

Zero Waste Team

Stakeholder: Kikei Wong (UCLA Zero Waste Manager)

Team leads: Jinsuh Jung-Aum & Taylor Sieverling

Team members: Hennessy Martinez, Mohona Sen,
& Madeline Zhang



Introduction

Policy Background

2022 UCLA Sustainability Plan Goals **Zero Waste**

By April, 2024: Reduce waste generation

By April, 2025: Divert 90% municipal solid waste from landfill

(UCLA, 2022)



Introduction

Research Questions

What Contamination Trends Exist within UCLA's
On-Campus Centralized Tri-Stream Waste System?

How do they arise, and how may they be mitigated?

Introduction

- 1. Address misconceptions and barriers**
- 2. Develop initiatives and resources**
- 3. Broaden sustainability impact**

Purpose of Study



Introduction

Primary Variables

1. Informational Interviews

- Challenges & successes

2. Visual Waste Audits

- Relative fullness & contamination
- Commonly contaminated items

3. Student Survey

- Sorting knowledge & misconceptions
- Recommendations for waste management



Methods

Visual Waste Audits & Informational Interviews

Three distinct buildings: Public Affairs, Kaplan, Boelter

- Diverse cross-section

Building manager interviews (winter)

- Feedback on initiatives and unique waste

Visual audits (winter & spring)

- Consistent auditors
- Photographed bins
- Quantified fullness and contamination



Methods

Student Survey

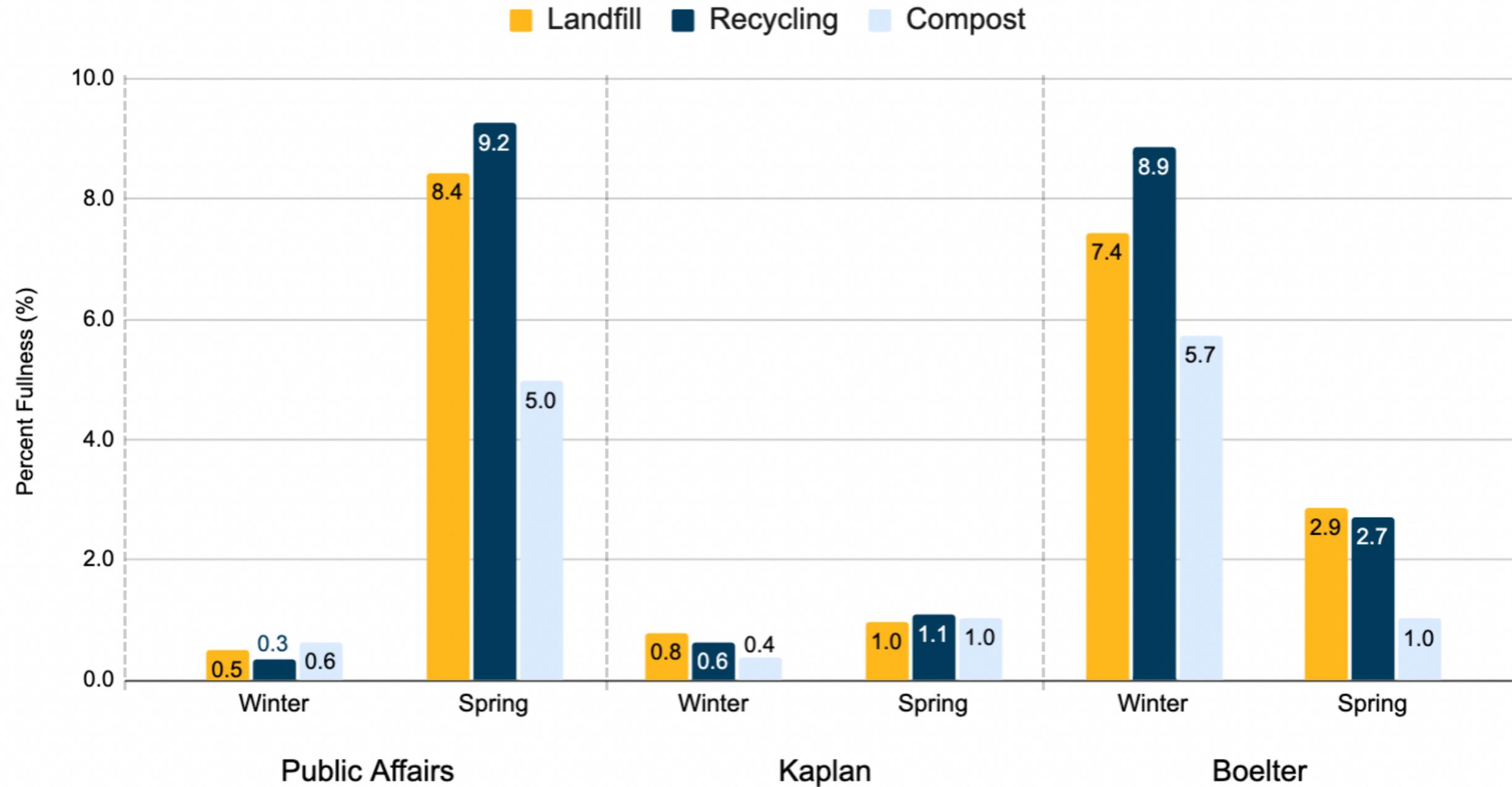
Questions:

- Demographics
- Sorting knowledge & behaviors
- Feedback on proposed ideas
- Further suggestions

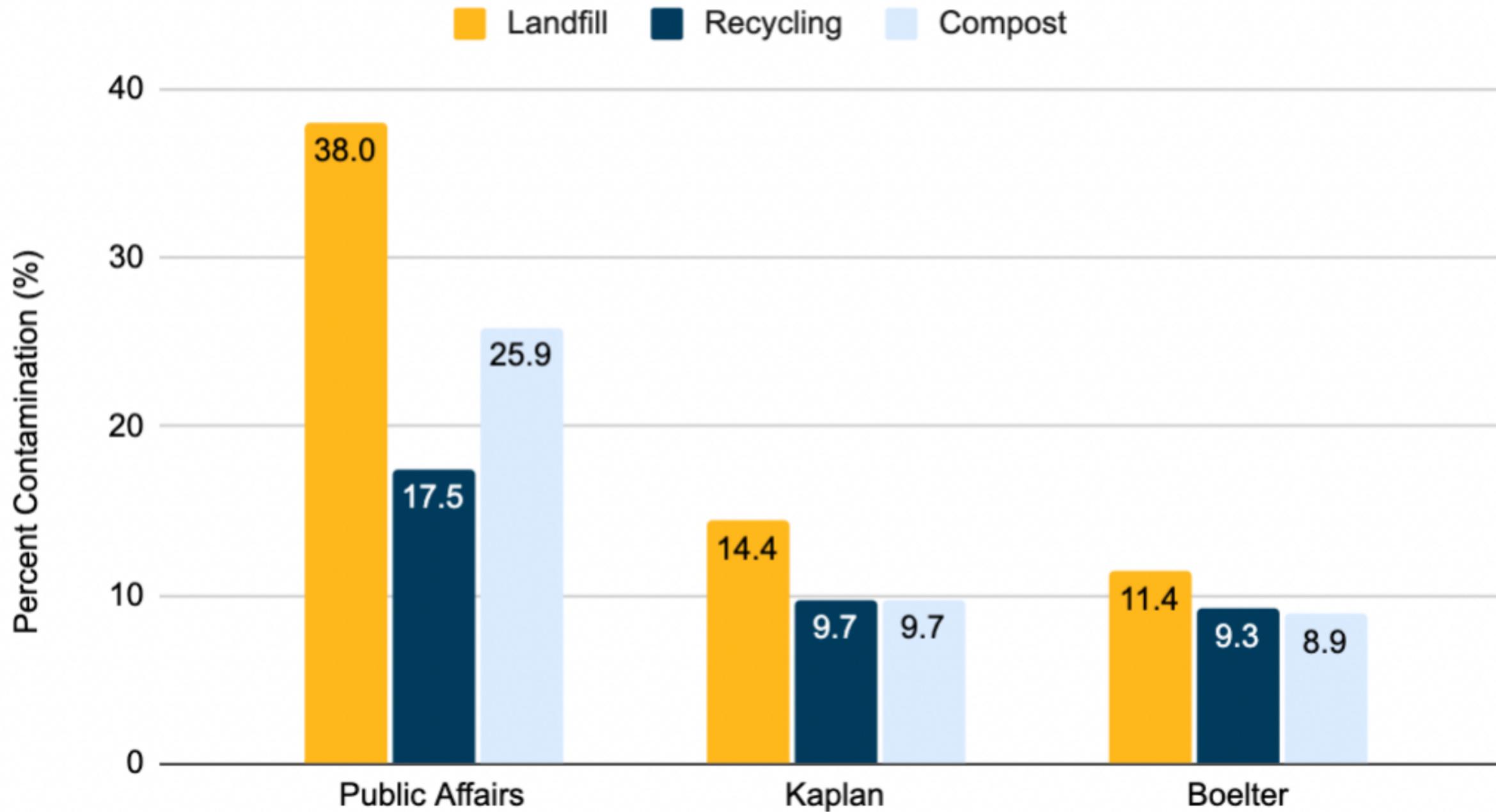
Logistics:

- Anonymous Google form
- Incentivized with zero waste prizes
- 119 respondents
- Sent to a diverse array of orgs/clubs

Average Percent Bin Fullness for the 2021-2022 Academic Year



Average Percent Contamination Per Waste Stream



Results

Common Contaminant

On average, ***soiled paper products*** represented

- **80%** of the contamination in the **landfill**
- **50%** of the contamination in the **recycling**



What has Kept Individuals from Sorting their Waste at UCLA:

Not enough time

5.9%

Sorting was not considered

10.2%

Not applicable, always sorted

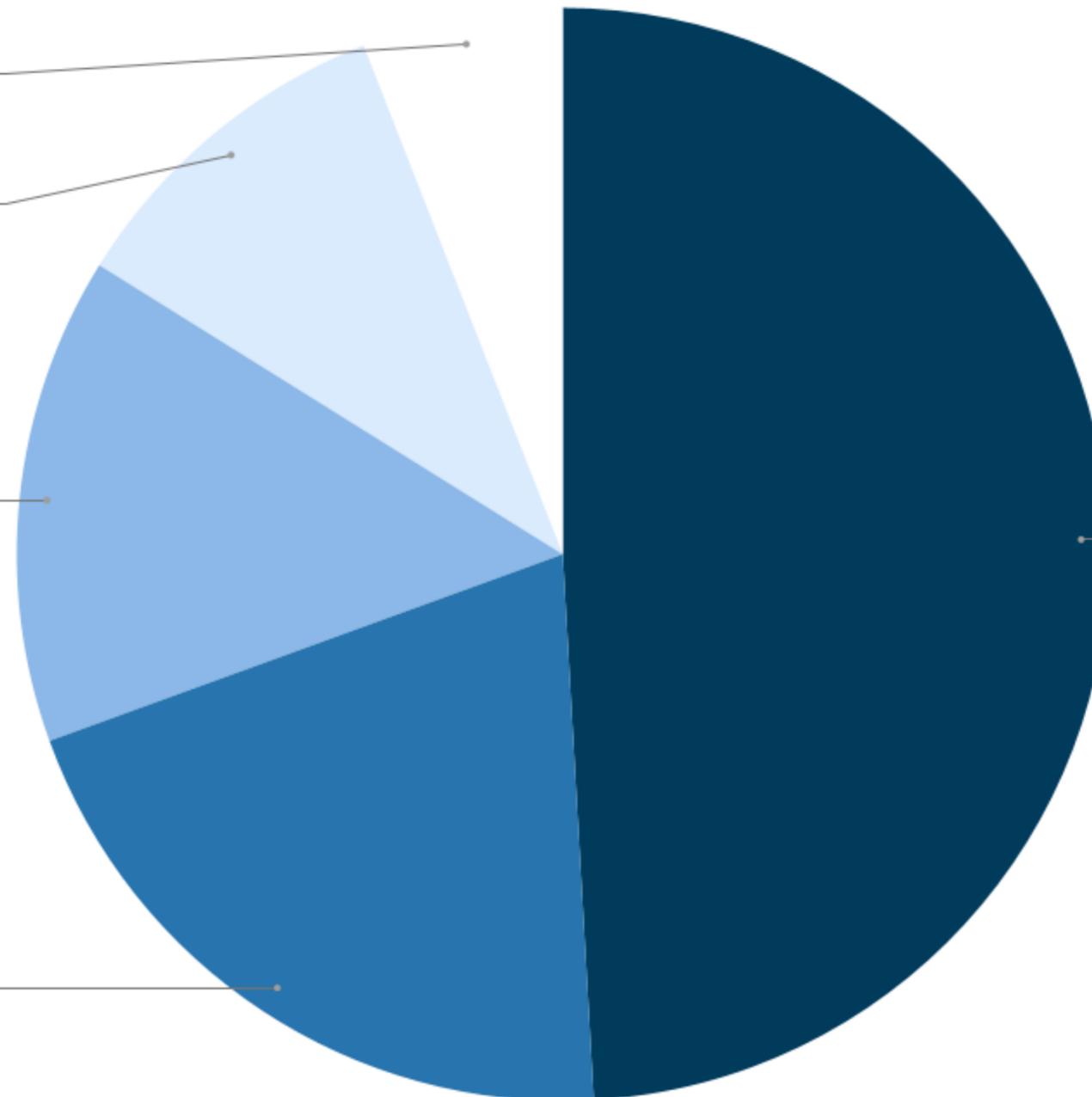
14.4%

Correct bin was not available

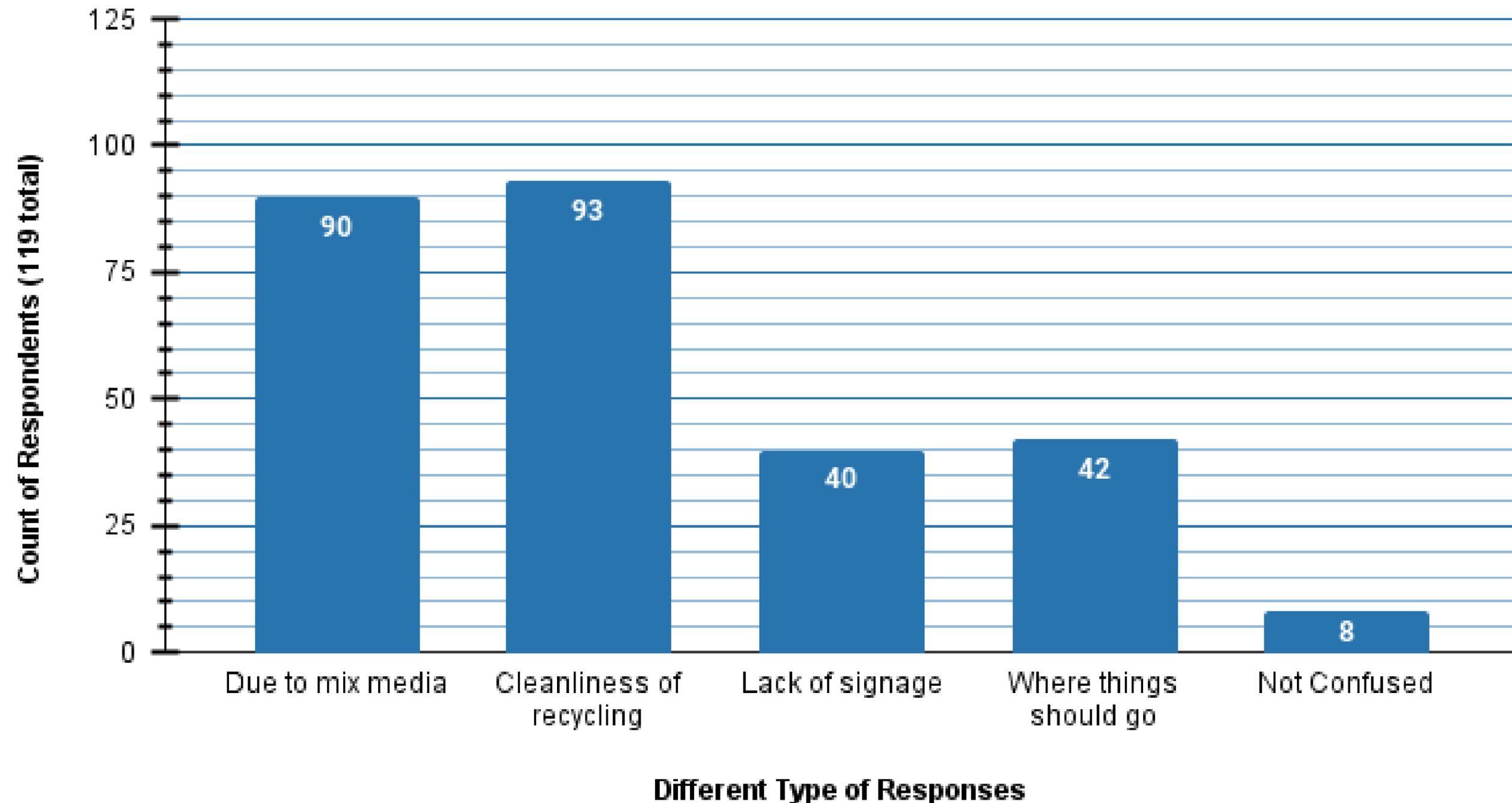
20.4%

Unsure how to sort item

49.1%



What Confuses People While Sorting:



Results

Recycling Misconceptions

Of all student respondents,

- **14.3%** indicated that **styrofoam** should be recycled
- **39.5%** indicated that **plastic film** should be recycled
- **61.3%** indicated that **plastic cutlery** should be recycled

All of these items belong in the **landfill**



Results

Composting Misconceptions

Of all student respondents,

- 47% were unaware that ***animal-based foods*** are compostable
- 78% incorrectly said ***bioplastics*** are compostable

Results

Call for Change

Of all student respondents,

- **69.7%** wanted *improved signage*
- **69.7%** wanted more free on-campus *zero waste resources*
- **58%** wanted a *sustainability section* added to the UCLA Mobile and/or the UCLA Housing apps

Results

Scannable QR Code for Bins

- **Goal:** Increase access to sorting information and zero waste initiatives
- **Progress:**
 - Proposed design



QR Code

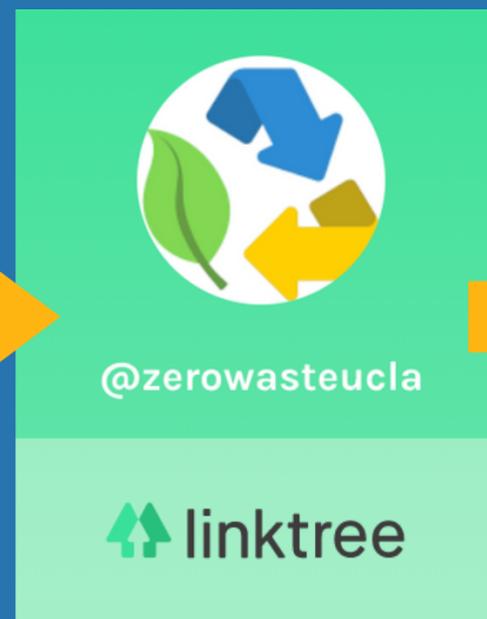
NOT SURE HOW TO SORT YOUR WASTE?



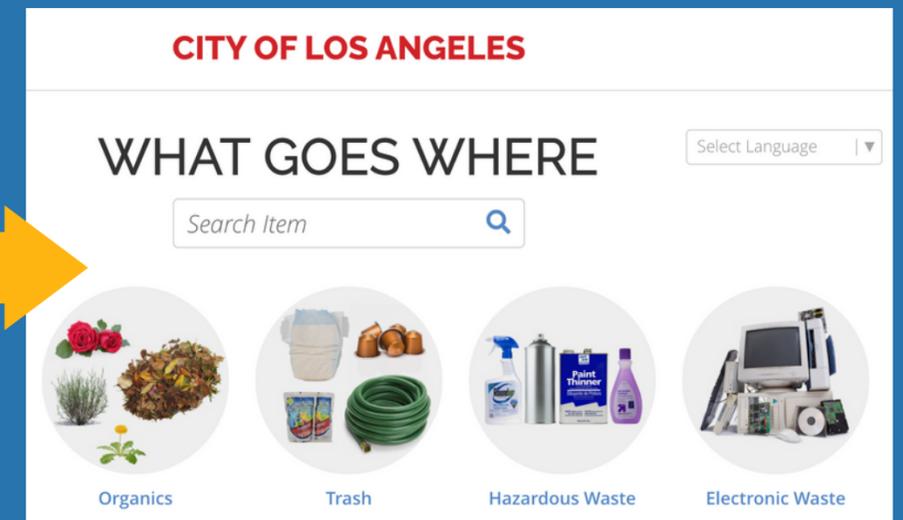
SCAN the QR Code for a waste sorting guide and zero waste info!

Visit sustain.ucla.edu to learn more about sustainability at UCLA.

Linktree



Athens Website



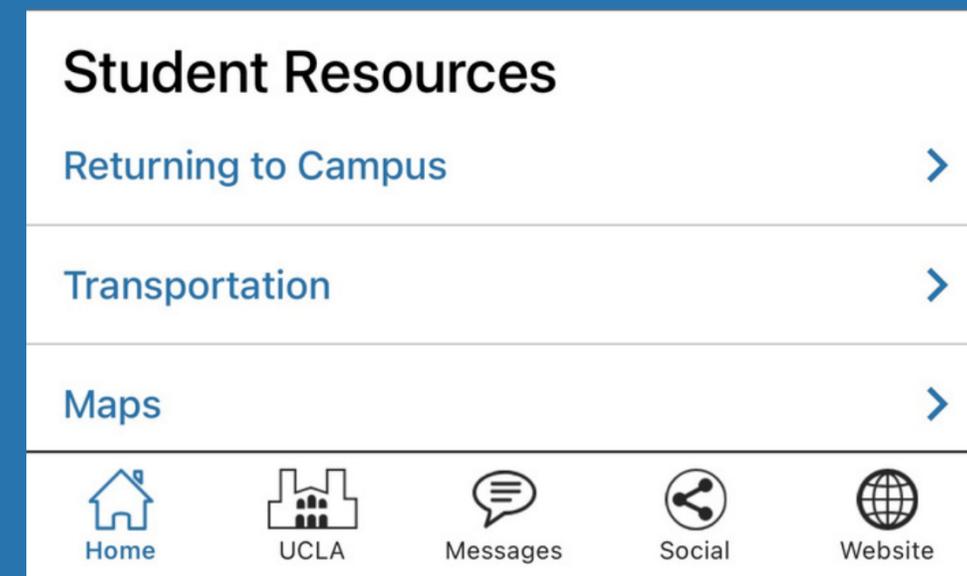
Results

UCLA Mobile / UCLA Housing Apps

- **Goal:** Increase access to sustainability information and resources
- **Progress:**
 - Proposed general design
 - Pitching idea to **UCLA Mobile Steering** committee on 6/01



New
"Sustainability"
section



Results

- **Goal:** Clarify sorting misconceptions
- **Progress:**
 - 7 designs created
 - Being placed throughout Powell Library on 5/27

Table Tents



Results

New Student Orientation Video

- **Goal:** Explain proper waste sorting methods for UCLA's tri-stream system & address misconceptions
- **Progress:**
 - Skit on sorting different waste, particularly confusing items
 - Section on suggested single-use swaps



Significance

1. Identified...

- Items frequently contributing to contamination
- Misconceptions about waste sorting

2. Promoted better waste sorting practices via...

- Informational table tents
- Waste sorting video
- Recommendations

Recommendations

Stakeholder

- QR Code sticker on bins
- Sustainability section on UCLA Mobile app

Future SAR teams

- Promote recycling, reusing, and proper sorting via:
 - Engagement initiatives for students + faculty
 - Educational tools (ex. UCLA Housing app)
 - On-campus resources



Acknowledgements

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UCLA Mobile contact: **Rosemary Rocchio**

Thank You!



References

UCLA. (2022). UCLA Sustainability Plan. UCLA Sustainability. Retrieved May 14, 2022, from <https://www.sustain.ucla.edu/plan/>