



Information BRIEF

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Campus Food Pantries in the State University System

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Introduction

Food insecurity is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as lacking “access to enough food for an active, healthy, life style.” Incidents of food insecurity in U.S. colleges and universities are increasing as college costs, including tuition, housing, books, and transportation, have risen significantly and more students from low income families are attending postsecondary education. National studies by student affairs professionals are confirming that there are many university campuses with students who are considered food insecure and that the reality of students missing meals to save money is not uncommon.

With rising food insecurity among college and university students, there has been a corresponding increase in the establishment of food pantries on college campuses, with over 200 college and university food pantries nationwide. The College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA) is a national association for higher education professionals whose purpose is to “focus on alleviating food insecurity, hunger, and poverty among college and university students in the US.” Many university student affairs professionals and student governments are working directly with CUFBA to collaboratively establish, operate, and maintain a campus food pantry. It is now being reported that over one-half of undergraduate and graduate students who received food from campus food pantries are having to choose between spending money on college expenses or food.

Nationally, university food pantry initiatives are now expanding to campus-wide advisory committees to address broader, longer-term issues of food access on university campuses, such as supplementing financial aid packages to account for food, accepting food stamps on campus, and implementing larger on-campus gardening programs to enable students to grow their own food.

State University System

In the State University System of Florida, ten universities operate food pantries for their campus communities and the remaining two universities are actively planning to establish a campus pantry. Several of the SUS university food pantries partner with local community food banks, and all of them receive pantry supplies from faculty, staff, and/or student donations. The campus food pantries are typically operated within student affairs divisions and are primarily

staffed by student volunteers. In addition to providing food to enrolled students and campus staff, a number of the pantries also provide workshops on healthy and nutritious food preparation and budgeting.

Selected details and features of SUS food pantries are provided below:

Florida A & M University

The campus food pantry at FAMU is operated in the student health services clinic and receives food donations from faculty, staff, and students to stock and maintain the pantry. In an established Farm Share program, the food pantry also operates large food distribution events to students weekly during fall and spring semesters, which are supplied by purchasing and collecting fresh food from farmer's markets in the community and in neighboring counties. The pantry services are advertised on social media sites and during orientation sessions.

Florida Atlantic University

FAU student affairs administrators and student government leaders are currently planning for a campus food pantry, with the pantry opening scheduled for late fall 2015 or early spring 2016. Using campus and community resources, the goal of the pantry will be to provide a holistic program that will address immediate and long-term hardships for students.

Florida Gulf Coast University

The operation of the FGCU campus food pantry is coordinated by the Division of Administration and Financial Services, with student affairs professionals and student government leaders serving on the pantry advisory committee. Enrolled students may visit the pantry once per week and take up to 10 pounds of shelf-stable food. The pantry has established a partnership with the Harry Chapin food bank in Southwest Florida. Student volunteers staff the pantry and receive service learning credit hours for their participation.

Florida International University

The FIU food pantry is managed by Division of Student Affairs and student volunteers. The pantry is open to any FIU student and students may receive food once a week. The FIU Pantry receives food that has been collected from alumni and campus food drives.

Florida Polytechnic University

The FPU food pantry is maintained in the campus Safety Office, with 24 hour accessibility for students in need. Supplies of food, basic necessities, and campus cafeteria meals are provided to students through campus faculty, staff, and student donations.

Florida State University

The FSU food pantry was established in 2009 and is currently housed in the Dean of Student's Office, staffed by case managers. Food is provided to needy FSU students, although proof of financial difficulty is not required to receive food. The pantry receives food supplies through

campus donations from student organizations. During the 2014-15 year, the pantry had 1,311 visits for food.

New College

New College student affairs and student government are currently planning for a campus food pantry, with the pantry opening scheduled for later this semester.

University of Central Florida

The UCF Knights Helping Knights food pantry was established in 2009 and is sustained through in-kind and cash donations from the campus and local community. Strong partnerships exist with Student Government (funding), the Student Union (facility), UCF Foundation (community and alumni support), and Second Harvest Food Bank (discounted food items). The pantry is primarily staffed by volunteers and is available to UCF students with valid ID, with a limit of five food items per day and unlimited toiletries and clothing. Donations have steadily increased since the Pantry was founded and totaled almost 24,000 pounds of food and over \$10,000 in the past year. Student volunteers have logged almost 3,000 service hours in that timeframe.

University of Florida

The UF Field and Fork food pantry opened in August and is part of a larger program run by IFAS. The pantry is operated by the Dean of Student's office in a refurbished chiller plant and is affiliated with a community food bank. Students, faculty, and staff with a current ID are served canned and dry goods and toiletries. The pantry is staffed by student employees, who also provide on and off campus referrals to helping resources. Plans are to provide educational programming regarding nutrition and budget management.

University of North Florida

The UNF Lend-A-Wing food pantry is operated by student government leaders, using student volunteers and employees. UNF students with a current ID are served up to five pounds of food and goods per visit. The pantry is supplied by donations from faculty, staff, students, and community partners. The pantry is now partnering with academic and administrative departments across campus to advertise its services and educational workshops on nutrition.

University of South Florida

The USF Feed-A-Bull food pantry is operated by the Office of Student Outreach and Support and is available to all enrolled students. The pantry is sponsored by Wellness Education and partners with Feeding America Tampa Bay. The program also provides education and resources to students related to purchasing and preparing balanced food on a budget.

University of West Florida

The UWF Argo Pantry is housed in the Dean of Student's office and provides food to currently enrolled students, who may access the pantry once per week. Campus and community partners include: the student government, the Social Work, Psychology, Anthropology, and Environmental Studies departments, and the Kugelman Honors Program.