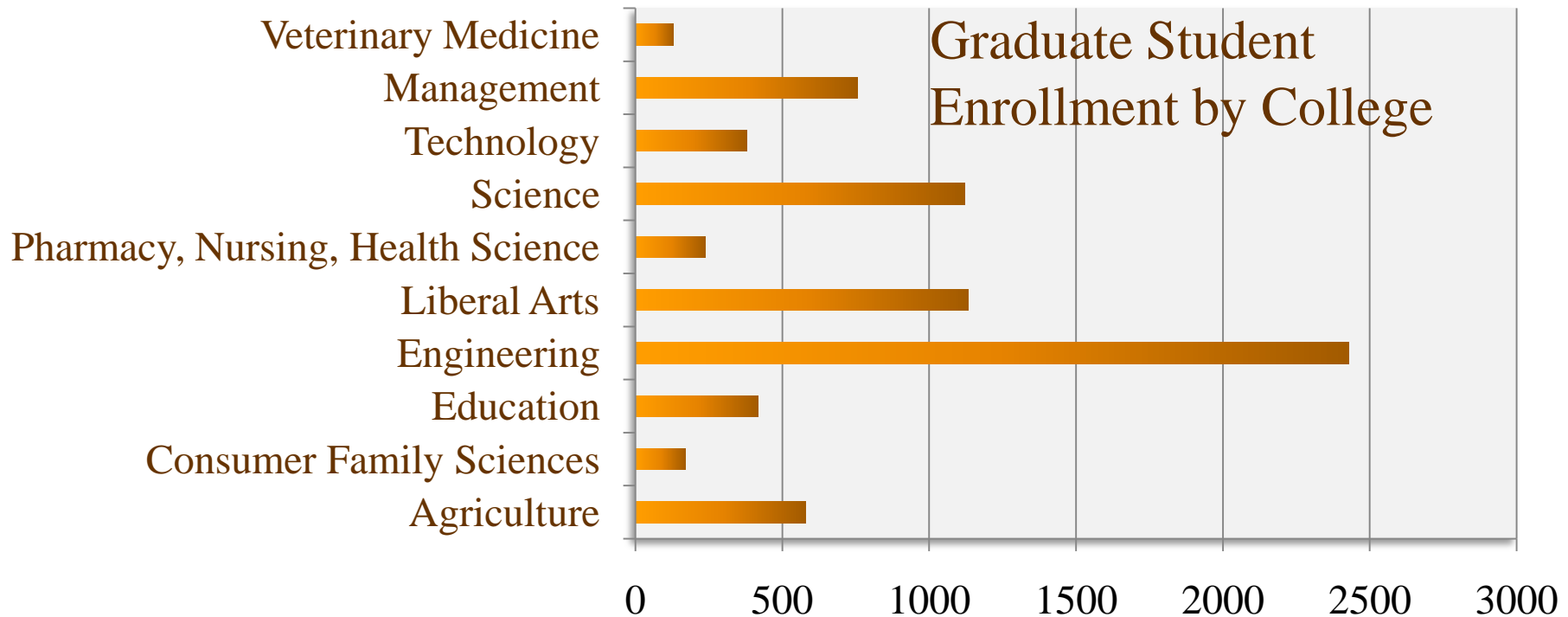# The Role and Status of the Master's Degree in STEM

Mark J. T. Smith
Dean of the Graduate School
Purdue University

About Purdue

- Public land-grant institution, founded in 1869
- 5 campuses, one graduate school
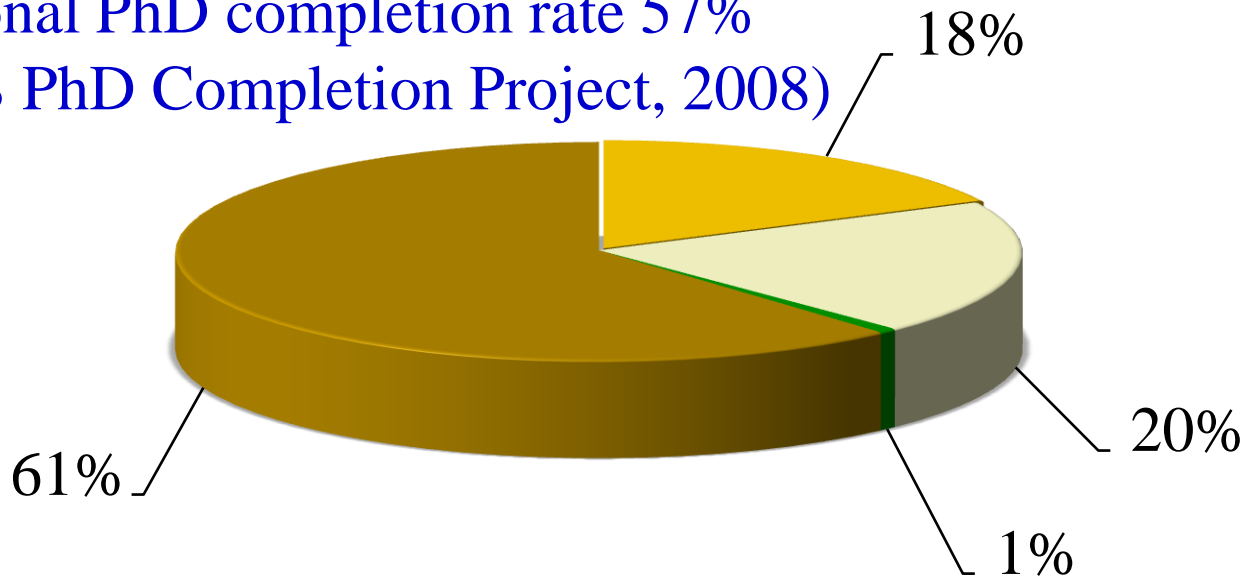- Main campus in West Lafayette

Graduate Student Enrollment by College

College	Enrollment
Veterinary Medicine	~120
Management	~760
Technology	~380
Science	~1100
Pharmacy, Nursing, Health Science	~230
Liberal Arts	~1120
Engineering	~2400
Education	~420
Consumer Family Sciences	~170
Agriculture	~580

Purdue University PhD Completion Data 10+ yrs

National PhD completion rate 57%
(CGS PhD Completion Project, 2008)

18%

20%

1%

61%

< 4 yrs   2.52%
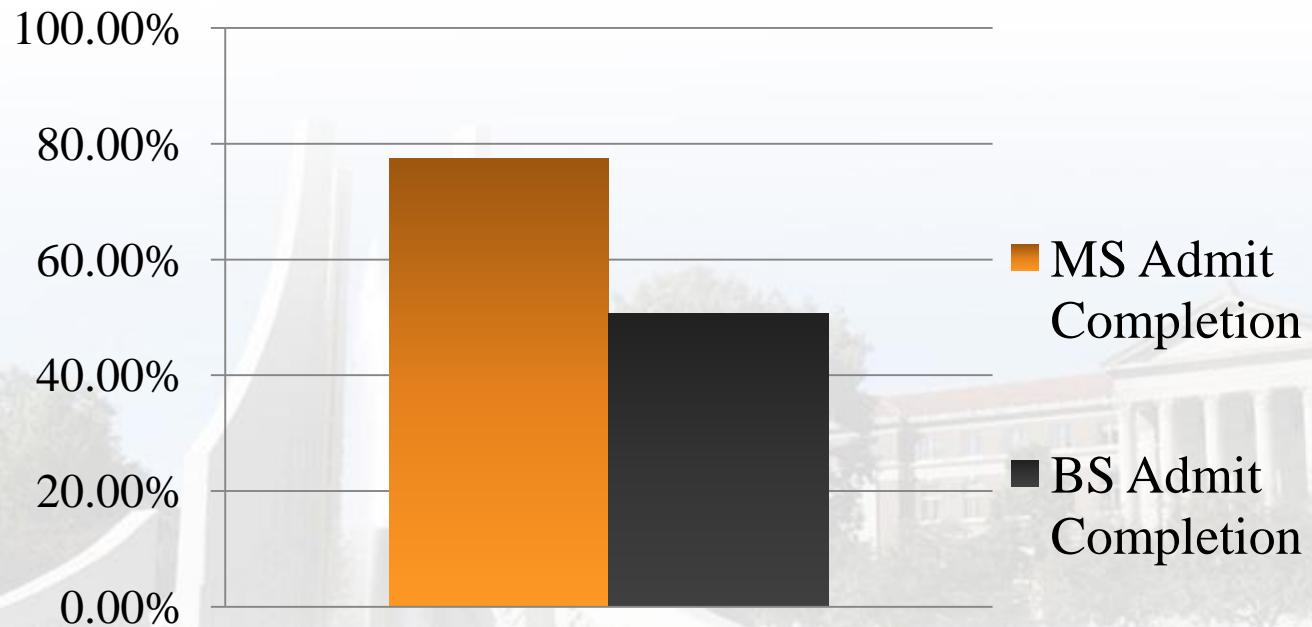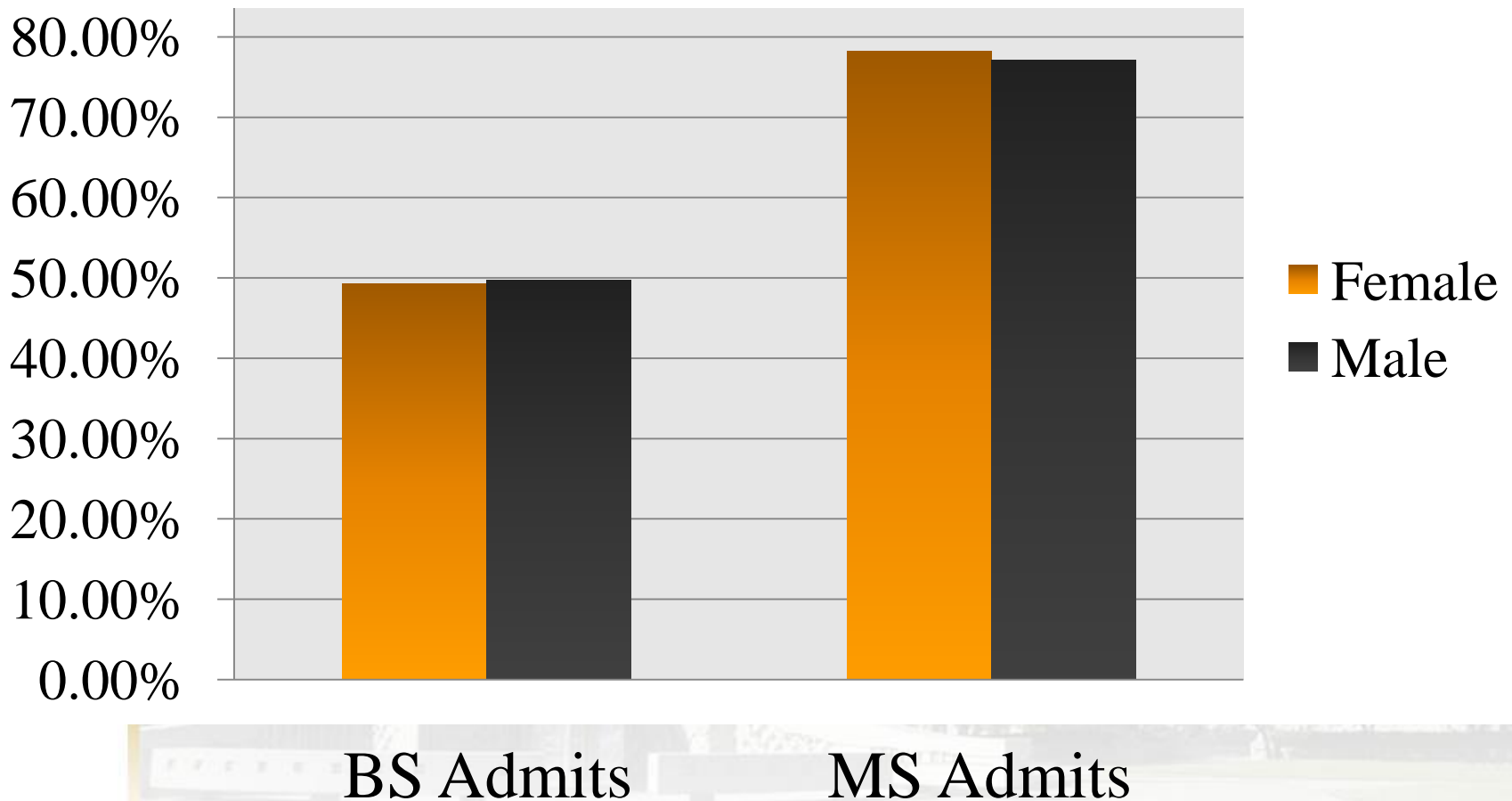4-6 yrs   41.61%
7-9 yrs   15.38%
>10 yrs   2.05%

Total   61.6%

- Left w/o Degree
- Left with Masters
- Still Enrolled
- Complete

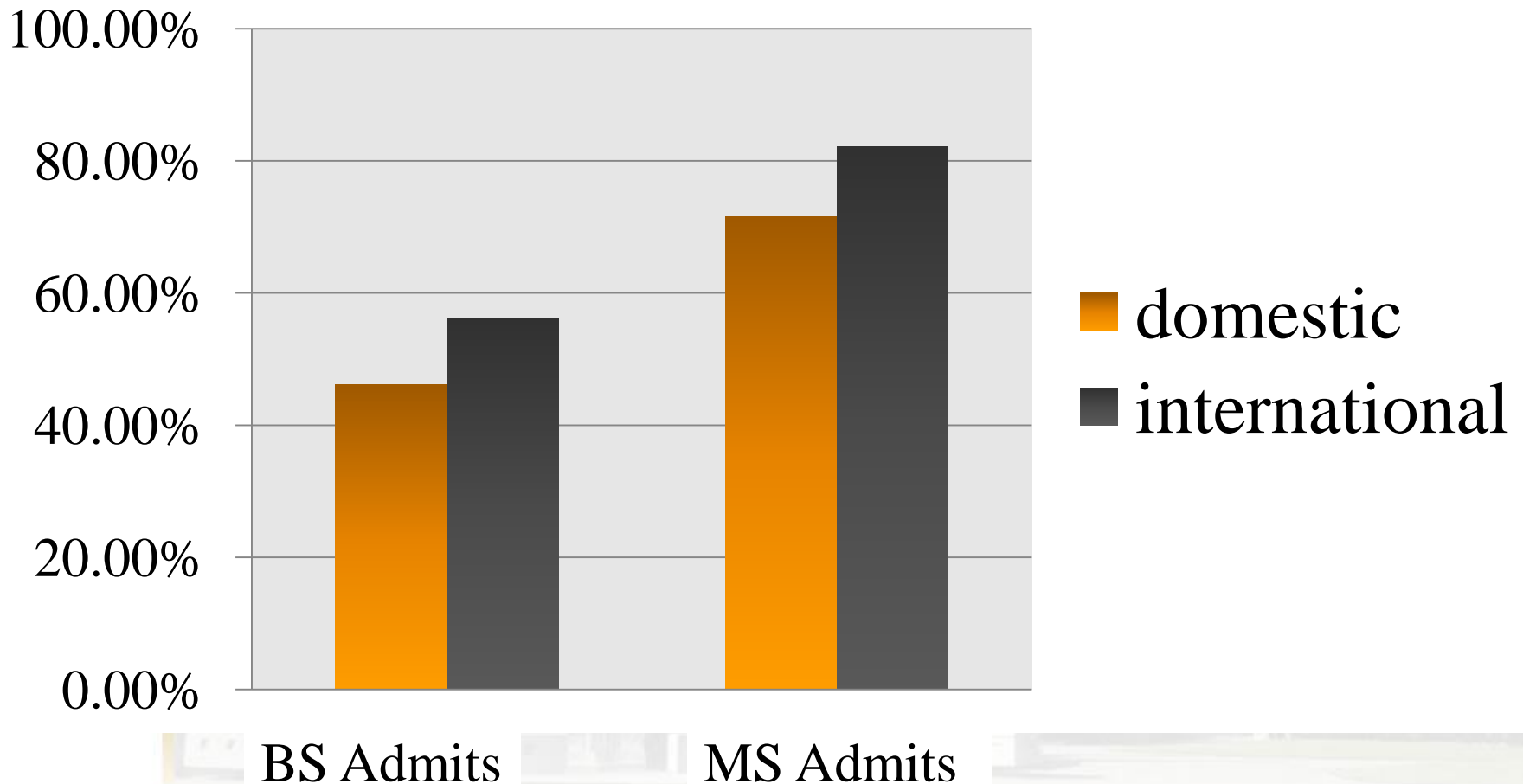Classes 96-2006 - 99-2009

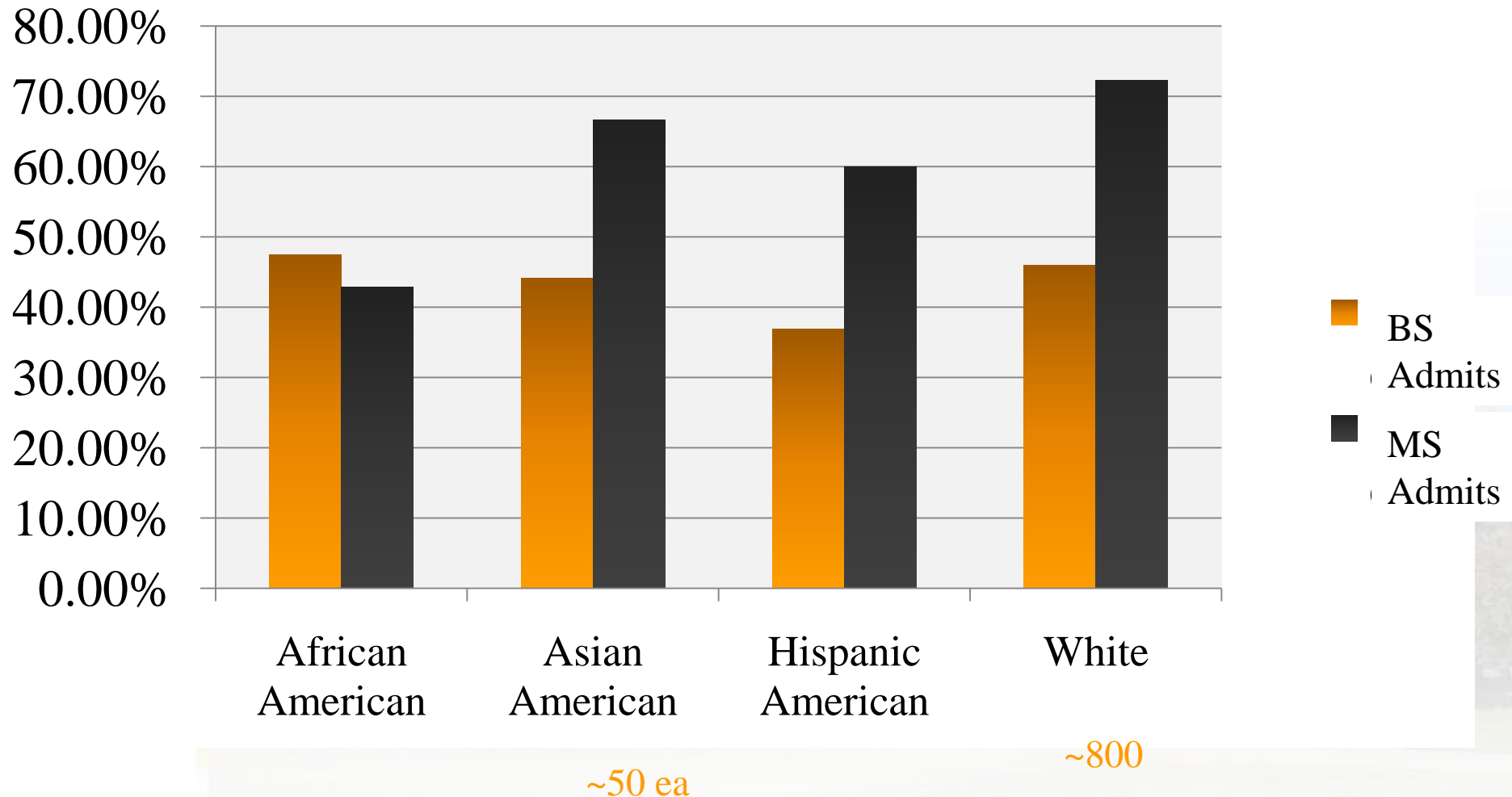# Purdue 10yr + PhD Completion Data 96-99 Cohorts

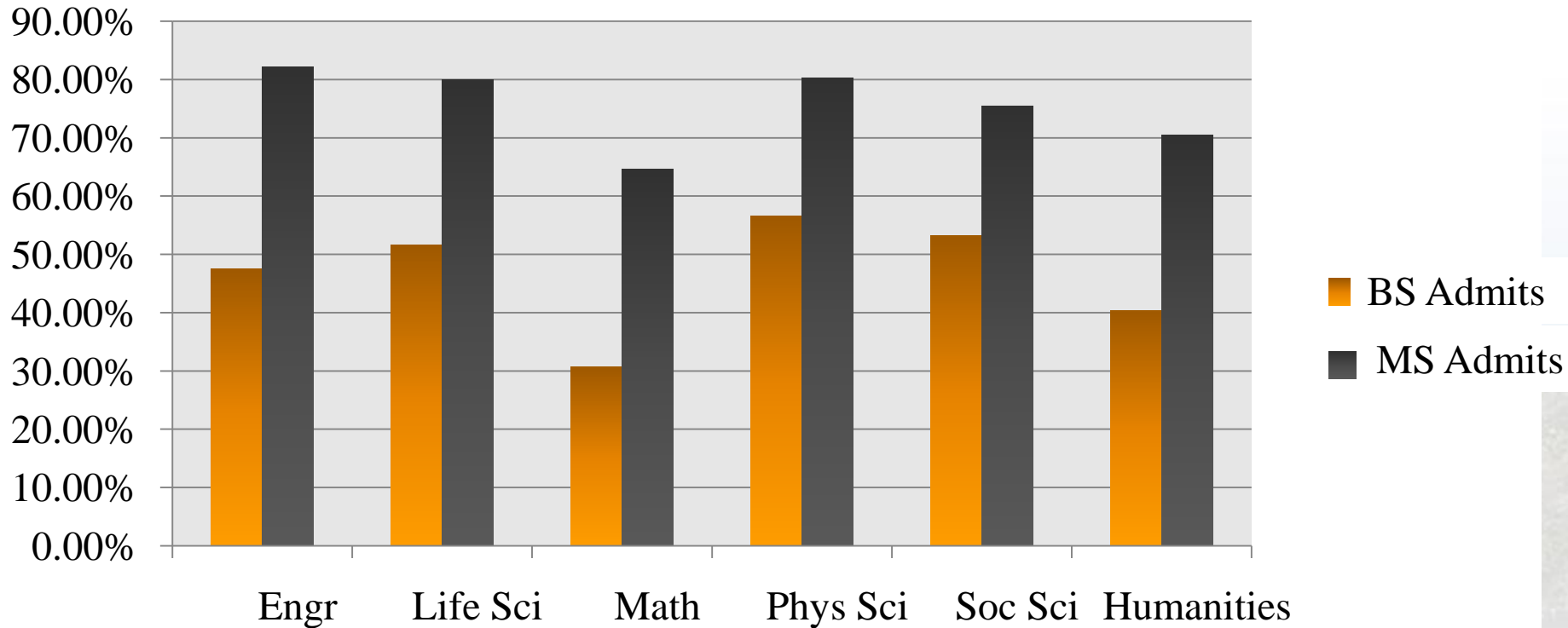# BS vs. MS Enrollee Completion for CGS Broad Categories by Gender

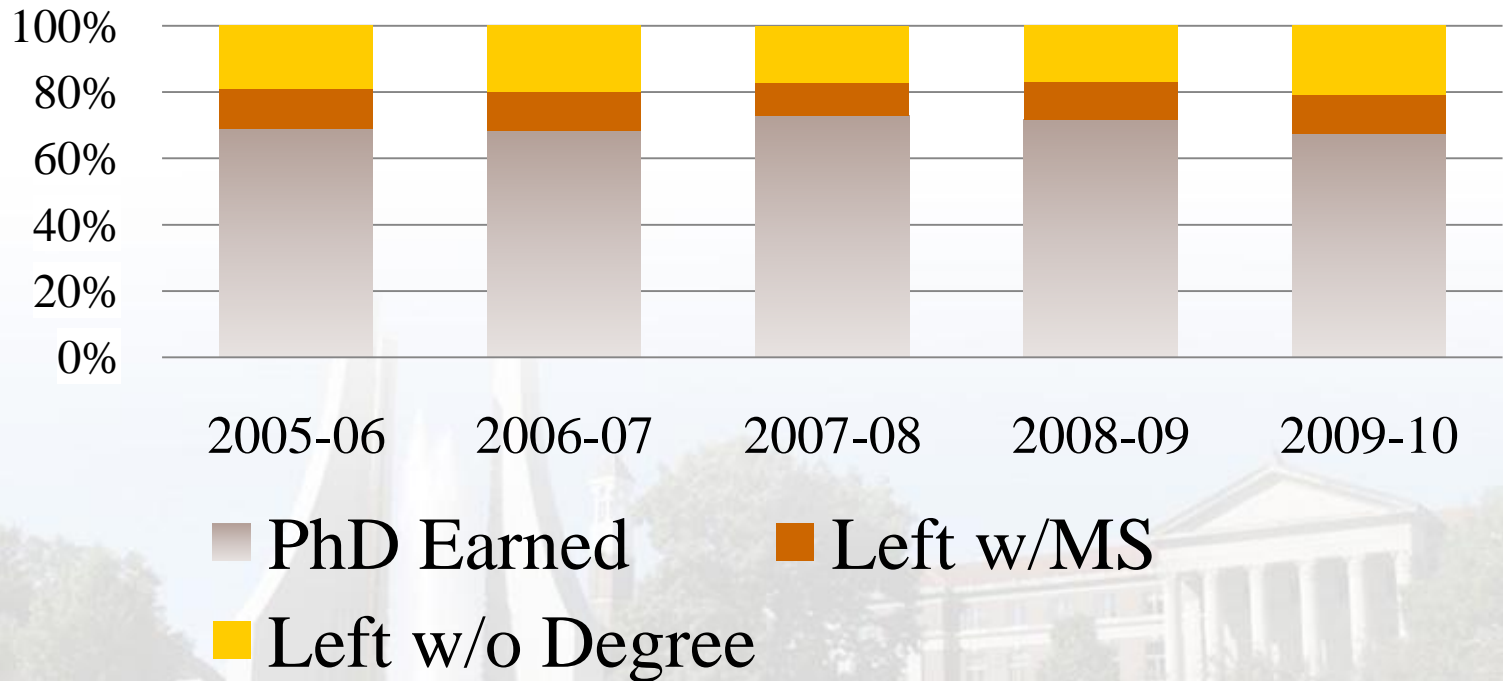# BS vs. MS Enrollee Completion for CGS Broad Categories by Citizenship/Residency

BS vs. MS Enrollee Completion for CGS Broad Categories by Race/Ethnicity

~50 ea

~800

BS vs. MS Enrollee Completion by Broad Discipline

PhD Students leaving the College of Engineering by Year

Computed by current year instead of by cohort.

Influential Factors

- Major Professors/Mentors
- Qualifying/Preliminary Exams
- Defined Research Project
- Academic Environment
- Personal/Family Related Stresses
- Financial Stresses
- Social Stresses

- Truth/accuracy in declaration for BS admits
- MS admits—aptitude correlation
- Software limitations in tracking
- Department culture variations

Conclusions