

Why Olin?

A look at why students decide to attend
Franklin W. Olin College of Engineering



Charleen Laughlin

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And so it begins...

- What are the differences in reasons why women and men decide to go into engineering?
 - Engineering is a way to help society (F)
 - Good at math + science (F)
 - Encouragement of a significant individual (F+M)
 - Money/prestige (M)
 - Tinkering experience (M)
 - Intrinsic interest (M)

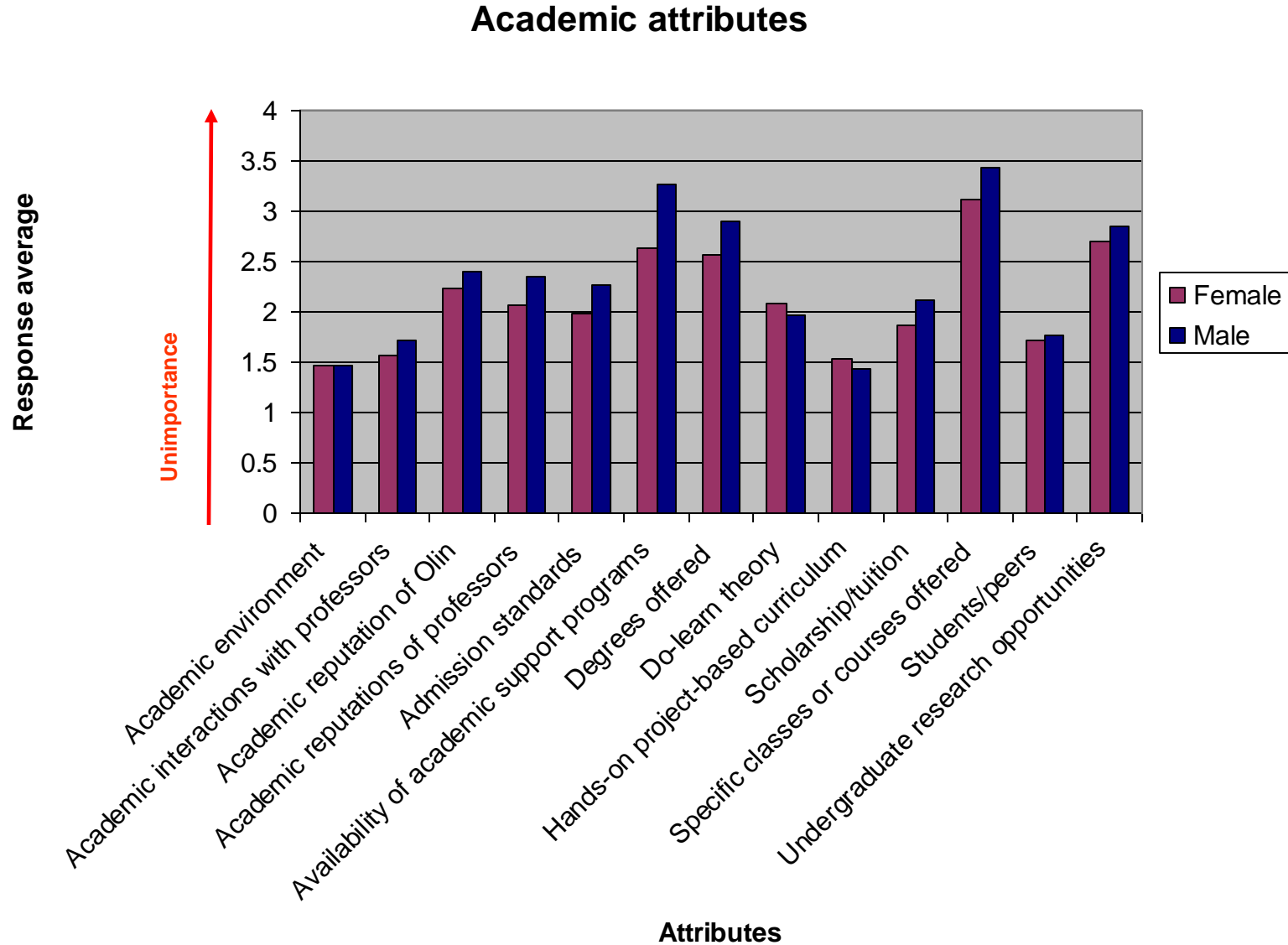
But wait!

- Do the reasons why women and men decide to Olin College also differ?
- What attributes of Olin College attract students?
- Perhaps... social/societal attributes will be more important than academic attributes?

Methods & Procedure

- Survey
 - Rate on a scale of importance
 - Academic attributes
 - Social attributes
 - Open-ended response questions
 - Favorite
 - Least favorite
 - Reservations
- Analysis
 - Average response (anything below 2 important)
 - Looked more closely at variances of 0.2 between male/female average response
 - Coding into category and sub-category for open-ended response

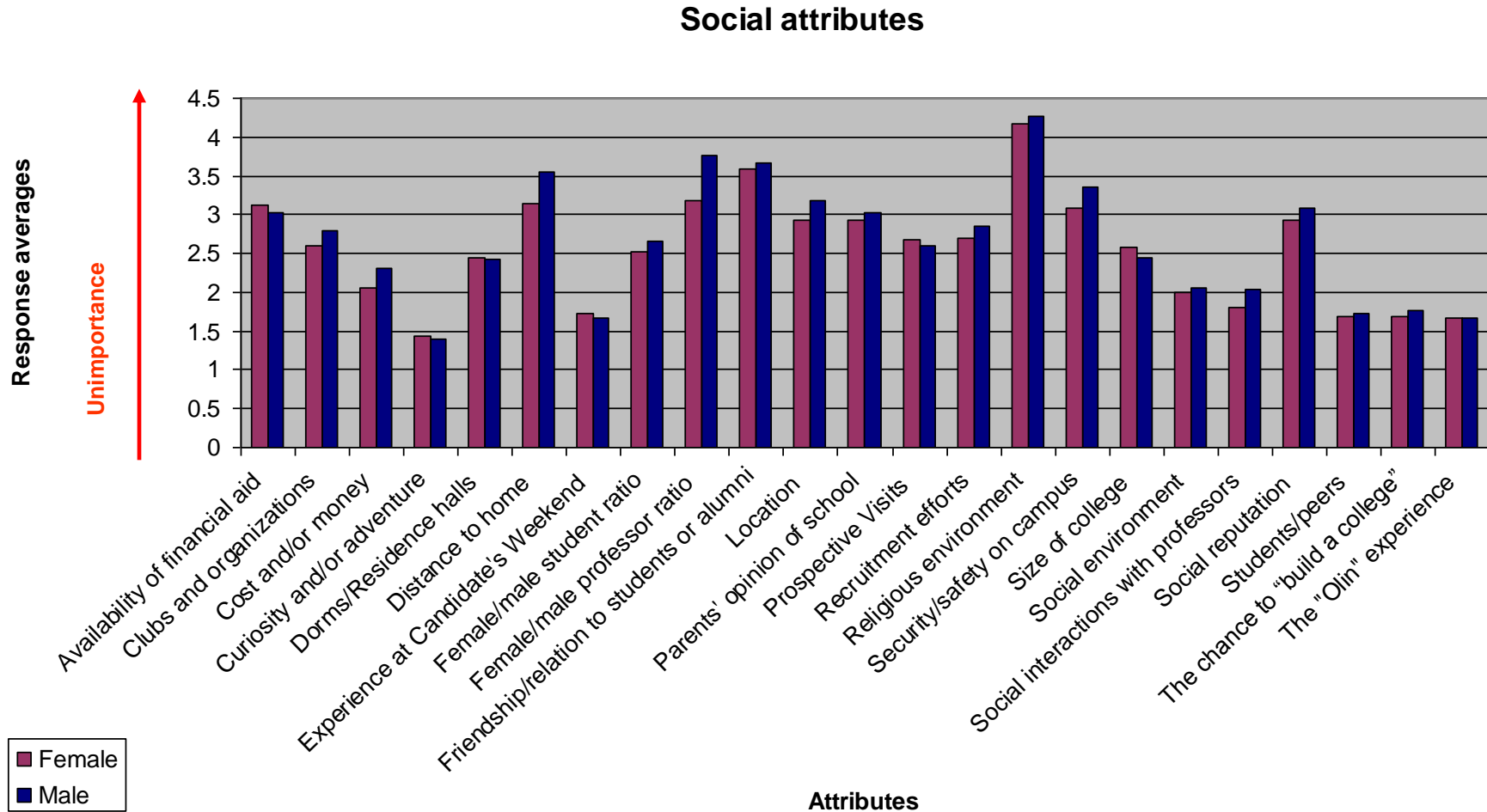
Academic attributes



Most important academic

- Academic environment
- Academic interactions with professors
- Do-learn theory
- Hands-on, project-based curriculum
- Students/peers

Social attributes

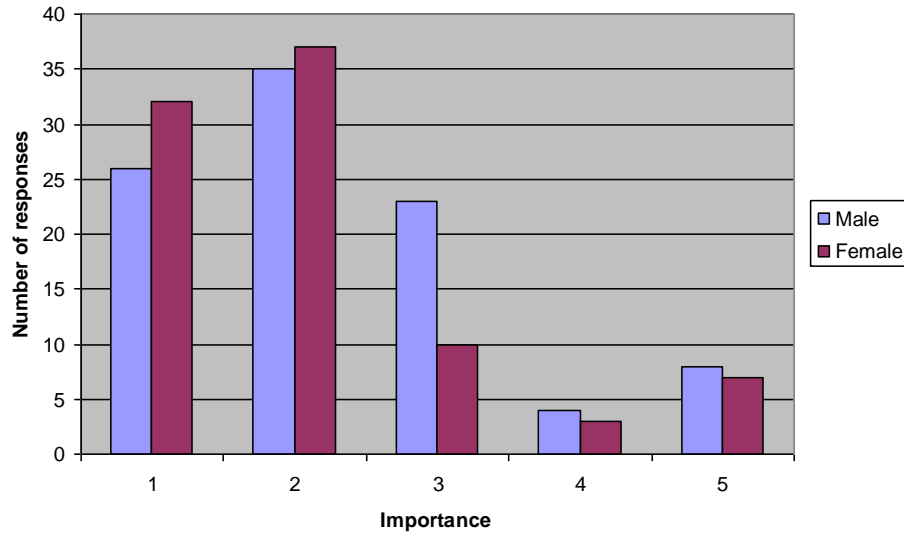


Most important social

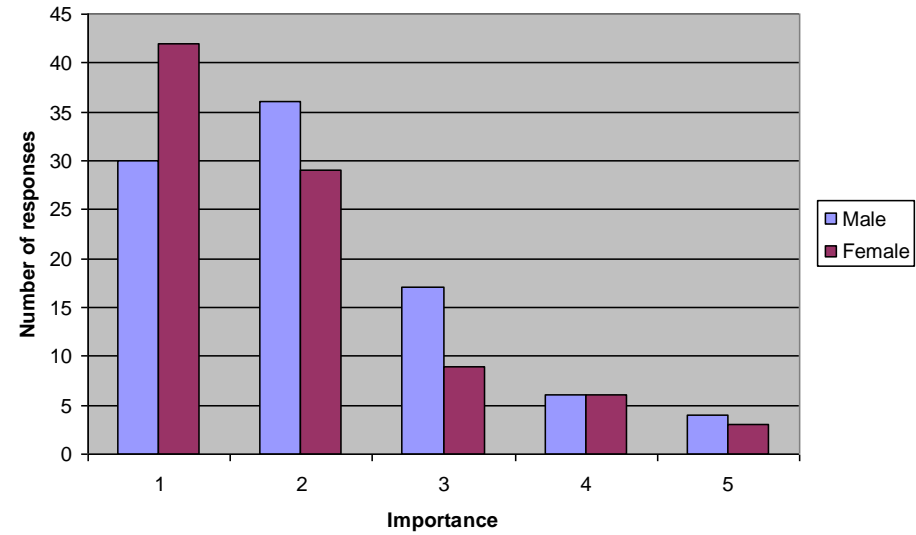
- Curiosity and/or adventure
- Experience at Candidate's weekend
- Social environment
- Social interactions with professors
- Students/peers
- The chance to “build a college”
- The “Olin” experience

A closer look: \$\$\$

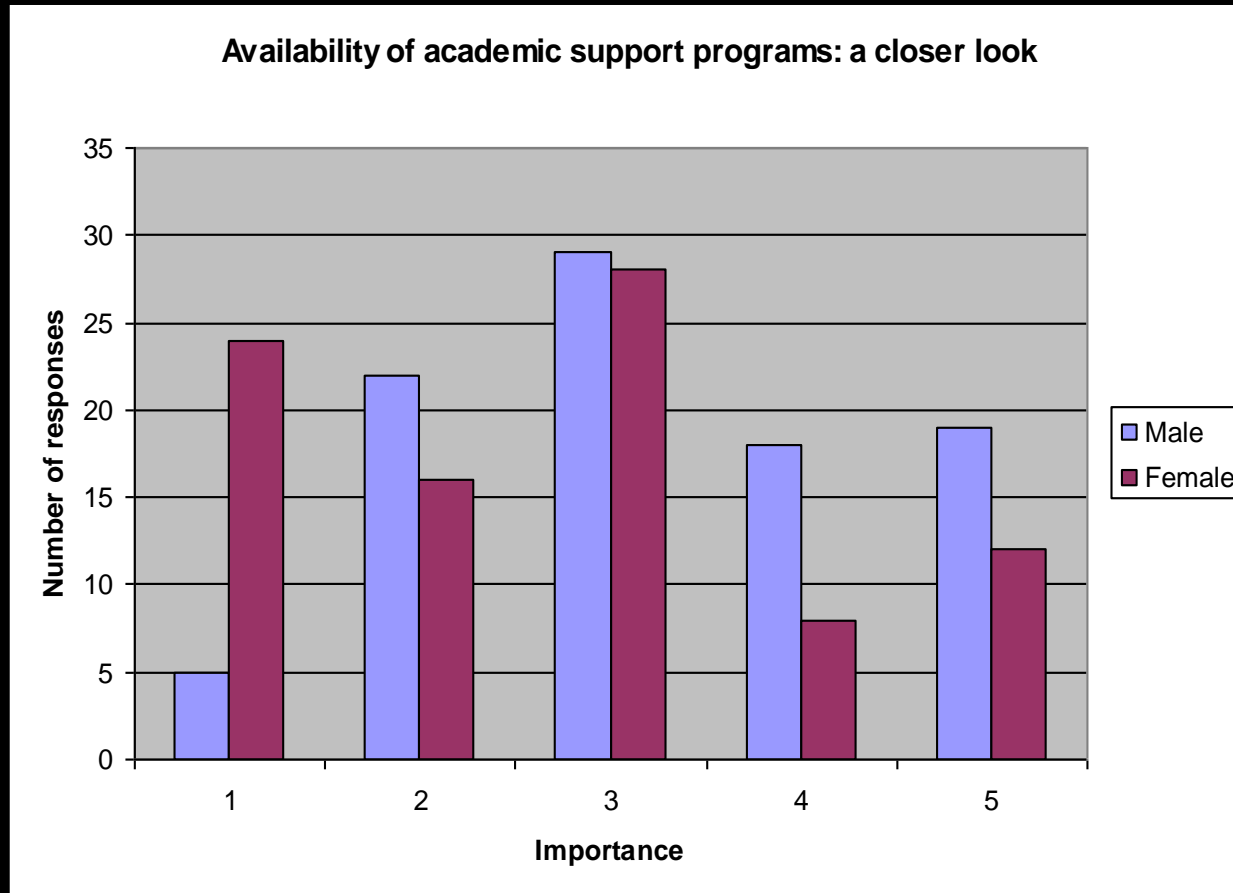
Cost and/or money: a closer look



Scholarship/tuition: a closer look



A closer look: academic support



Conclusions

- Data refutes my hypothesis – there are no significant differences in the reasons male and female students attend Olin College
- BUT:
 - Does money provide an extra impetus for females?
 - What do academic support programs mean?

Limitations

- Too little time!
- Too many other things to do!
- Survey could have been better designed
- Did not ask follow-up questions
- “Knowing it all”

Future directions

- Look at differences between classes
- Survey another school
- Compare Olin to another school
- Re-design/tweak survey
- Look just into scholarship/tuition
- How certain are students who want to come to Olin?

Most favoritest things 😊

- Professors
- Opportunities
- Campus
- Community/Honor Code
- Academic
 - Rigorous curriculum
 - Classes, hands-on, project-based
 - Research + cross-registration

Least favorite things ☹️

- Bureaucracy
- Size
- Moving away from initial vision
- Immature community
- Too much:
 - Work
 - Stress
- Not enough:
 - Sleep
 - Time
- Academic
 - Weak classes
 - Too traditional
 - Disproportionate Olin triangle

Reservations

- Size
- Studying only engineering
- Too hard?
- Newness of it all
- Would Olin succeed?