ADVANCING EQUITY

for Undocumented Students and Students from Mixed-Status Families at the University of California

UC PromISE

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RESEARCH TO ADVANCE EQUITY AND INCLUSION

This report is the result of research conducted by the UC Collaborative to Promote Immigrant and Student Equity (UC PromISE). UC PromISE is a multicampus initiative at the University of California that conducts research with the goal of informing policies and practices that will advance equity and inclusion for undocumented and immigrant-origin students. The collaborative brings together top scholars in the field to conduct cutting-edge, policy-relevant research and uplift best practices to promote immigrant and student equity.

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Authors

Dr. Laura E. Enriquez
Associate Professor of Chicano/Latino Studies
UC Irvine

Dr. Cecilia Ayón
Professor of Public Policy
UC Riverside

Dr. Jennifer Nájera
Associate Professor and Chair of Ethnic Studies
UC Riverside

Dr. Annie Ro
Associate Professor of Public Health
UC Irvine

Dr. Zulema Valdez
Associate Vice Provost for the Faculty and Professor of Sociology
UC Merced

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The University of California has become a national leader in implementing policies and programs to address undocumented students' unique needs. Even with these forward-thinking initiatives, the inequities faced by other students who are negatively impacted by immigration policy, including U.S. citizens who have undocumented parents, have largely been unaddressed.

Based on data from a spring 2020 survey of 2,742 UC undergraduate students, this report compares the experiences of three groups: undocumented immigrant students, U.S. citizen students with undocumented parents, and U.S. citizen students with immigrant parents who are permanent residents or naturalized citizens. The findings powerfully illustrate that immigration policy disrupts the educational experiences and wellbeing not only of undergraduate college students who are undocumented, but also those students who are citizens from mixed-status families. This report identifies areas of improvement to advance equity for all students affected by immigration policies that harm undocumented immigrants and individuals with precarious legal statuses.

Key Findings

Undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents have similarly compromised academic performance and mental health. They also have higher rates of political engagement, likely reflecting their attempts to address unjust policies that negatively affect themselves and their families.

- 10% of undocumented students and 12.5% of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported GPAs below 2.5, compared to 6% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.
- 28% of undocumented students and 30% of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported depressive symptoms at a level that warranted clinical treatment, compared to 21% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.
- Almost two-thirds of students who are undocumented or have undocumented parents reported talking to people about why they should vote for or against a political party or candidate, compared to 55% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.

Despite having more secure legal status, U.S. citizens with undocumented parents report similar levels of financial and legal vulnerability as undocumented students, illuminating why immigration-impacted students have similarly compromised outcomes.

- 61% of undocumented students and 59% of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported food insecurity, compared to 46% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.
- More than 9 in 10 students who are undocumented or have undocumented parents reported worrying about family separation at least sometimes, compared to 27% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.
- 40% of undocumented students and 52% of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported that they, a family member, and/or a friend had been involved in deportation proceedings, detained, or deported, compared to 23% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.
- About a quarter of students who are undocumented or have undocumented parents reported being treated unfairly in a store or restaurant because of the immigration policy context, compared to 17% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status

All groups perceive a generally positive campus climate toward undocumented immigrant communities.

- 56% of all respondents feel a sense of belonging to their university.
- 70% of all respondents reported sometimes or often hearing staff or faculty express positive feelings about undocumented immigrant communities.
- Fewer undocumented students reported hearing positive expressions from peers (77%), compared to 85% of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents and 82% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.

Undocumented students make use of campus resources above and beyond U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status. U.S. citizens with undocumented parents use these resources at a rate between their undocumented peers and those whose parents have legal permanent status.

- 76% of undocumented students had been to an office or met with a staff person who focuses on supporting undocumented students or students with undocumented family members, compared to 18% of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents and 10% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.
- Of the U.S. citizens with undocumented parents who had not made use of these services, 69% did not know they existed, 48% thought it was not for students like themselves, and 31% did not feel comfortable in the office.
- 45% of undocumented students used four or more campus-wide resources during the 2019-2020 academic year, compared to 36% of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents and 27% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status. Among all students, the most frequently used campus-wide resource was the basic need center/food pantry and least frequently used was the mental health counseling center.

Policy Recommendations

These findings call attention to the rippling effects that immigration policies have on both undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented immigrant parents. The UC must build on the success of undocumented student services and expand support to all students who are impacted by unjust immigration policies. To this end, we advance five key policy recommendations.

1. Expand undocumented student services to serve all students impacted by immigration policies.
2. Consider the unique needs of all immigration-impacted students when designing campus services, particularly financial and mental health support.
3. Build innovative collaborations between offices that focus on immigration-impacted students and campus-wide resources.
4. Provide professional development for all staff on how to answer immigration-related questions.
5. Improve understanding of and communication with the immigration-impacted student population.

INTRODUCTION

The University of California has become a national leader in implementing policies and programs to address the unique needs and inequities faced by undocumented students. Over the past seven years it has dedicated $15.4 million in funding for the Undocumented Students Initiative to grow undocumented student services.[1] UC campuses hired professional staff members, created undocumented student centers, provided additional financial aid, and developed innovative programming to reduce educational, social-emotional, and resource inequities. These initial efforts were reinforced with funding for the UC Dream Loan program, which allows undocumented students to access up to $20,000 in educational loans. Funding also established the UC Immigrant Legal Services Center which provides free immigration services to students and their immediate family members. In 2017, the UC also led the charge to defend the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program as the first university to file a lawsuit to block the federal government from ending the program.[2]

The UC has adopted a holistic understanding of undocumented student success, recognizing underlying structural barriers and seeking to meet their unique needs. However, these efforts would have greater impact if they were more sensitive to the fact that immigration-related strains are a family affair.

Scholars and practitioners have focused on the issues faced by undocumented students, including how they confront deportation threats, financial strains, and socio-emotional stressors. Increasingly, they acknowledge that these are both experienced individually and shared within families.[3] But research has increasingly documented that immigration policies profoundly affect members of mixed-status families as well. For instance, U.S. citizen children of undocumented parents have delayed cognitive development, lower academic performance, and higher rates of adjustment and anxiety disorders.[4,5,6,7] Adult citizen children of undocumented immigrants have worse educational and economic outcomes than the children of legalized or U.S.-born parents.[8]

In this report we broaden our focus to examine the experiences of immigration-impacted college students. We define "immigration-impacted students" as those who have been affected by contemporary immigration policies that marginalize undocumented immigrants and individuals

with precarious legal statuses. This includes undocumented students as well as U.S. citizen students with undocumented family members. Undocumented students represent one out of every 50 students enrolled in postsecondary education in the United States; California hosts 20% of these college students with approximately 4,000 enrolled at UC campuses.[9-10] While we do not have numbers on U.S. citizen college students with undocumented parents, this is likely a significant and growing student population. National estimates suggest that there are 4.1 million U.S. citizen children under age 18 who have at least one undocumented parent; this is the case for nearly one in eight K–12 school children in California.[11-12]

This report presents data from a spring 2020 survey of 2,742 UC college students from three groups: undocumented immigrant students, U.S. citizen students with undocumented parents, and U.S. citizen students with immigrant parents who are permanent residents or naturalized citizens. Focusing on these three comparison groups, we offer a comprehensive look at the consequences of self and parental immigration status. We shed light on how immigration policy disrupts the educational experiences and wellbeing of undergraduate college students from undocumented and mixed-status families.

The first section of this report examines how undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents compare to their U.S. citizen peers whose parents have lawful immigration status. The second section considers how differences in section one came to be and establishes the extent to which these three student groups experience different aspects of legal vulnerability. In the third section, we discuss the ways that students experience an inclusive campus climate. In the final section of the report, we show how students use campus resources, including those developed to meet the unique needs of undocumented students.

Ultimately, we contend that federal immigration policies are harming a wider group of students than previously recognized. The effects of such policies and practices are evident among both undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented immigrant parents. Absent comprehensive federal immigration relief, campuses must build on the success of undocumented student services and extend support to all students who are impacted by unjust immigration policies.

I. HOW ARE IMMIGRATION-IMPACTED STUDENTS FARING ON KEY OUTCOMES

California's colleges and universities are responsible for educating and training the next generation of workers, innovators, and leaders in the state. Our report assesses how the University of California is faring in this mission by measuring three key student outcomes: academic performance, mental health, and political engagement. Most often, university administrators rely on academic performance as a key indicator of student success. Student health and wellbeing is a growing area of concern given rising rates of mental health issues among college students. Finally, we examine students' political engagement as college is an important site for developing a civic identity.

Part I of this report examines how undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents compare on these key outcomes to their U.S. citizen peers whose parents have lawful immigration status. We find that both groups have similarly compromised academic performance and mental health. They also have higher rates of political engagement, likely reflecting their attempts to address unjust policies that negatively affect themselves and their families.

Undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents have compromised academic performance.

Both undocumented students and citizens with undocumented parents were overrepresented on measures of low academic performance. Ten percent of undocumented students and 12.5% of citizens with undocumented parents had GPAs below 2.5; only 6% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status reported a low GPA. Undocumented students were most likely to have failed a course (46%), followed closely by citizens with undocumented parents (42%). Citizen students whose parents have lawful immigration status were doing better by this metric but still seem to be struggling with 34% having failed a course. It is striking that similar proportions undocumented students and citizens with undocumented parents are struggling academically.

Both groups were also underrepresented on measures of high academic performance. A quarter of both undocumented students and citizens with undocumented parents reported a GPA of 3.5 or higher, compared to 38% of students whose parents have lawful immigration status. In some cases, citizens with undocumented parents fared worst. For instance, they were least likely to have received academic honors: 36% of citizens with undocumented parents placed on the Dean's List or Honor Roll compared to 42% of undocumented students and 45% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.

Undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents experience high levels of emotional distress.

Two clinically validated measures, the PHQ-9 and GAD-7, were used to assess depression and anxiety among students. Twenty-eight percent of undocumented students and 30% of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported depressive symptoms at a severe range, indicating a need for clinical intervention. About one in five reported similarly severe anxiety symptoms (see Figure 1). The rates of emotional distress among this sample exceed other estimates among U.S. college students; specifically, the 2016-2017 Healthy Minds study found that 14% of students had severe symptoms of depression and 10% had severe symptoms of anxiety.[13]

Students across all groups recognized the need for mental health services. Approximately 70% of undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents acknowledged that they felt they needed to see a professional because of problems with their mental health, emotions, or nerves during the academic year. In comparison, 60% of US. citizens students whose parents have lawful immigration status said the same.

Undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents are engaged politically.

Although undocumented students cannot vote, 65% reported talking to people to try to show them why they should vote for or against a political party or candidate sometimes, often, or always. U.S. citizen students with undocumented parents do so at nearly the same rate (66%). About 10% fewer citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status reported talking to people about voting (55%).

U.S. citizen students with undocumented parents reported higher levels of voting than U.S. citizen students whose parents have lawful immigration status. Eighty four percent of those with undocumented parents vote sometimes, often or always compared to 72% of their counterparts whose parents have lawful immigration status. It is worth noting that these numbers are significantly higher than the general population of young voters, who voted at a rate of 50-52% in the 2020 Presidential election, which had the highest turnout rate in over a century.[14] This indicates the growing political power of college-educated children of immigrants.

Students who were undocumented or had undocumented parents were more likely to participate in political actions than their citizen peers whose parents have lawful immigration status. Forty-four percent of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported participating in an on-campus protest, march, demonstration, or rally sometimes or often, compared to 32% of students whose parents have lawful immigration status. Undocumented students fell in the middle (39%), indicating that their legal vulnerability may dampen public-facing political action. Similar patterns emerge for off campus political protests.

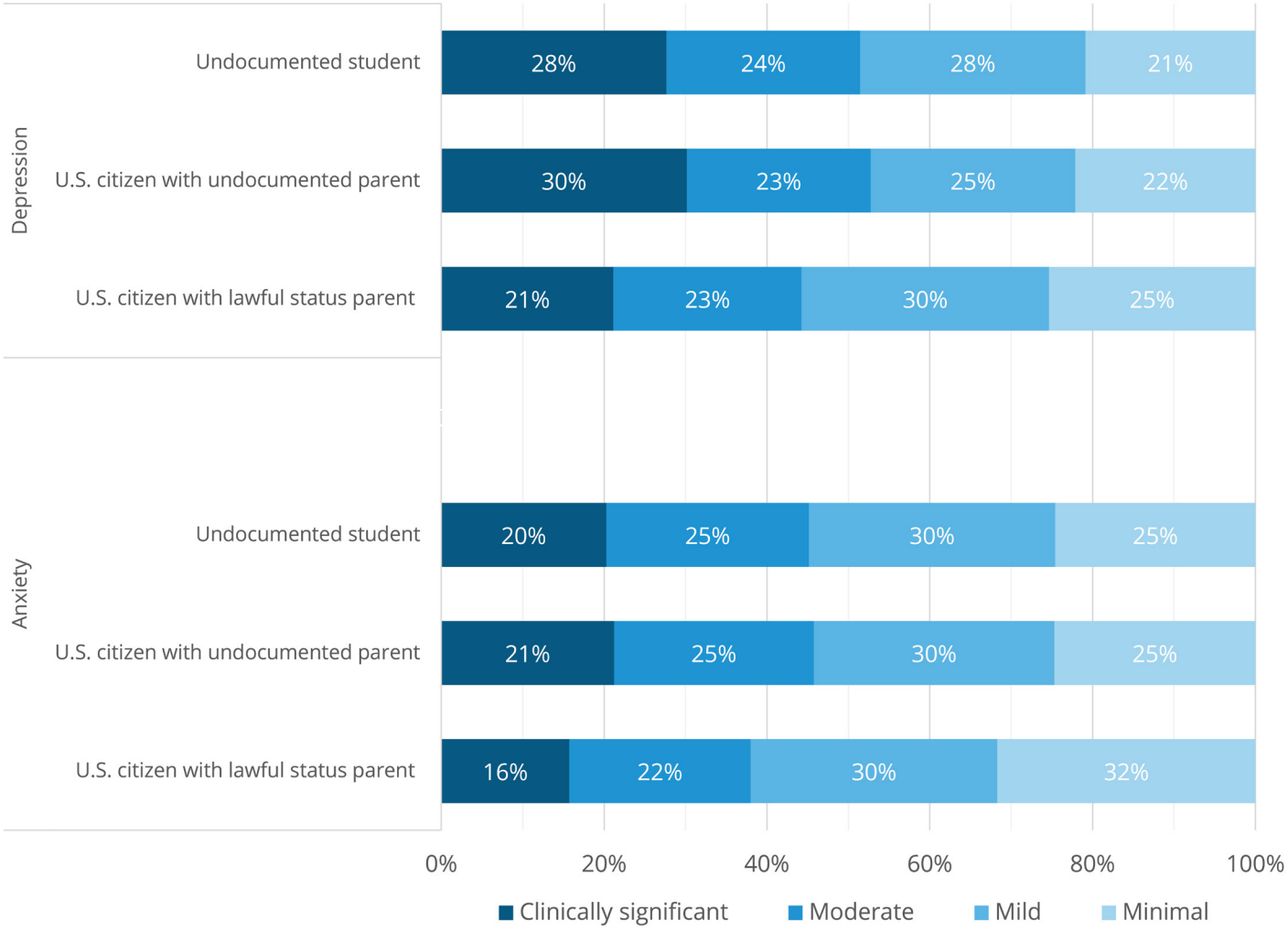

Figure 1. Severity of emotional distress symptoms by self and parental immigration status.

II. WHY MIGHT IMMIGRATION-IMPACTED STUDENTS HAVE SIMILAR OUTCOMES?

The negative consequences of immigration policies are not confined to undocumented immigrants, but are often shared within families. The U.S. citizen children of undocumented parents experience multigenerational punishment, wherein they share their parents' legal vulnerability, including financial strains, concerns about deportation, and social exclusion.[15] Part II of this report examines the extent to which legal vulnerability is experienced by respondents. We find that undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents report similar levels of legal vulnerability. Importantly, such legal vulnerability was associated with poorer educational and mental health outcomes and higher rates of political engagement, illuminating why immigration-impacted students have similarly compromised outcomes.

Undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents experience greater economic hardship than U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status.

Student Financial Strain

More than half of undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents worry considerably about not having enough money to pay for things a lot of the time or always (58% and 57%, respectively). This worry is well-placed, given that about one out of three undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported difficulty paying bills a lot of the time or always, whereas about one in five go without basic items or materials as frequently.

Fewer U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status share such financial strain. Just over 40% worry about not having enough money to pay for things a lot of the time or always, a difference of 15%. Only one in five reported difficulty paying bills as frequently, whereas 59% rarely experience this type of financial strain. Only one in ten reported having to go without basic items or materials needed for their studies, or half that of their counterparts from undocumented or mixed-status families.

Student Food Insecurity

A 2015 UC study found that 40% of the general UC student population was food insecure.[16] These concerns are substantially more prevalent among undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents. More than half of undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents are food insecure (61% and 59%, respectively). To illustrate, undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported eating less than they felt they should (52% and 47%, respectively), skipping meals (55% and 53%), or running out of food because of money (51% and 47%). In contrast, the majority of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status are food secure, with less than half (46%) reporting food insecurity.

Family Financial Strain

Parental immigration status sets the stage for differences in family financial strain. Undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents are over twice as likely as U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status to expect that their family will experience financial hardship. Eighteen percent of undocumented students expect that their family will experience bad times such as poor housing or not having enough food a lot of the time or always; 14% expect that their family will have to go without basic needs. These rates are similar among citizens with undocumented

parents, 17% and 13% respectively. Only 5% and 7% of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status share similarly frequent concerns.

In contrast, the majority of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status never or almost never worry about bad times befalling their family, such as poor housing (64%) or going without basic needs being met (66%). A minority of undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents are free from such worry. Roughly a third of undocumented students (30%) and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents (35%) never or almost never expect their family to experience bad times such as poor housing, or half that of their counterparts.

Deportation threats are widespread among undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents, but citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status were not fully insulated.

Deportation Concerns

Approximately half of undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported thinking about their parent/guardian's deportation once a week or more. Fewer undocumented students (37%) reported thinking about their own deportation as frequently. Students also perceived deportation as a threat to their family stability. A significant portion of undocumented students (90%) and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents (92.5%) reported worrying about family separation at least sometimes. Concomitantly, these students worry about the impact of immigration policies on their families.

U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status were substantially less likely to have these concerns, and if they did, reported them as being less frequent. Only 1% reported thinking about a parent/guardian's deportation once a week or more. However, 16% had thought about it once a month or a few times a year. Fifteen percent reported worrying about family separation sometimes and an additional 12% often or always. These concerns may reflect shifts in federal practice that have highlighted the deportation risks faced by lawful permanent residents and possibilities of denaturalization for U.S. citizens.

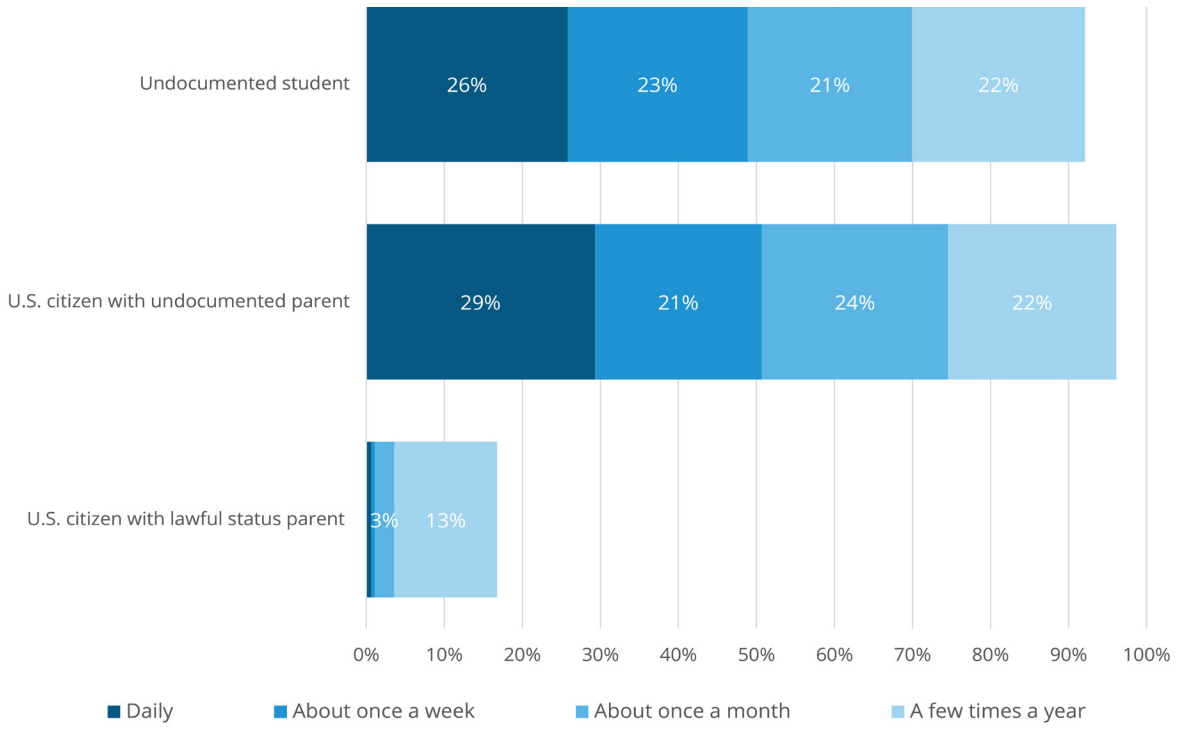

Figure 2. Frequency that students think about their parent/guardian's deportation by self and parental immigration status.

Note: Less than 1% of U.S. citizens with lawful status parents reported thinking about their parent/guardian's deportation daily or about once a week.

Experiences with Deportation

Fifty-two percent of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents reported that that they, a family member, and/or a friend had been involved in deportation proceedings, detained, or deported. Forty percent of undocumented students reported the same.[17] They overwhelmingly identified a parent as the family member having had direct experience with the deportation regime; this was the case for 26% of citizens with undocumented parents in the full sample and 16% of undocumented students. Forty-two percent of citizens with undocumented parents reported having at least one extended family member who had such experiences; 26% of undocumented students said the same.

Citizen students whose parents have lawful immigration status were not completely insulated from deportation threats. Twenty-three percent reported that they, a family member, and/or a friend had been involved in deportation proceedings, detained, or deported. These were often extended family members.

Undocumented students report more frequent experiences of social exclusion and discrimination due to the immigration policy context.

Undocumented students reported moderate levels of social exclusion compared to students whose parents have undocumented or lawful immigrant status (see Figure 3). For instance, 77% reported feeling that they have no rights at least sometimes because of immigration policies. Approximately half reported they avoid public spaces and felt like they had no liberty at least sometimes.

Reports of immigration-related discrimination were low on average across the three groups. However, undocumented students reported higher levels of discrimination compared to the two other groups. Some variation was evident across questions. For instance, 24% of undocumented students and 25% of students with undocumented parents reported being treated unfairly in a store or restaurant because of the immigration policy context. In contrast, 49% of

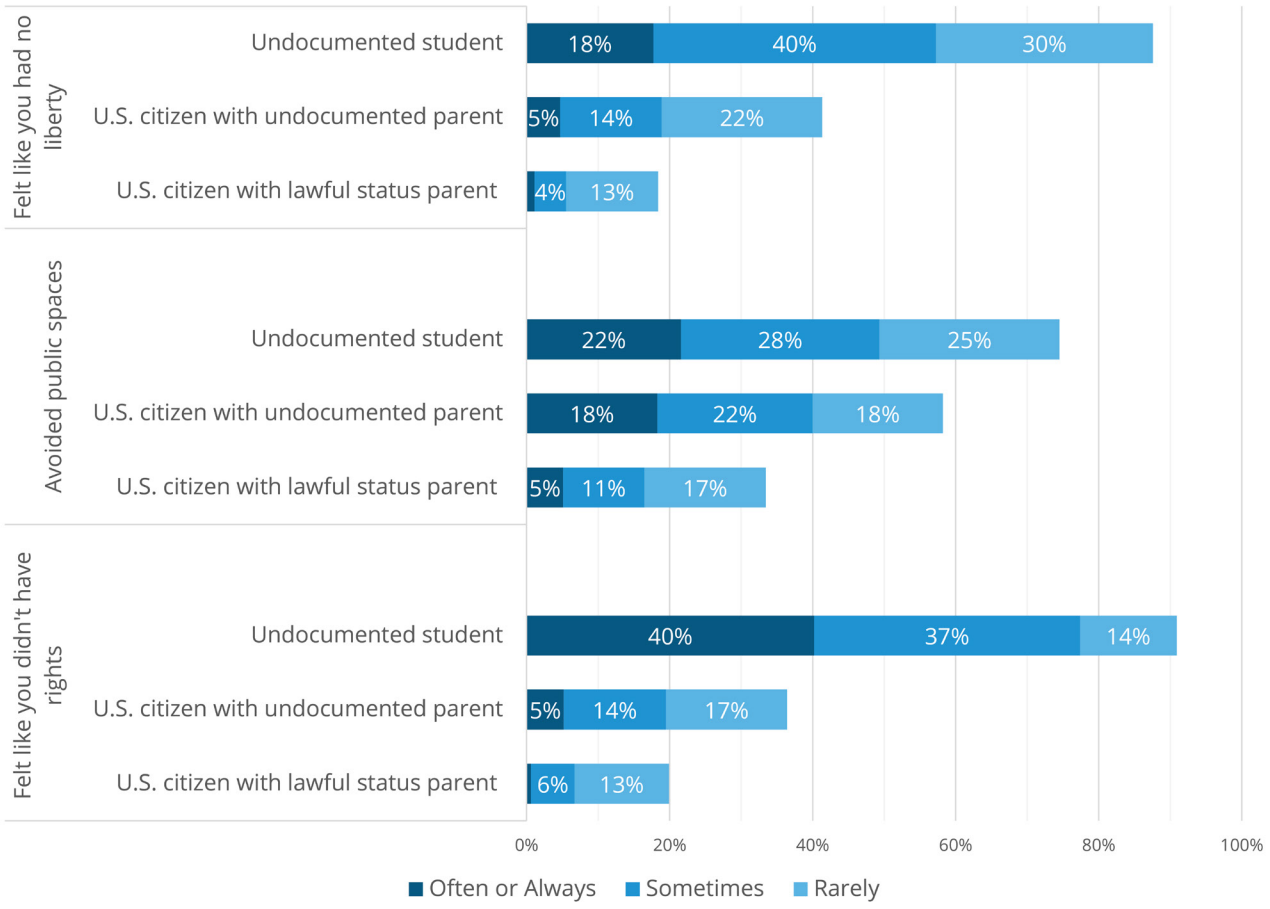

Figure 3. Frequency that students experience social isolation due to the immigration policy context by self and parental immigration status.
Note: 1% of U.S. citizens with lawful status parents reported feeling like they had no liberty and like they didn't have rights often or always.

undocumented students and 42% of students with an undocumented parent reported that others act like they have the right to treat them unfairly or poorly at least some of the time. Still, a larger portion of undocumented students tended to report experiencing various forms of discrimination, such as feeling ignored when seeking help or being silenced by others, at least sometimes (see Figure 4).

Immigration-related concerns prevent students who are undocumented or have undocumented parents from fully engaging in their academics.

Seventy-eight percent of undocumented students reported being distracted in class because they were dealing with or thinking about an issue related to their immigration status and 70% due to a family member's immigration status. Citizens with undocumented parents reported similar levels of distraction: 75% were distracted in class due to thinking about an issue related to a family member's immigration status. Only 30% of citizen students whose parents have lawful immigration status reported such distraction

A similar trend emerged for missing class. Forty-three percent of undocumented students missed class due to an issue related their own immigration status and 35% due to an issue related a family members' immigration status. Thirty-four percent of citizen students with undocumented parents missed class for this reason. Only 18% of citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status had experienced this. Similar patterns emerge for losing study hours and doing poorly on an exam.

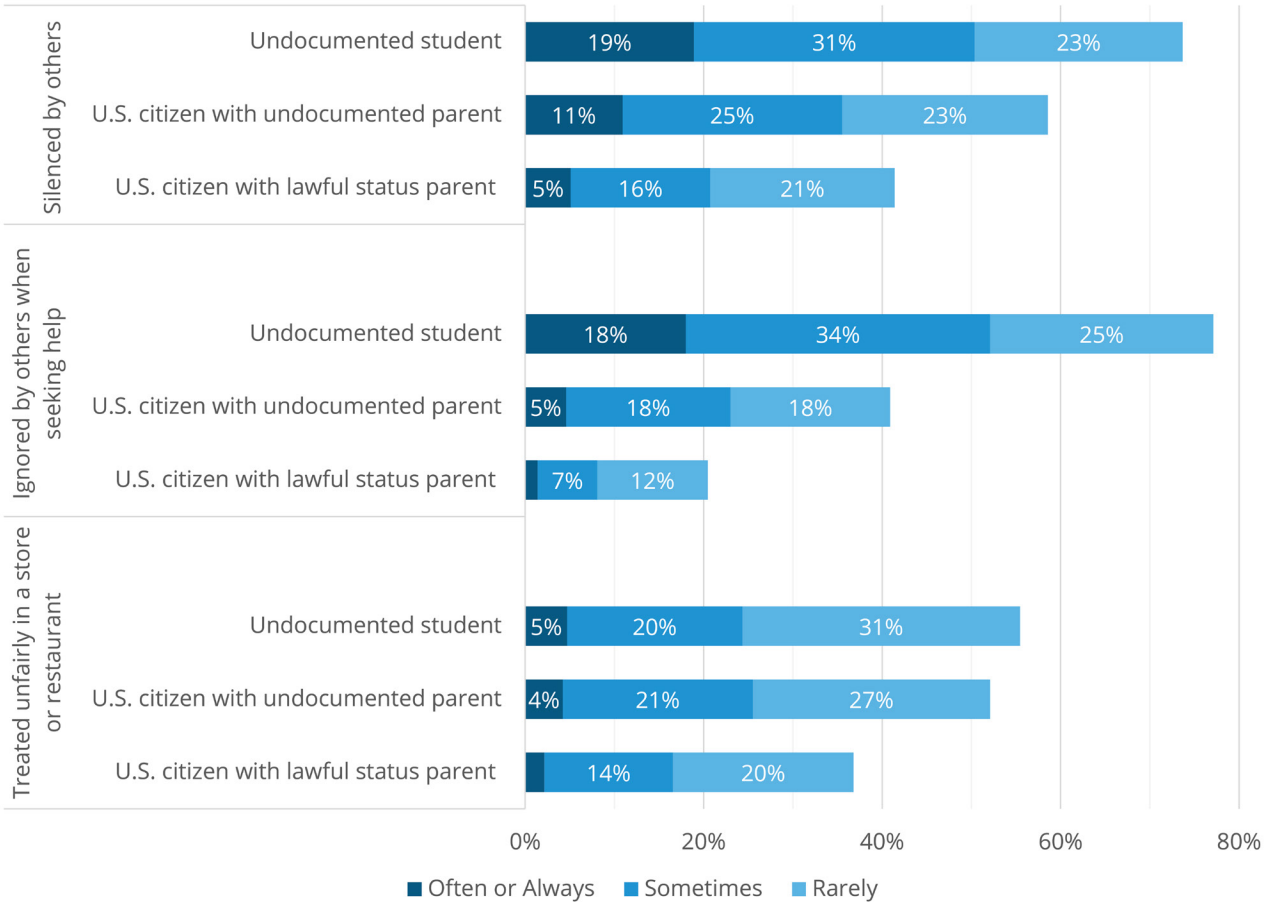

Figure 4. Frequency that students experience discrimination due to the immigration policy context by self and parental immigration status.
Note: 1% of U.S. citizens with lawful status parents reported feeling ignored when seeking help often or always and 2% reported feeling like others treat them unfairly often or always.

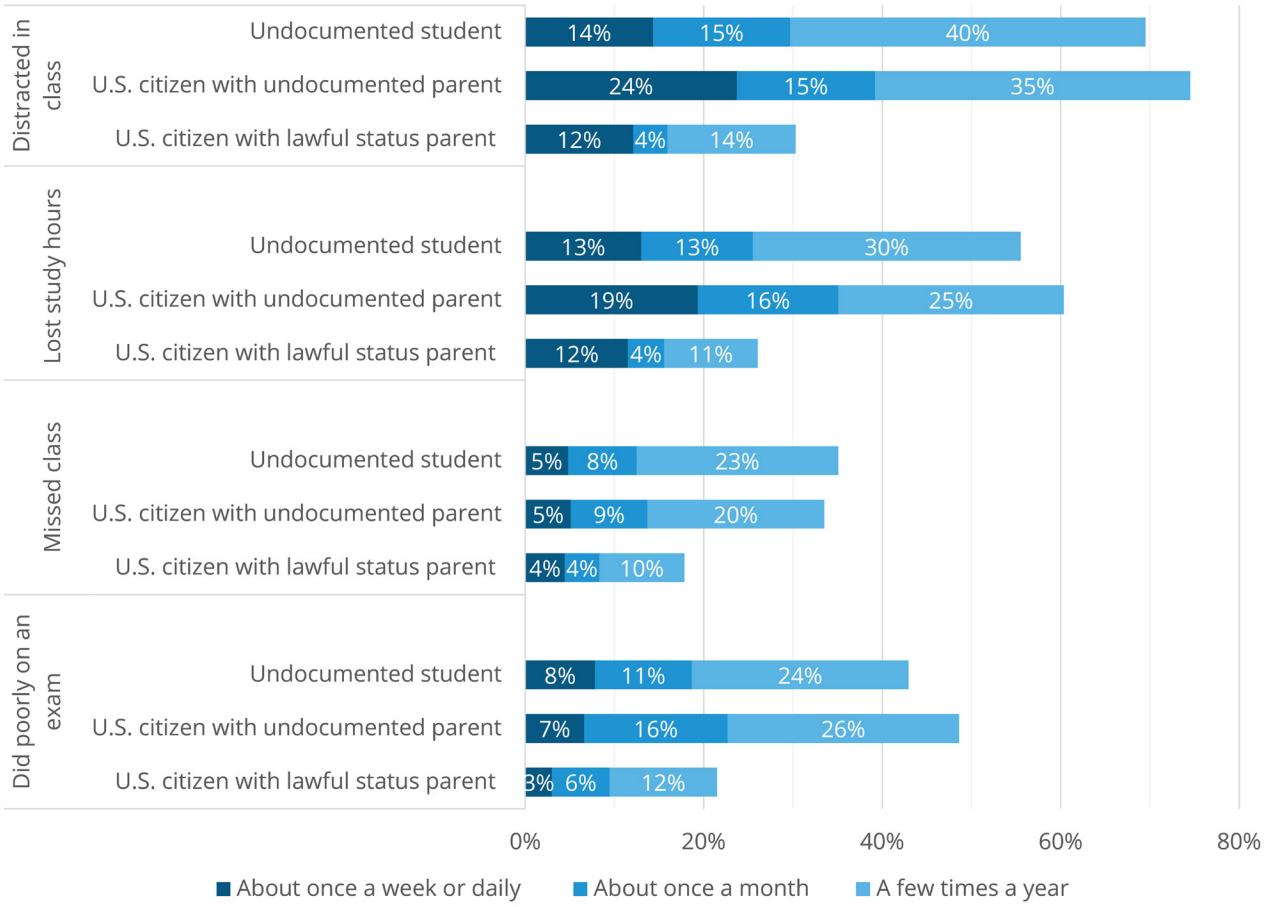

Figure 5. Frequency that students experience academic distractions due to a family members' immigration status by self and parental immigration status.

III. HOW DO IMMIGRATION-IMPACTED STUDENTS PERCEIVE THE CAMPUS CLIMATE?

A negative campus climate may compromise feelings of belonging, which is known to decrease the likelihood a student will excel academically and graduate.[18-19] Part III of this report examines the extent to which students perceive a positive campus climate with respect to pro- and anti-immigrant sentiment. We find that all groups perceive a generally positive campus climate toward undocumented immigrant communities.

The majority of students feel a sense of belonging on campus.

The majority of students feel a sense of belonging to their university (56%) and see themselves as part of the university community (58%), with no statistically significant differences among the three groups. However, undocumented students are more enthusiastic about their university (69%) than either group of citizens whose parents have undocumented or lawful immigration status (61% and 60%). That said, citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status are more likely to feel that they can present their whole authentic self on campus, 58% compared to 53% of both undocumented students and citizens with undocumented parents.

Campus climate toward undocumented immigrant communities is generally positive, with peers and the surrounding community expressing less positive sentiments.

Faculty and staff foster a generally positive campus climate toward undocumented immigrant communities. Around 70% of all students reported sometimes or often hearing staff or faculty express positive feelings about undocumented immigrant communities. Only slightly more than 10% of all students reported sometimes or often hearing faculty or staff express negative feelings.

Students reported hearing more mixed sentiments from their peers. Though the majority of students reported sometimes or often hearing peers express positive feelings about undocumented immigrant communities (82%), one out of three reported hearing negative feelings expressed by peers. Despite occupying the same campus spaces, undocumented students were less likely to report hearing positive expressions from peers (77%), compared to 85% of citizens with undocumented parents and 82% of those whose parents have lawful immigration status. Immigration-impacted students were also more attuned to anti-immigrant sentiments expressed by peers with 35% of each group reporting such sentiments sometimes or often, compared to 28% of the students whose parents have lawful immigration status.

Students reported that the communities surrounding their universities had a less positive climate for immigrants than their campuses. Slightly more than half of students reported sometimes or often hearing members of the community express positive feelings about undocumented immigrant communities and 30% reported hearing negative feelings.

IV. DO IMMIGRATION-IMPACTED STUDENTS USE CAMPUS RESOURCES?

Universities most often aim to address inequities by providing resources and services to students, including academic, social, emotional, and basic needs support. In this section of the report, we examine students' use of campus resources. We find that undocumented students use a wide breadth of campus resources, including undocumented student services, and they use them more frequently than their citizen peers. This suggests that campuses have effectively engaged in strategic change to advance equity for undocumented students but immigration-impacted U.S. citizen students have not benefitted similarly.

Immigration-Impacted Student Resources

Undocumented students overwhelmingly access undocumented student services.

Seventy-six percent of undocumented students had been to an office or met with a staff person who focuses on supporting undocumented students or students with undocumented family members. With the exception of the basic needs center/food pantry, they used undocumented student resources as frequently or slightly more than they did other campus-wide resources. Over 16% of undocumented students visited the undocumented student program office or spoke with a student staff member from the undocumented student program office about once a week or more. Around 12% spoke with a professional staff member from the center once a week or more. In comparison, only 11% visited general university academic support services and 3% saw an academic counselor with the same frequency.

The vast majority of U.S. citizen students have not been to an office intended for supporting undocumented students or students with undocumented family members.

Among U.S. citizen students whose parents had undocumented or lawful immigration statuses, 82% and 90% respectively, had not been to an office intended for supporting undocumented students or students with undocumented family members.

When asked why they did not visit such offices, 69% of citizens with undocumented parents reported that they did not know it existed. Additionally, 48% answered that this was because these resources were not for students like themselves and 31% indicated that they do not feel comfortable in the office.

The majority of undocumented students use UC Immigrant Legal Services but very few U.S. citizen students do.

One immigration-related resource that is explicitly available to all students is UC Immigrant Legal Services. The system-wide initiative provides free, immigration-related legal representation for UC students and their immediate family members. Notably, 68% of undocumented students accessed these services during the 2019-2020 academic year. Only 13% of citizen students with undocumented parents had used these services and almost no citizen students whose parents have lawful immigration status reported doing so (4%). Both U.S. citizen groups, particularly those with undocumented parents, could benefit from accessing free, high-quality legal services for their family members who may need legal consultations and assistance filing paperwork associated with immigration relief, adjustment of status, and/or naturalization.

Campus-wide Resources

Undocumented students used a wider breadth of campus-wide resources and used them more frequently than students whose parents have lawful immigration status.

We asked students how frequently they used eight different campus resources: academic counselors, academic support services, peer tutoring, the career center, identity-based centers, the basic needs/food pantry, the student health center, and the mental health counseling center. Fifteen percent of undocumented students reported using nearly all these resources (7-8) at least once during the 2019-2020 academic year and an additional 30% reported using more than half (5-6). The percentages were slightly lower for citizen students with an undocumented parent but still indicated regular resource use; 11% used 7-8 of the campus resources and 25% used 5-6 resources. Citizen students whose parents have lawful immigration status used the least number of campus resources; 7% used 7-8 resources and 20% used 5-6 resources. Undocumented students' more frequent use of campus resources likely reflects their higher need and their willingness to seek support.

A consistent pattern emerged for most of the eight resources when examined separately: undocumented students used each resource most frequently (once a month or more), followed by citizens with undocumented parents; citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status used them the least. The only exceptions were academic resources (academic counselor, academic support services, peer tutoring); a slightly higher proportion of citizens with undocumented parents used these services once a month or more compared to undocumented students.

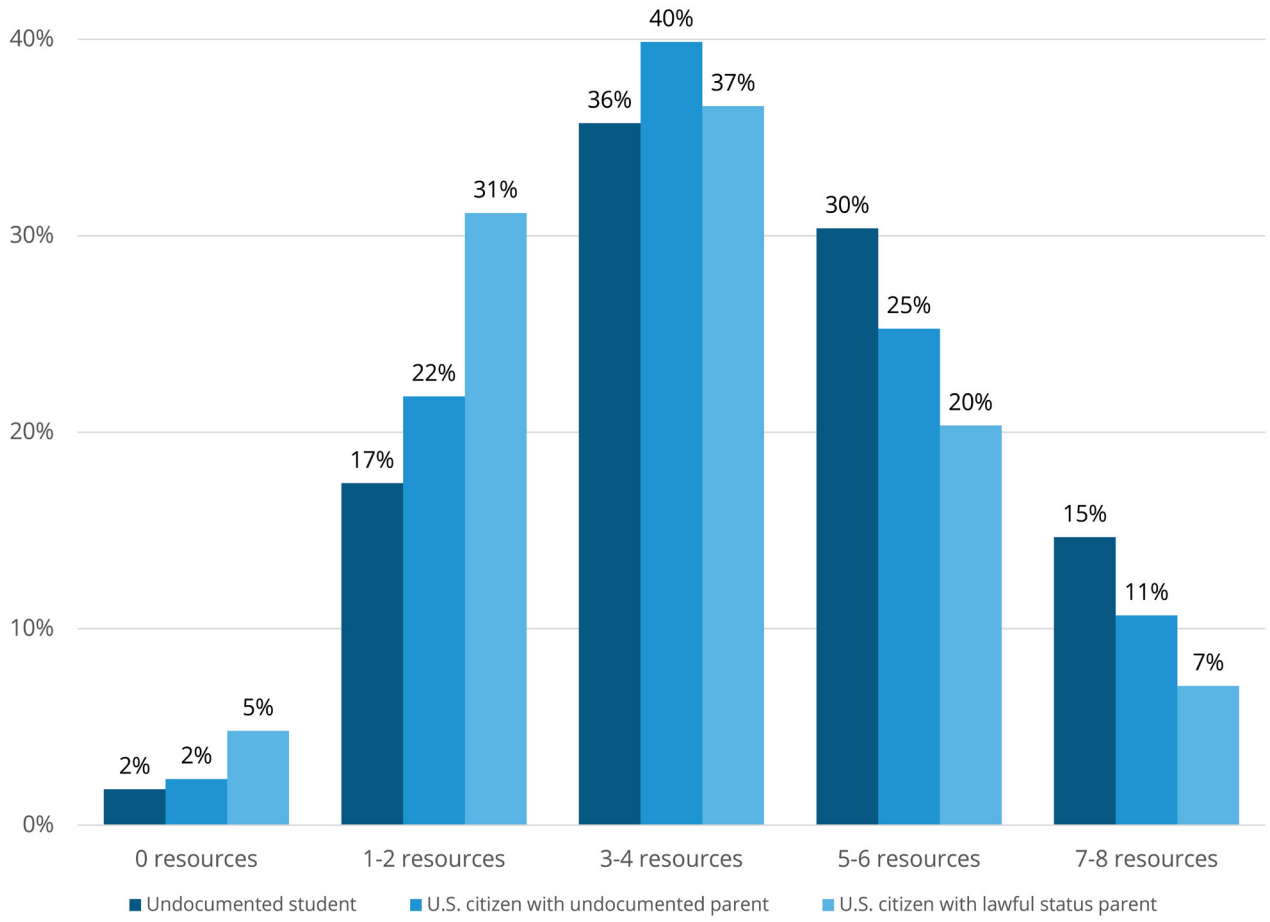

Figure 6. Number of campus-wide resources used by self and parental immigration status.

The most frequently used campus-wide resource was the basic needs center/food pantry, and undocumented students used it most frequently.

Nearly 25% of undocumented students and 20% of citizens with undocumented parents reported using this resource once a week or more. Another 15% of each group said they used it about once a month. Only 12% of citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status said they used a basic needs center/food pantry once a week or more and an additional 12% said once a month.

The least-used campus-wide resource was the mental health counseling center, but undocumented students used it most frequently.

Only a small number of students had visited the mental health counseling center during the 2019-2020 academic year: 31% of undocumented students, 24% of citizens with undocumented parents, and 22% of citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status. Undocumented students were the most likely to access these services once a month or more with 12.5% doing so, compared to 10% of citizens with undocumented parents, and 8% of citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status. Given the high rates of emotional strain, mental health counseling centers are being widely underutilized, likely due to impacted services and immigration-related concerns.[20]

When reporting if they had ever sought support for their mental or emotional health, undocumented students were still more likely to seek help (52%) compared to 47% of citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status and 43.5% of citizens with undocumented parents. Of those who sought help, a greater percent of undocumented students reported seeking help from an on-campus professional (36%) compared to 23% of citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status and 27% of citizens with undocumented parents.

Despite their relatively high use, undocumented students still report persisting barriers to accessing campus-wide resources.

Almost half (48%) reported being given inaccurate or incorrect information about how to complete a university procedure. Forty percent reported having to educate a staff person about their eligibility to receive a service or resource. A third (33%) reported being denied access to a campus resource or program because of their undocumented status. These rates are relatively consistent with what was found in a 2016 survey of UC undocumented students.[21]

Campus services have positive impacts on undocumented students.

Undocumented students were most likely to report participating in career-preparation opportunities. Forty-five percent had held an internship and/or career-relevant job, compared to 36% of citizens with undocumented parents and 40% of citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status. There were no differences in the rates of unpaid internships or career-relevant jobs among the groups with 21% and 17% of the full sample participating in each respectively. Undocumented students were more likely to have had a paid internship and a credit-based internship, 19% and 17% respectively.

It is important to note that a lack of work authorization may hinder undocumented students' engagement in these opportunities. Indeed, 20% of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) beneficiaries reported holding a career-relevant job compared to 4% of those with no legal status. However, there were no statistically significant differences in their rates of holding a paid internship.

Undocumented students are also more likely to report positive health. Respondents rated the degree to which they experience social and psychological prosperity, which includes feelings of self-respect, optimism, purpose, and living a meaningful life. The average score for the three groups was in line with the average reported in many other samples of college students throughout the country.[22] The majority of students across the three groups agreed or strongly agreed that they matter to their community and are worthy of getting their needs met. Differences across groups were marginal, however, undocumented students had significantly higher scores for flourishing and positive self-perceptions.

CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Our report calls attention to the rippling effects that immigration policies have on both undocumented students and U.S. citizens with undocumented immigrant parents. Building on successful attempts to extend holistic support to undocumented students, the University of California needs to adopt a broader view that acknowledges all immigration-impacted students.

In 2013, there were an estimated 5.3 million children and adolescents nationally who were undocumented or who had an undocumented parent. In other words, a little more than a quarter of children of immigrants are growing up undocumented or members of mixed-status families.[23] The older of these children are already making the transition to college and even more are rising through the K-12 education system. California colleges and universities, where half of the students are children of immigrants, must be prepared to serve these students when they arrive.[24]

The UC has invested in the creation of undocumented student services, and these initiatives have improved undocumented students' experiences through dedicated services and innovative programming to meet students' unique needs. Yet, these services subsist on small, temporary budgets and undocumented students still face substantial institutional barriers and inequities. Additionally, these services are stretched thin as campuses use them to deal with all immigration-related issues, including those presented by U.S. citizens with undocumented parents and family members. The UC must build on the success of undocumented student services to expand support to all students who are impacted by unjust immigration policies.

We outline recommendations to move in this direction.

1. Expand undocumented student services to serve all students impacted by immigration policies.

Campuses should review their existing undocumented student services to identify directions for expanding services and programs to serve all students impacted by immigration policies. A broader vision could charge these programs with serving undocumented students as well as their peers who have undocumented family members. Expanded framing would have the added benefit of also including formerly undocumented students who have adjusted their immigration status but still need legal, material, and socio-emotional support.

The expansion of services must be accompanied by the expansion of resources to sustain these programs. Services will require additional professional staff members to connect with this expanded immigration-impacted student population and design relevant programming. Current staff members should be provided with opportunities for professional development around issues related to serving these additional sub-groups of impacted students, and their offices will require additional programming funds, space, and logistical support.

Programming could reduce unequal outcomes in education and mental health by providing students with the tools they need to thrive despite immigration-related strains. Some programs might effectively serve all impacted students, such as providing "know your rights" training, which is meant to prepare students and family members for interacting with police and immigration authorities. Other programming should address the unique challenges of various sub-groups; for example, financial aid workshops could be offered to support undocumented students' completion of the California Dream Act application and U.S. citizens with undocumented parents completion of the FAFSA application. Programming should also directly address identified unequal outcomes by providing academic support and mental health services. Additional recommendations specific to supporting undocumented students can be found in our companion report: *Persisting Inequalities, Paths Forward: A Report on the State of Undocumented Students in California's Public Universities.*[25]

2. Consider the unique needs of all immigration-impacted students when designing campus services, particularly financial and mental health support.

Students who are undocumented or have undocumented parents identified two key areas of shared strain where universities can effectively provide support: their finances and their mental health. The theory of trickle-up social justice suggests that considering the needs of the most vulnerable will advance justice for all groups.[26] For this reason, we recommend that campuses center students who are vulnerable to immigration-related strains when they are designing programs and services to address basic needs and mental health for all students.

In some cases, campuses will need to increase funding to grow such services. For instance, campuses should hire more mental health counselors and ensure that they are culturally competent and aware of immigration-related strains. This would not only benefit undocumented students but also their citizen peers who have undocumented parents, extended family members, and friends. These counselors would also have competencies in immigrant families more generally, preparing them to better serve the children of immigrants who make up half of California's college student population.

Additionally, all campus offices should evaluate their existing services to ensure that students who are undocumented or have undocumented parents are able to access them. If they are not, equivalent supports should be created. For instance, campuses often address food insecurity through CalFresh, but undocumented students and their undocumented family members are not eligible for this program. In cases such as this, additional resources should be made available to impacted students. Similar efforts will be important when designing financial aid packages, scholarships, emergency funding, and wrap-around support services.

3. Build innovative collaborations between offices that focus on immigration-impacted students and campus-wide resources.

Campuses have made progress in identifying point people and providing ally training to staff in key offices across campus. However, these strategies yield inconsistent results as student experiences depend on who they contact when accessing campus-wide services. It also often puts the burden on undocumented student services to initiate, build, and sustain multiple collaborations across campus.

Campuses should move toward more formal collaborations with key offices. One way to do this is through joint professional staff hires between a campus-wide office and the office of undocumented and immigration-impacted student services. These staff members would be able to bridge resources and knowledge between offices. Given the inequities identified in this report, key offices for such joint positions include academic support services, mental health services, basic needs/food pantry services, campus social workers, and the financial aid office.

4. Provide professional development for all staff on how to answer immigration-related questions.

All campus offices should conduct a review of the types of immigration-related questions presented by students. A professional staff member should be identified to serve as an expert liaison in these issues. This person should also be responsible for administering annual professional development training of all staff, including student workers, to prepare them to answer basic questions and empower them to know when to make referrals for students with complex immigration-related issues. Such trainings are especially critical in the financial aid office and the university registrar as they both process paperwork that require students to answer sensitive questions related to their own and family members' immigration status.

5. Improve understanding of and communication with the immigration-impacted student population.

The UC Office of the President or each campus should regularly provide up-to-date numbers of immigration-impacted students to ensure sufficient funding allocations and inform program development. UC campuses commonly identify undocumented students using rough measures, such as through financial aid documentation. These efforts should continue and similar efforts must be made to identify the population of lawfully-present students (e.g. U.S. citizens, permanent residents) with undocumented parents.

Campuses should also establish a means of communicating with immigration-impacted students. The ability to communicate with all enrolled undocumented students has fluctuated over time at the UCs; these communication channels must be maintained so that critical announcements can be made and services advertised. In addition, a similar communication channel should be established on each campus to inform citizen students with undocumented family members of services.

We recognize that the hostile political climate discourages such efforts in order to protect students. However, not having such knowledge also serves to make students invisible and may contribute to the persistent underfunding and lack of awareness about support services that can advance equity. Thus, it is imperative that this sensitive information be collected and preserved with care to student privacy and safety.

APPENDIX: DATA AND METHODS

In Spring 2020, the UC Collaborative to Promote Immigrant and Student Equity (UC PromISE) fielded a survey of UC students with immigrant parents to assess the extent to which immigration-related policies produce inequalities in the educational and wellbeing outcomes of undocumented students and citizen students with undocumented parents. The survey was administered online from March to June 2020. It included questions about academic experiences, health and wellbeing, political and civic engagement, the immigration policy context, institutional context and resource use, and self and family demographics. All items were pilot tested to ensure validity.

Participants were recruited at all nine UC undergraduate campuses. Recruitment announcements were distributed widely, including emails and social media posts from each campus' undocumented student support services office, faculty teaching large general education and ethnic studies courses, departmental and university office newsletters, and undocumented student organizations.

The survey was administered via Qualtrics with an estimated completion time of 25–35 minutes. Participants had to self-identify as being over 18, having at least one immigrant parent, and being a currently enrolled undergraduate student at a UC campus. Respondents were emailed a $10 electronic gift card after completing the survey. All responses were reviewed for validity; incomplete responses, ineligible respondents, and suspected fabricated responses were removed using a detailed protocol.

The COVID-19 pandemic began shortly after the survey launched. We temporarily paused recruitment during the second half of March to adjust our recruitment plans and revise our survey instrument. Responses begun after March 30 were instructed to answer the questions based on what was typical before the COVID-19 crisis occurred. The full sample of students consists of 2,742 respondents: 667 undocumented immigrant students, 648 U.S. citizen students with undocumented parents, and 1,427 U.S. citizen students whose parents have lawful immigration status.

Undocumented students had to identify as being born outside of the United States and having no permanent legal status. Seventy percent were beneficiaries of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program and 29% had no current legal status. The remainder had other forms of liminal legal status such as Temporary Protected Status. Ninety percent were from Latin America.

The subgroup of U.S. citizens with undocumented parents had to identify as being born in the U.S. and having at least one immigrant parent with no permanent legal status. Almost three-quarters identified all their parents/guardians as being undocumented. The remaining students identified as having one undocumented parent, with about half identifying their other parent/guardian as a permanent resident and the other half identifying them as a U.S. citizen. Nearly all (97%) identified Latin America as their parents' area of origin.

The subgroup of U.S. citizens whose parents have lawful immigration status had to identify as being born in the U.S., having at least one immigrant parent, and all parents having permanent legal status. Slightly more than two-thirds (68%) identified all their parents/guardians as being U.S. citizens and an additional 13% identified all of them as permanent residents. Nineteen percent identified one parent as being a permanent resident and the other being a U.S. citizen. The vast majority (87%) identified both their parents as foreign born with 44% coming from Latin America and 42% from Asia.

All statistics reported were calculated using case deletion of missing responses for the specific variable being analyzed. All reported comparisons by self/parental immigration status were statistically significant and tested using a chi-squared test. Bivariate analyses used Spearman or Pearson correlations between ordinal or continuous variables and t-tests to compare differences across groups for continuous outcomes. We used $p<0.05$ to designate statistical significance.

Table 1: Demographic characteristics of survey respondents by university system and total.

Characteristic	Undocumented Students (n=667)		U.S. citizen with undocumented parent (n=648)		U.S. citizen with lawful status parent (n=1,427)	
	Number	Valid %	Number	Valid %	Number	Valid %
Students' Immigration Status						
U.S. citizen	--	--	648	100.0	1427	100.0
Undocumented - DACA	467	70.0	--	--	--	--
Undocumented - other liminal legal status	9	1.4	--	--	--	--
Undocumented - No legal status	191	28.6	--	--	--	--
Student's Area of Origin						
United States	--	--	648	100.0	1427	100.0
Mexico	503	75.4	--	--	--	--
Central America	68	10.2	--	--	--	--
South America	27	4.1	--	--	--	--
Asia and Pacific Islands	61	9.2	--	--	--	--
All others	8	1.2	--	--	--	--
Parental Immigration Status						
All undocumented	581	91.2	468	73.7	0	0.0
All lawful permanent residents	19	3.0	0	0.0	186	13.1
All U.S. citizens	1	0.2	0	0.0	961	67.7
1 undocumented and 1 lawful permanent resident	10	1.6	86	12.5	0	0.0
1 undocumented and 1 U.S. citizen	5	0.8	66	10.4	0	0.0
1 lawful permanent resident and 1 U.S. citizen	3	0.5	0	0.0	270	19.0
Other combinations	18	2.8	15	2.4	2	0.1
Missing	30		13		8	
Has one U.S.-born parent/guardian						
No	664	99.6	631	97.4	1241	87.0
Yes	3	0.5	17	2.6	186	13.0
Immigrant Parent/Guardians' Area of Origin*						
Latin America	601	90.1	631	97.4	629	44.1
Caribbean	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1
Asia	49	7.4	11	1.7	597	41.8
Middle East	0	0.0	0	0.0	51	3.6
Africa	0	0.0	1	0.2	22	1.5
Europe	0	0.0	0	0.0	23	1.6
Mixed areas of origin	16	2.4	5	0.8	104	7.3
Gender						
Female	495	74.4	526	81.3	1051	73.9
Male	153	23.0	114	17.6	348	24.5
Non-binary, queer, transgender	17	2.6	7	1.1	24	1.7
Missing	2		1		4	
Parent/Guardian 1 Level of Education						
6th grade or less	212	32.4	236	40.8	195	15.6
7 to 12 grade	169	25.8	203	32.0	208	14.8
High School diploma or GED	141	21.5	123	19.4	307	21.9
Some college	91	13.9	37	5.8	275	19.6
Bachelor's degree or higher	42	6.4	13	2.1	391	27.9
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.1
Missing	12		13		25	

Characteristic	Number	Valid %	Number	Valid %	Number	Valid %
Parent/Guardian 2 Level of Education						
6th grade or less	179	35.9	212	42.5	168	16.2
7 to 12 grade	135	27.1	191	34.9	202	16.4
High School diploma or GED	93	18.6	81	14.8	230	18.7
Some college	61	12.2	32	5.8	241	19.6
Bachelor's degree or higher	31	6.2	11	2.0	358	29.1
Other	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	0.2
Missing	8		16		27	
Did not report a second parent	160		84		168	
Age						
18-20	302	45.3	394	60.8	865	60.6
21-23	297	44.5	235	36.3	503	35.3
24 and older	68	10.2	19	2.9	59	4.1
Mean Age Year in School						
First year	114	17.1	169	26.1	335	23.5
Second year	108	16.2	131	20.3	316	22.2
Third year	205	30.7	170	26.3	373	26.2
Fourth year	196	29.4	147	22.7	355	24.9
Fifth year or more	44	6.6	30	4.6	46	3.2
Missing	0		1		2	
Transfer Status						
Started as first year student	498	75.0	579	89.4	1194	83.8
Transfer student	166	25.0	69	10.7	231	16.2
Missing	3		0		2	
Primary Major at School						
Arts and Humanities	107	16.0	84	13.0	162	11.4
Social Science	251	37.6	295	45.6	504	35.4
STEM (Biology, Engineering, etc.)	208	31.2	170	26.3	553	38.8
Other majors and undecided/undeclared	101	15.1	98	15.2	205	14.4
Missing	0		1		3	
Living Situation						
Living at home with family	145	21.8	107	16.5	277	19.4
On-campus housing	280	42.0	307	47.4	576	40.4
Off-campus housing, not with family	241	36.2	234	36.1	573	40.2
Missing	1		0		1	
Household Income						
Less than $20,000	164	25.8	156	24.8	162	12.5
$20,001 to $40,000	276	43.4	246	39.2	297	23.0
$40,001 to $75,000	157	24.7	180	28.7	383	29.6
Greater than $75,001	39	6.1	46	7.3	451	34.9
Missing	31		24		134	
Hours Worked in Typical Week						
Not working	329	49.9	322	49.9	811	57.7
1-20 hours	243	36.8	262	40.6	486	34.6
21 or more hours	88	13.3	61	9.5	109	7.8
Missing	7		3		21	
Average Pay		14.62 (n=325)		14.12 (n=324)		13.76 (n=605)

Note: Valid percentages exclude missing values. Missing values include "I don't know" and "Decline to state" responses.

* U.S. born parents are disregarded for this item

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