

Food Insecurity at UVM

In the fall of 2016, UVM launched a food insecurity working group comprised of faculty, staff and students. This group was tasked with collecting data and proposing short- and long-term strategies to increase food security on campus. Below are their multiple strategies and a status update on the group's progress.

ACCOMPLISHED INITIATIVES:

1. Launched a website with resources for students and staff.
2. Re-release UVM Hunger Resource Guide and Hunger Free Vermont outreach materials to campus community groups.
3. Launched Swipe Out Hunger in Spring 2019, an emergency food fund for students needing access to meals in the dining halls.
4. Host free three-week cooking workshops, twice per semester, at Discovery Kitchen for off-campus students.
5. Help secure funding (through grants and Dean of Students Office) for the food/snack shelves in the identity centers on campus.
6. Release of survey data summary to campus community groups including: Undergraduate and Graduate Student Government Association, Medical Student Association, Faculty Senate, Faculty Union, Staff Council, Administration and College Deans, Vermont Cynic.
7. Developed a report on existing strategies across other U.S. campuses to reduce textbook and course material costs.

LONG-TERM STRATEGIES:

1. Work with Hunger Free Vermont and the Vermont Food Bank to implement strategies that would encourage and assist students who are food insecure to apply for **3SquaresVT benefits**.
2. Support the Undergraduate and Graduate Student Government Association in opening and maintaining the **on-campus food pantry**.
3. Explore options to reduce waste and **repurpose leftovers** within catering events on campus.
4. Build partnerships with the Intervale and Catamount Farm to offer low cost, **local foods**, such as subsidized CSA shares and gleaned produce at the food pantry.
5. Conduct a third survey on food insecurity on campus to assess progress and impact of current strategies.
6. Explore a "round-up at the register" program to help students and staff purchase meals at campus retail locations.

For more information on the food insecurity working group please contact the co-chairs: Meredith Niles, Assistant Professor, Nutrition and Food Sciences, mtniles@uvm.edu
Nicole Reilly, UVM Dining Campus Dietitian, Nicole.Reilly@uvm.edu

DATA

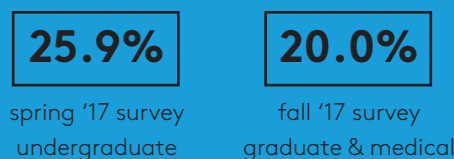
The group conducted research on food insecurity at UVM through two surveys in 2017. A random sample of 4,500 UVM community members (undergraduate, graduate, and medical students and faculty and staff) were sampled with a 24.5% and 25.8% response rate in spring and fall*.

Percent of the UVM community who was food insecure (within past 12 months):



By comparison: the national rate in 2016 was 12.3% and in Vermont it was 10.1%.

Students who were the most food insecure:



"THE OFF-CAMPUS EFFECT"

In both surveys, students living off campus were more likely to be food insecure.

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS

In both surveys, first generation students were more likely to be food insecure.

Students of color were more likely to be food insecure in the spring '17 survey only.

Transgender/queer/gender non-conforming students were more likely to be food insecure in the fall '17 survey only.

TIME IN THE SEMESTER

Students most frequently cited food insecurity following book/lab/course material purchases and before final exams.

*margin of error +/- 3%