



# FIRST In College

A MONTHLY E-MAGAZINE FOR FIRST-GEN AND  
LOW-INCOME STUDENTS

A background image showing a person's hand typing on a laptop keyboard. The laptop screen displays a web browser with various icons and text. The overall scene is set on a wooden desk.

# Food Edition

DECEMBER 2020

EDITION 4  
GENERAL  
INTELLIGENCES



# editor-in chief's note



I am absolutely pleased with how great of a reception we received on our first edition of our e-magazine. Thank you also for checking out our magazine.

For our next issue, we decided to work on an issue relating to food (food insecurity, food tips and more). Food insecurity is a prevalent problem on many college campuses.

Our goal of this issue is not just to reiterate that there are a lot of difficulties with getting affordable food in college settings, but to also provide some advice based on personal experiences and more. We wanted to emphasize that we all have nothing, but infinite respect for students that work multiple jobs to support themselves and their families. For many, it is exceptionally difficult to find resources.

For this reason, we want to guide you through everything you need to know.

*Magda Wojtara*

Magda Wojtara

**Editor-In-Chief F1rst in  
College  
Founder General  
Intelligences**



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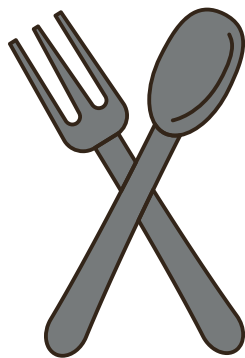


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# Food Insecurity





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For a cost reference, for one person each month, groceries can cost anywhere from \$200-400. This is extremely cost-prohibitive to many students who work on campus jobs to pay rent and potentially to help support family back home. Transportation costs are another additional factor to consider and even free transportation comes at a time-cost.

In normal semesters, students can grab some free food at sporting events, student organization meetings and promotional business meetings. However, with the COVID pandemic many schools have banned in-person events from occurring.

# The Prevalence of College Food Insecurity

A HIDDEN PROBLEM IN THE US COLLEGE SYSTEM

The College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFA) recently published a shocking statistic. A whopping 30% of college students are food-insecure. To be food insecure means to be genuinely unsure as to where their next meal will come from or a lack of knowledge as to when they will be able to get their next meal.

At many colleges, student meal plans are horrifyingly overpriced with average costs for a 16 week semester at around \$5000 (at a cost of \$40 a day). However, many college campuses, especially residential types, do not usually have nearby grocery stores or affordable food options. At the University of Michigan, for instance, the downtown area has small boutique markets, Walgreens and CVS. The Kroger or Meijer is a more than 25 minute bus ride. When low-income students already have to balance busy work and class schedules this additional hurdle proves challenging.



A close-up photograph of a stack of pancakes. The pancakes are golden-brown and stacked high. A thick, amber-colored caramel sauce is drizzled over the top, dripping down the sides. Fresh strawberries are scattered on top, some whole and some sliced. The background is dark, making the food stand out. The image is partially obscured by a white text box at the top and a blue background on the right side.

# Food Insecurity Impacts Academic Success

## ANOTHER BY-PRODUCT OF BEING FOOD INSECURE ? : FAILING YOUR COURSES

Food insecurity is a major stressor that is often already accompanied with the stresses of poverty, lack of affordable healthcare and potentially homelessness. However, the typical image of a college-student in the media is one of extreme privilege. Someone who has been afforded an opportunity to get a higher education and to focus solely on self-development and growth. This is in direct contrast to the realities of an average current student.

Students may be forced to work even more hours and often "under-the-table" to avoid getting reduced financial aid. This could include tutoring or other jobs where only cash is exchanged instead of a formally taxed paycheck. Furthermore, this also means that many students work outside the maximum number of work hours for students (typically averaging to part time work hours as dictated by the state). The lack of time is a massive detriment to studies academically, but also means that these students are less able to seek out academic help i.e. free tutoring, study groups, office hours because those typically occur between the hours of 9-5 which is also when classes and work take place. This catalyzes a repetitive cycle of struggle and one that is wholly unrecognized by the system.



# Food Deserts



*The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) uses the term "Food Desert" as being about the proximity to food providers. The Food Empowerment Project and other entities prefers terms such as Food Apartheid or Food Oppression.*

## WHAT IS A FOOD DESERT ANYWAY?

Food deserts are geographic areas where residents have a lack of accessibility to affordable and healthy food options. This is often because affordable and health food vendors are not at a convenient traveling distance. They are commonly found in areas where racial and ethnic minorities live. Healthier foods, if available, are much more costly in the smaller markets than the supermarkets which means that residents are more likely to purchase processed foods.

## HOW DO THESE FOOD DESERTS AFFECT HEALTH?

The United States has one of the highest incidences of obesity and other health issues like type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Highest rates of incidence in these diseases may be attributed to food deserts disproportionately affecting those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged (without access to a car or living in a 'better' area) and from racial and ethnic minority groups.

## WHAT ARE SOME WELL-KNOWN FOOD DESERTS?

New York City- 750,000 residents live in a 'food desert'

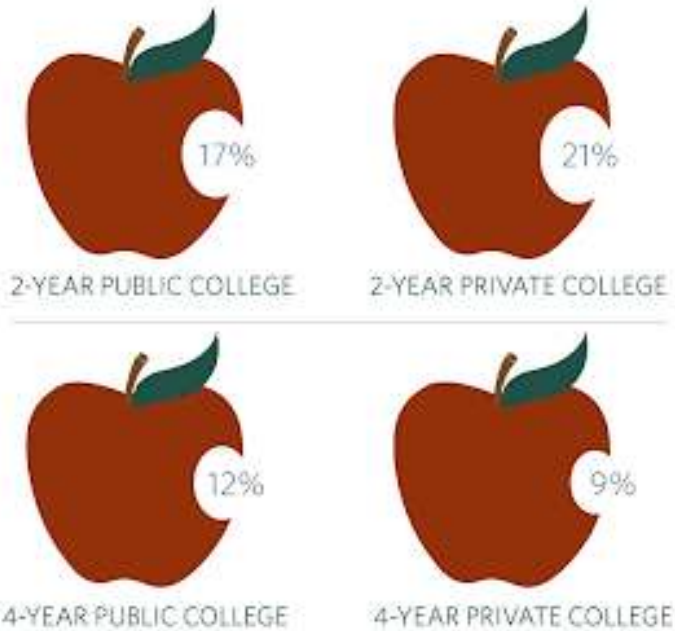
Chicago- 500,000 residents live in a 'food desert'

Los Angeles- Up until some city council laws resulting in South LA getting its first supermarket in a decade

# FOOD INSECURITY *in higher ed*

The Urban Institute study "Assessing Food Insecurity On Campus" found that students at four-year colleges are less likely to be food insecure than students at two-year colleges.

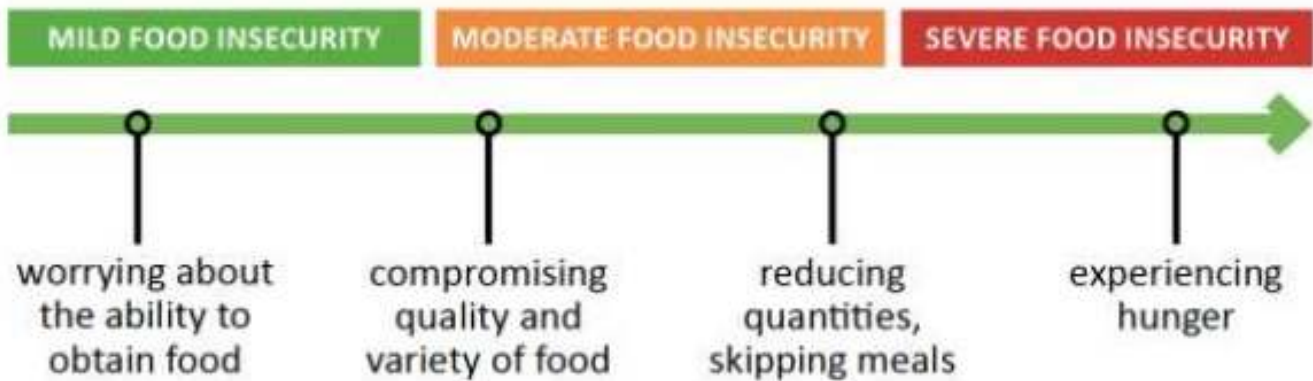
Here are the percentages of post-secondary students who were food insecure between 2011 and 2015, by type of institution.\*



\*Data refers to "percentage of adults identified as food insecure in the past 12 months." Percentages represent a 5-year average between 2011-2015. Source: Assessing Food Insecurity on Campus report, released Aug 1, 2017. Data from Current Population Survey (CPS). See the report for more details.



## WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY?





# Campus Resources





# CAMPUS FOOD RESOURCES

BY: NATALIE  
TJAHJADI

As the cost of attending college has gone up, the percent of students facing food insecurity has also risen. What is food insecurity? According to Feeding America, food insecurity is defined as “a federal measure of a household’s ability to provide enough food for every person in the household to have an active, healthy life.” With a limited budget, many college students deal with food insecurity at one point during college or another. Fortunately, many colleges and local community organizations can provide support in these situations. In this article, I will share some of the food resources you may be able to take advantage of!

One resource that I highly suggest looking into is a local or campus pantry; one thing to note is that on-campus food pantries are likely to have more supplies because they provide solely for students. At a food pantry, you can pick from a variety of non-perishable food items, fresh produce, and other basic necessities all for free. The best part is, you don’t have to sign up to be eligible! You can find the closest food pantry and just go there whenever you need. I also want to share this link from Feeding America where you can find your local Food Bank:

<https://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank>.





Another food resource that you can look for is a state or federally funded food program. I currently attend the University of California Santa Barbara and the program we have is CalFresh. CalFresh is a federally funded nutrition assistance program that gives eligible students \$194 per month for groceries. Here is a link with the eligibility rules for students applying for CalFresh (likely to be similar for other nutrition assistance programs): <http://mycalfresh.org/students/>. Some notable requirements include:

- Age 18-49 and is physically and mentally "fit" for employment
- Enrolled at least half-time in regular curriculum at an institution of higher education
- Work at least an average of 20 hours a week OR

- Are approved for state or federal work-study money and anticipate working during the term... and many other possibilities

If you plan on applying to CalFresh or a similar program, I highly suggest talking to an experienced individual to help with your application. For example, my school has Basic Needs Advocates who can help students navigate the CalFresh application process. You could look for similar individuals at your school who will be well-versed in the different resources your school and local community has to offer.

Another great place to look for more affordable food is local grocery stores and Co-Ops. Oftentimes, these stores offer

# Campus Food Resources Cont.



student discounts or just cheaper options in general. I also suggest looking to see if your school has any affiliation with the national Swipe Out Hunger organization. Swipe out Hunger is a nonprofit committed to ending college student hunger. They advise colleges and universities on the design of innovative anti-hunger programs. One of their largest programs, "The Swipe Drive", allows students with extra meals swipes or dining dollars to donate them to their peers. If your school is not partnered with Swipe Out Hunger, I highly suggest reaching out

to their organization or encouraging an administrator to do so. By doing this, you could make a positive impact on college students who are struggling with food insecurity. Make sure to also check out the healthy and affordable recipes listed later in the magazine!

I hope that this article can help you navigate some potential food resources! Thank you for reading and I wish you the best of luck with your college endeavors :)

# What YOU Can do to Help

WAYS TO HELP OUT OTHERS ON CAMPUS WHO MAY BE FOOD-INSECURE

## 1. Starting a Campus Food Bank

Get in contact with student offices and student organizations to determine your funding. Conduct a needs analysis (collecting data on students that may be food insecure). If there is an existing food bank then make sure that it has enough resources. It's especially important to consider possible food restrictions that some food insecure students may have i.e. kosher, halal, gluten free, vegan etc.

## 2. Create a community garden

A community garden is a great way to have a healthy campus with some healthy food options. Try to partner with a sustainability office to get it off the ground (pun intended).

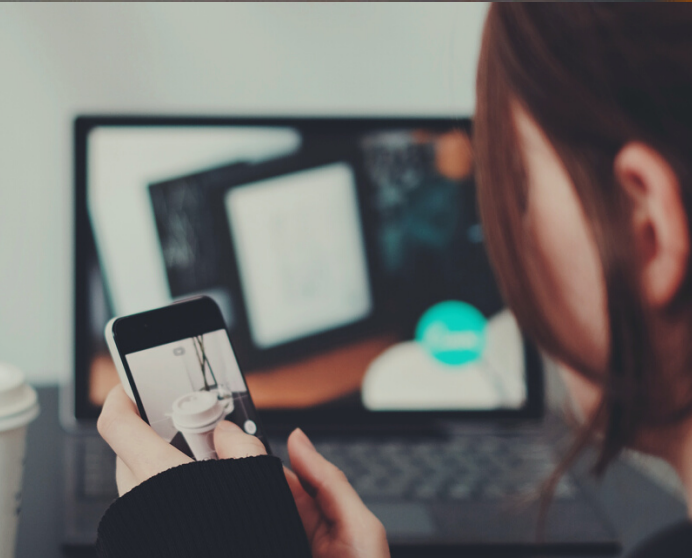
## 3. Petition or Call Attention

Raise Awareness of the hidden issue of college student food insecurity on campuses. Reach out to your social networks and potentially operate a fundraiser or speak with lawmakers. Circulating a petition on doing something about the issue on your campus is another step!





# Campus Resources



*Each college campus may have different availabilities and restrictions for these types of program. It is a good step to contact financial aid and student offices to determine what resources your school offers.*

## **FREE EVENTS / HOLIDAY EVENTS**

\*Sporting Events (non-football, basketball or hockey) usually have pizza and chips

\*Holiday Dinners/ Food Giveaways occur around Thanksgiving and other holidays.

\*Enter in Prize Raffles for Gift Cards (Visa or Other Food Stores)

## **FOOD PANTRIES ON- CAMPUS**

\*Available to all students at schools where available

\*Can come and pick up groceries in a convenient and on-campus location

\*Typically at no-cost to you / covered by tuition fees paid by all students

## **NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS / CO-OPS**

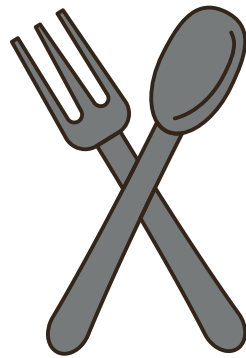
\*Co-Ops often allow non-residents to buy-in to their food plans where housemates cook meals that can be picked up or eaten.

\*Advocate for on-campus resources with national organizations





# Healthy Meals on a Budget





# Healthy Food: The Hidden Costs



\*Researchers have found that healthier diet patterns—for example, diets rich in fruits, vegetables, fish, and nuts—cost significantly more than unhealthy diets (for example, those rich in processed foods, meats, and refined grains).

\*The researchers suggested that unhealthy diets may cost less because food policies have focused on the production of “inexpensive, high volume” commodities, which has led to “a complex network of farming, storage, transportation, processing, manufacturing, and marketing capabilities that favor sales of highly processed food products for maximal industry profit.”

\*The healthiest diets cost about \$1.50 more per day than the least healthy diets, according to new research from Harvard School of Public Health (HSPH).

\*“While healthier diets did cost more, the difference was smaller than many people might have expected. Over the course of a year, \$1.50/day more for eating a healthy diet would increase food costs for one person by about \$550 per year

Source:<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/press-releases/healthy-vs-unhealthy-diet-costs-1-50-more/>

# Healthy Food: Scan the QR Codes for Healthy Low- Cost Recipes



# 5 Free Apps for Meal Prepping + Recipes

## 1. MEALIME

Input ingredients --> Get Recipes

## 2. PAPRIKA

Input Recipes from URL --> Get ingredients that overlap for several recipes

## 3. PLAN TO EAT

Calendar Style Planner w/o Pre-set recipes



## 4. MAKE MY PLATE

Plan your meals + filter for allergies

## 5. PREPEAR

Recipes + Ingredient Lists







# Final Thoughts







# FOOD IS JOURNEY

I have personally always loved and enjoyed food- not purely because of its' generally delicious nature, but because food offers me easily attainable adventure. By the end of this piece, you will hopefully understand how to create your own.

But first- a warning. In college, food often serves as a hidden social and financial trap. As a freshman, I was truly independent for the first time in my life and noticed that college students treat food like it is entertainment. Whether it be hanging out or studying in coffee shops, going on late night fast-food runs, or going out to eat at popular local destinations- all of my friends were eating out and I did not want to miss out on any of these classic college experiences. But, the cost of going out starts adding up very quickly. Eventually, I had to figure out how to budget properly and also be able to resist the temptation of going out to eat. A great thing to keep in the front of your mind freshmen year is that you should definitely be prioritizing your personal health, which includes making healthy eating choices and being financially responsible. I hope you all take great care of yourselves and show yourselves the care you deserve.

Secondly- the key to adventure. Food is simply culture on a plate, so when you try to cook new foods or unfamiliar cuisines, you end up learning a lot about the cultures, customs and stories behind the dishes. I have cooked dishes original to India, Ethiopia, Korea, Japan, Egypt, Nigeria, Vietnam, El Salvador, Mexico, Thailand and many more countries. Whereas one day, I would love to go to these countries and try authentic dishes, I can still travel through exploring cuisines in my own home. Cooking at home not only becomes more financially reasonable than always eating out, but also allows you to practice and build a life skill. I can guarantee that all my dishes have not been perfect and are sometimes fairly awful, but that is completely okay and I encourage your mistakes. Taking a moment to explore the ingredients involved, the chemistry behind the process, and the origins of different dishes can be so exciting, especially with friends. Messing up and being unfamiliar with something is completely okay. When you are able to spend time with friends or loved ones to try something new, you end up creating many meaningful and unique memories together. So, even if you start with a box of brownies and build your way up- I hope you are able to find your own worthwhile adventure through exploring cuisines and foods.

**Best of luck, take care, and stay healthy!**



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