Addressing Food and Housing Insecurity in Higher Education

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University of Maryland, College Park
Introductions

• Denise Bevly, DrPH
  – Director, Student Wellness & Basic Needs Initiative
    – The CSU is the largest public 4-year higher education system in the country: 23 campuses & 480,000+ students. More than 50% of CSU students are students of color, 1/3 of undergrads are the 1st in their family to go to college, and 49% are Pell grant recipients. Recently released the most comprehensive study of student basic needs within a 4-year public higher education system.

• Devon Payne-Sturges, DrPH
  – Assistant Professor, School of Public Health University of Maryland
    – Recently conducted and published the first ever study on food insecurity as a determinant of poor health and academic outcomes among UMD College Park undergraduate students. UMD College Park is Maryland's flagship university and one of the nation's preeminent public research universities. Our 30,000 undergraduate student body is one the most diverse in the country (43% ethnic/racial minority).
Agenda

• Background / Current Research
• Systems Framework
• Campus Examples
• Interactive Exercise
• Next Steps – Research
• Next Steps – Policy & Practice
• Q&A & Discussion
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“I think people feel that if students can afford to attend college they can afford food and living expenses. Often people don’t realize the amount of debt students take on to be in college, that they work three jobs and still have difficulty making ends meet.”

-Krista Swahn, Director of Student Activities & Community Service at Johnson State College in Virginia
More college students battle hunger as education and living costs rise

New Worry for College Students: Food Insecurity
It's not just the Freshman 15: college students' eating issues also include malnutrition

By Alexandra Sifferlin @acsifferlin | Jan. 28, 2014

The hunger crisis in America’s universities

08/18/14 12:33 AM – UPDATED 09/03/14 04:59 PM

By Ned Resnikoff
The Ph.D. Now Comes With Food Stamps

Food scholarships could help more students finish college

The hidden crisis on college campuses: Many students don’t have enough to eat
College Park, MD -- Farhan Ahmed, 20, a sophomore majoring in computer science, lives off campus and started coming in the past two months to the University of Maryland Campus Pantry, where he can pick out ten food items per visit. A reusable tote bag is provided to carry the food. The Campus Pantry offers food staples to students, faculty and staff in need.
March 12, 2016 - (Amy Davis / Baltimore Sun)
What is Food Insecurity?

• Food insecurity is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as “limited or uncertain availability of and ability to acquire nutritionally adequate and safe food due to a lack of money or other resources.”

How is Food Insecurity Measured?

- USDA Household Food Security Survey Module – 18 Items
- USDA Adult Food Security Survey Module – 10 Items
- USDA Short Form of the Food Security Survey Module – 6 Items

What are Consequences of Food Insecurity?

- Lower academic achievement
- Poorer self-rated health
- Nutritional deficiencies
- Chronic disease e.g. diabetes and obesity
Prevalence of FI Among College Students – Literature Review

• Peer-reviewed studies
  – 33% average FI
  – 14% - 59% range FI

• Gray literature
  – 36% average FI
  – 12% - 56% range FI

12.3 % of U.S. households were food insecure at some time during 2016.

More likely to be food insecure if:

- Students of color
- Younger students
- Students with children
- Financially independent
Health and Academic Outcomes

Food insecurity was associated with:

- Lower overall self-reported health
- Poorer eating behaviors (low fruit and veggie)
- Lower GPA
- Difficulty concentrating in class
- Higher rates of withdrawing from class or the institution
2015 UMD Food Insecurity Pilot Study

- 15% undergrads food insecure
- 16% at risk for food insecurity
- 69% food secure!
- At risk or FI more likely
  - AA, API, Hispanic
  - Employed while in school
  - Financially independent
  - Report housing instability
- Consequences
  - Lower GPAs
  - Higher depression symptoms
  - Lower self-rated health

2017 UMD Food Access and Well-Being Study

- 4,901 undergraduate and graduate UMD students
- 20% reported that they were food insecure
- FI - higher levels of distress, anxiety, depression, anger, and loneliness
- FI - not being able to concentrate in class, failing an assignment or exam, missing a class, failing or withdrawing from a class, and planning to withdraw from the University.
Basic Needs

- **Food Insecurity**
  - 43% (2-year institutions)
  - 35% (4-year institutions)

- **Housing Insecurity**
  - 46% (2-year institutions)
  - 36% (4-year institutions)

http://wihopelab.com/
Defining Basic Needs

Food Security
(USDA ERS, 2015)

High food security: no reported indications of food access problems or limitations.

Marginal food security: one or two reported indications—typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake.

Low food security: reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake.

Very low food security: Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.
Defining Basic Needs

Homelessness
(The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, Subtitle B of Title VII)

Homelessness defined as a lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

- Sharing the housing of others due or “couch surfing”
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, camping grounds
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Living in a public or private place not designed for humans to live
- Living in cars, parks, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or a similar setting
CSU Comprehensive Study of Students’ Basic Needs

Quantitative: 27,805 students (5.8%)
Qualitative: 213 students

Prevalence
Food Insecurity
41.6% of CSU STUDENTS reported food insecurity
*In the last 30 days

Homelessness
10.9% of CSU STUDENTS report being homeless
*In the last 12 months

Ref: www.calstate.edu/basicneeds
Challenges for Meeting Basic Needs

- Most students who were food insecure did not report non-financial reasons
- 70.4% No extra money
- 26.6% Struggle to buy groceries due to budget
- 17.3% Confusion with bills

Ref: [www.calstate.edu/basicneeds](http://www.calstate.edu/basicneeds)
SNAP / CalFresh

- **4.9%** reported that they were currently enrolled in the CalFresh program
- **37.3%** reported they thought they could qualify with the CalFresh
- Conservative estimate suggests **27.4%** of CSU students that could qualify for CalFresh under both state and federal criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Student CalFresh Eligibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CalFresh student work rule exemptions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does Not Meet Criteria</td>
<td>62.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meets Criteria</td>
<td>37.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SNAP federal income guidelines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Does Not Meet Criteria</td>
<td>31.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meets Criteria</td>
<td>68.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Meets both state and federal criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Likely Not Eligible</td>
<td>72.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Likely Eligible</td>
<td>27.4</td>
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Ref: [www.calstate.edu/basicneeds](http://www.calstate.edu/basicneeds)
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- **Systems Framework**
- Campus Examples
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The California State University
GRADUATION INITIATIVE 2025

- Student Engagement and Wellbeing
- Financial Support
- Data-Driven Decision Making
- Administrative Barriers
- Academic Preparation
- Enrollment Management
- Degree Completion
STUDENT SUCCESS

- Quality Education
- Physical Health
- Housing
- Mental Well-Being
- Sense of Belonging
- Food
CSU Basic Needs Initiative Framework

• Immediate Needs
• Growth
• Scale
• Collaboration
• Sustainable Impact
Immediate Needs

- Emergency housing programs
- Case manager models
- Campus website with resources
- Food pantry/distribution program
Growth

• “Hunger-Free Campus” Designation
  - SB 85
    - Food pantry
    - Meal-sharing program
    - CalFresh point of contact
Scale

- CSU Chico Center for Healthy Communities
- First-ever higher education CalFresh Outreach effort
- Increase awareness & help students apply for CalFresh
Collaboration

• Higher education alliance
• CSSA & CSU Alumni Council
• Basic Needs Conference
• Federal & state stakeholders
Sustainability

- Embedding basic needs resources into existing campus systems
- Developing strategies for long-term impact
- Expanding the continuum of care
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After hearing about hunger on campuses, students and administrators at West Virginia U. started the Rack, a food bank for students, in 2010. Joseph Janiczak (left) and Nick Persichetti, both juniors, stock up on frozen meat. The Chronicle of Higher Education 9/10/2012
Since 2014, UMD Campus Pantry has worked to alleviate food insecurity on campus, here is our impact:

Total Number of Clients*: 1225
Total Number of Visits: 3921
Unique Visits Per Week: 69

*total client count includes students, faculty, and staff

Student Clients by Academic Class (Fall 2017)

- Freshman: 3%
- Sophomore: 12%
- Junior: 22%
- Senior: 25%
- Graduate: 31%
- Undergraduate (unspecified): 7%
Campus Examples

- **Bakersfield**: Creating a "Basic Needs Hub"
- **Chico**: Attracted more than $40k in support
- **Humboldt, Long Beach, Pomona, San Francisco & San José**: EBT on campus
- **San Marcos**: *Bite-out Hunger campaign to raise awareness*
- **Northridge**: Food pantry received 6787 pounds of donated food
Campus Examples

- **San Luis Obispo**: Food pantry saw 566 unique students (16-17)
- **Sacramento**: Food pantry served more than 4339 transactions
- **Fresno**: The Meal Sharing program collected 465 meal certificates
- **San Diego**: Creation of ECRT (Economic Crisis Response Team)
- **Stanislaus**: On-campus food provider has donated $7,000
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Interactive Exercise

Strategic Planning: Get in groups of 3 – 5 to discuss the handout
Strategic Planning

Use this document to write-down and share thoughts that can be used to advance basic needs programming on your campus. Think about formulating a plan of implementation for your campus that is specific to one or more areas that needs development or improvement (i.e., food insecurity, housing insecurity, crisis intervention, etc.). Be encouraged to use SMART objectives while discussing your ideas so that impact can be measured, evaluated, and used for future progress.

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<tr>
<td><strong>1. SMART Objectives/Outcomes? (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-bound)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: Creating a food pantry [consistent food distribution program] that is open to serving students without an on-campus meal plan by Winter 2019.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Who/What Campus Partners need/should be involved?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: VP of Student Affairs; Student leaders; Faculty; Local food bank</td>
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<td><strong>3. Any Potential Barriers or Hurdles?</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Example: Funding; Getting buy-in from administration; Space</td>
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<td><strong>4. Budget Needs?</strong></td>
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<td>Example: Seed money to rent and renovate an old storage closet; fund to purchase “swag”...</td>
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Interactive Exercise

So…. Let’s Chat!
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Next Steps - Research

- Identify and use consistent set of metrics
- Evaluate multiple dimensions of academic and health outcomes
- Geographic variation
- Include the graduate students
- Larger representative sample
- Longitudinal studies


The University of Maryland's Campus Pantry collects food donations and provides an emergency source of food for at-risk staff, students and faculty. (File Photo/The Diamondback) 9/22/2016
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Next Steps - Policy

California’s 2018 College Hunger Agenda

- **Hunger Free College Campus Funding – Budget Request**
  - Additional money for colleges certified Hunger Free
- **AB 1894** (Weber) CalFresh, EBT & Restaurant Meals at all CSUs
- **AB 2297** (Arambula) CalFresh benefit increase
- **SB 1275** (Stern) Plan to End College Hunger (PACH)

2018 Federal College Hunger Agenda

- **H.R. 1276** (Adams) – Closing the Meal Gap
- **H.R. 3875** (Lawson) – College Student Hunger Act
- **H.R. 3577** (Costa) – SNAP Employment & Training
Next Steps - Policy

California’s 2018 College Homelessness Agenda
- AB 2784 (Caballero) Emergency Student Housing Loan Program
- SB 918 (Weiner) Homeless Youth Act of 2018

2018 Federal College Homelessness Agenda
- H.R. 3740 (Murray) – Higher Education Access and Success for Homeless and Foster Youth
  - An unaccompanied homeless youth’s status does not need to be re-determined each year
  - Financial Aid Administrators (FAAs) must accept the determination of homelessness from
    an authorized entity - A FAA’s disagreement with a determination is not considered
    conflicting information
- H.R. 1511 (Stivers) - HUD Homeless Assistance Reform: Homeless Children and Youth Act
  - Amends HUD’s definition of homelessness to include children and youth verified as
    homeless by school liaisons, RHYA programs, Head Start, Health Care for the Homeless
    programs, etc.
Next Steps - Practice

- Use systems already in place to start institutionalizing programs
- Raise faculty & staff awareness
- De-stigmatization campaign
- Mental health & housing
- Collaborate to continue looking for resources/funding for this work
- Targeted marketing to 1st generation, African-American, and Latino students
Thank you so much for donating. Living paycheck to paycheck is hard!
Thank You

From the bottom of my heart/stomach thank you!! You are really giving people a chance to succeed!!.
Contact Information

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