

Ethics and Society Sample Project

Project Title: Meals for Bobcats

One major problem at Texas State is **food insecurity**. Food insecurity is a structural injustice. Young defined structural injustice as, “Moral wrong distinct from the wrongful action of an individual agent or the willfully repressive policies of a state. Structural injustice occurs as a consequence of many individuals and institutions acting in pursuit of their particular goals and interests, within given institutional rules and accepted norms (Young).” Although a lot of people are aware of this problem there is little done to help students with this problem. It is unacceptable that with so much food being produced on campus a lot of it is going to waste and students go back home starving.



Food insecurity can be addressed with the **Social Connection Model of Responsibility proposed by Iris Young**. The Social Connection Model of Responsibility says, “that individuals bear responsibility for structural injustice because they contribute by their actions to the process that produce unjust outcomes” (Young). She argues that the people that live under an unjust process have some type of responsibility to fix a structural injustice. Her social connection model is forward-looking as she stated, “The point is not to blame, punish, or seek redress from those who did it, but rather to enjoin those who participated by their actions in the process of collective action to change it (Young).” Young wants to find a solution to a problem instead of assigning guilt and moving on. Putting this into context with my topic, this means that the dining halls can do something to help because they are participants of this unjust structure.

Dining halls are obligated to help because they produce each day thousands of food for students, and a lot of it ends up going to waste. The dining halls need to collaborate with bobcat bounty to ensure that food insecurity does not continue to be a problem for the students. Food insecurity is a real problem in Texas State. According to the University Star, the School of Family and Consumer sciences conducted a survey to gather some data about how many students experience food insecurity. The results are worrying because almost half of the students experience or have experienced food insecurity. Also, San Marcos has one of the highest poverty rates. According to the U.S. Census Bureau’s, 2016, 35.8% of residents in San Marcos fall under the poverty threshold (Richarson).

Total Waste in Harris Dining Hall for the period: Dec 2, 2019 – Dec 8, 2019

WEIGHT: 588 lb

TOTAL WASTE VALUE: \$912



Part II: Recommendation



bobcat bounty
FEED 'EM UP CATS

I think one way the university could address this problem is by creating a day at the end of the week where students can enter the dining halls and take the food that otherwise will only go to waste. The dining halls will be pairing up with Bobcat bounty to provide proof of eligibility to participate in this program to control the flow of people and make sure that the people that need the food are getting it. The students will be given a to-go reusable box, to make it easier to identify that they are part of this program. They will show the box to the person at the front and they will be allowed to come and take as much as they can fit in the box.



I think this is an acceptable recommendation because the food at the dining halls has already been prepared and paid for. It is the money of the students that have a meal plan that has paid for all that food. It is only logical that instead of throwing away all that money, it should be given to students who cannot afford to secure a meal. It would decrease the amount of food that goes to waste every single day at the dining halls, and it can also be beneficial to the environment. The dining halls will not be losing money, on the contrary, they will be cooperating to defeat the structural injustice of food insecurity.

I think the most important counter-argument the dining halls will have, its that some students that right now pay for the food might wait for it to be that free day and eat for free. They will not be getting that extra money that those students pay for that food and that might affect the quantity and quality of the food. I think that even though some students might wait for that free day, not all of them will wait. Students get hungry throughout the day and they will continue purchasing food. It is not possible that if they are hungry on Monday they will wait until Friday to alleviate that hunger.

Sources:

Richardson, Brittlin. "Students Battle Alarming Food Insecurity Rates." *The University Star*, Texas State, 21 Nov. 2018, <https://universitystar.com/27220/news/students-battle-alarming-food-insecurity-rates/>.

Young, Iris M. "Responsibility and Global Justice: A social connection Model." The University of Chicago.