UC Student Mental Health, Financial Confidence, and Basic Needs
## UC systemwide student experience surveys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Survey</th>
<th>Survey Administration</th>
<th>Major Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates</td>
<td>UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES)</td>
<td>2004, administered every other year and 11 times in total</td>
<td>• Education experience &lt;br&gt; • Academic and civic engagement &lt;br&gt; • Student life and development &lt;br&gt; • <strong>Student well-being</strong> &lt;br&gt; • <strong>Financial situation</strong> &lt;br&gt; • <strong>Basic needs (2016)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate students</td>
<td>UC Graduate Well-Being Survey (GWBS)</td>
<td>2016, administered once</td>
<td>• Academic experience &lt;br&gt; • Program climate &lt;br&gt; • Student well-being &lt;br&gt; • Basic needs support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UC Graduate Student Experience Survey (UCGSES)</td>
<td>2021, administered every other year and twice in total</td>
<td>• Quality of program, faculty and curriculum &lt;br&gt; • Advising experience &lt;br&gt; • Professional development &lt;br&gt; • <strong>Well-being</strong> &lt;br&gt; • <strong>Financial situation</strong> &lt;br&gt; • <strong>Basic needs</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student well-being questions in the 2022 UCUES and the 2023 UCGSES

The Patient Health Questionnaire-4 (PHQ-4)*

Over the last two weeks, how often have you been bothered by any of the following problems?

(0-Not at all, 1-several days, 2-More than half the days, 3-Nearly every day)

1. Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge
2. Not being able to stop worrying
3. Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless
4. Little interest or pleasure in doing things

Total score >=3 suggests anxiety
Total score >=3 suggests depression

Financial situation questions in the 2022 UCUES and the 2023 UCGSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UCUES</th>
<th>UCGSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How concerned are you about paying for your undergraduate education next year?</td>
<td>• I feel financially secure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Worried about my debt and financial circumstances</td>
<td>• I can get by financially without have to cut back on too many of the things that are important to me.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cut down on personal/recreational spending to help pay for college expenses</td>
<td>• Financial hardship has impeded my success in my program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How concerned are you about your accumulated educational debt?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Basic needs questions in the 2022 UCUES and the 2023 UCGSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food insecurity*</th>
<th>Housing insecurity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more.</td>
<td>In the last 12 months, have you ever lacked a safe, regular, and adequate nighttime place to stay and sleep for any of the following lengths of time?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn’t enough money for food?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. You indicated that you had cut the size of your meals or skipped meals because there wasn't enough money for food. How often did this happen?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The food insecurity module was developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, [https://www.ers.usda.gov/media/8282/short2012.pdf](https://www.ers.usda.gov/media/8282/short2012.pdf)
Response rates*

*Response rates vary across campuses and sub-populations, but respondents are fairly representative of population.
Data sharing and reporting*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data sharing</th>
<th>Data reporting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Institutional Research and Academic Planning (IRAP) at UCOP partners with campus survey coordinators on server administration</td>
<td>• Survey data dashboards on the UC Information Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• IRAP provides individual campus data with student identifiable information, so campuses can merge survey data with institutional data.</td>
<td>• UC Accountability Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• IRAP provides systemwide data without student identifiable information to campuses. Campuses can conduct comparisons.</td>
<td>• Campus websites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Research results to support decision-making</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student mental health, financial confidence, and basic needs data analysis
Undergraduate student satisfaction

Overall academic experience
- Very Satisfied: 14%
- Satisfied: 49%
- Somewhat satisfied: 26%
- Somewhat dissatisfied: 8%

Overall social experience
- Very Satisfied: 14%
- Satisfied: 33%
- Somewhat satisfied: 29%
- Somewhat dissatisfied: 14%
- Dissatisfied: 7%
- Very dissatisfied: 3%

Overall value of your education
- Very Satisfied: 11%
- Satisfied: 26%
- Somewhat satisfied: 31%
- Somewhat dissatisfied: 18%
- Dissatisfied: 10%
- Very dissatisfied: 9%
Graduate student satisfaction

- Overall academic experience: 2023
  - Very Satisfied: 22%
  - Satisfied: 43%
  - Somewhat satisfied: 8%
  - Somewhat dissatisfied: 4%
  - Dissatisfied: 2%

- Overall social experience: 2023
  - Very Satisfied: 12%
  - Satisfied: 34%
  - Somewhat satisfied: 28%
  - Somewhat dissatisfied: 6%
  - Dissatisfied: 3%

- Overall research experience
  - Academic doctoral students only
  - Very Satisfied: 9%
  - Satisfied: 5%
  - Somewhat satisfied: 5%
  - Somewhat dissatisfied: 3%

- Overall value of your education: 2023
  - Very Satisfied: 23%
  - Satisfied: 41%
  - Somewhat satisfied: 22%
  - Somewhat dissatisfied: 7%
  - Dissatisfied: 4%
Student mental health by campus

Undergraduate Students

- UC:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 40%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 30%

- Santa Cruz:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 44%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 35%

- Merced:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 42%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 35%

- Riverside:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 41%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 35%

- Davis:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 33%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 29%

- San Diego:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 40%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 31%

- Berkeley:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 40%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 31%

- Irvine:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 39%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 31%

- Santa Barbara:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 38%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 27%

- Los Angeles:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 36%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 26%

Graduate Students

- UC:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 33%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 22%

- Santa Cruz:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 40%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 28%

- Santa Barbara:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 39%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 26%

- Irvine:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 36%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 25%

- Davis:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 35%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 23%

- Riverside:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 35%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 27%

- Merced:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 35%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 25%

- Los Angeles:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 33%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 21%

- San Diego:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 33%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 23%

- Berkeley:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 28%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 17%

- San Francisco:
  - Likely anxiety disorder: 26%
  - Likely depressive disorder: 16%
### Subpopulations experiencing more mental health challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate student subpopulation</th>
<th>Likely anxiety disorder</th>
<th>Likely depressive disorder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting students who live with children part time</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonbinary gender</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-generation college student</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell grant recipient</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Likely anxiety disorder</th>
<th>Likely depressive disorder</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nonbinary gender</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parenting students who live with children part time</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humanities</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
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Basic Needs

Undergraduate student basic needs

Graduate student basic needs

* We used a two-item module to assess food insecurity in 2016 and did not collect enough information to assess the level of student food security.
## Subpopulations experiencing more basic needs challenges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate student subpopulation</th>
<th>Low food security</th>
<th>Very low food security</th>
<th>Housing insecure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting students who live with children part time</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonbinary gender</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino(a)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-generation college student</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pell grant recipient</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Low food security</th>
<th>Very low food security</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting students who live with children part time</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonbinary gender</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-generation college student</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicano/Latinx</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Undergraduate student financial situation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Not concerned</th>
<th>Somewhat concerned</th>
<th>Concerned</th>
<th>Very concerned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How concerned are you about your accumulated educational debt?</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How concerned have you been about paying for your undergraduate education up to now?</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How concerned are you about paying for your undergraduate education next year?</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students at UCM, UCR, and UCSC, URG students, Pell Grant recipients and first-generation students were more concerned about their financial situation.
Students identifying as Nonbinary, African American, or Chicano/Latino, as well as students in Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences were more concerned about their financial situation. [Link to detailed financial support report from UCGSES 2021.]
Undergraduate students experiencing greater **food** insecurity are more likely to have an **anxiety** disorder.

Undergraduate students experiencing greater **food** insecurity are more likely to have a **depressive** disorder.
Graduate students experiencing greater **food** insecurity are more likely to have an **anxiety** disorder.

Graduate students experiencing greater **food** insecurity are more likely to have a **depressive** disorder.
Summary of survey findings

• More than one third of UC students experienced a mental health issue with undergraduates being more likely to have an anxiety disorder (40%) or depressive disorder (30%) relative to graduate students (33%, 22%). Nonbinary and parenting students who stay with their children part time are among those that experience the greatest challenges to their mental health.

• Finances continue to be a major challenge for students with about three-fourths of undergraduates being at least somewhat concerned about paying for their education and two-thirds of graduate students being worried about their financial circumstances. Nearly half of graduate students reported that financial hardships impeded their academic success.

• About 45 percent of UC students experienced basic needs insecurity, with undergraduate students being more likely to experience food and housing insecurity than graduate students, and more undergraduate students reporting food insecurity in 2022 (43%) than in 2020 (38%) and more graduate students reporting food insecurity in 2023 (35%) than in 2021 (21%).

• Students experiencing food or housing insecurity are more likely to have an anxiety or depressive disorder.
Additional information about UC surveys

• **IRAP survey services website**: IRAP's Survey Services can assist units across UCOP and the campuses that participate in UC systemwide surveys to UC students, faculty, staff, and alumni. This website provides information about all surveys IRAP administered in past 20 years and administers periodically now.

• **UCUES data dashboards**: a landing page with a list of dashboards that present response counts and percentages for most survey questions

• **UCGSES data tables dashboard**: a landing page with a list of dashboards that present response counts and percentages for most survey questions

• **Basic needs dashboard**: results from undergraduate and graduate surveys on food and housing insecurity

• **UC Global Food Initiative**: information about UC Global Food Initiative

• **Global Food Initiative: Food and Housing Security at the University of California**

• **Graduate and professional student advising at the University of California**

• **Graduate and professional students’ financial support experience at the University of California**