



Dining Services Committee Minutes

September 17, 2025

Attendees – Evonne Ryan-Grandell, Jason Vielee, Tina Tormey, Rebecca Chabot, Jose Pablo Naughton, Carl White, Sarah Levin, Japneet Choprah, Michael Pavey, Michael Knipp, Vincent Papp, Nelson Morales, Sophia, Mara, Eitan

Opening Introductions

Evonne opened the meeting with a warm and engaging icebreaker, inviting everyone to go around the room and introduce themselves. Each attendee shared their name, role, and a fun fact about themselves, creating an upbeat and inclusive atmosphere from the start. The activity set a positive tone for the discussion, helping team members connect on a more personal level and fostering a sense of community before moving into the main agenda items.

Around Campus

Dining Services continues its initiative to help students better manage their meal points throughout the semester. New posters and email campaigns featuring helpful budgeting charts have been distributed around campus, providing clear visual guides on how to manage spending effectively. Nelson offered Ron Shoemaker's (Financial Controller) assistance in meeting with students to provide additional insight and advice on point budgeting and financial planning for dining.

Staffing Update

The department is pleased to welcome Ava Gamba as the new campus dietitian, succeeding Dineen. Ava will be available to support students with nutritional guidance, meal planning, and wellness-focused dining choices.

Culinary Highlights

Chef Pablo recently hosted a Polish Open-Face Sandwich pop-up at Traditions (October 7–8), featuring a variety of international flavors and allowing students to sample unique global dishes. These kinds of

events are part of Dining Services' broader effort to introduce the campus community to new culinary experiences.

Residential Dining

New dining concepts have been launched across campus to keep menus exciting and varied:

- Panini at 31 North Deli feature four different panini each week, all served on homemade focaccia bread.
- Donut Wall Saturdays at Bliss Bakery offer rotating donut varieties, available from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and restocked every thirty minutes.
- A new Vegan Jalapeño Pizzetta is now available at The Vegan Loop.
- New Simmering Spoon concept offered Monday nights at Quimby's Kitchen from 4–9 p.m., introducing a rotating selection of hearty, seasonal stews and chilis.

Dining has also hosted a series of themed events with great success. The Game On event received highly positive feedback, and Dining Services now shares student reactions every Friday on Instagram. Other highlights include Tall Hat Tuesday featuring swordfish (September 23), a Sushi Pop-Up at the Bamboo Garden Station (September 24), Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations (September 25), and Oktoberfest (October 2).

Dining Services will be submitting the Blue & Gold Lunch into NACUFS, for Residential Dining concept of the year. The menu will feature homemade bread and butter, local New Jersey produce, lemon blueberry Italian cheesecake, chowders, composed salads, and braised pork from the Wok station, and leg of lamb at Simple Servings—showcasing both tradition and local sourcing.

Other Programs

Mike Knipp's Cooking Class continues to be a popular feature, teaching students how to prepare simple yet delicious meals in their residential kitchens. Dining Services is looking to collaborate with a student organization on campus.

The 1855 Room also offered a series of themed dining experiences, including:

- *Pasta Bar* (September 17)
- *Island Bites* (October 1)
- *Brunch for Lunch* (October 8)

Coming up, Unity Week (October 13–17) will spotlight a new country or region each day:

- Monday (10/13) – Mexico
- Tuesday (10/14) – Thailand
- Wednesday (10/15) – Soul Food
- Thursday (10/16) – Spain

- Friday (10/17) – South Africa

C-Store Updates

The campus convenience store continues to evolve with the addition of innovative new machines. The Solato Machine now serves frozen yogurt, gelato, and sorbet, while a Just Bake machine is being added following its success last year in T-Dubs.

Top-selling items this semester include:

- Spicy Chicken Kung Pao Potstickers – 1,214 sold
- Glazed Donuts – 814 sold
- WOW Bao Potstickers – 786 sold

This brings the all-time total sales to an impressive 6,082 items. A door repair is currently pending to further improve the store's accessibility and function.

Retail Dining

At Traditions, weekend sales (September 13–14) totaled 27, and the Wake & Wow monthly breakfast specials continue to be a highlight:

- September: Apple Pie Pancakes
- October: Cinnamon Roll French Toast
- November: Caramelized Apple Stuffed French Toast
- December: Gingerbread Waffles

October will also introduce Throwback Wednesdays, featuring favorite Wake & Wow specials from previous months. New wrap options—Chicken Bacon Ranch and Honey Mustard Chicken—have been added to the menu, with a suggestion from Carl White to include turkey bacon for guests who prefer non-pork options.

A new mocktail offering, *Sparkling Black Raspberry Tea*, has also been introduced.

Events at Traditions

Traditions continues to host a vibrant mix of activities to engage students. Recent and upcoming events include:

- Blooket Trivia Night (September 17), featuring four rounds of trivia with prizes such as Amazon gift cards and meal vouchers.
- Pierogi Eating Contest (October 8).
- Rotating Limited Time Offers (LTOs) throughout September (9/22–9/26).
- Upcoming activities: *Lego Loco*, *Paint & Sip*, *Brain Bender Battle*, *Trivia Night* (September 25), and *Puzzle Pursuit* (October 9).

Prizes under consideration for future events include graphing calculators and AirPods, following last year's popular Kindle giveaway.

Smoodi

The Smoodi machine, which blends smoothies using whole fruits, has been a big hit. A second machine is planned for installation soon, with additional flavor options in development. The current version is completely nut-free, accommodating common allergies.

Fresh Pride Café

Fresh Pride Café has expanded its selection with new wholesome ingredients like sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds, and wild rice. The café also introduced new serving vessels, such as customizable bowls, along with refreshed posters, signage, and an updated logo to reflect its vibrant and health-focused identity.

Date	Issue/Feedback	Response	Results
9/17/25	"Can we get more deconstructed food options, specifically for picky eaters in Eickhoff at Quimbys and Pasta Station."	Evonne "The Deli, Salad Bar, Grill, and Roscoes all offer more make-your-own. We have a pasta bar twice a week. If the student comes up with more ideas, they are invited to help collaborate. Chefs are willing to make anything that a student asks for differently to accommodate what they want to eat."	Waiting for specifics of what food they would like to see where and if students will reach out to our chefs.

9/17/25	“Can we do more collaborative events to educate students on how to use the meal plans and options to eat?”	Evonne “That’s a great idea, we would need to figure out which event we can hold to incorporate that.”	Agreed on organizing an event.
9/17/25	“Can we do a once-a-month TCNJ dining newsletter, more “cutesy” to get more students to read it. Via email or posters throughout the dorm.”	Evonne “That’s a great idea. We have a team of interns that would love to do something like that. I will also speak to our HR team who has created newsletters for our company in the past”	Agreed on organizing a newsletter.