

UC SANTA BARBARA

Graduate Student Association

Fall 2023: GSA Housing Survey¹ 10/24/2023

Overview

In September 2023, GSA conducted its 2nd annual Fall housing survey to collect data on the housing situation of UCSB graduate students. Of the roughly **3000 graduate students** contacted, **731 responded to the survey** which represents a 56% increase from the previous year.

Respondents were asked to provide basic demographic information and answer questions about their housing situation, rent burden and/or commute. We also asked them to provide suggestions and demands to the university and GSA itself.

Executive Summary

Overall, **19 respondents reported to have not found housing by the time the survey closed at the end of September.**² 20 respondents and 19 respondents respectively reported to have only secured housing until the end of the Fall and Winter quarters respectively. While the number of unhoused students has declined as compared to the previous year, students appear to live in temporary arrangements at about the same numbers. Of those who were without any housing, more than half identified as people of color (12) and more than half identified as international students (11).

88% of survey respondents reported being rent burdened (>30% of income spent on rent) while almost **29% reported being severely rent burdened** (>50% of income spent on rent). The average rent reported amounts to **\$1224.5**, with the median rent reported amounting to \$1007.³ Respondents living in off-campus housing fare much worse than the general graduate student body in that they reported paying an average of **\$1523.8** in rent (median \$1350).

Beyond the immediate shortage of housing and issue of affordability, graduate students' concerns can be summarized in a few categories: First, graduate students who rely on cars to get to campus face the high cost of on-campus parking passes and increased gas prices. Those who were forced to move to areas outside of Santa Barbara are especially burdened. Second, international students are particularly vulnerable to housing insecurity due to their lack of credit history and their inability to provide co-signers on a lease. Many domestic students mentioned issues in relation to co-signers and security deposits. In addition, we have found that several first-year international students with families had extreme difficulties

¹ The survey and summary were prepared by Annjulie Vester, GSA External Co-President. For questions, please email gsa-ext-co-president@ucsb.edu.

² All students were referred to Campus Housing resources. To our knowledge, all but one student, have since found housing.

³ 2022 numbers: \$1264 average and \$1160 median

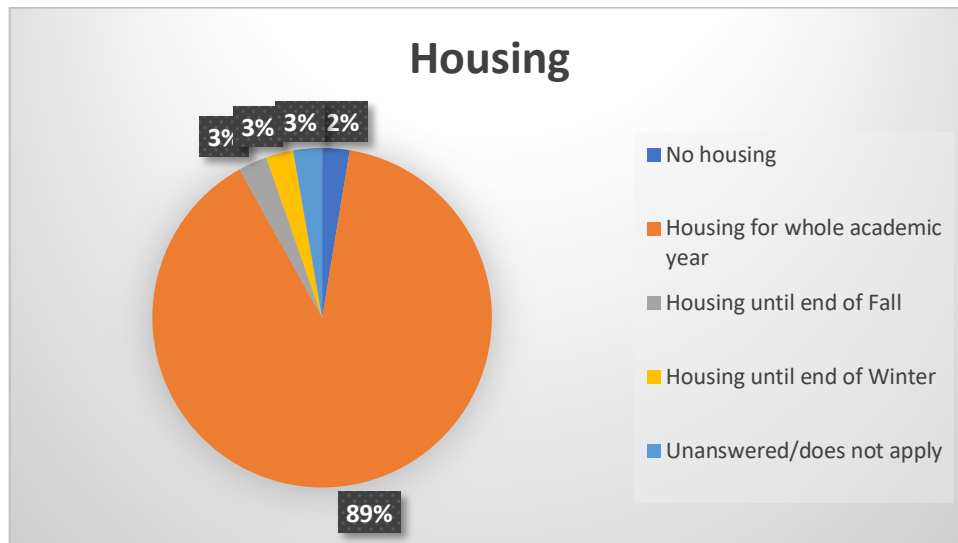
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finding permanent housing well into the first weeks of the Fall Quarter. While Campus Housing was successful in placing most families with children into on-campus options, there remains a **large waitlist of families without children** (>250 students).

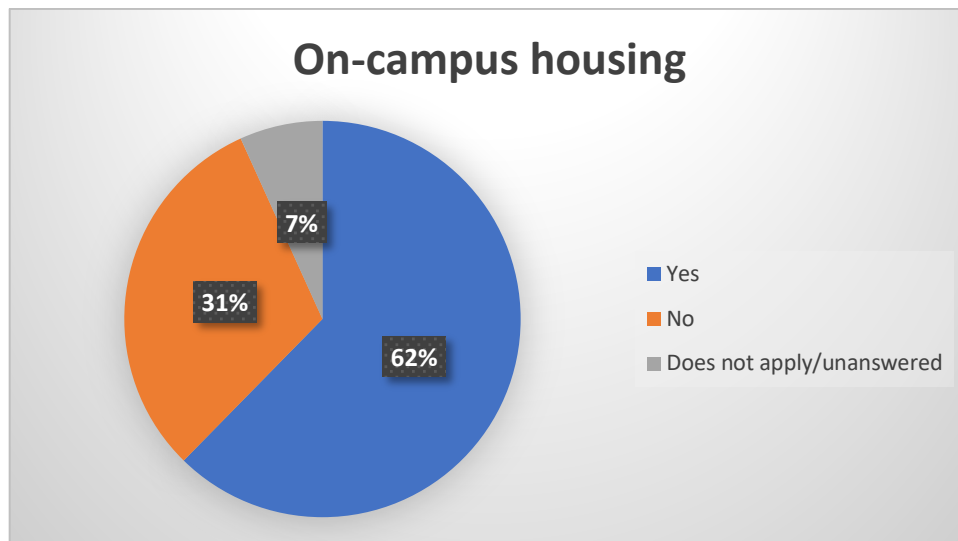
Respondents generally request more **help from their departments and the wider school** in navigating the housing market, especially before their tenure at UCSB even begins. Despite the new ASE/GSR contracts which will see its first large income increase this Fall, respondents perceive no change in the availability of housing in the community or their ability to compete for affordable housing. **Many noted the continued need for a campus development plan that is inclusive of new graduate student and family housing options.**

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Question 8: Have you secured housing for the upcoming academic year?⁴



Question 9: Did you apply for on-campus housing, such as SC or FSH for the upcoming academic year?⁵

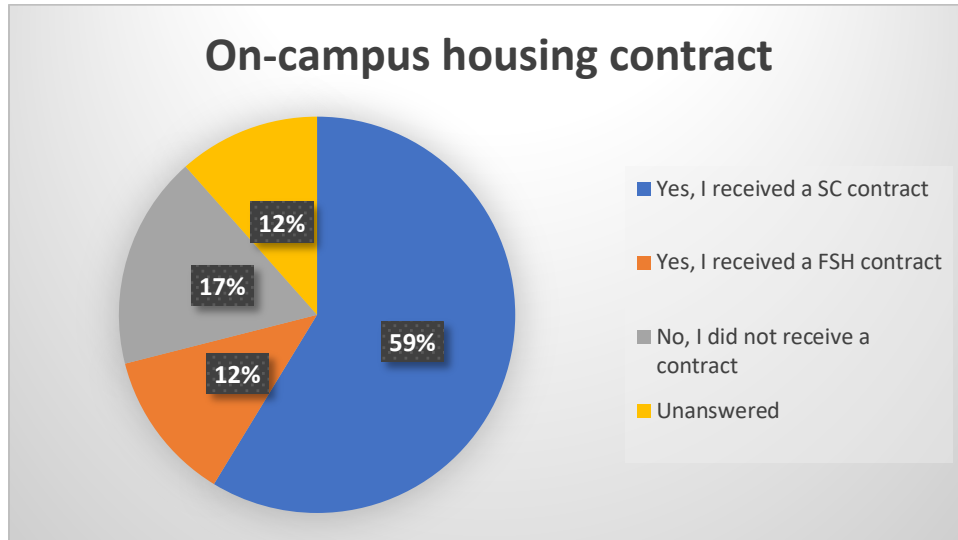


⁴ Whole academic year (89%, 652 respondents), no housing (2%, 19 respondents), Fall housing (3%, 20 respondents), Winter housing (3%, 19 respondents), other (3%, 20 respondents)

⁵ Yes (62%, 442 respondents), No (31%, 219 respondents), does not apply (7%, 48 respondents)

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Question 10: If you responded "Yes" to the above question, did you receive a San Clemente Villages or Family Housing contract for the upcoming academic year 2023-2024?⁶



⁶ Only includes respondents who applied to either campus options. Yes, I received a SC contract (59%, 300 respondents), Yes, I received a FSH contract (12%, 63 respondents), No, I did not received a contract (17%, 89 respondents), Unanswered (12%, 59 respondents)

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Question 11: If you have housing for at least part of the 2023 Fall quarter, what is your **monthly rent excluding utilities**? Enter the amount below, rounded to the nearest whole dollar, and without any punctuation or dollar sign (e.g., "1700").

All respondents ⁷	Amount		Respondents off-campus ⁸	Amount
Mean	1224.5		Mean	1523.8
Median	1007		Median	1350
Lowest	300		Lowest	600
Highest	5500		Highest	5500

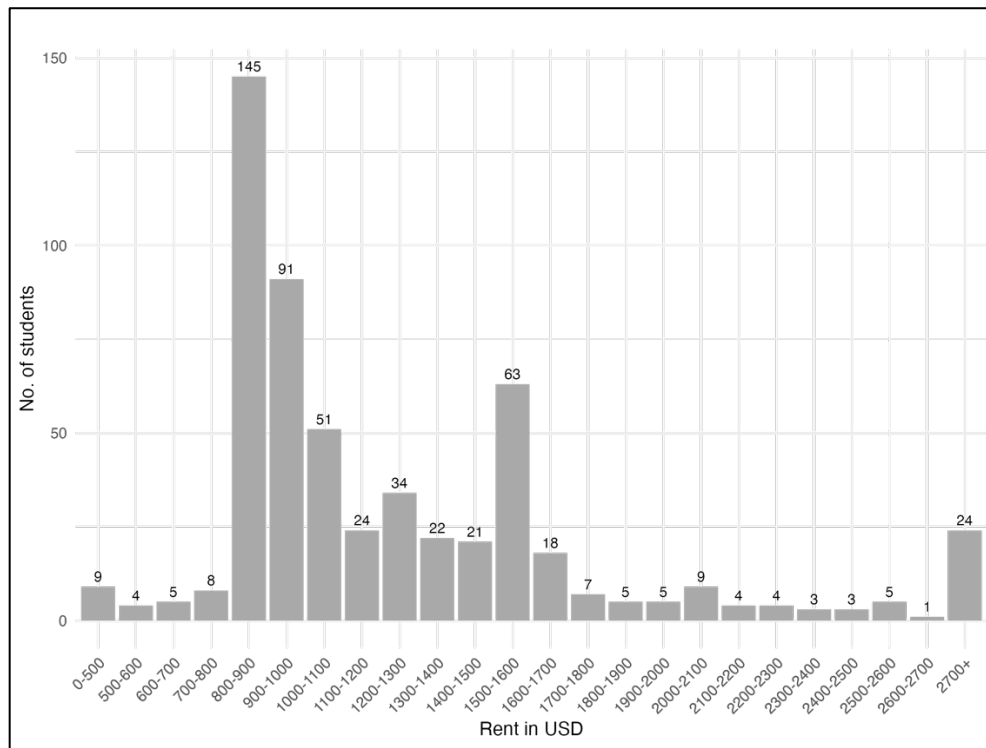


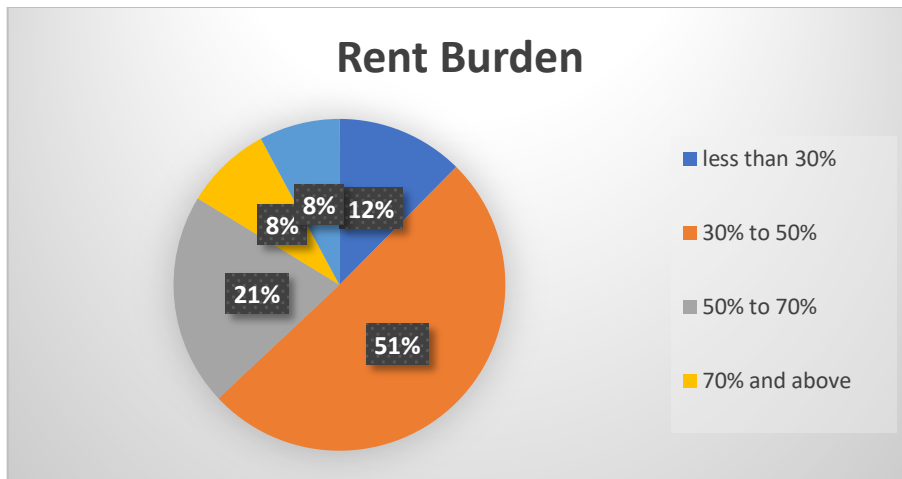
Figure shows binned data on reported monthly rent

⁷ 565 respondents provided data on their monthly rent. It can be challenging to collect data on rent because respondents sometimes share rent with a partner or may not be comfortable reporting it.

⁸ Includes all respondents who provided data on their monthly rent, excluding those living in FSH or SCV (= 241)

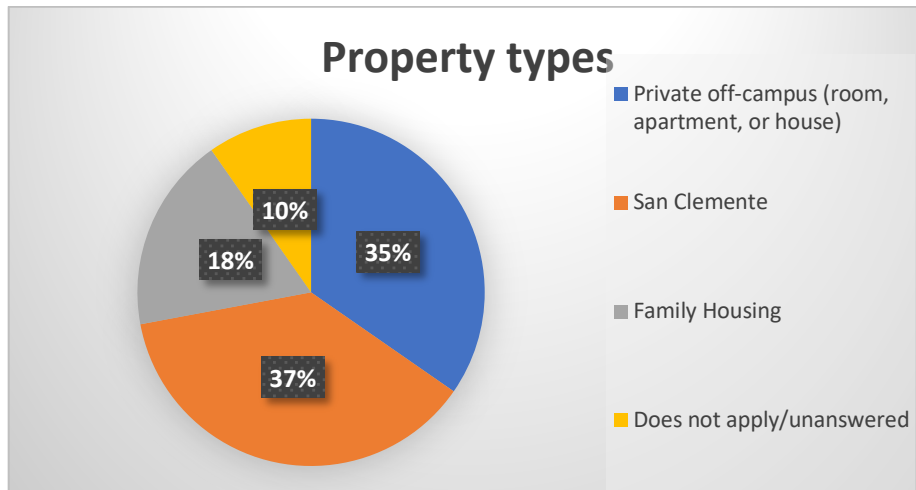
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Question 12: What is your expected rent burden for the upcoming academic year? To calculate your rent burden, divide your monthly rent by your monthly income (after tax)⁹



88% of survey respondents are rent burdened (rent burden = more than 30% of income is spent on rent).

Question 13: If you have housing for at least part of the 2023 Fall quarter, in which of the following types of property will you live?¹⁰



⁹ Data shown on the graph is binned for clearer visualization. The data further breaks down as follows: <30% = 87 respondents, 30% to 40% = 222 respondents, 40% to 50% = 132 respondents, 50% to 60% = 92 respondents, 60% to 70% = 53 respondents, >70% = 53 respondents. **Note:** There is a possibility that respondents did not yet include new ASE salaries in their calculation, which may inflate rent burden data we collected. This is understandable given that most graduate student TAs do not get their first paycheck until November 1st.

¹⁰ Private housing, including room in someone's home, private apartment for rent, or private house for rent (35%, 253 respondents), SCV (37%, 273 respondents), FSH (18%, 133 respondents), Does not apply/unanswered (10%, 71 respondents)

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Question 14: If you have housing, in which city is your housing located (for example, Goleta, Santa Barbara, Ventura, Lompoc, Los Angeles, etc.)?

Goleta/Santa Barbara: 621

Other locations: 15

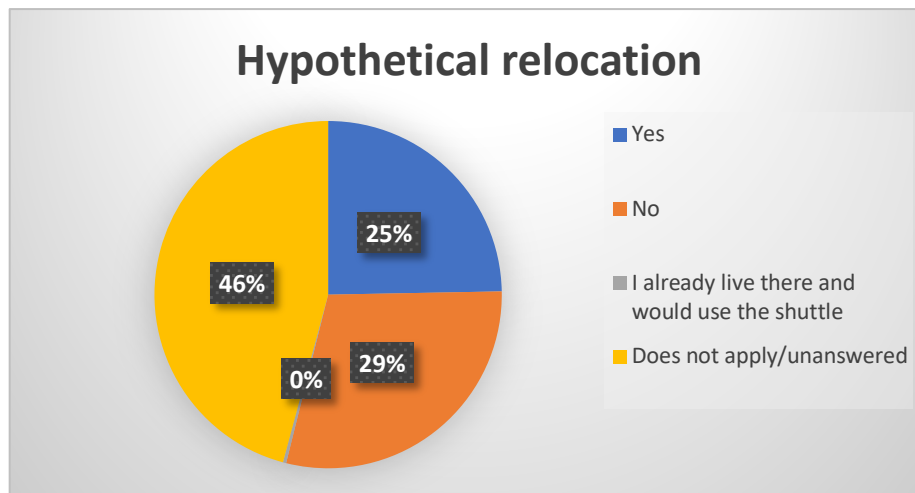
Ventura: 6

Camarillo: 2

Lompoc: 1

Los Angeles: 4

Question 17: Hypothetically, if the university would offer a daily shuttle service from areas like Lompoc or Buellton to campus, would you be interested to move to those areas?¹¹



Question 18: Are there any kind of amenities which would make such a shuttle service more attractive? Such as wifi, specific pick-up locations or times, etc.

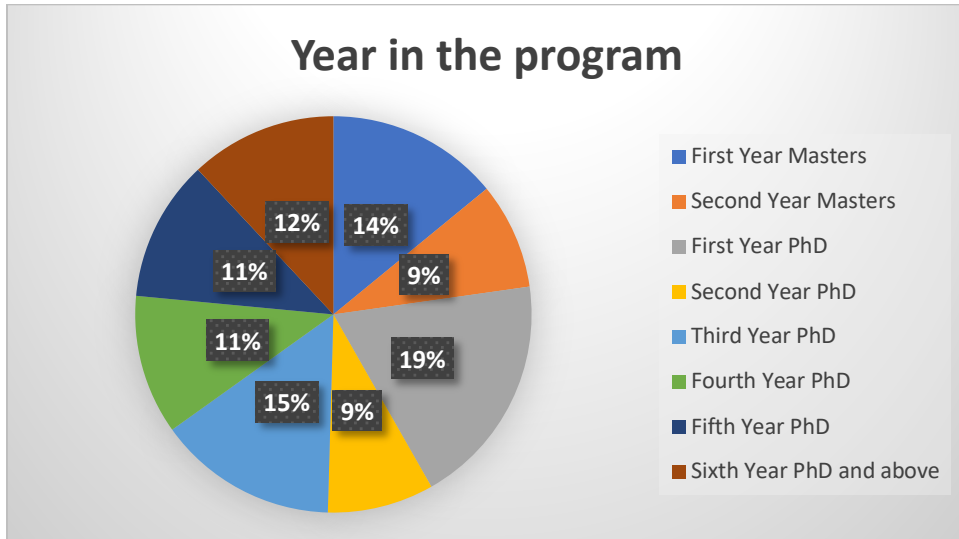
1. WIFI (very frequently mentioned)
2. Consistency and reliability (very frequently mentioned)
3. Frequency - as frequent as possible to avoid long waiting times (frequently mentioned)
4. Early morning and late evening pick-up times to cover the first and last sections/lectures taught on campus (8AM and/or ~8-9PM) - (frequently mentioned)
5. Affordability (frequently mentioned)
6. Pick up locations near free parking structures
7. Charging ports for laptops
8. A/C
9. Mandatory mask mandate

¹¹ Yes (25%, 165 respondents), No (29%, 195 respondents), based in the area already (<1%, 2 respondents), does not apply/unanswered (46%, 306). **Note:** it is unclear why many respondents opted for “does not apply” instead of choosing “No”.

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Appendix

Question 2: What year will you be in your program?



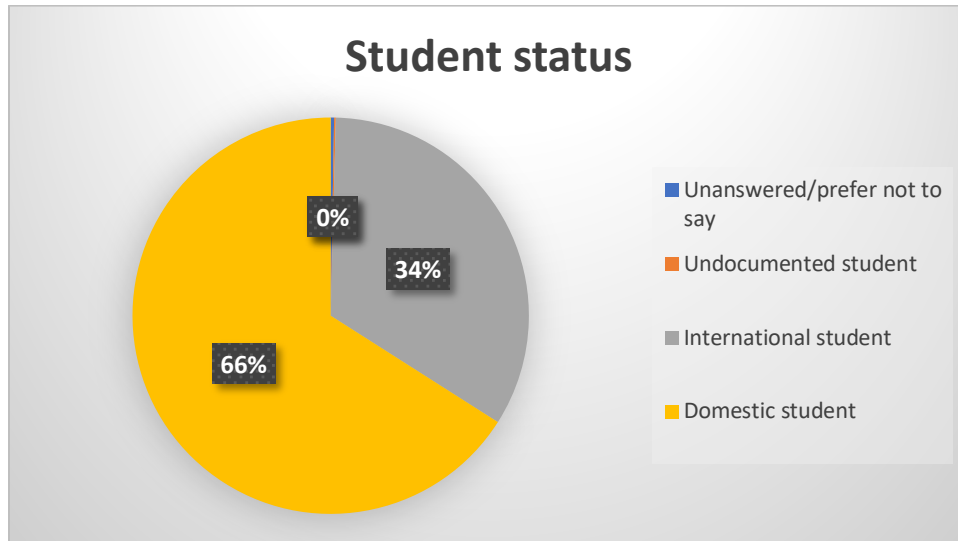
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Question 3: What is your department (#number of respondents)?

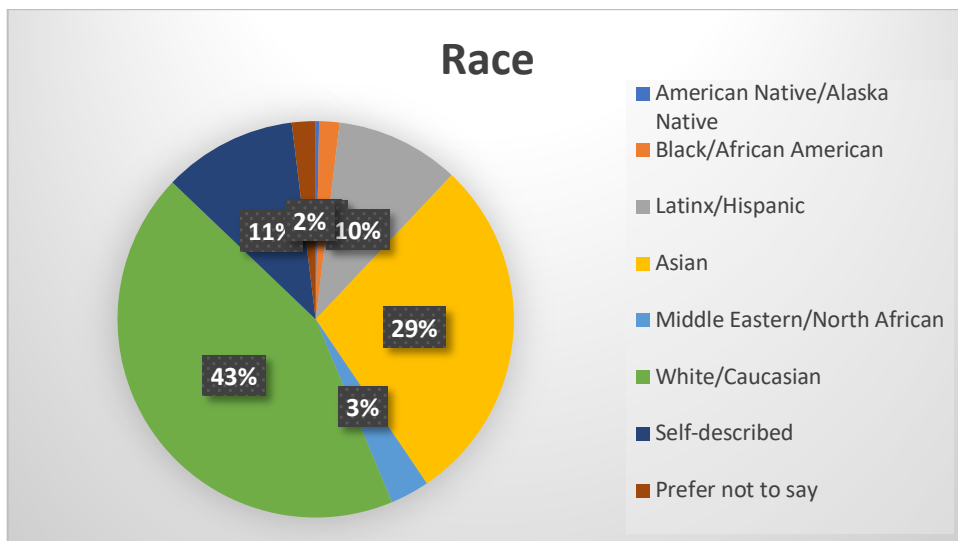
Department	#	Department	#
Bren School	78	MCDB	11
Electrical & Computer Engineering	44	Sociology	11
Computer Science	38	English	10
Materials	38	Global Studies	10
Education	33	My department is not listed	9
Physics	31	Political Science	9
Chemistry	27	Technology Management	9
Chemical Engineering	26	Theater, Dance & Performance	9
Counseling, Clinical & School Psychology	26	History of Art and Architecture	7
Geography	25	Marine Science	7
History	23	Media Arts & Technology	7
Economics	21	Biochemistry and Molecular Biology	6
Psychological & Brain Sciences	21	Classics	6
Mathematics	19	Comparative Literature	5
Statistics & Applied Probability	19	Feminist Studies	5
Ecology, Evolution & Marine Biology	16	Linguistics	5
Mechanical Engineering	15	Philosophy	5
Anthropology	14	Biological Engineering	4
Religious Studies	14	East Asian Languages or Asian Studies	4
Film and Media Studies	12	Dynamical Neuroscience	3
Music	12	Chicana and Chicano Studies	2
Communication	11	Hispanic Languages and Literatures	2
Earth Science	11	Latin American & Iberian Studies	1

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Question 4: Please select which applies to you (student status).¹²



Question 5: Which of the following best describes you (race/ethnicity)?¹³

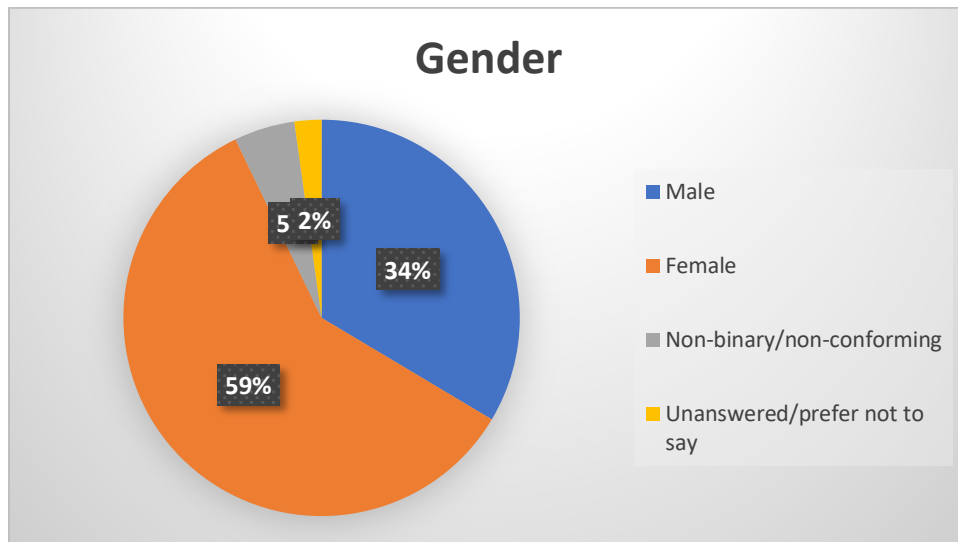


¹² Domestic Students (66%, 479 respondents), International Students (34%, 245 respondents), Undocumented Students (1 respondent), Unanswered (2 respondents)

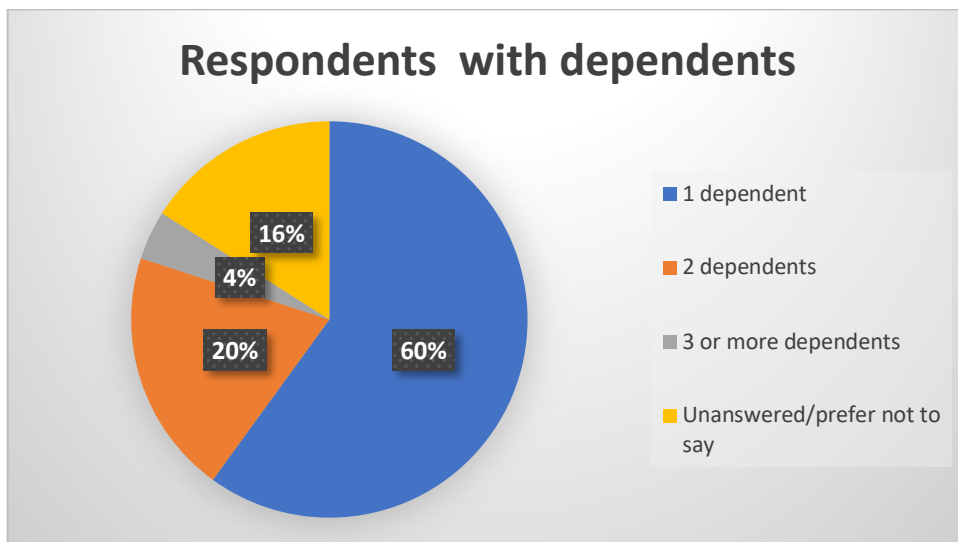
¹³ Our survey question provided respondents with the option to self-identify with multiple categories. The chart shows. Categories displayed are: White/Caucasian (43%, 314 respondents), Asian (29%, 206 respondents), Self-described (11%, 79 respondents), Latinx/Hispanic (10%, 73 respondents), MENA (3% 23 respondents), Prefer not to say (2%, 14 respondents), Black/African American (2%, 12 respondents), American/Alaska Native (2 respondents)

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Question 6: Which of the following best describes your gender?¹⁴



Question 7: Number of dependents¹⁵



¹⁴ Female (59%, 431 respondents), Male (34%, 244 respondents), non-binary (5%, 36 respondents), prefer not to say (2%, 15 respondents)

¹⁵ Graph shows data for respondents with dependents: 1 dependent (60%, 42 respondents), 2 dependents (20%, 18 dependents), 3 or more dependents (4 percent, 6 respondents), Unanswered (16%, 11 respondents)

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