# Comparative Analysis of Save-A-Swipe and Similar Programs at Other Colleges

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Retriever Essentials

## ABSTRACT

After reviewing Retriever Essentials programs I became fixated on the Save-A-Swipe Program. I thought that it was an amazing program that helps students suffering from food insecurity but I thought that the program could be improved to make the process easier for students to donate and receive meals. After completing preliminary research on if other colleges have meal donation programs on their campuses I thought to do a comparative analysis with the Save-A-Swipe program and other colleges with similar programs.

## INTRODUCTION & THESIS

There are hundreds of college meal donation programs at colleges and universities that I found while conducting my research. For my research I wanted to focus on programs that are still in existence and have ample information available about the program. Using those parameters I focused on eight colleges/universities that have a college meal donation program. The colleges/universities that I focused on were Central Michigan University, Rice University, University of Maryland, Southeastern Louisiana University, Tufts University, Cornell University, University of Rhode Island and Colorado State University. I also found that a national program called Swipe Out Hunger exists that helps colleges to develop meal donation programs on their campuses and some of the colleges that I focused on for my project have partnered with them.

Thesis: Find the common threads and the divergent elements between the programs.

## METHODS

Analysis of college meal donation programs through various online sources such as news articles and program websites.

Questionnaires sent to multiple colleges about their respective meal donation programs.

## FINDINGS

**Central Michigan University**

Resident students donate unused guest meal swipes and contribute to the bank of available meals anytime after the last day to change meal plans each semester at the CentralCard Office.

Any CMU student who does not have a meal plan, including FLEX dollars, may request a block of 10 meals by completing the Meal Swipe Registration Form

**Rice University**

Students with a 20 meal-per-week plan may donate between one and five of their guest meal swipes to off-campus students who may be experiencing food insecurity.

Students can donate Guest Meal Swipes by filling out the Swipe Donation Form.

Students can access donated meals by filling out a form online.

**University of Maryland (Emergency Meal Fund)**

The Emergency Meal Fund (EMF) is a SGA-funded program formed in order to help these students. The SGA has allocated $5,000 which will provide over 166 cards, which is over 1,660 meals, to students who have very low food insecurity.

EMF offers students 10 dining hall meal swipes on a card to use and these cards will be distributed to several offices on campus to ensure fast distribution to the students in need.

Campus staff will identify students in need based on the serious nature of their financial, personal, and/or housing situation.

**Southeastern Louisiana University (Swipe out Hunger)**

SGA Run Program where meals are donated by both students and Aramar.

Students can donate Meal Swipes through the GET app using their college login.

**Tufts University (Swipe it Forward)**

Students can donate meals online; Students with Premium Plans may donate one meal per semester, Students with other meal plans may donate up to four meals per semester, These meals will be part of a semester meal bank that other students can access.

Students may request up to 10 meals per semester. Students who feel they need additional support should be in touch with their financial aid counselor.

Students will only be able to access the meals that they requested from the meal bank once their existing meal plan is finished.

**Cornell University (Swipe out Hunger)**

Cornell students have the opportunity to donate one of their bonus meals online where donated bonus meals are collected and placed in a Swipe Out Hunger fund.

Cornell students who meet eligibility requirements will be given access to a Swipe Out Hunger meal plan with a few bonus meals.

Participating students can use the Swipe Out Hunger bonus meals in any of Cornell Dining's Dining Rooms.

**University of Rhode Island (Share a Swipe)**

Students experiencing food insecurity are encouraged to apply to request meal passes.

Students can donate one guest pass per semester online, or by visiting Butterfield Dining Hall or Mainfare Dining Hall.

Students can request meal passes by filling out an application form online. Once your request is reviewed, they will receive an email notification. The process is easy and confidential.

**Colorado State University (Rams Against Hunger)**

Students apply for dining hall meals via an application online which are evaluated by Student Financial Services.

Applicants will be notified of their selection after no more than 1 week by the Rams Against Hunger Coordinator. Applications are accepted year-round and are accommodated on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Selected applicants will receive 60 meals per semester on their RamCard. If an applicant applies mid semester, the number of meals they receive will be prorated. These meals are loaded electronically onto the recipient's card.

Recipients will be notified via email when their card has been loaded with meals and is ready to use in the residence hall dining centers.

Recipients can swipe their RamCard at any CSU dining hall.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Save-A-Swipe program at University of Maryland Baltimore County is currently undergoing a substantial revamp of the program. After completing my research I have found a few ways that I believe the Save-A-Swipe program could be improved.

Allow students to donate meals in person through people such as the cashier at the dining hall, or staff present at the Retriever Essentials pantry.

Increased marketing via posters around campus and especially in and around dining halls.

The use of email marketing.

Use of an phone application where students can donate meals such as where Southeastern Louisiana University uses the GET application.

Increased amount of meals students are able to donate or request.

More information about food insecurity in the community is taught and made available to students at University of Maryland Baltimore County.

Students, alumni, parents of students and staff should have the opportunity to donate money or flex dollars to add to an emergency fund for students.

Improved screening of students who may be suffering from food insecurity.

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