

Food for Thought: A Qualitative Look into the Need for a Campus Food Pantry

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According to the Chronicle of Higher Education, ongoing research on campus food insecurity illustrates the seriousness of the problem and need for intervention. To assess the need for a campus food pantry at Wichita State University, researchers conducted three focus groups. Focus groups, facilitated group conversations, included ten questions assessing the need for a campus-based food pantry. Twenty-two participants, ranging in age from 17 to 40, took part in the study. Three themes emerged: nutrition, awareness of the need for a campus food pantry, and recommendations regarding the logistics of implementing a food pantry. Participants showed concern with food quality, suggesting healthy food options including fresh fruits and vegetables. All participants perceived the need for a food pantry and acknowledged the reality of food insecurity on campus. Moreover, students were concerned with establishing clear procedures for the management of the food pantry, including protecting the privacy of those who use it.