



## UCSC 2021 Graduate Student Survey: Financial Situation and Support, Food Security, Residence During the Pandemic, and Support for Families

Based on Doctoral Students' Responses  
Report by IRAPS, April 2022

This report from the 2021 UCSC Graduate Student Survey contains responses of doctoral students about their financial situation and support, food security, residence during the pandemic, and support for families.

The 2021 UCSC Graduate Student Survey covered a comprehensive range of topics about the graduate student experience. The Graduate Student Survey has been held regularly at UCSC since 2007, and is conducted every other year in the Spring quarter. Since Spring 2021 this survey has become a UC-wide survey.

The survey was open from April 15, 2021 to July 1, 2021. All graduate students enrolled in Winter and/or Spring quarter 2021 were invited to participate. Students received an initial invitation and nine reminder emails. The survey was also promoted through UCSC Graduate Division online media, International Students and Scholars Services, various department listservs, BSOE email listservs, and the MyUCSC student portal.

Results are disaggregated by division, as well as other background characteristics where appropriate. Students' responses are representative of the academic division and gender composition (weights were applied to correct for some differences in response rates).

For results about student experiences with faculty teaching, program quality, advising, program climate, professional development, career plans, and campus services, or about teaching preparation, please see the 2021 Graduate Student Survey reports posted on the UCSC IRAPS webpage. If you have questions, please write to IRAPS at [surveys@ucsc.edu](mailto:surveys@ucsc.edu).

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## Executive Summary

### Priority areas for the university

- Students indicated the following top three priorities for the university to prioritize in regard to attention and resources: financial support, housing insecurity, and faculty advising and mentorship, among a list of eleven priority areas.

### Main sources of financial support

- Humanities and Arts students reported the highest levels of hardship and lowest confidence in their financial situation, Social Sciences students were in-between, and PBSci and BSOE students reported a relatively better financial situation overall.
- Among the main types or sources of support, the most common were Teaching Assistantships (TAships) (66%), fellowships/scholarships (57%), and Graduate Student Researcher appointments (GSRships) (44%).
- Teaching Assistantships were more prevalent in Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences, while Research Assistantships were more prevalent in BSOE and PBSci.

### Financial situation

- While nearly all students had either TA or GSR or other academic sources of support, half (49%) of students used personal savings regardless of the academic division.
- About one-third of students used family earnings/savings (34%) and/or were supporting themselves through other sources of employment (30%) outside of university-funded (such as TAships or GSRships) or academic-related sources of support.
- Overall, about 30% of students had high confidence in their financial situation, and another 30% had low confidence in their financial situation.
- About 1 in 2 Humanities and Arts students fully agreed that financial hardship has impeded their success in the program, compared with 1 in 3 Social Sciences students, 1 in 4 PBSci and 1 in 10 BSOE students.
- Confidence in personal financial circumstances varied across divisions: only 10% of graduate students in the Arts and Humanities divisions and in Humanities reported being fully confident in their financial situation, compared with 28% in Social Sciences, and about 2 in 5 in PBSci (37%) and BSOE (43%).
- About 30% of students who come from underrepresented communities (African American/Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American, Pacific Islander) *strongly disagreed* that they were confident in their financial situation, compared with 16% of white non-Hispanic students, 11% of Asian American students, and 11% of international students.
- More women reported low confidence in their financial situation than did men, across divisions.

### ***Food and housing insecurity***

- About 2 in 5 (41%) Humanities students and 1 in 3 (31%) Arts Division students reported having cut the size of their meals or skipped meals at some point in the last twelve months because there was not enough money. In terms of frequency of cutting the size of meals or skipping meals, 1 in 4 (24%) Humanities students did so almost every month.
- About 1 in 6 (16%) Humanities students lacked a place to sleep at some point in the last 12 months, including all academic terms and summer.

### ***Residence during the pandemic in 2020-21***

- Among students who moved in the last 12 months, more than half of Arts Division (51%) and Humanities (61%) students indicated doing so due to financial difficulties.
- In Spring quarter 2021, about 40 to 50% of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences students lived over 20 miles from campus, while only 22-23% of PBSci and BSOE students lived that far from campus.
- Students who come from underrepresented communities were much more likely to move residences for financial reasons than were other students who moved residences: for example, within the Arts and Humanities divisions, almost 9 in 10 (89%) students who come from underrepresented communities moved for financial reasons, compared with half (51%) of students in the Arts and Humanities divisions who do not come from underrepresented communities.
- Among students who moved, students who were relying on teaching assistantships were more likely to have moved for financial reasons, than were students who were not supported by teaching assistantships. Students who were using personal savings, and students who were relying on personal earnings other than TA or GSR positions, were also more likely to move due to financial reasons.

### ***Support for students with children***

- Based on survey responses, 1 in 10 (10%) doctoral students have children. Among students who have children, 1 in 5 (22%) indicated having very low confidence in their financial situation, compared with 15% of students without children. Due to sample sizes, these differences were not statistically significant.
- Among students with children, only 1 in 5 (19%) students indicated that their family felt supported in the campus community compared with 1 in 3 (32%) students who do not have children. Despite the substantive difference, these differences were not statistically significant, due to sample sizes.

## Survey Response Rates

Among Doctoral students, 1440 were invited and 585 participated in the survey, with an overall participation rate of **41%**. For details by division, ethnicity, and gender, see Table 1.

Women, Social Sciences students, and white non-Hispanic students had somewhat higher response rates than other students. BSOE students and African American/Black students responded with somewhat lower rates but still high (31-33%). In order to ensure that our results are representative, we made minor adjustments (weighted responses) to match the relative size of each division and gender compositions in the overall student population.

**Table 1. Doctoral student response rates for UCSC 2021 Graduate Student Survey**

		Total Invited (N)	Total Participated (N)	Participation Rate (%)
<b>Campus</b>	Doctoral students	1440	585	41%
<b>Division</b>	Arts	94	43	46%
	Humanities	178	78	44%
	PBSci	499	195	39%
	Social Sciences	306	149	49%
	BSOE	363	120	33%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	African American/Black	59	18	31%
	American Indian/Alaskan Native	15	6	40%
	Asian American	155	60	39%
	Hispanic/Latinx	157	60	38%
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	<5	0	0%
	White, non-Hispanic	608	276	45%
	International	376	140	37%
	Unknown	68	25	37%
<b>Gender</b>	Women	658	292	44%
	Men	685	257	38%
	Non-binary	45	20	44%
	Unknown gender	52	16	31%

## Methods

The report includes data tables that show overall results and results disaggregated by division or by demographic characteristics. Results are representative of the academic division and gender composition (weights were applied to correct for some differences in response rates). Group differences were tested using chi-squared tests.

## Findings

### Priority areas for the university

Students received a list of eleven priority areas and were asked to select up to 3 areas they wanted the university to prioritize in regard to attention and resources. Students most frequently selected financial support, followed by housing insecurity, and faculty advising and mentorship. Students who come from underrepresented communities (including African American/Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American, and Pacific Islander, in this report) were more likely than other students to select food insecurity (24% vs. 9%) and program climate (30% vs. 17%). See Tables 2 and 3.

**Table 2. Areas for the university to prioritize by division**

(Percent of students selecting each area as one of the "top three" priorities – sorted by total percentage)	Arts N = 32	Humanities N = 58	PBSci N = 165	BSOE N = 115	Social Sciences N = 103	Total N = 473
Financial support	72%	77%	64%	55%	69%	65%
Housing insecurity	43%	54%	38%	39%	52%	44%
Faculty advising and mentorship	21%	16%	35%	34%	31%	31%
Program quality	24%	21%	27%	40%	24%	28%
Mental health	29%	29%	32%	16%	27%	27%
Professional or skill developments	17%	19%	32%	26%	22%	26%
Graduate program climate	18%	13%	23%	18%	18%	19%
Career advising	21%	21%	18%	18%	19%	19%
Curricular requirements/offering	17%	10%	12%	23%	14%	15%
Food insecurity	16%	21%	9%	10%	12%	12%
University services	10%	5%	5%	11%	5%	7%

*Question text: Of the topics discussed in this survey, which would you most like the University to prioritize in regard to attention and resources? Please indicate your top three priorities, starting with what is most important to you.*

**Table 3. Areas for the university to prioritize by underrepresented status**

	Students who come from underrepresented communities N = 83	Not from underrepresented communities N = 389	Total N = 472
Financial support	59%	67%	65%
Housing insecurity	48%	43%	44%
Faculty advising and mentorship	31%	31%	31%
Program quality	25%	29%	28%
Mental health	26%	27%	27%
Professional or skill developments	20%	27%	26%
Graduate program climate	<b>30%</b>	17%	19%
Career advising	21%	18%	19%
Curricular requirements/offering	12%	16%	15%
Food insecurity	<b>24%</b>	9%	12%
University services	2%	8%	7%

*Question text: Of the topics discussed in this survey, which would you most like the University to prioritize in regard to attention and resources? Please indicate your top three priorities, starting with what is most important to you.*

## Sources of financial support for graduate education

Students were asked about the types of support they used as a source of financial support for graduate education during the 2020-21 academic year.

Among the main university-funded or academic-related sources of support:

- Teaching Assistantships (TAships) were more prevalent in Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.
- Research Assistantships (GSRships) were more prevalent in BSOE and PBSci.

Three-quarters (77%) of students received tuition remission or other discounts. Students could indicate multiple types of support. See Table 4.

**Table 4. University-funded or academic-related sources of financial support students used for this academic year (students could select one or more sources)**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 35	N = 67	N = 181	N = 128	N = 114	N = 523
Tuition remission or other discounts	85%	87%	74%	77%	73%	77%
Teaching assistantship	74%	83%	61%	55%	72%	66%
Fellowship, scholarship	68%	67%	56%	52%	53%	57%
Research assistantship	27%	17%	54%	59%	32%	44%
Grant	25%	23%	32%	32%	24%	29%
Other assistantship	6%	4%	5%	6%	8%	6%
Internship, clinical residency	0%	1%	1%	6%	3%	3%
Traineeship	0%	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%

*Question text: Please indicate which of the following is a source of financial support for your graduate education this academic year. Select all that apply.*

Next we analyzed sources of support to identify students who indicated the following sources (shown above in Table 4): teaching assistantship, research assistantship, fellowship/scholarship, grant, other assistantship, traineeship, internship/clinical residency.

- Nearly all (98.5%) relied on at least one of these types of support.
- About 70% of students used 2 or more of these sources. See Table 5.

**Table 5. Counts of types of university-funded and/or academic-related support in 2020-21, per student**

Count of types of support	N = 523
0	1%
1	31%
2	38%
3	21%
4	7%
5	1%
6	< 1%

Only 31% of students relied on one source of university-funded or academic-related sources. For example, relatively few students (about 14%) relied exclusively on a TAship to finance their graduate studies and living expenses in 2020-21. See Table 6.

This result suggests that most students who had TAships or GSRships also relied on other (personal) sources of support, discussed in next section.

**Table 6. Teaching Assistantships (TAships), Graduate Student Researcher positions (GSRships), and fellowships/scholarships as the sole source of earnings for this academic year (students who indicated only one source of earnings)**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 35	N = 67	N = 181	N = 128	N = 114	N = 523
TAship only	16%	18%	12%	8%	20%	14%
Fellowship/scholarship only	13%	11%	10%	10%	12%	11%
GSRship only	0%	1%	7%	7%	4%	5%
Grant only	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%	1%
Traineeship only	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Internship/clinical residency only	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other assistantship only	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

*Note: Students who indicated only one source of earnings means only one of the following: teaching assistantship, research assistantship, fellowship/scholarship, grant, other assistantship, traineeship, internship/clinical residency. Results include students who may also have indicated receiving some support outside employment or grants, such as tuition remission or public assistance programs, and also includes students who may also have indicated being supported by other personal earnings (outside of academic-related work).*

### Sources of financial support other than university-funded or academic-related sources

While nearly all students either worked as a TA or GSR or had other academic-related sources of support, many students simultaneously relied on additional sources of support:

- Half (49%) of students used personal savings regardless of the academic division.
- About one-third of students used family earnings/savings (34%) and/or supported themselves through other sources of employment (30%) outside of university-funded or academic-related sources of support.

Half of students in the Arts and Humanities divisions relied on personal earnings (other than those listed in Table 4) to support themselves in addition to other sources of support, compared with about 1 in 5 of students in PBSci and BSOE. While about 2 in 5 of students in the Humanities and Social Sciences division relied on the earnings or savings of a spouse, partner, and/or family, only 1 in 4 (25%) of students in BSOE needed to do so. See Table 7 (next page).



**Table 7. Sources of financial support students used for this academic year (students could select one or more sources)**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 35	N = 67	N = 181	N = 128	N = 114	N = 523
Personal savings	51%	61%	48%	45%	50%	49%
Spouse's, partner's, and/or family earnings or savings	35%	43%	32%	25%	40%	34%
Personal earnings (other than listed in Table 4)	53%	47%	21%	22%	35%	30%
Public assistance programs (CalFresh, etc.)	9%	14%	6%	6%	7%	7%
Loans (federal)	11%	13%	6%	1%	10%	7%
Employer reimbursement assistance (other)	9%	4%	4%	7%	1%	5%
Foreign (non-US) support (other)	4%	4%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Loans (from any non-federal sources)	2%	0%	2%	3%	1%	2%
Other sources	0%	7%	3%	3%	3%	3%

*Question text: Please indicate which of the following is a source of financial support for your graduate education this academic year. Select all that apply.*

## Students' assessment of financial situation

Students' assessments of their financial situation showed significant differences across divisions and demographic backgrounds. While we found differences based on race/ethnicity and gender, first-generation status did not seem to have an impact.

**Overall, about 3 in 10 (31%) students had high confidence in their financial situation (agreed/strongly agreed with the statement "I'm confident in my financial situation"), while another 3 in 10 (30%) had low confidence in their financial situation (disagreed/strongly disagreed about the statement "I'm confident in my financial situation").**

Humanities and Arts students reported the highest levels of hardship and low confidence in their financial situation, Social Sciences students were in-between, and PBSci and BSOE students reported somewhat better financial situations overall.

Students' financial hardship varied significantly across divisions. About 1 in 2 students in the Arts (50%) and Humanities (57%) *agreed or strongly agreed* that financial hardship has impeded their success in the program, compared with 1 in 3 Social Sciences students, 1 in 4 PBSci students and 1 in 10 BSOE students. See Table 6.

When asked whether they have been concerned about money lately, about 2 in 3 (65-69%) students in the Humanities and Arts divisions *agreed or strongly agreed*, compared with about half (50-56%) in the PBSci and Social Sciences divisions, and 32% of BSOE students.

Similarly, confidence in personal financial circumstances varied across divisions. Only 10% of Arts and Humanities students were confident in their financial situation, compared with 28% in Social Sciences, and about 2 in 5 in PBSci (37%) and BSOE (43%). See Table 8.

**Table 8. Assessments of financial situation**

(Percent agree/strongly agree)	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 35	N = 67	N = 181	N = 128	N = 113	N = 523
I'm confident in my financial situation.	10%	10%	37%	43%	28%	31%
I can get by financially without having to cut back.	20%	15%	36%	34%	29%	30%
I've been concerned about money lately.	65%	69%	50%	32%	56%	50%
Financial hardship has impeded my success in my program.	50%	57%	24%	12%	35%	30%

*Question text: Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response.*

## Gender- and division-specific differences in assessment of financial situation

We investigated gender- and division-specific differences in students' financial confidence. Based on students' degree of disagreement with the statement "I'm confident in my financial situation," we found that students' financial confidence varied by gender within and across the academic divisions.

Among Arts and Humanities students, 52% of women and 42% of men had low confidence (*strongly disagreed or disagreed* that they are confident) in their financial situation. Among Social Sciences students, 40% of women and 28% of men had low confidence in their financial situation. In comparison, 26% of women and 18% of men in PSci and BSOE had low confidence. Campus-wide, 40% of students who identify as nonbinary or genderqueer, or for whom gender was unknown, had low confidence in their financial situation. See Table 9.

**Table 9. Low confidence in financial situation, by gender and division**

	Arts/Humanities		Social Sciences		PSci/BSOE		Nonbinary/ Unknown	Total
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men		
	N = 48	N = 41	N = 69	N = 37	N = 129	N = 167	N = 34	N = 523
Strongly disagree	29%	25%	20%	22%	13%	7%	27%	16%
Disagree	23%	16%	20%	6%	13%	10%	13%	14%
<i>Combined:</i>	52%	42%	40%	28%	26%	18%	40%	30%

*Question text: Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response ... I'm confident in my financial situation.*

*Note: "Nonbinary/Unknown" is for students across all divisions.*

## Differences in financial assessment by ethnicity, college generation, and gender

Almost 3 in 10 students who come from the underrepresented communities had very low (*strongly disagreed*) confidence in their financial situation compared with 16% of white, non-Hispanic students, 11% of Asian American, and 11% International students. See Table 10.

**Table 10. Low confidence in financial situation, by ethnicity**

	African American/Black	American Indian/Alaskan	Hispanic/Latinx	Under represented*	Asian American	White, non-Hispanic	International	Unknown	Total
	N = 16	N = 7	N = 54	N = 77	N = 51	N = 244	N = 125	N = 25	N = 523
Strongly disagree	29%	37%	28%	29%	11%	16%	11%	11%	16%
Disagree	13%	0%	20%	17%	8%	15%	12%	14%	14%
<i>Combined:</i>	52%	37%	48%	46%	19%	31%	23%	25%	30%

*Question text: Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response ... I'm confident in my financial situation.*

*Note(\*): "Underrepresented" includes African American/Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Hispanic/Latinx, and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students, even if not shown in a separate column.*

First-generation status did not seem to affect financial confidence. Among first-generation college students, women graduate students were more likely to have low confidence in their

financial situation compared to men (34% vs. 20%). Similarly, among continuing-generation students, women graduate students were less confident than men (36% vs. 23%). See Table 11.

**Table 11. Low confidence in financial situation, by college generation and gender**

	First generation women	First generation men	Continuing generation women	Continuing generation men	Total
	N = 67	N = 64	N = 162	N = 158	N = 523
Strongly disagree	18%	14%	17%	10%	16%
Disagree	17%	7%	19%	13%	14%
<i>Combined:</i>	34%	20%	36%	23%	30%

*Question text: Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response ... I'm confident in my financial situation.*

*Note: Total includes students who identify as nonbinary or genderqueer, students for whom student gender is unknown, and students for whom college generation is unknown, even though not shown separately.*

## Differences in financial assessment by graduate students with children

About 1 in 5 (22%) of students who have children indicated having very low confidence in their financial situation, compared with 15% of students with no children. Overall, students with children were similarly likely to have low confidence as students without children (about 30%). See Table 12.

**Table 12. Low confidence in financial situation, by whether or not students had children in family**

	Yes, has children	No children	Total
	N = 50	N = 462	N = 512
Strongly disagree	22%	15%	16%
Disagree	6%	15%	14%
<i>Combined:</i>	28%	30%	30%

*Question text: Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response ... I'm confident in my financial situation.*

*Note: Strongly disagreeing with this statement is described as "very low confidence" in financial situation.*

## Differences in financial assessment by stage of doctoral program

Overall, students who were still taking classes (early in the program) were somewhat more confident than their more advanced peers. About 1 in 4 (24%) students taking classes reported low confidence in their financial situation (*disagreed or strongly disagreed* about being confident in their financial situation), while about 1 in 3 (32%) students working on their dissertation proposal reported low confidence in their financial situation. Due to sample sizes, however, differences were not statistically significant. See Table 13.

**Table 13. Low confidence in financial situation, by stage of progress in program**

	Taking classes N = 145	Working on dissertation proposal N = 224	Researching or writing dissertation, or completed N = 154	Total N = 523
Strongly disagree	12%	18%	17%	16%
Disagree	12%	14%	15%	14%
<i>Combined:</i>	24%	32%	32%	30%

*Question text: Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response ... I'm confident in my financial situation.*

*Note: Disagreeing or strongly disagreeing (combined) with this statement is referred as "low confidence" in financial situation, and strongly disagreeing with the statement is referred as "very low confidence".*

## Relationship between type of support and financial confidence

To examine the relationship between types of support and level of financial confidence, we conducted analyses of each source of financial support for graduate students' education, using chi-squared tests. Students could indicate multiple sources of support.

We found that **none** of the sources, including academic and personal, had a significant **positive impact** on students' confidence in their financial situation, except having an internship or clinical residency but the number of students who had this type of support was very small (15 respondents). See Table 14.

Overall, some funding sources had even a negative impact on financial confidence (or signaling that students are struggling such as those who use public assistance programs). That is, students who indicated the following types of funding were significantly less likely to be financially confident, compared with students who did not have that type of funding:

- Being supported by teaching assistantships (of them only 27% were financially confident)
- Using personal savings (among these students, 26% were financially confident)
- Relying on earnings or savings of a family member including a spouse or partner (25%)
- Using other personal earnings (that is, other than TAs or GSAs) (19%)
- Receiving support from public assistance programs (15%)
- Being supported by federal loans (only 2% of those with federal loans were financially confident)

Note that GSRship, a common source of support, was not significantly related to having either low or high financial confidence. For details on the types of financial support that have a relationship (negative or positive) with students' confidence in their financial situation, see Table 14 and 15.

**Table 14. High confidence in financial situation, by type of financial support**

	High confidence in financial situation
All students (N = 523):	31%
Students with internship, clinical residency (N = 15) – note: small n	62%
Students with teaching assistantship (N = 341)	27%
Students who are using personal savings (N = 258)	26%
Students who are using spouse's, partner's, and/or family earnings or savings (N = 175)	25%
Students who are using other personal earnings (N = 155)	19%
Students who are using public assistance programs (such as CalFresh) (N = 39)	15%
Students who have federal loans (N = 36)	2%

*Note: "Confident in financial situation" are those students who selected "Agree" or "Strongly agree" to the question, "Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response ... I'm confident in my financial situation." Other options included "Strongly agree", "Agree", "Somewhat agree", or "Somewhat disagree". Rows shown are those sources of support that had a significant impact on being financially confident, and are based on answers to the question, "Please indicate which of the following is a source of financial support for your graduate education this academic year."*

We also analyzed whether factors of support were associated with low financial confidence. Overall, 26% of students *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* with the statement, "I'm confident in my financial situation".

Importantly, we found that two widespread personal sources of support are significantly related to students' having low confidence in their financial situations such as using personal earnings other than those already listed elsewhere (43% had low confidence), and using personal savings (37% had low confidence). See Table 15.

**Table 15. Low confidence in financial situation, by type of financial support**

	Low confidence in financial situation
All students (N = 523)	30%
Students who are using personal savings (N = 258)	37%
Students who are using personal earnings other than TAs, GSRship, etc. (N = 155)	43%
Students who have loans (from any non-federal sources) (N = 9)	66%
Students who are using public assistance programs (such as CalFresh) (N = 39)	49%

*Note: "Low confidence in financial situation" are those students who selected "Disagree" or "Strongly disagree" to the question, "Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response ... I'm confident in my financial situation."*

## Food security

Close to 40% of Arts and Humanities students reported food insecurity based on a series of questions related to food consumption in the last 12 months.

Specifically, 41% of students in Humanities indicated *often true* or *sometimes true* when asked if the food they bought didn't last and they did not have enough money to get more, compared with 17% of BSOE students. 44% of Humanities students indicated *often true* or *sometimes true* when asked if they could not afford to eat balanced meals, while 1 in 5 (20%) of BSOE students felt the same. See Table 16.

**Table 16. Regular access to food**

		Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
		N = 35	N = 65	N = 174	N = 125	N = 106	N = 506
The food that I bought just didn't last, and I didn't have money to get more.	Often true	11%	20%	3%	1%	5%	6%
	Sometimes true	24%	21%	17%	16%	21%	19%
	Never true	64%	59%	80%	83%	74%	76%
I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals.	Often true	14%	26%	7%	2%	13%	10%
	Sometimes true	29%	19%	17%	18%	20%	19%
	Never true	57%	56%	76%	80%	67%	71%

*Question text: For the following statements, please say whether the statement was often true, sometimes true, or never true for you in the last 12 months.*

More so than students in other divisions, Arts and Humanities doctoral students ate less than they should (40-41%) or experienced hunger (27% Arts, 33% Humanities). See Table 17.

**Table 17. Eating less or being hungry**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 35	N = 65	N = 174	N = 128	N = 107	N = 509
Eat less than you should because there wasn't enough money for food?	40%	41%	21%	14%	24%	24%
Hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?	27%	33%	12%	9%	19%	17%

*Question text: In the last 12 months, did you:*

About 2 in 5 (41%) Humanities students and 1 in 3 (31%) Arts Division students reported having cut the size of their meals or skipped meals at some point in the last twelve months because there was not enough money. In terms of frequency of cutting the size of meals or skipping meals, 1 in 4 (24%) Humanities students did so almost every month. See Table 18.

**Table 18. Cutting or skipping meals**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 34	N = 65	N = 174	N = 128	N = 106	N = 507
No, do not cut or skip meals	69%	59%	84%	87%	76%	79%
Yes, cut or skip meals:	31%	41%	16%	13%	24%	21%
Cut or skip meals, 1 or 2 months	9%	3%	4%	6%	6%	5%
Cut or skip meals, some months but not every month	13%	14%	10%	5%	13%	10%
Cut or skip meals, almost every month	10%	24%	2%	3%	5%	6%

*Note: Based on results from two questions: "In the last 12 months: Did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?" and for those who selected 'Yes', a follow-up question, "You indicated that you had cut the size of your meals or skipped meals because there wasn't enough money for food. How often did this happen?"*

## Residence during the pandemic in 2020-21

In Spring quarter 2021 most graduate students lived off-campus either in an apartment or in a house. Over one-third (36%) of graduate students lived off-campus in an apartment and about half (49%) of graduate students lived off-campus in a house. See Table 19.

**Table 19. Type of housing in Spring quarter 2021**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 35	N = 67	N = 176	N = 129	N = 109	N = 516
Campus residence hall	0%	1%	1%	6%	4%	3%
Campus owned apartment or house (on- or off-campus)	12%	4%	7%	11%	13%	9%
Off-campus in an apartment	53%	44%	30%	38%	31%	36%
Off-campus in a house	33%	46%	61%	43%	44%	49%
No stable residence/Homeless	0%	3%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Other, please elaborate	2%	1%	1%	2%	6%	2%

*Question text: Where are you living this term?*

*Note: Options also included a "Sorority or fraternity" or "Co-op student housing", but no students selected these.*



About 2 in 5 Social Sciences (38%) and Arts Division (42%) students, as well as half (52%) of Humanities students, lived over 20 miles from campus, while only about 1 in 5 (22-23%) PBSci and BSOE students lived that far from campus. About 2 in 5 (43%) of BSOE students lived 3 to 10 miles from campus in Spring quarter 2021, while only about 1 in 5 (21%) of Social Science students lived at a similar distance. These numbers may be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, as many students who could do research remotely moved to locations further from the main campus. See Table 20.

**Table 20. Location from campus in Spring quarter 2021**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 35	N = 67	N = 177	N = 128	N = 107	N = 513
21 miles or more	42%	52%	22%	23%	38%	31%
11 to 20 miles	3%	7%	5%	1%	7%	5%
3 miles to 10 miles	25%	29%	39%	43%	21%	34%
1 mile to 2 miles	12%	7%	25%	12%	16%	16%
On campus or < 1 mile	17%	5%	9%	22%	18%	14%

*Question text: How far do you live from campus this term?*

Over 1 in 3 (37%) of PBSci students indicated that they shared a living space with at least one other UC student compared with 3% of Arts students. About 2 in 5 (41%) of Arts Division students indicated that they lived with their spouse or domestic partner without children, compared with 17% of BSOE students. See Table 21.

**Table 21. Living arrangement of students**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 35	N = 66	N = 176	N = 129	N = 110	N = 516
I share an apartment, house, or residence hall room with at least one other UC student	3%	8%	37%	32%	16%	25%
I live with my spouse or domestic partner without children	41%	35%	24%	17%	24%	25%
I share an apartment or house with people who are not UC students	13%	16%	19%	16%	19%	18%
I live alone	22%	14%	6%	11%	11%	11%
I live with at least one family member	3%	10%	6%	13%	13%	9%
I live with my spouse or domestic partner and children	11%	11%	5%	10%	12%	9%
Other, please elaborate	7%	4%	2%	0%	3%	3%
I am a single parent living with children	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%

*Question text: With whom do you live? Please select the option that best describes your living situation this term.*

Among students who did not have a permanent place to return to, almost all (93%) temporarily stayed with a relative, friend, or couch surfing, while 2% stayed in an outdoor location such as a street, sidewalk, alley, bus, train stop, etc. See Table 22.

**Table 22. Locations of non-permanent living arrangements (among students who did not have a permanent place to return to)**

(Percent selecting each arrangement, could select multiple types so percentages add up to more than 100%)	Arts N = 8	Humanities N = 20	PBSci N = 25	BSOE N = 16	Social Sciences N = 24	Total N = 93
Temporarily staying with a relative, friend, or couch surfing	79%	95%	95%	91%	93%	93%
In a living room or another space not intended for habitation (i.e., closet, attic, basement, etc.)	27%	29%	45%	8%	24%	28%
Temporarily at a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to	30%	33%	12%	9%	17%	19%
Temporarily in an Airbnb, HomeAway or similar without a permanent home to return to	39%	14%	10%	9%	21%	16%
In a closed area/space with a roof not meant for human habitation such as car, van, RV, etc.	0%	28%	14%	0%	10%	12%
Temporarily on campus in libraries, offices, or other non-residential university spaces	21%	5%	14%	9%	3%	9%
Outdoor location such as street, sidewalk, or alley, bus or train stop, etc.	0%	5%	5%	0%	0%	2%
In transitional housing or independent living program	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	1%

*Question text: In the last 12 months, have you slept overnight in any of the following places because you didn't have a permanent home to return to? Select all that apply.*

About one-third (32%) of graduate students indicated having moved residence one time in the last 12 months, and 1 in 5 (19%) moved more than once. See Table 23.

**Table 23. Number of times having moved residence in last 12 months**

	Arts N = 34	Humanities N = 66	PBSci N = 166	BSOE N = 125	Social Sciences N = 107	Total N = 497
0 times	42%	42%	46%	63%	39%	48%
1 time	27%	31%	41%	25%	30%	32%
2 times	15%	9%	6%	6%	16%	9%
3 times	12%	8%	4%	5%	10%	7%
4 or more	4%	10%	4%	1%	5%	4%

*Question text: How many times have you moved from one residence to another in the last 12 months?*

Among students who moved in the last 12 months, more than half of Arts Division (51%) and Humanities (61%) students indicated moving due to financial difficulties, while 1 in 5 (20%) of BSOE students indicated the same.

Almost 2 in 5 (38%) of BSOE students indicated moving due to their contract/lease ending while about 1 in 5 (22%) of Arts students indicated the same. Some students who indicated “other reasons” mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic and the CZU wildfires were a reason for having moved. See Table 24.

**Table 24. Reasons for moving (among students who moved in last 12 months)**

	Arts N = 18	Humanities N = 38	PBSci N = 87	BSOE N = 46	Social Sciences N = 60	Total N = 249
Financial difficulty (couldn't afford housing or rent, raised rent)	51%	61%	30%	20%	43%	38%
Landlord's reason (selling the property, etc.)	10%	17%	13%	7%	10%	12%
Landlord problems (difficulty communicating, does not make timely repairs)	21%	12%	12%	14%	11%	13%
Contract/lease ended	22%	34%	33%	38%	29%	32%
Got off a waiting list and got housing	0%	2%	2%	5%	3%	3%
Roommate problems (noisy, dirty, etc.)	35%	20%	18%	20%	13%	19%
Other, please elaborate	50%	47%	34%	30%	44%	39%

*Question text: In the last 12 months, which of the following were reasons why you moved? Select all that apply.*

We further investigated ethnicity- and division-specific differences among students who moved due to financial difficulties. Across divisions, students who come from underrepresented communities were much more likely to move residences for financial reasons than were other students who moved residences. For example, within the Arts and Humanities divisions, almost 9 in 10 (89%) students who come from underrepresented communities moved for financial reasons, compared with half (51%) of students in the Arts and Humanities divisions who do not come from underrepresented communities. See Table 25.

**Table 25. Moving due to financial difficulties, by underrepresented status and division**

	Arts/Humanities		Social Sciences		PBSci/BSOE		Total
	Under represented N = 14	Other students N = 85	Under represented N = 23	Other students N = 98	Under represented N = 49	Other students N = 289	
Moved due to financial difficulty	89%	51%	65%	41%	53%	21%	36%
Moved for other reasons	11%	49%	35%	59%	47%	79%	64%

*Question text: In the last 12 months, which of the following were reasons why you moved?*

We examined the relationship between the type of support and moving due to financial difficulties based on chi-square tests. We show those types of support that have a significant impact below.

Among students who moved:

- Students who were relying on teaching assistantships were more likely to have moved for financial reasons, than were students who were not supported by teaching assistantships.
- Students who were using personal savings, and students who were relying on personal earnings other than TA or GSR positions, were also more likely to move due to financial reasons.
- Students with federal loans were significantly more likely to have done so for financial reasons, compared with those who did not have federal loans.
- Students with a fellowship or scholarship were less likely to have moved due to financial reasons.

See Table 26.

**Table 26. Moving due to financial reasons, by type of financial support**

	Moved due to financial reasons
Students overall (N = 249):	38%
Students with federal loans (N = 21)	71%
Students using personal earnings (other than TAships, GSRships, etc.) (N = 71)	52%
Students using personal savings (N = 124)	45%
Students with a teaching assistantship (N = 168)	44%
Students with a fellowship or scholarship (N = 152)	30%

## Homelessness

About 1 in 6 (16%) Humanities students lacked a place to sleep at some point in the last 12 months, compared with 4-6% in other divisions. See Table 27.

**Table 27. Lacking a place to sleep: overall**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 33	N = 64	N = 169	N = 123	N = 103	N = 492
No	96%	84%	96%	94%	94%	93%
Yes	4%	16%	4%	6%	6%	7%

*Question text: In the last 12 months, have you ever lacked a safe, regular, and adequate nighttime place to stay and sleep for any of the following lengths of time?*

In particular, 13% of Humanities students indicated lacking a place to sleep during the summer when they were not taking classes. In addition, 9% of Humanities students indicated that they lacked a place to sleep during the fall academic term. See Table 28.

**Table 28. Lacking a place to sleep: details on timing during year**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 33	N = 64	N = 169	N = 123	N = 103	N = 492
No	96%	84%	96%	94%	94%	93%
Yes, during Fall academic term	3%	9%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Yes, during Winter academic term	5%	7%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Yes, during Winter break	0%	6%	1%	2%	0%	1%
Yes, during Spring academic term	4%	7%	1%	0%	2%	2%
Yes, during Spring break	0%	6%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Yes, during Summer when taking classes	0%	6%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Yes, during Summer when not taking classes	2%	13%	3%	3%	4%	4%
Yes, during other academic holidays	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Yes, but I cannot recall when it occurred	2%	1%	3%	0%	2%	2%

*Question text: In the last 12 months, have you ever lacked a safe, regular, and adequate nighttime place to stay and sleep for any of the following lengths of time?*

Almost 1 in 10 (7-9%) Arts and Humanities students lacked a place to sleep while on a UC housing waiting list. See Table 29.

**Table 29. Lacking a place to sleep while on a UC housing waiting list**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 34	N = 66	N = 174	N = 128	N = 106	N = 508
No	91%	93%	97%	100%	96%	97%
Yes	9%	7%	3%	0%	4%	3%

*Question text: In the last 12 months, were you ever at risk of not having a safe, regular, and adequate nighttime place to stay and sleep while you were on a UC housing waiting list?*

Over 3 in 5 (62%) of Humanities students indicated that they experienced anxiety *every month* or *some months during the year* due to the impacts of worrying about paying for housing compared with almost 3 in 10 (27%) of BSOE students.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of Humanities students indicated that they had difficulty focusing on their studies *every month* or *some months during the year* due to the impacts of worrying about paying for housing compared with almost 3 in 10 (28%) of BSOE students. See Table 30.

**Table 30. Impacts of worrying about paying for housing**

		Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
		N = 35	N = 63	N = 174	N = 128	N = 106	N = 506
Experienced anxiety	Every month	31%	40%	20%	12%	24%	22%
	Some months during the year	27%	22%	20%	15%	27%	21%
	1 or 2 times in the year	22%	16%	21%	15%	15%	18%
	Never	20%	22%	39%	58%	34%	39%
Experienced depression	Every month	16%	30%	13%	10%	20%	16%
	Some months during the year	22%	21%	12%	16%	18%	16%
	1 or 2 times in the year	15%	13%	14%	10%	9%	12%
	Never	47%	36%	61%	64%	52%	56%
Skipped meals	Every month	7%	22%	4%	5%	9%	8%
	Some months during the year	12%	11%	8%	9%	10%	9%
	1 or 2 times in the year	14%	19%	10%	9%	7%	11%
	Never	67%	48%	77%	77%	74%	72%
Ate less nutritious and/or balanced meals	Every month	12%	24%	10%	7%	10%	11%
	Some months during the year	10%	21%	13%	13%	16%	14%
	1 or 2 times in the year	24%	11%	9%	9%	8%	10%
	Never	54%	45%	67%	71%	66%	64%
Had difficulty focusing on your studies	Every month	28%	38%	12%	12%	21%	18%
	Some months during the year	18%	26%	23%	16%	21%	21%
	1 or 2 times in the year	25%	6%	18%	16%	14%	16%
	Never	29%	29%	47%	57%	44%	46%

*Question text: In the last 12 months, how often did each of these things happen to you because you were worried about paying for housing?*

## Support for students with families

Overall, 1 in 10 (10%) doctoral students indicated having children. Among students with children, the vast majority of students have children who reside with them full-time (50% or more of the time) with their children. See Table 31.

**Table 31. Parenthood and residence of children**

	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 35	N = 65	N = 175	N = 126	N = 112	N = 513
Yes, I have children who reside with me full-time (50% or more of the time)	14%	10%	5%	9%	10%	9%
Yes, I have children who reside with me part-time (less than 50% of the time)	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%
Yes, I have children but they do not currently reside with me	0%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%
No, I don't have any children	86%	87%	94%	89%	89%	90%

*Question text: Do you have a dependent child(ren) who currently resides with you?*

Some students responded to questions about family and work balance. Only 1 in 3 (32%) of these students indicated being able to balance work and family commitments, ranging from 18% of students in the Humanities to 36% in PBSci and 42% of students in BSOE. See Table 32.

**Table 32. Family-work balance and support in the campus community, by division**

(Percent agree/strongly agree)	Arts	Humanities	PBSci	BSOE	Social Sciences	Total
	N = 26	N = 52	N = 123	N = 92	N = 91	N = 384
I'm able to balance my work and family commitments	25%	18%	36%	42%	26%	32%
My family feels supported in the campus community	N=11 9%	N = 35 13%	N = 59 28%	N = 60 44%	N = 52 30%	N = 218 30%

*Question text: Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response.*

*Note: Fewer students answered this question compared with other questions in the survey.*

Among students with children, only 1 in 5 (19%) indicated that their family felt supported in the campus community, compared with 1 in 3 (32%) students who do not have children. This difference is substantively notable, but due to sample sizes was not statistically significant. See Table 33.

**Table 33. Family-work balance and support in the campus community, by whether having children in family**

(Percent agree/strongly agree)	Yes, has children	No children	Total
	N = 50	N = 332	N = 382
I'm able to balance my work and family commitments	27%	32%	32%
My family feels supported in the campus community	N = 45 19%	N = 172 32%	N = 217 30%

*Question text: Indicate your agreement or disagreement with each item by selecting the appropriate response.*

*Note: Fewer students answered this question compared with other questions in the survey.*

## Appendix: Respondent Profile

The UCSC 2021 Graduate Student Survey respondents were representative of the divisions, and ethnic and gender differences. The PBSci division had the largest proportion of doctoral students at UCSC (34%), Social Sciences and BSOE were roughly similar (21% and 26%), and the Humanities and the Arts division had about 20% of doctoral students combined. Over a quarter (27%) were students of color and another quarter were international students. The overall proportions of women and men were similar (46% and 48%) but varied across divisions. See Table A1.

**Table A1. Doctoral student respondent composition for UCSC 2021 Graduate Student Survey (adjusted)**

		Population (N = 1440)	Respondents (N = 608)
<b>Division</b>	Arts	7%	6%
	Humanities	12%	12%
	PBSci	35%	34%
	Social Sciences	21%	21%
	BSOE	25%	26%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	African American/Black	4%	3%
	American Indian/Alaskan Native	1%	1%
	Asian American	11%	10%
	Hispanic/Latinx	11%	10%
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0%	0%
	White, non-Hispanic	42%	45%
	International	26%	26%
	Unknown	5%	5%
<b>Gender</b>	Women	46%	46%
	Men	48%	48%
	Non-binary	3%	3%
	Unknown gender	4%	3%

*Note: Subtotals in this and other tables may not add to 100%, due to rounding.*

Respondents included students at various stages of their doctoral studies. About 30% were still working on their coursework, while 71% had already completed their coursework, and about 3 in 10 students (31%) had a dissertation proposal accepted by a committee. See Table A2.

**Table A2. Stage in graduate program**

	Arts N = 38	Humanities N = 73	PBSci N = 208	BSOE N = 155	Social Sciences N = 129	Total N = 603
I have completed all required coursework for my program	75%	80%	69%	69%	71%	71%
I have completed my lab rotations	-	-	81%	79%	23%	74%
I have passed my qualifying/comprehensive exams/paper	68%	58%	66%	47%	51%	57%
I have had my dissertation/thesis proposal accepted by a committee	53%	49%	25%	22%	34%	31%
I have defended (completed) my dissertation/thesis	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%	4%

*Question text: Have you completed the following aspects of your graduate program?*