

The Value and Impact of the College Experience:

A Comparative Study

Research by:
Hardwick Day

Commissioned by:
The Annapolis Group

November 2011

HARDWICK  DAY

Study Rationale

The Annapolis Group Comparative Alumni Research Project is organized around key factors identified by education researchers Alexander Astin (UCLA), Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini as critical to educational effectiveness.

Specifically, the survey examines those elements of the college environment that contribute to students' positive outcomes:

- Interaction between faculty and students
- A strong community and peer interactions both inside and outside the classroom
- A challenging, active classroom environment

Most previous studies assess students at graduation or in the first few years afterwards. This study was undertaken to assess lasting effects, interviewing alumni of each class more than thirty years after graduation.

What Matters in College

“Our review indicates two persistent themes in the research literature on college effects.

“The first is the central role of other people in a student’s life, whether students or faculty. . . .

“The second theme is the potency of the student’s effort and involvement in the academic and non- academic systems of the institutions they attend.”

- Ernest T. Pascarella and Patrick T. Terenzini, *How College Affects Students*, 1991.

“... although different types of institutions tend to have particular types of environments, ... it is the environment created by the faculty and the students ... that really seems to matter.

“Finally, the single most important environmental influence on student development is the peer group.”

- Alexander W. Astin, *What Matters in College? Four Critical Years Revisited*, 1993.

Study Methodology

- Study conducted by Hardwick Day, August 30 – November 1, 2011
- 21-24 minute telephone interviews
- Graduating classes of 1995-2006 (to be compared to database interviews from 1970-1994 whenever there are significant and meaningful differences)
- Interviews are proportioned to be representative of the average enrollment over the study years with:

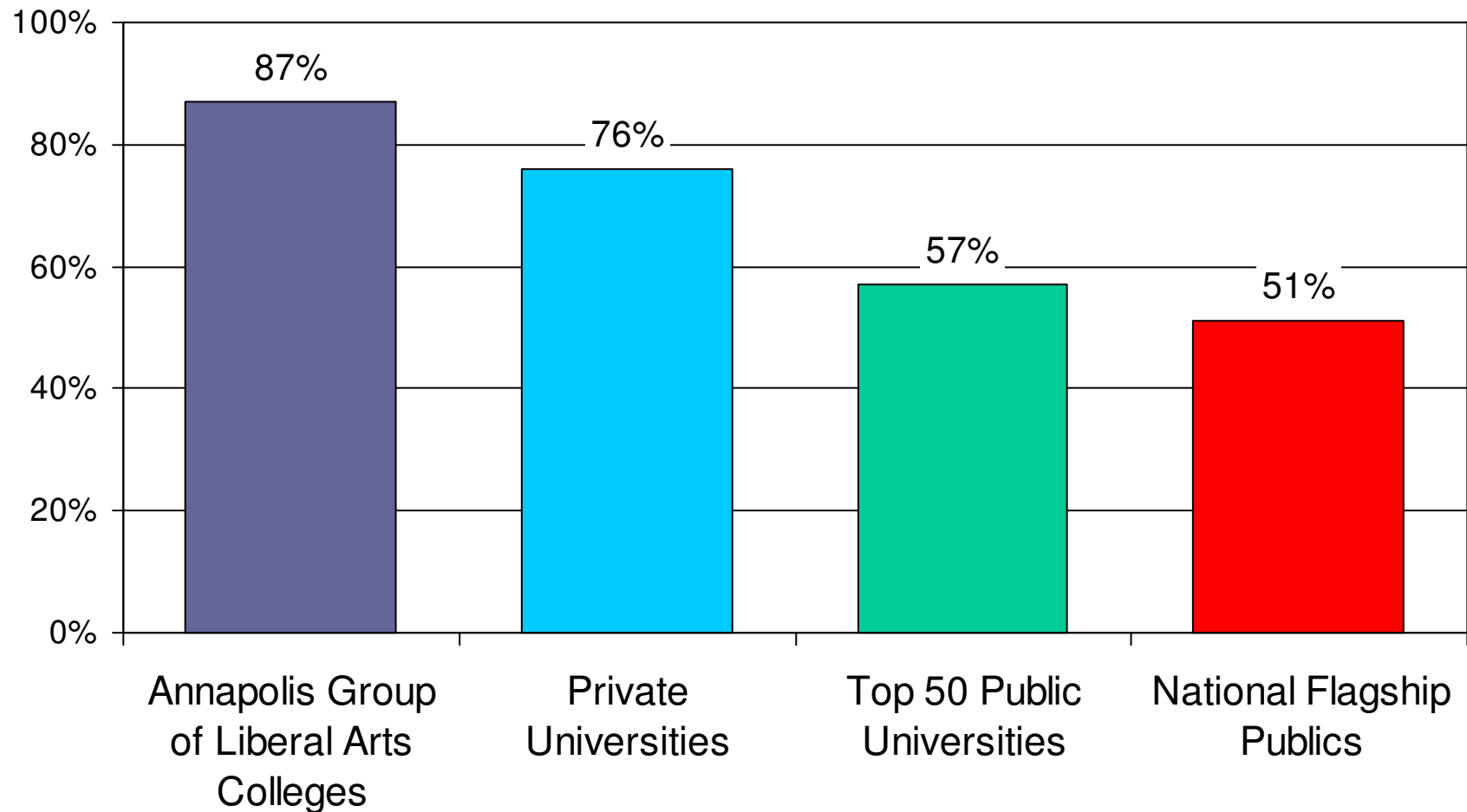
	<u>Total</u>	<u>1970-1994</u>	<u>1995-2006</u>
Annapolis Group colleges (member colleges included):	n=1030 120 / 130 (92%)	n=760 105 / 130 (81%)	n=270 93 / 130 (72%)
Private Universities (national or regional; often religiously-affiliated; no liberal arts colleges)	n=823	n=590	n=233
Public Universities (as identified by <i>U.S. News & World Report</i> , 2012):			
Top 50 Public Universities	n=316	n=203	n=113
Total Flagship Public Universities	n=604	n=425	n=179

- The margin of sampling error differs by group and between groups according to sample size, but can be generally summarized as (percentage points at a 95% confidence level):

– Annapolis Group:	Total: +/-3.1	1970: +/-3.6	1995: +/-6.1
– Private Universities:	Total: +/-3.5	1970: +/-4.1	1995: +/-6.6
– Top 50 Public Universities:	Total: +/-5.6	1970: +/-7.0	1995: +/-9.4
– Flagship Public Universities:	Total: +/-4.1	1970: +/-4.8	1995: +/-7.5

SELECTED ALUMNI CHARACTERISTICS

Percentage of Alumni Who Graduated in Four Years or Less

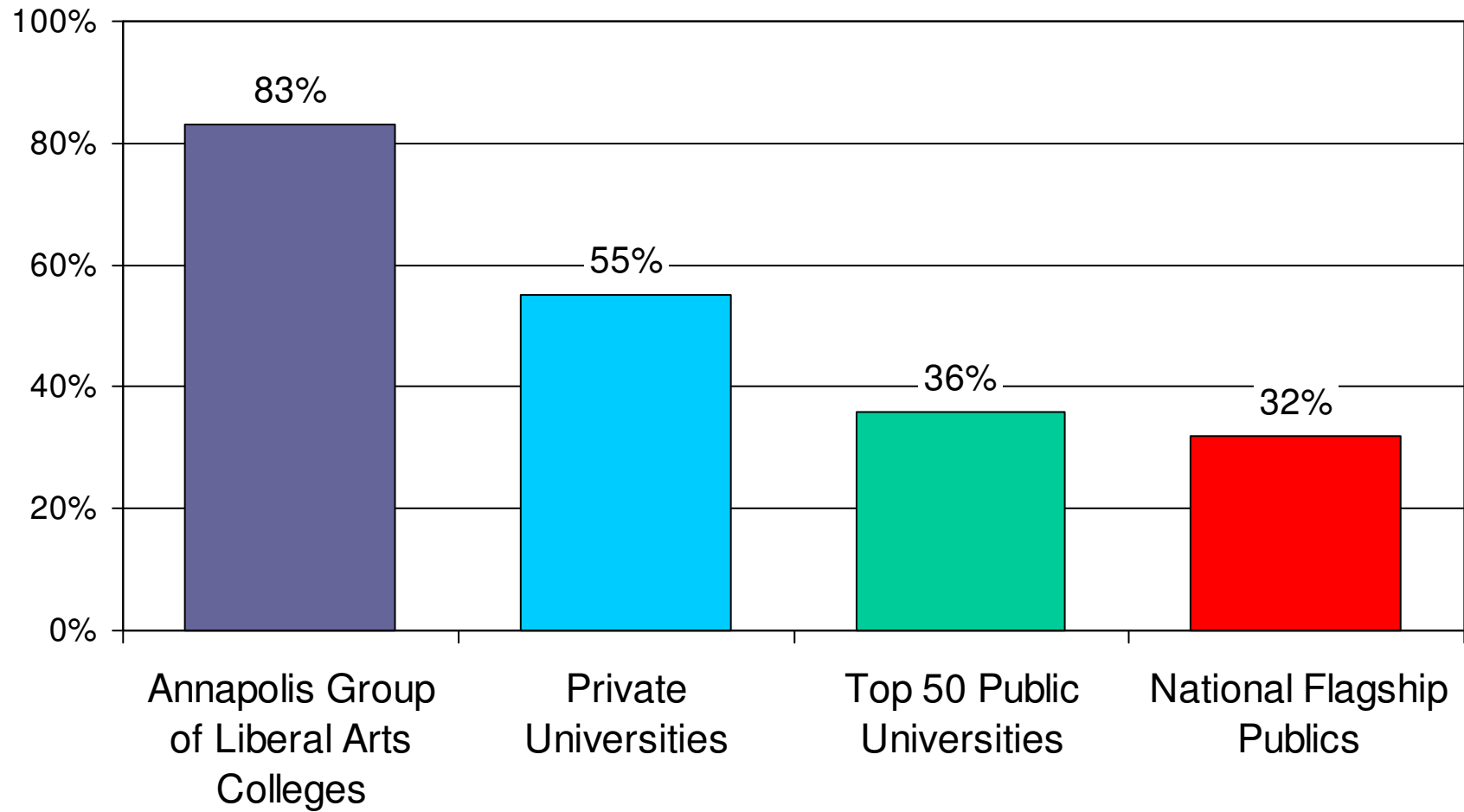


All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.18 How many years did it take you to complete your undergraduate degree?
(Four years or less)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Reported Living on Campus for Most of Their College Years



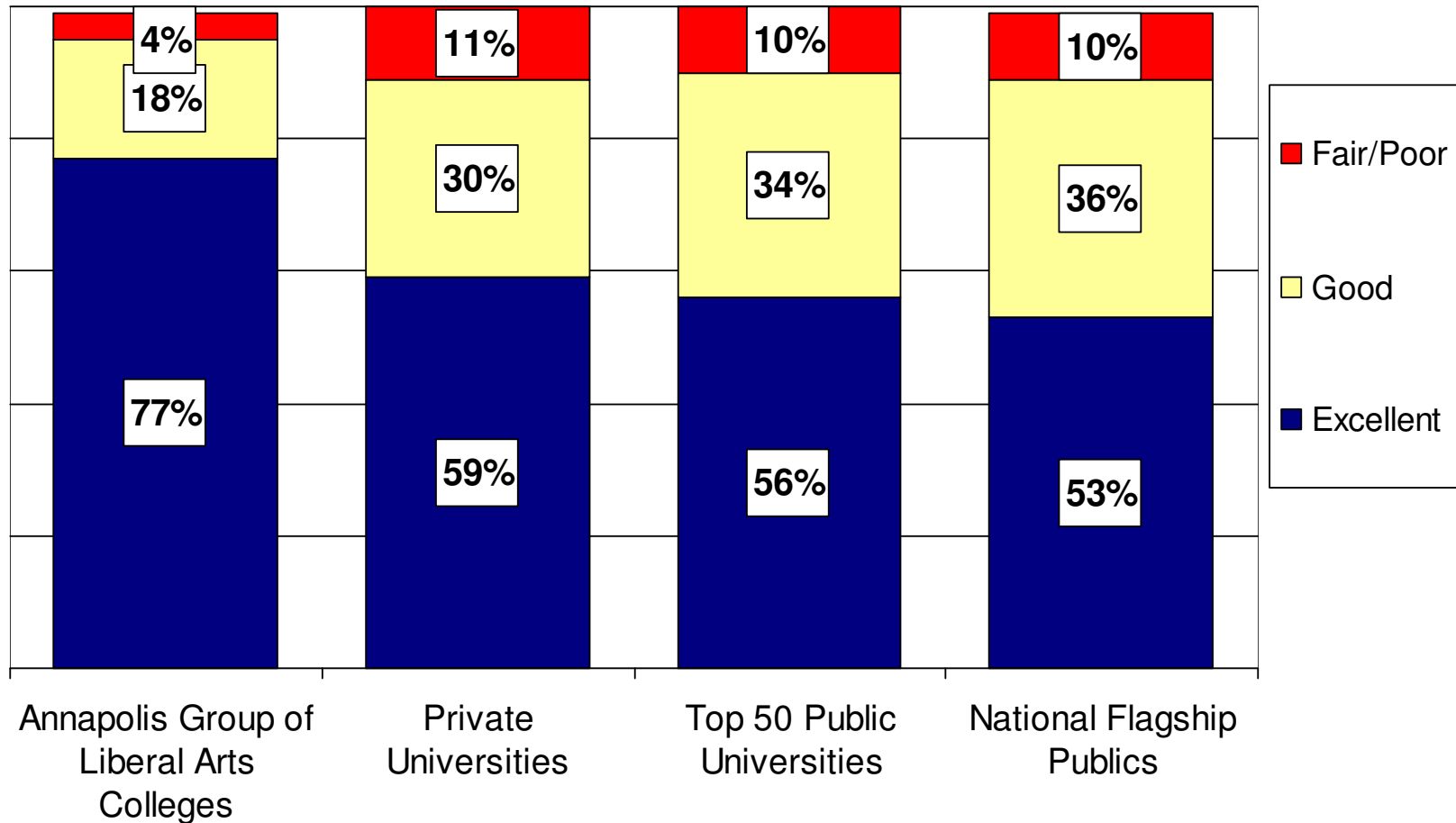
All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.K For most of your college years, did you live (on campus)?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Annapolis Group Alumni Give Higher
Ratings for Their Overall
Undergraduate Experience

Ratings for the Overall Undergraduate Experience

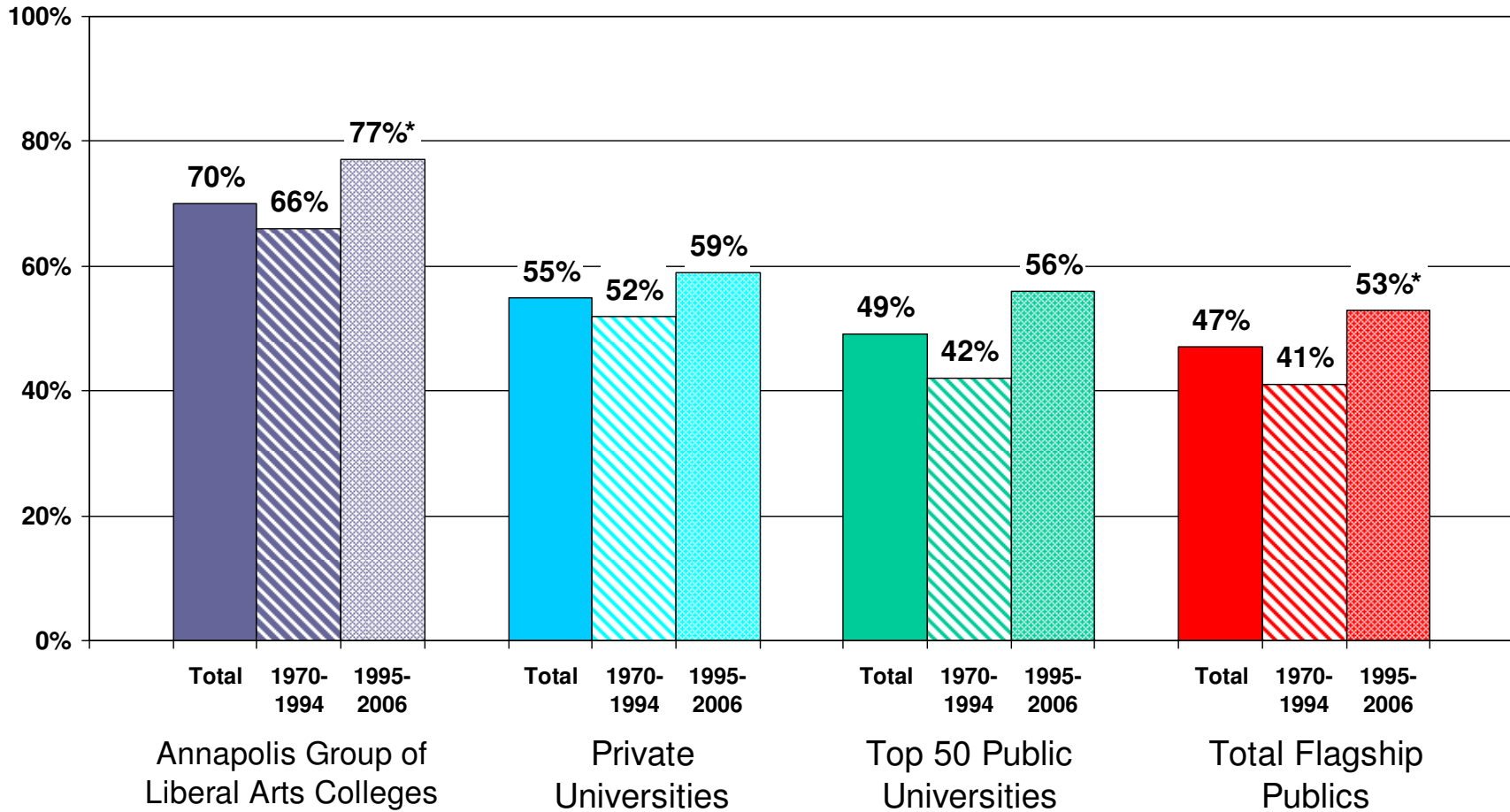


All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges on “excellent”

Q.29 How would you evaluate your overall undergraduate experience?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Rate Their Overall Undergraduate Experience as “Excellent”: A Comparison Over Time



* Significantly higher than previous years (Top 50 Public is not significant due to sample sizes)

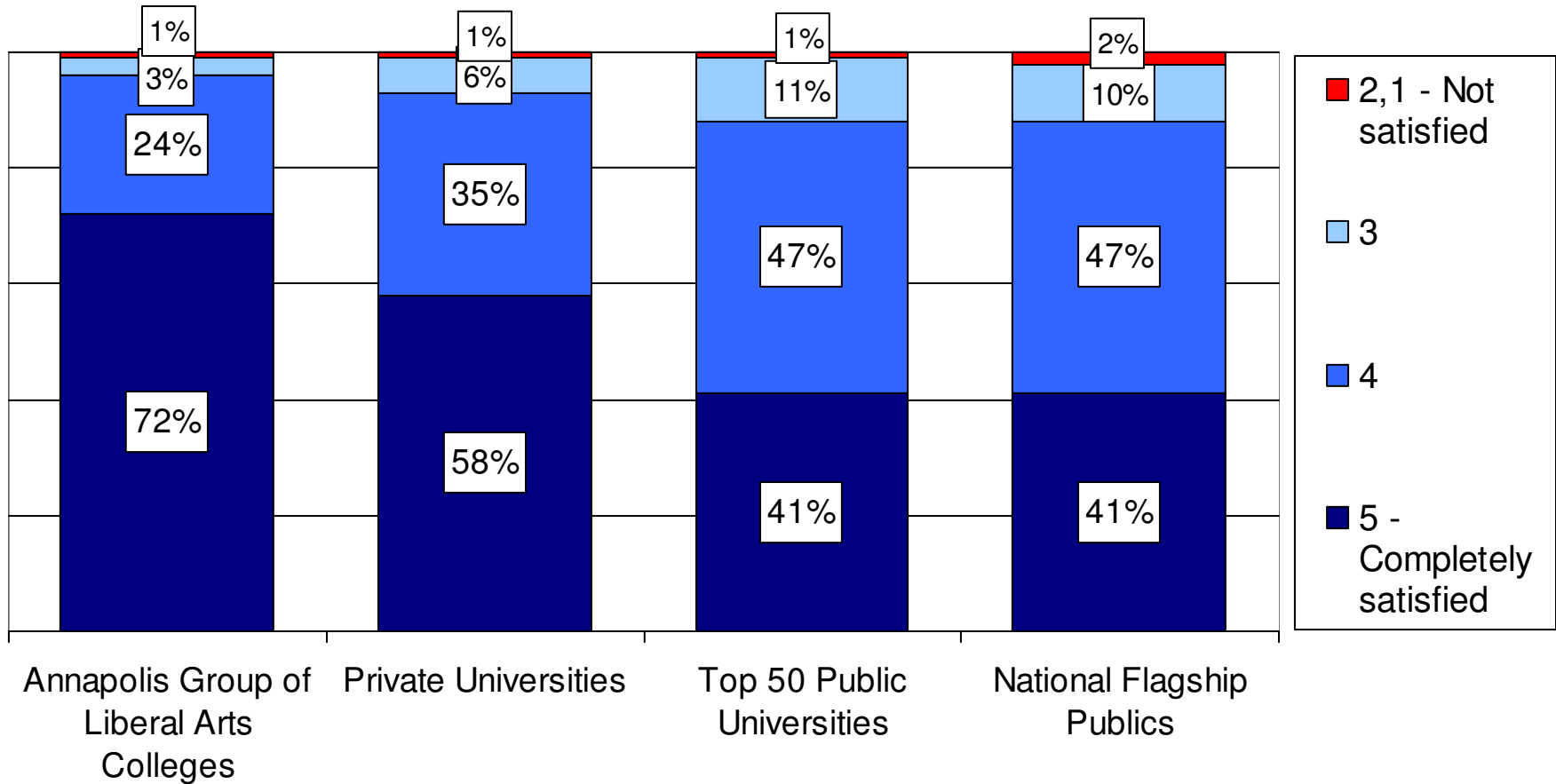
All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges on “excellent”

Q.29 How would you evaluate your overall undergraduate experience?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Alumni of Annapolis Group Colleges
Report Higher Satisfaction with Their
College Education

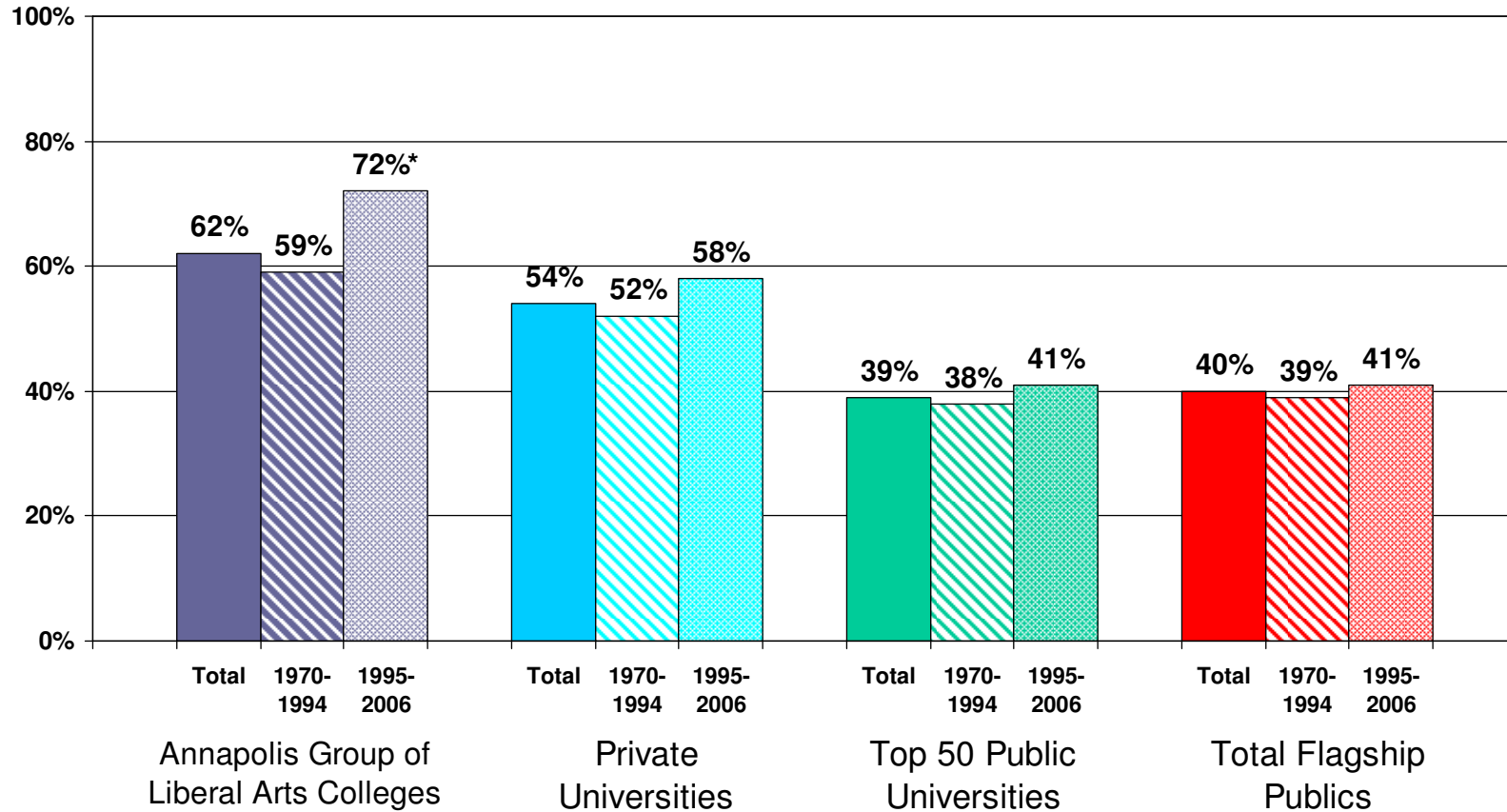
Satisfaction With the Overall Quality of Their Education



Annapolis Group is significantly higher than all other groups on “completely satisfied”
 Q. 7 How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the education you received from your college? (rating on a five-point scale, where 1=not at all satisfied and 5=completely satisfied).

2011 Annapolis Group Comparative Alumni Research
 Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Say They Are “Completely Satisfied” With the Overall Quality of Their Education: A Comparison Over Time



* Significantly higher than previous years

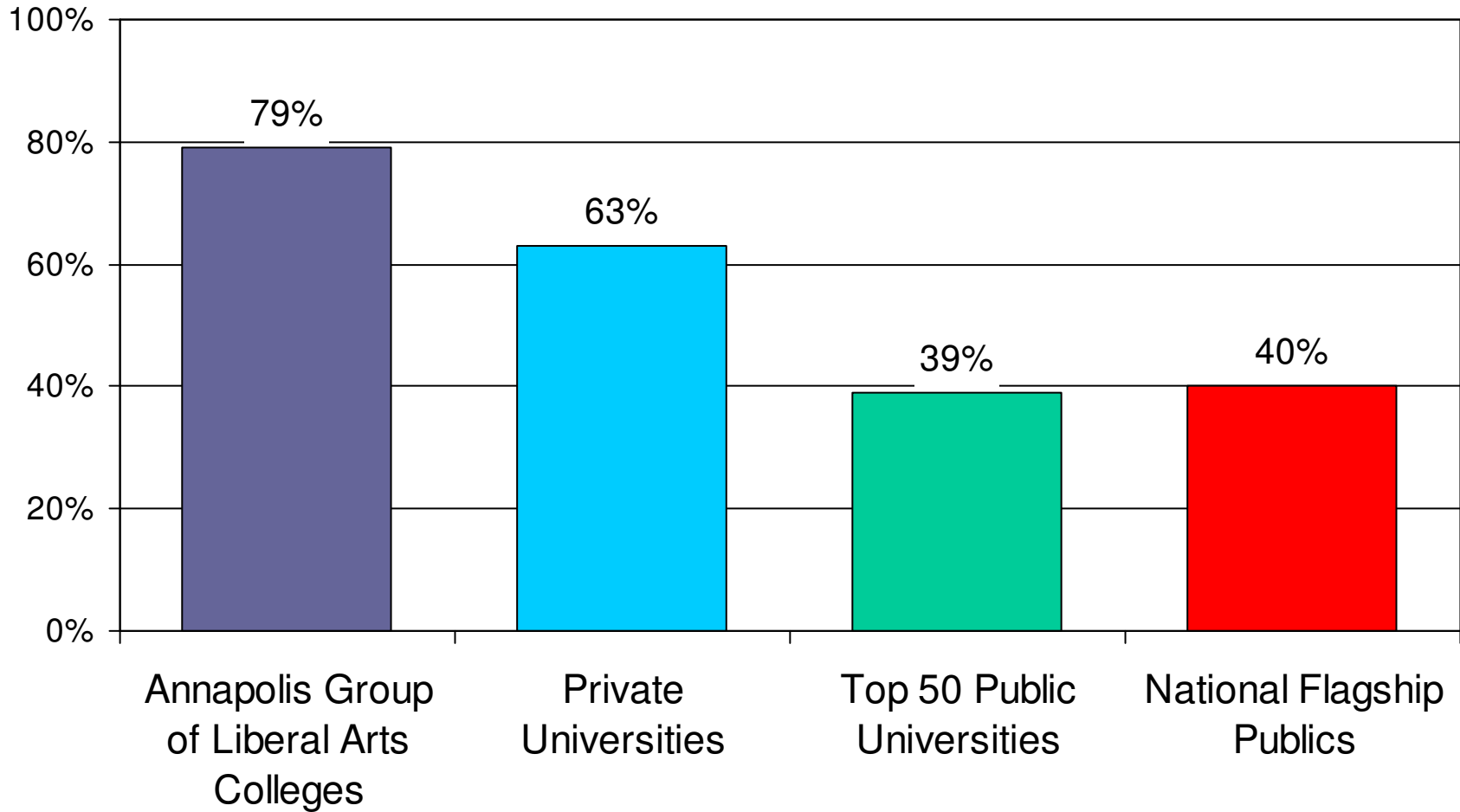
Annapolis Group is significantly higher than all other groups

Q. 7 How satisfied are you with the overall quality of the education you received from your college? (rating on a five-point scale, where 1=not at all satisfied and 5=completely satisfied).

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Annapolis Group Alumni Are More Likely
to Indicate They Benefited from
Interaction with Faculty

Percentage of Alumni Who Reported Benefiting “Very Much” From High-Quality Teaching-Oriented Faculty

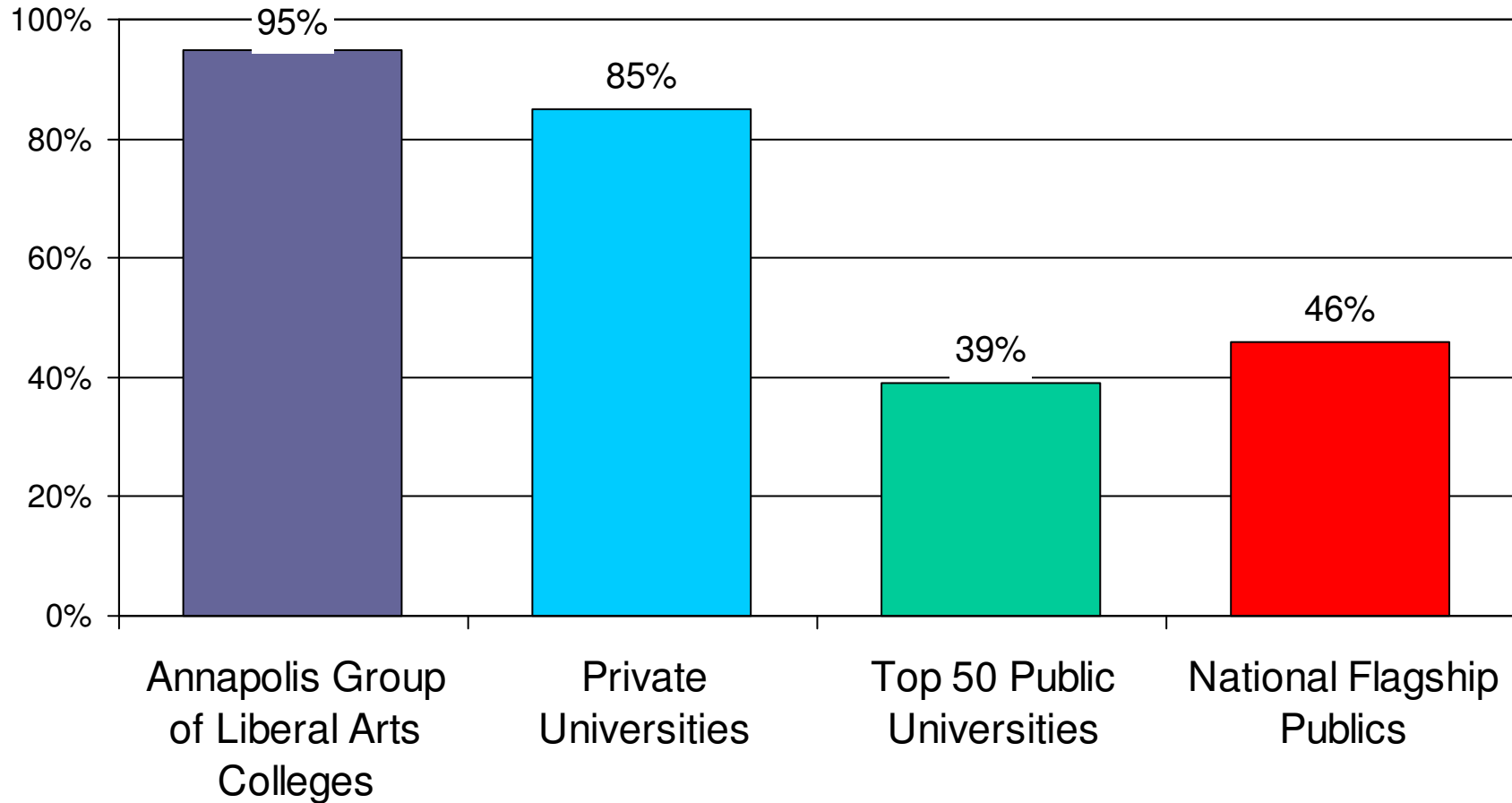


All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.1 Please tell me how much you personally benefited from...? (rating a 5 on a five-point scale, where 1=did not benefit at all and 5=benefited very much)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Reported Benefiting “Very Much” From a Majority of Classes Taught by Professors

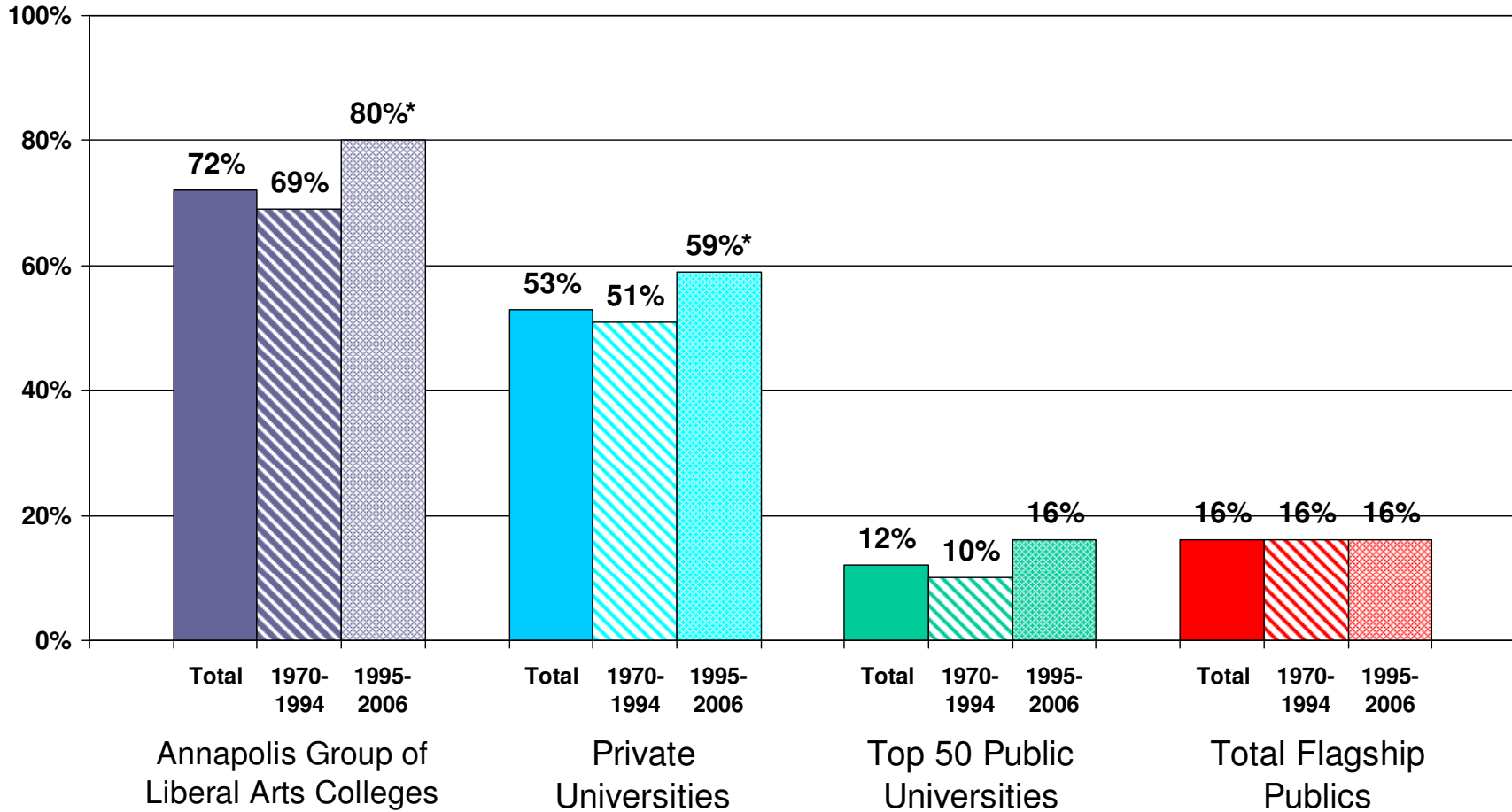


All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

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2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said They Benefited “Very Much” From Many Small Classes with Fewer than 20 Students



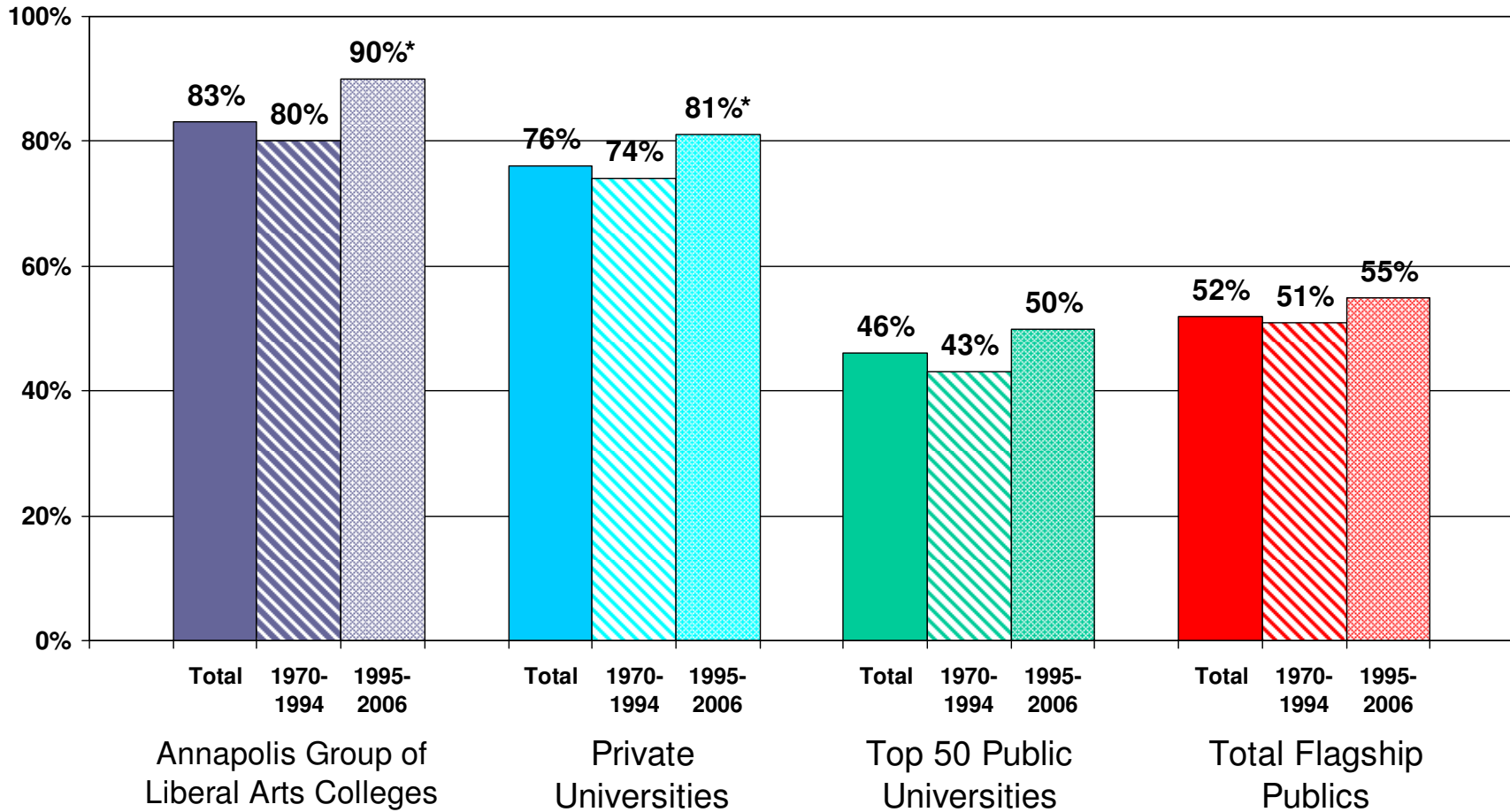
* Significantly higher than previous years

All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.1 Please tell me how much you personally benefited from...? (rating a 5 on a five-point scale, where 1=did not benefit at all and 5=benefited very much)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said Their Professors Often Challenged Them Academically and Also Personally Helped Them Meet Those Challenges



* Significantly higher than previous years

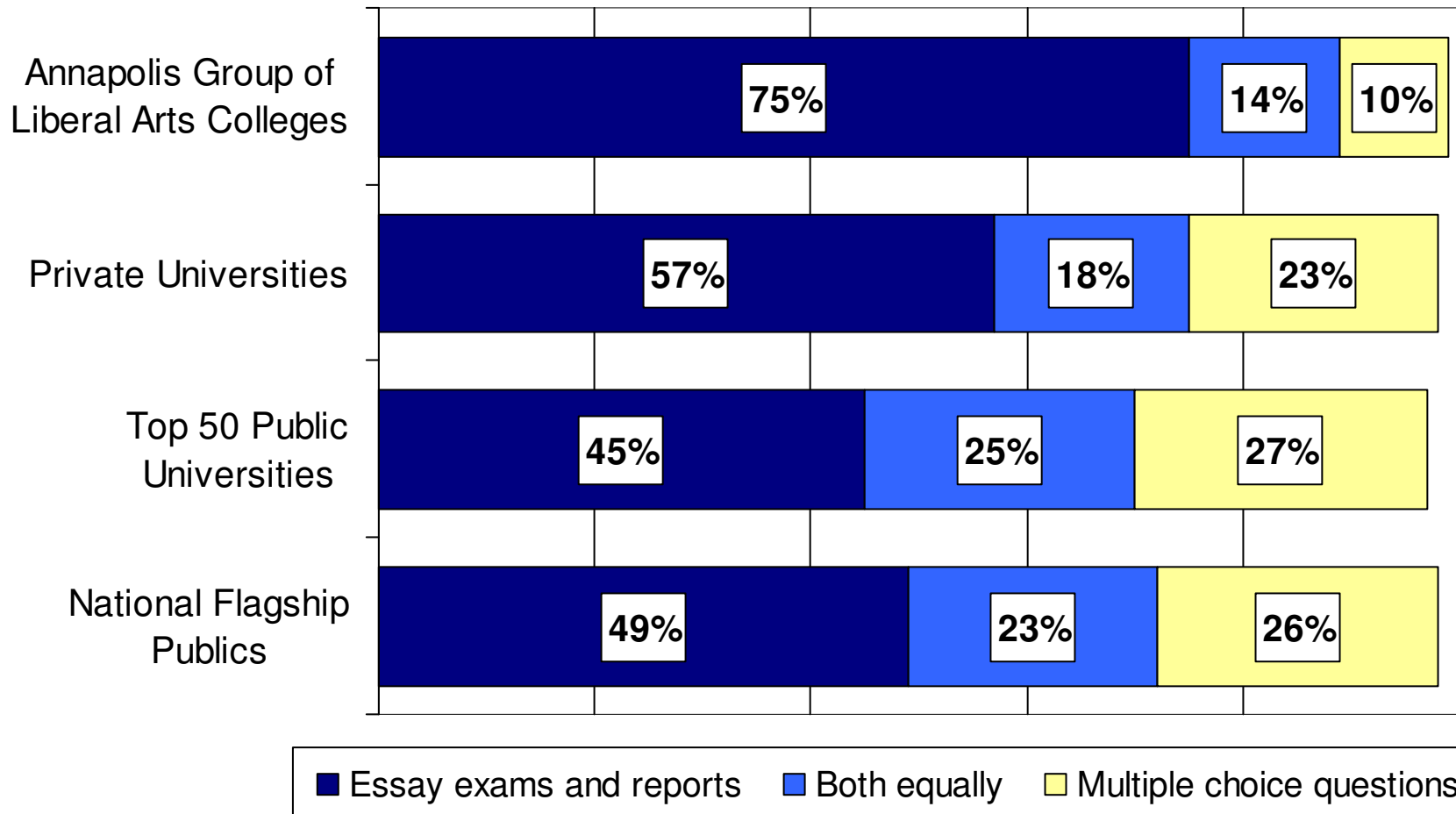
All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.2 How often did your college experience include the following...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1=never and 5=always)

2011 Annapolis Group Comparative Alumni Research
 Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Annapolis Group Alumni Also Reported Benefiting from Academic Rigor

Percentage of Alumni Who Said Most of Their Grades Were Based on Essay Exams and Written Reports

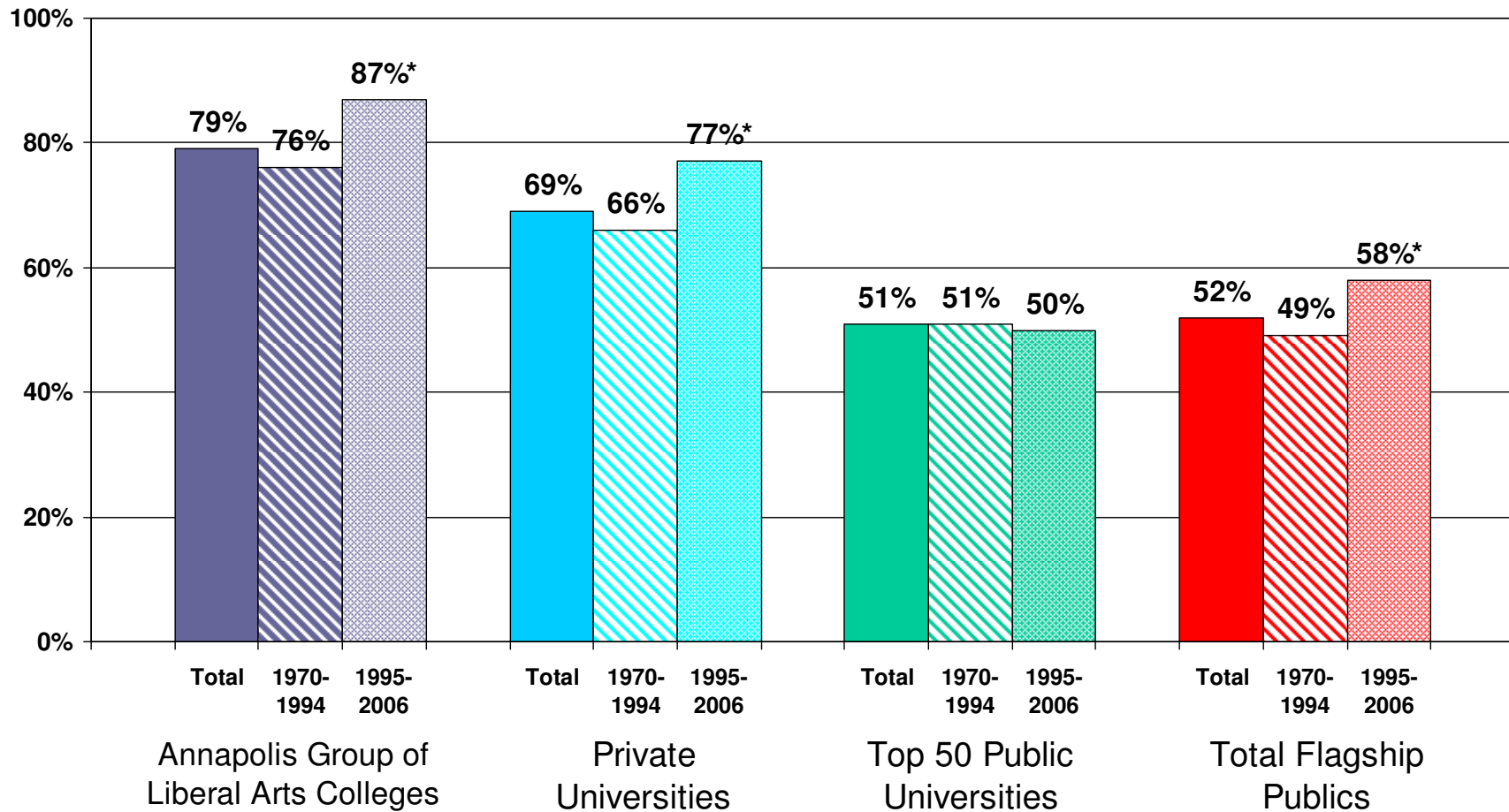


All other groups are significantly lower than the Annapolis Group colleges for "Essay exams" and higher on "Multiple choice questions"

Q.3 Would you say that most of your grades were based on...?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said Their Experience Often Included Extensive Classroom Discussions



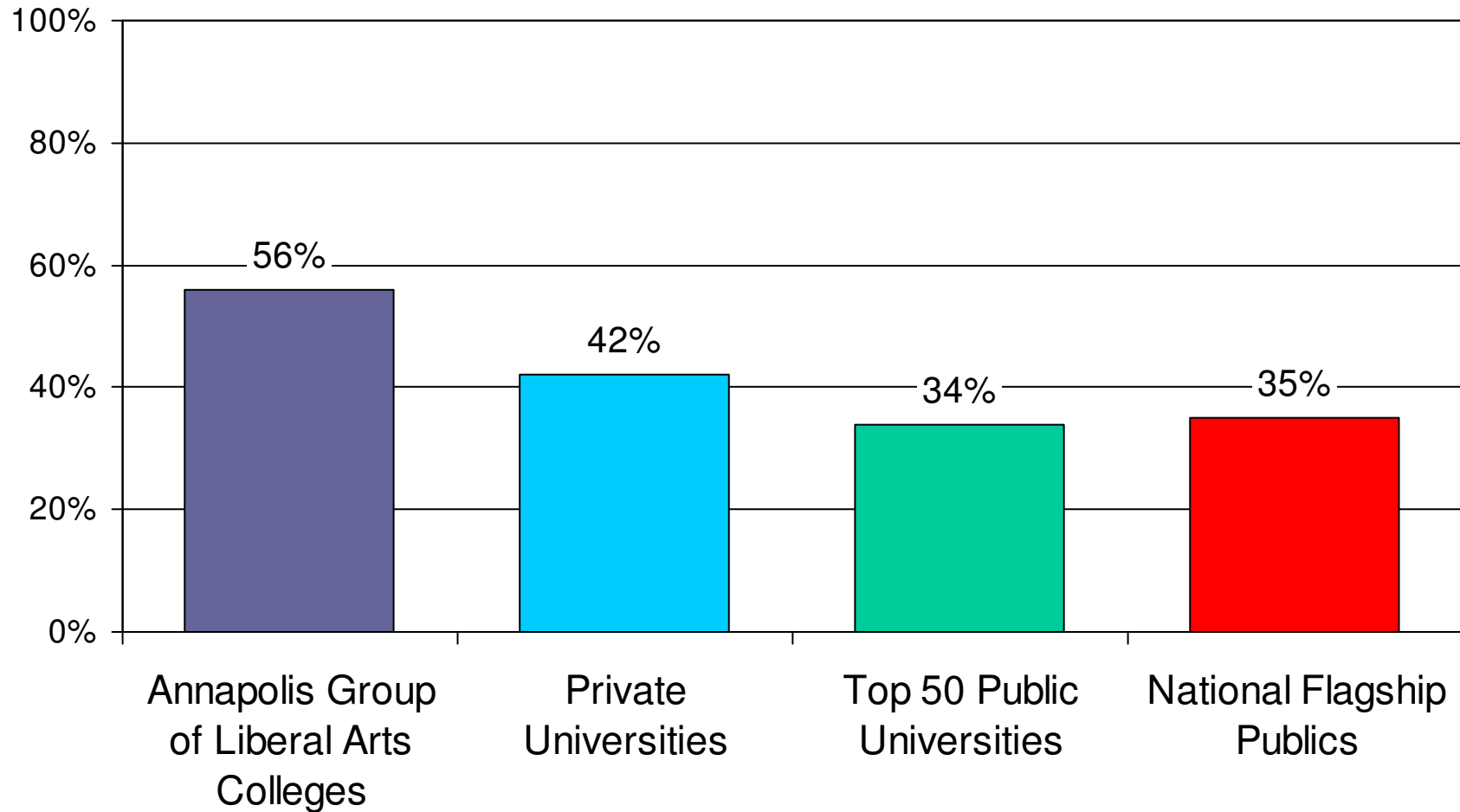
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All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.2 How often did your college experience include the following...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1=never and 5=always)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said They Participated In Faculty-Directed Research or Independent Study



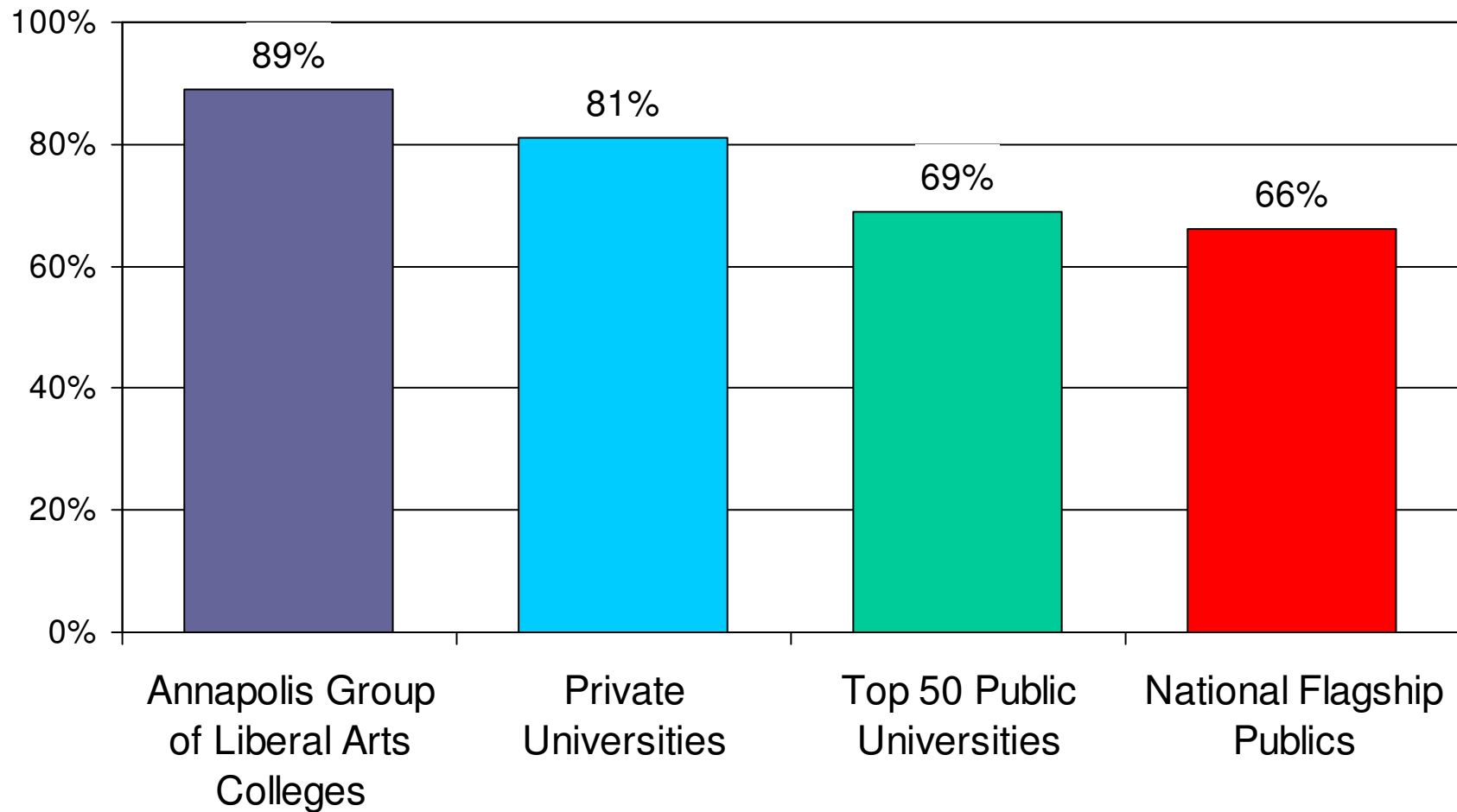
All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.5 While in college, did you participate in...?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Annapolis Group Alumni Also Reported
More Rewarding Personal Friendships
as a Result of the Campus Environment

Percentage of Alumni Who Reported Having Found a Mentor in College

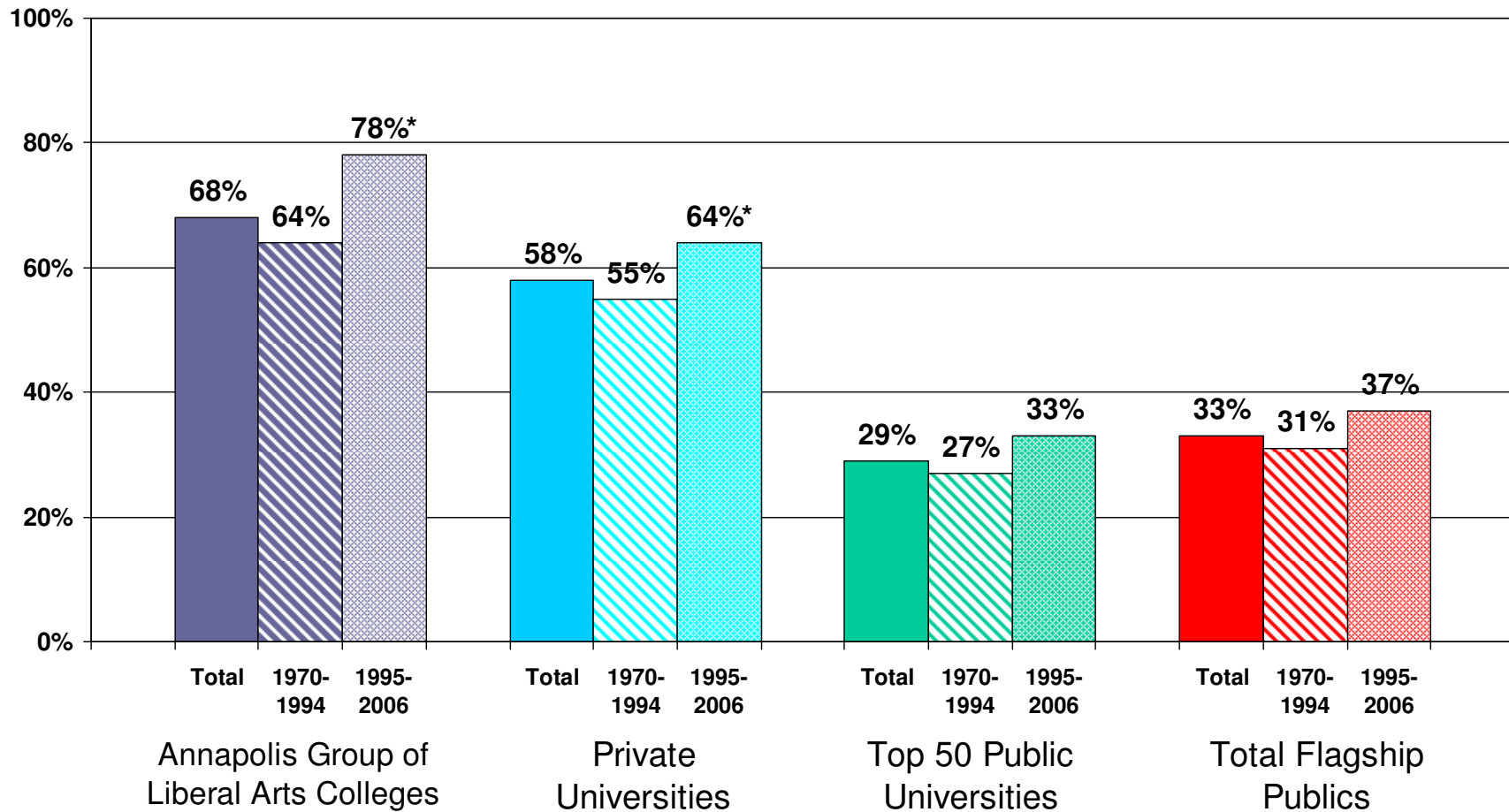


All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.4 Who, if anyone, did you meet at college who was a mentor or role model for you? (total who mentioned at least one)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said Their Experience Often Included Conversations with Professors Outside of Class



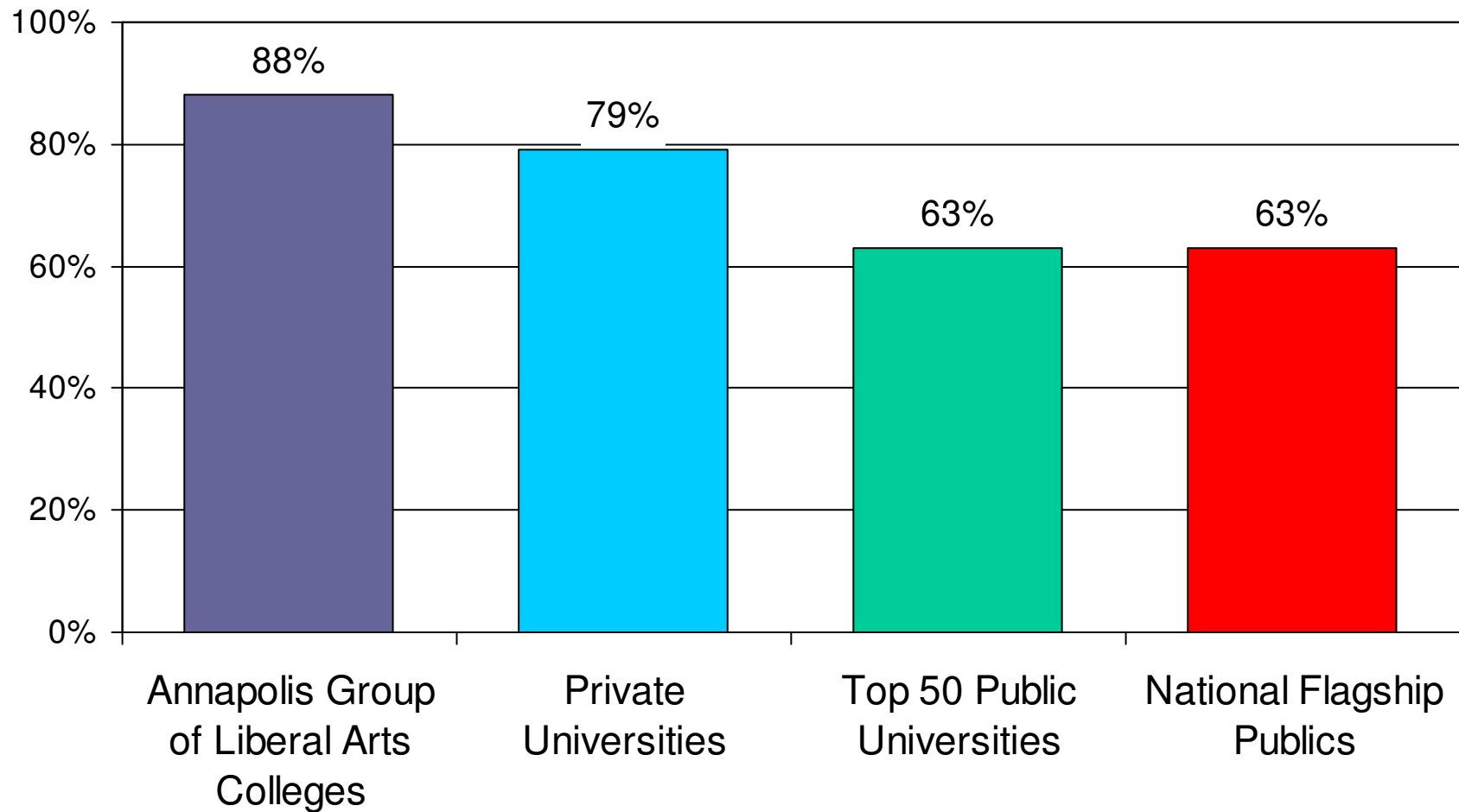
* Significantly higher than previous years

All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.2 How often did your college experience include the following...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1=never and 5=always)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Agreed There Was a Sense of Community Among Students



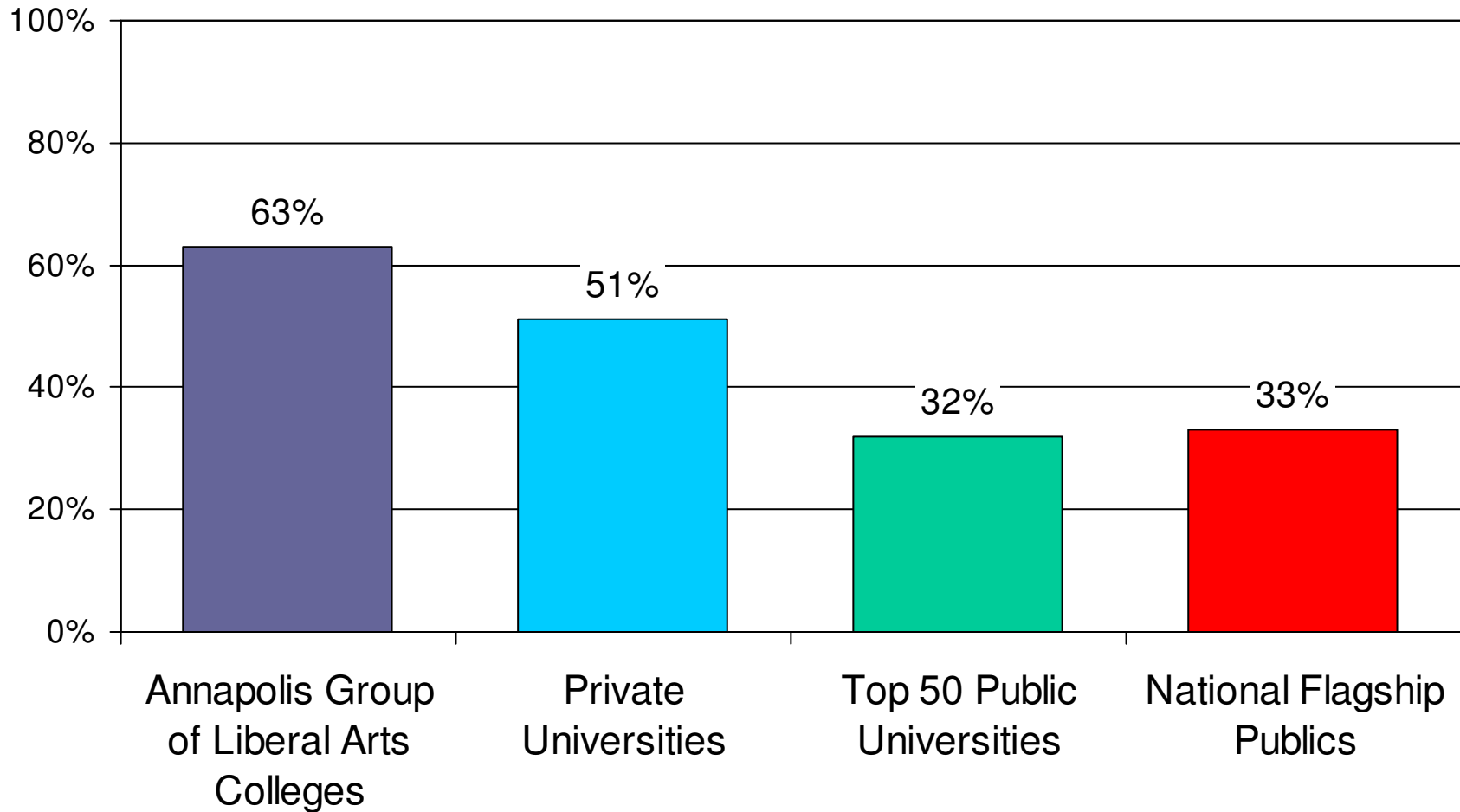
All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.12 How much do you agree or disagree with the following statement...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1=strongly disagree and 5=strongly agree)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Annapolis Group Alumni Report
Greater Participation in
Co-Curricular and Extracurricular
Experiences

Percentage of Alumni Who Said They Participated In Service Learning or Community Service

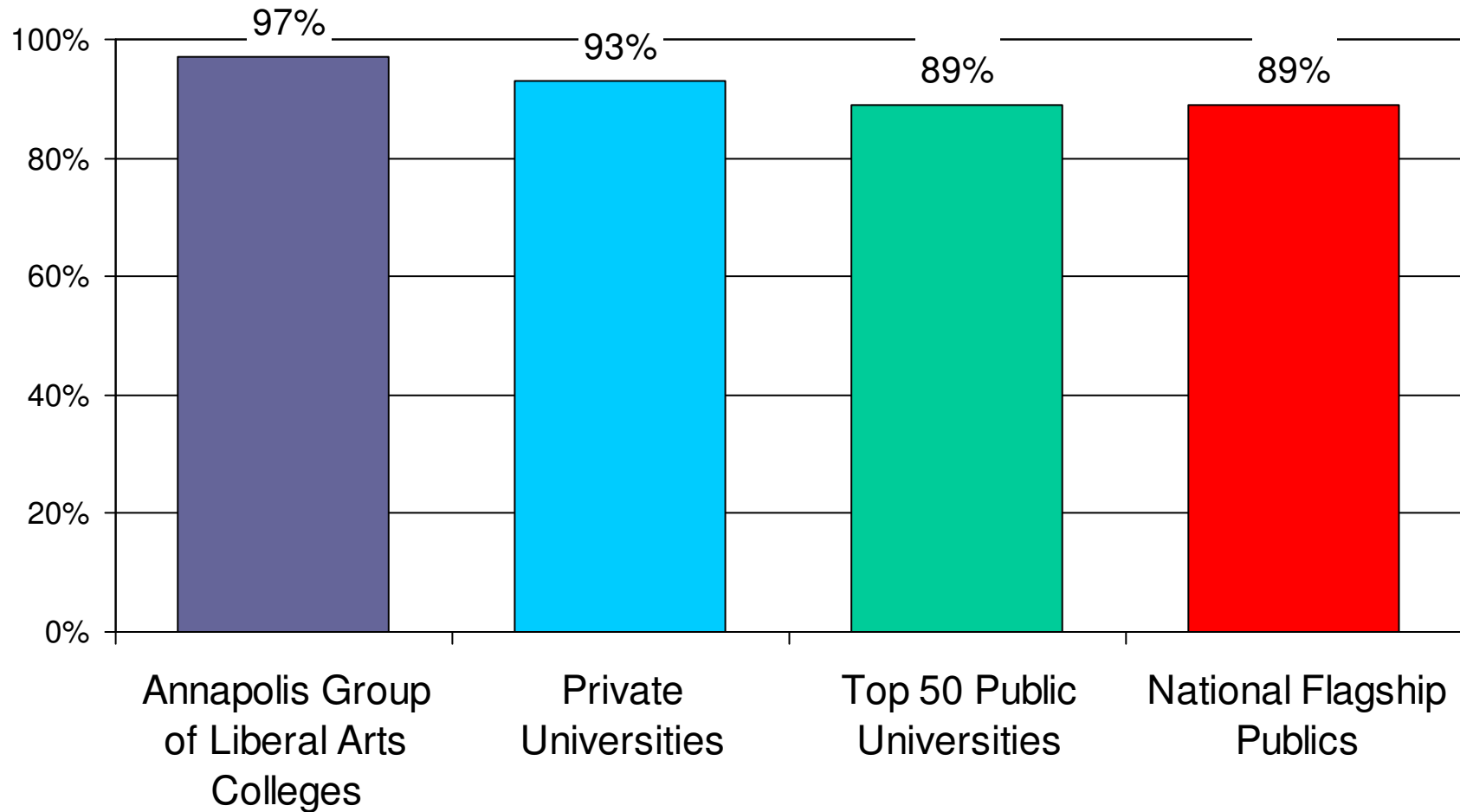


All groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.5 While in college, did you participate in...?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said They Were Involved in an Extracurricular Activity



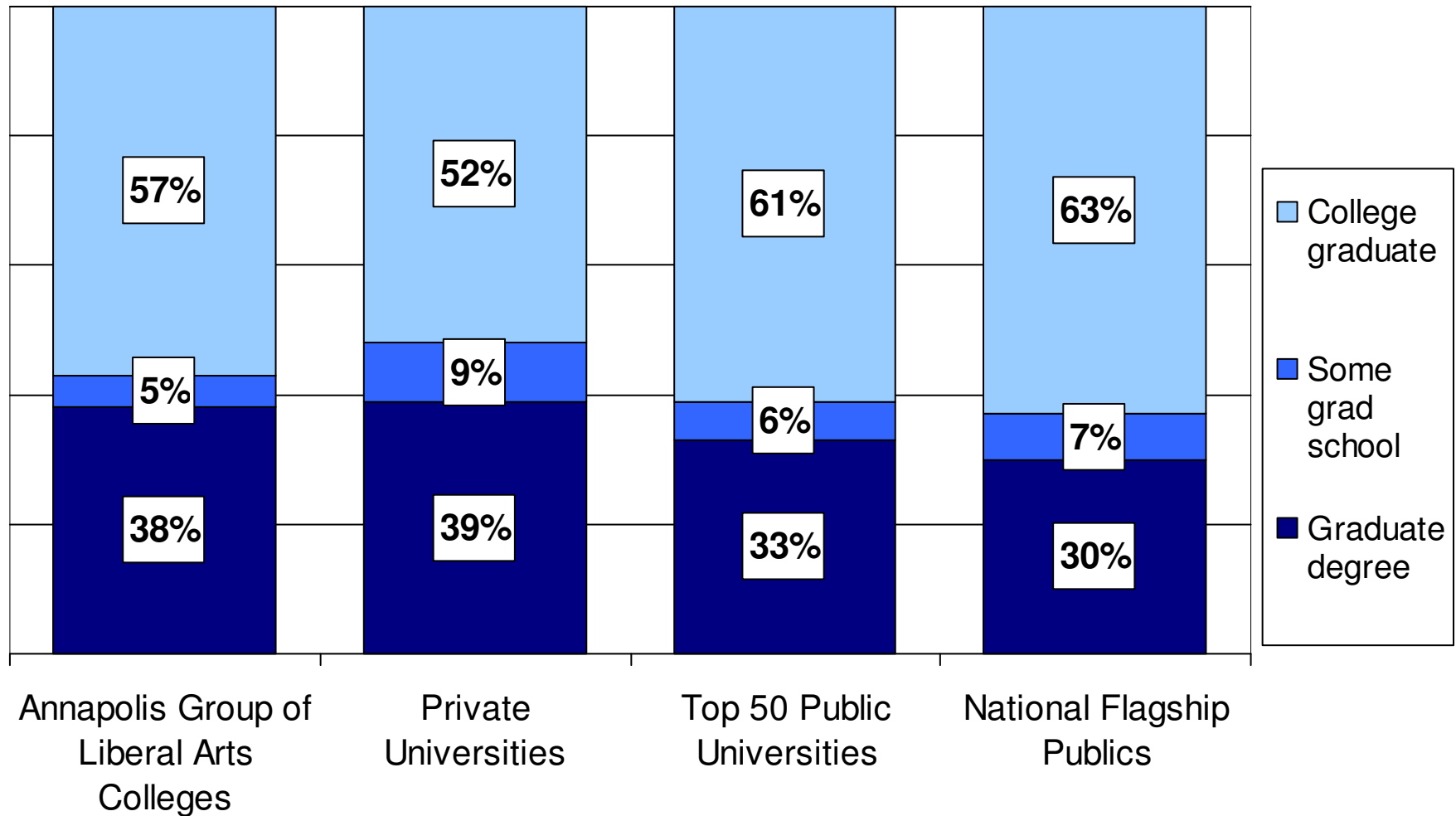
All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.6A Were you involved in any of the following...? (Total involved)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Alumni of Annapolis Group Colleges
Report Better Preparation for Graduate
School and Their Careers Than Alumni
of Public Institutions

Degree Completion

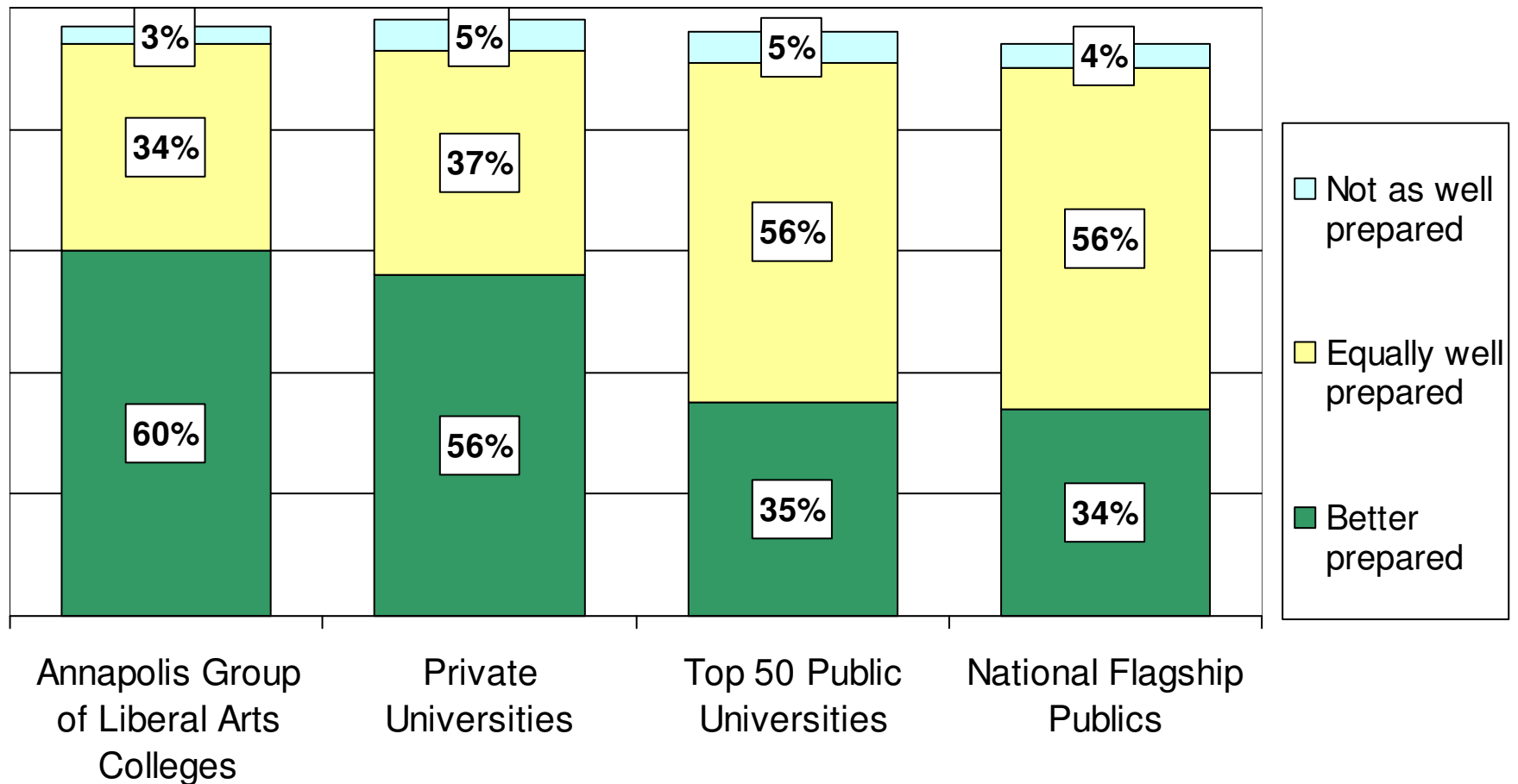


There are no significant differences

Q.A What level of education have you completed?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said They Felt “Better Prepared” For Life After College Than Students Who Attended Other Colleges

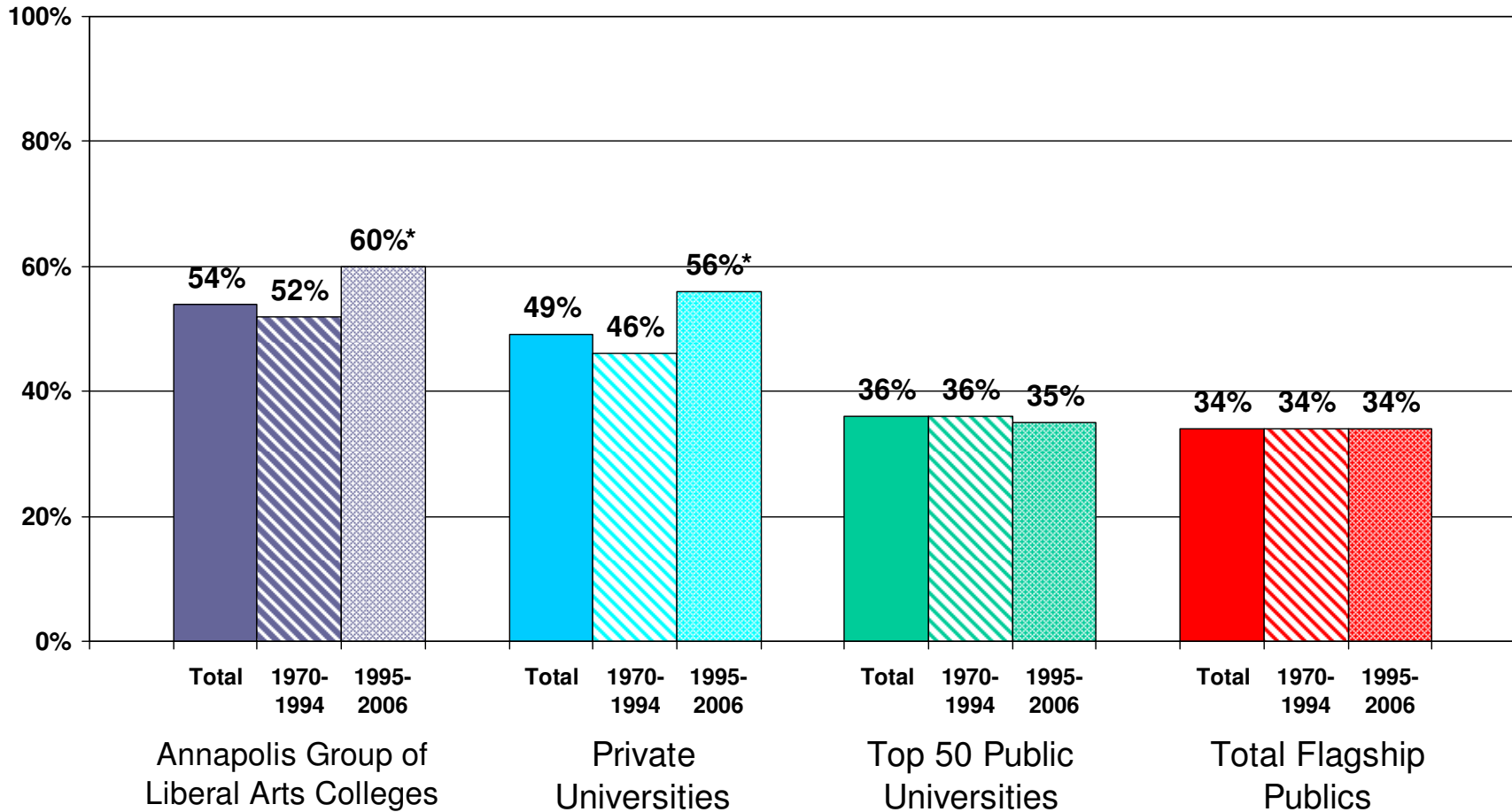


Annapolis Group is significantly higher for “better prepared” than the public university groups

Q.9 How prepared were you for life after college, such as for graduate school or your first job, compared to students from other colleges?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said They Felt “Better Prepared” For Life After College Than Students Who Attended Other Colleges: A Comparison Over Time



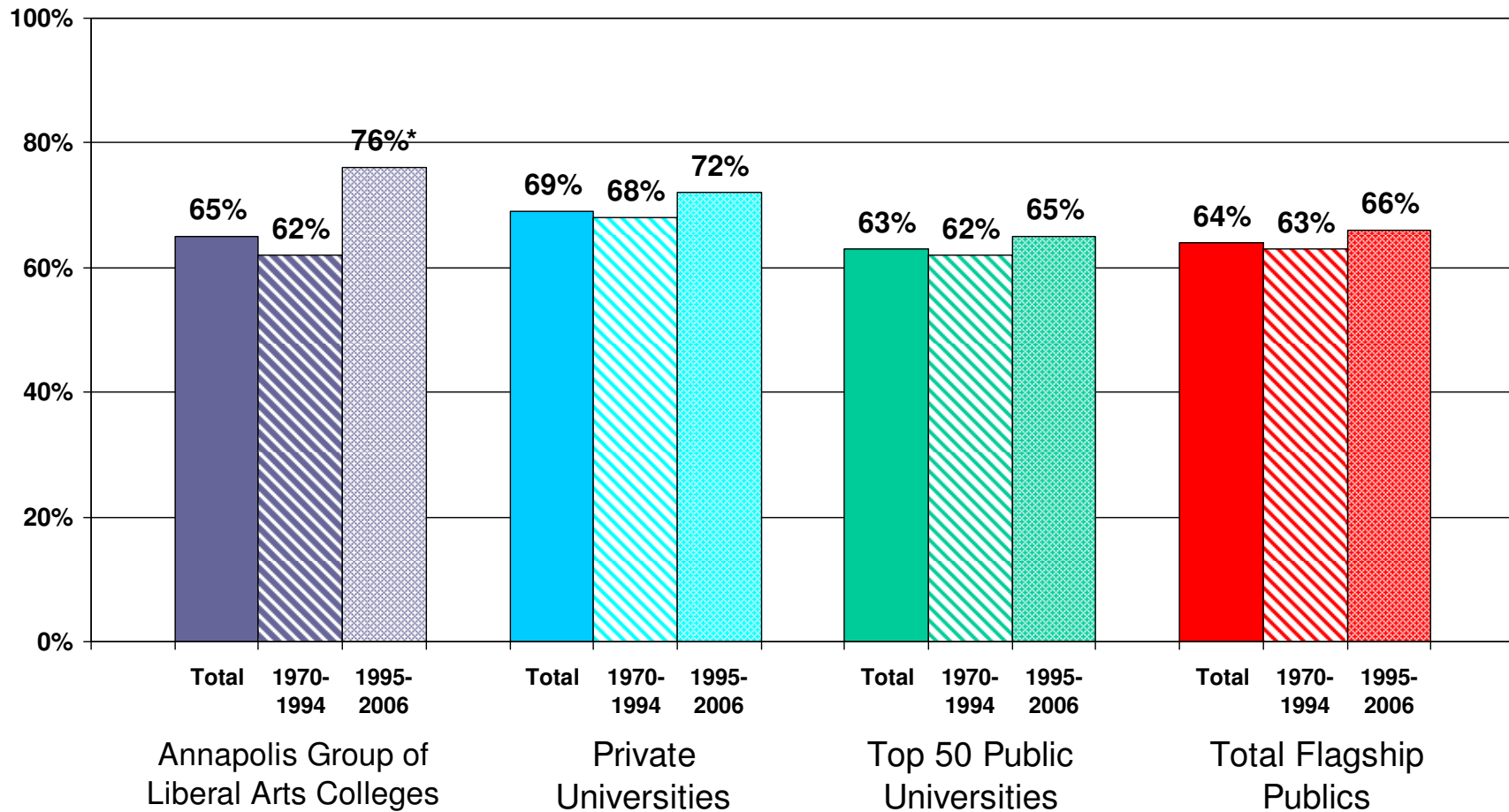
* Significantly higher than previous years

The public university groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.9 How prepared were you for life after college, such as for graduate school or your first job, compared to students from other colleges?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Give Their College a High Effectiveness Rating for Helping Them to Prepare for Their First Job



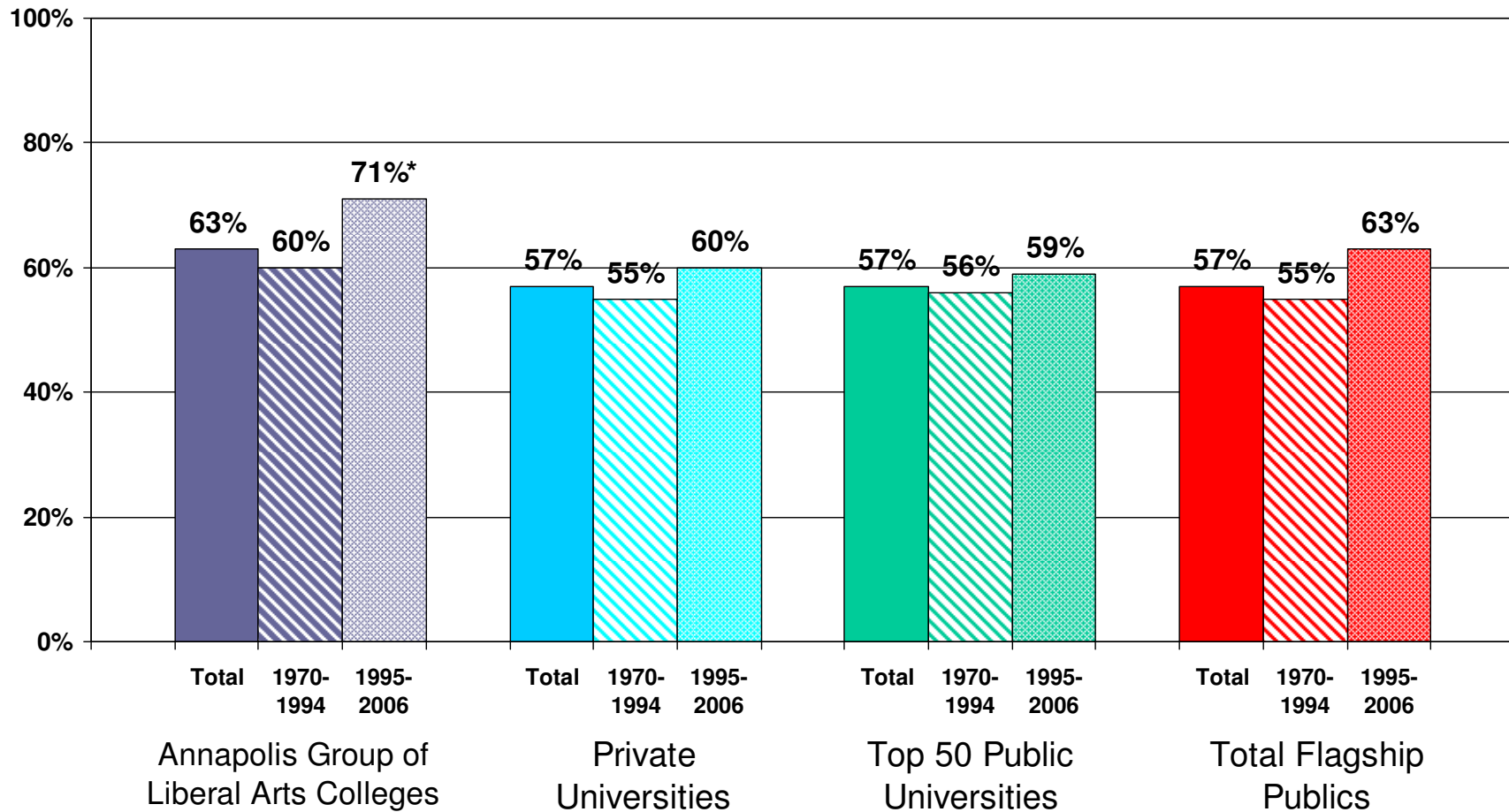
* Significantly higher than previous years

The public university groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.10 How effective was your college in helping you with...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1= not at all effective and 5 = extremely effective)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Give Their College a High Effectiveness Rating for Helping Them to Prepare for Career Change or Advancement



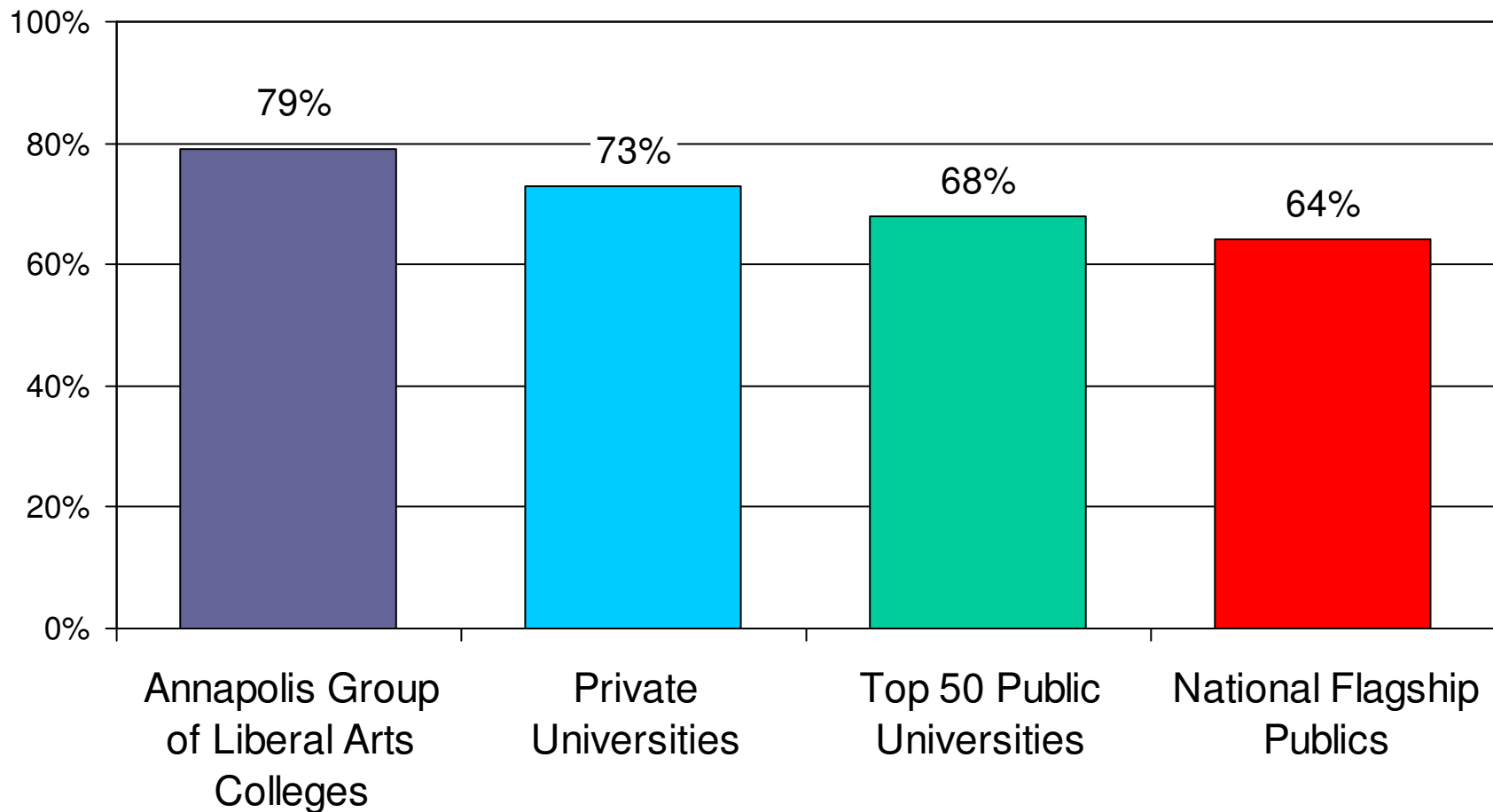
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All other groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.10 How effective was your college in helping you with...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1 = not at all effective and 5 = extremely effective)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said Overall Quality and Breadth of Academic Preparation Played an Important Role for in Being Accepted to Graduate School or Finding a First Job

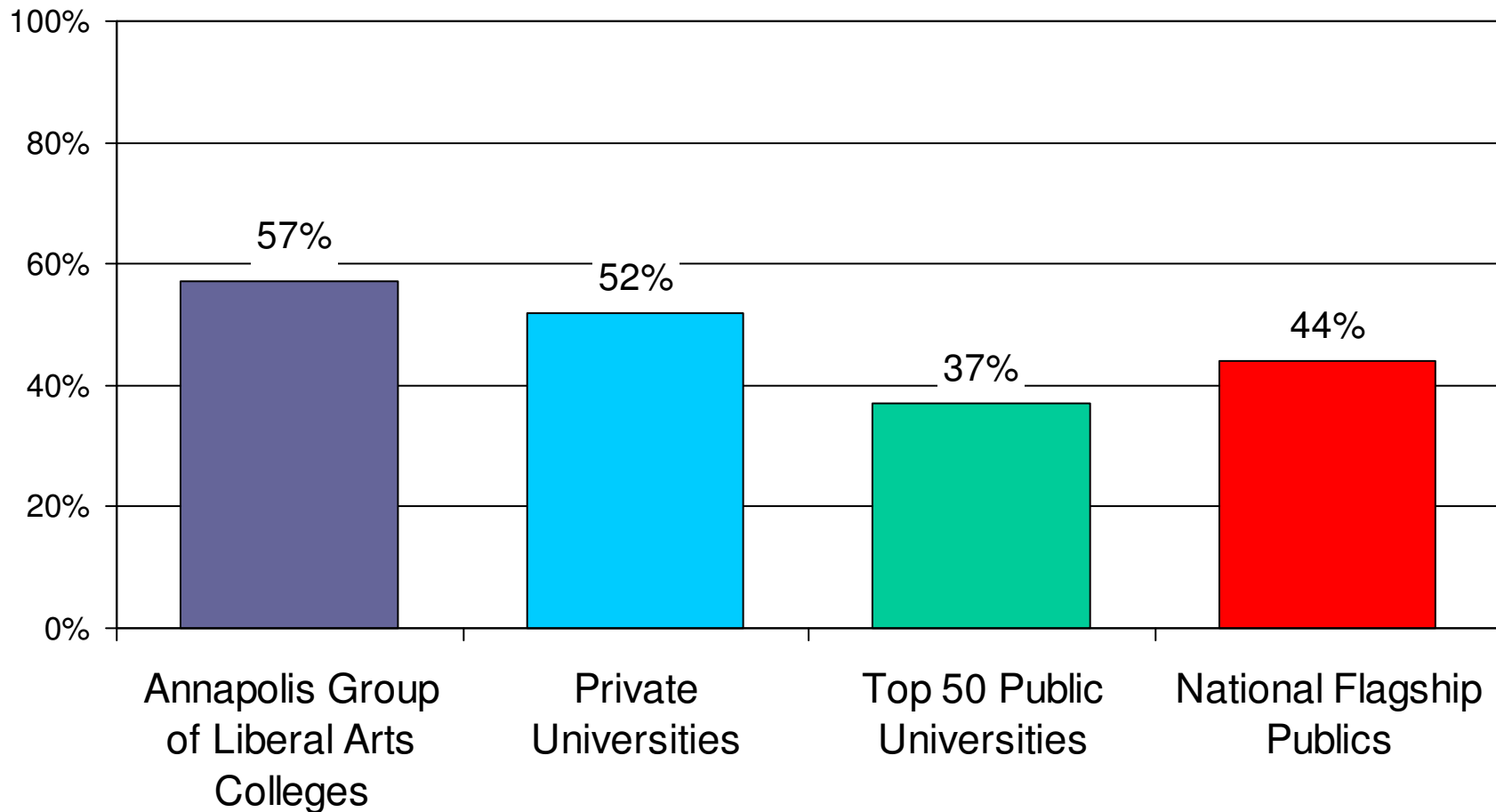


The public university groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.11 Did any of the following factors play an important role in being accepted to graduate school or finding your first real job?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Said the Quality of References
by Faculty or Staff Played an Important Role in Their
Being Accepted to Graduate School or Finding a First Job



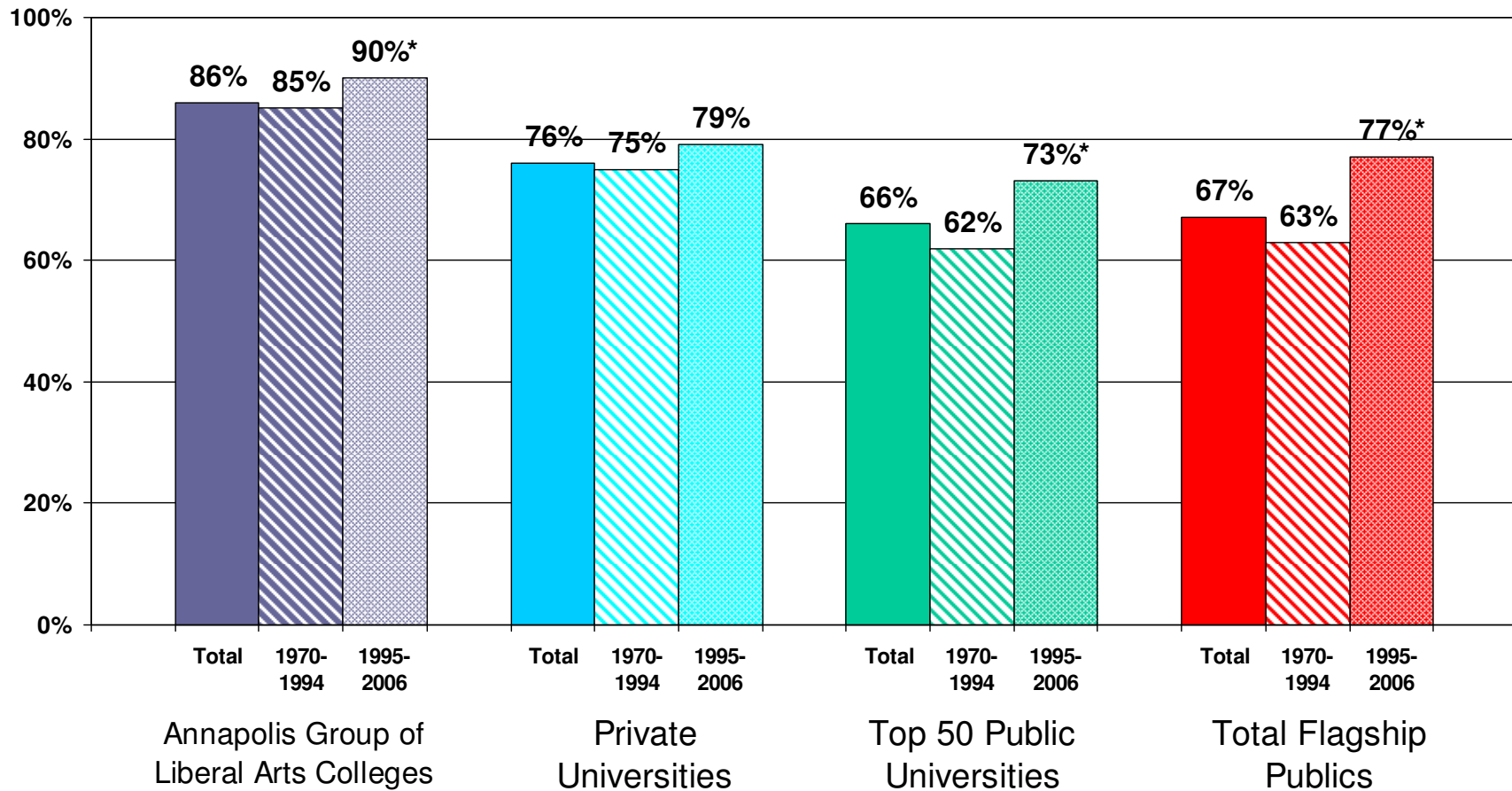
The public university groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.11 Did any of the following factors play an important role in being accepted to graduate school or finding your first real job?

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Annapolis Group Colleges Are Rated as More Effective in Developing Broad Skills That Are Often Deemed Important in Careers and Life

Percentage of Alumni Who Gave Their College a High Effectiveness Rating for Helping Them Learn to Write Effectively



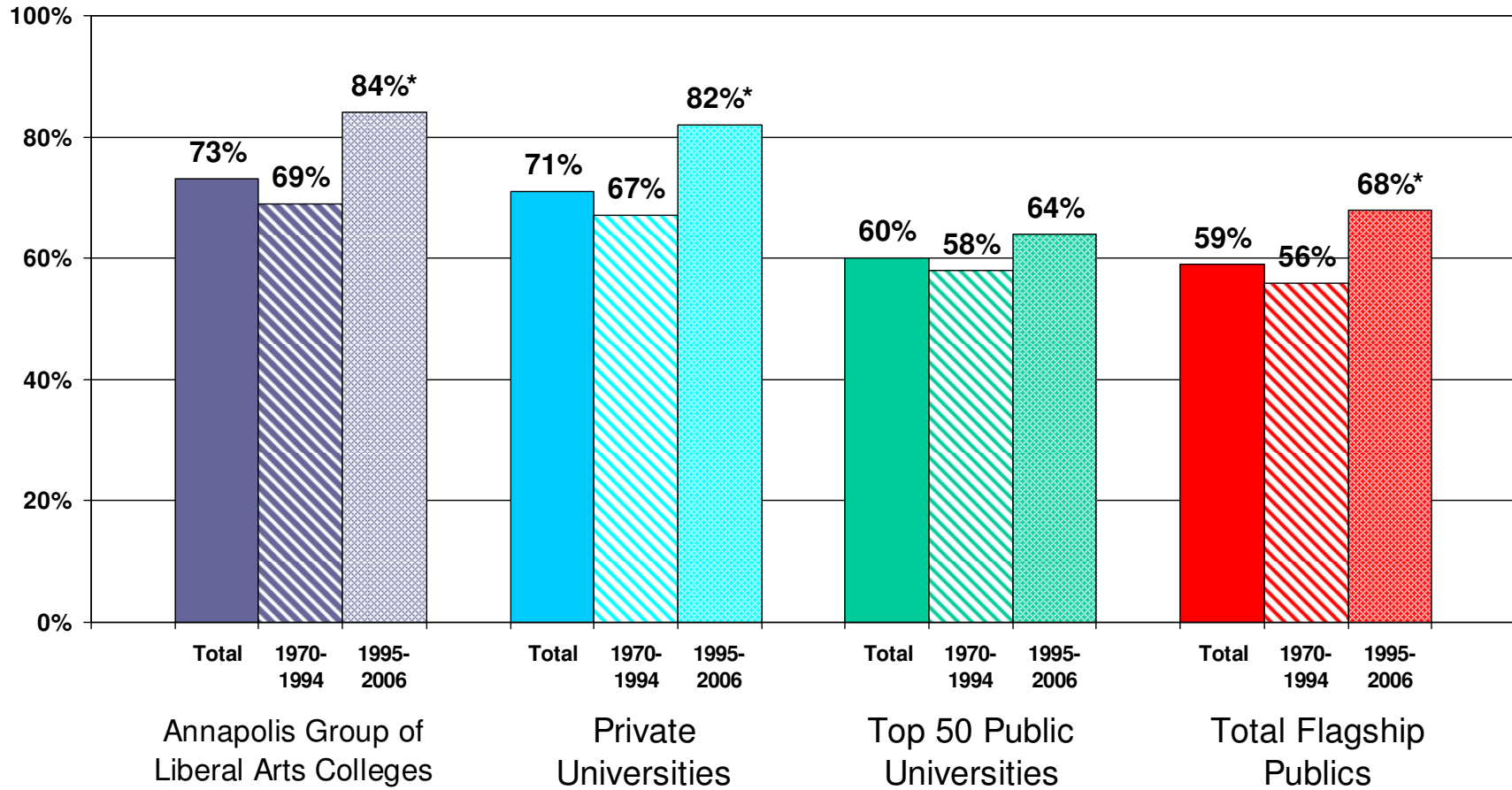
* Significantly higher than previous years

All groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.10 How effective was your college in helping you with...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1 = not at all effective and 5 = extremely effective)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Gave Their College a High Effectiveness Rating for Helping Them Learn to Speak Effectively



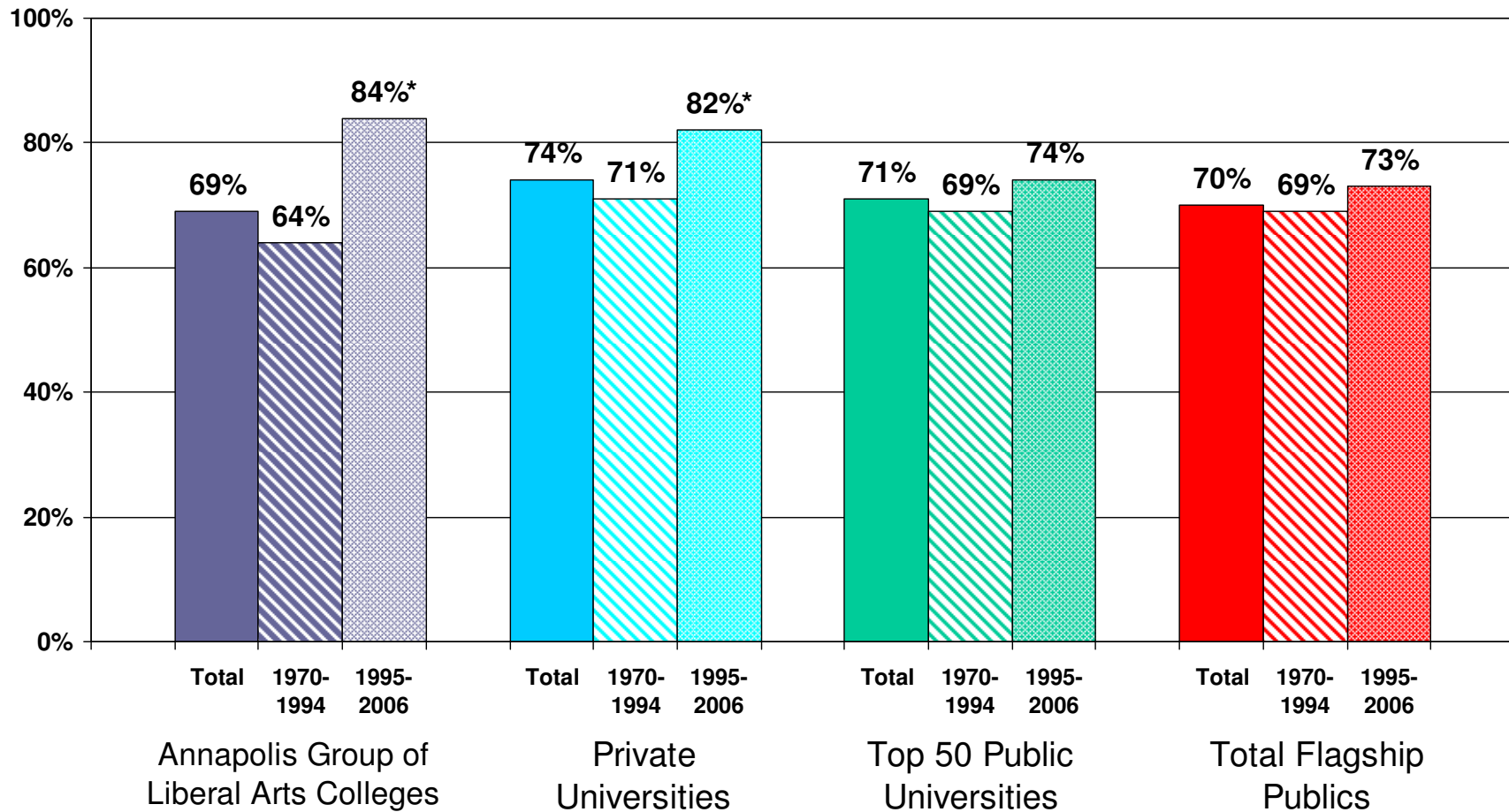
* Significantly higher than previous years

The public university groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.10 How effective was your college in helping you with...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1 = not at all effective and 5 = extremely effective)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Give Their College a High Effectiveness Rating for Helping Them Learn to Work as Part of a Team



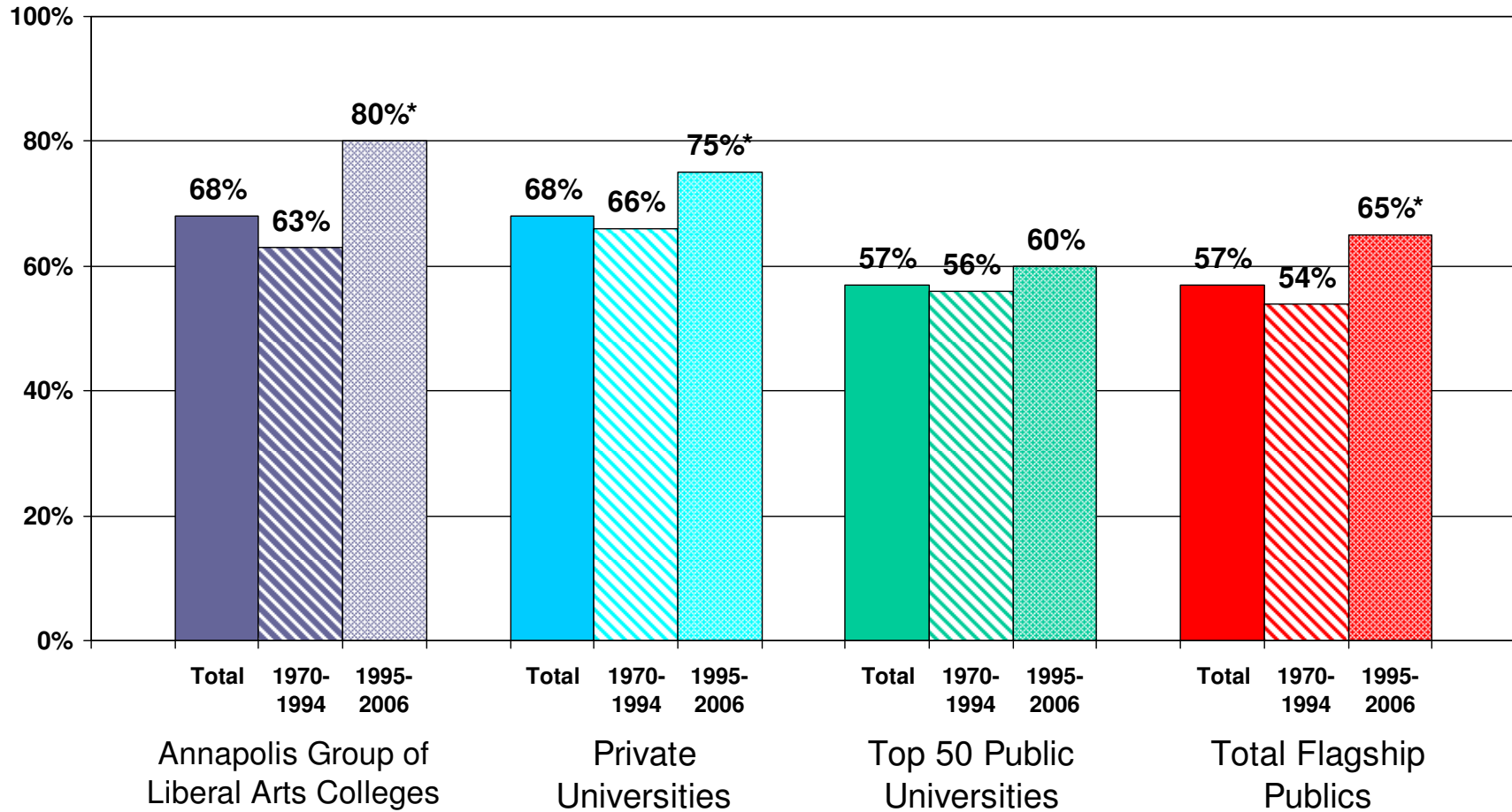
* Significantly higher than previous years

The public university groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.10 How effective was your college in helping you with...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1 = not at all effective and 5 = extremely effective)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org

Percentage of Alumni Who Give Their College a High Effectiveness Rating for Helping Students Learn to Be a Leader



* Significantly higher than previous years

The public university groups are significantly lower than Annapolis Group colleges

Q.10 How effective was your college in helping you with...? (rating a 4 or 5 on a five-point scale, where 1= not at all effective and 5 = extremely effective)

2011 Annapolis Group
Comparative Alumni Research
Source: Hardwick Day
www.collegenews.org