

2016 New Student Survey Report - All Students

Prepared by Institutional Research and Decision Support

Last Updated: December 13, 2017

Administration: The survey was administered between October 22, 2017 and November 20, 2017 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, Facebook 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).

Response Rate: Of the 2449 students invited to complete the survey, 1006 (41%) 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 a few exceptions:

- Females were 8% more likely to respond than males.
- There were some School and Major differences (e.g., students with a major in the School of Engineering or the School of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts were somewhat more likely to respond compared to students with a major in the School of Natural Sciences or Undeclared students).

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.
- **Fee 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 2449 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 1006 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
Entering Level					
Transfer Students	156	6%	80	8%	51%
Students Who Entered as Freshmen/Frosh	2293	94%	926	92%	40%
Gender					
Female	1276	52%	569	57%	45%
Male	1156	47%	431	43%	37%
Unknown	17	1%	6	<1%	35%
Race/Ethnicity					
International	191	8%	82	8%	43%
Hispanic	1388	57%	533	53%	38%
African American	113	5%	43	4%	38%
American Indian	4	<1%	1	<1%	25%
Asian	412	17%	197	20%	48%
Pacific Islander	14	1%	6	1%	43%
White	234	10%	105	10%	45%
Multi-racial	75	3%	32	3%	43%
Unknown	18	1%	7	1%	39%

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

Table 2. Student Demographics and Schools

Student Characteristic	# Invited (of 2449 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 1006 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
First Generation Status					
First Generation	1826	75%	738	73%	40%
Non-First Generation	623	25%	268	27%	43%
Pell Eligibility Status					
Pell Grant Eligible	1618	66%	664	66%	41%
Non-Pell Grant Eligible	831	34%	342	34%	41%
First Language					
English Only as First Language	705	29%	303	30%	43%
English and Other Language or Other Language Only as First Language	1742	71%	702	70%	40%
Unknown	2	<1%	1	<1%	50%
School					
Engineering	712	29%	309	31%	43%
Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts (SSHA)	815	33%	379	38%	47%
Natural Sciences	736	30%	247	25%	34%
Undeclared	186	8%	71	7%	38%

% 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	# Invited (of 2449 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 1006 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
ANTH – Anthropology	13	1%	6	1%	46%
BENG – Bioengineering	72	3%	25	3%	35%
BIOS – Biological Sciences	555	23%	177	18%	32%
CHEM – Chemical Sciences	84	3%	35	4%	42%
COGS – Cognitive Science	35	1%	13	1%	37%
CRES – Critical Race & Ethnic Studies	1	<1%	1	<1%	100%
CSE – Computer Science & Engineering	302	12%	149	15%	49%
ECON – Economics	16	1%	6	1%	38%
ENG – English	22	1%	13	1%	59%
ENVE – Environmental Engineering	30	1%	21	2%	70%
ESS – Earth Systems Science	6	<1%	3	<1%	50%
GASP – Global Arts Studies	10	<1%	2	<1%	20%
HIST – History	26	1%	12	1%	46%
MATH – Mathematical Sciences	40	2%	12	1%	30%
MBE – Management & Business Economics	153	6%	53	5%	35%

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

Table 3. Student Majors (continued)

Student Characteristic	# Invited (of 2449 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 1006 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
ME – Mechanical Engineering	192	8%	77	8%	40%
MSE – Materials Science & Engineering	11	<1%	1	<1%	9%
PH – Public Health	55	2%	32	3%	58%
PHYS – Physics	25	1%	8	1%	32%
POLI – Political Science	96	4%	43	4%	45%
PSY – Psychology	274	11%	142	14%	52%
SOC – Sociology	70	3%	33	3%	47%
SPAN – Spanish	16	1%	7	1%	44%
UENG – Undeclared Engineering	105	4%	36	4%	34%
UNS – Undeclared Natural Sciences	26	1%	12	1%	46%
USHA – Undeclared SSHA	28	1%	16	2%	57%
0000 - Undeclared	186	8%	71	7%	38%

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

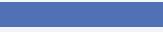
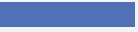
When you arrived at UC Merced, how welcoming did you find the campus environment?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Very welcoming		754	75%
2	Somewhat welcoming		236	23%
3	Not welcoming		16	2%
	Total		1006	100%

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

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Very connected		103	10%
2	Connected		671	67%
3	Disconnected		189	19%
4	Very disconnected		43	4%
	Total		1006	100%

When you applied to colleges, was UC Merced your:

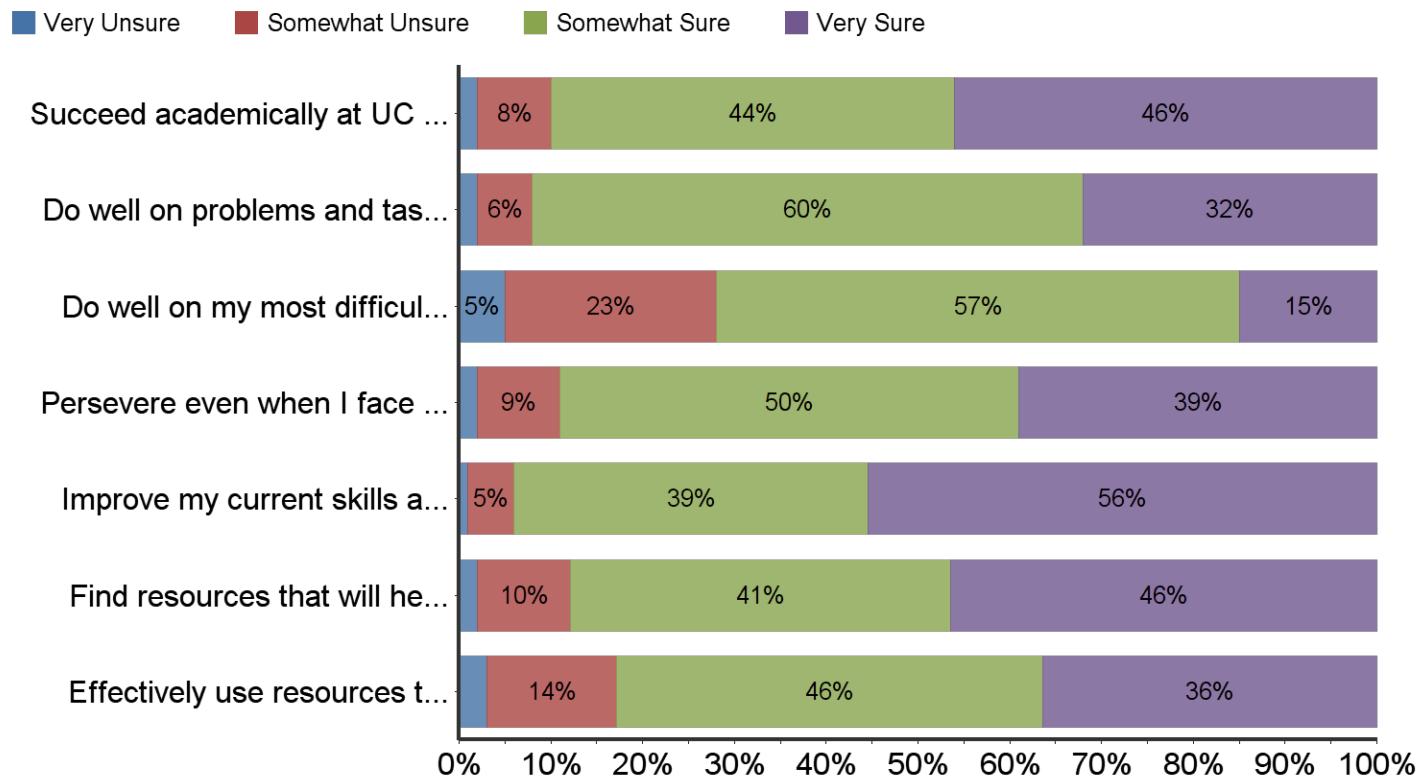
#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	First choice		154	15%
2	Second choice		289	29%
3	Third choice		245	24%
4	Lower than third choice		317	32%
	Total		1005	100%

What is the highest degree you intend to eventually obtain?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Bachelor's degree		244	24%
2	Master's degree		321	32%
3	Doctoral degree		260	26%
4	Unsure		177	18%
5	None		4	0%
	Total		1006	100%

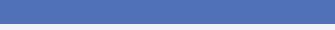
8 **How sure are you that you can do each of the following:**

Note: To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



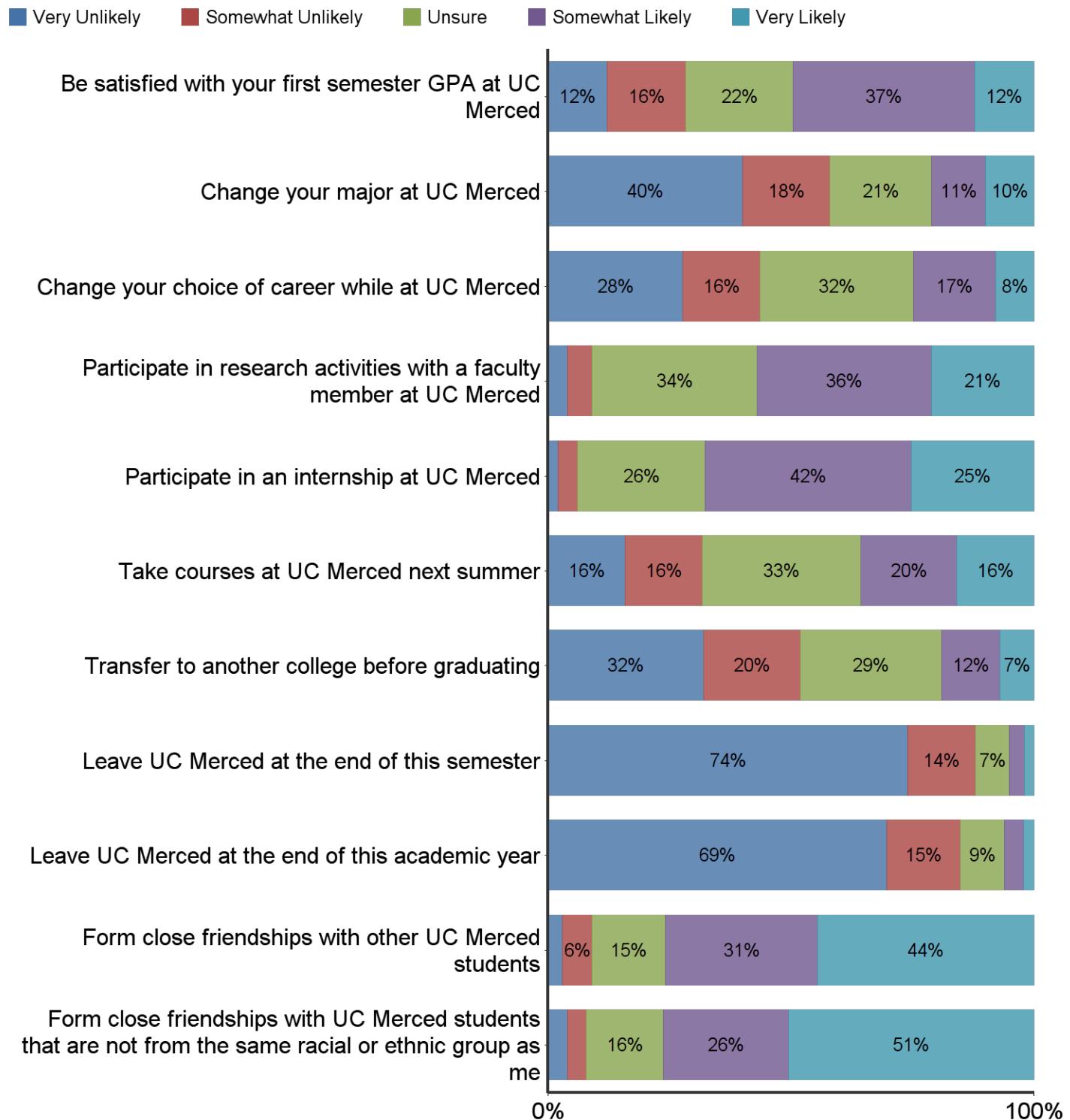
#	Question	Very Unsure	Somewhat Unsure	Somewhat Sure	Very Sure	Response
1	Succeed academically at UC Merced	16	75	442	463	996
2	Do well on problems and tasks assigned in my courses	15	64	598	317	994
3	Do well on my most difficult course	48	230	567	147	992
4	Persevere even when I face academic challenges and obstacles	15	90	499	387	991
5	Improve my current skills and abilities	12	45	382	553	992
6	Find resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	23	104	407	460	994
7	Effectively use resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	30	143	459	362	994

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

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Mostly A's		226	23%
2	Mostly B's		595	61%
3	Mostly C's		144	15%
4	Lower than C's		14	1%
	Total		979	100%

How likely are you to:

Note: This data is presented as a table (counts/frequencies) on the next page.

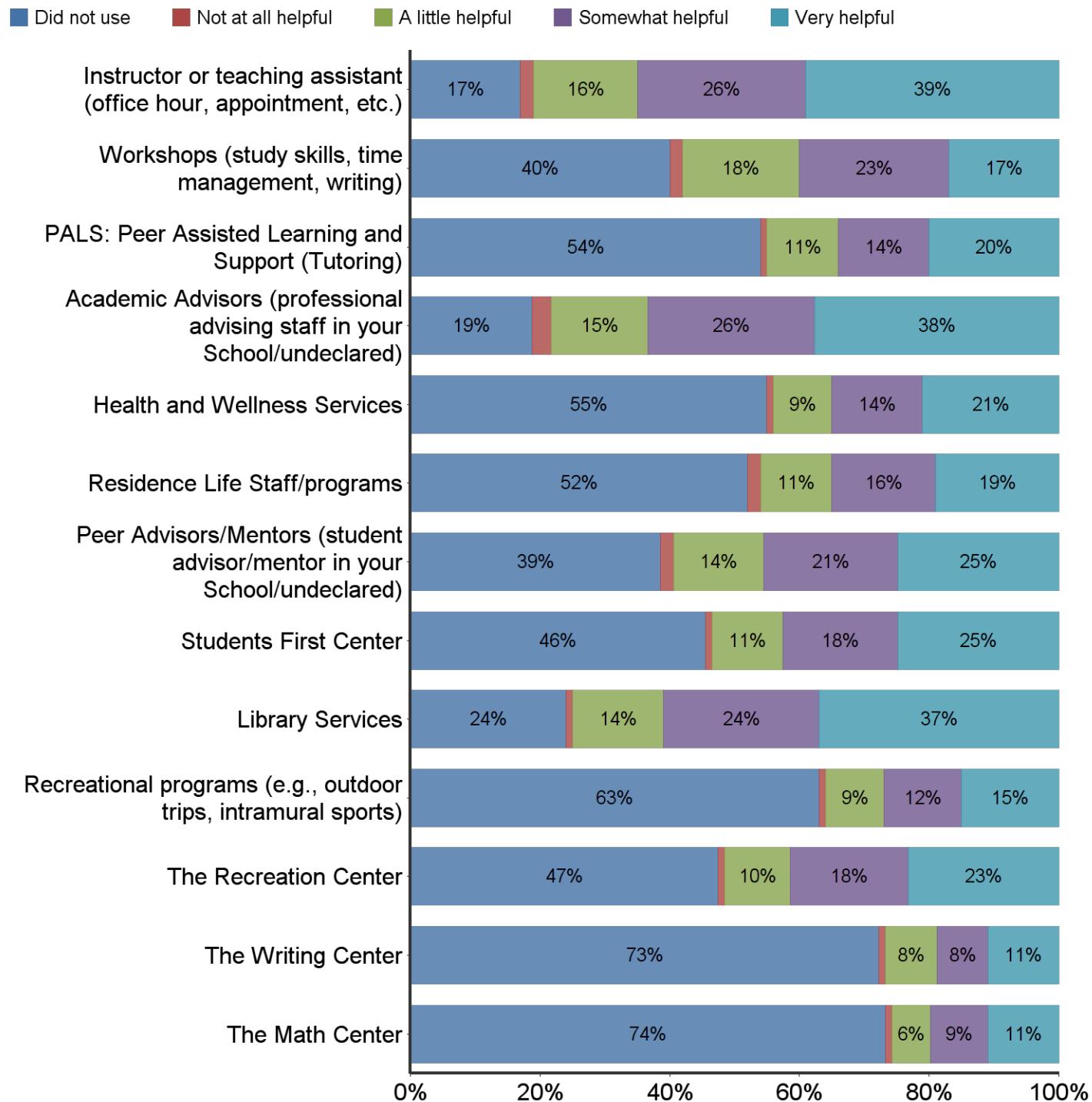


How likely are you to:**Note: This data is presented as a figure (percentages) on the previous page.**

#	Question	Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely	Response
1	Be satisfied with your first semester GPA at UC Merced	122	158	218	359	122	979
2	Change your major at UC Merced	393	178	201	104	101	977
3	Change your choice of career while at UC Merced	271	156	308	165	75	975
4	Participate in research activities with a faculty member at UC Merced	41	53	328	347	208	977
5	Participate in an internship at UC Merced	21	39	259	412	248	979
6	Take courses at UC Merced next summer	154	153	322	191	158	978
7	Transfer to another college before graduating	311	192	284	121	69	977
8	Leave UC Merced at the end of this semester	723	140	70	25	17	975
9	Leave UC Merced at the end of this academic year	674	147	90	42	20	973
10	Form close friendships with other UC Merced students	32	62	142	307	432	975
11	Form close friendships with UC Merced students that are not from the same racial or ethnic group as me	35	40	151	255	492	973

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.

Note: This data is presented as a table (counts/frequencies) on the next page.



¹³ 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.
Note: This data is presented as a figure (percentages) on the previous page.

#	Question	Did not use	Not at all helpful	A little helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	Response
1	Instructor or teaching assistant (office hour, appointment, etc.)	165	17	150	248	367	947
2	Workshops (study skills, time management, writing)	376	20	174	219	156	945
3	PALS: Peer Assisted Learning and Support (Tutoring)	509	13	105	131	185	943
7	Academic Advisors (professional advising staff in your School/undeclared)	179	26	142	243	356	946
10	Health and Wellness Services	517	13	87	133	195	945
11	Residence Life Staff/programs	493	16	101	154	180	944
13	Peer Advisors/Mentors (student advisor/mentor in your School/undeclared)	364	16	132	198	233	943
14	Students First Center	430	9	99	165	239	942
15	Library Services	229	6	132	229	345	941
16	Recreational programs (e.g., outdoor trips, intramural sports)	594	7	83	115	144	943
17	The Recreation Center	446	11	97	168	220	942
18	The Writing Center	686	7	73	72	104	942
20	The Math Center	696	10	58	81	100	945

Please list any other resources that have been helpful in your transition to UC Merced.

Note: n = 98 valid responses; however, some respondents listed more than one response such that there were more total responses than respondents. Numbers in parentheses indicate frequencies for responses given by more than one respondent. This table is static and cannot be filtered.

Resource	Frequency mentioned
Peers (friends, study groups, upperclassmates, mentors, room/housemate)	16
Bright Success Center (mentors, Fiat Lux, Gateway Scholars, PALS, undocumented student services)	13
Clubs and Organizations	10
Athletics (gym, sports team, SALA, OEP)	9
Residence Life (RA, floor activities)	6
DARTS	5
Office hours/TA	5
Coursework (Engineering Service Learning, USTU10)	4
No resources have been helpful	4
Campus outreach/information (Emails from campus and advisors, UCM website)	3
CAPS	3
Events to meet people (in and out of res halls)	3
General staff/faculty helpfulness	3
CARE	2
Career Center (CCPA)	2
Dining Center/Market Place	2
IT/IT Help Desk	2
Leadership programming (Bobcat Leadership Series, YLP)	2
Relaxed campus environment/city	2
STEM resource center	2
Summer Bridge Program	2
Advisors	1
Disability Services	1
Excel training	1
Game room	1
High School advisor	1
Lake Yosemite	1
Library	1
Music Room	1
Planner	1
Relaxation station	1
Students First Center	1
Writing Center	1

Which of the following describes your living situation?

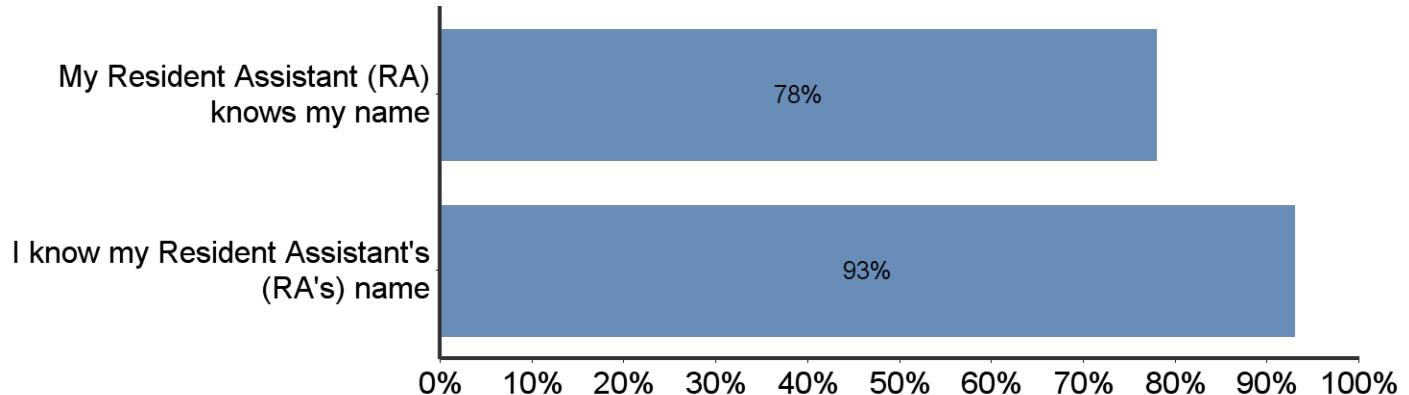
Note: Only respondents who live in campus sponsored housing could answer this question.

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	I live on campus in a residence hall		744	96%
2	I live off campus in a campus-sponsored apartment (i.e., Village Landing, Northwood Village, or Village Terrace)		30	4%
	Total		774	100%

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 respondents who live in campus sponsored housing could answer this question.

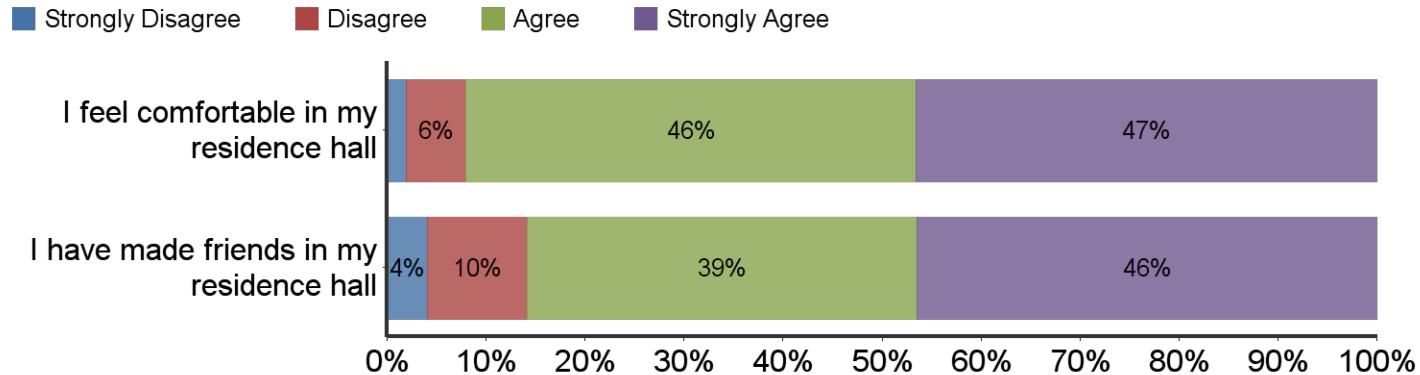
■ Yes



#	Question	No	Yes	Response
1	My Resident Assistant (RA) knows my name	177	612	789
2	I know my Resident Assistant's (RA's) name	52	737	789

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.

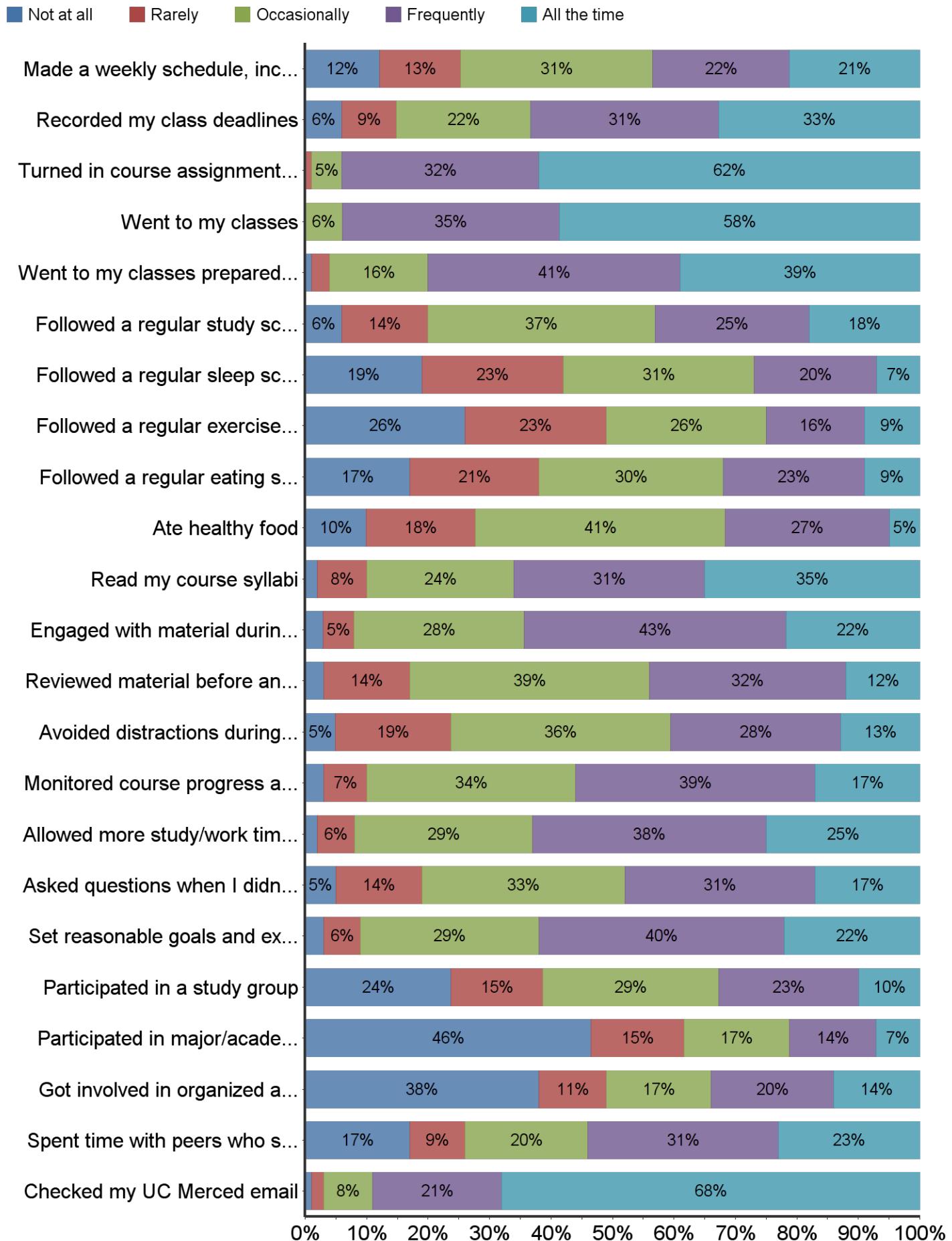
Note: Only respondents who live in campus sponsored housing could answer this question.



#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response
2	I feel comfortable in my residence hall	12	45	363	371	791
16	I have made friends in my residence hall	32	81	311	367	791

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

Note: This data is presented as a table (counts/frequencies) on the next page. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.

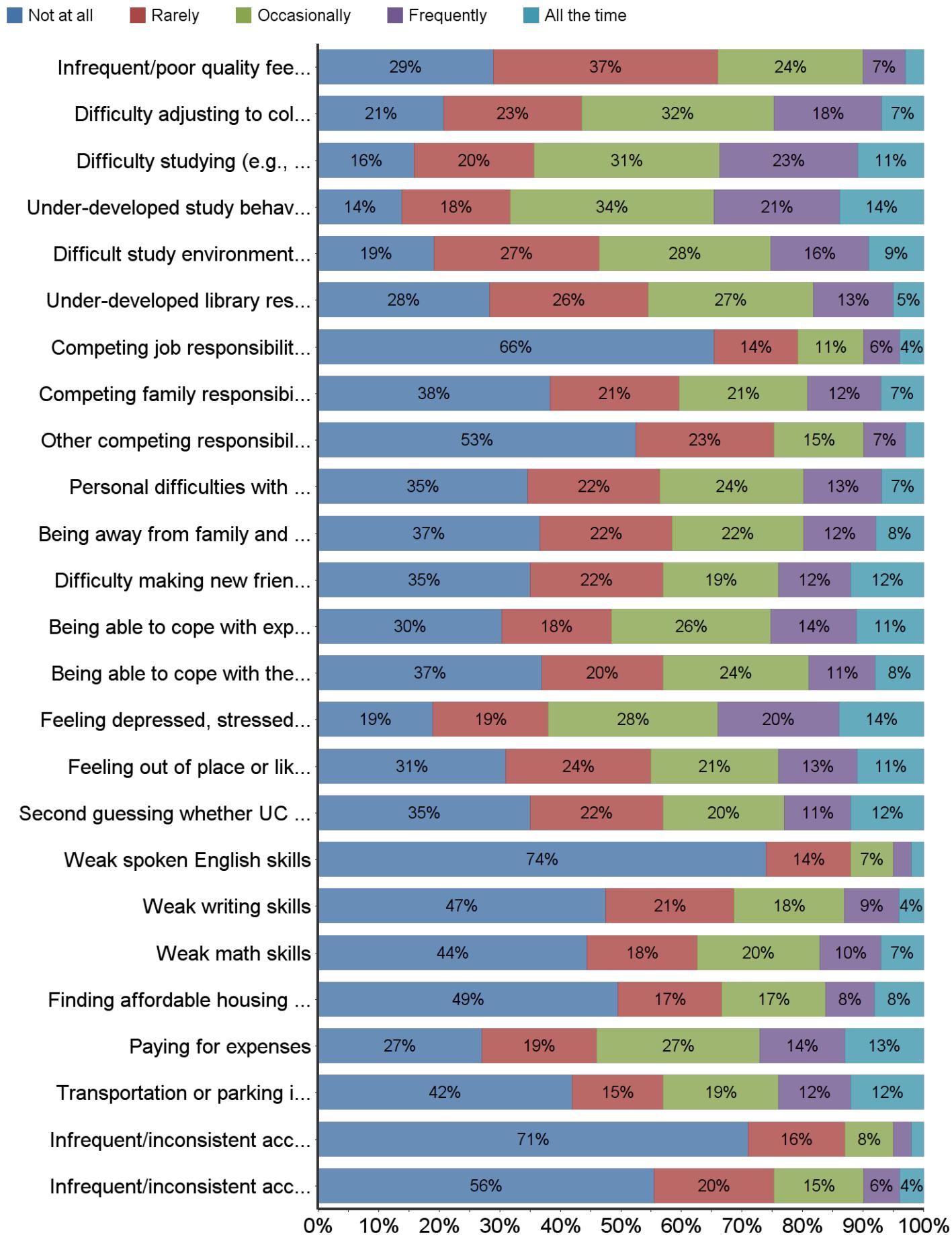


19 **How often have you done each of the following this semester?****Note: This data is presented as a figure (percentages) on the previous page.**

#	Question	Not at all	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	All the time	Response
1	Made a weekly schedule, including weekends, to help manage my time	112	121	288	208	196	925
2	Recorded my class deadlines	54	80	204	283	301	922
3	Turned in course assignments on time	4	5	46	293	576	924
4	Went to my classes	2	4	56	327	535	924
5	Went to my classes prepared (e.g., having read assignments)	6	30	147	381	359	923
6	Followed a regular study schedule	53	129	340	232	168	922
7	Followed a regular sleep schedule	174	215	284	183	68	924
8	Followed a regular exercise schedule	242	216	238	149	79	924
9	Followed a regular eating schedule	153	196	278	215	83	925
10	Ate healthy food	91	164	375	247	45	922
11	Read my course syllabi	20	73	219	283	324	919
12	Engaged with material during study sessions (i.e., I didn't just skim)	25	48	255	393	202	923
13	Reviewed material before and after class	31	126	359	296	112	924
14	Avoided distractions during study sessions (e.g., texting friends, checking Facebook)	42	174	330	258	116	920
15	Monitored course progress and made changes when needed	29	63	317	357	157	923
16	Allowed more study/work time for difficult classes and assignments	21	60	268	348	227	924
17	Asked questions when I didn't understand something	48	130	304	286	156	924
18	Set reasonable goals and expectations for myself	32	52	271	366	200	921
19	Participated in a study group	219	137	266	211	90	923
20	Participated in major/academic-related clubs, organizations, or activities	420	142	159	133	68	922
21	Got involved in organized activities outside the classroom (e.g., athletics, clubs, work)	351	105	156	183	129	924
22	Spent time with peers who support my academic success	154	82	189	283	214	922
23	Checked my UC Merced email	6	22	76	191	628	923

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

Note: This data is presented as a table (counts/frequencies) on the next page. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.

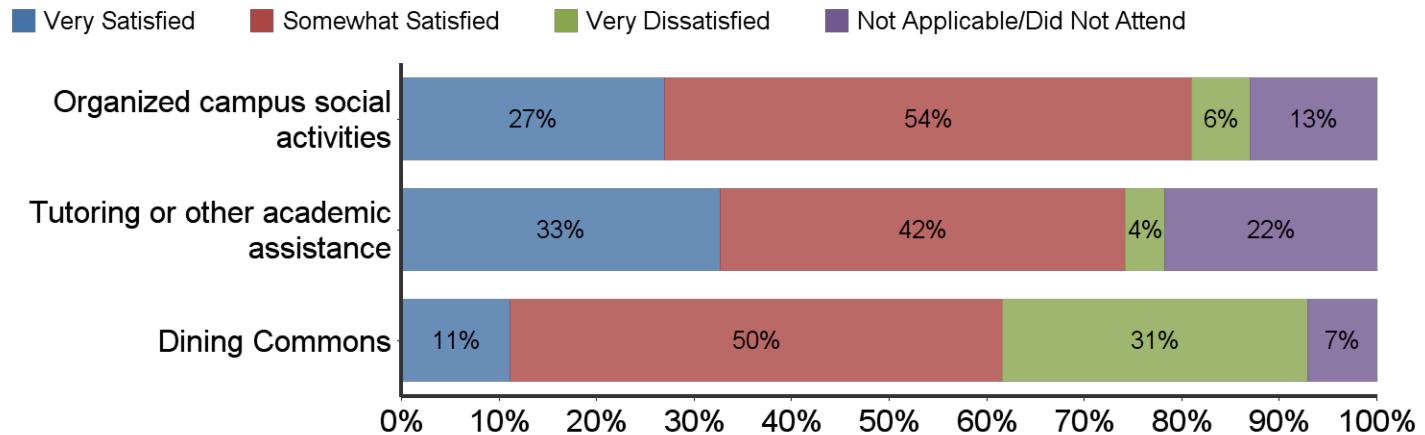


During your first semester at UC Merced, how often have each of the following been obstacles to your school work or academic success?

Note: This data is presented as a figure (percentages) on the previous page.

#	Question	Not at all	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	All the time	Response
1	Infrequent/poor quality feedback from instructors	263	326	212	64	27	892
2	Difficulty adjusting to college-level work (e.g., coursework, exams, papers)	188	204	282	158	60	892
3	Difficulty studying (e.g., knowing how to start, how to get help, organize material)	141	179	277	201	94	892
4	Under-developed study behaviors (e.g., wait until last minute, easily distracted, too much social time, too much web surfing)	125	156	299	189	121	890
5	Difficult study environment (e.g., noisy roommate, poor Internet access, inadequate computer/software)	173	244	251	143	79	890
6	Under-developed library research skills	249	233	245	116	49	892
7	Competing job responsibilities (i.e., paid employment)	580	121	95	54	35	885
8	Competing family responsibilities	339	190	189	106	65	889
9	Other competing responsibilities (e.g., athletics, clubs, internship)	471	200	131	61	25	888
10	Personal difficulties with family, intimate relationships, or friends	307	193	211	112	66	889
11	Being away from family and friends: being "homesick"	325	192	191	107	73	888
12	Difficulty making new friends at UC Merced	309	195	173	106	106	889
13	Being able to cope with expectations of parents and family	267	163	234	121	101	886
14	Being able to cope with the values and expectations of friends when they differ from your own	331	178	212	96	73	890
15	Feeling depressed, stressed, or upset	167	168	249	178	128	890
16	Feeling out of place or like you just don't fit on campus	274	213	188	118	97	890
17	Second guessing whether UC Merced was the right choice for you	312	196	174	97	109	888
18	Weak spoken English skills	653	123	65	25	22	888
19	Weak writing skills	421	186	163	80	39	889
20	Weak math skills	392	162	181	87	63	885
21	Finding affordable housing while a student at UC Merced	435	152	153	72	73	885
22	Paying for expenses	239	171	237	128	116	891
23	Transportation or parking issues	373	135	165	108	109	890
24	Infrequent/inconsistent access to a computer	632	143	71	23	22	891
25	Infrequent/inconsistent access to the Internet/web	496	174	132	51	38	891

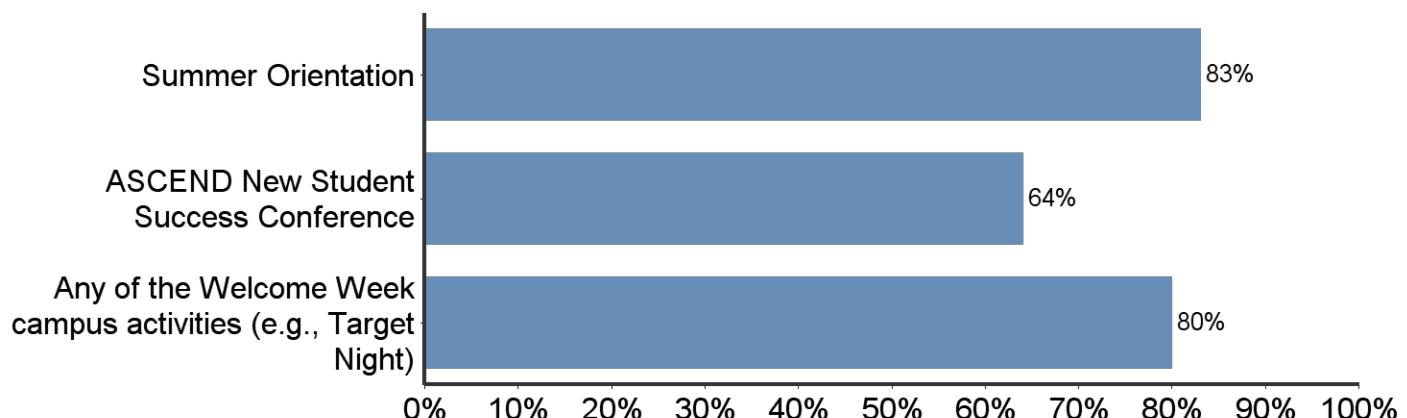
How satisfied are you so far with the following at UC Merced?



#	Question	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Applicable/Did Not Attend	Response
1	Organized campus social activities	245	479	53	115	892
2	Tutoring or other academic assistance	290	373	32	197	892
3	Dining Commons	98	446	279	66	889

Did you attend the following welcome and social activities at UC Merced?

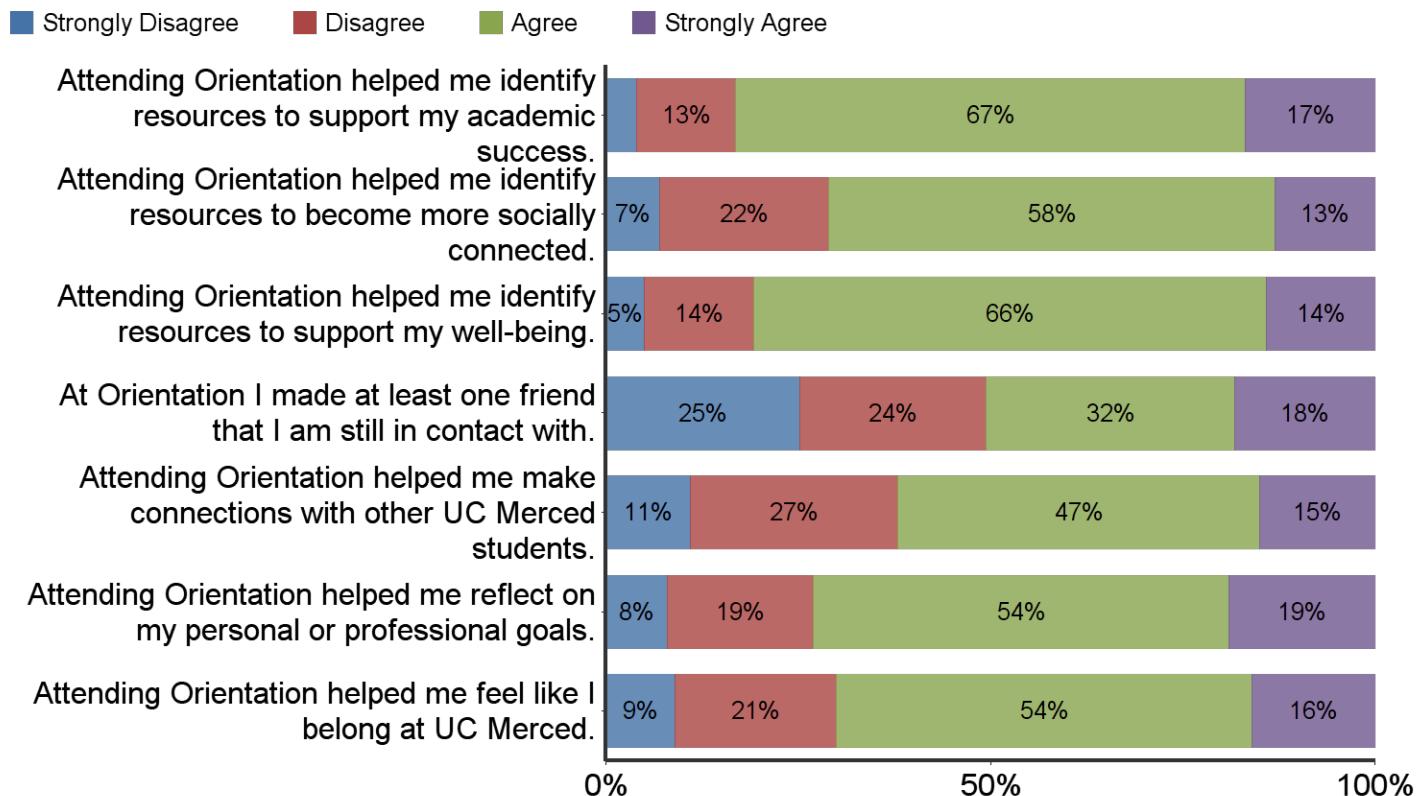
■ Yes



#	Question	No	Yes	Response
1	Summer Orientation	153	741	894
2	ASCEND New Student Success Conference	320	569	889
3	Any of the Welcome Week campus activities (e.g., Target Night)	178	716	894

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about Summer Orientation?

Note: Only respondents who said they attended Orientation could answer this question.



#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response
1	Attending Orientation helped me identify resources to support my academic success.	29	94	490	123	736
2	Attending Orientation helped me identify resources to become more socially connected.	50	160	429	97	736
3	Attending Orientation helped me identify resources to support my well-being.	38	105	485	105	733
4	At Orientation I made at least one friend that I am still in contact with.	187	175	238	135	735
5	Attending Orientation helped me make connections with other UC Merced students.	79	200	346	109	734
7	Attending Orientation helped me reflect on my personal or professional goals.	58	141	396	137	732
8	Attending Orientation helped me feel like I belong at UC Merced.	63	156	398	117	734

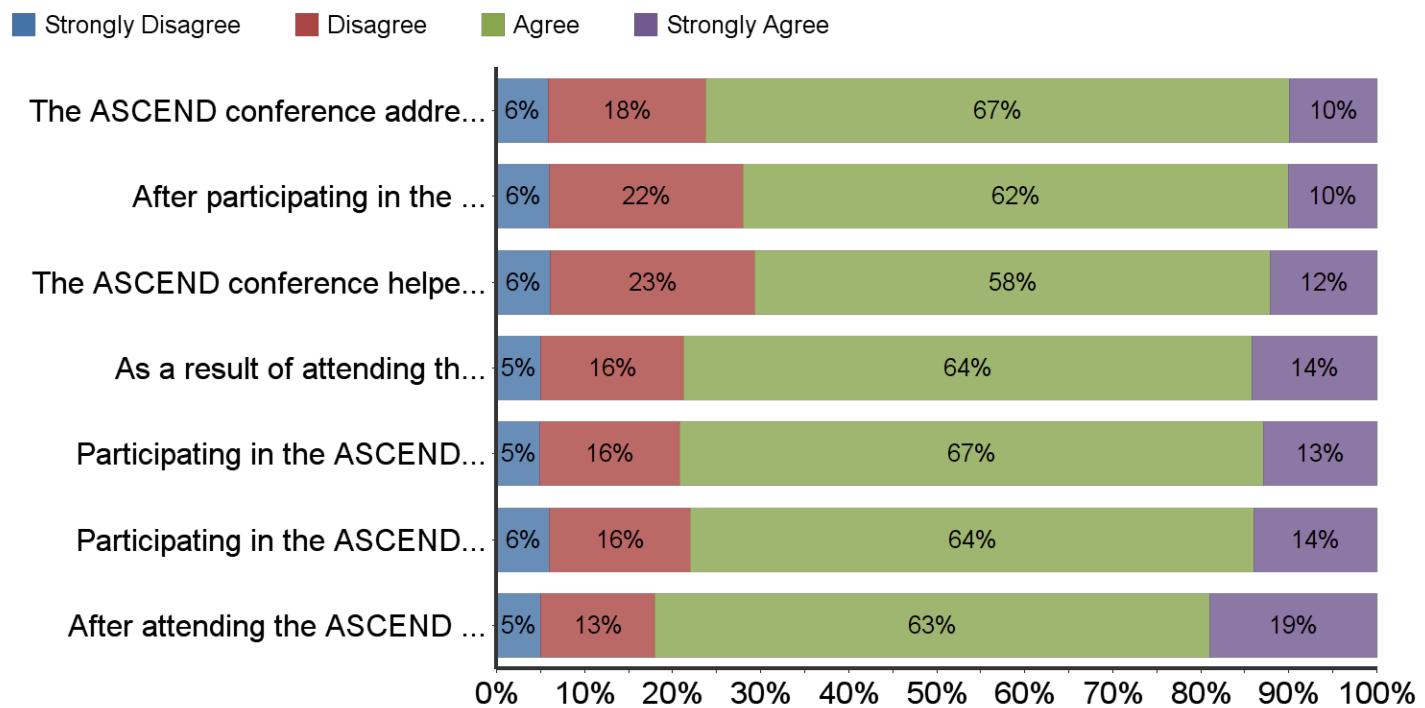
Think back to a personal or professional goal you reflected on at Orientation. Have you made progress toward achieving this goal?

Note: Only respondents who attended Orientation and agreed (agree or strongly agree) that it helped them reflect on personal/professional goals could answer this question.

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
2	No, no progress yet		37	7%
3	Yes, a little progress		359	68%
4	Yes, a lot of progress		41	8%
1	I'm not sure		94	18%
	Total		531	100%

26 To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the ASCEND New Student Success Conference.

Note: Only respondents who said they attended ASCEND 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.



#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response
1	The ASCEND conference addressed questions I had about UC Merced.	32	97	372	53	554
2	After participating in the ASCEND conference, I felt more prepared to begin classes at UC Merced.	35	122	342	55	554
3	The ASCEND conference helped increase my confidence about connecting with UC Merced personnel (e.g. staff, faculty, TAs).	35	129	321	69	554
4	As a result of attending the ASCEND conference, I know how to access the campus resources (e.g. tutoring, financial aid, job search) available to support my success at UC Merced.	30	91	356	77	554
5	Participating in the ASCEND conference helped me identify specific actions I could take to be academically successful.	26	87	370	70	553
6	Participating in the ASCEND conference helped me understand how personal choices and decisions can impact both the individual and the community.	34	90	352	78	554
7	After attending the ASCEND conference, I better understand the academic expectations of UC Merced.	25	74	349	104	552

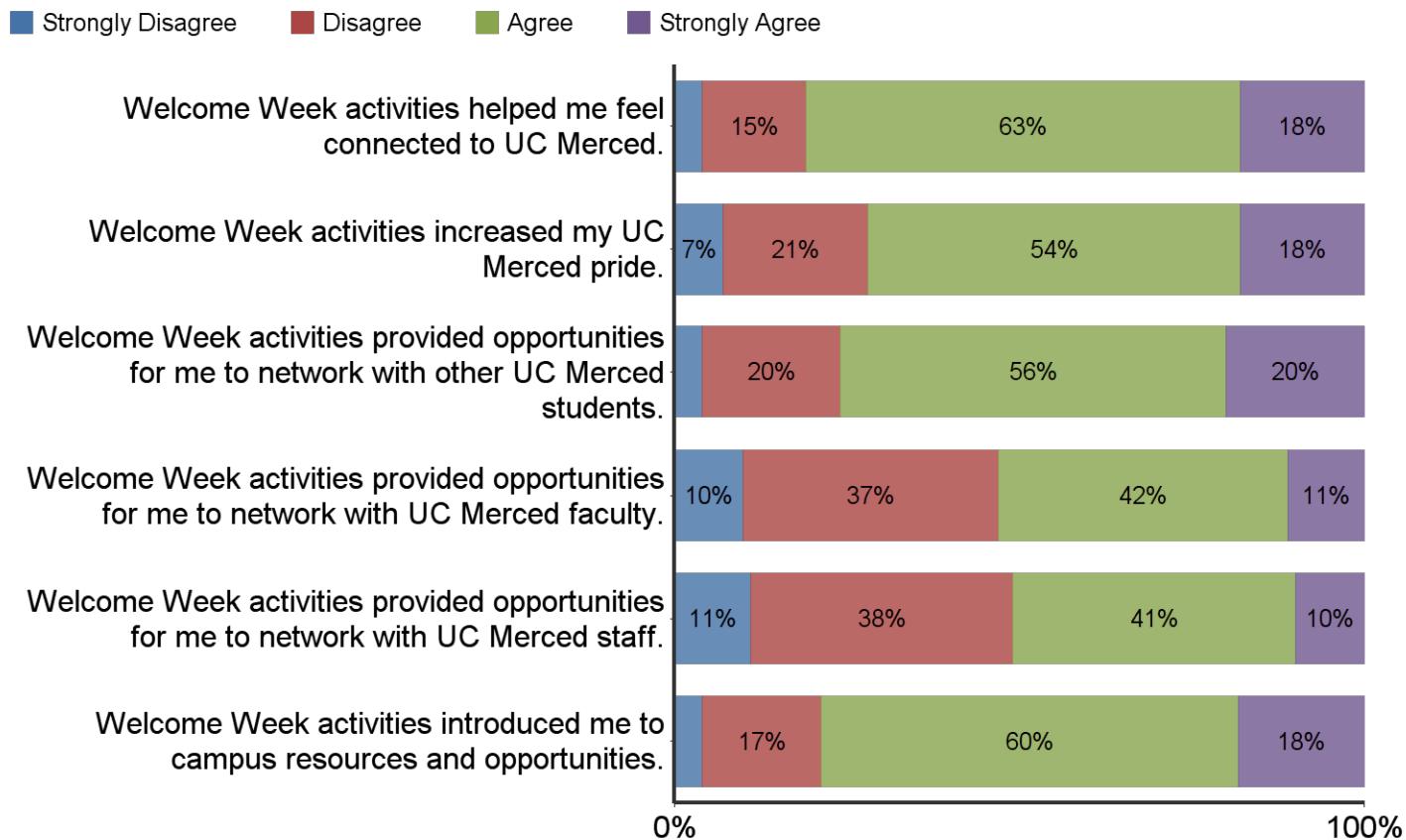
How many Welcome Week events did you attend (e.g., Target Night)?

Note: Only respondents who said they attended any Welcome Week event(s) could answer this question.

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Not sure		94	13%
3	1-3 events		412	58%
4	4-6 events		181	26%
5	7 or more events		21	3%
	Total		708	100%

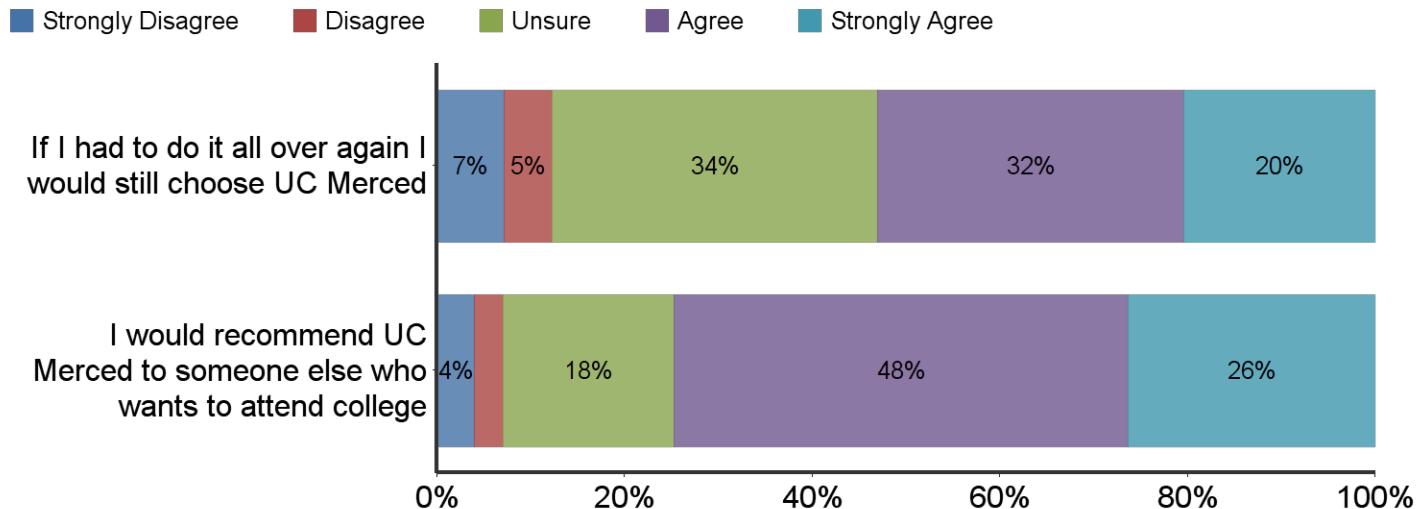
To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the Welcome Week campus activities you attended?

Note: Only respondents who said they attended any Welcome Week event(s) could answer this question.



#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response
1	Welcome Week activities helped me feel connected to UC Merced.	27	107	448	125	707
2	Welcome Week activities increased my UC Merced pride.	46	147	385	129	707
3	Welcome Week activities provided opportunities for me to network with other UC Merced students.	25	143	395	144	707
4	Welcome Week activities provided opportunities for me to network with UC Merced faculty.	72	258	298	76	704
5	Welcome Week activities provided opportunities for me to network with UC Merced staff.	77	266	291	70	704
6	Welcome Week activities introduced me to campus resources and opportunities.	31	120	423	129	703

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?



#	Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Response
1	If I had to do it all over again I would still choose UC Merced	65	48	304	287	181	885
2	I would recommend UC Merced to someone else who wants to attend college	37	26	160	427	234	884