

Food Exchange Program

"Give a little, Get a little"

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I. Summary

Due to increasing costs of higher education and the current economic climate, many students are lacking the basic necessities of food and shelter. This directly, and indirectly, affects their performance in the classroom, as students struggle physically, mentally, and emotionally to succeed. According to a report by NBC, university officials around the country are reporting that an increasing number of students are relying on college operated programs such as can food drives, meal voucher programs, or food closets.

To address this struggle at California State University, Los Angeles, A.S.I., and the Starving Students organization is looking to support students' efforts towards graduation through assistance with supplemental food costs. The need for this program is evident and the current proposal offers an option that requires little supervision at minimal cost. In turn, this is a chance to provide a much needed service to the starving and less fortunate students on our campus.

II. Objective

California State University, Los Angeles currently has the largest number of Cal Grants recipients in the CSU System, which is a strong indicator of our average student's socio economic status. This program's intention is to create a positive environment that supports success and acknowledges our students' struggles. When we see our students walking on campus, taking notes in the classroom, or conversing with friends, it is difficult to imagine what their struggles are on a daily basis. Via the Food Exchange Program, our purpose is to encourage non-perishable food item donations and the redistribution of quality goods to those in need, while respecting the confidentiality and integrity of those benefiting from the program.

"The hardest thing to accept is the notion that there are times in life when you become dependent on (the) charity of others." - A Homeless UCLA Student

III. Mission

The Food Exchange Program is designed to provide struggling students with a basic necessity, food.

IV. Description

Containers for collection and distribution will be available five days a week, Monday through Friday. Times will depend on the respective office hours where the collection and distribution containers are placed.

Number of containers: Three (3) collection containers and one (1) distribution container

Collection containers locations: At these locations, students will be able to drop off food donations. Possible locations are the University Times office in King Hall, the Engineering Building, E.P.I.C. office, Veterans Affairs office, A.S.I. Administration office, and the Housing Phase II Lobby. Times for collection at the identified locations will reflect regular business hours.

Distribution container location: At this location, students will be able to obtain food donations, and therefore benefit from the program. Possible location would be the Health Center via the Health Promotions office.

V. Management

A. Starving Student Organization (collection)

1. Club members will assess the collection containers at least once a day. A “Collection Checkpoint Volunteer Form” will be used to assign and manage members working on this task. The form will be accessible to all volunteers via Google docs, the collection box assessment coordinator will send reminders for members to sign up, etc.
2. Every day, at the close of business, club members will collect and transport donations to the A.S.I. office.
3. A separate volunteer sign-in sheet will be used to delegate the task of transportation of donations from collection to distribution point. Moving and platform dollies will be provided to volunteers by A.S.I.
4. Starving Students organization members will manage and recruit volunteers.

B. Health Center, Health Promotion office (distribution)

1. One distribution container will be Health Promotion office in the CSULA Health Center. All items will be placed in the distribution container only after proper inspection.
2. It will be available to students wishing to use the program Monday through Friday during regular Health Promotion office business hours.
3. A short program survey will be made available to students to fill out, with respect to the students’ privacy. This will also help to track the number of students using the program, further affirming students’ need.
4. The Health Promotion office will also be charged with administering a general liability waiver to any student wishing to take part in the program. Signed waivers will be collected weekly by A.S.I. personnel.
5. A.S.I. members and volunteers will be assigned to assess the distribution container at least once a day. These individuals will be managed by the A.S.I. Campus Affairs and A.S.I. Community Affairs Representatives.
6. The A.S.I. Campus Affairs and Community Affairs Representatives will be responsible for managing the schedule of student volunteers and A.S.I. members.
7. The distribution container will look visibly different in size and color from the collection containers, so as to avoid any confusion.

8. Service hours can also be provided for A.S.I. members assisting the Starving Students organization with transporting food donations from the collection containers to the distribution point.

C. Department Responsibilities and Duties

1. A.S.I.

- Inspect all donated food at the distribution location.
- Create program survey to assess the need and support for the Food Exchange Program.
- Ensure visibility of the criteria on/near the distribution container.
- Recruit and monitor volunteers —Campus Affairs and Community Affairs Representatives.
- Provide materials for publicity and marketing.
- Provide all needed program collection and distribution containers
- Provide carts and dollies for Starving Students organization donation deliveries.
- Sign off on the delivery of donations by the Starving Students organization.

2. Starving Student Organization

- Create criteria (Honors System) for distribution
- Create the “Collection Checkpoint Volunteer Form”
- Transport donations from collection containers to A.S.I.
- Create a program volunteer database and keep it updated
- Collaborate with the University Council of Clubs & Organizations (U.C.C.O.)

3. Campus Affairs Representatives and Community Affairs Representatives

- Through the U.C.C.O., the representatives will be in charge of marketing the program to clubs and orgs for their support.
- The Community Affairs and Campus Affairs Representatives will create and monitor the volunteer schedule for the A.S.I. members—inspection and daily assessment of the distribution container/location.

VI. Marketing (Starving Students Organization & U.C.C.O.)

1. Generate posters and flyers to promote the Food Exchange Program.
 - Publicity should be placed around the entire campus, especially in the departments where the collection and distribution containers are.
2. Create a program specific Twitter, Tumbler, and Facebook event page.

VII. Budget

1. Collection containers (2) and Distribution container (1)
2. Marketing and publicity
3. Introductory food stock for early distribution
4. Miscellaneous

VIII. Distribution Container (Grub Bin) Guidelines

1. This program was designed and established “For the Students, By the Students” to provide a basic necessity that students lack, food.
2. Food donations - Be considerate of others and take only what you need (Honor System).
3. Cleanliness - Do not place trash in the containers. Do not use this container to recycle cans or bottles.
4. Only non-perishable unopened items (canned or pre-packaged) will be distributed. Items cannot require refrigeration or other temperature dependent handling/storage requirements.

IX. Criteria

1. Any CSULA student who needs food is welcome to benefit from the program.

X. Survey

1. A short program survey will be used to collect quantitative and qualitative data to support and improve the program. This survey will help to assess, and monitor, how and how many students are benefiting from the program.
2. The survey will be placed near the distribution container for beneficiaries to fill out and return with anonymity.

XI. Contact Information

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