

RESIDENT STUDENT MEAL PLANS AND FEE INCREASES

Several changes are being proposed to the current meal plan structure for residential students, along with a 7% fee increase in dining fees. The following pages contain detailed information on the current and proposed Shepherd fees, as well as information on peer institutions.

Meal plan alternatives were developed in response to student requests for options, and they are based on recommendations coming out of extensive focus group discussions, meetings with an ad-hoc meal plan advisory committee, discussions with student leaders, and input from the Student Government Association. The purpose of offering the new plans is to improve student satisfaction, while meeting needed departmental revenue targets.

Under this proposal, students could select from among the following choices:

- A 19-meal (per week) plan;
- Both 10- and 5-meal plans for students with special needs;
- A 17-meal plan, plus \$45 “dining dollars,” available only to students who have successfully completed 25 or more credit hours. The “dining dollars” may be spent at any of Dining Service’s campus locations (Dining Hall, Ram’s Den, and Fireside Bistro).
- A 15-meal plan, plus \$95 “dining dollars,” available only to students who have successfully completed 57 or more credit hours.
- Included with all meal plans will be a new “meal transfer” option for lunch, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the Ram’s Den and Fireside Bistro.

The proposed pricing structure includes the following:

- The price of the 19-, 17-, and 15-meal plans would be set at 7% above the current price of the 19-meal plan. The “dining dollars” offered with the 17- and 15-meal plans make them an equal value to the 19-meal option.
- The price of the 10- and 5-meal plans would be increased by 7% over the current rate for those plans.

Implementing this pricing structure would achieve the \$2.3 million meal plan revenue target. A 7% increase in dining fees would raise revenues by approximately \$184,000, which is needed to offset rising costs of food, labor, and level of participation in the meal plans.

The following resolution is recommended for adoption by the Board:

RESOLVED, That the Shepherd University Board of Governors endorses the meal plan structure outlined in the Agenda Book and approves a dining fee increase of 7%.

Summary of Proposed Rate Increases for Room and Board for FY06

Dining Services	FY05	FY06	FY05 vs 06
Proposed Meal Plans	Actual Cost	7% increase	Difference
19 meals/wk	\$1,363.00	\$1,458	\$89.18
17 meal/wk + \$45 db	N/A	\$1,458	\$89.18
15 meals/wk + \$95 db	N/A	\$1,458	\$80.29
10 meals/week	\$1,083.00	\$1,159	\$75.81
5 meals/week	\$638.00	\$683	\$44.66

**Board Rate Comparison Between Shepherd University
and Regional Peer Universities**

Based on Projected Board Rate Increases for Fiscal, 2006

Institution	19 Meals	DB\$	Meal Tran	Guest Pass	contract	Value% vs. SU
Shepherd University	\$1,458	\$0	yes	4	self-op	100%
Frostburg State	\$1,450	\$100	yes	10	Sodexo	93%
Shippensburg	\$1,222	\$150	no	0	Sodexo	73%
Salisbury	\$1,646	\$0	no	4	self-op	113%
Towson	\$1,583	\$50	yes	0	Chartwells	105%
James Madison	\$1,541	\$125	no	0	Aramark	97%

- * Shepherd Board Rate increase of 7%
- * Other schools assumed board rate increase of 4.5% over current year.
- * Note: Shippensburg housing rate of \$1,595 is \$171 more than Shepherd (12% higher).
Factoring in housing the room & board rate of Shippensburg is 97.7% of Shepherd.

Institution	14/15 Meals	DB\$	Meal Tran	Guest Pass	contract	Value % vs. SU
Shepherd University (15)	\$1,458	\$95	yes	no	self-op	100%
Frostburg State (14)	\$1,373	\$100	yes	no	Sodexho	100%
Shippensburg (15)	\$1,089	\$150	no	no	Sodexho	69%
Salisbury (12)	\$1,632	\$250	no	no	self-op	127%
Towson (14)	\$1,494	\$50	yes	no	Chartwells	113%
James Madison (14)	\$1,418	\$225	no	no	Aramark	94%

* Shepherd and Shippensburg provide 15 meal plans.

* Frostburg and Towson provide 14 meal plans.

* Salisbury provides a 12 meal plan.

* Note: Shippensburg housing rate of \$1,595 is \$171 more than Shepherd (12% higher).

Factoring in housing the room & board rate of Shippensburg is 97.7% of Shepherd.

**Financial Impact of Varying Board Rate Increases:
Shepherd University: Fiscal, 2006**

FY 05 Rate (19 meals): \$1,363.00

Rate Increase:	New Rate	Proj. Net Loss	Proj Net Gain
0.00%	\$1,363	(\$201,477)	
4.00%	\$1,418	(\$94,901)	
5.00%	\$1,431	(\$69,718)	
6.00%	\$1,445	(\$42,654)	
7.00%	\$1,458	(\$17,470)	
8.00%	\$1,472		\$9,594

* This assumes 97% occupancy in fall and 94% in spring.

Breakdown of Board Rate Increase:

Plan	Cost, FY '05	Proj, FY '06	"Dining \$"	Board Amt	Real Board Incr	Cost/Meal
19	\$1,363	\$1,458	\$0	\$1,458	6.97%	\$4.76
17	\$1,309	\$1,458	\$45	\$1,413	7.94%	\$5.16
15	\$1,254	\$1,458	\$95	\$1,363	8.69%	\$5.68
10	\$1,159	\$1,240	\$0	\$1,240	6.99%	\$7.65
5	\$638	\$683	\$0	\$683	7.05%	\$8.54

- * Notes:
- * Only offer 5 and 10 meal plan to students who petition (e.g. student teachers).
 - * 14 meal plan offered through fiscal, 2005 to change to 15 meals/week
 - * Real board increase for 17 and 15 meal plans calculated from converting fiscal, 2005 costs for 19 and 14 meal plans to a 17 and 15 meal plan cost on fiscal, 2005 terms/rates.
 - Fiscal, 2005 17 meal plan rate = \$1,309 (60% of difference between costs of 19 & 14 meal plans).
 - Fiscal, 2005 15 meal plan rate = \$1,254 (20% increase over 14 meal plan rate).

The following report was published in *The Food Institute Report* September, 27, 2004

**Food At-Home Prices Seen Rising 3% to 4% in '05
Poultry Price Forecast For 2004 Upped**

Poultry prices are now forecast to rise 6.5% to 7.5% in 2004, according to the latest data from the USDA – a half percentage point more than last month and a level not seen since 1989 when poultry prices soared 9.9%. While broiler prices have eased from levels earlier this year, turkey prices remain strong due to smaller stocks and lower production. And, prices for whole hens are seen rising even further in the fourth quarter. USDA projects that prices in 2005, however, will return to that earlier level of 1% to 2%.

Higher ingredient prices this year for a number of food items have impacted some firms. ConAgra recently announced it may lift prices as a result.

Projected Food Price Changes for 2004 & 2005
Updated September 2004

Consumer Price Index (CPI)

<u>% Change vs. Year Prior</u>	<u>Actual, 2002</u>	<u>Actual, 2003</u>	<u>Forecast, 2004</u>	<u>Forecast, 2005</u>
All Food	1.8	2.2	3.5	3.5
Food Away from Home	2.6	2.1	3.0	3.0
Food at Home	1.3	2.2	4.0	3.5
Meats	0.6	5.4	8.0	2.5
Beef and Veal	0.1	9.0	10.5	2.0
Pork	(0.4)	1.9	4.5	2.5
Other Meats	3.5	2.5	4.5	2.5
Poultry	1.3	1.3	7.0	1.5
Fish & Seafood	(1.6)	1.0	3.0	3.5
Eggs	1.3	13.8	7.5	0.5
Dairy Products	0.6	(0.1)	8.5	3.5
Fats & Oils	(0.2)	1.3	7.5	3.5
Fruits & Vegetables	4.1	2.3	2.5	3.0
Fresh Fruits & Vegetables	4.2	2.7	2.5	3.0
Fresh Fruits	1.9	3.3	2.5	3.0
Fresh Vegetables	6.4	2.1	2.5	3.0
Processed Fruits & Veg.	3.7	0.9	1.5	1.5
Sugar & Sweets	2.1	1.9	0.5	0.5
Cereals & Bakery Prod.	2.2	2.4	2.5	3.0
Nonalcoholic Beverages	0.0	0.4	0.5	0.5
Other Foods	0.6	1.0	1.5	2.5

Source: US Department of Agriculture

The Picket

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SGA Approves New Meal Plan Options

JOSHUA BOEHMAN
Picket Staff Writer

A new meal plan for Shepherd University has been approved by the Student Government Association (SGA) and will be brought to the Board of Governors for further authorization.

Jack Shaw, the director of dining services, said that the new meal plan will bring more options to upper classmen.

Under the new plan, sophomores will have the option of buying a plan that includes 17 or 19 meals per week, and juniors and seniors will be able to purchase 15 meals per week. Freshmen will remain under the 19 meal plan.

Students participating in the new meal plan will also receive what Shaw described as dining dollars.

Dining dollars, Shaw said, will be separate from money on a Rambler Card and will "allow for greater participation by using the meal plan multiple times within meal periods."

Students on the 17 meal plan will have 45 dining dollars to spend on meals, while students on the 15

meal plan will have 95 dining dollars.

Shaw stressed the differences between dining dollars and money on a Rambler Card. Students will not be able to use the dining dollars off campus. They may only be used at on-campus locations, including the dining hall, Ram's Den and Fireside Bistro, and students may not exceed more than \$25 in purchases a day.

In order for the new meal plan to be possible, Shaw asked for a seven percent increase in the Shepherd board rate, meaning that next year's meal plans will cost about \$1,458. Four percent of the increase will be used to recover from inflation for the amount of food used during the year. The other three percent is for the recruitment of new staff for dining services.

The new employees in dining services will be very important, Shaw said, especially since the new meal plans allow students to use their dining dollars for lunch in the Ram's Den and Fireside Bistro.

"We will have to rise to the occasion," Shaw said, because more

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Meal Plan

from p1



Photo by Martin Cherry

Jack Shaw, left, looks on as Patricia Schopper, middle, admits junior Diana Miller into the dining hall.

business will come to the college center and traffic flow will increase.

The new meal plan, according to Shaw, can mean more flexibility and variety for students. Shaw said that dining services is considering "more flexibility by allowing lunch meal transfer from 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm in the Ram's Den and Bistro."

Dining services is also considering "limited Saturday hours at the Bistro and later weekend brunch hours (until 2:00 pm) in the dining hall." Shaw added that dining ser-

vices may add convenience or express items in the dining hall, with bulk or party food such as pizzas available for purchase with dining dollars.

Shaw explained that some students have a difficult time using their 19 meals per week, and the university is attempting to account for busy schedules.

The meal plans all cost the same amount, with the difference in meals made up by additional dining dollars.

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PICKET EDITORIALS

New Meal Plan Should be First of Many Changes

In the past, many Shepherd students have had to buy one very large and inconvenient meal plan. In many ways it had flaws that were never addressed by the Dining Services or Student Affairs. The plan locks students into a preset schedule which many cannot adhere to, while at the same time creating limitations on when students can eat. The current system does not allow students the flexibility of meals that many other universities across the country grant their student bodies. Students are locked into a plan that does not consider that not every student eats three meals a day at set times.

For years many students complained of the system's limitations, and were quickly silenced by administrators claiming that they knew what would serve students needs

best – never mind what students actually thought. It is ridiculous to have, for example, coffee from the Fireside Bistro only included on the meal plan between certain hours. If students must pay such a large lump sum for food, why should there be limitations on when they can have it? Many students do not attend breakfast in the morning or their hectic schedules do not allow for meals. Thereby, a waste of resources on part of both the student and the institution is created.

Recently that sentiment has changed. The Picket wishes to applaud the Director of Dining Services, Jack Shaw. Mr. Shaw recognizes that students have more flexible schedules than the current, rigid meal plan can account for and therefore wishes to introduce changes that will vary the plan

more to meet the needs of real students. Students have more options as to where they want to eat, and may now dine in the Ram's Den or Fireside Bistro. The college has options, and now students are encouraged to enjoy them.

Rather than providing one, set meal plan that locks students into a set nineteen meals a week, the school will allow students to choose whether they would like seven-teen or fifteen meals. Both meal plans will cost the same. The difference between them is that on the 17 meals-a-week plan, students receive 45 dining dollars, while on the 15 meals-a-week plan, students receive 95. Dining dollars, unlike the Rambler card, can only be used within University dining services, such as the Ram's Den, dining hall, or Fireside Bistro. We feel they are

an excellent innovation to the current system, allotting to students not only the standard preset meals, but also the freedom to dine, if they wish, outside of set time constraints without having to shell out cash of their own.

Students have busy lives and schedules that can't revolve around eating at certain times. When we pay for a service, such as a meal plan, we expect it to work for our benefit. College is difficult enough without the burden of wondering whether or not you can have that much-needed cup of coffee at a certain time without having to pay out of your own pocket. Mr. Shaw and the SGA should be praised for recognizing this, and making a positive step toward a meal plan any student's lifestyle can appreciate.