



## Institutional Research and Decision Support

### 2018 New Student Survey Report - All Students

Prepared by Institutional Research and Decision Support

Last Updated: December 14, 2018

**Administration:** The survey was administered between October 21, 2018 and November 19, 2018 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](http://irds.ucmerced.edu/new_student_survey.html)).

**Response Rate:** Of the 2408 students invited to complete the survey, 933 (39%) 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 one exception - females were more likely to respond than males.

#### 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 2408 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 933 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
Entering Level					
Transfer Students	191	8%	72	9%	38%
Students Who Entered as Freshmen/Frosh	2217	92%	861	92%	39%
Gender					
Female	1293	54%	560	60%	43%
Male	1103	46%	371	40%	34%
Unknown	12	<1%	2	<1%	2%
Race/Ethnicity					
International	162	7%	66	7%	41%
Hispanic	1379	57%	542	58%	39%
African American	98	4%	30	3%	31%
American Indian	5	<1%	2	<1%	40%
Asian	447	19%	162	17%	36%
Pacific Islander	8	<1%	4	<1%	50%
White	209	9%	88	9%	42%
Multi-racial	87	4%	36	4%	41%
Unknown	13	1%	3	<1%	23%

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

Table 2. Student Demographics and Schools

	# Invited (of 2408 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 933 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
First Generation Status					
First Generation	1759	73%	691	74%	39%
Non-First Generation	649	27%	242	26%	37%
Pell Eligibility Status					
Pell Grant Eligible	1527	63%	597	64%	39%
Non-Pell Grant Eligible	881	37%	336	36%	38%
First Language					
English Only as First Language	656	27%	263	28%	40%
English and Other Language or Other Language Only as First Language	1752	73%	670	71%	38%
Unknown	0	0%	0	0%	-
School					
Engineering	696	29%	262	28%	38%
Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts (SSHA)	845	35%	359	38%	42%
Natural Sciences	682	28%	251	27%	37%
Undeclared	185	8%	61	7%	33%

% 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 2408 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 933 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
ANTH – Anthropology	16	1%	9	1%	56%
BENG – Bioengineering	63	3%	22	2%	35%
BIOS – Biological Sciences	513	21%	182	20%	35%
CHEM – Chemical Sciences	72	3%	26	3%	36%
COGS – Cognitive Science	35	1%	16	2%	46%
CRES – Critical Race & Ethnic Studies	11	<1%	2	<1%	18%
CSE – Computer Science & Engineering	318	13%	118	13%	37%
ECON – Economics	24	1%	13	1%	54%
ENG – English	31	1%	19	2%	61%
ENVE – Environmental Engineering	25	1%	14	2%	56%
ESS – Earth Systems Science	11	<1%	7	1%	64%
GASP – Global Arts Studies	11	<1%	1	<1%	9%
HIST – History	21	1%	8	1%	38%
MATH – Mathematical Sciences	46	2%	18	2%	39%
MBE – Management & Business Economics	133	6%	46	5%	35%

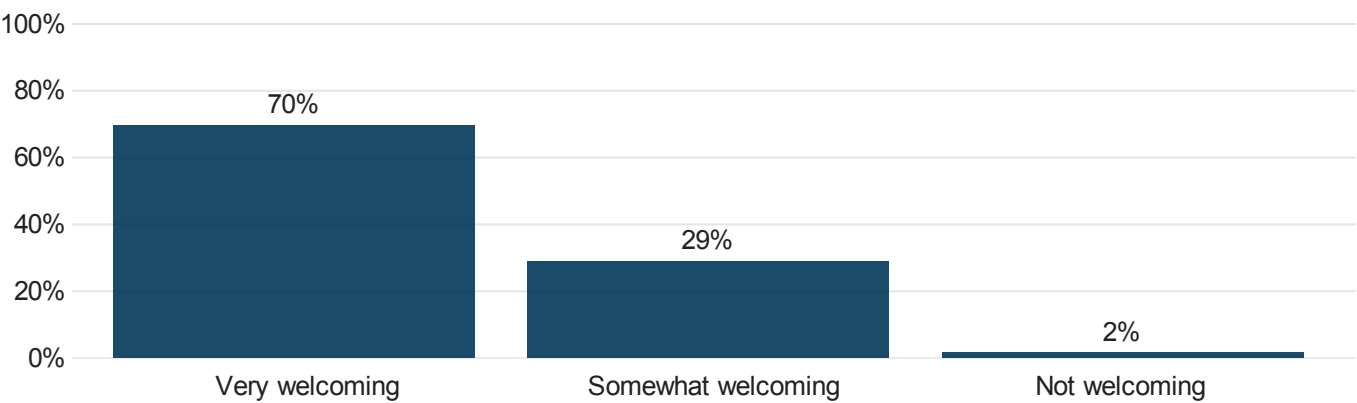
% values may not sum to 100 for a particular characteristic due to rounding error

Table 3. Student Majors (continued)

Student Characteristic	# Invited (of 2408 total)	% Invited	# Responded (of 933 total)	% Responded	Response Rate (# responded/# invited)
ME – Mechanical Engineering	220	9%	88	9%	40%
MSE – Materials Science & Engineering	6	<1%	0	0%	0%
PH – Public Health	55	2%	25	3%	45%
PHYS – Physics	14	1%	6	1%	43%
POLI – Political Science	113	5%	43	5%	38%
PSY – Psychology	249	10%	113	12%	45%
SOC – Sociology	81	3%	37	4%	47%
SPAN – Spanish	16	1%	8	1%	50%
UENG – Undeclared Engineering	64	3%	20	2%	31%
UNS – Undeclared Natural Sciences	26	1%	12	1%	46%
USHA – Undeclared SSHA	49	2%	19	2%	39%
0000 - Undeclared	185	8%	61	7%	33%

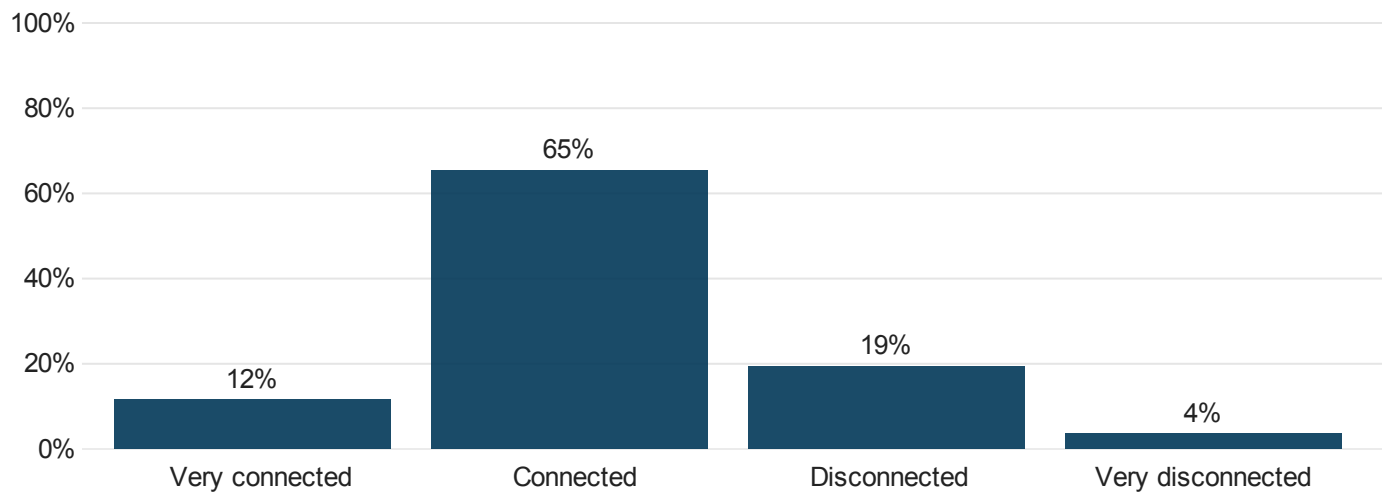
% values may not sum to 100 for a particular characteristic due to rounding error

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



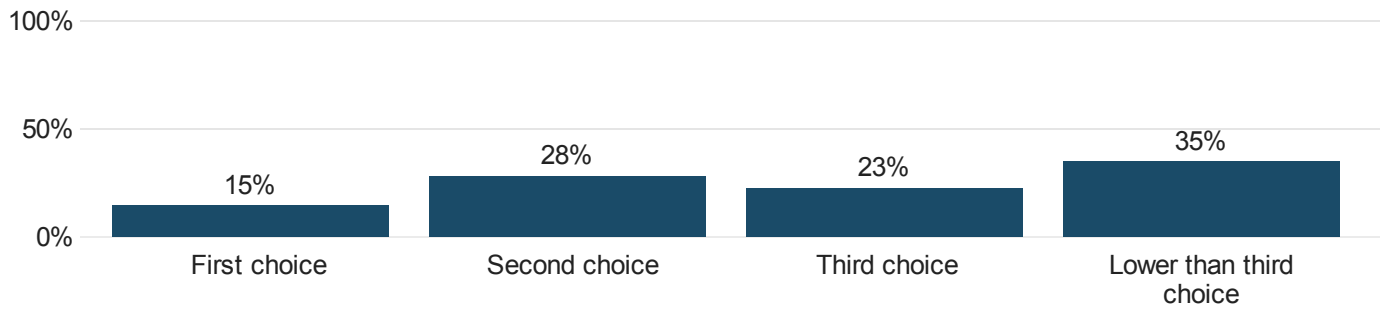
Field	Choice Count
Very welcoming	648
Somewhat welcoming	269
Not welcoming	15
Total	932

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



Field	Choice Count
Very connected	109
Connected	609
Disconnected	180
Very disconnected	33
Total	931

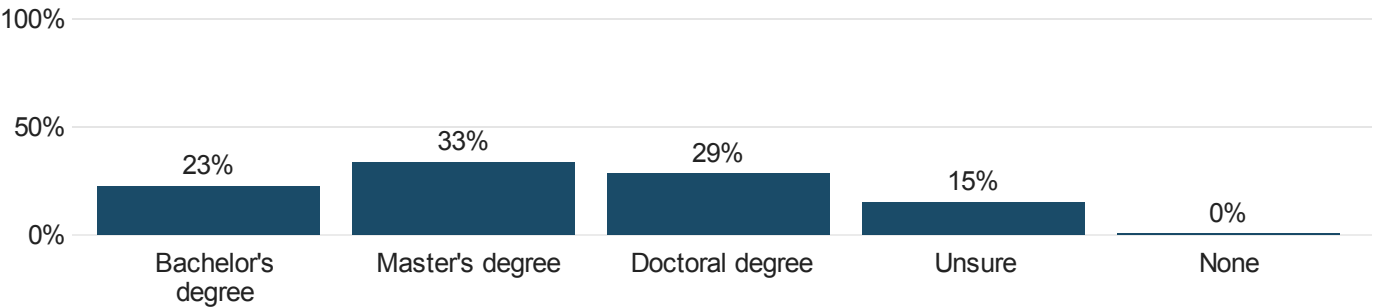
## When you applied to colleges, was UC Merced your:



Field	Choice Count
First choice	137
Second choice	259
Third choice	210
Lower than third choice	324
Total	930



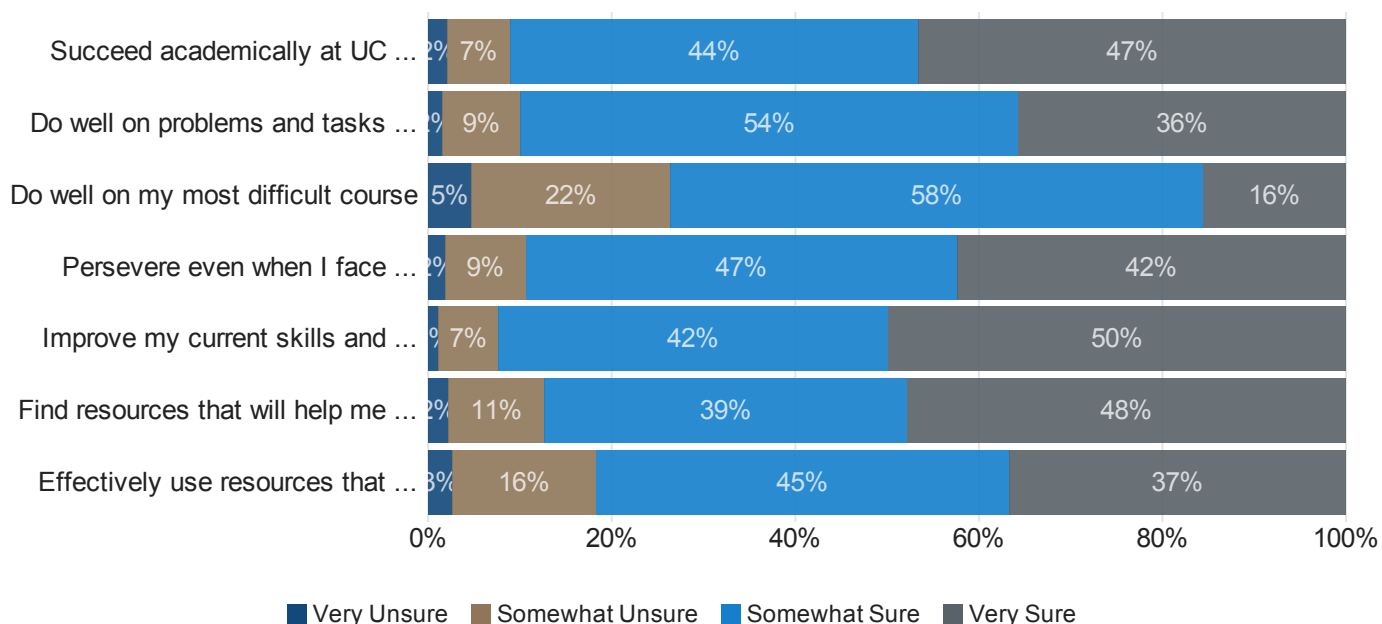
# What is the highest degree you intend to eventually obtain?



Field	Choice Count
Bachelor's degree	211
Master's degree	311
Doctoral degree	267
Unsure	142
None	0
Total	931

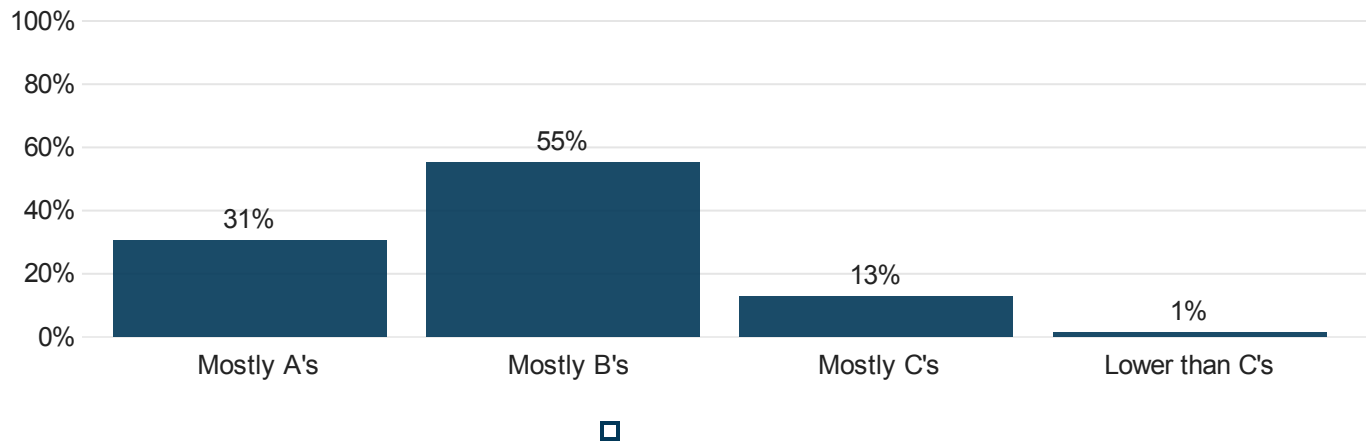
<sup>10</sup> How sure are you that you can do each of the following:

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.



Field	Very Unsure	Somewhat Unsure	Somewhat Sure	Very Sure	Total
Succeed academically at UC Merced	19	63	407	426	915
Do well on problems and tasks assigned in my courses	14	78	495	326	913
Do well on my most difficult course	43	198	529	142	912
Persevere even when I face academic challenges and obstacles	17	80	428	386	911
Improve my current skills and abilities	10	60	388	456	914
Find resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	20	96	361	437	914
Effectively use resources that will help me overcome academic challenges and obstacles (e.g., tutors, instructors, advisors)	24	143	411	335	913

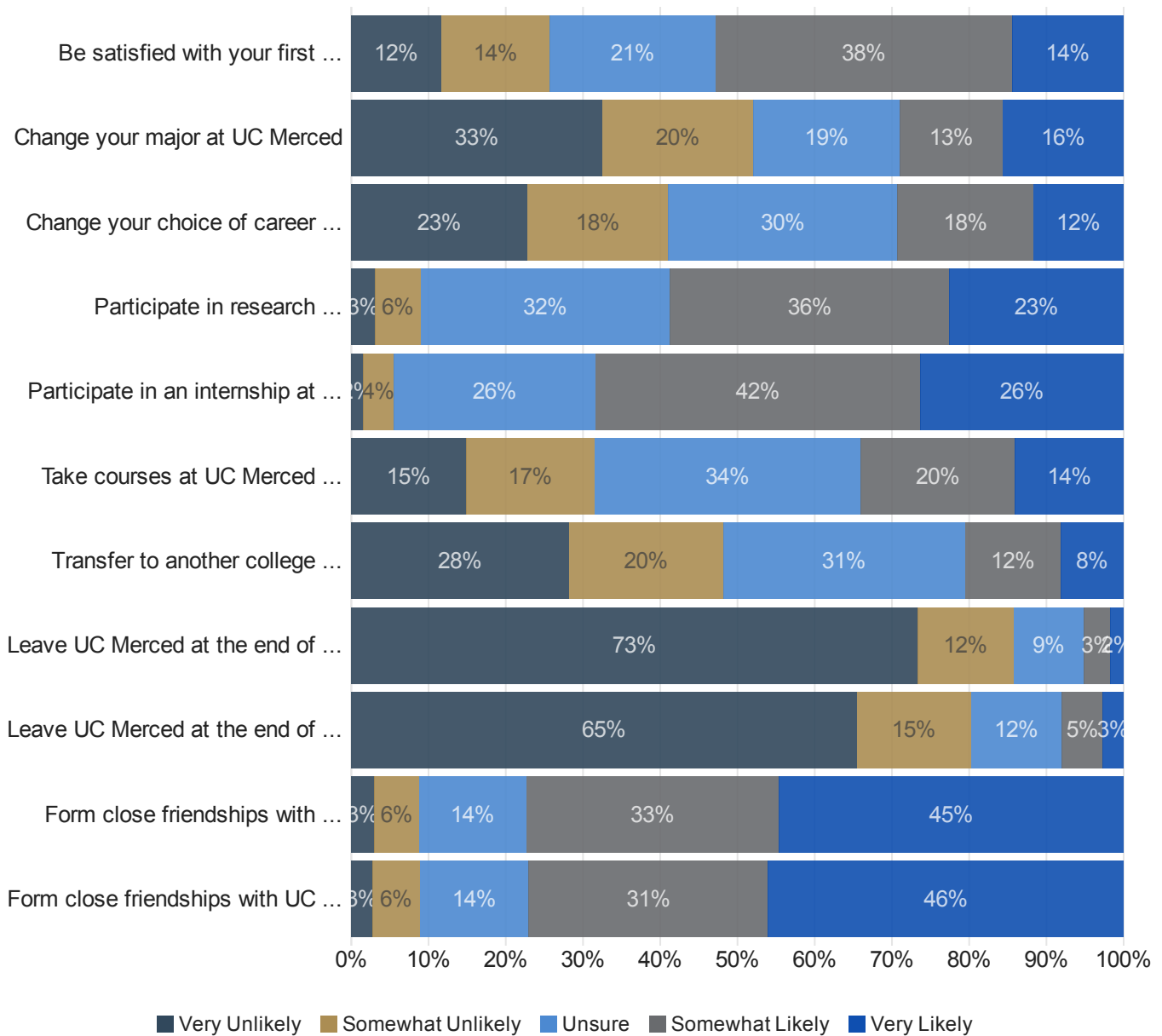
## What do you think your final course grades will be this semester?



Field	Choice Count
Mostly A's	275
Mostly B's	495
Mostly C's	114
Lower than C's	13
Total	897

## 12 How likely are you to:

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.



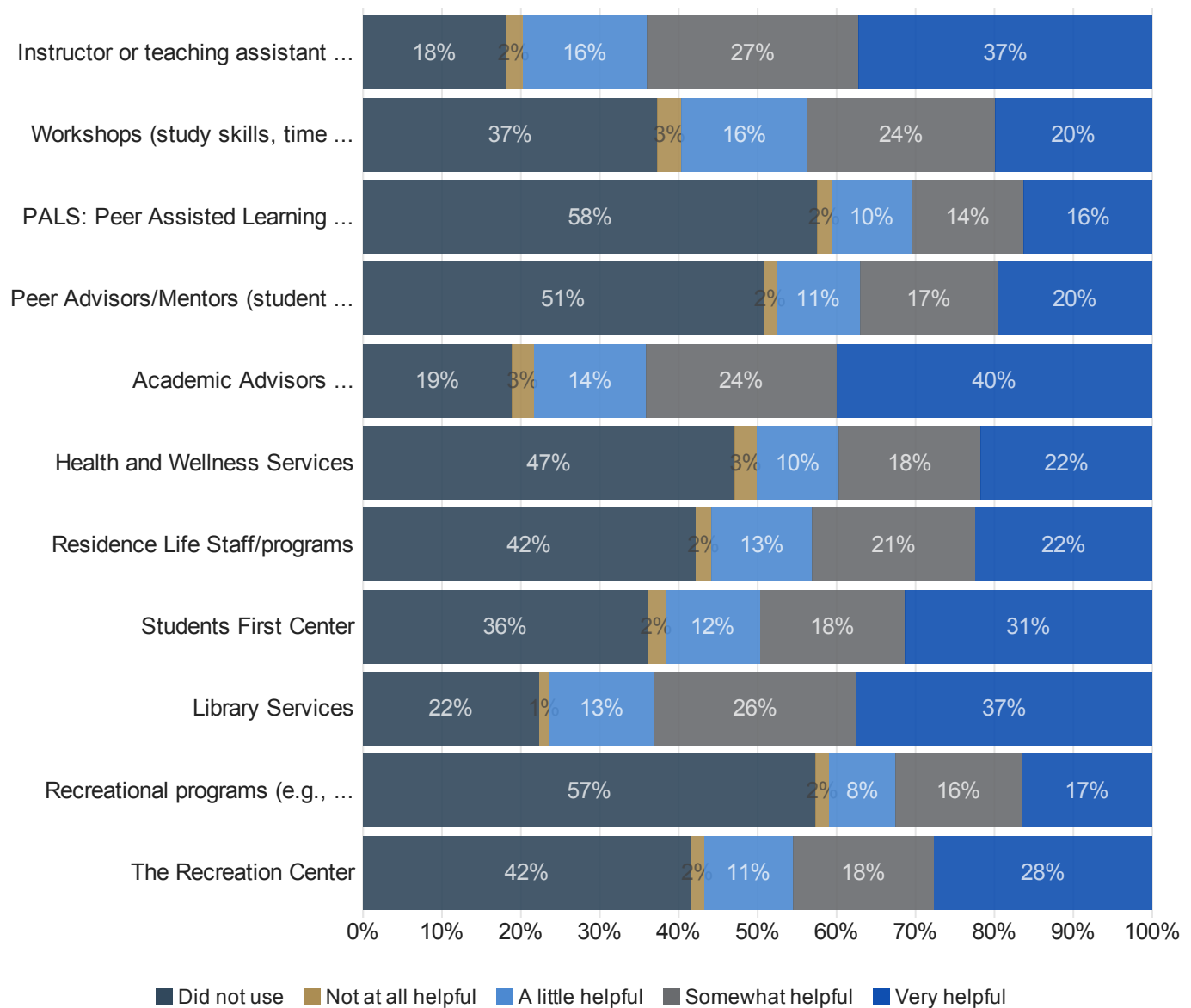
<sup>13</sup> **How likely are you to:**

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

Field	Very Unlikely	Somewhat Unlikely	Unsure	Somewhat Likely	Very Likely	Total
Be satisfied with your first semester GPA at UC Merced	105	127	193	346	130	901
Change your major at UC Merced	293	176	171	120	141	901
Change your choice of career while at UC Merced	205	164	267	158	105	899
Participate in research activities with a faculty member at UC Merced	28	53	291	326	203	901
Participate in an internship at UC Merced	14	36	235	379	237	901
Take courses at UC Merced next summer	134	149	310	180	126	899
Transfer to another college before graduating	254	180	282	112	73	901
Leave UC Merced at the end of this semester	658	111	82	31	15	897
Leave UC Merced at the end of this academic year	590	133	106	48	24	901
Form close friendships with other UC Merced students	27	52	125	295	402	901
Form close friendships with UC Merced students that are not from the same racial or ethnic group as me	25	55	127	279	414	900

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



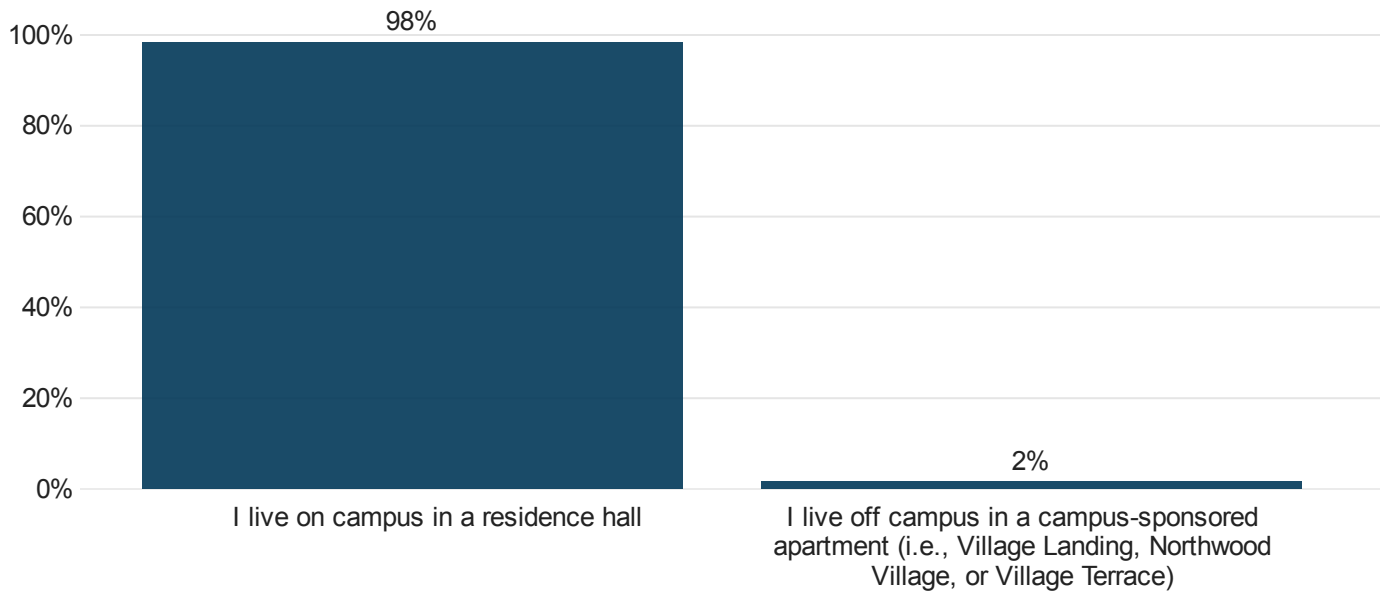
For each UC Merced campus resource below, please let us know how helpful that resource has been in your transition to UC Merced. Select "did not use" if you didn't use a resource.

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

Field	Did not use	Not at all helpful	A little helpful	Somewhat helpful	Very helpful	Total
Instructor or teaching assistant (office hour, appointment, etc.)	159	19	139	236	327	880
Workshops (study skills, time management, writing)	328	27	140	209	175	879
PALS: Peer Assisted Learning and Support (Tutoring)	506	16	89	125	143	879
Peer Advisors/Mentors (student advisor/mentor in your School)	446	14	93	153	172	878
Academic Advisors (professional advising staff in your School/Bobcat Advising Center)	166	24	125	212	351	878
Health and Wellness Services	413	24	91	158	190	876
Residence Life Staff/programs	370	18	112	181	197	878
Students First Center	314	20	104	160	273	871
Library Services	196	11	117	225	329	878
Recreational programs (e.g., outdoor trips, intramural sports)	503	15	74	140	145	877
The Recreation Center	365	15	99	157	243	879

## Which of the following describes your living situation?

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





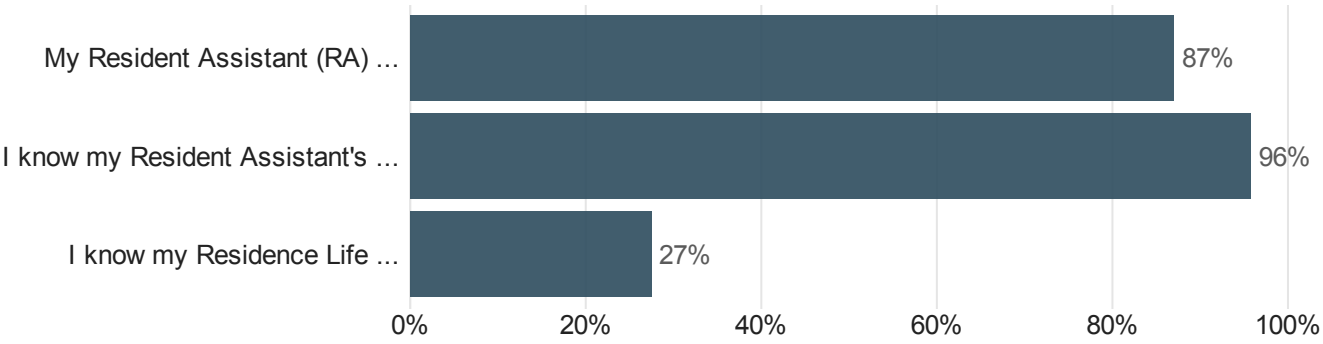
17 Which of the following describes your living situation?

Note: Only respondents who live in campus sponsored housing could answer this question. This data is presented as a figure (percentages) on the previous page.

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)	12
Total	694

18 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.

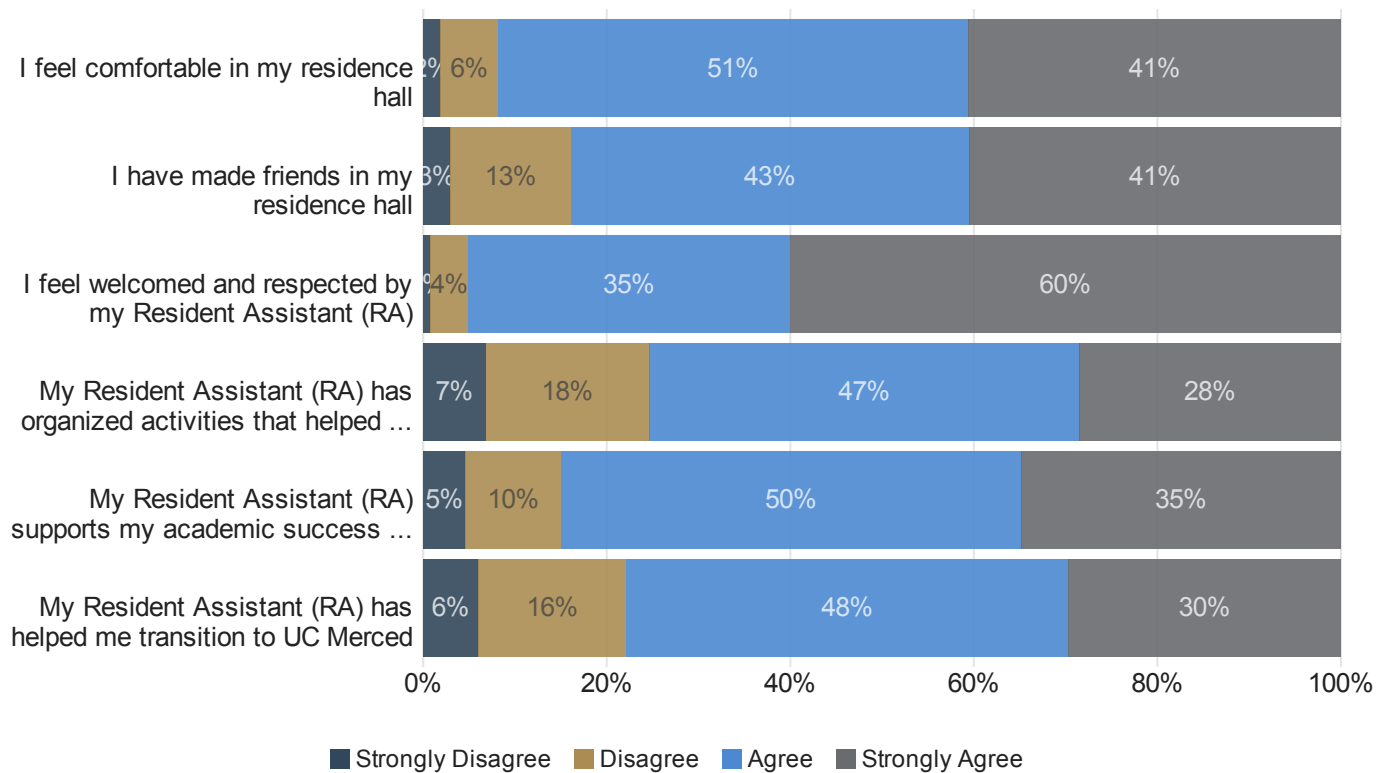
Note: Only respondents who live in campus sponsored housing could answer this question. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



Field	No	Yes	Total
My Resident Assistant (RA) knows my name	95	637	732
I know my Resident Assistant's (RA's) name	31	702	733
I know my Residence Life Coordinator's name	531	201	732

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of 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.

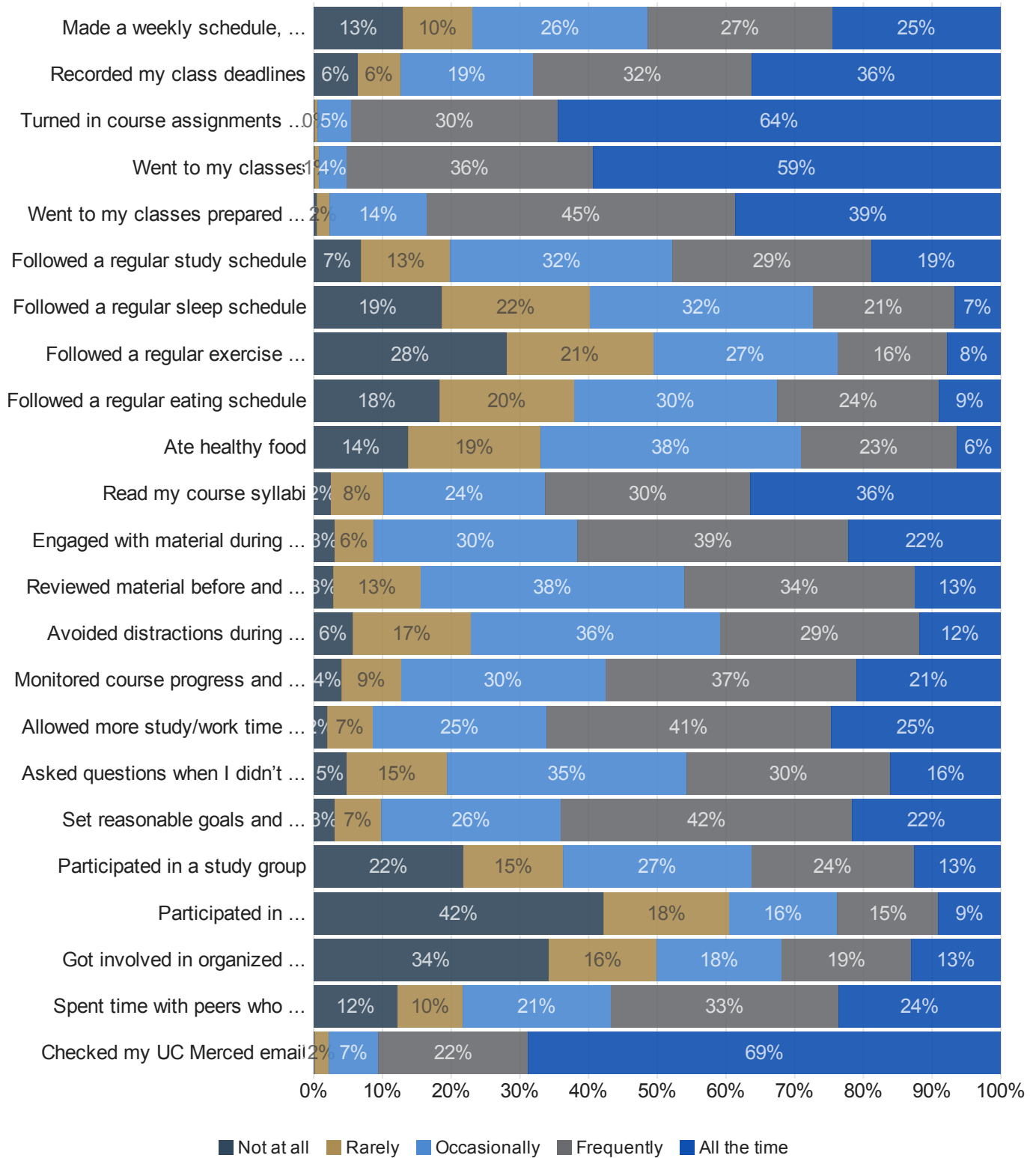
Note: Only respondents who live in campus sponsored housing could answer this question.



Field	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
I feel comfortable in my residence hall	14	46	376	298	734
I have made friends in my residence hall	22	96	318	297	733
I feel welcomed and respected by my Resident Assistant (RA)	6	30	257	440	733
My Resident Assistant (RA) has organized activities that helped me get to know other students	50	131	344	209	734
My Resident Assistant (RA) supports my academic success (e.g., shares resources/advice)	34	76	367	255	732
My Resident Assistant (RA) has helped me transition to UC Merced	44	118	353	217	732

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

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.



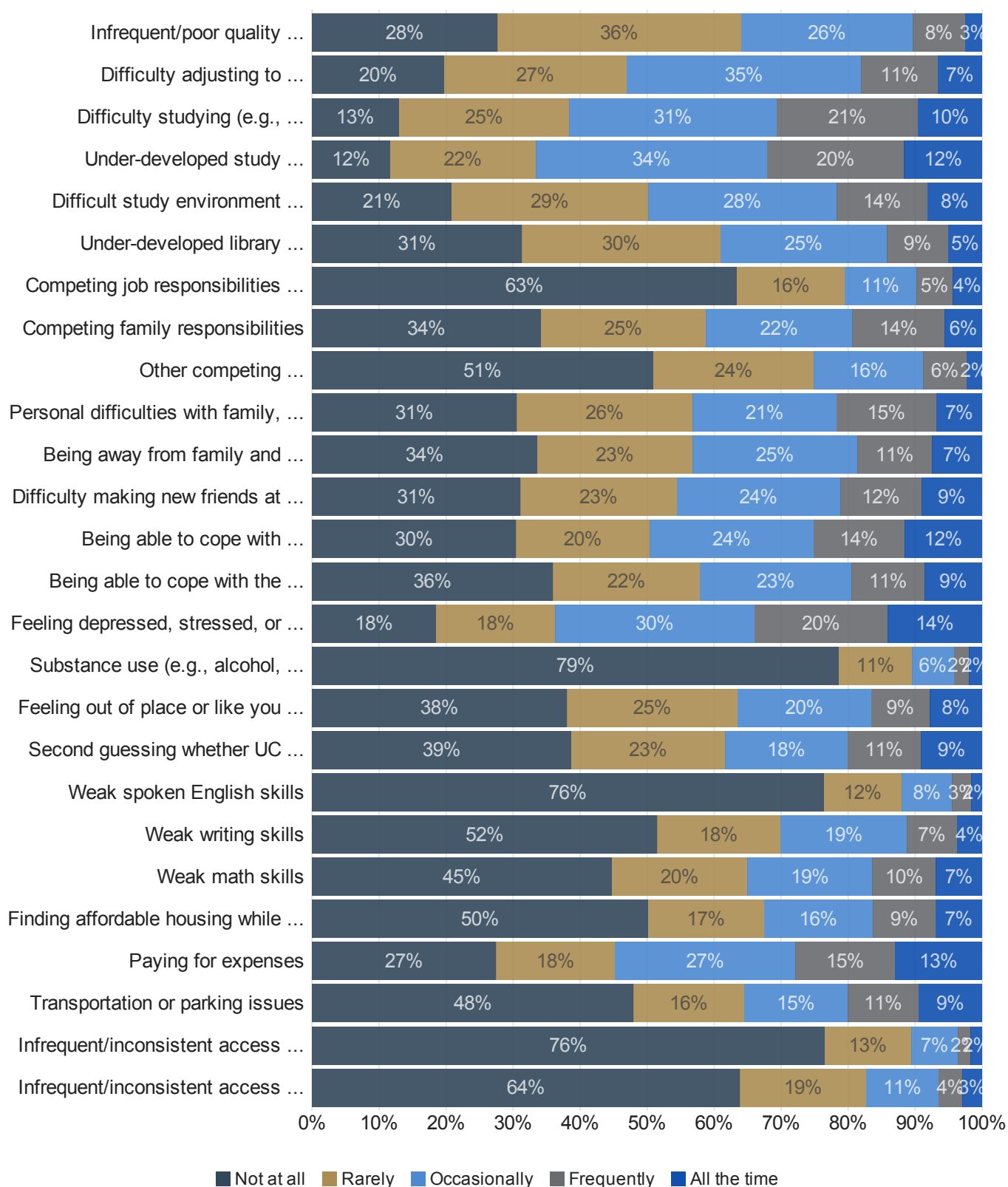
# How often have you done each of the following this semester?

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

Field	Not at all	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	All the time	Total
Made a weekly schedule, including weekends, to help manage my time	112	87	220	231	211	861
Recorded my class deadlines	55	54	166	275	312	862
Turned in course assignments on time	1	4	42	259	555	861
Went to my classes	1	6	34	308	510	859
Went to my classes prepared (e.g., having read assignments)	4	16	122	387	333	862
Followed a regular study schedule	59	112	278	249	161	859
Followed a regular sleep schedule	161	186	280	178	58	863
Followed a regular exercise schedule	242	184	231	138	67	862
Followed a regular eating schedule	158	168	255	203	77	861
Ate healthy food	118	166	325	195	55	859
Read my course syllabi	21	66	202	256	312	857
Engaged with material during study sessions (i.e., I didn't just skim)	26	49	255	339	190	859
Reviewed material before and after class	25	109	331	289	108	862
Avoided distractions during study sessions (e.g., texting friends, checking Facebook)	49	148	312	250	102	861
Monitored course progress and made changes when needed	35	74	255	314	180	858
Allowed more study/work time for difficult classes and assignments	17	57	218	357	213	862
Asked questions when I didn't understand something	41	126	300	255	138	860
Set reasonable goals and expectations for myself	26	59	225	366	186	862
Participated in a study group	187	125	235	204	108	859
Participated in major/academic-related clubs, organizations, or activities	364	157	136	127	78	862
Got involved in organized activities outside the classroom (e.g., athletics, clubs, work)	294	136	156	163	112	861
Spent time with peers who support my academic success	105	82	185	286	203	861
Checked my UC Merced email	1	18	62	188	592	861

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

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.

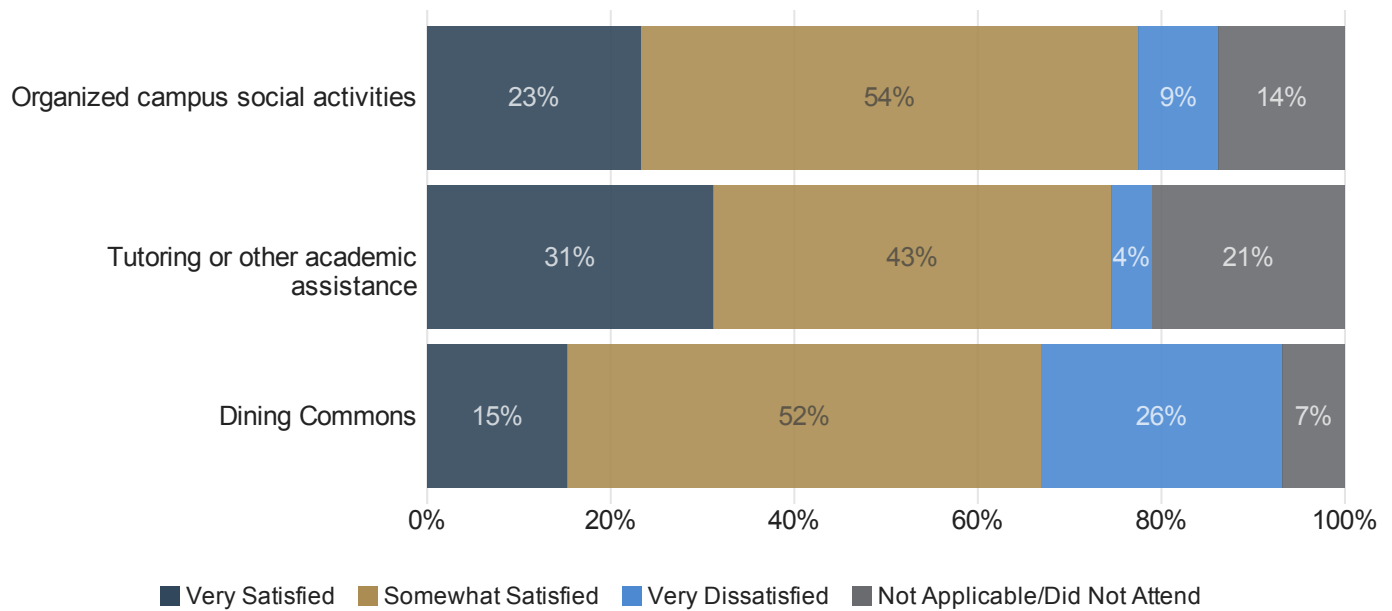


# During your first semester at UC Merced, how often have each of the following been obstacles to your school work or academic success?

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

Field	Not at all	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	All the time	Total
Infrequent/poor quality feedback from instructors	231	303	214	65	21	834
Difficulty adjusting to college-level work (e.g., coursework, exams, papers)	165	228	293	96	55	837
Difficulty studying (e.g., knowing how to start, how to get help, organize material)	108	213	259	176	80	836
Under-developed study behaviors (e.g., wait until last minute, easily distracted, too much social time, too much web surfing)	97	182	288	171	97	835
Difficult study environment (e.g., noisy roommate, poor Internet access, inadequate computer/software)	174	245	235	113	68	835
Under-developed library research skills	261	246	207	76	42	832
Competing job responsibilities (i.e., paid employment)	525	133	89	45	36	828
Competing family responsibilities	284	205	182	115	46	832
Other competing responsibilities (e.g., athletics, clubs, internship)	424	200	136	54	19	833
Personal difficulties with family, intimate relationships, or friends	255	219	179	124	57	834
Being away from family and friends: being “homesick”	280	193	205	93	62	833
Difficulty making new friends at UC Merced	259	194	203	101	75	832
Being able to cope with expectations of parents and family	253	166	203	113	96	831
Being able to cope with the values and expectations of friends when they differ from your own	299	182	188	91	71	831
Feeling depressed, stressed, or upset	154	148	248	166	117	833
Substance use (e.g., alcohol, other drugs)	655	91	52	19	16	833
Feeling out of place or like you just don’t fit on campus	317	212	166	73	65	833
Second guessing whether UC Merced was the right choice for you	323	192	152	92	76	835
Weak spoken English skills	637	97	63	24	13	834
Weak writing skills	428	152	157	62	31	830
Weak math skills	372	168	155	79	57	831
Finding affordable housing while a student at UC Merced	419	144	136	78	58	835
Paying for expenses	228	147	224	123	108	830
Transportation or parking issues	400	137	129	88	79	833
Infrequent/inconsistent access to a computer	638	108	58	16	14	834
Infrequent/inconsistent access to the Internet/web	532	157	90	30	24	833

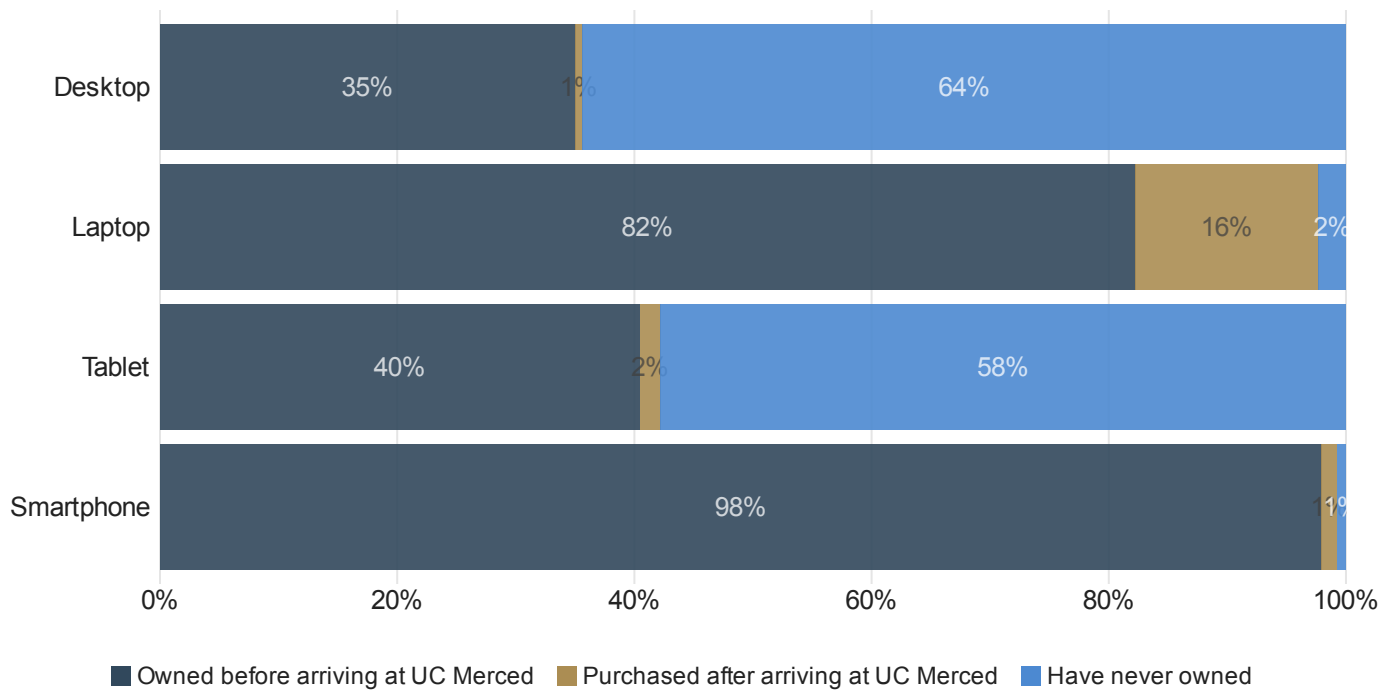
## How satisfied are you so far with the following at UC Merced?



Field	Very Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not Applicable/Did Not Attend	Total
Organized campus social activities	195	454	73	115	837
Tutoring or other academic assistance	261	363	37	176	837
Dining Commons	128	432	220	57	837

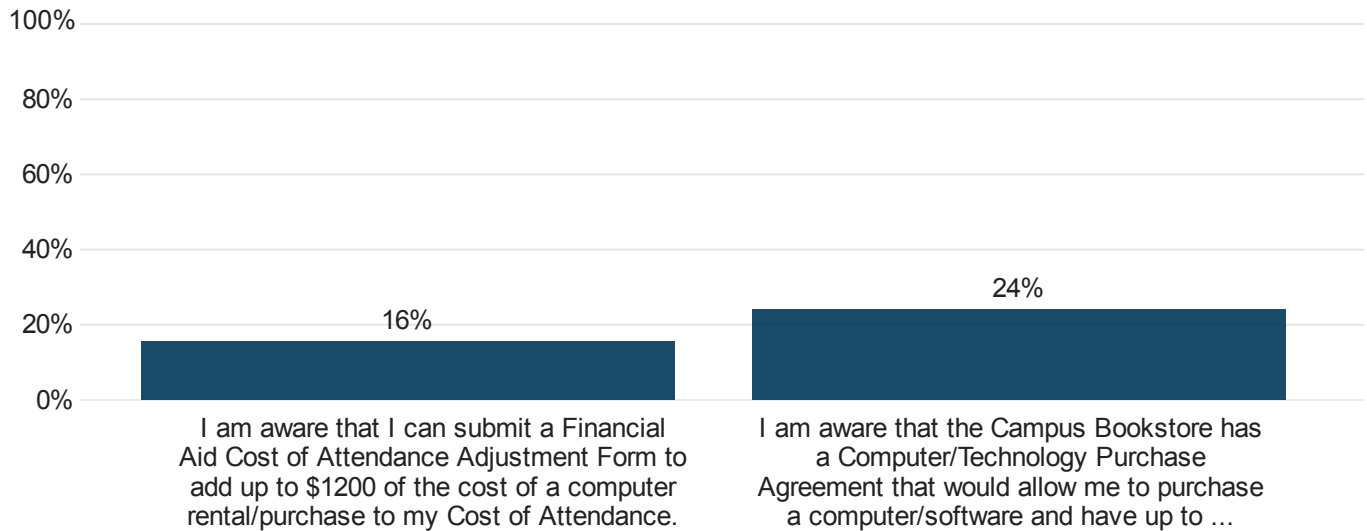


Please indicate whether you own each device below.



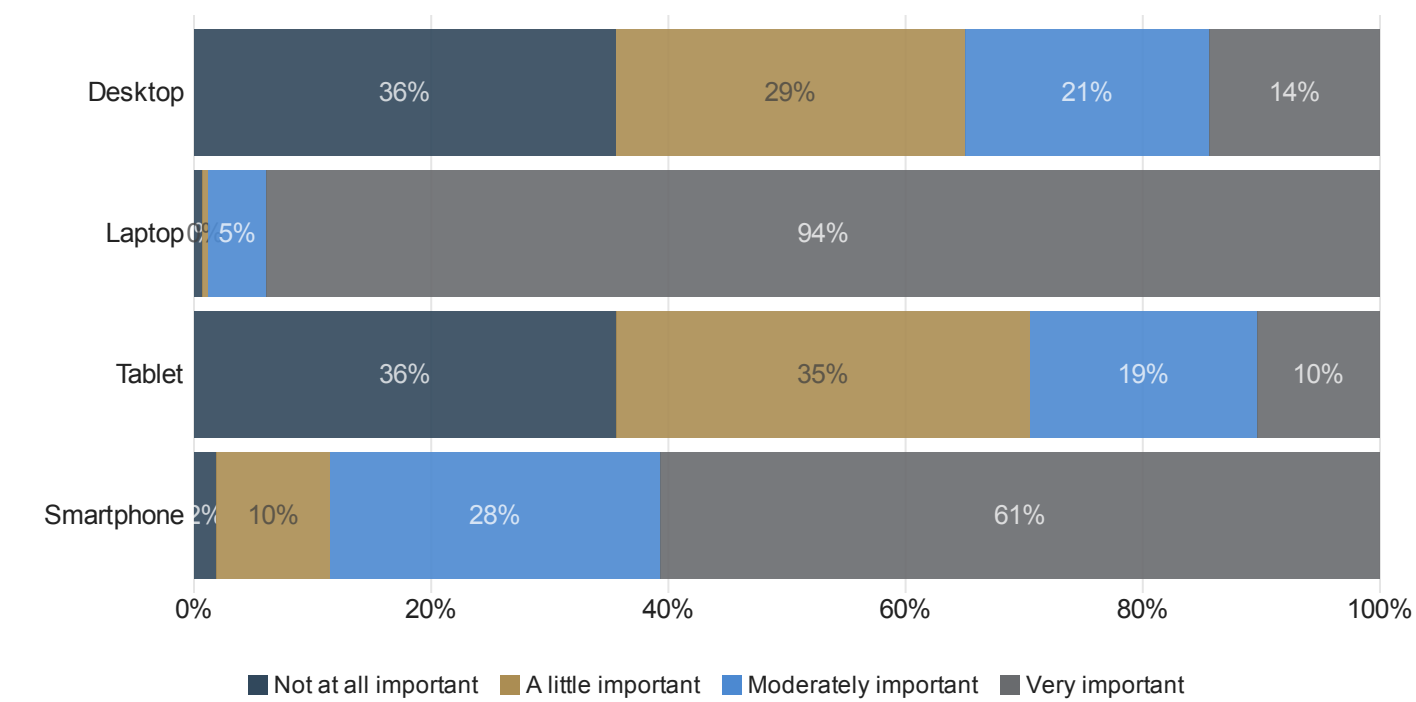
Field	Owned before arriving at UC Merced	Purchased after arriving at UC Merced	Have never owned	Total
Desktop	272	5	500	777
Laptop	684	129	19	832
Tablet	322	14	460	796
Smartphone	808	11	6	825

Please indicate your awareness of each of the following resources for purchasing a personal computer while a student at UC Merced.



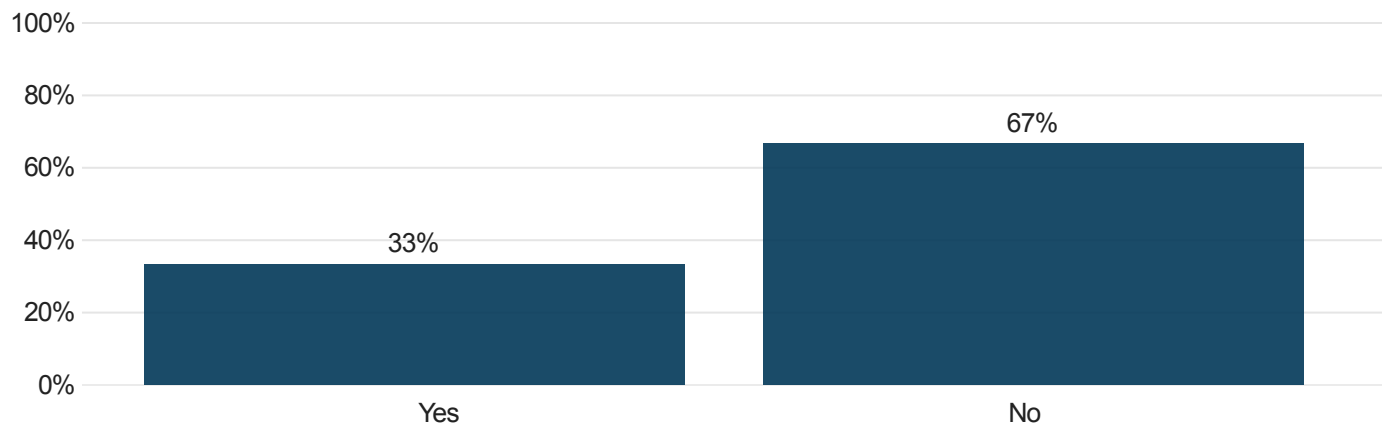
Field	Yes, I am aware of this resource	No, I was not aware of this resource	Total
I am aware that I can submit a Financial Aid Cost of Attendance Adjustment Form to add up to \$1200 of the cost of a computer rental/purchase to my Cost of Attendance.	130	699	829
I am aware that the Campus Bookstore has a Computer/Technology Purchase Agreement that would allow me to purchase a computer/software and have up to \$1500 charged to my student account.	200	628	828

27 How important do you think owning each device is for academic success at UC Merced? Please respond with your perceptions even if you do not own a particular device.



Field	Not at all important	A little important	Moderately important	Very important	Total
Desktop	292	242	169	118	821
Laptop	6	4	41	780	831
Tablet	292	286	157	85	820
Smartphone	16	79	231	503	829

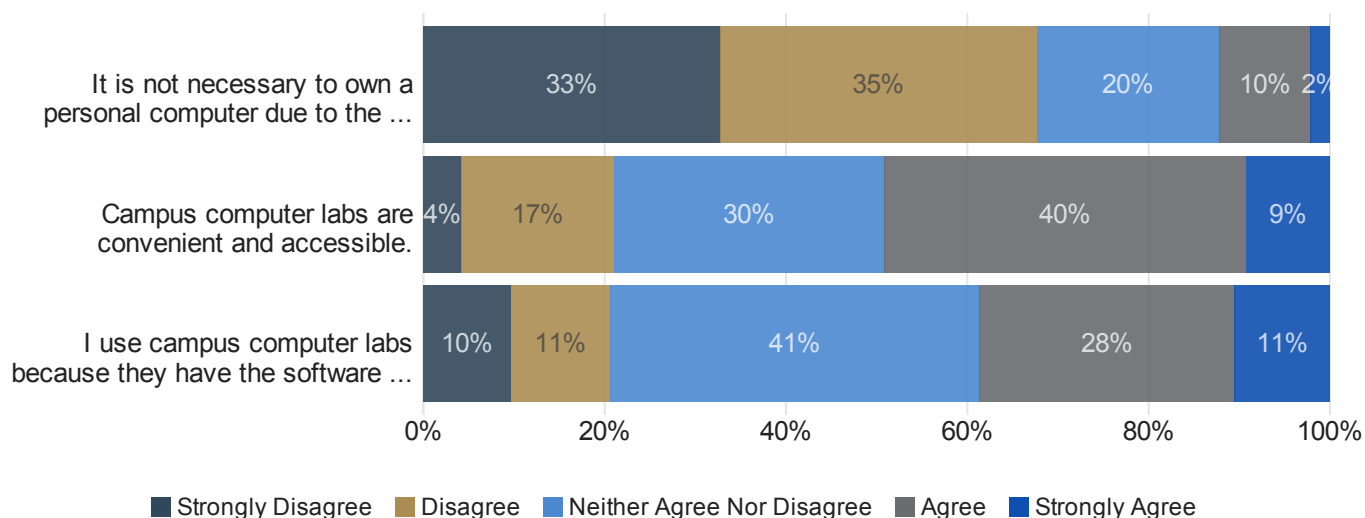
## Have you ever used a computer lab UC Merced?



Field	Choice Count
Yes	276
No	556
Total	832

29 Please indicate your agreement with each statement about campus computer labs.

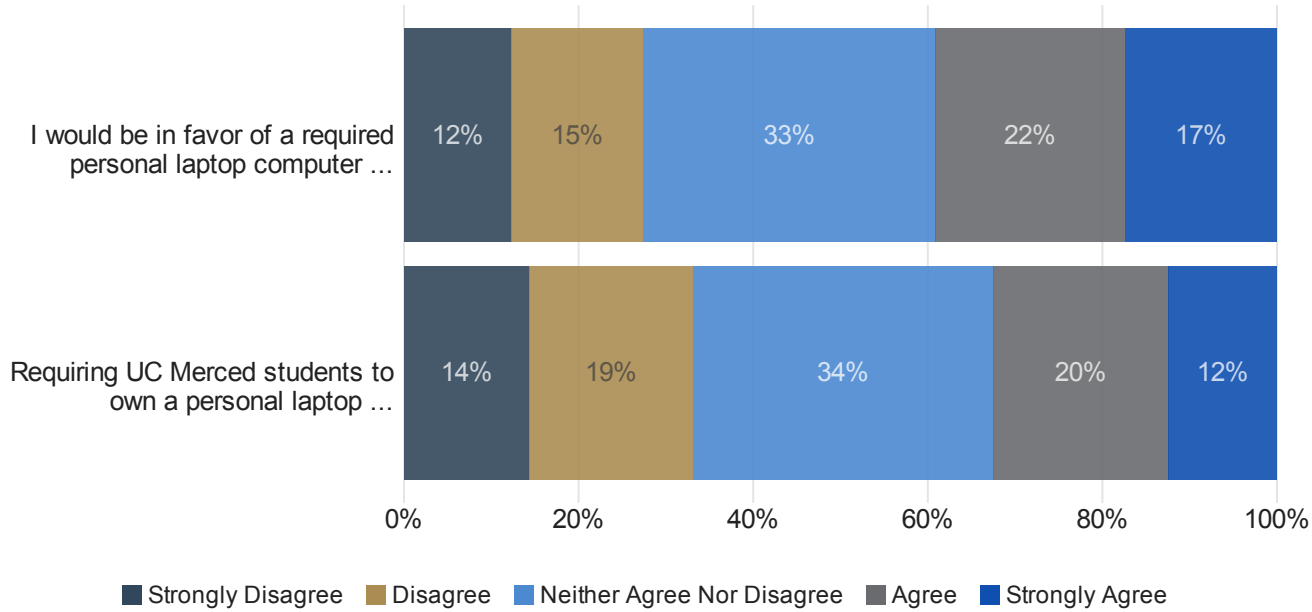
Note: Only respondents who used a campus computer lab could answer this question. To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



Field	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
It is not necessary to own a personal computer due to the availability of campus computer labs.	78	83	48	24	5	238
Campus computer labs are convenient and accessible.	10	40	71	95	22	238
I use campus computer labs because they have the software I need.	23	26	97	67	25	238

30 UC Merced is considering a requirement that students own a personal laptop computer. Please indicate your agreement with each statement below.

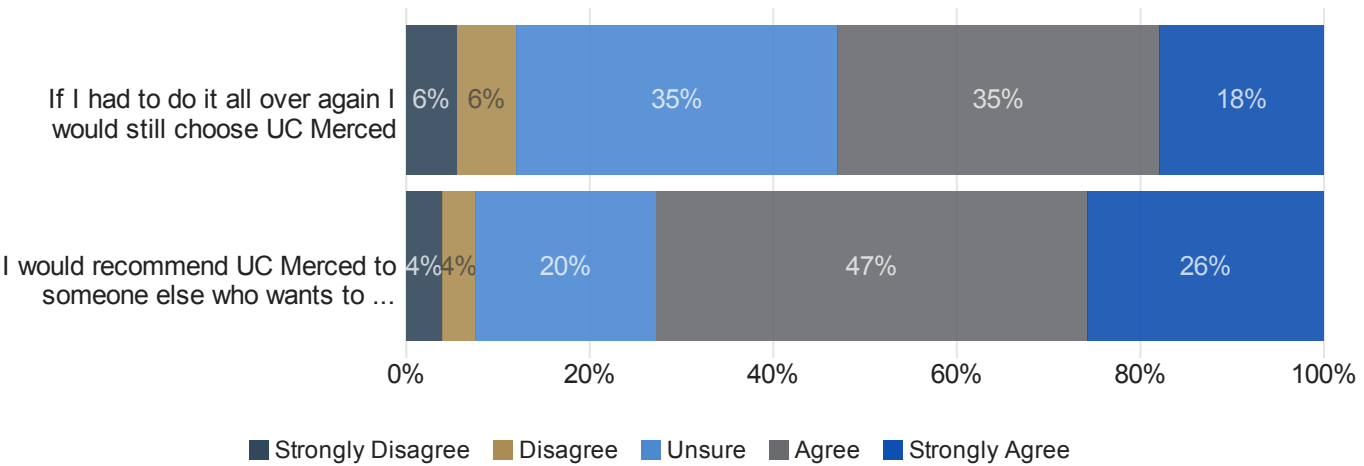
Note: To improve readability, some question text is truncated in the figure. Full question text can be found in the table that follows the figure.



Field	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
I would be in favor of a required personal laptop computer policy at UC Merced.	102	125	277	180	144	828
Requiring UC Merced students to own a personal laptop computer would be a significant financial challenge for me and my family.	119	155	285	166	103	828

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

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.



Field	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
If I had to do it all over again I would still choose UC Merced	46	54	291	292	149	832
I would recommend UC Merced to someone else who wants to attend college	33	30	163	390	214	830