



Washington State University
College of Education, Sport and Human Sciences

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Will defend their dissertation on

Date: June 30, 2026

Time: 2:00 P.M.

Vancouver Campus: VUB, Room 311

Zoom: Link by request ceshs.gradstudies@wsu.edu

Title:

**POSTSECONDARY STUDENT BASIC NEEDS: EXPLORING
ORGANIZATIONAL DECISION MAKING WITHIN WASHINGTON
STATE COMMUNITY AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES**

Chair: Kristin Huggins

Abstract:

This qualitative case study examines institutional responses to postsecondary student basic needs within a Washington state community college. Grounded in organizational decision making, this study explored how a community or technical college institution may identify and address basic needs insecurity, including challenges related to food, housing, and other essential resources. Basic needs insecurity is a significant barrier to student persistence and completion, particularly among community college populations. Findings indicate that institutional responses are shaped by external policy mandates and internal dynamics such as leadership priorities, resource constraints, and collaboration. Decision-making processes were iterative but challenged by limited resources and fragmented communication. Recommendations include strengthening centralized services, improving data systems, expanding staff training, and enhancing partnerships. These findings contribute to understanding how organizational decision-making influences institutional approaches to supporting student success.