



University Honors: Facilitators and Barriers to Student Success

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Data Fellows 2018-2019



Research Questions

- Q1: Are University Honors extracurricular events barriers to timely graduation?
- Q2: Do University Honors events act as facilitators or barriers to student success and does this differ by program, college, or certain student populations?
- Q3: Who is leaving University Honors and do completion rates differ by program, college, or certain student populations?





Introduction

• Mission Statement

- The University Honors Program challenges and enriches the educational experience of high-achieving students through its commitment to academic excellence and undergraduate research; mentorship and professionalism; and meaningful civic engagement both on campus and in local and global communities. This programming upholds three key learning objectives: Cultivating Leadership through Practice, Building Community through Civic Engagement, and Fostering Global Excellence with Global Learning.





Introduction

• University Honors Program (UHP)

Overview

- Students complete at least 1 Honors course every 2 consecutive semesters, and must maintain at least a 3.0 GPA (cumulative, Honors).
- Since Fall 2011, to maintain priority registration students must attend at least 3 Honors events, which include campus events, leadership series, professional development workshops, health and well-being, etc.
- Average time to degree for University Honors students was 4 years or 8.155 semesters as compared to non-honors students whose average time to degree was 4.5 years or 9.45 semesters for the entering cohorts of 2011-12 and 2012-13.
- Being a part of University Honors facilitates timely graduation.





Methods

■ Participants

- 251 students who began UHP in 2011-12 and 2012-13.
- 173 females and 78 males ranging in age from 18 to 31 at time of entry.

■ Materials

- Data from internal program spreadsheets and Institutional Research & Analytics were merged into an Access Database.
- Data collected included: gender, first generation status, race/ethnicity, EOP status, start/end term at CSULB and Honors, total Honors-related events attended each semester, and Honors Completion status.

■ Design and Procedure

- A summative evaluation approach was employed to examine the effects of demographic characteristics and program events on program completion and timely graduation.
- Data were analyzed using a benchmark of 3 events per semester (required for Honors priority registration) to assess program participation.





University Honors Barriers to Graduation

- What if any are University Honors-specific barriers to a timely graduation?
 - First, we simplified this to whether students completed Honors, and whether they graduated for most analyses.
 - We wanted to investigate several “barriers” or challenges to students including,
 - Events mandated for early registration,
 - First generation status and gender,
 - College at the time of graduation, or participation in other programs such as EOP.





Timely Graduation

- Overview of timely graduation for native first-year students
 - Average length to graduation for those that completed UHP:
 - 8.93 semesters or over 4 years (N=92).
 - Average length to graduation for those that started, but did not complete UHP:
 - 9.16 semesters or a little over 4.5 years (N=130).
 - CSULB average length to graduation for non-honors students.
 - 9.45 semesters or a little over 4.5 years (N=4867).





Q1

- Are University Honors extracurricular events barriers to timely graduation?
 - Answer: Not really.
 - The total number of semesters at CSULB did not correlate with the number of events students were doing per semester (less or more than 3, which would qualify them for early registration; $r=-.065$).





Q2A

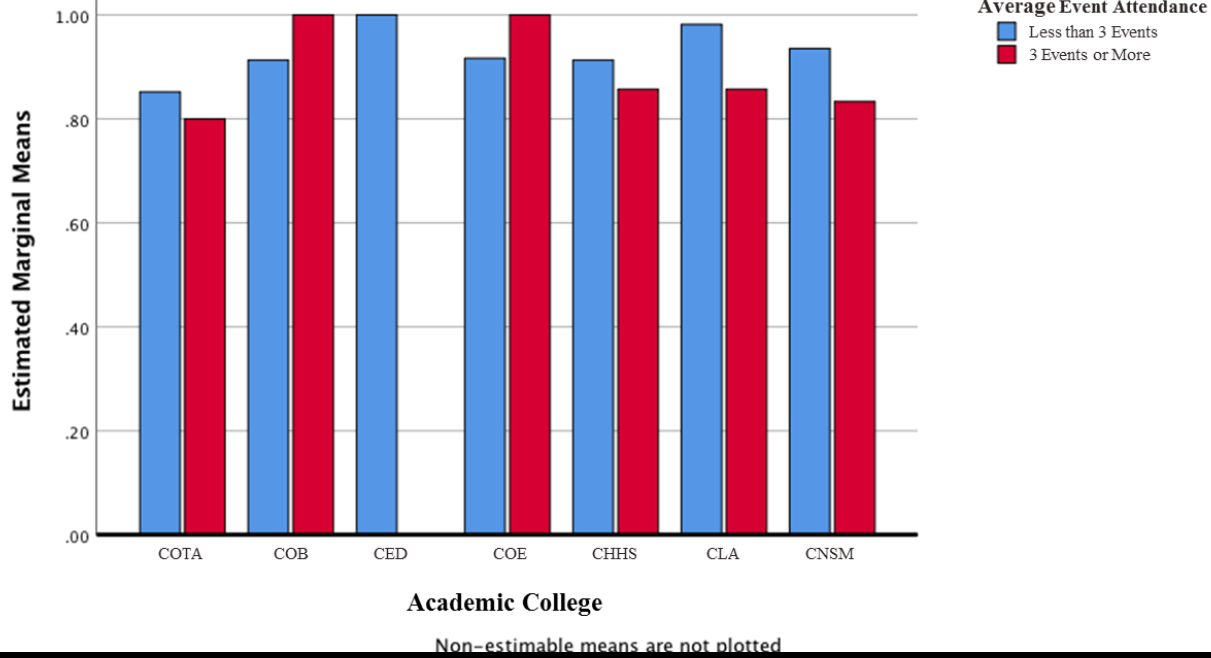
- Do University Honors events act as facilitators or barriers to student success and does this differ by program or college?
 - Answer: No!
 - Across colleges, doing more events did not seem to significantly reduce graduation rates.
 - Similarly, participation in EOP was unrelated to graduation rates.



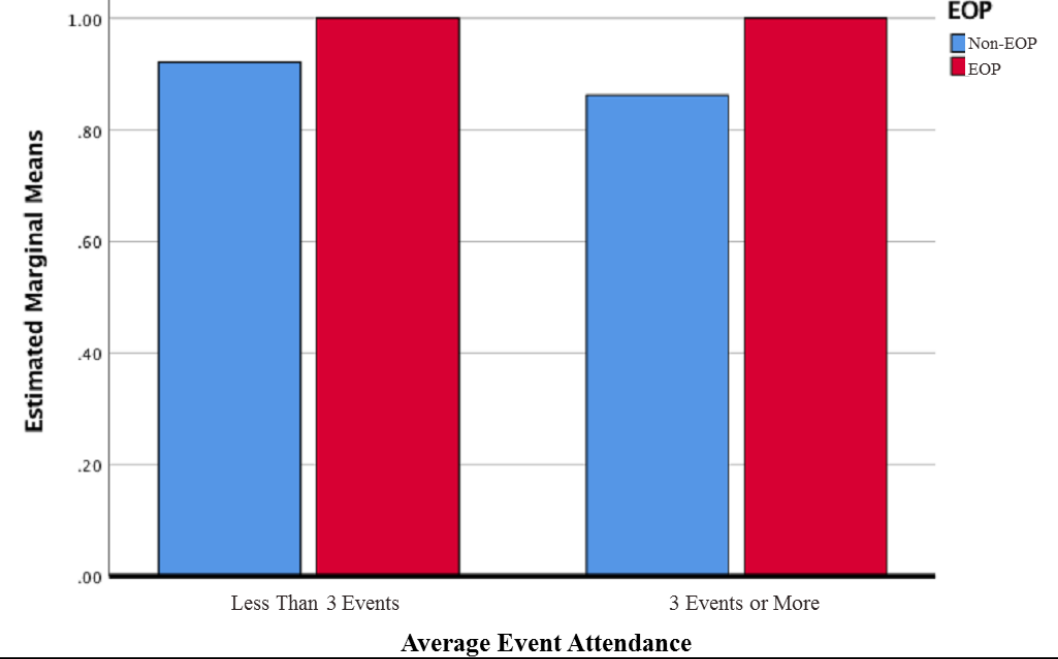


Q2A

Estimated Marginal Means of Graduation by College and Average Event Attendance



Estimated Marginal Means of Graduation by Average Event Attendance and EOP Participation





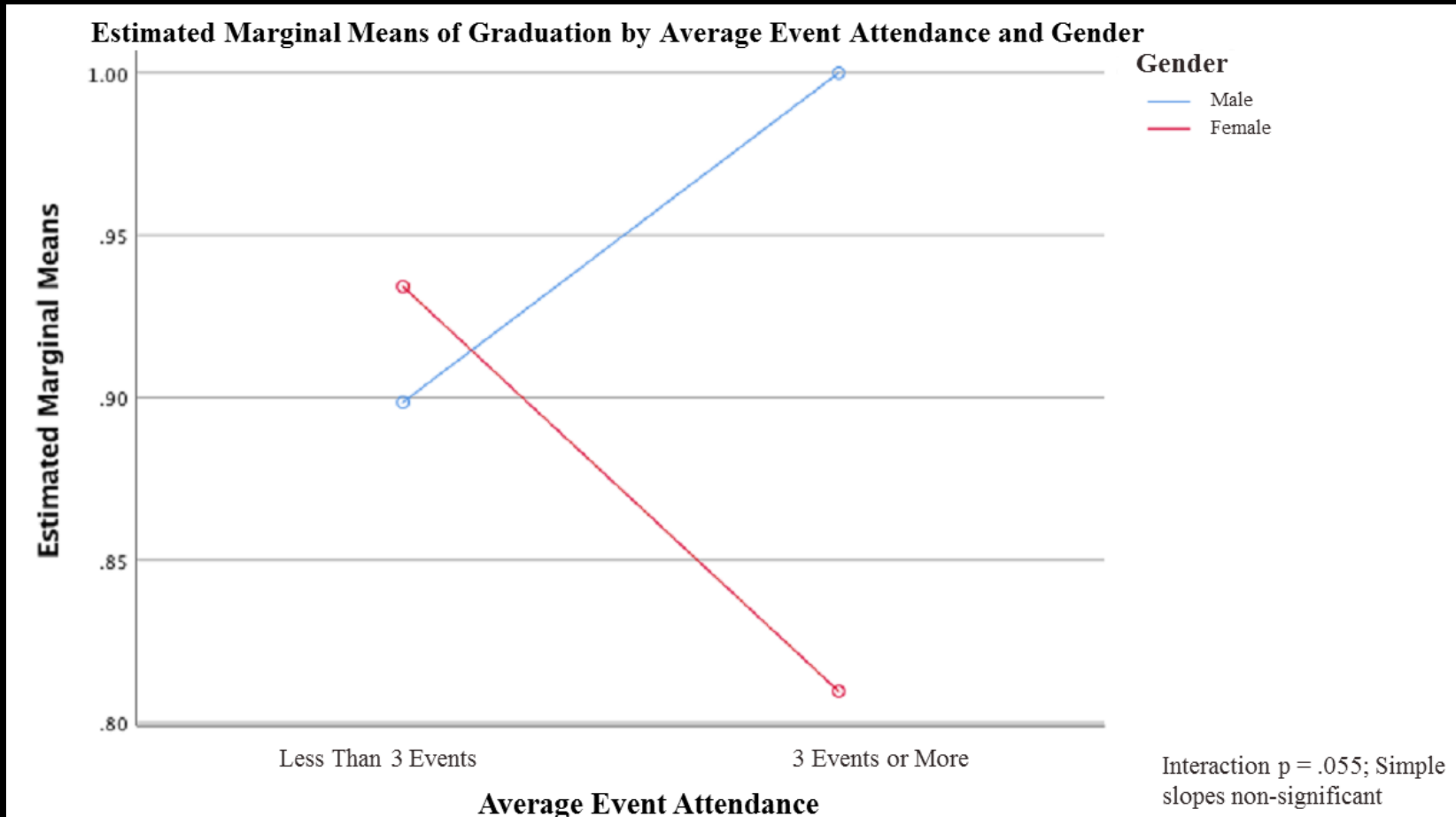
Q2B

- Do University Honors events act as facilitators or barriers to student success and does this differ by certain student populations?
 - Answer: Its complicated.
 - Although first generation status does not seem to differ in graduation rates based on whether or not they participated in 3 or more events per semester, there is a significant interaction between gender and events. Males seem to graduate more often when they have completed 3 or more events.



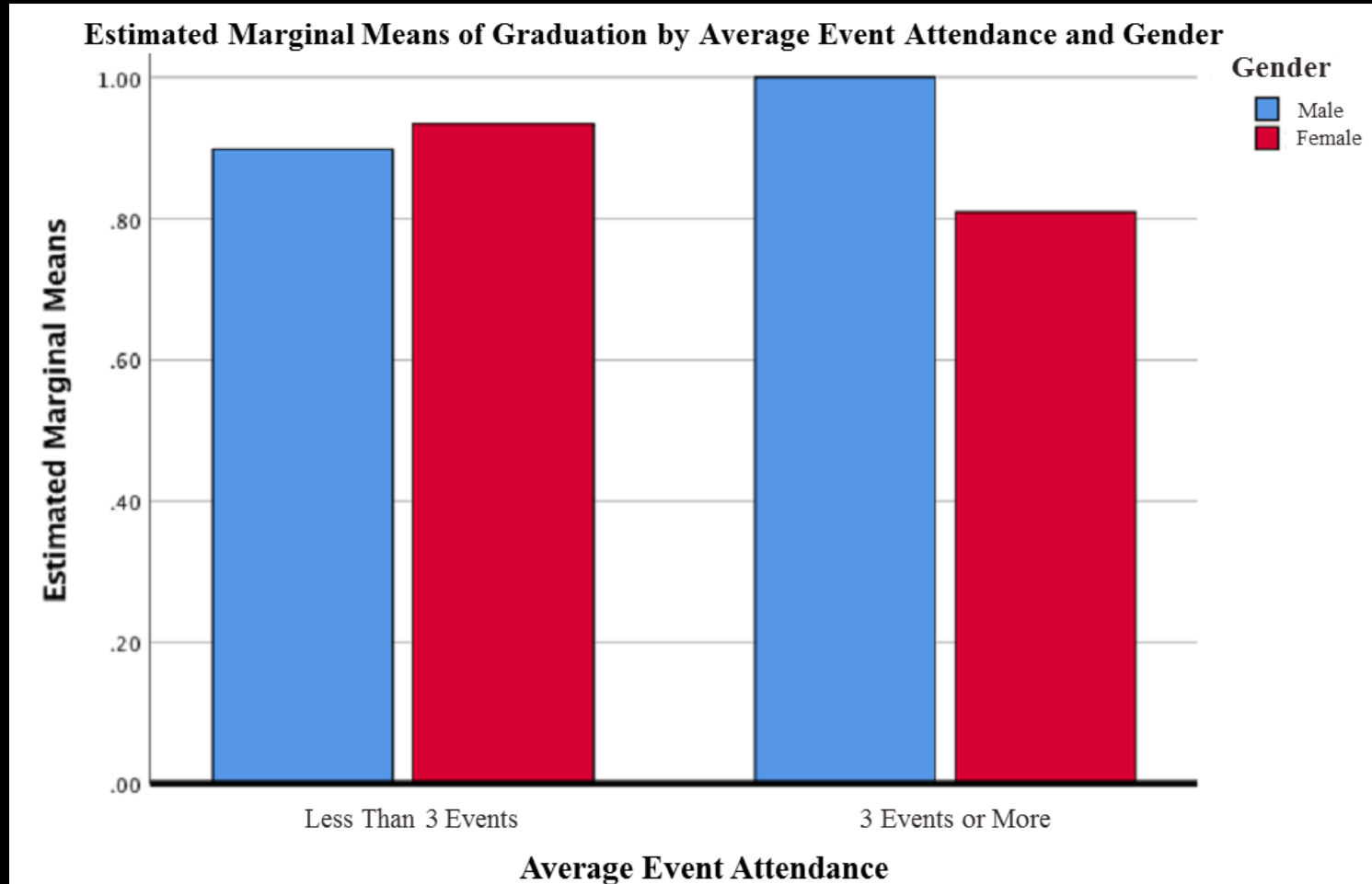


Q2B



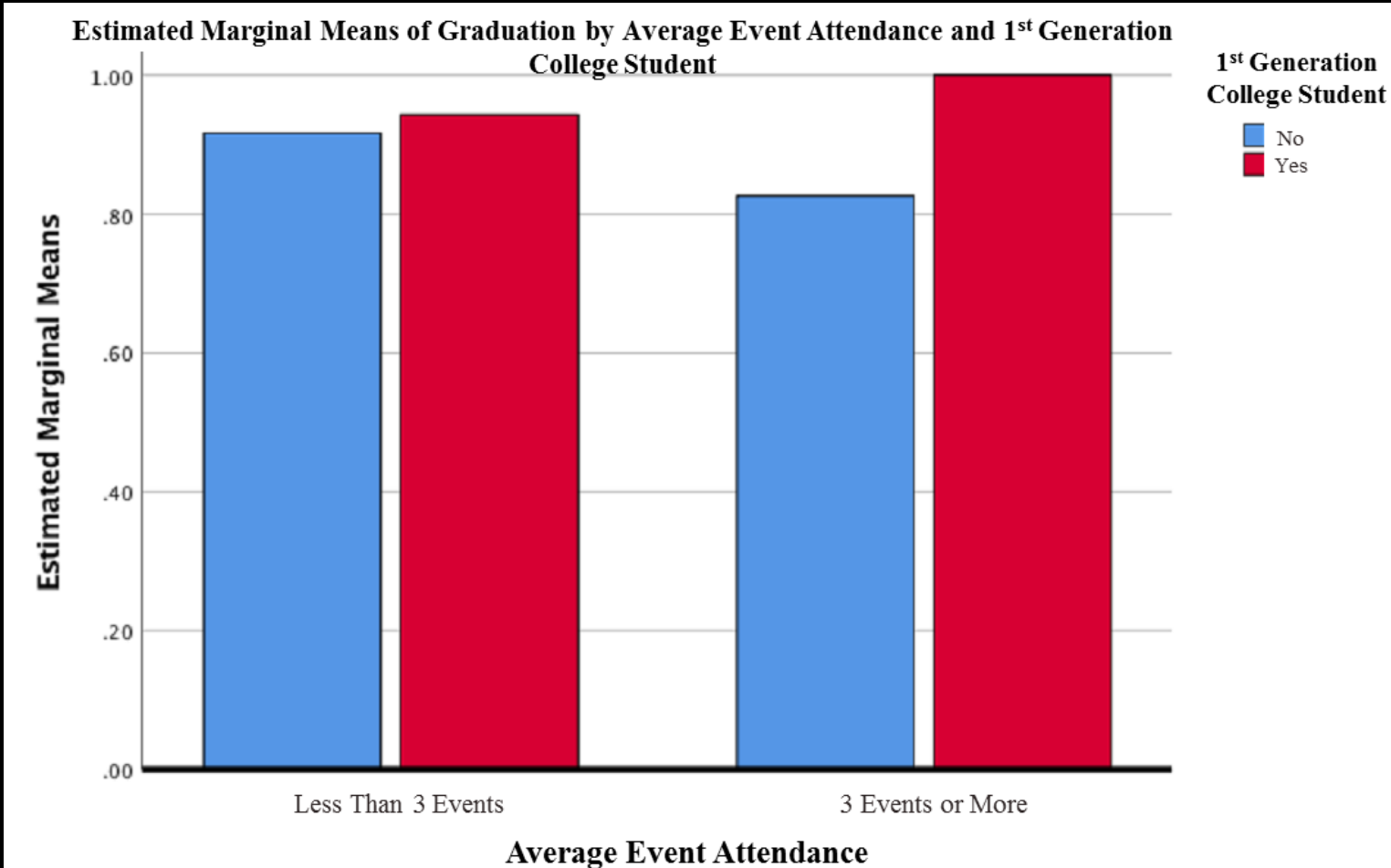


Q2B





Q2B





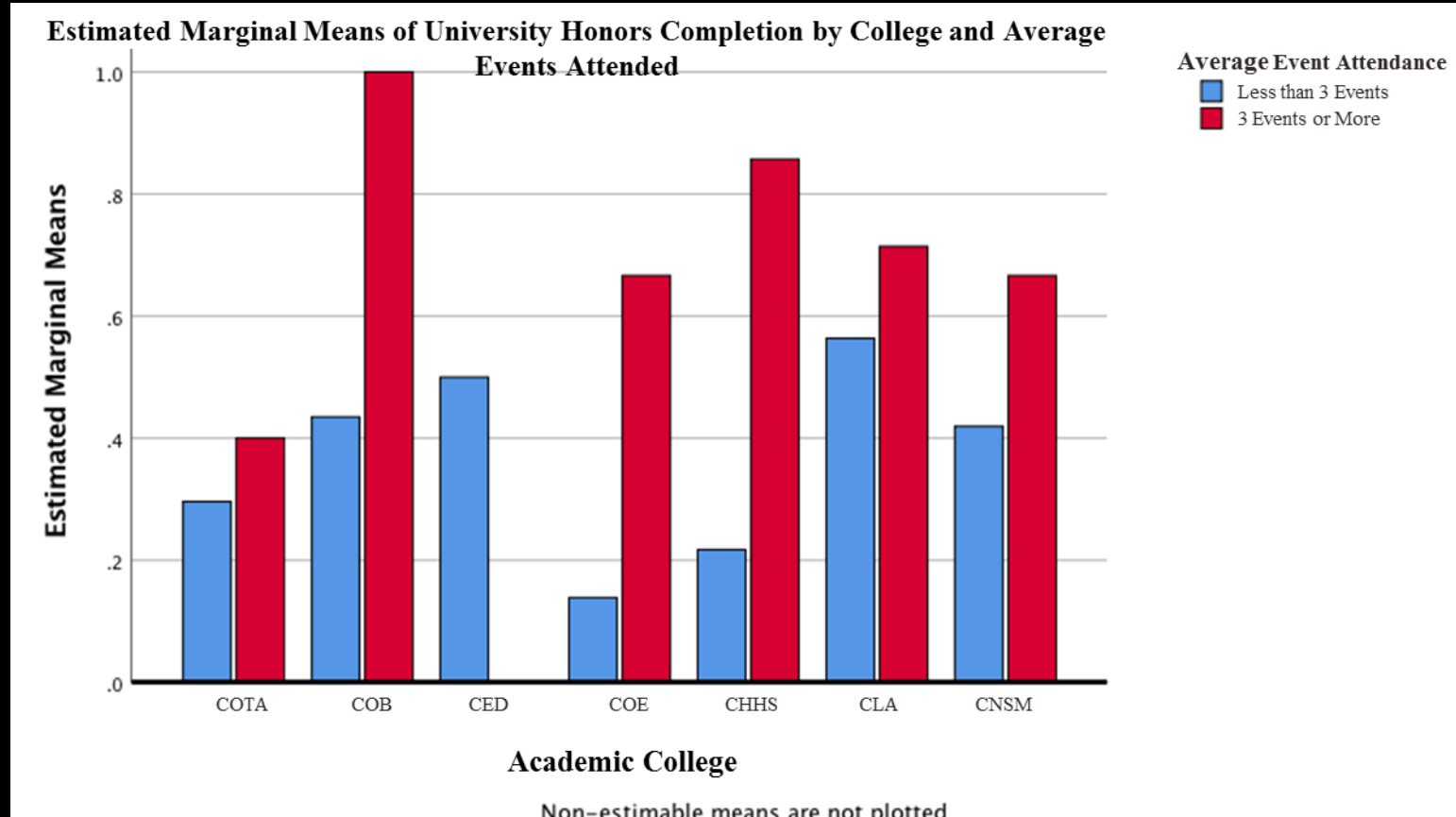
Q3A

- Who is leaving University Honors and do completion rates differ by college?
 - Individuals who do more events across colleges tend to finish University Honors at greater rates ($p > .001$), although colleges have vastly different honors completion rates in general.
 - The college at time of graduation did relate to whether students finished University Honors ($p = .002$), with Engineering, Health and Human Services, and Art majors at the most risk (in decreasing order).



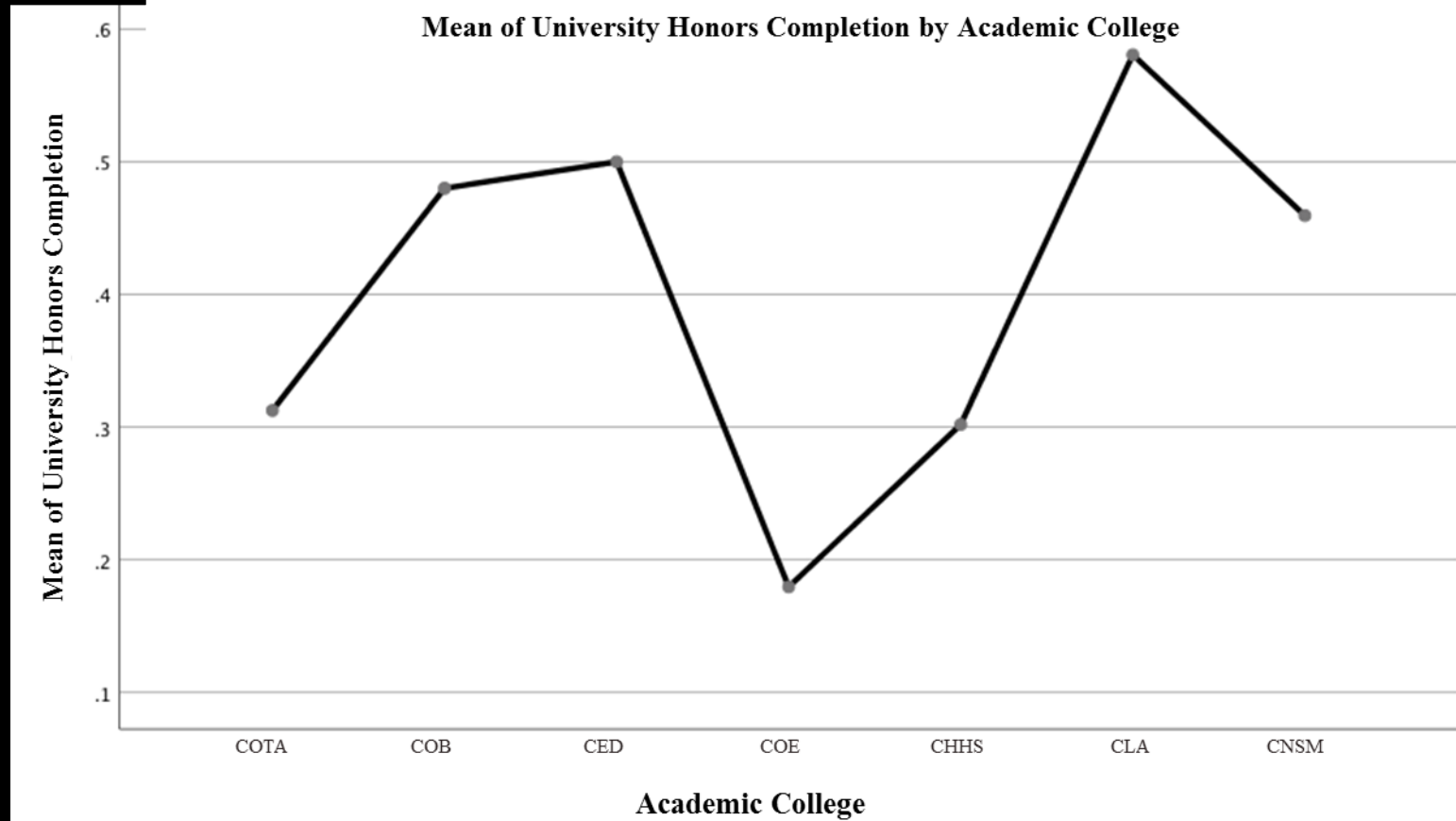


Q3A





Q3A





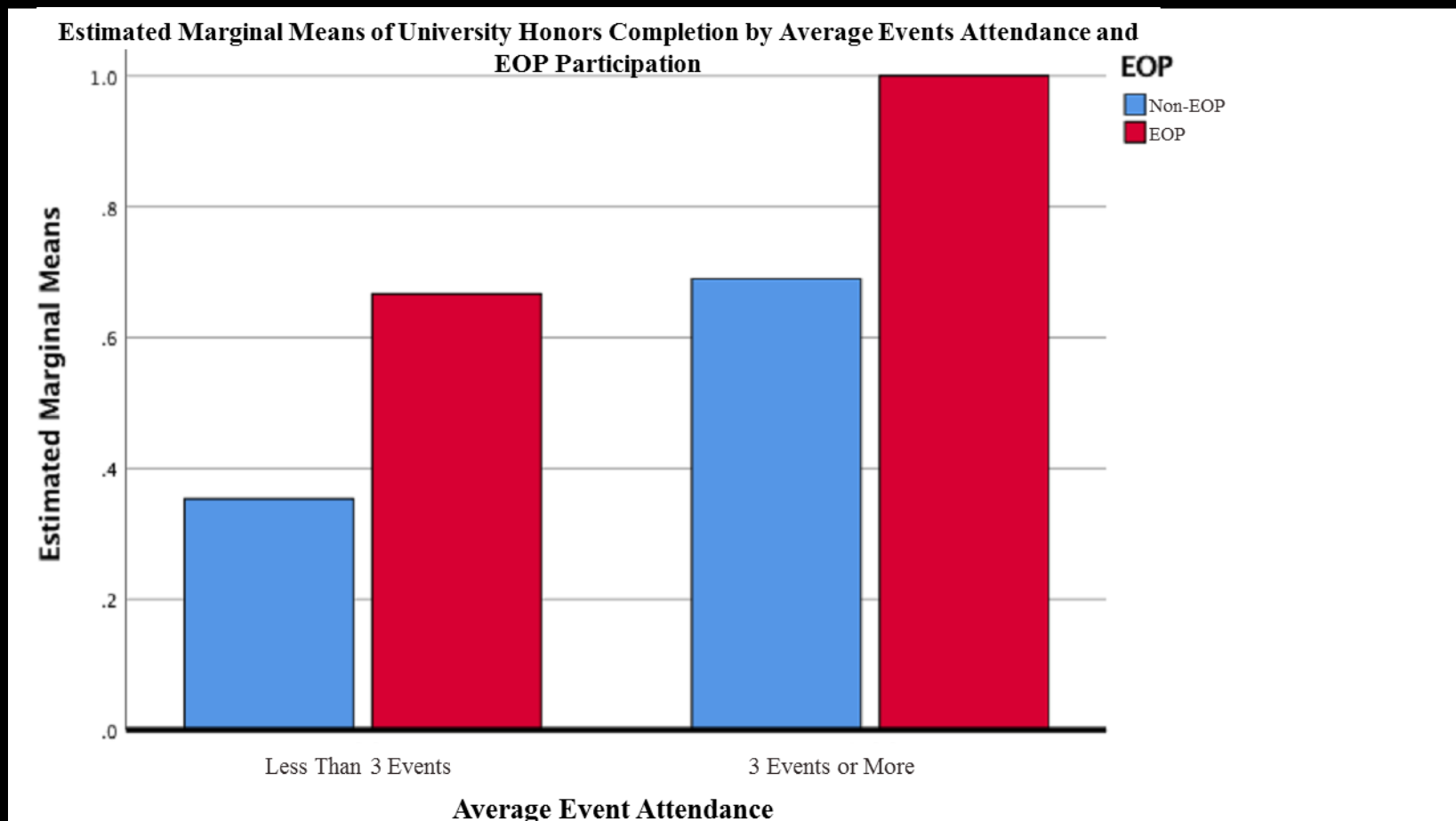
Q3A

- Who is leaving University Honors and do completion rates differ by program?
 - Individuals participating in EOP do not seem to leave University Honors at higher rates.
 - In fact! EOP students tend to complete slightly more often than students not benefiting from EOP, and the University Honors events also seem to benefit EOP students as much as non EOP students.





Question 3A





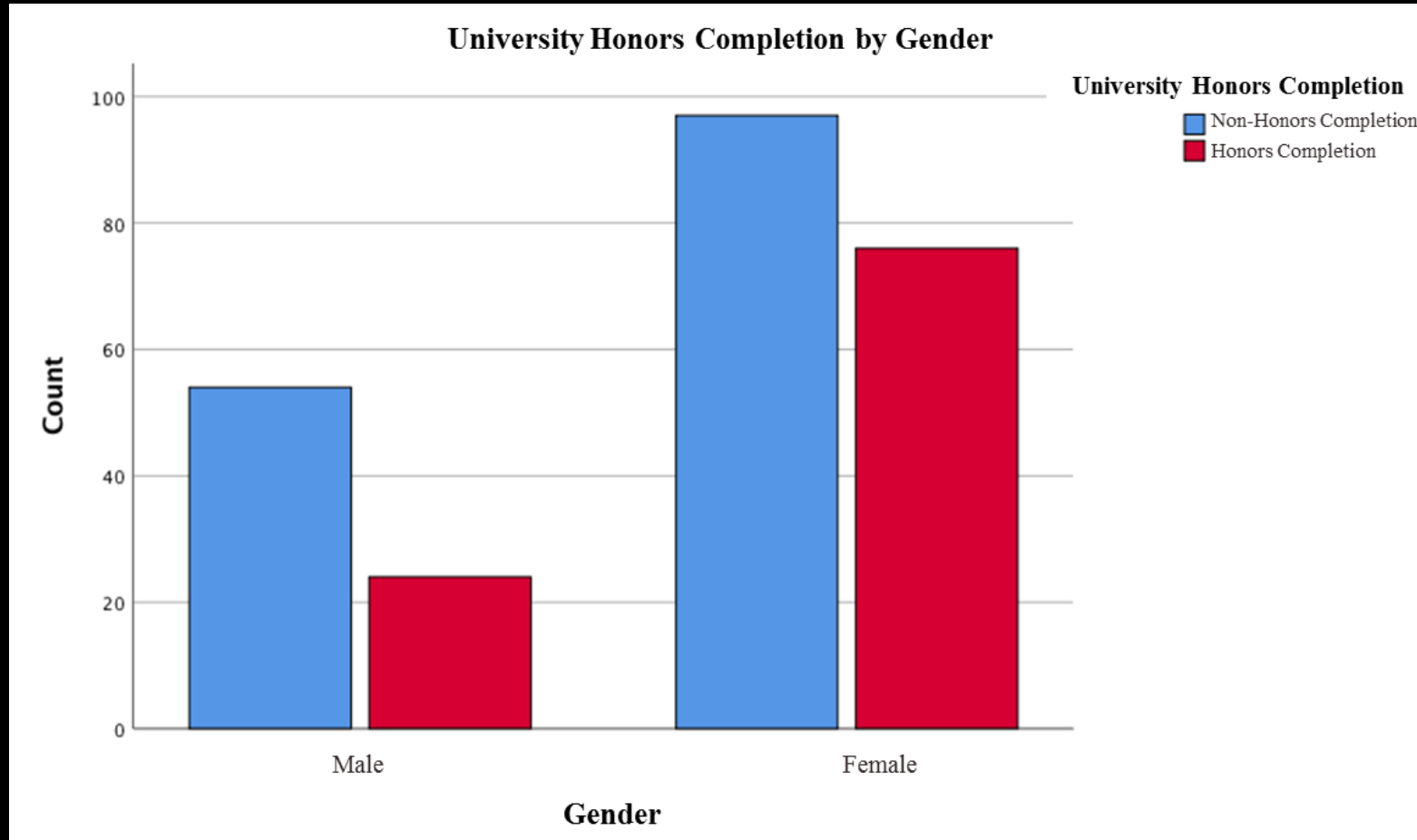
Q3B

- Who is leaving University Honors and do completion rates differ for certain students in the program?
 - Answer: Yes!
 - Gender significantly predicted whether someone would complete University Honors, with females completing at higher rates ($p = .049$), although events did not interact with gender significantly.
 - Students who identify as first generation were no more or less likely to discontinue University Honors.



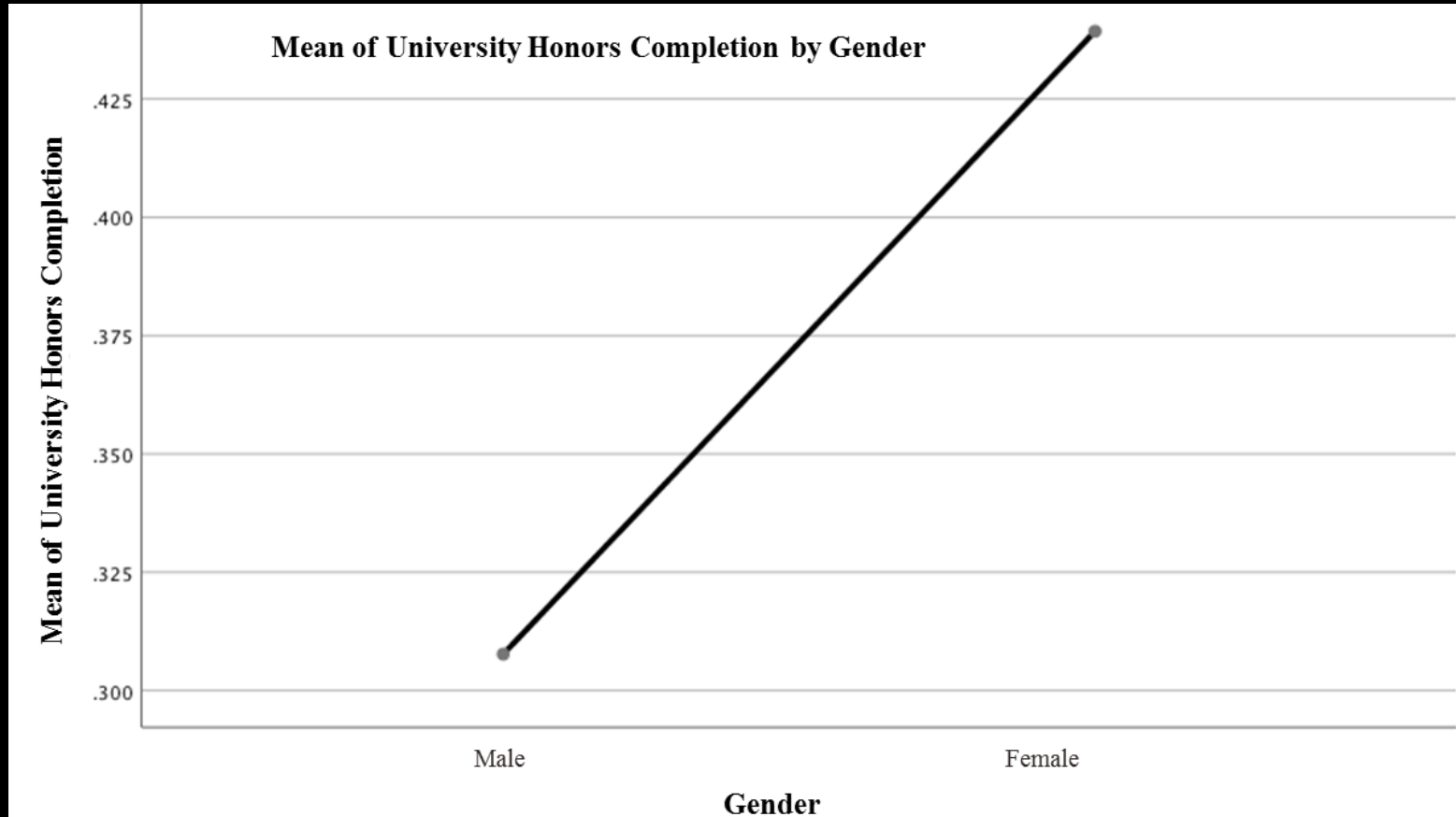


Q3B



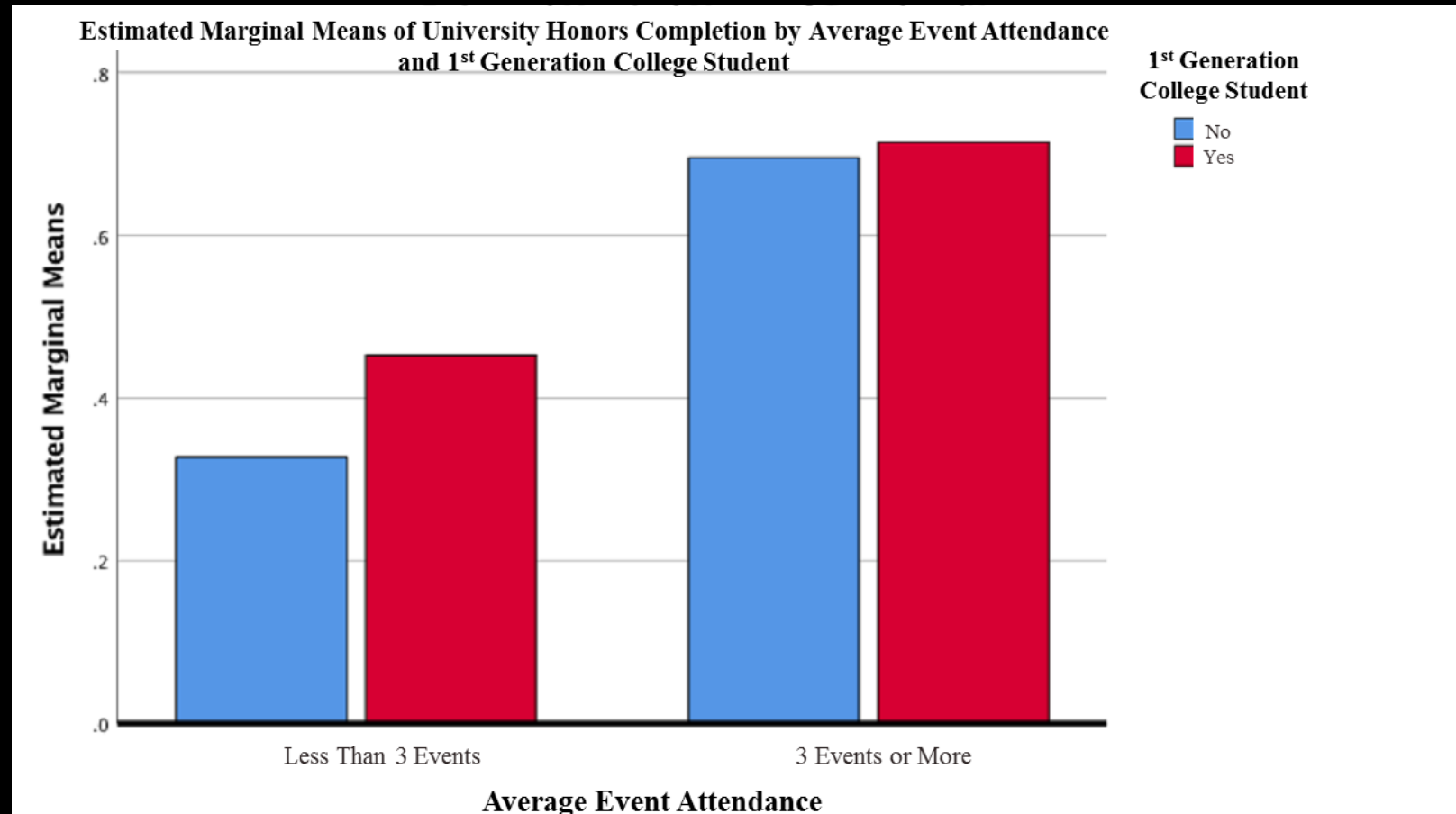


Q3B





Q3B





Conclusions

Based on an analysis of 271 students who entered UHP in 2011-12 and 2012-13:

- University Honors events were a positive influence on graduation, across colleges and in combination with other engaging programs like EOP.
- Graduation rates were high for both females and males who participated in University Honors. In relation to required University Honors extracurricular events and graduation, the events were positively correlated with program completion for men.
- Although events were benefiting individuals differently, the overall affect was positive in relation to program completion and timely graduation.
- The most at risk of not completing the University Honors Program were majors within Engineering, Health and Human Services, and the Arts, in decreasing order.





Implications for Action

- Building from our now established baseline, data collection will be ongoing to continue to monitor and evaluate student success in UHP.
- The findings of this project will be used to guide specific programming and initiatives to better support specific populations within UHP.
- The findings of this project will encourage conversations and collaborations with departments and colleges, especially with Engineering, Health and Human Services, and the Arts.





Next Steps / Future Directions

- Honors will further review data to assess the relationship of specific events to Honors Program completion.
- Honors will identify other programs (beyond EOP) that supplement University Honors students.
- Honors will review which term(s) students leave University Honors and implications for the program.
- Honors will continue to review newer cohorts to determine trends within our data.





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