



Food and Housing Insecurity at Sacramento State and Connection to Broader Trends in California

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Goals of this morning

- I. Share ongoing research at Sacramento State
 - Our process, methods and early results

- I. Think about connections to broader research
 - What do we know about homelessness in CA
 - Food insecurity on campuses and young adult housing challenges nationally

- II. Discuss challenges of this work
 - Measuring housing and food
 - Reporting findings
 - Lessons learned & future directions

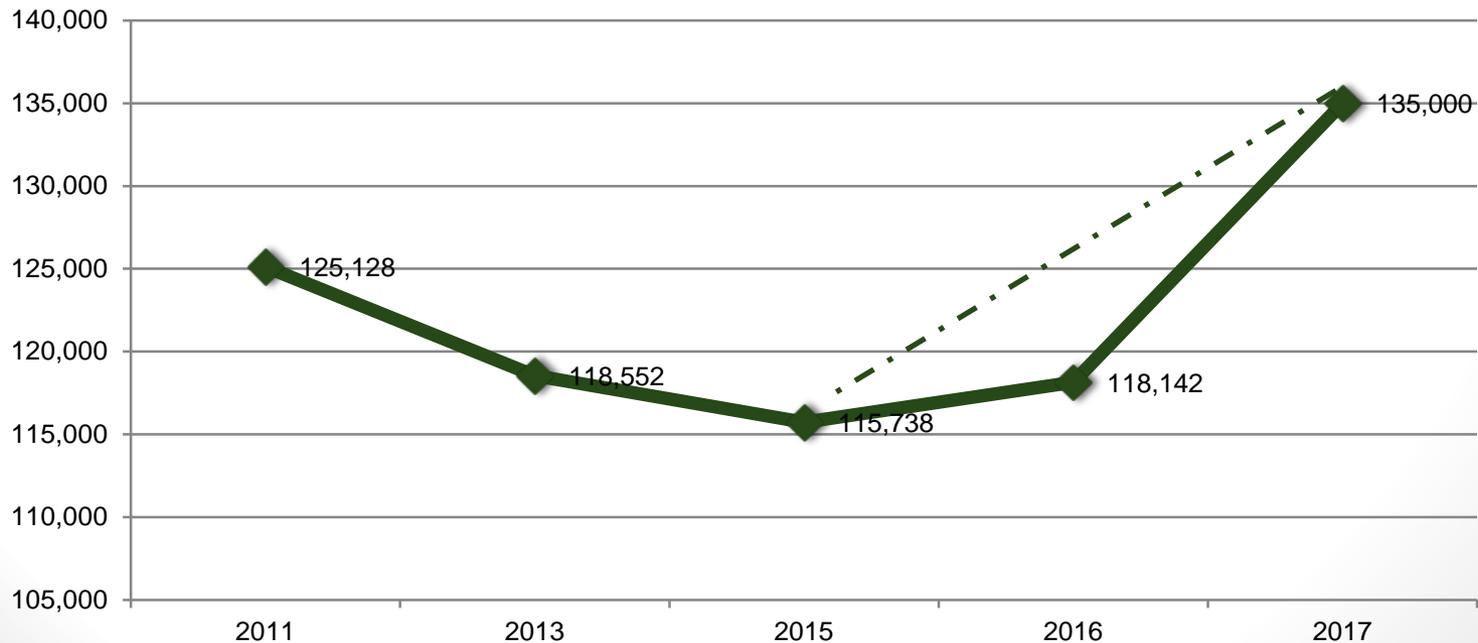
Agenda

1. What do we know so far?
2. Study background (our process & partners)
3. What have we found so far?
4. What do we (and you) want to know more about?

1. WHAT DO WE KNOW?

What we know

1. CA has largest homeless population in the US and it is growing
2. 80%-85% experience episodic homelessness
3. Housing insecurity vs. instability vs. homelessness
4. Complex drivers of homelessness: the role of affordable housing



What we know

- Homelessness and housing instability among young adults ages 18-25:
 - 5.2% experience “literal” homelessness in a given year
 - 4.5% experience housing insecurity in the form of “couch surfing” in a given year (Chapin Hall, 2017)
- Transition to adulthood as a time of instability and change
 - Some level of instability expected, but there are some youth at greater risk of higher level of instability and associated consequences
 - Homelessness among youth often episodic, short-term. Housing insecurity/instability may be more chronic.
- Homelessness and housing insecurity often hidden (Chapin Hall, 2017)

What we know

- Food Insecurity
- USDA Definitions of Food Security
- **High Food Security**
- **Marginal Food Security** – anxiety of food sufficiency or shortage of food; little/no change in diet or food intake
- **Low Food Security** – Reduced quality, variety, or desirability; little/no indication of reduced intake
- **Very Low Food Security** - Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake

What we know

In a nationwide study of food insecurity in college students:

- 56% of food insecure students report having a job
- Being enrolled in a meal plan with a campus dining hall does not eliminate the threat of food insecurity
- Three in four food insecure students received some form of financial aid (Dubick & Cady, 2016)

In a study across 12 UC campuses:

- The most prevalent consequence of not having enough money was purchasing the cheapest food even though it was not the healthiest (43%)
- 13% experienced difficulty studying because of hunger (Martinez, Maynard & Ritchie, 2016)

What we know

- Study of needs at the CSU (Crutchfield, 2016)
 - Preliminary student surveys from CSU Long Beach estimate that 12% of students are “displaced” and 21% food insecure
 - At the time of Phase 1 of the study (2015), 11 CSU campuses had programs for food insecure students, and one had programs for housing insecure students
 - Campuses tend to focus on addressing students’ food insecurity to a greater extent than students’ housing needs

2. STUDY BACKGROUND

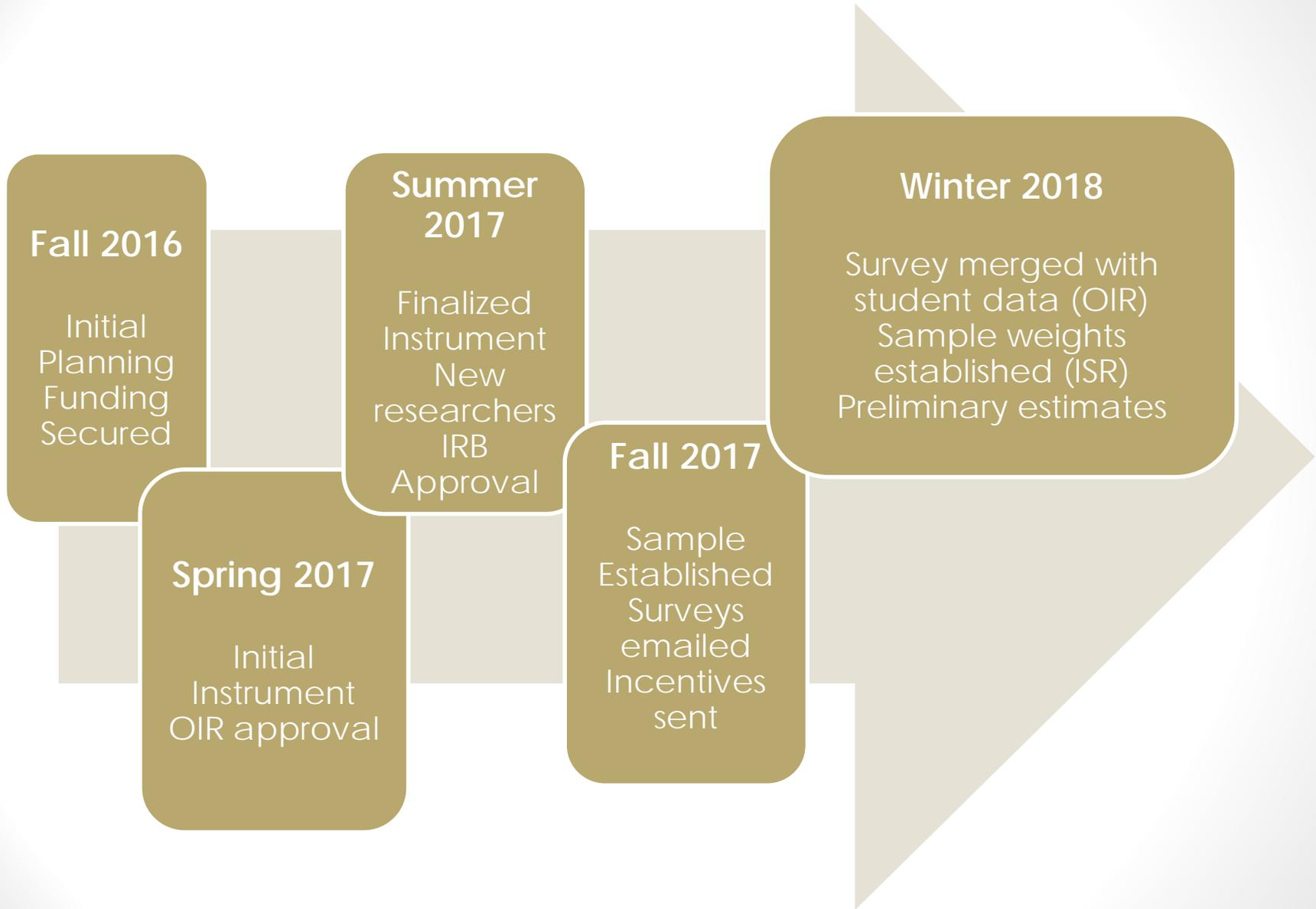
Post 2016 CSU Needs Conference

- CSUS Strategic Plan
- Task Force on Housing & Food Security.
 - Promote new campus programs & supports
 - (Emergency Housing Program. Hornet Roommate Finder, etc)
 - Support ongoing research
- Stakeholders
 - President's Office
 - The Union Well
 - Division of Student Affairs
 - Associated Students Inc.
 - Office of Institutional Research
 - Faculty researchers

Study Purpose

- Task Force Subgroup sought to design a new study to understand food and housing insecurity at CSUS
- Goals to build on CSU study and expand previous assessments by Dr. Lynn Hanna
 - Examine both housing and food insecurity issues at CSUS
 - Identify student groups particularly at-risk
 - Assess how insecurity issues may affect time-to-degree and graduation rates

Timeline



Study Design

- Instrumentation: 40 survey items
 - 13 food security items (based on USDA assessments)
 - 15 housing security items (based on HUD assessments)
 - 7 demographics items (based on census and other surveys)
 - 5 items on awareness of campus resources
- Stratified random sampling of 8,768 student emails
 - Stratified by student level, status and college
 - Undergraduates and Graduates
- Automated email invitations and incentives
 - 1,390 students responded to email (15.6% response rate)
 - 1,140 complete responses (13% effective rate)

Study Design

- Data merged with Student Records and Anonymized
 - **Office of Institutional Research** matched responses with student data
 - Demographics
 - Pell Grant Eligibility
 - Units Attempted & Completed
 - Overall GPA
- Sample weighted to adjust for response bias
 - **Institute for Social Research** assessed bias of sample to campus demographics
 - Biases found for students who are Male, Pell Grant eligible, Latinx, Transfer and Part-Time
 - Current Sample Weights restricted to sophomores, juniors, and seniors (n=970)

3. FINDINGS

Prevalence of Food Security among CSUS Undergraduates

2017
(N=970)

Food Secure 35.7%
(32.5%-39.0%)

Some level of Food Insecurity 64.3%
(61.0%-67.5%)

(95% CI Range)

Prevalence of Food Security among CSUS Undergraduates

	2017 (N=970)	2013 Pell Grant (n=848)
Food Secure	35.7% (32.5%-39.0%)	30.9% (26.1%-36.1%)
Some level of Food Insecurity	64.3% (61.0%-67.5%)	69.1% (63.9%-73.9%)

(95% CI Range)

Prevalence of Food Security among CSUS Undergraduates

	2017 (N=970)	2013 Pell Grant (n=848)	2017 Pell Grant (n=383)
Food Secure	35.7% (32.5%-39.0%)	30.9% (26.1%-36.1%)	30.9% (26.1%-36.1%)
Some level of Food Insecurity	64.3% (61.0%-67.5%)	69.1% (63.9%-73.9%)	69.1% (63.9%-73.9%)

(95% CI Range)

Unpacking “Levels of Food Insecurity” (USDA 10-item)

Among Food Insecure Students

Straddling Marginal Security
“Anxiety about food...” 28.5%
(24.7%-32.7%)

Low Food Security
“Reduced food quality...”

Very Low Food Security
“Reduced food quantity...”

(95% CI Range)

Unpacking “Levels of Food Insecurity” (USDA 10-item)

Among Food Insecure Students

Straddling Marginal Security <i>“Anxiety about food...”</i>	28.5% (24.7%-32.7%)
Low Food Security <i>“Reduced food quality...”</i>	24.1% (20.5%-28.1%)
Very Low Food Security <i>“Reduced food quantity...”</i>	47.4% (43.0%-51.8%)

(95% CI Range)

Unpacking “Levels of Food Insecurity” (USDA 10-item)

	Among Food Insecure Students	Among All Students
Straddling Marginal Security <i>“Anxiety about food...”</i>	28.5% (24.7%-32.7%)	17.2% (15.4%-20.7%)
Low Food Security <i>“Reduced food quality...”</i>	24.1% (20.5%-28.1%)	15.1% (12.8%-17.8%)
Very Low Food Security <i>“Reduced food quantity...”</i>	47.4% (43.0%-51.8%)	29.7% (26.7%-33.0%)

(95% CI Range)

How often do you...cut the size or skip meals?

Approximately **16.2%** of *all students* report that they skip at least one meal every week

	Marginal Security	Low Security	Very Low Security
Every week	1.3%	10.3%	48.0%
Once per month	0.6%	24.0%	33.6%
Less than once per month	9.0%	33.5%	17.0%

How often do you...not eat for a whole day?

Approximately **4.8%** of *all students* report that they go at least one entire day without food each week

	Marginal Security	Low Security	Very Low Security
Every week	0%	2.7%	14.8%
Once per month	1.5%	2.3%	25.7%
Less than once per month	2.5%	9.6%	35.5%

How often do you...go hungry because you can't afford more food?

Approximately **9.3%** of *all students* report feeling hungry every week because they can't afford food

	Marginal Security	Low Security	Very Low Security
Every week	0.5%	3.5%	29.2%
Once per month	2.6%	15.6%	36.4%
Less than once per month	2.1%	28.9%	27.7%

Prevalence of Housing Security among CSUS Undergraduates

	2017 (N=970)
Secure & Stable Housing	84.8% (82.7%-87.0%)
Some Level of Housing Instability	15.2% (13.0%-17.8%)

(95% CI Range)

Unpacking housing insecurity

	Among Housing Insecure Students (the 15% group)	Among All Students (100%)
Experienced periods of Instability in the past year <i>"Evicted, moved twice, trouble paying rent..."</i>	91.5% (85.1%-95.3%)	13.6% (11.0%-15.6%)

Not mutually exclusive

(95% CI Range)

Unpacking housing insecurity

	Among Housing Insecure Students (the 15% group)	Among All Students (100%)
Experienced periods of Instability in the past year <i>"Evicted, moved twice, trouble paying rent..."</i>	91.5% (85.1%-95.3%)	13.6% (11.0%-15.6%)
Experienced homelessness in the past year <i>"Stayed in shelter, no place to go..."</i>	32.7% (24.5%-42.1%)	4.6% (3.3%-6.4%)
Not mutually exclusive	(95% CI Range)	

Unpacking housing insecurity

	Among Housing Insecure Students (the 15% group)	Among All Students (100%)
Experienced periods of Instability in the past year <i>"Evicted, moved twice, trouble paying rent..."</i>	91.5% (85.1%-95.3%)	13.6% (11.0%-15.6%)
Experienced homelessness in the past year <i>"Stayed in shelter, no place to go..."</i>	32.7% (24.5%-42.1%)	4.6% (3.3%-6.4%)
Currently homeless <i>"Couch surfing, shelter..."</i>	5.0% (2.1%-11.7%)	0.7% (0.3%-1.7%)
Not mutually exclusive	(95% CI Range)	

Unpacking housing insecurity

- Important to remember that there is quite an overlap in these groups because housing status is fluid
 - 95% of students who experienced homelessness also experienced housing insecurity in the past year
 - They represent 30% of all students who experienced housing insecurity
 - 90% of students who experienced homelessness in the past year report that they are today in either a house or an apartment

What type of housing issues do CSUS students experience?

Across all undergraduates, approximately:

- **7.8%** say they struggled to pay rent after a substantial increase in the past year
- **3.4%** report that they have underpaid or missed a rent payment at least once in the past 12 months
- **5.2%** say they have been evicted out of their housing by their landlords in the past year
- **5.1%** say they were kicked out of their housing by a roommate or partner in the past year
- **4.0%** say they have slept in a car or an abandoned building at least once in the past year

What These Preliminary Analyses Tell Us

65% of CSUS undergraduates experience some level of food insecurity during the academic year

- Approx. **17%** are straddling **marginal food security** (anxiety about food)
- Approx. **15%** experience **low food security** (reduced quality but not quantity)
- Approx. **28%** experience **very low food security** (disruption to food intake)

What These Preliminary Analyses Tell Us

Experience of food insecurity varies widely across campus

- Approximately **16.2%** of all students skip at least one meal every week
- Approximately **4.8%** of all students go at least one entire day without food each week
- Approximately **9.3%** of *all students* feel hungry but can't afford food each week

What These Preliminary Analyses Tell Us

- Significant proportion of CSUS experiencing housing insecurity (including homelessness) within a 12-month period (~13%)
 - 4.6% of these students have experienced "literal" homelessness within the past year
 - These estimates for "literal" homelessness are similar to those from a recent national prevalence estimate of 18-25 year-olds (~5.2%; Chapin Hall, 2017)

What These Preliminary Analyses Tell Us

- Homelessness is typically part of an ongoing and cyclical experience of housing insecurity among students
 - Important implications for how we support students
 - Ongoing support may be needed beyond “literal” homelessness

Implications for Future Research

- We do not yet know what the consequences are for housing and food insecurity
 - To what extent are housing and food insecurity related to academic performance and retention?
 - To what extent is homelessness related to academic performance and retention?
- Are there differences in housing insecurity, food insecurity, and homelessness among certain groups of students?
- Follow-up interviews could help us understand further these experiences of housing and food insecurity, to what extent they are vulnerable and could impede academic retention and performance

Potential Implications

- Implications for potential campus interventions
 - Where do we target our resources?
 - Do we need to provide different levels of support than we are already providing?
 - How can we address housing insecurity before it leads to homelessness, before it impedes academic performance, retention, student well-being?

Thank you,

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