

# Duke University

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DUKE UNIVERSITY STUDENT DINING  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
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## **MEMORANDUM**

TO: Marcia Austero

FROM: Bryan Zupon, Co-Chair, DUSDAC  
Eric Hung, Co-Chair, DUSDAC

DATE: September 10, 2006

RE: DUSDAC's Initial Findings and Requests about the Marketplace and Great Hall

As you know, the Duke University Student Dining Advisory Committee is the main student group responsible for providing student input to Dining Services regarding on-campus eateries and Merchants on Points vendors. We have been soliciting student input on the Compass/ARAMARK transition, and so far the responses to the changes have been very positive. In addition to the quality and service that Compass Groups has provided, we have been very impressed at Compass' responsiveness to student complaints and suggestions. Despite Compass' great start, we feel our role is to provide as much information as possible to make Duke's dining establishments the best they can possibly be, and thus we are providing this list of preliminary suggestions and observations to you regarding key Compass-operated eateries. We will revisit these at the DSG General Body meeting on September 20<sup>th</sup>, where you and other Compass representatives are scheduled to speak.

### **The Marketplace**

#### **Major Issues Requiring Immediate Attention**

- Lengthy lines in serving areas for hot food
- Especially significant backups at ice cream station
- Shortage of silverware and china (our biggest and most easily fixable concern)

#### **Possible Solutions to Above Problems**

- Further limit number of students allowed in facility at one time; students note waits inside building more frequently than waits outside
- Encourage employees to serve food more rapidly while maintaining quality and portion control via more stringent management initiative
  - Separate ice creams from sorbets

- Install heated water reservoir for scoopers
- Provide more scoopers
- Put soft-serve machine into operation to divert students from scoopable ice cream
  - Purchase more silverware
- Employ more dishwashing employees for faster turnover of silverware and china items; even at 7:00pm the racks are overflowing

#### Other Issues

- Play music selections with input from students to create welcoming atmosphere
- Ensure that all foodstuffs, especially salad items and dressings, have labels
- Fix the broken glass sneeze guard at the pasta station
- Employ more efficient and sanitary way of dispensing condiments at grill via pump or similar system

#### General Remarks

- Lines may suggest a higher percentage of students eating at the Marketplace
- Markedly improved overall food quality
- The majority of students seem very pleased with food quality so far
- Made-from-scratch items such as soup, pizza, and salsas are especially tasty
- Excellent salad stations in quality and appearance

#### **The Great Hall**

##### Major Issues Requiring Immediate Attention

- Customer service is generally lacking according to student response
- Lines are often long and disorganized
- Serving format of Chinese cuisine station is unpopular and downright strange; food quality at this section most frequently reported as uneven

##### Possible Solutions to Above Problems

- Remind employees that the Great Hall should not feel like an institutionalized cafeteria but rather a collection of specialized, independent vendors; students and faculty want to be served pleasantly.
- Encourage employees to serve food more rapidly while maintaining quality and portion control via more stringent management initiative
- Post signs and/or temporary barriers to instruct students where to order and how to line up
- Get rid of cup system at Chinese station and use compartmentalized plates or to-go boxes
- Ensure cooks are following correct recipes or improve given recipes at Chinese station

#### Other Issues

- Ensure cashiers have screens facing out so that students can ensure they are being charged the correct price
- Students frequently complain that portion size is small given the prices charged
- Post clearer signage at the Italian section; ordering is reported as confusing

#### General Remarks

- Markedly improved overall food quality though uneven in some places
- Customer service from employees is the most frequently received complaint
- Praise for managers in early days in making sure students know about the changes and improvements