Student Basic Needs Security at Contra Costa College

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BACKGROUND

Basic needs security efforts at the national, statewide, and local level.

- The HOPE Center for College, Community, and Justice. (December 2018). #RealCollege Annotated Bibliography: Basic Needs Insecurity Among College Students.


  - Snider, M. (April 8, 2019). Disparities in food and housing run high - Thirty percent of Peralta Students homelessness, according to survey. Laney Tower.

- The HOPE Center for College, Community, and Justice. (March 2019). California Community Colleges #RealCollege Survey.
Think back to a time in your life when... OR Imagine what it is like to be....

- Worried about where your next meal is coming from.
- Concerned about how you will pay for rent/utilities.
- Uncertain of where you were going to live.
Raise Your Hand If.....

You’ve ever had a student in your class whose personal circumstances have impacted their ability to:

- Complete an assignment
- Pass an exam
- Succeed in your course
What is Basic Needs Insecurity?

**Food insecurity:** Accessing sufficient, affordable, nutritious foods.

- Having very limited amounts of food.
- Not having meals.
- Poor quality of food.

**Housing Insecurity & Homelessness:** Securing regular, safe, affordable housing.

- Inability to pay for cost of housing (rent/utilities).
- Temporarily living with relative/friend or “couch surfing”.
- Sleeping in a shelter, hotel, or automobile.
- Other spaces not meant for human habitation.

(Source: US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA); McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act; Crutchfield & Maguire, 2017; Hope Center for College, Community and Justice)
Roughly, 3 in 4 CCC student respondents reported experiencing at least one of these forms of basic needs insecurity in the past year (77%).

* Invitations to complete the questionnaire were sent by email to approximately 6,700 students [*FALL 2018*] and 668 students participated.

(Source: 2018 #REALCOLLEGE SURVEY SCHOOL REPORT FOR CONTRA COSTA COLLEGE, Hope Center for Community, Community and Justice, April 2019)
Half of student respondents were food insecure in the prior 30 days (52%).

Roughly, 2/3 of student respondents were housing insecure in the previous year (66%).

Roughly, 1 in 5 Contra Costa College student respondents reported being homeless in the past year (22%).

(Source: 2018 #REALCOLLEGE SURVEY SCHOOL REPORT FOR CONTRA COSTA COLLEGE, Hope Center for Community, Community and Justice, April 2019)
Figure 2. Food Insecurity Among Survey Respondents at Contra Costa College

- I worried whether my food would run out before I got money to buy more: 56%
- I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals: 52%
- The food that I bought just did not last and I did not have the money to buy more: 47%
- I cut the size of meals or skipped meals because there was not enough money for food: 41%
- I was less than I felt I should because there was not enough money for food: 39%
- I was hungry but did not eat because there was not enough money for food: 32%
- I cut the size of meals or skipped meals because there was not enough money for food (3 or more times): 26%
- I lost weight because there was not enough money for food: 20%
- I did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food: 13%
- I did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food (3 or more times): 8%

Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

Figure 3. Housing Insecurity Among Survey Respondents at Contra Costa College

- Any item: 66%
- Had a rent or mortgage increase that made it difficult to pay: 38%
- Did not pay full amount of utilities: 32%
- Did not pay full amount of rent or mortgage: 29%
- Moved in with people due to financial problems: 28%
- Lived with others beyond the expected capacity of the housing: 25%
- Had an account default or go into collections: 21%
- Left household because felt unsafe: 8%
- Moved three or more times: 4%
- Received a summons to appear in housing court: 2%

Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey
Figure 4. Homelessness Among Survey Respondents at Contra Costa College

Locations stayed overnight:
- Temporarily with relative, friend, or couch surfing: 18
- Temporarily at a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to: 5
- In closed area/space with roof not meant for human habitation: 3
- At outdoor location: 1
- In transitional housing or independent living: 1
- In a camper: 1
- At a treatment center (such as detox, hospital, etc.): 1
- At a shelter: 3
- At a group home such as halfway house or residential program for mental health or substance abuse: 1

Source: 2018 #RealCollege Survey

(Source: 2018 #REALCOLLEGE SURVEY SCHOOL REPORT FORCONTRA COSTA COLLEGE, Hope Center for Community, Community and Justice, April 2019)
Basic Needs Support Programs & Services at Contra Costa College

- Food Pantry
- Free Breakfast
- Cal-Fresh Screening & Sign-Up
- Free Produce Truck
- Comet Care Packages
- Mental Wellness
- Wrap-Around Grant
- SparkPoint
- Clipper Cards
- Shower Facilities
Guided Pathways + Retention Office (and many others) have helped consolidate all of the campus resources and created a “CAMPUS RESOURCE GUIDE”.

All students have access to our food pantry, which offers both canned and packaged food.
Additional Guides & Tools

The HOPE Center for College, Community, and Justice has a “RESOURCES” webpage dedicated to practical help and solutions for the staff and faculty: https://hope4college.com/resources/

Beyond the Food Pantry: Spreading the Word – Supporting Students’ Basic Needs with a Syllabus Statement
June 2019

Crafting a basic needs security statement is straightforward, involving just three steps:

Step 1: Welcome students to seek help and normalize the act of getting help with food and housing. Rather than calling out food insecurity or homelessness by name, simply indicate that if students are having trouble affording enough to eat, or don’t have safe and reliable places to sleep, they should seek help.

Step 2: Direct students toward help. Identify the best point of contact on your campus by asking the Dean of Students (or Vice President of Student Affairs) which person is appropriate to list and getting permission from that person first. If your college has support information on a website, list that web address along with a person’s name. It is not necessary to include a laundry list of every available resource on campus. Only list places to get help and the person in the right direction.

Step 3: Invite students to connect with you. Students dealing with basic needs insecurity often exhibit symptoms in the classroom. If they tell you this is a challenge, you will be more informed when you see them sleeping in cars or missing deadlines. Simply letting them know you care can improve their odds of success; indeed, most of today’s students express a strong desire for professors to know them as people.
TAKEAWAY

- SHARE the data
- HIGHLIGHT students’ stories
- HUMANIZE the student experience
- DISTIGMATIZE basic needs insecurity
- NORMALIZE basic needs services
Questions/Comments