

February 13, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

I want to share with you the latest campus data on basic needs insecurity as summarized in the 2019 Cerritos College #RealCollege Survey Report.

65% of students at Cerritos College experienced at least one form of basic needs insecurity in the past year.

Food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness are overlapping concerns. In comparison with other two-year institutions nationwide, Cerritos College has a higher rate of food insecurity, a higher rate of housing insecurity, and a slightly lower rate of homelessness (15 percent compared to 17 percent). Below are a few key takeaways:

Food Security: During the 30 days preceding the survey, approximately 46% of our survey respondents experienced low or very low levels of food security. Moreover, 49% of survey respondents cannot afford to eat balanced meals and 47% worry about running out of food before they have money to buy more.

Housing Insecurity: 55% of survey respondents are housing insecure. Survey respondents had difficulty paying rent or mortgage, and struggled to pay the full amount of rent, mortgage, and/or utilities.

Homelessness: 15% of survey respondents experience homelessness. Homelessness means that a person does not have a stable place to live. Students were identified as homeless if they responded affirmatively to a question asking if they had been homeless or they experienced living conditions that are considered signs of homelessness in the previous year.

Utilization of Supports: Many students at Cerritos College who experience basic needs insecurity do not receive public assistance. Among food insecure students, 16% receive SNAP benefits. In addition, 6% of students who experience homelessness receive housing assistance.

Through our [Food and Housing Insecurity Taskforce](#), established in July 2017, a growing number of on-campus supports are being offered. However, few students are accessing them. Of the students experiencing basic needs insecurity at Cerritos College, only about 15% use on-campus supports.

The #RealCollege survey data at Cerritos College—and nationwide—affirms what we already know and observe in our classrooms and across campus: basic needs insecurity is a condition challenging many undergraduates pursuing credentials.

As you are aware, we have been hard at work to address these needs at Cerritos College, as it is part of our culture to be socially responsible and help solve what it is becoming a crisis across the state. With your help and support we will continue to establish and maintain a variety of services and programs to support our students. We will also continue challenge our communities to join us being socially responsible.

Thanks,
Jose

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