

**Understanding Basic Needs Security Among Modesto Junior  
College Students:  
Spring 2023**

Modesto Junior College

Office of Planning, Research, Innovation, and Institutional Effectiveness

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### Understanding Basic Needs Security Among Modesto Junior College Students: Spring 2023

There is growing recognition among community colleges of the potentially important role a student's level of basic needs security plays on key student outcomes such as retention, persistence, and graduation. The extent to which basic needs insecurity impacts a student's academic success is still largely unknown and under-reported. There is a very slim literature base of studies examining university food and housing insecurity (Broton and Goldrick-Rab, 2016; Dubick, Mathews, and Cady, 2017; Crutchfield, 2016; Goldrick-Rab, 2016; Martinez, Maynard, and Ritchie, 2016, Crutchfield and Maguire, 2017) and even fewer examining these factors at the community college level (Goldrick-Rab, Richardson, and Hernandez, 2017; Goldrick-Rab, 2018; Hallett and Freas, 2018)

In Summer 2022, The California Community College Management Information System implemented data element SG23, which will be used to “indicate services and/or support that the student received through the Basic Needs Center at the college during the term” (California Community Colleges Management Information System, 2022). This data element allows college to track students who receive services or support in any of the following areas: food security, housing security, transportation support, mental health, child care, physical health and hygiene, and technology support. Although this new data element does provide insight on the number of students using Basic Needs services offered by California community colleges, the actual proportion of students with basic needs insecurities still remains unknown.

### **Purpose**

Because of this, the purpose of this study was to (1) identify students with basic needs insecurities, (2) understand challenges faced by these students and their attitudes towards the

college's basic needs programs and (3) explore the potential relationship between basic needs security and academic success.

## **Method**

### **Questionnaire Development**

The questionnaire consisted of 27 questions. Questions administered were based on recent literature aimed at assessing basic needs security among college students (Broton and Goldrick-Rab, 2016; Dubick, Mathews, and Cady, 2017; Crutchfield, 2016; Goldrick-Rab, 2016; Martinez, Maynard, and Ritchie, 2016, Crutchfield and Maguire, 2017; Goldrick-Rab, Richardson, and Hernandez, 2017; Goldrick-Rab, 2018; Hallett and Freas, 2018). Questions addressed all seven areas of the California Community College Management Information System implemented data element, SG23 (California Community Colleges Management Information System, 2022).

The 27 questions were broken into 11 overall sections: Demographics, Food Security, Housing Security, Homelessness, Physical/Mental Health, Employment/Job Security, Child Care, Technology Support, Transportation, Support Services, and Focus Group Recruitment. See Appendix A for complete questionnaire.

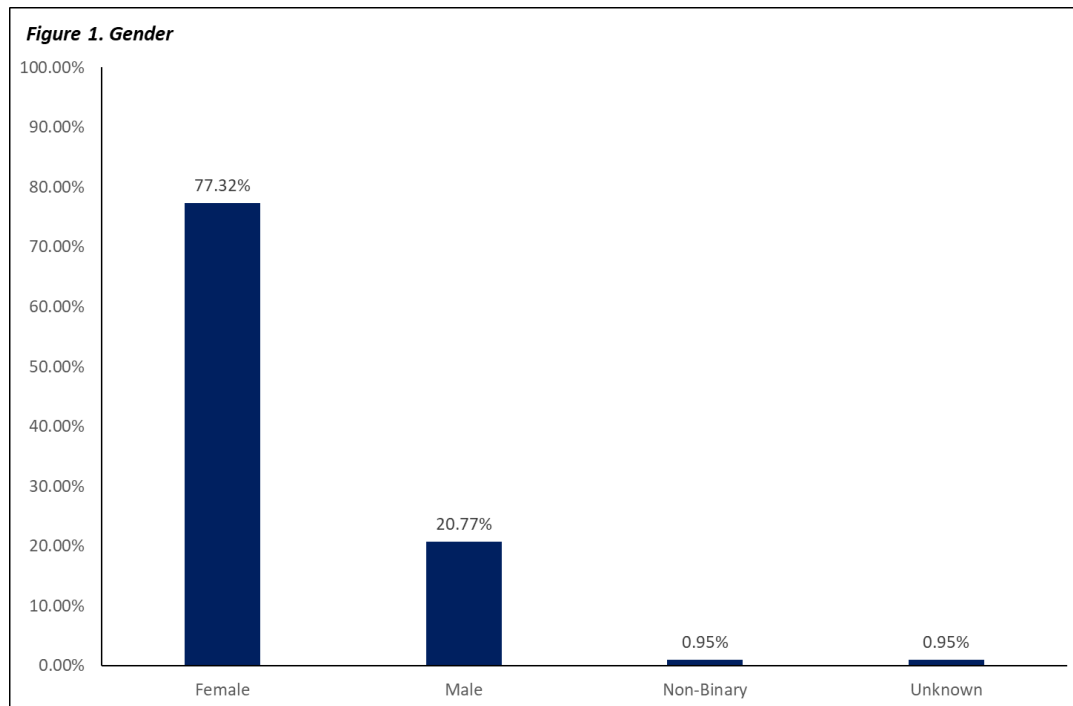
### **Administration**

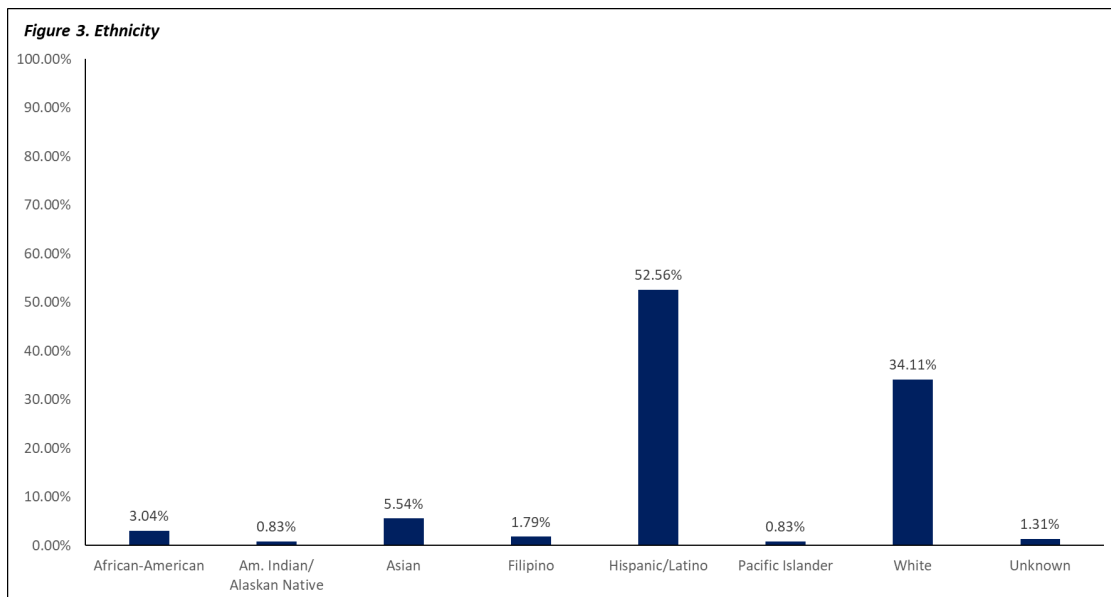
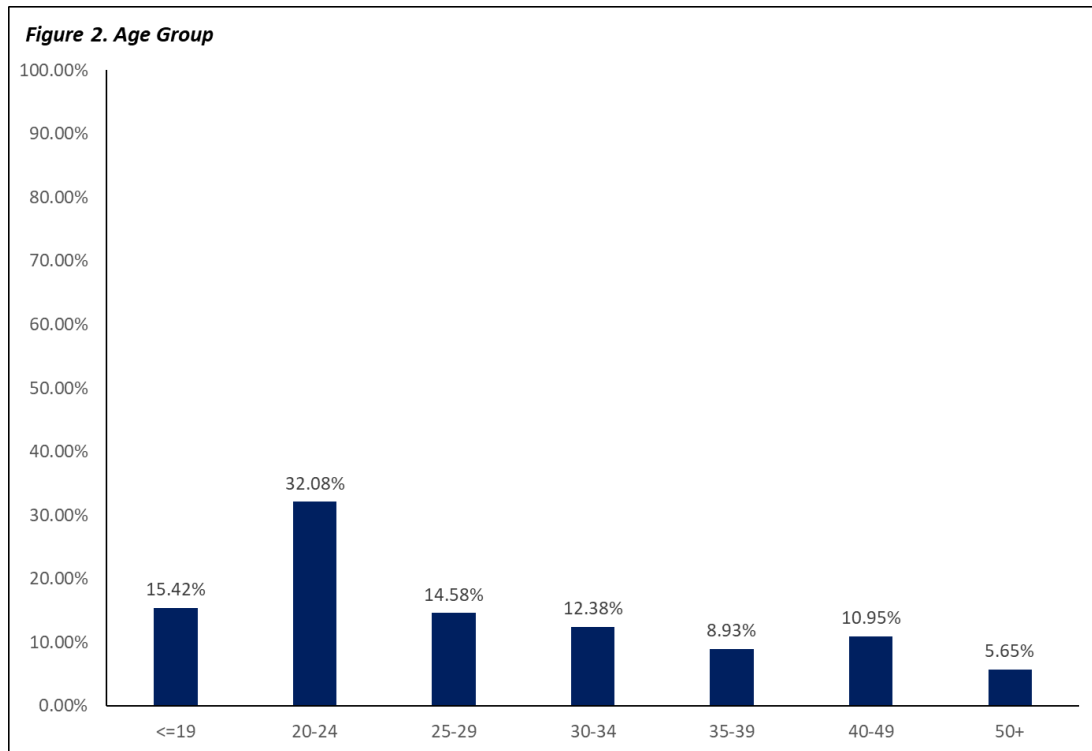
A list of current Modesto Junior College students was generated based on students who registered for courses in the Spring 2023 semester. A total of 14,681 students were then sent a link to the questionnaire via email. The questionnaire link accepted responses for 14 days before data collection closed. The questionnaire was administered through Qualtrics.

## Results

### Demographics

Of the 14,681 students who received the questionnaire, we received a total of 1,680 partial or completed responses (11.4% response rate). The majority of respondents were female ( $n = 1299$ ), with 349 male respondents, 16 non-binary, and 16 respondents who preferred not to state their gender (see figure 1). Respondents mostly consisted of 20-24 year-olds ( $n = 539$ ), with the remaining 68% of respondents collectively made up of 25-29 year-olds ( $n = 245$ ), 30-34 year-olds ( $n = 208$ ), 35-39 year-olds ( $n = 150$ ), 40-49 year-olds ( $n = 184$ ), 50+ ( $n = 95$ ), and 259 respondents under the age of 20 (see figure 2). Mirroring the college population, most respondents were Hispanic/Latino ( $n = 883$ ) or White ( $n = 573$ ). The remaining 13.4% of respondents were African-American ( $n = 51$ ), American Indian/Alaska Native ( $n = 14$ ), Asian ( $n = 93$ ), Filipino ( $n = 30$ ), Pacific Islander ( $n = 14$ ), or Unknown ( $n = 22$ ) (see figure 3).



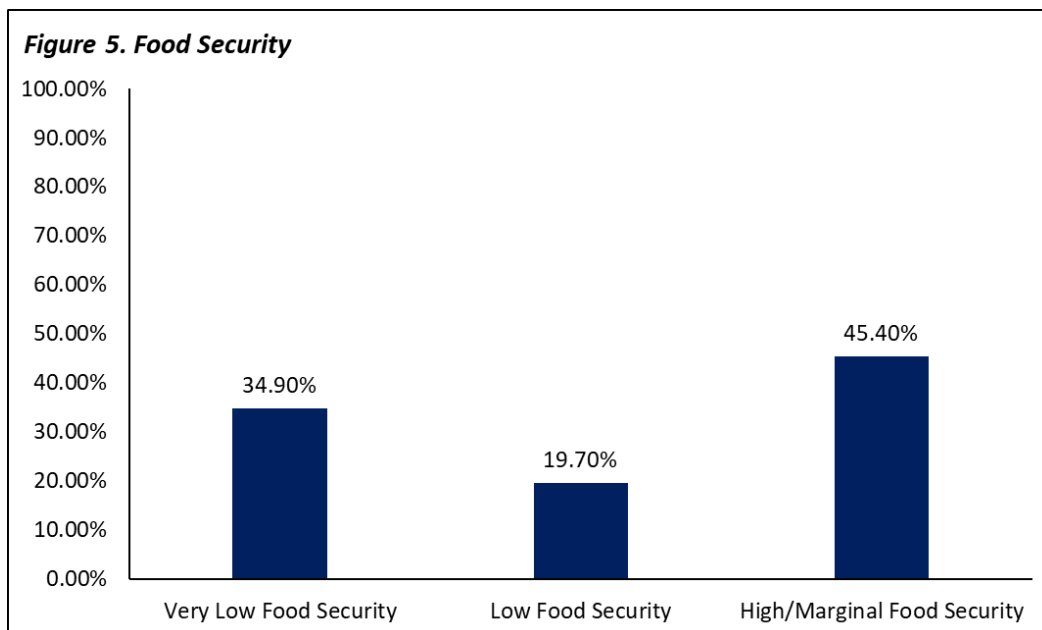


**Descriptive Statistics**

**Food Security.** A six-question scale developed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) was used to derive the number of respondents who may have struggled with food insecurity within the past 12 months (USDA, Economic Research Service, 2012). This

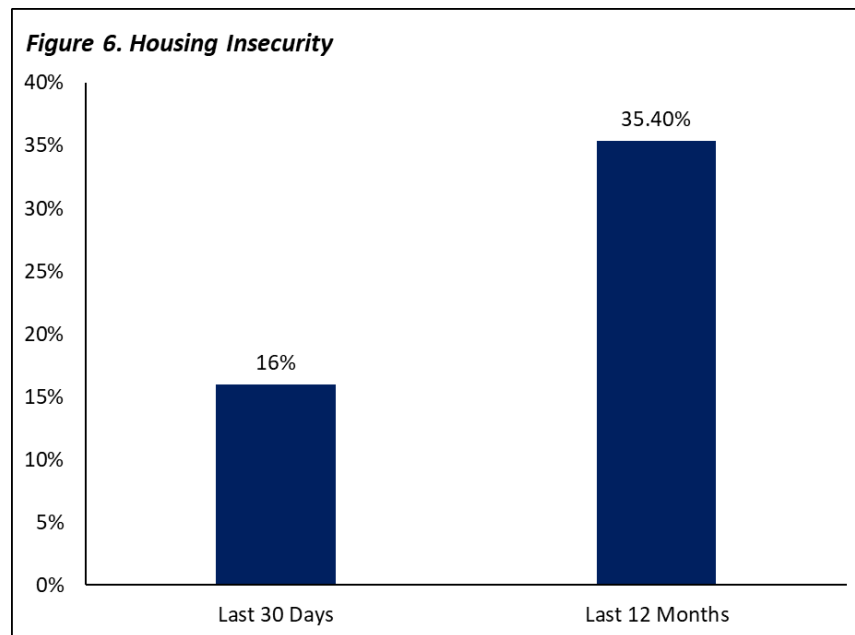
timeframe was chosen to capture students who experienced food insecurity at *any* point in the past 12 months, regardless of when this survey was administered. USDA methodology determines levels of food security (High/Marginal, Low, or Very Low) based on the number of affirmative responses given. Respondents with 2-4 affirmative responses are considered to be at higher odds for experiencing “Low Food Security” and respondents with 5-6 affirmative responses are considered to be at higher odds for experiencing “Very Low Food Security”.

Over one third of respondents (34.90%,  $n = 588$ ) showed signs of Very Low Food Security, with 19.70% experiencing Low Food Security ( $n = 332$ ), and 45.40% falling under the High/Marginal Food Security category ( $n = 765$ ). Out of the 50.4% of respondents ( $n = 797$ ) who responded “Yes” to cutting the size of meals or skipping meals in the last 12 months because there wasn’t enough money for food, 26.7% ( $n = 208$ ) reported that this occurred almost every month, with 53.3% ( $n = 415$ ) stating that it occurred some months, and 20% ( $n = 156$ ) reporting that it occurred only 1-2 months out of the past twelve.



**Housing Security.** The five-question instrument used to explore housing security of housed MJC students was adapted from the Trellis Student Financial Wellness Survey (Klepfer, Ashton, Bradley, Fernandez, Wartel, and Webster, 2018) and encompasses definitions of the Wisconsin HOPE Lab (Goldrick-Rab, Richardson, and Hernandez, 2017). If a respondent affirmed any statement in this instrument, they were considered to have experienced housing insecurity.

Respondents were asked if these instances occurred in the last 30 days or the last 12 months. It was found that 35.4% ( $n = 596$ ) of respondents have reportedly experienced an instance of housing insecurity within the past 12 months, with 16% ( $n = 269$ ) reportedly experiencing an instance of housing insecurity within the past 30 days.

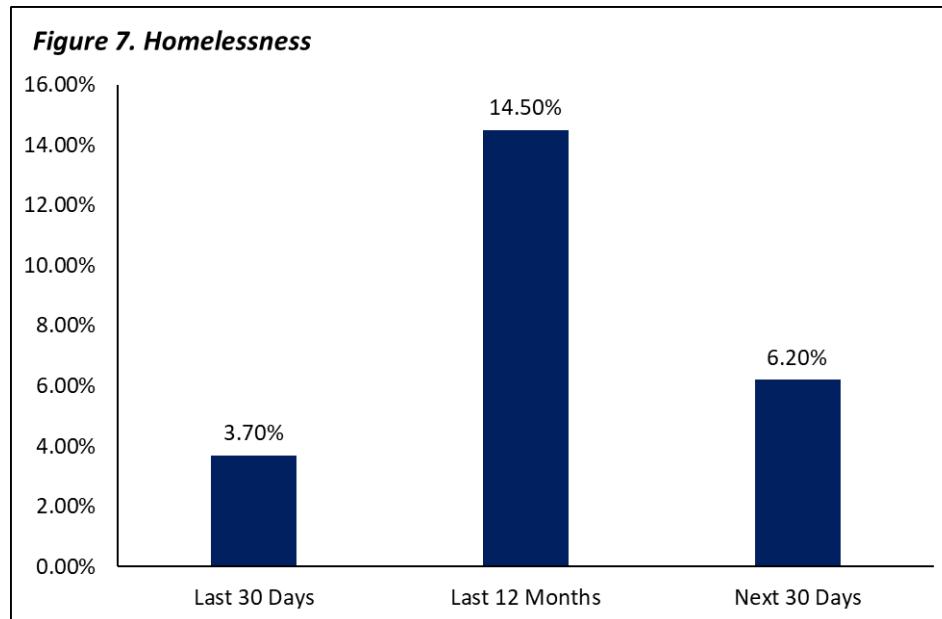


**Homelessness.** The seven-question instrument used to determine a respondent's status as homeless was adapted from the CSU System-wide Food and Housing Security Student Survey Instrument (Crutchfield and Maguire, 2017) and encompasses the homelessness definitions of both the U.S. Housing and Urban Development (Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid



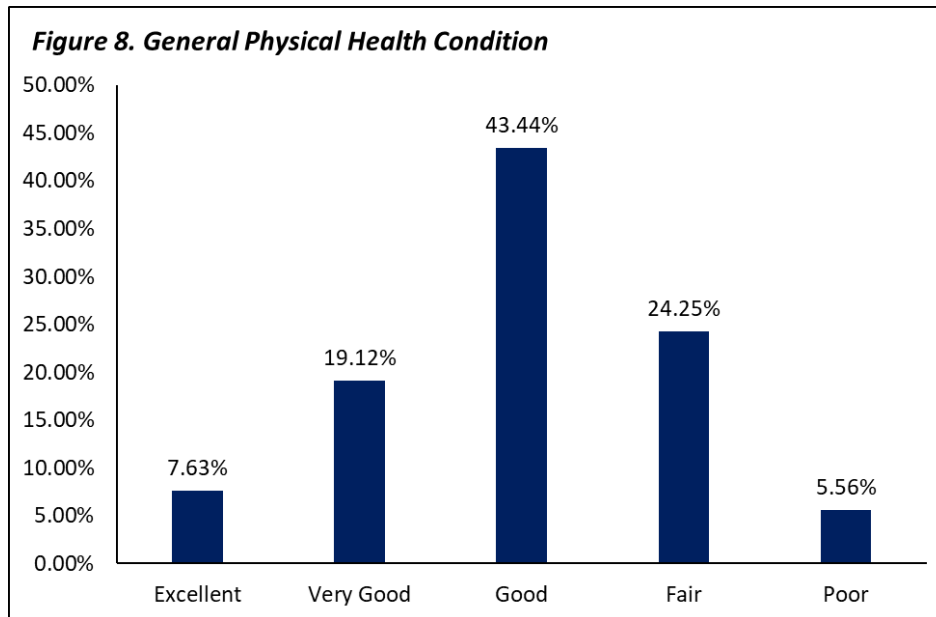
Transition to Housing Act of 2009; P.L. 111-22, Section 1003) and the U.S. Department of Education (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; PL 100-77). If a respondent affirmed any statement in this instrument, they were considered to have experienced an instance of homelessness.

Respondents were asked if these instances occurred in the last 30 days or the last 12 months. It was found that 14.5% ( $n = 209$ ) of respondents have reportedly experienced an instance of homelessness within the past 12 months, with 3.7% ( $n = 63$ ) reportedly experiencing an instance of homelessness within the past 30 days. Additionally, 6.2% of respondents ( $n = 104$ ) reported they will *not* have access to a permanent residence within the next 30 days.



**Physical/Mental Health.** The three-question instrument used to measure respondents' general health was adapted from the CORE Healthy Days Measures recommended by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2000). Overall, respondents reported to be in good health ( $M = 3.01$ ,  $SD = 0.98$ ,  $n = 1,402$ ) with 29% of respondents reporting their overall health to be "fair" ( $n = 340$ ) or "poor" ( $n = 78$ ). Eighty-five percent of respondents stated they have health

insurance, while 7.7% report having no health insurance ( $n = 108$ ) and 7% are uncertain about their health insurance status ( $n = 98$ ). On average, respondents reported poor physical or mental health kept them from doing their usual activities, such as work, school, self-care, or recreation, approximately 9.69 out of the past thirty days ( $SD = 8.26$ ,  $n = 1,188$ ). Additionally, 29.5% of respondents ( $n = 348$ ) were considered to have experienced substantial mental or physical distress over the past thirty days as defined by reporting 14 or more poor health days in a thirty-day period (Milazzo-Sayre, Henderson, & Manderscheid, 1997).



The 22-item scale used to evaluate the nature of respondents' psychological concerns was adapted from The College Students Presenting Problems Scale (Erdur-Baker, Aberson, Barrow, & Draper, 2006). Items were broken up into 5 primary categories: Academic Concerns, Depression, Anxiety, Problems in Romantic Relationships, and Concerns about the Future. Respondents rating their current level of distress on an item as "Extreme" were considered to be presenting a severe level of mental/psychological distress.

Within the category of Academic Concerns, 11.9% of respondents reported extreme distress related to Academics/School Work/Grades ( $n = 164$ ), 9.2% reported extreme distress related to concentration ( $n = 128$ ), 15.5% reported extreme distress related to procrastination/getting motivated ( $n = 214$ ), 6.1% reported extreme distress related to reading/study skills problems ( $n = 85$ ), and 12.4% reported extreme distress related to time management ( $n = 173$ ). See Table 1 for a complete breakdown of responses.

**Table 1. College Students Presenting Problems Scale – Academic Concerns**

Scale Items	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
School Work/Grades	233 (16.9%)	375 (27.2%)	388 (28.1%)	220 (15.9%)	164 (11.9%)
Concentration	207 (14.9%)	407 (29.4%)	360 (26%)	283 (20.4%)	128 (9.2%)
Procrastination/Getting Motivated	185 (13.4%)	336 (24.4%)	354 (25.6%)	291 (21.1%)	214 (15.5%)
Reading/Study Skills	432 (31.2%)	421 (30.4%)	312 (22.6%)	133 (9.6%)	85 (6.2%)
Time Management	190 (13.7%)	378 (27.2%)	403 (29%)	246 (17.7%)	173 (12.5%)

Within the category of Depression, 17% of respondents indicated they experience extreme distress related to sleeping problems ( $n = 236$ ), 11% reported experiencing extreme distress related to depression ( $n = 153$ ), 2% reported experiencing extreme distress related to suicidal feelings ( $n = 27$ ), 10% reported experiencing extreme distress related to physical health problems ( $n = 139$ ), and 5% reported experiencing extreme distress related to irritability/anger/hostility ( $n = 70$ ). See Table 2 for a complete breakdown of responses.

**Table 2. College Students Presenting Problems Scale – Depression**

Scale Items	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Sleeping Problems	250 (18%)	353 (25.5%)	266 (19.2%)	281 (20.3%)	236 (17%)
Depression	420 (30.4%)	349 (25.3%)	242 (17.5%)	217 (15.7%)	153 (11.1%)

Suicidal Feelings	1038 (75.2%)	187 (13.5%)	84 (6.1%)	44 (3.2%)	27 (2%)
Physical Health	311 (22.5%)	456 (32.9%)	280 (20.2%)	199 (14.4%)	139 (10%)
Irritability/Hostility	480 (34.7%)	446 (32.3%)	245 (17.7%)	142 (10.3%)	70 (5.1%)

Within the category of Anxiety, 22% of respondents indicated they experience extreme distress related to anxiety/fear/worries/nervousness ( $n = 305$ ), 14% reported experiencing extreme distress related to stress management ( $n = 195$ ), and 17.6% reported experiencing extreme distress related to test/speech/performance anxiety ( $n = 243$ ). See Table 3 for a complete breakdown of responses.

**Table 3. College Students Presenting Problems Scale – Anxiety**

Scale Items	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Anxiety/Fear/Worries/ Nervousness	175 (12.6%)	310 (22.4%)	300 (21.7%)	295 (21.3%)	305 (22%)
Stress Management	183 (13.2%)	367 (26.5%)	397 (28.7%)	243 (17.6%)	195 (14.1%)
Test/Speech/ Performance Anxiety	298 (21.6%)	328 (23.8%)	294 (21.3%)	218 (15.8%)	243 (17.6%)

Within the category of Problems in Romantic Relationships, 4.3% indicated they are experiencing extreme distress related to a breakup/loss of a relationship ( $n = 59$ ) and 6% reported experiencing extreme distress related to their relationship with their romantic partner/spouse ( $n = 82$ ). See Table 4 for a complete breakdown of responses.

**Table 4. College Students Presenting Problems Scale – Romantic Relationships**

Scale Items	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Breakup/Loss of a Relationship	1018 (74.2%)	142 (10.4%)	85 (6.2%)	68 (5%)	59 (4.3%)

Relationship Distress	836 (60.7%)	216 (15.7%)	163 (11.9%)	79 (5.7%)	82 (6%)
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Within the category of Concerns about the Future, 11.4% of respondents indicated they are experiencing extreme distress related to decisions about careers/majors ( $n = 158$ ), 21% reported currently experiencing extreme distress related to finances ( $n = 289$ ), and 16.3% reported experiencing extreme distress related to uncertainty about their future/life after college ( $n = 226$ ). See Table 5 for a complete breakdown of responses.

**Table 5. College Students Presenting Problems Scale – Concerns about the Future**

Scale Items	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Financial Concerns	228 (16.5%)	260 (18.8%)	295 (21.4%)	307 (22.3%)	289 (21%)
Life Post College	290 (21%)	353 (25.5%)	281 (20.3%)	232 (16.8%)	226 (16.3%)
Career/Major Decisions	338 (24.5%)	352 (25.5%)	348 (25.2%)	185 (13.4%)	158 (11.4%)

Outside of the 5 primary categories, 4 additional items were included on the Scale: Fatigue, Hopelessness, Grief/loss, and Sexuality/gender. 14.8% of respondents reported currently experiencing extreme distress related to fatigue ( $n = 204$ ), 7.3% reported experiencing extreme distress related to hopelessness ( $n = 101$ ), 8.2% reported experiencing extreme distress related to grief/loss ( $n = 113$ ), and 1.8% reported experiencing extreme distress related to sexuality/gender ( $n = 25$ ). See Table 6 for a complete breakdown of responses.

**Table 6. College Students Presenting Problems Scale – Additional Items**

Scale Items	Not at all	A little bit	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely
Fatigue	260 (18.8%)	343 (24.9%)	320 (23.2%)	252 (18.3%)	204 (14.8%)
Hopelessness	545 (39.5%)	368 (26.7%)	217 (15.7%)	148 (10.7%)	101 (7.3%)
Grief/Loss	770 (56%)	246 (17.9%)	153 (11.1%)	93 (6.8%)	113 (8.2%)

Sexuality/Gender	1162 (84.7%)	83 (6.1%)	76 (5.5%)	26 (1.9%)	25 (1.8%)
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**Employment/Job Security.** Respondents were asked questions related to employment and job security. 13.3% of respondents reported to have lost a job within the past 12 months ( $n = 173$ ), 24.3% indicated they have experienced reduced working hours ( $n = 316$ ), and 4.7% stated they have experienced a reduction in pay at work ( $n = 61$ ). On average, respondents reported that all of the following items have little-to-no impact on their ability to work for pay or work as much as they would like: child care responsibilities ( $M = 1.58$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ,  $n = 1,312$ ), caretaking responsibilities for someone other than a child ( $M = 1.57$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ,  $n = 1,320$ ), health problems of their own ( $M = 1.83$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ,  $n = 1,319$ ), difficulty arranging transportation to and/or from work ( $M = 1.51$ ,  $SD = 0.89$ ,  $n = 1,319$ ), employer restrictions on how many hours they work ( $M = 1.67$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ,  $n = 1,317$ ), and employer set work time/shift schedules ( $M = 1.73$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ,  $n = 1,317$ ).

**Child Care.** Respondents were asked two questions related to child care. Overall, 40.5% of respondents are parents ( $n = 543$ ). Of that 40.5%, 27.9% do **not** have access to adequate, reliable child care ( $n = 150$ ), with 25.5% reporting they sometimes have access to child care ( $n = 137$ ).

**Technology Support.** Respondents were asked two questions related to technology access and support. 11% of respondents do **not** possess a functional laptop or computer ( $n = 147$ ). When asked if they have sufficient internet access, 76.4% reported having sufficient access ( $n = 1017$ ), 19.5% stated they sometimes have access ( $n = 260$ ), and 4.1% report not having sufficient access to the internet ( $n = 55$ ).

**Transportation.** Respondents were asked two questions related to transportation to and from campus. When asked how many hours, on average, do they spend commuting to and from campus each week, 25.9% reported less than an hour ( $n = 344$ ), 29.4% reported 1-3 hours ( $n = 390$ ), 11.1% reported 3-6 hours ( $n = 147$ ), 5.8% reported they spend over six hours commuting to and from campus each week ( $n = 77$ ), and 27.9% reported they do not have a commute ( $n = 370$ ). When asked how they get to and from campus, 7.1% reported using public transportation ( $n = 94$ ), 1.3% walk ( $n = 17$ ), 4% carpool ( $n = 53$ ), 57.6% drive their own car ( $n = 764$ ), 0.3% bike or skate ( $n < 10$ ), 6.3% use a different mode of transportation ( $n = 84$ ), and 23.4% have solely online courses ( $n = 311$ ).

**Support Services.** Respondents were asked about their usage of the six basic needs support services currently offered at MJC: Pirate's Food Pantry, Personal Care & Hygiene (bath/body products, personal care packages, clothing rack, etc.), Timely Care (Mental Health), CalFresh Application Assistance, MJC Health Services, and Free Lunch On Wednesday (FLOW). When asked about Pirate's Food Pantry, 9.6% of respondents currently use the service ( $n = 125$ ), 13% have used the service in the past ( $n = 169$ ), 52% have heard of the service, but have never used it ( $n = 678$ ), and 25.5% have never heard of the service ( $n = 332$ ). When asked about Personal Care & Hygiene (bath/body products, personal care packages, clothing rack, etc.), 6% of respondents currently use the service ( $n = 78$ ), 4.6% have used the service in the past ( $n = 60$ ), 37.7% have heard of the service, but have never used it ( $n = 425$ ), and 56.7% have never heard of the service ( $n = 736$ ). When asked about Timely Care (Mental Health), 2.4% of respondents currently use the service ( $n = 31$ ), 5% have used the service in the past ( $n = 65$ ), 42.1% have heard of the service, but have never used it ( $n = 548$ ), and 50.6% have never heard of the service ( $n = 659$ ). When asked about CalFresh Application Assistance, 11% of

respondents currently use the service ( $n = 143$ ), 10.5% have used the service in the past ( $n = 136$ ), 49.9% have heard of the service, but have never used it ( $n = 647$ ), and 28.7% have never heard of the service ( $n = 372$ ). When asked about MJC Health Services, 3.1% of respondents currently use the service ( $n = 40$ ), 10.6% have used the service in the past ( $n = 137$ ), 60.3% have heard of the service, but have never used it ( $n = 782$ ), and 26.1% have never heard of the service ( $n = 479$ ). When asked about FLOW, 6.9% of respondents currently use the service ( $n = 90$ ), 11.5% have used the service in the past ( $n = 150$ ), 44.7% have heard of the service, but have never used it ( $n = 582$ ), and 36.8% have never heard of the service ( $n = 479$ ).

Respondents were also asked to provide their primary reason for not using these resources (if applicable). 23.1% of respondents stated that they are not in need of assistance ( $n = 259$ ), 21.3% do not know how to access the resources ( $n = 238$ ), 18.1% have not heard of the programs/resources ( $n = 203$ ), 11.4% do not have time to access the resources ( $n = 128$ ), 10.8% are not eligible for the programs/services ( $n = 121$ ), 4.3% state it is embarrassing to have to use the programs/resources ( $n = 48$ ), 3% do not have transportation to access the programs/services ( $n = 34$ ), 0.4% do not believe in using social services ( $n < 10$ ), and 7.6% stated a reason other than what was provided ( $n = 85$ ).

### **Correlational Analysis**

**Food Security & Physical Health.** A Pearson's  $r$  correlational analysis was used to examine the relationship between a student's level of food security and their physical health based on their reported number of poor health days in a thirty-day period. Results indicated that there was a significant positive correlation,  $r(1058) = .284, p < .001$ .



**Food Security & Mental Health.** A Pearson's  $r$  correlational analysis was used to examine the relationship between a student's level of food security and their mental health based on their score for the top three mental health indicators from question 13 of the survey: anxiety, financial distress, and sleeping problems. Results indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between a student's level of food security and their reported anxiety-related distress ( $r(1233) = .290, p < .001$ ), financial distress ( $r(1229) = .546, p < .001$ ), and sleeping problems ( $r(1234) = .300, p < .001$ ).

**Food Security & Grade Point Average (GPA).** A Pearson's  $r$  correlational analysis was used to examine the relationship between a student's level of food security and their cumulative GPA. Results indicated that there was a significant negative correlation,  $r(1506) = -.148, p < .001$ .

**Physical Health & Grade Point Average (GPA).** A Pearson's  $r$  correlational analysis was used to examine the relationship between a student's physical health (based on their reported number of poor health days in a thirty-day period) and their cumulative GPA. Results indicated that there was a significant negative correlation,  $r(1058) = -.195, p < .001$ .

**Mental Health & Grade Point Average (GPA).** A Pearson's  $r$  correlational analysis was used to examine the relationship between a student's mental health (based on their score for the top three mental health indicators from question 13 of the survey: anxiety, financial distress, and sleeping problems) and their cumulative GPA. Results indicated that there was a significant negative correlation between a student's GPA and their reported anxiety-related distress ( $r(1233) = -.089, p = .002$ ), financial distress ( $r(1229) = -.127, p < .001$ ), and sleeping problems ( $r(1234) = -.108, p < .001$ ).

## Discussion and Recommendations

The objectives of this survey were to (1) identify students with basic needs insecurities, (2) understand challenges faced by these students and their attitudes towards the college's basic needs programs and (3) explore the potential relationship between basic needs security and academic success.

Overall, 54.6% of respondents showed signs of experiencing food insecurity, with 19.7% having experienced low food security and 34.9% having experienced very low food security within the past 12 months. In terms of housing security, 35.4% of respondents have experienced an instance of housing insecurity within the past 12 months, with 16% having experienced an instance of housing insecurity within the past 30 days. Additionally, 14.5% of respondents have experienced an instance of homelessness within the past 12 months, 3.7% have experienced homelessness in the past 30 days, and 6.2% will not have access to a permanent residence within the *next* 30 days. In terms of health, almost one-third of respondents (29.5%) are considered by the US Department of Health and Human Services (2000) to have experienced substantial mental or physical distress over the past 30 days. Related to mental health specifically, 22% of respondents are experiencing extreme distress related to anxiety, 21% are experiencing extreme financial distress, and 17% are experiencing extreme distress related to sleeping problems. Child care access is also important to note as 40.5% of respondents were parents; however, 27.9% of those parents do not have reliable access to child care. Finally, in terms of technology, 11% of respondents do not possess a functional laptop or computer and 23.6% do not have consistent, reliable access to the internet.

Because Modesto Junior College is an academic institution, it is also important to highlight the potential relationship between basic needs security and academic success. As shown through the correlational analyses conducted, there are statistically significant negative relationships between a student's level of food security and their cumulative GPA, a student's physical health and their cumulative GPA, and a student's mental health and their cumulative GPA. While causality cannot be proven from these correlations, it is still crucial to understand that the greater the extent to which a student faces food insecurity, poor physical health, or poor mental health, the more likely the student will have a lower cumulative GPA.

Considering the large percentage of respondents dealing with basic needs insecurities, its potential relationship to academic success, and that Modesto Junior College has support services related to food security, physical health, and mental health, we evaluated respondents' reported usage of these services. Related to food security, 22.6% of respondents currently use or have used Pirate's Food Pantry, 7.4% currently use or have used CalFresh Application Assistance, and 18.4% currently use or have used FLOW (Free Lunch On Wednesday). Related to physical health, 13.7% of respondents currently use or have used MJC Health Services. Finally, related to mental health, 7.4% of respondents currently use or have used Timely Care (Mental Health Services). Although it is clear that some students have found and do use these services, there is an even larger percentage of student who are not aware these services exist. Related to food security, 25.5% of respondents have never heard of Pirate's Food Pantry, 28.7% have never heard of CalFresh Application Assistance, and 36.8% have never heard of FLOW. Related to physical health, 26.1% of respondents have never heard of MJC Health Services. Finally, related to mental health, 50.6% of respondents have never heard of Timely Care. When students who need assistance were asked why they are not using these resources, 27.7% reported they do not

know **how** to access these resources and 23.6% reported they did not know these resources existed. Given this data and the proportion of MJC students with food, physical health, and mental health needs, it may prove beneficial to improve the exposure *and* accessibility of basic needs programs at MJC.

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**Appendix A. Spring 2023 Basic Needs Survey Items**

Q1. Are you any of the following? Select all that apply.

- a. Current or Former Foster Youth
- b. International Student
- c. Out-of-State Student
- d. ESL Student
- e. Active Duty Military Personnel
- f. DREAM Student
- g. DACA Student
- h. RSN Student
- i. Umoja Student
- j. TRIO Student
- k. LGBTQ+ Student
- l. Collaborative Student
- m. CARE Student
- n. Comunidad Student
- o. None of the above

Q2. In the last 12 months, I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals.

- a. Often True
- b. Sometimes True
- c. Never True

Q3. In the last 12 months, the food I bought didn't last and I didn't have money to get more.

- a. Often True
- b. Sometimes True
- c. Never True

Q4. In the last 12 months, did you ever cut the size of meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q4a. (If Yes) How often did this happen?

- a. Almost Every Month
- b. Some Months, but not Every Month
- c. Only 1 or 2 Months

Q5. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q6. In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q7. Please answer the following statements (Response choices: "In the Last 30 Days", In the Last 12 Months", "N/A"):

- a. I have had difficulty paying for my rent
- b. I didn't pay the full amount of my rent
- c. I have moved 2 or more times
- d. I doubled up or took a roommate to save money
- e. I moved in with other people due to financial problems

Q8. Please answer the following statements (Response choices: "In the Last 30 Days", In the Last 12 Months", "N/A"):

- a. I was thrown out of my home
- b. I was evicted from my home
- c. I stayed in a shelter
- d. I stayed in an abandoned building
- e. I didn't know where I would sleep at night
- f. I didn't have a home
- g. I have stayed temporarily ("couch-surfing") with friends, relatives, or other people due to a lack of permanent residence



Q9. Within the next 30 days, I will not have access to a permanent residence.

- a. Yes
- b. No

Q10. Would you say that, in general, your health is:

- a. Excellent
- b. Very Good
- c. Good
- d. Fair
- e. Poor

Q11. Do you have health insurance?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. I am not sure if I have health insurance

Q12. During the past 30 days, for about how many days did poor physical or mental health keep you from doing your usual activities, such as work, school, self-care, or recreation?

- Sliding scale: 0-30 days

Q13. Below is a list of circumstances that students sometimes face. Carefully read each one, then mark each response indicating your current level of distress (Response Choices: Not at all, A little bit, Moderately, Quite a bit, Extremely):

- a. Academics/School Work/Grades
- b. Anxiety/Fear/Worries/Nervousness
- c. Breakup/Loss of a Relationship
- d. Concentration
- e. Decisions about Career/Major
- f. Depression
- g. Finances
- h. Irritability/Anger/Hostility
- i. Physical Health Problems (i.e. Headaches, stomach pains, etc.)
- j. Procrastination/Getting Motivated

- k. Reading/Study Skills Problems
- l. Relationship with Romantic Partner/Spouse
- m. Sleeping Problems
- n. Stress Management
- o. Suicidal Feelings
- p. Test anxiety/speech anxiety/performance anxiety
- q. Time management
- r. Uncertain about future/life after college
- s. Fatigue
- t. Hopelessness
- u. Grief/loss
- v. Sexuality/Gender

Q14. In the last 12 months, I have: (Check all that apply)

- a. Lost a job
- b. Experienced reduced working hours
- c. Experienced a reduction in pay at work
- d. None of the above

Q15. How much does each of the following impact your ability to work for pay or work as much as you would like? (Response Choices: No Impact, Minor Impact, Moderate Impact, Severe Impact)

- a. Child Care Responsibilities
- b. Caretaking responsibilities for someone other than a child (such as a parent, spouse/partner, or other adult family member/friend)
- c. Health problems of your own
- d. Difficulty arranging transportation to and/or from work
- e. Employer restrictions on how many hours you work
- f. Employer sets or schedules the times or shifts that you work

Q16. Are you currently working in your field of study?

- a. No, working outside my field of study
- b. Yes, working in my field of study
- c. Unsure
- d. I am not currently employed

Q17. Do you have a current resume and cover letter?

- a. Yes, both my resume and cover letter are up-to-date
- b. I have an updated resume but not a cover letter
- c. I have an updated cover letter but not a resume
- d. Neither my resume or cover letter are up-to-date
- e. I do not have a cover letter or resume

Q18. Are you a parent?

- a. No
- b. Yes

Q19. Do you have access to adequate, reliable child care?

- a. No
- b. Sometimes
- c. Yes

Q20. Do you have a functional laptop or computer?

- a. No
- b. Yes

Q21. Do you have sufficient internet access?

- a. No
- b. Sometimes
- c. Yes

Q22. On average, how many hours do you spend commuting to and from campus each week?

- a. Less than an hour
- b. 1-3 hours
- c. 3-6 hours
- d. More than 6 hours
- e. I do not have a commute

Q23. How do you get to campus?

- a. Public Transportation
- b. Walk
- c. Carpool
- d. I drive my own care
- e. Bike/Skate
- f. Other, please Specify
- g. I do not need to come to campus (All my courses are online)

Q24. Do you use any of the following campus-based resources? (Response Choices: Never heard of it; Heard of it, but never used it; Used it in the past; Currently use it)

- a. Pirate's Food Pantry
- b. Personal Care & Hygiene (bath/body products, personal care packages, clothing rack, etc.)
- c. Timely Care (Mental Health)
- d. CalFresh Application Assistance
- e. MJC Health Services
- f. FLOW (Free Lunch On Wednesday)

Q25. If you do not use any of these resources, please state the primary reason why.

- a. I do not need assistance
- b. I am not eligible
- c. I have not heard of the programs/resources
- d. I do not have time to access these resources
- e. I do not know how to access these resources

- f. I do not believe in using social services
- g. It is embarrassing to have to use these resources
- h. I do not have transportation
- i. Other, Please Specify
- j. N/A; I currently use these resources

Q26. Are you interested in participating in a focus group about your experiences with the topics discussed in this survey?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Unsure. Can I have more information first?