

## MIT Dining Q&A

Pulled from Transcripts

Wednesday, August 13, 2012

12:30 pm – 1:30 pm

### Questions answered by MIT Dining staff:

Michael Myers, Assistant Director of Campus Dining

### General Questions

*(Q): What is the percentage of students who participate in the meal plan program?*

(A): Over 50% of the undergraduate population residing on campus had a meal plan last year.

*(Q): Can you provide the contact information for the dining hall managers?*

(A): The following link will provide information to contact the managers of the specific dining halls, as well as the General Manager Lauren Patterson: <http://www.cafebonappetit.com/menu/your-cafe/mit>

*(Q): How late are the dining halls open?*

(A): The Howard Dining Hall in Maseeh is open until 9:00 pm; Baker and Next are open until 8:30 pm; McCormick and Simmons are open until 8:00 pm. We also have a late night option at Simmons that is open from 9:00 pm until 1:00 am, Sunday through Thursday. If a student misses dinner, they can use their meal swipe at Simmons during the late night cafe.

*(Q): Which dining hall is the most popular with students?*

(A): Each dining hall has a unique offering that is not available in other halls. This presents the opportunity for different menus, and the popularity really is determined by individual students' tastes, preferences, and schedule.

*(Q): What do students typically do for lunch? What are the options?*

(A): The Howard Dining Hall in Maseeh serves lunch Monday through Friday. All dining locations are open for brunch on the weekends. We also have over twenty retail locations spread throughout campus. Many students choose to eat at venues close to their classes.

*(Q): Can students eat in the dining hall if they don't have a meal plan?*

(A): Students who are not required to participate in the meal plan program may pay cash or use Tech Cash for their meals. Breakfast is \$7.50, Lunch is \$11.00, and Dinner is \$13.50. More information on Tech Cash can be found at <http://techcash.mit.edu>.

*(Q): Do dining halls allow students to cook their own meals?*

(A): Each residence hall does have some form of a kitchen in which students can cook for themselves. Policies for the space are determined by the residence hall. Students should direct questions to their individual house managers.

## **Orientation**

*(Q): We are planning to attend the freshman orientation at the end of August. Will there be a Q&A for meals and plans?*

(A): Yes. The times and locations will be printed in the Parent Guide for orientation.

*(Q): If students are arriving on campus early for athletics, where can they go to eat?*

(A): The regular meal plan service begins on Saturday, September 1. Dining halls will be open for incoming freshmen on Monday, Tuesday, and Friday of orientation week. We also have retail venues that will be open. Visit <http://dining.mit.edu/retaildining> for more information.

*(Q): Are meals provided for FPOP participants?*

(A): Any meals provided as part of FPOP are through those specific activities and departments, not the dining halls. You may be able to find more information about this at <http://web.mit.edu/firstyear/2016/orientation/index.html>.

## **Food Selection, Dietary Restrictions, and Religious Accommodations**

*(Q): Where is nutritional information for food served in the dining hall posted?*

(A): Bon Appetit does not post nutritional information, but is able to work with students on individual nutrition and dietary needs.

*(Q): If a student has an allergy, can they easily find out the ingredients of each dish served?*

(A): We strongly encourage individuals with allergies to speak with the managers on duty in any location they eat in. Each item is clearly labeled with common allergies in the name of the dish. If there is any question or concern, they should ask a manager.

*(Q): Which dining hall has the best gluten free options?*

(A): All of our residential dining facilities provide options that are gluten free. If you contact the manager of the location, they would be happy to show you specific items that are gluten free.

*(Q): What are the milk alternatives offered in the dining halls?*

(A): Soy Milk is always provided in all dining halls. Other options could be requested by filling out a comment card or speaking with the managers of the location.

*(Q): How are vegetarians accommodated in the meal plans?*

(A): Every meal period and location has multiple vegetarian offerings available. Students may see the menus posted online in advance to determine where they would like to eat based on the menu. Vegetarian items are clearly marked on the online menu, as well as at the service stations.

*(Q): During the Jewish holiday of Passover, where would kosher for Passover meals be available?*

(A): Passover meals are available in Maseeh Hall or the religious center. Last year, lunch and dinner Passover meals were available. Information about availability will be communicated to students near the time of the observance.

*(Q): Are there menus that feature Indian vegetarian food?*

(A): The Taj, an Indian cuisine concept, is featured at the Howard Dining Hall in Maseeh. They have vegetarian options featured as well as meat options at this location.

*(Q): What ethnic food options are offered in the dining halls?*

(A): There are many options available, including Asian, Indian, Mediterranean, and Mexican, as well as other rotating options.

## **Meal Plan**

*(Q): What is the last date that changes can be made to the meal plan?*

(A): The change period is from September 2 through September 20. Individuals may make one change to their meal plan during this period.

*(Q): If a student skips dinner, can they use the meal on the following night for a guest?*

(A): The meal swipes are not transferrable. The weekly counts reset Saturday after Dinner service. See below for more information about the guest passes.

*(Q): What if students on the Full 19 meal plan wish to eat off-campus? Is the cost of that meal wasted?*

(A): Any meals not used during the week on the Full 19 meal plan are lost at the end of dinner on Saturday.

*(Q): How does the weekly meal count work?*

(A): The weekly meal count refers to the number of meals available per week. For example, with the Basic 14 plan, individuals will have seven breakfasts and seven dinners in a week (note brunch is served on weekends instead of breakfast). More information can be found at <http://dining.mit.edu/meal-plans/options>.

*(Q): Can you use a meal swipe at venues on campus besides the dining halls?*

(A): The meal plan options are only available at the five residence dining halls in Maseeh, McCormick, Baker, Next, and Simmons.

*(Q): Can students with a meal plan eat at any of the dining halls?*

(A): Yes, they may eat in any of the five dining halls.

*(Q): How do Express Meals work?*

(A): Express meals are ordered in advance online and usually used when students cannot make it to the serving period. These are included in the meal plan, with no additional cost. Multiple orders can be placed at once. If a long-term Express option is desired, the student should contact Bon Appetit to make arrangements. Meals are picked up at the location from which the student ordered.

*(Q): What is an Eco-Clamshell and how is it different from the Express Meal?*

(A): Eco-Clamshells are for students to fill a container to take out of the dining hall. They are responsible for returning the clamshell on their next visit before another one is issued. If a student loses their clamshell, they will be charged for a replacement.

The Eco-Clamshells are typically used for a student who does not have time to eat during that meal period, but are in the residence hall. The decision between the Express Meal versus the Eco-Clamshell is usually determined by what works best with the student's schedule.

*(Q): Are there lunch items to pack from the dining hall during breakfast hours?*

(A): Lunch items are not available during breakfast hours.

*(Q): Are there any accommodations for athletes who have a meal plan, but will miss meals due to traveling for away games?*

(A): Not at this time. We are working with our House Dining Committee, the Athletics department, and Bon Appetit to try and address this issue.

*(Q): Are there specific times that breakfast is available?*

(A): Generally breakfast is 8:00 am – 10:00 am except for the Howard Dining Hall, which keeps breakfast options available through 3:00 pm.

*(Q): If a student goes abroad during part of the semester, are the meals lost or do they receive meals abroad covered under the same meal plan?*

(A): The student should contact Dining about this. We had no situations arise like this last year.

*(Q): Is there a separate plan to purchase meals during the Independent Activities Period (IAP) between semesters?*

(A): We offer different meal plan options for purchase during IAP. Details will be released later in this fall semester.

## **Guest Passes**

*(Q): Can students bring guests under the 14 Meals plan? How often?*

(A): This year, we have added guest passes. For the Basic 14 and Any 14 plan, students will have six guest passes per semester. If the guest passes are used, meals for guests can be purchased with Tech Cash.

*(Q): Can a student use his guest meal passes for himself if he does not use it for an actual guest?*

(A): Students may not use a guest pass for their own consumption. This was the structure supported by the student body last semester.

*(Q): How many guest passes are included in the Full 19 meal plan?*

(A): There are eight guest passes per semester given to individuals with the Full 19 meal plan.

Please contact [foodstuff@mit.edu](mailto:foodstuff@mit.edu) with further questions about MIT dining.

We also encourage our parents to email [mykidis@mit.edu](mailto:mykidis@mit.edu) or log onto our website, <http://www.alum.mit.edu/parents>, where plenty of information is stored. Our parent connectors have also started a group on Facebook that we encourage you to join. From there, you are able to talk to other parents regarding your experiences and share firsthand knowledge!