

# Improving Campus Pantry Service: Student Satisfaction and Feedback

## Maysie-Sophie Jean-Louis Healthcare Studies

### INTRODUCTION

- The Salem State University Student Wellness CARE Office provides support services that promote the health, safety, and overall well-being of students.
- The office focuses on helping students who may be experiencing personal, academic, or wellness challenges that affect their ability to succeed in Salem State University.
- Through a case management approach staff members work with students to assess their needs, provide guidance, and connect them with the appropriate campus or community resources.
- These services may include counseling, health care, basic needs assistance, pantry use, and referrals to community organizations.
- By providing access to resources and ongoing support the Student Wellness CARE helps create a healthier campus environment and promotes student success both academically and personally.

### PROJECT OBJECTIVE

To create and distribute a user survey for student who have used the current campus pantry in the Fall 2025 semester to assess their level of satisfactory and identify areas of improvement for the new pantry

### RELATED LITERATURE

Major barriers including stigma, lack of awareness, limited accessibility to culture relevant food and embarrassment lead to students not using the campus pantry. Helpful factor includes convenient hours, welcoming staff and wider variety of options (Idehai et al., 2024).

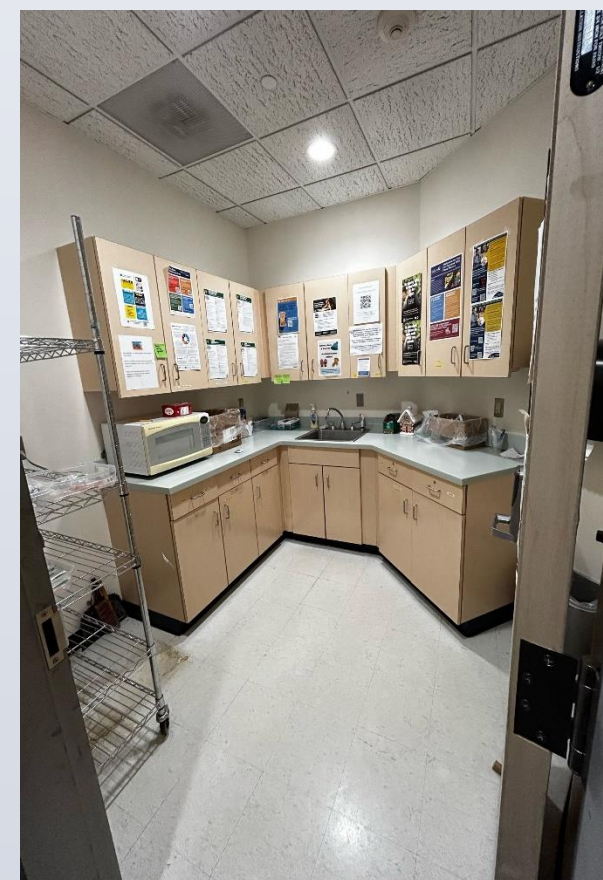
When students do not have regular access to enough nutritious food, they may feel fatigued, have difficulty concentrating, and experience a decline in their academic performance which can hurt their overall success in college (McCoy et al., 2022).

Cultural food security, the ability to access, afford, and prepare culturally meaningful food affects the identity, emotional well-being, and sense of belonging among second-generation U.S. minority college students. Through interviews the authors found that cultural food plays a vital role in maintaining cultural identity and supporting mental well-being (Lucero et al., 2021).

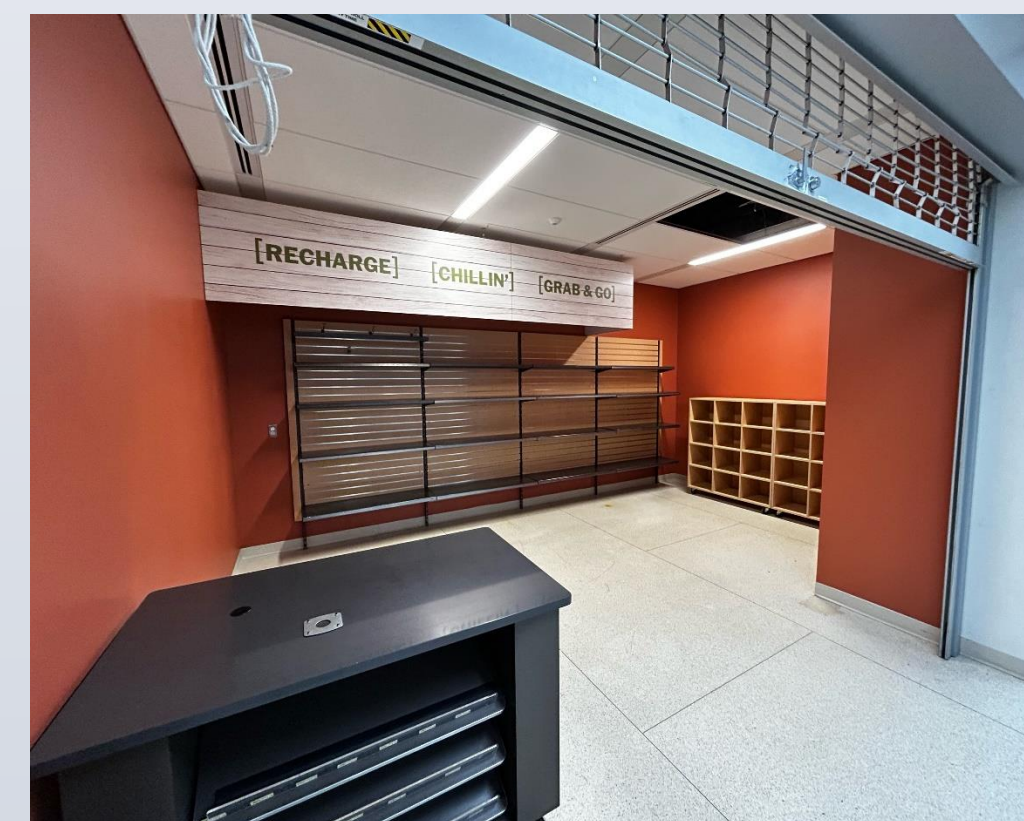
Measuring satisfaction provides insight into whether the pantry can better meet and provide support and overall food security on college campuses (Gardiner et al., 2024).

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

- Research was conducted and relevant information was gathered to help guide the development of the survey and ensure the questions and responses were useful for data collection.
- Transitional statements were included between different sections of the survey to improve clarity and help participants better understand each part of the survey.
- The target population consisted of students who have used the Salem state food pantry in the Fall 2025. The survey was distributed through email to ensure the correct audience was reached (N=90).
- Analyzing survey results to identify trends and areas for improvement helping inform recommendations to enhance the new campus food pantry.

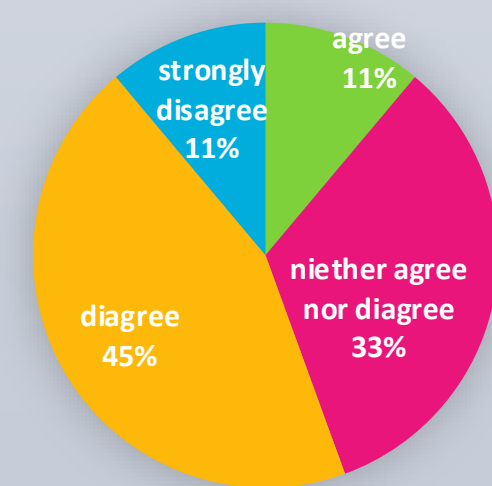


Old Pantry

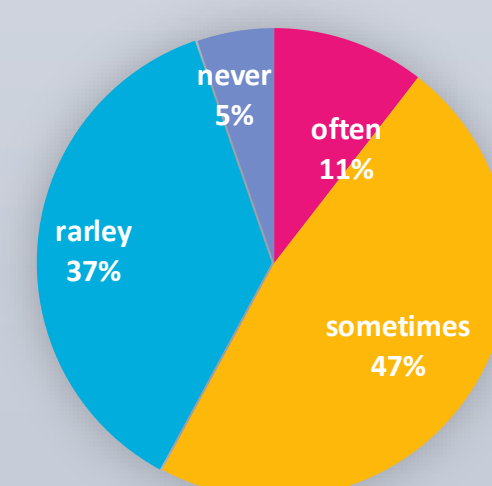


New Pantry

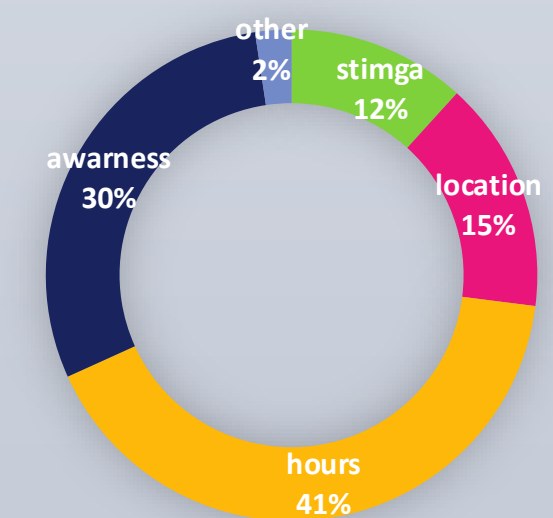
### RESULTS



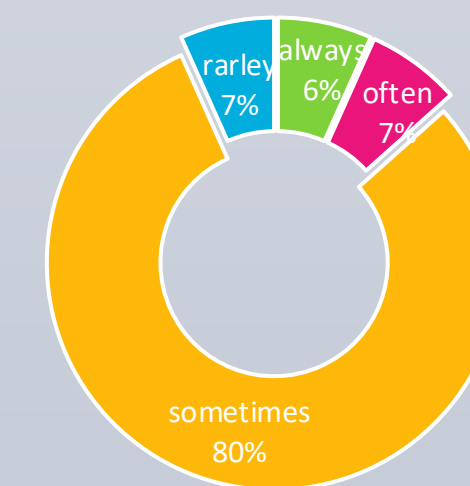
Are you able to make your cultural cuisine with items you get from the campus pantry?



Did the campus food pantry provide you with a meal that otherwise would have been skipped?



What barriers prevent you from going to the food pantry?



Does the food available at the SSU campus pantry to meet your dietary needs/restrictions?

- 95% of students use the pantry at least 1-2 times per week.
- 53% of students are satisfied with the hygiene essential items available to them in the campus food pantry.
- 76% use the campus food pantry as a supplement while 18% use it both sole resource and supplemental.
- 85% of students are only able to prepare one balanced meal daily using the campus food pantry.
- 40% of students disagree that It was easy to locate the campus pantry

### CONCLUSIONS

- The SSU food pantry is an essential resource with most students using it regularly.
- Students who visited the campus pantry in Fall 2025 rely on the pantry to avoid skipping meals.
- Not all students who previously used the campus pantry feel their dietary need or cultural food preferences are fully met.
- Many are only able to prepare one meal per day using the campus pantry resources.
- Despite its benefit some students using the campus pantry face barriers such as limited hours, lack of awareness and stigma.

Recommendation:

- Expanding pantry hours
- Expanding food variety to better meet diverse, dietary and cultural needs
- Improve availability on hygiene products
- Improving outreach to students

### REFERENCES

- Gardiner, K., & Harvey, S. (2024). Are we meeting student needs? Developing a measure for college food pantry satisfaction. *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development*, 13(3), 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.5304/jafscd.2024.133.027>
- Idehai, O. V., Mbaya, P., Chung, T., & Bhurosy, T. (2024). A systematic review of factors associated with student use of campus food pantries: implications for addressing barriers and facilitating use. *BMC Public Health*, 24(1), 97. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-17583-7>
- Loofbourrow, B. M., & Scherr, R. E. (2023). Food Insecurity in Higher Education: A Contemporary Review of Impacts and Explorations of Solutions. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 20(10), 5884. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20105884>
- Wright, K. E., Lucero, J. E., Ferguson, J. K., Granner, M. L., Devereux, P. G., Pearson, J. L., & Crosbie, E. (2021). The impact that cultural food security has on identity and well-being in the second-generation U.S. American minority college students. *Food Security*, 13(3), 701–715. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12571-020-01140-w>



### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ian Wong, MSPH- Site supervisor, Director of Student Wellness CARE  
Eric Schisler, PhD- Faculty Instructor