



Program Review - Overall Report

Instructional: Political Science

2021 - 2024

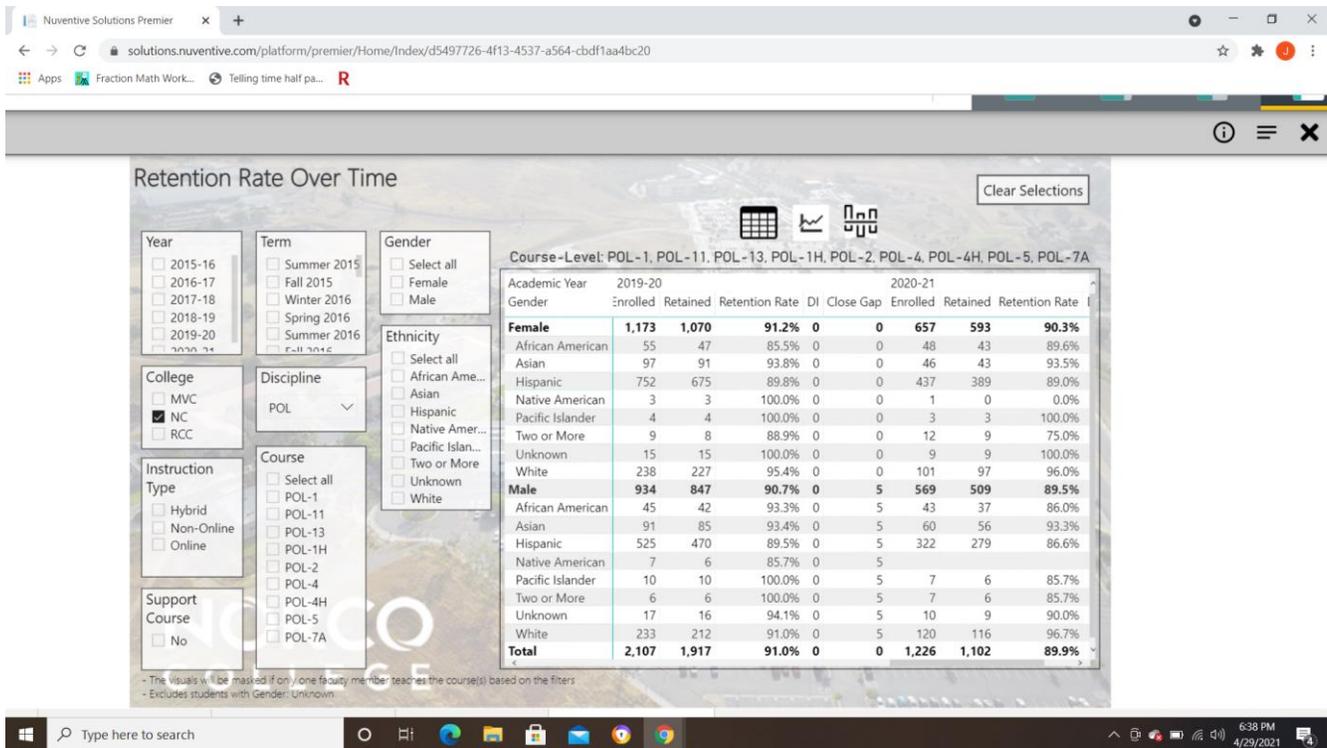
Overall Trends

What overall trends do you see in success, retention, program of study, educational planning, and awards over the past 3 or more years?

I. Retention Rates

First, beginning with retention rates over time, they have been stable and have gradually increased over the 5-year period from 2015-2020. They ranged from 86.8% to 91%. Overall retention in NC POLS classes was 88.7% in 2015-16, 88.5% in 2016-17, 86.8% in 2017-18, 87.9% in 2018-19, and 91% in 2019-2020, and 89.9% in 2020-21. The NC POLS retention rates are higher than the RCCD average retention rates that range between 80-85%, as well as being higher than the Norco average for all disciplines of 83-86%. They are also higher than the POLS discipline average of 82-84% for all three colleges. Moreover, the NC discipline's retention rate has remained high, at 91% and 90%, during the pandemic and the transition to online learning.

When disaggregating the data by gender, retention for females ranged from 85-91%. It was 87.8% in 2015, 88.4% in 2016, 85% in 2017, 88% in 2018, 91% in 2019, and 90% in 2020-2021. Similarly, retention rates for males were also stable ranging from 87% to 90%. In 2015, the male retention rate was 89.9%, it was 88.6% in 2016, 88.8% in 2017, 87.7% in 2018, 90.7% in 2019, and 89.5% in 2020-2021.



II. Success Rates

Second, turning to success rates, they have also been stable and range between 70 and 81% between 2015 - 2021. Student success rates have generally been stable or improving over the last 5 years. Norco College POLS

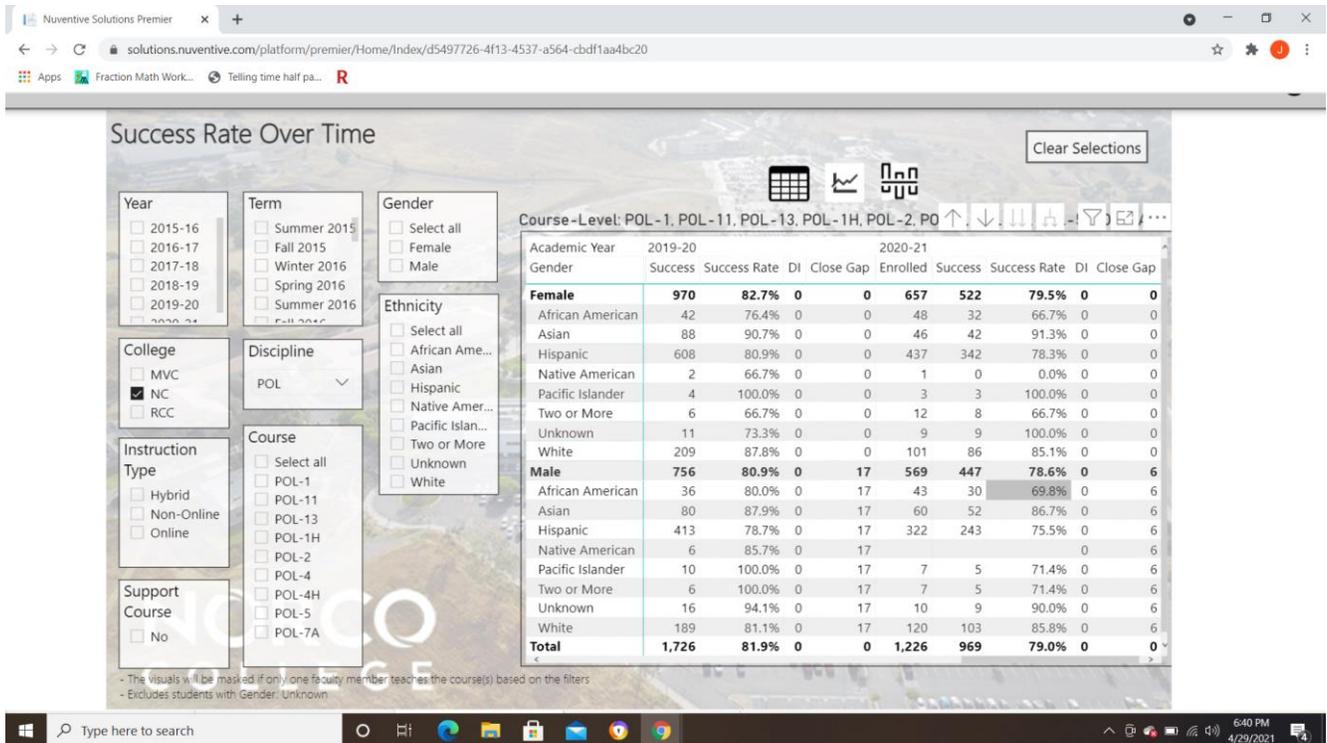
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student success rates were 74% 2015-16, 71.3% in 2016-17, 71% in 2017-18, 70.4% in 2018 -19, 81.9% in 2019-2020, and remained high at 79% in 2020-21, during the pandemic. The average student success rate for POLS students at Norco College over the 5-year period was 74%, which is higher than the NC average of 71% for all disciplines.

Indeed, the NC POLS success rates (70 - 81%) were typically higher than the Norco College average for all disciplines 69% - 72%, and the RCCD average for all disciplines 66% - 68%. They were also higher than the POLS discipline average success rates, which ranged from 62% to 70% during the last 5 years at the three colleges. Also, as was the case with retention, NC POLS student success rate during the 2019-20 pandemic's shift to online learning 82%, and is significantly higher than the RCCD 68% and the Norco College average for all disciplines at 71%.

When disaggregating the data by gender, the success rates among females ranged between 71% - 83%. Success rates for males ranged between 68% and 81% and averaged 73.9% between 2015-20. Turning to the annual data, the success rate for females was 74.4% vs. 73.9% for males in 2015-16. Similarly, the success rate for females was 71.8% vs. 70.8% for males in 2016-17. The success rate was 71.2% for females to 70.8% for males in 2017-18. In 2018-19, the female success rate was 72% vs. 68% for males. In 2019-2020, the success rate for females was 82.7% to 80.9% for male students. Similarly, the success rate for females was 79.5 and 78.6% for males, in 2020-21. The average success rate over the 5 year period was 75% for female students and 73% for male POLS students at Norco College.

In sum, the female average student success rate was 75% during this five year period, and 73% for males taking POLS courses at Norco College. This is in comparison to the average 68% female and 68% male success rate among all RCCD disciplines, and the Norco College averages of 72% and 71% for our female and male students.



III. Student Education Plans

Third, with regard to student education plans, 13% of students developed a comprehensive plan on average over the years since 2015, with the trend increasing from 1.85% in 2015 to 11.6% in 2016 to 12.5% in 2017, to 18% in 2019. This is twice the rate of the average number of SEPs for all Norco College programs.

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Similarly, the POLS average of 83.5% of students who did not complete a SEP in the term is better than the Norco College average of 88% of students who did not complete the SEP that term. In terms of tangible actions within the POLS discipline, the discipline lead will reach out to all POLS faculty to request that they mentor and advise their students to meet with counselors to get a SEP to promote their ability to choose a path and stay on their academic course.

IV. Students' Active Program of Study

Fourth, with regard to POLS students' active program of study, in 2015-16 there were 54. There were 86 in 2016-17, and increased to 112 in 2017-18, and 123 in 2018-19. Students reached 177 in 2019-20. In sum, the number of POLS students has tripled from 54 in 2015-16 to 177 in 2019-20.

V. Program Awards

Finally, turning to program awards, in 2015-16, there were 4. In 2016-17 there were 7. In 2017-18 there were 9. In 2018-19 there were 10 and 6 in 2019-20. There was a total of 36 program awards between 2015-2020.

Program of Study and Student Educational Plan

Program of Study

- Medical Transcription
- Mobile Application Development
- Music
- Nursing
- Office Management
- Office Technology/Office Computer Ap...
- Other Business and Management
- Other Engineering and Related Industr...
- Paralegal
- Philosophy
- Physical Education
- Physical Education, Health & Wellness
- Physicians Assistant
- Physics
- Political Science
- Pre-Engineering
- Psychology
- Real Estate

-Active program of study and student educational plan completion for each annual year enrolled

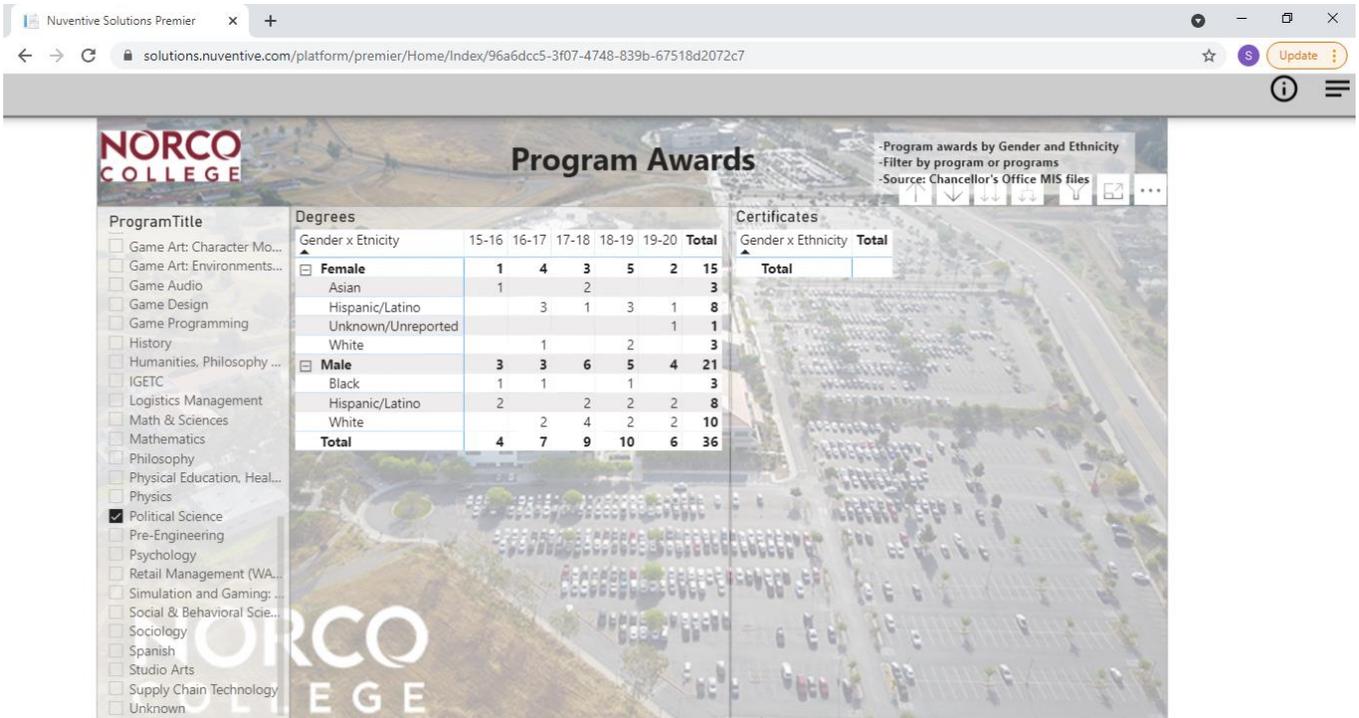
-Filter by program or programs

-Source: Chancellor's Office MIS files

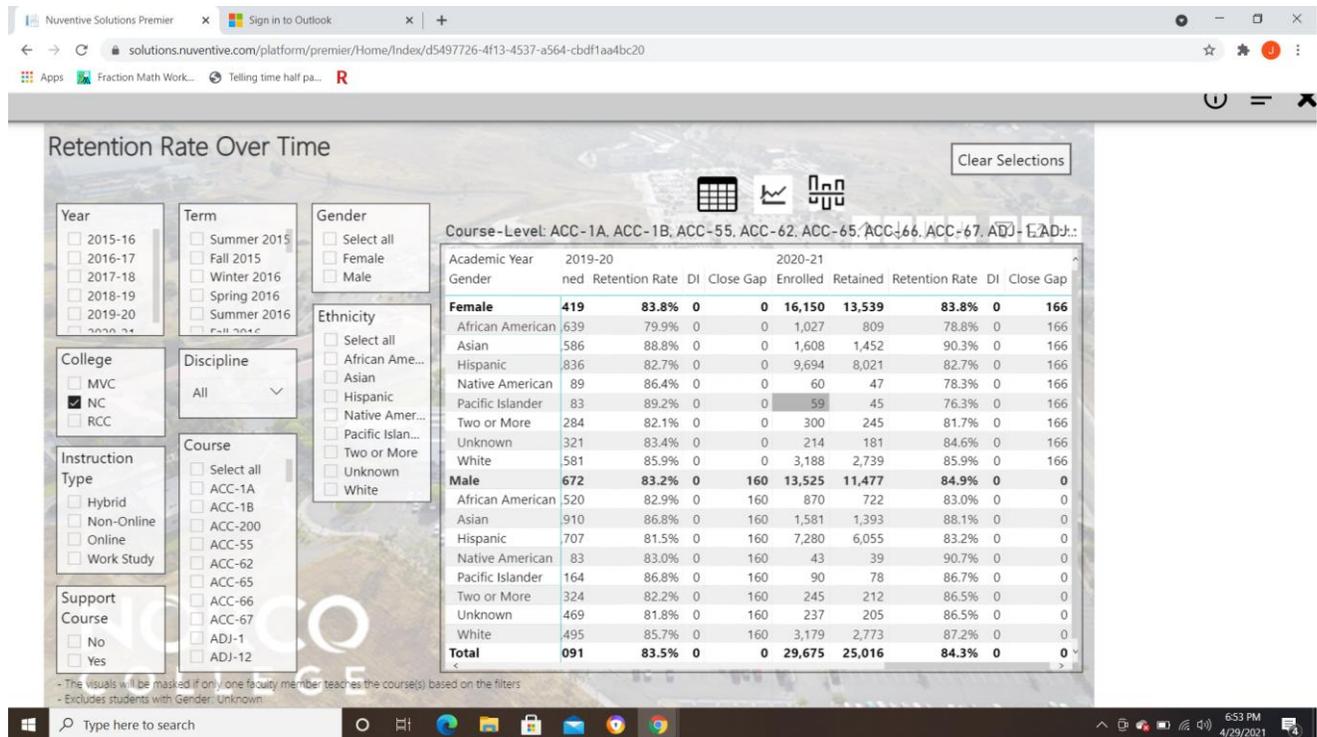
Gender by Ethnicity	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Female	28	35	49	63	93
Asian	3	3	2	5	9
Black	5	5	3	9	11
Hispanic/Latino	12	12	26	35	55
Two or More Races		1	1		3
Unknown/Unreported					4
White	8	14	17	14	11
Male	23	51	63	59	82
Amer Ind/Alaska Nat		1			
Asian	5	4	2	2	4
Black	2	5	2	3	8
Hispanic/Latino	14	25	40	38	48
Nat Hawaii or Other PI		1			1
Two or More Races		1	3		3
White	2	14	16	16	18
Unreported	3			1	2
Asian	2				
Hispanic/Latino				1	2
White	1				
Total	54	86	112	123	177

Student Educational Plan	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	Total
Student did not complete a credit education plan during the term	87.04%	84.88%	85.71%	86.18%	78.53%	83.51%
Student developed an abbreviated credit education plan	1.85%	3.49%		0.81%	0.56%	1.09%
Student developed an abbreviated and a comprehensive credit education plan	9.26%		1.79%	1.63%	2.82%	2.54%
Student developed a comprehensive credit education plan	1.85%	11.63%	12.50%	11.38%	18.08%	12.86%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

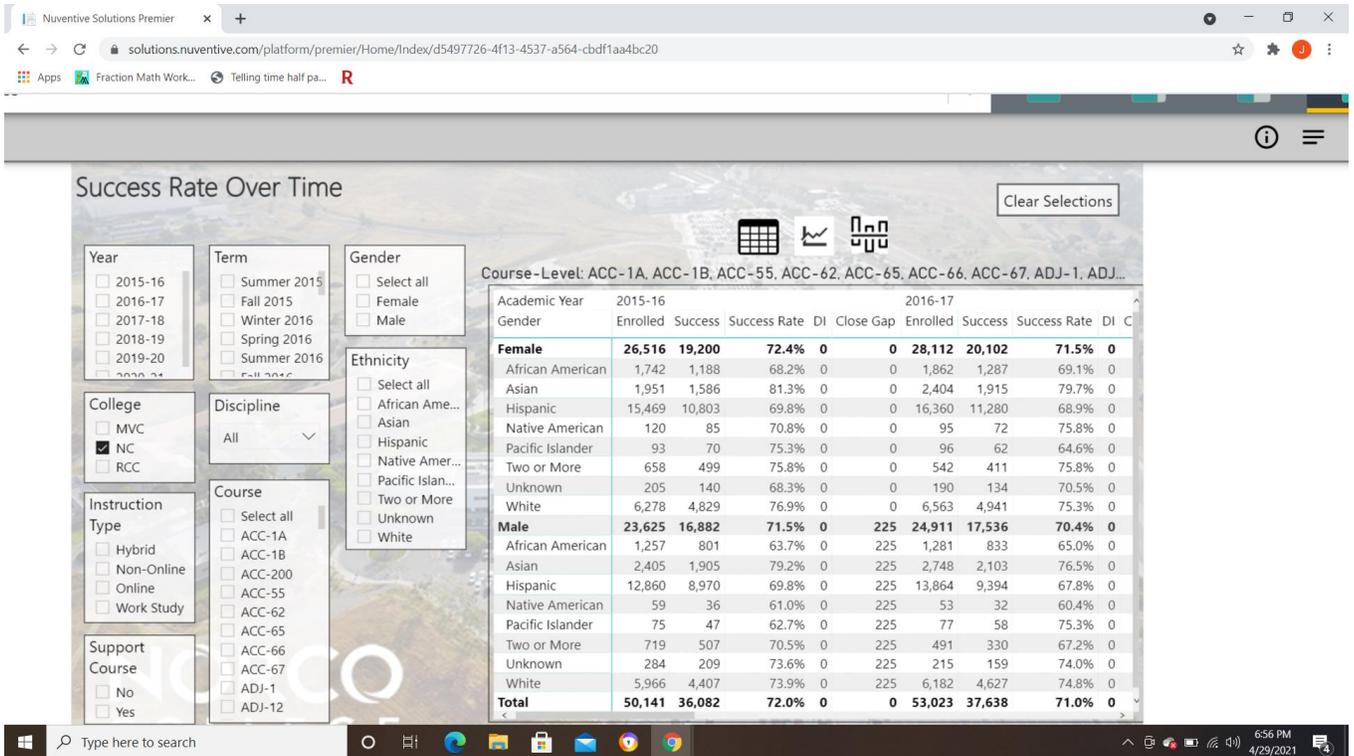
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Below are Norco College Average Retention and Success Rates for All Disciplines to Compare with POLS Rates



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Disaggregated Student Subgroups

Look at the disaggregated student subgroups in success, retention, program of study, educational planning, and awards for your area. Are there any equity gaps that you will address in the next 3 years?

I. Retention Rates

First, we begin with the data located in the table "retention rates disaggregated by race and ethnicity." The Norco College POLS discipline's retention rate for all students is 88.8%, which is higher than the Norco College and total district retention rates. The Norco College's average is 85.7% and the RCCD average for all 3 colleges is 83.9%. Delving deeper into the POLS retention data - by disaggregating by gender, race and ethnicity, it reveals that there are generally only a few small retention gaps. Beginning with gender, there are no retention equity gaps for male students in POLS courses. Comparing male and female retention, there is no gap in the aggregate, with both 89% of females, and 89% of males being retained. Student retention of males of all racial and ethnic categories is higher than the Norco College and RCCD averages.

Similarly, POLS retention rate for African American females is 88.5% and 88.3% for African American males in POLS courses at Norco College. This is also higher than the retention rate for African American females (80.9%) and males (82.7%) in the district and average retention rate at Norco College (83.9%) and (83.9%).

For POLS courses, the retention rate for Hispanic females is 87.1%, which is 1.7% lower than the POLS retention average for all students at 88.8%, and is thus an equity gap. However, the POLS Hispanic retention rate remains higher than the Hispanic female rate average for all classes at Norco College (84.9%) and RCCD Hispanic female (83.8%) average for all courses in the district.

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The POLS retention rate for Hispanic males is 87.9%, is also higher than the Norco and RCCD averages for all classes. The Hispanic male student retention rate average for all disciplines at Norco College, is 84.6%, and the Hispanic male retention rate is 83.6% for all courses offered within RCCD.

Turning to Native American student retention, here we see a clear gender difference, and female Native American students experiencing the largest equity gap of any student population. In POLS courses at Norco College, Native American females have a retention rate of 76.5% vs. 90.9% for Native American males.

In comparison, retention rates for Native American females are 77.2% vs. Native American males at 86.4% for all courses in RCCD. The average retention rate for all classes at Norco College is 83.2% for Native American females and 86.6% for Native American males. Although the N (number of respondents) is too small to draw statistically significant or definitive conclusions, with only 17 total female Native Americans - and 13 being retained, Indigenous Americans are disproportionately impacted and this equity gap requires further examination, reflection, and mitigation.

II. Student Success Rates

Second, turning to the disaggregated "student success" data - a few equity gaps emerge. The total success rate in for Norco College POLS courses 74.7%, which is 8% higher than the average for all POLS courses offered at the 3 colleges in the district (65.9%). It is also 3% higher than the average success rate at Norco College for all courses (71.3%).

However, when the data are disaggregated, it reveals that the African American female success rate is 72.7% and the African American male success rate is 68.6%. Thus, there is a 2% success equity gap for African American females and a 6% equity gap for African American males when compared with the NC POLS average.

As with the retention data, although equity gaps exist within Norco College POLS courses, the female African American success rate is also higher than the average for all Norco College courses (66.6%) and the RCCD average for African American females (60.3%). In the same way, the success rate for African American men in POLS courses is higher than the average for African American men in all courses at Norco College (63.3%) and the district average (59.8%).

However, the presence of equity gaps within POLS itself indicates areas for improvement. POLS has already begun to address them. For example, beginning in 2020-2021, the POLS discipline at Norco College began a partnership with Umoja, Puente, and Men of Color Scholars to offer a cross-listed equity section of POL 1 twice a year - in the fall and spring semesters.

In addition, two new African American POLS faculty members with PhD degrees were also hired to teach these new equity offerings as well. One of these was a female and the other focuses on LGBTQ+ politics. Moreover, we recently hired three other scholars of color with PhD degrees, and two with JD degrees, and two of which are female. This increases the ability for all of our students to engage with POLS experts from a variety of backgrounds, and see themselves as budding Political Scientists. The NC POLS discipline is committed to continuing these new equity offerings of POL 1 and they will remain permanent fixtures within the POLS discipline.

Next, we turn to the POLS success rates for our Hispanic students. Hispanic females have a success rate of 72.7%, which when compared with the NC POLS average - is a gap of 2%. Hispanic male students have a success rate of 70.7%, or a 4 percent equity gap from the NC POLS average success rate of 74.7%.

In comparison, the Norco College average Hispanic student success rate for females is 69.6% and 68.2% for males. The RCCD average Hispanic student success rate is 66.8% for females and 65.3% for males. Thus, although equity gaps emerge when examining POLS courses offered at Norco College, both Hispanic female and male students succeed at rates that are higher than the Norco College and district averages for all disciplines.

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Finally, we turn to Native American success rates. In Norco College POLS courses the Native American success rate is 47.1% for female and 72.7% for male students. In comparison, the average success rate for Native American females across all disciplines at Norco College is 66.8% and it is 63.8% for males. The average Native American success rate for all disciplines across RCCD is 60.4% for females and 66.3% for Native American males.

Female Native Americans are the one student population in which Norco College's POLS discipline has a success rate that is lower than the Norco College and RCCD averages.

Moreover, as was the case with the retention data for Native American students, a gendered difference exists, with female Native Americans experiencing the largest equity gaps of any student population. Although the number of Native American female students is not statistically significant, because of the small "N," with only 17 female Native American students, and 13 being retained - it is concerning that only 8 of them succeeded in their POLS courses. Thus, examining how to identify, address, and resolve these equity gaps are top priorities for the NC POLS discipline.

III. Success Rate by Modality

Next, we turn to the data on success rates with regard to the modality of the course. The average POLS success rate is 75%, with face-to-face classes averaging 73%, hybrid courses averaging 78% and online courses averaging 81.3%.

Beginning with the overall student success rate for Norco College online POLS courses (81%), this can be compared with the Norco College school average online success rate of 69%, the RCCD POLS discipline average of 63% for online POLS courses, and the 66.8% average for all colleges in the district.

As was the case with the overall data regarding POLS courses, there are small equity gaps if one considers the Norco College POLS discipline specifically, again mainly pertaining to African American and Hispanic women. However, the female student success rates for African American (74%), Asian (94%), Hispanic (77.4%), Pacific Islander (100%), were all higher than the Norco College and RCCD averages for online modalities. This is also the case for male students, such as Asian (91%), Hispanic (83%), Pacific Islander (100%). The African American male student success rate in online courses is 69%, which is the average for the Norco College average and higher than the average for all colleges in the district.

Lastly, turning to hybrid courses, the NC POLS discipline success rate is 78%. Again, this is higher than the Norco College average for all hybrid classes of 66%, as well the POLS RCCD discipline average of 69%, and the average student success in all RCCD hybrid courses, which is 65%. As was the case with the overall statistics for the POLS discipline at Norco College, and the online courses as well, equity gaps emerge when examining racial and ethnic data within POLS courses itself.

For example, the largest gap is for African American females who have a success rate in POLS hybrid classes of 50%, which is below the NC POLS hybrid average success rate of 78% and the POLS average for all modalities of 75%. Although there were only a total of 4 African American females total who enrolled in hybrid courses, which is too small to make definitive conclusions, the low number of only 2 succeeding is concerning and deserves further inquiry. African American men are doing better than average in hybrid courses, succeeding at 83%, which is higher than the NC POLS discipline average for hybrid classes (78%) and for all modalities (75%).

Moreover, the hybrid success rates for Hispanic students in POLS courses were 73% for females, and 75% for males. Again, although these are equity gaps within the NC discipline, they are higher success rates than the average at Norco College or the District. Again, with a low N (number of respondents in each category), as there are fewer hybrid sections and it is difficult to draw further inferences from the data, the trends are consistent with the NC POLS discipline as a whole and online courses as well.

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Moving forward, it is important to build upon our successful distance education program by retaining and expanding distance education courses and to focus on best to foster student achievement. The POLS discipline lead will focus on promoting our discipline's knowledge of the equity data and foster greater faculty awareness of the importance of intrusive outreach, instructor presence, peer-to-peer engagement, regular and substantive contact with students, and knowledge of student equity groups, our POLS 1 equity sections, and services that can support their academic progress.

IV. Program of Study and Student Education Plans

In disaggregating the program of study by gender, the number of females Political Science majors has tripled from 28 in 2015-16 to 93 in 2019-20. Similarly, the number of male Political Science majors increased from 23 in 2015-16 to 82 in 2019-20.

Over those 5 years, the number of annual African American POLS female majors doubled from 5 to 11 and the number of male majors also increased from 2 to 8. Similarly, the number of Hispanic POLS female majors has quadrupled from 12 in 2015-16 to 55. The number of POLS Hispanic male majors tripled from 14 to 48.

The number of Asian POLS female majors has increased from 3 in 2015-16 to 9 in 2019-20. The number of Asian POLS male majors was 5 in 2015-16 and was 4 in 2019-20.

V. Awards

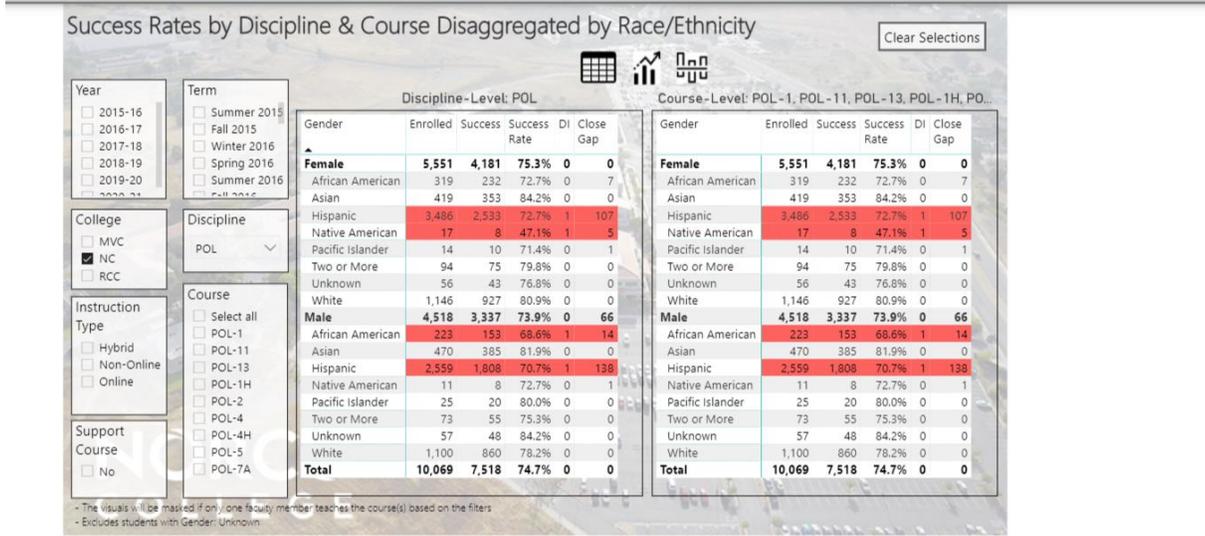
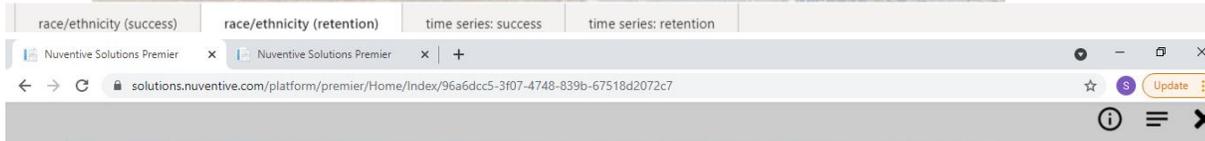
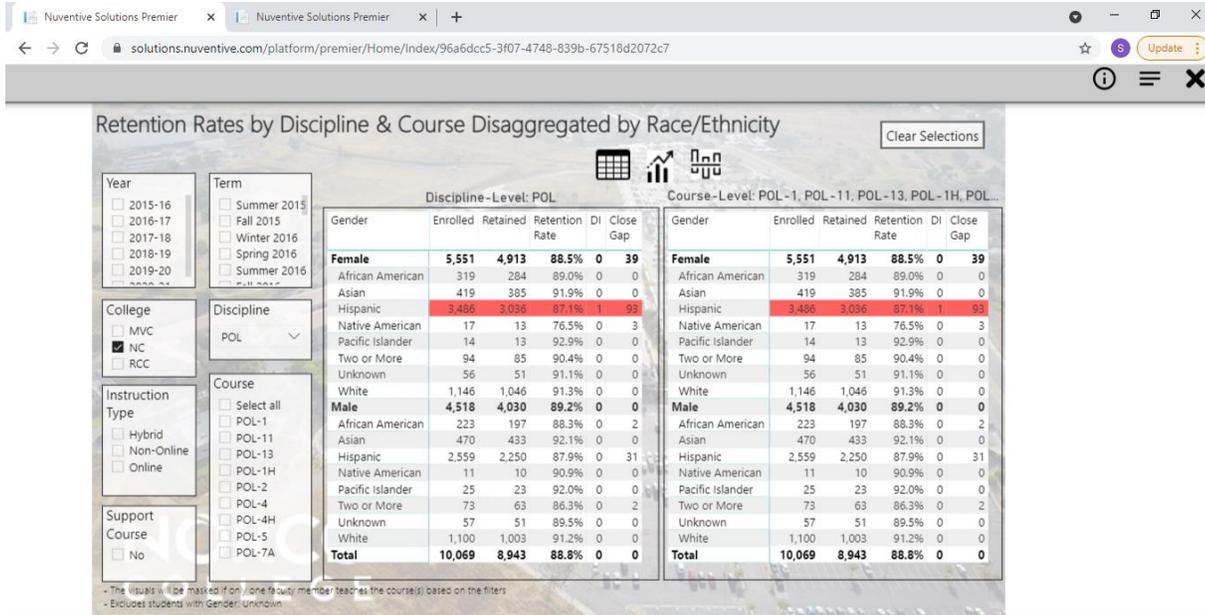
Lastly, turning to program awards, between 2015-20, out of the total of 36 degrees awarded, females have earned 15 POLS degrees. Eight of the degrees were earned by Hispanic females and 8 were earned by Hispanic males. Three were earned by Asian females, and zero were earned by Asian males.

It would be useful to consider why there have been no degrees awarded to African American females or Native American males or females. There is also an award gap for White females, as three earned degrees, which 10 White males earned degrees over the same time.

In light of the data, it would be helpful for the discipline to explore methods to increase our inclusion of women in politics, improve recruitment and outreach, as well as efforts to expand our culturally responsive pedagogy, and increase knowledge and utilization of basic needs supports. These include increasing access to student services and resources, as well as textbooks, course materials, technology, as well as reliable access to food and housing. This is particularly important for lower-income and student parents to lessen the digital divide and increase equitable outcomes for under-represented student populations who disproportionately face high rates of basic needs obstacles.

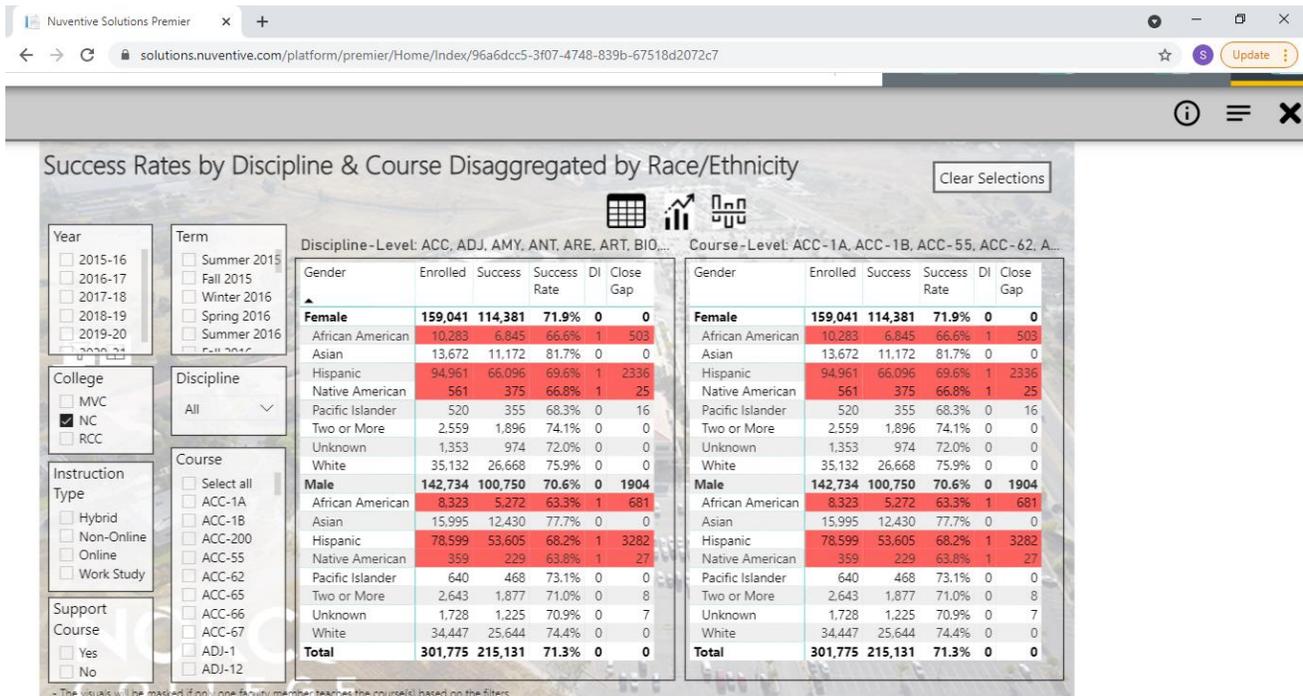
Political Science faculty will also continue to participate in training on equity-minded educational practices and participate in efforts to advance equity through initiatives such as the Racial Justice Task Force, Mustang Mentors, and Guided Pathways. The NC POLS discipline has also begun collaborations and dialogue among all our faculty members to share and devise strategies to improve graduation award rates for all students, and particularly for traditionally under-represented students.

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Below are Norco College Average Retention and Success Rates for All Disciplines to Compare

with POLS Rates



If there are any concerning trends over the past 3 or more years, or if equity gaps exist, what is your action plan to address them?

When examining equity gaps, the most concerning are the retention and student success gaps for female Native American students. In order to intentionally design practices to eliminate these equity gaps, four strategies will be adopted.

I. Equity Partnership

In order to address the equity gaps that exist and improve the quality of POLS courses for all students, the POLS discipline has committed to a new 2020-2021 partnership with Umoja, Puente and Men of Color Scholars programs. After a successful launch, the NC POLS discipline will continue to offer a POL 1 equity cross-listed section each fall and spring semester moving forward. This will likely promote the recruitment, retention, and success of POLS students and those involved in our learning communities.

II. Course Curriculum Changes - Enhancing the Presence and Voices of Women

We now turn to the equity gaps that persist for females. Obstacles clearly remain as women remain under-represented in politics, in POLS PhD degrees, highest prestige institutions, and in historical coverage of their accomplishments.

However, it is possible to focus our students' on trailblazers, contemporary female activists, leaders, voters and agents of social change can be incorporated into our curriculum to a greater extent. By intentionally including, recognizing, and analyzing female contributions into our country and curriculum, this can help to promote a better student understanding of civic engagement, popular sovereignty, and political efficacy. Hopefully, this will help to attract new majors and help to retain the ones we have.

III. Increasing NC POLS Faculty Training and Dialogue About Equitable Teaching

The NC POLS discipline, over the last 5 years, has hired an excellent team of educators. NC students are taught by POLS faculty that come from a wide variety of countries and backgrounds, and include African American,

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Latinx, Middle Eastern and Asian heritages. Engaging these scholars in dialogue about how to enhance our engagement, outreach, support, and inclusivity in our teaching is key to growing our discipline and retaining and advancing our students' success.

In terms of practical actions, the POLS discipline lead has already reached out to all NC POLS faculty to foster greater dialogue about the degree to which Native American, African American, Latinx, and Asian American stories and leaders are integrated into our course curriculum, assignments, and assessment. We will particularly focus on how our courses can enhance equitable outcomes for our female students and particularly for our Native American and African American female students.

Faculty will now have a greater chance to share and learn from each other and gain ideas for improving the cultural relevance of our courses for disproportionately impacted communities. The discipline lead will also make explicit the commitment of the POLS discipline to eliminate these equity gaps - such as by engaging in professional development on equity, student outreach and culturally responsive pedagogy, particularly for Native American student populations.

This includes the inclusion of recommendations for equity-minded resources, discussing pedagogical strategies, sharing professional development opportunities, and the basic needs challenges and resources and services available to students. The faculty lead has already contacted all NC POLS faculty to request that the other POLS faculty support the EMP equity goal and enroll with the [Teaching Men of Color and Racial Micro-Aggressions](#) CORA certificate training opportunities to improve our discipline's intentional focus on equity minded teaching practices. The discipline lead has also shared additional [free equity and anti-racism webinars](#) that are available through the Center for Organizational Responsibility and Advancement (CORA) and [USC's Center for Urban Education's](#) webinars and equity tools.

IV. POLS Funding Request # 1) New Texts for Faculty Adoption and Inclusive Course Materials

Similarly, in response to the data, POLS discipline has requested resources to purchase images and materials to display and share in the classroom. They will focus on Latinx, Native American, African American and Asian activists, leaders, and historical and political contributions, and contemporary challenges. These can serve as mirrors, and a source of inspiration and motivation to pursue a POLS degree.

The discipline lead will also examine options for more inclusive books, texts, videos, resources and other materials. Supporting the NC POLS discipline's funding request will advance the ability for NC faculty to evaluate and share with other NC POLS faculty new texts for potential adoption in POLS courses.

Such funding can also help pave the way for new potential courses. For example, in 2020-21, several new courses were adopted by the POLS discipline that will begin being offered at RCC. They have been approved in META and are currently in the articulation process to determine their transferability to the CSU and UC levels. Funding for new instructional texts would allow the POLS faculty to purchase and review texts in order to select the appropriate ones to offer for any new courses to be offered at Norco College. They include options such as Politics of Developing Countries, Latinx Politics, Race and Ethnic Politics, and other options such as including these topics into the exploration of the sub-fields of POLS in an Introduction to POLS course.

V. POLS Funding Request # 2) Student Access to Textbooks, Technology, and Basic Needs Resources and Services

The data on the basic needs insecurities faced by the majority of our CCC students is stark. For example, the [CCC #RealCollege survey](#), is the most extensive quantitative research on students' basic needs - conducted by Sara Goldrick-Rab and the Hope Lab on of 40,000 students in 57 CA Community Colleges. They found that **50**

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percent of CCC student respondents were food insecure within the last 30 days (in 2019), **60 percent of respondents were housing insecure** within the last year, and **19 percent were homeless** in the last year.

In response the trends that have now been exacerbated by Covid-19, the POLS faculty is requesting funding for textbooks and instructional resources (ie. student Access codes for homework and simulations) that are required for POLS courses.

As Chancellor Oakley mentioned following the publication of the [CCC Chancellor's Office Basic Needs Survey Report \(2018\)](#), basic needs and equity are two sides of the same coin, and intentional strategic planning is required to close equity & basic needs gaps. Improving our students' access to their course textbooks and materials will allow them to engage more fully and meaningfully with the content, faculty, and other students. Thus, the POLS discipline is requesting that all POLS textbooks be made available at the Norco College Library on reserve and for traditional check-out. This will increase the options for low-income students and student parents, who disproportionately cannot afford the cost of textbooks and other required Access Codes etc to access the course content and assignments needed to successfully complete their coursework and advance on their path to graduation and transfer.

As an additional support for the request for our college to increase access and the encouragement and normalization of utilizing basic needs supports - one can look to the CCC [Report and Recommendations for Improving Black and African American Student Outcomes \(2020\)](#). One key take-away from the CCC Advisory Panel was that **financial need is the number one barrier for Black and African American students'** academic success and that intentional policies and outreach are required to address them.

The CCC 2020 report consists of open-ended responses gathered from townhalls and focus groups, providing us with much needed evidence with regard to CA Community College students' experiences.

The study's key findings include:

- 1) That financial aid is a major stumbling block,
- 2) Isolation is a negative factor,
- 3) Campus programs are differentiators in ensuring student success,
- 4) Outreach must be conducted early and often.
- 5) Outreach on career education is important for exposure to new career pathways.

The report also provides 6 helpful recommendations:

- 1) Outreach and awareness
- 2) Support systems
- 3) Advertising and informational material
- 4) Financial Aid
- 5) Career Education
- 6) Transfer

The discipline lead for POLS has also been the Norco College representative at two #RealCollege Basic Needs Conferences (2020 & 2021) and the first ever CA Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA 2020), and was co-chair of the Basic Needs Task Force (2019).

A growing body of quantitative and qualitative evidence clearly demonstrates that **basic needs (food security, housing security, mental health, technology & textbooks, childcare etc), are academic needs that are central to CCC student success**. This is particularly important for the social mobility and stability our California's Black and

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African American students, two-thirds of whom attend CCCs, and who have been [disproportionately impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic](#) and economic fallout.

Political Science will continue to advocate for greater dialogue and institutional data gathering -such as deploying the #RealCollege Survey or gathering more data when our students drop. Such data would be helpful in fostering collaboration and data-driven BN policymaking and inform college-wide outreach with regard to available basic needs resources and services.

Towards this end, the POLS discipline lead created the Norco College Basic Needs Webpage. This is one form of outreach designed to make it easier for students (in the face of the dramatic changes in the pandemic) to learn about and access our district's basic needs support and services.

This is particularly important for identifying, retaining and fostering the academic success for our most vulnerable students. These including our housing insecure and homeless students, LGBTQ+, foster youth, and low-income student parents. A goal for Political Science is to ensure that the students from all majors who take POLS courses learn about the array of financial aid, grants, student equity programs, supportive services, and resources that are available at the college and in the community to help advance their academic success.

Lastly, POLS is committed to amplifying and responding to the voices of our students. In that spirit, I wanted to share the remarks from a wonderful student panel at the #RealCollege Summit, in which CCC students shared their academic journeys, greatest basic needs challenges, and recommendations for support.

The CCC "Basic Needs Insecurity" student panelists asked for more support & outreach in the following areas.

- 1) Food: Increased access, hot meals, information about partnerships and availability (such as through apps, social media)
- 2) Textbooks and technology: Increased information and outreach about the resources available, (ies. LRC, EOPS, Wifi, Laptops, Textbook and Access Code \$ Assistance).
- 3) Mental health: Outreach with regard to stress, trauma, outreach and de-stigmatizing use of personal counseling
- 4) Hotel vouchers and emergency funds: Outreach and awareness of availability, and importance of support for domestic violence survivors.
- 5) Quiet spaces / A centralized Basic Needs space to be connected to services
- 6) Opportunities to hear student experiences (empower students to be heard)
- 7) Overall knowledge of Basic Needs resources (by faculty, staff, counselors etc. of the system of support)

In sum, the POLS discipline funding request is designed to respond and prioritize our students' calls for greater assistance in accessing their required textbooks, course materials, and technology.

Is there a resource request associated with this Data Review? (If yes, please complete a Resource Request, which you can access from the main menu to the left)

Yes

Assessment Review

2021 - 2024

Section 1: SLO Assessment Status (Based on Dashboard - Assessment Status)

Which Disciplines are included in this Assessment?

POLS

What percent of SLOs in the disciplines you identified above have been assessed?

100%

Which SLOs have not been assessed and why? Identify both the Course and the associated SLO(s).

N/A

Section 2: Mapping Status (Based on Dashboard - Mapping Status)

Are all SLOs mapped to at least one PLO?

Yes

If all SLOs are not mapped to at least one PLOs, please explain why.

94.5% of the POLS SLOs have been mapped to the PLOs. POLS 7A is no longer being offered by POLS and has been submitted in META to be deleted from the catalog due to transfer equivalency issues. POL 7 was only offered once during the 4 year cycle and only two of the five SLOs were assessed (405). All other SLOs for the other POLS courses have been assessed and 100% have been mapped to the PLOs.

Are the appropriate SLOs mapped to GELOs? (If you have a course that is listed in any general education area, it should have at least one SLO mapped to at least one GELO)

Yes

If the appropriate SLOs are not mapped to GELOs, please explain why.

77.8% of the POLS SLOs have been mapped to GELs. POL 7 has been submitted and is being deleted from the POLS course catalog. All other POLS SLOs have been mapped to two GELOs.

Section 3: PLO Analysis (Based on Dashboard - Analysis: PLO Direct Assessment)

Which Programs are included in this Assessment?

ADT POLS

Please identify the PLO(s) - and name the associated Program(s) - that achieved benchmarks.

PLOs 1-5 : All PLOs achieved benchmarks with 88% of SLOs achieving benchmarks

To what do you attribute this success?

Consistent planning on annual assessment of POLS SLOs and outreach to POLS faculty paired with guidance on how to assess our SLOs and enter the data. The discipline lead engaged in training other faculty on how to choose the SLOs that best align with their courses materials and assignments, as well as providing a guide and assistance on how to enter the data in TracDat or with the Bitly option. Also, the POLS discipline lead mapped each of the SLOs to the PLOs and GELOs that they align with. It would be helpful to learn about where in Nuventive faculty members can enter the Assessment Schedule seen in the SLO assessment table that is currently being tracked with an excel spreadsheet.

Assessment Review

Please identify the PLO(s) - and name the associated Program(s) - that did not achieve benchmarks.

N/A

If there are PLOs that did not achieve benchmarks, what do you plan on doing to improve benchmark attainment?

N/A

Section 4: Alignment to Career and Transfer

Describe the process used in this area to ensure programs (PLOs) align with career and transfer needs.

POLS discipline members from throughout the district have been cooperating to modify, delete, and create new courses in the district. A top priority is to ensure that POLS courses transfer and satisfy CSU and UC graduation requirements.

The Norco College articulation officer and POLS discipline are currently awaiting responses with regard to the articulation of the new classes that will begin being offered at RCC, and data on how well the courses fill at RCC. This will help inform new course selection to enhance our majors' skill-sets to prepare them for an array of careers and aid their ability to fulfill their UC or CS major required coursework for transfer.

Updating our course curriculum also includes the deletion of courses such as POLS 7 that did not directly transfer as a major fulfilling requirement and a course exclusion as the POL 14 internship course will not be offered during the pandemic closures.

POL 1 is a required course for all students. This allows POLS faculty to encourage all of our diverse student majors to engage in analytical and theoretical thinking about the political issues that influence their lives and their educational and career objectives. POLS courses encourage historical, institutional, policy, and agency level analyses into political events and outcomes. These analytical, research and communicative skills apply to many disciplines and a wide range of phenomena. Exposure to POLS methodology and academic writing, debates, discussions, project learning, simulations, and group discussions provide the critical thinking, cross-cultural, and relevant skill set that prepares our majors for transfer, as well as employment in the government, non-profit, education, and corporate sectors.

In terms of the existing POLS PLOs - PLO 1: Helps our students to analyze and engage with American political institutions, political systems, policies, and processes. This helps their ability to participate in politics, such as by engaging in an internship, campaign, or other civic organizations.

PLO 2 asks our majors to identify and analyze the major global and domestic political theories and ideologies. This helps them to better understand the world and domestic politics, through exposure to the scientific method and the need for theories to be evaluated through testable hypotheses in order to advance our understanding of politics. This prepares them for cross-cultural collaboration and exposes them to an array of lenses to view contemporary and historical issues, events, and problems.

PLO 3 requires our majors to objectively explain critical issues in American, Comparative, and World Politics and to use theories and debates to defend an academic argument, such as by selecting examples and evidence to support their claims. Analytical critical thinking is an in-demand job skill that is transferrable across the disciplines and careers, including government, non-profit, and corporate positions. Similarly, PLO 4 requires our majors to employ a variety of current social science methodologies in the research analysis and evaluation of data.

This includes exposure to quantitative and qualitative research methods, as well as an introduction to research design and survey research tools. This analytical thinking is also central to PLO 5 - which requires students to

Assessment Review

demonstrate critical thinking ability including the understanding of alternative explanations and the formation of conclusions from the data presented. Thus, the POLS major focuses on increasing our students' understanding of political theories and ideologies - as well as equipping them with the analytical tools to begin to design and evaluate hypotheses. This also prepares POLS majors to transfer, more effectively engage in politics, and in a wide array of research among the many sub-fields of POLS, as well as inter-disciplinary scholarship.

Describe the activities, projects, and opportunities this program offers to support experiential learning and alignment of programs to career and transfer (e.g. capstone projects, portfolios, service-learning opportunities).

Students are trained to examine local, state, national, and international problems and analyze the institutional, leadership, and policy dimensions that shape potential solutions. They also engage in writing advocacy letters based on their research into these political problem, and may also recommend potential policy or other solutions. Students are also asked to examine the leaders, organizations, and states that work on political issues such as voting rights, civil rights, civil liberties, human rights, or climate change etc.

Students also write research essays and engage in other assignments that ask them to analyze the causes and consequences of historical and contemporary problems. These are designed to help students develop the analytical skills needed to transfer, as well as generating policy-maker or staffer style "memos." These can be to the president or state leader(s), to members of Congress, or in the intelligence community etc - and the assignment increases the ability of the student to persuade the reader by using precise and well researched language and verifiable evidence. These are valuable skills in the field, as are the debating skills and presentation skills that are also perfected in POLS courses.

In POLS courses, students also attend local government, student government, RCCD institutional, or nonprofit organization meetings, and they develop a greater understanding of how politics operates at different levels, the connections between the levels and how they can enact changes by engaging in politics.

Without looking at your current PLOs, describe some program outcomes which would best help your students continue on the path towards their workforce and transfer goals (e.g. subject matter expertise, hands on experience, partnerships, etc.).

I. Increase POLS students access to SEPs, the Transfer Center, Career Center, LRC, Learning Community and Basic Needs Support

It would be helpful to have greater outreach to students about internships and job opportunities currently available in the area - especially for our honors students. This can allow them to take their subject matter expertise and put it into practice, as several have done as interns for Rep. Sabrina Cervantes.

The discipline lead will also create promotional material to distribute to the NC POLS faculty to help acquaint them with the resources and services available, and the individuals that can be contacted to bring representatives to their classes. It will also be recommended to include this information in weekly announcements and to integrate them into our courses and have students discuss them or include them in course assignments etc.

The discipline lead will also mentor students and other NC POLS faculty with regard to the new ADT pathway, created in Spring 2022. It contains information to keep students on the path - such as about our POLS course rotation, ADT requirements, and suggested course options each semester - to help plan their degrees. It is also helpful to distribute this widely in our classes to educate our current majors and recruit new ones - as it also has suggested careers for POLS majors who have earned AA degrees or BA degrees or higher. POLS has also participated in the process of selecting Electives for Edunav to help POLS majors choose electives that will complement their POLS degree and provide exposure to an array of disciplines and perspectives that will help inform them as Political Scientists and practitioners. Taking the ADT required and IGETC fulfilling elective courses will help students to transfer as well and to prepare them for pursuing POLS higher education degrees.

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II. Course Scheduling Modifications - Offering ADT Required Courses Annually

With the hiring of a second full-time POLS faculty member, scheduled to start in Fall 2021, the NC POLS discipline intends to offer the POLS ADT required courses annually. This will replace the traditional rotation of POL 2 - Comparative Politics, POL 5 - Law and Politics, and POL 11 - Political Theory being offered once every other year in the spring semester. According to the current NC ADT course rotation schedule, POL 2 and 11 alternate every spring. So, if a student misses out on Theory say, in spring 2020, they will have to wait over a year to take it again at Norco (2022).

If a student's schedule doesn't permit their registration in the single section (of POL 2 or 11) offered, this delays their graduation and is a significant obstacle to their academic success. It is a top priority to switch to providing annual POL 2 and 11 course offerings - to increase the ability of our POLS majors to maximize their course options and take the courses needed to graduate in a timely manner. Increasing the frequency and flexibility of our course options also allows Norco's POLS discipline to attract more students and even students from other colleges who wish to fulfill their CSU & IGETC requirements. Growing the discipline has also been one of our primary Program Review goals over the last 5 years.

III. Expanding our Distance Education Offerings for ADT Required Courses

In spring 2020, the POLS discipline at Norco also submitted proposals to the Curriculum Committee to supplement the ADT courses with distance education options. This is an effort to ensure that Norco College POLS majors have reliable access to their required ADT required classes, beyond the traditional POL 1 - American Politics online and hybrid and POL 4 hybrid modalities.

For the other ADT required classes (POL 2, 11, and 13), the objective is to increase access and flexibility of modalities to give our students options to continue and thrive in their educational journeys.

Expanding our DE offerings also increases the likelihood that all of our students (including those non-majors who are taking them to fulfill CSU & IGETC requirements) can have access to the courses they need to graduate, transfer, and improve their economic stability. This is also particularly important for students with disabilities who often prefer DE courses, and other disproportionately impacted students who are being hardest hit by the health and economic crises. Transportation, family, employment and /or care-giving constraints are impediments. It is also likely to be essential for those POLS majors who may legitimately fear a return to large classes - and without these offerings may not be able to complete their POLS degree or transfer.

IV. Examine adding options to ADT lists A & B

NC POLS will explore adding a course to List A: ECON 6 - International Political Economy.

We will also explore adding several additional options to List B.

These include: ANT 2/2H - Cultural Anthropology, ANT 6 - Native American Cultures, ANT 7 - Anthropology of Religion, ANT 8 - Language and Culture, ECON 4 - Introduction to Economics, ECON 8/8H - Principles of Micro-Economics, GEOG 3 - World Regional Geography, GEOG 4 - Geography of California, GEOG 6 - Geography of US and Canada, HIST 6/6H - US History to 1877, HIST 14 - African American History, HIST 26 - History of California, HIST 31 - Introduction to Chicano/a/x Studies, History 34 - History of Women in America, PSY 1 - General Psychology, SOC 1 - Introduction to Sociology, SOC 2 - American Social Problems, SOC 10/10H - Race and Ethnic Relations, and SOC 15 - Introduction to Women's Studies.

The aim of this effort is to increase the overall attractiveness of the POLS by adding more courses that may interest students who wish to learn about these topics. Moreover, the addition of an array of SBS disciplines to the ADT makes explicit the commitment to foster greater learning about the value of inter-disciplinary approaches to understanding social, economic and political phenomena. It also brings about greater consistency with the RCC ADT, that offers even more student choice for List B options. Students earning the

Assessment Review

Associate in Arts in Political Science for Transfer will be provided with greater appreciation of the social, economic and cultural dimensions of politics and critically approach all political issues. Expanding the range of course offerings that our students can choose to fulfill their ADT requirement in areas such as Women's Studies, or African American and Chicano/a/x Studies to foster an intentional expression of inclusion of topics, disciplines and perspectives.

Review current PLOs. Do the outcomes listed above align with the current program outcomes?

Yes

EMP GOAL 2. Implement Guided Pathways framework.

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

What are you doing now in support of this goal?

Political Science has developed an ADT and students now have a clearer pathway to attend the CSU & UC campuses. The discipline lead has also worked to increase student knowledge and faculty advising of the ADT, and we have expanded our number of POLS majors. This supports the EMP Goal objectives 2.1 and 2.4 to increase the number of degrees completed and the number of transfers.

The POLS discipline has also updated our curriculum with the aim of improving the ability of all our course offerings to directly transfer to fulfill the CSU and IGETC major and area D degree requirements. This aids the ability of our majors to take courses that directly fulfill their major requirements, and allows our courses to be taken by other majors to fulfill their elective or ADT requirements.

Moreover, the NC POLS ADT has also been recently updated and the discipline lead helped to create a pathway document for students that aligns with the POLS course rotation, in order to recommend the courses and order to take courses to graduate with an ADT in POLS in two-years. This GP document helps simplify the process and aids in mentoring students for all POLS faculty members and counselors. POLS has also expanded our ADT required courses to be offered annually (vs. every other year for POL 2, 5, 11). This helps ensure our students a more timely path to graduation.

In addition, POLS has also selected suggested electives for POLS majors, to help students to select courses that will compliment their major and ensure that they are taking courses that will promote their timely graduation and transfer.

Lastly, POLS continues to take the lead in collaborating others in the college, CCC, CSU and UC systems to advocate for Basic Needs insecurities be acknowledged and incorporated into the Guided Pathways and Equity frameworks. De-stigmatizing support seeking and increasing outreach can help to retain our students and keep our most vulnerable students on the path to a degree and social mobility.

What are your plans/goals (3-year) regarding this goal?

The NC POLS discipline plans on distributing and promoting the new ADT and the pathway document that has been created in order to recruit and retain POLS majors. It will help our faculty to mentor students with regard to which courses to take and when to take them, as well as selecting electives, and choosing a career path that aligns with their interests.

The discipline lead will continue to participate in Guided Pathways and mentoring trainings and is a member of the new Norco College Success Network's "Mustang Mentor" program. As a member of the NCSN, the POLS discipline lead will mentor students by providing information regarding college majors, universities attended, employers and companies, career fields, and other forms of support.

Similarly, the POLS discipline lead will continue the work began as an Accessibility Mentor for NC in 2020 to actively in mentor and support POLS faculty to encourage UDL (Universal Design for Learning), that promotes student success for all students. All POLS courses are in compliance with the RCCD benchmark. The discipline lead will continue to share the "Accessibility Basics Guide" that she created, and engage faculty in discussions and training in order to ensure that POLS courses are accessible, which fosters all of our students' success and ability to transfer.

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Moreover, POLS will continue to explore OER and low cost textbook and resource options, and work with new faculty to promote greater awareness of these options. The discipline lead will continue to promote greater faculty and student awareness of Student Education Plans, the value of special programs, and equity groups - and the importance of increasing our overall awareness of academic supports.

POLS will continue to collaborate with others across the college to promote student success in Guided Pathways. For example, POLS is already working with NC's articulation officer to ensure any future course offerings are directly transferrable, that the ADT is expanded to offer a wider variety of diverse courses. Similarly, POLS is engaging in meetings and conversations with Umoja counselors to help advise and recruit students into the POLS major and courses beyond POL 1.

Lastly, based on the success of our distance education courses and the need to provide equitable access to our ADT required courses, POLS will work on expanding our ADT offerings online. This will allow students to have greater access to the courses needed to graduate for all students, regardless of their scheduling constraints - that are significant impediments, particularly for working students and student parents.

EVIDENCE

Do you have assessment data or other evidence that relates to this goal?

The evidence is located within META with regard to the course curriculum changes that have been approved and those that remain under review. The new [POLS ADT](#) and pathway documents are available online through the Norco College website. The participation of POLS in the [NC Success Network](#) is found on the Norco College website as well. Lastly, the advocacy by POLS faculty for the integration of Basic Needs into the Guided Pathways framework as a form of academic support is found on the [NC Student's Basic Needs Resource Guide](#) that the POLS discipline lead created in 2020.

RESOURCES

Is there a resource request associated with this EMP Goal? (If yes, please complete a Resource Request, which you can access from the main menu to the left)

Yes

EMP GOAL 3. Close all student equity gaps.

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

What are you doing now in support of this goal?

Political Science has been active in promoting student equity, both in terms of our discipline itself and more broadly at Norco College. This includes the hiring of a diverse array of excellent POLS faculty members, regularly offering equity sections of POL 1, increasing professional development opportunities and training on UDL and equitable practices in distance education, mentoring, and advocating for basic needs and other forms of support for our students and faculty. These efforts support the EMP equity goals 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 as well as EMP goal 4 about promoting equity in professional development.

To begin, POLS has also an established record of hiring faculty members from a variety of diverse backgrounds and academic specializations. Between 80-85% of the NC POLS faculty are persons of color. We are diverse in terms of our racial, ethnic, religious, and gender backgrounds, including African American men and women, Latino/a/x, Asian, and Middle Eastern scholars as well as a variety of sub-field specializations, such as Latinx

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Politics and LGBTQ+ Politics. The majority of our new hires possess PhD or JD qualifications - meaning that they are well qualified to teach our students and serve as role models for what is possible in POLS.

In addition, in fall 2020, the NC POLS department has joined with the Umoja, Puente, and Men of Color Scholars program to begin offering a cross-listed equity section of POL 1 each semester. This provides the advantages of a learning community and the mentoring, socio-emotional support and culturally relevant content that promotes student success. Our excellent faculty members provide mentorship and mirrors for our students, so students can see themselves as Political Scientists and learn from our faculties' impressive backgrounds, experiences, and academic journeys.

The POLS discipline lead also serves on the Professional Development Committee and helped draft and successfully advocate for a new mission statement for PDC that puts equity training at the center of the PDC mission.

The POLS faculty lead also successfully advocated for, and helped organize Fall Flex 2020, which focused on topics such as "Strategies to Support Online Learning," "DE Accessibility," "Humanizing the Online Experience," and "Student Services Available to Our Students." Another FLEX event that was proposed by POLS for Spring 2021 focused on "Emotional Support for Marginalized Students."

In the same way, POLS invited Miguel Powers to another fall FLEX to to share his scholarship on Growth Mindset practices that help motivate students, develop resiliency, and shape responses to challenges. POLS faculty also participate in a variety of other FLEX sponsored equity events, such as TLC, DEC, and RJTF brownbag training sessions.

Similarly, through service in the Distance Education Committee, the NC POLS faculty lead is also participating in the expansion of equity in online and distance education training and resources. This includes an ongoing project that the NC POLS faculty lead is participating in to create a "DE DEN" that has training and support for areas such as equity, accessibility and regular and substantive contact that are keys to academic student achievement. POLS has also reviewed and supported the creation of a new "Course Design Bootcamp" that will train new DE faculty and re-certify faculty. This bootcamp will now include a training Module on equity - that was not part of the Canvas Basics original certification.

In addition, the POLS discipline lead has also undergone two Accessibility trainings for Learning (UDL), created an "Accessibility Basics Guide" that has been distributed to RCCD POLS faculty, and served as an "Accessibility Mentor" for POLS and Norco College faculty. This resulted in all the POLS courses and other mentees meeting the RCCD Accessibility benchmark. UDL training also reduces equity gaps by increasing Universal Design faculty at Norco College as well as POLS discipline colleagues.

Moreover, the POLS discipline lead has also served on the hiring committee for the Norco College Accessibility Technology and Media Coordinator. The lead is also serving on the hiring committee for the Instructional Course Designer - which are both positions that will help faculty work with distance education specialists to design their courses to be UDL, accessible and engaging - to foster student success for all students.

POLS faculty also participate in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, as well as the Teaching and Learning Committee. For example, in response to student voices in DEI meetings about the negative consequences of prohibitively high textbook and course costs, the POLS faculty lead has joined the OER (Open Educational Resources) Taskforce. The aim is to examine the OER and low-textbook options, to plan a pilot project in 2021-2022, and encourage faculty to consider options for lowering the costs of course textbooks.

The POLS discipline lead has also earned certificates for completing the Teaching Men of Color and Microaggressions CORA trainings. These are central components of the EMP goal's benchmarks, and all POLS faculty have been encouraged to participate and will continue to be encouraged to join these efforts. The

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discipline lead is also a member of the Racial Justice Task Force, was a participant in the drafting of the NC Faculty Statement to students on standing together for justice, and participates in the work conducted by the RJTF Group's A and C. The POLS lead is also participating in the ongoing analysis of the RJTF student survey - and the formulation of recommendations to act based on the students' voices.

In addition, on October 27, 2020, the POLS discipline lead worked with the Racial Justice Taskforce head, Dr. Hitchcock, and the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Committee to put on the event, "A Moment Within a Movement: Why Young People Should Vote in the 2020 Election." Serving as the panel moderator, the POLS discipline promoted a discussion with our two diverse political activists working in the Inland Empire, about how the calls for change with regard to police violence and racial injustice can be translated into actual change. The panelists were Dr. John Dobbard, a RCCD alumni who serves as the Director of Political Voice at the Advancement Project California to eliminate disparities in political participation and government responsiveness through policy action and data-based collective action. The other panelist was Sky Allen, the Project Manager for Inland Empowerment, a coalition of non-profit agencies who work to increase political participation and civic engagement of historically under-represented communities.

This event also included the POLS lead recruiting our ASNC student representatives to lead the panel's Q+A session and to offer their perspectives on the value of voting and broader forms of political participation. Dr. Green attended the event and reached out to share that we "did a remarkable job facilitating the discussion and impressing upon the importance of voting and civic engagement."

Furthermore, the POLS faculty lead has also participated in the Equity Minded Community of Practice, that encourages sharing among the disciplines with regard to pedagogical practices. The Equity Community of Practice also helped NC disciplines to gather, examine, and reflect on equity data with regard to their disciplines.

Similarly, many POLS discipline members are also Ally trained as well and serve as sources of support for our LBGTQ+ students. The POLS discipline has also been consistently active is participating in equity events, such as the Read to Succeed (3-part) discussions on books covering experiences from persons with special needs, women in the military, formerly incarcerated student perspectives, those engaged in the struggle for equity in Latinx education, and revealing the trauma of implicit biases and explicit racism. Similarly, multiple POLS faculty participate in events supporting our DACA and Dreamer students and greater understanding of immigrant rights and legal resources.

The POLS Club has also promoted equity through advocating for political participation, such as by participating in hosting "voter registration drives with Mi Familia Vota, as well as others such as the "Rock the Vote" event with the Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice, or the collaboration between the POLS / Pre-Law Club and the Veterans Club to create a booth to advance students' knowledge of the CA propositions on the ballot.

Moreover, in response to the Jan. 6th insurrection at the U.S. Capitol, the discipline collaborated to create a statement of solidarity and provide all POLS faculty with suggestions from colleagues to lead difficult discussions as well as verifiable resources to provide context and help our students analyze the false claims of voter fraud in the 2020 election. This was a re-affirmation of our discipline's commitment to the ongoing struggle for evidence based dialogue, systemic transformation, racial justice, democracy, and human rights.

In addition, the NC POLS discipline lead has also represented Norco College at three Basic Needs Conferences, and served as the co-Chair of the Basic Needs Task Force. The advocacy of the POLS discipline lead secured \$10,000 in equity funds from Dr. Gustavo Ocegüera to increase financial support for the "Student Life Emergency Fund" to help homeless and housing insecure students. The Task Force also created an application to access

Program Review: Part 1

these emergency funds that was made available to undocumented students as well, who were not eligible for the CARES Act funds. The Task Force also worked on securing an arrangement with the local hotels to provide short-term housing for our homeless students. Finally, the POLS discipline lead created the Norco College Student Basic Needs Guide on the Norco College website - to help students navigate the resources that are available to them. This helped alleviate the problem of Norco College website searches for "food assistance," "housing," "basic needs,"

Lastly, the POLS discipline lead also served on the RCCD Re-Opening Taskforce, that prepares the college to return to campus as the risk of the pandemic recedes and advocated for greater data gathering, outreach, and creating a culture of support to help our most vulnerable students advance their educational journeys and wellbeing.

What are your plans/goals (3-year) regarding this goal?

The POLS discipline will continue to enhance their culturally relevant content, particularly with regard to under-represented and minoritized populations. This involves a resource request for POLS faculty to purchase new texts and classroom materials to expose our students to a wider array of leaders, activists and scholars than are found in current textbooks.

POLS faculty will continue to engage in professional development opportunities and increased our discipline and inter-disciplinary dialogue about the existing equity gaps and participate in additional professional development opportunities with regard to equity-minded practices, basic needs, and guided pathways.

Moreover, POLS has also generated a resource request for funding for our students' required textbooks and homework / simulation access codes. This will help our low-income, foster youth, LGBTQ+, African American and other students who are disproportionately impacted by homelessness, housing insecurity, food and financial insecurity. Increasing our most vulnerable students' access to their textbooks and other course requirements will help them to succeed in their courses by increasing their engagement with the content, their professors, and other students. In the same way, the POLS discipline lead will also explore institutional e-book subscriptions and journal articles available through the NC library, as well as low cost and zero cost OER texts and resources and share this information with the discipline.

Improving our courses by expanding our culturally relevant pedagogy, engaging in sustained professional development around equity-minded teaching practices, and actively pursuing resources and connecting our students to available services and resources can all help equip our faculty and students with the ability to eliminate existing equity gaps. We have a team of passionate educators who are dedicated to make a real impact on our students' lives, helping to actualize their potential and help to transform our communities through civic engagement and promoting student graduation, transfer, and career skills. More information on the details of this plan are found in the disaggregated student success and retention data section of this Program Review.

EVIDENCE

Do you have assessment data or other evidence that relates to this goal?

Yes, the student retention and success data mentioned in this Program Review report are relevant for this EMP. They demonstrate equity gap for Native American and African American women, and fewer declared POLS majors than other groups. The discipline would like to respond to this data by purchasing more course materials and resources - and reviewing additional texts for adoption to highlight the contributions and struggles of women and an array of other groups, countries, and organizations in American, comparative, and world politics.

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RESOURCES

Is there a resource request associated with this EMP Goal? (If yes, please complete a Resource Request, which you can access from the main menu to the left)

Yes

Program Review Part 2

2021 - 2024

Curriculum

Are all your courses current (within four years)?

No

What percentage of your courses are out of date?

More than 25%

If you have courses that are not current, are they in the curriculum process?

No

For out of date courses that are not already in progress of updating, what is your plan?

The Political Science discipline at Norco College offers six Political Science courses: POL 1, POL 2, POL 4, POL 5, POL 11 and POL 13 and two Honors courses: POL 1H and POL 4H.

The priority for the NC POLS discipline has been to gain approval for permanent DE designations for required ADT courses: POL 1, 2, 4, 11, and 13. These proposals have all been submitted into META and approval is pending.

Moreover, in the last academic year, Norco College POLS also sought DEX approval for all the classes listed above, as well as POL 5, POL 1H and 4H, and for POL 1 offered at the CRC as well to allow these courses to be offered in emergency circumstances. These have all been submitted in META and approved by the discipline, department and Curriculum Committee.

In terms of course modifications, the updates to the CORS for the majority of POLS courses remain in progress. POL 1 / 1H updates have already been completed and we have been engaging across the district to update our curriculum. Norco College POLS has taken the lead on updating the POL13. POL 2 and 4 CORs are also under revision, in coordination with other RCCD discipline members.

Moreover, the NC discipline lead is also collaborating with our colleagues in the district who specialize in Law and Theory with regard to updating POL 5 and 11 to gain input on the modifications required in order to update our curriculum. The revised CORS should be submitted to the discipline for final approval in the fall of 2021.

Do you have proposals in progress for all the DE courses you intend to file?

No

Do you require help to get your courses up to date?

No

Program Review Reflections

What would make program review meaningful and relevant for your unit?

It would be really helpful if faculty was provided more information on how to get one's funding requests approved, or learn the reason that they weren't funded. It would also be helpful to have more information about how to access funds to enhance our disciplines. And, to receive feedback regarding our requests and the types of requests that are likely to be funded or, why they were not funded.

For example, does the POLS discipline have a budget, how do we learn about it or access it? If so, what can it be spent on and does it have to go through the Program Review process? How are lottery funds to be requested

Program Review Part 2

and what are the criteria and deadlines for funding? Do these funding requests occur within the PR request process, or is there another process?

Take, for example, if POLS wants to request a guest speaker to come to campus, where does the faculty member request funds for a speaker's fee? Or, to put together a panel or conference, is there funding to support this? Or, how can faculty know whether or not PDC funding is available to attend conferences? Or, whether or not such requests for professional development, additional textbooks, or class materials are likely to be supported through the PR process. It is not readily apparent where disciplines can go to request the funding to build their disciplines and enhance their campus presence.

Similarly, it is not clear what types of financial support for program development and enrichment will be approved through the program review process. Additional training in this regard and feedback on previous submissions (that have not been funded) would be helpful and make this process more meaningful, as it would clarify what tangible steps to improve our programs are more likely to be supported. Often times, we submit requests and don't hear anything at all regarding whether or not they will be funded - either through the PR process or the lottery funds.

For example, POLS for many years even before I arrived had requested technology such as ipads for students' use - but they were not funded and so I stopped requesting them. Similarly, in May 2021, POLS submitted a technology request, but have little idea what the time-line or steps to approval are, and if or when we will be receiving feedback or approval. Is it redundant to request resources here as well or is this the appropriate venue? More outreach to faculty about PR in terms of how to access resources and how the process of approval works for lottery funds, PR requests, or departmental funds etc would help us to promote the development of our discipline.

What questions do we need to ask to understand your program plans, goals, needs?

What are the biggest challenges that you have identified that your students face?

What are the 1, 3, and / or 5 year goals for the discipline? This can allow the discipline to identify short-term, medium-term and longer term priorities.

What resources do you need to achieve these goals? Do you know where and how to to secure these resources?

Would you like to learn about or participate in grants writing opportunities to support your discipline?

What connections would you like to make to student services and with student programs to enhance your students' success?

Would you like more information about mentoring possibilities, transfer and career options, and scholarships for your students?

What types of data do you need to support your program plans, goals, needs?

The POLS discipline and our college as a whole would benefit from gathering and making accessible data on basic needs insecurity, as well as identifying why our students are dropping out of classes and out of college.

As a Political Scientist, I agree with Dr. Edwardo Padrón, Miami Dade College president "that educational leaders are in a struggle to protect and advance American democracy, by ensuring that all students have the opportunity to pursue an education and participate fully in American society." This requires an institutional commitment to promote social mobility in our students' lives and communities by helping BN insecure students to access the resources and support that they require to be successful in achieving their goals. (<https://equityinlearning.act.org/equity-in-action/equity-avengers-and-other-heroes-appear-at-realcollege-2019-summit/>)

Program Review Part 2

Thus, POLS requests that Norco College join and employ the CCC #RealCollege Basic Needs survey for FALL 2022. This survey instrument has already been utilized by 57 CCCs to poll 40,000 Community College students. More than 250 colleges and universities currently utilize this survey in total.

Although POLS is making this a formal discipline funding request, this request to join in ongoing data gathering efforts around basic needs inequities would help all disciplines. Even if we did not officially join, NC could still utilize the survey instrument (as the Hope Center recommends) and the resources and best practice recommendations they publish. (<https://hope4college.com/>). (<https://hope4college.com/realcollege-survey/#intro>)

Identifying and addressing our students' basic needs insecurities can help to foster transformative change in our student' lives, our college and communities. The aim of this request is to use the quantitative and qualitative data to promote greater institutional dialogue, collaboration, drafting and implementing intentional strategies to address our students' basic needs equity gaps.

In order to help our students to overcome real obstacles to their academic success, we as an institution would all benefit from improved methods to identify and reach out to our basic needs insecure students. The evidence from the Hope Lab and others clearly demonstrate that basic needs insecure students are disproportionately likely to withdraw from or fail our courses and that efforts to assist students' wellness enhances their success and retention rates.

In addition, addressing basic needs inequities are most important for our African American, LGBTQ+, foster students, student parents, formerly incarcerated, and other students who are disproportionately impacted. One important step towards effectively tackling our equity gaps is to gather better data, such as by joining the nation's largest and longest-running assesment of BN insecurity among college students.

It would also be helpful to dedicate funding to send NC teams to BN conferences such as CHEBNA, or even better yet - to help fund them and other BN initiatives. This allows our college to engage with BN champions - such as Skyline, Laney, Compton, San Diego Mesa and SMC that are strategically addressing basic needs insecurities. Examples include the creation of Basic Needs Centers on campus, bringing free farmer's markets and clothing closets to campus, having enrollment in CAL Fresh during campus events (ie. welcome week & club rush etc), as well as employing peer mentors, social workers, and / or BN coordinators. One additional example involves the "equity avengers" campaign in which colleges coordinate with local, regional and state agencies to address the needs of their students and communities. (<https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/RealCollege-CCCCO-Report.pdf>).

Generating valid and reliable BN data would greatly increase the ability of Norco College to identify and reach out to our housing and food insecure students, to assist them with these challenges that impact students' ability to succeed, graduate and transfer. This data can also help create a culture of understanding about the severity of the problems and the resources and services that are available at the college and through Norco's partners. This could increase the understanding of the true needs of our students, and awareness of the resources that de-stigmatize their use and make it easier for our students to learn about the resources and skills that can help them to overcome their basic needs obstacles and be successful on their academic journeys.

Why spend the money to join the survey organization effort? According to the CCC data collected in the #RealCollege CCC Survey (2019), approximately 19% of CCC student respondents have been homeless in the past year. Sixty percent of respondents were housing insecure within the last year and fifty percent of respondents were food insecure within the last 30 days. Half of CCC students don't

In light of the evidence that half or more of our students face food and housing insecurity - that it is the norm and not the exception in terms of the college experience, it would be very helpful for everyone at our institution to

Program Review Part 2

understand these facts, and how measure how they have now been exacerbated by the pandemic. This data is sorely needed in order to promote evidence based discussions and collaborations among all of our stakeholders. This includes faculty, students, student services, equity groups and special program leaders and mentors, student life and counselors to increase the ability for all of our NC community members to learn who students can turn to - and where they can go for help.

Based on the rising number of students (including Veterans and student parents) who have reached out because they are homeless - I have been inquiring for over a year (with the Office of Institutional Research, with Student Life, Equity leaders, and Financial Aid Office) about how we gather data and reach out to our most vulnerable students.

To date, it seems that we do not currently have an accurate or reliable way to identify our homeless students who are most in need of support. The onus is largely on the student to know how to navigate our college system, know who to turn to for help, and self-identify their circumstances. To my knowledge, there currently is no proactive outreach strategy to aid our homeless students to guide them through financial aid, CalFresh, housing options, or to let them know about our Student Life Emergency Fund and hotel voucher program. Similarly, there is no information at all on Norco College's website regarding the Student Life Emergency Fund.

Moreover, before I created the NC Basic Needs Student Resource Guide online our NC webpage in 2020, there was no information for students who face basic needs insecurities. For example, when our students searched our NC website for information regarding basic needs- such as textbook assistance, Norco's showers, food pantry, food bank, housing assistance, homeless, the Student Life Emergency Fund, or Cal Fresh etc - nothing meaningful came up in our search responses. I worked with Lenny to re-direct those searches to the new NC Basic Needs Student Resource Guide online - but much more remains to be done to improve our students' and our institution's knowledge of the resources that can help students to tackle some of the largest obstacles to their success.

Similarly, when I inquired on behalf of my homeless students, to help them navigate our NC system, the response I had to relay to my homeless students is that they should go to the Riverside homeless shelter and begin queing at 1pm to try and get a bed. This daily queing requirement over 20 miles away makes attending college classes at Norco College difficult.

Gathering BN data and shifting the outreach responsibility from the student (who currently need to seek out help, navigate Norco's systems, and self-identify which can engender fears of stigmatization) - to the college community to inform and support our students would help connect them to the services that enhance their ability to stay in their classes, maximize their GPAs, graduate, transfer, and promote social mobility in our region. This investment and work would promote our Norco College mission to enhance our students lives and our community.

Similarly, gathering better data about why our students are dropping offers our institution and disciplines the ability to understand how to respond to retain our students. For example, through Webadvisor, we could provide a "withdraw" checklist that includes options such as - work obligations and financial insecurity, housing insecurity, food insecurity, lack of childcare, family problems, mental health, physical health, language difficulties, under-performance, personal preference, other or decline to state.

This data could also be tied to outreach from Student Services to connect our students to the services and resources that are available to advance their academic success and upward mobility. This data would also help to inform our programs, as we can analyze the reasons that are students drop and this can foster meaningful responses, such as to promote more information about Norco's mental health services, for those who are facing mental health problems or crises.

Program Review Part 2

For example, "in the 2014 National Survey of College Counseling Centers, respondents reported that 52 percent of their clients had severe psychological problems, an increase from 44 percent in 2013... In a 2016 survey of students by the American College Health Association, 52.7 percent of students surveyed reported feeling that things were hopeless and 39.1 percent reported feeling so depressed that it was difficult to function during the past 12 months." (<https://www.apa.org/advocacy/higher-education/mental-health>).

Moreover, as a recent Rand (2081) report found, College students who do not receive treatment for mental health problems they face are more likely to have "lower academic achievement and graduation rates (Breslau et al., 2008; King et al., 2006); higher rates of substance misuse (Angst, 1996; Weitzman, 2004) and alcohol abuse (Dawson et al., 2005); greater levels of social impairment and difficulties with close relationships (Druss et al., 2009), including an increased risk of divorce; and lower lifetime earning potential (Ettner, Frank, and Kessler, 1997; Kessler, Walters, and Forthofer, 1998; Kessler, Foster, et al., 1995; Smith and Smith, 2010)." (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5798969/>).

Lastly, in Chancellor Oakley's Vision to Success - enhancing student equity is paramount. At the CHEBNA conference, he explicitly stated that equity and basic needs are two sides of the same coin.

However, Norco College does not currently gather adequate data to inform our community and students about the high prevalence of basic needs insecurity at our college. This is not a problem faced by a few students, but by the majority of our students.

It would thus be helpful for our college to prioritize gathering basic needs insecurity data, intentionally creating a body that is specifically focused on addressing our basic needs equity gaps, and for promoting training, awareness, and outreach to our most vulnerable students. The integration of basic needs into Guided Pathways, the creation of a culture and community of care would also help to advance our College's mission to reduce equity gaps for disproportionately impacted communities.

For over a year, in our Program Review and across the College, the POLS discipline has been advocating widely for basic needs to be integrated into our Guided Pathways support and framework. However, without data on the severity of the problem at Norco, it has been difficult to persuade our many important stakeholders of the urgency of our students' need and the importance of de-stigmatizing outreach, creating allies who support basic needs outreach, an explicit intentional culture of support, and an enhancement of our basic needs services. Examples include - establishing a Basic Needs Center on campus, clothing closet, basic needs counseling, social workers to aid in providing wrap around services, or a campaign to enroll our students in Cal Fresh etc).

In order to effectively tackle the equity gaps that have been identified in my program and throughout the College, the POLS discipline and all disciplines require more assistance and training about available basic needs services at NC and through Cal Fresh and the Department of Social Services. Without gathering the data, it will remain an under-acknowledged problem that remains a significant (largely unaddressed) obstacle to our students' success and our discipline's goal of shrinking our equity gaps.

The overall goal is to provide our students who are homeless and hungry an array of support, people, and resources that can help them to enhance their well-being and academic success. Our faculties' outreach to struggling students has too often revealed serious basic needs insecurities - and all of our faculty would benefit from having a stronger knowledge base about BN resources and services, particularly our part-time faculty, about how we can help.

Gathering the data is one important step in advancing that work on campus to address basic needs insecurities and advance equity on our campus.

Program Review Part 2

It would be particularly helpful to focus our efforts on food and housing insecurity that are statistically significant and inversely related to academic success. For example, "housing insecurity and homelessness have a particularly strong, statistically significant relationship with college completion rates, persistence, and credit attainment. Researchers also associate basic needs insecurity with self-reports of poor physical health, symptoms of depression, and higher perceived stress" (<https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/RealCollege-CCCCO-Report.pdf>)

After the gathering of data, the integration of basic needs support as part of Guided Pathways would be another important way that our college can enhance equity, promote academic achievement, and the well-being of our students.

For example, Priyadarshini Chaplot is a RP representative who led a great California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA) 2020 conference panel on linking Basic Needs to Guided Pathways. It would be great to respond to the research and learn about best practices - to demonstrate how the intentional integration of Basic Needs and Equity into Guided Pathways frameworks can foster student success and retention - and support the mission of our College to foster transformative change in our students' lives, families, and communities. (<https://rpgroup.org/About-Us/Team-Page/Project-Leads/Priyadarshini-Chaplot>).

In addition, there are other low-cost strategies that can be employed to help all NC faculty, classified managers and staff, and especially students to gain access to resources that can help our students meet their basic needs and improve the likelihood of academic success.

For example, if NC created an online "BN event calendar" that listed all the financial aid, financial literacy and scholarship workshops, as well as nutrition, mental health and wellness events and webinars, and student services and equity groups - this would go a long way to supporting our students! It would allow all of our community members to have an easy to follow and accessible way to be up to date with all the events - and reachable through the highly visible Norco College main webpage link. It would also foster the ability of students and especially our new and part-time faculty to learn about, plan for, and get a big picture of the organizations, services, and resources that are available to meet our student's basic needs that are important obstacles to advancing our student success, equity, transfer, and retention goals.

In conclusion, POLS would love to see Norco College become more explicit about our institutional commitment to helping students to meet the basic needs that are tied with their academic success and social mobility. By gathering quantitative data, fostering conversations and collaboration, we can enhance our institutional understanding and devise additional strategies improve our students' wellness and academic success.

This would hopefull include gathering and examining systematic data and creating some dedicated venue to include relevant stakeholders and focus our institution's efforts and with regard to basic needs insecurities' impact on student success and retention. It would also ideally foster a community of inclusion, by de-stigmatizing seeking access to information and normalize support seeking and shifting from the need for students to "self-identify."

Such data can begin conversations and the development of strategic planning, such as that prioritizes outreach. In addition to increasing our college's overall knowledge about basic needs - it would be helpful for faculty to be made aware of efforts to engage in targeted outreach - such as to equity groups and special programs specifically mentioned in the NC equity plan. That could help our full-time and Associate faculty and others to amplify the message and increase the likelihood that our students will utilize these important resources.

It would also be helpful to create a systematic plan to reach other vulnerable groups, such as student parents, Pell grant recipients, undocumented students, Liberated Scholars if it's not already being done etc. The aim

Program Review Part 2

would be to reach out and encourage them as individuals to access our services, resources, and student support clubs and organizations that make them feel welcome and part of our community. Outreach efforts could also include named e-mails, phone calls / texts, social media, web pages or main page, global Canvas announcements, etc. This is likely to be particularly important as the CARES act funding wanes as a source of support for our BN insecure students.

I want to conclude by recognizing that NC currently does a wonderful job working with Veterans and Foster Youth and there is great work being done with our Liberated Scholars and our Umoja, Puente, and Men of Color learning communities. It would be wonderful if we could build on those models and successes. If there was a place for those who are basic needs and equity allies to find each other, work together, and amplify the outreach efforts to improve our students lives and our community.

For more information on the membership pricing for #RealCollegeCalifornia, a list of the other CCC members, overview of support from the Hope Center, and information about the CCC #RealCollege survey please see the link below.

Membership fee: 10,000- 20,000 students \$4,000

<https://hope4college.com/realcollege/realcollegecalifornia/#:~:text=Membership%20Pricing&text=10%2C000%2D%2020%2C000%20students%20%244%2C000,30%2C001%20students%20or%20more%20%246%2C000>

If there are any supporting documents you would like to attach, please attach them here.

[2019_RealCollege_Survey_Report.pdf](#)

[Basic-Needs-Insecurity-College-StudentsDec18repost.pdf](#)

[RealCollege-CCCCO-Report.pdf](#)

[2018-basic-needs-survey-report-print.pdf](#)

Resource Requests

2021 - 2024

What resources do we already have?

There are a limited number of textbooks for POLS courses on reserve in the Maxwell Library.

What resources do you need?

Textbooks and Access Codes for Students for Required Course Simulations and Homework.

POLS 1 is a required course for all students at Norco College. Providing access to up-to-date POLS textbooks would thereby benefit students of all majors. Similarly, increasing access to the required POLS textbooks and access codes would promote POLS student achievement for their ADT required courses for transfer.

POLS is requesting the purchase of up-to-date versions of POLS required textbooks used by our faculty for all 6 ADT courses to be made available to students through library loans. Increasing student access to their core course materials promotes student learning, engagement, and success. The Hope Lab's findings on CCCs show that this is particularly important for our lower-income, basic-needs insecure, foster youth and student parents, who may face an affordability barrier and may not be able to purchase the required textbooks for all of their classes.

Improving students' access to the textbooks for their courses also advances the college's mission and goals involving student equity, promoting student success, as well as the transformation of our students lives and their contributions to our community. In the same way, POLS also seeks funding support for online simulation and homework "student access codes" that are required in some POLS courses, such as POL 1, 4 and 13. Increasing access to these course requirements will reduce the digital divide and promote our POLS students' engagement with course content, interactive activities, and required assignments - improving academic success.

Request related to EMP goal or Assessment?

EMP Goal 2,EMP Goal 3

\$ Amount Requested

2,500

Resource Type

ITEM: Instructional supplies

Potential Funding Source(s)

Instructional Equipment Allocation,Department Regular Funding,Lottery Instructional Supplies,Equity,General Fund,Guided Pathways

The evidence to support this request can be found in:

Data Review,Program Review: Part 1,Program Review: Part 2

This request for my area is Priority #:

1

2021 - 2024

What resources do we already have?

We did receive upgrades projector equipment and computers in our classrooms.

Resource Requests

What resources do you need?

POLS is requesting resources to enhance the cultural relevancy and equity-minded practices in our courses. Examples include:

- 1) Purchasing U.S. and World Maps, images and materials that can be displayed and shared in the classroom, such as of diverse political leaders and activists for POLS classrooms.
- 2) Funding for the POLS faculty to purchase new texts that offer additional opportunities for culturally relevant content, particularly enhancing students' knowledge on the politics and leadership of Native American, Latinx, African American, and Asian populations.
- 3) Funding for full-time faculty to attend a POLS conference and the annual Online Learning Conference to ensure contemporary knowledge in the field and best practices in distance education.

Request related to EMP goal or Assessment?

EMP Goal 3,EMP Goal 2

\$ Amount Requested

2,500

Resource Type

ITEM: Instructional supplies

Potential Funding Source(s)

Equity,Department Regular Funding,General Fund,Guided Pathways

The evidence to support this request can be found in:

Program Review: Part 1,Data Review

This request for my area is Priority #:

2

2021 - 2024

What resources do we already have?

CARES Act funds for computers and wifi

What resources do you need?

POLS and all disciplines would benefit if Norco College would become a #RealCollege California Coalition Member. This would allow NC to employ the Hope Center survey to gather more systematic data on the extent and dimensions of basic needs insecurities and inequities that impact student success and retention.

(<https://hope4college.com/realcollege/realcollegecalifornia/#:~:text=Membership%20Pricing&text=10%2C000%2D%2020%2C000%20students%20%244%2C000,30%2C001%20students%20or%20more%20%246%2C000>)

Request related to EMP goal or Assessment?

EMP Goal 1,EMP Goal 2,EMP Goal 3,EMP Goal 4,EMP Goal 5,EMP Goal 6,EMP Goal 8,EMP Goal 10,EMP Goal 12,Achievement Data

\$ Amount Requested

4,000

Resource Type

BUDGET: Request Ongoing Funding (Professional Development, Department or Program Support, Outreach, Marketing)

Resource Requests

Potential Funding Source(s)

General Fund, Guided Pathways, Equity

The evidence to support this request can be found in:

Program Review: Part 2, Data Review

This request for my area is Priority #:

3

Submission

2021 - 2024

All parts of my Program Review have been completed and it is ready for review

Yes



MARCH 2019

California Community Colleges #RealCollege Survey

AUTHORS:

Sara Goldrick-Rab
Christine Baker-Smith
Vanessa Coca
Elizabeth Looker



California
Community
Colleges





Executive Summary

The #RealCollege survey is the nation's largest annual assessment of basic needs security among college students. The survey, which specifically evaluates access to affordable food and housing, began in 2015 under the Wisconsin HOPE Lab. This report describes the results of the #RealCollege survey administered at nearly half of the schools in the California Community College system in the fall of 2016 and 2018.

Rates of basic needs insecurity vary by region and by institution. The highest incidence of basic needs insecurity is found in the Northern Coastal, Northern Inland, and Greater Sacramento regions of California. In contrast, rates of basic needs insecurity are far lower, albeit still substantial, in the South Central region of the state, which includes Santa Barbara. Rates of basic needs insecurity are higher for marginalized students, including African Americans, students identifying as LGBTQ, and students considered independent from their parents or guardians for financial aid purposes. Students who have served in the military, former foster youth, and formerly incarcerated students are all at greater risk of basic needs insecurity. Working during college is not associated with a lower risk of basic needs insecurity, and neither is receiving the federal Pell Grant; the latter is associated with higher rates of basic needs insecurity.

If your institution is interested in participating in a 2019 survey of basic needs, please contact the Hope Center Research Team at hopesrvy@temple.edu.

ALMOST 40,000 STUDENTS AT 57 CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES PARTICIPATED. THE RESULTS INDICATE:

- 50% of respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days,
- 60% of respondents were housing insecure in the previous year,
- 19% of respondents were homeless in the previous year.

The Hope Center thanks the California State Legislature, California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office & The Institute for College Access and Success for making this report possible.

Introduction

According to the federal government, insufficient food and housing undermines postsecondary educational experiences and credential attainment for many of today's college students.¹ Data describing the scope and dimensions of this problem, particularly at the college level, remain sparse. The #RealCollege survey fills a void by providing needed information for campus leaders and policymakers who are seeking to support students better. A 2019 U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report noted that there are only 31 quality studies of campus food insecurity, very few of which involve multiple colleges. Among existing multi-institutional studies, four draw on data from the #RealCollege survey.

California faces many opportunities and challenges with an expanding and increasingly diverse population seeking college certificates and degrees. Surveys conducted in both the University of California and the California State University systems document the prevalence of basic needs insecurity among students in public four-year institutions.² There is also some evidence of these challenges among community college students.³ But until now, California Community Colleges lacked a robust multi-institutional survey capable of revealing the scope and scale of the challenge confronting its 114 open-access institutions.

Colleges seek to address students' basic needs because food and housing insecurity undermines academic success.⁴ Housing insecurity and homelessness have a particularly strong, statistically significant relationship with college completion rates, persistence, and credit attainment.⁵ Researchers also associate basic needs insecurity with self-reports of poor physical health, symptoms of depression, and higher perceived stress.⁶

While campus food pantries are increasingly common, usage of other supports to promote economic security are not. In particular, use of public benefits programs remains low among





students in higher education, with many students missing out on the opportunity to receive SNAP (CalFresh in California).⁷ The GAO estimates that 57% of students at risk of food insecurity and eligible for SNAP did not collect those benefits. A 2016 study of students at a California state university found that 80% of students who were eligible for CalFresh did not receive benefits.⁸

Designing effective practices and policies requires understanding how students experience and cope with basic needs insecurity. To inform this work in California community colleges, this report includes overall and subgroup estimates of food and housing insecurity, as well as contextual information.

REPORT OVERVIEW

The following report presents findings from the Hope Center's 2016 and 2018 #RealCollege surveys on basic needs of students at 57 California community colleges.⁹ **Section 1** of this report describes the overall rates of basic needs insecurity across all survey respondents, as well as variation in these rates across schools and regions. **Section 2** describes rates of basic needs by specific groups of students. **Section 3** describes the work and academic experiences of students with basic needs insecurity. **Section 4** describes utilization of public assistance by students who need support.

For more on the research methodology and additional tables please refer to the Appendices.

SECTION 1:

Prevalence of Basic Needs Insecurity

What fraction of students are affected by basic needs insecurity? This section examines the prevalence of food insecurity during the month prior to the survey, and the prevalence of housing insecurity and homelessness during the previous year.

The data in this report come from an electronic survey fielded to students. This system-wide report includes data from 57 schools in the system. Colleges distributed the electronic survey to all enrolled students, yielding an estimated response rate of 5%, resulting in almost 40,000 total students participating in the survey.

FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner. The most extreme form is often accompanied with physiological sensations of hunger. We assessed food security among California community college students using the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) 18-item set of questions.¹⁰

During the 30 days preceding the survey, 50% of the California community college students who responded to the survey experienced food insecurity, with 20% assessed at the low level and 30% assessed at the very lowest level of food security (Figure 1).

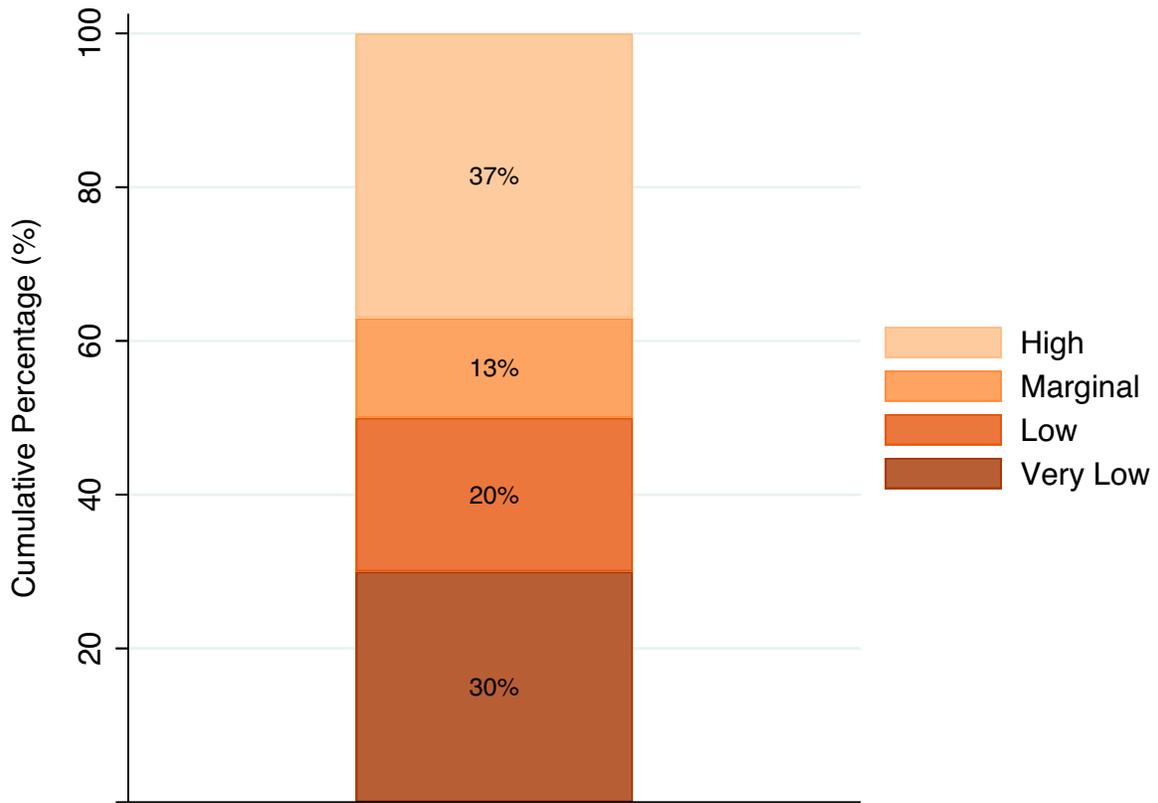
Over half of survey respondents worried about running out of food or could not afford to eat balanced meals (Figure 2). Forty-one percent of respondents reported that they skipped meals or cut the size of their meals for financial reasons, and 12% of respondents reported not eating for at least one whole day during the prior month because they didn't have enough money.

WHO ANSWERED THE SURVEY?

Most students sent the #RealCollege survey did not answer it. We surveyed all students rather than drawing a subsample due to legal and financial restrictions. The results may be biased — overstating or understating the problem— depending on who answered and who did not. As readers ponder this issue, consider that the survey was emailed to students and thus they had to have electronic access to respond. The incentives provided were negligible and did not include help with their challenges. Finally, the survey was framed as about college life, not about hunger or homelessness.



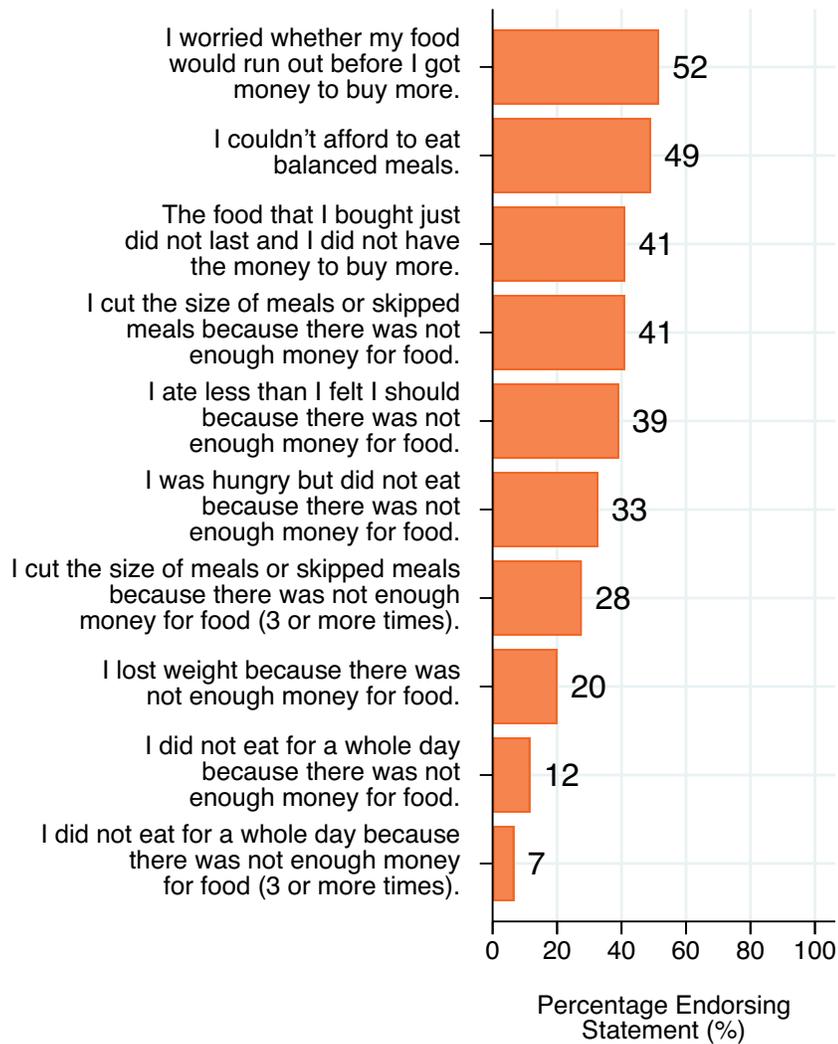
FIGURE 1. Food Security Among California Community College Survey Respondents



Source: 2016 & 2018 #RealCollege Surveys

Notes: According to the USDA, students at either the low or very low level of food security are termed “food insecure.” For more details on the 2016 and 2018 food security measures used in this report, see Appendix C.

FIGURE 2. Food Insecurity Among California Community College Survey Respondents



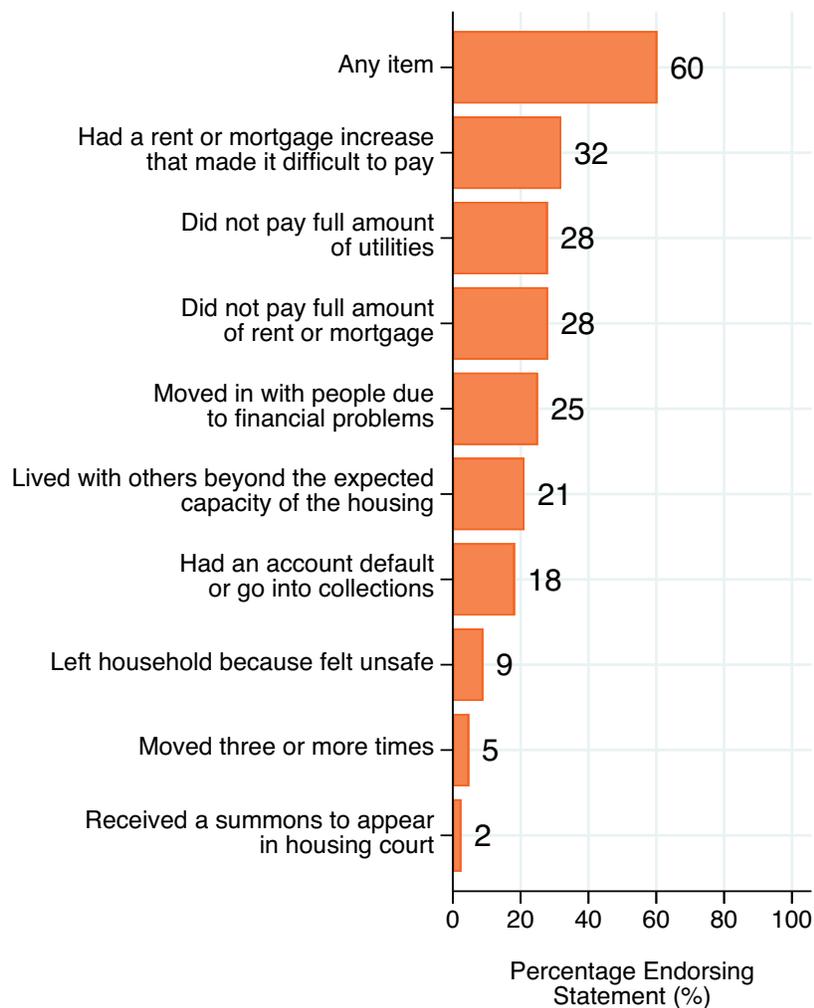
Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

HOUSING INSECURITY AND HOMELESSNESS

Housing insecurity includes a broad set of challenges such as the inability to pay rent or utilities, or the need to move frequently. All of these challenges affect students, and results suggest that they are more likely to suffer some form of housing insecurity than to have all their needs met during college. Housing insecurity among students was assessed with a nine-item set of questions developed by the Hope Center.

Sixty percent of survey respondents experienced housing insecurity in the previous year (Figure 3). The most commonly reported challenges were experiencing a rent or mortgage increase (32%), not paying the full cost of utilities (28%), and not paying the full amount of their rent or mortgage (28%).

FIGURE 3. Housing Insecurity Among California Community College Survey Respondents

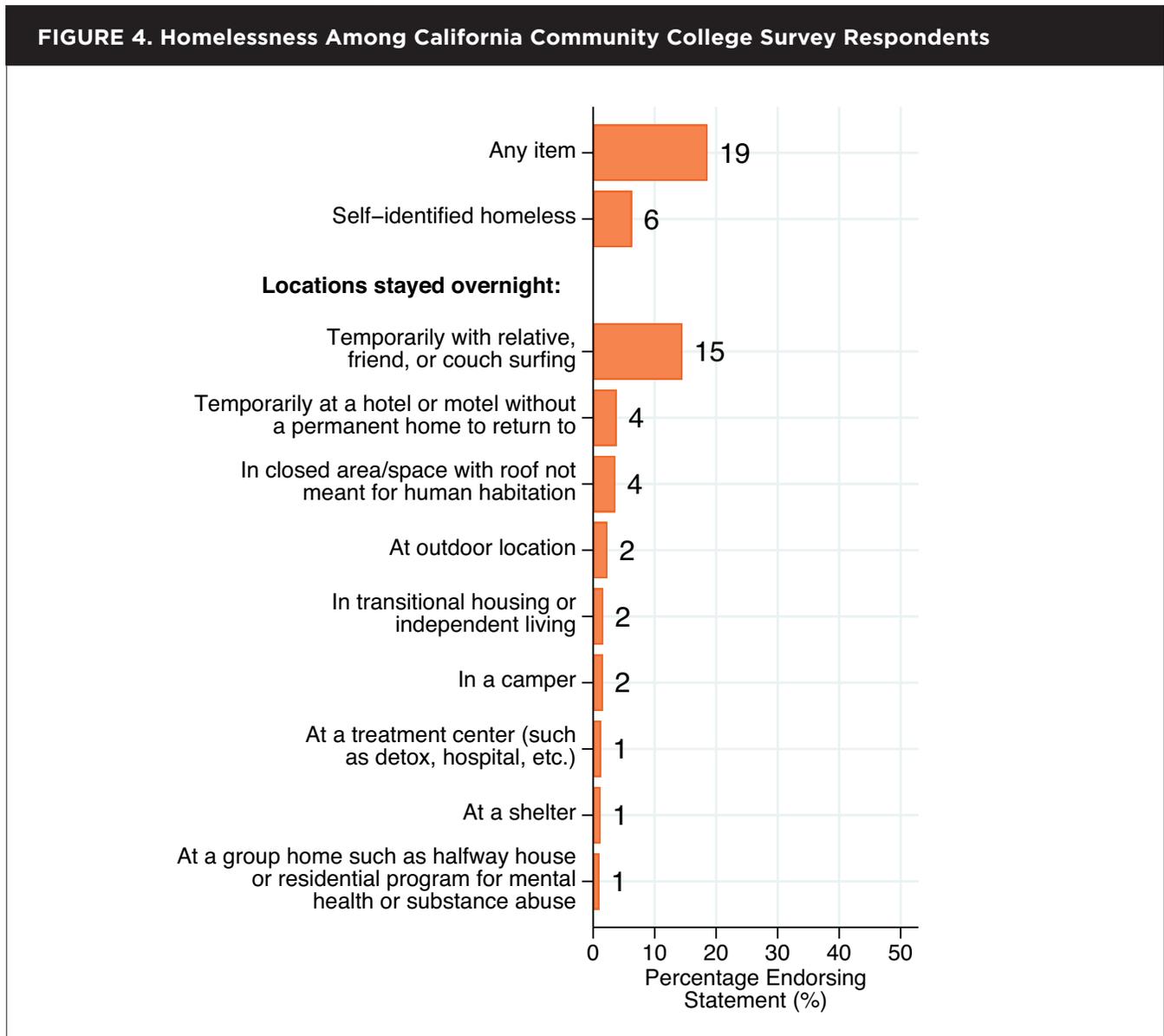


Source: Top bar – 2016 & 2018 #RealCollege Surveys; All other bars – 2018 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: In the above graph, the top bar, “Any item” represents the rate of housing insecurity for all California community college survey respondents in 2016 and 2018. However, housing insecurity was measured differently in 2016. For more details on the 2016 and 2018 measures of housing insecurity used in this report, see Appendix C.

Homelessness means that a person does not have a stable place to live. Students were identified as homeless if they responded affirmatively to a question asking if they had been homeless or they identified living conditions that are considered signs of homelessness. We measure homelessness with a tool developed by California State University researchers.

Homelessness affected 19% of California community college survey respondents during the previous year (Figure 4). Six percent of those respondents self-identify as homeless; 13% experience homelessness (e.g. were living under conditions indicating housing insecurity), but do not self-identify as homeless. The vast majority of students who experience homelessness temporarily stayed with a relative or friend, or couch surfed.



Source: Top bar - 2016 & 2018 #RealCollege Surveys; All other bars - 2018 #RealCollege Survey

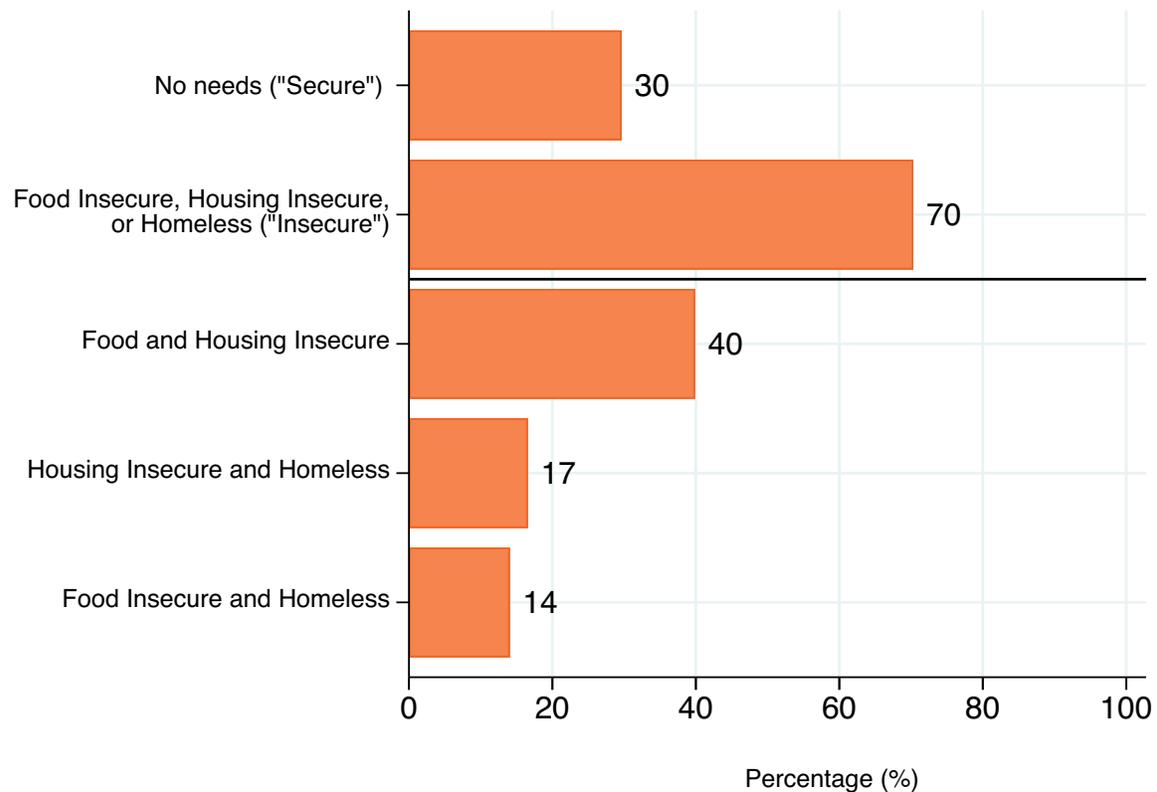
Notes: In the above graph, the top bar, "Any item" represents the rate of homelessness for all California community college survey respondents in 2016 and 2018. However, homelessness was measured differently in 2016. For more details on the 2016 and 2018 measures of homelessness used in this report, see Appendix C.

OVERLAPPING CHALLENGES

Students who lack resources for housing often also lack resources for food. In addition, basic needs insecurity varies over time, such that a student might experience housing insecurity during one semester and food insecurity the next. Some students are housing insecure during the summer and homeless during the winter.

Seven in 10 students responding to the survey experienced food insecurity *or* housing insecurity *or* homelessness during the previous year (Figure 5). In addition, 40% of respondents were both food and housing insecure in the past year, and 17% experienced both housing insecurity and homelessness during that time. Many of the latter group were also food insecure. Finally, 14% were both food insecure and homeless in the past year.

FIGURE 5. Intersections of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among California Community College Survey Respondents



Source: 2016 & 2018 #RealCollege Surveys

Notes: Food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness were measured differently in 2016. For more details on the 2016 and 2018 measures of basic needs insecurity used in this report, see Appendix C.

FIGURE 6. Regions of the California Community Colleges System



VARIATION BY REGION

Food insecurity in California community colleges ranges from 38% to 59% across regions (Figure 6 and Table 1). Housing insecurity varies from 49% to 70%. Homelessness varies the least by region, from approximately 15% to 24%. Region A, which includes much of northern California, has the highest rates of basic needs insecurity, while regions D and F, located on the south central coast and southeastern border, have substantially lower, albeit still substantial, rates of basic needs insecurity.

TABLE 1. Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity by Region*

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
BY REGION				
A	1,093	59	70	24
B	7,991	43	59	20
C	3,669	53	64	18
D	762	38	49	16
E	3,959	50	60	18
F	1,952	45	58	15
G	12,830	54	60	18
TOTAL	32,256			

*Among California Community College Survey Respondents

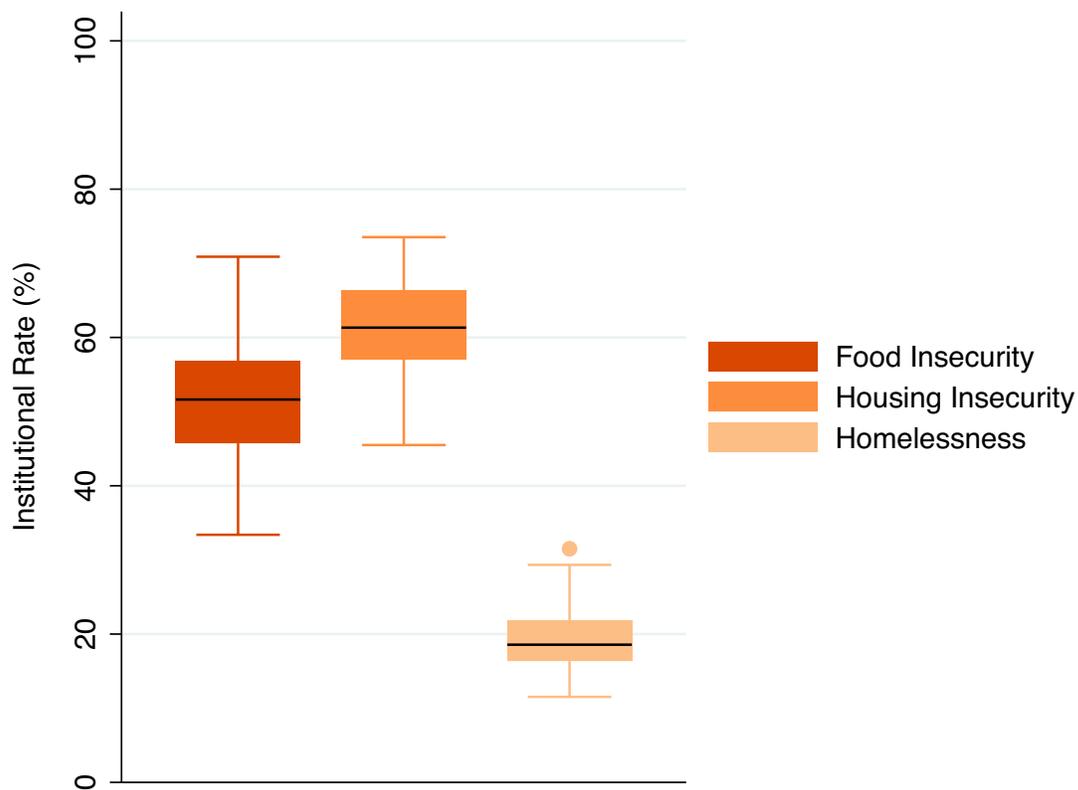
Source: 2016 & 2018 #RealCollege Surveys

Notes: There were 32,256 survey participants across the regions in our measure of homelessness. The number of survey respondents for our measures of food insecurity and housing insecurity may vary slightly. For more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed, see Appendix C. Region A comprises the greater Sacramento and northern coastal and inland areas. Region B comprises East Bay, Mid-Peninsula, North Bay, Santa Cruz/Monterey, and Silicon Valley areas. Region C comprises Central Valley and Mother Lode regions. Region D comprises the South Central area. Region E comprises the San Diego/Imperial areas. Region F comprises Inland Empire and Desert areas. Region G comprises Los Angeles and Orange County.

VARIATION BY INSTITUTION

Within and across regions, institutional rates of basic needs insecurity vary as well (Figure 7). There is wide variation in rates of food insecurity across institutions, from around 35% at one institution to almost 70% at another. Rates of housing insecurity have a slightly smaller range across participating institutions, with few colleges having less than 50% of their students experiencing housing insecurity and the highest rates slightly less than 75%. Rates of student homelessness range from approximately 10% to 30%, with most participating institutions ranging from 15% to 20%.

FIGURE 7. Variation in Institutional Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, & Homelessness Among California Community College Survey Respondents



Source: 2016 & 2018 #RealCollege Surveys

Notes: The horizontal line within each box represents the median institutional rate. Food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness were measured differently across years. For more details on the 2016 and 2018 measures of basic needs insecurity used in this report, see Appendix C. Institutional-level rates were not available for institutions in the San Diego Community College District or the San Mateo Community College District; however, district-level rates for these two districts are used in compiling the figure above.

SECTION 2:

Disparities in Basic Needs Insecurity

Some California community college students are at higher risk of basic needs insecurity than others. This section of the report examines basic needs insecurity according to students' demographic, academic, and economic characteristics, as well as their life circumstances.

DEMOGRAPHIC DISPARITIES IN BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY

Students who are male or heterosexual have lower rates of basic needs insecurity as compared to their peers; students who are not sure of their sexuality or do not identify as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual also have lower rates than their peers (Table 2). Students who chose not to identify themselves as female, male, or transgender have higher rates of food and housing insecurity as compared to other gender orientations. Transgender students have the highest rates of homelessness at 37%, approximately double the rate of students identifying as male or female. Bisexual students have rates of food insecurity 11 percentage points higher than their heterosexual peers, at 58% versus 47%. Gay or lesbian students have food insecurity rates almost as high, at 56%. These students have rates of housing insecurity and homelessness almost 10 percentage points higher than their heterosexual or non-identifying peers.



There are also sizable racial/ethnic disparities in basic needs insecurity among California community college students. For example, rates of food insecurity among students identifying as African American or Black, American Indian, or Alaskan Native exceed 60%. This is approximately 10 percentage points higher than rates for Hispanic or Latinx students, and almost 20 percentage points higher than rates for students identifying as White or Caucasian. Racial/ethnic disparities are somewhat smaller, but still pronounced, for housing insecurity and homelessness. Students who are not U.S. citizens are somewhat more likely than U.S. citizens to experience homelessness, but the converse is true with regard to food insecurity.

Higher levels of parental education are associated with less risk of basic needs insecurity, with the clearest disparities evident based on whether or not a student's parent possesses a bachelor's degree. Nonetheless, about one-third of students with college-educated parents experience food insecurity.

Basic needs insecurity is more pronounced among older California community college students. For example, more than half of students ages 21 or older experience food insecurity (compared to 40% for 18–20 year olds) and about one in five experience homelessness (compared to 15% for 18–20 year olds).

TABLE 2. Demographic Disparities in Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness*

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
GENDER ORIENTATION				
Male	7,375	44	56	21
Female	18,024	50	64	18
Transgender	245	56	65	37
Does not identify as female, male, or transgender	490	59	70	33
SEXUAL ORIENTATION				
Heterosexual or straight	20,605	47	61	18
Gay or lesbian	969	56	68	27
Bisexual	2,316	58	67	25
Is not sure or neither heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual	1,437	50	61	19
RACIAL OR ETHNIC BACKGROUND				
White or Caucasian	7,409	45	59	21
African American or Black	1,874	62	73	31
Hispanic or Latinx	11,713	51	65	17
American Indian or Alaskan Native	656	63	74	32
Middle Eastern or North African or Arab or Arab American	521	44	62	21
Southeast Asian	1,799	41	52	17
Pacific Islander or native Hawaiian	649	57	63	25
Other Asian or Asian American	2,800	39	50	16
Other	1,066	54	65	23
STUDENT IS A U.S. CITIZEN OR PERMANENT RESIDENT				
Yes	23,331	49	62	19

TABLE 2. Demographic Disparities in Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness* (continued)

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
No	1,403	44	62	24
Prefers not to answer	795	49	64	17
HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARENTAL EDUCATION				
No high school diploma	5,100	53	69	18
High school diploma	5,552	51	62	21
Some college	9,122	52	66	20
Bachelor's degree or greater	4,879	33	46	16
Does not know	1,046	49	61	22
AGE				
18 to 20	9,519	40	46	15
21 to 25	6,909	53	68	23
26 to 30	3,525	58	78	24
Older than 30	5,597	52	71	20

*Among California Community College Survey Respondents

Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: In the table above, the columns labelled Food, Housing, and Homelessness indicate rates of food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness for each subgroup. For more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed, see Appendix C. Classifications of gender orientation and racial/ethnic background are not mutually exclusive. Students could self-identify with multiple classifications.

BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY BY ACADEMIC, ECONOMIC, AND LIFE EXPERIENCES

Rates of basic needs insecurity vary as well by students' academic, economic, and life experiences (Table 3). Food insecurity and homelessness vary minimally across part- versus full-time academic status, though full-time students experience less housing insecurity than their part-time peers, at 59% versus 64%. Students who spend three or more years in college have higher rates of food and housing insecurity than students who spend fewer than two years in college. Half of students with one or more years of college are food insecure and nearly two-thirds are housing insecure. In comparison, approximately 43% of students still in their first year of college are food insecure and 52% are housing insecure. Rates of homelessness do not differ by number of years in college.

Students who are considered independent from their families for the purposes of filing a FAFSA are more likely to experience food insecurity, homelessness, and housing insecurity than those claimed as a dependent by their parents. We also find disparities in basic needs insecurity by financial need (measured using Pell Grant status). Pell Grant recipients experience greater basic needs insecurity in all three categories in comparison with students who do not receive the Pell.

In addition, students with children experience higher rates of food insecurity (55%) and housing insecurity (69%) as compared with those who do not have children; rates of homelessness vary far less. Students who are married or in a domestic partnership have lower rates of homelessness than their peers in other types of relationships. While the total number of students who report being divorced (564) is small, the rates of food insecurity (65%), housing insecurity (84%), and homelessness (27%) are worth noting, as these rates are higher than any other relationship category.

TABLE 3. Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness by Student Life Experiences*

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
COLLEGE ENROLLMENT STATUS				
Full-time (at least 12 credits)	15,828	48	59	20
Part-time (fewer than 12 credits)	11,775	48	64	18
YEARS IN COLLEGE				
Less than 1	7,200	43	52	19
1 to 2	9,218	49	62	19
3 or more	9,309	52	68	19
DEPENDENCY STATUS				
Dependent	8,989	41	50	15
Independent	16,466	53	69	22

TABLE 3. Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness by Student Life Experiences* (continued)

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
STUDENT RECEIVES THE PELL GRANT				
Yes	11,116	57	69	22
No	16,607	42	56	17
STUDENT HAS CHILDREN				
Yes	6,124	55	69	19
No	21,599	46	59	19
RELATIONSHIP STATUS				
Single	13,732	47	58	20
In a relationship	7,640	52	66	20
Married or domestic partnership	3,610	42	65	13
Divorced	564	65	84	27
Widowed	116	54	67	25
STUDENT HAS BEEN IN FOSTER CARE				
Yes	1,013	69	82	43
No	24,637	48	61	18
STUDENT SERVED IN THE MILITARY				
Yes	749	48	64	25
No	24,909	48	62	19
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Employed	15,359	52	68	20
Not employed, looking for work	5,274	51	58	21
Not employed, not looking for work	5,940	34	46	13
STUDENT HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME				
Yes	996	66	83	44
No	25,608	47	61	18

TABLE 3. Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness by Student Life Experiences* (continued)

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
DISABILITY OR MEDICAL CONDITION				
Learning disability (dyslexia, etc.)	2,095	62	72	30
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	1,992	63	73	32
Autism spectrum disorder	343	49	54	31
Physical disability (speech, sight, mobility, hearing, etc.)	1,538	61	70	30
Chronic illness (asthma, diabetes, autoimmune disorder, cancer, etc.)	3,170	58	71	26
Psychological disorder (depression, anxiety, etc.)	7,732	60	71	27
Other	711	61	71	29
No disability or medical condition	14,619	42	57	15

*Among California Community College Survey Respondents

Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: For more detail on how each measure of insecurity was constructed see Appendix C. Classifications of disability or medical conditions are not mutually exclusive. Students could self-identify with multiple disabilities or medical conditions.

DISPARITIES BY LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES

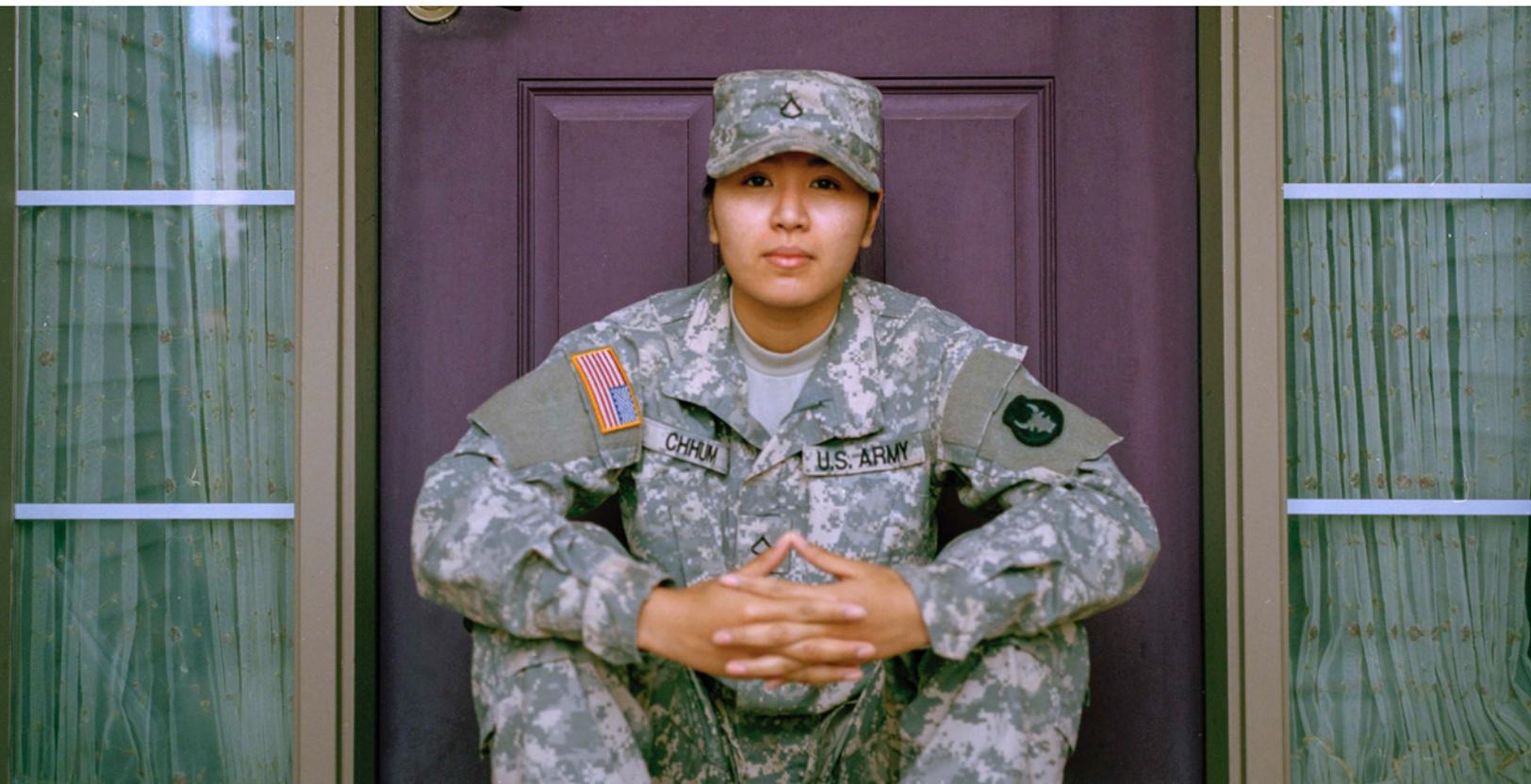
Table 3 also illustrates variations in basic needs insecurity by student life circumstances. Students who have been in the foster care system are much more likely to report basic needs insecurity than their peers. More than two-thirds of these students experience food insecurity, while the vast majority (82%) experience housing insecurity. Forty-three percent of students who were formerly in foster care also experience homelessness.

Students who served in the military were more likely to experience homelessness (25%) than students who did not (19%). However, students with military experience were no more likely to experience food insecurity than students who were not in the military.

Within employment categories, students who were looking for work have lower basic needs insecurity than their peers. Students who were employed or looking for work experience similar rates of food insecurity and homelessness. However, employed students experience higher rates of housing insecurity (68%) than students who were looking for work (58%). For more detailed information about employment and basic needs insecurity, refer to Section 3.

Among students who reported they had been convicted of a crime in the past, many encounter food and housing challenges while attending college. Two-thirds of these respondents experience food insecurity, while 83% experience housing insecurity. Also, a significant share of these students (44%) experience homelessness.

Basic needs insecurity varies widely by disability or medical condition. Students who reported having attention deficit hyperactivity disorder struggle the most with basic needs insecurity, while students with autism spectrum disorder report rates of housing insecurity below the rates for students who reported not having a disability or medical condition.



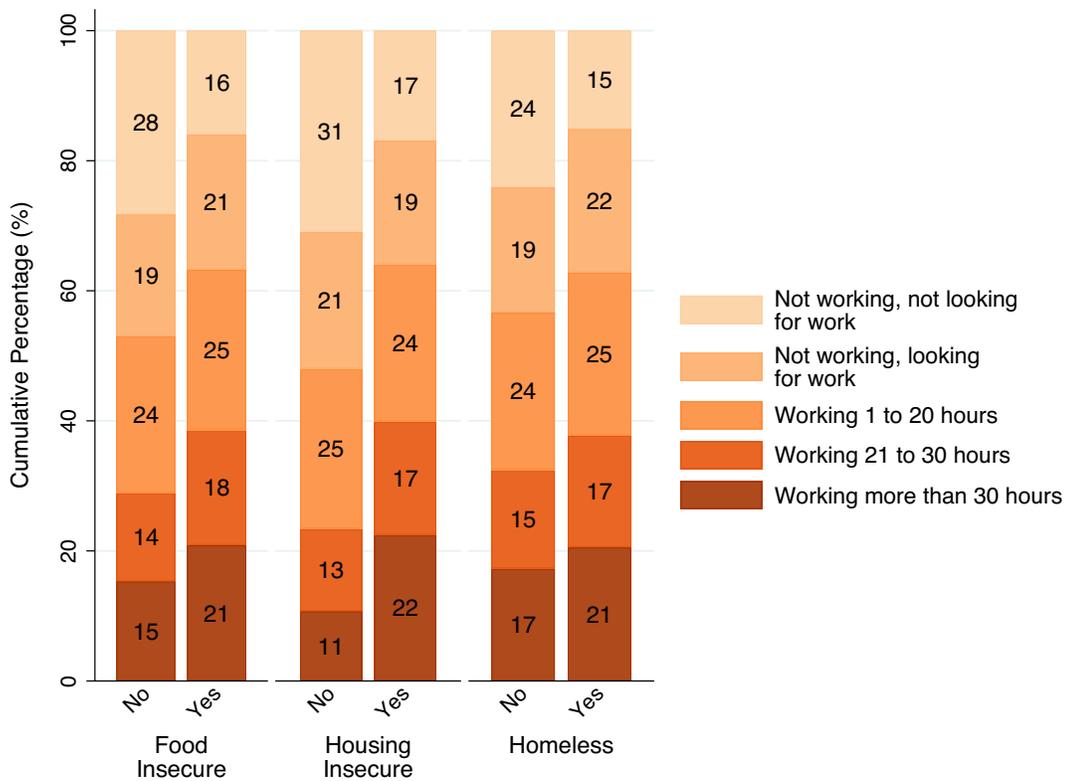


SECTION 3:

Employment and Academic Performance

Like most American undergraduates, California community college students experiencing basic needs insecurity are overwhelmingly part of the labor force. For example, the vast majority (84%) of students who experience food insecurity are employed or looking for work (Figure 8). Similarly, the majority of students who experience housing insecurity or homelessness are employed or looking for work. Also, among working students, those who experience basic needs insecurity work more hours than other students.

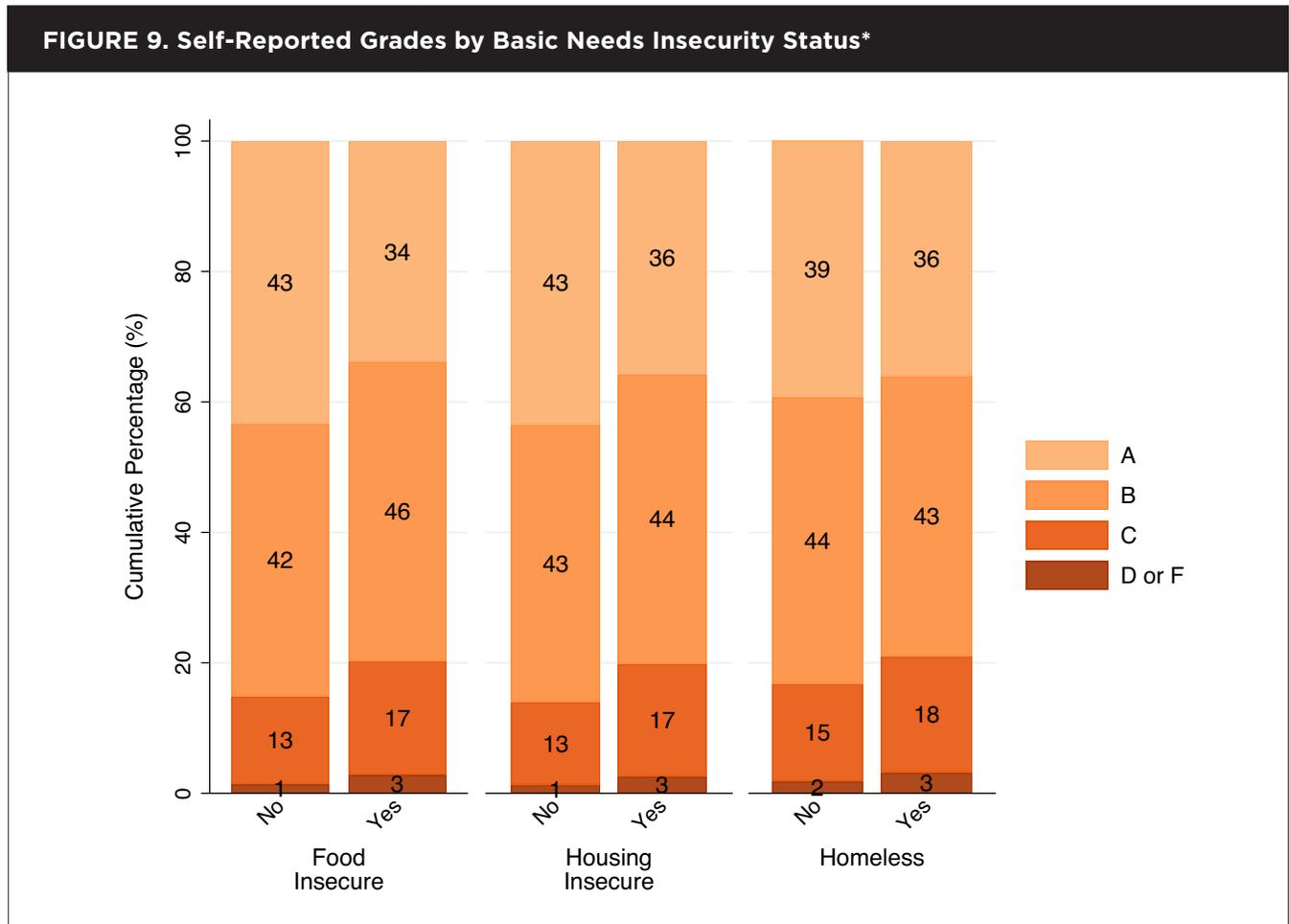
FIGURE 8. Employment Behavior by Basic Needs Insecurity Status*



*Among California Community College Survey Respondents

Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

Figure 9 illustrates that while most students report receiving A's and B's, students who experience food insecurity report grades of C or below at higher rates than students who do not experience food insecurity. Similarly, about one in five students who experience housing insecurity or homelessness earn grades of C or below.



*Among California Community College Survey Respondents

Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

SECTION 4:

Utilization of Supports

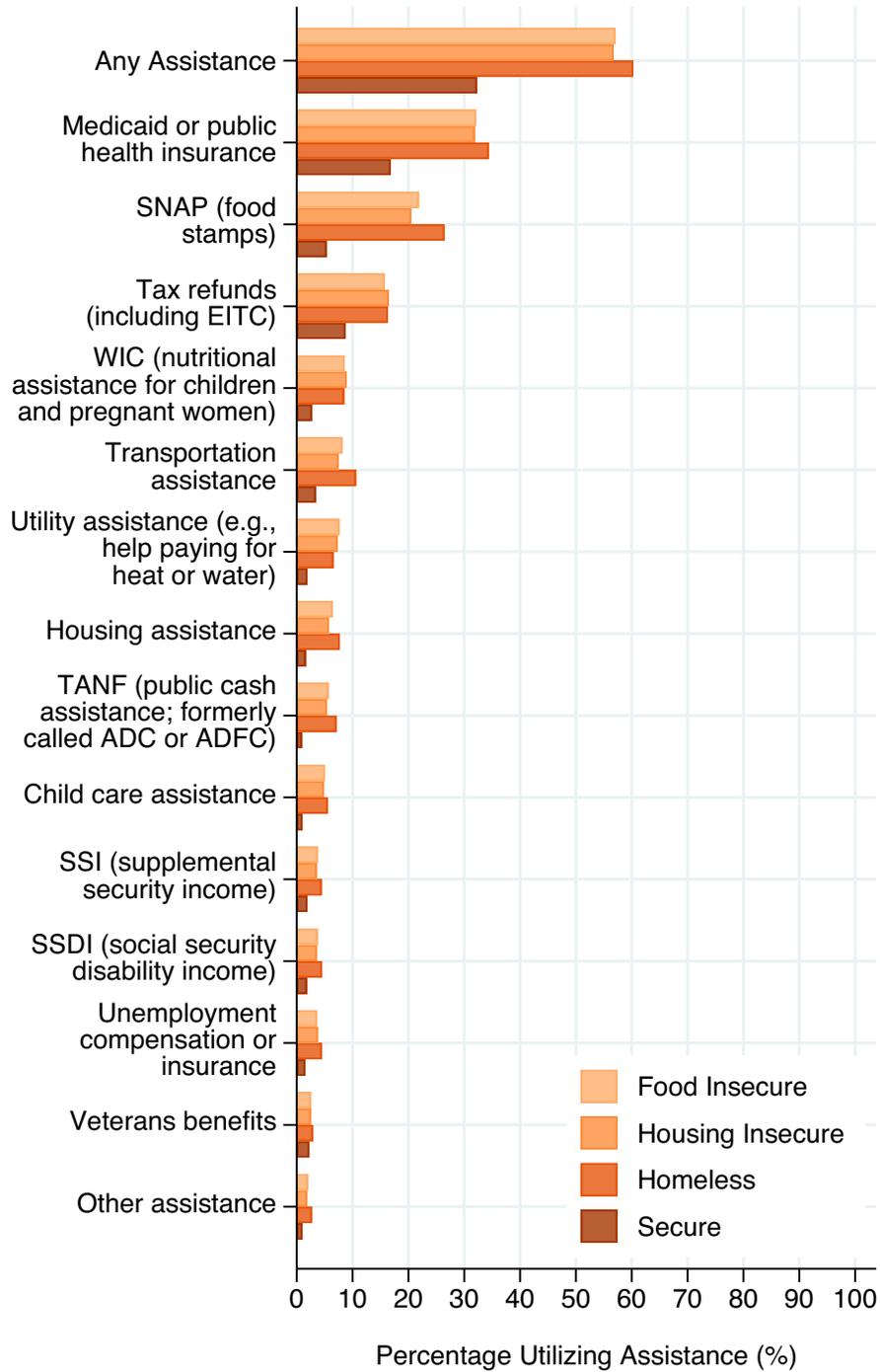
Many students in California community colleges who experience basic needs insecurity do not receive public assistance (Figure 10). Approximately 22% of food insecure students receive SNAP. Likewise, only 8% of students who experience homelessness receive housing assistance. Medicaid or public health insurance, SNAP, and tax refunds are the supports used most often, though they remain quite low given the rates of students experiencing basic needs insecurity. It is also worth noting that students who are secure in their basic needs are still accessing public benefits, albeit at lower rates (32%) than students with food insecurity (57%), housing insecurity (57%), and homelessness (60%).¹¹

Use of public assistance also varies by California region (Table 4). Moreover, the use of public assistance reflects the variation in basic needs insecurity by region (Table 1). For example, Region A, which has the highest incidence of basic needs insecurity, also sees the highest utilization of public assistance. In contrast, regions D and B, areas with relatively lower rates of basic needs insecurity, see fewer students accessing supports.

California Community College students deserve more support for their basic needs. The Hope Center and the Institute for College Access and Success offer policy recommendations in a brief found on the Hope Center website.



FIGURE 10. Use of Assistance Among California Community College Survey Respondents According to Basic Needs Security



Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: For more detail on the percentages for each bar, see Appendix E, Table E-10.

TABLE 4. Utilization of Public Assistance by California Region*

	REGION						
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
PERCENTAGE USING:							
Any Assistance	59	43	58	38	47	48	49
Medicaid or public health insurance	35	23	35	19	24	28	27
SNAP (food stamps)	25	10	26	7	12	17	15
Tax refunds (including EITC)	17	13	14	13	13	14	14
WIC (nutritional assistance for children and pregnant women)	7	4	13	1	6	8	7
Transportation assistance	7	6	7	2	5	6	7
Utility assistance (e.g., help paying for heat or water)	10	4	7	3	7	6	5
Housing assistance	6	5	6	3	5	2	4
TANF (public cash assistance; formerly called ADC or ADCF)	4	2	8	1	2	4	4
Child care assistance	5	3	5	1	3	4	3
SSI (supplemental security income)	6	3	3	2	3	3	3
SSDI (social security disability income)	6	3	3	3	3	3	3
Unemployment compensation or insurance	4	2	4	3	3	2	3
Veterans benefits	3	3	2	2	5	2	2
Other assistance	2	1	2	2	2	1	2

* Among California Community College Survey Respondents

Source: 2018#RealCollege Survey

Notes: Region A comprises the greater Sacramento and northern coastal and inland areas. Region B comprises East Bay, Mid-Peninsula, North Bay, Santa Cruz/Monterey, and Silicon Valley areas. Region C comprises Central Valley and Mother Lode regions. Region D comprises the South Central area. Region E comprises the San Diego/Imperial areas. Region F comprises Inland Empire and Desert areas. Region G comprises Los Angeles and Orange County.

California Community Colleges #RealCollege Survey Appendices

Appendix A. Participating Postsecondary Institutions in this Report

2018 #REALCOLLEGE SURVEY

Barstow Community College
Berkeley City College
Butte College
Cabrillo College
Canada College
Chaffey College
Citrus College
Clovis Community College
Coastline Community College
College of San Mateo
College of the Redwoods
College of the Siskiyous
Contra Costa College
Copper Mountain College
Cypress College
De Anza College
Diablo Valley College
El Camino College-Compton Center
Evergreen Valley College
Foothill College
Fresno City College
Fullerton College
Golden West College
Lake Tahoe Community College
Laney College
Long Beach City College
Los Angeles Trade Technical College
Los Medanos College
Monterey Peninsula College
Moorpark College
Mt. San Antonio College
North Orange Continuing Education
Orange Coast College
Palomar College
Porterville College
Reedley College
Rio Hondo College

San Diego City College
San Diego Continuing Education
San Diego Mesa College
San Diego Miramar College
San Joaquin Delta College
San Jose City College
Santa Monica College
Santa Rosa Junior College
Skyline College
West Los Angeles College
Woodland Community College

#2016 REALCOLLEGE SURVEY

Cuyamaca College
East Los Angeles College
Grossmont College
Los Angeles City College
Los Angeles Harbor College
Los Angeles Mission College
Los Angeles Pierce College
Los Angeles Southwest College
Los Angeles Valley College

Appendix B. Survey Methodology

SURVEY ELIGIBILITY AND PARTICIPATING COLLEGES

The Hope Center extended the opportunity to participate in the #RealCollege survey (at no charge) to any California Community College, with the invitation coming directly from the California Community College Chancellor’s Office. Participating institutions agreed to administer an online survey in the fall and offer ten \$100 prizes to their students in order to boost response rates. Institutions sent a series of invitations and follow-up reminders to all enrolled students encouraging them to participate. The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice provided the email invitation language as well as hosted the survey as shown below. Upon opening the survey they were presented with a consent form in compliance with Institutional Review Board standards. To actually take the survey the student must have clicked continue as a record of his/her consent and completed a minimum of the first page of the survey. Participating institutions were asked to use only the provided invitation language to ensure consistency across institutions.

Subject: #RealCollege: Speak out - chance to win \$100!

Making it in college these days can be tough. We want to help.

Colleges and universities need to know about the lives of real students like you so that they can offer more support. After you complete the survey, you can enter a drawing to receive a \$100 award.

This survey we call “#RealCollege” is all about you and your college experience. You’re getting it because you attend [COLLEGE NAME] and people there want to help you succeed.

Click here to share your story. [SURVEY LINKED HERE]

Everything will be kept confidential so, tell the truth. Share your challenges. Help us find solutions.

The sample includes 39,930 students from 57 institutions (see Appendix A for a list of participating institutions). Institutions typically fielded the survey early in fall term, as students enduring basic needs insecurity are at greater risk for dropping out of school later in the year.¹² Institutions sent survey invitations to an estimated 795,632 students, yielding a response rate of 5%.¹³

COLLEGE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Table B-1. Characteristics of Participating Institutions

	Percentage
URBANICITY OF LOCATION	
City	44
Suburb	44
Town	5
Rural	7

Table B-1. Characteristics of Participating Institutions (continued)

	Percentage
UNDERGRADUATE POPULATION	
Fewer than 5,000	13
5,000–9,999	25
10,000–19,999	38
20,000 or more	24
UNDERGRADUATES AWARDED PELL GRANTS	
Less than 25%	43
25%–49%	53
50%–74%	4
75% or more	0

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (2017 & 2018). Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/>

Notes: TThe information above reflects the characteristics of 55 institutions in the fall of 2017 with the exception of information on Pell awardees, which was collected in fall 2016. In addition, characteristics of institutions that participated in the 2016 RealCollege Survey are from fall 2016. Two college programs, North Orange Continuing Education and San Diego Continuing Education, were missing IPEDS information and are not included in the above table.

STUDENT SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

Table B-2. Characteristics of California Community College Survey Respondents

	Percentage
GENDER ORIENTATION	
Male	29
Female	70
Transgender	1
Does not identify as female, male, or transgender	2
SEXUAL ORIENTATION	
Heterosexual or straight	81
Gay or lesbian	4
Bisexual	9
Is not sure or neither heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual	6

Table B-2. Characteristics of California Community College Survey Respondents (continued)

	Percentage
RACIAL OR ETHNIC BACKGROUND	
White or Caucasian	29
African American or Black	7
Hispanic or Latinx	46
American Indian or Alaskan Native	3
Middle Eastern or North African or Arab or Arab American	2
Southeast Asian	7
Pacific Islander or native Hawaiian	3
Other Asian or Asian American	11
Other	4
STUDENT IS A U.S. CITIZEN OR PERMANENT RESIDENT	
Yes	91
No	5
Prefers not to answer	3
HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARENTAL EDUCATION	
No high school diploma	20
High school diploma	22
Some college	35
Bachelor's degree or greater	19
Does not know	4
AGE	
18 to 20	37
21 to 25	27
26 to 30	14
Older than 30	22
COLLEGE ENROLLMENT STATUS	
Full-time (at least 12 credits)	57
Part-time (fewer than 12 credits)	43

Table B-2. Characteristics of California Community College Survey Respondents (continued)

	Percentage
YEARS IN COLLEGE	
Less than 1	29
1 to 2	36
3 or more	36
DEPENDENCY STATUS	
Dependent	35
Independent	65
STUDENT RECEIVES THE PELL GRANT	
Yes	40
No	60
STUDENT HAS CHILDREN	
Yes	22
No	78
RELATIONSHIP STATUS	
Single	54
In a relationship	30
Married or domestic partnership	14
Divorced	2
Widowed	0
STUDENT HAS BEEN IN FOSTER CARE	
Yes	4
No	96
STUDENT SERVED IN THE MILITARY	
Yes	3
No	97
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	
Employed	57
Not employed, looking for work	20

Table B-2. Characteristics of California Community College Survey Respondents (continued)

	Percentage
Not employed, not looking for work	23
STUDENT HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME	
Yes	4
No	96
DISABILITY OR MEDICAL CONDITION	
Learning disability (dyslexia, etc.)	8
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	8
Autism spectrum disorder	1
Physical disability (speech, sight, mobility, hearing, etc.)	6
Chronic illness (asthma, diabetes, autoimmune disorder, cancer, etc.)	12
Psychological disorder (depression, anxiety, etc.)	30
Other	3
No disability or medical condition	43

Source: 2018 RealCollege Survey

Notes: Classifications of gender orientation, racial or ethnic background, and disability or medical condition are not mutually exclusive. Students could self-identify with multiple classifications.

Appendix C. Three Survey Measures of Basic Needs Insecurity

1. Food Security

To assess food security in 2018, we used questions from the 18-item Household Food Security Survey Module (shown below) from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). It is important to note that while we mainly discuss insecurity, the standard is to measure the level of security, referring to those with low or very low security as “food insecure.”

FOOD SECURITY MODULE

Adult Stage 1

1. “In the last 30 days, I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.” (Often true, Sometimes true, Never true)
2. “In the last 30 days, the food that I bought just didn’t last, and I didn’t have money to get more.” (Often true, Sometimes true, Never true)
3. “In the last 30 days, I couldn’t afford to eat balanced meals.” (Often true, Sometimes true, Never true)

If the respondent answers “often true” or “sometimes true” to any of the three questions in Adult Stage 1, then proceed to Adult Stage 2.

Adult Stage 2

4. “In the last 30 days, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?” (Yes/No)
5. [If yes to question 4, ask] “In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?” (Once, Twice, Three times, Four times, Five times, More than five times)
6. “In the last 30 days, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn’t enough money for food?” (Yes/No)
7. “In the last 30 days, were you ever hungry but didn’t eat because there wasn’t enough money for food?” (Yes/No)
8. “In the last 30 days, did you lose weight because there wasn’t enough money for food?” (Yes/No)

If the respondent answers “yes” to any of the questions in Adult Stage 2, then proceed to Adult Stage 3.

Adult Stage 3

9. “In the last 30 days, did you ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn’t enough money for food?” (Yes/No)
10. [If yes to question 9, ask] “In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?” (Once, Twice, Three times, Four times, Five times, More than five times)

If the respondent has indicated that children under 18 are present in the household, then proceed to Child Stage 1:

Child Stage 1

11. “In the last 30 days, I relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed my children because I was running out of money to buy food.” (Often true, Sometimes true, Never true)
12. “In the last 30 days, I couldn’t feed my children a balanced meal, because I couldn’t afford that.” (Often true, Sometimes true, Never true)
13. “In the last 30 days, my child was not eating enough because I just couldn’t afford enough food.” (Often true, Sometimes true, Never true)

If the respondent answers “often true” or “sometimes true” to any of the three questions in child stage 1, then proceed to child stage 2.

Child Stage 2

14. “In the last 30 days, did you ever cut the size of your children’s meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?” (Yes/No)
15. “In the last 30 days, did your children ever skip meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?” (Yes/No)
16. [If yes to question 15, ask] “In the last 30 days, how often did this happen?” (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 or more times)
17. “In the last 30 days, were your children ever hungry but you just couldn’t afford more food?” (Yes/No)
18. “In the last 30 days, did any of your children ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn’t enough money for food?” (Yes/No)

In 2016, we used the six-item Household Food Security Survey Module from the USDA¹⁴, which comprised questions #2 through #7 of the above Adult Stage questions.¹⁵

To calculate a raw score for food security, we counted the number of questions to which a student answered affirmatively.

- a. “Often true” and “Sometimes true” were counted as affirmative answers.
- b. Answers of “Three times” or more were counted as a “yes.” We translated the raw score into food security levels as follows:

FOOD SECURITY LEVEL	RAW SCORE		
	18-item (children present)	18-item (no children present)	Six-item
High	0	0	0
Marginal	1-2	1-2	1
Low	3-7	3-5	2-4
Very Low	8-18	6-10	5-6

2. Housing Insecurity

To assess housing insecurity, we used a series of survey questions adapted from the national Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) Adult Well-Being Module to measure students' access to and ability to pay for safe and reliable housing.¹⁶ In 2018, we asked students the following questions:

HOUSING INSECURITY MODULE

1. "In the past 12 months, was there a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay?" (Yes/No)
2. "In the past 12 months, have you been unable to pay or underpaid your rent or mortgage?" (Yes/No)
3. "In the past 12 months, have you received a summons to appear in housing court?" (Yes/No)
4. "In the past 12 months, have you not paid the full amount of a gas, oil, or electricity bill?" (Yes/No)
5. "In the past 12 months, did you have an account default or go into collections?" (Yes/No)
6. "In the past 12 months, have you moved in with other people, even for a little while, because of financial problems?" (Yes/No)
7. "In the past 12 months, have you lived with others beyond the expected capacity of the house or apartment?" (Yes/No)
8. "In the past 12 months, did you leave your household because you felt unsafe?" (Yes/No)
9. "In the past 12 months, how many times have you moved?" (None, Once, Twice, 3 times, 4 times, 5 times, 6 times, 7 times, 8 times, 9 times, 10 or more times)
10. "In the past 12 months, was there a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay?" (Yes/No)

In 2018, students were considered housing insecure if they answered "yes" to any of the first eight questions or said they moved at least three times (question #9). In 2016, students were considered housing insecure if they answered affirmatively to question #2, #4, or #6, or they moved two or more times (question #9).¹⁷

3. Homelessness

To measure homelessness, we asked a series of survey questions developed by Crutchfield and Maguire (2017) that are based on definitions of homelessness adopted by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Education. In 2018, students were considered homeless if they answered affirmatively to question #1 OR any part of question #2 (parts e through m) in the Homelessness Module (below).¹⁸

HOMELESSNESS MODULE

1. "In the past 12 months, have you ever been homeless?"
2. "In the past 12 months, have you slept in any of the following places? Please check all that apply?"

- a. Campus or university housing
- b. Sorority/fraternity house
- c. In a rented or owned house, mobile home, or apartment (alone or with roommates or friends)
- d. In a rented or owned house, mobile home, or apartment with my family (parent, guardian, or relative)
- e. At a shelter
- f. In a camper
- g. Temporarily staying with a relative, friend, or couch surfing until I find other housing
- h. Temporarily at a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to (not on vacation or business travel)
- i. In transitional housing or independent living program
- j. At a group home such as halfway house or residential program for mental health or substance abuse
- k. At a treatment center (such as detox, hospital, etc.)
- l. Outdoor location (such as street, sidewalk, or alley; bus or train stop; campground or woods, park, beach, or riverbed; under bridge or overpass; or other)
- m. In a closed area/space with a roof not meant for human habitation (such as abandoned building; car, truck, van, RV, or camper; encampment or tent; unconverted garage, attic, or basement; etc.)

In 2016, students were considered homeless if they answered affirmatively to any of the first five questions below or answered “no” to question #6:¹⁹

1. “In the past 12 months, did you not know where you were going to sleep even for one night?” (Yes/No)
2. “In the past 12 months, have you been thrown out of the home?” (Yes/No)
3. “In the past 12 months, have you been evicted from home?” (Yes/No)
4. “In the past 12 months, have you stayed in a shelter” (Yes/No)
5. “In the past 12 months, have you stayed in an abandoned building, auto, or other place not meant as housing?” (Yes/No)
6. “In the past 12 months, did you have a home?” (Yes/No)

Appendix D. Comparing Measures of Homelessness

One key challenge to supporting homeless students is that they often do not identify as homeless. In this survey, we posed direct questions about students’ homelessness status and compared those results with the indirect measures assessing their actual experiences (described in Appendix C). As shown in Table D, when asked if they ever experienced homelessness in the past year, the majority of students who said “yes” also reported couch surfing (77%) or sleeping in a location used to classify students as homeless (91%). However, among students who reported couch surfing in the past year—a considerably greater number of students than those who said they had been homeless (2,515 versus 1,738)—only half self-identified as experiencing homelessness. Similarly, only 32% who reported sleeping in a location used to classify students as homeless also self-identified as experiencing homelessness.

TABLE D. Comparisons of Homelessness Measures

	Number of Students	Percentage self-identified homeless (%)	Percentage ever couch surfed (%)	Percentage experienced location-based homelessness (%)
AMONG RESPONDENTS WHO:				
Self-identified homeless	1,738	100	77	91
Ever couch surfed	2,515	53	100	90
Experienced location-based homelessness	5,038	32	45	100

Note: The first row refers the students who responded “Yes” to the following question: “In the past 12 months have you been homeless?” The second row refers to students who responded “Yes” to the following question: “In the past 12 months, did you couch surf—that is moved from one temporary housing arrangement to another because you had no other place to live?” The last row, experienced location-based homelessness, reflects the students who reported sleeping in any of the following locations in the past 12 months: at a shelter; in a camper; temporarily staying with a relative, friend, or couch surfing; temporarily at a hotel or motel; in transitional housing or independent living program; at a group; at a treatment; outdoor location; in a closed area/space with a roof not meant for human habitation.

Appendix E. Tables on Data Used in Figures

TABLE E-1. Food Security Among California Community College Survey Respondents (Figure 1)

	Number of Students	Percentage
High	12,001	37
Marginal	4,117	13
Low	6,341	20
Very low	9,655	30

Source: 2016 & 2018 RealCollege surveys

Notes: According to the USDA, students at either the low or very low level of food security are termed “food insecure.” For more details on the 2016 and 2018 food security measures used in this report, see Appendix C.

TABLE E-2. Food Insecurity Among California Community College Survey Respondents (Figure 2)

	Number of Students	Percentage
I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.	14,107	52
I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals.	13,430	49
The food that I bought just didn't last and I didn't have the money to buy more.	11,239	41
I cut the size of meals or skipped meals because there wasn't enough money for food.	11,208	41
I ate less than I felt I should because there wasn't enough money for food.	10,627	39
I was hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food.	8,893	33
I cut the size of meals or skipped because there wasn't enough money for food. (Three or more times)	7,424	28
I lost weight because there wasn't enough money for food.	5,444	20
I did not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food.	3,163	12
I did not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food. (Three or more times)	1,816	7

Source: 2018 RealCollege Survey

TABLE E-3. Housing Insecurity Among California Community College Survey Respondents (Figure 3)

	Number of Students	Percentage
Any item	19,469	60
Had a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay	8,817	32
Did not pay full amount of utilities	7,693	28
Did not pay full amount of rent or mortgage	7,736	28
Moved in with people due to financial problems	6,892	25
Lived with others beyond the expected capacity of the housing	5,811	21
Had an account default or go into collections	4,998	18
Left household because felt unsafe	2,421	9
Moved three or more times	1,301	5
Received a summons to appear in housing court	683	2

Source: Top row—2016 & 2018 RealCollege surveys; all other rows—2018 RealCollege Survey

Notes: In the above table, the top row, “Any item” represents the rate of housing insecurity for all California community college survey respondents in 2016 and 2018. However, housing insecurity was measured differently in 2016. For more details on the 2016 and 2018 measures of housing insecurity used in this report, see Appendix C.

TABLE E-4. Homelessness Among California Community College Survey Respondents (Figure 4)

	Number of Students	Percentage
Any item	6,003	19
Self-identified homeless	1,744	6
LOCATIONS STAYED OVERNIGHT		
Temporarily with relative, friend or couch surfing	4,021	15
Temporarily at a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to	1,059	4
In closed area/space with roof not meant for human habitation (such as abandoned building; car, truck, van, RV, or camper; encampment or tent; unconverted garage, attic, or basement; etc.)	1,006	4
At outdoor location (such as street, sidewalk, or alley; bus or train stop; campground or woods, park, beach, or riverbed; under bridge or overpass; or other)	644	2

TABLE E-4. Homelessness Among California Community College Survey Respondents (Figure 4) (continued)

	Number of Students	Percentage
In transitional housing or independent living	458	2
In a camper	439	2
At a treatment center (such as detox, hospital, etc.)	352	1
At a shelter	339	1
At a group home such as halfway house or residential program for mental health or substance abuse	278	1

Source: Top row—2016 & 2018 RealCollege surveys; all other rows—2018 RealCollege Survey

Notes: In the above table, the top row, “Any item” represents the rate of homelessness for all California community college survey respondents in 2016 and 2018. However, homelessness was measured differently in 2016. For more details on the 2016 and 2018 measures of homelessness used in this report, see Appendix C.

TABLE E-5. Intersections of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among California Community College Survey Respondents (Figure 5)

	Number of Students	Percentage
No needs (“Secure”)	9,649	30
Food insecure, housing insecure, or homeless (“Insecure”)	22,871	70
Food and housing insecure	12,971	40
Housing insecure and homeless	5,370	17
Food insecure and housing	4,569	14

Source: 2016 & 2018 RealCollege surveys

Notes: Food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness were measured differently in 2016. For more details on the 2016 and 2018 measures of basic needs insecurity used in this report, see Appendix C.

TABLE E-6. Variation in Institutional Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among California Community College Survey Participants (Figure 7)

	Number of Colleges	Mean	Standard Deviation	P25	P50 (Median)	P75
Food insecurity rate	52	51	8	46	52	57
Housing insecurity rate	52	61	7	57	61	66

TABLE E-6. Variation in Institutional Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among California Community College Survey Participants (Figure 7) (continued)

	Number of Colleges	Mean	Standard Deviation	P25	P50 (Median)	P75
Homelessness rate	52	19	4	16	19	22

Source: 2016 & 2018 RealCollege surveys

Notes: Food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness were measured differently across years. For more details on the 2016 and 2018 measures of basic needs insecurity used in this report, see Appendix C. Institutional-level rates were not available for institutions in the San Diego Community College District or the San Mateo Community College District; however, district-level rates for these two districts are used in compiling the table above.

TABLE E-7. Employment Behavior by Basic Needs Insecurity Status* (Figure 8)

	Number of Students	Percentage
FOOD INSECURE—NO		
Not working, not looking for work	3,861	28
Not working, looking for work	2,562	19
Working 1 to 20 hours	3,295	24
Working 21 to 30 hours	1,859	14
Working more than 30 hours	2,092	15
FOOD INSECURE—YES		
Not working, not looking for work	1,993	16
Not working, looking for work	2,614	21
Working 1 to 20 hours	3,086	25
Working 21 to 30 hours	2,219	18
Working more than 30 hours	2,616	21
HOUSING INSECURE—NO		
Not working, not looking for work	3,206	31
Not working, looking for work	2,188	21
Working 1 to 20 hours	2,555	25
Working 21 to 30 hours	1,315	13
Working more than 30 hours	1,112	11

TABLE E-7. Employment Behavior by Basic Needs Insecurity Status* (Figure 8) (continued)

	Number of Students	Percentage
HOUSING INSECURE—YES		
Not working, not looking for work	2,731	17
Not working, looking for work	3,082	19
Working 1 to 20 hours	3,911	24
Working 21 to 30 hours	2,822	17
Working more than 30 hours	3,639	22
HOMELESS—NO		
Not working, not looking for work	5,189	24
Not working, looking for work	4,177	19
Working 1 to 20 hours	5,222	24
Working 21 to 30 hours	3,284	15
Working more than 30 hours	3,731	17
HOMELESS—YES		
Not working, not looking for work	751	15
Not working, looking for work	1,097	22
Working 1 to 20 hours	1,247	25
Working 21 to 30 hours	854	17
Working more than 30 hours	1,021	21

Source: 2018 RealCollege Survey

*Among California Community College Survey Respondents

TABLE E-8. Self-Reported Grades by Basic Needs Insecurity Status* (Figure 9)

	Number of Students	Percentage
FOOD INSECURE—NO		
A	5,646	43
B	5,440	42
C	1,756	13
D or F	181	1

TABLE E-8. Self-Reported Grades by Basic Needs Insecurity Status* (Figure 9) (continued)

	Number of Students	Percentage
FOOD INSECURE—YES		
A	4,081	34
B	5,519	46
C	2,108	17
D or F	338	3
HOUSING INSECURE—NO		
A	4,257	43
B	4,172	43
C	1,244	13
D or F	127	1
HOUSING INSECURE—YES		
A	5,571	36
B	6,939	44
C	2,682	17
D or F	403	3
HOMELESS—NO		
A	8,131	39
B	9,084	44
C	3,084	15
D or F	381	2
HOMELESS—YES		
A	1,703	36
B	2,033	43
C	844	18
D or F	149	3

Source: 2018 RealCollege Survey

*Among California Community College Survey Respondents

TABLE E-9. Use of Public Assistance by Basic Needs Insecurity Status (Figure 10)

	Number of Students	Percentage
FOOD INSECURE		
Any Assistance	7,280	57
Medicaid or public health insurance	4,099	32
SNAP (food stamps)	2,782	22
Tax refunds (including EITC)	2,001	16
WIC (nutritional assistance for children and pregnant women)	1,097	9
Transportation assistance	1,044	8
Utility assistance (e.g., help paying for heat or water)	975	8
Housing assistance	819	6
TANF (public cash assistance; formerly called ADC or ADCFC)	724	6
Child care assistance	644	5
SSI (supplemental security income)	477	4
SSDI (social security disability income)	472	4
Unemployment compensation or insurance	467	4
Veterans benefits	322	3
Other assistance	255	2
HOUSING INSECURE		
Any Assistance	9,256	57
Medicaid or public health insurance	5,197	32
SNAP (food stamps)	3,339	21
Tax refunds (including EITC)	2,695	17
WIC (nutritional assistance for children and pregnant women)	1,462	9
Transportation assistance	1,218	7
Utility assistance (e.g., help paying for heat or water)	1,197	7
Housing assistance	944	6

TABLE E-9. Use of Public Assistance by Basic Needs Insecurity Status (Figure 10) (continued)

	Number of Students	Percentage
TANF (public cash assistance; formerly called ADC or ADFC)	885	5
Child care assistance	795	5
SSI (supplemental security income)	577	4
SSDI (social security disability income)	585	4
Unemployment compensation or insurance	612	4
Veterans benefits	407	2
Other assistance	296	2
HOMELESS		
Any Assistance	3,050	60
Medicaid or public health insurance	1,741	34
SNAP (food stamps)	1,338	26
Tax refunds (including EITC)	827	16
WIC (nutritional assistance for children and pregnant women)	428	8
Transportation assistance	535	11
Utility assistance (e.g., help paying for heat or water)	333	7
Housing assistance	390	8
TANF (public cash assistance; formerly called ADC or ADFC)	360	7
Child care assistance	282	6
SSI (supplemental security income)	224	4
SSDI (social security disability income)	229	5
Unemployment compensation or insurance	228	5
Veterans benefits	147	3
Other assistance	137	3
SECURE		
Any Assistance	2,515	32
Medicaid or public health insurance	1,309	17

SNAP (food stamps)	417	5
Tax refunds (including EITC)	680	9
WIC (nutritional assistance for children and pregnant women)	212	3
Transportation assistance	266	3
Utility assistance (e.g., help paying for heat or water)	150	2
Housing assistance	125	2
TANF (public cash assistance; formerly called ADC or ADCFC)	69	1
Child care assistance	82	1
SSI (supplemental security income)	149	2
SSDI (social security disability income)	141	2
Unemployment compensation or insurance	120	2
Veterans benefits	176	2
Other assistance	81	1

Source: 2018 RealCollege Survey

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Endnotes

- 1 U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2018). *Food insecurity: Better information could help eligible college students access federal food assistance benefits*. (GAO Publication No. 19-95) Washington, D.C.; U.S. Government Accountability Office. (2016). *Higher education: Actions needed to improve access to federal financial assistance for homeless and foster youth*. (GAO Publication No. 16-343) Washington, D.C.
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- 3 See Crutchfield et al. (2018); Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., & Hernandez, A. (2017). *Hungry and homeless in college: Results from a national study of basic needs insecurity in higher education*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin HOPE Lab; Goldrick-Rab, S., Broton, K., & Eisenberg, D. (2015). *Hungry to learn: Addressing food & housing insecurity among undergraduates*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin HOPE Lab.
- 4 El Zein, A., Shelnutt, K., Colby, S., Olfert, M., Kattelman, K., Brown, O., & Mathews, A. (2017). The prevalence of food insecurity and its association with health and academic outcomes among college freshmen. *Advances in Nutrition*, 8(1), 4; Maroto, M. E., Snelling, A., & Linck, H. (2015). Food insecurity among community college students: Prevalence and association with grade point average. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 39(6), 515-526; Morris, L. M., Smith, S., Davis, J., & Null, D. B. (2016). The prevalence of food security and insecurity among Illinois University students. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 48(6), 376-382; Patton-López, M., López-Cevallos, D. F., Cancel-Tirado, D. I., & Vazquez, L. (2014). Prevalence and correlates of food insecurity among students attending a midsize rural university in Oregon. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 46(3), 209-214; Simon, A., Goto, K., Simon, A., Breed, J., & Bianco, S. (2018). Factors associated with food insecurity and food assistance program participation among university students. *Californian Journal of Health Promotion* 16(1), 73-78.
- 5 Broton, K. M. (2017). *The evolution of poverty in higher education: Material hardship, academic success, and policy perspectives* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, Wisconsin.
- 6 For physical health, see Bruening, M., van Woerden, I., Todd, M., & Laska, M. (2018). Hungry to learn: The prevalence and effects of food insecurity on health behaviors and outcomes over time among a diverse sample of university freshmen. *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity*, 15(9), 1-10; Bruening, M., Argo, K., Payne-Sturges, D., & Laska, M. N. (2017). The struggle is real: A systematic review of food insecurity on postsecondary education campuses. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*; Freudenberg, N., Manzo, L., Jones, H., Kwan, A., Tsui, E., & Gagnon, M. (2011). *Food insecurity at CUNY: Results from a survey of CUNY undergraduate students*. New York: The Campaign for a Healthy CUNY, The City University of New York; McArthur, L. H., Ball, L., Danek, A. C., & Holbert, D. (2018). A high prevalence of food insecurity among university students in Appalachia reflects a need for educational interventions and policy advocacy. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 50(6), 564-572; Payne-Sturges, D. C., Tjaden, A., Caldeira, K. M., & Arria, A. M. (2017). Student hunger on campus: Food insecurity among college students and implications for academic institutions. *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 32(2), 349-354; Tsui, E., Freudenberg, N., Manzo, L., Jones, H., Kwan, A., & Gagnon, M. (2011). *Housing instability at CUNY: Results from a survey of CUNY undergraduate students*. New York: The Campaign for a Healthy CUNY, City University of New York; For symptoms of depression, see Bruening et al. (2018); Bruening et al. (2017); Payne-Sturges et al. (2017); Goldrick-Rab et al. (2015); Freudenberg et al. (2011). For higher perceived stress, see El Zein et al. (2017).
- 7 Broton, K. M. & Goldrick-Rab, S. (2017). Going without: An exploration of food and housing insecurity among undergraduates. *Educational Researcher* 47(2). 121-133.

8 Bianco, S., Bedore, A., Jiang, M., Stamper, N., Breed, J., Abbiati, L., & Wolff, C. (2016). *Identifying food insecure students and constraints for SNAP/CalFresh participation at California State University, Chico*. Chico, CA: California State University; Goldrick-Rab, S., & Nellum, C. (2015). *Request to add measurement of food insecurity to the national postsecondary student aid study*. Wisconsin HOPE Lab & American Council on Education Center for Policy Research and Strategy; see Goldrick-Rab et al. (2017).

9 To ensure we represent every California Community College institution that has participated in this survey, we include those schools that took the survey in 2016 where possible.

10 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2012). *U.S. adult food security survey module: Three-stage design, with screeners*.

11 One of the many reasons students do not take advantage of available assistance is the social stigma that accompanies such aid. See King, J. A. (2017). Food insecurity among college students—Exploring the predictors of food assistance resource use (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Kent State University, Kent, Ohio; Allen, C. C., & Alleman, N. F. (2019). A private struggle at a private institution: Effects of student hunger on social and academic experiences. *Journal of College Student Development*, 60(1), 52–69; Henry, L. (2017). Understanding food insecurity among college students: Experience, motivation, and local solutions. *Annals of Anthropological Practice*, 41(1), 6–19; Ambrose, V. K. (2016). *It's like a mountain: The lived experience of homeless college student* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Tennessee—Knoxville, Knoxville, Tennessee; Tierney, W. G., Gupton, J. T., & Hallett, R. E. (2008). *Transitions to adulthood for homeless adolescents: Education and public policy*. Los Angeles: Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis, University of Southern California.

12 Although assessments of basic needs insecurity made early in the fall semester are likely to capture more students, these assessments may also understate students' basic needs. In fact, Bruening et al. (2018) surveyed the same population in the beginning and the end of a semester and found that rates of food insecurity were higher at the end of the semester (35%) than in the beginning (28%).

13 The estimated number of survey invitations is based on the total number of undergraduates in the fall of 2016 or 2017 at participating institutions, as reported by the National Center for Education Statistics's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System. Fall 2017 enrollment numbers for the North Orange Continuing Education and San Diego Continuing Education programs were gathered from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office website.

14 U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2012). *U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module: Six-Item Short Form*.

15 In 2017, we used the USDA's 10-item Adult Food Security Survey Module to assess food insecurity.

16 See https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/about/sipp-content-information.html#par_textimage_5

17 In 2017, students were considered housing insecure if they responded affirmatively to question #1, #2, #4, #6, or #7, or if they moved two or more times (question #9).

18 Crutchfield, R. M. & Maguire, J. (2017). *Researching basic needs in higher education: Qualitative and quantitative instruments to explore a holistic understanding of food and housing insecurity*. Long Beach, CA: Basic Needs Initiative, Office of the Chancellor, California State University.

19 In 2017, students were classified as homeless if they answered affirmatively to any of the first five questions asked in 2016.



Guide to Assessing Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education

JULY 2018

Sara Goldrick-Rab, Jed Richardson, and Peter Kinsley

Introduction

Is every student on your college campus ready to learn? High school grades and/or standardized test scores are often used to answer that question, but those numbers do not consider a more essential form of readiness: basic needs security. If a student has not eaten sufficient nutritious food or slept the night before a class or exam, they will have difficulty mastering the material and performing well.¹

There is growing evidence that food and housing insecurity compromise the well-being of thousands of undergraduates across the country, reducing the odds that they will complete degrees. A recent study of more than 43,000 students found widespread basic needs insecurity at both 2-year and 4-year colleges. At community colleges, 42% were food insecure, 46% were housing insecure, and 12% were homeless. Of university students surveyed, 36% were food insecure, 36% were housing insecure, and 9% were homeless.² Studies conducted at other institutions have yielded similar results.³

Assessing food and housing security among students produces numbers that may be used to support educational success. For example, the results will help answer questions such as:

- How many students could benefit from additional supports from campus food pantries, emergency aid, crisis housing, or other interventions?
- Which students ought to be flagged in early alert systems for additional outreach?
- To what extent should the security of students' basic needs become a campus priority, especially when it comes to retention efforts?

The results can be used to support fundraising efforts, guide campus decision-making about key investments, and generate new ideas for how to improve degree completion rates. They can also help inform conversations about student well-being.

This guide describes how to perform two types of studies:

- Surveys to assess basic needs security; and
- Opportunistic small scale experiments to evaluate the effectiveness of programs meant to address basic needs security.

Drawing on our experiences conducting research on basic needs security at colleges around the nation, our team at the Wisconsin HOPE Lab produced this guide to support your own efforts. The most effective assessments of basic needs security will occur with the cooperation of institutional administrators and include the entire student body in the survey effort, but the practices we describe can be used by those conducting smaller surveys, too. Once the need for more support is established and programs developed, evaluations of those efforts should occur in order to ensure that they are effective. We provide guidance for those evaluations as well.

As you read this guide, please keep in mind that basic needs security among college students is an emergent field. Many of the best practices are still developing. One of the most difficult questions is how best to assess whether students' basic needs are met, and the survey items and recommendations for analysis contained in this guide may change as researchers develop further understanding of how students experience and communicate material hardships. This guide therefore represents the current state of the field. We expect to update it as we learn more and plan to release version 3.0 in summer 2019.

Defining and Assessing Basic Needs Security

An individual's basic needs begin with food and shelter, along with water and safety, and assessments of basic needs security in higher education therefore focus on measuring food and housing insecurity, as well as homelessness.

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or the ability to acquire such foods in a socially acceptable manner.⁴ The most extreme form is often accompanied with physiological sensations of hunger. **Homelessness** means that a person is without a place to live, often residing in a shelter, an automobile, an abandoned building or outside, while **housing insecurity** includes a broader set of challenges such as the inability to pay rent or utilities or the need to move frequently.

Accurately assessing basic needs security requires using validated, standardized measures that are respected by the scientific, policy, and advocacy communities. This is easier to do with regard to food security, where measures are widely agreed upon, than with housing security, where more controversy over appropriate measurement exists. Next, we provide the measures employed by the Wisconsin HOPE Lab as well as other researchers studying higher education, and recommend their use to facilitate national comparisons.

Food Insecurity:

We recommend assessing food insecurity using either the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-approved 18-item, 10-item, or 6-item survey modules of food security. The USDA recommends using the 10-item scale,⁵ although the 6-item scale has been shown to give similar results.⁶ Researchers should choose the scale that best fits their context and the space available in their surveys. The questions can refer to either the prior 30 days or 12 months, and that timing should be considered when deciding when to distribute the survey.⁷ This scale is most appropriate for students without children, and an alternative scale with additional questions may be used for parenting students.⁸

USDA Food Security Survey Module: 18-Item Household Food Security Survey Module

Please note that the USDA 10-item Adult Food Security Survey Module consists of the first 10 items (Adult Stages 1, 2, and 3) of the 18-item Household Food Security Survey Module.

ADULT STAGE 1

1. "I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more." Was that often true, sometimes true, or never true for you in the last 30 days (12 months)?
2. "The food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days (12 months)?
3. "I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days (12 months)?

IF THE RESPONDENT ANSWERS "OFTEN TRUE" OR "SOMETIMES TRUE" TO ANY OF THE THREE QUESTIONS IN ADULT STAGE 1, THEN PROCEED TO ADULT STAGE 2.

ADULT STAGE 2 (YES/NO QUESTIONS)

4. In the last 30 days (12 months, since last (name of current month)), did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?
5. [IF YES TO QUESTION 4, ASK]
If using the 30 day version: In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?
If using the 12 month version: How often did this happen – almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?
6. In the last 30 days (12 months), did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?
7. In the last 30 days (12 months), were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?
8. In the last 30 days (12 months), did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food?

IF THE RESPONDENT ANSWERS "YES" TO ANY OF THE QUESTIONS IN ADULT STAGE 2, THEN PROCEED TO ADULT STAGE 3.

ADULT STAGE 3

9. In the last 30 days (12 months), did you ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?
10. [IF YES TO QUESTION 9, ASK]
If using the 30 day version: In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?
If using the 12 month version: How often did this happen – almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

IF THE RESPONDENT HAS INDICATED THAT CHILDREN UNDER 18 ARE PRESENT IN THE HOUSEHOLD, THEN PROCEED TO CHILD STAGE 1.

CHILD STAGE 1

11. "I relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed my children because I was running out of money to buy food." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days (12 months)?
12. "I couldn't feed my children a balanced meal, because I couldn't afford that." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days (12 months)?
13. "My child was not eating enough because I just couldn't afford enough food." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days (12 months)?

IF THE RESPONDENT ANSWERS "OFTEN TRUE" OR "SOMETIMES TRUE" TO ANY OF THE THREE QUESTIONS IN CHILD STAGE 1, THEN PROCEED TO CHILD STAGE 2.

CHILD STAGE 2

14. In the last 30 days (12 months), did you ever cut the size of your children's meals because there wasn't enough money for food?
15. In the last 30 days (12 months), did your children ever skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?
16. [IF YES TO QUESTION 15, ASK]
If using the 30 day version: In the last 30 days, how often did this happen?
If using the 12 month version: How often did this happen – almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?
17. In the last 30 days (12 months), were your children ever hungry but you just couldn't afford more food?
18. In the last 30 days (12 months), did any of your children ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

USDA Food Security Survey Module: Six-Item Short Form

1. The food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more. Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days (12 months)?
2. I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals. Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days (12 months)?
3. In the last 30 days (12 months), did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?
4. [IF YES TO QUESTION 3, ASK]
If using the 30 day version: In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?
If using the 12 month version: How often did this happen – almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?
5. In the last 30 days (12 months) did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?
6. In the last 30 days (12 months), were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?

Housing Insecurity and Homelessness:

There is widespread debate over the best ways to measure housing security, and homelessness in particular.⁹ One reason is that housing security takes somewhat different forms depending on age and circumstances. Noted researcher Paul Toro recently remarked that the phrase “homeless college student” seems like “a contradiction in terms”.¹⁰ Consider that couchsurfing may look different for an 11-year-old whose parents have passed away as compared to a 40-year-old with relationship troubles who is staying with friends while he figures out his next move. When it comes to serving homeless youth, a more inclusive definition of housing security is preferable. But given persistent stereotypes of undergraduates that undergird resistance to addressing housing for that population, the Wisconsin HOPE Lab utilizes a narrower approach to measurement, relying on a series of questions adapted from the national Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) Adult Well-Being Module to measure students' access to and ability to pay for safe and reliable housing.¹¹ For measuring homelessness among college students, we recommend Crutchfield and Maguire's (2017) instrument that is based on definitions of homelessness developed by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the U.S. Department of Education.¹²

For housing insecurity and homelessness, we recommend surveying students on their experiences both in the past 30 days and in the past 12 months. Students who indicate housing insecurity or homelessness in the past 30 days may be more insecure than students who indicate insecurity only in the past 12 months. Surveying students on both time periods provides a more nuanced measure of student need.

Housing Insecurity

1. In the past 30 days (12 months), was there a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay?¹³
2. In the past 30 days (12 months), did you not pay or underpay your rent or mortgage?
3. In the past 30 days (12 months), did you not pay the full amount of a gas, oil, or electricity bill?
4. In the past 30 days (12 months), have you moved two times or more?
5. In the past 30 days (12 months), did you move in with other people, even for a little while, because of financial problems?
6. In the past 30 days (12 months), did you “live with others beyond the expected capacity of the house or apartment”?

Homelessness

1. Since starting college, have you ever been homeless?
2. In the past 30 days (12 months), have you slept in any of the following places? Please check all that apply?
 - a. Campus or university housing
 - b. Sorority/fraternity house
 - c. In a rented or owned house, mobile home, or apartment (alone or with roommates or friends)
 - d. In a rented or owned house, mobile home, or apartment with my family (parent, guardian, or relative)
 - e. At a shelter
 - f. In a camper
 - g. Temporarily staying with a relative, friend, or couch surfing until I find other housing
 - h. Temporarily at a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to (not on vacation or business travel)
 - i. In transitional housing or independent living program
 - j. At a group home such as halfway house or residential program for mental health or substance abuse
 - k. At a treatment center (such as detox, hospital, etc.)
 - l. Outdoor location such as street, sidewalk, or alley, bus or train stop, campground or woods, park, beach, or riverbed, under bridge or overpass
 - m. In a closed area/space with a roof not meant for human habitation such as abandoned building, car or truck, van, RV, or camper, encampment or tent, or unconverted garage, attic, or basement

*** Note that students are counted as homeless if they respond YES to any one of questions 1 or 2e-2m.

When assessing food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness, it can be useful to also ask additional questions to help contextualize the responses. For example, the survey might include information about whether a student works, receives financial aid, and/or accesses supports such as food from campus food pantries. Examples of those questions and the sorts of analyses that could be conducted can be found in the Wisconsin HOPE Lab reports and books listed at the end of this guide.

Gathering Data on Basic Needs Security

College transcripts and financial aid applications provide little information about the security of students' basic needs. While the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) asks some questions about homelessness, the results greatly underestimate the number of students experiencing that condition since only students who complete the FAFSA and paperwork or an interview verifying their homelessness are counted.¹⁴ Instead, student surveys are the best way to assess how many students experience food and/or housing insecurity. Here are responses to common questions about how to conduct those surveys:¹⁵

Q: What is involved in fielding a basic needs security survey, and who should do it?

A: Successfully fielding a high-quality survey requires asking good questions, identifying appropriate samples, recruiting students and gaining their participation, analyzing data, and writing up the results. The person conducting the survey needs to have access to accurate contact information for students, preferably including more than one email address. It is also important to have resources to offer incentives to students for participation, and the scientific knowledge required to execute the steps described above. For these reasons, the Institutional Research (IR) office is the best-equipped to lead these survey efforts, along with professional researchers, and students and staff should endeavor to work with the IR office if possible.

Q: What legal permissions are needed in order to do a basic needs security survey?

A: In order to protect students, the approval of each participating institution's Institutional Review Board (IRB) may need to be secured before surveys may be conducted. Unfortunately, every IRB makes its own rules and has its own application and review procedures.

If the survey is led by an employee of the college or university in order to better serve students, it may not be necessary to get students' consent or IRB approval, but if the data is being collected for public reporting, or for more general research purposes, then students' consent may need to be obtained and all proper legal channels utilized.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that before initiating a basic needs security survey, contact each participating college or university's IRB and ask whether it is necessary to apply for approval. Be sure to provide the following information:

- The research team's intent to survey students.
- The goal(s) of the survey—is it strictly to improve services for students at the institution, or does the research team intend to use the data to generalize beyond the institution, building knowledge in the field?
- Whether and how the research team intends to share the results, for example, in an internal campus report or in a published research paper.

Q: Which students—and how many students—should be included in a basic needs security survey?

A: If the basic needs security assessment aims to describe the prevalence of food and housing insecurity on campus, then the full population of enrolled students should be included in the survey. Utilize a list of enrolled students provided by the institution rather than recruiting students using tables on campus or other methods driven by convenience. This is critical to ensuring that students in the survey are representative of students on campus. The assessment could focus on a specific group—for example, undergraduates only, rather than all students—but it should be administered to everyone in that group.

Of course, where resources are limited, focusing on a smaller sample of students may be necessary. Using a smaller sample requires additional expertise, however, and in particular it demands additional information upfront—and time to devote to the sampling process—so that the resulting sample is useful.¹⁶ Simply sampling a smaller group of students at random is inadvisable, since the resulting group may include too few members of key subgroups. Instead, identify the groups of students who might be at risk of basic needs insecurity, and then draw samples within those groups. This is called a “stratified sampling strategy” and the samples should be proportional and drawn at random.

Example: A large university wishes to survey just 1,000 of its students and is especially concerned about Pell Grant recipients (40% of its students). The researcher must first divide the total student body into two groups (Pell recipients and non-Pell recipients). Next, the researcher should randomly select 400 Pell recipients and 600 non-Pell recipients in order to ensure that the proportion of Pell recipients in the survey sample matches the proportion in the total student body.

If only a sample of students will be surveyed, rather than all students, then it is important to ensure that enough students are included so that the sample can be used to accurately represent the prevalence of basic needs security on campus. One major determinant of how many people the survey should include is the expected response rate. If the research team can convince most

students to take the survey, then it can be sent to fewer people. But if, like at many colleges and universities, expected response rates are low, then the research team will need to survey many students. In the next section we discuss ways to maximize response rates. Generally, without sizable incentives to pay to students and resources to track down those who do not answer, the research team should anticipate low response rates—around 5 to 10 percent.

Another consideration is how confident the research team wants to be in estimating the prevalence of basic needs security on campus. More certainty requires more students in the survey. For example, if there are 10,000 students on campus and the research team wants to be at least 95% sure that the estimate is on target, then aim to get at least 400 students to take the survey – which likely requires contacting at least 4,000 students.¹⁷

Q: How should we recruit students to a basic needs security survey?

A: It can be very difficult to get students to take surveys, and especially surveys administered online—which are often the only feasible option given scarce resources. Since estimates of basic needs security on campus depend on who takes the survey, it is important to do everything possible to maximize response rates—in other words, to get surveyed students to answer the questions.

But what researchers cannot do, without risking biasing the results, is to recruit for the survey by talking about hunger and homelessness on campus and urging people to take the survey because they might be at risk. This will likely lead to results that over-state how common these issues are on campus. For example, avoid:

- Engaging in surveys in or near programs focusing on food insecurity, such as a campus food pantry.
- Calling out food or housing insecurity in recruitment materials, such as hashtags or phrases calling out student hunger.
- Advertising surveys as part of campus-wide initiatives to address basic needs insecurity.

Instead, the research team should administer the survey as an effort to generally understand how students are doing, and treat every student the same when fielding the survey. When designing a successful recruitment process, include the following steps:

1. **Design an effective invitation to the survey.** At the Wisconsin HOPE Lab, we appeal to the student’s sense of social responsibility to their peers and to their college (see Sample

KEY TERMS

Response rate – the number of people who answered a survey divided by the number of people who received an offer to take the survey.

Bias – when a sample statistic is systematically different than the actual value in the overall population. For example, a homelessness statistic from a college survey will be biased if the students answering the survey are more likely to be homeless than students in the overall college population.

Survey Recruitment Letter in Appendix A1), helping motivate them to participate. Campus basic needs assessments are often undertaken as a component of a larger strategy to help students graduate. When students understand that taking the survey will directly inform that strategy and improve the lives of their friends and colleagues, they are more likely to respond.

2. **Provide incentives.** What will students receive as compensation for doing the survey? Ideally, every student would be offered a little money upfront and a payment for doing the survey, but this is often impossible. Instead, consider raffling off gift cards, iPads, etc. Check with each participating campus's Institutional Research office for ideas, and reach out to the institution's Foundation for support. The information used from the basic needs security survey can be successfully leveraged for fundraising purposes, and so the Foundation may consider it a good investment to support efforts to get students' responses.

Q: How should we administer a basic needs security survey?

A: Surveys can be administered in a variety of ways, including by phone, via mail, or in person. Each form of administration has its own mix of benefits and drawbacks in terms of relative data quality, level of student response, and cost. Web-based internet surveys are generally the most effective and inexpensive way to gather student data for campus basic needs security assessments. Online survey software such as Qualtrics or Survey Monkey can simplify both survey creation and administration and are often free to college campuses. For more information about the advantages and limitations of web-surveys, as well as of other forms of survey administration, we refer the reader to this excellent and practical guide by Don Dillman and colleagues on survey design and administration.¹⁸

Q: How should we analyze and report on the results of a basic needs security survey?

A: When students finish taking the survey, prepare to look at the data. Begin by looking to see how many students responded, and in particular how many responded to the questions on food and housing insecurity (versus other questions included on the survey). Then, proceed to analyze the data in the following manner:

Step 1: Look at who took the survey.

Are the respondents similar to other students on campus? Find ways to compare them, for example by checking their self-reported demographic and academic characteristics against campus averages. Be sure to focus on attributes that matter for how students fare in college—things like gender, race, age, marital status, number of children, Pell-eligibility status, and first generation status, as well as academic information such as enrollment level and year in school. If some groups are over-represented or under-represented in the survey's sample, make a note of that. It

may be possible to use “survey weights” to adjust the results so that they are more representative of the full student body, and on-campus experts on the faculty or staff might be able to help do that.

Step 2: Calculate rates of food and housing insecurity

Along with the Food Security Survey Module, the USDA provides a simple methodology for determining survey respondents’ levels of food security. To calculate a raw score, simply count the number of questions that a student answers affirmatively (questions with choices of “often true”, “sometimes true”, and “never true” should be counted as a “Yes” if students answer “often” or “sometimes.” For questions that ask about the frequency of an occurrence, answers of 3 days or more should be counted as “Yes” in the 30-day version, and answers of “almost every month” and “some months but not every month” should be counted as “Yes” in the 12-month version. Translate the raw score into food security levels as follows:¹⁹

Raw Score				
18 item (children present)	18-item (no children present)	10-item	6-item	Food security level
0	0	0	0	High
1-2	1-2	1-2	1	Marginal
3-7	3-5	3-5	2-4	Low
8-18	6-10	6-10	5-6	Very Low

Students are counted as housing insecure if they answered “Yes” to any of the six housing insecurity questions above. Similarly, students are counted as homeless if they answered affirmatively to any of questions 1 or 2d–2m of the homelessness questions. Researchers should calculate food and housing insecurity status for both the full sample and by important demographic subgroups, e.g. race, first generation status, Pell receipt, etc.

Step 3: Examine the relationship between other student issues and food and housing insecurity

Do students who are food-insecure receive financial aid? Do they work? How often are homeless students finding that they are financially stressed? These are the sorts of questions the research team can examine next based on which additional questions were included in the survey.

Step 4: Prepare the report

As the research team writes up the results from the campus basic needs security survey, be sure to include details on how the survey was conducted - information on who was surveyed, what incentives were provided, etc. - these things are critical for readers trying to understand the results. Include information not only on how many students responded, but how many were surveyed, and include the results of the analysis on how those groups differ.

The report itself may wish to reference prior studies of basic needs security at other institutions, and the Wisconsin HOPE Lab is maintaining a useful compilation of studies for that purpose. Go to our website to find the [“annotated bibliography”](#) and include information for readers on how the results compare to results at other comparable institutions.

Q: How can we effectively disseminate the results of a basic needs security survey?

A: Surveys of student food and housing insecurity can be effective tools for motivating federal, state, and institutional policy changes to help struggling students. For this reason, it is important to ensure that survey results reach a wide audience. Successful dissemination strategies include:

- Sharing results with key audiences on campus – administration, student support services offices, financial aid, and student government are well-positioned to address food and housing issues.
- Release to the media – prepare a press release and contact education reporters for local outlets. Sharing via social media accounts (Twitter, Facebook, etc.) can also be effective strategies for reaching a wider audience.
- Publish – studies published in academic journals reach a large community of researchers who can learn from, and build on, survey findings.

Evaluating Programs to Address Basic Needs Security

With growing recognition of the prevalence of student food and housing insecurity, institutions and communities have created numerous services to help students become more secure. To date, practitioners have had little guidance in these efforts because few if any food and housing programs have been rigorously evaluated. Moving forward, the program development process must include high-quality evaluation to ensure that students receive the help they need and that institutions are effectively investing their scarce resources.

To know whether a program “works,” institutions must be confident that it causes meaningful improvements in student outcomes. However, establishing a causal link in college settings can be difficult because different types of students receive different services. An evaluator comparing the outcomes of program recipients to those of non-recipients may be measuring differences in

the students themselves and not program impacts. Consider an evaluation of a cafeteria voucher program. An evaluator comparing voucher recipients to non-recipients is likely to find that recipients measure lower on indices of food security and academic achievement. This does not mean that the vouchers have a negative impact on students, however, because non-recipients are not similar to recipients. Because vouchers are need-based, recipients' worse outcomes are likely due to their financial circumstances, not the vouchers themselves. Due to the inherent challenges in evaluating college programs, high-quality research design is essential for determining whether a food or housing program causes improved student outcomes. While there are multiple methods for evaluating effectiveness, all high-quality studies compare the outcomes of students receiving services to a comparison group, a similar set of students who do not receive the service. Without a comparable control group, evaluations are likely measuring the impacts of external factors, such as financial need, rather than the impact of the service itself, as in the voucher example above.

High-quality evaluation designs are either experimental or quasi-experimental. Experimental designs randomly assign students into either treatment (recipient) or control groups, whereas quasi-experimental designs attempt to identify a control group without using random assignment. Typical quasi-experimental designs use "before and after" approaches that compare changes in the outcomes of recipients in relation to the changes in outcomes of a similar group of non-recipients. While evaluators often prefer these designs due to concerns regarding random assignment (see below), college environments limit their usefulness. Typically, colleges offer services to all students who request them or on a first-come first-served basis. Either method can prevent identification of a satisfactory control group. Again, consider the example of cafeteria vouchers. For programs that serve all comers, students who request vouchers likely have greater financial need than those who do not. For first-come first-served programs, students who are quick to sign up for vouchers may be more motivated or have better support than those who are slower, which would lead to better outcomes regardless of the efficacy of the vouchers. In addition, colleges will often introduce several, related programs at the same time. Before and after approaches are unable to differentiate the impacts of these services. For example, if a cafeteria voucher was rolled out at the same time as a housing program and a food pantry, a before and after approach would measure the combined impacts of all the programs but could not measure the impact of the vouchers themselves.

KEY TERMS

Causality – The relationship between cause and effect; in other words, does a program or service cause the observed changes in outcomes?

Comparison Group – a group of students who did not participate in the program or receive the service being evaluated but are similar to those who did.

Embedding Opportunistic, Small-Scale Experiments

Experimental evaluation designs using randomized controlled trials (RCTs) provide the best possible evidence of program effectiveness and can be simple and inexpensive. A recent U.S. Department of Education guide illustrates how experiments featuring random assignment can be easily implemented in school environments.²⁰ What follows is a short overview of this guide's recommendations.

Experiments are the gold standard for determining program effectiveness because, when done properly, they ensure that the students who receive the service and those who do not are as similar as possible. Using the cafeteria voucher example, in an RCT the evaluator would randomly assign vouchers among a group of students with similar characteristics, financial need in particular, and academic achievement.

Sometimes college administrators, faculty, and staff are uncomfortable with RCTs due to concerns regarding fairness and expense. Most common of those concerns is whether it is ethical to deny a service to students who need it. Without knowing whether that service actually works, however, we cannot know whether we are preventing students from using something that would help them. Also, random assignment can be a fair method for distributing these services when small-scale pilots cannot serve all possible recipients. Another common concern is cost. However, an RCT does not have to be costly if colleges can easily identify participants and already collect the necessary data. Implementing an RCT can be simple and, most importantly, will provide the best evidence for whether a service helps students. RCTs involve several steps:

1. **Find a research partner.** Colleges that would like to conduct an RCT but lack staff with the requisite knowledge should first find a research partner that can provide design guidance and data and analytics expertise. HEART researchers can be hired to provide this expertise.
2. **Identify the students who will be in the study.** For food and housing programs, these students will typically have financial need.
3. **Conduct and monitor random assignment.** Random-number generators can be found in spreadsheet or statistical programs. Research partners can help with randomization.
4. **Collect data.** These data may be from administrative records, such as retention or GPA, or from survey responses to questions about hunger, homelessness, and other material need.
5. **Analyze data.** Analysis of an RCT can be very simple because advanced statistical knowledge is unnecessary when a high-quality control group is already identified.
6. **Share the results.** Research will have the most impact when it is shared widely, particularly with administrators and other policymakers who make decisions regarding services and funding.

More Support

We hope that these resources prove useful in your efforts to address basic needs security in higher education. Here are several additional supports for your work:

- For a sample survey of college students' basic needs insecurity, please see Appendix B.
- If you require additional assistance with surveys or in constructing more rigorous program evaluations, please reach out to Dr. Sara Goldrick-Rab (sgr@temple.edu) for help.
- To aid in producing comparisons between institution-specific data and national trends, the Wisconsin HOPE Lab has published an [annotated bibliography](#) of extant studies to date.
- For assistance in developing a campus food pantry, please contact Clare Cady (clare.cady@temple.edu) of Temple University and the College and University Food Bank Alliance.

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Wisconsin HOPE Lab Books and Reports Using Food and Housing Insecurity Data

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⁸ United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2017). U.S. Adult Food Security Survey Module: Three-Stage Design with Screeners. Retrieved from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/media/8279/ad2012.pdf>.

⁹ See Hombs, M. E. (2011). *Modern Homelessness: A Reference Handbook*. ABC-CLIO.

¹⁰ Harris, E. A. Behind the Problem of Student Homelessness. *New York Times*, April 7, 2017.

¹¹ See: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/sipp/about/sipp-content-information.html#par_textimage_5

¹² Crutchfield, R. M. & Maguire, J. (2017). *Researching Basic Needs in Higher Education: Qualitative and Quantitative Instruments to Explore a Holistic Understanding of Food and Housing Insecurity*. California State University Office of the Chancellor Basic Needs Initiative.

¹³ Students who indicate housing insecurity in the past 30 days may be more insecure than students who indicate insecurity only in the past 12 months. Surveying students on both time periods provides a more nuanced measure of student need.

¹⁴ SchoolHouse Connection. (2017). "This is How I'm Going to Make a Life for Myself:" An Analysis of FAFSA Data and Barriers to Financial Aid for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth. Retrieved from <http://www.schoolhouseconnection.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Formatted-FAFSA-Report.pdf>.

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¹⁵ For more details on survey creation and administration methods, see Walston, J., Redford, J., & Bhatt, M. P. (2017). Workshop on Survey Methods in Education Research: Facilitator's Guide and Resources. Institute of Education Sciences Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory at American Institutes for Research. Retrieved from https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midwest/pdf/REL_2017214.pdf.

¹⁶ Since we have had very limited resources with which to conduct national surveys, and institutions are unwilling to provide the information needed to construct effective subsamples, Wisconsin HOPE Lab surveys have always been administered to the full population of enrolled students.

¹⁷ Survey Monkey. (2017). Calculating the Number of Responses You Need. Retrieved from https://help.surveymonkey.com/articles/en_US/kb/How-many-respondents-do-I-need.

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¹⁹ United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. (2012). U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module: Six-Item Short Form. Retrieved from <https://www.ers.usda.gov/media/8282/short2012.pdf>.

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Appendix A: Basic Needs Security Research Guide Sample Survey Recruitment Letter

[STUDY NAME] Cover and Reminder Letter

[DATE]

Dear [fill student first name],

We need your help. College is expensive and getting harder to afford every day. We need to know more about the challenges that you face. In order to create colleges that can help students like you overcome these challenges and finish college, we are conducting the [STUDY NAME] on behalf of [ORGANIZATION NAME] and want you to participate!

We have included a link to a questionnaire for you to fill out and share your experiences with us. You are not obligated to participate, but we do hope that you will help!

[SURVEY LINK]

To thank you for your help, after you complete the survey you can choose to enter a random drawing to receive one of ten \$100 awards that will be given to students at your college.

Thank you in advance for your participation! If you have any questions about this study, please call me at [SURVEY CONTACT'S PHONE NUMBER].

Sincerely,

[SURVEY CONTACT NAME, TITLE, AND CONTACT INFORMATION]

Appendix B: Basic Needs Security Research Guide Sample Survey

I. Your college experience

Let's begin by learning about how you are experiencing college.

Please note that the survey refers to both undergraduate and graduate education as "college".

- Q1. As of today, which college or university do you attend? (answers will be by dropdown options)
- Q2. As of today, are you attending college full-time or part-time?
1. Full-time (at least 12 credits)
 2. Part-time (less than 12 credits)
- Q3. As of today, are you an undergraduate or graduate student?
1. Undergraduate
 2. Graduate

If answered "Undergraduate" to Q3, then

- Q4. How many years have you been in college?
- Q5. Thinking about the past academic year, which of the following best describes your grades?
1. A
 2. B
 3. C
 4. D
 5. F
 6. No grade or don't know

II. How you pay for college

Transition text: Next let's talk about how you are working to make ends meet.

Q6. Which of the following ways do you pay for the expenses associated with attending college? (check all that apply)

1. A work-study job
2. A job that isn't work-study (including self-employment)
3. Pell Grant
4. Other grants from the federal or state government
5. Other grants from my college or university
6. Student loans
7. Stipend or fellowship
8. Tuition remission
9. Help from family or friends
10. Savings
11. Credit cards
12. Employer support
13. Other _____

If select 1 or 2 for Q6

Q7. About how many hours do you generally work each week (include all your jobs)?

Q8. Thinking about all of your jobs, on average, about how much do you earn per hour?

1. \$7.25/hour
2. \$7.26 - \$10/hour
3. \$10.01 - \$15/hour
4. More than \$15/hour

If didn't select 1 or 2 for Q6, then

Q9. **In the past 30 days** have you been looking for work?

1. Yes
2. No

Transition: Now we'd like to learn a bit about what your life is like these days.

III. Your economic experiences

Q10. **In the past 12 months**, did you experience any of the following?

1. Not pay or underpay your rent or mortgage?
2. Receive a summons to appear in housing court?
3. Not pay the full amount of a gas, oil, or electricity bill?
4. Borrow money from friends or family to help pay bills?
5. Have an account default or go into collections?
6. Move in with other people, even for a little while, because of financial problems?
7. Live with others beyond the expected capacity of the house or apartment?

Q11. In the past 12 months, was there a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay?"

1. Yes
2. No

Q12. **In the past 12 months**, how many times have you moved?

Q13. **In the past 12 months**, did you leave your household because you felt unsafe?

1. Yes
2. No

Q14. How safe do you feel where you currently live?

1. Not at all safe
2. A little bit safe
3. Somewhat safe
4. Very safe
5. Extremely safe

Q15. **In the past 12 months**, have you ever been homeless?

Q16. **In the past 12 months**, did you couch surf – that is, moved from one temporary housing arrangement to another because you had no other place to live?

Q17. **In the past 12 months**, have you slept in any of the following places? Please check all that apply?

1. Campus or university housing
2. Sorority/fraternity house
3. In a rented or owned house, mobile home, or apartment (alone or with roommates or friends)
4. In a rented or owned house, mobile home, or apartment with my family (parent, guardian, or relative)
5. At a shelter
6. In a camper
7. Temporarily staying with a relative, friend, or couch surfing until I find other housing
8. Temporarily at a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to (not on vacation or business travel)
9. In transitional housing or independent living program
10. At a group home such as halfway house or residential program for mental health or substance abuse
11. At a treatment center (such as detox, hospital, etc.)
12. Outdoor location such as street, sidewalk, or alley, bus or train stop, campground or woods, park, beach, or riverbed, under bridge or overpass
13. In a closed area/space with a roof not meant for human habitation such as abandoned building, car or truck, van, RV, or camper, encampment or tent, or unconverted garage, attic, or basement

Q18. Is your home in a public housing project, owned by a local housing authority or other public agency?

1. Yes
2. No

Q19. Do you receive a public housing voucher, such as Section 8, to subsidize the cost of private housing?

1. Yes
2. No

Q20. Do you have any biological, adopted, step or foster children who live in your household?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes to Q20, then:

Q21: Please indicate the number of biological, adopted, step, or foster children who live in your household.

Q22. These next questions are about the food you have eaten in your household **in the last 30 days**, and whether you were able to afford the food you need.

In the last 30 days, were the following situations often true, sometimes true, or never true for you?

Q22a. "I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more." Was that often true, sometimes true, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

- a. Often true
- b. Sometimes true
- c. Never true

Q22b. "The food that I bought just didn't last and I didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

- d. Often true
- e. Sometimes true
- f. Never true

Q22c. "I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

- g. Often true
- h. Sometimes true
- i. Never true

If respondent answers “Often true” or “Sometimes true” for any one of questions Q22a, Q22b, or Q22c, then:

Q22d. **In the last 30 days**, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, then:

Q22e. **In the last 30 days**, how often did this happen (you cut the size of your meals or skipped meals because there wasn't enough money for food)?

Q22f. **In the last 30 days**, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?

1. Yes
2. No

Q22g. **In the last 30 days**, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?

1. Yes
2. No

Q22h. **In the last 30 days**, did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food?

1. Yes
2. No

If respondent answers “Yes” to any one of questions Q22d, Q22f, Q22g, or Q22h, then:

Q22i. **In the last 30 days**, did you ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn’t enough money for food?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, then:

Q22j. **In the last 30 days**, how often did this happen (you did not eat for a whole day because there wasn’t enough money for food)?

If respondent answers “Yes” to Q20 (they have at least one child who lives in the household)

The next questions are statements that people have made about the food situation of their children.

Q22k. “I relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed my children because I was running out of money to buy food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

1. Often true
2. Sometimes true
3. Never true

Q22l. “I couldn’t feed my children a balanced meal, because I couldn’t afford that.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

1. Often true
2. Sometimes true
3. Never true

Q22m. “My child was not eating enough because I just couldn’t afford enough food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 30 days?

1. Often true
2. Sometimes true
3. Never true

If respondent answered “Often true” or Sometimes true” for any one of questions Q22k, Q22l, or Q22m, then:

Q22n. **In the last 30 days**, did you ever cut the size of your children’s meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?

1. Yes
2. No

Q22o. **In the last 30 days**, did your children ever skip meals because there wasn’t enough money for food?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes, then:

Q22p. **In the last 30 days**, how often did this happen (your children skipped meals because there wasn’t enough money for food)?

Q22q. **In the last 30 days**, were your children ever hungry but you just couldn’t afford more food?

1. Yes
2. No

Q22r. **In the last 30 days**, did any of your children ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn’t enough money for food?

1. Yes
2. No

Q23. Do you purchase a college meal plan?

1. Yes
2. No

If yes to Q23, then:

Q24. What type of meal plan do you have?

1. I purchase a set number of meals
2. I purchase flexible points (or dining hall dollars) that can be used to purchase meals
3. I purchase a combination of meals and points
4. Other – please specify

Q25. How many meals does your meal plan provide each week?

1. 0-11
2. 12-15
3. 16 or more

Q26. How many meals do you think you eat in the dining hall in a typical week?

- a. I never plan to eat there
- b. 1-5 meals per week
- c. 6-10 meals per week
- d. 11-15 meals per week
- e. 16 or more meals per week

Q27. **In the past 12 months**, did you ever not eat or eat less than you felt you should during winter and spring breaks because the dining halls were closed?

1. Yes
2. No

Only if respondent answered that they had stayed in “Campus or university housing” for Q17

Q28. Does your college have on-campus residence halls?

1. Yes
2. No

Q29. **In the last 12 months**, have you ever not known where you would stay during winter/spring breaks because the on-campus residence halls were closed?

1. Yes
2. No

Q30. **In the past 12 months**, were there times when you stayed in someone else’s room in an on-campus residence hall because you didn’t have anywhere else to sleep?

1. Yes
2. No

Q31. **In the past 12 months**, were there times you stayed in someone else’s room in an on-campus residence hall but had to leave because of administration rules?

1. Yes
2. No

Q32. **In the past 12 months**, from which of the following programs did you receive assistance? (check Yes/No)

1. SNAP (food stamps)
2. WIC (nutritional assistance for pregnant women and children)
3. TANF (public cash assistance; formerly called ADC or ADFC)
4. SSI (supplemental security income)
5. SSDI (social security disability income)
6. Medicaid or Public health insurance
7. Child care assistance
8. Unemployment compensation/insurance
9. Utility assistance (e.g. help paying for heat or water)
10. Housing assistance
11. Transportation assistance
12. Tax refunds (including EITC)
13. Veterans benefits (Veteran’s Administration benefits for a servicemen’s, widow’s, or survivor’s pension, service disability or the GI bill)

IV. About you

Transition: Finally, just a few more questions about yourself.

Q33. At birth, what sex were you assigned on your birth certificate?

1. Female
2. Male

Q34. Currently, how do you describe yourself? (check all that apply)

1. Male
2. Female
3. Transgender
4. Do not identify as female, male, or transgender.

Q35. Do you consider yourself to be:

1. Heterosexual or straight
2. Gay or lesbian
3. Bisexual
4. Not sure or neither heterosexual, gay, lesbian, or bisexual

Q36. In what year were you born?

Q37. Are you a U.S. citizen or permanent resident?

Q38. Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces, military Reserves, or National Guard?
(Please select the answer that is most applicable)

Q39. How do you usually describe your race and/or ethnicity? (Select all that apply)

1. White or Caucasian
2. African American or Black
3. Hispanic or Latino
4. American Indian or Alaskan Native
5. Middle Eastern or North African or Arab or Arab American
6. Southeast Asian
7. Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian
8. Other Asian or Asian-American
9. Other (please specify)
10. Not applicable-I would prefer not to identify my race/ethnicity

Q40. What is the highest level of education completed by either of your parents and/or guardians?

1. Eighth grade or lower
2. Between 9th and 12th grade (but no high school diploma)
3. High school diploma
4. GED
5. Some college (but no college degree)
6. College certificate or diploma
7. Associate's degree
8. Bachelor's degree
9. Graduate degree
10. Don't know

Q41. **In the last year**, did a parent or guardian claim you as a “dependent” for tax purposes?

Q42. Do you have any of the following disabilities or medical conditions? (Mark Yes or No for each item)

1. Learning disability (dyslexia, etc.)
2. Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
3. Autism spectrum disorder
4. Physical disability (speech, sight, mobility, hearing, etc.)
5. Chronic illness (cancer, diabetes, autoimmune disorders, etc.)
6. Psychological disorder (depression, etc.)
7. Other

Q43. How would you describe your current relationship status?

1. Single
2. In a relationship
3. Married or domestic partnership
4. Divorced
5. Widowed

Q44. Have you ever been in foster care?

1. Yes
2. No

Q45. Thinking back to the last full week that began on a Monday and ended on a Sunday, for about how many total hours and minutes did you spend doing each of the following activities?

If you did not do an activity during the last full week, please enter “0” hours and “0” minutes.

1. Q34a. Working for pay
2. Q34b. Commuting to or from work or school
3. Q34c. Sleeping
4. Q34d. Leisure activities (for example, spending time with friends, watching TV or movies, using the internet for leisure, talking or texting on the phone)
5. Q34e. Taking care of a child or adult family member
6. Q34f. Attending college classes, labs, or discussion sections either in person or online
7. Q34g. Preparing for class by yourself or with others by studying, reading, writing, rehearsing, or doing other academic activities



For College, Community, and Justice

HOPE4COLLEGE.COM

#RealCollege 2020: Five Years of Evidence on Campus Basic Needs Insecurity

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Executive Summary

Now in its fifth year, the #RealCollege survey is the nation's largest, longest-running annual assessment of basic needs insecurity among college students. In the absence of any federal data on the subject, the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice created the survey to evaluate access to affordable food and housing among college students.

This report describes the results of the #RealCollege survey administered in the fall of 2019 at 227 two- and four-year institutions across the United States. It also considers the cumulative evidence on campus basic needs insecurity amassed over five surveys from 2015 to 2019. The lessons the Hope Center has learned are drawn from over 330,000 students attending 411 colleges and universities.

In 2019 the Hope Center expanded the exploration of basic needs to also include transportation, childcare, stress, and mental health. Special briefs on each of those issues will be released under separate cover, along with additional new reports on basic needs insecurity among student-athletes, faculty and staff, and students attending Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs).

In 2019, nearly 167,000 students from 171 two-year institutions and 56 four-year institutions responded to the #RealCollege survey. The results indicate:

- 39% of respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days
- 46% of respondents were housing insecure in the previous year
- 17% of respondents were homeless in the previous year

These rates of food and housing insecurity are lower than they were for the sample of students and colleges assessed in 2018, while results for homelessness are the same. Basic needs insecurity continues to be more common among students attending two-year colleges compared with those attending four-year colleges. Students often marginalized in higher education, including Black and Indigenous students, students identifying as nonbinary or transgender, students enrolled part-time, and students who are former foster youth or returning citizens, are at greater risk of basic needs insecurity. The Hope Center's findings point to a need for an evolution of programmatic work to advance cultural shifts on college campuses, engagement with community organizations and the private sector, more robust emergency aid programs, and a basic needs-centered approach to government policy at all levels.

The Hope Center offers a wide range of technical assistance for colleges interested in identifying and addressing students' basic needs. If you are interested in that support, please complete this [short assessment](#). To learn more about the #RealCollege survey research methodology and how you could field the survey at your institution, see the Hope Center's [Guide to Assessing Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education](#).

Introduction

Most colleges and universities are striving to build enrollment and increase college completion rates. Their efforts include changes to student advising practices, the structure of academic programs and teaching, and the strategic use of scholarships. But until recently, few institutions identified basic needs insecurity as a significant challenge keeping students from obtaining credentials. In 2018, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) issued a report on food insecurity among college students, stating that “increasing evidence indicates that some college students are experiencing food insecurity, which can negatively impact their academic success.” The GAO concluded that the “substantial federal investment in higher education is at risk if college students drop out because they cannot afford basic necessities like food.”¹

The #RealCollege survey is one of 31 studies the GAO reviewed for its report. The survey results assist college administrators, trustees, staff, faculty, and students, along with community partners, policymakers, and advocates, in understanding the prevalence and correlates of food and housing insecurity on college campuses across the nation. The report provides the most current evidence, and this year includes other key factors affecting basic needs insecurity, including transportation and childcare. The data provide ample reason to center efforts to address students’ basic needs as institutions seek to become “student-ready” colleges where degree completion is common.²

Supporting students’ basic needs has many benefits for colleges and universities, especially in today’s difficult economic climate. Here are five key reasons why institutions are doing #RealCollege work:

1. Addressing #RealCollege issues boosts academic performance, helping the institution and its students retain federal financial aid. It also promotes retention and degree completion, helping the institution generate more tuition dollars and improving outcomes about which legislators care.
2. Addressing #RealCollege issues reduces the barriers that returning adults face, boosting enrollment.
3. Addressing #RealCollege issues makes the jobs of faculty and staff easier, as students are more able to focus on learning.
4. Addressing #RealCollege issues creates bridges between the institution and community organizations, bringing new relationships and resources to bear. It also creates a productive opportunity for the private sector to engage with the institution to help create the graduates that everyone wants to hire.
5. Addressing #RealCollege issues generates new philanthropic giving and creates opportunities to engage alumni who do not have much but will happily contribute to emergency aid.

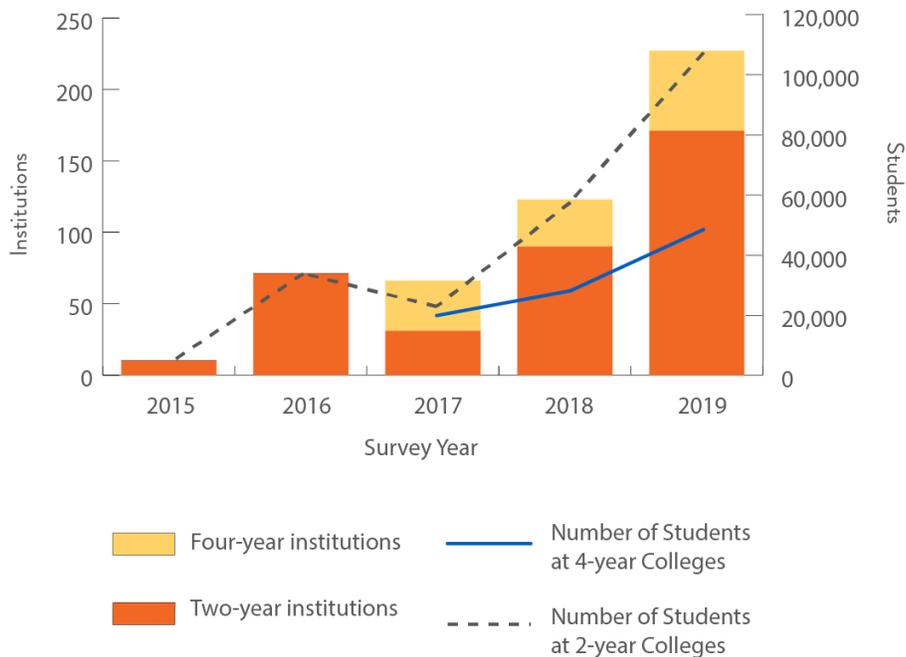
There are many paths to implementing programs and policies to support students’ basic needs, several of which are listed at the conclusion of this report. The Hope Center strongly recommends focusing on prevention, rather than responding only to emergency situations, and finds that systemic reforms are far more effective than one-time solutions.

The #RealCollege Survey, 2015–2019

The Hope Center created the #RealCollege survey to fill a knowledge gap: no government agency—at either the federal or state level—collects information on the security of students’ basic needs. The primary goal is fielding institution-specific surveys to equip each institution with information it can use to support students.

The #RealCollege survey began in 2015 and included more than 4,300 students at 10 community colleges across the nation. At first, it was quite difficult to gain institutional participation, but interest has grown substantially over time. This year’s report is the largest yet (Figure 1).

FIGURE 1. #RealCollege Survey Participation Over Time

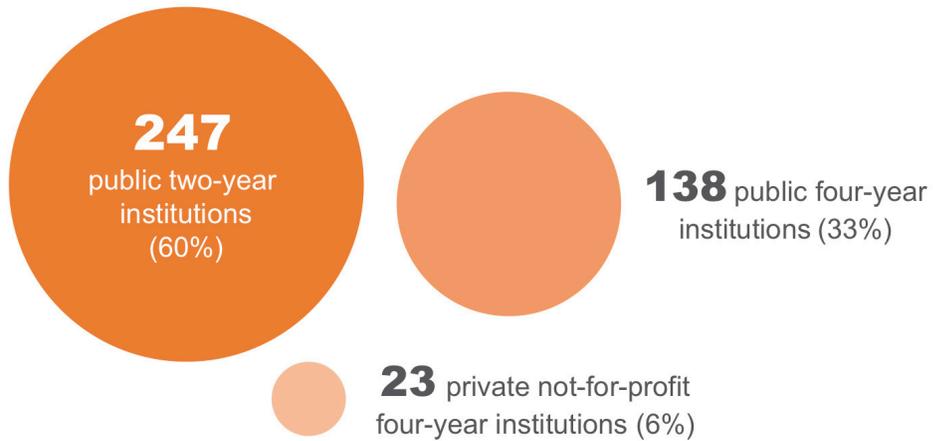


Source: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 #RealCollege surveys

Notes: One public university asked not to be named in 2017 and is not represented in the figure above.

Public institutions (especially community colleges) field the survey far more often than other types. The Hope Center invites participation from all types of institutions, and the bar for participation is very low, yet few private institutions have administered the survey. Figure 2 shows the distribution of participating institutions by type. Nine out of every 10 institutions represented in the #RealCollege surveys are public, while only one in 10 are from the private sector. Over the last five years, 75 institutions participated in the survey more than once. The survey has been conducted by at least one college or university in 44 states plus Washington D.C. (Figure 3).

FIGURE 2. Distribution of #RealCollege Survey Participation by Institution Type



Source: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 #RealCollege surveys

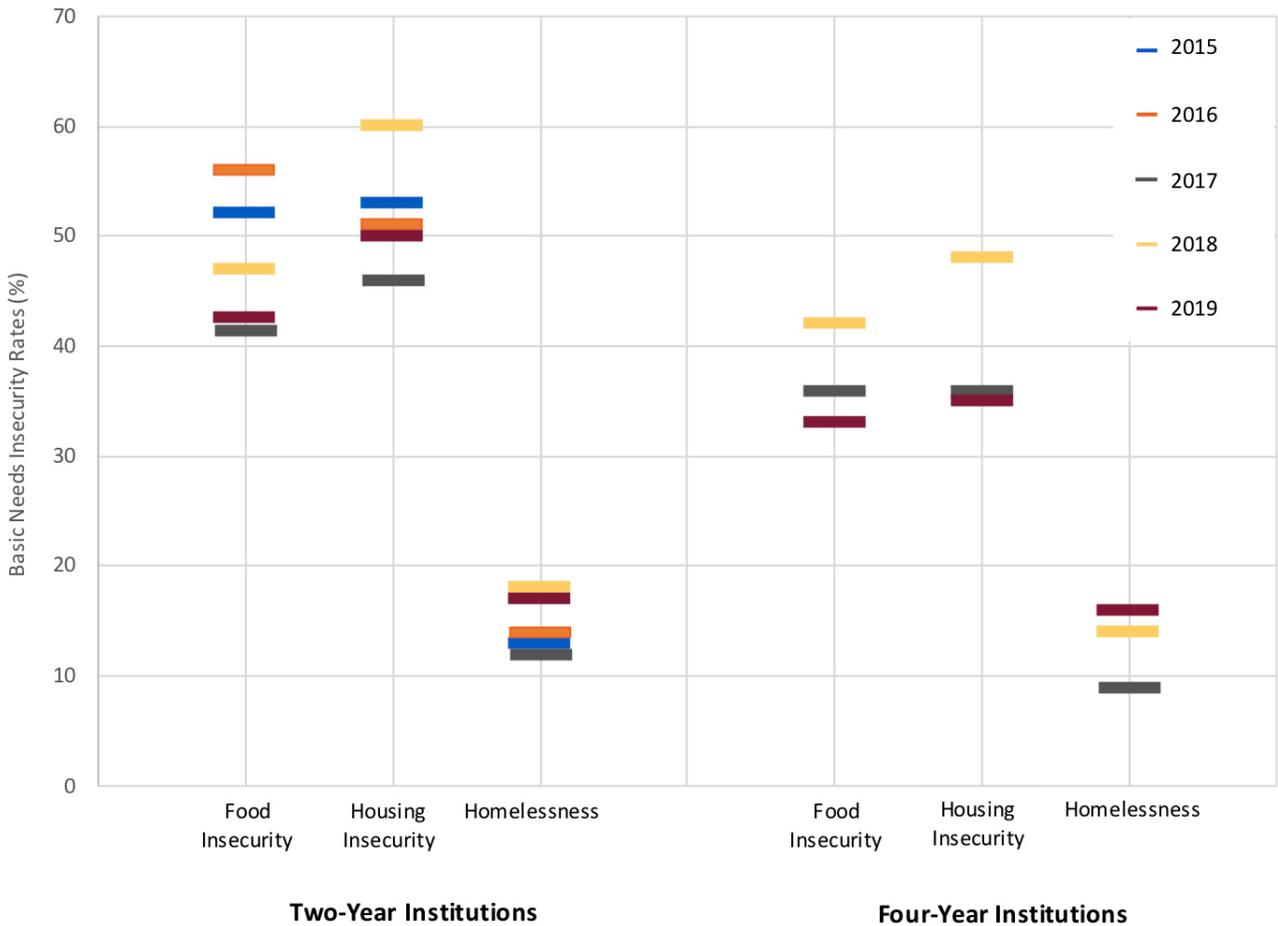
Notes: The figure above does not include three private two-year not-for-profit colleges.



The surveys reveal the scope of basic needs insecurity among #RealCollege students (Figure 4). The results are remarkably consistent over the last five years. They cannot, however, be interpreted as trends since different institutions participated in different years. From 2015–2019:

- Rates of food insecurity among students ranged from 42% to 56% at two-year institutions and from 33% to 42% at four-year institutions, with an overall weighted average of 43%.
- Rates of housing insecurity among students ranged from 46% to 60% at two-year institutions and from 35% to 48% at four-year institutions, with an overall weighted average of 48%.
- Rates of homelessness among students ranged from 12% to 18% at two-year institutions and from 9% to 16% at four-year institutions, with an overall weighted average of 16%.

FIGURE 4. Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity by Year and Institution Type



Source: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 #RealCollege surveys

Notes: The number of participating institutions and student respondents vary over time. See Figure 1 for more detail. Survey response rates range from 4.5% to 9% over five years (2015–2019).

What's Missing?

Bias due to non-response is always a concern in survey research. Since colleges and universities are not required to field the #RealCollege survey, nor are students required to participate, the Hope Center cannot know for sure whether its estimates of food and housing insecurity would change if non-participating schools and students were included. However, it is possible to make some educated guesses.

At this point, nearly all (94%) of the 411 colleges and universities the Hope Center has surveyed are public two-year or four-year institutions. One in four of the nation's community colleges and one in five of its public four-year colleges and universities have fielded the survey at least once.³ If the survey results do generalize, they apply to public two-year colleges and, to a lesser extent, public four-year institutions.

While any institution may participate in the #RealCollege survey, the private sector of higher education has seldom done so. However, based on research done by others, it appears that students at private nonprofits also experience basic needs insecurity. For example, Anthony Jack writes about food insecurity at "Renowned University" in the *Privileged Poor*; the scholars Que and Baldrige, in Texas, described food insecurity at private institutions in their state; and Minnesota's Private Colleges recently issued reports about food insecurity on their campuses.⁴

The Hope Center is not aware of any publicly available information about basic needs insecurity at private for-profit institutions. However, student demographics at these colleges skew toward the many risk factors for basic needs insecurity making it likely that their rates are similar to, or higher than, those at community colleges.



To what extent do Hope Center estimates of basic needs insecurity accurately depict the situation for the colleges we have surveyed? This depends largely on whether the students who responded differ in important ways from those who did not. A growing body of evidence suggests that is not the case. Several other major surveys have used different methodologies and produced rates that are consistent with those of the #RealCollege survey.⁵

More than 13 million undergraduates are enrolled at public institutions, about 45% of those at community colleges.⁶ Private nonprofit colleges enroll about 2.8 million students, while private for-profits enroll about 840,000. The Hope Center estimates that approximately half of the 6.5 million students at community colleges and for-profit colleges experience basic needs insecurity. Of the 7.4 million students attending

public four-year colleges, this rate is closer to two in five. We therefore estimate that at least 6 million students are delayed or deterred on their path to a degree because they don't have a safe and stable place to live or enough nutritious food to eat.

Later this year, the federal government will—for the first time—begin assessing food and housing insecurity among students using the National Postsecondary Student Aid Survey, a step the Hope Center has long advocated. In addition, numerous other organizations have begun including similar assessments in their surveys, including the [Trellis Financial Wellness Survey](#), the [Community College Survey of Student Engagement](#) (survey questions now in the pilot stage), the [ACHA-National College Health Assessment](#), and the [CIRP Freshman Survey](#). In addition, some colleges and universities are integrating basic needs insecurity assessments into their early warning systems and institutional surveys. The Hope Center is heartened by this response and continues to provide technical support in several ways, including the publication of a [guide for assessment tools](#).



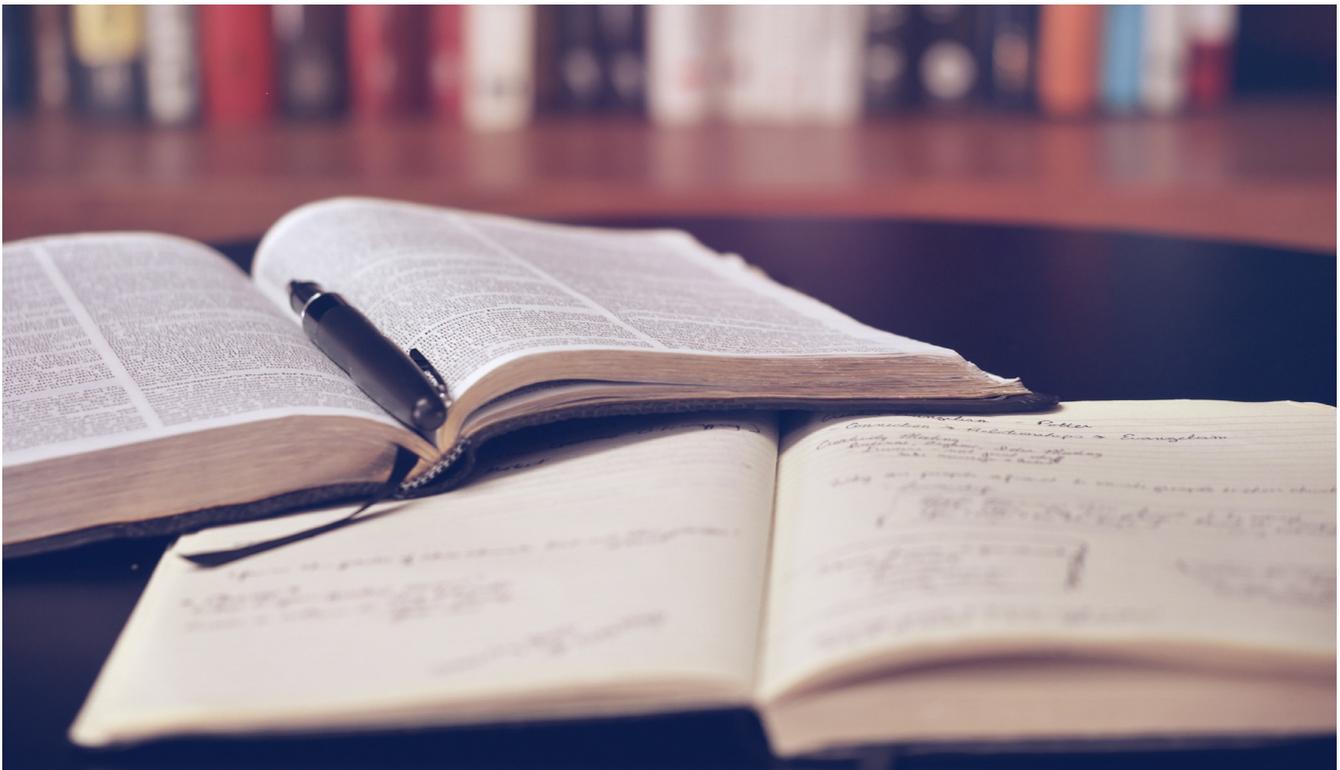
2019 Findings Overview

This report presents findings from the 2019 #RealCollege survey on basic needs of students in colleges and universities across the United States. Section 1 presents the overall rates of basic needs insecurity across all survey respondents. Section 2 shows disparate rates of basic needs insecurity by specific groups of students. Section 3 describes the work and academic experiences of students with basic needs insecurity. Section 4 describes students' utilization of public assistance and on-campus supports. Section 5 contains concluding remarks and introduces new research areas related to basic needs insecurity.

For more information on 2019 survey participants and methodologies used for this report, refer to the web appendices.

THE DATA

The data elements in this report were gathered using an online survey fielded to all enrolled students at participating colleges and universities.⁷ Colleges distributed the online survey to more than 1.9 million enrolled students, yielding an estimated response rate of 8.4%, or approximately 167,000 total student respondents. For more information on how the survey was fielded and a discussion of how representative the results are, refer to the [web appendices](#).



SECTION 1: Prevalence of Basic Needs Insecurity

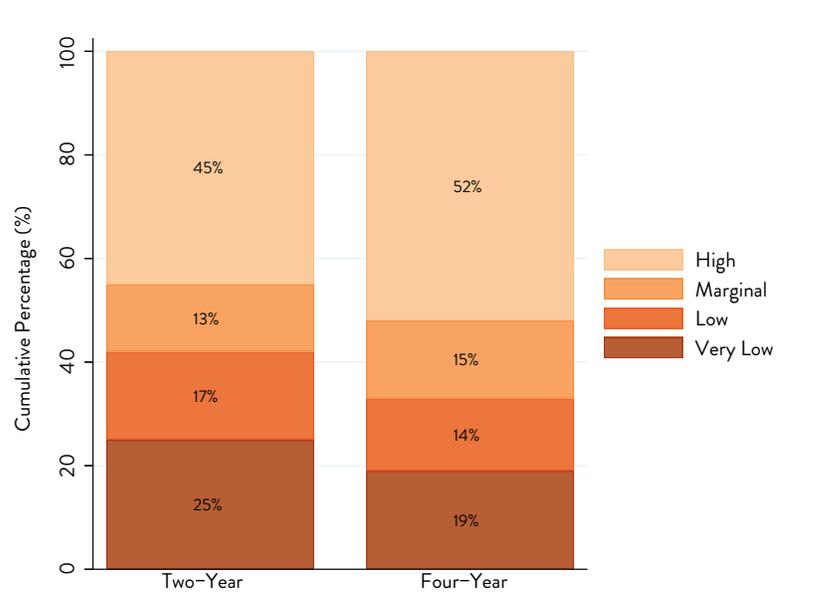
What fraction of students are affected by basic needs insecurity? This section examines the prevalence of food insecurity during the month prior to the survey, and the prevalence of housing insecurity and homelessness during the previous year.

FOOD INSECURITY

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner. The most extreme form is often accompanied by physiological sensations of hunger. The survey assesses food security among students using the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) 18-item set of questions.⁸

During the 30 days preceding the survey, approximately 42% of survey respondents attending two-year institutions experienced food insecurity, with 17% assessed at the low level and 25% at the very low level of food security (Figure 5). Approximately 33% of survey respondents at four-year institutions experienced food insecurity, with 14% assessed at the low level and 19% at the very low level of food security. Almost half of survey respondents attending two-year institutions worried about running out of food (44%) or could not afford to eat balanced meals (45%), compared to 36% and 38% of respondents at four-year institutions, respectively (Figure 6).

FIGURE 5. Food Security Among Survey Respondents by Sector



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: According to the USDA, students at either low or very low food security are termed “food insecure.” Cumulative percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding. For more details on the food security module used in this report, refer to the [web appendices](#).

FIGURE 6. Student Responses to Questions on Food Security by Sector

Two-Year		Four-Year
44%	I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.	36%
45%	I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals.	38%
36%	The food that I bought did not last and I did not have the money to buy more.	27%
36%	I cut the size of meals or skipped meals because there was not enough money for food.	28%
34%	I ate less than I felt I should because there was not enough money for food.	26%
29%	I was hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money for food.	21%
25%	I cut the size of meals or skipped meals because there was not enough money for food (3 or more times).	19%
17%	I lost weight because there was not enough money for food.	12%
11%	I did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food.	6%
6%	I did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food (3 or more times).	3%

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: This figure has been amended from the original release. For more details on the food security module used in this report, refer to the [web appendices](#).

HOUSING INSECURITY AND HOMELESSNESS

Housing insecurity includes a broad set of housing challenges that prevent someone from having a safe, affordable, and consistent place to live. Housing insecurity among students was assessed with a nine-item set of questions the Hope Center developed, which looks at factors such as the ability to pay rent or utilities and the need to move frequently. The data show that students are more likely to suffer some form of housing insecurity than to have all their needs met during college.

Half of survey respondents at two-year institutions and 35% at four-year institutions experienced housing insecurity in the past 12 months (Figure 7). The most commonly reported challenge is experiencing a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay (23% of students at two-year institutions and 15% at four-year institutions). Seven percent of survey respondents at two-year institutions and 6% at four-year institutions left their household because they felt unsafe.

FIGURE 7. Housing Insecurity Among Survey Respondents by Sector

Two-Year		Four-Year
50%	Any item	35%
23%	Had a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay	15%
22%	Did not pay full amount of rent or mortgage	12%
22%	Did not pay full amount of utilities	9%
17%	Had an account default or go into collections	7%
17%	Moved in with people due to financial problems	11%
12%	Lived with others beyond the expected capacity of the housing	7%
7%	Left household because felt unsafe	6%
3%	Moved three or more times	4%
2%	Received a summons to appear in housing court	1%

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: For more details on the housing insecurity module used in this report, refer to the [web appendices](#).

Homelessness means that a person does not have a fixed, regular, and adequate place to live. Students were identified as homeless if they responded affirmatively to a question asking if they had been homeless or they identified living conditions that are considered signs of homelessness. California State University researchers developed the tool used in this report to assess homelessness.²

Homelessness affects 17% of survey respondents at two-year institutions and 16% at four-year institutions (Figure 8). Five percent of respondents at two-year institutions self-identify as homeless; 12% experience homelessness but do not self-identify as homeless. Two percent of respondents at four-year institutions self-identify as homeless; 10% experience homelessness but do not self-identify as homeless. The vast majority of students who experience homelessness temporarily stay with a relative or friend, or couch surf. Using an inclusive definition of homelessness allows more students to receive the support they need. The Brookings Institution recently found that “academic outcomes for doubled-up homeless students and other homeless students are almost indistinguishable from one another.”¹⁰

“... I ran away from an abusive household and was thereafter forced into financial independence at a time when I was already struggling to find the money for basic necessities.”

- Malik

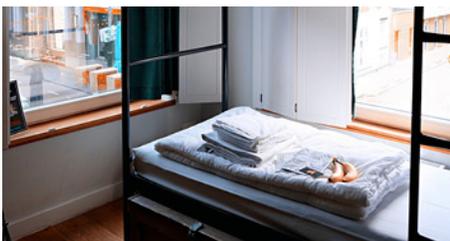
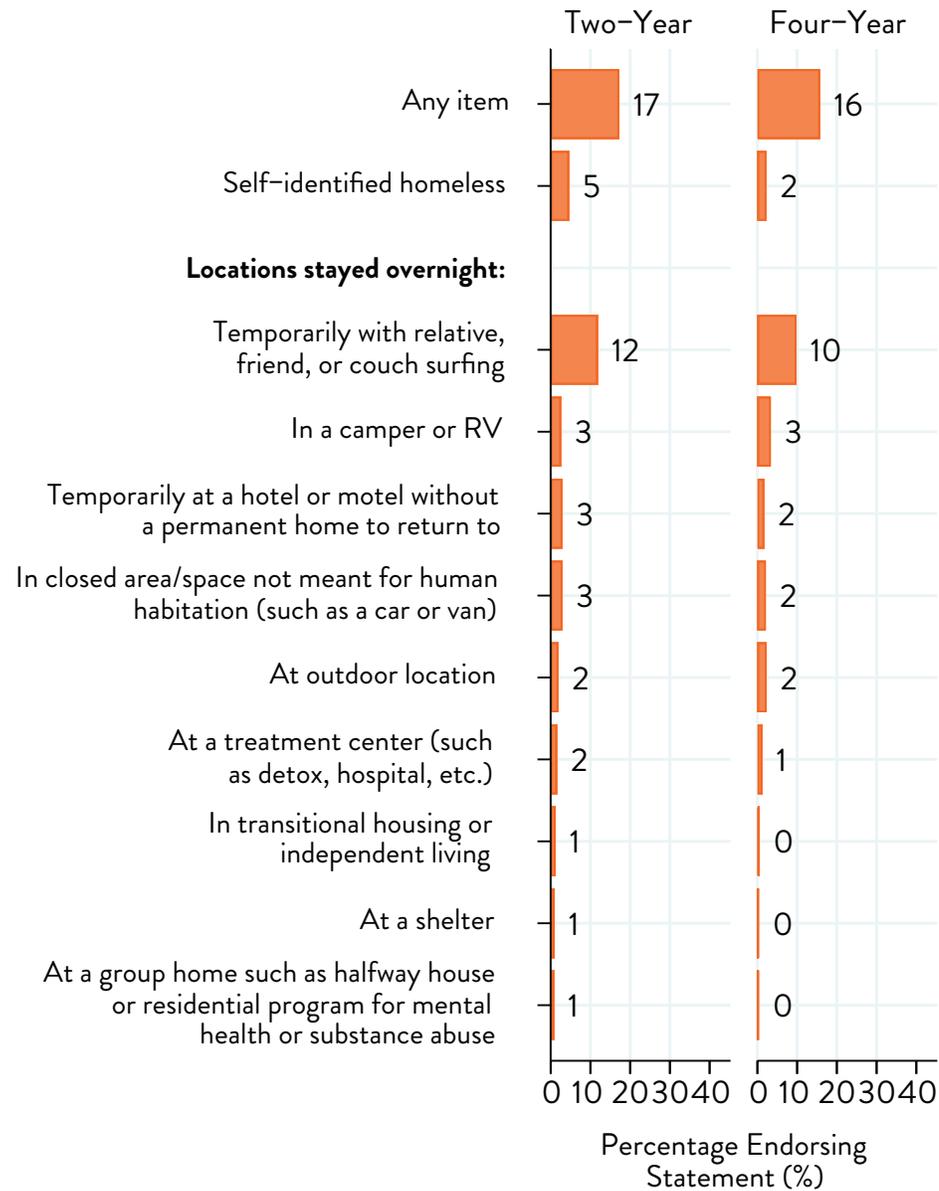


FIGURE 8. Homelessness Among Survey Respondents by Sector



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: For more details on the homelessness module used in this report, refer to the [web appendices](#).

OVERLAPPING CHALLENGES

Students often experience basic needs insecurity in one or more forms, either simultaneously or over time. Students' overlapping challenges in the data demonstrate that basic needs insecurities are fluid and interconnected.

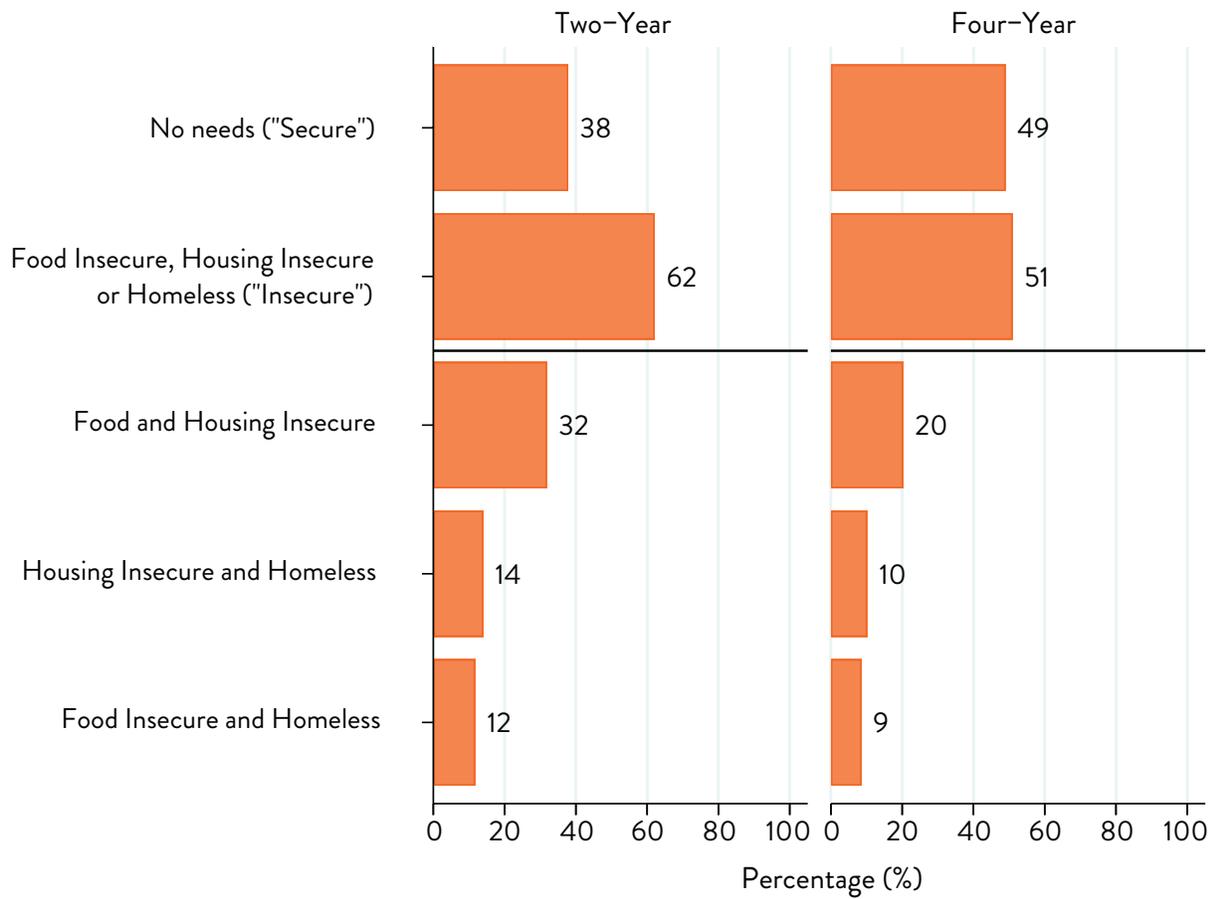
Six in 10 community college students responding to the survey experienced food insecurity, housing insecurity, or homelessness during the previous year, whereas about half of four-year students did (Figure 9). Thirty-two percent of respondents from two-year institutions and 20% from four-year institutions were both food and housing insecure in the past year.



“I work 60 hours a week at three different jobs so I can afford to go to college and provide for my son. I’m a commuter and I don’t own a car, so I take the bus or ride my bike everywhere. Since I’m working so much, I’m not getting enough sleep and I don’t always have enough time to focus on my classes.”

- Dalziel

FIGURE 9. Intersections of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among Survey Respondents by Sector



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

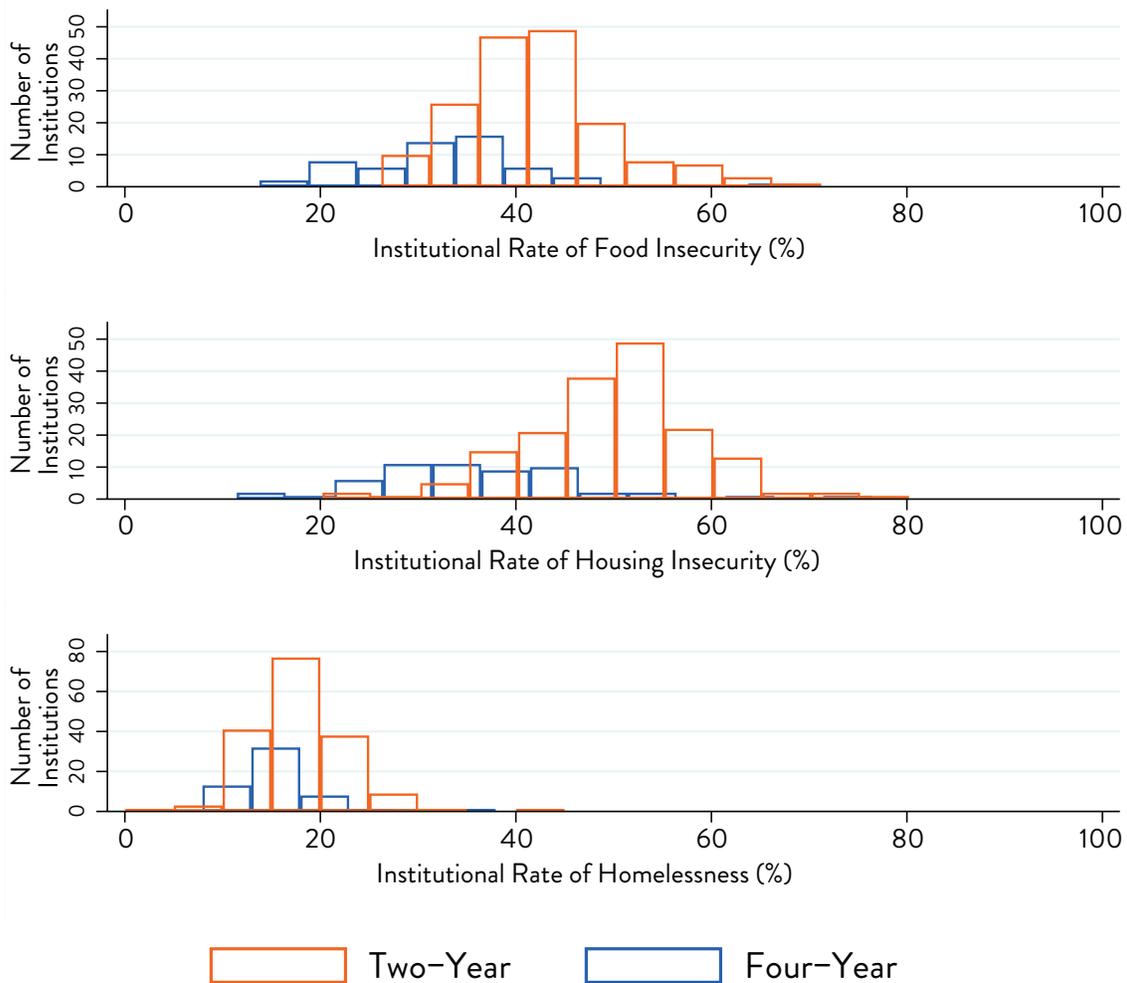
Notes: For more details on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed, refer to the [web appendices](#).



VARIATION BY INSTITUTION

Rates of basic needs insecurity vary not only in type and severity among students, but across institutions as well (Figure 10). There is wide variation in rates of food insecurity across college and university participants. For the most part, rates of food insecurity range between 35% and 49% at two-year institutions and between 24% and 40% at four-year institutions. Institution-level rates of housing insecurity are also fairly different across sectors, with between 41% and 59% of students experiencing housing insecurity at two-year institutions compared to between 25% and 47% of students at four-year institutions. Institution-level rates of student homelessness, generally range from 13% to 23% at two-year institutions and 11% to 21% at four-year institutions.

FIGURE 10. Variation in Institutional Rates of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among Survey Respondents by Sector



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: For more details on institutional rates shown in the figure above, refer to the [web appendices](#).

SECTION 2: Disparities in Basic Needs Insecurity

The Hope Center’s prior work, as well as that of others, has consistently found that some students are at higher risk of basic needs insecurity than others.¹¹ This section highlights disparities in basic needs insecurity by student demographic, academic, or economic characteristics, as well as their life circumstances.

For more on demographic disparities and additional tables with information on survey participants, refer to the web appendices.

Racial and ethnic disparities are evident. For example, White students have lower rates of food insecurity (36%) as compared to most of their peers; rates of food insecurity among Hispanic or Latinx (47%), Black (54%), and Indigenous (60%) students are higher (Table 1). Though rates are higher for housing insecurity than food insecurity, the disparities across racial and ethnic groups are similar. American Indian, Alaskan Native or Indigenous students have the highest rates of homelessness, followed by Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian students. As with the other basic needs insecurities, rates of homelessness among White students are lower than most of their peers.



TABLE 1. Disparities in Basic Needs Insecurities by Race/Ethnicity

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
Racial or Ethnic Background				
American Indian or Alaskan Native	5,472	55	61	28
Black	15,737	54	58	20
Hispanic or Latinx	28,796	47	54	16
Indigenous	2,624	60	66	31
Middle Eastern or North African or Arab or Arab American	2,897	40	50	19
Other Asian or Asian American	7,958	35	38	16
Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian	2,032	47	53	23
Southeast Asian	5,588	38	41	16
White	83,295	36	43	17
Other	3,694	45	55	22
Prefer not to answer	2,283	48	56	23

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: The Number of Students column indicates the number of survey respondents to our measure of homelessness. The number of survey respondents for our measures of food insecurity and housing insecurity may vary slightly. Classifications of racial/ethnic background are not mutually exclusive. Students could self-identify with multiple classifications. For more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed, see [web appendices](#).



The overall rate of housing insecurity for students attending school part-time is 54%, approximately 11 percentage points higher than the overall rate for those attending full-time. Students who have spent more than three years in college are more likely to experience housing insecurity than those in college less than one year (Table 2). Graduate students experience basic need insecurity at approximately the same rates as undergraduates.

TABLE 2. Disparities in Basic Needs Insecurities by Enrollment Status

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
College Enrollment Status				
Full-time (at least 12 credits)	100,557	39	43	17
Part-time (fewer than 12 credits)	43,258	41	54	16
Level of Study				
Undergraduate	114,018	40	45	17
Graduate	17,658	39	49	17
Non-degree	12,043	35	46	16
Years in College				
Less than 1	46,270	36	39	17
1 to 2	49,925	41	47	16
Three or more	47,585	42	52	17

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: The Number of Students column indicates the number of survey respondents to our measure of homelessness. The number of survey respondents for our measures of food insecurity and housing insecurity may vary slightly. For more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed, see [web appendices](#).



Gender identity and sexual orientation are also related to whether students experience basic needs insecurity (Table 3). Rates of food insecurity and housing insecurity are lowest among male students; non-binary and transgender students have the highest rates of food and housing insecurity and homelessness.

TABLE 3. Disparities in Basic Needs Insecurities by Gender Identity and Sexuality

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
Gender Identity				
Female	90,440	41	49	16
Male	36,202	35	40	19
Non-binary/Third gender	2,152	55	59	31
Transgender	1,883	52	57	28
Self-describe	930	50	56	34
Sexual Orientation				
Heterosexual	101,095	37	44	16
Gay or Lesbian	4,773	47	53	23
Bisexual	13,808	50	53	24
Self-describe	4,052	47	54	25

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: The Number of Students column indicates the number of survey respondents to our measure of homelessness. The number of survey respondents for our measures of food insecurity and housing insecurity may vary slightly. Classifications of gender identity are not mutually exclusive. Students could self-identify with multiple classifications. For more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed, see [web appendices](#).



In addition, some life circumstances are associated with a higher-than-average risk of basic needs insecurity. Students with children, those that previously served in the military, former foster youth, and returning citizens are more likely to experience basic needs insecurity than their peers (Table 4). For example, well over half of students with children and former foster youth experience food insecurity and more than 65% experience housing insecurity, while the rates for their peers remain below 40% and 45%, respectively. Returning citizens and former foster youth experience homelessness more than double the overall rate (17%).

TABLE 4. Disparities in Basic Needs Insecurities by Student Experience

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
Parenting Student				
Yes	22,993	53	68	17
No	116,680	37	42	17
Student has Been in Foster Care				
Yes	3,838	62	70	36
No	123,924	39	45	16
Student Served in the Military				
Yes	4,256	41	55	22
No	123,877	39	46	17
Student is a Returning Citizen				
Yes	4,611	59	72	35
No	128,910	38	45	16

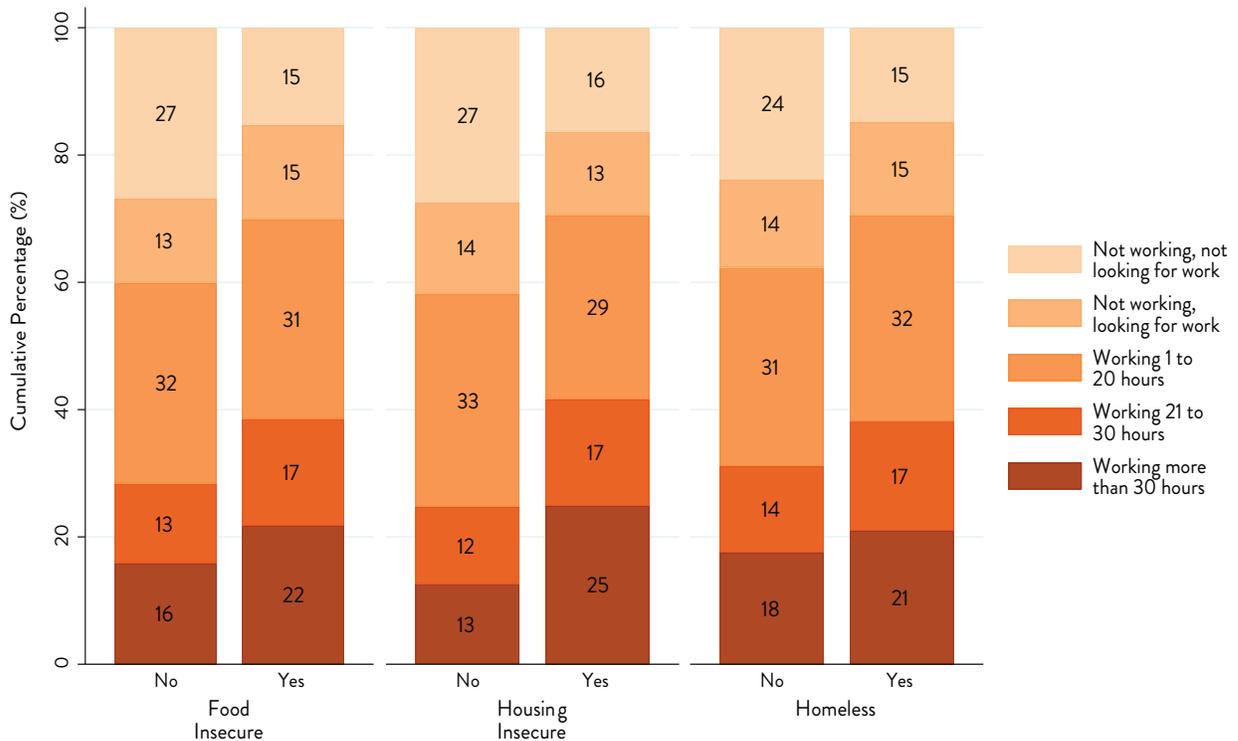
Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: The Number of Students column indicates the number of survey respondents to our measure of homelessness. The number of survey respondents for our measures of food insecurity and housing insecurity may vary slightly. For more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed, see [web appendices](#).

SECTION 3: Employment and Academic Performance

Students who experience basic needs insecurity are overwhelmingly active participants in the labor force. The majority (70%) of students who experience food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness are employed (Figure 11). Among working students, those who experience basic needs insecurity often work more hours than other students.

FIGURE 11. Employment Behavior by Basic Need Insecurity Status Among Survey Respondents



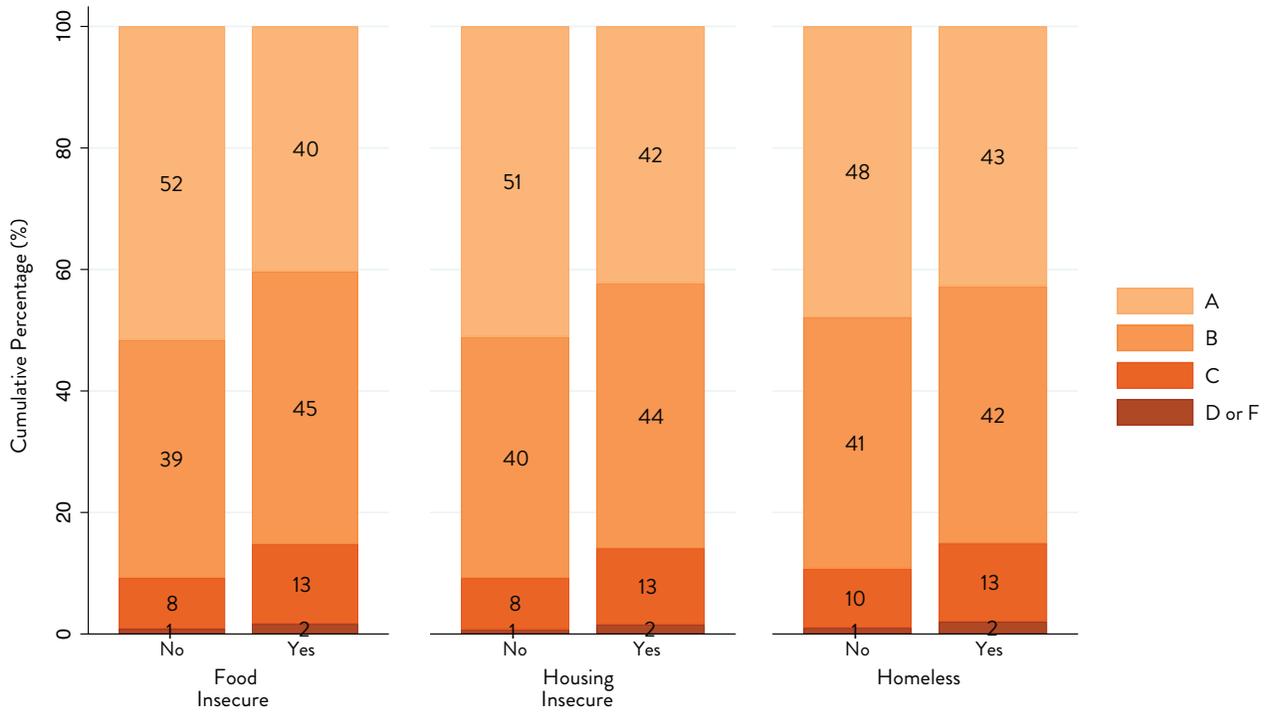
Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: Cumulative percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding. This figure has been amended from the original release. Survey questions about work status and number of hours worked were randomly administered to a subset of respondents. For more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed, refer to the [web appendices](#).



While most students report receiving A's and B's, students who experience food insecurity or homelessness more often report grades of C or below, compared to students who do not face these challenges. (Figure 12).

FIGURE 12. Self-Reported Grades by Basic Need Insecurity Status Among Survey Respondents



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: Cumulative percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding. For more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed, refer to the [web appendices](#).

“Working full-time and often overtime, sometimes going to college felt like my side job ... If I didn’t have to work so much to pay for my education, I would be able to focus on my studies so much more, and succeed like I know I can.”

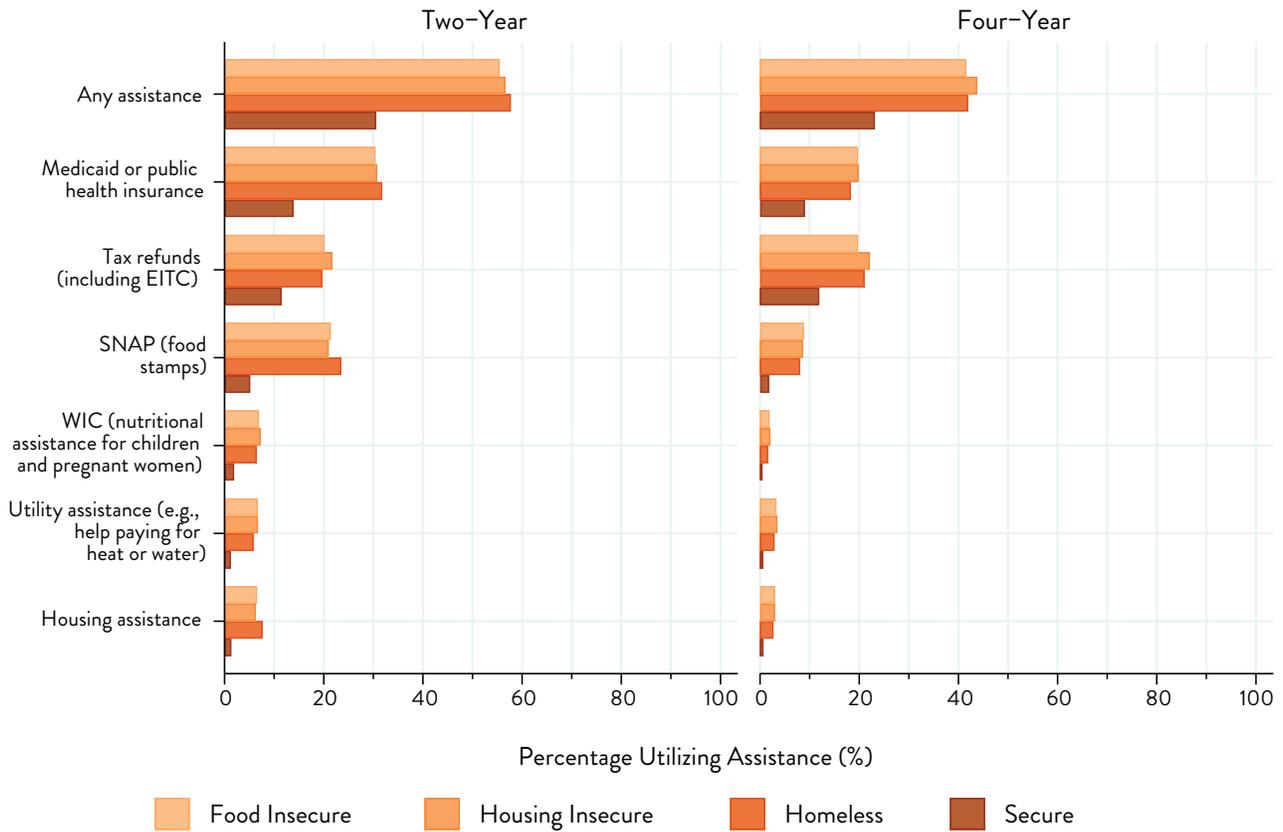
- Matthew

SECTION 4: Utilization of Supports

While supports for students exist on the federal, state, and college levels, our data continue to show that most students who experience basic needs insecurity do not access them (Figure 13).¹² Medicaid or public health insurance, SNAP, and tax refunds are the benefits used most often, though they remain quite low given the needs of students responding. For example, only 18% of food insecure students across two and four-year colleges receive SNAP benefits. Likewise, 6% of students who experience housing insecurity receive housing assistance. Twenty-eight percent of students who experience homelessness utilized Medicaid or public health insurance. Overall, students with basic needs insecurity at two-year colleges access public benefits at higher rates than students with basic needs insecurity at four-year colleges. It is also worth noting that students who are secure in their basic needs are still accessing public benefits, albeit at lower rates (28%) than students who are insecure.



FIGURE 13. Use of Public Assistance Among Survey Respondents According to Basic Needs Security



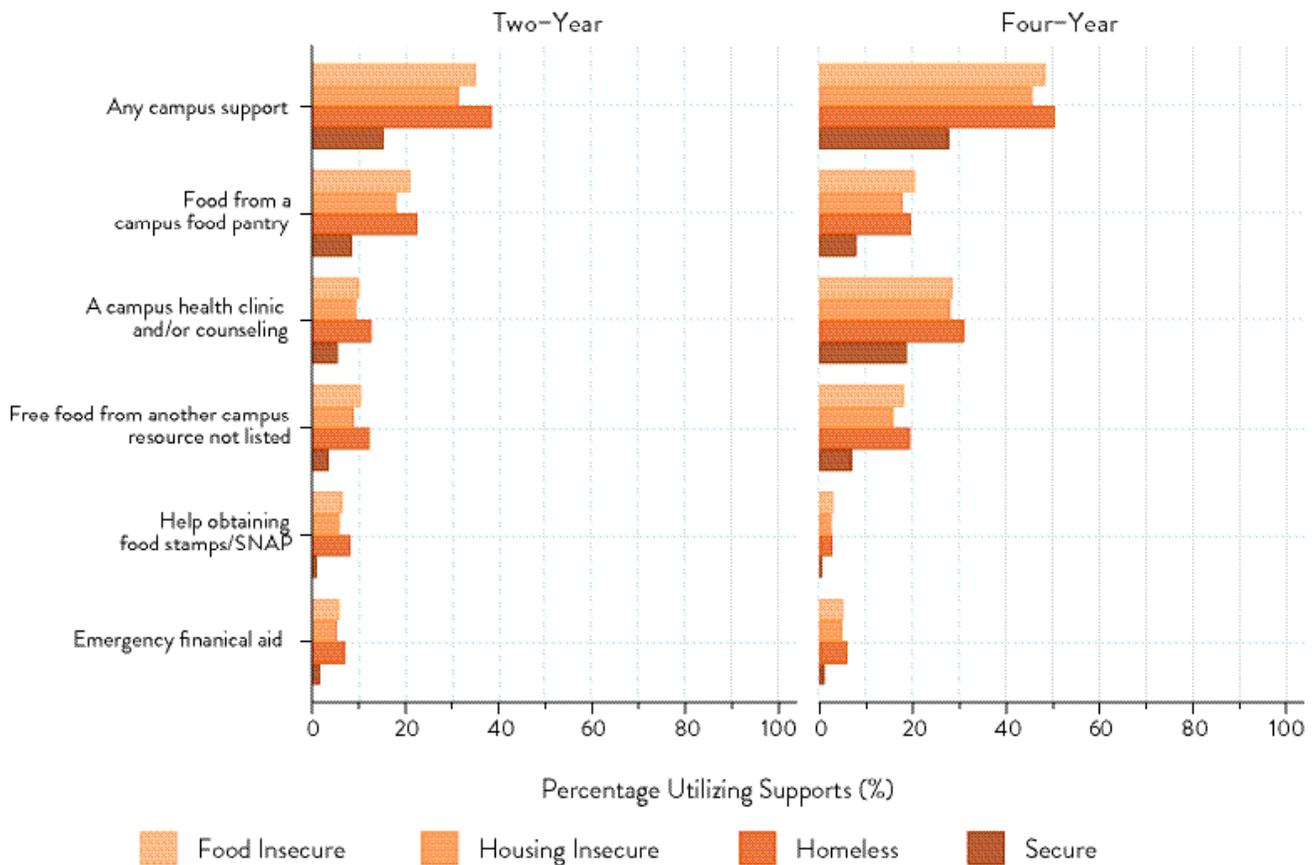
Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: Not all types of public assistance are included in the figure above. See [web appendices](#) for more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed and rates of utilization for other types of public assistance.



The number of on-campus supports being offered is increasing but that does not mean that students who need them the most are accessing those resources (Figure 14). The most commonly used on-campus supports are campus health clinic and/or counseling, food from a campus food pantry, and free food from another campus resource. For example, only 21% of food insecure students use a campus food pantry and less than 10% use emergency aid.

FIGURE 14. Use of On-Campus Supports Among Survey Respondents According to Basic Needs Security



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: Not all types on-campus supports are included in the figure above. This figure has been amended from the original release. Survey questions about campus supports were administered to a subset of randomly selected respondents. See [web appendices](#) for more detail on how each measure of basic needs insecurity was constructed and rates of utilization for other types of on-campus supports.



SECTION 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

Basic needs insecurity is a substantial problem affecting many students. Providing support will help students and institutions thrive. Here are six ways to get started:

1. Assess the landscape of existing supports on campus, including food pantries, emergency aid programs, access to public benefits, and case managers. The Hope Center recommends paying close attention to the approaches to outreach, the requirements for eligibility, the data collected on numbers served, and the capacity (in dollars, staffing, hours, etc.) of these efforts. Please see the Hope Center’s survey of campus food pantries for an example.¹³
2. Encourage faculty to add a [basic needs security statement](#) to their syllabus in order to inform themselves and their students of supports.
3. Support efforts to expand SNAP access for students, apply for federal support for those efforts, and work to accept EBT on campus. Follow [California](#) and [New Jersey’s](#) lead and encourage your legislature to pursue Hunger-Free Campus legislation.
4. Create a basic needs website listing available supports, including:
 - How to access SNAP, the Earned Income Tax Credit, affordable health care , and so on
 - How to reduce the cost of utilities
 - How to secure emergency aid
 - Where to find free food, including any meal swipe programs
 - Who to call if more comprehensive support is needed
5. Consider centralizing fundraising for and distribution of emergency aid across institutions, increasing efficiency and effectiveness and relieving campuses of unnecessary burdens. Many institutional emergency aid programs are relatively small and inadequately implemented. Common problems include:
 - A lack of a student-friendly application process that minimizes hassles for both students and their colleges
 - Limited staff capacity and resources to do effective outreach, challenges moving from selection of emergency aid to distribution of emergency aid quickly
 - Difficulty selecting recipients in an equitable and efficient manner while recognizing the implicit bias compromising interactions with students

- Difficulty navigating the conditions Title IV places on emergency aid
 - Struggles maintaining strong positive relationships with students while necessarily having to say no to many requests
6. Convene the campus dining hall service provider, the VP of finance, and those in charge of student retention. Discuss the current business model for meal plans and whether the approach might be shifted to enhance retention rather than undermine it. Be sure to consider whether a Swipe Out Hunger model might be feasible.



The Hope Center also offers the following additional supports for your efforts:

- An annual [national conference](#) focused on inspiration, education, and action
- A [self-assessment](#) of your campus supports for basic needs security
- [Guides and Tools](#) including how to assess basic needs on campus, a Beyond the Food Pantry series, and a digest of existing research on basic needs insecurity from around the country
- [Evaluations](#) of food and housing support programs

Upcoming #RealCollege Survey Reports

This spring, watch for special supplementary reports on the following topics:

Tribal Colleges and Universities: Students attending Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) have access to unique supports and challenges regarding basic needs security. This report will present findings on students' experiences attending TCUs across the United States.

Student-athletes: Student athletes are #RealCollege students too. In addition to juggling family, academic, and work responsibilities, they participate in sports and may need to maintain certain standards for athletic scholarships. This report will explore basic needs insecurity among student athletes and students' varying experiences.

Faculty and staff: Faculty and staff also struggle with basic needs insecurity. In fall 2019 the Hope Center surveyed faculty and staff at multiple institutions and this report will describe what we learned.

Parenting-students and childcare: This report will take a deep dive into basic needs insecurity among parenting-students and their children, as well as highlighting one of the major challenges they confront—the cost of childcare.

Stress and mental health: Research finds basic needs insecurity is associated with self-reports of poor physical health, symptoms of depression, and perceptions of higher stress. Research in these areas will present crucial information for practitioners and policymakers looking to improve the general well-being of the students they serve.

Transportation: Students commuting to campus experience transportation challenges. Whether students struggle with the cost of maintaining a vehicle or the practicality of public transit, transportation troubles are a large part of #RealCollege student life.

Please check the [Hope Center website](#) for the upcoming series.

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We are thankful to [RISE](#) for providing insights into student experiences with the quotes included throughout the report



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¹² One of the many reasons students do not take advantage of available assistance is the social stigma that accompanies such aid. See King, J. A. (2017). *Food insecurity among college students—Exploring the predictors of food assistance resource use (Unpublished doctoral dissertation)*. Kent State University, Kent, Ohio; Allen, C. C. & Alleman, N. F. (2019). [A private struggle at a private institution: Effects of student hunger on social and academic experiences.](#) *Journal of College Student Development*, 60(1), 52–69; Henry, L. (2017). [Understanding food insecurity among college students: Experience, motivation, and local solutions.](#) *Annals of Anthropological Practice*, 41(1), 6–19; Ambrose, V. K. (2016). *It’s like a mountain: The lived experience of homeless college student (Unpublished doctoral dissertation)*. University of Tennessee–Knoxville, Knoxville, Tennessee; Tierney, W. G., Gupton, J. T., & Hallett, R. E. (2008). [Transitions to adulthood for homeless adolescents: Education and public policy.](#) Los Angeles: Center for Higher Education Policy Analysis, University of Southern California.

¹³ Goldrick-Rab, S., Cady, C., & Coca, V. (2018). [Campus food pantries: Insights from a national survey.](#) Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice.



California Community Colleges



2018 REPORT

San Diego City College

Basic Needs Survey Report

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office | Eloy Ortiz Oakley, Chancellor



Basic Needs Survey Report

1. Introduction

At colleges throughout the country, there is a rapidly growing awareness of the serious challenges that students face meeting basic needs. A recent study of 70 community colleges found that 56 percent of students were food insecure, and nearly half were either experiencing housing insecurity (35 percent) or homelessness (14 percent). A fall 2017 survey of California community colleges found **56.8 percent of respondents had direct contact with students experiencing basic needs insecurity multiple times per week or every day**. This high rate of contact is not isolated to any student or academic service area (Table 1).

Table 1. How frequently do you have direct contact with students that are food insecure, housing insecure, or homeless on your campus? (N=222)

Academic Service Area	Every day	Multiple times per week	Once a week	2 - 3 times per month	Once a month or less
Educational Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS)	20%	41.5%	3.1%	23.1%	12.3%
Student Equity/SSSP	20.8%	30.2%	7.5%	22.6%	18.9%
TRIO	7.1%	28.6%	7.1%	28.6%	28.6%
Disabled Students Programs and Service (DSPS)	21.7%	34.8%	0%	21.7%	21.7%
Veterans Services	14.3%	40%	2.9%	20%	22.9%
Foster youth programs (FYSI, Guardian Scholars, CAFYES, etc.)	24%	32%	8%	24%	12%
Homeless Youth Liaison	25.9%	33.3%	3.7%	25.9%	11.1%
Financial Aid	18.6%	34.9%	4.7%	20.9%	20.9%
Counseling	9.5%	42.9%	2.4%	28.6%	16.7%
Student Activity Advisor	25%	25%	6.3%	25%	18.8%
Teaching Faculty/Staff	28.6%	28.6%	7.1%	14.3%	21.4%
CalWORKs	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%
Other	26.7%	33.3%	8.9%	17.8%	13.3%
Total	24.3%	33.3%	8.1%	19.8%	14.4%

This document provides an overview and analysis of the fall 2017 survey described above, the “Food, Housing and Basic Needs Resources Survey.” Survey participants included administrators, faculty and staff from 105 of the 114 California community colleges, and these participants heavily represented student services and categorical



departments. Ultimately, this document is intended to function as a roadmap to help California Community College leaders, administrators, student services staff, faculty, and other stakeholders identify useful strategies, resources, and funding strategies. **Food pantries, housing support, and other basic needs resources take a variety of forms throughout the California Community Colleges, and this document is intended to highlight this range of innovative and effective practices.**

As the analysis that follows reveals, the California community colleges are already forming networks of deep collaboration that run across campuses and through their local communities. The tools needed to address basic needs insecurity are being discovered and employed to varying degrees throughout the California Community Colleges and their local communities. The next step is to collaborate and disseminate—to ensure that the diverse solutions required to overcome basic needs insecurity are spread throughout the California Community Colleges.

2. Survey Background and Methodology

At two recent strategy sessions for leaders of the University of California (UC), California State University (CSU), and California Community Colleges systems, participants recognized the need to work collaboratively to address basic needs insecurity.ⁱ As part of these efforts, the CSU system developed a basic needs survey that the California Community Colleges later modified to reflect the unique conditions of their students and staff.

The California Community Colleges survey was part of an initiative to gather state-level baseline data regarding resources available to students who need assistance meeting their food, housing, or other basic needs as they matriculate through college. In total, 227 survey responses were received, with all respondents completing at least part of the survey. Because the primary purpose of this document is to provide a resource map, all 227 responses were included in the final data set, regardless of whether they completed all questions.

3. Survey Findings

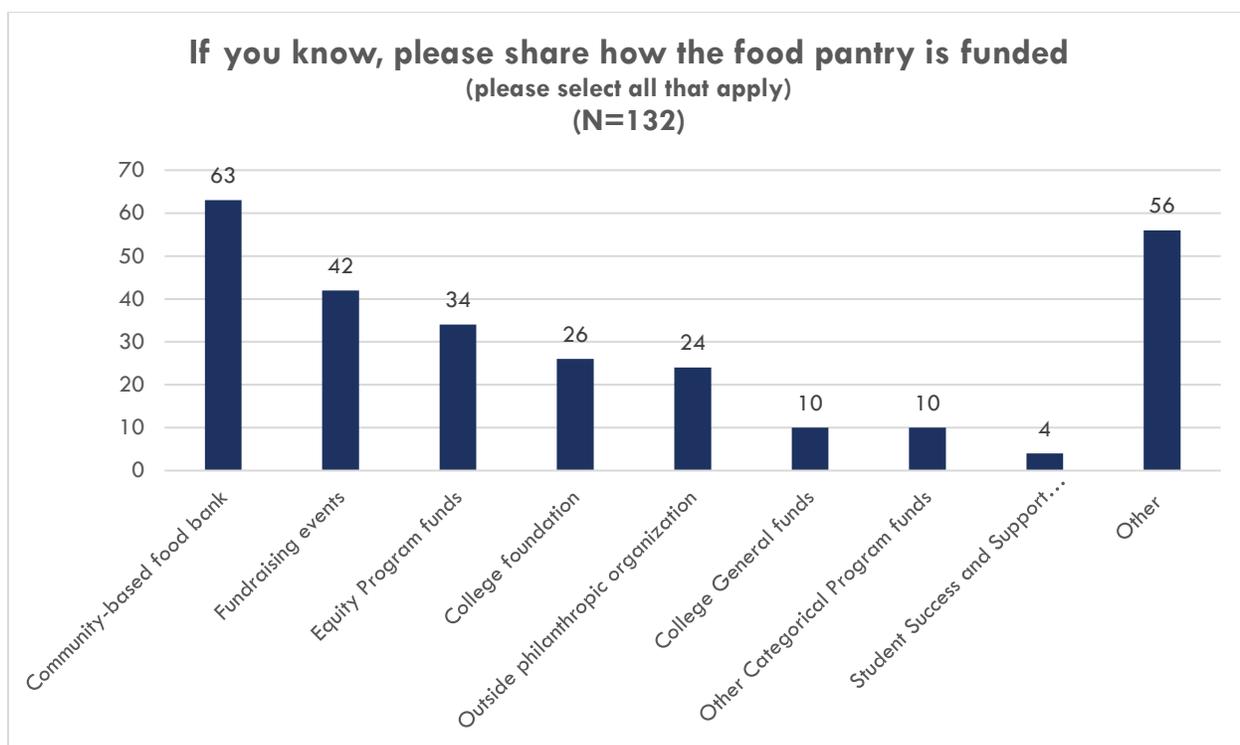
This section summarizes the California Community Colleges survey data around these key areas of basic needs support: food pantries, CalFresh enrollment, and additional food resources; housing resources and emergency funds; campus Homeless and/or Foster Youth Liaison; campus basic needs webpage; and campus health or mental health services. Across these areas, survey respondents described multifaceted efforts to support vulnerable student groups. Examples of respondents' promising strategies are included throughout this section.

Food Pantries

Studies of basic needs in higher education have found that food pantries are one of the most common sources of support provided to students who may be food insecure.ⁱⁱ Similarly, campus food pantries were one of the most-reported basic needs resources in this survey. More than two-thirds of question respondents (68.4 percent, or 132 respondents) indicated that there was a food pantry on campus. Forty-five respondents (23.3 percent) indicated that there was no food pantry on campus, and the remaining 16 respondents (8.3 percent) were unsure.

Campus food pantries are one of the fastest growing movements to address hunger on college campuses, and they often draw on multiple funding sources.ⁱⁱⁱ Respondents to this survey were asked to provide information about how their food pantry is funded and staffed, and the results revealed a wide degree of variation. As Table 2 shows, community-based food banks were the most commonly indicated form of funding, with nearly half (47.7 percent) of

the campus food banks collaborating with one of these outside organizations. These results, combined with the high rate of collaboration with outside philanthropic organizations (18.2 percent), suggest **deep collaborations with the local community**. At the same time, nearly one-third (31.8 percent) of respondents indicated that their food pantry funding includes fundraising events.



The “other” category received 56 responses in total, and the majority of these fell into one of two categories: 27.3 percent of the question respondents indicated that their food pantry was funded with donations—including food drives, faculty and staff donations, and employee wage deductions—and 8.3 percent shared that their food pantry funding incorporated the student government. These results suggest the presence of **strong campus buy-in to address basic needs insecurity**.

While funding for these food pantries varied, the majority of respondents indicated that their food pantry used multiple forms of funding: whereas 34.9 percent of respondents shared that their food pantry received funding from one source, over half reported at least two forms of funding. In terms of staffing, 36 percent of respondents indicated that their team included students, and 27.3 percent included volunteers; 15.2 percent included both.

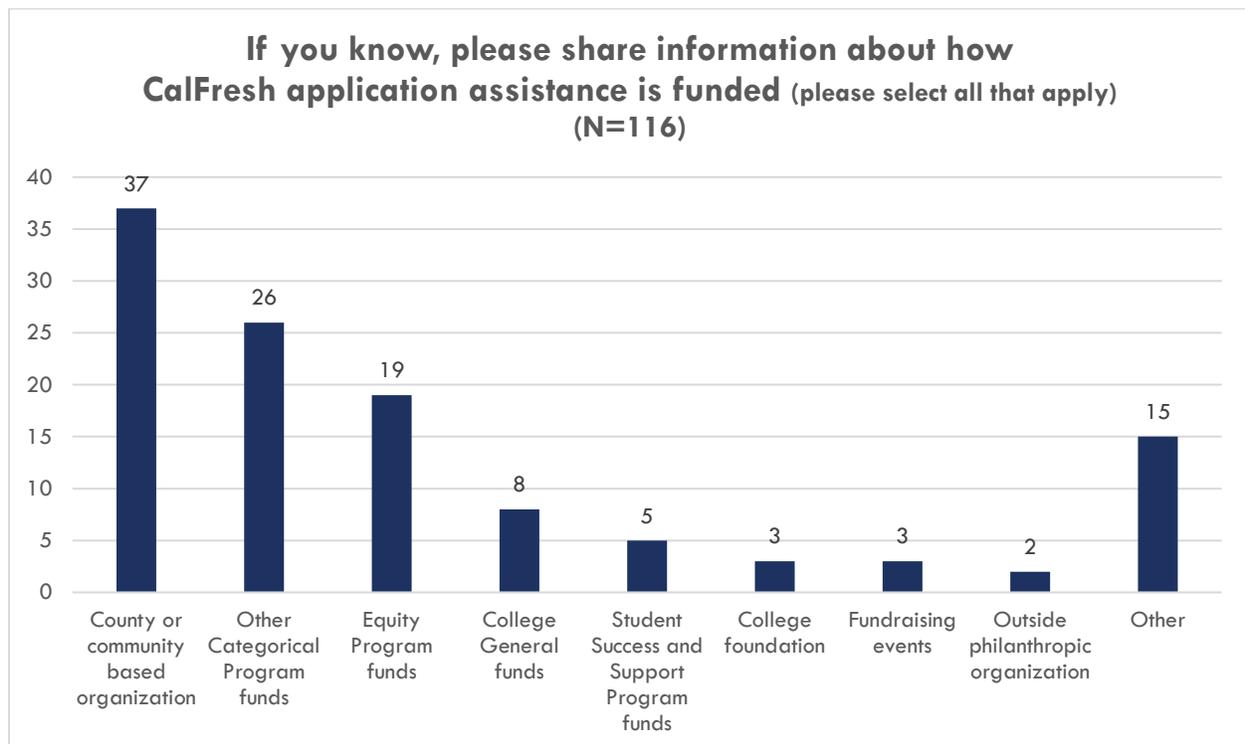
Many survey respondents described innovative outreach techniques for engaging students experiencing basic needs insecurity. One respondent noted, “[their pantry] is very sensitive to the students’ needs and the stigma that accompanied using the pantry. **We provide an environment that provides students with integrity and dignity. Students come into the pantry, they check in, get a basket and go into our storage to pick their items** [...] it’s like going shopping.” Another respondent noted that food is supplied through a creative textbook rental system, in which students can bring in ten cans of food to checkout a textbook for the system. These approaches help normalize food insecurity services by making them a part of campus culture.

Best Practice Spotlight: Imperial Valley College

Imperial Valley College has an array of food resources for students. Starting with a food shack in an Extended Opportunity Programs & Services (EOPS) cubicle, Imperial became a weekly distribution site for a food bank and makes daily packs available to any student. Students experiencing homelessness have access to campus showers, shower kits, and financial analysis; faculty and students can contribute to dinner packs for homeless students through the Imperial kitchen. In addition, Imperial provides wireless service and some computer donations.

CalFresh Enrollment Assistance

Many campuses provide support to help eligible students enroll in CalFresh, known nationally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program (SNAP). **More than half of respondents (61.7 percent, or 116) indicated that there is assistance with CalFresh enrollment on campus**, 32 (17.0 percent) indicated that there was not, and 40 (21.3 percent) were unsure. As shown in Table 3, 37 respondents (31.9 percent) reported that enrollment assistance was funded through collaboration with county offices or community-based organizations; 26 respondents (22.4 percent) said their campus used categorical program funds, such as EOPS; and 19 respondents (16.4 percent) used Equity Program funds.



One hundred and thirteen of the respondents (60.8 percent) indicated that their campus featured additional food security resources, and this rate goes up to 68.2 percent when it is isolated to campuses without a food bank on campus.

Additional Food Resources

While food pantries are sometimes used as an index of food insecurity awareness,^{iv} the survey responses revealed a variety of alternative food insecurity resources available throughout the California Community Colleges. One hundred and thirteen of the respondents (60.8 percent) indicated that their campus featured additional food security resources, and this rate goes up to 68.2 percent when it is isolated to campuses without a food bank on campus. The prevalence of these other resource suggests that campuses are adjusting their strategies based on both institutional resources and campus culture.

Food or meal vouchers were the most common additional resource (64 respondents). An additional 35 respondents indicated that students had access to free snacks, groceries, or produce. These resources were often described as less centralized—and thus potentially less formal—than food pantries. In many cases, snacks were casually available in areas such as student centers, financial aid and EOPS offices, Veterans Resource Centers and other areas frequented by students. Such an approach might be useful for battling the stigma often associated with food and other forms of basic needs insecurity.^v

Housing Resources

Some researchers have argued that, because they are less likely than a four-year institution to offer on-campus housing, community colleges are at a disadvantage when it comes to supporting students experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness.^{vi} Survey participants were asked to provide information about the availability and funding of housing resources available on campus. In total, 185 participants responded to this question, of which 72 (38.9 percent) indicated that their campus offered housing resources; 83 (44.9 percent) indicated that housing resources were not available; and the remaining 30 (16.2 percent) were unsure. As shown in Table 4, the most common form of resource available is a referral. Of the 72 respondents that indicated that their campus featured housing resources, 61 (84.7 percent) of these included referrals to a shelter, and 50 (69.4 percent) included referrals to Transitional Housing Program Plus (THP-PLUS).

In total, 185 participants responded to this question, of which 72 (38.9 percent) indicated that their campus offered housing resources.

Table 2. Which housing resources are available on your campus? (N=72)

Housing Resources Available on Campus	Percent
Referrals to shelters	84.7%
Referrals to Transitional Housing Program Plus (THP-Plus) for former foster youth	69.4%
Support with seeking subsidized HUD housing	20.8%
On-campus housing	6.9%
Hotel/motel vouchers	6.9%
Rental assistance/vouchers	2.8%
Other	23.6%

As Table 3 shows, housing resources are funded through a variety of mechanisms. As the previous question showed, housing resources at California community colleges are usually referrals, a relatively low-cost service. For this reason, the funding categories below may largely reflect the department(s) where the housing referrals list or staff can be found.

Table 3. If you know, provide information about how housing resources on your campus are funded (N=72)

Mechanism for Funding Housing	Percent
Equity Program funds	19.4%
Community based organization	16.7%
Other Categorical Program funds	16.7%
College General fund	11.1%
Outside philanthropic organization	8.3%
College foundation	8.3%
Student Success and Support Program funds	6.9%
Fundraising events	4.2%
Other	15.3%

Despite the lack of on-campus housing, the survey results suggest that community colleges throughout California are finding creative solutions for their students experiencing housing insecurity and homelessness. For example, one respondent shared that their campus offers **case management and one-on-one sessions that help students develop a budget and navigate the rental process**. Several respondents stated that they provide emergency rental assistance, described in more detail in the next section. While there are many barriers for housing insecure and homeless students, these programs emphasize that there also many possible solutions.

Best Practice Spotlight: Skyline College

Skyline College hosts SparkPoint, a one-stop service that provides longer term, intensive financial coaching. Services are available to whole community, and also include career coaching and employment. Skyline also supports student enrollment in public benefits, including CalFresh, staffed by CalWorks students. Skyline’s DREAM Center staff and allies help students who are immigrants navigate financial aid and other resources.

Emergency Funds

Survey participants were asked to provide information about emergency funds. Of the 182 respondents, 92 (50.6 percent) indicated that emergency funds were available on campus. Forty-seven (25.8 percent) reported that emergency funds were not available, and the remaining 43 (23.6 percent) were unsure. Participants provided a brief description of available resources, and these were coded into six, non-mutually exclusive categories based on analyst-identified trends.

Table 4. What kind of emergency funding is available on campus (transportation funding, gift cards, etc.)? Please list: (N=92)

Emergency Funding Available	Percent
Transportation (including gas cards, bus passes, etc.)	60.9%
Grants and Cash Assistance (including gift cards)	38.0%
Grocery Cards and Food Vouchers	17.4%
Text Book	17.4%
Emergency Loans	7.6%
Housing	3.3%

Foster Youth and Homeless Youth Liaisons

As the above discussion of housing resources suggests, housing insecurity and homelessness present significant challenges to community colleges and the survey data suggest that the California Community Colleges are still identifying opportunities to support students facing these issues. One resource already in place throughout the California Community Colleges are homeless youth and foster youth liaisons. Although basic needs insecurity and homelessness cuts across race, gender and geographical space, former foster youth are the most likely to experience homelessness as community college students: one survey found that almost three-quarters of former foster youth experienced housing insecurity, and that nearly a third experienced homelessness while enrolled at community college.^{vii}

In this survey, 101 respondents listed a foster youth liaison, and an additional 54 listed two liaisons. The results for homeless youth liaisons were similar, with 86 respondents listing a homeless youth liaison, and an additional 40 listing two liaisons. The list of [Homeless Youth Liaisons](#) can be found on the California Community Colleges Student Mental Health Program (CCC SMHP) website, and a directory of [Foster Youth Success Initiative \(FYSI\) Liaisons](#) is available on the Chancellor’s Office website.

Basic Needs Webpage

Respondents were asked to provide webpage addresses within their campus website that direct students to resources for food, housing, or other basic needs. Fifty-two respondents provided one website, 29 provided two, and 28 provided three. Many of these websites highlight campus food pantries, resources for students from traditionally marginalized populations (e.g., foster youth, students who are undocumented immigrants), and referrals to community-based resources. The list of [CCC Basic Needs Webpages](#) can be found on the [CCC SMHP website](#).

For more resources and tools from the basic needs survey, visit:

www.cccstudentmentalhealth.org/resources/

Health and Mental Health Resources

Research has found strong links between basic needs insecurity, stress, and mental health challenges (e.g., anxiety, depression, eating disorders, and suicide).^{viii} Health and mental health services can serve as a critical screening point for identifying and supporting students with basic needs insecurity. One hundred and eighty survey participants provided information about the availability and funding of health/mental health resources available on campus. One hundred fifty-seven (87.2 percent) indicated that health/mental health services were available on campus; 16 (8.9 percent) reported that health/mental health services were not available; and the remaining seven (3.9 percent) were unsure.

Respondents were asked to provide information about how health/mental health services are funded. The most commonly indicated form of funding was college general funds (43.3 percent, 68 respondents), and 36 respondents provided additional information that indicated that student health fees were used to support these services.

Table 5. If you know, provide information about how health/mental health services at your campus are funded (N=157)

Health/Mental Health Services Funded on Campus	Percent
College General funds	43.3%
Equity Program funds	14.0%
Other Categorical Program funds	9.6%
Student Success and Support Program funds	7.0%
Community based organization	3.2%
Family PACT	3.2%
Medi-Cal Administrative Activities	3.2%
Outside philanthropic organization	1.3%
College foundation	1.3%
Fundraising events	1.3%
Local Educational Agency Medi-Cal Billing	1.9%
Other	26.1%
Student Health Fees	22.9%
Free Internships	2.5%



Best Practice Spotlight: Saddleback College

Saddleback provides health and mental health services in innovative ways. Saddleback was the first college in the country to be approved as a Medi-Cal provider. All Saddleback health services come from categorical funding and fundraising. They have a compassionate care fund for health services, and a family pack that reimburses for family planning care. In addition, Saddleback is pursuing funding to do mixed income housing, and has an “adopt-a-student” program in which alumni provide housing for free.

4. Identified “Best Practices”

In total, 83 respondents provided an example of a best practice that was utilized either on their campus or on another campus. Some of these best practices have already been discussed above, but the survey revealed many important practices that warrant further attention. Although a full discussion of best practices is beyond the scope of this resource, this conclusion will discuss trends that emerged across responses, with the hope of providing a framework for development and implementation. Visit the CCC SMHP website for the full list of identified [Basic Needs Best Practices](#).

1. Developing Awareness

Several of the best practices revolved around developing awareness of basic needs insecurity. These practices ranged from sending reminder emails about available resources to employees and students, to making sure basic needs resources were shared at all departmental and leadership meetings. As one respondent put it in a discussion of a recently developed “HelpFinder” website, “The idea is that we have a lot of resources for students, but they aren’t currently organized in a way that would be logical or accessible to students.” Developing awareness helps ensure that students can find—and staff and faculty can recommend—the basic needs resources that are already in place.

Developing awareness is also a vital tool for ensure that basic needs resources continue to receive the funding that they need. When one community college launched its food pantry last year, “The Associated Students took the lead by purchasing \$1,500.00 worth of food items which could be put in zip lock baggies. Those baggies were then distributed to faculty in packs of 10. The faculty were then asked to share the food with any student they felt had a food insecurity. This created awareness throughout the campus that there was a real need. After that, we solicited the campus to buy items for the newly created Food Pantry. People from the campus community stepped up because they saw firsthand that the need was real and it wasn't just a handful of students.” **Developing awareness is often a crucial early step for programs looking to obtain buy-in from community members and stakeholders.**

2. Integrated Services

Students who suffer from basic needs insecurity often require multiple forms of support, and many of the best practices highlighted different models for integrating services. One bundled-service model that was shared revolves around “incentivizing students to use multiple services at the same time to build long term financial stability (including financial coaching, employment coaching, public benefits support, food pantry, scholarships, free tax prep, etc.)” Another respondent discussed how their food pantry is designed to offer a variety of services that provide “immediate, short-term, and long-term solutions to food insecurity. We recognize we cannot just provide snacks as a Band-Aid to food insecurity. We house a federal program ([The Emergency Food Assistance Program](#)) to address immediate and short-term food needs, and we also provide grab-n-go-packs. For a long-term solution, we recognize that enrolling in CalFresh is the most successful approach to food insecurity; thus, we house and provide CalFresh benefits screening.” Both of these practices recognize the **importance of integrating services when trying to provide help for the present and the future.**

Providing integrated services can involve streamlining the process, expediting it, and reducing its stressful nature. For some campuses, these integrated services are centralized to a single location. One campus has a resource center where “anyone can come for resources, referrals, and to talk about the insecurities they are facing.”

3. Collaboration

As much of the above data suggest, basic needs resources often develop as the result of deep collaborations. For many respondents, collaboration is its own best practice: “We work collaboratively and have a shared responsibility to address food insecurity. The development of our food pantry was a grassroots effort led by a diverse group of staff, faculty, administration, and students.” Other respondents shared that their campus features **diverse committees that meet as often as weekly to address basic needs insecurity. These work groups help spread awareness surrounding basic needs resources.**

These collaborations often involve partnerships with outside organizations. Many of the food pantries throughout the California Community Colleges receive support from local foodbanks, and multiple respondents shared that they have partnered with a local farmer’s market to procure fresh produce. Although collaborations around food are common, one campus has “collaborated with a local religiously affiliated organization and piloted a safe car park program for our students who live in their cars.”

5. Conclusion

Basic needs insecurity is a multifaceted problem, but the above data suggest that solutions are already emerging throughout the California community colleges. As the best practices above depict, some of these solutions have already been developed, and the next step is to ensure that they spread throughout the California Community Colleges and its neighboring communities. However, these best practices also suggest new discoveries—solutions that will be developed from collaborations between administrators, faculty, staff and students. These discoveries—both past and future—result in new resources and funding mechanics that can better equip California community colleges to support their students and address basic needs challenges.

California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office

ⁱ Office of the President. (2017). Basic Needs Security: Year Three Update. The University of California.

ⁱⁱ Page 17. Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., & Hernandez, A. (2017). *Hungry and Homeless in College: Results from a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education*. Wisconsin HOPE Lab and Association of Community College Trustees.

ⁱⁱⁱ Dubick, J., Mathews, B., & Cady, C. (2016). *Hunger on Campus: The Challenge of Food Insecurity for College Students*. College and University Food Bank Alliance and National Campaign to End Student Hunger.

^{iv} See Henry, L. (2017). Understanding Food Insecurity Among College Students: Experience, motivation, and local solutions. *Annals of Anthropological Practice*, 41(1), 6-19.

^v See *ibid*. See also King, J. (2017). *Food insecurity among college students — exploring the predictors of food assistance resource use*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Kent State University.

^{vi} Au, N. & Hyatt, S. (2017). *Resources supporting homeless students at California’s public universities and colleges*. California Homeless Youth Project.

^{vii} Goldrick-Rab, S., Richardson, J., & Hernandez, A. (2017). *Hungry and Homeless in College: Results from a National Study of Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education*. Wisconsin HOPE Lab and Association of Community College Trustees.

^{viii} Goldrick-Rab, S., Broton, K., Eisenberg, D. (2015). *Hungry to Learn: Addressing Food and Housing Insecurity Among Undergraduates*. Wisconsin HOPE Lab.



San Joaquin Delta College



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