UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

The University of California's Next Phase of Improving Student Basic Needs

Regents of the University of California
Special Committee on Basic Needs

November 2020

Ba·sic needs

/'bāsik /nēdz/ · noun

An ecosystem that supports financial stability by ensuring equitable access to nutritious and sufficient food; safe, secure, and adequate housing (to sleep, study, cook, and shower); healthcare to promote sustained mental and physical well-being; affordable transportation; resources for personal hygiene care; and emergency needs for students with dependents.

LETTER TO THE REGENTS

We are pleased to share this report on behalf of the Regents' Special Committee on Basic Needs. It represents a collection of new understandings based on critical discussions over the past year and a half, including the determinants of food and housing insecurity among UC students, urgent measures the University has taken to eliminate the need for basic needs resources, and further strategies warranted by the issue of basic needs insecurity among students across the University of California system.

Through our meetings, we sought to understand the underlying causes of food and housing insecurity among our most historically underserved student populations and to identify areas for improvement so that the University can most effectively address basic needs.

While college students have faced basic needs insecurity for decades, the growing salience of this issue, coupled with increasing calls for reform among student advocates and their supporters in recent years, signaled a misalignment between students' changing financial circumstances and our institution's efforts to support them. As public stewards of the University of California, we must commit to providing an educational experience wherein the true costs match the financial expectations of students and their families if we are to achieve our ultimate goal of equitable and successful academic completion.

Finally, we extend our deepest gratitude to the activists, advocates, students, staff, faculty, policymakers, and Regents for their advocacy for and support of basic needs, as well as to former Chairs of the Special Committee Hayley Weddle and Devon Graves for their commitment to this cause and for the creation of this committee.

With the knowledge and insights gained by the convening of the Regents' Special Committee on Basic Needs, we are now equipped to more effectively address the basic needs of UC students and begin our work to eliminate basic needs insecurity.

Sincerely,

Jamaal Muwwakkil
Student Regent and Chair, Special Committee on Basic Needs

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

ASAC Regent's Academic and Student Affairs Committee
CalMHSA California Mental Health Services Authority
CAPS Counseling and Psychological Services
CCC California Community Colleges
CDSS California Department of Social Services
CHEBNA California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance
CSAC California Student Aid Commission
CSU California State University
EBT Electronic Benefit Transfer
EFM Education Financing Model
ETV Educational Training Vouchers Program
FAFSA Free Application for Federal Student Aid
FAP Food Assistance Program
FAS-BN GFI Food Access and Security Basic Needs subcommittee
FFY Former Foster Youth
GFI Global Food Initiative
GWBS Graduate Student Well-Being Survey
MHSA Mental Health Services Act/Proposition 63
MHSOAC Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission
MOU Memorandum of Understanding
NRST Nonresident Supplemental Tuition
SFASS Student Food Access and Security Survey
SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SSF Student Service Fees
TANF Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
UC University of California
UCOP University of California Office of the President
UCSHIP UC Student Health Insurance Program
UCUES UC Undergraduate Experience Survey
URG Underrepresented group

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of California's definition of basic needs includes a list of comprehensive needs representing the minimum resources necessary to holistically support all students in their daily lives. Basic needs insecurity (the lack of the minimum necessary supports for well-being) has pervaded universities nationwide for decades, and the University of California is no exception.[1] Over the last 18 years, the total cost of attendance for the University has more than doubled ($35,429 for in-state students living on campus in 2018–19), making it more difficult for the University's most historically underserved students to thrive in college.[2]

Financial struggles during post-secondary education have been globally accepted as a rite of passage that most students undergo as a part of the college experience. In the past six years, rapidly increasing housing costs coupled with stakeholder advocacy and a growing body of research have accelerated the urgency and visibility of this issue with University leaders and policymakers.[1] Today, UC's basic needs efforts are viewed as a national model for improving basic needs in higher education. UC's expanding efforts have been instrumental to supporting an estimated minimum of 40,000 students in need during the 2019–20 academic year, based on campus estimates as of July 2020. Yet the University is only beginning to fully understand the complex and intersecting factors that allow basic needs insecurity to continue and to assess its impact on students' well-being and academic performance.

The Regents formed a Special Committee on Basic Needs to further the discussion on basic needs, identify the root causes of basic needs insecurity, and develop a long-term strategy to eliminate basic needs insecurity at the University. The charter of the Special Committee included the issuance of this report, which has two aims: 1) to explain the daily struggles faced by students experiencing basic needs insecurity; and 2) to provide recommendations that address the root causes of basic needs insecurity systemwide.

By outlining the underlying policy mechanisms that contribute to basic needs insecurity, this collection of findings and recommendations serves to help stakeholders understand their role in effectively addressing basic needs insecurity.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations identified in this report represent actionable solutions to the major findings that emerged from the Special Committee's deliberations. These findings inform the strategy of reducing basic needs insecurity at the University and are discussed in detail throughout this report.

39%

of undergraduate students in 2020 said they have been

FOOD INSECURE

during their enrollment at UC, as did half of students from underrepresented groups (URGs), (African American, Hispanic/ Latino and American Indian). *(More on page 40)*

5%

of undergraduate and graduate students in 2016 said they have been

HOMELESS

during their enrollment at UC. (2-3 percentage points higher for students from URGs).[3] *(More on page 36)*

64%

of UC undergraduates are concerned about the possible effects of COVID-19 on meeting their basic needs.[4]

The average four-year graduation rate for UC students who experienced food insecurity and homelessness was

11 PERCENTAGE POINTS LOWER

compared to students who were food secure and housed.[3]

Even students with financial aid struggle to have enough funding to meet their basic needs. *(More on page 23)*

SUCCESSES

10 OUT OF 10

campuses have established an on-site basic needs center, which provides access to food, emergency housing, and support services. *(More on page 18)*

OVER 48,000 STUDENTS

systemwide have been served by campus basic needs efforts in fiscal year 2019–20.[5]

The California State Legislature currently provides

$18.5M

in annual funding to the university to support basic needs and rapid rehousing efforts.[6] *(More on pages 16 and 54)*

The recommendations identified in this report represent a comprehensive approach to addressing basic needs insecurity through research, prevention, sustainability, and advocacy. They are grouped and directed to five audiences: policymakers and advocates; University leaders; student service practitioners; researchers and evaluators; and students.

As outlined in the five-year UC basic needs goals below, the recommendations serve as a vehicle to further expand the proportion of students whose basic needs are met. By working diligently toward these target milestones with the guidance of these recommendations, the University will increase the basic needs security of UC students, providing them the necessary resources to persist to degree completion and, in turn, to achieve continued success in the workforce and in their communities.

FIVE-YEAR UC BASIC NEEDS GOALS

By June 2025:

1. Reduce the proportion of undergraduate students reported to have experienced food insecurity in the past 12 months by 50 percent (from 44 percent to 22 percent, based on 2016 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey [UCUES] data).

2. Reduce the proportion of graduate students reported to have experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months by 50 percent (from 26 percent to 13 percent, based on 2016 Graduate Well-Being Survey [GWBS] data).

3. Reduce the proportion of undergraduate students who have experienced housing insecurity by 50 percent (from 16 percent to 8 percent, according to 2020 UCUES data).*

4. Reduce the proportion of graduate students who have experienced homelessness to by 50 percent (from 5 percent to 2.5 percent, based on 2016 GWBS data.)

For the purposes of this goal, the definition of housing insecurity is based on the number of respondents who indicated that, in the past 12 months, they slept overnight on campus, at a hotel, at an Airbnb, in a transitional housing or independent living program, at a group home, treatment center, homeless center, or outdoor location because they did not have a permanent home to return to; based on preliminary 2020 UCUES data as of July 13, 2020.

The goals listed above represent "challenge goals" for the system to reduce food and housing insecurity. The economic circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the increasing number of students whose needs are growing, further challenge us to reach these goals. The University will periodically revisit progress toward these goals and update them based on available funding and other relevant factors to ensure that they align with current circumstances.

Please note: The following recommendations are listed in no particular order. For definitions of the audiences to whom they are assigned, see page 47.

Recommendations for Policymakers and Advocates

1. Advocate for greater investment in financial aid at the federal, State, and University levels: stronger financial aid helps prevent basic needs insecurity. With an additional $500 million in need-based grants, the University could: 1) decrease, by half, the number of undergraduate students who would need to borrow or work and 2) increase by 60 percent the amount of aid available to support students' living expenses. Comparable funding for graduate students (e.g., an additional $113 million in fellowships and assistantships) could close the gap between estimated living expenses and net stipends for academic doctoral students.

a. Goal: Increase financial aid available to undergraduate students from all sources, including federal, State, and philanthropic sources. The goal is to cut, by half, undergraduate students' need to work and borrow by FY 2025. In 2020, that would require the equivalent of $500 million, which could grow with inflation and enrollment.

b. Goal: Increase financial aid available to academic doctoral students from all sources, including federal, State and philanthropic sources, with the goal of expanding net stipends to match living expenses by FY 2025. In 2020, that would require the equivalent of $113 million, which could grow with inflation and enrollment, enabling campuses to commit to multi-year offers for doctoral candidates.

2. When the State's budget allows, advocate for legislation that would eliminate unnecessary barriers for UC students in the State's Cal Grant program and provide additional summer financial aid for students enrolled in summer session.

a. Goal: Convince the Legislature to pass acts that reform Cal Grant to expand eligibility by FY 2022.

3. Advocate for the State adoption of the UC definition of student basic needs. This will allow campuses to use State budget appropriations for basic needs to address the full scope of students' basic needs, e.g., healthy and sufficient food; safe, secure and adequate housing (to sleep, study, cook, and shower); hygiene; and transportation.

a. Goal: Expand upon the current State definition of basic needs funding to go beyond just food and housing by FY 2022.

4. Continue the work of County Human Services collaborating with campuses to provide staffing for regular on-campus county (and food bank) office hours and for technical and application assistance for student CalFresh applicants. When county intake workers and food bank outreach staff have an office on campus, student applications are faster, less burdensome, and more likely to be approved. Investing in outreach to student applicants will bolster student enrollment into CalFresh.

a. Goal: Ensure that all ten UC campuses have regular office hours with designated local county staff by FY 2022.

b. Goal: Ensure that all ten UC campuses have direct lines of communication to their local county staff who are trained to assist students in navigating the application process, by FY 2022.

Recommendations for University Leaders

1. Refine the total cost-of-attendance calculation methodology, especially the algorithm used to account for off-campus rent costs, to ensure that the calculated cost of attendance accurately represents the true local cost of living.

a. Goal: Refine the total cost-of-attendance—set for each campus by the UC Office of the President (UCOP)—to be used for academic year 2021–22 using new data sources (e.g., the off-campus housing study that UCOP is now conducting) to supplement the current student survey method.

2. Advocate for an increase in mental health funding to ensure that the University has the capacity to meet demand for mental health services, including for students whose need for mental health services is related to basic needs insecurity*

a. Goal: Prioritize mental health funding in the Regents' budget request to the State.

b. Goal: Re-engage in discussions with the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) and county mental health directors about providing enhanced mental health services to UC students supported by Mental Health Services Act (MHSA/ Proposition 63) funding.

3. Create regional approaches to basic needs by strengthening alliances with UC partners (e.g., Agriculture and Natural Resources), intersegmental partners (e.g., the California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance, California Community Colleges, the California State University), private/independent colleges and universities, and external partners (e.g., the HOPE Center and other national entities).

a. Goal: Support regional professional development trainings and conferences to improve efforts across direct services, financial student awards, strategic planning, and policy.

4. Prioritize basic needs resources for historically underserved student populations including, but not limited to, low-income, LGBTQ, community college transfer, parenting, undocumented, current/former foster, and carceral system-impacted students, as well as student veterans.

a. Goal: Include specific efforts to address the basic needs of historically underserved populations in campus FY 2020–21 spending plans.

b. Goal: Include criteria in the annual Innovation Grant process that prioritize proposals focused on supporting historically underserved populations.

5. Prioritize basic needs as a goal of campus development or advancement fundraising campaigns.

a. Goal: Assess whether development opportunities exist to raise additional funding for basic needs by FY 2022.

6. Continue to invest in direct partnerships between county offices of Health and Social Services and Campus Governmental Relations to ensure regular office hours for on-campus county staff to assist students with the CalFresh application.

a. Goal: Provide direct lines of communication for all ten campuses with their local county staff (i.e., have a county contact accessible via phone and/or email) by FY 2022.

7. Coordinate financial aid packages with the notification of CalFresh eligibility. When students receive their financial aid package, those who meet known eligibility criteria (e.g., are approved for Federal Work Study) should receive information about their potential eligibility and how to apply for CalFresh, as well as the appropriate verification letter(s) to submit with their CalFresh application.

a. Goal: Implement processes that notify students of CalFresh eligibility in all campus Financial Aid offices by FY 2022.

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* UC Health presented its estimated unmet mental health funding needs at the July 17, 2019 Public Engagement and Development Committee, which can be viewed at: https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/july19/p3.pdf

8. Advocate for collaboration with county and community services to improve basic needs services for students.

a. Establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with county and community basic needs services to address student basic needs.

Recommendations for Student Service Practitioners

1. Maximize enrollment of eligible graduate and undergraduate students in CalFresh by continuing to work with county agencies to increase application assistance.

a. Goal: Establish/increase the number of county staff hosting regular on-campus or virtual office hours for CalFresh assistance; integrate CalFresh into financial aid advising; and operate large-scale, onsite CalFresh enrollment clinics with county staff present. This will create stronger partnerships between campus governmental relations and county offices of health and social services.

b. Goal: Increase the number of UC students enrolled into CalFresh by 50 percent by FY 2022, using a baseline benchmark to be developed by the California Policy Lab in partnership with UCOP.

c. Goal: Establish partnerships between all ten campuses' CalFresh outreach programs and Financial Aid offices by FY 2022 to facilitate recommendations regarding CalFresh eligibility and financial aid notifications.

d. Goal: Request application outcomes data from County Social Services and report on meals provided and the local economic impact of CalFresh student enrollment.

2. Ensure that students who are experiencing food insecurity but do not qualify for CalFresh (e.g., undocumented and international students) have access to nutritious food.

a. Goal: Establish programs on all campuses to that ensure CalFresh-ineligible students can access nutritious food, such as another program equivalent to CalFresh benefits or student aid awards, by FY 2022.

b. Goal: Identify a baseline of food insecurity for this population by FY 2022, then create benchmarks toward closing the equity gaps in food insecurity between this population and the CalFresh-eligible population by 2024.

3. Continue to share promising practices related to basic needs and to coordinate strategies across campuses and intersegmental partners.

a. Goal: Continue to convene the Systemwide Basic Needs Committee to share promising practices, coordinate strategies, and build the community of practice among campus service providers.

b. Goal: Provide the resources needed to offer a biennial California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA) conference that brings together basic needs experts from across UC, California State University (CSU), California Community Colleges (CCC), private and independent colleges, non-profit organizations, and others.

Recommendations for Researchers

1. Further examine the interrelations between the various components of basic needs, including food; housing; financial and economic needs; health care; hygiene; mental health, well-being and safety; sleep; and transportation.

a. Goal: Continuously improve student experience surveys (i.e., the UCUES, GWBS, Cost of Attendance Survey) to evaluate basic needs services and to inform best practices.

b. Goal: Continue to disseminate research and evaluation findings to basic needs leadership, staff, and researchers.

2. Continue researching barriers and facilitators of CalFresh enrollment systemwide, particularly the factors that influence student eligibility, and monitor CalFresh enrollment and application rates among UC students.

a. Goal: Publish a study by 2022 that assesses CalFresh eligibility and trends in CalFresh enrollment with better representation from a range of California county agency staff respondents.

b. Goal: Collaborate with the California Policy Lab and UCOP to develop a methodology for annual reporting on the number of students eligible for and enrolled in CalFresh.

3. Establish assessments of basic needs interventions and identify practices that best support the experiences of students, especially those from historically underserved groups.

a. Goal: Design and launch a survey tool to assess and refine basic needs interventions at the campus level for use during the 2020–21 academic year.

b. Goal: Design and launch the CHEBNA Research, Evaluation and Tools strategy that will coordinate efforts across UC, CSU, and CCC.

Recommendations for Students

1. Encourage more students—on individual campuses and across the system—to access basic needs resources by raising awareness about basic needs insecurity in order to normalize students' availing themselves of assistance.

a. Goal: Include student ambassador internships and peer-to-peer advising in all campus basic needs centers.

2. Continue to prioritize ongoing support for basic needs services in student government leadership and advocacy and participate in campus basic needs committees to represent the student voice in these spaces.

a. Goal: Ensure that all campus basic needs committees include undergraduate and/or graduate student representatives.

NEXT STEPS

Following the issuance of this report, the University shall provide a status update on the state of basic needs at UC to the Regents' Academic and Student Affairs Committee (ASAC) on an annual basis beginning in 2021. The yearly item shall present the status of the report's recommendations and goals, including any novel or amended recommendations and goals, as well as the University's progress on the overall goals, as systemwide student survey results become available. These yearly presentations shall be informed by campuses' progress on their implementation plans. In addition, each campus will continue to report on progress toward meeting goals; numbers of students served; programmatic budgets summarizing how funds were spent; programmatic interventions and innovations; and the impact of basic needs on student outcomes such as persistence or completion.

INTRODUCTION

THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BASIC NEEDS

In November 2018, the Regents convened the Special Committee on Basic Needs, whose charge was to study basic needs insecurity among students at the University of California and beyond and to make recommendations for improvement. Part of this effort included reviewing long-term goals and reporting to the Board about basic needs matters and solutions that concern UC students.[7]

The committee Charter includes the issuance of a report on basic needs to guide the University's long-term strategic vision of addressing the subject. Information on the committee charter and membership is included in Appendix I.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

This report was created to inform University leaders, researchers, and practitioners, as well as policymakers and other higher education institutions, about the state of basic needs insecurity among UC students and the severe impact of this insecurity on students' well-being and academic outcomes. It also delineates the policy landscape for addressing basic needs and it presents tangible, actionable recommendations and long-term goals to guide the University's strategic vision of how best to reduce basic needs insecurity among students, thereby reducing the need for basic needs services.

REPORT METHODS

Discussions from meetings of the Regents' Special Committee on Basic Needs and the Public Engagement and Development Committee informed the conclusions and research findings of this report. A full list of Special Committee meeting topics is included in Appendix II. Meeting minutes, written items, research articles, and reports were synthesized and categorized. The report and its recommendations account for Regents' comments and suggestions expressed during past Special Committee meetings.

The report integrates student testimonials and images to highlight a variety of students' own experiences with basic needs insecurity and campus-based basic needs services.

DEFINING BASIC NEEDS

In accordance with research findings, the University defines student basic needs as an ecosystem of financial stability; healthy and sufficient food; safe, secure and adequate housing (to sleep, study, cook, and shower); access to healthcare to promote mental and physical well-being; access to affordable transportation; and emergency needs for dependents of parenting students. This list of comprehensive needs represents the minimum necessary to support students in their holistic experience through the University of California.

Figure 1. Concepts that students defined as basic needs based during student focus group discussion[8] (Illustrated by Christopher Paguio)

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITY

UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSIBILITY

SUFFICIENT HEALTHY FOOD

SAFE & SECURE HOUSING

STABILITY (PEACE OF MIND)

BASIC NEEDS

SLEEP

TRANSPORTATION

HYGIENE

While *basic needs* have traditionally referred solely to food and shelter, the definition has evolved to encompass a broader web of resources necessary for living a safe and healthy life. In 2019, the Global Food Initiative funded research by UCSF behavioral epidemiologist Dr. Suzanna Martinez.* Dr. Martinez used qualitative research methods, including cognitive interviews and focus groups, to assess UC students' perceptions of basic needs in the context of housing and food insecurity.

The study revealed that students define basic needs in a more comprehensive manner than just food and housing. It also includes hygiene, sleep, stability, and transportation to allow them to feel adequately safe and healthy to learn.[8] In addition to agreeing that they should be expected to contribute to their own basic needs, students agreed that the University also bears responsibility for assisting students in meeting their basic needs while they earn a degree.

The recommendations operate within this student-informed definition of basic needs to promote an ecosystem that enables all UC students to achieve success.

Mental well-being was also identified as critical to students, given the undue stress related to basic needs insecurity. Staff members at basic needs centers have also identified improving financial stability and overall well-being as essential elements of meeting students' basic needs.[8]

See page 16 for more information about the Global Food Initiative.

Other definitions

UCUES serves as a systemwide undergraduate census survey administered every two years. In 2016, it included three food insecurity questions (two of which have been validated to assess food insecurity) and one housing insecurity question about homelessness.* Over 63,115 undergraduate students across the nine undergraduate campuses completed the survey in 2016, resulting in a response rate of 33 percent.

Homelessness

The 2016 UCUES defines homelessness as "not having stable or reliable housing, e.g., living on the street, in vehicles, motels, campgrounds, single-occupancy facilities, or couch-surfing in other people's homes as temporary sleeping arrangements."[9]

Food insecurity

In the 2016 UCUES, food insecurity was defined as an affirmative response to either or both:

1. I was worried whether my food would run out before I got more.

2. The food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more.

Respondents who indicated either statement was "sometimes true" or "often true" were considered food insecure.[9]

UCUES definitions of food insecurity and housing insecurity have changed since 2016. UCUES survey instruments can be found at: https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/services/survey-services/UCUES.html.

(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Berkeley Basic Needs Center)

"During the first month into the Coronavirus, I was stuck, really stuck in a situation that was almost impossible to bear. I have been transient (homeless) for the last seven and a half years and was in the last semester of school before graduating. … Being transient has its challenges, one being I have to shower and get cleaned up at the local gym. The only problem is the gyms had to close due to the pandemic; therefore, I had nowhere that met this very basic need. My professor suggested that I contact the Basic Needs Program to see if they could help me find housing. Frankly, I did not contact them before because I thought it was a lot to ask for housing. But at [my professor's] recommendation, I went for it. So, I asked for a motel room one night per week in order to have some sort of way to maintain basic hygiene.

I called and spoke with [a Basic Needs case manager] … and explained my situation to her. [She] listened to and understood my very unique situation. Much to my surprise and delight, she was able to secure a hotel room not for one night per week, but daily for four weeks. Then at the end of the four weeks, [the case manager] was also able to secure funds … that allowed me to maintain the hotel room a bit longer plus additional funds to buy food. The Basic Needs Program really came through for me at a time when they were needed the most."

— RONALD RIVERS, UC BERKELEY UNDERGRADUATE

CAUSES OF BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY

The largest contributor to debt for middle- and low-income students at UC is not tuition and fees, but the cost of living (e.g., rent, food, transportation, etc.), which have risen without commensurate increases in financial aid.[10] A network of federal, State, and University policy and program frameworks (explained on page 23) determines how much money students have to take care of themselves, as does their awareness of the resources available to them.

Students at every income level can find themselves faced with significant challenges to meeting basic needs, for a variety of reasons:

- By necessity, financial aid must make assumptions about students' circumstances in managing large scale social programs—over $4.6 billion in financial support at the University of California alone.

- Some parents are unable or unwilling to provide the support the University expects them to contribute based on the federal formula for calculating parents' expected contribution.

- Some students decide not to work in order to focus on their studies, or they have trouble finding a part-time job.

- Some students are responsible for contributing to their family finances, which results in less money to meet their own needs. Twenty percent of undergraduates report sending money home to their families.[11]

- Some students find it challenging to manage their one-time financial aid disbursement over the course of each academic term.[12]

Pell Grant recipients comprise more than 35 percent of the undergraduate student body at UC, and they are the most vulnerable to food and housing insecurity.[13] These students may be less likely than their higher-income peers to benefit from family financial support and may struggle to cover the cost of college attendance.[8] Moreover, low-income students who are the first in their family to attend college are more likely to lack family support to navigate the financial aid system.

The availability of financial aid has not kept pace with increases in the cost of college attendance and often fails to cover non-tuition expenses. This shortfall contributes to basic needs insecurity. Financial aid programs often prioritize tuition and fees over food, rent, books, and educational materials.[11] Since financial aid does not adequately assist all students in meeting their basic needs, the University must urgently explore new strategies for financial aid if it is to uphold its promise of equal access to education.

The role of the University in supporting basic needs

Over the past six years, coordinated advocacy efforts to develop and fund basic needs services at UC have proved groundbreaking and essential to students.

While many UC students have persevered despite not having their essential needs met, current and future students rely on higher-education leadership to create equal opportunity.

Some students have expressed the belief that UC is responsible for meeting their basic needs; others acknowledge that it is also the student's responsibility while they're attending the University.[8] Some students felt shame or that they were to blame when they were unable to meet their basic needs. Others, especially first-generation college students, struggled between feeling grateful to UC for admitting them into a prestigious program and disappointment that they were given an insufficient financial aid package (and shame for needing to ask for more support). Students reported that feelings of indebtedness prevented them from asking for more funding.[8] Nevertheless, the University is responsible for supporting the basic needs of all students it admits, including out-of-state students and students of low socioeconomic backgrounds.

CONTEXT

HISTORY OF BASIC NEEDS FUNDING AT THE UNIVERSITY

In only six years, the University evolved from having no systemwide basic needs data or programs to launching busy basic needs centers at all ten campuses. These state-funded hubs serve thousands of students annually. The tremendous success of the basic needs movement at UC is the result of a collaborative effort by all stakeholders—students, University leaders, Regents, and State policymakers—who galvanized their efforts toward a common goal: providing a college experience wherein all students have everything they need to thrive personally and academically.

Prior to attaining ongoing, sustainable funding, campuses varied greatly in the levels and duration of resources dedicated to campus-based basic needs programs. This included material resource contributions; revenues from campus-based fees introduced via student fee referenda; budget line items; external donations and grants; and specific project awards and allocations.

RECOMMENDATION FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERS

Prioritize basic needs as a goal of campus development or advancement fundraising campaigns.

Goal: Assess whether development opportunities exist to raise additional funding for basic needs by FY 2022.

In addition to campus-generated funds (from student service fees and tuition revenue) allocated to individual campus basic needs programs and services, UC's Office of the President (UCOP) provided campuses with one-time funding for campus-based programs to address food security-related issues in 2015–16, 2016–17, and 2017–18, and the State Budget Act provided additional funding in 2017–18 and 2018–19.[12] (See the next page for funding levels.)

While consecutive years of one-time funding provided by UCOP and the State, combined with other resources generated at the campus level, have allowed campuses to expand basic needs services during these years, reliance on one-time funding made it difficult for campuses to hire permanent staff or develop longer-term strategies because funding in future years was uncertain.[12]

top: State funds have permitted the expansion of campus basic needs services, such as the Bobcat Pantry at UC Merced.
(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Merced Basic Needs Center)

right: Many campuses, like UC Santa Cruz, used their funds to bolster marketing and publicity efforts to improve outreach.
(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Santa Cruz Basic Needs Center)

"
I GOT CONNECTED TO A NETWORK OF RESOURCES THAT **SET ME UP FOR SUCCESS.**

De'Rael Edwards
Latin American and Latino Studies Major
Slug Support Team Member

Are you worried about your essential needs like food, housing, healthcare and money? **You are not alone.** Last year the Basic Needs team helped over 5,000 students find solutions that were right for them.

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UC SANTA CRUZ BASIC NEEDS

UC SANTA CRUZ

HISTORY OF SYSTEMWIDE BASIC NEEDS EFFORTS

2014
- Then-UC President Janet Napolitano and UC's 10 chancellors launched the UC Global Food Initiative (GFI) with the goal of providing nutritious food in a sustainable manner for a world population expected to reach 8 billion by 2025.[9] This ambitious goal included a focus on addressing food security, and later basic needs security, among UC students.[14] UC campuses then established working groups to coordinate food security efforts at the local level.

2015
- The UC Student Regent successfully advocated for the establishment of the Food Security and Access Committee as a part of the GFI. This committee conducted a GFI-funded Student Food Access and Security Survey (SFASS), which was then the nation's largest study of food security in higher education and marked the first time UC tracked food insecurity among students. Survey results revealed a growing need for funding campus programs to support student basic needs.

- Consequently, President Napolitano approved a $75,000 allocation per undergraduate campus to immediately support student food access and to enhance existing campus food security projects. Following that initial support, UCOP committed more than $3 million to UC campuses over a three-year period to comprehensively address basic needs challenges. That funding allowed campuses to move beyond emergency food support services to a holistic basic needs model.

2016
- UCOP granted the campuses $1.5 million for FY 2016–17.

- In January 2016, President Napolitano announced the UC Student Housing Initiative, which aimed to add 14,000 new affordable beds by 2020 and surpassed this goal by over 1,000 new beds.[15] In support of that initiative, the Board of Regents approved a one-time allocation of $27 million in July 2017 to support campus efforts to address housing for students, faculty, and staff. In May 2018, the Regents approved a second allocation of $30 million for the same purpose.[12]

- CalFresh applications were coordinated at all campuses for the first time.

2017
- UCOP granted campuses $1.5 million for FY 2017–18 and the State Budget Act funds allocated $2.5 million to UC for basic needs efforts.

- The California State Legislature also provided $2.5 million in funding toward UC's Hunger Free Campus efforts during this year. These funds allowed UC campuses to: 1) expand emergency meal services; 2) host CalFresh enrollment clinics; 3) invest in one-time infrastructure and equipment needs; and 4) hire temporary staff (student employees, contract employees, etc.) to bolster overall basic needs efforts at the local level.[16]

2018
- Campuses received $1.5 million from State Budget Act funds, as well as another $1.5 million for Hunger Free Campus efforts.

- In November 2018, the Student Regent created the Regents' Special Committee on Basic Needs to assess how to improve the University's basic needs efforts and produce this report. (The Special Committee's charter is included in Appendix I.)

2019
- Campuses received $18.5 million from the Budget Act of 2019 for FY 2019–20, 2020–21, and 2021–22. This allocation included $15 million to address food and housing insecurity and $3.5 million to support rapid rehousing efforts. (Budget allocation language for these funds, as well as distribution of funds by campus and number of students served are included in Appendices III–V.)

2020
- UCOP granted campuses $4.6 million in over-enrollment funds reallocated for student basic needs, generated from Nonresident Supplemental Tuition (NRST) revenue. These funds are to be expended fully by 2024–25.

CURRENT UC APPROACHES

UC EFFORTS IN THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

In 2016–17, the University of California, California State University, and California Community Colleges systems collaborated to clarify CalFresh student eligibility and increase CalFresh enrollment. This partnership has already yielded positive results. In addition to California-based collaborations, the GFI Food Access and Security Basic Needs (FAS-BN) subcommittee has gained national recognition for its work, positioning UC as a leader across higher education in addressing food and basic needs challenges.[9]
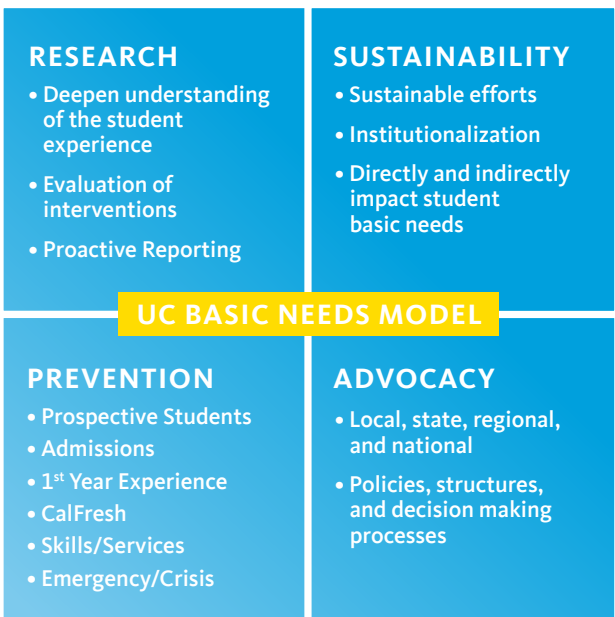
UC BASIC NEEDS MODEL

To serve as the guiding principles of systemwide basic needs funding efforts, the FAS-BN subcommittee designed the UC Basic Needs Model, which outlines a holistic and preventative approach to addressing basic needs insecurity. The Model has allowed campuses to prioritize the implementation of funding from UCOP and the California State Legislature in ways that address local campus issues and needs while still adhering to a unified approach across the UC system.[17]

The UC Basic Needs Model includes four key areas: research, prevention, sustainability, and advocacy.

- *Research*: Basic needs leadership shall prioritize research, data collection, and program evaluation to study students' experiences with basic needs and the effectiveness of campus interventions.

- *Prevention*: Basic needs leadership shall devote funds to preventative measures, such as increasing the visibility of basic needs resources and financial training in pre-college outreach efforts to all students, especially first-year and prospective students. By providing these students an understanding of how to manage finances, food, and housing, they can be better equipped to evade basic needs insecurity in the first place.

- *Sustainability*: Basic needs efforts shall be designed in a manner that sustains their operation and creates institutional memory, so that basic needs efforts continue beyond the first few years of their inception.

- *Advocacy*: Basic needs leadership shall advocate for this work as a model for other institutions and actively promote further systemic changes at the State and federal level to bolster programs aimed at reducing basic needs insecurity.

Figure 2. The UC Basic Needs Model

RESEARCH
- Deepen understanding of the student experience
- Evaluation of interventions
- Proactive Reporting

SUSTAINABILITY
- Sustainable efforts
- Institutionalization
- Directly and indirectly impact student basic needs

UC BASIC NEEDS MODEL

PREVENTION
- Prospective Students
- Admissions
- 1st Year Experience
- CalFresh
- Skills/Services
- Emergency/Crisis

ADVOCACY
- Local, state, regional, and national
- Policies, structures, and decision making processes

The Student Experience Logic Model highlights the necessity of pre-emptively mitigating need by diverting more resources toward preventative measures like pre-college outreach and admissions messaging. The systemwide Basic Needs Committee has recommended that campuses focus attention and funds on the following eight areas, which align with the Prevention and Research areas of the Basic Needs Model (Figure 3). These broad categories identify areas of allocation for specific funding requirements, which include annual trainings, cross-campus outreach events and basic needs tools; basic skills instructors and supplies; food pantries and food assistance programs; equipment and maintenance costs; salaries and benefits for basic needs staff; and evaluation and reporting costs.

Figure 3. UC Basic Needs Strategic Approach

| Pre UC |
| Admissions Messaging |
| 1st Year Experience |
| CalFresh |
| Basic Needs Services |
| Emergency Relief |
| Crisis Resolution |

■ All Students   ■ Basic Needs-Insecure Populations
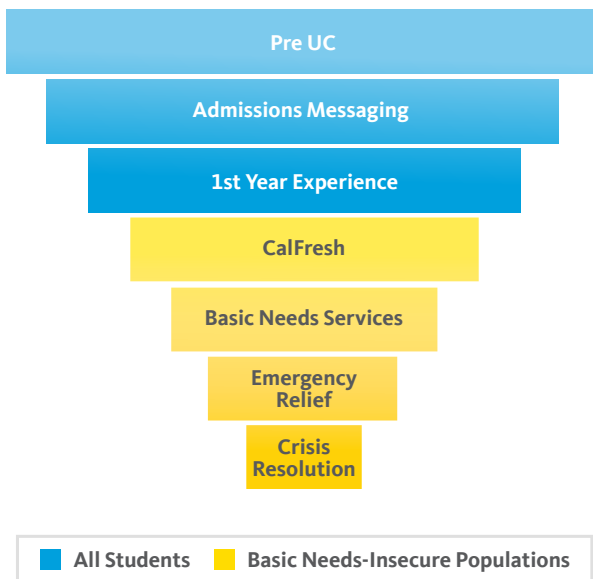
CURRENT ACTIVITIES AND PROMISING PRACTICES

Campus-Based Basic Needs Programs and Services

Campus-based programs have proved critical to assisting students who are basic needs insecure, and the most recent funding has improved their access to these services. UC students consider campus basic needs services to be essential, especially the free-food programs.[8]

The UC Global Food Initiative has enabled all UC campuses to establish robust Basic Needs Committees, comprising students, faculty, staff, and administrators, as well as community subject-matter experts. The committees have four areas of focus: 1) research; 2) preventative campus models; 3) sustainable institutionalization; and 4) advocacy. These efforts have expanded learning and impact beyond UC, through intersegmental partnerships with the CSU and CCC systems.[14]

RECOMMENDATION FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERS

Create regional approaches to basic needs by strengthening alliances with UC partners (e.g., Agriculture and Natural Resources), intersegmental partners (e.g., the California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance, California Community Colleges, the California State University), private/independent colleges and universities, and external partners (e.g., the HOPE Center and other national entities).

Goal: Support regional professional development trainings and conferences to improve efforts across direct services, financial student awards, strategic planning, and policy.

Prior to the 2019–20 Budget Act's $15 million allocation in ongoing State funds to address food and housing insecurity at UC, the bulk of basic needs resources (emergency aid, food pantry access, rapid rehousing, and one-time funding) had been responsive to the symptoms of food and housing insecurity rather than to the underlying causes thereof. Thanks to this funding, all campuses have established onsite basic needs centers.

The new funding has paved the way for the expansion and solidification of campus-based programs, and campuses will have the flexibility to use funds in a manner that fits their needs at the local level. A survey of spending plans shows that campuses will use the funds for developing long-term strategies, hiring permanent staff and increasing pantry hours, for example.

Services provided by 2015 GFI funding include financial skills-building workshops; institutional basic needs websites that provide information about campus and community resources; emergency services and assistance with crisis resolution; basic needs awareness campaigns; and the hiring of staff and student interns to contribute to programming and case management. Initiative funding enabled several campuses to secure new spaces for food pantries; renovate and expand facilities; and provide students with cooking demonstrations, nutrition information, and CalFresh enrollment sessions.[14] UC campuses served approximately 52,000 students in FY 2017–18. However, efforts may only be reaching about 30 percent of the students who may be basic needs insecure.

Basic needs leadership is developing a systemwide website and mobile application, which shall serve as centralized platforms for all campus basic needs resources, research

information, contacts, educational information, and other resources. Set to be completed in June 2021, these displays will help facilitate cross-campus services, connecting students with food distributions, online workshops, and other support at their local UC campus. The tools will be especially useful for UC students who live closer to a UC campus other than their own to access basic needs services more readily.

Rapid Rehousing

In the service of curbing homelessness and housing insecurity among UC students, the Budget Act of 2019 included an additional $3.5 million to support rapid rehousing efforts. With this support, the University was able to provide nearly 2,150 homeless and housing-insecure students with stable housing, case management, and wrap-around support services between June 2019 and May 2020. (See Appendix V for more information about the University's rapid rehousing efforts.)

In accordance with the budget language that allocated the funds (listed in Appendix III), campuses used their allotments to develop or establish partnerships with community housing organizations and nonprofits; to grant direct housing awards; to provide emergency relief or crisis resolution services; and to hire additional staff, case managers, coordinators, and interns to support housing services.

Housing services and programming varied by campus. They included efforts such as:

- Providing students assistance with rental deposits and first-month rent costs

- Delivering housing-focused presentations to incoming freshmen and transfer students

- Establishing bridge housing programs that provide temporary shelter to students who lacked the necessary resources to secure or maintain adequate housing during University breaks and holidays

- Coordinating workshops on lease signing, roommate selection, conflict resolution, financial literacy, and budgeting

- Creating sustainable, year-round, and on-campus housing for former foster youth, a group particularly vulnerable to housing insecurity

- Contributing to the salaries of existing or new career and student staff to secure administrative and logistical support for housing placements, disbursement of aid, and liaising with local housing organizations

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENT SERVICE PRACTITIONERS

Continue to share promising practices related to basic needs and to coordinate strategies across campuses and intersegmental partners.

Goal: Continue to convene the Systemwide Basic Needs Committee to share promising practices, coordinate strategies, and build the community of practice among campus service providers.

Goal: Provide the resources needed to offer a biennial CHEBNA conference that brings together basic needs specialists from across the UC, CSU, and CCC systems, private and independent colleges, non-profit organizations and others.

RECOMMENDATION FOR RESEARCHERS

Establish assessments of basic needs interventions and identify practices that best support the experiences of students, especially those from historically underserved groups.

Goal: Design and launch a survey tool to assess and refine basic needs interventions at the campus level for use during the 2020–21 academic year.

Goal: Design and launch the CHEBNA Research, Evaluation and Tools strategy that will coordinate efforts across UC, CSU, and CCC.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS

Encourage more students—on individual campuses and across the system—to access basic needs resources by raising awareness about basic needs insecurity in order to normalize students' availing themselves of assistance.

Goal: Include student ambassador internships and peer-to-peer advising in all campus basic needs centers.

Continue to prioritize ongoing support for basic needs services in student government leadership and advocacy and participate in campus basic needs committees to represent the student voice in these spaces.

Goal: Ensure that all campus basic needs committees include undergraduate and/or graduate student representatives.

Basic needs prevention

As illustrated in the Basic Needs Strategic Approach model, a preventative approach to basic needs would ultimately decrease the need for emergency resources. New, ongoing funding has enabled campuses to move beyond emergency food support to a holistic basic needs model. Most campuses have launched basic needs skills development; financial literacy workshops (including some for pre-college students); and regular programming about food preparation, housing, financial aid, and other salient topics.

Pre-college outreach

As included in UC's Basic Needs Framework, incorporating basic needs information and education into pre-college programs has been identified as an effective strategy to reduce the number of students needing emergency resources by equipping them with relevant information and resources prior to college. The aforementioned basic needs website, currently underway, will serve to educate prospective students about the resources offered at UC campuses.

Campuses have included pre-UC basic needs education in their campus spending plans as part of the 2019–20 State allocation of $15 million for basic needs. At many campuses, pre-college outreach programs and basic needs offices have collaborated to incorporate basic needs education into their messaging. While these efforts vary by campus, the general approach is to present basic needs and financial literacy workshops at high school teacher and counselor conferences; include basic needs information in pre-college outreach materials; and create ambassador and intern positions that include training in basic needs resources.

Top: Students participate in a healthy cooking workshop provided by the UC Irvine FRESH basic needs center.
(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Irvine FRESH Basic Needs Center)

Right: UC Irvine FRESH Basic Needs Center student ambassadors' table for a life skills workshop.
(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Irvine FRESH Basic Needs Center)

At the systemwide level, UCOP is integrating basic needs information within a toolkit and curriculum for use by academic and school partnership programs. The idea is to incorporate basic needs and financial literacy information into existing activities. With assistance from the UC Treasurer's Office, UCOP has begun to forge a partnership with Beneficial State Bank to develop a financial literacy curriculum for California students in grades 9–12 and in California Community Colleges. UCOP is now working with them to develop and deploy financial wellness content that is tailored for students taking advantage of UC's Outreach and Educational Partnership programs and is scheduled to become integrated into campus and systemwide outreach work beginning in spring 2021.

Basic needs skills education

In general, students' understanding of how to navigate and maximize campus financial resources is limited. Students need details about the true cost of attending college.[8] Campus basic needs efforts are centered on website content, coordinating population-specific messaging, and offering workshops and trainings every quarter/semester. More effort on the part of UC is needed to produce online and in-person trainings for financial aid, admissions, and basic needs personnel. These staff and student trainings help cultivate financial literacy. They can be tailored to specific populations, including prospective students.

Basic needs data collection

Not all campuses used to collect and distribute data about their basic needs services. According to a UC Campus Basic Needs Model Inventory Survey conducted in early 2019, efforts related to data collection, analysis, and distribution of information, including a basic needs screener, were very low across the UC system. UCOP now requires campus basic needs centers to report annual data about their services, including the number of students served by food and housing services each year.[18]

CALIFORNIA'S POLICY FRAMEWORK AFFECTING STUDENT BASIC NEEDS

The policy area of basic needs has emerged from an ecosystem of State, federal and University policies, along with economic and political factors. There are five main policy arenas that influence causes of and solutions to basic needs insecurity: college costs, financial aid, student housing, social services, and mental health.

COLLEGE COSTS

While headlines often focus solely on the cost of tuition, the proper context for understanding college affordability is the total cost of attendance, which includes room and board; transportation; books and supplies; and other living expenses beyond tuition and fees. The UC Board of Regents and President recognized this by establishing a Total Cost of Attendance Working Group in 2017. The group undertook a comprehensive review of UC's implementation of the Regents' policy on undergraduate financial aid via the Education Financing Model (EFM) and produced recommendations to improve the EFM.[19]

The total cost of college attendance before financial aid has never been higher.[20] In recent years, this could be attributed to increases in the cost of living, which can make up over 60 percent of the estimated total cost of attendance, rather than to tuition and fee increases.[21] Financial aid offsets these costs for low- and middle-income undergraduates, as well as for a significant portion of graduate students (see below), but not for all students.

Total cost of attendance for undergraduates

Cost of attendance estimates, or student expense budgets for undergraduates, are based in part on the results of a systemwide Cost of Attendance Survey.* The rising total cost of attendance in recent years is largely due to the rise in the cost of living, not tuition.[10]

RECOMMENDATION FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERS

Refine the total cost-of-attendance calculation methodology, especially the algorithm used to account for off-campus rent costs, to ensure that the calculated cost of attendance accurately represents the true local cost of living.

Goal: Refine the total cost-of-attendance—set for each campus by the UCOP—to be used for academic year 2021–22 using new data sources (e.g., the off-campus housing study that UCOP is now conducting) to supplement the current student survey method.

Estimated average costs for California residents, 2020–21[22]

This chart estimates the cost of attending UC for one year as a California resident undergraduate. For three-fourths of UC students, these expenses are offset by grants and scholarships. Total costs vary depending on personal expenses and the campus attended. California resident undergraduates at all UC campuses pay the same $12,570 in systemwide tuition and fees. Figure 4 includes the average cost of additional campus-based fees, which vary by campus and are subject to change without notice.

Figure 4. Estimated average costs for resident UC undergraduates 2020–21

	Living on campus	Living off campus
Tuition and fees	$14,000	$14,000
Books and supplies	1,200	1,200
Health insurance allowance/fee	2,600	2,600
Room and board	16,300	12,800
Personal/transportation	2,000	2,600
TOTAL	$36,100	$33,200

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* More information about the Undergraduate Cost of Attendance Survey can be found here: https://www.ucop.edu/institutional-research-academic-planning/services/survey-services/UCOAS.html#:%7E:text=The%20Cost%20of%20Attendance%20Survey,financial%20aid%20policies%20and%20programs.

The total cost of attendance at UC has risen by nearly $10,000 over the last ten years. While most of that increase was due to tuition and fee increases, primarily during the Great Recession of 2008, increases in living costs dominated the changes in recent years. This is particularly problematic because, while tuition increases result in additional financial aid for UC undergraduates (Figure 5), this is not the case for non-tuition increases.

Tuition increases made during the Great Recession of 2008 were accompanied by increases in financial aid. Increases in non-tuition costs, which dominate more recent years, were not.

Figure 5. Average UC Total Cost of Attendance for California Residents, 2008 to 2018, nominal dollars (not adjusted for inflation)[10]

	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	10-year increase
Non-Fee Costs	$15,083	$15,698	$16,086	$15,533	$15,902	$16,486	$16,707	$17,141	$17,852	$18,298	$18,929	$3,846
Campus-Based Fees	$901	$935	$976	$992	$1,015	$1,035	$1,127	$1,206	$1,259	$1,333	$1,389	$488
Systemwide Tuition & Fees	$7,126	$8,373	$10,302	$12,192	$12,192	$12,192	$12,192	$12,240	$12,294	$12,630	$12,570	$5,444
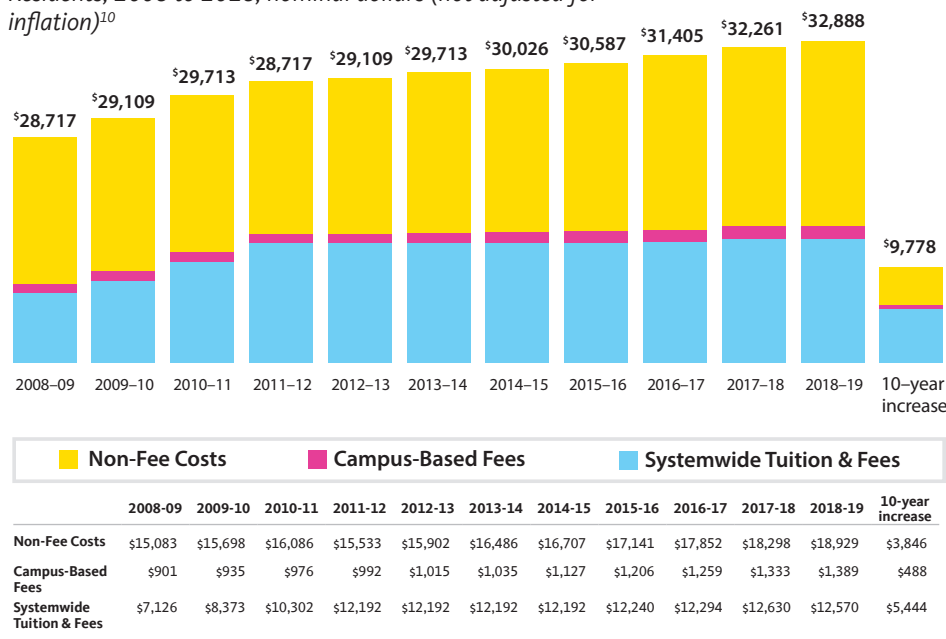
While undergraduates at all campuses pay the same $12,570 in tuition, nonresident students also pay $29,754 in supplemental tuition. Despite this supplemental fee, the University provides non-resident students with the same level of support as is provided for resident or international students.

Figure 6. Estimated average costs for nonresident undergraduates 2020–21

	Living on campus	Living off campus
Tuition and fees	$43,800	$43,800
Books and supplies	1,200	1,200
Health insurance allowance/fee	2,600	2,600
Room and board	16,300	12,800
Personal/transportation	2,000	2,600
TOTAL	$65,900	$63,000

The total cost of attendance includes an assortment of fees in addition to campus fees, for course materials, technology, shuttle transport, housing waitlists, and parking.[8] Moreover, some students who already have private health insurance struggle to locate the information required for waiving the costs associated with UC's Student Health Insurance Program (UCSHIP), which produces a significant premium.[8]

Graduate student total cost of attendance

Because financial support at the graduate level is structured differently than support at the undergraduate level, the total cost of attendance for graduate students varies greatly by campus and discipline. UCOP surveyed graduate and professional students about their total costs in 2017 and found that expenses vary significantly by marital status, by whether or not the student has dependents, and by the type of program they choose.[23]

Research universities typically cover tuition and fees for students in academic doctoral programs, also providing students with a stipend for living expenses. The "net stipend," or amount of fellowship and assistantship above tuition and fees, is generally the measure of graduate student financial aid. Since the Regents' Financial Aid Policy for Graduate Students focuses on the competitiveness of aid offers, the adequacy of these offers is typically measured against those made by peer universities. The Graduate Student Support Survey conducted every three years by UCOP has shown that UC has closed the gap in the competitiveness of its awards but still has room to improve.[24]

In contrast to doctoral programs, professional degree programs (MBA, MPA, MD, PharmD) typically expect students to finance a portion of their tuition and/or living expenses through student loans, which may cover the entire cost of attendance.

Average net stipends vary by discipline and campus, which may explain basic needs insecurity for some students.[24] For example, STEM fields supported by large external grants may be able to provide larger stipends compared with disciplines in the arts and humanities or social sciences.

In an attempt to understand how graduate academic students' net stipends fare in comparison to the total cost of attendance as estimated by the 2017 survey, UCOP compared net stipends to both the housing and total cost of attendance estimated. Most campus net stipends just barely cover the total budget, with UCLA and UC Santa Cruz falling slightly short (Figure 7).

As mentioned above, the adequacy of support using this new measure also varies by discipline. Financial support offers in the sciences are more likely to cover costs than offers from the arts and humanities.

FINANCIAL AID

Robust financial support for UC students is the most effective preventer of basic needs insecurity, but in recent years the average amount of grants available to cover living expenses for undergraduate students has flattened. Furthermore, financial aid policy makes generalized assumptions—as it must when considering tens of thousands of students—that may not hold for all students, e.g., those who cannot find a job. Finally, the University's financial aid policy does not apply to all undergraduates, e.g., nonresidents. Additional financial support is thus needed to meet these students' basic needs.

RECOMMENDATION FOR POLICYMAKERS AND ADVOCATES

Advocate for greater investment in financial aid at the federal, State, and University levels: stronger financial aid helps prevent basic needs insecurity. With an additional $500 million in need-based grants, the University could: 1) decrease, by half, the number of undergraduate students who would need to borrow or work and 2) increase by 60 percent the amount of aid available to support students' living expenses. Comparable funding for graduate students (e.g., an additional $113 million in fellowships and assistantships) could close the gap between estimated living expenses and net stipends for academic doctoral students.

Goal: Increase financial aid available to undergraduate students from all sources, including federal, State, and philanthropic sources. The goal is to cut, by half, undergraduate students' need to work and borrow by FY 2025. In 2020, that would require the equivalent of $500 million, which could grow with inflation and enrollment.

Goal: Increase financial aid available to academic doctoral students from all sources, including federal, State and philanthropic sources, with the goal of expanding net stipends to match living expenses by FY 2025. In 2020, that would require the equivalent of $113 million, which could grow with inflation and enrollment, enabling campuses to commit to multi-year offers for doctoral candidates.

Figure 7. Academic Doctoral Student Support, Average Net Stipend vs. Housing and Total Budget by Campus, 2018–19
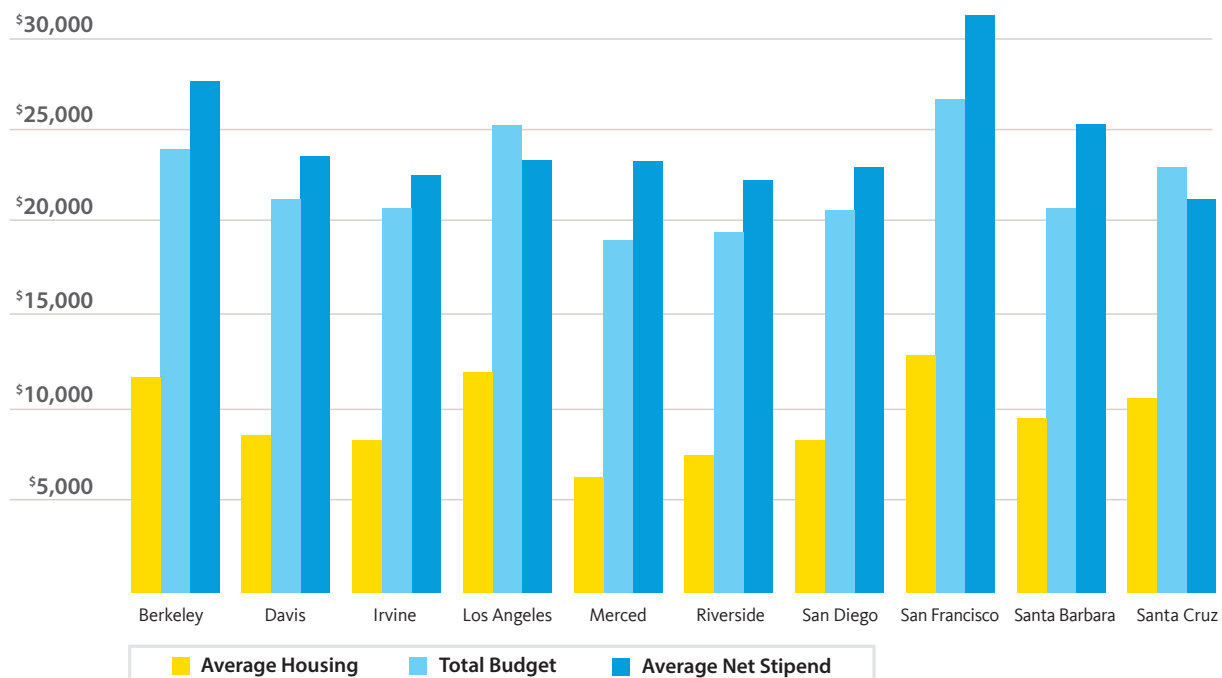
Undergraduate financial support

The University's financial aid strategy at the undergraduate level is called the Education Financing Model (EFM), which has taken the total cost of attendance into account since the 1990s. The EFM assumes that a partnership between parents, the student, State and federal financial aid programs, and the University is necessary to cover that total cost of attendance.[25]

- Parents are asked to contribute based on their ability to pay, as measured by the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

- Students are asked to contribute roughly equal amounts through part-time work and borrowing.

- Federal, State, and University grant aid covers the remaining costs.

PARENTS/FAMILIES	STUDENTS	GRANT SUPPORT
• Based on ability to pay using federal formula (income, assets, family size, etc.) • Expectations range from $0 to cost of attendance	• Work part-time (<20 hours) during school year, full-time during the summer • Loan debt such that repayments are 5 to 9 percent of average income	• Cal Grants ($950M) primarily cover tuition. • Federal Pell Grants ($400M) • UC Grant ($800M) fills in gaps; two-thirds cover living costs

The goal of this partnership is to ensure that students can cover their contribution from part-time work and student loans in a manageable way.

By most measures, the University's financial aid strategy has proved successful. The University enrolls more low-income students than any other comparable public institution. Low-income students graduate at rates on par with their peers. UC students graduate with far less cumulative debt than students nationwide.[25] Nevertheless, four aspects of financial aid policy suggest improvement is needed to meet students' basic needs:

1. Assumptions made in the EFM

2. Assessment of the total cost of attendance

3. Leveling of per capita gift aid for living costs

4. Some students are not covered by the EFM (e.g., nonresidents).

Assumptions

When administering such broad-based financial aid programs under federal and State regulations, assumptions must be made. If any one of the assumptions in the EFM does not hold true for a student, they may find themselves in crisis. For example, if a parent is unable or unwilling to contribute the amount that the FAFSA has calculated they can, a student will fall short in covering their total cost of attendance. Similarly, if a student is unable to find employment or is unwilling to take out student loans, they will fall short in what they need to cover costs.

UC students have expressed the need for additional funding to cover the cost of attendance. While student loans are designed to provide additional support, some students do not consider loans to be a financially responsible option, and they worry about acquiring and repaying debt.[8] Rejecting loan support may force students to work more hours than is recommended for academic success and to cut corners on other essential living expenses.

Meeting students' basic needs requires a strong financial aid program to proactively address those needs, as well as the basic needs infrastructure to help students whose circumstances do not align with the assumptions made in the EFM.

A campus financial aid office has the capacity to assist students with some circumstances that do not fit the EFM. For example, if a student's parent loses a job or has a change in income, they have the flexibility to adjust what is expected of the parent. The campus can also take into account higher-than-average living expenses, such as those that a parenting student will have associated with childcare, food, transportation, or other expenses.

Students are always encouraged to contact the financial aid office with concerns, though the office's responsiveness to unique circumstances may be limited by federal, State, or University policy. When they reached out to financial aid staff for help, some UC students reported feeling that staff members were insensitive to their financial struggles.[8] To cultivate more sensitive interactions between low-income students and University staff, the Systemwide Basic Needs Committee has been facilitating trainings for University personnel, including campus financial aid staff. The goal is to ensure that staff members comprehend the extreme circumstances confronting some students and that they operate in a manner that is sensitive to students' experiences.

For the University to meet students' basic needs in a proactive way, a strong financial aid system is essential. Also required is a basic needs infrastructure to support students with unusual circumstances or who experience an unanticipated crisis; basic needs support is a safety net for these students.

Cost of Attendance

The EFM requires staff members to estimate the total cost of attendance accurately. If the estimate is wrong, the amount of financial aid awarded to a student to offset it will be either too much or too little. To calculate the total cost of attendance for multiple student scenarios, the University created 27 student expense budgets at the undergraduate level—three types (on-campus, off-campus, and commuter) for each of the nine undergraduate campuses. Direct charges in the cost of attendance are collected from campuses, while indirect charges are estimated using survey data.

Estimating indirect costs, especially for students who live off campus, can be difficult. Anecdotal and qualitative evidence have called into question the estimates at some campuses and for certain living situations. Since 2017, the University has been working to adjust its methodology for assessing the total cost of attendance, based in part on recommendations from the Total Cost of Attendance Working Group. For example, looking forward to 2021–22, UC will use market data instead of student survey data to establish the off-campus rent allowance.

Some costs students incur are not accounted for in the total cost of attendance. As mentioned above, students can request to add some costs, such as childcare expenses. Other costs are excluded by State and federal law, such as costs during periods of non-enrollment (summer), car payments, and money sent home to support a student's family. Security deposits are currently not included in the financial aid model, and the financial aid community is divided on whether this is permissible under federal financial aid policy.[26] Policymakers must establish accurate calculations of the cost of living, to match the financial support students receive with their actual living expenses.

Financial aid for living costs has flattened out in recent years.

Funding for Financial Aid

The amount of financial aid available to UC students for living expenses has risen over the years. Nevertheless, students report food and housing insecurity. Despite increases in the total financial aid available, the amount of money students have for educational expenses beyond tuition has flattened in recent years, when controlling for inflation. Furthermore, even within the EFM, and given assumptions about the total cost of attendance, the burden on students to work and borrow is likely to exceed the amount the University deems manageable (i.e., 13 hours of work per week and 7 percent

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS AND ADVOCATES

When the State's budget allows, advocate for legislation that would eliminate unnecessary barriers for UC students in the State's Cal Grant program and provide additional summer financial aid for students enrolled in summer session.

Goal: Convince the Legislature to pass acts that reform Cal Grant to expand eligibility by FY 2022.

of postgraduate earnings devoted to loan repayment). Thus, evidence points to a need for additional financial aid to provide students with assistance sufficient to cover the total cost of attendance.

UC undergraduate students benefit from both a strong State and strong University grant program, which helps to keep UC affordable. In 2018–19, UC students received \$957M in Cal Grants and \$839M in UC need-based grants. By contrast, UC students only received \$437M in Federal Pell Grants, which is at an all-time low in purchasing power.[27]

These amounts and proportions have changed over time, particularly during the mid-2000s. In response to drastic budget cuts during the Great Recession, UC raised tuition significantly between 2007–08 and 2011–12.

Tuition increases automatically trigger increases in the State's Cal Grant Program. In a practice known as "return-to-aid," UC sets aside one-third of all new tuition revenue for financial aid, which funds the UC Grant. The amount of funding in these two programs has increased significantly (Figure 8, page 26).

The net cost for UC actually decreased in constant dollars in recent years. Figure 9 shows the net cost for UC families, by income level, since 2011–12 in constant 2018–19 dollars (i.e., adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index) (Figure 9, page 26).

The amount of financial aid available for living expenses has increased only modestly (Figure 10, page 26).

Figure 8: Cal Grant, UC Grant, and Pell Grant Over Time

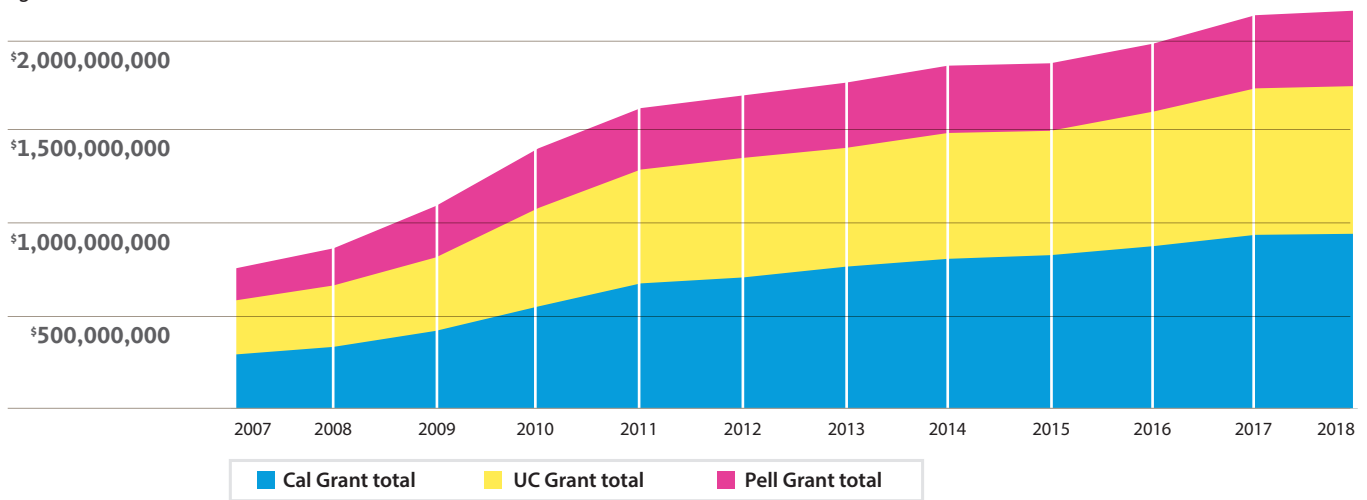

Figure 9. Trends in Net Cost by Parent Income among CA Residents, 2018–19 Constant Dollars[10]
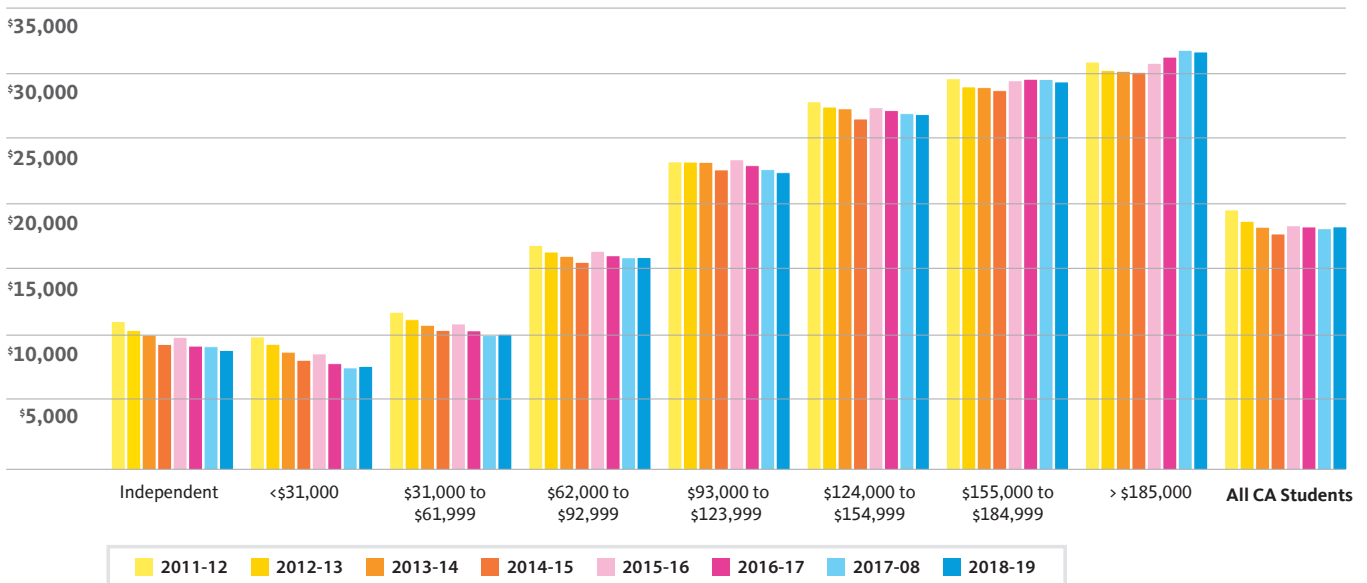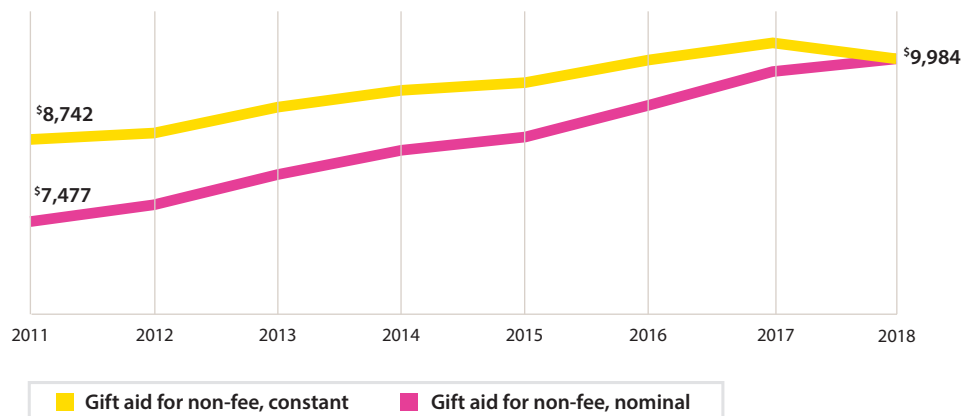

Figure 10. This chart shows the constant and nominal gift aid for non-fee tuition costs provided for families earning less than $60,000 a year.

Students Not Covered by EFM

Regents Policy 3201 on undergraduate financial aid specifically calls for maintaining affordability "for all the students admitted within the framework of the Master Plan."[28] This student population has come to encompass California resident undergraduates. While nonresident undergraduates may be eligible for some limited support, they are excluded by State law and Regents' policy from receiving financial aid funded by return-to-aid of systemwide mandatory Tuition and Student Services Fees. Beginning in 2019–20, a small amount of return-to-aid from NRST was made available to nonresident undergraduates.

Graduate Student Financial Support

As mentioned above, the structure of graduate student support differs greatly from undergraduate financial aid, and it is decentralized, meaning it is controlled at the campus program or department level. According to this analysis, many graduate students have living expenses that exceed their University stipends: 6,776 academic doctoral students have stipends that fall below the total estimated costs. UCOP calculated that $113 million is needed to close the gap between net stipends and estimated living costs. The additional funding should be reliable so that campuses can extend multiyear financial offers to their doctoral program applicants, a recommendation identified as a key priority by the Academic Planning Council.[29]

STUDENT HOUSING

Housing costs are the highest contributor to student debt and among the most significant contributing factors to students' unstable and unhealthy basic needs experiences. Housing costs, policies, and experiences vary by campus and by whether the housing is on campus or off campus. In general, however, financial aid funding has not kept pace with the rise in both on- and off-campus housing costs.

California housing costs

Since the 1970s, increased demand for housing, along with housing shortages and the most costly construction rates in the nation, have contributed to spikes in California housing prices.[30] The median price of a California home is nearly three times the national average, with rents 50 percent higher.[31] Consequently, rates of homelessness also rose; from 2016–17, the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness increased by 14 percent in California.[30] The State has the highest estimated proportion of homeless people who are between 18 and 24 years old in the nation.[32] The lack of affordable housing certainly affects UC students, especially given that many of the UC campuses are located in coastal areas where real estate prices are among the highest in the State.[8]

Off-campus housing

Students have the option of living off-campus, whether at home or independently in campus-adjacent, privately owned housing. The education financing model assumes a lower cost of living for off-campus living. Students choose this option for a number of reasons, including independence from University housing policies, proximity to a job or internship, and lower costs attributed to sharing rent. Yet the costs of housing and rent in many UC campus locations—the Bay Area, Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego—are some of the highest in the country. Furthermore, landowners typically seek a higher rental rate when there is proximity to a campus. This forces many students to double and triple up in bedrooms, to couch-surf, or to seek housing that is further away from campus, which increases commute time and transportation costs. Financial aid funding has not kept pace with increasing cost-of-living expenses and does not include support for housing deposits in off-campus lease agreements.[12]

Campuses used the $3.5 million allocated by the State Legislature toward rapid rehousing efforts. (More information on rapid rehousing is on page 19 and Appendix V.) To assist students who choose to live off campus, some campuses (e.g., San Diego, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara) provide resources and support, such as websites that help students find reputable rentals and roommates. Additionally, those campuses with student legal services offer workshops on the "dos and don'ts" of signing a lease and will educate students on ways to break a lease or to recoup a full security deposit when necessary. Campuses also provide some sort of "commuter student" lounge, where students can store their personal belongings or heat up meals in anticipation of a long day on campus.

On-campus housing

The mechanisms that determine who secures on-campus housing vary by campus, but all are subject to California regulations that give priority campus housing access to foster youth and students whose backgrounds include chronic homelessness.

The University is working rapidly to expand on-campus student housing options across the system. Those housing costs will likely be higher than what many students currently pay for substandard or overcrowded units in the off-campus housing market. Each campus determines its own on-campus housing rates. On-campus housing includes many amenities and utilities for which rentals would otherwise charge a premium. Furthermore, housing must pay for itself in the big picture; that includes the cost to build and sustain the

units, salaries for staff who maintain the units and care for the student residents, and costs associated with future maintenance and safety standards. Currently, there is no identified source of new financial aid to help offset those cost increases.[12]

Every UC campus is committed to offering on-campus housing to historically underserved student populations, including former and current foster and homeless youth, Pell-grant recipients, and students with documented disabilities. For students who are facing financial challenges and seeking to live on campus, housing departments at every UC general campus are communicating with campus financial aid offices and basic needs centers to minimize the impact of 2020–21 housing rates.

In accordance with the California Department of Health's interim guidance for institutions of higher education, issued in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, many campuses have significantly limited student housing capacity to minimize the risk of spreading the coronavirus. Priority housing will still be given to those with the greatest risk of housing insecurity.

Student Housing Initiative

In January 2016, President Napolitano announced a housing initiative aimed at supporting current students and future enrollment growth across the UC system, with the goals of 1) ensuring that each campus has sufficient housing for its growing student population and 2) keeping housing as affordable as possible for UC students.[15]

The initiative aimed to add 14,000 new affordable beds by 2020. (As of September 2020, this goal has been surpassed, with the addition of 15,000 new beds.) This includes the creation of new beds for undergraduate students in residence halls and the addition of more graduate student housing and other apartments that are generally open to all students. As noted above, housing rates for new and existing on-campus housing is set by each campus based on construction costs, debt service, and ongoing staffing and facilities' needs.

RECOMMENDATION FOR POLICYMAKERS AND ADVOCATES

Continue the work of County Human Services collaborating with campuses to provide staffing for regular on-campus county (and food bank) office hours and for technical and application assistance for student CalFresh applicants. When county intake workers and food bank outreach staff have an office on campus, student applications are faster, less burdensome, and more likely to be approved. Investing in outreach to student applicants will bolster student enrollment into CalFresh.

Goal: Ensure that all ten UC campuses have regular office hours with designated local county staff by FY 2022.

Goal: Ensure that all ten UC campuses have direct lines of communication to their local county staff who are trained to assist students in navigating the application process, by FY 2022.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Several State and county social services are available to support UC students' well-being and financial stability; CalFresh, county food banks, and county mental health services all intersect with campus basic needs and crisis support programs. UC partnerships with county departments are critical for connecting students with these largely untapped resources.

CalFresh

A goal of the University, as part of the basic needs framework, is to maximize students' use of federal support services related to basic needs. The federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), known in California as CalFresh, provides eligible recipients up to $194 per month on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card to purchase healthy and nutritious food.[33]* This program is administered jointly by the county-level welfare agencies and the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) in accordance with federal regulations.[34]

Campus food pantries, now operating on all UC campuses, were designed as a short-term emergency solution to student food insecurity. They were not intended to be a resource that students would rely on for the duration of college. Providing eligible students with money for groceries is a longer-term solution for students struggling to afford food.

The maximum dollar amount provided on a CalFresh-issued EBT card is subject to change each fiscal year.

Students are under-enrolled in SNAP and in CalFresh

Despite being a sustainable solution, CalFresh is under-enrolled. According to U.S. Government/Department of Education data, "almost 2 million at-risk students who were potentially eligible for SNAP did not report receiving benefits in 2016 [nation-wide]."[35] A 2015 analysis found that, within California, at least 78 percent of students eligible for CalFresh are not receiving the benefits.[36] Similarly, UC basic needs campus leadership estimate that only a fraction of students who are eligible for CalFresh have enrolled.

The governmental review of SNAP concluded that the lack of clarity around student eligibility at the federal level hindered local efforts to enroll students. The review recommended clarification of SNAP student eligibility rules, enhanced information sharing about State efforts, and federally coordinated efforts to help State agencies enroll eligible students into SNAP.[35]

Understanding Student Exemptions: Federal law prohibits students from applying for SNAP, and exemptions from this rule do not apply to all students who experience food insecurity.

In order to receive SNAP benefits, students must meet exemption criteria.[37] For the purposes of SNAP, one is considered a student if they are between 18 and 49 years of age and attend class at least half-time. In California, Assembly Bill 1930, passed in 2014, has clarified exemptions for students. California students may be exempt from the student ineligibility rule if the individual is:

- Younger than age 18 or age 50 or older
- A parent caring for a child under age 6
- A parent caring for a child aged 6 to 11 who is unable to obtain childcare to attend school and work
- A single parent caring for a child under 12 years old and enrolled full time
- Working a minimum of 20 hours per week at paid employment
- Participating in a state- or federally-financed work-study program
- Receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits; in the State of California TANF funding is used in Cal Grants for UC students, which allows them to use this as an exemption to apply for CalFresh

- Not physically or mentally fit (e.g., has a disability); in California a letter confirming the student is a member of their campus Disabled Student Program can be used as proof of exemption
- Enrolled in certain programs for the purpose of employment and training; this exemption is essential for graduate/professional school students whose programs are determined as "employment and training." Unfortunately there is no streamlined process; each individual program must apply to CDSS to be confirmed.[35]

Students must identify with at least one exemption in order to qualify for CalFresh. According to these requirements, a student must be a U.S. citizen to be eligible for exemption. Thus, international and undocumented students do not qualify for CalFresh and must rely on campus-based short-term resources for food.[33] Many undocumented students and some international students make up some of the University's most underserved students.

CALFRESH DATA COLLECTION

UC student engagement with CalFresh can be described by three primary data categories: 1) students who are eligible for CalFresh; 2) students who have applied to CalFresh; and 3) students who have successfully enrolled in CalFresh.

1) Students who are eligible for CalFresh

According to OP's estimates, **114,450** UC undergraduate and graduate students (40 percent of UC students) were potentially eligible for CalFresh in the 2018–19 academic year.

Of these students, the total unduplicated count of potential CalFresh-eligible undergraduate students is 100,152. This count includes undergraduate documented domestic students of age 18 to 49 who were enrolled at least part-time during academic year 2018–19 and had one of these CalFresh exemptions:

- Participates in the Chafee Educational Training and Vouchers program (ETV)
- Has work-study earnings
- Receives Cal Grant
- Has a disability
- Receives Pell Grant only (without other exemptions)*

UCOP estimates that the number of graduate students who were potentially eligible for CalFresh during the 2018–19 academic year was 14,302. This count includes low-income graduate students who were Pell recipients as undergraduates.

2) Students who have applied to CalFresh

Students can apply to CalFresh with campus basic needs staff and/or county eligibility worker support; independently via their local county CalFresh website, GetCalFresh.com; or at their local County Social Services agency, to name a few avenues.

Between June 2018 and June 2019, UC campuses assisted 12,850 students with submitting CalFresh applications.

Campuses have been able to track the number of CalFresh applications submitted with support from UC whether through mass-enrollment clinics, the campus CalFresh application assistance program, or assistance from an on-campus county eligibility worker. Between June 2018 and June 2019, UC campuses assisted 12,850 students with submitting CalFresh applications. A subset of 921 of those students (from UC Davis, UCLA, and UC Merced) submitted CalFresh applications through their respective GetCalFresh campus websites, which is a CDSS-authorized application assistance tool. The number of student applications submitted per campus ranged from 322 to 3,400 students.

* UCOP used the receipt of Pell Grant as a proxy for low-income; the receipt of the Pell Grant itself does not make students eligible for CalFresh.

This estimate does not reflect the full picture of UC students who have applied to CalFresh, however. The number of UC-based applicants remains unknown for the following reasons:

- Students who apply for CalFresh independently do not need to indicate their student status nor campus affiliation on the CalFresh application.
- Counties are not legally required to share application or enrollment data with our campus CalFresh leads.
- The CDSS employs three separate CalFresh enrollment systems. CDSS leadership are in the process of creating a centralized data system by 2021 (this deadline may change due to COVID-19 impacts).
- Application and enrollment data from Code for America's GetCalFresh tool can only be shared if the county allows, and the data must be cleaned to prevent duplication across GetCalFresh and county data.
- No known county DSS agency tracks UC student applications across the various application points that would generate county-confirmed application and enrollment data.

3) Students who have successfully enrolled in CalFresh

The number of UC students enrolled in CalFresh is unknown because of the complex nature of county reporting requirements and application decentralization, as explained above.

CalFresh application assistance programs at UC

All ten campuses' Basic Needs Centers have developed programs to help students apply for CalFresh. In 2019, the UC Basic Needs Systemwide Committee funded a study of these CalFresh application assistance programs. The study aimed to 1) explore the facilitators and barriers to students' successful enrollment in CalFresh; and 2) understand how partnerships with food banks and county offices affect these programs. The study involved key interviews with 15 basic needs staff (including at least one CalFresh outreach specialist from each campus), one county agency staff, three food bank staff, and two financial aid staff.

Key findings include:

- Strong communication between county agencies administering CalFresh and campus basic needs staff is critical to enrollment success. County staff integration with on-campus basic needs centers can greatly improve student enrollment.
- Partnerships between basic needs centers and food banks and with other University departments—especially financial aid—can benefit campus CalFresh assistance programs substantially. Enrollment is best facilitated when there is direct communication between basic needs staff and county agency personnel.

- CalFresh enrollment improves when there is extensive on-campus staff assistance—especially from the county—with student applications and outreach.

- There seems to be inconsistent interpretation regarding student eligibility and enrollment by county, possibly due to inconsistent training, which may result in differing levels of enrollment by campus.

- The administrative processes of the CalFresh application require that students attend interviews and submit verification documents, which can pose challenges for full-time students. The length and complexity of the process can result in some students dropping out.[34]

FACILITATORS OF SUCCESSFUL STUDENT CALFRESH ENROLLMENT

The two most frequently cited facilitators of successful enrollment of UC students into CalFresh are 1) regular and frequent visits by county agency workers on campus to assist students with enrollment, and on-campus sign-up events with county staff present; and 2) a strong relationship and direct line of communication between basic needs staff and the county agency administering CalFresh.

County workers' campus visits consist of regularly scheduled office hours (available at five campuses). The presence of county workers to help students understand the verification documents they need and to answer questions about exemptions, the application, or the program has proved to be successful.

At larger CalFresh sign-up events, county workers help with CalFresh enrollment. In some cases, students can complete a CalFresh application and attend a same-day interview during these events, and county workers can assist many students in a short time frame, which is especially beneficial for campuses with limited county staff office hours.[34]

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERS

Advocate for collaboration with county and community services to improve basic needs services for students.

Goal: Establish a MOU with county and community basic needs services to address student basic needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCHERS

Continue researching barriers and facilitators of CalFresh enrollment systemwide, particularly the factors that influence student eligibility, and monitor CalFresh enrollment and application rates among UC students.

Goal: Publish a study by 2022 that assesses CalFresh eligibility and trends in CalFresh enrollment with better representation from a range of California county agency staff respondents.

Goal: Collaborate with the California Policy Lab and UCOP to develop a methodology for annual reporting on the number of students eligible for and enrolled in CalFresh.

The campuses with direct lines of communication to the county agency staff who administered CalFresh reported the most success in enrolling students. The ability to speak directly with county offices to clarify policy and to advocate for students bolstered the basic needs team members' ability to assist students.[34]

Students approach a mass CalFresh enrollment clinic held at UC Irvine in partnership with Orange County Social Services Agency.
(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Irvine FRESH Basic Needs Center)

Barriers to successful student CalFresh enrollment

The top two most commonly reported barriers to successful UC student CalFresh application completion are inconsistent information available to students to determine eligibility and the mismatch between student demand for services and the availability of county and campus staff to provide assistance. In some counties, high turnover of county staff contributes to inconsistent information for students, as do complex changes to CalFresh policies themselves. Although both county offices and campus basic needs centers provide on-campus assistance, students' limited availability, because of classes and jobs, may result in incomplete or inaccurate applications, or no application at all.[34]

Current efforts to increase CalFresh enrollment

The extent and type of CalFresh assistance varies by campus, but generally includes the following:

- Conducting outreach to improve awareness of CalFresh
- Pre-screening of applicants
- Explaining exemptions so students know if and how they qualify
- Helping students complete the application form
- Explaining verification documents and, at times, helping students collect documents
- Providing information on what to expect in the interview
- Providing information on due dates, especially for renewals[34]

CalFresh and Financial Aid

UC Financial Aid offices have been seeking to reach out to students with eligibility for both programs. Students with Cal Grants that are funded by federal dollars and students "approved for federal work-study" may also be eligible for CalFresh. The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) has been notifying Cal Grant recipients who may qualify. Similarly, UC campuses have been including a message about potential CalFresh eligibility with financial aid notices for work-study students for a few years. But the county offices that determine CalFresh eligibility have had varying standards on what constitutes "approved for work-study," with some requiring pay stubs before allowing students to qualify and others simply accepting a print-out of the financial aid awards.

A more streamlined process for students to apply for CalFresh is on the horizon, with help from UC Financial Aid offices. UCOP has advised CDSS on a form letter that campuses will be able to generate to serve as a universally accepted proof of eligibility. UC campuses should be able to implement this as soon as the letter is finalized by CDSS, although financial aid does not have the means to auto-enroll students in CalFresh.

RECOMMENDATION FOR STUDENT SERVICE PRACTITIONERS

Maximize enrollment of eligible graduate and undergraduate students in CalFresh by continuing to work with county agencies to increase application assistance.

Goal: Establish/increase the number of county staff hosting regular on-campus or virtual office hours for CalFresh assistance; integrate CalFresh into financial aid advising; and operate large-scale, onsite CalFresh enrollment clinics with county staff present. This will create stronger partnerships between campus governmental relations and county offices of health and social services.

Goal: Increase the number of UC students enrolled into CalFresh by 50 percent by FY 2022, using a baseline benchmark to be developed by the California Policy Lab in partnership with UCOP.

Goal: Establish partnerships between all ten campuses' CalFresh outreach programs and Financial Aid offices by FY 2022 to facilitate recommendations regarding CalFresh eligibility and financial aid notifications.

Goal: Request application outcomes data from County Social Services and report on meals provided and the local economic impact of CalFresh student enrollment. student enrollment.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERS

Continue to invest in direct partnerships between county offices of Health and Social Services and Campus Governmental Relations to ensure regular office hours for on-campus county staff to assist students with the CalFresh application.

Goal: Provide direct lines of communication for all ten campuses with their local county staff (i.e., have a county contact accessible via phone and/or email) by FY 2022.

Coordinate financial aid packages with the notification of CalFresh eligibility. When students receive their financial aid package, those who meet known eligibility criteria (e.g., are approved for Federal Work Study) should receive information about their potential eligibility and how to apply for CalFresh, as well as the appropriate verification letter(s) to submit with their CalFresh application.

Goal: Implement processes that notify students of CalFresh eligibility in all campus Financial Aid offices by FY 2022.

Pictured: Celina Chanthanouvong, Undergraduate at UC Merced, in an advertisement for CalFresh outreach at UC Merced

(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Irvine FRESH Basic Needs Center)

Five campus basic needs centers have regular on-campus office hours for county staff members. A clear system of communication and technical support between UC campus teams and county workers has proven essential for advancing student enrollment in CalFresh. And basic needs staff are now working with UC financial aid staff to make students aware of how to apply for, receive support with, and pursue getting CalFresh benefits. UC Basic Needs Systemwide meetings have generated great ideas and best practices between campuses. UC has worked with CalFresh program leadership at the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) and with colleagues in the CSU and CCC systems to increase CalFresh undergraduate and graduate student awareness, application assistance, and successful enrollment. Efforts have entailed joint intersegmental meetings with CDSS to facilitate sharing of best practices on enrollment and application support services for students. The collaboration aims to improve county responses to CalFresh and has resulted in the creation of a CDSS All-County Letter, which provides counties with guidance on college student CalFresh eligibility.[31]

CAMPUS SOLUTION

To provide food support to students who do not meet eligibility requirements for CalFresh, UC Berkeley began the Food Assistance Program (FAP), which is a CalFresh-equivalent program that grants non-CalFresh-eligible populations $582 per quarter. This amount is equivalent to $194/month, the maximum CalFresh benefit for students. UC Irvine implemented a similar model, for which they used their State basic needs allocation in spring 2020. Other campuses are considering implementing this program, which may provide a promising solution to addressing gaps in CalFresh eligibility across UC.

Direction of future efforts

In light of the high demand for CalFresh at UC, State advocacy is needed to require that county social services leadership sustain structured relationships with their higher education institutions to improve student enrollment. Furthermore, research and development is warranted to coordinate and standardize data collection and reporting practices across all UC CalFresh programs and DSS offices. Systemwide basic needs leadership and the CDSS must continue working toward a centralized database of CalFresh enrollment to determine the effectiveness of UC Basic Needs CalFresh outreach and State commitment to increasing CalFresh access for hungry students in need of food assistance.

MENTAL HEALTH

Student mental health services are an important aspect of the basic needs ecosystem, given that students experiencing basic needs insecurity are likely to also experience mental health challenges.[38]

Student mental health continues to be a prominent and persistent issue across the country. According to the National College Health Assessment, conducted by the American College Health Association in 2019, more than a quarter of U.S. college students reported having received psychological or mental health services within the preceding 12 months.[39] At UC, the number of students seeking mental health services rose 78 percent between 2007 and 2018, while student enrollment for the same period increased by only 27 percent.[40] Research indicates that the challenges associated with basic needs insecurity can negatively affect students' mental health. UC students have described how constantly searching for affordable housing, travelling long commutes from campus to save on rent, skipping meals to make food budgets stretch, and worrying about the rising cost of tuition and fees have contributed to stress and anxiety.[8]

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), available at all UC campuses, offers a range of mental health and counseling services to registered students. Facilities are fully accredited by independent agencies to ensure high-quality, easily accessible and cost-effective care. Services include crisis counseling, available by phone around the clock, seven days a week; emergency intervention; individual counseling and psychotherapy; and group therapy and psychiatric support (all now available through telehealth services), as well as campus mental health and wellness promotion.

In addition to CAPS, students may have access to off-campus mental health resources, which can include private mental health practices and/or county mental health services. While off-campus services can present increased choices for care, this option is less desirable because of the time and expense it takes to travel from campus, especially for students who are basic needs insecure. Also, depending on the type of mental health service required and the size of office copayments, the unplanned cost can deter students from seeking ongoing mental health assistance.[41]

Many campuses continue to experience a lack of sufficient funding to provide the breadth and volume of services needed to match the growing demand for student mental health support.[42]

Over the past 15 years, UC has successfully secured a variety of funding sources to support student mental health services, in response to escalating demand for psychological support. This has included tuition increases, Proposition 63 funds,

RECOMMENDATION FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERS

Advocate for an increase in mental health funding to ensure that the University has the capacity to meet demand for mental health services, including for students whose need for mental health services is related to basic needs insecurity.

Goal: Prioritize mental health funding in the Regents' budget request to the State.

Goal: Re-engage in discussions with the MHSOAC and county mental health directors about providing enhanced mental health services to UC students supported by MHSA/Proposition 63 funding.

student services fee (SSF) increases, and State support.[42] Tuition and student service fee increases generate campus revenue to support student mental health services, but the University faces pressures to limit and/or defer increases, particularly during times of economic loss and instability.

Between 2011 and 2014, UCOP applied for and received approximately $8 million in grants from the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) through Proposition 63.[43] In addition to funding CAPS, campuses used some of these funds to sustain prevention and early intervention services, maintain campus awareness campaigns, and support a systemwide best-practices conference. The University exhausted its CalMHSA funds in 2015, as counties redirected State prevention dollars away from higher education to K–12 education systems. In addition, then-Governor Brown vetoed State legislation that would have provided additional mental health funding to UC through Proposition 63 in 2016 and 2017, respectively.[41] Loss of State financial support, coupled with rising demand for student mental health services, puts in jeopardy the University's goals of increasing access and graduation rates among students from California's most underrepresented groups, including those who are basic needs insecure.

To mitigate this risk, UC plans to re-engage with MHSOAC and county mental health directors to discuss collaborative solutions for meeting community mental health needs. Providing enhanced mental health services to UC students, supported by Proposition 63 funding is one way to expand support of the mental healthcare needs of underserved students. Meanwhile, UC will continue to identify and explore additional partnership opportunities with county and State agencies, private philanthropy, and development offices, as well as students, staff, and faculty at UC for mental healthcare funding and programmatic support.

IMPACT OF HOUSING AND FOOD INSECURITY ON ACADEMIC SUCCESS AND STUDENT WELL-BEING

SYSTEMWIDE BASIC NEEDS RESEARCH AND DATA COLLECTION

The University administered the Student Food and Access Security Survey (SFASS) in spring 2015 to evaluate the state of students' food security. That survey used the USDA's six-item food security module to assess student food insecurity. Results affirmed the magnitude of existing issues for students and demonstrated the need for ongoing research.

The SFASS findings prompted the inclusion of food insecurity questions in the UCUES in 2016. To assess these outcomes among graduate students, the University also added basic needs-related survey questions to the GSWBS, which the University administers to examine graduate life satisfaction; mental health; mentorship and advising; finances; and now food and housing security. A total of 6,764 graduate students participated in the survey—a response rate of 50 percent.[9] The findings below are based on the 2016 UCUES and GSWBS survey results.

A note about housing insecurity data

Unlike the assessment of food insecurity, for which there are standardized sets of questions used in the U.S., similar standards did not exist to assess housing insecurity nationally, let alone in student populations.[44]

To tackle the issue of standardized assessment, the President's Global Food Initiative (GFI) funded researchers to study housing insecurity and homelessness at UC and to develop validated survey questions for future assessment of housing insecurity. The team used focus groups and cognitive interviews for a deeper understanding of housing insecurity. They also identified and analyzed sources of response error in existing housing insecurity survey items among UC students. UC has since published the largest study to date of student food and housing insecurity at a public state university system.[9]

The Office of the President has integrated these housing insecurity survey instruments, based on cognitive interviews and focus group findings, across systemwide administered surveys (e.g., UCUES and GSWBS). Housing-related issues continue to evolve, and the research team has adapted the instruments as they learn from students about the changing landscapes of cost of living, cost of attendance, and other factors that affect students' housing experiences.

ACADEMIC IMPACTS OF BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY

- Average UC GPA was highest for undergraduate students who did not experience food insecurity and homelessness and lowest for students who experienced both. Differences in average GPA were statistically significant between the two groups across all levels, from freshman to senior.

- In comparing students who experienced only food insecurity to students who experienced only homelessness (i.e., housing insecurity), average UC GPA was consistently lower for students who experienced only the former. Differences were statistically significant in sophomore, junior, and senior years. In other words, UC GPAs decreased among students experiencing food insecurity, regardless of years in college, compared with students experiencing homelessness.

Figure 11. Average undergraduate GPA and basic needs insecurity

	Food & Housing Insecure	Food Insecure Only	Housing Insecure Only	Food & Housing Secure
SENIOR	3.05	3.14	3.25	3.35
JUNIOR	2.90	3.04	3.24	3.29
SOPHOMORE	2.92	3.02	3.30	3.29
FRESHMAN	2.85	2.82	2.91	3.06

- Analyses of food insecurity and academic completion revealed significantly lower graduation rates among students who experienced food insecurity and entered as freshmen (10 percentage points lower) or transfers (6 percentage points).[3] Figure 12 displays the four-year graduation rates of 2016 UCUES respondents who graduated by spring 2019 as freshmen, or by spring 2017 as transfers.

Figure 12. Difference between four-year graduation rates of undergraduate students who reported experiencing food insecurity and those who did not experience food insecurity.

FOOD INSECURE

Freshman	-10.5
Transfer	-6.1

HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING INSECURITY AT THE UNIVERSITY

Homelessness is at the extreme end of the spectrum of housing insecurity. Low-income college students who live in expensive regions are especially at risk of homelessness. Students who experience homelessness are the most likely to drop out of college, which exacerbates student loan debt.

On the less extreme end of the continuum is general housing insecurity. Lack of stable housing is a symptom of issues in one's life that are caused, influenced, or exacerbated by societal challenges.[1]

RECOMMENDATION FOR POLICYMAKERS AND ADVOCATES

Advocate for the State adoption of the UC definition of student basic needs. This will allow campuses to use State budget appropriations for basic needs to address the full scope of students' basic needs, e.g., healthy and sufficient food; safe, secure and adequate housing (to sleep, study, cook, and shower); hygiene; and transportation.

Goal: Expand upon the current State definition of basic needs funding to go beyond just food and housing by FY 2022.

RECOMMENDATION FOR RESEARCHERS

Further examine the interrelations between the various components of basic needs, including food; housing; financial and economic needs; health care; hygiene; mental health, well-being and safety; sleep; and transportation.

Goal: Continuously improve student experience surveys (i.e., the UCUES, GWBS, Cost of Attendance Survey) to evaluate basic needs services and to inform best practices.

Goal: Continue to disseminate research and evaluation findings to basic needs leadership, staff, and researchers.

(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Riverside Basic Needs Center)

"As a first-year transfer student at UC Riverside, expenses were already tight for me and I couldn't count on anyone else for financial support because of my background as a low-income student. I worked 35–40 hours a week and had to choose missing a day of work to study and attend a class, but that often resulted in me being low on money for rent, which meant I could not eat every day to make up for the loss. If I decided to miss class for work, then I would often end up doing badly in a class—and this was a pattern that continued for a while and I found myself under academic probation and at risk for losing my university's help in paying for my tuition. I was confused, I felt like a failure, and I didn't know what to do because everyone else was doing well except me.

Because of this, I took the decision to cut my hours to focus on school and became homeless, though I didn't want to admit it. I used to sleep on different friends' couches during the week, and when I couldn't sleep on someone's couch I would sleep inside my friend Kat's car. All while still having to ration my food during the week and joining clubs so I could eat during the meetings, since food was always provided. My inability to access basic needs affected my academic performances and made me feel embarrassed and anxious every day because I was homeless and was afraid that someone might find out."

— ANGEL HUERTA, UC RIVERSIDE UNDERGRADUATE

The housing impacts of basic needs insecurity

To understand the impact of basic needs insecurity on students, it is crucial to examine the multiple factors that encompass housing insecurity as an interrelated web whose intersecting threads compound each other. For instance, some UC students described that unstable conditions attached to housing insecurity (constantly calculating whether they would be able to afford rent) contributed to mental stress, which made it harder to focus on academics.[8] By addressing those factors (in green in Figure 13, below) more proximal to housing insecurity (in pink), it may be possible to improve the peripheral conditions (in blue) and, ultimately, to prevent homelessness.

Figure 13. The housing insecurity web contributing to mental stress represents the relationship between concepts discussed by UC students when describing their housing situation. (Note: Issues related to housing insecurity are presented in green. Situations stemming from housing issues are presented in blue. Homelessness is presented in pink and is the most severe case of housing insecurity.) (Illustrated by Christopher Paguio)
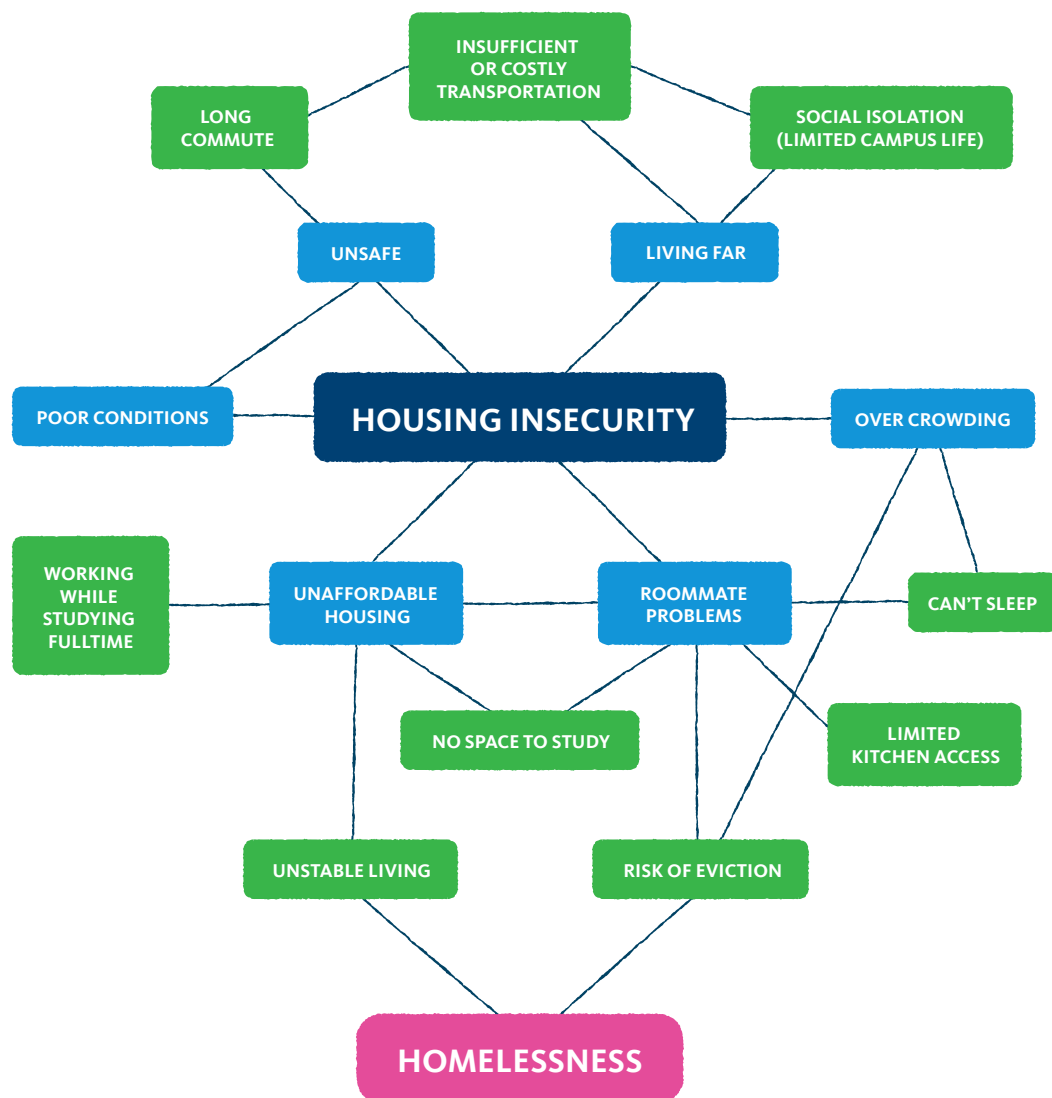
Consequences of housing insecurity and homelessness at UC

The consequences of housing insecurity are often interrelated and compound each other.[8] Unaffordable housing often leads to overcrowding, which can make sleeping and studying difficult, thus worsening mental health, and poor living conditions and housing insecurity negatively impact students' financial security, academic performance, and health and well-being.[8]

It is because of the way that basic needs elements interrelate that students who are housing insecure are likely to also be food insecure. For many, keeping up with the high costs of rent leaves meager funds available to buy food; students prioritize housing over food, resulting in struggles to find their next meal.

Consequences of experiencing housing insecurity include increased academic concerns, poor physical or mental health, days of physical inactivity as a result of lack of sleep, frequent moving from location to location, and not having access to a shower. Students who chose to live further away from campus to save on rent face long commutes, increased transportation costs and fatigue, all of which contribute to mental stress.[8] Additionally, some students will choose to live in overcrowded housing to split rent and living costs, which can make studying and sleeping peacefully more difficult. Students who seek more affordable housing also described dealing with other challenging living conditions like mold, broken heating or a lack thereof, rodents, and even scabies.[8] To meet rent and other living costs, many students work more than half-time at locations not on campus, which also contributes to commute times and provides less opportunity for academic study.[8]

Homelessness among undergraduate students

- Homelessness was higher among first-generation students (6 percent) compared with their non-first-generation peers (4 percent) and higher among Pell recipients (6 percent) than non-Pell Grant recipients (4 percent).

- The student populations that experience the highest percentage of homelessness include African American (8 percent), American Indian (7 percent) and international students (8 percent), compared with white (4 percent) and Asian/Pacific Islander students (3 percent). The difference across the ethnic groups was statistically significant. (International students had a high prevalence of homelessness, largely due to housing policy during holidays and University breaks.)

- Homelessness was higher among LGBTQ students (8 percent) when compared with non-LGBTQ students (4 percent).
- Homelessness was slightly higher among transfer students (6 percent) when compared with freshmen (5 percent).
- Homelessness was higher among former foster care youth (FFY) students (13 percent) when compared with non-FFY peers (5 percent).
- Student homelessness rates increase after freshman year, and higher rates of homelessness occur among students in their penultimate term or final year of college. Basic needs experts hypothesize this correlation is due to the following reasons: (i) continuing students tend to take heavier course loads; (ii) continuing students have less priority for on-campus housing, so they are more likely to live off-campus and have longer commutes; (iii) some evidence suggests that financial aid underestimates the cost of off-campus living expenses, which is being addressed in other policy contexts (e.g., the Academic and Student Affairs Committee).[26]

Figure 14. Percentage of undergraduate students experiencing homelessness by demographics*

OVERALL

OVERALL	5

AGE

19 ‹	3
20-21	4
22-23	6
24-25	9
26 ›	8

ETHNICITY

African American	8
American Indian	6
Asian	3
Hispanic	6
White	4
International	8

FIRST-GENERATION

Not first-gen	4
First-gen	6

FORMER FOSTER YOUTH

Not foster	5
Foster	13

LGBTQ

Not LGBTQ	4
LGBTQ	8

FAMILY INCOME

Independent	10
$0-49.99k	5
$50k-99.99k	4
$100k-149.99k	4
$150k ›	4

APPLICANT

Freshmen	5
Transfer	6

YEAR ENROLLED

1st	3
2nd	5
3rd	5
4th	6
5th	12
6th	15

* *Differences between various demographic groups (e.g., race/ethnicity) were mostly not statistically significant, due to the overall small prevalence of students experiencing homelessness.*

Homelessness among graduate students

- The prevalence of homelessness was similar among graduate and undergraduate students. Overall, 5 percent of both graduate and undergraduate students reported having experienced homelessness.

- Homelessness was higher among underrepresented and international graduate students. International graduate students had a high prevalence of homelessness, largely due to h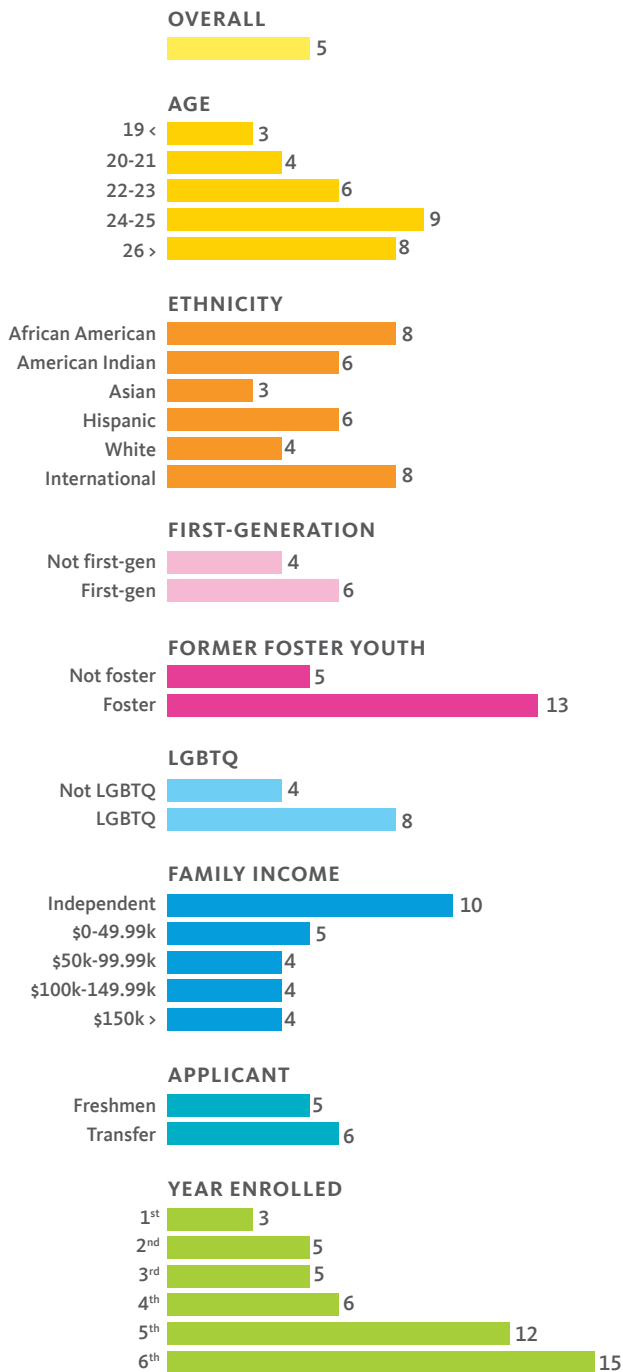ousing policy during holidays and University breaks. About 6 to 10 percent of underrepresented graduate students reported having experienced homelessness, compared with about 2 to 4 percent of Asian and White graduate students. The difference across the ethnic groups was statistically significant.

- Homelessness was higher among LGBTQ graduate students (7 percent) when compared with non-LGBTQ graduate students (4 percent).

- By degree level, homelessness was highest among academic master's students (6 percent) and lowest among graduate professional degree students (4 percent).

Figure 15. Percentage of graduate students having experienced homelessness by basic demographics

OVERALL

OVERALL	5

ETHNICITY

African American	7
American Indian	10
Asian	2
Hispanic	5
White	4
International	6

LGBTQ

Not LGBTQ	4
LGBTQ	7

DEGREE LEVEL

Academic Masters	6
Academic Doctoral (no candidacy)	5
Academic Doctoral (candidacy)	5
Graduate Professional	4

DISCIPLINE

Humanities	8
Social Sciences	7
STEM	4
Professional Fields	4
Multi/Other	5

YEAR ENROLLED

1st	5
2nd	5
3rd	4
4th	6
5th	4
6th	5

- A major housing issue for graduate students in particular is that housing leases often do not align with graduate student stipend pay schedules. For example, rent is typically due on the first of the month of the fall term, but student stipends are not issued until after the first month of the fall term.[8]

- The most common issue was that graduate student fellowships and other forms of funding, such as graduate student instructor or researcher positions, did not suffice to cover basic needs. Some students did not receive funding in the summer, which made it difficult to pay for basic needs in between terms.

FOOD INSECURITY AT THE UNIVERSITY

While students have noted that campus pantry programs are essential, they acknowledged that they did not always offer the healthiest food and had little variety. To strategize buying better food, many would split grocery costs with friends or even skip meals to make food last longer. Some would choose the most affordable meal plans and then binge on food in the dining commons.

Students also described "coping with a constant tradeoff between eating and other priorities like seeking medical services (to avoid medical bills) and physical health." Some students noted the physical signs of hunger, including sickness, fatigue, and sleepiness, which made it hard to focus on school when food was on their mind.

Food insecurity among undergraduate students

A systemic review and recent Government Accountability Office report found that food insecurity among post-secondary students in the United States is well above 30 percent, and likely closer to 44 percent. This rate is consistent with national trends.

- Food insecurity was more prevalent among underrepresented students—African American, Hispanic/Latino(a) and American Indian—compared with Asian or White students. About three-fifths of African American students (62 percent) and Hispanic/Latino(a) students (57 percent), and half of American Indian students (49 percent) reported they had experienced food insecurity, compared with about two-fifths of Asian (41 percent), international (41 percent), and white (35 percent) students.

- Older students were more likely to report experiencing food insecurity when compared with younger students. Students aged 20–21 (43 percent), 22–23 (47 percent), 24–25 (57 percent), and 26 and older (55 percent) were more likely to experience food insecurity when compared with students aged 19 and younger (36 percent).

- Students in their fifth and sixth year (or beyond) were more likely to report experiencing food insecurity when compared with students in their first four years at UC. Students within their fifth (58 percent) and sixth (59 percent) year were more likely to report experiencing food insecurity when compared with students within their first four years (range from 40 percent to 46 percent).

- LGBTQ students were more likely to experience food insecurity when compared with non-LGBTQ students. Over half of LGBTQ students have experienced food insecurity, compared with 43 percent of non-LGBTQ students. Food insecurity was highest among independent LGBTQ students (67 percent).*

Independent student as defined for the purposes of financial aid: https://admission. universityofcalifornia.edu/tuition-financial-aid/glossary-and-resources.html

(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Riverside Basic Needs Center)

"When I transferred to Riverside this fall, I had a hard time adjusting both financially and academically. I faced food insecurity and rent insecurity. It was hard to concentrate on classes when I was worried about paying rent and where I could get meals. The basic needs resources on campus have been essential to minimizing my stress regarding essential needs like food and housing. Especially the Economic Crisis Response Team who've been crucial to providing much-needed resources during the quarantine. Receiving CalFresh has also alleviated my food insecurity and helped me to reconsider the role food plays in my life and others'."

— JANE QUARLES, UC RIVERSIDE UNDERGRADUATE

- Food insecurity was more prevalent among former foster care youth (FFY) students (over 60 percent) compared with non-FFY (50 percent). However, it is important to note that half of foster care youth were independent students who were more likely to experience food insecurity.

- Food insecurity was more prevalent among transfer students (52 percent) compared with freshmen (42 percent).

Figure 16: Percentage of undergraduate students experiencing food insecurity by demographics

OVERALL

	44

AGE

19 <	36
20-21	43
22-23	47
24-25	57
26 >	55

ETHNICITY

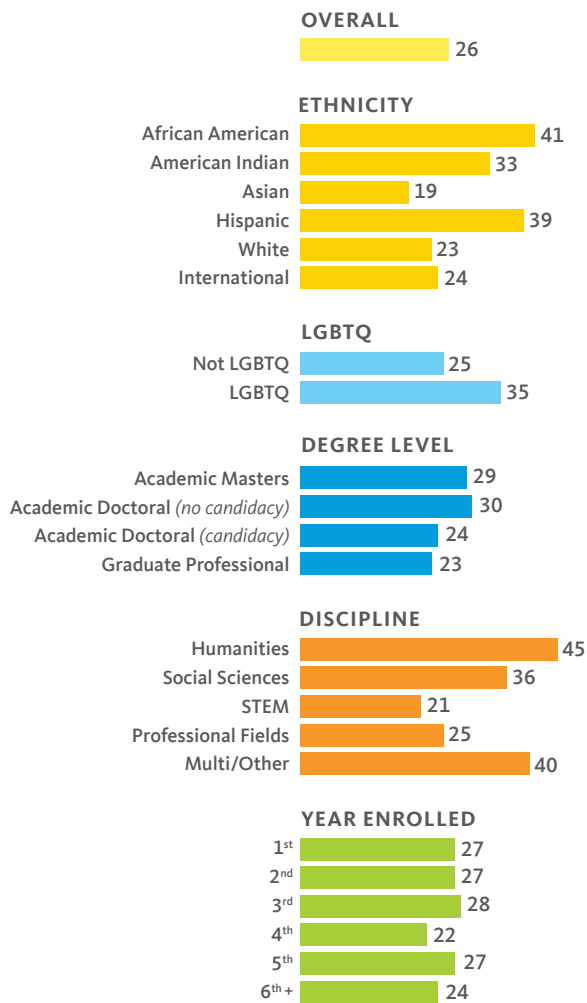|	
African American	62
American Indian	49
Asian	41
Hispanic	57
White	35
International	41

FIRST-GENERATION

Not first-gen	35
First-gen	56

FORMER FOSTER YOUTH

Not foster	44
Foster	61

LGBTQ

Not LGBTQ	43
LGBTQ	51

FAMILY INCOME

Independent	59
$0-49.99k	55
$50k-99.99k	46
$100k-149.99k	36
$150k >	27

APPLICANT

Freshmen	42
Transfer	52

YEAR ENROLLED

1st	40
2nd	45
3rd	46
4th	44
5th	58
6th	59

A student testimonial featured in an advertisement by the UC Irvine FRESH Basic Needs Center

(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Irvine FRESH Basic Needs Center)

Food insecurity among graduate students

- Food insecurity was less prevalent among graduate students (26 percent) compared with undergraduate students (44 percent). The difference between graduate and undergraduate students was statistically significant.

- By ethnicity, food insecurity was more prevalent among underrepresented graduate students—African American, Hispanic/Latino(a) and American Indian—compared with Asian or White graduate students. About two-fifths of Hispanic/Latino(a) graduate students (39 percent) and African American graduate students (38 percent) reported having experiencing food insecurity compared with about one-fifth for international (24 percent), White (23 percent) and Asian (19 percent) graduate students. The difference across ethnic groups was statistically significant.

- LGBTQ graduate students (about 35 percent) were more likely to experience food insecurity when compared with non-LGBTQ graduate students (25 percent).

- By degree level, food insecurity was high among academic master's and academic doctoral students with no candidacy. Academic master's students (28 percent) as well as academic doctoral students who had not advanced to candidacy (30 percent) were more likely to experience food insecurity than were professional students (23 percent) and academic doctoral students who had advanced to candidacy (24 percent).

Figure 17. Percentage of graduate students experiencing food insecurity by student characteristic

OVERALL

	26

ETHNICITY

African American	41
American Indian	33
Asian	19
Hispanic	39
White	23
International	24

LGBTQ

Not LGBTQ	25
LGBTQ	35

DEGREE LEVEL

Academic Masters	29
Academic Doctoral *(no candidacy)*	30
Academic Doctoral *(candidacy)*	24
Graduate Professional	23

DISCIPLINE

Humanities	45
Social Sciences	36
STEM	21
Professional Fields	25
Multi/Other	40

YEAR ENROLLED

1st	27
2nd	27
3rd	28
4th	22
5th	27
6th +	24

OTHER CRITICAL ASPECTS OF BASIC NEEDS

Transportation

Students living far from campus to save on rent relied on public transportation. "Students on all campuses expressed the need for more affordable and more consistent transportation." One student gave the example of missing class because of a local bus being full.[8] Students expressed the need for more affordable grocery stores near campus instead of the more expensive food on campus. Students described long travel times to affordable grocery stores accessible only by unreliable public transportation. One student described travelling forty minutes each way to purchase groceries at a lower price.[8]

Parenting students and older students

Undergraduate parenting students

Parenting students face unique circumstances in meeting basic needs. Unlike their non-parent student counterparts, parenting students have the additional considerations of family unit size, childcare, dependent healthcare, additional food, hygiene items, and medications. Undergraduate parenting students, who make up 1 percent of the UC undergraduate student population are more likely to have basic needs challenges than other undergraduate students.[45] Of undergraduate parenting students, 11 percent reported ever having been homeless, compared with 4 percent for non-parenting students.

Undergraduate parenting students are very concerned about the affordability of college and are more likely to have basic needs challenges than non-parenting undergraduate students (Figure 18, page 43).

(Source: Photo courtesy of the UCLA Basic Needs Center)

"My experience as a commuter student at UCLA was a huge factor in my basic needs insecurity. Being a low-income, first-generation student from South Central Los Angeles, commuting took the brunt of it all. As a commuter, I prioritized buying gas, parking permits, and books to be prepared to go to class, which meant that I would limit the amount of money I would spend on food while I was on campus ... I only bought food once a week while I was on campus and would not eat until I returned home ... I would often lose focus and fall asleep more often in class, and when I was not sleeping, I would find myself thinking more about being hungry than the actual coursework itself. With all this, I began to experience imposter syndrome. I felt as if I did not belong at UCLA because I was experiencing this issue of food insecurity and not issues that a traditional student would encounter. My first year was tough being a full-time commuting student; however, it became more manageable when I found the UCLA Community Programs Office (CPO) my second year ... The program took away the stress of needing to go to extreme measures to secure the ingredients and provided a healthy meal for us. If it were not for the UCLA CPO Basic Needs Initiatives and the support from the UCLA CPO, I had no idea how to manage myself and my basic needs."

– FREDDY RAMOS, UNDERGRADUATE, UCLA

Eleven percent of undergraduate parenting students reported ever having been homeless, compared with 4 percent of non-parenting students. About two-thirds (61 percent) of undergraduate student parents reported having experienced food insecurity, 15 percentage points higher than for other undergraduate students (46 percent).
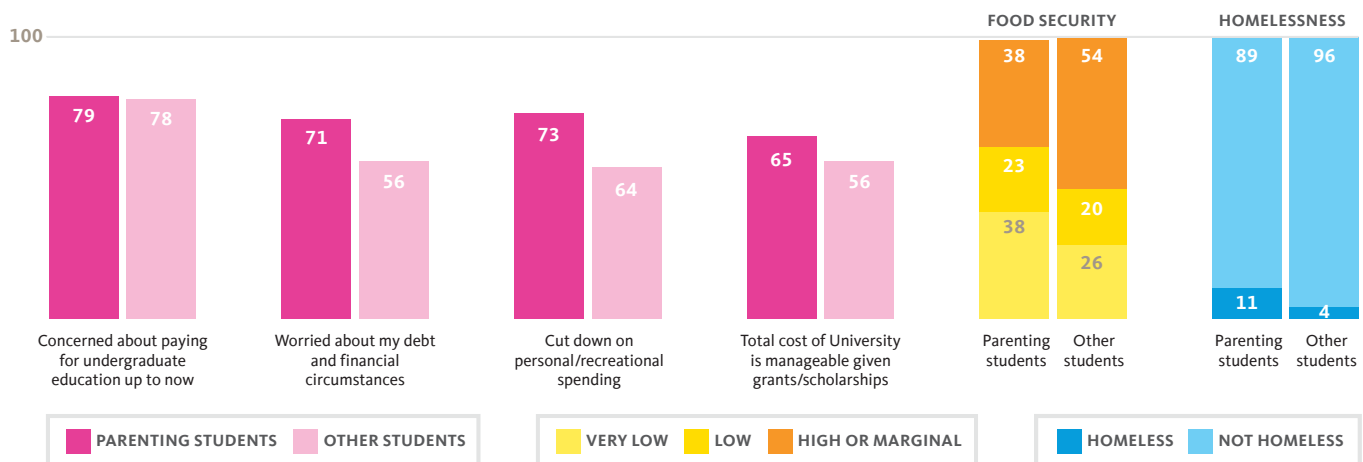
Undergraduate parenting students are more worried about their debt and financial circumstances (71 percent) and more likely to cut down on personal/recreational spending (73 percent) than other undergraduate students (56 percent and 64 percent, respectively).[45]

Graduate parenting students

About 12 percent of graduate students at UC identify as parenting students. Graduate parenting students are more likely to be in debt than are non-parenting graduate students. On average, the reported total debt of graduate parenting students was $43,894, compared with $28,748 for non-parenting students, despite graduate parenting students having a much higher monthly income after taxes ($6,319) than non-parenting students ($2,511).[45] Graduate parenting students reported a higher average monthly rent or mortgage than did non-parenting students ($1,672 versus $987)."

Having children also often necessitates working to support increased costs. Older students (which parenting students tend to be) tend to live further from campus than their non-parent peers.[8]

Figure 18. Undergraduate parenting students' financial concerns and basic needs, based on 2016 and 2018 UCUES data, shown in percentage[45]

"Along with being a full-time student, I am a wife and a mother of two. Aggie compass helped me at a very critical time in my life. I had just given birth to a baby during a pandemic, my preschooler was out of school due to COVID-19, and my husband was on unpaid leave due to his health. The doctor ordered him to take time off because it was dangerous to continue to work in the public sector with chronic asthma. Amongst all of those life changes, I am enrolled in school, part-time, a week after delivering a baby. Aggie Compass helped relieve the pressure of one of our biggest bills, RENT. We lost our income during this quarter, but Aggie Compass kept shelter over my family's head. I am forever grateful, and I am shocked that I never heard of this resource until now. This is a life-saving program and very beneficial to the well-being of UC Davis students."

— SADE MCALISTER, AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDIES, UC DAVIS CLASS OF 2020

(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Davis Basic Needs Center)

Addressing parenting student basic needs

In fall 2019, UCOP established a UC Parenting Students Workgroup to discuss the unique issues impacting parenting students. Their report is set to be delivered in fall 2020 to the UC Board of Regents and will address topics such as flexible child care access for parenting students, child-friendly study spaces, convenient access to lactation rooms and breastfeeding resources, affordable healthcare for dependent children, and other select topics.

Beyond State and federal government-mandated services, UC campuses vary widely in their support of parenting students. Some campuses have centralized parenting-student offices and resources, while other campuses provide services in a decentralized manner, forcing students to seek out multiple resources while balancing childcare, academics, teaching, and/or work commitments.[46]

International students

International students are not without basic needs challenges. Being thousands of miles apart from familial safety nets and unfamiliar with the culture and practices can trigger isolation. Complicating matters, federal policy prohibits international students from receiving federal funding and public resources such as CalFresh. If an international student receives public resources and is deemed a public charge, they may be removed from the country and prohibited reentry. For these reasons, students who are facing financial hardship or housing insecurity have limited options and may not seek out support for fear of violating their non-immigrant authorization.

The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the vulnerability of international students. Many students found themselves unable to return home due to border closures and travel restrictions. As a result, they had to find immediate housing sto carry them over the summer. Campuses were forced to creatively secure resources that did not violate federal policies to help students in their time of need. This points out the need to better understand that proven solutions are not always applicable to every student.

Undocumented students

Like international students, undocumented students are prohibited from receiving federal student aid. This results in an increase in loans to make up the difference. While DACA protections do provide eligible undocumented students the ability to work, those without DACA lack work authorization to earn additional income. Furthermore, undocumented students with or without DACA have additional legal costs. These can include fees to remain in status as well as costs for legal advice, although UC Immigration Legal Services is one resource to support students. While the University was successful in its case against the current White House's abrupt termination of DACA, there remains the possibility that the program will end without a permanent legislative solution. If this is the case, California undocumented students will lose their protections from deportation and will forfeit all ability to work and earn income.

This commitment to undocumented students at UC is unprecedented in the nation and, coupled with State statute, undocumented students have been able to persist despite extraordinary circumstances. Yet, anecdotal experiences suggest that undocumented students may be among the populations with the highest rates of basic needs insecurity. Further research is needed to understand basic needs insecurity among this population.

(Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Berkeley Basic Needs Center)

"During Covid-19, my country's border closed and I was unable to return home. Along with this, I had no housing for the summer session. This is when I contacted the Basic Needs Center. They responded quickly and were so helpful in ensuring that I had a place to stay no matter what and for however long I needed. Their main goal was making sure that I had a roof over my head and I am so grateful for this. They brought ease to my mind in a difficult situation and were a vital organization for me during Covid-19."

— JENEA SPINKS, UC BERKELEY UNDERGRADUATE

Case study: How UC campuses supported basic needs during the COVID-19 outbreak

In response to emergency campus closures as a result of the coronavirus outbreak in March 2020, campus basic needs centers quickly adapted to remain accessible to students.

While students moved away from their campuses during the spring term, some students continued to reside on or near campus, and many of these students relied on on-campus services and programs to fulfill their basic needs. Campus basic needs resources have been identified as an "essential service" at each campus, and campuses have modified their delivery service to ensure that students can continue to access these critical resources.

Campuses adapted their case management, food, and housing services to accommodate social-distancing guidelines. They have been quick to expand their online communication platforms to boost virtual outreach to students. Campuses commonly reported conducting needs assessments through online surveys. To augment capacity, some campuses have applied for grants from private foundations or explored bringing in staff from other departments.

Strategies to address food insecurity during COVID-19

Campus dining facilities have remained operational during campus closures to support students who are still living on campus. Most basic needs centers have shifted their food models to hybrids of direct food distribution and direct student grants. These adaptations include the implementation of "pop-up" mobile pantries and weekly grocery bag pick-ups, as well as providing electronic gift cards for parenting

students and other historically underserved populations, as deemed necessary by a case manager. Meanwhile, CalFresh has moved completely online with application assistance, and some campuses have held online workshops to inform students of changes to the CalFresh program in light of COVID-19.

Strategies to address housing insecurity during COVID-19

Campus residence halls have continued to operate for students who elect to reside on campus for the remainder of the shelter-in-place order, and each campus has implemented its own guidelines for observing social distancing practices and supervising students in residence halls. Students who may be struggling to afford rent might be eligible for direct emergency aid; one campus is looking into assistance grants to support graduate students specifically. Through a case-management model, basic needs staff are continuing their current rapid rehousing practices remotely. Some basic needs centers are aiding students during their housing transitions by holding online workshops to inform them about how to navigate rental contracts and agreements in the face of COVID-19. Basic needs staff are also connecting students with other campus services that provide loaned laptops and technology support so students can access remote instruction as they transition to their quarantine housing situations.

Source: Photo courtesy of the UC Santa Barbara Basic Needs Center)

"My need for assistance is COVID/pandemic-related. Unfortunately, my housemates and I came directly into contact with someone who tested positive at the end of our lease. Unable to safely self-isolate at home due to underlying conditions of certain loved ones, I was unsure of where to go. I was recommended to the financial aid crisis team and surely they went above and beyond to aid us. I was willing to seek any option to ensure the safety of my loved ones, even going into major debt and sacrificing my summer classes I need to finish to have my degree by fall.

The financial aid crisis team provided us with housing while we waited for test results and to be cleared to join our families. They provided housing and support when we all really needed it. The weight they took off of our shoulders allowed us to finish finals, prepare for summer, and know that no matter what the situation turned into later ... we would be in good hands. There are no words to fully express my gratitude for their help."

— KARLA RAMOS, UC SANTA BARBARA UNDERGRADUATE

Next steps for addressing basic needs during COVID-19

As COVID-19 continues to impose financial strain on students, campus basic needs centers will need to be prepared to potentially serve a greater capacity of students across hybrid models in the fall 2020 term and beyond.

Dr. Martinez, in conjunction with the systemwide Basic Needs Committee Co-Chairs and campus leads, implemented a multi-campus survey to 1) identify any challenges graduate students have experienced due to the coronavirus pandemic (e.g., housing insecurity, changes in basic needs); and 2) examine whether basic needs services have helped to mitigate their basic needs-related challenges during the coronavirus pandemic. Graduate students were invited to participate in the online survey in summer 2020 via campus basic needs listservs. Preliminary findings will be available in late spring 2021.

Bianca Duarte, a student in the School of Dentistry, volunteers at the Student Food Market, which is open during the Coronavirus pandemic and which continues to offer fresh produce, snacks and other healthy staples—this time in ready-made grocery bags— free of charge to any current UCSF student, in the Student Success Center at the Parnassus campus. (Photo courtesy of Susan Merrell, 2020)

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations identified in this report offer actionable solutions to the major findings that emerged during the course of the Special Committee's work. These findings inform the strategy of reducing basic needs insecurity at the University and are discussed throughout this report. The major findings are:

- **Fulfilling basic needs remains a challenge for almost half of the University student body and for over half of students from URGs.[3]**

- **Basic needs insecurity impedes educational access and success.**

- **Financial aid is not sufficient for certain students to meet their basic needs, because the University's financial aid policy assumptions do not hold for all students, e.g., those who cannot find a job, and the financial aid policy does not apply to all undergraduates, e.g., nonresidents.**

- **Current basic needs services have proven effective for supporting many students' basic needs, but they are not scalable to address every student in need.**

- **The academic, economic, and health-related impacts of the coronavirus pandemic reinforce the need for the University to strengthen and sustain basic needs interventions and services.**

The proposed strategies put forth in the recommendations represent a comprehensive approach to addressing basic needs insecurity through research, prevention, sustainability, and advocacy—otherwise known as the basic needs model. A detailed description of this framework is included on page 17 of this report. Recommendations are formulated based on suggestions made by members of the Special Committee, as well as by various subject matter experts and internal consultants.

The recommendations are grouped and directed to five audiences:

Policymakers and Advocates: Governor's office, members of the State and federal legislature, basic needs advocacy groups, and student advocacy groups, among others

University Leaders: UC Regents, UCOP executive leaders and staff; campus-level decision makers, including Chancellors, Chancellor cabinet members, Executive Directors; the State Governmental Relations team at UCOP, and other institutional leaders

Student Service Practitioners: Staff engaged in the management and provision of student services, including basic needs, mental health support, CalFresh enrollment, academic advising and other student services

Researchers: Faculty members and researchers, including career employees and University graduate/undergraduate students. Given the need for continued research to understand the issue of collegiate basic needs insecurity, the Special Committee identified topics in need of future study.

Students: All undergraduate, graduate, and professional UC students, including student leadership and advocacy groups

As outlined in the five-year UC basic needs goals below, the recommendations serve as a vehicle to further expand the proportion of students whose basic needs are met. By working diligently toward these target milestones with the guidance of these recommendations, the University will increase the basic needs security of UC students, providing them the necessary resources to persist to degree completion and, in turn, to achieve continued success in the workforce and in their communities.

FIVE-YEAR UC BASIC NEEDS GOALS

By June 2025:

1. Reduce the proportion of undergraduate students reported to have experienced food insecurity in the past 12 months by 50 percent (from 44 percent to 22 percent, based on 2016 UC Undergraduate Experience Survey [UCUES] data).

2. Reduce the proportion of graduate students reported to have experienced food insecurity in the last 12 months by 50 percent (from 26 percent to 13 percent, based on 2016 Graduate Wellbeing Survey [GWBS] data).

3. Reduce the proportion of undergraduate students who have experienced housing insecurity by 50 percent (from 16 percent to 8 percent, according to 2020 UCUES data).*

4. Reduce the proportion of graduate students who have experienced homelessness to by 50 percent (from 5 percent to 2.5 percent, based on 2016 GWBS data.)

* For the purposes of this goal, the definition of housing insecurity is based on the number of respondents who indicated that, in the past 12 months, they slept overnight on campus, at a hotel, at an Airbnb, in a transitional housing or independent living program, at a group home, treatment center, homeless center, or outdoor location because they did not have a permanent home to return to; based on preliminary 2020 UCUES data as of July 13, 2020.

The goals listed above represent "challenge goals" for the system to reduce food and housing insecurity. The economic circumstances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, along with the increasing number of students whose needs are growing, further challenge us to reach these goals. The University will periodically revisit progress toward these goals and update them based on available funding and other relevant factors to ensure that they align with current circumstances.

Please note: The following recommendations are listed in no particular order.

Recommendations for Policymakers and Advocates

1. Advocate for greater investment in financial aid at the federal, State, and University levels: stronger financial aid helps prevent basic needs insecurity. With an additional $500 million in need-based grants, the University could: 1) decrease, by half, the number of undergraduate students who would need to borrow or work and 2) increase by 60 percent the amount of aid available to support students' living expenses. Comparable funding for graduate students (e.g., an additional $113 million in fellowships and assistantships) could close the gap between estimated living expenses and net stipends for academic doctoral students.

a. Goal: Increase financial aid available to undergraduate students from all sources, including federal, State, and philanthropic sources. The goal is to cut, by half, undergraduate students' need to work and borrow by FY 2025. In 2020, that would require the equivalent of $500 million, which could grow with inflation and enrollment.

b. Goal: Increase financial aid available to academic doctoral students from all sources, including federal, State and philanthropic sources, with the goal of expanding net stipends to match living expenses by FY 2025. In 2020, that would require the equivalent of $113 million, which could grow with inflation and enrollment, enabling campuses to commit to multi-year offers for doctoral candidates.

2. When the State's budget allows, advocate for legislation that would eliminate unnecessary barriers for UC students in the State's Cal Grant program and provide additional summer financial aid for students enrolled in summer session.

a. Goal: Convince the Legislature to pass acts that reform Cal Grant to expand eligibility by FY 2022.

3. Advocate for the State adoption of the UC definition of student basic needs. This will allow campuses to use State budget appropriations for basic needs to address the full scope of students' basic needs, e.g., healthy and sufficient food; safe, secure and adequate housing (to sleep, study, cook, and shower); hygiene; and transportation.

a. Goal: Expand upon the current State definition of basic needs funding to go beyond just food and housing by FY 2022.

4. Continue the work of County Human Services collaborating with campuses to provide staffing for regular on-campus county (and food bank) office hours and for technical and application assistance for student CalFresh applicants. When county intake workers and food bank outreach staff have an office on campus, student applications are faster, less burdensome, and more likely to be approved. Investing in outreach to student applicants will bolster student enrollment into CalFresh.

a. Goal: Ensure that all ten UC campuses have regular office hours with designated local county staff by FY 2022.

b. Goal: Ensure that all ten UC campuses have direct lines of communication to their local county staff who are trained to assist students in navigating the application process, by FY 2022.

Recommendations for University Leaders

1. Refine the total cost-of-attendance calculation methodology, especially the algorithm used to account for off-campus rent costs, to ensure that the calculated cost of attendance accurately represents the true local cost of living.

a. Goal: Refine the total cost-of-attendance—set for each campus by the UC Office of the President (UCOP)—to be used for academic year 2021–22 using new data sources (e.g., the off-campus housing study that UCOP is now conducting) to supplement the current student survey method.

2. Advocate for an increase in mental health funding to ensure that the University has the capacity to meet demand for mental health services, including for students whose need for mental health services is related to basic needs insecurity.*

a. Goal: Prioritize mental health funding in the Regents' budget request to the State.

b. Goal: Re-engage in discussions with the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) and county mental health directors about providing enhanced mental health services to UC students supported by Mental Health Services Act (MHSA/Proposition 63) funding.

3. Create regional approaches to basic needs by strengthening alliances with UC partners (e.g., Agriculture and Natural Resources), intersegmental partners (e.g., the California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance, California Community Colleges, the California State University), private/independent colleges and universities, and external partners (e.g., the HOPE Center and other national entities).

a. Goal: Support regional professional development trainings and conferences to improve efforts across direct services, financial student awards, strategic planning, and policy.

4. Prioritize basic needs resources for historically underserved student populations including, but not limited to, low-income, LGBTQ, community college transfer, parenting, undocumented, current/former foster, and carceral system-impacted students, as well as student veterans.

a. Goal: Include specific efforts to address the basic needs of historically underserved populations in campus FY 2020–21 spending plans.

b. Goal: Include criteria in the annual Innovation Grant process that prioritize proposals focused on supporting historically underserved populations.

5. Prioritize basic needs as a goal of campus development or advancement fundraising campaigns.

a. Goal: Assess whether development opportunities exist to raise additional funding for basic needs by FY 2022.

6. Continue to invest in direct partnerships between county offices of Health and Social Services and Campus Governmental Relations to ensure regular office hours for on-campus county staff to assist students with the CalFresh application.

a. Goal: Provide direct lines of communication for all ten campuses with their local county staff (i.e., have a county contact accessible via phone and/or email) by FY 2022.

7. Coordinate financial aid packages with the notification of CalFresh eligibility. When students receive their financial aid package, those who meet known eligibility criteria (e.g., are approved for Federal Work Study) should receive information about their potential eligibility and how to apply for CalFresh, as well as the appropriate verification letter(s) to submit with their CalFresh application.

a. Goal: Implement processes that notify students of CalFresh eligibility in all campus Financial Aid offices by FY 2022.

8. Advocate for collaboration with county and community services to improve basic needs services for students.

a. Establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with county and community basic needs services to address student basic needs.

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*UC Health presented its estimated unmet mental health funding needs at the July 17, 2019 Public Engagement and Development Committee, which can be viewed at: https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/regmeet/july19/p3.pdf

Recommendations for Student Service Practitioners

1. Maximize enrollment of eligible graduate and undergraduate students in CalFresh by continuing to work with county agencies to increase application assistance.

a. Goal: Establish/increase the number of county staff hosting regular on-campus or virtual office hours for CalFresh assistance; integrate CalFresh into financial aid advising; and operate large-scale, onsite CalFresh enrollment clinics with county staff present. This will create stronger partnerships between campus governmental relations and county offices of health and social services.

b. Goal: Increase the number of UC students enrolled into CalFresh by 50 percent by FY 2022, using a baseline benchmark to be developed by the California Policy Lab in partnership with UCOP.

c. Goal: Establish partnerships between all ten campuses' CalFresh outreach programs and Financial Aid offices by FY 2022 to facilitate recommendations regarding CalFresh eligibility and financial aid notifications.

d. Goal: Request application outcomes data from County Social Services and report on meals provided and the local economic impact of CalFresh student enrollment.

2. Ensure that students who are experiencing food insecurity but do not qualify for CalFresh (e.g., undocumented and international students) have access to nutritious food.

a. Goal: Establish programs on all campuses to that ensure CalFresh-ineligible students can access nutritious food, such as another program equivalent to CalFresh benefits or student aid awards, by FY 2022.

b. Goal: Identify a baseline of food insecurity for this population by FY 2022, then create benchmarks toward closing the equity gaps in food insecurity between this population and the CalFresh-eligible population by 2024.

3. Continue to share promising practices related to basic needs and to coordinate strategies across campuses and intersegmental partners.

a. Goal: Continue to convene the Systemwide Basic Needs Committee to share promising practices, coordinate strategies, and build the community of practice among campus service providers.

b. Goal: Provide the resources needed to offer a biennial California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA) conference that brings together basic needs experts from across UC, California State University (CSU), California Community Colleges (CCC), private and independent colleges, non-profit organizations, and others.

Recommendations for Researchers

1. Further examine the interrelations between the various components of basic needs, including food; housing; financial and economic needs; health care; hygiene; mental health, well-being and safety; sleep; and transportation.

a. Goal: Continuously improve student experience surveys (i.e., the UCUES, GWBS, Cost of Attendance Survey) to evaluate basic needs services and to inform best practices.

b. Goal: Continue to disseminate research and evaluation findings to basic needs leadership, staff, and researchers.

2. Continue researching barriers and facilitators of CalFresh enrollment systemwide, particularly the factors that influence student eligibility, and monitor CalFresh enrollment and application rates among UC students.

a. Goal: Publish a study by 2022 that assesses CalFresh eligibility and trends in CalFresh enrollment with better representation from a range of California county agency staff respondents.

b. Goal: Collaborate with the California Policy Lab and UCOP to develop a methodology for annual reporting on the number of students eligible for and enrolled in CalFresh.

3. Establish assessments of basic needs interventions and identify practices that best support the experiences of students, especially those from historically underserved groups.

a. Goal: Design and launch a survey tool to assess and refine basic needs interventions at the campus level for use during the 2020–21 academic year.

b. Goal: Design and launch the CHEBNA Research, Evaluation and Tools strategy that will coordinate efforts across UC, CSU, and CCC.

Recommendations for Students

1. Encourage more students—on individual campuses and across the system—to access basic needs resources by raising awareness about basic needs insecurity in order to normalize students' availing themselves of assistance.

a. Goal: Include student ambassador internships and peer-to-peer advising in all campus basic needs centers.

2. Continue to prioritize ongoing support for basic needs services in student government leadership and advocacy and participate in campus basic needs committees to represent the student voice in these spaces.

a. Goal: Ensure that all campus basic needs committees include undergraduate and/or graduate student representatives.

CONCLUSION

In the face of an ever-evolving environment that increasingly prevents students from having their basic needs fulfilled, UC stakeholders and partners have worked diligently to decrease rates of basic needs insecurity through multiple avenues of intervention, advocacy, and practice. This report and its recommendations are a testament to the University's ongoing commitment to supporting long-term solutions that provide equitable access to basic needs resources and, in turn, to academic success.

APPENDIX I: SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BASIC NEEDS CHARTER AND MEMBERSHIP

Adopted November 15, 2018[7]

A. Purpose. The Special Committee on Basic Needs shall review campus, systemwide, and national trends in regards to supporting students' basic needs at the University of California, including efforts to address food, housing, and financial insecurity. The Special Committee shall have the authority to explore the scope and impact of basic needs insecurity; review campus basic needs initiatives; review basic needs efforts among campuses, UCOP, and the California State government; and report to the Board on basic needs improvement for students attending the University of California.

B. Membership/Terms of Service. The Special Committee on Basic Needs shall be established for two years. Members of the Special Committee shall be appointed by the Chair of the Board for one-year terms in consultation with the Chair of the Governance and Compensation Committee and may include chancellors and other advisory members.

C. Oversight Responsibilities. The charge of the Special Committee shall include reviewing long-term goals and reporting to the Board with regard to the following matters:

Campus housing security initiatives
Food security initiatives and programs
Establishment of campus basic needs centers
Financial aid and cost of attendance
Student services
Mental health services
Child Care Services

D. Reporting. The Special Committee shall issue a report on basic needs to guide UC's long-term strategic vision to address basic needs.

Special Committee on Basic Needs Membership
- Regents: Laphonza Butler, Michael Cohen, Richard Leib, Lark Park, Christine Simmons, Tony Thurmond, William Um, and Haley Weddle (Chair)
- Ex officio members: Governor Gavin Newsom, Chair of the Regents John A. Pérez, and UC President Michael Drake
- Advisory members: Student Regent Jamaal Muwwakkil, Alumni Regent Debby Stegura, Faculty Representative Kum-Kum Bhavnani, and UC Davis Chancellor Gary S. May

Report-writing Workgroup Membership
- Regents Cohen, Leib, Park, and Weddle (Chair)

APPENDIX II: SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON BASIC NEEDS MEETING TOPICS
Topics are hyperlinked to pdf

January 15, 2019
1. Review of UC Basic Needs Efforts
2. Consultation with Campus and Systemwide Basic Needs Committee Leaders
3. Special Committee Future Items and Priorities

March 12, 2019
1. University of California Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) Data And Dashboard Information About Basic Needs
2. Basic Needs Programs and Services Funding Priorities
3. Governor's 2019–20 Budget Proposal: Student Hunger and Housing Initiatives

April 22, 2019
1. UC Campus Basic Needs Model Inventory Survey
2. Rapid Rehousing Presentation
3. Tour of the UC Davis Basic Needs Center and Food Pantry

July 16, 2019
1. Supporting University of California Students' Financial Literacy
2. Exploring Housing Insecurity Among University of California Students
3. Special Committee's Report to the Board
4. Update on Basic Needs Spending Plan

September 17, 2019
1. CalFresh Eligibility, Access, Enrollment and Partnership Across the University of California
2. Rapid Rehousing Efforts
3. Review of the 2017 Total Cost of Attendance Working Group Report

November 12, 2019
1. Addressing Students' Basic Needs Across California: Collaboration with the University of California, California State University, and California Community Colleges
2. Intersection of Basic Needs and Student Mental Health
3. Update on 2019–20 Campus Basic Needs Spending Plans

January 21, 2020
1. Approaches to Supporting the Basic Needs of Parenting Students
2. Pre-College Basic Needs Outreach and Preparation
3. Update on Exploring Housing Insecurity Among University of California Students

March 17, 2020
1. Examining the Impact of Food and Housing Insecurity on Student Outcomes
2. Preliminary Findings for the Special Committee on Basic Needs Report

May 19, 2020
1. Supporting Students' Basic Needs During COVID-19
2. Special Committee on Basic Needs Report Draft Recommendations

July 28, 2020
1. Financial Aid Offer Letters

September, 2020
1. Special Committee on Basic Needs Report

APPENDIX III: BUDGET ACT OF 2019

Text from the Budget Act of 2019 (SB106, Chapter 55, Statutes of 2019)
Related to Appropriations to Address Food and Housing Insecurity[6]

$15 million for student food and housing insecurity:

(a) Of the funds appropriated in this item, $15,000,000 shall be available to support meal donation programs, food pantries serving students, CalFresh enrollment and other means of directly providing nutrition assistance to students. The funds shall also be used to assist homeless and housing-insecure students in securing stable housing.

(b) The University of California shall report to the Department of Finance and relevant policy and fiscal committees of the Legislature by March 1, 2020, and each year thereafter regarding the use of funds specified in this provision. The report shall include, but not necessarily be limited to, all of the following information:

  (1) The amount of funds distributed to campuses, and identification of which campuses received funds.

  (2) For each campus, a programmatic budget summarizing how the funds were spent. The budget shall include any other funding used to supplement the General Fund.

  (3) A description of the types of programs in which each campus invested.

  (4) A list of campuses that accept or plan to accept electronic benefit transfer.

  (5) A list of campuses that participate or plan to participate in the CalFresh Restaurant Meals Program.

  (6) A list of campuses that offer or plan to offer emergency housing or assistance with long-term housing arrangements.

  (7) A description of how campuses leveraged or coordinated with other State or local resources to address housing and food insecurity.

  (8) An analysis describing how funds reduced food insecurity and homelessness among students, and, if feasible, how funds impacted student outcomes such as persistence or completion.

  (9) Other findings and best practices implemented by campuses.

$3.5 million for rapid rehousing efforts:

(a) Of the funds appropriated in this item, $3,500,000 shall be available to support rapid rehousing efforts assisting homeless and housing insecure students.

(b) Campuses shall establish ongoing partnerships with community organizations that have a tradition of helping populations experiencing homelessness to provide wraparound services and rental subsidies for students. Funds appropriated in the item may be used for, but authorized uses are not limited to, the following activities:

  (1) Connecting students with community case managers who have knowledge and expertise in accessing safety net resources

  (2) Establishing ongoing emergency housing procedures, including on-campus and off-campus resources

  (3) Providing emergency grants that are necessary to secure housing or to prevent the imminent loss of housing

(c) Funding shall be allocated to campuses based on demonstrated need.

(d) The terms "homeless" and "housing insecure" shall be defined as students who lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This includes students who are:

  (1) Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason

  (2) Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations

  (3) Living in emergency or transitional shelters

  (4) Abandoned in hospitals

  (5) Living in a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings

  (6) Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations or similar settings

APPENDIX IV: BASIC NEEDS SPENDING ALLOCATIONS AND STUDENTS SERVED SUMMARY

Figure I. Basic Needs Budgets, by Campus, Fiscal Year 2019–20 to 2021–22*

Campus	Base Allocations	Allocations based on estimated number of food and housing-insecure students	Approved Innovation Grant Proposals	Allocations of Remaining Innovation Grant Funds	Total
Berkeley	$500,000	$896,000		$164,000	$1,560,000
Davis	500,000	977,000		173,500	1,650,500
Irvine	500,000	945,000		169,700	,614,700
Los Angeles	500,000	850,000	$400,000	158,600	1,908,600
Merced	500,000	291,000		92,909	883,909
Riverside	500,000	740,000	338,516	145,600	1,724,116
San Diego	500,000	903,000	180,500	164,800	1,748,300
San Francisco	500,000	49,000		64,500	613,500
Santa Barbara	500,000	762,000		148,200	1,410,200
Santa Cruz	500,000	587,000	171,475	127,700	1,386,175
UCOP *(Systemwide Coordination/ Evaluation)*					500,000
TOTALS	**$5,000,000**	**$7,000,000**	**$1,090,491**	**$1,409,509**	**$15,000,000**

* For the full UC Basic Needs Legislative Report of FY 2019–20, visit
https://www.ucop.edu/operating-budget/_files/legreports/20-21/uc_basic_needs_leg_report-92220.pdf

Figure II: Estimated amount of students served by campus basic needs services during Fiscal Year 2019–20, by campus

UC Campus	Unique students served[†]	Student contacts[‡]
Berkeley	5,000	41,000
Davis	3,467	8,734
Irvine	7,681	28,117
Los Angeles	4,799	29,839
Merced	3,908	11,749
Riverside	4,665	16,749
Santa Barbara	3,235	32,863
Santa Cruz	5,301	22,461
San Diego	8,894	32,863
San Francisco	1,564	10,889
TOTAL	**48,514**	**235,264**

[†] *Campus basic needs staff calculated the number of unique students served by basic needs services by the number of individual student identification card "swipes" registered at all basic needs services, or the total number of individual students who were served by state-funded basic needs programs.*

[‡] *Student contacts represent the total number of student identification card "swipes," or the total number of instances in which students were served by state-funded basic needs programs.*

APPENDIX V: RAPID REHOUSING SPENDING ALLOCATIONS AND STUDENTS SERVED SUMMARY

Figure III. Distribution of Rapid Rehousing Allocations by Campus*

UC Campus	Base Allocation	Allocation Based on Food/Housing Insecure Student Estimates	Total Allocation
Berkeley	$150,000	$322,000	$472,000
Davis	150,000	204,000	354,000
Irvine	150,000	247,000	397,000
Los Angeles	150,000	257,000	407,000
Merced	150,000	53,000	203,000
Riverside	150,000	157,000	307,000
San Diego	150,000	256,000	406,000
San Francisco	150,000	18,000	168,000
Santa Barbara	150,000	265,000	415,000
Santa Cruz	150,000	221,000	371,000
TOTAL	$1,500,000	$2,000,000	$3,500,000

* For the full UC Rapid Rehousing Legislative Report of FY 2019–20, visit
https://www.ucop.edu/operating-budget/_files/legreports/19-20/2019-20_rapid_rehousing_legrpt_7-13-2020.pdf

Housing-Insecure Students Served

From June 2019 to May 2020, campuses served approximately 2,150 housing-insecure students across the University of California system. This number is an estimate, as campuses independently tracked the number of students they served and did so using different metrics. Generally, campuses defined the number of students served as those who received emergency housing; temporary housing and hotel vouchers; rent and deposit assistance; placements in short- and long-term housing; and case management that connected them to wraparound services. Many of these students already had permanent housing, but due to unexpected circumstances, such as loss of job or unexpected medical bills, they found themselves with insufficient funding to pay for rent.

Over 550 students either obtained permanent housing and/or received support such as rent subsidies to help them remain in their current housing. While only 15 housing-insecure students who received housing support graduated, the rest remain enrolled at their respective campuses. The final count of students served may change, as this report is being submitted before the end of the 2019–20 academic year, and UC campuses are working toward a common metric for tracking the number of housing-insecure students served.

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