

Some Observations Relative to Entering First Year Students Majoring in Animal Science

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Introduction

- Assumptions are that lesson content, lesson format, and method of delivery need to be suitably structured in order to maximize learning
- If this is true, then in an ideal world, university instructors should have an appreciation for the general make-up of the students in various courses in order for lessons to be delivered effectively

Introduction

- Two trends have been noticeable in our Department of Animal Science over the past several years:
- (1) Fewer students from traditional agricultural (farm) situations
- (2) Higher proportion of females than males in recent years

Introduction

- Do the trends observed influence the animal species preference exhibited by entering students?
- Do the trends observed influence the depth of knowledge exhibited by entering students

Objectives

- (1) Track the gender make-up of entering first year animal science students
- (2) Get an idea of their preferred animal species of study
- (3) Evaluate their depth of knowledge relative to certain production practices

Method

- Conducted each Fall semester over 12 years
- Students completed questionnaire during the first session of the Introduction to Animal Science course
- Students completed the same questionnaire during the last class session of the semester

Method

- Questionnaires asked students to:
- (1) Select their animal species of preference from a list of 10 provided
- (2) Respond to 10 items designed to evaluate their knowledge of production animal agriculture

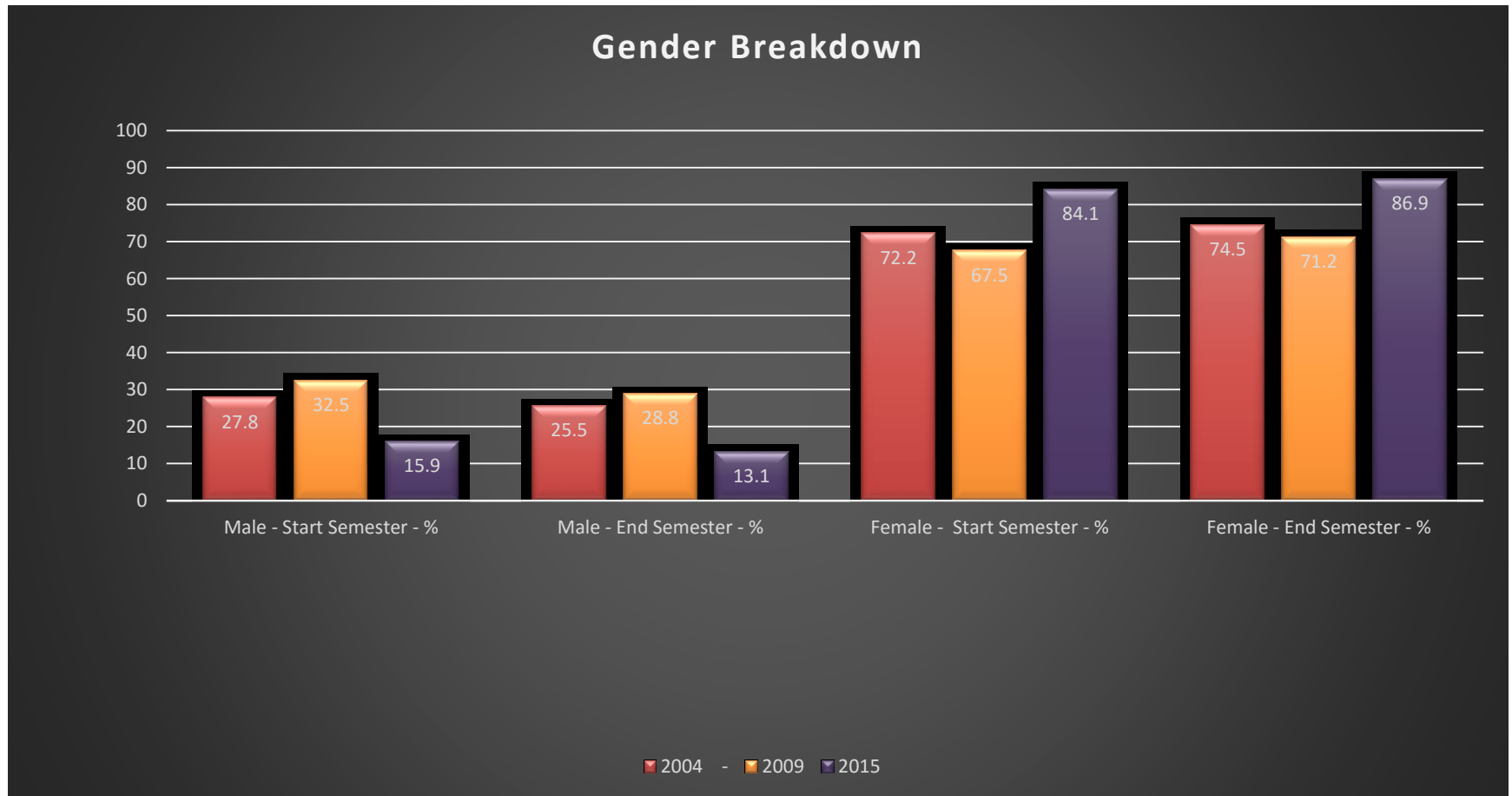
Instructions

- Provide the requested information. If you do not know the information, respond “I do not know”
- Your responses will not affect your grade in this course

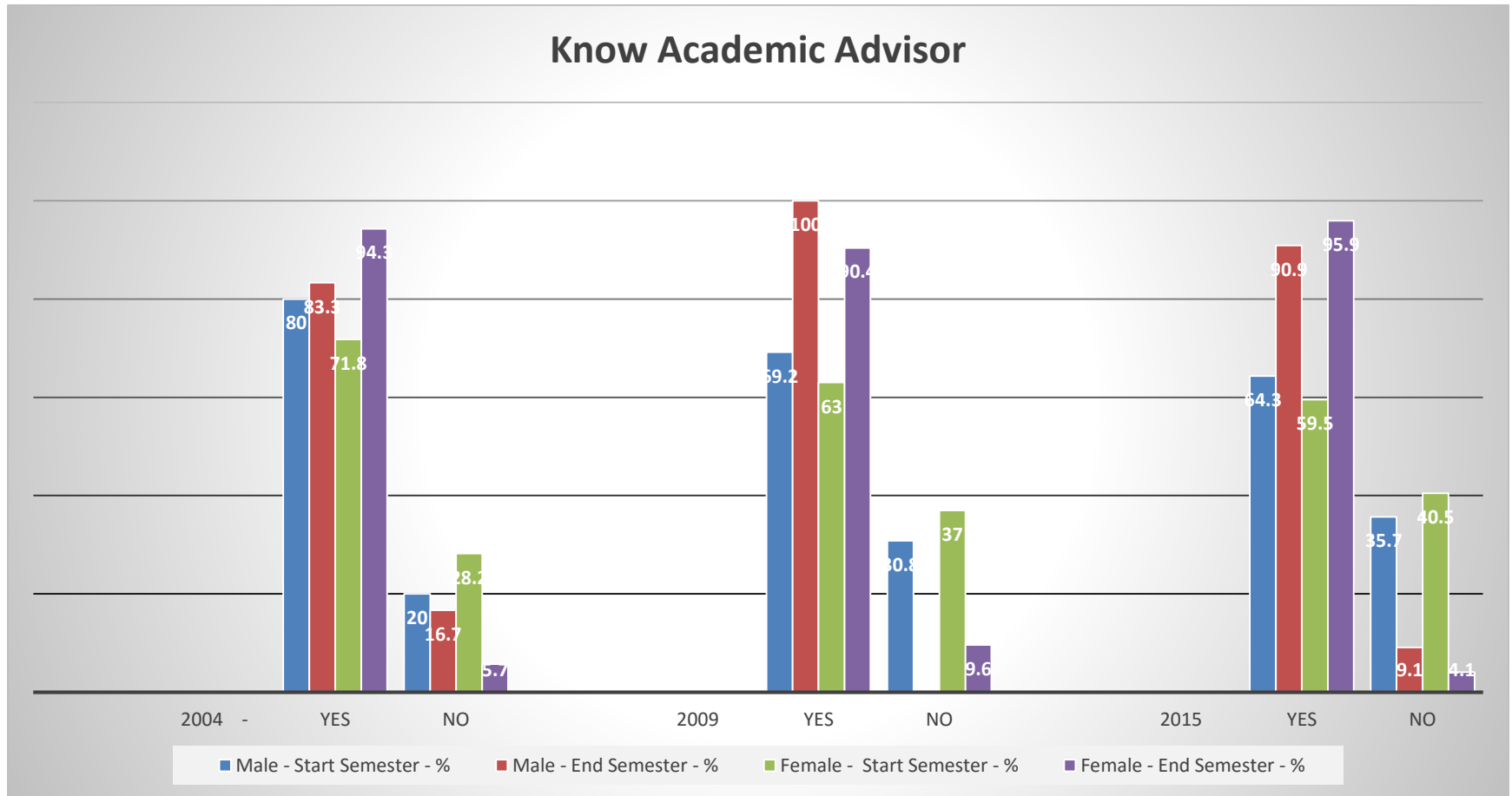
Requested Information

- Gender
- Major
- Name of academic advisor
- Anticipated occupation (employment) after graduation

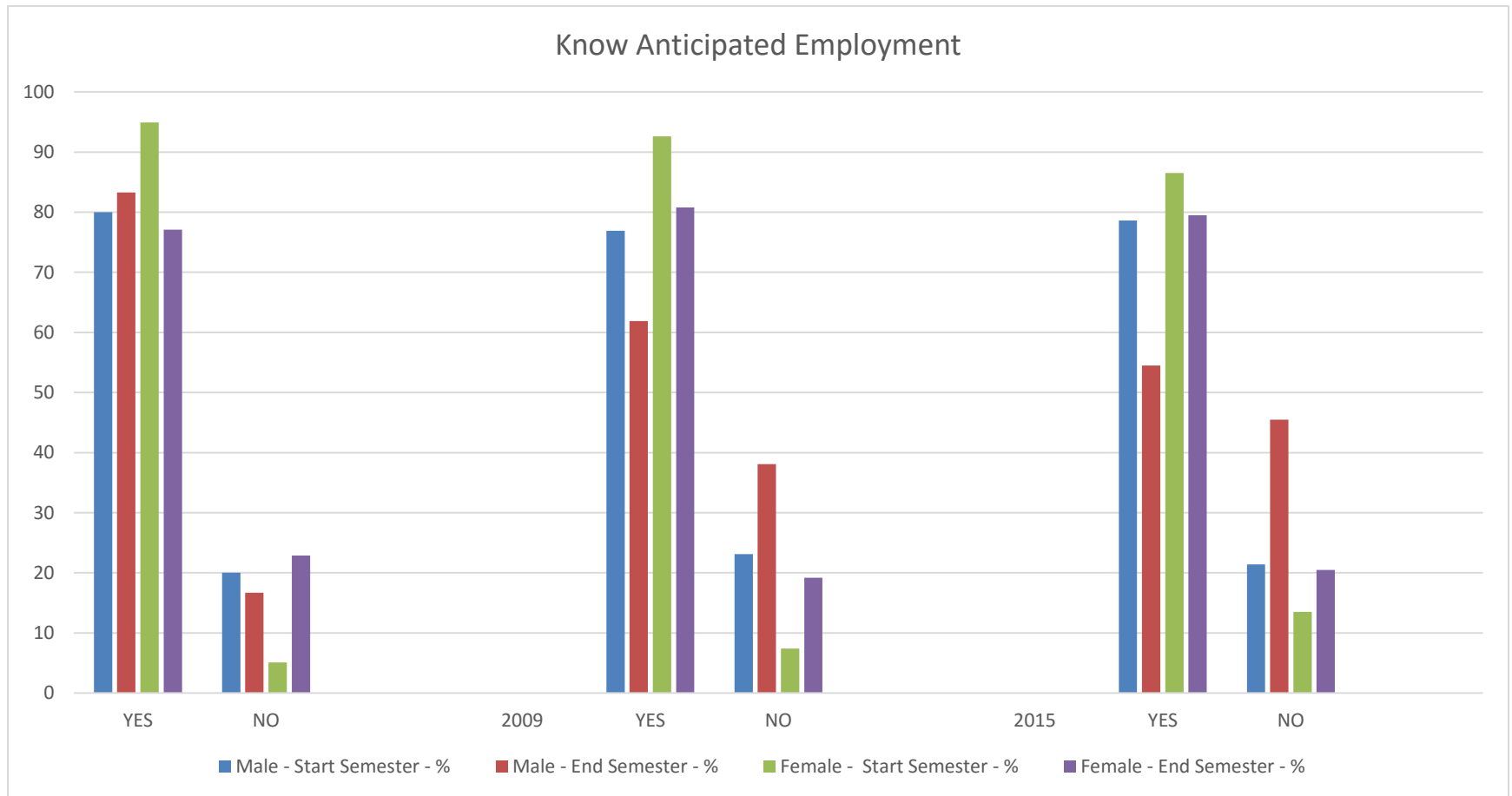
Proportion of Male:Female



Know Academic Advisor



Have an Idea of Post-graduation Employment



Species Preference Instructions

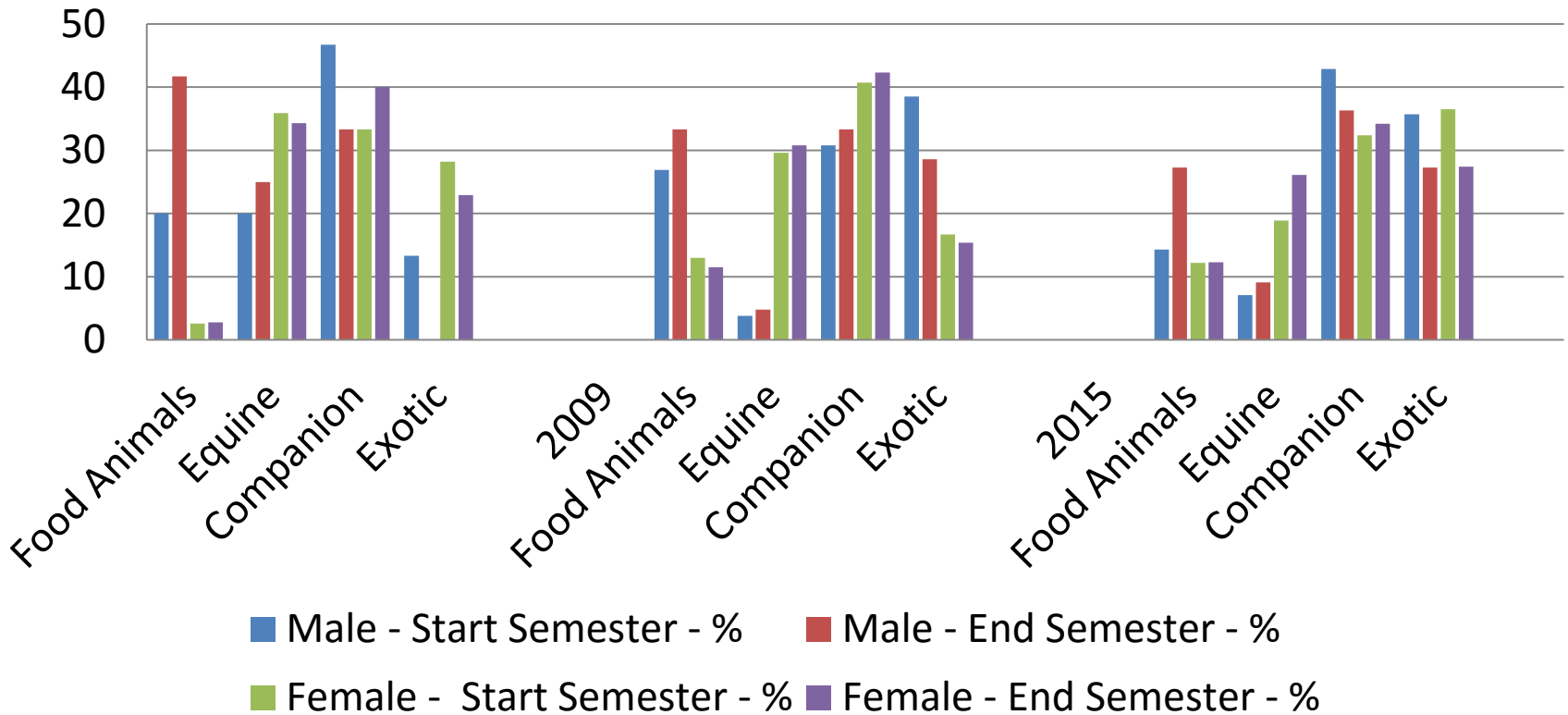
- Rank the animal species listed in your order of interest (1 = most preferred; 10 = least preferred)

Species of interest

- Beef cattle
- Dairy cattle
- Poultry
- Pigs
- Sheep
- Horses
- Companion animals
- Exotic animals
- Pet birds
- Other _____

Species Preference

Species Preference



Production Questions Instructions

- Answer each of the following questions. Do not leave any blank. If you do not know the answer, provide your best guess.

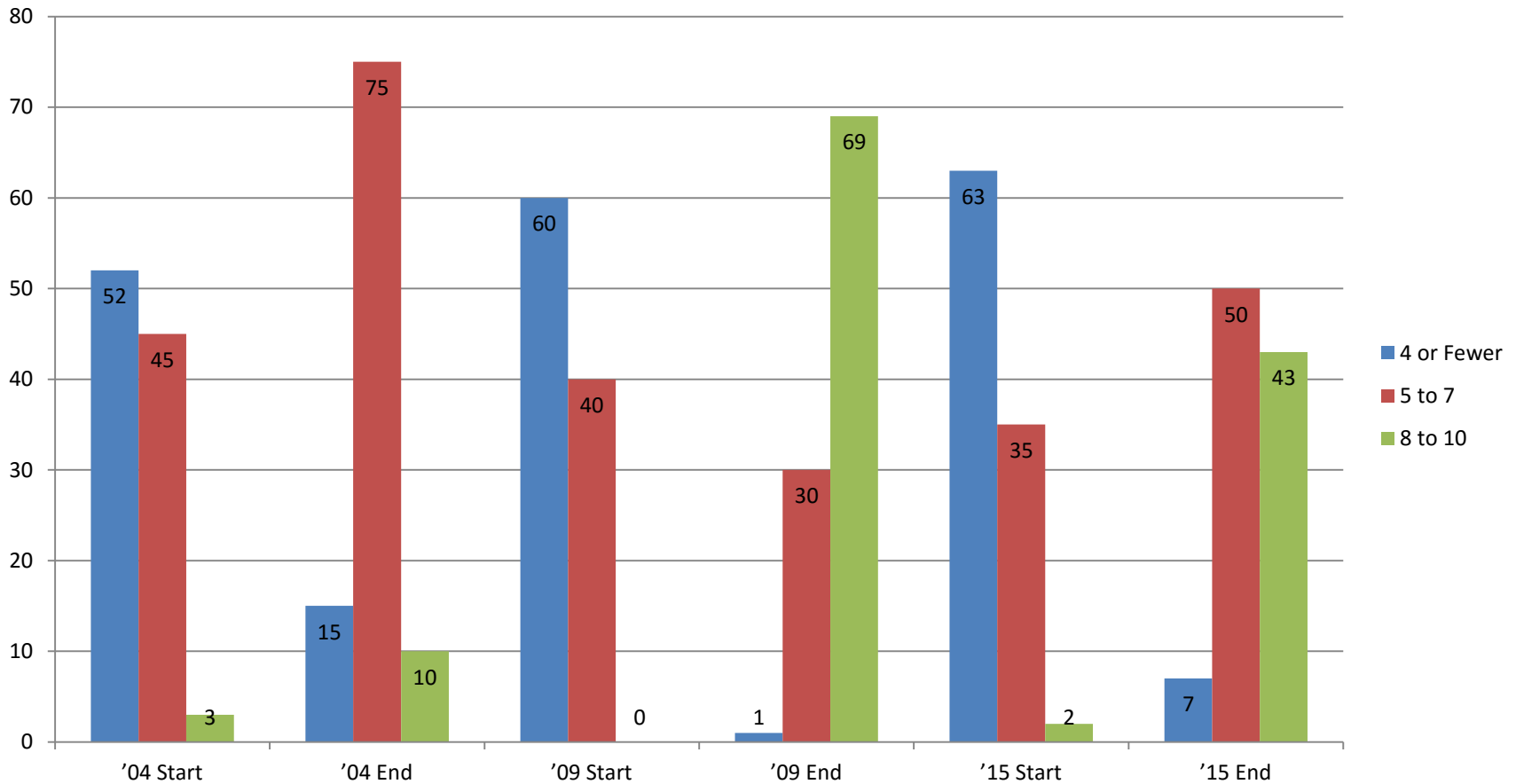
Questions Related to Animal Production

- What is the gestation period for a cow?
- The act of removing the testes is referred to as?
- The incubation period for chicken eggs is (days)?
- From what part of the pork carcass is bacon derived?
- Milk is a rich source of which mineral?
- From which animal is the wool most commonly used in clothing derived?

Questions Related to Animal Production

- What is the meaning of the term “offal”?
- Which state in the U.S has the largest number of horses?
- Currently, per capita consumption is highest for which meat product (beef, pork, poultry)?
- Give a common example of an animal classified as a ‘bovine’.

Correct Response to 10 Production Questions at Start and End of Semester (%)



Summary Observations Over Time

- Class size increase
- Ratio of male:female decrease
- Students more aware of identity of individual academic advisor
- Entering male students appear to be more aware of the identity of individual academic advisor

Summary Observations, Cont'd

- At start of semester, most students convinced they know prospective employment
- At end of semester, number who undecided on employment prospects increase
- May indicate a willingness to be more open-minded

Summary Observations Cont'd

- Males tended to exhibit preference for food animals when compared to females
- Male preference for food animals tended to increase by end of semester
- Overall high interest in non-food (exotic and companion) animals

Summary Observations Cont'd

- Fluctuation in knowledge of basic production questions
- Increased knowledge at end of semester compared to beginning