



Wisdom to make a difference.

Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

2015 CIRP Freshman Survey: College Choice Items

During June 2015 Summer Orientation, Keene State College asked all incoming students to complete the CIRP Freshman Survey. Usable responses were received from 882 students. Results from this survey will be shared in a series of reports on clusters of related survey items. This report summarizes the CIRP responses that relate to college choice. Because national comparison data are not yet available for 2015, the comparisons provided here are from all four-year public colleges that participated in the CIRP study in 2014.

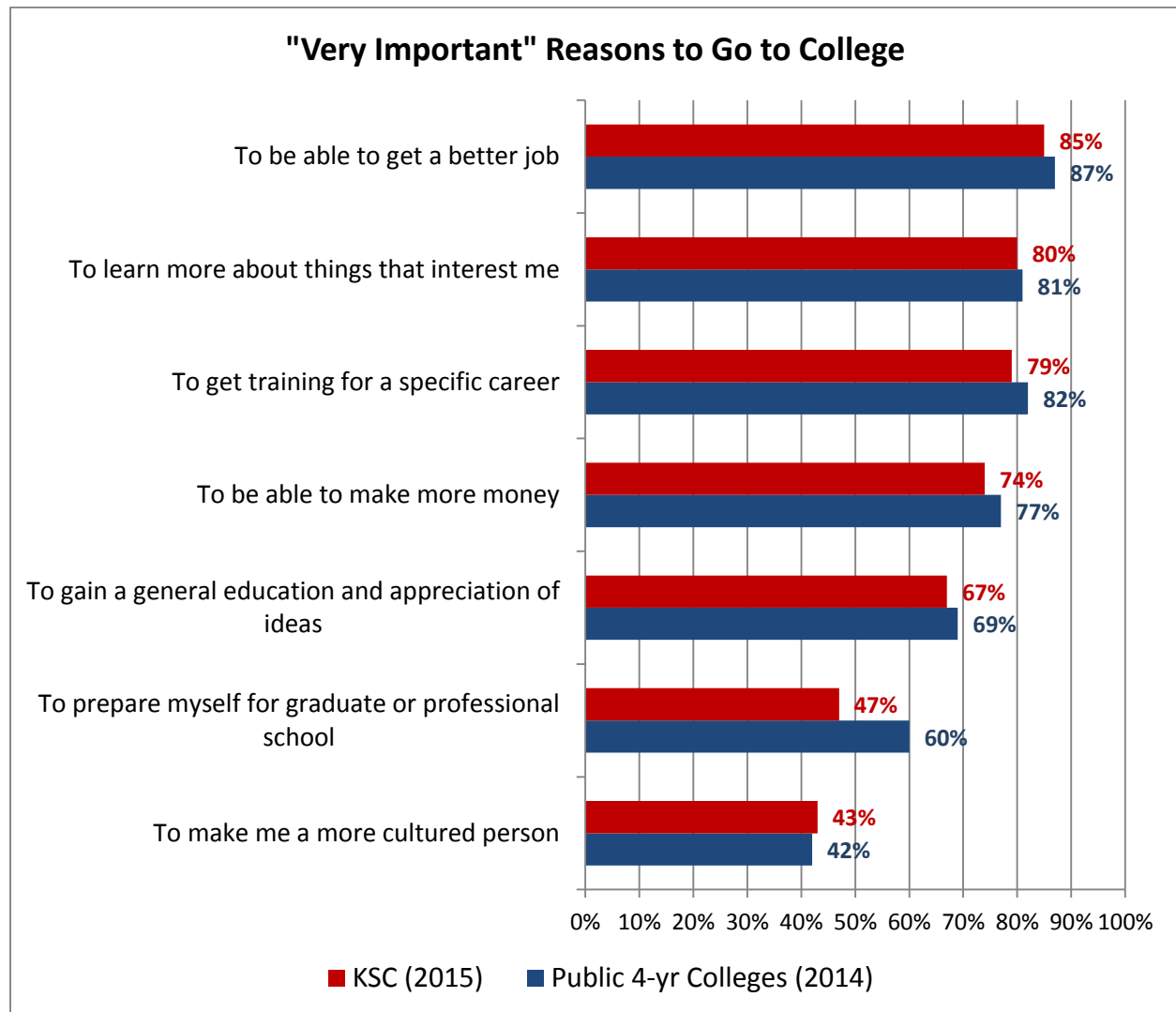
KEY FINDINGS

- Keene State College first-year students are similar to their national peers in identifying financial and career-related motivations for going to college. Eighty-five percent of KSC students indicate that getting a better job is a very important reason to attend college.
- For most entering students (90%), KSC is their first or second choice institution. The same is true for most students at four-year public colleges nationwide.
- As in 2013, the number one reason that KSC students give as “very important” for choosing this institution is their campus visit. This is a much more important reason for KSC students than for students at other institutions nationally (57% vs. 36%). Though the importance of the campus visit for KSC students has declined somewhat in recent years, it remains a much stronger factor than for students at most other colleges.
- Given the downturn in admissions yield for 2015, it is important to understand how the motivations of KSC students may have changed since 2013. The importance of the College’s reputation for social activities has increased in the past two years, while the importance of the campus visit, the College’s academic reputation, and parental recommendations have declined as reasons to select KSC over other institutions.

DETAILED FINDINGS

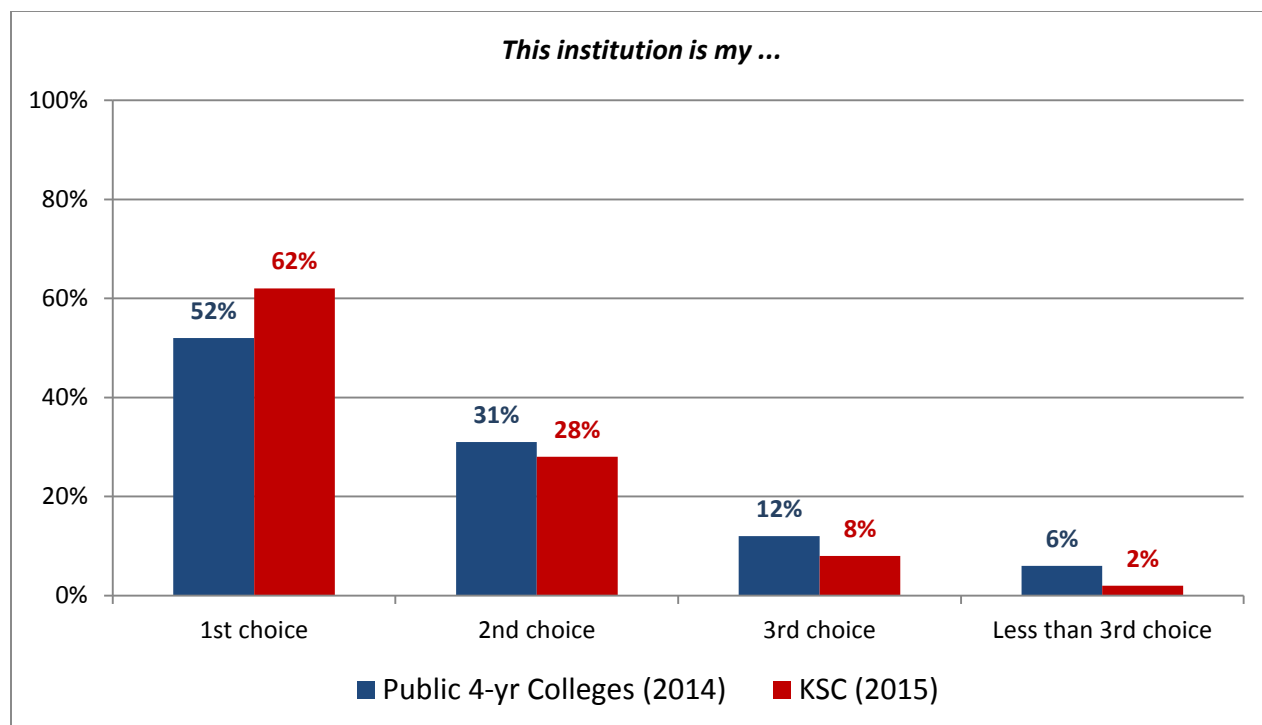
Reasons to Go to College

As the following graph shows, Keene State College first-year students are similar to their national peers in their reasons for going to college, with one exception. KSC students are less likely than first-year students elsewhere to intend to enroll in graduate or professional school (Eagan et al., 2014). Overall, KSC's 2015 responses to this question were similar to those from the last administration of this survey in 2013.



Reasons to Choose Keene State College

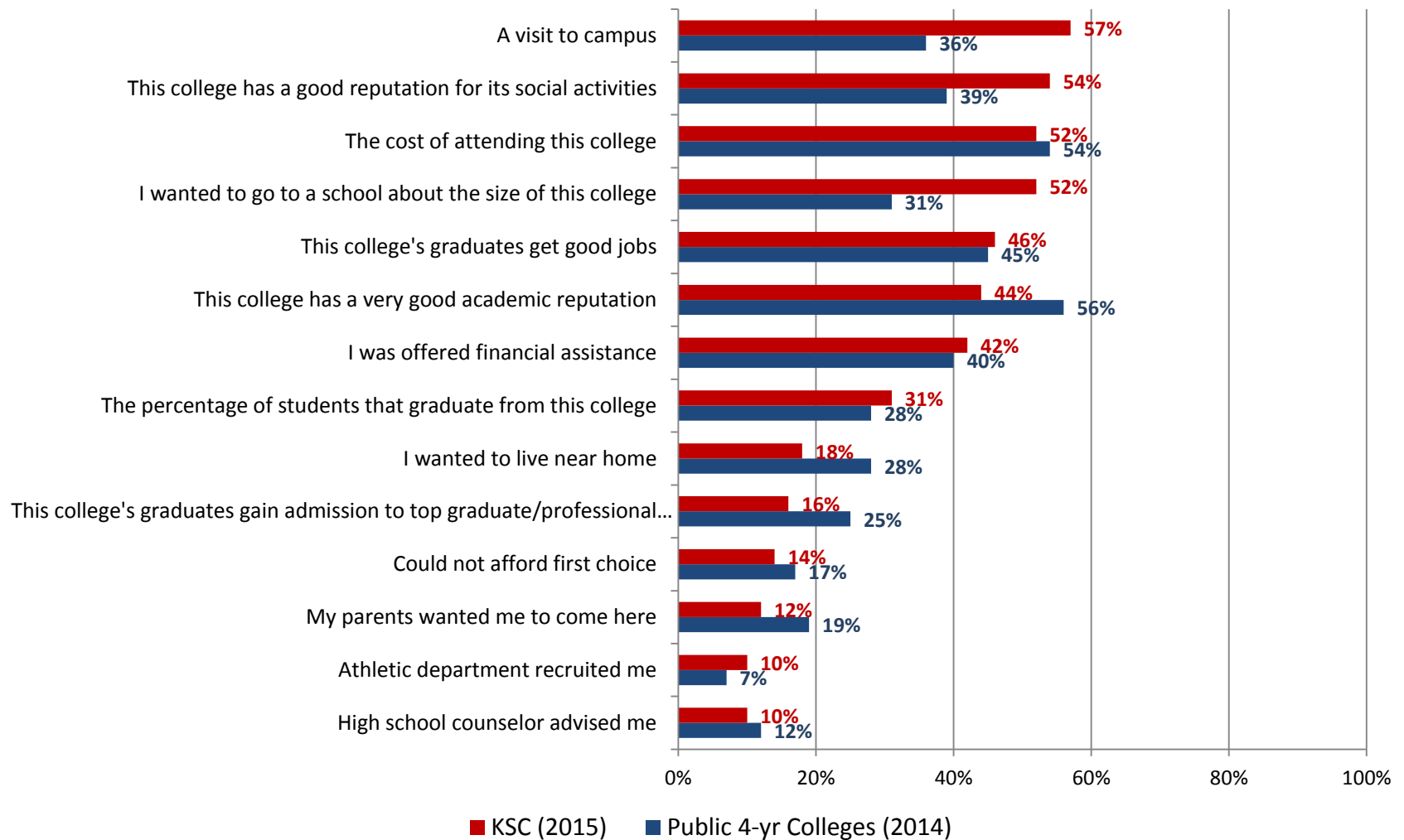
Most students who enroll at KSC report that this was their first or second choice institution (90%). KSC is somewhat more likely to be the first choice of students who enroll here than would be true at other similar institutions. Again, responses to this question were similar for students entering in 2015 and those who completed this survey in 2013. The following graph displays the range of responses to this 2015 survey item.



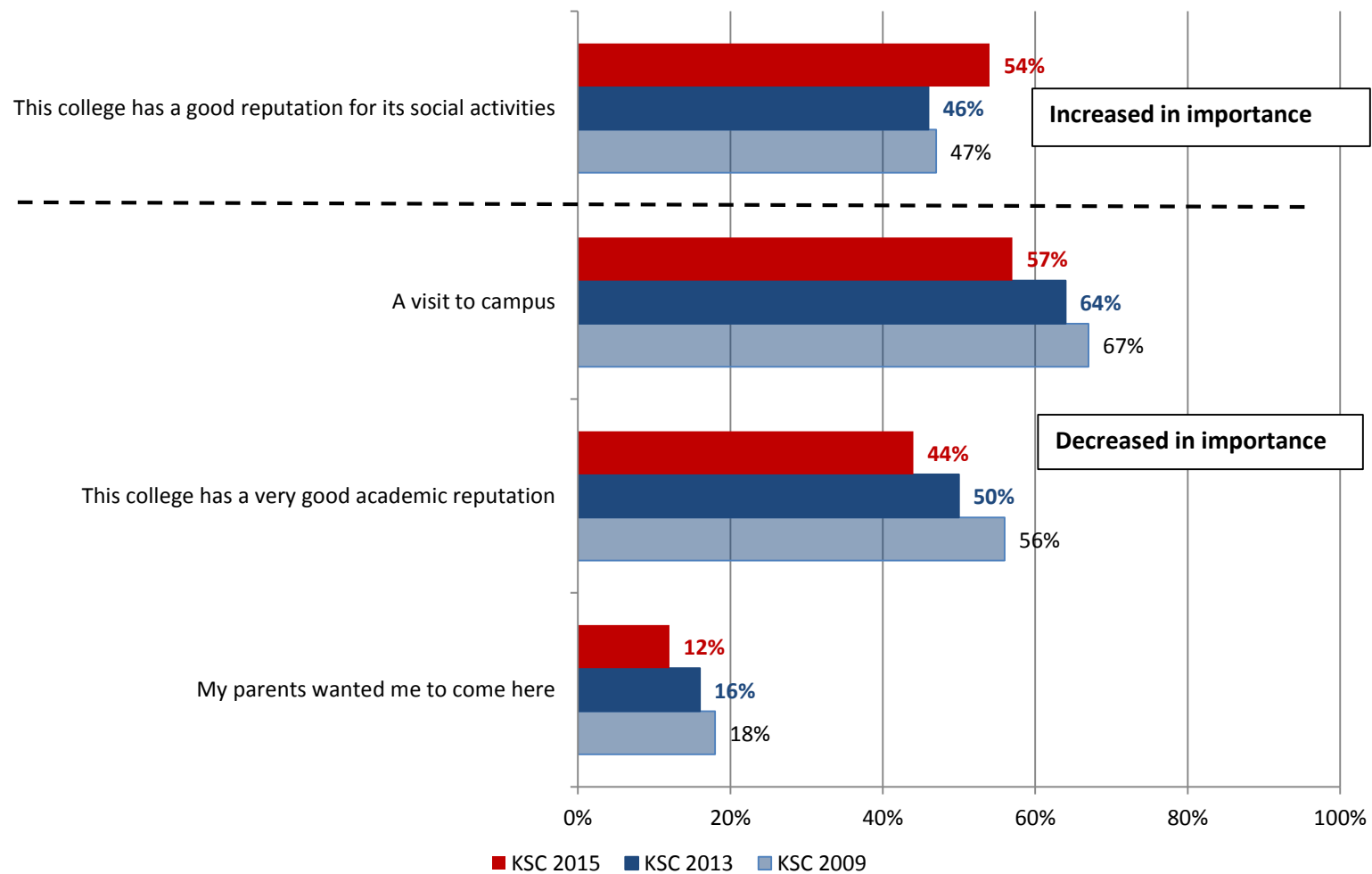
The number one reason that KSC students give as “very important” for choosing Keene State College is their campus visit, just as in 2013. This is a much more important reason for KSC students than for students at other institutions nationally (57% vs. 36%). The table on page 4 displays all the reasons that 10% or more of KSC incoming students identified as “very important” in their choice to enroll here, with comparisons to national data for four-year public institutions.

There have been marked changes in the responses of KSC students to these items in the past two years. Given the downturn in admission yield for 2015, it is important to understand how the motivations of KSC students may have changed over time. The table on page 5 shows those reasons for choosing KSC that have changed the most over the past three administrations of CIRP at KSC. (KSC began administering CIRP every two years in 2013. Prior to that, the most recent administration was in 2009.) As this table shows, the importance of the College’s reputation for social activities has increased, while the importance of the campus visit, the College’s academic reputation, and parental recommendations have declined as reasons to select KSC over other institutions. The graph on page 6 shows the national comparison data on these same factors for public four-year institutions for every year from 2009 through 2014. As this graph shows, the national data have been relatively steady in this period, with no notable trends, either up or down.

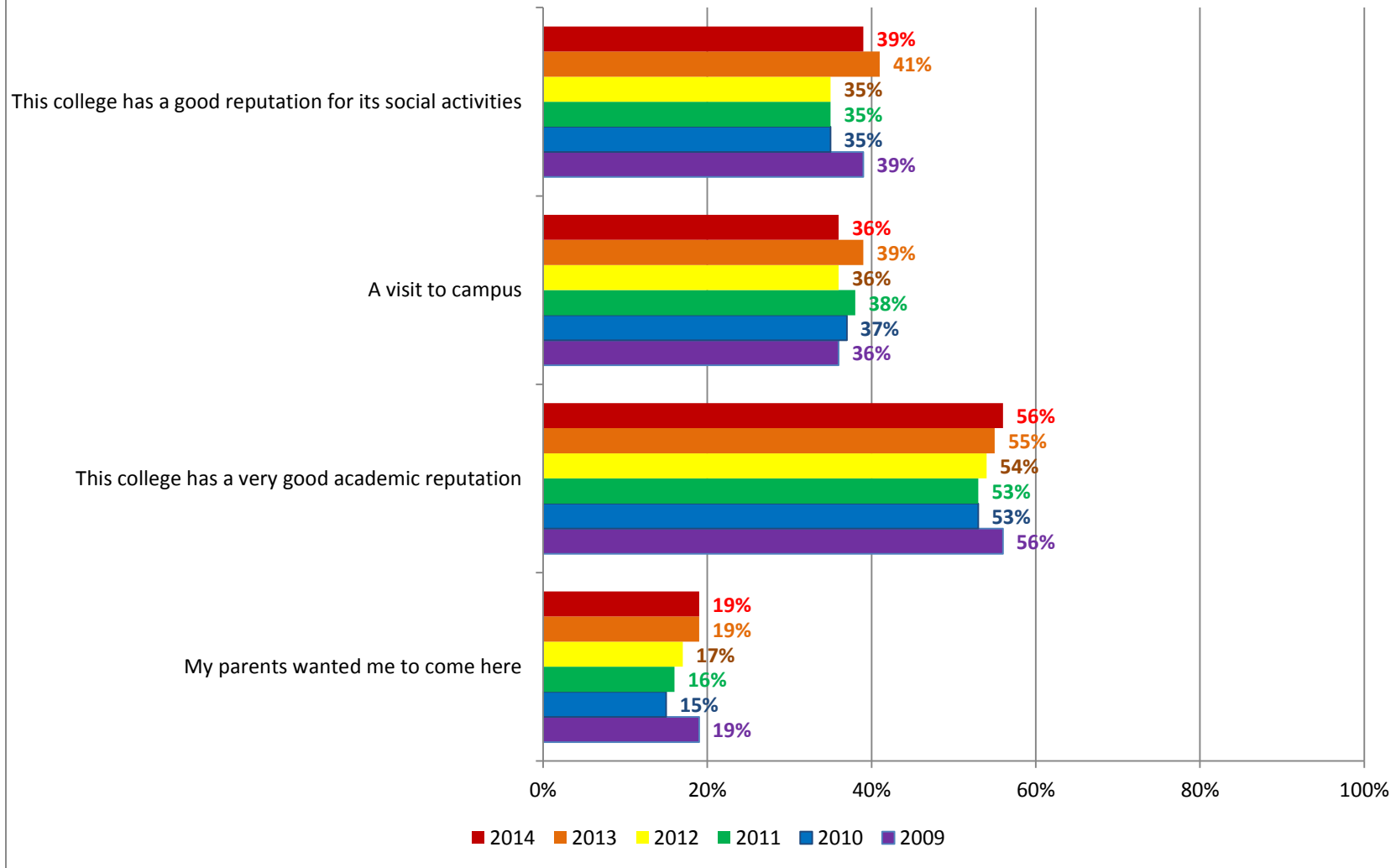
**"Very Important" Reasons to Choose This College
(KSC vs. National Norms)**



Changes in "Very Important" Reasons to Choose KSC, 2009-2015



**"Very Important" Reasons to Choose a Particular College, 2009-2014
Public Four-Year Colleges Nationally**



REFERENCE

Eagan, K., et al. (2014). *The American freshman: National norms, fall 2014*. Los Angeles: UCLA Higher Education Research Institute. (Available at: <http://www.heru.ucla.edu/monographs/theamericanfreshman2014.pdf>)