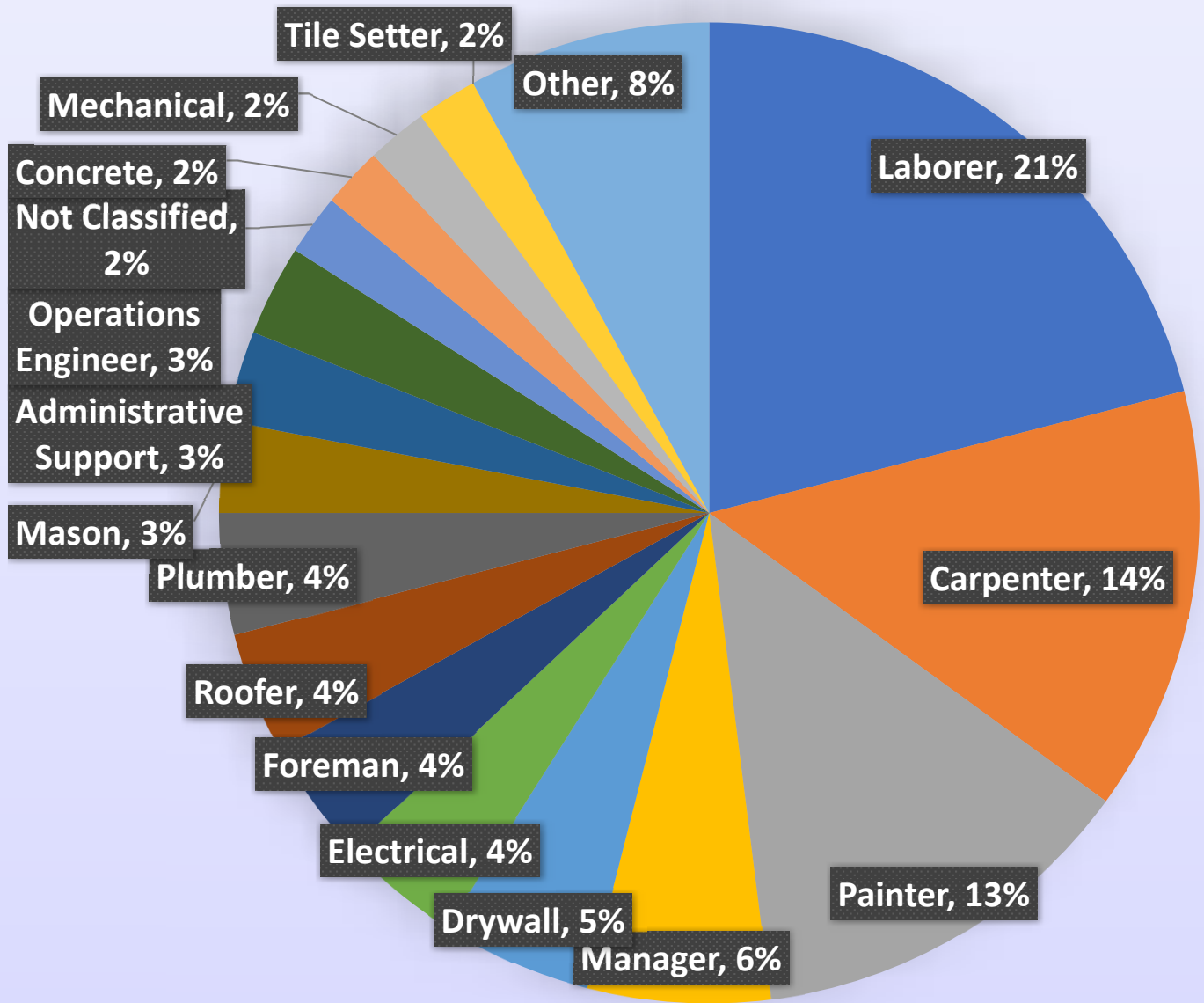


Cost-Benefit Analysis of Studying Spanish and Construction in Tandem

Does Spanish bilingualism have measurable fiscal value in the U.S. construction industry? Studying and becoming proficient in Spanish is feasible, affordable, and can be accomplished at Cal Poly in conjunction with a Construction Management major. In a dynamic industry that values versatile employees, where communication is key to success, the capability of speaking Spanish is a substantial value-add in the workforce. Using qualitative and quantitative data analysis, it is concluded that individuals who possess English and Spanish-speaking abilities in the U.S. construction industry can expect a 3 percent wage premium when compared to English-only speakers. This study weighs the costs associated with acquiring a Spanish minor and the requisite increase in salary.



Distribution of Hispanic Construction Workers



Key Words: Spanish, Construction, Salary, College, Value-Add

Cal Poly Spanish Minor Coursework

Intermediate Spanish II	Intermediate Spanish III	Introduction to Spanish Linguistics
Advanced Composition in Spanish	Significant Works in Spanish	Advanced Literature in Spanish

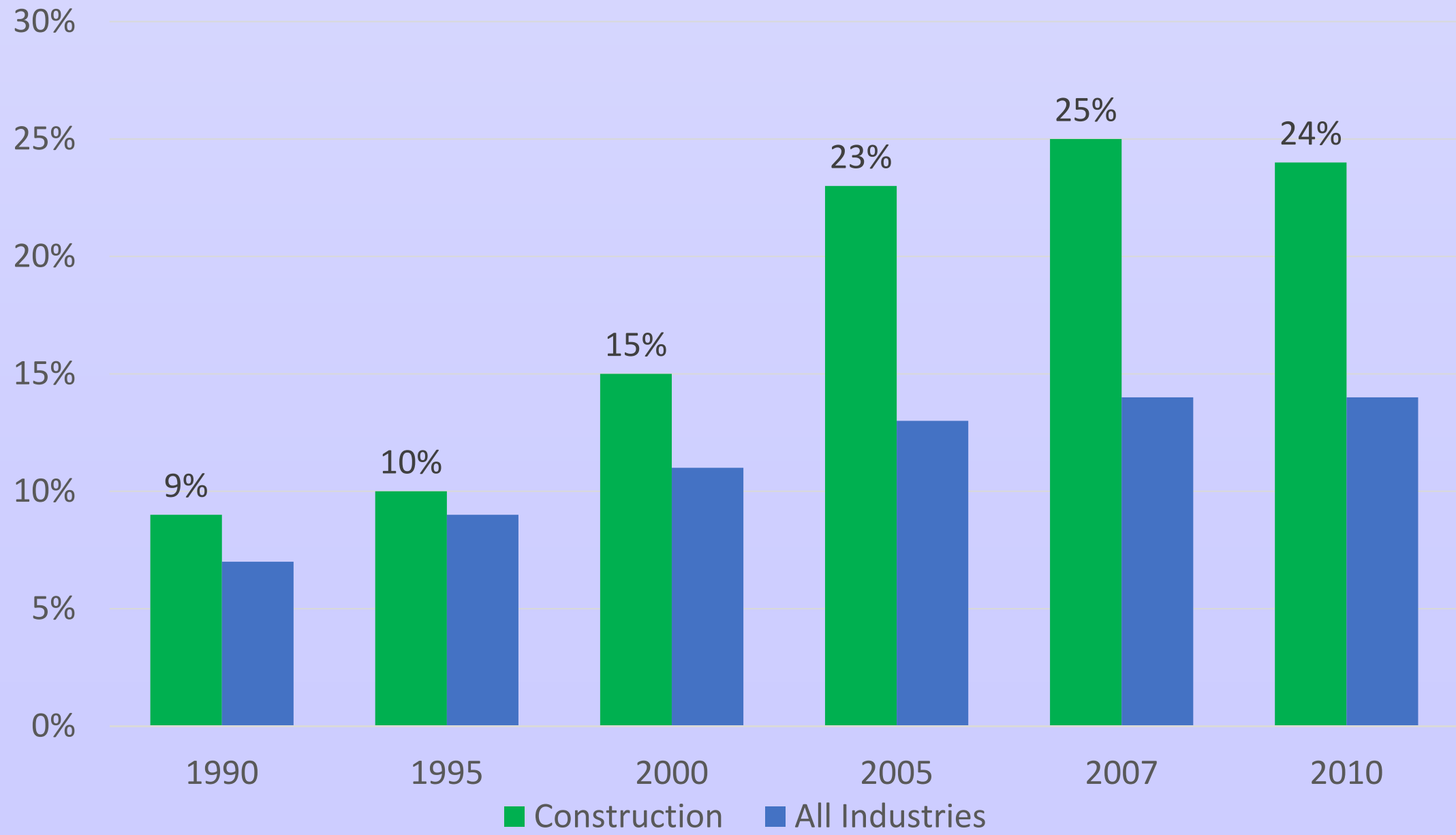
The Industry’s Growing Demand

In an industry where Hispanic laborers greatly outnumber Hispanics managers, there is an increasing demand for Spanish-speaking construction managers. The lack of bilingual management personnel leads to miscommunication and productivity losses on jobsites. Individuals that are pursuing degrees and careers in construction have the opportunity to fill a major void in the market as employers realize the value of bilingualism, especially English-Spanish. The students that choose to supplement their Construction knowledge with Spanish can expect higher wages and will be more sought after than other English-only candidates.

The Negative Effects of Language Barriers

Language barriers create a number of negative effects on construction job-sites. For one, the English-Spanish language barrier has a pronounced effect on the safety of Hispanic workers as they are at a much higher risk of injury or death. Communication accounts for many of the risks that Hispanic workers face, as many workers are prone to misinterpretations with instructions. Another area that is greatly affected on construction job-sites is productivity. Language barriers create confusion on the field because of the coordination required with management personnel. Unfortunately, Hispanic construction professionals are underrepresented in management positions, making it difficult for laborers to communicate effectively.

Hispanic Workers as a Percentage in Construction, All Industries



Return on Investment of Spanish Bilingualism

