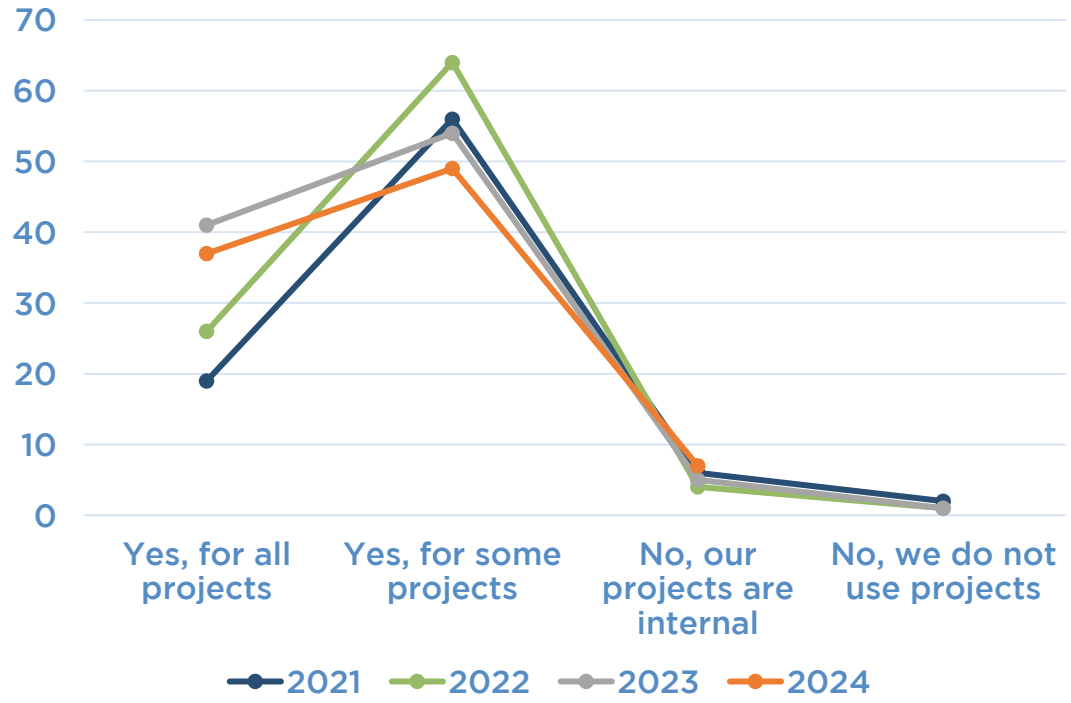
Participant Backgrounds



Are Live Clients Involved?

ALL DISCIPLINES





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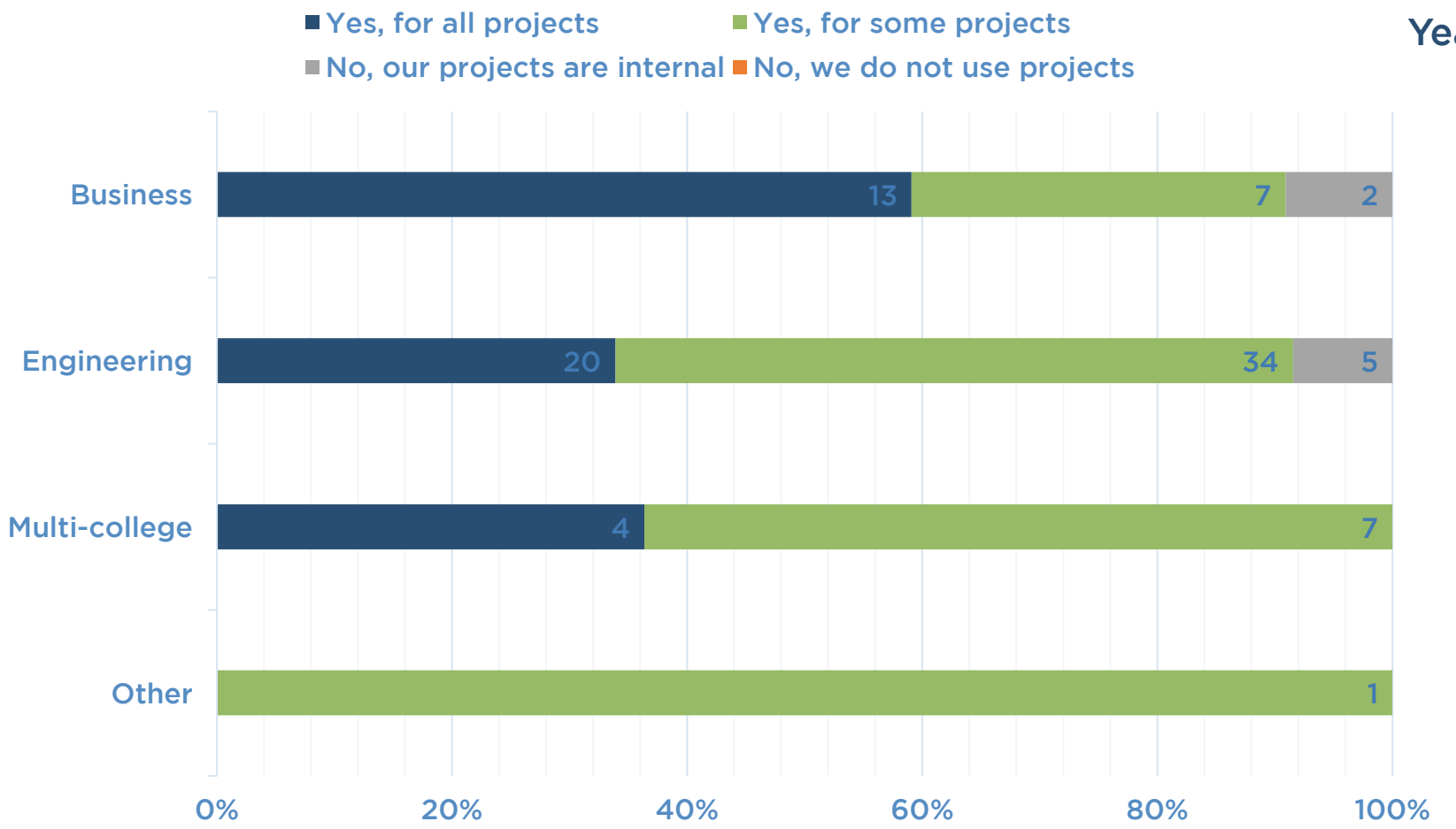
Are Live Clients Involved? By Discipline



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Year over Year change, likelihood to use any live clients

-2 pts

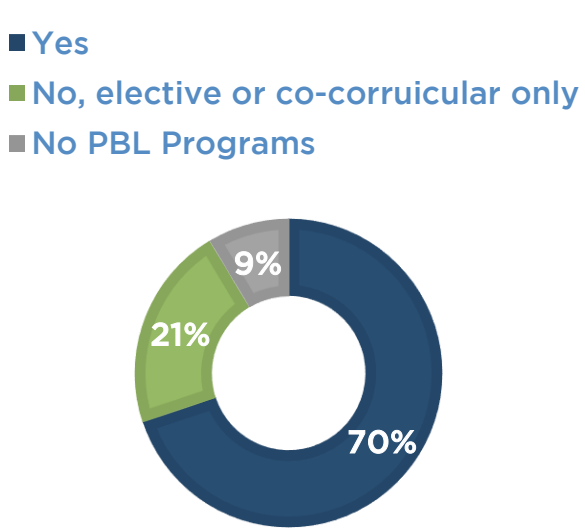
-8 pts

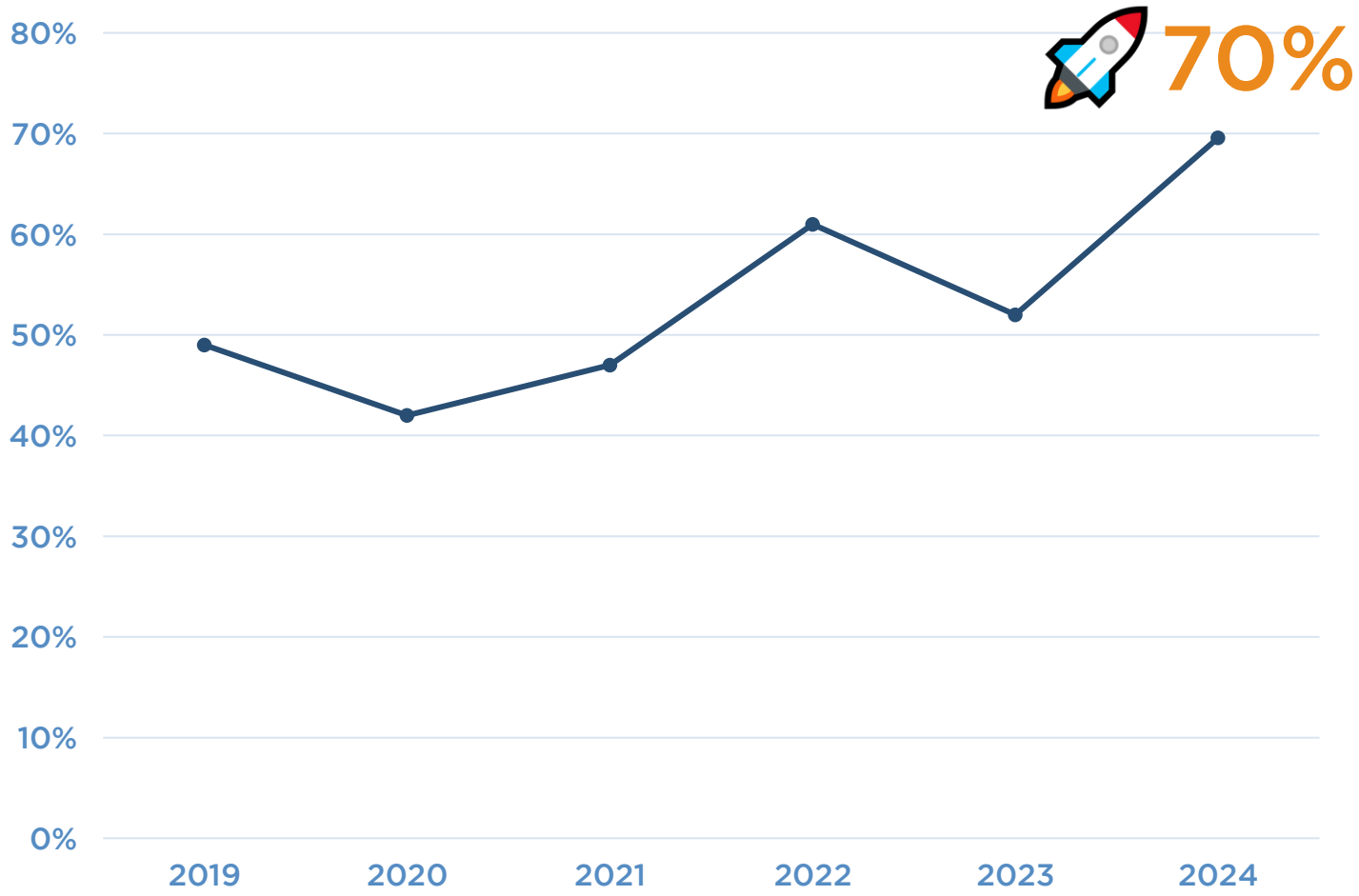
+11 pts

No Change

Experiential Project-based Learning Requirement Trendline

ALL DISCIPLINES





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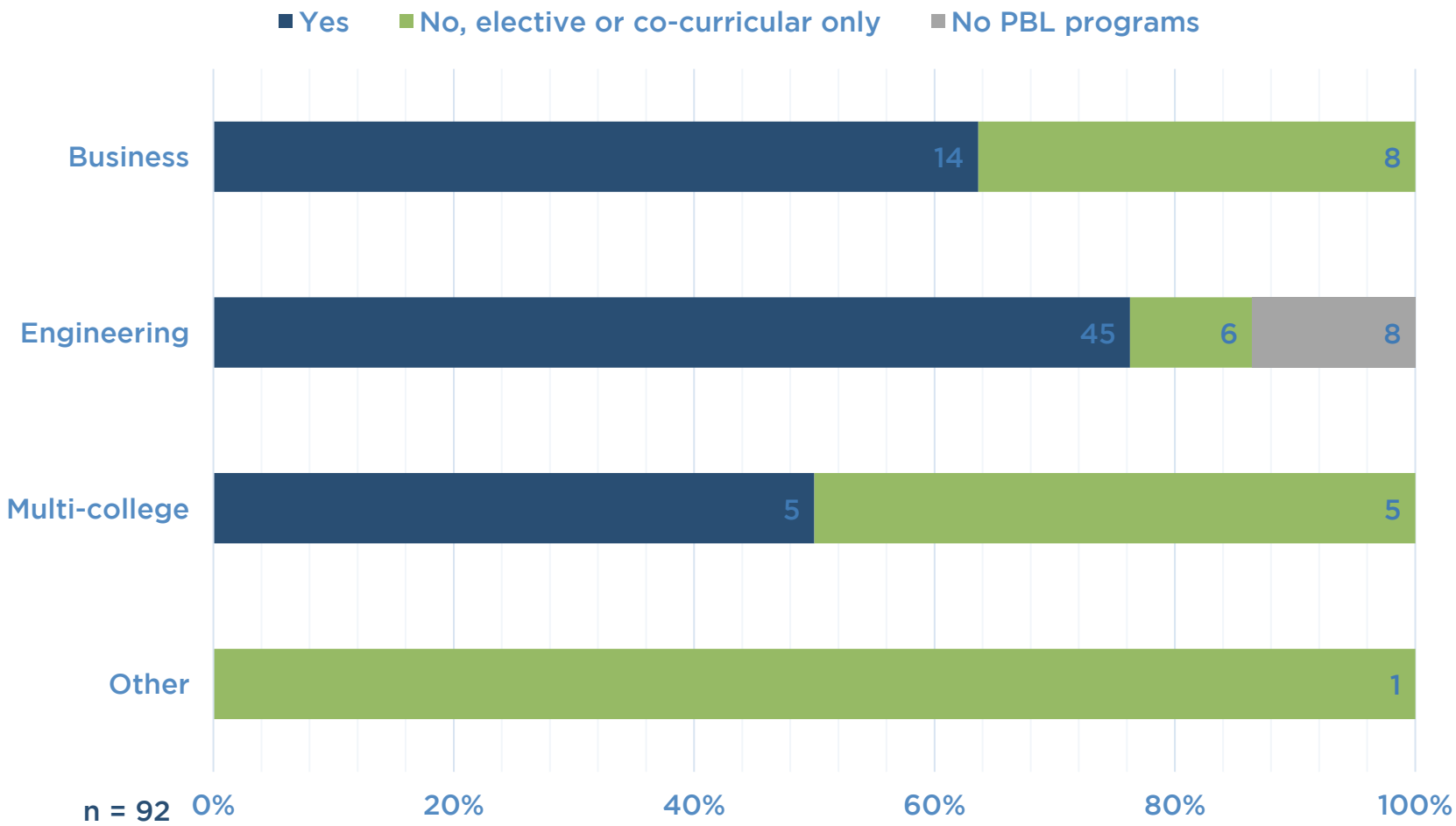
Required Experiential PBL Program By Discipline



Year over Year

+18 pts

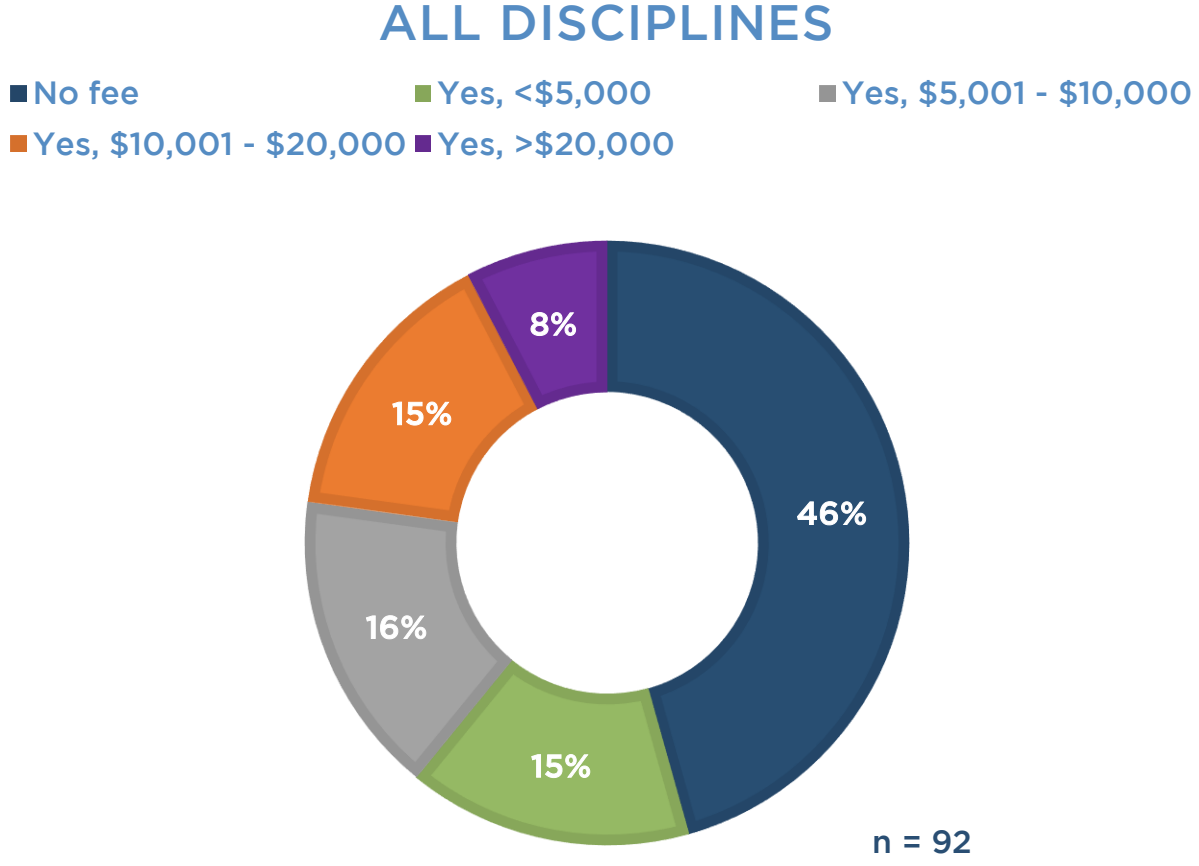
Business programs requiring PBL

-3 pts

Engineering programs requiring PBL

Project Fees: How Much do Programs Charge?

ALL DISCIPLINES



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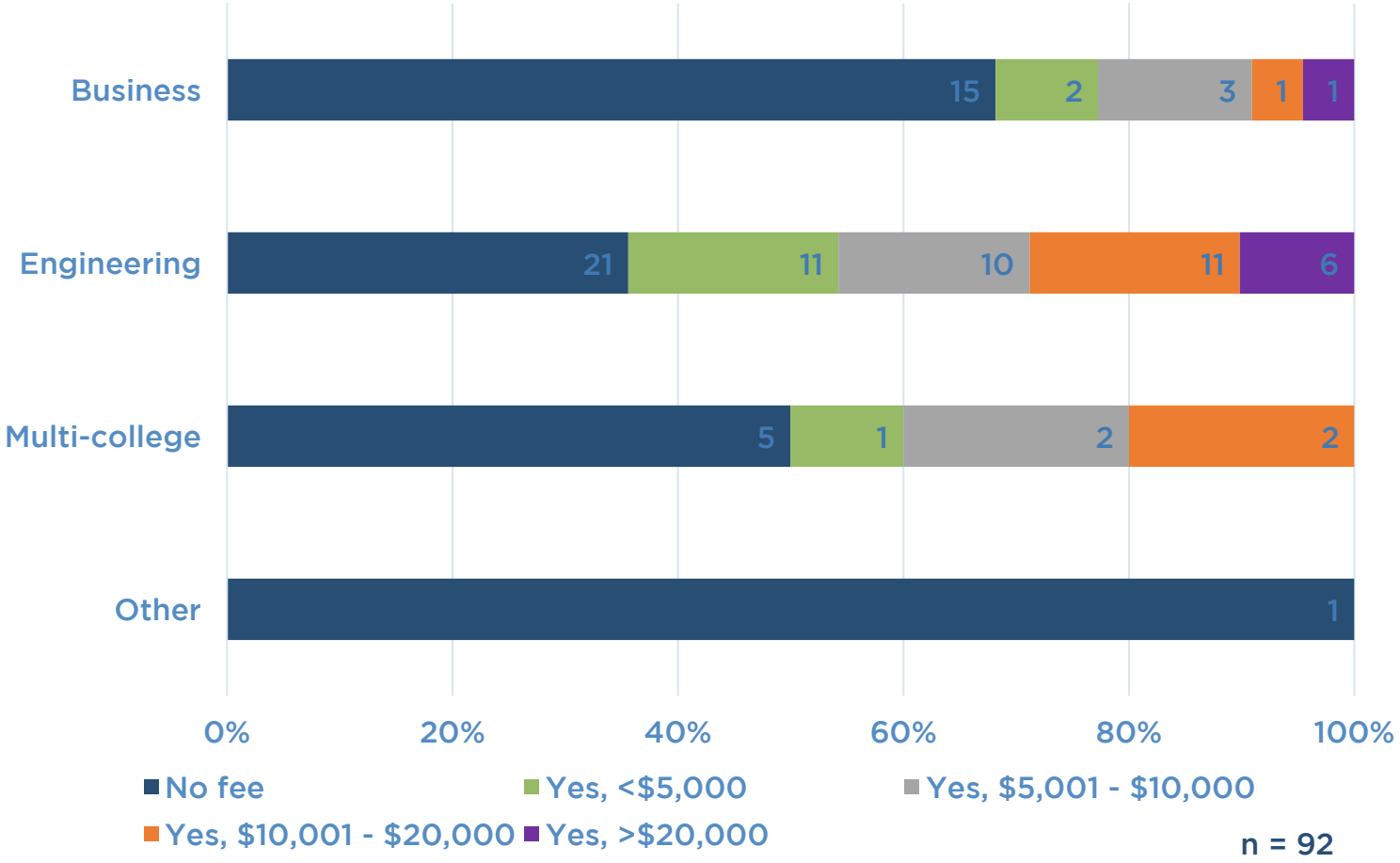
Charging a Fee			
2021	2022	2023*	2024*
37%	49%	22%	54%

*Question changed to exclude only covering materials costs

Project Fees: How Much do Programs Charge? By Discipline



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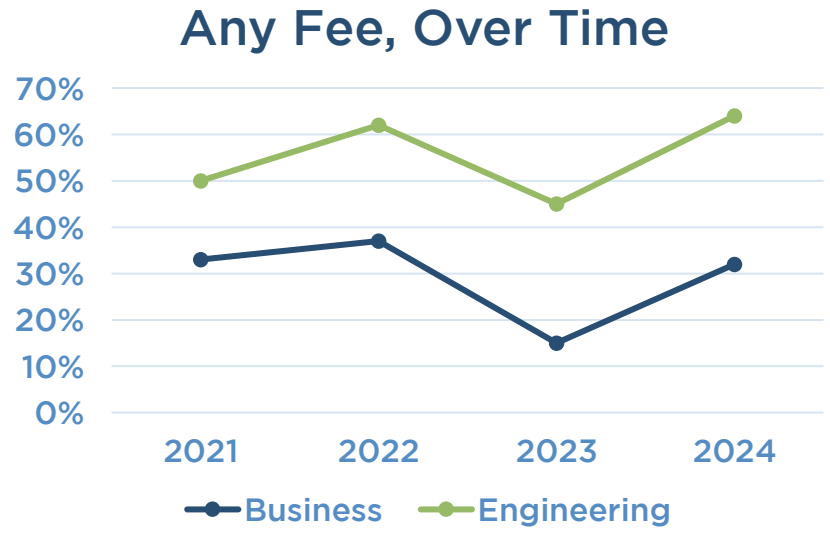


EduSourced Data

Average price per paid project, Academic Year 2023 - 2024

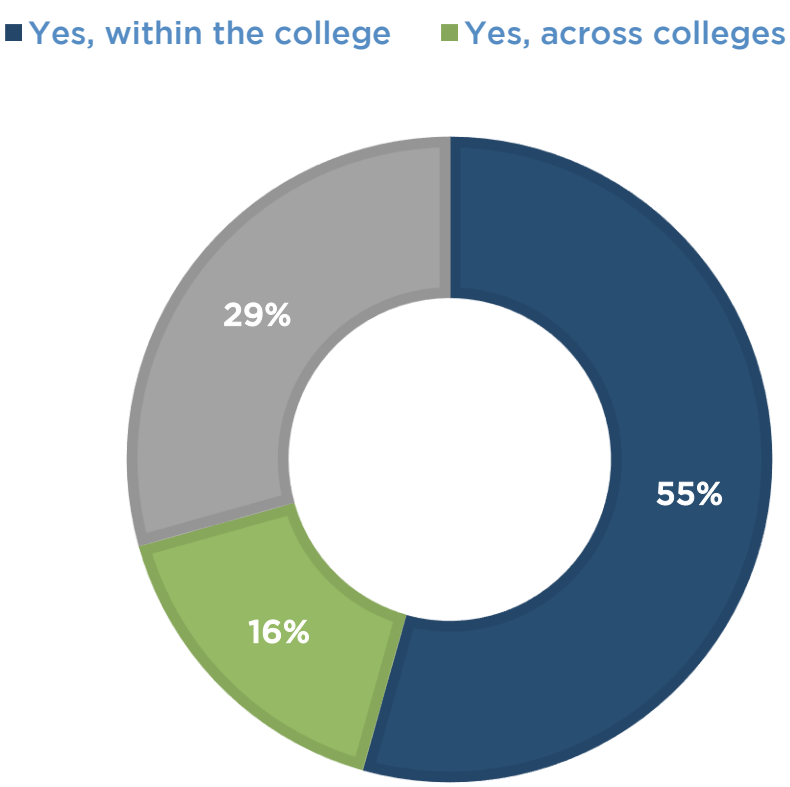
$4,449 (+$817 Year over Year)

Most expensive project recorded in 2024

$22,000

Does Your Program Include Multidisciplinary Projects?

ALL DISCIPLINES



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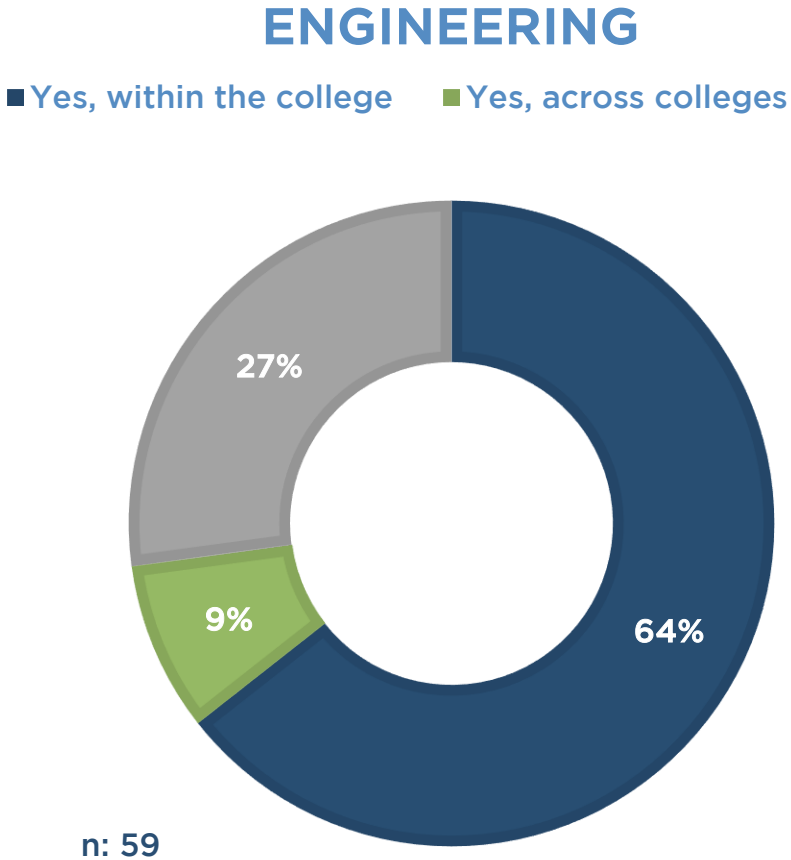
Virtually unchanged over the past 2 years

Does Your Program Include Multidisciplinary Projects? By Discipline

ENGINEERING



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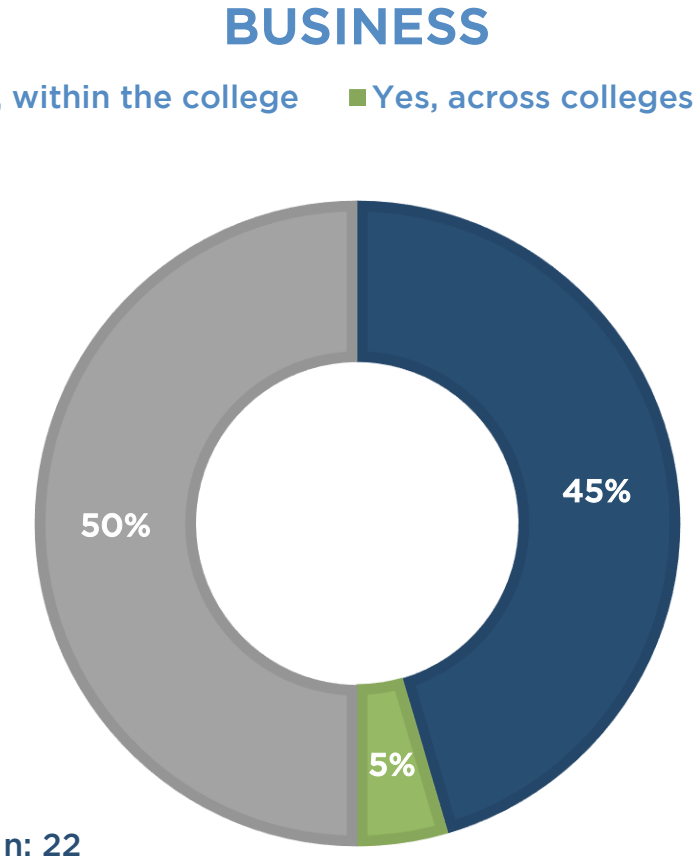
BUSINESS



n: 22

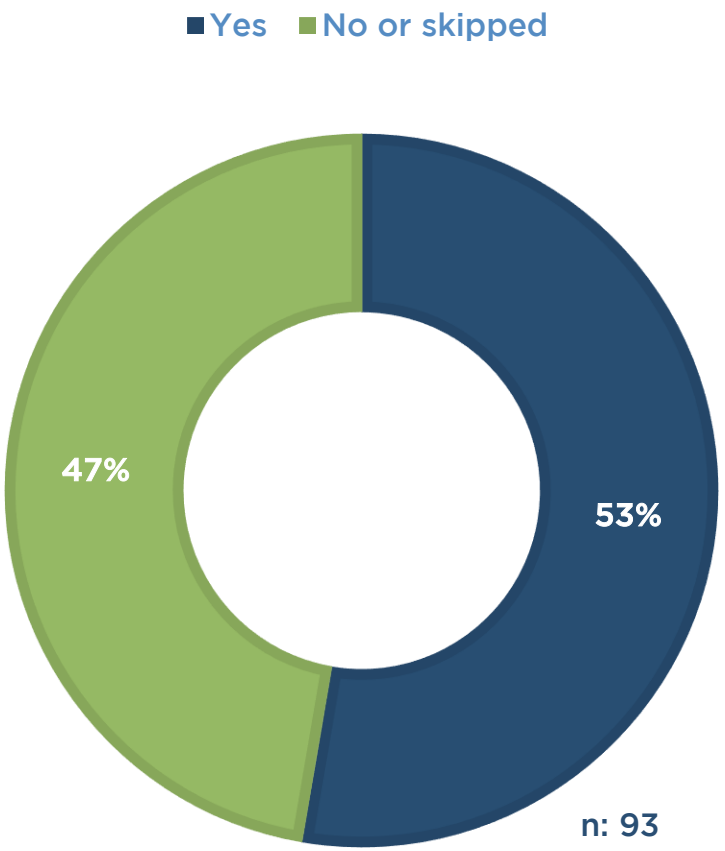
Year over Year Trend

Engineering: **-2 pts**

Business: **-13 pts**

2024 wiped out 4 years of gradual gains putting multidisciplinary occurrence back to 2019 levels

Are There Any Innovations or New Components to Your Experiential Initiatives that you are Particularly Excited About?



Year over Year Trend
+5 pts: more programs reporting new innovations

Experiential Learning Innovations
Key Themes from 56 Responses

1. Collaboration and Mentorship

- Building connections between alumni and student teams, MBA students leading undergrad teams and closer sponsor connections with teams.

2. Maximum Real-world Elements

- Clearly defined deliverables and long-term follow-up and maintenance of completed projects make this as real as it gets.

3. Applying Structure and Methodology

- Several responses focused on improving the structure of EL projects and leveraging tools to organize everything.

Full responses in addendum

EduSourced Data

20% (▼2 pts)

Current active projects in EduSourced include a mentor

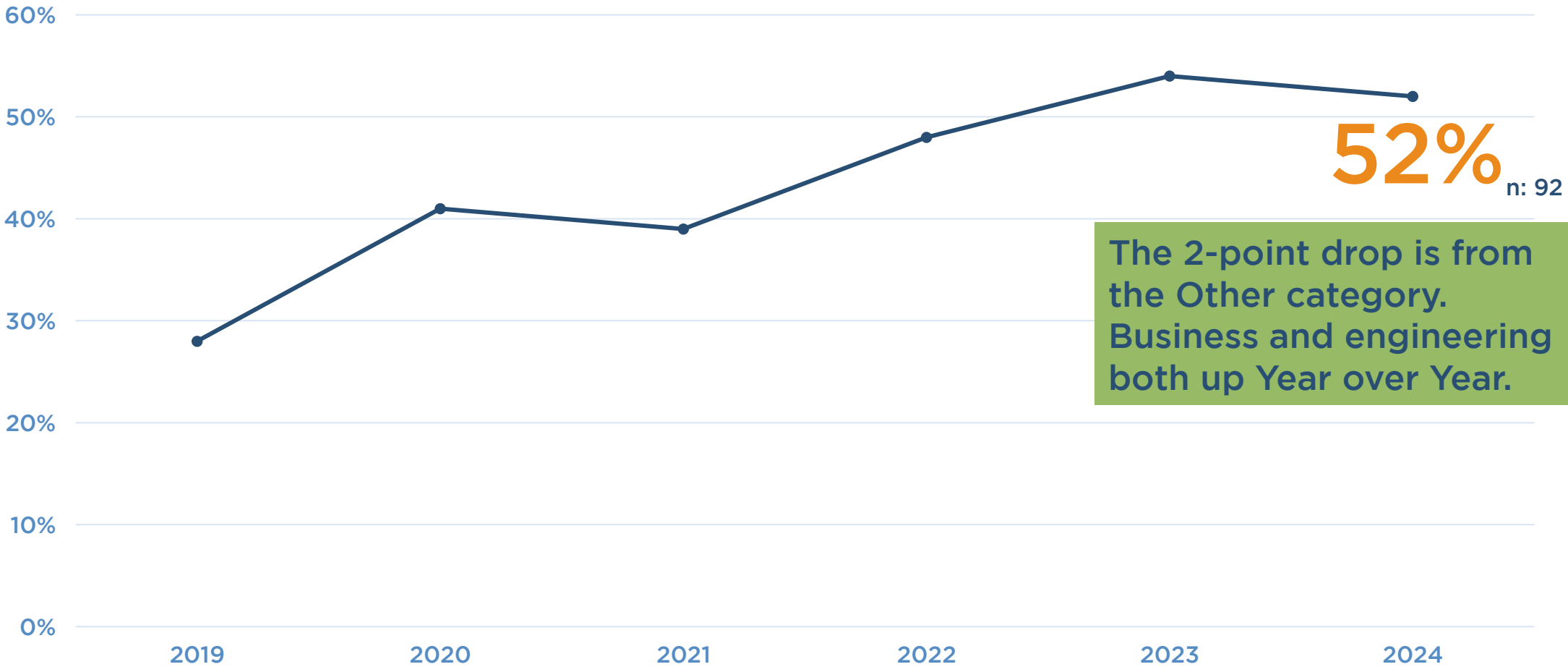
Formal Director or Office of Experiential Learning

Business	Multi-college	Engineering	Overall
64%	80%	44%	52%
			n: 92

Year over Year Trend

Engineering is +4 points, and Business is +12 points as formal offices in the core areas of business and engineering continue their rise.

Formal Director or Office of Experiential Trendline

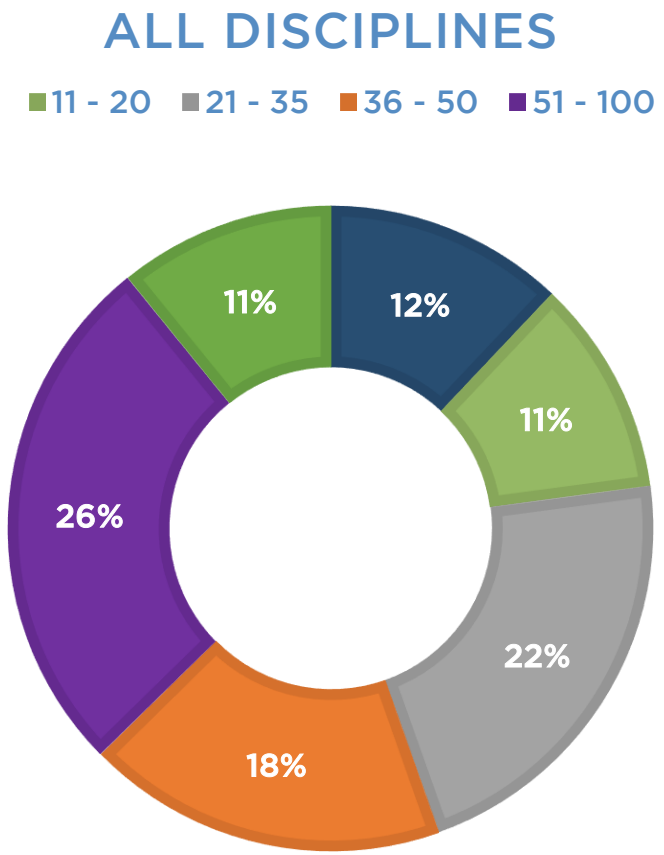


Project Sources, Ranked by Prevalence

1: Alumni +1
2: Office of experiential +1
3: Faculty Referred -2
4: Unsolicited inbound (-)
5: Career Office +1
6: Student referred -1
7: Third party project-sourcing service (-)

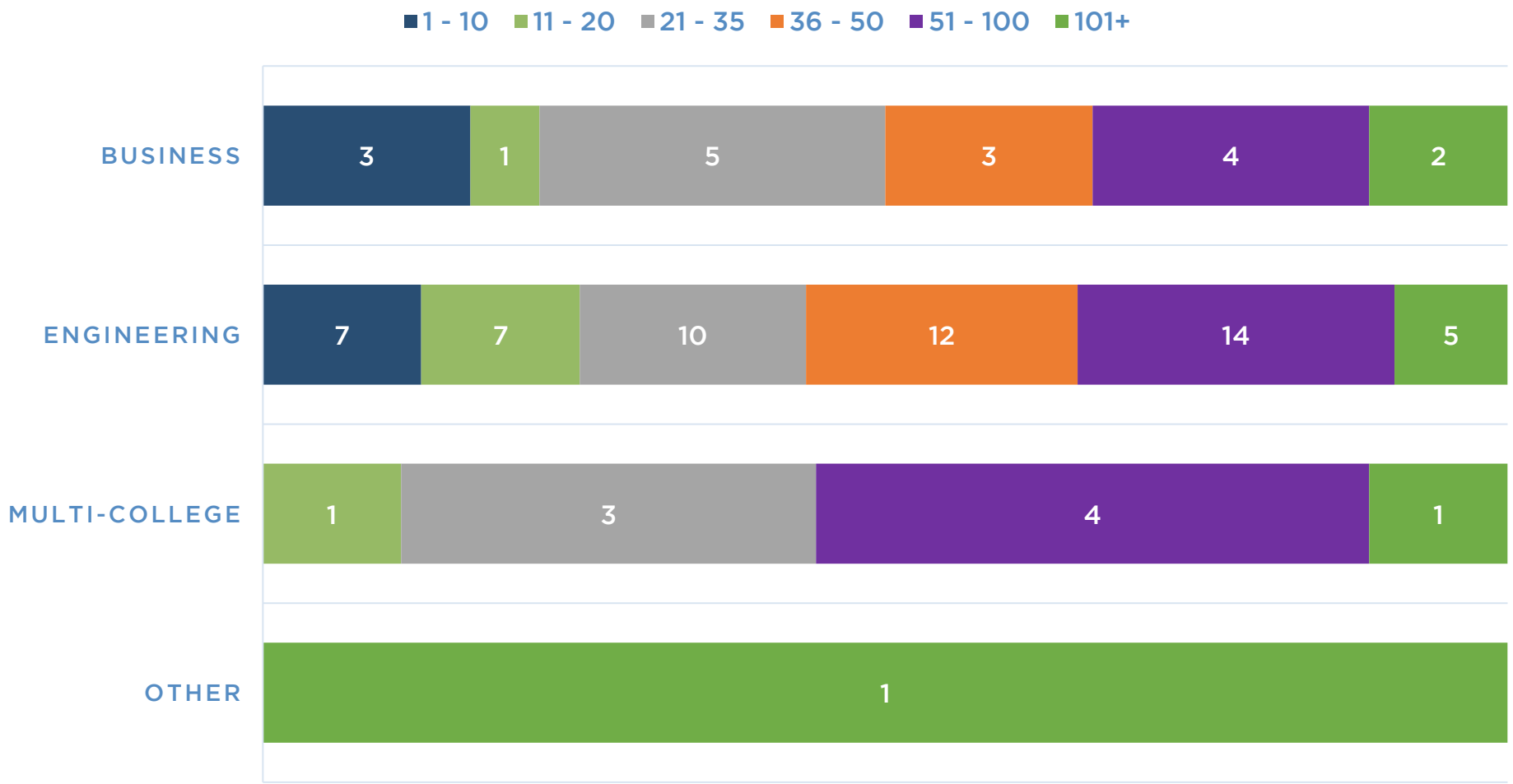
n: 81

Annual Project Count Within your College (not university-wide)



n: 83

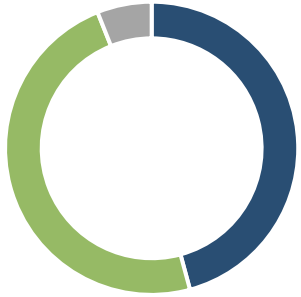
Annual Project Count Within your College (not university-wide) By Discipline



n: 83

NDA Usage

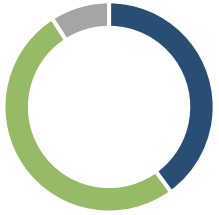
Overall (including "Other")



- Yes as a standard procedure
- Yes if the client insists
- No

n: 83

Engineering



- Yes as a standard procedure
- Yes if the client insists
- No

n: 55

Business

- Yes as a standard procedure
- Yes if the client insists
- No

n: 18

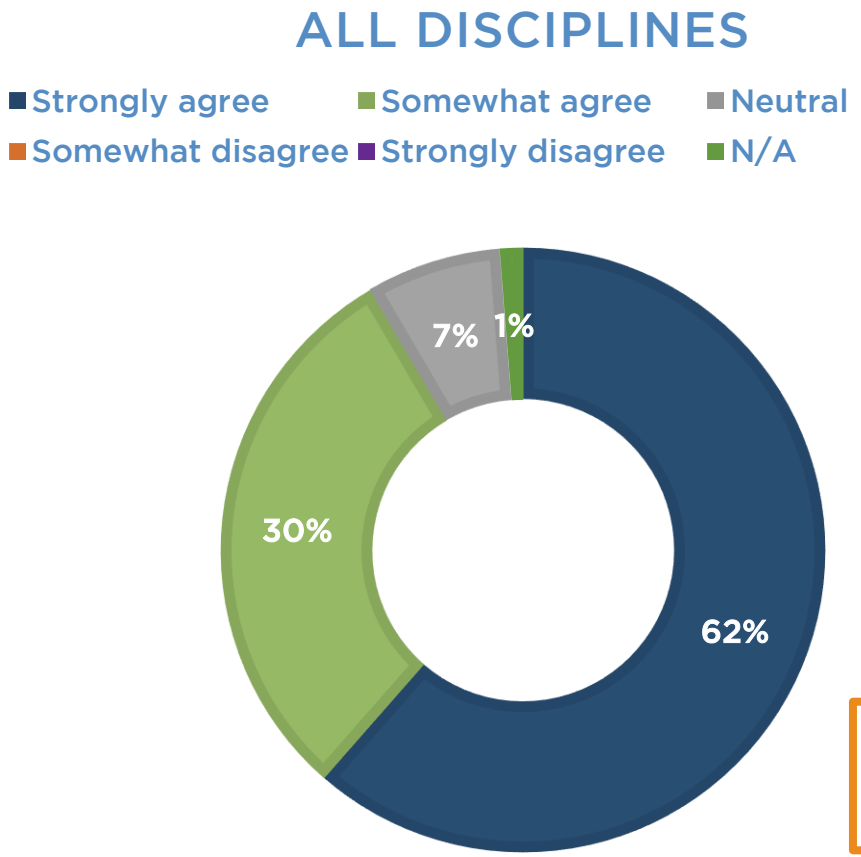
Multi-college

- Yes as a standard procedure
- Yes if the client insists
- No

n: 9

6% of programs, across all disciplines, will not use an NDA, even if a client insists (down from 21% year over year)

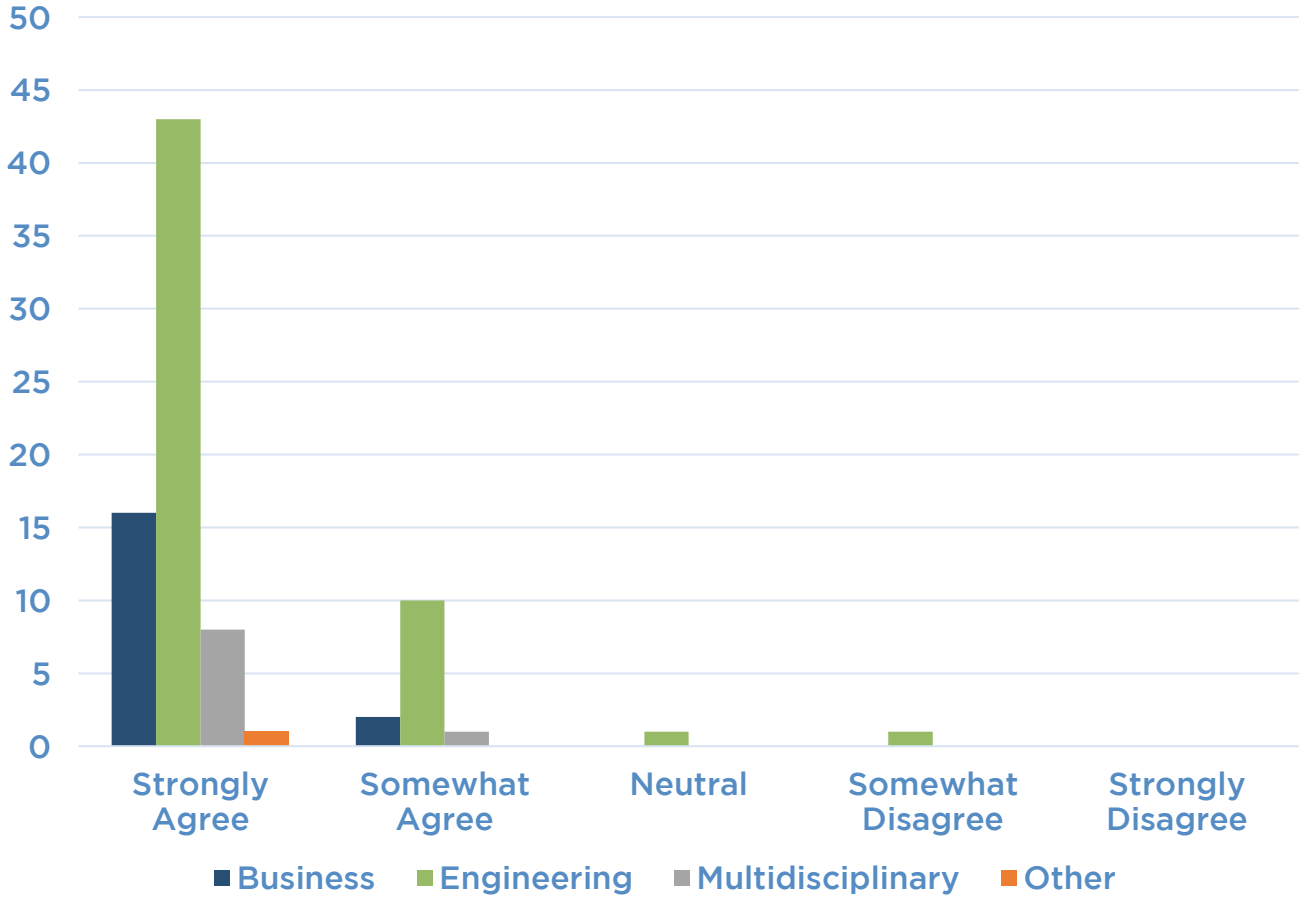
You Feel Your Program Sets Clear Expectations with Project Sponsors



n: 83

💡 This metric has consistently improved over the past 5 years

You Believe Industry Projects in the Classroom are Critical to a Student's Career Preparation.



n: 83

How Strongly do you Feel Industry Projects Jelp with their First Job?

2.8/3 Weighted Average

Unchanged Year over Year

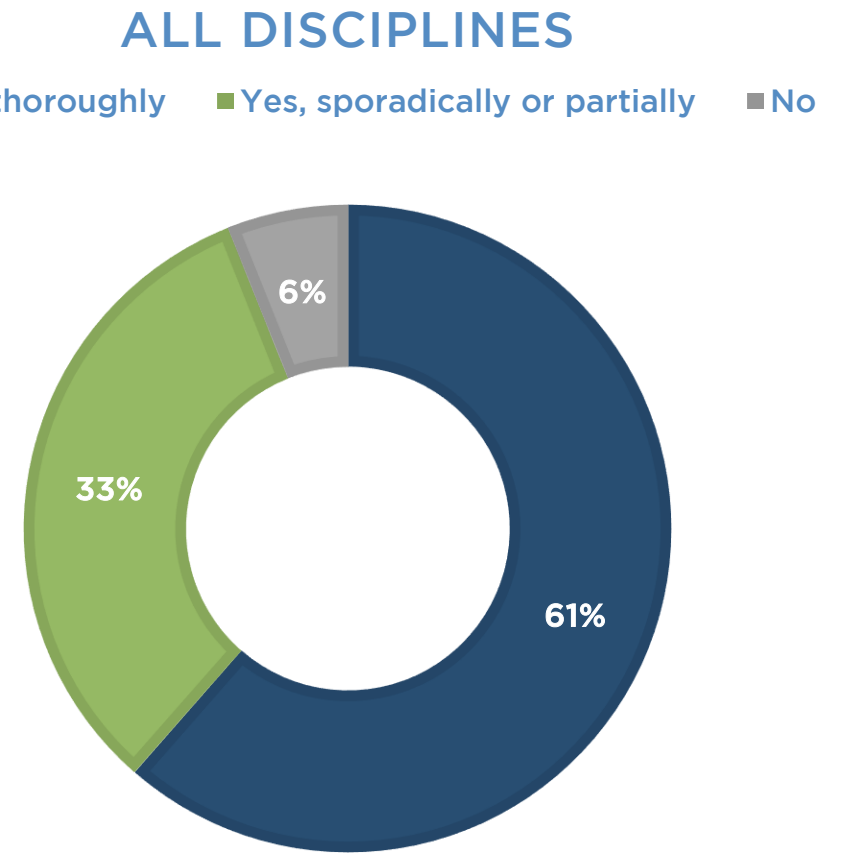
n: 83

How Strongly Do You Feel Industry Projects Help Prepare Students for a Future of Work Where AI Use is Prevalent?

2.1/3 Weighted Average

n: 79

Does your Program Measure Learning Outcomes?



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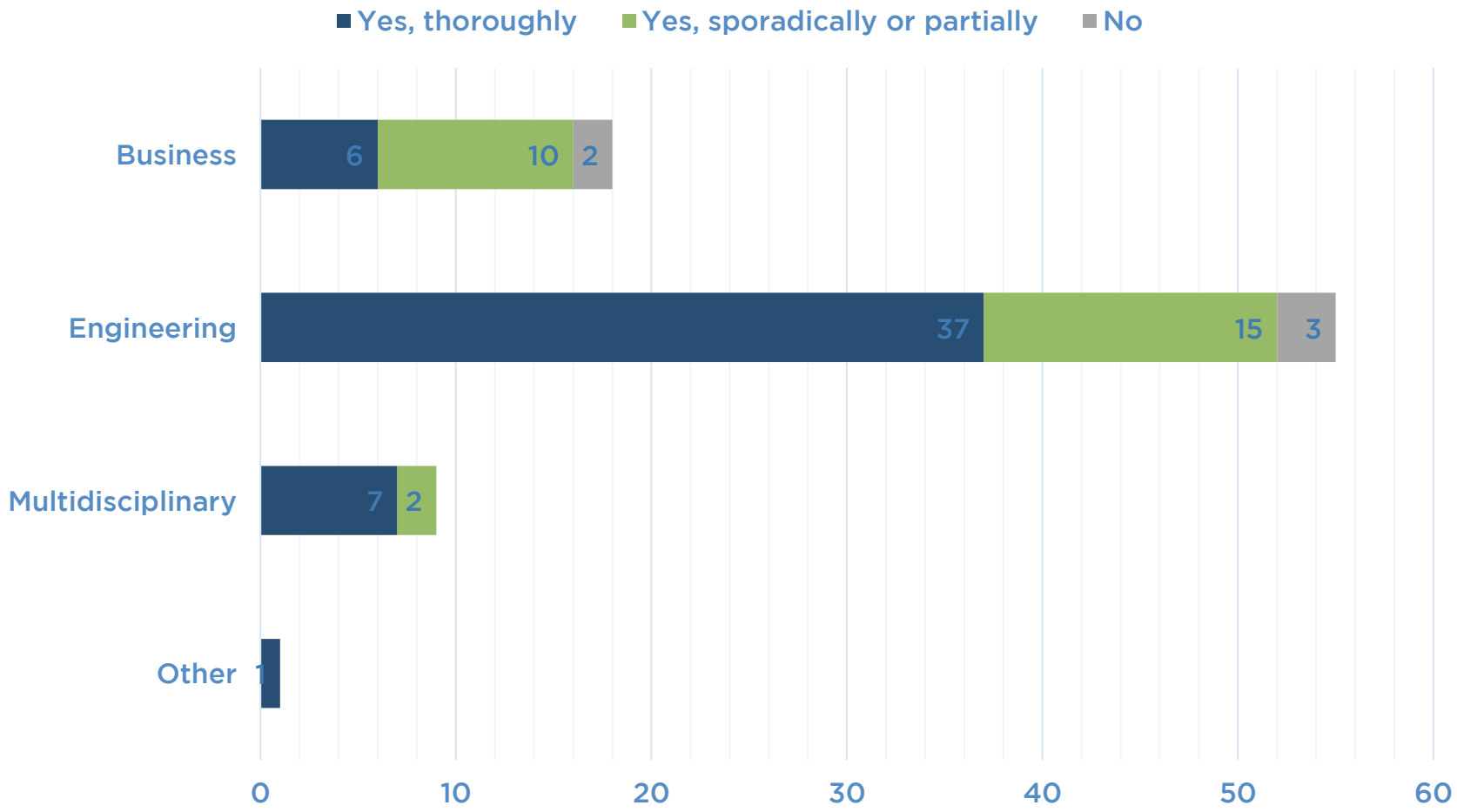
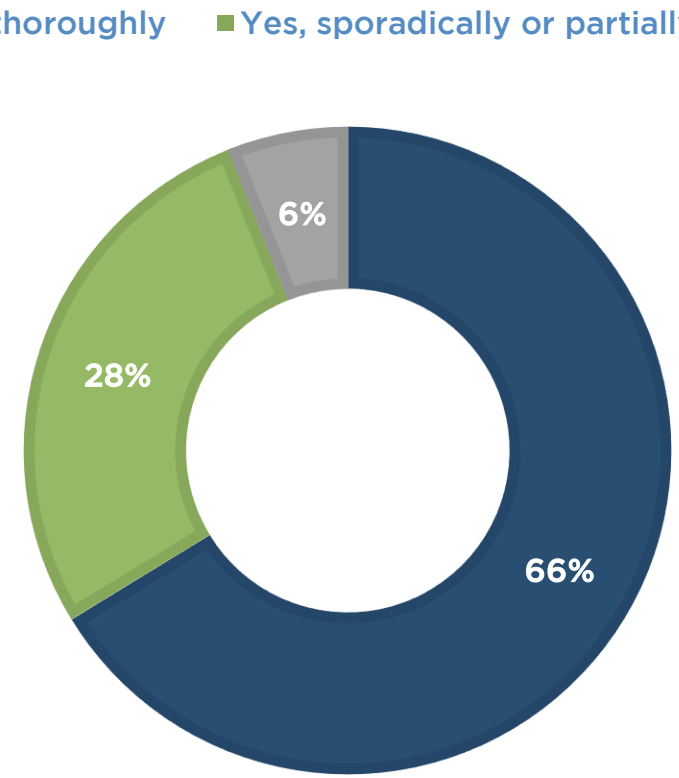
Does your Program Measure Learning Outcomes? By Discipline



n: 83

Does your Program Maintain Records of Past Projects, Clients and Student Participation?

ALL DISCIPLINES



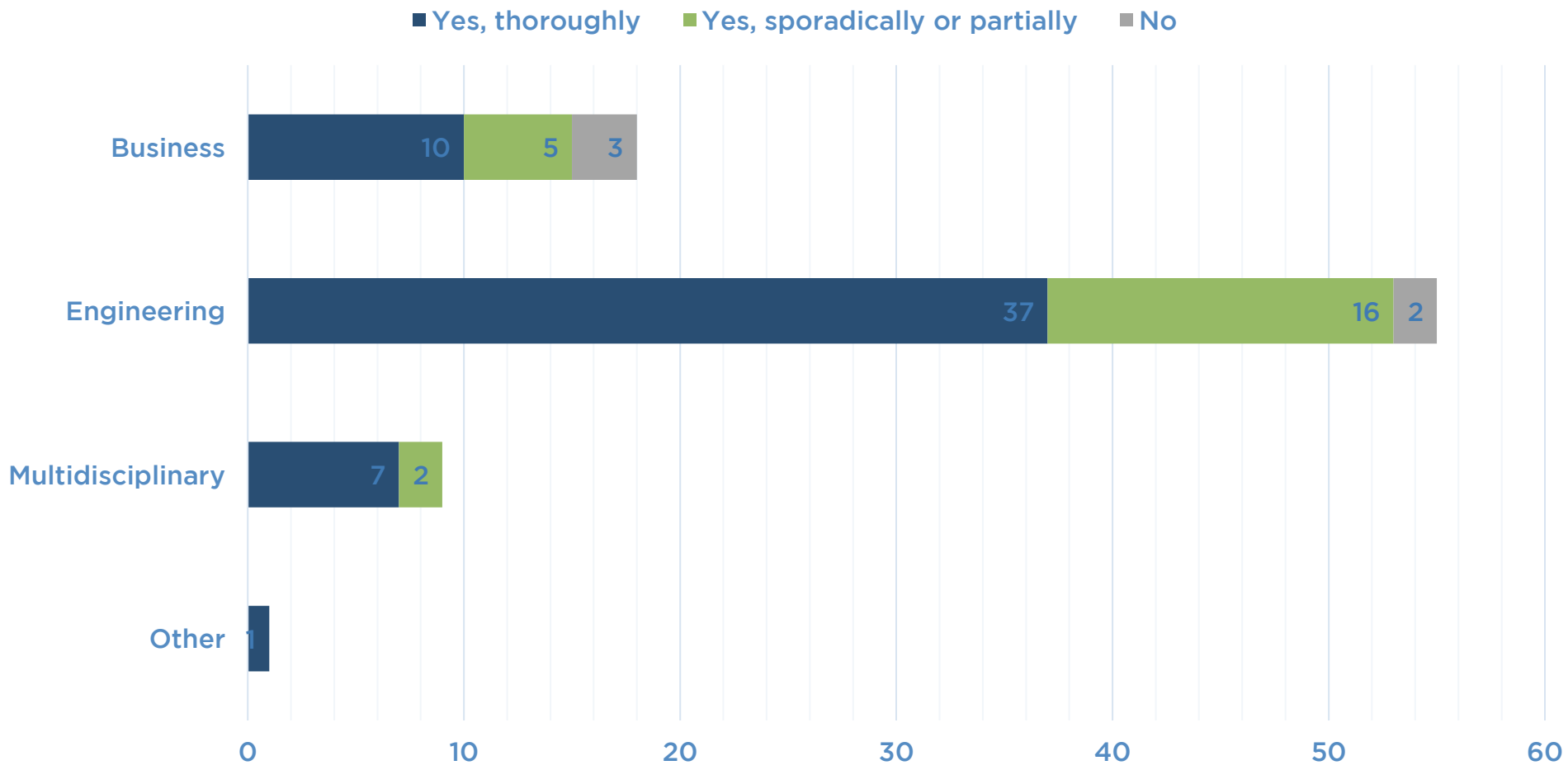
Year over Year

+4 pts

Maintain at least partial records

n: 83

Does your Program Maintain Records of Past Projects, Clients and Student Participation? By Discipline



n: 87

What are Your Biggest Challenges? Key Themes from 70 Responses

1. **Sourcing Projects**
   - Matching company demand with interesting and stimulating projects for students, collecting project sponsorship fees, matching sponsor needs to academic timeline. Having well-defined projects.

2. **Client and Student Communication**
   - Maintaining a tight connection between project clients and students with regular communication and keeping clients engaged.

3. **Student Engagement**
   - Recruiting students, keeping them engaged, managing team dynamics, student performance, lack of motivation, affecting quality control without diminishing student learning

Full responses in addendum

One Piece of Advice You Want to Share? Key Themes from 69 Responses

1. **Collaboration and Partnerships**
   - Building strong relationships with industry partners and alumni is crucial for project sourcing, mentorship, and program success.

2. **Structure and Planning**
   - Clearly defined processes, expectations, and learning objectives are essential for program success. Careful project scoping ensures alignment with program goals and student learning outcomes.

3. **Resources are Needed**
   - Faculty with industry experience to teach these projects, dedicated team and tools to organize these programs and maintain a strong pipeline of projects. Hire industry professionals to help where you can.

Full responses in addendum

2024

Experiential Learning Benchmark Report

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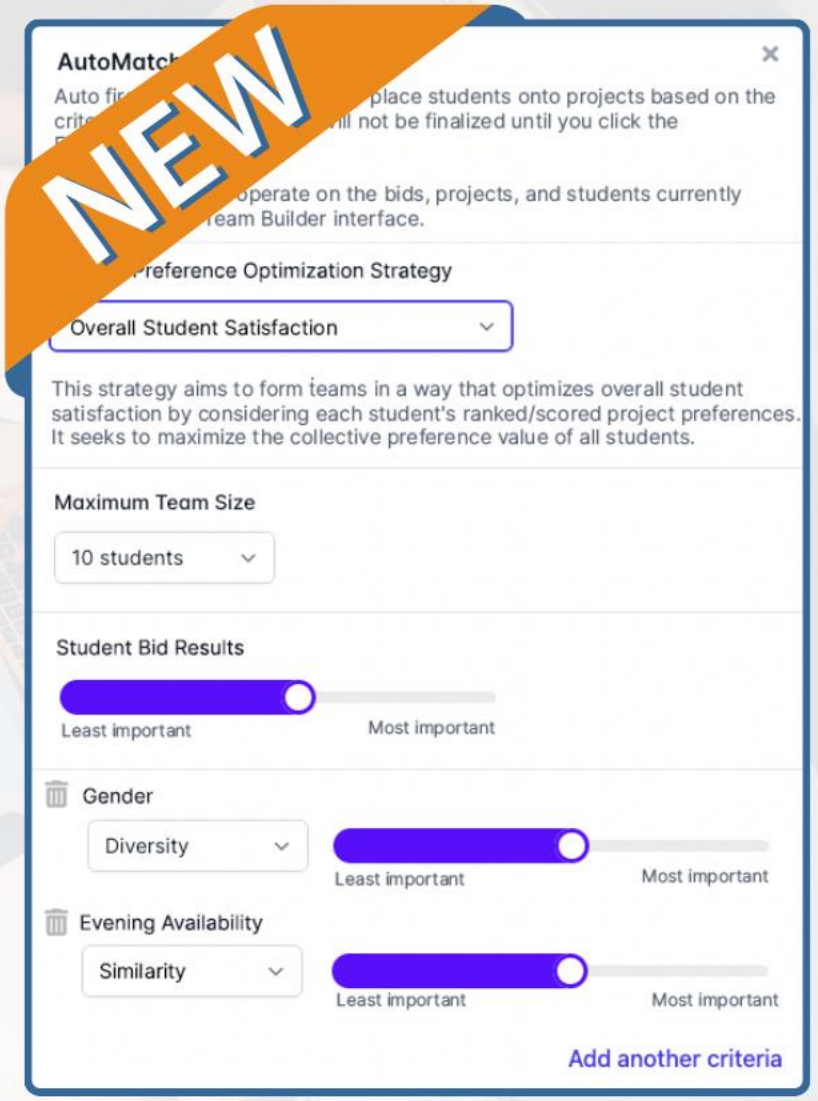
Fully Automated Custom Team Matching

- Complete Experiential Learning management system
- Automate peer feedback, client satisfaction and project health
- Commercial grade security and data privacy
- Secure student team <> project client collaboration



Feedback Loop

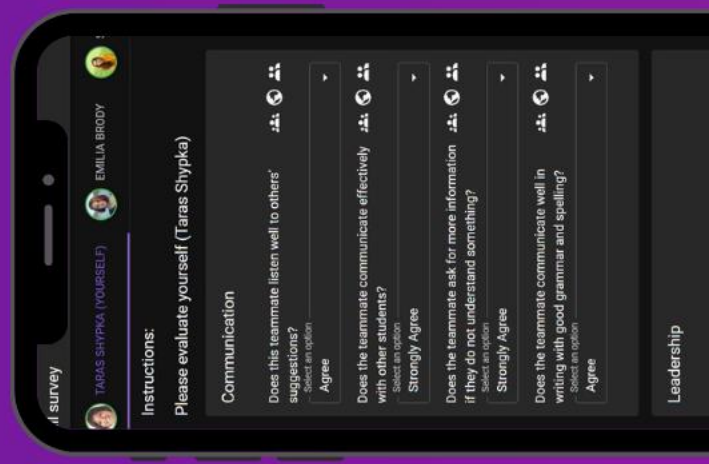
Classroom Peer Feedback

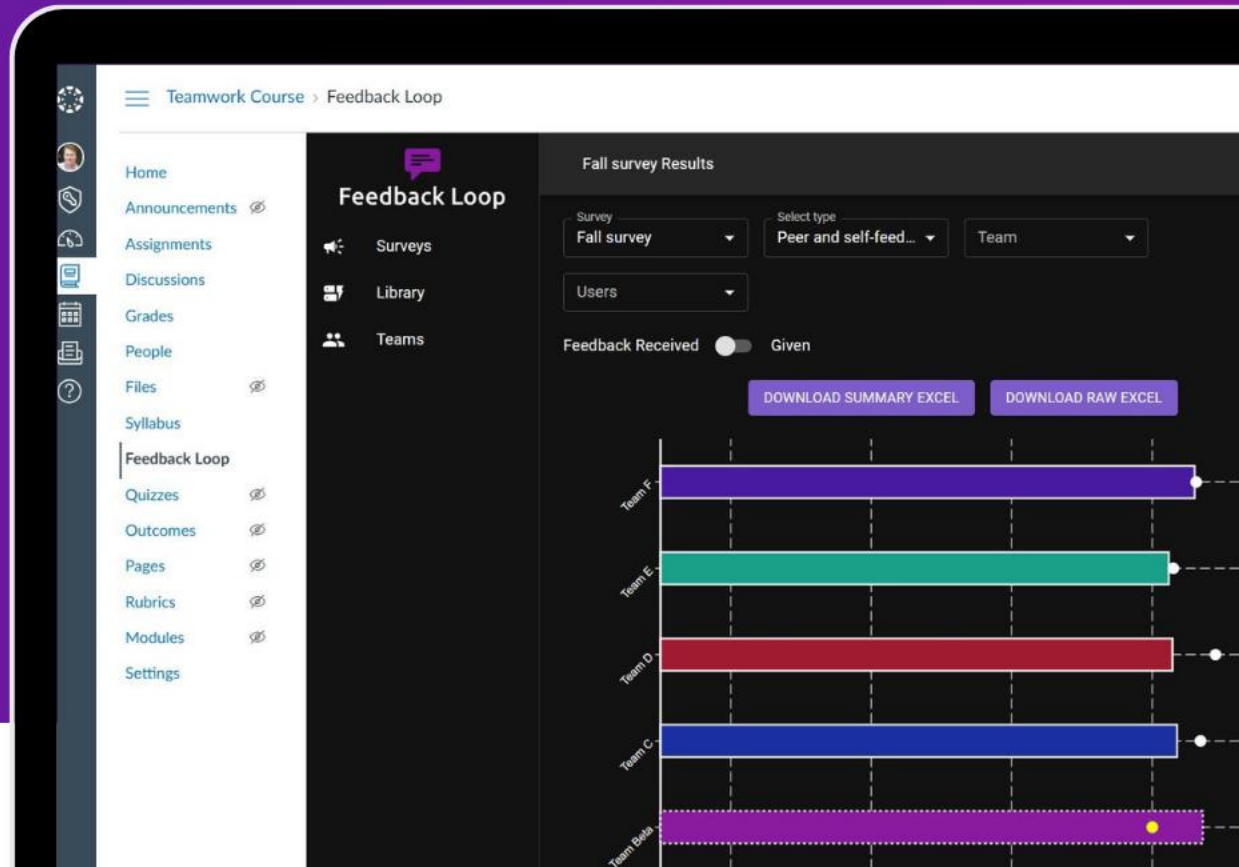
Powerful & Endlessly Flexible

Works Entirely Within the LMS

Sleek Instructor and Student User Experience

Seamlessly Easy to Use





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Addendum: All Written Responses

One piece of advice you want to share? All Responses
They are great ways to help students connect with industry
Plan for multiple sources of project acquisition
Keep at it! The work does get easier with time and the value for the students is incredible.
Scoping the projects is key to a successful experience
Get admin support
Make sure that enough resources are available
Put some systems in place for how you will run it before going to deep into the process
Need faculty who have actual work experience
Define expectations clearly
Keep a good schedule. Make sure you always check announcement for any changes or important information pertaining to the programme
Keep an open mind about who can help source partner organizations!
Work toward making experiential, internship, fellowship projects required.
Engage alumni network to find projects. Have dedicated staff for recruiting and program management.

One piece of advice you want to share? All Responses

Keep organized
Hire industry professionals to run the program
Be clear with industry partners exactly what you want them to bring/do.
None.
Please do what you can to make it happen for your students. Partnering with faculty and administration could be a great first step.
It is really one of the best ways to get experience for students. Students can't get a job without experience, but they also can't get experience without a job, and Experiential Learning can help bridge that gap for students, if they are willing.
The people we serve will one day enter the world. That world is normally one they did not grow up in. Our job is to prepare them to impact the next generation.
They take a lot of work to coordinate.
Faculty guidance is critical
Ideally, we would like to work with live clients but if you do not have clients or constrained by time, you can get started with creating a case study with clients (with or without client data) to get started.
Find someone who has connections to help find good sponsors.
It depends on the type of project. management consulting is probably easier. If the project requires questionnaires and significant samples, then they had better find a client who is willing to pay a panel to return enough samples to validate the study.
NA

One piece of advice you want to share? All Responses

Set clear learning objectives, validate clients true interest/commitment to participating throughout the semster long, year long project life cycle.
get the faculty to be primary relationship builders
Set expectations with industry partners early
Expect failure but focus on what students learn from the failures instead of penalizing them for failure.
Not sure
make sure you have at least one person, staff or faculty, that has understanding and oversight of the whole process. There are many variables to balance to achieve good outcomes for all stakeholders and you need someone at the center to help optimize everything
Industry sponsored must be invested to get quality work from the projects (the "drop off and come back when you're done" projects don't yield high quality results.
It is worth it!
Do it! And do industry-sponsored projects and treat your students like engineers working on those projects.
Do it! PBL w external partners teaching something that can not be captured in classroom learning - chaos occurs in poorly posed problems and you have to be able to manage that chaos.
Listen to student feedback and their needs for learning.
Make it a graduation requirement. Students without such experience could be at a disadvantage in the market. Design the program you want, but grow into that vision in a phase fashion while incorporating lessons learned into each new phase. Involve external industry!
Leverage alumni for not only the project sourcing, but also project advice and mentoring to students.

One piece of advice you want to share? All Responses

Consider adding requirements for lifecycle assessment as it is becoming more important with industry
Create a team with representation from each discipline you involve so there is buy-in and accountability, and also access to those industry contacts.
The "devil is in the details", and it will take time to get it done. Be ready to constantly make changes and fine tune the process, but it is always ongoing.
It's all about finding the right customers. What we teach in the class has minimal impact compared with the positively demanding voice and honest feedback that a good customer brings.
Recognize the value of the work being done and charge for projects.
Having a college-level coordinator is very helpful
Set clear expectations at the beginning regarding IP, confidentiality, and if possible, consider putting this in writing in a Sponsorship Agreement. Also, don't be afraid to charge a Program Fee; sponsors will pay!
Early and consistent communication with external parties is crucial. Students also take an abundance of communication (repetition) to “get” the program mechanics (e.g, what is expected of them in working with the external partner).
It is well worth the effort.
Focus on building relationships with current students so they come back to sponsor projects.
Funded projects has lead to better engagement with external mentors. Build a network of contacts at each organization to help when people change roles or companies
Real projects can have real impact on real people. Students like to participate in projects that can improve people's lives at home and around the world.
project sponsorship by local companies yield better collaborations for both sponsor satisfaction and job placement for students

One piece of advice you want to share? All Responses

Do it multi-disciplinary, single disciplinary cheats the students and the only reason not to do it is laziness.
Just do it
Make sure you have a protocol for keeping in touch with the sponsors
Take the time to have unambiguous project briefs and a commitment from project partners to meet with students on a regular basis (every 2-3 weeks) and participate in design reviews
Build strong alumni relationships and make sure that the program is funded(fully or majority of the costs) through university
Its not easy, but doable and well worth it for the students and very fulfilling for the faculty involved.
Get an instructor who has industry experience
Choose carefully the industry partner/mentor.
Have it lead by faculty member with actual design/capstone practice in industry or get an alumnus(a) to lead the program. There is a real time commitment to guide and mentor teams through the process.
Reach out to alumni early and often
Set expectations for deliverables early. Defining sponsored research vs experiential learning
make sure you have someone understand how to scope the projects so they fit the learning outcomes of the class
new equipment helps
Start with the most formalized process possible - boundaries are a good thing!
Learn from others!
Do it, but start small
well-informed faculty are key

Are there any innovations or new components to your experiential initiatives that you are especially excited about? All Responses
Connecting with alums of the program - as project liaisons, mentors, guest speakers, etc.
Many [of our projects] are used by retailers to improve their business
We are trying cross or inter-team projects, i.e., one sponsor working with teams from different departments on the same project (different aspects of it of course).
Trying a new elective option for field experience targeting projects specifically tailored to student interest.
Possibility of group internship projects for larger projects. For MBA internships and fellowships focus on non-profit and community work (societal impact).
Newly completed textbook
If there is any way to make the process of putting teams together, that is one of the only gaps in the current way we use EduSourced. [editor note: EduSourced released its Smart Match tool since this was posted!]
We evaluate to ensure we are remaining relevant and efective.
Yes -- growing opportunities
I don't know of any.
There are several classes, and each done a little differently to fit the needs of the class requirements. Some clients pay per project with dedicated team, some classes have multiple teams that work on same project, some classes are 8 weeks in duration while others are 16 weeks in duration, etc. We keep on tweaking each EL class to meet the needs of the students.
Experienced adjunct faculty acting as project mentors / coaches
Currently renovating our faculty participation - making curriculum changes. Seekign consistent learningobjectives across all - with additional variations by program.

Are there any innovations or new components to your experiential initiatives that you are especially excited about? All Responses
Expanding the breadth on industries in our project coverage
A few of the student teams work with industrial design students from a local design school for 8 weeks. This provide engineering students with a new perspective on design.
using AI tools for research
New pricing models
Industry partners involved in regular mentoring of students and feedback on their work.
We have recently been awarded an NSF grant where we will investigate the use of several things to increase student persistence to graduation in our engineering program. A component of this is early (as early as a student's first year) internships.
College-level multi-discipline projects defined more clearly recently
How we have it structured to ensure most projects have good deliverables and are completed in two semesters
Tried teaching students Agile Project management and requiring them to use that methodology to manage their capstone projects. Worked great for keeping projects on schedule and helping teams be more focused, productive, and reflective.
Allowing greater flexibility for teams to incorporate agile methods.
Yes, too numerous to list
Integration with the School of Business; Expanding to Technical Entrepreneurship Projects that are from our students.
We are starting a gaming program and are exploring a robotics programWe are starting a gaming program and are exploring a robotics program

Are there any innovations or new components to your experiential initiatives that you are especially excited about? All Responses
Charitable organizations helping with community member projects.
Long term follow up and maintenance of installed projects. What you design needs to work now and it needs to work after it is installed, and it needs to work after it is used for years.
Use of part time employees as project mentors, mostly ex engineering managers
Machine learning
Excited about separating the client/advisor roles more. Excited about incorporating more "how to teamwork" modules.
We try to focus at least half of our projects on work with NGOs/nonprofits. We use a coaching model where each team has an experienced coach with significant industry experience.
Many in-house developed operational processes and tools, just finished migrating documentation templates and operations management platform from MS Office to Google Workspace, and excited to (this summer) extend functionality to include automation for calendaring, email messaging (both currently residing in LMS as unpublished notices and page templates, respectively, requiring manual updating and sending, respectively). Google Forms grading in place will also get directly connected in to eliminate numerous stages of copy and paste from G-Forms to Excel.
Design night, where students showcase projects to the public
social justice and environmental justice components
Immersive treks
Within college collabs - lab technology, entrepreneurship area
The process of scaling is challenging so excited about experimenting with this

Are there any innovations or new components to your experiential initiatives that you are especially excited about? All Responses

We have multi-discipline projects in civil engineering where each project includes a structural and utility/environmental subdiscipline plus completion of an environmental assessment/check list and project cost estimate. Also included is a 14 topic lecture on professional practice and ethics. Course is CIVL 4001 Civil Engineering Design, Practice and Ethics. We have been given commendations by ABET for the course and projects. We have been doing this for 25 years. Also we assign an industry practicing mentor to each project team. Teams are required to meet with their mentor regularly (typically Zoom) and obtain their review and approval of each deliverable. Mentors and other faculty and alums evaluate the team presentations and final project reports, incl. calculations using established rubrics which are tabulated and evaluated in determining final grades.

I love our MBA students leading Undergraduate teams, MBA learning to manage teams while Undergrads learn to consult

solid student preparation before project, ethics discussion, team contract between members along with 2 peer reviews, 1 mid project. Separate client contract, including confidentiality clause. We do not accept client-created NDA requests.

What is the biggest challenge with experiential projects in your program? All Responses

Having the time to complete the program
Getting companies to agree to $10,000 sponsorship, IP agreement terms
They're a lot of work to facilitate/oversee - each project is different and teams need different forms of guidance and support. This type of teaching is not efficient in terms of time, but is incredibly effective in terms of learning.
Managing our program as our enrollment increases.
Project teams remote, virtual and across all worlds time zones
Recruitment
Getting the projects!
Sourcing enough industry sponsored projects each year and generating enough income from the projects to fund out program.
keeping an open pipeline of new companies coming in while keeping our long standing partners engaged and excited to continue working with us.
None.
Grading
Demand for students from our host projects could be greater and more diverse. Our students are capable of much!
Consistency in sponsorship
Finding them
Project Sourcing and students not performing on projects
It classes with a lot of things schedule wise
Timing

What is the biggest challenge with experiential projects in your program? All Responses

Currently, we are just trying to find enough students to staff the many projects tat we have.
Protecting anonymity and maintaining fidelity to the process.
Obtaining projects that fit within the semester.
keeping the student on track for graduation
There is not one biggest challenge, each class has different challenges. In the graduate program, the classes are 8 weeks long which makes it very difficult with client projects and it has been done for business statistics and data visualization.
Students are still suffering from post-COVID issues. They work less, complain more, and in general do not perform as well.
In the past I have conducted over 200 client-sponsored marketing research projects and they were great. In the past few years though I had to switch to self generated simulated projects because of the difficulty in getting people to return questionnaires. In these real projects some groups could only get a dozen returns on their surveys. This clearly doesn't cut it! Thus, I went to simulated research studies.
Na
Clearly defined problems from the client...then consistent external support from client... Helping students apprecaite all the data that is now available in addition to the data from clients.
measurement and expanding the relationships beyond a single project
Sizing the projects appropriately to our two semester course
They are not always predictable so scheduling can be a guess.
Finding good projects for the students.

What is the biggest challenge with experiential projects in your program? All Responses
managing student expectations
Finding enough appropriate projects / sponsors
Scoping, variability of student team skills
Getting enough appropriately scoped projects.
Securing enough paid sponsor projects
engaging all students on large teams and managing sponsor expectations
Interfering with the student experience to steer an outcome.
Getting a sufficient sample size of projects to assess for acceptance into the program.
Student team dynamics
Finding interested industry partners
Ensuring when working with external partners that they bring us multi-disciplinary project scopes - and getting enough projects from partners to accomodate our student enrollment.
Resources to fabricate and get all the tests done - we need to be creative and think out of the box solutions all the time
Finding good clients who are engaged and bring meaningful projects to the table.
Finding enough high quality sponsored projects for students.
Finding sufficient number of approachable projects
Consistency of quality of student and sponsor experience across departments and lately, student motivation throughout the entire process, especially if the student is assigned to a project they are not overly enthusiastic about.
Constant coordination and maintenance of the external relationships and ensuring enough partners will participate each year to accommodate the number of seniors.

What is the biggest challenge with experiential projects in your program? All Responses

Time it takes to solicit, scope and manage each project. Plus students can be an issue..."senioritus"
Having enough faculty to manage the students. Our current model involves a project coordinator who teaches the class and then individually assigned faculty to each project team.
Finding enough high quality projects
Student motivation and student ownership
recruiting enough projects
Mentor quality and consistency
Finding industry sponsors for the projects
Permission
Getting industry onboarding, making sure projects are open-ended to allow design
Scope creep and/or poorly defined project objectives and/or lack of participation by project liaisons.
It is more about the program administration. We are soft-funded and are focused on project sponsorships. We miss out a lot of interesting opportunities for students where the client is not able to provide financial support
Getting enough good projects at full price at our price point of financial viability.
Balancing learning with delivering a quality result to clients (practicing vs performing)
Getting good projects not overly but not too narrowly defined
Getting the students to realize that time is going by and they need to produce. Too much waiting for the last minute. I have established deadlines with deliverables/expectations which help somewhat

What is the biggest challenge with experiential projects in your program? All Responses

Funding and being a one semester project
Securing fees
getting everyone to work
Time
Funding enough projects
Team formation and student engagement, ensuring projects are the right fit for the program
Communication between partners and teams
Making sure teams closely engage with clients