

# How do you LIVE? Survey Report

Oct. 2, 2024

Prepared for UASU Executive Committee by  
Department of Research and Advocacy



## Overview

The survey *How do you LIVE?* was posted on the UASU Perks app for a week and collected responses from 1,471 unique individuals. This survey aimed to accumulate recent data on student living situations, financial stressors and well-being.

*Note: 42 respondents' data was removed from the data pool because they did not complete the survey. Thus, the true n = 1,429. Questions below with a listed sample size less than 1,429 exclude respondents who do not fit within the specific demographic under analysis in that question.*

## Highlights:

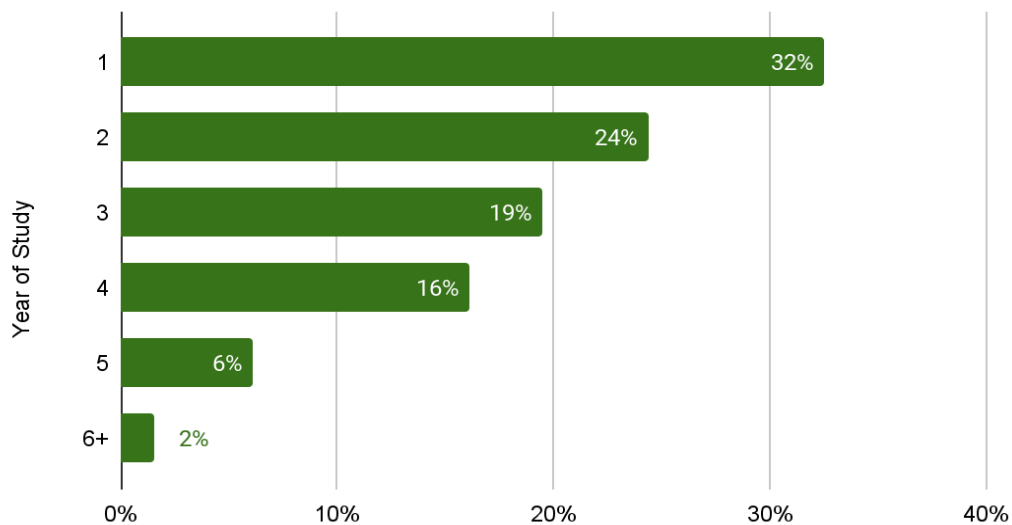
- 53% of respondents in their first year and 53% of respondents in their second year live with three or more people.
- For students in years one through five, the most common financial situation has someone other than the student (e.g. parent) paying for all the bills/living expenses.
- 27% of students who buy their own groceries spend between \$150 and \$200 a month on food.
- 30% of students who pay for their housing spend between \$800 and \$1,000 a month on rent/a mortgage.
- 42% of students work in the Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer semesters.
- 70% of students list school/tuition as their biggest financial stressor.
- 77% of students report feeling tired.

## Bills and Work

The majority of survey respondents were in their first year (32%), followed by the second (24%) and third years (19%), respectively.

### Respondent Year of Study

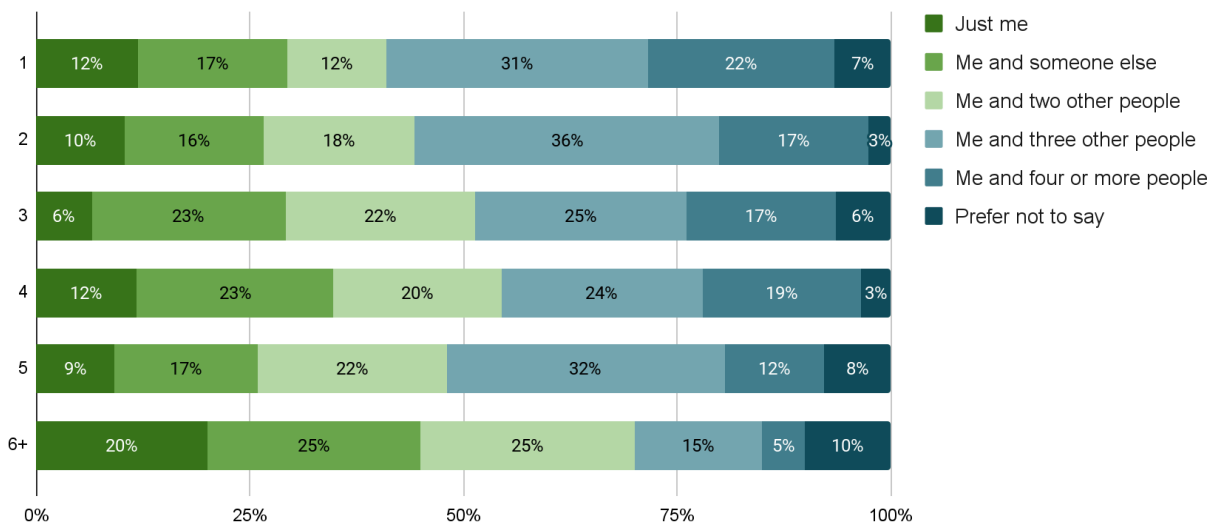
*How Do You Live, n= 1,269*



Most students in their first (53%) and second (53%) years report living with three or more people, while most third-year students and above report living with three or fewer people.

### Year of Study and Living Situation

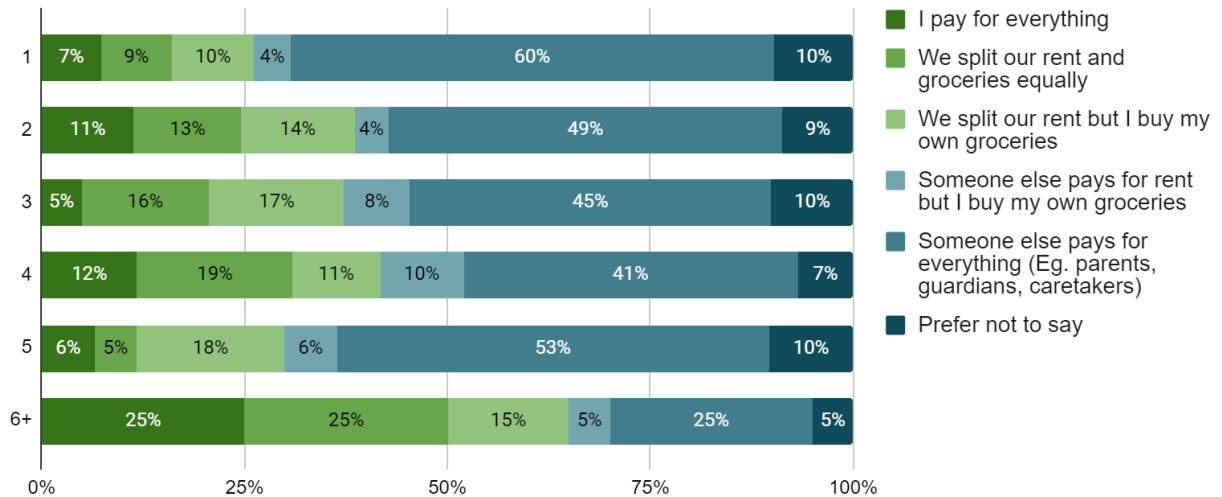
*How Do You Live, n= 1,269*



Regardless of year of study, most students have someone else, such as a parent or guardian, paying for groceries and rent. Approximately 26% of first-year students, 38% of second and third-year students, and 42% of fourth-year students pay for both groceries and rent.

### Year of Study and Cost Payments

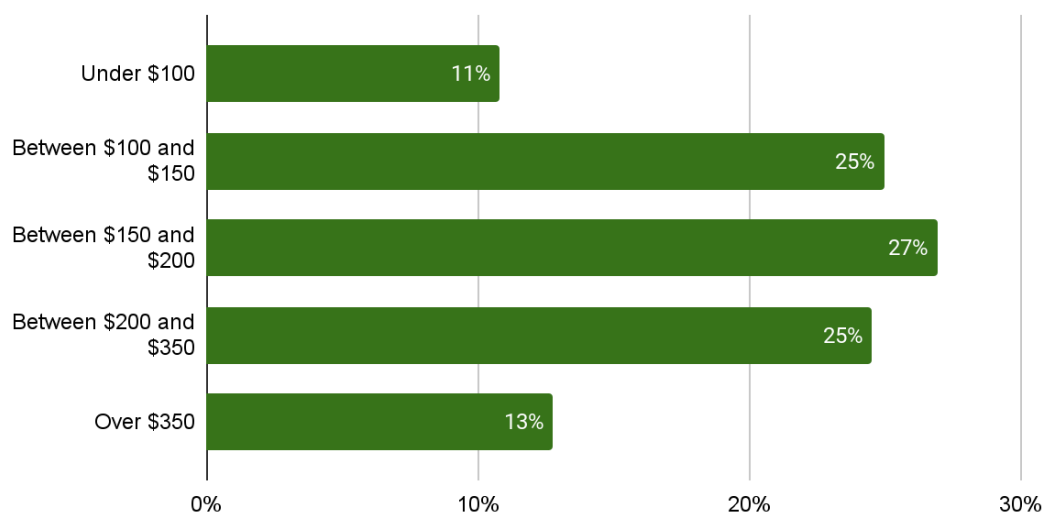
*How Do You Live, n= 1,269*



Of those students who do pay for groceries, most (27%) report spending between \$150 and \$200 a month on groceries. 25% report spending between \$100 and \$150, and 25% report spending between \$200 and \$350. Only 11% of respondents claim they spend less than \$100 a month on groceries.

### How Much Do You Spend on Groceries a Month?

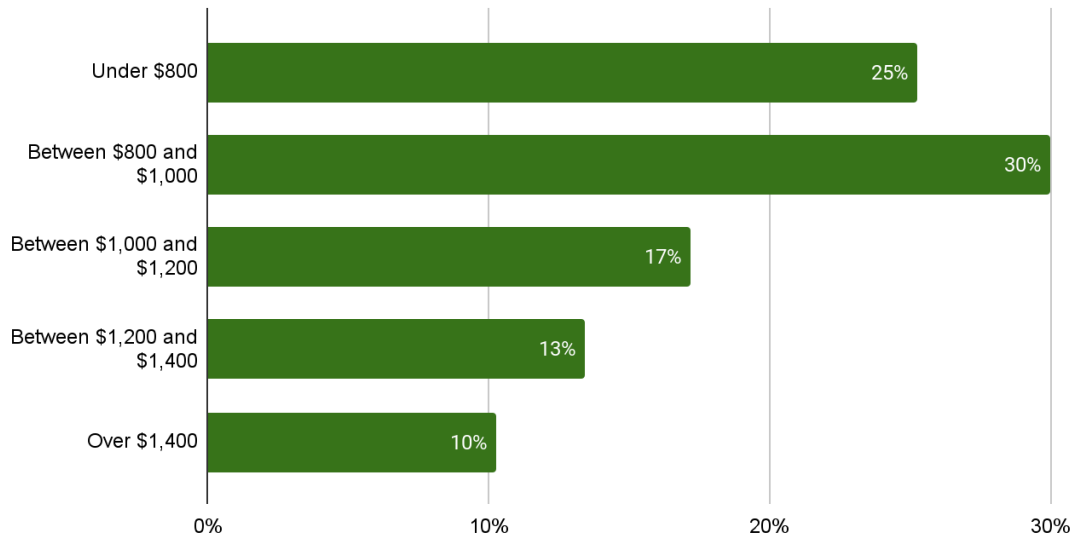
*How Do You Live, n= 665*



Of those students who do pay for their housing, most (30%) report spending between \$800 and \$1,000 a month. 25% spend under \$800, while 17% report spending between \$1,000 and \$1,200. Only 10% claim to spend over \$1,400 a month on housing.

### How much do you pay for housing (rent, mortgage, etc) a month?

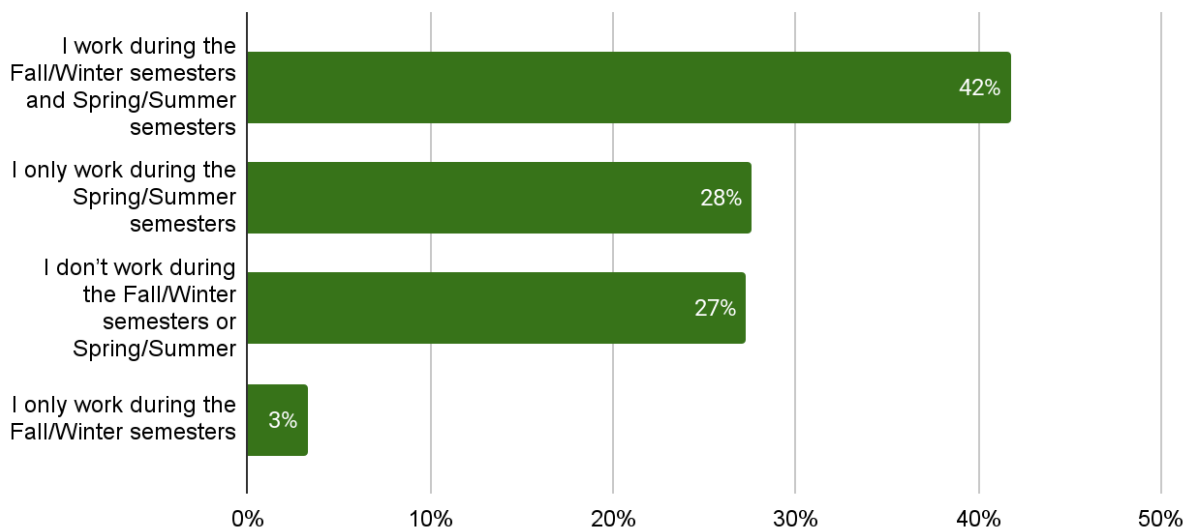
*How Do You Live, n=507*



Approximately 42% of students report working during the Fall/Winter semesters as well as the Spring/Summer semesters. Alternatively, 28% claim to work only in the Spring/Summer and 27% don't work at all during the year.

### Do you work during the Fall/Winter semesters or Spring/Summer semesters? (Not including co-ops)

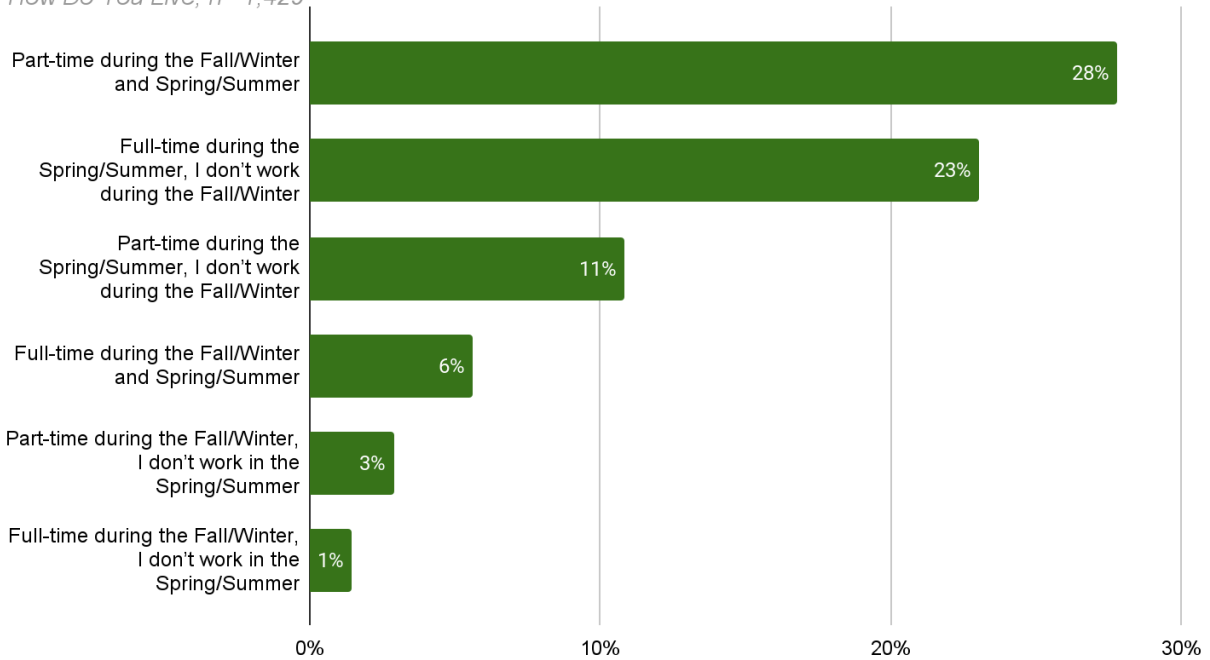
*How Do You Live, n= 1,429*



28% of students who work claim to work part-time in both the Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer semesters. 23% work full-time in the Spring/Summer but don't work in the Fall/Winter, and 6% work full-time year-round.

### What are your working hours like?

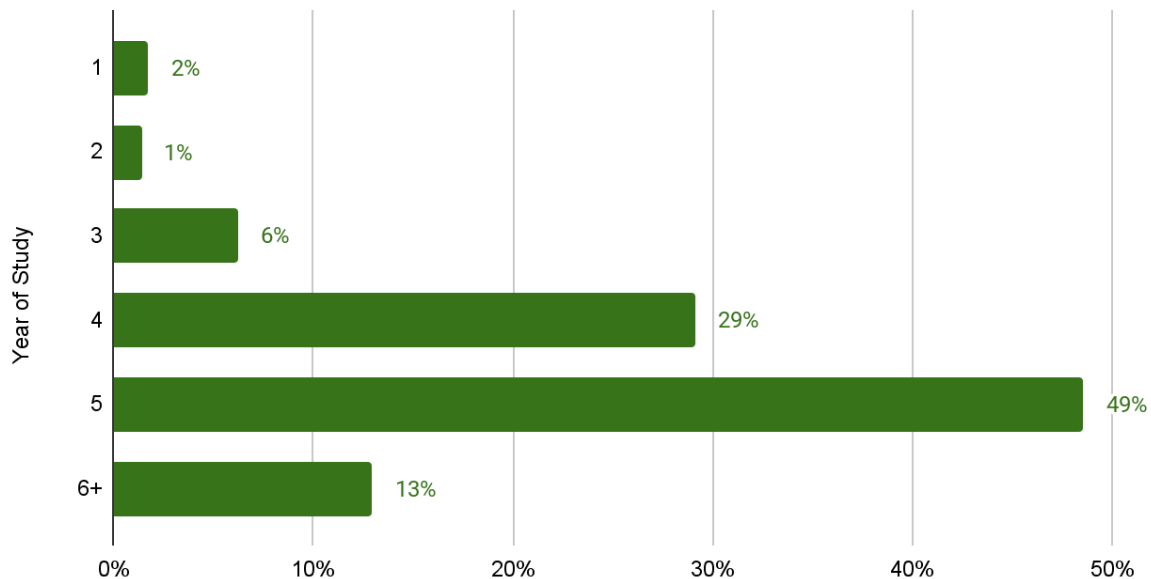
*How Do You Live, n= 1,429*



Approximately half of all respondents reported that they take 5 classes per semester. 29% take 4, while 13% take 6 or more a semester.

### How many classes do you usually take in one semester?

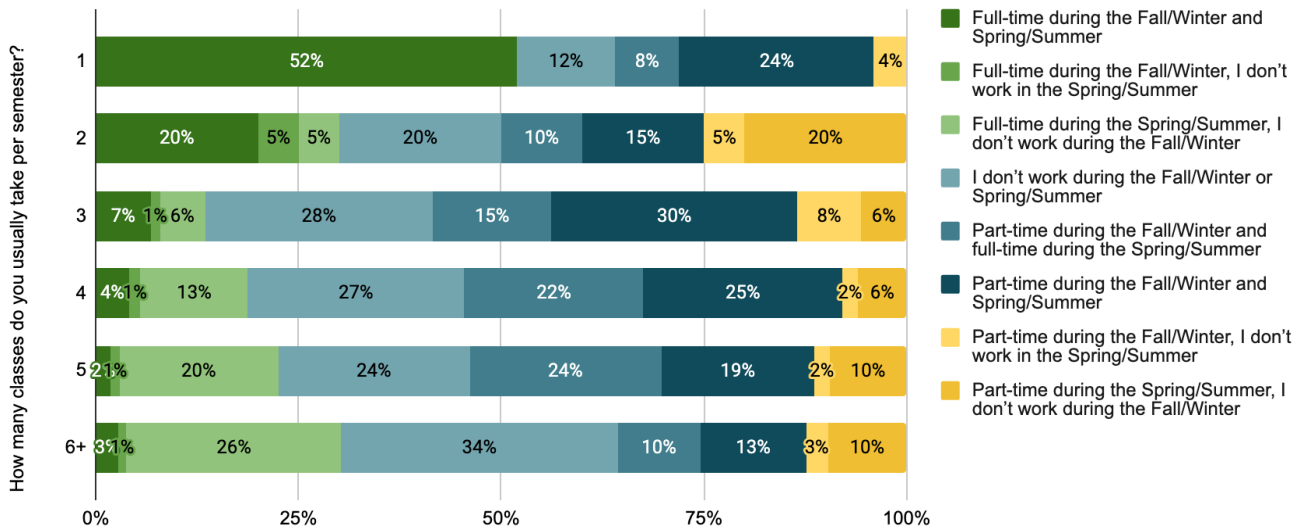
*How Do You Live, n= 1,429*



Comparing classes per semester and working hours, students usually do not work full-time in the Fall/Winter unless they are only enrolled in one or two classes. Most students who have an average schedule of 5 classes report not working at all during the year (24%) or working part-time in the Fall/Winter and full-time in the Spring/Summer (24%).

### What are your working hours like?

How Do You Live, n=1,429



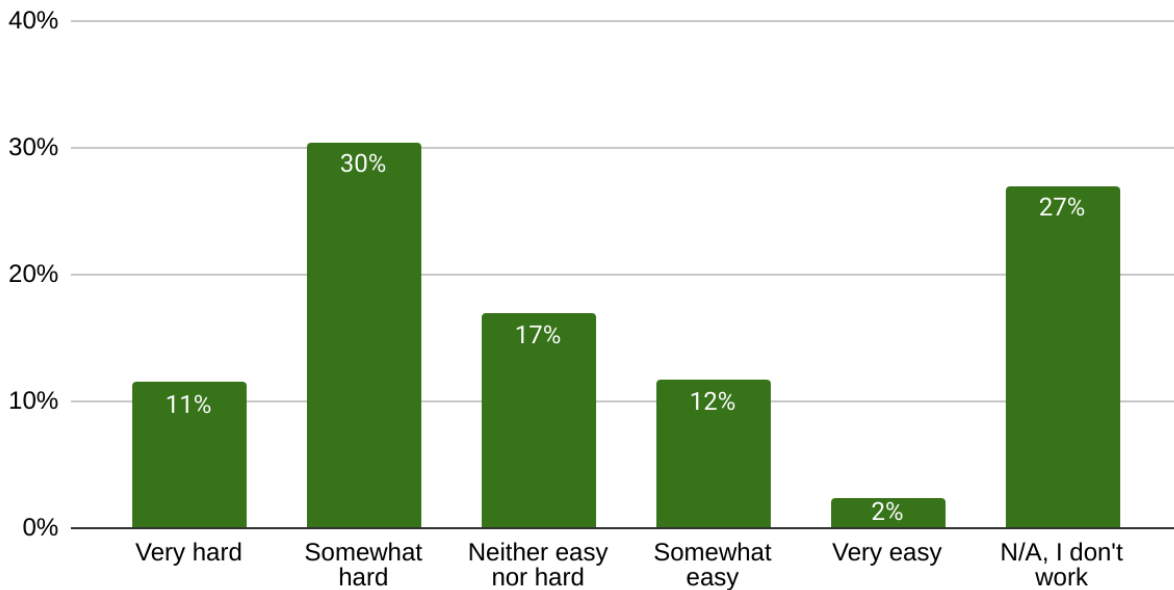
## Habits and Feelings

In addition to asking students about their bills and work life, we asked them about their schedule, emotions, and average grocery basket.

When asked about the difficulty of balancing school and work, 30% of respondents stated that it is 'somewhat hard'. 17% were neutral, while 12% claimed it is 'somewhat easy' and 11% that it is 'very hard'.

### How easy or hard is it for you to balance work and school?

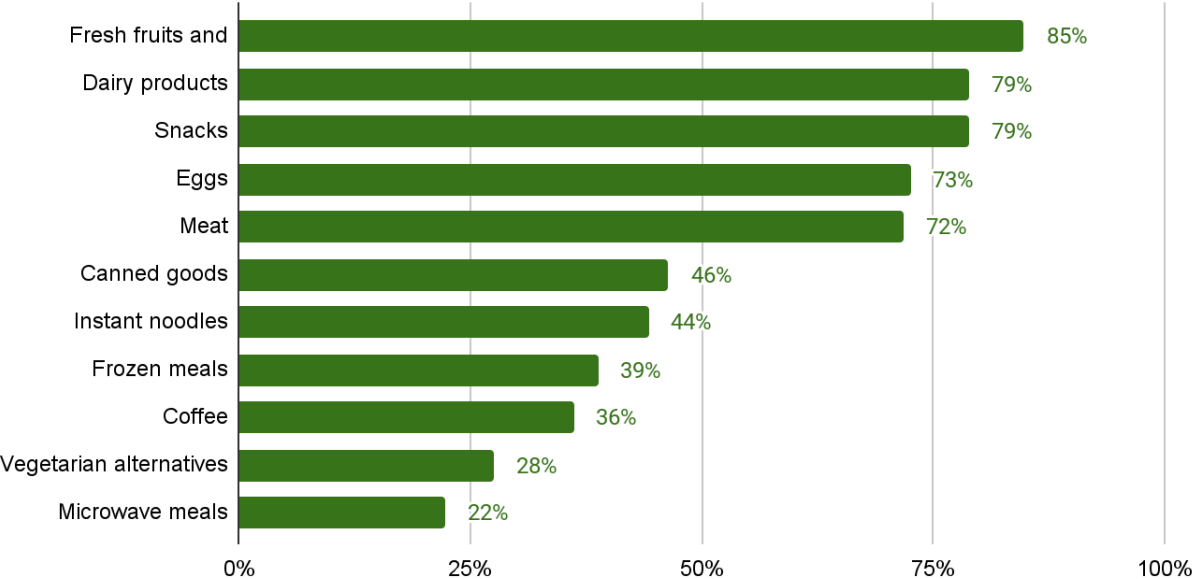
*How do you Live, n= 1,429*



The majority of respondents claim their grocery baskets usually include fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products, snacks, eggs and meat. 44% also listed instant noodles and 39% listed frozen meals. These options appeared in randomized order for each respondent.

### What does your grocery basket usually include? Select all that apply.

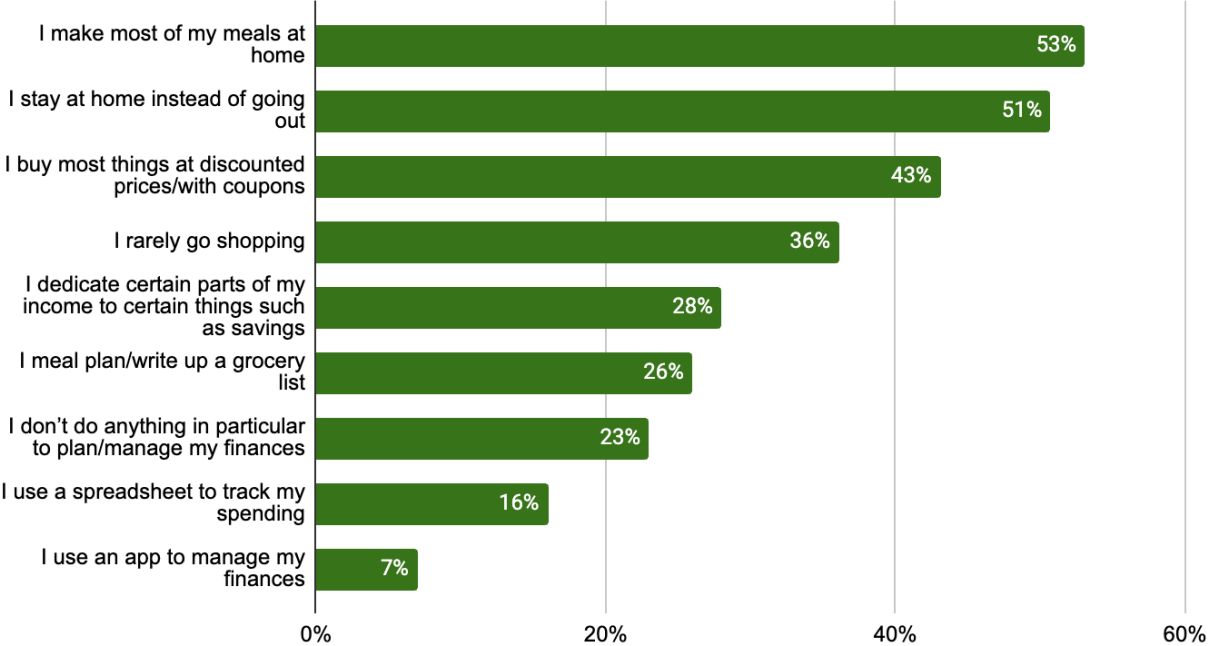
*How Do You Live, n= 1,429*





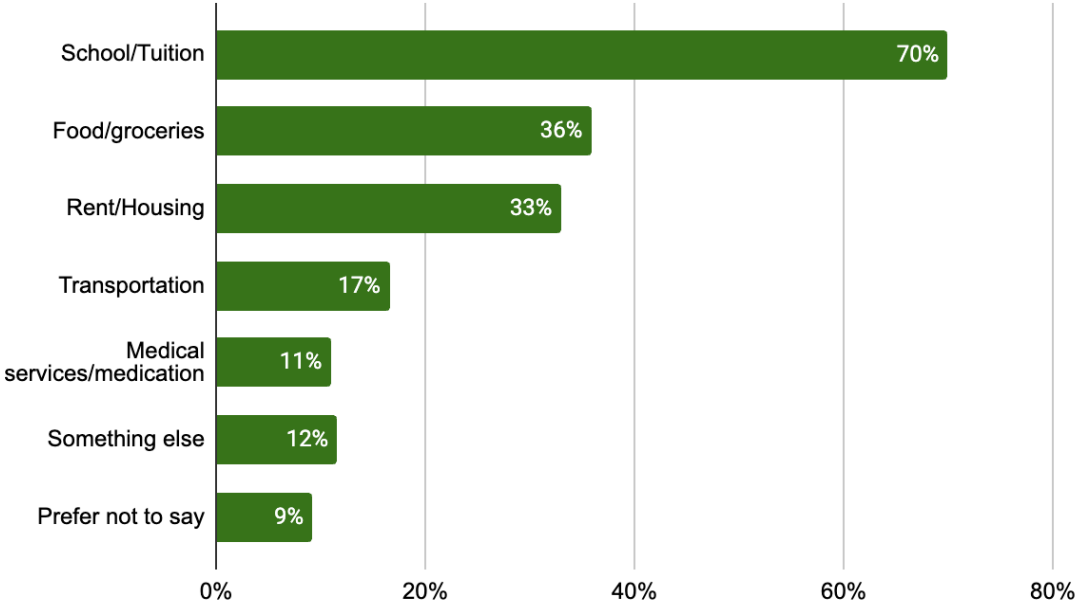
Around 53% of students manage their finances by making most of their meals at home. 51% stay in instead of going out, and 43% buy things at discounted prices/ with coupons. Only 23% of respondents claim that they do not do anything in particular to plan/manage their finances.

**How do you plan/manage your finances? Select all that apply**



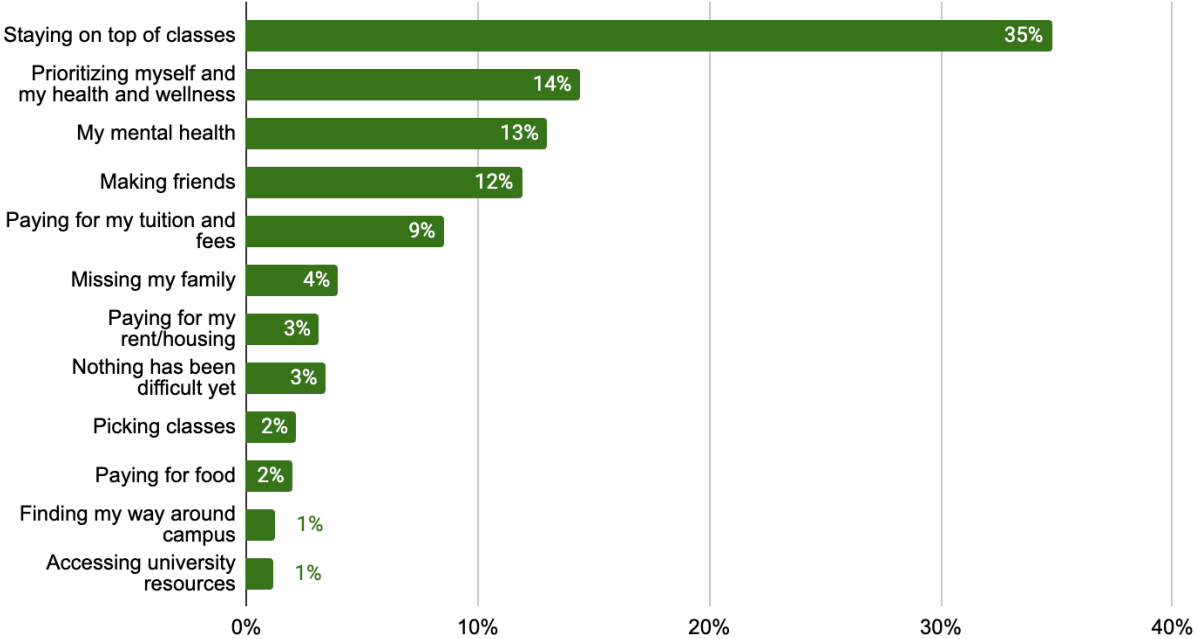
70% of survey respondents named school/tuition as their biggest financial stressor, followed by food/groceries (36%) and rent/housing (33%).

**What are your biggest financial stressors right now?**



Of the respondents, 35% determined that staying on top of classes has been the most difficult part of their university experience so far. The next most popular stressors include 'prioritizing myself and my health and wellness' with 14% of respondents, 'My mental health' with 13% of respondents, and 'Making friends' with 12% of respondents. These options appeared in randomized order.

### What has been the most difficult part of your university experience so far?



Turning to general student well-being, 77% of respondents claimed they were tired, 61% anxious and 50% worried. Additionally, 46% were nervous, and 30% felt depressed. Furthermore, approximately 78% of respondents selected at least one positive feeling, such as 'excited', 'inspired', 'prepared', 'energized' and 'amazing'.

## How are you right now?

How Do You Live, n= 1,429

