

WASHINGTON STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY 2024

OVERVIEW

[This informational section is included for participating institutions and for IRB review and will not be presented to participants.]

The purpose of this instrument is to assess the prevalence of unmet basic needs among students in higher education institutions in Washington State. The original data collection instrument was created in 2021 by higher education professionals in Washington through the Basic Needs Data Work Group facilitated by the Washington Student Achievement Council, with support from The Hope Center for Community, College and Justice at Temple University.

The instrument incorporates items or definitions provided by the United States Department of Agriculture (food insecurity items), the federal McKinney-Vento Assistance Act (housing security definitions), and the Hope Center for College, Community and Justice's #Real College Survey (additional respondent information items).

INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

Student Experience Survey: We are asking you to participate in a survey. Your participation is voluntary. The purpose of this form is to give you the information you need to decide whether to participate. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about anything that is not clear (contact information is below). This process is called "informed consent."

Survey Description: Colleges in Washington want to learn about the best ways to help students succeed and are working with the Washington Student Achievement Council (WSAC, <https://wsac.wa.gov/>) to better understand challenges faced by students. You can help them by sharing your real-life experiences during college by participating in this survey (you were invited to participate simply because you are currently enrolled at a participating college in Washington). The survey questions will address your basic needs (food, housing, etc.) and services available to you to meet those needs. Your responses will help colleges to improve services for students and will be summarized in a report to state lawmakers to help them better understand the support needs of college students.

What will my participation involve? This one-time survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete, and all responses will be provided digitally, and no further participation is involved.

Are there any benefits to me? There are no direct benefits or compensation for participating in this survey, however your participation in this survey may inform the development of new support services which will benefit students in need at your college.

Are there any risks to me? You may find some questions uncomfortable, but you can reply "prefer not to answer" to any questions. The survey does not collect any personally-identifiable information and your survey responses will not be connected to any personally-identifiable information, but your survey responses will be connected to demographic information you have previously provided to your college (age, gender, race/ethnicity, etc.). While there is a remote possibility that through a combination of

demographic variables your responses could be identified by researchers at your institution, no efforts will be made to identify individual respondents. All individual-level responses will be kept confidential (data will be saved on secure servers and accessible only to approved researchers at participating colleges) and will not be included in any analyses or reports of survey results. (Note: Data collected through this survey may be used for future studies on student needs without your additional informed consent, but only by approved researchers at participating colleges and/or WSAC.)

Who should I contact if I have questions about the survey? Questions about the survey can be directed to the Lead Partner Institution (Western Washington University) at ssi@wwu.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you can contact the Western Washington University Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (RSP) at compliance@wwu.edu or (360) 650-2146.

Agreement to participate in the survey: Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. You may stop the survey at any time. By participating in the survey you acknowledge you are currently enrolled in a participating college and you consent to your responses being included in the survey dataset for analysis and reporting purposes. You may print this page for your records.

Do you agree to participate?

- a. Yes
- b. No

[Start survey]

Module 1: Food Security

First we will ask questions related to food access.

1. In the last 30 days, the food that I bought just did not last, and I did not have money to get more.
 - a. Often true
 - b. Sometimes true
 - c. Never true
 - d. I prefer not to answer

2. In the last 30 days, I could not afford to eat balanced meals.
 - a. Often true
 - b. Sometimes true
 - c. Never true
 - d. I prefer not to answer

Display if *a* or *b* selected for either question 1 or 2:

3. In the last 30 days, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there was not enough money for food?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

Display if *a* selected for question 3:

4. In the last 30 days, how many days did this happen?
 - a. Once
 - b. Twice
 - c. Three times
 - d. Four times
 - e. Five times
 - f. More than five times
 - g. I prefer not to answer

5. In the last 30 days, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there was not enough money for food?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

6. In the last 30 days, were you ever hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money for food?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

Module 2: Housing Security

Next we will ask questions related to housing access.

7. Do you currently live in college housing?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

8. In the past 12 months, which of the following have you experienced? (select all that apply)
 - a. I had a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay
 - b. I was unable to pay or underpaid my rent or mortgage
 - c. I was unable to pay or underpaid a utility bill (electricity, gas, water, etc.)
 - d. I had an account default or go into collections
 - e. I moved in with other people because of financial problems
 - f. I lived with others beyond the expected capacity of a house or apartment
 - g. I had to leave my household because I felt unsafe
 - h. I moved three or more times
 - i. None of these situations apply to me
 - j. I prefer not to answer

9. In the past 12 months, have you slept in any of the following places due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason? (select all that apply)
 - a. Temporarily staying with relative, friend or couch surfing until I find other housing
 - b. In a camper or RV without a permanent home to return to
 - c. Temporarily at a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to
 - d. In a closed area/space with a roof not meant for human habitation (such as abandoned building; car, truck, or van; encampment or tent; unconverted garage, attic, or basement; etc.)
 - e. At an outdoor location (such as street, sidewalk or alley; bus or train stop; campground or woods, park, beach, or riverbed; under bridge or overpass)
 - f. At a treatment center (such as detox, hospital, etc.)
 - g. In transitional housing or independent living program
 - h. At an overnight shelter
 - i. At a group home such as halfway house or residential program for mental health or substance abuse
 - j. None of these situations apply to me
 - k. I prefer not to answer

Display if a selected for question 7 and a-i selected for question 9:

- 9b. Did you sleep in this place/these places because you had no access to campus housing between academic terms?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

If you have questions about resources for food or housing, please contact [insert campus/ local information provided by institutions based on respondent's selected institution].

Module 3: Healthcare Access

Next we will ask questions related to healthcare access.

10. In the past 12 months, I was able to access the healthcare services I needed.
- a. Always true
 - b. Sometimes true
 - c. Never true
 - d. Does not apply
 - e. I prefer not to answer

Display if b or c selected for question 10:

- 10b. What prevented you from accessing the healthcare services you needed? (select all that apply)
- a. I do not have health insurance
 - b. I have health insurance but it still costs too much
 - c. I was not able to find a care provider
 - d. It was difficult finding an available appointment
 - e. I was lacking information
 - f. I was not sure where to go
 - g. Other: _____
 - h. I prefer not to answer

11. In the past 12 months, I was able to access the mental / behavioral healthcare services I needed.
- a. Always true
 - b. Sometimes true
 - c. Never true
 - d. Does not apply
 - e. I prefer not to answer

Display if b or c selected for question 11:

- 11b. What prevented you from accessing the mental healthcare services you needed? (select all that apply)
- a. I do not have health insurance
 - b. I have health insurance but it still costs too much
 - c. I was not able to find a care provider
 - d. It was difficult finding an available appointment
 - e. I was lacking information
 - f. I was not sure where to go
 - g. Other: _____
 - h. I prefer not to answer

Module 4: Resource Use

Next we will ask questions related to resources you may have used.

12. In the past 6 months, which of the following **community and public resources** have you used? (select all that apply)
- a. Food benefits, such as Basic Food / SNAP
 - b. Community food bank
 - c. Housing assistance (rent assistance or start up costs, Section 8, etc.)
 - d. Utility assistance (Help paying for heat or water, etc.)
 - e. Public healthcare insurance, such as Medicaid (Apple Health)
 - f. Childcare assistance (Working Connections Childcare subsidy, etc.)
 - g. Transportation assistance
 - h. Tax-related money, such as Earned Income Tax Credit or Working Families Tax Credit
 - i. Cash assistance (public cash assistance, unemployment compensation, etc.)
 - j. Other: _____
 - k. None of the above
 - l. I prefer not to answer
13. Have any of the following issues affected your ability to use the public programs resources? (select all that apply)
- a. I am not eligible for these resources
 - b. I am not aware of these resources
 - c. I do not know how to use these resources
 - d. I do not have time to access these resources
 - e. I do not have transportation to use these resources
 - f. I am embarrassed to use these resources
 - g. I do not know anyone like me who uses these resources
 - h. Other: _____
 - i. None of these apply to me
 - j. I prefer not to answer
14. In the past 6 months, have you used any **campus services or resources** for basic needs? (select all that apply)
- a. Food resources
 - b. Housing resources
 - c. Health care
 - d. Mental/behavioral healthcare
 - e. Childcare assistance
 - f. Transportation assistance
 - g. Resource navigation/case management
 - h. Other: _____
 - i. None of the above
 - j. I prefer not to answer

15. Have any of the following issues affected your ability to use the campus resources? (select all that apply)

- a. I am not eligible for these resources
- b. I am not aware of these resources
- c. I do not know how to use these resources
- d. I do not have time to access these resources
- e. I do not have transportation to use these resources
- f. I am embarrassed to use these resources
- g. I do not know anyone like me who uses these resources
- h. Other: _____
- i. None of these apply to me
- j. I prefer not to answer

16. Do you have additional comments related to basic needs you would like to share?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Display if a selected for question 16:

16b. Please indicate the area(s) of concern for your comment(s): (select all that apply)

- Food Insecurity
- Housing Insecurity
- Homelessness
- Physical Healthcare
- Mental Healthcare
- Satisfaction with Services Available
- Dissatisfaction with Services Available
- Other Financial Needs
- Other Concerns: _____

16c. Please share your comment(s): [Text box]

Module 5: Respondent Information

Now we will ask questions related to your background, experience, and identity.

17. What is the highest level of education completed by any of your parents and/or guardians?
- a. Eighth grade or lower
 - b. Between 9th and 12th grade (but no high school diploma)
 - c. High school diploma
 - d. GED
 - e. Some college (but no college degree)
 - f. College certificate or diploma
 - g. Associate's degree
 - h. Bachelor's degree
 - i. Graduate degree
 - j. I do not know
 - k. I prefer not to answer
18. Are you currently receiving income-based financial aid for your education (for example: Pell grant, Washington College Grant, need-based scholarships, etc.)?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I do not know
 - d. I prefer not to answer
19. How many hours do you work weekly outside of classes?
- a. I am not employed
 - b. 1-19
 - c. 20-30
 - d. 31-40
 - e. More than 40 hours
 - f. I prefer not to answer

Display if a selected for question 11:

- 19b. Are you currently seeking employment?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

Display if b-e selected for question 11:

- 19c. How many jobs are you currently working?
- a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. I prefer not to answer

20. Have you ever served, or are you currently serving, in the U.S. Armed Forces, Military Reserves, or National Guard?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

21. Have you ever been in foster care?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

Display if a selected for question 21:

- 21b. Were you in foster care after your 13th birthday?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

Display if a selected for question 21b:

- 21c. Did you “age out” of foster care?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

22. When you were in high school, did you ever experience homelessness?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

23. Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQI+ community?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

24. Are you living with a physical, mental/emotional, and/or learning disability?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer

25. Are you currently parenting children?
- a. I am currently parenting at least one child
 - b. I am not currently parenting any children
 - c. I prefer not to answer

Module 6: Childcare*

*Display module if a selected for question 25

Finally, we will ask you some questions about parenting and childcare.

- 25b. Are you responsible for the care of your child(ren) at least half of the time?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer
- 25c. Do you consider yourself a single parent of your child(ren)?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I prefer not to answer
- 25d. If you are parenting any child(ren) ages 5 and under, what are your childcare arrangements for this academic year? (select all that apply)
- a. Paid or unpaid center-based care, such as pre-school, daycare, Head Start, nursery school, etc.
 - b. Paid or unpaid childcare provided by relatives, friends, neighbors, or non-center based professional childcare providers
 - c. I do not have childcare arrangements but I need childcare
 - d. I do not have childcare arrangements and I do not need childcare
 - e. I do not have any children ages 5 and under
 - f. I prefer not to answer

Display if a-c selected for 25d:

- 25e. In attempting to access childcare, I have experienced the following: (check all that apply)
- a. Unreasonable waitlists or a lack of spots available for my child(ren)
 - b. Opening/closing hours that do not fit my student schedule
 - c. Minimum hours of care required that do not fit my needs as a student
 - d. Lack of flexibility when my child cannot attend childcare
 - e. My preferred childcare option would not accept my childcare subsidy
 - f. Other experiences related to access to childcare: _____
 - g. I have not experienced any of these
 - h. I prefer not to answer
- 25f. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: *I can afford to pay for childcare without worrying about my basic needs and my level of debt.*
- a. Strongly disagree
 - b. Disagree
 - c. Undecided
 - d. Agree
 - e. Strongly agree
 - f. I prefer not to answer

Display if a-b selected for 25d:

25g. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: *I feel satisfied with the quality of my childcare.*

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Undecided
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly Agree
- f. I prefer not to answer

25h. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: *I feel that my children's childcare environments are safe.*

- a. Strongly disagree
- b. Disagree
- c. Undecided
- d. Agree
- e. Strongly Agree
- f. I prefer not to answer

[End survey]