

UH SYSTEM BEST PRACTICES & PRIORITIES

To ensure that national best practices and UH institutional priorities for student basic needs planning were integrated and highlighted in the inaugural UH Student Basic Needs Master Plan (UHSBNMP), the UH Basic Needs Committee management team³ drafted and completed a [basic needs best practices survey](#) to help university staff merge existing student needs data with best practices to clarify basic needs priorities and programming most effectively executed at the UH System level. This process was replicated at each of the 10 UH campuses. The outcomes of this process are represented in each of the [UH Campus Student Basic Needs Master Plans](#). This iterative process—evaluating student basic needs insecurity across the UH system, defining programming priorities based on institutional best practices, and reconciling priorities with institutional capacity and resource constraints—will be repeated every three years to re-assess basic needs priorities as new data becomes available and institutional resource circumstances change.

³ The UH System Basic Needs Committee Management Team: Hae Okimoto, Associate Vice President for Student Affairs; Albie Miles, UH Basic Needs Committee Chair; and Rainbow Uli'i, UH System Student Basic Needs Coordinator.



2021 UH System #RealCollege Survey: Key Findings

In 2020, UH contracted [The Hope Center](#) to administer the #RealCollege Survey to students across all 10 campuses in the UH System. The [study](#) published in June 2021 found that a total of 58% of respondents experienced some form of basic needs insecurity, with 39% experiencing food insecurity in the previous 30 days, 44% experiencing housing insecurity in the past 12 months, and 14% experiencing homelessness in the previous 12 months. Despite the low response rate (2%), these UH findings are consistent with the findings of [The Hope Center's 5-year national study](#) of over 195,000 students in higher education.

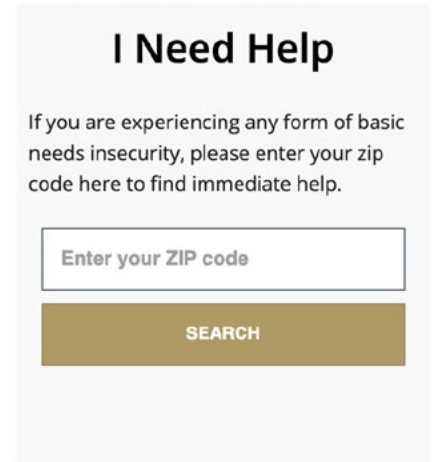
In addition to the key data mentioned above, 38% of students who took the #RealCollege Survey showed at least moderate anxiety. **Importantly, 58% of students who reported experienced basic needs insecurity did not apply for support because they didn't know how. Similarly, only 15% of students who had some form of basic needs insecurity utilized emergency aid. 45% of respondents were not aware of any emergency aid programs on campuses.** As troubling as these findings are, it is clear that students are not informed enough about on-campus support to address basic needs insecurity. These statistics support the formation of our SBNMP to specifically address informing student populations about campus resources.

The #RealCollege Survey identified campus support available to students, and whether students used, heard of but had not used, or had not heard of those types of support. The identified resources on the survey were Emergency Aid, Help Obtaining SNAP, Help Finding Affordable Housing and Emergency Housing. Of those who completed the survey, 40% heard of but had not used emergency aid, 53% heard of but had not used help obtaining SNAP, 47% heard of but had not used help finding affordable housing, and 43% heard of but had not used emergency housing. For emergency aid, 45% of students who completed the survey did not know it existed, showing a clear lack of awareness in students for emergency financial support. Of survey respondents 53% have never heard of emergency housing identifying the importance of resource awareness.

Of the students who experienced basic needs insecurity, multiple reasons were identified for not applying for the types of campus support mentioned above. 78% of students attending a two-year college and 77% of students attending a four-year university stated that they did not think they were eligible for campus support. A total of 66% of students attending a two-year college and 72% of students attending a four-year university didn't apply for campus support because they felt other people needed those programs more than they did. Other reasons identified by students include not knowing the campus support existed, not knowing how to apply, not needing those programs, having difficulty completing the application, being too embarrassed to apply, and feeling that students in their situation do not use those programs.

Tracking and Using UH System Findhelp.org User Meta-Data

The [Findhelp.org](#) basic needs search engine (embedded in the UH Basic Needs website) is used to connect UH students to community, state and federal resources that support basic needs security. The Findhelp.org site is linked across the [UH Student Basic Needs website](#) in multiple locations and accessed through a simple search box (see image below). Between March 2021 and December 15, 2021, there have been a total of 1,498 identified users that have created accounts using the UH single sign-on capabilities. These users have completed a total of 8,568 searches within this timeframe. Data show the most popular of those searches are those under the categories of housing, money and food.



The graphic below shows the number of searches from the UH Findhelp.org site between its launch in March 2021, until the end of the Fall 2021 semester. The “Program” line shows the amount of times users selected an action that generated a list of basic needs programs to select from, a process similar to selecting a search category. Meta-data derived from the UH Findhelp.org site will be used on an ongoing basis to identify student needs and inform subsequent updates to the UHSBNMP. Data will also be used to determine how frequently students are accessing support and logging self-referrals for programs. With this user meta-data, the UH Student Basic Needs Committee will be better able to track how trends in student basic needs align with programming and outreach efforts aimed at reducing basic needs insecurity. This information will also be used to design priorities, best practices and programs as part of future UH Student Basic Needs Master Planning.

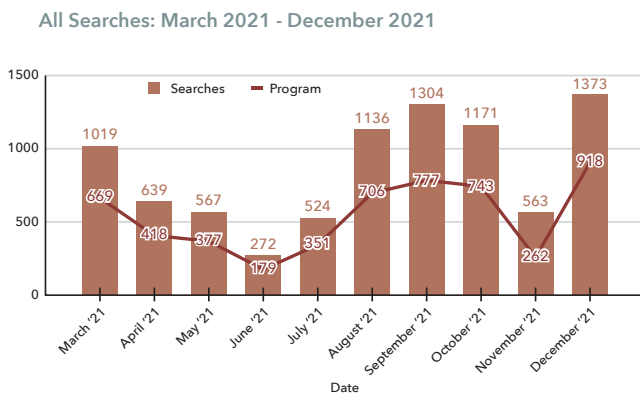


Image: Number of searches from the UH Findhelp.org site between March 2021 until the end of the Fall 2021 semester.

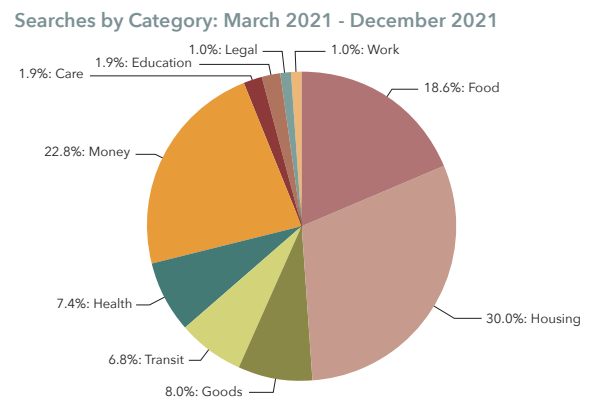


Image: Searches by category from the UH Findhelp.org site between March 2021 until the end of the Fall 2021 semester.



UH System and UH Campuses: Coordination of Basic Needs Programing Efforts

To better understand the capabilities of the UH System, it is important to note that the system itself does not carry the majority of the funds for basic needs efforts. UH campuses are more likely to have the capacity to implement direct services to students. In addition, the UH System will need to receive buy-in and monetary funds from the campuses to be able to implement certain best practices. Because the Basic Needs Best Practices Survey asks for best practices according to priorities that the UH System has the working capacity to implement immediately, the identified best practices prioritize strategies such as staffing, institutional policy, partnerships, emergency aid and outreach and education.

UH Basic Needs Staffing Plan

To coordinate overall UH student basic needs planning and prioritize best practices, it is critical that there be a UH System student basic needs coordinator position, as well as a UHSBNC chair. The coordinator will manage the operational aspects of the committee, interfacing with campus resources and the community. The chair will be someone recognized as a leader in this area, from within the UH System, able to convene and lead faculty and staff. The chair will be an overload position. Since the basic needs coordinator was hired in February 2021, the basic needs committee was able to complete multiple projects. To have someone dedicated to the necessary basic needs efforts in the system is crucial, and therefore UH System basic needs representatives are suggesting that there continue to be dedicated staff for these efforts.

Maintaining both the basic needs coordinator position and UHSBNC chair (course overloads) will require a total cost of \$120,000 per academic year. Some of the duties for both positions are included in the table below.

UH Student Basic Needs Institutional Policy, Partnerships & Sustainability

As the SBNMP has been completed, it is crucial that the UH System accept the plan as a key part of institutional policy to better continue practices. In addition, the UH System SBNMP also includes crafted best practices from each campus, as teams worked to tailor a plan that worked for their individual campuses. Allowing this SBNMP to be considered a part of institutional policy for the UH System will ensure that plans are executed and measurable.

Partnerships are a large part of the continuance of basic needs support across the UH System. With help from the Lumina Foundation and Harold K. L. Castle Foundation, the basic needs committee was able to hire a coordinator, construct a basic needs website, and craft the basic needs master plan. With help from more partners, it's clear that the UH System and campuses will likely be able to decrease the rate of basic needs insecurity for students.

Upon adoption of the SBNMP by UH academic officers (estimated for spring 2022), the UHSBNC is committed to seeking funding to support UH System and campus-level initiatives outlined in the master plan in perpetuity. UHSBNC will seek extramural funding for basic needs programming through public and private sources.

Outreach & Education

The UH System basic needs representatives are recommending that there be consistent basic needs webinars occurring at least once a month to help destigmatize basic needs, and deliver information and resources to students. Similar to the basic needs webinars from summer 2021, these webinars will cover multiple important topics for basic needs security including but not limited to: financial literacy, basic needs education for faculty/staff, basic needs resource support, website introductions, etc.

Measuring Efficacy

UH contracted with The Hope Center in 2020 to bring the #RealCollege survey to students. This survey was the foundation of the [UH System and Campus' Student Basic Needs Reports](#). The reports have provided the UHSBNC, campus administration and the general public with new information on rates of student basic needs insecurity across the UH System. The UHSBNC recommends that the UH System continue to contract with The Hope Center to deliver the #RealCollege Survey every three years on an ongoing basis. Doing so will support the UHSBNMP as a living document, enabling the UH System and individual campuses to adjust the plan as needed based on current data. Subsequent studies of the UH student population will measure and assess rates of basic needs insecurity, priority needs, student awareness

of available resources and services, and how students are gaining access to basic needs services and resources.

Emergency Aid

The UHSBNC is responsible for managing the [Urgent Student Relief Fund \(USRF\)](#) for the UH System in collaboration with the UH Foundation. The USRF (initiated in April 2020) will be distributed on a case-by-case basis to UH campuses based on the decision of the UHSBNC. Funds transferred to each campus will be allocated to UH students as direct payments. Students eligibility for USRF support will be determined by each UH campus.

Recommendations

BEST PRACTICE	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST: 3 YEARS
Core Staff: UH Basic Needs Coordinator and UH Student Basic Needs Committee Chairperson	UH Student Basic Needs Coordinator and Committee Chairperson: Provide salary, benefits and course release for 3 years to support foundational basic needs programming at the system level. Core staff will carry out all necessary coordination, planning and operations to support the completion and implementation of the UH Student Basic Needs Master Plan and related activities in close coordination with the UHSBNC and key constituencies, including students. The UHSBNC will support UH System and campus-level basic needs programming.	\$360,000 (\$120,000 annually)



BEST PRACTICE	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST: 3 YEARS
Student Basic Needs Outreach & Education Events	Multiple education and outreach programs will be coordinated by the project personnel (above) and in consultation with the UHSBNC. Events will include, but are not limited to, inviting national experts to dialog with UHSBNC, UH administrative leadership, conduct public talks and provide strategic advice to UH and prospective funders (philanthropic, governmental). In addition, there will be multiple system level education and outreach events directed toward the UH student body and staff to raise awareness of the issue of student basic need insecurity, connect students to basic need resources, and solicit input into the improvement of delivery of food and basic needs programming in the UH System.	\$150,000 (\$50,000 annually)
Regularly Scheduled Student Basic Needs Electronic Communications	On an ongoing basis, the UHSBNC will organize the circulation the following electronic communications: a reminder to UH faculty to include a basic needs course syllabus statement; a basic needs webinar schedule; a Lualima pop-up window directing students to the Student Basic Needs online clearinghouse; multiple UH News stories on student basic needs insecurity; and related electronic communications via social media during orientation week.	In-Kind
Maintain & Update the UH Student Basic Needs Online Clearinghouse	UH Student Basic Needs online clearinghouse will be regularly updated with current data, plans, news and resources. The UH Student Basic Needs site will be linked to from each of the 10 UH campus home pages.	In-Kind
Iterative Basic Needs Planning and Measuring Efficacy	Contract with The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice (The Hope Center) to deliver the #RealCollege survey to students across the UH System every three years. This process will serve to measure changes in student basic needs insecurity through time and the efficacy of UH basic needs programming, and allow for adjustments in the UHSBNMP to align with emerging priorities. The UHSBNC will also facilitate an annual review of UH basic needs programming and efficacy.	\$100,000 (Survey will occur once over next 3 years)
Emergency Aid	Following procedures developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, the UHSBNC will work with UH Foundation and individual UH campuses to provide emergency needs as they arise.	In-Kind
Campus-Level Committees	Create a 2-3 person Campus-level Basic Needs Committee. The Campus-level Basic Needs Committee is ideally headed and organized by each UH Student Basic Needs Committee member previously assigned by each UH chancellor. Committee members may include counselors, advisors, faculty, financial aid representatives or others familiar with the basic needs of students at the campus. Campus-level Basic Needs Committees will provide updates to UHSBNC each month, inform the committee about changes to campus programming, resources and plans, and provide updates to the online clearinghouse.	In-Kind

Implementation Plan

PRIORITY 1: STAFFING PLAN					
FALL 2021	SPRING 2022	FALL 2022	SPRING 2023	FALL 2023	SPRING 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extend BN coordinator position - Create campus-level basic needs committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make BN coordinator position permanent & state-funded - Implement UH basic needs communication package every semester 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement another BN survey to determine BN insecurity across students in UH System 	
PRIORITY 2: OUTREACH & EDUCATION					
FALL 2021	SPRING 2022	FALL 2022	SPRING 2023	FALL 2023	SPRING 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold monthly webinars related to BN resource navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement a semester long financial literacy class 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold one BN webinar per month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold one BN webinar per month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold one BN webinar per month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hold one BN webinar per month
PRIORITY 3: INSTITUTIONAL POLICY, PARTNERSHIPS, AND SUSTAINABILITY					
FALL 2021	SPRING 2022	FALL 2022	SPRING 2023	FALL 2023	SPRING 2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit SBNMP to Harold K. L. Castle Foundation for funding support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirm acceptance of SBNMP as institutional policy across the UH System 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solidify partnerships with community organizations to support financial needs of SBN efforts 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Construct an updated version of the SBNMP for the UH System

The UH System level basic needs plan above gives information and recommendations for the entire UH System, while the following section will provide priorities for each individual campus. All 10 campuses demonstrate different circumstances and capabilities for basic needs programming. They also outline future best practices and priorities, while highlighting implementation plans up until Fall 2023. Each plan is campus-specific, and unique to the campus' capacity for basic needs work.