

Abstract

Sustainability is a concept with rising importance for colleges all over the globe. SUNY Oneonta is no exception as they have implemented numerous sustainable initiatives, with many more anticipated in the future. The purpose of this research is to assess the student awareness of Sustainability Initiatives at SUNY Oneonta, as well as explore comparisons between other SUNY schools. One component of the study consists of a student-survey of a variety of majors across schools to determine their awareness of campus sustainability initiatives. The authors surmise that only a small number of students outside of the natural science/ENVS majors and introductory science classes will be aware of sustainability initiatives. Through interviews with other SUNY schools, more information and ideas on how to spread awareness on each campus and within the SUNY system can be discovered. The information obtained from this study can be of use for the college, to assess effectiveness of current initiatives and to find new methods of dispersing relevant information to the student body.

Introduction

- How aware are students of the sustainability initiatives on campus?
- Is there a correlation between student awareness and their major or time enrolled at SUNY Oneonta?
- Do students want to be more involved with sustainability practices on campus?
- Future ideas to connect students and sustainability

Procedure

Survey of Student Body:

- 325 students, 14 majors, from all 5 schools
 - 2-4 majors from each school
 - Majors chosen have the greatest number of students in their respective school
- Introductory and Upper level classes from each major
- Online survey given out through email or Blackboard
- Paper survey given in class

Interviews of Sustainability Coordinators:

- 6 SUNY schools, including Oneonta
 - Cortland, Fredonia, Binghamton, Albany, Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF)
- Basic set of 10 questions, either over the phone, or in person

References and Acknowledgements

Cloos, A. (2016, March 18). Personal Interview.
 Elmore, M. (2016, March 21). Personal Interview.
 Klein, B. (2016, March 9). Personal Interview.
 Mallia, M.E. (2016, March 23). Personal Interview.
 Morgan, H. (2016, February 4). Personal Interview.
 Poisson, A. (2016, February 5). Personal Interview.

This work was supported by the Student Grant Program for Research and Creative Activity. Thank you to the Committee on Research for your support.

Student Awareness of Sustainability Projects on Campus

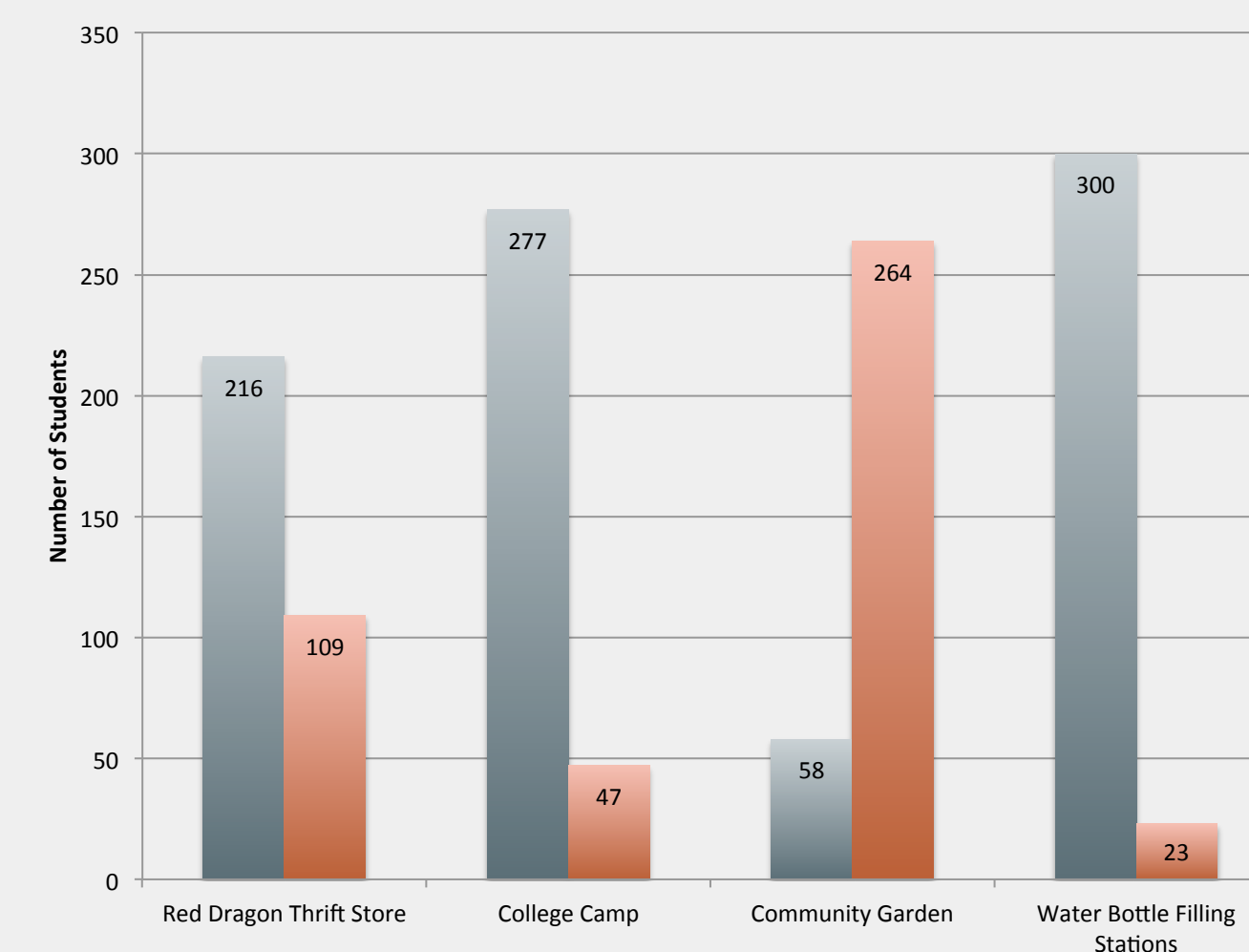
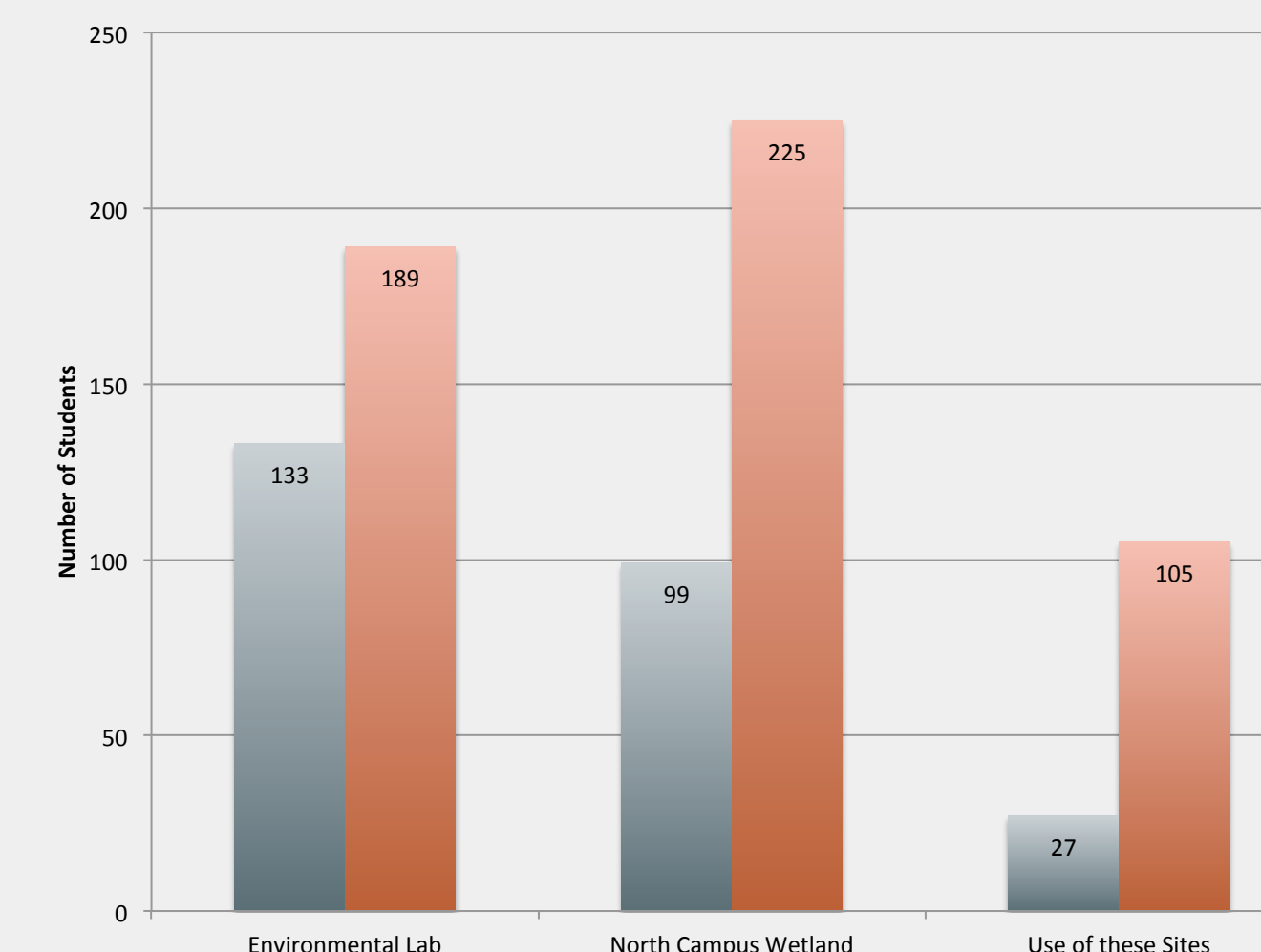


Fig 1. The number of students that are aware of different sustainability projects taking place on SUNY Oneonta's campus.

Student Awareness of Sustainability Projects on Campus



How Information for the Wetlands and Environmental Lab was Made Accessible to Students

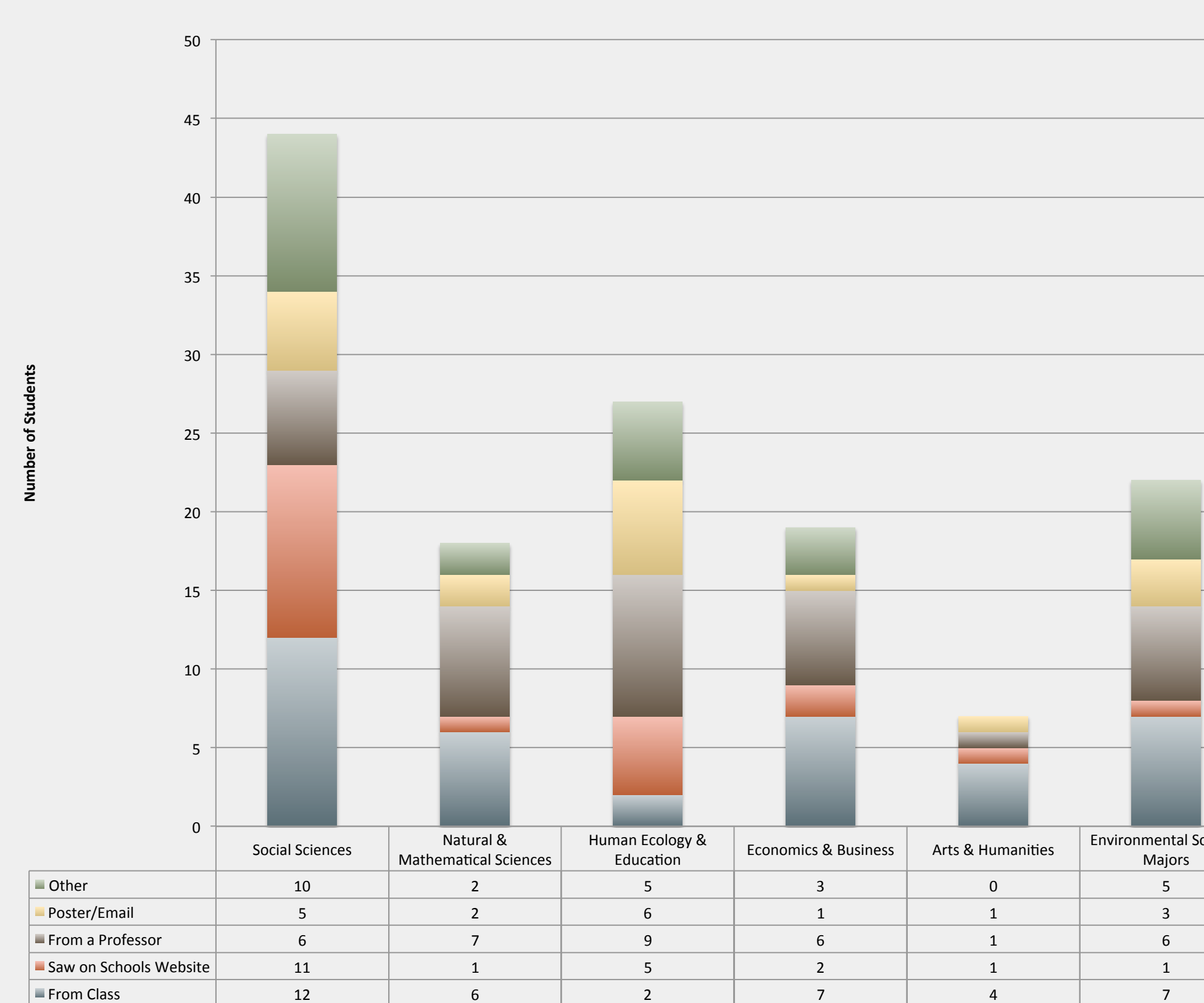


Fig 2. Ways in which the students have received information about the North Campus Wetlands, and the Environmental Lab behind Golding Hall. This information is broken down between the five schools, and Environmental Science majors.

Student Involvement

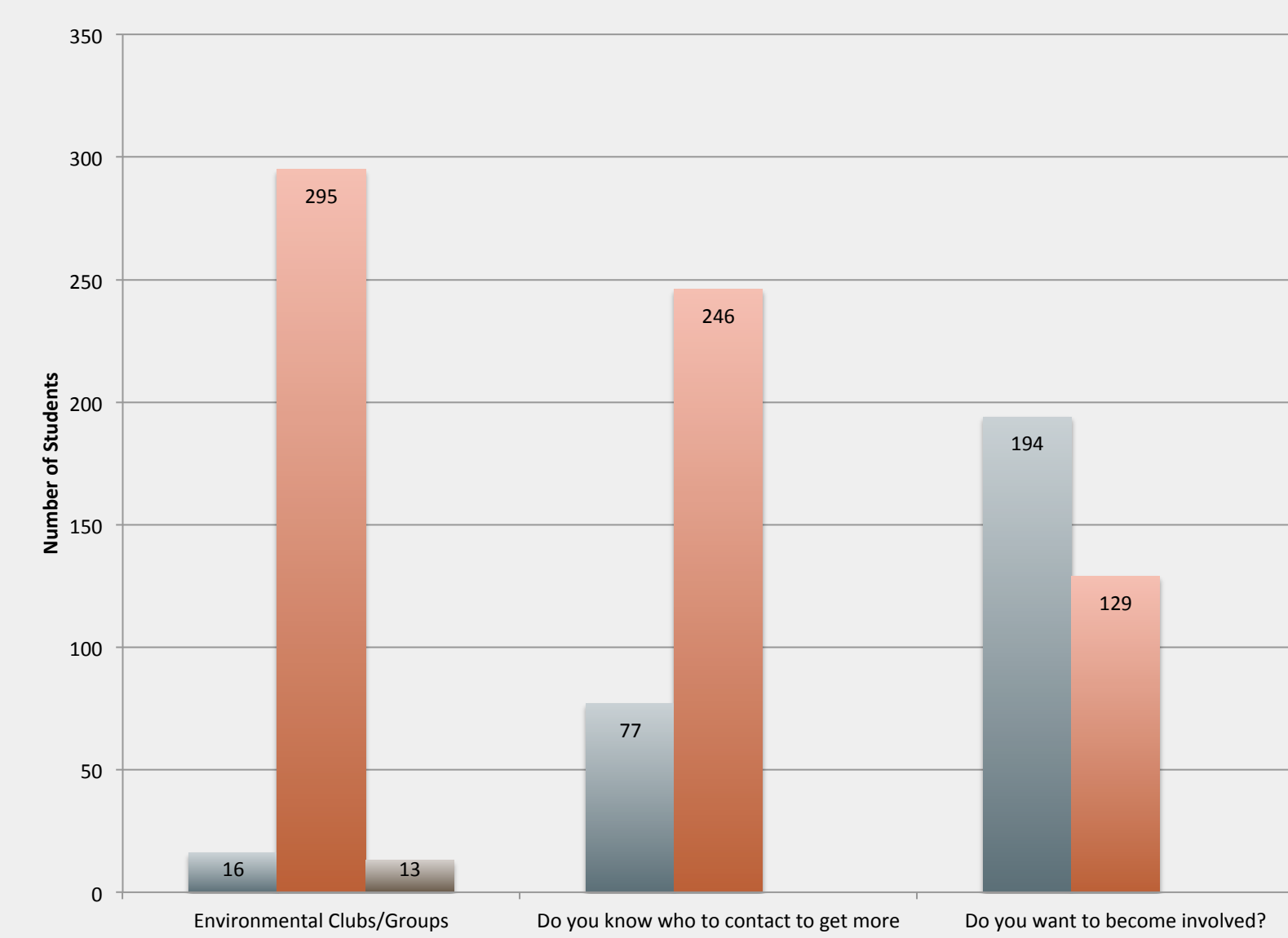


Fig 3. The first column represents the number of students who are in one or more of the environmentally focused clubs on campus. The second column represents the number of students who know who to contact to get more information, while the third column represents the number of students who wish to become more involved.

Do you know who to Contact for Sustainability Information?

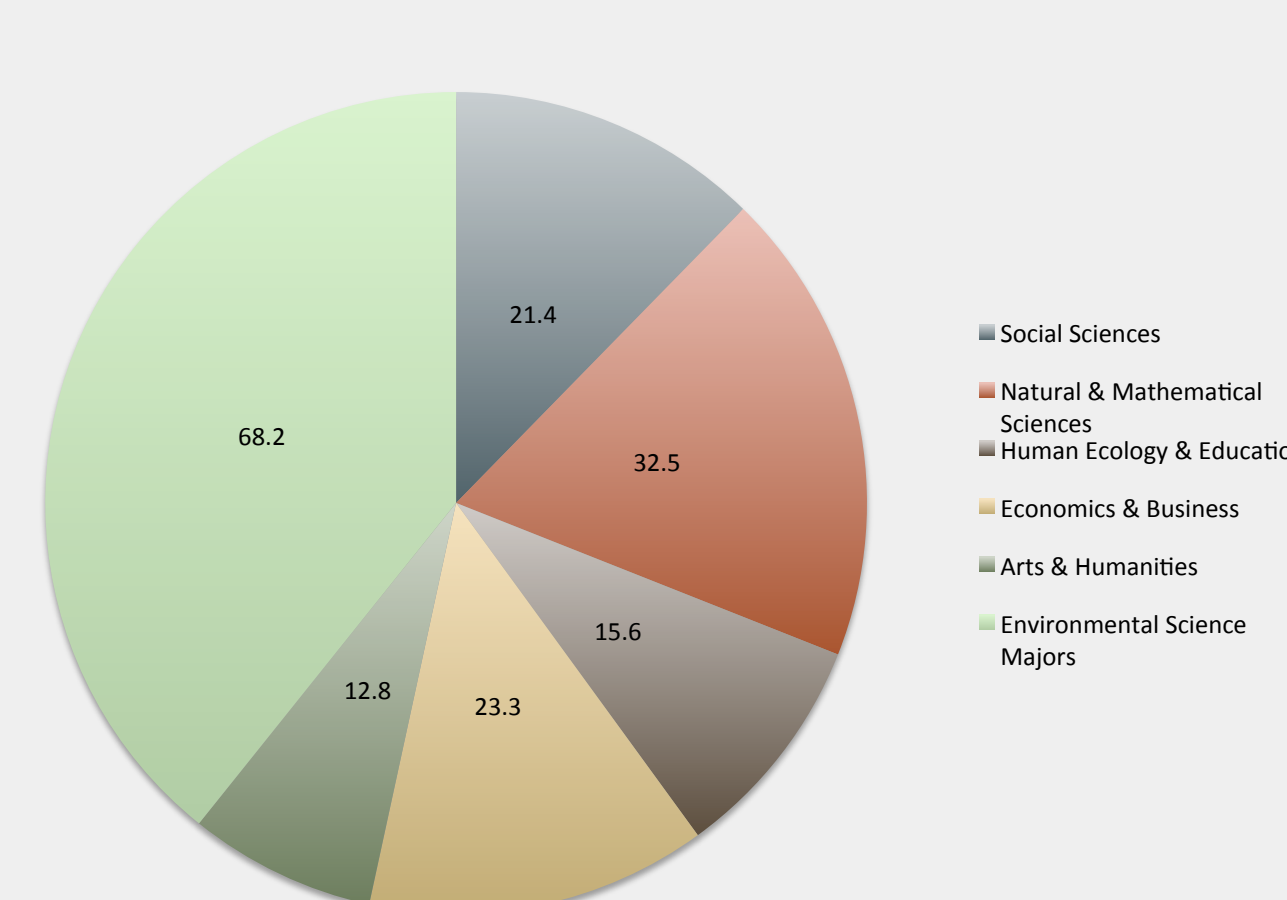


Fig 4. The percentage of students, by school, who know who to contact to become more involved.

Breakdown of the Students who Wish to be More Involved, by School and Time Enrolled at Oneonta

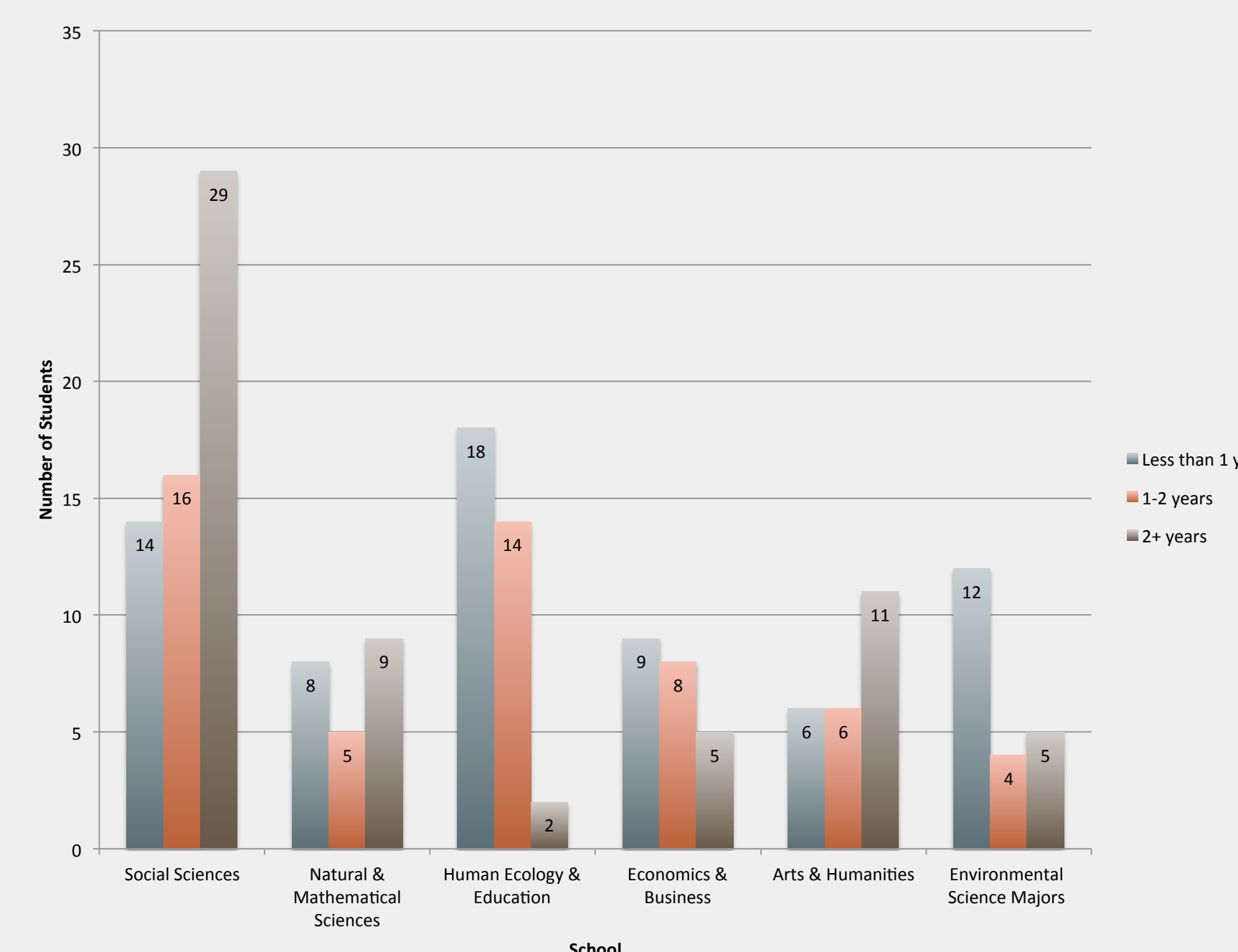


Fig 5. The number of students who would like to be more involved, by school, and years enrolled at SUNY Oneonta.

Results

- 41.5 % of students know about Oneonta's Sustainability Website
- 64.1% of students who knew about either the North Campus Wetland or the Environmental Lab behind Golding Hall have never visited it
 - Only 20.5% of students know the use of these sites
 - 54% of students received information about these sites in class or from a professor
- 92.9% of students know this campus has water bottle filling stations
 - 88.9% of students use reusable water bottles
- Each of the five schools have over 51% of their students that wish to be more involved
 - 68% of Environmental Science students and 32.5% of Natural and Mathematical Science students know who to contact to become more involved
 - The four other schools: Less than 25% of their students have knowledge of who to contact to become more involved
- 81.8% of Environmental Science students have talked about sustainability initiatives in class
 - Less than 20% of students in all five schools have talked about sustainability initiatives in class

Conclusion

- A greater number of Environmental Science students have been given information about sustainability practices on campus
 - Professors teaching in the classroom, higher involvement in clubs and groups on campus
- Majority of students from all schools would like to be involved but do not know who to contact, or where to get this information from
- Environmental Students have much higher awareness of strictly science related sustainability projects (North Campus Wetland, Environmental Lab)
- Natural and Mathematical Science students did not possess a greater awareness or involvement than those from the four remaining schools
- Oneonta is on track to having high student awareness, but would benefit from an increase of information availability given out to students

Future Ideas

- Green Day Passport during Green Week (Cortland)
 - Stamps for every event attended
 - Win prizes depending on how many events attended
- Newsletter for entire SUNY system (ESF)
 - Very general, keep everyone informed
 - Great mix of competition and collaboration
- Green leaf on course catalog to show class has sustainability/ environmental aspects (Fredonia)
 - Course has to meet a standard to get an indicator
- Trashion Fashion (Albany)
 - Fashion show with recycled materials for your outfit
 - Get students from all majors involved
- Program between different departments (Binghamton)
 - Students take courses from the opposite disciplines
 - In Binghamton's case, Engineering and Environmental Science