

approved 9/24/2014

Food Services Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 9, 2014
Culinary Arts Center, East Campus

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Ogun called the Food Services Committee meeting to order at 11:37 a.m., Wednesday, April 9, 2014, as a luncheon prepared by Culinary Arts students at the East Campus. Voting members present were Chair Johnson Ogun, Vice Chair Allison Taylor, Ms. Casey Childers, Mr. Bret Jennings, Mr. David Shields, and Ms. Donna Tipps. Non-voting members were Mr. Alan Kinkead and Ms. Gwen Turner. Guests were Jennifer Irons (Manager, Debit Card System, Mane Card) and Cindy Conlon (Assistant Vice President for Business Services, Procurement).
2. **Approve Agenda** – A motion made by Allison Taylor and Bret Jennings was unanimously carried to approve the agenda.
3. **Approval of November 12, 2013 Minutes** -- Casey Childers and Allison Taylor motioned and a vote unanimously accepted notes from March 11th meeting.
4. **New Business**
 - A. Casey Childers had research from SGA student polls and the changes that students would like to see. Responses are noted below each item.
 - 1) ***More Coke machines at equal prices; there is varied pricing across campus.***

Concerns were addressed by Cindy Conlon, Jennifer Irons

- All should be the same price.
- Some machines were cans but all should have converted to bottles.
- The retail Coke products are different: the 20-ounce bottle is \$1.25 and the energy drinks are \$1.75 each.

2) *More Coke machines with Mane card access*

- Some machines are coin-only.
- Many visiting students do not carry cash.
- The machines in the residence halls could be Mane card and all other machines use the debit card.

Concerns were addressed by Cindy Conlon and Jennifer Irons

- Some Mane card breakage was known in the shift to NuVision [operating system for swipe card vending].
- Debit card swipe is an option with new Listerhill debit on the Mane card.

- No cost is incurred for making debit card purchase with the Listerhill debit.

3) More options in the C Store (specifically grocery)

- Results from the student poll indicated a desire for more grocery items in the C Store [operated at Towers Complex outside Rivers Hall], including personal care items and food options to keep in dorm room for longer time, like bread.
- At least 70% of residents have their own microwave oven and refrigerator, as explained by Allison Taylor, Residence Life Area Coordinator.

Response by Gwen Turner and Alan Kinkead

- More clarification is needed on “groceries” since the store is small.
- Perhaps conduct another poll or survey with specific items given.
- Students need to use the white board in C Store to give ideas.

Casey recommended that we get feedback at SOAR because after enrolling students are less participative in polls and surveys.

4) Re-discuss leaving Towers open another hour at night

- Suggestion made that Sodexo talk to SOAR about having later hours.
- There was no campus announcement that Towers was open later hours.
- Students do not read the UNA Info emails.
- Residents with night classes cannot use meal plan option because Towers is closed. Although there are more dining dollar options, there is nothing but WOW every time for them. Anything else becomes out-of-pocket expense.
- Students would like Towers open until 8 p.m.

Response by Alan Kinkead:

- Towers is typically open from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Towers tried to stay open.
- Any other hours and there is a cost factor.

5) Discuss adding more C Store hours/days

- Meal plan equivalency idea has been discussed before. When cannot use meal plan, student can go to other venue perhaps during last hour of meal plan coverage.
- Sodexo stated that often students are not pleased with quantity of food on meal equivalency.
- A specific equivalency time could be set up. Would not have to be available all the time.
- Awareness of dining services, as done at SOAR, so that students know availability and hours. Advertising is needed. For example, a to-go lunch is available at breakfast at Towers but this is not widely known.

- Question asked if an online order form is possible and suggested that a to-go package could be available through C Store and purchased with meal plan.
- The discussion leaned in favor Simply-to-Go type option and to have a meal equivalency at C Store and Towers.
- Consensus that a specific menu is the best way to offer this service.
- All of us need to communicate the SOAR info throughout the semester.
- Discuss further the meal plan equivalence and whether it affects meal plan rates and dynamics, since food is already prepared.
- David Shields stated that new marketing is needed. For example, signage at the cafeteria line could include attention getters if student missed meal due to night class and options available, like grab-n-go at C Store until 10 PM.
- Cindy Conlon added that the selling point in meal plans is if they have more flexibility.
- When question was posed about how to tender these options, Jennifer Irons suggested that one meal could be deducted from meal plan. A printout could be generated to see ratio of C Store versus regular meal plan purchases.

B. Updates from Sodexo and Results of Sodexo Survey – Gwen Turner

Gwen Turner reported results that show overall satisfaction dropped from Spring 2013 (83%) to Spring 2014 (78%). Fall results fell from 90% in Fall 2012 to 84% in Fall 2013. Location was 80% and other locations, 80%. For same plan, rate is 74% satisfaction. Increased frequency was 50%. Overall, there is room to grow. Satisfaction with meal experience was 80% and overall meal satisfaction was 79%.

Chair Ogun asked Sodexo's action plan [in response to survey results]. Since Gwen just received the survey results, she will go over them with SGA and come up with a strategic plan. Elements that are underway include:

- a. Website improvement
- b. Look at marketing elements
- c. Do better job of a timeline (scroll on UNA website)
- d. Better timing in campus events to get ahead in marketing; will contact Bret Jennings and Mark Linder
- e. Work with Mr. Shields on networking
- f. CB&S Bank networking and tasting with The Commons is a possibility
- g. Spur community business
- h. Retail (resident dining) to ensure Residence Life is aware so they can work along with Sodexo to get info to residents.

A question was asked about published hours for summer. Starbucks will be open. It was open Spring Break to break even, per Kinkead. He was not familiar

with summer enrollment. Jennifer Irons noted many other consumers beside summer enrollment, such as SOAR sessions, employees, camps, and conferences. David Shields reiterated that we need to let the community know consistent hours of operation. Kinkead responded that he was willing to try; Chick-Fil-A was not budgeted to be open during summer. Donna Tipps recommended that they commit to a time period and not close after only three weeks into the process to allow greater response.

Opportunities for marketing exist. Students need to experience life on campus in SOAR sessions. Marketing in the community and among staff is key. Community groups from many parts of the state come to UNA campus to see the lions. Simple ideas like a giant cut-out passion fruit drink for Starbucks placed near downtown will draw consumers. The community needs to know these retailers in the Commons are not limited to students.

Also, we need to know if retailers in GUC (^WA&B, Pizza Hut, Einstein Brothers) will be open and that information publicized now rather than later. ✓

Cindy Conlon introduced The Commons Experience card as a marketing tool. The 2,500 cards will be distributed to incoming new students and 1,000 cards will go to returning students who are registered. We can partner with Handy Festival (which has become a month-long event) and other downtown venues but we must market.

Bret Jennings indicated that some summer meals are in GUC and some in Towers. Consistency is the issue. Availability is needed for each. Conlon's concern is that marketing is not just event-based because the perception in community is that it is only for UNA. Casey added that the GUC looks like a college cafeteria and is not inviting the community into the center of campus. Others commented on how often they see strollers in The Commons, so community interest does exist, although some are not sure they are allowed here on weekends. One mode of communication is to send flyers to downtown churches and to target the kitchen-talk hour, a twice-monthly program for high schools.

5. Announcements

Chair Ogun announced that this is the last meeting of the committee for Spring 2014 and we will return in the fall.

6. Adjourn – The meeting adjourned at 12:35 p.m.

Submitted by Veronica Allen