2025

HOUSING HELP INFORMATION PACKET

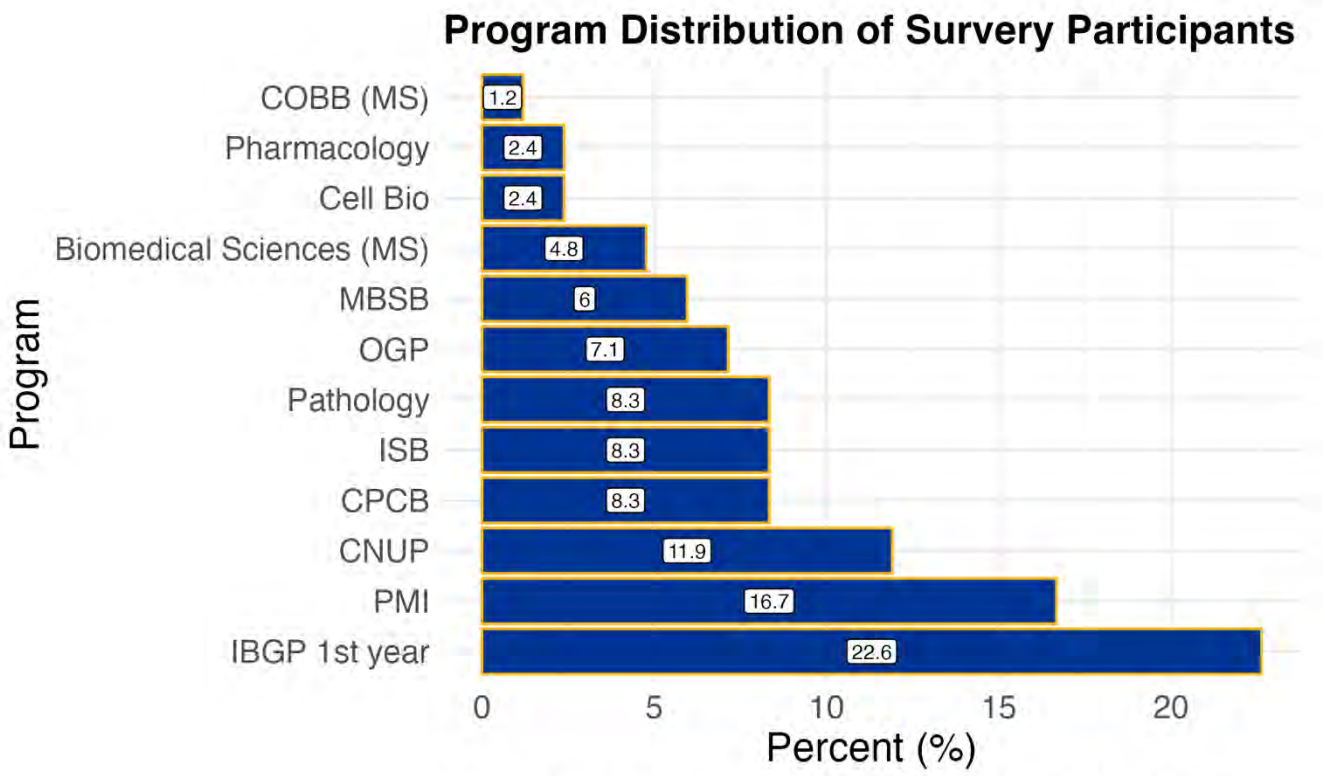
Welcome to the University of Pittsburgh!

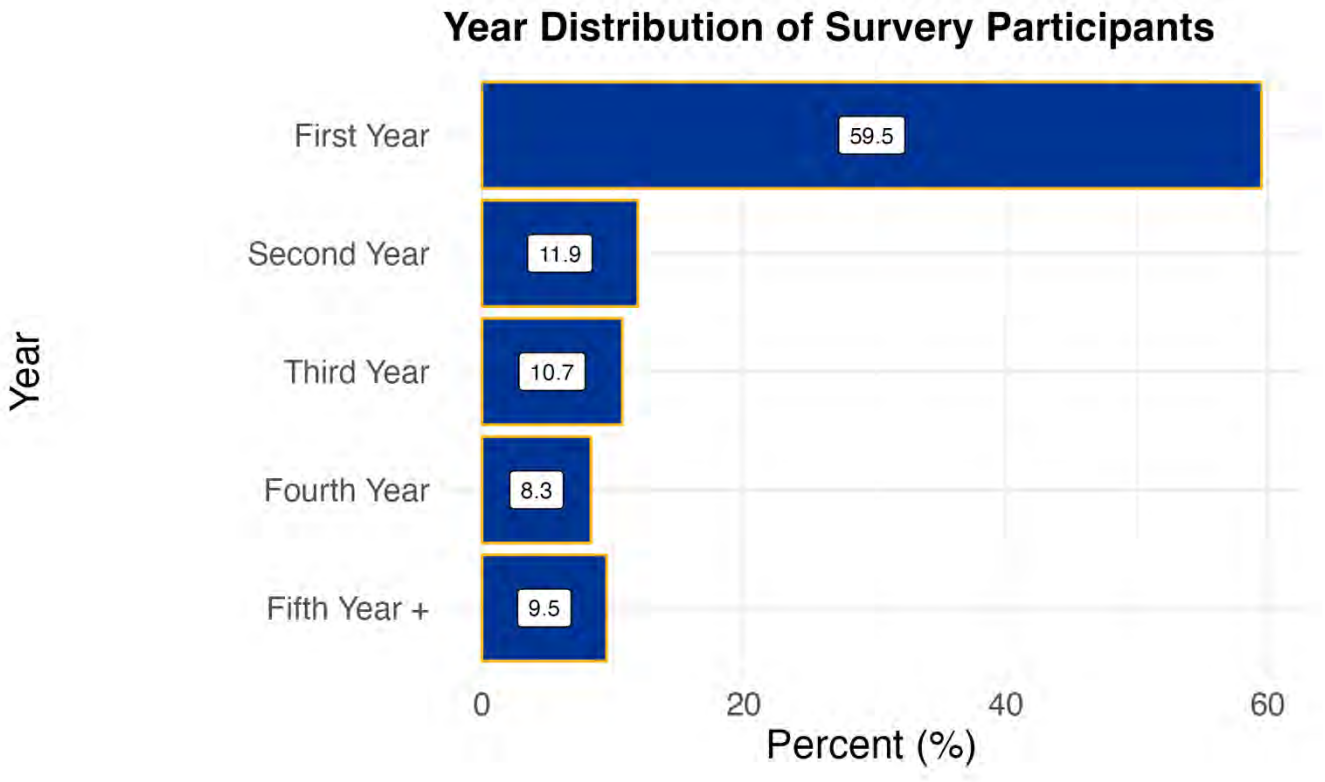
We know how intimidating moving to a new city can be, and we are here to help. We've surveyed graduate students across the School of Medicine and collected information on living and working locations, landlord reviews, budgeting, and transportation. We hope this will provide you with everything you need to make the best decision for your big move. Please feel free to reach out to the First Year Ambassador or the BGSA with any other questions you may have. We're so excited to see you around the city soon!

~ Biomedical Graduate Student Association

Survey Information

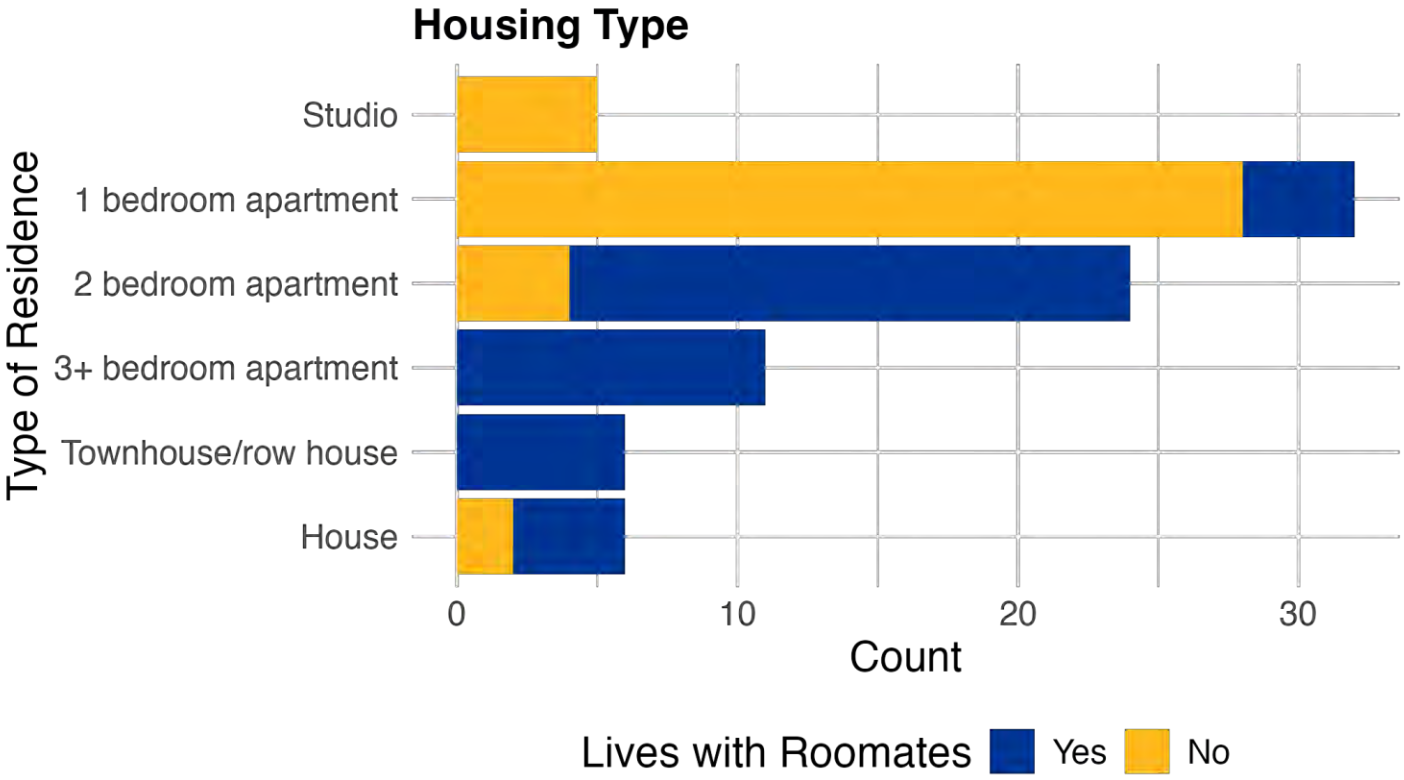
The information presented in this packet was taken from BGSA students who participated in a voluntary survey in January 2025. Here are the demographics of survey participants.





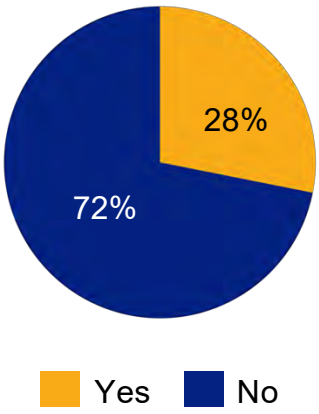
Apartment Types and Roommates

Most of our students live in apartments, and 53.6% have roommates.

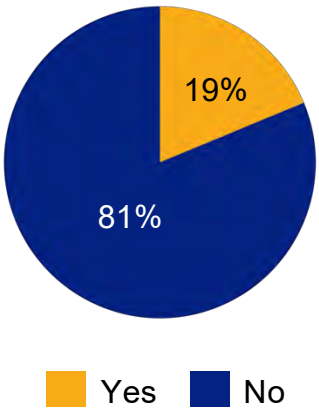


Reasons for Roommate(s)

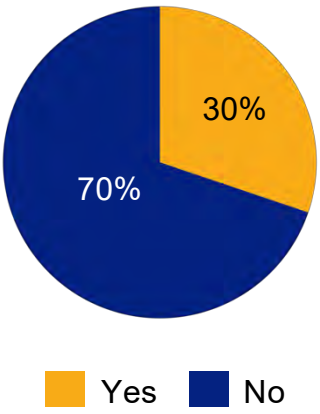
I live with roommate(s) to keep housing costs down:



I prefer to live with roommate(s) for camaraderie during grad school:



I live with my partner or spouse:

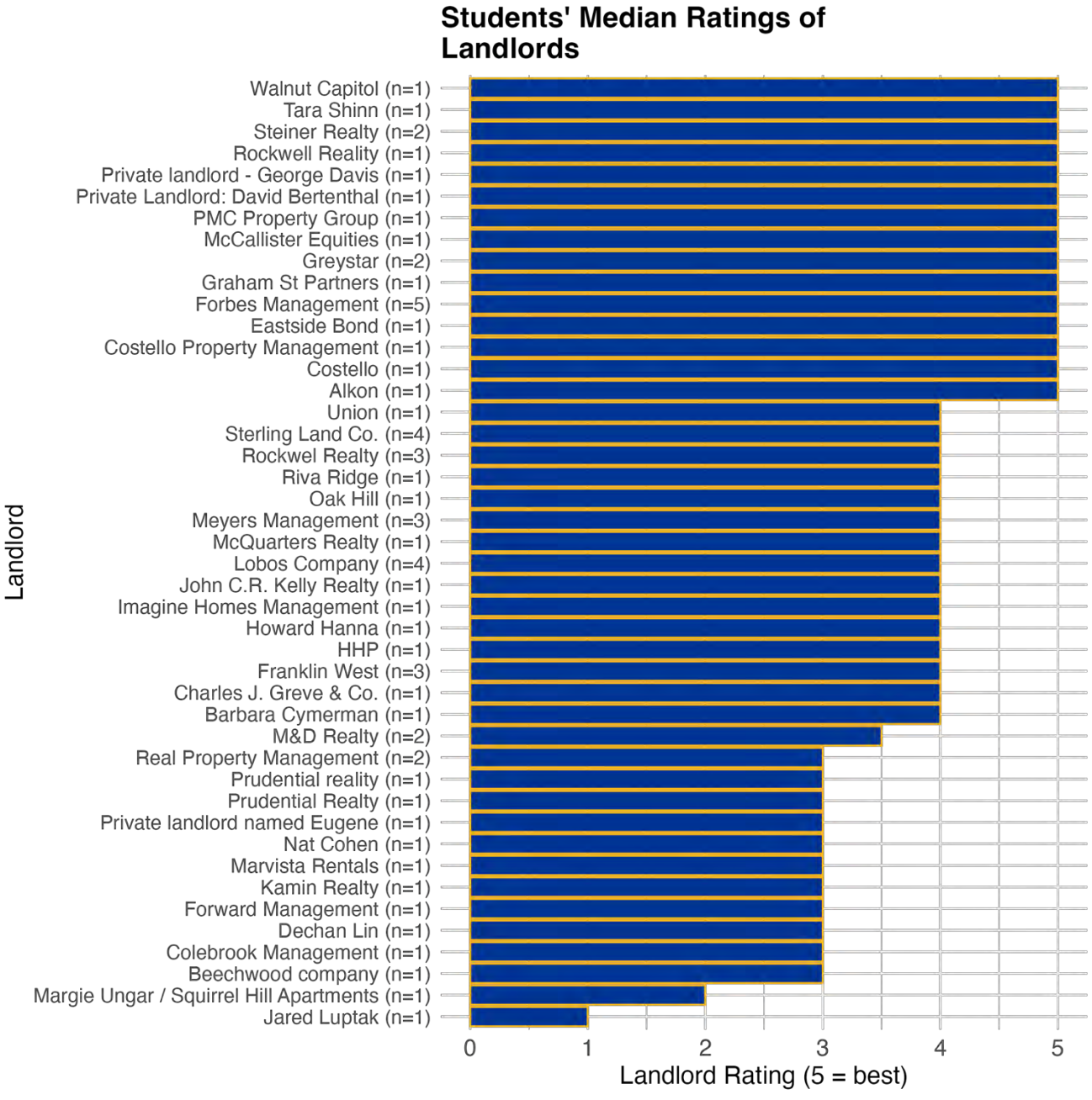


Landlords

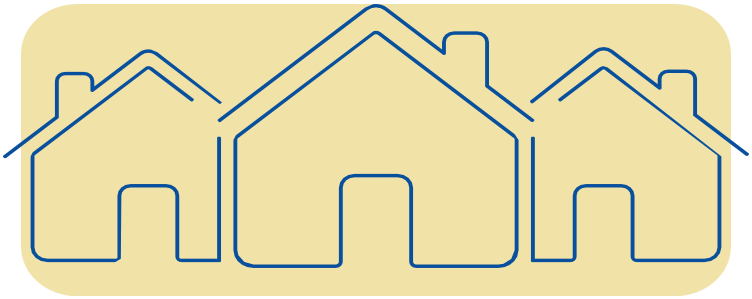
Here is a sampling of landlords and companies used by our students. Some students prefer a company and some prefer a private owner.

Resources for apartment hunting include:
https://www.zillow.com/
https://www.apartments.com/
https://www.hotpads.com/
https://www.apartmentfinder.com/Pennsylvania/Pittsburgh-Apartments
https://www.trulia.com/for_rent/Pittsburgh,PA/

Checking local Facebook pages can also help you find private owners looking for a renter. Some include “Pittsburgh Housing/Sublet/Rentals”, ”University of Pittsburgh (PITT) Housing, Sublets & Roommates”, and “University of Pittsburgh PITT & CMU Housing Subleases Roommates Apartments”.



Landlords



Student Reviews

*Keep in mind these are just the thoughts of individual students

McQuarters Realty- "large maintenance and building staff, so repairs are quick and easy."

Walnut Capitol- "They are very organized and keep the building well maintained."

Meyers Management- "do not contain AC or dishwasher/garbage disposal. Maintainence is OK but slow."

Lobos Management- "certain buildings were poorly lit and often had issues like the elevator breaking. Maintenance took awhile to respond."

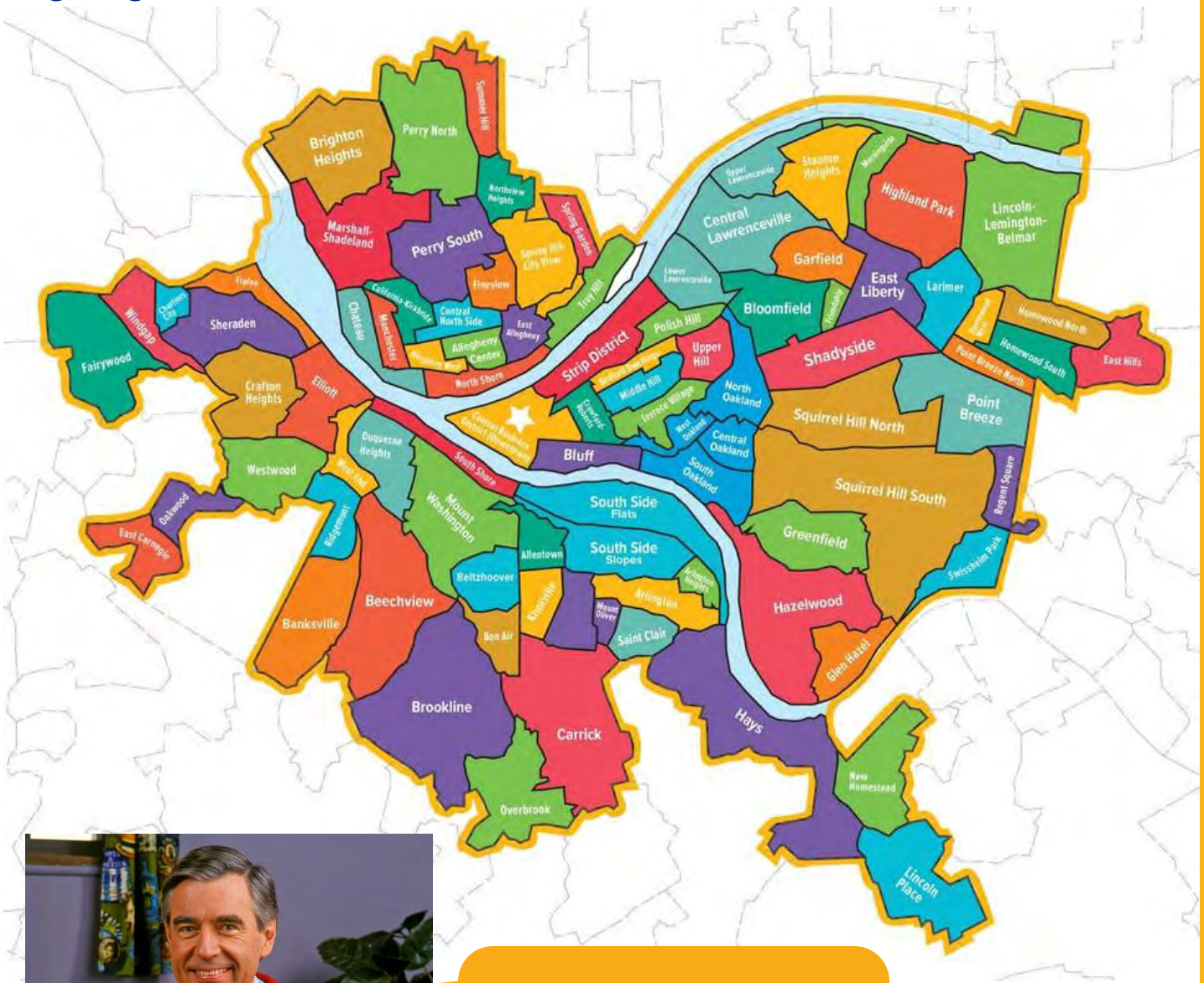
Forbes Management- "Quick response on maintenance requests, good condition of apartments, but a little more expensive."

Ralph Hoffman- "Very sweet old man who is easy to reach and quick to fix any maintenance issues. Did not raise my rent during my lease renewal."

Mozart Management- "a bandaid solution kind of management company. They respond to things relatively quickly but they are not always long term solutions."

Pittsburgh Neighborhoods

Pittsburgh is home to various diverse neighborhoods that each offer a unique living experience. The most popular neighborhoods for our students will be highlighted here.



Welcome to the neighborhood!

Shadyside

Shadyside is a residential area known for its eclectic shopping scene, with a mix of upscale boutiques, big name brand shops and specialty grocers, plus vintage, antiques and home decor stores. The lively bar scene features late-night pubs, a popular gay club and chilled craft beer spots, joined by tapas restaurants, American eateries, noodle bars and brunch spots.

Average rent for 1BR apartment:
$1,255
***regardless of roomate status**

Favorite Student Spots:

Con Alma (coffee shop)
Two Sisters (Vietnamese Restaurant)
Square Cafe (breakfast spot)
Trader Joe's (grocery store)
Yoga Love Pittsburgh (Yoga Studio)
Adda (coffee shop)
Round Table (coffee shop)
Kards Unlimited (bookstore)
Noodlehead (Asian restaurant)
Fujya Ramen (Ramen restaurant)

Students Describe Shadyside as

"walkable, lively, active"
"safe and friendly"
"young professional"
"very bike friendly"
"calm, safe, peaceful"

Oakland

Oakland is the academic and healthcare center of Pittsburgh and one of the city's major cultural centers. The neighborhood is home to three universities, museums, and hospitals, as well as an abundance of shopping, restaurants, and recreational activities. This is where Pitt's main campus is located, as well as a majority of the first-year graduate classes and research labs.

Average rent for 1BR apartment:
$1,465
***regardless of roomate status**

Favorite Student Spots:

Pie for Breakfast (breakfast and lunch place)
Crepes Parisinne (French crepe place)
Carnegie Museum of Natural History
Zarra's (Italian restaurant)
Chikn (fried chicken sandwiches)
Red Hawk (coffee shop)
Piada (Italian takeout)
Chipotle (Mexican takeout)
The Porch at Schenley (outside American dining)
Schenley Park (trails, playground, and sports fields; botanical gardens)

Students Describe Oakland as

"young adults, but mostly students"
"comfortable and friendly"
"mix of undergrad housing and longtime residents"
"homey"

Bloomfield & Garfield

Bloomfield, known as Pittsburgh's Little Italy, is an diverse neighborhood with a wide-ranging dining scene that includes pizzerias and old-school Italian spots, as well as global eateries, hip cafes and burger joints. Lively taverns host bands and DJs, and classic dive bars buzz after dark. Garfield is more residential and known for having 13 distinct flights of city steps among its hills and parks.

Average rent for 1BR apartment:
$1,075
***regardless of roomate status**

Favorite Student Spots:

Yinz Coffee (coffee shop)
Baby Loves Tacos (casual Mexican food)
People's Indian Restaurant
Nico's Recovery Room (American Bar)
Big Shot Bob's (wings)
Angelo's Pizzeria
Caliente Pizza and Draft House
Bloomfield Saturday Market (outdoor market with local produce)
Annual Little Italy Days (festival with Italian food, games, and music)

Students Describe Bloomfield/Garfield as

"a nice hip area"
"quiet and calm"
"neighborhood vibe with plenty of families"
"highly walkable"

Squirrel Hill

Squirrel Hill is a residential neighborhood, officially divided into two, Squirrel Hill North and Squirrel Hill South. Squirrel Hill features a cluster of indie clothing boutiques, chic decor shops and bookstores. It also has a mix of Thai and Indian eateries, pizza joints and delis on Forbes Avenue. This family friendly neighborhood is filled with beautiful historic homes.

Average rent for 1BR apartment:
$1,132
***regardless of roomate status**

Favorite Student Spots:

Taiwanese Bistro Cafe 33 (Taiwanese food)

Rita's (Italian water ice and custard)

Frick Park (trails and dog parks)

Dobra Tea (peacful Bohemian tearoom)

Ramen Bar (Japanese noodles)

Sichuan Gourmet (Traditional and Americanized Chinese food)

Students Describe Squirrel Hill as

"lots of restaurants and shops in walking distance"
"friendly, safe and quiet"
"family oriented"
"15-minute neighborhood"
"I have never eaten a bad meal here"

Southside

There is no shortage of bars on the South Side. East Carson is Pittsburgh's Bourbon Street, with all manner of watering holes packed onto every block. Whether you're sipping elaborate cocktails at the speakeasys or throwing back a pints of beer, or hopping between the street's many dives, the neighborhood has your drinking needs covered.

Average rent for 1 BR apartment:

$890
***regardless of roommate status**

Favorite Student Spots:

Pins Mechanical (bar with bowling alley and other games)
Carmella's (upscale dinner)
de Fer Coffee & Tea
Delanie's Coffee (cafe with small bites)
Carson Street Deli (sandwich shop)
Three Rivers Heritage Trail (gravel trail with river and downtown views)
Thai Me Up (Thai food)
Archies (wings and bar food)
Little Tokyo Bistro (sushi)

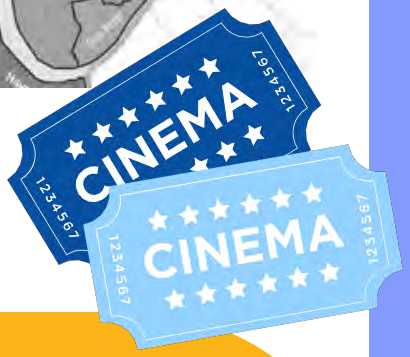
Students Describe Southside as

"affordable and underrated"
"quiet during the week, but weekends can get rowdy"
"cozy with upbeat energy"
"mix of young professionals and college students"
"fun and lively"

Lawrenceville

Formerly an industrial neighborhood with a rich history, Lawrenceville has transformed into a hub for innovation, creativity and nightlife. This is a historic neighborhood that has reinvented itself into a boho city center with a hyper creative energy, and an edgy nightlife. Butler Street is lined with trendy bars and restaurants, art galleries, antique shops and boutiques and even a historic movie theater

Average rent for 1BR apartment:
$1,009 (average from last year)
***regardless of roomate status**



Favorite Student Spots:

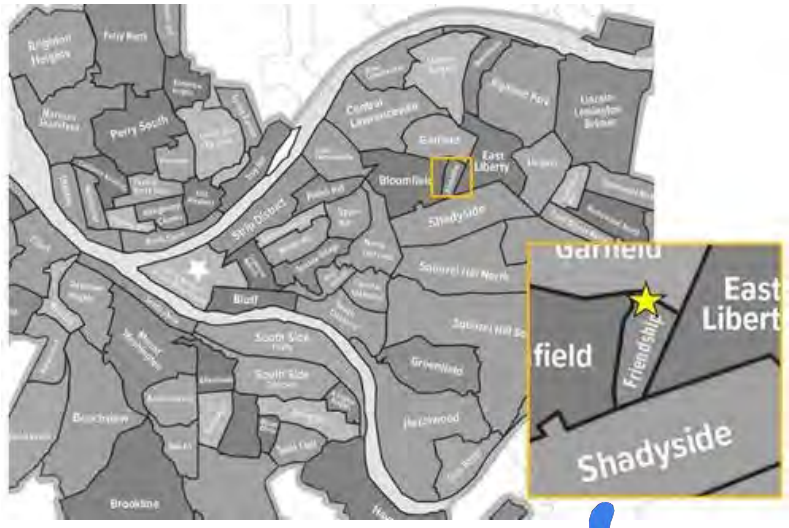
Mezcal Mexican Cantina
Bierport Tap Room
Row House (historic movie theater with themed showings)
Cork Harbour Pub (Irish pub)
Wildcard (gift shop with local art)
People's Indian Restaurant
La Gourmandine (French bakery)
Industry (American bar)
Burgh'ers Brewing (gourmet burgers)

Students Describe Friendship as

"social and walkable"
"great places to eat and drink"
"lots of food, bars, and cute shops"

Friendship

Friendship is a central neighborhood of large Victorian houses, that is bordered by East liberty, Bloomfield, and Shadyside. Though small, it still has a nice stretch of small businesses and restaurants along Penn Avenue and it offers convenient travel to work.



Average rent for 1BR apartment:
$1,008
***regardless of roomate status**

Favorite Student Spots:

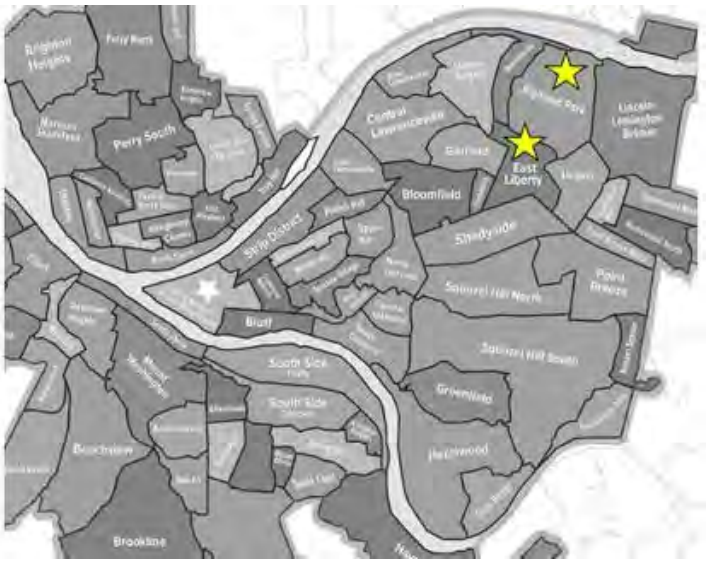
Spak Bros (Mediterranean food and pizza)
Two Frays Brewing (brewery)
Soju (Korean restaurant)
Mixtape (bar)
Adda (coffee shop)
White Whale (bookstore)
Condado Tacos (casual Mexican)
Sienna Mercato (Italian rooftop restaurant)
Commonplace Coffee (coffee shop)
Black Cat Market (a cat cafe to play with and adopt kitties)

Students Describe Friendship as

"quiet and residential"
"small but convenient"
"plenty of families and long-term residents"

Highland Park & East Liberty

The culturally diverse neighborhood of East Liberty today is undergoing a monumental redevelopment effort. East Liberty is home to trendy restaurants and community theaters. Highland Park is a quiet residential area dominated by the vast, leafy park of the same name. The park is also home to the Pittsburgh Zoo & PPG Aquarium. Dining options in the area include relaxed bistros, cafes, and Thai and Italian restaurants.



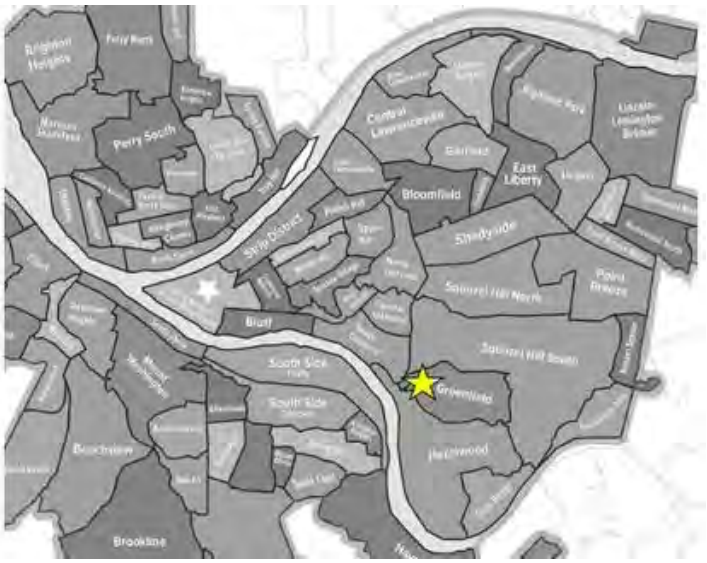
Average rent for 1BR apartment:
$1,044
***regardless of roomate status**

Students Describe Highland Park as
"homey, quiet, green"
"quiet & residential"
"close to shops and restaurants"

Favorite Student Spots:
Urban Tap (gastropub with beers on tap)
Millie's Homemade Ice Cream
Bird on the Run (fried chicken sandwiches)
Two Sisters Vietnamese Restaurant
Honeygrow (healthy salads and bowls)
Noodlehead (Thai street noodles)
Casbah (high-end Mediterranean)

Greenfield

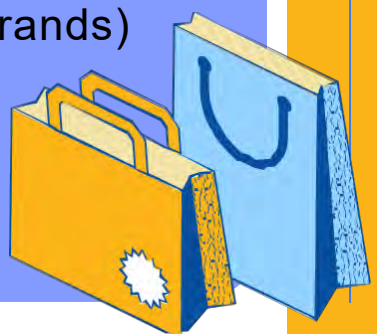
Close to Pittsburgh's most established neighborhoods, Greenfield is drawing a new generation of homeowners with affordable housing and a do-it-yourself ethic. The community is less pricey than many of its neighboring enclaves, but just as convenient to their amenities, so first-time homebuyers love it.



Average rent for 1BR apartment:
$1,050 (average from last year)
***regardless of roomate status**

Favorite Student Spots:

Kiev (Ukrainian/Slavic market)
The Pop Cakery (custom cookies and cakes)
Caprioni's Pizza
J. Gough's Tavern (historic tavern with origins in the Whiskey Rebellion)
The Waterfront (nearby open-air shopping center with big brands)

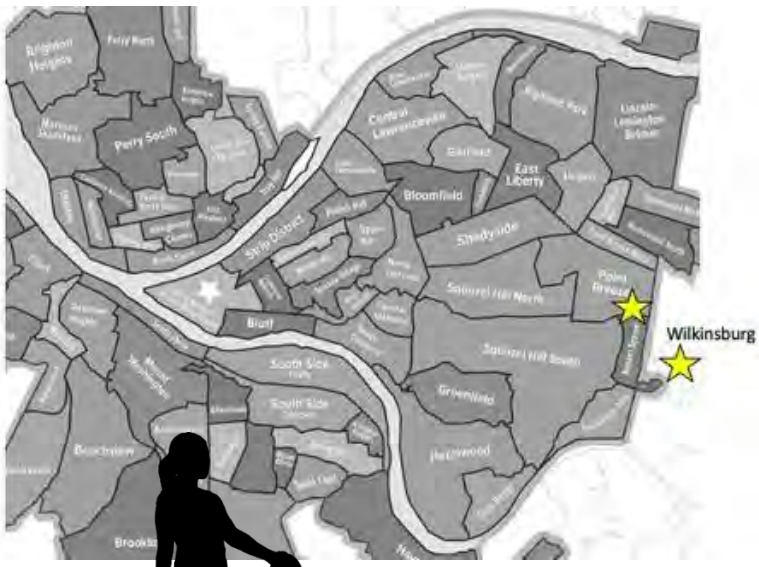


Students Describe Greenfield as

"quiet and peaceful"
"very residential"
"easy to have your own yard"

Regent Square & Wilkinsburg

Regent Square is a charming tree-lined community, giving it a small town feel with a city feeling. One of the best things going for Regent Square is Frick Park, a favorite spot to walk dogs, hike on the many paths, and play in the soccer fields and playgrounds. The business district on Braddock Ave teems with foot traffic and adds to the bustle of those making their way to coffee shops, cafés, bakeries, and yoga studios.



Average rent for 1BR apartment:
Regent Square: $997
Wilkinsburg: $1,043
(averages from last year)
***regardless of roomate status**

Students Describe Regent Square and Wilkinsburg as

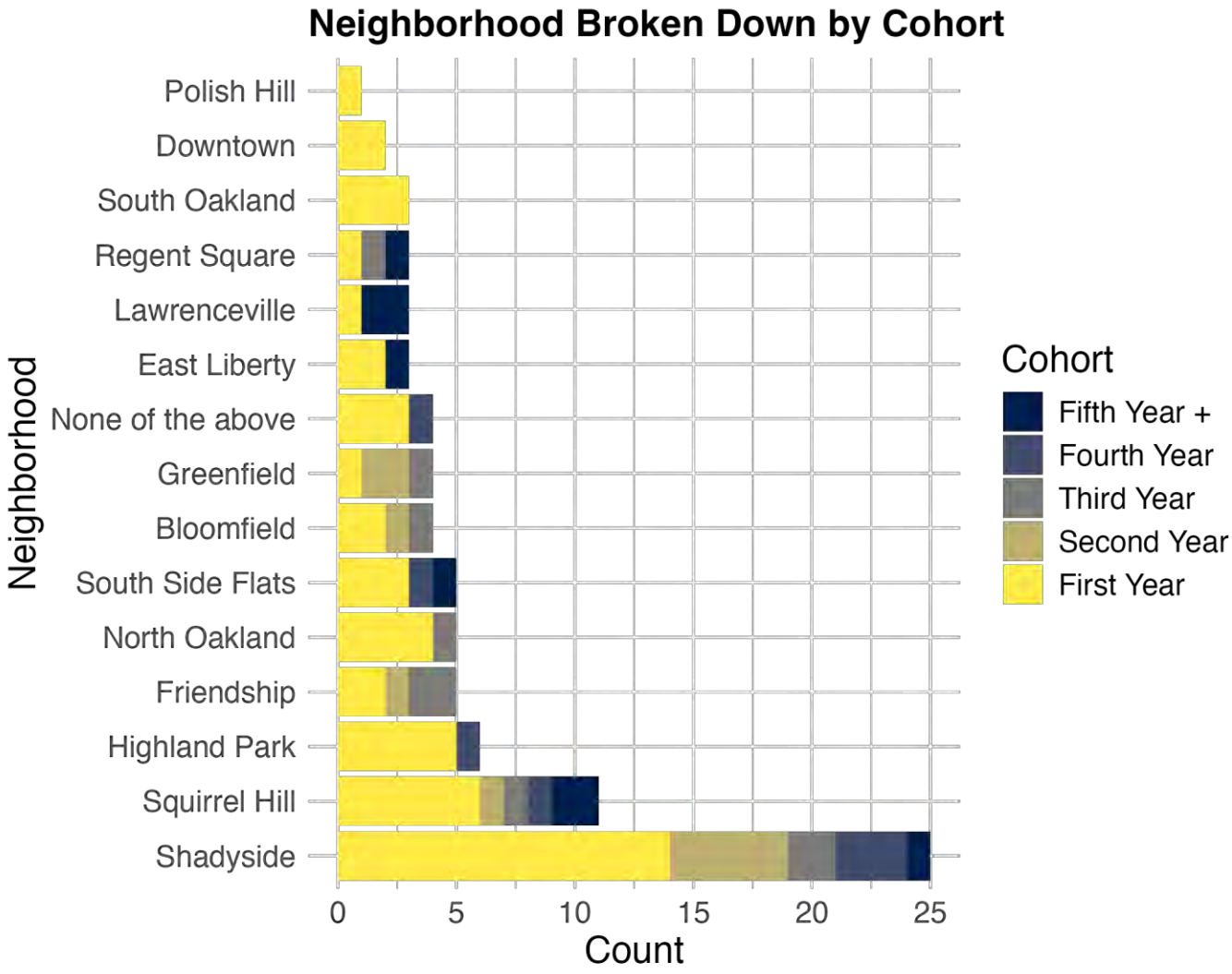
"outdoorsy"
"small-business oriented"
"full of young adult couples and families"

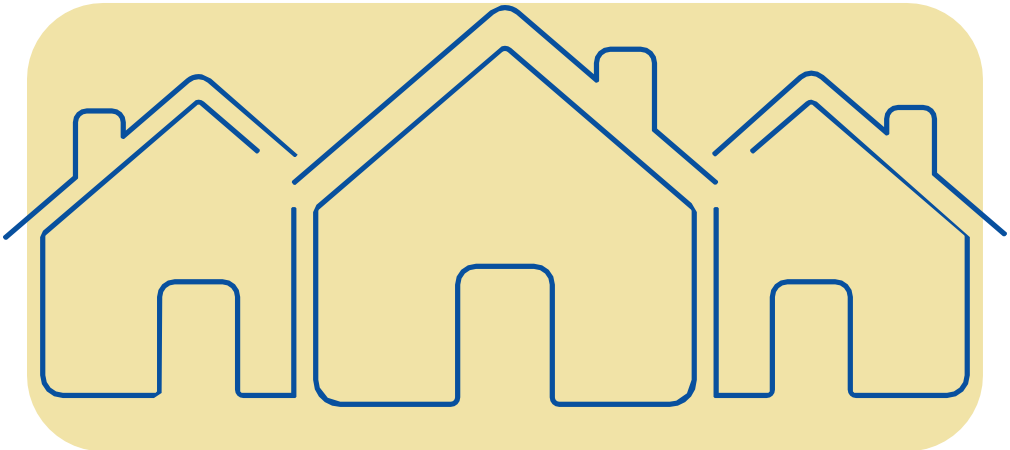
Favorite Student Spots:

Biddle's Escape (artisanal coffee and cafe)
Madeline Bakery and Bistro
D's Six Pax and Dogz (pizza, wings, and gourmet hot dogs)
BB&Bur Pastry Kitchen and Bakery
Frick Park (wooded trails, sports fields, and a dog park)

Popular Student Neighborhoods

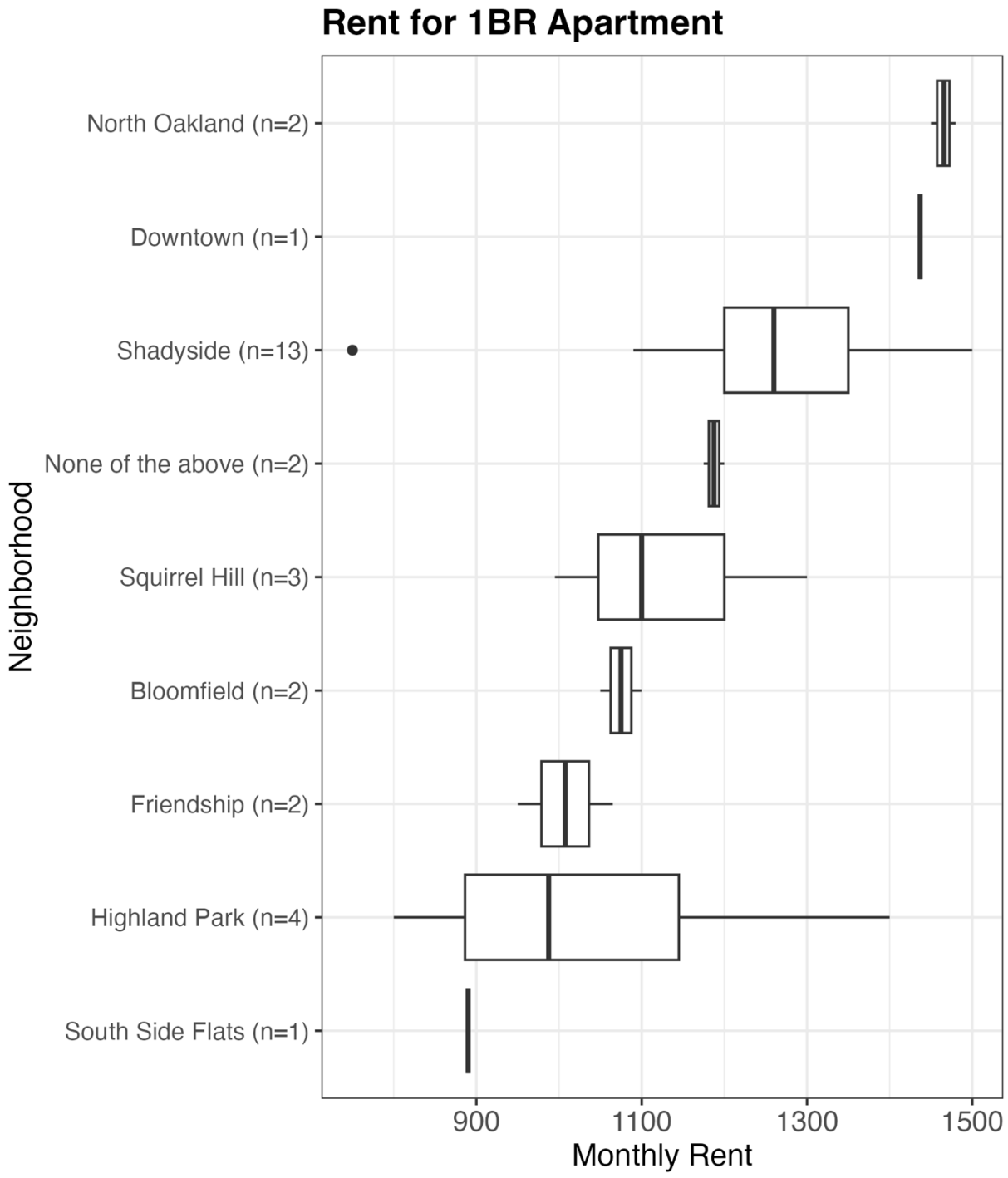
Shadyside and Bloomfield and the two most popular living locations for our students. Students from all cohorts choose to live here.





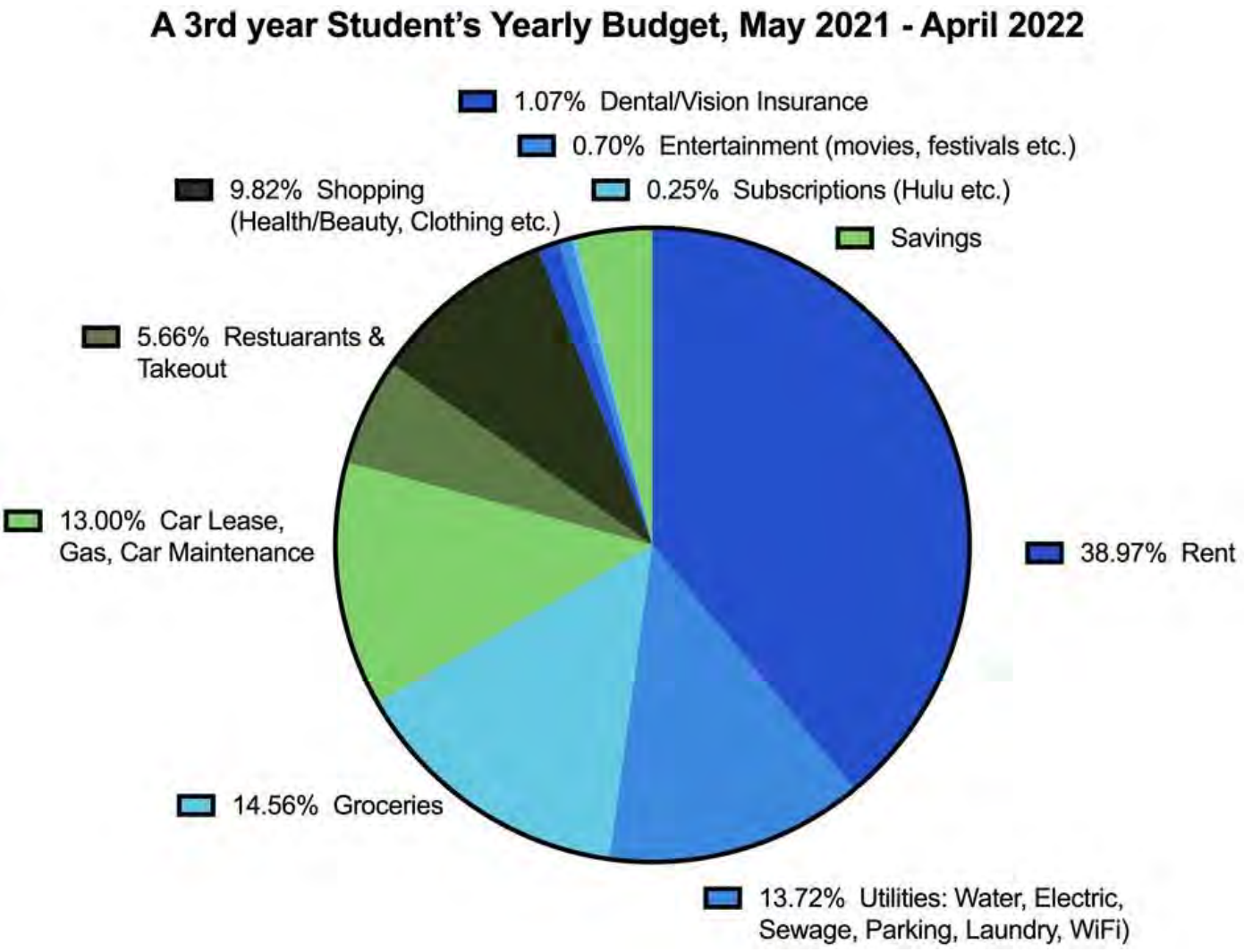
Budgeting

The different neighborhoods also differ in the amount they charge for rent. Shown below is the rent for 1-bedroom apartments in each of the different locations (square footage of the apartment was not accounted for). Box shows the interquartile range, with the median shown by the vertical line.



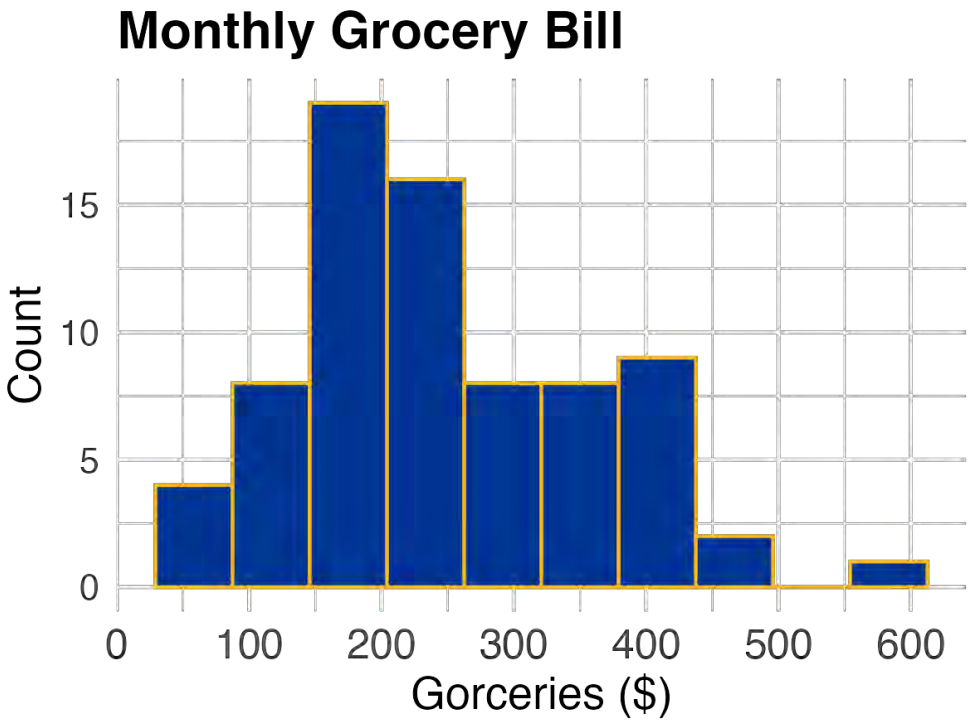
Budgeting

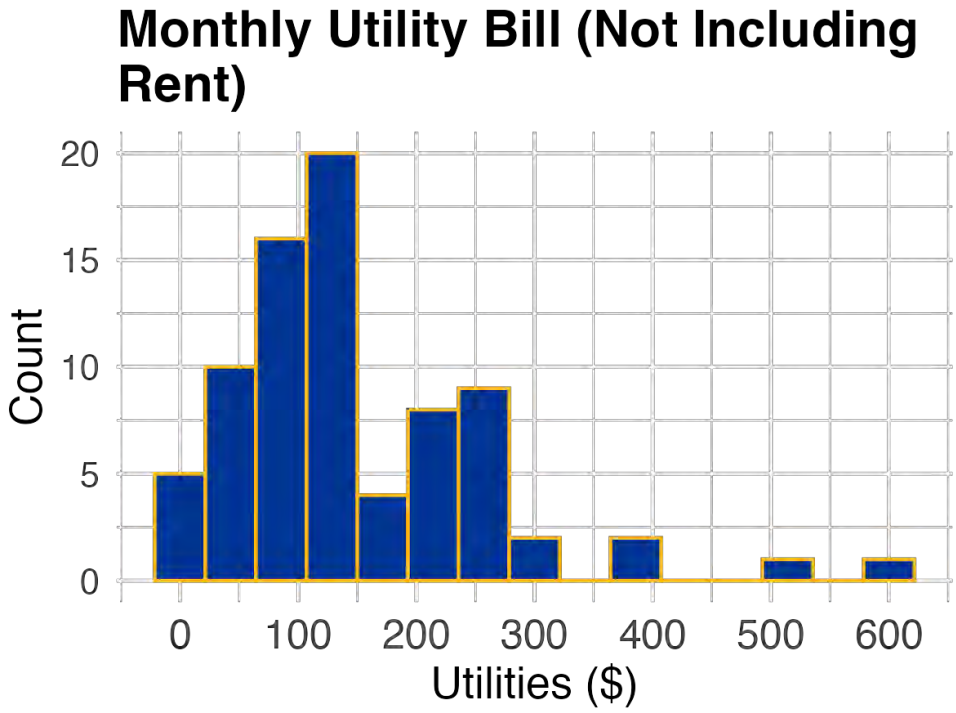
Rent takes up the majority of students' budgets, but typically students still find they can put a bit of money into their savings. Shown here is the budget of a single student over the course of a year (May 2021 to April 2022). This student lived alone in a 1-bedroom apartment in Shadyside.



Budgeting

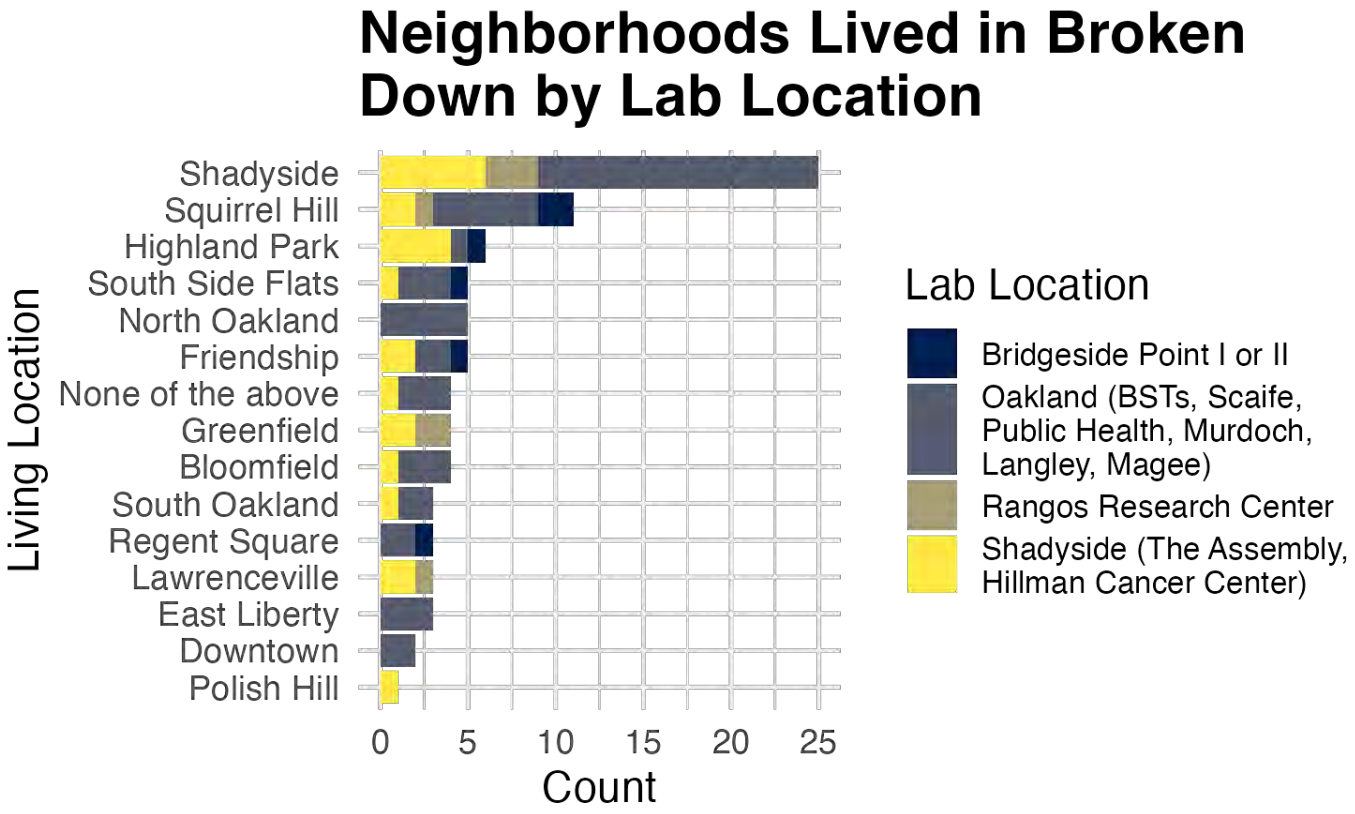
Some of the other biggest expenses are utilities and groceries. These graphs show how much students estimate to be spending in these categories in the past year.

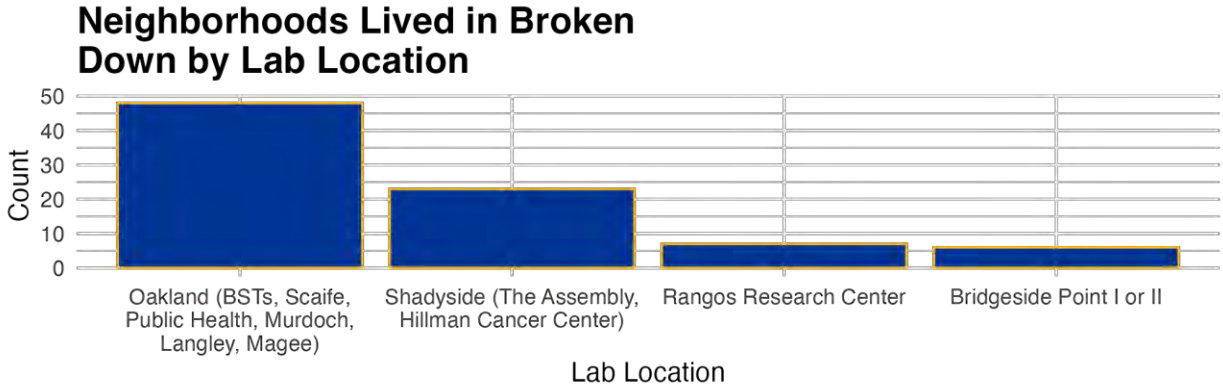




Transportation

Another important factor to consider when picking a neighborhood is the commute to lab that will be required. Most labs that students will choose to work in are located in Oakland, which includes the Biomedical Science Towers (BSTs), Scaife Hall, the School of Public Health, the Murdoch Building, Langley Hall, and Magee-Womens Research Institute. Lawrenceville is home to the Rangos Research Center at UPMC Children's Hospital. South Oakland houses Bridgeside Point 1 and Bridgeside Point 2 at Technology Drive. Finally, Shadyside is home to both The Assembly Building and the Hillman Cancer Center. Here is the correlation of neighborhoods and lab locations.





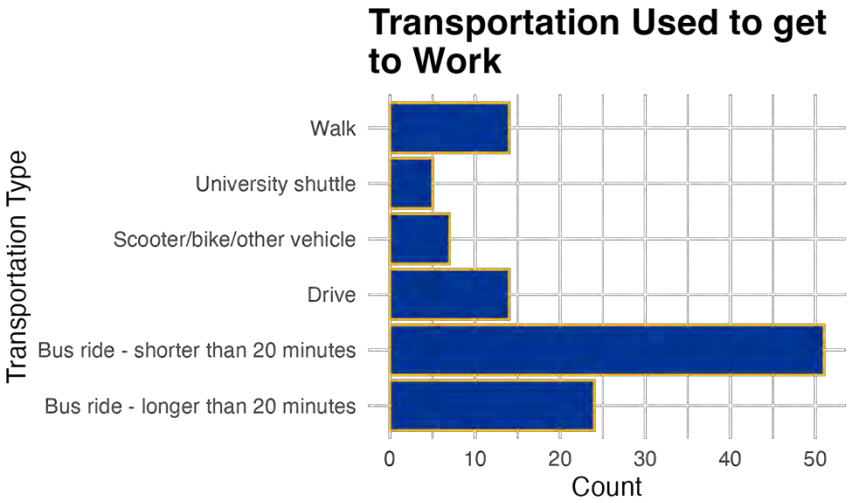
Transportation

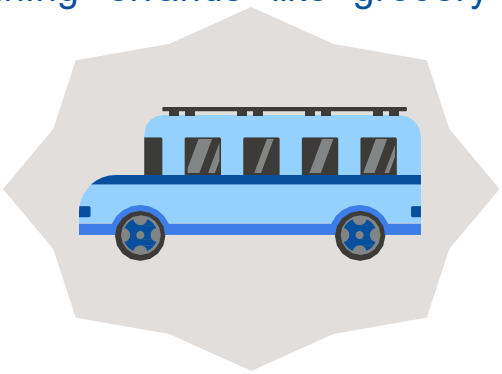
Despite being spread out across many neighborhoods, most students use public transportation to get to work. Buses are free with your Pitt student ID. More bus information can be found at https://www.rideprt.org/. Note that Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) was formerly known as Port Authority Transit (PAT). The most popular app for navigating the PRT is the Transit App (icon pictured here).

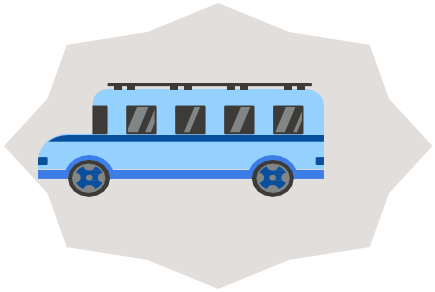
Pitt and UPMC also offer their own shuttle services that students can utilize. (https://www.pc.pitt.edu/buses-shuttles and https://apps.apple.com/us/app/upmc-shuttle/id1144986226).

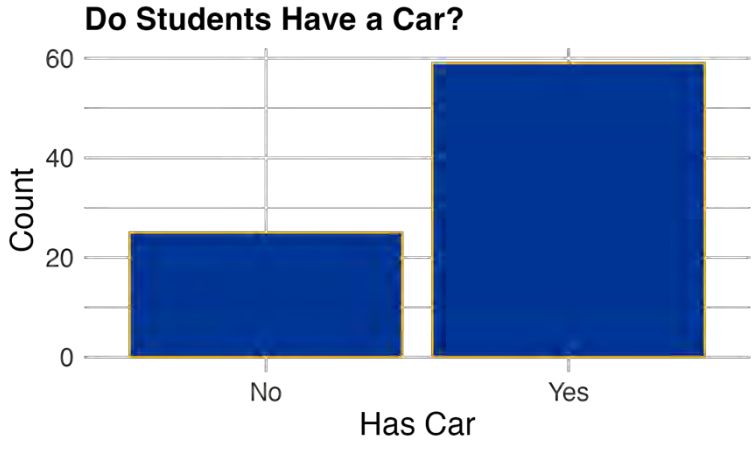
Additionally, bikes are available for rent throughout the city and rides less than 30 minutes are free for Pitt students (https://move-pgh.com/).

About half of our students own cars, although students don't commonly use cars for their work commute, as it is difficult and costly to park on campus. Cars can be helpful for weekends or for running errands like grocery shopping.









Lab Locations

Oakland

Labs:

Biomedical Science Towers (BSTs), Scaife Hall, the School of Public Health, the Murdoch Building, Langley Hall, and Magee-Womens Research Institute.

Pros:

- Majority of labs are here, so there is a community feel.
- Easy access to resource centers such as FLOW or microscopes.
- Most classes are held here, so you can save on travel time.
- Most bus lines pass through Oakland, making it convenient.
- Forbes Ave has many lunch and happy hour options.

Cons:

- Also home to central undergrad campus, so area/buses will get crowded.
- Some buildings are older.

Bus Lines:

58, 54, 61A, 61B, 61C, 61D, 67, 69, 81, 83, 71A, 71B, 71C, 71D, 75, 93, P3

Lab Locations

Lawrenceville

Labs: Rangos Research Center at UPMC Children's Hospital.

Pros:

- UPMC shuttles run between Rangos and Oakland.
- Nice, large labs in an open format.
- Access to core facilities.
- Children's Hospital cafeteria food is considered the best of the hospital cafeterias.
- Close to central Lawrenceville restaurants.

Cons:

- Commute to Oakland for class can be time consuming.

Bus Lines:

64, 54, 93, 88, 87, 86

Lab Locations

South Oakland

Labs: Bridgeside Point 1 and Bridgeside Point 2 at Technology Drive.

Pros:

- Beautiful river views and a lot of outside space to enjoy.
- Large, open concept labs

Cons:

- Probably the most isolated of the lab locations.
- Limited transportation options. Pitt shuttles serve this area but are not always reliable.
- No cafeterias/restaurants in the vicinity.

Bus Lines:

56, 57, 58

Lab Locations

Shadyside

Labs: The Assembly Building and the Hillman Cancer Center

Pros:

- The Assembly is the newest research building at the School of Medicine.
- State of the art labs in an open concept format.
- Lobby serves as a convenient meeting location.
- Many food choices nearby.

Cons:

- Commute to Oakland for classes can be time consuming.
- Shadyside buses get very crowded, especially when undergrads are in school.

Bus Lines:

54, 64, 71A, 71C, 83

Conclusions

We hope this packet was useful to you as you transition into graduate school at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. If you have any other questions or want more specific information, please reach out to the First Year Ambassador, the BGSA executive board, and they will help you get in touch with the proper resources.

You can contact the BGSA at: bgsa@pitt.edu.

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