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Greek community needs assessment: Reducing the negative impact of alcohol and drugs

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Greeks Against Drug and Alcohol Abuse at Clemson University

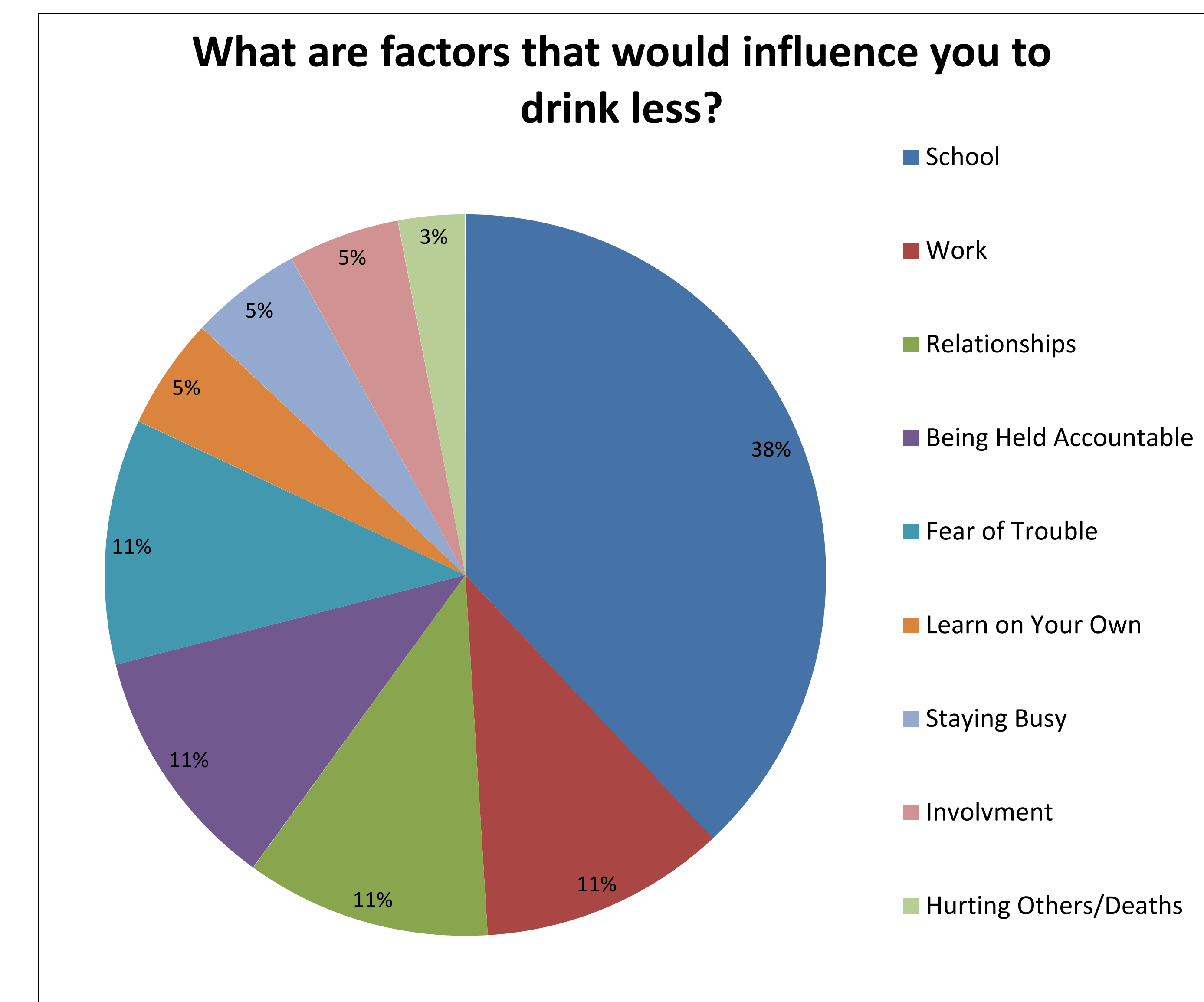
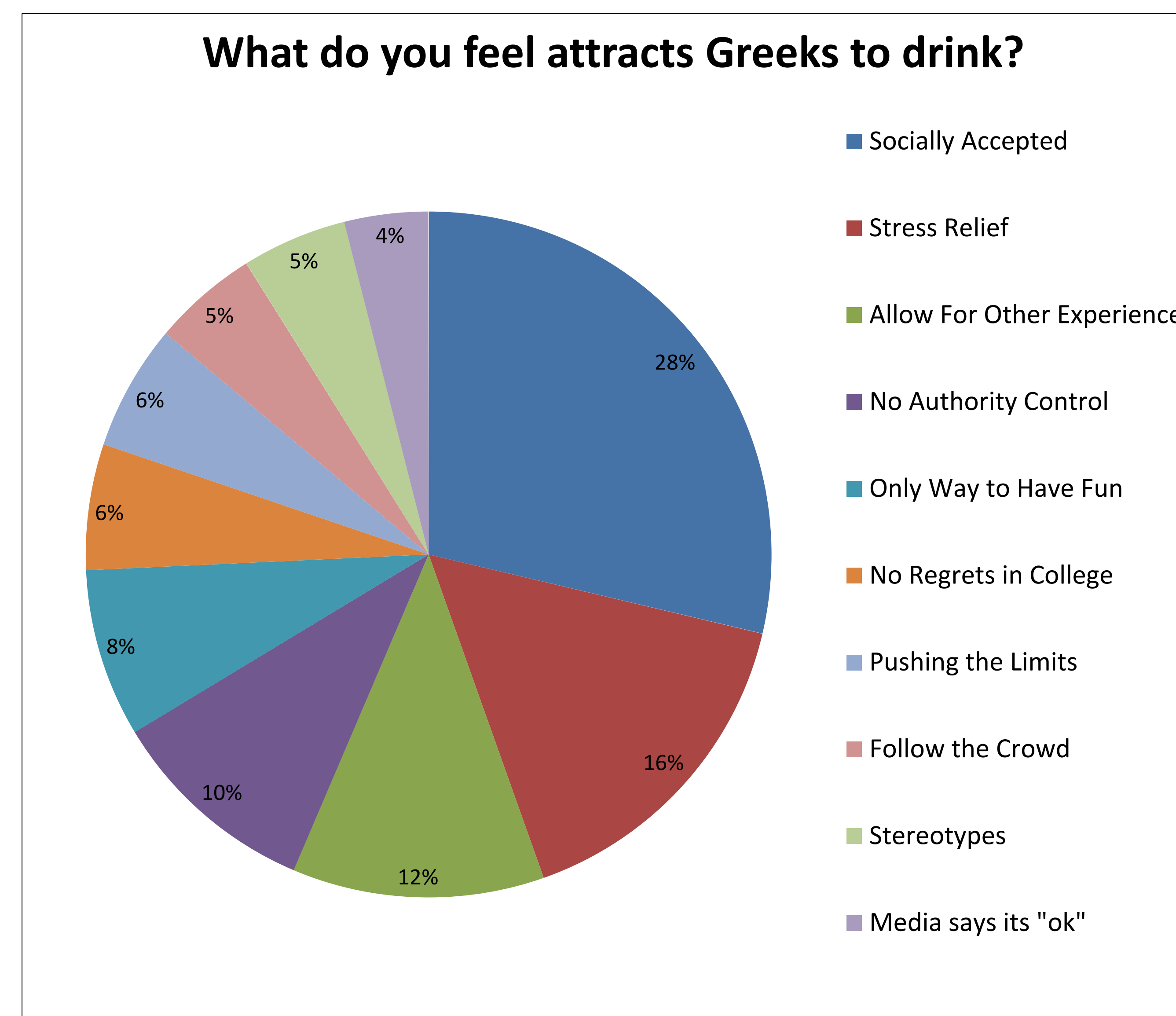
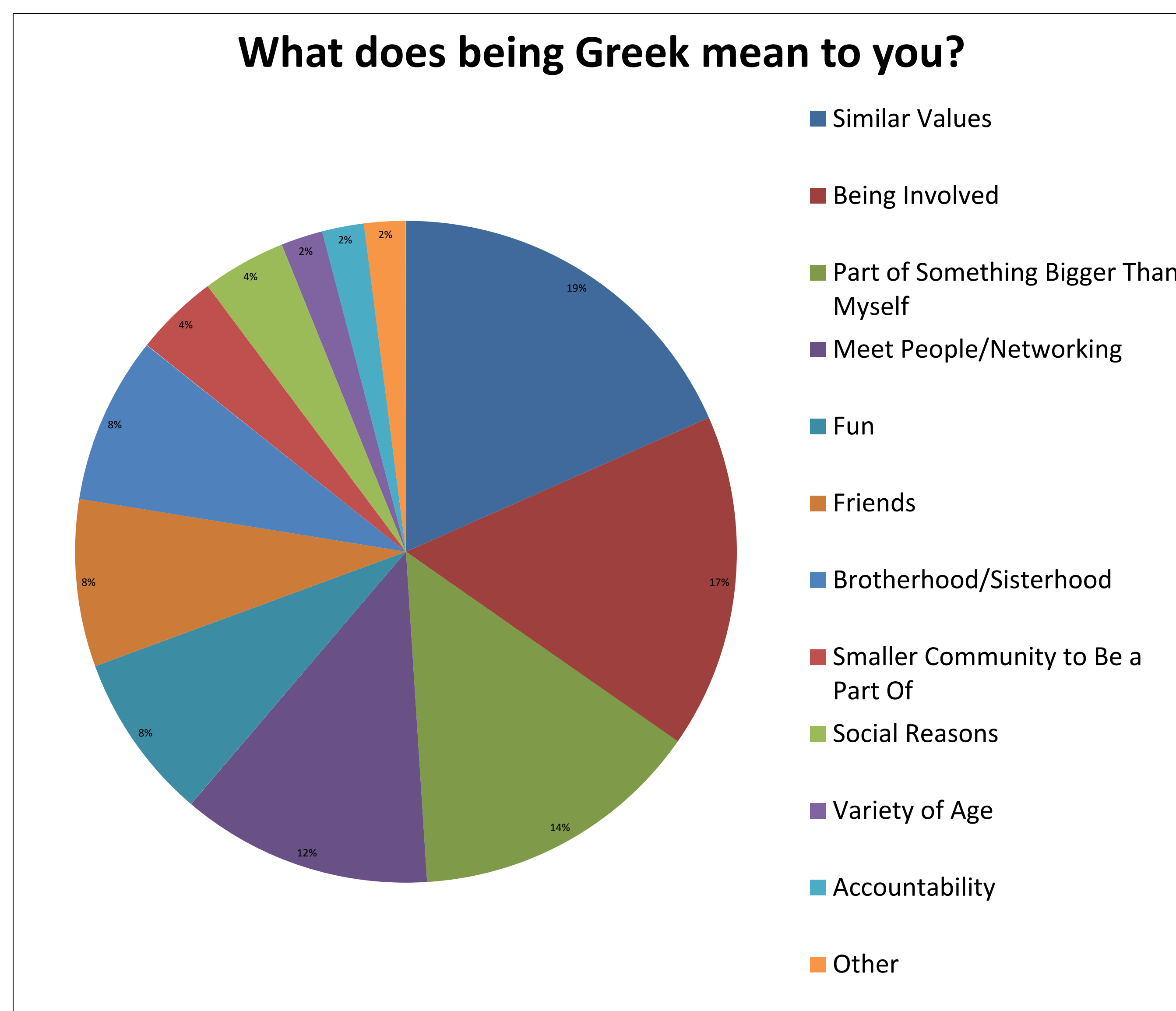
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INTRODUCTION

Use and abuse of drugs and alcohol have been prevalent among college campuses across the nation. The atmosphere created for incoming freshmen to partake in some of this illegal activity places a large stress on students to fit in. In hopes of making a large campus smaller, students decide to “go Greek” and strive to join a Greek organization. In fact, at Clemson University, roughly 24% of the student body is Greek. As each individual has the choice to decide their collegiate path, they also have the choice to engage in certain behaviors in social settings. At Clemson University, the drug and alcohol issue is overwhelming and intimidating. It is clear that this illegal behavior is difficult to monitor, but by educating new members and current Greeks of the repercussion of the actions taken, all can enjoy the positives of the Greek system.

METHODS

5 focus groups were held with Clemson University students from the Greek Community. Participants included 17 Clemson students from 12 chapter across all 3 councils (College Panhellenic Council, National Pan-Hellenic Council, Interfraternity Council).



CONCLUSIONS

Most Greek students joined their organization because they were looking for a core group of friends that share their values. One major problem with this is that students reported that part of the reason they drink is for social acceptance. Students therefore see drinking as something that is commonly accepted and shared and that begins to become a similar value, whether students are aware or not. Students are aware of the consequences of drinking and drug use such as negative impacts on school work, their health, and their relationships, but the levels of incidents on campus is indicative that students either put these consequences out of mind, or do not find the risk of them to be high enough to warrant a change in action.

By increasing the amount that students think about these consequences they already know, we could change the way that students act.

FUTURE RESEARCH

This CI team plans to conduct several more focus groups that will provide valuable information from students within the Greek Community. Surveys will also be used as a method to connect with the Greek community. We will organize the information in ways to see different trends about alcohol and drug influences. We will look into different ways alcohol and drugs negatively effects Greek students and try to find solutions to some of these problems. We plan on raising awareness to the Clemson Greek students about the problems that arise from our research.

Mission: We are a cross-council collaborative effort working to better the Greek community at Clemson University by implementing action-based changes that help reduce the negative and unwanted impact of drug and alcohol abuse.

Vision: To become a model of a safe and responsible Greek community through peer leadership.

Values: Accountability, leadership, respect.