



Majoring in Money:

HOW AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS MANAGE THEIR FINANCES



Conducted by
Ipsos Public Affairs

Sallie Mae's national study of college students ages 18–24

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INTRODUCTION

Sallie Mae, the nation's saving, planning, and paying for college company, along with Ipsos, one of the world's largest, independent market research companies, surveyed 800 college students to learn more about how they are managing their finances and using credit. The online survey, completed in December 2015, comprised a cross-section of key demographic variables. (For details on sampling and methodology, please see the Technical Notes section.)

Specifically, this report, *Majoring in Money: How American College Students Are Managing Their Finances*, examines the financial habits of college students between the ages of 18 and 24, including the methods they use to pay for purchases, their knowledge and use of credit, and their money management skills.

The report finds the majority of American college students are handling their finances responsibly, and they are looking for opportunities to understand and improve their credit management.

College students are taking advantage of an array of methods to pay for all types of purchases. While debit cards are the top payment choice, 56 percent of this year's students are carrying credit cards.

Their general attitude toward credit is sensible and most students are prudently managing their money.

The majority of college students report they do the following:

- Pay bills on time (77%).
- Set aside savings every month (55%).
- Track their spending (56%).
- Never spend more than they have (60%).
- Have a paying job (65%).

And among those with credit cards, the majority do the following:

- Use credit cards as a way to build credit (59%).
- Review their credit report (66%).
- Pay their credit card bill themselves (73%).
- Pay off their credit cards each month (63%).
- Keep their average monthly credit card balance under \$500 (69%).

These positive financial behaviors, however, mask an underlying gap in college students' knowledge about the detailed workings of credit. Nevertheless, four out of five college students are eager for more information and resources—from saving strategies to budgeting—to help them better manage their finances.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding an open black wallet. The wallet contains several colorful cards (red, green, blue) and a stack of US dollar bills. The background is a blurred wooden surface. The image is used as a background for a title card.

1

HOW COLLEGE STUDENTS PAY FOR PURCHASES

PAYMENT METHODS USED

College students take advantage of a wide array of payment methods. While debit cards dominate purchase behavior, students use a variety of other payment types as well.

When it comes to college students and “paying with plastic,” 85 percent of college students carry debit cards. Additionally, more than half (56%) hold a credit card.

Despite rumors that cash is nearly extinct among this generation, nearly nine in 10 college students (86%) say they carry cash. Cash is used most often for in-store purchases of \$20 or less.

As expected, mobile payment methods are also widely used among this population, with more than three-quarters (77%) of college students having used this option.

Far fewer students use other forms of payment. Seventeen percent use ATM cards, and 14 percent write checks. Prepaid debit cards are used by 15 percent of students, and 6 percent use a secured credit card.

- 86% of college students carry cash.
- 85% possess debit cards.
- 77% use mobile pay.
- 56% have credit cards.



Regardless of age, a similar proportion of students carry debit cards and cash. Younger students, however, are slightly less likely to use mobile payments, and significantly less likely to have a credit card. Seventy-two percent of students aged 18-20 have used mobile payments, compared with 80 percent of 21-22 year-olds and 81 percent of 23-24 year-olds. Forty-three percent of students aged 18-20 have a credit card, compared with 63 percent of students aged 21-22 and 71 percent of those aged 23-24.

FIGURE 1
PRIMARY METHODS OF PAYMENT, BY AGE

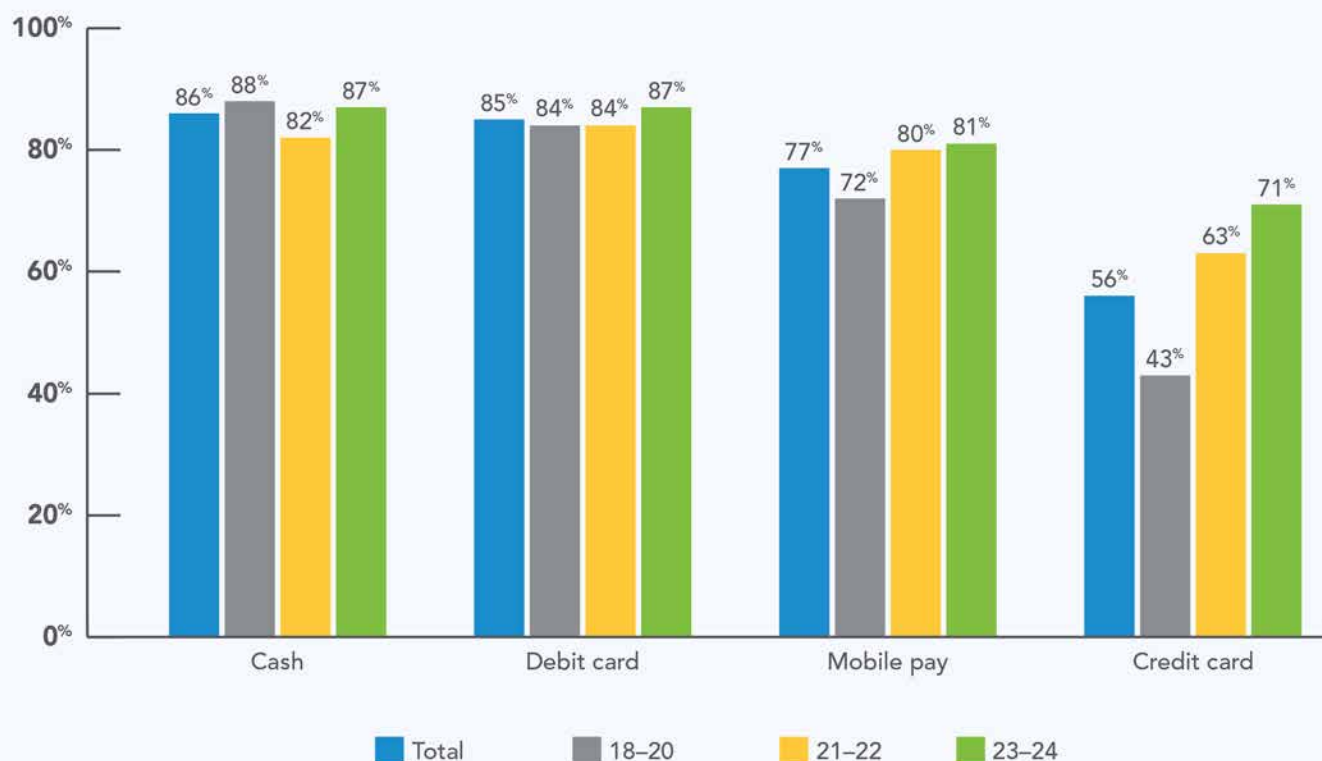
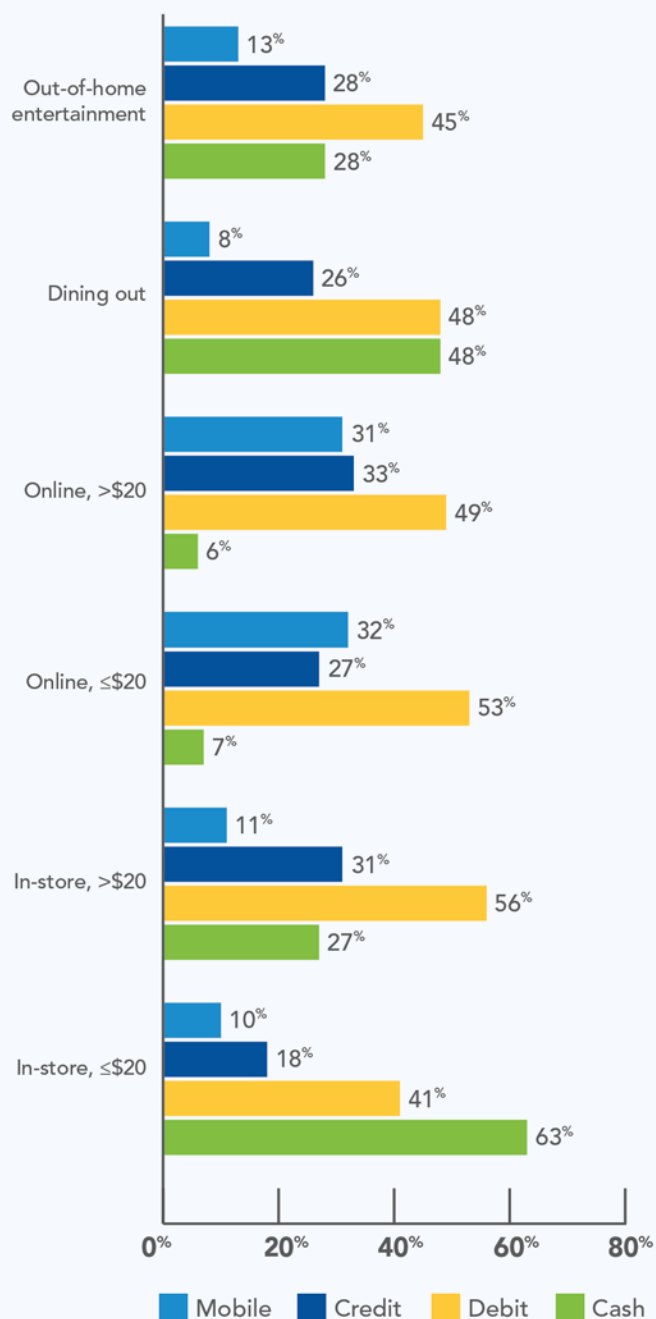
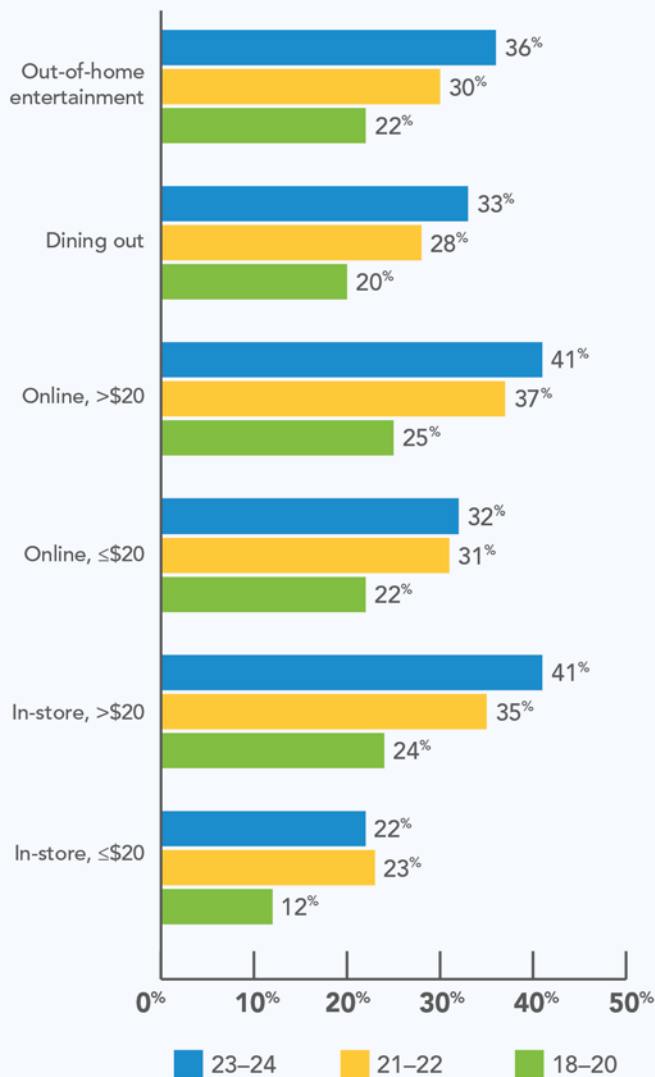


FIGURE 2
PAYMENT METHOD FOR
PURCHASE TYPE



Access to these various payment methods, however, does not correspond to actual usage. Among students who make the types of purchases measured (see Table 4), debit cards are used more often than other forms of payment for almost every category, including groceries, entertainment, college-related expenses, and to pay phone bills, regardless of whether the purchase

FIGURE 3
CREDIT CARD USE FOR
PURCHASE TYPE, BY AGE



or payment is made in a store or online. Cash is the leading payment choice for in-store purchases that cost less than \$20. It is tied with debit cards as the preferred way to pay when dining out.

Credit cards are used more than other forms of payment only for vacations. Mobile payments were not the top-used payment method for any purchase category.

Credit card usage is more prevalent among older college students, 21-24 year-olds, more of whom have credit cards than 18-20 year-olds. Higher usage is especially true for purchases that cost more than \$20, and for expenses related to entertainment and dining

out. Older students, likewise, are more likely than younger students to have utility and rent bills, and to use their credit cards for those expenses.

STUDENTS AND MOBILE PAYMENTS

College students choose to pay with mobile methods for the convenience. Seventy percent of respondents identify convenience as the primary reason for paying with mobile methods. Many, however, also appreciate the benefits of security, ease of use, and flexibility they get from these payment methods. Older college students are more likely than their younger counterparts to cite the security and value realized with mobile pay, while 18-20 year-olds are more likely to cite the ease of use.

Table A – Perceived Mobile Payment Benefits, by Age

	SECURITY	VALUE	EASE OF USE
Total (18-24)	40%	19%	37%
18-20	39%	15%	42%
21-22	32%	15%	31%
23-24	53%	29%	36%

Table B – Mobile Payment Methods Used

MOBILE PAYMENT TYPES USED	USAGE RATE
PayPal	58%
Apple Pay	18%
Google Wallet	16%
Venmo	11%
Android Pay	8%
Samsung Pay	6%
Square	6%
Dwolla	2%
Bitcoin/cryptocurrency	2%
CurrentC	1%
LevelUp	1%



2

HOW COLLEGE STUDENTS USE THEIR CREDIT CARDS

CONSIDERATIONS WHEN CHOOSING AND USING CREDIT CARDS

The majority of students consider both longer-term credit implications and day-to-day practical considerations when opting for credit cards. By far, the No. 1 reason students obtain a credit card is to begin building a credit history (59%). Other reasons for obtaining a credit card vary, and include:

- 26 percent said their parents or guardians suggested they get a credit card.
- 25 percent said they needed an easy way to shop online.
- 25 percent said they wanted a way to make purchases without carrying cash.
- 22 percent said they needed a way to access emergency funds.
- 20 percent said they are interested in earning rewards.

The age group most interested in using a credit card to build credit is 21-22 year-olds (68%), compared with 18-20 year-olds (51%) and 23-24 year-olds (57%).

Younger college students, 18-20 year-olds, are more likely than older students to obtain a credit card because their parents suggested it (35%), or in order to shop online (31%), while 23-24 year-olds are more likely than younger students to say they are interested in earning rewards (28%).



The No. 1 reason for obtaining a credit card is to begin building a credit history.

Parents influence the student's choice of first credit card. While only one-quarter of college students said their parents suggested they get a credit card, parental

PROFILE OF A TYPICAL STUDENT CREDIT CARD USER

- Older than 21
- Male
- Lives in the Northeast or South
- Comes from a high-income family
- Employed
- Says he is good or excellent at managing his money

influence over card choice rose dramatically once the student decided to obtain a card. More than two-thirds of students (68%) said their parents influenced their first credit card choice, including 18 percent whose parents added them to the parent card. Three out of 10 college students sought advice from their parents on which card to take. An additional 21 percent said parents took all of the responsibility by choosing the card for the student. Only 4 percent of students said their parents advised them against obtaining a card.

Eleven percent of college students said their parents knew they were looking to get a credit card, but had no recommendations. Fifteen percent said their parents didn't know they were looking for a credit card.

68% of students with credit cards said their parents influenced the choice of their first credit card.

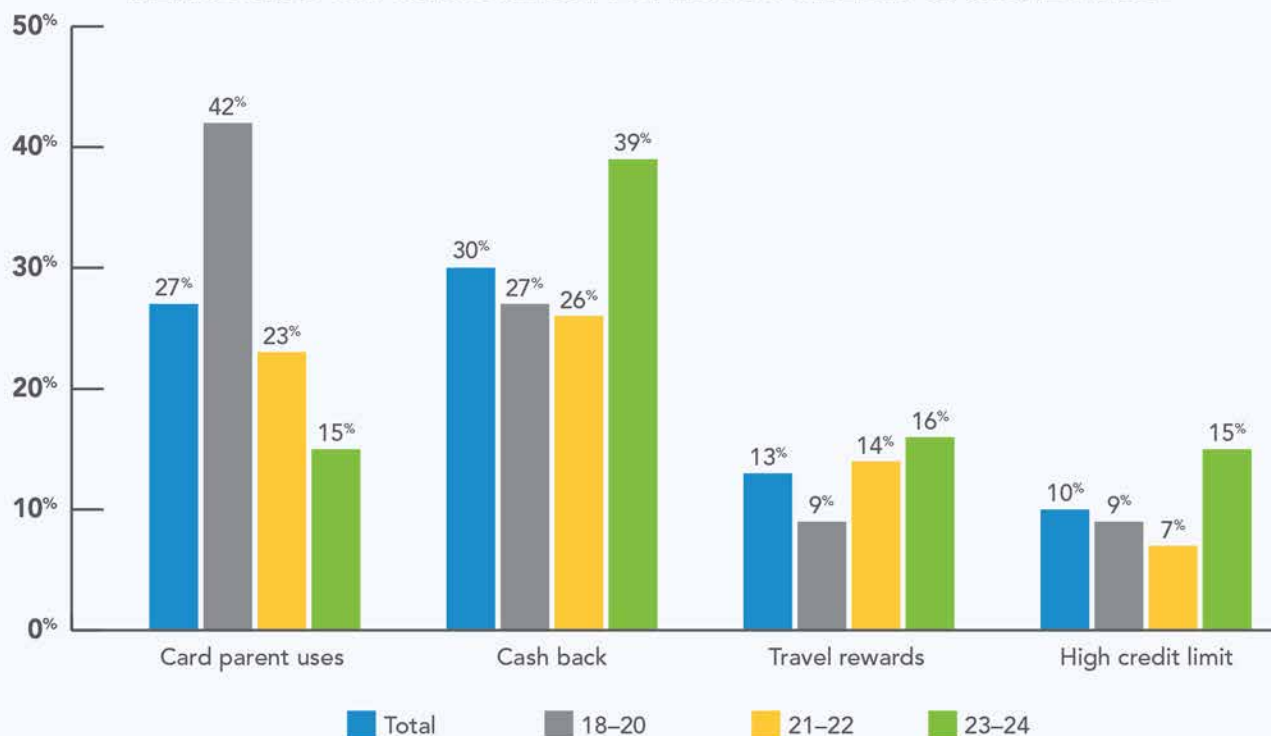


College students are savvy shoppers who choose cards that offer points or cash-back benefits. Students aren't just taking the first card offer for which they can be approved. The top two reasons college students cite for choosing a card are the rewards points (32%) or the cash-back benefit (30%). Easy approval ranked third (27%). One-quarter of students (25%) were influenced by the bank or issuing company's reputation.

Students aged 23-24 are more likely than younger students to choose a card that offers cash back (39%), travel rewards (16%), or a high credit limit (15%). Parallel to the influence parents have on younger students' card decisions, 42 percent of 18-20 year-olds—more than twice the rate of older college students—chose the actual card type or brand their parents use.

Most students who have credit cards use them regularly. Nearly half of college students use their credit cards on everyday purchases (46%), and another 12 percent use them for all types of purchases. Only about one-quarter limit card use to a needs-based situation, either only for emergencies (10%) or for large purchases that need to be paid over time (16%). A smaller percentage of students restrict card use to online shopping (12%) or to shopping only with the issuing merchant (3%), i.e., store card.

FIGURE 4
REASONS FOR CHOOSING A SPECIFIC CREDIT CARD, BY AGE



More than half of college students consider affordability before making a credit card purchase.

Thirty-six percent said they never charge a purchase without having the money to pay the bill when it arrives, and another 23 percent said they have rarely done so. On the other hand, 25 percent said they sometimes do this, and another 15 percent said they do it frequently.

College students carry three credit cards, on average. They report an average monthly balance on their combined credit cards of \$906, and a median balance of \$300. Older students report a higher average balance than younger students, and carry an average of four cards.

College students are managing their credit card payments responsibly. Nearly two-thirds (63%) pay their credit card balance in full each month, and one-quarter (26%) make partial payments that exceed the minimum amount due. Very few college students—just 8 percent—pay only the minimum amount due each month, and fewer than 1 percent pay less than the minimum amount due.

FIGURE 5
FREQUENCY OF CHARGING PURCHASES WITHOUT FUNDS TO PAY THE BILL

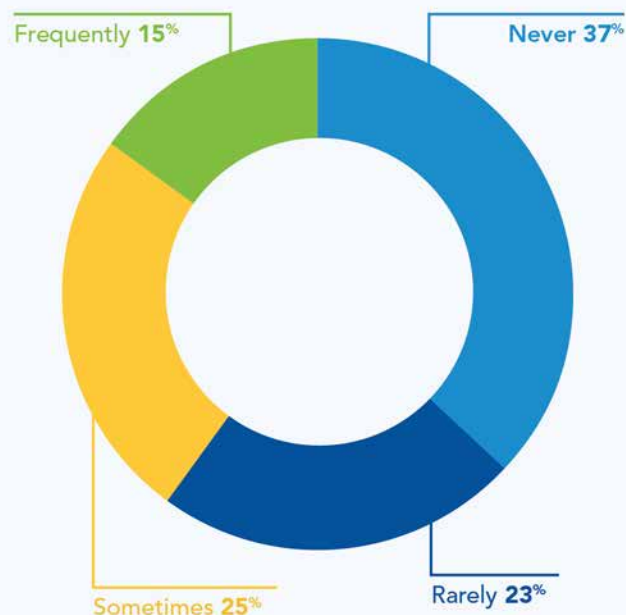


FIGURE 6
AVERAGE CREDIT CARD BALANCE, BY AGE



College students who pay their balances in full each month have a lower average monthly balance—\$825—than those who do not. In comparison, the average monthly balance of students who pay more than the minimum, but not the full balance, is \$935, and the average balance of students who pay only the minimum amount is twice as high as that of full payers, at \$1,635.¹

Most college students take responsibility for making their own credit card payments. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of college students are solely responsible for their card payment, and 12 percent make co-payments with a family member. Only 15 percent report that a parent or other family member fully makes payments on their behalf.

Among college students who share credit card payments with a family member, more than half (56%) pay most of the balance themselves, and 29 percent split the payment in half. Twelve percent who share payments pay just a small portion of their credit card balance, getting help paying most of it.

FIGURE 7
TYPICAL MONTHLY CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

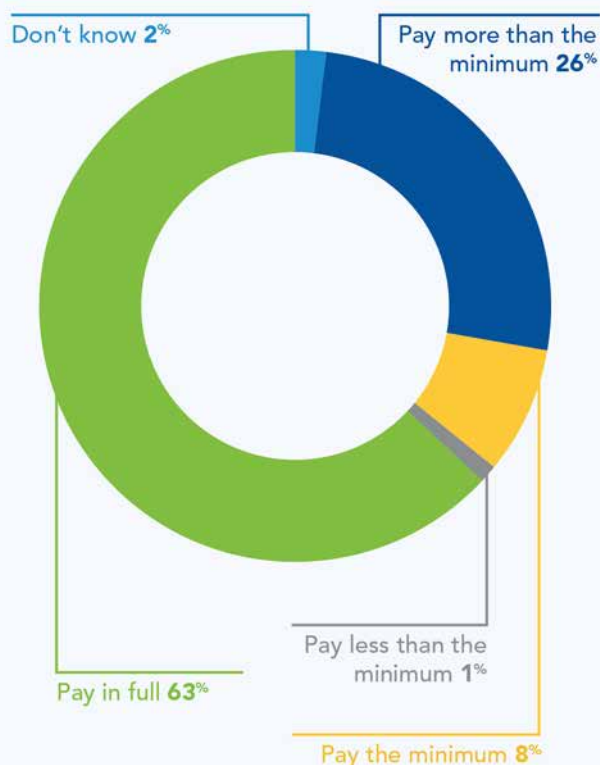
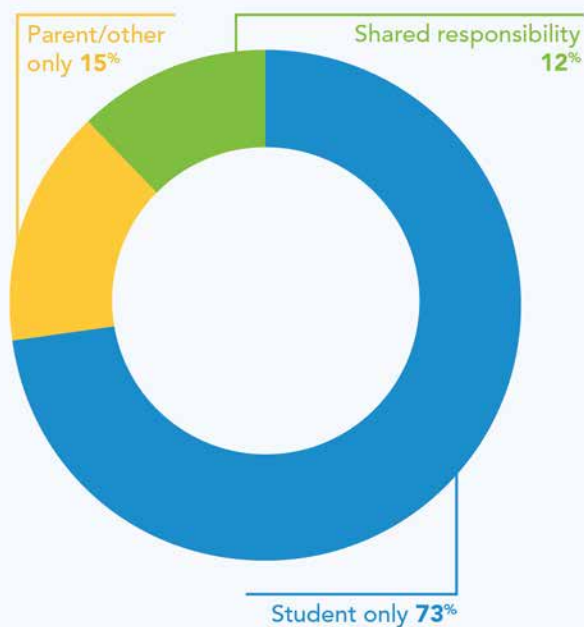


FIGURE 8
MONTHLY CREDIT CARD PAYMENT RESPONSIBILITY



¹ The number who pay less than the minimum is too small to report.

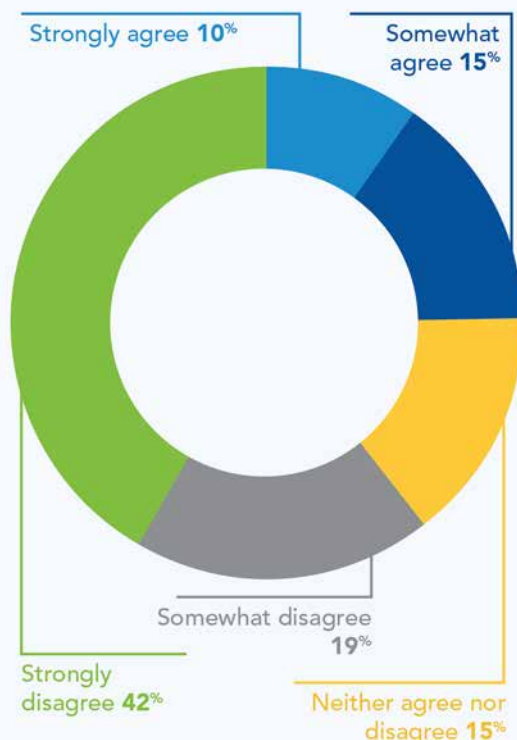
College students who take sole responsibility for their credit card payments have an average monthly balance that is nearly half the amount of college students whose families pay their credit card bills (\$779, compared to \$1,461).



Students whose families pay their credit card bills carry an average balance nearly double the amount carried by students who pay their own credit card bills.

One-quarter of student credit card holders worry about their debt. While the majority of college students with credit cards are not concerned about it, 25 percent of them worry their credit card debt is out of control. More older students—37 percent of students aged 23-24—worry, compared with those aged 21-22 (25%) or aged 18-20 (13%). Worried students carry an average credit card balance of \$1,454, more than twice the average balance of \$679 carried by students who are not worried.

**FIGURE 9
WORRY CREDIT CARD DEBT
IS OUT OF CONTROL**



More than one-quarter of credit card holders (28%) say they expect to have some credit card debt for the rest of their lives, and a similar proportion (27%) say they don't mind having some credit card debt. Those who are worried about their debt are much more likely to agree with both those statements. Sixty-two percent of those who worry believe they will have debt for the rest of their lives, and 50 percent of worriers say they don't mind having some credit card debt.

STUDENTS WITHOUT CREDIT CARDS

Lack of need as well as fear of temptation inhibit students from getting a credit card. Forty-four percent of college students do not use credit cards. These students tend to be younger and from low-income² families. More than half of college students from low-income families (52%) and of those aged 18-20 (57%) do not have a credit card.

The top reasons students give for not having a credit card are that they don't need one now (51%) and that they want to avoid debt (47%). Younger college students, 18-20 year-olds, are more likely than their older cohorts to worry they will be tempted to buy things they don't need (35%, compared to 21% of 21-22 year-olds and 20% of 23-24 year-olds). Older college students are more likely to say they do not qualify for a credit card (18% of 23-24 year-olds and 16% of 21-22 year-olds, compared to 6% of 18-20 year-olds).

Most college students who do not have credit cards plan to obtain a credit card in the future. Nearly one-third (32%) plan to obtain one within the next year, about one-quarter (23%) plan to obtain their credit card in conjunction with finding employment, and one-fifth (20%) plan to obtain a credit card when they graduate.

Twelve percent of college students who do not have a credit card say they will never get one. These students tend to be 21 or older (16% of 23-24 year-olds and 15% of 21-22 year-olds, compared to 8% of 18-20 year-olds), and are more likely to attend a two-year school (16%, compared to 9% of those who attend four-year schools).

12% of students without any credit cards say they will never get one.



² For the purposes of this study, low-income is defined as households with an annual income of less than \$35,000; middle-income with annual income from \$35,000 to less than \$100,000; and high-income with annual income of \$100,000 or more.

COLLEGE STUDENTS AND OTHER TYPES OF CREDIT

The majority of college students have experience with credit beyond credit cards. More than two-thirds (68%) say they have some type of outstanding debt, and the vast majority of that debt is attached to a loan or extension of credit. Only 1 percent report having only non-credit-based debt, such as medical bills.

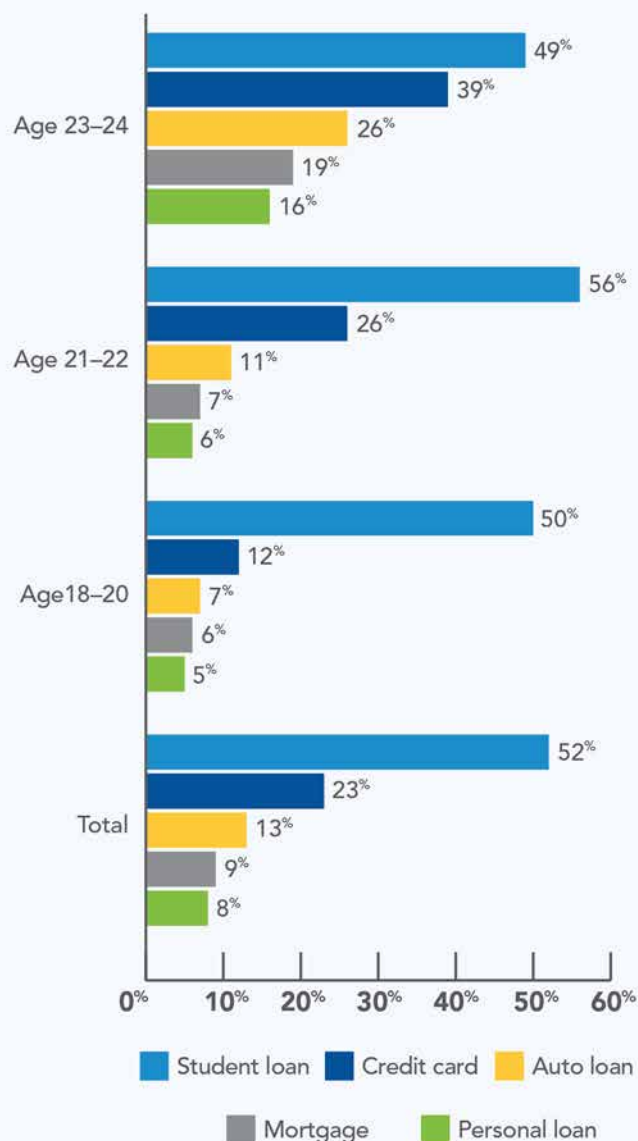
More than half of all respondents (52%) report having student loans. After student loans, the next most common types of debt are credit cards (23%) and auto loans (13%). Note that while 56 percent of college students have credit cards, only one-third of them report having debt on those cards.

Older students (aged 23-24) are much more likely than younger students to have almost all types of debt. A significantly higher proportion report having credit card debt, auto loans, mortgages, and personal loans. A similar proportion in each age group, however, report having student loans.



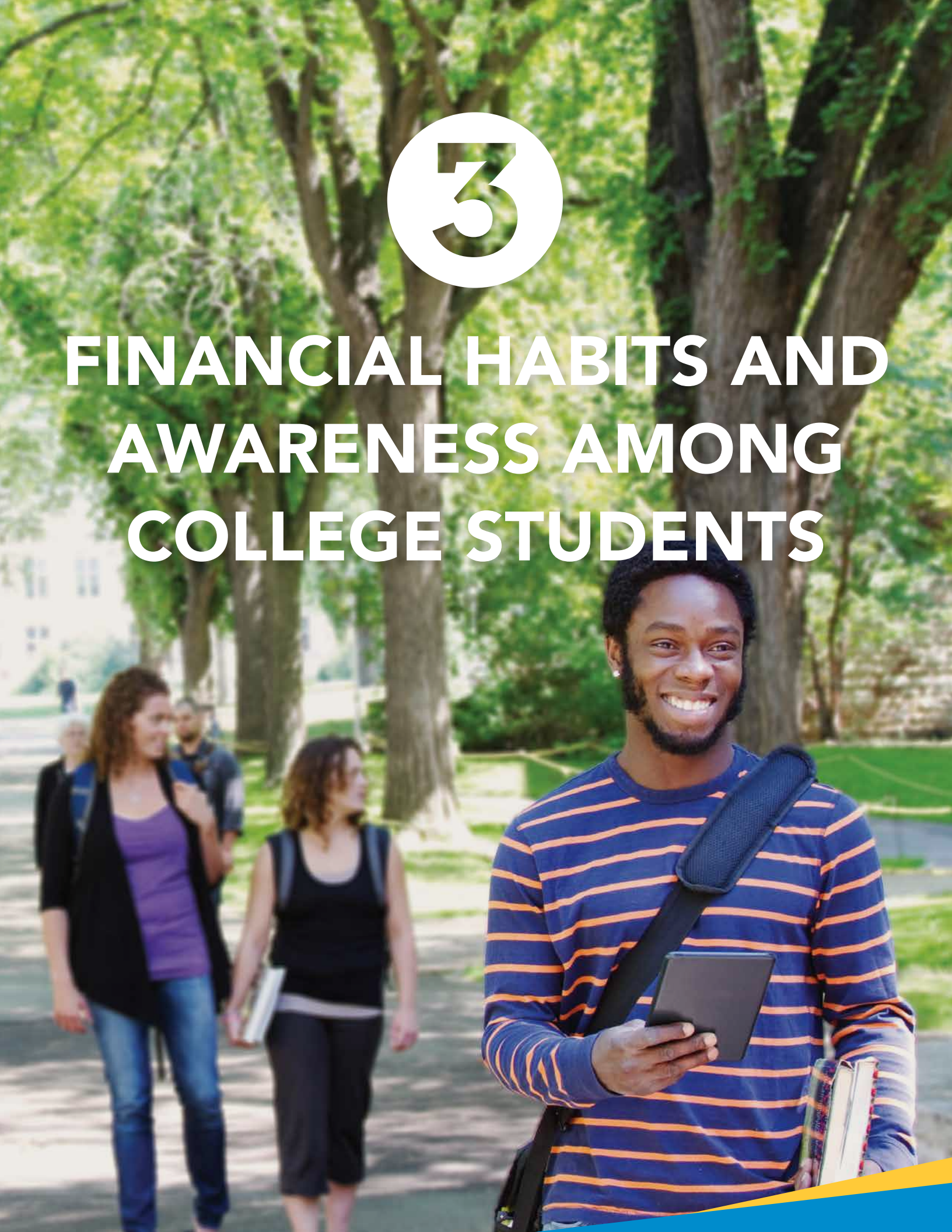
Only one-third of college students with credit cards consider themselves as having debt on those cards.

FIGURE 10
OUTSTANDING DEBT TYPE,
BY AGE



3

FINANCIAL HABITS AND AWARENESS AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS



ATTENTION TO CREDIT HEALTH

Most college students are paying attention to their finances and have adopted some positive financial management behaviors. More than three-quarters pay their bills on time (77%). In addition, more than half say they do the following:

- Never spend more than they have (60%).
- Track spending so they know where their money is going (56%).
- Save at least some money every month (55%).

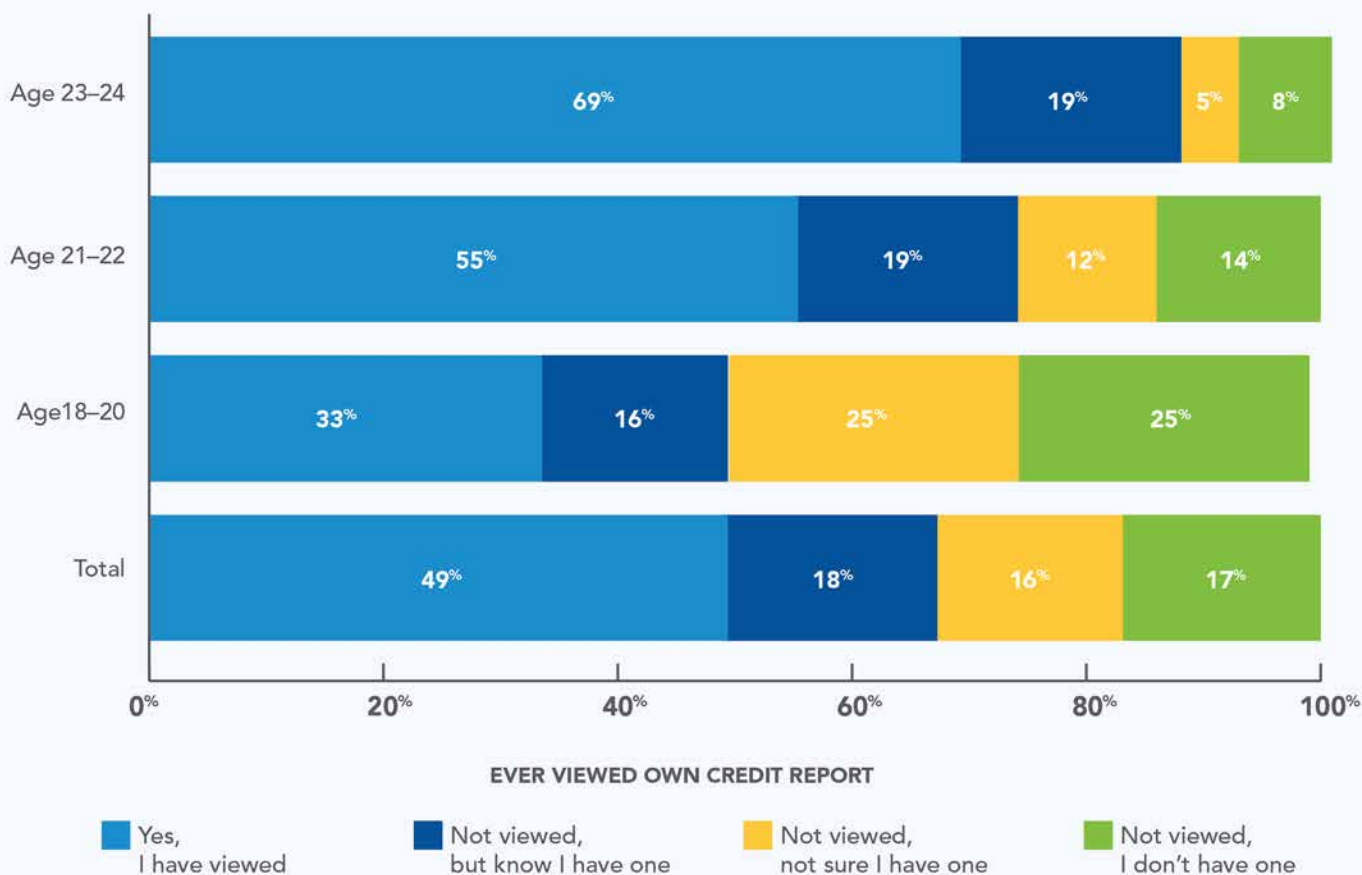
Students without a credit card (69%) and those without any type of debt (72%) are less likely than those with cards or debt (83% and 79%, respectively) to say they

pay bills on time. This may be a reflection, however, of not having bills, rather than of poor credit behavior. Conversely, those without a credit card (69%) or without debt (65%) are more likely than those with cards or debt (53% and 57%, respectively) to say they never spend more money than they have.

Other types of proactive money management are practiced by significantly fewer students. These less-practiced behaviors include:

- 36 percent avoid incurring fees by never overdrafting their accounts.
- 28 percent pay off higher interest rate debt first.
- 24 percent have an emergency fund.
- 16 percent invest savings to earn higher rates.

FIGURE 11
CREDIT REPORT AWARENESS, BY AGE



Note: Due to rounding, totals may not equal 100%.

Only 4 percent say they don't practice any good money management habits, or don't know how to manage their finances more effectively.

Sixty-seven percent of college students are aware of credit reports, and about half have viewed theirs.

Those who have experience with credit are far more likely to have viewed their credit report than those without credit experience. Two-thirds (66%) of students with credit cards have viewed their credit report, compared with one quarter (27%) of those who do not have a credit card. Among those who have any type of credit-based debt, 56 percent have viewed their credit report, compared with 33 percent of those who have no debt.



49% of college students have viewed their credit report.

Older students—who tend to have more experience with credit—are more likely than younger students to look at their credit report, with 69 percent of those aged 23-24, 55 percent of those aged 21-22, and 33 percent of those aged 18-20 having viewed their credit report.

Students aged 18-20 are more likely to say they either don't have a credit report (25%) or don't know whether they have one (25%), compared with those aged 21-22 (14% and 12%, respectively) and those aged 23-24 (8% and 5%, respectively).

The vast majority of college students understand the benefits associated with having a good credit score.

When asked to write in the benefits of having a good credit score, students gave a variety of responses that illustrated their general understanding that good credit allows the consumer to obtain better loans or rates on loans, to qualify for a variety of types of credit, and to appear credible in the eyes of a lender. Only 9 percent of respondents were unable to provide an answer.

The most common response—given by one-third of respondents (32%)—was the ability to qualify for good or better loan rates. The next most prevalent answer—given by one-quarter of respondents (24%)—was the ability to qualify for a mortgage or rent. Similar proportions of students gave these top two responses whether or not they used credit, and regardless of their perception of their money management skills.

College students understand the value of having good credit, but fewer understand applicability in specific situations. While more than nine in 10 students (93%) are aware of a core component of good credit, agreeing that “paying bills on time” is a positive credit behavior, a much smaller majority recognize other, less top-of-mind actions as having a positive, negative, or neutral effect on credit.

Sixty-three percent agreed “keeping a low balance on your credit cards” has a positive effect on credit. “Using as much of your credit limit as possible” and “opening multiple credit accounts at the same time” were recognized as negative behaviors by 61 percent and 64 percent, respectively.

“Having no credit cards” was identified as a neutral behavior by 58 percent. Students who have credit cards were less likely than students who don't have cards to say this was neutral behavior (52% vs. 66%, respectively), and twice as likely to say it was negative (32% vs 16%, respectively).

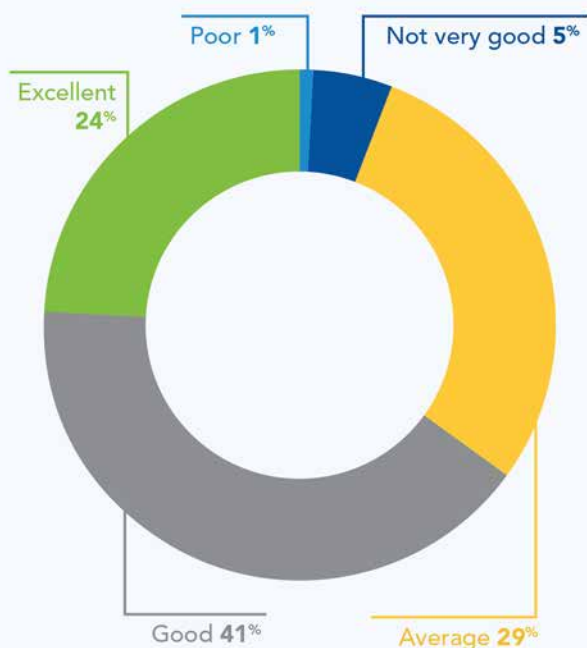
Students with credit cards are twice as likely as those without credit cards to say having no credit cards is a negative credit behavior.



ASSESSMENT OF MONEY MANAGEMENT SKILLS

College students are confident in their money management skills. Students were asked to rate their money management skills as being excellent, good, average, not very good, or poor. Forty-one percent of students rated their skills as good, the most prevalent response. Nearly one-quarter (24%) rated themselves as excellent, and more than one-quarter (29%) said they were average. Only 6 percent rated themselves as either not very good or poor.

**FIGURE 12
SELF-RATED MONEY
MANAGEMENT SKILLS**



Students who have credit experience are slightly more likely than those without experience to rate their skills at the highest level. Twenty-six percent of those who have a credit card and 25 percent of those who have debt gave themselves excellent ratings, compared with 20 percent of those without a card and 21 percent without debt.

In line with their level of credit experience, a higher proportion of older students than younger students rated their skills as excellent. Thirty-one percent of those

aged 23-24 chose excellent, compared with 21 percent of both those aged 18-20 and aged 21-22.

Students from middle-income families are more confident than others in their money management skills, with 27 percent rating their skills as excellent. Nineteen percent of students from low-income families and 21 percent from high-income families rate their skills as excellent. Conversely, 4 percent of low-income students rate their skills as poor, compared with 1 percent of both middle- and high-income students.

Business majors comprise the highest proportion of students who consider their money management skills as excellent, at 37 percent. Similar to the total population, approximately one-quarter of students majoring in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math) give themselves excellent ratings. The lowest proportion of any major rating themselves as having excellent skills are visual and performing arts majors (8%).

37% of business majors—more than any other major—believe they have “excellent” money management skills.



Students who believe they have above-average money management skills, and those with credit experience, are more confident in their ability to qualify for credit. When asked to estimate the amount for which they would be eligible if they applied for a non-cosigned credit card today, those who already have a credit card (58%) and those with some type of outstanding loan debt (53%) are twice as likely to say they would qualify for a higher credit limit—\$1,000 or greater—than those without cards (27%) or outstanding loan debt (28%).

Students from middle-income (51%) and high-income (47%) households are more likely than those from low-income (31%) households to say they would qualify for a higher credit limit, as were those who believe they have excellent (60%) or good (47%) money management skills, compared with those who say they have average (32%) or not good/poor³ (28%) money management skills.

Twenty-two percent of respondents said they didn’t know the amount for which they would qualify. Those

³ Not good/poor includes combined responses of “not very good” and “poor.”

most likely to say they didn't know were students without any outstanding loans (37%), those without a credit card (34%), those aged 18-20 (31%), those from high-income families (30%), females (29%), and those who rated their money management skills as average (30%).

Four percent of all respondents said they wouldn't qualify for a credit card. Those who rated their money management skills as not good/poor were slightly more likely to say they wouldn't qualify (9%).

Perceptions about the value of credit cards differ between those who have cards and those who don't.

Students who have credit cards are more likely to agree that credit cards have positive value or benefits, compared to those who do not have a card. On the other hand, there were no significant differences in the perceptions of the potential detriments of credit cards between those who have cards and those who do not.

A significant difference does exist, however, on the perceptions of the potential detriments of credit cards between the proportion of students who rate their money management skills as not good/poor and the proportion who rate their skills as excellent. Students who rate their skills as not good/poor are more likely to agree that it is too easy to accumulate a lot of credit card debt quickly (75%) and that credit cards allow for too much impulse buying (76%), compared with students who rate their skills as excellent (63% and 66%, respectively).

Table C: Agreement with Statements about Credit Cards, by Card Ownership Status

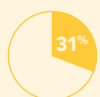
BENEFITS STATEMENTS	WITH CARD	NO CARD
Credit cards are safer than debit cards when it comes to online purchases	44%	24%
Having lots of credit cards helps people to build credit / improve their credit score	34%	26%
Credit card rewards are a real benefit to using credit cards	65%	53%
It is easier to pay with a credit card than to pay with mobile	54%	35%
There are real benefits to paying for things with a credit card (instead of cash or debit or mobile)	63%	46%
DETRIMENTS STATEMENTS	WITH CARD	NO CARD
Having a credit card makes people more vulnerable to identity theft	47%	50%
It is too easy to accumulate a lot of credit card debt quickly	62%	67%
Credit cards allow for too much impulse buying	59%	64%



61% of all college students agree that credit cards allow for too much impulse buying.

COLLEGE STUDENTS' CREDIT UNDERSTANDING

Fewer than one-third of college students successfully answered questions on credit basics. Students were asked three multiple choice questions about how credit works, specifically related to interest accumulation, the effect of repayment behavior on the cost of credit, and the impact of repayment term on the cost of credit.



31% of college students correctly answered all three "how credit works" questions.

Fewer than one-third of students (31%) correctly answered three out of three questions. One-third (33%) answered two of three questions correctly, one-quarter (23%) answered one correctly, and one-eighth (13%) did not answer any of the questions correctly.

While a sizeable percentage understand how interest accumulates, far fewer understand how payment behavior and repayment terms affect the cost of credit over time. Three-quarters of respondents (75%) answered the interest accumulation question correctly, but fewer than half (48%) knew the correct answer to the payment behavior question, and fewer than three-fifths (59%) got the question on repayment terms right.

Students with more credit experience were not more likely to answer the questions correctly. Younger students correctly answered all three questions at a higher rate than their older, more credit-experienced counterparts. Thirty-three percent of students aged 18-20 correctly answered all three questions, compared with 31 percent of students aged 21-22 and 25 percent aged 23-24.

Credit card ownership did not affect the proportion of correct responses, including to the specific question on how credit card payment behavior affects the total cost of credit.

Those who view their money management skills as excellent may be overconfident in their skills and knowledge—they were least likely to answer all three questions correctly. Twenty-three percent of students who rated their money management skills as excellent answered all three correctly, fewer than those who believe their skills are good (33%), average (32%), and not good/poor (38%).

HOW CREDIT WORKS QUESTIONS

1. Interest accumulation question: Suppose you had \$100 in a savings account and the interest rate was 2% per year. After 5 years, how much do you think you would have in the account if you left the money to grow?

- a. More than \$102.
- b. Exactly \$102.
- c. Less than \$102.
- d. Not sure.

2. Effect of payment behavior on credit cost question:

Assuming the following individuals have the same credit card with the same interest rate, which will pay the most in interest on their credit card purchases over time?

- a. Joe, who makes the minimum payment on his credit card bill every month.
- b. Jane, who pays the balance on her credit card in full every month.
- c. Joyce, who sometimes pays the minimum, sometimes pays less than the minimum, and missed one payment on her credit card bill.
- d. All of them will pay the same amount in interest over time.
- e. Not sure.

3. Impact of repayment term on cost of credit question:

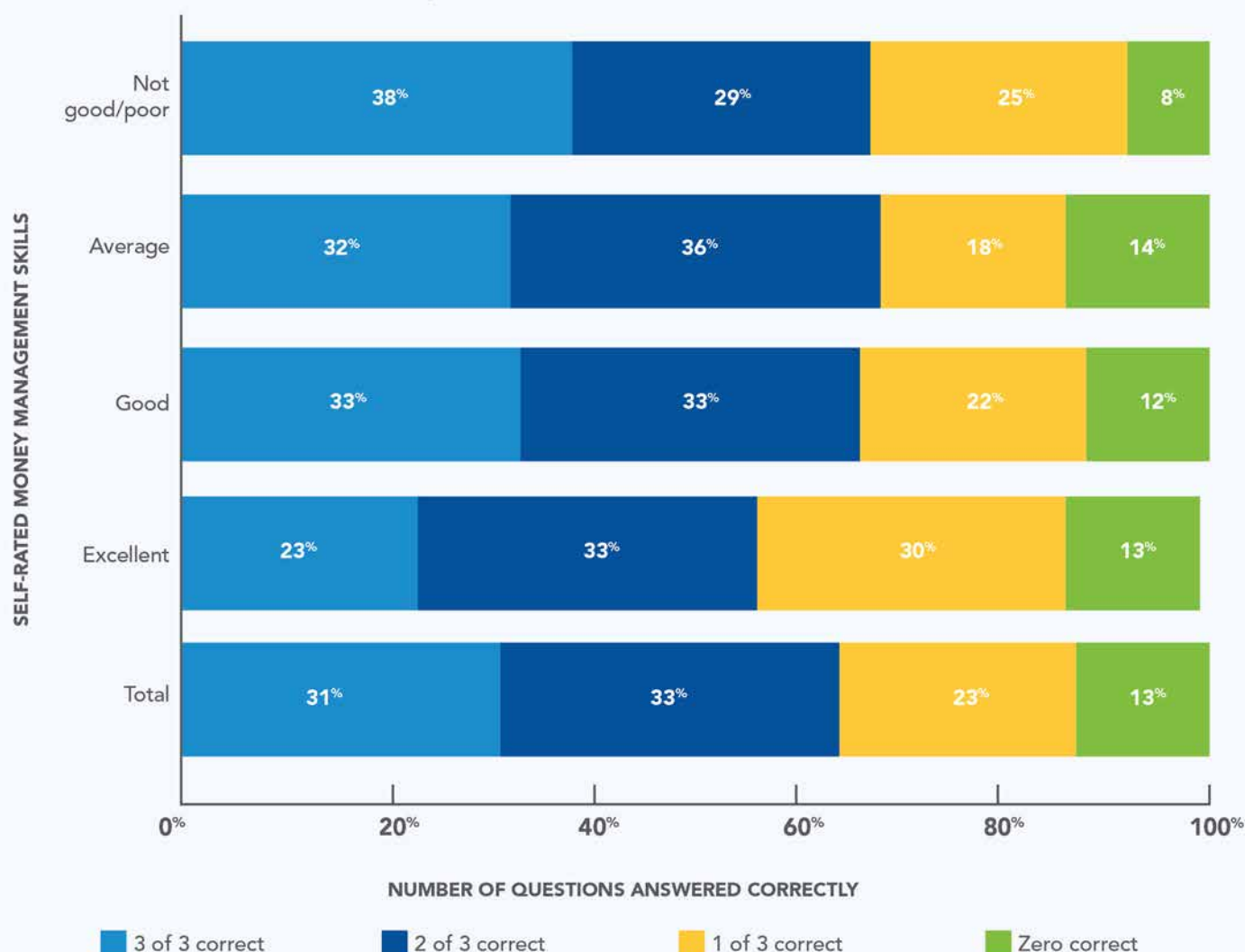
Imagine that there are two options when it comes to paying back a loan and both come with the same interest rate. Provided you have the needed funds, which option would you select to minimize your total costs over the life of the loan (i.e., all of your payments combined until the loan is completely paid off)?

- a. Option 1 allows you to take 10 years to pay back the loan.
- b. Option 2 allows you to take 20 years to pay back the loan.
- c. Both options have the same out-of-pocket cost over the life of the loan.
- d. Not sure.

Answer Key:

- 1. a
- 2. c
- 3. a

FIGURE 13
CORRECT RESPONSES, BY PERCEIVED MONEY MANAGEMENT SKILLS



Note: Due to rounding, totals may not equal 100%.

Household income did not affect the proportion of correct responses. Parent education level, however, did make a difference: 25 percent of first-in-family-to-attend-college students answered all three questions correctly, compared with 32 percent of second-generation students.

Lack of professional resources or formal course work related to money management may be contributing to knowledge gaps. The vast majority of college students are learning financial management skills from their parents. Far fewer have accessed professional resources or taken courses on money management.

Parents are, by far, the most common resource college students rely on to learn about managing money. Seventy-one percent of college students report having learned money management from their parents. Those more likely to cite parents are younger students (81% of 18-20 year olds), females (78%), second-generation students, and those from high-income families (78%).

Parents are the top personal resource college students use to learn about money management, cited by 71%.



Students who do not have debt or credit cards cite parents (76% and 75%, respectively) at a higher rate than those who have debt or credit cards (68% and 67%, respectively). Students more likely to cite parents as a resource are those who rate their money management skills as good (72%), average (77%), or not good/poor (74%), compared to those who rate their skills as excellent (60%).

After parents, the most-cited personal resources include other family members (29%) and friends (20%).

The use of professional resources is mixed, and occurs at a much lower rate than parental guidance.

Outside of friends and family, the reliance on other sources for money management information varies widely by students' perceived level of money management skills.

- 23 percent of students learn about money management through self-conducted online research. Those who rate their money management skills as excellent (12%) are least likely to use this resource, compared with those who rate themselves as not good/poor (31%), average (23%), or good (28%).
- High school classes are cited by 22 percent of students, with those who rate their skills as average (26%) or good (25%) more likely to cite this than those who rate their skills as either excellent (13%) or not good/poor (16%).
- 14 percent of students say they have used a financial advisor, with those rating themselves as excellent (20%) more likely to say so than those who rate their skills as good (13%), average (14%), or not good/poor (8%).



The top professional resource for money management information, cited by 22%, is a high school class.

Only 12 percent of students report learning about financial management through a college course. Five percent say they have not used any resources.

More than four out of five college students express interest in learning more about specific aspects of managing money. While 17 percent are not currently interested in any financial management topics, the

majority of all students express interest in learning more about any one or more of the topics suggested in the survey. The top three topics about which they want more information are:

- Saving strategies, cited by 37 percent.
- Paying-for-college options, selected by 32 percent.
- Budgeting, identified by 32 percent.

Students who rate their money management skills as not very good or poor are much more likely to be interested in learning more about all topics. Fifty-three percent of them want information on savings strategies, 48 percent want information on paying-for-college options, and 47 percent want budgeting information.

The top financial topic students want to learn about is saving strategies, cited by 37%.



Students who have some debt are more interested in learning about debt reduction strategies (28%) and student loan repayment options (37%) than students without debt (14% each). Students with a credit card are more interested in saving strategies than those without a card (41% and 32%, respectively).

HOW MEN AND WOMEN DIFFER ON CREDIT AND MONEY MANAGEMENT

Male and female college students show some distinct differences in how they manage money and use credit cards. Men are more likely than women to have a credit card (60% and 53%, respectively), and to carry a higher average balance.

Compared to women, men are more likely to obtain a credit card for the following purposes:

- As a way to help manage their money (23% vs. 11% of women).
- To earn rewards (23% vs. 17% of women).
- As a way to make purchases without carrying cash (30% vs. 21% of women).

Compared to men, women are more likely to obtain a credit card for the following purposes:

- As a way to build credit (68% vs. 50% of men).
- At the suggestion of their parents (29% vs. 22% of men).

Slightly more men than women use their credit cards only for emergencies (12% and 8%, respectively), and more men than women pay their balance in full each month (68% vs. 57% of women). While these behaviors give men the appearance of using credit cards more conservatively, their average credit card balance is nearly twice as high as women's. On average, men have a monthly credit card balance of \$1,190, while women have a monthly credit card balance of \$642.



Male students' average credit card balances are nearly twice as high as female students' balances.

When selecting a credit card, women are more likely to base their choice on the brand their parents use (31% vs. 22% of men), and to consider the security features (such as chip-enabled) of a credit card (19% vs. 10% of men). Men, on the other hand, are more likely to consider a credit card with a high credit limit (13% vs. 7% of women).

Men are also significantly more likely than women to use some type of mobile payment method (83% and 72%, respectively). Men say they use mobile payment for the value (26%, compared to 12% of women) and because

they like using the latest technology or gadgets (28% vs. 16% of women). In contrast, women like the ease of use provided by mobile payments (42% vs. 32% of men).

29% of male students rate their money management skills as excellent, compared with 19% of female students.



Men are more likely than women to feel confident in their money management skills, but women were more likely to answer the "how credit works" questions correctly. Nearly one-third of men say

their money management skills are excellent (29%), compared to fewer than one-fifth of women (19%). Men are more likely to report having viewed their credit report than women (55% and 44%, respectively). Men, however, were significantly more likely to say they frequently used their credit card to make purchases knowing they would not have the funds to pay the bill when it arrives, while women were significantly more likely to say they would never make such purchases.

Thirty-three percent of women correctly answered all three "how credit works" questions, compared to 28 percent of men.

Compared to men, women are also more likely to do the following:

- Never spend more than they have (66%, compared to 52% of men).
- Track their spending (63%, compared to 48% of men).
- Never overdraft (42%, compared to 29% of men).
- Save some of their earnings every month (61%, compared to 48% of men).

Despite these differences, the majority of both men and women are making responsible money management choices. The majority of both genders do the following:

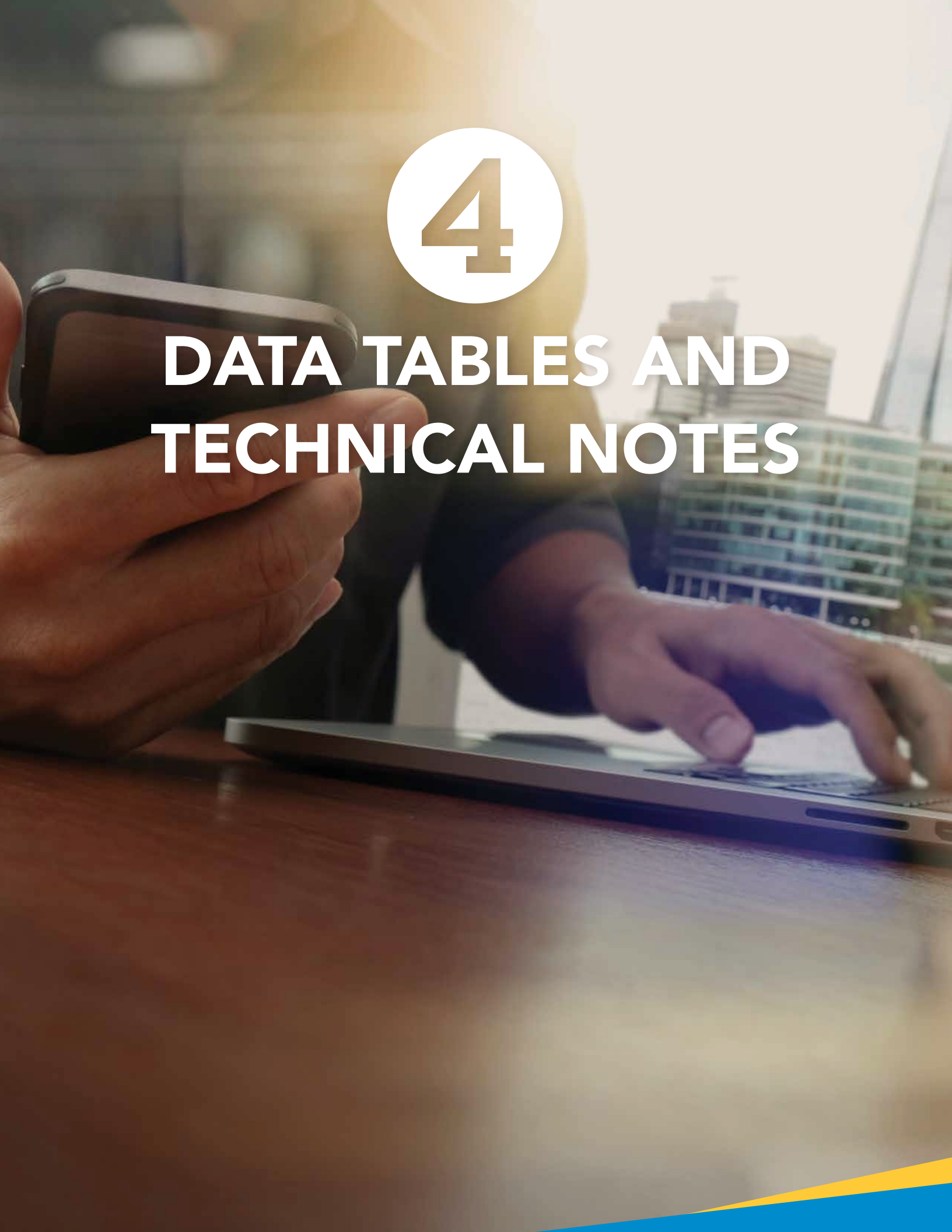
- Take sole responsibility for their credit charges (77% of men and 68% of women).
- Pay more than the minimum or all of their credit card balance each month (89% of both men and women).

CONCLUSION

Today's college students demonstrate a careful approach to managing money. Their penchant for purchasing with debit cards rather than credit cards, for paying bills on time, and for paying more than the minimum due on credit card bills is evidence of responsible behavior. Students have a cautious attitude toward debt, with the majority saying they never spend more than they have, and the majority agreeing that credit cards can contribute to impulse buying and debt accumulation.

While students have a general awareness of the importance of credit—the majority could name a benefit associated with having good credit, and are aware they have a credit report, and the majority of credit card holders obtained a card to establish good credit—the survey reveals they have less understanding of the details of how credit works. Half as many credit card holders cite the card's interest rate as the reason for choosing a specific credit card, compared with the 30 percent who chose one for the cash-back benefits. Only about one-third say they avoid paying fees by never overdrafting their accounts. Nearly four in 10 don't know that maximizing the amount of credit for which they are eligible can negatively affect their credit record. Twenty-five percent don't understand the most basic principle of interest accumulation in a savings account.

More than four out of five college students are interested in learning more about a variety of topics associated with managing their money. This could be motivated by a perceived gap in knowledge—interest is much stronger among those who think their money management skills are not very good or poor—or by a desire to be more financially successful. Either way, it is clear that more financial management education opportunities are warranted for college students. Additional financial management information, tools, and programs designed for this population can only benefit individual students and their wider economic communities.

A person's hands are shown holding a smartphone in the left hand and typing on a laptop keyboard in the right hand. The background is a blurred city skyline with tall buildings. A bright light source, possibly the sun, is visible in the upper left, creating a lens flare effect. The overall scene suggests a professional or business environment.

4

DATA TABLES AND TECHNICAL NOTES

DATA TABLES

Q. Which of the following do you have in your wallet? Please select all that apply.

Table 1 – Non-Mobile Payment Methods Used

	TOTAL	HAVE CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	FIRST IN FAMILY	NOT FIRST IN FAMILY
N	793	445	348	348	258	187	206	396	190	356	437	133	650
Cash	86%	88%	83%	88%	82%	87%	80%	87%	89%	84%	87%	86%	86%
Credit card(s)	56%	100%	0%	43%	63%	71%	48%	59%	60%	60%	53%	55%	57%
Debit card(s)	85%	86%	83%	84%	84%	87%	86%	84%	85%	81%	88%	77%	87%
Secured credit card(s)	6%	8%	5%	5%	4%	12%	7%	6%	7%	8%	5%	5%	7%
Prepaid debit card(s)	15%	17%	13%	15%	10%	23%	13%	16%	16%	15%	15%	12%	16%
Personal checks	14%	18%	10%	11%	12%	21%	9%	16%	15%	12%	16%	6%	16%
ATM card(s)	17%	22%	10%	14%	16%	22%	10%	17%	22%	19%	14%	13%	18%
SNAP or other assistance program(s)	3%	3%	3%	1%	2%	9%	6%	3%	1%	3%	3%	4%	3%
Other method for purchasing	2%	1%	4%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	4%	0%	4%	1%	3%
None of these	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%

Base: All students

Q. Do you use any mobile payment methods? Please select all that apply.

Table 2 – Mobile Payment Methods Used

	TOTAL	HAVE CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	FIRST IN FAMILY	NOT FIRST IN FAMILY
N	793	445	348	348	258	187	206	396	190	356	437	133	650
Apple Pay	18%	24%	11%	14%	21%	22%	15%	16%	25%	25%	13%	18%	18%
Google Wallet	16%	20%	12%	12%	14%	27%	14%	17%	18%	25%	10%	18%	16%
Android Pay	8%	11%	5%	6%	7%	15%	8%	8%	9%	11%	6%	9%	8%
Samsung Pay	6%	9%	4%	3%	6%	13%	5%	6%	9%	10%	3%	9%	6%
CurrentC	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%
Square	6%	7%	5%	4%	6%	9%	5%	6%	6%	7%	5%	6%	6%
PayPal	58%	59%	56%	53%	61%	63%	56%	60%	56%	62%	55%	61%	57%
LevelUp	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	0%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Venmo	11%	12%	10%	10%	15%	7%	11%	9%	15%	10%	12%	6%	12%
Moven	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Dwolla	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	6%	0%	2%	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%
Bitcoin or other cryptocurrency	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	5%	0%	3%	3%	4%	0%	1%	2%
Other	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%
None	23%	20%	27%	28%	20%	19%	25%	22%	24%	17%	28%	19%	24%

Base: All students

Q. What is the mobile payment method you use most often?

Table 3 – Preferred Mobile Payment Method

	TOTAL	HAVE CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	FIRST IN FAMILY	NOT FIRST IN FAMILY
N	609	355	254	250	207	152	155	310	144	295	314	108	492
Apple Pay	12%	14%	9%	14%	13%	8%	11%	13%	12%	14%	11%	12%	12%
Google Wallet	6%	6%	5%	6%	5%	7%	5%	6%	6%	9%	3%	4%	6%
Android Pay	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	7%	4%	4%	6%	6%	3%	6%	4%
Samsung Pay	3%	3%	1%	1%	3%	5%	4%	2%	4%	3%	2%	3%	2%
CurrentC	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Square	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	1%	3%
PayPal	61%	58%	64%	58%	61%	65%	61%	63%	55%	57%	64%	65%	60%
LevelUp	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%
Venmo	10%	9%	11%	11%	13%	2%	12%	6%	14%	6%	13%	7%	10%
Moven	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Dwolla	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Bitcoin or other cryptocurrency	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	1%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%

Base: Students who use more than one mobile payment method

Q. In general, how do you pay for the following types of purchases? Select all that apply.

Table 4 – Payment Methods Used*, By Purchase Type

	IN STORE PURCHASES \$20 OR LESS	IN STORE PURCHASES MORE THAN \$20	ONLINE PURCHASES \$20 OR LESS	ONLINE PURCHASES MORE THAN \$20	PHONE BILL	UTILITIES	GROCERIES	DINING OUT	VACATION	TUITION, FEES	TEXT BOOKS, CLASS-REQUIRED SUPPLIES	RENT	IN-HOME ENTERTAINMENT / SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES	OUT-OF-HOME ENTERTAINMENT
Cash	63%	27%	7%	6%	10%	12%	32%	48%	15%	10%	16%	17%	6%	28%
Credit card(s)	18%	31%	27%	33%	18%	16%	25%	26%	33%	21%	27%	9%	21%	28%
Debit card(s)	41%	56%	53%	49%	28%	27%	45%	48%	30%	31%	41%	21%	35%	45%
Prepaid debit card(s)	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%
Personal checks	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%	4%	1%	2%
ATM card(s)	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%
Apple Pay	3%	3%	2%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
PayPal	4%	5%	27%	25%	5%	4%	4%	3%	4%	4%	8%	3%	11%	8%
Other	10%	10%	12%	11%	14%	16%	13%	9%	8%	26%	16%	19%	10%	7%
I don't pay for these types of purchases	1%	2%	3%	3%	32%	32%	10%	3%	27%	19%	12%	35%	26%	11%

Base: All students

*Method used by at least 3% of respondents in at least one category

Q. What is the primary reason(s) you use a mobile payment method?

Table 5 – Reasons for Using Mobile Payment Methods

	TOTAL	HAVE CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	FIRST IN FAMILY	NOT FIRST IN FAMILY
N	609	355	254	250	207	152	155	310	144	295	314	108	492
Convenience	70%	73%	67%	73%	68%	70%	66%	73%	69%	71%	70%	70%	71%
Security	40%	44%	35%	39%	32%	53%	39%	40%	43%	44%	37%	50%	38%
Value	19%	22%	14%	15%	15%	29%	18%	19%	19%	26%	12%	21%	18%
I like using the latest technologies or gadgets	22%	23%	20%	23%	17%	27%	16%	25%	21%	28%	16%	10%	24%
Flexibility	30%	29%	32%	31%	28%	33%	33%	29%	29%	32%	29%	27%	31%
Ease of use	37%	34%	41%	42%	31%	36%	40%	36%	36%	32%	42%	40%	36%
Other	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	1%	1%	3%	0%	2%
Don't know	3%	2%	4%	2%	5%	1%	3%	2%	5%	2%	3%	5%	2%

Base: Students who use mobile payment methods

Q. Thinking of the mobile payment method you use most often, why do you use this service over another service provider? Select all that apply.

Table 6 – Reasons for Using Preferred Mobile Payment Method

	TOTAL	HAVE CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	FIRST IN FAMILY	NOT FIRST IN FAMILY
N	609	355	254	250	207	152	155	310	144	295	314	108	492
My friends/family use it	43%	44%	42%	45%	44%	40%	39%	41%	51%	41%	45%	49%	42%
Accepted at the places I need to use it	42%	38%	48%	47%	36%	44%	42%	44%	40%	41%	43%	42%	42%
Brand name	28%	30%	26%	27%	24%	36%	28%	30%	26%	38%	19%	28%	28%
Easy account set up	48%	47%	50%	50%	41%	56%	53%	48%	43%	48%	48%	50%	48%
Ease of transactional use	44%	39%	51%	49%	42%	37%	50%	43%	41%	42%	46%	48%	43%
Easy to manage	41%	38%	46%	46%	36%	42%	47%	38%	42%	39%	44%	40%	41%
Security features	21%	17%	27%	24%	16%	23%	26%	20%	19%	18%	24%	25%	20%
Other	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%
Don't know	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%	2%

Base: Students who use mobile payment methods

Q. Thinking of the mobile payment method you use most often, what account(s) do you have your electronic payment linked to? Select all that apply.

Table 7 – Accounts Linked to Mobile Payments

	TOTAL	HAVE CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	FIRST IN FAMILY	NOT FIRST IN FAMILY
N	609	355	254	250	207	152	155	310	144	295	314	108	492
My credit card	31%	53%	0%	22%	32%	43%	21%	34%	34%	38%	24%	32%	31%
My debit card	55%	53%	58%	57%	55%	51%	58%	55%	53%	49%	61%	55%	56%
My secured credit card	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%
My prepaid debit card	6%	6%	5%	5%	3%	10%	4%	6%	7%	8%	4%	3%	6%
My ATM card	5%	7%	3%	3%	3%	12%	2%	6%	8%	7%	3%	4%	6%
My SNAP or other Assistance program	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
My savings account	19%	20%	18%	17%	18%	24%	14%	19%	25%	25%	14%	20%	19%
My checking account	47%	45%	49%	42%	48%	53%	53%	43%	48%	47%	47%	46%	47%
My parent's account or card	3%	3%	4%	6%	2%	1%	2%	3%	5%	3%	4%	2%	4%
Other	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%
None	3%	1%	4%	3%	3%	1%	5%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	3%

Base: Students who use mobile payment methods

Q. How do you typically use your credit card(s)?

Table 8 – Frequency with which Credit Cards are Typically Used

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE	DOES NOT USE MOBILE
N	445	150	162	133	98	233	114	215	230	355	90
On a regular basis for everyday purchases	46%	39%	43%	53%	36%	48%	45%	46%	43%	46%	38%
Emergency only	10%	13%	12%	5%	16%	7%	11%	12%	8%	9%	14%
For big-ticket items that I need to pay over time	16%	11%	19%	19%	18%	16%	14%	15%	17%	16%	16%
For online purchases	12%	17%	10%	10%	11%	13%	12%	13%	12%	14%	6%
Only at the store(s) where I have a store or merchant card	3%	4%	1%	4%	3%	4%	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%
For all types of purchases	12%	14%	13%	9%	14%	12%	11%	9%	14%	10%	18%
Other	2%	3%	2%	1%	3%	1%	5%	2%	3%	2%	4%

Base: Students who use credit cards

Q. How many credit cards do you have now?

Table 9 – Number of Credit Cards Owned

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE	DOES NOT USE MOBILE
N	445	150	162	133	98	233	114	215	230	355	90
One	31%	41%	34%	14%	44%	28%	24%	29%	32%	25%	53%
Two	24%	23%	21%	29%	29%	22%	23%	23%	24%	24%	23%
Three	16%	17%	13%	19%	9%	19%	16%	19%	14%	17%	12%
Four	9%	4%	12%	13%	7%	10%	10%	7%	11%	11%	3%
Five	6%	3%	7%	10%	3%	7%	8%	6%	6%	7%	3%
Six	6%	2%	9%	8%	3%	6%	10%	8%	4%	7%	1%
Seven	2%	4%	1%	2%	2%	2%	4%	3%	2%	3%	1%
Eight	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Nine	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Ten	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Eleven or more	2%	4%	1%	2%	3%	1%	4%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Median number of cards	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	1
Average number of cards	3	3	3	4	3	3	4	3	3	3	2

Base: Students who use credit cards

Table 10 – Credit Card Type Owned

	TOTAL
N	445
Visa	81%
MasterCard	42%
Discover	28%
American Express	28%
Store/Merchant Card	41%
Other	9%

Base: Students who use credit cards

Q. What are the main reasons why you got your first credit card? Please choose up to 3 reasons.

Table 11 – Reasons for Obtaining a Credit Card

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE PAYMENT	DOES NOT USE MOBILE PAYMENT
N	445	150	162	133	98	233	114	215	230	355	90
Needed access to emergency funds	22%	23%	21%	22%	28%	19%	23%	21%	23%	22%	22%
Wanted to start building credit	59%	51%	68%	57%	68%	58%	55%	50%	68%	58%	64%
Needed an easy way to buy/order things online	25%	31%	19%	27%	23%	30%	17%	28%	22%	27%	20%
Wanted a way to help me manage my spending	17%	18%	12%	22%	16%	16%	19%	23%	11%	19%	8%
Parent(s) or guardian(s) suggested I get one	26%	35%	22%	21%	24%	26%	27%	22%	29%	26%	23%
Interested in earning rewards	20%	14%	19%	28%	20%	21%	17%	23%	17%	21%	17%
Needed an easy way to pay without carrying cash	25%	30%	22%	23%	21%	24%	30%	30%	21%	28%	13%
Needed an easy way to access my own money while living away from home	18%	20%	17%	18%	16%	18%	20%	22%	14%	19%	15%
Needed an easy way to access my parent(s)' or guardian(s)' money while living away from home	11%	16%	9%	10%	15%	7%	18%	9%	13%	12%	8%
Other	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%	1%
Don't Know	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%

Base: Students who use credit cards

Q. When selecting a credit card, what were the main reasons you selected the credit card(s) you have?

Table 12 – Reasons for Choosing a Specific Credit Card

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE PAYMENT	DOES NOT USE MOBILE PAYMENT
N	445	150	162	133	98	233	114	215	230	355	90
Cash back	30%	27%	26%	39%	24%	32%	31%	30%	30%	32%	24%
Introductory interest rate	15%	13%	15%	18%	17%	16%	12%	15%	16%	16%	13%
Balance transfer interest rate	5%	4%	3%	8%	4%	6%	4%	8%	2%	6%	1%
Connected to my bank/ checking account	20%	25%	21%	14%	21%	18%	24%	17%	23%	20%	21%
Concierge service	4%	1%	4%	9%	6%	5%	1%	6%	2%	5%	1%
Travel rewards	13%	9%	14%	16%	11%	12%	16%	15%	11%	15%	5%
Rewards points	32%	33%	29%	33%	32%	31%	32%	31%	32%	32%	29%
My parent(s) or guardian(s) use this card/ recommended	27%	42%	23%	15%	29%	24%	30%	22%	31%	24%	36%
Bank or company reputation	25%	21%	28%	26%	25%	28%	19%	25%	25%	25%	27%
I got an offer in the mail/email and applied	12%	10%	13%	13%	10%	12%	13%	9%	15%	12%	10%
Easy to get approved	27%	24%	28%	29%	30%	24%	31%	25%	29%	27%	28%
Credit limit was high	10%	9%	7%	15%	10%	9%	12%	13%	7%	12%	3%
Credit limit was low	14%	13%	11%	18%	13%	12%	18%	13%	15%	14%	14%
International travel/use	9%	8%	10%	10%	7%	7%	16%	9%	9%	10%	6%
Exclusivity/ status symbol	6%	8%	3%	6%	1%	7%	6%	8%	4%	7%	0%
College or store affiliation	17%	19%	16%	17%	13%	18%	19%	17%	17%	19%	11%
Security features (chip-enabled)	14%	14%	16%	13%	14%	14%	14%	10%	19%	16%	9%
Other	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%
None	1%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%	4%	1%	2%	1%	4%
Don't know	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%

Base: Students who use credit cards

Q. How involved were your parent(s) or guardian(s) in choosing your first credit card?

Table 13 – Parent Involvement in Credit Card Selection

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE PAYMENT	DOES NOT USE MOBILE PAYMENT
N	445	150	162	133	98	233	114	215	230	355	90
They advised me on which types of card to research or apply for	29%	26%	29%	33%	29%	28%	31%	33%	25%	30%	27%
They chose the card	21%	27%	20%	16%	17%	21%	26%	21%	22%	20%	26%
They added me to their card/account	18%	28%	12%	12%	16%	18%	18%	14%	20%	19%	13%
They knew I was looking at cards but had no recommendations	11%	9%	11%	12%	7%	15%	6%	11%	10%	9%	18%
They advised me not to get a card	4%	1%	4%	6%	6%	2%	5%	3%	4%	4%	2%
They didn't know I applied for a card	15%	7%	20%	18%	23%	13%	12%	15%	15%	16%	11%
Other	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Don't Know	3%	2%	2%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	4%

Base: Students who use credit cards

Q. As of your last monthly statement, what was your credit card balance?

Q. Thinking back over the past year, what would you estimate to be the average balance per month on your credit card? If you have more than one credit card, please estimate the average combined balance per month on all your cards.

Table 14 – Average Credit Card Balance

	ALL CARD HOLDERS		AGE GROUP 18-20		AGE GROUP 21-22		AGE GROUP 23-24	
N	445		150		162		135	
	AVG CURRENT BALANCE	AVG MONTHLY BALANCE PAST 12 MONTHS	AVG CURRENT BALANCE	AVG MONTHLY BALANCE PAST 12 MONTHS	AVG CURRENT BALANCE	AVG MONTHLY BALANCE PAST 12 MONTHS	AVG CURRENT BALANCE	AVG MONTHLY BALANCE PAST 12 MONTHS
Zero	6%	6%	10%	8%	5%	6%	3%	4%
\$1 – \$100	18%	24%	25%	31%	15%	23%	13%	19%
\$101 – \$500	39%	39%	45%	43%	36%	38%	35%	37%
\$501 – \$1000	16%	15%	12%	11%	19%	17%	17%	18%
\$1001 – \$2500	15%	8%	7%	5%	15%	8%	24%	11%
\$2501 – \$5000	5%	5%	2%	2%	6%	4%	6%	10%
>\$5000	2%	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%	2%	2%
Total average balance	\$1,076	\$906	\$569	\$611	\$1,346	\$1,013	\$1,319	\$1,109

Base: Students who use credit cards

Q. Who makes payments on your credit card(s)? Please select all that apply.

Table 15 – Credit Card Bill Payer

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE PAYMENT	DOES NOT USE MOBILE PAYMENT
N	445	150	162	133	98	233	114	215	230	355	90
Me	85%	75%	86%	94%	82%	88%	80%	87%	83%	85%	84%
My parent(s) or guardian(s)	25%	38%	25%	9%	28%	20%	32%	20%	29%	25%	25%
Spouse/partner	3%	3%	2%	4%	5%	3%	1%	2%	4%	3%	2%
Someone else	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Base: Students who use credit cards

Q. How do you share payments on your credit card balance each month? Please select one answer.

Table 16 – Shared Payment Responsibility

	TOTAL
N*	55
I pay most of it, with some help	56%
I pay about half, with help for the other half	29%
I pay a little of it, with help for the rest	12%
Don't know	3%

Base: Students who use credit cards and share payment responsibility

*Small sample

Q. Thinking about your credit card balance each month, which of the following applies? Please select one answer.

Table 17 – Typical Monthly Credit Card Payment

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE PAYMENT	DOES NOT USE MOBILE PAYMENT
N	445	150	162	133	98	233	114	215	230	355	90
The full balance is paid each month	63%	72%	56%	60%	55%	65%	64%	68%	57%	62%	64%
Partial but more than minimum is paid each month	26%	31%	28%	28%	28%	24%	30%	21%	31%	26%	26%
The minimum payment due is paid each month	8%	6%	10%	9%	13%	9%	4%	8%	9%	9%	5%
Less than the minimum payment is paid each month	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Don't know	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	5%

Base: Students who use credit cards

Q. How often have you used a credit card to buy items knowing you wouldn't have money to pay the bill when it arrived?

Table 18 – Charging Purchases without Ability to Pay

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE PAYMENT	DOES NOT USE MOBILE PAYMENT
N	445	150	162	133	98	233	114	215	230	355	90
Never	37%	48%	38%	22%	40%	35%	37%	30%	42%	31%	60%
Rarely	23%	24%	21%	24%	24%	24%	20%	24%	23%	23%	25%
Sometimes	25%	20%	26%	31%	27%	26%	21%	27%	23%	29%	11%
Frequently	15%	9%	15%	24%	9%	15%	21%	19%	12%	18%	4%

Base: Students who use credit cards

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Table 19 – Attitudes Toward Credit Card Debt, Scale 1 - 5

	N	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NEITHER	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I worry that my credit card debts are out of control	445	10%	15%	15%	19%	42%
I don't mind having some credit card debt	445	7%	20%	20%	21%	32%
I will probably have some credit card debt for the rest of my life	445	10%	18%	19%	17%	37%

Base: Students who use credit cards

Table 20 – Attitudes Toward Credit Card Debt, "Disagree"*

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE PAYMENT	DOES NOT USE MOBILE PAYMENT
N	445	150	162	133	98	233	114	215	230	355	90
I worry that my credit card debts are out of control	61%	76%	55%	50%	67%	59%	58%	55%	66%	55%	84%
I don't mind having some credit card debt	53%	64%	56%	36%	62%	47%	56%	46%	59%	49%	67%
I will probably have some credit card debt for the rest of my life	54%	61%	55%	44%	55%	50%	60%	47%	60%	49%	74%

Base: Students who use credit cards

*Combined "strongly disagree" and "somewhat disagree"

Q. Why don't you have a credit card? Please select all that apply.

Table 21 – Reasons for Not Having a Credit Card

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE PAYMENT	DOES NOT USE MOBILE PAYMENT
N	348	198	96	54	108	164	76	141	207	254	94
I don't need one now	51%	53%	48%	47%	49%	49%	57%	43%	56%	49%	56%
I don't qualify for one	11%	6%	16%	18%	11%	10%	11%	13%	9%	11%	8%
I want to avoid debt as much as possible	47%	50%	44%	47%	45%	52%	41%	40%	53%	46%	53%
I'm afraid I'll be tempted to buy things I don't need	29%	35%	21%	20%	22%	32%	30%	23%	33%	32%	20%
I haven't gotten around to applying for one yet	21%	24%	17%	16%	24%	18%	23%	16%	24%	20%	23%
Other/Don't Know	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%

Base: Students who do not have credit cards

Q. Do you plan to obtain a credit card in the future?

Table 22 – Intent to Obtain a Credit Card

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	USES MOBILE PAYMENT	DOES NOT USE MOBILE PAYMENT
N	348	198	96	54	108	164	76	141	207	254	94
Within the next month	8%	4%	11%	17%	8%	9%	7%	11%	6%	10%	3%
Within the next year	24%	24%	19%	33%	21%	29%	16%	23%	24%	23%	26%
After graduation	20%	22%	21%	12%	19%	18%	29%	18%	22%	21%	20%
After finding a part-time job	7%	9%	3%	7%	6%	6%	11%	6%	8%	6%	8%
After finding a full-time job	16%	16%	22%	4%	19%	15%	14%	18%	14%	19%	7%
When I have a large purchase	5%	5%	5%	6%	6%	6%	2%	6%	5%	5%	5%
Soon after I turn 21	5%	7%	1%	0%	6%	2%	7%	6%	4%	5%	4%
When I need one	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%	3%
Other	2%	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	0%	2%	2%	3%	1%
Never	12%	8%	15%	16%	11%	11%	13%	11%	12%	9%	19%
Don't know	1%	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	2%

Base: Students who do not have credit cards

Q. How would you rate your money management skills?**Table 23 – Perception of Money Management Skills**

	N	Excellent	Good	Average	Not very good	Poor
TOTAL	793	24%	41%	29%	5%	1%
CARD OWNERSHIP						
HAS CREDIT CARD	445	26%	45%	25%	3%	1%
NO CREDIT CARD	348	20%	38%	33%	6%	2%
AGE						
18-20	348	21%	42%	30%	5%	2%
21-22	258	21%	40%	33%	4%	1%
23-24	187	31%	45%	19%	4%	0%
GENDER						
MALE	356	29%	39%	25%	5%	2%
FEMALE	437	19%	44%	31%	5%	1%
ANY LOAN OWNERSHIP						
HAS LOAN DEBT	536	25%	42%	28%	5%	1%
NO LOAN DEBT	257	21%	43%	30%	3%	2%
INCOME						
<\$35K	206	19%	41%	32%	5%	4%
\$35K - <\$100K	396	27%	41%	27%	4%	1%
\$100K+	190	21%	45%	29%	5%	1%
RACE/ETHNICITY						
WHITE	474	24%	42%	29%	4%	2%
BLACK	103	22%	43%	29%	4%	1%
HISPANIC	169	22%	42%	31%	5%	1%

Base: All students

Table 24 – Perception of Money Management Skills, by Major

	N*	Excellent	Good	Average	Not very good	Poor
AGRICULTURE	10	33%	19%	38%	10%	0%
ARCHITECTURE & RELATED	12	20%	52%	20%	8%	0%
BIOLOGY/BIOMED	72	26%	40%	32%	1%	1%
BUSINESS, MARKETING & RELATED	98	37%	41%	18%	2%	2%
COMMUNICATION, JOURNALISM & RELATED	31	28%	32%	25%	12%	3%
COMPUTER/INFO SCIENCES	59	22%	34%	43%	2%	0%
EDUCATION	59	27%	45%	26%	2%	0%
ENGINEERING	73	27%	43%	22%	5%	3%
HEALTH PROFESSIONS	90	19%	40%	34%	8%	0%
LAW ENFORCEMENT & RELATED	7	27%	60%	0%	13%	0%
LIBERAL ARTS, GENERAL, HUMANITIES	28	20%	56%	25%	0%	0%
MATHEMATICS, STATISTICS	12	23%	44%	26%	7%	0%
PHYSICAL SCIENCES	18	28%	45%	15%	12%	0%
PSYCHOLOGY	80	18%	47%	29%	6%	1%
PUBLIC ADMIN, SOCIAL SERVICES	6	29%	43%	28%	0%	0%
SOCIAL SCIENCES	22	10%	38%	40%	8%	4%
VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS	45	8%	50%	33%	4%	5%
OTHER	70	20%	41%	33%	5%	1%

Base: All students

* Small sample

Q. Do you currently have any of the following types of loans or debt?

Table 25 – Current Debt Type

	TOTAL	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	FIRST IN FAMILY	SECOND GENERATION
N	793	348	258	187	206	396	190	356	437	133	650
Student loan	52%	50%	56%	49%	49%	54%	50%	50%	53%	59%	50%
Auto loan/lease	13%	7%	11%	26%	8%	15%	14%	14%	13%	10%	14%
Mortgage	9%	6%	7%	19%	5%	11%	10%	14%	5%	8%	10%
Credit card debt	23%	12%	26%	39%	21%	24%	24%	25%	21%	25%	23%
Business loan	4%	3%	4%	6%	4%	4%	5%	6%	2%	2%	4%
Personal loan	8%	5%	6%	16%	7%	9%	7%	12%	5%	6%	8%
Medical bills	7%	5%	6%	13%	8%	7%	5%	5%	9%	7%	7%
Payday loan	2%	1%	2%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
Other	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%
None	32%	40%	29%	19%	36%	27%	36%	29%	33%	28%	32%

Base: All students

Q. If you applied for a credit card today on your own (without a cosigner), approximately how much credit do you think you would be eligible to receive?

Table 26 – Presumed Credit Eligibility

	N	Up to \$500	\$500 - \$999	\$1,000 - \$3,999	\$4,000 - \$6,999	\$7,000+	Don't Know	Don't Qualify
TOTAL	793	10%	19%	25%	11%	9%	22%	4%
CARD OWNERSHIP								
HAS CREDIT CARD	445	7%	19%	31%	15%	12%	13%	2%
NO CREDIT CARD	348	14%	19%	17%	6%	4%	34%	6%
AGE								
18-20	348	12%	22%	18%	7%	6%	31%	3%
21-22	258	9%	18%	31%	10%	10%	19%	4%
23-24	187	8%	15%	31%	20%	11%	10%	5%
GENDER								
MALE	356	7%	17%	32%	14%	12%	15%	4%
FEMALE	437	13%	21%	20%	8%	6%	29%	4%
ANY LOAN OWNERSHIP								
HAS LOAN DEBT	536	10%	19%	29%	13%	11%	15%	3%
NO LOAN DEBT	257	10%	19%	16%	8%	4%	37%	5%
INCOME								
<\$35K	206	17%	27%	23%	5%	3%	22%	4%
\$35K - <\$100K	396	8%	18%	29%	14%	8%	19%	4%
\$100K+	190	7%	12%	19%	11%	17%	30%	4%
PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS								
EXCELLENT	186	7%	16%	30%	15%	15%	16%	1%
GOOD	334	10%	19%	27%	11%	8%	20%	4%
AVERAGE	226	11%	23%	20%	8%	4%	30%	5%
NOT GOOD/POOR	47	20%	15%	14%	8%	6%	29%	9%

Base: All students

Q. Have you ever reviewed your credit report?

Table 27 – Credit Report Awareness

	N	Yes	No, but know I have one	No, not sure I have one	No, I don't have one
TOTAL	793	49%	18%	16%	17%
CARD OWNERSHIP					
HAS CREDIT CARD	445	66%	20%	10%	3%
NO CREDIT CARD	348	27%	15%	23%	36%
AGE					
18-20	348	33%	16%	25%	25%
21-22	258	55%	19%	12%	14%
23-24	187	69%	19%	5%	8%
GENDER					
MALE	356	55%	20%	13%	12%
FEMALE	437	44%	17%	18%	22%
ANY LOAN OWNERSHIP					
HAS LOAN DEBT	536	56%	19%	14%	11%
NO LOAN DEBT	257	33%	16%	20%	31%
INCOME					
<\$35K	206	45%	15%	18%	22%
\$35K - <\$100K	396	53%	19%	15%	14%
\$100K+	190	44%	19%	16%	21%
PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS					
EXCELLENT	186	61%	14%	8%	16%
GOOD	520	56%	17%	11%	16%
AVERAGE	226	36%	20%	24%	21%
NOT GOOD/POOR	47	34%	17%	31%	18%

Base: All students

Q. Which of the following do you consider to be positive credit behaviors – that is, actions that may increase your credit score, and which of the following do you consider to be negative credit behaviors - that is, actions that may lower your credit score?

Table 28 – Perception of Credit Behaviors as Positive, Negative, or Neutral

	POSITIVE	NEITHER	NEGATIVE
N=793			
Paying your bills on time	93%	4%	3%
Having no credit cards	17%	58%	25%
Opening multiple credit cards or other loan accounts around the same time	16%	21%	64%
Keeping a high balance on your credit card	24%	14%	62%
Keeping a low balance on your credit card	63%	18%	19%
Using as much of your credit limit as possible	15%	25%	61%
None of these	4%	26%	11%

Base: All students

Q. As you may know, a credit score is a number that various financial institutions assign to an individual, based on their financial background, in order to assess the investment risk that person poses to creditors, lenders, and other businesses.

What are the benefits of having a good credit score? (Open response, coded)

Table 29 – Benefits of Having a Good Credit Score

	PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS					CARD OWNERSHIP		ANY LOAN OWNERSHIP	
	TOTAL	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	NOT GOOD/ POOR	HAS CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	HAS LOANS	NO LOANS
N	793	186	334	226	47	445	348	536	257
Ability to apply for good/better loans or loan rates	32%	31%	32%	33%	31%	30%	35%	31%	34%
Ability to be approved for mortgage/rent	24%	20%	26%	24%	26%	24%	25%	24%	25%
Ability to obtain car loan	19%	13%	20%	21%	27%	17%	22%	19%	19%
Ability to purchase expensive items	14%	14%	14%	15%	11%	12%	17%	14%	14%
Ability to obtain credit cards	7%	4%	10%	5%	10%	8%	6%	8%	6%
Increase credit limit	7%	3%	10%	7%	2%	7%	6%	7%	6%
More opportunities/options	4%	4%	5%	3%	5%	5%	3%	5%	3%
Qualify for low/better interest rate	18%	14%	21%	18%	19%	20%	17%	20%	16%
Easy/quick approval process	12%	13%	10%	15%	15%	14%	11%	13%	10%
Security of companies trusting you	12%	13%	12%	12%	20%	13%	12%	12%	13%
Other	15%	16%	17%	10%	12%	17%	13%	16%	13%
Don't know	9%	10%	7%	12%	9%	7%	12%	9%	10%

Base: All students

Q. What behaviors do you practice in order to manage your finances more effectively? Please select all that apply.

Table 30 – Putting Financial Management in Practice

		PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS				CARD OWNERSHIP		ANY LOAN OWNERSHIP	
		TOTAL	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	NOT GOOD/ POOR	HAS CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	HAS LOANS
N	793	186	334	226	47	445	348	536	257
Pay bills on time	77%	75%	81%	74%	68%	83%	69%	79%	72%
Pay off higher interest rate debt first	28%	33%	31%	22%	16%	30%	25%	33%	16%
Save some amount from my earnings every month	55%	53%	62%	52%	38%	54%	58%	54%	58%
Track my spending so I know where my money is going	56%	48%	63%	54%	53%	51%	63%	55%	60%
Never spend more money than I have	60%	57%	63%	60%	55%	53%	69%	57%	65%
Invest my savings to earn higher rates	16%	21%	17%	10%	8%	16%	15%	16%	15%
Never overdraft so I don't incur fees	36%	28%	43%	35%	30%	37%	36%	38%	32%
Have an emergency fund	24%	24%	27%	21%	23%	22%	27%	24%	26%
Other	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
None	2%	2%	1%	0%	8%	2%	2%	1%	4%
Don't know	2%	1%	1%	4%	2%	1%	3%	0%	6%

Base: All students

Q. How did you learn about managing your finances? Please select all that apply.

Table 31 – Financial Management Education Resources

		PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS			
	TOTAL	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	NOT GOOD/POOR
N	793	186	334	226	47
Parent(s) or guardian(s)	71%	60%	72%	77%	74%
Family members	29%	30%	33%	26%	16%
Spouse/partner	6%	8%	5%	5%	4%
Friends	20%	21%	20%	19%	18%
Financial advisor	14%	20%	13%	14%	8%
Community programs	5%	4%	7%	5%	2%
Online services through bank	9%	8%	9%	11%	6%
Researched online	23%	12%	28%	23%	31%
In a high school class	22%	13%	25%	26%	16%
In a college course	12%	9%	14%	12%	15%
Other	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%
None	5%	6%	4%	5%	6%

Base: All students

Q. On which financial management topics would you like more information now? Please select all that apply.

Table 32 – Preferred Financial Management Information

	PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS				
	TOTAL	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	NOT GOOD/POOR
N	793	186	334	226	47
Paying for college options	32%	29%	30%	34%	48%
Budgeting	32%	24%	33%	36%	47%
Financial aid resources	21%	20%	18%	23%	29%
Benefits and pitfalls of using credit	20%	19%	22%	18%	23%
Student loan repayment options	30%	16%	32%	35%	44%
Debt reduction strategies	23%	19%	22%	25%	32%
Saving strategies	37%	33%	37%	38%	53%
Retirement/future financial planning	25%	24%	28%	19%	29%
Investment strategies	29%	23%	32%	28%	33%
Credit reports and credit scores	28%	21%	32%	26%	33%
Other	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
None	17%	14%	15%	22%	13%

Base: All students

Q. To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

Table 33 – Perceptions about Credit Cards, Scale 1 - 5

N=793	STRONGLY AGREE	SOMEWHAT AGREE	NEITHER	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
Having a credit card makes people more vulnerable to identity theft	11%	38%	34%	14%	5%
Credit cards are safer than debit cards when it comes to online purchases	13%	23%	41%	15%	9%
Having lots of credit cards help people to build credit/improve their credit score	7%	23%	34%	25%	11%
It is too easy to accumulate a lot of credit card debt quickly	30%	35%	22%	10%	4%
Credit card rewards are a real benefit to using credit cards	20%	40%	28%	9%	4%
It is easier to pay with a credit card than to pay with mobile	15%	31%	39%	12%	4%
There are real benefits to paying for things with a credit card (instead of cash or debit or mobile)	15%	40%	30%	10%	5%
Credit cards allow for too much impulse buying	22%	40%	25%	10%	4%

Base: All students

Table 34 – Perceptions about Credit Cards, “Agree”**

	TOTAL	HAS CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	AGES 18-20	AGES 21-22	AGES 23-24	<\$35K	\$35K - <\$100K	\$100K+	MALE	FEMALE	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	NOT GOOD/ POOR
N	793	445	348	348	258	187	206	396	190	356	437	186	334	226	47
Having a credit card makes people more vulnerable to identity theft	48%	47%	50%	46%	45%	56%	45%	50%	48%	48%	48%	55%	45%	46%	54%
Credit cards are safer than debit cards when it comes to online purchases	35%	44%	24%	30%	34%	47%	29%	39%	34%	40%	32%	44%	36%	26%	41%
Having lots of credit cards help people to build credit/ improve their credit score	31%	34%	26%	26%	32%	38%	30%	32%	29%	36%	27%	39%	29%	24%	36%
It is too easy to accumulate a lot of credit card debt quickly	64%	62%	67%	65%	61%	67%	67%	67%	56%	58%	69%	63%	62%	66%	75%
Credit card rewards are a real benefit to using credit cards	59%	65%	53%	58%	58%	65%	54%	63%	57%	60%	59%	67%	59%	55%	53%
It is easier to pay with a credit card than to pay with mobile	45%	54%	35%	44%	43%	51%	40%	48%	46%	47%	44%	53%	44%	42%	39%
There are real benefits to paying for things with a credit card (instead of cash or debit or mobile)	55%	63%	46%	52%	51%	67%	56%	57%	51%	56%	55%	58%	59%	48%	54%
Credit cards allow for too much impulse buying	61%	59%	64%	61%	61%	63%	62%	64%	56%	56%	66%	66%	58%	60%	76%

Base: All students

*Combined “strongly agree” and “somewhat agree”

- Q.** Suppose you had \$100 in a savings account and the interest rate was 2% per year. After 5 years, how much do you think you would have in the account if you left the money to grow?

Table 35 – Question: Interest Accumulation

	PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS					CARD OWNERSHIP		ANY LOAN OWNERSHIP	
	TOTAL	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	NOT GOOD/ POOR	HAS CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	HAS LOANS	NO LOANS
N	793	186	334	226	47	445	348	536	257
More than \$102	75%	74%	75%	73%	79%	77%	71%	75%	73%
Exactly \$102	14%	17%	13%	11%	15%	15%	12%	16%	8%
Less than \$102	4%	4%	3%	3%	4%	3%	5%	3%	5%
Not sure	9%	5%	8%	13%	2%	6%	12%	6%	14%

Base: All students

- Q.** Assuming the following individuals have the same credit card with the same interest rate, which will pay the most in interest on their credit card purchases over time?

Table 36 – Question: Effect of Payment Behavior on Cost

	PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS					CARD OWNERSHIP		ANY LOAN OWNERSHIP	
	TOTAL	EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	NOT GOOD/ POOR	HAS CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	HAS LOANS	NO LOANS
N	793	186	334	226	47	445	348	536	257
Joe, who makes the minimum payment on his credit card bill every month	17%	28%	14%	13%	12%	20%	13%	20%	10%
Jane, who pays the balance on her credit card in full every month	19%	22%	18%	16%	20%	19%	18%	20%	15%
Joyce, who sometimes pays the minimum, sometimes pays less than the minimum, and missed one payment on her credit card bill	48%	38%	49%	51%	58%	46%	49%	48%	47%
All of them will pay the same amount in interest over time	8%	7%	8%	9%	4%	7%	9%	7%	10%
Not sure	9%	5%	10%	11%	7%	8%	10%	5%	18%

Base: All students

Q. Imagine that there are two options when it comes to paying back a loan and both come with the same interest rate. Provided you have the needed funds, which option would you select to minimize your total costs over the life of the loan (i.e., all of your payments combined until the loan is completely paid off)?

Table 37 – Question: Impact of Repayment Term on Cost

	TOTAL	PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS				CARD OWNERSHIP		ANY LOAN OWNERSHIP	
		EXCELLENT	GOOD	AVERAGE	NOT GOOD/ POOR	HAS CREDIT CARD	NO CREDIT CARD	HAS LOANS	NO LOANS
N	793	186	334	226	47	445	348	536	257
Option 1 allows you to take 10 years to pay back the loan	59%	54%	61%	61%	59%	58%	60%	63%	50%
Option 2 allows you to take 20 years to pay back the loan	16%	26%	14%	10%	15%	19%	12%	19%	10%
Both options have the same out-of-pocket cost over the life of the loan	12%	15%	10%	15%	10%	13%	12%	11%	15%
Not sure	13%	5%	15%	14%	17%	10%	16%	7%	25%

Base: All students

Table 38 – Proportion of Correct Answers to Questions

	N	Three of three correct	Two of three correct	One of three correct	Zero of three correct
TOTAL	793	31%	33%	23%	13%
CARD OWNERSHIP					
HAS CREDIT CARD	445	30%	34%	23%	13%
NO CREDIT CARD	348	31%	33%	23%	14%
AGE					
18-20	348	33%	34%	23%	10%
21-22	258	31%	30%	22%	17%
23-24	187	25%	36%	25%	14%
GENDER					
MALE	356	28%	35%	23%	14%
FEMALE	437	33%	32%	23%	12%
ANY LOAN OWNERSHIP					
HAS LOAN DEBT	536	32%	33%	24%	11%
NO LOAN DEBT	257	27%	34%	21%	18%
INCOME					
<\$35K	206	32%	32%	23%	13%
\$35K - <\$100K	396	29%	36%	22%	14%
\$100K+	190	32%	30%	25%	13%
PERCEIVED MONEY MGMT SKILLS					
EXCELLENT	186	23%	33%	30%	13%
GOOD	334	33%	33%	22%	12%
AVERAGE	226	32%	36%	18%	14%
NOT GOOD/POOR	47	38%	29%	25%	8%
PARENT COLLEGE					
FIRST IN FAMILY	133	25%	32%	23%	13%
SECOND GENERATION	793	32%	33%	30%	13%

Base: All students

TECHNICAL NOTES

TARGET POPULATION

Ipsos conducted the *Majoring in Money* survey between Friday, December 18, 2015, and Thursday, December 31, 2015. Ipsos interviewed 793 adults between 18 and 24 years of age from the continental U.S., Alaska, and Hawaii who are currently attending a technical school, two-year undergraduate institution, or four-year undergraduate institution. Interviews were conducted online and in English.

SAMPLE DESIGN

The sample for this study was drawn randomly from Ipsos' online panel, partner online panel sources (including a purchased list of 18-24 year-olds), and "river" sampling, and does not rely on a population frame in the traditional sense.

Ipsos uses fixed sample targets, unique to the study, in drawing sample. After a sample has been obtained, Ipsos calibrates respondent characteristics to be representative of the U.S. population, using standard procedures such as raking-ratio adjustments. The source of these population targets is 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) data. The sample drawn for this study reflects fixed sample targets on demographics. The target set for each of these variables is shown in Table D.

WEIGHTING

To correct for adjustments to sample targets during fielding, the survey was weighted using a statistical technique called rim-weighting to align the respondent demographics with the current U.S. population. All of the demographic profiles used in the weights were sourced from the 2013 ACS.

How to Calculate Bayesian Credibility Intervals

The calculation of credibility intervals assumes that Y has a binomial distribution conditioned on the parameter θ , i.e., $Y|\theta \sim \text{Bin}(n, \theta)$, where n is the size of our sample. In this setting, Y counts the number of "yes," or "1," observed in the sample, so that the sample mean ($\bar{y}$) is a natural estimate of the true population proportion θ . This model is often called the likelihood function, and it is a standard concept in both the Bayesian and the

Table D: Sample Targets for Household Income, Region, Gender, Race, and Enrollment Status

GENDER	
MALE	407
FEMALE	393
	800
INCOME	
UNDER \$35,000	210
\$35,000-\$99,999	400
\$100,000 OR MORE	190
	800
REGION	
NORTHEAST	168
MIDWEST	192
SOUTH	240
WEST	200
	800
ETH_RACE	
WHITE NON-HISPANIC	438
BLACK NON-HISPANIC	116
ASIAN NON-HISPANIC	38
OTHER NON-HISPANIC	32
HISPANIC (ALL RACES)	176
	800
ENROLLMENT STATUS	
FULL TIME	720
PART TIME	80
	800

Classical framework. The Bayesian 1 statistics combines both the prior distribution and the likelihood function to create a posterior distribution. The posterior distribution represents our opinion about which are the plausible values for θ adjusted after observing the sample data. In reality, the posterior distribution is one's knowledge base updated using the latest survey information. For the prior and likelihood functions specified here, the posterior distribution is also a beta distribution ($\pi(\theta/y) \sim \beta(y+a, n-y+b)$), but with updated hyper-parameters.

Our credibility interval for θ is based on this posterior distribution. As mentioned above, these intervals represent our belief about which are the most plausible values for θ given our updated knowledge base. There are different ways to calculate these intervals based on $\pi(\theta/y)$. Since we want only one measure of precision for all variables in the survey, analogous to what is done within the Classical framework, we will compute the largest possible credibility interval for any observed sample. The worst case occurs when we assume that $a=1$ and $b=1$ and $y=n/2$. Using a simple approximation of the posterior by the normal distribution, the 95% credibility interval is given by, approximately,:

Table E: Credibility Intervals by Sample Size

SAMPLE SIZE	CREDIBILITY INTERVALS
2,000	2.5
1,500	2.9
1,000	3.5
750	4.1
500	5.0
350	6.0
200	7.9
100	11.2