

UC Berkeley Food Access and Security

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UC Global Food Initiative Fellowship

Introduction

The UC Global Food Initiative Food Access and Security Fellow at UC Berkeley has worked alongside food security champions at the university and across the UC system to address student food insecurity on our campus. Since the 2010-2011 academic year when the UC Berkeley University Health Services released a white paper on student hunger and consequently a task force to address student food insecurity was established, this has been an issue at the forefront of UC Berkeley's activities.

During the 2013-2014 academic year, the UC Berkeley Food Security Committee was established to bring together faculty, staff, administrators, graduate students, undergraduate students, and community experts working on or interested in food security on campus. The committee works to engage all of the relevant individuals and groups to address student food insecurity, with the goal of achieving a food secure university.

Along with financial support administered to students in need through the Financial Aid and Scholarships Office, the UC Berkeley Food Pantry launched in 2014 to provide emergency food assistance to students.

Today, there is a wide variety of efforts targeting UC Berkeley student food insecurity, and all work together to achieve the goal of a food secure community.



Goals

There were two primary goals for the UC Berkeley Food Access and Security Fellowship:

1. Co-author the first-ever UC Berkeley Food Access and Security Report
1. Actively participate in UC Berkeley and UC system-wide conversations around addressing student food insecurity

In addition to these overarching fellowship goals, the fellow worked to support the UC Berkeley Food Pantry operations throughout the year, as they progressed as an organization to address nutrition as well as food insecurity.

Fellowship Activities

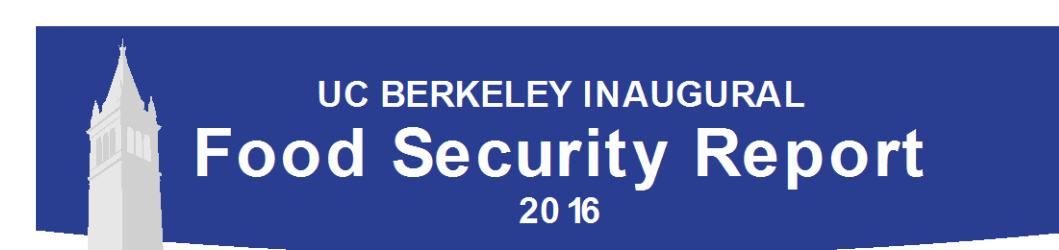
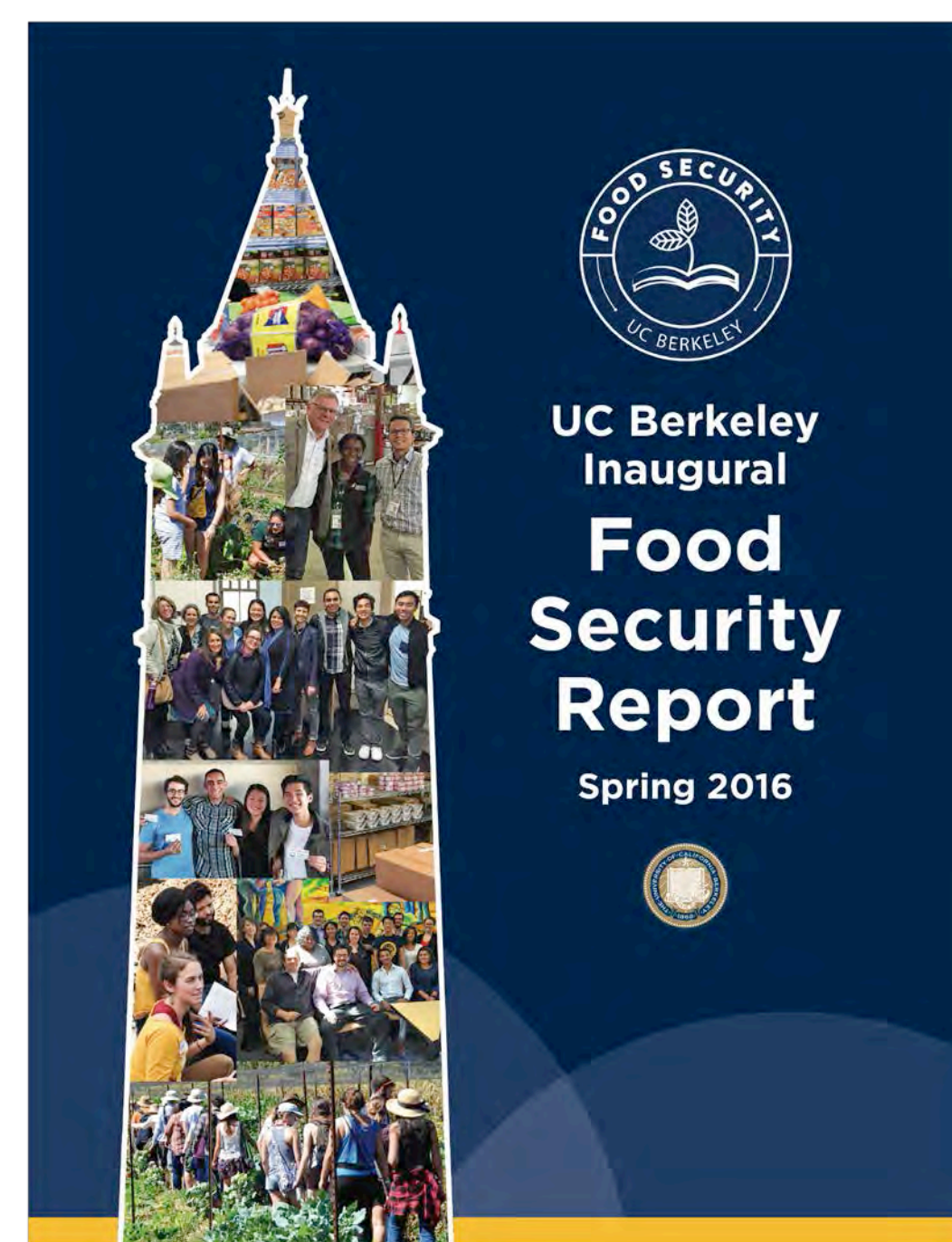
In order to accomplish the goals of the UC Berkeley Food Access and Security Fellowship, the fellow worked with a variety of partners and synthesized data from a variety of sources throughout the year.

Main fellowship activities included:

- Analyze quantitative and qualitative data on food insecurity among UC Berkeley Food Pantry clients
- Meet with UC Berkeley food security stakeholders – students, staff, and faculty – to understand the landscape of activities to address food insecurity
- Participate in UC Berkeley Food Pantry weekly meetings to support activities of the organization
- Participate in UC Berkeley Food Security Committee and UC System-Wide Food Security Committee meetings
- Engage in development of UC Berkeley Food Security and system-wide Model
- Synthesize campus data about financial aid, housing, and cost of attendance
- Present on food security efforts to students, staff, and other stakeholders

Fellowship Accomplishments

In addition to a further developed UC Berkeley Food Security Model, which brings together a variety of stakeholders to more fully address student food insecurity, in May 2016, the first annual UC Berkeley Food Security Report was published.



Executive Summary

Food Insecurity and Associated Trade-offs
"Food security is defined as... all people at all times having access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life." In the United States, 10% of households (or roughly 40 million individuals) are considered food insecure. According to a study from the 2013 Understanding Student Experience Survey (USE), 20% of undergraduate students report skipping meals to save money, and 40% of students at UC Berkeley report skipping meals to save money, and 40% of students at UC Berkeley report skipping meals to save money.

UC Berkeley's Response to Student Food Insecurity

Emergency Relief
Food insecurity is a complex issue that requires a multi-pronged approach. UC Berkeley has established a multi-pronged approach to address student food insecurity, including the UC Berkeley Food Pantry, the UC Berkeley Food Security Committee, and the UC Berkeley Food Security Model.

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Student Testimonials

"Education is crucial to better oneself, but it can be so expensive. It is becoming increasingly difficult to pay for school, and pay for living expenses such as food. I am constantly feeling overwhelmed, and the Food Pantry is helping to ease the burden. Resources like the Food Pantry give me hope that I will be able to finish my education and be able to help others once I am established."

"It gives me a feeling of security. I am confident that I can utilize such an amazing resource without feeling stigmatized."

"I come from a low-income family. Because my family is relying on me for financial support as well, I have to be as financially independent as I can without burdening my family. I prioritize their needs over mine, so I tend to neglect my own diet."

"The Food Pantry makes me feel more supported here at Cal. With a full stomach, I feel mentally and physically ready to tackle the rigor of school."

Future Goals

As our understanding of food insecurity at UC Berkeley progresses, the UC Berkeley Food Security Model will continue to evolve. A continued emphasis on data rigor and community engagement will be necessary in order to achieve the goal of a food secure university. The UC Berkeley Food Security Report will continue with new iterations each year, in order to gather and synthesize all the information about efforts to address student food insecurity on UC Berkeley's campus.

Acknowledgements

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- GFI Food Access and Security Committee
- Nutrition Policy Institute
- UC Institutional Research and Academic Planning

