Committee for Improving Student Food Security
Introduction

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Adult Brains and Nutrition

- Academic success is impacted by food insecurity
  - A student who has not eaten sufficient nutritious food will have difficulty mastering the material or performing on the test
- Standardized test scores do not consider basic needs security as another form of college readiness

National Statistics

● Overall Food Insecurity Stats
  ○ US average food insecurity = 12.3% (USDA, 2017)
  ○ Oregon average food insecurity = 15.2% (Feeding America, 2017)

● Food Insecurity in Higher Education
  ○ 36% of higher education students surveyed do not get enough to eat on a regular basis
  ○ Nearly 1 in 10 community college students have gone a whole day without eating in the past month


http://map.feedingamerica.org/
Food Insecurity at PSU

- Summer 2014, campus-wide food insecurity assessment
  - Determined that 59% of respondents experienced some sort of food insecurity in the 2013-2014 academic year. (22% response rate)
  - Most respondents did not know we have a food pantry on campus
  - Highest concerns when accessing emergency food services:
    1. Availability of fresh fruits and vegetables
    2. Stigma

- Spring 2016, campus-wide food insecurity assessment
  - 54% indicated a level of food insecurity (20% response rate)
  - 65% indicated they were aware we have a student food pantry
  - Highest concerns when accessing emergency food services:
    1. Availability of fresh fruits and vegetables
    2. Difficulty accessing resources (hours of operation, transportation)
    3. Stigma

- Spring 2018, campus-wide food insecurity assessment
  - In progress now!

Drivers of Student Food Insecurity

- Rising cost of tuition and student fees
- Lack of financial aid/assistance
- Strict requirements for NSAP
- Rising cost of living
- Tough/competitive job market, low wage jobs
- Health/mental health issues or disability
- Existing debt or low socioeconomic status
- Stable housing and reliable transportation
- Stigma and skepticism persist
The CISFS Mission:

Student food security is an integral element of a sustainable and equitable Portland State University (PSU) community. The Committee for Improving Student Food Security (CISFS) seeks to improve PSU students’ ability to access affordable, nutritious, culturally relevant food. This will be achieved through fostering community partnerships, increasing awareness, addressing barriers through policy advocacy, and using data to inform and build capacity for action.

Committee Members:
Staff, faculty, students, community partners & alumni (13 members currently, 2 vacancies)

Work Groups:
Outreach, Marketing, and Planning & Development
CISFS Website

https://www.pdx.edu/student-access-center/

- URL is “future-minded”
- Information on:
  - Where to find help
  - How to get involved
  - Events and collaborative efforts
  - Scholarly resources
  - The committee
Formerly known as “Harvest Share”
Monthly since April 2015
195,821 = Total lbs. food given away
11,485 = households impacted
32 = Average number of volunteers each month
Open to students, staff, & community members
SNAP Awareness and Representation

Annual fall training/retraining

Weekly office hours provided by PSU staff around campus in discrete, non-stigmatizing locations at a variety of times
Working Together

Working with the PSU Food Pantry
- Student-run pantry, we support them but are separate

Working with University Studies classes
- Students help with a variety of small assessments and outreach projects

Working with PSU Eats
- Donate leftover food to the PSU Food Pantry
- Host events about food waste, cooking skills, etc.

Working with others on campus - Financial Wellness Center, SHAC, etc. for campus-wide initiatives and events