

FIRST-GEN CAREER MENTORSHIP PROGRAM



BOSTON COLLEGE
Career Center
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

The program was launched in 2020 as an initiative to engage first year first generation students in career exploration. We received IRB approval to conduct a longitudinal study to assess the impact of the intervention.

The study is primarily an email intervention. Upon enrollment, students are split into three randomly selected groups. Students in the first group are assigned a staff mentor, those in the second group a peer mentor, and those in the third serve as a control. All students receive the same regular, personalized emails, outlining relevant opportunities and resources. Students with assigned mentors receive the emails from their mentors while the control group receives the email from "the Career Center" as opposed to an individual.

Assessment methods to evaluate the intervention include a pre-and post-survey taken before and immediately following the academic year as well as engagement data extracted from the Handshake platform.

STUDY QUESTIONS

- Does having an assigned career mentor through a yearlong program positively influence a first gen student's engagement with the Career Center (as measured by attendance at events/programs and frequency of coaching appointments)?
- Is there a difference in engagement trends for students assigned to a staff vs. peer career mentor?
- Does the intervention influence students' confidence in exploring careers, comfort in interacting with the Career Center, and knowledge of available services and resources?

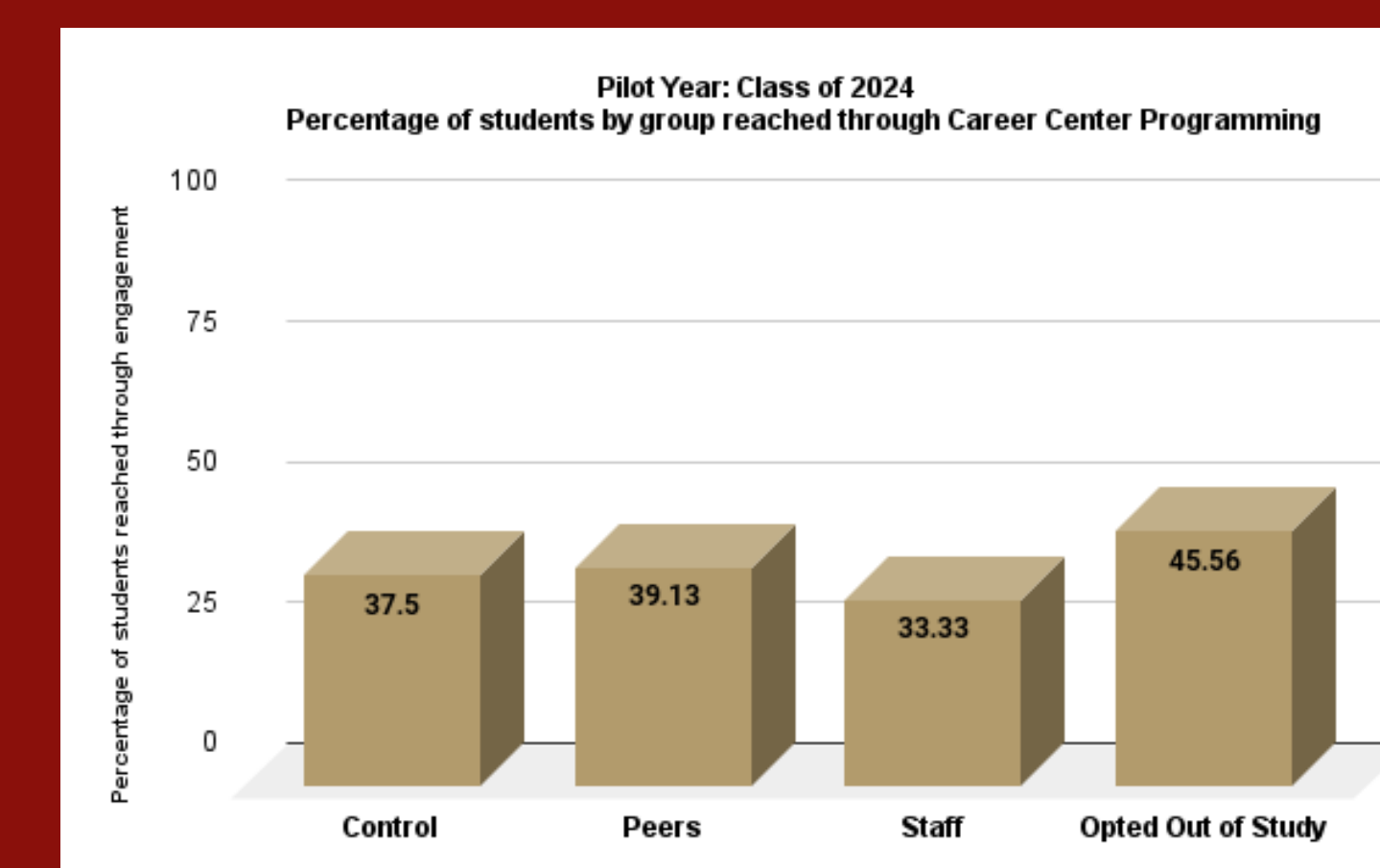
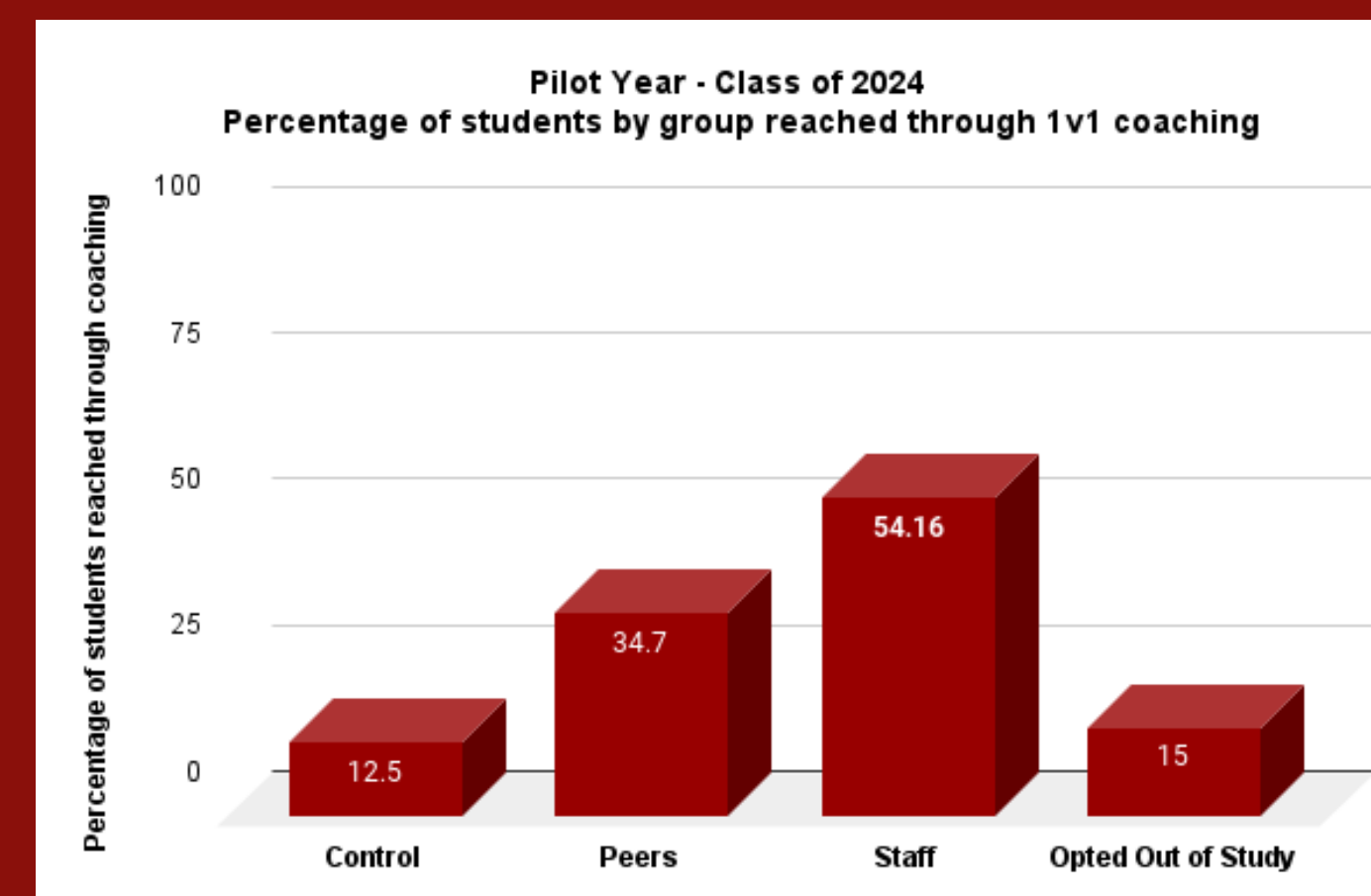
PRELIMINARY RESULTS

- Having an assigned mentor seems to positively influence a student's participation in 1v1 coaching; impact on program participation isn't as clear
- Students assigned to staff are more likely to engage in coaching than those assigned to peers or no mentor, while those assigned to peers are more likely to engage than those in the control group
- The intervention positively impacted students' confidence with regards to career exploration services and resources.

PILOT YEAR: CLASS OF 2024 COHORT

CAREER COACHING

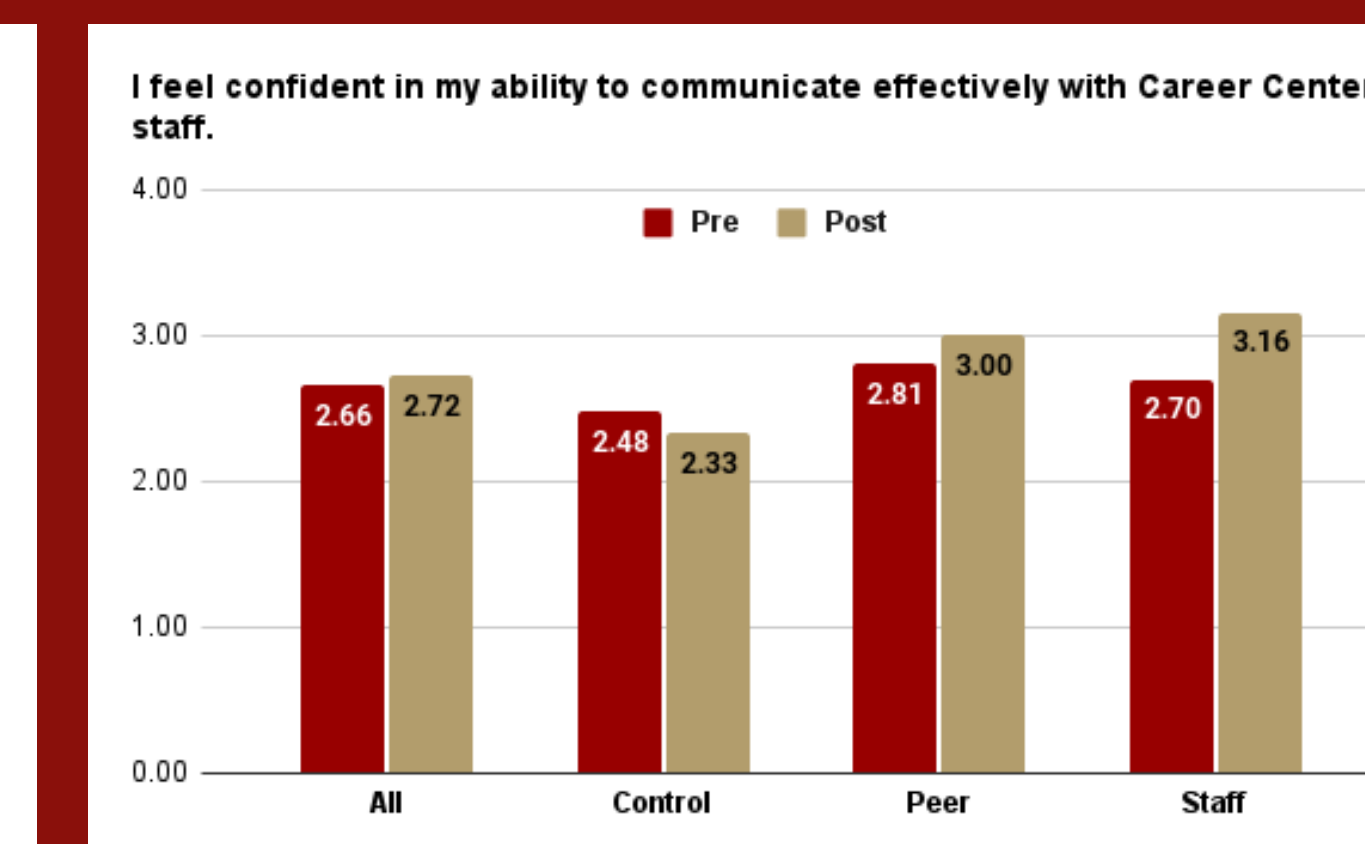
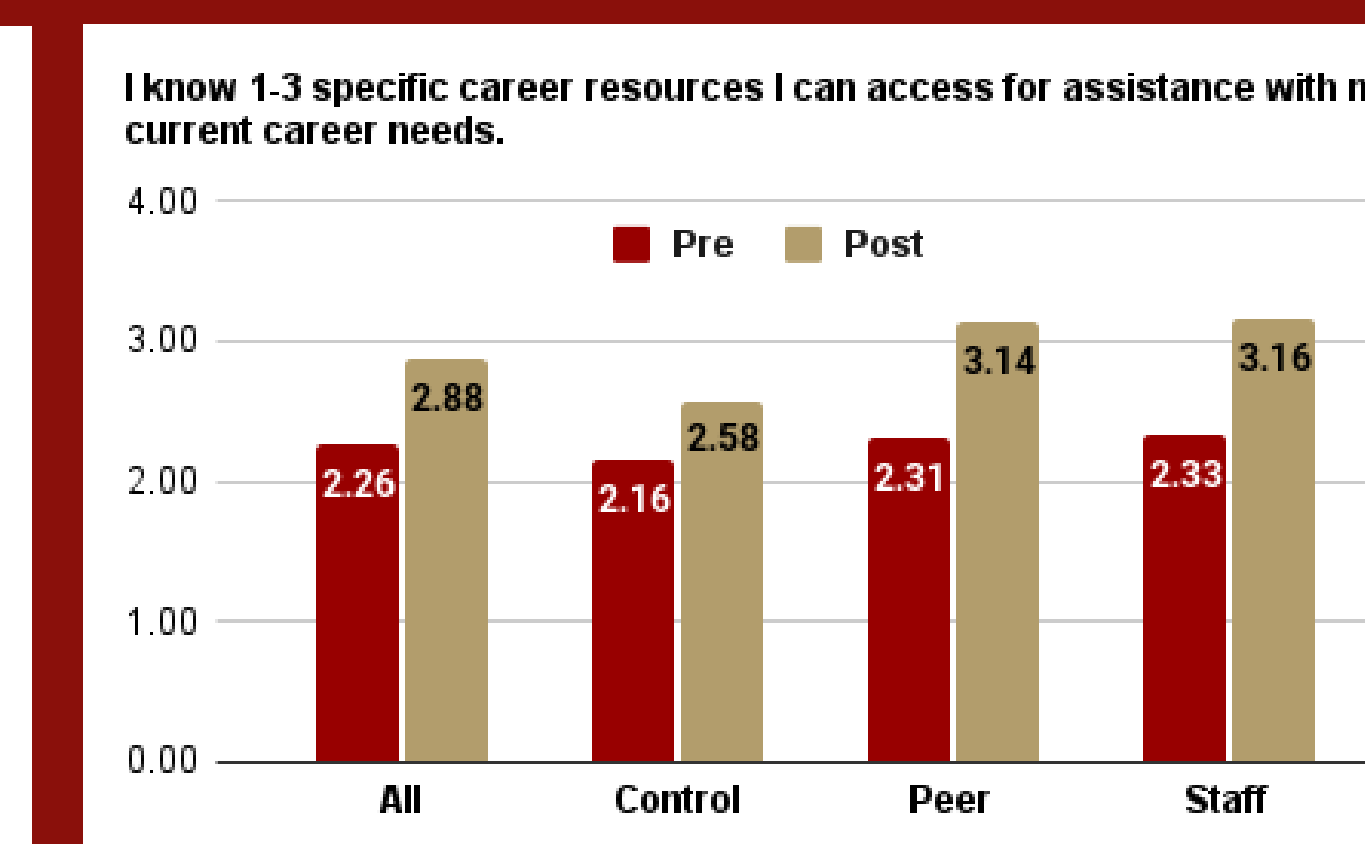
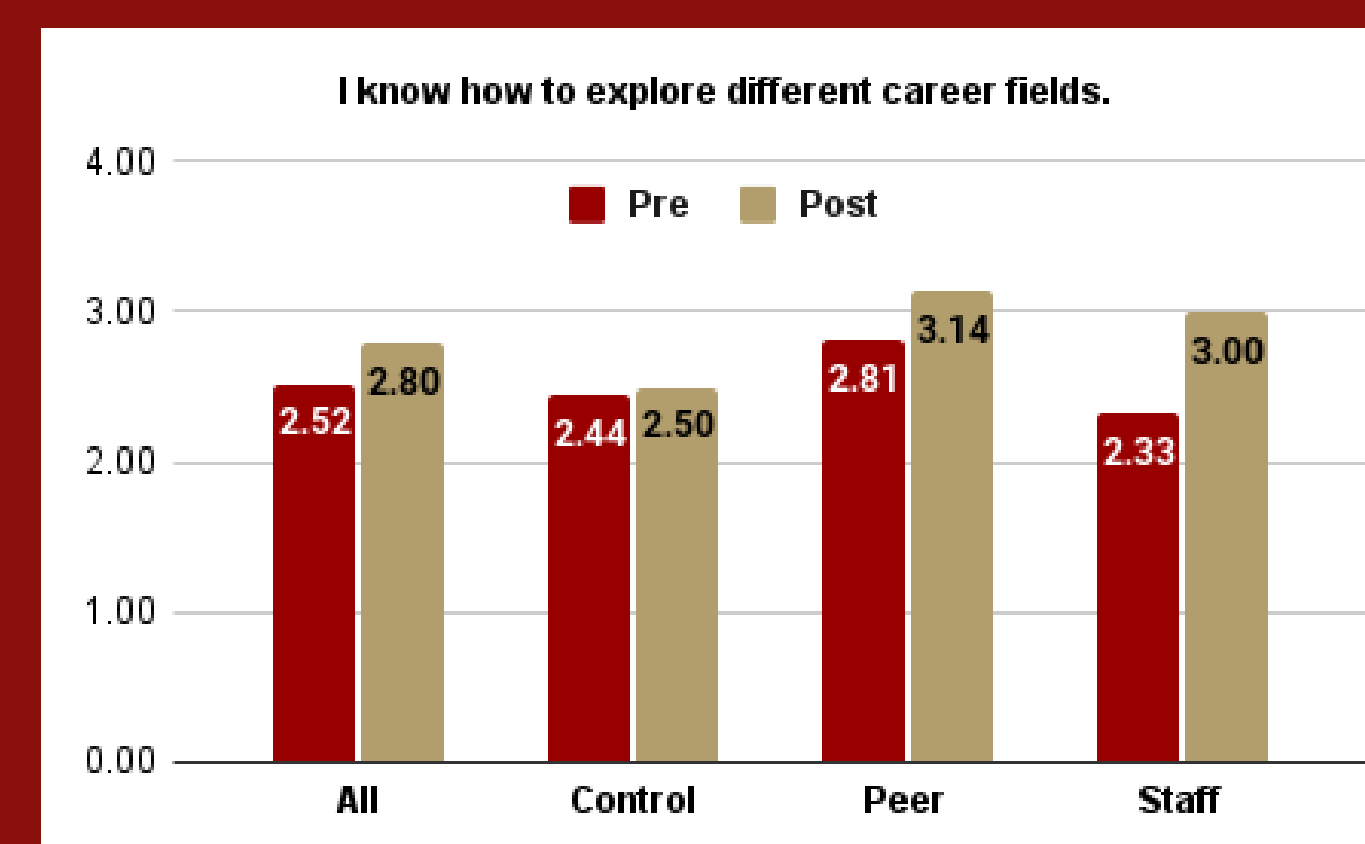
Students paired with staff mentors were most likely to seek 1v1 career coaching, followed by those with peers, those not in the study, and those in the control group.



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Interestingly, students who opted out of the study were more likely to attend a Career Center event with students assigned to peer mentors being the second most likely, followed by the control group, and those with staff mentors.

LEARNING OUTCOMES



There was an increase in confidence from the pre to the post-survey for all study groups for all questions with two exceptions: students in the control group reported slightly lower confidence with regards to knowing their next steps in career discernment and in their ability to communicate effectively with Career Center Staff. Students with an assigned mentor saw greater increases in confidence for all questions than those in the control group.

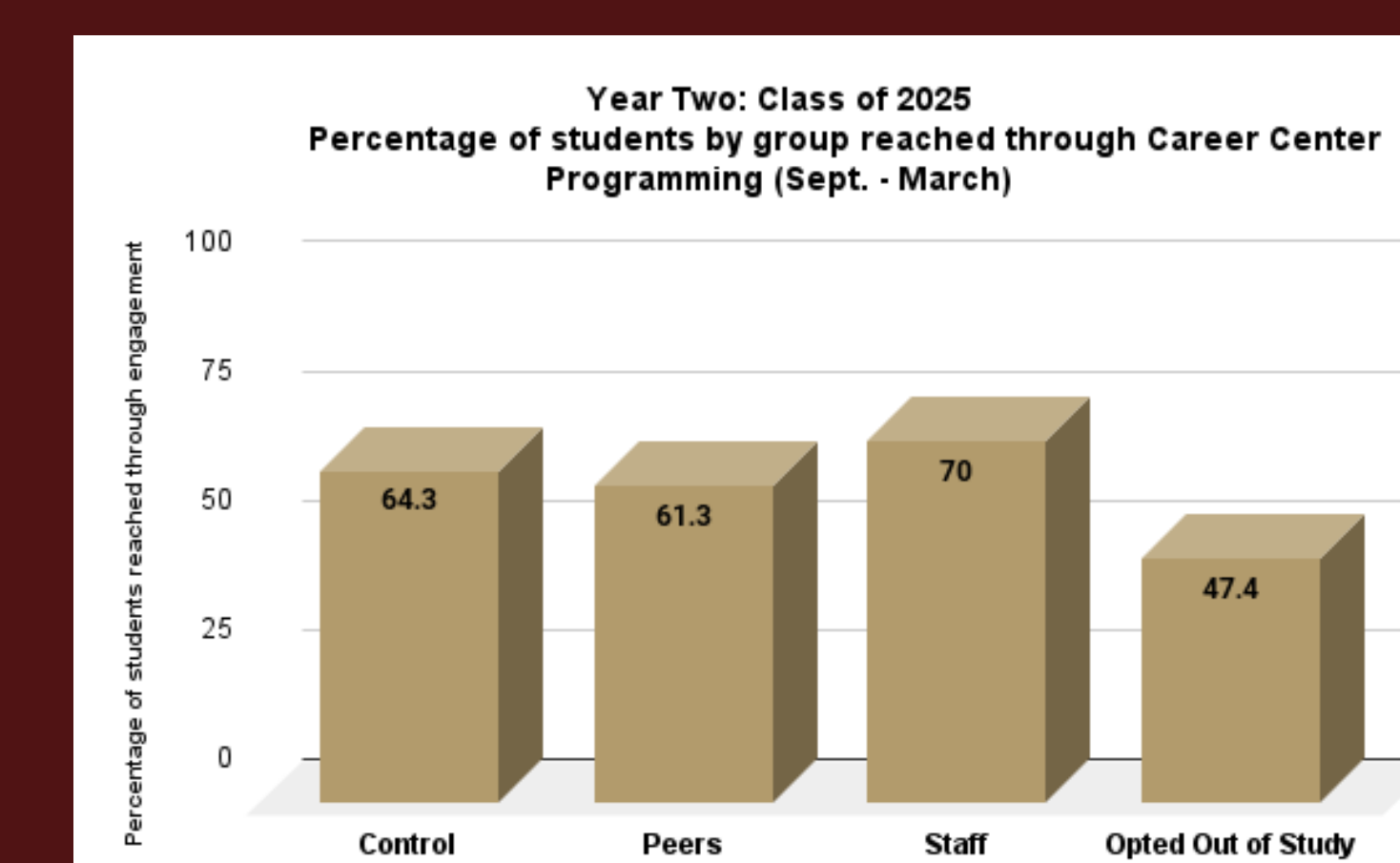
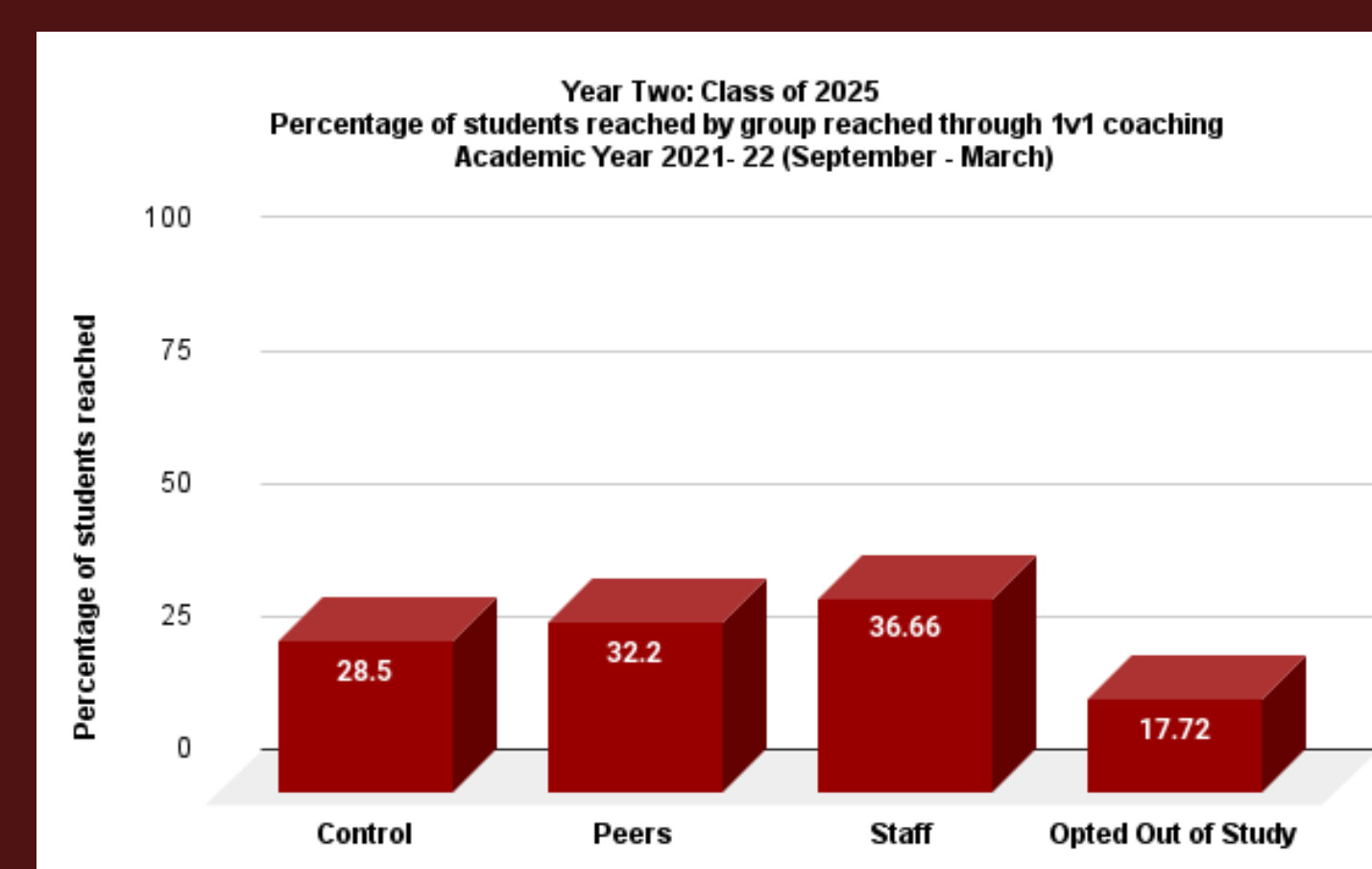
CHANGES MADE AFTER YEAR ONE

- Based on program participants' lack of engagement with voluntary Career Center programming during the pilot year, we were more intentional about emphasizing the importance of these opportunities with regards to career exploration through the email communication.
- Additionally, we've encouraged program participants to attend group programming (e.g. having peer mentors create opportunities for FGCMF participants to attend an event together) and have further personalized email communications by including more photos and videos.

YEAR TWO: CLASS OF 2025 COHORT

CAREER COACHING

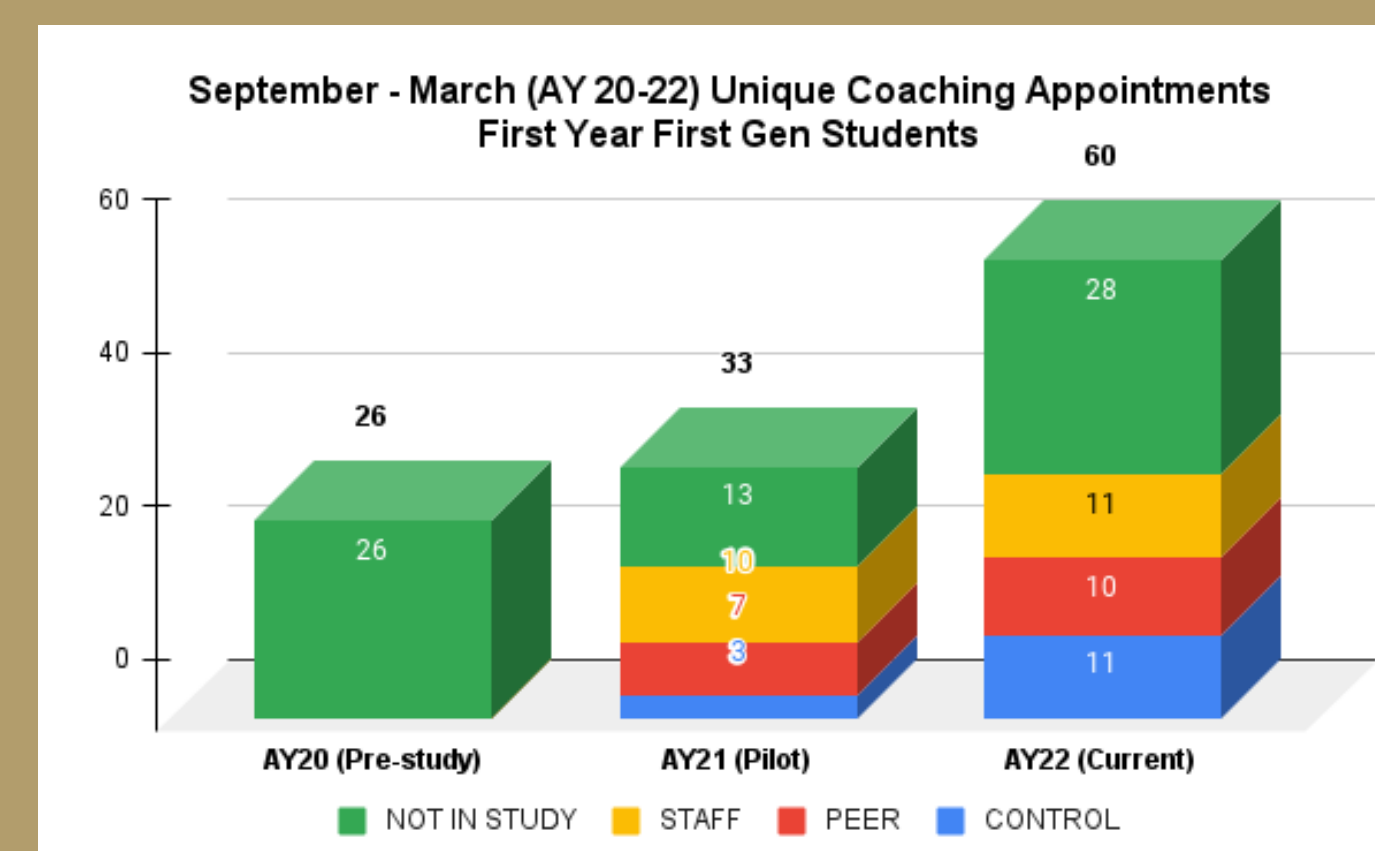
Once again, students paired with staff mentors were most likely to seek 1v1 career coaching, followed by those with peers, those in the control group, and then those who opted out of the study.



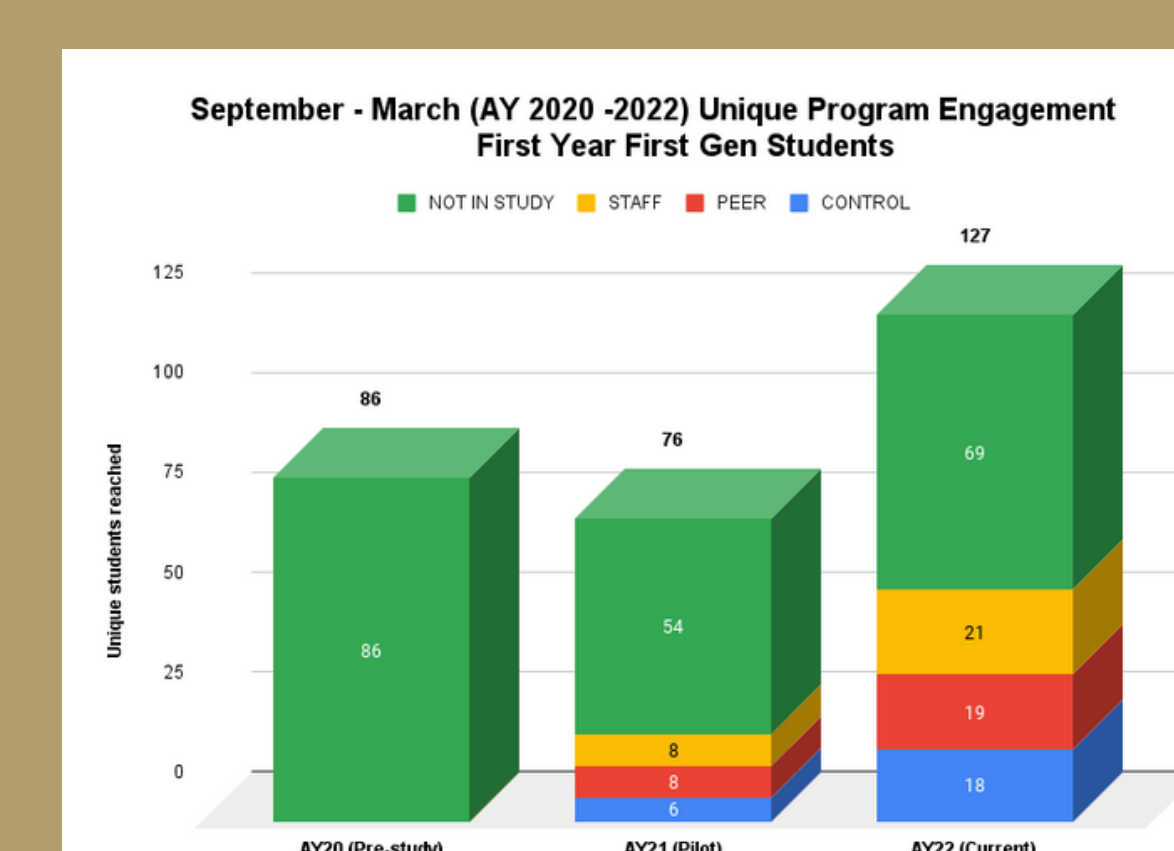
PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

Differing from year one, students paired with staff mentors were most likely to engage in Career Center programming, followed by those in the control group, those in the peer group, and then those who opted out of the study.

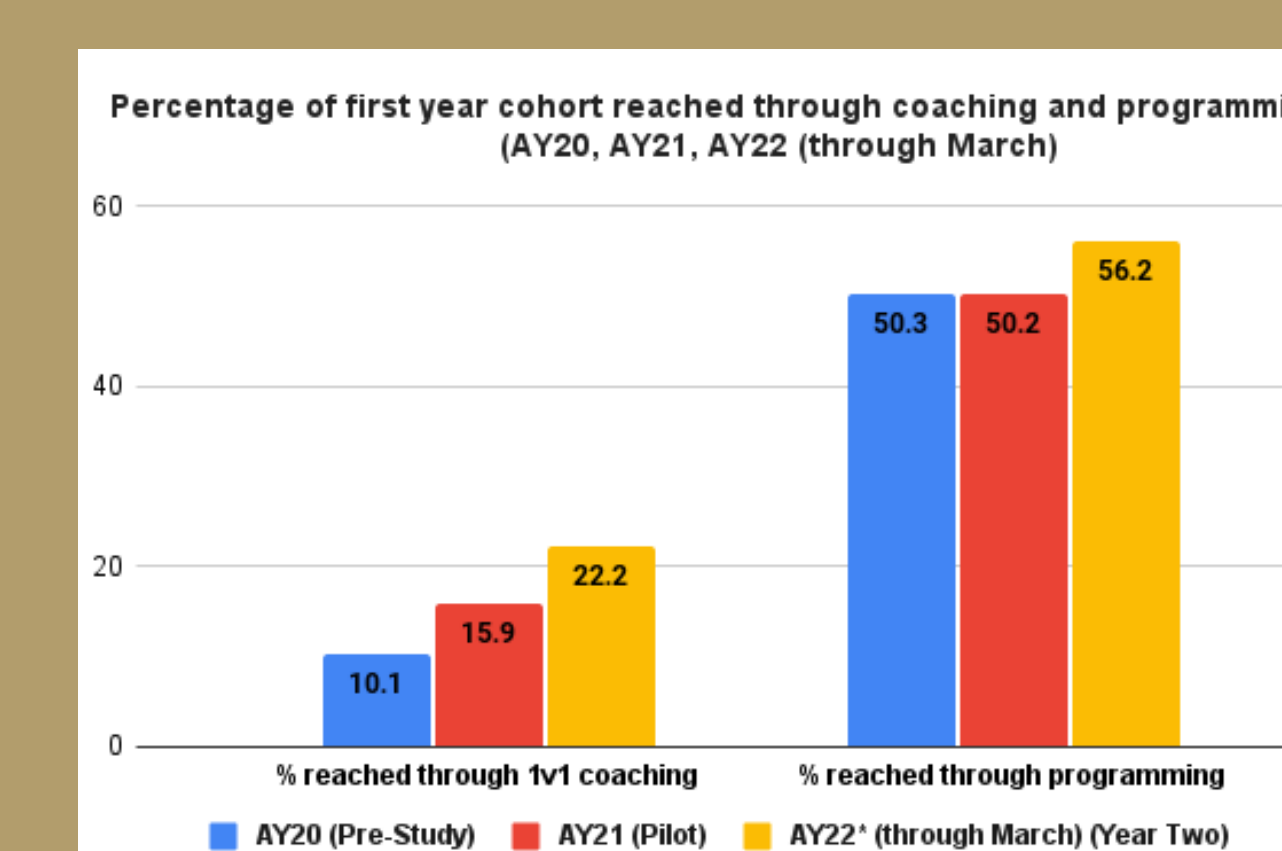
THE IMPACT OF THE INTERVENTION OVER TIME



130.7%
increase in unique students reached through career coaching since 2020



47.6%
increase in unique students reached through Career Center programming since 2020



6.2%
increase in the percentage of cohort reached through coaching since 2020
12.1%
increase in the percentage of cohort reached through programming since 2020

