

Cal State LA Food Pantry

ASI Funding Proposal

Project Abstract

In February of 2015 a study was commissioned by Cal State University Chancellor White. The purpose of this study was to examine student food and housing displacement across CSU campuses. The study looked at how campuses provided support overall to their student populations; What resources were available? What percentage of students experienced housing displacement or food insecurity, and how do we address these concerns? The study found that an estimated 8.7% of students were displaced and 21% of students were food insecure (*Crutchfield 2016*). Prior studies completed on specific campuses indicated even higher percentages. The College and University Food Bank Alliance indicates that students represent a large percentage of poverty and food insecurity nationally. One in ten of Feeding America clients are college students, and research further shows that the rate of food insecurity is 1.5 to 4 times greater than the national average for college students (www.CUFBA.org). A large percentage of college students are nontraditional which means that those making up the student population are working one or more jobs while attending school, they may have families (children, spouse, etc.), amongst many other things. In light of these recent findings, Cal State LA has recently joined fellow CSU campuses in addressing, and improving, food and housing security within the campus community. In response to the food and housing insecurity, Cal State LA has charged the Food and Housing Security Taskforce with addressing food and housing displacement and other immediate needs for students through initiatives such as the CalFresh Outreach Center, Cal State LA Food Pantry, and Emergency Housing Program.

Area Mission

The Cal State LA Food Pantry, under the division of Student Life, works in close partnership with the office of the Dean of Students, the University Student Union, and with various departments throughout campus such as the Alumni Association, Associated Students Inc. (ASI), Center for Student Involvement (CSI), College of Health and Human Services, College of Natural and Social Sciences, Department of Financial Aid, Housing and Residence Life, Kinesiology and Nutritional Science, Marketing, Public Health, Social Work, and Sociology. The food pantry's objective is to provide students with free food regardless of verified need as a means of supporting their wellbeing. Our goal is to eliminate as many barriers as possible to ensure ultimate success for Cal State LA students.

1.0. Target Population

- The pantry serves currently enrolled Cal State LA students regardless of verified need. The student's enrollment status is verified by verification of campus ID and class schedule.

2.0. Program Description

The pantry functions as a dry pantry with pre-selected/pre-filled bags for students to pick-up upon arrival. Students are able to view pre-filled bags to ensure that the bag contains items that they will likely use, with the possibility to swap 1-2 items if needed. Dietary restrictions are taken into consideration and are honored upon student request.

Food is supplied mostly from donated goods via campus and community partners, partnership with a local food bank, donated goods from students and others, and partially funded through the food pantries operating budget. Donations are accepted anytime during the week at the CalFresh Outreach Center (SA 113), Dean of Students Office (SA 115A), and Center for Student Involvement (U-SU 204). However, Monday is the official donation day, held at the food pantry between 11am-1pm and 3pm-5pm. All handling of food donations, packaging, and storage follow guidelines set forth by ServSafe.

2.1. Staffing

The Assistant Dean of Students for Wellness & Engagement, along with the Coordinator of Food and Housing Security oversees the operations of the pantry. The pantry is staffed by volunteers and interns from several academic programs.

2.2. Food Pantry Hours of Operation

Donation Day – Monday 11:00AM-1:00PM; 3:00PM-5:00PM

Service Day – Wednesday 11:00AM-1:00PM; 3:00PM-5:00PM

Students unable to make the official service day, or needing additional resources, can contact the CalFresh Outreach center to schedule an appointment.

3.0. Marketing and Outreach Plan

Food Pantry services are marketed each semester through the University-Student Union calendars. In addition, posters and postcards are provided through the pantry itself and through the various tabling events the pantry participates in, inclusive of Welcome Week, Wellness Week, and the CalFresh Day initiatives. In addition, the pantry makes use of its social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram to outreach its services and resource to students.

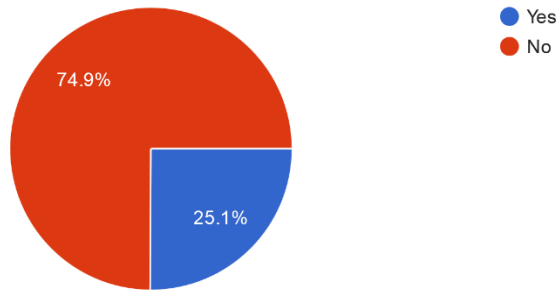
4.0. Fall 2019-20 Food Pantry Usage Data

As of fall 2019, the food pantry has served approximately 11,168 Cal State LA students since its opening in the spring of 2017. We serve an average of more than 200 students

per week. Below are statistics captured through an optional and anonymous survey for fall 2019 to date.

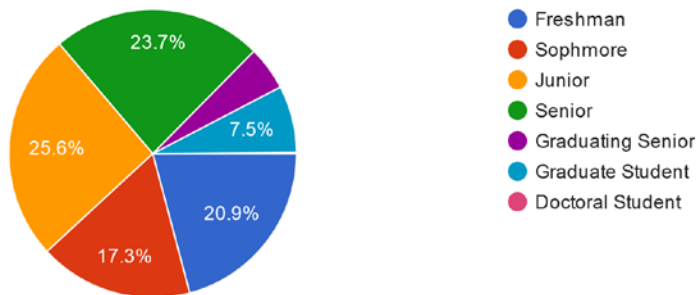
Is this your first time visiting The Food Pantry?

2,905 responses



Class Standing:

2,853 responses



5.0. Financial Plan and Expense Detail

The Cal State LA Food Pantry is requesting additional funding to supplement serving students with its resources. The request below outlines two specific areas that would support food pantry operations, food and supplies.

Average Cost of Pre-filled Bag:	Individual Food Items	Price Range
	1-2 Cans Veggies	\$0.75 - \$1.88
	1-2 Cans Fruit	\$0.54 - \$1.50
	Rice or Pasta Item	\$0.99 - \$2.80
	Pasta Sauce	\$0.90 - \$1.50
	Cereal or Breakfast item	\$0.50 - \$3.50
	Protein	\$0.99 - \$2.00
	Snacks	\$0.41 - \$1.00
	Bag Breakdown (Weekly average 200 bags)	Price
	Range cost for 1 Bag	\$5.08 - \$14.18 (\$9.63 average)
	Approximate Total 200 Bags x average \$9.63	\$1,926.00
	200 x 16 Weeks (1 Semester)	\$30,086.00
	Total Cost Annually (2 Semesters)	\$61,632.00
	Requested Funds for Food	\$61,632.00
Budget for Pantry Supplies:	Item	Price
	Giving is Golden Bag	\$1,650.00
	Donation Bag	\$1,400.00
	Pantry Staff T-Shirts	\$500.00
	Utensil Set – Promotional Item	\$678.00
	Requested Funds for Supplies	\$4228.00
Total Requested Funds:		\$65,860.00

This proposal not only aims to support Cal State LA students in addressing food and housing security issues, but is also in alignment with ASI’s purpose of “advocating for the rights and interests of students” and “supporting the educational, social, physical and cultural wellbeing of the university community.”

6.0. Program Evaluation and Quality Control Mechanisms

In the spring of 2020, the Food Pantry instituted usage of a student ID card reading system that allows students to easily access pantry services while validating their student status simultaneously. The introduction of this system aligns with the CSU system-wide approach toward ensuring enrolled students receive access to the resource while also connecting student usage to important anonymous and disaggregated student demographic data that can be used to paint a larger picture of pantry users. This data can also inform the pantry staff on which areas/colleges/majors on campus to target for additional usage and which areas/colleges/majors on campus are currently using the pantry.

In addition, in an effort to better understand and better serve student pantry users, the pantry staff will begin laying foundations for program assessment and student feedback through anonymous surveys and focus groups designed to provide students with opportunities to share

their experiences and suggestions. In order to maintain confidentiality and respect user privacy, these will be offered as optional activities, will both be anonymous or use pseudonyms (focus groups) and will provide incentives to participants as well.