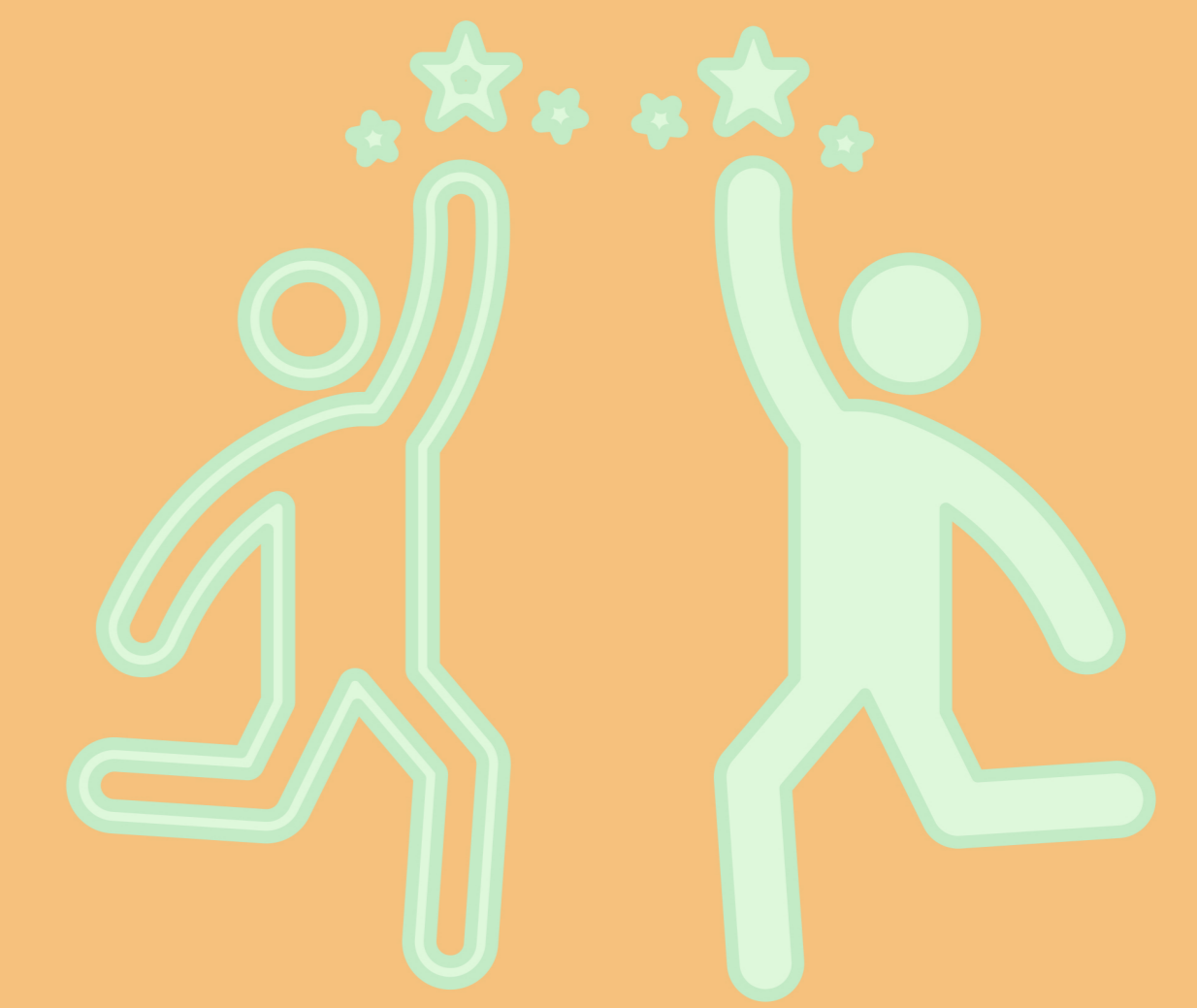# Peer Into Success

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Problem

WPI first year students struggle with academic self-confidence and efficacy. These affect academic success and overall wellbeing.

Definitions

Self-confidence: One's trust in their abilities, qualities, and judgment

Efficacy: One's belief in being able to successfully execute a task to obtain a certain outcome

Solution

Improve the Peer Learning Mentor program by developing guidelines that expand focus to self-confidence and efficacy.

Sources

Moses, J., & Escolas, J. (2002). *Ambition, confidence, focus and academic performance*. Worcester: Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

Stupnisky, R.H., Renaud, R.D., Perry, R.P. *et al*. Comparing self-esteem and perceived control as predictors of first-year college students' academic achievement. *Soc Psychol Educ* 10, 303–330 (2007). https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-007-9020-4

Kim, S. C., Oliveri, D., Riingen, M., Taylor, B., & Rankin, L. 2013). Randomized controlled trial of graduate-to-undergraduate student mentoring program. *Journal of Professional Nursing, 29*(6), e43-e49.
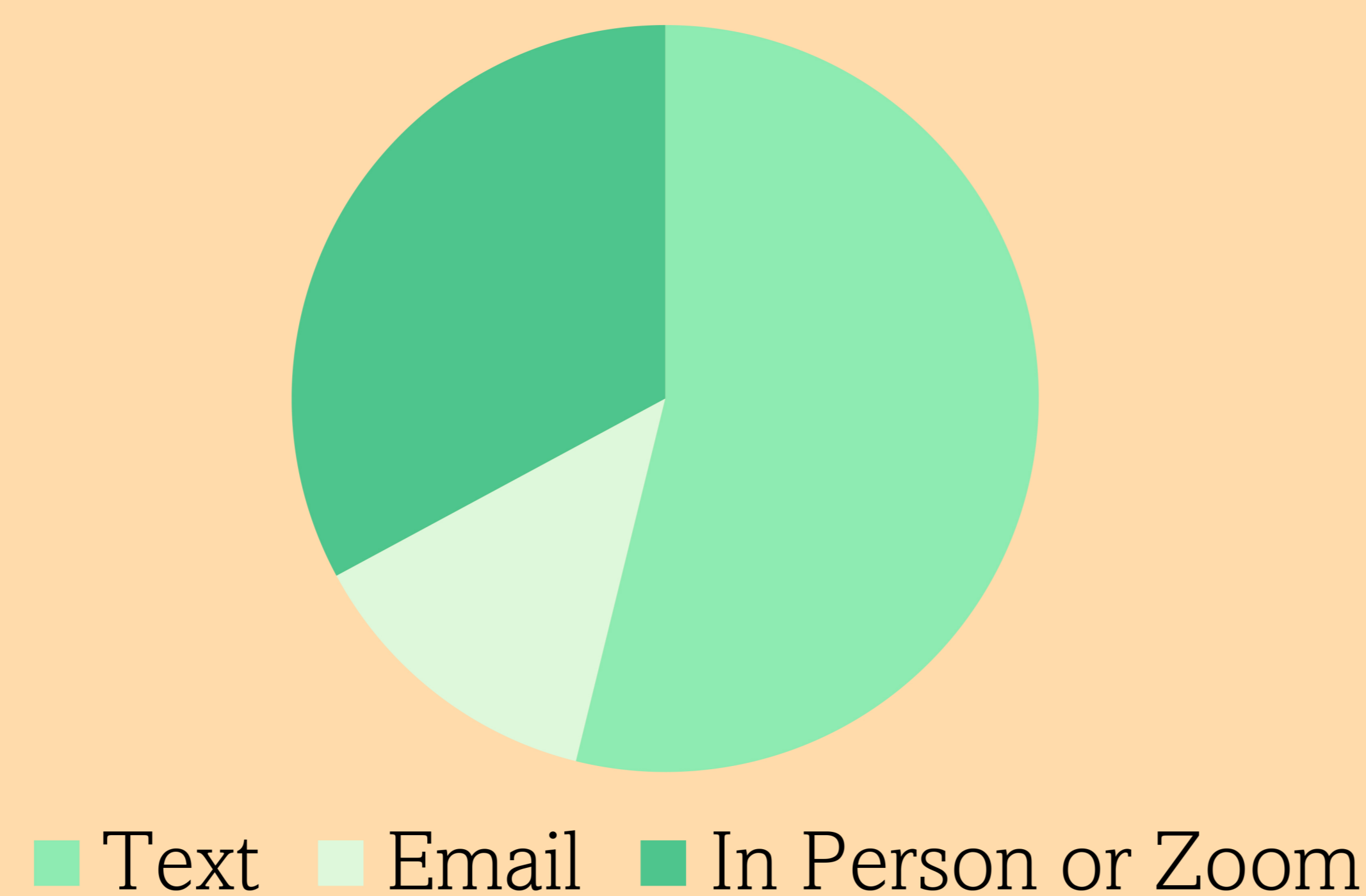
Peer Learning Mentor Program

Connects underclassmen with upperclassmen in their major. Builds networking skills and prepares underclassmen for internships and jobs. Implemented in D term of the 2020-2021 academic year.

Percentage of Sessions where Topic was Discussed

How Sessions Occurred

Text   Email   In Person or Zoom
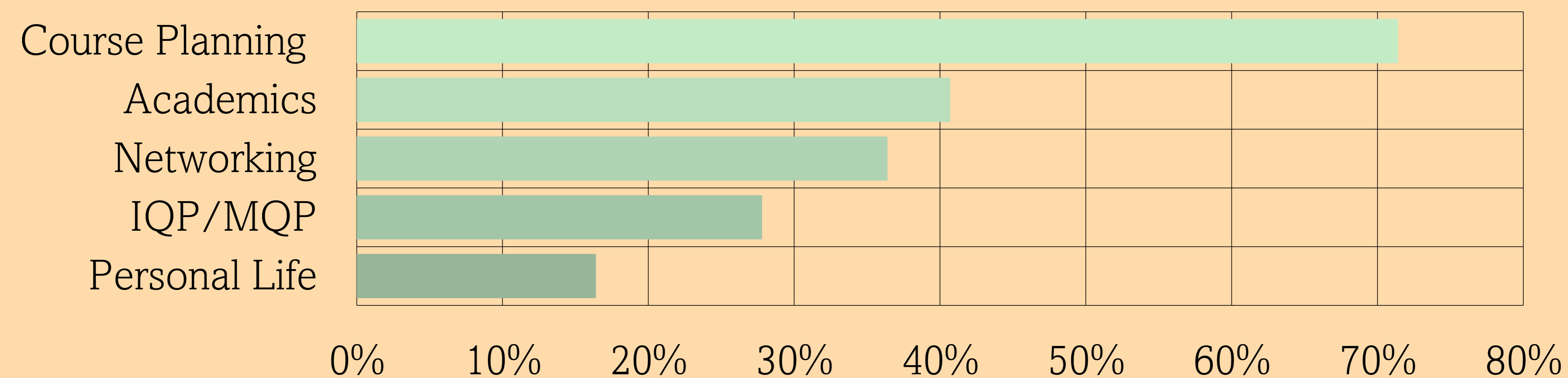
Lack of Guidelines

- "I'd appreciate if the mentors could be given some big-picture guidance on what topics to cover."

Unstructured

- "Guidance on what pairings should look like."

Mental Health

- Many mentors did not know how to appropriately respond to their mentee's mental health struggles.

Conclusions

The revisions introduced to the PLM program have created more balanced and organized meetings. This will expand the scope of PLM to better address self-confidence and efficacy. This allows the program to contribute to improved academic success and overall wellbeing of first-years at WPI.

Methodology

Analyze current self-confidence trends in WPI first-years

Improve guidelines for PLM program; list new topics for mentor coverage

Train mentors using new guidelines

Collect feedback from mentors and mentees

Compare data to measure success of new guidelines

Acknowledgements