

A photograph of two young men walking away from the camera on a paved path. The man on the left is wearing a green and blue plaid shirt, glasses, and a dark backpack with green accents. The man on the right is wearing a white t-shirt and a dark backpack. They are walking on a light-colored concrete path with shadows cast on the ground. In the background, other people are visible, including a woman with a bright green bag.

UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

Basic Needs Annual Report

To The Regents of the University of California
January 2024

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KEY TO ACRONYMS

BAP: Budget Analysis and Planning (UCOP)

BN: Basic Needs

BNRI: Basic Needs Research Institute

CBHT: California Behavioral Health Taskforce

CCC: California Community Colleges

CDSS: California Department of Social Services

CHC: Center for Healthy Communities (CSU CHICO)

CalHHS: California Health and Human Services

CHEBNA: California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance

COA: cost of attendance

CPL: California Policy Lab

CSU: California State University

CWDA: California Welfare Directors Association

EFM: Education Financing Model

FAD: Financial Aid Directors

FGR: Federal Governmental Relations (UCOP)

FY: fiscal year

GUEA: Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs (UCOP)

GWBS: Graduate Student Well-being Survey

HUD: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

IRAP: Institutional Research and Academic Planning (UCOP)

LPIE: Local Programs that Increase Employability

MHSA: Mental Health Services Act

MHSOAC: Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission

MPP: Moderate Meal Plan” after MHSOAC

SEA: Student Equity Affairs (UCOP)

SFS: Student Financial Support (UCOP)

SGR: State Governmental Relations (UCOP)

UC: University of California

UCGPC: University of California Graduate and Professional Council

UCGSES: UC Graduate Student Experience Survey

UCOP: UC Office of the President

UCSA: University of California Student Association

UCUES: UC Undergraduate Experience Survey

USDA: U.S. Department of Agriculture

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2020 Regents' Special Committee on Student Basic Needs developed systemwide recommendations for policymakers and advocates, leaders, student service practitioners, researchers, and students, as outlined in the report, *The University of California's Next Phase of Improving Student Basic Needs*. Among those recommendations is an annual report to the Regents discussing progress toward specific goals. This report provides systemwide updates in relation to these goals, focusing on academic year 2022–23.

University of California (UC) campuses made substantial progress in many goal areas, serving more than 65,000 students in 2022–23 with nine campuses reporting data. The Budget Act of 2023 also increased funding for UC basic needs, mental health, and rapid rehousing programs. Yet challenges remain as university systems attempt to rebound from the economic and health consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, including significant rises in the costs of living that exacerbate basic needs challenges. Stagnant eligibility barriers to CalFresh also remain, decreasing access to adequate, nutritious, and culturally relevant food for many food-insecure students.

The University continues to lead and collaborate with State agencies, community organizations, county agencies, and advocacy partners to find solutions through research, promising practices, and innovative programs.

BACKGROUND

The University of California has seen tremendous growth in basic needs over the last decade, beginning with student-led calls to action. This led to support from the UC Regents, UC Office of the President, campus leaders, researchers, and advocates. In 2020, the UC Regents established the aspirational goals of cutting UC student food and housing insecurity rates in half by 2025.¹

In the last three years, the University has made significant progress in advocating for funding resources that increase students' ability to meet their basic needs, broadening collaborations with community partners, deepening investigations of disproportionate impacts, and evaluating the effects of State and national economic conditions. To date, all ten campuses have Basic Needs Centers, a suite of programs and services, and ongoing funding from the State of California.

DEFINING BASIC NEEDS

In 2021, the UC served on the Intersegmental Working Group on Basic Needs with the California Community Colleges (CCC) and the California State University (CSU) system. This working group produced recommendations for the Governor's Council for Post-Secondary Education to strengthen student basic needs supports.² The working group consisted of student leaders, researchers, and staff and affirmed UC's holistic definition of basic needs:

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.

This definition enables UC to acknowledge the interdependent systems that comprise holistic basic needs; the impact basic needs have on mental health and well-being; and the essential role basic needs security plays in supporting financial stability.

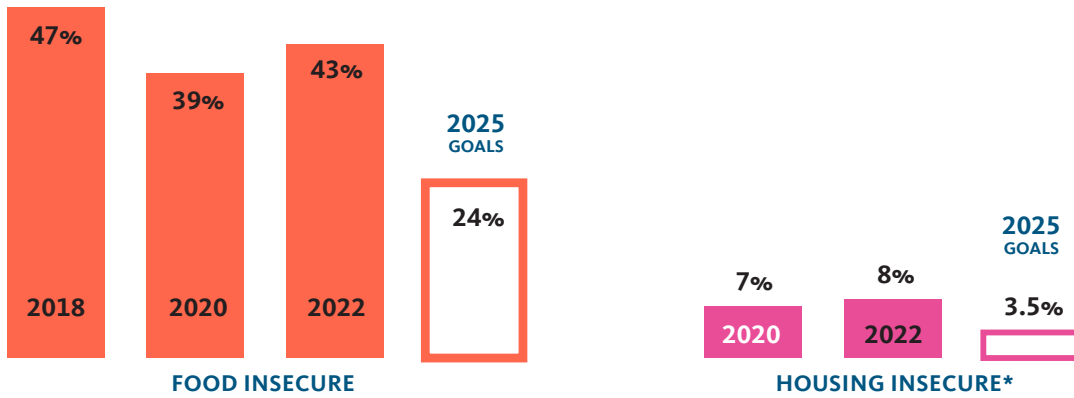
2025 BASIC NEEDS GOALS

To assess progress on reducing student food and housing insecurity rates, UC administers student experience surveys that include basic needs questions, with graduates and undergraduates surveyed in alternating years. Food security questions are based on the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Six-Item Food Security Survey Module.³ Housing security questions are informed by the McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness and by feedback from campuses on student housing concerns.⁴ The UC Undergraduate Experience Survey (UCUES) was last administered in 2022, while the UC Graduate Student Experience Survey (UCGSES) was last administered in 2023. Regents' goal benchmarks are based on 2018 student experience survey data, which was the first year to use the most updated food security module.

While national food insecurity rates increased from 11.1 percent in 2018 to 12.8 percent in 2022,⁵ UC undergraduate student food insecurity rates declined by over three percentage points between 2018 and 2022—from 46.6 to 43.4 percent.⁶ This decline has not been consistent over the four years. Between 2018 and 2020, undergraduate food insecurity decreased by eight percentage points, but then increased again in 2022. Housing insecurity increased by 1 percentage point between 2020 and 2022.⁷ Figure 1 illustrates undergraduate food and housing insecurity rates between 2018 and 2022 according to UCUES results.

Figure 1: Undergraduate food and housing insecurity, 2018–2022

Figures rounded to the nearest percent.



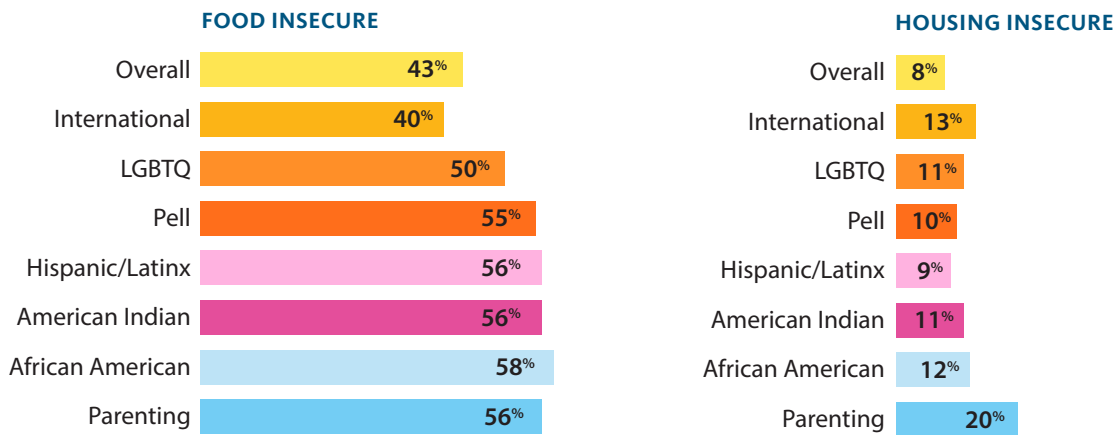
Historically underserved undergraduate populations were more likely to experience food insecurity, housing insecurity or both than the overall undergraduate student population, including parenting, African American, Hispanic/Latinx,

American Indian, LGBTQ, International, and Pell students. Figure 2 illustrates undergraduate food and housing insecurities by population according to 2022 UCUES.

Figure 2: Undergraduate Food and Housing Insecurity by Population, 2022⁸

Source: *Student basic needs | University of California* and internal UCOP analysis.

Figures rounded to the nearest percent.

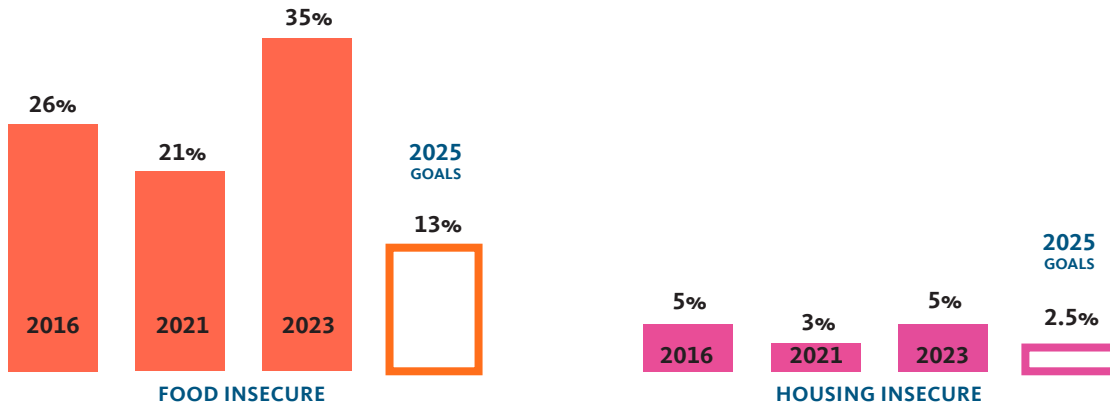


Graduate student food insecurity declined by five percentage points between 2016 and 2021 and increased by 14 percentage points between 2021 and 2023. Housing insecurity went down by two percentage points between 2016 and 2021—from five

percent to three percent—and then rebounded to five percent in 2023. Figure 2 illustrates graduate student food and housing insecurity rates over the last five years according to UCGSES results.

Figure 3: Graduate student food and housing insecurity, 2016–2023

Figures rounded to the nearest percent.

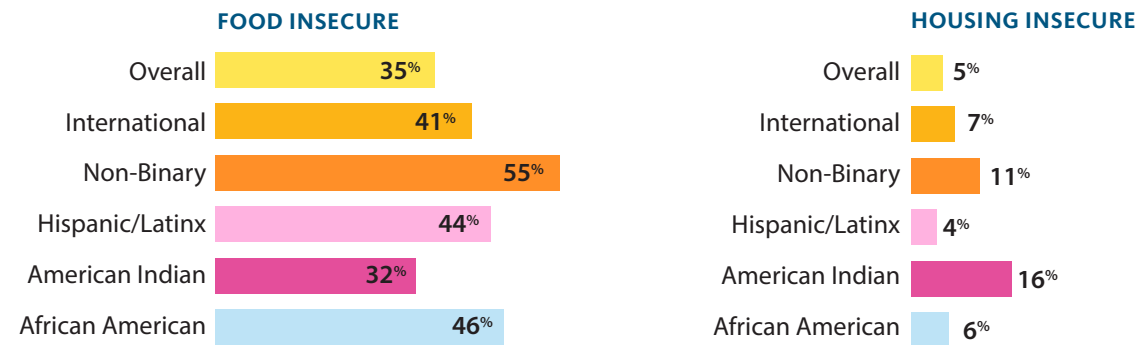


Historically underserved graduate student populations were also more likely to experience food insecurity, housing insecurity or both than the overall graduate student population, including African American, American Indian,

Hispanic/Latinx, International and Non-Binary students. Figure 3 illustrates undergraduate food and housing insecurities by population according to 2023 UCGSES.

Figure 4: Graduate Food and Housing Insecurity by Population, 2023⁹

Source: Internal UCOP analysis on 2023 UCGSES. Figures rounded to the nearest percent.



ANALYSIS OF UC FOOD AND HOUSING INSECURITY RATES

Fluctuations in Food and Housing Insecurity Rates

Fluctuations in food and housing insecurity rates for both undergraduate and graduate students may demonstrate the influence of difficult national economic conditions, along with the timing and availability of emergency resource programs.

Financial Stressors

The COVID-19 pandemic began the spring of 2020, placing financial stress on households and forcing transitions in housing, employment, and caretaking, among other everyday experiences. Inflation and cost of living have risen significantly since then, increasing the costs of basic needs like food, housing, and energy. Between January 2020 and September 2023, all items in the consumer index (CPI-U) increased by 18.7 percent. Food costs increased by 24.2 percent in that time, and energy prices spiked in June 2022 at a 49.3 percent increase compared with January 2020.¹⁰ Four UC campuses are in cities ranked as among the country's most expensive to live.¹¹ Systemwide, student undergraduate rent increased 24 percent above inflation since 2019.¹² All nine undergraduate campuses reported rent increases, with seven reporting increases of at least 23 percent. Undergraduate students at the Merced campus reported the highest increase at 56 percent.¹³ Systemwide average monthly rent for undergraduates was \$1,341 in 2023,¹⁴ while the average for graduate and professional students was \$1,260 in 2022.¹⁵ UC is attempting to keep pace with changing costs for students through its Cost of Attendance Survey (see Progress on Recommendations for University Leaders).

Resource Programs

On the other hand, campus Basic Needs Centers had been established by the onset of the 2020 pandemic due to permanent funding allocated to UC basic needs programs by the Budget Act of 2019.¹⁶ These programs enabled campuses to deliver timely food, housing, and financial crisis resolution services at a critical juncture during the pandemic. Many students also returned to family homes from spring 2020 to fall 2021, where food and housing may have been more readily available.

In addition to campus basic needs support, federal emergency programs were active during select periods during the pandemic. Between spring 2020 and spring 2022, approximately \$596 million in Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) grants were disbursed to UC students based largely on anticipated financial need, which could be used to help pay basic needs expenses like food and housing. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, or CalFresh in California) expanded exemptions for college students under Public Health Emergency (PHE) regulations between January of 2021 and May of 2023, as well as provided additional emergency allotments (EAs) from 2021 to March 2023.¹⁷ Housing is Key, a federal pandemic housing support program, assisted eligible households with rent between April 2020 and March 2022.¹⁸

During the administration of the 2020 and 2022 UCUES and the 2021 UCGSES—between April and August of their respective years—many students had access to at least one emergency resource beyond the campus basic needs centers, with different programs active during different time intervals, as noted above. However, federal emergency programs had ended by the 2023 UCGSES. Timing of these resources may have been influential when paired with strenuous economic conditions affecting the cost of living, leading to both dips and rebounds in food and housing insecurity for undergraduate and graduate students.

ANNUAL DATA COLLECTION

Unique students served across food and housing programs are among the data points collected annually. Figure 3 illustrates the total number of unique students served across all UC food and housing efforts between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023, with nine campuses reporting.

Figure 5: Basic Needs Unique Students Served and Student Contacts

Campus	Unique Students Served*	Total Student Contacts**
Berkeley	6,103	27,343
Davis	11,216	76,039
Irvine	5,044	32,937
Los Angeles	N/A	N/A
Merced	2,952	9,233
Riverside	8,452	26,418
San Diego	10,326	48,662
San Francisco	2,189	19,231
Santa Barbara	13,888	50,301
Santa Cruz	7,224	31,055
Total	67,394	321,219

*The number of unique students served is calculated through a variety of data collection methods, such as the number of individual student identification card "swipes" registered at basic-needs centers. The swipes represent the total number of individual students served. Due to differing data collection methods and data infrastructure available across campuses, minor duplication may occur.

**Student contacts represent the total number of student identification card "swipes," or the total number of times students were served by State-funded basic needs programs.

Common UC food insecurity programs include CalFresh outreach and application assistance; food pantries; food distributions (such as holiday food boxes and fresh produce distributions); skills development; grocery cards; meal vouchers; CalFresh-like assistance for CalFresh-ineligible populations; campus-sponsored transportation to grocery stores; and food awards. Common UC housing insecurity programs include emergency housing, short or long-term housing arrangements, rental deposit assistance, direct aid, case management and skills development.

Other systemwide data collection points, and results for fiscal year 2022–23, include:

- Amount of emergency basic needs aid awarded: \$3,364,433*
- Number of students who received emergency aid: 2,995
- Number of students served by a campus food pantry: 27,657**
- Number of students served by food distribution sites: 14,335**
- Number of students who received meal vouchers: 2,810**
- Number of students who received food/grocery gift cards: 4088**
- Number of students served by CalFresh: 16,716**¹⁹
- Number of students served by case management: 8,759**
- Number of staff members hired: 52.45 (FTE)**
- Number of student staff hired at UC: 324**

*Figure includes awards funded by both State basic needs and University dollars.

**Totals do not include Los Angeles data.

PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS

The 2020 Regents report included recommendations for policymakers and advocates, University leaders, student service practitioners, researchers, and students. UC has made significant progress the past year in each of these five areas. Appendix I: Basic Needs Progress provides a summary of progress toward these goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS AND ADVOCATES

The guiding recommendations for policymakers and advocates focus on advocating for increased student financial aid (Priority 1.1) and continuing to collaborate with County Social Services to provide staffing and technical and application assistance for student CalFresh applicants (1.4). This section also includes updates on State funding for basic needs. See Appendix I: Basic Needs Progress for a complete list of recommendations for policy makers and advocates, including detailed descriptions of each goal.

Financial Aid

UC has made significant progress in advocating for increased or improved funding for students via financial aid (Priority 1.1). Providing these resources for low-resourced students supports financial stability—a core element of UC’s basic needs ecosystem.

Priority 1.1: UC has increased financial aid to students through “return-to-aid” policies associated with tuition increases; has been a strong advocate for federal improvements to financial aid processes and resources that result in greater aid to students, including the FAFSA Simplification Act; and has supported student-centered campaigns, such as Double the Pell.

UC’s “return-to-aid” portion of tuition increases resulted in a \$26 million increase of UC-funded financial aid for undergraduates in 2022–23 and will result in \$61 million in 2023–24. UC, alongside other segments, also advocated for California to expand the Middle Class Scholarship (MCS). The MCS previously offered approximately 11,000 UC students a total of \$38 million. In 2023–24, the MCS will support 92,000 UC students with a total of \$151 million. Additionally, prior to 2023–24, basic needs awards often reduced a student’s MCS amount, offsetting the positive financial impact of that basic needs award. Due to advocacy efforts of staff and students, basic needs awards no longer reduce a student’s MCS, except in those rare cases in which a student’s combination of

scholarships and emergency aid exceeds their MCS “self-help,” currently set at \$7,898.

The UC joined institutions nationwide in supporting the FAFSA Simplification Act, which will enable more students to receive more aid dollars under the new Student Aid Index and will link Pell eligibility to family size, household income, and the federal poverty level. The University also supports the Double the Pell campaign, which calls for the maximum Pell grant for low-income students to increase to \$13,000.²⁰ In 2022–23, the Pell increased by \$400 and in 2023–24, the Pell increased by \$500 for a maximum award of \$7,395—the largest percentage increase to the program in 15 years.²¹

State Basic Needs and Rapid Rehousing Funding

While increased resources for students through financial aid are critical, ensuring adequate funding for the Basic Needs Centers is also a vital part of supporting students. In the Budget Act of 2023, the California legislature provided UC basic needs programs an additional \$800,000, UC mental health programs an additional \$1,000,000, and UC rapid rehousing programs an additional \$200,000. This brings systemwide funding totals in all three areas to \$40.8 million.²² Basic Needs and Rapid Rehousing receive a total of \$19.5 million. These increases followed recent historic rises in cost of living, which disproportionately impact low-income households. UCOP distributed these funds based on an equity index, which factored in food and housing insecurity rates, as well as total numbers of students on each campus.

Social Services/CalFresh

Priority 1.4: The University has progressed in Priority 1.4 by way of campuses continuing to work with local County Social Service Agencies, maintaining proactive communication via the statewide CalFresh Eligibility Working Groups, and maintaining campus-based relationships that enable more efficient and informative delivery of technical and application assistance by the counties. This section includes additional information on efforts relevant to collaborations with Social Services.

Basic Needs Centers worked with their County Social Services Agencies to maintain productive communication until the appointment of their county liaisons. In 2021, [AB 1326](#) passed, requiring all county offices to designate at least one staff member to serve as a liaison to institutions of higher education within their jurisdiction. Due to county delays, 2023 was the first year in which every UC campus was assigned a liaison. With county liaisons available, campuses have a consistent and direct contact with whom to receive technical and application assistance for CalFresh, as well as request on-campus support. Representatives from UC also participate in the quarterly statewide CalFresh Student Eligibility Workgroup facilitated by California Department of Social Services. This communication allows for streamlined discussions around unintended consequences produced by CalFresh student rules, as well as for gaining insights relevant to technical assistance. Key efforts include:

- Basic Needs Centers worked closely with campus partners and the Center for Healthy Communities (CHC) at Chico State University to submit UC programs to California Department of Social Services (CDSS) for consideration under the newly expanded CalFresh student exemption, Local Programs that Increase Employability (LPIE). LPIE is a student exemption for those participating in programs deemed to increase their likelihood of employment. As of November 2023, UC has submitted over 800 LPIE programs.
- UC worked alongside segment and community partners to advise on data points for the [Senate Bill \(SB\) 187](#)-mandated CalFresh Student Data Dashboard, a public CDSS dashboard that will provide student-specific information on CalFresh application and participation by January 2024.²³ [AB 928](#) also passed in September 2023 due to feedback from UC and other segments, specifying that CDSS is required to update this dashboard annually.
- UC issued support for the reintroduction of the [EATS Act](#) in 2023, which would permanently expand college student eligibility to all students attending a two- or four-year institution at least part time.
- UC basic needs staff provided feedback to CDSS during their update of the CalFresh Student Handbook, last revised in 2020. This handbook elaborates on the student rules for CalFresh, providing guidance for CDSS eligibility workers.
- After the ending of PHE regulations that temporarily expanded CalFresh eligibility, UC Basic Needs Centers supported students with CalFresh through proactive outreach informing students of PHE changes, deadlines, and associated documentation requirements and through offering CalFresh application support.

- UC convenes a monthly systemwide group for Basic Needs practitioners to discuss processes around CalFresh and other public programs available to students.
- Eight campuses participate in the CalFresh Outreach Subaward, administered by CHC. This award documents time and effort spent in CalFresh outreach efforts and allows campuses to receive additional funds in federal share to support CalFresh outreach.

PROGRESS ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERS

The guiding recommendations for university leaders include refining the Cost of Attendance (COA) to reflect the true cost of living (Priority 2.1); advocating for increased mental health funding to meet capacity and better serve students whose mental health is impacted by basic needs struggles (Priority 2.2); creating regional approaches to basic needs by strengthening alliances with community partners and higher education segments (Priority 2.3); and prioritizing basic needs for historically underserved populations (Priority 2.4). See Appendix I: Basic Needs Progress for a complete list of recommendations for university leaders, including detailed descriptions of each goal.

Cost of Attendance Adjustments

Priority 2.1: The UC has made Cost of Attendance (COA) adjustments for one of the most basic needs-insecure populations: parenting students. In addition, the University has made efforts to better conceptualize how independent students' costs may differ from dependent students' costs through the 2023 Cost of Attendance Survey (COAS). The COA also now includes "floors" for both food and rent expenses.

UC Student Financial Support (SFS) is continually evaluating how the COA aligns with the true cost of living. UCOP conducted a new Cost of Attendance Survey (COAS) in Spring 2023. As part of that survey, UCOP "oversampled" independent students (including older and parenting students) to get greater detail on the expenses that they face. Initial findings show that inflation impacted student expenses. National and internal UCOP assessments also indicate undergraduate student parents experience higher food and housing insecurity rates than the overall student population,²⁴ making COA adjustments important to access adequate aid.

Beginning in 2023–24, in alignment with the FAFSA Simplification Act,²⁵ undergraduate students identified on the FAFSA as parenting and who are living on campus receive automatic COA increases for housing. All parenting undergraduates are also given automatic COA adjustments

for food and personal expenses based on the number of their dependent children. SFS has encouraged campus Financial Aid offices to apply gift aid, rather than loans, to meet additional costs. Campuses have also agreed to enact proactive outreach to parenting students to advise them of these COA adjustments, as well as other resources that may be available, such as COA adjustments for dependent care costs.

In addition, the 2022–23 UC COA also included a “floor” for grocery expenses based on the USDA’s Moderate Meal Plan (MMP) and continued the practice of using a “floor” for rents based on Housing and Urban Development (HUD) data. “Floors” are the minimum amounts used for students in these categories, which prevents very low reported expenses from pushing averages used to set student expense budgets low.

Advocating for Mental Health Funding

Priority 2.2: The University has successfully advocated for an increase in State mental health funds to assist the UC in gaining the capacity to meet the demand, including for students whose mental health is negatively impacted by basic needs insecurities. This section also includes information on efforts the University has made to develop collaborative strategies between basic needs and mental health and well-being practitioners.

The intersections of mental health and basic needs are increasingly recognized in higher education. When students struggle to afford the most basic necessities, it can lead to increased stress—including depression and anxiety—and lower grade point averages.^{26,27} Advocacy efforts to increase State funding for student mental health efforts, including serving those who are negatively impacted by basic needs insecurities, were successful in 2022–23. The Budget Act of 2023 allocated an additional \$1 million in ongoing funds for UC mental health efforts. These funds support campus programs and services that utilize holistic strategies to provide students with prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery services.

Additionally, in October 2023, UCOP hosted a systemwide Student Well-Being Leadership Summit, in which basic needs and mental health and well-being leaders from across all ten campuses met to discuss collaborative strategies. Leaders emerged with an improved understanding of their intersecting portfolios, suggestions for expanded definitions of well-being and strategic action items.

Creating Regional Approaches

Priority 2.3: UC creates regional approaches to basic needs by maintaining strong collaborations with segments, community partners, research organizations, and

philanthropic organizations to address and inform efforts around student basic needs.

The California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA), a tri-segmental alliance with leaders across UC, CSU, and CCC, meets regularly. As a co-host of CHEBNA’s 2024 in-person conference, UC is working closely with the CSU and CCC systems to plan the event, which will bring together approximately 1,500 higher education leaders, students, and staff from across the state. This will be the first in-person CHEBNA conference since the COVID-19 pandemic. CHEBNA also hosted a 2023 Spring Learning Series. This series included presenters from all three segments and informed on topics such as CalFresh eligibility changes after the ending of the PHE; disproportionate impact in the parenting student population regarding basic needs; and advancing housing efforts. Additional regional collaborations include:

- UC Santa Barbara is the first UC campus to be onboarded to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) platform, assisting Basic Needs and Rapid Rehousing staff in connecting students with off-campus resources.
- UC Merced and UC Riverside collaborated with local community colleges to plan joint housing projects and increase transfer rates. The State provided \$100 million in funding to build a 488-bed housing project on the UC Merced campus, which will accept eligible Merced College students expecting to transfer.²⁸ UC Riverside, similarly, was allocated \$126 million in State funds to build a 1,500-bed complex that accepts students from Riverside Community College.²⁹
- UC has joined with the CSU and CCC systems to submit regular segment updates to the California Interagency Council on Homelessness (Cal-ICH), which seeks to identify benefits, services, and other resources to prevent and end California homelessness.³⁰
- UC leaders regularly meet with federal and State basic needs groups, including a monthly federal basic needs strategy group hosted by HOPE Center for Community, College & Justice; a quarterly Student Eligibility Working Group hosted by CDSS; monthly statewide meetings on CalFresh efforts hosted by CHC; a monthly national meeting supporting parenting students; and ongoing conversations with mission-driven and research organizations dedicated to improving student basic needs.

Prioritizing Basic Needs for Historically Underserved Populations

Priority 2.4: The University prioritizes basic needs resources for historically underserved student populations by offering services with low entry barriers; partnering with other

student services to provide coordinated care; working with Financial Aid offices to offer insights on the differing needs of historically underserved populations; and ensuring emergency programs evaluate the holistic situation of each individual, including their access, or eligibility barriers to, programs like CalFresh. Additionally, updated campus Basic Needs spending plan requirements for 2024 include criteria for prioritizing historically marginalized populations for Innovation Funding.

The prevalence of basic needs insecurities is not evenly distributed among all UC student populations, as demonstrated in Figures 2 and 4. In 2022–23, the majority of emergency basic needs grants were distributed to historically underserved populations. A total of 2,383 undergraduates and a total of 612 graduate students received an emergency basic needs grant.³¹ Eighty percent of undergraduate emergency basic needs grant recipients identified as Black, indigenous and/or people of color (BIPOC); 61 percent were Pell recipients and 73 percent were first-generation.

Basic Needs Centers offer many low-barrier programs—many of which only require a student identification. Basic Needs Centers also engage with other student programs and diverse student groups to help meet the needs of these populations. In some cases, Basic Needs Centers work directly with these programs to serve students with intersectional identities. For example, UC Berkeley’s Basic Needs Centers often communicate with Berkeley’s Student Parent Programs to help serve parenting students. The programs’ offices are located in proximity to one another, with a food pantry in between, encouraging students to learn about and use resources from both centers.

Basic Needs staff continue to dialogue with Financial Aid staff to offer insights on the differing needs of historically underserved populations who may experience more financial emergencies or increased costs. When considering need, Basic Needs Centers take into account the holistic situation of each student—including ineligibility for programs like CalFresh and costs like unexpectedly high rent or utility bills, emergency medical needs, dependent care, or disrupted transportation that can create crisis situations.

Finally, campus Basic Needs Centers will update Basic Needs and Rapid Rehousing spending plans in the first quarter of 2024. These spending plans include criteria to create or sustain innovative practices that address student food and/or housing insecurity, particularly for those from historically underserved populations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENT SERVICE PRACTITIONERS

The three guiding recommendations for student service practitioners include maximizing CalFresh enrollment for eligible graduate and undergraduate students by continuing to work with county agencies to increase application assistance (Priority 3.1); ensuring that food-insecure students who do not qualify for CalFresh have access to nutritious food (Priority 3.2); and continuing to share promising practices related to basic needs (Priority 3.3). This section also includes efforts relevant to increasing CalFresh eligibility. See Appendix I: Basic Needs Progress for a complete list of recommendations for student service practitioners, including detailed descriptions of each goal.

Maximizing CalFresh Enrollment

Priority 3.1: UC student practitioners in basic needs continue to show leadership, adaptability, and dedication with CalFresh student support. This has resulted in thousands of submitted CalFresh applications, hundreds of Local Programs that Increase Employability programs submitted to CDSS for the CalFresh student exemption, and a quarter of students who access basic needs services participating in CalFresh.

An estimated 25 percent of students who used basic needs services in Fall 2022 were enrolled in CalFresh,³² compared with an estimated 12 percent of all UC undergraduate students, and four percent of all UC graduate students, enrolled in CalFresh in 2019–20.³³ Systemwide, UC campuses submitted over 16,000 CalFresh applications between July 2022 and June 2023, with more than 74,870 total CalFresh contacts, including outreach events.³⁴ Additionally, as of November 2023, UC has submitted 823 programs to CDSS as Local Programs that Increase Employability due in large part to campus collaborative efforts with CHC.

CalFresh outreach and assistance programs include, but are not limited to, initial application and continued CalFresh renewal support; outreach emails; social media posts; presentations at orientations and campus events; eligibility notification letters through financial aid; CalFresh outreach and application events; and information delivered through food and housing programs.

Food Programs for CalFresh Ineligible Students

Priority 3.2: All ten campuses offer food programs for which students who do not qualify for CalFresh are eligible. These include food awards, grocery gift cards, dining hall meal vouchers, food pantries, mobile produce distributions, and holiday food distributions. Additionally, campuses conduct targeted outreach for student groups less likely to qualify, such as undocumented and graduate students.

Innovative, community-responsive programs with low access barriers are also key to serving this population. Examples of these include UC Davis's Aggie Food Truck, UC Irvine's free mobile food pantry distribution, and UC Merced's No Food Left Behind food recovery program. UC Davis's Aggie Food Truck offers free and low cost nutritious meals in a manner similar to a paid food truck, providing fresh meals, dignity, and choice to students. UC Irvine's free mobile food pantry stops at campus housing locations weekly to help reduce transportation barriers associated with getting to and from food pantries, as well as carrying food home. UC Merced's No Food Left Behind program sends text messages to students notifying them of catering events with leftover food, providing nutrition for food-insecure students while reducing food waste.

Sharing Promising Practices Related to Basic Needs

Priority 3.3: UC has been a leader in professional development opportunities and the sharing of best practices for student basic needs. The University hosted a basic needs virtual learning series in Spring 2023, offering presentations from subject-matter experts across all three segments that featured pressing topics, including disproportionate impact for parenting students, housing, and CalFresh changes associated with the ending of the PHE. The UC will also host CHEBNA's 2024 summit, the first in-person convening since the pandemic and predicted to gather 1500 staff, faculty, students, State representatives, and members of community-based organizations across California. Finally, the University began funding a five-year research and training consortium pilot in July 2023, the Center for Economic Justice and Action (CEJA) at UC Santa Cruz, to continue evolving research, best practices, and professional development in the field. (See Recommendations for Researchers).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCHERS

The three guiding recommendations for researchers include further examining the interrelationships among various components of basic needs (Priority 4.1); continuing to research barriers and facilitators of CalFresh (Priority 4.2); and establishing basic needs assessments and identifying promising practices that best support the needs of students, especially from historically underserved groups (Priority 4.3). See Appendix I: Basic Needs Progress for a complete list of recommendations for researchers, including detailed descriptions of each goal.

Interrelationships Among Basic Needs Components; CalFresh; Assessments and Promising Practices

Priorities 4.1, 4.2, 4.3: This year, the University responded to the evolving landscape of basic needs research, training, and innovation by funding a historic five-year pilot: the UC Essential Needs Research, Training, and Promising Practices Consortium, housed at the Center for Economic Justice and Action (CEJA), formerly the Blum Center on Poverty, Social Enterprise, and Participatory Governance, at UC Santa Cruz. This consortium brings together faculty, researchers, and practitioners in innovative ways to advance UC's basic needs programs and to foster student success. The new UC Essential Needs Consortium (1) sponsors annual systemwide funding opportunities for research and evaluation related to UC students' basic, or essential, needs and facilitates a robust learning community of UC researchers and practitioners; (2) provides basic (essential) needs education, training, and technical assistance to UC campuses; and (3) serves as a clearinghouse to learn about cutting-edge basic (essential) needs practices, programs, and research across the UC system. Through training, research, and evaluation, the Consortium will identify, strengthen, and amplify best practices and programs for ensuring that all UC students' basic needs are met.³⁵

Among those first research initiatives at CEJA is [Food Security and Cardiovascular and Metabolic Health \(CVMH\)](#), a project backed by the National Institute of Health (NIH) examining the link between CVMH and food security in the college student population.

Other UC research in basic needs this year focused on assessment of basic needs program usage, or "interventions," and barriers; increased fruit and vegetable intake associated with campus food pantry usage (Priority 4.3); and correlations among mental health, COVID-19 related stressors, and food insecurity (Priority 4.1). A systemwide survey administered to students who utilized basic needs programs in Fall 2022 found that 60 percent of students who utilized campus basic needs services were eligible for work study and that 49 percent were first-generation. These students were also more likely to be homeless than the overall student population, and three-quarters reported feelings of being overwhelmed and/or exhausted. Barriers to accessing resources included student schedules, hours of operation, and students' proximity to resources.³⁶ Other findings included increased fruit and vegetable consumption among UC campus pantry users who are experiencing food insecurity,³⁷ and stressors associated with COVID, including increased depressive symptoms, increased time caring for family, the inability to pay utilities in full, being unable to afford housing, and concerns about accessing healthcare associated with COVID-19 challenges.³⁸

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS

The two guiding recommendations for students include encouraging more students to access basic needs services and normalizing students availing themselves of assistance (Priority 5.1) and continuing to prioritize ongoing support for basic needs services in student government leadership and advocacy and participating in campus committees (Priority 5.2). See Appendix I: Basic Needs Progress for a complete list of recommendations for students, including detailed descriptions of each goal.

Normalizing Basic Needs Services

Priority 5.1: Students have successfully contributed to increasing student utilization and normalization of basic needs services. Unique student counts for basic needs services systemwide have risen over the last two academic years from 52,883 in 2020–21 to at least 67,394 (with nine campuses reporting) in 2022–23.

Students continue to serve on campus committees and offer their perspectives in discussions related to basic needs, including student services and supports. They also offer powerful insights on how modern student experiences differ from those of previous generations, creating a greater need for basic needs services in light of increased educational and living costs. Additionally, both undergraduate and graduate students serve as staff in campus Basic Needs Centers, lending their skills, insights, and lived experiences to program design and delivery.

Ongoing Support for Basic Needs

Priority 5.2: Student leadership remains in active discussions with the campus student base, with basic needs practitioners and with leadership at UCOP through systemwide calls, student government meetings, campus events, and systemwide retreats. In August 2023, members of the UC Student Association (UCSA), the UC Graduate & Professional Council (UCGPC), and the Student Regents convened at the in-person Student Leadership Summit at the UCOP Oakland headquarters. These leaders met with President Drake and UCOP staff to discuss pressing topics, including the intersections of basic needs insecurities, economic conditions, and disproportionate impact. Student government leaders were also included in the Student Well-Being Leadership Summit at UC Davis in October 2023, sharing their perspectives on data collection and student needs.

KEY CHALLENGES

COST-OF-LIVING INCREASES IN RELATION TO RESOURCES

The nation is experiencing profound economic reverberations from the COVID-19 pandemic, including significantly increased inflation and cost of living. Basic needs are unique in that they are not simply affected by the cost of living—their components **are** the cost of living. For low-income households, any upward movement in the price of essential goods and services, without comparable financial or in-kind resources, can quickly lead to crises.

According to a 2022 survey administered to students utilizing UC basic needs services, 36 percent could not handle an unexpected emergency expense of \$100 or less; 25 percent could not cover an emergency expense of any amount.³⁹ When food costs increase by nearly 25 percent; when average rents rise by 24 percent above inflation systemwide; when energy prices spike by nearly 50 percent during a pandemic; and when childcare costs as much as housing,⁴⁰ additional resources are necessary to meet those increased expenses. Federal emergency programs provided temporary relief to students, but those programs are no longer active and not all students were able to access them.

Basic Needs Centers in 2022–23 served at least 14,500 more students than in 2020-21⁴¹, in addition to navigating their own increased costs associated with inflation. UC campus staff have been innovative in finding ways to meet this demand, showing dedication to their students. However, they have been doing so with limited resources.

The State budget increase in Basic Needs and Rapid Rehousing funds for 2022–23 is a welcome infusion that has helped fill that gap. However, it is insufficient to meet the needs of students. Due to current levels of funding, campus Basic Needs Centers must limit their student supports to primarily focus on emergency situations that ensure health and safety. They are unable to significantly invest in prevention and other kinds of medium- and long-term solutions that would be more likely to decrease overall student food and housing insecurity rates over time, such as long-term rental subsidies or food programs that provide all on- and off-campus food- insecure students—particularly those not eligible for, or not receiving the maximum allotment for, CalFresh—with three nutritious meals a day. Funding is also insufficient to eliminate difficult tradeoffs, such as tradeoffs between increasing campus staff and increasing

supportive resources. Despite these ongoing operational needs, campus basic needs practitioners meet regularly to share promising practices across the system and continue to keep students at the center of the work that they do.

Social Services

Public welfare programs are critical resources to aid students in navigating these cost increases. Students continue to be categorically ineligible for CalFresh, the largest and most effective food security program in the nation. Students must meet at least one specific exemption to be eligible for CalFresh, such as:

- Work at least 20 hours per week (on average)
- Approved for and awarded TANF-funded Cal Grant A or Cal Grant B
- Approved for State or federal work-study money and have not refused any job assignments
- A full-time student who is a single parent to a child under 12
- A part-time student with a child under age six; or a part-time student with a child (age 6-11) without adequate childcare
- Receiving CalWORKs benefits
- Enrolled in CalFresh employment and training or another training program accepted by CalFresh (such as LPIEs)
- Not planning to register for the next school term

Graduate students face particular challenges to CalFresh eligibility. Social Services eligibility criteria and income calculations do not readily translate to students whose income is earned with fellowships or graduate assistantships. When graduate and undergraduate students do qualify, they often experience challenges completing the application process or maintaining eligibility requirements. This is in addition to the inconsistent procedures around student rules within, and between, counties.⁴²

Four-year universities in California also lack CDSS outreach, technical assistance, and on-campus application support for California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program, which provides families with financial, childcare, housing, educational, and food assistance. While the precise percentage of UC students who are parenting is unknown due to data limitations, over 8 percent of respondents to the 2022 Graduate Cost of Attendance Survey

(GCOAS) reported having dependent children. Approximately 7.5 percent of undergraduate COAS respondents⁴³ in 2019 indicated potential parenting status.⁴⁴

Solution Strategies

Strategies are underway to increase knowledge of, and advocate for the elimination of barriers to, public programs that help ease the cost of living, including CalFresh, CalWORKs, and Housing and Urban Development (HUD) housing programs. UC issued support for the reintroduction of the EATS Act in 2023, which would expand college student eligibility for those attending two- and four-year institutions at least part time. County human services liaisons are now assigned to UC campuses in association with Assembly Bill 1326, providing a consistent connection point between campuses and county run programs. UC participates in quarterly CalFresh working group meetings with CDSS and ongoing discussions with segment, State, and national basic needs partners, which aides in deepening systemwide understandings around eligibility and access barriers to programs beyond CalFresh. Additionally, conversations on opportunities to increase students' federal, State, and University financial aid are ongoing.

DATA

To properly assess progress in meeting students' basic needs, data collection and analysis are necessary. Technology infrastructure is a systemwide challenge, for example, technology platforms that consistently record individual students' service usage in basic needs centers, and link that service usage with their institutional student data records upon consent. In order to move forward in achieving goals for more comprehensive and evaluative data collection that is consistent across the system and is capable of efficiently linking student basic needs program utilization with outcome measures, all ten campuses need access to trusted data platforms.

Access to complete data on student participation in CalFresh and consistent understanding among state agencies regarding which organizations have access to this data also remains a challenge. The University of California system does not have direct access to the CDSS data that would enable a comprehensive understanding of how many UC students are receiving CalFresh at any given time. Yet the Budget Act of 2023 requests the University of California to supply, systemwide:

The number of students who first started receiving CalFresh benefits in the preceding year as well as the total number of students in the preceding year receiving CalFresh.⁴⁵

Beginning in 2024, the CalFresh Student Data Dashboard, mandated by [Senate Bill \(SB\) 187](#), will provide CDSS information on student participation in CalFresh. However, currently published information on planned data points do not include information disaggregated by institution or segment.⁴⁶

Solution Strategies

UCOP is working with campus Basic Needs Centers to better understand current data limitations; consulting with other programs that have long-standing institutional knowledge of data keeping, including navigating privacy concerns; and developing a data infrastructure plan to increase efficiency and accuracy of data recording in Basic Needs Centers. The University is continuing to engage with CDSS, segment partners, State Government Relations, the California Policy Lab, and CHC to increase knowledge around the nuances of data access and analysis regarding CalFresh eligibility and participation.

OPPORTUNITIES AND NEXT STEPS

- Continue to investigate the true cost of living for students and advocate financial aid meet those costs. This includes continuing to refine the total cost-of-attendance calculation methodology, especially for independent students and students with dependents, and advocating to increase State and federal financial aid to students. (Priorities 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 4.1)
- Investigate disproportionate impact of, and resources available to mitigate, basic needs insecurities for historically underserved groups, including food and housing insecurity rates; campus basic needs program participation; and enrollment rates for public programs like CalFresh. Collaborate with campus, segment, and State partners to increase services to those populations. (Priorities 1.4, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 5.2)
- 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; dependent care; and transportation. (Priority 4.1)
- Advance and elevate services and supports for parenting students, whose positive educational outcomes have multigenerational effects. (Priorities 2.4, 5.1, 5.2)
- Investigate the intersections of basic needs insecurities and negative impacts on mental health, particularly as they pertain to historically underserved populations. (Priorities 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.8, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3, 5.2)
- Address sustainable funding strategies for UC basic needs and related mental health programs, particularly considering the rising cost of living and associated stressors. (Priorities 1.3, 2.2, 2.5)
- Encourage CDSS to share data on CalFresh participation, enrollment, and eligibility barriers disaggregated by higher education system. Utilize data to inform policies, programming, and legislative efforts. (Priorities 2.3, 2.8, 3.1, 4.2)
- Continue collaborating with CDSS, California higher education segments, and local counties to support policy changes to eliminate CalFresh eligibility barriers specific to college students and to increase CalFresh enrollment. (Priorities 1.4, 2.3, 2.6, 2.8, 3.1, 5.1, 5.2)
- Learn from and collaborate with CDSS, California higher education segments, UC Basic Needs staff, and local counties to address barriers to four-year university students enrolling in CalWORKs and HUD housing programs. (Priorities 1.4, 2.3, 2.6, 2.8, 3.1, 5.1, 5.2)
- Continue outreach to increase enrollment for eligible graduate and undergraduate students in CalFresh. (Priorities 3.2, 5.1, 5.2)
- Facilitate basic needs professional development, learning opportunities, and collaborative dialogues across all three segments. (Priorities 2.3, 2.8, 3.3)

CONCLUSION

Policymakers, advocates, university leaders, student service practitioners, researchers, and the students themselves have shown resiliency, creativity, resourcefulness, compassion, and skill in navigating the recent challenges facing basic needs. While cost of living and inflation have increased and emergency programs associated with COVID have closed, Basic Needs Centers have served students dutifully. Staff have provided community-responsive supports and services while highlighting the need for public programs beyond CalFresh to support students. Due to their commitment, communication with financial aid, collaborations with community partners, and contributions to legislative advocacy, the University has made progress in many basic needs goal areas established by the Regents in 2020.

ENDNOTES

¹[The University of California's Next Phase of Improving Basic Needs](#)

²[The Opportunity to Strengthen Basic Needs Supports for California's Post-Secondary Students through Partnership and Shared Accountability](#)

³[Six-item Short Form Food Security Survey Module \(usda.gov\); UC measuring-food-insecurity.pdf](#)

⁴[42 USC CHAPTER 119, SUBCHAPTER VI, Part B: Education for Homeless Children and Youths](#)

⁵[USDA ERS - Key Statistics & Graphics](#)

⁶UC food and housing insecurity figures rounded to the nearest percent.

⁷The UCUES began including housing insecurity questions in 2020.

⁸Housing Insecurity measured by respondents' "yes" answer to the 2022 UCUES question "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?" Respondents were given the following options: No; Yes, during Fall academic term; Yes, during Winter academic term; Yes, during Winter break; Yes, during Spring academic term; Yes, during Spring break; Yes, during Summer when taking classes; Yes, during Summer when not taking classes; Yes, during other academic holidays (such as Thanksgiving or MLK day); Yes, but I cannot recall when it occurred

⁹Housing Insecurity measured by respondents' "yes" answer to the 2022 UCUES and 2023 UCGSES question "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?" Respondents were given the following options: No; Yes, during Fall academic term; Yes, during Winter academic term; Yes, during Winter break; Yes, during Spring academic term; Yes, during Spring break; Yes, during Summer when taking classes; Yes, during Summer when not taking classes; Yes, during other academic holidays (such as Thanksgiving or MLK day); Yes, but I cannot recall when it occurred

¹⁰[Inflation Tracker \[EconTax Blog\]](#)

¹¹[U.S. cities with the highest cost of living \(cnbc.com\)](#)

¹²This increase is likely indicative of both market increases in rent, as well as more students living on campus and more students commuting than in 2019. Results from 2023 COAS survey, publication pending.

¹³Based on systemwide average monthly housing costs according to the 2023 Undergraduate Cost of Attendance Survey. Publication pending.

¹⁴Based on systemwide average monthly housing costs according to the 2023 Undergraduate Cost of Attendance Survey. Publication pending.

¹⁵Based on systemwide average monthly housing costs according to the [2022 Graduate and Professional School COAS](#).

¹⁶[Bill Text: CA AB74 | 2019-2020 |](#)

¹⁷[SNAP – Expiration of Program Flexibilities for the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency | Food and Nutrition Service](#)

¹⁸[CA COVID-19 Rent Relief - Housing Is Key](#)

¹⁹CalFresh applications submitted. Data collected through campus submissions and the [CFO Dashboard](#).

²⁰[Message to the House of Representatives Returning Without Approval Legislation Disapproving the Department of Education's Rule Relating to Waivers and Modifications of Federal Student Loans UC Why It's Time to Double the Pell Grant](#)

²¹[Federal Pell Grants | Federal Student Aid](#)

²²[Bill Text - AB-102 Budget Act of 2023](#)

²³[All County Letter No. 23-58](#)

²⁴[2019 ParentingStudentsReport.pdf](#)

²⁵[Cost of Attendance \(Budget\) | 2023-2024 Federal Student Aid Handbook](#)

²⁶[Understanding the Cumulative Burden of Basic Needs Insecurities: Associations With Health and Academic Achievement Among College Students](#)

²⁷[No food for thought: Food insecurity is related to poor mental health and lower academic performance among students in California's public university system](#)

²⁸[UC Merced, Merced College to Provide New Housing for Transfer Students | Newsroom](#)

²⁹[State awards \\$126 million for first-of-its-kind housing project](#)

³⁰[California Interagency Council on Homelessness \(Cal ICH\)](#)

³¹These totals reflect both State and UC-funded emergency basic needs grants.

³²Results from the UC Basic Needs Research & Evaluation team online survey administered to all students who accessed Basic Needs services during Fall 2022, at nine participating University of California campuses. [22-23-bn-survey-long.pdf \(ucop.edu\)](#)

Endnotes *continued*

³³[California Community College and University of California student participation in CalFresh food benefits \(capolicylab.org\)](#)

³⁴Eight campuses reported data on total CalFresh contacts.

³⁵Recognizing that “basic needs” are foundational to thriving (e.g., nutritious and sufficient food; safe, secure, adequate housing; affordable transportation, healthcare to promote sustained physical and mental well-being) and that a holistic ecosystem supports financial stability, CEJA uses the term “essential needs” to amplify their importance to daily living and student success.

³⁶Results from the UC Basic Needs Research & Evaluation team online survey administered to all students who accessed Basic Needs services during Fall 2022, at nine participating University of California campuses. [22-23-bn-survey-long.pdf \(ucop.edu\)](#)

³⁷[Campus Food Pantry Use May Improve Daily Frequency of Fruit and Vegetable Intake Among California University Students Experiencing Food Insecurity](#)

³⁸COVID-19-related stressors exacerbate food insecurity and depressive symptoms among graduate students receiving campus basic needs services: Cross-sectional findings from seven California public universities. *Stress and Health* (In press).

³⁹Results from the UC Basic Needs Research & Evaluation team online survey administered to all students who accessed Basic Needs services during Fall 2022, at nine participating University of California campuses.

⁴⁰[Child care costs in the United States | Economic Policy Institute](#)

⁴¹This is the increase with nine campuses reporting data in 2022-23. This number will increase when the tenth campus reports.

⁴²[Helping College Students Get Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Facilitators of and Barriers to Students Accessing the Federal Nutrition Assistance Program](#)

⁴³[2022 GCOAS Report 091222](#)

⁴⁴The question on the 2019 UCUES concerning parenting status is comparable to the 2022 GCOAS question concerning parenting status. Results from internal UCOP analysis.

⁴⁵[Bill Text - AB-102 Budget Act of 2023. \(ca.gov\)](#)

⁴⁶[All County Letter No. 23-58 \(ca.gov\)](#)

APPENDIX

BASIC NEEDS 2025 GOAL TRACKER

1. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS AND ADVOCATES	STATUS	AREA	DETAILS
<p>1.1. 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.</p>	In Progress	Financial Security	The maximum Federal Pell Grant increased by \$400 in 2022–23 and by \$500 in 2023–24. UC advocated for doubling the Pell by 2029–30. The State of California also expanded its investment in Cal Grants by creating the Community College Entitlement, which will help UC transfer students. More importantly, the Middle Class Scholarship was drastically expanded from a program that provides roughly \$38 million to 11,000 UC students to one that provided an estimated \$151 million to 92,000 students. Finally, the "return-to-aid" — the proportion of UC tuition increases set aside for financial aid — was increased from 33 to 45 percent starting with 2022–23. This resulted in an increase of UC-funded financial aid for undergraduates of \$26 million in 2022–23 and \$61 million in 2023–24.
<p>1.1.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.</p>	In Progress	Financial Security	(a) In 2021–22, the UC developed the cohort tuition model in order to increase amount of financial aid available. As noted in 1.1, the increase in 2022–23 was \$26 million and the increase in 2023–24 was \$61 million. (b) Pell has increased by \$900 since 2021–22. (c) The Middle Class scholarship program has provided an additional \$120 million to UC students in 2022–23.
<p>1.1.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.</p>	In Progress	Financial Security	UCOP conducted a survey of newly admitted graduate students in Spring 2023 to assess the competitiveness of graduate student financial support. Analysis is underway on the survey results.
<p>1.2. 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.</p>	In Progress	Financial Security	The California Legislature approved the Cal Grant Equity Framework in the 2022 Budget Act, contingent on funding available in 2024–25. UCOP is working with the Legislature and the California Student Aid Commission as part of a larger Cal Grant Reform Workgroup to ensure that the Equity Framework is implemented if the reform is activated and to address possible hurdles as a result of the delayed budget trigger.
<p>1.2.a. Goal: Convince the Legislature to pass acts that reform Cal Grant to expand eligibility by FY 2022.</p>	In Progress	Financial Security	CCC Entitlement Program and MCS 2.0 passed through the Budget process. \$4 million in summer aid made permanent.
<p>1.3. Advocate for the State adoption of the UC definition of student basic needs.</p>	In Progress	Policy	Governor's Intersegmental Workgroup on Basic Needs was established in Fall 2021. https://careereducation.gov.ca.gov/initiatives/intersegmental-working-group-on-student-basic-needs
<p>1.3.a. Goal: Expand upon the current State definition of basic needs funding to go beyond just food and housing by FY 2022.</p>	In Progress	Policy	Governor's Intersegmental Workgroup on Basic Needs published its recommendations in March 2022. https://careereducation.gov.ca.gov/initiatives/intersegmental-working-group-on-student-basic-needs The Budget Act of 2022 ensures hygiene products are an allowable expense for State basic needs funds.
<p>1.4. 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.</p>	In Progress	Public Benefits	AB1326 approved by Governor 10/6/2021. All UC campuses were appointed a liaison by 2023. Next step, work collaboratively with CHHS to establish MOUs and working agreements. https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB1326
<p>1.4.a. Goal: Ensure that all ten UC campuses have regular office hours with designated local county staff by FY 2022.</p>	In Progress	Public Benefits	(a) Campuses are coordinating efforts with designated county staff that provide campus-based office hours when available. All UC campuses were appointed a liaison in association with AB 1326 by 2023.
<p>1.4.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</p>	Complete	Public Benefits	All UC campuses were appointed a liaison in association with AB 1326 by 2023.

Attachment: Basic Needs 2025 Goal Tracker *continued*

2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERS	STATUS	AREA	DETAILS
2.1. 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.	In Progress	Financial Security	The Education Financing Model Steering Committee continues to implement refinements to the estimated total cost of attendance. In 2022–23, this included a “floor” for grocery expenses using the USDA allowances and continued the practice of a “floor” for rents based on Housing and Urban Development data. UCOP conducted a new Cost of Attendance Survey in Spring 2023. As part of that survey, UCOP “oversampled” independent students (i.e., older students, parenting students) to get greater detail on the expenses that they face. Initial findings show that inflation impacted student expenses. Finally, all undergraduate parenting students starting 2023–24 receive automatic COA adjustments for food and personal expenses based on number of children. Parenting students living on campus also receive automatic COA adjustments based on campus family housing rents.
2.1.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.”	Complete	Financial Security	(a) The off-campus housing study was not usable (i.e., too restricted, not representative of student behavior). However, UCOP augmented its data sources using HUD and USDA to modify student expense budgets. (b) The EFM Steering convened in February 2022 to approve the cost of attendance for each campus. Data from the 2023 Cost of Attendance Survey (COAS) shows a sizable increase in off-campus rents, which will be reflected in financial aid budgets for 2024–25.
2.2. 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.	In Progress	Health Equity	(a) Systemwide Student Mental Health Oversight Committee has developed an Equity in Mental Health plan for achieving underlying goals. (b) University is working with two faculty research teams at UC Santa Barbara and UC Davis to help develop common metrics for evaluation. (c) Budget Act of 2023 increased mental health funds by \$1 million for a total of \$21.3 million.
2.2.a. Goal: Prioritize mental health funding in the Regents' budget request to the State.	Complete	Health Equity	(a) In Spring 2021, \$15 million ongoing for student mental health was included in the Budget Act of 2020. (b) In Fall 2021, the re-imagining community safety efforts included the provision of a stepped response approach, including mental health crisis response.
2.2.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.	In Progress	Health Equity	(a) In Spring 2021, UC provided a support position on AB 940 (McCarty) to include the provision of funding to address student mental health; the bill did not pass. (b) UC is exploring regional partnerships to support student mental health needs within the scope of the Children Youth Behavioral Health Initiative and the Mental Health Student Services Act. (c) SB 326 the Behavioral Health Services Act will be on the ballot for the March 5, 2024 primary election, to expand the distribution of funding, service and resources available.
2.3. 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)	Ongoing	Partnerships	(a) Governor’s Intersegmental Workgroup on Basic Needs is focused on regional approaches and collaborations. (b) CHEBNA and the Global Food Initiative and Healthy Campus Network are examples of collaborative approaches with various UC Partners. (c) UC is hosting CHEBNA’s tri-segmental conference in February 2024, the first in-person CHEBNA conference since the pandemic. (d) UC Santa Barbara has been onboarded to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) platform. (e) In 2023, UC Merced and UC Riverside partnered with local community colleges to plan joint housing projects.
2.3.a. Goal: Support regional professional development trainings and conferences to improve efforts across direct services, financial student awards, strategic planning, and policy.	Ongoing	Community of Practice	(a) UC participated in the 2021 Intersegmental CHEBNA Learning Series. (b) UC participated in the CSU Chico CalFresh Outreach Summit in June 2021. (c) UC hosted the Intersegmental CHEBNA Learning Series April 2022. (d) UC hosted the CHEBNA virtual learning series in Spring 2023. (e) UC is hosting the 2024 in-person CHEBNA summit in close collaboration with CSU and CCC segment partners. (f) Quarterly systemwide calls among Basic Needs Directors and Financial Aid Directors beginning in Fall 2023.

Attachment: Basic Needs 2025 Goal Tracker *continued*

2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSITY LEADERS	STATUS	AREA	DETAILS
2.4. 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.	In Progress	Equity	(a) In Spring 2021, the Basic Needs team presented the Regents report to systemwide chief diversity officers, the Systemwide Housing Group, vice chancellors for Student Affairs, and Budget and Planning directors. (b) Budget Act of 2022 included SAPEP funding for former foster youth, undocumented students, and carceral system-impacted students.
2.4.a. Goal: Include specific efforts to address the basic needs of historically underserved population in campus FY 2020–21 spending plans.	Complete		(a) Reviewed results from parenting student workgroup in winter 2021 (b) Included underserved student populations in student mental health funding plans (c) Updated spending plans for Basic Needs and Rapid Rehousing in 2024, including prioritization of historically underserved students for Innovation Awards.
2.4.a. Goal: Include specific efforts to address the basic needs of historically underserved population in campus FY 2020–21 spending plans.	Complete	Equity	(a) In Fall 2021, explored Federal Basic Act Grant Funding for HSI Campuses, FGR advocating for four-year public universities. (b) Basic Needs Innovation Dollars were redirected to provide funding to all ten campuses during the COVID-19 pandemic to assist with underserved populations (2020–21, 2021–22).
2.4.b. Goal: Include criteria in the annual Innovation Grant process that prioritize proposals focused on supporting historically underserved populations	Complete	Equity	Innovation funds made permanent to all campuses in 2023. Updated campus basic needs and rapid rehousing spending plans to be submitted in early 2024, including criteria to create or sustain innovative practices that address student food and/or housing insecurity, particularly for those from historically underserved populations.
2.5. Prioritize basic needs as a goal of campus development or advancement fundraising campaigns.	In Progress	Campus Infrastructure	In 2021, presented Regents Report to Vice Chancellors for Planning and Budget and Vice Chancellors for Student Affairs, discussing basic needs as an opportunity for development and advancement fundraising campaigns.
2.5.a. Goal: Assess whether development opportunities exist to raise additional funding for basic needs by FY 2022.	In Progress	Campus Infrastructure	Presented to vice chancellors for Student Affairs and discussed development opportunities for fundraising. Will coordinate meeting with development directors in 2022–23.
2.6. 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.	Complete	Public Benefits	AB 1326 (Arambula) Public Social Services was passed in June 2022. Human services liaisons appointed to all UC campuses by 2023 in association with AB 1326.
2.6.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.	Complete	Public Benefits	(a) Campus practitioners have historically fostered collaborations among County Departments of Social Services, to support students access to CalFresh. (b) 9/10 University campuses are on the Center for Healthy Communities Prime Contract for CalFresh Outreach, which coordinates technical assistance and supports to build working relationships local CDSS offices. (c) Human services liaisons appointed to all UC campuses by 2023 in association with AB 1326.
2.7. Coordinate financial aid packages with the notification of CalFresh eligibility.	Complete	Public Benefits	Students who are workstudy eligible receive notifications from financial aid offices.
2.7.a. Goal: Implement processes that notify students of CalFresh eligibility in all campus Financial Aid offices by FY 2022.	Complete	Public Benefits	Spring 2021, Student Financial Services, worked closely with CDSS to develop a standard notification letter.
2.8. Advocate for collaboration with county and community services to improve basic needs services for students.	In Progress	Public Benefits	See Goal 1.4
2.8.a. Goal: Establish a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with county and community basic needs services to address student basic needs.	In Progress	Public Benefits	(a) Spring 2022 Governor's Intersegmental Workgroup on Basic Needs included recommendations for regional partnerships. (b) Spring 2021, AB 1326 was passed to designate a higher education liaison within the County Department of Social Services. (c) By 2023, all UC campuses had an appointed liaison associated with AB 1326.

Attachment: Basic Needs 2025 Goal Tracker *continued*

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENT SERVICE PRACTITIONERS	STATUS	AREA	DETAILS
3.1. Maximize enrollment of eligible graduate and undergraduate students in CalFresh by continuing to work with county agencies to increase application assistance.	Ongoing	Public Benefits	UC works closely with Center for Healthy Communities (CHC) at Chico State University to maximize CalFresh outreach. Eight campuses also participate in the CalFresh Outreach Subaward, administered by CHC, which allows campuses to receive additional funds in federal share for CalFresh outreach purposes. UCOP will participate in the CalFresh Outreach Subaward beginning 2024–25.
3.1.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.	In Progress	Public Benefits	All UC campuses were appointed a liaison in association with AB 1326 by 2023 (reference goal 1.4a, 2.6a)
3.1.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.	Complete	Public Benefits	(a) UC received one-time funding from AB 85 to conduct CalFresh Outreach. (b) UC developed a guidance memo in consultation with the Center for Healthy Communities (CHC) to provide “best practices” for maximizing CalFresh Outreach funding. (c) 9/10 UC campuses are on the CHC Contract; CHC received funding from AB 85 to provide technical assistance to all higher-ed partners. (d) As of November 2023, campuses have submitted over 800 programs to CDSS for the expanded Local Programs that Increase Employability (LPIE) student exemption.
3.1.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.	In Progress	Public Benefits	(a) Systemwide training between Financial Aid offices and Basic Needs practitioners and guidance provided to campuses regarding financial aid implications. (b) Beginning in 2023, campus Basic Needs managers meet quarterly with Student Financial Services/Financial Aid managers.
3.1.d. Goal: Request application outcomes data from County Social Services and report on meals provided and the local economic impact of CalFresh student enrollment.	In Progress	Data & Outcomes	(Working closely with the Center for Health Communities, Code for America, California Policy Lab, CDSS, and CSAC to assess data outcomes (b) Senate Bill 187 requires CDSS to post information on CalFresh student participation to public dashboard by January 2024.
3.2. 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.	In Progress	Public Benefits	Campuses have developed programming to support students who do not qualify for CalFresh.
3.2.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.	In Progress	Programs & Services	Campus practitioners have or are in the process of establishing programs for students who do not qualify for benefits.
3.2.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.	In Progress	Data & Outcomes	(a) Spring 2021 Graduate Student Experience data analyzed and published to Basic Needs Dashboard https://www.universityofcalifornia.edu/about-us/information-center/student-basic-needs (b) Fall 2021, benchmarks updated to ensure consistent data reporting for rate of food and housing insecurity (c) UCUES and UCGSES food and housing insecurity data posted to Basic Needs Dashboard on an ongoing basis; 2022 UCUES posted, 2023 UCGSES results expected early 2024

Attachment: Basic Needs 2025 Goal Tracker *continued*

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENT SERVICE PRACTITIONERS	STATUS	AREA	DETAILS
<p>3.3. 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)</p>	Ongoing	Partnerships	<p>(a) Governor’s Intersegmental Workgroup on Basic Needs is focused on regional approaches and collaborations. (b) CHEBNA and the Global Food Initiative and Healthy Campus Network are examples of collaborative approaches with various UC Partners. (c) UC is hosting CHEBNA’s tri-segmental conference in February 2024, the first in-person CHEBNA conference since the pandemic. (d) UC Santa Barbara has been onboarded to the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) platform. (e) In 2023, UC Merced and UC Riverside partnered with local community colleges to plan joint housing projects.</p>
<p>3.3.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.</p>	Ongoing	Community of Practice	<p>(a) Center for Economic Justice and Action, founded in 2023 at UC Santa Cruz (formerly Blum Center on Poverty, Social Enterprise, and Participatory Governance) hosts regular calls with campuses to support research and training and development of best practices.</p>
<p>3.3.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, nonprofit organizations, and others.</p>	In Progress	Community of Practice	<p>UC is hosting CHEBNA’s 2024 in-person conference. UC, CSU, and CCC segments all participate and contribute to conference planning, proposals, and sessions/presentations.</p>

Attachment: Basic Needs 2025 Goal Tracker *continued*

4. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RESEARCHERS	STATUS	AREA	DETAILS
4.1. 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.	Ongoing	Data and Outcomes	(a) Researchers work with IRAP to refine UCUES and UCGSES survey Indicators and other survey opportunities. (b) Center for Economic Justice and Action will support ongoing and innovative basic needs research, beginning in 2023–24.
4.1.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.	Ongoing	Data and Outcomes	(a) Provided education to Basic Needs Village in January 2021 (b) Continue to include links and information via stakeholder roadshows to BN Dashboard. (c) Working closely with Institution Research and Academic Planning to ensure survey measures are validated
4.1.b. Goal: Continue to disseminate research and evaluation findings to basic needs leadership, staff, and researchers.	Ongoing	Outreach and Education	Published research findings on new Basic Needs website. https://basicneeds.ucop.edu
4.2. 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.	Ongoing	Data and Outcomes	(a) Partnering with the California Policy Lab (b) Working closely with UC researchers to conduct focus groups and provide peer-reviewed research
4.2.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.	In Progress	Data and Outcomes	(a) Engage research team to complete informational interviews and collaborate with segment researchers to develop a comprehensive study. (b) CPL published a 2022 student CalFresh participation study for UC and CCCs. https://www.capolicylab.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Student-Participation-in-CalFresh.pdf
4.2.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.	Complete	Data & Outcomes	Study results published by CPL in March 2022 https://www.capolicylab.org/california-community-college-and-university-of-california-student-participation-in-calfresh-food-benefits
4.3. Establish assessments of basic needs interventions and identify practices that best support the experiences of students, especially those from historically underserved groups.	In Progress	Data and Outcomes	(a) Updated housing insecurity measures in UCUES and UCGSES in Spring 2021 (b) UC Basic Needs Research and Evaluation team administered survey to students who accessed Basic Needs services during fall 2022
4.3.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.	Complete	Data and Outcomes	(a) A logic model has been developed as a starting point to begin assessing basic need service interventions across the system. (b) UC Basic Needs Research and Evaluation team administered survey to students who accessed Basic Needs services during fall 2022.
4.3.b. Goal: Design and launch the CHEBNA Research, Evaluation and Tools strategy that will coordinate efforts across UC, CSU, and CCC.	Not Started	Data and Outcomes	Discussing with CHEBNA leadership and consulting recommendations from Governor’s Workgroup on Student Basic Needs.

Attachment: Basic Needs 2025 Goal Tracker *continued*

5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR STUDENTS	STATUS	AREA	DETAILS
5.1. 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.	In Progress	Outreach and Education	(a) CalFresh Outreach week in partnership with the Center for Healthy Campus Living has occurred in fall of 2022 and 2023.
5.1.a. Goal: Include student ambassador internships and peer-to-peer advising in all campus basic needs centers.	Complete	Community of Practice	(a) Student position descriptions and training programs have been shared with basic needs managers/coordinators. (b) All campuses have student positions in their Basic Needs Centers.
5.2. 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.	In Progress	Advocacy	(a) UC included student representation on Governor’s Intersegmental Workgroup for Basic Needs. (b) Student representation is included on quarterly systemwide calls. (c) Student government leaders attended the Student Leadership Summit in August 2023 at the UCOP Oakland office with UCOP staff and President Drake. (d) Student government leaders were included in student well-being leadership summit at UC Davis in October 2023 to share student perspectives on data collection and needs.
5.2.a. Goal: Ensure that all campus basic needs committees include undergraduate and/or graduate student representatives.	In Progress	Campus Infrastructure	(a) Ongoing effort to recruit student representatives annually (b) UCSA representative was identified to participate in the Governor’s Intersegmental workgroup on basic needs.

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