

DINING SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

Thursday, September 22, 2011

12:00 noon

JRC Room 224C (The White Room)

Present: Holden Bale, Nancy Combs, Chris Dorman, Jenna Holt, Michael Hunt, Sara Kay, Eric Mistry, Sam Mulopulos, Les Ollinger, Andrea Traci, and Dick Williams; also Laura Kaiser, Mary Kirk, Jeanette Moser, Barb Shell, Scott Turley, Vicki Wade.

Absent: Travis Greene.

Introduction of Members

Dining Services Updates

- Changes implemented in the Marketplace for 2011-2012: Intense sessions this past summer for culinary staff, reviewing survey results, reviewing production records, removing "losers", making changes to menu. Over 140 new items were added to the menu.
- Another change this year for the Marketplace is the addition of a wheat free-gluten free station, which offers vegetarian and meat options at each meal. It meets most medical dietary needs for students. Uses individual portion packs and separate equipment to eliminate cross-contamination. Have received very good student response so far.
- New system of preparation and service has been implemented at the stir fry station this year. We were experiencing mix ups on finished dishes, which was a concern for students with food allergies. Now each wok chef works with one customer from start to finish, and customers must stay with their dish through the process. The goal is to offer increased customer service through speed and communication and also to help eliminate potential cross-contamination issues.
- Changes implemented in Out Takes for 2011-2012: As a result of the discussions in Dining Committee and survey results last year about the Out Takes offerings, a new 11 day menu cycle (with two entrees per day) was introduced. Rather than relying on Out Takes as an occasional option, many students are depending on these meals as part of their program. Entrees were "beefed up" and some are even microwavable. They have proved to be very popular so far. When questioned about the costs associated with these meals, Dick reported that the production is much more intense and we are at the limit of what we can offer in this venue.
- Changes implemented in The Spencer Grill for 2011-2012: Added filtered water spigot for self-serve; College Bookstore water bottles are for sale in the Grill; new Panini grill arrived yesterday; new products this year include French fries, nachos.
- Marketplace special meal program this year is "Foods of the World – Experience It", with each meal planned by a member of the culinary staff. Spanish Tapas night last night was very well received by the students. Next month will feature Diwali Festival of Lights. More information will be in the Marketplace Messenger.
- G-SAP (Grinnell Sustainable Agriculture Program): Student Nate Powell-Palm (a certified organic farmer) is working for Dining Services, helping raise 4 pigs on a local farm. Animals will go to market in the spring for use in the Marketplace, etc. This is a small but important first step toward growing/raising some of the food that we use.
- Bottled Water: Follow up to last year's student initiative regarding bottled water at Out Takes – asking every water customer if they want bottle or tap water (of 744 customers, 65 asked for cups). Effective October 3, we are switching to biodegradable cups, lids, and straws for filtered water, and eliminating bottled water.

- Food service contract, worth almost \$2 million, went out for bid in the spring. We have chosen to stay with Sysco of Iowa as our major supplier. They “sharpened their pencil” and they have the ability to provide the foods that we need for Grinnell’s unique program. College officials will sign the contract next week.

Comments and Questions from Campus

- Request super size mozzarella sticks order from Spencer Grill.
- Question of why smoothie service stops at 9 am. Response is that there is such a short time between the close of breakfast and the reopening for lunch, the added time is needed for cleanup and setup.

Next meeting will be Thursday, October 6, 2011 at 12 noon in (CHANGE!) Dining Services Conference Room. Lunch will be provided so it will be important to answer RSVP as soon as possible.