



# Descriptive Analysis of Homelessness, Housing, and Food Insecurity Among Students at the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus



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## BACKGROUND

The University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus (UPRRP), has faced significant challenges due to natural disasters, the ongoing pandemic, and budget cuts, affecting its student population. Recent research in the United States has revealed concerning statistics, with 22.6% of undergraduates and 12.2% of graduate students reporting food insecurity, 8% of undergraduates, and 4.6% of graduate students experiencing homelessness. In Puerto Rico, no recent studies have assessed college students' necessities. This study is significant considering the impact of natural events and the recent Pandemic on college students' well-being.

## OBJECTIVE

This study aims to provide preliminary insights into the needs of UPRRP students, focusing on homelessness, housing security, and food security.

## METHODS

Researchers employed a cross-sectional design using an online survey through Survey Monkey. The sample comprised active students from the University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras Campus.

The instruments used were the U.S. Household Food Security Survey Module: Spanish: Three-Stage Design and the Guide to Assessing Basic Needs Insecurity in Higher Education of Goldrick-Rab, Richardson, and Kinsley (2018)-translated into Spanish.

## SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Figure 1  
College Students Sex

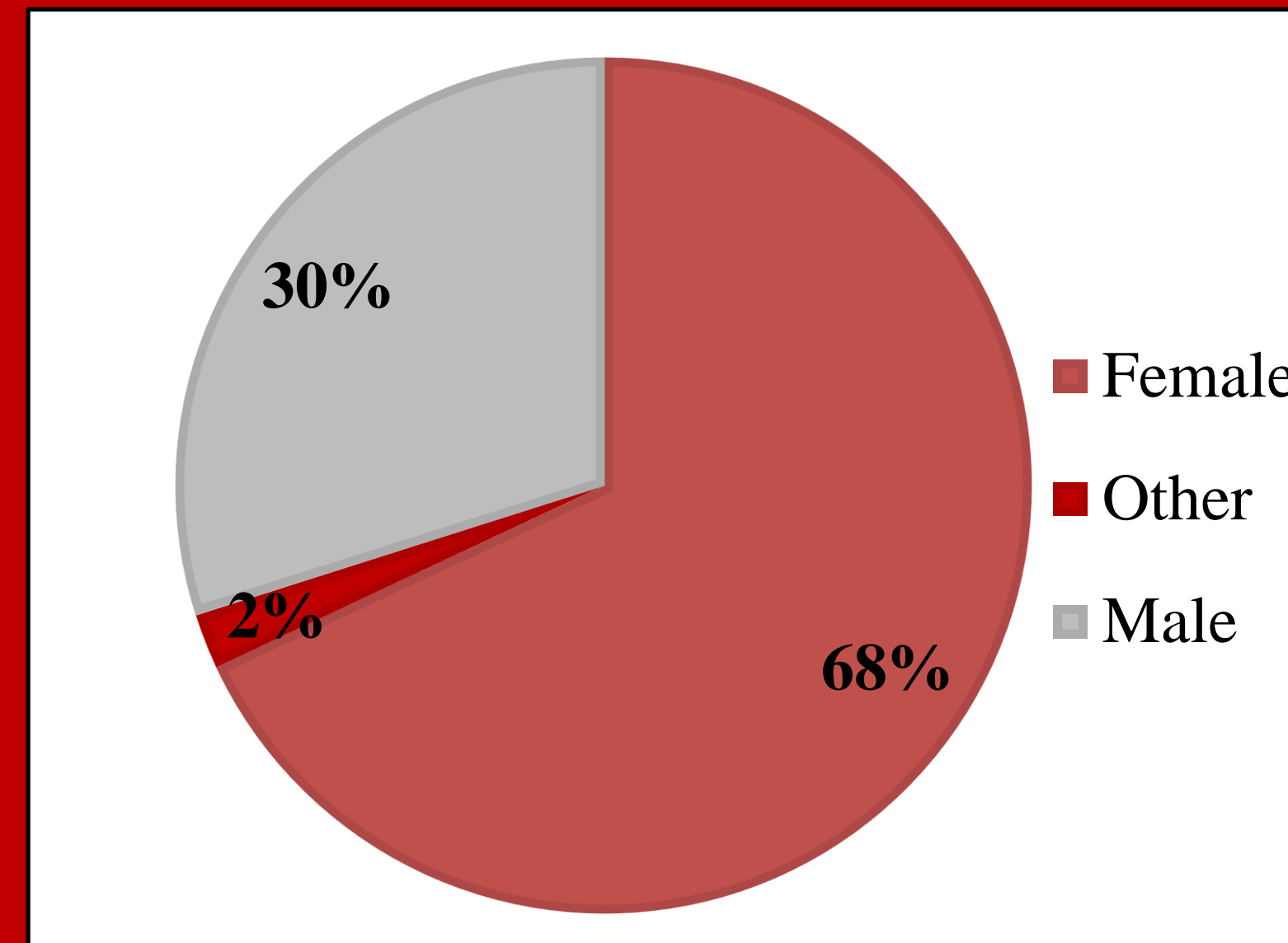
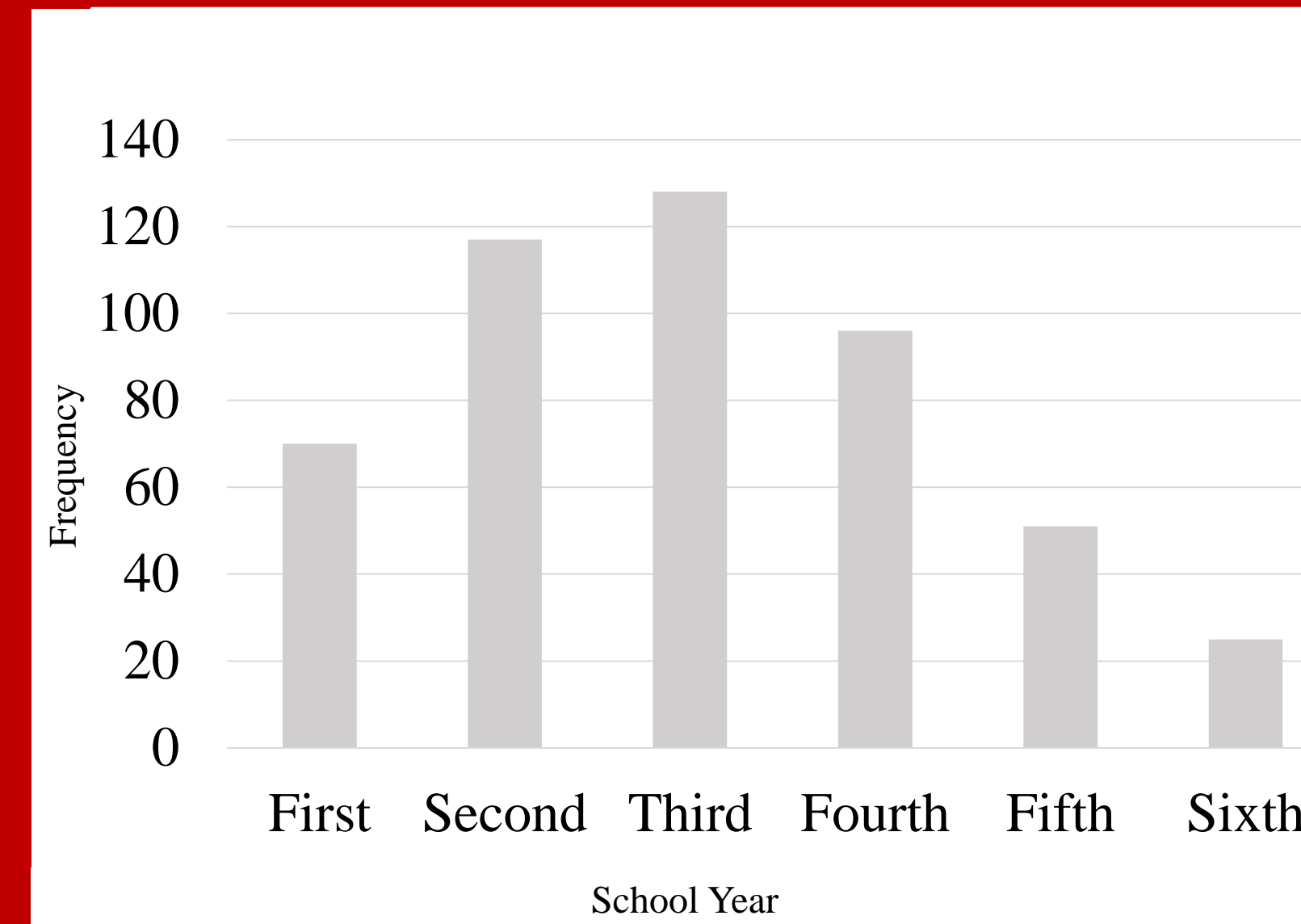
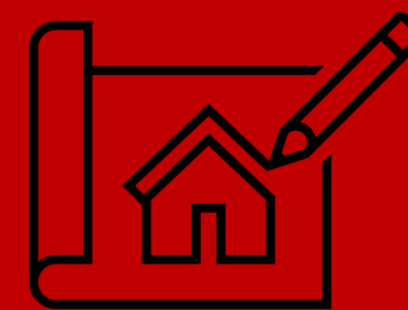


Figure 2  
College Students School Term



## MAIN RESULTS

12% of surveyed students have experienced homelessness

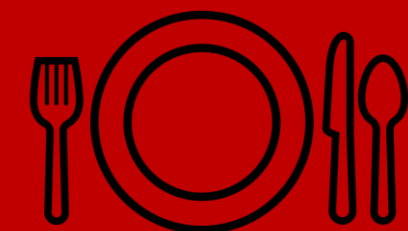


29% mentioned that they often struggle to find study spaces.

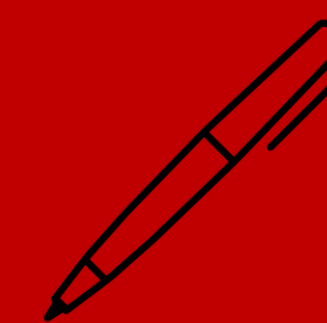


8% of students mentioned that always or almost always are in need of notebooks.

22% of students are experiencing some level of food insecurity



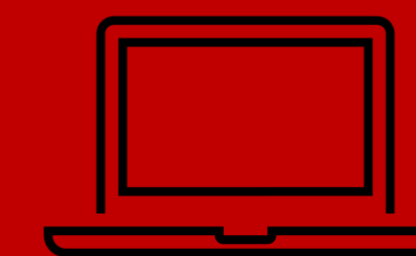
11% of students revealed that always or almost always are in need of writing tools.



36% of students are experiencing housing insecurity



27% of students revealed a need for academic counseling.



Approximately, 29% of students need a computer for academic purposes.

## ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

Table 1  
Levels of Food Insecurity Experienced by Students

Food Security Level	Frequency	Percentage
Marginal Food Security	39	7.50%
Low Food Security	11	2.12%
Very Low Food Security	54	10.38%

Note. Food security levels were estimated based of the 20% that passed the screening.

Table 2  
How often have students needed assistance with course enrollment?

Need Frequency	Frequency	Percentage
Never	107	20.58%
Not often	102	19.62%
In Occasions	142	27.31%
Often	84	16.15%
Always	81	15.58%

## CONCLUSIONS

The study results suggest that students from the University of Puerto Rico seem to face more pronounced challenges related to homelessness, food, and housing security than their counterparts in the broader United States.

Students from the University of Puerto Rico are also experiencing a severe need for academic materials and college services that are essential for academic achievement. Given the series of adversities affecting this student population, addressing these issues is crucial for enhancing their well-being and academic success.