Dining Advisory Group Meeting Minutes & Summary

Date: 9/29/25

Location: Mund- Dining Hall

Recorder: Sarah Shupp

Purpose

The meeting brought together student representatives and Metz Dining leadership to share feedback, discuss ongoing dining initiatives, and strengthen communication between students and dining services.

Introductions

Student members introduced themselves and shared their goals for serving on the advisory group. Common themes included strengthening communication between students and Metz staff, representing student voices, promoting respectful dialogue, and supporting Metz initiatives through peer engagement. The group emphasized mutual respect, curiosity, and clear communication as guiding principles.

Metz Dining Updates

Staffing and Operations:
Metz experienced significant employee turnover during the summer due to the competitive local job market (e.g., Hershey and Amazon). Hiring efforts have increased this fall, with temporary workers assisting to fill staffing gaps.

Menu and Food Service Enhancements:
- A new four-week salad bar rotation is underway, featuring added grains and new items alongside fan favorites.
- The team is exploring partnerships with Panera Bread for future campus options.
- Ongoing pop-up dining events, such as the Hispanic Heritage Month dinner featuring ribs, brisket, chicken, vegan sausage, and themed sides, aim to bring variety and excitement to campus dining.
- Metz is seeking greater student attendance at special dinner events and welcomes ideas for improving promotion.

Marketing and Communication

Students noted that event promotions are sometimes difficult to find. Suggestions included:
- Increased use of Instagram, Facebook, and other social media platforms
- 'Napkin holder' advertisements and rotating table cards

- Faculty announcements in classes about upcoming events
- Student 'takeovers' of Metz social media to showcase meals and experiences
- Clearer communication around special options (e.g., vegan meals available upon request)

Metz staff welcomed these suggestions and encouraged students to share creative ideas for advertising.

Student Feedback and Discussion

Scheduling and Access:

- Student-athletes reported challenges accessing meals before practices and games, with requests to review dining hall hours.
- Students who are student teaching or off-campus requested more flexible to-go meal options or expanded swipe access.

Menu Preferences:

- Students praised popular items such as flatbreads, spaghetti and meatballs, and General Tso's chicken.
- Some expressed 'burger fatigue,' requesting a broader rotation of entrees and sides.
- Suggestions included maintaining at least one 'fan favorite' dish daily while introducing new recipes.

Vegan and Vegetarian Options:

- Students appreciated the increase in plant-based meals but requested clearer labeling and education around available options.
- Some noted that labeling items as 'vegan' can unintentionally deter others from trying them.
- Metz invited students to report labeling errors or quality concerns directly to management for quick correction.

Future Meetings and Next Steps

The group agreed biweekly meetings would help maintain communication and momentum. Students were encouraged to submit specific, actionable feedback. Metz will continue testing new menu items and marketing strategies and will report progress at the next meeting.

Action Items

Task	**Responsible Party**	**Timeline**
Review meal timing for athletic schedules	Metz	Before next meeting

Develop stronger event promotion strategy (social media, napkin ads, etc.)	Metz Marketing & Students	Ongoing
Clarify labeling and accessibility of vegan/vegetarian items	Chef Jordan & Team	Immediate
Explore to-go meal solutions for off-campus students	Metz Leadership	Fall 2025
Schedule next meeting (biweekly)	Sarah/Dan/Metz	TBD