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# ECFFM:

A Theological School Initiative  
to Address  
Economic Challenges Facing  
Future Ministers

*Welcome!*

October 11 to 13, 2017  
Pittsburgh, PA

# Goals:

- Renew focus on our goals
- Orient new coordinators
- Share what we are learning
- Facilitate peer learning
- Equip and encourage



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# What We're Learning

- Debt levels differ among students
- Debt is about more than tuition
- Debt is underestimated and hidden
- Debt is part of a larger network of financial issues




# Introductions:

- Name, institution and position
- How are you connected to the ECFFM Initiative? For how long?
- What are you learning about educational debt?



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THE **ATS**  
**EDUCATIONAL MODELS**  
**AND PRACTICES**  
PROJECT



**EXPLORE**  
**ASSESS**  
**AFFIRM**

**ats** The Association of Theological Schools  
The Commission on Accrediting



# Representative Nature of Response Set

## Underrepresented

- Evangelical Protestant schools
- Denominational schools
- Largest schools
- Black, non-Hispanic

## Overrepresented

- Roman Catholic/Orthodox Schools
- Mid-sized schools
- White, non-Hispanic



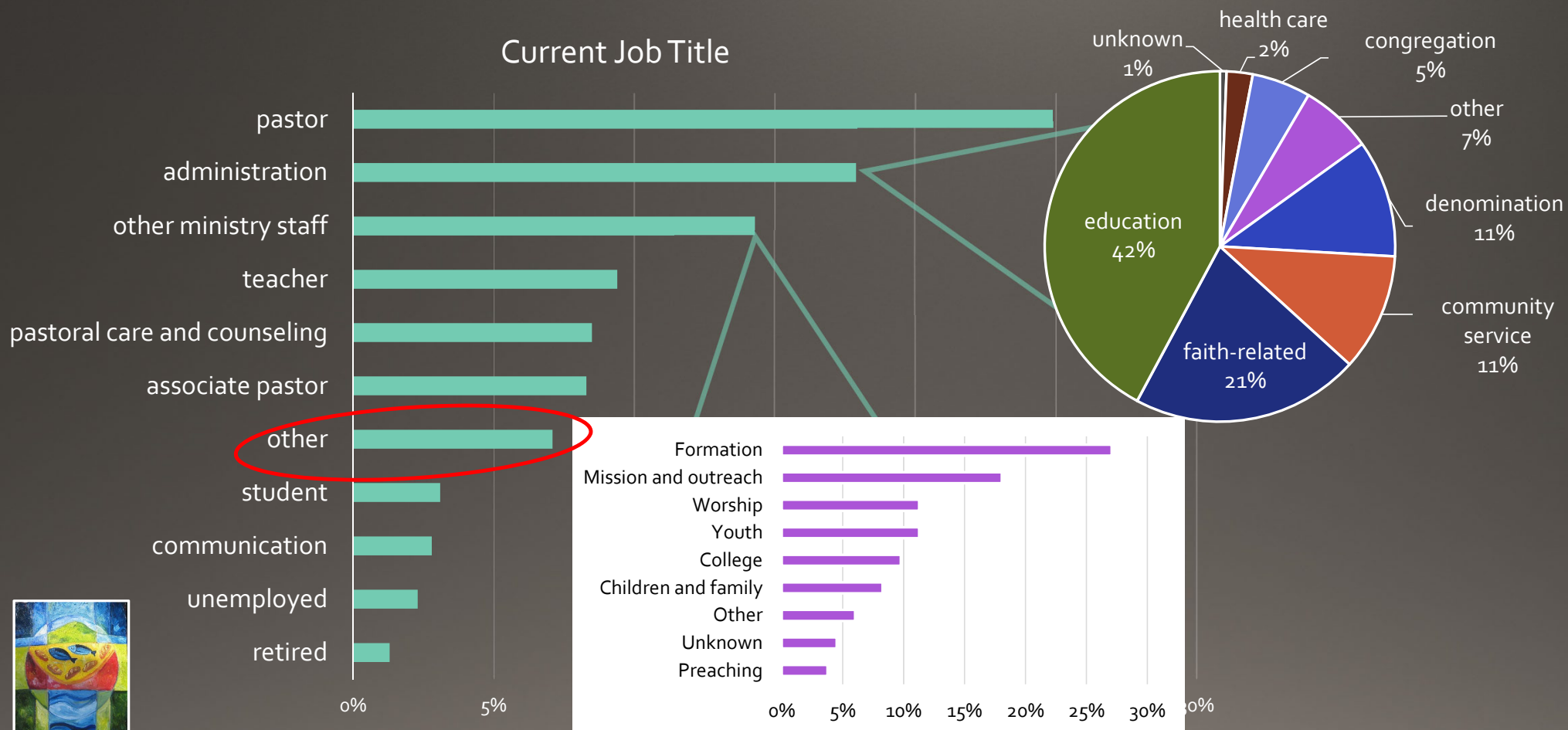
# Representative Nature of Response Set

Educational Debt Incurred During Seminary			
	2011 Graduates	2015 Graduates	Survey Response Set
\$0	46%	46%	65%
Less than \$20,000	20%	17%	11%
\$20,000-\$39,999	18%	14%	11%
\$40,000-\$59,999	16%	11%	6%
\$60,000 or More	—	13%	6%



Sources: ATS Graduating Student Questionnaire, 2010-11, 2014-15; Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

# About Our Alumni/ae

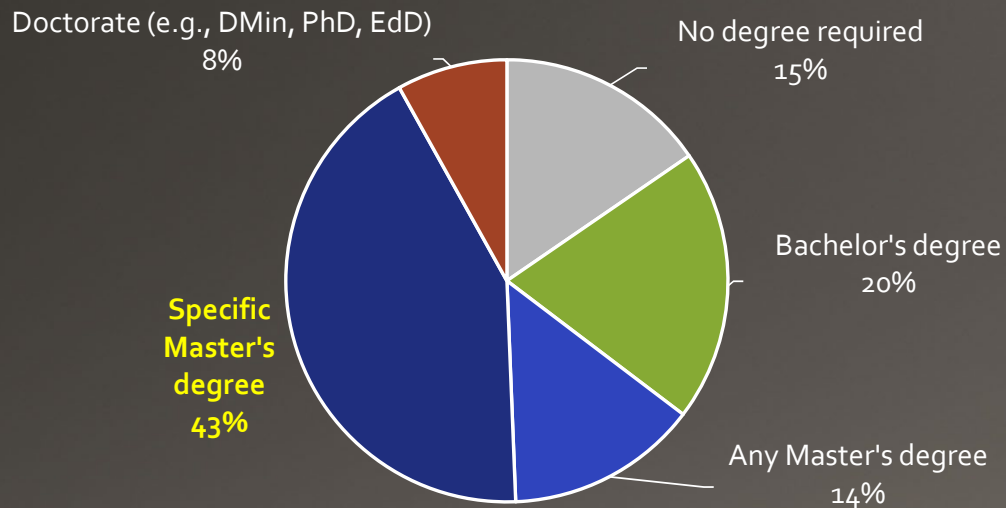


Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

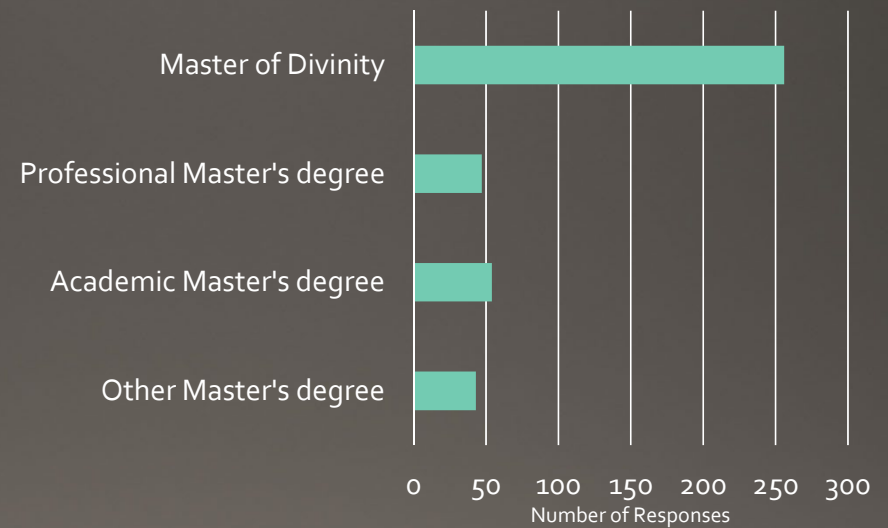


# About Our Alumni/ae

## Minimum Degree Required by Employer



## Which Specific Master's

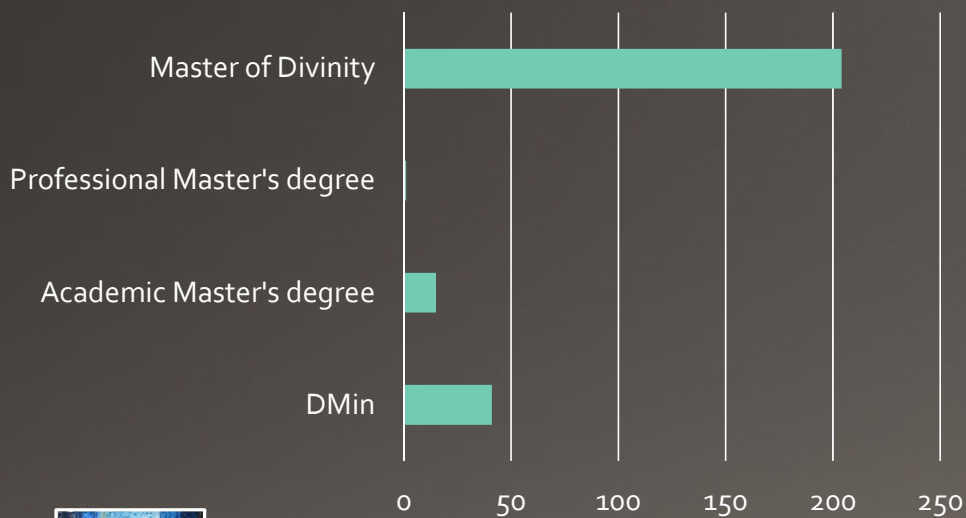


Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

# About Our Alumni/ae

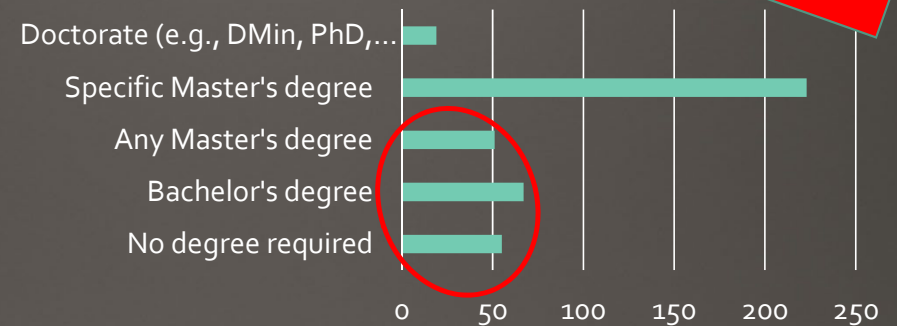


Degrees Earned  
(Employer Required MDiv Only)

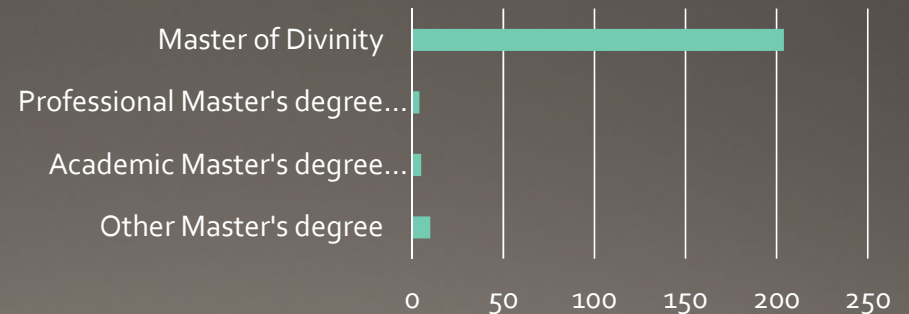


Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

Minimum Degree Required  
(MDiv Earners Only)



Which Specific Master's  
(MDiv Earners Only)



# About Our Alumni/ae



Personal Income  
(All Respondents)



Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17



Educational Debt



Resources



Strategies



Decisions

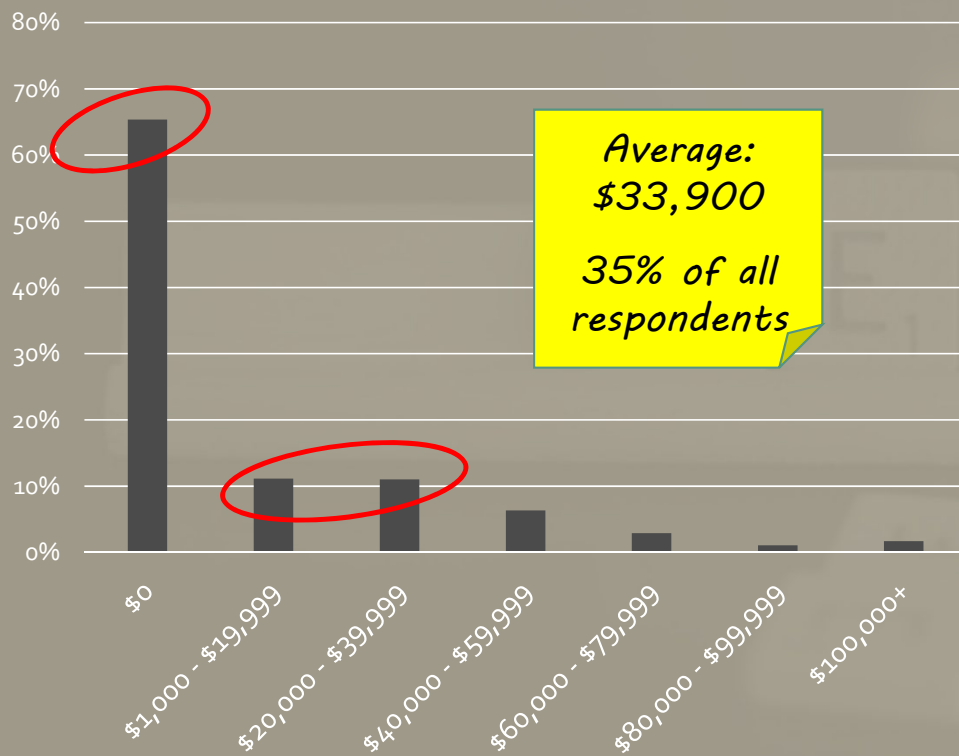
D<sub>2</sub> E<sub>1</sub> B<sub>3</sub> T<sub>1</sub>



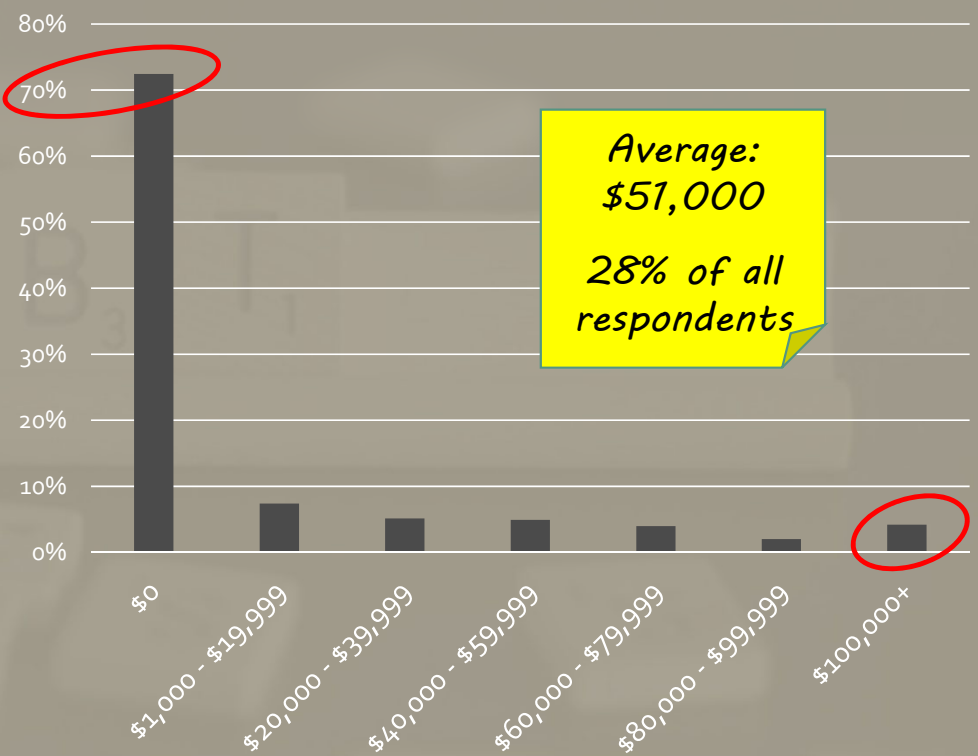
# Educational Debt



## Educational Debt Incurred During Seminary



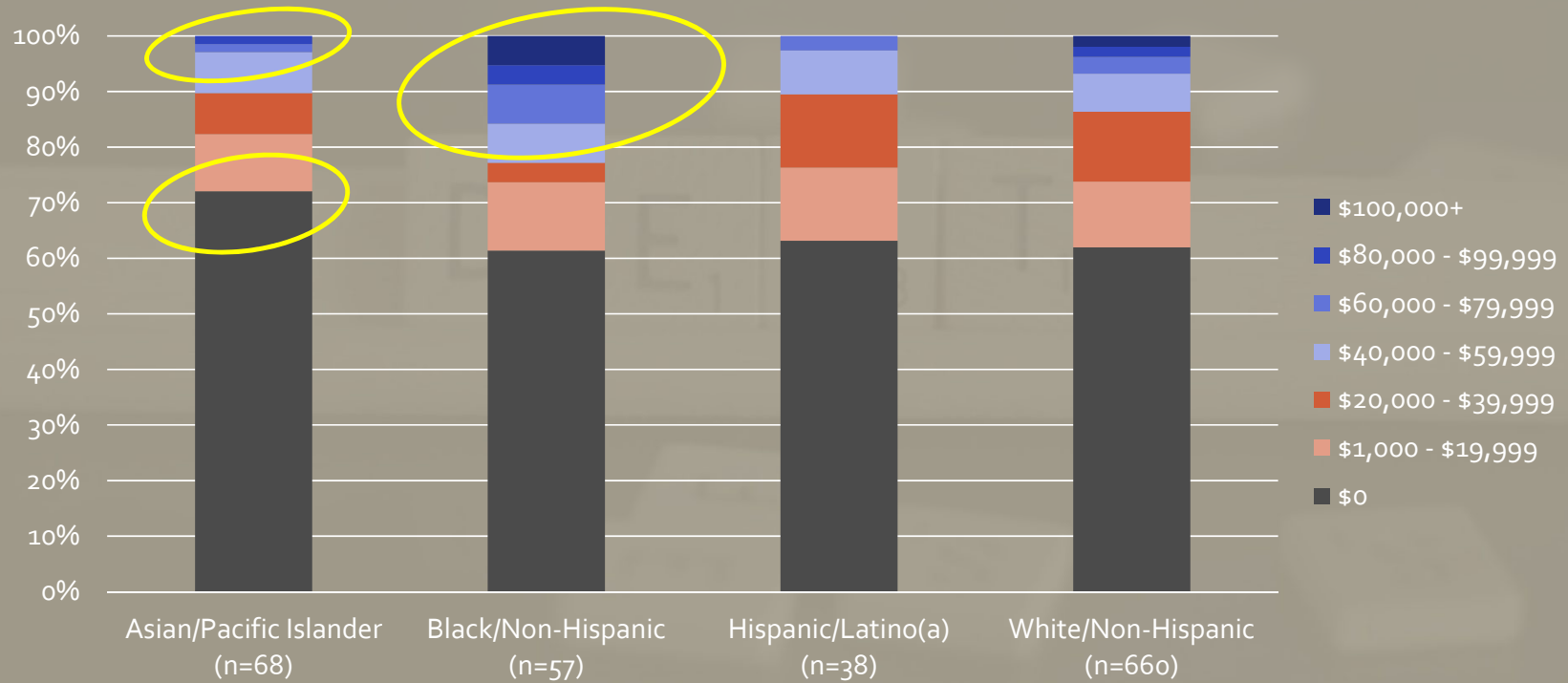
## Current Educational Debt



# Educational Debt



Educational Debt Incurred x Race

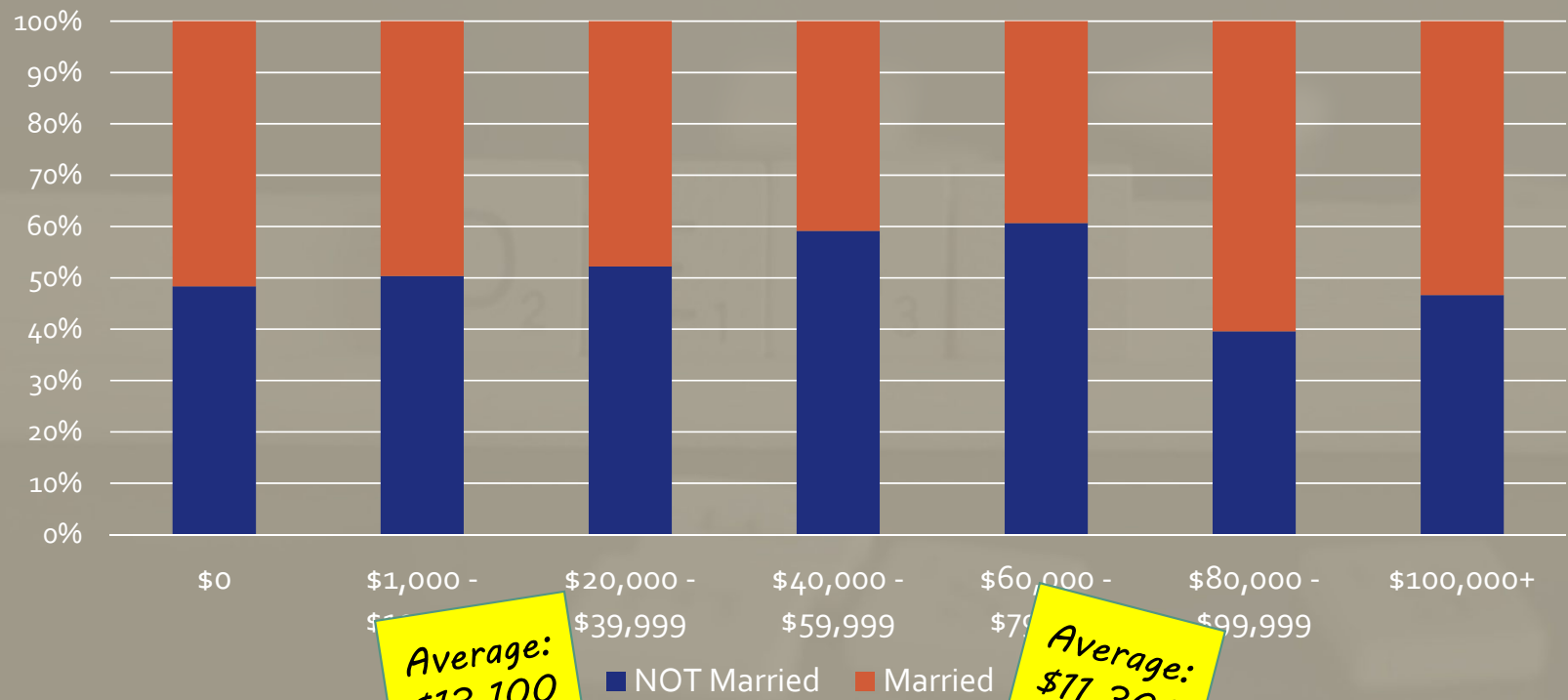


$\chi^2 = 21.804, df = 24$

# Educational Debt



Educational Debt **Incurred** x Marital Status



**Average: \$13,100**

**Average: \$71,300**

$\chi^2 = 4.251, df = 6$

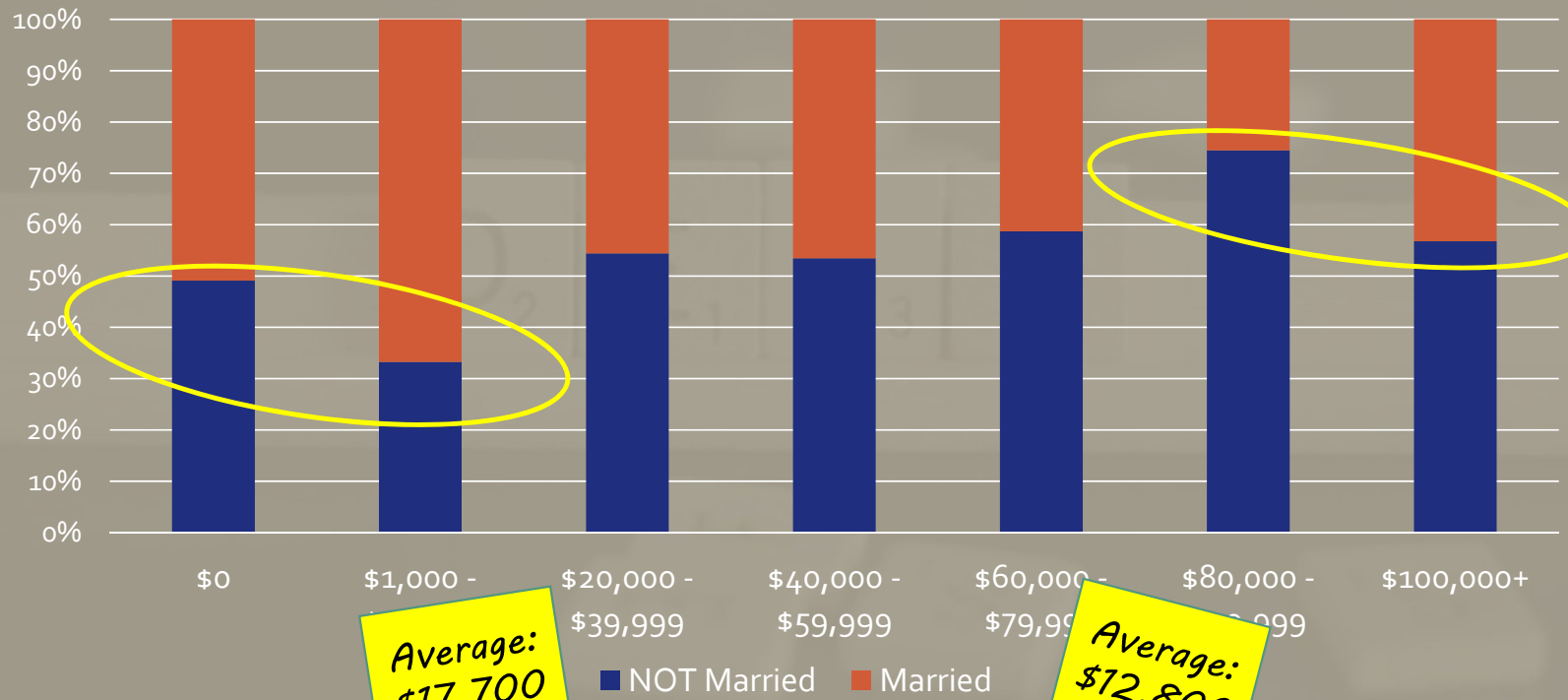
Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17



# Educational Debt



**Current** Educational Debt x Marital Status

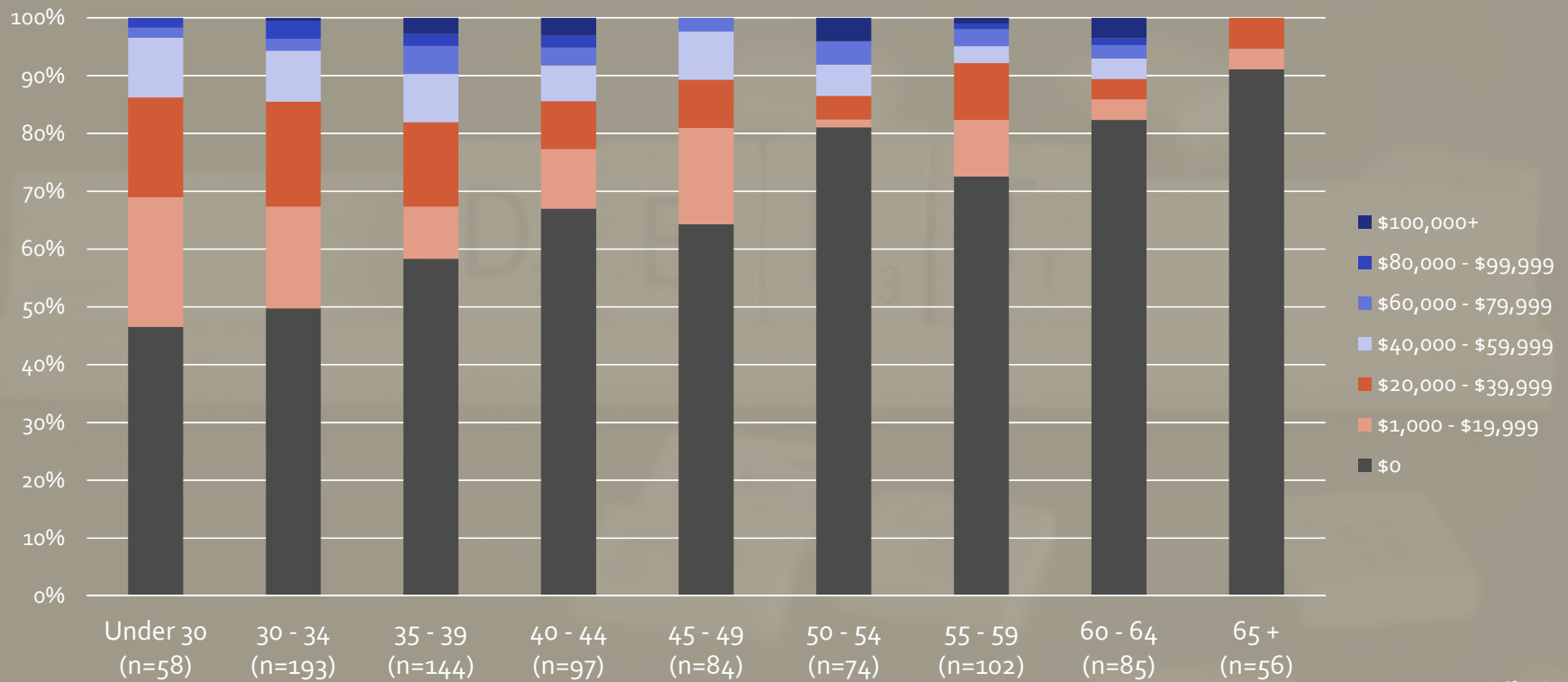


$X^2 = 13.043, df = 6$

# Educational Debt



Educational Debt Incurred x Age



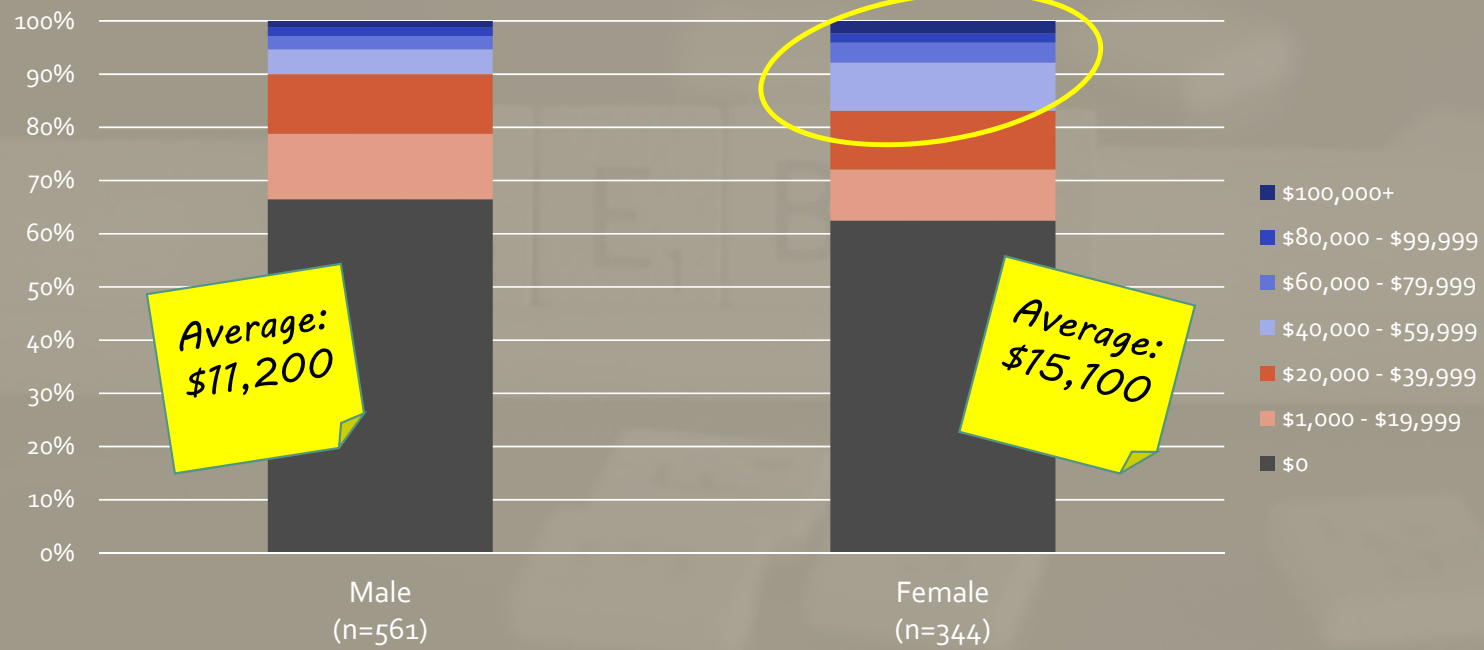
$\chi^2 = 112.358, df = 48$

Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

# Educational Debt



### Educational Debt Incurred x Gender

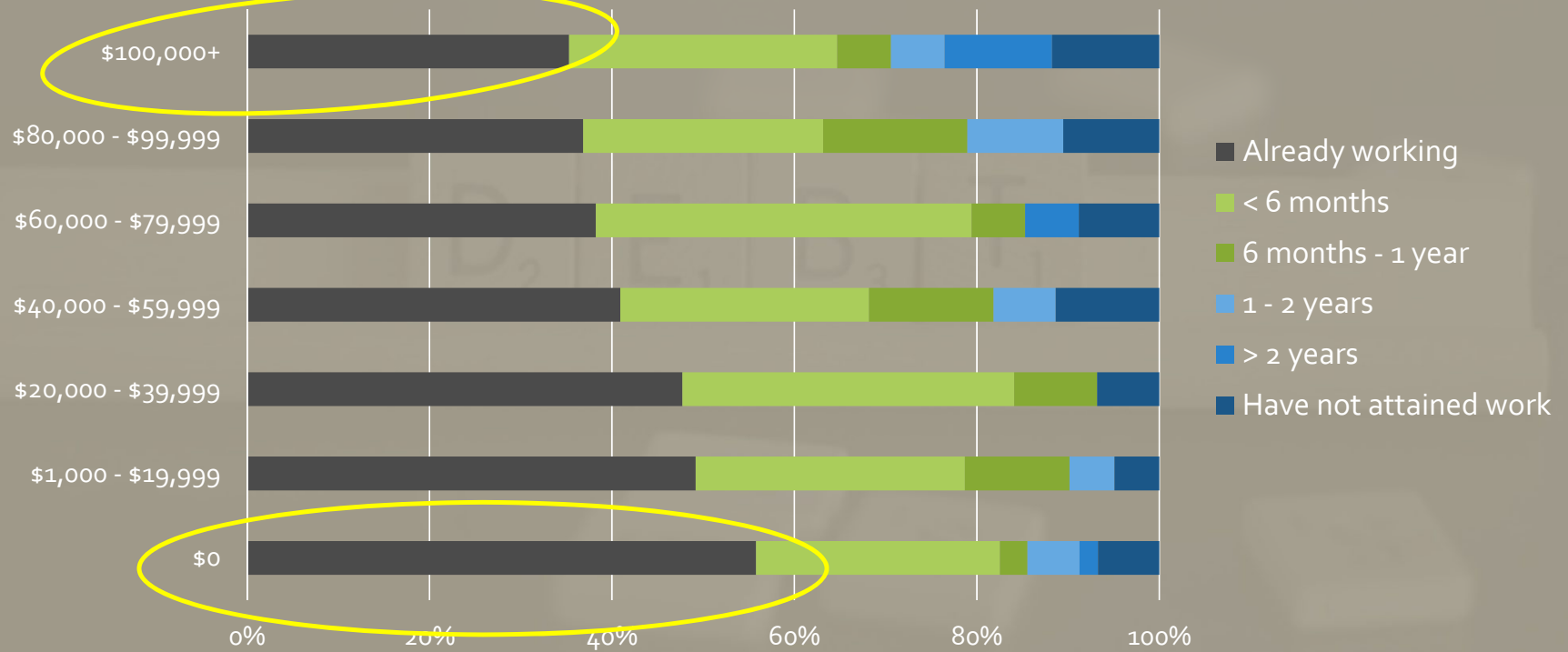


t(839) = -2.374, p < .001, Cohen's D = -.16

# Educational Debt



Current Educational Debt x Time to First Hire



$\chi^2 = 61.493, df = 30$

Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

# “Predictive Models”

- Size of school
- Ecclesial family of school
- Gender
- Race
- Age
- Personal Income
- Degree earned
- Debt brought to seminary
- Perceptions about debt
- Etc.



Debt incurred during  
seminary...



To address in the future...



# Most likely to Incur Higher Ed Debt in Seminary?

(All Borrowers)

## The one who:

Is in a loan repayment program	$\beta=.242$
Wish they borrowed less	.240
Attended a larger seminary	.223
Attended a mainline Protestant seminary	.180
Had to postpone healthcare because of debt	.155
Is older	.142
Earned an MDiv	.127

(Model  $R^2=.308$ )



# Most likely to Incur Higher Ed Debt in Seminary?

(Among High- and Low-Debt Borrowers)

## The one who(se):

(High-Debt)	(Low-Debt)
Salary is <i>not</i> a resource ( $\beta=.267$ )	Salary <i>is</i> a resource ( $\beta=.178$ )
Wish they borrowed less (.232)	Younger (.146)
Has safe colleague to discuss work problems (.218)	Wish they borrowed less (.138)
Personal income is higher (.202)	Is in a loan repayment program (.130)
Did <i>not</i> pursue an MA Professional (.160)	Took longer to be hired-first job (.129)

(Model  $R^2=.200$ )

(Model  $R^2=.236$ )

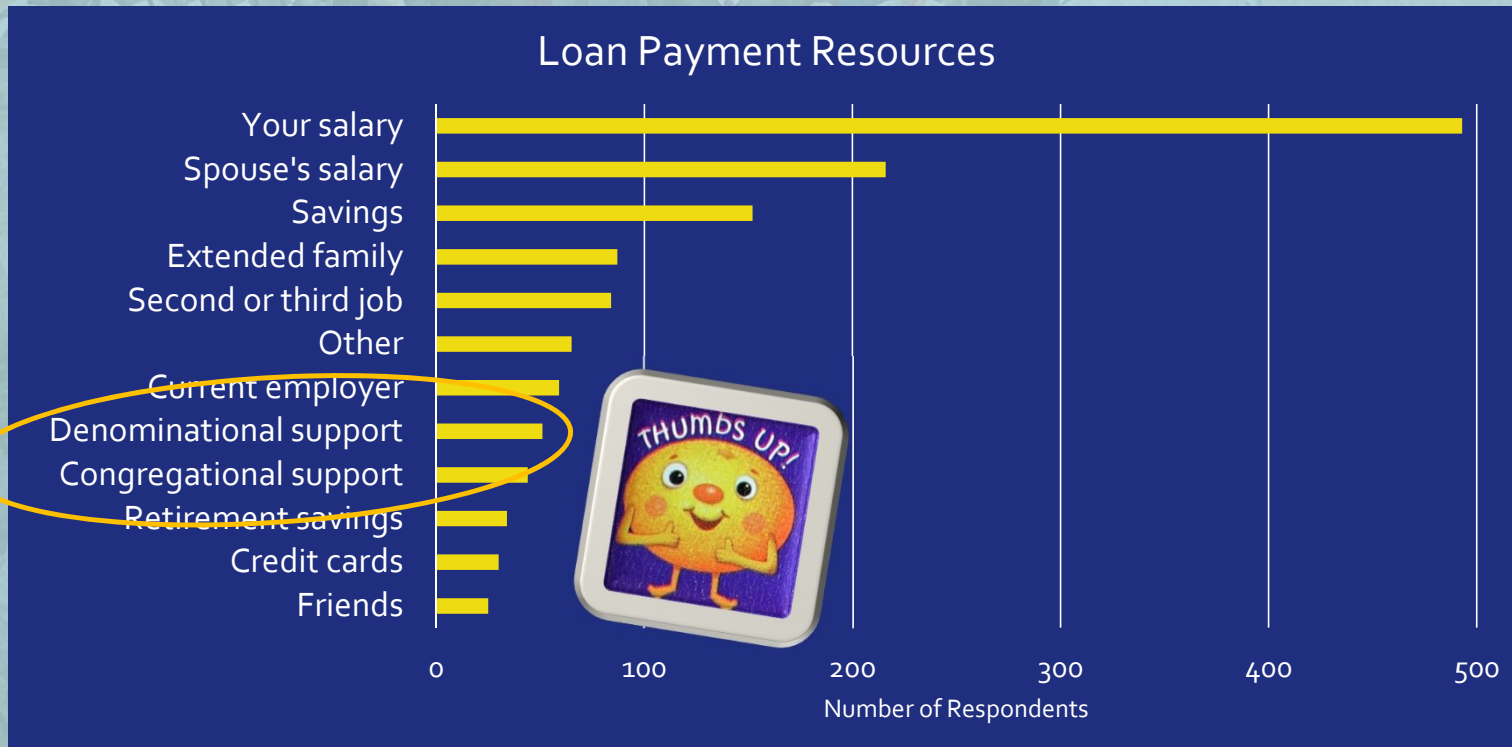


# Resources

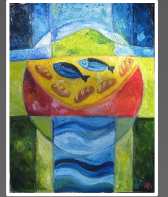




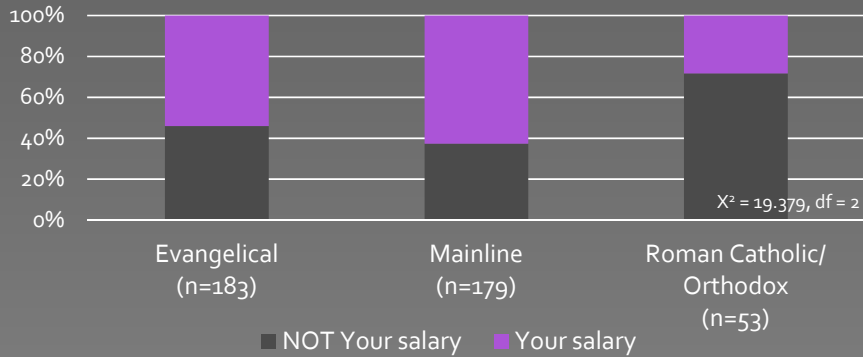
# Resources



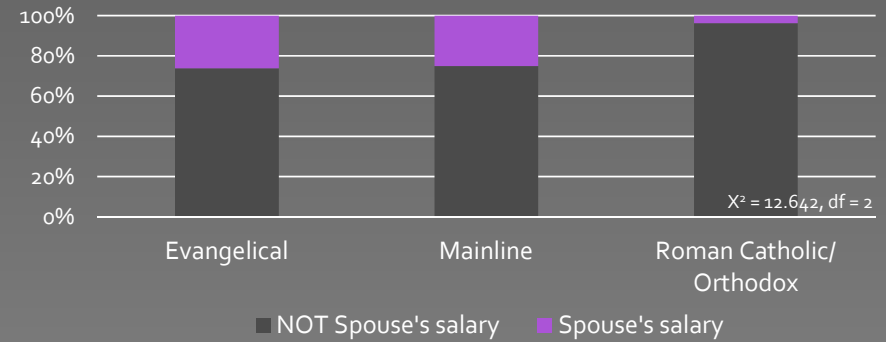
# Resources x Ecclesial Family (MDivs Only)



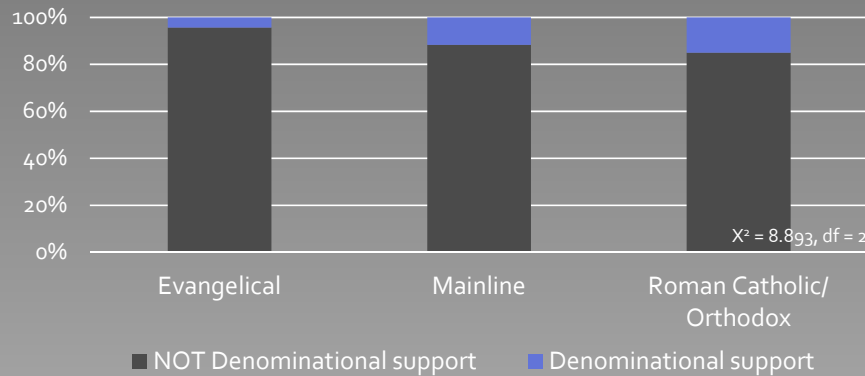
## Salary



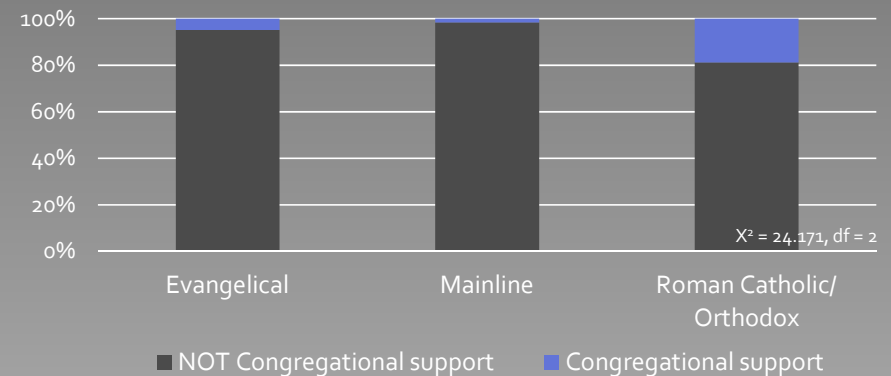
## Spouse's Salary



## Denominational Support



## Congregational Support (Other than Employer)



# Most likely to be supported by Denom/Congreg/Employer? (Borrowers Only)

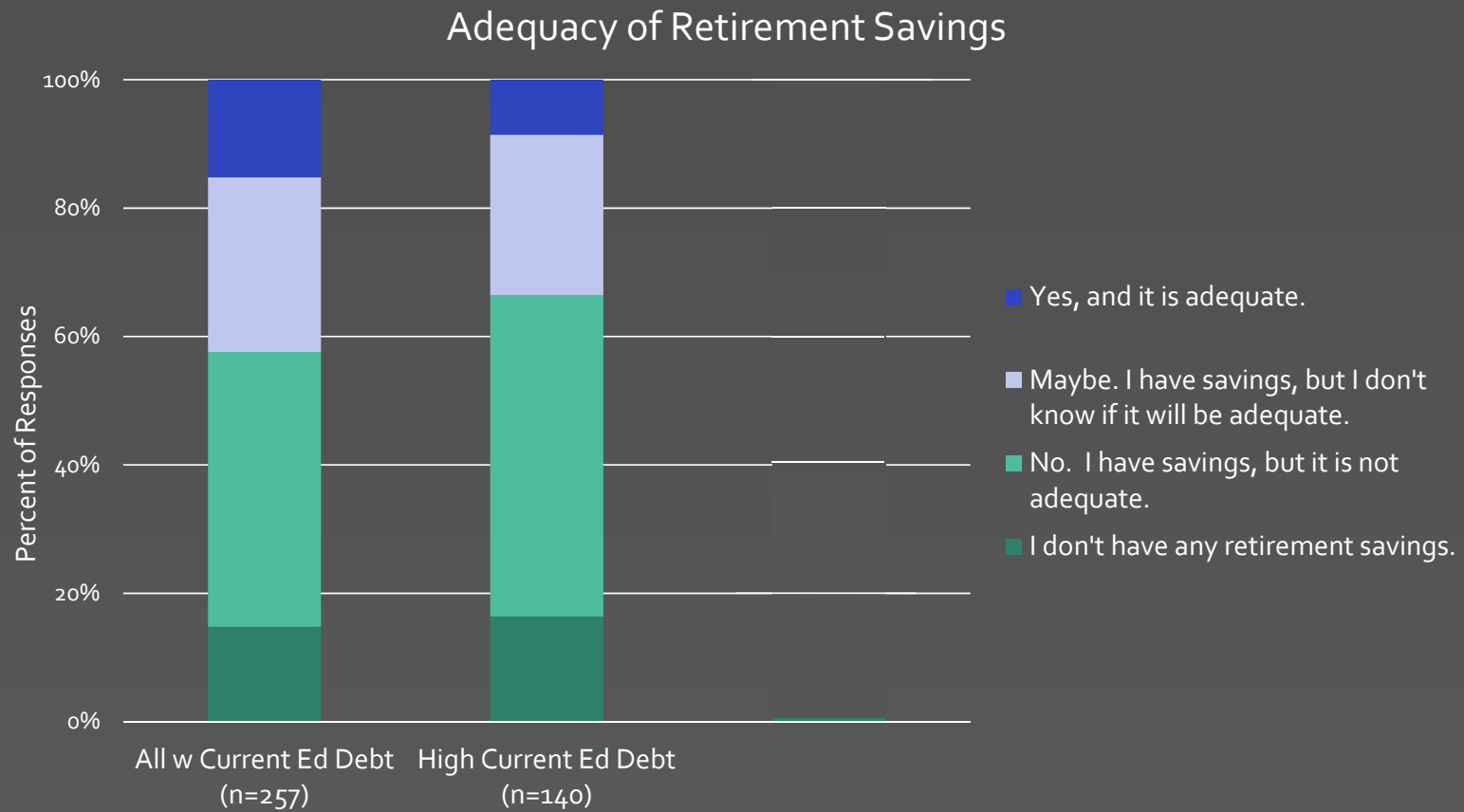
## The one who(se):

Employer expects ordination/track	$\beta = .262$
Male	.144
Contacts classmates more frequently	.141
Citizenship is other than US/Canada	.125
Had shorter time to be hired in first job	.110

(Model  $R^2 = .147$ )



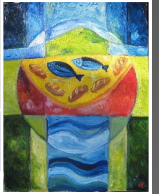
# Resources: Retirement



Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

# Resources: Retirement

Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17



Group	Strongest Correlates				
All Cases	FinanceAdeq (.464)	AdeqMonthly (.388)	PersonallIncome (.327)		
Racial/ethnic	FinanceAdeq (.417)	AdeqMonthly (.374)	PersonallIncome (.385)		
<u>White</u>	FinanceAdeq (.470)	AdeqMonthly (.382)			
Under 40	FinanceAdeq (.410)	AdeqMonthly (.407)			EmployrRetirement (.312)
40 and Over	FinanceAdeq (.489)	AdeqMonthly (.397)	PersonallIncome (.316)		Not HigherJob (.333)
Male	FinanceAdeq (.482)	AdeqMonthly (.417)	PersonallIncome (.374)	HomeOwner (.317)	
<u>Female</u>	FinanceAdeq (.421)	AdeqMonthly (.352)			
Evangelical	FinanceAdeq (.460)	AdeqMonthly (.359)	PersonallIncome (.332)	HomeOwner (.337)	Older (.324)
<u>Mainline</u>	FinanceAdeq (.470)	AdeqMonthly (.382)			
RC/O	FinanceAdeq (.500)	AdeqMonthly (.357)			Not WishBorrowLess (.441)
Any Debt Incurred	FinanceAdeq (.391)	AdeqMonthly (.348)	PersonallIncome (.356)		
Low Debt Incurred	FinanceAdeq (.378)	AdeqMonthly (.377)	PersonallIncome (.325)	HomeOwner (.303)	Not Pursue Add'l Nontheo UG Degree (.301)
High Debt Incurred	FinanceAdeq (.408)	AdeqMonthly (.303)	PersonallIncome (.405)		ConfidentPersonal (.308)
No Debt Incurred	FinanceAdeq (.478)	AdeqMonthly (.380)	PersonallIncome (.306)		Not HigherJob (.322)

Personal  
Loans

Mortgage

Health  
Insurance

# Financial Education Strategies



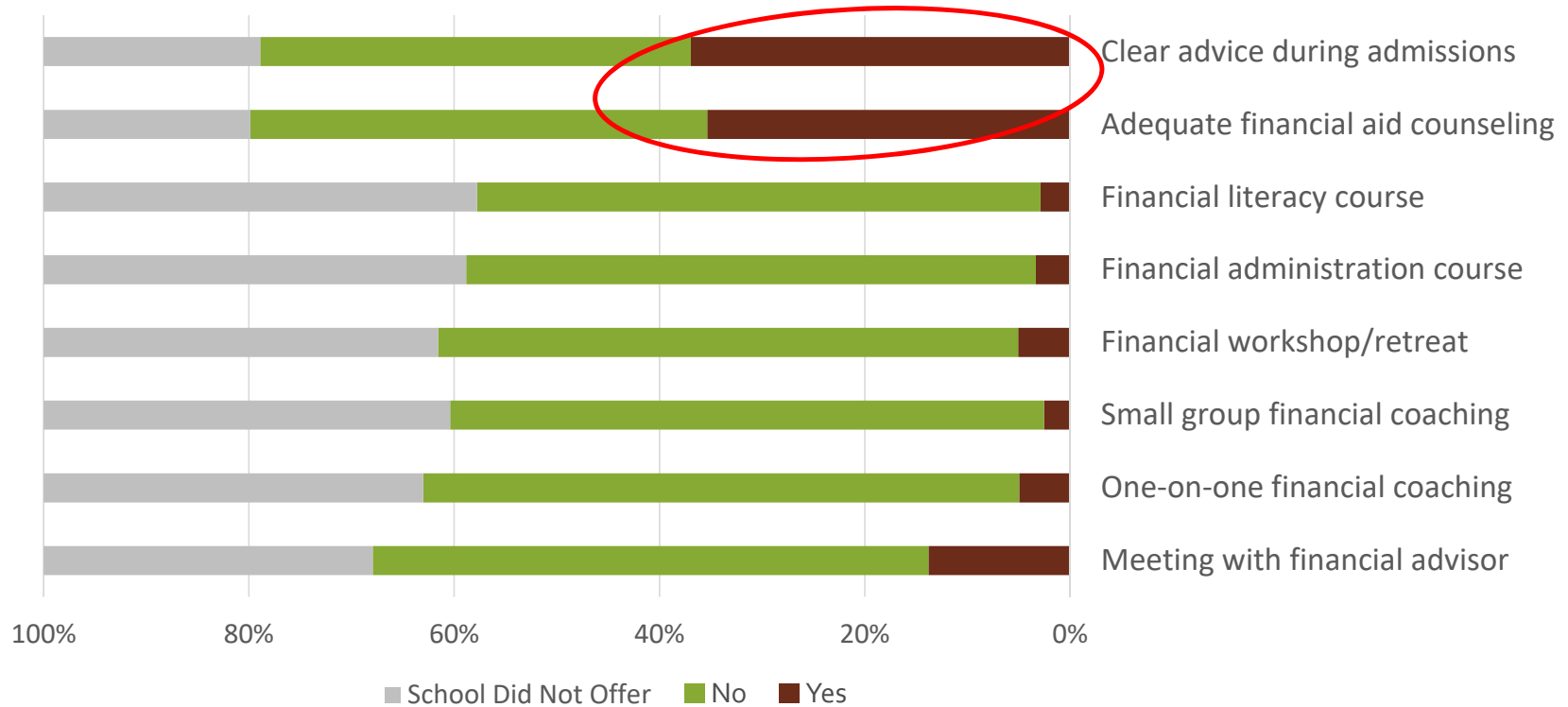
Counseling

Retirement

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ney

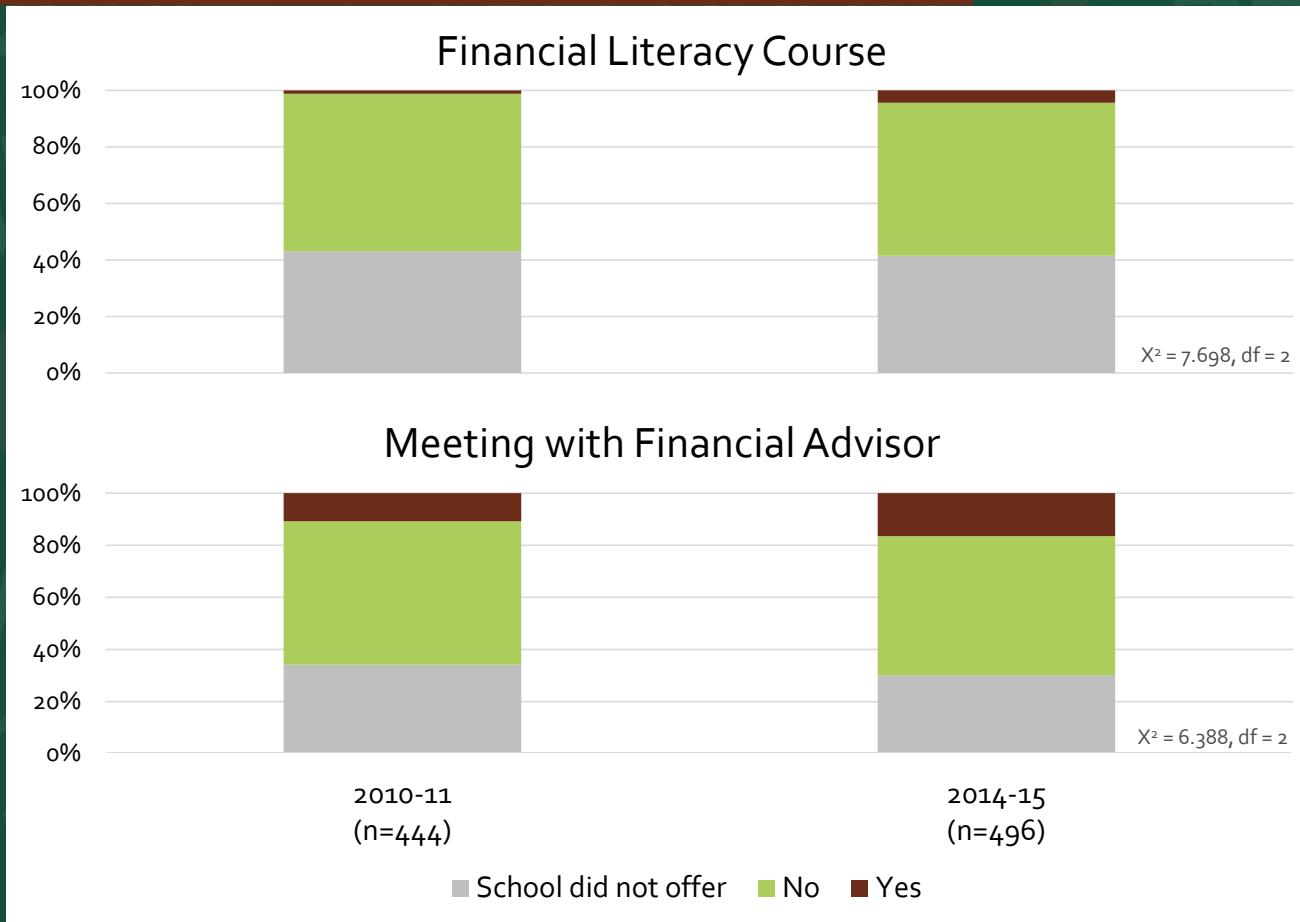
# Financial Education Strategies

Participation in Financial Education Strategies



Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

# Financial Education Strategies



Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17



# Adequate Financial Aid Counseling



Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

$r=.195, n=205, p=.005$

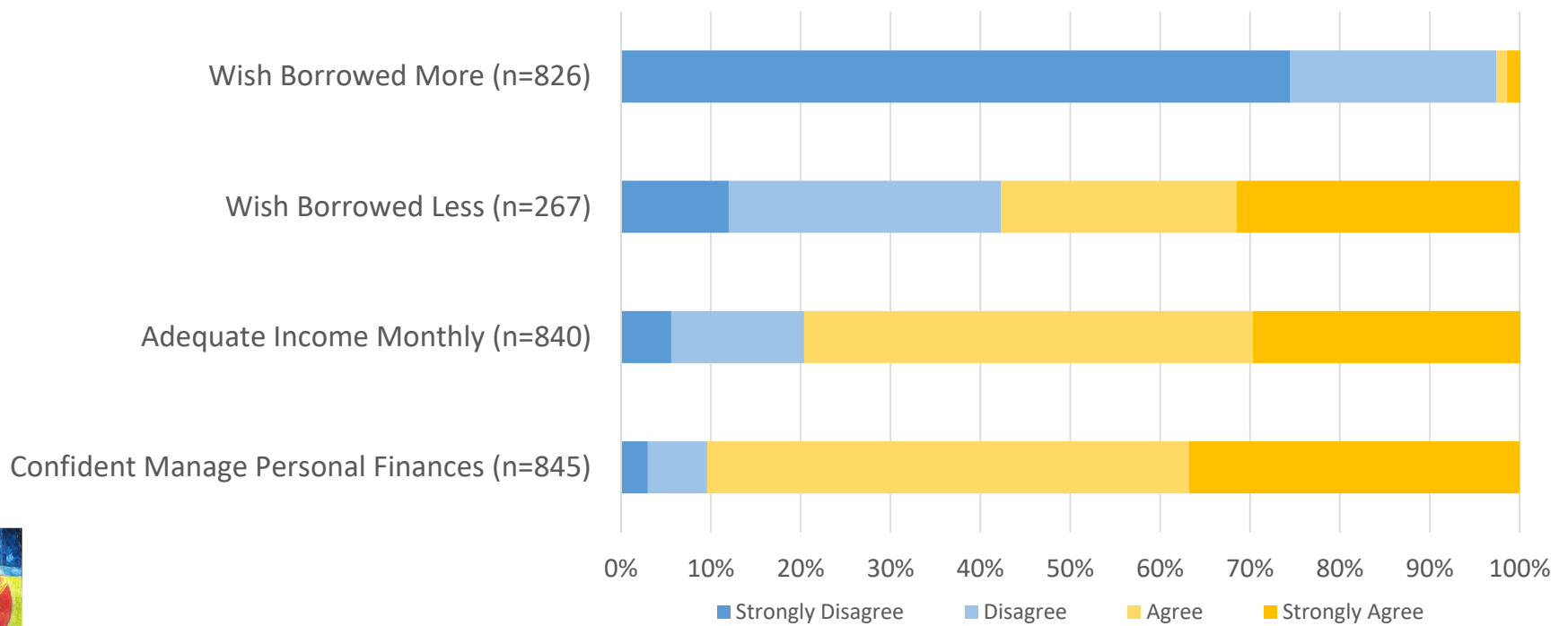
# Perspectives & Decisions

**POSTPONED**  
WATCH FOR FURTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS



# Perspectives & Decisions

## Perspectives on Debt



Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

# Beliefs about Monthly Income

Adequate Monthly Income x Current Educational Debt  
(Borrowers Only)

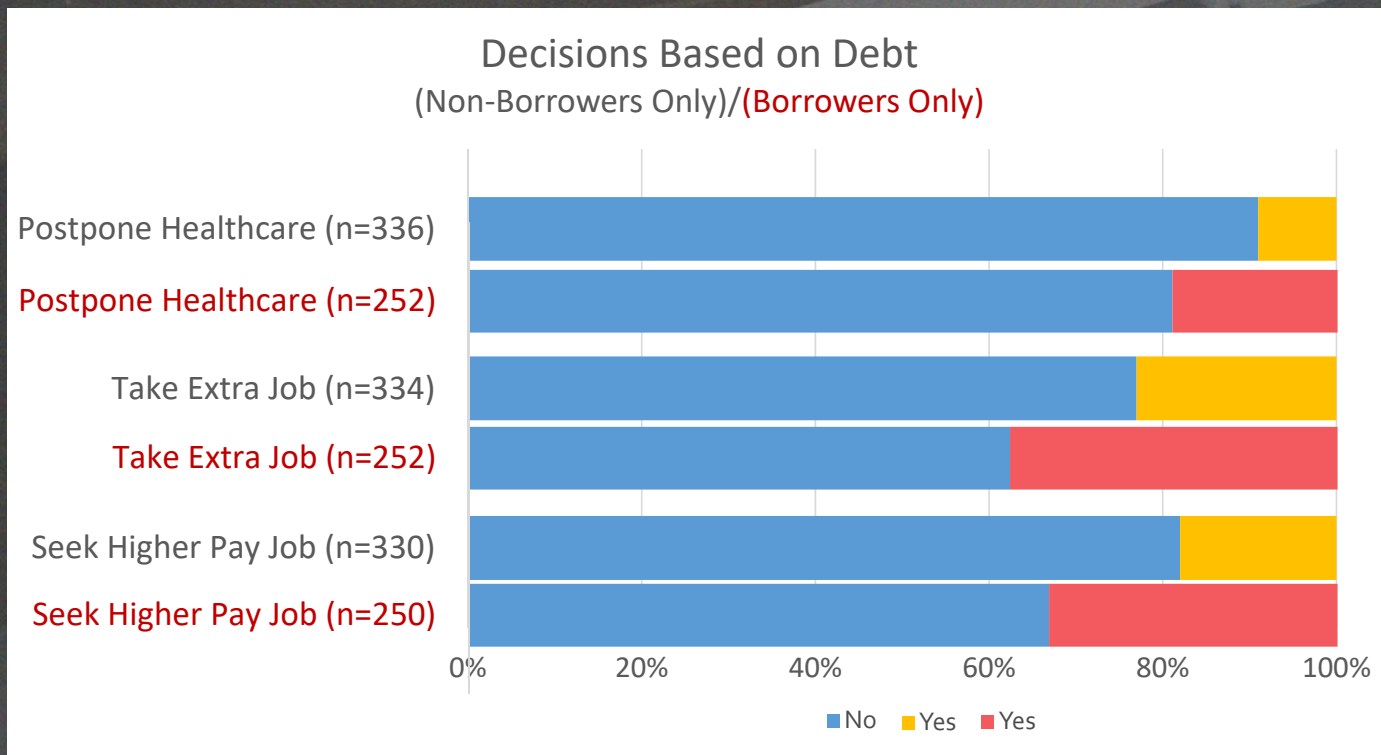


$X^2 = 45.699, df = 15$

Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17



# Perspectives & Decisions



Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

# Who would Wish Borrowed Less? (Borrowers Only)

## The one who:

Incurred higher educational debt during seminary	$\beta=.317$
Had to take an extra job to make ends meet	.194
Would <i>not</i> choose the same seminary if were to do again	.181
Brought higher educational debt to seminary	.138

(Model  $R^2=.259$ )



Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

# Most likely to Postpone Healthcare? (Borrowers Only)

## The one who:

Had to seek higher paying job because of loans, though called to ministry	$\beta=.204$
Incurred higher educational debt during seminary	.173
Does <i>not</i> have full medical coverage	.163
Had to take an extra job to make ends meet	.137
Less likely to encourage others to consider ministry	.117

(Model  $R^2=.212$ )



Source: Educational Models & Practices/ECFFM Mapping the Workforce Survey, 2016-17

## Educational Debt



- Debt affects alums differently—gender, age, marital status
- How debt affects alums by race unclear
- Debt related to time to first professional job
- Most frequent: advice at admissions and financial aid counseling
- Financial aid counseling related to higher ed debt—for low-debt borrowers

## Strategies



## Resources



- Heavy reliance on individ, little on congreg/denom
- Need to learn from non-Western ways of “being church”?
- What is adequacy of retirement savings related to? For whom?
- Wishing borrowed less ~ extra job, *not* choose same seminary again
- Postponing healthcare ~ *less* apt to encourage others toward ministry

## Decisions





# Goals of the Initiative:

- **Conduct research** *into financial assumptions/practices that result in student debt*



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# Goals of the Initiative:

- Diagnosing the problem



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# Goals of the Initiative:

- Diagnosing the problem
- Creating and/or strengthen **educational programs** *that prepare future financial leaders*



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## *Goals of the Initiative:*

- Diagnosing the problem
- Educating and equipping future ministers

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# Goals of the Initiative:

- Diagnosing the problem
- Educating and equipping future ministers
- Imagine and implement new **strategies** *for lessening financial burdens*



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# Goals of the Initiative:

- Diagnosing the problem
- Educating and equipping future ministers
- Creating more sustainable models of theological education



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# Goals of the Initiative:

- Diagnosing the problem
- Educating and equipping future ministers
- Creating more sustainable models of theological education
- **Initiate or enhance partnerships** *with those who can address these circumstances*

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# Goals of the Initiative:

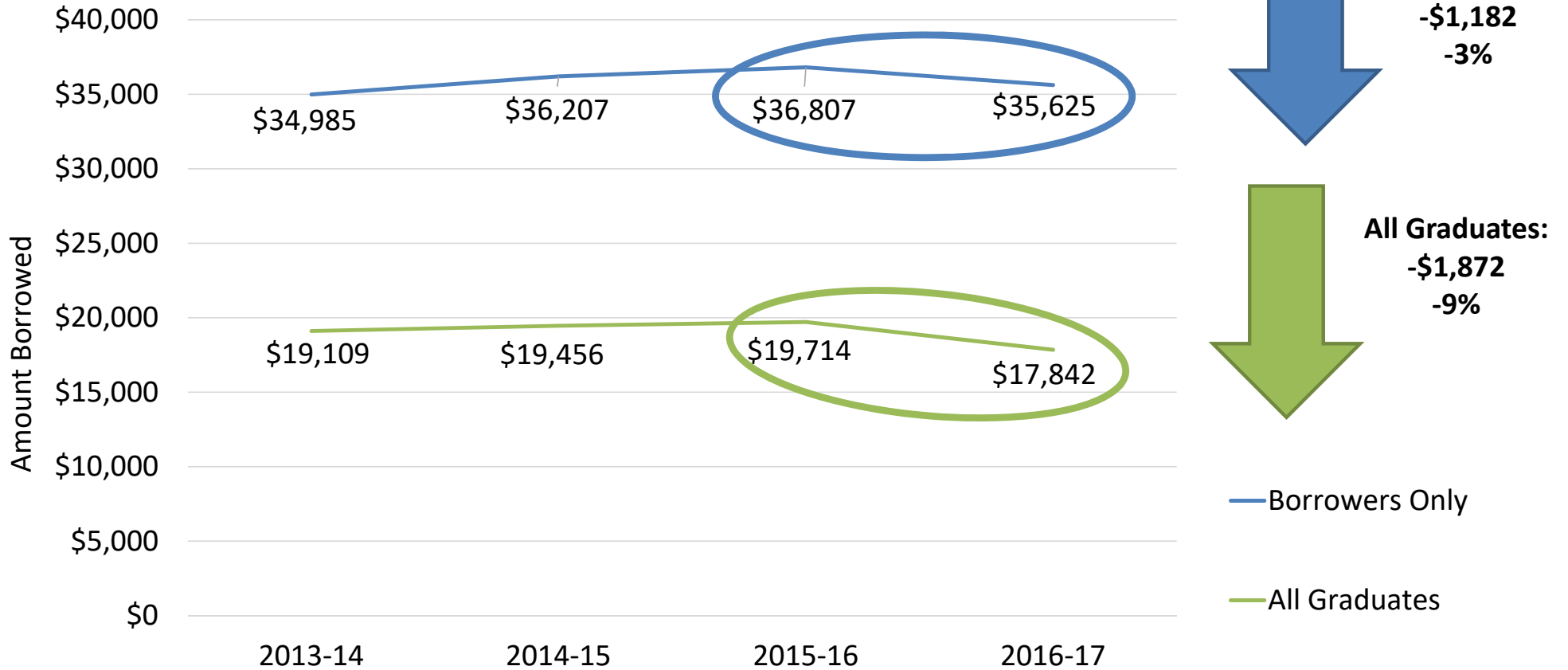
- Diagnosing the problem
- Educating and equipping future ministers
- Creating more sustainable models of theological education
- Rebuilding networks of support for future ministers

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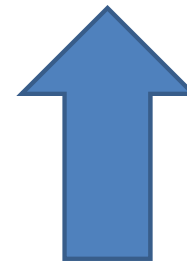
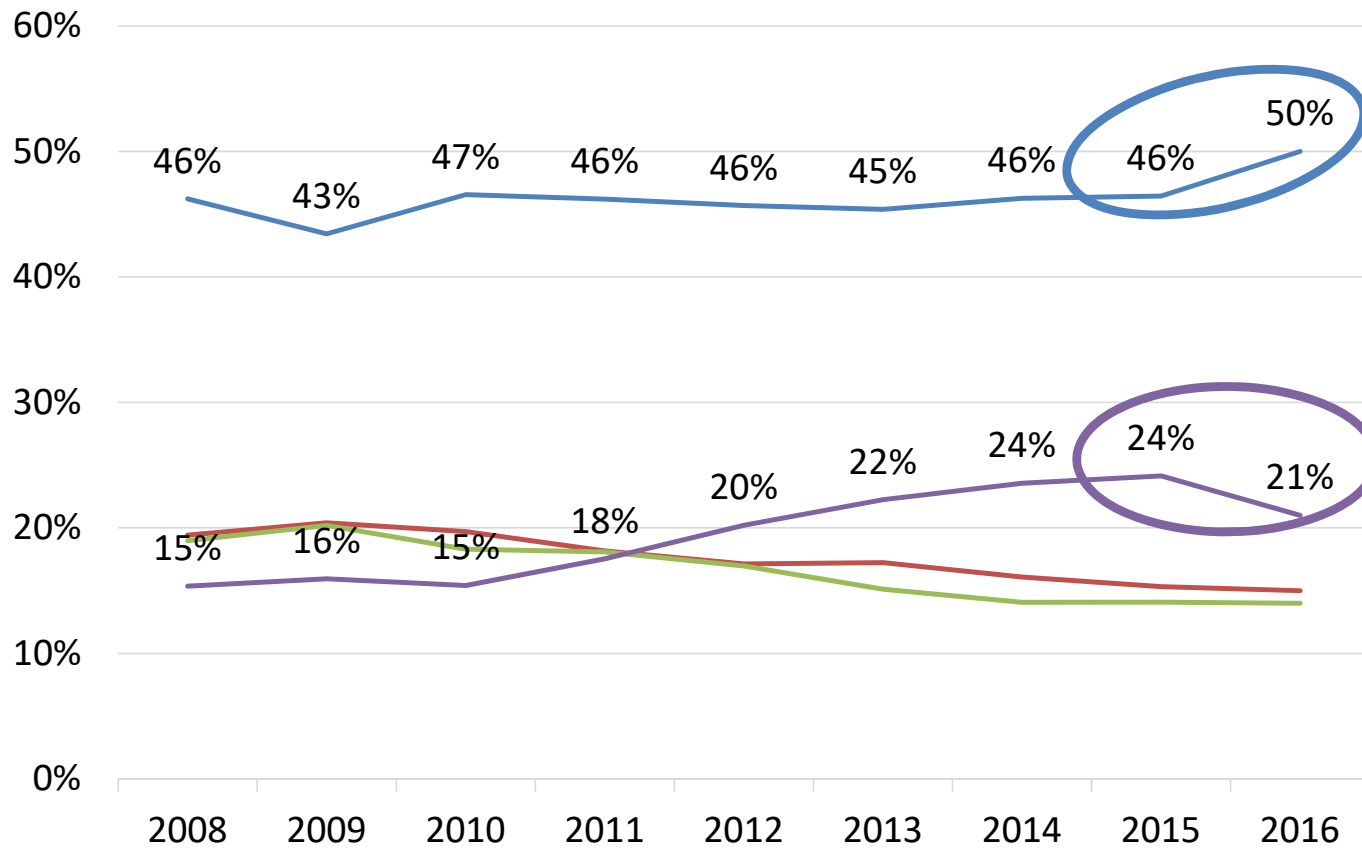


## Approx. Average Educational Debt Incurred in Seminary All Graduates, 2013-14 to present

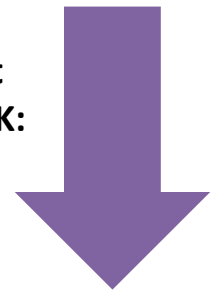


Source: The ATS Graduating Student Questionnaire Total School Profile Table 7,  
The ATS Graduating Student Questionnaire Question 13b

## Educational Debt Incurred, % of All Students 2008-09 to Present



**Students  
incurring no  
debt:  
4%**



**Students  
incurring debt  
More than \$40K:  
-3%**

- None
- Less than \$20K
- \$20K to \$39.9K
- More than \$40K



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# ECFFM:

## A Theological School Initiative to Address Economic Challenges Facing Future Ministers

Jo Ann Deasy  
ATS Director, Institutional Initiatives and Student Research

Deborah H.C. Gin  
ATS Director, Research and Faculty Development

October 11, 2017  
Pittsburgh, PA