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2019 #RealCollege Survey Report

Institution Report

January 2020



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2019 #REALCOLLEGE SURVEY RESULTS

INSTITUTION REPORT FOR TACOMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Prepared by
The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice
at Temple University**

January 2020

OVERVIEW

* Invitations to complete the questionnaire were sent by email to approximately 6,100 students from Tacoma Community College and 516 students participated. Thus, the estimated response rate is 8.4%.

*** Overall Basic Needs Insecurity Rates:**

- 48% of respondents experienced food insecurity in the prior 30 days
- 63% of respondents experienced housing insecurity in the previous year
- 23% of respondents experienced homelessness in the previous year

* 72% of students at Tacoma Community College experienced at least one of these forms of basic needs insecurity in the past year.

* There is substantial variation in basic needs insecurity across subgroups.

* 46% of food insecure students utilize SNAP benefits and 12% of homeless students utilize housing benefits.

For more information on the research methodology and survey participants, please refer to the online appendices for the 2019 National #RealCollege Survey report (available at www.hope4college.com).

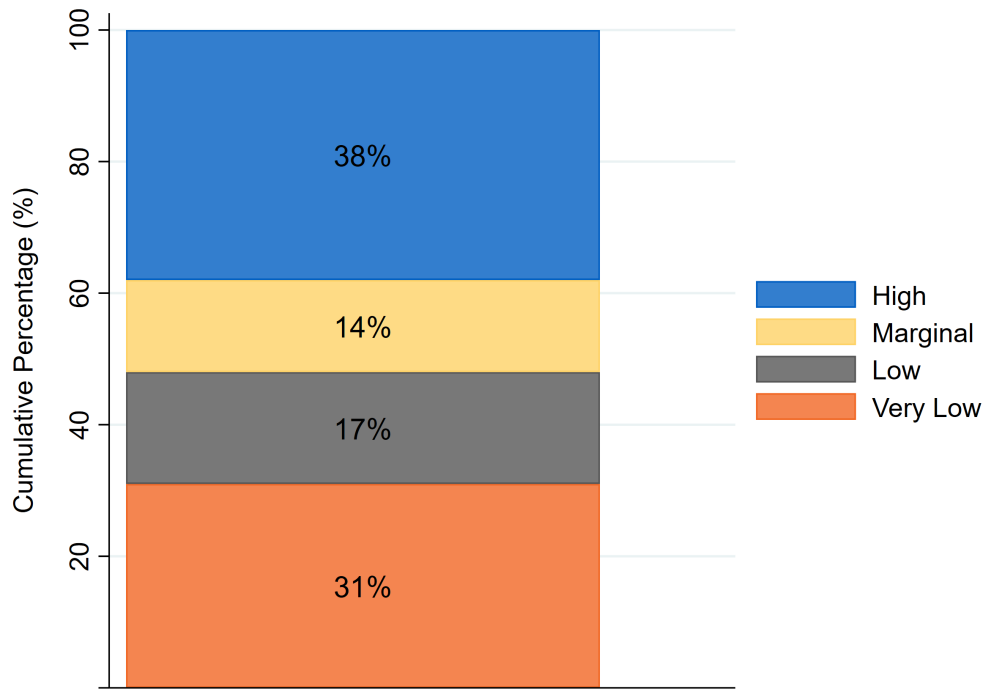
PREVALENCE OF BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY

Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food in a socially acceptable manner. The most extreme form is often accompanied with physiological sensations of hunger. We assessed food security among students using the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) 18-item set of questions.

During the 30 days preceding the survey, approximately 48% of survey respondents at Tacoma Community College experienced low or very low levels of food security (Figure 1). Moreover, 53% of survey respondents cannot afford to eat balanced meals and 51% worry about running out of food before they have money to buy more.

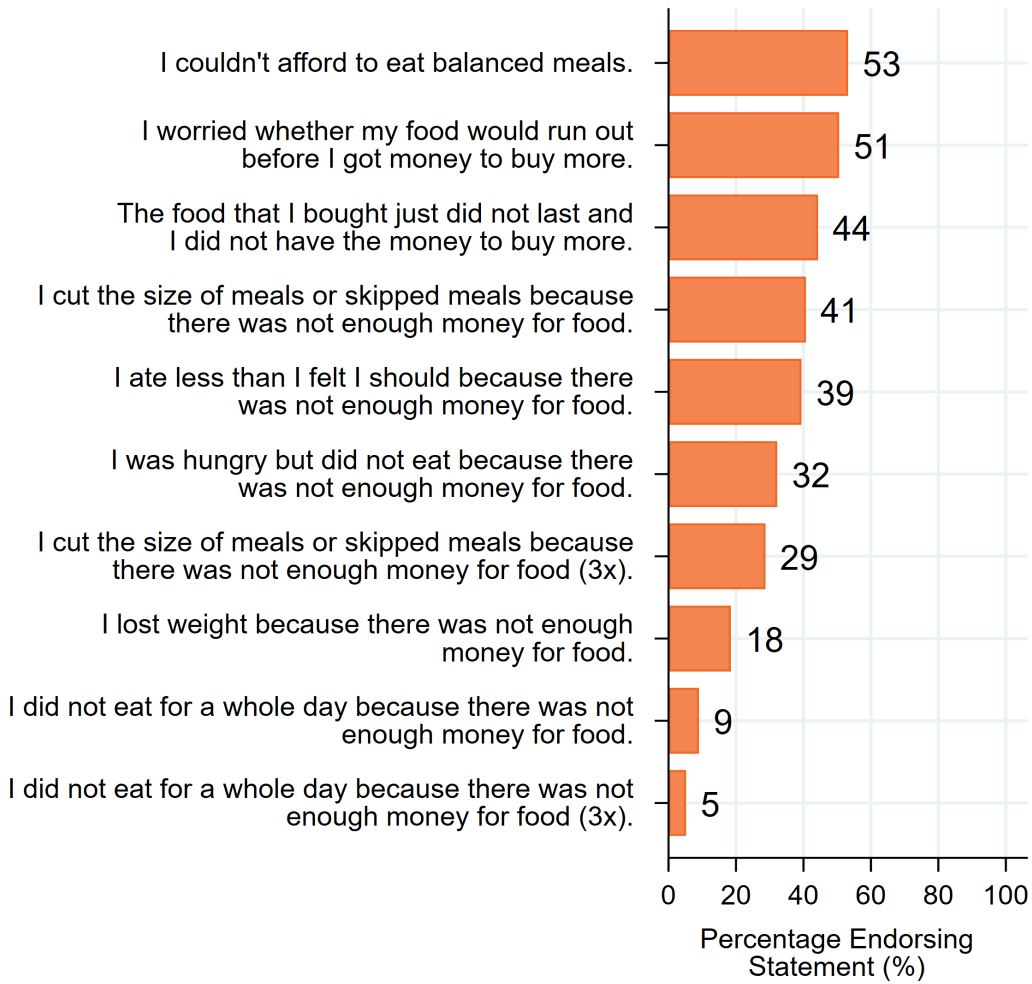
Figure 1. Food Security Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Notes: According to the USDA, students at either low or very low food security are termed food insecure. For the full list of questions used to measure food security, see our full report available at www.hope4college.com. Cumulative percentage may not add up to 100 due to rounding error.

Figure 2. Food Insecurity Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College



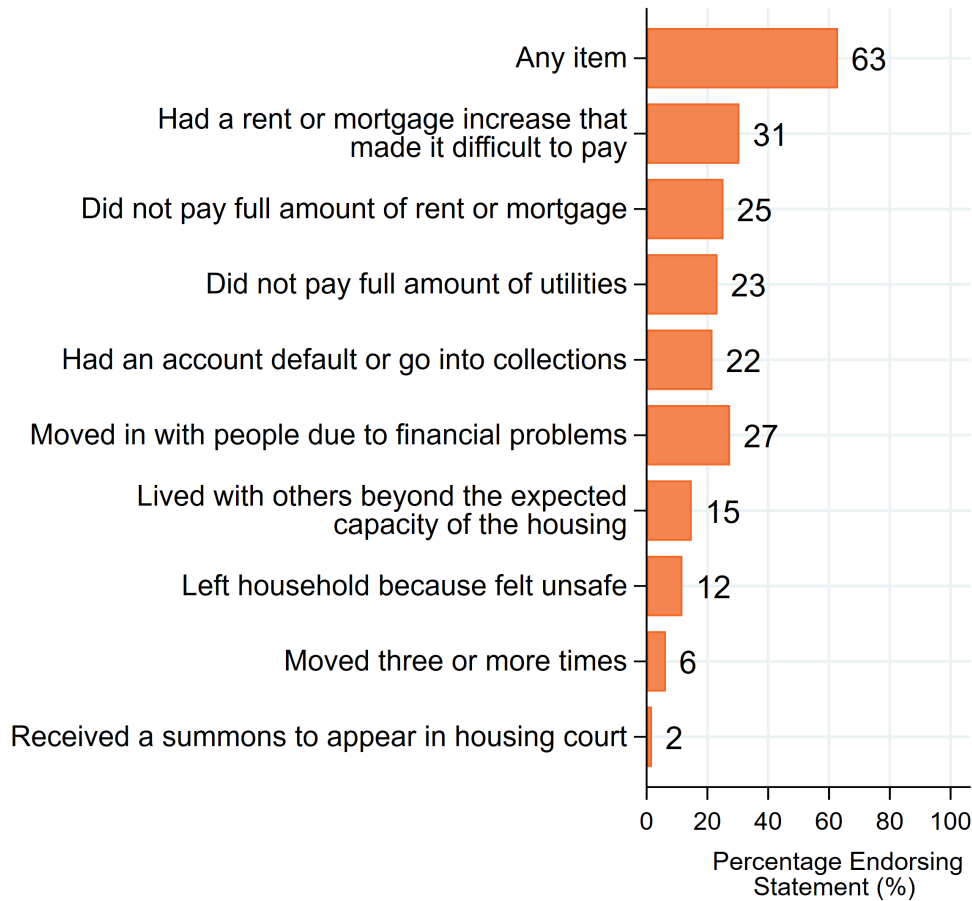
Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Housing Insecurity

Housing insecurity includes a broad set of challenges such as the inability to pay rent or utilities or the need to move frequently. All of these challenges affect students, and results suggest they are more likely to suffer some form of housing insecurity than to have all their needs met during college. Housing insecurity among students was assessed with a nine-item set of questions developed by the Hope Center. Students are classified as housing insecure if they answered affirmatively to experiencing at least one of those items in the previous year.

How prevalent is housing insecurity at Tacoma Community College? As displayed below, 63% of survey respondents are housing insecure (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Housing Insecurity Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College



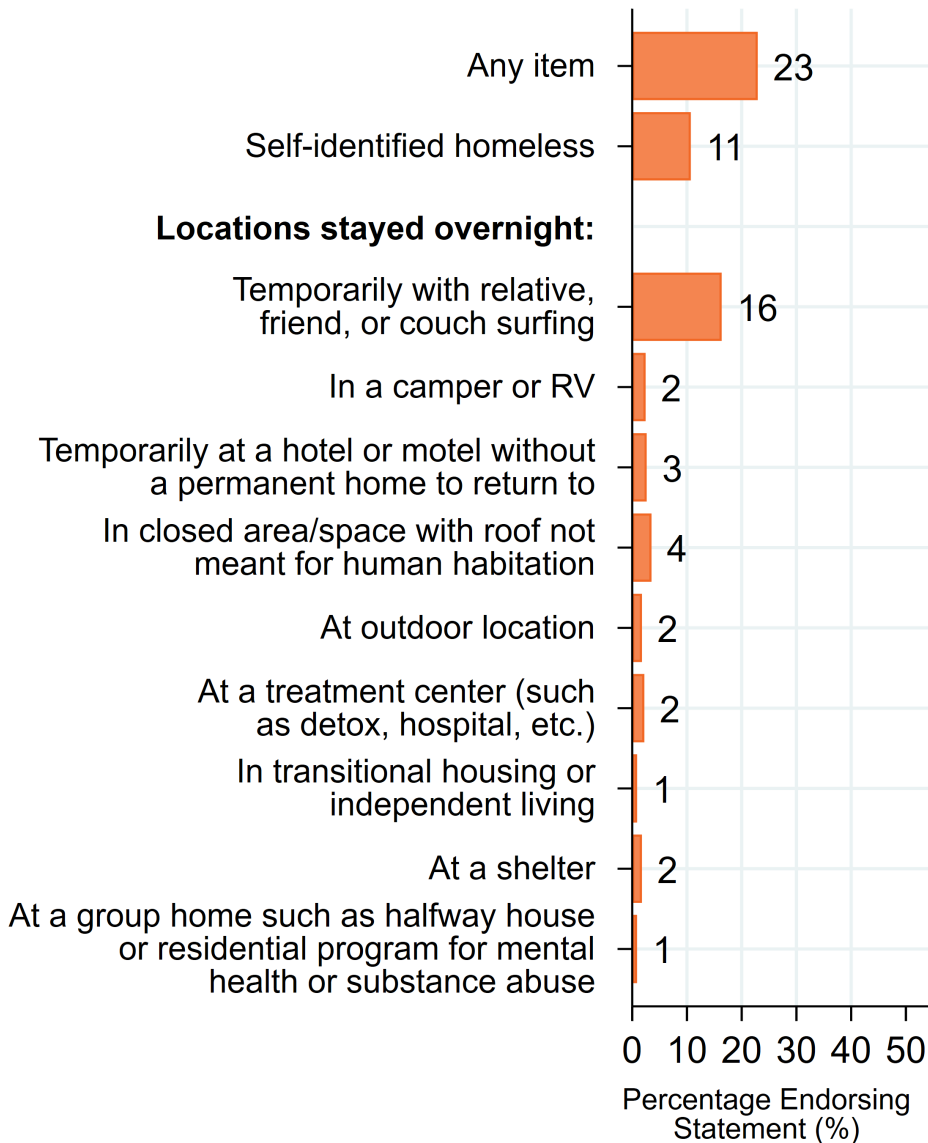
Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Homelessness

Homelessness means that a person does not have a stable place to live. Students were identified as homeless if they responded affirmatively to a question asking if they had been homeless or they experienced living conditions that are considered signs of homelessness in the previous year. Homelessness among students was assessed with a tool developed by California State University researchers.

How prevalent is homelessness at Tacoma Community College? As displayed below, 23% of survey respondents experience homelessness (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Homelessness Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College

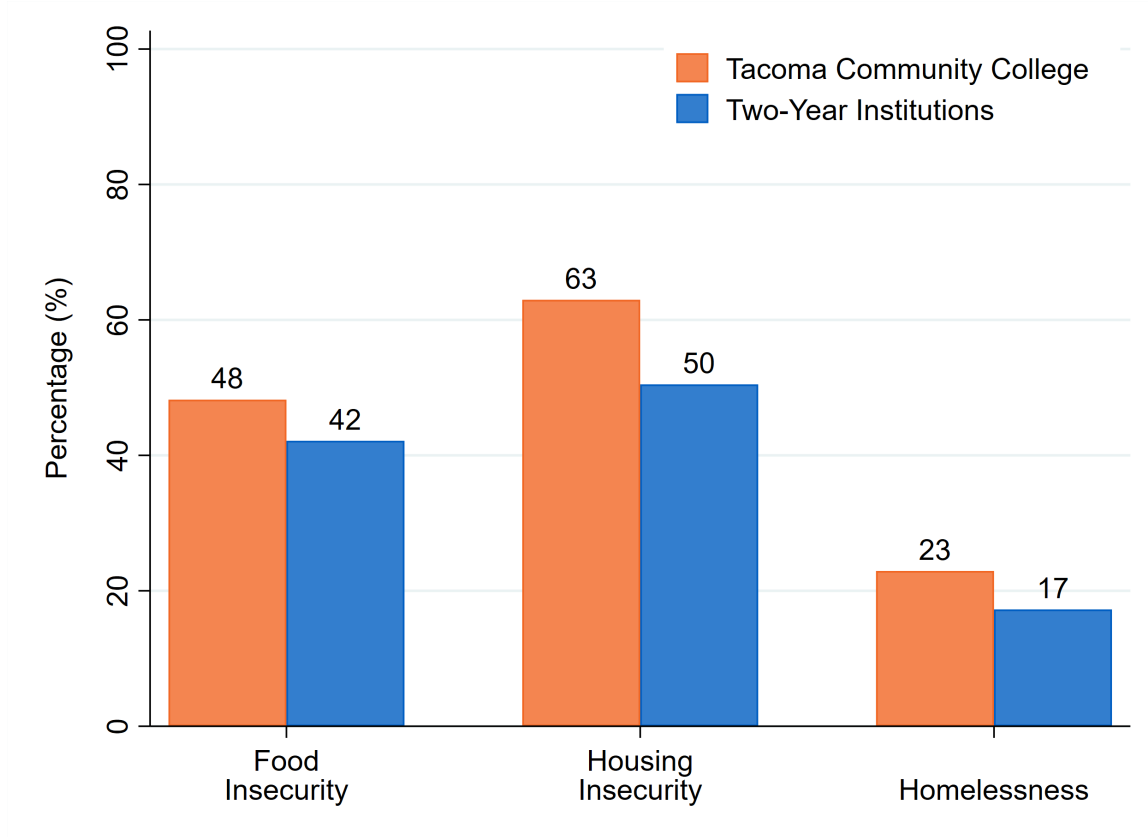


Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

COMPARISON TO SURVEY RESPONDENTS ATTENDING TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

In comparison to the rates for all survey respondents at two-year institutions nationwide in 2019, Tacoma Community College has a higher rate of food insecurity, a higher rate of housing insecurity, and a higher rate of homelessness (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Comparison of Basic Needs Insecurity Rates

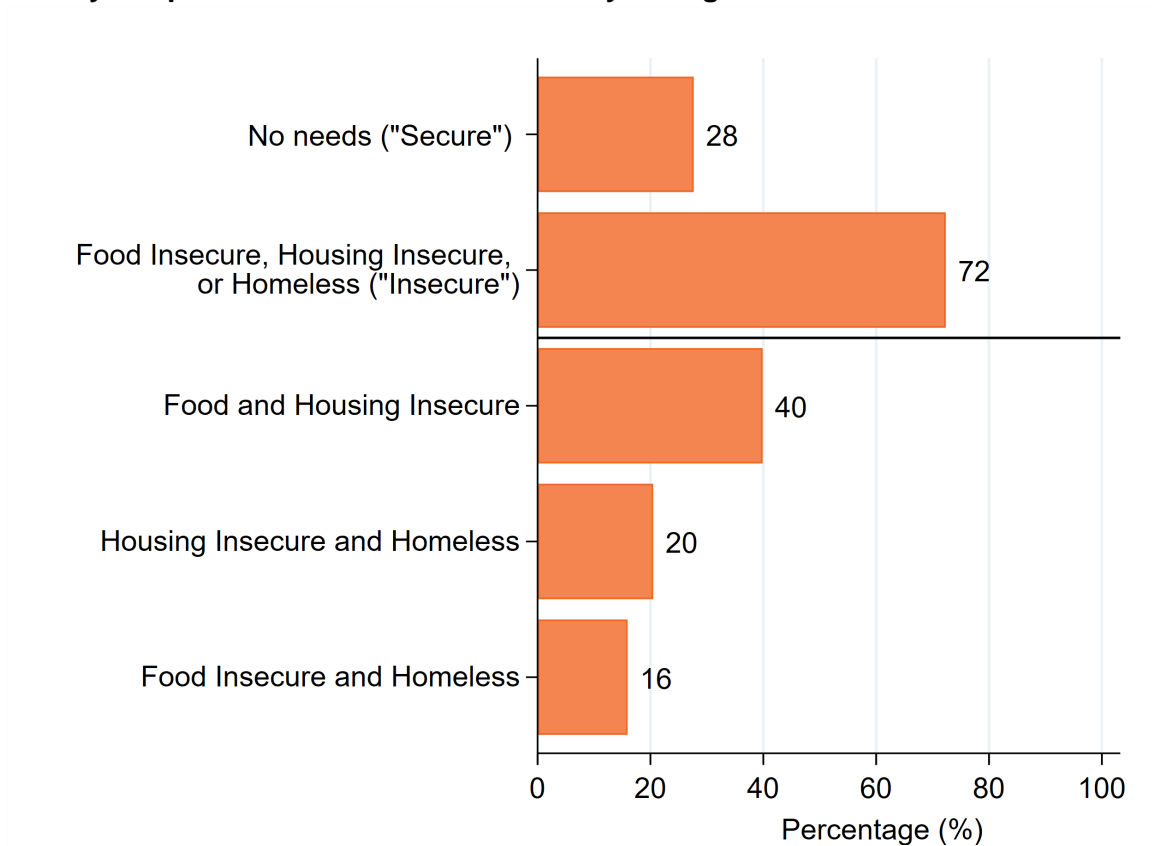


Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

OVERLAPPING CHALLENGES

Food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness are overlapping concerns, with 72% of students at Tacoma Community College experiencing at least one of these forms of basic needs insecurity in the past year (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Intersections of Food Insecurity, Housing Insecurity, and Homelessness Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

DISPARITIES IN BASIC NEEDS INSECURITY

Some students are at higher risk of basic needs insecurity than others. The tables in this section present rates of food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness according to students' demographic, academic, and economic circumstances, as well as their life circumstances.

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By Demographic Background

Table 1. Demographic Disparities in Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
GENDER IDENTITY				
Male	106	48	61	25
Female	308	50	63	22
Non-Binary/Third gender	10	40	90	30
Prefers to self-describe
TRANSGENDER IDENTITY				
Identifies as transgender	13	46	92	31
Does not identify as transgender	402	49	62	22
SEXUAL ORIENTATION				
Heterosexual or straight	309	47	61	21
Gay or lesbian	12	42	67	8
Bisexual	61	43	67	30
Prefers to self-describe	18	67	89	33
HIGHEST LEVEL OF PARENTAL EDUCATION				
No high school diploma	30	60	74	27
High school diploma	79	54	61	24
Some college	189	55	68	24
Bachelors degree or higher	102	32	54	19
Does not know	18	33	56	22

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Table 1 (continued). Demographic Disparities in Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
RACIAL OR ETHNIC BACKGROUND				
White or Caucasian	283	47	64	23
African American or Black	65	65	82	38
Hispanic or Latinx	51	45	57	18
American Indian or Alaskan Native	41	61	83	37
Indigenous	14	57	67	29
Middle Eastern or North African or Arab or Arab American	10	50	50	40
Southeast Asian	37	46	42	22
Pacific Islander or Native Hawaiian	19	53	60	32
Other Asian or Asian American	50	54	56	26
Other	14	64	79	36
STUDENT IS A U.S. CITIZEN OR PERMANENT RESIDENT				
Yes	400	49	64	23
No	14	43	50	29
AGE				
18 to 20	108	31	36	14
21 to 25	75	46	59	27
26 to 30	67	48	72	25
Older than 30	164	62	80	27
STUDENT IS AN ATHLETE				
Yes
No	408	49	64	24

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Note: Results from any category with fewer than 10 participants are not shown in the table. The Number of Students column indicates the number of survey respondents to our measure of homelessness. The number respondents to our measures of food and housing insecurity may vary slightly. Classifications of gender and race/ethnicity are not mutually exclusive. Students could self-identify with multiple classifications.

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By Student Academic, Economic, and Life Experiences

Table 2. Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity by Student Life Experiences Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
LEVEL OF STUDY				
Undergraduate	336	44	59	20
Graduate	62	60	77	23
Non-degree	60	58	72	42
COLLEGE ENROLLMENT STATUS				
Full-time (at least 12 credits)	348	46	61	21
Part-time (fewer than 12 credits)	109	54	68	29
YEARS IN COLLEGE				
Less than 1	130	48	67	33
1 to 2	192	48	57	20
3 or more	135	48	68	17
DEPENDENCY STATUS				
Dependent	89	35	35	11
Independent	274	56	76	27
Does not know	50	34	44	24
STUDENT RECEIVES THE PELL GRANT				
Yes	206	64	77	24
No	210	33	49	21
RELATIONSHIP STATUS				
Single	196	46	58	22
In a relationship	106	47	64	28
Married or domestic partnership	79	44	65	11
Divorced	26	81	88	38
Widowed

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Table 2 (continued). Rates of Basic Needs Insecurity by Student Life Experiences Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College

	Number of Students	Food Insecurity (%)	Housing Insecurity (%)	Homelessness (%)
STUDENT HAS CHILDREN				
Yes	120	65	82	24
No	326	42	56	21
STUDENT HAS BEEN IN FOSTER CARE				
Yes	23	57	78	30
No	389	48	62	22
STUDENT HAS BEEN IN MILITARY				
Yes	26	46	62	19
No	389	49	63	23
EMPLOYMENT STATUS				
Employed	111	51	65	19
Not employed, looking for work	33	66	70	39
Not employed, not looking for work	54	42	56	15
STUDENT HAS BEEN CONVICTED OF A CRIME				
Yes	27	81	89	56
No	399	45	61	20
DISABILITY OR MEDICAL CONDITION				
Learning disability	81	47	75	23
Physical disability	40	64	75	20
Chronic illness	88	61	77	28
Psychological disorder	174	55	75	28
Other disability or condition	14	43	79	29
No disability or medical condition	190	44	54	19

Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

Note: Results from any category with fewer than 10 participants are not shown in the table. The Number of Students column indicates the number of survey respondents to our measure of homelessness. The number respondents to our measures of food and housing insecurity may vary slightly. Survey questions about employment status were randomly administered to a subset of respondents. Classifications of Disability or Medical Condition are not mutually exclusive. Students could self-identify with multiple classifications.

UTILIZATION OF SUPPORTS

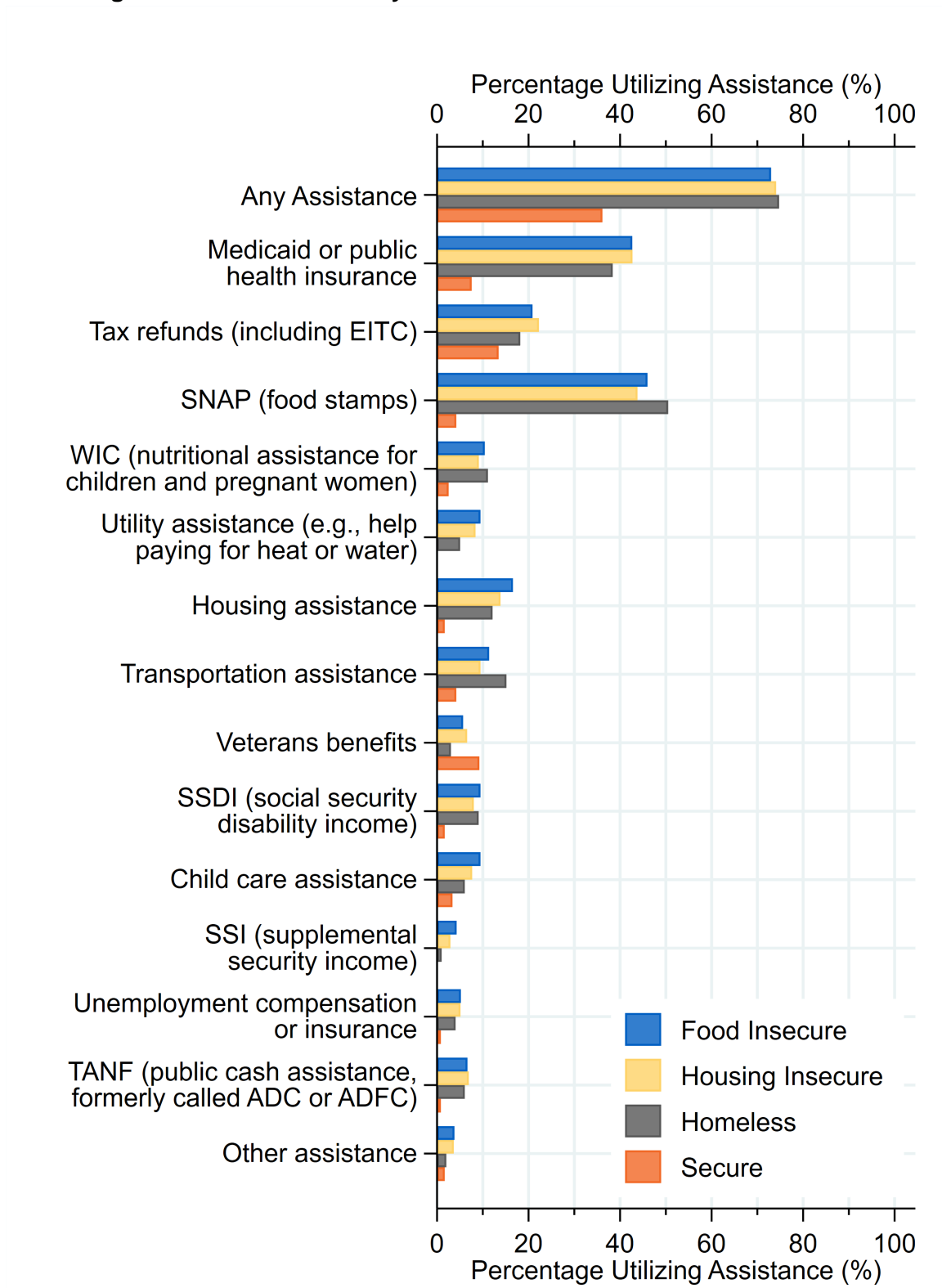
Many students at Tacoma Community College who experience basic needs insecurity do not receive public assistance (Figure 7). Among food insecure students, 46% receive SNAP benefits. In addition, 12% of students who experience homelessness receive housing assistance. It is also worth noting that students who are secure in their basic needs are still accessing public benefits, albeit at lower rates (36%) than their peers.

A growing number of on-campus supports are being offered but again, few students are accessing them (Figure 8). Of the students experiencing basic needs insecurity at Tacoma Community College, only about 17% use on-campus supports.



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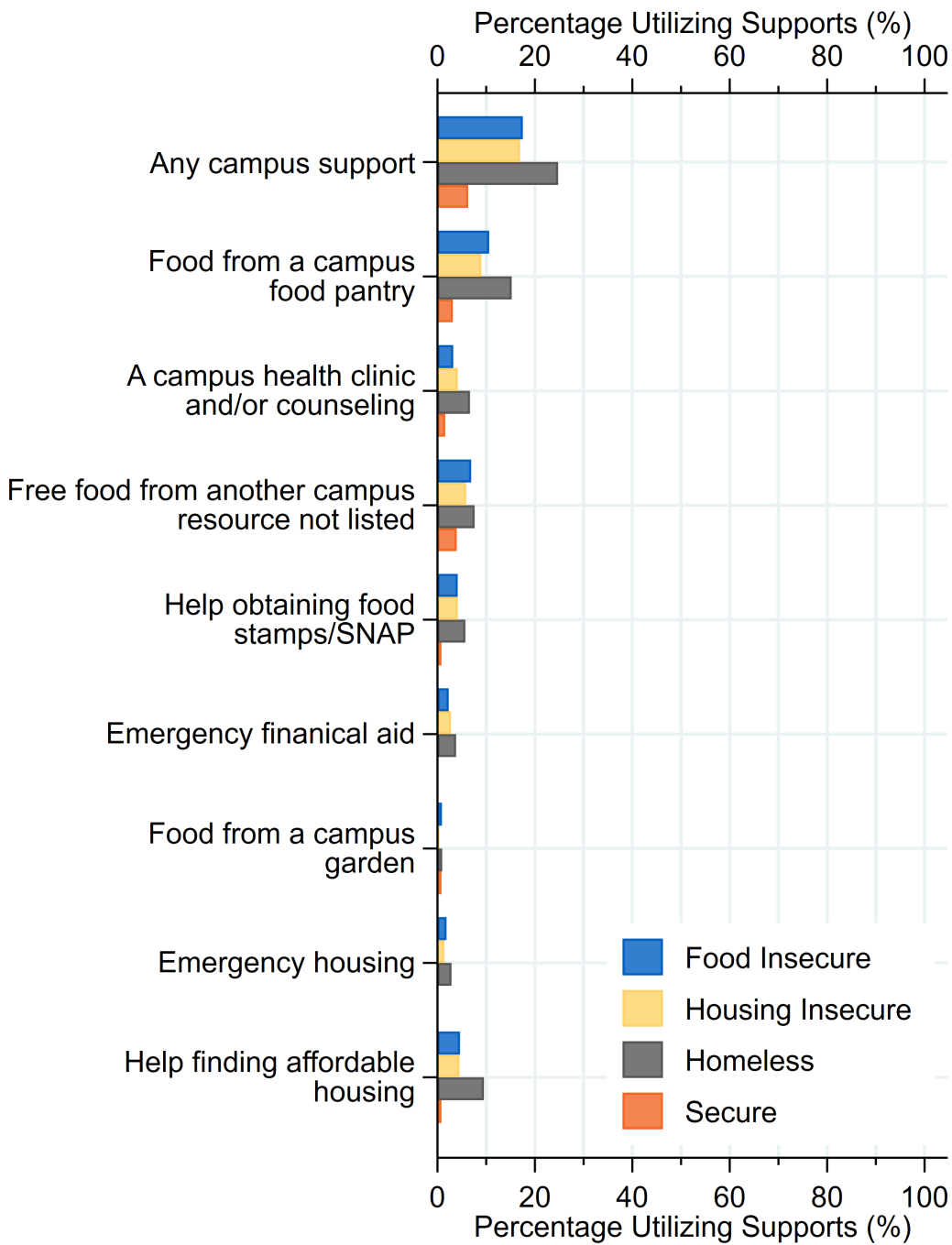
Figure 7. Use of Assistance Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College According to Basic Needs Security



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

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Figure 8. Use of Campus Supports Among Survey Respondents at Tacoma Community College According to Basic Needs Security



Source: 2019 #RealCollege Survey

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CONCLUSION

The #RealCollege survey affirms what has been evident to college administrators, faculty, staff, and students for years: basic needs insecurity is a condition challenging many undergraduates pursuing credentials. The scope of the problem described here is substantial and should be cause for a systemic response.

ABOUT US

The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice is redefining what it means to be a student-ready college with a national movement centering #realcollege students' basic needs. In order to advance the necessary systemic changes to support those needs, our work includes four pillars: action research, engagement and communication, advocacy, and sustainability. For more information, visit www.hope4college.com.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions about this report, please contact the Hope Center Research Team at hopesrvy@temple.edu.

