

# SUMMARY DATA ON ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS AND INSTITUTION DEMOGRAPHICS IN ATHLETIC TRAINING EDUCATION



Citation: Association for Athletic Training Education. Summary Data on Admissions Requirements and Institution Demographics in Athletic training Education. February 2023.

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## INTRODUCTION

In late 2021 the Association for Athletic Training Education Research Network formed a group charged to create a record of application and admissions variables for all levels of AT programs (professional, residency, DAT). This work entailed an examination of each program's website to determine the nature and extent of admissions variables and some program demographic information. This data was collected from publicly-available information and is used for informational purposes.

The group first determined the variables of interest and then conducted a program-by-program website examination to find that information. CAATE-accredited residency and master's degree level programs as of February 2022 were examined. Programs that announced closure between February

2022 and September 2022 were removed prior to analysis and are not considered in this report. All known Doctor of Athletic Training degree programs were also included.

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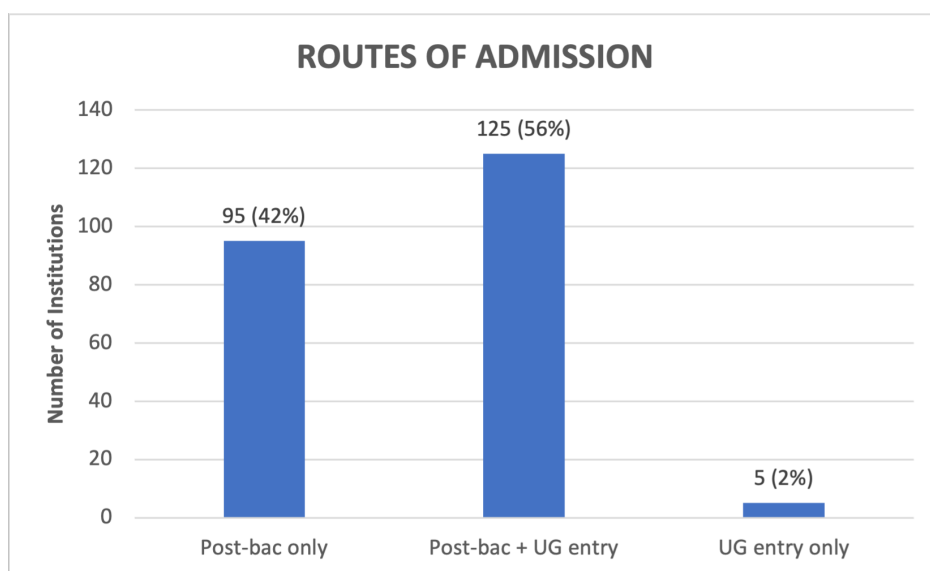
Some data proved not usable and is not included in this report. For example, we recorded outcomes-related data pertaining to number of graduates and Board of Certification pass rates but were unable to discern whether the data pertained to students in baccalaureate- or master's degree programs.

We gathered this information to encourage conversation around admissions processes and to provide data for users to compare their institutional processes to the whole. This information is presented in graphical form and is accompanied by questions for consideration and other commentary created by the work group. This commentary represents opinions of the group.

We offer these broad observations:

- Programs should consider stating what's *not* required (for example, GREs, observation hours, letters of recommendation) if requirements differ from what is typical.
- Change nomenclature from "certified athletic trainer" to "athletic trainer" in all documents.
- Website photos often depict students in a passive role (such as multiple students gathered around a faculty member who is doing something on a patient) instead of in an active role (engaging in lab based or clinical experience-type activities).
- Programs should examine each admissions requirement against what's required for accreditation, required for their institution, and required to get the desired snapshot of a student's potential for success in the program.
- Annual, thorough website review is important to assure accurate and up-to-date information. For example, we often found dated manuals, broken links, and conflicting information regarding admissions requirements.
- The AATE should engage with the CAATE to identify desired data to be gathered in the annual report and the most helpful way to present that data. While some of this information (e.g., Carnegie classification) is already included, much of it is not.

## PART 1A. PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS ADMISSIONS: ROUTES OF ADMISSION

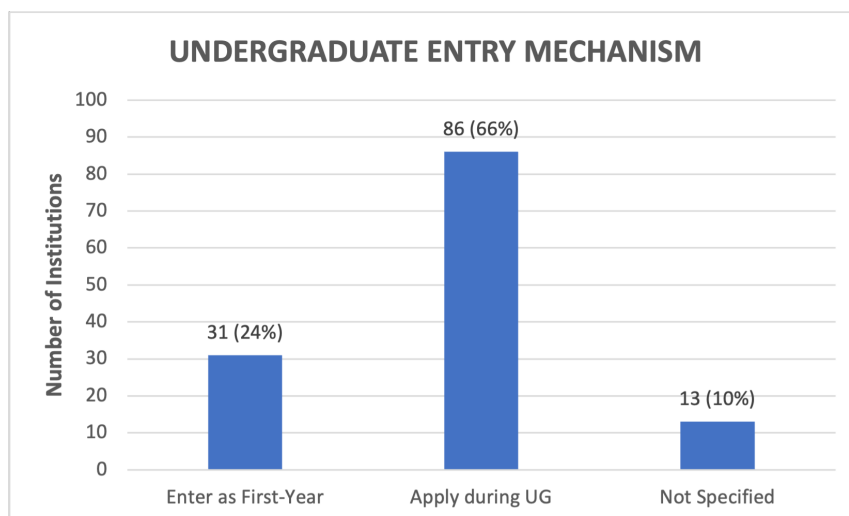


### EXPLANATION

- Examined route of admission for each program.
- Categorized as **post-bac only** (all applicants must have completed a bachelor's degree by the program start date), **undergraduate entry** – also known as early admission (applicants enter institution as undergraduates and enter the professional program before completing their undergraduate degrees; often described as 3+2) or offering both entry routes (**post-bac and undergraduate**).

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider adding route of entry (post-bac or undergraduate) for each student to demographic information collected in CAATE annual report. This information would help inform recruiting strategies.
- Future work: Examine cost of education for different routes of entry, retention in the program, and longevity in the profession.



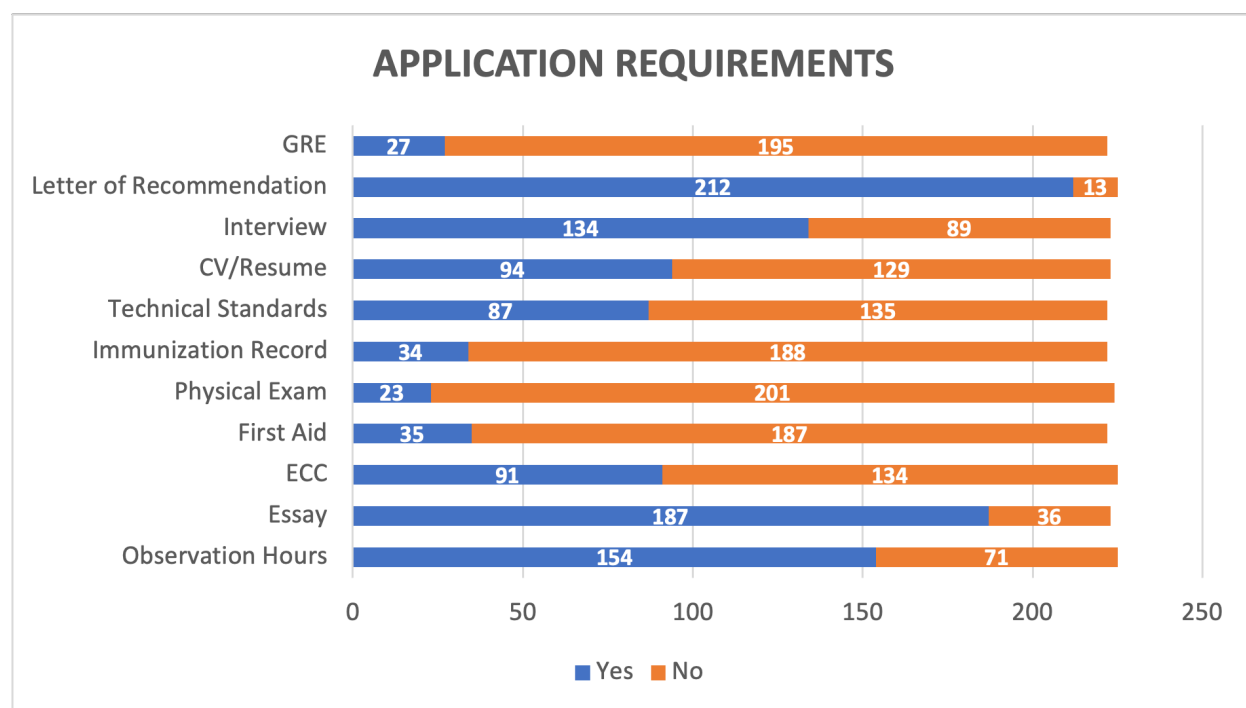
#### EXPLANATION

- Enter as first-year: Student automatically enrolled in early acceptance program as an incoming undergraduate student.
- Apply during UG: Secondary application required. Student is already enrolled at institution but must apply separately for entry into the professional program.
- Not specified: Unable to determine from publicly-available information

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- For programs with undergraduate entry option: Ensure that requirements for admission into the program are readily available. If no separate application is required, state that.

## PART 1A. PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS ADMISSIONS: APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS



APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS (most common to least common)		
Requirement	Yes (n, %)	No (n, %)
Letter of Recommendation	212 (94%)	13 (6%)
Essay	187 (84%)	36 (16%)
Observation Hours	154 (68%)	71 (32%)
Interview	134 (60%)	89 (40%)
CV/Resume	94 (42%)	129 (58%)
Emergency Cardiac Care	91 (40%)	134 (60%)
Technical Standards	87 (39%)	135 (61%)
First Aid	35 (16%)	187 (84%)
Immunization Record	34 (15%)	188 (85%)
GRE	27 (12%)	195 (88%)
Physical Exam	23 (10%)	201 (90%)

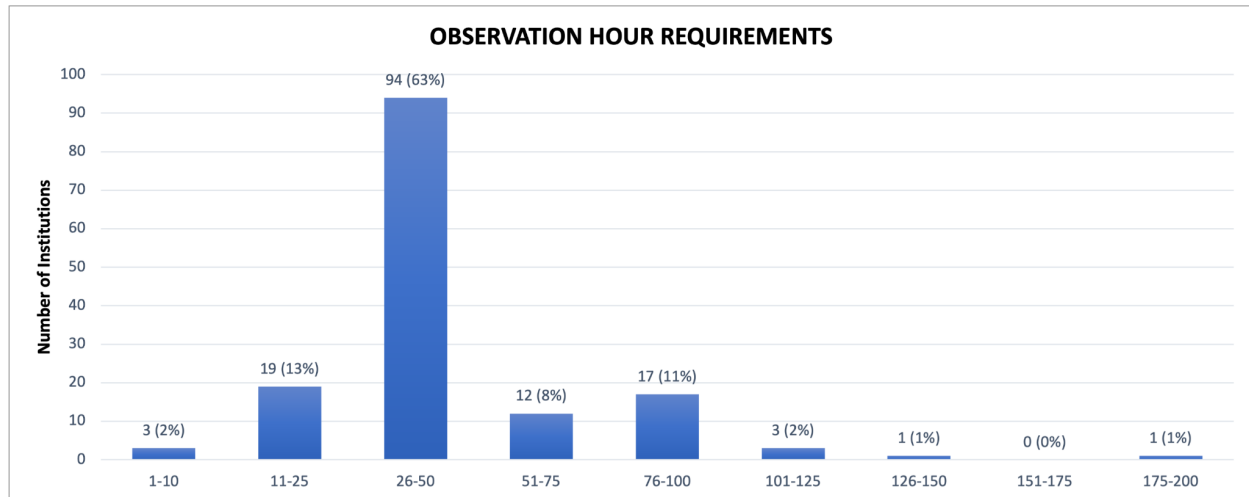
### EXPLANATION

- Technical Standards, Immunization Records, Physical Exam, First Aid certification, Emergency Cardiac Care certification: Included only if a required component of the initial application. Note that many programs required these elements as a condition of acceptance – so *de facto* requirements - but not part of the actual application (and not reflected as “yes” in the above chart).
- Some programs do not require any application beyond the entering first-year application (as an incoming undergraduate student). These elements were left blank for these institutions.
- For Interview: “Yes” if specified; “No” if not specified or optional or specifically stated that interview is not required
- GRE information: “No” if not required (explicitly stated), not specified (not required by omission), or optional.
- For Essay: “Yes” if program uses ATCAS. Institution-specific applications needed to specifically indicate that a writing sample was required.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Programs should discontinue asking students to submit protected health information (like a physical examination or immunization record) directly to the program either as a component of the application or a requirement as a condition of acceptance.
- Attestation of the ability to meet the technical standards need not require a healthcare provider’s review.
- Consider the rationale behind requiring each component of the application and its use in decision-making. For example, is requiring certification in first aid needed?
- Whether or not GREs are required was challenging to find for some programs. Consider specifically stating that GREs are not required (if so) in the Application Requirements section.

## PART 1A. PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS ADMISSIONS: OBSERVATION HOUR REQUIREMENTS



### EXPLANATION

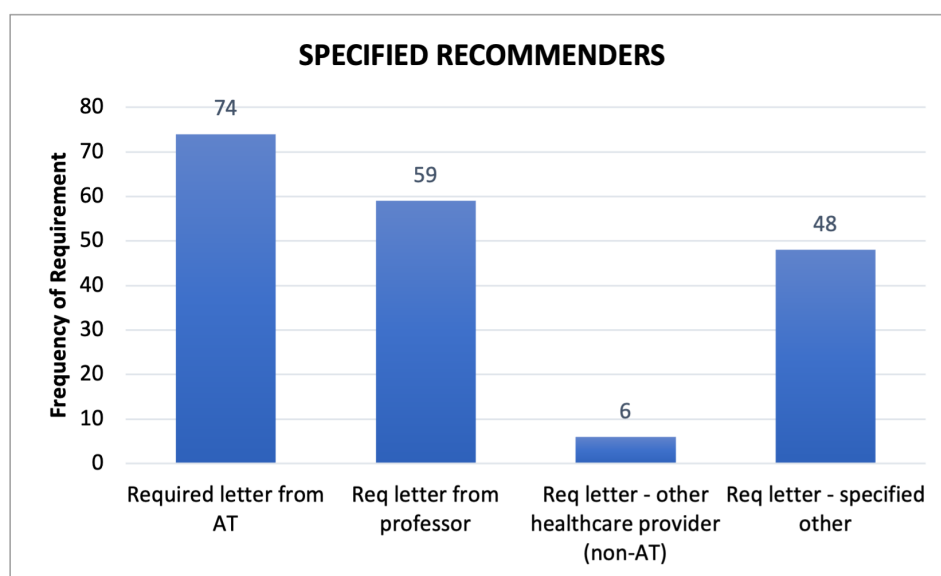
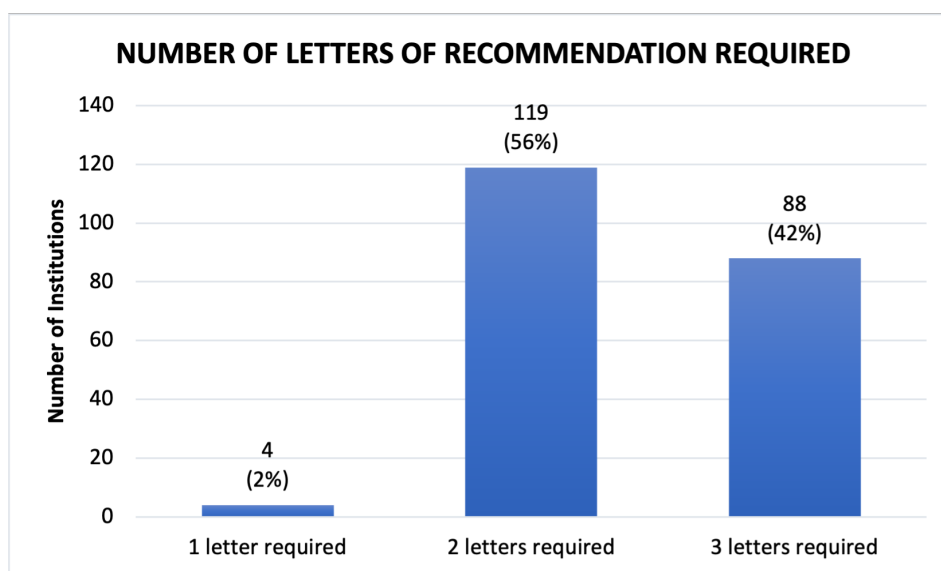
- Observation hour requirements were bundled into ranges. Many programs had qualifying statements indicating latitude for requirements given constraints of COVID.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- What is the goal of observation hours? How many hours are needed to achieve that goal? How does completion of observation hours impact decision-making for an applicant?
- If prospective students complete observation hours at your institution, what steps are taken to protect patient privacy?
- To what extent is completion of observation hours a barrier for individuals to apply to your program? Consider your program's requirements in light of the aggregate data above.
- Should CAATE develop and distribute a universal form to be used for reporting observation hours? (Currently, each program has its own form.)
- Future work: To what extent do observation hours align with program retention and completion?



## PART 1A. PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS ADMISSIONS: NUMBER OF LOR REQUIRED AND SPECIFIC RECOMMENDERS

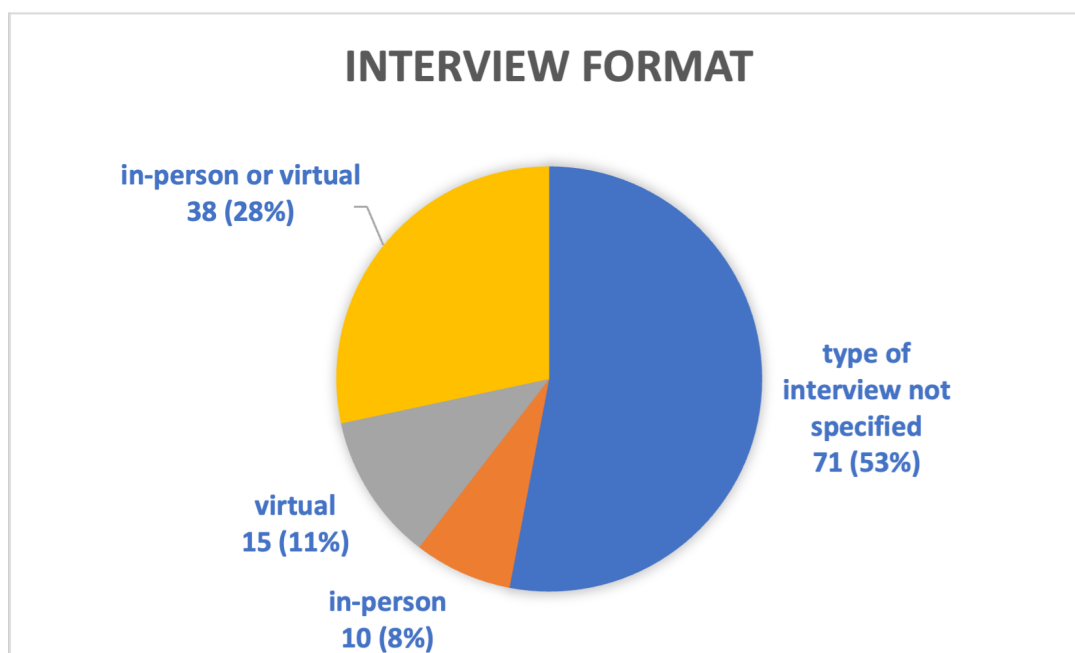


### EXPLANATION

- Details for those programs that specify who should write the letters of recommendation.
- For Letters of Recommendation: If a program used ATCAS and the number of letters wasn't otherwise discernable, a value of "2" was used (requirement in ATCAS).
- Single programs may have multiple requirements (e.g., a letter from an AT and another from a professor).
- "Specified other" category included either/or (Examples: "college professor or athletic trainer", "not a relative", "professional reference")

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider how letters of recommendation are used in the admissions process. Does an AT who has "supervised" 10 hours of observation have a solid basis for a recommendation? To what extent are these recommendations influential in the decision-making process and a possible barrier for applicants?

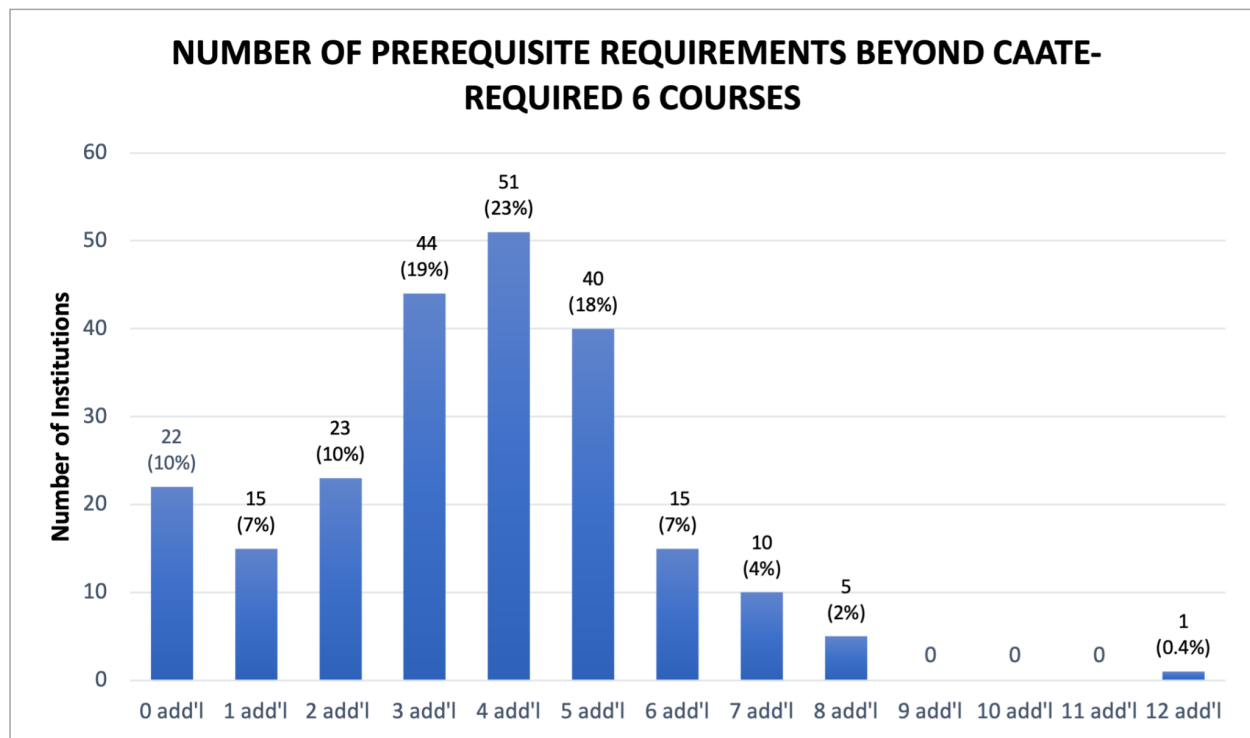


#### EXPLANATION

- For the 134 (60%) of programs that stated an interview is required, the specified nature of the interview was identified.
- Counted as virtual if automated interview (record answers to set questions) as part of application process)

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- If an interview is required, clearly delineate on the website how the interview is conducted (virtual, in-person, or either)
- Future work: To what extent does an interview and the interview's format impact decision-making for the institution and for the student?

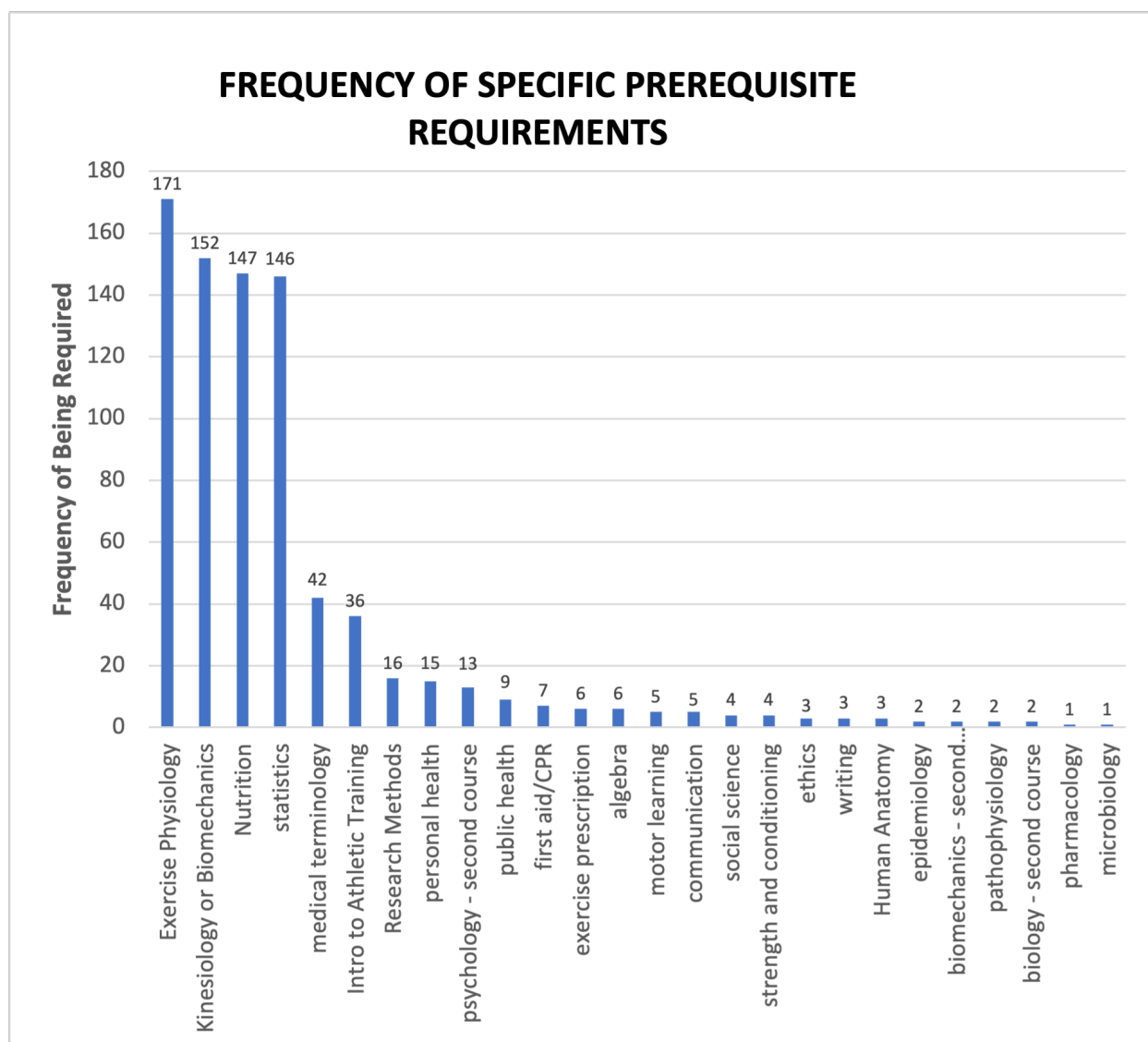


#### EXPLANATION

- Per CAATE standards, all programs must require prerequisite coursework in physics, biology, anatomy, physiology, chemistry, and psychology. (Note that in our examination, not all programs listed these as prerequisites but that's an issue for the CAATE.) We assumed that all programs include these as requirements. This chart represents the number of additional prerequisites beyond the CAATE-required 6.
- As depicted in this chart, most programs require prerequisite coursework beyond these 6 standard prerequisites.

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Foundational questions
  - What content are incoming students expected to have? Are prerequisite courses serving that purpose?
  - To what extent are prerequisites a barrier to application?



SPECIFIC PREREQUISITES REQUIRED BY NUMBER (%) OF INSTITUTIONS			
Course	Number (%) of Institutions Requiring	Course	Number (%) of Institutions Requiring
Exercise Physiology	171 (76%)	Communication	5 (2%)
Kinesiology or Biomechanics	152 (68%)	Social Science	4 (2%)
Nutrition	147 (66%)	Strength & Conditioning	4 (2%)
Statistics	146 (65%)	Ethics	3 (1%)
Medical Terminology	42 (19%)	Writing	3 (1%)
Intro to Athletic Training	36 (16%)	Human Anatomy	3 (1%)
Research Methods	16 (7%)	Epidemiology	2 (1%)
Personal Health	15 (7%)	Biomechanics (2nd course)	2 (1%)
First Aid/CPR	7 (3%)	Pathophysiology	2 (1%)
Exercise Prescription	6 (3%)	Biology (2nd course)	2 (1%)
Algebra	6 (3%)	Pharmacology	1 (0.4%)
Motor Learning	5 (2%)	Microbiology	1 (0.4%)

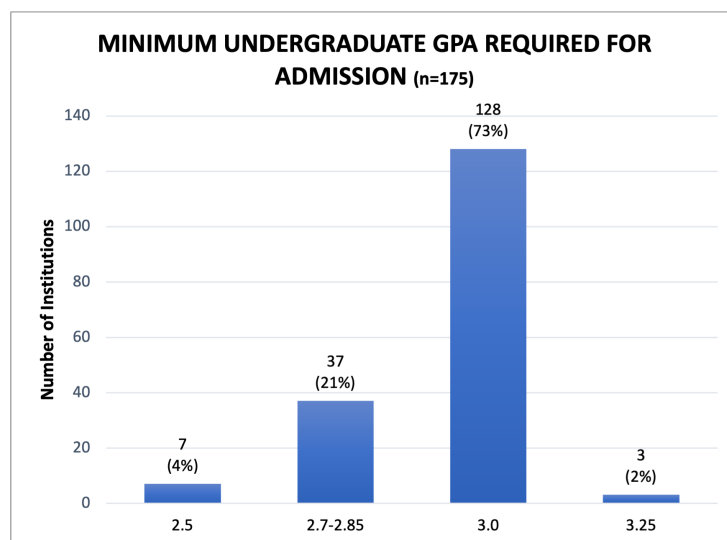
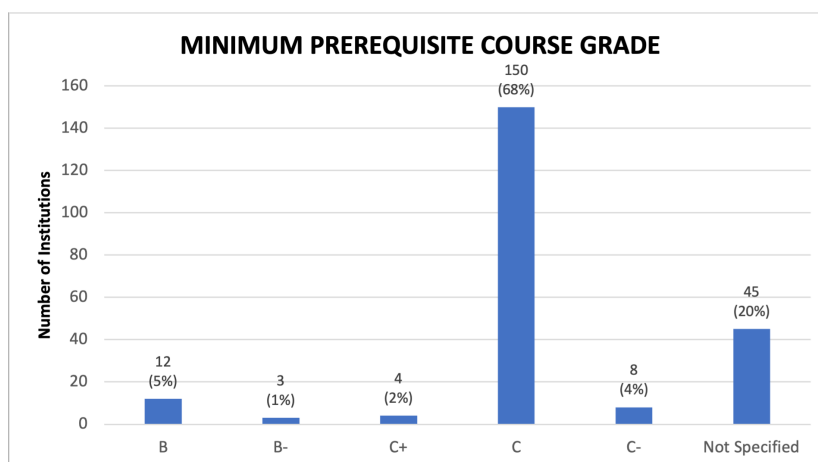
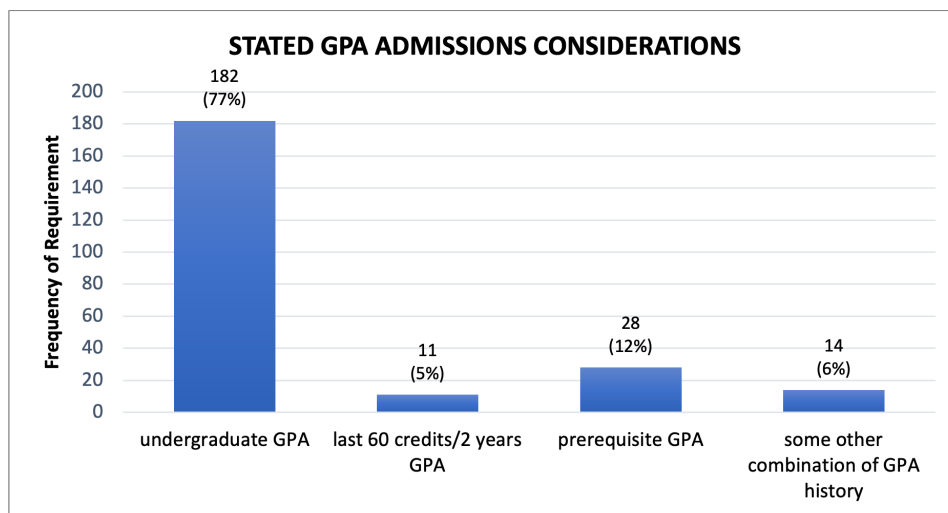
### EXPLANATION

- Courses with similar titles were bundled. For example, Intro to Athletic Training included Prevention & Care of Athletic Injuries, Principles of Athletic Training, Foundations of Athletic Training, etc.
- Kinesiology, Biomechanics, Kinesiology or Biomechanics were bundled into a single option.
- First aid/CPR indicates that a specific, credit-bearing combined course was required

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Many institutions continue to offer “foundational” sports medicine courses to all undergraduate students. (In a throwback to the 70s, some programs still have a “Basic Athletic Training” course.) As a community of educators, we should examine the extent to which professional content is taught outside of professional programs and the impact of this on the perception of the profession and attracting students to it.
- For post-baccalaureate admissions processes: Consider including broad course content areas instead of specific course numbers and/or titles that are unique to the institution.
- Make prerequisite requirements easily findable and directly on the Admissions Requirements page. We were unable to find the listing for some programs.
- Some programs indicated a credit-bearing course requirement of first aid/CPR. Consider whether proof of certification is sufficient. Consider, too, the extent to which the standard first aid course contributes to the student’s foundational knowledge. (See also admissions requirements for the number of programs that require first aid and/or emergency cardiac care certification as a component of the application.
- Future work: The AATE should consider a white paper examining the role of prerequisites in admissions (including the impact on recruiting students from underrepresented minorities), program planning, and assessment.

PART 1A. PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS ADMISSIONS: MINIMUM OVERALL GPA, PREREQUISITE COURSE GRADE, AND GPA CONSIDERATIONS

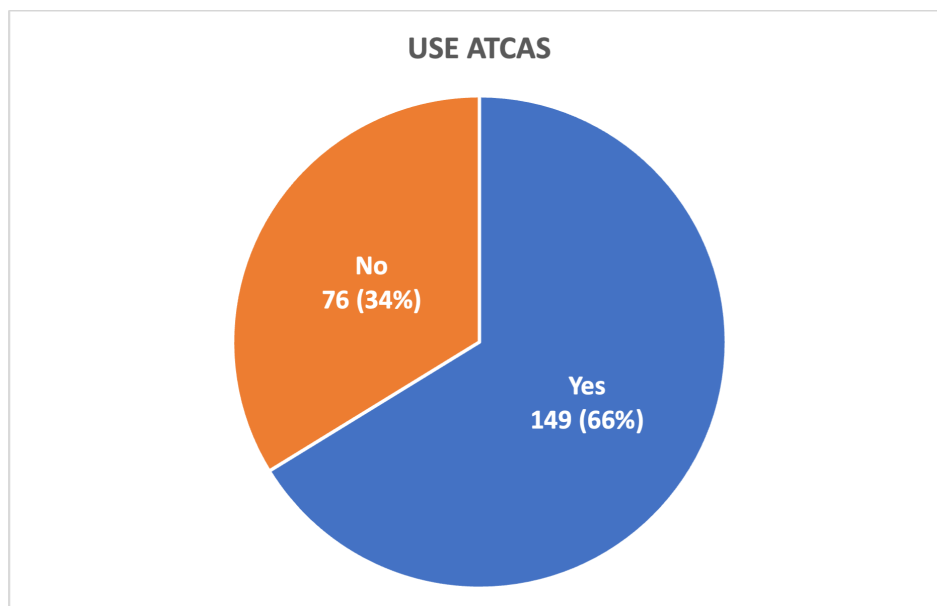


### EXPLANATION

- Programs typically identified minimum undergraduate GPA required for admission. Frequently, these stated minimums are accompanied by disclaimers that those with lower GPAs may still be considered.
- Stated GPA Admissions Considerations
  - “Some other combination of GPA history” includes either/or (e.g., either 3.0 overall GPA or 3.0 in last 60 credit hours”)
  - Programs may use more than one consideration (e.g., undergraduate GPA and prerequisite GPA).

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Clearly indicate if minimum course grade is immutable or flexible.
- Are minimum GPA requirements derived from institutional requirements for graduate study or program requirements?
- Future work: Examine influence of undergraduate GPA (and other indicators) on program and/or student success.



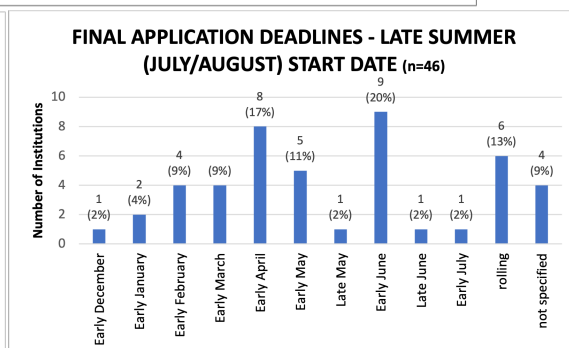
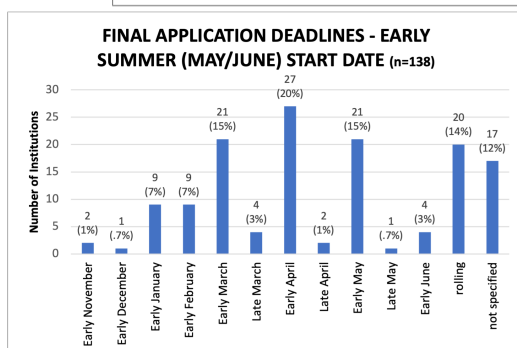
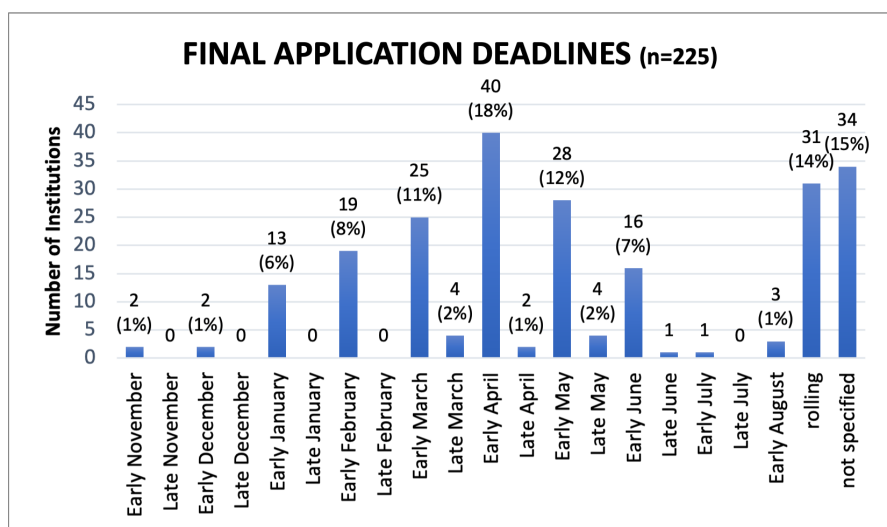
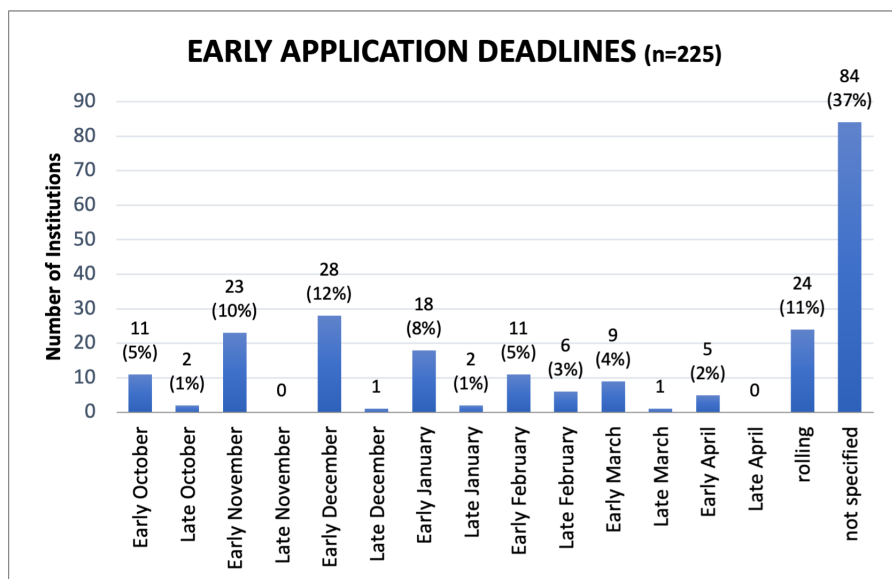
#### EXPLANATION

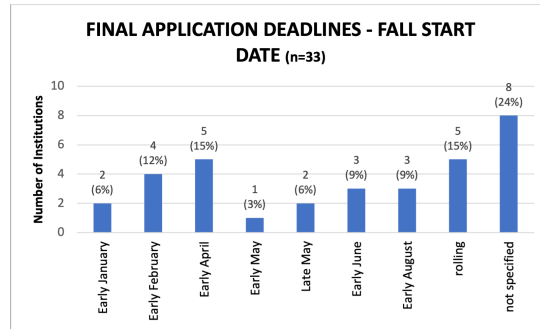
- Number of programs that use ATCAS for admissions; “NO” means that only institution-specific application is used
- Does not capture those programs that require both ATCAS *and* an institutional application OR programs that have the option of *either* ATCAS *or* an institutional application

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Fewer application hoops to jump through makes sense.
- The AATE should promote the CAATE’s application fee assistance program.
- The standard ATCAS institutional agreement requires programs to use ATCAS exclusively and not accept primary applications outside of ATCAS; however, it appears some programs give students the option of choosing to use ATCAS or an institutional application.





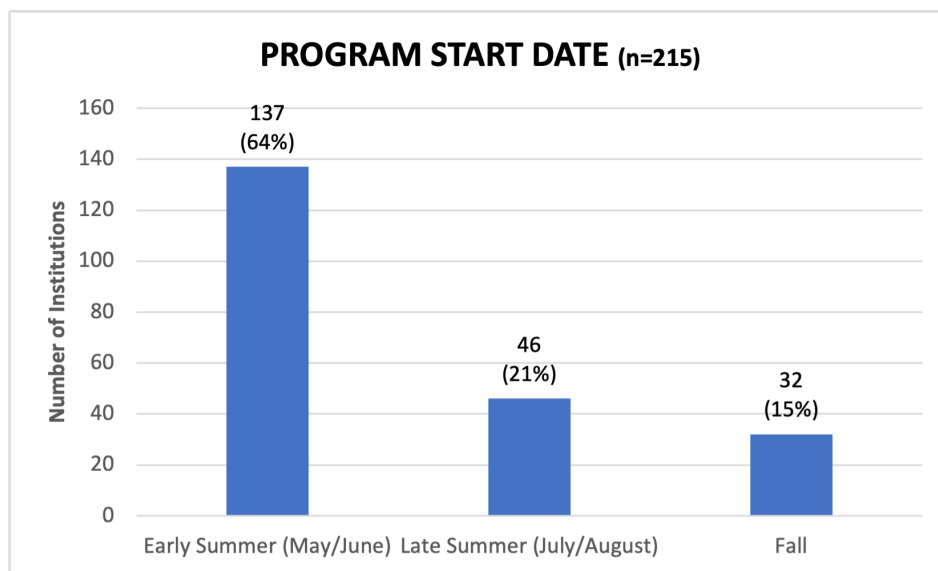


### EXPLANATION

- Deadlines were identified and clustered in 2-week increments (early month and late month).
- “Not specified” was used when a deadline could not be identified.
- Final application deadlines were sorted by program start date. Some programs were not included because program start date could not be identified.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Ensure that program deadlines are clear and available on a public-facing portion of your website.
- Consider updating the website as the admissions year progresses. For example, if your institution has a firm deadline that is extended “until enrollment targets are met”, after the firm deadline, revise the website to simply state that applications are still open.
- Identify incentives for individuals to meet early application deadlines (e.g., consideration for scholarship).

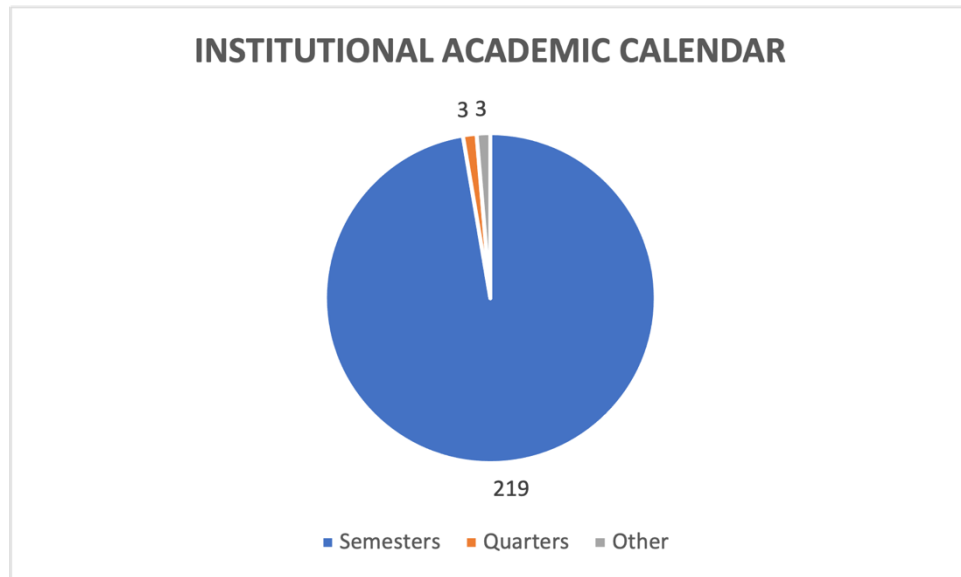


**EXPLANATION**

- Start dates were sorted by season and month. Start dates could not be identified for 10 programs.

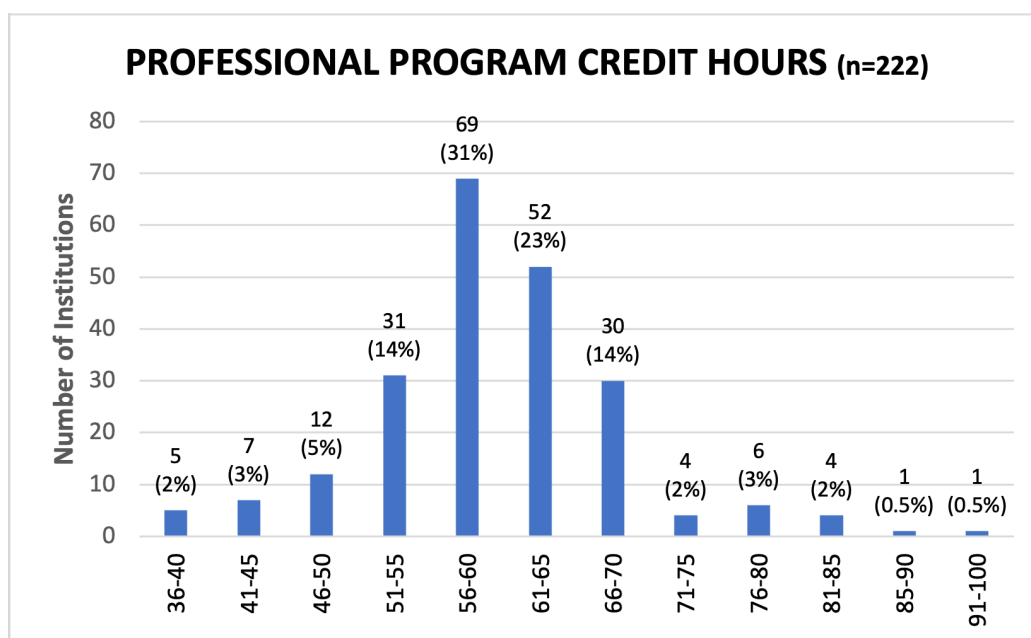
**CONSIDERATIONS**

- This information was often hard to find. Consider positioning it prominently on the website.



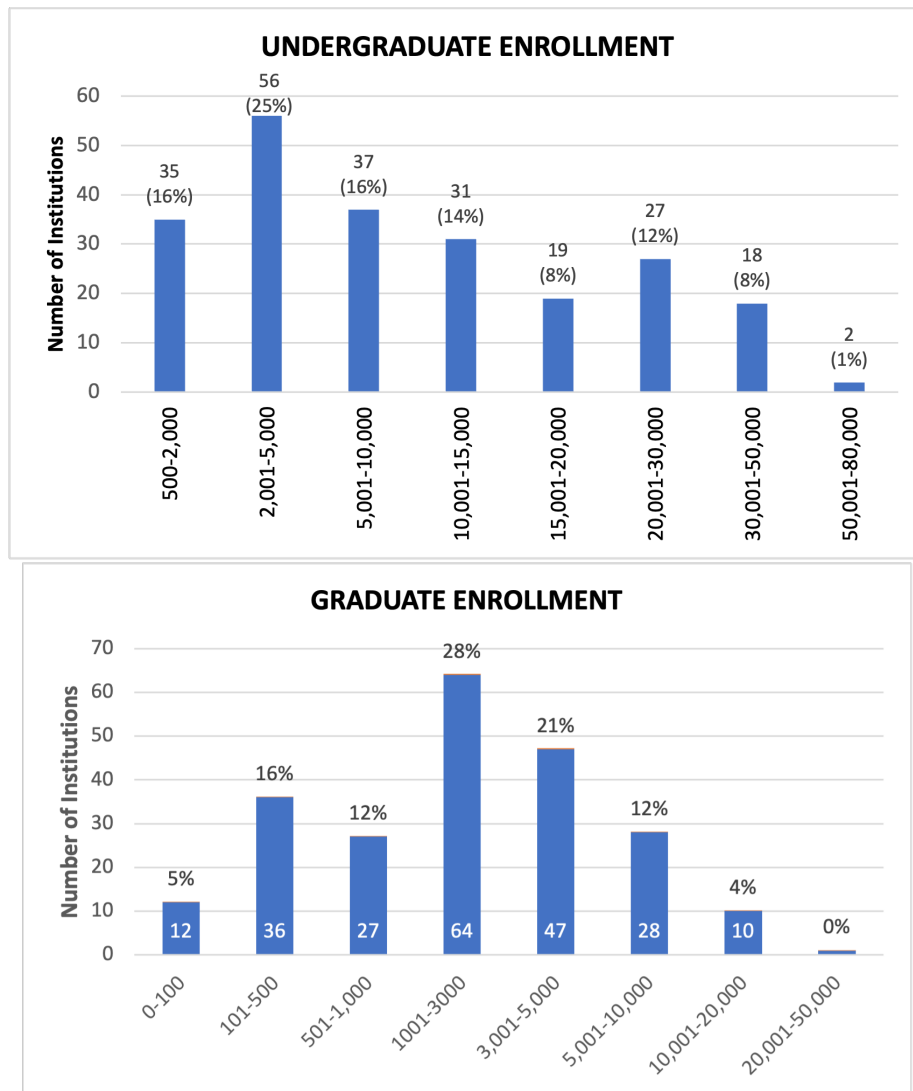
**EXPLANATION**

- The institutional academic calendar was identified.
- Some programs described shorter courses (e.g., 3 weeks, 6 weeks) within the semester. This is not captured in the above graphic.
- “Other” pertains to trimesters or unknown.



#### EXPLANATION

- The number of credit hours for each program was identified and clustered.
- When a range was provided, the lowest number was used.
- The number of credit hours could not be determined for 3 programs.

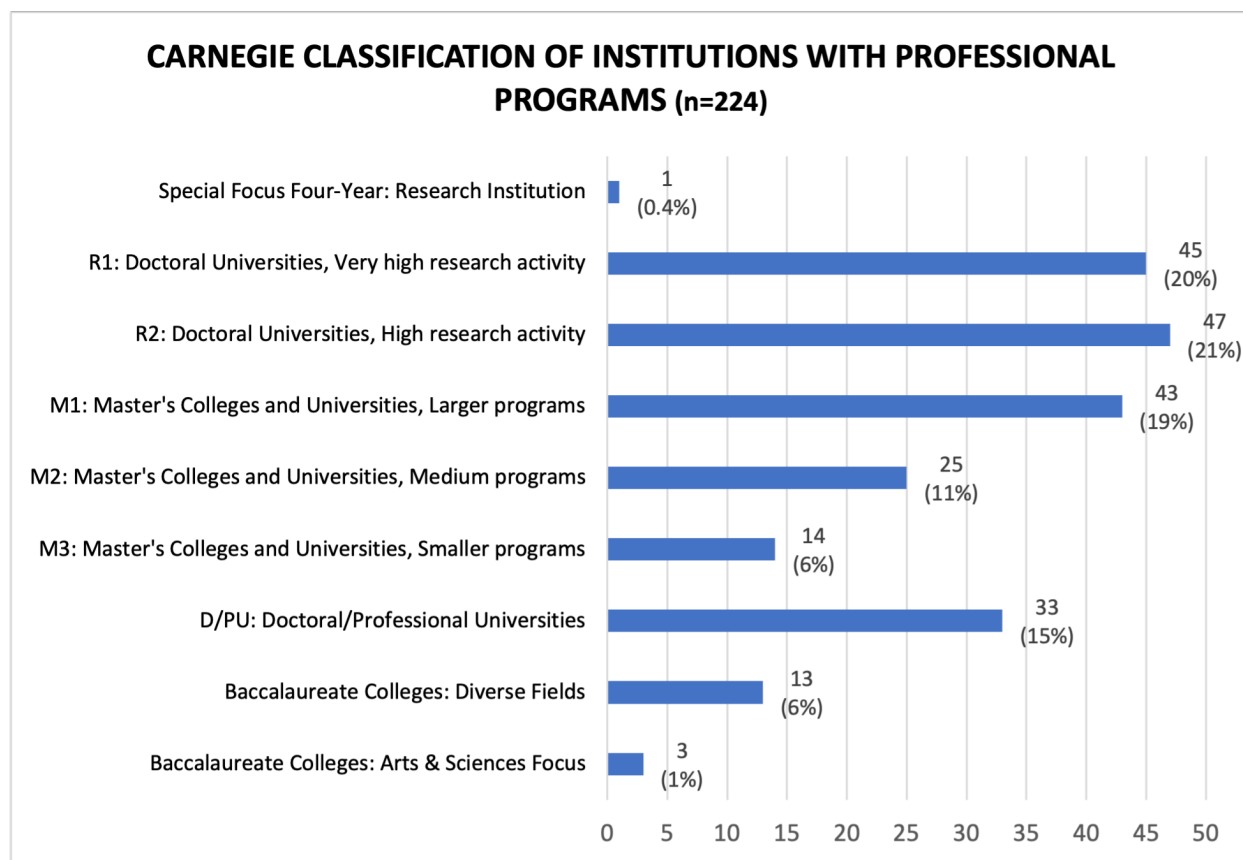


#### EXPLANATION

- Data was obtained from the [National Center for Education Statistics](#).

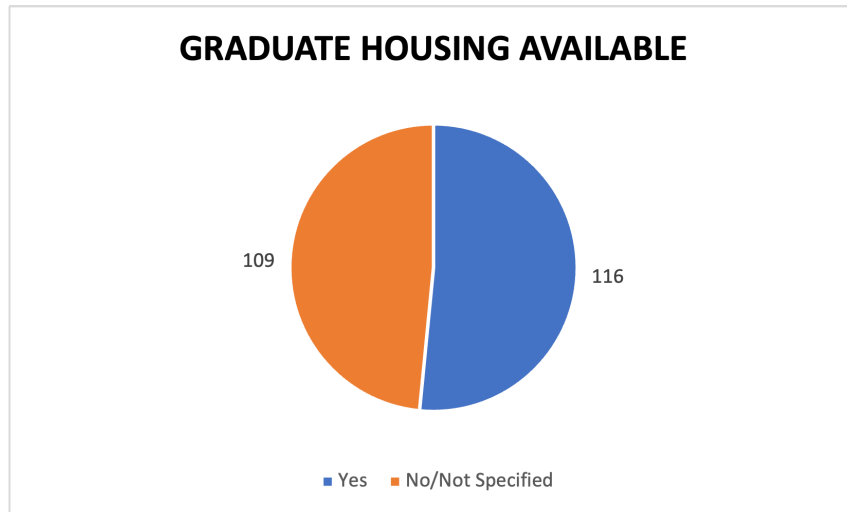
#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Future work: Examine program enrollment by institutional enrollment.



#### EXPLANATION

- Information retrieved from <https://carnegieclassifications.acenet.edu/lookup/lookup.php>
- International program not included.



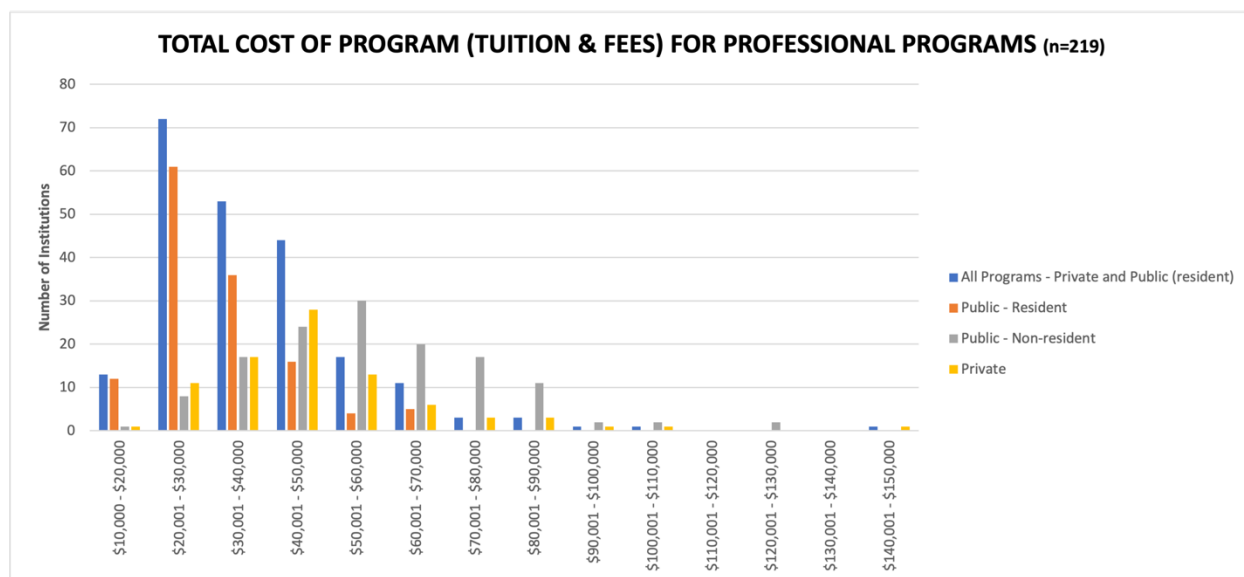
**EXPLANATION**

- Websites reviewed to determine if institutional housing is available for graduate students.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

- Information about graduate housing availability was often hard to find. Because access to affordable housing is a potential program barrier, programs should be transparent in sharing information with prospective students regarding housing options.





TOTAL TUITION AND FEES				
	All Programs - Private and Public (resident)	Public - Resident	Public - Non-resident	Private
\$10,000 - \$20,000	13 (6%)	12 (9%)	1 (1%)	1 (1%)
\$20,001 - \$30,000	72 (33%)	61 (46%)	8 (6%)	11 (13%)
\$30,001 - \$40,000	53 (24%)	36 (27%)	17 (13%)	17 (20%)
\$40,001 - \$50,000	44 (20%)	16 (12%)	24 (18%)	28 (33%)
\$50,001 - \$60,000	17 (8%)	4 (3%)	30 (22%)	13 (15%)
\$60,001 - \$70,000	11 (5%)	5 (4%)	20 (15%)	6 (7%)
\$70,001 - \$80,000	3 (1%)	0 (0%)	17 (13%)	3 (4%)
\$80,001 - \$90,000	3 (1%)	0 (0%)	11 (8%)	3 (4%)
\$90,001 - \$100,000	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	1 (1%)
\$100,001 - \$110,000	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	1 (1%)
\$110,001 - \$120,000	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
\$120,001 - \$130,000	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (1%)	0 (0%)
\$130,001 - \$140,000	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
\$140,001 - \$150,000	1 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)

TOTAL TUITION AND FEES – AVERAGE BY INSTITUTION TYPE	
All Programs (public-residents and private)	\$37,820
Public institutions - residents	\$31,643
Public institutions - non-residents	\$57,897
Private institutions	\$47,558

AVERAGE TOTAL TUITION AND FEES BY CARNEGIE CLASSIFICATION		
	Number	Tuition and Fees
Baccalaureate Colleges: Arts & Sciences Focus	3	\$37,588
Baccalaureate Colleges: Diverse Fields	13	\$34,970
M3: Master's Colleges and Universities, Smaller programs	14	\$38,211
M2: Master's Colleges and Universities, Medium programs	25	\$37,914
M1: Master's Colleges and Universities, Larger programs	43	\$33,593
D/PU: Doctoral/Professional Universities	33	\$44,291
R2: Doctoral Universities, High research activity	47	\$35,943
R1: Doctoral Universities, Very high research activity	45	\$39,970
Special Focus Four-Year: Research Institution	1	\$17,956

### EXPLANATION

- Data is predominantly from the 2022-23 academic year. The tuition information was gathered in January 2023. Four institutions only had 2023-24 rates available, and that data was used.
- The following search pattern sequence was used:
  - Searched the program-specific website for the cost of the program.
    - When only tuition was listed, a search for institution-specific graduate fees was conducted and these fees were added to the tuition whether by credit or by term
  - If tuition and fees were not available on the program-specific website, we searched for graduate tuition for the institution, looking for differential tuition specific for the AT program. When a differential tuition rate wasn't evident, we used the institutional graduate tuition rate.
  - Institutional fees were included but *not* fees specific to the AT program or AT classes. Cost of living expenses are also not included.
  - When tuition and/or fees was presented as a factor of number of credits enrolled in for the term (for example, \$X for 6 - 9 credits; \$Y for 10 - 12 credits), we examined the available curriculum and calculated by number of credits multiplied by the rate for each term.
- Fees were calculated as presented: by term, by year, by credit, or by number of credits enrolled in for the term.
- In the Total Tuition and Fees table, the All Programs column contains data from Public Institutions – Residents and Private Institutions. Public Institutions – Non-Resident information is not included.
- Data is not included if the costs could not be determined from available information or if the program had closed between September 2022 and December 2022 (6 programs).

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Consider the ease with which your program tuition and fees can be determined.
- Avoid putting tuition information exclusively in the program policy and procedure manual (for example, differential tuition rates). This is hard to find.
- Multiple programs had only 2021-22 (or earlier) tuition information available on their program-specific site.
- The above data differs substantially from the tuition and fees data reported in the [CAATE 2019-2020 Analytic Report](#) (see page 12) even if accounting for increases in tuition and fees given the different years examined.

## RESIDENCY PROGRAMS

### PART 2A: RESIDENCY PROGRAMS ADMISSIONS | APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

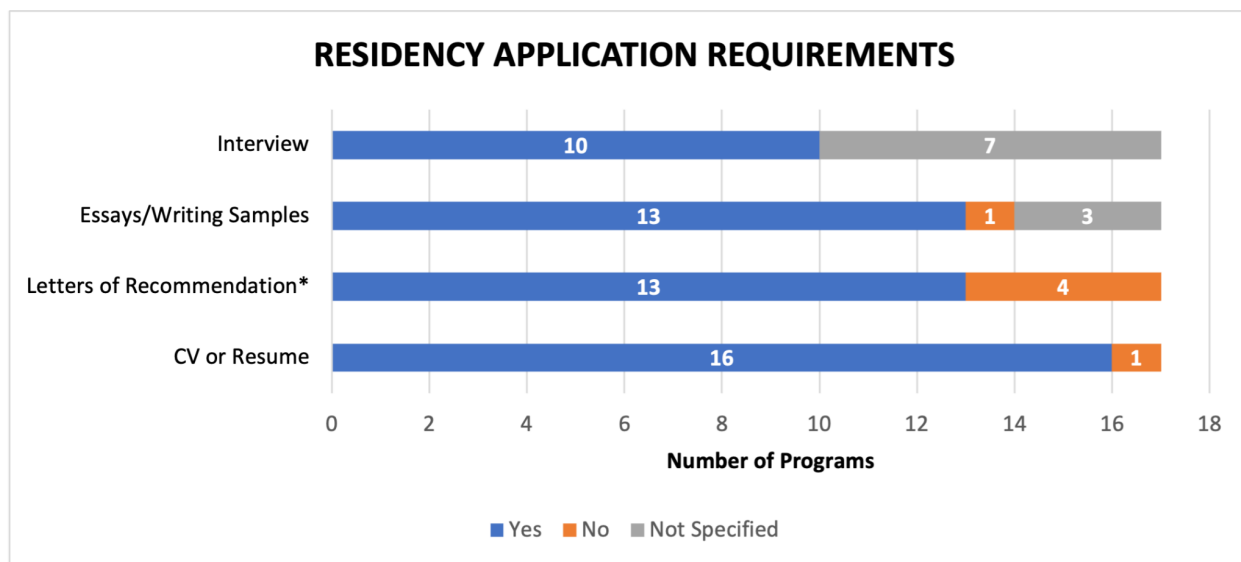
Years of Work Experience Required	1 program = 2 years 1 program = 1 year 15 programs = not specified
Years of Work Experience Recommended	5 programs = 1 year 2 programs = 2 years 10 programs = not specified

#### EXPLANATION

- Examined program websites for selection requirements pertaining to work experience.

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Make explicit the extent to which years of work experience is used in the decision-making process?



\*Two programs in the “No” category require names of references but not letters.

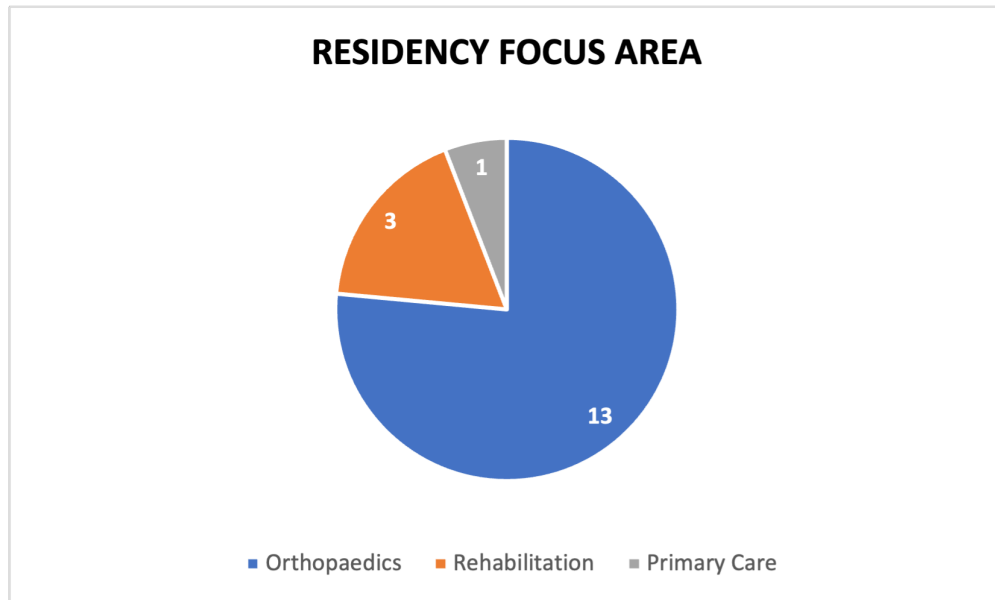
SPECIFICS OF APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	
Letters of recommendation – Number	2 letters of recommendation = 3 programs 3 letters of recommendation = 10 programs
Letters of recommendation from whom?	Not Specified = 10 programs Other programs specified ATs and ATs who were preceptors
Interview type?	Either in-person or virtual = 3 programs In-person only = 2 programs Not specified = 5 programs

#### EXPLANATION

- Reviewed program websites for application requirements.

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Review your program website to confirm that all of the above information is clearly available.
- To what extent do letters of recommendation impact the decision-making process?



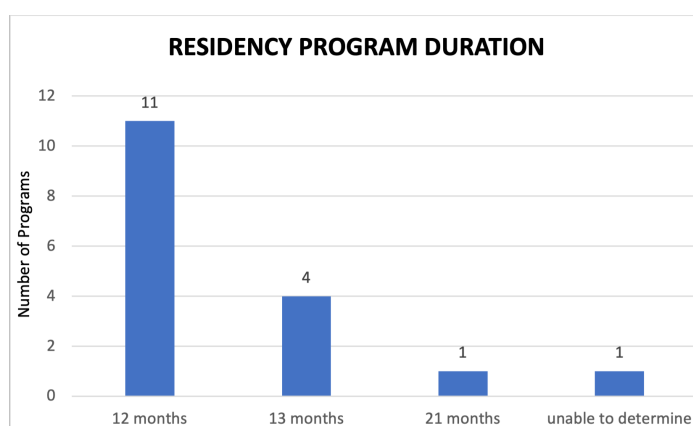
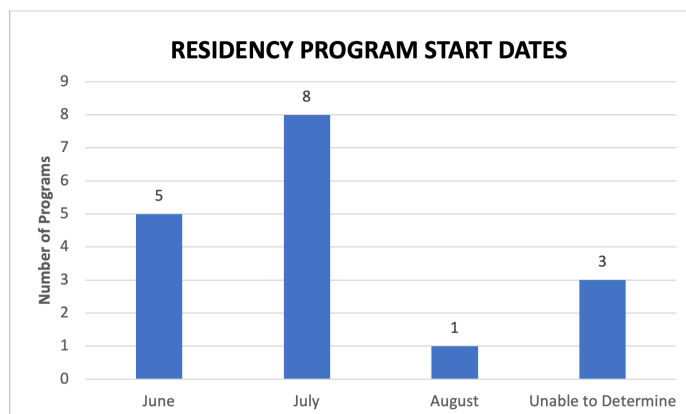
**EXPLANATION**

- Program focus area was identified.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

- What are strategies to encourage and support the development of residencies across the identified areas of specialization?

## PART 2B: RESIDENCY PROGRAM INFORMATION: PROGRAM START MONTH, DURATION, AND SALARY



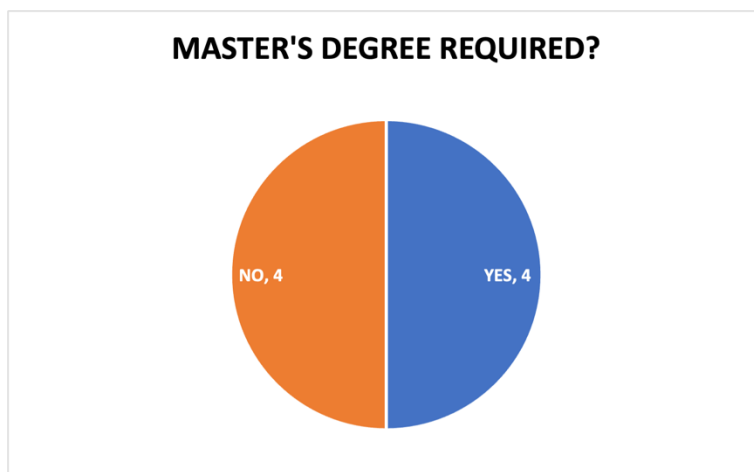
	ANNUAL SALARY	NOTES
Program 1	\$47,000	
Program 2	\$18,000	Housing provided.
Program 3	\$36,000	
Program 4	\$42,000	
Program 5	\$13,000	
Program 6	\$50,000	
Program 7	\$35,000	
All other programs: salary not listed		

### EXPLANATION

- Program duration, start dates, and resident salary were recorded for each program.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- The salaries that are available vary widely, and the majority of programs do not publish a salary. Would consumers benefit if this information were available?
- Review website to make sure that the program duration and start dates are publicly available.



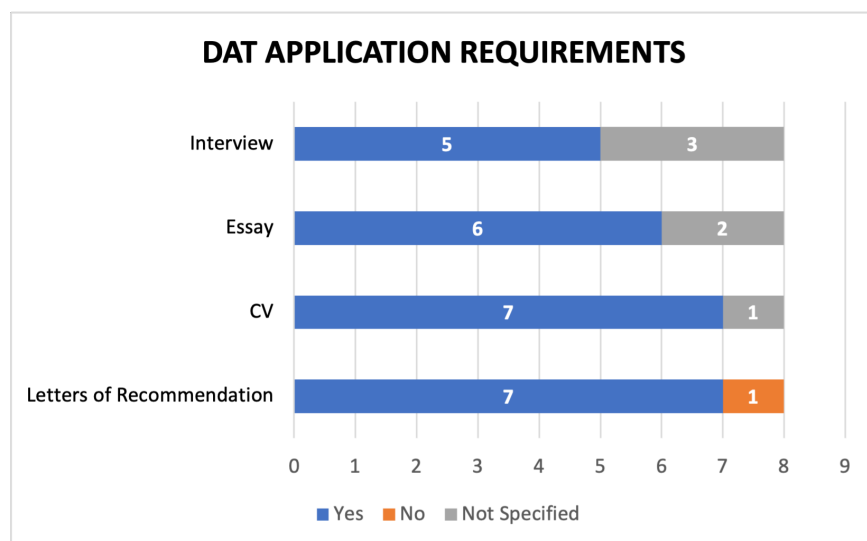
Years of Work Experience Required	5 programs = 0 years required 3 programs = not specified
Years of Work Experience Recommended	1 program = 2-3 years 1 program = 5 years 6 programs = not specified
Currently working as an AT?	3 programs = YES (required) 5 programs = not specified

#### EXPLANATION

- Applicant qualifications of work experience and master's degree were recorded for each program.

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Examine the extent to which these criteria impact the admissions process.



SPECIFICS OF APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS	
Letters of Recommendation – Number	3 letters = 5 programs 2 letters = 1 program 1 letters = 1 program 0 letters = 1 program
Letters of Recommendation from Whom?	When specified (6/7): academic and/or clinical One program requires no letters
Interview Type?	Virtual = 2 programs In-person or Virtual = 1 program Not Specified = 2 programs

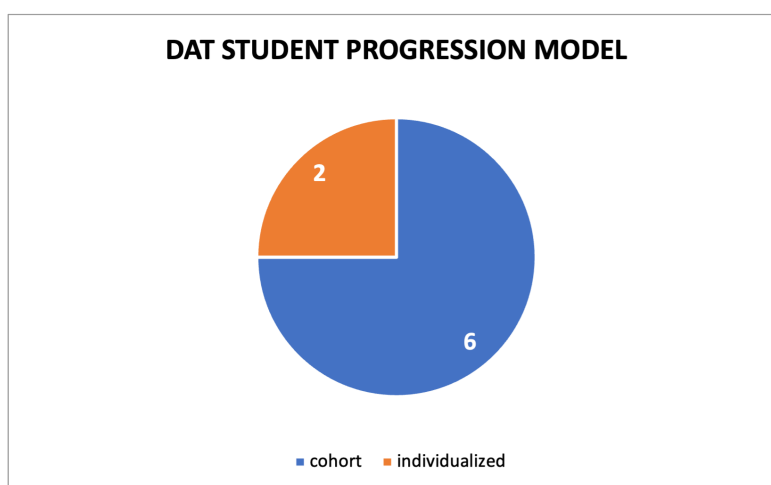
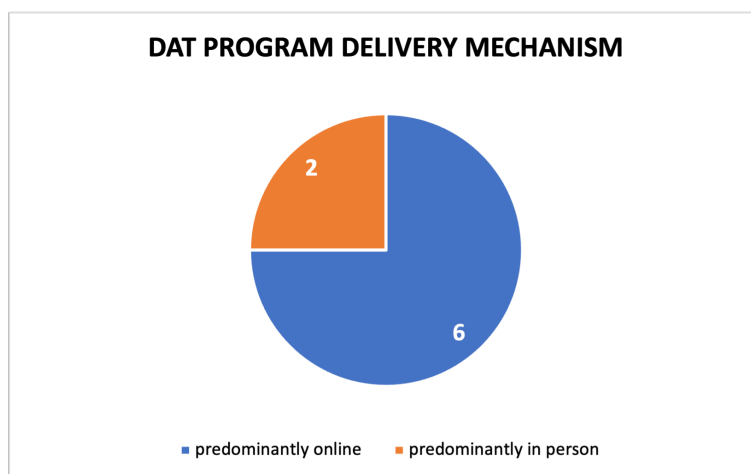
#### EXPLANATION

- Required components of applications were recorded.

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Review program website to confirm that all of the above information is publicly available.
- Explore the utility of letters of recommendation. To what extent do they impact the decision-making process?





#### EXPLANATION

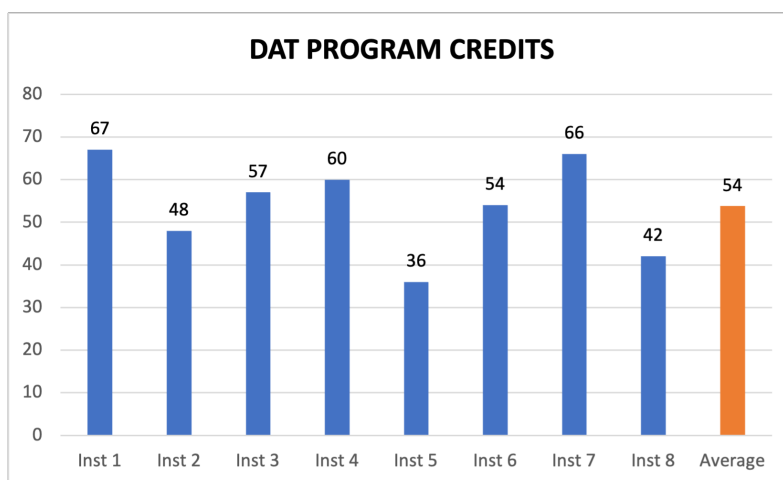
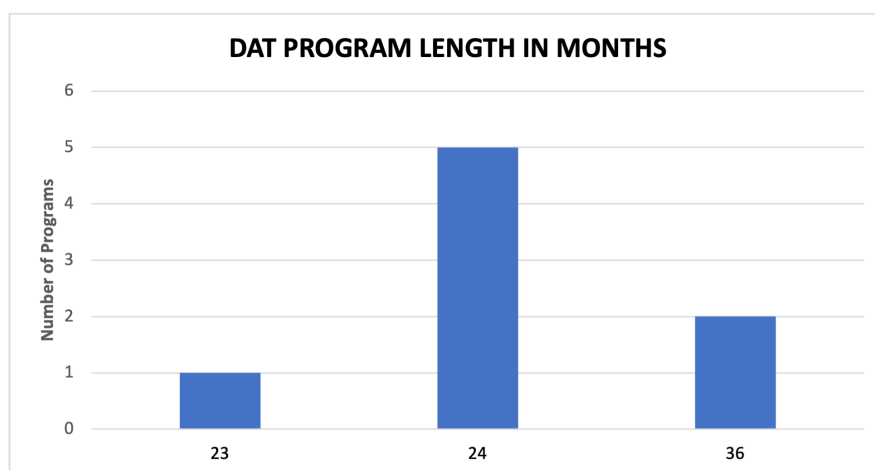
- Program Delivery Mechanism
  - Predominantly online if less than 20% of program occurs in-person.
    - Two programs are completely on-line.
  - Predominantly in-person if less than 20% of the program occurs in a distance format
- Student Progression Model
  - Individualized: students complete courses based on individual degree plan
  - Cohort: Students enter as a group and progress through the program in a specified amount of time

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Review program website to ensure that the expectations for synchronous and asynchronous learning formats are clear.

### PART 3: DAT PROGRAM AND INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION: PROGRAM START MONTH, DURATION, AND CREDITS

PROGRAM START MONTH	
Cohort Model	January and September = 1 program May only = 1 program June only = 2 programs September only = 2 programs
Individualized Model	January, March, July, October = 1 program January, May, August = 1 program

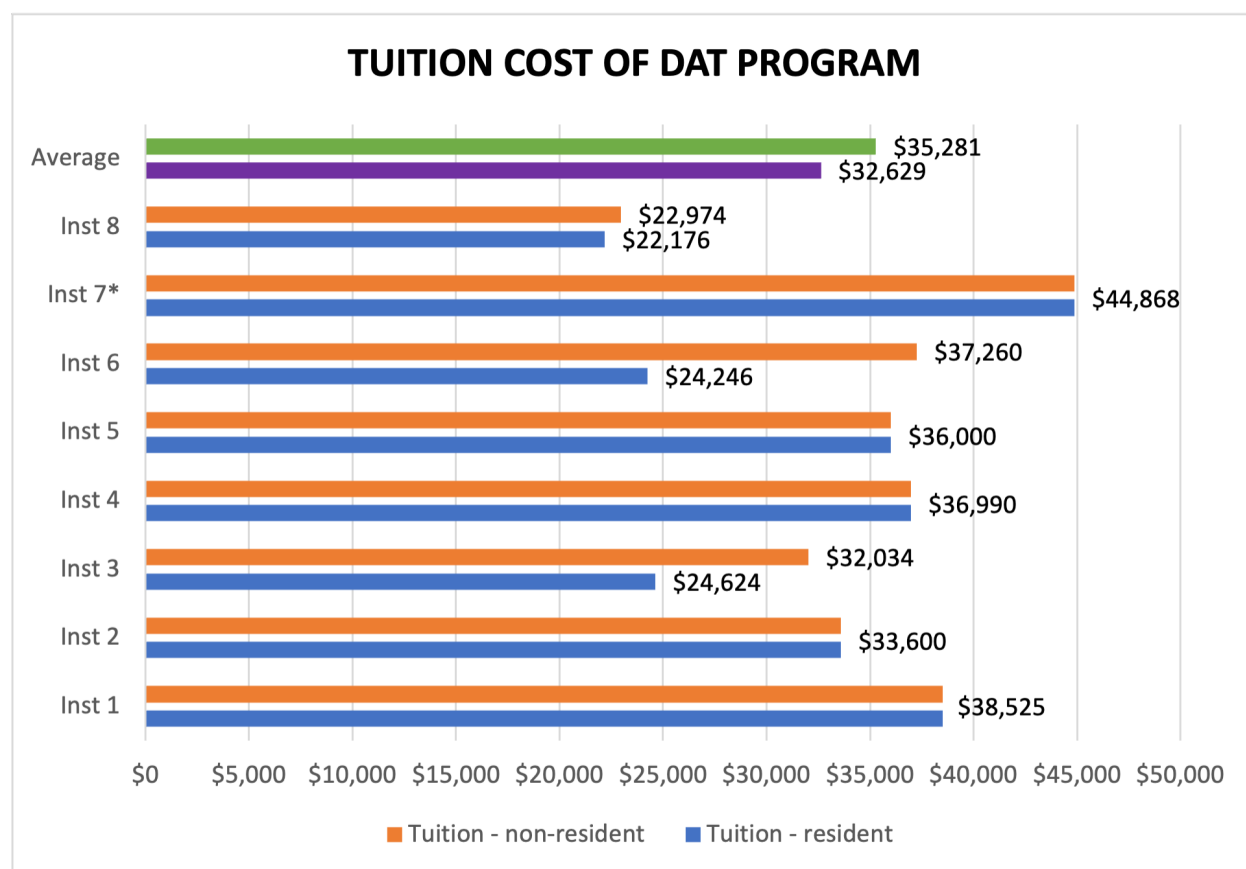


#### EXPLANATION

- For individualized (progress-at-your-own-pace) programs, included minimum duration to complete the program.

PART 3: DAT PROGRAM AND INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION: GRADUATE ASSISTANT POSITIONS

GRADUATE ASSISTANT (COMPENSATED) POSITIONS	
GA positions available = 3 programs	<u>Position Types</u> Clinical Practice Assistant Teaching Assistant Clinical Practice Assistant
Not Specified or No = 5	



\*7: Program-reported flat rate for entire cost of program (tuition, fees, books, etc.)

#### EXPLANATION

- Tuition (2022-23) derived from either explicitly-stated tuition rate for program *or* number of credits multiplied by graduate tuition per credit.
- Fees and other associated expenses are not included, except where indicated.

#### CONSIDERATIONS

- Future work: Examine funding mechanisms for DAT degrees.
- Future work: Examine return-on-investment for the DAT degree.