

2025 Prelaw Advisor Landscape Study





Acknowledgments

LSAC is pleased to share the results of a more than one-year process studying the advising community. It wouldn't have been possible without the contributions of many colleagues and collaborators across our community.

At LSAC, **Val Cecconi** and **Pranita Sharma** provided invaluable support in developing the survey instrument and managing our vendor, **Emerging Strategy**, which conducted the survey and provided early findings that shaped the direction of this final report. **Noah Austin** contributed careful copy editing as we neared completion. **Connie Ballou**, **Nataliya Efimova**, and **Maya Russell** (Furman University) helped make sure we reached as many advisors as possible. **Natalie Ivory** ensured we made the most of our external panel of experts reviewing the survey instrument. That panel consisted of the members of LSAC's 2024–25 Prelaw Advisory Council, along with **Megan Pickens** (University of Illinois) and **Chris Shortell** (Portland State University) from the PLANC board, and was complemented by the internal expertise of **Eric Peterson** and **Gisele Joachim**. The feedback we received about the instrument strengthened the study.

Finally, this report would not have been possible without the advisors who generously gave their time to participate. Your insights and candor will positively affect the advising community for years to come.

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Foreword

As prelaw advisors, you occupy an important position in higher education and the legal profession. You guide people through one of the most consequential decisions of their lives — whether to pursue a law career — along with where to apply, how to present themselves as applicants, and where to attend. Many of you are the only prelaw advisor on your campus and face significant institutional constraints, not to mention state and federal policy shifts that affect your work. Yet you show up for your advisees, year after year, because you believe in their potential and understand the stakes.

We designed this landscape study to accomplish four goals: understand trends and changes facing the prelaw advising profession; provide baseline information, so you can see how your work compares to that of your peers; analyze professional development opportunities; and support strategic planning for organizations serving the prelaw advising community.

But beyond these research objectives, we want this report to be useful to you. Use these findings to make your case. When you need to advocate for more time, more funding, or other institutional support, the data can strengthen your argument. When you're deciding where to focus limited capacity, the data can guide your priorities. When you're feeling isolated or uncertain, know that advisors across the country face similar challenges — and that the profession is building the infrastructure to support you better.

The findings have already begun shaping how LSAC supports prelaw advisors. We're launching a new financial aid training that will run annually each spring, expanding our professional development offerings, and using these insights to refine content for prospective law students. We're just scratching the surface of how we'll use this information, and we're committed to working with PLANC, regional advisor organizations, and others in the advising ecosystem to translate these findings into meaningful support.

Thank you for the work you do. Thank you for responding to this survey and sharing your experiences. Thank you for showing up for law school aspirants who need informed, thoughtful guidance as they consider their futures. This report documents where the profession stands in 2025. Where we go from here depends on all of us working together.



Kyle McEntee
Senior Director, Prewlaw Engagement
LSAC



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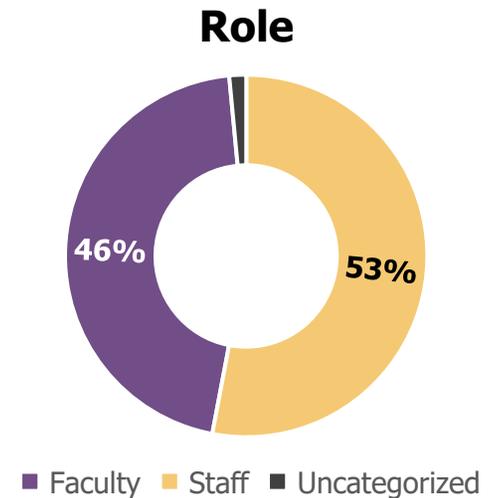
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Survey Sample and Coverage

Survey responses covered a wide range of advisors at four-year institutions. The **200** respondents represent **15%** of four-year universities in the LSAC system. The institutions represented by survey respondents account for **30%** of 2025 1Ls. For the purposes of this report, respondents who report a faculty appointment count as faculty and respondents who report only an administrative role count as staff. **One in five** advisors has an administrative role. The rate is the same for staff and faculty.

Professionals at four-year colleges who do prelaw advising vary by university role, experience, and responsibilities. Just **10%** of staff prelaw advisors are exclusively housed in a prelaw advising office. While **four in five** staff advisors selected one department, the most common overlap was pre-professional and career services. Of the **46%** of advisors who hold a faculty appointment, **nine in 10** are full-time faculty and **three in four** are tenured or tenure-track.

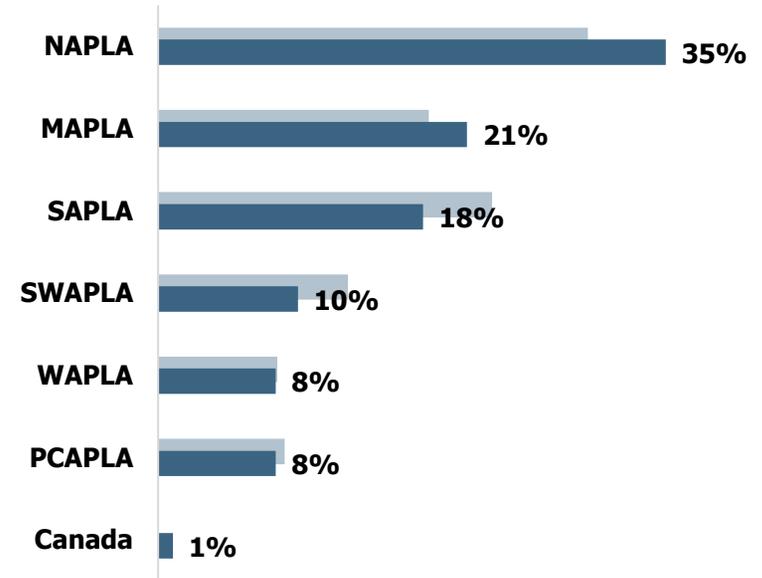
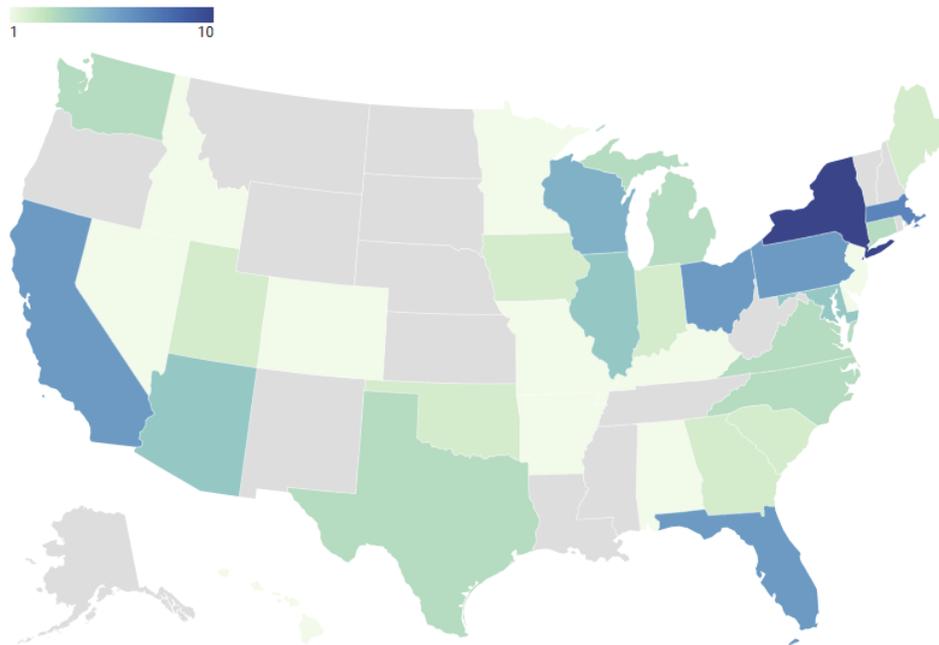




Survey Responses Geographically Representative

Demographics

We received responses from **35** states and Washington, D.C. The NAPLA and MAPLA regions were slightly overrepresented among respondents compared with the number of advisors by region in the LSAC prelaw advisor database, whereas SAPLA and SWAPLA were slightly underrepresented.



■ Share of LSAC Database ■ Share of Responses

Top States: New York, Massachusetts, and California

The regional percentages are based on all U.S. prelaw advisors in the LSAC system. For regional definitions, see the [Appendix](#).



Full-Time Prelaw Advisors Are the Exception

Full-time prelaw advising is not a common job, but for many prelaw advisors, the work does take a significant amount of their time. Advising duties vary by institution and by advisor, but most of the work is accomplished with individual students and small groups. This word cloud illustrates that variety.



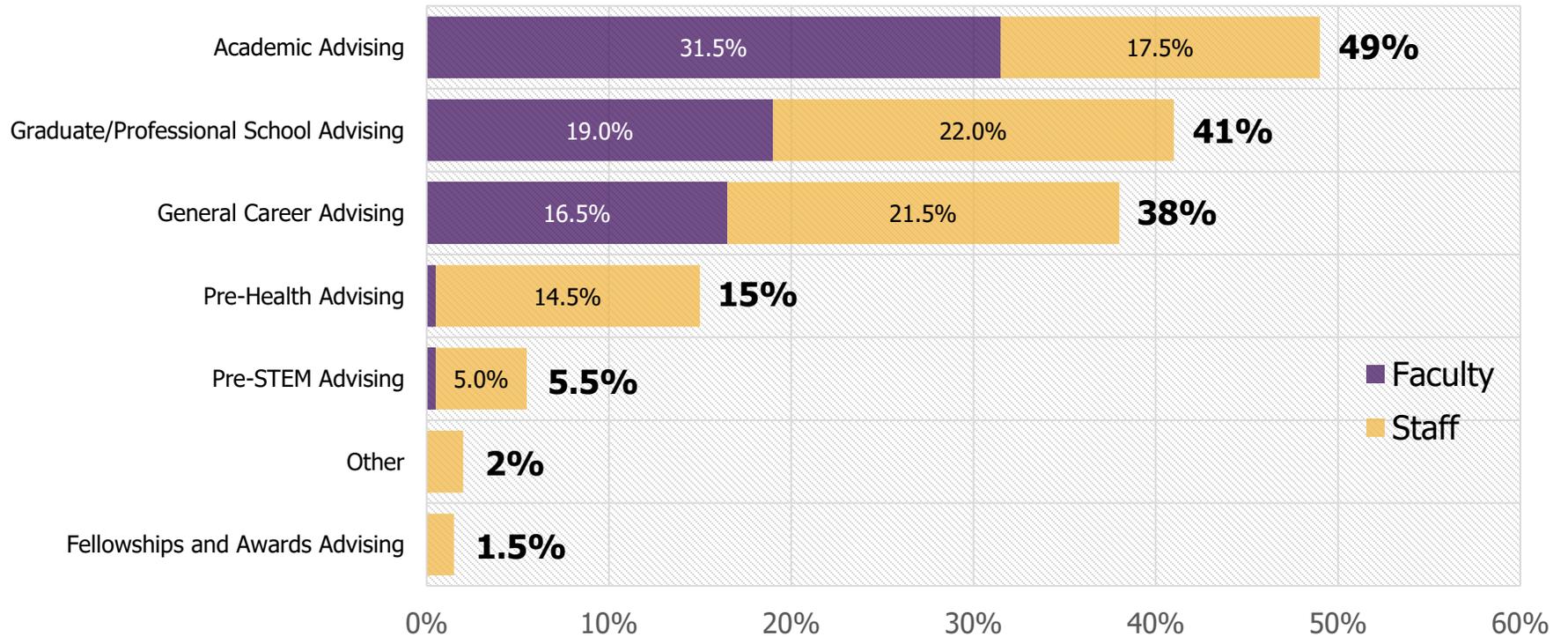
Time Spent Advising





Prelaw Advisors Juggle Multiple Advising Roles

The vast majority of prelaw advisors have additional on-campus duties. Among staff advisors, **18%** do solely prelaw advising (**9.5%** of all advisors), while the remaining **82%** have at least one additional advising duty. Among faculty, **76%** have at least one more advising duty in addition to prelaw advising. Faculty are significantly more likely to do academic advising and less likely to do pre-health or pre-STEM advising, while staff are slightly more likely to do general career advising.



Each horizontal bar shows a duty, split by advisor type. The segments represent percentages of all advisors. Together, these two bars add up to the total share for that advising area. For example, **49%** of prelaw advisors (**31.5%** + **17.5%**) also do academic advising.



Advanced Degrees Nearly Universal Among Advisors

As professionals who advise about professional education, prelaw advisors unsurprisingly have a very high rate of advanced degrees (**96%**). The rate of advisors with a law degree is also rather high, at **37%**, although going to law school does not make someone an expert about getting into or succeeding in law school. While faculty are a little more likely (**100%** vs. **92%**) to have any advanced degree compared with staff, faculty are nearly twice as likely (**45%** vs. **25%**) to hold a law degree.



Advanced Degree

100%

Faculty

vs.

92%

Staff



Law Degree

45%

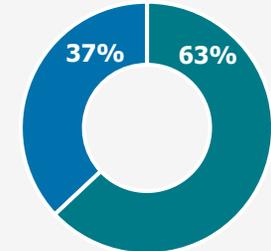
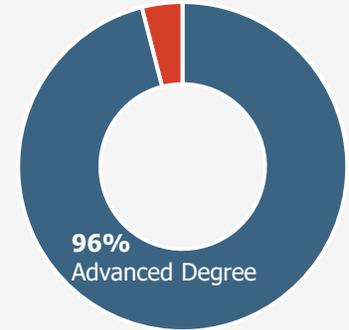
Faculty

vs.

25%

Staff

All Advisors

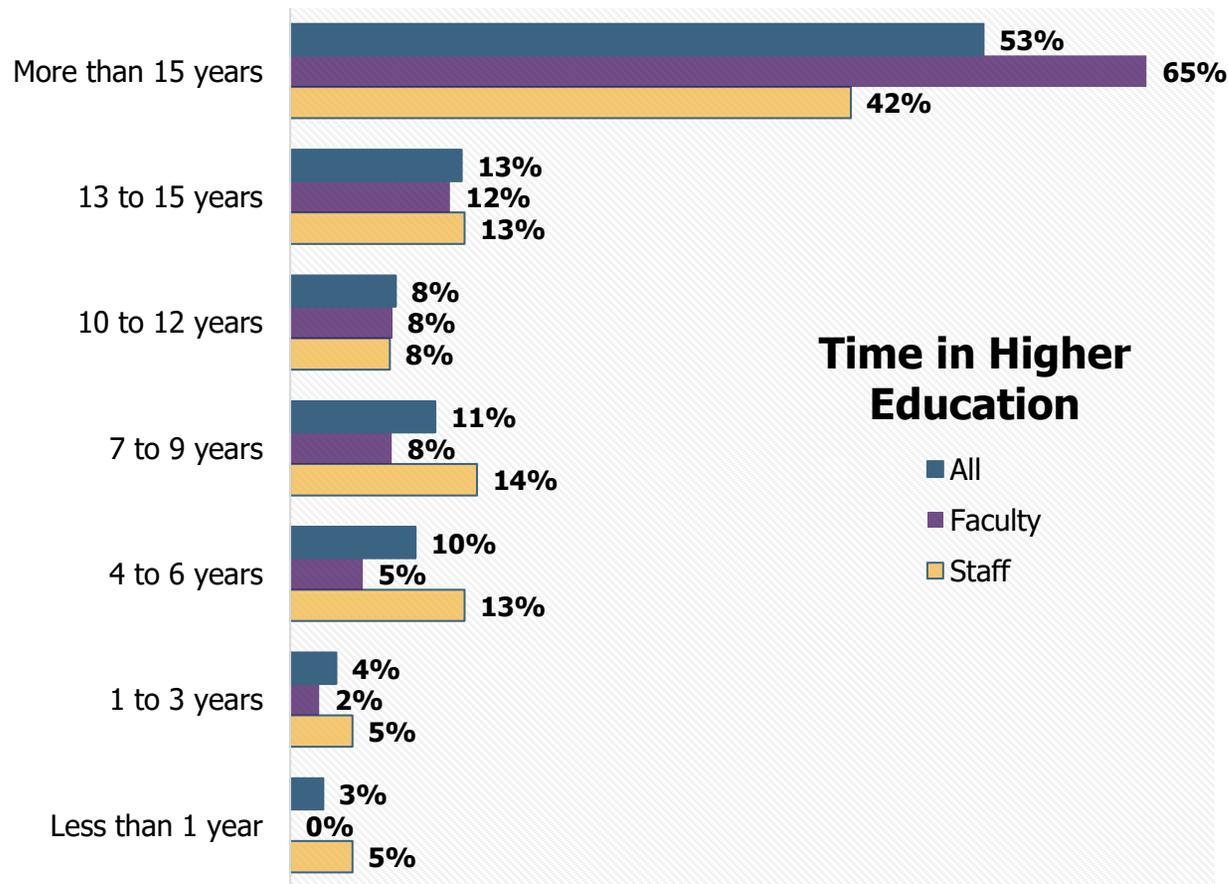


■ Law Degree ■ No Law Degree



New to Prelaw Advising, Not New to Higher Education

While **33%** of prelaw advisors have less than four years of prelaw advising experience, only **7%** of prelaw advisors have less than four years of any higher education experience. However, **53%** of advisors have more than 15 years in higher education, with **65%** of faculty members having that much experience in higher ed.



Experience in prelaw advising

- **33%** with 0-3 years
- **29%** with 4-9 years
- **37%** with 10+ years

26% of staff have 10 or more years of prelaw experience, compared with **51%** of faculty.

48% of staff have three or fewer years of prelaw experience, compared with **17%** of faculty.

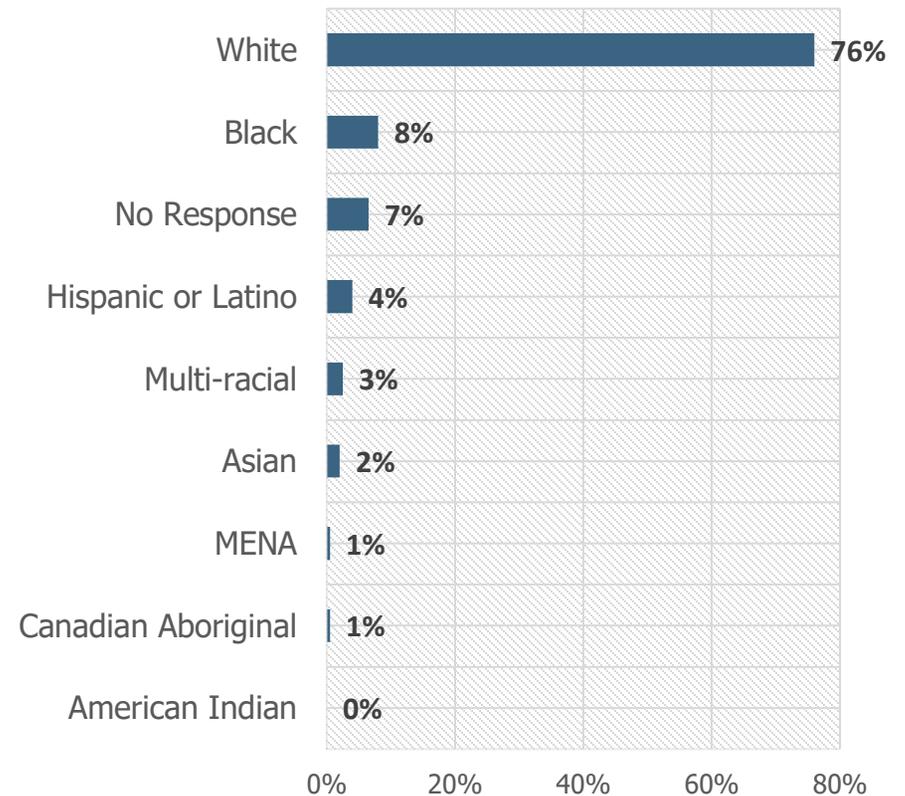
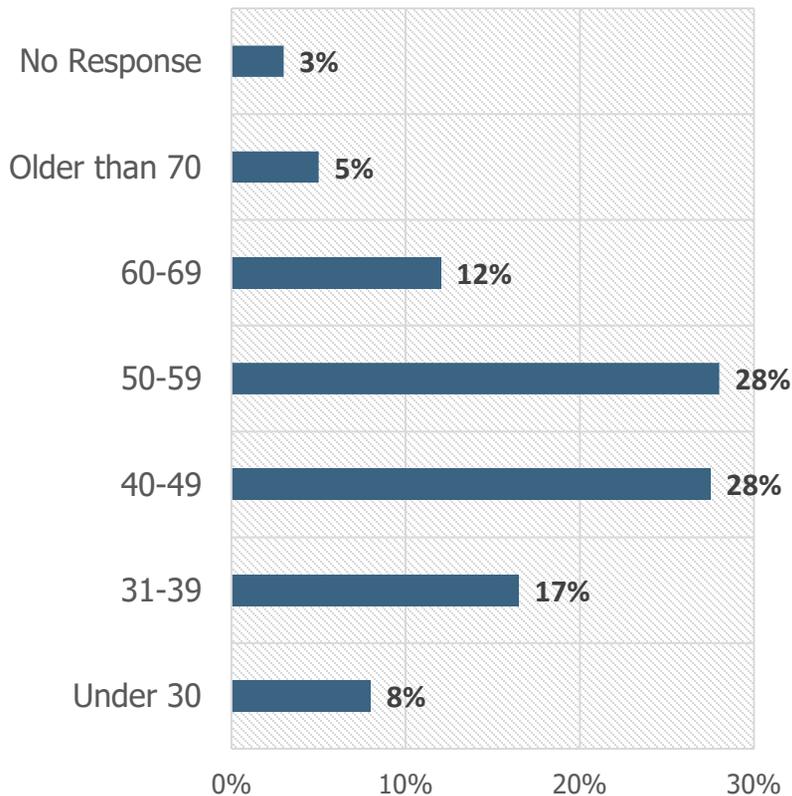
63% of advisors have less than 10 years of experience in prelaw advising, while just **28%** have less than 10 years of experience in higher education.



Age and Racial Diversity Inversely Related

Demographics

Just over **one in two** advisors in our sample were under 50 years old, while nearly **one in five** were racially diverse (of those who responded). However, younger advisors are much more racially diverse. **One in four** advisors under 50 is racially diverse, compared with **one in nine** advisors over 50. In total, **three in four** racially diverse advisors were under 50.



The survey instrument did not allow selecting more than one option, so people wrote in "multi-racial." We corrected the data with the write-ins, but we may be underestimating multi-racial respondents.



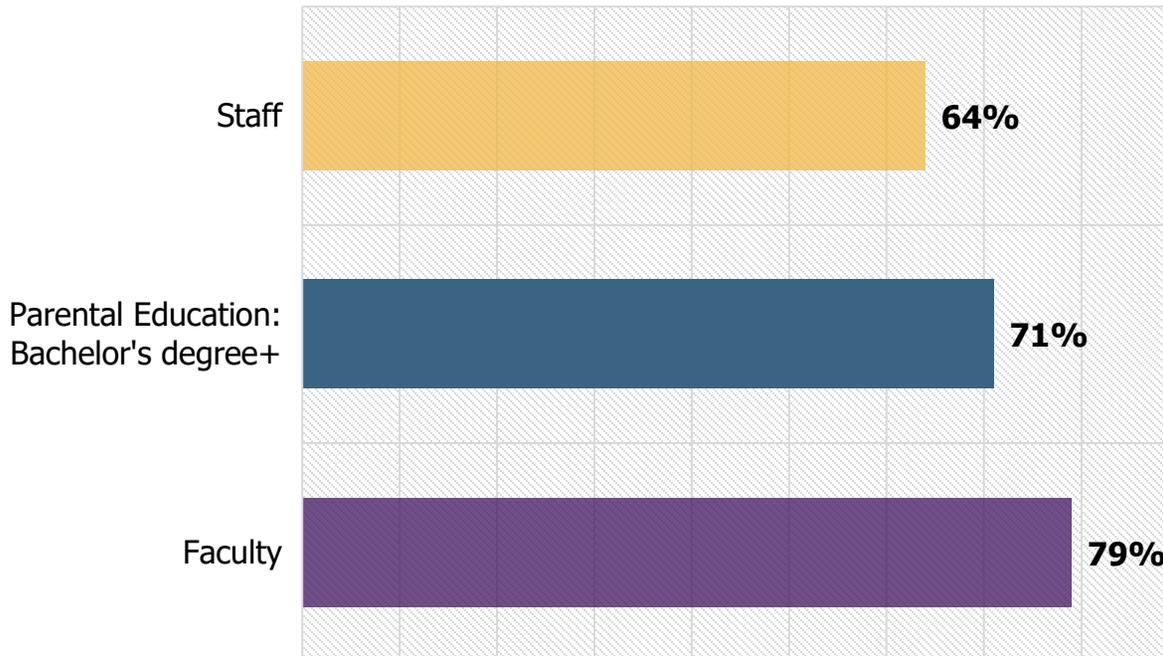
Parental Education Varies by University Role

Parental education serves as a proxy for socioeconomic background and mobility. The overall percentage of all sampled advisors who are first-generation college graduates (**29%**) is the same as that of first-generation college graduates who applied to law school during the **2024-25 application cycle (29%)**. Staff prelaw advisors are more likely to be first-generation college graduates than are faculty prelaw advisors (**64%** vs. **79%**). First-generation advisees often face different challenges than their peers, especially related to navigating unfamiliar institutional systems, which first-generation advisors may recognize from their own trajectories.

Regional Differences

WAPLA		56%
NAPLA		62%
SWAPLA		74%
PCAPLA		75%
MAPLA		79%
SAPLA		86%

The largest contrast in parental education is between the WAPLA (**56%**) and SAPLA (**86%**) regions. This difference is not driven by a greater concentration of faculty in the SAPLA region compared with the WAPLA region. For regional definitions, see the [Appendix](#).



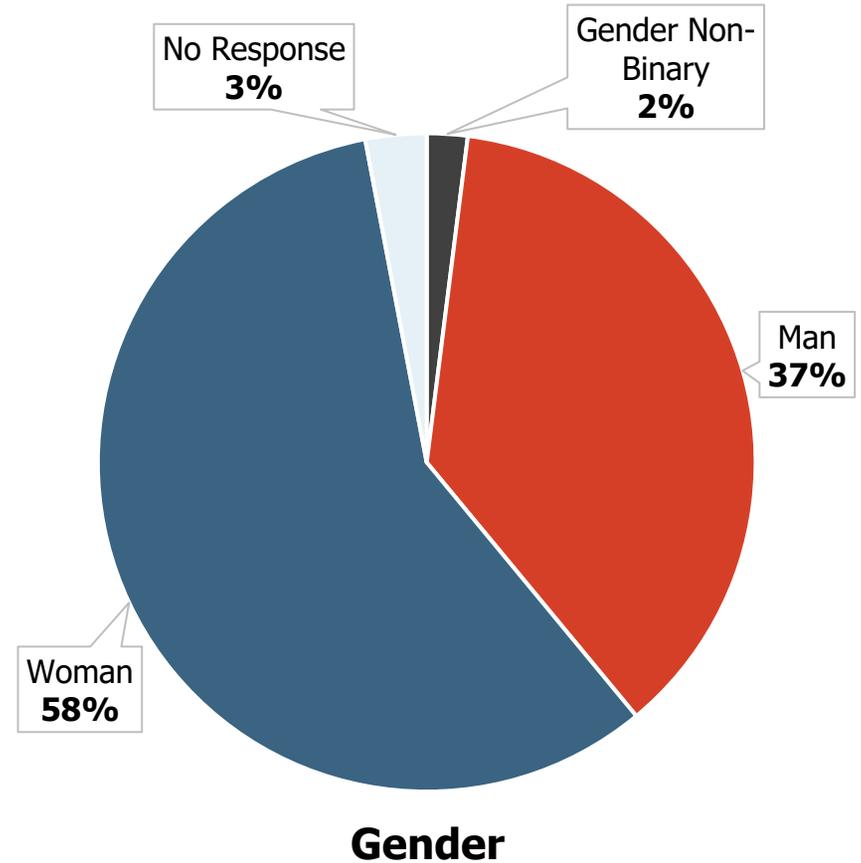


Women Constitute a Solid Majority of Advisors

While **58%**, a clear majority, of prelaw advisors are women, the difference is driven by staff advisors: **71%** of staff advisors are women, while **24%** are men, **3%** are non-binary, and **2%** declined to identify. Faculty advisors, on the other hand, are mostly men (**53%**); **44%** are women, and **3%** declined to identify.

The gender gap between women and men is smaller for those with a law degree:

	Non-Law Grad	Law Grad
Men	34%	43%
Women	60%	54%
Non-binary	3%	0%
Declined to Identify	3%	3%

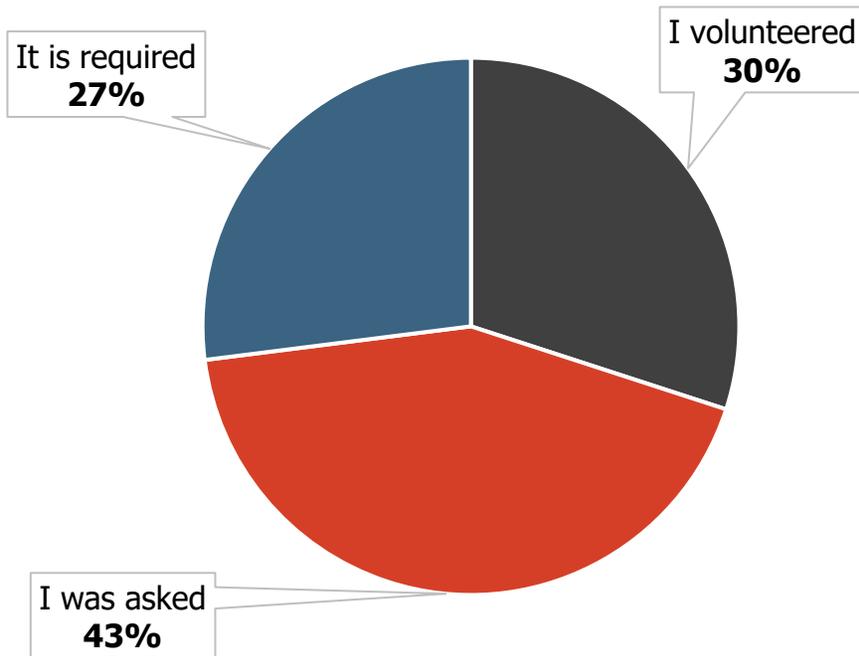




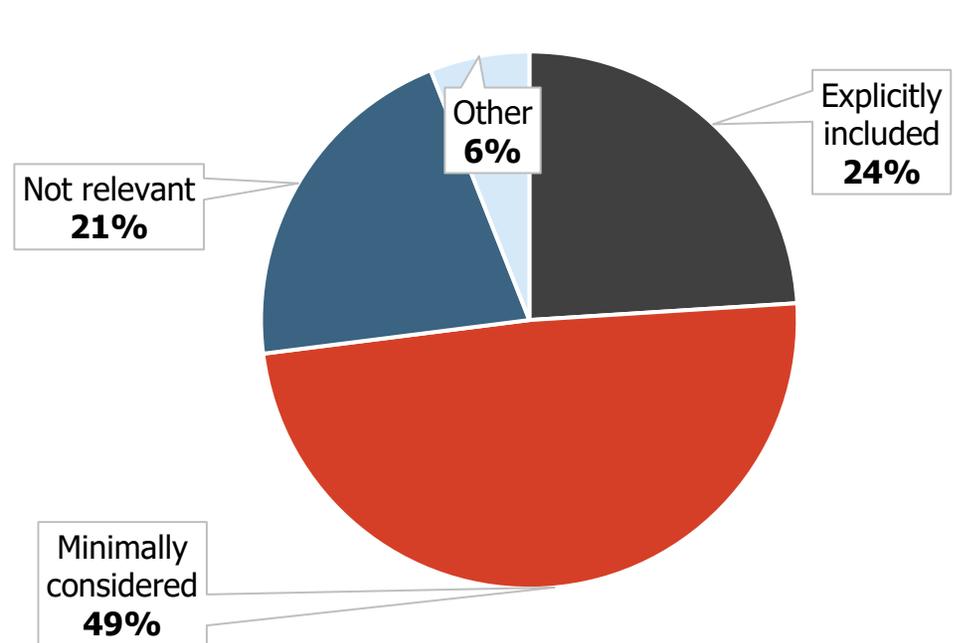
Faculty Prelaw Work Sits Outside Formal Review for Most

While only about **one in four** faculty prelaw advisors has prelaw responsibilities required by their position, only **30%** volunteered for the role. The remaining advisors were asked, but the amount of choice they had is unclear. Universities don't especially value prelaw advising in tenure decisions — these efforts are described as minimally or not relevant for tenure by **70%** of faculty prelaw advisors. Only **24%** of faculty advisors say their prelaw advising is explicitly included in tenure or post-tenure review.

How Did I Get the Role?



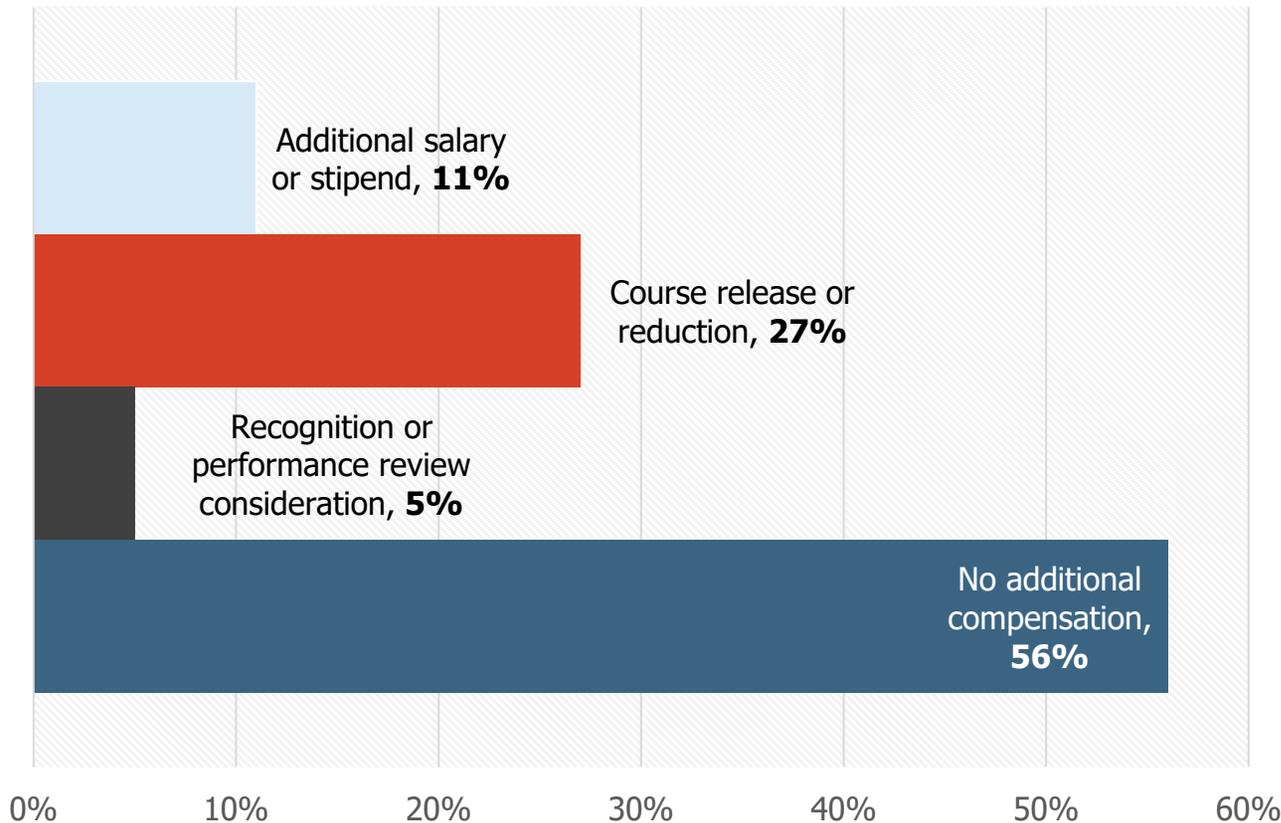
Tenure Consideration for Prelaw Advising





Faculty Compensation for Prelaw Work Varies

Faculty prelaw advisors receive a range of types of compensation for their role — or no compensation at all (**56%** of faculty). When they are compensated, the forms include money (**11%**), time in the form of course release or reduction (**27%**), and performance review consideration (**5%**).



For the love of the game?

While **56%** of faculty received no additional compensation due to their role as a prelaw advisor, roughly **one-third** of this group fell into each of these three categories describing how they came into the role:

- I volunteered
- It's part of the job
- I was asked



Staff Advisors Average \$69,300 in Salary

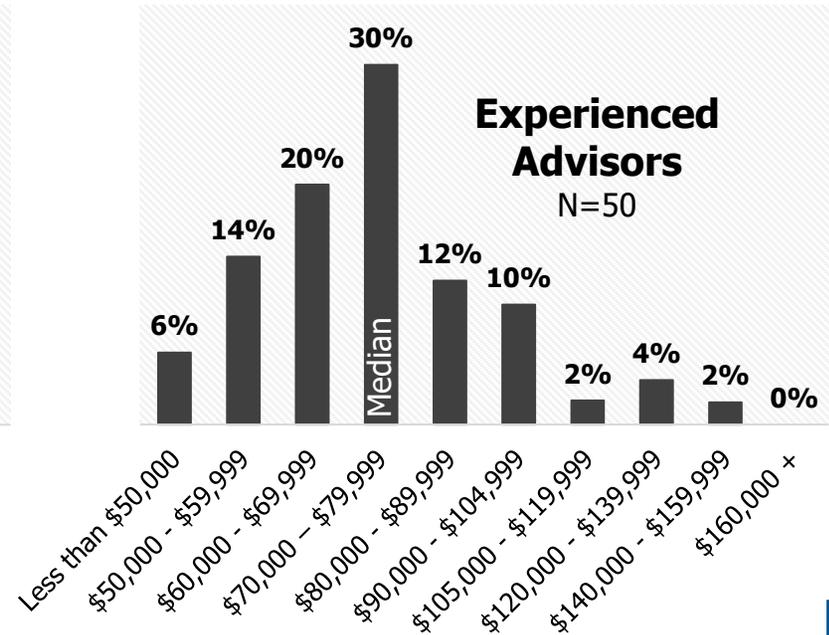
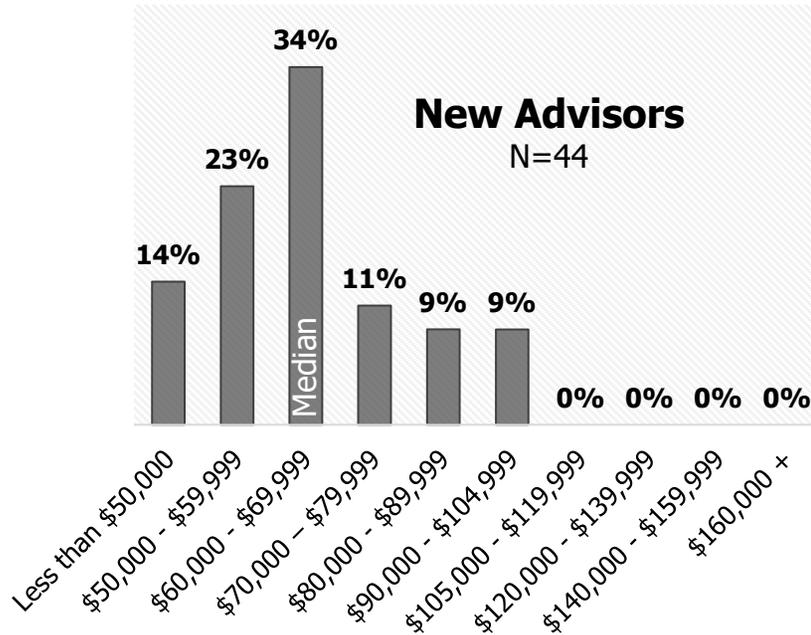
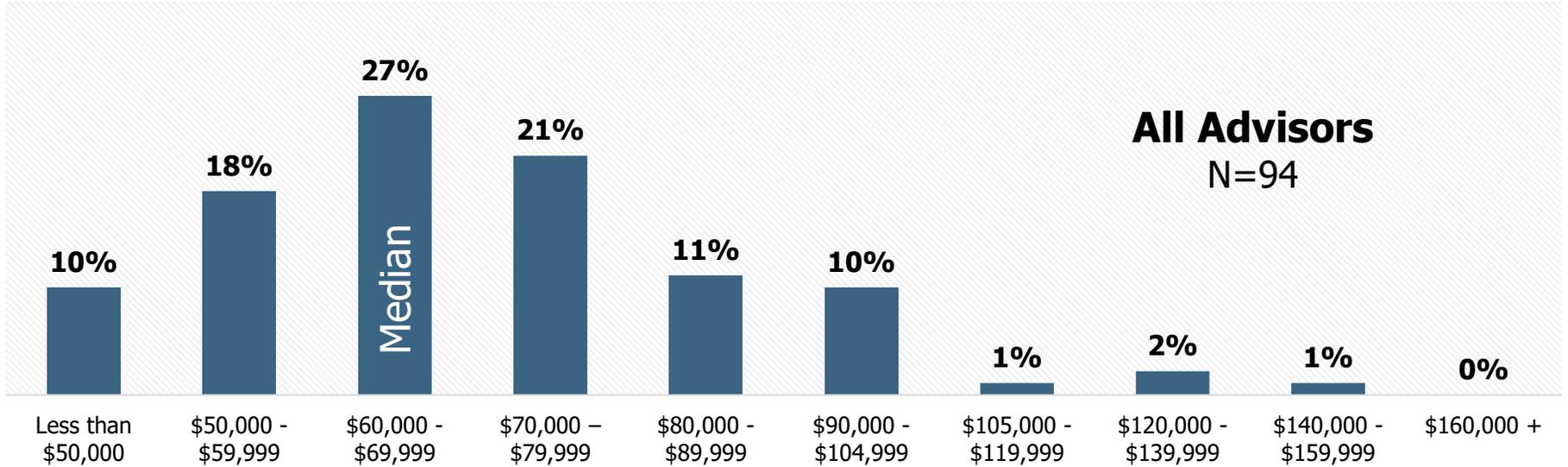
We asked staff advisors to report their salary ranges, though we did not ask whether compensation is tied specifically to prelaw duties or reflects broader responsibilities. Of the 106 staff advisors, 94 — 44 new advisors (less than four years) and 50 experienced advisors (four or more years) — provided salary ranges. We also compared staff advisor salaries according to whether the advisor is a law school graduate (23) or not (71). The following means were calculated using the midpoint of each salary band.



These averages exclude three statistical outliers that were more than three standard deviations above the mean. The overall mean including outliers was **\$71,400**. The outliers had the largest effect on the law school graduate mean, which rose from **\$70,400** to **\$79,000** when outliers were included.



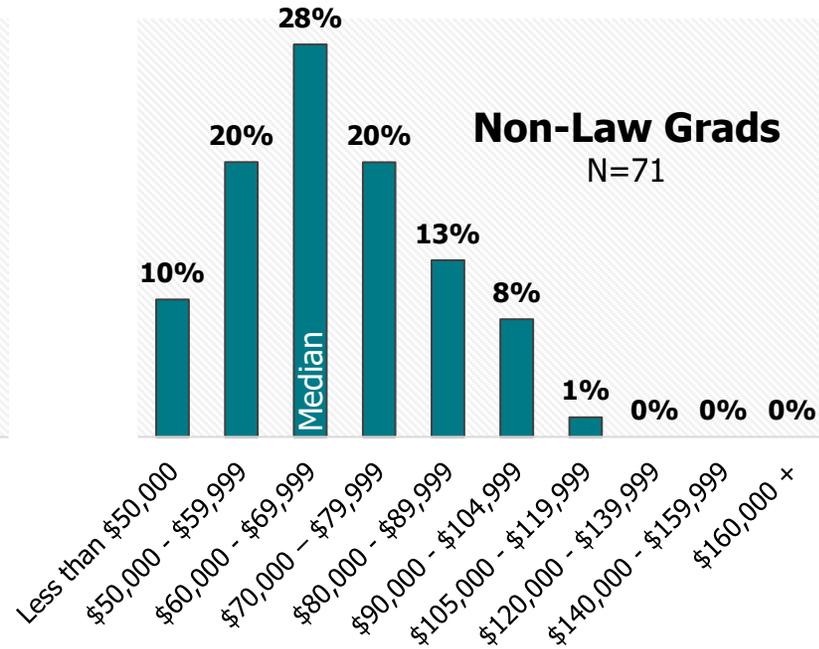
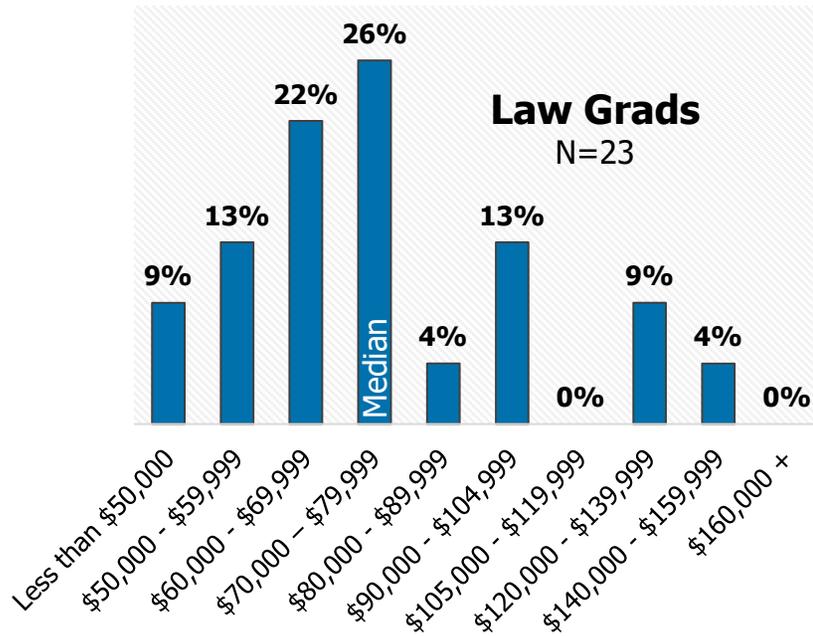
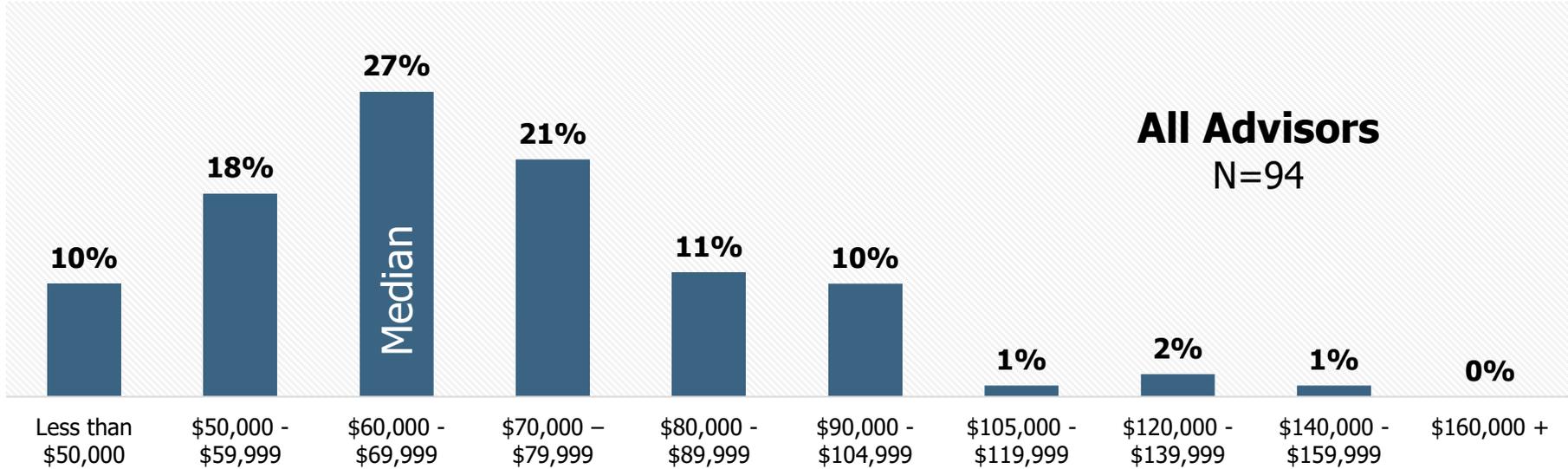
Experienced Advisors Earn More on Average





Law Degree Shows Minimal Salary Impact

Demographics



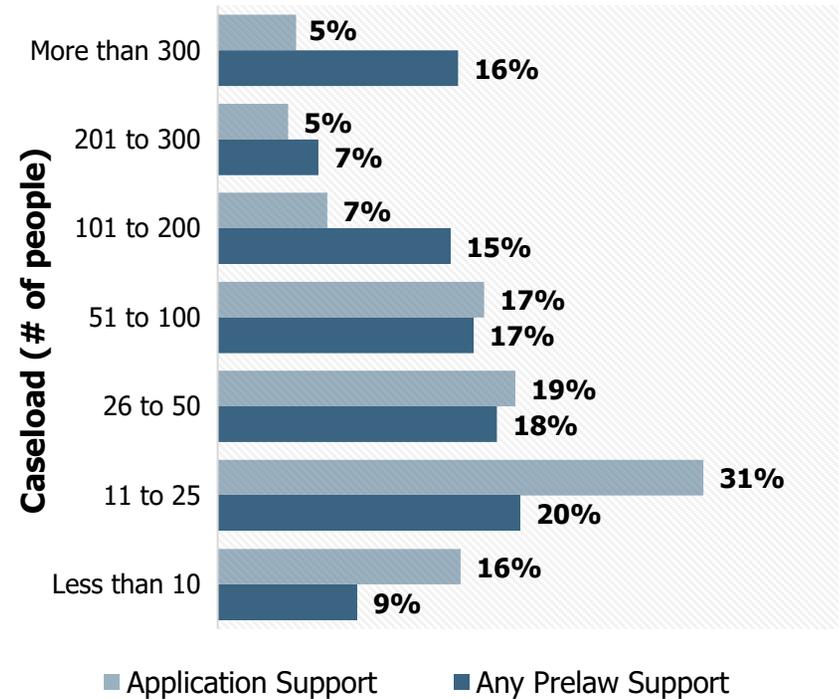


Prelaw Advising Caseloads Vary in Magnitude, Coverage

Prelaw advisors typically support more individuals on general prelaw topics than they do with law school applications specifically. The most common caseload for both is 11–25 individuals, but this range is especially dominant for application help. In contrast, broader prelaw advising is more evenly distributed across small and mid-sized caseloads, with a meaningful share of advisors reporting that they support more than 100 individuals on general topics — a level of volume that is far less common for application support.

Advisors may guide relatively large groups through exploration, planning, and general questions, but shift to smaller caseloads when providing application-specific assistance. Overall, the responses suggest that broad advising scales more easily and application support tends to stay more limited in volume.

While **38%** of advisors personally support more than 100 advisees on any prelaw topic, just **17%** offer the same level of support on applications. Faculty and staff show sharp differences at this advising volume: **17%** of faculty support more than 100 individuals on general prelaw topics, compared with **55%** of staff who do so. For application support, the gap remains: Only **3%** of faculty assist more than 100 applicants, whereas **28%** of staff do.



The questions asked advisors how many individuals they personally support on **any prelaw topic** and how many they personally support specifically with **law school applications**.



Advisor Workload Peaks During Fall Application Season

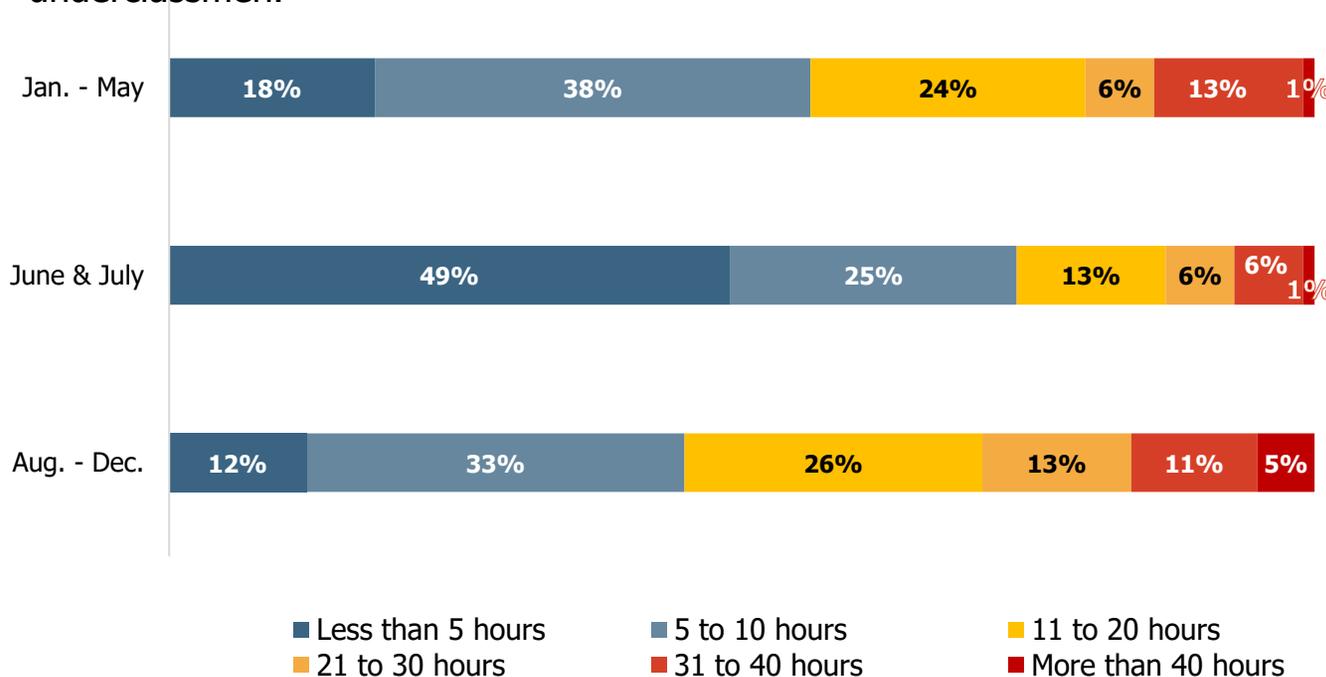
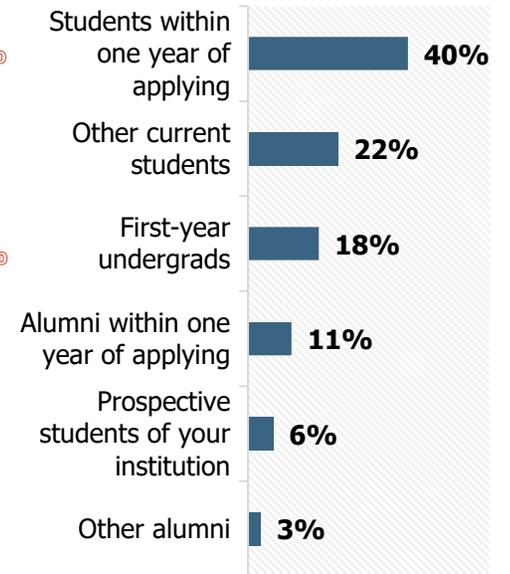
Duties

Prelaw advisor time commitments clearly reflect the law school application cycle's seasonal demands, with summer as the recovery period before the fall rush. During the fall semester, **55%** of advisors report spending at least 11 hours per week on prelaw advising duties, and nearly **30%** report at least 21 hours. The summer, on the other hand, is much lighter. Nearly half (**49%**) of advisors work less than five hours per week on prelaw advising during June and July, compared with just **18%** in spring and **12%** in fall. This reflects that many students and faculty are away from campus. The spring semester falls somewhere in the middle, with **56%** working 10 hours or less per week on advising, which may reflect continued application support for late applicants and planning with underclassmen.

Time by Advisee Group

Prelaw advisors spend **51%** of their time with advisees who are within one year of applying to law school. While **two in three** applicants are alumni when they apply, advisors spend just **14%** of their advising time with alumni.

Advising Population

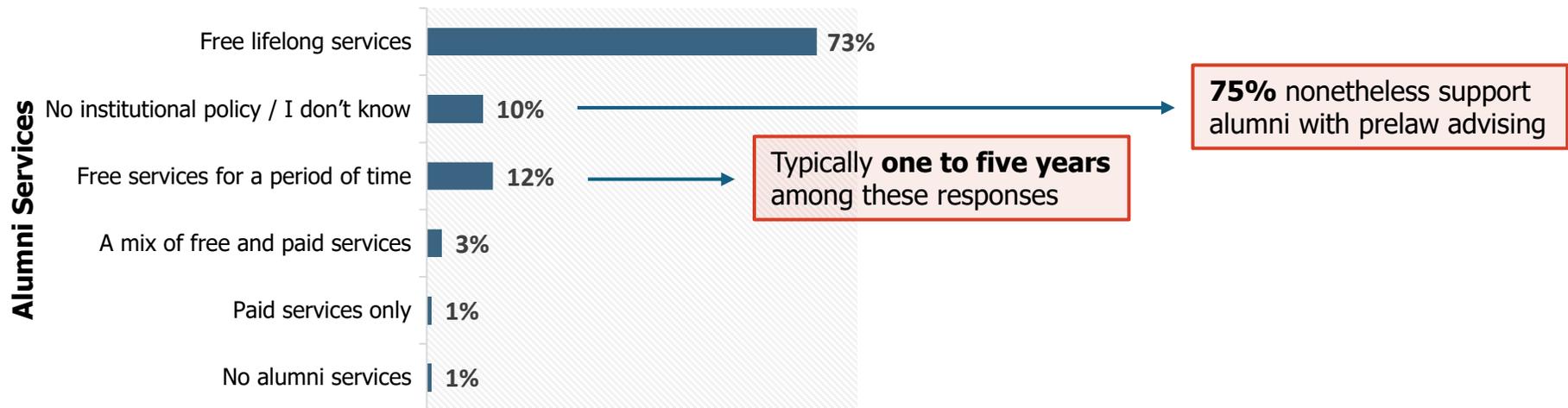




Prelaw Advisors Overwhelmingly Support Alumni

Duties

In addition to current students, the vast majority of prelaw advisors support alumni on their journeys to law school. Alumni prelaw advising services tend to be free and lifelong (**63%**). An additional **7%** provide free services for a limited period, while very few institutions (**less than 1%** each) charge for alumni advising services or explicitly exclude alumni from support.



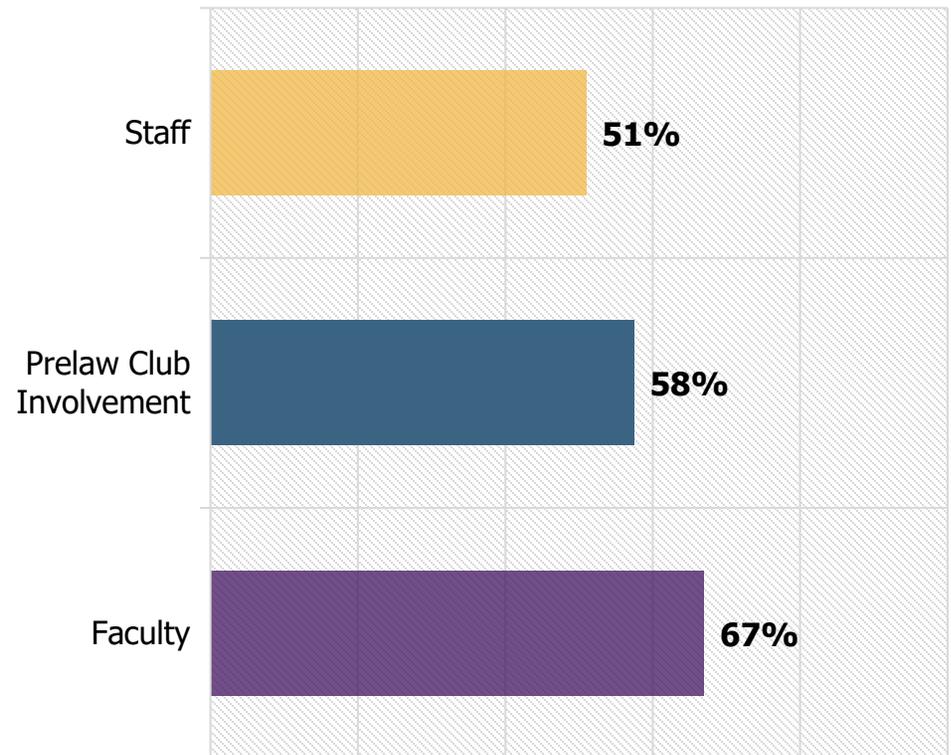
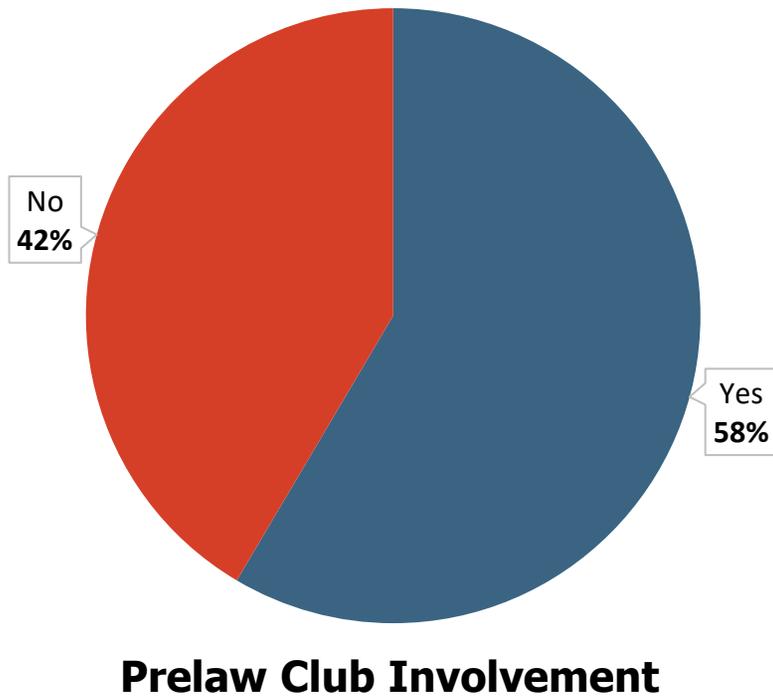
There is a significant knowledge gap between faculty and staff regarding institutional policies on alumni advising. Nearly half of faculty advisors (**46%**) report not knowing their institution's policy or indicate no institutional policy exists, compared with only **10%** of staff advisors. This disparity suggests that staff advisors are better integrated into institutional support structures and more aware of formal policies than are faculty members who may advise students as part of broader academic responsibilities. The uncertainty among faculty advisors represents a potential missed opportunity for institutions to better support their alumni through existing resources.



Faculty More Likely to Be Involved in Prelaw Clubs

Duties

Prelaw clubs provide leadership, exploratory, skill-building, and supportive opportunities to students on campus. About **one in two** staff prelaw advisors is involved with prelaw clubs and societies such as Phi Alpha Delta, mock trial, debate, and other law-adjacent groups. However, **two in three** faculty prelaw advisors work with these types of prelaw clubs.

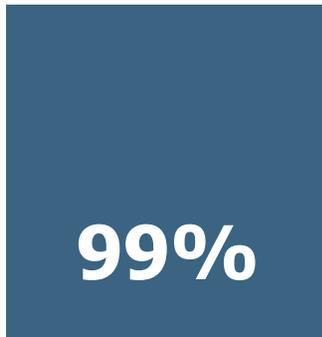




Advisors Universally Help Through Application Submission 24

Duties

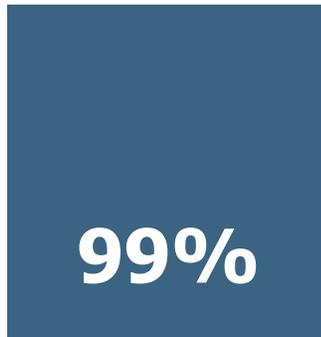
Virtually every prelaw advisor helps prospective law students through basic exploration and law school applications. However, after someone submits their applications, advisors are slightly less likely to support those individuals' efforts.



1

Prelaw Exploration and Academic Planning

- Professional goals
- Law career exploration
- College course or curricular selection
- Internship selection



2

Law School Application Support

- Identifying target schools
- Application strategy
- Supporting test prep
- Reviewing application components



3

Post-Application Support

- Navigating waitlists
- Evaluate offers
- Understanding the classroom experience
- Financing law school
- Scholarships

Additionally, **66%** of prelaw advisors have prelaw advising duties not captured above; these include planning law school fairs, training formal and informal prelaw advisors, developing internship programs, and coaching mock trial.



Advising Topic Engagement and Confidence

Across the three phases of prelaw advising — prelaw exploration, application support, and post-application support — we examine advisor engagement and confidence with a variety of advising topics. The metrics we use reveal where the prelaw advising profession succeeds, where it struggles, and why that may be.



Engagement rates measure the percentage of advisors who advise on each topic, revealing the scope and reach of different types of support across the profession. When engagement is low for a topic, several factors may be at work. Advisors may feel unqualified or uncomfortable with the topic, institutional policies may restrict their involvement, time and capacity constraints may force prioritization decisions, advisees may not seek help with the topic, advisors may view the topic as outside their proper role, or previous attempts may have been unsuccessful.



Confidence rates show the percentage of all advisors who feel "fairly confident" or "very confident" addressing each topic. Because this metric includes advisors who do not engage at all on the topic, it reveals the overall readiness of the prelaw advising profession to handle different advisees' needs. It can also signal potential gaps in professional preparation, training, or institutional support that may affect service quality.



Confidence ratios measure confidence only among advisors who advise on each topic. This provides insight into whether low confidence reflects genuine expertise gaps among advisors, or simply indicates that many advisors avoid unfamiliar topics entirely. A high confidence ratio suggests that advisors who engage develop adequate skills, while a low ratio indicates persistent challenges even among motivated advisors.

Together, these metrics help distinguish whether challenges in advising stem from avoidance, inadequate preparation, or systemic barriers. We did not try to measure competence, whether knowledge-based (knowing the facts) or skills-based (how to approach people well). Confident advisors likely presume their own competence, but some advisors may experience misplaced confidence or underestimate their abilities.

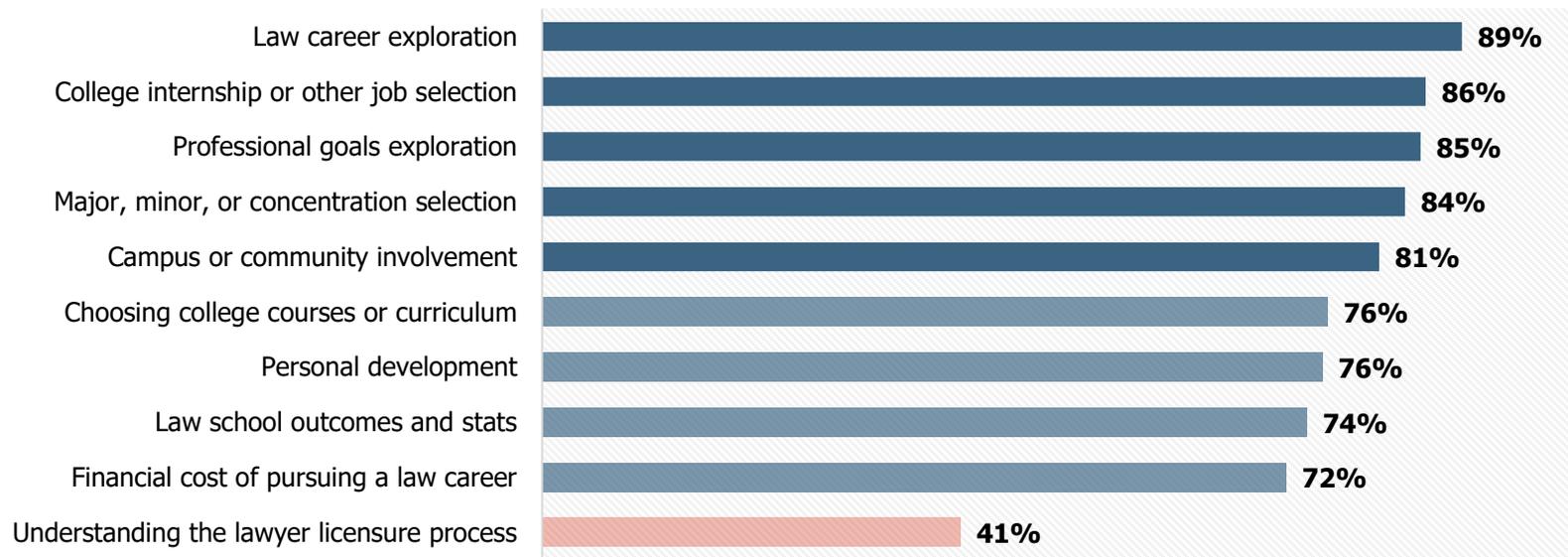


Prelaw Exploration and Academic Planning Engagement

Confidence

Prelaw advisors guide advisees through an exploration of law and how to get there, helping them make informed, intentional decisions — including that law isn't the right fit for their goals, at least not now. The data reveal near-consensus support for foundational topics related to fit, with **84% to 89%** engaging with advisees about law career exploration, internship selection, professional goal-setting, and academic planning. Beyond these basics, most advisors embrace a holistic approach to their work, with high percentages addressing campus involvement (**81%**), course selection (**76%**), and personal development (**76%**). This indicates they view their role as extending beyond prelaw support to broader undergraduate development (although sustained personal development can enhance the strength of advisees' applications).

However, two notable gaps emerge. While **72%** discuss the cost of pursuing law, that is a meaningful drop from the near-universal engagement on fit topics, possibly reflecting varying comfort levels with financial topics or institutional boundaries around such discussions. More striking is the licensure gap: Only **41%** advise on the lawyer licensure process, less than half the rate of the fit topics. Law school graduates are significantly more likely (**55%** vs. **31%**) to advise on licensure, but their engagement still lags other areas.



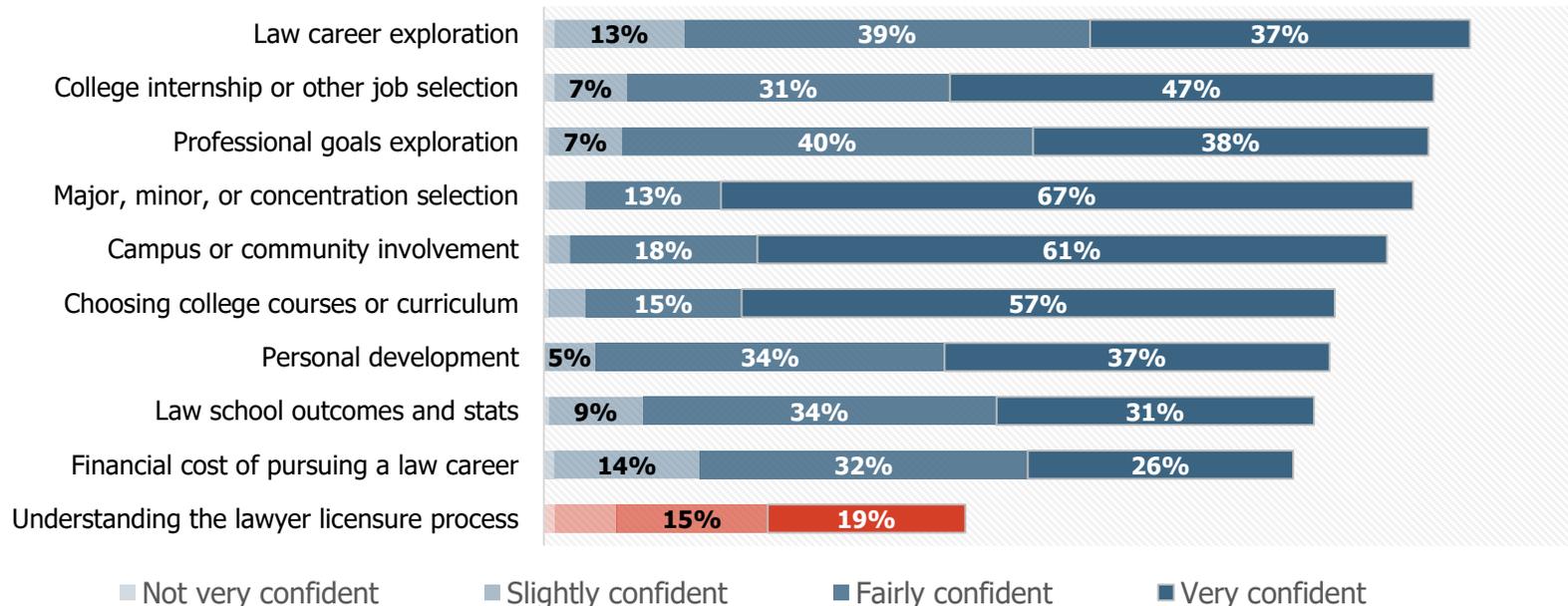


Advisors Confident on Guidance, Less So on Evaluation

Confidence

Advisor confidence adds another layer to the story. Confidence matters significantly in prelaw advising, where advisees rely on advisors for informed guidance, and is remarkably high and consistent throughout prelaw exploration. **72% to 80%** of advisors feel "fairly confident" or "very confident" addressing on-campus matters such as majors (**80%**), campus involvement (**79%**), and course selection (**72%**). Career planning matters such as internship selection (**78%**), professional goals (**78%**), law career exploration (**76%**), and personal development (**71%**) fall into a similar range. This clustering suggests advisors feel equally capable whether facilitating exploration, supporting decision-making, or discussing foundational career questions.

However, there is a confidence cliff past this large cluster. Only **65%** of advisors feel confident discussing law school outcomes such as bar pass rates, job placement, and salaries, with even lower confidence about costs (**58%**) and licensure (**34%**). It appears that advisors are confident guiding advisees through exploratory and developmental processes, but much less so when discussions require specific institutional knowledge and evaluative judgments about risk that consider whether someone's background may complicate licensure, where they can take the bar, or whether a particular law school investment will deliver the expected return.



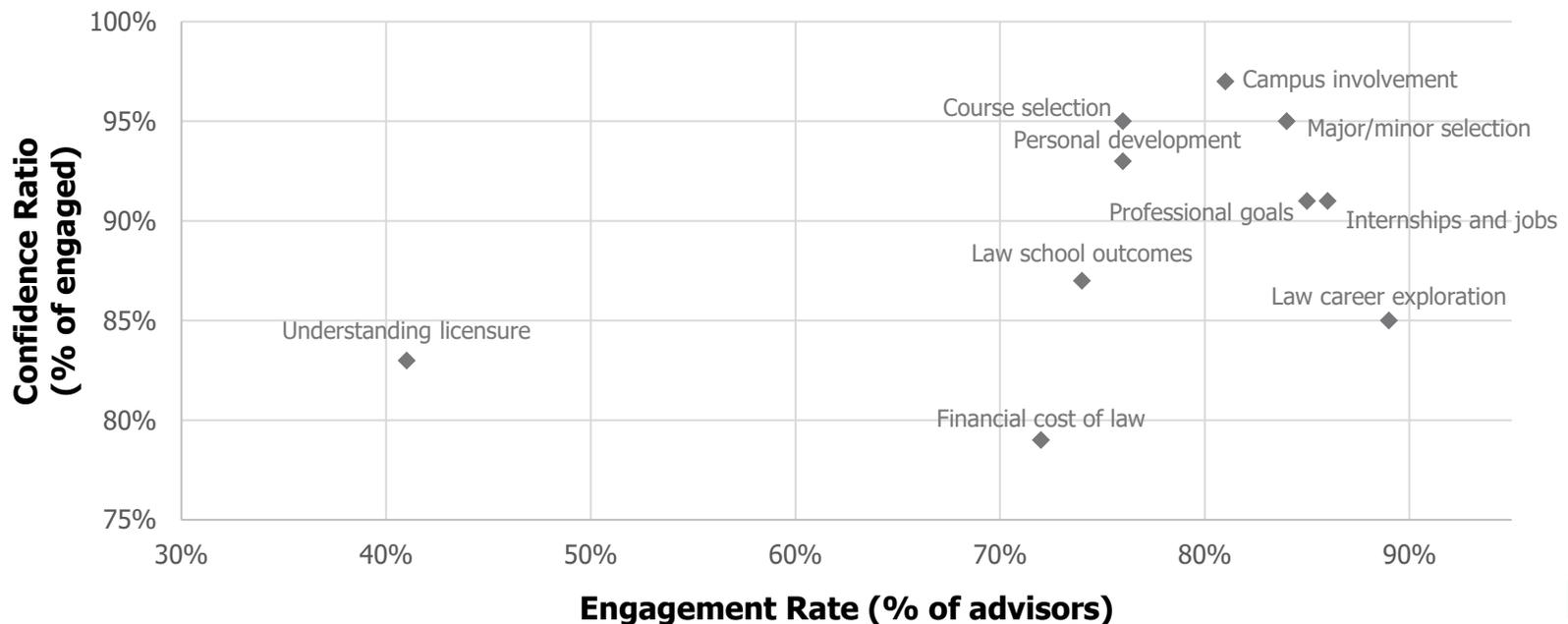


Confidence Ratios Reveal Selective Engagement Patterns

Confidence

Among advisors who actually advise on a topic, confidence levels remain remarkably consistent: The confidence ratio (percentage fairly or very confident among those engaged) ranges from **79% to 97%**. This suggests the work itself is not inherently more difficult from topic to topic. For instance, while only **41%** of all advisors address licensure and just **34%** of all advisors feel fairly or very confident doing so, **83%** of those who do this work feel that level of confidence — comparable with other advising topics, even if it is the lowest area of confidence among these topics.

The barrier, then, isn't confidence once engaged, but advisors developing knowledge to attempt advising in the first place. Lower engagement rates on licensure (**41%**), costs (**72%**), and law school outcomes (**74%**) likely reflect advisors opting out due to lack of specialized preparation. Institutional policies restricting advising on financial topics may also prevent some advisors from building expertise in these discussions. The challenge is establishing the foundation to enter these areas of practice, not performing the work itself.

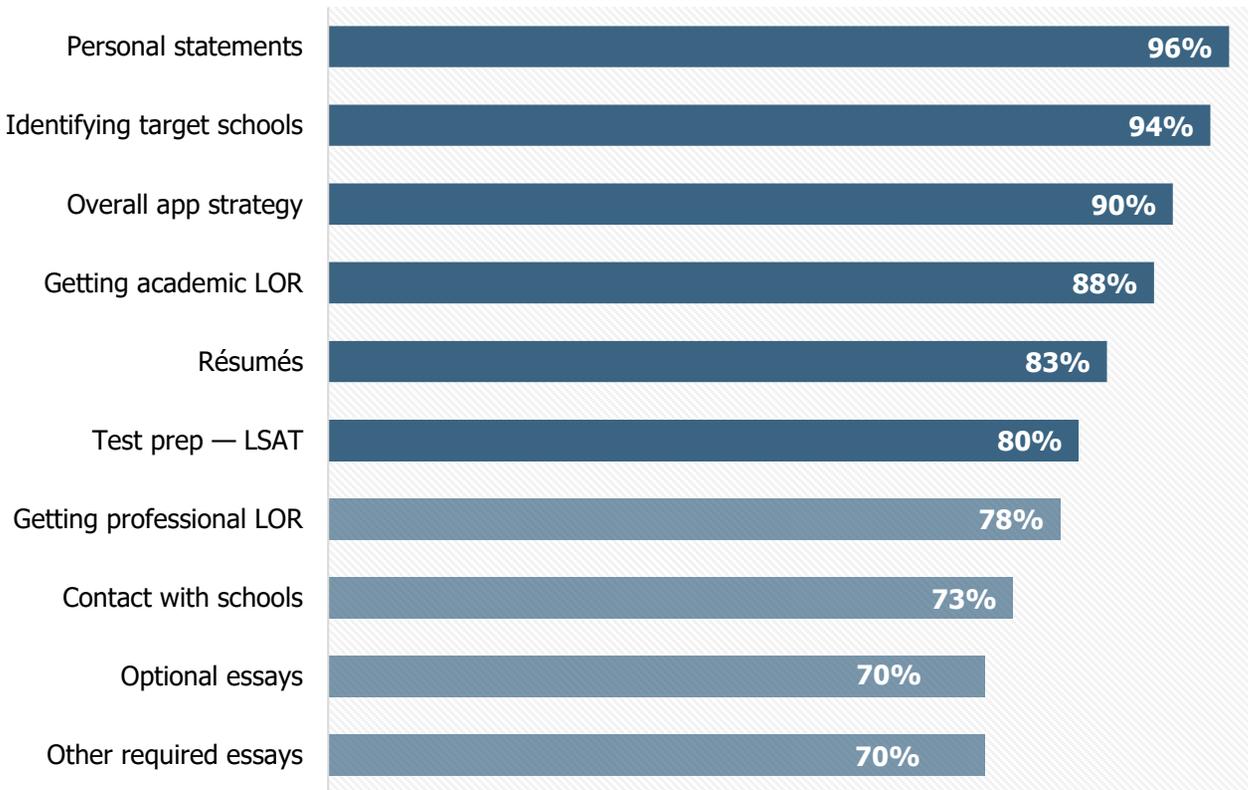




Law School Application Support

Confidence

Prelaw advisors guide advisees through the law school application process, helping them decide where to apply and how to put their package together. Advisors engage most heavily in core application components that require active guidance and strategy — assistance that nearly every applicant needs. At least **90%** assist with personal statements (**96%**), identifying target schools (**94%**), and overall application strategy (**90%**). Engagement is also high for academic credentials and preparation: getting academic letters of recommendation (**88%**), résumé development (**83%**), and high-level LSAT prep (**80%**). This represents intensive work on the building blocks of law school applications.



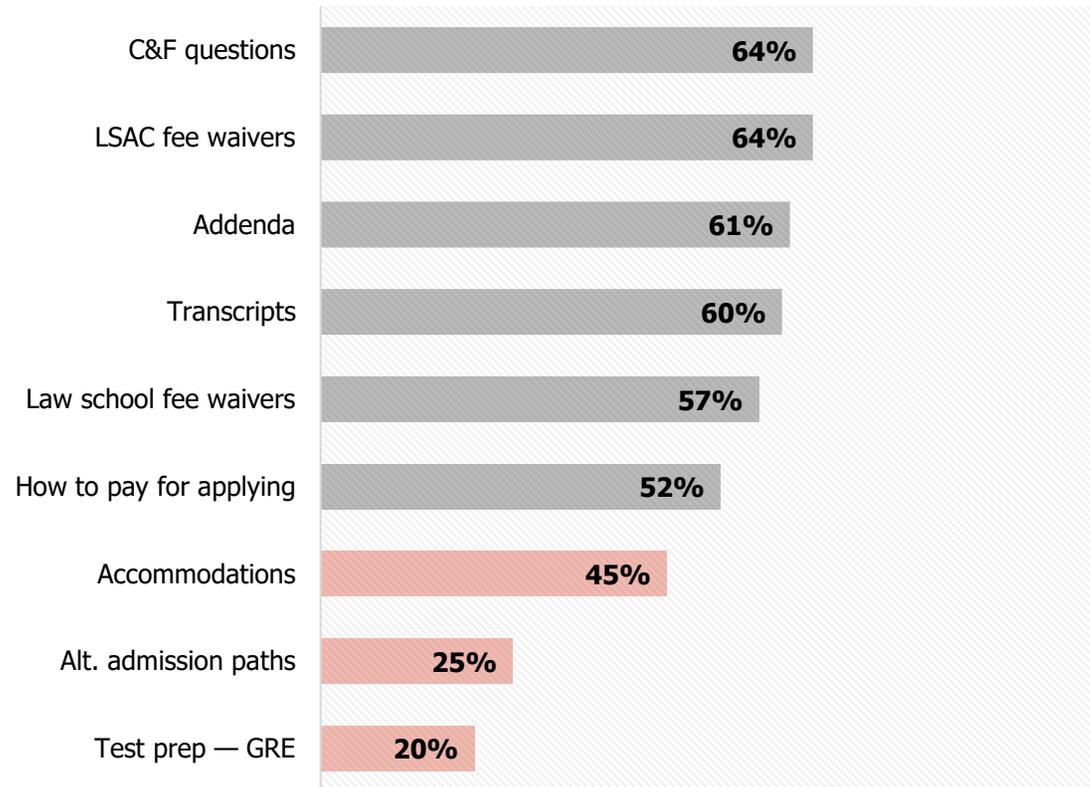


Engagement Drops for Specialized Circumstances

Confidence

Engagement falls for specialized circumstances and technical processes. Fewer than half of advisors address testing accommodations (**45%**) or alternative admission paths (**25%**), while transcripts (**60%**) and fee waivers from law schools or LSAC (**57%**, **64%**) fall in the moderate range. The contrast between LSAT prep (**80%**) and GRE prep (**20%**) reflects advisors' focus on the dominant admission test. Guidance on financial topics remains limited, with only **52%** helping advisees understand how to pay for applying.

The pattern suggests advisors concentrate on universal application needs while stepping back from specialized situations or procedural tasks that affect fewer students. Within the application process, there is a clear division. Core work serves most applicants, while technical or circumstantial elements require different expertise and affect smaller populations. This mirrors the broader confidence patterns that we observed earlier within prelaw exploration, where advisors feel most equipped to handle common, foundational advising topics.

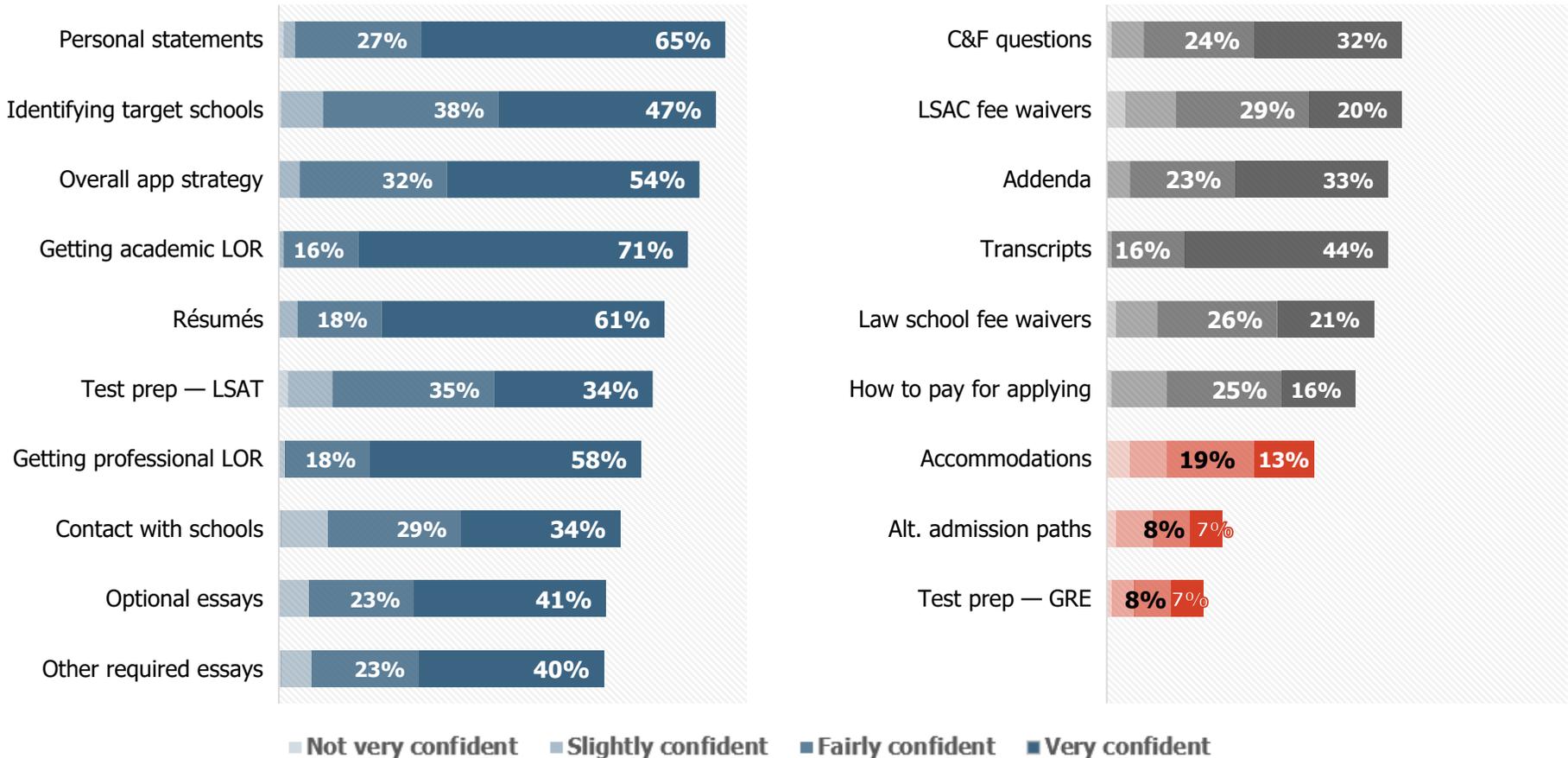




Advisors Confident on Key Application Topics

Confidence

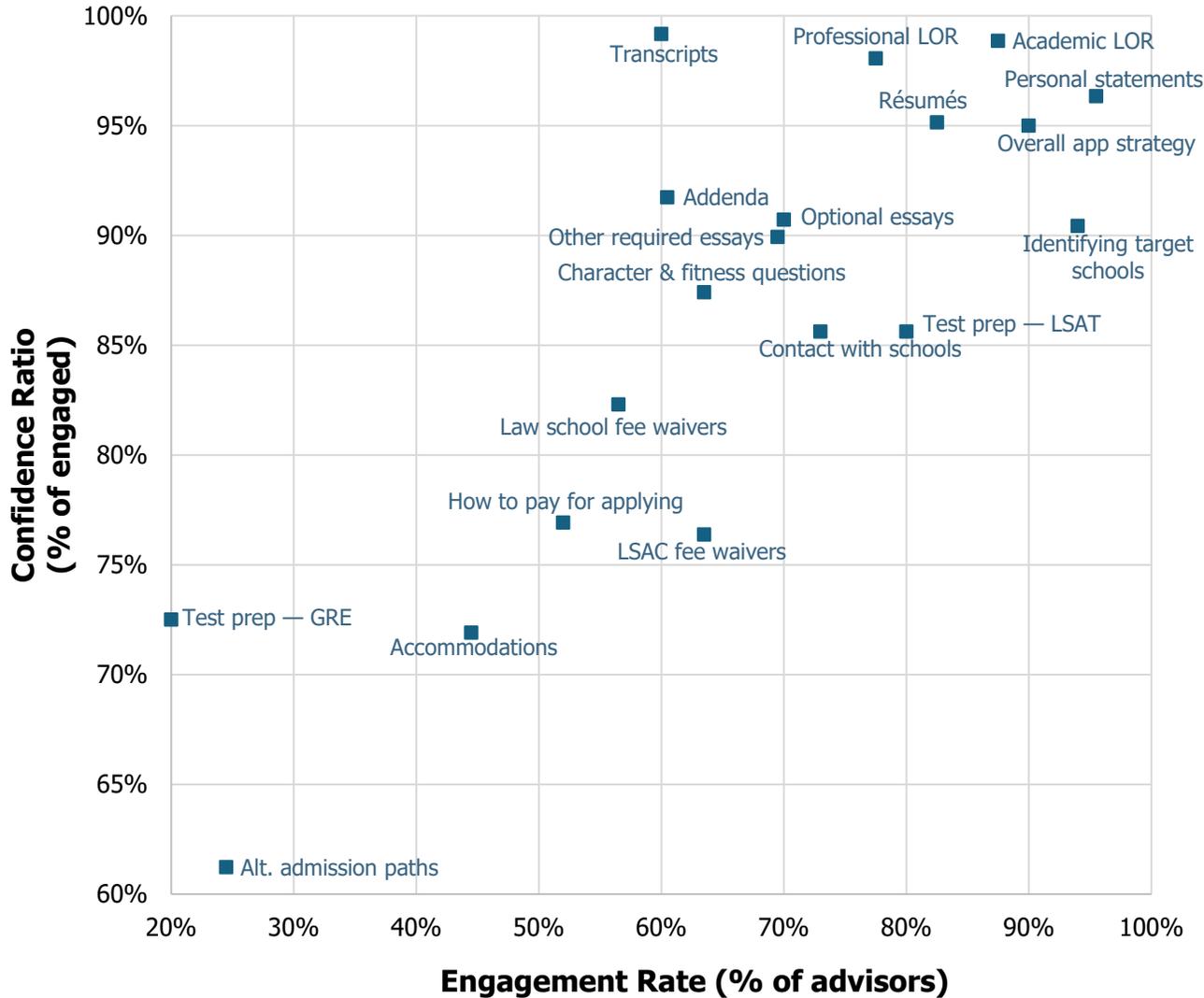
As with prelaw exploration, advisor confidence adds another layer to the application package story, highlighting a relationship between what advisors do and how equipped they feel to do it. However, advisor confidence is much higher across core law school application topics: **77% to 92%** of advisors feel "fairly confident" or "very confident" addressing core law school application topics such as personal statements, résumés, letters of recommendation, and big-picture strategy. Applicants inevitably need help with fundamental components, so advisors prioritize building competence for those areas.





Confidence Patterns Highlight Advising Challenges

Confidence



Confidence Ratios

The ratio provides a clearer lens for understanding advisor engagement. It isolates confidence among those who advise on each topic, rather than diluting the measure with advisors who don't engage. This distinction is crucial because low overall confidence percentages can stem from two different problems: advisors lacking ability, or advisors choosing not to engage. The ratio helps distinguish between "Advisors avoid this because they can't do it well" and "Advisors avoid this despite being capable of developing the necessary skills."



With Applications, Advisors Are Confident if Engaged

For law school application assistance, high engagement rates correlate with high confidence ratios for core advising topics because advisors recognize these as essential and have invested in developing expertise. The topics with **80%** or higher engagement show strong confidence (**86% to 99%** ratios).

Despite lower engagement rates for many application assistance topics, most show remarkably high confidence ratios, typically in the **87% to 98%** range. Personal statements (**96%**), résumés (**95%**), academic letters of recommendation (**99%**), transcripts (**99%**), overall strategy (**95%**), and addenda (**92%**) all demonstrate that advisors who take on these tasks feel equipped to handle them. Even areas that might seem challenging or peripheral — such as high-level LSAT preparation conversations, character and fitness, and professional letters of recommendation — show strong confidence among those engaged.

Only a handful of topics show lower confidence ratios at or below **80%**: alternative admission paths (**61%**), accommodations (**72%**), guidance on paying for applications (**77%**), and GRE preparation (**73%**). These represent areas where even motivated advisors seem to find it difficult to develop adequate expertise, likely reflecting the specialized knowledge required or limited exposure to (or relevance of) these topics.

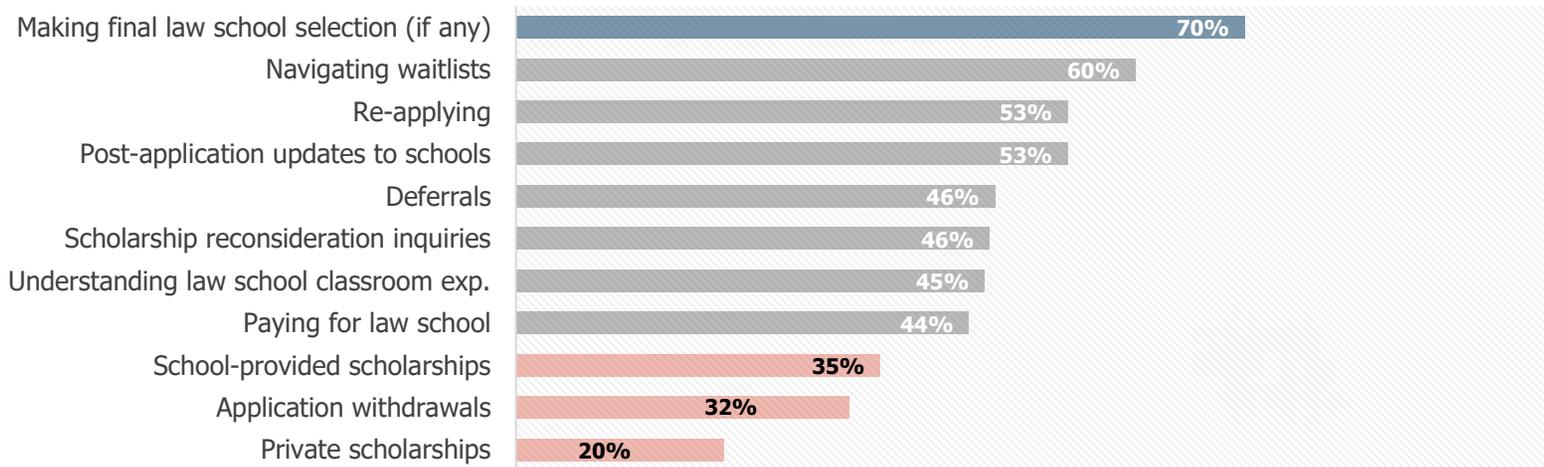


Post-Application Support

Confidence

Post-application support operates at lower engagement levels than prelaw exploration or application assistance. Even the most common post-application advising topic, making a final school selection, engages only **70%** of advisors, compared with **90%** or higher engagement for core topics such as school targeting and personal statements. This represents a significant drop-off after advisees submit applications.

Patterns emerge by type of advising topic. Strategic-heavy advising topics show the most engagement: final school selection (**70%**), reapplying decisions (**53%**), deferrals (**46%**), and application withdrawals (**32%**). Process-focused advising demonstrates moderate engagement: waitlist navigation (**60%**), post-application updates (**53%**), and scholarship reconsideration (**46%**). Financial topics consistently shows the lowest engagement: paying for law school (**44%**), school-provided scholarships* (**35%**), and especially private scholarships (**20%**). While **45%** of advisors cover the law school classroom, law school graduates advise on this topic at much higher rates than do non-law school graduates (**74%** vs. **28%**).



*The higher engagement rate for scholarship reconsideration than school-provided scholarships suggests potential measurement issues, as advisors would typically help advisees understand available scholarships before assisting with reconsideration requests.

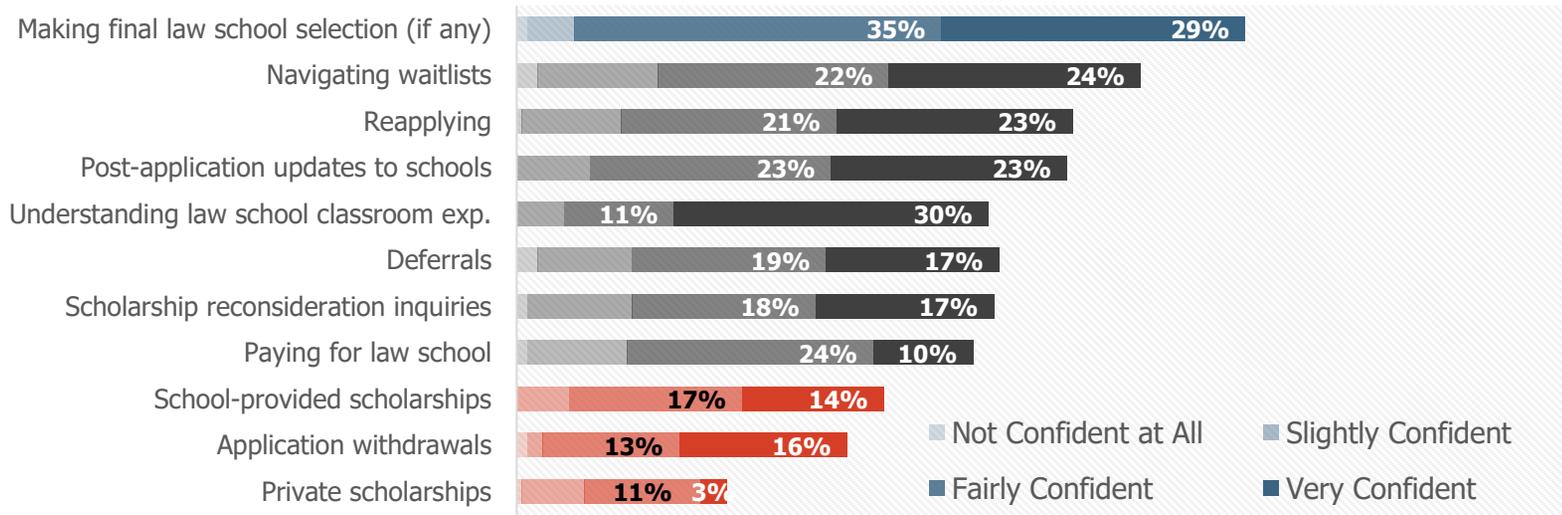


Confidence Falls After Application Submission

Confidence

The percentage of advisors confident on post-application topics shows consistently lower levels than observed for prelaw exploration or application support topics, driven largely by lower engagement rates. Final law school selection achieves the highest confidence, at **64%** (fairly or very confident), but even this peak falls well below the **71% to 80%** clustering observed in prelaw exploration. Every other advising topic shows a confidence percentage of less than **50%**. Advising about financial topics consistently shows concerning confidence levels: paying for law school (**35%**), school-provided scholarships (**31%**), and private scholarships (**14%**). Scholarship reconsideration, which could arguably be classified as financial-related advising as well as procedural or strategy-heavy advising, is also low, at **35%**.

Unlike previous phases where confidence clustered predictably, post-application support varies widely, from **14% to 64%**. This suggests that post-application issues require more specialized, diverse knowledge that advisors don't develop. The lower confidence levels across all topical areas indicate that this phase challenges advisors more broadly than earlier stages of prelaw support.



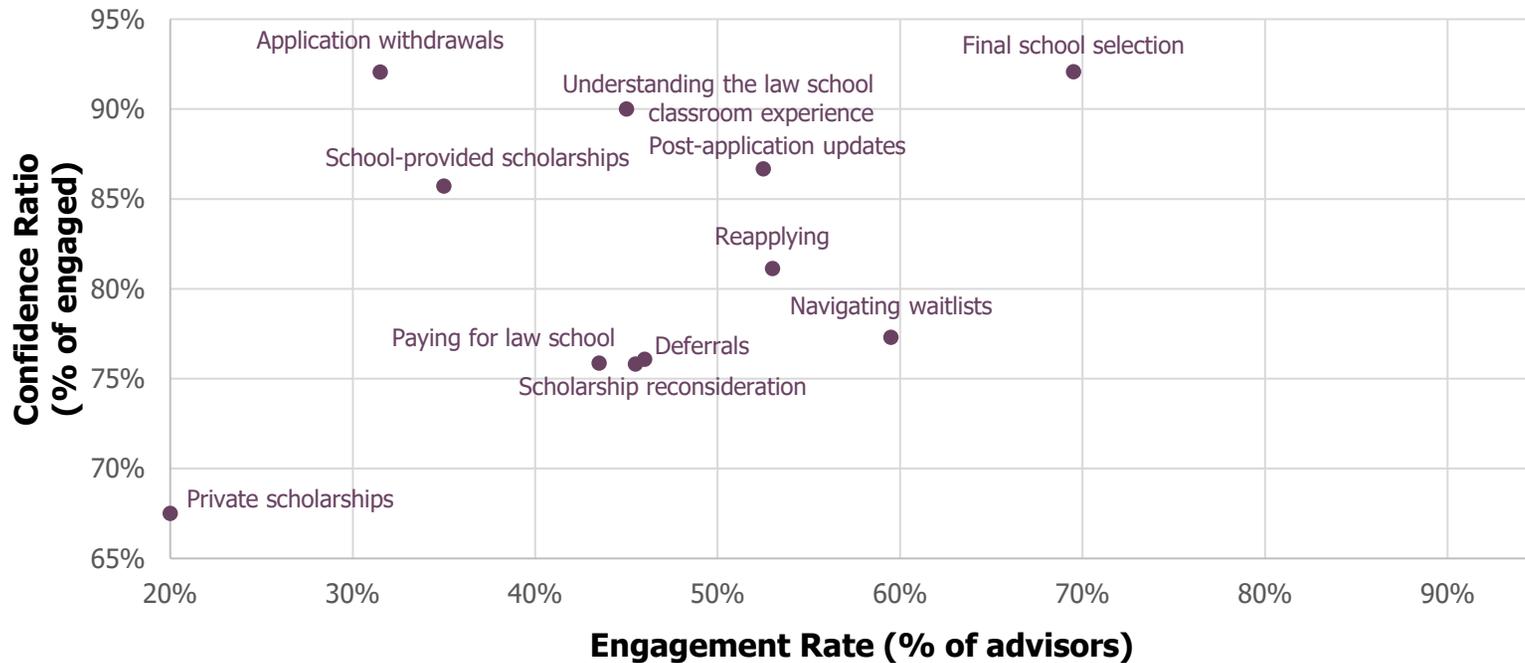


Post-Application, Advisors Are Confident if Engaged

Confidence

Despite lower engagement, advisors who do engage are confident, albeit at a lower rate than in earlier phases. The average confidence ratio for post-application support is **82%**, compared with **90%** for prelaw exploration and **87%** for application support. Most post-application support ratios range from **76% to 92%**, with making final law school selections (**92%**), application withdrawals (**92%**), and understanding the law school classroom experience (**90%**) at the top. Private scholarships stand as the notable outlier, with a confidence ratio of **68%**.

These patterns reinforce earlier findings. The primary challenge is expanding advisor engagement, not building confidence among those already helping. The substantial gap between engagement rates (**20% to 70%**) and confidence ratios (**68% to 92%**) indicates that support gaps stem largely from advisors opting out of this phase entirely, not from inadequate preparation among those who do engage.



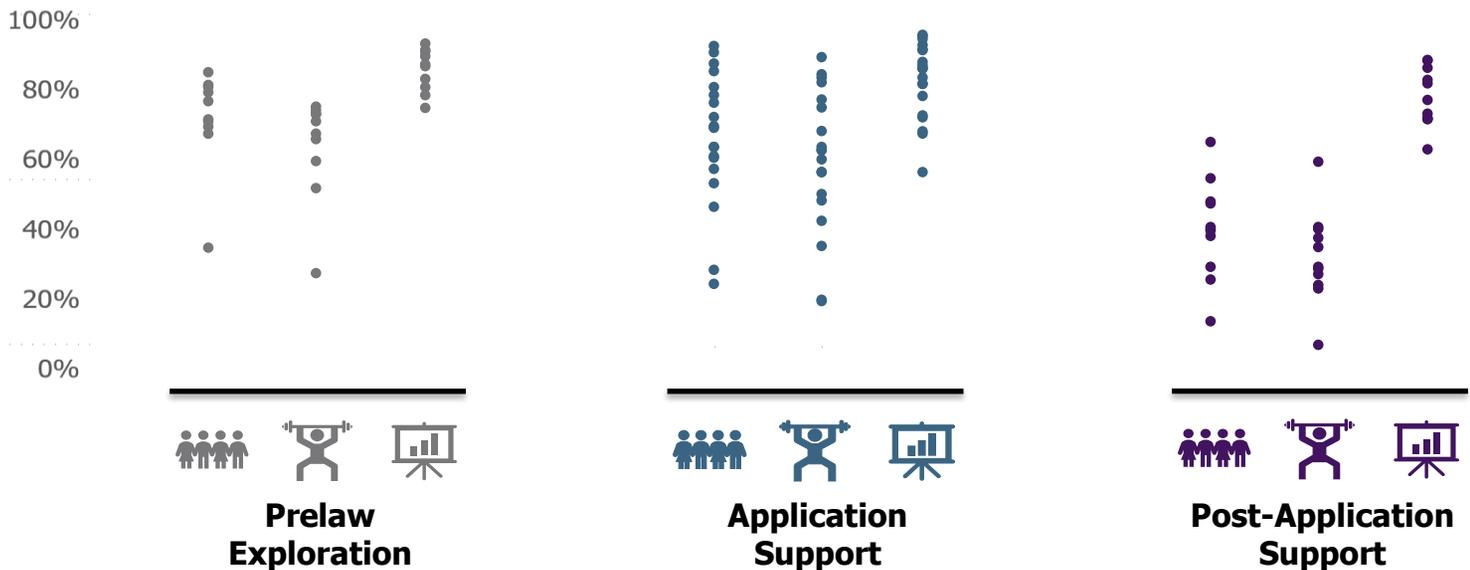


Summary: Engagement and Confidence

Confidence

The relationship between engagement rates (👥), confidence rates (🏆), and confidence ratios (📊) reveals distinct patterns about advising success and gaps. Across all three phases, confidence ratios typically range from **80% to 92%**. Most topics are above **86%**, but several exceptions in the **61% to 77%** range represent genuine challenges. This indicates that advisors who engage generally develop expertise. However, high confidence among engaged advisors can obscure significant participation gaps.

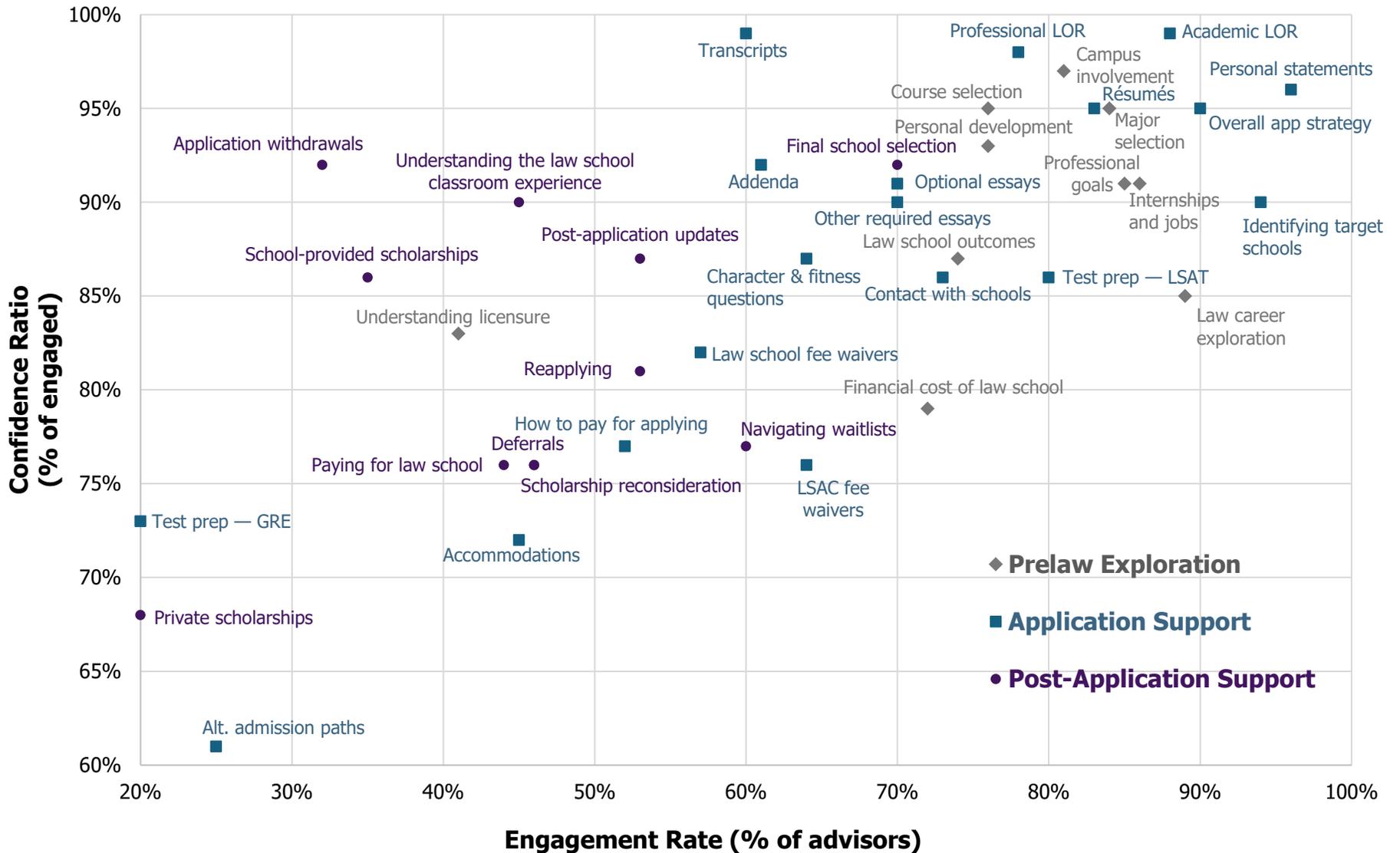
The confidence ratios show that low confidence rates tell only part of the story. When many advisors avoid a topic entirely, this creates the appearance of widespread uncertainty — even when those who do the work feel confident. For example, while only **34%** of all advisors feel confident advising on lawyer licensure, **83%** of those who advise on this topic feel confident. During the application support phase, accommodations show an overall **32%** confidence rate but **72%** confidence among engaged advisors. After applicants hit “Submit,” we see the most dramatic gap: Private scholarship guidance has an overall **14%** confidence rate, but a **68%** rate among advisors who advise on this topic.





Visual Summary: Engagement and Confidence

Confidence





Some Conversations Are Just Difficult

Confidence

A striking pattern emerges across all three phases of prelaw advising: Financial topics consistently show lower engagement and confidence than non-financial topics. Additionally, engagement rates and confidence rates on financial topics drop for each later phase of the prelaw journey.

	Cost of Law	LSAC Fee Waivers	Law School Fee Waivers	How to Pay for Applying	Scholarship Reconsideration	Paying for Law School	School Scholarships	Private Scholarships
Engaged	72%	64%	57%	52%	46%	44%	35%	20%
Confident	57%	49%	47%	40%	35%	33%	30%	14%
Confidence Ratio	79%	76%	82%	77%	76%	76%	86%	68%

Systematic avoidance of financial topics likely reflects multiple barriers. Institutional policies may restrict advisors from providing guidance on some financial topics, or advisors may feel they lack the professional qualifications for these topics. However, an equally plausible explanation is that talking about money is simply uncomfortable — a cultural reluctance that affects both advisors and advisees. This creates a support gap precisely where many need guidance, especially amid the changes to the federal student loan program taking effect in July 2026. The consistency across all phases suggests that addressing financial topics requires more than just training; it may also require clear professional guidelines about the appropriate scope of financial discussions in prelaw advising.

Other topics share similar patterns and characteristics. Non-LSAT admission paths (**20%** engagement for the GRE and **25%** for other paths) are high-stakes departures from the norm. Accommodations (**45%** engagement) involve legal requirements. The common thread appears to be topics that are highly specialized, are legally or financially sensitive, or require external knowledge — contrasting sharply with core advising topics, which build on advisors' general advising skills and institutional knowledge.



Licensure Presents Unique High-Stakes Challenges

Another high-stakes topic for advising is lawyer licensing. The importance progressively increases for advisees as they move through each prelaw phase. Character and fitness requirements can prevent bar admission even after completing law school, making early awareness essential for advisees who, as children or young adults, made choices that could jeopardize their legal careers. Advisees benefit from understanding these requirements early so they can address potential issues proactively, accurately respond to questions on law school applications, and ultimately make informed decisions about whether to pursue law given their circumstances.

Several characteristics make licensure challenging for advisors to address. It represents one of the most temporally distant topics — advisees won't face bar admission for three or more years, making it feel less immediate. State variability creates additional complexity, as requirements differ significantly by jurisdiction and moving after licensure is not trivial. The high-stakes nature of character and fitness issues, combined with their complexity, likely makes advisors reluctant to provide advice that could derail entire career plans if incorrect. Unlike academic or career advising, which builds on advisors' general skills, licensure understanding requires specialized knowledge of the law and how state agencies apply it, and that knowledge falls outside most advisors' expertise.

Despite this importance, licensure shows **41%** engagement (the lowest of all exploratory topics), **34%** confidence (also the lowest), and an **83%** confidence ratio — which, while strong, is the second lowest in the exploration phase. Interestingly, character and fitness questions during the application support phase show higher engagement (**64%**) and confidence (**56%**), as well as a higher confidence ratio (**87%**), suggesting that timing and context matter significantly in how advisors approach licensure-related topics. In other words, advisors may focus solely on how these questions affect the admission process.



LSAC Policies and Procedures Present Challenges

Confidence

The three LSAC-related topics during the application support phase show moderate to low engagement (**45% to 64%**) compared to other topics. Confidence ratios also vary significantly. Advisors have a high ratio for transcripts (**99%**), but even engaged advisors struggle with accommodations (**72%**). What unites these topics is that they all require working with LSAC systems, policies, and processes, rather than just providing direct advising. They demand knowledge of external institutional procedures, deadlines, and requirements that go beyond general advising skills. Advisors must understand how LSAC operates, not just how to guide decision-making.

	LSAC Fee Waivers	Transcripts	Accoms.
Engaged	64%	60%	45%
Confident	49%	60%	32%
Confidence Ratio	76%	99%	72%

Testing accommodations add another layer of complexity, because they involve legal requirements beyond simply LSAC policies and processes. This suggests that procedural and institutional knowledge represents a different challenge than the evaluative and strategic work that characterizes most other low-engagement topics. While advisors can develop confidence in LSAC policies and processes (as the confidence ratios show), they may avoid these topics because they require learning external systems, rather than building on existing advising expertise, or because the policies and processes are unclear or difficult to parse. Either way, this pattern reinforces the broader finding that advisors tend to engage less with topics requiring specialized external knowledge, even when they are can develop confidence once they commit to learning the systems.

The advising topic of “transcripts” may have a measurement issue. Respondents may have interpreted the question as asking whether they “explain that advisees need to get transcripts from various institutions” and/or “explain how LSAC’s transcript summarization process works and its implications.”

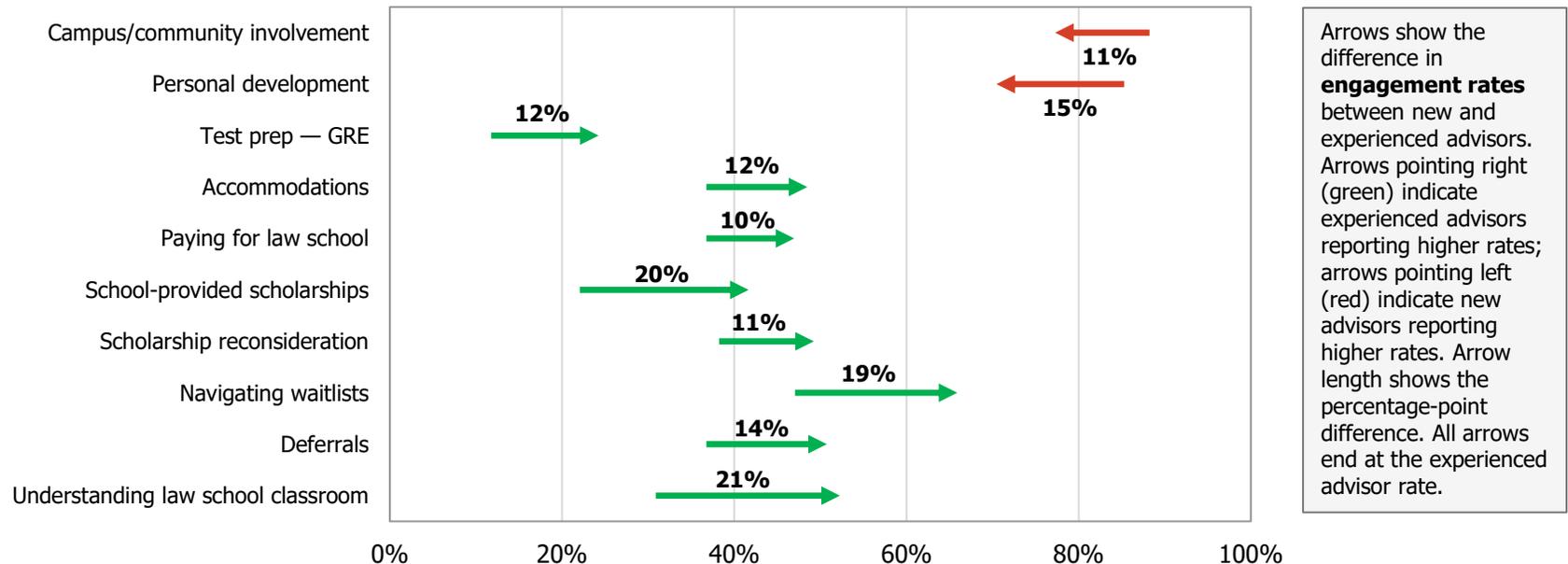


Advising Patterns Shift With Prelaw Experience

Confidence

Experience generally increases engagement and confidence, but patterns vary by phase and topic. In prelaw exploration, experienced advisors (four or more years) did not engage at meaningfully higher rates (10 percentage points or more) than newer advisors (less than four years). In application support, experienced advisors engage at meaningfully higher rates for only **two of 19** topics. However, experienced advisors engaged at meaningfully higher rates for **six of 11** topics in the post-application support phase.

Two exceptions appear in exploration. Campus or community involvement and personal development both show experienced advisors engaging at meaningfully lower rates (**11** and **15** percentage points, respectively) than newer advisors. These patterns may reflect that newer advisors bring different skill sets or interests to their role than their more senior counterparts do. Supporting this possibility, **82%** of new prelaw advisors have worked at least four years in higher education, so their experiences in other roles may influence their engagement patterns.

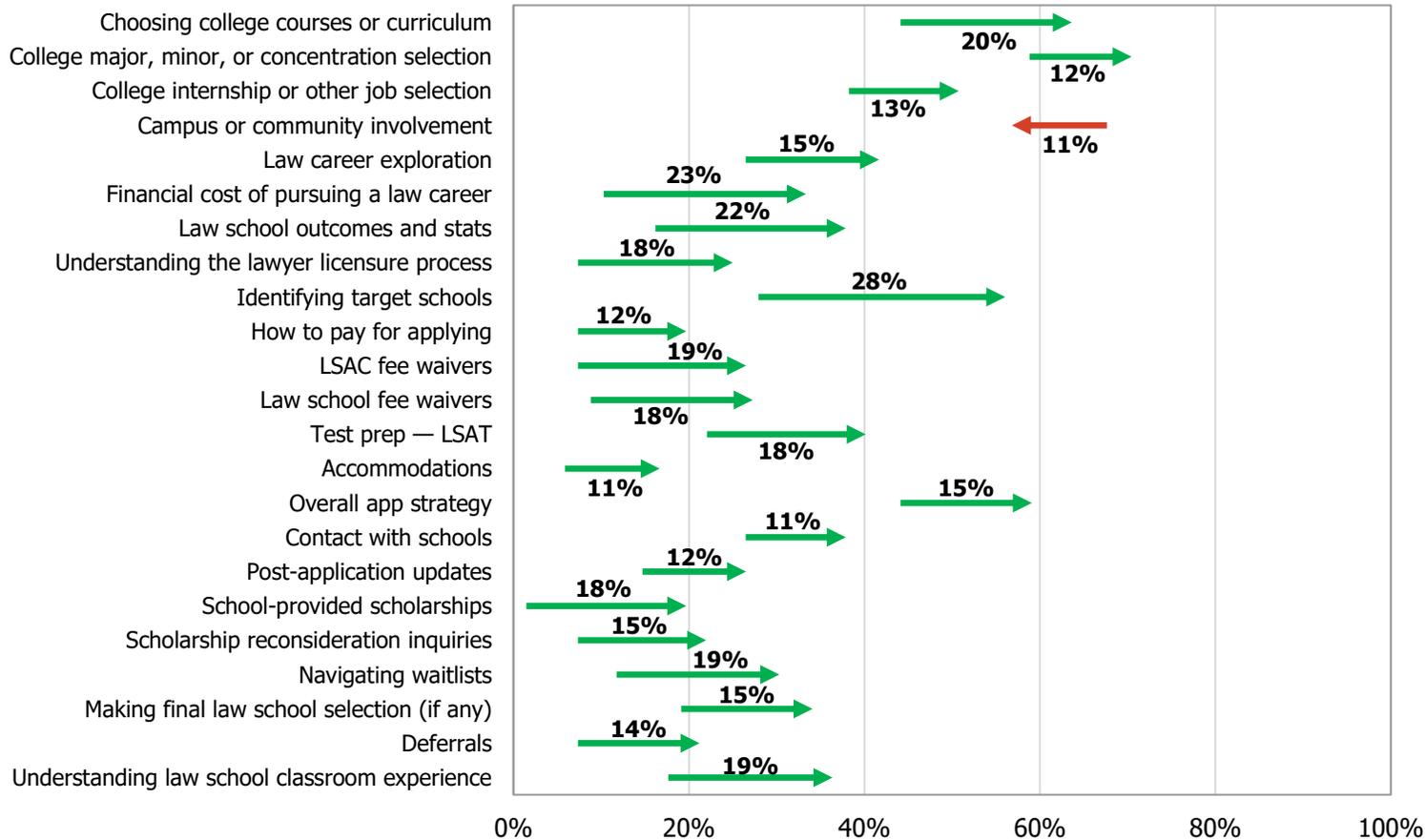




Experience Intensifies Confidence

Confidence

Confidence shows more consistent patterns. Experienced advisors demonstrate higher overall confidence than newer advisors across nearly all topics, with **more than one-third** showing meaningful differences of at least 10 percentage points. The composition of confidence reveals even more about how experience shapes advisor confidence. Experienced advisors fall into the "very confident" category at substantially higher rates, so it appears that experience builds stronger, not just greater, confidence. In total, **22 of 40** topics show experienced advisors with meaningfully higher "very confident" rates.



Arrows show the difference in "very confident" rates for new and experienced advisors. Arrows pointing right (green) indicate experienced advisors reporting higher rates; arrows pointing left (red) indicate new advisors reporting higher rates. Arrow length shows the percentage-point difference. All arrows end at the experienced advisor rate.



Experience Gap Pronounced for Post-App Advising

The "very confident" rate differences between experienced and newer advisors vary substantially by phase and topic type. Within prelaw exploration, these differences were especially widespread. For **seven of 10** topics, experienced advisors showed meaningfully higher very-confident rates. Campus or community involvement is still an outlier in the prelaw exploration phase. Indeed, it's the only topic across all phases where meaningfully more new advisors are very confident compared with experienced advisors.

Application support, on the other hand, shows a distinct pattern. For **eight of 19** topics, experienced advisors showed meaningfully higher very-confident rates, but these were not about core application components. Résumés, transcripts, letters of recommendation, and essays are foundational elements advisors must learn early to function competently, and these topics showed minimal group differences. Instead, meaningful differences were concentrated in topics requiring external knowledge or strategic sophistication: identifying target schools, overall application strategy, LSAT preparation, accommodations, alternative admission paths, and this phase's three financial topics. These topics demand accumulated knowledge of external systems, evolving options, and patterns across multiple admission cycles — expertise that builds gradually, not quickly.

Post-application support demonstrates an even more pronounced pattern. This is the only phase in which experienced advisors showed higher very-confident rates than newer advisors for every topic, with **seven of 11** showing meaningful differences. Combined with meaningfully higher engagement and confidence rates, as well as meaningfully higher confidence ratios, the data suggest that post-application advising may be where experience provides the most consistent advantages. Strategy-heavy topics, such as making final school selection and reapplying, showed particularly large differences in very-confident rates, while financial topics, such as paying for law school and scholarships, showed smaller but still meaningful differences. These patterns likely reflect that post-application topics require accumulated knowledge of outcomes, school-specific practices, and navigation strategies that develop through supporting multiple admission cycles.



Summary: Advisor Abilities and Limitations

Prelaw advisors demonstrate remarkable consistency in confidence when engaged. Across all three phases and dozens of topics, confidence ratios typically range from **80% to 92%**, with most clustering above **86%**. In other words, the work does not inherently exceed advisors' abilities.

The primary limitation is selective engagement. The dramatic differences between overall confidence rates (**14% to 92%**) and confidence ratios (**61% to 99%**) reveal that apparent expertise gaps often reflect advisor avoidance, rather than inability. This pattern holds consistently. Advisors who commit to topics generally build needed skills and experience, but many opt out of areas where advisees need support. More prelaw advising experience, however, does tend to increase engagement and confidence.

Certain topic types consistently challenge the profession. Financial topics exemplify this pattern, with engagement and confidence declining through each phase while maintaining strong confidence ratios (**68% to 86%**) among engaged advisors. These findings suggest boundaries around what prelaw advisors consider their professional scope, although who sets the boundaries and why warrant further inquiry.

Post-application support represents an opportunity. Engagement rates ranging from **20% to 70%** indicate systematic disengagement later in the prelaw process. Yet even here, confidence ratios remain strong (**68% to 92%**), suggesting the gap stems from advisors stepping back, not lacking ability.

The profession works well within defined boundaries but struggles with scope expansion. Prelaw advisors demonstrate consistent success in core advising topics that build on general advising skills — exploration, decision-making support, strategic guidance — but encounter systematic challenges with topics requiring specialized external knowledge or especially high-stakes evaluative judgments.



Advisors See Advisee Challenges Clearly

Understanding advisor engagement and confidence provides only part of the picture. To serve effectively, advisors must recognize the challenges their populations face — and advisors perceive a range of challenges in their advising population. Advisor capacity to address these challenges varies along a continuum and depends partly on role definition.

Some challenges can be directly addressed through advising conversations. When advisees lack an understanding of application timelines, need help exploring legal careers, or believe misinformation, advisors can resolve these challenges in one or a few meetings. These fall squarely within advisor expertise.

Many challenges allow partial advisor influence. Advisors can coach time management strategies, provide decision-making frameworks, facilitate prelaw communities to address social isolation, or fundraise to cover costs associated with applying to law school. In these cases, advisors take meaningful action through coaching, facilitating, or resourcing. But advisees must do sustained work, or resolution requires additional actors beyond the advising relationship.

Some challenges permit only minimal advisor engagement. Mental health concerns require therapeutic intervention. Academic workload often reflects institutional requirements that advisors cannot change. Basic needs insecurity requires emergency services and financial aid offices. Family dynamics operate in spaces advisors cannot enter. For these challenges, an advisor's role is primarily acknowledgment, validation, and referral.

Advisors rated 22 challenges on a four-point scale from "not a concern" to "significant concern" for their advising populations. To identify challenges with the strongest agreement, we combined "moderate" and "significant" ratings. This captures challenges advisors broadly recognize as meaningful.

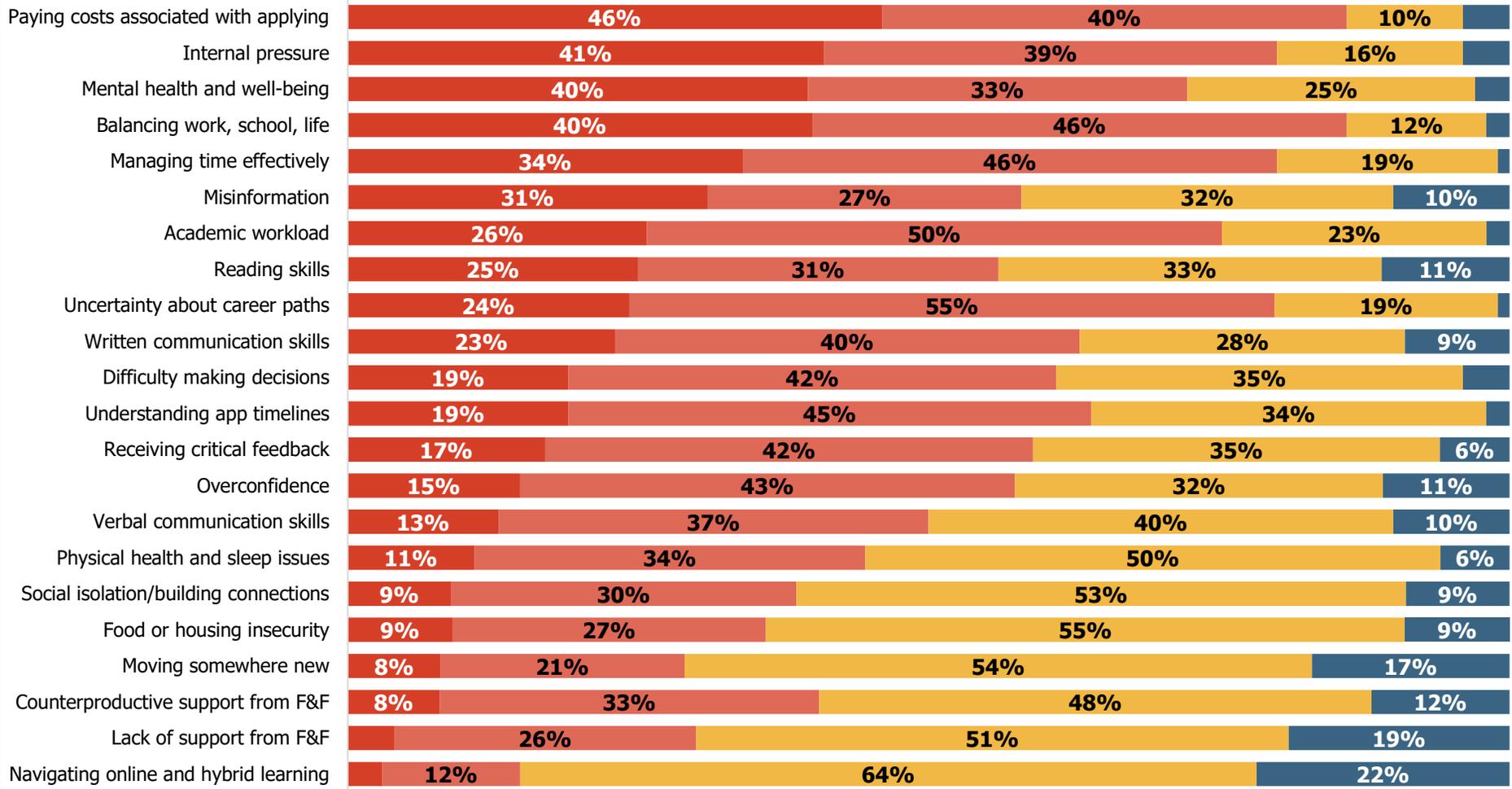
Our analysis focuses on the challenges that show modest to overwhelming agreement among advisors, exploring how those challenges align with advisor capacity to address them. Only two of the surveyed challenges show broad agreement that they are not a concern: navigating online and hybrid learning, and moving somewhere new.



Advisors Perceive Many Significant Advisee Challenges

This chart sorts challenges by the percentage of advisors who perceive it as significant among their advising population.

Advisee Challenges



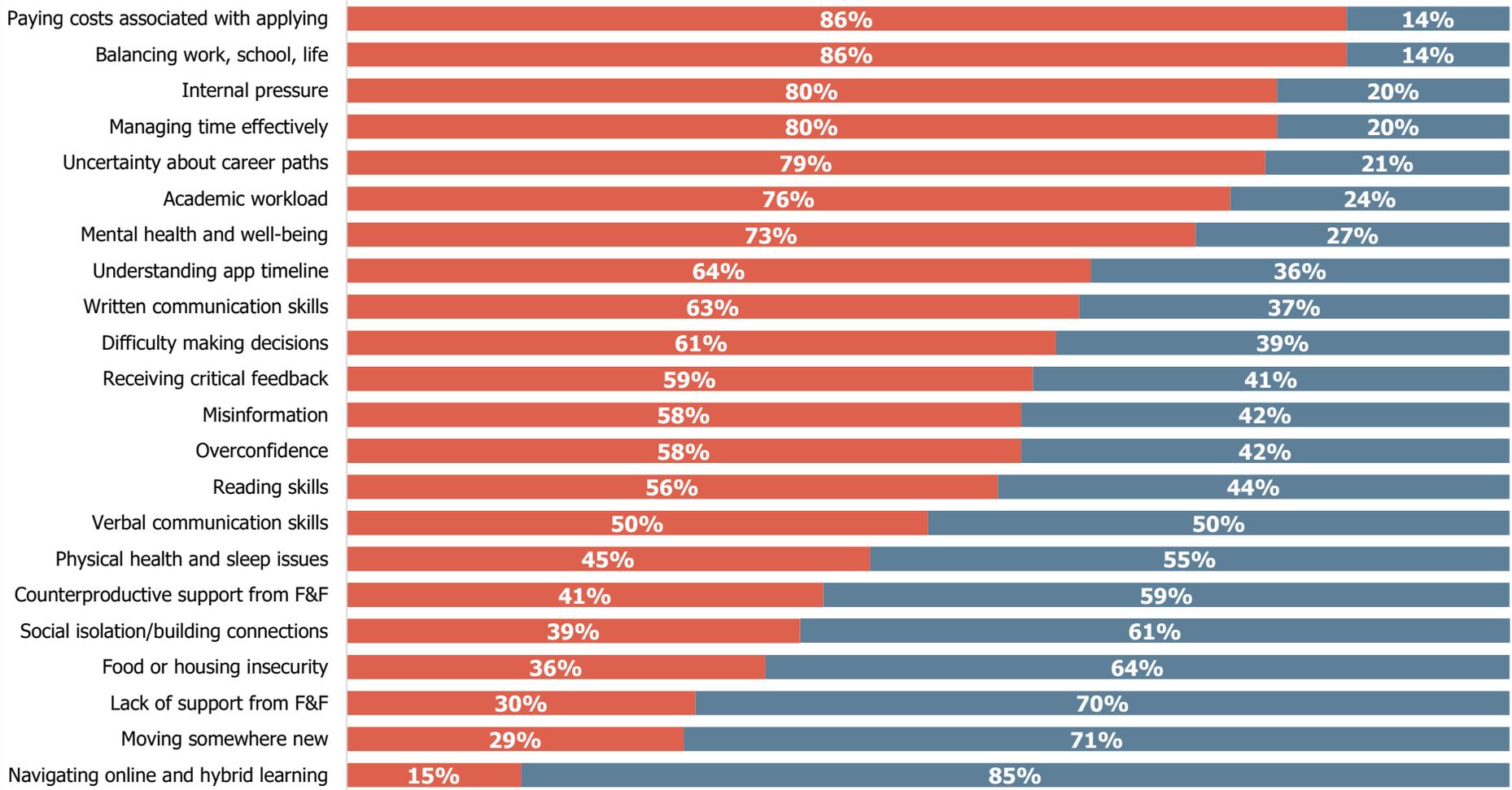
■ Significant ■ Moderate ■ Limited ■ Not a Concern



Money, Time, and Pressure Cast a Shadow Over Advisees

This chart sorts challenges by the percentage of advisors who perceive it as either moderate or significant (together “concerning”) among their advising population.

Advisee Challenges



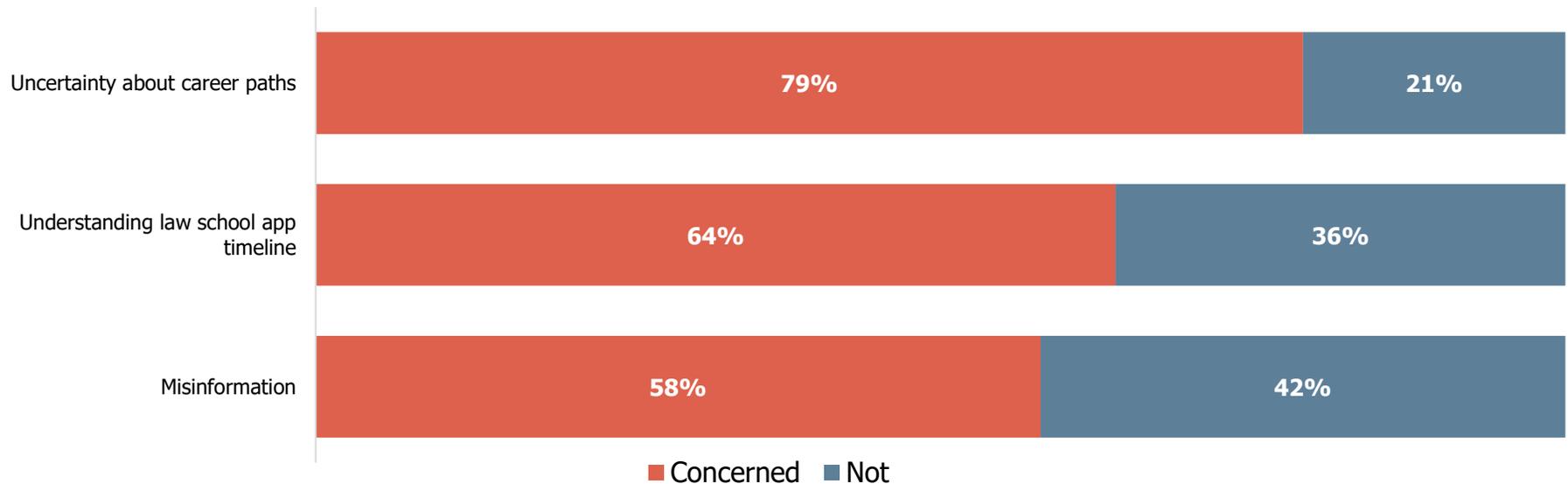
■ Concerned ■ Not



Direct Advisor Intervention Addresses Key Gaps

Three challenges fall within advisors' direct capacity to address. Career uncertainty shows the highest level of agreement (**79%**), while misinformation shows a relatively lower, but still significant, level of concern (**58%**). Timeline understanding falls in the middle (**64%**). These are challenges advisors can resolve through advising conversations themselves — typically in one or a few meetings — because these challenges align closely with core advising functions.

Advisors' specialized knowledge about law school admission processes and legal career exploration allows them to provide this guidance directly. When an advisee doesn't understand the importance of prep for the LSAT or believes law school requires a specific undergraduate major, advisors can correct these information gaps immediately. Traditional advising methods work well: Advisors can listen to what advisees share and leave unsaid, ask questions that guide advisees toward self-discovery and clarity, and engage in dialogue that allows them to understand each advisee's situation well enough to provide tailored guidance.



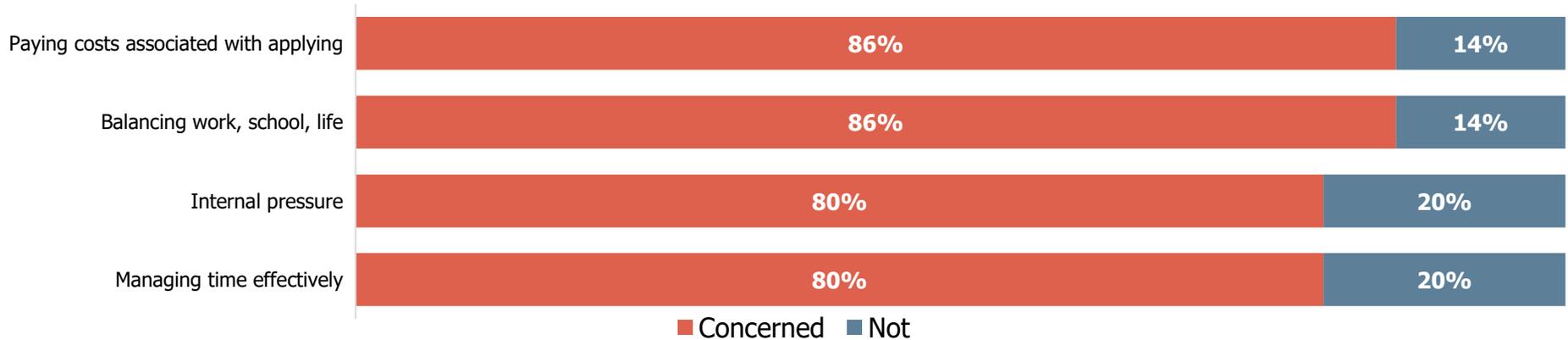


Top Challenges Allow Coaching but Require Advisee Work

Thirteen challenges fall into the “partial addressability” category, where advisors can take meaningful action through coaching, facilitating, or resourcing, but advisees must do sustained work or resolution requires additional actors. This is the largest category, encompassing challenges that range from **86%** agreement (paying to apply) to **39%** agreement (social isolation and building connections).

There is near-consensus for the top four challenges: paying for the costs associated with applying to law school (**86%**); balancing work, school, and personal life (**86%**); managing internal pressure (**80%**); and managing time (**80%**). Advisors can coach time management strategies, help advisees think through priorities and trade-offs, normalize stress, and — for application costs — fundraise or secure institutional resources. But they cannot eliminate the underlying constraints: limited hours, competing obligations, financial pressures, or the internal experience of stress.

Advisee Challenges



This creates a frustrating dynamic. The challenges advisors most universally recognize are also challenges they have limited capacity to resolve. Advisors routinely witness these struggles and can coach, support, and guide, but any sustained developmental work remains with the advisee. Fortunately, advisors have countless stories of advisees who, through this coaching and support, successfully navigated these challenges — evidence that partial influence can still make a meaningful difference.

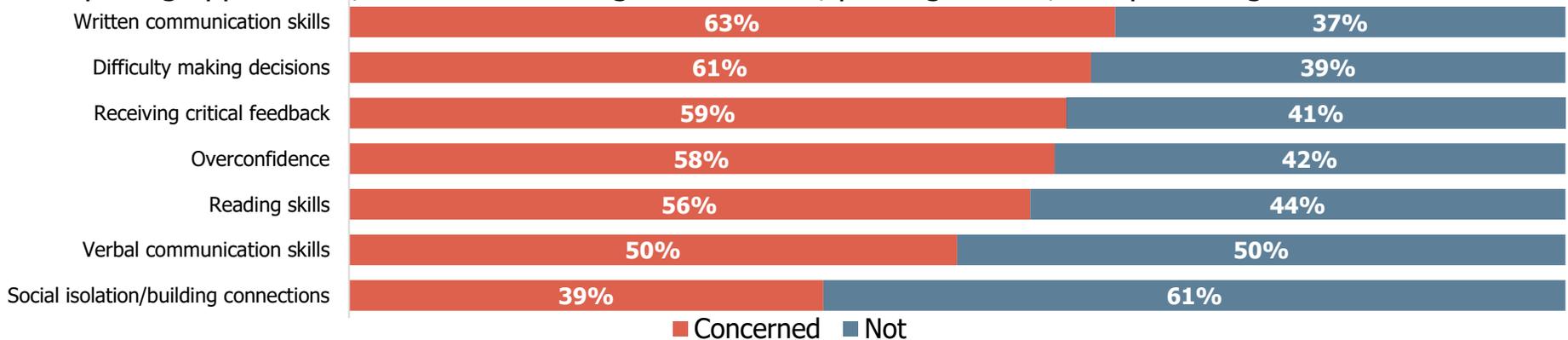


Skill Development Falls Under Advisor Influence, Not Control

Additional challenges in this category show modest to significant agreement, ranging from **39% to 63%**. These include communication skills (written **63%**, verbal **50%**), decision-making difficulties (**61%**), receiving critical feedback (**59%**), overconfidence (**57%**), reading skills (**56%**), and social isolation (**39%**). Each represents a skill or competency that advisors are positioned to support through coaching, creating practice opportunities, facilitating peer connections, or offering frameworks. In all cases, the developmental work remains with advisees.

Partially addressable challenges fall into two groups. The previously discussed top challenges involve managing conditions that shape how people navigate all aspects of their lives. There is overwhelming agreement that advising populations struggle here, casting a shadow over other aspects of their life. The remaining challenges involve capabilities advisees use within those conditions: writing personal statements, making decisions about law schools, receiving feedback on applications, or building professional connections.

Importantly, the skills and competencies represented by these challenges are foundational for the entire legal career trajectory. Managing life conditions and deploying specific capabilities are essential not just for completing applications, but for succeeding in law school, passing the bar, and practicing law.



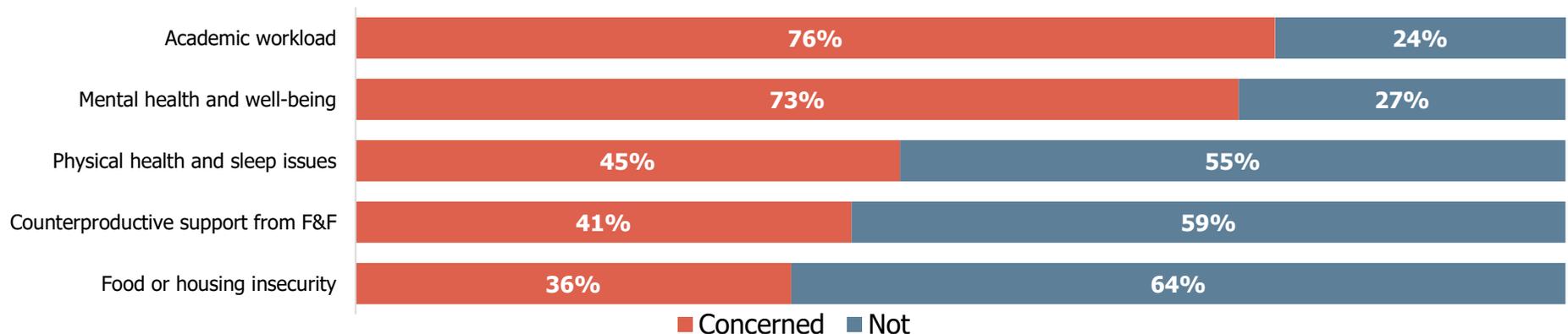


Some Challenges Fall Outside Scope of Prelaw Advising

Six challenges fall into the “minimal addressability” category. These challenges require either specialized intervention, beyond advisor expertise, or address structural constraints advisors cannot change: academic workload (**76%**), mental health (**72%**), physical health (**45%**), food or housing insecurity (**35%**), and counterproductive support (**40%**) or a lack of support (**30%**) from friends and family.

These challenges show notably lower average agreement (**50%**) compared with directly addressable (**67%**) and partially (**65%**) challenges. Most have relatively less, although still modest, agreement. That may reflect either lower prevalence in advising populations or limited advisor visibility regarding challenges that are private, external to academic contexts, or not disclosed in advising conversations.

Two exceptions stand out: mental health and academic workload. Both show substantially higher agreement (**73%** and **76%**, respectively). Unlike food insecurity or family dynamics, these challenges routinely surface in advising. Advisors see advisees struggling, see demanding course schedules, and hear about competing obligations. This visibility likely explains the higher agreement — advisors can witness these challenges even when they cannot meaningfully address them beyond acknowledgment and referral to appropriate services, whether counseling, financial aid offices, academic support programs, or family support systems.





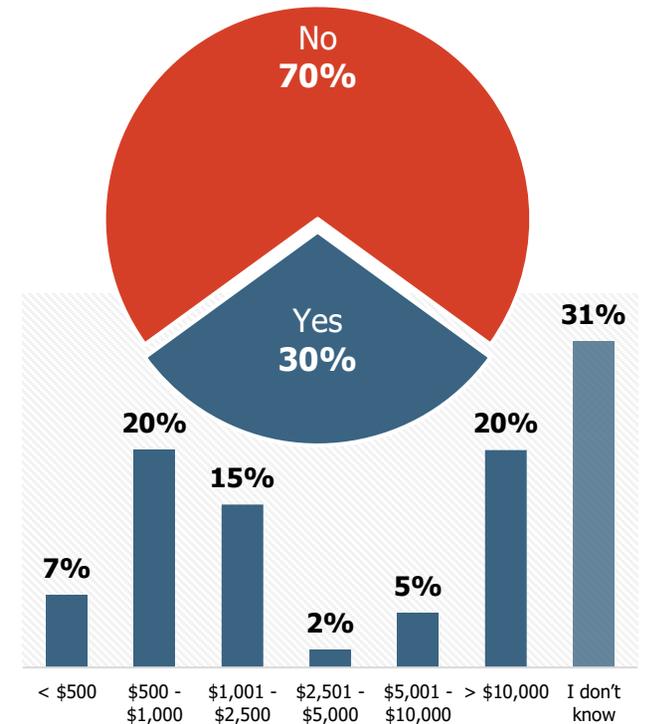
70% Lack Funds Despite App Cost Concerns Topping List

While the costs associated with getting into law school topped the list of concerns among advisors (**86%**), capacity to address this concern varies considerably across institutions. Not all advisors have access to funding, institutional support, or fundraising mechanisms that would allow them to help advisees cover law-school-related costs.

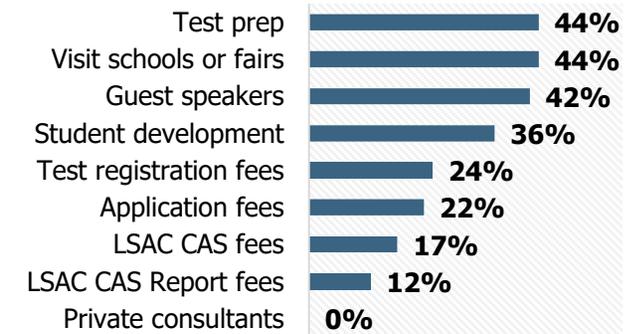
When asked whether they had funding available to assist advisees with law school application costs, **70%** of advisors reported having no such funding. Among the **30%** who do have access to funds, the amounts vary widely — from under \$500 (**7%**) to over \$10,000 (**20%**), with a plurality falling in the \$500 to \$2,500 range.

Law school application fees represent only part of the financial burden prospective law students face. When advisors with funding were asked what they support, test preparation emerged as the most common use (**44%**), alongside travel to visit schools or fairs (**44%**) and guest speakers (**42%**). Fees paid to LSAC or similar organizations followed (**24%**, **17%**, **12%**), with application fees in the middle (**22%**). Test preparation costs alone can dwarf application fees, yet few advisors have resources for these expenses.

While we categorized the costs associated with applying to law school as partially addressable, this challenge falls into the minimally addressable category for most. Those advisors can validate the struggle and inform advisees about fee waivers from law schools and LSAC, but they cannot provide direct funding. That variation in institutional support creates significant disparities in what different advisors can offer their populations.



Advisee Funding? Yes

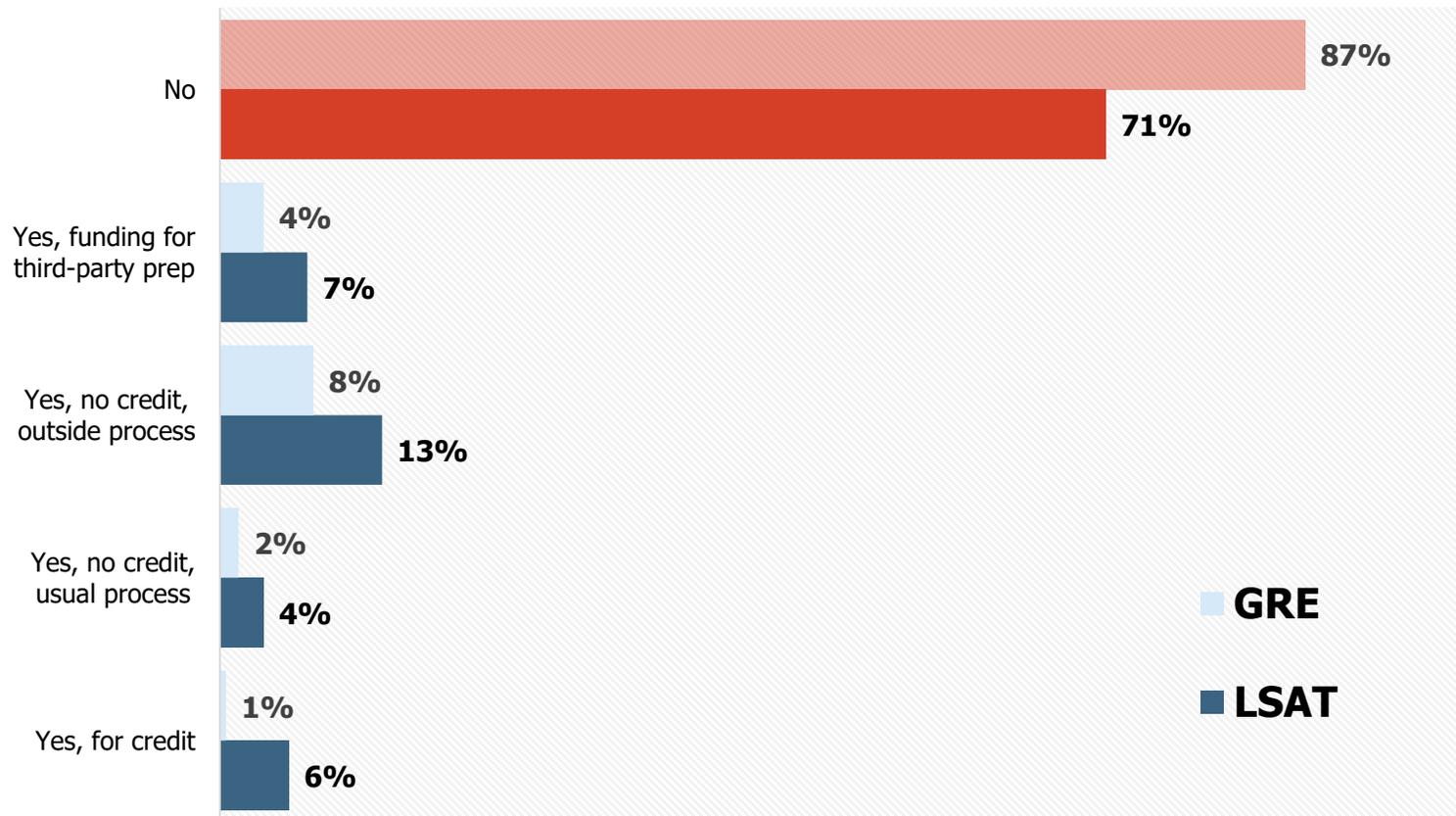




Financial Assistance for LSAT and GRE Prep Very Limited

Beyond direct funding, a minority of institutions provide LSAT preparation (**29%** of advisors report this) and GRE preparation (**13%**). This takes various forms: for-credit courses, no-credit courses, or institutional payment to third-party prep providers. No-credit courses are sometimes integrated into standard course registration systems but more often operate outside those processes.

Advisee Challenges





Effective Communication Channels

To address the challenges advisees face, advisors employ multiple channels to communicate with advisees and various formats to deliver advising experiences. Among the communication channels that advisors use, six emerge as the most effective across prelaw exploration, application support, and post-application support. And within these six, there is clear tiering between core and supplementary channels. This tier boundary never shifts across phases, though selection frequency within each tier changes as advisee needs evolve.

Core Channels

- Meetings and Office Hours
- Info Sessions and Workshops
- Emails

Supplementary Channels

- Student Organizations
- Websites
- Newsletters

Meetings anchor the core tier, with increasing numbers of advisors rating them among their most effective channels: **75%** of advisors include meetings in their top three for exploration, and that number rises to **87%** for application support and **91%** for post-application support. The latter **16-point increase** suggests that progression through the prelaw process requires more individualized guidance.

Information sessions and emails demonstrate inverse trajectories. Information sessions appear in the top three for **54%** of advisors during exploration and **64%** during application support, then decline to **41%** post-application. Emails follow the opposite pattern: selected by **52%** during exploration and **49%** during application support, then increasing to **71%** post-application. Information sessions may be most effective when advisors can reach many advisees simultaneously with standardized guidance, while emails may serve the exploration and post-application phases, where advisees need targeted follow-up and decision support.

The supplementary tier shows more stability across phases, with selection rates varying by less than **10 percentage points**. These channels provide consistent background support during the advising process.



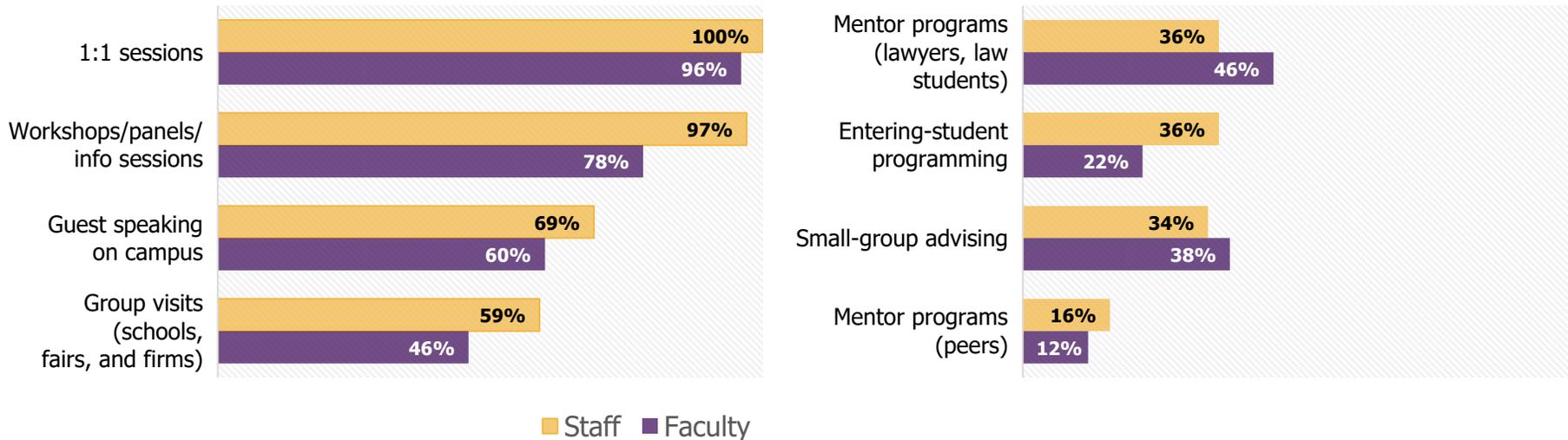
Advising Experiences for Advisees

Advisors use communication channels to accomplish various goals: event marketing, prelaw program recruitment, education, resource sharing, reminders, and relationship-building. We also asked advisors which advising formats they use — focusing on the type of experience, rather than delivery method.

Two formats achieve near-universal adoption: one-on-one sessions (**98%**); and workshops, panels, and informational sessions (**88%**). Beyond these foundational formats, advisors commonly employ guest speaking (**64%**) and group visits (**54%**), while mentorship programs, small-group advising, and entering-student programming see more variable adoption.

Staff and faculty show similar adoption patterns, though staff engage in more large-scale programming. Staff are notably more likely to provide workshops and panels (**97%** vs. **78%**), entering-student programs (**36%** vs. **22%**), and group visits (**59%** vs. **46%**). This suggests staff may have more time for scalable programming and events, while faculty integrate prelaw advising into existing teaching roles. Faculty show higher adoption of mentorship with non-peers (**46%** vs. **36%**), possibly reflecting established networks.

Engagement Tactics





Advisor Favorites for Exploration

Regardless of communication channel or advising format, advisors prioritize connecting their advisees with a range of resources, strategies, and activities. We asked advisors to identify their favorites for prelaw exploration and academic planning, which we grouped into five buckets.

Interviews and Networking

- Informational interviews with lawyers
- Networking with alumni and local professionals
- Engaging with student organizations

Internships and Shadowing

- Legal internships for hands-on experience
- Job shadowing and observing legal professionals
- Participating in fieldwork

Prelaw and Academic Activities

- Academic advising for law school prep
- Using LSAC and ABA resources
- Course selection guidance

Workshops, Panels, and Events

- Law school panels and guest speakers
- Prelaw fairs and networking events
- Legal career webinars and workshops

LSAC-Provided Resources

- LSAC.org, LawHub, Law School Transparency
- Educational content and virtual advice
- LSAC admission tools and data



Advisor Favorites for Application Support

We also asked advisors about their favorite resources, strategies, and activities that they use or suggest to advisees for law school application support.

Personal Statement Review

- Essay and résumé workshops
- One-on-one personal statement feedback
- Writing center support

One-on-One Advising

- Individual meetings with advisors
- Tailored application guidance
- Strategic planning for school selection

Workshops and Panels

- Law school admission and LSAT prep sessions
- Financing law school discussions
- Application strategy events

Alumni and Law School Networking

- Connecting with alumni and law students
- Engaging with law school admission reps
- Attending info sessions

LSAC-Provided Resources

- LSAC.org, LawHub, Law School Transparency
- Educational content and virtual advice
- LSAC admission tools and data



Advisor Favorites for Post-App Support

Finally, we asked advisors about their favorite resources, strategies, and activities that they use or suggest to advisees for support after law school applications are submitted.

Financial Planning

- Use AccessLex for aid and private scholarships
- Compare financial offers
- Plan for law school costs

Staying Engaged

- Contact admissions for updates
- Attend admitted-student days
- Send LOCI if waitlisted

One-on-One Advising

- Discuss decisions and next steps
- Review scholarships and financial aid
- Personalized support

Alumni and Law School Networking

- Connecting with alumni and law students
- Seek mentorship from lawyers
- Learn from peers' experiences

LSAC and Data Tools

- Use LSAC and ABA 509 Reports
- Compare schools and job outcomes
- Research bar passage rates



Advisors Measure Success in Many Ways

How advisors measure success shapes what they prioritize and how they allocate limited time and resources. We see substantial variation in how advisors and their supervisors evaluate their work — far more than communication channels or advising formats, where advisors converge around core approaches. This diversity of approaches to measuring prelaw program success reflects differences in institutional contexts, advisor roles, program maturity, available data infrastructure, and personal philosophies.

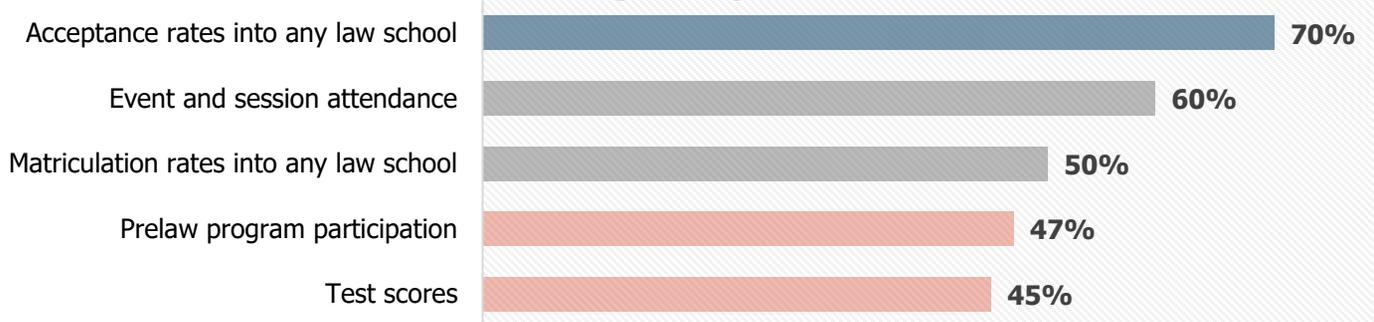
Certain metrics, though, achieve broad adoption: **70%** of advisors identify acceptance rates into any law school as a success metric, and **60%** identify attendance at advising sessions or events the same way. Advisors also use measures such as specific law school acceptances, advisee engagement, preparation indicators, and program health.

Notably, **90%** of advisors use at least one metric to evaluate program success. Advisors use an average of **5.5** metrics from the available options, though the measures vary by advisor background, role, and institutional context, with some metrics showing notably different adoption patterns. Some advisors (**12%**) also use institutional financial support for prelaw advising as a success metric, likely viewing resource allocation as an indicator of program value.

Success Metric Usage



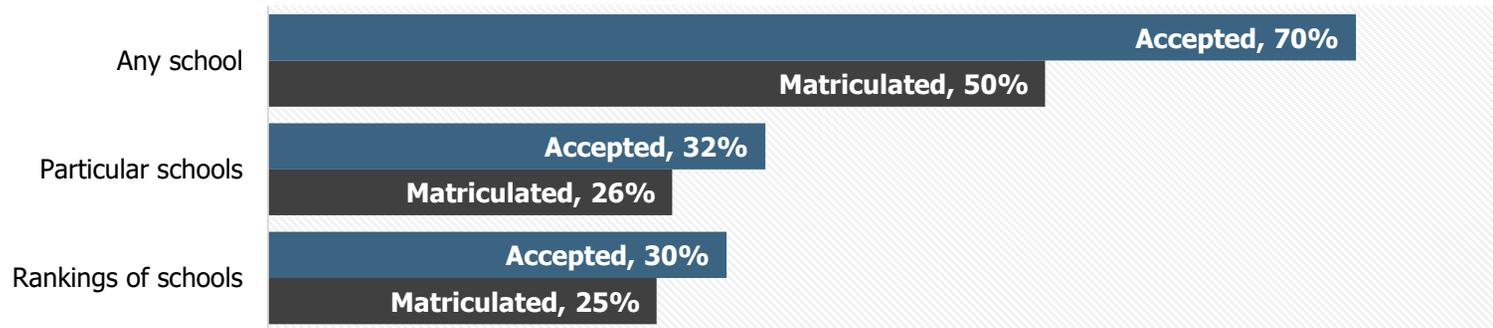
Top Program Success Metrics





Access Metrics Outweigh Selectivity Measures

Advisors commonly evaluate program success through law school acceptance and matriculation rates: **70%** track acceptance rates into any law school — the single most prevalent success metric — while **50%** track matriculation rates. Fewer advisors track selectivity-focused outcomes, whether based on law school ranking or some other criterion, such as their home institution’s law school.



Advisor background and role influence which application outcomes receive emphasis. Law school graduates track selectivity-focused metrics more frequently than do non-law graduates, particularly when it comes to acceptance into certain schools (**42%** vs. **24%**) and school rankings (**36%** vs. **24%**). Staff advisors focus more on access metrics, including acceptance (**75%** vs. **66%** faculty) and matriculation (**55%** vs. **45%**) into any school, while faculty show greater attention to selectivity measures, such as acceptance into certain schools (**38%** vs. **25%** staff).

Notably, **29%** of advisors treat advisees deciding “No” or “Not now” as a success metric. This reflects recognition that effective advising includes helping advisees make well-informed decisions about whether to pursue law school, not just supporting those who do apply. Despite that, only **9%** of advisors use prelaw program attrition as a success metric, suggesting most programs either lack formal enrollment structures that would generate attrition data or view retention as less central to evaluating program effectiveness.



Beyond Outcomes, Advisors Track Program Engagement

Beyond law school outcomes, advisors use various measures of advisee engagement and program participation to evaluate success. For example, **60%** of advisors use attendance at advising sessions, workshops, and other events as a success metric — the second most common metric overall, after law school acceptance rates. However, this metric shows the largest role-based difference among all success metrics: **73%** of staff advisors use attendance, compared with **46%** of faculty — a 27-point gap. This disparity likely reflects staff advisors' higher institutional expectations for programming and event management, making attendance a more salient indicator of their programs' reach and impact.

Nearly half of advisors (**47%**) use prelaw program participation as a success metric. While related to attendance, participation represents a broader measure of engagement, encompassing interaction across multiple channels, including emails, advising sessions, workshops, and online platforms. Advisors using participation as a metric nearly always also use attendance. However, the reverse is less true: About **40%** of advisors who use attendance as a success metric don't also use broader program participation.

This pattern suggests attendance serves as an accessible entry point for engagement measurement, while participation requires more comprehensive data synthesis across multiple touchpoints. Experienced advisors show slightly higher adoption of participation metrics (**49%**) compared with early-career advisors (**43%**), potentially reflecting greater capacity for this kind of cross-channel assessment.

Additional engagement metrics see moderate adoption: **37%** of advisors use alumni returning to campus to speak with prospective law students as a success indicator, and **31%** use feedback from students or alumni on ongoing projects. These metrics reflect relationship-building and program-quality dimensions that extend beyond simple head counts or attendance figures.



Infrastructure Affects Success Metrics

Advisors also evaluate success through metrics that look at advisee preparation for law school applications and legal careers. Of note, **45%** use test scores as a success metric, making this the most commonly adopted preparation indicator. Test scores serve multiple functions: demonstrating that advisees are academically prepared for law school, showing improvement over time through test prep support, and signaling something about the institution's student profile.

Staff advisors and law school graduates show slightly higher adoption of test score metrics (**50%** and **51%**, respectively) compared with faculty advisors (**40%**) and non-law graduates (**40%**). This may reflect that staff advisors and those with legal backgrounds place greater emphasis on quantifiable application credentials or are more likely to use score data from advisees through LSAC reports.

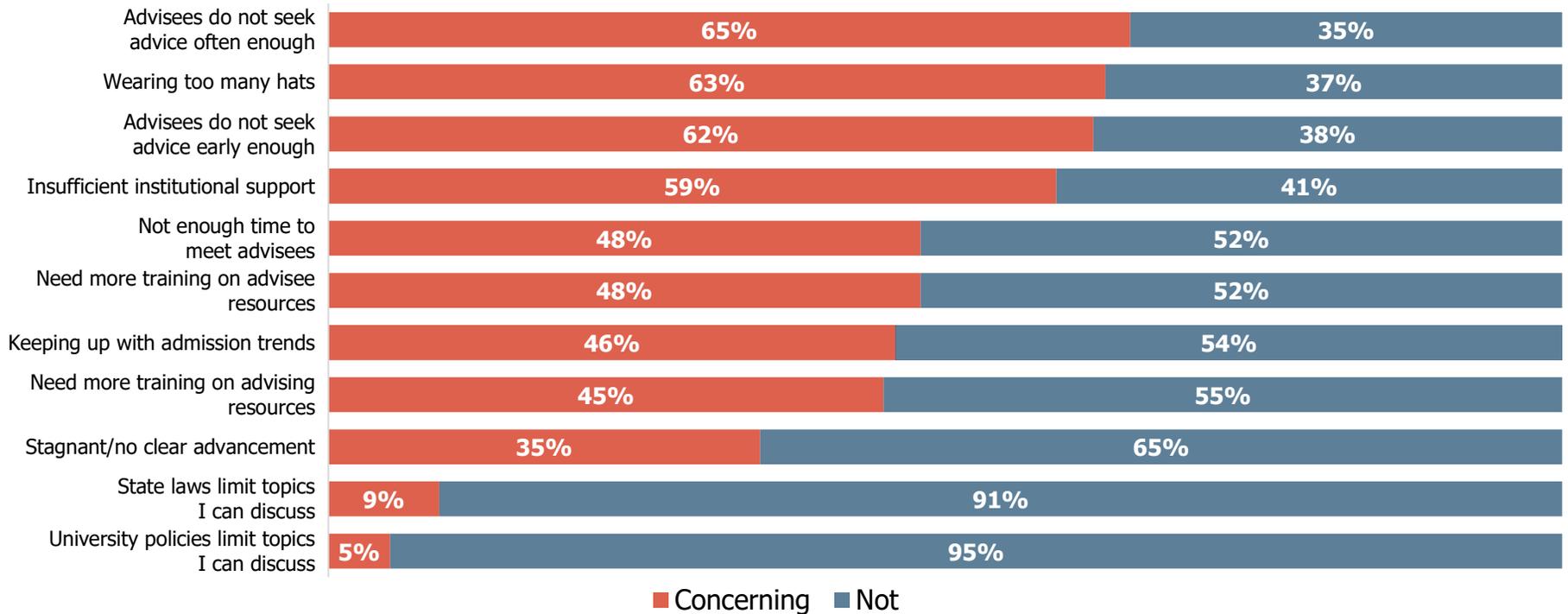
Beyond test scores, **27%** of advisors use networking connections between prospective law students and legal professionals as a success metric, while **18%** use internships. The relatively low adoption of internships as a success metric is notable, given that internships appear frequently in advisors' favorite strategies for prelaw exploration. This gap suggests that while advisors value and recommend internships, fewer have the infrastructure to track participation systematically or use it to evaluate program effectiveness. Experienced advisors show higher adoption of internships as a metric (**21%**) compared with early-career advisors (**13%**), potentially reflecting that advisors need time to build internship tracking systems.



Institutional Challenges Pervade Advising

Success metrics reveal a field where measurement practices vary widely based on available infrastructure and institutional support. These constraints become explicit when advisors identify their most concerning challenges, which fall into three buckets: institutional resources, advisee engagement, and professional development.

Institutional challenges dominate: **63%** are concerned they wear too many hats, and **39%** identify that as a significant concern — the highest for any challenge. Closely related, **59%** are concerned about insufficient institutional support, while **48%** are concerned they don't have enough time to meet with advisees. These challenges share a common root in how institutions allocate resources and define advisor roles. This creates capacity constraints that limit effectiveness, regardless of expertise.



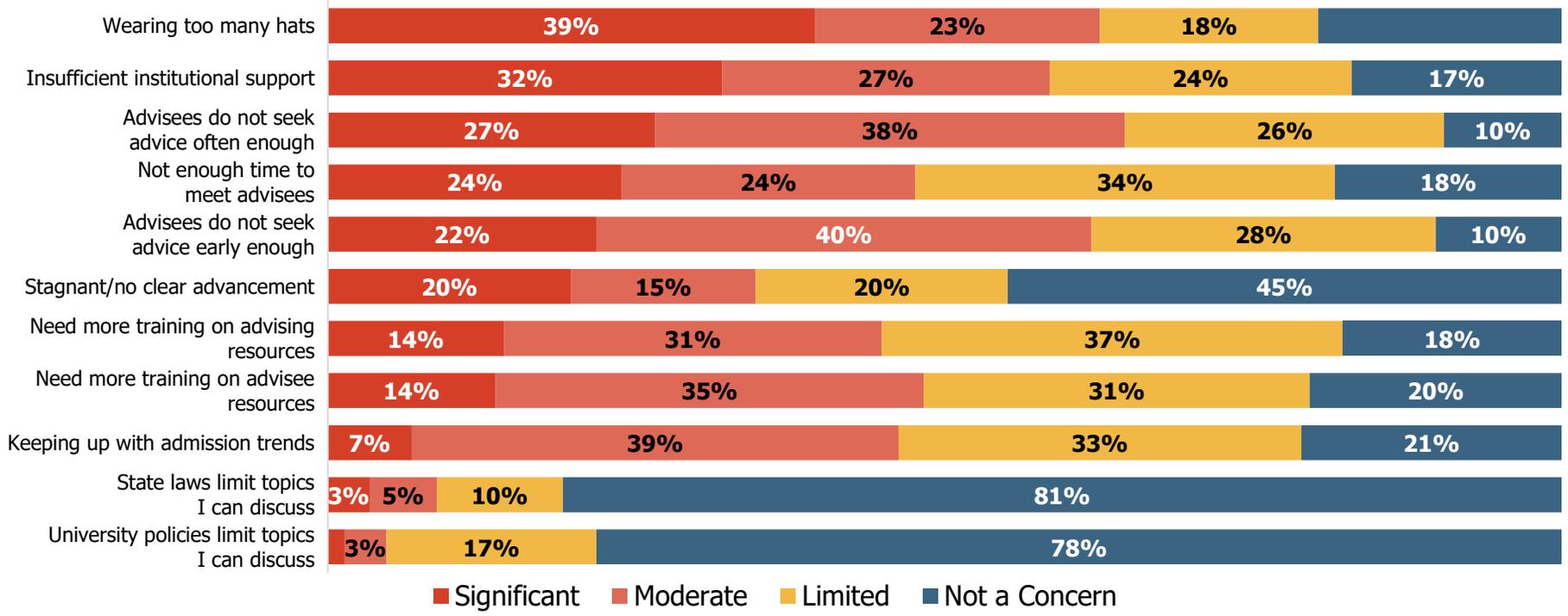


Advisors Have a Strong Desire to Help

Among advisors, **65%** are concerned that advisees don't seek advice often enough, while **62%** are concerned they don't start early enough. These challenges are related, with similar consequences, but warrant different approaches. Bringing advisees into advising earlier requires outreach, perhaps in partnership with undergraduate admissions. Increasing frequency among known advisees may require changes to communication, more follow-ups, or more positive initial prelaw advising experiences. Institutional challenges make these efforts all the more difficult.

Among other concerns, **46%** of advisors are concerned about keeping up with law school admission trends, while **45 to 48%** are concerned about needing more training, which aligns with the confidence patterns across different activities observed earlier.

Measuring Success



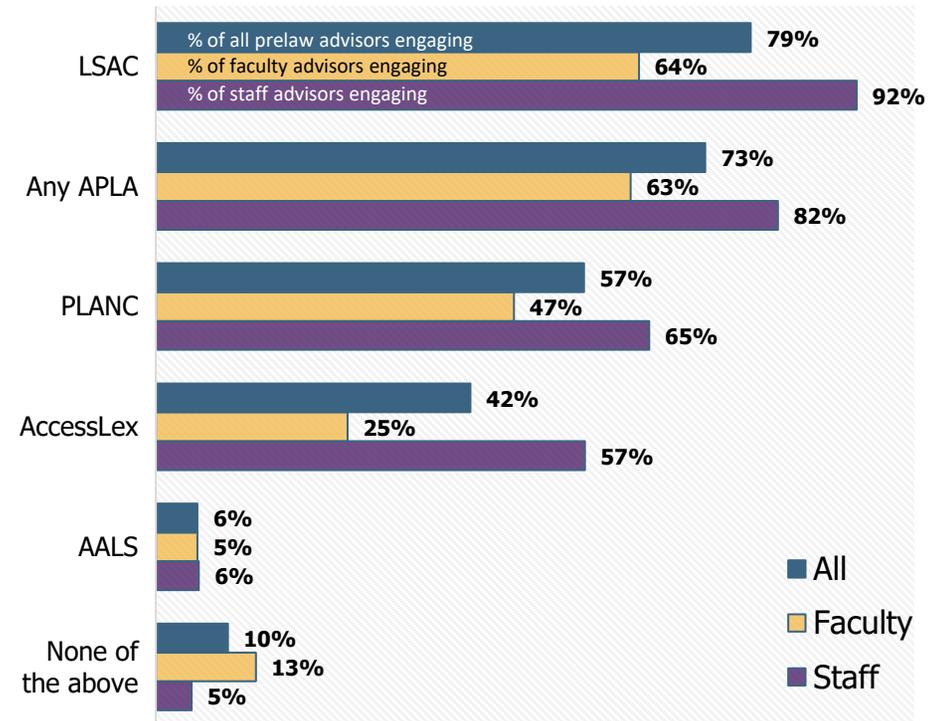


Most Engage Multiple Professional Development Sources

Prelaw advisors face substantial resource constraints despite their commitment to supporting advisees. Professional development can help advisors expand capabilities and increase efficiency, though time remains a critical limiting factor — particularly for those with split responsibilities or large caseloads. Many prelaw advisors are the only one on their campus. Not surprisingly, many seek professional development with organizations such as regional prelaw advisor groups or LSAC. The vast majority of prelaw advisors engage with at least one external source, but faculty are **2.5 times** as likely as staff to report using none.

This engagement gap extends to how many sources advisors use. Staff are more likely than faculty to engage with multiple professional development sources (**82% vs. 59%**), with half of staff selecting four or more sources, compared with just 19% of faculty. The average staff advisor engages with three sources, while faculty average two. Across the top four sources — LSAC, any APLA group, PLANC, and AccessLex — staff adoption rates exceed faculty rates by **18 to 32 percentage points**.

Among the 62 advisors who selected only one external organization, **62%** chose LSAC and **33%** chose an APLA. Experience level shows little effect on these professional development patterns, with one exception: New advisors use LSAC resources at substantially higher rates (**93%**) than do experienced advisors (**71%**).



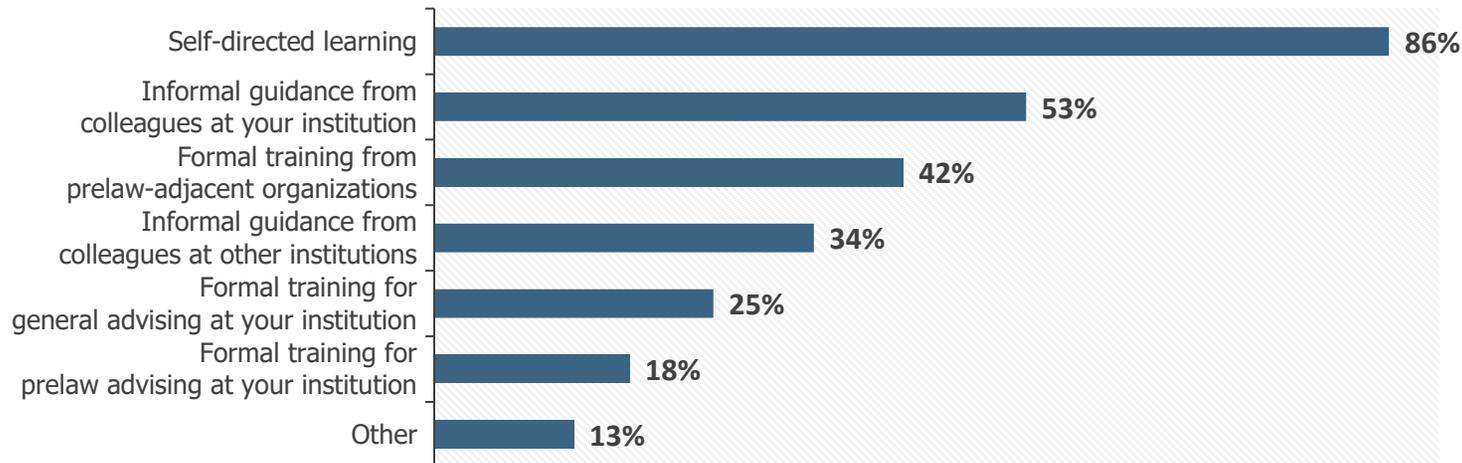


New Advisors Lean More on Self-Directed Learning

Continued professional development is important, but the need and desire for accurate information about the law school exploration and application process starts on day one. When preparing for their new role as a prelaw advisor, **86%** used self-directed learning — making it by far the most common preparation method across all advisor types. Beyond teaching themselves, advisors received both formal and informal training: **57%** received some form of formal training, while **64%** received informal guidance from colleagues, either at their own institution or from other schools. Notably, **22%** of advisors relied exclusively on self-directed learning without any formal or informal support.

Staff advisors received substantially more institutional support than faculty. Among staff, **71%** received formal training and **75%** received informal guidance, compared with just **42%** and **53%**, respectively, of faculty. This gap is especially pronounced for institutional training, as **27%** of staff received formal prelaw training from their institution, compared with only **7%** of faculty. External prelaw organizations partially fill this gap, providing formal training to **50%** of staff and **33%** of faculty. The result is that **31%** of faculty advisors prepared for their role using only self-directed learning, compared with **13%** of staff.

Advisor Preparation Usage

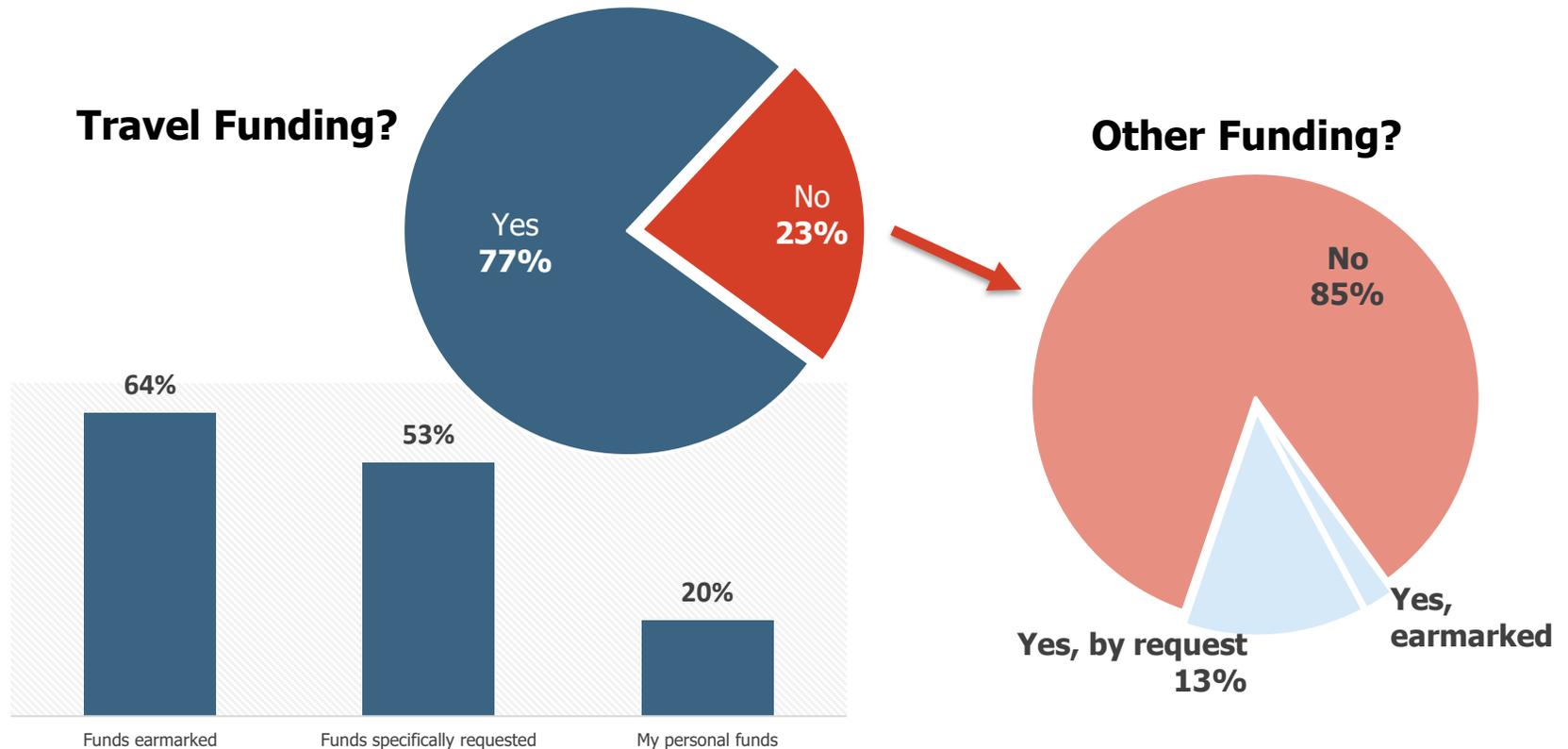




Travel Funding Affects Professional Development

Many professional development opportunities are available virtually, but some require in-person attendance. While **77%** of advisors can travel for prelaw conferences or workshops, **20%** of those advisors must use personal funds. Among the **23%** of advisors who cannot travel for these prelaw professional development opportunities, **85%** have no other professional development funds available.

Travel access differs notably by role: **86%** of staff can travel for prelaw advising professional development, compared with **67%** of faculty.





Advisors' Feelings of Connection Span the Spectrum

In-person events foster community connection between prelaw advisors and their peers, as well as between prelaw advisors and law school admission professionals. While these events have panels and presentations focused on skills and knowledge, they also provide formal and informal social time at receptions, during meals, on outings, and in hallways. Given the importance of these professional connections, we asked a deliberately subjective question to gauge community integration: How do you rate your connection to others in the prelaw advising community?

Advisors' Connection to Advisors



Advisors' Connection to Law School Admission Professionals



Prelaw advisors are evenly distributed from “very disconnected” to “very connected” in their feelings of connection to both prelaw advisor peers and law school admission colleagues. Despite this distribution, connection levels to these two groups are only moderately correlated ($r=0.58$). This suggests that advisors who feel integrated with peers also tend to feel connected to law school admission professionals. However, this relationship is only moderate: Many advisors feel strongly connected to one group while disconnected from the other, indicating that these professional networks operate somewhat independently.



Travel Access and Role Shape Feelings of Connection

When we examine these patterns more closely, a stark relationship between travel access and connection emerges. Notably, **27%** of advisors feel disconnected when they can travel for professional development, compared with **61%** for those who cannot. The charts below examine peer connection, but the pattern holds for connection to admission colleagues (**27%** disconnected with travel access vs. **59%** without).

Travel Access: Advisors' Connection to Advisors



No Travel Access: Advisors' Connection to Advisors



Advisor role also reveals a stark relationship for peer connection. Faculty are significantly more likely to feel disconnected (**46%**) compared with staff (**24%**). We see a similar pattern for advisors' connection to admission colleagues (**45%** disconnected for faculty vs. **25%** for staff).

Staff Advisors' Connection to Advisors



Faculty Advisors' Connection to Advisors





The State of Prelaw Advising in 2025

Prelaw advisors operate at the intersection of institutional constraint and professional commitment. They bring diverse backgrounds to their work — faculty and staff spanning different departments, varying levels of experience, and different pathways into the profession — but face common challenges. Many wear multiple hats, report insufficient institutional support, and lack adequate time to fulfill their advising responsibilities.

Confidence varies widely across advising topics. This variation reflects engagement patterns more than competence. When we examine advisors who actually advise on specific topics, confidence ratios typically range from **80% to 92%** across exploration, application, and post-application phases. These high ratios indicate that selective engagement, not lack of ability, is the primary barrier. Topics requiring specialized external knowledge — such as lawyer licensing, high-stakes evaluative judgments about school selection, and especially anything involving money — see systematic avoidance. Post-application support shows both lower engagement and wider confidence variation than earlier phases.

Communication tactics shift across the prelaw journey. Advisors adapt as advisee needs change, with meetings becoming increasingly central while information sessions and emails serve different functions at different phases. Advisors see what advisees face, but their capacity to address these challenges varies. Some challenges fall within their direct expertise to resolve. Others require shared effort between advisors and advisees. Still others require specialized intervention beyond the advising relationship.

These findings establish a baseline for 2025 and a foundation for the profession's continued development. Understanding shared challenges and constraints can help advisors recognize they are not alone in what they face. For organizations serving the prelaw advising community, these patterns reveal where advisors need support — whether through professional development; advocacy for institutional resources; or tools that help them reach, understand, and educate advisees. When we repeat this survey, we can track how the advising profession and applying to law school have evolved.



Prelaw Advisor Associations

MAPLA: Midwest Association of Prelaw Advisors

Primary States: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

NAPLA: Northeast Association of Prelaw Advisors

Primary States: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington, D.C., West Virginia

PCAPLA: Pacific Coast Association of Prelaw Advisors

Primary States: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington

SAPLA: Southern Association of Prelaw Advisors

Primary States: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia

SWAPLA: Southwest Association of Prelaw Advisors

Primary States: Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas

WAPLA: Western Association of Prelaw Advisors

Primary States: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming

PLANC: Prelaw Advisors National Council

PLANC serves as a resource for the regional associations and provides support for the common interests of prelaw advisors. Individual advisors do not join PLANC — its membership comprises the six APLAs.