

## 2019 New Student Survey Report – Frosh

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 2107 frosh invited to complete the survey, 805 (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. Tables refer to the entire population, not just frosh. 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.

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%

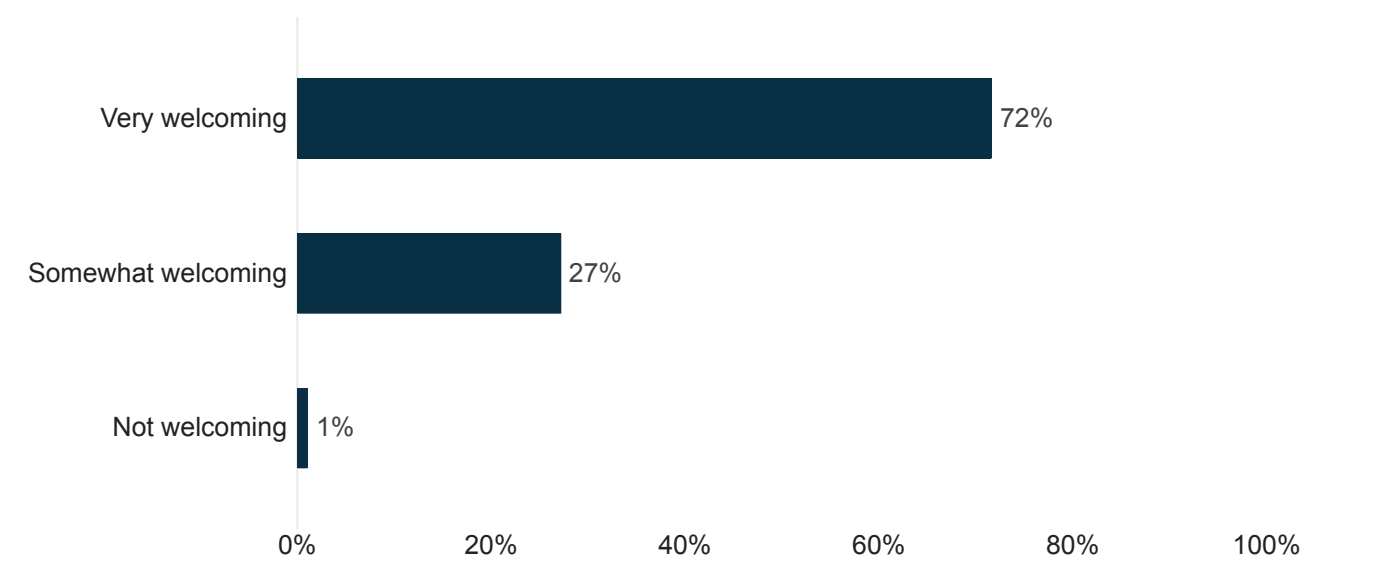
% values may not sum to 100 for a particular characteristic due to rounding error

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%

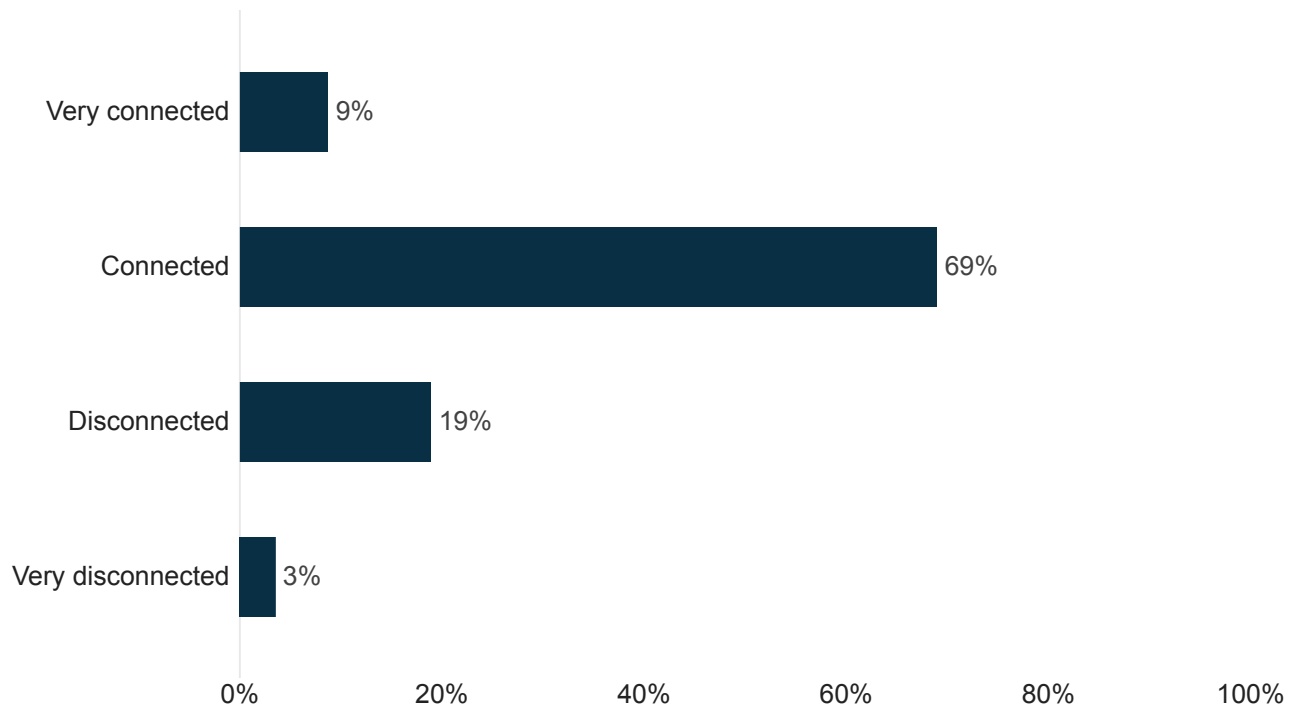
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When you arrived at UC Merced, how welcoming did you find the campus environment?



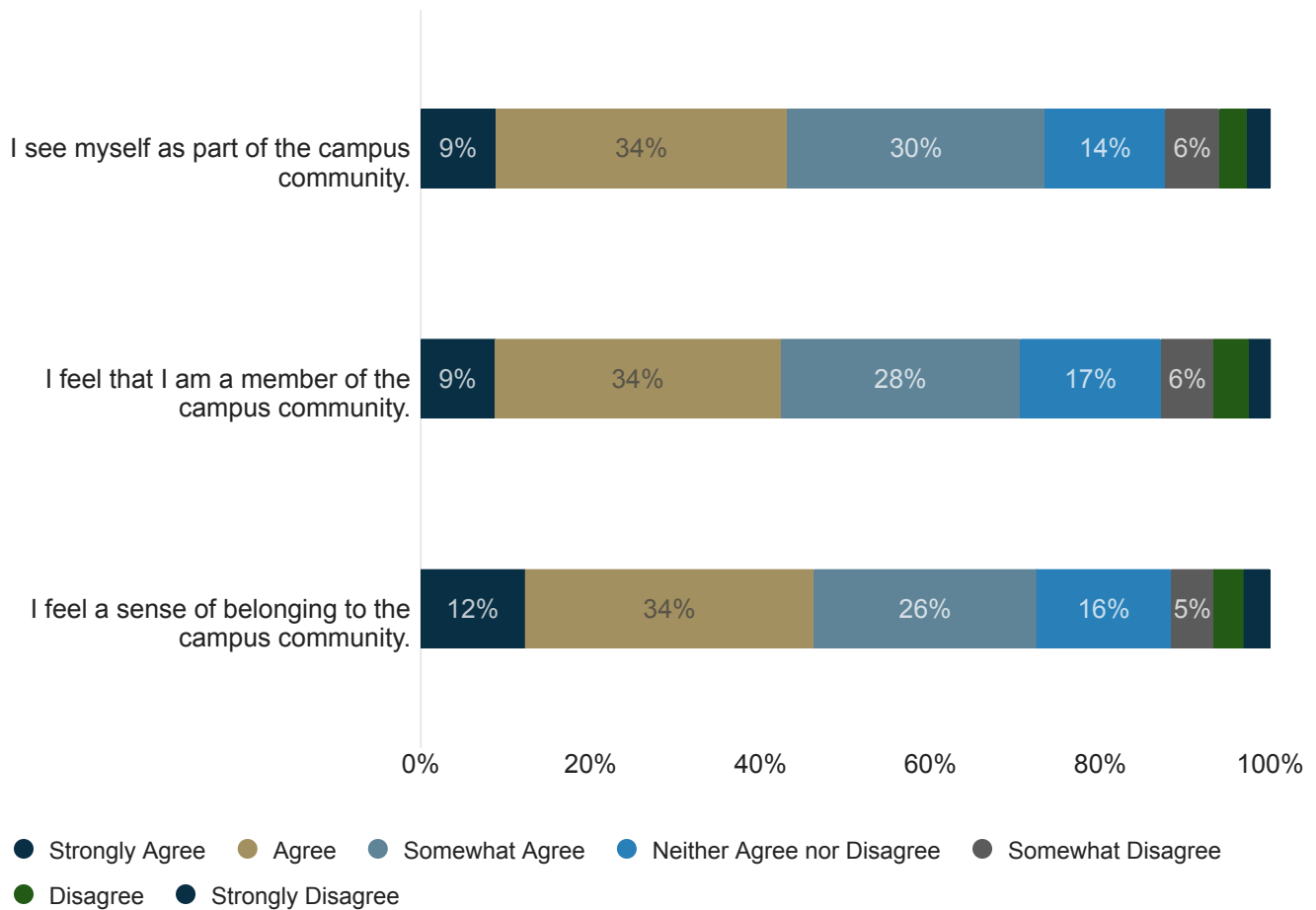
Field	Choice Count
Very welcoming	577
Somewhat welcoming	219
Not welcoming	9
Total	805

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



Field	Choice Count
Very connected	70
Connected	555
Disconnected	152
Very disconnected	28
Total	805

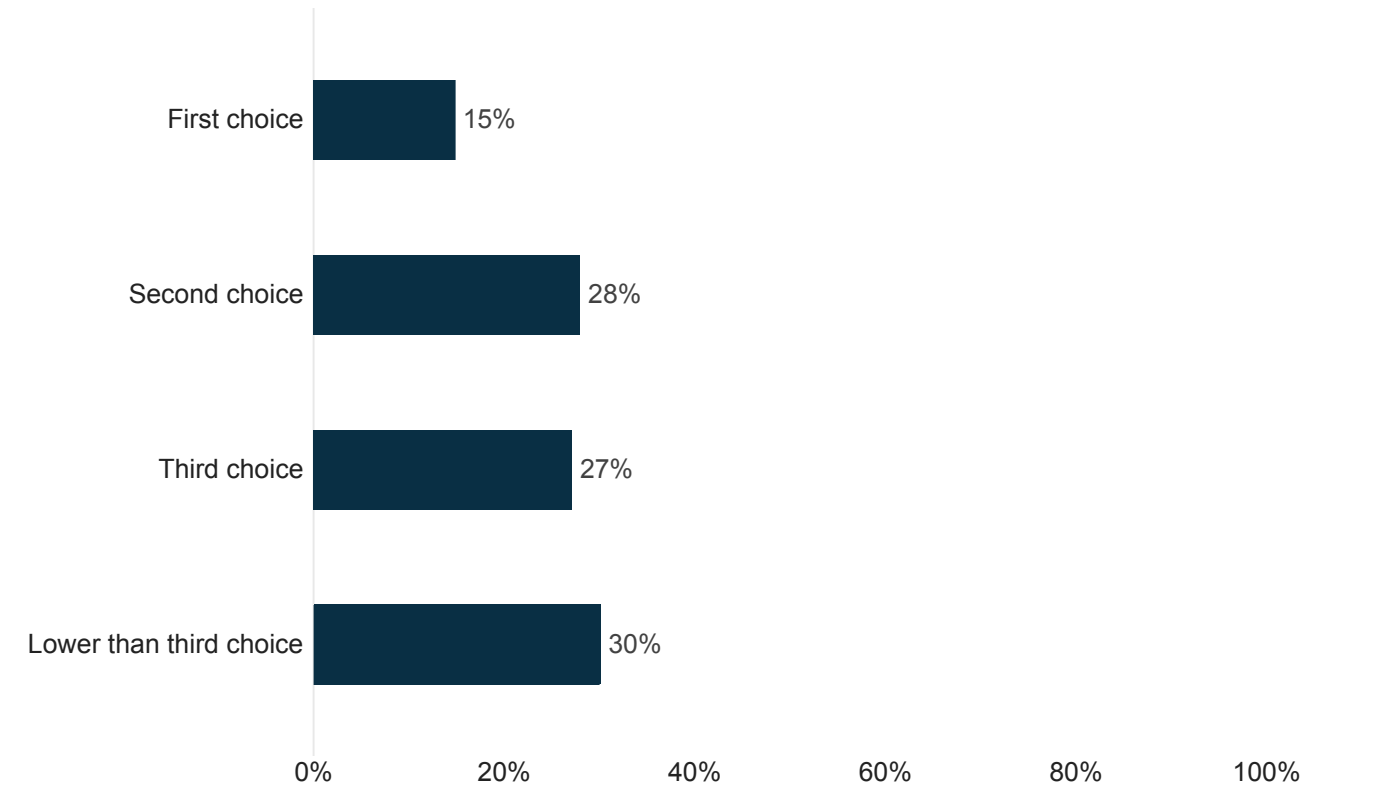
To what extent do you agree or disagree with each statement about your experience on the UC Merced campus.



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.	71	276	244	114	51	26	22	804
I feel that I am a member of the campus community.	70	270	226	133	50	33	20	802
I feel a sense of belonging to the campus community.	98	272	209	127	40	28	25	799

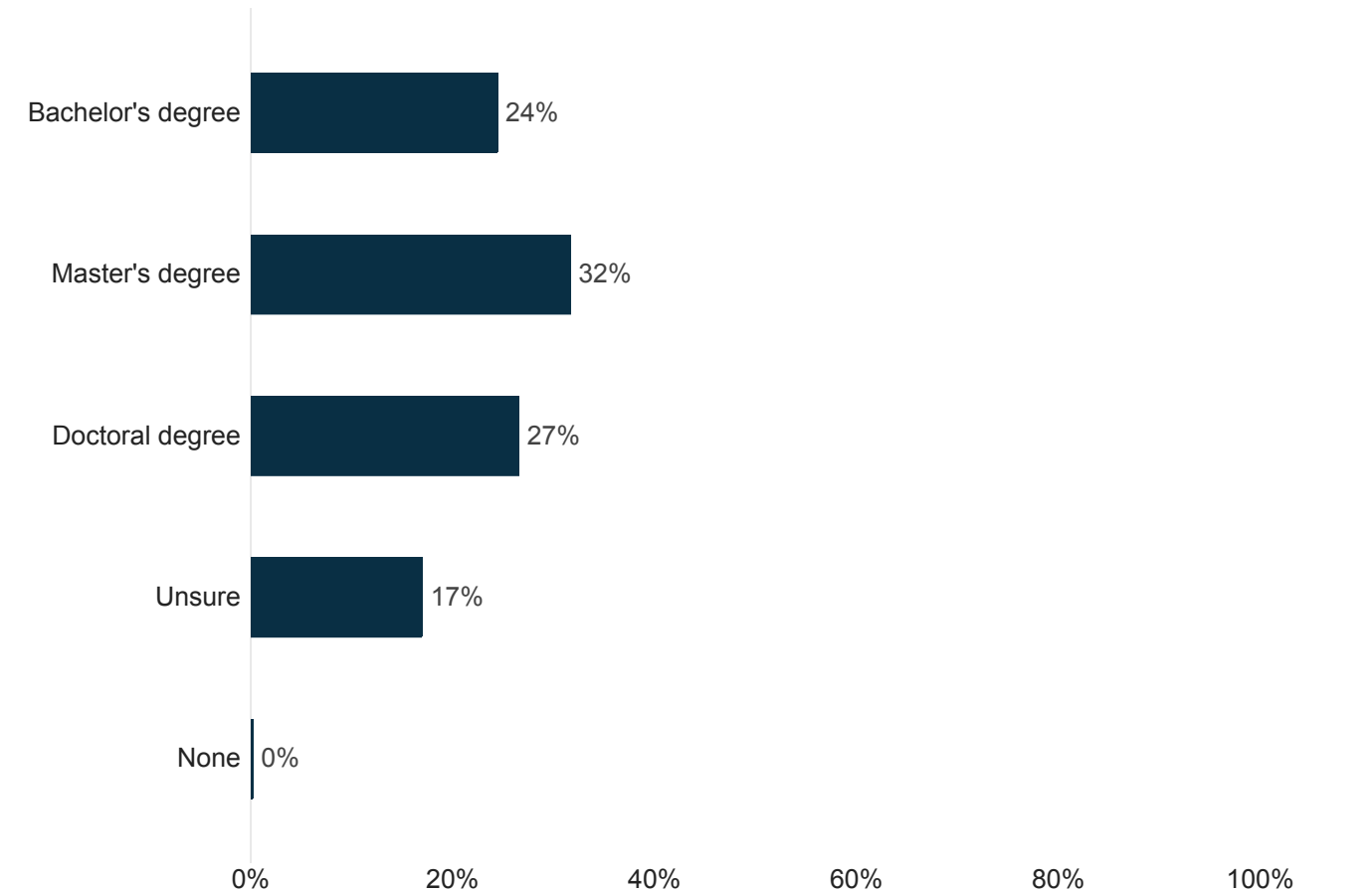


When you applied to colleges, was UC Merced your:



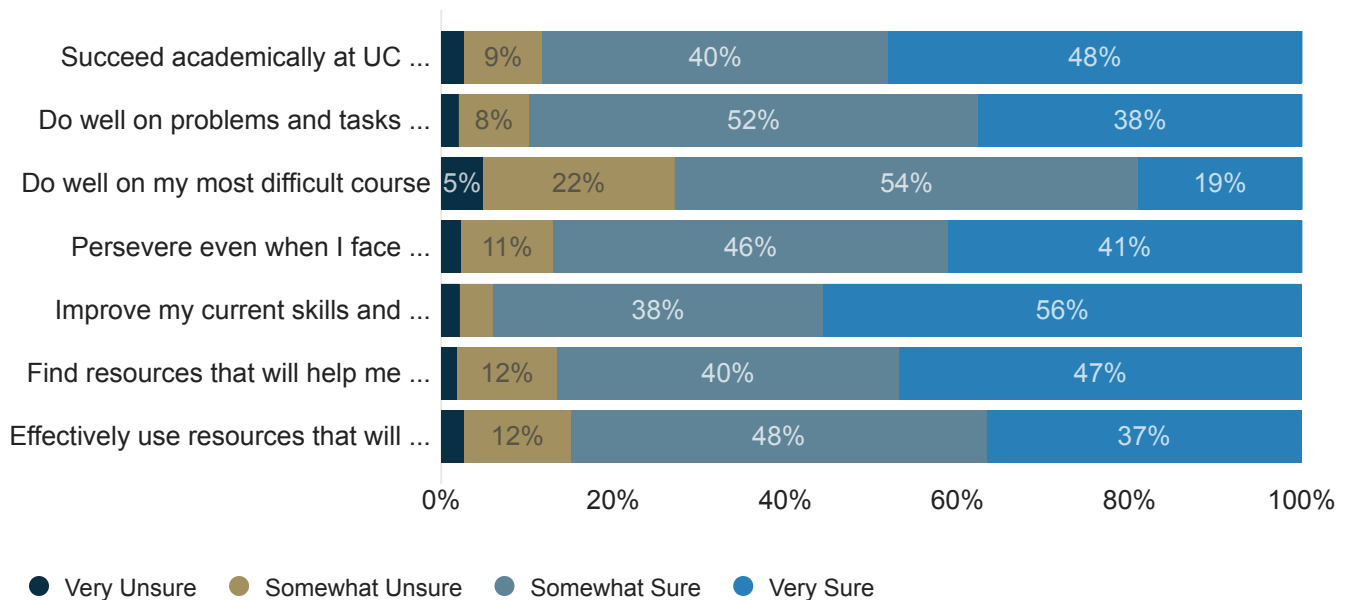
Field	Choice Count
First choice	119
Second choice	225
Third choice	218
Lower than third choice	242
Total	804

What is the highest degree you intend to eventually obtain?



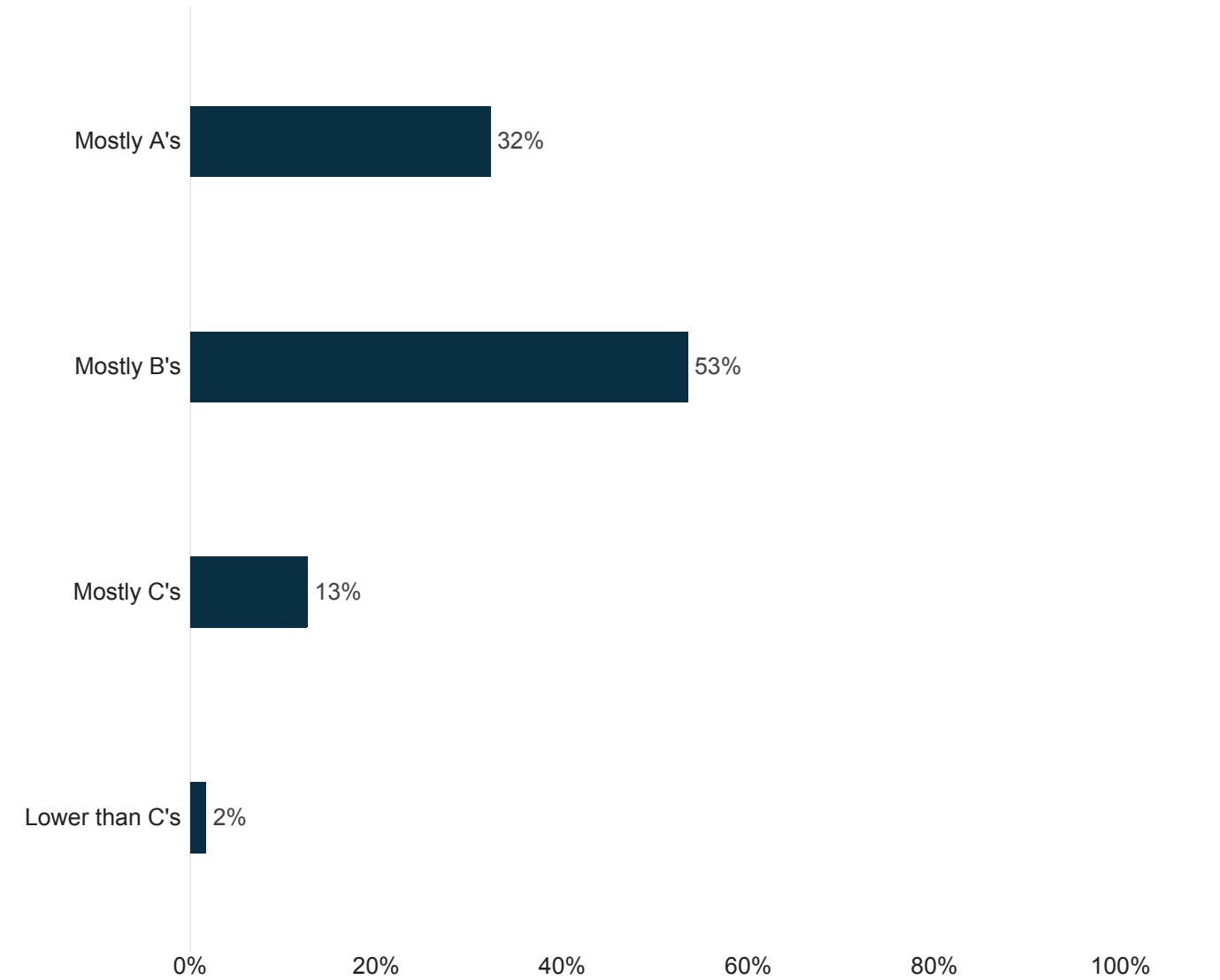
Field	Choice Count
Bachelor's degree	197
Master's degree	255
Doctoral degree	214
Unsure	137
None	2
Total	805

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.



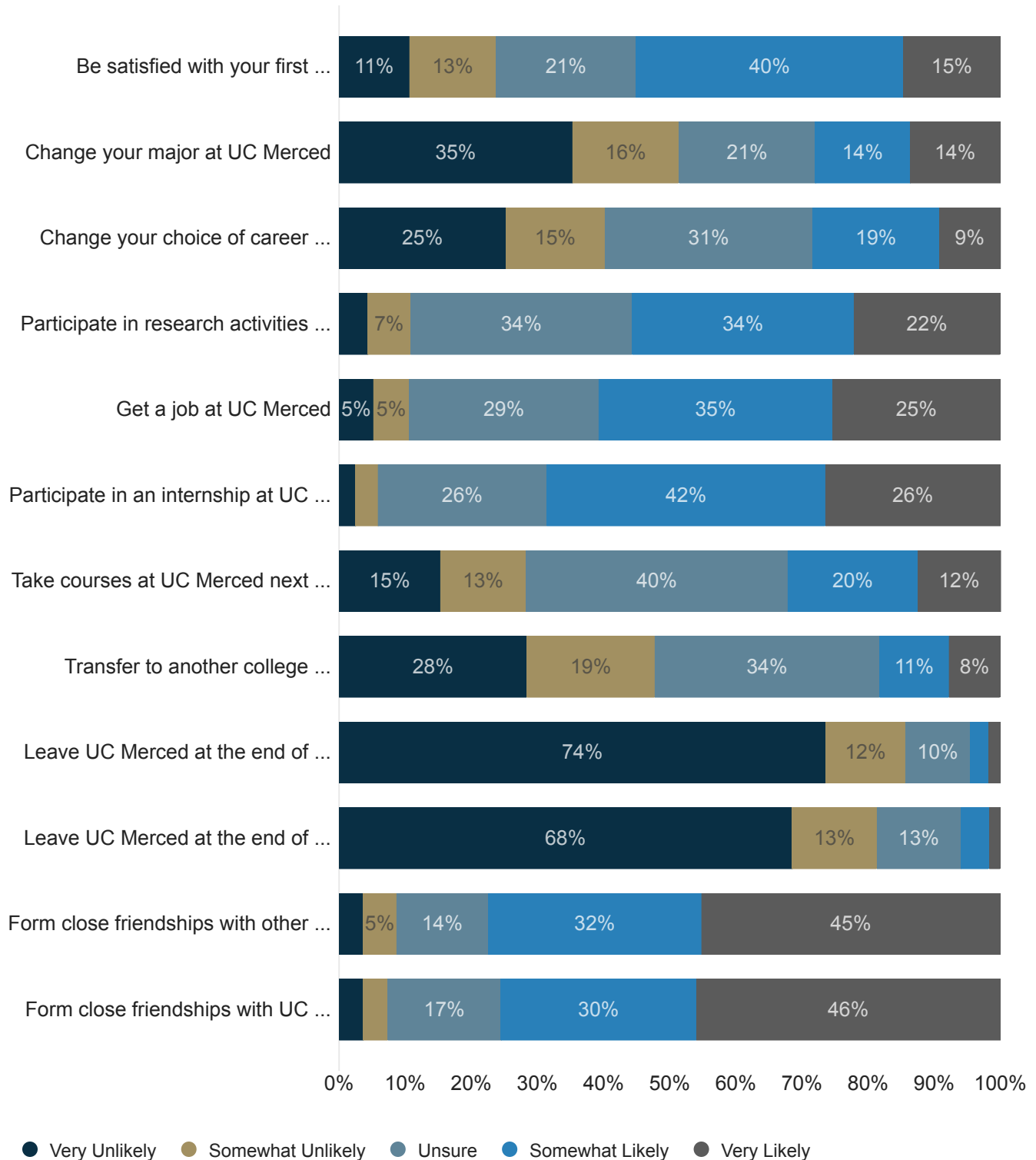
Field	Very Unsure	Somewhat Unsure	Somewhat Sure	Very Sure	Total
Succeed academically at UC Merced	21	71	315	376	783
Do well on problems and tasks assigned in my courses	16	64	407	293	780
Do well on my most difficult course	38	174	421	148	781
Persevere even when I face academic challenges and obstacles	18	83	357	319	777
Improve my current skills and abilities	17	30	301	435	783
Find resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	15	90	311	365	781
Effectively use resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	21	97	378	286	782

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



Field	Choice Count
Mostly A's	248
Mostly B's	411
Mostly C's	97
Lower than C's	13
Total	769

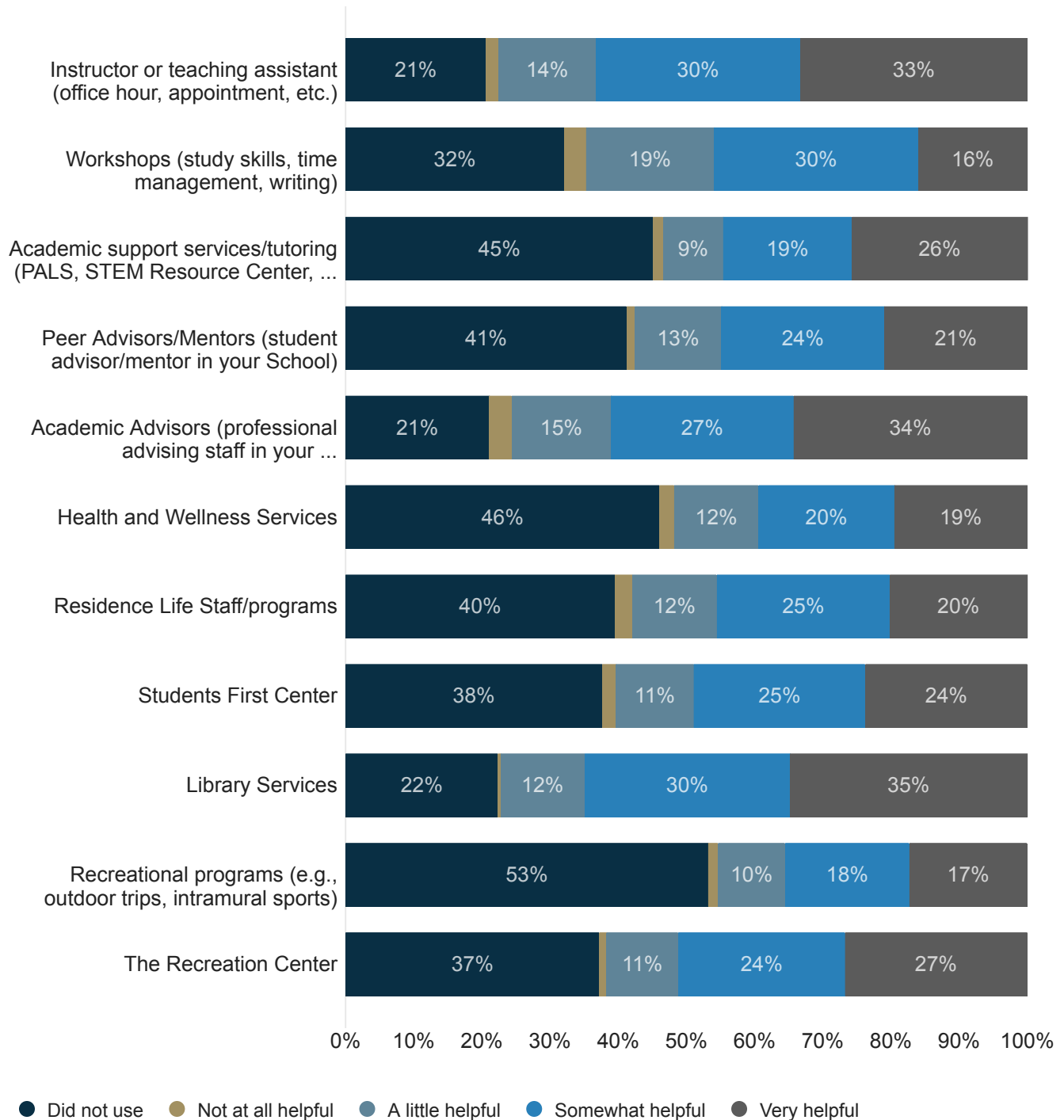
## How likely are you to:



## 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	82	101	163	312	113	771
Change your major at UC Merced	271	124	158	110	105	768
Change your choice of career while at UC Merced	194	115	242	147	71	769
Participate in research activities with a faculty member at UC Merced	33	50	257	257	170	767
Get a job at UC Merced	40	42	221	273	196	772
Participate in an internship at UC Merced	19	26	196	323	203	767
Take courses at UC Merced next summer	118	100	305	152	96	771
Transfer to another college before graduating	219	149	262	81	60	771
Leave UC Merced at the end of this semester	568	93	76	21	14	772
Leave UC Merced at the end of this academic year	528	99	98	33	13	771
Form close friendships with other UC Merced students	28	39	107	249	349	772
Form close friendships with UC Merced students that are not from the same racial or ethnic group as me	28	29	132	228	355	772

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.

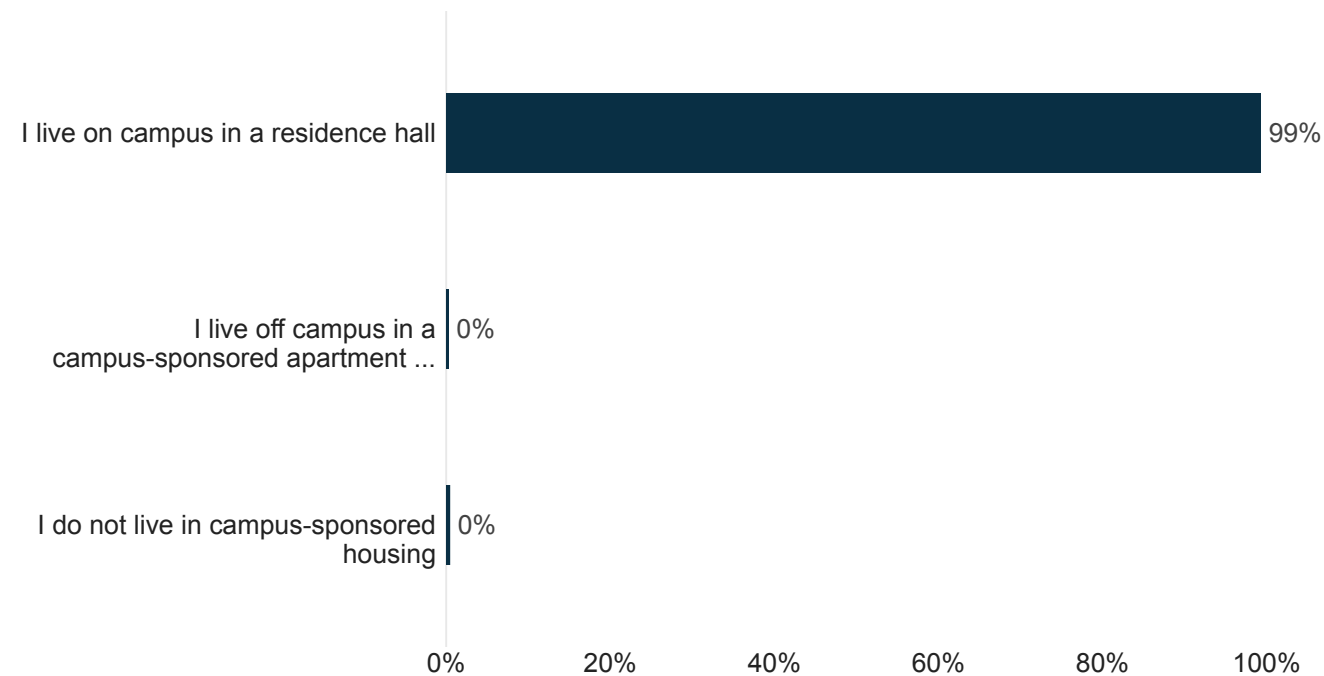


For each UC Merced campus resource below, please let us know how helpful that resource has been in your transition to UC Merced. Select "did not use" if you didn't use a resource.

Field	Did not use	Not at all helpful	A little helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	Total
Instructor or teaching assistant (office hour, appointment, etc.)	155	14	107	226	250	752
Workshops (study skills, time management, writing)	241	24	141	225	120	751
Academic support services/tutoring (PALS, STEM Resource Center, Writing/Math/Chem Center)	339	11	66	142	193	751
Peer Advisors/Mentors (student advisor/mentor in your School)	309	9	95	179	157	749
Academic Advisors (professional advising staff in your School/Bobcat Advising Center)	158	25	109	201	257	750
Health and Wellness Services	345	16	93	149	146	749
Residence Life Staff/programs	296	19	93	190	151	749
Students First Center	281	15	85	188	177	746
Library Services	167	3	92	225	260	747
Recreational programs (e.g., outdoor trips, intramural sports)	400	11	74	137	130	752
The Recreation Center	280	8	79	184	201	752

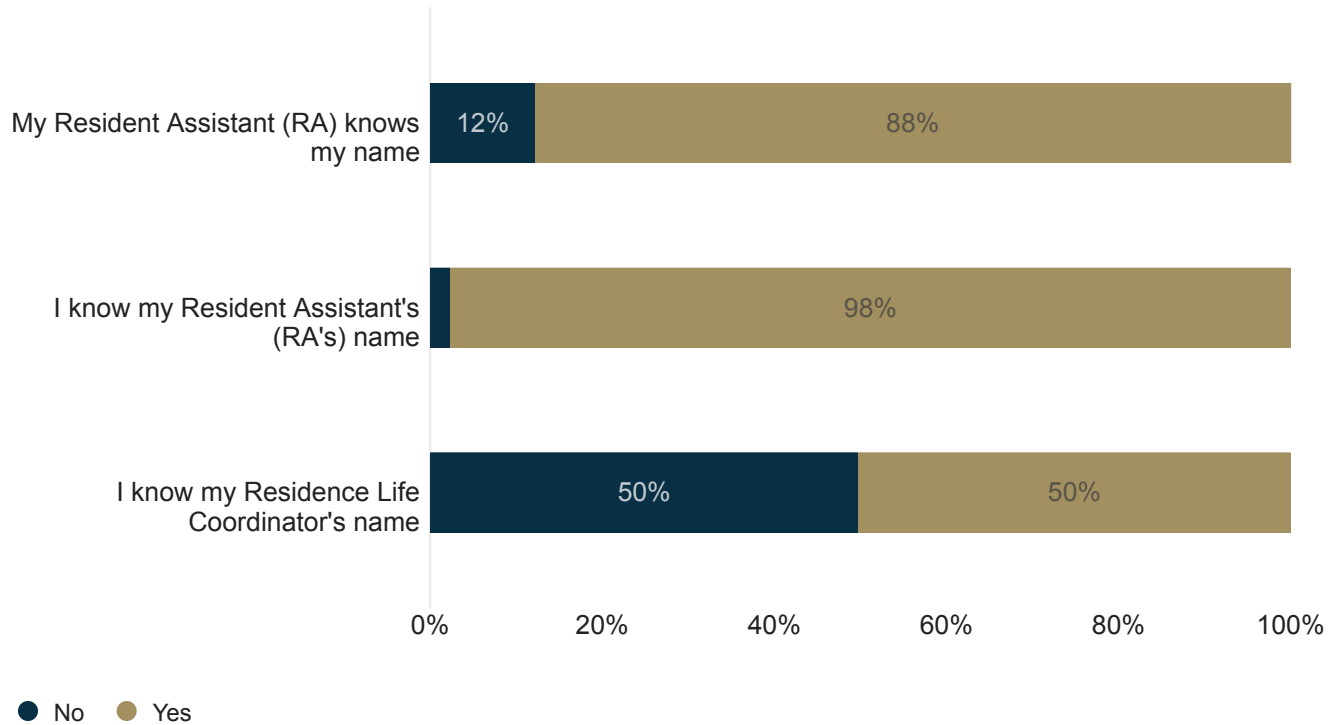


Which of the following describes your living situation? Note: Only students in campus housing could answer this question. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



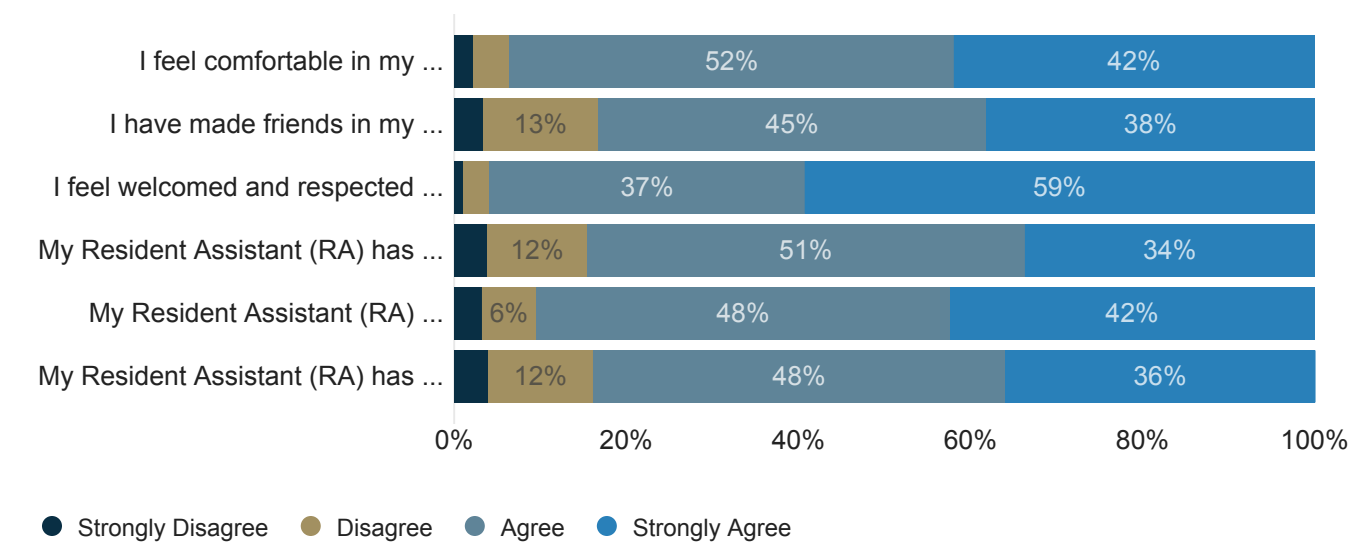
Field	Choice Count
I live on campus in a residence hall	682
I live off campus in a campus-sponsored apartment (i.e., Village Landing, Northwood Village, or Village Terrace)	2
I do not live in campus-sponsored housing	3
Total	687

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.



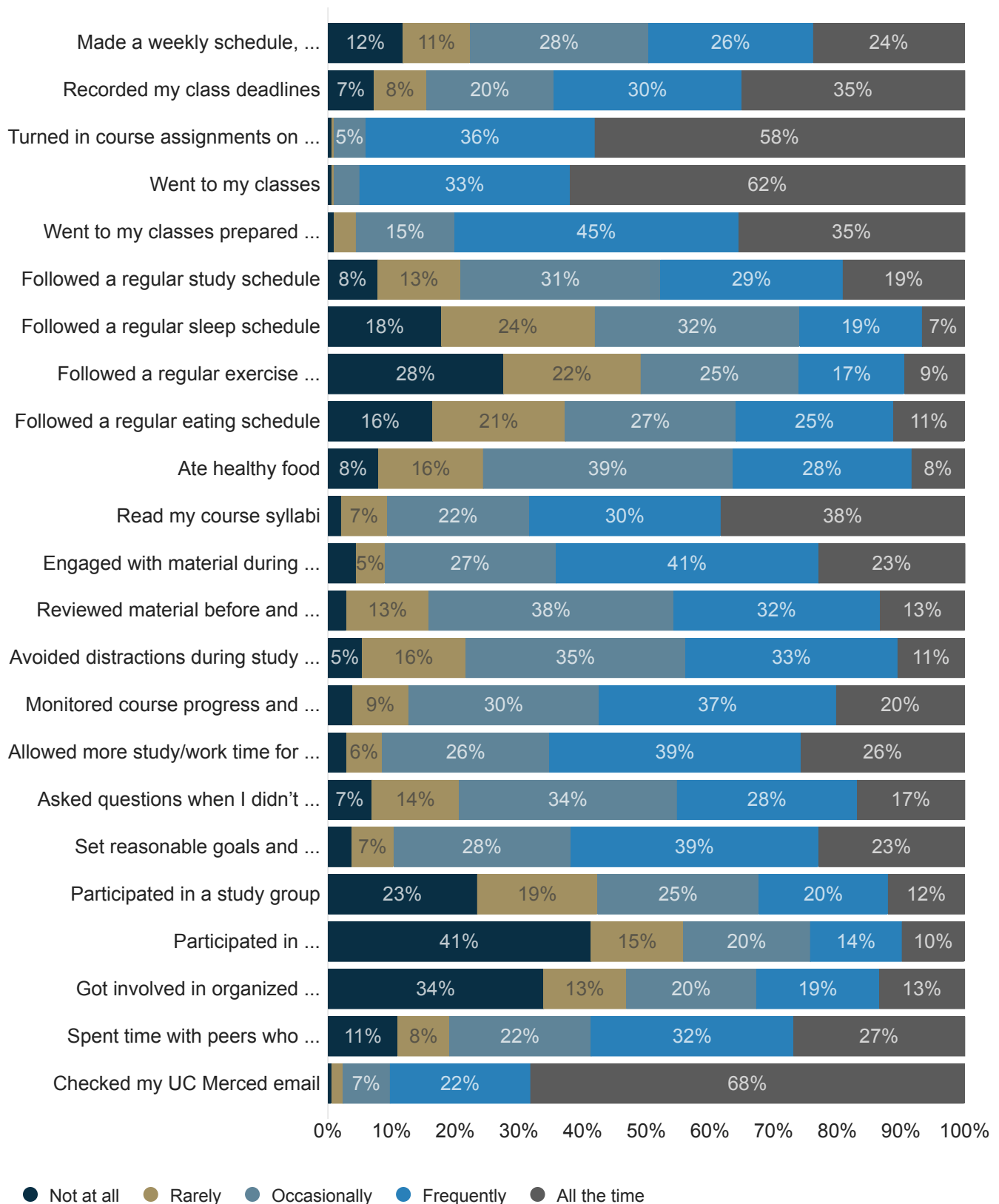
Field	No	Yes	Total
My Resident Assistant (RA) knows my name	83	597	680
I know my Resident Assistant's (RA's) name	16	663	679
I know my Residence Life Coordinator's name	338	341	679

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	29	352	286
I have made friends in my residence hall	23	91	308	260
I feel welcomed and respected by my Resident Assistant (RA)	7	21	249	403
My Resident Assistant (RA) has organized activities that helped me get to know other students	26	79	346	229
My Resident Assistant (RA) supports my academic success (e.g., shares resources/advice)	22	43	328	289
My Resident Assistant (RA) has helped me transition to UC Merced	27	83	327	245

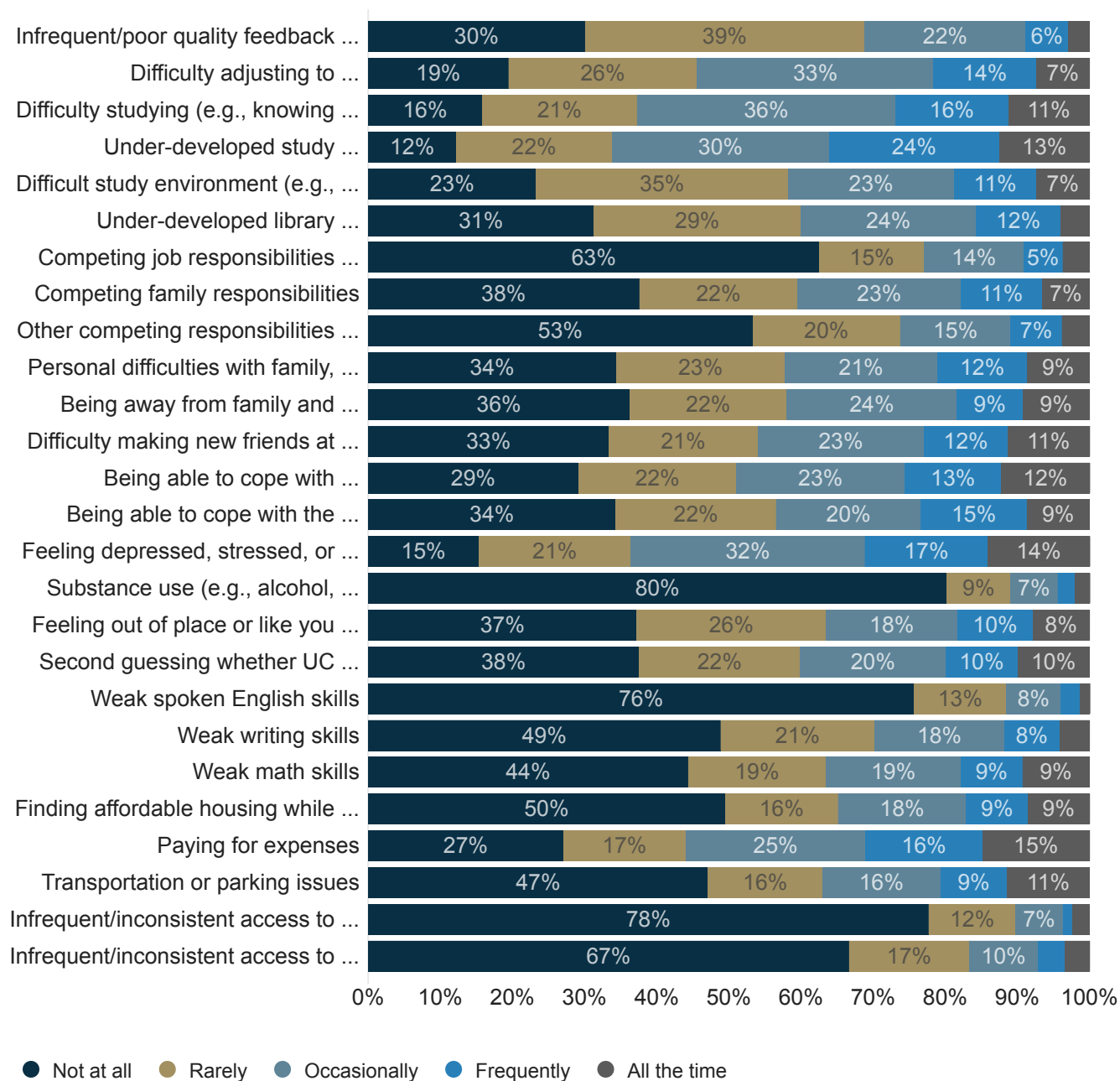
## How often have you done each of the following this semester?



## 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	86	77	205	189	174	731
Recorded my class deadlines	53	60	146	216	256	731
Turned in course assignments on time	4	3	36	262	423	728
Went to my classes	4	3	29	241	451	728
Went to my classes prepared (e.g., having read assignments)	7	25	113	326	259	730
Followed a regular study schedule	57	95	230	209	140	731
Followed a regular sleep schedule	130	176	235	140	49	730
Followed a regular exercise schedule	201	157	181	121	69	729
Followed a regular eating schedule	120	152	196	180	82	730
Ate healthy food	58	120	287	205	61	731
Read my course syllabi	15	53	162	219	279	728
Engaged with material during study sessions (i.e., I didn't just skim)	32	33	196	301	167	729
Reviewed material before and after class	21	95	280	237	97	730
Avoided distractions during study sessions (e.g., texting friends, checking Facebook)	39	119	252	243	77	730
Monitored course progress and made changes when needed	28	64	218	271	147	728
Allowed more study/work time for difficult classes and assignments	21	41	192	288	188	730
Asked questions when I didn't understand something	50	100	249	206	123	728
Set reasonable goals and expectations for myself	27	48	202	283	167	727
Participated in a study group	171	138	185	148	88	730
Participated in major/academic-related clubs, organizations, or activities	301	106	145	105	72	729
Got involved in organized activities outside the classroom (e.g., athletics, clubs, work)	247	95	149	141	98	730
Spent time with peers who support my academic success	80	59	162	232	196	729
Checked my UC Merced email	4	13	54	161	498	730

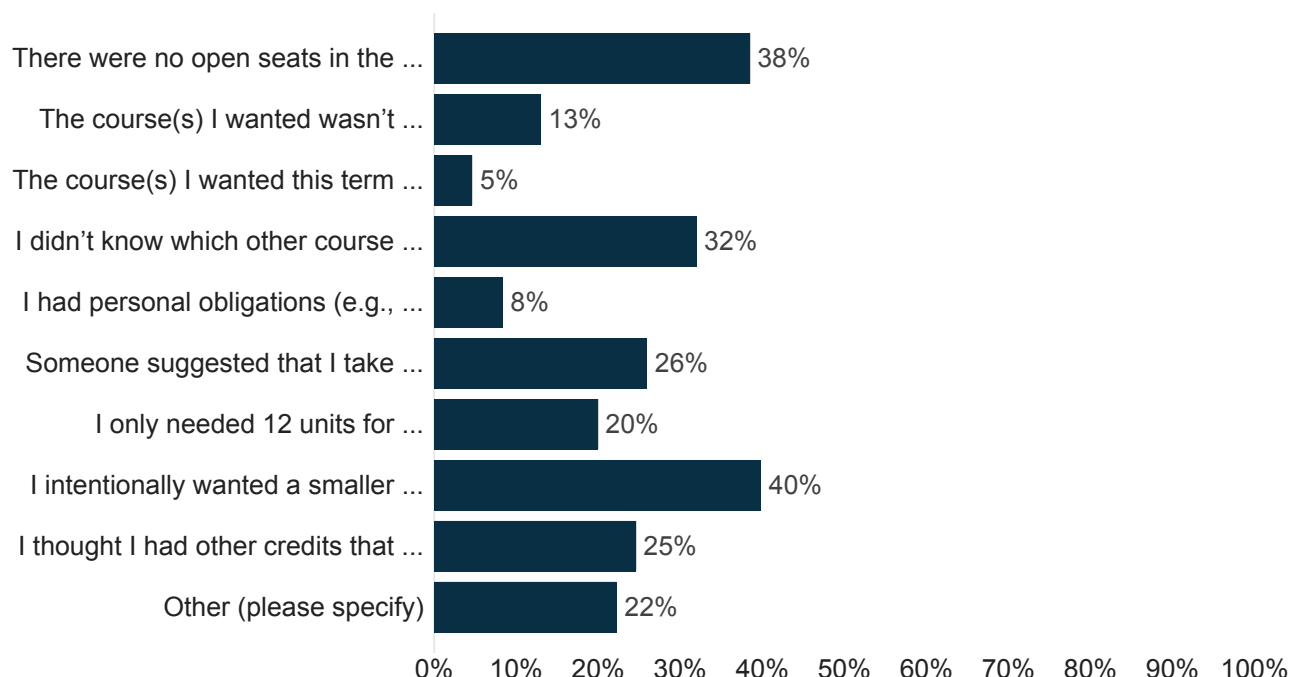
During your first semester at UC Merced, how often have each of the following been obstacles to your school work or academic success? To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



## 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	212	273	158	41	21	705
Difficulty adjusting to college-level work (e.g., coursework, exams, papers)	137	184	231	100	52	704
Difficulty studying (e.g., knowing how to start, how to get help, organize material)	111	151	252	110	79	703
Under-developed study behaviors (e.g., wait until last minute, easily distracted, too much social time, too much web surfing)	86	152	212	166	88	704
Difficult study environment (e.g., noisy roommate, poor Internet access, inadequate computer/software)	164	246	162	80	52	704
Under-developed library research skills	219	201	170	82	28	700
Competing job responsibilities (i.e., paid employment)	438	102	96	38	26	700
Competing family responsibilities	264	154	159	79	46	702
Other competing responsibilities (e.g., athletics, clubs, internship)	376	144	108	50	27	705
Personal difficulties with family, intimate relationships, or friends	242	164	149	87	61	703
Being away from family and friends: being “homesick”	255	153	166	64	65	703
Difficulty making new friends at UC Merced	233	144	161	81	79	698
Being able to cope with expectations of parents and family	205	154	164	94	86	703
Being able to cope with the values and expectations of friends when they differ from your own	241	156	141	103	61	702
Feeling depressed, stressed, or upset	108	148	228	120	99	703
Substance use (e.g., alcohol, other drugs)	564	62	46	17	14	703
Feeling out of place or like you just don’t fit on campus	261	184	128	73	55	701
Second guessing whether UC Merced was the right choice for you	264	157	142	70	70	703
Weak spoken English skills	532	90	53	19	9	703
Weak writing skills	343	150	126	54	29	702
Weak math skills	311	134	131	60	65	701
Finding affordable housing while a student at UC Merced	348	110	125	60	60	703
Paying for expenses	190	119	175	114	104	702
Transportation or parking issues	331	111	115	65	80	702
Infrequent/inconsistent access to a computer	547	85	46	9	17	704
Infrequent/inconsistent access to the Internet/web	468	117	67	26	24	702

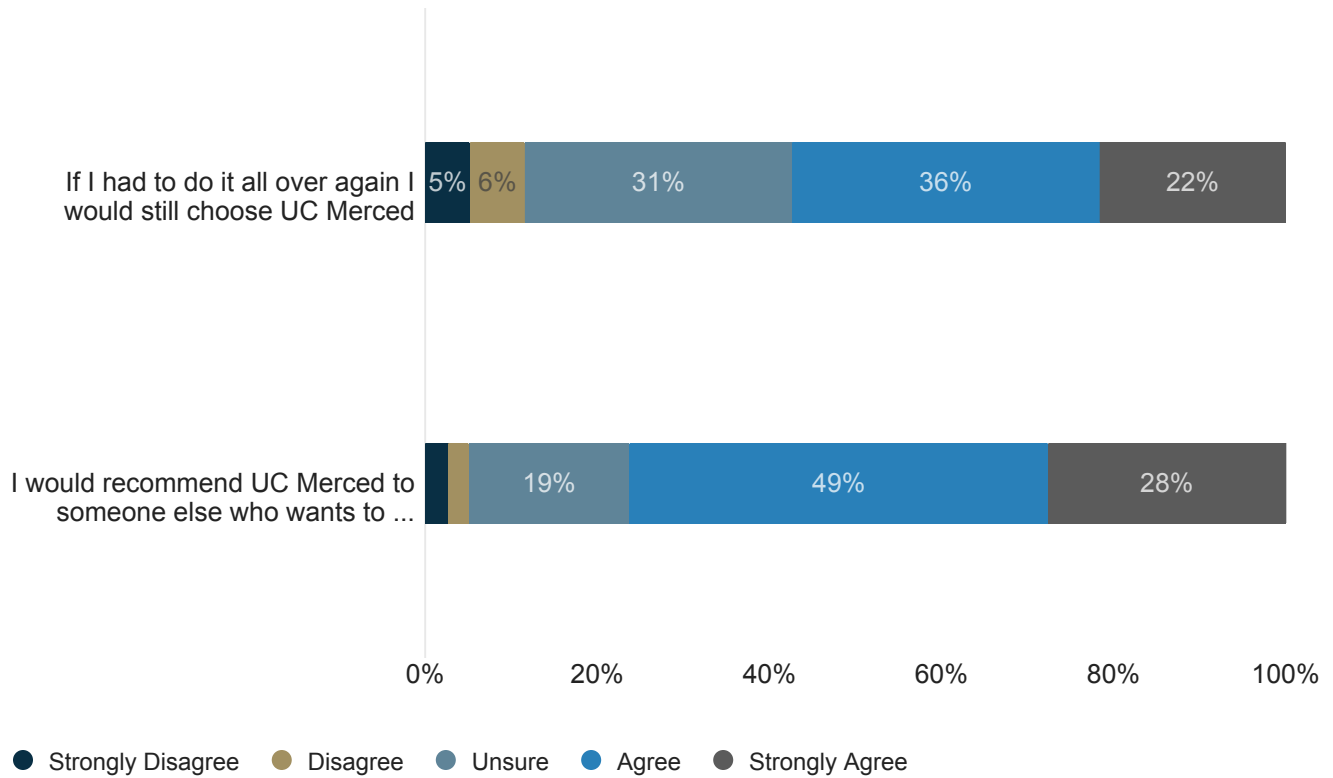
Our records indicate you are not enrolled in 15 units this term. Please let us know why by selecting from the reasons below (select all that apply).



Field	Choice Count
There were no open seats in the section(s) I needed.	83
The course(s) I wanted wasn't offered this term.	28
The course(s) I wanted this term was cancelled.	10
I didn't know which other course to take.	69
I had personal obligations (e.g., work, family) and so needed a smaller course load.	18
Someone suggested that I take 12 units.	56
I only needed 12 units for Financial Aid.	43
I intentionally wanted a smaller course load.	86
I thought I had other credits that would transfer (e.g., AP/IB, community college, etc.).	53
Other (please specify)	48
Total	494



## 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	37	45	220	253	153	708
I would recommend UC Merced to someone else who wants to attend college	19	17	132	344	195	707