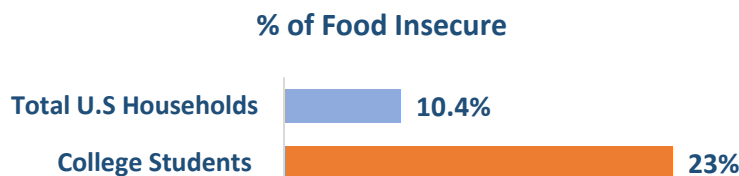
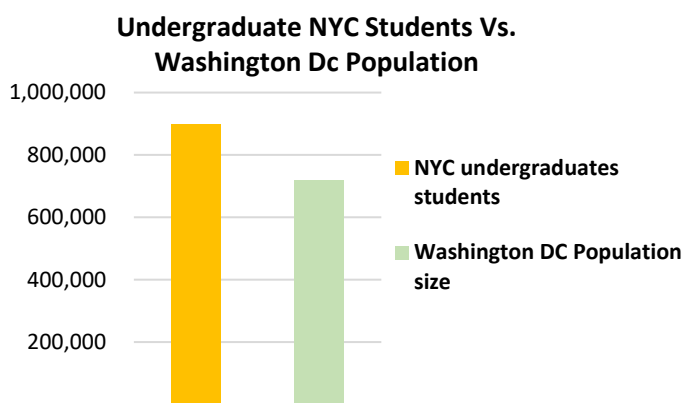


Food Insecurity Among College Students: A Growing Concern in New York City

Food insecurity is a growing issue among college students. From the just-released National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, nationwide, 23 percent of undergraduate students face food insecurity¹. This is more than twice the current U.S. household food insecurity rate, estimated at 10.4 percent².



New York City hosts myriad of colleges and universities and attracts a diverse student population of nearly 900,000³ undergraduate students—surpassing the entire population of the nation's capital, Washington DC (approximately 720,000).

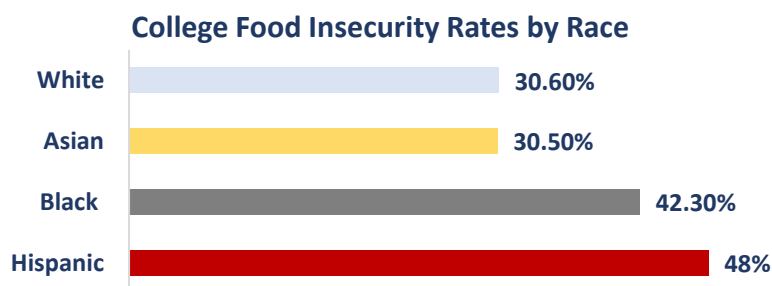


Despite its vibrant atmosphere, a significant number of students in New York City grapple with challenges in accessing nutritious meals regularly. A considerable portion of these students experiences food insecurity, characterized by limited or uncertain access to affordable, nutritious food.

A survey conducted by HealthyCUNY across all 17 CUNY community colleges and four-year

schools revealed that almost 39 percent⁴ of CUNY students struggle with food insecurity. Notably, food insecurity is most prevalent among Hispanic and Black populations, with 48% of Hispanic students and 42.3% of Black students facing food insecurity⁵.

39% of CUNY College Students are food Insecure



High living costs, tuition fees, and other academic expenses often strain students' budgets, leaving them vulnerable to hunger. This one-pager sheds light on the factors contributing to food insecurity and proposes potential solutions to alleviate this issue.

¹ [Food Insecurity and Homelessness in American Higher Education: An Overview of New Nationally Representative Estimates \(2023\) – SARA GOLDRICK-RAB \(saragoldrickrab.com\)](https://www.saragoldrickrab.com/)

² <https://map.feedingamerica.org/>

³ <https://www.univstats.com/states/new-york/>

⁴ HealthyCUNY [CUNY CARES report](#), Released 07/2023

⁵ <https://younginvincibles.org/food-insecurity-at-cuny/>

Factors Contributing to Food Insecurity Among College Students:

- **High Living Costs:** The exorbitant cost of living in New York City significantly impacts students, compelling them to allocate a substantial portion of their budget to housing and other necessities.



- **Tuition and Educational Expenses:** College tuition and related expenses impose additional financial burdens on students, diverting funds away from food budgets.



- **Limited Employment Opportunities:** Balancing academics and work is challenging for many students, and the competitive job market in the city further limits their ability to secure stable employment.

- **Lack of Awareness:** Some students may be unaware of available resources, such as food assistance programs and campus initiatives, exacerbating the issue.



Potential actions to ensure a food secure tomorrow for college students:



Enhanced campus support programs: Food banks, meal voucher systems, and easily accessible on-campus food pantries can significantly mitigate the challenges of food insecurity. Notably, students attending a food pantry were three times less likely to discontinue their studies than their food-insecure peers⁶.

Assistance in enrolling in SNAP and WIC: A Healthy CUNY survey conducted in Fall 2022 estimated that 50% of Bronx students were eligible for SNAP. Of these eligible students, 60% were not enrolled in the program, equaling an estimated 30% of the CUNY student population (~7,200 students). Providing assistance in enrolling in SNAP and WIC, and troubleshooting for problems with SNAP and WIC enrollment could benefit a significant portion of students.⁷



Advocate for legislation to expand access to vital programs such as the New York State Hunger Free Campus Act and the Federal Enhance Access to SNAP Act. For more information, visit foodbanknyc.org/advocate.

For more information on campus pantry hours and for other resources available to students:



- For college pantry locations and hours, visit [CUNY Food Pantries — Healthy CUNY](https://www.foodbanknyc.org/pantries)
- For SNAP support, visit NYC HRA: <https://a069-access.nyc.gov/accesshra/> or Food Bank SNAP Assistance program: <https://www.foodbanknyc.org/snap-assistance/>
- For other resources publicly available, visit <https://www.foodbanknyc.org/get-help/>
- For ways to help: <https://www.foodbanknyc.org/donate/#>

⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6836795/pdf/AJPH.2019.305332.pdf>

⁷ <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58583536725e25dfee053319/t/64a6dad6f6d95d00ba410330/1688656601426/CUNY+CARES+Baseline+Assessment+Report.7.6.23.pdf>