

To: Senior Staff

From: Lisa Ly, Senior Research Analyst

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Subject: Belonging, Civic Engagement, Basic Needs and Mental Health Survey, Spring 2023

Overview:

In the student survey, *Belonging, Civic Engagement, Basic Needs and Mental Health Survey for Spring 2022*, there was one open-ended question where respondents were prompted to write in whether there was anything else they would like to share about their needs or issues so the college could provide better support for them and other students. This report provides the results of their responses.

Methodology:

Open-ended responses were examined and some common themes surfaced. Individual responses were coded to these themes, and responses that touched on more than one theme were coded to those themes accordingly. The following themes were identified:

- Academic counseling
- Access to campus facilities/internet
- Books/Library
- Class scheduling preference
- Clubs/Social
- Financial issue
- Food insecurity
- Housing insecurity
- Job/Career information
- Laptop/Bike loaner
- Single parent or General support program
- Student health/Mental health
- Transportation

Survey Question: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your needs or issues to help us provide better support for you and other students? (200 character limit)

- **The top responses touched on Financial issue (N=17) and Housing insecurity (N=16).**
- Other responses touched on food insecurity (N=6) and preference for class scheduling (N=6), followed by single-parent hardships (N=5), student health/mental health (N=5) and academic counseling (N=5).

- Financial issue
 - *“As a single parent, returning to school is quite challenging. Balancing work, with parenting, with coursework feels impossible. I noticed the aid offered really was not going to be enough, even with my supplement of working and I had some really trying times where I couldn’t pay my bills. I currently am in one of those moments and I really wish there was a way to better supplement education so that there is a better chance to succeed without the feeling that the rug is being pulled out from under me.”*
 - *“Transportation is the worst thing that I have to face right now. It’s really bad that the place I stay doesn’t have frequent bus and when I miss one, I have to wait another hour. It’s the worst thing. And also do you still have programs of emergency funds...? I am having trouble with housing problems and tuition fees problems.”*
 - *“Family contribution on the FAFSA doesn’t apply to me, and I know that a lot of others are going through this too. I’m the only person contributing to my education and it’s hard when you don’t have enough money to take all of the classes that you want because you need to focus it on bills instead.”*
 - *“I was adversely affected by the recent rainstorms and had to relocate mid-quarter in the winter. I have back rent I have not been able to pay, plus additional storage tents I have had to take on due to the necessary relocation and moving. I currently have some serious money shortages and was not able to drive to campus to attend classes for a few days because of lack of gas and funds to purchase fuel for my car.”*
- Housing insecurity
 - *“Housing. We need an option for some sort of housing support. Whether that be partner with a shelter or something. Also maybe having access to a shower on campus.”*
 - *“Students who live far would prefer to live on campus to make it easier to finish school fully.”*
 - *“Hope our college can offer affordable dormitories to students. Rent in [the] Bay Area is really expensive.”*
- Food insecurity
 - *“I have an EBT card for food, but the cafeteria can't accept it. It would be very helpful if they could.”*
 - *“More veteran food vouchers”*
 - *“Dedicated gluten free foods and prep areas are important for students with celiac disease and gluten allergies as exposure can hinder our health and studies.”*
- Class scheduling preference
 - *“More asynchronous or synchronous classes available and more sections for those classes because they get full right away.”*
 - *“Pushing for classes returning to campus does not help. Gas prices are astronomical and it actually puts back a barrier to education that was gone thanks to having to attend classes online. A lot of people went back to school due to pandemic and cannot go to physical classes. By reducing the options of online classes you are forcing people to give up on school that had been attending.”*

- *“As an older student I had modified my schedule to work with my online classes but when De Anza took away a lot of the online options it made me choose between my education or paying the bills. I finally was able to find classes and get in but please consider that there are quite a few students that work full time and having online options is really important for us.”*
- *“I work full time M-F and De Anza falls short in offering nighttime or fully remote classes for students who already have full plates. As De Anza moves to having students be back on campus, please bear in mind that a lot of students depend on asynchronous classes to be able to attend class at all. It's disheartening to see so many of these options disappear from the quarter rosters. Especially prevalent in the Biology and Chemistry departments right now.”*
- *“I wish that the tuition were free like CCSF. I don't know if this is a political issue or what, but it would help me very much. I also sometimes think that it would be nice if, for online classes, one could "pause" mid-semester and finish the following semester if need be, without having to go back again. This would avoid having to withdraw and re-take a class again for those that have an issue. I think this might work especially well for online classes since the work is already self-directed.”*
- Single parent or General support program
 - *“Help students financially with rent, because without having a place to live especially when you're a single mom it's hard and very stressful, that sometimes you just need to make a choice of working full time to provide for your family or not having a place to live and try to finish school.”*
 - *“I had a lot of personal problem that affected my daily life. Owing rent was one of them that brought me down and made me not attend class. I had to get work as I could and being a single father that was a struggle. The bad part I didn't qualify any help or grant for myself. No emergency funds or FAFSA program. I would be great if there was a program that help undocumented students with a one-time grant or some type of financial support.”*
 - *“I am a single mother having a hard time, is there an outlet for a counselor?”*
 - *“More support or help with housing for single mothers. Or have a program for just mothers.”*
- Student health/Mental health
 - *“Mental health is extremely important when it comes to the success of students but to my experience so far many professors aren't lenient on giving extensions or being understanding when students are struggling to keep up with school due to others factors such as work or family issues. We never plan for these things to happen but sometimes they do and we ask for is a little compassion. I recently had my grandmother pass away and I don't think it would be worth telling professors as they probably wouldn't take that into consideration when it comes to keeping up with my school work.”*
 - *“... It's really difficult to manage my mental health at times on top of working and taking multiple classes, and I wish teachers didn't need paperwork to treat me with grace and understanding at times. Not that the paperwork isn't necessary, it is, but I feel like paperwork isn't the only reason to be gracious to students.”*
 - *“I wanted to get tested for possible [disabilities] since is really hard for me to finish my test on time. I have to read over the info multiple times and still don't finish [on] time.”*

- Academic counseling

- *“... Also, it would be helpful to have a counselor (academic and financial) who has the time to holistically consider my circumstance and help me accordingly. Drop in quick zoom sessions with people who didn't have time to review my files or lacked investment in my success has not been helpful and has disrupted access to financial aid and limited ability to access proper guidance as non-[traditional] first-[generation] student.”*
- *“I had asked a counselor to go over my units and tell me what I needed to apply and transfer. She said I didn't meet the requirements [to] transfer and there only might be a chance to be accepted. I was accepted without issue. She made me doubt my accomplishments. I felt defeated.”*
- *“Please provide more support for academic counseling. The time limit is never enough. Especially ISP counselor.”*
- *“I think it would be a good idea to emphasize more strongly to students that frequent counselor.”*