

PROBLEMATIZING PEER REVIEW

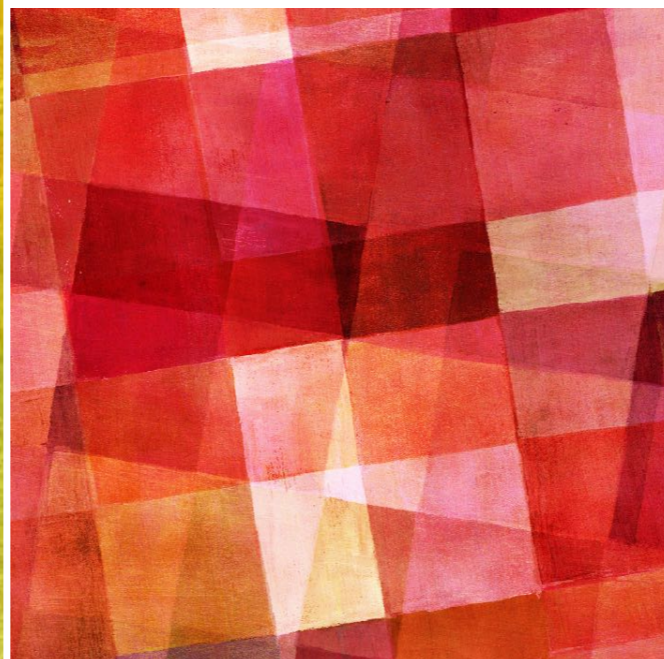
*Gr Keer & Lana Wood
California State University, East Bay*



AGENDA

- Why peer review?
- What have others said?
- Discussion - Best Practices
- Our study
- Discussion - Implementation

WHY PEER REVIEW?



97.5%

Percentage of surveyed academic librarians who taught about peer review in the last 12 months

73.8%

Percentage of surveyed academic librarians who have participated in the peer review process

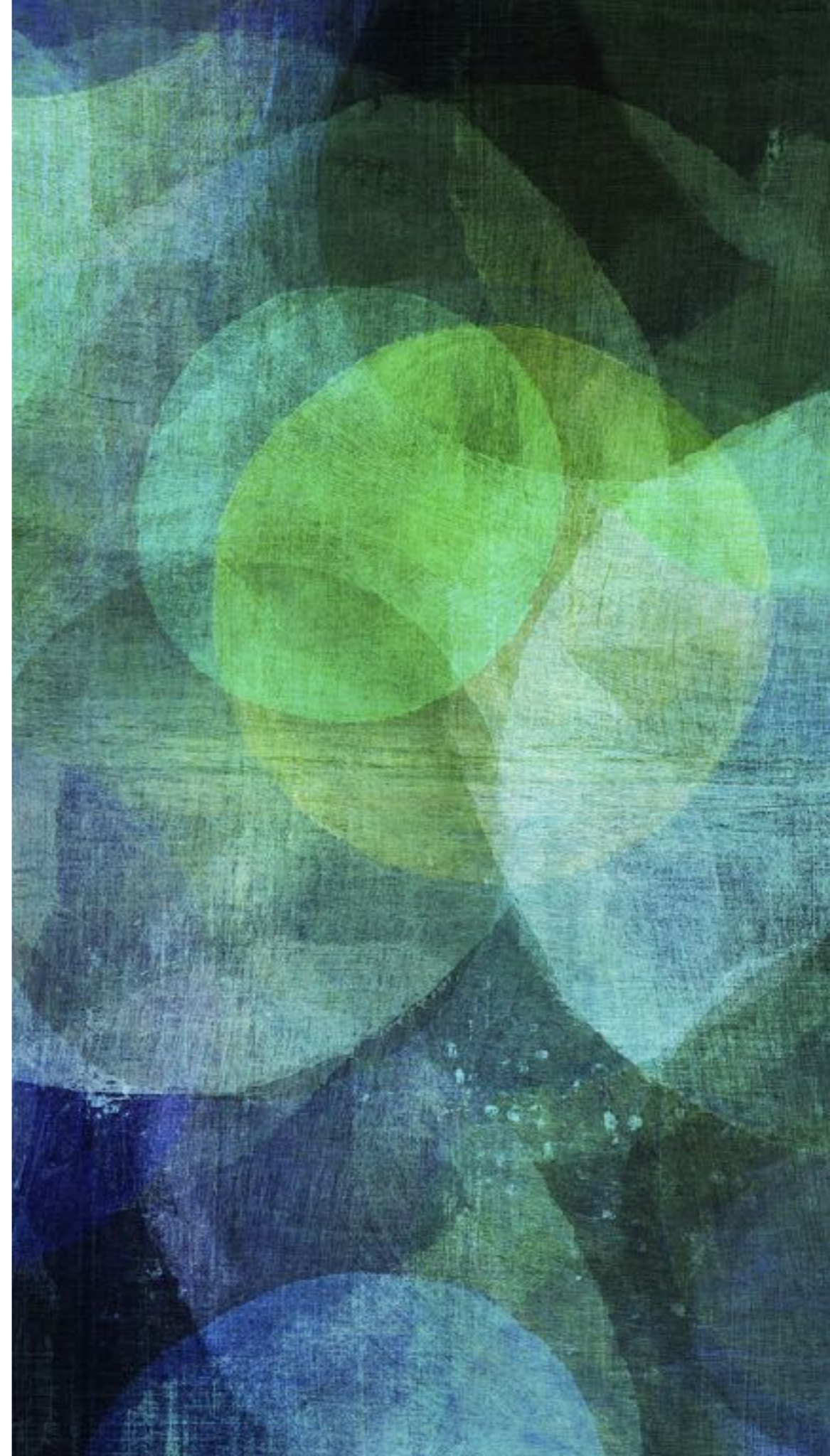


LITERATURE REVIEW

- Peer review in information literacy instruction
 - Discussions of publishing industry more broadly
 - Open Access
 - Impact Factors
 - Fraud
 - Broadening authority to include new/popular formats (blogs, etc.)
 - Students reviewing each other's work
- Alternative forms of peer review
- Librarians publishing in peer review journals
 - Faculty status/Tenure
- Critical assessment of research

**WHAT ARE BEST
PRACTICES IN
TEACHING &
CONTEXTUALIZING
SCHOLARLY PEER
REVIEW IN IL
INSTRUCTION?**

Turn & Talk





STUDY METHODOLOGY

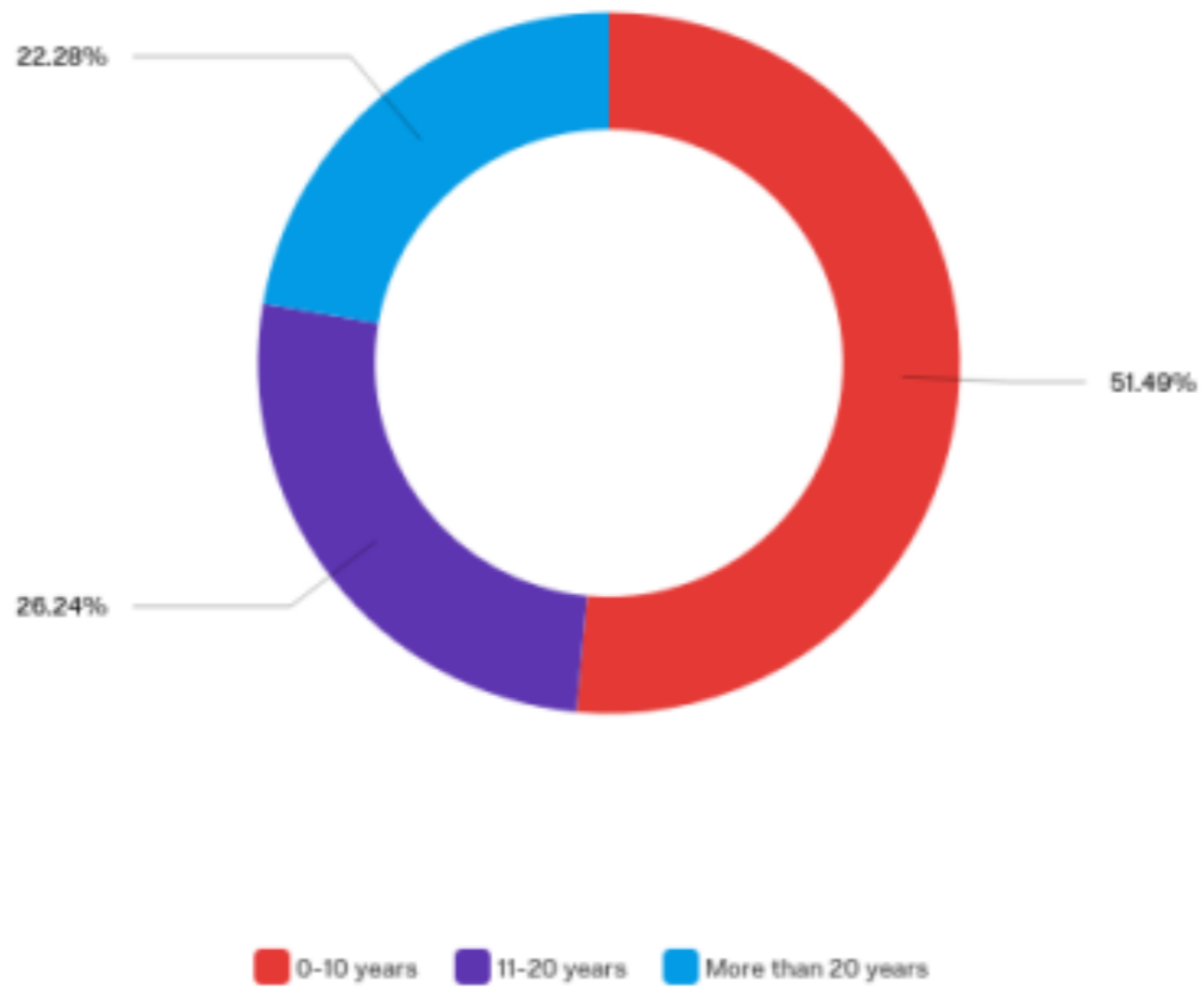
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- Mixed Methods Survey

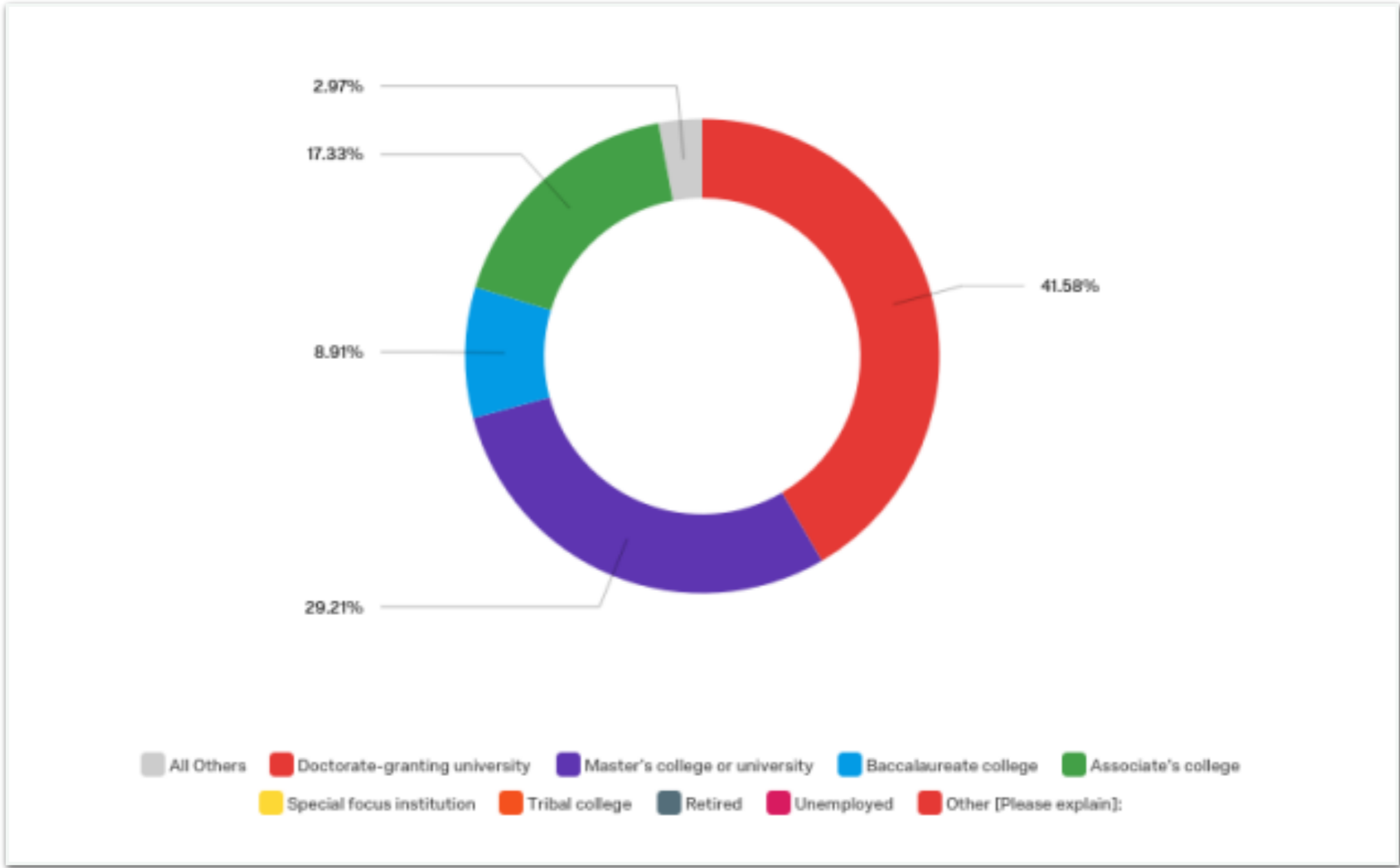
- Data collected between August 15 - September 9, 2016
- Purposive Sampling - using listservs and social media
- 202 complete eligible responses (out of 216 total complete responses)
- Respondent Criteria: academic librarians in United States & Canada
- Survey demographics to follow

- Interviews

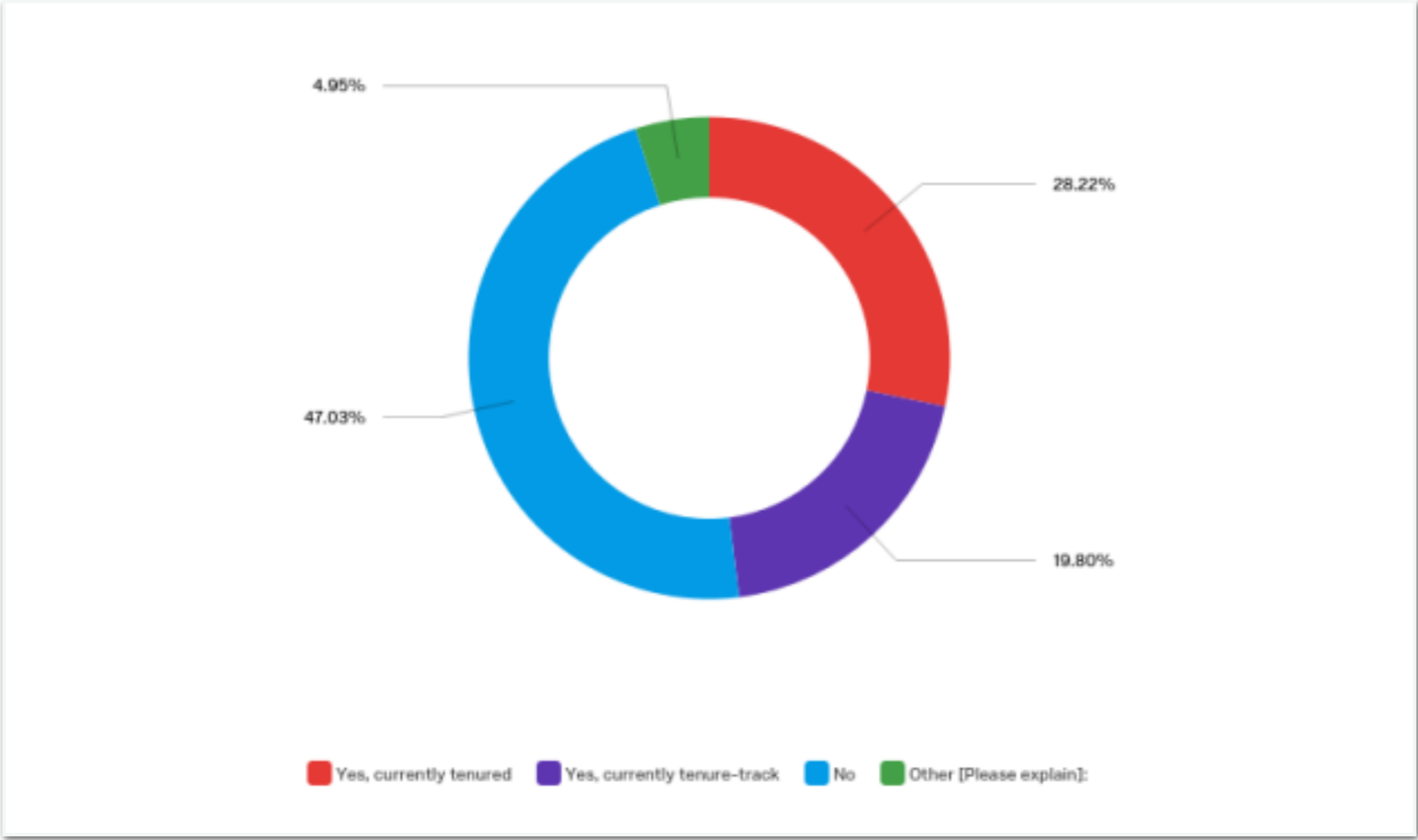
- Survey participants self-identified if they were interested in doing a follow-up interview
- 25 semi-structured interviews (via video or audio)



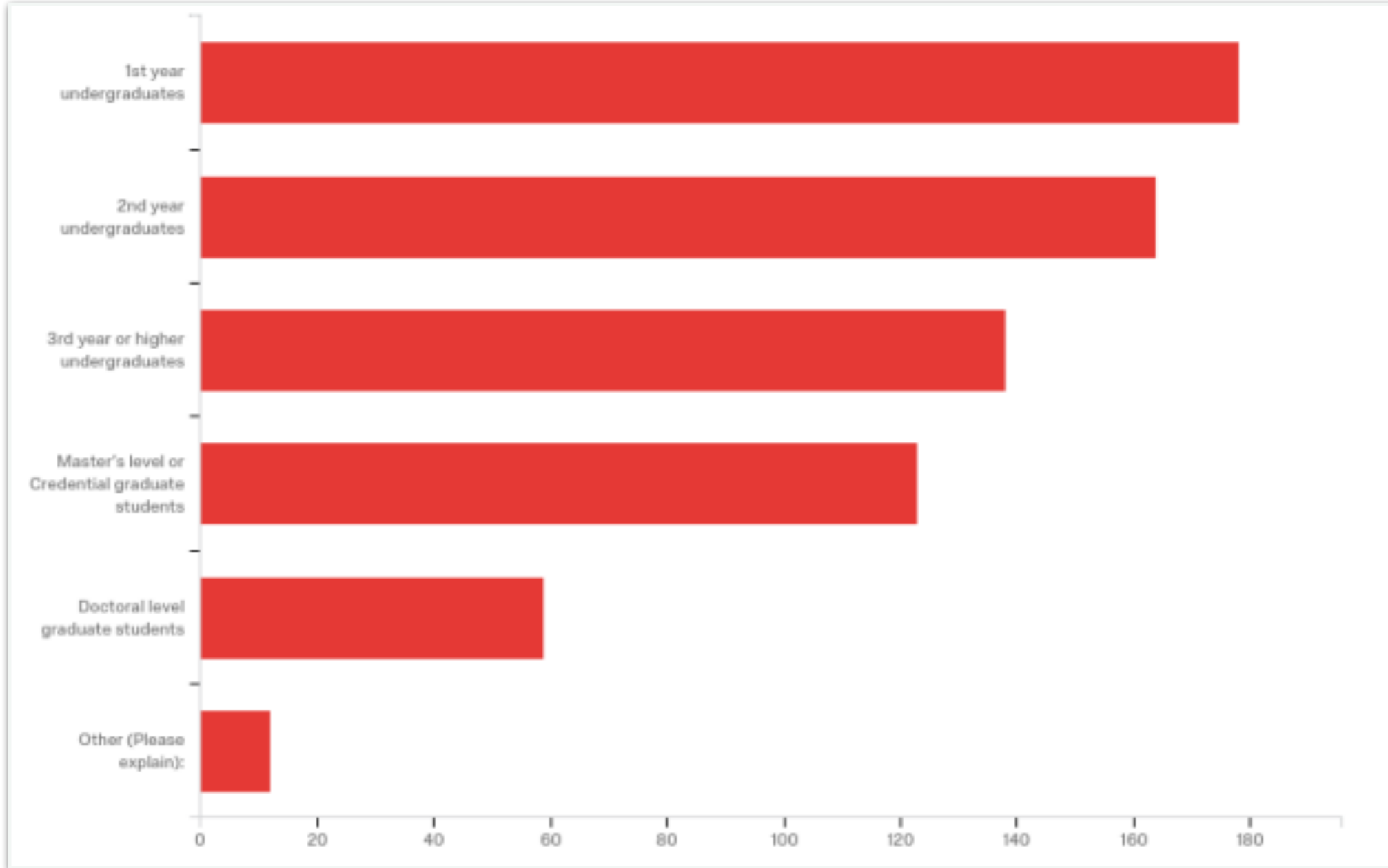
Years in the library profession



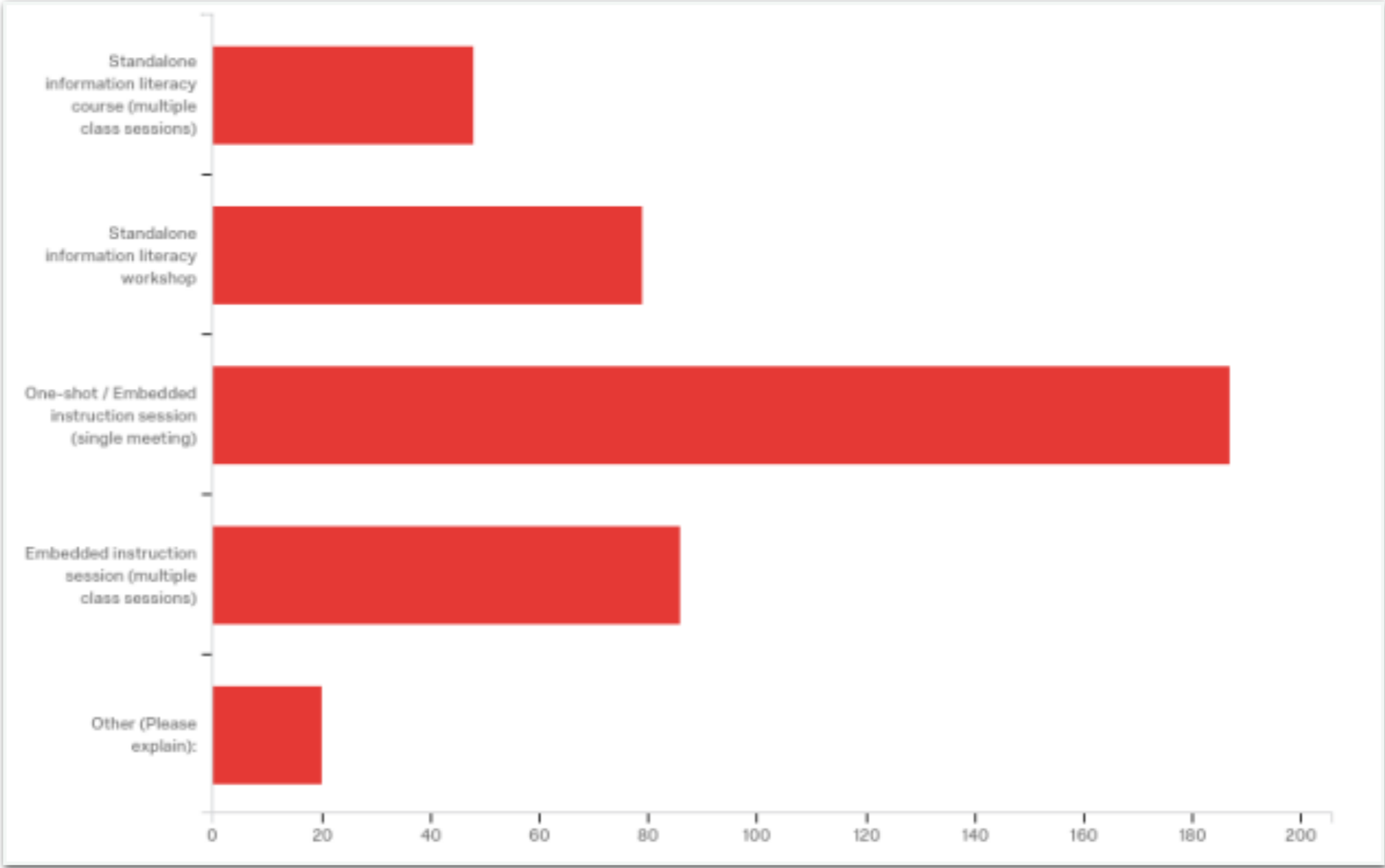
Type of academic library



Tenure status

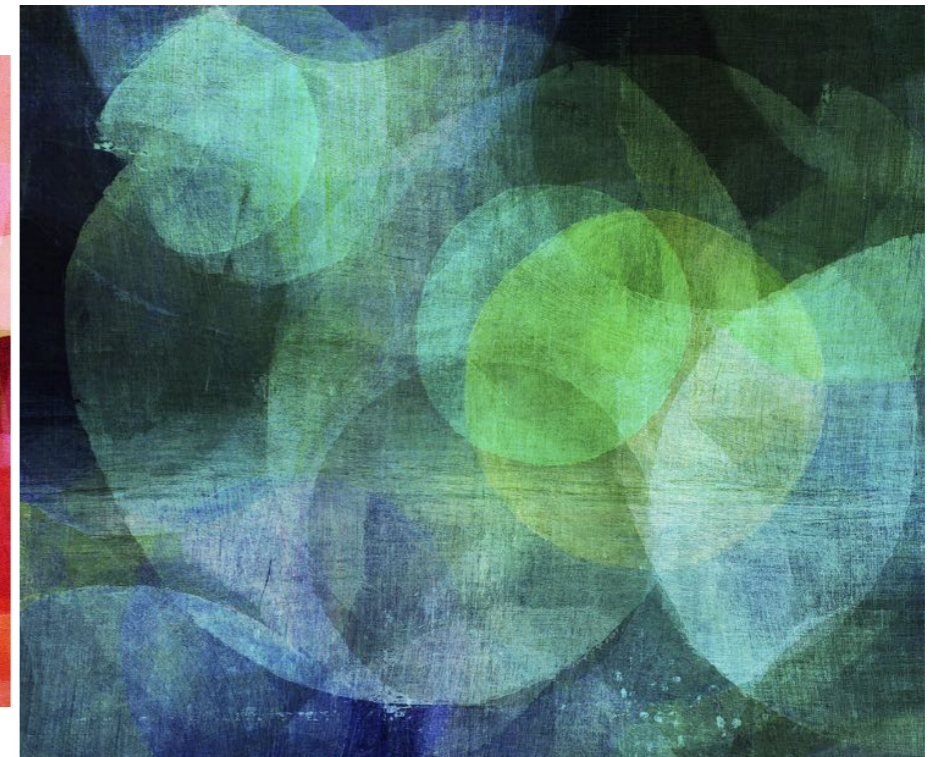
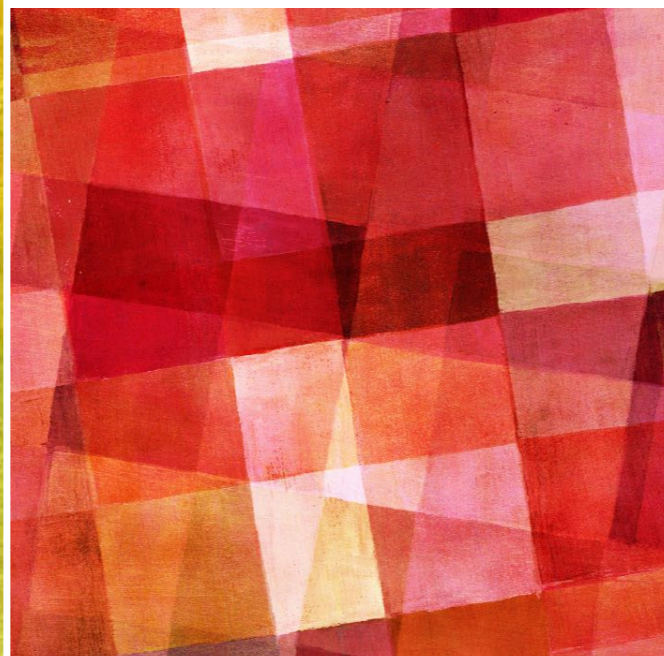


Student level



Class type session

STUDY FINDINGS

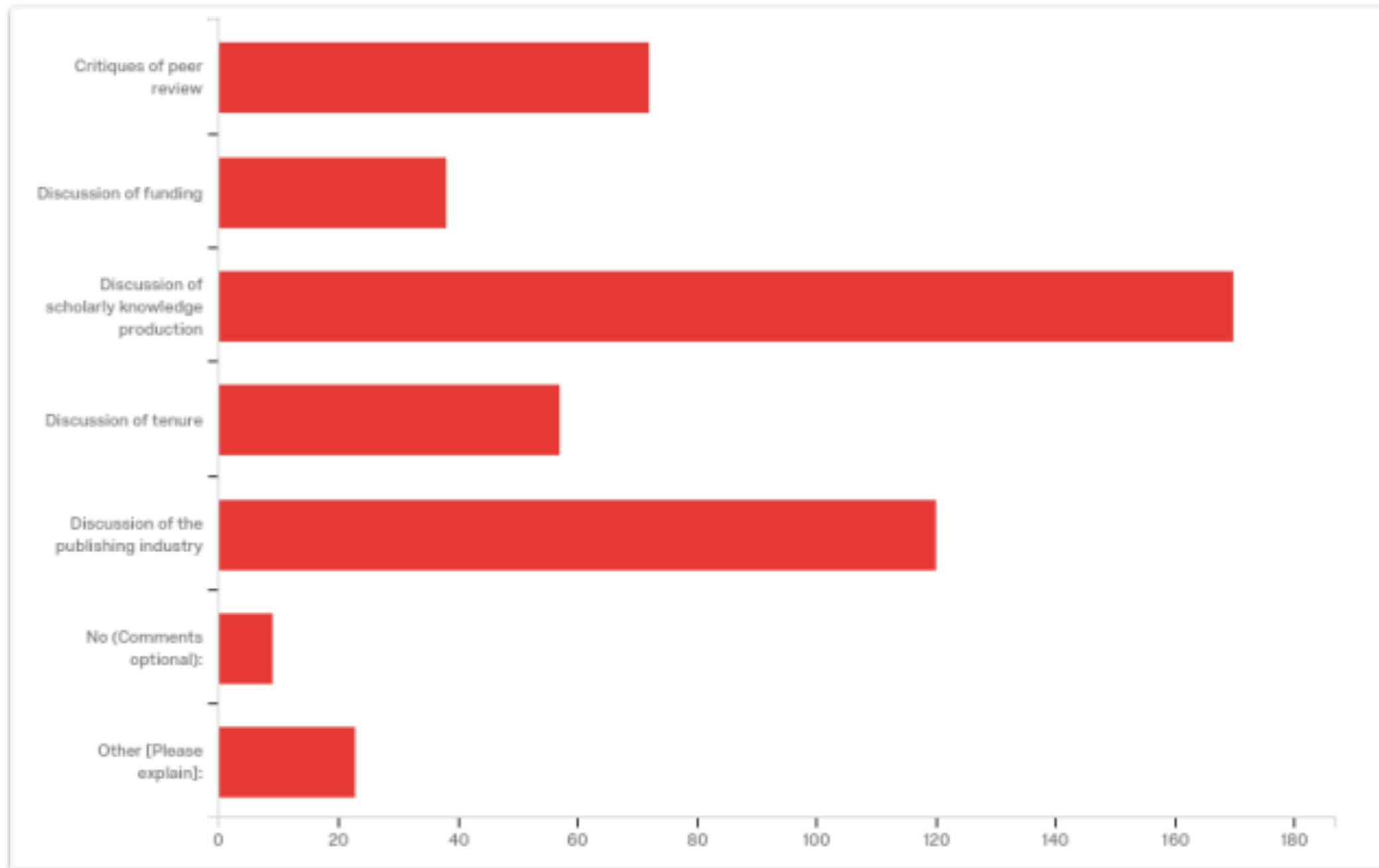




What is your working definition of peer review?



What do you think the function of peer review is?



What context do we provide?

“

My favorite analogy that I use is Iron Chef...With Iron Chef I basically say, ‘If I were a chef and I were making a meal or a dish and I got feedback from my mother, is that peer review?’ I try to take it out of the academic process.

“

I talk about **who is doing the peer review**. It's normally people who are faculty, and the demographics of faculty are **mostly white men**.

“

This is a term they've usually heard from their instructors but they don't have a sense of what it means. They just know that it's 'good'...but I kind of try to push them to **think about it as a process**, and what the limitations are.

“

Peer review is just a vehicle. It's not a guarantee of quality.

“

I don't contextualize peer review as much as I would like to.

“

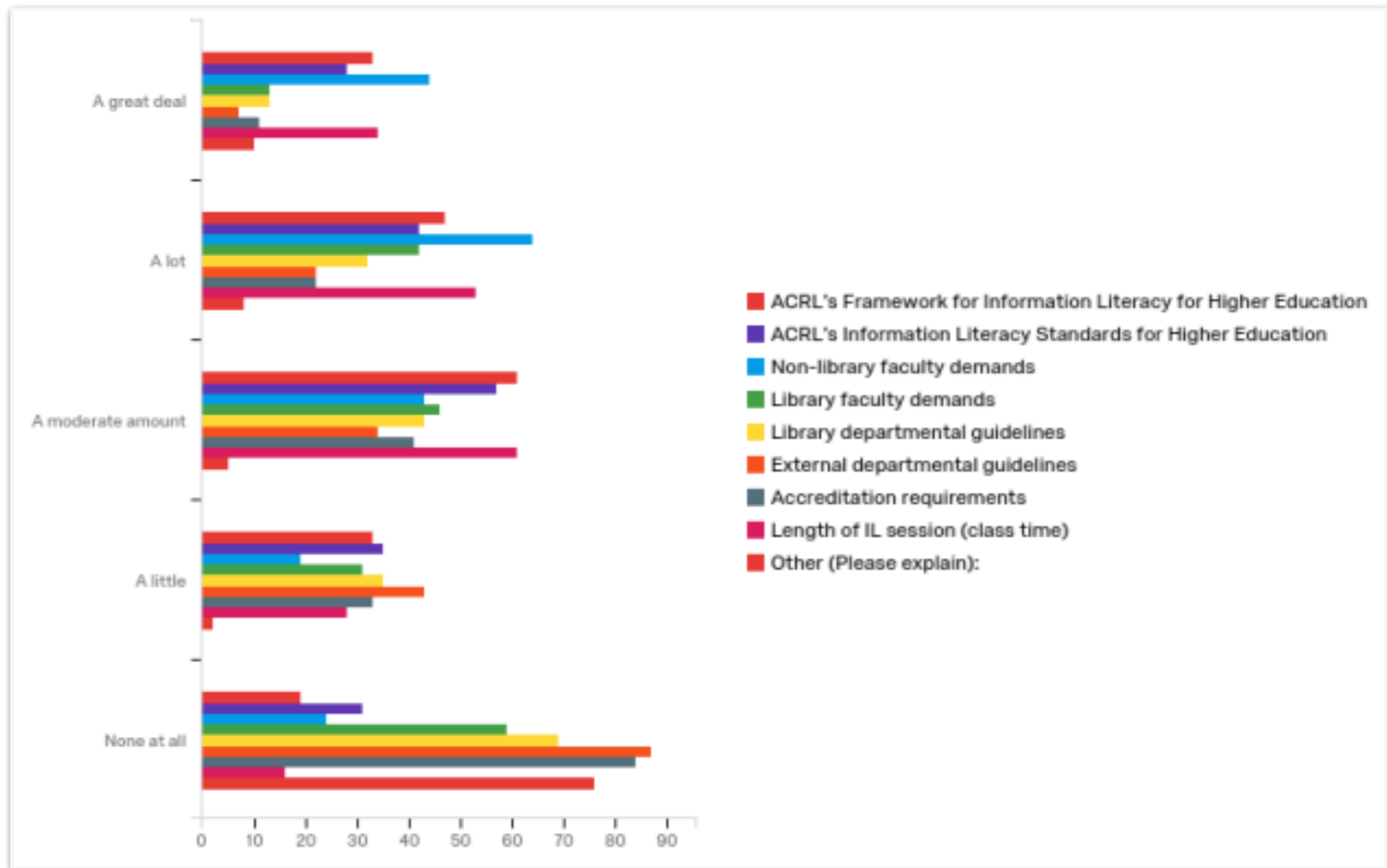
I think we just sort of assume we're going to teach what's academic and what's not without getting to the underlying process of what makes it supposedly academic. I think maybe some of that's a **function of timing and what the course instructor wants**, but some of it is that **that's just harder**.

“

I have not seen peer review...as something for our first and second year students that is going to change how they interact with that source.

“

Once we get to the **higher level courses** we can talk about how peer review is kind of broken in some ways...It's a good way for them to think about credibility beyond a checkmark.



What influences how we teach peer review?

“

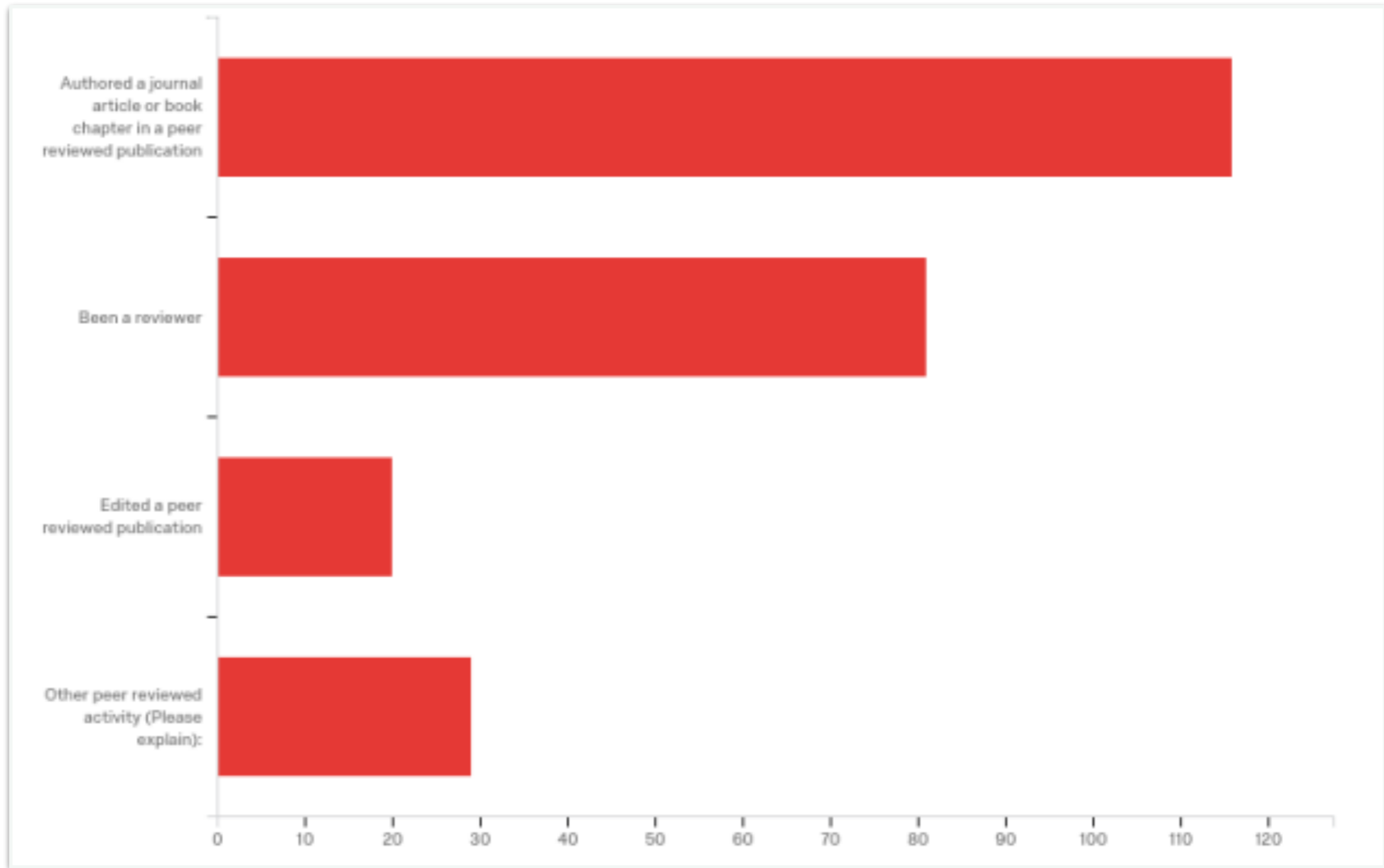
When the instructor says something like ‘Oh, well, peer review is really important’ I will then come in and amend it a little to say, ‘well, this is what it really means,’ or, ‘this is why it’s brought up,’ or, ‘there are other types of information that are valuable, but they might do different things for you.’

“

We don't necessarily talk about what information gets published and valued...
Instructors aren't really down for that. Or maybe I'm just pawning it off on them because I'm too scared to talk about it in the classroom.

“

I'm really liking the new Framework because it's so broad...I talk about how **authority is constructed** and I talk about how **information has value**.



How do we participate in the peer review process?

“

I might be colored a little bit by my experience as a peer reviewer because it always felt a little more disorganized than I thought it would... and so I guess that was my first experience with 'maybe this isn't as perfect as we're led to believe beforehand.'

“

I was surprised at some of the statistical notes written by the peer reviewer that were just wrong. I wonder sometimes what kind of expertise lies at the other end of that.

“

I remember an instance... where a reviewer gave the feedback that it would be much better if the male co-author is listed first in front of the female co-author. I occasionally mention this as a problem of anonymous peer review, but there are reasons we still do it.

“

I think [open peer review] was the most helpful, because you were able to have a **conversation with your reviewer...** being able to go back and forth with the reviewer and clarify what comments meant can **make for much better writing.**



CONCLUSIONS

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- Library literature doesn't explicitly address how we teach peer review
- Librarians are not actively seeking out perspectives on peer review in outside literature
- Most librarians teach PR but there is a wide variety of approaches
- Decision to teach PR often depends on course instructor desires & time constraints



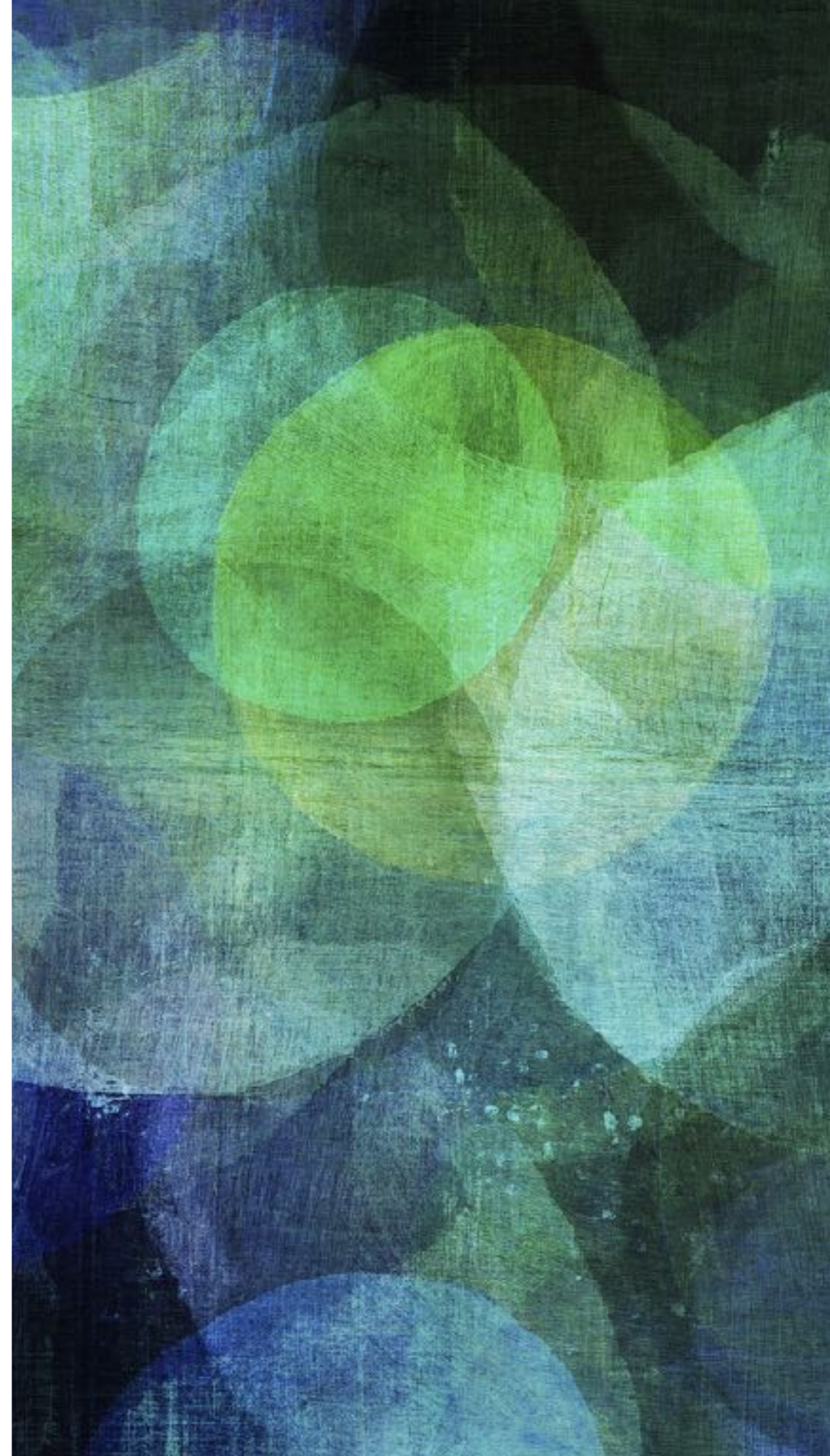
CONCLUSIONS

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- Personal experience as author, reviewer, or editor influences how we think & teach about PR
- Librarians are open to alternative forms of peer review, but say it often depends on the journal (including for librarianship)
- We are thinking about the Framework but it is not consistently connected to PR
- Contextualizing PR is seen by many librarians as a concept to be taught at a higher level

**HOW DO YOU
(OR WOULD YOU)
IDEALLY
CONTEXTUALIZE
PEER REVIEW FOR
YOUR STUDENTS?**

.....
Turn & Talk



QUESTIONS?

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