

Meal Plan Working Group

June 2019

DSL is committed to creating a vibrant and engaging food program that enhances the living and learning environment in MIT's residential dining houses.

Charge

The Meal Plan Working Group will develop a meal plan model encompassing all six residential dining houses that: optimizes plan value and flexibility; encourages increased use of meals to foster house community building; and ensures a long-term, financially sustainable dining program.

Goals

The working group will be responsible for advancing the following goals:

- Determine meal plan attributes that balance meal swipe portability, provide value, and address the needs of undergraduates and graduate students, including those who are food insecure;
- Determine the optimum plan type: block or weekly or combination;
- Design meal plans that provide nutrition for healthy lifestyles;
- Identify a plan structure that creates a financially sustainable dining program, i.e. propose strategies to increase voluntary meal plan sign-ups.

Deliverables

- Deliver findings and recommendations to Chancellor Barnhart and Dean Nelson in December 2019.
- Recommendations will include a new meal plan structure for all dining plan participants in all six dining residence halls.

Communication Plan

- Raise awareness of the working group's establishment and efforts via news stories, the Dean's welcome back letter, e-newsletters (e.g., Parents' Association), social media, and the Dean's Priorities and Dining web sites. The working group can also be featured as a priority during Fall 2019 speaking engagements and student meetings the Dean takes part in and/or leads (e.g., presenting at fall UA Council and DormCon meetings);
- Minutes from the working group's meetings and public meetings will be posted to the Meal Plan Working Group's website (student members of the group may help amplify the official meeting minutes by emailing them to their respective house mailing lists);
- By October 31, have committee members visit houses to share nature of the committee's work and to test concepts that committee has been discussing (talking points and/or slides will be provided to committee members for these conversations);

- By November 22, hold one community meeting to share committee's initial findings, informed by house visit input and goals (above) (this community meeting will be well advertised and chronicled in news stories on DSL's site, MIT News, and in *The Tech* as well as on social media);
- Formulate recommendations with committee and stakeholder input. Consider other communication strategies;
- Recommendations and findings will be announced to students via a letter to the community and news story, and posted to the Meal Plan Working Group's website.

Responsibilities of Working Group Members

- Attend approximately 8-10 meetings between August and December (summer meetings via conference call);
- Review all available dining assessment data;
- Use financial data to understand the impact and trade-offs of different meal plan models on the number of dining locations, operational costs, staffing, retail dining, and DSL expenses;
- Pre-read materials prior to meetings and come prepared for engaged discussion, active listening, and respectful dialogue:
 - Review Envisions recommendations
 - 2010 House Dining Advisory Group Findings
 - *Others as determined*
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive financial information provided;
- Discuss the Meal Plan Working Group's work and draft recommendations with the W20 Dining Concepts Working Group to ensure coordination;
- Champion and publicize the working groups' effort with campus stakeholders.

Membership

House Dining Committee members

UA

DormCon

GSC

DSL Staff

P. Cummings

M. Hayes

C. Artis

Staff Member from Student Financial Services (TBD)

Staff to Committee: Katie Tavares