

Teale Harden: Health & Human Development
Mentor: Selena Ahmed, Mary Stein -- Health & Human Development
Exploring Connections between Food Security and Academic Success

It is generally accepted that in adolescents' food security increases academic outcomes. This acknowledged correlation has resulted in programs such as free and reduced price lunch and breakfast. However, quality and quantity of food is important no matter the stage of development. This research specifically examines connections between food insecurity in Montana State University students and their academic achievement. The preliminary research question for this project was: Does food insecurity in the student population at Montana State University correlate with a lower Grade Point Average (GPA) or an increased likelihood of being placed on academic probation at some point in their academic careers? Additional research questions that were explored were: Are there demographic factors that contribute to a more significant impact on academic outcome in food insecure conditions and does knowledge about emergency food security resources impact academic outcomes by balancing out food insecurity with knowledge on how to access food? The objective of this research was to build on previous research conducted at Montana State University surrounding food insecurity to determine if there are tangible outcomes that result in decreased academic performance when students are food insecure. To conduct this research surveys were utilized to determine the level of food insecurity of respondents as well as their academic success.