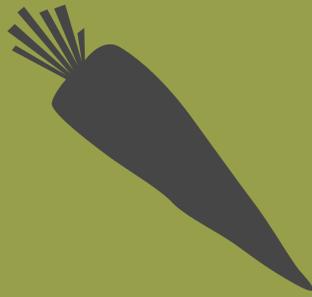


2016-2017
UWM Student Association
Food Insecurity

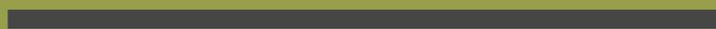
REPORT





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Executive Summary

Food insecurity, the lack of reliable access to sufficient quantities of affordable, nutritious food, is common at colleges and universities across the country, potentially undermining the educational success of thousands of students. Recent national research by the Wisconsin HOPE Lab at the University of Wisconsin Madison has drawn significant attention to food insecurity and the many factors leading to its prevalence among college students (1). The rising cost of college has reduced the buying power of the Pell Grant and other financial aid, meaning more students are living on shoestring budgets (2). The rise in non-traditional students, students of color, and first-generation college students enrolling in universities has also diversified the needs of college students, and challenges our notion that all students in college are 18-22 years old and financially supported by their parents (3). Today, more and more college students are married, have children, have been out of school for several years, and are financially independent. And all of this is very much prevalent and central to the student experience at the University of Wisconsin Milwaukee.

During the fall semester of 2016, the Student Association at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee created a survey to expand its understanding of food insecurity among students, faculty, and staff at UWM. The food insecurity data is based on a survey that was sent to the entire student body and faculty and staff at UWM, resulting in 2,267 total responses. Both students and faculty/staff were surveyed on their personal experiences of food insecurity, and what they saw in their peers and the students they know. Demographic data was collected, and notable differences based on demographics are included in this report.

Survey respondents were first asked, "While at UWM, has there ever been a time when you did not have enough food for yourself?" 49.4% of student respondents (934) indicated "yes" and were then directed to more questions to understand the severity of their food insecurity. The results of this survey indicate food insecurity is a serious problem for many UWM students, as well as some staff and faculty. Students who were food insecure cited not having enough money due to the high cost of bills, tuition, and rent as a main reason for being unable to afford food. Non-traditional students, first-generation students, and students of color were also significantly more likely to experience food insecurity. The survey results also indicated that there is an extremely large lack of knowledge among students and staff/faculty about resources available to them if they are food insecure. 92.84% of students (1568) and 87.04% of staff/faculty (262) did not know where to receive food assistance on campus.

Other key findings include:

- 80% of students who self-identified that they did not have enough food for themselves couldn't afford to eat fresh fruits and vegetables (This represents 36% of all student respondents)
- 38.9% of student respondents have cut meal sizes or skipped meals due to a lack of money for food
- 19.5% of student respondents lost weight because they didn't have enough money for food
- 13.8% of student respondents have gone an entire day without eating because of a lack of money for food

It is clear that food insecurity and hunger are affecting students at UWM. Food insecurity affects students in many different ways and at various levels of severity. The Student Association at UWM hopes this report will help make students, faculty, and staff more aware of the prevalence of food insecurity on our campus and offer potential solutions. The solutions outlined in this report are a first step, and will hopefully provide guidance and inspiration to those dedicated to addressing food insecurity at UWM.

1. Dubick, J., Mathews, B., & Cady, C. (2016). Hunger on Campus: The Challenge of Food Insecurity for College Students (pp. 1-47, Rep.). <https://studentsagainsthunger.org/hunger-on-campus/>; Goldrick-Rab, S., Broton, K., & Eisenberg, D. (2015). Hungry to Learn: Addressing Food & Housing Insecurity Among Undergraduates (pp. 1-25, Rep.). http://wihopelab.com/publications/Wisconsin_HOPE_Lab_Hungry_To_Learn.pdf

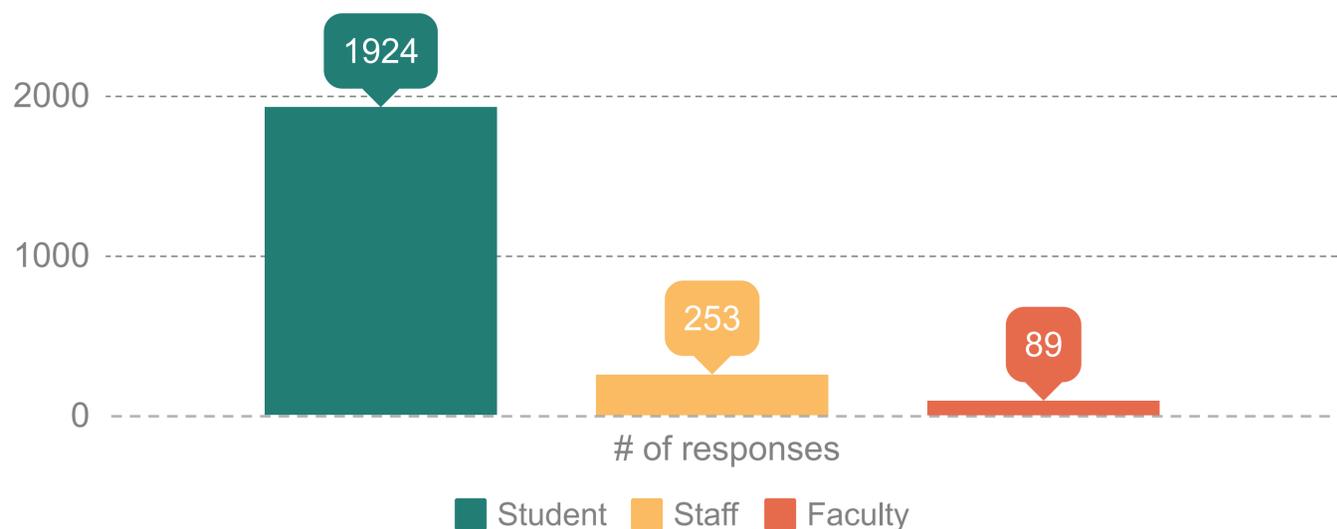
2. The Pell Institute. (2015). Indicators of Higher Education Equity in the United States (pp. 1-60, Rep.). PennAhead. http://www.pellinstitute.org/downloads/publications-Indicators_of_Higher_Education_Equity_in_the_US_45_Year_Trend_Report.pdf

3. Husser, W. J., & Bailey, T. M. (2013). Projections of Education Statistics to 2021 (40th ed., pp. 19-24, Rep. No. 008). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2013/2013008.pdf>



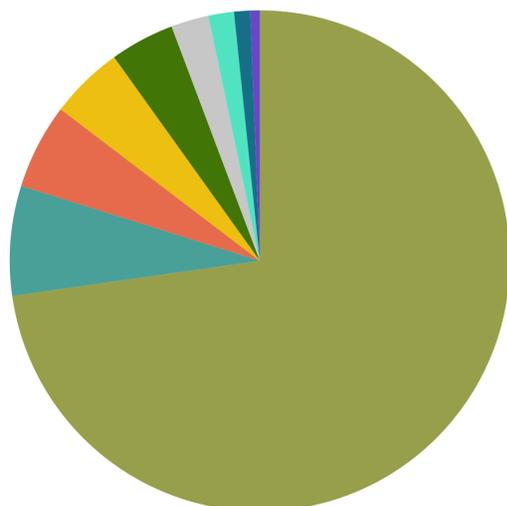
Survey Overview

2267 total responses



Student Demographics

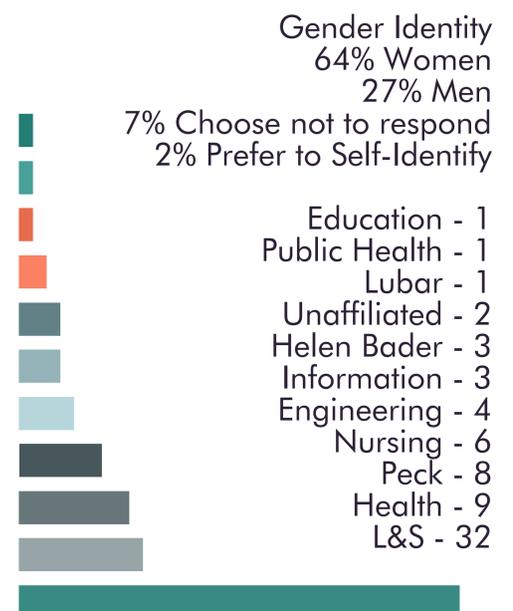
- Enrollment status - 91% full-time, 8% part-time
- 420 respondents (26%) identified as non-traditional
- 705 respondents (43%) identified as first-generation
- Gender identity - 65% women, 31% men, 2% preferred to self-identify, 2% chose not to respond
- Residential status - 59% off-campus independently, 24% on-campus, 17% commuting from family home



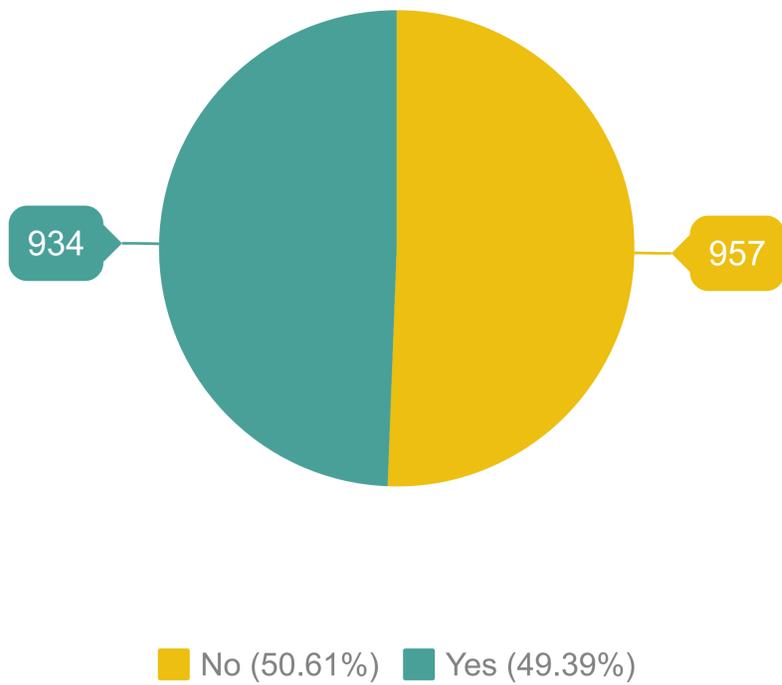
Racial Identity

- White/Caucasian - 1191 (72%)
- Asian/Pacific Islander - 116 (7%)
- Hispanic/Latino/a - 90 (6%)
- Black/African-American - 78 (5%)
- Multiracial - 68 (4%)
- Choose not to respond - 40 (2%)
- Self-Identify - 27 (2%)
- Native American/Alaskan Native - 17 (1%)
- Middle Eastern - 10 (0.6%)

Staff & Faculty Demographics



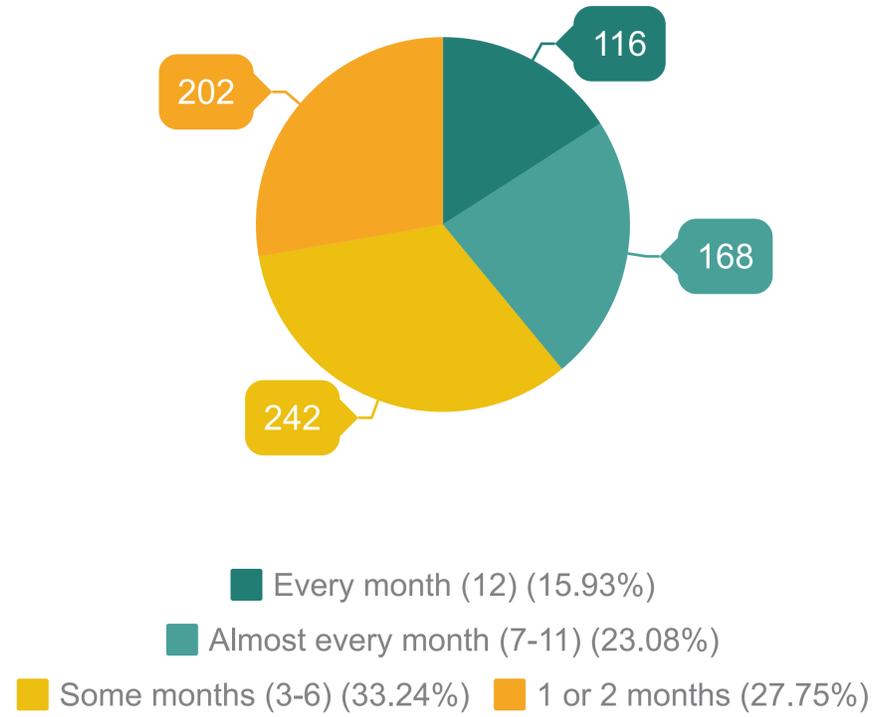
While a student at UWM, has there ever been a time when you did not have enough food for yourself?



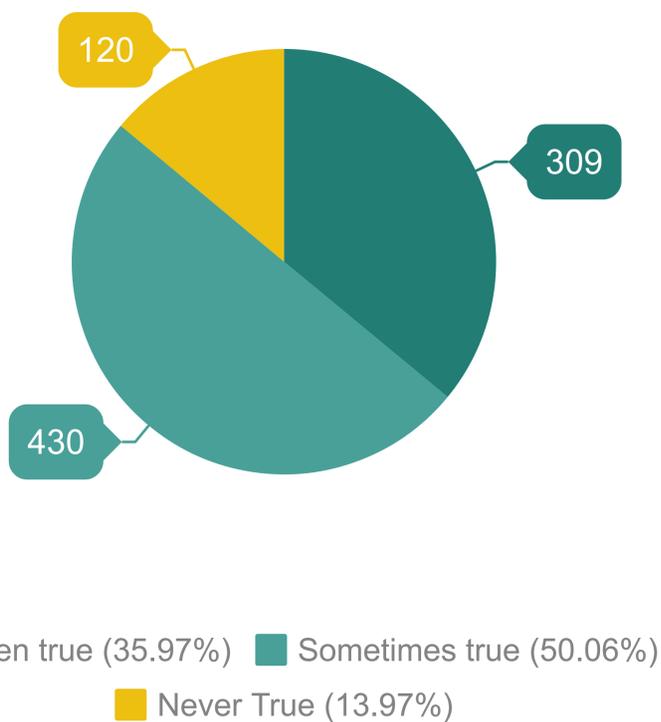
This was our primary filter question. If students responded "Yes" they were asked a series of additional questions related to food insecurity. If "No" they were forwarded to the demographic questions.

If yes...

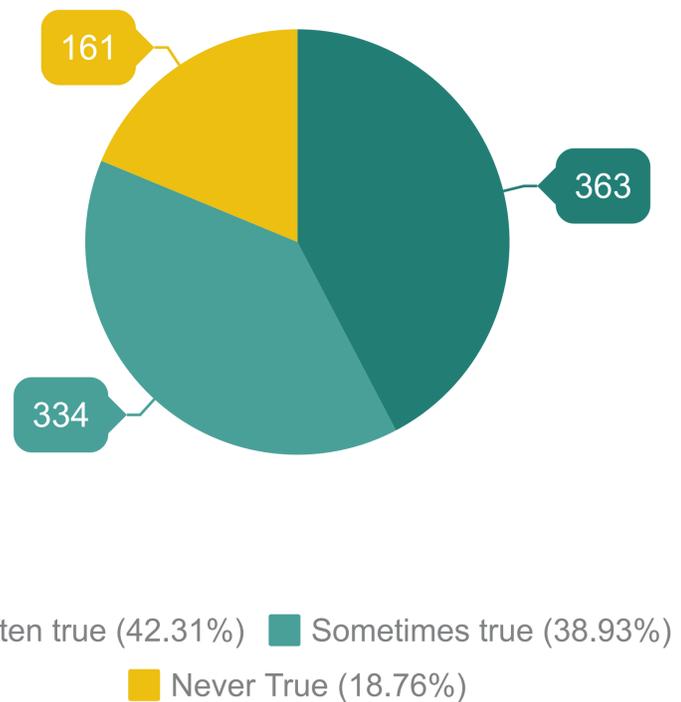
In the past 12 months, how often has your food supply been inadequate?



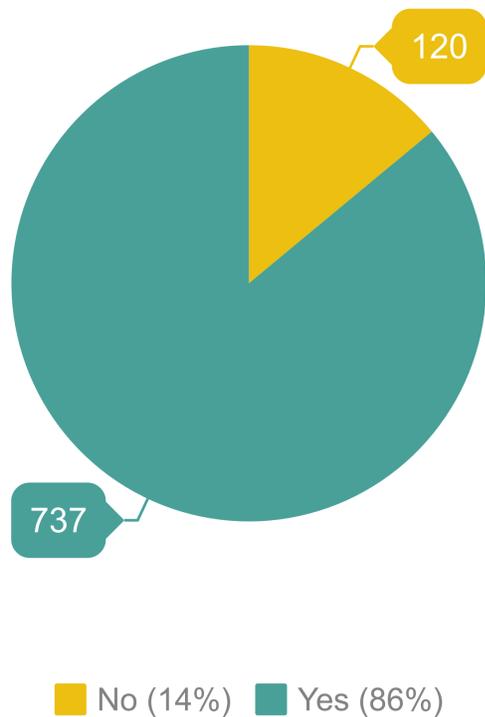
How true is the following statement for you: In the past 12 months, I have worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.



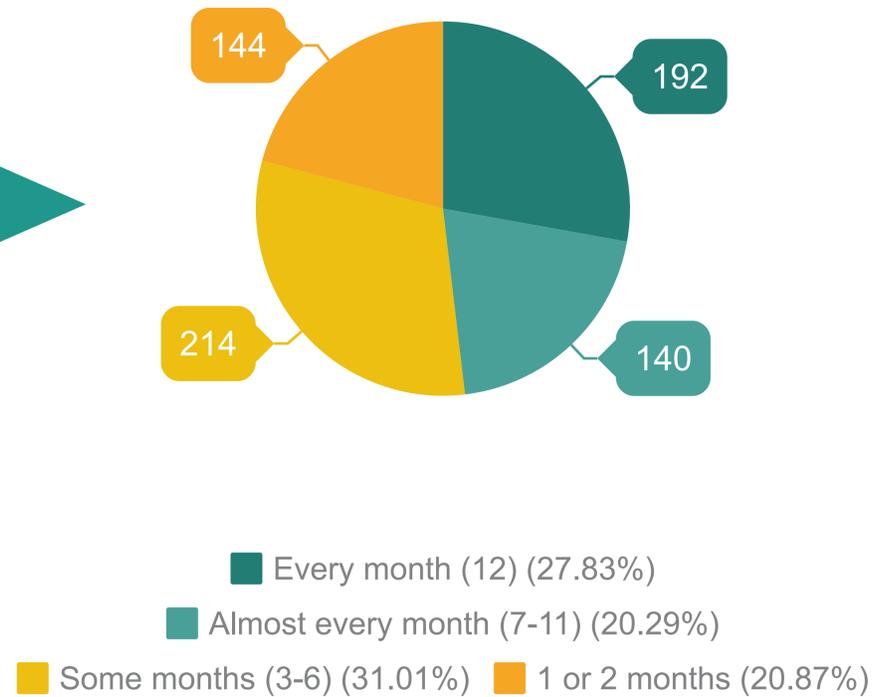
How true is the following statement for you: In the past 12 months, I couldn't afford to eat fresh fruits and vegetables.



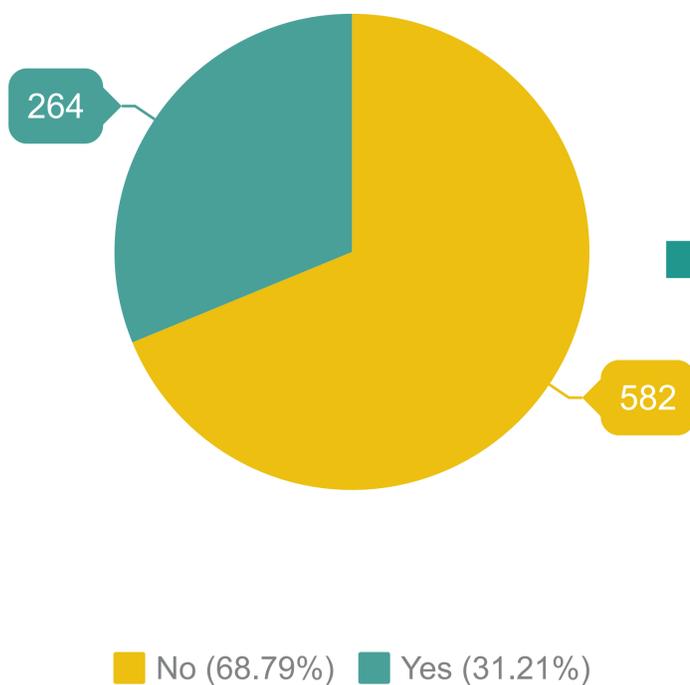
In the past 12 months, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?



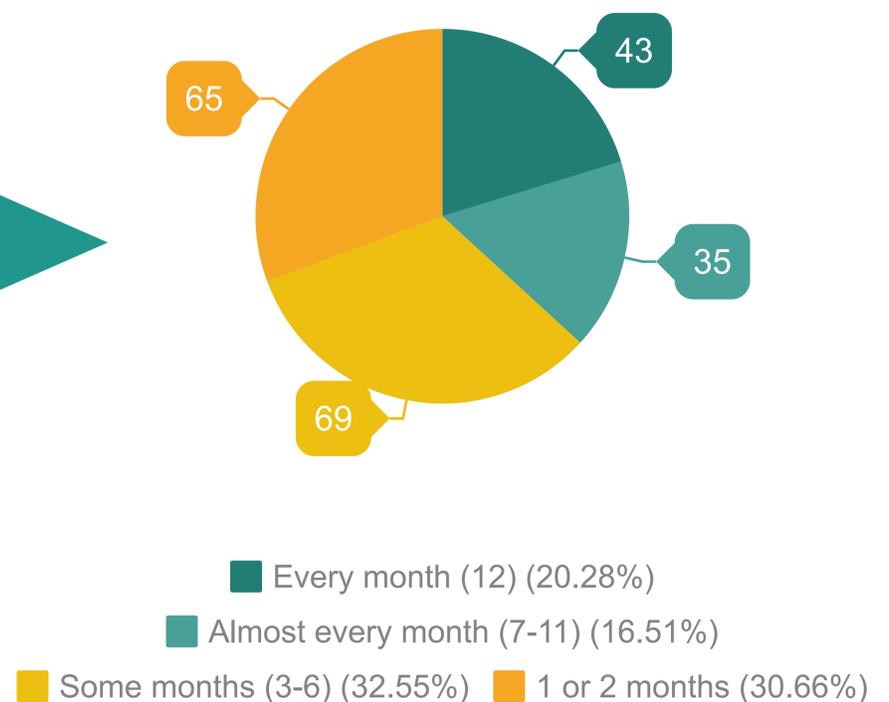
If yes, how often did you cut the size of your meals or skip meals in the last 12 months?



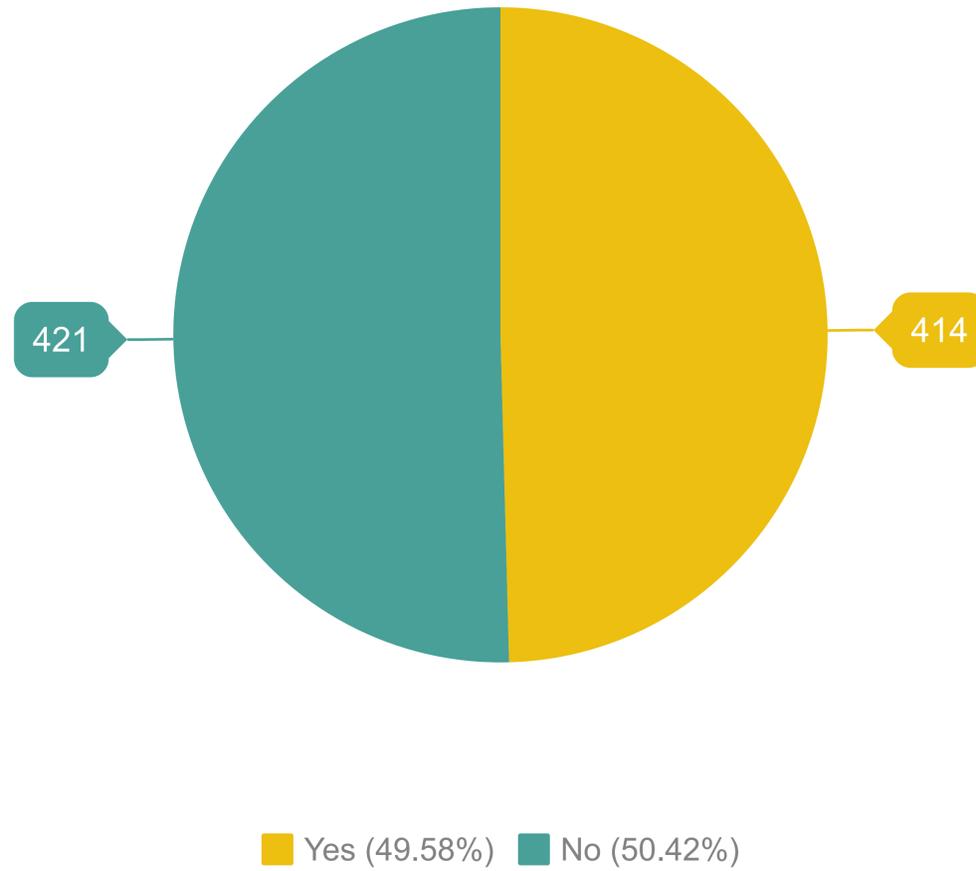
In the past 12 months, did you ever go a whole day without eating because there wasn't enough money for food?



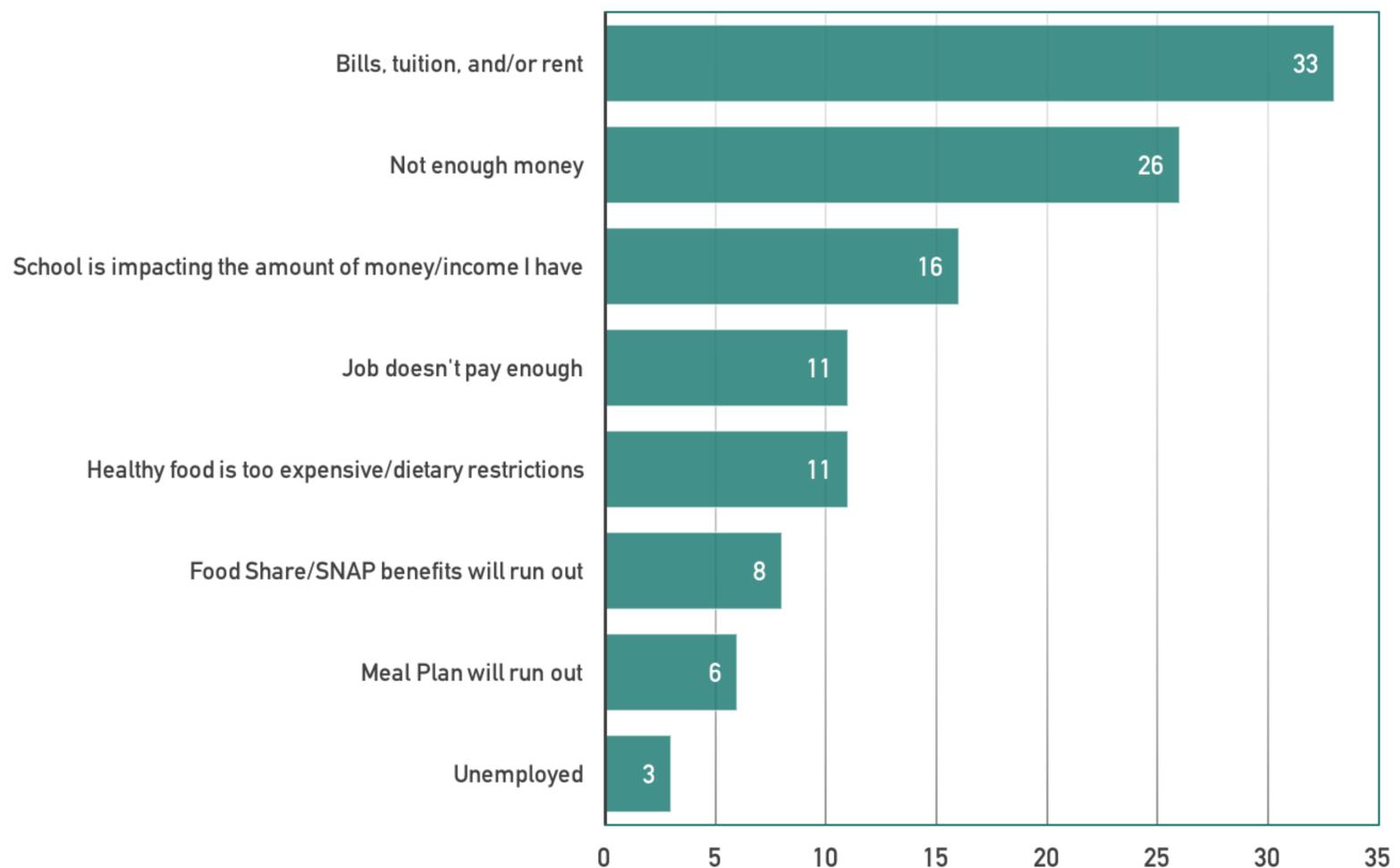
If yes, how often did you go a whole day without eating because there wasn't enough money for food?



Do you feel your food supply will be adequate for the next 12 months?



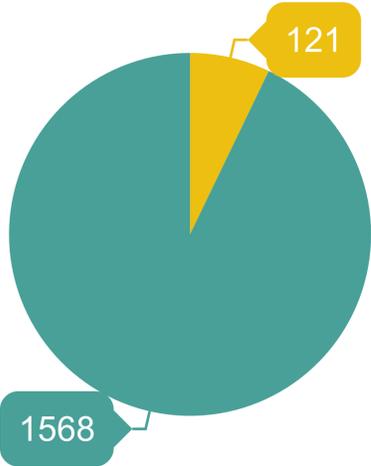
Please explain why you believe your food supply will not be adequate for the next 12 months.



Key Issue: Lack of Awareness of Resources & Referral

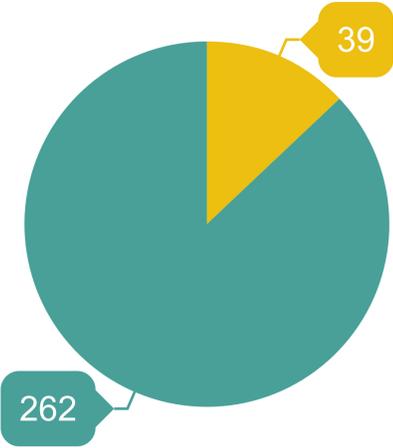
Do you know where to receive food assistance on campus?

Students



Yes (7.16%) No (92.84%)

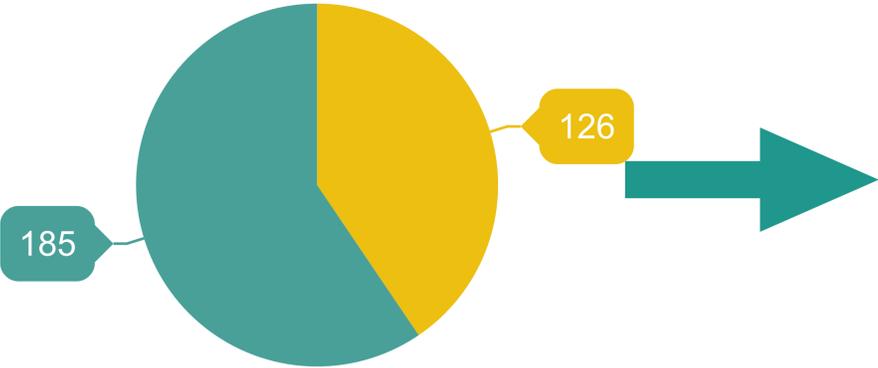
Staff/Faculty



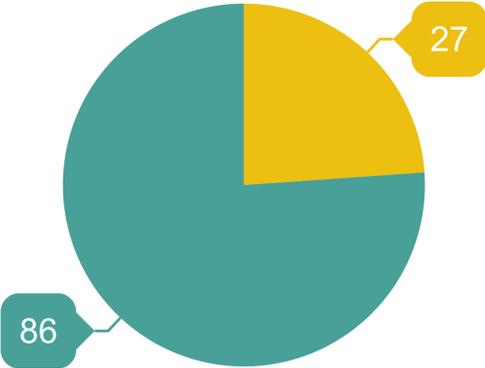
Yes (12.96%) No (87.04%)

While a faculty or staff member at UWM, has there been a time when you were aware of a student who did not have enough food for themselves?

If yes, have you ever referred students to food assistance services on campus?



Yes (40.51%) No (59.49%)



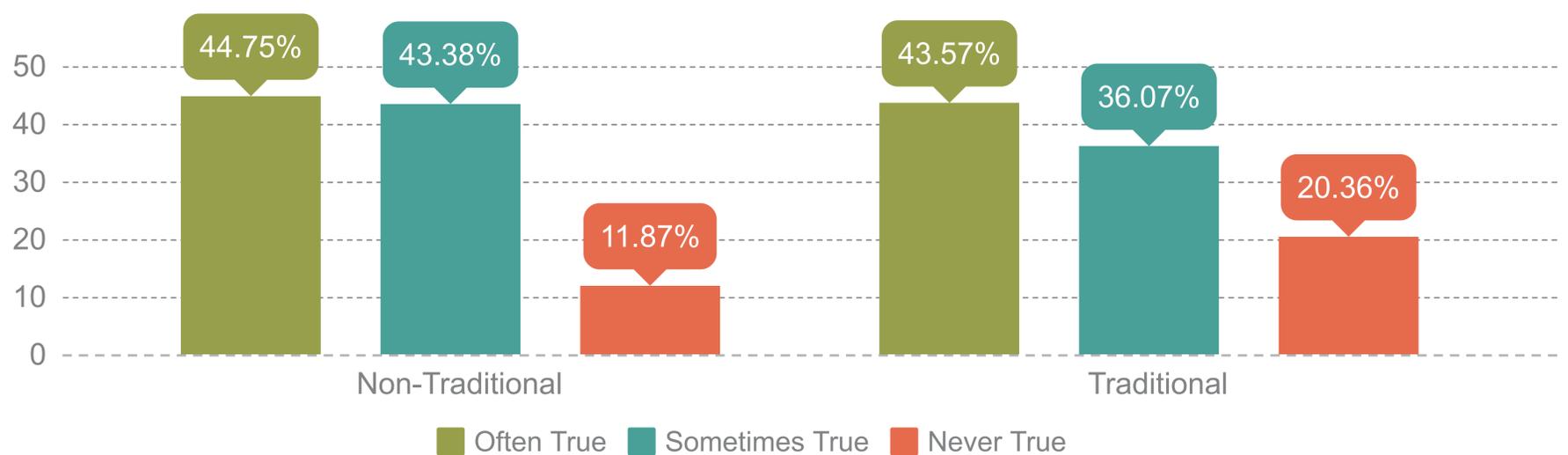
Yes (23.89%) No (76.11%)

Non-Traditional Students

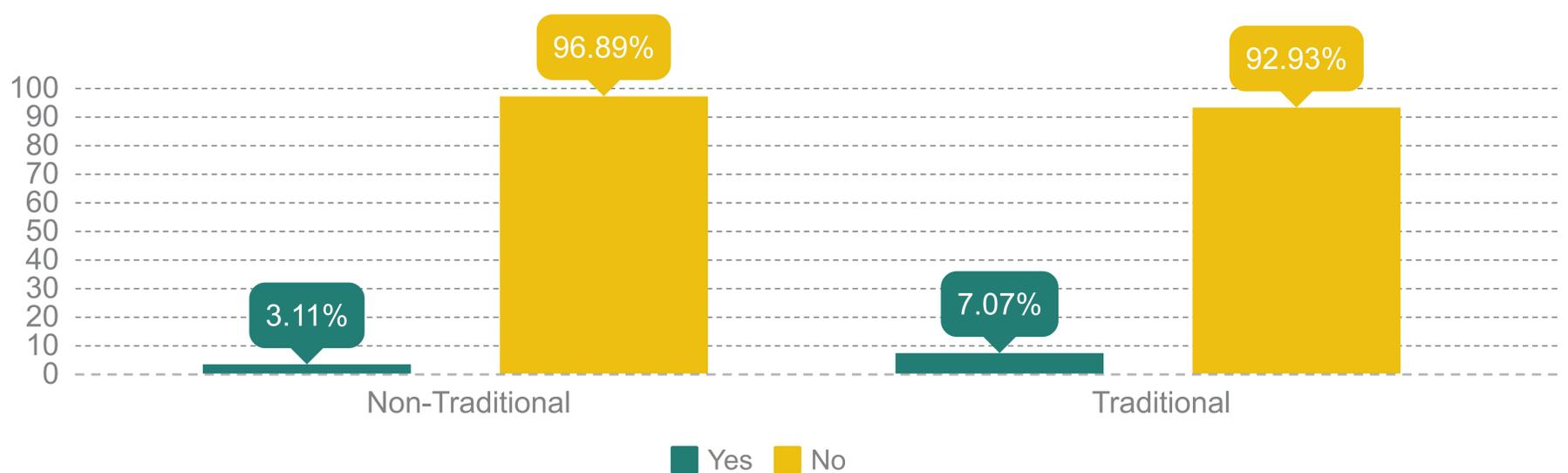
Overview

- 25.6% of student respondents (418) self-identified as non-traditional
- While overall, non-traditional students expressed higher levels of food insecurity than traditional students, two questions showed a statistically significant higher incidence of self-disclosed food insecurity

In the past 12 months, I couldn't afford to eat fresh fruits and vegetables.



Do you know where to receive food assistance on campus?

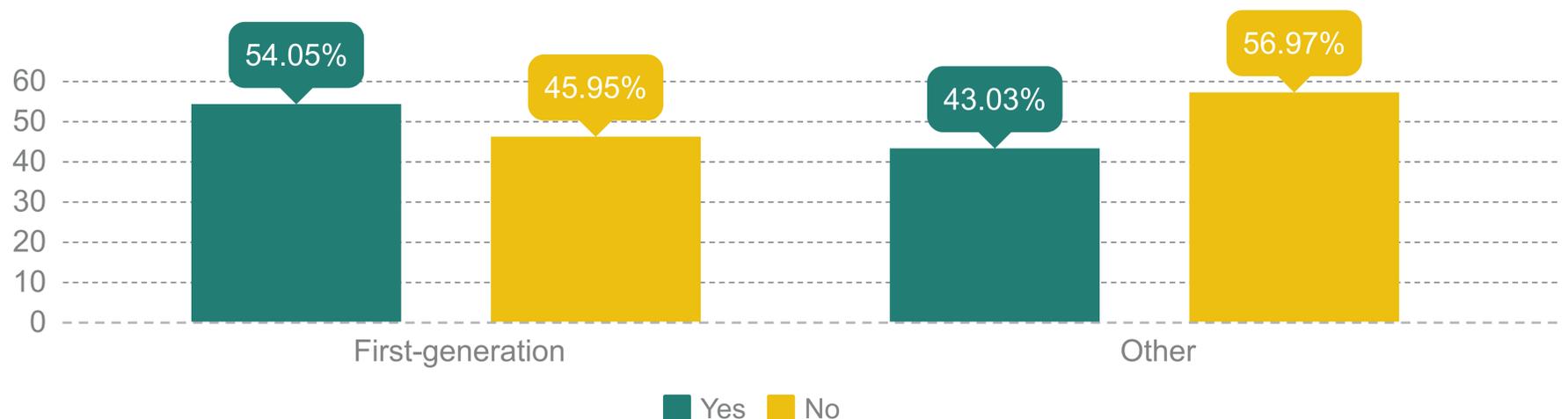


First-Generation Students

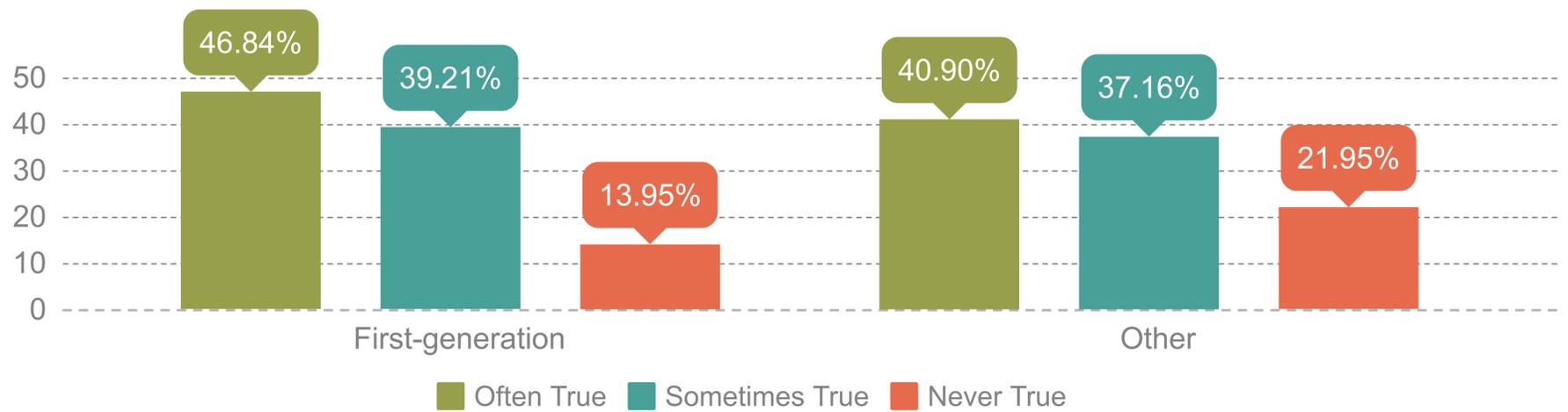
Overview

- 48.7% of student respondents (380) self-identified as first-generation
- Currently, 41.4% of UWM students identify as first-generation
- Overall, first-generation students expressed higher levels of food insecurity than non-first-generation students and three questions showed statistically significant differences.

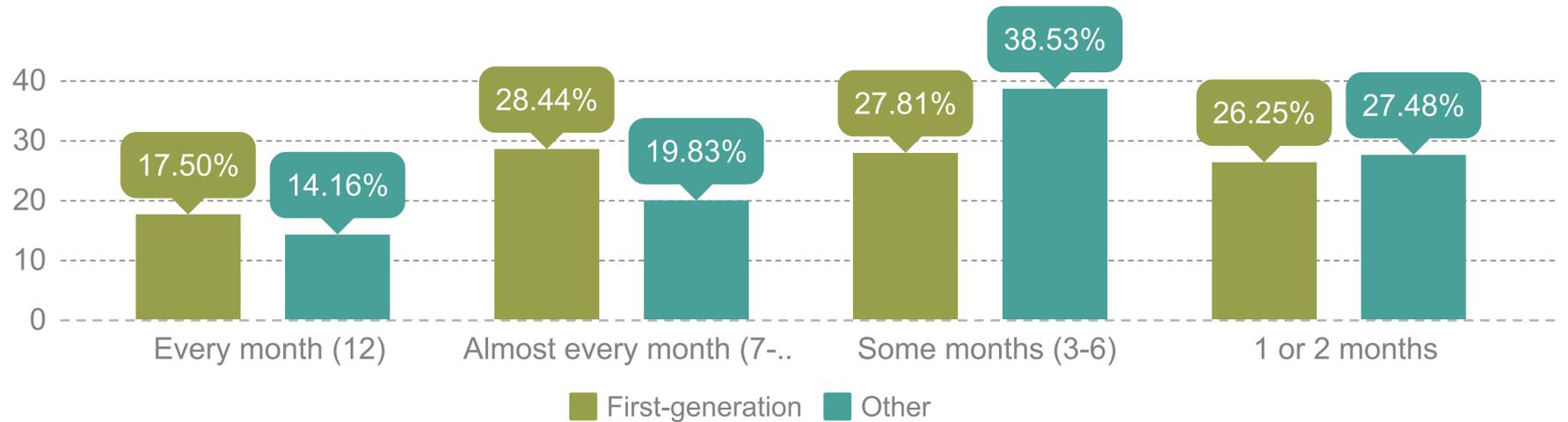
While a student at UWM, has there ever been a time when you did not have enough food for yourself?



In the past 12 months, I couldn't afford to eat fresh fruits and vegetables.



In the past 12 months, how often was your food supply inadequate?

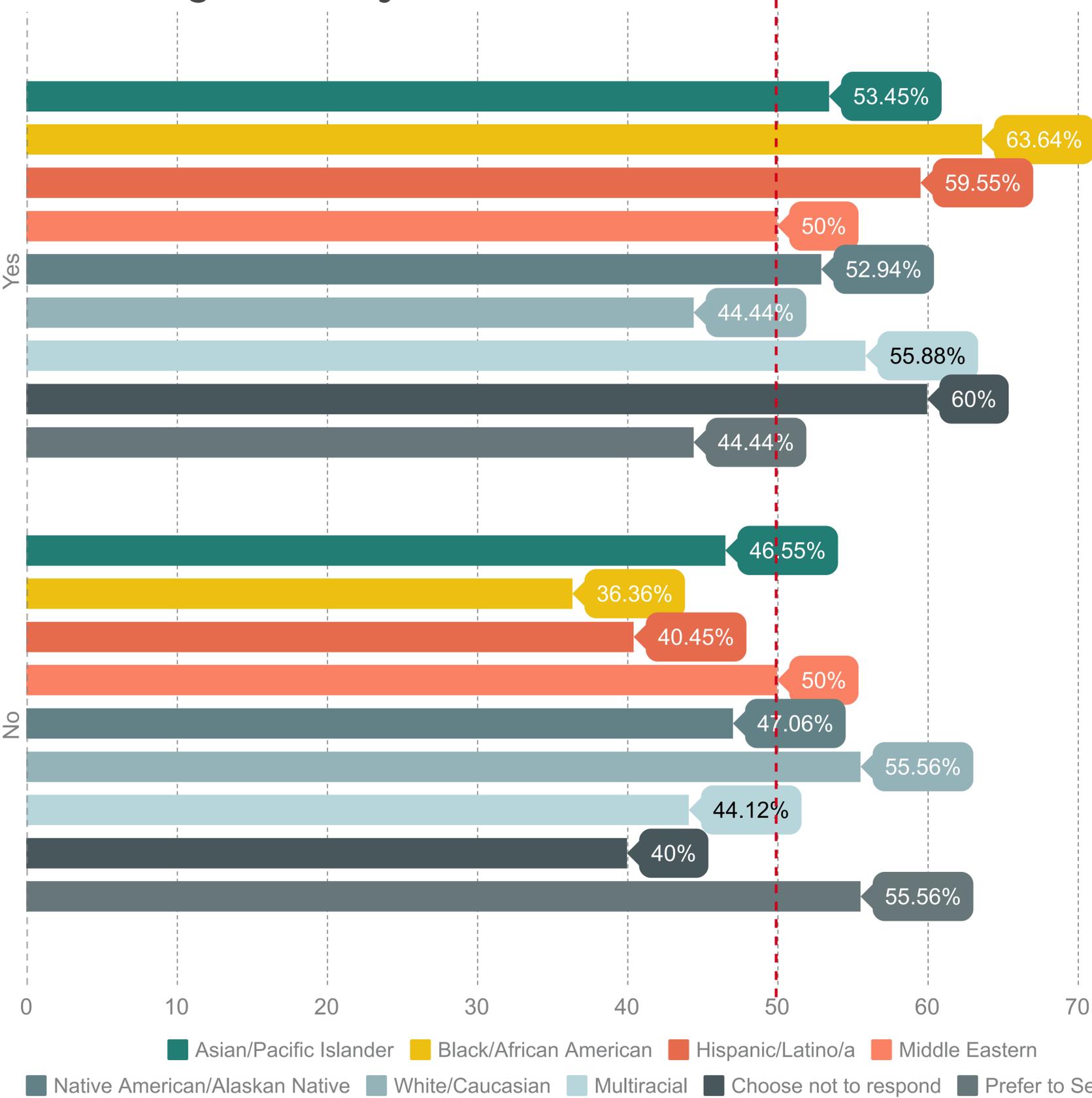


Students of Color

Overview

- 23.1% of student respondents (379) self-identified as a person of color
- Currently, approximately 33% of UWM students identify as a person of color
- Across racial identity, the majority of students of color self-disclosed experiencing food insecurity while at UWM. White/Caucasian students and students who self-identified their race were the only groups that expressed less than 50% experiencing food insecurity.

While a student at UWM, has there ever been a time when you did not have enough food for yourself?

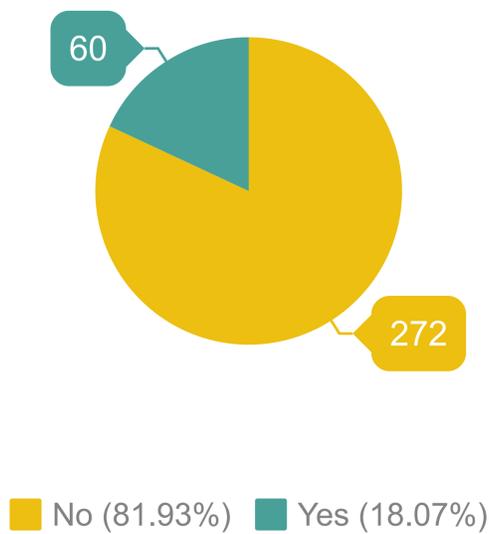


Faculty & Staff

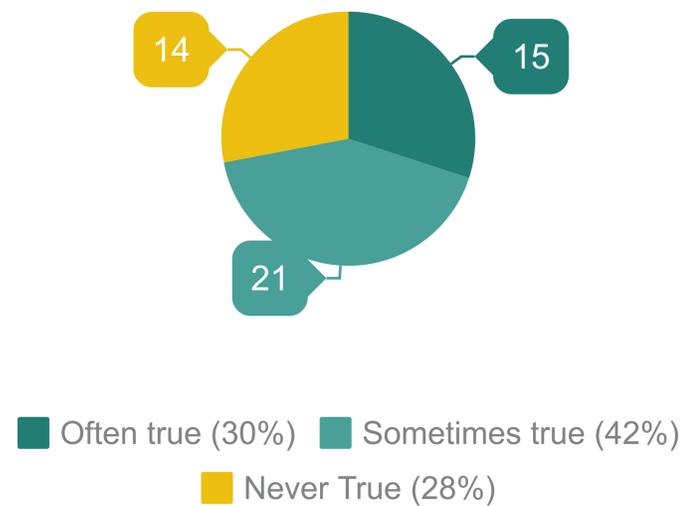
Overview

- Faculty and staff respondents expressed not only the food insecurity they saw in UWM students, but in some cases their own experiences of food insecurity while working at UWM.
- 18.1% of faculty/staff respondents (60) indicated that while working at UWM, there has been a time that they did not have enough food for themselves. Of those respondents, 47.9% (23) felt their food supply would not be adequate in the next 12 months, with many stating concerns that other bills impact their budget for food.
- 40.5% of faculty/staff respondents (126) also indicated that they were aware of a student who did not have enough food for themselves.

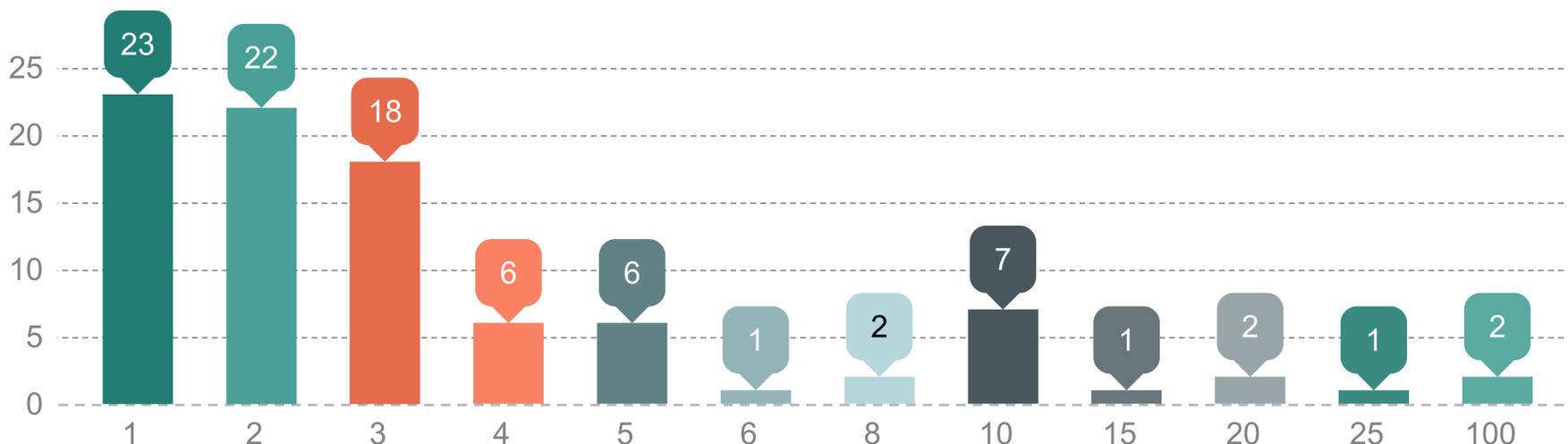
While a faculty or staff at UWM, has there ever been a time when you did not have enough food for yourself?



If yes, how true is the following statement for you: In the past 12 months, I have worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more.



How many students do you know that don't have enough food for themselves?



Recommendations & Next Steps

1. Increase campus education about food insecurity and resources

- Develop a committee or task force to connect campus entities closely connected with the issue and doing the work
- Provide education for faculty and staff about food insecurity and local resources
- Add resources related to food insecurity to course syllabi
- Assist students with food benefit process

2. Expand partnerships with local agencies addressing food insecurity

- Hunger Task Force
- Pick N Save Mobile Market
- Riverwest Food Pantry
- Fondy Farmer's Market & Growing Power - opportunities for regular campus farmer's market

3. Encourage and support campus food recovery efforts

- Establish connections between addressing campus food insecurity and food waste reduction
- Support Food Recovery Network student organization in seeking space, campus outreach and volunteer support
- Review campus food policies related to post-event food recovery to enhance capacities to recover food

4. Expand campus food options, particularly outside of the residence halls

- Improve affordability and diversity of healthy food options, including exploring options to purchase imperfect or "ugly" produce by partnering with local farmers
- Improve commuter students' access to facilities to store and prepare food during the school day
- Expand food education for students, particularly related to cooking and budgeting
- Increase opportunities for students in residence halls to donate their meal points to others in need

5. Establish an on-campus food pantry for students

- Assist in identifying space and volunteer staffing possibilities
- Encourage drop-off bins across campus for students to donate food
- Collect donations at registers across campus to purchase food for the food pantry

Resources

Dean of Students and Norris Health Center

Students that may be food insecure and are looking for food assistance should contact the Dean of Students at DOS@uwm.edu or the Norris Health Center at nhc-help@uwm.edu.

The Offering – A Food Pantry for UWM Students and Staff/Faculty

The University Christian Ministries runs a food pantry to provide emergency food assistance to UWM students and faculty. The pantry is located across the street from the student union at 2211 E Kenwood Blvd. Students can request food assistance from The Offering through the DOS or Norris Health Center. There is no requirement that students or staff be of a particular faith and there is no expectation of involvement in UCM. The Offering is simply a way to assist students in their efforts to obtain an education. Call 414-962-5460 or email ucm@uwm.edu for more information.

Lunch Bunch – A Free Lunch for UWM Students

During the fall and spring semesters students gather at UCM on Wednesdays from 12pm to 1:30pm for a FREE LUNCH. Join roughly 120 students who make Lunch Bunch their weekly priority! Call 414-962-5460 or email ucm@uwm.edu for more information. This takes place at 2211 E Kenwood Blvd.

Food Recovery Network at UWM

The Food Recovery Network is a national organization that works to reduce the amount of food waste on college campuses. Put simply, FRN works to feed hungry students by recovering food that would otherwise be thrown out in dining services. FRN is working to start a dinner program to provide a free meal once a week for students. To learn more contact Adam Honts at ajhonts@uwm.edu.

FoodShare Wisconsin

See if you qualify for FoodShare assistance by contacting the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. You can apply for FoodShare benefits at <https://access.wisconsin.gov/>

Community Food Pantry

Visit Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin to find a local meal program or food pantry in your neighborhood. You can locate these services at: <https://feedingamericawi.org/find-help/pantry-locator/>

Don't forget that you can always donate food or your time to your local food pantry and give back to your community!

