MARCH 2019

California Community Colleges #RealCollege Survey

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THE hope CENTER

California Community Colleges

#REALCOLLEGE™

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]

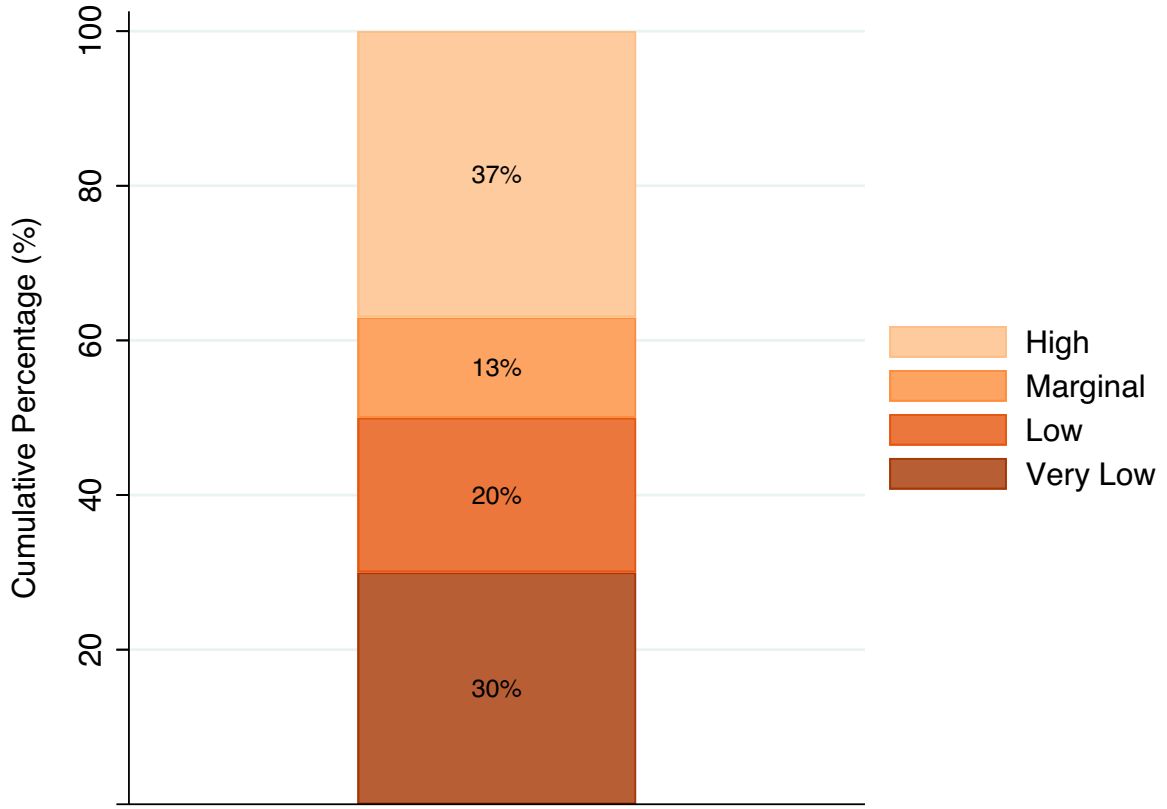
During the 30 days preceding the survey, 50% of the California community college students who responded to the survey experienced food insecurity, with 20% assessed at the low level and 30% assessed at the very lowest level of food security (Figure 1).

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.

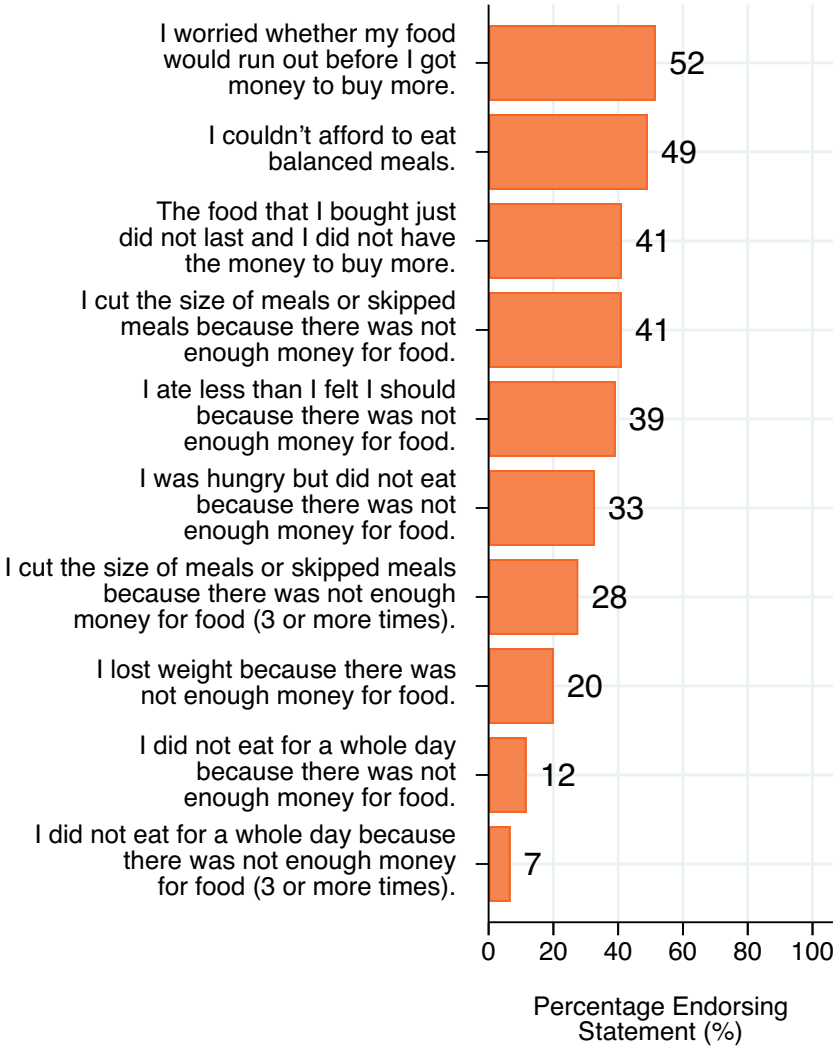
FIGURE 1. Food Security Among California Community College Survey Respondents



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



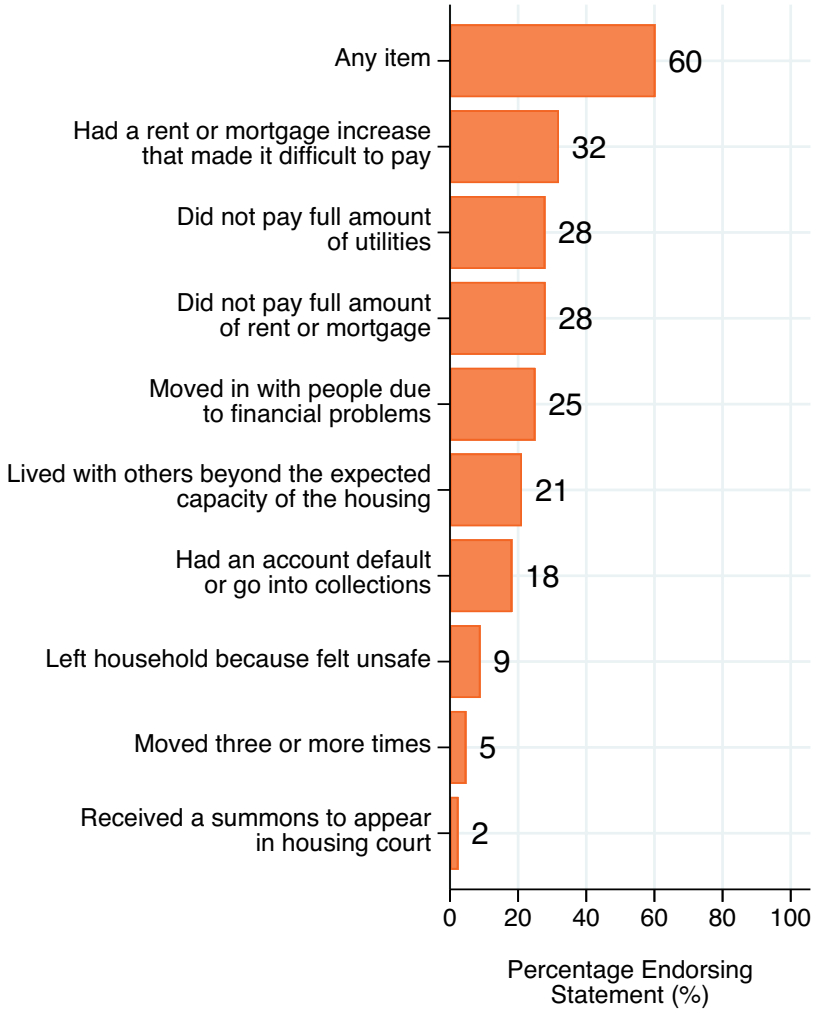
Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

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



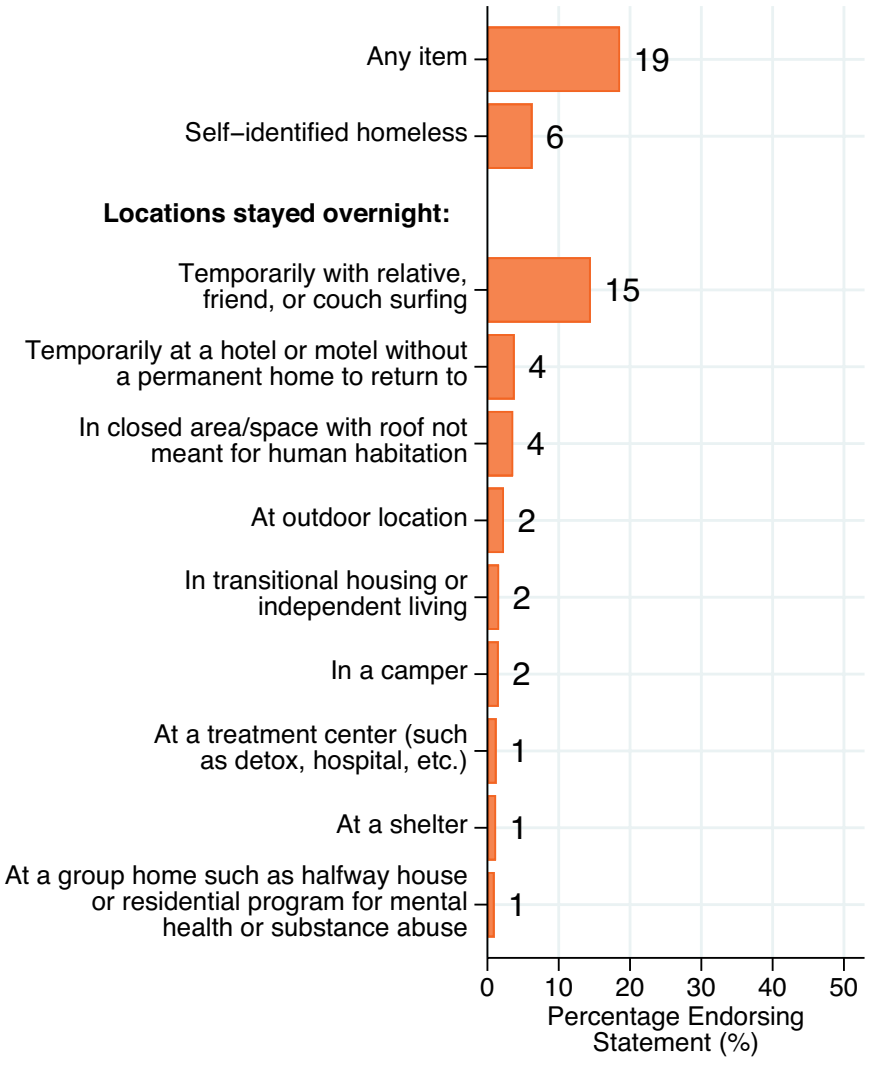
Source: Top bar – 2016 & 2018 #RealCollege Surveys; All other bars – 2018 #RealCollege Survey

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.

FIGURE 4. Homelessness Among California Community College Survey Respondents



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

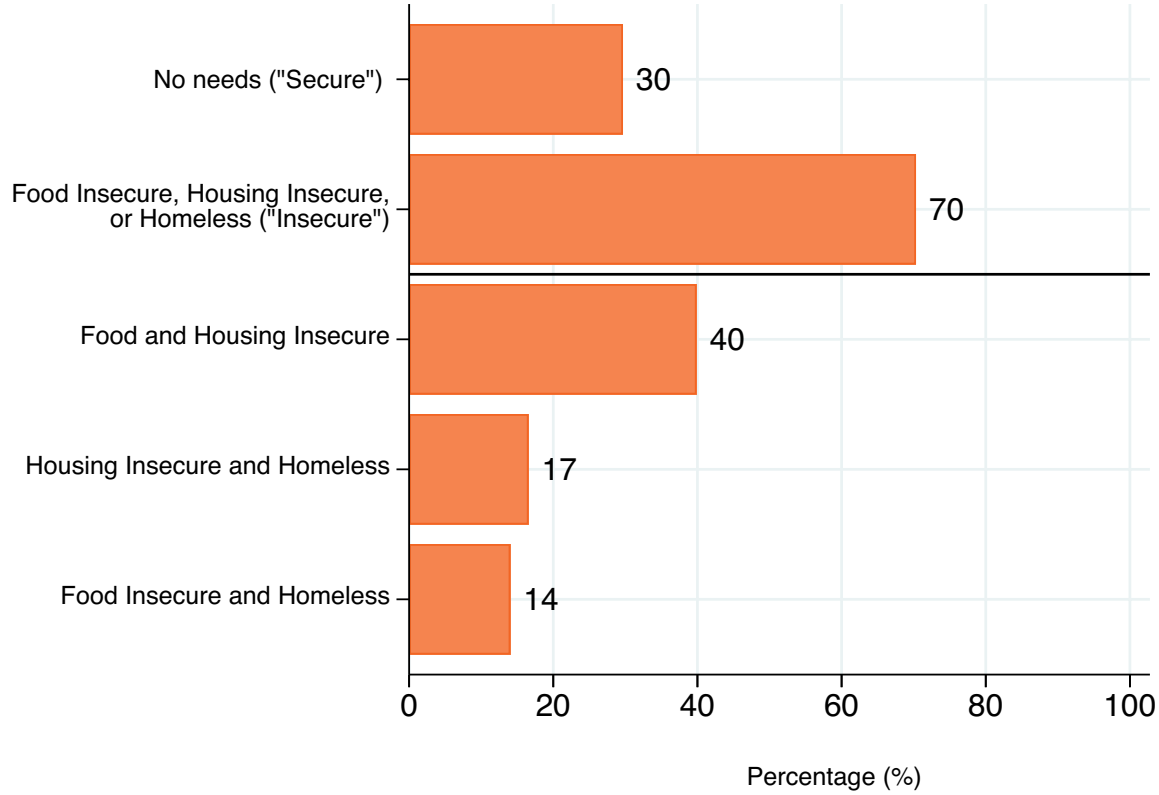
Notes: In the above graph, the top bar, "Any item" represents the rate of homelessness for all California community college survey respondents in 2016 and 2018. However, homelessness was measured differently in 2016. For more details on the 2016 and 2018 measures of homelessness used in this report,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

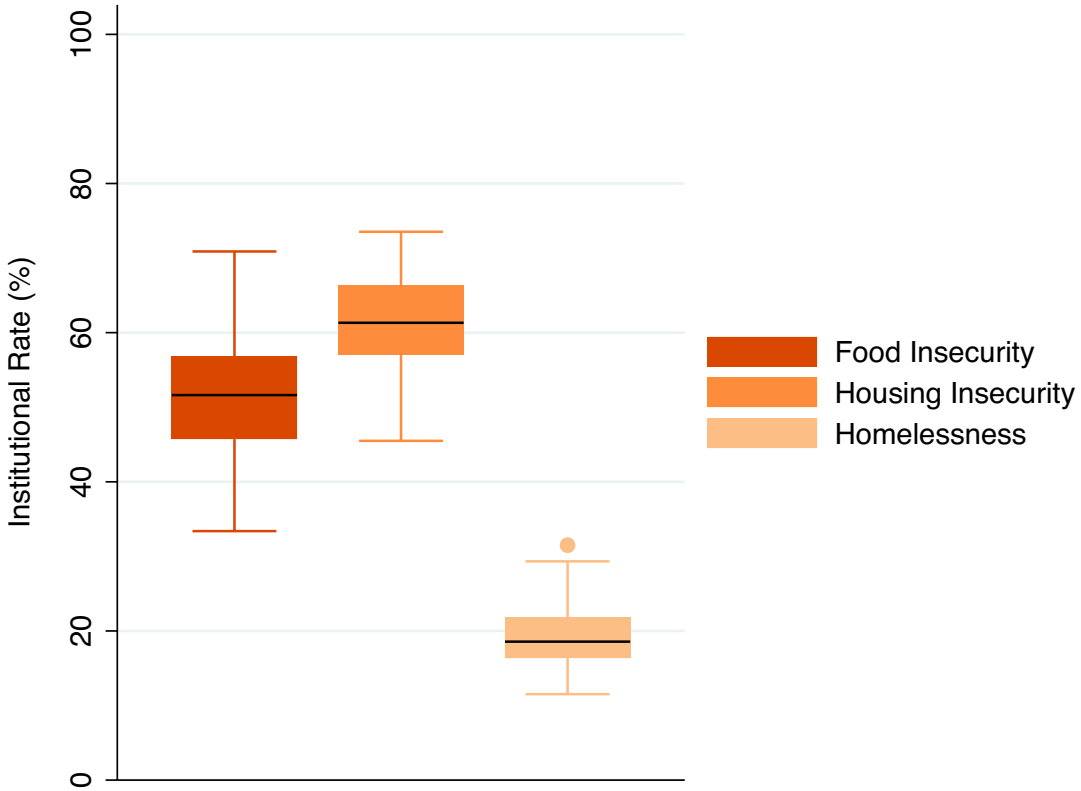
Source: 2016 & 2018 #RealCollege Surveys

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.

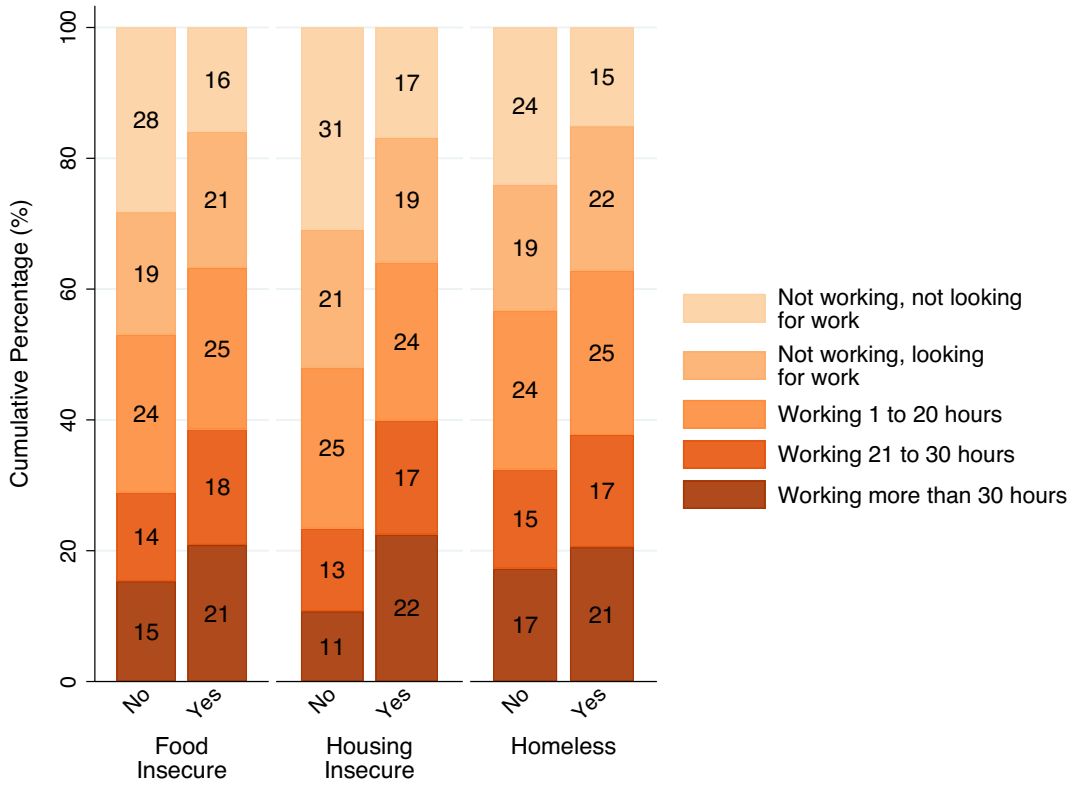


SECTION 3:

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*

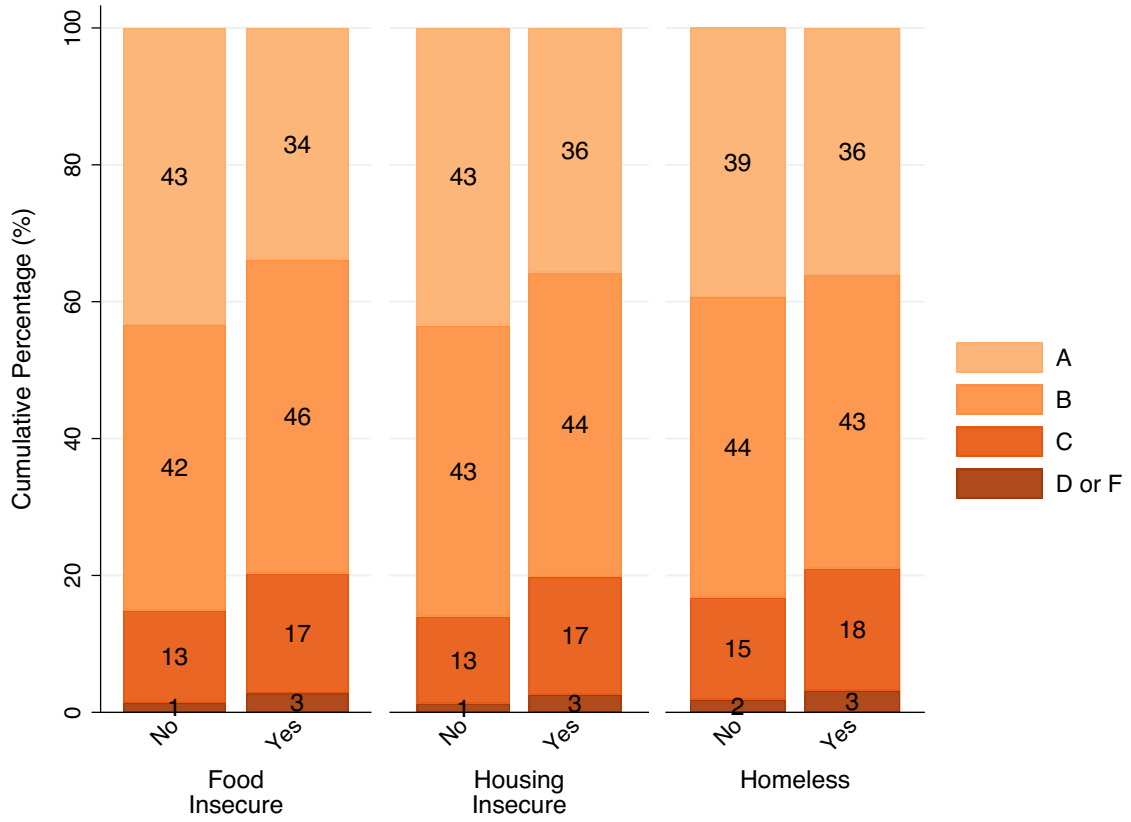


Among California Community College Survey Respondents

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.

FIGURE 9. Self-Reported Grades by Basic Needs Insecurity Status*



**Among California Community College Survey Respondents*

Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

SECTION 4:

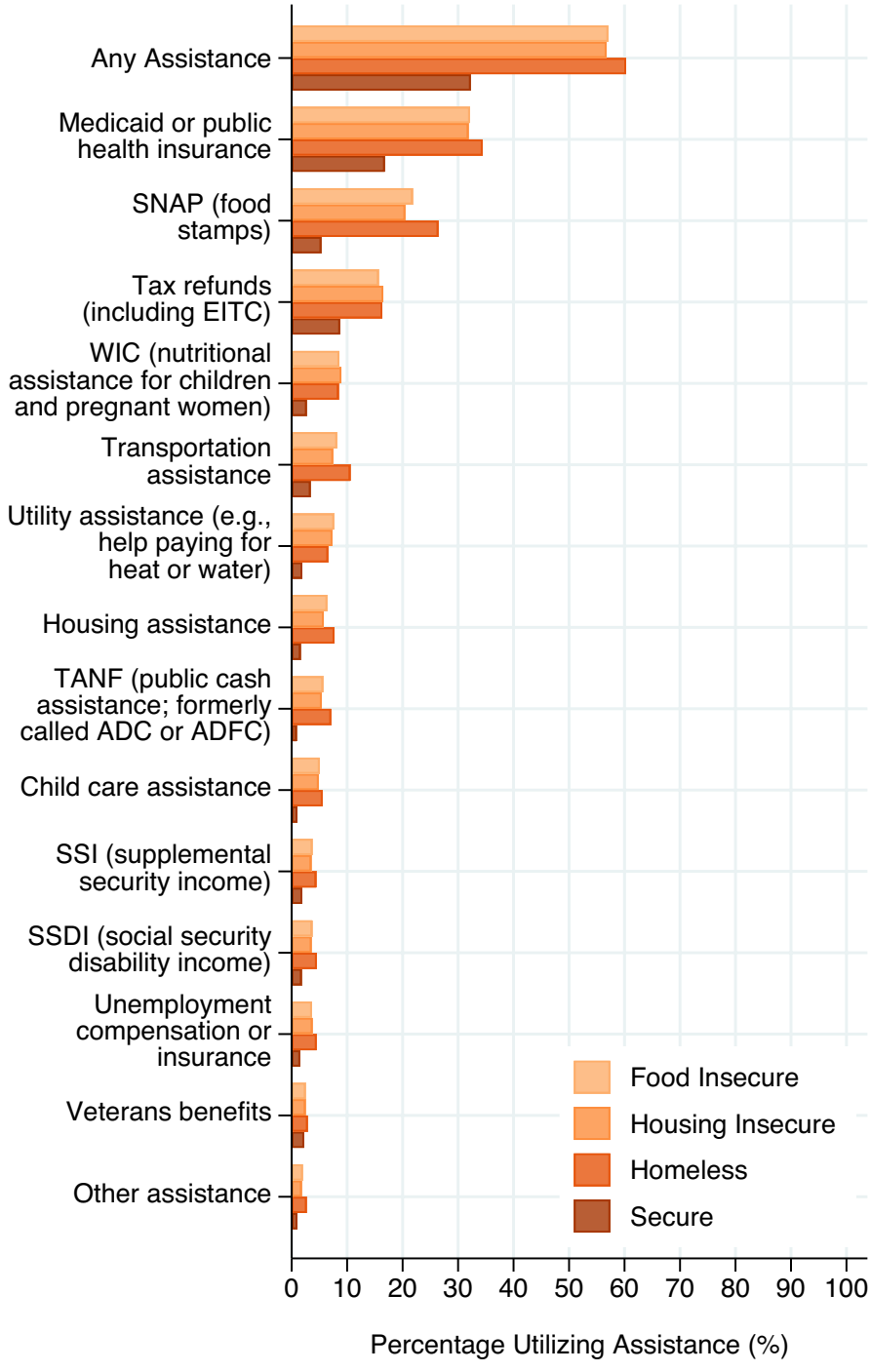
Utilization of Supports

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 ADFC)	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 USDA[14], 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:

	RAW SCORE		
	18-item (children present)	**18-item (no children present)**	**Six-item**
FOOD SECURITY LEVEL			
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 ADFC)	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 ADFC)	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

Authors

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Sara Goldrick-Rab is a Professor of Higher Education Policy and Sociology at Temple University, Founder of the Wisconsin HOPE Lab, and Founder of the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice (launched September 2018). She is best known for her innovative research on food and housing insecurity in higher education. She is the recipient of the William T. Grant Foundation's Faculty Scholars Award, and the American Educational Research Association's Early Career Award, and in 2016 POLITICO magazine named her one of the top 50 people shaping American politics. Her latest book, *Paying the Price: College Costs, Financial Aid, and the Betrayal of the American Dream* is a 2018 winner of the Grawemeyer Award. Dr. Goldrick-Rab is ranked 6th in the nation among education scholars according to *Education Week.*

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Christine Baker-Smith is the Managing Director and Director of Research for the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice. A sociologist of education, Christine's training is in mixed-methods research and causal inference with a focus on student social and academic engagement across schooling transitions. She holds a PhD from New York University in Sociology of Education, an EdM in Leadership, Policy and Politics from Teachers College, Columbia University, an MA in Social Sciences of Education from Stanford University, and a BA in Sociology from Whitman College. She has published on adolescence and school transitions in numerous peer-reviewed journals such as *Sociology of Education, Peabody Journal of Education,* and *Education Finance and Policy.*

VANESSA COCA

Vanessa Coca is a Senior Research Associate at the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice. She has more than a decade of experience in conducting research on the postsecondary enrollment and completion of students of color, students from low-income households, immigrant students, and first-generation college goers. Vanessa received her PhD in sociology of education at the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development at New York University—where she was an Institute of Education-funded Predoctoral Interdisciplinary Research Training (IES-PIRT) fellow. She also holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees from the University of Chicago.

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Elizabeth Looker is a Research Project Manager at the Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice. Prior to joining the Hope Center, her experience was in academic affairs where she launched an EMBA program, managed graduate and undergraduate curricula, and advised students on coursework and careers in the MIT Sloan School of Management. Elizabeth earned an MEd in Higher Education Administration from Suffolk University and a BA in Sociology and Fine Art from Hampshire College.

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., Kattelmann, 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.

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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 Statistic'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.