

# 2022 Annual Survey

November 14–December 11, 2022 (n=4,070)

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## Key Findings

### Demographics

In November and December 2022, 4,070 students took the UASU Annual Survey, the highest turnout since 2018, representing roughly 11.4% of UAlberta undergraduates. The sample improved on demographic distortions found in previous years: proportions of men and international students were closer to actuals. We do note that there was a high turnout of first-year students and a low turnout of upper-year students. There were also faculty-related distortions, though not as heavily as in past years; Engineering, CSJ, and Augustana, for example, were unusually well represented.

DEMOGRAPHIC	PERCENT OF SAMPLE	EQUIVALENT NUMBER OF STUDENTS OUT OF 35,628 (2022/23) <sup>1</sup>	ACTUALS IF KNOWN (2022/23)
Men	34.8%	12,399	N/A <sup>2,3</sup>
Women	58.1%	20,700	N/A <sup>2,3</sup>
Non-binary or another gender	4.3%	1,532	N/A <sup>2,3</sup>
International students	8.4% <sup>4</sup>	2,993	13.9% <sup>1</sup>
Transgender students	2.1%	748	Unknown <sup>3</sup>
Disabled students <sup>5</sup>	5.5%	1,960	Unknown <sup>3</sup>
Indigenous students	4.8%	1,710	4.5% <sup>1</sup>
Black students	4.5%	1,603	Unknown <sup>3</sup>
BIPOC students	45%	16,033	Unknown <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The actuals in this table come from the 2022/23 Annual Report on Undergraduate Enrolment.

<sup>2</sup> The University's standard data captures gender as 'female, male, other,' which conflates sex and gender and introduces other distortions. These proportions are 53.9%, 45.7%, and 0.5% as of 2022/23, which do not map directly to our gender data. It appears likely that men are underrepresented in our data, though notably less than in previous years.

<sup>3</sup> These items correlate well with unpublished preliminary data from other University datasets. We consider our data to be reasonably representative of student diversity.

<sup>4</sup> While international students are underrepresented in this survey, this turnout is a major improvement over previous years, and the best in the history of UASU annual surveys.

<sup>5</sup> The use of identity-first versus person-first language (disabled students or students with disabilities, in this case) is [not a settled matter of convention](#). In this survey, the question was 'Do you identify as disabled?' so the report defaults to the identity-first terminology 'disabled students.'

## Burnout

- We used the relevant segment of the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory to calculate student burnout. Fear or experience of burnout has been consistent throughout the year and high in the annual survey.
- The average burnout rating was 61; however, it was higher for women than men, and even higher for gender minorities.
- Rates of moderate, high, and severe burnout were approximately 41%, 29%, and 3%, respectively.  $\frac{1}{3}$  of students were facing high or severe burnout.
- Disabled students' burnout was significantly higher than average.
- Burnout ratings and food insecurity had a moderate correlation.
- Burnout was fairly stable across years of study and faculty.

## Food Insecurity

- As in 2019, we used the Health Canada HFSSM to calculate food insecurity.
- Severe food insecurity in the student body has increased significantly, from 13% in 2019 to 16% in 2022.
- 25% of students indicated that they worried they would run out of food before they got money to buy more.
- 31% of students indicated they struggled with affording balanced meals.
- 4%, or 1 in 25, frequently lost weight because there was not enough money for food.
- Severe food insecurity was high among international students, disabled students, transgender and gender minority students, Black students, Indigenous students, and several particular faculties.
- Specific burnout questions correlated with food insecurity (e.g. frequency of thinking 'I can't take it anymore' or 'I feel weak and susceptible to illness').

## Student Spaces

- 44% of students visit SUB at least once a week.
- 28% of respondents indicated that they would use SUB computers if they were installed. 5% stated they needed them.
  - We noted higher rates of need for computers in SUB among international students (13%), severely food insecure students (10%), and BIPOC students (8%).
- 83% of respondents indicated that they would use charging stations if they were installed in SUB. 23% stated they needed them.
  - We noted higher rates of need for charging stations in SUB among non-binary/another gender identity and/or transgender students (27%), BIPOC students (26%), disabled students (29%) and severely food insecure students (32%).

### **Building an Engaged Community**

- Groups somewhat more likely than average to be involved on campus:
  - Fourth-year students.
  - International students.
  - Disabled students.
  - Women and transgender students.
  - South Asian students.
- Indigenous students stood out as less involved on campus; this is likely due to the fact that Indigenous students tend to be somewhat older and much more likely to be parenting.
- Unlike in 2021, men were just as likely to be involved in student clubs/groups as women.
- Second- and third-year students were much less likely to be very involved in student clubs/groups, likely stemming from pandemic impacts on early exposure to clubs/groups.
- Food insecurity and engagement are related, with food insecure students being more involved on average. This likely speaks to the value of food at events.
- Strongly reduced interest in volunteering was common across many demographics.
- Rates of interest in volunteering were stable across levels of food insecurity and burnout.
- Overwhelmingly, academics are the main obstacle to involvement, and lack of awareness of interesting options remains the second most frequent choice.
- Compared to 2018, students are less likely to cite off-campus commitments and friends' uninvolved as barriers, perhaps reflecting less social and civil engagement.

### **Student Services**

- Compared to several previous surveys, The Landing has seen an increased share of students who have visited several times. This is consistent with anecdotal evidence of increased demand.
- Transgender students are especially likely to visit The Landing and become regular visitors.
- In 2022, students were interested in visiting The Landing to look for friendship and connections (15.5%), out of general curiosity about sexual and gender diversity (14.8%), to look for community (14.6%), and to learn how to be an ally (12.2%).
  - Reasons to be interested in visiting The Landing were closely consistent with the 2021 Annual Survey, with one exception: an increased rate of students looking for sexual health resources (7.4%, up from 6.0%).



- Many students would appreciate low-cost professional development programs on communication, team management, conflict resolution, resumés and job hunting, budgeting, being interviewed, and many others.
- Compared to 2020, students are becoming less sure that they might use the Peer Support Centre. However, usage remains stable.
- The students who visit the PSC have serious needs. For example, those who used the PSC in the past 12 months had above-average burnout, and were twice as likely to be severely food insecure.
- In a 5-point Likert scale question about the usefulness of their PSC visit, 64% of PSC visitors chose the top two categories. Commonly expressed frustrations aligned with the natural limits of the PSC: these are, after all, student volunteers rather than counseling staff.

### Advocating for Student Needs

- 88.3% of students have a laptop/iPad for schoolwork.
  - 11% of students indicated that they need a laptop or iPad, especially severely food-insecure students.
- An average of 1.6% of students indicated having a UASU paid position within the past two years.
  - 9.9% of non-binary students or other gender minorities indicated volunteering with the UASU, more than any other demographic.
- An average of 11.2% of students indicated having a UAlberta paid position within the past two years.
  - 16.7% of Peer Support Center users indicated volunteering with UAlberta, more than any other demographic/group.
- More Indigenous students are working for the UASU in paid and volunteer positions, as well as with UAlberta since 2021.
- More Black, Indigenous, and disabled students worked off campus than on campus this year.
- 6.5% of students had visited a food bank in the past year. This rose to 25% for Peer Support Centre users, 23% of Law students, and 20% of international students.
- 21.4% of students were unable to find work in 2022. This rose to 31% for disabled students, 34% for Black students, and 39% for transgender students.
- The number of students living in unhealthy or unsafe housing situations in the previous two years increased by 1.3% since the 2021 Annual Survey.
  - 35% of transgender students had been living in unhealthy or unsafe housing in the previous two years.
  - 28% of disabled students had been living in unhealthy or unsafe housing in the previous two years.
  - 20% of Indigenous students had been living in unhealthy or unsafe housing in the previous two years.



- 30% of non-binary students or students of another gender had been living in unhealthy or unsafe housing in the previous two years.
- 1.9% of students had been evicted or forced to leave their residence since enrolling at UAlberta.
- 2.3% of students had been unhoused/homeless at some point since enrolling.
  - 4.1% of international students had been unhoused.
  - 4.7% of disabled students had been unhoused.
  - 8.9% of severely food insecure students had been unhoused.
  - 6% of non-binary students/students of another gender had been unhoused.
- By far the most common pronoun outside of the gender binary is 'they/them,' used by about 8% of students, equivalent to around 2700 individuals.
- 4% fewer non-binary students or students of another gender are uncomfortable using their pronouns on campus since 2021, a positive development.
- Around 6% of respondents, ⅓ of them cisgender, use more than one type of pronoun.
- 7% more transgender students are comfortable using their pronouns on campus since 2021.
- More students have found balancing work and school difficult in 2022 than the past two years (i.e. during the pandemic).
  - The share of respondents who found balancing work and school very difficult (average 19%) was quite consistent across faculties, demographics, and years of study. The main exception was Law (38%).
- In an open-ended question about student life, by far the most common responses spoke to stress, mental health, food insecurity, accessibility concerns, and financial frustration (e.g. around tuition increases).

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## Sample Collection

The survey reached 4,070 points of contact (11.4% of this year's 35,600 undergraduate students). This was the highest UASU Annual Survey turnout since 2018.

The survey was built in the SurveyMonkey platform. The UASU attempted to contact the entire undergraduate student body (roughly 35,000 students) through various means, including newsletters, the UASU Perks platform, and contact with faculty associations. By far the most effective distribution method was a link on eClass; 52% of respondents accessed the survey through that link. The survey went out in both French and English.

UASU Perks ([perks.uasu.ca](https://perks.uasu.ca)) is a gamification platform. UAlberta students earn points for activities like checking in at events, participating in a donor-backed vaccination promotion contest, or taking small surveys. Students can redeem points for real-world goods (e.g. branded socks or mugs). Students who finished the survey had the option to claim 250 Perks points (equivalent to 3-5 normal activities) and a chance to win \$300 in grocery gift cards. 1,506 students claimed the points.

As key demographic distortions were significantly reduced in this survey compared to the 2021 Annual Survey, we did not construct a Stratified Random Sample this year. The 2022 sample is presented 'as is.' Note that the sample does include a bias toward early-year students; however, we have cross-tabulated by year of study when valuable, to eliminate the bias at crucial points.

> 4,070 unique respondents, representing 11.4% of UAlberta undergraduates.

> Highest turnout since 2018.

> eClass determined to be the most effective form of distribution.

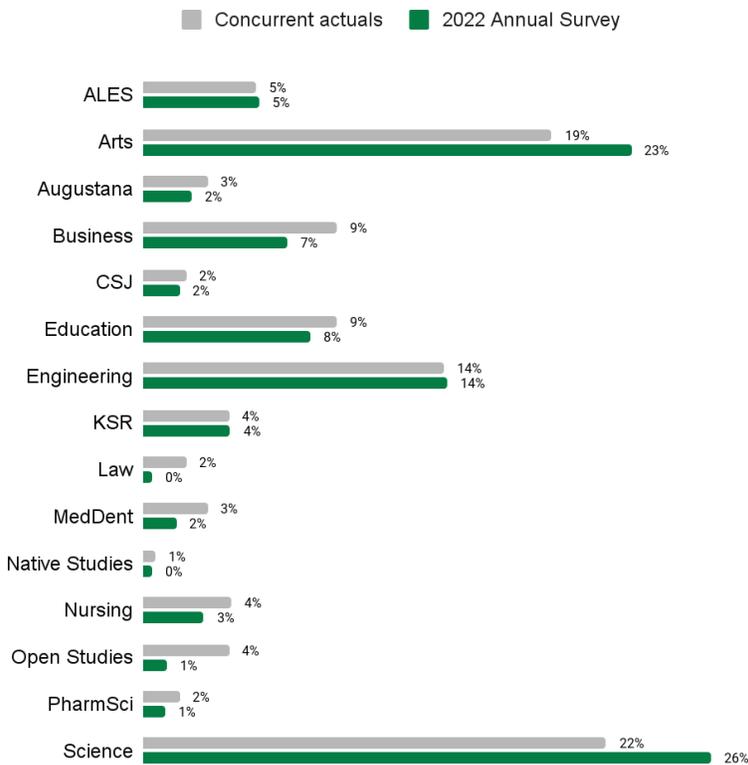
> 1,506 students claimed Perks points for taking the survey.

## Demographics

### Turnout by Faculty

Comparing our data to an enrolment report for the period of the survey's delivery (helpfully provided by the University), participation varied widely by faculty. Business, Nursing, Medicine and Dentistry, Open Studies, and of course Law were significantly underrepresented; Arts and Science had disproportionately high turnout; and Engineering and the satellite campuses, unlike previous years, had a very strong showing.

> Turnout variation by faculty: Arts and Science high; professional faculties low; Engineering, CSJ, and Augustana unusually well represented.

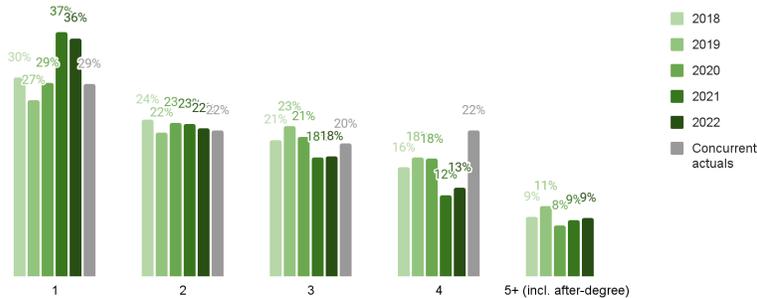


### Turnout by Year of Study

As with the 2021 survey, and departing from previous years, this year saw high engagement from first-year students, and proportionately low engagement from upper-year students, based on the information available. This likely speaks to the UASU's redoubled efforts to engage first-year students, e.g. through orientation and other events and various

> Strong turnout from first-year students and reduced turnout from upper-year students, as in last year's survey.

communication channels. It may also speak to disengagement among upper-year students, a trend noted in other recent surveys.



Note that our survey's 'fifth year or higher, including after-degree programs' framing is the reason that concurrent actuals are not available for that category. 2% of undergraduates are fifth year or higher. 5% are marked as year zero, mostly Open Studies students. Some students in after-degree programs (for example, some Education students) may count toward other years of study in the actuals. These factors are all caveats about direct comparisons between the turnout and the actuals. However, the general trends (overrepresentation of first-year students, and underrepresentation of upper-year students) seem clear.

## Gender

As with last year's survey, we used a two-question approach that improves on the University's data collection and previous UASU approaches.

- Woman: 58.1%
  - Man: 34.8%
  - Non-binary or another gender: 4.3%
  - Prefer not to say: 2.7%
- 
- Transgender: 2.1%
  - Not transgender: 95.4%
  - Prefer not to say: 2.4%

> Sample accurately reflects gender distribution among students.

> 4.3% non-binary or other gender identity.

> 2.1% transgender (in a separate question).

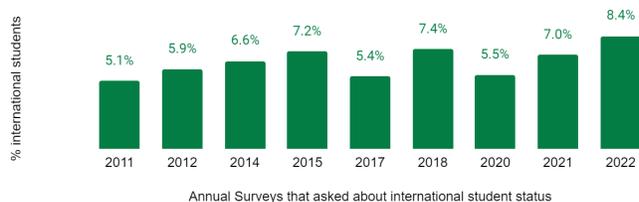
5% of respondents were non-binary or other gender minorities and/or transgender. We coded this combined and/or variable as GENDMINOR for analysis. Looking specifically at the transgender students, 12% were transgender women, 18% were transgender men, and 67% were non-binary or another gender.

Last year's sample included a very strong turnout by gender minority students and a low turnout from cisgender men. Based on comparisons with unpublished preliminary data from the University's new Student Diversity Census, this year's sample reflects the gender balance of the student body reasonably well, and significantly better than last year.

### International Students

This year 13.9% of UAlberta undergraduates are international students, who are typically underrepresented in surveys. 8.4% of this survey's respondents were international students, still an underrepresentation but also an all-time record. The key difference appears to have been the use of the eClass link.

> 8.4% international students, much less underrepresented than in previous years.



### Disability

5.5% of respondents are disabled students. The use of identity-first versus person-first language (disabled students or students with disabilities, in this case) is [not a settled matter of convention](#). In this survey, the question was 'Do you identify as disabled?' so the report defaults to the identity-first terminology 'disabled students.' For comparison, in our 2018 survey, only 4.2% of respondents answered 'yes' to 'Do you identify as differently abled or a person with disabilities?' Shifting away from person-first language may have played a role in the significantly increased response rate from disabled students in both the 2021 and 2022 surveys.

> 5.5% disabled students, a major increase from 2018 data, which used person-first language.

## Race and Ethnicity

This question used a 'choose all that apply' format. 55% indicated they are white or Caucasian and did not select other options. Since the term 'BIPOC' is still widely used, we estimate that around 45% of respondents would fall within this envelope, a major increase from 2021 (35%).<sup>6</sup>

> 45% BIPOC

> East Asian students were underrepresented.

> Indigenous students had a strong turnout.

Looking more closely:

- Black (African, African-Canadian, Black Indigenous, etc.): 4.5%
  - Up from 3.9% in 2021.
- First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit: 4.8%
  - This year, 4.5% of undergraduates are Indigenous, including Indigenous students from other parts of the world.
- Middle Eastern or North African: 4.3%
  - Up from 3.3% in 2021.
- South Asian: 13.4%
  - Up from 11.2% in 2021.
- East Asian: 11.3%
  - This is certainly an underrepresentation, as East Asian students make up over half of international undergraduates at UAlberta, but only 14% of international respondents to this survey. It is likely that over 15% of undergraduates are East Asian.
- Southeast Asian: 14.4%
  - Up from 8.2% in 2021.
- Hispanic or Latine: 3.3%
  - Up from 1.9% in 2021.

> Increasing proportions of South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Latine students.

The sharply increased racial/ethnic diversity of this survey compared to last year's likely stems from two factors: a student body that is increasing in diversity, and the reach of the eClass link as a primary delivery mechanism.

> Sharp increase in racial/ethnic diversity of the survey likely due to changes in the student body and eClass survey delivery.

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<sup>6</sup> The term 'BIPOC' has been criticized for its tendency to paint a diversity of communities (and their needs and experiences) as homogeneous. Another major point of criticism is that including First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people in categories like 'BIPOC' or 'visible minority' erases their unique relationships with (and claims on) Canadian society, history, and government. In our 2018 annual survey data, fewer than ¼ of Indigenous respondents self-identified as members of a visible minority.

## Burnout

The fear or experience of burnout has been a consistent thread throughout interactions with students in Fall 2022. The Annual Survey was an ideal opportunity to quantify this aspect of students' welfare. Students are highly susceptible to burnout due to taking classes, working or volunteering, maintaining their apartment/home, maintaining relationships and taking care of themselves. It is important to address burnout because it is often associated with severe exhaustion, weakness, illness, isolation and feelings of giving up.

While common burnout survey instruments require licensing fees, the free-to-use [Copenhagen Burnout Inventory](#) suited our purposes. We thank Kristensen et al. at Denmark's National Research Center for the Working Environment (NFA). The CBI is a three-part instrument designed to measure personal, work-related, and client-related burnout. In this survey, we were able to find space for fully bilingual versions of the entire personal burnout section, as well as one student-relevant question ('I don't have enough energy for family and friends during leisure time') from the work-related burnout section.

Since some of these questions are closely related, the NFA recommends distributing them throughout a larger survey to reduce distortions, which we did. We needed to adjust some wording to make the available French and English versions align more closely, but either way, we believe the results speak for themselves.

Using the CBI, each question is scored numerically (always=100, often=75, sometimes=50, seldom=25, never/almost never=0) and an individual's total score for the personal burnout section is the average of those responses. As per the CBI's marking instructions, this gives us a personal burnout rating out of 100. (50-74 is moderate burnout, 75-99 is high burnout, and 100 is extreme burnout.) Since this long survey had some falloff, we also removed (from the burnout

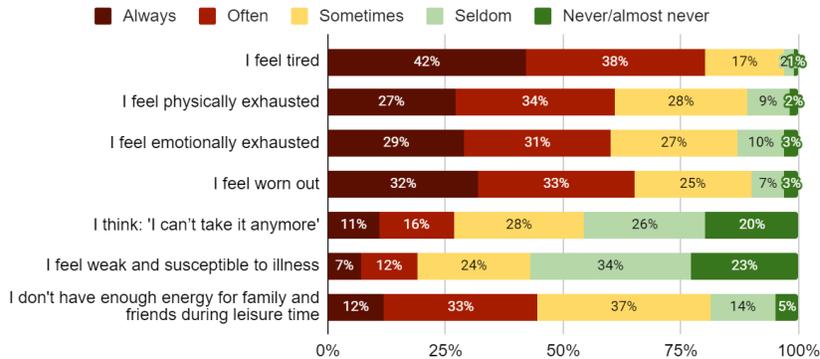
> Fear or experience of burnout has been consistent throughout the year and high in the annual survey.

> We used the Copenhagen Burnout Inventory to calculate student burnout.

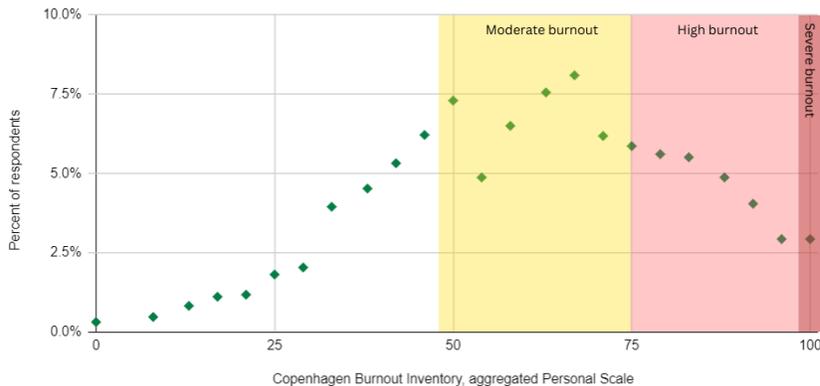
index assessment) the fraction of responses that only answered a few of the questions.

- The average burnout rating was 61 (moderate).
  - Around 41% faced moderate burnout.
  - Around 29% faced high burnout.
  - Around 3% faced extreme burnout.

> The average burnout rating was 61; however, it was higher for women than men, and higher for gender minorities than men and women.



> Around 1/3 faced high or extreme burnout.



- Self-reported burnout was highly gendered.
  - The average rating for men was 52; the average rating for women was 65.
  - The GENDMINOR group (non-binary and other gender identities, and/or transgender students) had an average rating of 70.
- The average rating for disabled students was 72, close to the high burnout threshold.
- The average rating for international students was 53.
- Ratings were consistent (generally ~59-62) across racial/ethnic demographics.

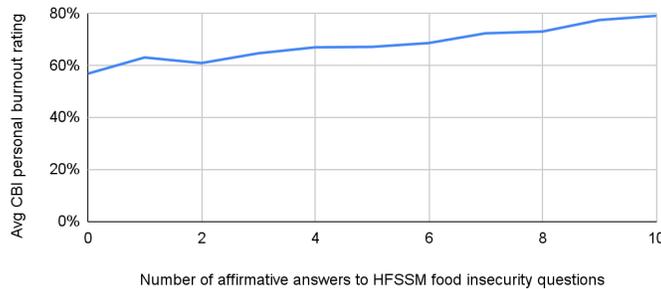
> Disabled students' burnout was higher than average.



- We found a moderate positive association (Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.3) between individual burnout ratings and the number of affirmative answers to the food insecurity questions. As explored in the next section, food insecurity plays a serious role in burnout.

> Burnout ratings and food insecurity were found to be positively correlated.

Burnout and food insecurity in UAlberta undergraduates



> As burnout increased, so did food insecurity, and as food insecurity increased, so did burnout.

- Burnout, surprisingly, was stable by year of study.
- Burnout ratings were fairly stable across faculties, with some exceptions. Low ratings (~55) appeared in Business and Engineering. High ratings (~65) appeared in Law, ALES, and Arts.
- Burnout was consistent across self-reported involvement on campus (a question outlined later in this report). Both engaged and disengaged students are vulnerable to burnout.

> Burnout was fairly stable across year of study and faculty.

## Food Insecurity

The 10-question Health Canada Household Food Security Survey Module Adult Scale (HFSSM) is a standard instrument for measuring food insecurity in Canada, and is functionally identical to the American equivalent. In recent years, the HFSSM Adult Scale has been employed on studies of food insecurity among post-secondary students in Canada.

The UASU included the HFSSM Adult Scale in the [2019 Annual Survey](#) (n=3944), and we repeated that instrument as part of the 2022 Annual Survey.

The 2019 survey took place shortly before the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. The new survey speaks to the state of student food insecurity after three unusual years, encompassing the height of the pandemic in Canada, institutional recovery efforts, and — most recently — record inflation impacting the cost of living. Using Health Canada's instrument and grading mechanisms, the rate of severe food insecurity has significantly increased (up from 13% to 16%) since 2019. The total rate of moderate or severe food insecurity is 34%.

> We used the Health Canada HFSSM survey instrument to calculate food insecurity.

> Severe food insecurity in the student body has increased significantly from 2019 to 2022.

FOOD SECURITY STATUS (HFSSM)	THRESHOLD	2022	2019
Food secure	No affirmative responses	57%	56%
Marginally food insecure	No more than 1 affirmative response	9%	11%
Moderately food insecure	2 to 5 affirmative responses	18%	20%
Severely food insecure	6 or more affirmative responses	16%	13%

HFSSM QUESTION	Yes, frequently	Yes, sometimes	No	Prefer not to say
I worried food would run out before I got money to buy more	7%	18%	72%	4%
The food I bought didn't last and there wasn't any money to get more	5%	12%	79%	4%
I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	10%	21%	66%	3%
I cut the size of meals or skipped meals because there was not enough money for food	8%	20%	69%	3%
I ate less than I felt I should because there was not enough money for food	7%	19%	70%	4%
I was hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money for food	6%	17%	74%	4%
I lost weight because there was not enough money for food	4%	10%	81%	5%
I did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food	2%	7%	87%	3%
HFSSM QUESTION	Yes		No	Prefer not to say
I cut the size of meals or skipped meals in 3 or more months because there was not enough money for food	16%		79%	5%
I did not eat for a whole day in 3 or more months because there was not enough money for food	5%		90%	4%

> 25% of students indicated that they worried they would run out of food before they got money to buy more.

> 31% of students indicated they struggled with affording balanced meals.

> 28% of students indicated they cut the size of a meal or skipped a meal because they did not have enough money.

The 2019 survey noted high rates of severe food insecurity among gender minorities, first-generation students, mature students, students who parent, and Indigenous students. The 2022 survey collected a different set of demographic data.

> In 2019, severe food insecurity was high in gender minorities, first-generation students, mature students, students who parent and Indigenous students.

In the 2022 survey, severe food insecurity (baseline 16%) was most common among international students (23%), disabled students (29%), transgender students (25%), non-binary students and other gender minorities (19%), Black students (20%), and Indigenous students (24%, up from 19-20% in 2019, with Indigenous women most commonly affected).

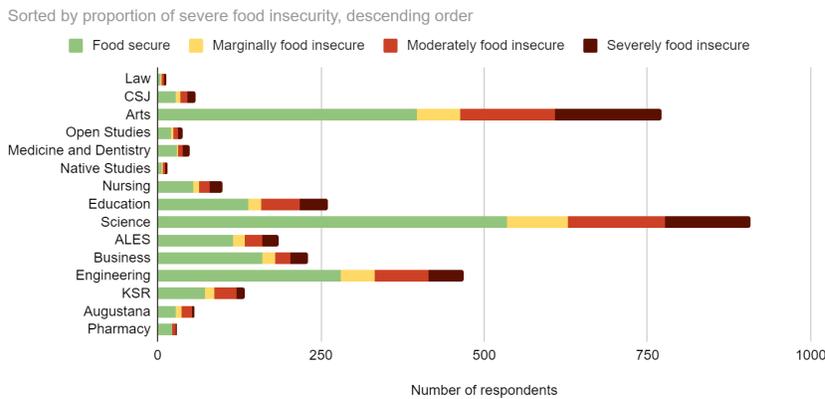
There was also major variation within faculties: with caveats around turnout from small faculties, severe food insecurity was highest in Open Studies (21%), Nursing (20%), Law (36%), Medicine and Dentistry (20%), Arts (21%), and Campus Saint-Jean (22%).

However, food insecurity is common across all demographics and faculties, with two exceptions. Food insecurity appears low in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, and severe food insecurity appears low at Augustana.

> In 2022, severe food insecurity was high among international students, disabled students, transgender and gender minorities, Black students and Indigenous students

> Severe food insecurity appeared in Open Studies, Nursing, Law, Medicine and Dentistry, Arts and CSJ.

> Food insecurity was low in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences as well as Augustana.



As noted in the previous section, food insecurity goes hand in hand with burnout. For example, looking at the question 'I think: 'I can't take it anymore,' we see the following number of affirmative HFSSM responses:

- Never/almost never: 0.9 (food secure)
- Seldom: 1.5 (marginally or moderately food insecure)

> Students who claimed that they never think 'I can't take it anymore' also scored as food secure, while students who claimed that they do think 'I can't take it anymore' scored as food insecure.



- Sometimes: 2.0 (moderately food insecure)
- Often: 2.4 (moderately food insecure)
- Always: 3.7 (moderately food insecure)

The question 'I feel weak and susceptible to illness' displayed a similarly serious pattern, and all the burnout questions displayed this pattern to some extent. Our conclusion is that food insecurity is a serious factor in student burnout.

## Student Spaces

### "How many times each week do you visit the Students' Union Building (SUB)?"

44% of respondents visit SUB at least once per week; 14% visit at least four times per week.

> 44% of respondents indicated they visit SUB at least once a week.

- Never: 12%
- Less than once a month: 17%
- At least once a month, but less than once a week: 27%
- 1-3 times per week: 30%
- 4-6 times per week: 11%
- 7-10 times per week: 2%
- More than 10 times per week: 1%

### "Would you use public computers if SUB had them?"

- I think I need public computers in SUB: 5%
- I would use public computers in SUB: 9%
- I might use public computers in SUB: 14%
- I probably wouldn't use public computers in SUB much, if at all: 44%
- I don't spend time in SUB: 22%

> 28% of respondents indicated that they would use SUB computers if they were installed.

'Need' responses (5% of responses) were higher among the following groups:

- International students: 13%
- Severely food insecure students: 10%
- BIPOC students: 8% (compared to 2% of white students)
  - Notably, up to 10% of South Asian students.

> Higher rates of need for computers in SUB among international students (13%), severely food insecure students (10%), and BIPOC students (8%).

### "Would you use charging stations if SUB had them?"

- I think I need charging stations in SUB: 23%
- I would use charging stations in SUB: 39%
- I might use charging stations in SUB: 21%
- I probably wouldn't use charging stations in SUB much, if at all: 11%
- I don't spend time in SUB: 22%

> 83% of respondents indicated that they would use charging stations if they were installed in SUB.

'Need' responses (22% of responses) were higher among the following groups:

- GENDMINOR students (non-binary or another gender identity, and/or transgender): 27%
- BIPOC students: 26% (compared to 19% of white students)
  - 29% of Southeast Asian students
  - 26% of Black students
  - 30% of South Asian students
- Disabled students: 29%
- Severely food insecure students: 32%

> Higher rates of need for charging stations in SUB among gender minorities, BIPOC students, disabled and severely food insecure students.

## Building an Engaged Community

"How involved are you on campus this year? (Examples: campus recreation, faculty/department association, clubs, volunteering, attending events.)"

This question ran as a slider scale from 0 (very uninvolved) to 100 (very involved). The full sample's average was 35, i.e. somewhat uninvolved. This average result was virtually identical to the result of the same question in the 2018 Annual Survey.

> The sample average indicated students are somewhat uninvolved on campus.

Early-year students were more disengaged than later-year students:

- First-year students: 32
- Second-year: 34
- Third-year: 38
- Fourth-year: 42
- Fifth-year or higher: 37

> Fourth year students indicated the most involvement on campus.

Domestic students were significantly more disengaged than international students:

- International students: 45
- Domestic students: 34

Disabled students were less disengaged than other students:

- Disabled students: 40
- Students who are not disabled: 35

Disengagement was largely stable across gender metrics, with notable disengagement among gender minorities:

- Women: 36
- Men: 35
- Non-binary or another gender identity: 31
- Transgender: 36
- Cisgender: 35

> Non-binary students or students of another gender identity were less involved on campus than women, men, cisgender and transgender students.

Disengagement varied somewhat across racial demographics. The least disengaged were South Asian students; the most disengaged were Indigenous students.

- Black students: 37

- First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit students: 32
- Middle Eastern or North African students: 34
- South Asian students: 40
- East Asian students: 37
- Southeast Asian students: 35
- White or Caucasian students: 34
- Hispanic or Latine students: 37

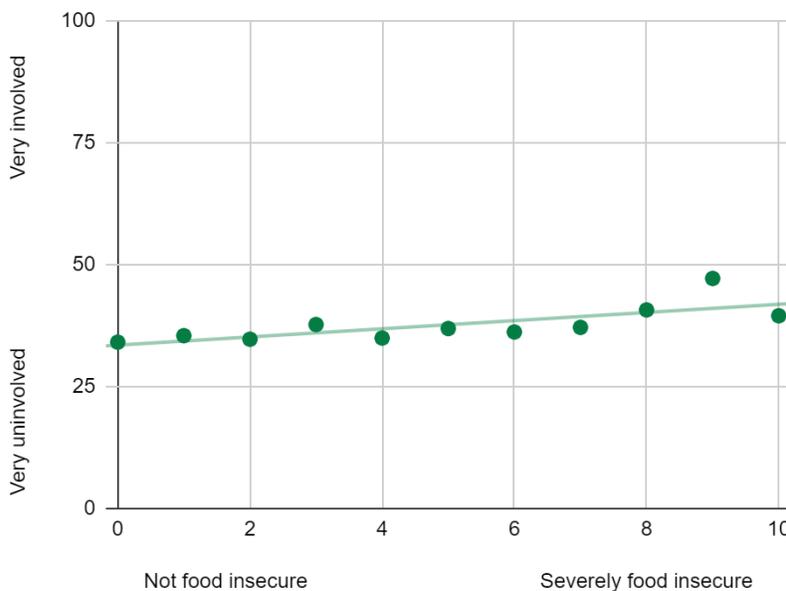
> First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit students were the least engaged on campus, while South Asian students were the most involved.

Highly involved students can still be just as vulnerable as any other students to burnout and food insecurity. As noted above, disengagement did not vary significantly with respect to burnout.

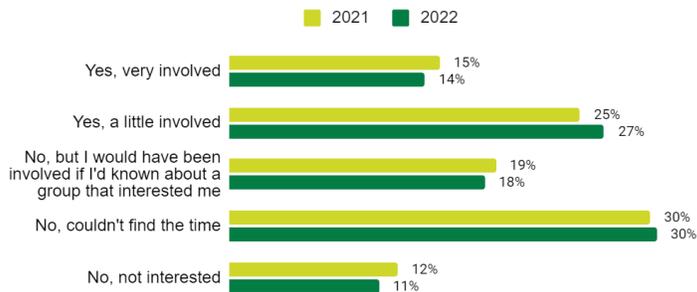
Food insecurity and engagement had a stronger relationship. The more food insecure a student is, the more likely they are to be involved on campus. Based on comments made in past surveys, we suspect that the throughline is access to food through activities, or even selecting activities based on free food.

> Food insecurity and engagement were related.

> We suspect engagement was higher in food insecure students because select campus activities offer free food.



"The UASU supports a diverse ecosystem of clubs and other student groups. BearsDen lists almost 400 of them. Have you been involved in student groups this semester?"



> Involvement consistent with 2021.

Rates of involvement were consistent with the previous year. The 2021 Annual Survey found that women were more likely to be involved in clubs/groups than men, and this variation did not appear in the 2022 data.

> Men just as involved as women, unlike in 2021.

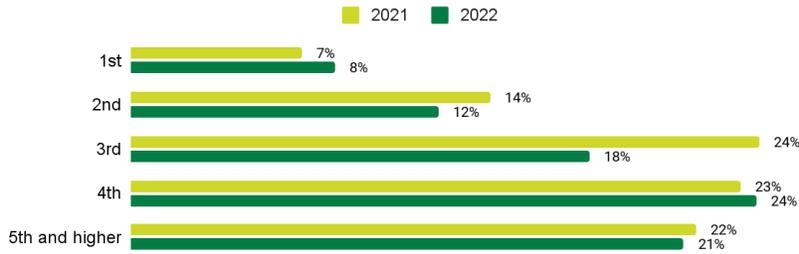
In the 2021 data, this question varied widely by faculty, and we saw similar patterns this year. Asterisks mark points consistent with the 2021 data.

- Most involved (total rate of 'very' + 'a little'): Law\* (71%, but note that Law had a very low turnout this year), Business (46%), Medicine and Dentistry (53%, though low turnout), ALES\* (51%), Pharmacy\* (47%), Science\* (45%).
- Least involved (lowest total rate of 'very' + 'a little'): Education\* (25%), Native Studies\* (12%).
  - Nursing rose from 28% to 36% this year, leaving the 'least involved' list.
- Most uninterested: Augustana\* (17%), Education\* (17%), Native Studies\* (18%).
- Least likely to be able to find the time: Native Studies\* (53%), Engineering\* (38%), Education (37%), CSJ\* (35%).
- Most likely to have been involved if they'd known about a group that interested them: Education (22%), KSR\* (24%), Arts (23%).

> Major faculty variations consistent with 2021 data.

> Notable positive signs in Business and Nursing.

Rates of being 'very involved' in clubs and student groups by year of study



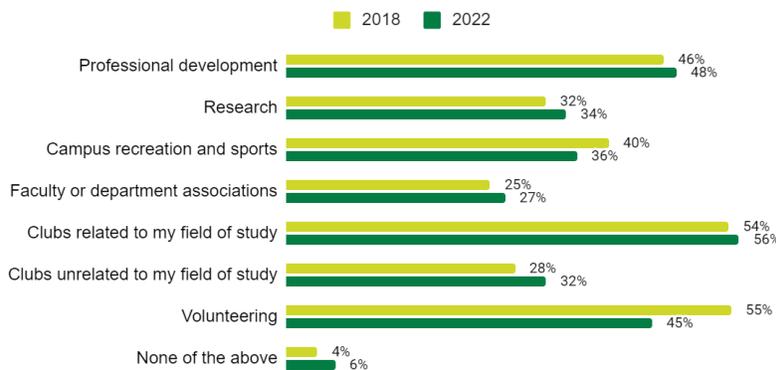
We noted an unusually large shift in involvement by year of study compared with the 2021 data. In 2022, second- and third-year students were far less likely than before to be very involved in clubs/groups. Upper-year and first-year students were just as likely as in 2021 to be very involved. Based on conversations with Student Life staff, we believe a major factor here is that 2022/23's third-year students' earliest exposure to the clubs/groups ecosystem was strongly impacted by the pandemic. (For example, the 2020/21 Clubs Fair was delivered in a very different way than in most years.)

> Second- and third-year students were much less likely to be very involved, likely stemming from pandemic impacts on early exposure to clubs/groups.

**"What kinds of opportunities interest you the most? (Choose all that apply.)"**

This question was repeated from the 2018 Annual Survey, a four-year gap. It was also deployed in a January 2023 Perks survey (n=744). Patterns were largely the same as in 2018, except for a somewhat reduced interest in campus recreation, a somewhat increased rate of disinterest in all opportunities, a moderately increased rate of interest in clubs unrelated to field of study, and severely reduced interest in volunteering.

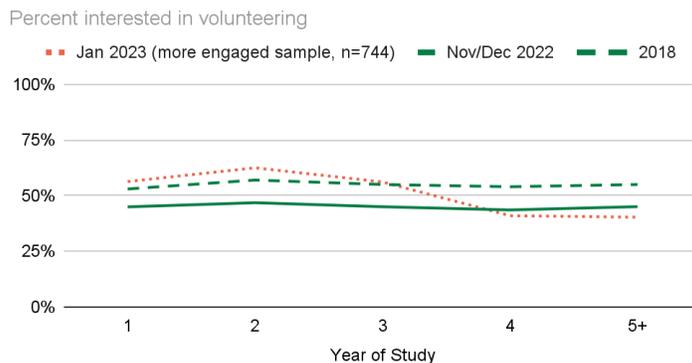
> Increased interest in clubs, but sharply decreased interest in volunteering.



Looking more closely at the reduced interest in volunteering, we find significant complexity around year of study. The January 2023 Perks survey noted a strong falloff in interest among upper-year students compared to the 2018 data. What we find in the 2022 data is a reduced level of interest across all years of study. The discrepancy between the 2022 and 2023 data makes sense in the context of the typical engagement levels of the Perks user base. We suspect the 2022 Annual Survey data is closer to a campus-wide picture of student interest in volunteering.

> On average, students across years of study are less likely to be interested in volunteering than in 2018.

Viewed together, this data suggests a pervasive reduction of interest in volunteering.



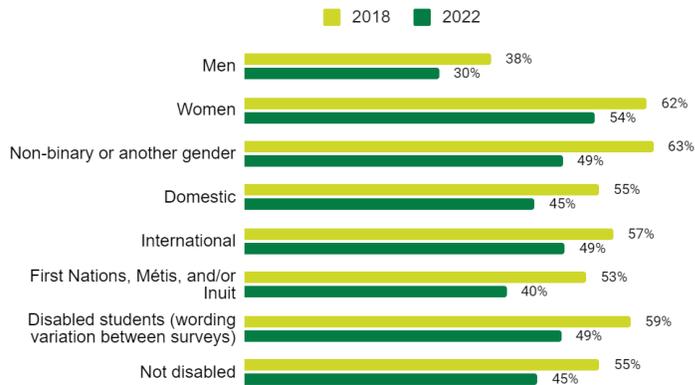
The [2023 Perks survey](#) provided additional context that is useful for interpreting the 2022 data. When asked 'If you're not interested in volunteering, why?' students overwhelmingly focused on one of two interrelated factors: they have no time and, if they are going to work, they want/need to be paid. Subthemes included 'I've already done a lot of volunteering,' 'any free time I have needs to go towards working for money,' and 'I've got too much on my plate and can't risk my mental health deteriorating again.' Time constraints were often associated with transit access, especially at night. Students also remarked that they expected volunteer work to be boring, un-educational, and/or un-meaningful, or that they had already done significant amounts of volunteering. However, time and a need for paid work remained the dominant concerns.

> Reduced interest in volunteering is primarily linked to lack of time and a desire for paid work, as well as an expectation that volunteering will not be meaningful work.

Since all these factors do not impact students equally, we opted to explore interest in volunteering through all shared cross-tabulations available to us in the 2018 and 2022 datasets. Again, the reduced interest in volunteering is pervasive and consistent.

> Reduced interest in volunteering is common across many demographics.

Rates of interest in volunteering by selected demographic



We anticipated that reduced interest in volunteering might go hand in hand with food insecurity and burnout. However, this was not the case. Reduced rates of interest are pervasive regardless of students' circumstances.

> Interest in volunteering is stable across levels of food insecurity and burnout.

Rates of interest in volunteering by food insecurity



Rates of interest in volunteering by burnout level

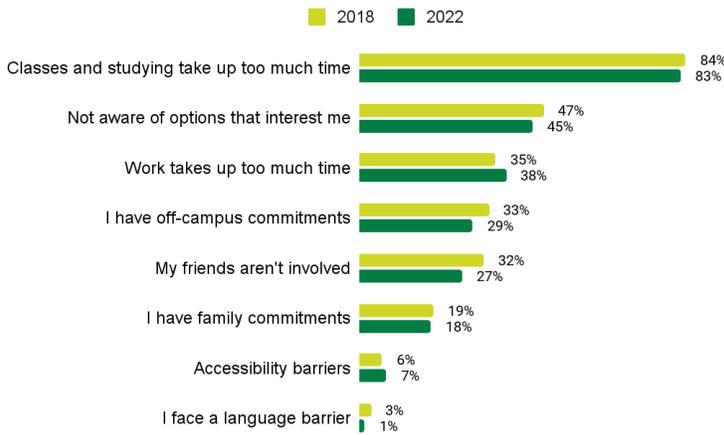


The main limitation of this analysis is that interest in volunteering was collected as a binary state. However, there are degrees of interest in volunteering, and potential factors impacting how long volunteering remains interesting.

**"What are your biggest obstacles to getting more involved? (Choose all that apply.)"**

This was another question repeated from the 2018 survey. Results were quite consistent, with a moderately increased rate of 'work takes up too much time' and moderately reduced rates of 'off-campus commitments' and 'my friends aren't involved.' We suggest this data reflects a student body more likely to be burdened by work and perhaps less likely to be socially engaged or involved in civil society.

> Overwhelmingly, academics are the main obstacle to involvement, and lack of awareness of interesting options remains the second most frequent choice.



> Compared to 2018, students are less likely to cite off-campus commitments and friends' uninvolved as barriers, perhaps reflecting less social and civil engagement.

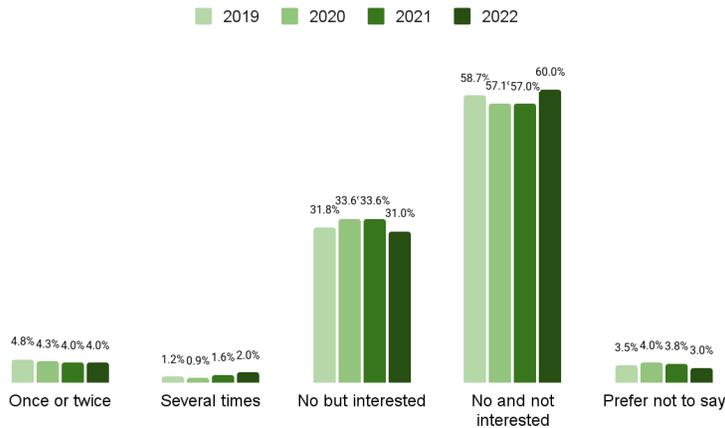
As a positive note, the reduced rate of a language barrier is heartening in the context of the increased international student turnout this year.

## Student Services

"Have you visited The Landing (0-68A SUB), a community space and resource centre for sexual and gender diversity?"

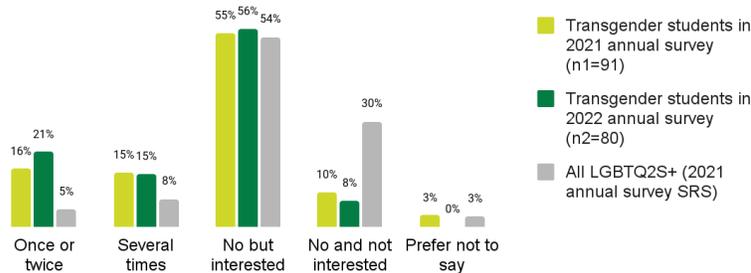
> The Landing is seeing increased usage by frequent visitors.

This question has been asked in several previous annual surveys, and the results remain stable. The 'several times' cohort has slowly but steadily increased, which aligns with input from Services staff about increased demand.



One valuable lens on this question comes from assessing the responses of transgender students with reference to last year's survey. We note somewhat higher rates of visiting The Landing occasionally, and the other numbers remained stable. Transgender students are far more likely than other LGBTQ2S+ students to drop by The Landing, twice as likely to visit several times, and far less likely to be uninterested.

> Transgender students are especially likely to visit The Landing and become frequent visitors.



## "What interests you about visiting The Landing? (Choose all that apply.)"



> Students are typically interested in visiting The Landing for curiosity, community, and involvement.

> This year, more students were looking for sexual health resources.

Results remained stable from last year: students report a wide variety of reasons for their interest. Notably, this year more students were interested because they were looking for sexual health resources. Some text responses under the 'Other' heading:

- Volunteering.
- Feeling that my identity is acknowledged and supported by the university.
- Genuinely never heard of this before so excited to say hello!
- I'm generally not interested but I'm interested in sexual health resources.
- The Landing lending library! [Noted by multiple students.]
- I think it is inappropriate to display these things in the open when it is a very personal part of our lives.
- For now I have no plans to visit, but I may in the future when I have a more clear idea of what I'm doing.
- Places like these frustrate me because they raise the cost of tuition when most students don't use it. I would still rather have places like this, than 3 new useless staircases.
- I am gay, my boyfriend is gay, we have plenty of gay friends — we have our own community and have never had any interest in visiting The Landing.

In the interests of examining the Landing's appeal to various groups of students (which was examined through other lenses in the [2021 Annual Survey](#)), we cross-tabulated 'I am not interested in visiting The Landing' against various subsections of the 2022 survey data.

- All respondents average: 59%
- All respondents who use at least two types of pronouns (201 respondents): 24%
- All GENDMINOR respondents (i.e. transgender and/or non-binary/another gender identity; 192 respondents): 17%
- White GENDMINOR (133 respondents): 18%
- BIPOC GENDMINOR (59 respondents): 14%
- Disabled GENDMINOR (51 respondents): 8%
- Cisgender she/they (120 respondents): 22%
- Cisgender he/they (33 respondents): 33%

> Disinterest in visiting the landing is very low among intersectionally marginalized gender minorities.

**"If you were going to join a low-cost professional/leadership development program, what kinds of skills would you want to learn?"**

Students provided over 2100 responses. The most common themes (i.e. ~100-250 responses each) that we heard from interested students:

- Written and verbal communication, including public speaking
- Team management, leadership, conflict resolution, and collaboration
- Networking
- Resumé development
- Budgeting and financial literacy
- Interview skills
- Job hunting

> Students would appreciate low-cost professional development programs on communication, team management, conflict resolution, resumé and job hunting, budgeting, being interviewed, and many others.

Other common areas of interest:

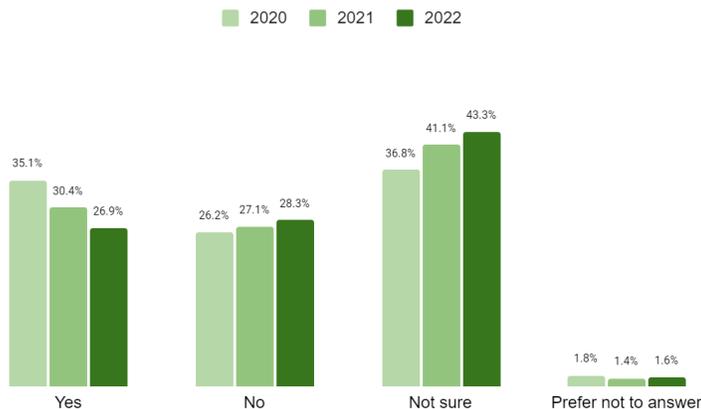
- Confidence
- Workload management
- Event/project management
- Grant writing
- Living and working with neurodivergence

- Spreadsheets
- Coding
- First aid/naloxone/CPR, and not just on weekends

Several respondents noted that they would appreciate some sort of credential to put on their resumés to demonstrate these skills.

**"The Peer Support Centre (2-707 SUB, or available online) offers a free, confidential place to talk with trained volunteers about the stress and challenges you face. Is this something you think you might use?"**

> Students are becoming less sure that they might use the Peer Support Centre. However, usage remains stable.



Over the past three years, a significant fraction of students has shifted from 'yes' to 'not sure.' 'No,' however, remains largely stable.

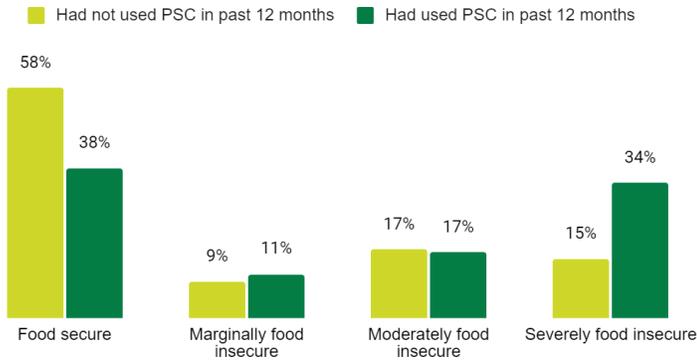
**"Have you used the Peer Support Centre (PSC), either in person or online, in the past 12 months?"**

3.4% of respondents who answered 'yes,' equivalent to 2021 (3.5%) and 2020 (3.5%). ('Prefer not to say' rose somewhat this year, reinforcing that usage is likely stable.) 'Yes' respondents were logic-piped to two follow-up questions.

> Those who used the PSC in the past 12 months scored higher on burnout than the average score, and were twice as likely to be severely food insecure.

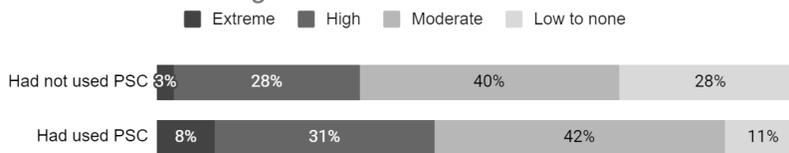
The average burnout rating of those who had used the PSC in the past 12 months was 70, significantly higher than the

average of 61. Severe food insecurity was also extremely common among PSC users.



PSC users were much more likely to be extremely burned out and much less likely to not face burnout.

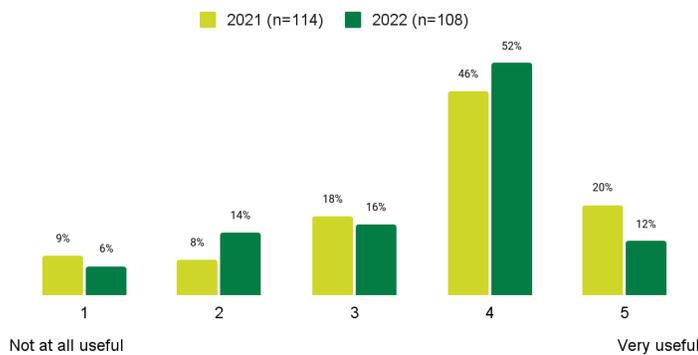
#### Burnout levels among PSC visitors and others



#### "Was your Peer Support Center session useful to you?"

This question ran on a five-point Likert scale (1=not at all useful, 5=extremely useful). The average value was 3.5, almost identical to the 2021 data and other previous surveys of PSC visitors. Patterns were broadly comparable, trending away from more extreme positive/negative responses.

> The majority of those who used the PSC found their sessions helpful.



### "Did you receive the support you needed?"

A few dozen students offered substantive responses to this question. All responses above the level of 'yes' or 'no' are included here.

- I felt lighter after talking with someone but it was not as useful as I thought it would be. I definitely did receive support for the duration I was there for.
- I got some support but I feel as though there needs to be people with more experience.
- I think I received enough support to tide me over and keep me stable.
- I was hoping to join a support group, but it was cancelled due to COVID.
- I was referred later to a social worker on campus to help deal with my case.
- No - wasn't enough space for me. Got discouraged and didn't try again.
- No. It felt rushed and unprofessional. It didn't feel like much of a safe space to disclose the things I needed to.
- Not really, the HCP that I saw cried after I told her about my stressors and my mental health background. It kind of felt like no one could help me.
- There was not enough staff to continue sessions.
- Yes but I also was too busy to implement the tools I learned.
- Yes within the scopes of what the centre can do.
- Yes. It was exactly what I needed to push me another day.

## Advocating for Student Needs

### "Do you have a laptop/iPad for schoolwork?"

- Yes, and it meets my needs: 88.3%
- Yes, but it doesn't meet my needs: 8.7%
- No, and I wish I had one: 2.4%
- No, don't need one: 0.6%

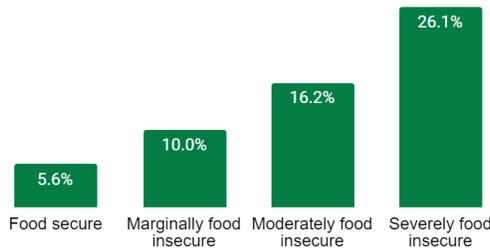
> The majority (88.3%) of students claimed they have a laptop/iPad for schoolwork.

11% of respondents expressed a need for a laptop or iPad for their schoolwork. Need for a device scaled very sharply by food insecurity:

> Those who were highly food insecure were more likely than any other level of food insecurity to state they need a laptop/iPad for school work.

Need for a laptop/iPad versus food insecurity

\*Yes, but doesn't meet needs' + 'No, and wish I had one'



Several groups stood out as needing a suitable device for their academic work. By proportion of 'yes, but it doesn't meet my needs' plus 'no, and I wish I had one':

- PSC users: 16%
- South Asian students: 16%
- Transgender students and/or non-binary/marginalized genders: 18%
- Disabled students: 19%
- International students: 24%

## "Have you worked for any of the following in the past two years?"

This question was repeated from the 2021 annual survey.

	UASU paid position	UASU volunteer	UAlberta paid position	UAlberta volunteer	Gov't paid position	Other paid position on campus	Other paid position off campus
Average	1.6%	4.9%	11.2%	10.3%	8.0%	4.5%	47.8%
Man/woman split	1.6%/1.4%	4.2%/4.7%	10.2%/11.6%	8.8%/11.3%	7.9%/8.0%	4.9%/4.4%	36.9%/32.4%
NB or other gender	3.3%	9.9%	13.8%	8.6%	7.9%	3.3%	50.0%
Transgender	2.5%	6.3%	13.9%	6.3%	8.9%	1.3%	46.8%
Black	3.9%	3.9%	15.4%	9.2%	5.4%	6.9%	35.4%
Indigenous	2.5%	3.8%	10.6%	6.3%	11.3%	3.8%	51.9%
Disabled	2.1%	3.1%	16.2%	9.4%	13.1%	3.7%	50.8%
International	2.3%	7.6%	15.5%	12.0%	2.9%	4.7%	19.5%
PSC users	4.9%	9.8%	19.6%	16.7%	7.8%	8.8%	41.2%

With the caveat that cross-tabulations like this should be taken with a large grain of salt, some points of note compared to the same question in 2021:

- The number of Indigenous students working for the UASU in both paid and volunteer roles appears to have increased.
- In 2021, men appeared far less likely than women to volunteer; that is less the case in the 2022 data.
- This year, Black and Indigenous students appeared less likely to find government employment, but more likely to find on-campus work.
- This year, transgender students appeared more likely to find off-campus work.
- This year, Indigenous students appeared more likely to find work with the University.
- This year, disabled students were less likely to volunteer and more likely to take off-campus work.

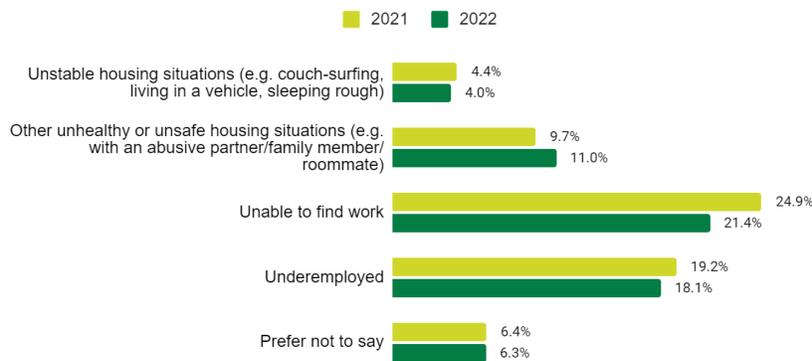
## "Have you visited a food bank in the past year?"

6.5% of respondents answered 'yes.' Some variations of note:

- PSC users: 25%
- Law students: 23%
- International students: 20%
- Disabled students: 12%
- Open Studies students: 11%
- Black students: 8%
- Indigenous students: 9%
- Non-binary/other gender: 11%
- Transgender: 9%

> 25% of PSC users also accessed the food bank in the past year, as well as 23% of law students and 20% of international students.

## "Have you found yourself in any of these circumstances in the past two years?"



> More students are living in unsafe housing situations in 2022 compared to 2021, but less students are struggling to find work in 2022 than 2021.

This year, students were less likely to experience unemployment or underemployment, but somewhat more likely to be in unhealthy/unsafe household situations.

Groups who were likely to be unable to find work:

- Disabled students: 31%
- Black students: 34%
- International students: 36%
- Transgender students: 39%
- Non-binary students/another gender: 28%

> Transgender students and international students were more likely to be unable to find work than other demographics.

Groups who were likely to be in unhealthy/unsafe household situations:

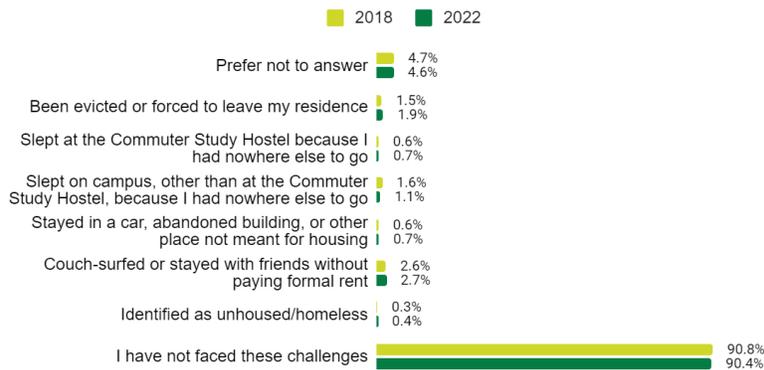
- Disabled students: 28%
- Indigenous students: 20%
- Transgender students: 35%
- Non-binary students/another gender: 30%

> Transgender, non-binary and students of another gender were more likely to indicate living in an unhealthy/unsafe household than other demographics.

It is also noteworthy that the likelihood of an unhealthy/unsafe housing situation scaled in relation to involvement in student groups/clubs. (For example, 15% of 'very involved' students had experienced this, compared to 8-10% of students who were not involved in groups/clubs for whatever reason.) One possible reason might be that student groups/clubs can be a refuge from circumstances at home.

> Students who were very involved on campus also experienced more unhealthy/unsafe housing than those not involved on campus.

**"Since you enrolled at UAlberta, have you faced any of the following housing challenges? (Choose all that apply.)"**



This question was repeated from the 2018 annual survey. The results are essentially stable, though sleeping on campus has decreased somewhat and eviction has increased somewhat.

> 2.3% of students indicated that they had experienced a form of homelessness.

We created a composite variable (UNHOUSE): any student who had stayed in a car/abandoned building etc. and/or slept on campus for lack of options and/or identified as unhoused/homeless. The average UNHOUSE level was 2.3%.

The 2022 survey's enhanced demographic panel allows for a closer look at whether specific groups may be more commonly impacted:

- International students: 4.1%
- Disabled students: 4.7%
- Non-binary students/another gender: 6.0%
- Transgender students: 3.8%
- South Asian students: 4.3%
- Middle Eastern or North African students: 6.2%
- Hispanic or Latine students: 4.5%
- Severely food insecure students: 8.9%
- Students who had been unable to find work at some point in the past two years: 3.5%

> Severely food insecure students, Middle Eastern or North African and non-binary/another-gender students experienced houselessness more than any other demographic.

**"What are your pronouns among trusted family/friends? Choose all that apply."**

	He/him/il	She/her/elle	They/them/iel	Two or more
All respondents	32.9%	61.7%	7.7%	6.3%
Transgender	36.7%	31.7%	67.1%	36.7%
Non-binary or another gender	22.4%	44.7%	82.9%	52.0%

> Around 8% (likely around 2700 students on campus) report their pronouns as they/them/iel (with or without other pronouns).

> Around 6%, % of them cisgender, use more than one type of pronoun.

These results are quite close to the 2021 data. While an 'other' option was provided, very few responses emerged, mostly non-substantive (e.g. a handful of objections to the concept of pronouns). Substantive responses included fae/faer, it/its, and ze/zir. Overwhelmingly, 'they/them' (alone or in combination with other pronouns, e.g. 'he/they') is the most common choice of pronoun outside the strict gender binary.

## "How comfortable do you feel when using your pronouns on campus?"

Looking at non-binary students or another gender, we see reduced discomfort since 2021:



Looking at transgender students, we see higher rates of comfort and lower rates of discomfort:



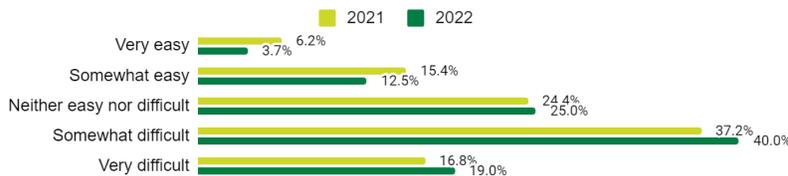
Transgender students encompass a wide variety of lived experiences and identities. Although cross-tabulating further for gender makes results far less reliable due to the small numbers of students involved, we did see indications that comfort levels vary between transgender students based on their gender identity. For example, looking at the rate of total comfortable respondents (very + somewhat) in both years, we found that transgender men were very likely (~80% rising to >90%) to be comfortable, and transgender students who were also gender minorities were somewhat likely (~60% in both years) to be comfortable.

Within the limits of our data, most of the change for transgender students appeared to centre on transgender women. In 2021's data, only 22% of transgender women were comfortable using their pronouns on campus; in 2022's data, that rose to 78%. Remember, however, that we are talking about a very small number of students (under a dozen transgender women in each year) once cross-tabulated down this far.

**"During the past year, how easy or difficult has it been to balance work and school?"**

Note that the 2021 version of this question used a two-year period (i.e. to focus on the COVID-19 pandemic to date); the 2022 version used a one-year period to focus on the period since the 2021 survey, without overlapping.

> Students found balancing work and school more difficult in the past year than in the preceding two years.



The share of respondents who found balancing work and school very difficult (average 19%) was quite consistent across faculties, demographics, and years of study. The main exception was Law (38%).

**"Is there anything else you think we should know about life as a student at the University of Alberta?"**

Students provided over 1,300 unique responses across a wide range of topics. Frequent responses involved stress, mental health, food insecurity, accessibility concerns, and financial frustration (e.g. around tuition increases). A small but notable share of respondents criticized the UASU's priorities from various angles. Some felt that the UASU should have done more to resist tuition increases or support the Campus Food Bank, or that other priorities should be reduced in the context of those needs. Meanwhile, some felt that the UASU (and this survey) placed too much value on diversity.

It is worth noting that this report has highlighted many cases where students from specific equity-seeking groups are displaying a measurably different likelihood of experiences and impacts around, for example, food insecurity, device access, comfort, campus engagement, finding various types of employment, and burnout. We stand by the value of this approach.