

Minutes of the Food Services Committee

1:30 p.m., Tuesday, October 27, 2015
Student Affairs Conference Room, GUC 207

The Food Services Committee met on Tuesday, October 27, 2015 in Room 207A of the Guillot University Center. The following members were present: Dr. Ulrich Groetsch (Chair, faculty), Mr. Evan Thornton and Ms. Cindy Conlon (designees for Business & Financial Affairs), Mr. Jermaine Ferguson (staff, University Residences), Ms. Leah Harper (staff at-large), Mr. Bret Jennings (staff, at-large), Mr. Johnson Ogun (faculty), Ms. Sarah Stevens (staff, International Affairs), Mr. Nick Lang (SGA President), Mr. Jordan Cooper (SGA), Ms. Ambur Love (SGA), and Ms. Gwen Burney (general manager, Sodexo).

Chair Groetsch called the meeting to order at approximately 1:37 p.m.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda for today's meeting was properly amended to add Student Feedback under New Business; the amended agenda was approved unanimously after proper motion and second.

Approval of Minutes of September 22, 2015

Chair Groetsch presented the minutes for committee's approval. Upon proper motion and second, the minutes were approved unanimously.

Old Business

Breakfast hours at Food Court - Sodexo has made no changes to resume breakfast in Food Court other than Einstein's since there are five other venues available at 7 a.m. Improvements were made at Einstein's to quickly move customers based on their purchase options. Alternative simple options like food/beverage cart would have to meet food regulation laws as well; Sodexo has no plans to pursue.

Although grab-and-go breakfast is available at Convenience Store (C-Store), the one-person operation has 15-minute intervals when door is locked during restock, counting cash drawer, or during shift change. C-Store hours are noon until midnight.

SGA's Lang thanked Sodexo for resolving the lengthy line at Einstein's; it is improving. He said students are not aware of all the other venues for breakfast such as the science building and therefore contributes to extremely long lines at Einstein's and Chick-Fil-A. The cost factor also affects students' options for a single breakfast item versus a whole meal.

SGA would like to help resolve lengthy wait. Fresh, hot and personal preferences are key factors in lengthy lines. Chick-Fil-A standardizes their processes and all franchises must meet quality control for signature product consistency, such as holding time on prepared foods. Suggestions were offered to have a SGA-driven infomercial; to have incentives for students to tag or time their wait and receive perk if order not received within X minutes; to have a monitor that displays each customer's order status. Sometimes the delay is a courtesy problem when customers with ear jacks do not hear when their order is ready.

To-Go Services – No further info has been gathered.

New Business

Sodexo Manager Update/Report – Improvements at Towers are receiving compliments. Featured chef nights are continuing, such as BBQ Blues with a live band. Sodexo continues to work with UNA sustainability team in an ongoing awareness effort. Increased retail sales are indicative of improvements made, especially at A&W and Pizza Hut, on expanded hours of operation. SGA has observed high traffic at night in GUC. Sodexo was encouraged that they must be attentive to increased student presence at campus events which make living on campus beneficial.

Towers Cafeteria dishwasher is presently out of order. Disposable dishes must be used but are not preferable.

Coffee shop in Collier Library – Desired services would be equivalent to Einstein's and require infrastructure investment.

What to do with Stone Lodge – Although the food services contract had included some type of sandwich operation at Stone Lodge, the cost of implementation vetoed any further consideration by UNA Executive Council. Plumbing, delivery access, waste disposal are just some of the many costly facets that must be implemented to make Stone Lodge a dining venue option.

Future expansion plans of Towers Cafeteria – Expanded food options inside Towers as well as branding concepts on campus, such as TexMex like Moe's Southwest. Healthy eating remains a student concern. Sugar-free desserts are a student request, particularly for students with diabetes. Current options are gelatin desserts and some cookies.

Structurally, if Rice/Rivers complex is demolished, then Towers is eliminated. No expansion of Towers will occur. Any new residence hall construction will need to include dining facility and this is a top consideration in campus planning. Ideas from other campus dining facilities are encouraged. Some campuses have only retail venue and no longer operate cafeteria-style all-you-can-eat where the student's dollar stretches much farther.

Other food concepts to consider (burrito, salad, sushi, etc.) — “Satellite” type venues, especially grab-and-go, are becoming more popular. Just adding different stations within a space like Towers does not add staff efficiency. Towers staff are friendly and fun as they are preparing custom dishes, particularly for international students.

Student Feedback – Some issues have been covered in today's discussion. Students also have expressed concern about WOW not open until midnight as expected; Sodexo clarified that they close at 11:30 p.m. and hours are posted on the door. Also, students are interested in plans for new nursing facility and if dining options (like those at the new science building) are included in the plans. SGA will be interested in formulating the plan. A smoothie maker is on back-order for the SRC. Students expressed concern that an every-day menu for Towers had not been on the website; Sodexo was not aware but corrected this about two weeks and it should be accessible now. Lacking a steady chef in Towers has been an obstacle.

Cajun food for homecoming was well received. Cheaper food pricing is always a concern with students, especially compared to off campus. Towers averages \$7.75/meal and GUC is about \$9-\$10, as compared to Chicago Café in downtown within walking distance. Sodexo is open to discuss but pricing is a regional zone pricing. They may consider markdown specials rather than throwing things away. Although Sodexo has not had student feedback, the faculty in science building frequently purchase the pre-packaged Take Three (entree, starch, vegetable) per Towers' daily menu, a value at less than \$5. Students are commenting favorably on the Friday night catfish specials.

The committee also considers all food service options available to campus, including Culinary Arts and downtown Florence.

Announcements

The next meeting is scheduled for November 17, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. in GUC 207 conference room.

Adjourn

Chair Groetsch adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:40 p.m.

Submitted by:
Veronica Allen
Committee Recorder