



Too Distressed to Learn: Hunger and Mental Health in Higher Education

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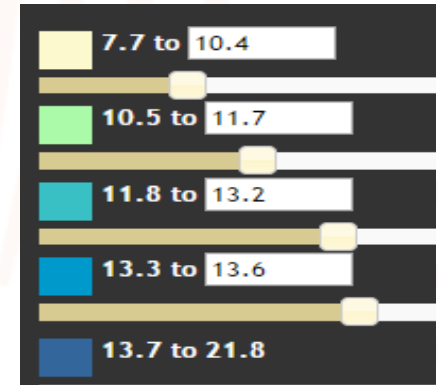
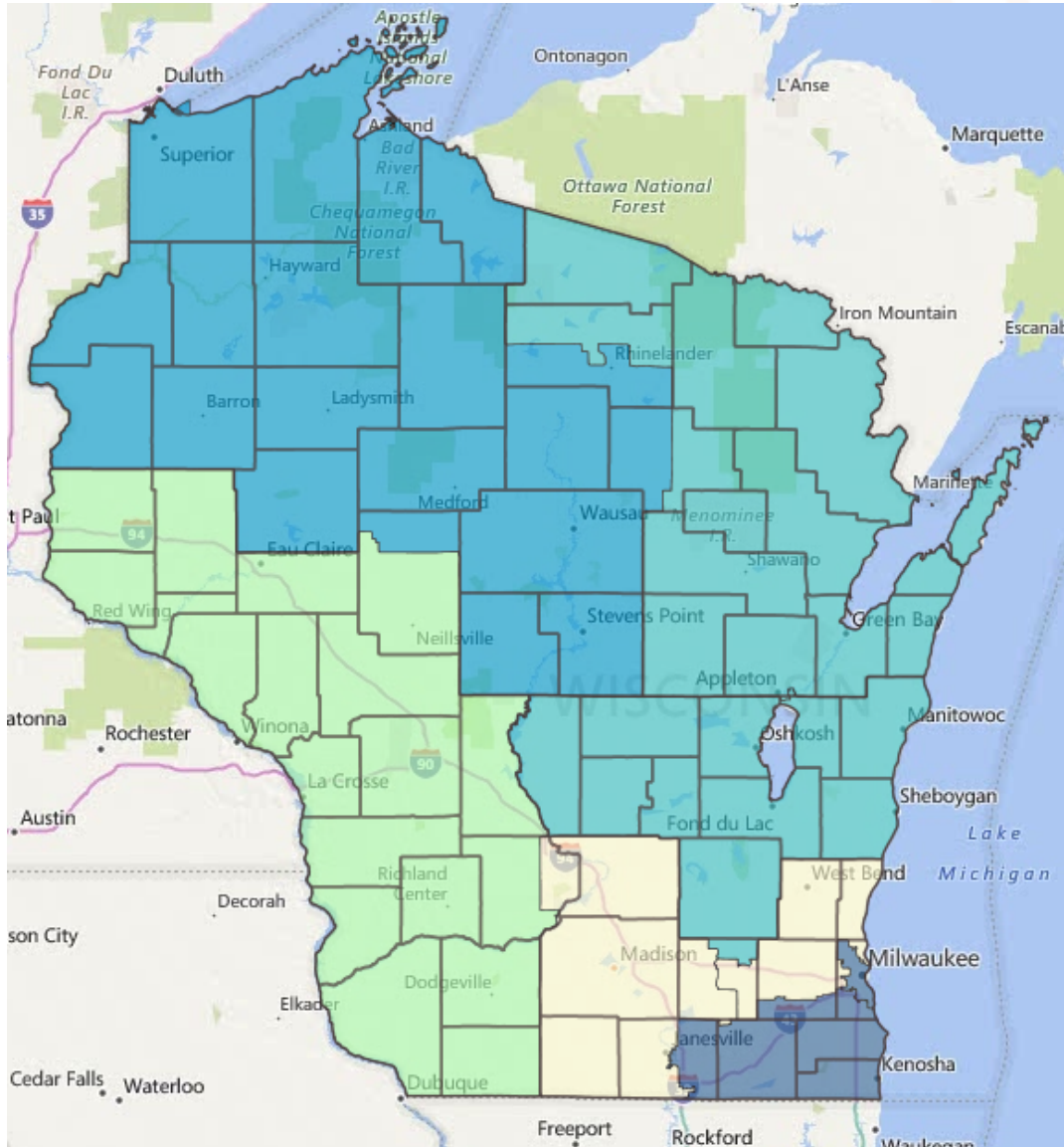
- We are an applied translational research laboratory focused on college affordable
- College students and practitioners expressed that basic needs insecurity – including food insecurity and housing instability – are key challenges to college success
- We examine the prevalence and correlates of these material challenges, how students cope, and what colleges and communities are doing to help

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods, or the ability to acquire such foods in a socially acceptable manner

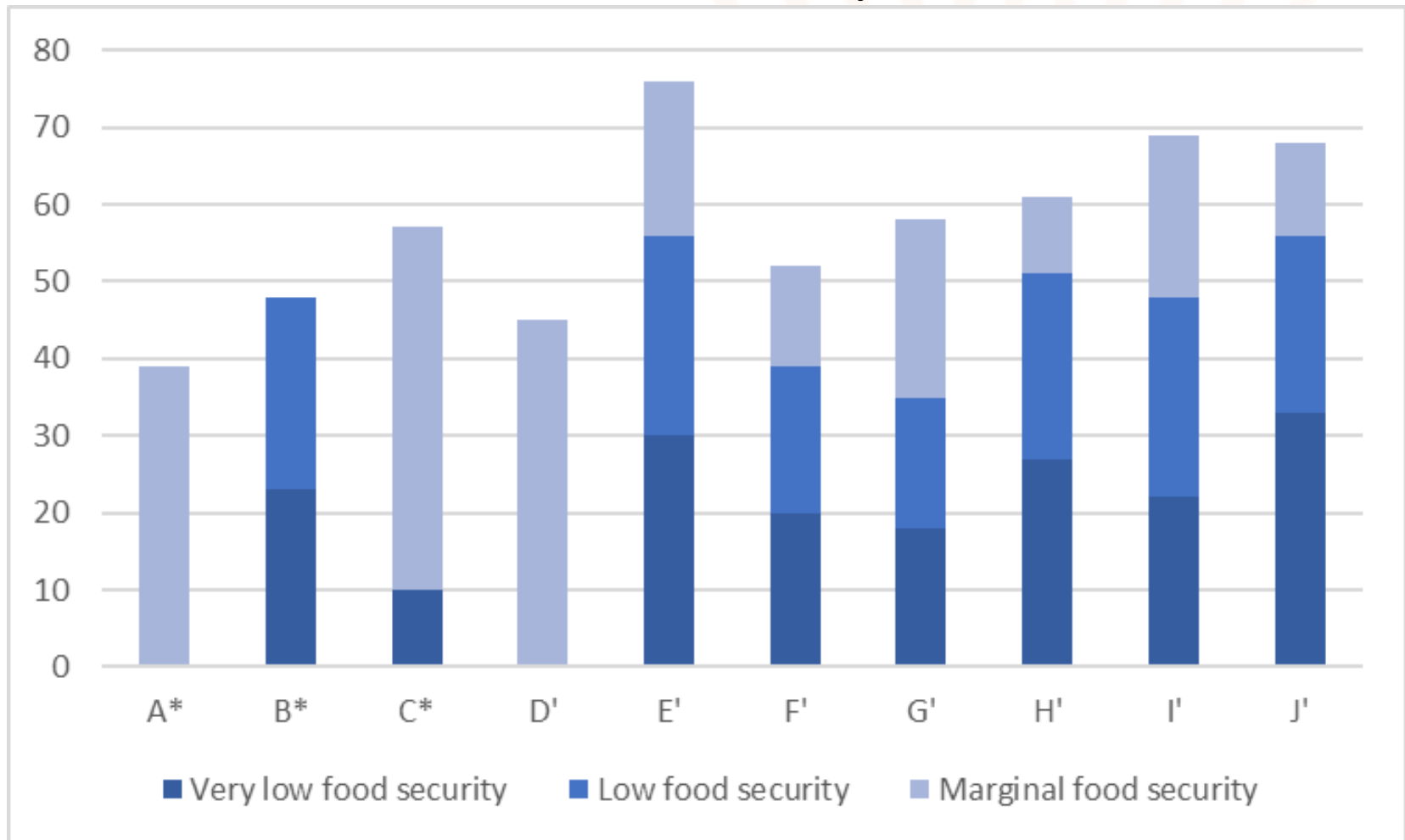
Marginal

Low

Very
Low



Multi-Site Food Insecurity Studies



BALANCING MULTIPLE RESPONSIBILITIES

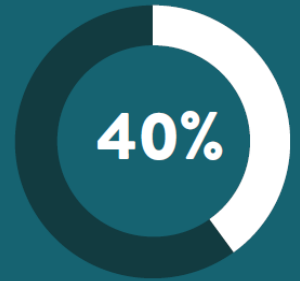


75%

**THREE-QUARTERS
OF COLLEGE STUDENTS**

COMMUTE TO CLASS WHILE JUGGLING PARENTING,
WORKING AND BOTH.

**40 PERCENT
ATTEND SCHOOL ONLY
PART-TIME.**



40%



STUDENTS WORK ON AVERAGE

**19 HOURS
PER WEEK**



ABOUT

40 PERCENT

OF COMMUNITY-COLLEGE STUDENTS
WORK 20 OR MORE HOURS
PER WEEK.

OLDER AND MORE RACIALLY DIVERSE



38 PERCENT
OF ALL TODAY'S UNDERGRADUATES
ARE OLDER THAN 25.

THE VISION THAT MOST OF US HAVE OF COLLEGE STUDENTS – 18- TO 21-YEAR-OLDS WHO ATTEND SCHOOL FULL-TIME – ONLY MAKE UP ABOUT A THIRD OF THE COLLEGE POPULATION.



ENROLLMENT AMONG
HISPANIC STUDENTS
TRIPLED
SINCE THE MID-1990'S,



**AND BLACK STUDENT
ENROLLMENT GREW BY
72 PERCENT.**

AND THOSE TRENDS ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE THROUGH 2021, WITH BLACK ENROLLMENT PROJECTED TO GROW BY **25 PERCENT**, HISPANIC STUDENTS PROJECTED TO INCREASE BY **42 PERCENT**, AND ONLY A **4 PERCENT** INCREASE IN WHITE STUDENTS FORECASTED.

FINANCIALLY SUPPORT THEMSELVES... AND OFTEN STRUGGLE TO MAKE ENDS MEET

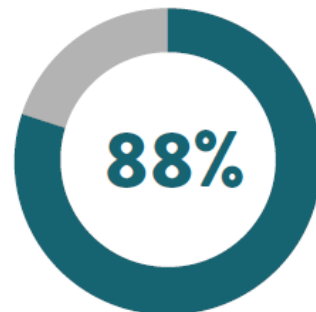


ALMOST HALF OF **TODAY'S STUDENTS**

ARE ON THEIR OWN FINANCIALLY. HALF OF THOSE STUDENTS (25%) HAVE FINANCIAL DEPENDENTS OF THEIR OWN.

4.8 MILLION

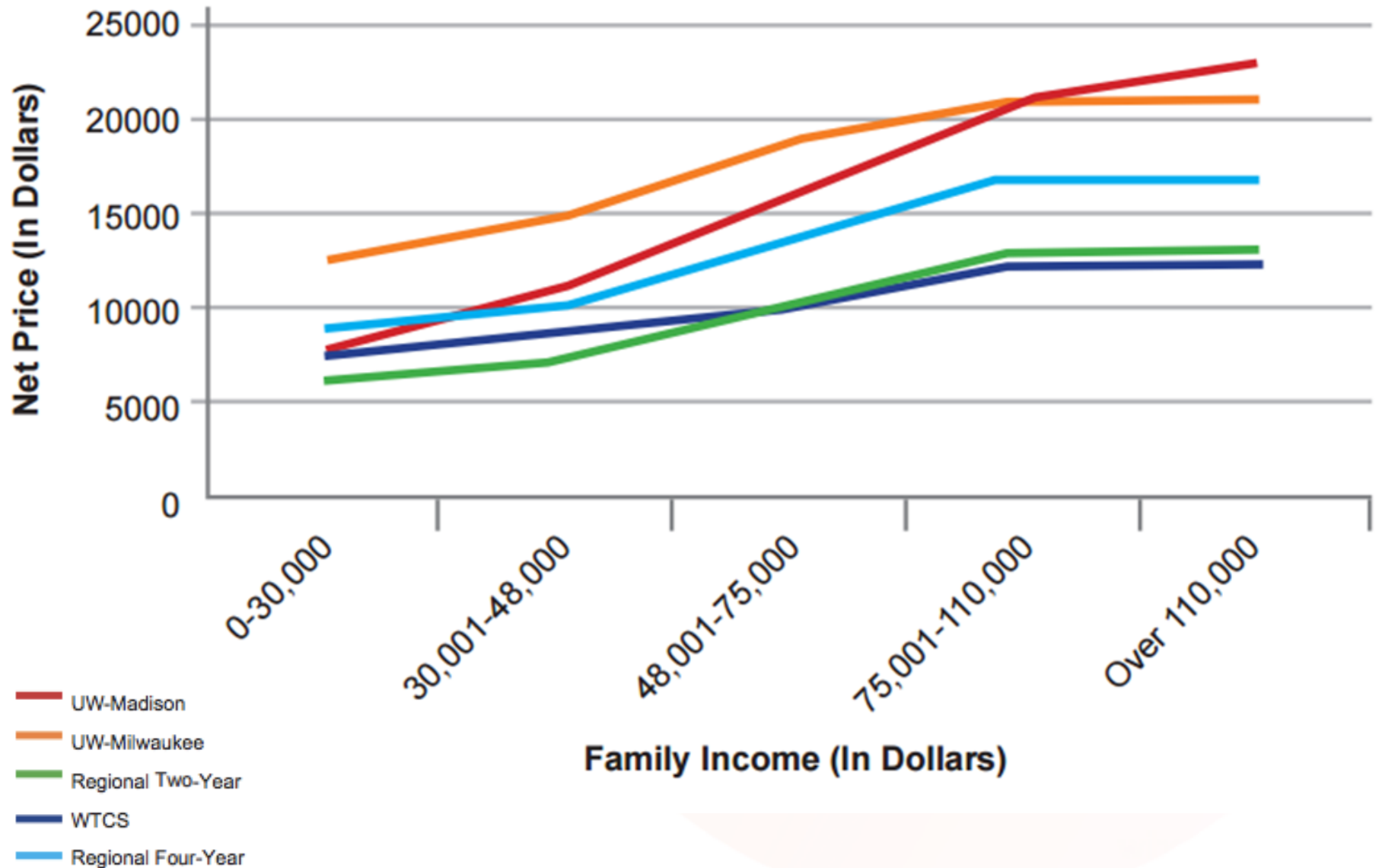
POSTSECONDARY STUDENTS ARE PARENTS, AND OF THOSE, **61 PERCENT** HAVE NO MONEY TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE COST OF COLLEGE.

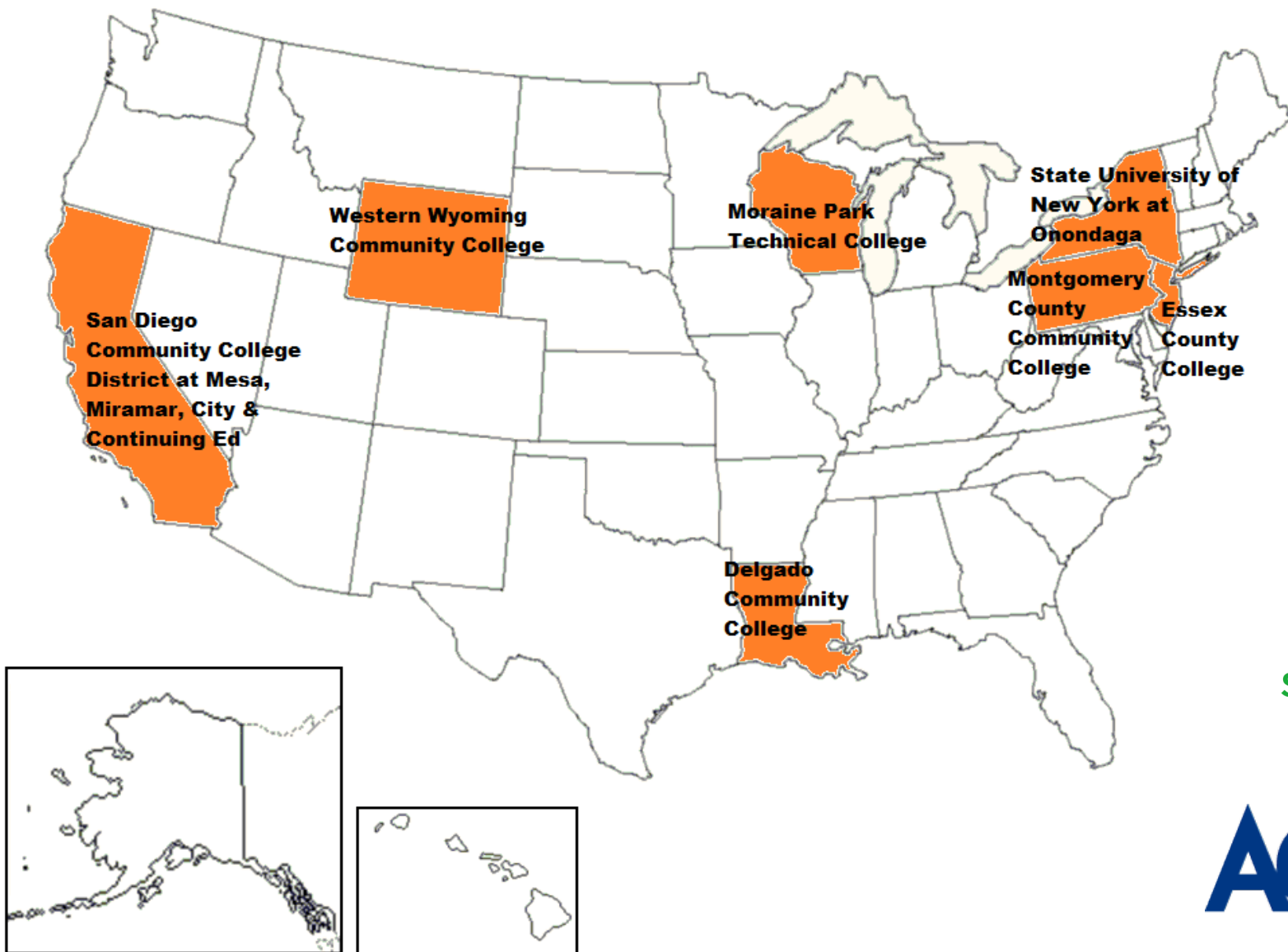


88 PERCENT

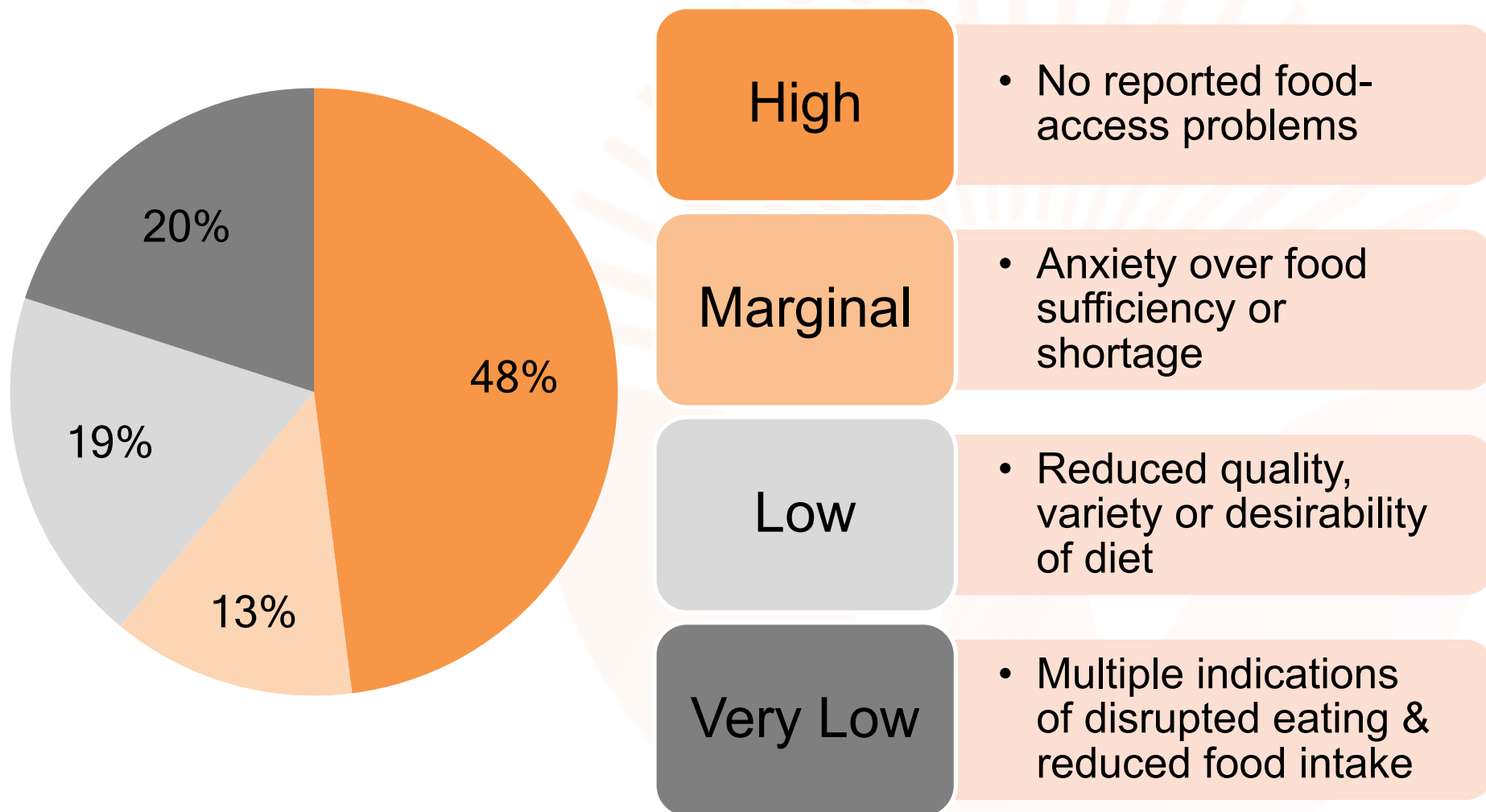
OF SINGLE STUDENT-PARENTS HAVE INCOMES **BELOW 200 PERCENT** OF THE POVERTY LINE.

Net Price by Family Income



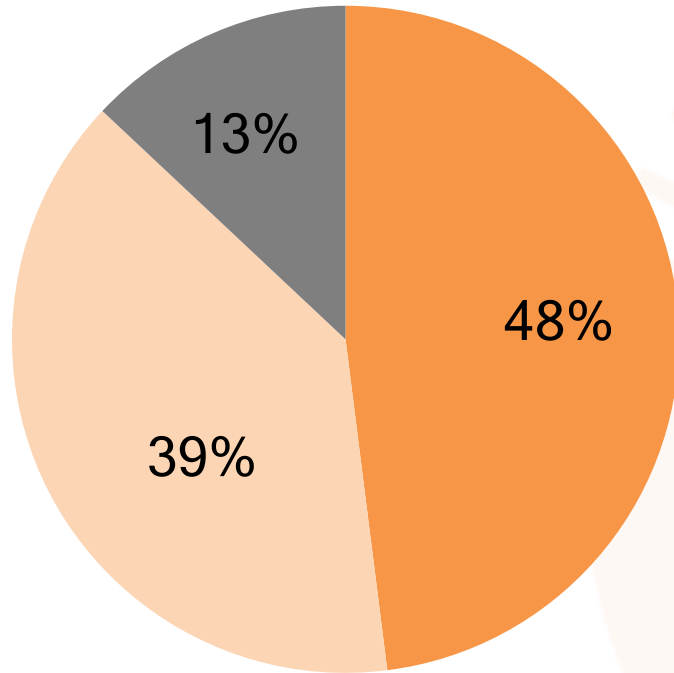


Female	55%	Household Income	
Race / Ethnicity		<\$5,000	7%
Non-Hispanic White	54%	\$5-\$15,000	11%
Hispanic or Latino	20%	\$15-\$25,000	9%
African American	15%	\$25-\$50,000	16%
Age		\$50-\$75,000	11%
18-25 years	50%	>\$75,000	17%
26-30 years	16%	Not reported	29%
Over age 30	33%	Financial aid recipient	67%
Has child(ren)	19%		



(N=4,312)

Housing Security Status (prior year)



- Secure
- Insecure without homelessness
- Homeless

Housing Insecurity	
<i>Any of the below items</i>	52%
1. Difficulty paying rent	22%
2. Didn't pay full amount of rent	18%
3. Didn't pay full amount of utilities	22%
4. Moved 2 or more times per year	12%
5. Doubled up	11%
6. Moved in with other people due financial problems	14%
Homelessness	
<i>Any of the below items</i>	13%
1. Thrown out of home	5%
2. Evicted from home	2%
3. Stayed in shelter	1%
4. Stayed in abandoned building	3%
5. Didn't know where you'd sleep at night	1%
6. Didn't have a home	1%

(N=4,312)

Multiple Challenges



Among students with low or very low levels of food security, 73 percent were also housing insecure, including 23 percent who were homeless.

	Depression	Severe Anxiety	Disordered Eating	Suicidal Ideation
Overall	32%	29%	10%	11%
Food Security				
High	20%	18%	5%	6%
Marginal	33%	28%	12%	12%
Low	36%	32%	13%	14%
Very low	55%	52%	16%	20%
Housing Security				
Secure	21%	20%	7%	8%
Insecure	39%	35%	12%	11%
Homeless	54%	50%	16%	24%

Working

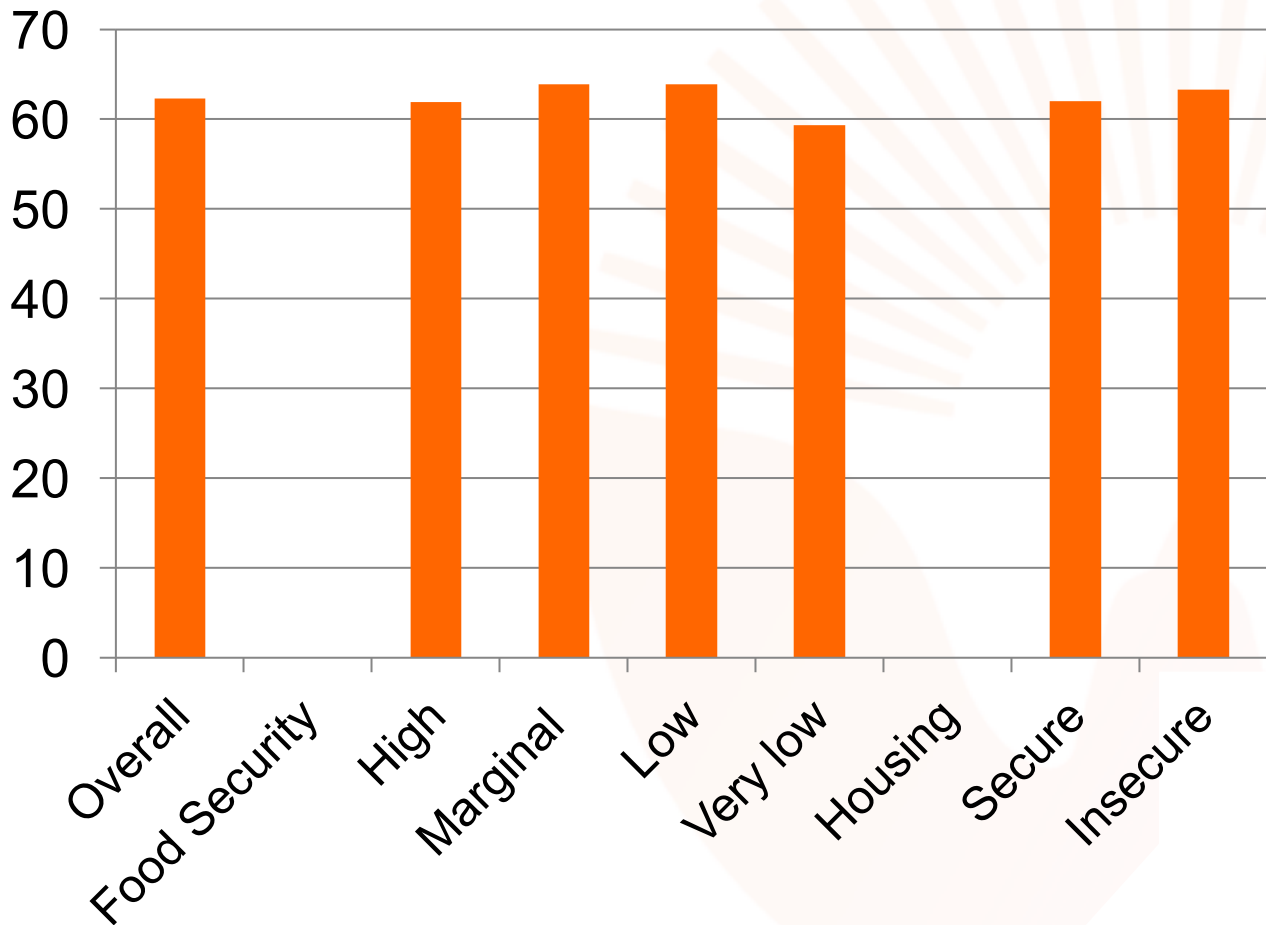
Public assistance

Coping

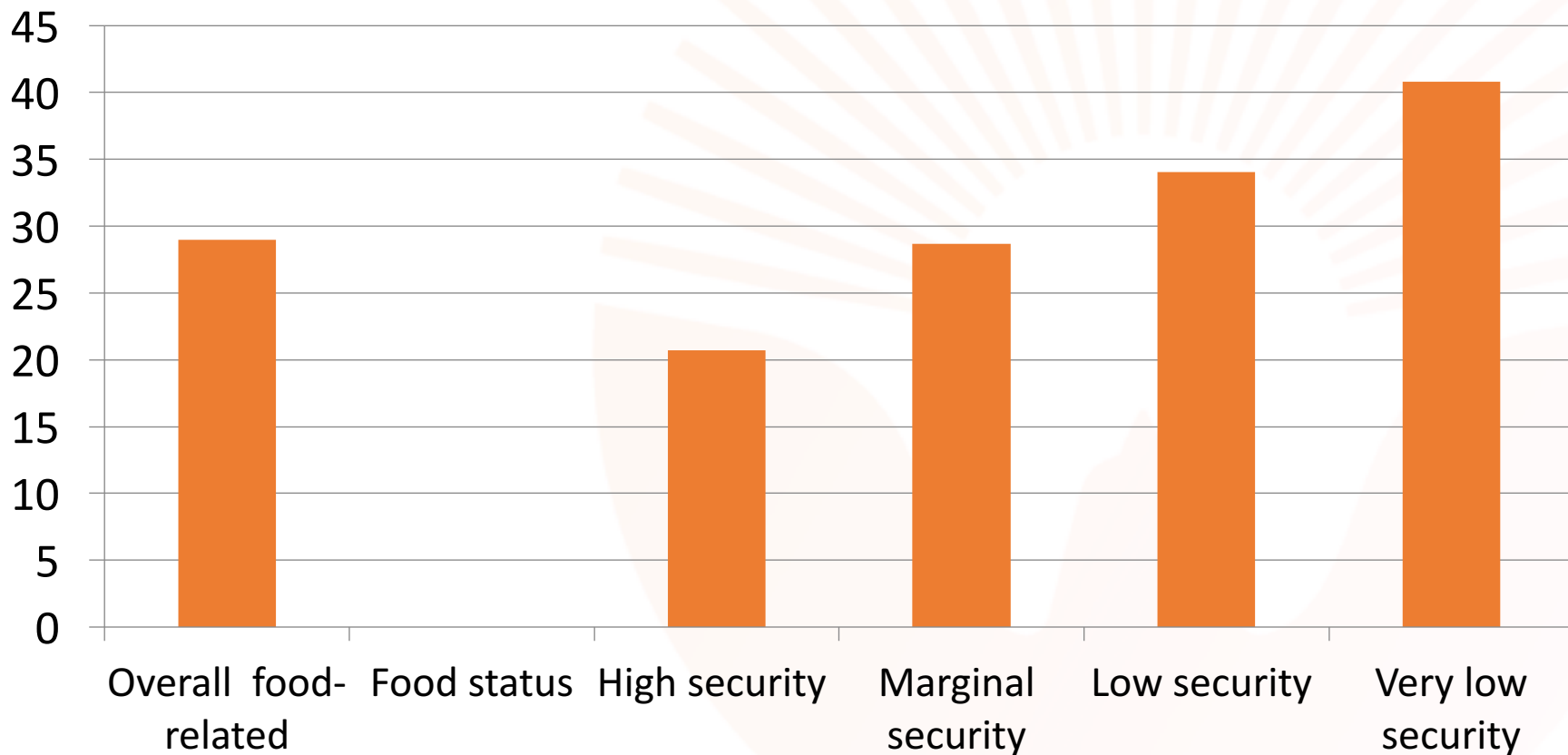
Private assistance

Stretching &
cutting back

Currently Working (%)



Public Assistance (%)

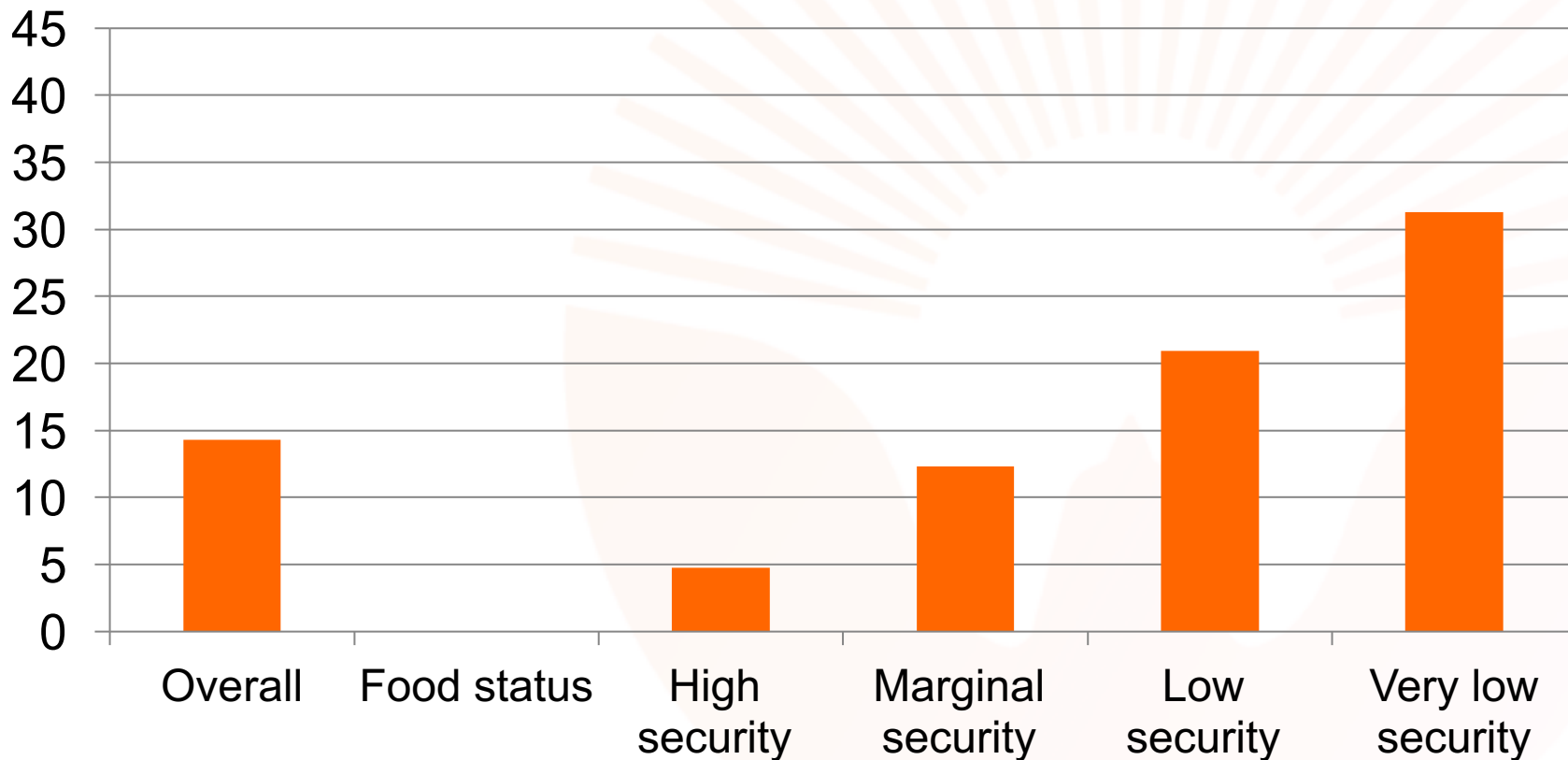


SNAP exceptions allow some low-income college students to receive benefits:

- Receiving work-study
 - Access to this program is extremely limited
- Participating in job training program (WIOA, TAA, SNAP E&T)
 - States have some flexibility (e.g., Massachusetts)
- Working for pay at least 20 hours/ week (can be averaged across a month in WI)
- Under age 18 or older than 50
- Caring for a child under age 6
- Single parent caring for child age 6-11 and enrolled full-time or unable to obtain child care
- Receiving TANF
- Unable to work due to disability

I applied for [food stamps] probably two or three times and they always denied me. I've been on my own since I was 19, living paycheck to paycheck, in between jobs, trying to stay afloat and juggle school at the same time, but they always denied me and I never could get them. I never understood why; I'm struggling with my bills. Why can't I get food stamps? I don't have any help from my family. I'm doing it all by myself.

Private Assistance (%)



According to the College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA), there are about 500 on-campus food pantries across the nation

- In 1993, Michigan State University established the first campus food pantry
- Just one part of a comprehensive food strategy at many colleges and universities
 - SNAP outreach and sign-up
 - Cooking and healthy eating demonstrations
 - Farm and fresh produce distribution
 - Meal vouchers

WHY THE TIME IS RIGHT TO EXPAND THE NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM TO HIGHER EDUCATION

Sara Goldrick-Rab, Temple University, Katharine Broton, Emily Brunjes Colo, University of Wisconsin-Madison



In May 2016, Representative Bobby Scott (D-VA) introduced an amendment to the Child Nutrition Act that reiterated the Wisconsin HOPE Lab's call to expand the National School Lunch Program to higher education. As planned, after getting the issue on the record, he withdrew the amendment saying he will pursue it in the Higher Education Act Reauthorization.

Coping with mental health among those in need

	Two-year College Students	Four-year College Students
Clinical service and support, past year		
Psychotropic medication	31%	30%
Therapy or counseling	28%	34%
Any medication or therapy	41%	46%
Any visit to health provider	72%	86%
Non-clinical counseling and support, past year		
Friend or roommate	39%	62%
Significant other	26%	37%
Family member	32%	48%
Religious contact	8%	6%
Support group	3%	3%
Any of the above	60%	79%

- College attainment remains a key pathway to breaking the cycle of poverty and promoting an economically stable and healthy lifestyle
- Substantial share of college students is struggling to make ends meet and report mental health challenges
- Mental and financial well-being are key predictors of college success
- In addition to direct service support, we need a multi-pronged, comprehensive set of institutional, local, state, and federal policies
- Such action has the potential to improve educational success and promote community well-being



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Resources for Additional Information and Support

Active Minds empowers students to promote mental health and change the perception about mental health on college campuses. www.activeminds.org

Campus Kitchens Project partners with colleges and universities to share on-campus kitchen space, recover food from cafeterias and engage students as volunteers who prepare and deliver meals to the community. www.campuskitchens.org

College and University Food Bank Alliance is a professional organization consisting of campus-based programs focused on alleviating food insecurity, hunger, and poverty among college and university students in the United States. www.cufba.org

Food Recovery Network unites students on college campuses to fight food waste and hunger by recovering perishable food that would otherwise go to waste from their campuses and communities and donating it to people in need. www.foodrecoverynetwork.org

Healthy Minds Network, based at the University of Michigan, conducts research on college student mental health, and shares data with campus administrators, practitioners, and affiliated organizations. www.healthymindsnetwork.org

Jed Foundation provides information and resources for students, parents, and campus professionals to promote mental health and prevent suicide among college students. www.jedfoundation.org

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth offers a Higher Education Helpline for assistance with issues related to students experiencing homelessness accessing higher education. www.naehcy.org/educational-resources/helpline

Scholarship America Dreamkeepers helps students stay in college when faced with an unforeseen financial emergency. Through Dreamkeepers, students receive financial assistance as well as mentoring and financial counseling. scholarshipamerica.org/dk.php

Single Stop partners with local organizations and institutions that serve low-income families to provide wraparound services and ensure their clients leverage all the major anti-poverty resources available. Since 2007, Single Stop has connected 1.2 million households with \$3.5 billion in resources and support. www.singlestopusa.org

Student Government Resource Center provides resources to student governments to help them build a culture of organizing and advocacy, and publishes the Running a Campus Food Pantry toolkit, which explains how to create and manage a campus food pantry. studentgovresources.org

Wisconsin HOPE Lab documents the challenges students face in securing food and housing, evaluates efforts to meet their needs, and shares information with policymakers and practitioners. www.wihopelab.com

Working Families Success Network is a network of community-based organizations and colleges helping families and individuals get jobs, complete their education or training, improve their credit, and have enough income to pay their bills and to save for the future. workingfamiliesuccess.com