

DINING AND CULINARY SERVICES OVERVIEW

As an integral part of University Housing, food service plays a critical role in contributing to the residential program’s mission of “creating communities.” Over the years, University Housing Dining and Culinary Services staff have always provided high quality food at reasonable prices. Meeting this goal has required many changes and adaptations to menus, staffing, and usage of facilities. Improvements have recently been made to dining room seating areas, resulting in pleasant eating and gathering places. The Dining and Culinary Services program has an excellent reputation for quality, and the level of satisfaction among students is generally high. However, to satisfy the ever-changing needs and wants of students, it is necessary to undertake major renovations of selected existing food preparation and service areas and the replacement of the two largest capacity units.

The Dining Services program has an excellent reputation. However, to satisfy the ever-changing needs and wants of students, it is necessary to undertake major renovations.

Aging and inflexible facilities are the major roadblock to maintaining and improving quality. Some of those service areas have not been significantly remodeled for 75 years. All of the existing food preparation and serving facilities were built when Housing Dining and Culinary Services provided a “traditional” university food service: a single cafeteria line where the students proceeded along a stainless steel serving line and received a serving of whatever items were on the menu for that meal. The cafeteria was open for a limited time during each of the three meal periods. Students sat in institutional-style dining rooms and no food was allowed to be taken out.

By contrast, current students choose among three or four hot entrées, in addition to a salad bar, dessert area, cereal bar, beverages, made-to-order sandwich bar, soups, ice cream, etc. University Housing’s food service is open until 1:00 a.m. every day. Our facilities consist of coffee shops, carryouts, delivery operations, and dining rooms. What and how much a student eats is totally up to the individual student. The entire food service is à la carte; each item is priced individually and food may be eaten in the dining room, taken out, or delivered. Students frequently take food back to their rooms, and place their dishes and trays in collection areas in each hall.



Today’s students want access to a wide variety of foods and especially made-to-order options. Housing’s goal is to create marketplace-style preparation and serving areas that will allow for changing menu concepts easily from month to month or year to year, while also having the ability to do speed-scratch and made-to-order cooking or assembly at each location within the serving area. However, in the present facilities, the location and capacity of ventilation, electrical outlets, gas connections, water supply and drains, refrigeration and steam connections are inadequate.

Food service venues need to be located and sized to strike a balance between programmatic needs and economic realities driven by demand. The new building designs are intended to dramatically improve the dining venues and transform them from a “commons” to “community centers” where students will gather, engage, experience, and learn. These improvements will have a significant impact on the residents who live in these two neighborhood communities.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

DINING AND CULINARY SERVICES

A. SERVICES ALIGNED WITH MISSION

- Maintain the voluntary meal plan policy.
- Continue to operate a full à la carte program with take-out service available at all locations.
- Continue to offer delivery service.
- Constantly seek opportunities to improve services and maintain customer satisfaction through new offerings, without compromising the commitment to full-menu offerings within a convenient distance (5-minute walk) of each housing cluster.
- Provide new facilities that enable responsive changes through the use of portable cooking and service equipment, as well as modular design platforms.
- Seek opportunities to increase the speed and convenience of getting food without diminishing the need for full-menu dining.



B. BUILD VALUE THROUGH ONGOING COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

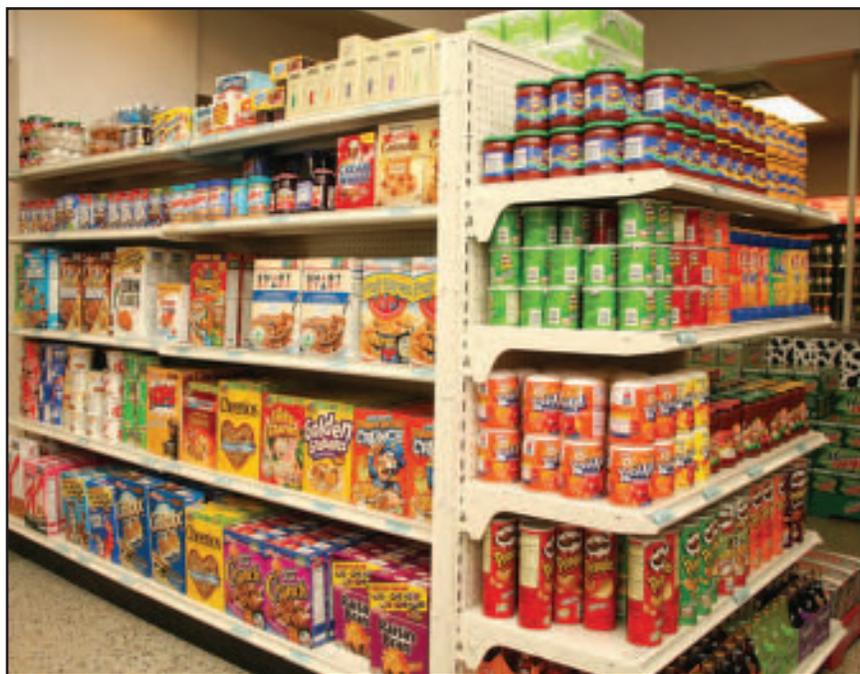
- The overall design will be a marketplace concept in the full-menu dining venues, using a combination of staffed platforms and self-service stations.
- Examples of staffed platforms include a grilling station, a Mongolian grill/wok station, a gourmet deli and coffee bar, and a comfort foods station.
- Examples of self-serve stations include a cereal bar, salad/fruit bar, ice cream/dessert station, and beverages/condiments station.
- Where volume and space permit, additional themed stations may be provided, such as an active bakery, a Mediterranean station, an international or rotating theme station, and a vegetarian station.
- Size and design of service systems must serve students quickly during peak periods.

- Use the commercial restaurant arena as the frame of reference for dining room design. The approach will be holistic, including the mix and style of seating, finish selections, and lighting. Music and TV/technology components will be considered part of creating an entire dining experience.
- Theme-oriented dining opportunities will be considered.
- Expand on the success of the carryout operations by improving non-packaged offerings.
- Where possible, gathering and “happening” places — fueled by the availability of good food during extended hours in settings that offer a variety of seating types and activities — will be created.
- In contrast to students’ increased desire for convenient and portable food, many campuses have seen a renewed interest in an upscale, yet casual sit-down dining venue. UW–Madison residents may be no exception, and this concept might be an appropriate complement to the future mix of offerings.



C. SERVICES ALIGNED WITH DEMAND

- Review and adjust mix of venues by residential neighborhood.
- Regulate size of new offerings and facilities to anticipate projected demand. Where demand projections suggest, consider additional capacity to capture more business and generate additional revenue.



PROJECTS AND SCHEDULE

DINING AND CULINARY SERVICES

CHADBOURNE (RHETA'S)

COMPLETED FALL 2007

The Chadbourne dining renovation is the first of four food service renovations that will allow the Division of University Housing to correct deficiencies in the present facilities and modernize the food preparation and service areas in order to remain responsive to the ever-changing needs of Housing residents.

The original servery dated from 1959 with some of the kitchen area dating back to the original Chadbourne Hall. Needless to say, the culinary and eating habits of college students have changed dramatically in the past 45 years and University Housing has tried and adapted the best it could within the physical constraints of the existing servery and kitchen areas. The plan for Chadbourne dining provides the facilities and services to meet the needs of residents of the Chadbourne Residential College (CRC). These needs include the availability of food for longer periods of time, and a wider variety of food options.

The new venue opened in November 2007, named "Rheta's" in honor of former Housing Dining and Culinary Services Director Rheta McCutchin, who pioneered our à la carte program.

Marketplace Concept

These goals were accomplished by providing more space in the servery area and by utilizing a marketplace concept. There are seven platforms/stations offering many entrée choices, salads, beverages, desserts, sandwiches, etc., with multiple items available made-to-order to accommodate customers' different tastes.

Kosher Kitchen

University Housing works with the Chicago Rabbinical Council to staff a Kosher Kitchen within the Chadbourne dining facility. This is the first time Kosher food service has been offered at the University, and we anticipate serving faculty and staff in addition to residents of University Housing.

Enhancing the Learning Experience

By remodeling a currently under-utilized small dining room area, Dining and Culinary Services will be able to provide snack and grab-and-go food and beverage items from early morning through late at night. This area, called Now or Later, will further help facilitate the residents' utilization of the dining room as part of their out-of-classroom living and learning experience.



LAKESHORE DEVELOPMENT

DECEMBER 2010–JUNE 2012

The new dining venue created during Phase One of the Lakeshore Development will feature a marketplace-style servery, where residents can choose among numerous offerings at every meal.

This dining room will serve breakfast and remain open through late night, replacing Frank's Place (Holt Commons), which currently is open until 11:30 p.m. on weeknights. After the completion of Phase One, Holt Commons will be renovated.



GORDON COMMONS

JANUARY 2011–JUNE 2012 (Phase One); SEPTEMBER 2012–OCTOBER 2013 (Phase Two)

Gordon Commons was built in 1965 to serve as both the dining facility for over 3,000 residents of the Southeast Area and the commissary (central kitchen) for the entire University Housing Dining and Culinary Services program. At the time of Gordon's construction, the Housing program was the traditional, single-line cafeteria operation with three meals daily, each served for about an hour. This type of food service required six dining rooms with serving lines to feed all students within a very short time period.

Currently, two dining rooms are utilized for daily food service in Gordon Commons; other former cafeteria seating spaces are being used for events, meetings, and student activities. The University Housing Commissary occupies one-third of the ground floor of Gordon Commons and still prepares much of the food served across campus, including pastries, desserts, casseroles, and salad items. Kitchen areas in Gordon have been changed very little in the past 39 years.



After extensive study of multiple renovation options, it was decided to replace Gordon Commons rather than renovate the building. The new Gordon Commons will be located on the site of the old Ogg Hall. It will open in the summer of 2012. After the new Gordon Commons opens, a project to demolish the existing structure will begin. When finished, the site will be an open green space. Plans for potential parking and office space below the green space are also being considered.

The new Gordon Commons will provide similar dining and culinary services to those currently provided in Gordon. Large, flexible program spaces will also be a major feature of the new Gordon Commons.

CARSON GULLEY

AUGUST 2012–MAY 2013

Carson Gulley (originally named Van Hise Commons) was established in 1926 along with Adams and Tripp residence halls, the earliest buildings in the lakeshore area neighborhood.

Plans for Carson Gulley will dramatically improve all three levels to better accommodate student activities and meet space needs for the International Learning Community, language houses, and special events for the lakeshore area. The dining venue will become a deli and carryout, similar to Newell's in Smith Hall. The facility will also serve as a community center for the Slichter, Adams, and Tripp Halls neighborhood. Improvements to the Adams and Tripp gatehouses are also included in the project.



ELIZABETH WATERS

APRIL–AUGUST 2013

Opened in 1940, Elizabeth Waters is the second oldest University Housing dining location. Over the past 67 years, the seating areas have been refurbished twice and an atrium was added to provide additional seating. Except for the atrium addition, the Elizabeth Waters food service occupies the same space today as it did 67 years ago.

Elizabeth Waters offers the most attractive dining room seating areas. However, the servery and kitchen areas are cramped, poorly designed and inadequately vented. Thus, the major goal in the Elizabeth Waters renovations is to provide adequate servery and kitchen space within the existing areas, utilizing a marketplace stations/platforms concept. The design will allow maximum flexibility to frequently change menus, concepts and offerings to keep up with the rapidly changing tastes and expectations of student customers.



Another goal that will be accomplished by the renovations is to allow use of the dining areas for limited food service and/or meeting, study, and activity space when the complete food service is not operating. Presently it is difficult to securely isolate the kitchen and servery areas from the seating areas. The renovations will greatly add to common area space, which will enhance the community program space and opportunities for students to interact outside the classroom.

In addition to these improvements, the outdoor patio and adjacent landscaping will be restored, to again serve as recreation space and lakeside seating for casual dining and special events.

HOLT COMMONS

JUNE 2013–DECEMBER 2013

Frank's Place will close when the new dining facility in the first phase of the Lakeshore Development opens in August 2012. The building will undergo a renovation to enhance the current student services support spaces and coffee house. The upper floor, current location of Frank's servery and seating, will be converted to flexible program space for student events and activities, space that is sorely needed in the Lakeshore area. Entrances will also be enhanced.

