

The following themes appeared in survey responses:

Choice – This was a key theme and truly the umbrella term, the word was used to describe several different concepts, including: choice of food programs, choice of food or menu items offered in a location, and choice of locations to visit.

Affordability – It was generally agreed upon that people should recognize value in what they're eating; the program should offer good food at a reasonable price.

Location/Availability - Having access to locations easily and for all meal periods (including late night) is important. Additionally, answers point to having a central location with a few smaller locations as well. Aesthetically, the location should be inviting and attractive, convenient and easy to access.

Program Structure – Any new program needs to address all needs for all meal periods and should include breakfast and late night options.

Community - The dining program should seek to create opportunities (programs, spaces, etc) to bring the community together, and should recognize existing smaller community structures (FSILG communities, hall communities, etc).

Quality - Regardless of program structure, answers showed agreement that food quality should be high.

Sustainability – The Institute mission is focused on green sustainability, both in dollars and with the earth. The dining program should be financially and environmentally sustainable.

Education – The program should contain some effort to educate consumers about nutrition and wellness as well as their dining choices.

Responsive/Evolutionary – This should be a dynamic dining program that reflects the continual changing needs of the MIT community, including a responsive, pro-active and omni-directional feedback and response mode.

Using these themes, the committee charge, previous discussions and key data points, the committee started to move toward framing recommendations to submit to the consultants, with the goal of providing some standards and committee perspective from which the consultants could frame final recommendations. Discussion included the following points:

- 1. The committee proposed a level of commitment based on a standard of nutrition. Survey Respondents were asked to select one statement that best describes their dining patterns. While most indicate attempt/interest in good habits, less than 20% of the Undergraduate and 30% of the Graduate respondents indicated that they eat a balanced diet. Other data and focus group feedback indicate that poor nutritional habits for many are due to lack of finances. With the understanding that not all**

students come from the same economic background, the committee agreed that the Institute must have a system that provides for a nutritional standard of all students with the following recommendations:

- a. Nutrition should not be dependent on economic situation;
 - b. Students should be able to choose the level at which they would like to participate with a range of choices from committed declining balance accounts with ability to purchase groceries for those who want to cook, all the way to comprehensive All-You-Care-to-Eat plans;
 - c. To aid students wishing to cook for themselves, add grocery card vending machines to campus with ability to purchase cards for a variety of popular vendors including Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, Shaw's, and others;
 - d. FSILG Members who are already paying into a meal program should be permitted to choose this program as their meal option;
 - e. A variety of plans are offered that support those who want to cook for themselves and those who would prefer to have meals prepared for them;
 - f. Plans should be created that allow students to choose a level of buy-in that fits their eating habits and is equal to or above the minimum standard with that standard set through benchmarking information and national standards set by federal guidelines.
- 2. Service hours should be reevaluated to address population needs and cover meal periods in areas where service is not currently available and is needed.**
- a. All meal periods should be covered in a way that meets the needs of the population. There should be options for breakfast, lunch, dinner and late night in the regions of campus that are heavily populated during the time periods when these meals are offered.
- 3. The program should include opportunities for the community to participate in and take ownership of the process.**
- a. Open opportunities for student employment within the dining system
 - b. Increase student participation in the Campus Dining Advisory Board
 - c. Feedback mechanisms should be built into the system
 - d. Graduate students, faculty members and other MIT community members should be allowed to buy into any plans if they so choose.
- 4. The dining program should include All-You-Care-to-Eat (AYCE) meal services.**
- a. 52.8% of undergraduates living on campus think MIT should offer an AYCE option
 - b. Undergraduate and Graduate Students tend to *agree* upon the following:
 - i. With an AYCE option, they would eat a broader variety of foods
 - ii. Meal plans should offer AYCE meals as an option
 - iii. The cost of the meal plan should be discounted for larger meal plan commitments
 - iv. Should offer declining balance accounts, where the AYCE meal option is a fixed price

- v. MIT should create new meal plans that offer a combination of TechCASH accounts and pre-paid AYCE

Summary Conclusions

The information in this document represents a summary of the committee discussion progress and resulting recommendation framework to date (12/10/08).

The committee has submitted these recommendations to Envision Strategies, the committee consultant, to integrate into a final report to be reviewed by MIT leadership. These are recommendations only based on the committee's research and work and will be carefully reviewed and considered by the Dean for Student Life.

A presentation of the final data will be given to the Student Engagement Group and the Undergraduate Association.