



LOST

How to suss the code, crack the hatch & get off the island

A student perspective on surviving the First Year Experience





Insights gleaned from the survivors



Janet von Randow

DELNA

by
the
'others'



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Structure of 'Lost' discussion



- Introduction to workshop topic
- DELNA screening
- FTVMS Four-year Snapshot Survey
- Discussion segments (with moving pictures)



Structure of 'Lost' discussion



Discussion topics

1) The crash survivors – who are our year one students?



2) Getting off the beach & finding shelter



3) Cracking the code



4) Survivor's tool kit



Structure of 'Lost' discussion



Discussion during the workshop:

Each group to construct a brief check list during the workshop following each discussion:

- 1) Key survival skills which influence academic success
- 2) Influences which impede academic progress or bring about academic failure

Each group to come up with ONE outstanding factor which in their experience influences:

- a) Academic success
- b) Academic failure





Found **(Floating in a bottle!)**

‘Trends in the First Year Experience In Australian Universities’ (2000) McInnis,C., James,R., Hartley,J. Centre for the Study of Higher Learning, University of Melbourne

‘The First Year Experience in Australian Universities: Findings from a Decade of National Studies (2005) Krause,K.,Hartley,J.,James,R.,McInnis C.

‘Managing Study and Work: the impact of full-time study and paid work on the undergraduate experience in Australian Universities’(2002)McInnis,C.,Hartley, J.

‘Serious Thoughts about dropping out in first year: Trends, patterns and implication for higher education’ (2005) Krause, Kerri-Lee.

‘Transition to and through the first year: Strategies to enhance the student experience’ (2006) Krause Kerri-Lee, University of Melbourne

Te whai i ngā taumata atakura: Supporting Māori achievement in bachelors degrees (June 2007), Earle, David. Ministry of Education. Wellington.



Lost

Engagement with the Island

Overall trends (McInnes study)

Less attachment and commitment to range of aspects of university life & academic work on the part of those that work longer hours in paid employment.

University study occupies a smaller proportion of a growing number of students' lives.

A slight decline in motivation to study.

Increase in the hours of paid work.

Less engagement with the university.

Richard James – Student patterns of (dis)engagement with study and campus life will grow more complex and diverse.



Lost

How do we know who is on the plane?

DELNA

Diagnostic English Language Needs Assessment

The Purpose of DELNA

- To diagnose the academic English language needs of new undergraduates
- To guide students to suitable academic English language enrichment
- To enhance chances of success



Lost

Assessing the key skills
of the passengers

Two-tier DELNA

The Screening – 30 minutes online

Vocabulary

Speed Reading

The Diagnosis – 2 hours

Listening

Reading

Writing



Lost **'FTVMS Snapshot Project'**

FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

To track first year FTVMS students' academic progress for a period of four years: from first semester of study to completion of undergraduate degree.

To investigate factors that impact on academic success; pre-entry qualifications, academic language proficiency, readiness for university study, attendance, study habits, paid employment, family and social commitments.

To investigate how teaching and support structures are accessed by the students throughout their years of study.



Lost

'FTVMS Snapshot Project'

FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Research results by category: 'Study, Work and Life' questionnaire

- Academic
- Online contact & services
- Paid Work
- Student Identity

Student interviews:

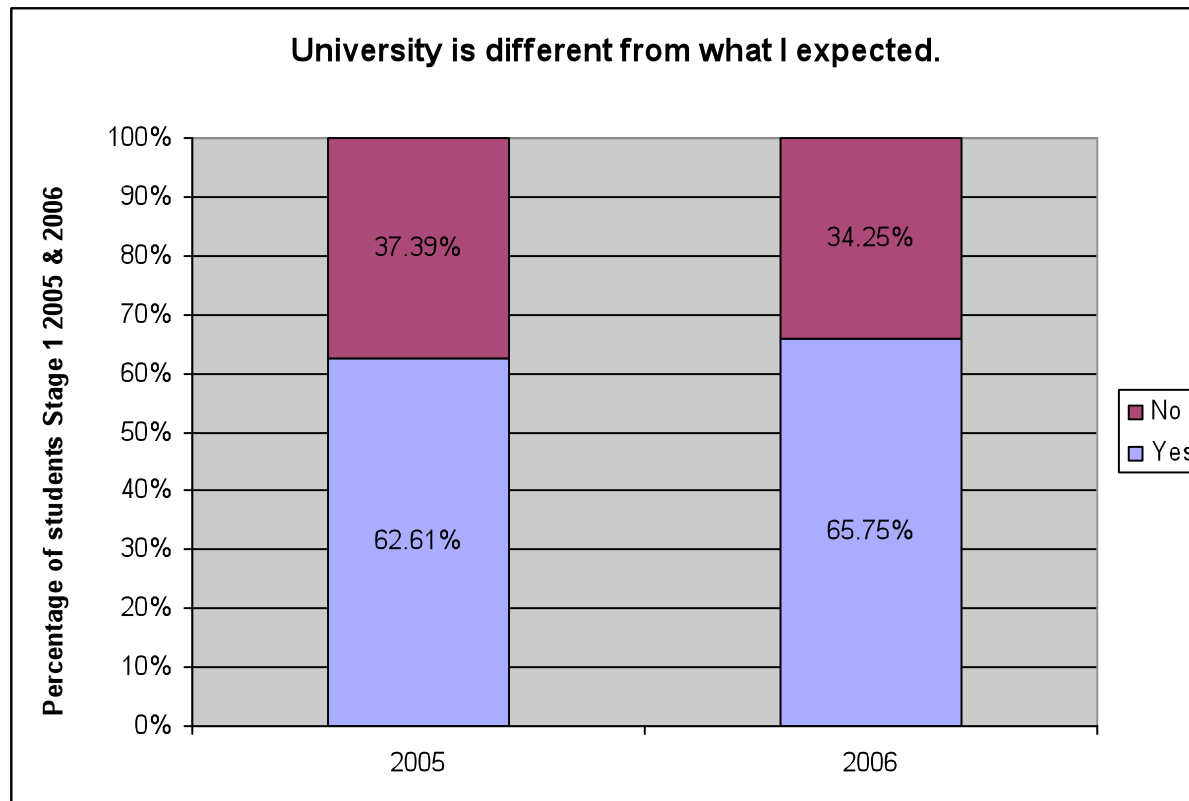
18 –20 students re-interviewed each year of their undergraduate degree (30 minute/end of year interview – Janet von Randow)



Lost Engagement with the Island

FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Academic: Stage I; 2005 & 2006

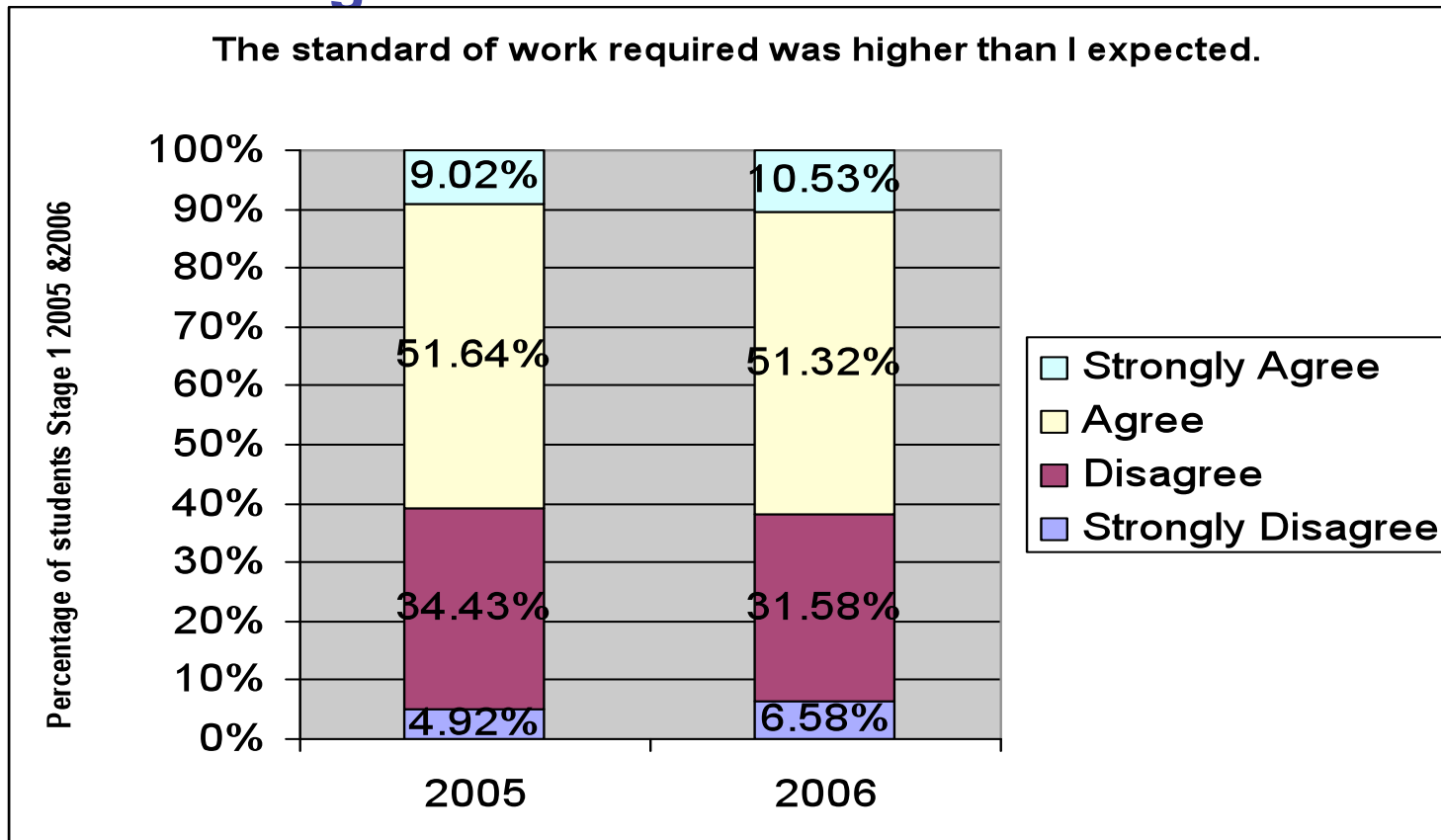




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FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Academic: Stage I

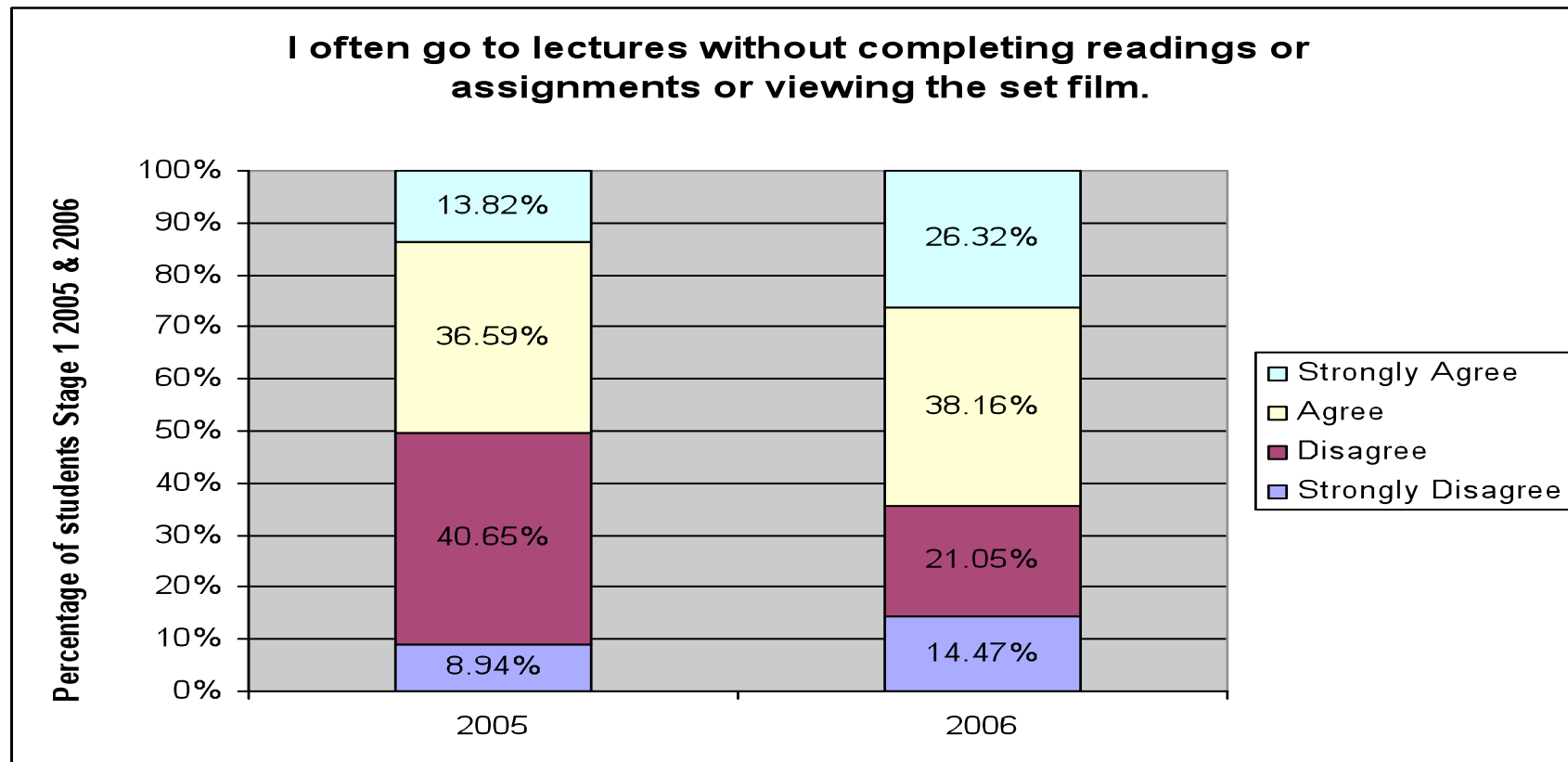




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Academic: Stage I

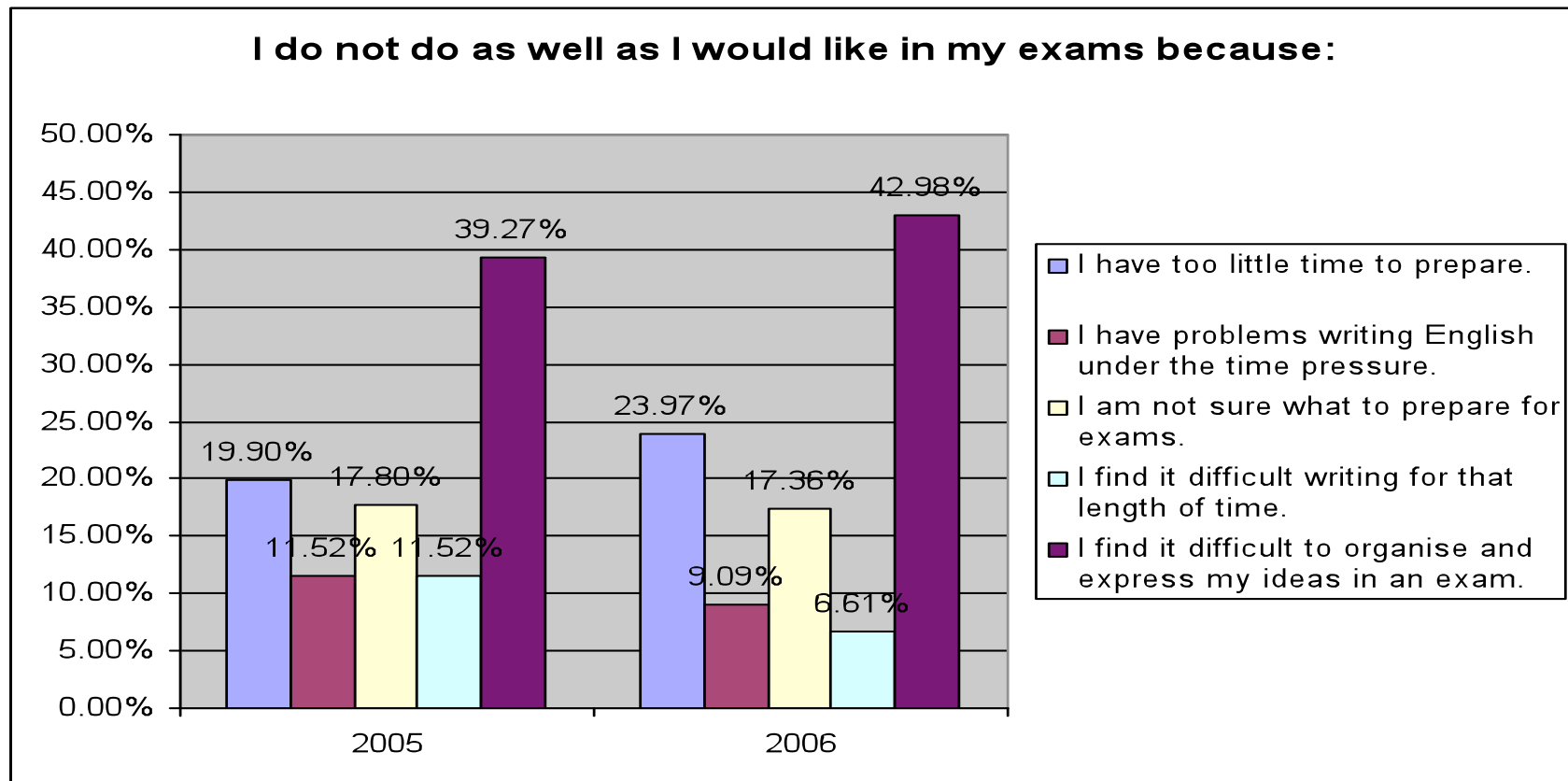




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FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Academic: Stage I

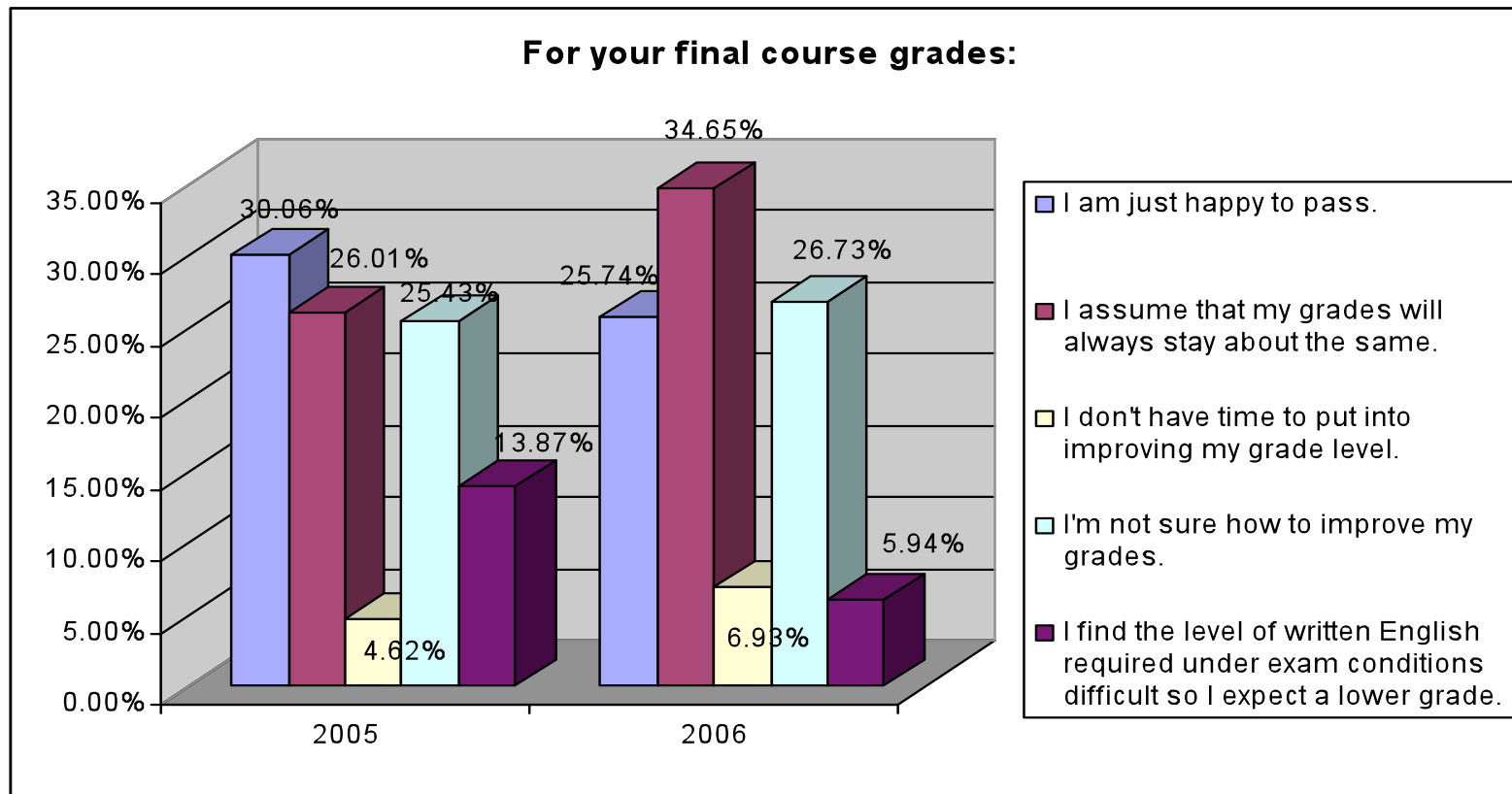




Lost Engagement with the Island

FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Academic: Stage I; 2005 & 2006

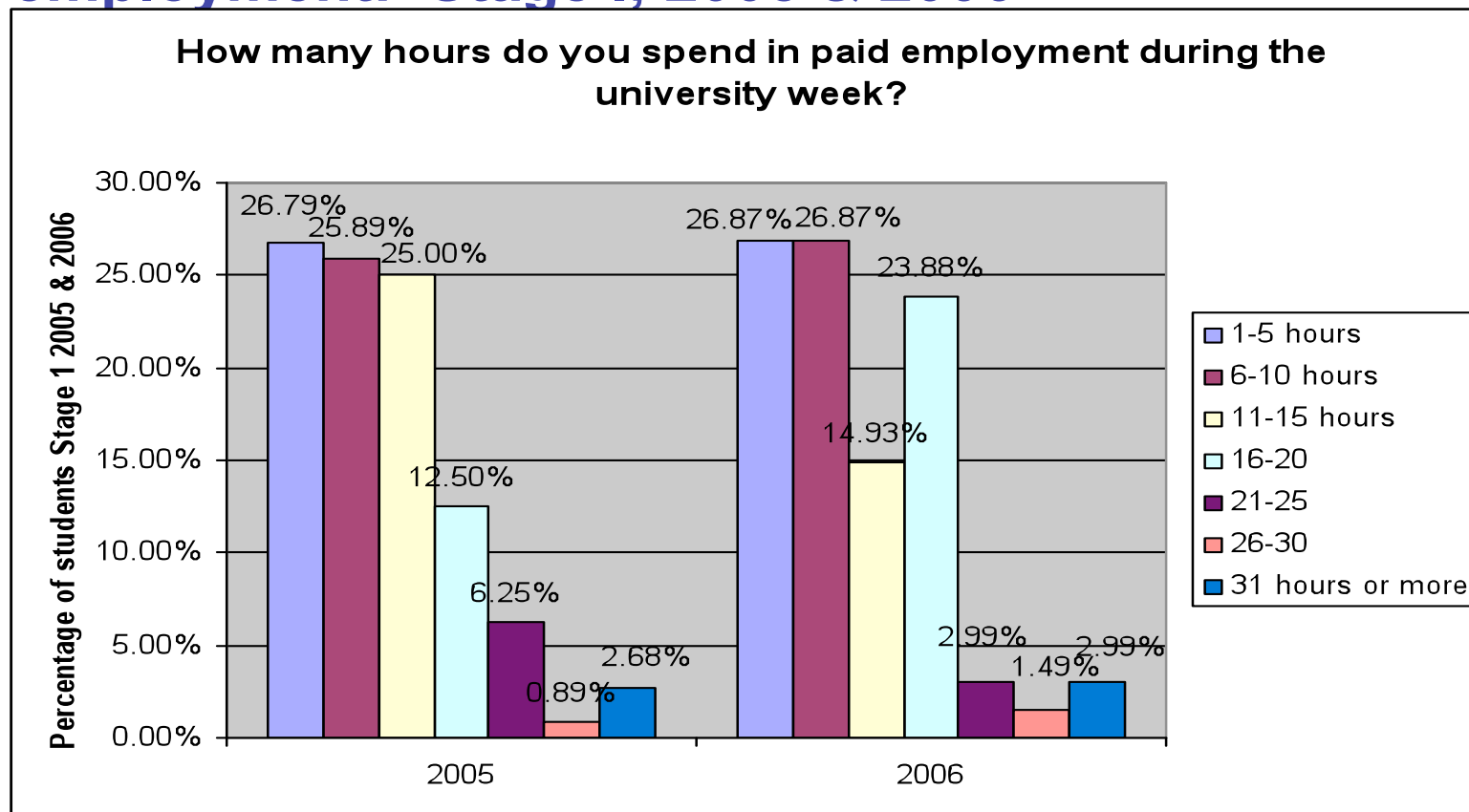




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FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Paid employment: Stage I; 2005 & 2006

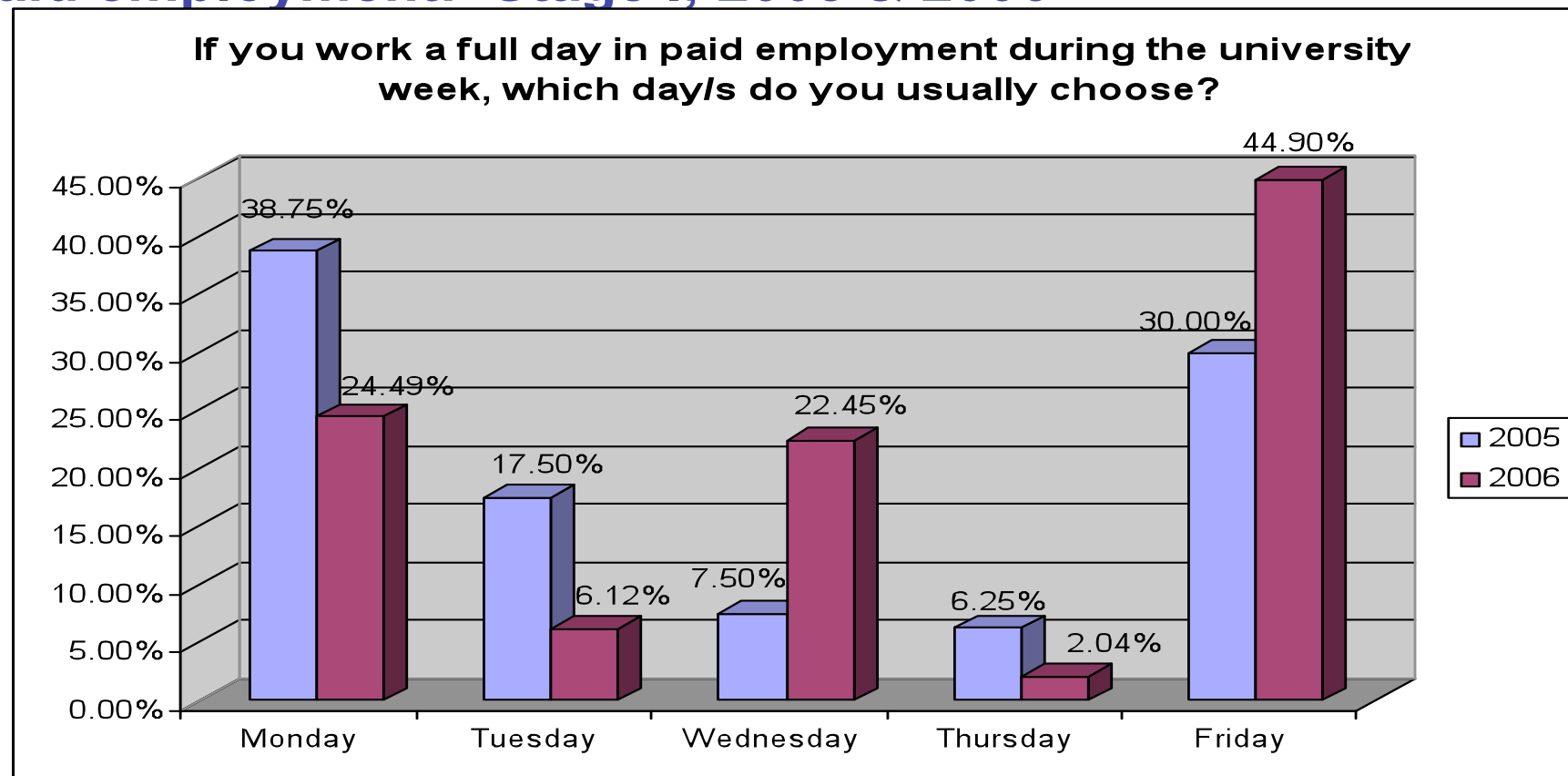




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FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Paid employment: Stage I; 2005 & 2006

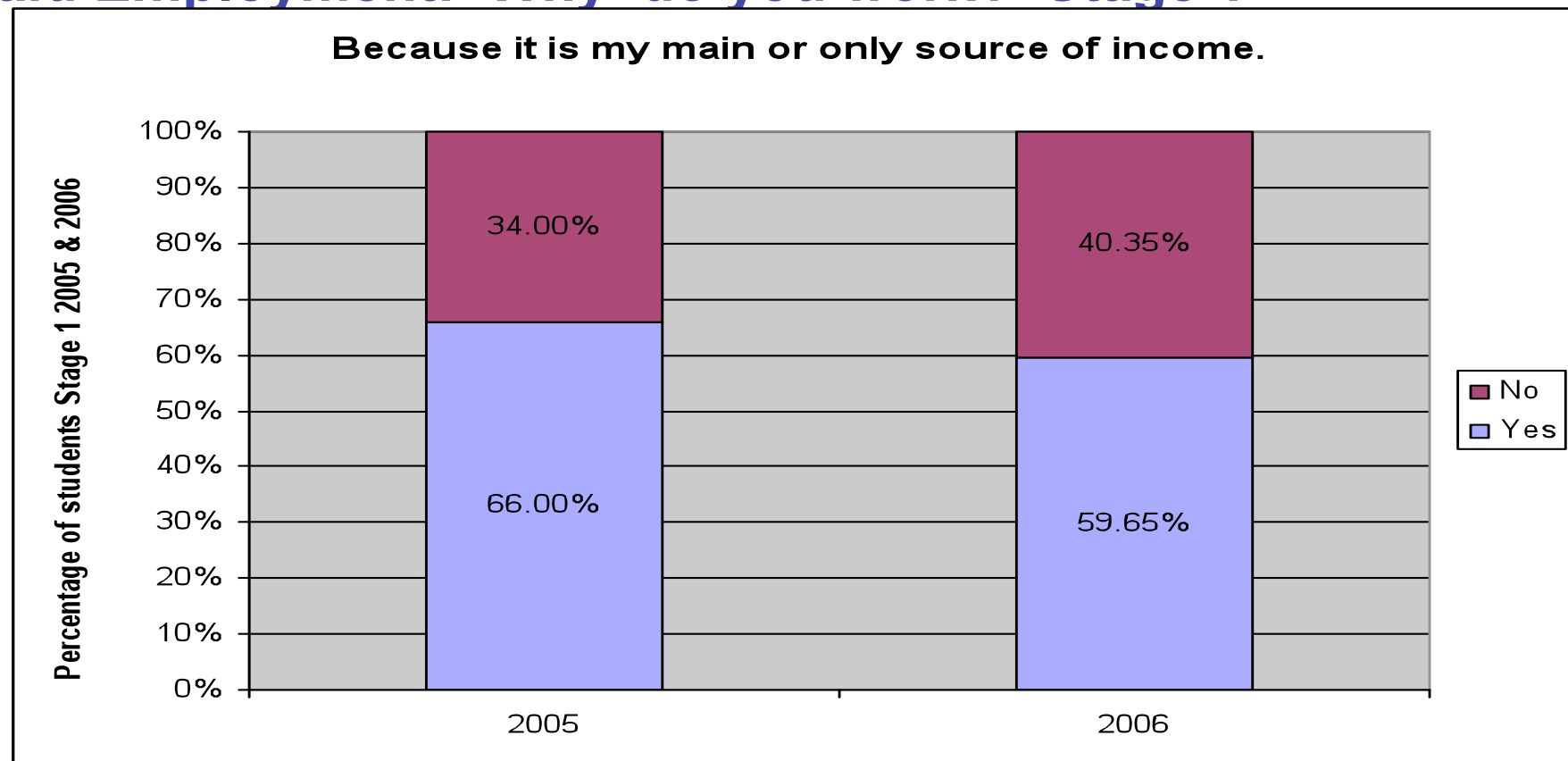




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FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Paid Employment: Why do you work? Stage 1

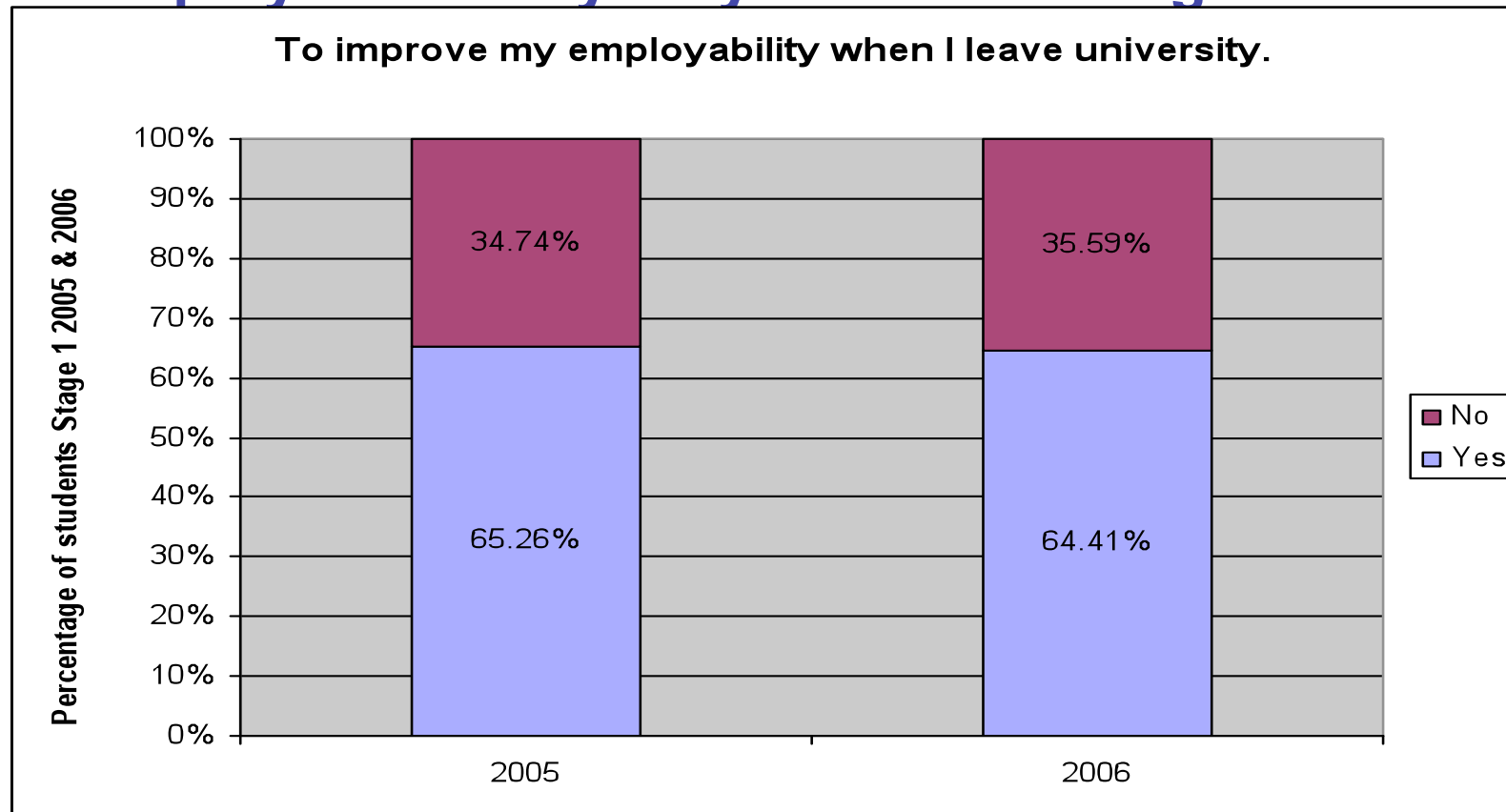




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FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Paid employment: Why do you work? Stage I





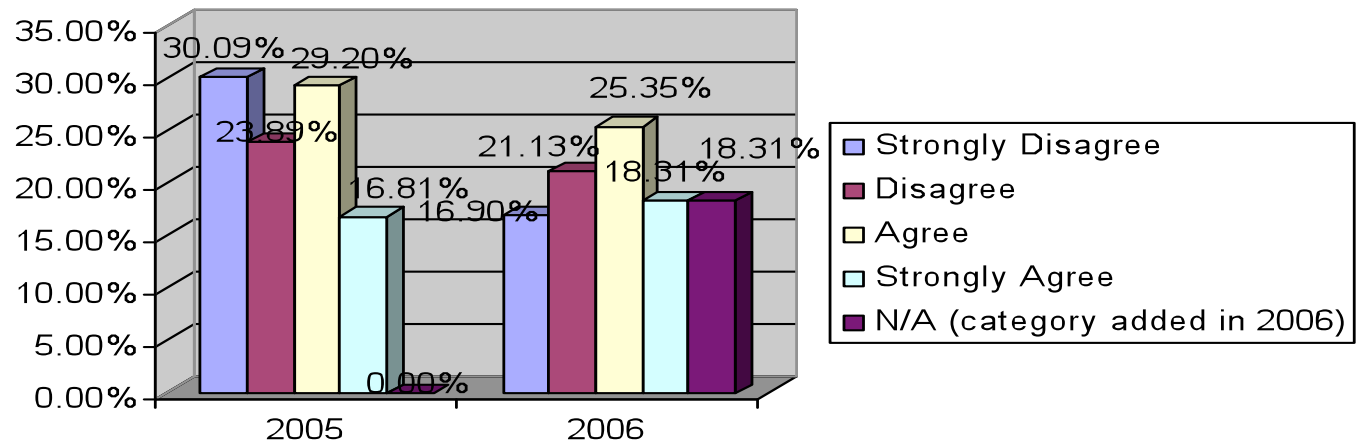
Lost Engagement with the Island

FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Paid employment: Stage I

Do you think the amount of paid work you do during the academic year has a direct influence on your grade level?

Percentage of students Stage 1
2005 & 2006





Lost Engagement with the Island

FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Paid employment: Stage I

Personal Interviews

Balancing work and university

“I come to uni 4 days a week and stuff like that. Yeah it does have a bit of an impact, like sometimes I get so tired...you know all I want to do it sleep.”

“Leading up to exams when I got a couple of marks back and I wasn't really happy I was going to get some time off but they weren't really keen...”

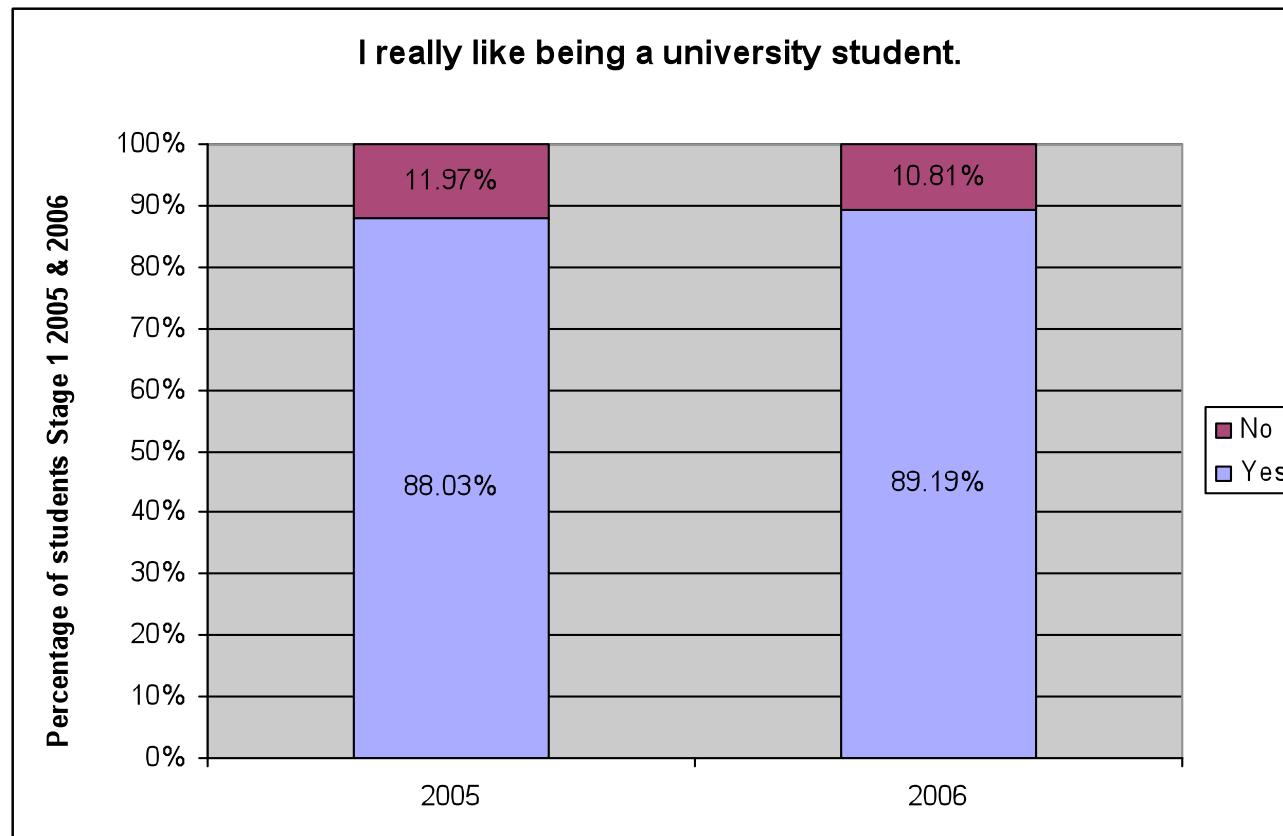
“I didn't work as hard as I could have, but that was because I was working 17 hours a week and 3 papers, so didn't have quite enough time to fit in all of the work I should have done for it.”



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FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Student Identity

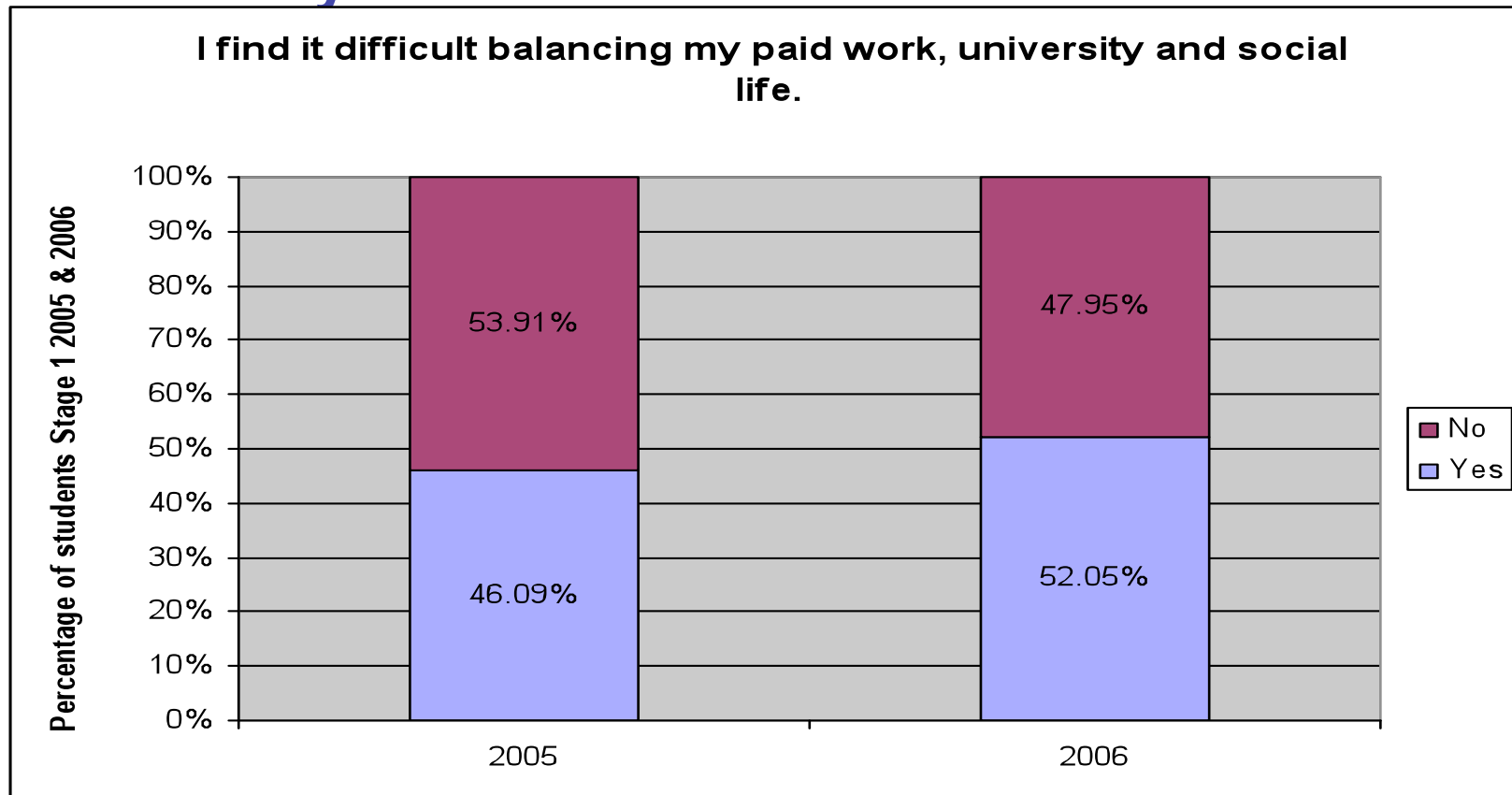




Lost Engagement with the Island

FTVMS Four-Year Snapshot Project

Student Identity



The Plane Crash or Arriving at University





Arrival on the Island

1) The Plane Crash : who are the survivors ?

In the majority of large Stage 1 programmes there is now a rich diversity of students. It is no longer possible to make blanket assumptions as to their academic proficiency, English language competency and the level at which individuals are able or willing to commit to their full time study.

What is the range of academic proficiency that now characterises an incoming student cohort?

What strategies are in place for recognising and systematically dealing with this diversity?

How can differing notions of engagement between teachers and learners be recognised and accommodated?





Getting off the Beach





Getting off the beach

The first 4-6 weeks are crucial to the survival of incoming students who are doing a crash course in adapting to their new learning environment and try to get their work/study/life balance sorted out.

What are the factors which enable some students to adapt rapidly and cause others to founder?

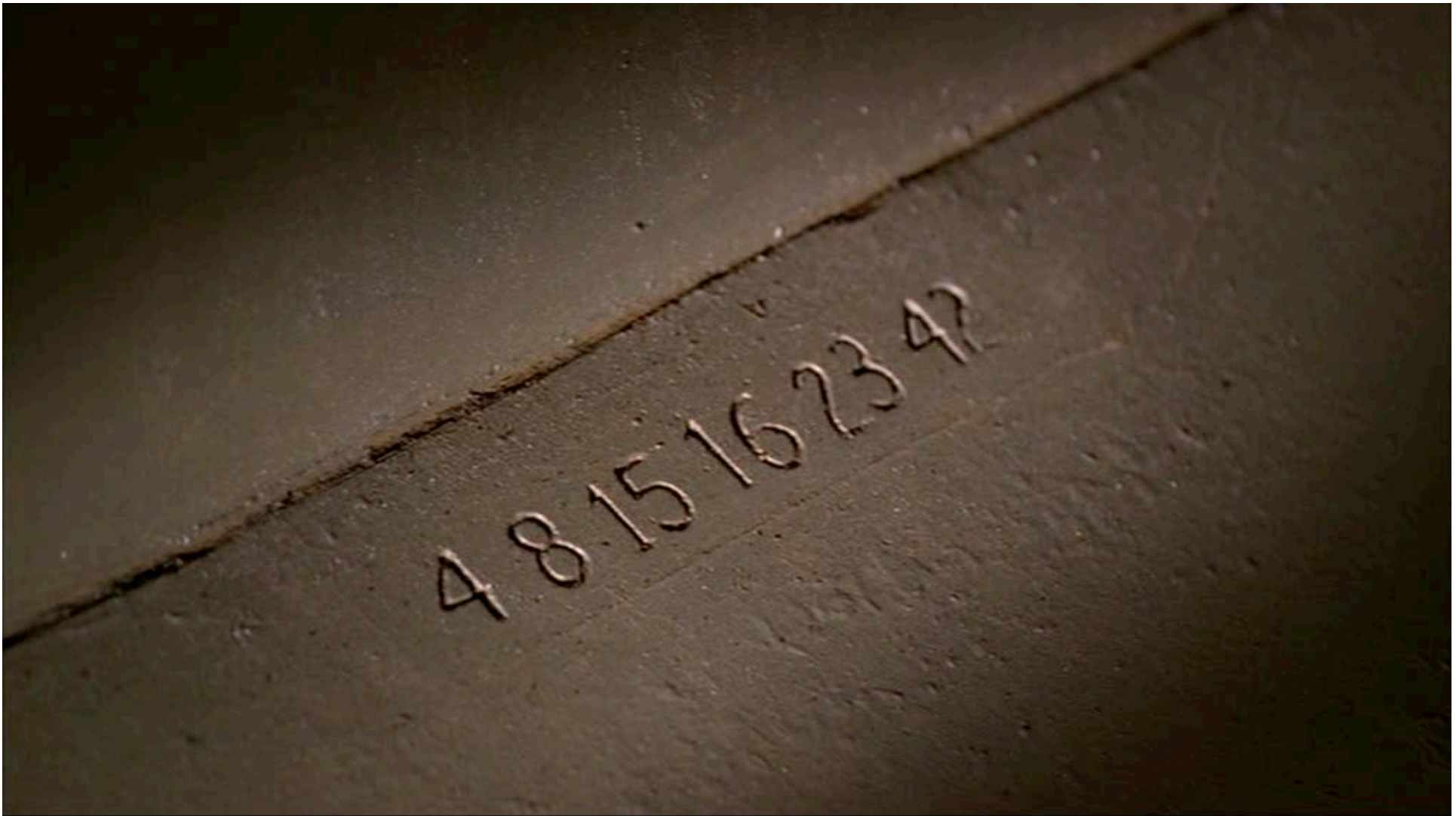
Is it the function of tertiary institutions and academics to accommodate these factors with an awareness of increasing difference represented by the incoming study body?

How much of the onus should fall on the student to adapt and survive or should the Island always provide?





Cracking the Code





Cracking the Code

The majority of students graduate through to their second year of tertiary study with more than just academic skills in their survival kit.

What are these skills?

What factors enabled these to be gathered or refined during their first year of study?





Survivors' debrief

Consider the two lists constructed during the workshop

- Key survival skills which influence academic success
- Influences which impede academic progress or bring about academic failure

Each group to come up with the outstanding factor which in their experience influences:

- a) Academic success
- b) Academic failure





Lost Survival Tips

Summary

Recommendations:

- **Semester 1, First Year, critical to set up administrative, teaching goals and embed learning structures.**
- **Provide explicit set of guidelines of course structure & expectations to incoming students – and stick to them.**
- **Discussion of workload vital in introductory weeks of Year 1 core courses.**
- **Discussion of GPA and Graduate profile integral to Stage 1 discourse.**
- **Discipline centred learning support needs to be clearly identified, integral to core teaching programme and never an optional ‘equity extra’.**
- **Implement teaching strategies which recognise the increasingly diverse range of language proficiency in both EAL & ESB students – particularly at Year 1.**
- **Students ‘disengagement’ with the physical campus needs to be considered in teaching strategies and not necessarily interpreted as a lack of commitment to their course of study.**

**‘The secret of the Island’
Find the hatch before week 4**

Spend the rest of the first year learning to crack the code





LOST



**Orientation week
Power Point presentation
To
Incoming First Year students
Faculty of Arts
University of Auckland**

**Margaret Henley
Department of Film, TV & Media Studies**





The crash site or Semester 1



DELNA

(Diagnostic English Language Needs Assessment)

- Complete your DELNA screening in the first two weeks of semester (usually completed in Week 1)
- Complete the follow up DELNA diagnosis if requested based on your screening results
- Make sure you understand what additional support you can get at the university to help develop your Academic skills. (ELSAC or SLC)
- Access the support on offer as early as possible
- Seek information about courses for credit which will help you with your academic writing skills





Cracking the code



In the first week:

Make sure you attend your first lecture

Read your course schedule carefully

Draw up your assessment timetable

Ensure you are enrolled in a tutorial/workshop

Enroll in Tuakana, Maori & Pacific Island tutorials or EAL tutes if these are offered and if they suit the way you wish to be supported to learn

Attend your first tutorial (usually start in 2nd week of semester)

Make sure you know the name of your tutor & their office hours

Make sure you know where the departmental offices are



Lectures



- Attending lectures is not compulsory but infrequent attendance = academic failure
- Be an active learner in lectures
- Just being in the room is not enough
- Select where you sit to assist your learning in lectures
- Develop your note taking skills
- Use the notes on CECIL to supplement your note taking
- Complete the required reading or viewing **BEFORE** the lecture
- Clarify anything you don't understand in a lecture with your tutor during a tutorial or an office hour





Tutorials



- Attending tutorials are not always compulsory but some departments have a course participation mark that includes tutorial attendance
- They are a place of active learning in which you are the main participant
- Complete the required reading or viewing
- BEFORE the tutorial
- Tutorials develop your debating and analytical skills
- Your tutor is your most important link to the department
- They are a place to meet friends



How you can get Lost



- Stop going to lectures
- Rarely attend tutorials or use tutor office hours
- Fail to hand in first assignment
- Spend too little time on campus engaged in research
- Spend too little time on campus
- Do not find a social group early in the semester



**SEEK HELP EARLY IN
THE SEMESTER
(before week 6)**



Survival Skills



-
- Factor in assessment requirements of each department
Eg. Turnitin online submission of essays
 - Do not expect your tutor to cover missed tutorial material in an office hour.
 - Contribute in tutorials
 - Meet deadlines
 - Recognise that it takes time to develop analytical skills and you need to take an active part in finding ways to do this.





Survival Skills



- Plan out your academic workload for the semester.
- Average Stg I course workload = 3 hours tuition
7 hrs prep/research/writing
- Factor in research and assignment writing time which may be considerably more than you have been used to at school (1/3 of Stage 1 students report that they find the standard of work required higher than they expected).
- Electronic resources are only ONE of the many options you have for research. Develop your skills using a range of resources & may use of the free workshops to help you with this eg. Library





Survival Skills



-
- Don't be a hero – ie. don't enrol in any more than 4 courses a semester, there's no need and why put yourself under that level of strain?
 - respect pre-requisites, they are there for a reason, to help build up skills and knowledge to give you a better chance of success once you get to Stage II, III etc so don't rush to get there too quickly and stumble on the journey
 - timetable clashes may be annoying, but there are usually always other options. If you get them waived/over-ridden it can reduce your chance of success
 - Check your degree plan at least once a year in the ASC to make sure you are not taking any unnecessary courses.
 - SEEK HELP and ask the right people as early in your degree as you can. The end of your Stage I year is a good time to recheck you are on the right track.



Factors which influence success



- **Consistent access to computer and internet services**
- **A quiet study space - preferably where you live which you have some control over**
- **Less than 12.5 hours of paid employment per week**
- **Ability to meet deadlines**
- **high level of contact on campus per week**
- **Talking with classmates about your courses**
- **A study/work/ life balance that is able to be maintained throughout the semester**



**Good luck
and remember that your
GPA really matters**



The higher your Grade Point Average the more options you are giving yourself:

- To get accepted into limited entry courses
- To undertake graduate study
- To qualify for scholarships
- For more challenging employment opportunities

And find where you belong on your First Year Island

