

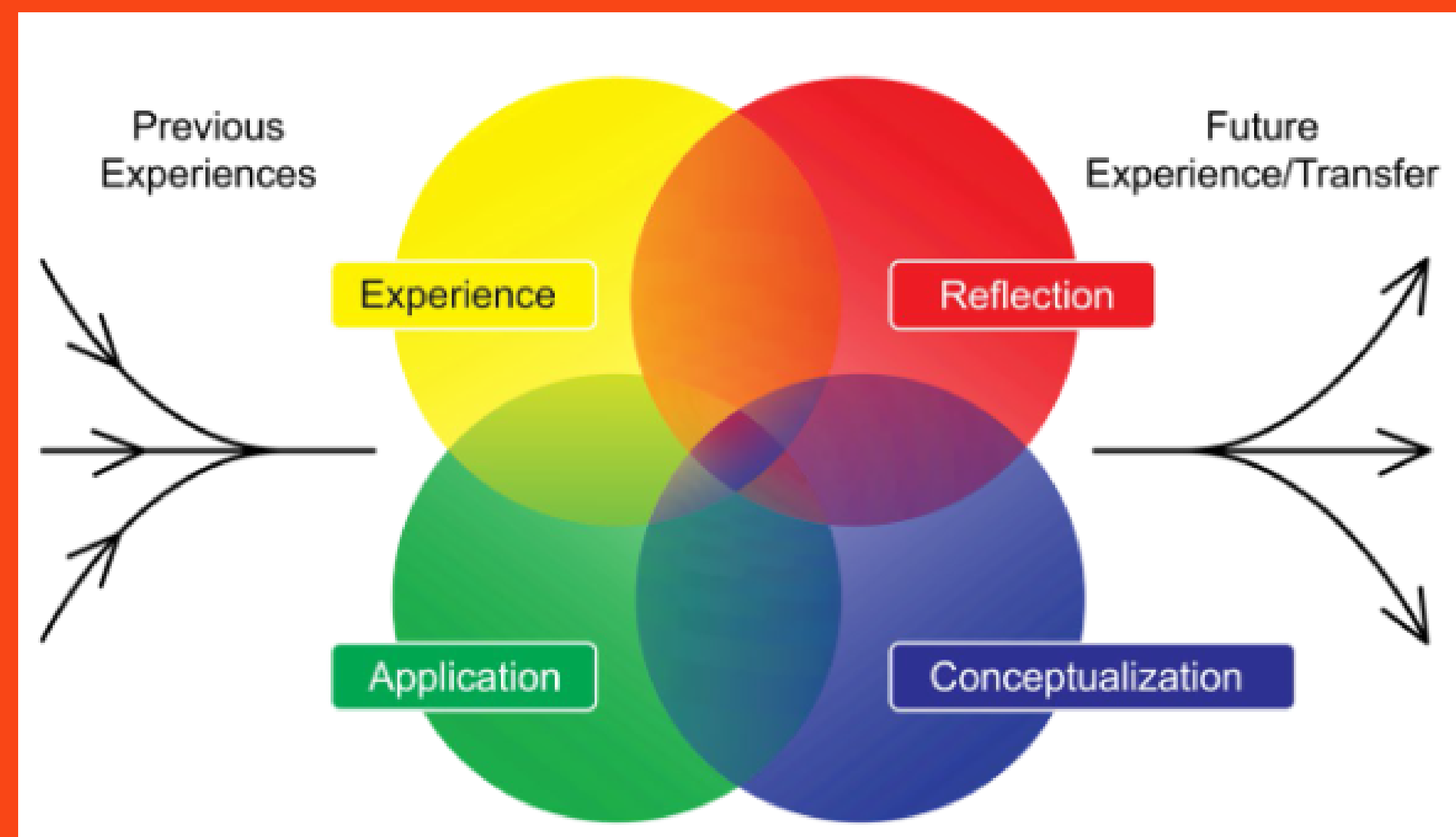
Leading the Way? A Look at FFA Engagement vs. Other CTSOs for College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Undergraduates at the University of Florida



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Introduction / Theoretical Framework

- Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) are student organizations that enable students to gain technical, employability, and workforce skills while improving their academics
- APLU, employers, and faculty have identified a skill gap among those entering the workforce.
- Within school-based agricultural education (SBAE), students have the opportunity to engage in the CTSO associated with ANFR, the National FFA Organization
 - Students enrolled in SBAE and members of the FFA have many opportunities to practice and experience skills associated with leadership development
 - FFA prepares students for career success through premier leadership and personal growth
- Experiential learning commonly occurs in secondary education within CTE courses, including FFA, which typically offer opportunities for students to engage in hands-on activities and develop skills desired by industry.



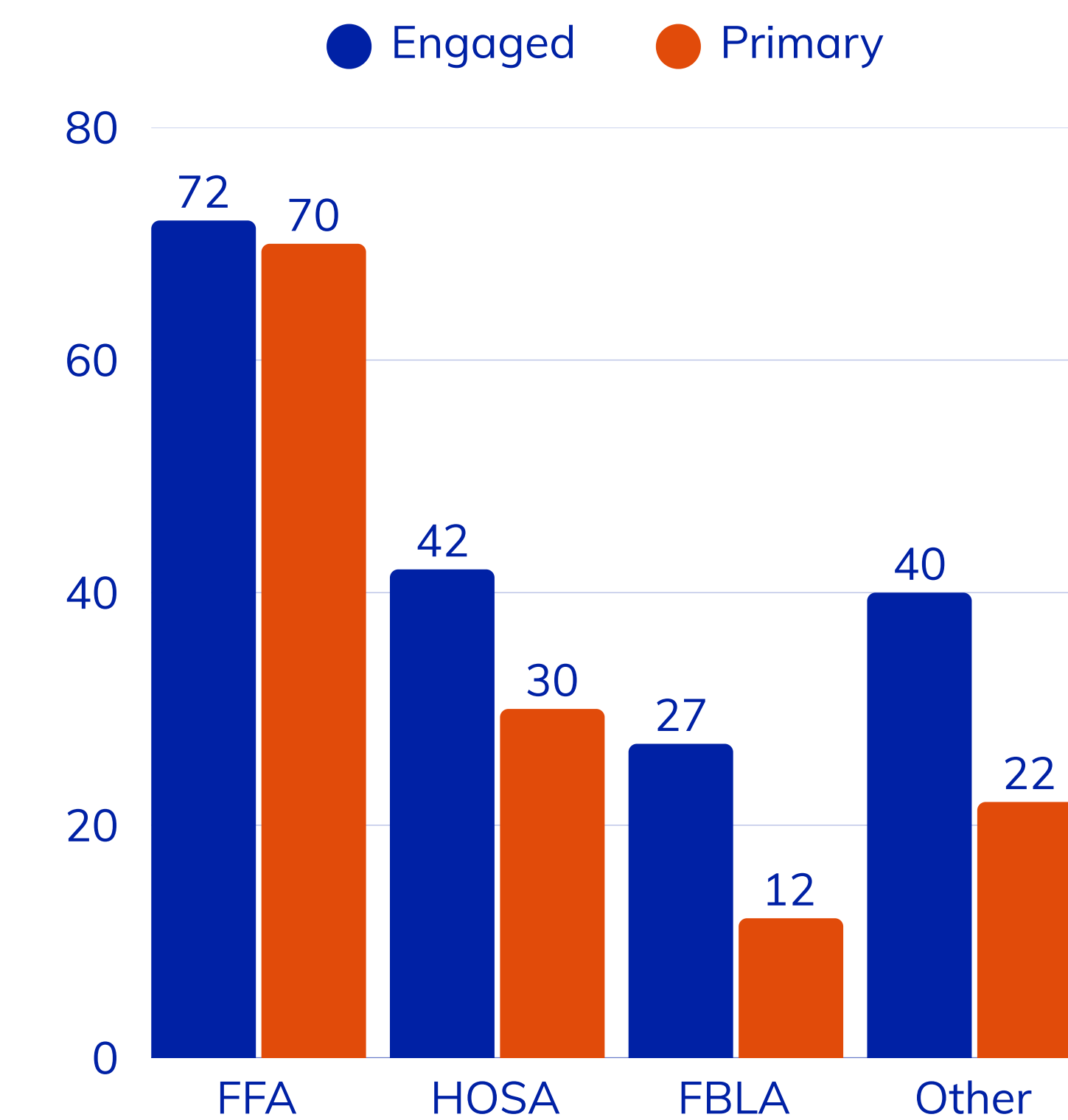
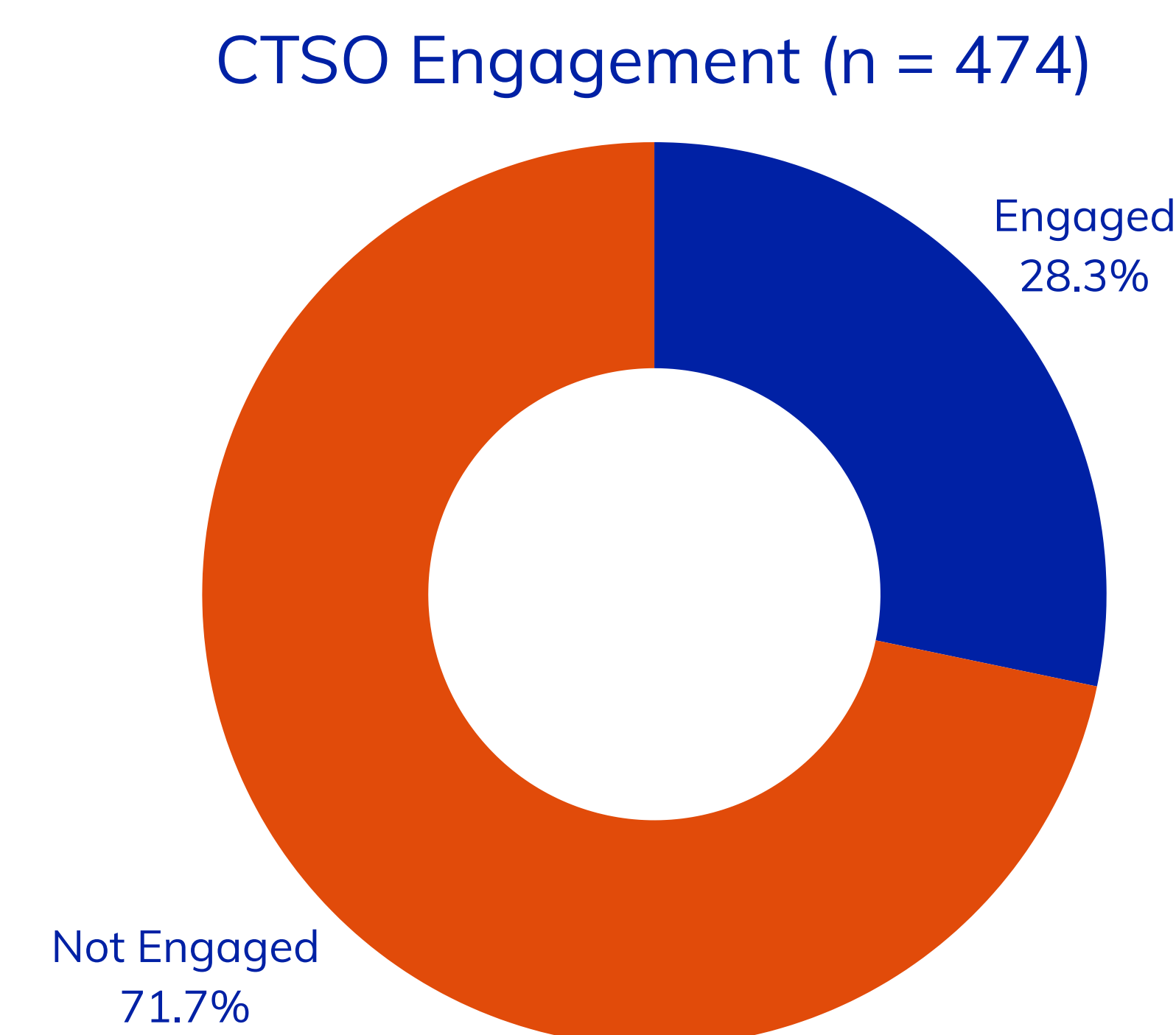
Purpose & Methodology

The purpose of this study was to compare student engagement skill perceptions among FFA members with those of other CTSO members.

The data reported and the results of this study are part of a larger study.

- Surveyed the undergraduate population at UF in the CALS
- Qualtrics & SPSS were used to analyze data, reporting means and standard deviations
- Data was collected between September 10 - October 8, 2025
- 474 surveys were completed in their entirety and provided usable data out of 4054 email recipients

Results / Findings



Students' perceptions of skill development in FFA (n = 70) and other CTSOs (n = 64).

	FFA	Other CTSO	p
	M (SD)	M (SD)	
Gained leadership experience.	4.79 (.45)	4.06 (1.12)	<.001
Gained technical skills (i.e., public speaking, laboratory procedures, communication development, management, 3-way switch).	4.73 (.68)	4.13 (1.10)	<.001
CTSO allowed me to gain real-world experiences.	4.64 (.72)	4.05 (1.16)	<.001
CTSO(s) allowed me to gain employability skills (i.e., soft skills, decision-making, teamwork, collaboration, communication, and leadership).	4.60 (.73)	4.16 (1.04)	.005
CTSO(s) allowed me to gain workforce skills (i.e., technological skills, reading, and writing).	4.47 (.83)	3.89 (1.14)	<.001

Note. Responses are on a scale of (1) *Strongly disagree*, (2) *Somewhat disagree*, (3) *Neutral*, (4) *Somewhat agree*, (5) *Strongly agree*.

Conclusions & Recommendations

- FFA students believe they are more prepared for their future careers than those engaged in other CTSOs
- Students engaged in CTSOs are reporting positive experiences and agree that CTSOs aid in developing the skills that are desired by the workforce
- Respondents reported significantly different responses to each question, but all are higher perceptions
- Among responses, FFA students reported a smaller standard deviation, indicating lower variation in responses
- We recommend that FFA advisors, parents, stakeholders, and state affiliations continue to offer opportunities for students to develop their skills
- Other organizations should attempt to offer similar opportunities for students to build their workforce, technical, and employability skills while gaining leadership and real-world experiences
- For future research, we recommend exploring what experiences are unique and beneficial in FFA to expand into other CTSOs

References

