



## Institutional Research and Decision Support

### 2019 New Student Survey Report - All Students

Prepared by Institutional Research and Decision Support

Last Updated: December 6, 2019

**Administration:** The survey was administered between October 28, 2019 and November 26, 2019 to all incoming first year students (entering frosh and transfer students). No incentives were offered. Survey publicity and outreach was coordinated by IRDS, with help from School Assessment Managers, Academic Advising units, and Student Affairs staff. Promotion included email, social media posts, digital signage around campus, and classroom/LMS announcements. A survey landing page was used in publicity materials ([http://irds.ucmerced.edu/new\\_student\\_survey.html](http://irds.ucmerced.edu/new_student_survey.html)).

**Response Rate:** Of the 2282 students invited to complete the survey, 875 (38%) provided partial or complete responses. Because students could skip questions, response rates varied by question.

**Respondent Characteristics:** Please refer to Tables 1-3 below for respondent characteristics, including information about the representativeness of the respondent sample relative to the invitee population. These tables are static and cannot be filtered. The respondent sample was roughly representative of the invitee population with the following exceptions.

- Females were more likely to respond than males.
- Students whose first language was English Only were more likely to respond than students whose first language was English and another language or another language only.
- Students in Natural Sciences were less likely to respond than students in the other two schools and undeclared.

#### Other Notes:

- **Number of responses:** Unless otherwise noted, respondents could answer each question on the survey; however, only certain respondents could complete some questions based on their prior responses or characteristics. See the question notes for more information. Additionally, respondents could skip questions. Thus, there will be discrepancies between the overall number of respondents and the number of respondents that answered particular questions.
- **Free response questions:** Free response question responses are not included in this report for several reasons. They require response coding to analyze, and coding schemes are often developed with a research question in mind. Additionally, in some cases free response data can inadvertently identify particular respondents who completed the survey, thus violating confidentiality. Interested parties should request these data from IRDS so that individual requests can be evaluated.

If you have questions about this report, please contact Andrea Hall-Cuccia ([ahallcuccia@ucmerced.edu](mailto:ahallcuccia@ucmerced.edu)) in Institutional Research and Decision Support. This report and more information about this survey can be found on the IRDS New Student Survey webpage: [http://irds.ucmerced.edu/new\\_student\\_survey.html](http://irds.ucmerced.edu/new_student_survey.html)

Table 1. Student Demographics

Student Characteristic	# Invited (of 2282 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 875 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
Entering Level					
Transfer Students	175	8%	70	8%	40%
Students Who Entered as Freshmen/Frosh	2107	92%	805	92%	38%
Gender					
Female	1184	52%	488	56%	41%
Male	1086	48%	384	44%	35%
Unknown	12	1%	3	<1%	25%
Race/Ethnicity					
International	178	8%	68	8%	38%
Hispanic	1326	58%	489	56%	37%
African American	89	4%	38	4%	43%
American Indian	1	<1%	0	0%	0%
Asian	409	18%	165	19%	40%
Pacific Islander	9	<1%	3	<1%	33%
White	188	8%	80	9%	43%
Multi-racial	70	3%	32	4%	46%
Unknown	12	1%	0	0%	0%

% values may not sum to 100 for a particular characteristic due to rounding error

Table 2. Student Demographics and Schools

Student Characteristic	# Invited (of 2282 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 875 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
First Generation Status					
First Generation	1713	75%	640	73%	37%
Non-First Generation	569	25%	235	27%	41%
Pell Eligibility Status					
Pell Grant Eligible	1475	65%	545	62%	37%
Non-Pell Grant Eligible	807	35%	330	38%	41%
First Language					
English Only as First Language	612	27%	262	30%	43%
English and Other Language or Other Language Only as First Language	1668	73%	613	70%	37%
Unknown	2	<1%	0	0%	0%
School					
Engineering	644	28%	259	30%	40%
Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts (SSHA)	819	36%	335	38%	41%
Natural Sciences	630	28%	205	23%	33%
Undeclared	189	8%	76	9%	40%

% values may not sum to 100 for a particular characteristic due to rounding error; undeclared students in a particular School are included in their respective Schools

Table 3. Student Majors

Student Characteristic <sup>4</sup>	# Invited (of 2282 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 875 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
ANTH – Anthropology	14	1%	5	1%	36%
BENG – Bioengineering	67	3%	32	4%	48%
BIOS – Biological Sciences	463	20%	137	16%	30%
CHEM – Chemical Sciences	68	3%	25	3%	37%
COGS – Cognitive Science	42	2%	21	2%	50%
CRES – Critical Race & Ethnic Studies	6	<1%	1	<1%	17%
CSE – Computer Science & Engineering	283	12%	118	13%	42%
ECON – Economics	19	1%	7	1%	37%
ENG – English	32	1%	11	1%	34%
ENVE – Environmental Engineering	41	2%	20	2%	49%
ESY – Earth Systems Science	12	1%	6	1%	50%
GASP – Global Arts Studies	4	<1%	2	<1%	50%
HIST – History	25	1%	13	1%	52%
MATH – Mathematical Sciences	54	2%	22	3%	41%
MBE – Management & Business Economics	134	6%	54	6%	40%

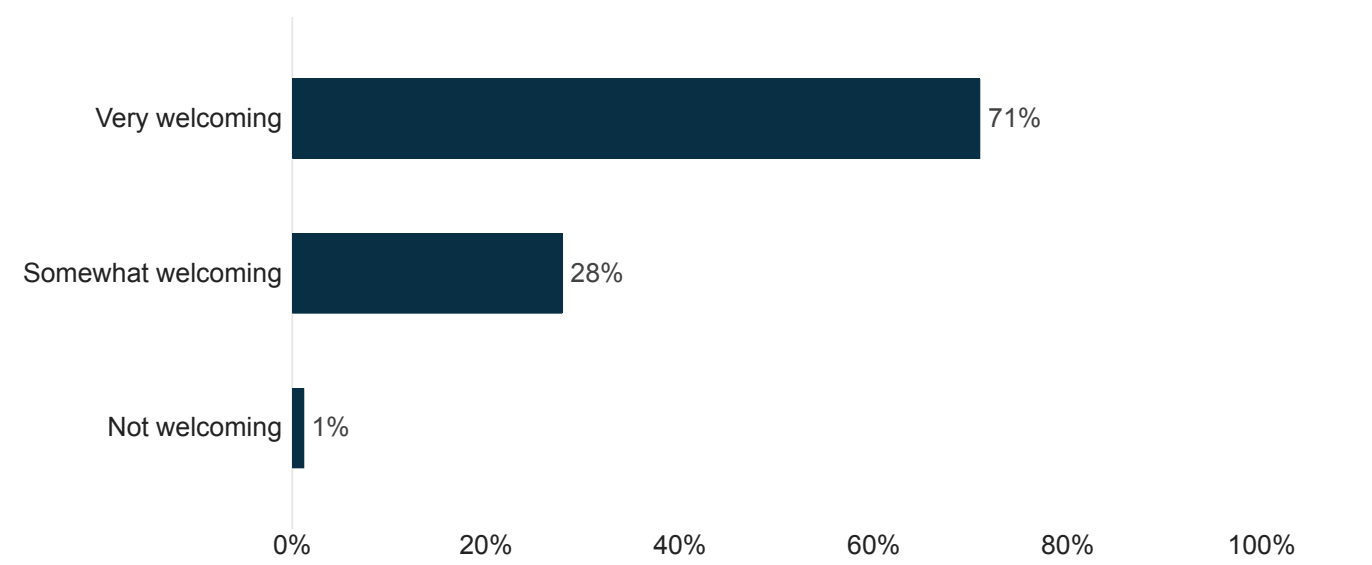
% values may not sum to 100 for a particular characteristic due to rounding error

Table 3. Student Majors (continued)

Student Characteristic	# Invited (of 2283 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 875 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
ME – Mechanical Engineering	195	9%	68	8%	35%
MSE – Materials Science & Engineering	20	1%	8	1%	40%
PH – Public Health	41	2%	17	2%	41%
PHIL – Philosophy	7	<1%	3	<1%	43%
PHYS – Physics	14	1%	6	1%	43%
POLI – Political Science	95	4%	44	5%	46%
PSY – Psychology	267	12%	97	11%	36%
SOC – Sociology	76	3%	33	4%	43%
SPAN – Spanish	12	1%	7	1%	58%
UENG – Undeclared Engineering	38	2%	13	1%	34%
UNS – Undeclared Natural Sciences	19	1%	9	1%	47%
USHA – Undeclared SSHA	45	2%	20	2%	44%
0000 - Undeclared	189	8%	76	9%	40%

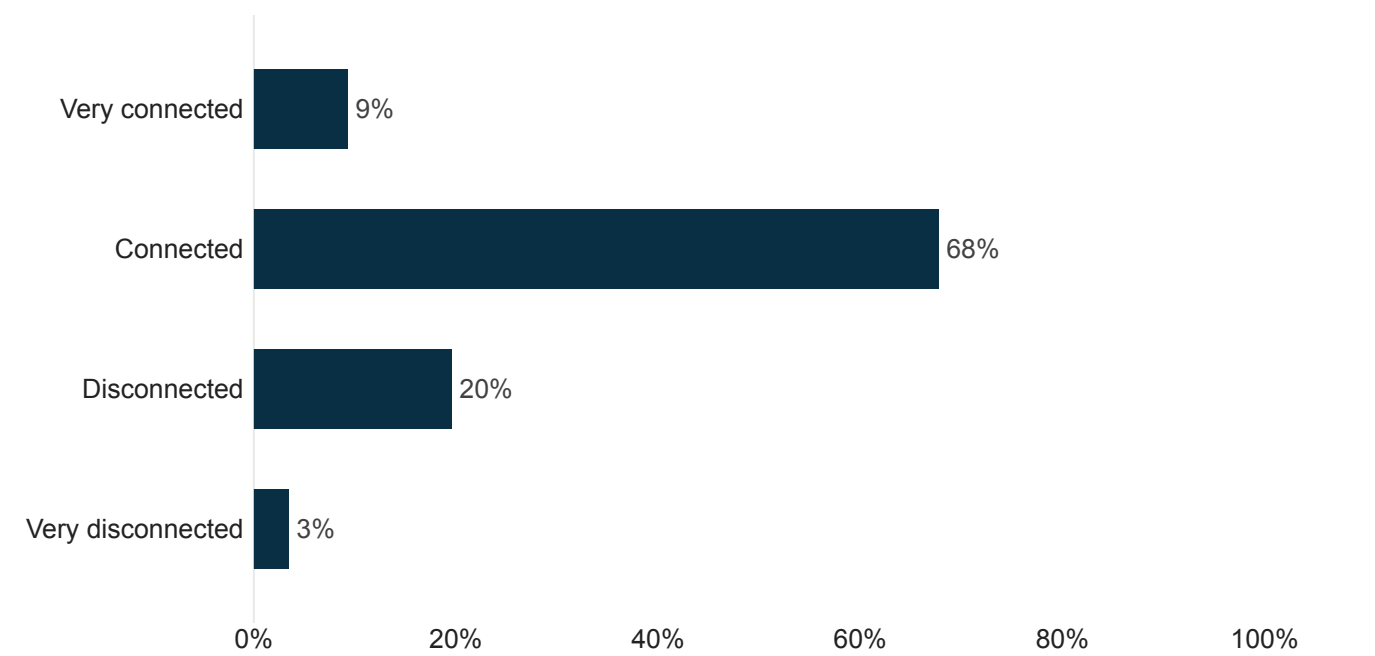
% values may not sum to 100 for a particular characteristic due to rounding error

When you arrived at UC Merced, how welcoming did you find the campus environment?



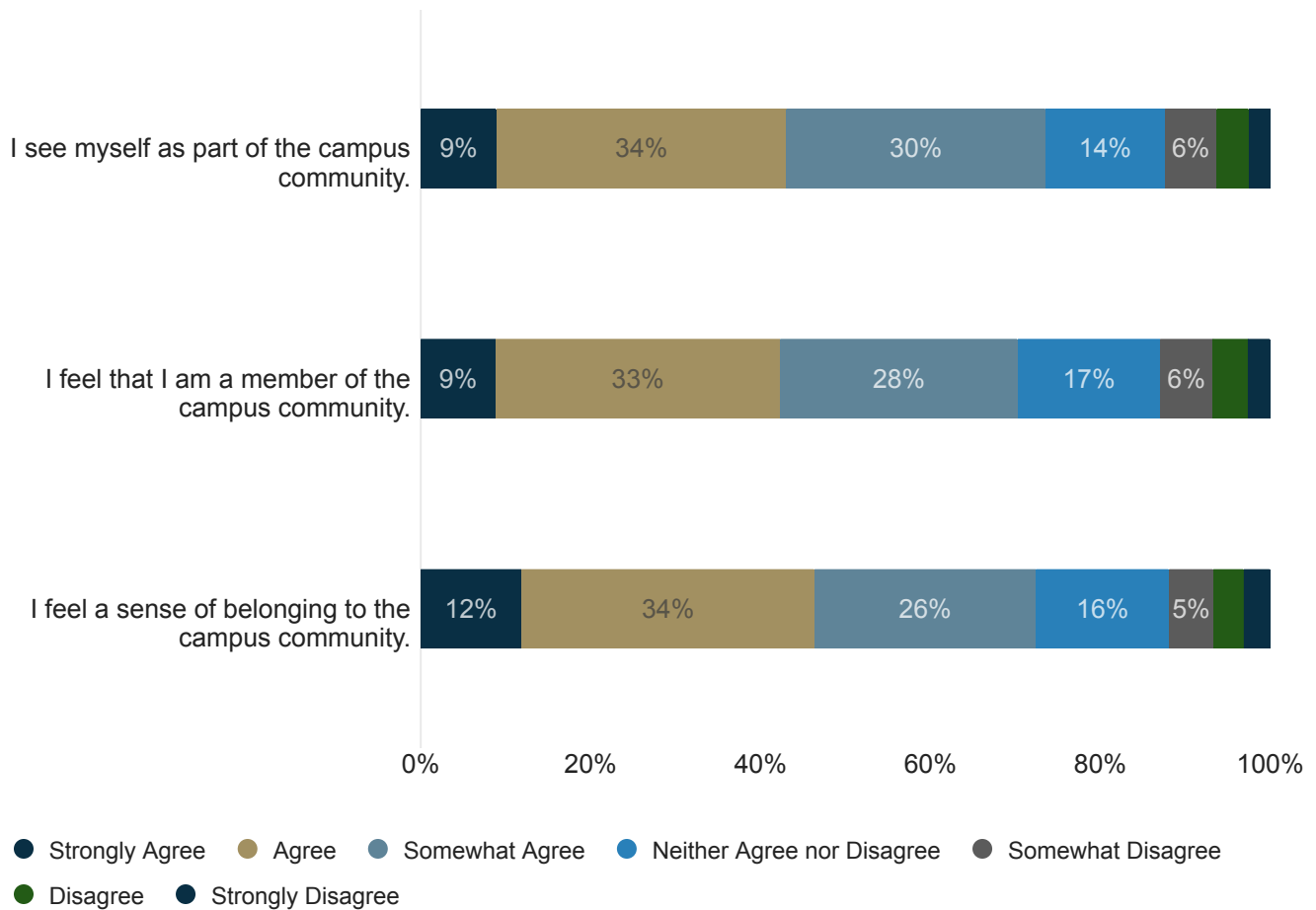
Field	Choice Count
Very welcoming	621
Somewhat welcoming	244
Not welcoming	10
Total	875

Today, how connected to or disconnected from UC Merced do you feel?



Field	Choice Count
Very connected	81
Connected	592
Disconnected	171
Very disconnected	30
Total	874

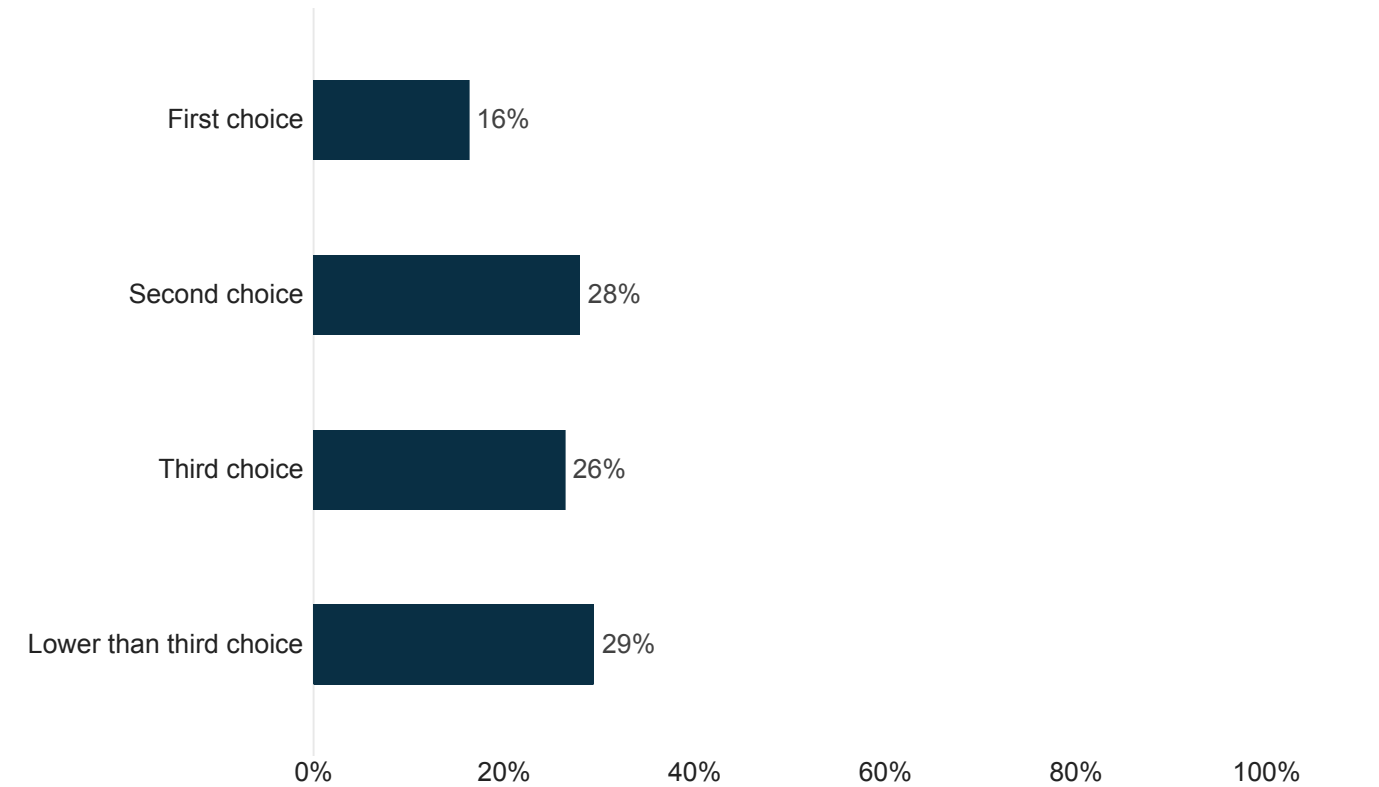
To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement about your experience on the UC Merced campus.



Field	Strongly Agree	Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
I see myself as part of the campus community.	78	298	266	123	53	33	22	873
I feel that I am a member of the campus community.	77	292	244	146	54	36	23	872
I feel a sense of belonging to the campus community.	103	299	226	136	45	31	27	867

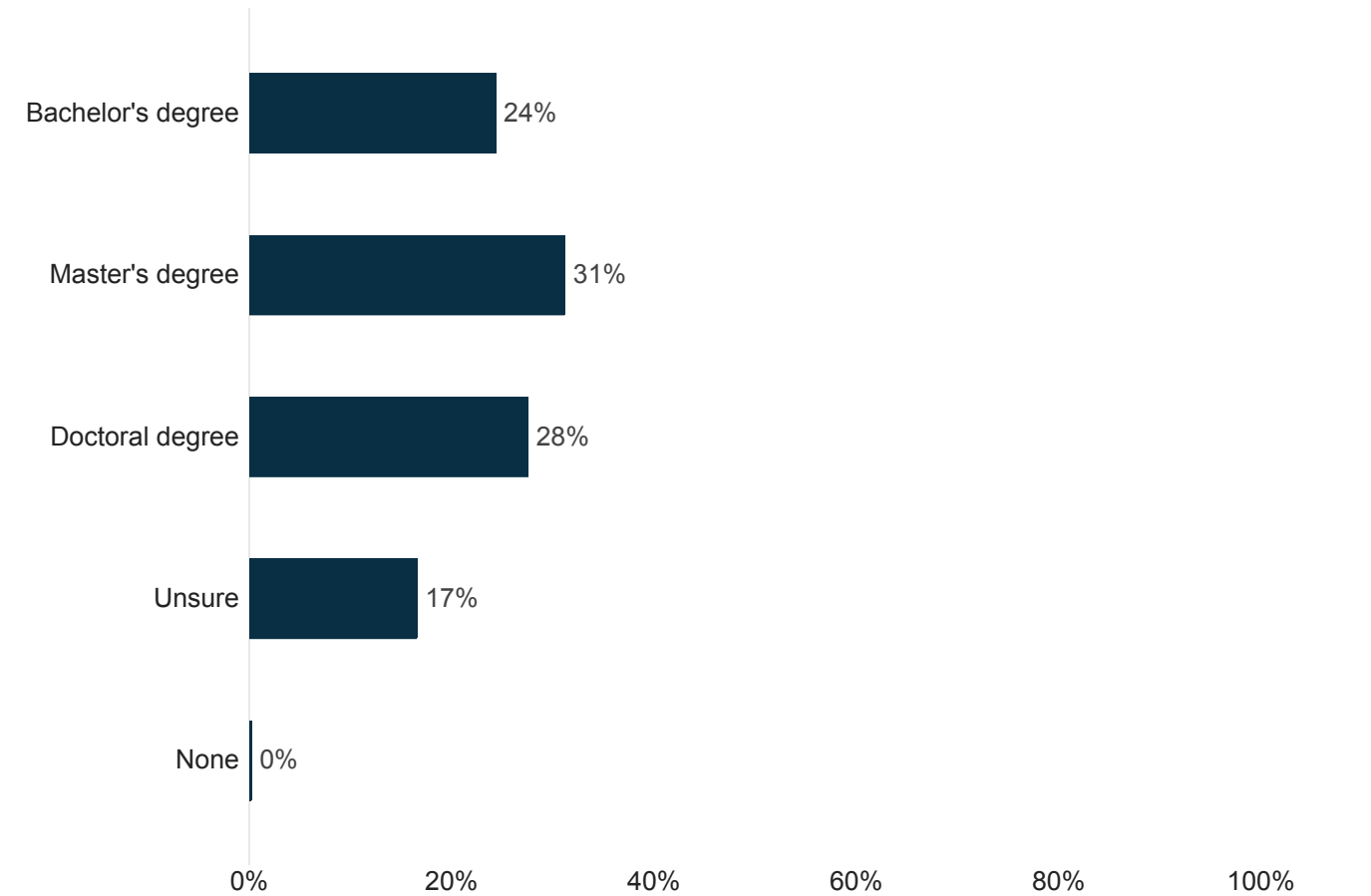


When you applied to colleges, was UC Merced your:



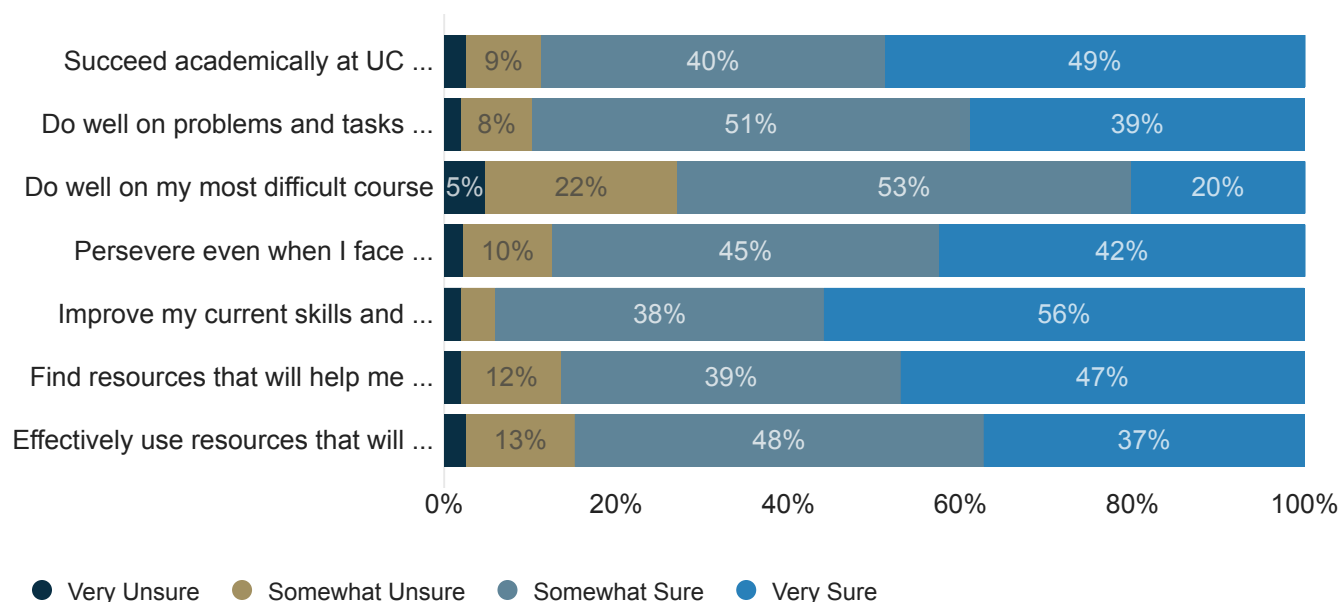
Field	Choice Count
First choice	142
Second choice	244
Third choice	230
Lower than third choice	257
Total	873

What is the highest degree you intend to eventually obtain?



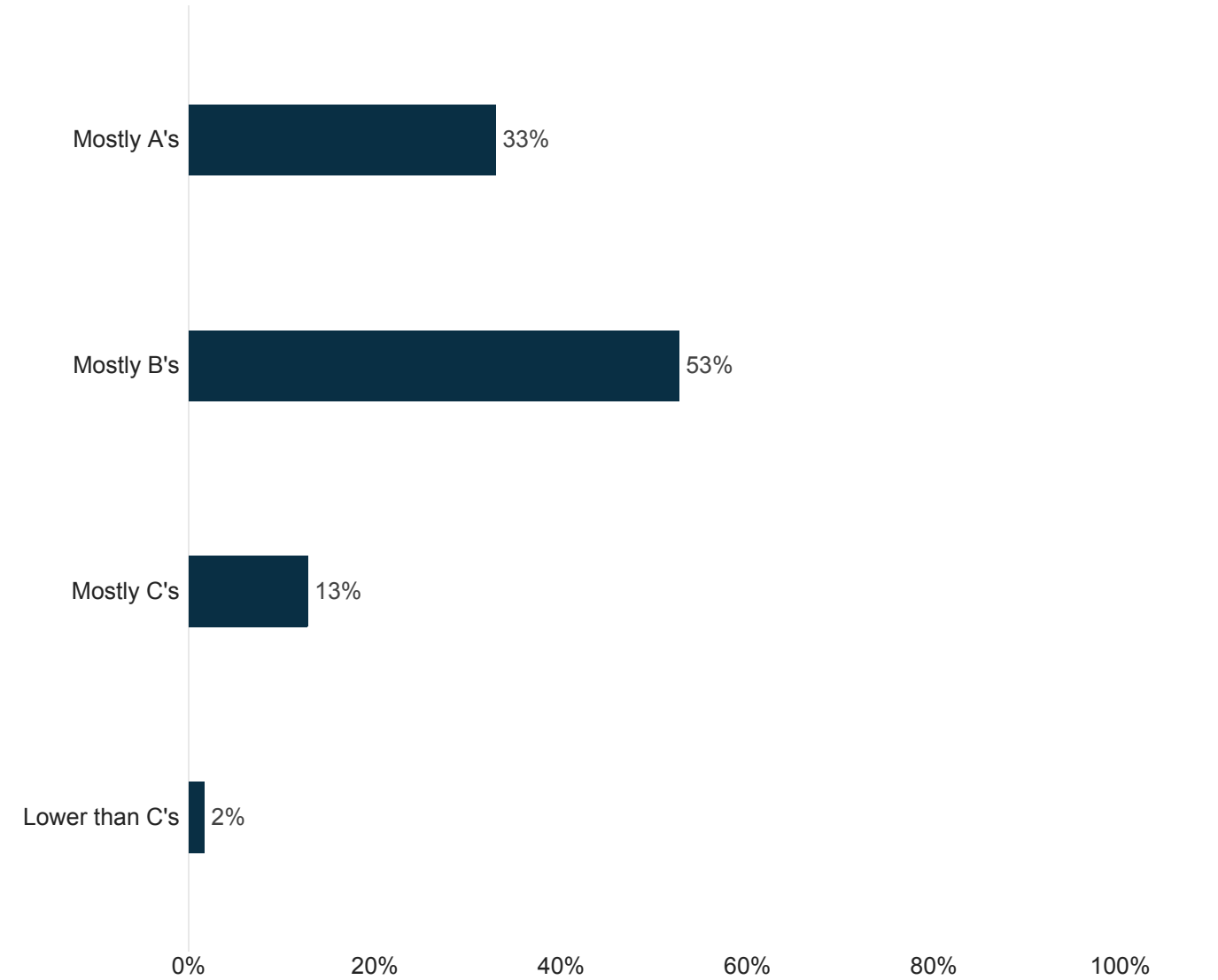
Field	Choice Count
Bachelor's degree	213
Master's degree	273
Doctoral degree	241
Unsure	145
None	2
Total	874

How sure are you that you can do each of the following: Note: Only students in campus housing could answer this question. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



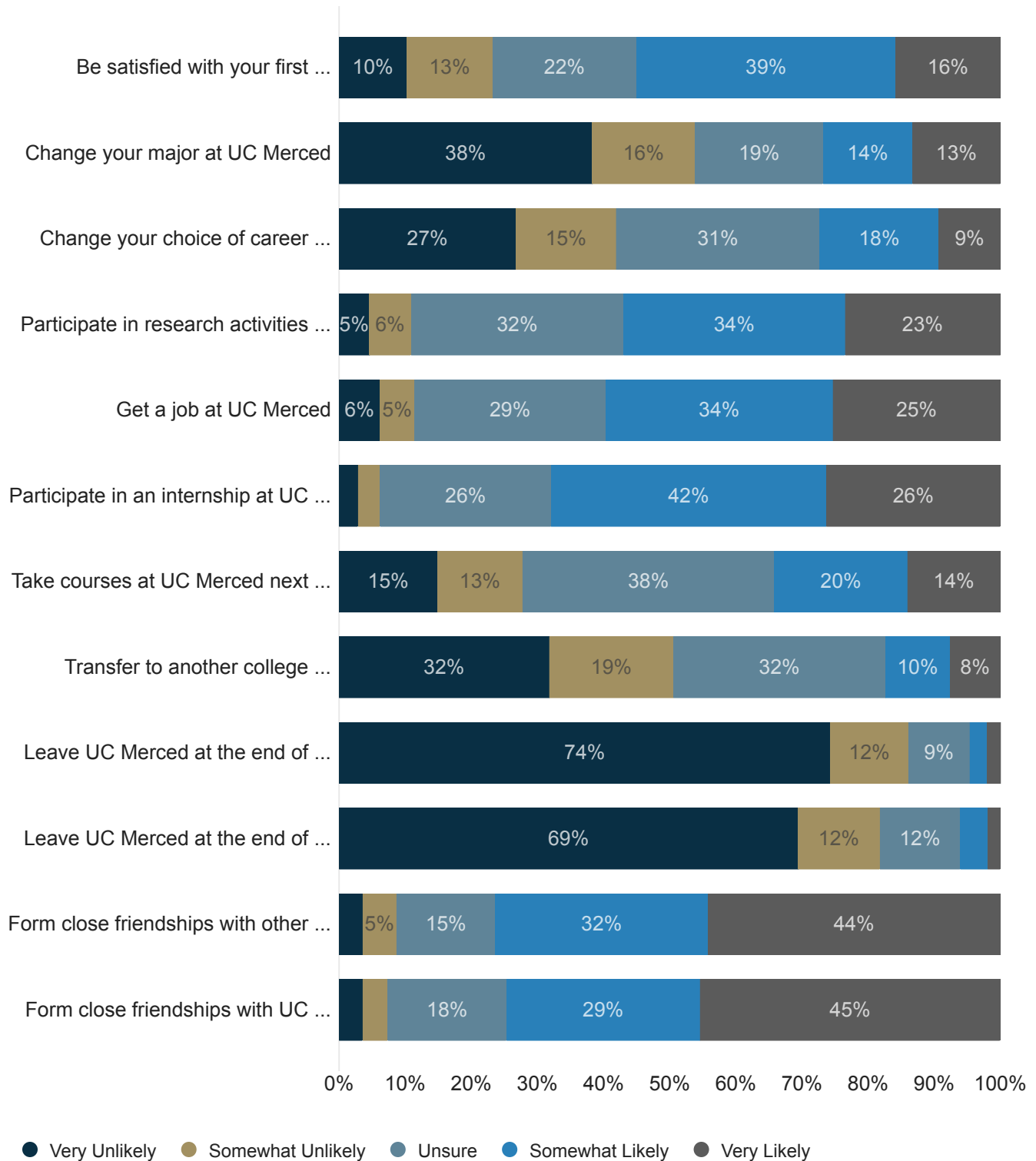
Field	Very Unsure	Somewhat Unsure	Somewhat Sure	Very Sure	Total
Succeed academically at UC Merced	22	74	341	415	852
Do well on problems and tasks assigned in my courses	17	70	432	330	849
Do well on my most difficult course	41	189	449	171	850
Persevere even when I face academic challenges and obstacles	19	87	381	359	846
Improve my current skills and abilities	17	34	325	476	852
Find resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	17	99	335	399	850
Effectively use resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	22	107	404	317	850

What do you think your final course grades will be this semester?



Field	Choice Count
Mostly A's	276
Mostly B's	441
Mostly C's	107
Lower than C's	14
Total	838

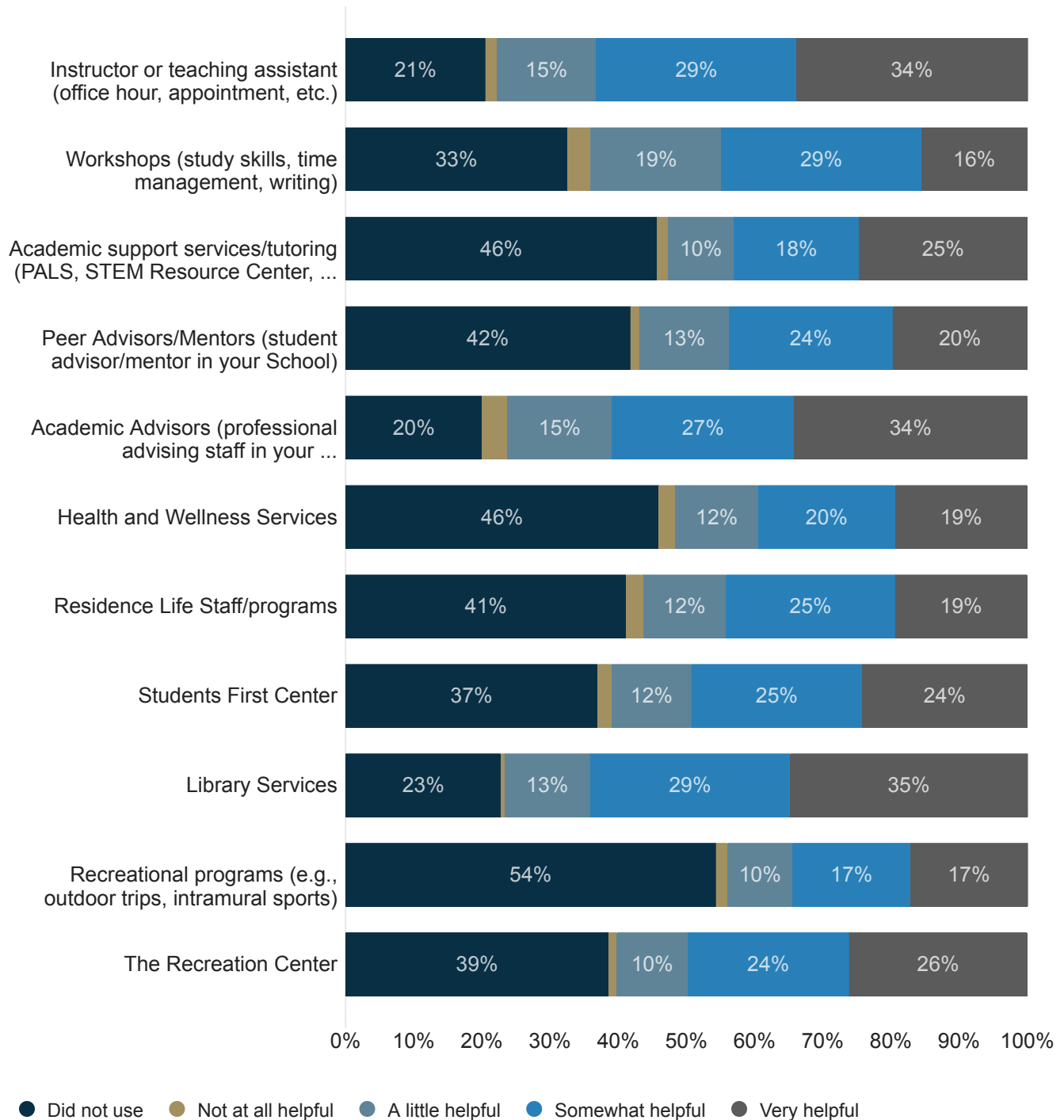
## How likely are you to:



## How likely are you to:

Field	Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely	Total
Be satisfied with your first semester GPA at UC Merced	86	109	183	329	133	840
Change your major at UC Merced	320	130	162	113	111	836
Change your choice of career while at UC Merced	224	127	258	151	78	838
Participate in research activities with a faculty member at UC Merced	38	53	268	280	196	835
Get a job at UC Merced	52	44	243	289	213	841
Participate in an internship at UC Merced	24	28	216	348	220	836
Take courses at UC Merced next summer	125	108	320	169	118	840
Transfer to another college before graduating	267	158	269	82	64	840
Leave UC Merced at the end of this semester	625	99	78	22	17	841
Leave UC Merced at the end of this academic year	583	104	102	35	16	840
Form close friendships with other UC Merced students	30	43	126	270	372	841
Form close friendships with UC Merced students that are not from the same racial or ethnic group as me	30	32	151	246	382	841

For each UC Merced campus resource below, please let us know how helpful that resource has been in your transition to UC Merced. Select "did not use" if you didn't use a resource.

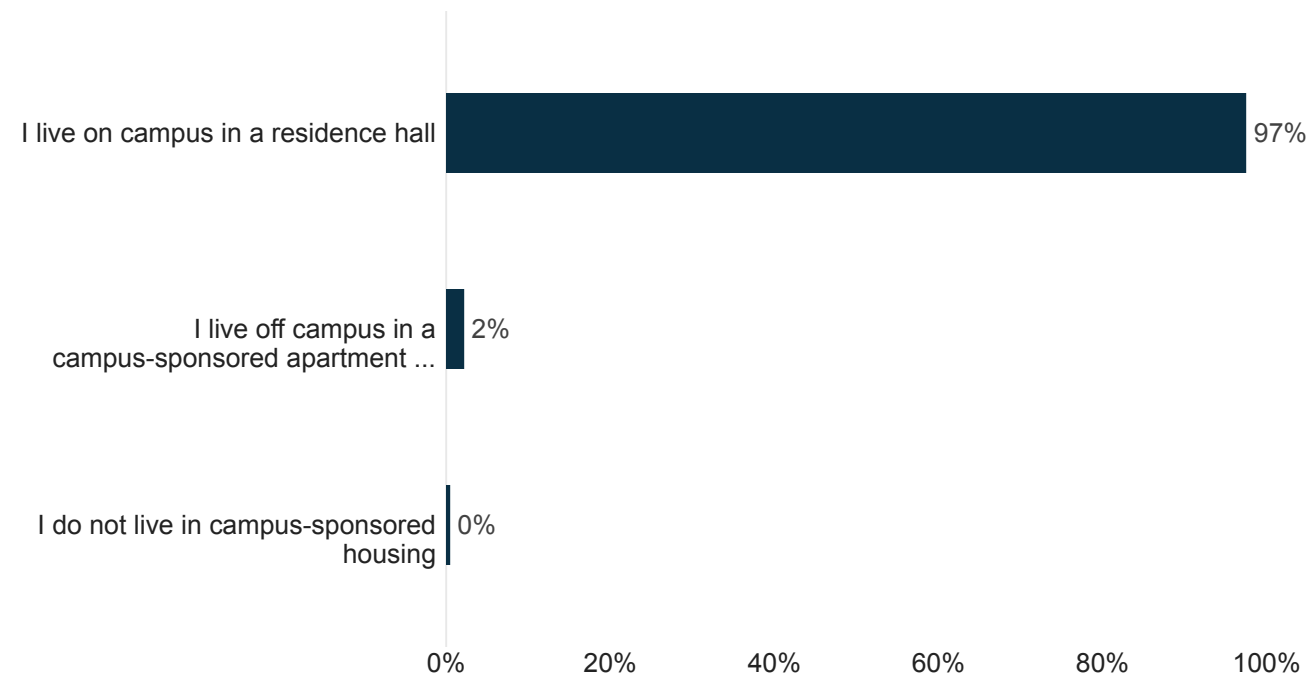


For each UC Merced campus resource below, please let us know how helpful that resource has been in your transition to UC Merced. Select "did not use" if you didn't use a resource.

Field	Did not use	Not at all helpful	A little helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	Total
Instructor or teaching assistant (office hour, appointment, etc.)	168	14	119	241	277	819
Workshops (study skills, time management, writing)	266	28	157	240	127	818
Academic support services/tutoring (PALS, STEM Resource Center, Writing/Math/Chem Center)	374	13	79	150	202	818
Peer Advisors/Mentors (student advisor/mentor in your School)	341	11	107	196	161	816
Academic Advisors (professional advising staff in your School/Bobcat Advising Center)	164	30	126	218	280	818
Health and Wellness Services	375	20	99	164	158	816
Residence Life Staff/programs	336	20	99	202	158	815
Students First Center	301	17	95	204	197	814
Library Services	186	4	102	239	283	814
Recreational programs (e.g., outdoor trips, intramural sports)	445	14	78	142	140	819
The Recreation Center	316	10	85	194	214	819

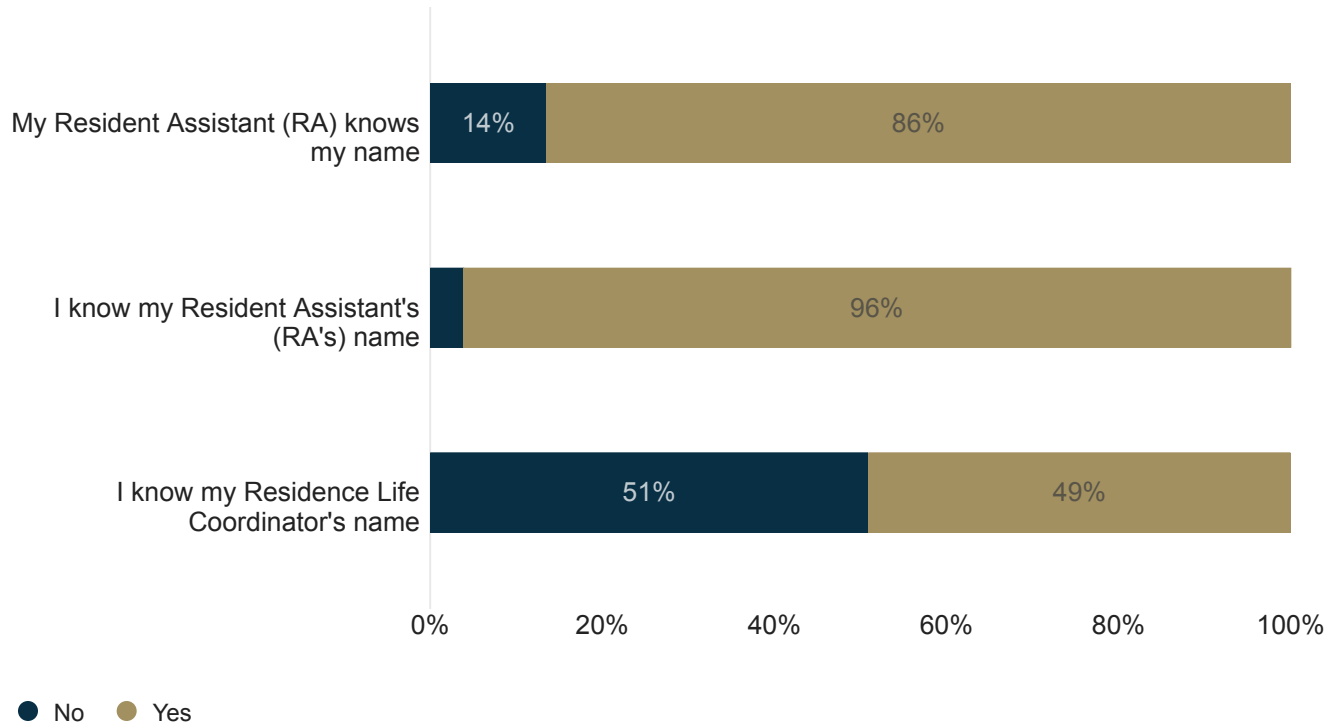


Which of the following describes your living situation? Note: Only students in campus housing could answer this question. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



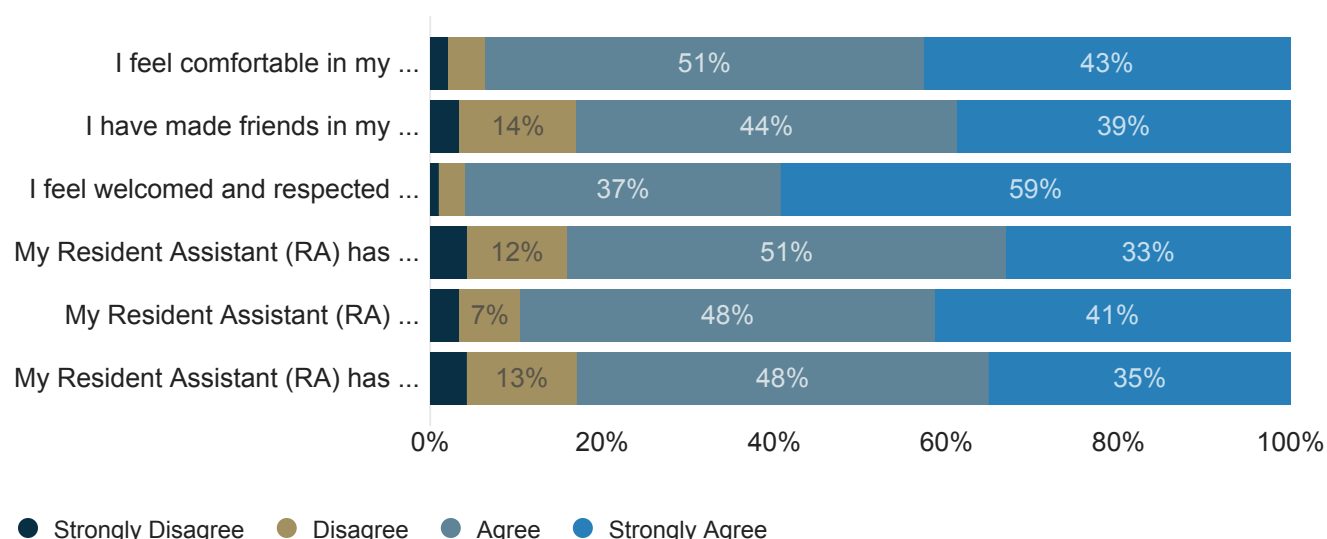
Field	Choice Count
I live on campus in a residence hall	692
I live off campus in a campus-sponsored apartment (i.e., Village Landing, Northwood Village, or Village Terrace)	15
I do not live in campus-sponsored housing	3
Total	710

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements about your experience so far living in a residence hall on campus. If you live off campus in a campus-sponsored apartment, please answer regarding that experience. Note: Only students in campus housing could answer this question.



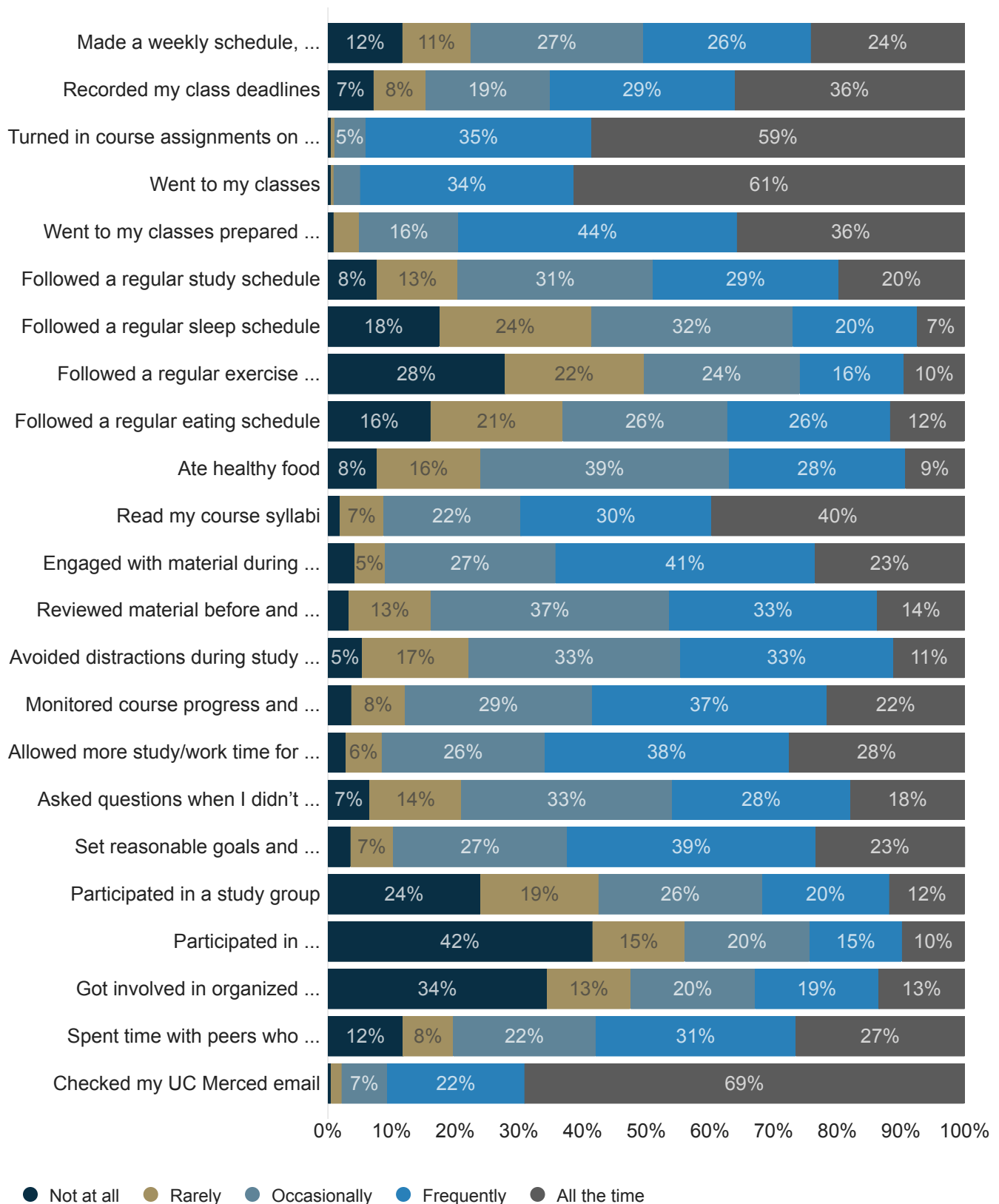
Field	No	Yes	Total
My Resident Assistant (RA) knows my name	95	607	702
I know my Resident Assistant's (RA's) name	27	674	701
I know my Residence Life Coordinator's name	357	344	701

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your experience so far living in a residence hall? If you live off campus in a campus-sponsored apartment, please answer regarding that experience. Note: Only students in campus housing could answer this question. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



Field	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel comfortable in my residence hall	15	30	359	300
I have made friends in my residence hall	24	96	311	273
I feel welcomed and respected by my Resident Assistant (RA)	7	22	257	416
My Resident Assistant (RA) has organized activities that helped me get to know other students	30	82	358	232
My Resident Assistant (RA) supports my academic success (e.g., shares resources/advice)	24	50	339	291
My Resident Assistant (RA) has helped me transition to UC Merced	30	90	337	247

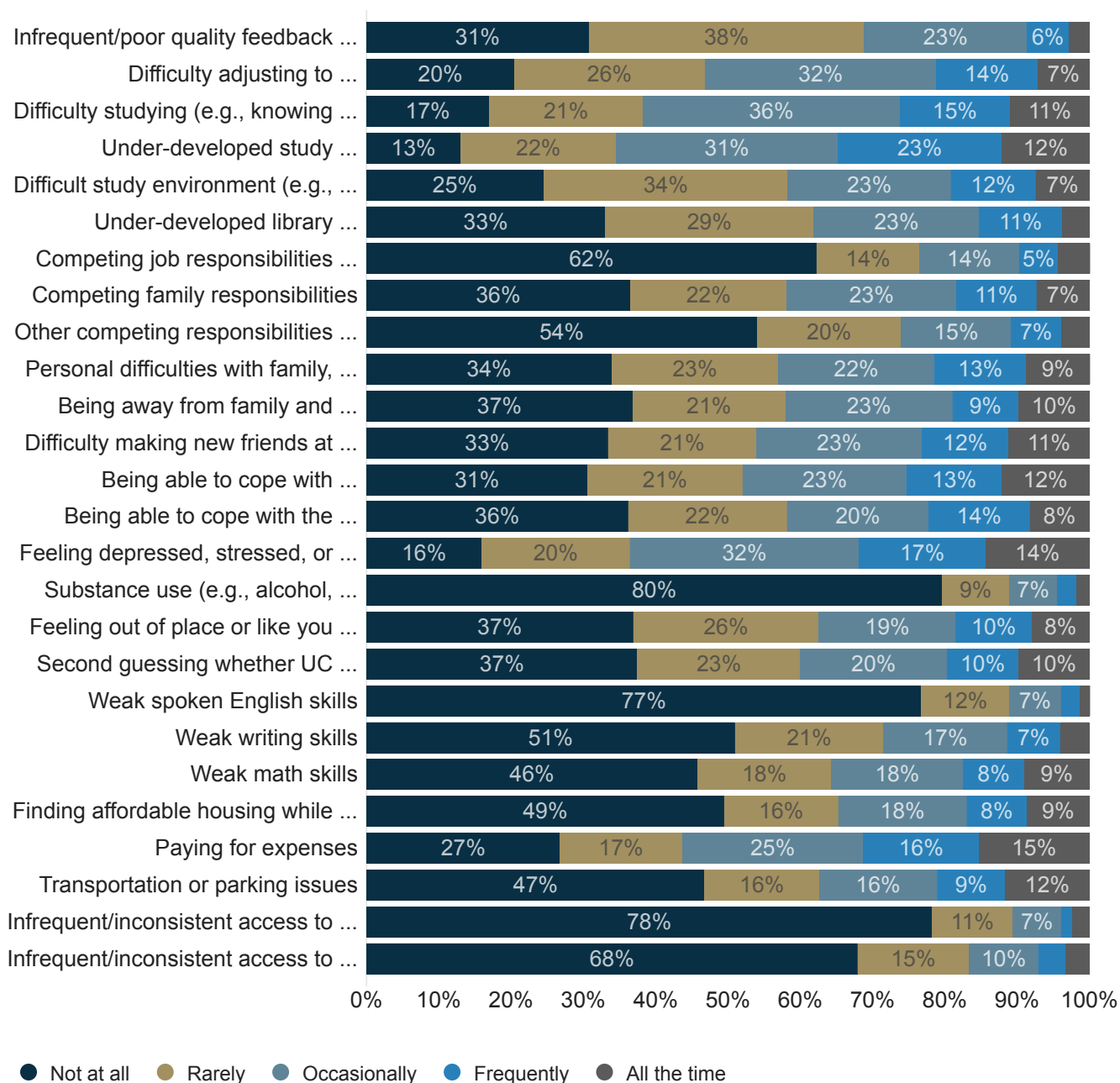
How often have you done each of the following this semester? To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



## How often have you done each of the following this semester?

Field	Not at all	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	All the time	Total
Made a weekly schedule, including weekends, to help manage my time	93	85	216	209	192	795
Recorded my class deadlines	57	65	155	231	287	795
Turned in course assignments on time	4	4	39	281	464	792
Went to my classes	4	3	33	266	486	792
Went to my classes prepared (e.g., having read assignments)	7	32	124	347	284	794
Followed a regular study schedule	61	101	243	232	157	794
Followed a regular sleep schedule	139	189	251	155	59	793
Followed a regular exercise schedule	220	173	194	129	76	792
Followed a regular eating schedule	128	165	205	203	93	794
Ate healthy food	61	129	310	220	74	794
Read my course syllabi	15	54	170	237	314	790
Engaged with material during study sessions (i.e., I didn't just skim)	33	38	212	323	186	792
Reviewed material before and after class	26	102	297	259	109	793
Avoided distractions during study sessions (e.g., texting friends, checking Facebook)	43	132	264	265	89	793
Monitored course progress and made changes when needed	29	67	232	292	171	791
Allowed more study/work time for difficult classes and assignments	22	45	203	304	219	793
Asked questions when I didn't understand something	52	114	262	221	142	791
Set reasonable goals and expectations for myself	28	53	216	308	185	790
Participated in a study group	190	147	204	158	94	793
Participated in major/academic-related clubs, organizations, or activities	329	115	155	115	78	792
Got involved in organized activities outside the classroom (e.g., athletics, clubs, work)	273	104	155	154	107	793
Spent time with peers who support my academic success	93	63	177	249	210	792
Checked my UC Merced email	4	13	57	171	549	794

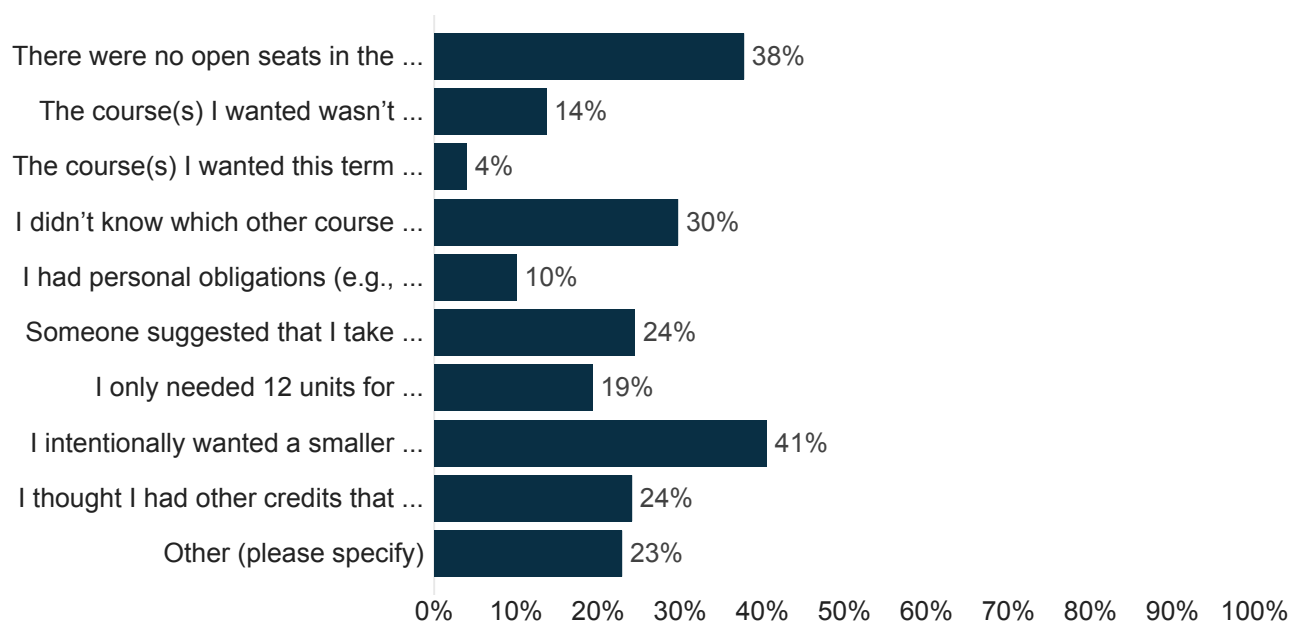
During your first semester at UC Merced, how often have each of the following been obstacles to your school work or academic success? To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



During your first semester at UC Merced, how often have each of the following been obstacles to your school work or academic success?

Field	Not at all	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	All the time	Total
Infrequent/poor quality feedback from instructors	236	292	173	44	22	767
Difficulty adjusting to college-level work (e.g., coursework, exams, papers)	157	202	246	107	55	767
Difficulty studying (e.g., knowing how to start, how to get help, organize material)	130	163	272	117	84	766
Under-developed study behaviors (e.g., wait until last minute, easily distracted, too much social time, too much web surfing)	100	165	235	174	93	767
Difficult study environment (e.g., noisy roommate, poor Internet access, inadequate computer/software)	188	259	173	90	57	767
Under-developed library research skills	252	220	175	87	29	763
Competing job responsibilities (i.e., paid employment)	475	109	105	41	33	763
Competing family responsibilities	279	166	179	85	56	765
Other competing responsibilities (e.g., athletics, clubs, internship)	415	153	117	53	30	768
Personal difficulties with family, intimate relationships, or friends	260	176	166	97	67	766
Being away from family and friends: being “homesick”	282	162	177	70	75	766
Difficulty making new friends at UC Merced	254	156	174	91	85	760
Being able to cope with expectations of parents and family	234	164	174	100	93	765
Being able to cope with the values and expectations of friends when they differ from your own	277	168	150	107	63	765
Feeling depressed, stressed, or upset	122	157	243	134	110	766
Substance use (e.g., alcohol, other drugs)	610	71	51	20	14	766
Feeling out of place or like you just don’t fit on campus	282	196	145	80	61	764
Second guessing whether UC Merced was the right choice for you	287	173	155	76	75	766
Weak spoken English skills	588	93	55	20	10	766
Weak writing skills	390	157	131	56	31	765
Weak math skills	350	141	140	64	69	764
Finding affordable housing while a student at UC Merced	379	121	136	64	66	766
Paying for expenses	205	129	192	122	117	765
Transportation or parking issues	358	121	125	72	89	765
Infrequent/inconsistent access to a computer	600	86	51	12	18	767
Infrequent/inconsistent access to the Internet/web	519	118	73	29	25	764

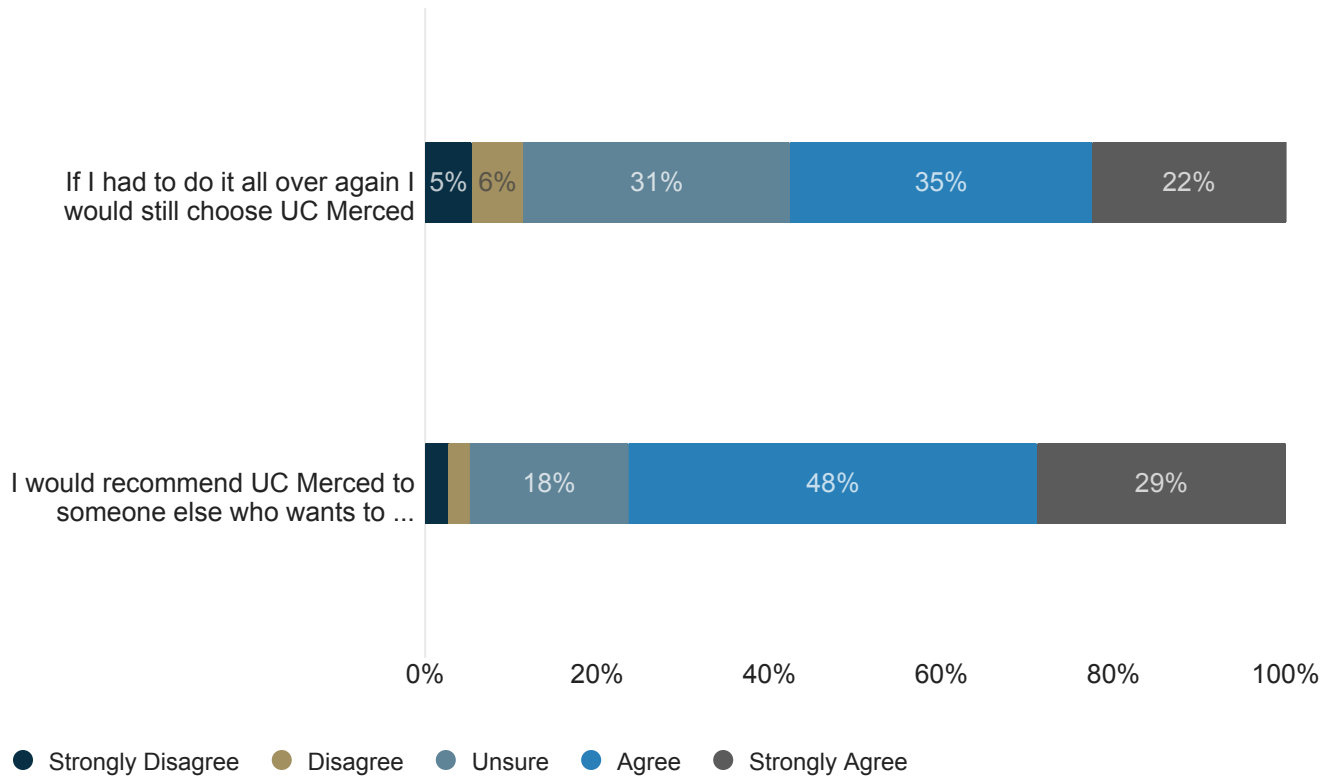
Our records indicate you are not enrolled in 15 units this term. Please let us know why by selecting from the reasons below (select all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
There were no open seats in the section(s) I needed.	94
The course(s) I wanted wasn't offered this term.	34
The course(s) I wanted this term was cancelled.	10
I didn't know which other course to take.	74
I had personal obligations (e.g., work, family) and so needed a smaller course load.	25
Someone suggested that I take 12 units.	61
I only needed 12 units for Financial Aid.	48
I intentionally wanted a smaller course load.	101
I thought I had other credits that would transfer (e.g., AP/IB, community college, etc.).	60
Other (please specify)	57
Total	564



## To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



Field	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
If I had to do it all over again I would still choose UC Merced	42	46	239	271	173	771
I would recommend UC Merced to someone else who wants to attend college	21	19	142	366	222	770