UC San Diego

Herbert Wertheim School of Public Health and Human Longevity Science

OBJECTIVE

- To investigate which meal of the day is most commonly skipped among undergraduate students at UCSD
- To investigate which constraint is most common among the different meals of the day

BACKGROUND

•	70% of college students skip 5 meals on average in a	•
	week'	•
•	In 2014, 25% of UCSD students skipped meals ²	•
•	Meal skipping is positively correlated with stress, anxiety, and depression ³	
	 10%¹ association of all-cause mortality⁴ 	•
	 40% A association with cardiovascular disease 	
	mortality ⁴	•
•	<u>Financial Constraints</u>	
	\circ Rising food cost → 43% of college students prioritize	
	academic expenses ⁵	
•	<u>Academic-related Constaints</u>	
	 32% skip due to academic reasons, such as stress⁶ 	
•	<u>Time Constraints</u>	•
	 As high as 38-61% of college students skip meals due 	
	to a lack of time ⁷	
•	Prior literature has rarely examined lunch- and dinner-	
	skipping, only focusing primarily on breakfast	

CONCLUSIONS

- **Breakfast** is the most skipped meal, while dinner is the least skipped \circ Students often skip breakfast as they do not feel hungry in the morning and need to get to school/work $^{\circ}$
- **Time** is the lead constraint for breakfast-skipping while **academics** are the lead constraint for lunch- and dinner-skipping
 - Students may spend more afternoons and nights for lecture classes and studying
- Findings support prior research, as academic and time constraints have been found to be leading causes of meal-skipping⁶⁻⁷
 - As meal-skipping can lead to a vicious cycle of lower academic performance and breakfast-skipping, it is important to ensure that students do not skip any meal of the day ^{6, 8}
- Future research should be conducted to:
 - Explore in-depth reasons for academic or time constraints affecting meal skipping habits
 - Explore how different majors and departments have different influences on meal-skipping

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Implement workshops, run by the Housing, Dining, and Hospitality Department (HDH) and the Student Health Services, directed that promote healthier eating habits and raises awareness of the effects if meal skipping
- Create a HDH service for more accessible cheap meals near popular study spots and lecture halls

THE HUNGER GAMES: COLLEGE EDITION Factors that Influence Meal Skipping In UCSD Undergraduates Sandy La, Matthew Yam, Kai Gan







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		Constraints (Meal Mean Rank)				
		Financial	Academic	Time	X ²	p-value
	Breakfast	1.57	2.15	2.27	60.577	< 0.001
	Lunch	1.70	2.23	2.08	37.015	< 0.001
	Dinner	1.85	2.22	1.93	26.083	< 0.001