Hunger for Change: Let's Talk about Food and Housing Insecurity on our Campus

Community-Engaged Interdisciplinary Research Team

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CFDL Conference 2022
August 12, 2022
Agenda

- Background
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion and Call to Action
- Next Steps
Food and Housing Security at UTEP

Study idea emerged from Kellogg Food Equity Summit followed by UTEP Social Work Macro graduate course, summer BUILDing scholar, and phenomenological observations on campus. *Student-focus and community-driven initiative.*

It would not have been possible for this study to be completed without the vision and support of:

- Dr. Diana Natalicio
- Dr. Gary Edens
- Dr. Catie McCorry-Andalis
- Matt Crouse
- Study team
Research Questions

• What are the overall levels of food security (FS) and housing security (HS) among UTEP students?

• Which factors are associated with FS and HS among UTEP students?
UTEP Student Survey

- 2019, 2020, and 2021
  - Student needs (e.g., food and housing)
  - General and sociodemographics
  - Validated survey questions (when available)

- Launched through UTEP Division of Student Affairs
  - Population: All current adult (18+) UTEP Students (undergraduate, graduate)

- High response rate, representative of UTEP student population (completes out of those who initiated survey)
  - 26% (2019)
  - 50% (2020)
  - 33% (2021)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>2019, N=2,615</th>
<th>2020, N=5,018</th>
<th>2021, N=2,199</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USDA Rating</td>
<td>9,706</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High/Marginal Food Security</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,149 (44%)</td>
<td>2,737 (55%)</td>
<td>819 (40%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Food Security</td>
<td></td>
<td>618 (24%)</td>
<td>1,107 (22%)</td>
<td>470 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Low Food Security</td>
<td></td>
<td>848 (32%)</td>
<td>1,174 (23%)</td>
<td>782 (38%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Permanent Address</td>
<td>9,829</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,331 (89%)</td>
<td>4,766 (95%)</td>
<td>1,932 (88%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td></td>
<td>281 (11%)</td>
<td>252 (5%)</td>
<td>267 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of No Address</td>
<td>772</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td></td>
<td>157 (59%)</td>
<td>136 (54%)</td>
<td>43 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td></td>
<td>67 (25%)</td>
<td>83 (33%)</td>
<td>76 (30%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td></td>
<td>43 (16%)</td>
<td>33 (13%)</td>
<td>134 (53%)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
2021 UTEP Student Population

Total enrolled students: 24,003 (Fall 2021) (Jackson, 2021)

- Housing Insecure Students: 2,280
- Food Insecure Students: 14,640
  - Low Food Security: 5,520
  - Very Low Food Security: 9,120

Quotes From Students (Study Fall 2020)

- “I personally spent a lot of money on food because I have to provide three meals for my children that are learning virtually. Yesterday I went to Walmart and all my credit cards were denied and I had to leave the items I was purchasing at the store”

- “I've been homeless twice this year”

- “I live in a mentally abusive household and a constantly getting kicked out”
Quotes From Students (Study Fall 2021)

- "I believe UTEP should have some type of assistance for food. I am struggling with buying food for me since I live alone with my daughter”

- “Is all this pain really worth the school? I try and try but I can’t seem to catch a break. I don’t have money for school so I work more but then I do poorly in school. There is no way of winning.”

- “I was the young lady that used to sleep in her car and live on campus about 10 years ago. It’s so hard to pay rent without loans”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Security</th>
<th>Housing Security</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Head of Household</td>
<td>• Not living with family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Low Income</td>
<td>• Low Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Unemployed</td>
<td>• Not having reliable transportation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Not having reliable</td>
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<tr>
<td>transportation</td>
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Analysis of Food and Housing Insecurity among University Students at a Public Hispanic-Serving Institution

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ABSTRACT
This study explores food and housing insecurity among university students at a public Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) located in the U.S.-Mexico border region. Classification and regression trees were used to identify the principal factors leading to food and housing insecurity in a predominantly Hispanic student population. An analysis of Hispanic university students is needed to better understand the challenges of the fastest growing group with the highest enrollment gain. Findings will inform decision makers and faculty in their efforts to address food and housing insecurity and enhance the responses necessary to better serve Hispanics and all students.

KEYWORDS
Food security, homelessness, university, Hispanic-Serving Institution.
Desempleo y bienestar en universitarios: inseguridad alimentaria

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Introducción

Cuando la persona no tiene acceso de manera física, social y económica todo el tiempo a alimentos nutritivos, en cantidad suficiente y seguros para cubrir las necesidades nutricionales diarias y preferencias culturales individuales para una vida sana y activa es lo que se llama inseguridad alimentaria. Es bien sabido que, si los alimentos escasean, la higiene, la rutina y la nutrición se deterioran, debido a que se inician dietas menos nutritivas y se
Call to Action
Concrete Actions to Address Food and Housing Security

Inform students of external food distribution centers and housing assistance.

• Provide directory of housing, food centers, human services and assist with transportation.

• Identify community health events/venues and inform students through social media, posts on the bulletin boards, and student health centers.
Concrete Actions to Address Food and Housing Security

Ensure that nutritious food options are utilized by campus students.

• Generate an affordable meal sharing program.

• Partner with food services, food banks, and other community organizations to host campus community kitchen services and pantry with perishable, frozen and non-perishable high nutritional value items.

• Open a public benefits integrated eligibility venue.
Reduce stigma surrounding support services.

• Integrate in all course syllabus resources, QRs and links to food, housing, transportation and other support services.

• Seek grants/financial support to increase food options and lower costs of campus food services.

• Conducts ongoing assessments and research to inform leadership of findings and address social determinants.

• Change the name of the food pantry (i.e. University Nutrition, Grab and Go, Healthy Bite)
Create opportunities for students to share expertise and creative ideas to address housing and food insecurity.

• Invite students to generate and implement actions.

• Designate University, College, and School student ambassadors to promote well-being, food, and housing security.
Concrete Actions to Address Food and Housing Security

Institutionalize support services.

- Generate policies to expand nutritional food services, improve access to affordable housing, transportation, and student health services.
- Assign adequate space for personnel, food storage and distribution.
- Develop a bilingual food, housing and financial security toolkit.
- Include University food and support services in the interactive map and expand hours of operation to meet the needs of working students.
Ignite Discussion

What does this **mean** to us as a Leading Hispanic Serving University?

What can we **all do**?
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Thank you-Gracias