

The background of the slide is a blurred photograph of a casino table. A hand in a blue sleeve is visible, holding a stack of white banknotes. The table surface is green with various colored chips (blue, pink, red) scattered around. The overall scene is dimly lit, typical of a casino environment.

Assessing Student Gambling

**Seeking Greater Understanding and
Creating Prevention/Education Programs**

Philip C. Suchma, Ph.D

Office of Student Affairs Assessment

The Ohio State University

psuchma@studentaffairs.osu.edu

This is...

A socio-cultural examination of gambling as an element of students' lives and collegiate activity

This is not...

A study rooted in legal or clinical expertise on issues of student gambling

Research Background

Spring Quarter 2004: Moonlight Madness sponsored a Texas Hold'em poker tournament at Lincoln House

- Increased presence of poker advertisements on campus
- Popularity of television shows like “The World Series of Poker” on ESPN and “Celebrity Poker” on Bravo

Questions:

Was the decision to address and affect the campus drinking culture through a gambling activity reasonable or responsible?

What responsibilities does a university have regarding student gambling?



Research Background (cont.)

A second group of questions arose:

- If OSU students have drinking problems, are there also students with gambling problems?
- Is there a growing risk for problem gambling because of its increased popularity?
- Are students targeted by gambling promoters?



Methodology

Review of Literature

- *Journals of Gambling Studies*
- *Journal of American College Health*
- Surveys found online
- OSU Spending Habits Survey (2005)
- Follow-up Questionnaire to Lincoln House Poker Tournament participants

Other Schools looked at:

- Syracuse University
- University of Rhode Island (Kingston Campus)
- Connecticut State University (four regional campuses)
- Two unnamed Minnesota colleges (located near casinos)

OSU Online Survey

- 20,000 undergraduate students sent invitations with survey link
- Seven sections questions, taking approximately 10 minutes to complete



What is gambling?

According to *Webster's Dictionary*,
to “gamble” is:

1a: to play a game for money or property

b: to bet on an uncertain outcome

2: to stake something on a contingency: take a chance

Gambling - the act of playing for stakes in the hope of winning
(including the payment of a price for a chance to win a prize)



Clinical Definition

Gambling addictions are classified under **Impulse-Control Disorders**

Similar to alcohol and other drug addictions, which are classified under either **Substance Dependence** and **Substance Abuse**.



They all share many of the same criteria:

- A preoccupation with the substance/activity
- A need to consume/gamble in larger amounts over time to achieve a desired effect
- Numerous and unsuccessful attempts to cut back or stop
- Heightened chance of legal problems
- Create problems with family and friends

Source: Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Illness, 4th Edition

South Oaks Gambling Screen (SOGS)

A questionnaire originally developed by Dr. Henry Lesieur and Dr. Sheila Blume identify addicted/pathological gamblers from groups of people receiving treatment for other substance abuse problems

Now used to simply identify potential gambling problems

Most questions are scored; overall point totals indicate the gambling tendencies in an individual

- Non-Gambler
- Social Gambler
- Problem Gambler (3-4)
- Pathological Gambler (5+)

Gambling Classifications

Non-Gamblers: do not participate in gambling activities

Social Gamblers: occasionally take part in gambling activities



Problem Gamblers: regular participation who verge on addiction

Pathological Gamblers: suffer gambling addiction

Gambling in American Culture

Gambling was commonly viewed as a social vice that was imbedded in American ‘tavern culture’:

Alcohol—Gambling—Women



Jan Steen, *Card Players Quarrelling* (1664-1665)

**A protestant minister in colonial Virginia said of his fellow colonists:
*“[They] will drink, and game, and swear, and whore; they will pursue
the world with Eagerness and Avarice.”* (Fabian, 1990)**

Late 19th Century Educational Approach

“Even though our faces blanch, and our hearts sicken, we must face and reform other areas of the student life. Gambling, drunkenness, impurity may still be heard discussed by students as though these things were but forms of venial mischief. Public sentiment in our institutions of learning, absolved from a serious responsibility as it is by our tacit permissions, fails to punish the debauchee and gambler even in the court of scholarly life.”

James C. Mackenzie

Head Master of the Lawrenceville School

Lawrenceville, N. J

- **Gambling was viewed as a detriment to the moral health of the individual, not the physical or social health**

20th Century College Gambling

College athletics have been the centerpieces of the most notable events of student gambling

Incidents of point shaving have made national news at the City College of New York and the University of Kentucky in the 1950s and more recently at Northwestern University and Arizona State University

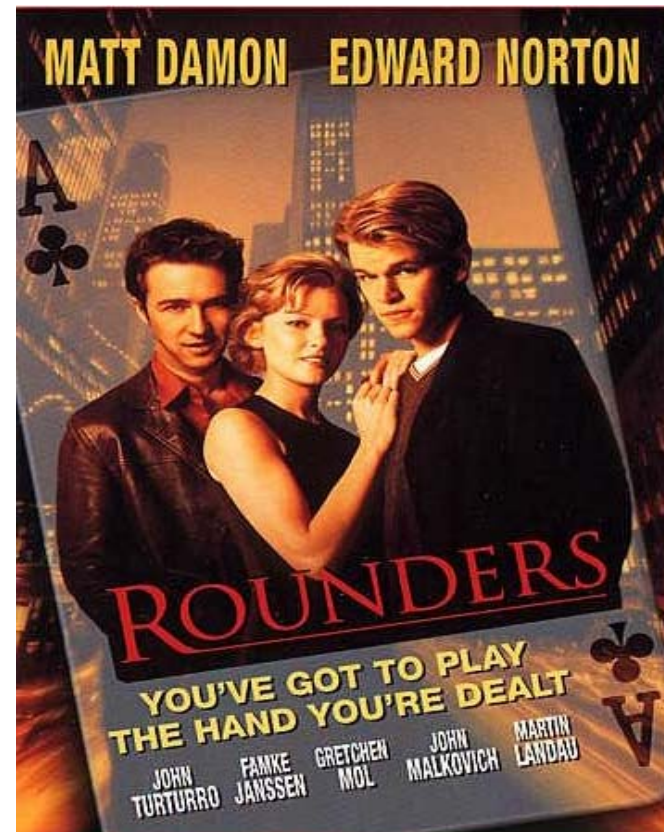
NCAA has initiated programming to educate student athletes and discourage gambling



Student Exposure

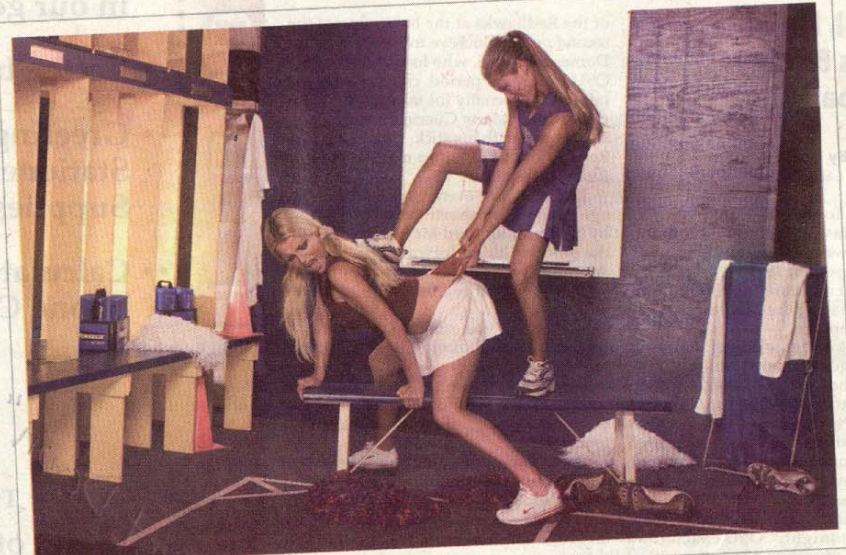


- Advertisements on campus
- Internet access and advertising
- Movies and television
- Subsequent perceptions



**THIS AIN'T
YOUR DADDY'S
SPORTSBOOK**

**BUCKEYES
BETTING WITH
ATTITUDE**



bodog.com
sports · casino · poker
1-866-536-3781

No cheerleader was harmed during the making of this ad

Advertising to College Students focuses on ...

Youth & Vigor

Sexuality

Attitude

Review of Literature & National Stats

Student Gambling Habits:

- *“Gambling among college students is probably the most prevalent of student behaviors receiving the least amount of attention.”*
- Estimated **50%** of college students have gambled in past year and **5.5%** are pathological gamblers
- Students surveyed indicated that money, excitement, and socialization were their top three reasons for gambling (Neighbors, et al, 2002)



Future Problems?

- **8%** of US and Canadian teens identify as problem gamblers
(Univ. of Minnesota, 1998)
- **35 million** teens are addicted to Gambling *(Harvard Med School, 1997)*
- *“As legalized gambling becomes the social norm, adolescents obtain addictive gambling habits at an earlier age, and more students enter college already highly addicted, institutions of higher education need to be prepared.”*



Discussion Issue:

Currently, OSU's Moonlight Madness: Late Night Programming Initiative has debated whether or not to approve future funding for gambling-themed event applications

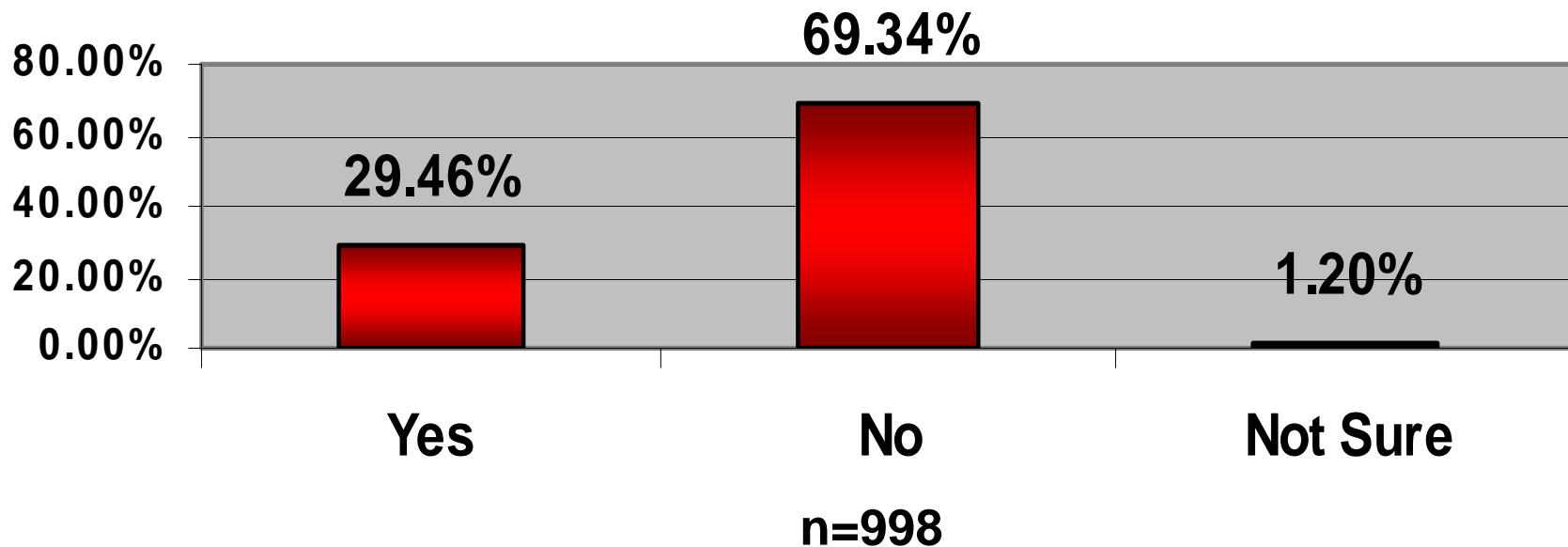
- Should Late Night Programming host gambling-themed events?
- Should University funds be used to fund all or part of gambling-themed events?
- Should the University allow gambling-themed events to occur on school property?

2005 OSU Figures

The Spring 2005 Student Spending Habits Survey was distributed to rank one and rank four students. It included several questions on gambling habits.

294 student respondents acknowledged gambling in the past year.

OSU Student Gambling Participation



OSU Results (cont)

- **Playing poker** games with friends (49.66%) and purchasing **lottery tickets** (30.27%) were the most popular activities among students who gambled.
- The vast majority of OSU students who gamble use **cash**.
- Most students indicated that they spent **less than \$100** gambling over the previous month, with 50% spending less than \$10.
- 83% of students never spent more than \$100 on gambling in one day.
- **Less than 1%** of students felt that they currently have a gambling problem or had one in the past.



Other Schools' Data

Two Unnamed Minnesota Colleges

- Located near high-stakes gambling facilities
- 1,400 students surveyed
- Used SOGS
- **93%** of males and **85%** of females reported gambling over the past year
- Concluded that “Gambling appears to be a common and benign experience for most students,” but also found that a sizeable percentage of students gambled excessively and showed signs of gambling problems

Other Schools' Data

Syracuse University

- 770 students living in residence halls completed an online survey
- Respondents were mostly underclassmen and male
- Students participated most frequently in the state lottery and gaming machines (slots, video poker)
- Almost **25%** of students claimed to know someone with a gambling problem, yet less than **2%** felt that gambling was a serious problem

Other Schools' Data

University of Rhode Island (Kinston campus)

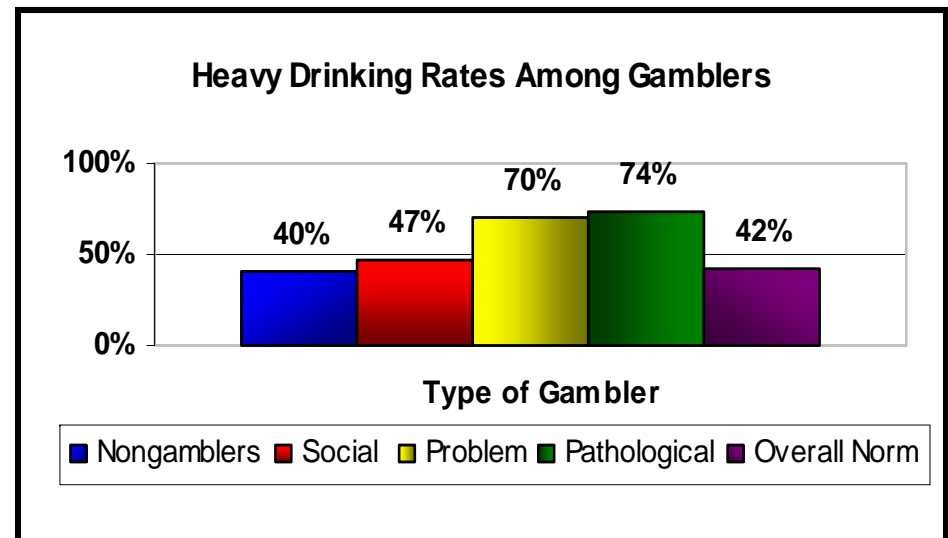
- 720 students were surveyed
- **35%** of students admitted gambling in previous six months
- Students who gambled reported consuming alcohol **more frequently and in larger quantities** than non-gamblers over a 30-day period

Other Schools' Data

Connecticut State University System

- Students from four campuses were surveyed and given SOGS
- **76.5%** of males and **63.4%** of females admitted gambling, with the majority being social gamblers
- Problem and Pathological gamblers showed higher rates of other risk behaviors

- Cigarette and marijuana use
- Heavy drinking
- Binge eating & weight disorders



2006 Survey of Undergraduate Student Gambling Habits

*Depending on whether you use the conservative rate or more accepted rate, there are likely **from 975 to over 2,000 undergraduate students** on the OSU campus who exhibit the symptoms of problem gamblers.*

Office of Student Affairs Assessment is planning a large-scale, gambling survey in January 2006

- Randomly distribute on-line survey to 20,000 OSU undergraduates and 5,000 students from participating schools
- Questions includes materials from pre-existing studies and SOGS

The survey questions are designed to gather data in specific areas:

Individual gambling habits

Motivation for gambling

Links to financial health

Influences for gambling

Perceptions of gambling

Impact of popular culture



“As the Internet poker wave breaks over college campuses, a few bright young players are exploiting high-level statistics and game theory to make a fortune. Others are losing more than their tuition.”

Sports Illustrated (May 30, 2005)

Respondent Demographic Information

All Respondents

Valid Percentages

Gender

Male: 52%

Female: 48%

College Rank

Rank 1: 19%

Rank 2: 21%

Rank 3: 23%

Rank 4: 36%

Residence

Campus: 32%

Greek: 3%

Rental Unit: 46%

With Family: 9%

Ethnicity

White: 87%

African Amer: 4%

Asian Amer: 4%

Latino(a): 2%

Internat'l: 1%

Relationships

Single: 81%

Married/Partner: 10%

Divorced/Separated: 1%

IM/Sport Club

Intramurals: 25%

Sport Club: 9%

None: 69%

Gambling Habits and Behaviors (All Respondents)

- **72%** of students responded that they have gambled, while **55%** admit to gambling in the past year
- Regarding family and relationships, **43%** reported having a **parent** who gambled and **79%** had **friends** who gamble or gambled
 - Only **7%** reported having a family member who was/is an addict
- **52%** first gambled when they were in high school (14-18 yrs. old) versus **27%** who started in college
- Friends (non-classmates) was the group with whom most identified first gambling (**40%**)...family members were second at **34%**
- Students primarily gamble at **Off-campus locations (53%)** or at a **parent's house (39%)**
 - **40%** travel to casinos (at least once)
 - **22%** report gambling in Residence Halls; **21%** report gambling online

Differences Between Males and Females

70% of males and **39%** of females reported gambling in the past year

“Win Money” was the top ranked primary reason for gambling among males; **“It is fun”** was the top ranked reason for women

- Males tended to rank “competitive” factors higher while females ranked “social” reasons as being of greater importance
- Males reported higher rates of participation in card games for money, sports related gambling, and casino games while women had a higher rate for raffle and fundraising tickets

A larger percentage of males students reported gambling at off-campus residences (**64%**) than did female students (**37%**), while a higher percentage of females gambled at a parent or relative’s house (**43% to 36%**)

Gambling Habits and Behaviors: Group Comparisons

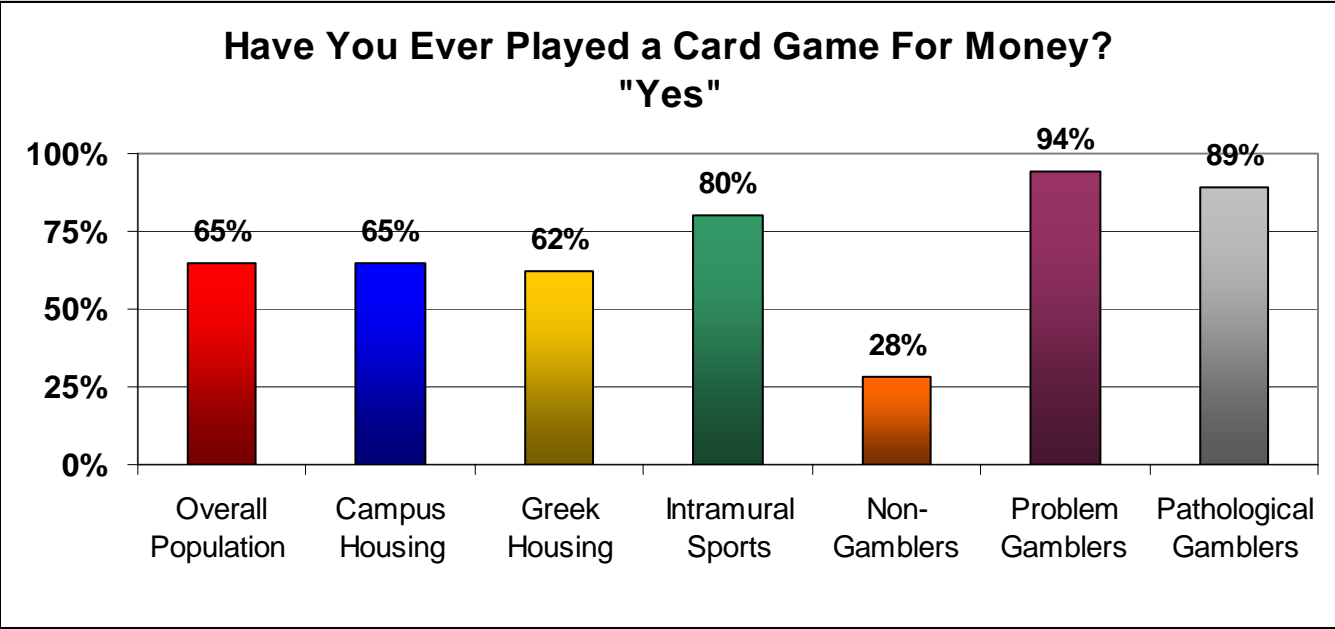
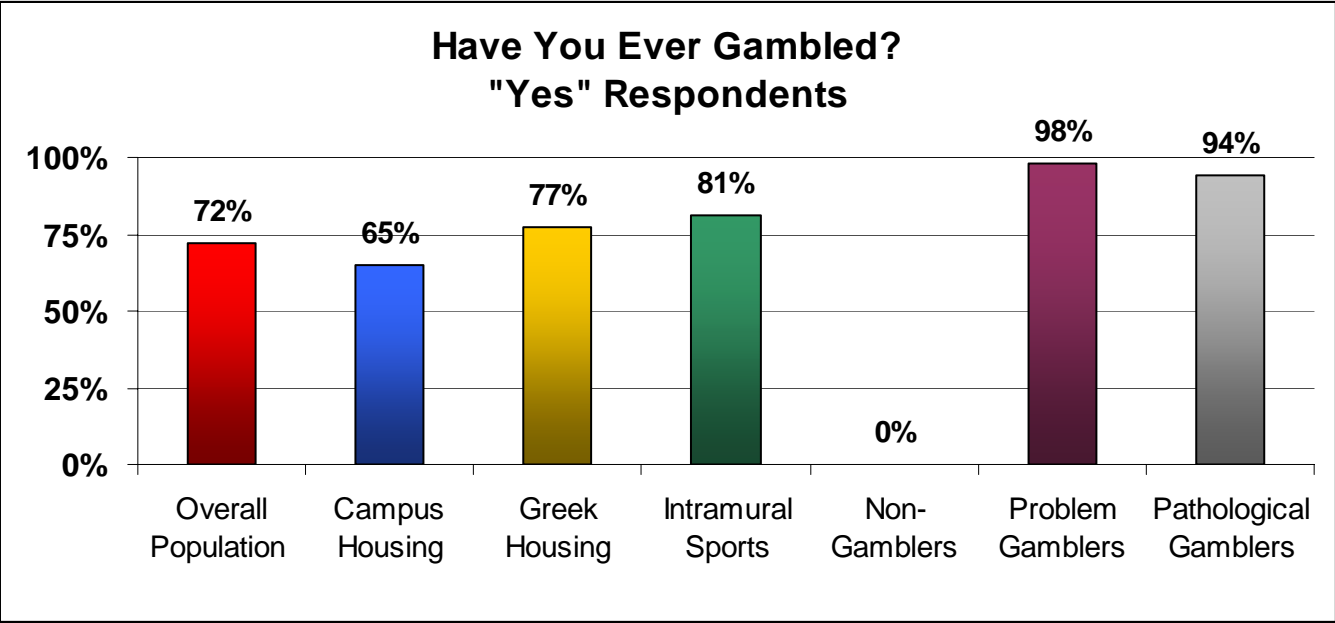
Overall OSU Population

Sub Groups

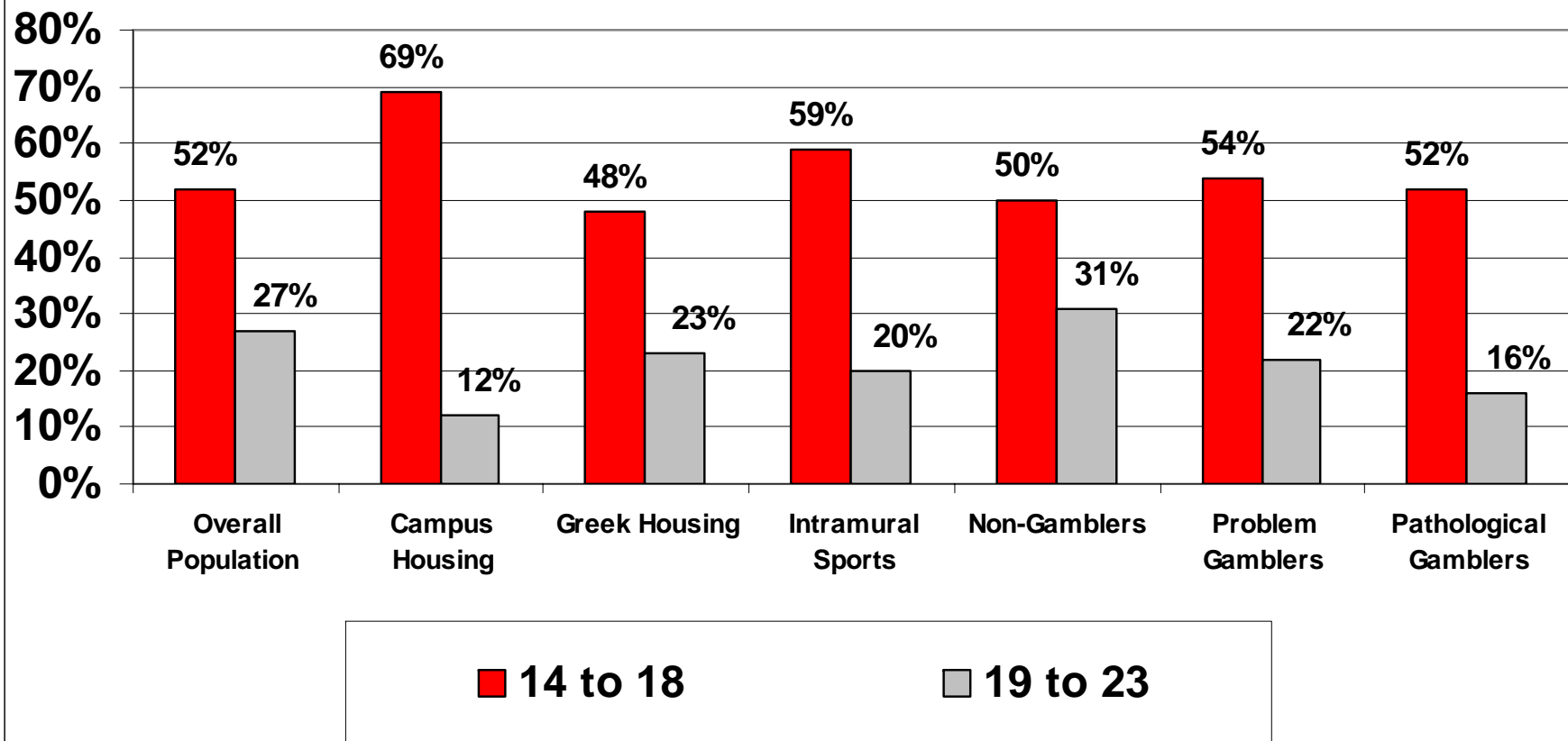
- **Students Living in Campus Housing**
- **Students Living in Greek Housing**
- **Students Who Participated in Intramural Sports in the Past Year**
- **Students Who Reported Themselves as “Non-Gamblers”**

SOGS Groups

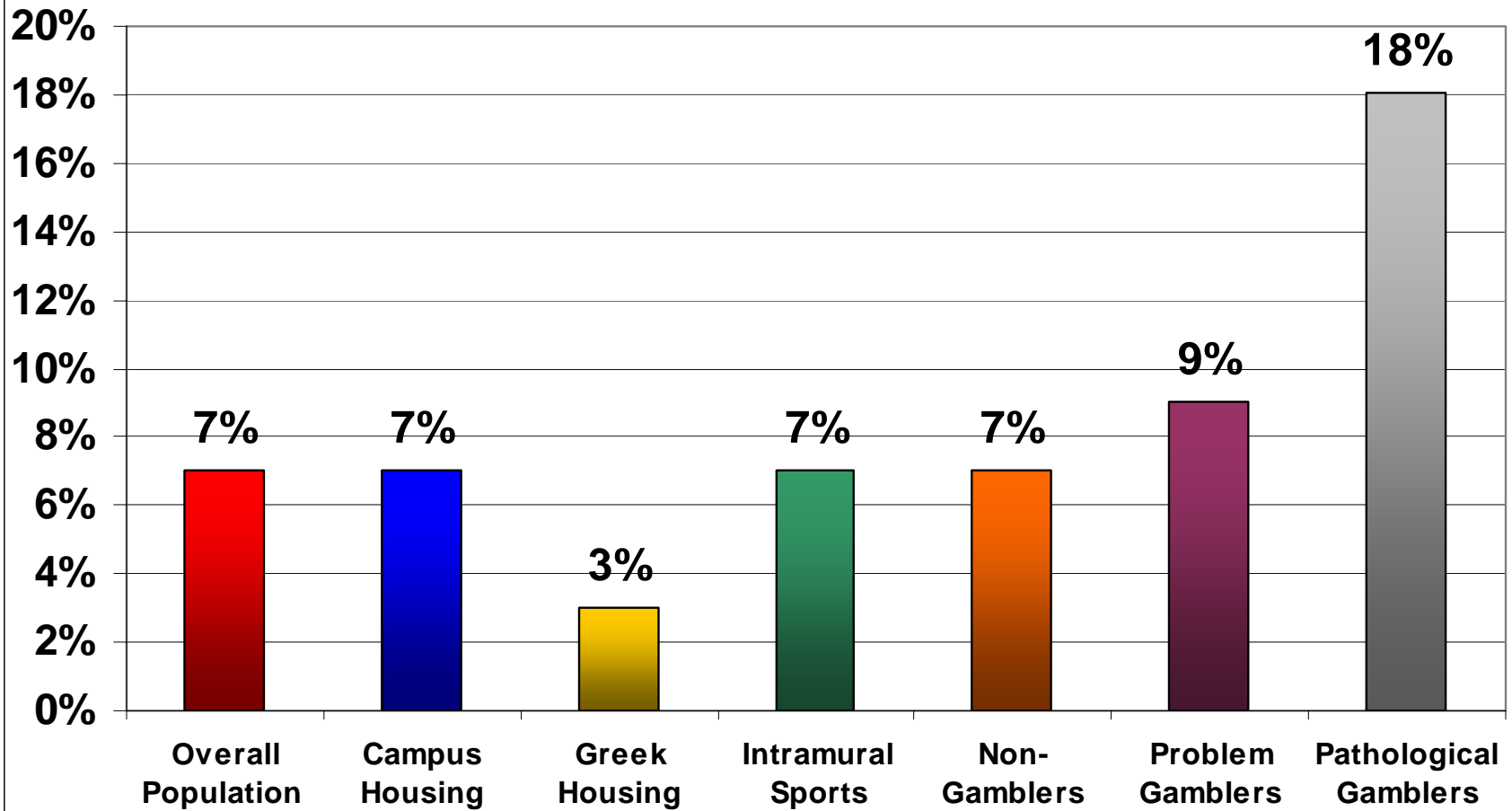
- **Problem Gamblers**
- **Pathological Gamblers**



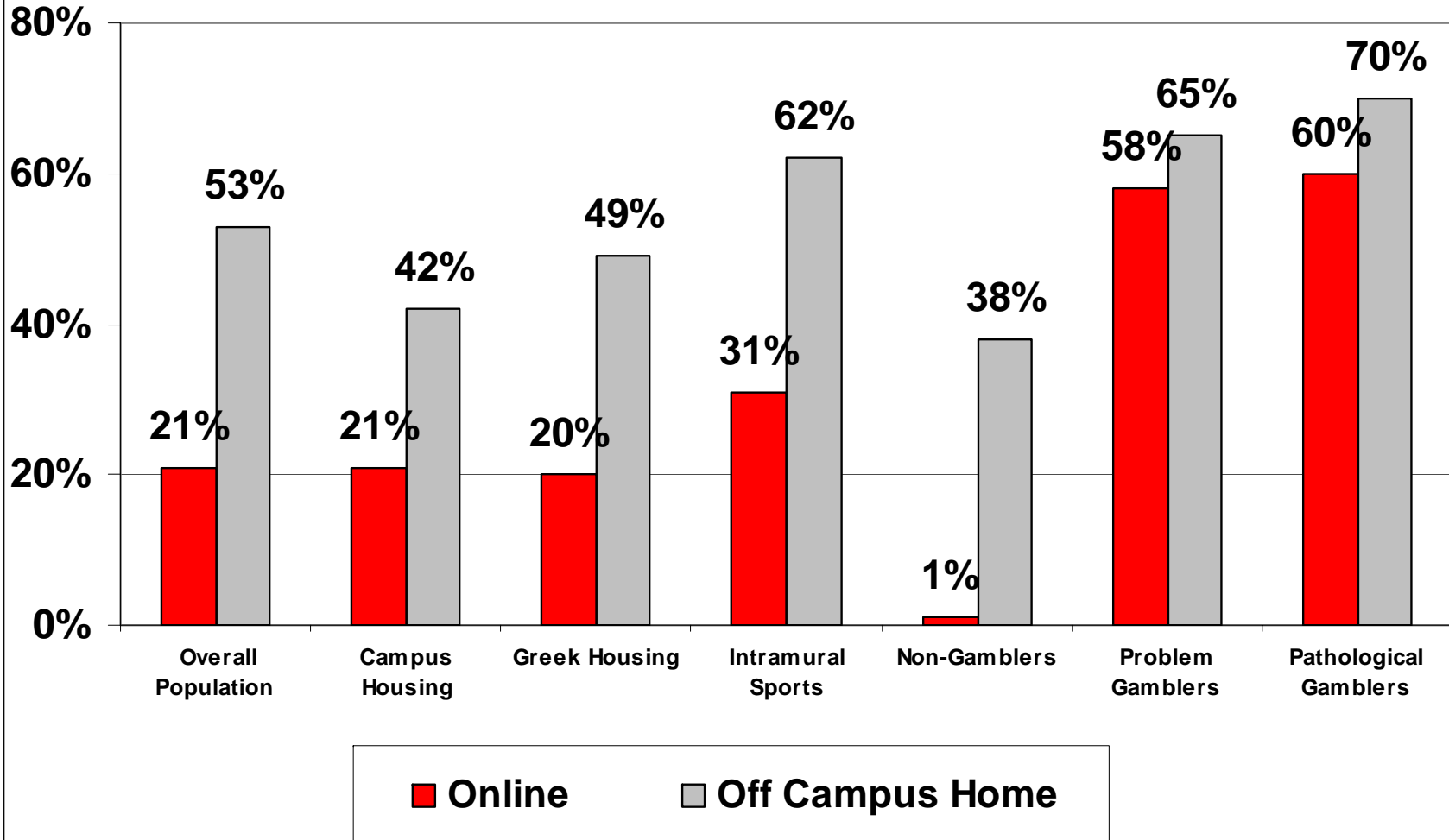
Age When First Gambled



"YES": Has Anyone In Your Family Ever Had a Gambling Problem?



Where Do You Gamble?



Individuals' Reasons For Gambling

Primary Reason Votes

	Win Money	It Is Fun
<i>Overall Population</i>	2 (31%)	1 (33%)
<i>Campus Housing</i>	2 (31%)	1 (34%)
Greek Housing	1 (30%)	2 (28%)
Intramural Sports	1 (35%)	2 (31%)
Non-Gamblers	1 (30%)	2 (27%)
Problem Gamblers	1 (54%)	2 (21%)
Pathological Gamblers	1 (44%)	2 (22%)

Student Perceptions of Gambling



Awareness of what “qualifies” as gambling

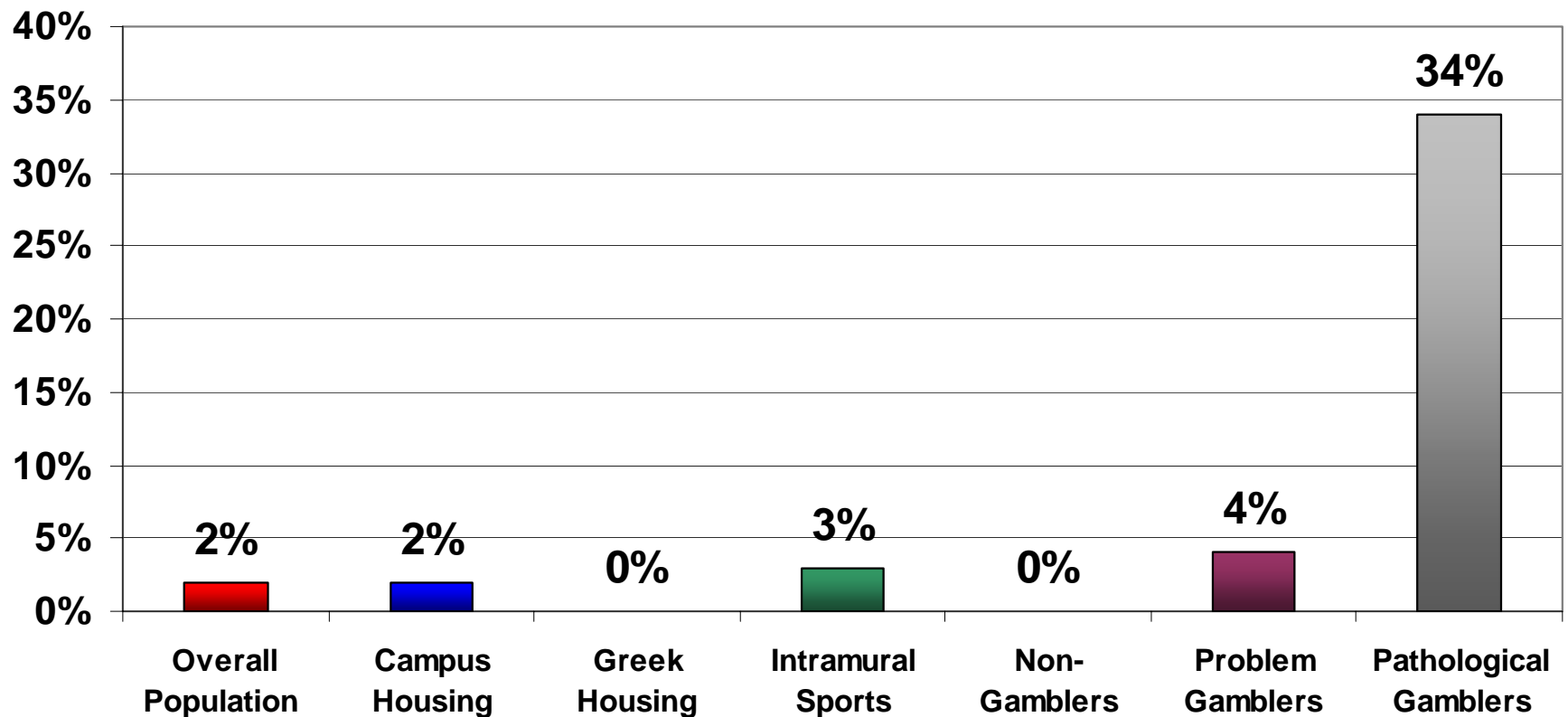
Self-realization of habits/behavior

Recognition of friends and peers

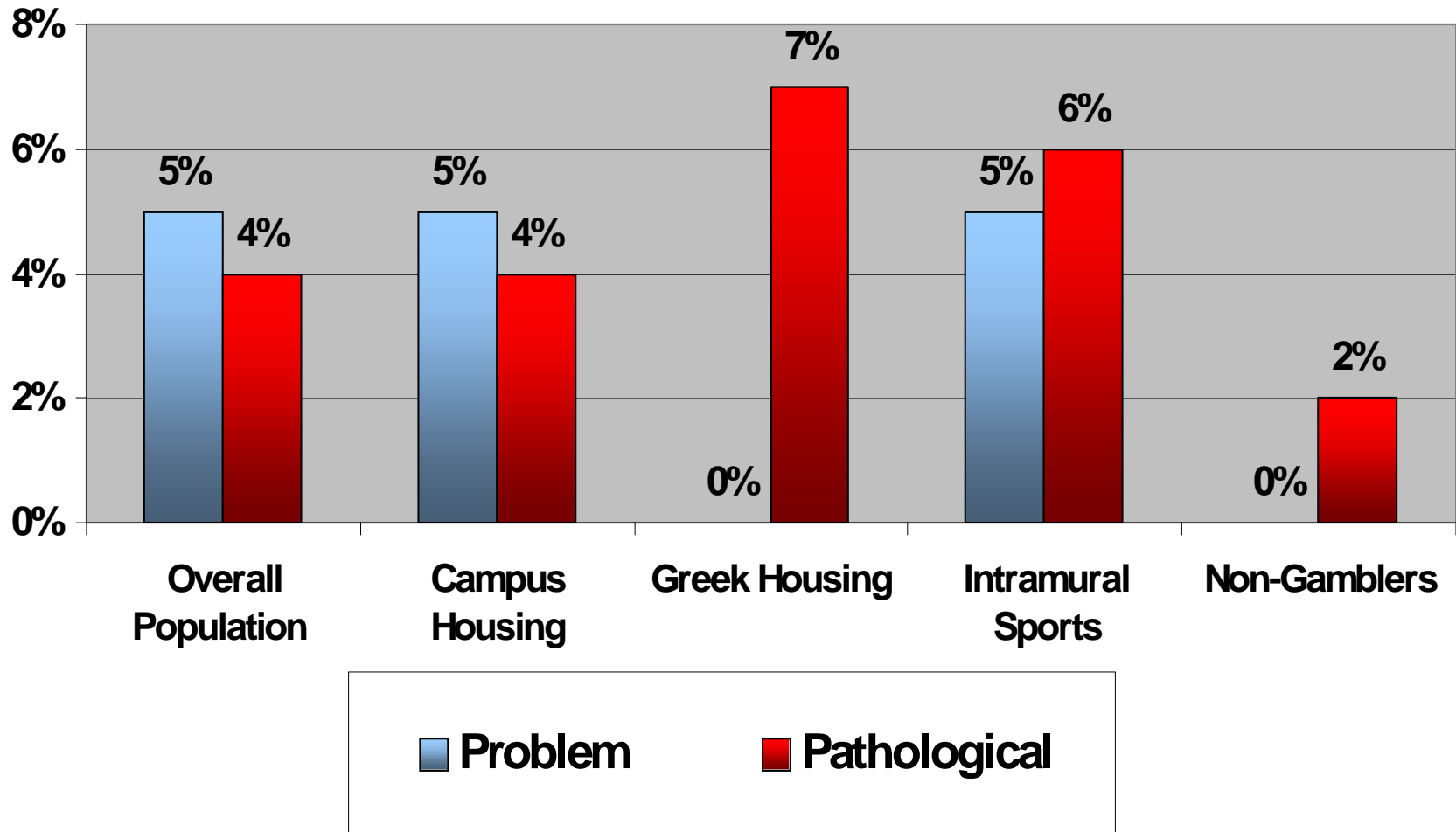
Does gambling make one a “gambler”?

South Oaks Gambling Screen: SOGS

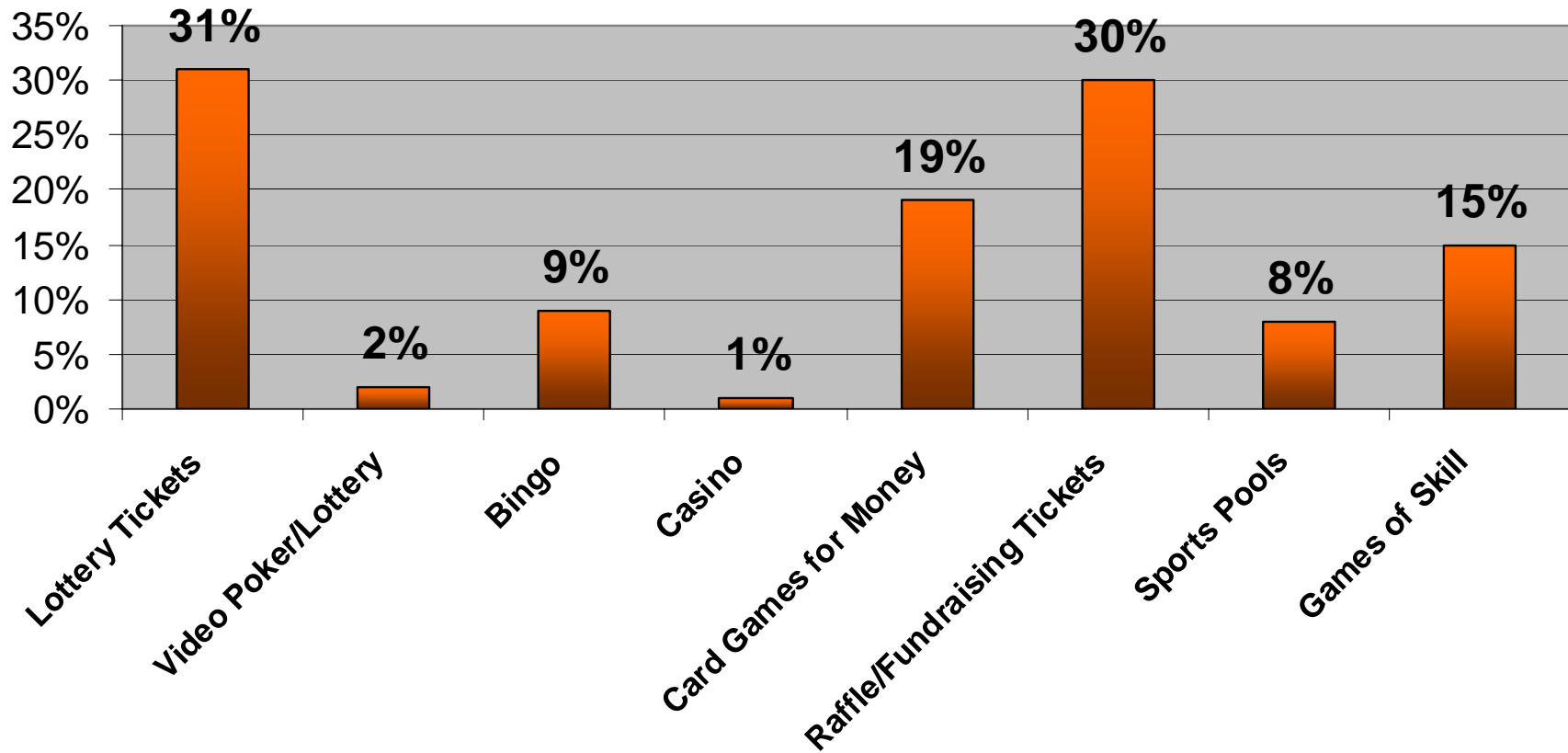
"Yes": I Had a Gambling Problem in the Past or I Currently Have a Gambling Problem



SOGS: Problem and Pathological Gamblers



Reported Participation in the Past Year Among "Non-Gamblers"



Setting Personal Guidelines

- 1. The decision to gamble is a personal choice.***
- 2. Gambling is not essential for having a good time.***
- 3. Establish an acceptable loss needs before starting to gamble.***
- 4. Borrowing money to gamble should be avoided and discouraged.***
- 5. There are times when people should not gamble.***
 - When under the legal gambling age*
 - When the gambling interferes with one's work or family responsibilities*
 - When in recovery from compulsive/pathological gambling. And, for many, when in recovery from chemical dependency or other addictions*
 - When in the early stages of recovery from other addictions such as chemical dependency*
 - When the form of gambling is illegal*
 - When the gambling is prohibited by an organizational or employer policy*
 - When trying to make up for a gambling loss or series of losses (chasing)*

6. There are certain high risk situations during which gambling should be avoided.

- When feeling lonely, angry, depressed or under stress.
- When coping with the death or loss of a loved one.
- When trying to solve any personal or family problems.
- When trying to impress others.



7. Use of alcohol or other drugs when gambling is risky.



“I am of the opinion that unless the common tendencies toward irresponsible conduct in college life are checked, parents will begin to doubt whether it is best to send their children to college. The older I grow the more deeply I feel that it is the duty of all people charged with any responsibility for the guidance of youth to cooperate with all others having any share in that responsibility, to the end that the young may make the most of themselves.”

*Anonymous College President
The School Review, 1899*

Discussion Issue:

“As legalized gambling continues to expand and become more socially acceptable, universities must begin to track the influence of gambling on broader student health issues.”

Engwall, 2004

- What responsibility does the university have regarding student-gambling?
- Would students and a university be best served through heightened educational programming, counseling efforts, or a ban of gambling activities from campus?
- What gambling policies currently exist on college campuses?