

CSAC



CALIFORNIA
STUDENT AID
COMMISSION



Fall 2020 COVID Student Survey June 2021

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California College Students' Experiences During the Global Pandemic

- Report out and available on CSAC website
- Authors:
 - Sherrie Reed, Elizabeth Friedmann, Michal Kurlaender, Paco Martorell & Derek Rury, CA Education Lab, University of California, Davis
 - Jessica Moldoff, Ryan Fuller & Patrick Perry, CSAC
- Second survey, third report from these efforts

California College Students' Experiences during the Global Pandemic

JUNE 2021



Survey

- Spring Survey: 650,000 sent, 76,000 responses
- Fall Survey: 1.4m sent, 106,000 responses (sent Nov. 2020)
- Responses weighted for representativeness
- Added some questions, removed others
 - Spring survey asked more questions about students' perceptions of the future
 - Fall survey asked more about what actually happened to them

High-level Findings

COVID-19 has disrupted many students' educational trajectories and created significant barriers to schooling.



46% of students reduced units during fall term 2020



65% of students do not have a quiet place to work



70% of students missed class and homework due to stress



44% of students cannot access online course materials



62% of students have unreliable internet connections

High-level Findings

The COVID-19 pandemic has also disrupted the lives of college students more generally.



61% of students changed their living situation



58% of respondents had COVID-19 themselves or knew someone who contracted COVID-19

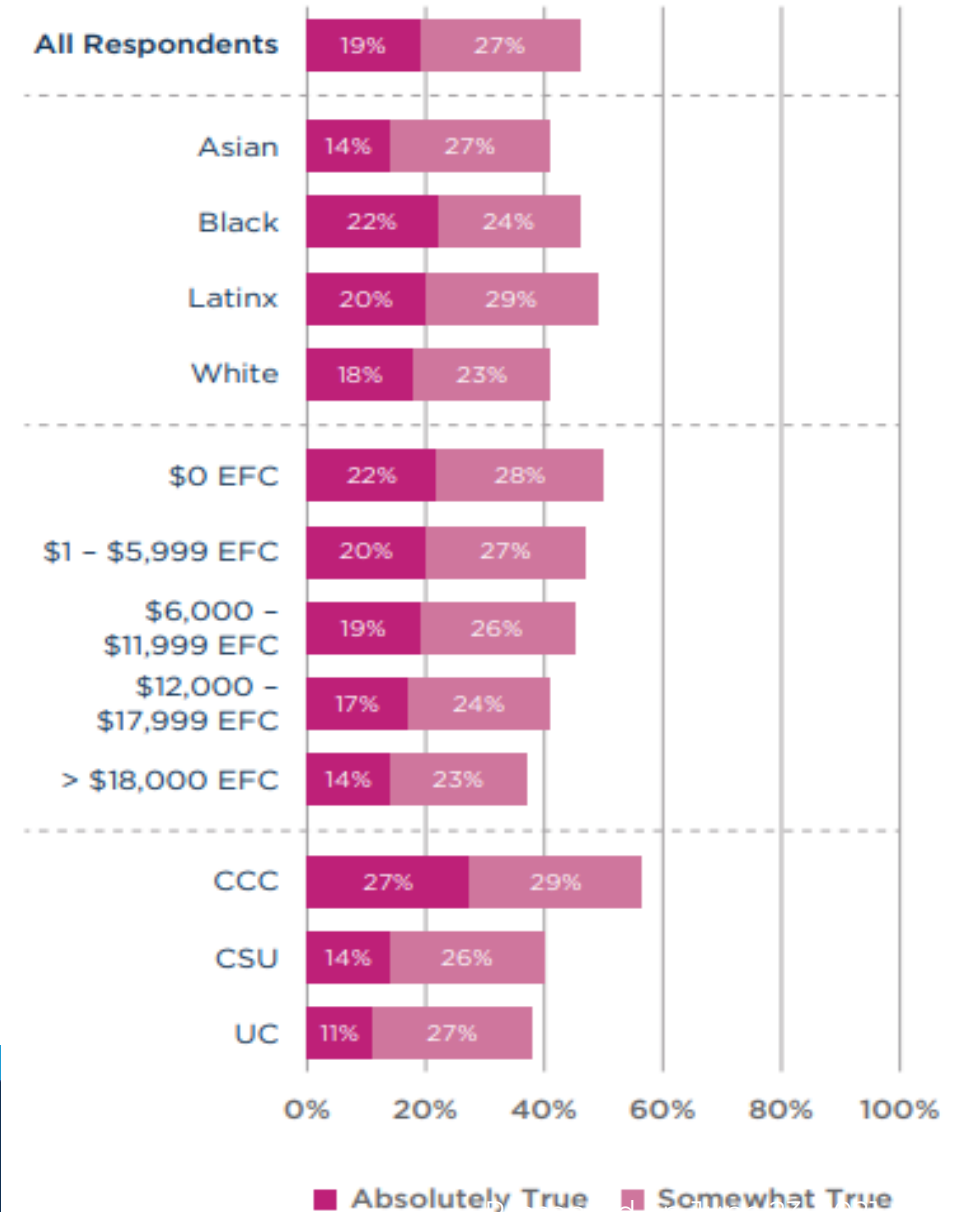


40% of students are caring for family members

Disrupted Enrollments: Fall 2020

- 46% of students reduced unit loads in Fall 2020

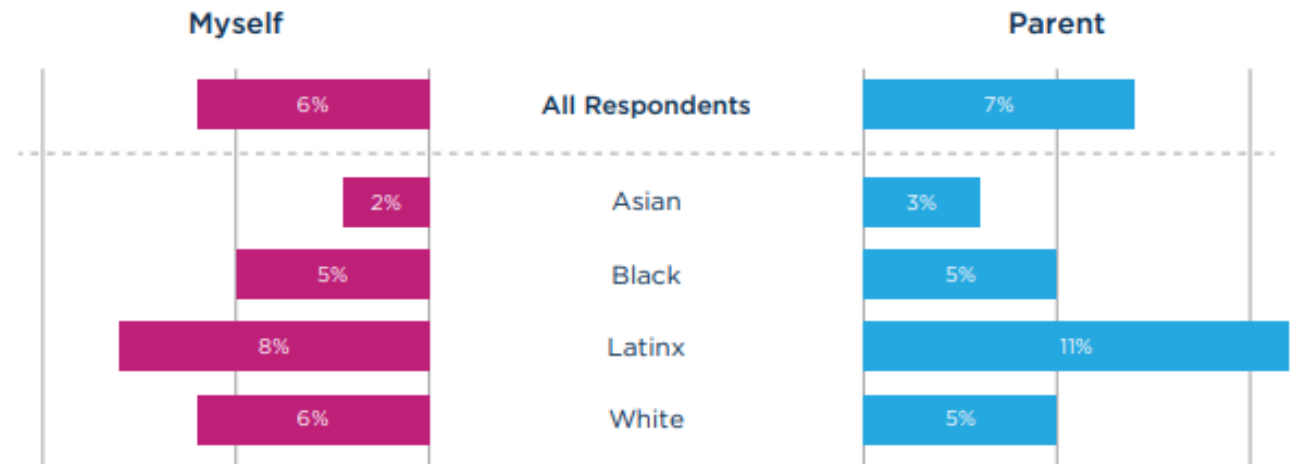
Percent of respondents who reduced units taken during fall 2020



COVID Direct Effects

- 58% of students stated they knew at least one person who contracted COVID.
- 7% had parents who contracted COVID.
- 6% stated they contracted COVID themselves.

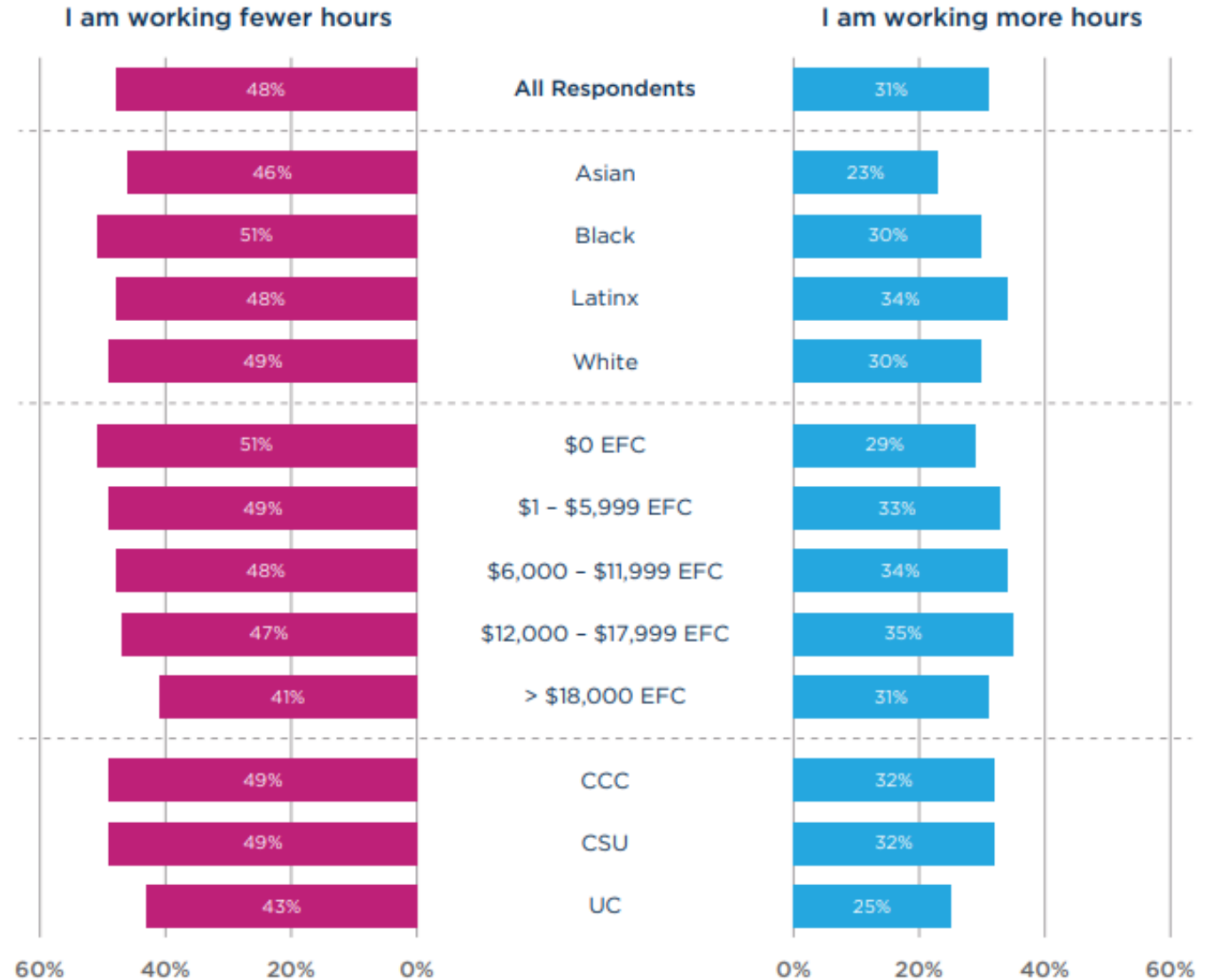
Percent of respondents who got sick with COVID-19 themselves or whose parents contracted COVID-19



Effects on Employment

- Almost half of respondents reported working fewer hours.
- Almost a third reported working more hours.

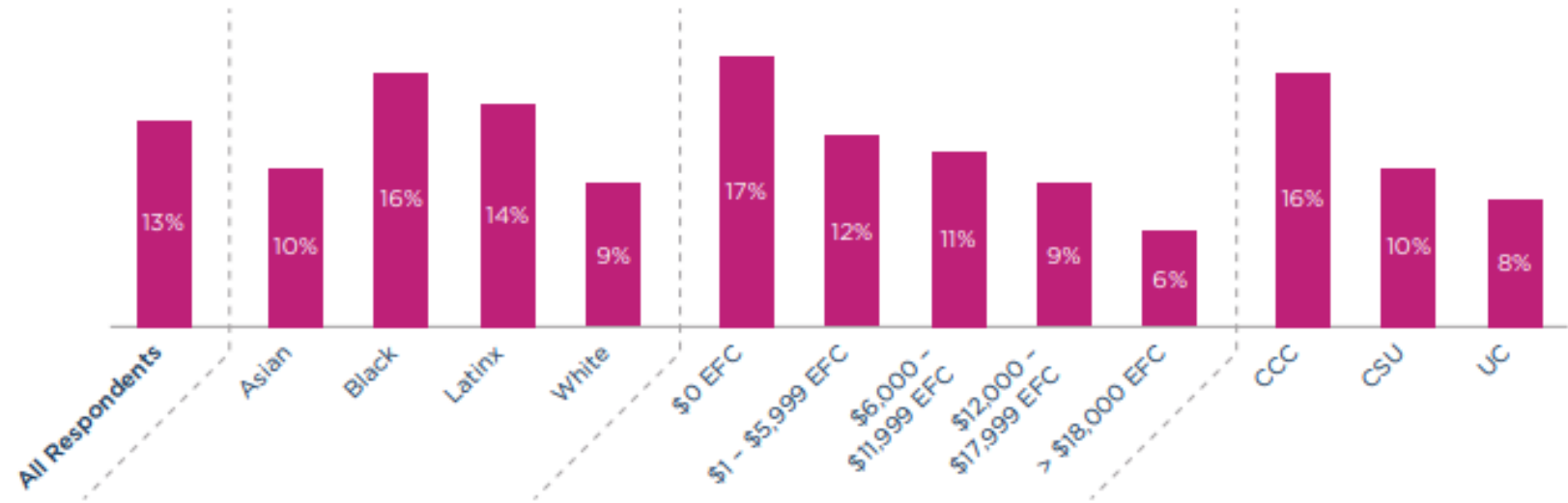
Percent of respondents working more or fewer hours



Technology Availability

- 13% of students did not have a computer readily available for online coursework.

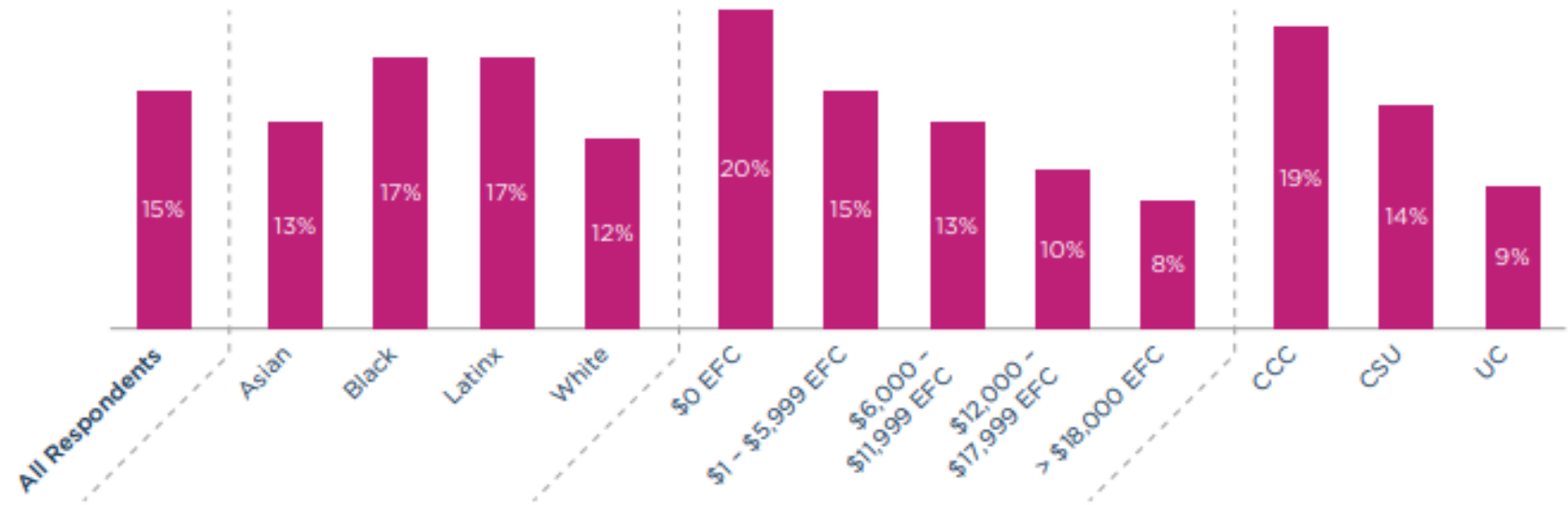
Percent of respondents in each subgroup lacking computer access



Internet Access

- 15% of students relied on non-broadband internet connectivity (hotspot/phone, DSL, dial-up)

Percent of respondents in each subgroup relying on wireless hotspots, DSL or dial-up connections for internet access



62%

of students reported unreliable or unpredictable internet connections at least some of the time.

22%

report they must leave the house to access reliable internet.

“

The internet connection is unstable because we have three people using the internet at the exact same time for classes.”

44% of students reported difficulty accessing course materials at times.



“

It has cost me more because I need the technology to learn and I had to buy a laptop and get WiFi at home. It has also increased my costs for class materials because we have had to use online programs that you have to pay for which aren't needed for in person classes such as mastering chemistry and math. This has made me take fewer classes.”

65%

of students do not have a quiet place to work.

“

It is hard to find a quiet space to learn and complete my assignments.”

40% of students reported that caring for family members disrupted their ability to attend classes and complete homework. This was most commonly reported by CCC, Black, and Latinx students. There was also a clear pattern by income, specifically such disruptions steadily decreasing as income level increased.



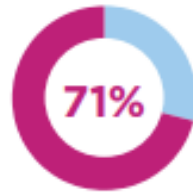
“

It is harder for me to do my school work when I also have 3 other kids (aged 9-12) doing online school at the same time that need my help, as well as a 11-month-old baby that needs my attention. The house is chaos, my bills are backed up, food is scarce, kids eat all day. The house is never clean even after I clean. Laundry is always full.”

Missing Classes/Homework

Reasons for missing class:

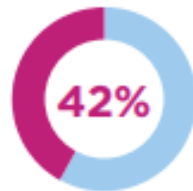
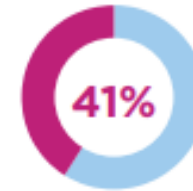
Reasons for missing homework:



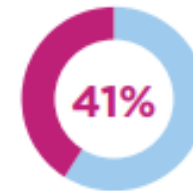
PERSONAL STRESS



UNRELIABLE INTERNET



WORK HOURS



CARING FOR FAMILY



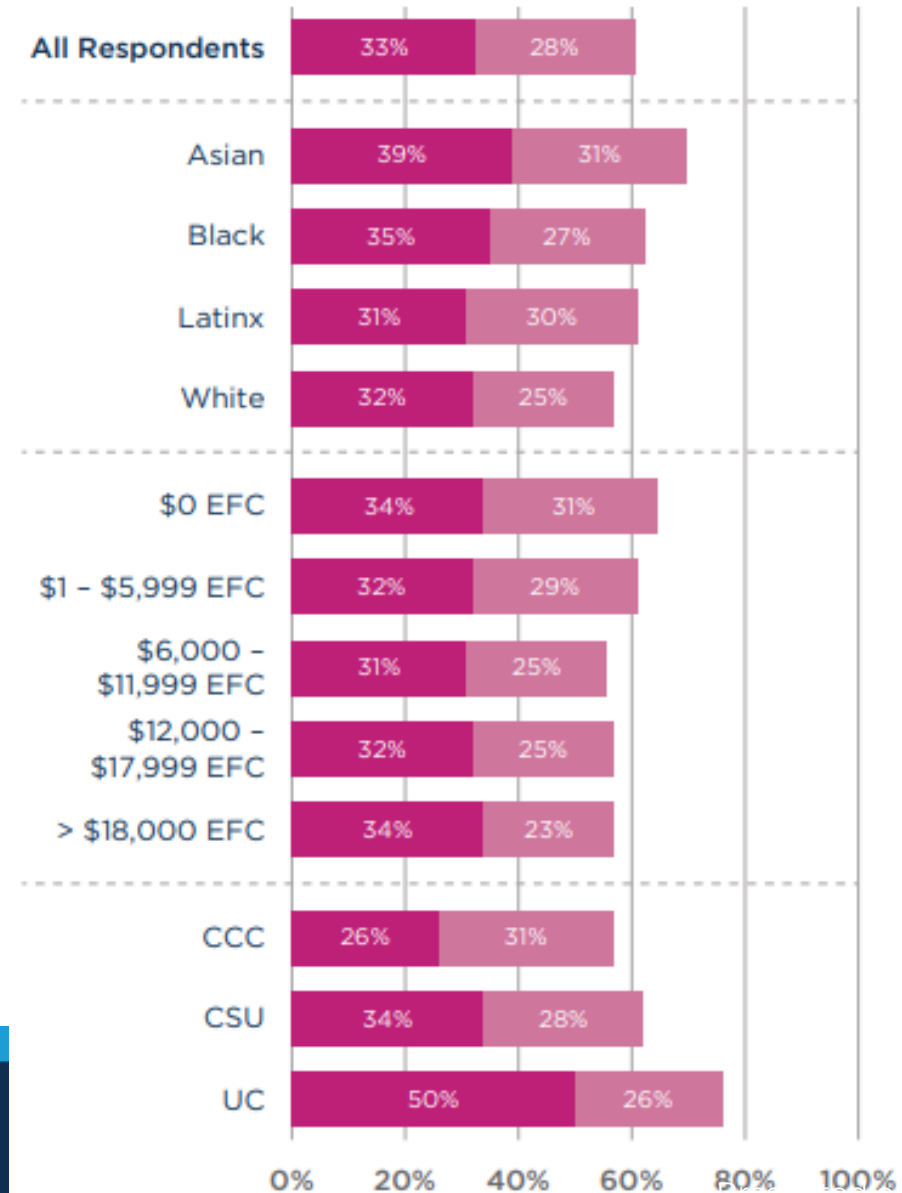
LACKED ACCESS
TO MATERIALS



Living Situation Disruptions

- 61% of students reported their living situation changed due to COVID.

Percent of respondents whose living situation changed



Basic Needs Costs

- Costs of housing/food increased
- Transportation costs decreased



MONTHLY
HOUSING EXPENSES



WEEKLY
FOOD COSTS



WEEKLY
TRANSPORTATION COSTS



“

Along with my rent, food and other expenses increased, buying materials and books for my classes was more challenging than ever before.”

“

COVID-19 has affected my college plans because without me being able to fully work I do not have the financial stability to pay for food, gas, rent and school tuition and books.”

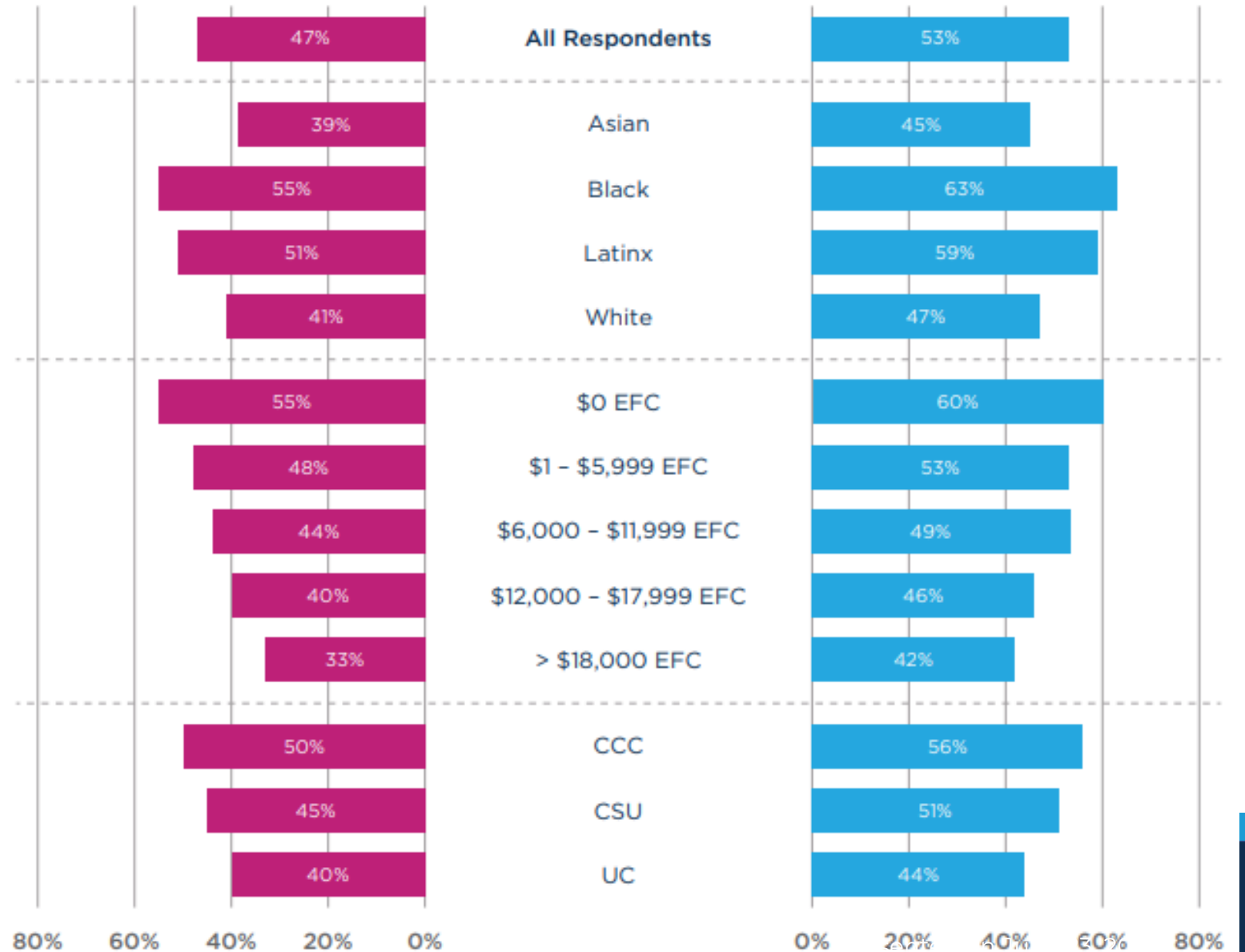
Presented on June 23, 2021

**Increased costs
did not affect
students equally**

Percent of respondents with increased housing and food costs

Increased monthly housing expenses

Increased weekly food expenses



Summary

The data and voices collected in this second survey tell a clear and troubling story: The pandemic has impacted the lives and educational trajectories of California college students in profound and profoundly uneven ways.

While the accumulated toll has been substantial on students overall, disruption and stress have been disproportionately felt by Black and Latinx students, by lower-income students, and by those who attend community colleges.



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Download the Spring 2020 COVID-19 Student Survey at
csac.ca.gov/survey2020

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