



**Not So Bicycle Friendly**  
By Yun Hong

The city of Davis and the UC Davis campus have encouraged bicycle riding as a primary means of transportation. There are many bicycle-friendly amenities throughout the city and campus, such as wide bicycle lanes and special parking spaces. Even the official logo for the city is a bicycle.

One out of every five respondents had their bicycle stolen, and over 10% had their bicycle vandalized

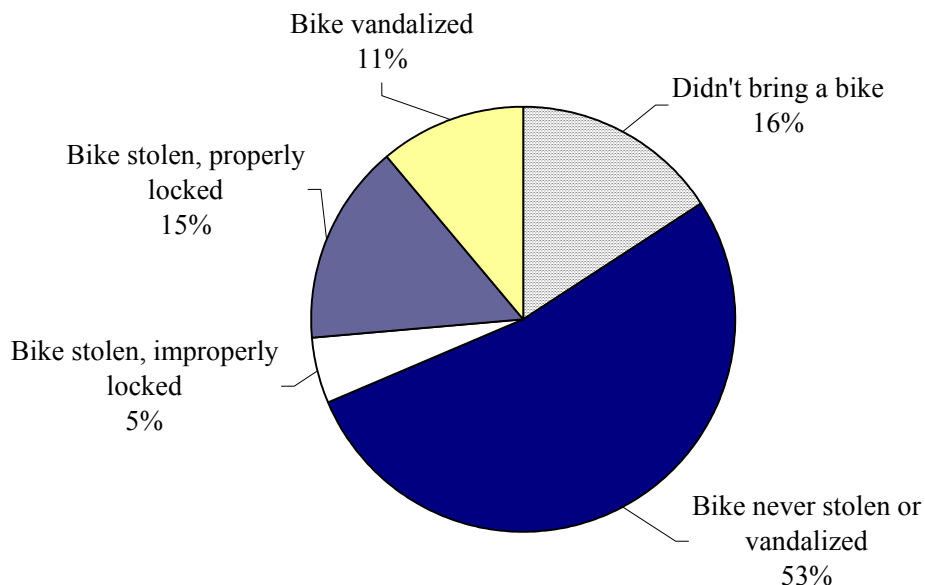
In a recent Quick Survey, SARI asked students about their experiences with bicycle theft and vandalism. The survey was available to all UC Davis undergraduate students on the My.UCDavis.edu web portal from April 17 through April 24 2004. Survey choices allowed a student to indicate if she had brought a bike to campus, whether the bicycle had been stolen or vandalized, whether the bicycle had been properly locked, and the estimate of damage incurred.

Of the 4006 students who responded, 84% brought a bicycle to UC Davis (Figure 1). Of all respondents, the majority (53%) never experienced bicycle theft or vandalism. However, 20% of all respondents reported a bicycle stolen (15% properly locked, 5% locked improperly) and additional 11% of the survey-takers said that their bicycle had been vandalized.



**Figure 1:**

**Which of the Following Describes Your Experience Regarding Your Bicycle at UC Davis?**



When results were broken down by sex, 25% of females and 40% of males claimed their bicycles had been stolen or vandalized.

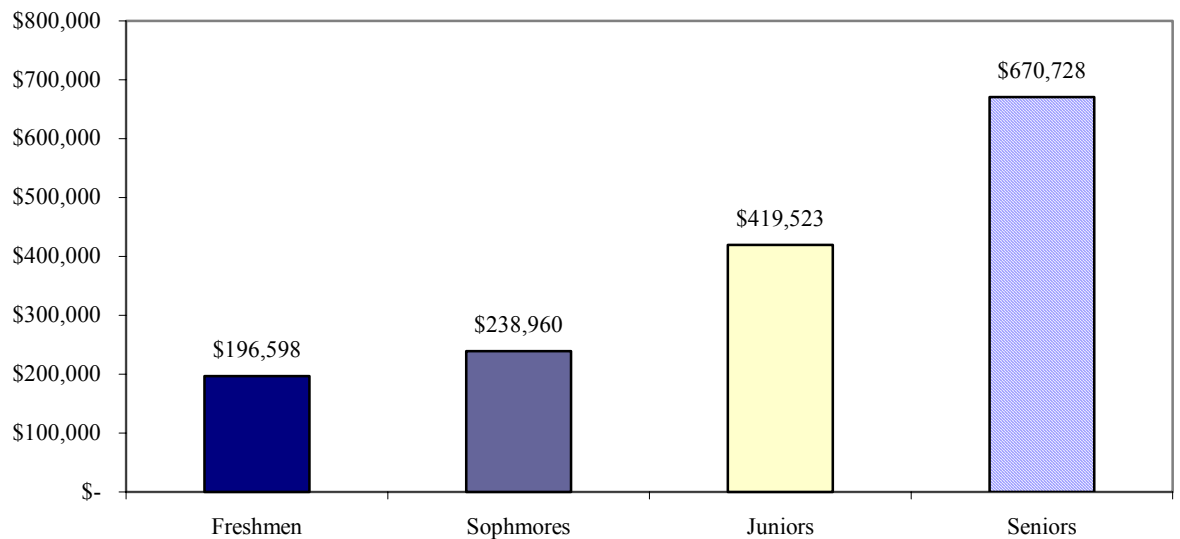
Of those who responded, 23% of all freshmen had experienced bicycle theft or vandalism, while seniors reported the highest number of incidences at 39%. Sophomores and juniors reported 30% and 31%, respectively. Notably, the theft and vandalism rate figures for freshmen are totals that have accumulated in only one year.

The average value of bicycles before damage or theft for freshmen was \$180, while for sophomores, juniors, and seniors the average values were \$182, \$236, and \$226, in that order. The total average value of bikes before theft or vandalism was \$211, ranging from \$3 to \$1500.

Nearly one quarter of freshmen have experienced theft or vandalism in the short time that they have been on campus

Using these survey results to calculate the big picture, the figures can be used to calculate the estimated loss for the entire undergraduate population. Doing so, the freshmen population as a whole would have experienced \$196,598 in damage since arriving at UC Davis, while the senior population as a whole would have experienced damage as high as \$670,728 since beginning their college careers at Davis. The surprisingly high rate of theft and damage experienced by freshmen may indicate that a large portion of bicycle incidences occur during students' first year on campus—when most students live in dorms.

**Figure 2: Estimated Loss by Theft or Vandalism for Entire Undergraduate Population**



It is alarming that roughly one out of three students who have taken the survey have experienced some sort of bicycle theft or vandalism while attending Davis. Although crimes involving bicycles might appear trivial compared to car thefts or other high profile crimes, the dollar value of bicycle theft and damage is very high—over \$650,000 in total each year.