

# Chapter 1: FIRST-YEAR SURVEY

*Who takes it?*

All first-year students who start in the fall semester are offered to take the survey.

*When is it administered?*

It was administered during Truman Week, which is the first three days of school for the first-year students.

*How long does it take the students to complete the instrument?*

15 to 25 minutes.

*What office administers it?*

The Student Success Center in conjunction with the Provost's Office administers the survey.

*Who originates this survey?*

The survey is a local instrument prepared by Truman faculty and administrators.

*When are results typically available?*

Late fall.

*What type of information is sought?*

The survey provides information on the student's perception of the admission process, summer orientation, and expectations of college. It also provides some basic demographic information on first-generation status and family income.

*From whom are the results available?*

The Director of Retention and Student Success.

*To whom are the results regularly distributed?*

Results are available to the University community through this almanac and available by request from the Director of Retention and Student Success.

*Are the results available by department or discipline?*

Neither.

*Are the results comparable to data of other universities?*

No.

The first-year survey is a short survey given to all students at the conclusion of Truman Week. It allows a better understanding of student demographics and expectations. In 2020, 305 students completed the survey. Response rates (approximately 42%) for the survey were lower than previous years likely due to logistical changes required under the Covid-19 pandemic. The following highlights some of the most relevant findings.

### Choosing Truman

Prior to admission, approximately 73% of students had visited more than one college and 87% of respondents visited Truman State's campus at least once as part of the admission process. In ranking the reasons that they chose Truman, students overwhelmingly indicated academic reputation as the top reason for attending with cost and financial aid being the next most important reasons. When identifying influences, first-year students clearly indicate that their campus visit was the most influential reason for them choosing Truman. In general other potential factors were approximately equal and responses on parental influence were somewhat polarizing.

### Demographics

The 2020 entering class is similar in makeup to the 2019 first-year cohort with approximately 17% identifying themselves as upper class, 32% as upper middle class, 23% as middle class, 19% as working class, and 9% as lower class. One noticeable shift in the demographics was the decrease in students indicating their family made less than \$75K. Approximately 23% of the incoming students indicate they are first generation (with neither parent having a bachelor's degree) while 51% of the incoming class indicate that both of their parents have a bachelor's degree.

### Connections within Truman Days

Approximately 87% of students felt that Truman Days was helpful in introducing them to faculty and staff while more than 92% of students felt that Truman Days was helpful in meeting fellow students. Additionally, following Truman Days, 93% of the students could identify at least one connection for mutual support. While Truman Days was clearly successful in helping students make at least one connection during their first week on the Truman campus, there was a substantial drop from 2019 in the number of multiple connections made in 2020. This decrease is likely attributable to the pandemic protocols installed on campus for fall 2020.

### Expectations

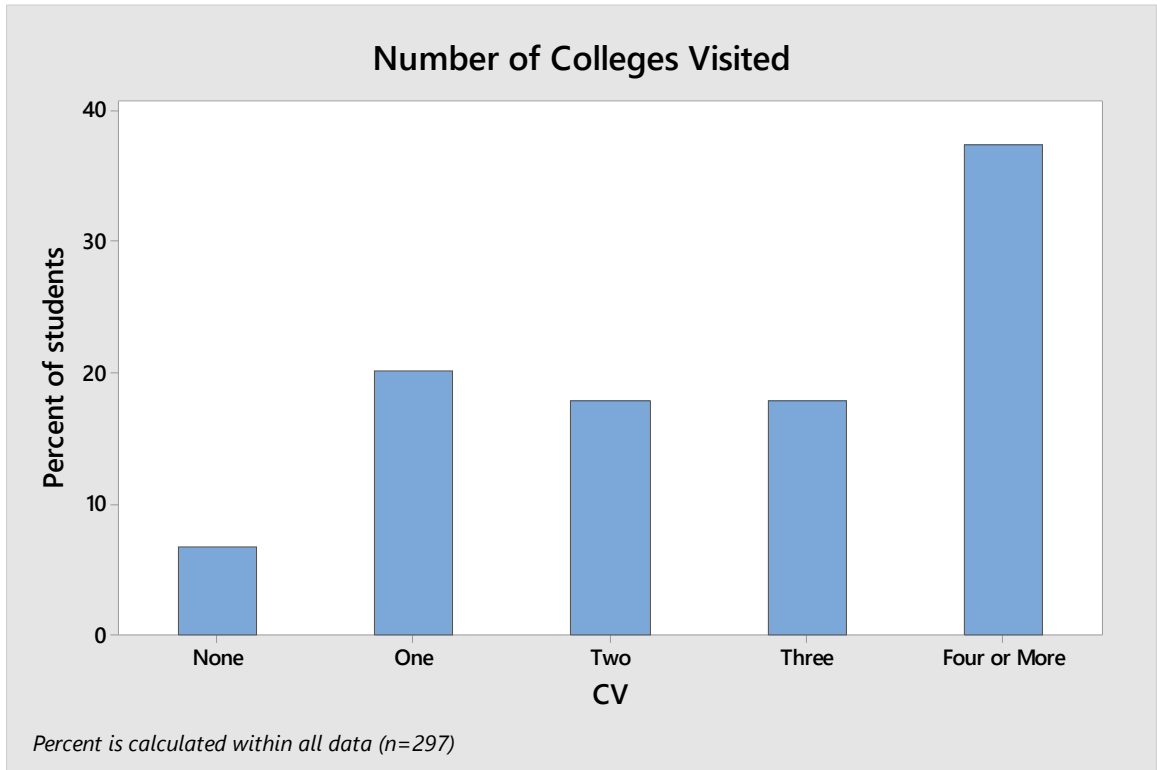
Over 97% of respondents expect to graduate Truman knowing at least one faculty member well enough to ask for a letter of recommendation and 38% expect to know four or more faculty members that well upon graduation. The most common expectation for first semester grades was A-/B+ and fewer than 2.3% of students expect to average lower than a B during their first semester at Truman.

### Attitude towards Truman

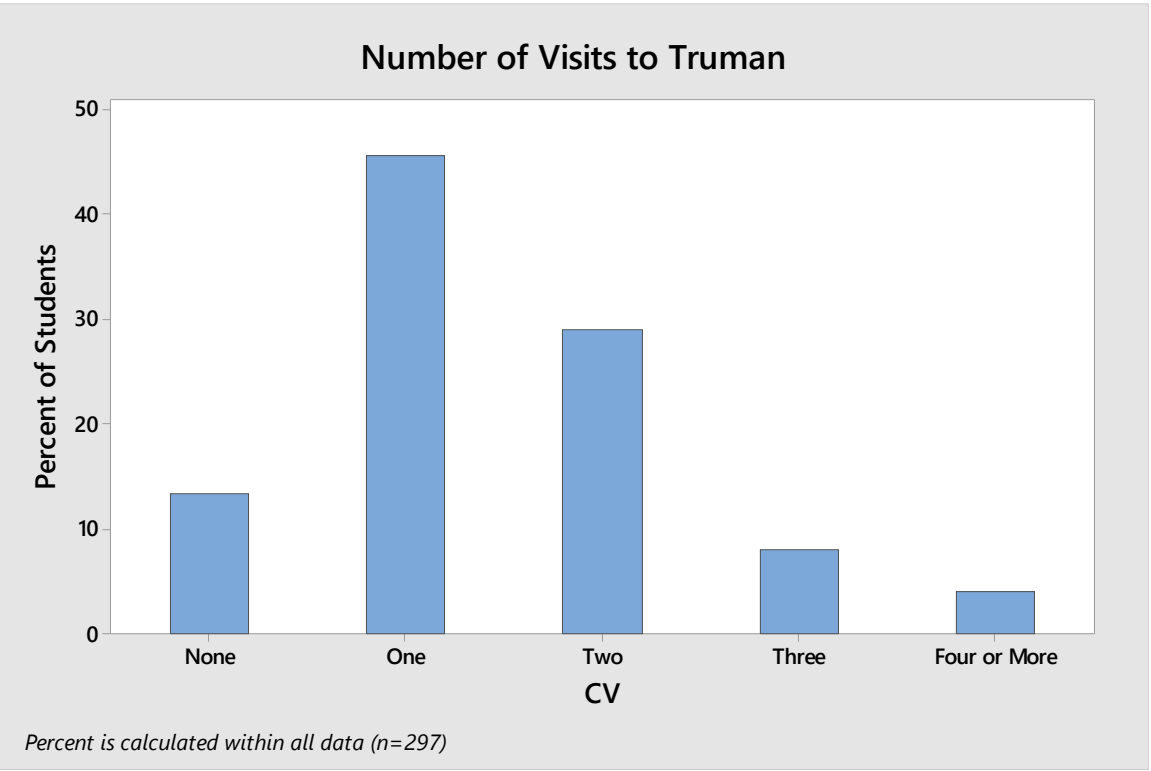
Approximately 89% of the first-year students reported having a positive or strongly positive attitude towards Truman at the time of the survey (with only 2% indicating any type of negative attitude). Following Truman Days, 95% of students indicated some commitment to returning to Truman for their second year (with 65% being almost certain to return).

### Experiences with Truman Days

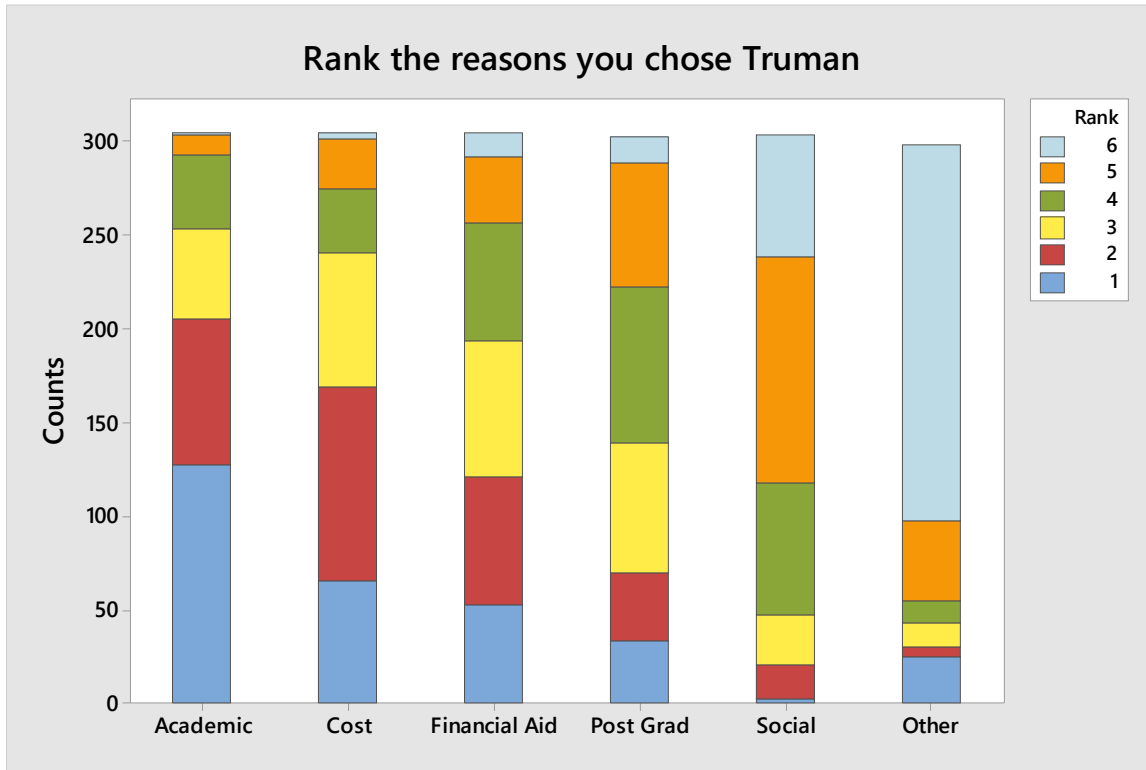
The Majors Welcome activity was a clear favorite amongst first-year students being both well attended and strongly rated. The All Hall Meeting was a close second and many other activities were also well attend and favorably rated.



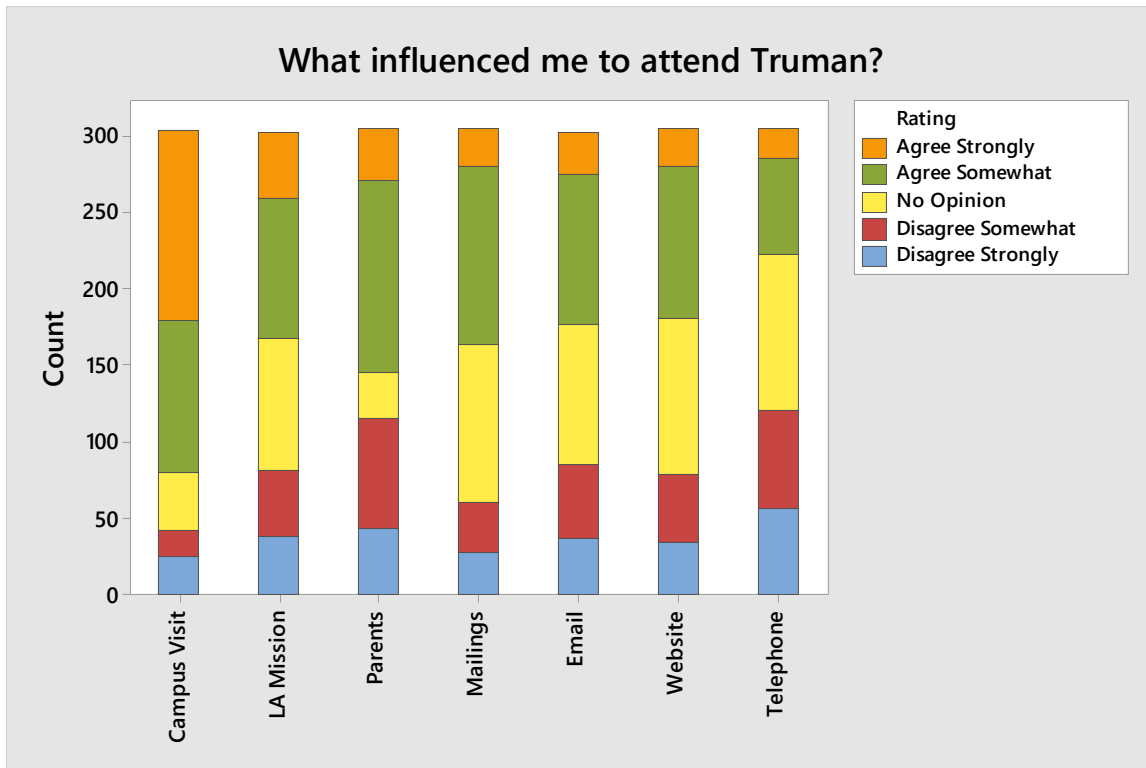
**Figure 1** – “In selecting a college, how many colleges or university campuses did you visit?”



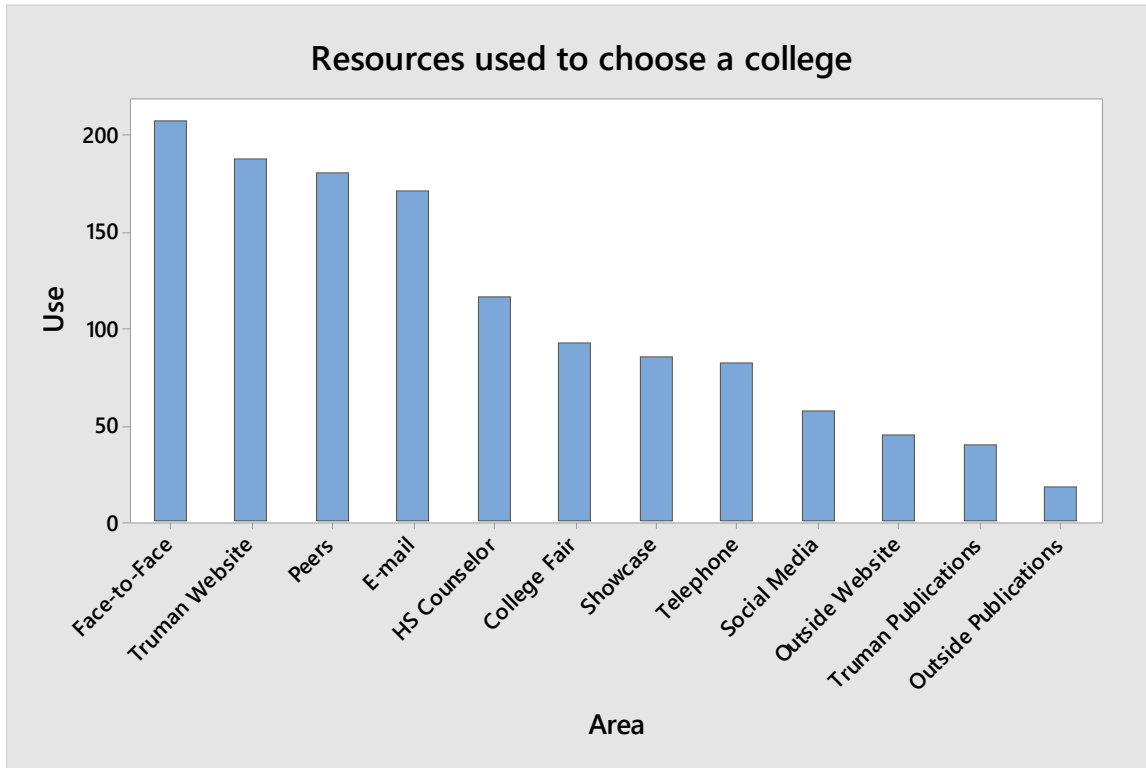
**Figure 2** – “In making a college selection, how many times did you visit Truman State University?”



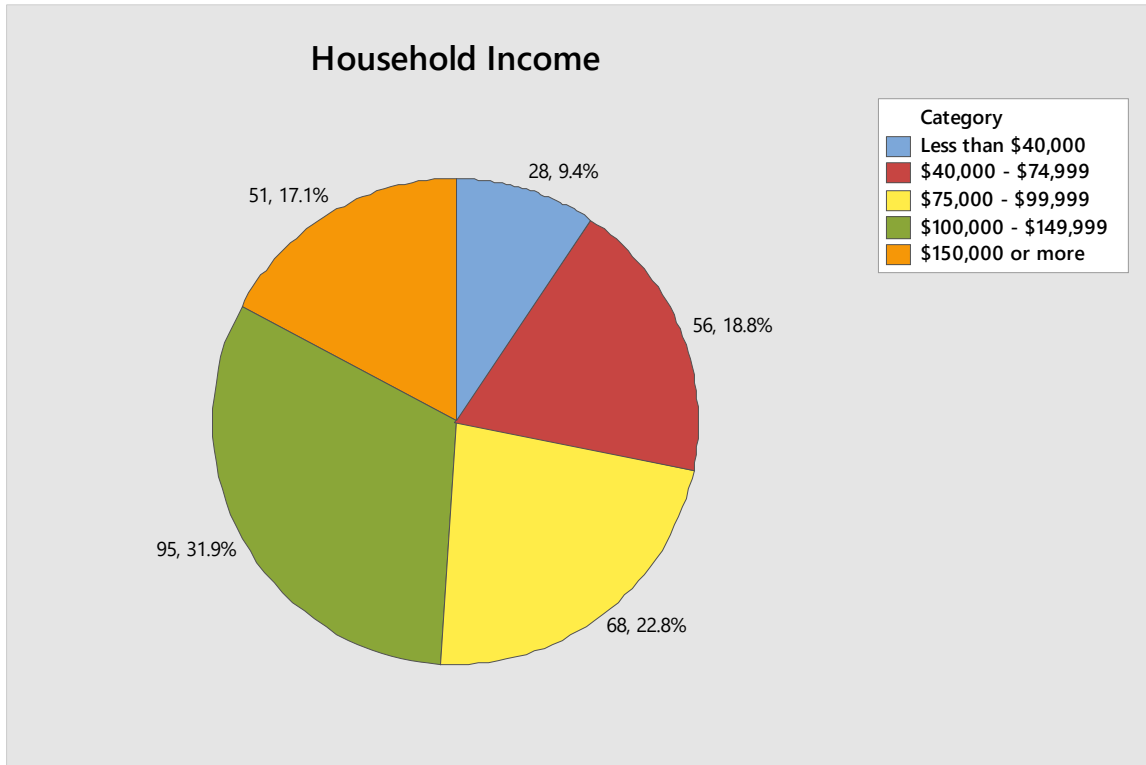
**Figure 3** – “Please rank these reasons for choosing Truman. Assign the most important reason number 1, the second most important number 2, etc. until you have used all six ranks.



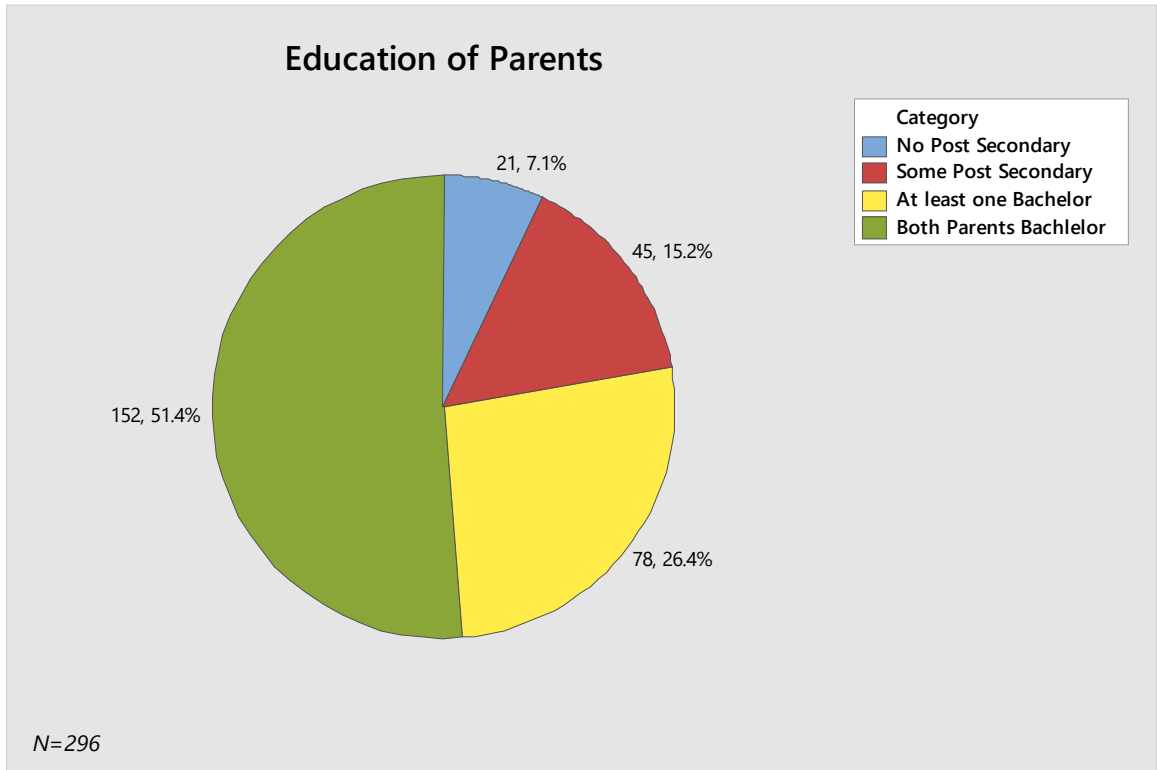
**Figure 4a** – “Please indicate your opinion (on the level of influence in attending Truman) by marking one response on each question”



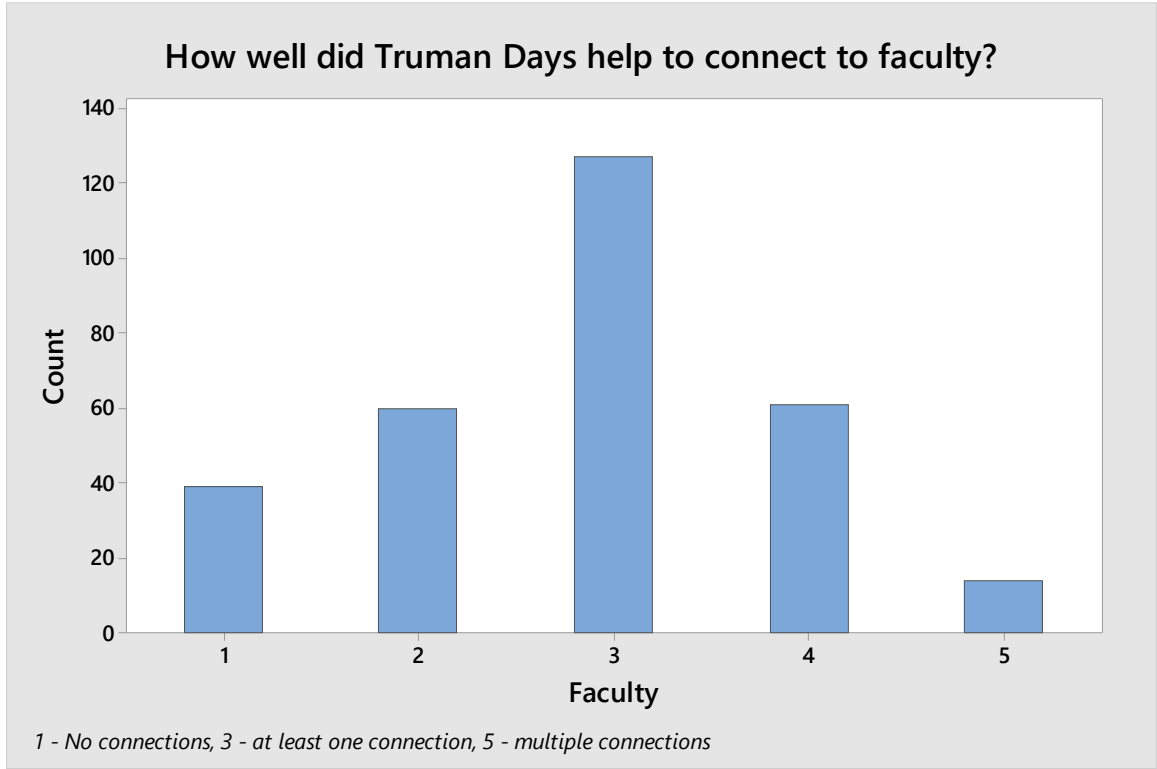
**Figure 4b** – “Which of these resources did you use to choose a college? (Check as many as apply)”



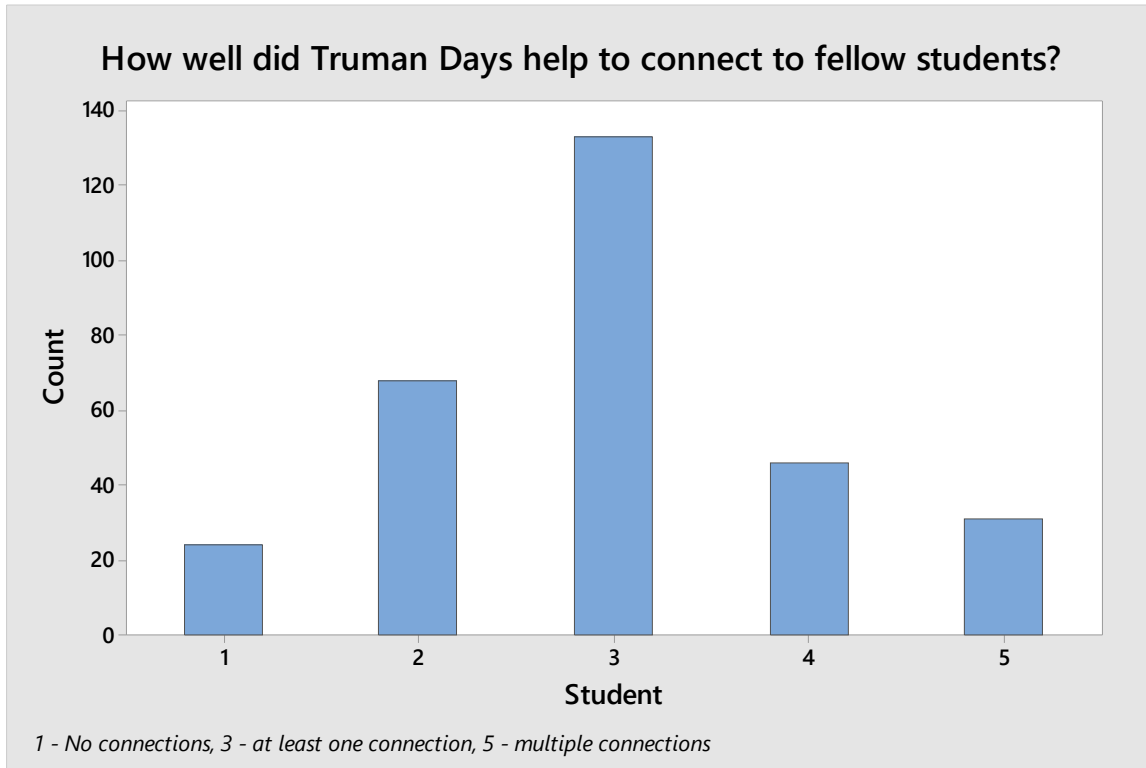
**Figure 5** – “What is your best estimate of your parent's total income last year? Consider income from all sources before taxes.”



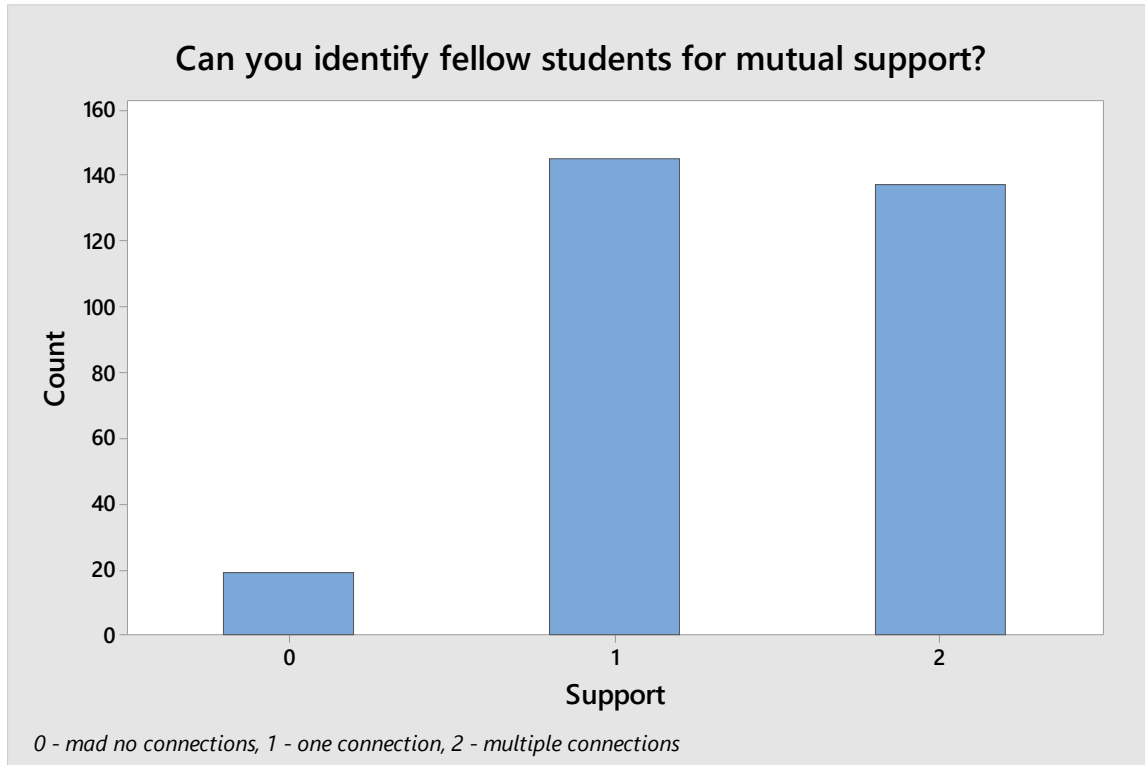
**Figure 6** – “What is the highest level of formal education obtained by your parents?”



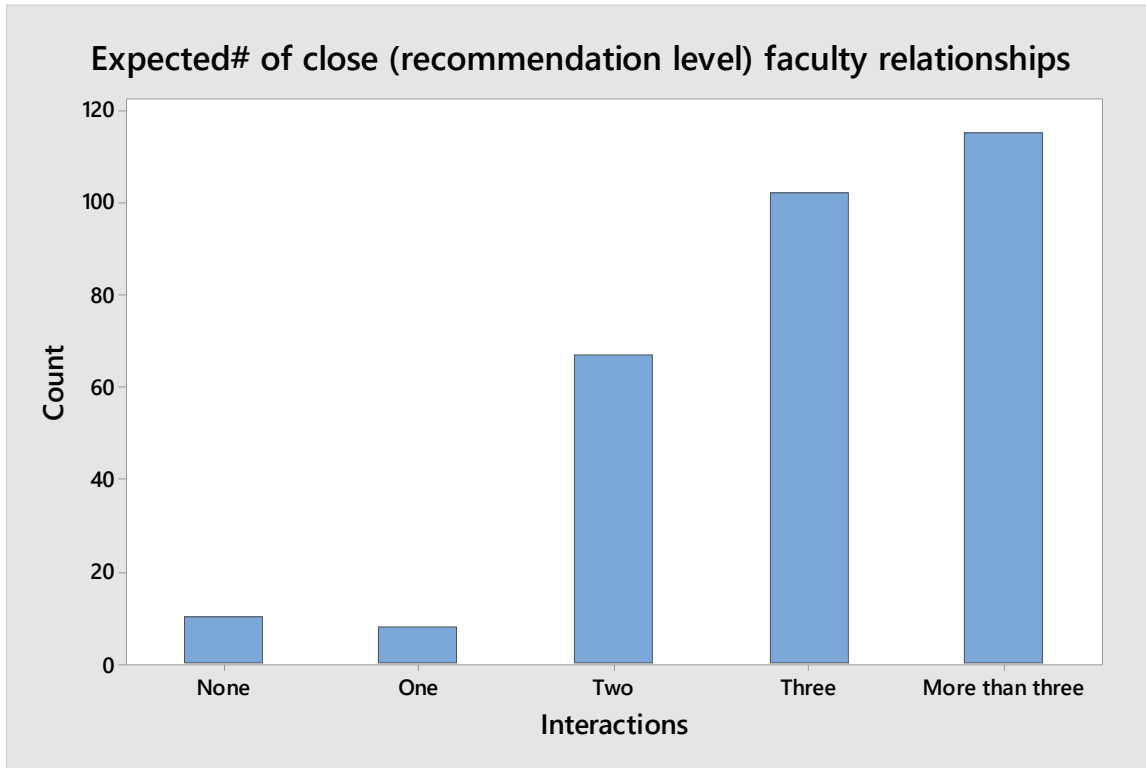
**Figure 7** – “How well did Truman Days do at introducing you to faculty and staff?”



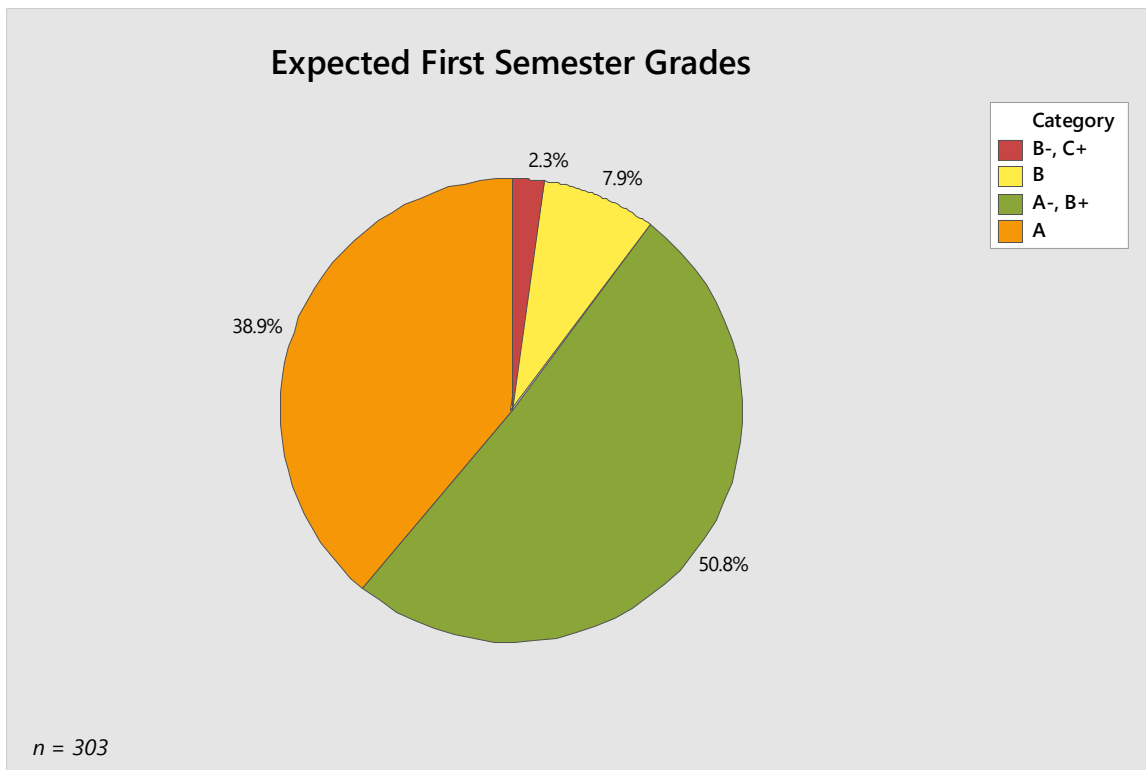
**Figure 8** – “How well did Truman Days help you get connected to your fellow students?”



**Figure 9** – “Can you identify fellow students that can help support you and that you can help support?”

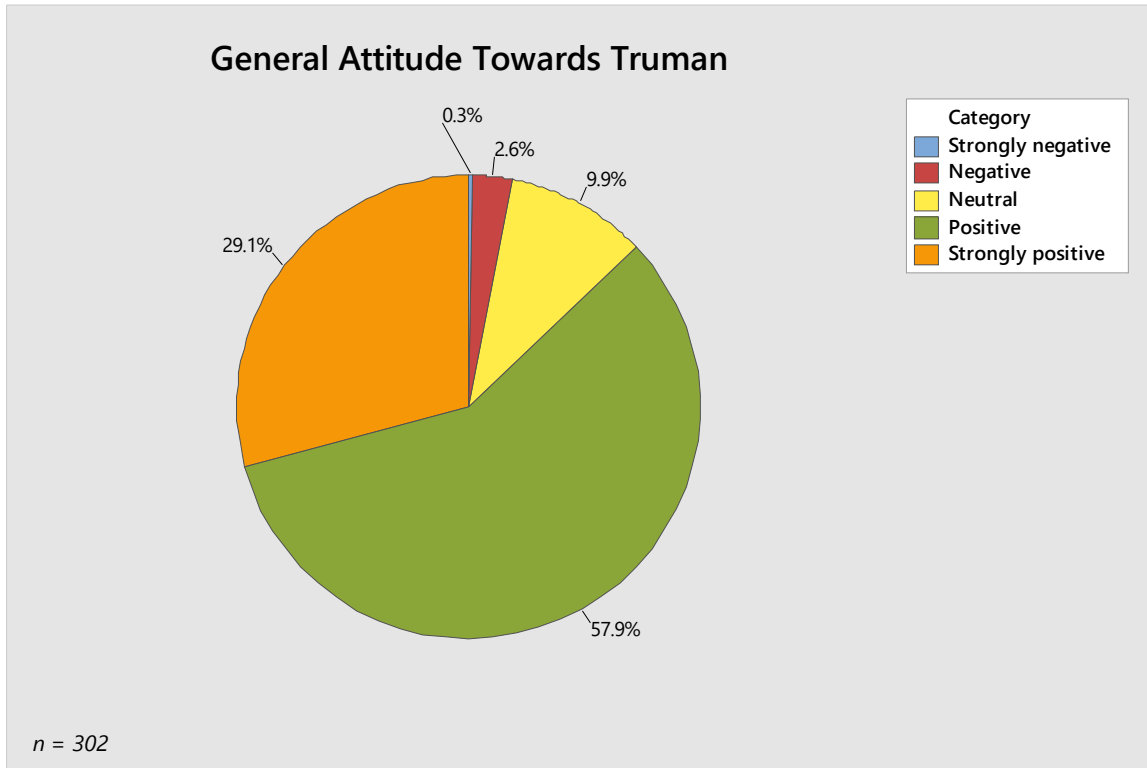


**Figure 10** – “Upon graduation from Truman, how many faculty members do you expect to know well enough that you would ask them for a letter of recommendation?” (Figure 13 in F18)

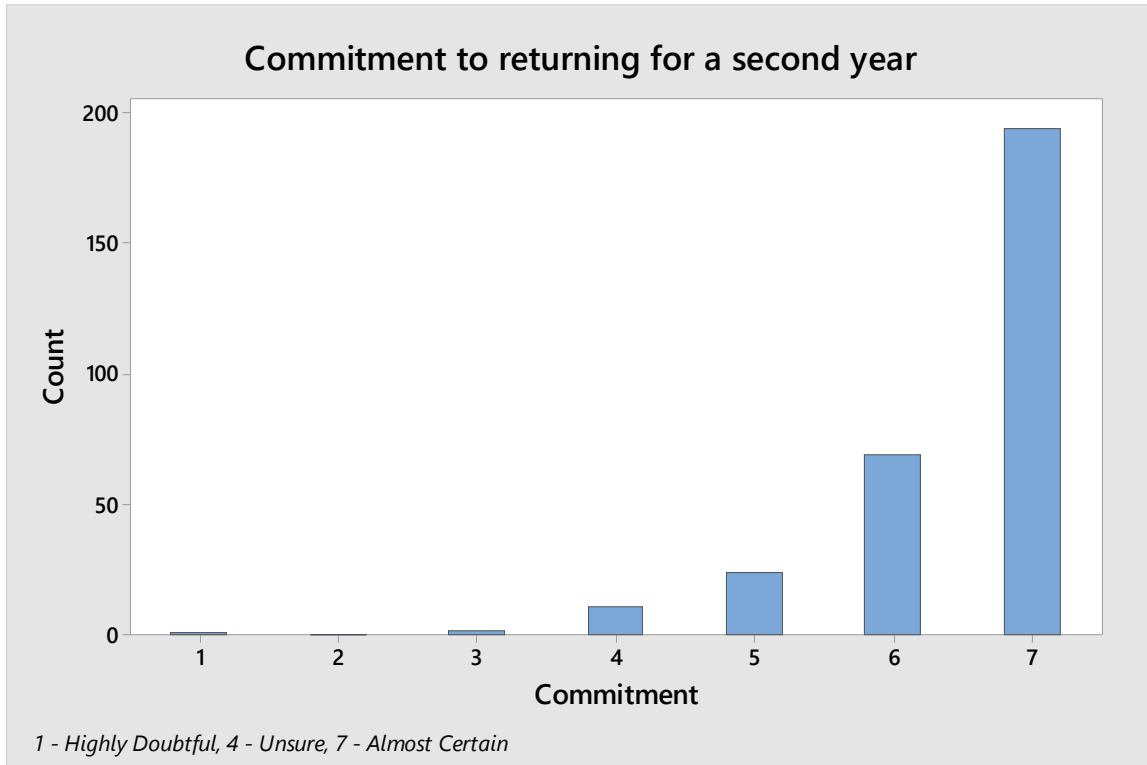


**Figure 11** – “What do you expect most of your first semester grades at Truman to be?” (Figure 14 in F18)

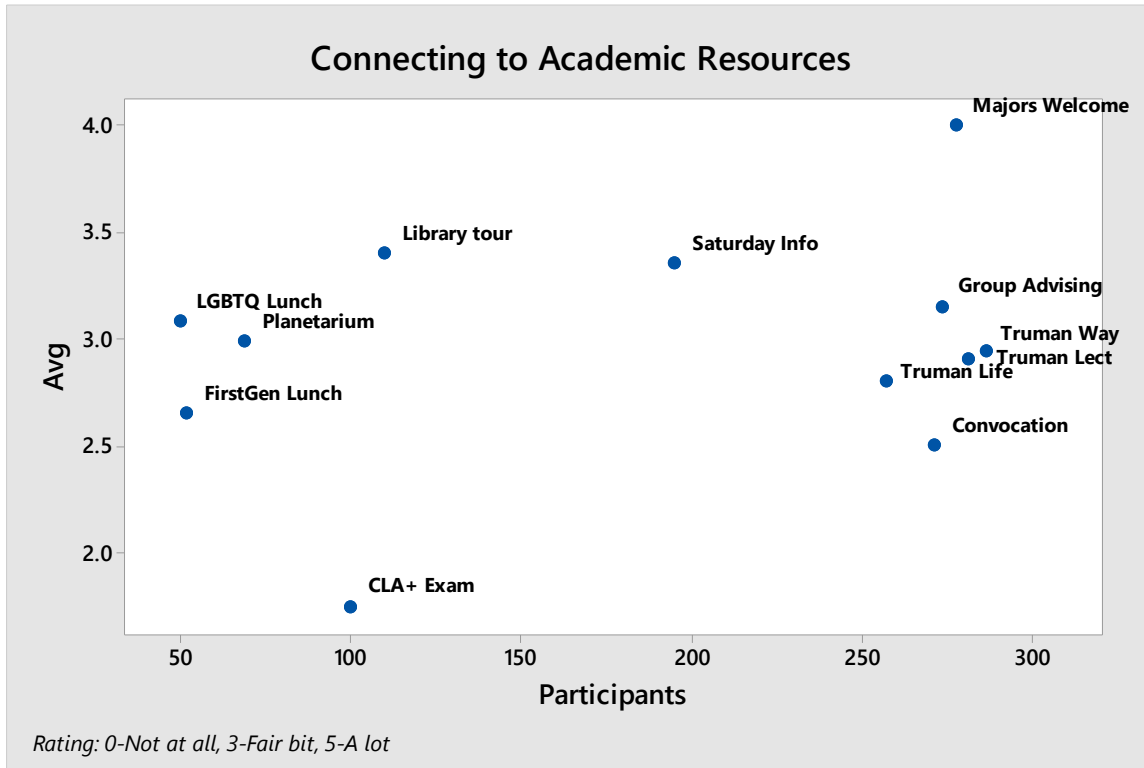




**Figure 12** – “At the present time, your general attitude toward Truman is?” (Figure 15 in F18)



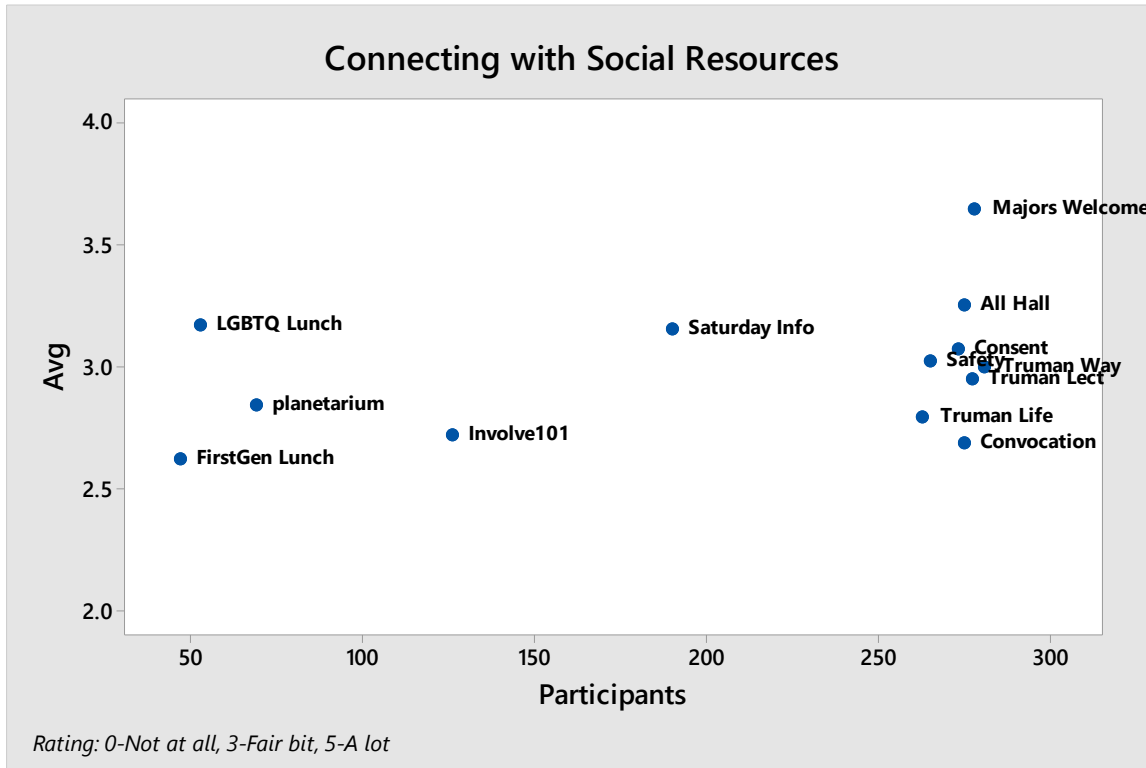
**Figure 13** – “Now that Truman Week is over, how committed are you to staying to Truman for a second year and beyond?”



**Figure 14** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help connecting you with relevant Academic Resources?”

Activity	Rating						Avg	Participants
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
CLA+ Exam	201	56	22	16	3	3	1.8	100
Convocation	27	61	77	84	34	15	2.5	271
Truman Life	43	33	64	92	56	12	2.8	257
FirstGen Lunch	247	16	8	12	10	6	2.7	52
Group Advising	24	22	51	97	70	33	3.2	273
Saturday Info	102	13	32	57	59	34	3.4	195
LGBTQ Lunch	250	14	4	8	12	12	3.1	50
Library tour	191	13	13	27	31	26	3.4	110
Majors Welcome	22	9	20	53	77	118	4.0	277
planetarium	231	18	4	19	17	11	3.0	69
Truman Lect	19	32	56	120	54	19	2.9	281
Truman Way	15	34	56	113	59	24	2.9	286

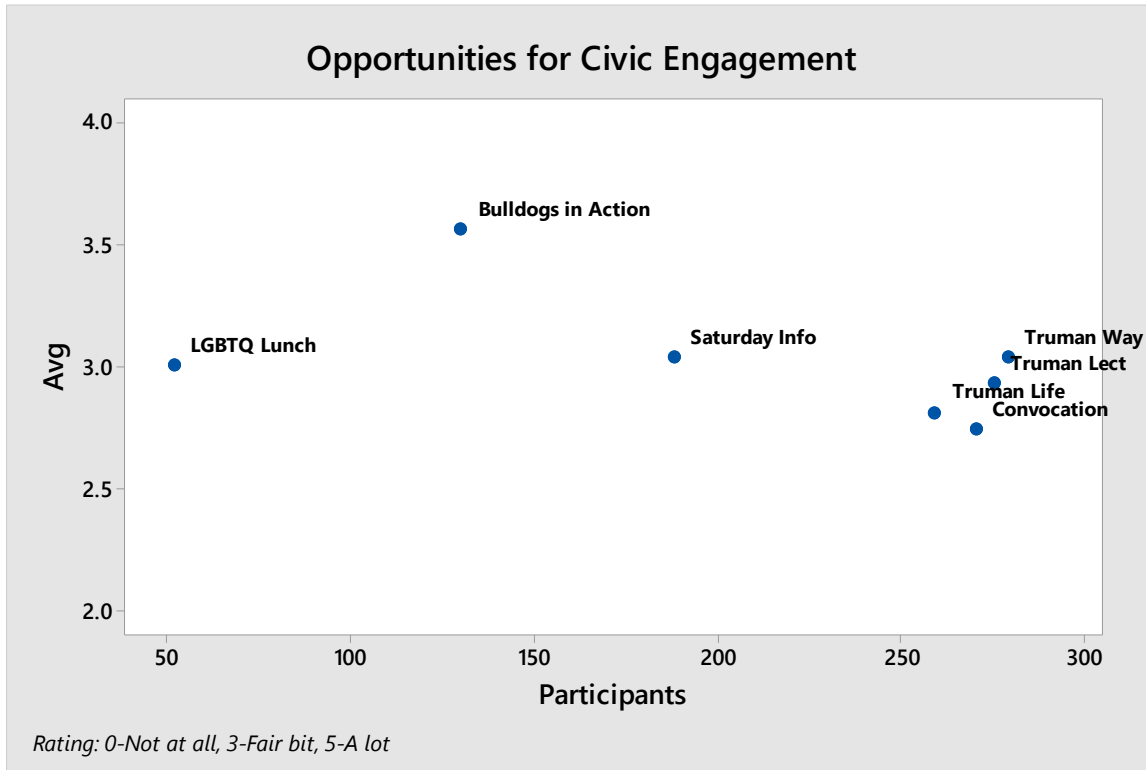
**Table 1** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help connecting you with relevant Academic Resources? (0 = did not participate)”



**Figure 15** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help connecting you with relevant Social Resources?”

Activity	Rating						Avg	Participants
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
All Hall	25	23	49	89	65	49	3.2	275
Safety	34	29	54	89	68	25	3.0	265
Consent	29	31	50	93	68	31	3.1	273
Convocation	25	51	68	85	58	13	2.7	275
Truman Life	38	34	64	97	58	10	2.8	263
FirstGen Lunch	253	14	8	12	8	5	2.6	47
Saturday Info	109	18	35	65	44	28	3.2	190
Involve101	172	19	27	56	19	5	2.7	126
LGBTQ Lunch	246	14	5	9	8	17	3.2	53
Majors Welcome	21	17	34	70	67	90	3.6	278
planetarium	225	18	7	22	12	10	2.8	69
Truman Lect	23	26	57	117	59	18	2.9	277
Truman Way	18	29	53	113	62	24	3.0	281

**Table 2** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help connecting you with relevant Social Resources?” (0 = did not participate)



**Figure 16** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help identify opportunities for Civic Engagement and its role in the Truman Culture?”

Activity	Rating						Avg	Participants
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Bulldogs in Action	170	13	13	32	32	40	3.6	130
Convocation	29	45	72	79	55	19	2.7	270
Truman Life	38	40	61	83	58	17	2.8	259
Saturday Info	110	25	37	59	40	27	3.0	188
LGBTQ Lunch	246	14	6	11	8	13	3.0	52
Truman Lect	24	35	55	105	54	26	2.9	275
Truman Way	19	33	48	109	54	35	3.0	279

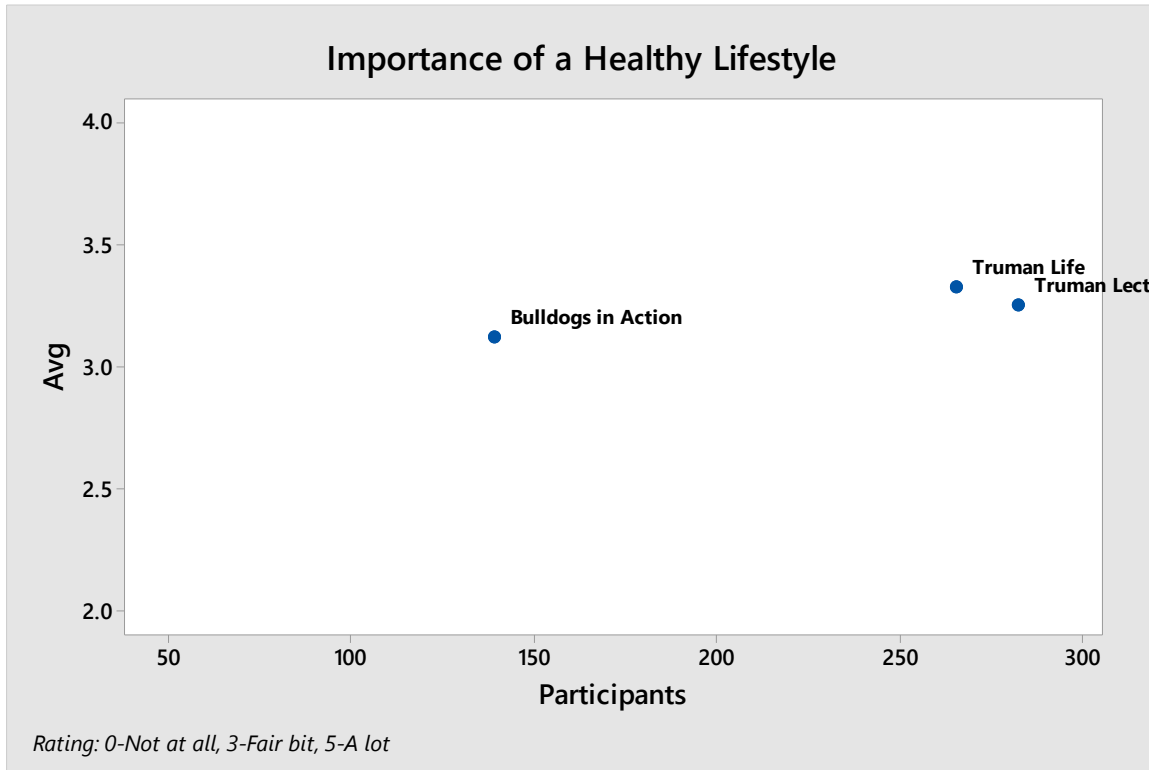
**Table 3** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help identify opportunities for Civic Engagement and its role in the Truman Culture?” (0 = did not participate)



**Figure 17** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help you to recognize the benefits of a growth mindset and the value of failure as data in the pursuit of success?”

Activity	Rating						Avg	Participants
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Truman Life	32	21	30	82	88	47	3.4	268
Truman Lect	18	21	26	102	90	43	3.4	282

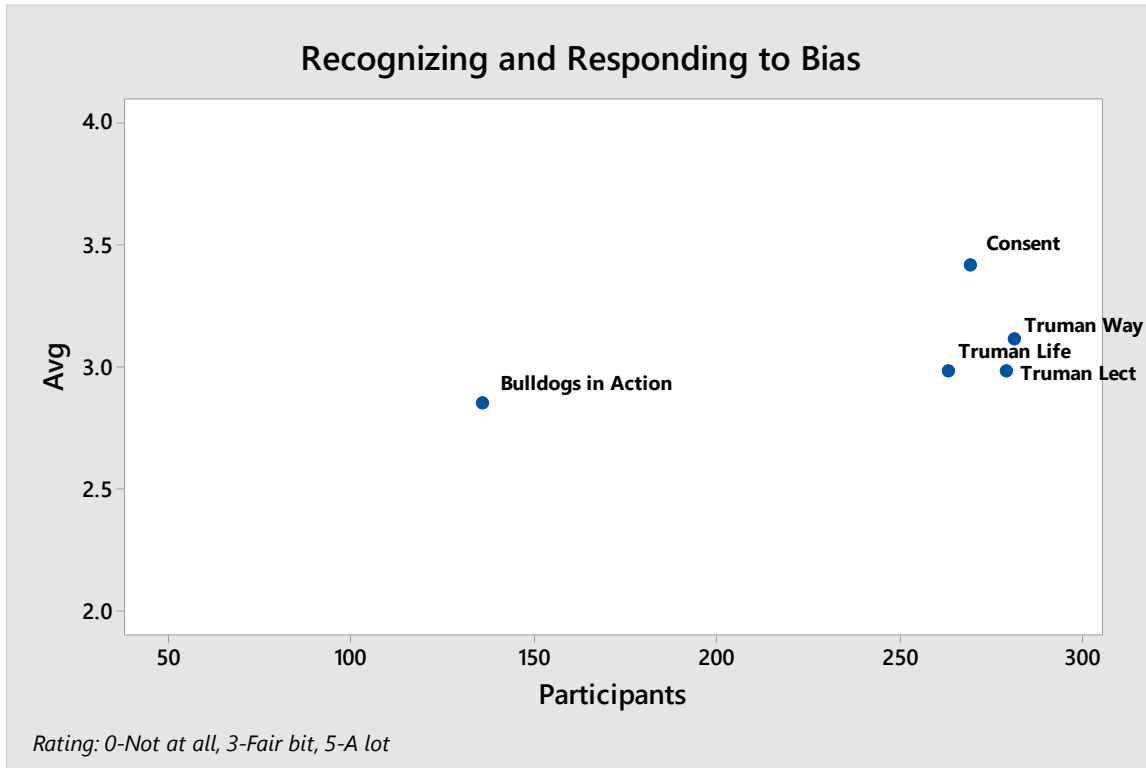
**Table 4** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help you to recognize the benefits of a growth mindset and the value of failure as data in the pursuit of success?” (0 = did not participate)



**Figure 18** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help you understand the importance of a balanced, healthy life habits?”

Activity	Rating						Avg	Participants
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Truman Life	35	23	35	82	84	41	3.3	265
Bulldogs in Action	160	19	20	48	30	22	3.1	139
Truman Lect	18	22	36	110	78	36	3.2	282

**Table 5** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help you understand the importance of a balanced, healthy life habits?” (0 = did not participate)



**Figure 19** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help you recognize bias and unconscious bias and develop strategies to respond and/or intervene?”

Activity	Rating						Avg	Participants
	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Bulldogs in Action	163	25	26	46	23	16	2.8	136
Consent	29	24	33	73	85	54	3.4	269
Truman Life	36	33	41	103	70	16	3.0	263
Truman Lect	20	37	47	101	73	21	3.0	279
Truman Way	16	33	42	101	72	33	3.1	281

**Table 6** – “How well did each listed Truman Week activity help you recognize bias and unconscious bias and develop strategies to respond and/or intervene?” (0 = did not participate)