

Committee on Priorities and Resources  
Meeting Minutes – February 25, 2020

In attendance: Professor Javier Corrales, chair; Professor Andrew Dole; Professor Jill Miller; Professor Monica Ringer; Director of Financial Planning Thomas Dwyer, *ex officio*; Provost and Dean of the Faculty Catherine Epstein, *ex officio*; Chief Human Resources Officer Maria-Judith Rodriguez, *ex officio*; Chief Financial and Administrative Officer Kevin Weinman, *ex officio*; Sydney Ireland '23; Steven Hegarty, recorder

Not in attendance: Library Administrative Assistant/Bookkeeper Susan Bradley; Assistant Director of Athletics Kelly Mannix; Brooke Harrington '22, *ex officio*; James Hulsizer '23

Guests: Jim Brassord, Chief of Campus Operations; Joe Flueckiger, Director of Dining Services

The meeting came to order at 8:30 am.

Proceedings

1. Announcements:

- There will be no CPR meeting next week, March 3.
- Kevin and Tom will present a financial update at the next CPR meeting on March 10.
- CPR approved the minutes from February 18.

2. Joe and Jim updated CPR on the Financial Pressure in Dining Services.

Financial Pressures

- In 2013, there was a quality upgrade to the food offerings that has resulted in higher demand as well as increased utilization of the board plan. Other financial and staffing pressures include increasing numbers of catered events, extended hours, increases to Massachusetts minimum wage, and a highly competitive labor market.
- Increasingly, there is a 365 day/year need for food service including interterm and summer.
- Procurement negotiations have resulted in discounts and vendor concessions, resulting in cost savings.
- Benchmarks for Dining include the average cost per plate, and meals per labor dollar.
- Financially, Dining operates as a cost center, rather than being run as an auxiliary service.

Facility

- There is overcrowding in Val.
- In addition, Val's design, layout, and infrastructure limit the possibility to realize current trends in college dining services. Val has a remote kitchen and separate serving area. Trend is cooking at the point of serving - "action stations" - such as at UMass. Val can not be effectively opened as a smaller facility.
- Students have expressed a desire for increased hours. Currently, there is a six-week pilot underway with extended hours to 11:30 on Thursday and Friday. This requires four or five staff members for additional three hour shifts. Costs for the pilot are being shared with AAS.

### Staffing

- Dining Services is staffed by 76 regular employees, 125 casuals (including event staff), and 30 student workers.
- CPR recommended exploring ways to make student jobs more attractive. For example, offer a pay rate differential, promote the leadership experience, create jobs focused on sustainability, etc.
- Dining is presenting a casual conversion/transition to benefitted positions in the current budget cycle.

### New Student Center Opportunities

- The new student center presents the opportunity for changes in Dining Services. For example:
  - A facility to accommodate a late hour dining option;
  - More space for private meetings;
  - Flexible space utilization based on demand cycles.

### Lewis Sebring Changes

- The recent changes to Lewis Sebring to eliminate menu options were made after noting a trend of declining participation. Dining has realized some savings, as well as receiving feedback on the new options and level of service.
- CPR noted there is a balance between the benefits of community vs. the cost of food.
- CPR also noted that declining options will inevitably lower demand.

Adjourned 9:30 am.

Respectfully submitted,  
S Hegarty