Teaching Kitchens, Best Practices

What we’ve learned almost 2 years in.
Why Teach Cooking?

Campus’ should be striving to ensure that our communities know about nutrition, know how to shop on a budget and how to cook healthy meals. And we should all be focused on sustainability and food awareness. We have made great strides in educating people, but there’s much still to do.
Why Teach Cooking?

Food-secure students report higher confidence in planning, preparing, and cooking meals compared to food insecure students.*

Food insecurity models suggest lack of skills as a possible contributor/risk for food insecurity.*

Research shows teaching cooking increases**

Fruit and vegetable consumption

Food Insecurity and Hunger in the U.S., October 2014; Gaines, 2014
A variety of ways of teaching about cooking

A mobile “cart type” may be the most affordable

Can be acquired for less than $7,000

A single station operation

Limits events to demonstrations; or groups of 25-60

Importance of cameras or mirrors for one station

A multiple station option
UCSB: Mobile demo kitchen

Connects students to resources and information to empower them with the skills they need to make healthful and informed choices. Part of the Food, Nutrition, and Basic Skills program.

Coordinating with Risk Management early on to understand how to manage risk.

Total acquisition cost was $6,500
Initial Planning

Start as a pilot program

Build a coalition with many partners

Involve Risk Management and Operations early

Link academic success with food security

Target most at-risk populations
Budgeting and Planning: Help students plan and build strong budgets

Kitchen Basics: Includes the basics of cooking, setting up a kitchen pantry, properly equipping a kitchen, etc.

Cooking and Nutrition Basics: Learn, through food demonstrations, how to cook nutritious meals

Connecting to your food: Help students understand the relationship with the world around them through their dietary choices.
UCSB Curriculum

The demo kitchen is part of a larger curriculum.

About 3-4 workshops per week.

Focus on affordability, sustainability, nutrition and skill building.
Evolving Strategies

Our initial target population was food bank clients. We came to realize that Grad Student Housing was also a population that we should help.

Marketing is key

Attendance incentive programs aren’t long term successful

Interns focused on logistics and marketing
Evolving Strategies Continued

Don’t just target students our who community struggles with food insecurity.

Evaluations at the end of each workshop to refine curriculum

Best practices guide.

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Zl5zIsax6GPW...