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Hungry for Student Food Security: A Comparative Analysis of University Food Pantry Policies

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HUNGRY FOR STUDENT FOOD SECURITY: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF UNIVERSITY FOOD PANTRY POLICIES

by

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Disclosure of Potential Bias: The author acknowledges that their previous work in this field may have influenced their assumptions and interpretation of findings. Additionally, as the former Director of External Affairs for *Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry*, the author has a potential conflict of interest that could impact their objectivity. To address these concerns, the study was designed with a strict methodology for informant interviews, including audiovisual recordings, interview guide, and clear criteria for informant selection.While the author was involved in data collection, analysis, and interpretation, the results were reviewed by unbiased advisors who provided critical feedback to ensure objectivity. There are no financial relationships or other incentives associated with the outcomes that may have biased this study. These measures intended to minimize the potential sources of bias.

ABSTRACT: HUNGRY FOR STUDENT FOOD SECURITY

This undergraduate research thesis aims to explore the relationship between public institutions of higher education and the operational policies of their university food pantries. The increasing rates of nontraditional students entering public universities correlate to an increasing population of students facing food insecurity, placing strain on institutional interventions, especially university food pantries (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015; Nazmi et al., 2019, p.2). This research conducted a qualitative comparative case analysis of university food pantry policies and semistructured interviews with pantry informants through a USDA-adapted evaluative framework to understand the evolution of public universities' interventions (Barale et al., 2017). The findings of the comparative analysis informed recommendations for institutional and public policy change to alleviate student food insecurity sustainably. The practical applications of this research are relevant to the stakeholders, institutions of higher education, nonprofit leaders, and policymakers concerned with alleviating student food insecurity in higher education environments.

Keywords: student food insecurity, university food pantry, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), higher education institutions (HEIs), comparative analysis, public policy

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CHAPTER I: THE FACE OF STUDENT FOOD INSECURITY

With the hopes of breaking from her family's intergenerational cycle of poverty and gaining more financial security, Amy enrolled in a public university to earn a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology (Ma et al., 2020). As she works toward her degree, she is solely responsible for funding her higher education and is financially independent of her family. While rises in tuition and cost of living aid her risk of failure, she sees her goal of bachelor's degree attainment to be a logical and strategic investment toward her potential financial security (El Zein et al., 2019). Amy graduated with honors from her public high school, while maintaining employment with a part-time job to help financially support her low-income household and save for her own college aspirations. Even though Amy will continue to hold jobs throughout her academic tenure, she is motivated to complete her degree and has heard that degree-earners make, on average, $1.2 million in additional earnings over their lifetime (Lobo et al., 2022). Amy is eager to experience her university's various opportunities and believes her degree attainment will provide her a better life.

After starting classes, Amy is worried about her ability to budget both her finances and time. Her work schedule often prevents her from using her university's dining halls during regular meal times, and she does not know where she will get her next meal, often deciding to skip meals in order to save money. Amy feels anxious and stressed surrounding her choices about buying textbooks, food, and other necessities, which leads her to be distracted in class. After some time on campus, Amy tries to research campus resources to help, but decides that others may need the resources more than her and she might feel too embarrassed if she does make accommodations to use the university food pantry (McArthur et al., 2020). Throughout the

semester, Amy sees that her academic productivity and performance are decreasing from the standards she has set for herself, which makes her question whether or not she can earn her degree (Freitas and Leonard, 2011).

As students, like Amy, attempt to ease the impacts of socioeconomic inequities through the pursuit of higher education, the actual or perceived scarcity of basic resources can negatively interfere with student health, degree completion, and performance rates (Freitas and Leonard, 2011). Physiological needs, including food, are the foundation of human wellbeing, yet 30% to 50% of students across the United States share a similar story of facing food insecurity while pursuing a bachelor's degree (Maslow, 1949; GAO, 2019, p.11; Nazmi et al., 2019, p.8). Food insecurity is defined as an economic and social condition of inconsistent, limited, or uncertain accessibility, and intake of nutritionally-adequate and safe foods (USDA: Measurement, 2022). A "growing body of literature suggests that post-secondary students experience food insecurity (FI) at greater rates than the general population," which is currently projected to be no greater than 14% (Nikolaus et al., 2019, p. 2; Feeding America, 2021). While 87.5% of households face no level of food insecurity, these household securities and resources are not as accessible to the minimum 74% of students that experience financial independence from their household (USDA Food Security in the U.S.: Measurement, 2022; National Center for Education Statistics, 2015; Nazmi et al., 2019, p.2; Feeding America, 2021). From a systematic review of the available literature, "food insecurity among students at US higher education institutions was at least three times higher than observed in nationally representative households" (Nazmi et al., 2019, p.8).

Food imbalances and insecurity are linked to a higher likelihood of developing chronic health conditions, such as heart disease, obesity, hypertension, diabetes, and certain cancers, as

well as conditions associated with compromised mental health (Seligman et al., 2010; Thomas et al., 2019, p. 1). In addition to the positive correlation between food insecurity and poor health developments, economic and social development suffer amongst food-insecure individuals, as indicated by lower rates of attention, employment, earning, literacy, and academic performance (Seligman et al., 2010). The physiological impacts of food insecurity on attention, poor health, and information-retention take shape inside the classroom with reported rates of lower grade point average and outside with higher rates of class absences amongst food insecure students (Silva et al., 2017). As supported by Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, the psychological effects of financial insecurity may and have been shown to hinder the process of degree completion (Maslow, 1943; Freitas and Leonard, 2011).

Institutions of higher education, in addition to awarding degrees, continue to develop student life and success initiatives, like food insecurity interventions, to compete with the market demand. As more research emerges, students in higher education environments "may be at significantly elevated risk compared to community-dwelling populations," which only intensifies the demands of addressing food insecurity (Nazmi et al., 2019, p.8). Institutions of higher education have attempted to adapt beyond the federal definitions that are inapplicable to the growing nontraditional student populations (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015; Nazmi et al., 2019, p.2). Federal programs, too, like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program leave students unserved and institutions of higher education are increasingly responsible for remedying this gap of food insecurity intervention (GAO, 2019).

To provide immediate nutritional assistance to students, non-profit organizations, Feeding American and Swipe Out Hunger, support institutions of higher learning by facilitating

university food pantries. Swipe Out Hunger hosts the College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA), which provides monetary grants and consulting to expedite the implementation of over 800 registered university food pantries (Swipe Out Hunger, 2021). Feeding America operated a total of 316 food pantries and 124 mobile food distribution sites on college and university campuses (Lowthert et al., 2022). University food pantries receive little, if any, institutional funding and are reliant on inconsistent donations, leaving even more food insecure students underserved with this additional intervention (Lowthert et al., 2022).).

To measure and address the insecurities students face while pursuing higher education, some universities have conducted internal studies or collaborated with non-profit organizations to participate in surveys. External surveys, which are often sponsored by non-profits, allow standardized data-collection without the high expense on the university that would result from conducting an internal survey. From the available literature, which spans "a range of disciplines, including nutrition and dietetics, consumer studies, and higher education, it is difficult to gain a clear impression of the extent of the food insecurity issue in higher education" (Nazmi et al., p. 3, 2018). As the political action gains momentum, with the first Congressional Hearing on college student hunger in 2021, this research is timely, relevant, and key to the role of public higher education institutions and their university food pantries to address student food insecurity (Food Research and Action Center's Working Group on College Student Hunger, 2022).

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the relationship between public institutions of higher education and the operational policies of their university food pantries. By conducting a qualitative comparative analysis of university food pantry written policies and verbal accounts of procedures, this work aims to develop an understanding of the interventions of public

universities to address the issue of student food insecurity in order to inform institutional and public policy change. In Chapter II, I will provide background into the evolution of supplemental nutritional interventions and food insecurity in higher education. Chapter III provides the methodology of data collection and framework for the qualitative comparative case analysis. The findings of the comparative case analysis will be reported in Chapter IV before Chapter V explores the applications, implications, and recommendations for policy interventions.

CHAPTER II: THE EVOLUTION OF FOOD INSECURITY ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES

Higher Purpose to Higher Education

Pursuing higher education and degree attainment was first associated with upward socioeconomic mobility when the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, commonly known as the G.I. Bill, was passed with bipartisan support (Overall, 1974). Between the birth of the United States and World War II, high-income white men and otherwise privileged women had post-secondary educational opportunities exclusively reserved (Reed, 2019, p.288). To shift combat from abroad to the homefront, the G.I. Bill targeted the post-war fears of triggering another Great Depression by rewarding service in the military with educational benefits and opportunities to own a business through loans (National Archive, 2019). As a new policy structure reared American optimism for more opportunity and security, the G.I. Bill repopulated the American higher education system, doubling the number of enrolled students within the first year (Sheffield, 2016). The other Roosevelt New Deal policy reforms compounded the initial influx of over two million, then eight million total, veterans to America's universities, which radically established a national welfare structure and propelled more Americans into higher education until an enrollment stabilization in the 1980s (Goldin & Katz, 1999).

Even as universities acted as newly-established vehicles for economic mobility, limited research informed early expansion projects, and the institutional infrastructures may exacerbate existing inequities amongst their student body. While the first federal Food Stamp program was designed in 1939 under the Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, Henry Wallace, a lack of a standardized definition and measure of food insecurity failed to inform a cross-sector partnership to study and reduce the prevalence of food insecurity (USDA, 2018). As FDR's New Deal welfare reform led to the 1944 influx of higher education enrollment amongst low-income Americans, that same population would not have a federal supplemental nutrition assistance program for another 20 years. Federal nutrition assistance came with the 1964 passage of the Food Stamp Act under President Johnson (USDA, 2018). It would not be 31 years later, in 1995, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) would publish the first annual survey of household food insecurity. This survey identified this low-income population, just thrust by the successful welfare reform into the investment of higher education, as having the highest prevalence and at the most risk of experiencing food insecurity (USDA, 1995).

Incentives For Student Needs Support

As universities expanded in the mid-1900s to accommodate the continuing increases in enrollment by supporting student needs and market demands, universities attempted to match demand with the infrastructure of the residential community. The initial support of the G.I. Bill was compounded throughout the next presidential administrations, as the human resource of a highly educated citizenry became a national resource. These administrative commissions to reduce the barrier of the cost associated with educational pursuit continued the trends of increased enrollment with the 1958 passage of the National Defense Education Act, which

continues to grant student aid funding to states, and the first student loan program (U.S. Senate, 2019). Before the G.I. Bill, the spending was less than $3,000 per student from the earliest gathered data reports of the 1929-1930 school year (Snyder, 1993). As universities attempted to deliver an adequate living and learning environment with booming rates, universities expanded with renovations and constructions of on-campus dormitories and dining halls.

These physical changes, however, struggled to serve the growing perception of the utility of higher education. In its war on poverty, the Johnson administration continued focusing on mutual aid to decrease financial insecurity and boost national strength through higher education with the College Work-Study (CWS) Program (Johnson, 1967). The Johnson administration's domestic work for more civil rights and structural access, along with the cultural impacts of the American 60s, inspired more to explore the flexibility of higher education (Johnson, 1967). College Work-Study (CWS) Program broadened the financial aid program with The Higher Education Act of 1972 to create part-time enrollment and diversify the age, racial or ethnic identity, employment status, and socioeconomic background of college students (Lumina Foundation, 2016). The rejected traditions of higher education diversified the student body, which subsequently diversified the private and public universities and re-birthed higher education in a free market concept (van Woerdan et al., 2019). As more barriers to access fell through the joint of the federal government and universities, more human resource and student services structures rose to solidify the shifted perception of campus life into an employment environment.

As universities sought to compete in the free market with the novel need for housing and food services, universities sought innovative methods to compensate and remain financially

attractive to prospective students. To fund such projects beyond federal aid, universities created meal plans and campus housing requirements for students within the additional fees and tuition (van Woerdan et al., 2019). The traditional school cafeterias with a payment per standard hot meal gave way to new dining halls and pre-paid meal plans, which could accommodate the diversifying student population's needs (van Woerdan et al., 2019). Meal plans are the predetermined plan for payment of "either a fixed number of dining hall meals per week or semester, or unlimited dining hall meals" in an academic term or year (van Woerdan et al., 2019). As many dormitories left students without access to a kitchen to prepare meals, universities expect that most residential students consume most of their meals through this program with the caveat that any unused meals will be forfeited (van Woerdan et al., 2019). The novice food court model, all-you-can-eat service styles, and extended hours of dining hall operation functions appealed to students' desire or necessity for nutritional variety.

Nutritional Assistance and Student Success

While enrollment rates boomed since the 1940s, post-secondary students in the twentieth century needed more supplemental nutrition assistance throughout their educational pursuits outside of the on-campus dining provisions. The emergence of food banks followed the 1967 establishment of the nation's first food bank in Arizona. The movement of food banks and this mission of supplemental assistance migrated slowly across the United States, with their development in only eighteen cities by 1977. Small in number, the 1979 network of food banks would grow into the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, Feeding America (Feeding America, "Our History"). Localized philanthropic support throughout the 1980s fueled the founding of food banks, soup kitchens, and church-sponsored food pantries (Feeding

America, "Our History"). As a result of the conservative Reagan administration's tightening of social welfare, the emergency food security system exponentially expanded, showing access to these resources was inequitable due to geographic and sociopolitical factors (Feeding America, "Our History"). Despite the increasing student-centered approaches to maintain high enrollment and demand in the free market, student retention and degree attainment data highlight the inequities perpetuated by these attempts (Blanco, 2019, p.3).

Before the 1900s spurred a new utility for higher education, college degrees had little importance with regard to financial security and mobility, as educational pursuits were a significant investment without aid programs. As federal reforms aided student and institutional differentiation, this exacerbated existing differences in the ability of students to complete educational pursuits and earn post-secondary degrees. Attempting to compete in the growing free market, institutions continued to be more concerned with attracting students than keeping them, despite the ever-increasing importance of students' degree attainment. As the utility of higher education shifted from an academic experience to the result of degree attainment, the issue of student retention, defined as "the ability of a particular college or university to successfully graduate the students who initially" emerged to maintain business (Blanco, 2019, p.3). Unfortunately, many universities were unprepared, unable, or otherwise unwilling to deal with a more diverse student body through supportive environments, and many still fail to provide adequate and equitable support.

Modern Interventions for Student Food Security

Because of the significant federal investment in public universities since the New Deal era, legislators and institutions are incentivized to actively support resources and services for

students basic, safety, and social-belonging needs to maintain their utility as an academic institution. Regarding institutional food security interventions, meal plans are considered the most standardized, widespread resource, especially among first-year and other residential students. Despite the long history and broad institutional use, 43% of students with a meal plan reported food insecurity (Dubrick et al., 2016). Emerging research on meal plans has fostered criticism for failing to address food insecurity by providing insufficient meals and charging high costs (van Woerdan et al., 2019). "The average college and university charges about $4,500, or $18.75 per day, for a three-meal-a-day dining contract that covers the eight months or so of a typical academic year" (Mathewson, 2017; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). Contrastingly, highlighting inequities, an American without a required college meal plan spends less than 11 dollars per day or $3,989 annually on food (Mathewson, 2017; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2017). "Students who report food insecurity are also more likely to be financially independent from their family, to have debt, and to receive financial aid than their food secure counterparts" (van Woerden et al., 2019). Merit- and need-based financial aid programs may cover portions of college meal plans, but this varies individually. For the cost, food insecurity was reported for students across various meal plan levels and even when students had meals left in their meal plan (van Woerdan et al., 2019). In 2010, the national non-profit organization, Swipe Out Hunger facilitated a collaboration to redistribute unused meals to incrementally fix this common intervention and alleviate student food insecurity (van Woerdan et al., 2019).

Just the year prior, in 2009, the University of Hawai'i at Ma ̄noa was the first to internally conduct a case study on the prevalence of student food insecurity, which paved the way for campus-specific interventions (Pia et al., 2009). By 2012, 15 universities began implementing

university food pantries by partnering with non-governmental agencies, like Swipe Out Hunger, which facilitate cross-sector collaborations for the College and University Food Bank Alliance (CUFBA) (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2018). According to the U.S. Code, a food pantry means "a public or private non-profit organization that distributes food to low-income and unemployed households, including food from sources other than the Department of Agriculture, to relieve situations of emergency and distress" (Brito-Silva et al., 2022). Now, the CUFBA boasts 316 food pantries that operate for supplemental food assistance provision, but little literature is evaluating their accessibility or effectiveness (Goldrick-Rab et al., 2018).

Without consistent institutional or external support for university pantries, some universities opt toward intervention programs to connect students to welfare assistance programs based on their eligibility. The current inaccessible nature of SNAP enrollment leaves two-million at-risk students who were potentially eligible for SNAP without benefits (GAO, 2019). Roughly forty-one million Americans are currently Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants and, in connection with the national guidelines for state eligibility, "at or below 130% of the Federal Poverty Level" (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2022; Snap to Health, 2022). "[T]he average SNAP client received a monthly benefit of $121", which "can be used to purchase all food products" (Snap to Health, 2022). Household eligibility and resource availability are determined by the evaluation of three metrics, gross monthly income, net income, and assets, in conjunction with household size (Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 2022). Because this metric misrepresents the 74% of non-traditional students, institutions must take steps to increase student access to SNAP enrollment. The intervention of case-by-case consulting on social welfare eligibility may require a great deal of funding for implementation. The

institutional cost deters this intervention's effectiveness or implementation, and this lack of university support can partially account for eligible students (GAO, 2019). Although general awareness of the prevalence of food insecurity among households is established in the literature, targeted policies fail to regulate, financially support, and incentivize institutional, data-driven interventions to address food insecurity among higher education student populations (Nazmi et al., 2018, p. 3).

Public universities, outside of governmental support, have access to resources and services from non-profit organizations to address food insecurity by identifying the specific needs of this student population and adapting strategies based on student data. As a rising institutional response, university food pantries highlight the gaps in the food security interventions of HEIs (Waite, 2019). Food pantries are direct, community distribution sites for the provision of nutritional resources to those facing hunger or food insecurity (Feeding America, 2022). Despite the prevalence of university food pantries, students facing food insecurity face additional barriers to access in an attempt to benefit from the resources of available food pantries. The accessibility of adequate information regarding the procedures, patron eligibility requirements, hours of operation, and the strains of stigma influence students' decisions about whether or not to utilize pantry services (El Zein et al., 2018). The current importance of the policies and practices of university food pantries to address student food insecurity informed the research of this thesis.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Chapter III explains the methodologies for the mixed-methods, multi-institutional, qualitative comparative analysis design used to address the research question of the thesis; what

is the relationship between public higher education institutions (HEIs) and the operational policies of university food pantries? The Institutional Review Board (IRB) approves the research, as determined as Exempt under 45 CFR 46 (Department of Health & Human Services, 2022). Chapter III outlines the research sampling, design, data, evaluative framework, and supporting rationale.

Sample

This multi-institutional case study of five public universities and the respective food pantries employs a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) research design (Schneider & Wagemann, 2010). The sample size of five campus food pantries lies within the appropriate range for the design. The sample includes the policies and procedures of Louisiana State University, the University of Mississippi, the University of South Carolina, Auburn University, and Marshall University. The sample is a non-random convenience or opportunity sample, meaning the sample voluntarily provides the respective policies and procedural information to be used for the purpose of the study within the practical constraints (Farrokh & Mahmoudi-Hamidabad, 2012). The criteria requirements for the non-random sample include higher education institutions (HEIs) that are public, accredited, and operate a university food pantry.

Because this sampling method relies on the judgment of the researcher, this section explores the justification of the sampling method. The convenience sample of the public, accredited HEIs with operating university food pantries, meet consistent standards of quality through accreditation, and are physical post-secondary environments in which students work toward degree obtainment. The purpose of the use of the sample is the ability to be influenced by

the enactment of public policies and research funding opportunities. The justification of public HEIs as the sample population for this research is to establish a set of consistent standards of quality within the sample and to apply the research findings to public policy recommendations. While public HEIs, due to a decentralized federal authority, can “vary widely in the character and quality of their programs” under state-level regulation, all public HEIs in the United States are accredited universities" (NCES, 2022). “Accrediting agencies, which are private educational associations that develop evaluation criteria and conduct peer evaluations to assess" institutions, are approved through the Secretary of Education (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). The accreditation criteria are pertinent as a method of sample standardization regarding an institution’s allocation of financial resources to research (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). In addition to the esteem appeals to students pursuing higher education, the accreditation process ensures the quality of HEIs without exercising any authority over the autonomy and independence of the HEI under 34 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 602 and Section 496 of The Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) as amended (U.S. Department of Education, 2022).

The Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) strengthens the educational resources of the United States through the provision of cross-sector structures for regulated quality and federal financial assistance to students enrolled at accredited HEIs. Because only students of accredited HEIs receive federal financial aid, this criterion addresses the strong correlation between food insecurity and financial insecurity (Freitas & Leonard, 2011). To address more financial correlations, public universities are consistently associated with a higher average rate of return than private universities and liberal arts colleges (Lobo et al., 2022). Degree-earning students from such institutions are less likely to be unemployed than their peers who only have a high

school degree and make, on average, $1.2 million in additional earnings over their lifetime (Lobo et al., 2022).

Data

Document Analysis

The data materials from the sample include the policies of the respective university food pantries. For use in the qualitative comparative analysis, the policy data material is either published to, and collected from, the official websites of the pantries, or unpublished and collected through the voluntary provision of the representative participant. Via these channels, the data was collected virtually and asynchronously from June 2022 to March 2023. The materials include written operational practices regarding resource management, personnel services, food quantities offered, donor involvement, and eligibility restrictions. Because of the available literature defining common food pantry practices to address the key themes, the qualitative content of policy materials can be evaluated against the provided, adapted criteria. The policy materials are quoted in Chapter IV and the cited, referenced documents. The multi-institutional policy and survey data are managed through the evaluative framework adapted by the researcher.

Interview Protocol

Interviews were conducted with open-ended questions relating to the adapted criteria to assess the current practices of the pantry and address variance between the policies and common procedure, as further explored in Chapter IV. In addition to the data gathered from written policy materials, qualitative data is collected verbally through interviews with the sample of pantry representatives and the researcher. Through the evaluative framework and identification of

emerging models or strategies, qualitative data is deductively analyzed, and the quantitative data is used for descriptive statistics.

During the virtually scheduled and conducted interview, the researcher prompted the informant to respond with a description to an open-ended primary question based on the definitions of the nine adapted criteria. If comparative elements of the criteria go unacknowledged through the informant's response to the primary question, the researcher prompted the informant to respond to the probing questions, as ordered and corresponding to the respective sub-criterion. The semistructured interview's audio recordings files were created through the Zoom software. Verbatim transcripts were created from the recorded audio files with Rev, an artificial intelligence transcription service and edited by the researcher for accuracy to be included as data materials (Rev, n.d.). The participating informants were asked to give descriptive responses to the following questions and prompts, as shown in *Table 1. Table 1* captures the guide of the semistructured interview to the adapted criteria-correlating primary and probing questions.

Table 1. Semistructured interview guide with the adapted criteria-correlating primary and probing questions.

Informant Screening & Consent	
Primary Question	Please state your name, age, and describe your current role or roles at the university food pantry.
Primary Question	Do you have any questions before we begin regarding the study and if so, please share them?
Primary Question	Do you feel you have a full understanding of the research and consent to your participation in this interview?
Pantry Practice Questions	
Primary Question: Resource Quantity criteria	Please describe how the amount of goods or products that can be taken by a patron during a given timeframe is determined and measured (Barale et al., 2019, p. 581).
Probing Questions:	

	Is there a limit to the amount of goods one patron can take per visit and if so, please describe?
	Is there a limit to the amount of visits one patron is permitted during a given timeframe and if so, please describe?
	If so, please describe how these limits are determined and measured?
Primary Question: Resource Variety criteria	Please describe the diversity amongst the goods made available to patrons by the pantry at any given time (Barale et al., 2018, p. 32).
Probing Questions:	
	Does your pantry offer non-perishable, nutritional goods at least across the nutritional categories of protein, fruit, vegetables, and grains?
	Does your pantry offer perishable, nutritional goods across the nutritional categories of protein, fruit, vegetables, grains?
	Does your pantry offer non-nutritional goods beyond nutritional goods?
Primary Question: Patron autonomy criteria	Please describe how the patron decides which of the available resources they accept from the pantry during one given visit (Barale et al., 2018, p.10,; Barale et al., 2017).
Probing Questions:	
	Does the pantry allow the patron to freely select amongst the items available themselves and if so, please describe?
	Does the pantry inform patron selection amongst the available items and if so, please describe?
	Does the pantry offer standardized selections and if so, please describe?
Primary Question: Personnel Quality criteria	Please describe the level of training or education provided or required of the personnel that provide the human services associated with the pantry (Barale et al., 2018, p. 50-52).
Probing Questions:	
	Is the pantry staffed with a hired, paid employee (ex. full-time hire, seasonal hire, and/or student work-study program) and if so, please describe?
	Does the pantry utilize volunteers and if so, please describe?
	Is there personnel training and if so, please describe?
Primary Question: Patron Screening criteria	Please describe the conditions in which a patron is granted access to the pantry resources and services (Barale et al., 2018,

	p.9).
Probing Questions:	
	Does the pantry require the patron to submit at least one form of documentation and if so, please describe this practice?
	Does the pantry verify the documentation and if so, please describe this practice?
	Does the pantry require the patron to request access to the pantry resources in advance and if so, please describe this practice?
Primary Question: Referral Services criteria	Please describe the services of a pantry to connect patrons with access to services external to the pantry (Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729).
Probing Questions:	
	Does the pantry provide any visual or spoken referrals, educational programming, and/or individualized advising and if so, please describe?
	What types of services are referred by the pantry and please describe?
	How many referral services are offered by the pantry and please describe?
Primary Question: External partnerships criteria	Please describe the types of collaborations, not pertaining to referral services, utilized by pantries to promote their mission in various environments, “outside of pantry settings” (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).
Probing Questions:	
	What types of organizations does the pantry collaborate with to promote their mission in various environments and please describe?
	If any, please describe the nature of the partnerships.
	If any, please describe the various environments “outside of pantry settings” afforded by the nature of the partnerships.
Primary Question: Extended Provision criteria	Please describe the pantry strategies to provide nutrition assistance and resources in lieu of the distribution operations of the physical pantry facility (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).
Probing Questions:	
	Please describe the regular availability of distribution operations of the physical pantry facility.
	If any, please describe the types of additional nutritional

	provision service or resources.
	If any, please describe the nature of the additional nutritional provision service or resources.
Primary Question: Pantry Data criteria	Please describe the pantry strategies for data collection, management, and distribution (Barale et al., 2018, p.27).
Probing Questions:	
	Please describe the types of data collected by the pantry.
	Please describe the management of the data collected by the pantry.
	Please describe the distribution of the data collected by the pantry.

The sample of interviewees willingly participate in the mixed-method research by volunteering policy materials for the qualitative comparative analysis and representing the common patron experience with their respective pantry for the survey. The informant acknowledged their consent to participate by completing a consent form and verbally during the interview. The researcher utilized purposive sampling with the choice of interview participant, which was informed by adapted qualification of the individual as an informan: an individual that may be recognized as a "food pantry manager, staff member, or designated volunteer leader who may be familiar with the agency's policies or has access to a policy manual" (Barale et al., 2019, p. 24). Because of the participant's leadership role with their respective university's pantry, the interviewees self-identified as informants, which is consistent with the research conducted for the development of the USDA assessment tool, as used for the framework adaptation (Barale et al., 2019, p. 579). The informant's name and contact information will be de-identified from the transcription, which will remain unpublished for the purpose of this thesis. *Table 2* illustrates the

associations between university pantry and their informant status. The interviewee's responses reflect the current pantry strategies to address the criteria across the evaluative framework.

Table 2. Associations of university pantries and informant status.

Informant Contact	Food Pantry	University
LSU Campus Life Program Assistant, Chair of LSU Food Pantry Board of Directors	The Food Pantry	Louisiana State University
Assistant Director of Internal Affairs	Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry	The University of Mississippi
AmeriCorps VISTA Campus Compact Member, USC Leadership and Service Center	The Gamecock Pantry	The University of South Carolina
Coordinator	Auburn Cares Food Pantry	Auburn University
Manager	The Marshall Food Pantry	Marshall University

Evaluative Framework

Food pantries are a leading intervention for alleviating food insecurity, and the necessary assessment of their influence hinges on the innovation of appropriate evaluative tools, which has led to practice-based and evidence-based assessments (Barale et al., 2017). This thesis modified an evaluative framework of nine criteria, which is adapted from the research that shaped the USDA-funded Nutrition Environment Food Pantry Assessment Tool (NEFPAT) and Healthy Food Pantry Assessment Toolkit (HFPAT) (Barale et al., 2017). The USDA-funded research to form the related assessment tools has been tested to show strong content validity in usefulness and relevance (Barale et al., 2017). The findings from in-depth interviews with pantry experts led to the Healthy Food Pantry Assessment Toolkit (HFPAT) identified "three main themes… from

the formative interviews: food procurement strategies, promotion of healthier environments, food assistance efforts outside of pantry settings" (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). The three themes with each of the associated three criteria are defined in this chapter and in *Table 3*.

Table 3: The themes and criteria of the adapted evaluative framework.

Adapted Evaluative Framework	
Food Procurement Strategies:	the methods the pantry practices to provide nutritional and other resources to patrons (Barale et al., 2019, p. 26)
1. Resource Quantity	how the amount of goods or products that can be taken by a patron during a given timeframe is determined and measured (Barale et al., 2019, p. 581).
2. Resource Variety	the diversity amongst the goods available to patrons by the pantry at any given time (Barale et al., 2018, p. 32)
3. Patron Autonomy	the extent of the patron to decide which of the available resources they accept from the pantry during one given visit (Barale et al., 2018, p.10; Barale et al., 2017)
Health Promotion Service Strategies:	the strategies to create the emotional environment, or "how individuals are treated" (Barale et al., 2019, p. 579).
1. Personnel Quality	the status of human services associated with the pantry experience, as measured by the level of training or qualification (Barale et al., 2018, p. 50-52)
2. Patron Screening	the conditional access of the patron to the pantry resources and services (Barale et al., 2018, p.9)
3. Referral Services	the services of a pantry to connect patrons with access to services external to the pantry (Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729)
Additional Assistance Strategies:	community-specific strategies to collaborate with external infrastructures to develop the pantry environment and food security interventions (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47)
1. External Partnerships	the types of collaboration, not pertaining to referral services, utilized by pantries to promote their mission in various environments “outside of pantry settings” (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47)
2. Extended Provision	strategies to provide nutrition assistance and resources in

	lieu of the distribution operations of the physical pantry facility (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47)
3. Pantry Data	the data collection, distribution, and management practices (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47)

With the foundation of these three USDA's identified main themes, this thesis defines nine adapted criteria that reflect the operationalization of the themes into practices for food security interventions in higher education environments (Barale et al., 2017). To answer the research question, what is the relationship between public higher education institutions (HEIs) and the operational policies of university food pantries, the data is applied to nine criteria which include resource quantity, resource variety, patron autonomy, personnel quality, patron screening, referral services, external partnerships, extended provisions, and pantry data. Within the three USDA identified main themes, the researcher defines criteria, its relevance, and the management of data materials through this framework (Barale et al., 2017).

Based on the available research regarding pantry use and common practices, pantries utilize combinations or all of the corresponding strategies to fulfill a criteria (Barale et al., 2017). Because the adapted models are designed to be observational surveys of the usual patron experience, the actualization of pantry-practice strategies to address the criteria needed to be represented in the scope of the research. The strengths and weaknesses of each strategy, which vary depending on organizational and patron priorities, are further analyzed in Chapter V. The evaluation of data through the adapted criteria are relevant and useful to the understanding of institutional responses to food security, as the structure of campus pantries is distinct from other forms of state-regulated food provision and the prevalence of the available literature regarding implications for common practices. The adapted criteria, along with the associated strategies of the USDA's main themes, are defined with researched justification below (Barale et al., 2017).

Food Procurement Strategies

As adapted from 2019 The Healthy Food Pantry Assessment Tool, food procurement strategies are defined as the methods the pantry practices to provide nutritional and other resources to patrons (Barale et al., 2019, p. 26). The “food dimension” refers to the “observable outcomes of food procurement were the variety and quality of foods available" with the survey questions of the initial study “based on food distribution methods" (Barale et al., 2019, p. 581). To address and evaluate this set of criteria, further defined below, the food procurement criteria include resource quantity, resource variety, and patron autonomy.

Resource Quantity

The *Resource Quantity* criteria evaluates how the amount of goods or products that can be taken by a patron during a given timeframe is determined and measured (Barale et al., 2019, p. 581). The terms relate to the procedure and basis for distribution decisions. For some USDA-affiliated food banks or pantries, states regulate the terms of accessibility through policy and common metrics of this include household income and size in order to quantity resource provision (USDA, 2023). Policy may provide quantitative measurements of offered goods or clarify how that determination was concluded.

Resource Variety

Resource Variety refers to the diversity amongst the goods available to patrons by the pantry at any given time (Barale et al., 2018, p. 32). Dependent on the capacity of the pantry to collect and safely store goods, pantries may offer non-perishable and perishable goods across the nutritional categories of protein, fruit, vegetables, and grains, as well as non-nutritional goods, in their inventory (Barale et al., 2018, p. 32). Non-nutritional goods distributed by pantries may

include school supplies, toiletries, hygiene products, and family care products. Policies, if present, will refer to the pursuit of and management of these various resources.

Patron Autonomy

Patron autonomy is defined as the extent of the patron to decide which of the available resources they accept from the pantry during one given visit (Barale et al., 2018, p.10; Barale et al., 2017). Pantries utilize combinations or all of the following strategies to fulfill this criterion: patron choice, pre-established formula choice, and standardized selection options (Barale et al., 2017, p. 10). Because of its resemblance to the retail food environment, in which the patron freely selects amongst the items available themselves as if they were in a grocery store, the terms and their variations associated with patron choice include: *shop*, *freely*, *shelves,* and *order* (Barale et al., 2018, p. 10; USDA, 2018). When patrons are permitted to select items based on a pre-established formula or mix their choice-items with required items, policy may specify the formula rationale, educational information of food groups or nutritional balance via signage or personnel, and communication methods for such requirements (Barale et al., 2018, pg. 13-15; Kuhls, 2011). In the case that a standardized selection is offered, policy reflects terms of the pre-packed of goods and equal or needs-dependent categorizations (Barale et al., 2018, p. 12; Kuhls, 2011).

Health Promotion Service Strategies

Moving on from the physical resources addressed by the food procurement strategies criteria, the health promotion services theme is addressed across emotional and informational dimensions by pantries with the following criteria: personnel services, patron screening, and

referral services (Barale et al., 2018). These three criteria regard the strategies the pantry practices to create the emotional environment, or "how individuals are treated," which may impact a patron's accessibility to health promotion services and resources (Barale et al., 2019, p. 579). By melding the emotional and informational dimensions, as addressed in Healthy Food Pantry Assessment research, the scope of the thesis relates to inclusive health promotion responses in higher education environments, as commonly executed by pantries in practice, in addition to food provision (Barale et al., 2019).

Personnel Quality

The criteria, *Personnel Quality*, evaluates the status of human services associated with the pantry experience, as measured by the level of training or qualification to serve the pantry's health promotion strategies (Barale et al., 2018, p. 50-52). The policy or organizational website staff directory may distinguish the classification of personnel with any or combinations of the following: full-time hire, seasonal hire, student work-study program employee, volunteers, completed training, offered training, and no training. The level of education provided or required of the personnel informs the procedure, services, and attitudes patrons encounter (Barale et al., 2018, p.38). More information regarding the quality or content of required or optional training may be present in policy findings in the form of training presentations, contracts, and . Procedures or notices that outline accountability, discipline, and organizational values are considered through this criterion.

Patron Screening

The *Patron Screening* criteria relates to the conditional access of the patron to the pantry resources and services (Barale et al., 2018). This criteria compares the screening methods

conducted by pantries prior to patron access, which may require patrons to provide documentation of certain statuses and complete applications. Separate from meeting or identifying with eligibility requirements, the execution of tasks may present emotional barriers in accessing needed resources (Barale et al., 2018, p.9). Policies may include metrics for eligibility and qualifications, similar to those for social welfare programs or use of USDA-affiliated banks or pantries, which are determined by each state (USDA, 2023). The common metrics of this include household income, employment status, however the metrics relevant to university food pantries may be catered to the higher education environment, like enrollment status, attendance, federal student aid (USDA, 2023). Further university-specific forms of identification, like student identification cards, may be evaluated. In addition to policies, the materials that may be considered under this criterion are any forms and surveys that patron's must complete. With the collection of forms, policies may explore the material management of such records (Barale et al., 2018, p.9). The process of screening patron access and recognition of what is required of the patron in this process is relevant to the understanding of what populations are impacted by the health promotion response of an institution, either intentionally or inadvertently.

Referral Services

The *Referral Services* criteria regard the services of a pantry to connect patrons with access to services external to the pantry (Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729). The Healthy Food Pantry Assessment Toolkit (HFPAT) addresses the promotion of external medical, educational, and social welfare, which is supplemented by the Nutrition Environment Food Pantry Assessment Tool (NEFPAT) specifying the addition of employment or self-improvement resources (Barale et al., 2019; Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729). In the context of institutional responses in higher

education, these external resources may be provided by private, University-sponsored, or other public and governmental organizations (Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729). In an attempt to provide educational resources referral regarding eligibility and application requirements, the common practices to address this criterion include offering patrons: visual or spoken referrals, educational programming, and individualized advising (Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729). The visual and spoken referrals may be communicated via organizationally-run media advertisements, facility displays, or via personnel (Barale et al., 2019). Materials for this criterion may include informational websites, advertisements, and training manuals.

Additional Assistance Strategies

Long out-lasting the identification of the USDA-identified main theme of "food assistance efforts outside of pantry settings" pantries and other nutritional assistance providers have implemented community-specific strategies to collaborate with external infrastructures to develop the pantry environment and food security interventions (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). *External partnerships*, *Extended provision*, and *Pantry data* are the defined criteria to support this theme (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). The Additional Assistance Strategies fall with the Healthy Food Pantry Assessment Toolkit's "other" dimension, which allow the researcher to establish linkages or co-occurrences among varying respondent practices across the food, physical, emotional, and information dimensions addressed by the above six criteria (Barale et al., 2019, p. 1635). Even as more research-based resources emerge, like those that inspired the adapted criteria, pantries are assuming more duties to decrease their own demand through the implementation of strategies to reduce the prevalence of food insecurity. The Additional Assistance Strategies aim to connect the practices with the networks and implementation

pathways associated with modern food security interventions in higher education environments (Barale et al., 2019, p. 1635).

External Partnerships

The *External partnerships* criteria refer to the types of collaboration, not pertaining to referral services, utilized by pantries to promote their mission in various environments "outside of pantry settings" (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). Pantries may choose to collaborate with other University departments, student organizations, public sector organizations, or private corporations to receive a variety of benefits. Such partnerships may contribute to pantry function, policy, and procedures, as the resources provided by external sources may include volunteers, grants, marketing outlets, advocacy tools, research, and funding. These collaborations are present in policy materials with details of relationship building procedures, contracts, advertisements, contact information,

Extended Provision

The *Extended Provision* criteria refer to pantry strategies to provide nutrition assistance and resources in lieu of the distribution operations of the physical pantry facility (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). Without strategies to address this criterion, access to the resources and services of the pantry would be limited by the hours of operation, which are unique to each pantry, due to various factors like volunteer reliance, campus facility space, utility costs, and availability of food storage equipment (Barale et al., 2018, p.8). While facility hours are impractical for comparative analysis, the creative adapted strategies to address this theme reveal insight into the mechanisms of support that contribute to institutional food security interventions. Examples of

such “food assistance efforts,” or nutritional provision, include the provision of pre-packaged meal kits, delivery services, meal donation programs, dining plan scholarships, satellite kitchens, and restaurant discounts (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). Training manuals, contracts, applications, forms, surveys, advertisements, and other informational materials are considered for evaluation in this criterion.

Pantry Data

Pantries have leveraged data collection and management strategies, which are evaluated through the *Pantry Data* criteria, in order to develop meaningful partnerships and impactful initiatives. Data collection, distribution, and management practices address the theme of “food assistance efforts outside of pantry settings” by informing which efforts suit the needs of their patrons (Barale et al., 2018, p.27). Data distribution, for the criteria, may be used for internal or external use to fulfill resource provision and service demands or their larger mission (Barale et al., 2018, p.27). Materials considered through this criterion may include, but are not limited to any external or internal reports, newsletters, blogs, patron surveys, identity verification records, inventory reports, facility operations logs, donation records, training guides, and management procedures.

Design

Comparative Policy Analysis Methods

The collected policy material yields qualitative data, which is evaluated through a qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) design (Schneider & Wagemann, 2010). A QCA is a case study methodology used to systematically evaluate a set of qualitative characteristics (Schneider & Wagemann, 2010). The flexible nature of the QCA design suits the analysis of

nonpermanent and heterogeneous casualty claims, which is appropriate for the status of pantry policies in this research (Schneider & Wagemann, 2010).

For the purpose of the QCA, the policies included in collected materials are quoted in Chapter IV. From the defined nine criteria across the three main themes, the policy data collected is compared by the researcher to the defined three, varying, defined operational strategies.

Case Study Methods

In addition to the comparative analysis conducted, qualitative data regarding pantry practices was collected with structured, synchronous interviews between the participating pantry informants and the researcher. From the adapted nine criteria, across the three main themes, a script of closed-ended and open-ended question interview questions was designed to capture the pantry representatives' descriptions of their current pantry practices. In conjunction with the findings of the policy analysis, the findings of the interviews provide a real-life contextualization to the examined policies, which yields a case study approach for the research (Yin, 2009). The research includes a multi-institutional case design of university food pantry policies.

Due to the constraints of the research, the interviews were scheduled via email and conducted via Zoom between February and March of 2023. The interviewed pantry representatives were not awarded or offered any compensation for their participation in the survey and the interviews did not exceed 30 minutes. Through Zoom software, the interviews were recorded and transcribed using the verbatim method. The interview guide is included in *Table 1*. Beyond clarifying the meaning of the question, using the pre-determined, adapted definitions, the researcher does not deviate from the structure, thus creating high research reliability.

Mixed-method Rationale

This mixed-method design will aid in the regulation of the human error of the researcher in conducting the comparative analysis. An additional benefit to the interview design is the self-reported account of the respective pantry's operational practices, which may present discretions between policy and true operational practice, as explored in the findings. The design of the selected qualitative research methods, the comparative policy analysis and the interview, coupled with the literature review, create credibility and reliability through triangulation (Yin, 2009).

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS

The findings of the interview and policy document analysis throughout Chapter IV provide an understanding of what contexts influence an intervention and how to better tailor institutional interventions to the specific context in order to achieve the intended outcome of reducing student food security. Chapter IV includes the qualitative comparative policy analysis, institutional case analyses, and cross-case comparisons.

Qualitative Comparative Analysis

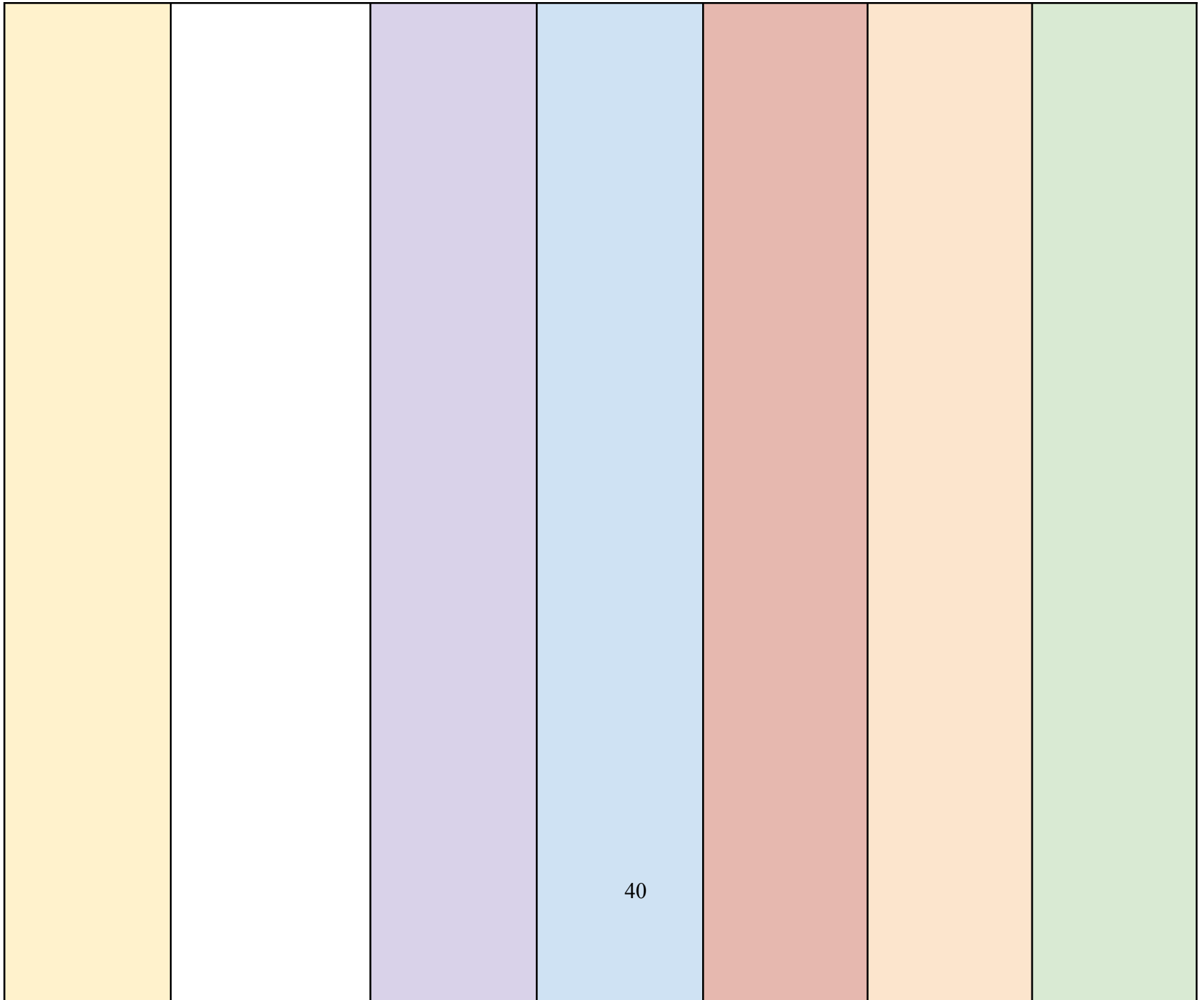
The qualitative comparative analysis of the policy materials is reflected in *Table 4.*

Table 4. Comparative Policy Analysis findings.

Criteria	Strategies	LSU Food Pantry Policy	UM's Grove Grocery Policy	USC's Gamecock Pantry Policy	Auburn Cares Food Pantry Policy	Marshall University Food Pantry Policy
Resource Quantity	amount of goods	n/a	no limit	20 points	any quantity	n/a
	amount of visits	2 visits a week	no limit	per week	once a week	once a week
	how limits are determined and measured	food donation	individual needs	points	one bag	n/a
Resource Variety	offer non-perishable, nutritional goods	food	nonperishable items	non-perishables	non-perishable food	shelf stable food
	offer perishable, nutritional goods	fresh fruit	fresh produce or frozen items.	fresh food	n/a	frozen meats...and fresh items
	offer non-nutritional goods	Hand sanitizer	toiletry items and cleaning products	toiletries	toiletry items	toiletries
Patron Autonomy	Does the pantry allow the patron to freely select?	Shop	to shop	shelves	self-shop model	shop

	Does the pantry inform patron selection?	n/a	create nutritious recipes	n/a	n/a	provide recipes
	Does the pantry offer standardized selections?	online request form	pre-made meals	emergency food kits	n/a	n/a
Personnel Quality	staffed with a hired, paid employee	Faculty and staff	faculty/staff adviser	Staff Contact	staffed	n/a
	utilizes volunteers	student volunteers staff the Food Pantry	student-run	54 pantry volunteers	volunteers	rely on volunteers
	personnel screening or training	required to attend a training session	required to complete confidentiality training.	must complete an interview	n/a	n/a
Patron Screening	at least one form of documentation	must be enrolled	no qualifications	Any current student, faculty, or staff	must be a currently enrolled student	No ID or information required
	verify documentation	present...LSU ID	n/a	a valid CarolinaCard	do not...verify	n/a
	request access to the pantry in advance	fill out ...Request Form	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Referral Services	visual or spoken referrals	Referral Information	list of resources	food insecurity education	Auburn Campus and Community Resources	pantry employees can help
	types of services are referred	these food pantries and soup kitchens	general assistance, financial aid, housing, food, physical health, and mental health	On-Campus...Food Assistance... Transportation... Ongoing Assistance	campus and community food resources	complete a TEFAP form



External partnerships	collaborative organizations	the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank , LSU Dining, LSU Student Government...LSU Dining	Ole Miss Dining and Aramark, Swipe Out Hunger; Nutrition and Hospitality Management Department	Student Government, Aramark...Swipe Out Hunger; Dodie Anderson Academic Enrichment Center; Gamecock Pantry, Carolina Food Co., Food Recovery Network, and the Methodist Student Network	The Feed the Family Fund... Swipe Out Hunger.; the Hunger Solutions Institute; multiple departments	Marshall's Dietetic Department; Huntington Food Bank
	nature of the partnerships	meal swipes	Meal Swipes	meal swipes	a meal donation program	recipe cards
	environments "outside of pantry settings" afforded by the nature	send a group to the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank	n/a	all campus dining locations	only use the funds at campus dining venues	n/a

Extended Provision	regular availability of distribution	Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. and Friday from 11 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	open ...Monday and Tuesday, 12pm-8pm, Wednesday through Sunday, 10am-6pm	Monday - Friday | 8:00A-6:00P	Mondays from 11:30 am – 3:30 pm, Tuesdays from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm, Wednesdays from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm, and Thursdays from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm.	Monday-10:00-11:30am, Tuesday-4:00-5:30pm
	types of additional nutritional provision	meal swipes	Meal Swipes	meal swipes	a meal donation program	recipe cards
	the nature of the additional nutritional provision	LSU Food Pantry Online Request Form	Grab and Go	all campus dining locations	only use... at campus dining venues	n/a
Pantry Data	the type of data collected	terms of utilization,	surveys to patrons	Economic Impact, Service Hours, Number of Visits	one-time demographic information sheet	Number of users each month since pantry opened, Breakdown of MU users vs. general public

	the management of the data collected	Food Pantry All Tracking spreadsheet	surveys to patrons	data collected by the Leadership and Service Center	will not become part of the student's record	sign in sheet
	the distribution of the data collected	Community Impact Statement	Grove Grocery Newsletter	2020-2021 GAMECOCK PANTRY ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020 Gamecock Pantry Annual Report	Auburn University's Hunger Solutions Institute	report... to the Huntington Food Bank

Resource Quantity

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

Patrons are “limited to 2 visits a week" to the pantry itself and in their ability to place online orders (LSU Campus Life, *Shop the Pantry,* 2022; *LSU Food Pantry Order Form,* p.1). No specific limitation to the quantity of resources a patron can take from the pantry in a given visit or through a given order is provided across the policy materials. The purpose behind this strategy is further explained by the findings in the *Patron Autonomy* criteria.

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

Grove Grocery’s policies regarding the resource quantity criteria are determined by the patron more than the organization (Barale et al., 2019, p. 581). The policy clarifies that there is “no limit to how many times you can shop at Grove Grocery, or how much you can take each visit” (The University of Mississippi, *Frequently asked questions*, 2021). The policy further encourages patrons to “take as much food as [they] need (The University of Mississippi, *Visit grove grocery*, 2020). This continues, as the policy asks patrons to “Visit as often as you need,” “depending on your individual needs” (The University of Mississippi, *Frequently asked questions*, 2021). Per the order form, however, the patron is asked to “Please limit the amount of groceries you request/take from the Pantry” due to a “very limited” supply (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

The limits pertaining to the item quantity and frequency of visits to the pantry are tracked by the use of the CarolinaCard, or the University-issued identification, as a patron screening tool (University of South Carolina, *CarolinaCard Tools & Resources,* 2022). Allotted to patron’s

CarolinaCard is a total of "up to 20 points per week," which can be distributed throughout the calendar week timeframe by any method, as it is unspecified in the current policy. The pantry, however, clarifies that the majority of resources are one point, with the exception of some smaller items charging only one-half of a point to the card (Gamecock Pantry, *Who does the pantry serve?*, 2023).

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

Within the *resource quantity* criteria, the offering and limitations of this criterion are represented in the following policy: "Students are eligible to use the Campus Food Pantry once a week and may fill one bag per week" (Barale et al., 2019, p. 581; Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan, 2023, p.2). Patrons "may take any quantity of items" during a visit, which is explained further in the *patron autonomy* criteria (*Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan*, 2023, p.2). The amount permitted by the physical dimensions of the bag, as mentioned in the policy, is not explored further in the available materials. The pantry "provides re-usable bags to students on their first visit," which patrons are expected to use upon returning (*Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan*, 2023, p.2). Each patron is limited to visiting "once a week" (Auburn University Student Affairs, 2022).

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

The policy of the *Marshall Food Pantry,* for the fulfillment of this criterion, specifies the consideration of the limited frequency of patron visits and does not address the amount of goods that may be taken by a patron during one visit (Barale et al., 2019, p. 581). Patrons are limited to the use of the pantry "for goods once a week" (Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023). No

information on the measurement of goods that can be taken from patrons is provided in the policies collected, but is further addressed in the *patron autonomy* criteria.

Resource Variety

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

As indicated by the selectable options of the LSU Food Pantry Online Request Form, the pantry addresses this criterion by offering non-perishable and perishable nutritional resources (*LSU Food Pantry Order Form,* p.2; Barale et al., 2018, p. 32). The nutritional goods available fall into the following categories by which the patron is prompted to select by checking a box to indicate their preference: fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, canned chili, canned beef stew, canned beans, dry beans, canned vegetables, canned spaghetti, cilantro verde, sauces, canned soup, tomato sauce, cranberry sauce potted meat, pork and beans, canned fruit, vienna sausage, mac n' cheese, rice, and snacks/chips (*LSU Food Pantry Order Form,* p.2). Hand sanitizer is the only offered non-nutritional good included in any policies (*LSU Food Pantry Order Form,* p.2).

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

Striving "to be more than just a pantry," Grove Grocery offers non-perishable and perishable nutritional resources, as well as non-nutritional goods, which are further identified through this criterion (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.; Barale et al., 2018, p. 32). On the pantry's shelves, the non-perishable inventory categories include canned vegetables, canned fruit, canned and dried beans, canned and dried pasta, rice, pasta and rice ready meals, canned soups and chilis, baking and breakfast ingredients, ramen, condiments, sauces, seasonings, baby formulas and canned baby food, and snacks (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.). The perishable goods categories offered by the order form include: meat, fish,

frozen foods, fresh foods, and fresh produce (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.). The non-nutritional goods offered by the form include a variety of hygiene and household cleaning items, which even accommodate families with the inclusion of baby wipes and diapers (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.). In addition to the patron's selections, Grab-and-go varieties offer non-perishable goods, which typically include "canned vegetables, canned meat/fish, canned/dried beans, canned fruit, dry pasta/rice, [and] seasoning" (The University of Mississippi, *Host an Event*, 2020).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

The pantry provides fresh food, non-perishables, and toiletries to fulfill this criterion (Gamecock Pantry, Leadership and Service Center, 2019, p. 2; Barale et al., 2018, p. 32). The non-perishable nutritional goods that the pantry aims to procure through the published donation request list include: Rice, Nut Butters, Canned Meats, Pasta / Gluten-Free Pasta, Snacks, Cereal, Jellies, Pasta Sauce, Canned Corn, Canned Carrots, Canned Mixed Vegetables, Ravioli, Spaghetti-o's, Dry Goods (Flour, Sugar, etc.), Mac & Cheese Cups, Drinks" (Gamecock Pantry, *Donate Goods*, 2023). That same list requests fresh produce and dairy items (Gamecock Pantry, *Donate Goods*, 2023). The non-nutritional items include: "toiletries, school supplies, and small housewares" (Gamecock Pantry, *Who does the pantry serve?,* 2023).

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

Within the criteria, the Campus Food Pantry provides "free non-perishable foods and toiletry items" (Barale et al., 2018, p. 32; Auburn University, *Auburn campus and Community Resources,* 2020). An ever-updating list of requested, non-perishable, nutritional and hygiene items are linked for donation-based purchase via an "Amazon Wish List," which would, upon

purchase, be sent directly to the pantry facility (Auburn University Student Affairs, *Ways to Support the Campus Food Pantry*, 2022). In the available materials, there is no acknowledgment of pantry or patron procurement of perishable nutritional goods.

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

Within the *resource variety* criteria, the available policy materials show the pantry offers non-perishable and perishable resources across all nutritional categories, as well as non-nutritional goods (Barale et al., 2018, p. 32). Marshall's pantry describes their inventory as a "wide variety of foods including lean meats, low-fat dairy products, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and healthy fats to ensure a well balance diet to meet students' basic nutritional needs" (Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023). From the Donation tab (Marshall University, 2022) of the official website, more specific information to identity variety of goods offered by the panty is made public in order to indicate preference via a Wish-List form. These items are: "meats (frozen or canned), including chicken, ground beef/turkey, salmon, tilapia, tuna; grains, which include, white bread, wheat bread, whole grain pasta (any kind), cereal, macaroni and cheese, oatmeal, and rice; beans (canned or dry), including black, pinto, chickpea, kidney bean; fruit, including any frozen or canned fruit, apple sauce, tomato juice; vegetable, any frozen or canned vegetables, instant potatoes; soup, including "any variety of canned soups, ramen, cup of noodles"; miscellaneous, including "peanut butter, jelly, tomato sauce, granola bars, gold fish, fruit snacks, crackers, any dry seasonings; dairy, milk 2 % & or 1 %, mozzarella, colby, cheddar, swiss cheese, yogurt, almond milk, soy milk, dry milk; hygiene products, which include the following items: "tooth brush, toothpaste, shampoo and conditioner, soap/body wash, deodorant, and feminine hygiene products" (Marshall University, *Donation*, 2022).

Patron Autonomy

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

For the *patron autonomy* criteria, patrons are referenced as "shoppers," and their collections are in a "shopping bag," which indicates a shopping style client choice model (Barale et al., 2018, p.10; LSU Food Pantry, *Shop the Pantry,* 2022; Barale et al., 2018, p. 10). Marketing materials through the official website encourage students to "Shop the Pantry," meaning the patrons shop from the shelved items freely without assistance or close supervision (LSU Food Pantry, *Shop the Pantry,* 2022; Barale et al., 2018, p. 10-12). This is supported by the volunteers' duties relating to shelf stocking, which then meet the definitions of the shelf-style model to correspond with the shopper style (*On-Site Training Checklist*, n.d; Barale et al., 2018).

This level of autonomy is maintained with online ordering, as the form prompts patrons to "Please share any specific items you would like to be included in your order if available," and requires the field that asks patrons to "share any specific items you would like to be included in your order if available" (*LSU Food Pantry Order Form,* p.2).

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

Grove Grocery is a shelf-style pantry with the features of shelves stocked like a grocery store, and a volunteer checks out the patron once finished with their shopping experience (Barale et al., 2018, pp. 9-10). Because of its resemblance to the retail food environment, patrons freely select amongst the items available themselves as if they were in a grocery store. The patron choice or shopping style terms included in the policy are *shop*, *freely*, *shelves,* and *order* (Barale et al., 2018, p. 10). Grab-and-go options and pre-made recipe kits of non-perishable goods are available, and the pantry works to "create nutritious recipes" to correspond with the provisions

(The University of Mississippi, *Host an Event*, 2020; The University of Mississippi, *Our Services*, 2023). With the online ordering option, patrons may select amongst all the resources within each category of goods available and may write "special requests" to guide the order with further preferences (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

Within the constraints of the CarolinaCard points system, as described throughout the previous criteria of the theme, no further policies indicate restrictions to patron choice amongst the available items. Other policies refer to the pantry with shelves, which may indicate a shelf-style facility and correlate to a shopping style (Gamecock Pantry, Supporting Students, 2023). Patrons have also had the opportunity to choose amongst emergency food kits, which reflects some available forms of standardized selection options (Leadership and Service Center, 2019, p. 2).

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

The *Campus Food Pantry* "offers a self-shop model, where students may take any quantity of items they are interested in" from the available selection (Barale et al., 2018, p.10; *Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan*, 2023, p.2). Maintenance and stocking of the shelves, which is mentioned four times through a provided operational guide material, supports the implementation of the model (*Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan*, 2023; Barale et al., pg. 10, 2018).

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

Within the criteria, the official Marshall Food Pantry website (About Us, 2023) encourages patrons to "come sign in and shop for food" (Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023;

Barale et al., 2018, p.10). As published, volunteers “help customers shop” which reinforces the intention of a patron-choice or shopper-style model (Marshall University, *Volunteer,* 2023; Barale et al., pg. 10, 2018). This model allows patrons to freely select from the available items as if they were experiencing a retail food environment (Barale et al., pg. 10, 2018).

Personnel Quality

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

The LSU Food Pantry uses hired employees and trained volunteers to staff the facility and address the criteria (Barale et al., 2018, p. 50-52). In the LSU Campus Life policies, the term “staff" is used twice to confirm the employment of some pantry personnel (LSU Campus Life, n.d., p. 4). Volunteers are “required to attend a training session and sign a confidentiality waiver before they start volunteering" (LSU Campus Life, *Volunteer*, 2022). The training regarding the regular duties is fully outlined in the *On-Site Training Checklist* (n.d.) through sections regarding procedures for the shift tasks, such as pallet sorting, morning stocking, and for patron interaction during the facility’s open hours. A *LSU Food Pantry Volunteer Form* (n.d.) asks volunteers to “protect the privacy and dignity” of patrons by affirming confidentiality intent (*On-Site Training Checklist*, n.d.).

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

Within the criteria, Grove Grocery “is operated by a student committee with the help of student volunteers,” which are supported by prerequisite training and hired staff (The University of Mississippi, *Volunteer*, 2020; Barale et al., 2018, p. 50-52). “Volunteers must complete a mandatory 30-minute training session (over Zoom) before volunteering,” which is further described as “confidentiality training” (The University of Mississippi, *Volunteer*, 2020; Food

Pantry Volunteer Sign-Up). More specifically, “volunteers are trained to respect patrons’ privacy, and we do not ask” for identifying information (The University of Mississippi, *Confidentiality*, 2020). There are no further materials on the content of the training sessions. The policy provides a job description adds that: “volunteers are responsible for staffing the Food Pantry during operating hours, filling grocery orders, organizing the shelves and other areas of the facility, and aiding in data collection" (The University of Mississippi, *Volunteer*, 2020).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

In addition to the one website-recognized staff contact, the Gamecock Pantry identifies as a “student-led initiative managed by a student Executive Board” with trained volunteers, which addresses this criterion (Barale et al., 2018, p. 50-52; Gamecock Pantry, Staff Contact, 2023; Leadership and Service Center, 2019, p. 4). As a student-led initiative, those wishing to volunteer “must complete an interview…to be accepted as a new volunteer,” and all “accepted volunteers must attend a mandatory training session” (Gamecock Pantry, Gamecock Pantry volunteer application, 2023). As a requirement of the completion of the application, the applicant signs to acknowledge that a failure of volunteers to “not take this responsibility seriously” results in “a direct and severe impact on people’s ability to get the sustenance they need,” as well as addressing their “[commitment] to attending the … volunteer training prior to starting my first shift, as it is a prerequisite for serving in the pantry” (Gamecock Pantry, Gamecock Pantry volunteer application, 2023). The organization recognizes “54 pantry volunteers” (Leadership and Service Center, 2019, p. 4). The volunteers are “assigned weekly shifts" and must attend a one-time, five-hour training, the contents of which are not disclosed in the publicly-available policies (Gamecock Pantry, Gamecock Pantry volunteer application, 2023).

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

The pantry utilized some hired employees and volunteers to maintain the pantry's operations and address the definition of the *personnel quality* criteria (Barale et al., 2018, p. 50-52). The pantry is "staffed by the Auburn Cares Graduate Assistant," who is "responsible for greeting users, registering new users, assisting users in shopping, keeping record of users, tracking inventory, and keeping the pantry shelves stocked" (*Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan*, 2023, p.1). "Any Campus Food Pantry volunteers will also assist with" the previously described tasks (*Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan*, 2023, p.1). No further information regarding the training of personnel is available in policy.

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

To address this criterion, the policies define the requirements of a patron to gain access to the pantry (Barale et al., 2018, p.9). The patron is defined in the policy as "students (and community members!)" and "no ID required to utilize the pantry" (Marshall University, *Home,* 2023; Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023). No policy materials reference other factors for eligibility, documentation provision or verification, or other screening measures.

Patron Screening

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

To address this criterion, the LSU Campus Lifes policies define the procedure to grant student patrons access to the pantry (Barale et al., 2018, p.9). The patron is defined in the policy as a "student" (LSU Campus Life, *Shop the Pantry*, 2022). When the student arrives, the volunteers are prompted to "ask for their Tiger Card and swipe in the chrome browser: campuslabs" (*On-Site Training Checklist*, n.d). The Tiger Card is a University-issued form of

identification and, as such, is connected to the internal system of *campuslabs* for verification. The eligibility requirements regard student enrollment: “must be enrolled for classes in the current semester” and “present a current LSU ID upon visiting” (LSU Campus Life, *Shop the Pantry,* 2022). The proof of University-affiliation, Tiger Card, is required to obtain access to the physical pantry facility, verified by the personnel through the same information system (LSU Food Pantry Online Request Form (n.d., p.2).

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

The policy identified that “All University of Mississippi students, faculty, and staff are eligible with “no qualifications” (The University of Mississippi, *Frequently asked questions*, 2021). “Volunteers… do not ask for your name or ID” (The University of Mississippi, *Confidentiality*, 2020). Policies do not refer to any other screening procedures or patron requirements to align with this criterion (Barale et al., 2018, p.9).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

The policy materials define the method of both the pantry and patron to verify eligibility for the pantry’s resources (Barale et al., 2018, p.9). The patron profile is **“**any current student, faculty, or staff" with the documentation provided at the time of visit with the pantry is “a valid CarolinaCard,” which is defined as a permanent University-issued identification card (Gamecock Pantry, *Who does the pantry serve?*, 2023; University of South Carolina, *CarolinaCard Tools & Resources,* 2022). The method for verifying the validity of the CarolinaCard is unspecified in the available policies.

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

The Auburn Care policies outline the patron eligibility, intake, and other screening to fulfill this criterion (Barale et al., 2018, p.9). The policy identifies that a patron "must be a currently enrolled student" and "does not need to verify financial need" (Auburn University Student Affairs, *Campus Food Pantry,* 2022). Patrons, on their first visit, "fill out a one-time demographic information sheet," and each subsequent visit is logged through that created profile (Auburn University Student Affairs, *Campus Food Pantry,* 2022). Following a patron's first visit, policies specify a distinct change in the screening procedure, asking the patron to "'add visit' to PantrySOFT, when [the patron] completes shopping," as opposed to requirements as a prerequisite to access (*Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan*, 2023, p. 2).

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

The oversight of hired employees and the training level of volunteers is not clearly specified by the policies within the criteria (Barale et al., 2018, p. 50-52). In addition to the singular staff contact, the published responsibilities of volunteers outline that they "help customers shop, restock items, and with occasional events" (Marshall University, *Volunteer,* 2023; *Contact,* 2023). No further information regarding the training or qualifications of the personnel is available through the materials.

Referral Services

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

The LSU Food Pantry offers written referrals to six regional food banks and pantries through the informational website to address this criterion (LSU Campus Life, *Alternative Resources*, 2022; Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729). This referral includes the organization's contact

information, website address, physical address, organization type, hours of operation, and general information regarding its offerings (LSU Campus Life, *Alternative Resources*, 2022). More specifically, the resources offered include five food banks, soup kitchens, and pantries: Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank, Hope Ministries, St. Vincent De Paul, Shepherd's Market Food Pantry, The Missionaries of Charity at St. Agnes), one information referral, United Way 211, and The Missionaries of Charity at St. Agnes is also a shelter or temporary housing service (LSU Campus Life, *Alternative Resources*, 2022).

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

From the materials available, the criteria are addressed through written referral services via the organization's website in the following categories: food, general assistance, healthcare, and financial aid and housing (Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729; The University of Mississippi, *External resources*, 2020). The food resources include referrals to SNAP, WIC, The Pantry, the Oxford Community Market, and More Than A Meal (The University of Mississippi, *External resources*, 2020).

With regard to physical and mental health, housing, financial aid, and general assistance services, the pantry cites a university, local, and federal welfare programs: University of Mississippi Health Services, Oxford Medical Ministries Clinic, Medicaid, CHIP, University of Mississippi Counseling Center, UMatter, and University of Mississippi Psychological Services, Subsidized Housing, Housing Vouchers, and Public Housing Programs, Energy Assistance, Doors of Hope, 211, findhelp.org, Rise, Inc. Student Navigator Network, Oxford-University Transit, Ole Miss Office of Financial Aid, Unemployment Insurance, TANF, and SSI (The University of Mississippi, *External resources*, 2020).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

Outside of their own services, the Gamecock Pantry presents an online resource bank for written referral services to housing, food, transportation, and other provisional resources, thus addressing this criterion (Gamecock Pantry, Additional Resources, 2023; Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729). For each of these referrals, the pantry website includes the organizations' direct links and a brief description of services (Gamecock Pantry, Additional Resources, 2023). Through the website, the pantry refers to on-campus resources, which include the Career Center, Student Health Center, and Student Success Center (Gamecock Pantry, Additional Resources, 2023). The referenced Off-Campus include a variety of housing shelters: Oliver Gospel Mission, Toby's Place, Transitions, St. Lawrence Place, Hannah House, and Homeless No More (Gamecock Pantry, Additional Resources, 2023). For more off-campus food assistance, the pantry refers to Harvest Hope Food Bank, Salvation Army, Food Share, and Operation Veteran Support (Gamecock Pantry, Additional Resources, 2023). Transportation security resources linked through the site are Soda Cap Connector, DART Dial-A-Ride-Transit, Yellow Shirts, USC Shuttles, and, for "Ongoing Assistance," the pantry offers the SC Thrive Benefits Bank Enrollment (Gamecock Pantry, Additional Resources, 2023).

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

From the available materials, the pantry offers both written referrals and referral advice services to fulfill this criterion (Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729). The related websites offer written referrals to campus and community food resources (Auburn University, *Auburn campus and Community Resources,* 2020). These food assistance referrals include a brief description of services and a direct link to their respective sites for more information. The campus-related

University partners with available websites, including the Feed the Family Fund, Share Meals, and The Little Food Library. (Auburn University, *Auburn campus and Community Resources,* 2020). The community food resources, or those external to the University, that the pantry highlights are the Community Market, SNAP, and Food Bank of East Alabama (Auburn University, *Auburn campus and Community Resources,* 2020). In addition to written referrals, referral services include a "10-minute meeting" for individualized or "1:1" advising "every month [with a] SNAP Representative…in the Campus Food Pantry" to "find out if they are eligible for benefits, and receive information on applying for SNAP benefits (*Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan*, 2023, p. 4).

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

To address this criterion, the pantry offers personnel educational and advising opportunities for one referral resource (Nikolas et al., 2018, p. 4). The website policy encourages patrons to "[stop] by the pantry and complete a TEFAP form," as "pantry employees can help" (Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023). From this description, the patron must request this form, and the external referral service is limited to The Emergency Food Assistance Program (USDA, 2020). No other referral services are seen to be offered, given the policy materials available.

External Partnership

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

The LSU Food Pantry identifies as "an affiliate of the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank," additionally acknowledging other LSU Campus Life partnerships with LSU Dining and LSU Student Government, and Swipe Out Hunger to address this criterion (*On-Site Training Checklist*, n.d.; LSU Campus Life, n.d., p. 10; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47; Media Center, L. S. U.,

2021). The On-Site Training Checklist (n.d.) further clarifies the nature of the partnerships as donation-based. The pantry acknowledges weekly "part of [the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank] partnership includes a donation on Wednesdays," and a donation of rice and beans from LSU Dining, which volunteers are responsible for sorting, recording, and stocking (*On-Site Training Checklist*, n.d.).

In addition to the donated inventory, the LSU Food Pantry manages contributions "outside of the pantry setting" with these named partnerships (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). Nutritional food provision is accomplished for students who receive donated meal swipes, which are redeemable for meals "available at The Club, 459, and the 5 dining halls" (Media Center L.S.U., 2021). Another opportunity to promote their mission"outside of the pantry setting" is achieved with the utilization of pantry volunteers by sending a "group to the Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47; LSU Campus Life, *Volunteer*, 2022).

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

Grove Grocery, addressing the elements of this criterion, collaborates with a number of national, state, local, and University-affiliated organizations to advance elements of their mission "outside of pantry settings" (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). The national partners that the pantry identifies as a member of include the College and University Food Bank Alliance, the Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi College, and the University Anti-Hunger Alliance, which promote the pantry's mission in political and policy-setting arenas (The University of Mississippi, *About*, 2021; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). In order to maintain these capacities, Grove Grocery receives funding from national partners, the non-profit organization, Swipe Out Hunger, and Kroger (*Food Bank adviser manual*, 2020, p. 5).

In addition to the referral services offered by the pantry, policies indicate the following collaborates with University-affiliated organizations: “the UM Garden Club and Willie Price Lab School to provide fresh, sustainably grown produce to patrons,” as well as “the UM Compost Program to compost expired food” (The University of Mississippi, *About*, 2021). The nature of these partnerships reduces food waste while contributing to the community-wide systems of food production and rescue that support their own functions, which makes an impact “outside of the pantry setting” (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). The current Ole Miss Dining and Aramark partnerships “allow students, faculty, and staff with extra meal swipes to donate them to those in need,” increasing nutritional assistance through the various dining venues (The University of Mississippi, *About*, 2021).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

As reported in the 2022 Annual Report, the Gamecock Pantry launched a number of new partnerships to facilitate nutrition provision outside of the pantry environment, which will be explored through this criterion and include: Student Government, Aramark, Swipe Out Hunger, Dodie Anderson Academic Enrichment Center, Gamecock Parents, Carolina Food Co., Food Recovery Network, and the Methodist Student Network (Leadership and Service Center, 2019, p. 6; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). The Gamecock Pantry collaborates with Student Government and Aramark to facilitate a campus-wide donation drive of meal swipes to the dining halls, which will then be re-allocated to students in need through an application process to demonstrate need (Leadership and Service Center, Tools & Resources, 2022; Leadership and Service Center, 2019, p. 6). In the same on-campus dining halls, the Dodie Anderson Academic Enrichment Center contributes “ready-made, healthy, grab-and-go options” (Leadership and Service Center, 2019, p.

6). More collaboration with the dining halls to provide a free, once-a-week meal to in-need community members, as made possible by the partnerships of Carolina Food Co., Food Recovery Network, and the Methodist Student Network (Leadership and Service Center, 2019, p. 6).

As a part of the pantry's services to engage the community, the personnel "provide comprehensive food insecurity education to the Carolina Community" (Gamecock Pantry, *Vision*, 2023). The nature of this partnership with community entities and service is a form of outreach to share the pantry's mission "outside of pantry settings" (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

The *external partnerships* criteria are explored with an examination of the status and nature of the pantry's collaborations with the Hunger Solutions Institute, University departments, Feed the Family Fund, and Swipe Out Hunger (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). The Auburn Cares Student Affairs Department, which operates the pantry, is a voluntary member of the Food Insecurity Coalition with the Hunger Solutions Institute (Campus *Food Pantry GA - operational plan*, 2023, p.4). Through the Food Insecurity Coalition, institutional partners are accessible in "monthly meetings" and unified in "the Action Plan's 5 stated goals" from Auburn University's Action Plan to End Student Food Insecurity (Campus *Food Pantry GA - operational plan,* 2023, p.4). Because the pantry Graduate Advisor has the responsibility to "oversee" these proceedings, the nature of this partnership promotes the pantry's leadership and mission "outside of pantry settings" (Campus *Food Pantry GA - operational plan,* 2023, p.4; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

At various times, "multiple departments will ask for outreach presentations, tours, or tabling related to the Campus Food Pantry and food insecurity" (*Campus Food Pantry GA -*

operational plan, 2023, p.4). The nature of this University partnership allows the pantry to advance its mission "outside of pantry settings," as it is to "be given outside of Campus Food Pantry operating hours" (*Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan,* 2023, p.4; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

Partnering through the Feed the Family Fund to host the Swipe Out Hunger meal swipe drive with the name-sake non-profit organization creates nutrition assistance opportunities "outside of pantry settings" by engaging the various dining venues and by "[empowering] students to give back to their community by donating unused meal swipes to students in need" (*Feed the Family Fund,* 2023; Office of Sustainability Admin., 2021; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

The pantry maintains partnerships, which correspond with this criterion, with University-affiliated and community organizations to address this criterion (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). In addition to being "sponsored by the Marshall's Dietetic Department," the pantry has a partnership "with the Huntington Food Bank" "to order pantry food" (Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023). Per their partnership, the pantry personnel "are required to report the total number of clients served every month to the Huntington Food Bank" (Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023). This partnership endorses the services of both food assistance entities "outside of pantry settings" by connecting the broader community with their mission and work (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

Extended Provision

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

The pantry facility specifies "Pickup times… Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. and Friday from 11 a.m. - 4:30 p.m." (LSU Campus Life, *Food Pantry Home and Hours*, 2022). Outside of those published operating hours, "Students can place an order online beginning at 8 a.m. every Monday," indicating accessibility to the LSU Food Pantry Online Request Form beyond regular hours and a strategy to address this criterion (LSU Campus Life, *Food Pantry Home and Hours,* 2022; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). While pick-up or the fulfillment of the placed orders aligns with the facility's hours, patrons may still take steps toward nutrition-based services at a time beyond pantry hours (*LSU Food Pantry Order Form,* p.2).

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

The regular hours of availability are "Monday and Tuesday, 12pm-8pm, Wednesday through Sunday, 10am-6pm" (The University of Mississippi, *About*, 2021). In addition to the facility's operational hours, Grove Grocery identifies the methods in which they "[work] to ensure continued access for our patrons," and address this criterion (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). In addition to the fully stocked pantry, these strategies include "home delivery, a kitchen facility, meal swipes, grocery-fill orders, Grab and Go Bags, and corresponding recipes" (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.). The grocery-fill orders and Grab-and-Go Bags are accessible "24 hours a day" in the facility that houses the pantry itself (The University of Mississippi, *About*, 2021). As defined by the pantry, "Grab and Go Bags contain a recipe and all the ingredients needed to make it" and "can be found outside the Food Pantry… at all times" (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.).

“Outside of the pantry setting," but with pantry hours of operation, is the satellite location kitchen, which has available nutritional products and a “fully equipped kitchen” (Barale et al., 2017; The University of Mississippi, *Our Services*, 2023). Because all are “welcome to bring [their] food as [they] choose,” the environment can be identified through this criterion (The University of Mississippi, *Our Services*, 2023; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

For a selected group of patrons, who have completed an application, collaborations will allow the pantry to offer “up to 30 meal swipes per semester,” which are redeemable across dining halls and venues (The University of Mississippi, *Our Services*, 2023). These meal swipes offer nutritional provision in settings that differ from the pantry, have a cash equivalency at dining venues, and, therefore, address this criterion (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

The regular posted hours of the pantry are Monday through Friday from 8:00AM to 6:00 PM (Gamecock Pantry, Location & Hours, 2023). Beyond those hours, a selection of patrons, who receive meal donations through a collaboration with the university’s Student Government, Aramark, and Swipe Out Hunger, have available access to food services through meal donations (Leadership and Service Center, Tools & Resources, 2022). This, however, the fulfillment of this criterion limited to the patrons selected from an “anonymously reviewed” application completed by patrons and to a “block of 16 additional meal swipes for the semester” (Leadership and Service Center, Tools & Resources, 2022; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). For the selected patrons receiving the additional nutrition assistance, the “16 meal swipes can be used at all campus dining locations,” which have limited hours themselves (Leadership and Service Center, Tools & Resources, 2022).

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

As posted for the spring semester of 2023, the facility's hours are: "Mondays from 11:30 am – 3:30 pm, Tuesdays from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm, Wednesdays from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm, and Thursdays from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm" (Auburn University Student Affairs, *Campus Food Pantry,* 2022). To meet the criterion of extended provision outside the operational hours, there is nutrition assistance available through the meal swipe drive and donation program, as well as appointment scheduling opportunities (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). "Meal swipes are loaded onto the recipient's Tiger Card," the University-issued identification, through which the application-selected patron "can only use…at campus dining venues" *(Feed the Family Fund*, 2023). All patrons are encouraged to "contact Auburn Cares for an appointment" if they "need assistance outside of these hours" (Auburn University Student Affairs, *Campus Food Pantry,* 2022).

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

Outside of pantry offerings and referrals, there appear to be no additional services from the available policy materials to address this criterion (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

Pantry Data

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

Several points of data are collected to measure incoming inventory, outgoing inventory, spoilage weight, and elements of patron identity to address this criterion (Barale et al., 2018, p.27). When an order is placed online, the student's University-assigned email and information are attached, as needed for notification of fulfillment, and managed through their collaboration within the secure information systems of campuslabs (*LSU Food Pantry Order Form,* p.1).

As published in the Community Impact Statement of the Resource Packet, the quantitative data items informed analytical findings regarding pantry output and patron usage (LSU Campus Life, n.d., p.3). The responsibility of data collection lies within the duties of the daily volunteers, as indicated by the provided *On-Site Training Checklist* (n.d.). Volunteers are asked to: "Record the outgoing weight of the goods taken by the patron, as they exit" and "Weigh and record spoilage" when stocking (*On-Site Training Checklist*, n.d.). These measurements are documented and managed through the internal "Food Pantry All Tracking spreadsheet," made available to regular volunteers (*On-Site Training Checklist*, n.d.).

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

To address this criterion, the pantry collects and distributes data regardings spending, patron visits, patron contact information, and inventory tracking data through several methods (Barale et al., 2018, p.27). Pantry volunteers log inventory tracking "weigh the outgoing food," which is then managed "using a calculation suggested by the University of Southern Mississippi's Eagle's Nest food pantry" to estimate the quantity of provided meals (Food Bank adviser manual, 2020, p.3). The purpose of this is internal: "to help us with our planning and assessment" (The University of Mississippi, *Frequently asked questions*, 2021).

Identifying information on patrons is collected via the tallying of visitors and the amount of completed grocery order forms (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.). For patrons filling out the request form, the survey specifies that their name, when prompted to provide it, is "kept confidential" (Grove Grocery, *Grove Grocery Order form,* n.d.). Any statistical data published through newsletters or other methods maintain patron confidentiality (The University of Mississippi, *Grove Grocery Newsletter,* 2021).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

From the available materials, the Gamecock Pantry addresses the criteria through reports data regarding economic impact, totaled service hours, number of patron visits, pantry volunteers, and the number of unique visitors (Barale et al., p.27, 2018; Leadership and Service Center, Initiatives and Programs, 2022); Gamecock Pantry, Leadership and Service Center, p. 3, 2019). All the statistics are "based on data collected by the Leadership and Service Center" and distributed through publicly-available annual reports (Gamecock Pantry, Leadership and Service Center, 2019, p.3).

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

The methods of data relations throughout the other pantry practices are explored through this criterion (Barale et al., 2018, p.27). As the patron screening criteria indicated, the Campus Food Pantry Auburn University's Hunger Solutions contributes to the pantry's data collection and distribution procedures. As the pantry "strives to protect the privacy of all students who access it," the policies assure patrons that their information or pantry usage "will not become part of the student's record, nor will the student's information be shared outside the Auburn Cares office" (Auburn University Student Affairs, *Campus Food Pantry,* 2022). All data is managed through the "record keeping software, PantrySOFT" (*Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan,* 2023, p.2). Distribution and statistical analysis of data appear to be conducted on behalf of and by Auburn University's Hunger Solutions Institute (Tuggle, n.d.).

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

For this criterion, the *Marshall Food Pantry* participates in data collection, management, and distribution of information regarding the number of users each month since the pantry

opened, a breakdown of users between University-affiliated and the general public patrons, number of pounds of food, number of volunteers, patron information, and volunteer categorization of general public or University-affiliated (Marshall University, *Statistics,* 2021; Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023; Barale et al., 2018, p.27). All statistics gathered and published via the website from the collected data present no identifiable information regarding patrons (Marshall University, *Statistics,* 2021). This is consistent with the referral service option for TEFPA, through which patron "information will remain confidential and is not shared with any other entity on campus" (Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023).

Interview Data

The LSU Food Pantry at Louisiana State University

Resource Quantity

From the conducted interview, the resource quantity criteria limits are consistent with the evaluated policies. The rationale behind the practice to "only allow our students to come twice a week" is to "ensure we're serving as many students as possible" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The outlined restrictions are "not truly enforced," but personnel attempt to increase compliance through "a good rapport with our student shoppers," acknowledging "a lot of them know the two-week limit" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). With items that are consistently donated, "there's no real limit," but personnel "write on a big board" to convey the specialty-item's restrictions (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The perishable items that are donated "from local grocery stores like Trader Joe's and Whole Foods" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). This formula limits patrons to "take one or two of those [specialty] items and …one

freezer item, one dairy item, and one produce item" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Resource Variety

While consistent with the policies, the resource variety is vastly more diverse than is represented in the evaluated policies due to donation-based partners' waste-reduction efforts. For example, in trying to reduce their waste, the variety of consistently-donated non-perishable goods contrasts the yield of the inconsistent personal and corporate donations, which are often "super random" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Patron Autonomy

To address the patron autonomy criteria, the informant describes how the pantry model has changed. Both the outdated and new models are reflected through policies when only one is currently available to patrons: "Before Covid, we used to have our students just come in, grab a little grocery basket, and shop around; Since Covid, …we created, I think of it as a Walmart pickup order situation" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). This "pickup order situation" is further defined procedurally as the patron "fills out their order form and then we fill their box, and then they can just pick it up from there" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). Acknowledging "there isn't much autonomy on the front part of what they get besides filling out that survey and putting which items they want," the pantry offers that the patron "can always return those items or request a different one when they're looking through their box" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). "Once they come into the

shop, [the pantry personnel] can kind of help guide that a little bit, and…they do have a little more autonomy (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Personnel Quality

With regard to the personnel quality criteria, the pantry does operate with student workers, which have to qualify with good academic standing and a basic background check for a "specific scholarship to work on LSU's campus," but has "a lot of volunteers" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). These student workers have to participate in a "week-long training" with confidentiality and procedural training, relating to "health protocols and our cleaning protocols" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). Before participating in the regular operational hours, "everyone signs a consent form and a waiver saying …you won't share any information of the students that use the pantry" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). At a later point in the interview, with regard to data management, the informant references a hired Americorps employee that is in "charge of managing that and making sure everything's input" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Patron Screening

Almost directly echoing the policy materials, the informant states: "As you have some form that says you're an LSU student, you're allowed to use the pantry" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). For the online surveys and forms, individuals "can only fill them out if [they] have an LSU email address," which serves as the procedure to verify their status as an LSU student (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Referral Services

Contrary to the policy materials, the informant claims the pantry does not "have any visuals or set advising categories," but they "have resources about other supplemental food resources" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The informant supports the practice of verbal referral services because "all of our student workers are educated on those resources, and we'll just talk to whoever's asking about it" or "just explain the different resources" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

External Partnerships

The only partnerships that are regular enough to fit this criterion include the annually-beneficial partnership with the Black Student Union that hosts a "drive during or for MLK day of service," as well as the corporations, Trader Joe's and Whole Foods, and local chain restaurants, Fat Boys Pizza, that consistently provide donations (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The various student and community organizations that provide irregular resource support do not meet this criterion (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47; LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Extended Provisions

In alignment with the limited policies on this criterion, the informant acknowledges that there is "not a lot of work outside of that being done by the pantry itself," but that is "something [they are] working on currently" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The pantry does "have people that are SNAP educated and can help students register for SNAP," but

struggles to meet this criterion because of the irregularity (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47; LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Pantry Data

The informant's response is in accordance with the policies and provides additional information. As reflected by the internal-use procedural document, the pantry personnel "use a lot of Excel sheets and have a huge Excel sheet" (*On-Site Training Checklist*, n.d.; LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The data collected per patron log "their names and their emails," as well as "what day and what time" (*On-Site Training Checklist*, n.d.; LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). After a series of internal checks from the Americorps employee and the staff advisor, and student's information is all kept private, and there is a general distribution of "the big numbers," or the statistical analysis results, "to see the impact" (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

With regard to inventory, the pantry does "weigh all the food out and then we weigh our spoilage…and to see the impact of rescuing that food (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). While "it's mostly our student workers inputting it as the day goes on," a hired Americorps employee is in "charge of managing" data collection in aggregate (LSU Food Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Grove Grocery: The UM Food Pantry at the University of Mississippi

Resource Quantity

The Grove Grocery informant states, in accordance with the policy materials, there is "not really a limit" to either measure of visit frequency or resource quantity at one time, but encourages patron "to be respectful of other people coming in who need the resources from the

pantry" and "to grab what they need at the time" (2023, [Speech Transcript]). With regard to supporting the lack of policy, the informant again confirms there is "not a limit of how many times they can come," and this frequency "just depends on what they need" (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Resource Variety

The variety of non-perishable, perishable, and non-nutritional offerings are verified through the confirmation the use of a "refrigerator and a freezer in the pantry" and procedures employed to "have very minimal waste" (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Patron Autonomy

Supporting the shopper-style or patron choice model, as evidenced across various policy materials, the informant describes, "when a patron comes in, they select the goods that they want from the pantry" (2023, [Speech Transcript]). This style and autonomy are mirrored with online ordering services, as the patron "will fill out the forms, saying what they need, and then we'll go ahead and pack whatever they need in there" (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). In addition to these options, the pantry provides various standardized selection options through the Grab-and-Go bags, which include "the recipe, the ingredients and what to do with that food" as a "how-to guide of food that they can also come back and get in the pantry if they like the grab and go bag recipe" (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Personnel Quality

Aligning with the policies, the informant confirms that the pantry is "all volunteer based," with their qualification contingent on participation in "a training process with our staffing chair" via Zoom, but fails to specify the content of the training, as addressed by policy

(2023, [Speech Transcript]). The training is described as a “one-time training,” and the content, which is described in general terms, addresses “the ins and out the pantry” and “anything they need to know about” relating to their learning “how to volunteer” (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The staffed hours are determined by the completion of a “sign up sheet every single week” through which volunteers “can sign up for any time that works for them” within the facility hours (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Patron Screening

The informant identifies the pantry, in accordance with the policies, as being “for the community and people on campus and in the community”with “no sort of qualifications” (2023, [Speech Transcript]). Addressing the screening procedure, the informant states the pantry does do “any kind of ID-ing,” which refers to the collection or verification of identifying documentation (Barale et al., 2018, p.9; Grove Grocery Informant 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Referral Services

While the informant does not acknowledge the written referral services available in the policy materials, the informant references verbal referral services, “trying to connect” the patron to the “right people, right places, and things,” specially “food pantries all over Oxford” (2023, [Speech Transcript]). This response is consistent with the policy findings of the case through the website resources.

External Partnerships

Across this criterion, the informant’s response is somewhat consistent with the policy findings. The regular fundraisers, defined as “percentage nights” are within this criterion by

engaging external partners the mission of the pantry “outside of panty settings” (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). In the interview, the informant addresses the meal swipe donation partnership in accordance with the policy materials (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Extended Provisions

To address this criterion, the informant briefly confirms the utilization of Grab-and-Go Bag, meal swipes, and kitchen options, as described consistently by the policies (2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Pantry Data

Expanding on any available policies, the informant refers to this criterion with how several members of the volunteer leadership participate in the data collection, management, and distribution process. Each volunteer is responsible for logging “how many pounds of food people got and how many patrons came in” during their shift through a QR code in the pantry facility (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). This data is internally accessible, as a “record of this in the pantry and then put it on a spreadsheet” (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). From the description of the management of this spreadsheet, it is analyzed by the secretary each week into meals distributed (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The following acknowledgement verbally conducts informal, qualitative data collection: "patrons coming in actually help us know when to open up the pantry, what days work" (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). From this collection, the informant references their general practice to “post about how many meals we distributed” to

explain the data distribution subcriteria, as opposed to the newsletters referenced through the policies (Grove Grocery Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

The Gamecock Pantry at the University of South Carolina

Resource Quantity

Honoring the CarolinaCard points system established by the policy, the patron has "15 points a week in order to use our pantry," instead of 20 points, as referenced in the policy, to purchase all of the goods offered by the pantry, which are further explored in the resource variety criteria (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). There is a "recommended split within our pantry [for the patron] spend 10 points on items within the actual food pantry and five points on items that are outside of the food pantry," with non-nutritional or inconsistent, perishable resource offerings referenced as the Aldi aisle outside of the food pantry (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The pantry enforces "pantry restrictions a little more strict to the actual 15 points per week, and they reset on Monday in order to maintain just a status of somewhat fullness in our pantry" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The "students that serve as the executive board of our basic needs programs, and they pick a lot of our caps" evaluating "data from previous years to determine what a client can receive in aid per week" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Resource Variety

In addition to referencing the diverse inventory amongst the categories of non-perishable, perishable, and non-nutritional goods, the informant acknowledges their capacity to "carry gluten-free options" and how the "try to keep that as a pretty regular situation within our pantry,

as well as other dietary restriction options" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). Similarly, after identifying a "gap that needed to be filled within our last year's data reports," the pantry "decided to implement" regular stocking efforts for baby "formulas and baby food" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Patron Autonomy

Patrons, within the point limitations, "choose to spend those on what you choose to spend them on" with "some guidelines on what we would like for you to follow" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). An example of a pantry-encouraged guideline is that the patron should take "no more than three of the same item within our pantry so that way we can make sure nobody gets 15 points worth of peanut butter, but there is" not any type of restrictions on what you can take for our pantry" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). To mimic the retail environment, the pantry places "more whole foods in the front and more snacks and things that you can make quick meals with in the back… in order to encourage healthy eating" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). To support the self-shop model, "volunteer staff …have no verbal opinion of what our clients are taking or not taking" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). Currently, "we do not offer the standardized practice because everything that comes in our pantry currently is donations based," but "we're working on" this option, as "we look to expand the capacity of our pantry to be able to take some regular donations (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Personnel Quality

While in alignment with the policies, the informant greatly expands past the practices represented by the policy materials to address this criterion. The informant identifies as the "only one that is paid to run our pantry," as hired for a "year of service through AmeriCorps" (2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Volunteers participate in a "comprehensive,"" mandatory six-hour training in the beginning of the semester…in order to be trained on how to utilize the pantry, how to check folks out, customer relations," and offers "different training options depending on what we have going on in the pantry" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The content of the trainings are identified as "a comprehensive training regarding anything you could possibly know about the basic resources on our campus," which informs referral services, "safety rules regarding how things are stored within the pantry and how we keep inventory rotating" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). To inclusively serve the patrons, volunteers are "LGBTQIA+ safe zone trained," as well as undergo "diversity trainings and some other just privileged trainings and awareness trainings" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The "only requirement to be a pantry pal within our system is that you attend that training" (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Patron Screening

The pantry operates under "no standardized regulations or rules to who can use our pantry beyond the fact that you have to have a Carolina card," as volunteers "check a client out" at the "front desk" with this information. (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). Additionally, in order to "de-stigmatize using a pantry," the pantry promotes itself

as “a free resource for all students, faculty or staff” and has “steered away from the idea of having to qualify to use our pantry” (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

Referral Services

In addition to the corroborated written referrals on the website included in the available policies, the pantry offers verbal referral services through volunteers that are “directly trained on different resources that we have within our university system” so that they “are able to assist the client right then and there” in the pantry setting (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

External Partnerships

In addition to the campus partnerships referenced through the policies, the informant describes the “work with Harvest Hope, which is our Feeding America sponsor, as a “way to cross-promote things so that way the Columbia community,” which qualifies to as “outside of pantry settings,” component of the criteria (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). The pantry collaborates with staff and promotes “awareness tabling” with the student government collaboration, which is “outside of pantry settings” (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

Extended Provisions

For extended nutritional assistance, the pantry has created the position of “wellness coordinator,” which “consults with clients to provide them with the opportunity to create more whole and nutritious meals from items given in our pantry” through a 30-minute appointment.”

“outside of pantry settings” (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). A partnership with the” student health center, which hosts our Healthy Carolina program” and a twice-a-month farmer's Market on our primary road within campus” creates extended nutritional provisions “outside of pantry settings” (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

Pantry Data

To expand on the data procedures outlined by the policies, MyPantryHelper is identified as the “primary data collection tool” to “track all information: whether or not you're student, faculty or staff first name, last name, the date you came in, as well as your university email” with the institution-wide system associated with the CarolinaCard information database (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). The data collected includes the patron’s “Carolina card …email, the date and time that they came in, the items that they received, the poundage or ounces of the items they received, as well as how many points they used within that visit” (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]). While the pantry transitions to the PantrySoft information technology, the data is internally managed “in an Excel sheet” to be “used on the backend to increase donor participation as well as to give us a more holistic view of who is coming to visit us” through the distribution of “a monthly newsletter to our clients and one for our donors (Gamecock Pantry Informant, 2023, [Speech Transcript]).

The Campus Food Pantry at Auburn University

Resource Quantity

Consistent with the available policy, “students are allowed to use the campus food pantry once a week” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). To clarify the limit to the amount of goods one patron can take per visit, as defined by the criteria, the pantry defines “item limits for students using the food pantry, and those are posted within the food pantry” (Barale et al., 2019, p. 581; The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). These specific item limits were not further explored through the interview or policy materials. However, the limits were determined by the pantry’s method to “categorize items to make sure that students could get enough of each item to feed themselves for a week” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

Resource Variety

The pantry stocks “shelf table items,” which matches the available policies, but, unmentioned by policy, are the offerings of “refrigerated foods, frozen foods, and fresh produce, and like non-refrigerated” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

Patron Autonomy

The pantry self-describes as a “small grocery store” with “shopping baskets that [patrons] can take with them throughout the store, and they just basically walk around and we tell them, pick what [they] want” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). This description supports the self-shop model, explored by the policy materials (Barale et al., 2018, p.10; *Campus Food Pantry GA - operational plan,* 2023, p.2). Within this structure, the pantry informs, by a determined formula, patrons to “select what they want” across the nutritional category limits (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). The pantry does

not “have any pre-packaged items,” but has offered standardized selection options “in the past” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

Personnel Quality

As stated by the informant, “*The Campus Food Pantr*y is primarily staffed by our graduate assistant,” who was trained by the university-hired Coordinator via a shadowing method “for the first week or so” (2023 [Speech Transcript]). Following this training, the pantry provides an “operational manual for our graduate assistant for her to refer back to about her duties and assignments,” as this role “receives tuition assistance and a monthly stipend” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). Volunteers are not used for “checking out of students, but they do assist with breaking down boxes, restocking inventory” and there is “not any formal training for volunteers” due to the graduate assistant oversight in most cases (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). The pantry recognizes the permission of a small set of students to be “let into the pantry unmonitored because they know what to do and have been trained” and “since they're not interacting with student data” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

Patron Screening

The pantry informant claims that the pantry does “not require any type of documentation to use the food pantry,” explaining the use of a “software [that] is connected to our larger university system software where it verifies based on a student's ID number that they're enrolled,” which is the “only criteria” for access (2023 [Speech Transcript]). “[For] the first time, we ask them to fill out this new user information…in our system” through “an iPad in there,

which regards ”demographic information,” “and then, every time they come after that, we simply just pull them up and fill anything else out” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). Because this screening manages student information data, the task of “checking out of students” is only managed by the graduate assistant. (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

Referral Services

As acknowledged by policy, the referral services provided by the pantry include individualized SNAP consulting and visual referrals of other universities in the pantry facility. With a week's notice, the pantry does require students to “sign up in advance for those meetings” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). As publicized through the available policies, the pantry personnel “[sends] out an email every month letting students know that we're going to be hosting a snack representative from our local SNAP office to help students with the” application process, which they recognize is “really cumbersome and really difficult” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

The visual referrals are posted on a “big magnetic whiteboard” and consist of “information about other food resources on campus and within our community,” which attracts student interest (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). The students’ interaction with the visual referrals are described by the following statement: “while they're waiting to check out or coming in, taking pictures of things on the board” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

The interview also included the use of verbal referral services through the current GA, who, as “a social worker…tells students, if you need anything, food, pantry, or otherwise,” that

the pantry can “get that student connected with whatever services they need” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

External Partnerships

Highlighting the referenced policy, the “food insecurity coalition with our institution that combines associate deans from all our colleges” and “Hunger Solutions Institute, which is part of our College of Human Sciences,” the informant states that the pantry “works really closely with them with for some of our other food aid programming international programs, the graduate school advisors unit, scholarship office, financial aid (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).” Outside of pantry settings,” as required of this criterion, these partnerships are “combining a lot of key players at the institution and making sure that we are collaborating across efforts and working to build partnerships” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]; Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).

Extended Provisions

As consistent with the policies, the pantry does “refer to other programming on campus” and “offer the Feed the Family Fund, which is a meal swipe meal scholarship,” for which the pantry takes action to “encourage all food pantry students to apply” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

Pantry Data

The pantry uses a “software called PantrySoft,” which has been “set up to ask some specific information that we're interested in: what college they're in, how many dependents they have, those kinds of things, and then we log every visit, and then we also log inventory, so what items they're taking, and then we put in what items” (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023

[Speech Transcript]). Because this screening manages student information data, the task of "checking out of students" is only internally handled by the graduate assistant, the university-hired coordinator, and their supervisor (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]). Despite the use of the software that is "connected to our larger university system software," "using the food pantry is not part of their other existing educational record" (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

Data distribution is acknowledged for internal semesterly reports, external annual reports, "campus partner presentations," and "[encouraging] people to donate or give by making them understand how big of an issue and how many students really are serving" (The Campus Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech Transcript]).

Marshall University Food Pantry at the Marshall University

Resource Quantity

Consistent with the policy materials, pantrons "can come once a week" (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). Similarly, the patron determines "can choose" amongst the selection of items, and this "varies depending on what the person needs at that time" (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]).

Resource Variety

The pantry offerings are the consistent provision of Facing Hunger Food Bank's use of The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and supplemented by community donations (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). The informant references "shelf stable, canned," selections as well as a variety of "fresh and frozen goods," to support the listing of some of the nutritional items above (Marshall University Food Pantry

Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). Referencing an occasion several months ago, the pantry received non-nutritional goods that included "donations of dog treats and sometimes … clothes, dish detergent and laundry detergent" (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]).

Patron Autonomy

The informant identifies this criterion to be addressed by the pantry through the"grocery store style," which is also referenced through patron choice models and terms, like "shop" (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). The pantry personnel tries to encourage the patron to take "at least two items per section" but it is "not an issue at all' if the patron takes more or less of an item (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). The patron "can choose" and their selection "varies depending on what the person needs at that time" which often includes considerations of 'how many people are in their household" and health goals (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). Pre-packaged and standardized selections were distributed "during covid times," but not anymore" (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). These elements of procedure are consistent with the publicly-available policies.

Personnel Quality

The University "only hires one student at a time" to be "a student manager," who is overseen by a faculty advisor (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). Volunteers "normally help with restocking my shelves, cleaning, …just basic day-to-day stuff" and "help [patrons] grab their food" (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). The training is informal and consists of shadowing the

student Manager, takeing no more than “10, 15 minutes for someone to really understand the normal day-to-day of what kind of goes on” (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). Only the Manager “does any of the paperwork…to report [data] per month,” which took her a “few months to learn how to do correctly,” but the manager does not engage in training any other personnel on this task” (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]).

Patron Screening

The interview revealed that the TEFAP referral service could not be categorized as an external entity to the pantry, as their collaboration with Facing Hunger Food Bank provides the regular TEFAP options to the pantry’s patrons, which regard to *resource quantity* and *resource variety* criteria, in addition to the supplemental community donations (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). The TEFAP form completion is a screening measure in order to access the pantry“when [a patron] first comes,” they complete “a…means test paper,” which “expires yearly” and “requires a name, address, …phone number and a signature” (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). Once this form is completed for the year, the pantry “does not require any income requirements or ID checks,” however, the Manager does “initial and mark off on their paper” in order to “keep track of how many times they come in and who comes in” (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]).

Referral Services

The interview revealed that the TEFAP referral service was not an external entity to the pantry, as their collaboration with Facing Hunger Food Bank provides the regular TEFAP options to the pantry's patrons and not within the scope of the *referral services* criteria (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). The pantry's referrals relate, instead, to "senior boxes and the different mobile pantries," as offered by Facing Hunger Food Bank (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]).

External Partnerships

The pantry's partners are majorly nutrition provision services. The most significant collaboration is Facing Hunger Food Bank, as "most all of [their] food," as well as the pantry's referral services are a result of their partnership (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). The most significant partner is Facing Hunger Food Bank, as "most all of [their] food" is a result of their partnership (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). The informant references entities that regularly donate provisions, but, as these operations are inconsistent, this partnership is beyond the scope of the criterion.

Extended Provisions

While unrecognized by the policy materials, the informant sites the use of Swipe Out Hunger's "meal swipe donation program" in collaboration with the campus dining entities and a "couple instances" in which the pantry provided delivery to a patron with specific accessibility limitations relating to transportation (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]).

Pantry Data

The pantry data criteria has no variance between policy and the practice, as expressed by the informant. Data is collected from a form, called “means test paper,” which “expires yearly” and “requires a name, address, …phone number and a signature" from the patron on their initial visit to the pantry (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). While the publicly-available website distribution efforts were not mentioned, this published data does not include identifying information, as does the data reported “at the end of each” month to “a couple of the coordinators at the food bank” via email (Marshall University, Statistics, 2021; Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). While data remains “confidential and is not shared with any other entity on campus,” the raw data is shared with their partner, the Facing Hunger Food Bank (Marshall University, *About Us,* 2023; Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]). The student manager exclusively handles the internal use of data, as explored in the personnel quality criteria (Marshall University Food Pantry Informant, 2023 [Speech transcript]).

Cross-Case Comparison

Because the research does not aim to produce generalized findings, the findings of this thesis can be applied with a case-based, prescriptive approach to inform institutional interventions. The nuanced contexts of each university greatly influence, not only the organizational structure and conditions of the food pantry itself, but also, the political power of each higher education institution to be a change agent for the public policy recommendations at the state or federal level. In turn, the quantity and quality of the policies that pantries possess may have a significant impact on the perception and power of the university.

The quantity of policies is assessed for each university and each of the nine criteria in *Table 5*. As each of the nine criteria have three subcriteria, the presence of one policy equates to one point for the criteria. Because this table assesses only the presence of policy, the value is nominal and used for an additive score. The highest score per criteria indicated as a three and, when evaluated against the nine criteria, highest score per pantry is acknowledged by the highest product of twenty-seven.

Table 5: Policy presence across pantries and criteria.

Criteria	LSU Food Pantry Policy	UM's Grove Grocery Policy	USC's Gamecock Pantry Policy	Auburn Cares Food Pantry Policy	Marshall University Food Pantry Policy	Criteria Policy Total
Resource Quantity	2	3	3	3	1	12
Resource Variety	3	3	3	2	3	14
Patron Autonomy	2	3	2	1	2	10
Personnel Quality	3	3	3	2	1	12
Patron Screening	3	3	2	2	1	11
Referral Services	3	3	3	3	3	15
External partnerships	3	3	3	3	2	14
Extended Provision	3	3	3	3	3	15
Pantry Data	3	3	3	3	3	15
University Total	25	27	25	22	19	

The quality of policies, for the purposes of this research, relates to the continuity or alignment between practice, uncovered through the interviews with pantry informants and the policy materials. From the interview data, the informants revealed that many of the available policies pre-dated the 2020 pandemic, which significantly influenced operations, and have not been updated. Based on the informants' responses, the 2020 pandemic, for most, led to an expansion of accommodating services with a variety of unique strategies across several criteria. A failure to reflect these changes through policy or easily accessible publication may lead to the low utilization of university food pantries, as it is correlated to an actual or perceived stigma or lack of resources (El Zein et al., 2018). This issue may be alleviated by increased transparency with published and updating operational policies (El Zein et al., 2018; McArthur et al., 2020). Table 6 compares this status with the nominal indicator of a "D" to reflect significant difference and a "S" to indicate significant similarity between the policy materials and the current operational practice.

Table 6: Assessing alignment between policy materials and current practice.

Criteria	LSU Food Pantry Policy	UM's Grove Grocery Policy	USC's Gamecock Pantry Policy	Auburn Cares Food Pantry Policy	Marshall University Food Pantry Policy
Resource Quantity	D	S	D	S	S
Resource Variety	D	S	S	D	S
Patron Autonomy	D	S	S	S	S
Personnel Quality	D	S	S	S	S

Patron Screening	S	S	S	D	D
Referral Services	D	S	D	D	D
External partnerships	D	D	D	S	S
Extended Provision	S	S	D	S	D
Pantry Data	S	D	S	S	S

For this post-pandemic innovation to continue, the level of institutional and external support must grow alongside the increasing demand. This demand requires university pantries to bolster the quality and quantity of their organizational policies and practices, but each university has a diverse combination of financial, human resource, and external community support. An indicator of this support is found through a subcriteria the *extended provisions* criteria, which refer to the regular availability of distribution operations of the physical pantry facility related to the operational hours (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). Because the hours of operation are determined by institutional and external factors, like volunteer commitment, utility cost, facility availability, and other factors, this comparison draws an inexact, yet important reflection (Barale et al., 2018, p.8). This is supplemented by the strategies of the visual or verbal *referral services*, which allow "the pantry to provide a broader scope of assistance to clients beyond their existing food donations and services" (Barale et al., 2018, p.8). Even with this limitation, the hours of operation serve as a quantitative measure of comparison between pantries, as displayed through Table 7.

Table 7: Qualitative and quantitative comparison of operational hours by pantry.

Criteria	Definition	Strategies	LSU Food Pantry Policy	UM's Grove Grocery Policy	USC's Gamecock Pantry Policy	Auburn Cares Food Pantry Policy	Marshall University Food Pantry Policy
Extended Provision	strategies to provide nutrition assistance and resources in lieu of the distributi-on operations of the physical pantry facility (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47).	Please describe the regular availability of distribution operations of the physical pantry facility.	Monday through Thursday from 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. and Friday from 11 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.	Monday and Tuesday, 12pm-8p m, Wednesd-ay through Sunday, 10am-6p m	Monday - Friday | 8:00A-6:0 0P	Mondays from 11:30 am – 3:30 pm, Tuesdays from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm, Wednesd-ays from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm, and Thursdays from 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm.	Monday-10:00-11:3 0 am, Tuesday-4:00-5:30 pm
		Hours per week	39.5	56	50	16	3

Within the cross-case analysis, the adapted evaluative framework itself assesses the common practices and foundational themes of pantry operations. With regard to the findings, institutions with higher research accreditation and flagship universities tended to have greater

quantitative outcomes against others in the sample. More commonalities amongst the sample are evaluated further in Chapter V, as it relates to the application of the findings to policy recommendations amongst rising demand for food pantries and broadened institutional interventions.

CHAPTER V: APPLICATION OF FINDINGS

Chapter V addresses the application of the varying multi-institutional policies and practices into interventions that significantly alleviate, if not eradicate, student food insecurity, in lieu of, and support of, the recommended public policy solutions. Enacting the change necessary to address student food insecurity in higher education environments is a multi-dimensional process, requiring multi-level governance and combined approaches. The different degrees of action and autonomy between university food pantries, higher education institutions, and state or national-level policy-makers, which are ordered as tiers one, two, and three, reflect the multi-level governance approach(Cerna, 2013). This work has examined the relationship between public institutions of higher education and the policies of their university food pantries, which serves to identify recommendations to strengthen coordination between tiers one and two governance levels (Cerna, 2013). Higher education institutions (HEIs) lack policies to standardize, financially support, and incentivize data-driven interventions. Simultaneously, policies attempting to provide these resources require the data-driven political support of HEIs (Nazmi et al., 2018, p. 3). The actual or perceived “transaction costs of coordinating multiple jurisdictions" stall targeted mechanisms to specifically address food insecurity amongst student populations in higher education environments (Cerna, 2013, p.12). The combined-approach recommendations are explored for each governance level throughout Chapter V.

Implications of the Evaluative Framework

the "validity of USDA instruments within college student populations has not been tested, but has been validated for use in U.S. households, and therefore, food insecurity estimations based on the USDA food security survey questions may be differentially interpreted according to general household demographic factors" (Nazmi et al., 2019, p.8; Opsomer, 2003). With the foundation of these three USDA's identified main themes, the nine adapted criteria of the evaluative framework were adapted to mirror the normative practices that are feasible for respective pantry leadership to act on in place of institutional support or in the face of larger institutional barriers (Barale et al., 2017). The evaluative framework is adapted from peer-reviewed, valid, highly reliable studies and a significant sample of various pantries (Barale et al., 2017, p.S47). For example, the Healthy Food Pantry Assessment Toolkit includes measures for pantry location and physical accessibility, which were excluded from the adapted criteria due to the physical and administrative constraints of a university food pantry in a higher-education environment (Barale et al., 2018, p.5-7). More physical and social constraints relating to nutritional-resource donation and perishable-goods storage trends excluded further nutritional health promotion assessment measures than those explored through the patron autonomy criteria.

While the adapted evaluative framework faces limitations as a methodology, it was created with the consideration of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory, which re-emerged in higher education literature with the coronavirus pandemic. As a pandemic reconstruction approach, this theoretical framework has and can continue to be applied by HEIs to create student-centered interventions (Freitas and Leonard, 2011). The criteria of the evaluative

framework explore the policies and practices of university food pantries, as tier one in the multi-level governance approach through their direct contact with the students most impacted by, and in need of, effective food insecurity interventions. As the resources to higher education institutions translate to the pantry provision of aid to students through the close nature of these multi-level jurisdictions, the additional assistance theme resulted in the most diverse and most applicable body of findings to the purpose of the thesis.

This underlying theoretical framework conveys a sense of urgency and relevance to the fundamental argument of the thesis for institutional nutritional assistance based on the potential mutual benefits for higher education institutions and students. In the post-pandemic reconstruction era, higher education must revolutionize the federal metrics associated with food insecurity for their growing nontraditional student populations (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015; Nazmi et al., 2019, p.2). Leading with student-centered practices can not only equitably improve rates of return on investments across socioeconomic, racial, gender, and other socio-cultural groups but lead to public policy reward systems (Lobo et al., 2022). A rejuvenated commitment to education through a motivational-needs lens may yield economic, democratic participation, and quality-of-life improvements, associated with participation in higher education (Freitas and Leonard, 2011). The state and federal public policy recommendations to address student food insecurity in higher education environments include appeals to the administration and personnel's intrinsic, hierarchical motivations through the proposed implementation, accountability, and competitive measures.

Recommendations

Public Policy Recommendations: Top-Down Approach

Currently, in the United States, "no federal mechanisms are specifically targeted to combat food insecurity among college students" (Nazmi et al., 2019, p.9). One of the nation's strongest mechanisms for alleviating food insecurity, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), only serves 31% of students, while at least 39% of all undergraduates are associated with households below the federal poverty line (GAO, 2019). In addition to the need to increase SNAP accessibility and eligibility, and other implementation accountability measures to address student food insecurity with federal legislative action, this work recommends the Enhance Access To SNAP (EATS) and Student Food Security Acts, as similarly endorsed by the Food Research and Action Center for the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition, Hunger, and Health (Food Research and Action Center's Working Group on College Student Hunger, 2022).

If passed and enacted, the EATS Act permanently amends the foundational policy of the 2008 Food and Nutrition Act's eligibility criteria to include the consideration of attendance at an institution of higher education equal to work employment (EATS Act, S.2515/ H.R.1919, 2021). Tangentially echoing and expanding the eligibility terms of the EATS Act is the Student Food Security Act (Student Food Security Act, S. 1569/H.R. 3100, 2021). The Student Food Security Act, also "awards planning and coordination grants, on a competitive basis," based on HEI demonstration of commitment: to the promotion of federally-funded basic needs programs, to conducting research on food and housing insecurity amongst college student populations, and to

securely reporting data amongst the respective federal agencies (Student Food Security Act, S. 1569/H.R. 3100, 2021).

At the state level, the passage and enactment of the Hunger Free Campus Act mirror the goals of the Student Food Security Act by awarding grants on a competitive basis to public and private HEIs that demonstrate a commitment to addressing student hunger through SNAP referral and other innovative services, which the respective state commissioner evaluates. Since its inception as a college student-led organization, Swipe Out Hunger has presented innovative interventions for HEIs to address food insecurity with its meal swipe reallocation program and has reflected its program-design approach in its template legislation (Swipe Out Hunger, 2022). While research regarding its implementation in the five states in which it has passed is limited due to the two-year recency, this legislation presents signs of feasible implementation because it addresses the needs of a worthy demographic, accommodates states' unique needs, highlights practicality, assures quality with competitive designation status, and has external governmental agency buy-in through existing structures. By creating competition among institutions of higher education to be recognized with the Hunger Free Campus designation and initiating coalition building, this legislative recommendation has both implementation durability and political feasibility (Swipe Out Hunger, 2022; Maslow, 1943; Marris 1975). Because there is an existing network across the tier of all of the participating university pantries in their respective collaborations with Swipe Out Hunger at some level for the meal reallocation drive and donation, there are opportunities to increase political action amongst the food pantry volunteer base and (Swipe Out Hunger, 2022). Its recent passage in one of the sampled states, Louisiana,

as well as its introduction in West Virginia, speaks to the potential for benefit amongst the sample.

Because of their similar strategies, The Hunger Free Campus Bill and Student Food Security Act have shared political feasibility and implementation appeals. The Student Food Security Act appeals to the esteem motivation and creates durable competition within and among states by highlighting the existing requirement of states' reporting food insecurity levels, as well as their state's SNAP population and eligibility terms (Student Food Security Act, S. 1569/H.R. 3100, 2021).

Pantry and Institutional Recommendations: Bottom-Up Approach

Regardless of their status in the legislative process, these public policy recommendations require growth and their associated costs from the institutions and pantries (Cerna, 2013). The recognition of the bottom-up approaches would emphasize the importance of food pantries and the networks of volunteer personnel involved in regular service delivery, potentially elevating multi-level support (Cerna, 2013). Based on the findings of current and past practices of qualitative comparative analysis, the incremental implementation of these bottom-up recommendations by the pantry would improve communication between the jurisdictions, enabling more multi-level coordination in the fight to alleviate student food insecurity. To achieve the unified, reliable federal and state response to aid higher education institutions, as outlined in the recommended public policies, public higher education institutions and their pantries must increase their research participation and data distribution capacity. This section

chronologically orders the recommended policy changes necessary to provide data-driven political support behind the aforementioned public policy alternative solutions.

Based on the pantry data criteria findings, higher education institutions and pantries should first solidify advocacy pathways for more purposeful upstream application of the data collected. Data is collected and statistically analyzed from the samples, but fails to inform policy and programmatic change at an institutional or public policy level. The lack of data distribution efforts is the first recommendation pantries should address for sustainably gaining more resources to accomplish significant research and supporting the policies that provide funding for data-collection efforts. Existing structures within the pantry operations, like volunteer training and utilization, internal data analysis procedures, and digital external report issuance, make this recommendation feasible and low-cost. As shown from the findings amongst the sample, the pantries' data is mainly for internal use except for the partnership between The Campus Food Pantry and the Hunger Solutions Institute at Auburn University, which proves to participate in the most advocacy relating to external food security initiatives. Public disclosure of the pantries' impact can reduce stigma while increasing general awareness and inspiring contributions to their organizational missions. The adapted criteria of the additional assistance theme resulted in the most diverse body of findings informing tier one and two recommendations in place of the support that would be provided with the public policy recommendations.

Secondly, while individual pantries work to distribute their data to their closest level of governance more effectively, the university administration must incentivize multi-institutional research on the prevalence and associated risk factors of student food insecurity in higher education environments in order to access a large and diverse sample for a representative,

generalizable studies (GAO, 2019, p. 11). Still, pantry, university, and government leaders alike only have a range of estimates from limited research for political advocacy and to inform institutional interventions, like renegotiating meal plan costs or creating scholarship opportunities to cover the costs.

The common practice of hosting the meal swipe reallocation initiative supports an established connection and incentive to collaborate with external partners to advance the Hunger Free Campus Bill and earn this state-recognized designation. The policy network, especially of Swipe Out Hunger, which now hosts the College and University Food Pantry Alliance, and coalition-building opportunity is at the fingertips of these pantries, based on the findings of Chapter IV (Anderson, 2021). Failing to grasp this opportunity is detrimental to the sustainability of their practices, and the incentive to advocate for state-level public policies benefits all areas of the environments of these sample public universities (Anderson, 2021). Louisiana has passed the Hunger-Free Campus Bill, and Louisiana State University is on-track to gain designation, bringing their institution a level of social esteem in addition to the funding incentives (Swipe Out Hunger, 2022). The "fiscal commitment required from state legislatures considering new hunger-free campus legislation will be a challenge" (Anderson, 2021). To overcome this barrier, pantries should adopt the recommended data collection and distribution strategies. Additionally, pantries should provide a continual demonstration of good practices amongst institutional interventions that would earn designation if enacted (Anderson, 2021). Through this shared institutional intervention, institutions can build a horizontal network, producing more data for future research regarding food insecurity interventions.

In place of the enactment of supportive policies, like the Hunger Free Campus Bill in the respective states of the sample or nationally with the Student Food Insecurity Act, the recommendations for the sample include moving forward in creating more avenues for increasing accessibility to SNAP application. Through more SNAP education training for various levels of personnel, the pantry and institutional partners can provide spoken referrals, individualized consulting sessions, and conduct community awareness programming (Nikolas et al., 2018, p.729; Barale et al., 2018, p.50-52). Conducting more outreach and awareness-based programming, specifically in collaboration with community-trusted organizations, is a worthy investment for pantries, as their services fill the gaps of their external referral programs, like SNAP, and reduce the stigma surrounding pantry utilization (El Zein et al., 2018).

In order to compromise for the reallocated energy of the personnel and other resources and expand capacity to meet the demand, pantry personnel should utilize the available USDA assessment tools to guide strategic planning initiatives. Strategic planning initiatives require a strong understanding and assessment of the current baseline. Across the sample, most policies had yet to be recently updated, as apparent through the generated citations of the materials and the different content expressed through the interview responses. The recommendations of the USDA-funded assessment tools support practices that align with retail environments to promote patron choice, limited time for screening, discrete data collection, and other methods to increase physical and social accessibility (Barale et al., 2019; Barale et al., 2018). The purpose of the research, however, is not to judge or compare the current policies and practices against those recommended by the original, adapted materials but to use the strategies associated with the

adapted criteria of the assessment tools in higher education environments to address student food insecurity.

Conclusion

By conducting a qualitative comparative analysis of university food pantry written policies and verbal accounts of procedures, this work has developed five case studies of interventions of public universities to address the issue of student food insecurity in order to inform related institutional and public policy change. The background of the evolution of institutional food security interventions supports the argument that higher education institutions face an increasing responsibility, amongst social and economic incentives, to support their student populations that experience food insecurity.

To actualize this novel responsibility of higher education institutions, this work provides institutional and public policy recommendations to address student food insecurity in higher education environments. It is imperative for higher education institutions to buy into what they are selling: an institution that can provide students of all socioeconomic statuses and backgrounds with a brighter, more secure future. Similarly, state legislators must meet their representative universities to fulfill the promise of equal opportunity through public institutions of higher education and remain dedicated to the success of every student, as these demographics shift. These factors must be coordinated for students, like Amy, who, among the barriers associated with her socioeconomic background, are struggling to keep promises to themselves and their hope for a brighter, more secure future through higher education.

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