

# Hunger and Food Insecurity in Oregon Higher Education

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# Many Students Face Food Insecurity

**College students are struggling with basic needs.** In the largest national survey performed by The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice (surveying students at 123 institutions in 24 states), **nearly half of college students were food insecure.**

**47% of community college students and 42% of university students** were food insecure in the 30 days preceding the survey.\*

Food insecurity was more prevalent among former foster youth, underrepresented students of color and first-generation students.\*

College and University Basic Needs Insecurity, based on a survey of 86,000 students at 123 colleges and universities in 24 states and Washington D.C. By Sara Goldrick-Rab, Christine Baker-Smith, Vanessa Coca, Elizabeth Looker, and Tiffani Williams. The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice. April 2019. [https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/HOPE\\_realcollege\\_National\\_report\\_digital.pdf](https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/HOPE_realcollege_National_report_digital.pdf)

# Food Insecurity Impacts Student Success

Students who were food insecure were more likely to have lower grades than food secure students.\*

Students who are food insecure are more likely to experience academic disruptions, such as taking lighter course loads or neglecting studies. Food insecurity is also linked to lower GPAs.\*\*

Food insecurity is a pervasive issue in higher education nationwide, emphasizing the need for statewide and local responses.

\*College and University Basic Needs Insecurity, based on a survey of 86,000 students at 123 colleges and universities in 24 states and Washington D.C. By Sara Gc Rab, Christine Baker-Smith, Vanessa Coca, Elizabeth Looker, and Tiffani Williams. The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice. April 2019.

[https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/HOPE\\_realcollege\\_National\\_report\\_digital.pdf](https://hope4college.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/HOPE_realcollege_National_report_digital.pdf)

\*\*Food Insecurity and Academic Disruption Among College Students, based on data from an urban, public Midwestern university in 2014. By Erica Phillips, Anne McDaniel, and Alicia Croft. Journal of Student Affairs Research and Practice. June 2018. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19496591.2018.1470003>



# Lived Experience of Students

Ivan Chen, student at UO

Venus Barnes, alumna of PCC



# How are some community partners responding?



**Kara Smith**

Community Engagement & Advocacy  
Coordinator



# How are some Oregon campuses responding?

- WOU - Campus Food Pantry
- PSU - Harvest Share Free Food Market - fresh produce to students
- Klamath Falls Community College - food packages up to twice a month
- SOU - Raiders helping Raiders meal swipe donation program
- Blue Mountain Community College - recent survey showed 45% of students cutting meal sizes or skipping meal sizes - recently opened “The Den” food pantry

**TABLE 1. Pantries and food assistance at Oregon colleges and universities**

Source: Oregon Food Bank

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| <u>Public universities</u>  | Oregon State University, Portland State University, Southern Oregon University, Western Oregon University, Oregon Institute of Technology   |
| <u>Community colleges</u>   | Mt. Hood Community College, Portland Community College, Lane Community College, Chemeketa Community College, Klamath Community College, Oregon Coast Community College, Southwest Oregon Community College, Umpqua Community College, Clackamas Community College |
| <u>Private institutions</u> | Lewis & Clark College, NW Christian University, Pacific University, Gutenberg College, Reed College, Willamette University  |

# OSU's Human Services Resource Center

- Student driven, activism as early as 2006
- Today's center is a national model
- Programs include: textbook library, emergency housing support, case management, food pantry, food vouchers, cooking classes and assistance signing up for SNAP
- Facility includes a commercial kitchen, shower, laundry, lactation room, lounge space and an onsite production garden
- Served 1700 unique students last year - over 10,000 touchpoints
- HSRC Food pantry distributed 83,000 lbs of food to over 4500 individuals
- **Almost exclusively student fee funded**



# ***There is no one solution to campus hunger***

**But there are opportunities for the state to make progress.**

- Gather statewide data to better understand the scope of the issue in Oregon, barriers and resources that students face.
- Consider statewide programs that begin to address the issue
  - State Work Study
  - Campus Grant Program
- Explore ways to increase access to SNAP and other benefits
  - Build on recent clarification that more students in CTE programs are eligible for food assistance

**Invest in higher education to address affordability & access**



# Questions?

