

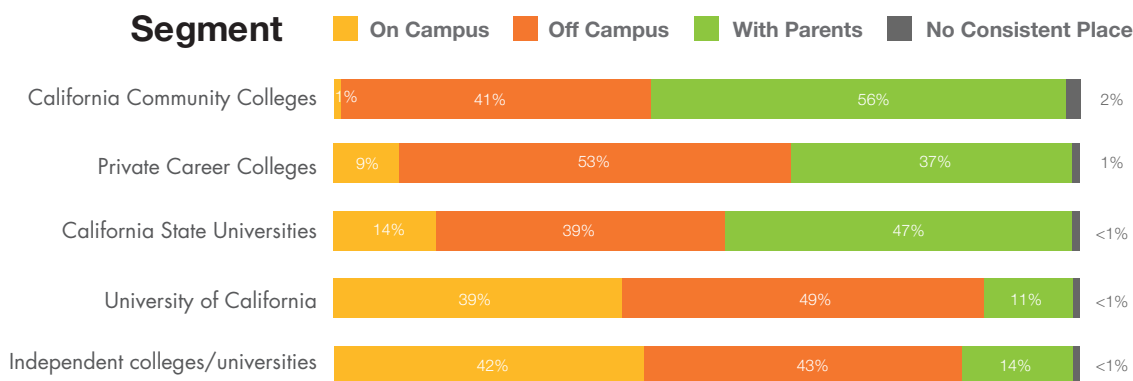
SEARS SURVEY SPOTLIGHT:

HOUSING

Where students live can have a big impact on their lives and success in college. Among other things, it can affect their financial security, ability to balance school, work, and family responsibilities, and access to nutritious food. This spotlight brief explores what students told us in the 2018-19 SEARS about their housing experiences.

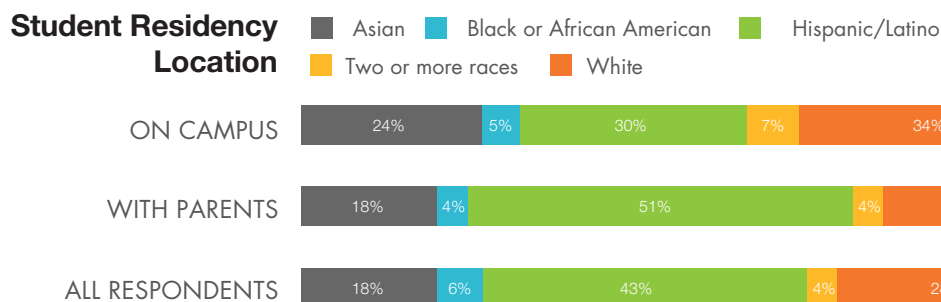
Where do students live?

Each segment of higher education has a different distribution of where students live while attending college:



Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Hispanic/Latino students disproportionately live with their parents while white students disproportionately live on campus. Hispanic/Latino students make up 43 percent of students, but 51 percent of students living with parents are Hispanic/Latino. 28 percent of students are white, but 34 percent of students living on campus are white.¹



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For more information please refer to our website

<https://www.csac.ca.gov/sears>

Contact research@csac.ca.gov

with any questions

“The main struggle is housing, since paying a huge amount for rent is very challenging. It also causes distraction, stress and inability to focus on studies.”

Student, South Central Coast

75%

of students age 21 and under across all segments either live on campus or with their parents.

“It's been tough and hard to eat balanced meals and have a stable place to live. I had to couch surf for several weeks and sleep in my car due to lack of money.”

Student, East Bay

¹ Due to survey response rates, this survey did not collect statistically representative data on students from other racial and ethnic groups, but the Commission acknowledges that they may also be struggling with housing and other obstacles.

How much are students paying for housing?

Students reported the following average monthly costs of housing:

\$1,235
On Campus/dorm

\$1,244
Off Campus: Rent/own

Housing challenges students encountered within the last 30 days:

- 21%** said they did not pay the full amount of a gas, oil, or electricity bill
- 18%** said there was a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay
- 10%** said they did not pay or underpaid their rent or mortgage
- 10%** said they lived in a house or apartment with more people than were listed on the lease or rental agreement
- 5%** said they moved in with others, even for a little while, because of financial problems
- 2%** said they moved two times or more
- 1%** said they had no consistent place to sleep (e.g. homeless, couch-surfing, living in a car/shelter)

35 percent of students surveyed experienced one or more conditions of housing insecurity

All in all, 35 percent of students surveyed experienced one or more conditions of housing insecurity. Students experiencing housing insecurity reported unstable living conditions, which included the inability to pay rent or utilities, or the need to move frequently.²

Students who were classified as housing insecure were more likely to be:

- older (age 22 and above);
- female;
- Black or Hispanic/Latino;
- having dependents

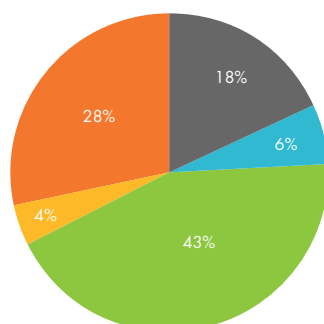
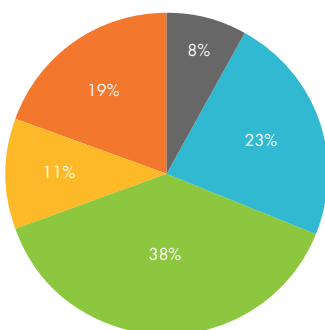
Housing insecurity is correlated with lower completion, persistence, and credit attainment.³

Homeless Students

While Hispanic/Latino students make up the largest percentage of homeless students, black students are disproportionately affected by homelessness.

Homeless Students

All Surveyed Students



- Asian
- Black or African American
- Hispanic/Latino
- Two or more races
- White

70%

of homeless students are age 22 and older.

² Those with no consistent place to sleep are classified as housing insecure and those on campus are classified as housing secure. These groups did not see the housing insecurity module.

³ Broton, K. M. (2017). *The evolution of poverty in higher education: Material hardship, academic success, and policy perspectives* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Wisconsin–Madison, Madison, Wisconsin.