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## Background

- Food insecurity increases emotional, physical, and psychological distress in college students and negatively affects academic performance and overall well-being<sup>1</sup>
- Food insecurity levels are significantly higher in college students than the national food insecurity average<sup>2</sup>
- Studies show food insecurity levels were higher in students with partial or no meal plan, receiving financial assistance, commuters, and first generation students<sup>3</sup>

## Objectives

- To assess UCSD undergraduate students' food insecurity and the effects on academic performance
- To identify risk factors for food insecurity and evaluate prevalence among UCSD students

## Methods

- Qualtrics survey distributed through social media, targeting UCSD undergraduate students
- Questionnaires included demographics, perceived food insecurity, and academic performance
- Participants were categorized into three groups (high or marginal food security, low food security, very low food security) based on their perceived food security level using USDA score system
- A linear regression test was performed using Excel to investigate associations between food insecurity and GPA

## Figures

Figure 1. Correlation between Food Insecurity and GPA

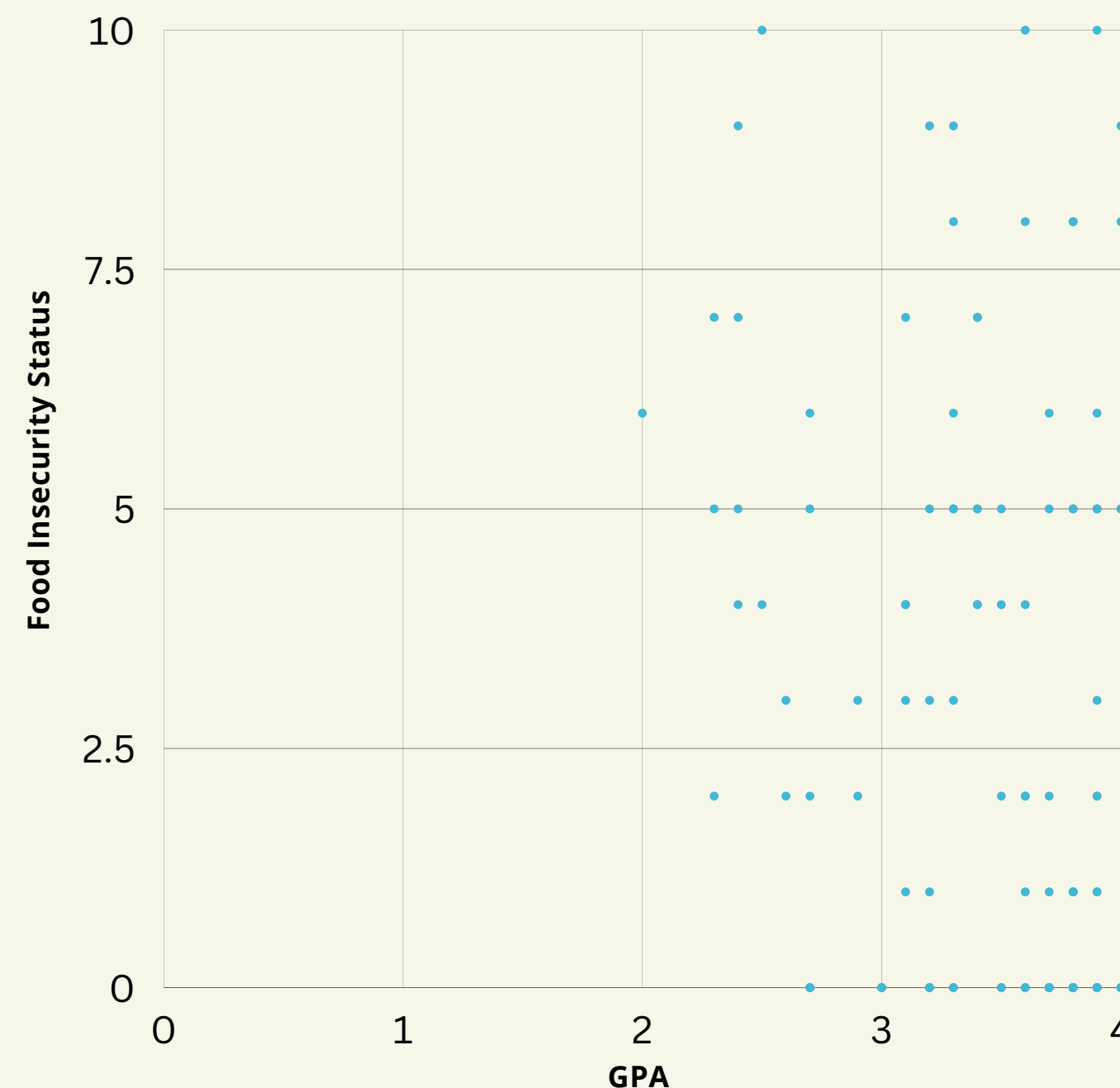
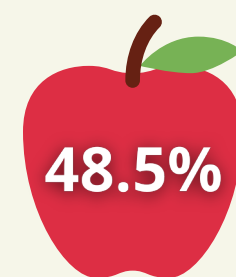


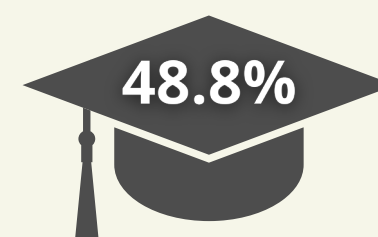
Figure 2. Risk Factors for Food Insecurity

### Food Assistance



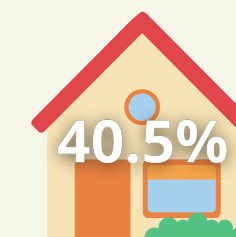
Recipient

### First Generation Student

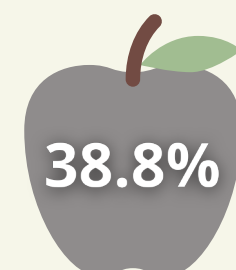


First Generation Student

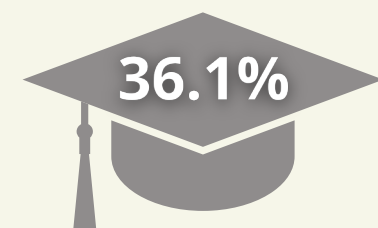
### Housing



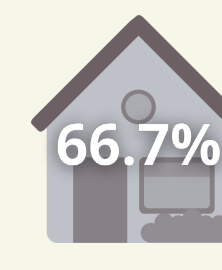
Off-campus



Non-recipient



Non-First Generation Student



On-campus

## Results

- Response rate 73% (141/192)
- 57% were first-generation students
- 2% freshmen, 15% sophomore, 35% Junior, 26% senior, 2% super senior
- 77% living off-campus, 23% living on-campus
- 48% of participants receive food assistance such as SNAP or CalFresh in the past 12 months
- 57% of participants have high or marginal food security, 35% of participants have low food security, and 8% of participants have very low food security
- A linear regression coefficient of -0.03629 indicates that there is a negative correlation between food insecurity and GPA as the result is statistically significant
- 53% of participants perceive that food security has negative impacts on academic performance

## Conclusion

- Over 40% of UCSD undergraduate participants are experiencing food insecurity
- Food insecurity has negative impacts on undergraduate students' academic performance

## Policy Implications

- Prioritize food accessibility on campus
- Expand food aid on campus, providing free or reduced cost meals at multiple locations
- Expand efforts to promote food assistance programs available on campus

## Acknowledgements

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### References:

1. Weaver, R. R., Vaughn, N. A., Hendricks, S. P., McPherson-Myers, P. E., Jia, Q., Willis, S. L., & Rescigno, K. P. (2020). University student food insecurity and academic performance. *Journal of American college health : J of ACH*, 68(7), 727-733.
2. DeBate, R., Himmelgreen, D., Gupton, J., & Heuer, J. N.. (2021). Food Insecurity, Well-being, and Academic Success among College Students: Implications for Post COVID-19 Pandemic Programming. *Ecology of Food and Nutrition*, 60(5), 564-579.
3. Ahmad, N. S. S., Sulaiman, N., & Sabri, M. F. (2021). Food Insecurity: Is It a Threat to University Students' Well-Being and Success?. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 18(11), 5627.



UCSD Food  
Assistance  
Resources