

Food Insecurity on Campus

Successes, Struggles and Solutions

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Food Insecurity Stats

Barriers to Food Security

- Viable Income Sources
- Tuition Costs increasing
- Food Costs increasing
- Housing Costs increasing
- Lack of Funding
- Competing financial commitments
- Limited reach of initiatives that address issue

- Average cost of food per person was \$200.50 per month (2022) – Canada Food Price Report (2022)
- On average, 40% of post-secondary students experience food insecurity Silverthorn (2016)
- Students are more vulnerable to becoming food insecure facing unique barriers Frank (2018), Silverthorn (2016)
- Student who rely on loans have higher rate of food insecurity Entz et al. (2017)
- Financial stability is the most consistent barrier for students Bessey et al. (2020); Maynard et al. (2018)

Food Insecurity Stats

Effects of Food Insecurity

- Poor academic outcomes
- Difficulties concentrating in school
- Poor mental health and depression
- Poor physical health
- Higher stress levels
- Higher student debt
- Anxiety, Guilt
- Alienation and Social withdrawal
- Food compromises

- Female identifying persons, Indigenous peoples, and racialized students are most at risk of being food insecure (Silverthorn, 2016; Blundell 2018)
- Female international students and those with disabilities are also particularly vulnerable (Bottorff et al., 2020).
- Financial stability is the most consistent barrier for students Bessey et al. (2020); Maynard et al. (2018)

Food Security at the Mohawk Students' Association

Lean On We!



What MSA Offers!

- Emergency Food Bank
- Breakfast Program
- Community Fridge at Stoney Creek Campus
– Skilled Trades Campus
- Meal Token Program – NEW



Pre-Pandemic

Pre-Pandemic Stats:

- May 2018 - August 2018
 - 58 students
 - September 2018 - December 2018
 - 254 students
 - January 2019 – April 2019
 - 260 students
- Total: 572 students
(136 International students)**
- Offered pre-packaged food bags with variety of perishable food items.
 - Vegetarian Option
 - Family – 1.5 bags of food
 - Single – 1 bag of food
 - Students could access service twice per month



- Had a year and half of the Breakfast Program by offering HOT breakfast once a semester then expanded to grab and go items weekly/monthly

During Pandemic

During Pandemic Numbers:

- May 2020 – August 2020
 - 19 students
- September 2020- December 2020
 - 313 students
- January 2021 – April 2021
 - 492 Students

**Total: 824 students
(245 International Students)**

- Offered digital gift cards twice a month to students.
- Bypass the international student approvals
- Offered Cooking on a Budget / Clean out your Fridge workshop with a chef.



Post Pandemic

Post Pandemic Stats:

- May 2022 – August 2022
 - 75 students
- September 2022- December 2022
 - 88 students
- January 2023 – April 2023
 - 96 Students

**Total: 227 students
(111 International Student)**



- Offered Breakfast Program every week at all campuses
 - Had a hot breakfast each semester
- Offered Food Bank as Emergency and didn't promote as front facing service
- Soft Launched Community Fridge at Stoney Creek
- Supported students from Turkey when the Earthquake occurred (14 students)

Future

Emergency Food Bank

- Students can access once a month
- Digital Gift Cards – [Walmart/PC/Sobeys](#)
 - \$60.00 for Single
 - \$75.00 for Family



Breakfast Program

- Continue to offer grab and go items weekly/monthly
- Provide a hot breakfast option each semester

Community Fridge

- Only at our Stoney Creek campus
- This campus doesn't see a lot of students using the food bank so addressing food security in a different way
- Creating Community partners to support this initiative

Meal Token – **NEW**

- Provide immediate support to student with a meal in the moment
- Use a token to get a full meal – food and drink from one of the MSA food outlets

Community Fridge - SC

Soft Launch in February 2023

Hard Launch in September 2023

Process:

- Student comes in and Tap on our NFC Pad
 - Track data/usage and funding
- Allowed to take 2 items – juice box plus fruit or yogurt

Goals:

- Low barrier – not policed
- Build a Sense of Reliability – students know there is a stocked fridge on our busiest day
- Cross promotion – between our services

Growing Pains:

- First month – everything would be gone in 5 minutes
- Now having the tap system, it slows the process – making them aware of other resources and not just free food



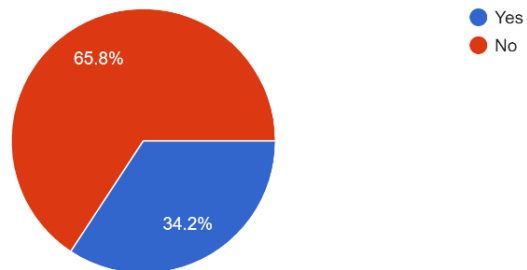
Community Fridge Part 2

**Lots of great feedback from students that they are relying on it every week

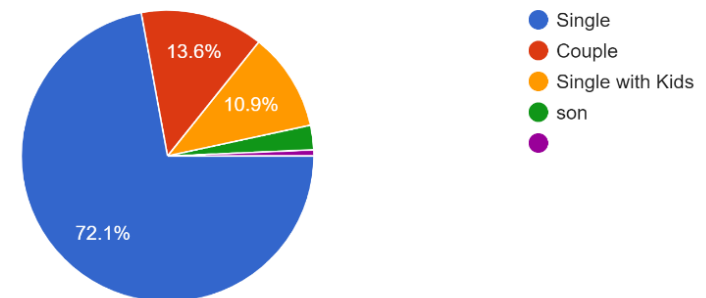
**Leading to students wanting to be involved and help out with the program

Usage Chart	
Total Items delivered	543
Total approximate usage	271.5
Total recorded usage	147
Usage variance	124.5
Usage variance percentage	84.69387755

Have you accessed the MSA Food Bank and received a food bag or gift card before?
146 responses



Choose one family type
147 responses



Partnership

The MSA has built a strong partnership with the Mohawk College Foundation.



The Foundation supports the Breakfast Program on alternating weeks which provides the students with more food security support which frees up our resources for other food security programs.

Sharing Shop Statistics

Pre-Covid (2019) to Post-Covid (W23)

Pre-Covid
(2019)

- The Sharing Shop Open - In Person Pick-Ups
 - Closed in April 2020 due to Covid-19

Term	Domestic	International	Total	Total Food Items Given to Students
Summer 2019	14	85	169	1371
Fall 2019	36	123	159	1559
Winter 2020	32	133	145	1450
Grand Total	82	341	473	4380

Covid
 (Fall 2020- Summer 2021)

- Due to Covid-19, The Sharing Shop was closed and \$25.00 PC Gift cards were distributed to students

Term	Domestic	International	Total	Total PC Gift Card in \$
Fall 2020	77	28	105	\$2625.00
Winter 2021	24	19	46 *	\$1150.00
Summer 2021	17	8	25	\$625.00
Grand Total	118	55	176	\$4400.00

* **Winter 2021** includes 3 Part-Time Students (Circumstantial)

Post-Covid
(Fall 2021- Winter 2023)

- Fall 2021- Increased PC Gift Card amount to \$50.00
 - 12 G/C's issued at \$25.00 prior to increase
- The Sharing Shop was shut down due to exceeding the allotted funds on March 9th, 2023

Term	Domestic	INTL.	Total	Total PC Gift Card in \$
Fall 2021	54	10	65	\$3000.00
Winter 2022	43	22	65	\$3250.00
Fall 2022	156	255* 42 UA/RU Students	411	\$33,800.00
Winter 2023	140	813 *	953	\$47,650.00
Grand Total	393	1100	1494	\$87,700.00

***\$300.00** issued to each UA/RU Student

***658 international students** waiting for referral form to be received (Winter 2023)

Events and Initiatives

Meal Calendar

Collective
Kitchen

Share-O-
Grams

Meals from the
Shop
(Quick recipes for
students utilizing basic
ingredients)

Holiday
Hampers

Free Breakfast
On-Campus

Free menstrual
products for
students

Adopt-A- Family

Approach Moving Forward

The Sharing Shop will operate as a referral-basis working with our College Partners to reach those students in need.

Students will receive a food hamper filled with non-perishable food items as well as a \$50 PC Gift Card to purchase perishable items (e.g. bread/milk/eggs etc.).

Toiletries will be offered as add-ons to these hampers

Hampers will be picked-up in person and available at all of our London Campus locations

Approach Moving Forward

Utilizing Microsoft Teams to connect with our College partners

No changes in eligibility criteria (full-time member) or how many times it can be accessed times (x3 per semester)

www.fsu.ca/the-sharing-shop will become a *resource hub* for students – advertising free breakfasts and upcoming Collective Kitchen Events, sharing recipes from Collective Kitchen/Meals from The Shop, etc.

Working with the local Food Bank (which has seen an increase in Fanshawe College Students) to promote upcoming Collective Kitchen Events on Campus for students

Food Insecurity at UW - STATS

Pre-Pandemic

- Offered pick your own style, then switched to pre-made hampers available at two locations
- 2019 – ~400 hampers distributed in 3 terms

During Pandemic

- Hampers available at 24/7 Turnkey only. Pre-made, Introduced Hygiene Hampers
 - Spring 2020 – 58 Hampers
 - Fall 2020 – 77 Hampers
 - Winter 2021 – 73 Hampers
 - Spring 2021 – 143 Hampers
 - Fall 2021 – 271 Hampers

Food Insecurity at UW - STATS

Post-Pandemic

- Winter 2022 – 505 Hampers
- Spring 2022 – 503 Hampers
- Fall 2022 – 703 Hampers

TOTAL 1711

Food Insecurity at UW

Current...

How are we addressing it?

Practical changes:

- “They say it’s anonymous, but I feel like it’s kind of embarrassing to go there.” (Maynard et al., 2018)
- “I don’t really want people to know. So, like, whenever I go to the food bank, I kind of make sure there’s nobody around and then I go in.” (Maynard et al., 2018)
- Switched in 2019 to a hamper system, available through our 24/7 service desk

Current

How are we addressing it?

Practical changes:

- Addressing Diverse needs
 - Placing hampers in accessible and relevant locations (ie: 2SLGBTQ Centre, Women's Centre, Racialized Student Centre, etc)
- Custom hampers
 - Allergens
 - Dietary Restrictions
 - ON HOLD – Culturally specific food hampers (due to lack of supply)
 - Menstrual Hampers
 - Hygiene Hampers
 - Regular hampers: Meat, Vegetarian, Halal, Kosher

Current

How are we addressing it?

Created a Food Security Strategy Committee

- Includes various stakeholders from around campus
- Not just big thinkers, but big doers too!
- Has at least started the conversation about how to address the bigger issue
- Created immediate returns including massive increase in donations and awareness
- Provides access to the University Administration that isn't directly involving the SA
 - They hear it from others, not just us!



Future

- Increasing support through Dropbox style Smart lockers
- Lockers are placed in 3 strategic locations around campus
- Expect to expand to at least other strategic location
 - Allows more anonymity as boxes are not heavily branded
 - Removes interaction with staff which can create anxiety
 - Allows more hampers to be pre-created and available
 - Addresses “between term” staffing concerns
 - Can be expanded to accommodate larger items if needed
 - Accessibility is increased due to location of lockers
 - Easy to manage and maintain
 - Implementation phase



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Future

- Breakfast Program through our MATES Peer Support Wellness Centre
 - Trial through Spring term with expansion in the Fall
 - Free food for breakfast including grab and go options
- Community Fridge supported by United University College
 - Online as of Fall 2023
 - Filled by students, community, and administration
- Survey and data gathering to understand the needs of students and where we can increase support



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THANK YOU!

Sorry I couldn't be here... I will miss you all. Please feel free to connect with me at Brendan@lowther.ca anytime! - Brendan Lowther, Services Manager, WUSA (until June 2nd)

Please reach out to Sam Spizzirri (sspizzir@wusa.ca) or Brian Schwan (bschwan@wusa.ca) if you have any questions about WUSA's Food Support Service



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Thank you!

Questions?

