Corcoran (continued)

Conclusion: A CHW-specific MI training is acceptable and perceived positively by practicing CHWs, and should be integrated earlier in training.

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Project FRIENDS: A Qualitative Study on Food-Related Lived Experiences of Individuals With Low Income in New York State

Reah Chiong, BS, trc222@cornell.edu, Division of Nutritional Sciences, College of Human Ecology, Cornell University; Julio Salas, BS, Division of Nutritional Sciences, College of Human Ecology, Cornell University; Julius Kohn, BS, Division of Nutritional Sciences, College of Human Ecology, Cornell University; Emily St. John, Division of Nutritional Sciences, College of Human Ecology, Cornell University; Katherine Baker, MPH, MS, Division of Nutritional Sciences, College of Human Ecology, Cornell University; Fladen Gonzalez, MA, PhD, Department of Psychology, College of Human Ecology, Cornell University; Roger Figueroa, PhD, MPH, MS, Division of Nutritional Sciences, College of Human Ecology, Cornell University

Background: Nutrition security, the consistent access and availability of affordable foods that promote a diet that supports optimal health, is a priority area in nutrition, yet more context is needed to understand its meaning and implications for nutrition science, practice, and policy.

Objective: The Food Research Initiative on the Experience of Nutrition Diversity and Security (Project FRIENDS) aims to generate and test hypotheses on food-related lived experiences and programming preferences to attaining nutrition security among adults eligible for federal food assistance programs.

Study Design, Settings, Participants: During the qualitative phase of this exploratory sequential mixed methods study, a purposive sample of New York residents eligible for food assistance benefits (n=26) participated in hour-long interviews via phone or video chat.

Measurable Outcomes/Analysis: An interview facilitation protocol was developed and pilot tested prior to conducting this study. The protocol assessed constructs such as food purchasing, food preparation, diet and healthy eating, among others. Audio recordings of interviews were transcribed verbatim and analyzed using open, selective, and theoretical coding.

Results: Findings suggest that food-related strategies (ie, budgeting, modifying recipes) are central to efficiently acquire and consume adequate food in quantity and quality among study participants. These strategies may vary depending on participants’ life history (eg, cultural background, upbringing) and their food work stage (eg, food planning). For example, when purchasing food, study participants leveraged sales and discounts and a majority stored and repurposed food to avoid food waste. Overall, these strategies are strongly correlated with the support and resources available to participants (public assistance, transportation, etc). These strategies enable study participants and their family to access and eat more nutritious foods.

Conclusion: To achieve nutrition security in this population, our data supports the development of programs that prioritize the application of food-related strategies. The quantitative phase of Project FRIENDS will create and launch a statewide assessment that tests the association between the construct of food-related strategies and nutrition security while considering additional determinants (eg, capital, life history).

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Repeated Critical Reflection Aids Soft Skills Development and Professionalism in a Dietetics Curriculum

Elizabeth Wall-Bassett, PhD, RDN, FAND, ewbassett@wcu.edu, Western Carolina University; Oyinlola Babatunde, MPH, PhD, RDN, FAND, East Carolina University

Objective: Repeated critical reflection as a mechanism for facilitating personal growth, academic learning, and civic engagement in dietetics courses for career preparedness and professionalism

Use of Theory or Research: Incorporating service-learning into dietetics curriculum is an avenue to provide understanding more complex problems within the discipline, broadening perspectives and increasing awareness of self and others’, and enhancing preparedness for civic and professional responsibility. Constructivist educational theory through service-learning supports active learner participation as they experience and interact with others that challenge their prior understanding. Critical reflection models such as DEAL (Describe, Examine, Articulate Learning) and ERA (Experience, Reflection, Action) guide the continuity of possible learning, and ensure the progress of the individual.

Target Audience: Students from 4 cohorts (N=73) enrolled in an undergraduate Nutrition and Dietetics (DPD) program during 2018-22

Course/Curriculum Description: A sequence of 2 consecutive Community Nutrition courses integrated service activities/assignments including repeated critical reflection journals at regular and purposefully constructed intervals (before, during, and after service) using the ERA and DEAL models.

Evaluation Methods: Written reflective journal responses were reviewed and coded using an instructor created assessment rubric informed by AAC&U’s VALUE rubrics.

Results: Students identified organization and communication as areas for personal growth; they made connections to policies, programs, and people in their academic learning especially related to conceptual skills; and they

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Rigor vs Grace: Navigating the COVID-19 Pandemic in Higher Education Nutrition Programs

Laura Sans Duran, BA, Meredith College; Victoria Min, California State University Long Beach; Virginia Gray, PhD, RDN, California State University Long Beach; Rebecca Hagedorn-Hattfeld, PhD, RDN, rihatfield@meredith.edu, Meredith College

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic caused nutrition educators in higher education to shift from traditional course delivery and student engagement models. Instructors faced unprecedented challenges to balance rigorous academic standards with providing grace in light of the pandemic.

Objective: To determine how nutrition educators in higher education define rigor and grace, explore approaches to rigor and grace and institutional guidance during the pandemic, and gauge perceived pandemic impacts on students’ educational experience.

Study Design, Settings, Participants: This online, cross-sectional study included nutrition educators (n=31) in Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics programs. A 23-item survey was developed and underwent expert review (n=5). Data were collected from March-April 2022.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: Descriptive statistics were used for demographics and quantifying perceived changes due to COVID-19. Thematic analysis by two coders was used to analyze qualitative data, using an inductive approach to determine themes.

Results: Respondents taught in 30 states at undergraduate and graduate levels (58.1%) with 6-15 (58.1%) years of teaching experience. Qualitative definitions of rigor included two themes: challenging standards and student engagement and outcomes. Grace also had two themes: flexibility and human approach. Most (58.1%) respondents’ institutions did not provide recommendations regarding rigor but (96.8%) encouraged showing additional grace amidst the pandemic. Institutional response was coded into two themes: teaching support and self-care strategies. Faculty (51.6%) reported implementing strategies to ensure continued rigor; themes for instructor response included innovation and variation. Most faculty (61.2%) reported changes in relationships with students since the pandemic. Perceived pandemic impacts on nutrition education fell into three themes: disengagement, innovation, and human-first acknowledgment.

Conclusion: Nutrition educators defined rigor and grace as engaging students with challenging standards while also using a flexible, human-first approach. As educators navigate a post-pandemic world, institutional response is needed to empower instructors to balance rigor and grace in ways that maximize student outcomes.

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Role of Sociodemographic, Academic, and Individual Health Behaviors on Psychological Well-Being Among College Students

Leandra Durham, RDN, MS, leandrad@uab.edu, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Lizzy Davis, PhD, RDN, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Tara Kelly, MS, RDN, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Rebecca Kennedy, PhD, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Daniel Smith, Jr., PhD, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Yenni Cedillo, PhD, RDN, University of Alabama at Birmingham

Background: College is a time that brings a host of new challenges, including changes in environment, support systems, academic load, financial status, food security, and other factors. Studies have found that having strong psychological well-being (PWB) is a useful tool for these additional stressors. However, the relationship PWB has with these factors, specifically, is unclear.

Objective: This study aimed to identify behaviors and other factors that may influence PWB among college students.

Study Design, Settings, Participants: Data from 1,439 undergraduate students (58.65% White, 20.71% Black or African American, 9.68% Asian or Asian American, 7.19% biracial or multiracial, and 3.77% Hispanic or Latino/a/x) from the American College Health Association National College Health Assessment III (Fall 2020) were used in this secondary data analysis.

Measurable Outcome/Analysis: Variables included sociodemographic (age, gender, race), academic (year in school, enrollment status, housing, GPA), BMI, physical activity, financial challenges, and individual health behaviors (dietary patterns, physical activity, stress, and sleeping patterns). Differences in absolute values among PWB percentiles (25th, 50th, and 75th percentile) were analyzed using ANOVA. Multiple regression analyses were performed to measure the influence of all factors combined on PWB.

Results: The average age of the respondents was 22.15±6.56 years, and most were White (58.65%) females (72.60%). Regarding academic factors, most respondents were first year college students (24.39%), enrolled full-time (88.25%), living off-campus (38.03%), and with a 4.0 GPA (57.32%). Significant differences were observed in age, GPA, financial challenges, and health behaviors by PWB percentiles (p<0.05). Older age, being female (compared to male), higher GPA, being a full-time student, higher intake of vegetables, less time required to fall asleep, and lower stress levels were positively associated with higher PWB scores (p<0.05).

Conclusion: Findings indicate that academic environment and individual health behaviors have a relationship with PWB among college students. Targeting these factors