

**Food Service Advisory Committee  
Auxiliary Services**

**Date:** Oct. 14, 2016

**Location:** Melcher Hall Room 302

**Time:** noon-2 p.m.

**Attendees:** Christina Martinez, Christopher Caldwell, Don Yackley, Esmeralda Valdez, Frank Blanchard, Henri Jreij, Joel Cecil, Kathryn Delgado, Lars Grabow, Leighanne Dean, Maria Honey, Mariam Bitar, Mark Laney, Melissa Halstead, Richard Zagrzecki, Robert Comer, Shane Smith, Swati Basu, Travis Ramirez, Jennifer Black, Matthew Sebby, Karla Acosta, Alejandro Dolores, Moumita Mukherjee

**Meeting Minutes**

**I. Open Forum**

- a. Nobody asked to speak to the committee

**II. Roles and Responsibilities**

- a. Esmeralda Valdez provided a quick overview of committee's roles/responsibilities
  - 1. Committee has 14 voting members
    - A. Representation from students, faculty and staff
  - 2. Review items involving the overall food service program, including retail, residential and vending programs
  - 3. Engages with campus constituencies
    - A. Provides feedback on current programs
    - B. Builds consensus for new programs
    - C. Facilitates campus dialogue on food service issues
- b. Frank Blanchard serving as interim resident district manager
  - 1. Replaces Geoff Herbert, who has left UH Dining
- c. Bylaws are posted on the website
- d. Online agenda request process posted on the website

**III. Chair and Vice Chair Elections**

- a. Shane Smith nominated for chair
  - 1. No other nominations made
  - 2. Shane Smith to serve as chair for second consecutive year
- b. Vice chair nomination process opened
  - 1. Shane Smith nominated Robert Comer
  - 2. Chris Caldwell nominated himself
  - 3. Each candidate spoke to the committee regarding their vision, qualifications and background
  - 4. Candidates asked questions by committee members
  - 5. Candidates left room to allow for committee discussion and vote
  - 6. Christopher Caldwell voted in as vice chair

**IV. At-Large Appointments**

- a. Tremendous interest from applicants to serve on committee
- b. Committee members have been sent candidate applications for review
- c. Selected representatives will be at the next meeting.

**V. Meal Plan Task Force**

- a. Shane Smith said he has already asked several individuals to join him in serving on a task force to examine meal plans
  1. He was frustrated by how late the meal plan subcommittee started last year
  2. He wanted to start the task force earlier this year
  3. He expects the earlier start time of task force to result in the creation of better meal plans
  4. Group includes Don Yackley, Keith Kowalka, Rosie Ashley, Esmeralda Valdez, Dr. Emily Messa and five students
  5. Task force has already requested data regarding meal plan usage

**VI. Introductions**

- a. Attendees gave quick introductions of themselves to the entire committee

**VII. Updates and Information**

- a. Spring 2017 hours of operation
  1. Team is working on setting the proposed hours of operation
  2. Anticipate sending out those hours for review before November meeting
- b. UH Dining Updates
  1. Retail
    - A. Pilot food truck program launched at Valenti School of Communications on Tuesday and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
    - B. Looking at restructuring how the overall food truck program is managed
      - i. Currently managed by marketing department
      - ii. May be moved to operations side
    - C. Friday hours added to express lane at Panda Express in Student Center
    - D. Customer traffic control improvements undertaken at the retail establishments in the Student Center
    - E. Hours being extended at Student Center retail establishments on days of extracurricular activities
      - i. Day of presidential debate given as one example
    - F. C-store and Taco Cabana in Stadium Garage now open during football games
  2. Residential
    - A. Front line associates will start wearing name tags with their first names
      - i. Management team also will wear name tags
    - B. Superhero themed meal planned at Fresh Food Co. on Halloween
  3. Marketing
    - A. Numerous dining surveys underway concurrently across campus

- i. Consultant hired by university surveying select members of UH community as part of its overall review of the campus food program
  - ii. Dining Styles survey helps in understanding current dining trends on college campuses
  - iii. In addition, MarketMatch survey also seeking input
- 4. General
  - A. Executive Chef Brent Gorman to represent UH at Taste of the NFL event
    - i. Takes place Feb. 4
    - ii. Part of Super Bowl festivities in the city
    - iii. Hosted at the Hilton
  - B. Search underway for a new resident district manager

**VIII. Member items**

- a. Shane Smith would like to do a better job of following up on member items that are brought up at FSAC meeting
  - 1. Would like to find a way to digitize the list so that it can be shared and referenced by committee members
  - 2. He would like to make use of a section in the bylaws that requires written responses to items that would help with tracking purposes
- b. Shane said he would like the committee to be more efficient with its time and stay on task
- c. Shane wanted to know how meal plans are calculated and created, including how missed meals/non usage of meal plans are factored in
- d. Shane requested a list of all the national partners that Aramark works with, which could assist in discussions regarding a replacement for Chinese Star
- e. Shane said it would be good for the committee to have a calendar list of due dates for such things as pricing, hours of operation, and meal plans
- f. Shane said a plan should be developed for addressing the difficulty experienced by customers when navigating through the Voice of the Consumer survey to provide feedback on their experiences
- g. Shane said he dislikes that when residential students required to have a meal do not choose a specific one, they are defaulted to the all-you-care-to-eat plan
  - 1. He believes it should default to the cheapest or most popular plan
  - 2. Esmeralda Valdez said that it may be part of the terms and conditions, which could be brought before the committee to be amended
- h. He dislikes the displayed cost per meal of the unlimited plan in marketing materials
  - 1. It is misleading to calculate the cost based on a usage rate of three meals a day
  - 2. He thinks it should be based on the average use of the plan
- i. Swati Basu said it would be of value to have data from other universities' dining programs to determine how UH's dining program compares
- j. Alejandro Dolores brought up high prices for items at campus food stores
  - 1. He used the example of paying \$3 for a chocolate bar
  - 2. He is interested in pursuing a program that will implement a fair price-matching technique for determining C-store prices

3. Said current prices punish students who live on campus and rely on items from the C-stores
4. Joel Cecil said the pricing is something that is on his radar and understands why customers are dissatisfied
- k. Henri Jreij said he received an email from a resident on campus who said serving sizes are no longer on the menu cards at Fresh Food Company
  1. Travis Ramirez said that comes down to the management teams placing those cards out
- l. Chris Caldwell said he went to Fresh Food Company with friends at 4:30 p.m. one day and only the salad bar was available, but staff did not tell them that prior to entering
  1. Should be a better way to communicate to customers what is available in dining halls during off-peak hours prior to them paying and entering
  2. Don Yackley said he doesn't think it is OK that there is not a lot of food options during off-peak hours
  3. Frank Blanchard said they can come up with some reasonable options to put into place
- m. Kathryn Delgado said there are not a lot of healthy food options available during late-night hours on campus
- n. Henri Jreij said Bayou Oaks residents would like to have a food truck program service their complex during the late-night hours
  1. Joel Cecil said the challenge is getting a food truck vendor to do it because it needs to be financially viable for them
  2. Esmeralda Valdez said we can reach out to the food trucks to see if one is willing to pilot it for us
  3. Another committee member asked about food trucks serving campus on weekends
- o. Frank Blanchard brought up the names of the food pads and if everyone on campus understands where they are located based on their current names of Pad 1 and Pad 2
  1. Esmeralda Valdez said one thing on their to-do list is to formalize the food truck program, and that could include taking a closer look at the naming system
  2. Henri Jreij suggested naming them after the buildings they are located near
- p. Don Yackley asked about the possibility of exploring food carts to service the campus
- q. Esmeralda Valdez said Cougar Cash is being rolled out at TDECU Stadium, starting with the student concession area as the pilot
  1. Alcohol cannot be purchased with Cougar Cash
- r. Esmeralda Valdez said Chinese Star is closing at the end of the fall semester
  1. The next step for that location is being evaluated
  2. Partnering with Student Government Association on a survey to campus to get feedback as to what they would like to see
  3. Repairs and renovations will be done to that location during the spring semester
  4. Expect the next tenant to have a full opening in the fall of 2017

## **IX. Adjournment**

**Next meeting**

**Date:** Nov. 4, 2016

**Time:** Noon-2 p.m.

**Location:** Cougar Village II, Room S113