At a Glance: Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is defined as “a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food” by the United States Department of Agriculture.

Missouri College Students

22% of Missouri college students answered “Sometimes”, “Very often” or “Always” to both of the following questions in the survey and are coded as “facing food insecurity”:

1. The food that I bought just did not last and I did not have money to get more.
2. I couldn’t afford to eat balanced meals.

Students Facing Food Insecurity

Forty percent (40%) of Black/African American students are facing food insecurity, which is the highest rate among all racial/ethnic groups.

First generation students also have a higher rate of food insecurity than other students.

Food Insecurity vs. Well-being, Retention, and Substance Use


This data is taken from the 2020 Missouri Assessment of College Health Behaviors survey (N=8769), implemented at 23 institutions of higher education in the state. Data was collected prior to COVID-19 campus closures. For more information on the survey please visit pip.missouri.edu/research.html