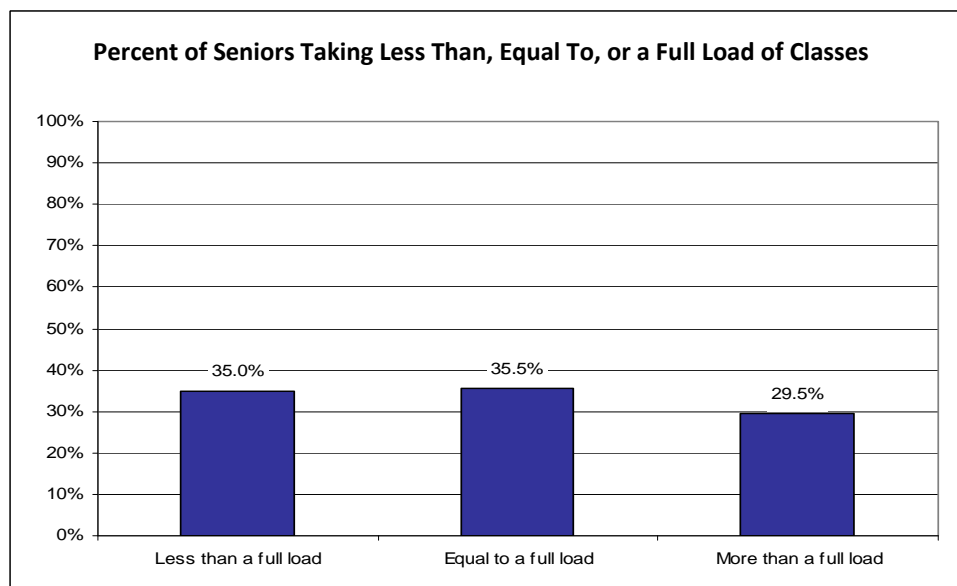
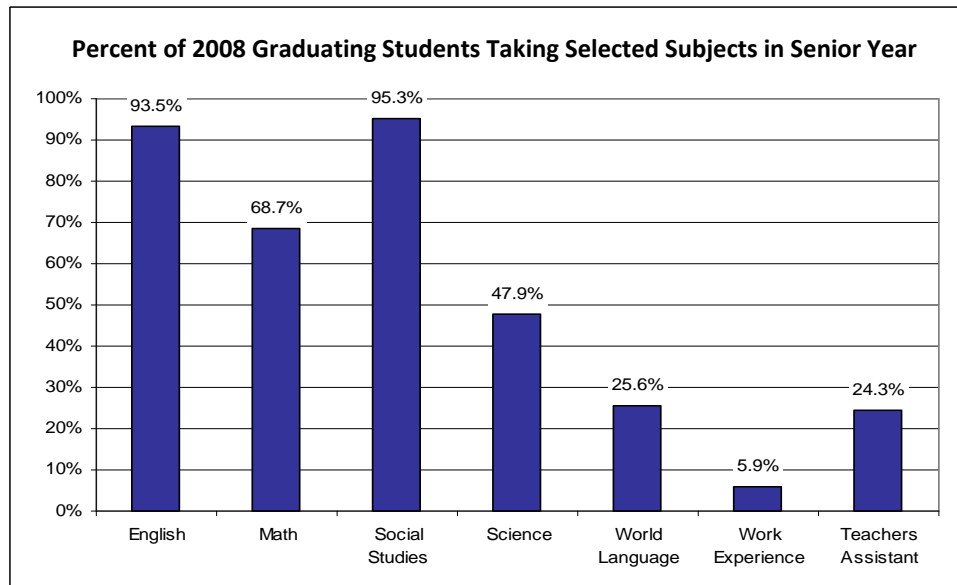




What are Students Taking in Their Senior Year?¹



¹ In 2007, the State Board of Education conducted a study to determine what course credits students were *required* to take in order to graduate from high school. In 2008, the Board commissioned a transcript study by the BERC Group to determine what course credits students in the graduating class of 2008 were actually *taking*. The BERC Group examined course-taking patterns of 14,875 high school seniors from 100 schools in 100 districts. Every county was represented in the sample. The minimum HEC Board requirements were used because they provide a standard, measurable metric of comparison in Washington State. Both the graduation requirements database of all 246 districts with high schools and the full transcript study can be found on the Board's Web site at: <http://sbe.wa.gov>.

Notes:

- A full load was defined by each school—whatever the school deemed to be a “full load” based on its schedule.
- Seniors taking less than a full load:
 - Had the fewest failed classes of the three groups
 - Had the highest GPA of the three groups
- Seniors taking more than a full load:
 - 26.7% failed 2 or more classes
 - 23.2% enrolled in Running Start
 - Many took additional electives, particularly in the fine arts

Questions for Discussion

- What stands out for you about this data?
- Seniors taking less than a full load had the highest GPA of the three groups. What does your school do to encourage seniors to participate fully in their senior year?
- Some students took more than a full load. How does your school schedule accommodate these students?
- Almost a quarter of the seniors in the sample were serving as TAs as part of their course load. Who benefits from this practice?