ABSTRACT

THESIS: Health and Nutrition-Related Characteristics of Faculty and Staff Who Utilized the Nutrition Assessment Laboratory as Part of the Working Well Worksite Wellness Program at Ball State University

STUDENT: Rebekah Vukovich

DEGREE: Master of Science

COLLEGE: College of Health

DATE: May 2017

PAGES: 164

The overall state of health in the United States is poor, with a growing incidence of obesity and chronic diseases. The health of employees affects an employer through productivity changes and as health care costs are high for both individuals and employers. For these reasons, it is beneficial for employers to be aware of the health risks of their employees and proactive in prevention and treatment. The purpose of this study was to identify the nutrition and health-related characteristics of faculty and staff at a mid-major university who completed an enrollment survey for the Nutrition Assessment Lab (NAL). The NAL, staffed by an RD or RD-eligible graduate student, offers nutrition education, nutrition counseling, and biometric screening services to Ball State University employees. Results from the Nutrition Assessment Lab Working Well Enrollment Form, collected from 2010-2016, indicated the primary reasons participants came to the lab were to lose weight (65.1%; n=151) and to improve overall diet (56.9%; n=132). The majority of participants were female (81%), white (86.5%), and were classified as professionals (27.2%) or professors (25%). Over two-thirds (67.9%) of the participants were overweight or obese. Measured biochemical data indicated 43.1% had elevated total cholesterol, 65.7% had elevated LDL cholesterol, 30.5% had elevated triglycerides, and
22% had low HDL levels. Results of dietary intake found that only 6.9% of participants reported consuming five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day. The Stages of Change results indicated the largest percentage of employees who came to the NAL were in the early-action or late-action stage. The results of this study will be used to evaluate the NAL’s current services, to justify its continued need, and to improve the services provide by the NAL to better meet the health needs of university employees.