




DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

FOOD & HOUSING SECURITY

Status and Service Use of DePaul
University Students

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DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR ACCESS AND ATTAINMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

42%

of the overall sample was food insecure, with undergraduates experiencing food insecurity at higher rates.



8%

Of the total sample had experienced homelessness.

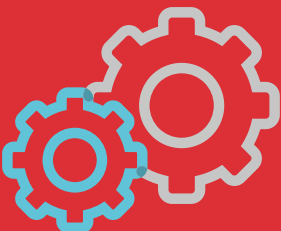
6%

of the overall sample had experienced both food insecurity and homelessness in the past year.



12%

Of the sample were aware of services provided by DePaul University to address food and housing needs. Graduate students were less aware of on-campus services.



CAA FOOD & HOUSING SECURITY STUDY

Study Background

Basic needs insecurity among college students is an increasingly prevalent problem in the United States (Broton & Goldrick-Rab, 2017). Many barriers exist for college students in attaining basic needs stability. These barriers range from resource inaccessibility, lack of affordable housing, as well as lack of access to wages that reflect cost of living (E.g., El Zein et al., 2019; Fincher et al., 2018; Gaines et al., 2014; Hallett & Crutchfield, 2017). Food insecurity in college students is significantly greater than the national average (Henry, 2017).

Food Security

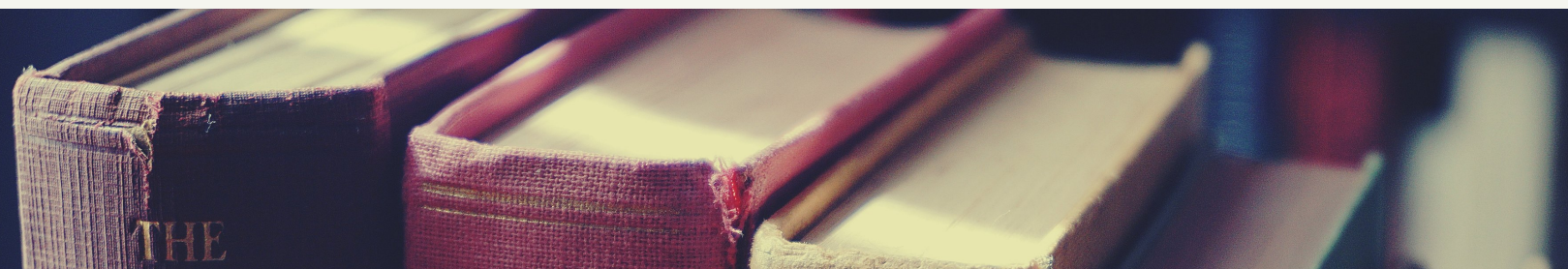
A recent study (Willis, 2019) found 32% of undergraduate students at a New York state university to be food insecure. In this sample racial and sexual minorities experienced food insecurity at higher rates. Another study from 2014 surveying U.S college students found 14% of the sample examined to be food insecure. 20% reported experiencing anxiety related to their food supply and access, and 14% percent indicated altering their food consumption due to limited resources (Gaines, 2014). These statistics are not unique, other studies have also shown university students are worried about their food supply due to limited resources (E.g., Broton & Goldrick-Rab, 2016; Goldrick-Rab, 2016; Chaparro et al., 2009).

Housing Security

According to a 2017 study, 11%-19% of students at four-year college or university are housing insecure (Broton & Goldrick-Rab, 2017). Findings by Tsui and colleagues (2011) showed that almost 3 times as many students were living in a shelter compared to New York City residents overall, and 5 times as many students participate in public housing programs. Overall, the CUNY survey found that 42% of students reported being housing insecure within the last year.

Comorbidity

Often, students who experience one form of basic needs insecurity, also experience another (Cady & White, 2018). Willis (2019) found that students that lack housing security have increased odds of also experience food insecurity. For example, between 1/4 and 1/3 of CUNY students reported being both housing and food insecure (Tsui et al. 2011). Silva and colleagues (2017) found that college students experiencing food and housing insecurity also had issues attending or performing in class. This suggests that those facing food insecurity or housing challenges are also juggling several obstacles related to college success and completion.



REPORT AIMS & ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1

Understand the breadth and depth of food and housing security issues among DePaul University students

2

The rates of students who require assistance to meet their basic needs

3

What barriers are cited by students who experience insecurity, but do not use DePaul University resources?





STUDY PARTICIPANTS

There was a total of 660 DePaul University Students who completed the survey and the end of the 2018-2019 academic year. Students were representative of both undergraduate and graduate programs, and across all university colleges .



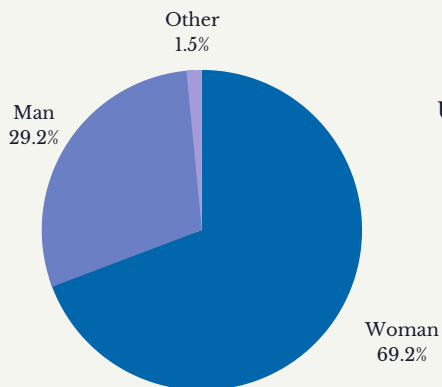
SAMPLE BREAKDOWN



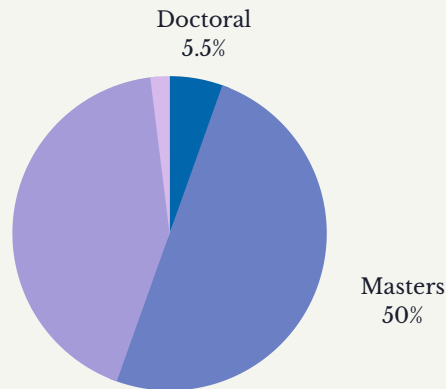
Demographic Information

Participants in the sample ranged from age 18 to 65, and were representative of every college in the university.

Gender Identity



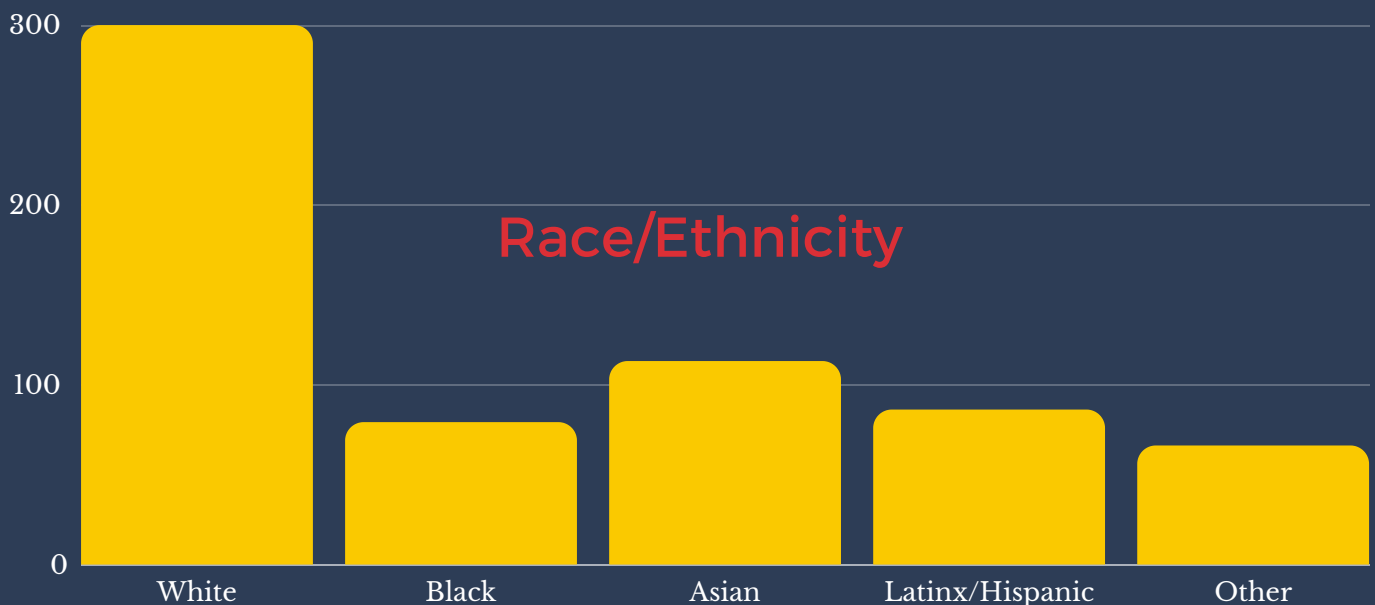
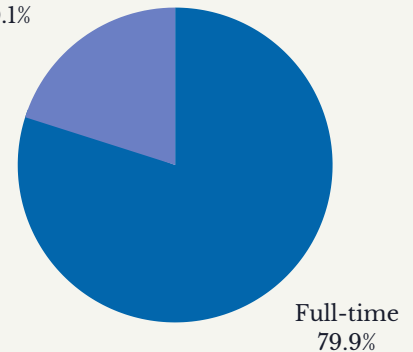
Undergrad
42.6%



Degree

Student Status

Part-time
20.1%



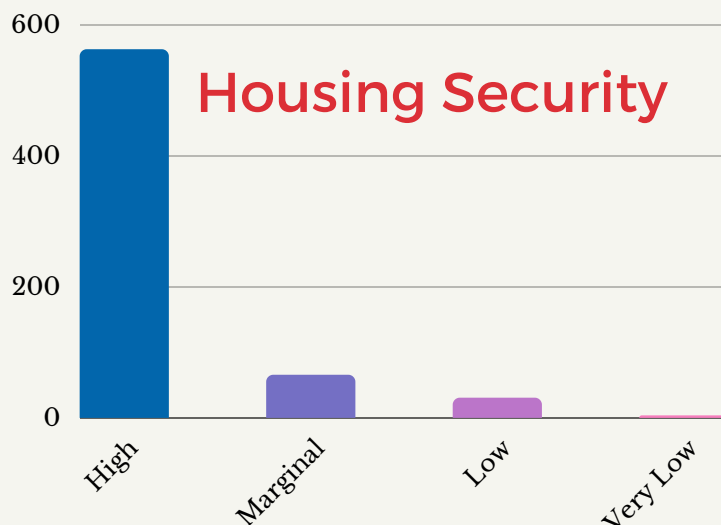
Race/Ethnicity



Q1: RATES OF FOOD AND HOUSING INSECURITY

STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS

8%



STUDENTS FOOD INSECURE:

42%

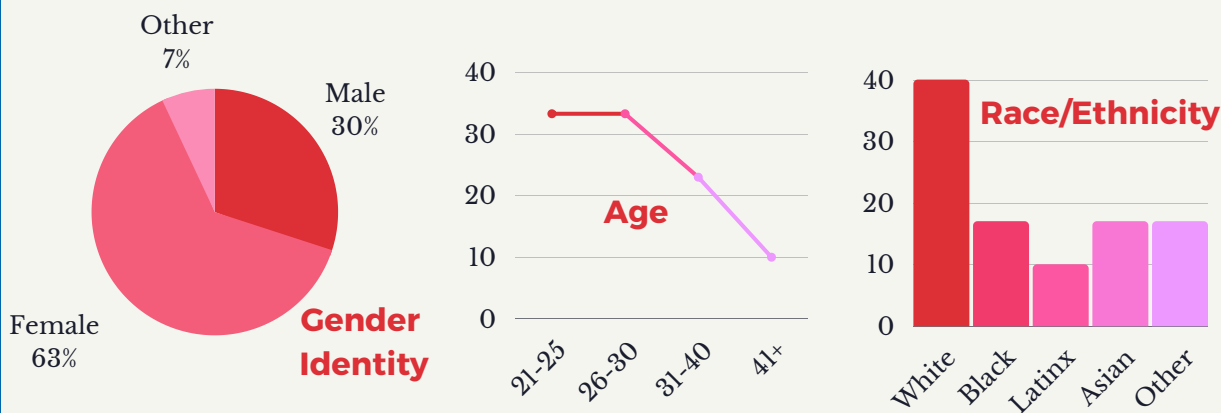
Assessment

Food security was measured using the USDA Food Security Survey short item version (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2018). Homelessness was measured using selected items from Crutchfield and Maguire's (2017) homelessness measure.



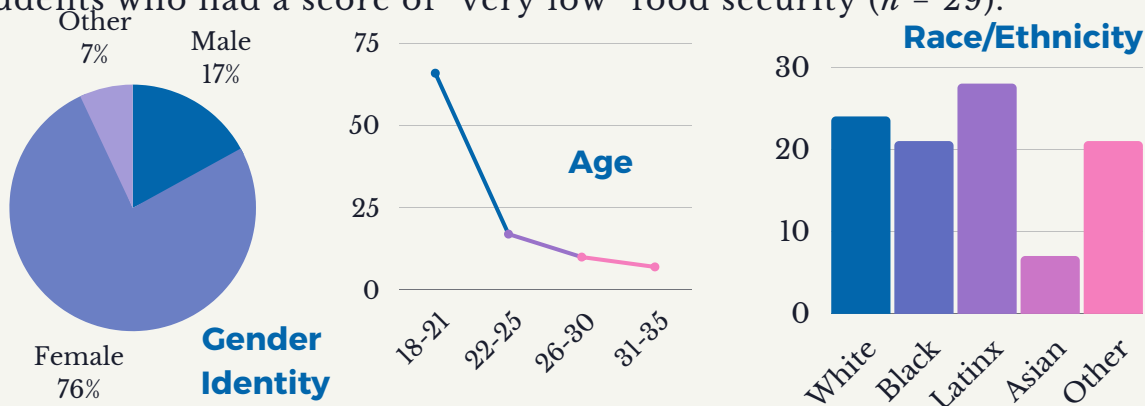
Graduate Students

39% of graduate students had low or very low food security ($n = 134$). The majority of graduate students experiencing food insecurity were students pursuing a masters degree. Below are the demographic breakdowns (in percentage) of students who had a score of "very low" food security ($n = 30$).



Undergraduate Students

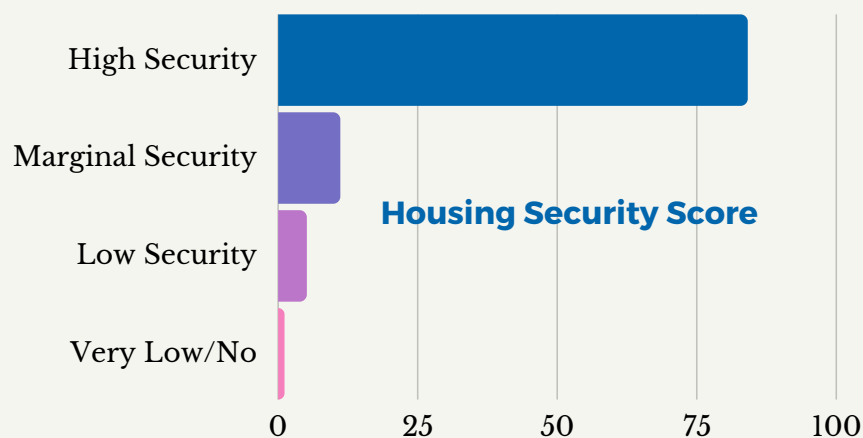
Undergraduate students comprise 43% of the overall study sample, however undergraduates make up 46% of students in the sample experiencing food insecurity. This indicates that food security may be more of an issue in the undergraduate student sample. Below are the demographic breakdowns (in percentage) of undergraduate students who had a score of "very low" food security ($n = 29$).



HOUSING SECURITY

Graduate Students

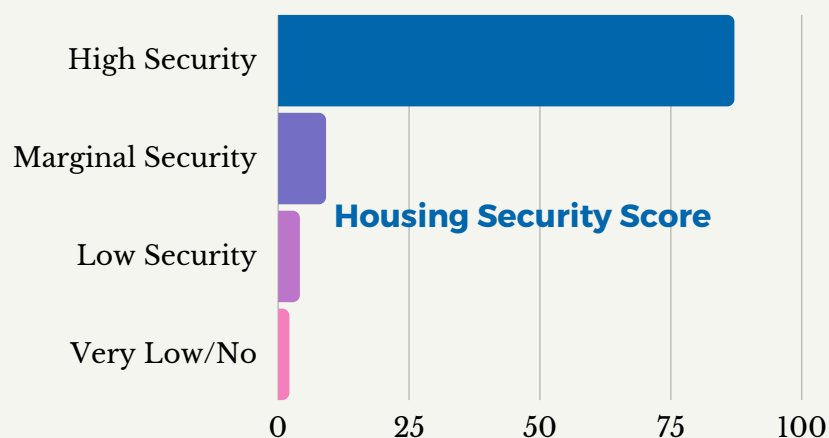
Below are the housing security scores of graduate students in the sample (by percentage), as well as how many of them experienced homelessness in the last 12 months. Students were determined to have experienced homelessness if they answered yes to any of the following: Stay at a shelter; stayed somewhere not meant for regular housing or couch-hopped.



7%
Experienced Homelessness in
the last 12 months
(*n* = 27)

Undergraduate Students

Below are the housing security scores of undergraduate students in the sample (by percentage) , as well as how many of them experienced homelessness in the last 12 months. Students were determined to have experienced homelessness if they answered yes to any of the following: Stay at a shelter; stayed somewhere not meant for regular housing or couch-hopped.



8%
Experienced Homelessness in
the last 12 months
(*n* = 23)



COMORBIDITY

74% of the undergraduate and graduate students surveyed who experienced homelessness in the past 12 months, also experienced food insecurity.

7%

Of Undergraduate student sample experienced both low/very low food security and homelessness.

6%

Of Graduate student sample experienced both low/very low food security and homelessness.

Q2: RESOURCE USE

On Campus Resources

Undergraduate sample: Only **8%** of undergraduate students surveyed indicated that they knew where to go on campus for resources or services related to both food and housing security. Another **9%** indicated they were aware of on-campus food security resources, while **5%** of the sample knew where to go for services related to housing security.

Graduate sample: Only **5%** of the graduate students surveyed indicated that they knew where to go on campus for resources or services related to both food and housing security. Another **4%** indicated they were aware of on-campus food security resources, while only **2%** of the sample knew where to go for services related to housing security.



Q3: BARRIERS TO SERVICE USE

Number One Barrier: Knowledge

89% Of graduate students were not aware of any on campus service provision, with **78%** of undergraduate students also indicating that they were unaware of where to go on-campus for assistance with any form of basic needs insecurity.

Food Security Services

83%

Of undergraduate students were not aware of where to go for food security assistance on campus

91%

Of graduate students were not aware of where to go for food security assistance on campus

Housing Security Services

87%

Of undergraduate students were not aware of where to go for housing security assistance on campus

93%

Of graduate students were not aware of where to go for housing security assistance on campus

RECOMMENDATIONS

On Campus Recommendations

1. Increase service provision
2. Services provided in same locations
3. Increase training of employees on referral practices
4. Make salient information easily accessible
 - a. (e.g., on websites, in syllabi, clearly marked service providers etc.)

Increase Awareness

Next Steps

1. Further Research
2. Develop a plan for sustainable change
 - a. Create a DePaul University level observatory to continually assess basic-needs insecurity among college students
 - i. Assessment project(s) would be to specifically address issues of basic needs insecurity, and focus on implementing changes to mitigate food and housing insecurity among students

