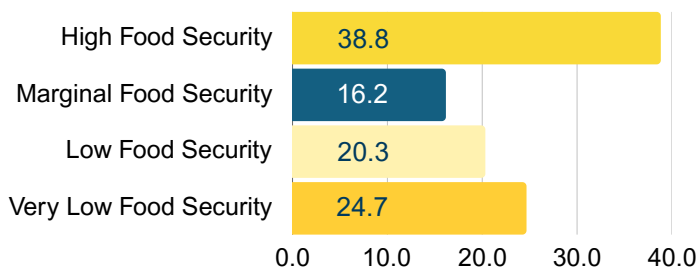


Food insecurity among UC Davis Students: Findings from the UCLA-CSUF Study

During Spring 2024, we invited a 20% random sample (8,000 students), representative of the UC Davis Student body, to participate in a survey to learn more about their experiences with food insecurity and resources on campus. 675 students completed the survey. We provide the breakdown by socio-demographic characteristics for groups of students that had at least 10 respondents.

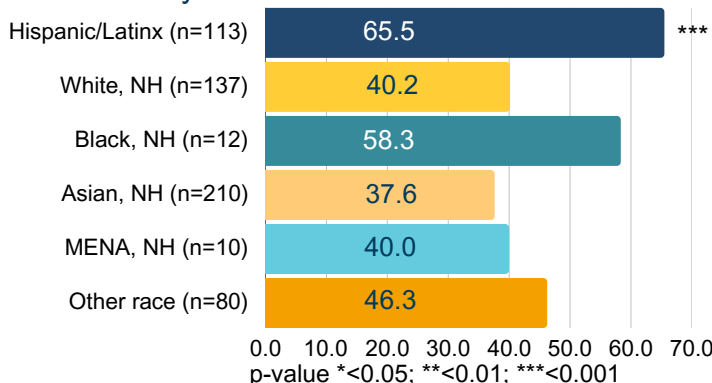
45% students were food insecure

Figure 1. Food security levels reported by UC Davis students (n=600)



Using the validated USDA household measure, 39% reported having high food security (no difficulty accessing food nor experiencing limitations). 45% were food insecure; 20% had low food security (decreased the quality, variety or desirability of their diet) and 25% were very low food secure (changed their eating patterns and reduced their intake (Figure 1). 16% were marginally food secure (anxious about having enough food but did not change their diet or the amount eaten).

Figure 2. Percentage of food insecure students by race/ethnicity



Other race includes American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, and multiple race.
NH = non-Hispanic; MENA = Middle Eastern & North African

Statistically significant differences in food insecurity existed by student race and ethnicity. Figure 2 shows that Hispanic/Latinx students (65.5%) reported the highest rates of food security followed closely by non-Hispanic Black students (58.3%).

Figure 3. Percentage of food insecure students by student sociodemographic characteristic

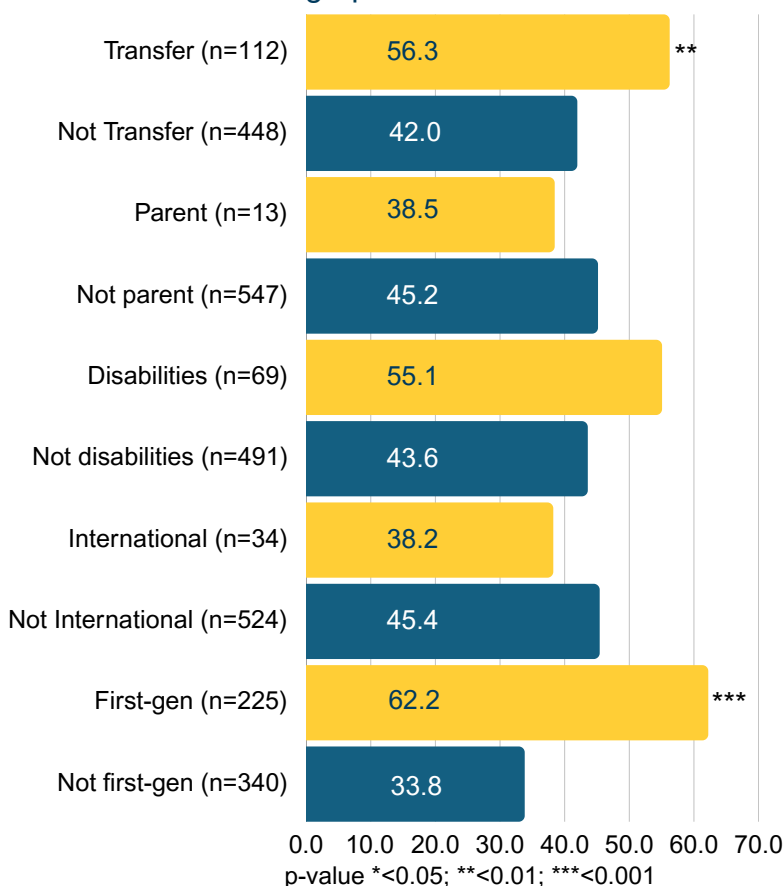


Figure 3 shows that students who were transfer students had significantly higher rates of food insecurity than non-transfer students. Additionally, first-generation college students had rates of food insecurity that were nearly twice as high as those reported by non-first-generation college students.

We thank ECMC Foundation for their support of this research.

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Figure 4. Use and awareness of food assistance programs by food insecurity status

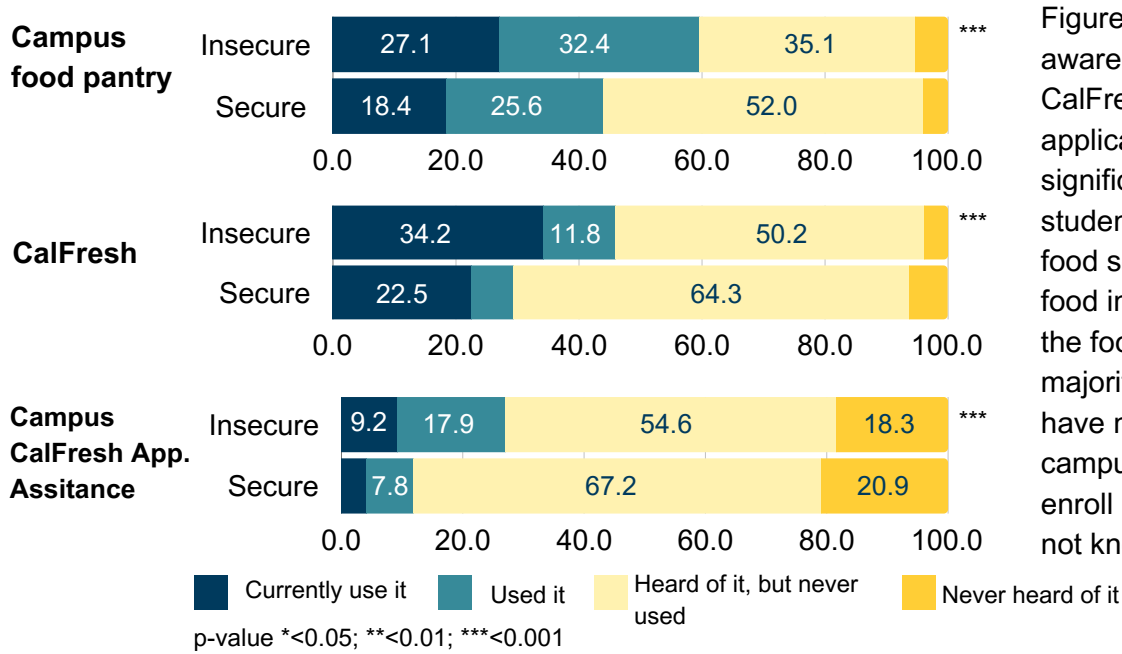
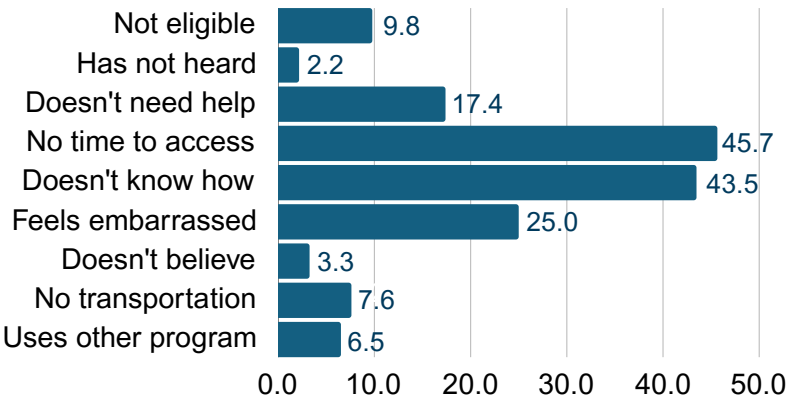


Figure 4 highlights students' use and awareness of the campus food pantry, CalFresh and the campus CalFresh application assistance. While significantly more food insecure students use these resources than food secure students, over a third of food insecure students are aware of the food pantry but do not use it. A majority of food insecure students have not used the assistance the campus provides in helping students enroll in CalFresh and nearly 20% do not know it exists.

Figure 5. Reasons why food insecure students do not use the campus food pantry (n=92)



Suggesting important avenues for interventions, Figure 5 shows reasons why food-insecure students, despite knowing about the campus food pantry, do not use it. 46% reported not having time to access it, 44% reported not knowing how to access it, and 25% reported feeling embarrassed.

Figure 6. Reasons why food insecure students do not use CalFresh (n=132)

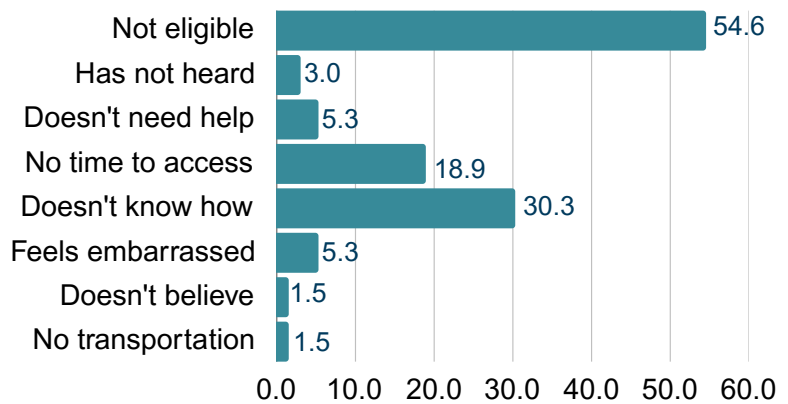


Figure 6 shows reasons why food-insecure students do not use CalFresh. 55% of students reported not being eligible, 30% didn't know how to use CalFresh, and 19% having not time to access. These findings suggest interventions for increased CalFresh accessibility.

Figure 7. Reasons why food insecure students do not use campus CalFresh application assistance (n=143)

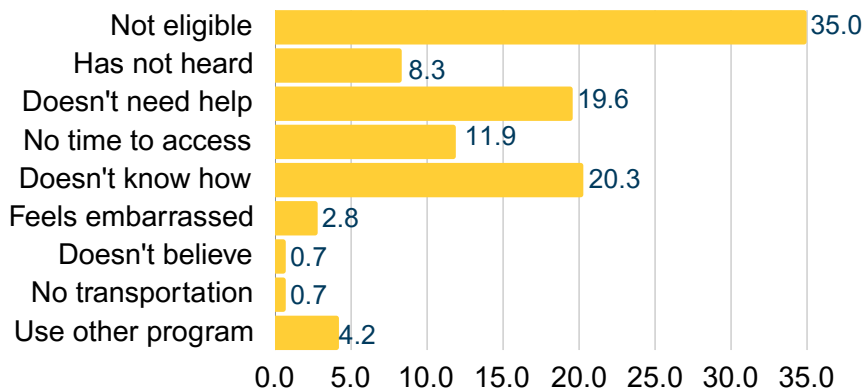


Figure 7 highlights reasons why UC Davis students who have heard of the campus CalFresh application assistance do not use it, with 35% reporting not being eligible, 20% not needing help, and 20% not knowing how. These findings indicate opportunities to increase awareness of eligibility criteria and how students can access the assistance in addition to normalizing its use.