

# Student Interest Survey – Artificial Intelligence, Technology, and Society

Prepared for Nazareth College

April 2019



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# Introduction

- The following report presents the results of a survey administered by Hanover Research on behalf of Nazareth College in March 2019.
- The purpose of the survey is to gauge interest in the proposed undergraduate degree program Artificial Intelligence, Technology, and Society and uncover factors that impact students' decision making, program expectations, and selection criteria.
- Hanover surveyed students who are interested in Nazareth College along with current and former students and other affiliates of the institution. A total of 105 respondents completed all or part of the survey and provided quality responses.

AFFILIATION WITH NAZARETH	COUNT	PERCENTAGE
I am interested in attending Nazareth College.	67	64%
I graduated from Nazareth College.	31	30%
I am affiliated with Nazareth College in a different capacity.	5	5%
I am currently enrolled at Nazareth College.	2	2%

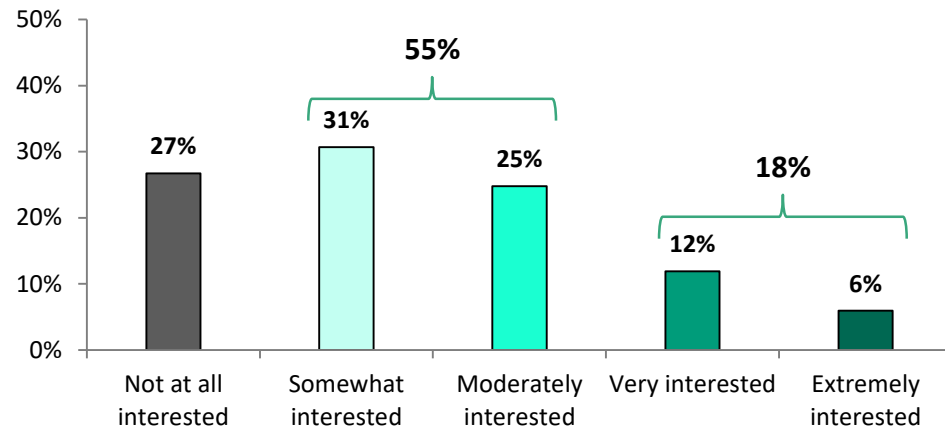
# Recommendations

- ✓ **When promoting the new program, emphasize the marketability of the degree for respondents' specific post-graduation interests along with strengths related to costs.** The ability to find a job is important to respondents, and many also express interest in continuing their education, particularly in a field related to business. They anticipate technology and business intelligence would be suitable industries for program graduates, so specific examples of how the program would be used to further those aspirations could be beneficial.
- ✓ **Provide plenty of hands-on and employer-sponsored learning experiences for program participants and advertise these opportunities.** For example, Nazareth should provide opportunities for students to gain hands-on experiences in the workforce, such as through an employer-connected capstone project related to the industries listed above, and clearly advertise these experiences to help students better understand possible post-graduation pathways. Prospective students value this kind of capstone experience more than a more traditional internship requirement.
- ✓ **Ensure an adequate balance of “hard” and “soft” skills in the program requirements with an emphasis on skills that are relevant to post-graduation plans and industries of interest.** Respondents favor the BS track, and survey results suggest that they desire a solid technical foundation with curriculum requirements in critical hard skills such as AI core, engineering, and computer science. However, courses and requirements in ethics, humanities, and human-AI interactions are of interest to most respondents as well, so a program that blends these soft skills with more traditionally foundational AI skills would be ideal.

# Interest in Proposed Program

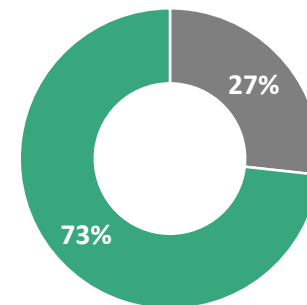
- **Nearly three-quarters of respondents are at least somewhat interested in the proposed program.** Most express modest interest (55 percent somewhat or moderately interested), while only 18 percent are very or extremely interested.
- **Most of those who are not interested in pursuing this degree program are simply not interested in this area of study (76%).**
- **There are no significant differences in interest by affiliation** (i.e., current students, alumni, and others v. respondents who are interested in the institution), **residence** (i.e., in state v. out of state), **or age** (i.e., under 18 v. 18 and over).

Overall, how interested would you be in pursuing a degree program in Artificial intelligence, Technology, and Society? (n=101)

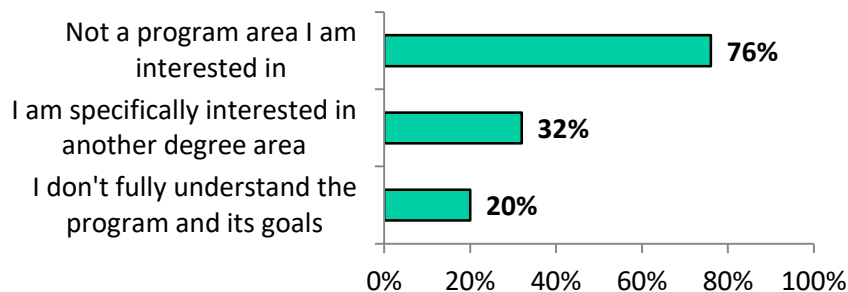


Program Interest Regrouped (n=101)

■ Not Interested ■ Interested



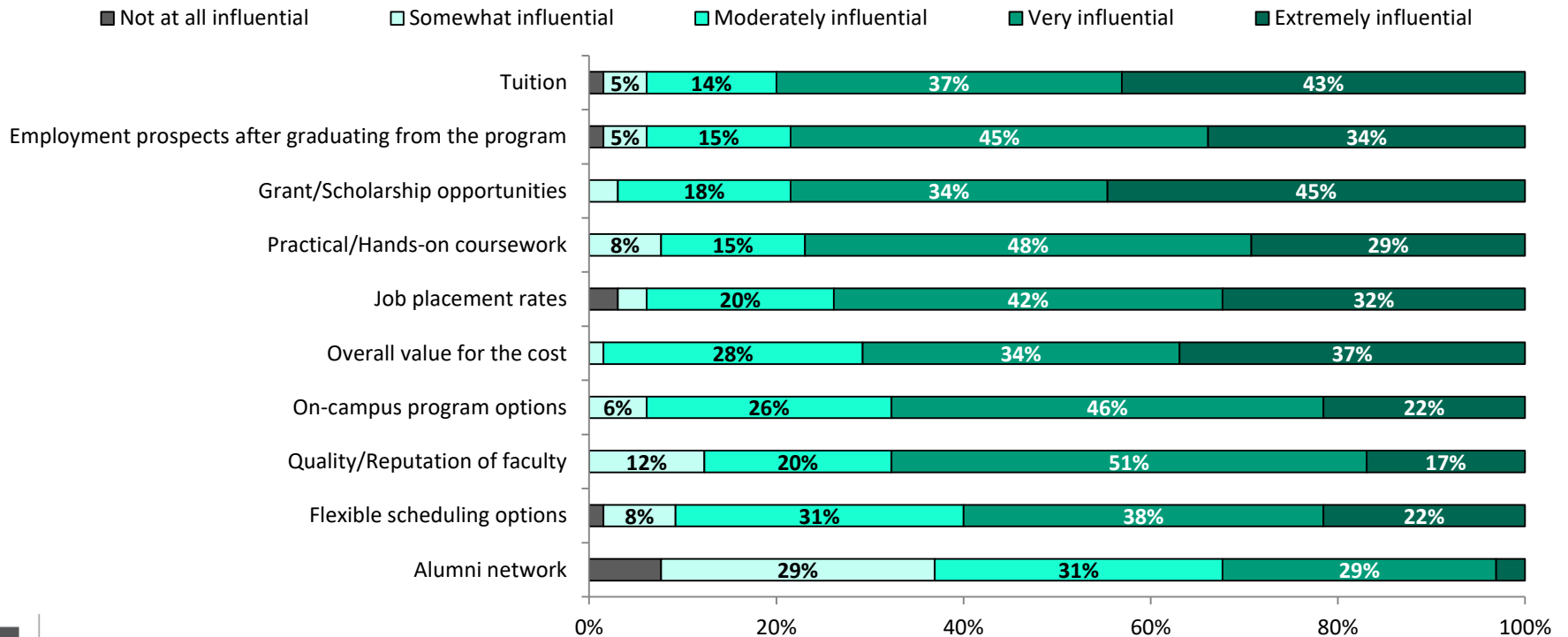
Top 3 Reasons Not Interested (n=25)



# Influential Factors

- Nazareth should emphasize benefits related to cost and practical application of the degree program in marketing, as these factors are influential among respondents who are interested in the proposed program when choosing a college or university.** For example, tuition ranks highest overall (by “very” or “extremely influential”) and second for “very influential” (43%), while grant/scholarship opportunities rank third overall and first for “very influential” (45%). Employment prospects after graduating and job placement rates are also very influential in decision making. Given the novelty of this degree, Nazareth should ensure that it is clearly communicating the graduate pathways available to prospective students in this field.

**Top 10 Factors in College or University Choice (n=65)**



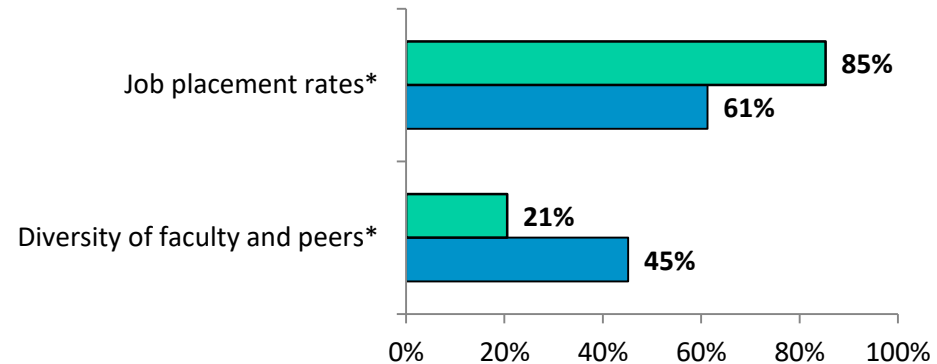
# Influential Factors

- **Job placement is particularly important for older respondents.** While it ranks fifth overall, 85 percent of respondents 18 or older indicate this is “very” or “extremely influential” compared to 61 percent of those under 18. Though not in the top 10 overall, younger respondents place more importance on diversity (45% v. 21%).
- **Flexible scheduling options are more important among out-of-state respondents (76% v. 35%).** This is unsurprising, given that many out-of-state students require additional flexibility in attending a higher education institution. However, given the preferences for campus-based experiences in this field, Nazareth should look for ways beyond delivery flexibility to offer non-standard schedules. For example, offering some core coursework in the evening may facilitate student internships in this field during working hours.
- **There are no significant differences by affiliation with Nazareth.** This suggests that all Nazareth stakeholders generally value the same items when making college decisions.

## Important Factors by Age

% Very influential + % Extremely influential

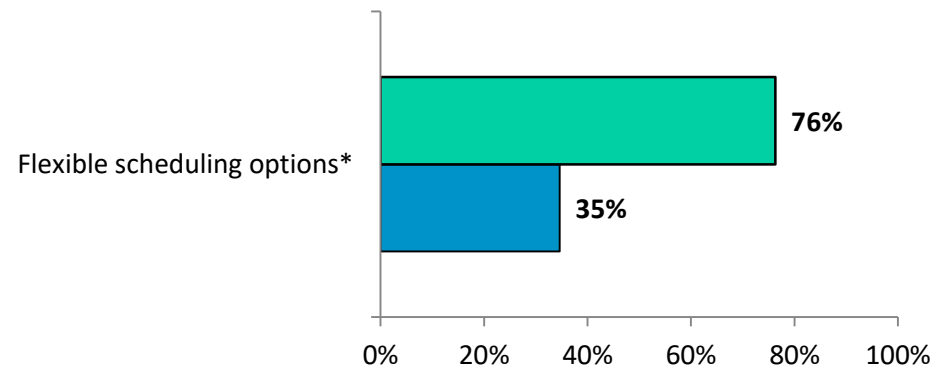
■ 18 and Over (n=34) ■ Under 18 (n=31)



## Important Factors by Residence

% Very influential + % Extremely influential

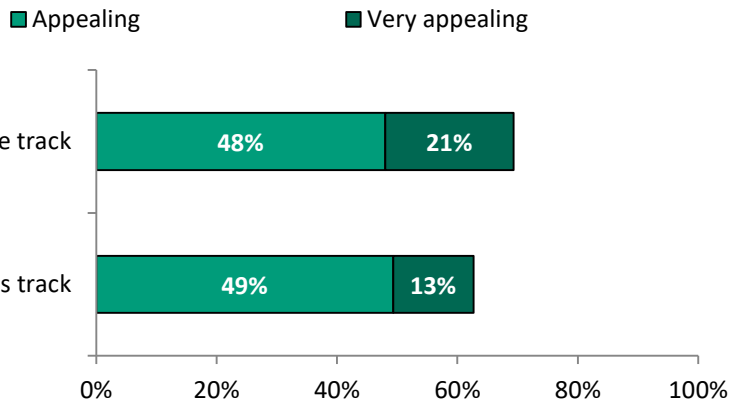
■ Out of State (n=38) ■ In State (n=26)



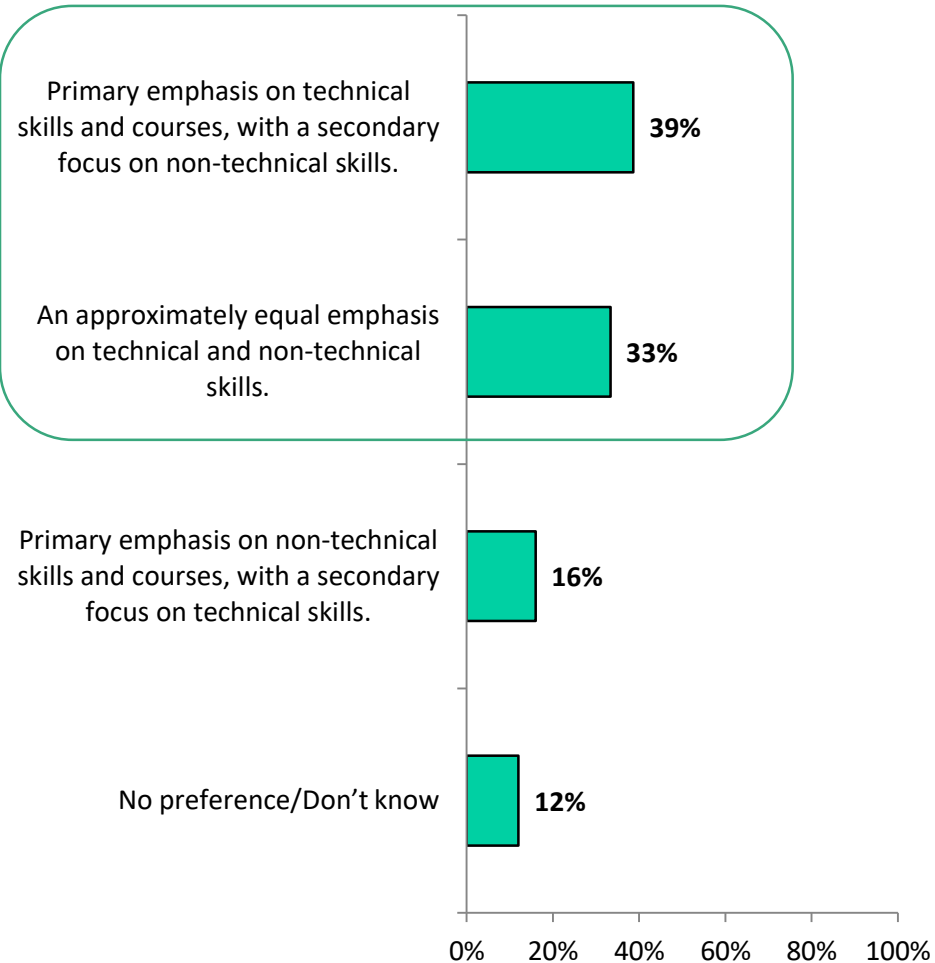
# Program Track and Skills

- **A Bachelor of Science track is most appealing to respondents overall.** This is largely driven by the percentage indicating it would be “very appealing” (21%) compared to the Bachelor of Arts (13%).
- **Respondents prefer an emphasis on technical skills, aligning with their interest in the BS degree.** Thirty-nine percent of those interested in the proposed program would find a primary emphasis on technical skills most appealing, and one-third would prefer an equal emphasis on technical and non-technical skills.

**Most appealing program tracks (n=75)**



**Most appealing content structures (n=75)**

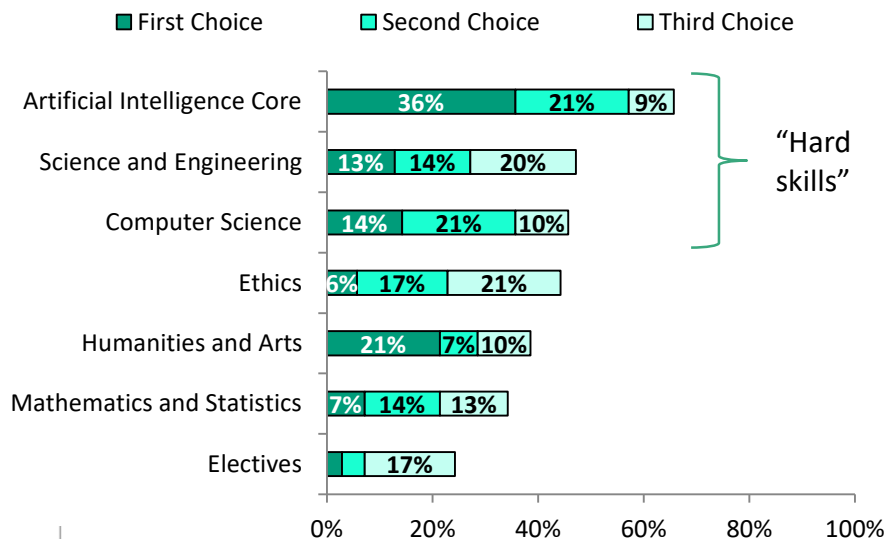




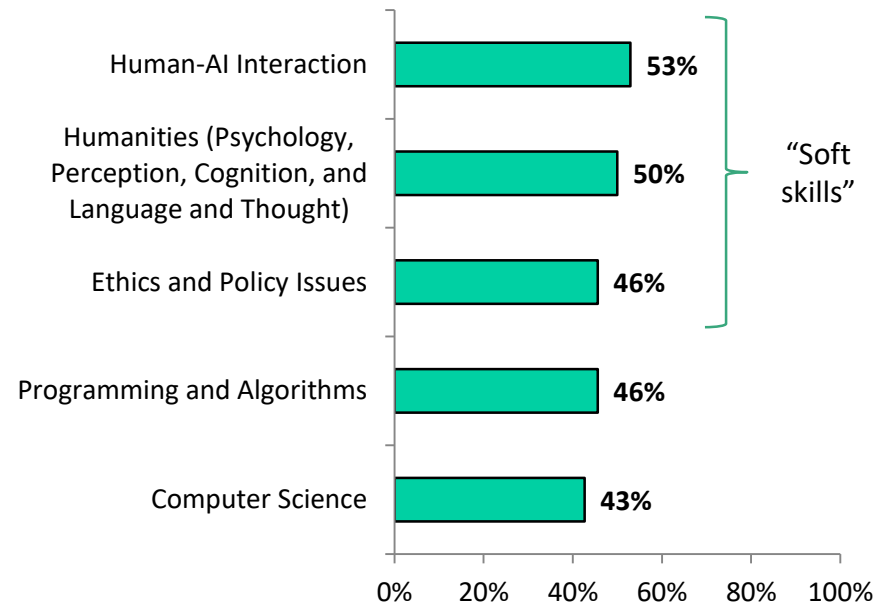
# Curriculum and Course Requirements

- An ideal program would ensure a balance between hard and soft skill courses and requirements.** Curriculum requirements related to hard skills most commonly rank among the top three that would contribute to the overall satisfaction of respondents interested in the program. The number one requirement overall, and most commonly-chosen among the top three, is the artificial intelligence core (36% and 66%, respectively). Nearly half also choose science and engineering (47%) and computer science (46%) among their top three. However, humanities is the second-most common as a first choice for curriculum requirements (21%).
- In contrast, the top-ranking important courses or topics among respondents are related to soft skills.** The two most commonly-selected among their top five most important topics are Human-AI interaction (53%) and Humanities (50%). In sum, they desire a mix of both but place value in a solid foundation of core technical skills.

**Top three curriculum requirements that would contribute to respondent's overall satisfaction with the program (n=70)**



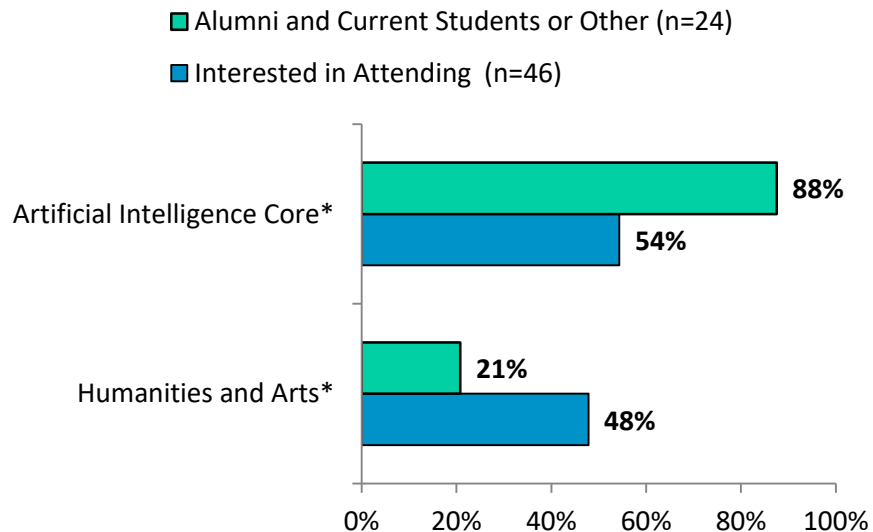
**Top 5 most important courses or topics (n=68)**



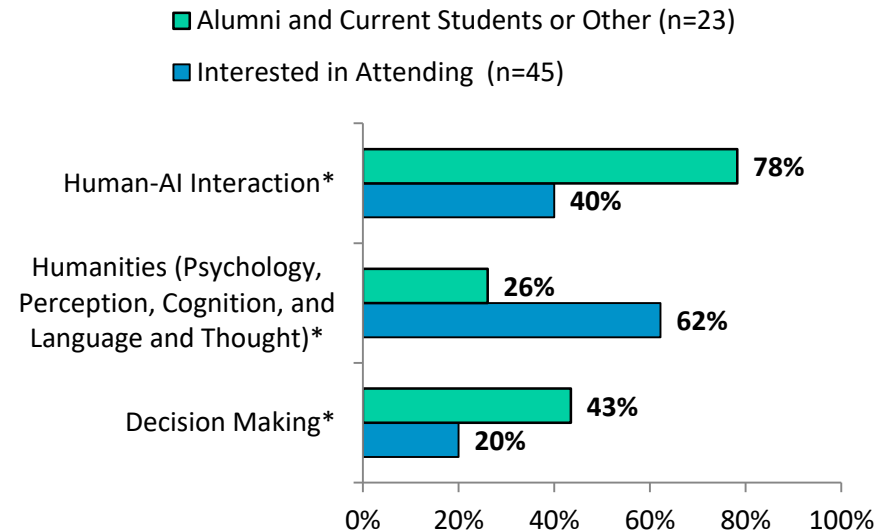
# Curriculum and Course Requirements

- **Respondents who are interested in attending (but not yet affiliated with) Nazareth express greater interest in humanities requirements.** Prospective students are statistically more likely to seek core coursework in humanities and the arts, and rate individual humanities courses like psychology and perception as important to their interest in such a program at Nazareth.
- **On the other hand, other stakeholders are more interested in Artificial Intelligence-specific coursework.** These respondents, including current students and alumni, seek a strong AI core and coursework in Human-AI Interaction at statistically higher rates. This is important as it shows what respondents who have already experienced Nazareth value in this program, and highlights that the College should be focusing on demonstrating both the AI-specific elements and also their affiliation with the broader humanities.

**Top Curriculum Requirements by Affiliation**  
% in Top 3



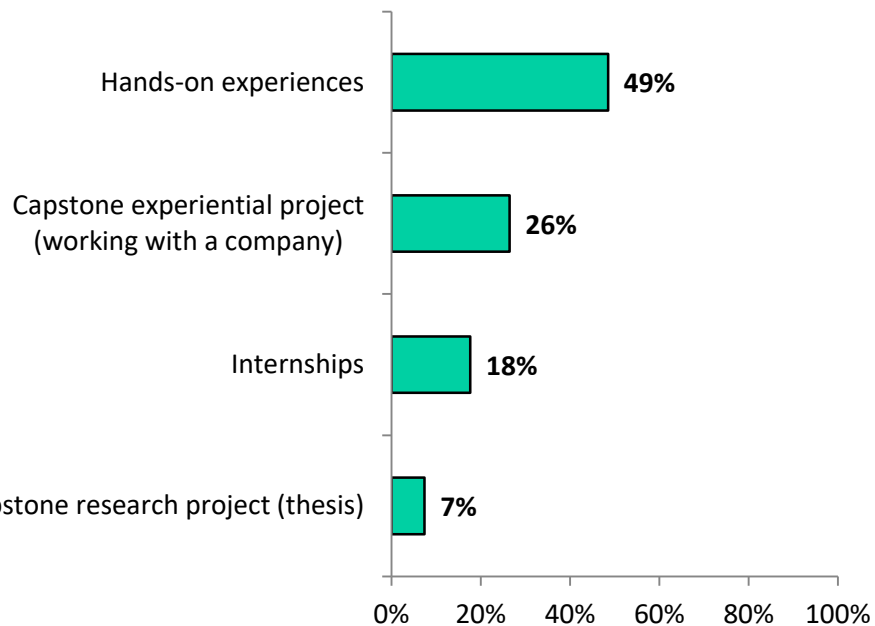
**Differences in Important Courses Among Top 5 by Affiliation**



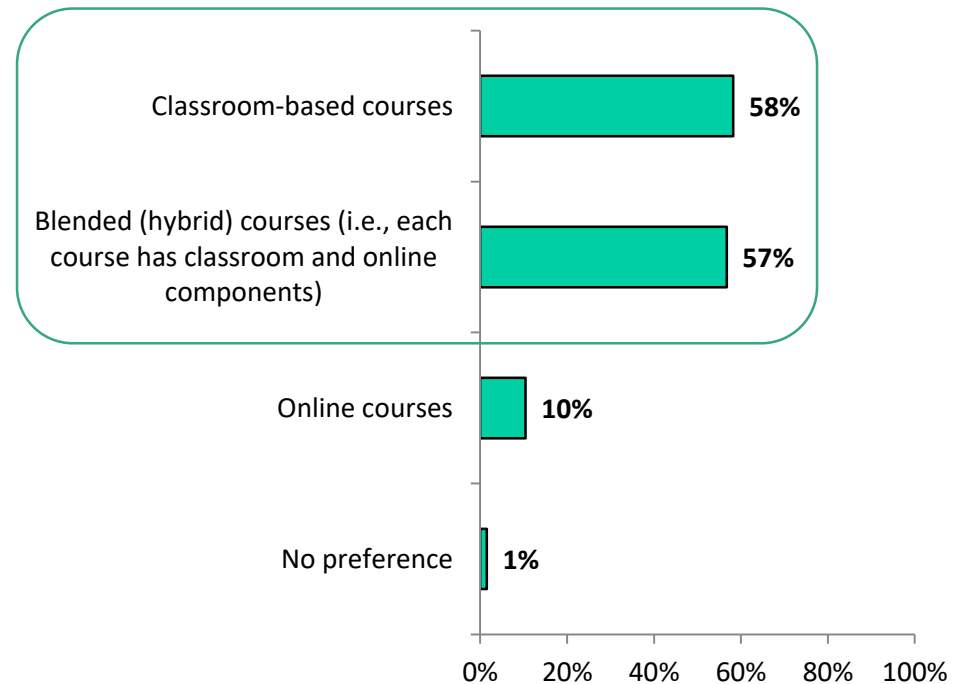
# Program Format and Requirements

- **A program with in-person, hands-on experiences would appeal to respondents who are interested in the program.** Almost half of these respondents seek hands-on experiences, and one-quarter express interest in working with a company to fulfill a capstone requirement. As such, they most prefer classroom-based courses (58%) or hybrid formats (57%) over online courses (10%). Nazareth should seek ways to provide students with these experiential opportunities to highlight the practical applications of its unique AI program, especially considering much of the competition is focused on hands-on technical skills development in the field of AI.

**Most Important Program Graduation Requirement (n=68)**



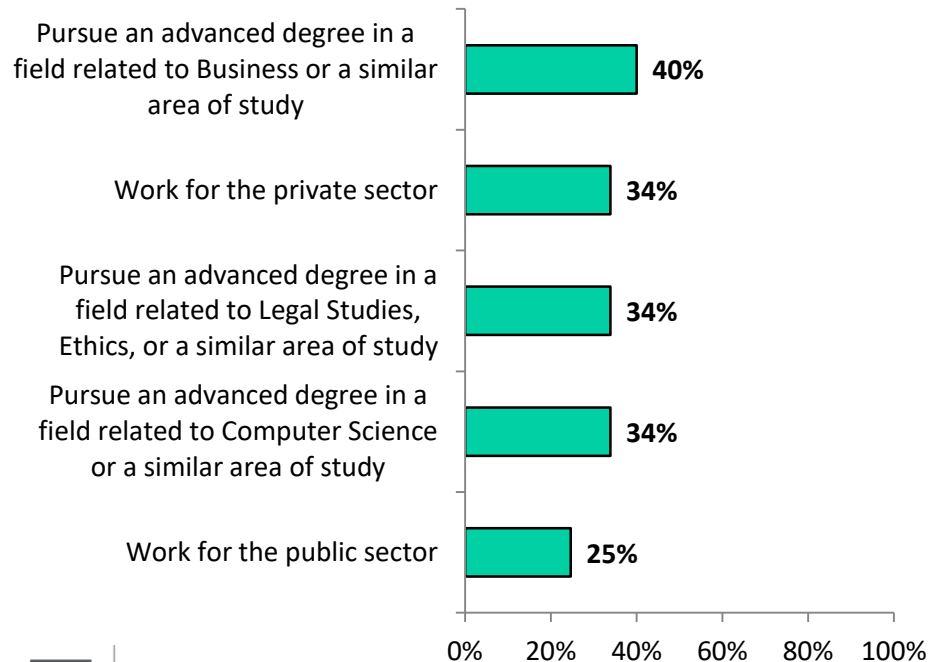
**Preferred class formats (n=67)**



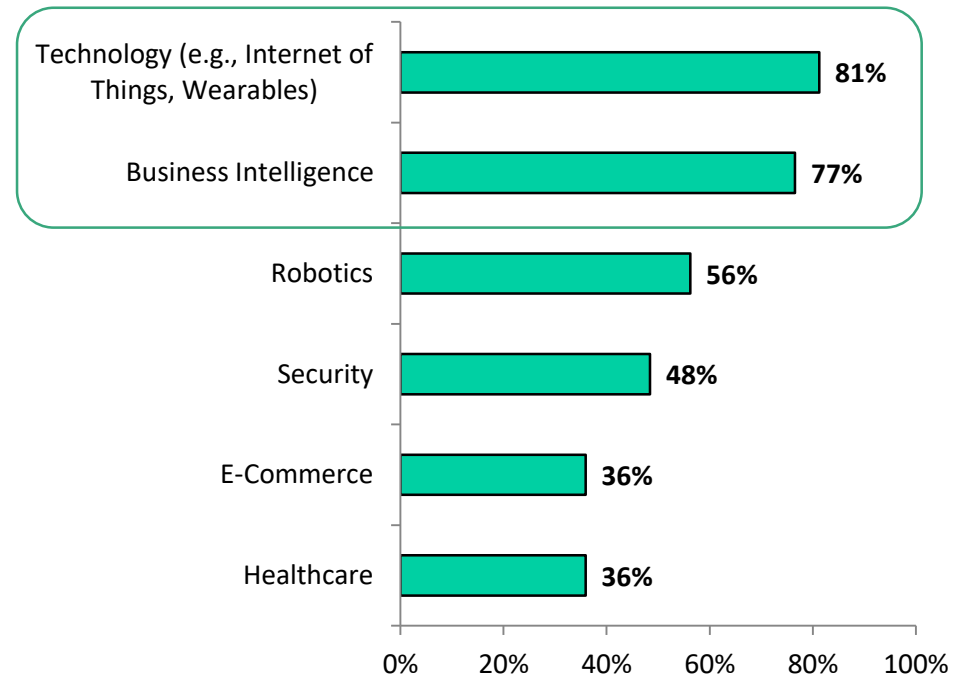
# Post-Graduation Plans

- **Respondents express varying post-graduation interests, but many plan to pursue advanced degrees.** An advanced degree in business or a related field (40%) is the most anticipated post-graduation pathway, reinforcing many respondents' interest in the BS track over the BA track. This highlights students' focus on employment prospects and suggests that direct industry links, particularly in business or management, could help spark additional interest in the program. However, the relatively even distribution of responses for this question indicates the potential lack of well-defined post-graduation pathways.
- **Technology and business intelligence are the best-suited industries for graduates of the proposed program according to respondents (77%-81%).**

Post-Graduation Paths of Interest (n=65)



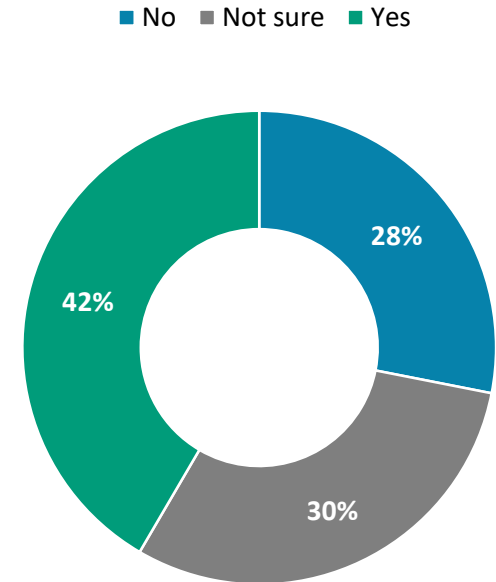
Top 6 Industries for Program Graduates (n=64)



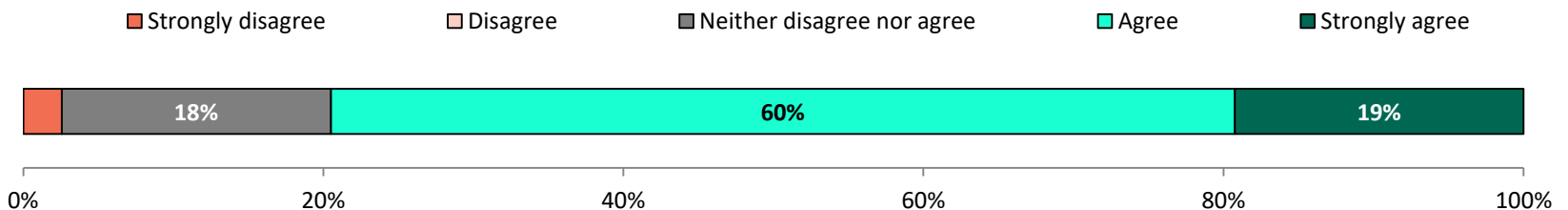
# Mission

- **When presented with Nazareth’s mission statement, more than three-quarters of respondents agree that it accurately reflects the goals and values of the institution.** They are more likely to agree (60%) than strongly agree (19%), but few respondents disagree (3%). This breakdown is consistent across stakeholder groups, suggesting that Nazareth is doing a good job of marketing and upholding its core institutional mission.
- **Forty-two percent of respondents indicated they were familiar with Nazareth’s mission statement before it was presented to them in the survey.** This again speaks to the strength of Nazareth’s institutional perspective and highlights the centrality that its mission plays on its outreach materials and students’ experiences (both anticipated and actual).

Are you familiar with Nazareth College’s mission statement?  
(n=89)



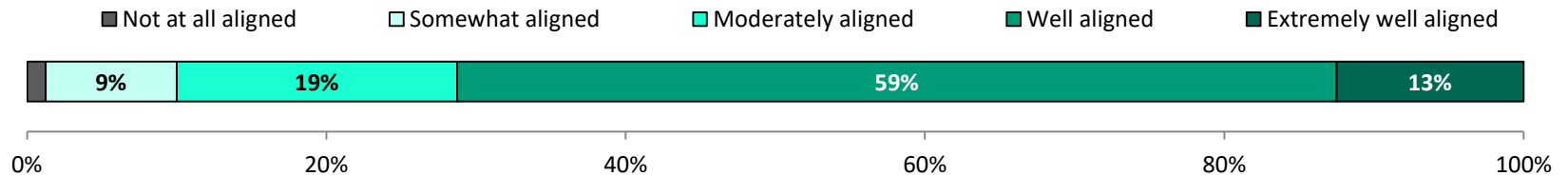
Nazareth’s mission accurately reflects the goals and values of the institution. (n=78)



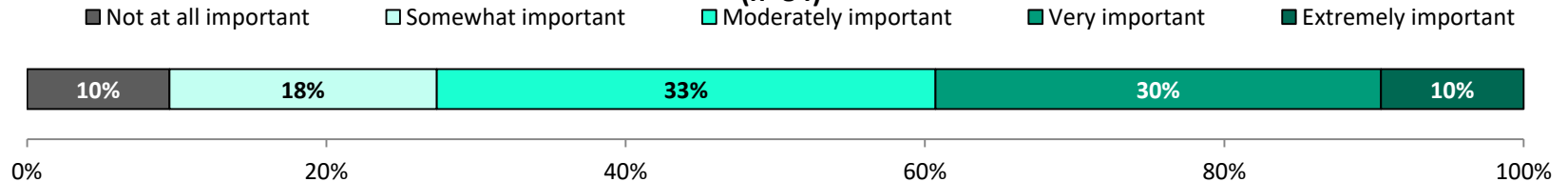
# Mission

- Nearly all respondents (99%) feel the proposed program is at least somewhat aligned with Nazareth’s mission, while fewer feel strongly that this is important. While 71 percent feel it is “well” or “extremely well aligned,” just 39 percent feel it is “very” or “extremely important” that the program aligns to the mission.

How closely do you feel the proposed Artificial Intelligence, Technology, and Society degree aligns with Nazareth College’s mission? (n=80)



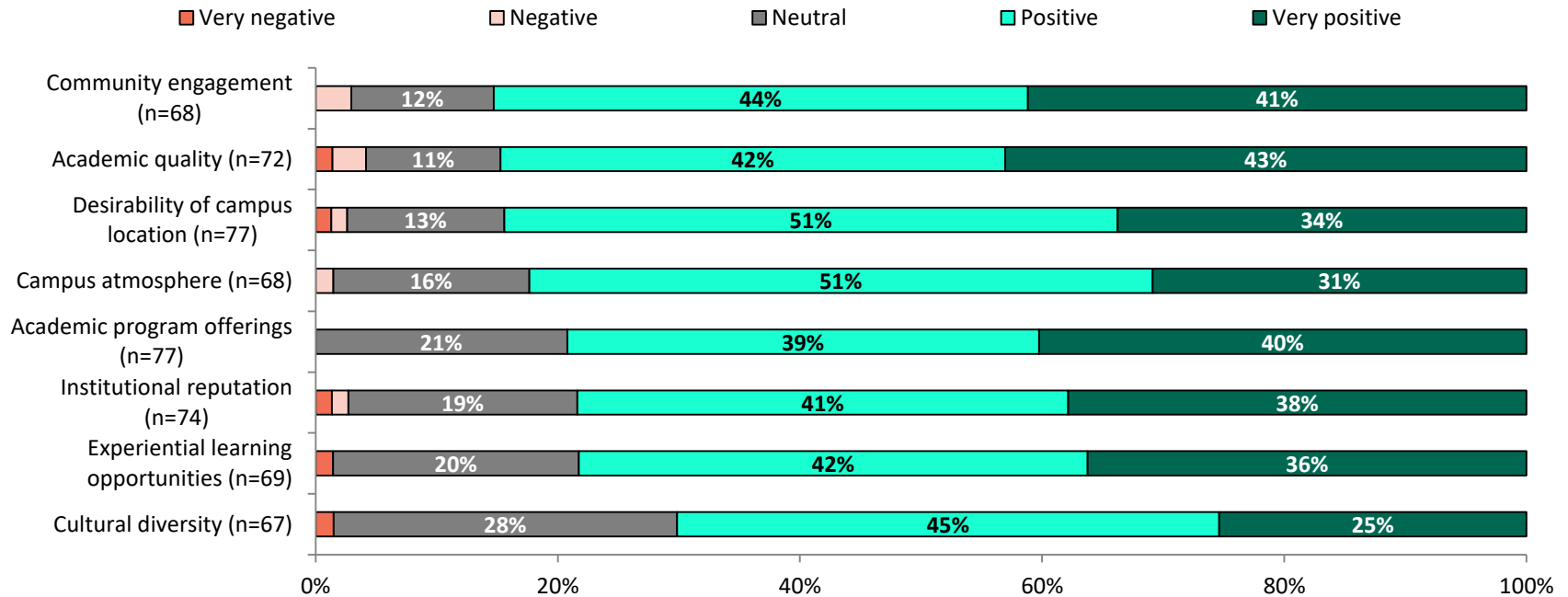
How important to you is it that your program aligns as closely as possible with Nazareth's mission? (n=84)



# Opinions of Nazareth

- Seventy percent or more of respondents rate Nazareth positively on all attributes surveyed.** They rate it highest in community engagement, academic quality, and desirability of campus location (85-85% “positive” or “very positive”). They rate it lowest in cultural diversity (70%). Many of these themes corroborate preferences expressed with regard to the proposed program, including on-campus elements (and highly-rated campus atmosphere and location) and experiential learning opportunities. It also reinforces that Nazareth stakeholders value its institutional mission and highly rate the College’s commitment to the greater community.

How would you rate Nazareth College on each of the following attributes?



# Methodology

- The survey was fielded online using the Qualtrics software platform in March 2019.
- After data collection, Hanover identified and removed low-quality respondents.
- “Don’t Know” or “Not Applicable” responses, and equivalent, are often excluded from the figures and analysis in order to focus on respondents who did express an opinion.
- Sample sizes vary across questions as some questions only pertain to a subset of respondents.
- Conclusions drawn from a small sample size ( $n < 20$ ) should be interpreted with caution.
- For full aggregate and segmented results, please consult the accompanying data supplement.
- Statistically significant differences (95% confidence level) between groups are noted with an asterisk (\*).
- Respondents were re-grouped by affiliation with Nazareth, residence, age, and interest in the proposed program to explore differences in responses by each of these segmentations. Please see the accompanying data supplement for survey results by each grouping.



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