# Assessing Preferences for Collections Access

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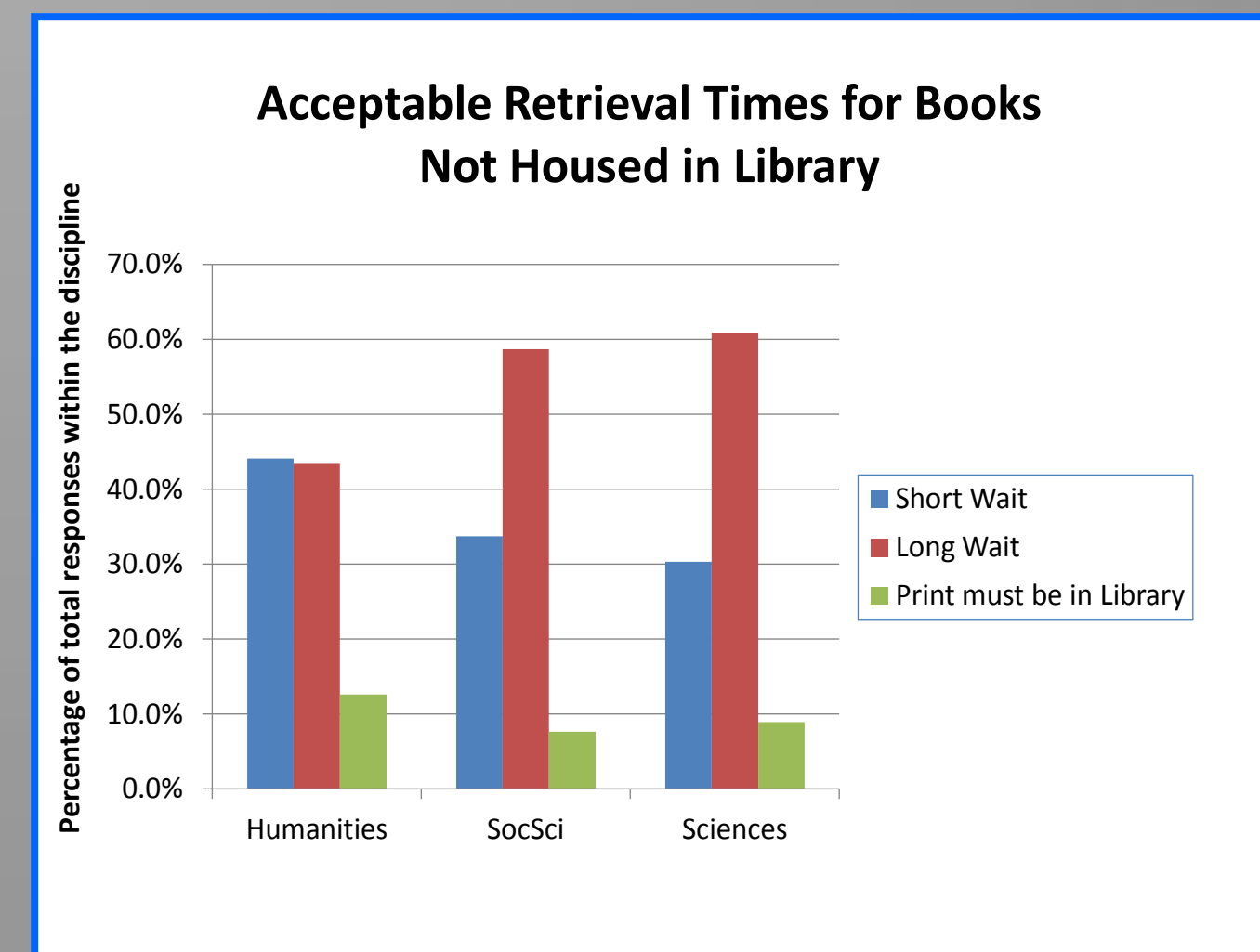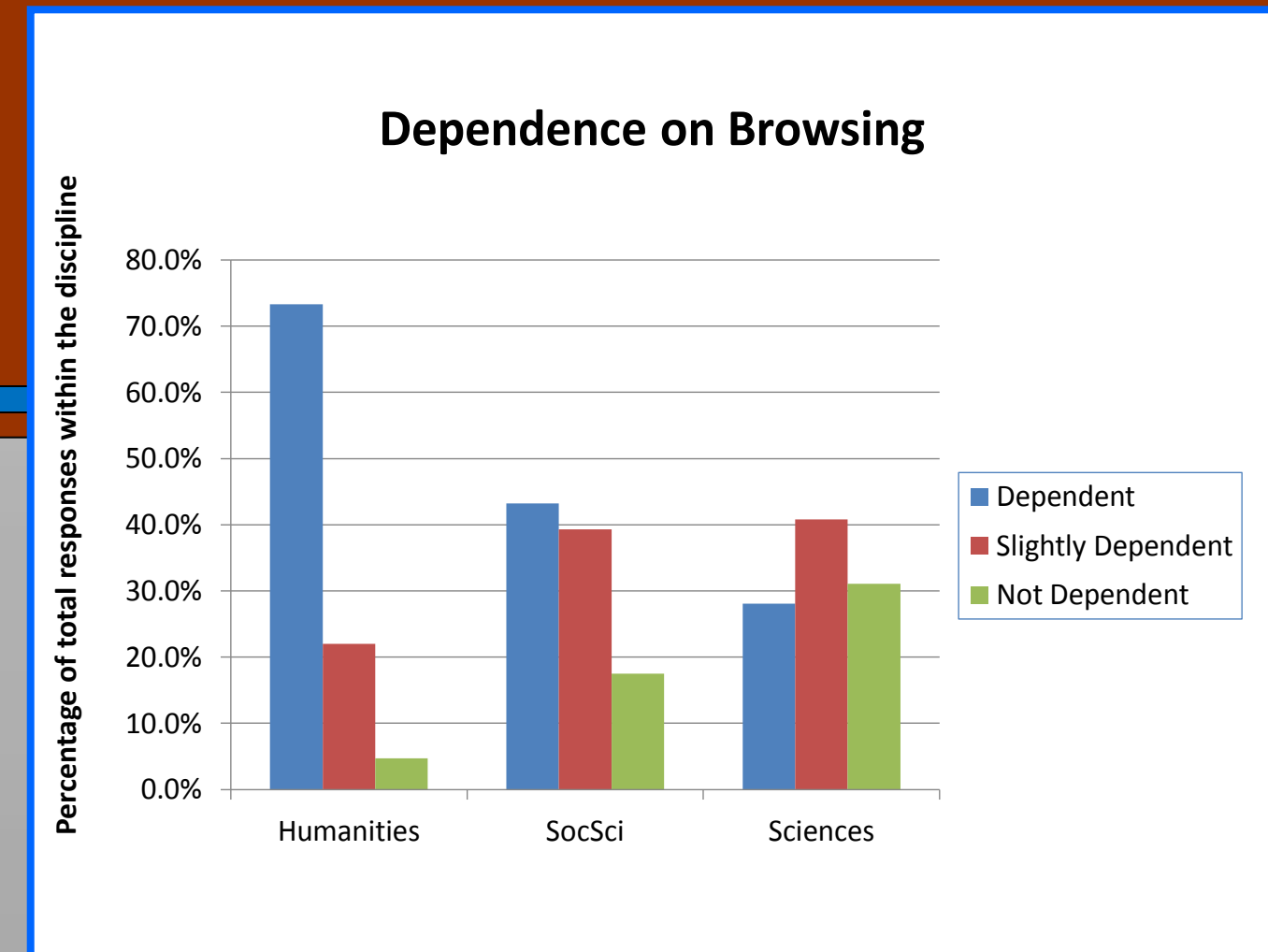
## Introduction

**The challenge:**
Due to seismic retrofitting, permanently reduce the collection of 700,000 volumes in the central tower within one year.

**The assessment:**
A survey of faculty and graduate students to determine collection access behaviors and preferences.
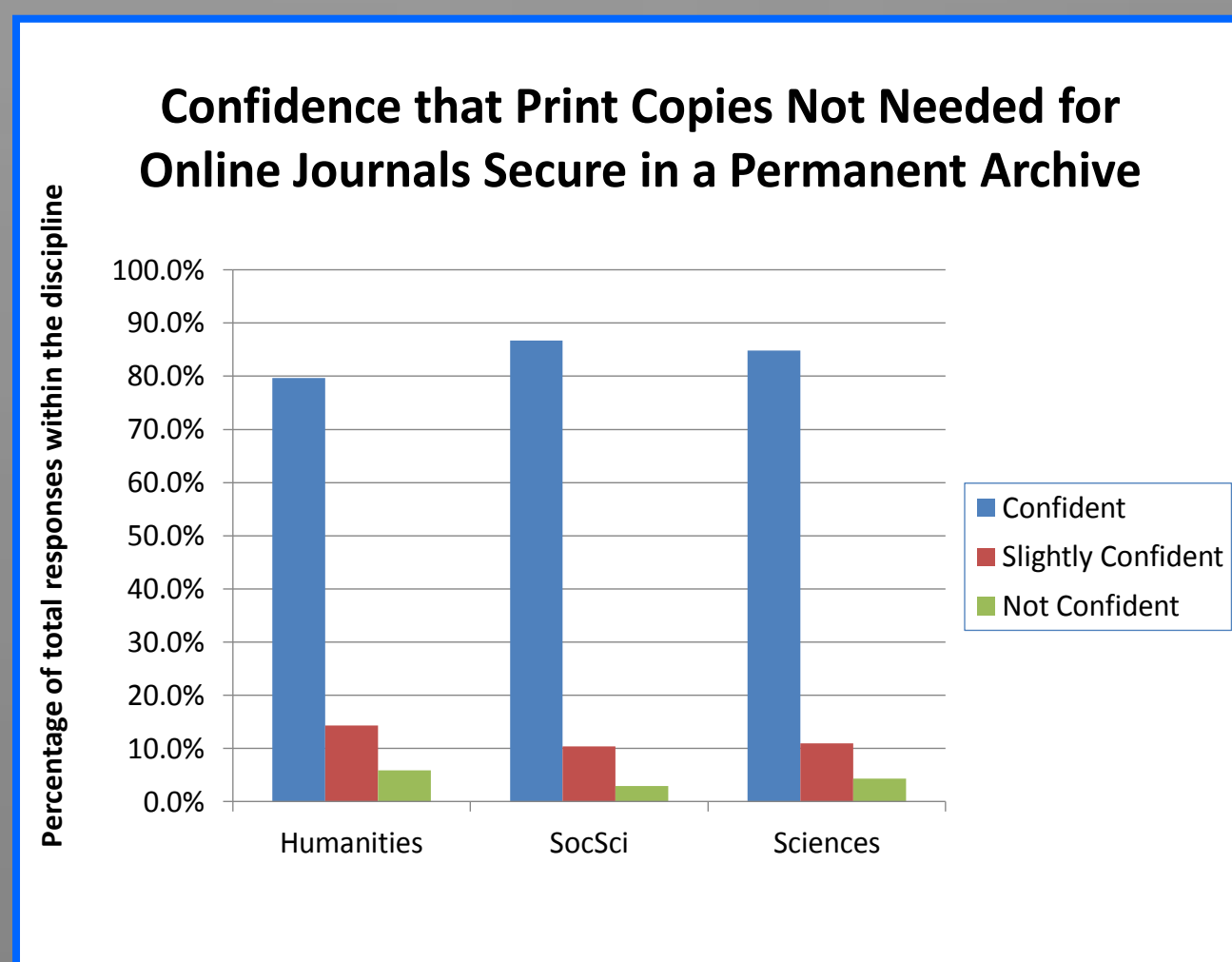
## Key Survey Outcomes

- High confidence that for online journals, print versions are not needed onsite.

- Strong willingness to wait for retrieval of needed books from offsite.

- With enhancements to catalog records (such as tables of contents), lower need for books to be onsite.

- Significant differences between humanities, social sciences, and sciences in browsing, in-library use of books, use of print books even with online availability, and use of older books.



Dependence on Browsing



Acceptable Retrieval Times for Books Not Housed in Library



Confidence that Print Copies Not Needed for Online Journals Secure in a Permanent Archive

## Steps Taken

- The Executive Vice Chancellor sent a letter to faculty announcing the start of a consultative process between the library and faculty to address the challenge.

- The UL convened an Ad Hoc Committee on Library Space Planning, consisting of faculty and student representatives nominated by academic deans and the Academic Senate.

- Consulting with the committee, a library team worked with the UCSB Social Science Survey Center to create the survey.

- Interpretations of the survey results were reviewed and endorsed by the committee.

- The team used the survey results to develop strategies for offsite storage.

- The committee evaluated the strategies to ensure consistency with the survey results.

## Strategies for Offsite Storage Selection

**Relocate to local offsite storage:**

- Print volumes of journals that the library has cancelled in print but provides access to online.

- Selected print journals for which access and preservation are secure in a permanent and persistent archive such as JSTOR; alternatively, withdraw these journals.

- Selected, previously cancelled journal titles.

- Selected older editions of books for which the library holds more recent editions, in disciplines where fewer than 20 percent of respondents said that these are important for their research and teaching.

- Selected non-English books in disciplines where fewer than 20 percent of respondents said that these are important for their research and teaching.

- Selected older books; for example, selected titles published more than twenty years ago that have not circulated in over ten years.

## Conclusion

- With high rate of survey response, UCSB faculty and students provided reliable information about how they access and use library collections.

- Outcomes, validated by the Advisory Committee, yielded the best available strategies for meeting the Library's necessary onsite collection reduction targets with the least impact on research and teaching.

- With disciplinary differences taken into account, the six strategies form a sound basis for shaping collection access, for both short term and long term needs.