

A DECADE OF USER SURVEYS

Utilizing and Assessing a Standard Assessment Tool
to Measure Library Performance at the
University of Virginia and
University of Washington

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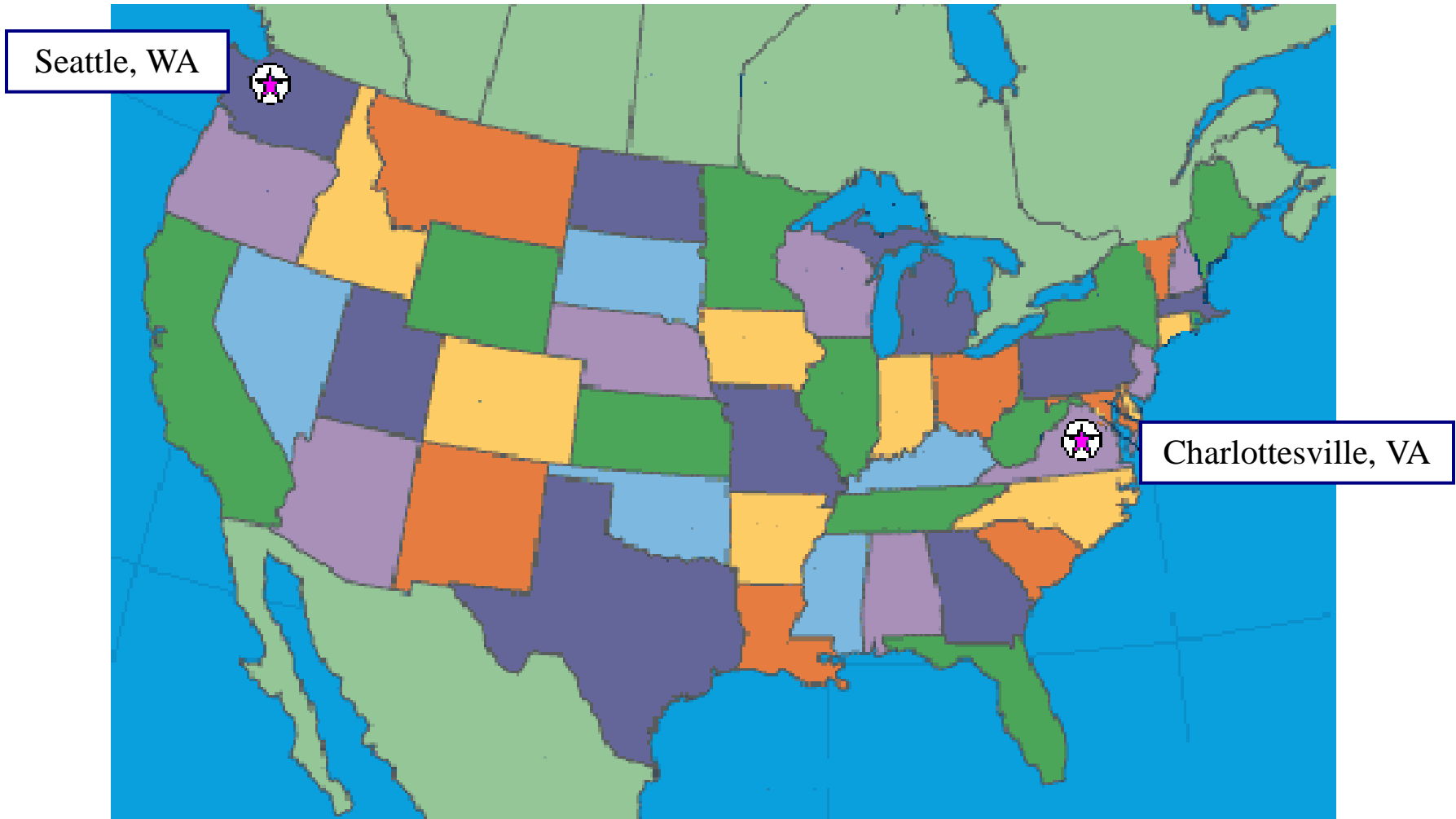
User Surveys

- Obtain direct responses to a series of questions
- Identify user issues, concerns and needs
- Measure library performance from user perspective, including satisfaction
- Acquire quantifiable data that can be statistically analyzed and generalizeable for the larger population
- Use results to improve or change services
- Campus/community political benefits
- Institutional assessment/accreditation

“Two Proofs”

- Surveys designed to provide multidimensional user perspective on library performance
 - Use type and frequency
 - Satisfaction
 - Importance
 - Priority
 - Written comments
- Use survey results with other measures/user input such as counts, observation, focus groups

Locations of the University of Virginia (UVA) and the University of Washington (UW)



University of Virginia (UVA)

- 12,500 undergraduates
 - 65% from Virginia, 35% out of state
 - Selective admissions, with high retention and graduation rates
 - Notable for liberal arts
- 6,000 graduate and professional students
 - Notable programs in humanities, law, business
- Located in Charlottesville
 - Small city in metro area of 160,000
 - Scenic environment -- Blue Ridge, horse farms, wineries
 - Home to early Presidents and modern day celebrities

UVA Library Surveys

- Faculty
- Sample of 500
 - 1993 (paper)
 - 1996 (paper)
 - 2000 (Web)
- Students
- Separate tallies for grads and undergrads
- Sample size varied
 - 1994 (paper)
 - 1998 (Web)
 - 2001 (Web)

UVA Results

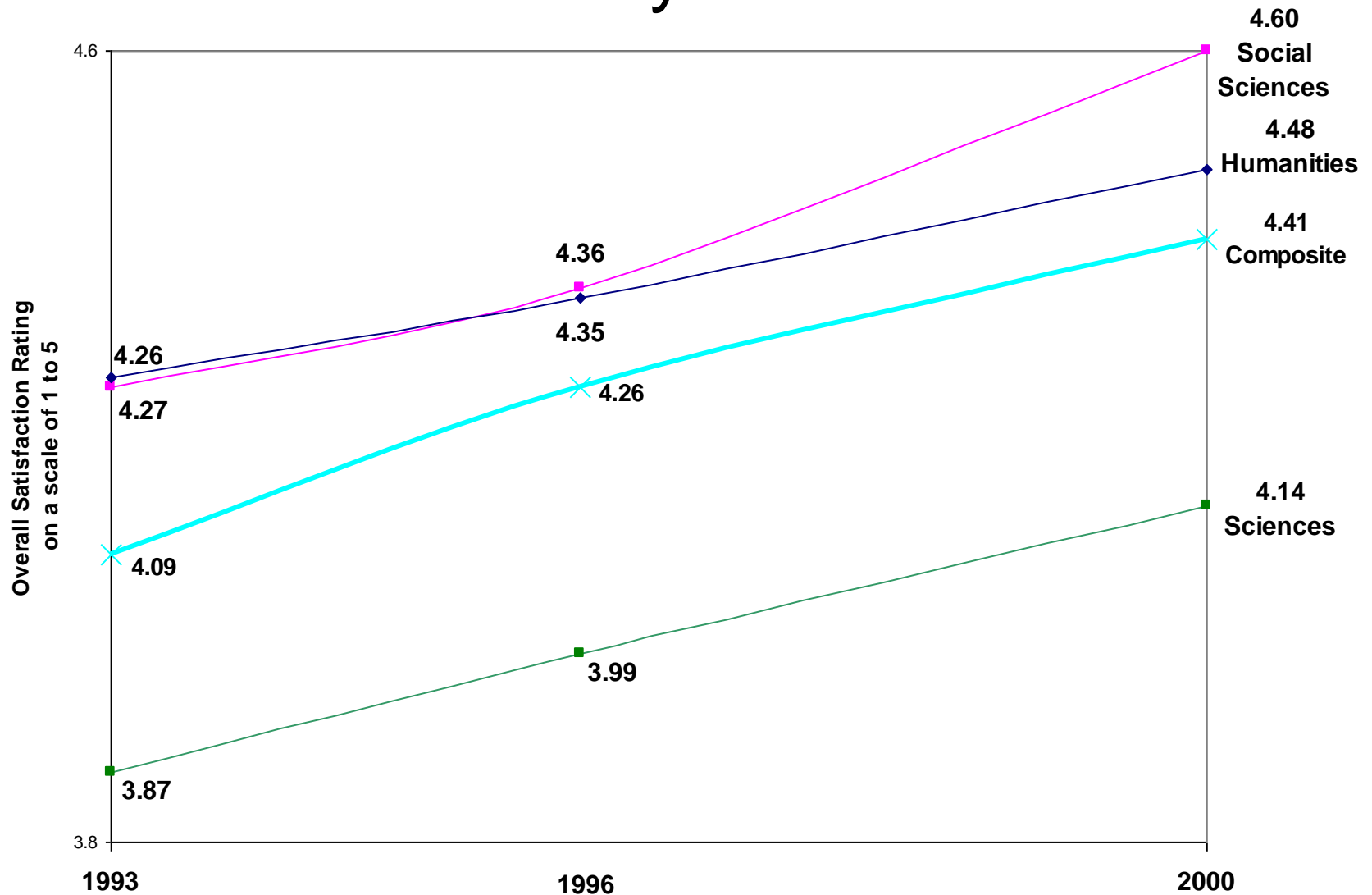
- Response rates

- Faculty: 63-70%
- Graduate Students: 53-65%
- Undergraduates: 43-50%

- Overall satisfaction (1 to 5 scale)

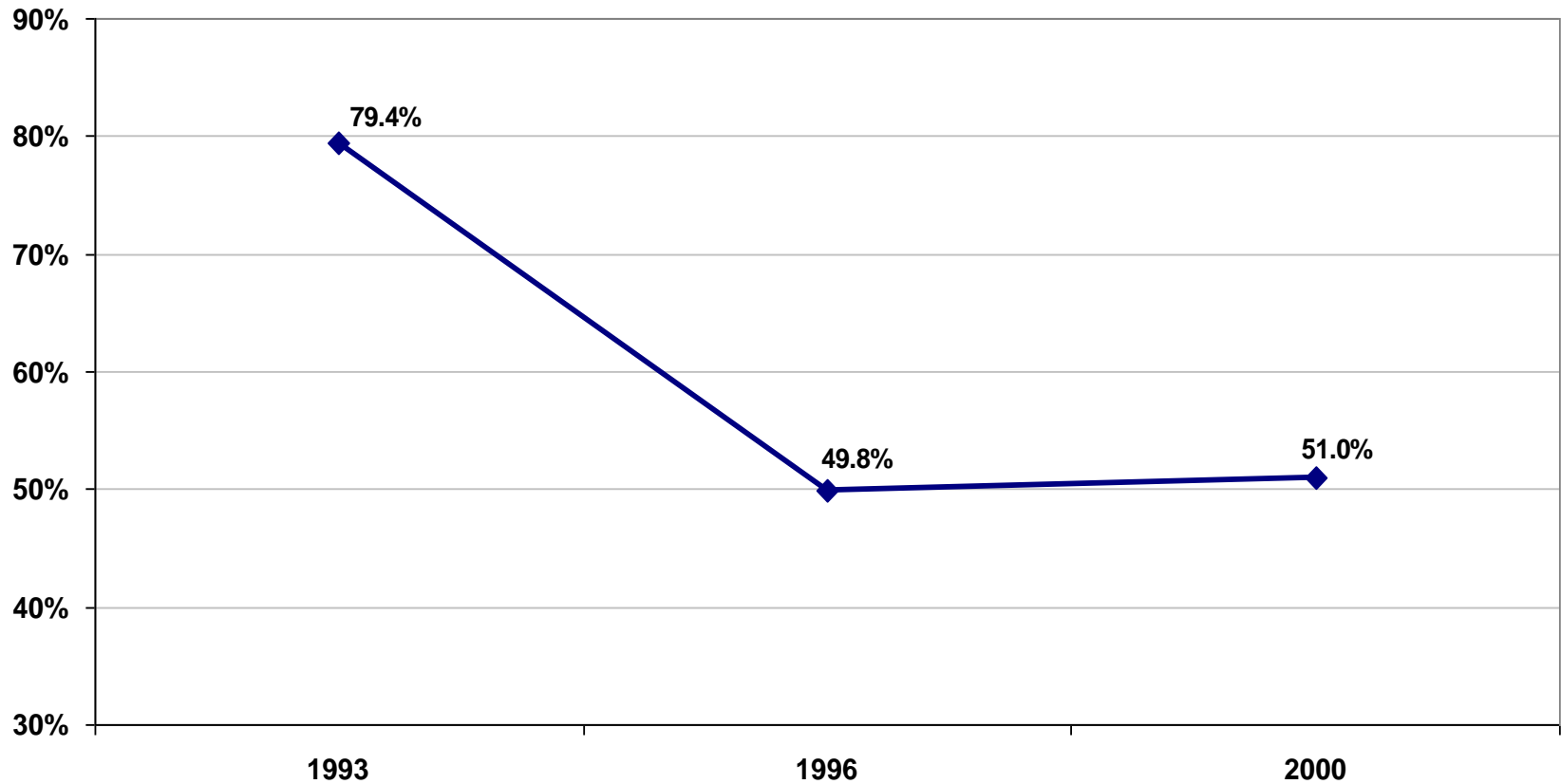
	93/94	96/98	00/01
– Faculty:	4.09	4.26	4.41
– Graduate Students	3.96	3.97	3.97
– Undergraduates	4.01	3.90	4.07

UVA Faculty Satisfaction



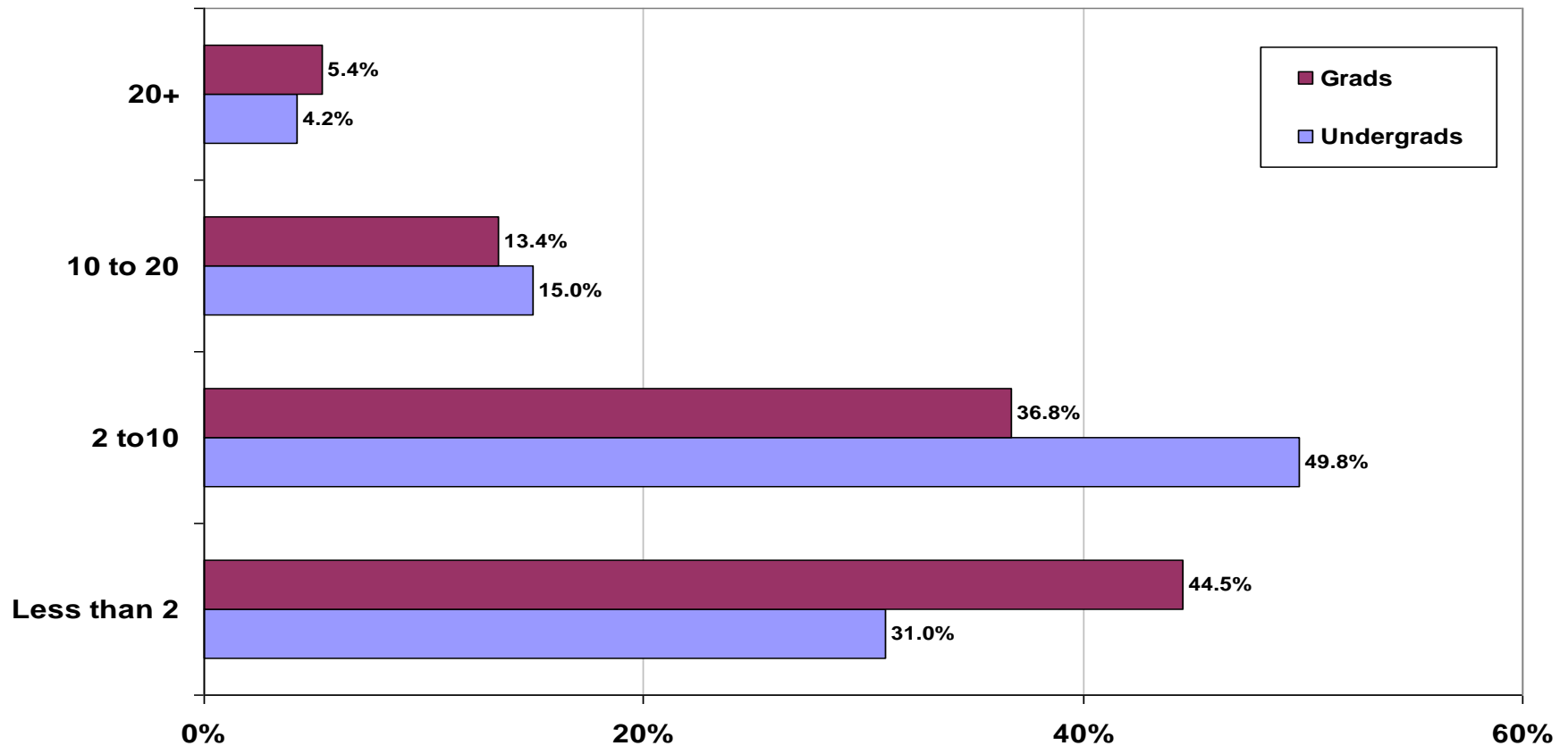
UVA Faculty In-Person Library Use

(% visiting at least weekly)



UVA Hours per Week in the Library

Student Survey 2001

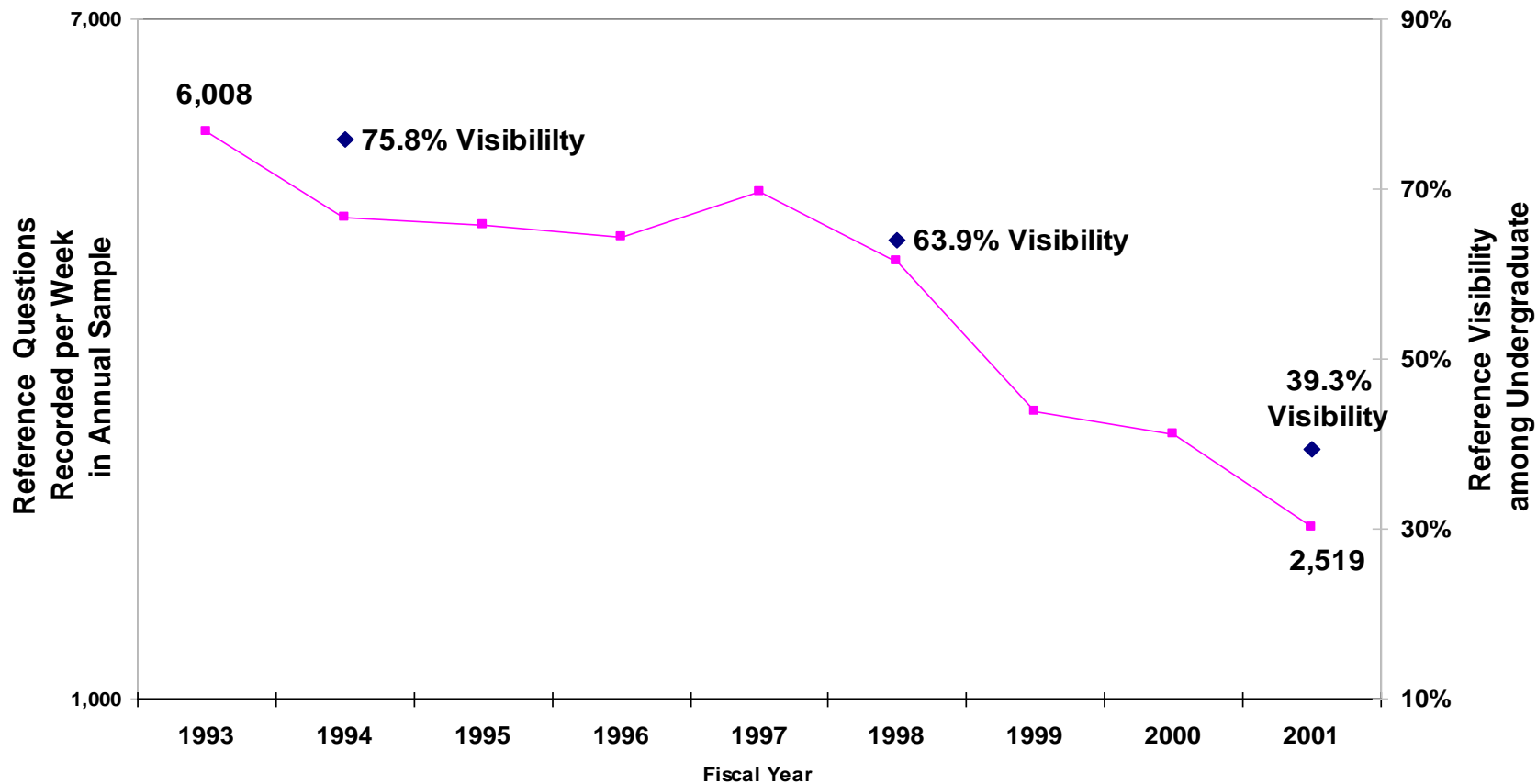


Analyzing the UVA Results

- Two Scores for Resources, Services, Facilities
 - Satisfaction = Mean Rating (1 to 5)
 - Visibility = Percentage Answering the Question
- Permits comparison over time and among groups
- Identifies areas that need more attention

UVA

Reference Activity and Reference Visibility in Student Surveys



UVA Priorities

- 2000 Faculty
 - Books, Journals, Electronic Databases, E-Texts and Journals, Document Delivery/ILL
- 2001 Graduate Students
 - Books, Electronic Journals, Print Journals
- 2001 Undergraduates
 - Books, Computer Workstations, Physical Comfort
- 2001 Law Students
 - Physical Comfort, Computer Workstations, Books

Qualitative Data in UVA Surveys

- Standard open ended questions
 - What is the greatest strength of the library?
 - What needs to be improved?
 - Do you have general comments?
- Utility of qualitative data
 - Interesting reading, but difficult to aggregate
 - Risk of unsupported generalizations
 - Useful when correlated with quantitative data
 - Useful when applied to smaller units

Using Results – University of Virginia

- Additional resources for the science libraries (1994+)
Major renovation (2001)
- Revision of library instruction for first year students (1995)
- Redefinition of collection development (1996)
- Initiative to improve shelving (1999)
- Undergraduate library open 24 hours (2000)
- Additional resources for the Fine Arts Library (2000)
- Support for various library initiatives--document delivery, acquisition of electronic resources, development of electronic centers (1994+)

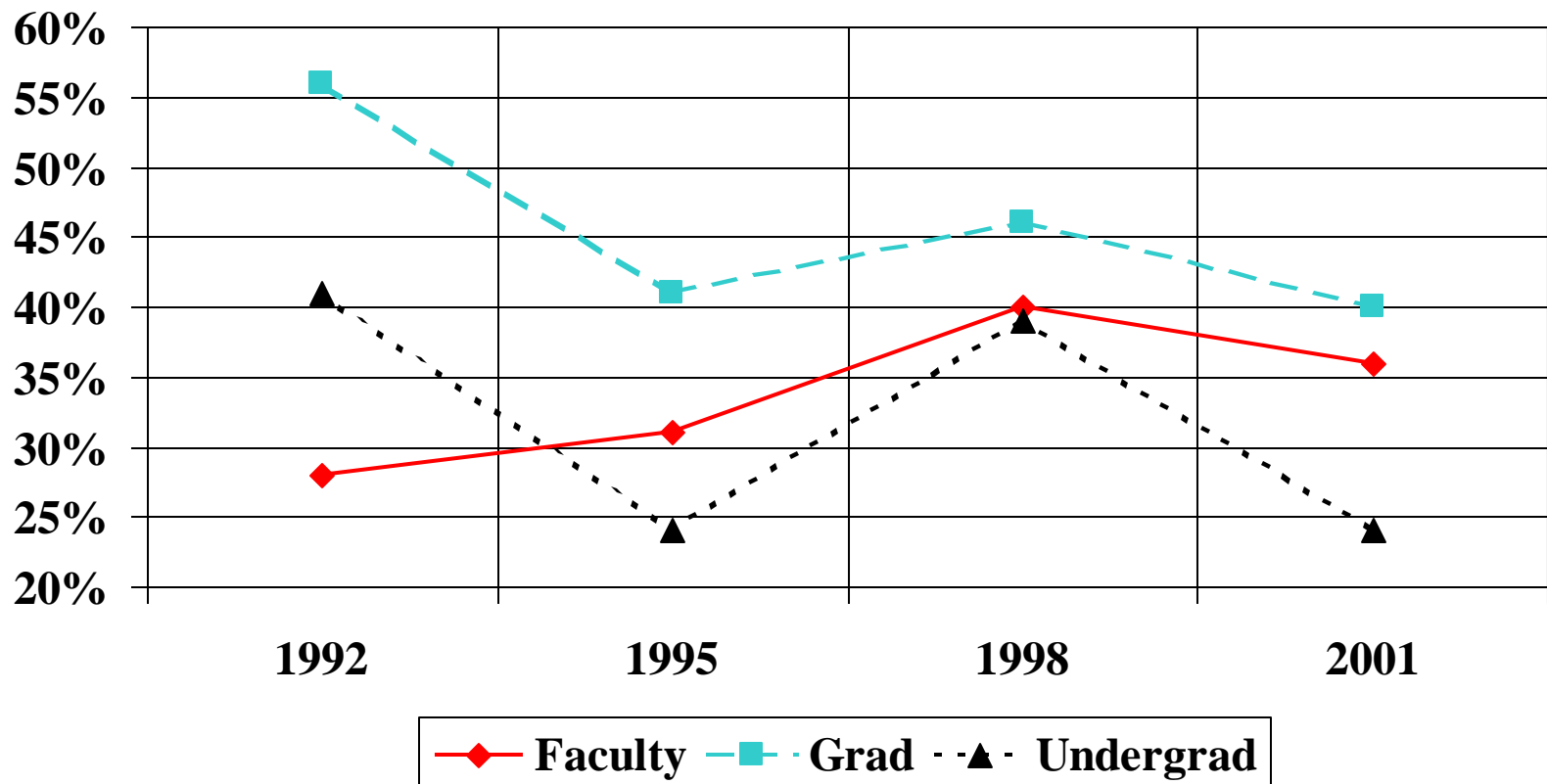
University of Washington (UW)

- Large Institution
 - 10,000 graduate and professional students
 - 25,000 undergraduates
 - 3,000-6,000 faculty
- Comprehensive/Research Oriented
 - Strong professional schools in medicine, nursing, law
 - Excellent programs in biosciences, engineering, and area studies
 - 1st among public institutions in federal research grant funds
- Located in City of Seattle
 - Metropolitan area population of more than 3 million
 - Attractive physical environment – volcanoes, fjords, forests
 - Home to Microsoft, Adobe, Amazon.com, Weyerhaeuser, Immunex, ~~Boeing~~, Starbucks, Nordstrom

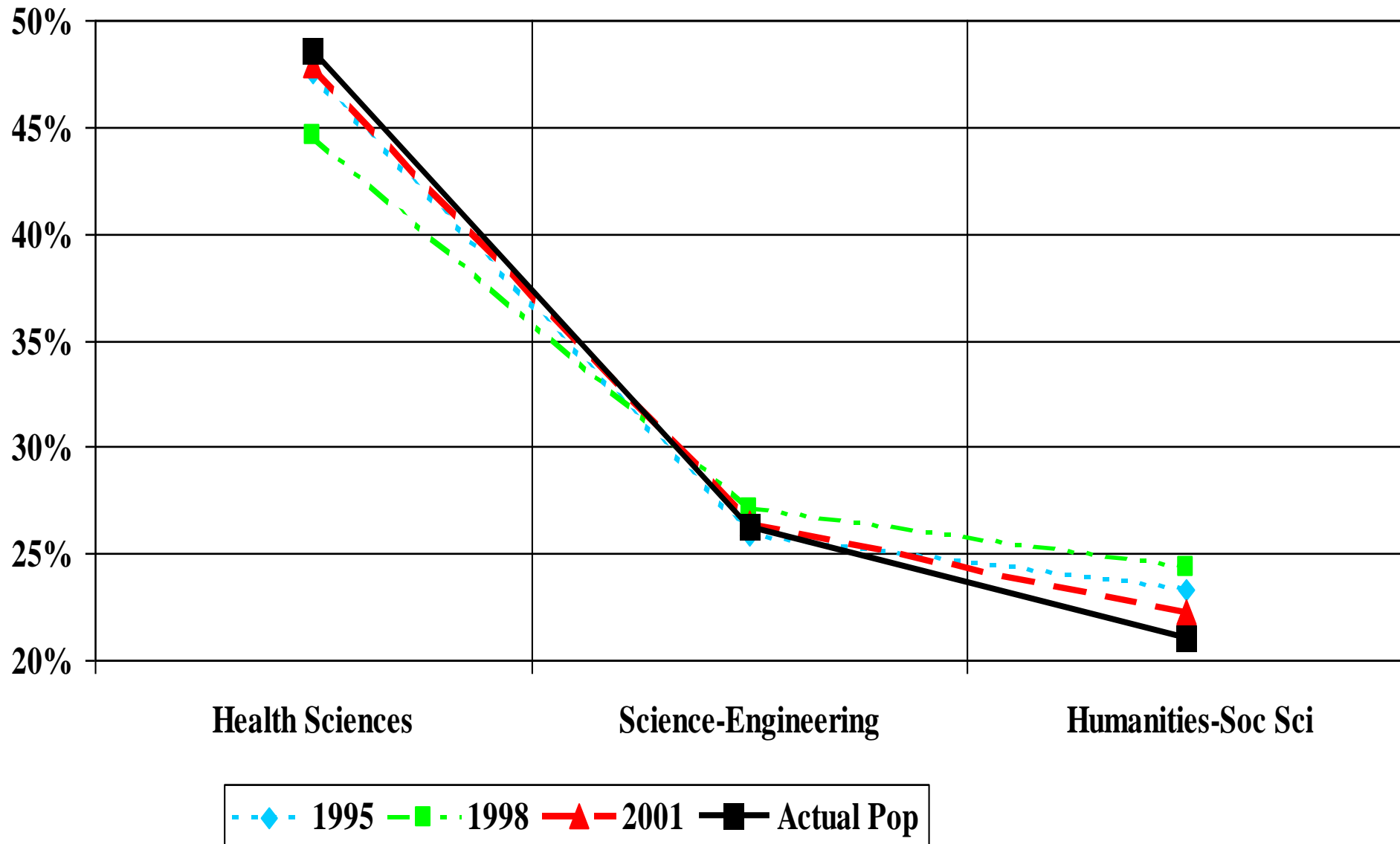
UW Survey Numbers and Costs

	1992	1995	1998	2001
Faculty	1108	1359	1503	1340
Surveys sent	3900	4400	3750	3720
Grad	561	409	457	594
Surveys sent	1000	1000	1000	1500
Undergrad	409	489	787	470
Surveys sent	1000	2000	2000	2000
Direct Costs	\$10,000	\$14,000	\$19,000	\$22,000 (estimated)

UW Survey Response Rates



UW Faculty Representativeness



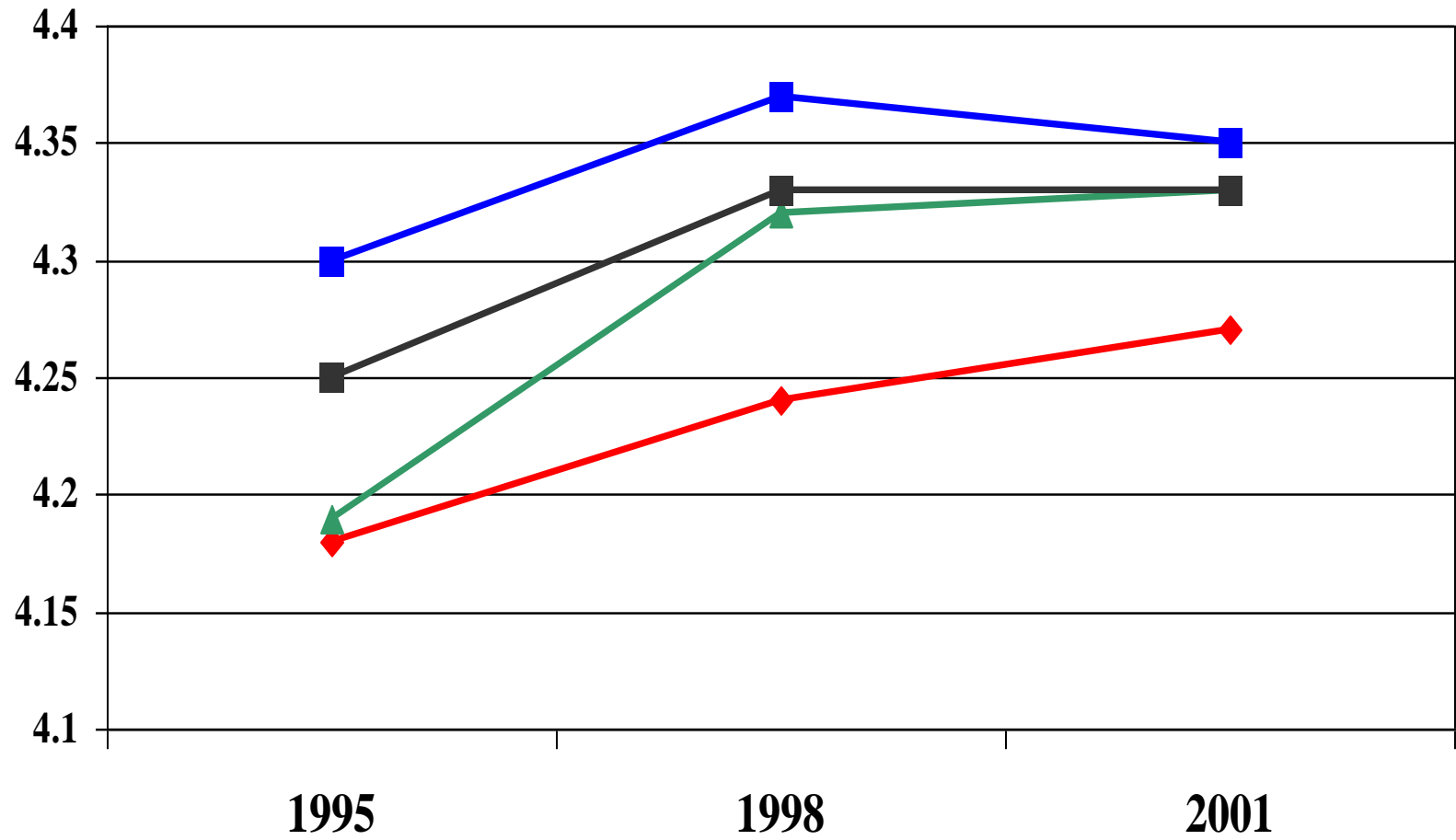
UW Survey Results

- Results
 - Satisfaction
 - Importance,
 - Needs,
 - Use patterns
 - Connectivity
 - Competencies
 - Library performance
- Quantitative and qualitative data
- Analysis
 - Snapshot
 - Change over time
 - Differences within groups
 - Differences between groups

UW Overall Satisfaction

	1995	1998	2001
Faculty	4.25	4.33	4.33
Grads	4.18	4.11	4.25
Undergrads	3.97	3.99	4.28

UW Faculty Satisfaction (by Academic Area)



◆ Humanities-Soc Sci ▲ Science-Engineering ■ Health Sci ■ Overall

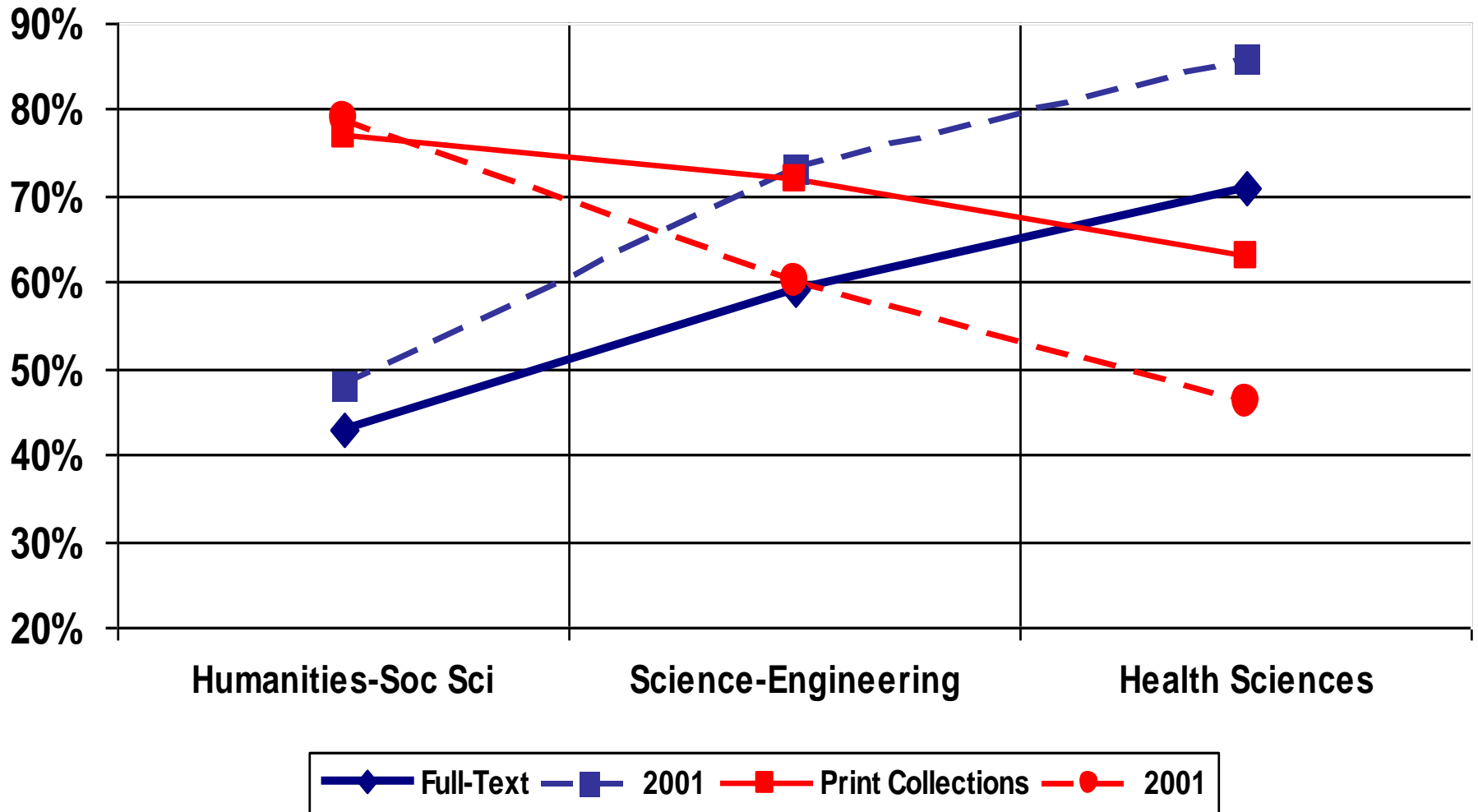
UW 1998 And 2001 Surveys

Priorities by Group

PRIORITY	Faculty 1998	Faculty 2001	Grad 1998	Grad 2001
Maintain quality of print collections	69.6%	57.4%	52.1%	53.2%
Deliver full-text to your computer	60.4%	73.4%	56.0%	72.7%
Provide Electronic access to older journals		59.6%		61.8%
Deliver Bib Databases through Web	52.1%		40.3%	
Provide course reserves electronically	18.8%	23.7%	36.5%	37.5%
Increase library hours	17.0%	8.5%	37.6%	27.3%

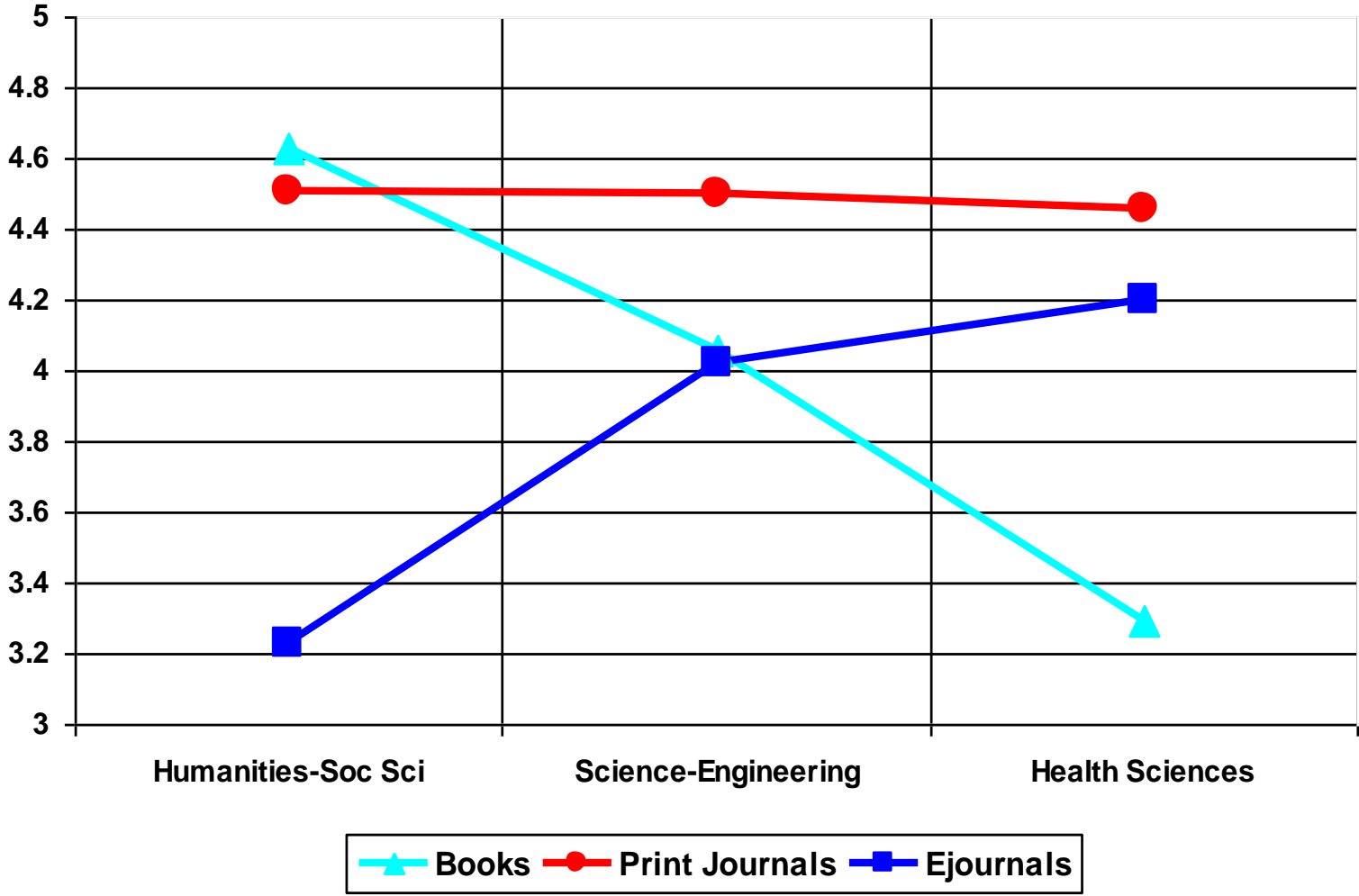
UW 1998 and 2001 Surveys

Faculty Top Priorities (By Academic area, Dashed line is 2001)

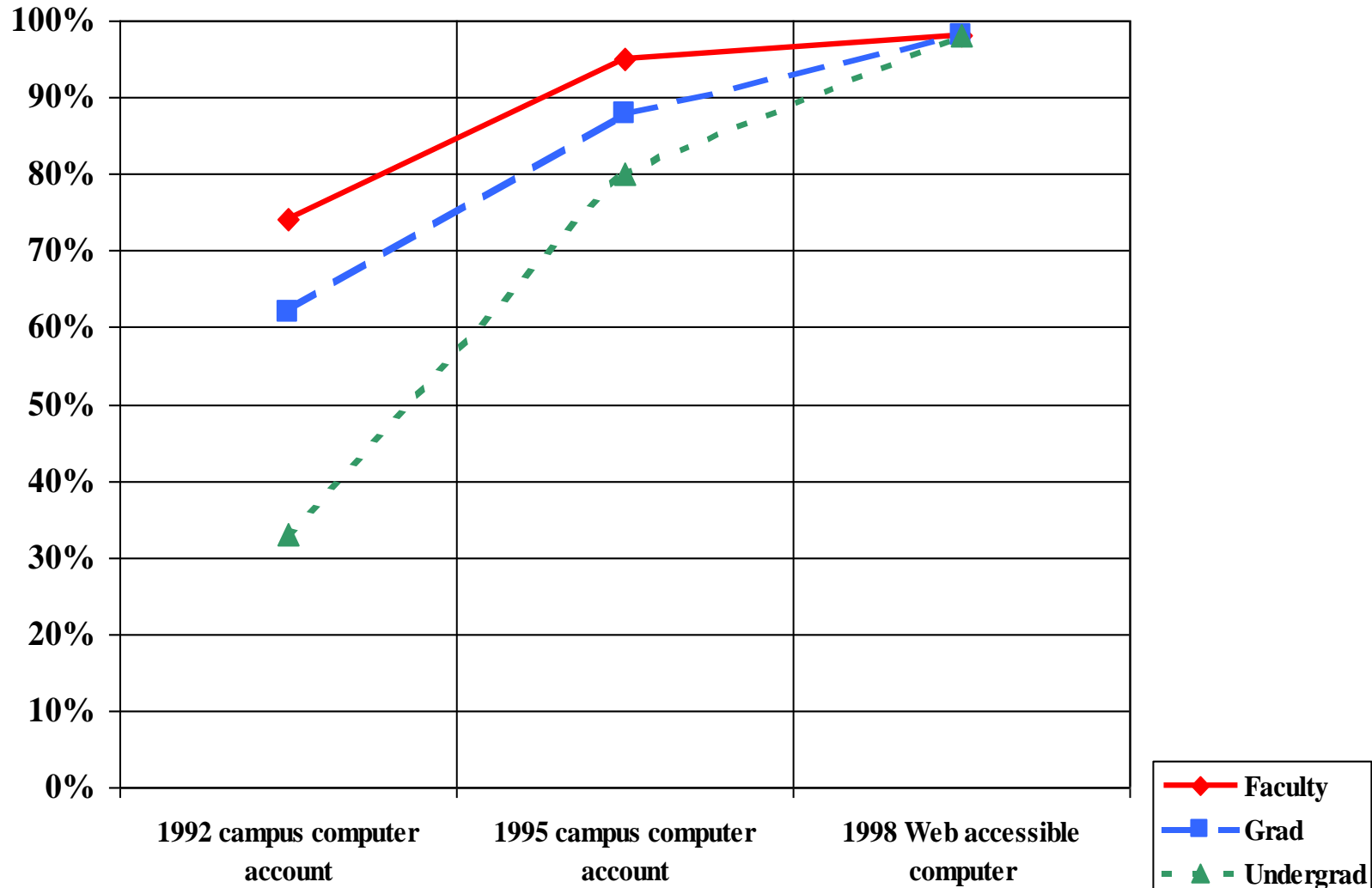


UW 2001 Faculty Survey

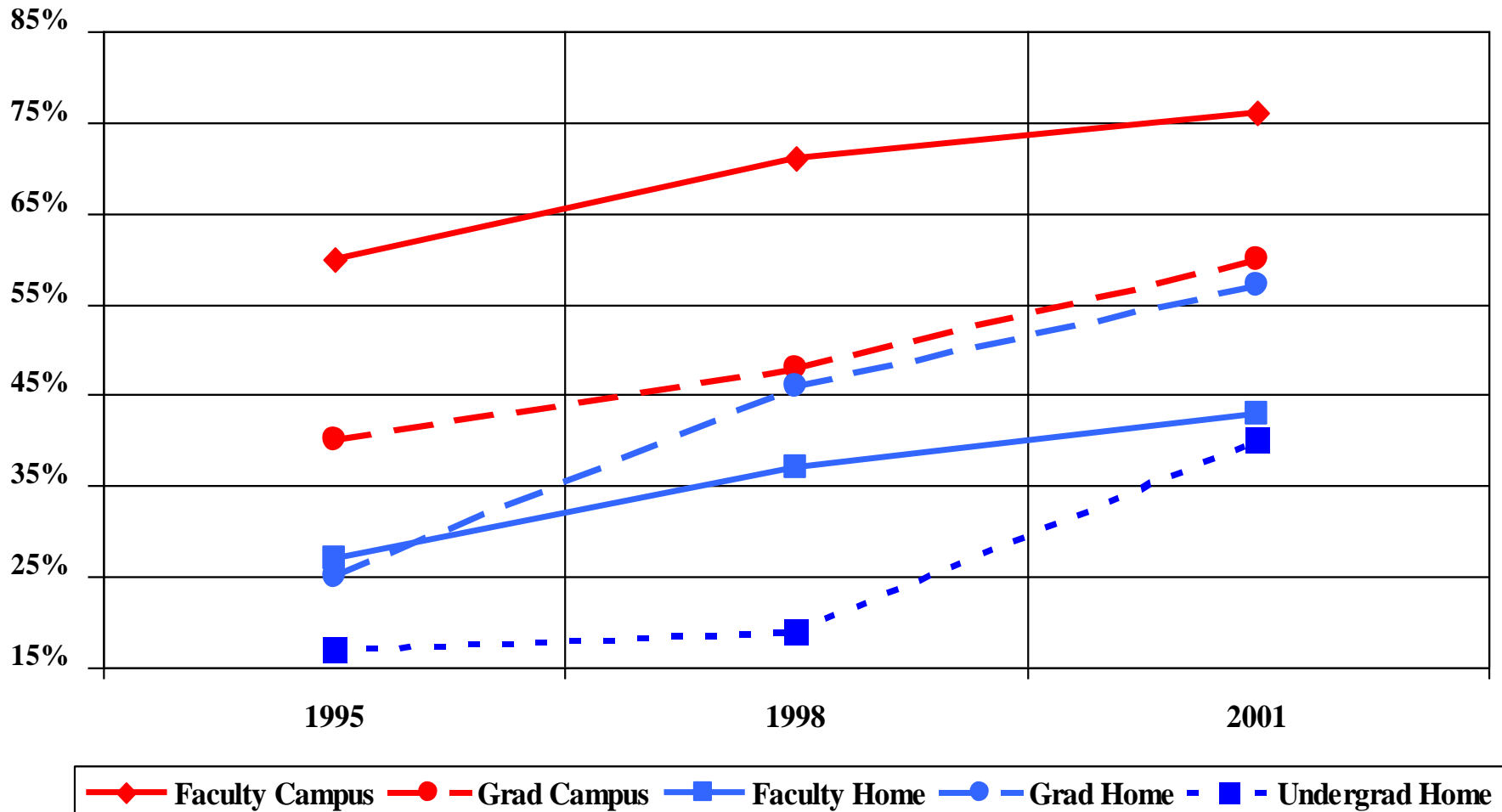
Importance of Resource Types (By academic area)



UW Computer Connectivity 1992-98

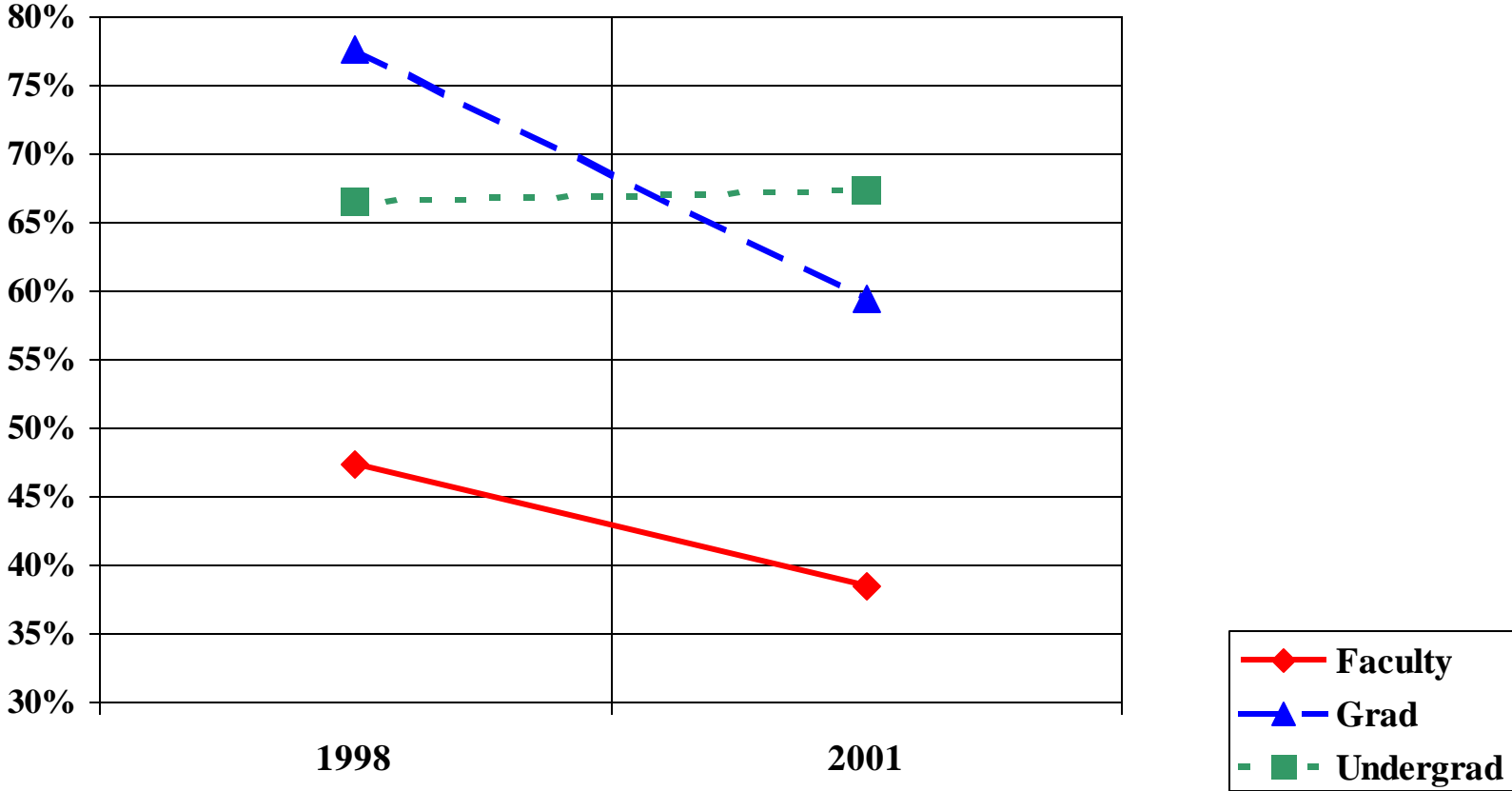


UW Remote Use of Library Resources and Services (use at least weekly)

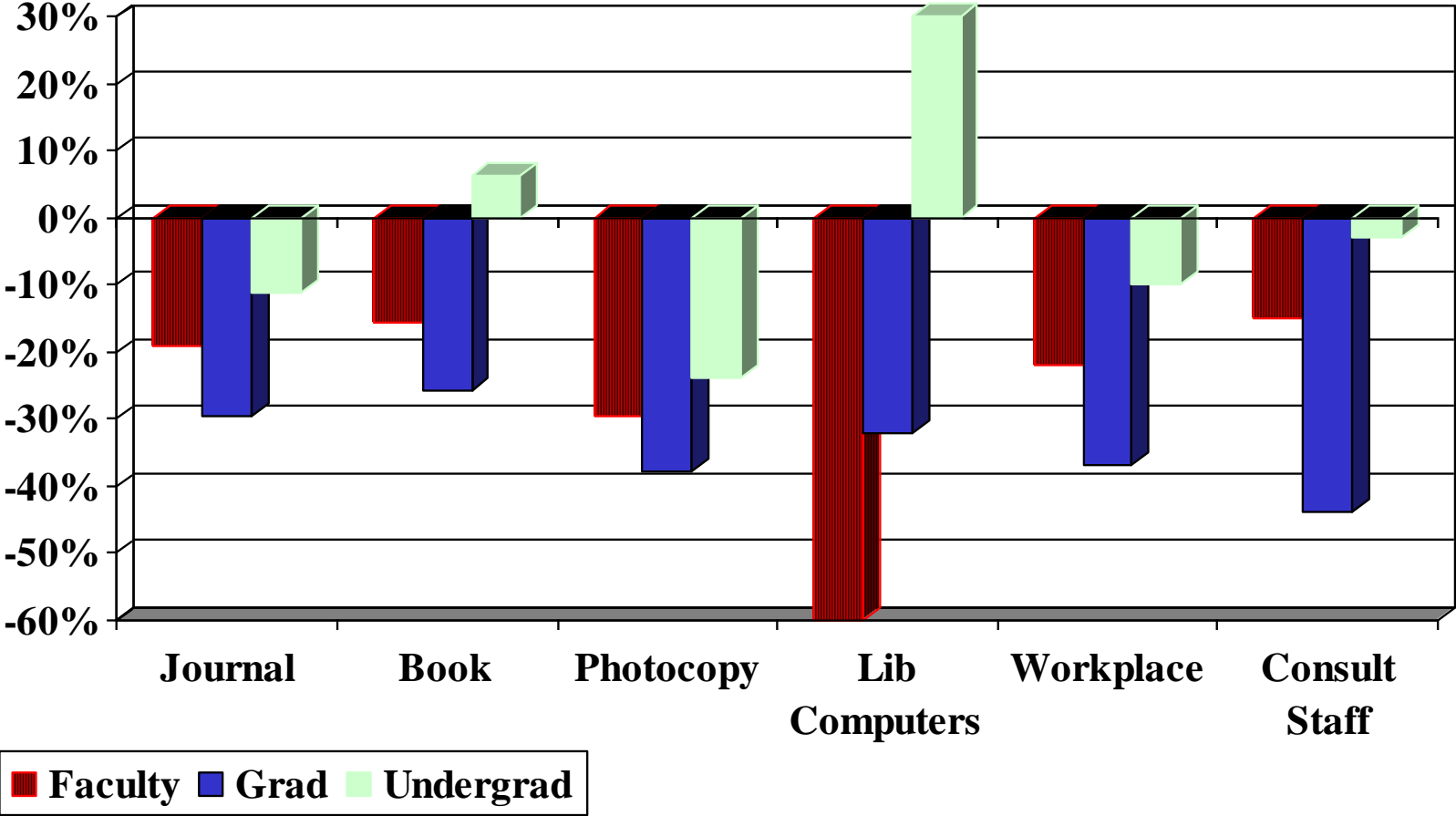


UW In-Person Library Use 1998, 2001

(% visiting at least weekly)

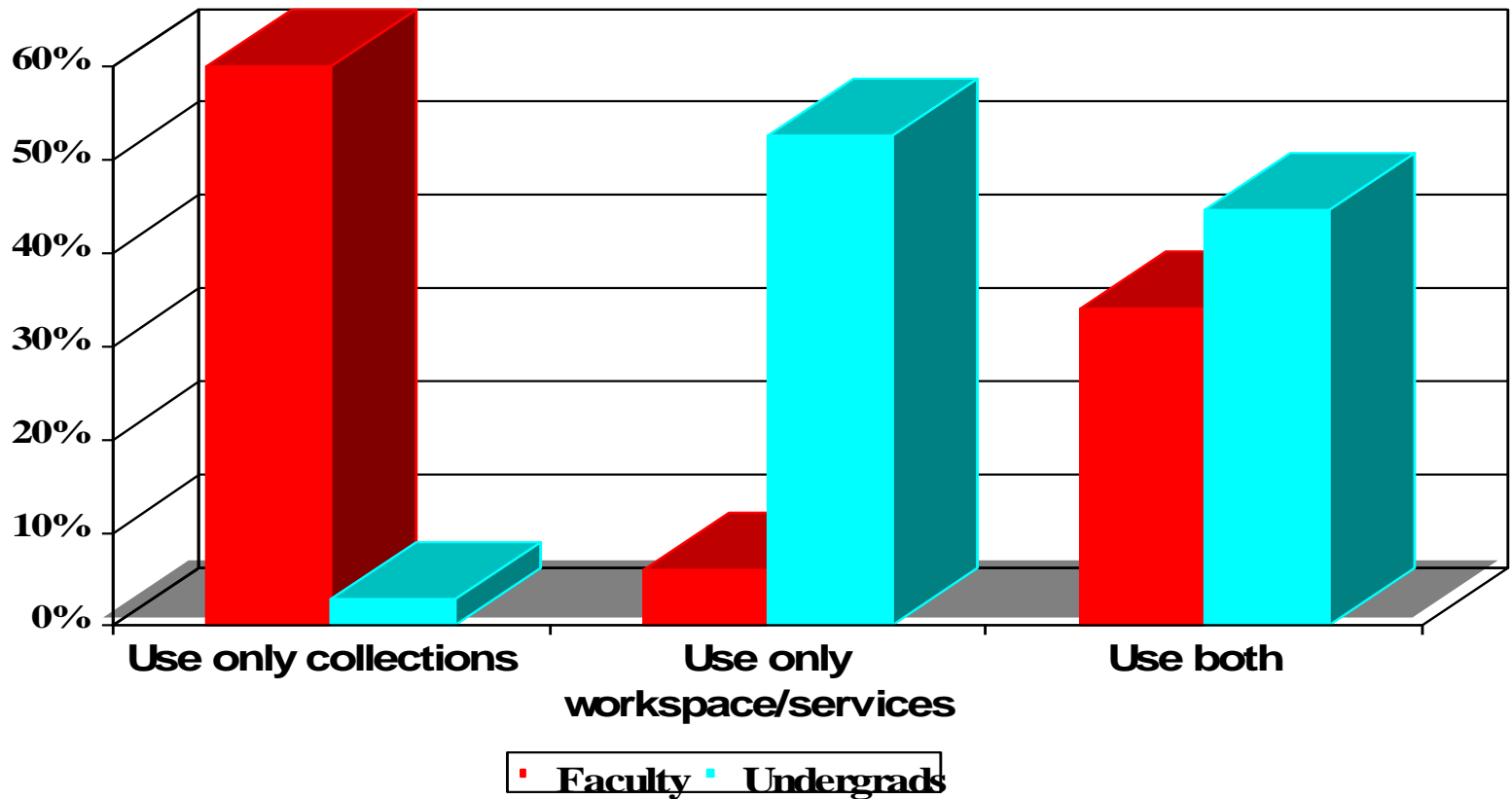


UW Changes in In-Library Use Categories Between 1998 and 2001 (% using at least weekly)



UW 1998 Survey - Reasons for Visiting the Library

(among those who visit at least weekly)



Using Results – University of Washington

- **Facility** design and improvements focused on student needs (1992-)
- Performance measures instituted for **reshelving** (1995)
- **Hours** expanded during interims, weekends, evenings (1995-2000)
- Undergraduate library open **24 hours** (1998)
- Significant increase in number of library **computers** (1995-2000)
- **Remote access** to bibliographic databases (1992-)
- Emphasis on acquiring access to **full-text** resources (1998-)
- Survey results used by other campus units for developing **instructional technology workshops** (1998-)
- **Stopped** doing extensive database **documentation** (1998)

User Surveys – Strengths and Limitations for Measuring Library Performance

- Strengths
 - Obtain quantitative and qualitative data
 - May be able to generalize for the larger population(s)
 - Direct user input and evaluation of library performance
 - Flexible instrument
 - Powerful political tool
- Limitations
 - Behavioral perceptions not actual performance
 - Difficult to frame complex questions
 - Time-consuming; may be expensive
 - Changes in survey design and group composition can affect results
 - Survey fatigue
- Alternatives/Other options
 - Follow-up issues with other techniques

Some final thoughts . . .