



BASIC NEEDS INITIATIVE

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STUDENT BASIC NEEDS

Food and housing security for students in the CSU



**Faculty
Research &
Curriculum**



**Systemwide
Coordination**



**Community
Partnerships &
Collaboration**



**Policy &
Legislation**

Background and Research Motivation

College Student Food Security

- . Study of 10 community colleges in the US found **39%** of students were found to have low food security
- . City University of New York found **39%** of students were food insecure
- . University of California system found that **42%** of students experienced food insecurity (23% low and 19% very low food security)

Background and Research Motivation

College Student Housing Insecurity and Homelessness

- University of Massachusetts Boston found that **5.4%** of students experienced homelessness and **45%** of participants reported housing insecurity
- City University of New York reported that **40%** of students experienced housing instability
- Community colleges range from **30% to 50%** of students experiencing housing insecurity and **13% to 14%** experiencing homelessness
- Empirical research is inadequate on the possible impacts of college student food and housing insecurity on student success indicators related to academic performance, health, and mental health.

PHASE 1:

Staff, Faculty, and Administration

SURVEYS

Preliminary online survey of CSULB students

INTERVIEWS

Qualitative interviews with CSU staff, faculty, and administrators

ANALYSIS

Analysis of campus websites and student support service

Defining Basic Needs

Food Security

(USDA ERS, 2015)

High food security

No reported indications of food access problems or limitations

Marginal food security

One or two reported indications—typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake

Low food security

Reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake

Very low food security

Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake

Defining Basic Needs

Food Security

Low Food Security



Well, I can afford food. I can't afford great food, but I can afford food. Umm... It was tough

Dilbert (CSUSB)

Defining Basic Needs

Food Security

Very Low Food Security

“ So basically what I used to eat three days out of the week was like Minute Maid and chips and that'd be it...I wouldn't eat anything 'cause I didn't have any money

Tiffany (CSULB)

Defining Basic Needs

Homelessness

(The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Subtitle B of Title VII)

HOMELESSNESS

=

**A lack a fixed, regular, and
adequate nighttime
residence.**

Defining Basic Needs

Homelessness

(The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Subtitle B of Title VII)

“

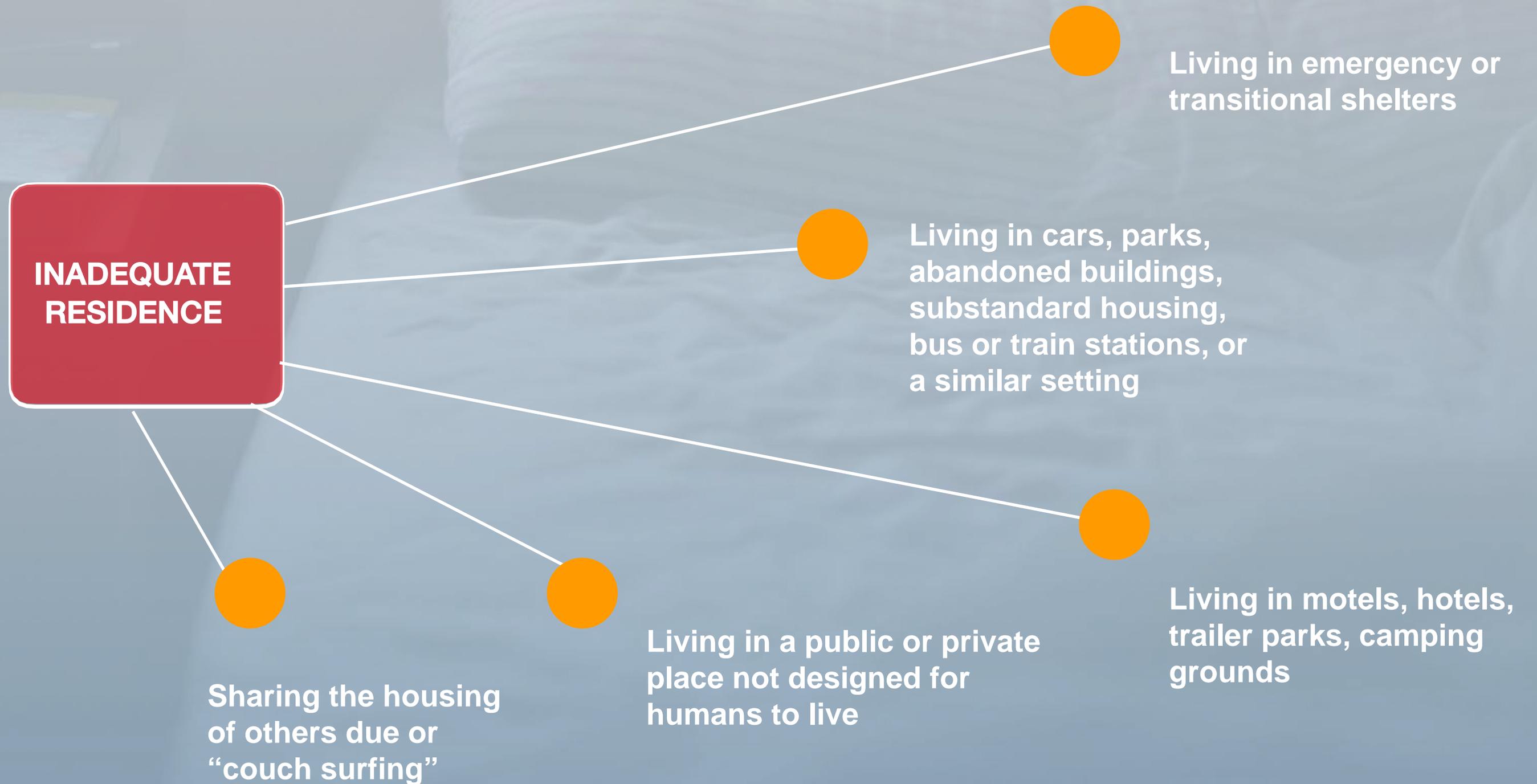
And so, I ended up being homeless for about four months. Sleeping on friends' couches, staying in my car...

Elizabeth (FSU)

Defining Basic Needs

Homelessness

(The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Subtitle B of Title VII)



Methods

Quantitative

Locational data was where students entered the city and location of two streets that intersected nearby their residence

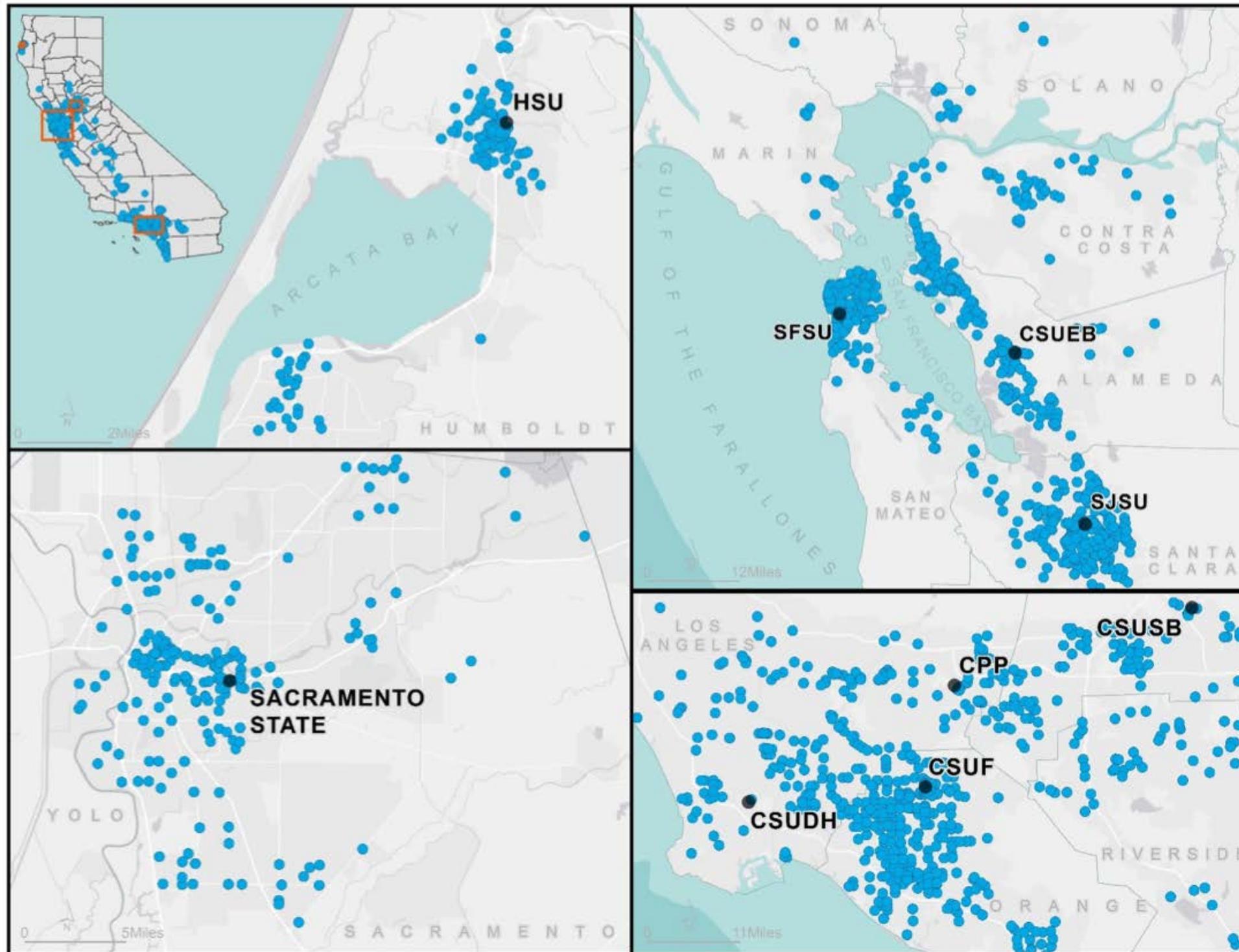
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Campus
Surveys

5.8%

Students
participated





Survey Respondents Living Locations



CSU Survey

Sample Description

- **5.8% of all CSU students participated ($n=24,324$)**
- Overall survey sample characteristics were similar to the demographics of the CSU student body.
- Racial and ethnic groups were similar, with the percentage of White and Asian/Pacific Islander participants represented slightly higher within the sample.
- The largest difference was regarding gender, where females were over represented and males were underrepresented in the sample.

CSU Survey Instruments

1. HUD and US Department of Ed definitions of Homelessness
2. U.S. Adult Food Security Survey Module (10-item)
3. Presenting Problems List (Academic Concerns)
4. CORE Healthy Days
5. Geospatial Point Data

Methods

Qualitative

Representative from northern, southern, and central California and included urban, rural, and suburban areas

11

**CSU campuses with students
who identify as housing and/or
food insecure**



CSU Interviews and Focus Groups

Sample Description

- Drawn from survey responses with experiences of food, housing or both food and housing insecurity
- 213 student participants
- Northern, southern, and central California and to include perspectives from urban, rural, and suburban areas
- Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, CSU Bakersfield, CSU Dominguez Hills, CSU Long Beach, CSU Los Angeles, CSU Northridge, CSU San Bernardino, Fresno State University, Humboldt State University, San Diego State University, and San Francisco State University

Prevalence

Food Security

41.6%

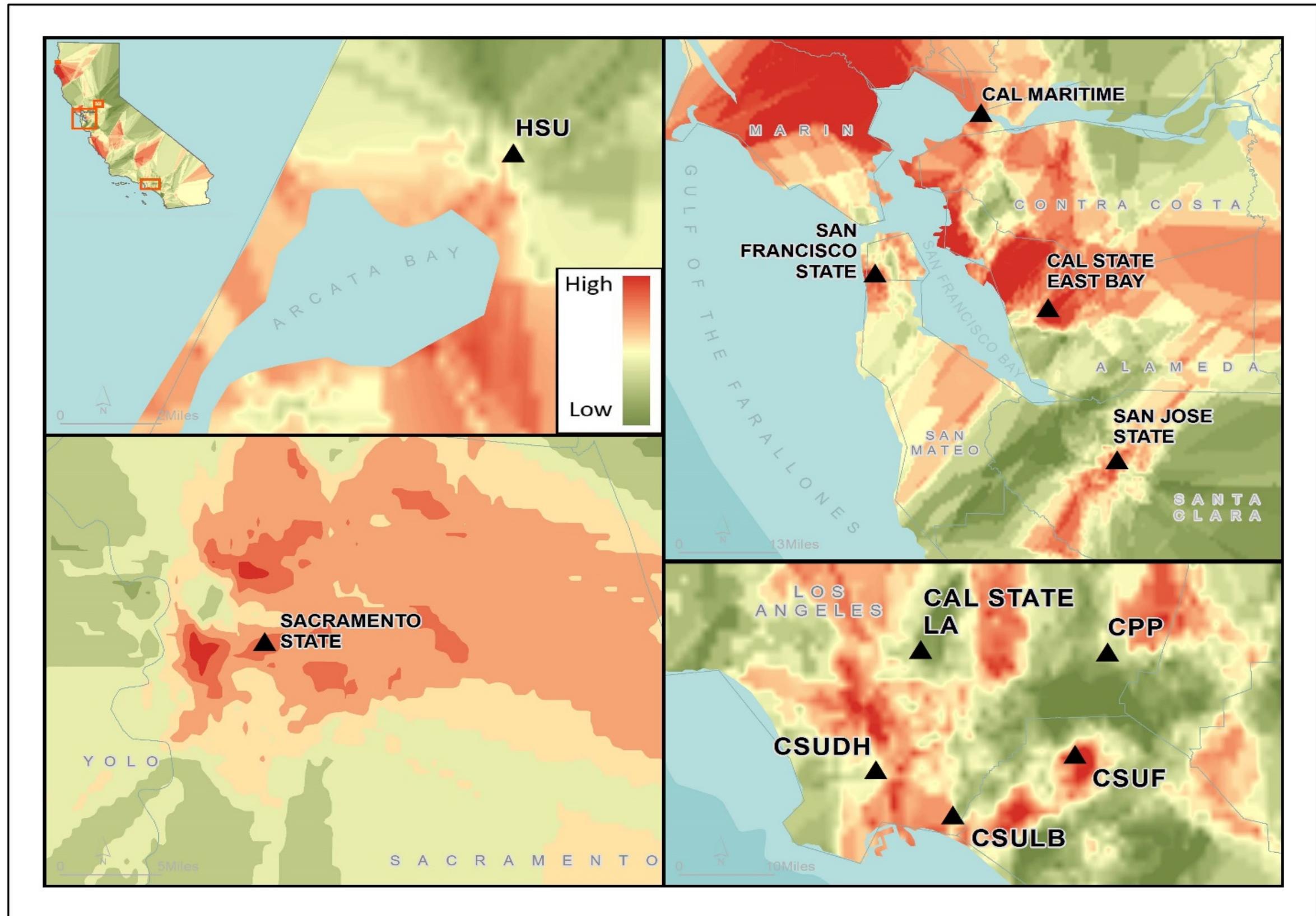
CSU Students
reported food
insecurity

20%

experience
*low food
security*

21.6%

experience *very
low food security*



CSU Student Food Security

Prevalence

Food Security

- Women (42.6%) reported slightly higher food insecurity than men (39.3%)
- First generation students (49.0%) reported higher food insecurity
- Students both first generation and Black/African American had the highest levels of food insecurity (65.9%)

	Homeless %	Housed %
White/First generation	12.6%	87.4%
Asian/First generation	9.6%	90.4%
Black/African American/ First generation	18%	82%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander /First generation	8.9%	91.1%
Hispanic Participants/ First generation	10.1%	89.9%
Other/First generation	10.4%	89.6%

Table 2
Percentage of student homelessness by race/ethnicity and first generation college student status.

Prevalence

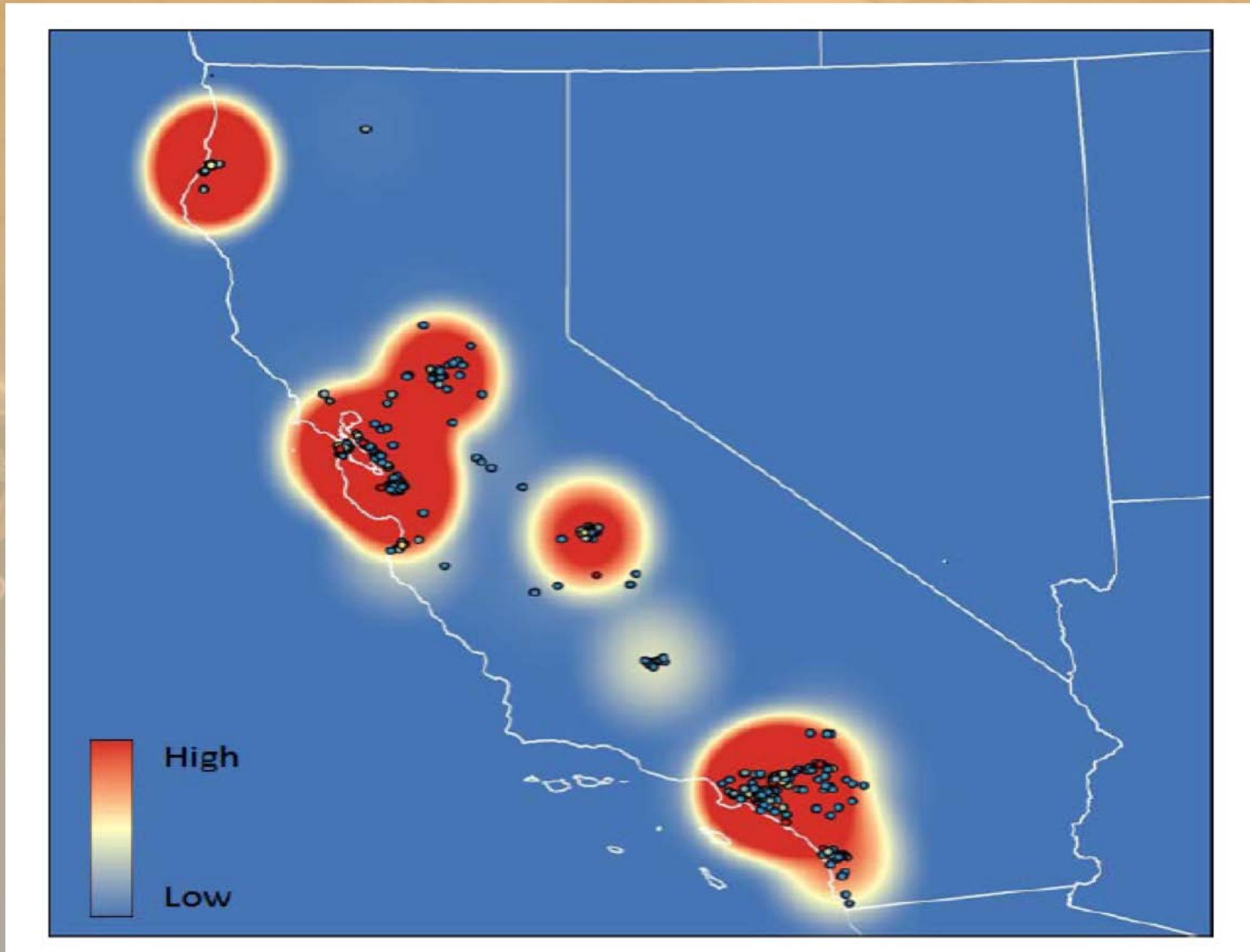
Homelessness

10.9%

of CSU STUDENTS report
being homeless

18%

of African American and first-
generation college students
experienced homelessness
(a higher rate than any other
group)



CSU Student Homelessness

Prevalence

Homelessness

- Men (14.1%) experienced more homelessness than women (9.6%)
- First generation students (11.2%) slightly higher incidences of homelessness

	Homeless %	Housed %
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ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT, MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH, AND PERSONAL CONCERNS

Food Security and Academics

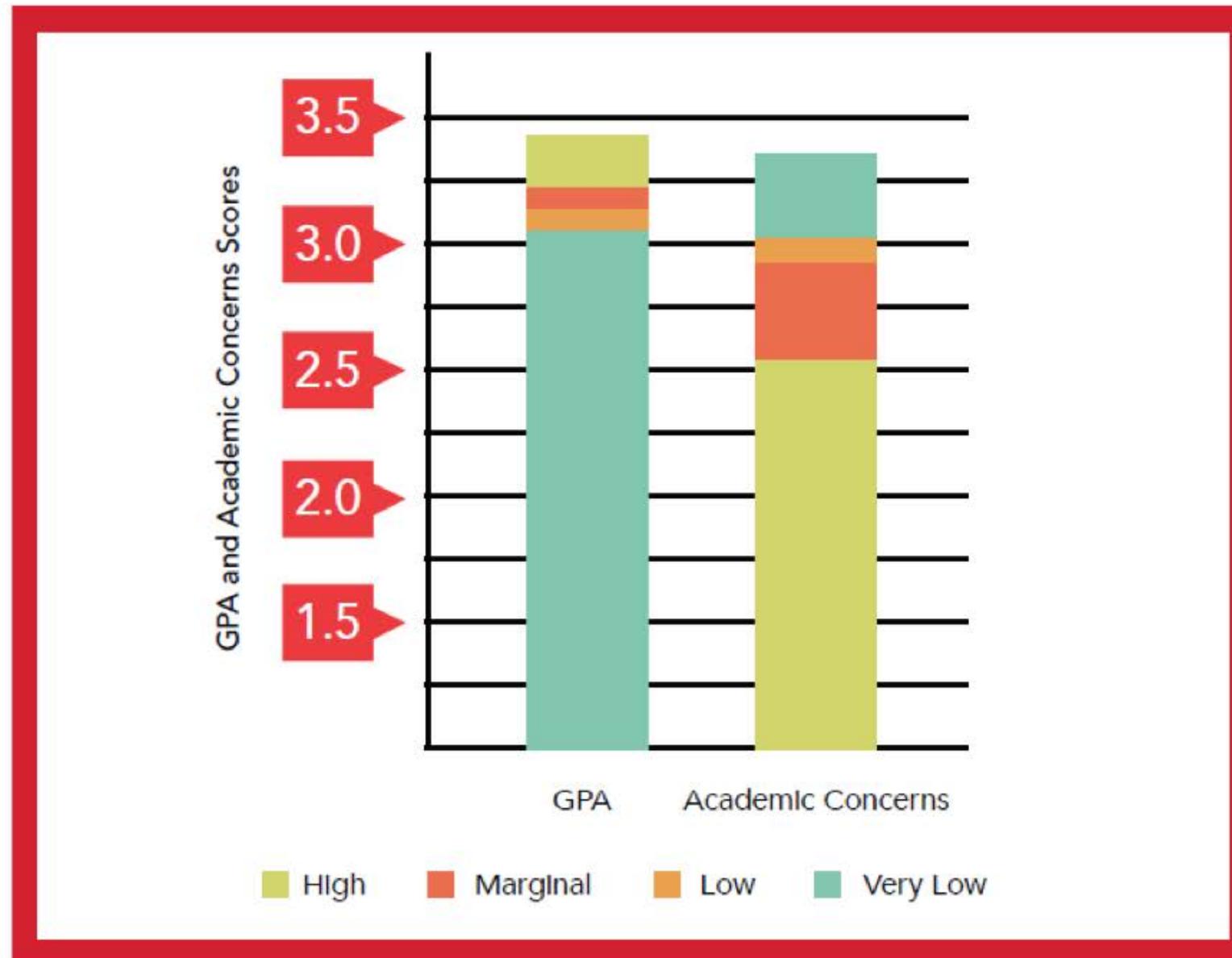


Figure 4
Food security as it is related to academics.

Note. GPA was based on self-report. Academic Concerns were created from the Presenting Problems Scale using a continuous variable from 1-5 based on current level of stress, where the score goes up with greater concern.

Food Security and Academics



I would get bananas and I will cut it in half. I'd eat only half in the morning, and then I would wait five hours, then eat the other half, just so I have something in my stomach consistently...**I would struggle to concentrate** for sure, because sometimes that's **all I could think about was where was my next meal going to come from.**

Susan (CSUDH)



Housing and Academics

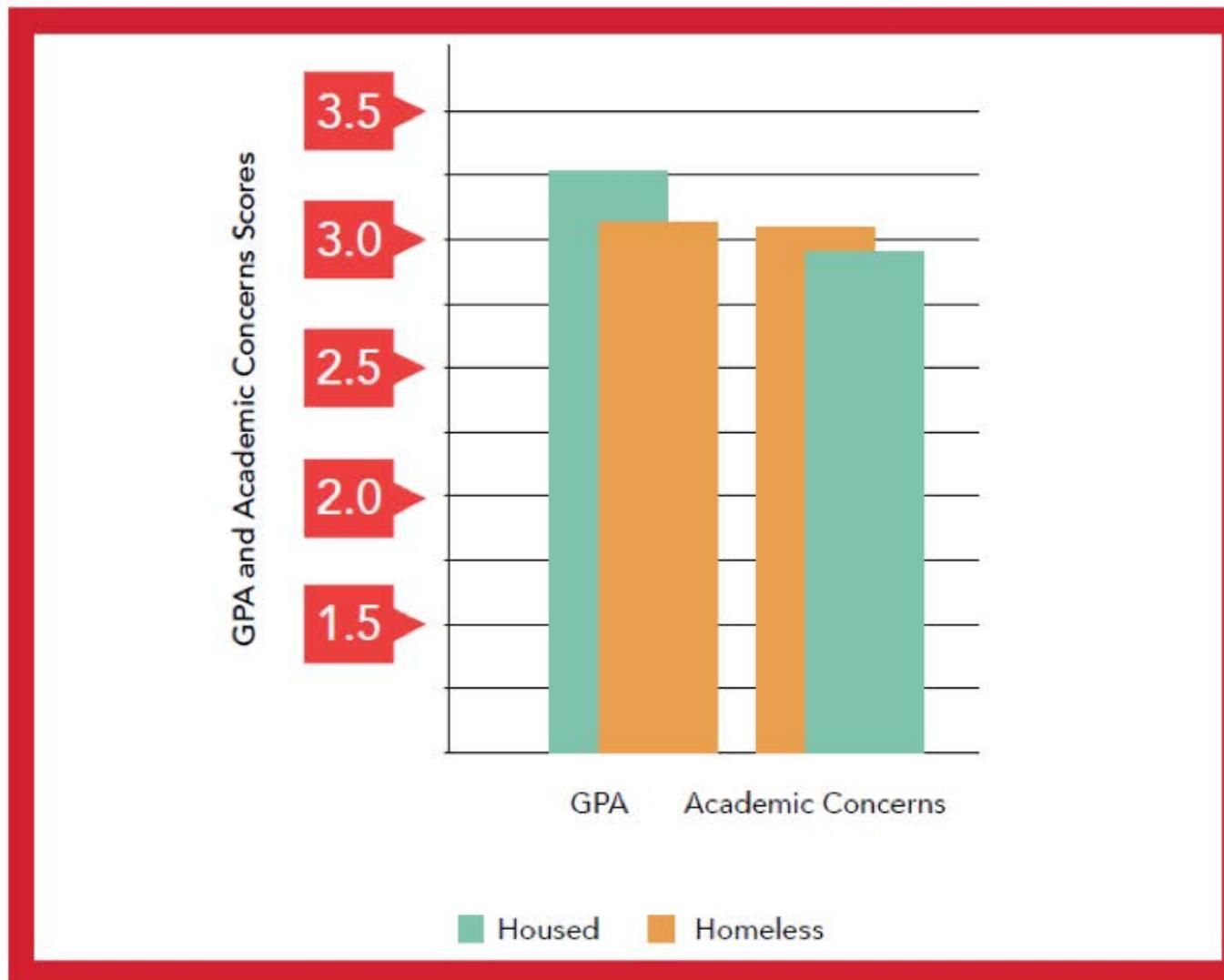


Figure 5
Homelessness and academics

Note. GPA was based on self-report. Academic Concerns were created from the Presenting Problems Scale using a continuous variable from 1-5 based on current level of stress, where the score goes up with greater concern.

Housing and Academics

“

This semester when my housing was really insecure was rough. I got a D in one class...**I just cut down one in order to get fairly good grades in the others...**

Clark (SDSU)

Housing and Academics

“ It affects my studying if I don't know where I'm going to go, where am I studying or am I concentrating on studying because I'm not worried about where I'm going to go.

Gabrielle (CSUDH)



Housing and Academics

Students spoke about high overall GPAs because they had additional study time as they found refuge in the library and in other campus spaces

Food Security and Health

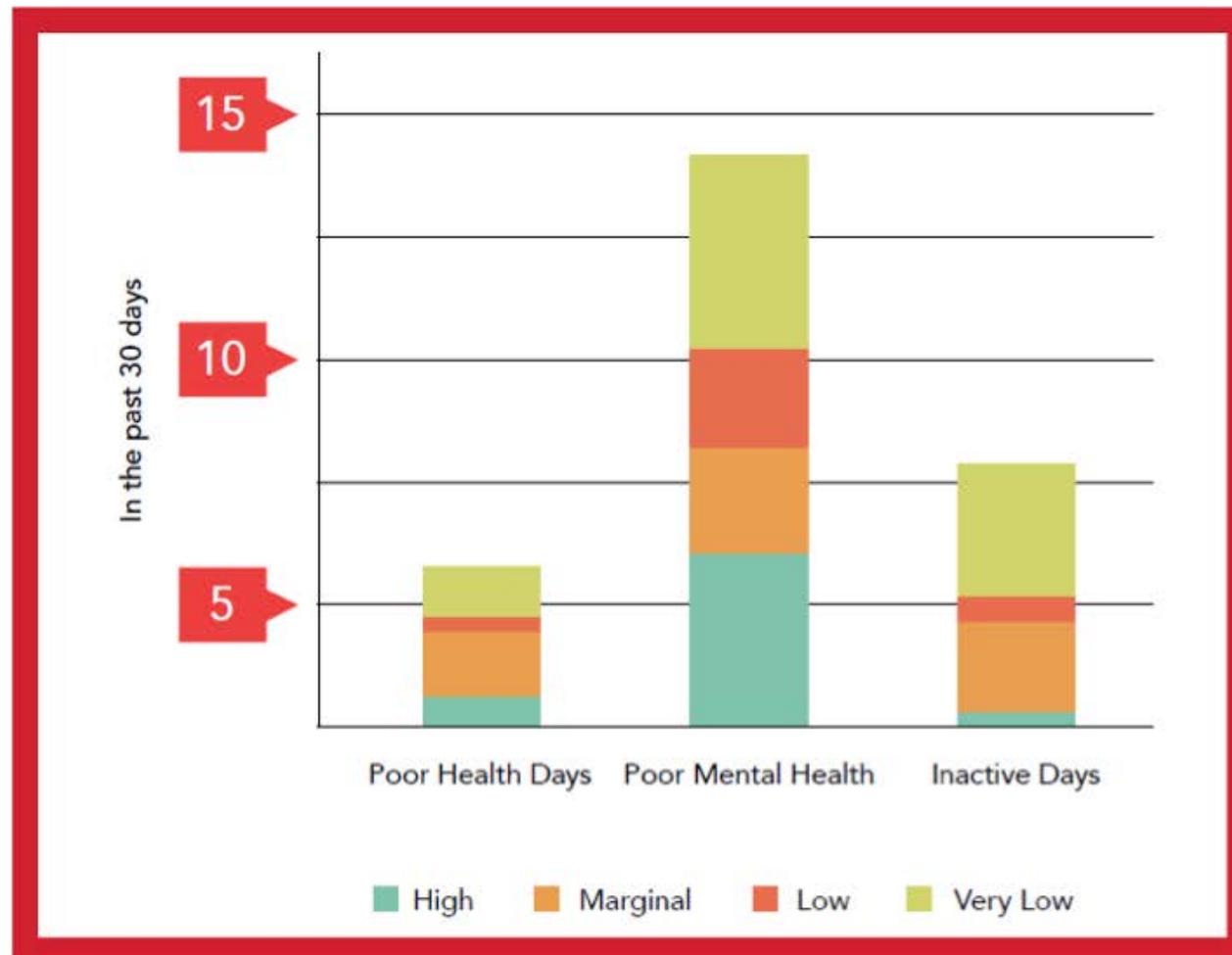


Figure 6
Food security and health.

Food Security and Health

“ Canned foods just don't do it. Yesterday, all of a sudden I started with these tremors in my arms. Ugh, nutrition [laughs]. Just not enough time, not enough money. It's very hard to concentrate. You're exhausted. You couldn't read a book and you fall asleep. It's not easy, even in class.

Bernard (SFSU)



Housing and Health

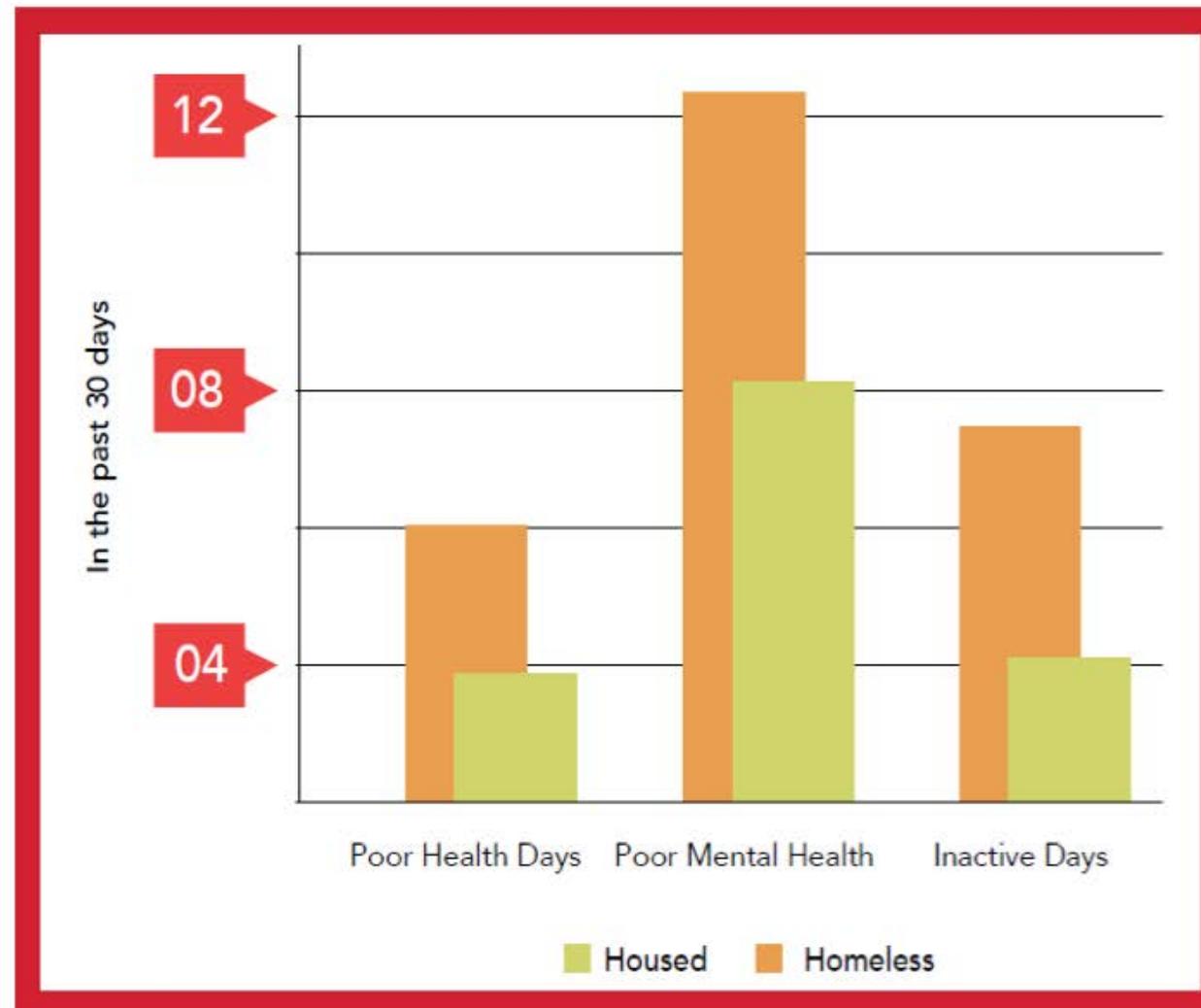


Figure 7
Homelessness and health.

Housing and Health

“ Friend’s couches, ya know, a couple nights in my car. Thankfully it was warm enough to where I’m not freezing to death in the...when I stayed at a certain friend’s house and her roommate was kind of getting annoyed I was there, and I didn’t want to overstay my welcome...and I had left that day before showering, and so it really hit me like I didn’t have a place to shower . . . Something I would never want to wish upon anybody to go through.

Elizabeth (FSU)



Challenges

Meeting Basic Needs

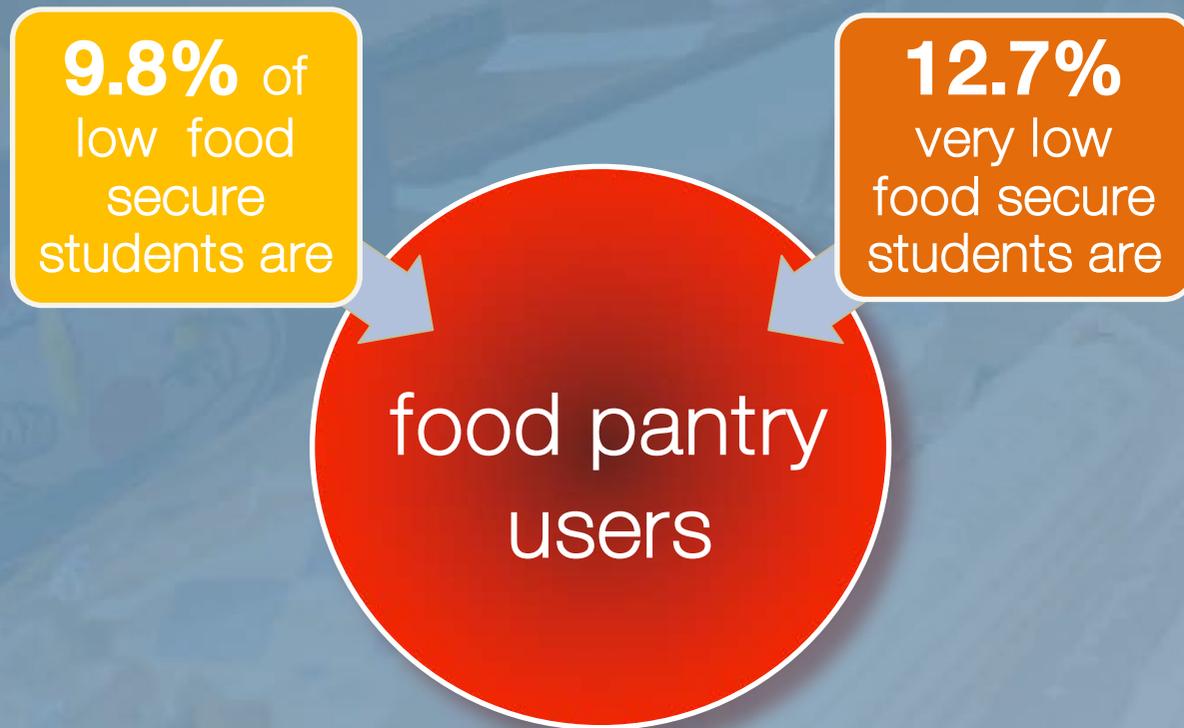
- Most students who were food insecure did not report non-financial reasons
- **70.4% No extra money**
- 26.6% Struggle to buy groceries due to budget
- 17.3% Confusion with bills



Figure 9
Budgeting explanations for why students could not buy groceries.

CSU Student Use of On-Campus Supports

Food resource use



Housing resource awareness

Service Use

Food Pantries

“

... I felt like I had to justify why I was there to them, and they don't need that. They don't need that information, they just want you to be happy and healthy.



“

... myself and other students have experience where you go in there and it's like, "You can't come in here." Or, "this is supposed to be a temporary solution"

...The message was that I shouldn't keep coming down here, it was okay for me to come a few times but I need to move on.



CalFresh

10.1% of students who reported very low food security currently used CalFresh

7.5% of students who reported low food security currently used CalFresh

	Does not meet Criteria	Meets Criteria
CalFresh student exemptions	62.7%	37.3%
SNAP federal income guidelines	31.6%	68.4%
Meets both state and federal criteria	72.6%	27.4%

TABLE 3
College Student CalFresh Eligibility

CalFresh

“ I don't remember how much I got a month, but that was the only semester in college I've ever made the dean's list. I was getting healthy food. When I think about money problems, obviously, it consumes you...I was getting the nutrition, I was getting the energy. I was awake and eating breakfast every morning. It made a difference.

Fiona (SDSU)



Conclusions

- It is clear that food and housing security play a critical role in the health and personal and academic progress of students
- The enormity of the issues are daunting
- Responding to students who are housing or food insecure will require complex, long term approaches to solution building

Recommendations

- Development of affordable food and housing options for students.
- Target strategies to address the student populations that reported the highest levels of food insecurity and homelessness
- Conduct longitudinal research exploring basic needs security as predictors and protective factors that may promote persistence and degree completion

Recommendations

- Incorporate single points of contact who are trained in trauma-informed perspective in programmatic responses
- Identify and institute creative campaigns to develop a campus culture of awareness and response
- Utilize campus-based CalFresh enrollment

Acknowledgements

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INITIATIVE**

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www.calstate.edu/BasicNeeds