

Who CARES? We Do!

A “Research in Action” Presentation

Sharron L. Ronco
Associate Provost, Institutional Effectiveness & Analysis
Florida Atlantic University
sronco@fau.edu
<http://iea.fau.edu/inst/aircares09.pdf>

What happens to our first-time freshmen?

2 Year College



14%

4 Year College



6%

Florida Atlantic University



74%



6%

Can we . . .

- Help students recognize academically risky behavior?
- Intervene early on to help them stay on track?

Will self-awareness translate into better decisions?

A partnership between IEA and the Center for Learning and Student Success to:

- Create a survey instrument that will assess risk
- Administer it and analyze results
- Disseminate results to students, advisors, faculty
- Validate instrument
- Examine policy implications

College Assessment of Readiness for Entering Students = CARES

- 75 items
- 1,400 respondents

Survey topics:

I. Your first semester

Thoughts about your courses and ability to succeed
How often will you miss class and for what reasons?
How much time do you plan to study?
What study strategies will you use?

II. Use of your time

Time to be spent in social networking
Tools for managing your time
Ability to balance academics with other demands on
your time

III. Dealing with challenges

What challenges do you anticipate?

What will you do if you find yourself struggling academically?

How comfortable are you asking others for support?

IV. Commitment and motivation

Reasons for selecting FAU

Commitment to completing bachelor's degree here

Commitment to major

Plans for campus involvement

V. Background info

Parents' educational background

Primary home language

Plans for employment

PART ONE of FIVE: MY FIRST SEMESTER!

1	2	3	4	5
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1) How well do the following statements describe your thoughts about your first semester?

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
My courses will be interesting	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
My courses will be easy	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
I will do well if I have good instructors that teach me everything I need to know	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
I am concerned about my ability to succeed in one or more courses	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
My courses are scheduled at good times for me	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
I see the value in each of the courses I will be taking this semester	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5
I am confident in my current ability to do well in my first semester	<input type="radio"/> 1	<input type="radio"/> 2	<input type="radio"/> 3	<input type="radio"/> 4	<input type="radio"/> 5

Predicting First Term GPA

Data: Fall 2002 - Fall 2005 (6,974 observations)

Target: First Term GPA

Predictor	Parameter estimate	Standardized Parameter estimate	
Intercept	-1.06	0	***
High School GPA	0.79	0.41	***
SAT (Unit 100)	0.07	0.09	***
Freshman Learning Community	0.14	0.06	***
Housing	-0.06	-0.03	**
Gender Female vs. Male	0.13	0.07	***
Ethnicity			
Black vs. White	-0.12	-0.04	***
Non-Resident Alien vs. White	0.41	0.06	***
College			
Engineering vs. Arts & Letters	-0.13	-0.04	**
County of Residency			
Miami-Dade vs. FAU service area	-0.16	-0.05	***
Non-FL vs. FAU service area	0.25	0.08	***

R Square: 0.22

Average first fall GPA = 2.45

***: <.001

**> <.01

*: <.05

“My courses will be easy”

Agreement scale:	1	2	3	4	5	(Disagree to agree)
Risk scale:	Mod	Mod	None	Min	Min	

“I am committed to completing my bachelor’s degree at FAU”

Agreement scale:	1	2	3	4	5	(Disagree to agree)
Risk scale:	High	High	Mod	None	None	

“I plan to work during my first semester...”

- a. At a job ON-campus (No risk)
- b. At a job OFF-campus, less than 20 hrs/wk (Moderate)
- c. At a job OFF-campus, 20-35 hrs/wk (High)
- d. At a job OFF-campus, more than 35 hrs/wk (High)
- e. I don't plan to have a job during my first semester (Minimal)

High risk was assigned if . . .

Planning to miss class 3-4 times this semester for three or more reasons

Lacking at least two strategies for studying and relieving stress

Planning to spend four hours a day or more social networking

Lack of confidence in ability to balance academics with other activities

Lacking specific tools to manage time

Dissatisfied with decision to come to FAU

Don't feel prepared to select a major yet

Neither parent attended college

Primary speaker of other language



If risk = zero or minimal on all questions 1-5:

GREEN OWL

Based on your responses to Part One: My First Semester, you are **“GOOD TO GO”!** You have a positive attitude toward your first semester and are prepared to do the work required to succeed. You intend to go to class regularly, despite obstacles that may come up. You also intend to use strategies that are important to succeed in college – **NOW GO OUT AND USE THEM!** And always remember, if you need help there are many people here who can and will respond. Review the tips below to help you navigate your first year at FAU.



If risk = moderate on one or more questions 1-5:

YELLOW OWL

Based on your responses to Part One: My First Semester, we advise you to “**PROCEED WITH CAUTION**”! You have identified some items that may be obstacles to your successful completion of the first semester. Read the following tips to see what you can do to ensure your success at FAU!



*If risk = high on one or more questions 1-5: RED
OWL*

Based on your responses to Part One: My First Semester, we advise you “**STOP! And make some changes.**” You have identified items that may inhibit you from being successful in your first semester at FAU. Read the following tips to learn what you should do to ensure your success!

Sample tips

In high school, most students only “study” when they have a test coming up or “do homework” to complete a specific assignment. In college, you will need to devote time to studying even when there is no specific assignment due. Daily study time should include completing assigned readings, reviewing your notes from class or answering questions at the end of a chapter (*even when the work won't be collected by your instructor*). **Plan to study AT LEAST 2 hours for every hour spent in class**. (If you are taking 13 credits, that means 26 hours of study per week!) You should set aside the specific study times in your weekly schedule just as you do class or work times. For tips about how to study more effectively, visit:

http://www.fau.edu/retention/Tips_Main.php.

Stress Management: All college students get stressed. Stress is a response to a demand that is placed upon you. Without some stress, people would not get a lot done. That extra burst of adrenaline that helps you finish your final paper, perform well in sports or meet any challenge is positive stress. But sometimes, too much stress can cause problems and affect your health, productivity, relationships and college success!

In order to keep stress at a manageable level, find the strategies that work for you. Managing stress is individual; what helps one person reduce his or her stress may not be that helpful for someone else. Some examples of stress relievers are working out, talking to a friend, deep breathing and meditation. For more help in finding ways to cope with stress, visit FAU's Counseling Center above the Breezeway (SSB 229 or <http://www.fau.edu/student/counseling/>).

CARES Survey Student Risk Profile Fall, 2008

Students in SLS1503, Section 001

Instructor: Doe, Jane

September 3, 2008

Legend

	No/Low risk
	Moderate risk
	High risk

Student	My First Semester					My Time			Challenges				Commitment & Motivation					About Me				GPA		
	Overall risk, this section	Expectations and confidence	Miss class	Study time	Strategies for success	Overall risk, this section	Social and Technology Time	Confident can manage time	Tools for managing time	Overall risk, this section	Degree of challenge expected	Comfortable asking for support	Strategies to overcome challenges	Overall risk, this section	Reasons chose FAU	Satisfied with decision to attend FAU	Committed to completing degree	Committed to major	Expected engagement in FAU	Overall risk, this section	Educational background parents	Primary language	Work plans	Risk from predicted GPA
Student 1	High	Low	Low	High	Low	High	Moderate	Low	High	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	High	High
Student 2	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low	High
Student 3	High	Low	Low	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	High	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	High
Student 4	High	Low	Low	High	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	High	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	High
Student 5	Moderate	Low	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	Moderate	Low	High	Low
Student 6	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low	High	High	Moderate	Moderate	High	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	Moderate	Low	Moderate	Low	Low
Student 7	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Low	Low	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High
Student 8	High	Low	Low	High	Low	High	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	High	Low	High	Moderate	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	High	Low	Moderate	Low	High
Student 9	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Low	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Moderate
Student 10	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	High	High	Low	Low	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Student 11	High	Low	Low	High	Low	High	Moderate	Moderate	High	High	Moderate	Low	High	Low	Low	Low	High	Low	Low	High	Low	Moderate	Low	Low

Which survey “risk factors” actually predict risk? (Risk measured by fall GPA and percent of credit hours completed).

Predicted GPA: 2.23

Actual GPA: 2.70

Underprediction: - .47

Correlation between predicted and actual:

$r = .39$

Predicting Fall GPA from Survey Risk Factors

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	3.562	0.060		59.709	0.000
Risk from predicted GPA	-0.271	0.015	-0.455	-18.470	0.000
Risk: Complete BA degree here	0.051	0.016	0.081	3.300	0.001
Risk: Committed to a major	0.037	0.014	0.064	2.597	0.009
Risk: Employment	-0.028	0.013	-0.054	-2.174	0.030

a. Dependent Variable: Fall GPA

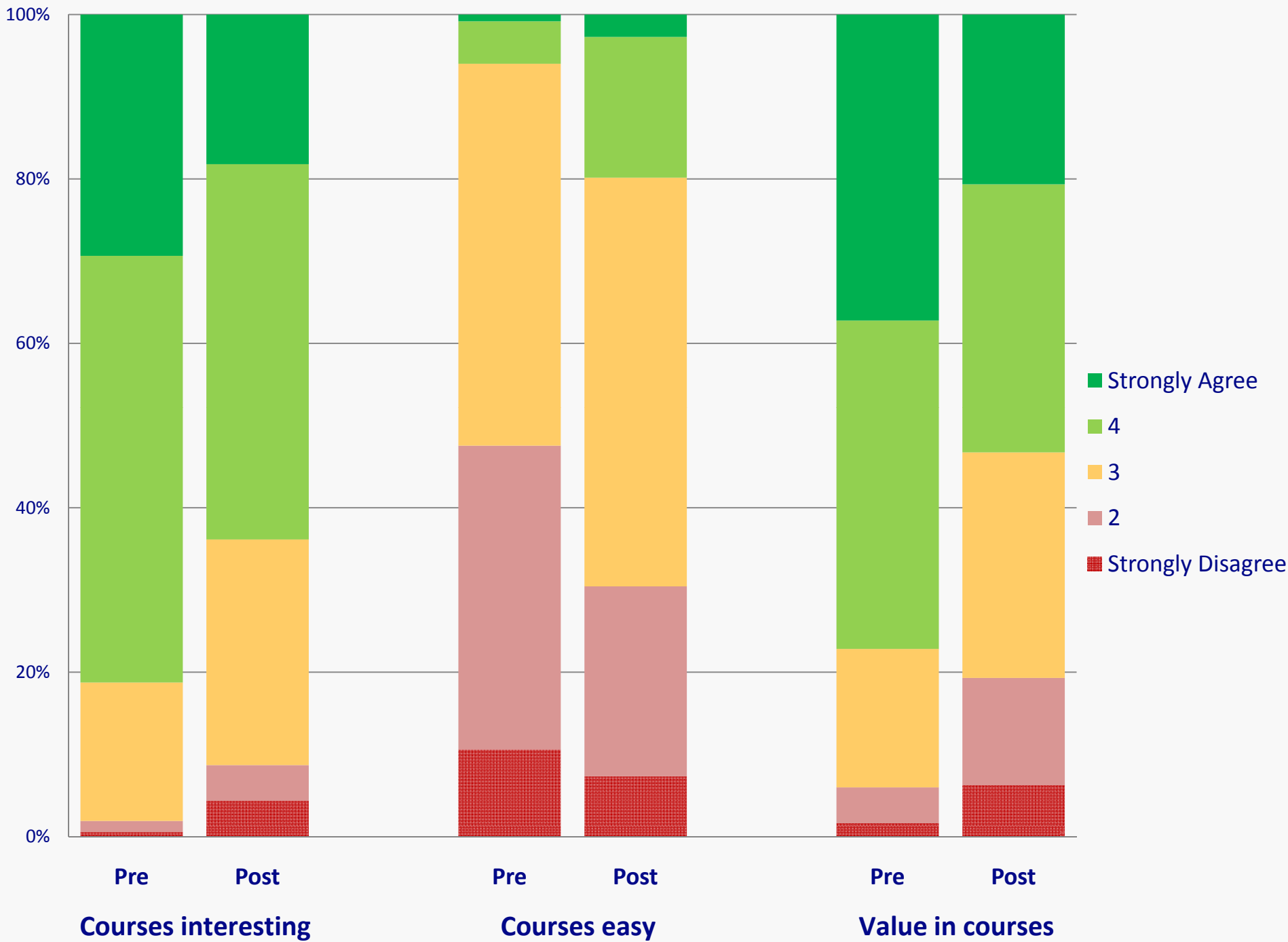
b. RSQ = .211

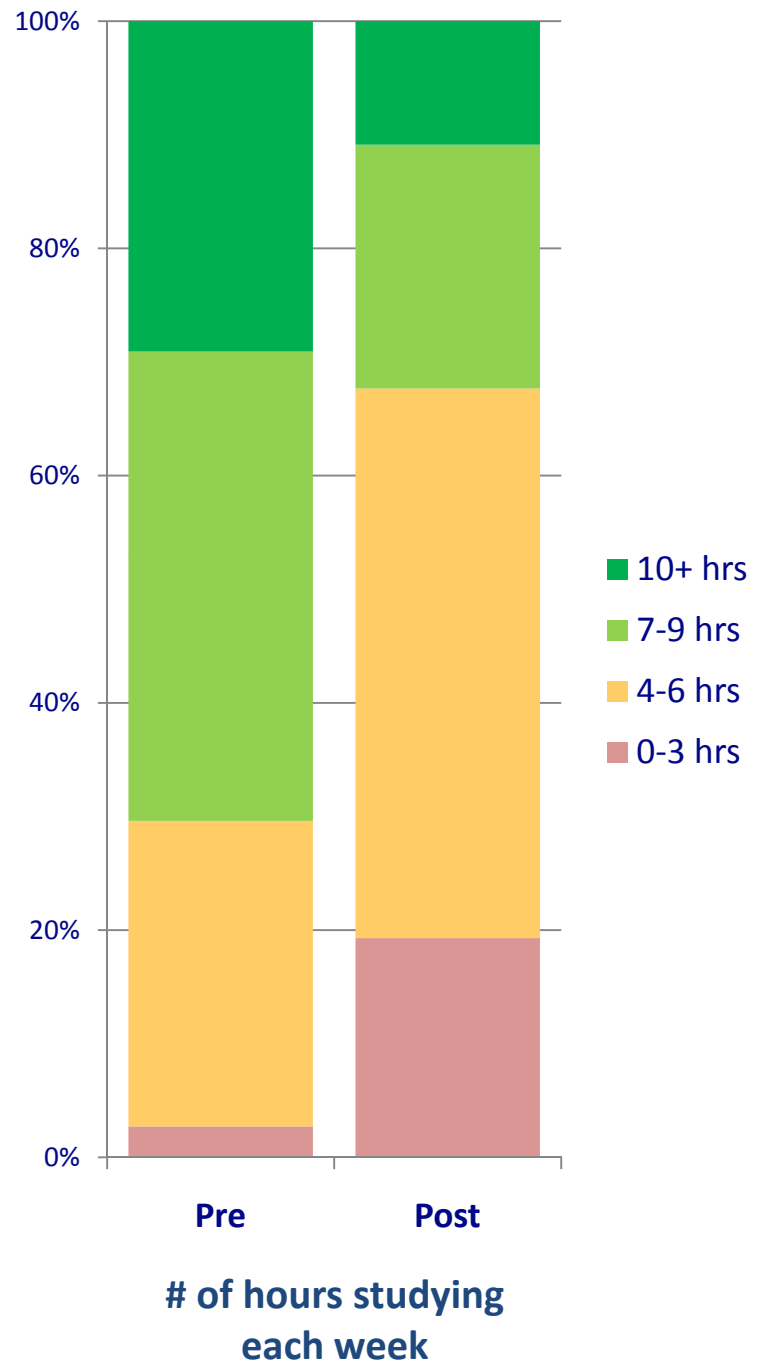
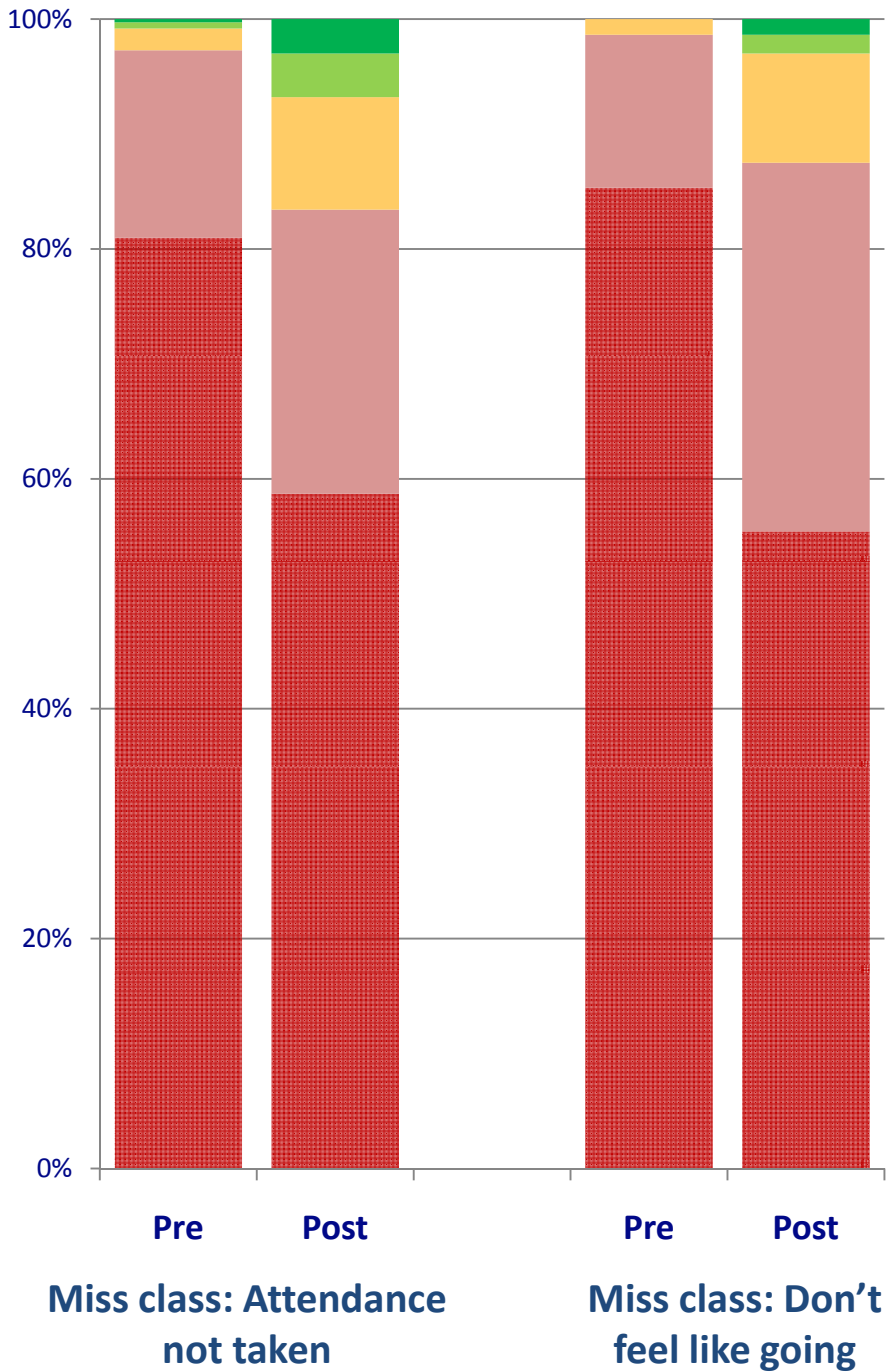
Why don't risk factors predict risk? (some theories)

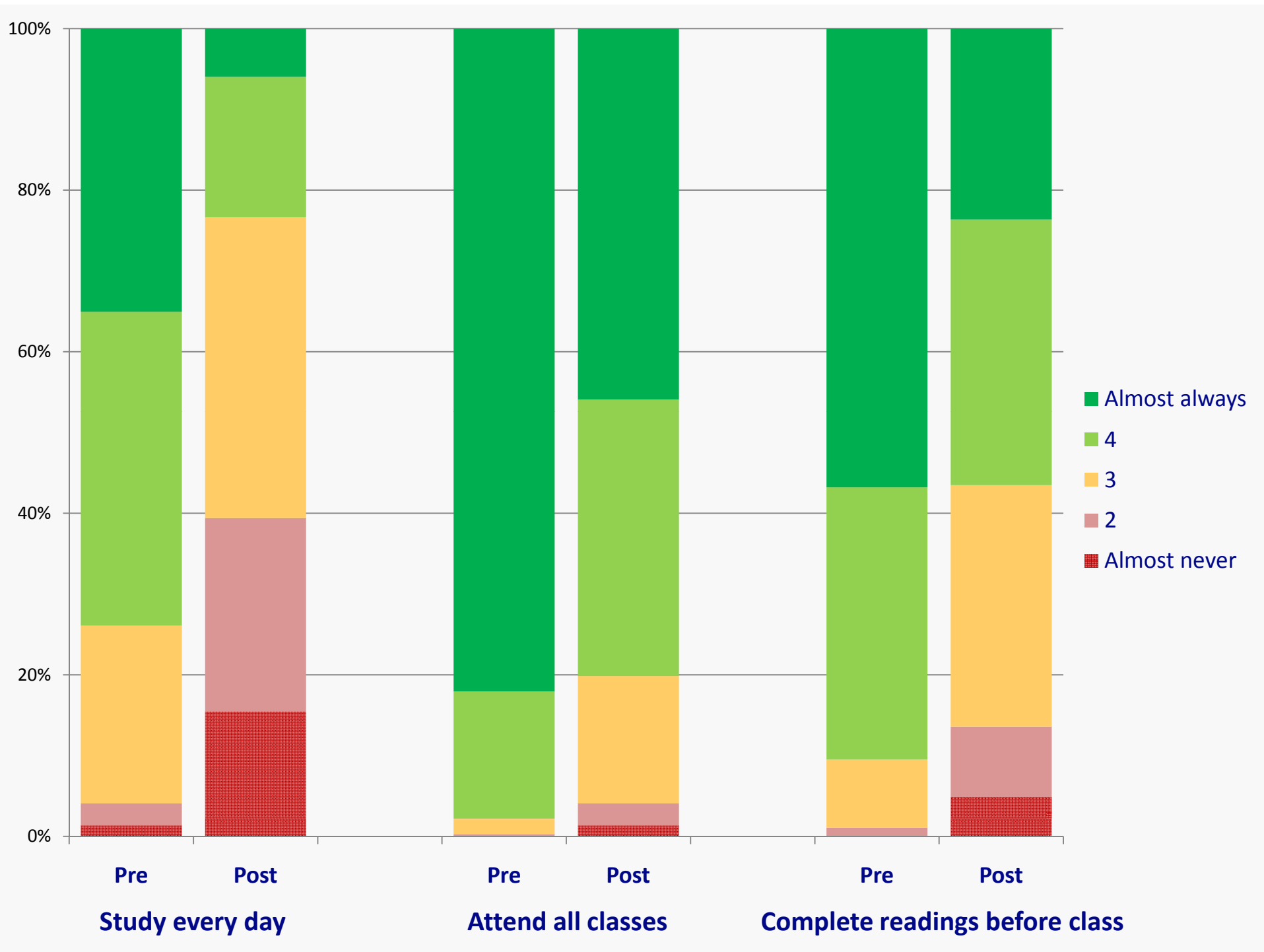
- Assignment of risk was based on faulty assumptions
- Not much variability in responses – Most students said they planned to study every day, attend all classes, seek out help when needed, etc.
- Students read the “Tips” and headed off risky behavior

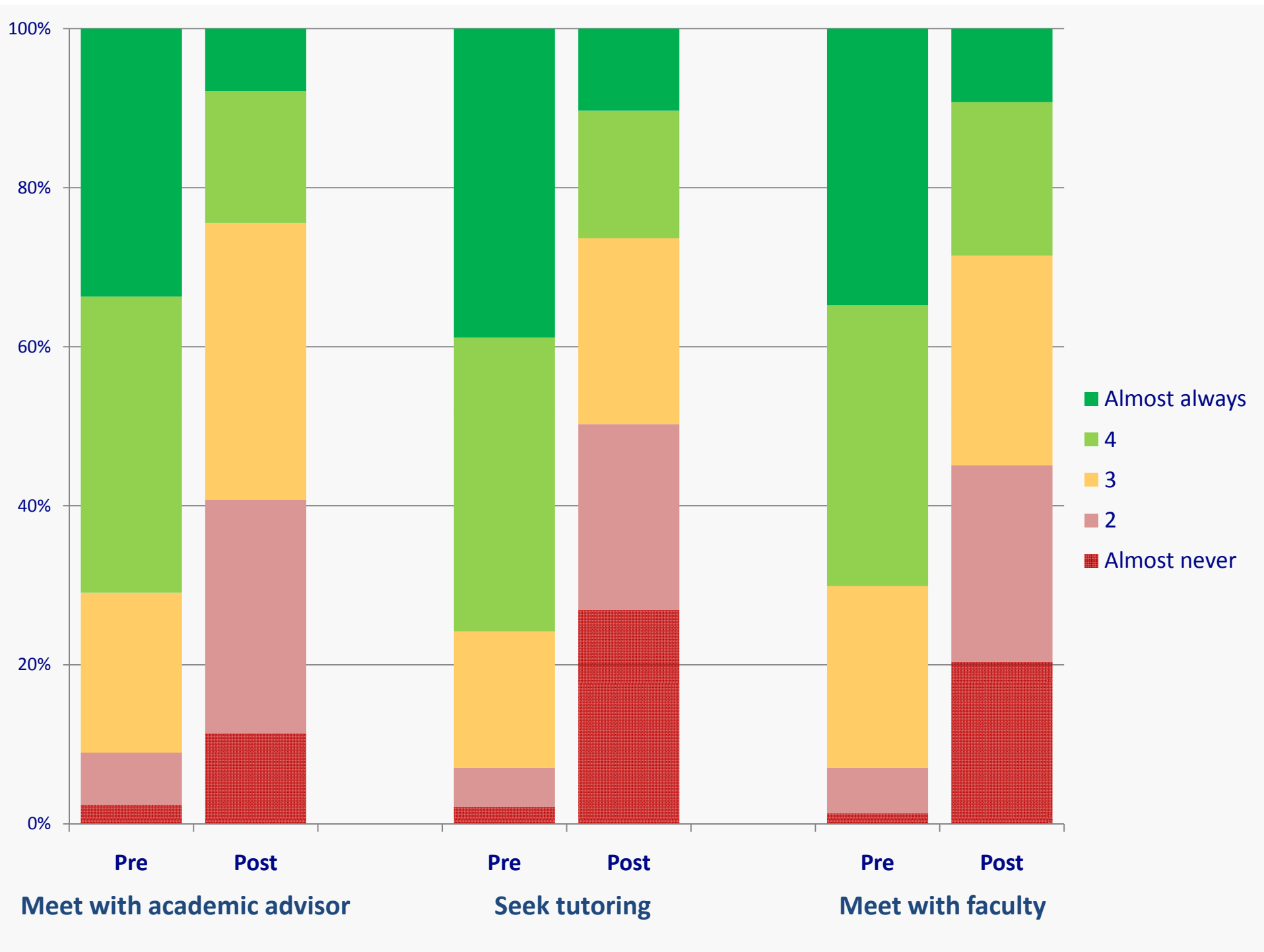
Post-semester CARES

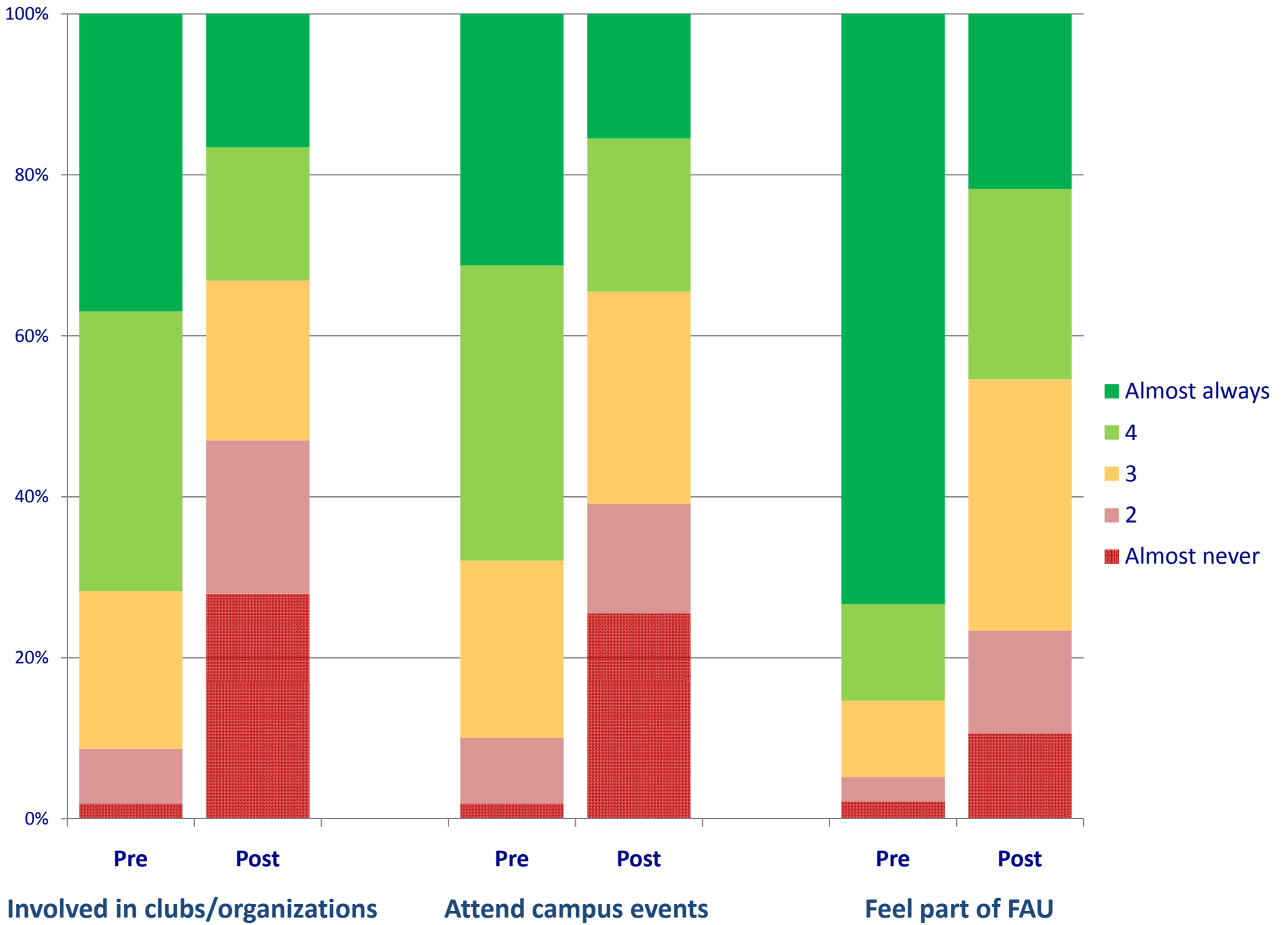
- Subset of survey items from pre-semester CARES
- Inquired into actual behavior
- Completed by about 30% of pre-semester respondents











Predicting Fall GPA from Post-Semester CARES

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.900	0.042		69.812	0.000
Study habits and strategies	0.218	0.042	0.295	5.237	0.000
Predicted GPA	0.174	0.042	0.236	4.181	0.000
Health issues	-0.159	0.042	-0.216	-3.827	0.000
Miss class for "lazy" reasons	-0.133	0.042	-0.180	-3.185	0.002
Courses were easy	0.130	0.042	0.176	3.113	0.002
Time spend studying	0.114	0.042	0.154	2.740	0.007
Personal motivation challenges	-0.104	0.042	-0.140	-2.487	0.014
Miss class for "legit" reasons	-0.087	0.042	-0.118	-2.088	0.038

Independent variables are factor scores

RSQ = .311

Next steps:

- Rerun models using retention to fall 2009
- Recompute the risk scores based on actual academic performance
- Rewrite “Tips” to alert students to intentions vs. actions gap
- Post semester survey will inquire about use of tips
- Engage faculty in exploring reasons and remedies for freshman “disengagement.”

Questions?
Comments?

Find the slides at:

<http://iea.fau.edu/inst/aircares09.pdf>