REPORT

of the

COMMITTEE ON CAMPUS DINING

Massachusetts Institute of Technology

October 1979

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October 19, 1979

Chancellor Paul E. Gray
Room 3-208

Dear Paul,

I am pleased to transmit the Report of the Committee on Campus Dining. As you know, the dining review involved the efforts of a number of people serving on the Committee, in the Working Groups, or both, and included a substantial degree of student participation. Other students, faculty, and staff have made their viewpoints known through various meetings and forums. Copies of the draft Report have been in circulation for the past two months to elicit further comments, suggestions, and alternative proposals. During the past month some Committee members have spent a substantial amount of time discussing the proposals within Houses. This feedback was reviewed, and a number of constructive suggestions subsequently were incorporated into the Report.

The Committee would like to emphasize the supportive relationships among the major recommendations. They are viewed as dependent upon each other in addressing the concerns identified during the review, and also in providing program possibilities which currently do not exist. We do not feel that the proposals make irreversible major commitments to facilities or programs, or lock us onto a course that cannot accommodate future situations. The recommendations, in fact, provide for an advisory group to review such issues that may lie ahead.

The overall conceptual plan proposed by the Committee, if approved, requires that a number of important details be worked out among Housing and Food Services, the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs, Faculty Residents, and student residents of the various Houses. We trust that a high level of student participation will characterize the further development and implementation of the dining programs.

The set of problems that faced the Committee is obviously complicated, with room for strong feelings and differences in emphases on all sides of the issues. The efforts of the Committee and Working Groups have been arduous and at times frustrating, but I believe that the process has resulted in the identification of the nucleus of a high quality residential dining program. I am enthusiastic about the promise and new opportunities the proposals can represent for the future, and hope that this view will be broadly shared in the MIT Community as people reflect on the range of issues and concerns that were addressed by the Committee.

Sincerely,
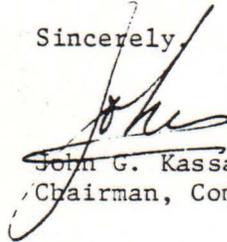
John G. Kassakian
Chairman, Committee on Campus Dining

JGK:bl

A. CHARGE TO THE COMMITTEE

The decision to undertake a comprehensive review of MIT's dining programs was motivated by a number of concerns, among them the rising costs of commons; frequently voiced dissatisfaction with various aspects of the meal plans (in terms of flexibility, convenience, quality of the food, etc.); concerns about the quality of student cooking efforts, especially in Houses where adequate facilities are not provided; and the existence of a hodgepodge of dining styles and facilities that on the whole do little to enhance the quality of the campus living environment, either for students or the MIT community in general.

The basic charge to the Committee was to take a fresh look at dining at MIT: to identify strengths and problems in the current dining opportunities on campus (primarily commons, a la carte services, and student cooking); to develop goals for the dining program as part of the overall student experience at MIT, and to assess the university's responsibilities in this regard; and to explore alternatives to the current operating modes and dining offerings.

In responding to the proposal from Mr. Philip Stoddard, Vice President, Operations, that a comprehensive review of dining be undertaken, Chancellor Paul Gray said,

> "It offers the promise of a careful and complete reexamination of all the issues affecting dining, issues which are certainly responsible for our present dilemma, and will surely shape the alternatives that we might consider for the future. I feel that such a 'zero base review' is both what we need and timely, and I would like to encourage you in every way that I can to move ahead with the process with all deliberate speed.

> I remain hopeful that our students will, if they are given the chance to understand the problem in all its complexity, help us come to reasonable and workable plans, and I am pleased that you anticipate significant student involvement in this review.

> It is obvious that there has got to be a 'better way' than we have so far found, and it will take considerable ingenuity and creativity to find it."

B. APPROACH TAKEN

During the summer of 1978, a group of students and staff met weekly to begin identifying some of the issues that needed to be addressed and to develop the approach for how the review should continue during the academic year. Given the importance of involving large numbers of students and bringing the review close to the individual Houses, three Working Groups were developed: East Campus, Baker/MacGregor, and West Campus. Each group had a particular focus based primarily on related interests.

needs, and dining facilities available in or near the Houses in which the students
lived. House governments were asked to select representatives to the Working Groups
who would reflect the dining styles of the House residents. All Faculty Residents were
invited to take part. The Working Groups included the House representatives, as well
as faculty and staff members.

The student Working Group members have brought the needs and concerns of students
in their living groups to the Working Group discussions. Each of the Working Groups
performed various tasks and brought suggestions to the Committee on Campus Dining.
The 16 members of the CCD (eight of whom were students) included student repre-
sentatives from each of the three Working Groups, the faculty chairman of the CCD
and the chairperson of each Working Group, representatives from the Dean's Office
(DSA) and Housing and Food Services (HFS), and two other staff members.

In addition to extensive Working Group and Committee discussions, information was
gathered from a variety of sources, including student visits to other colleges, tours
of the MIT dining system, telephone survey, informal surveys within dormitories and
dining facilities, resource people at MIT and elsewhere, literature searches, and
historical and operational data from Food Services.

C. OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee examined the current dining situation on the MIT campus and decided,
because of the broad scope of the study and time constraints, to focus primarily on
the various dining opportunities available to undergraduate residents. With the addi-
tion of cooking facilities in Institute Houses over the last decade, the commons pro-
gram has undergone numerous changes in response to the diverse needs of the under-
graduate community. The Committee reaffirms the need to preserve diversity in the
residence/dining options. However, the practice of accommodating all dining options
in every House contributes to much fragmentation in the character of residential life,
and does not provide for a level of support necessary to assure quality in all dining
options.

The wide range of choices available to students makes it difficult to predict the level
of participation within any single option, to hold down costs, and at the same time
to make substantial improvements in the general dining environment. Attempting to
be all things to all people has resulted in shortcomings in the overall dining situation.
as criticisms from students and members of the faculty and administration attest. These

are described more fully in Part II of the Report. The Committee feels that the Institute has several specific responsibilities with regard to addressing these concerns, which are discussed in Part III.

The recommendations detailed in Part IV are intended to establish guidelines for improving the quality of the dining experience at MIT and for helping dining play a more central role in the larger concept of an undergraduate residential program:

● Because dining hours lend themselves naturally to a community focus, the Committee begins its recommendations with a number of specific suggestions for strengthening the program aspect of dining through greater involvement by faculty, staff, and alumni in the Institute Houses and Independent Living Groups, and through the scheduling of various events around meal time that take advantage of the special resources within the university environment. House residents would play a significant role in developing such programs for their House. A DSA staff member would have primary responsibility for supporting and coordinating the overall development of the dining program.

● To assure continued support of the program aspect of dining, and to provide a campus-wide forum for discussing dining-related issues, the Committee recommends the creation of a Dining Advisory Board that includes representatives from HFS, DSA, House Dining Committees, and various other users of MIT's dining facilities.

● It is recommended that the Institute continue to offer the use of kitchens as an alternative to commons, but that students who do their own cooking reside in Houses with properly maintained and regularly updated kitchen facilities (Burton House, New House, Senior House, Bexley Hall, and Random Hall). Students in Houses associated with dining rooms (Baker, McCormick, MacGregor, East Campus and Next House) would be required to subscribe to one of several contract meal plans which would provide about half or more of students' weekly meals, and the dining room would become an important focal point for the residential program. Morss Hall would be dedicated primarily to East Campus residents at dinner time, and would provide services and amenities similar to the House dining rooms. These changes would be phased in gradually, and would not affect the options available to current students. Clarifying the character of the dining options in each House and developing the concept of a dining program will allow for significant improvements overall in cooking, commons, and the residential program in general.

● The remaining recommendations concern improvements to, and in some cases, expansion of, existing facilities and services, both in terms of ambiance and ability

to meet the requirements of the students and staff who use them. Specific recommendations are made for substantially improving the flexibility, convenience, and financial equity of the dining plan offerings, and for more adequately supporting student cooking efforts through a Food Co-op and a program of consumer information and education.

The Committee recognizes, and does not take lightly, the feelings of uncertainty than can accompany any contemplated change in the fabric of the residential system. Many members of the Committee initially opposed to restructuring the dining options were influenced by the highly positive role dining and related programming can play in fulfilling the basic educational and social purposes of the overall residential experience. The proposal to require students in certain of the Houses to participate in a meal plan is inseparable from the larger commitment to focus energy and resources on developing a high quality residential dining program. The following sections provide the details of the Committee's findings and recommendations. We hope that when people reflect on the broad range of issues and concerns that have been addressed by the Committee, they will find promise and new opportunities in the directions that are being proposed.

PART II: CURRENT DINING SITUATION

A. INTRODUCTION

The Committee has reviewed the major on-campus dining opportunities, which include the undergraduate residential dining offerings, graduate student facilities, lunch-time opportunities for the entire MIT community, snack bar/grille operations, and vending machines.

This chapter presents a detailed description of existing dining services and facilities and assesses the effectiveness of undergraduate residential dining offerings. Several important topics such as lunch opportunities for the MIT community and facilities for graduate students are discussed only in a preliminary fashion here and in the recommendations (Part IV) and require further investigation.

In general, the Committee feels that current dining patterns and experiences are not in keeping with the overall goals of an MIT undergraduate education. Dining offers opportunities for enhancing the quality of residential life, which the current system is unable to take advantage of because of its multiplicity and character.

The review also indicates that the areas of cost, flexibility and convenience of meal plans, student cooking support, communication between students and Food Services, and the programming aspect of dining need to be addressed. The detailed findings are presented below.

B. DESCRIPTION OF MIT DINING PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

Introduction

The primary dining options available on campus are the MIT Food Services and student cooking facilities. The dining rooms operated by Food Services provide a range of a la carte dining opportunities for the entire community, and four of them also offer a variety of contract meal plans from which students may choose. Many of the Institute Houses include cooking facilities, and a number of students choose to cook for themselves or combine cooking with eating in the dining halls. There are wide variations among the Houses in the cooking facilities provided. The various dining services and facilities are described below in some detail. A brief historical perspective on the major developments over the last six decades in dining at MIT, leading to the current situation, is outlined in Appendix A.

1. MIT Food Services

The Institute operates six dining facilities*: two House dining rooms, two full service cafeterias, and two snack bars. Table I briefly summarizes some of the characteristics of these facilities. MIT Food Services are available at least 16 hours per day seven days a week, and there are obvious variations in size, ambiance, and type of food among the six facilities. Because of their smaller size, the dining rooms in Baker and MacGregor are less economically efficient than the larger cafeterias. House dining rooms, though closed, are also located in Burton, Ashdown, and McCormick.

Each of the major facilities does much of its own buying (from among a list of vendors identified by the central Food Services office) in order to be able to respond to differences among the various dining rooms and their clientele. The list of vendors is selected on the basis of bids, after careful evaluation of product, price, and delivery. This process helps achieve both purchasing economies and high quality standards. In order to verify the quality of purchased products, a substantial amount of testing is done. Food Services lacks storage space to take advantage of bulk purchasing economies, and increased space to serve the entire campus has been requested in the new undergraduate House, planned for 1981 occupancy.

Menus are developed by the administrative dietician, who coordinates information and suggestions from a working group of dining hall managers and food production supervisors. Menu preparation takes into account a number of factors: the interests

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* Excluding the Faculty Club, which is not part of the dining review.

TABLE I

M.I.T. DINING FACILITIES (1978-79)*

	Baker	MacGregor	Lobdell	Twenty Chimneys	Morss Hall	Pritchett
Location	Baker House	MacGregor House	Student Center	Student Center	Walker Mem.	Walker Mem.
Type	House Dining Rm.	House Dining Rm.	Cafeteria	Snack	Cafeteria	Snack
Seating	135-150	160	410	75	400	45 (could go to 75)
Hours	7:30-10:00 11:15-1:30 5:00-7:00	7:30-10:00 11:15-1:30 5:00-6:30	7:30 a.m to 7:00 p.m.**	11:30-1:30 7:00-12:00 (1:00 a.m. weekends)	7:30-11:00 11:00-2:00 5:00-7:00	11:30 a.m. (9:00 a.m. weekends) to 12:00 p.m.
	M - F	M - F	7 days	7 days	M - F	7 days
Primary Users	Undergrads from Baker, Burton, and McCormick	Undergrads from Mac-Gregor, New House, and Burton	Mixture of students, staff, and employees	Mixture(but mostly students in evening)	Mixture of students, staff, employees; undergrads mostly from east side of campus	Mostly undergrads
Average Daily Customers:						
Breakfast	175	175	200	---	200	---
Lunch	175	125	1300-1400	160	1000-1100	420
Dinner	300	300	575	---	420	per
Other	---	---	---	385	---	day
Programs	'unlimited seconds' meal plans		'no seconds' meal plans, a la carte, catering	a la carte: grille, fountain, beer, etc. (salad bar at lunch)	'unlimited seconds' meal plans, a la carte, catering	a la carte: pizza, grille, fountain, etc.

* Managed by MIT (excluding Faculty Club)
** Closed brief periods during day to clean up/change lines

and tastes of the consumer, nutrition, variety, cost, seasonal availability of particular items, differences in production capacity and equipment in the various dining room kitchens, and so forth. New recipes are periodically tested and added to the menu. Because there is a "learning curve" associated with new approaches or changes in personnel, some variation in quality among the dining facilities can result on particular items. Suggestions regarding menu preparation also come from Commons Committees (student groups in Baker and MacGregor that provide client input on the commons program), and from annual menu ratings by students, comment cards, and direct communication with Food Services staff and employees.

Management of Food Services operations is constrained by two primary factors:
1) Under current policy, the total operation (as well as the a la carte and contract meal programs separately) must break even. 2) The union contract, which is negotiated, defines compensation scales, working conditions, fringe benefits, job specifications, number and types of positions, and so forth for a two or three year period. The success of continuing efforts to increase the total volume of dining services, including catering, will offset some fixed operating costs and thereby maintain a lower price structure in the dining system.

Food Services is a complex, highly constrained system, and subject to the problems of any labor-intensive operation. The manager of each dining unit is accountable for food presentation and quality and for meeting the budget. When Food Services was operated by Stouffer's (which terminated in 1974), their management system tended to be highly centralized. During the transition to MIT management, efforts were made, and are continuing, to decentralize the management process where possible. Over time the degree of autonomy at the unit manager level is likely to increase. Employees are encouraged to take advantage of various on-the-job training opportunities, seminars, and summer programs.

There are currently seven contract dining plans available to students in four of the dining facilities (shown in Table II). On an experimental basis, discounts ranging from 5-10% were offered during the 1978-79 academic year to students who participated in a plan both terms.

Comparing equivalent daily costs, the 15 and 19 meal plans are less expensive than point plans for three reasons: 1) larger, more predictable meal participation is cost efficient, 2) points are more likely to be used for the more expensive meals, and 3) missed meals, typically in the 15-20% range for the 15/19 meal plan, lower the price, whereas points generally are used by the end of the term. Under the meal

TABLE II

DINING PLAN OPTIONS (1978-79)

Plan	Type	Cost per Term	Equivalent Daily Cost *	Available
19 meal	unlimited seconds	$ 630	$ 6.59	
15 meal	unlimited seconds	488	6.59	Baker,
300 points**	unlimited seconds	305	8.13	MacGregor,
200 points**	unlimited seconds	236	9.44	Morss Hall
15 meal	no seconds	415	5.61	
300 points**	no seconds	262	6.99	Lobdell
200 points**	no seconds	205	8.20	

* Not including the discount.

** Four points for dinner, three points for lunch, one point for breakfast (though students seldom eat three meals per day on the point plans).

TABLE III

ON-CAMPUS UNDERGRADUATE PARTICIPATION IN DINING PLANS (1978-79)

Fall Term	Freshmen 15/19	Points	Sophomores 15/19	Points	Juniors/Seniors 15/19	Points	Total on Plan
East Campus	32 %	14 %	6 %	23 %	7 %	13 %	31 %
Senior House	32	10	17	17	4	15	30
Bexley Hall	21	18	0	8	2	3	16
Random Hall	21	17	5	8	0	11	19
McCormick Hall	9	16	0	11	2	5	14
Burton House	23	31	4	26	4	15	31
New House (excluding language houses)	48	32	26	33	7	22	45
Baker House	46	47	19	54	11	50	72
MacGregor House	69	22	20	57	8	40	69
All Houses	35 %	23 %	11 %	29 %	6 %	23 %	40 %
Number on Plan	234	154	75	194	65	246	968
Spring Term							
All Houses	23 %	24 %	8 %	29 %	5 %	22 %	36 %
Number on Plan	153	164	50	190	54	226	837

plan, students pay only for the average number of meals eaten. Any cost comparisons with other colleges must take into account the proportion of missed meals. For example, the missed commons meals at Harvard and Wellesley, both compulsory systems, average as high as 35%.

Students on the "unlimited" plans can eat in any of the four commons dining rooms, while students on "no seconds" plans eat in Lobdell (about 7% of the undergraduates on a meal plan). For those on the 15/19 meal plans, transfers can be obtained from the dining unit in which they normally eat or from the manager of the dining hall to which they are transferring. Bag lunches are also available for those who cannot meet the dining room lunch schedule.

On an experimental basis in the spring term of 1979, students could bring guests to the Baker and MacGregor dining rooms and either use points or be billed at the meal plan rate, depending upon their plan. Special nights were excluded, and there were limitations, at the unit manager's discretion, on the total number of guests that could be accommodated for dinner.

The on-campus undergraduate enrollment in the contract meal plans is shown in Table III. There are wide variations by House, by Class, and by type of Plan, but the two Houses with dining rooms have by far the highest participation. Table III also shows the lower meal plan enrollments during spring term, particularly the decline of freshmen on the 15/19 meal plans. Including graduate students and off-campus residents, about 1,150 students were enrolled under contract plans fall term. The spring term total is about 965, a decrease of 16%. This decrease is somewhat lower than in recent years, and the impact of the discount experiment will be discussed more fully on pages 26 and 54.

The luncheon clientele in the six MIT dining facilities is of special interest in understanding the eating patterns of the MIT community. A line survey conducted in early December showed that about half the weekly luncheon clients at Lobdell and Morss Hall are students, and about half are faculty, staff, employees, and visitors. Also, about half of the total clientele are frequent luncheon customers, that is, eat in Lobdell or Morss Hall four or five times during the week. Based on the one-day line survey, the distribution of the luncheon customers for all six facilities is estimated to be:

Undergraduates   900 - about 500 on a meal plan, 400 a la carte; about a third
                     each in Baker/MacGregor, Walker, and Lobdell; about
                     20% live off campus

Graduate Students	750	two-thirds in Lobdell, one-third in Walker
Faculty/Staff	500	about equally divided between Lobdell and Walker
Support Staff	400	three-fifths Lobdell, two-fifths Walker
Visitors	300	about equally divided between Lobdell and Walker
	2850	(plus about 300 in the Faculty Club)

Thus, about one-fifth of the total MIT community eat lunch in one of MIT's dining facilities, though the proportion is closer to one-quarter or one-third of those on campus on a given day. The significant issue is to understand what the remaining 70-75% do for lunch (vending, brown bag, off-campus restaurants, cooking, skipped meal), and why.

2. Cooking in Campus Houses

Students cook in every Institute House on campus, no matter whether facilities are provided or whether specific activities are in compliance with Cambridge codes applying to rooming units. The various cooking styles and facilities are outlined below.

The three language houses within New House are often cited as successful models for cooperative group cooking on campus. The groups of about 20-25 students organize themselves to share such responsibilities as shopping, cooking, cleaning up, and financial management. Dinner time provides a special focus for gathering as a group, both to eat and to practice the language of the house, often with outside guests.

The rest of New House was designed with the idea that groups of about 50 students would form cohesive living groups (houses) within the dormitory. Each house has 3-5 kitchen modules (usually on the ground floor) which are adjacent to a large, open dining area. A kitchen consists of stove (or stoves) with oven, refrigerator(s), sink, storage space, and counter area. Although group cooking is not the typical mode, the open dining area serves as a central gathering place for some members of the house, particularly around meal time.

MacGregor House has a dining room, and was designed with a full commons program in mind. The kitchen facilities were intended primarily for snacks and for weekends, and do not include ovens. In the absence of a full commons program, the use of these facilities has changed. Student-supplied radar ranges and toaster ovens make full cooking possible, though sometimes not in conformity with Cambridge codes. Each kitchen can serve a maximum of 6-8 students, but the use is typically less because many students eat in the dining room (or eat out).

Both the Burton and McCormick student kitchen facilities were designed to supplement the commons program (for snacks and weekend meals), and both have dining rooms which have been closed. The cooking and storage space is not always adequate for full cooking use by all residents, depending upon the way it is used. McCormick includes a "country kitchen" which is used by residents for special group functions (up to 75 people). The West Tower of McCormick is organized around the entire floor, with a double kitchen/lounge serving at most 24 students. Burton and the East Tower of McCormick are arranged in suites, including a kitchen (generally for fewer than 13 students). The situation is similar in Random Hall where a kitchen serves about 12 students in a suite. The full kitchen in each Bexley apartment serves 2-4 students.

Cooking facilities are not provided in Baker House, although considerable cooking takes place in rooms or in the floor lounges. About 70% of the residents are on some form of commons plan, but this level of enrollment in the plans provides less than half of the weekday meals of Baker residents (since many are on point plans). With the exception of two lounge kitchens serving the entire Houses, East Campus and Senior House do not have kitchen facilities. Many of the residents in both Houses cook regularly in their rooms and lounges, using a variety of electrical appliances. The rooms in all three Houses have sinks.

It is clear from these brief descriptions that there are wide variations in cooking styles and facilities across the campus, and that some facilities are used in ways that the facilities were not planned to handle.

3. Other Dining Options

Other on-campus dining opportunities (not operated by Food Services) include vending machines, street vendors, various independent coffee, coke, sandwich, and pastry operations, and a variety of student entrepreneurial programs such as the 24 Hour Coffee House, Ploughman's Pub, Muddy Charles, Kosher Kitchen, and student-operated snack bars in some dormitories. In addition, there are a number of departmental lounges with potential dining capacity. These services are important in meeting the diverse needs of the MIT community. The growth of these operations in total, however, affects the potential level of Food Services business.

The vending operation is of particular interest, because of its size and its relation to Food Services. Vending is managed by Seiler's, an outside firm, but some of the revenues are used as a planned subsidy to Food Services operations (about $20K per year). On a typical weekday, vending provides 450-500 sandwiches, salads, yogurts, and soups and 600-700 pastries, as well as snacks, drinks, and ice cream

in seven locations on the campus. The original purpose of vending was to provide food nearby in the buildings, particularly at times when other services are not available, but this latter objective is not being met currently. The sandwiches, for example, are sold primarily at lunch; the machines are frequently empty after lunch and are not restocked until the next day because of serious problems with vandalism. Various improvements should be explored in this important vending service.

4. Summary of the Undergraduate Dining Program

The current dining situation is described in the section on Dining Options included in the 1978-79 Undergraduate Residence book (distributed to all entering students):

> "In addition to choosing a place to live you must also decide where and how you are going to eat. Since eating is an important aspect of any lifestyle, it is one of the things you may wish to consider in making your choice of living group.
>
> Fraternities and Independent Living Groups. In most (but not all) fraternities and independent living groups, the meal program is defined and expected of everyone in the house -- so your choice of living group defines your meal option as well in that case. A few fraternities have variable meal plans. Meal plans vary from house to house, ranging from six to twenty meals per week. In most fraternities, dinner time is an important time of day for it is the time when most house members are together. Fraternities have cooks to prepare the meals, but in several houses members do the cooking, either on a paid basis or on a coopera-tive share-the-duty basis.
>
> Institute Houses. Institute House residents eat in a number of different ways. This can range from taking a contract meal plan, to eating a la carte in the dining halls, to cooking for yourself. In each of the three language houses, the residents cooperatively prepare dinner and eat as a group while speaking the language of the house. Just as in the fraternities, meal time in the Institute Houses is a time for being with your friends and relaxing. This is especially so in Baker and MacGregor, with their own house dining rooms, where a majority of the residents and all of the Graduate Residents in those houses use the dining rooms. We encourage the use of the dining rooms by Baker and MacGregor resi-dents both for the social benefits to individuals and for the spirit, unity, and communication which is fostered in the house and/or entry."

Following a discussion of Food Services facilities and programs, the Undergraduate Residence book observes:

> "This wide range of meal plans is provided in an effort to meet the diverse needs of MIT students. Students who like to eat full meals three times per day, students who eat three times per day but not that much each time, and students who don't eat three meals per day or who wish to combine cooking for themselves with purchasing some meals can all find a plan to their liking...
>
> Cooking for Yourself. Many students cook for themselves. This can be less expensive on an out-of-pocket basis if you buy carefully; however, you will have to spend some time buying and cooking your food and cleaning up after-wards. Cost estimates are hard to determine since each person has his or her own taste, appetite, tolerance, etc., but a good guess would be around $20 to

$25 per week. Cooking facilities vary from house to house. Burton-Conner Bexley, New House, McCormick, and MacGregor have kitchen facilities (but MacGregor doesn't have ovens). Russian, French, and German House also have kitchen facilities, where residents prepare and eat dinner together."

The message that comes across is a fairly accurate picture of the on-campus under-graduate dining situation. With the exception of the language houses and Baker/MacGregor, there appear to be no institutional objectives or philosophies associated with the current system, other than a willingness to meet diverse needs. The Resi-dence book offers mixed messages to students about costs, diversity, and sense of community. The responsibility for sifting through these issues rests ultimately with the incoming student, who generally receives little useful assistance.

The language in the Undergraduate Residence book directly reflects the Institute's current emphasis in its dining programs: institutional laissez-faire and freedom of choice for students. Not mentioned are the consequences of that approach, which will be addressed in the next section.

C.   ASSESSMENT OF THE ON-CAMPUS UNDERGRADUATE DINING PROGRAM

Introduction

The information in this section is taken primarily from the discussions of the Dining Committee and its three Working Groups, whose members, in turn, have discussed the various dining programs and styles with residents in their respective living groups. Also, in December 1978, a telephone survey consisting of open-ended interviews with a random sample of about 100 on-campus undergraduates was undertaken to supplement the information generated by the working groups. The survey results were consistent with the general experiences of Committee and Working Group members. Because the survey was of small sample size, the results can only be used to provide some rough quantificatons of the basic themes emerging from Committee discussions. Most of the observations that follow characterize the dining situation campus-wide or in particular Houses, and do not necessarily reflect the unique situation in a particular suite, entry, or floor. Such variations can sometimes be significant.

The assessment which follows addresses the practical considerations of day-to-day dining, and also examines the extent to which dining program opportunities are recognized and taken advantage of. The wide range of dining options available to undergraduates, and particularly the current practice of accommodating all the options in every House, leaves Housing and Food Services with no predictable base of participation in any of the offerings and therefore constrained in its efforts to support each option adequately.

Concern for diversity reflects a sense of fragmentation in the character of residential life and does not take advantage of the social and educational opportunities that dining offers a university community. As a valuable complement to the academic program, dining can provide an important focal point for the residential community and for various interactions with faculty, staff, and alumni in an informal setting.

Substantial effort is required to develop programs which would provide such opportunities and create a more stimulating dining environment for undergraduate residents. Freshmen in particular could be served better by such a dining program in making the transition into the university community.

The assessment that follows addresses both pragmatic dining needs and these programmatic considerations.

1. Diversity of Dining Offerings

Many students feel that one of the strengths in MIT's dining arrangements is the
wide variation in opportunities, which include meal plans, cooking, a la carte options,
and other on- and off-campus services. The telephone interviews indicate that MIT's
dining situation compares favorably with that at other institutions: only 10% felt
that MIT's programs were worse, and 60% felt that MIT was about the same or better
than other places (with the remainder having no basis for comparison). In fact,
about 30% of the freshmen, but 50% of the upperclass students, felt that MIT's dining
program was better in relation to other specific colleges they mentioned. Not only
was the food quality sometimes mentioned as comparatively good, but 30% of the stu-
dents in the survey mentioned (without being directly asked) that the diversity of
options and freedom of choice at MIT was a positive factor.

About 60% of those interviewed seemed generally satisfied with their eating arrange-
ments; the remainder experienced more serious difficulties, the specifics of which
will be addressed within the topical sections that follow.

2. Patterns of Eating

The many dining options available have led to a relatively diffuse pattern of dining.
Table IV roughly characterizes how the various options were used during the 1978
fall term for the weekday meals, with the inference that MIT undergraduates are
generally scattered throughout the campus at meal times. The Table also indicates
shifts in dining pattern between freshmen and upperclass students, and between
breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

The information from the telephone survey on weekend eating patterns is somewhat
vague, but in general it would appear that about 200 on-campus undergraduates who
don't cook during the week do some cooking on weekends, and that a higher propor-
tion of meals are taken off campus than during the week.

The meals eaten off campus by on-campus undergraduates provide some indication of
the extent to which students make use of the resources in the surrounding communi-
ties. In fact, one of the arguments for keeping most of the dining rooms closed on
weekends was to encourage exploration of the cultural richness of the Boston area.
The survey suggests that about half typically eat one or more meals per week off
campus, mostly on weekends.

The dining patterns of freshmen and their selection of housing and dining arrange-
ments are particularly important to understand. The primary factors on-campus
freshmen take into account in choosing their living group include the people they

TABLE IV

ON-CAMPUS UNDERGRADUATE DINING PATTERNS[*]
(Fall Term, 1978)

	Freshmen			Upperclass		
	Dinner	Lunch	Break.	Dinner	Lunch	Break.
Meal Plans	53%	41%	39%	25%	10%	12%
A la carte	10	7	5	17	19	6
Cooking	29	25	18	53	32	42
Other**	6	7	6	5	8	3
Missed Meals	2	20	32	0	31	37
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Rough characterization of weekday meals during 1978 fall term, based on samples of 42 freshmen and 53 upperclass students. Meals are categorized in terms of dinner, lunch, and breakfast, although they may not have occurred at the traditional meal hours. Snacks are not included.

**Off campus, vending, coffee shop, etc.

TABLE V

PARTICIPATION OF ON-CAMPUS FRESHMEN
IN DINING PLANS (Fall Term, 1978)

	All On-Campus Freshmen	Men	Women	Minority	International
Meal Plans	35%	44%	11%	34%	40%
Point Plans	23	21	26	32	14
No Plan	42	35	63	34	46
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

meet, the atmosphere and activities of the House, location of the House, privacy issues (single rooms, uncrowded), cleanliness, and newness. When asked directly in the telephone interviews, about one-quarter acknowledged that dining factors were related to their housing choice (primarily being close to a dining hall or having kitchen facilities, or both). In contrast, over three-fifths had some expectations regarding their eating arrangements prior to coming to MIT (mostly an assumption that there would be commons or a cafeteria). It appears that entering students are not especially concerned about dining at MIT before they come or during the R/O Week period.

When the dining choice is made, it appears to be based mostly on pragmatic concerns. The primary reason freshmen choose a meal plan is convenience; for example, saving time, providing for three meals a day, or allowing a period of time to get adjusted or to check things out. Those freshmen who cook are influenced by what other people in their living group are doing, perceived problems with the meal plans, cost factors, or the flexibility to eat what and when they want.

Freshmen are expected to make choices during R/O Week that have important impact on the nature of their living experience at MIT. Little useful information is available to assist them in comparing the various dining opportunities. There appears to be a substantial amount of peer pressure, as well as biased or generalized information from upperclass students. Those who cook don't necessarily understand the benefits of the dining hall experience for a particular freshman; and conversely, meal plan participants don't necessarily understand the cooking experience. Once R/O Week is over, students' views on dining can change rapidly, depending upon the quality and the type of their experience. Information about dining should consist of more than a mere description of the options. Freshmen should be made more aware of the importance of dining and dining programs in bringing them together with the larger community.

To help understand the dining patterns of particular groups of on-campus freshmen, the contract meal plan participation by women, men, minority students, and international students was reviewed. As shown in Table V, these groups have basic similarities in participation, with the exception of women students. Nearly 90% of the first-year women in Baker House were on a commons plan fall term; outside of Baker, however, only one-quarter of the on-campus freshman women were on a meal plan.

The pattern is similar for upperclass women students. In Baker House over half of the women students were on a plan fall term (compared with two-thirds of the upper-

class men), but only 8% of upperclass women in the other Houses were on a plan, with no variation between McCormick and the coed Houses.

Overall, on-campus women are less likely than men to be on any commons plan (22% versus 46%), and are even less likely to take a 15 or 19 meal plan (5% versus 19%). A number of considerations contribute to these differences. Though some relate to the benefits of cooking and the particular experience in their living group, others relate to concerns about the currently available meal plans and dining facilities. Some women, who otherwise might prefer to eat in the dining facilities, comment that the 15/19 meal plans and the unlimited plans provide too much food, and express concerns about the high cost of an option that cannot be fully used (in effect sub-sidizing other students). Also, "no seconds" plans are available only in Lobdell, which is often viewed as an unattractive or impersonal dining environment. Women comment further that for them the starch content tends to be high, and salad and vegetable selections repetitive. Given the dining environments and offerings avail-able, many women are reluctant to participate in commons and prepare their own meals instead.

The participation of international students in the various meal plans during the upper-class years is somewhat less than that of U.S. students (22% versus 34%), although the differences are not as great during the freshman year (as seen in Table V). Many international students cook because of their preferences for particular diets and eating styles, financial considerations, or a desire for meal times to reflect cul-tural traditions or provide a time to get away. On the other hand, privacy also in-creases the chance of becoming isolated. Little attention has been devoted to the development of dining opportunities which serve the interests of international stu-dents, issues relating to dietary needs, shopping problems, social and cultural ad-justments, and in general the diversity within MIT's international community.

The above discussion of dining patterns indicates a wide variety of group needs and interests. In the sections that follow, the two primary dining modes, cooking and dining room services, are specifically assessed.

3. Student Cooking

The primary reasons students give for cooking their own meals are: 1) The flexi-bility to choose and prepare foods that meet particular tastes and diets (mentioned by 80% in the telephone interviews). 2) The convenience of eating at any time, thus fitting with variable schedules, or of eating quickly when necessary, for example, by avoiding cafeteria lines. (Convenience was mentioned by 60% of the sample.) 3) The out-of-pocket cost savings (mentioned by 60%).

The primary disadvantage of cooking (mentioned by 35% of those interviewed who cook) is that it takes the time and effort of planning, shopping, cooking, and cleanup. Other disadvantages include transportation problems to and from supermarkets, cockroaches, scarcity of storage space, crowded kitchens, repetitive meals to use up leftovers, and annoyance associated with food disappearing and kitchens left dirty. In Houses where cooking facilities are not provided, the disadvantages also may include tripped circuit breakers, grease-clogged drains, the need to purchase appliances for personal use, lack of space and equipment for preparing multi-course meals, potential illegalities, and concerns about health and safety. Managing of finances can also be a problem, especially near the end of the term; for example, some students reduce food expenditures and nutritional content when funds run low.

Several important social and educational benefits are mentioned by students who do most of their own cooking: 1) Preparing a meal provides a break from other daily activities; 2) Learning how to cook, taking responsibility for one's needs, and learning to share responsibilities with friends contribute to a sense of independence; 3) Cooking can be an important social experience in a relaxed dining setting within one's own living group.

In students' experiences, there are varying degrees to which these benefits are achieved. Student cooking is characterized (at least for the evening meal) by four general styles: 1) Large cooperative group cooking (though few examples are evident on campus, other than the language houses and several kosher groups); 2) Small group cooking, where typically two to four people share shopping, cooking, and clean-up; 3) Cooking one's own meal, but eating with friends (which appears to be the typical mode on campus); and 4) Cooking and eating alone.

The telephone interviews suggest that of those who cook, about two-thirds typically cook weekday dinners only for themselves. A group experience sometimes occurs when others are cooking at the same time, though this can vary by living group. Group cooking can be a particularly positive experience, both socially and in terms of developing cooking and cooperative skills. It happens less frequently, however, because of the time and effort it takes to organize and because of conflicts in schedules and incompatibilities in taste. There is some anecdotal evidence that group cooking provides a better nutritional balance than individual cooking.

Of those who cook their dinners (as well as of those who eat dinner a la carte in the Student Center or Walker), about one-third appear to eat by themselves on a typical weekday night (with the proportion higher for upperclass students), though in some

cases other students are in the general vicinity. (About one-eighth of the partici-
pants in the contract meal plans typically eat by themselves, with possible variation
by dining hall). There may be 500-600 undergraduate campus residents eating dinner
by themselves on a typical night (perhaps more during exam time), about two-thirds
of whom are cooking for themselves. In some cases, students eat alone because they
have erratic schedules, but in most cases it is the result of choice or habit. Some
students prefer privacy at meal times as a way to relax and pull back from the pres-
sures of the day; others feel rushed when they have many things to do, and prefer
to expedite mealtime. But in a climate of academic intensity or personal stress, dining
habits are sometimes too loosely structured and can lead to isolation. Legitimate con-
cerns can be raised about the small number of students who regularly eat alone in
their rooms while studying. These and similar arrangements may not reflect a par-
ticularly healthy application of freedom of choice in dining options.

In summary, student cooking can be a significant beneficial experience for some on-
campus undergraduates. In general, however, the cooking opportunity has as yet to
reach its full potential in contributing to the residential experience at MIT. Though it
is less expensive and more easily tailored to individual needs, there are problems
associated with food supply, insufficient support in terms of nutrition and cooking
information, inadequate facilities (in some Houses), and a tendency for students to
go their separate ways. When students eat together, it is with the same group most
of the time, and there is limited exposure to different people, including faculty, at
least during mealtimes. Because it takes time to adequately plan for and meet
one's nutritional needs, this responsibility sometimes is neglected to leave time to
handle heavy workloads, causing the quality of dining to fluctuate. Cooking in situa-
tions where adequate facilities are not provided presents serious health and safety
problems and lack of compliance with Cambridge codes (related to electrical over-
loading, ventilation problems, and deterioration of plumbing and other systems in
buildings that are already in need of major renovation). Many student cookers adapt
to the facilities available, particularly if they associate serious problems with the dining
halls and have eliminated them as an alternative.

4. Dining Service Offerings

Students state a number of advantages in participating in the various meal plans:
They can be convenient, especially if the dining room is located in the House, and
reliable in meeting dining needs. The meal plans provide for a nutritionally balanced
choice of entrees, vegetables, and desserts for varied tastes. "Specials" are offered
throughout the term to provide a break in the normal menu. The "unlimited" and "no

seconds" options allow for differences in the amount people eat. The point plans accommodate varied eating patterns and schedules and allow for combinations with cooking and other dining alternatives. The plans are paid for in advance or by deferred payment on the term bill, which may be of help in terms of students' financial management (though this also can be a problem for some, as well). Students on the "unlimited" plans have flexibility to eat in any of the four commons dining halls, although "no seconds" meals are served only in Lobdell.

In terms of social and educational benefits, the meal plan options allow students a period during the day to relax with friends. Dining halls can provide a valuable social experience, not necessarily present in other activities. The casual atmosphere and shared experience of the dining hall can encourage interaction and foster a sense of community.

In students' experiences, there are varying degrees to which these benefits are perceived or achieved. Typically, students go to dining halls with a group of friends (usually from the floor, suite, or entry of the House), or just go and meet others there. Most students tend to eat with the same group of people most of the time, although the telephone interviews indicate that about one-third of those on a meal plan occasionally eat with new people (a much higher frequency than the experience reported by those who cook). Dining can be rushed when there are other things to do, and (as mentioned earlier) a small fraction tends to be isolated in the dining halls. The mere existence of a dining hall ensures neither interactions with other students nor regrouping with new people.

Although the current range of meal plan options has evolved to provide wider variation in meeting the needs of MIT students, there are various complaints: The primary criticisms heard in the telephone interviews, as well as in committee discussions, are the following: 1) The meal plans need to be more flexible in order to meet the needs of some students and to achieve a better relation between cost and value (mentioned by two-thirds of the meal plan participants in the telephone interviews). For example, missed meals on the 15/19 meal plans are often seen as wasted money (even though the meal plan price takes absenteeism into account); additional variations in the plans are desired to accommodate particular situations; and light eaters prefer options with less food in all dining halls. 2) The variety and quality of the food do not always meet particular tastes and interests (mentioned by half of those interviewed). This includes comments on the cooking of vegetables, degree of seasoning, availability of fresh produce, starch content in certain meals, and repetition of

particular items.   3) The current dining hall operations are inconvenient for some students (mentioned by one-third of those interviewed). Long lines and wait times can be a problem, and scheduled meal hours can conflict with other activities, particularly classes at lunch time and athletics at dinner. Transfer to the two snack bars after hours is possible (with some loss of purchasing value and meal diversity), but the hours are limited. 4) The meal plans are viewed as relatively expensive by students when compared to cooking and eating a la carte (mentioned in the telephone interviews by over half of those not on a meal plan). Some individuals find that it is cheaper to eat a la carte, if on the average they eat less than what is provided on the commons menu. 5) The commons plans do not accommodate special diets, like kosher and vegetarian (though Food Services has developed some vegetarian dishes to help meet the latter needs). 6) The most frequently used commons dining facilities are closed on weekends; only Lobdell is open. Convenient weekend dining on campus is not available to many students, and this may be associated with the growth in student cooking in recent years. (Once equipment for weekend cooking has been purchased, there can be greater incentive to cook during the week as well).

5.   Dining Facilities
The students' perceptions of Food Services are often based on where they eat and the feeling of the dining hall. Few students have voiced complaints about the ambiance in Baker and MacGregor, with the possible exception of crowding at particular times. (There is especially high participaton on "special nights" by those on meal plans.) In general, these House dining rooms provide a comfortable social setting for dining.

Morss Hall provides the closest thing to dining "tradition" as any place on campus. However, East Campus and Senior House residents feel it isn't their dining hall because a large number of graduate students, faculty, and employees use it for lunch (primarily) and for dinner. At lunchtime, Morss Hall can be crowded during much of the serving hours, which results in waiting time for food and finding a table. For some this crowded ambiance is not conducive to a relaxed meal. Pritchett Lounge has the ambiance of a snack bar/game room, and is used primarily by students throughout the day and evening for snacks and meals.

The Lobdell environment is often considered cold and impersonal (high ceiling, concrete, physically overwhelming space, table arrangement, serving area, etc.), indicating a possible need for major changes. At any given time, one-quarter or more of the patrons may be eating by themselves. Lines are long at lunch and the facility is often crowded. Lobdell is cost-efficient because large numbers of people purchase

meals, but does not attract the relaxed, animated lunch time community that once frequented the dining room in Ashdown. Lobdell does not make a generally positive contribution to undergraduate dining, either as a setting for community dining or as a place for students to congregate throughout the day. Twenty Chimneys, because of its size and offerings (grille, salad bar), provides a more personal setting.

6. Communication Between Food Services and Students

The substance of the criticisms expressed above will be addressed in the recommendations. However, it should be pointed out here that many of the criticisms are inseparable from a complex set of underlying issues. Food Services operates under financial and other constraints that the MIT community is not always aware of, and their efforts to improve MIT's dining services are not always well known.

Over the years, students and Food Services staff have worked together to develop a more effective client-management relationship. There have been a number of improvements in the system, with some specific ones resulting from this kind of dialogue and participation. However, some students feel that the level of responsiveness has been less than desirable in particular cases, and that small gains sometimes are achieved only with disproportionately large effort. This situation has been complicated by a number of factors, including difficulties in recruiting students and in acquainting student groups, which have an annual turnover, with the operational details of the system. The fact that dining programs serve a dual role (on-campus residents and the MIT community in general) means that changes in one part of the dining services can have impact, often unforeseen, on other parts. Nevertheless, there appears to be less organized client input than is desirable, both on menu planning and on other aspects of the dining services. The opportunities are available, but Commons Committees have been organized only in Baker and MacGregor. These groups have met irregularly and their concerns have tended to focus on specific operational details within the two House dining rooms. A more broadly based client-management relationship will be of help in ongoing efforts to improve the quality and flexibility of the dining services.

7. Nutrition

A nutritional comparison among the various dining options is difficult to develop. Based on anecdotal reports, it appears that the variations in nutrition are wide within each of the options, but that students on the 15/19 meal plans are likely to be better off on the average. These dining plans are designed to provide nutritionally balanced meals, and students on them tend to eat more regularly. (For

example, the telephone interviews indicate that only about 10% of those on the 15/19 meal plans eat 10 or less meals during the weekdays, compared with 50-60% of those on a point plan, cooking, or eating a la carte, although there is obviously a degree of self-selection in those who take the meal plans.) However, nutrition depends upon the actual items selected and consumed on the 15/19 meal plans, and the manner in which specific items are prepared. There appears to be a tendency for some people on point plans to eat fewer, but larger, meals and to supplement with snacks.

While some cookers eat a very narrow selection of "convenient" foods or few vegetables and fruits, others are extraordinarily conscious of the quality and nutritional balance of the foods they consume. The quality of ingredients used can also vary. Although some cookers feel that they exceed the quality standards used by Food Services on purchased products, the chain supermarket brands that some students purchase are generally lower than these standards. The telephone interviews indicate that nearly half of the sample overall felt that their nutrition could be improved.

8. Costs

For many students, whether they are on financial aid or not, the issue of cost is important in the choice of dining option. MIT is among the most expensive institutions in the country, and dining is one of the areas in the student's budget where financial flexibility can be achieved. Many students consider the meal plans expensive, particularly in relation to perceived value (see pages 22-23).

Meal plan prices have been driven up by extraordinary inflation, as well as by trends at MIT. With the addition of kitchen facilities, the change to a voluntary commons program, development of the point plans, and shifts in student lifestyles, the total number of meals served on the various contract meal plans has declined by about half over the last decade. There is a strong financial interdependence between cooking and commons. Declining participation in the plans (or in the number of meals served) leads to higher prices, because fixed operating costs are distributed over fewer people. Higher prices, in turn, can lead to even lower participation and more cooking. Fluctuations in meal plan enrollment also make planning more difficult, both over the short-term and the long-term. Ways must be found to break this cycle so that meal plans remain viable in the long term.

In recent years, spring term participation in the contract dining plans has been about 25% lower than the fall term. This decline during spring term, coupled with switches to less expensive plans (fewer meals), raises the cost of contract plans by about 5-10% above what they would be otherwise. Analysis of the discount experiment that was

tried this year (see page 8), indicates that spring term participation increased by about 10% over last year, but that the discount had little overall impact first term, leading to a sizeable net cost to the Institute for the experiment.

The telephone survey information indicates the following typical out-of-pocket costs per week for those using the various options (including off-campus meals, snacks, purchased grocery items, meals taken at MIT dining facilities, etc.):

	Mean	Range
For those on 15/19 meal plan	$ 45	$ 40-55
For those on point plan or primarily eating a la carte	$ 35	$ 20-50
For those who primarily cook	$ 25	$ 15-45

The mean and median for the sample of undergraduates was $30-35. The situation is obviously more complicated than the figures show, depending upon the number of meals eaten, the amount and quality of food consumed, and so forth.

The total cost to students using the various dining options includes more than direct out-of-pocket expenses. There are "costs" (both dollars and time) associated with shopping, cooking, cleaning up, utensils, and appliances. There also are costs included in House rents, such as the residence dining fee, utilities for cooking, cleaning expenses, maintenance and replacement of kitchen facilities, maintenance of plumbing system, and so forth. These costs are currently under study in order to understand better the cost differences among the dining options.

Obviously, students can save out-of-pocket expenses by cooking, but the tradeoffs this can entail are not clear. On the one hand, savings of $300-600 per year while maintaining adequate nutrition can be important in a given year's budget. On the other hand, significant residential experiences may be missed if dining decisions are motivated purely by financial issues. Both the cooking experience and the dining hall experience have the potential for making major contributions to residential life at MIT. Since dining services can never compete financially with cooking for one's self, it is essential that the difference be bridged in terms of quality, service, and important program benefits that are outlined below.

9. Quality of the Dining Experience

Beyond issues of cost and provision of food, the overall quality of the dining experience is determined in large measure by the social and educational benefits befitting a university environment. Student criticisms of cooking (other than of the facilities)

tend to be less frequent, mostly because students acknowledge primary responsibility. The quality of the experience is determined largely by student efforts. The Institute can play a limited, but important, role in terms of providing facilities and supportive services to student cookers.

With regard to the dining hall program, on the other hand, the Institute has primary responsibility to use the dining rooms in ways that help provide a nucleus for undergraduate interaction and experience. Little overall effort has been made in recent years to enrich the social and educational benefits of the dining hall experience. Several comments can be made about the current situation which relate to such program possibilities: a) At present, the primary function of dining halls is the presentation of food. Elements of style, tradition, and community are largely absent. b) Because of the lack of focus on dining programs, the dining rooms encourage little interaction among students with diverse backgrounds and interests. Dining is perhaps uniquely suited for achieving this kind of exchange, when compared to other types of activities which typically are self-selected on the basis of some common tie. c) Although the Faculty and Graduate Residents, as part of their broader responsibilities, are currently involved in various ways in the dining patterns of their students, there is a continuing need for the dining program and the Housemaster-Tutor Program to complement and support each other. d) Few faculty, alumni, and members of the administration currently eat with students in the dining rooms. e) Dining rooms associated with particular Houses (in comparison with current arrangements in the community cafeterias) appear to be more responsive to students' needs.

It is helpful to compare the dining program at MIT with the programs at several other colleges (see Appendix B for brief descriptions). The students who investigated these programs saw the experience as an important educational process which broadened their thinking about possibilities for dining at MIT. Some of the specific programmatic ideas are included in the summaries. Dining at most of these colleges appears to play an important role in the social and personal growth of students, and can provide an informal setting in which students, faculty, and members of the administration can comfortably exchange views and experiences. Although food quality can vary from college to college, the dining program is a more central and valuable part of the residential experience and therefore more likely to achieve student satisfaction most of the time.

Despite the objectives of the residential program, the dining program at MIT is not fulfilling similar goals and generally is not perceived as an important part of the undergraduate experience. Because of the special character of the academic

programs and the undergraduate student community at MIT, the Committee recognizes that programs which work elsewhere may not be appropriate here. Nevertheless, we feel that every effort must be made to create a more stimulating dining environment, and specific suggestions in this regard will be made in the recommendations. We see a degree of fragmentation and isolation that diminishes the presence of an informal learning community at MIT. This is influenced by academic stresses, as well as the character of current dining opportunities, and is a concern that the institution has primary responsibility to address.

PART III: INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR
UNDERGRADUATE DINING

The primary objective of the undergraduate experience at MIT is to give each individual the opportunity to develop his or her full potential as a scholar and person. As seen in Appendix C (which the Committee hopes people will take the time to read), this basic concern for the whole individual has been articulated in many ways over the years and is reflected in the academic program as well as the residence program. It is, in fact, a major justification for undertaking a residential program, as distinct from private rooming houses.

From the information presented in Part II, it is evident that the current dining styles and eating patterns on the whole detract from the general goals of the residential program, even when the philosophical observations in Appendix C are scaled down to reasonable expectations. In 1963, the Faculty Committee on Student Environment assumed that appropriately designed dining halls and actively involved Faculty Residents and Tutors would make dining an important part of residential life. By 1973, the CSE was suggesting that diversity and flexibility in living styles would enable individuals to realize their potential more fully. In practice, however, neither of these assumptions has worked well in enhancing the quality of the residential environment. Somewhere between the ideals espoused in the fifties and early sixties and the laissez-faire approach which followed in the seventies lies the course which the Committee feels is appropriate for the Institute today.

The Committee recognizes that freedom of choice is important to students and reaffirms the need to preserve diversity in residence options. However, the practice of accommodating all dining options in every House does not provide the level of support necessary to assure quality and does not make use of program opportunities that can be a valuable part of the dining experience.

Because the topic of dining relates closely to the quality of undergraduate life at MIT, the Committee feels that a joint effort is required in which the Institute and students act together out of mutual concern for the residential program. The Institute's responsibilities for undergraduate dining are viewed to be the following:

1. MIT should provide support and direction for developing a dining program which is an integral part of a more comprehensive residence program in both the Institute Houses and Independent Living Groups. Offering more than eating facilities and options, this program should be viewed as a valuable part of undergraduate life and an opportunity for relief from academic pressures.

2. MIT should provide mechanisms for students to participate in the design and ongoing development of both the dining room and cooking programs.

3. MIT's dining program should reflect the differing character of individual Houses, emphasizing the quality of the dining experience and assuring that differences in living and dining styles from House to House are well understood. MIT should not attempt to provide every option and service in each House at the cost of reducing the overall quality of the residence program.

4. MIT has the responsibility to assure viability of both the dining room and student cooking options and should take steps to strengthen both.

Dining provides a unique opportunity for social growth and intellectual development in a manner which complements the pursuit of excellence in academic programs. The recommendations discussed in Part IV extend beyond the practical considerations of adequate facilities, costs, and quality food. They are intended to establish guidelines for improving the quality of the dining experience at MIT, and for helping dining play a more central role in the larger concept of an undergraduate residential program. To meet these objectives, MIT must proceed from the conviction that the residence program provides unique and important possibilities for bringing students, faculty, staff, and other members of the larger community into closer contact with one another. The recommendations attempt to define a dining program that creates such opportunities.

In reaching its recommendations, the Committee has taken into consideration the desirability of providing choices in dining styles, improving current dining offerings, and taking advantage of opportunities to enrich the residential experience. After exploring a number of alternative approaches, the Committee has concluded that over a period of time, the Institute should move in the direction of establishing Houses with a dining program that serves students who primarily wish to cook and Houses with a dining program that focuses around a dining room, in which all House residents would take at least some of their meals and which would provide an important focal point for the residential program. Such a restructuring of options will affect, in part, the way some students select the House of their choice. This suggests a need for re-evaluating the room priority system, in order to facilitate transferring between Houses to accommodate students whose needs change during their four years as residential students. Clarifying the character of the dining options in each House and developing the concept of a dining program will allow for significant improvements overall in both cooking and commons.

The following section provides the details of the Committee's recommendations.

PART IV: RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The recommendations of the Committee are a distillation, following extensive discussion, of suggestions made by students, faculty, and staff who share a concern for the role of dining on campus. While some recommendations are not unanimously endorsed by the Committee, they nevertheless represent the general direction taken by most of the members who have studied the issues from various sides. Many details have yet to be worked out in some of the recommendations.

Dining, as a time of relaxation and an opportunity for informal socializing, falls naturally into the focus of MIT's undergraduate Residence Program. To underscore the significance of dining in the overall residential program, the Committee begins the recommendations with suggestions for further developing the program part of dining (Section A) and for restructuring and strengthening the dining options (Section B). These recommendations are followed by suggestions for increasing communication and interaction between the community and Food Services (Section C), strengthening the Commons program and meal plans (Section D), supporting student cooking (Section E), and making improvements in Walker, Student Center, and vending operations (Section F).

A. PROGRAM ASPECTS OF UNDERGRADUATE DINING

1. Special Dining Programs and Events

Recommendation: That House or fraternity residents, together with Dean for Student Affairs (DSA) and Housing and Food Services (HFS) staff, develop special programs for the living group that bring students in closer contact with the larger MIT community and add new dimensions to the residence experience.

The program aspect is distinct from meal offerings and refers to informally structured events that center around dining. These take advantage of the special resources within the univeristy environment and foster important associations within the MIT community. The following suggestions include ideas from Working Group and Committee members, as well as formats which work successfully in particular Houses here or at other universities:

a. Faculty and Graduate Resident Activities

A strong program element already exists in the Houses in the form of social activities initiated by Faculty and Graduate Residents; for example, entry or

floor dinners, dinner for students and their advisors, and so forth. In order to make their tasks somewhat easier, it is recommended that the DSA systematically gather and make available information about successful House functions that have taken place at MIT and elsewhere. This perspective should be updated every year and provided to House governments, IFC Executive Committee, Undergraduate Association (UAP and UAVP), and Faculty/Graduate Residents each fall.

Further assistance should be provided by Food Services. Faculty and Graduate residents need to function together with Food Services in mutually supportive ways that assist the implementation of an expanded residential/dining program. It is recommended that guidelines be developed which clarify the nature and cost of Food Services' support in such areas as the provision of uncooked or prepared food, assistance with House socials, study breaks, catered meals in cooking dorms, etc.

b. Faculty Associates Program

In the past, student-faculty social hours and dinners often have been hampered by poor attendance or difficulties in "breaking the ice." Also, there is a long-felt need that faculty have not been sufficiently involved with undergraduates outside their more formal academic associations. Informal interactions might be easier if the same group of faculty were to join in House activities on a periodic basis and the events had a minimal structure to lend focus to the socializing. The Committee recommends the formation of a Faculty Associates Program (begun last year in McCormick) as a vehicle for informal exchange between faculty and students. Each House or fraternity wishing to develop such a program would have five to twenty faculty members closely associated with it. Students would play a significant role in the selection process. which would give a clear indication that such associations were desired by House residents.

Faculty Associates would be expected to eat regularly with students, about once per month on scheduled occasions, more frequently on an informal basis. They would participate in certain House social functions, together with their families if possible, and they would in turn occasionally invite small groups of students to their homes.

The planning of events with Faculty Associates should involve students to a significant degree, and needs to be well thought out and organized to most effectively take advantage of the associations. Considerable effort is needed to sustain the program, and it is expected that Faculty Residents would draw

on the assistance of the DSA for support and suggestions. The events should have sufficient structure that faculty and students alike can interact comfortably while they participate. Faculty Associates in time would become a very special part of the House and House "tradition."

Since the presence of Faculty Associates adds a valuable dimension to the residential program, the DSA staff should explore ways to convey the importance of such an appointment to the faculty. In keeping with the need for substantial faculty support, the Associates should be Presidentially appointed. A strong commitment is needed from the senior administration, both to articulate the importance of the program and to establish clear expectations for making it work.

c. Advisor/Advisee Activities

The relationship that already exists between students and their advisors can be strengthened by utilizing the meal hour. It is recommended that Faculty Residents and/or students could extend personal invitations to advisors for dinner, House socials, picnics, etc. Such a program was tried last year in Senior House. Experience shows that specific catalysts can be important in overcoming any student hesitancy to extend invitations. The Committee feels that such activities with advisors can be important both for upperclass students and freshmen, though in the latter case the program might be strengthened by considering ways to assign some freshmen advisors by House. A pilot program to do this is being planned with Baker House for this fall (1979).

d. Faculty/Staff Guest Meal Tickets

An experimental program was conducted the spring term of 1979, whereby students on commons plans could invite faculty and staff as their guests in the Baker, MacGregor, and Walker dining rooms. It is recommended that the Faculty/ Staff Guest Meal Ticket arrangement be extended to all undergraduates, both on and off campus, and publicized more extensively through House meetings, flyers, posters, and notices in The Tech. Guest Meal tickets are particularly suited for spontaneous invitations and should be made available in all dining halls.

Because there is considerable inertia to overcome in inaugurating such a program, the DSA might consider supplementing the informal guest meal program with a more formal approach, modeled after the Yale "Tuesday Lunch program": One student and one Faculty Associate in each House are responsible for inviting groups of students (15-20) and faculty (6-8) to join one another for lunch on a particular

day each week in a designated part of a suite or dining hall. A "committee" of host students and faculty would oversee the program and make sure each student and Faculty Associate is formally invited once per term.

e. Alumni Associates

A number of alumni living in the Boston area or visiting MIT are interested in developing closer associations with MIT, and many seek greater participation in aspects of student life through the residence program. The Alumni Association is also interested in supporting a greater sense of alumni involvement with MIT. The success of the Trailblazing Symposium, the Baker 30th Anniversary party, and the student fund raising telethon shows that greater contact with alumni can be rewarding for students as well.

The Committee recommends the formation of an Alumni Associates Program on a pilot basis in several Houses where residents are interested. The dining hour can be used to establish contacts with alumni that expose students to lifestyles, interests, and career possibilities that go beyond the university "greenhouse." Students, Faculty Associates, and the Lipner Subcommittee* within the Alumni Association would be involved in the recruitment process and asked to provide feedback with which to evaluate the program. Former residents of the House may be particularly interested in participating. As with the Faculty Associates Program, the functions to which alumni are invited should be structured sufficiently to give focus to the event. Such events might take place twice per year, though alumni should be encouraged to eat informally with students and participate in certain other House activities. In addition, the Houses might want to take greater advantage of Technology Day and the Alumni Officers Conference, when more alumni are on campus.

Detailed discussions between the DSA and Alumni Association, including issues of funding support, are needed to define activities which will be mutually satisfying to both students and alumni.

f. Presentation of Program to Incoming Freshmen

Incoming freshmen, freshmen advisors, and new Graduate Residents formally learn about the dining options and the residential programs from the Undergraduate

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*A subcommittee, chaired by Steven Lipner '65, of the Committee to Strengthen Alumni Involvement with the Institute.

Residence booklet, the Freshman Handbook, House meetings, and various mailings and briefings. With a greater emphasis on dining program and with the restructuring of the dining options, these information sources should be supplemented to include the following:

- a detailed description of the meal plan and cooking options

- a description of the dining programs and possible benefits in Houses with dining rooms and Houses with cooking facilities, as well as other suggestions for aiding freshmen in choosing Houses

- information about room assignment priority systems and inter-House transfer procedures

g. Dining Activities During R/O Week

It is recommended that the House dining rooms be opened for part of R/O Week (at least for dinner and no earlier than Wednesday) in order to meet House dining needs once rush is over and housing assignments are mostly set. R/O Week meal plans could be offered, chargeable to the term bill to alleviate cash flow problems some students experience during R/O Week.

R/O Week dining in the Houses helps freshmen to get acquainted with their classmates, and gives the dining program the kind of focus that will continue throughout the year. For example, the dinner time can be used to acquaint freshmen with their Faculty and Graduate Residents, Faculty Associates, DSA staff members, and other student services staff, through open forums and discussions during or following dinner. Other special events of the kind described below are also possibilities for broadening entering students' introduction to the university environment. House R/O Committees, with the support of DSA and HFS staff, would have responsibility for developing and arranging these activities.

h. Departmental Orientation Activities for Freshmen

Academic and administrative departments can use lunch time for increasing informal contact between faculty or staff and first-year students; for example, Undergraduate Seminars over lunch, informal lunches for freshmen and faculty during the spring period when students decide upon their course major, informal group discussions over lunch with the Preprofessional Advising staff, and so forth. The Undergraduate Academic Support Office in the ODSA could help arrange such activities.

There are a number of special events and social functions that lend themselves to any of the above programs. By scheduling special events during the dining hour, Houses can tailor functions to the particular interests of the residents and reach a large number of students at a time when they are more receptive to informal socializing (with little or no time added to a student's typically busy schedule). However, it should be pointed out that the size of our dining rooms (with the exception of Morss Hall) places constraints on the number of House residents that could participate in these functions at any given time, and on the extent to which meals could be prolonged. The following suggestions for special events are a sample of activities that lend themselves to the various programs outlined above or may serve as an incentive to develop others. They offer general suggestions for any groups, whether associated with the dining rooms or with cooking efforts, that wish to make broader use of the dining hours.

- invited speakers (with the DSA, for example, providing a "speakers bureau" to identify people that tap the impressive range of technical and nontechnical interests within the MIT community)

- group discussions and open forums, for example:
  -- career paths/course majors, together with Faculty and Alumni Associates and the Career Planning and Placement Office
  -- issues raised with the DSA relating to student life at MIT
  -- discussions with various MIT administrative offices (HFS, Student Accounts, SFAO, etc.)
  -- political debates
  -- open meeting with Committee on Student Affairs
  -- international tables/topical tables

- weekly dinner seminar

- live entertainment

- family-style dinners (dining rooms)

- collaborative or progressive dinners (cooking Houses)

- program exchanges with other living groups (e.g., fraternities) or with other colleges (e.g., Wellesley)

In concluding this section, the Committee recognizes that there are many practical problems that must be resolved in developing dining programs along the above lines. The development of programs takes time, energy, and interest, and the Committee does not expect that each of the programs would be undertaken in each House. However, we hope that every living group will explore at least several of the possibilities.

2. DSA Dining Program Coordinator

Recommendation: That a member of the DSA staff have the specific responsibility for coordinating the development of the dining program and strengthening its role within the overall residence program.

The success of the dining program outlined above depends critically upon continued leadership and focus from the DSA, as part of the overall support and development of the residence program. The DSA Residence Program staff and the Faculty and Graduate Residents, working closely with Housing and Food Services staff, have especially important roles in this regard.

The proposed position would play a key role in bridging the DSA and Food Services with regard to dining programs, in much the same way as housing/residence issues are currently coordinated. In order for dining and related programming to make significant contributions to undergraduate life, full-time effort is needed for several years to help design and implement the range of programs recommended in the current dining review. The position is important in providing needed program support whether it be in Houses where a combined room and board plan is recommended, in Houses where cooking is the primary dining mode, or in the independent living groups.

The individual would: a) provide staff support for an ongoing Dining Advisory Board (see Section C); b) work with individuals and student groups in each of the Houses, as well as with DSA staff, HFS staff, and Faculty and Graduate Residents, in designing and implementing the dining programs, including those outlined in the previous section (residence dining program information for incoming students, R/O Week dining programs, Faculty Associates, Alumni Associates, Open Forum events, etc.) and in Section E (support of student cooking, food co-op, consumer education and information, support of group cooking efforts, etc.); c) work with Food Services on specific planning and publicity functions.

If an existing DSA staff member does not have sufficient time to devote to these essential functions, it may be necessary to add a full-time staff member for a period of some years, along with the necessary secretarial support. The Committee recommends that the position: a) report to the Associate Dean of the Residence Program; b) require at least two or three years relevant experience (that is, not be an entry level staff position); c) be filled as soon as possible, to help work on program implementation beginning during the fall term.

The Committee feels strongly that this position is essential for the successful implementation and ongoing evaluation of its recommendations.

B. UNDERGRADUATE DINING OPTIONS

1. Plan for Strengthening House Dining Options

The following recommendation to strengthen the House dining offerings, because of
its major significance, was detailed earlier in the "Overview" (pages 2-4).

Recommendation: 1) That the Institute move in the direction of adopting a combined
room and board plan for East Campus, Baker, MacGregor, McCormick, and Next
House. Under this proposal, residents of these Houses (which have a dining room
in or close to the House)would take about half or more of their meals per week in their
dining rooms (discussed further in Section D.1), and 2) that residents of Senior House
Burton, New House, Bexley, and Random Hall would have kitchen facilities in which to
prepare their meals.

The Committee believes that the Residence Program on campus must continue to pro-
vide for diversity in lifestyles. This diversity, however, has been supported to a
point where each House attempts to accommodate students who cook, students who
purchase meals, and students who do both in various combinations. As a result of
this laissez-faire approach, the dining situation generally lacks direction, focus,
and connection to the overall Residence Program. More specifically, the Committee
reviewed several factors present in the current arrangements which generally were
viewed as undesirable.

   a. Cooking in rooms or areas in which the facilities are inadequate is in direct
   violation of Cambridge health and safety codes. MIT cannot support this type
   of cooking and many students find it less than satisfactory. A more active
   institutional lead is needed, because ignoring the issue has given the impres-
   sion of supporting the practice and risks intervention by city officials.

   b. Some kitchen facilities and other support systems (plumbing, electrical)
   in Houses are deteriorating from overuse and misuse related to cooking, and
   the use of personal electrical appliances (hotplates, microwave ovens, etc.)
   appears to be increasing.

   c. Efforts to improve commons and the dining hall environment, as well as to
   hold down prices, will continue to be highly constrained unless there is a larger,
   more predictable base of participation in the meal plans. In the absence of change
   from current practices, the long-term viability of the dining room option is
   jeopardized.

d. The presence of all dining options in each House makes it difficult to adequately support all of them, and contributes to a sense of fragmentation which affects students, as well as Faculty and Graduate Residents. Other recent changes in the academic and residential programs (e.g., more single rooms, fewer labs, expansion of freshman options) have also tended to separate students.

e. Neither the dining halls nor the student cooking areas are set up to develop a greater sense of community among campus residents, faculty, and others. As one of the few times that people can get together in a more relaxed setting, dining has untapped potential for enriching community life.

The proposed recommendation to clarify and restructure the dining options by House has significant potential for strengthening the two dining styles and their relationship to the residential program. In fact, this proposal works closely together with the dining program recommendations described in Section A; House residents can tailor their dining program to take advantage of the primary dining mode of the House. As a result, dining is expected to become a more important part of the residential experience and House character and one of a number of considerations that would be weighed in making residence choices. The Committee does not feel that dining and cost issues would alter to any great extent the current bases (House atmosphere, the people met, whether coed or single sex, proximity to classes, and so forth) on which residence choices are made. The proposed dining changes may in fact help focus what the Houses can offer in the way of program. Nevertheless, the R/O Week selection process should be monitored carefully during the next several years.

In recognition of the fact that individuals' needs can change over time (for example, some students who have been on meal plans might want to try cooking for themselves, and vice versa), the current system of room assignments and priorities should be re-evaluated. Some mobility is not detrimental to the identity of a House and can be important to individuals in terms of enlarging their sphere of experiences and acquaintances. For some students, the current residence system provides too little encouragement and opportunity for changing Houses. Others may choose to move off-campus for various reasons, as they have done in the past. The Committee recognizes that the issues related to mobility between Houses are difficult to address, and will require a great deal of discussion within individual Houses and among the Houses, DSA staff, and Faculty Residents.

In implementing the proposal, the DSA must take into consideration special needs, such as strict kosher or vegetarian diets, or the diets of some non-U.S. students.

Specific suggestions have been received regarding ways MIT could meet special dietary considerations on an institutional basis, and require further exploration by the DSA and HFS. It is anticipated that most students who cannot eat in the dining halls because of special dietary requirements will choose to live in Houses where cooking is the primary mode. There may be some situations where dietary requirements and living group preferences do not easily fit together, and the DSA would work with these students to find the best arrangements. Since several different options will generally be available, the Committee expects that there should be little need for an elaborate or extensively used set of exceptions in implementing the proposal to restructure the dining options.

Women students have pointed out that the option of living on campus in an all-women's environment and doing one's own cooking has been severely limited under the proposals. It is essential that this issue be carefully evaluated and efforts be made to provide this option elsewhere on campus. The Committee reviewed the arguments for having a combined room and board plan in only one tower of McCormick and was strongly advised by residents and others that such a step would further fragment the House. The McCormick dining hall can be opened only with a clear base of support, and the Committee, in recommending a combined room and board plan for McCormick, was persuaded by the importance of the program focus for the House. Opening the dining hall can be important to the women's community in general.

The program focus in MacGregor House is expected to develop around the House's unique entry orientation in conjunction with the dining room. Although MacGregor has partial kitchens in each entry, these facilities, like the ones in McCormick, were designed to supplement the dining room, and not to replace it. Upon reviewing its earlier draft, the Committee leaves open for the future the possibility that junior and senior residents of MacGregor and McCormick have the option of taking fewer meals in the dining room (see Section D.1) than would be taken by freshmen and sophomores. However, the final decision should be based on further analysis of the impact, including some experience under the proposed changes in meal plan options.

2. Plan for Improving House Dining Facilities
Recommendation: That specific improvements be made to House dining facilities that will strengthen the character and effectiveness of the dining program.

With the dining options restructured by House, the Committee is in a better position to address the concerns of individual Houses and to suggest specific improvements in facilities. The following items were discussed at meetings of the Working Groups and the Dining Committee and have been brought to the attention of Housing and Food

Services, Planning Office, and the Office of the Dean for Student Affairs for further feasibility, cost, and program studies.

East Campus (see Section F.2 for further details)

-- move in the direction of using Morss Hall primarily for undergraduate dining at dinner, and provide services, amenities, and dining programs similar to the House dining rooms

-- renovate Talbot Lounge both to provide country kitchen facilities capable of serving two floors, about 80 people, and to contribute to its use as House social function space

-- explore ways to reduce crowding in Morss Hall at lunch time, including the possibility of major renovations in Pritchett Lounge/Blue Room to provide expanded lunch services

-- undertake minor renovations to improve the physical condition of the space and facilities in Pritchett Lounge and the Blue Room

The Committee also considered a proposal to add one kitchen per floor in the East Campus parallels. The Committee has not endorsed this proposal because of cost factors, student concerns about loss of room/lounge space and kitchen cleanliness, and because the proposal, which provides facilities for a fraction of the residents, only marginally addresses the various problems that have been identified. The Committee considered proposals to add full kitchen facilities or to build a new dining hall at the end of the parallels, but does not recommend either for near-term implementation for a variety of reasons, the basic practical consideration being capital cost (particularly in view of the funds needed to renovate the House) and ongoing operating costs. However, if subsequent development of the east end of campus changed the present use of Walker (either greater use resulting from new buildings or from relocation of the Faculty Club), and additional dining facilities were needed, the Committee would urge that a House dining room be built to provide fully dedicated space for East Campus residents.

Senior House

-- add kitchen facilities in at least four of the entries; Senior House would then complement East Campus by providing residential cooking opportunities at that end of campus

Baker

    -- have dining room serve primarily Baker residents during "normal" dinner hours (to address crowding issues and provide a House program focus)

    -- extend dinner hours to provide late commons meals for any campus residents (with Lobdell or Next House as alternative possibilities)

    -- continue to explore funding for a "training table" through the Athletic Department (would be provided in same facility as late commons meals)

    -- add a country kitchen for special events

McCormick

    -- reopen dining room for lunch and dinner; House concerns must be addressed in terms of how and when the dining room would be opened to the community

    -- provide menu with emphasis on foods more in the direction of salads, fresh vegetables, low starch and fat, etc.

    -- use as test and training kitchen for entire campus dining system

    -- consider providing a focus for women's lunches, perhaps including more formal programs on a periodic basis

MacGregor

    -- have the dining room serve primarily MacGregor residents at dinner (to address crowding issues and provide a House and entry program focus)

    -- extend current dinner hours to 7:00 p.m.

Next House

    -- open part of dining room to residents of New House and Burton who wish to be on a meal plan

    -- have portion of dining room function as a grille/snack bar evenings and weekends

    -- coordinate with MacGregor dining room so that only one of the two is open for breakfast/lunch

-- provide additional storage and freezer space to take advantage of purchasing economies for entire campus dining services and provide bakery to serve system-wide needs with greater quality. It is anticipated that capital costs for storage space amortized over 30 years would be more than offset by the savings on bulk purchase. (See Appendix D for text of recommendations to the Program Planning Committee.)

C. COMMUNICATION AMONG FOOD SERVICES, DSA, AND DINING FACILITY USERS

1. House Participation in Dining Program Planning
Recommendation: That the Dining Committees in Houses associated with particular
dining rooms be revitalized and their responsibilities broadened.

Good communication between Food Services, DSA, and students is essential if dining
is to figure prominently in the residential program. "Commons" Committees have been
in existence for a number of years, but they have not been particularly active. With
combined room and board plans and greater emphasis on dining program, the role of
House Dining Committees assumes more importance for students, Food Services, and
the DSA. The experience of participating in such a consumer advocacy environment
has important educational benefits as well.

   a. Charge to the House Dining Committees - The Dining Committees are en-
   couraged to help develop, implement, and monitor specific dining programs
   within the House, like Faculty Associates, open forums, etc. (see Section A).
   They would gather student suggestions on programs and on "commons" menus
   and services, and take steps to obtain representative student opinion to increase
   reliability and usefulness of information. In addition, they would work with the
   dining room manager in reviewing menus, operational concerns, and program publi-
   city. They would provide a link to the Dining Advisory Board by offering sugges-
   tions regarding evaluation and development of programs and services.

   b. Representation - The Dining Committees would include House residents, Food
   Services staff (including dining room manager and student staff), DSA staff,
   and Faculty and Graduate Residents.

   c. Administration - The DSA will provide staff support for the House Dining
   Committees in the area of program development. The implementation of this
   recommendation should begin early in the fall (1979), since the observations
   and suggestions from House Dining Committees are a key element in the develop-
   ment of dining programs. (Comments from the Student Center Committee and
   the Walker Use Committee will also be useful for program considerations in these
   two facilities.)

Recommendation: That "Program" Committees be formed in Houses in which cooking
is the primary dining mode and that they assume responsibility for dining-related aspects
of the residence program in these Houses.

Dining programs have an equally important function in Houses in which most students cook, even though the activities do not center around a dining hall. Program Committees will be able to focus on the character of individual living groups and develop programs accordingly.

a. Charge to the Program Committee - The Program Committee is encouraged to organize programs and special events like Faculty Associates, open forums, etc. (see Section A.1), support cooking efforts (see Section E), and provide feedback to the Board of Directors of the Food Co-op (see Section E.1).

b. Representation - Members of the Program Committee would include students and Faculty and Graduate Residents (ideally representing various entries, floors, and suites), as well as DSA and HFS staff.

c. Administration - The DSA and Faculty Residents will provide support for programming needs, and HFS will address kitchen requirements.

2. Dining Advisory Board

Recommendation: That an ongoing campus-wide advisory board be established that represents the broad spectrum of dining facility users, as well as DSA and Food Services staff, and provides a forum for addressing dining-related issues.

The formation of an advisory board is essential if dining is to play a more significant role in the MIT community. A greater degree of dialogue and mutual support is needed between those who provide services and those who use them. Food Services wants more constructive input from the student community, particularly in a form that provides representative views, and students want to understand and participate more actively with program issues and operational concerns. In addition, there are many community users of Food Services' facilities and catering services whose needs are not well understood and whose feedback could be more systematically solicited. With representation from the DSA staff, the advisory board is assured of continued effort and concern for the program apsect of undergraduate dining.

a. Charge to the Advisory Board - The advisory board will be asked to help in the development and evaluation of campus-wide dining programs and services for residential students and the community at large, including the implementation of the recommendations from this review. They will help coordinate efforts to receive community feedback on menus, dining services, and facilities. The representatives from the House Dining Committees might bring issues from their committees that could profit from broader discussion. The board will serve in an

advisory capacity on operational and program decisions made by HFS and the DSA Residence Program staff, relating to such matters as dining policies, market surveys and other studies, dining operations and programs, and publicity efforts.

b. Representation - The Committee proposes the following composition of the Advisory Board:

- Director of Housing and Food Services, and General Manager of Food Services

- Associate Dean of the Residence Program and the Coordinator of Dining/Residence Programs (who will also provide staff support to the Board)

- Faculty representative from the Committee on Student Affairs

- Faculty Resident(s)

- seven representatives from among the House Dining Committees, Food Co-op Board of Directors, GSC, UA, IFC, Dormitory Council, etc.

- four representatives (faculty, staff, employees) from community users of Food Services' facilities and catering: Since the primary focus of the Board is likely to be on the undergraduate dining program (and less on dining for the community at large), it is important that all representatives also have a personal interest in undergraduate dining. It would also be helpful in obtaining community input if the community representatives also had direct connections to other groups (e.g., Women's Forum, Alumni Association, Administrative Council, Administrative Officers' Group, Hourly/Technical Unions).

c. Administration - Members of the Board will be Presidentially appointed. Because the Board will have responsibilities in both the dining program and dining service areas, the Board will report jointly to the Dean for Student Affairs and the Vice President, Operations. The Committee discussed the concept that a subgroup of the Committee on Student Affairs serve as a dining advisory board, and concluded that this approach would not give dining issues sufficient attention and visibility.

3. Communication with Wider Community
Recommendation: That Food Services develop means for more actively soliciting comments and suggestions from the broader community on dining services and facilities.

Objectives and mechanisms that have been suggested by Committee and Working Group members include:

a.   achieving more interaction between central Food Services staff (as well as dining unit staff) and dining service users, so that the service orientation that exists becomes more visible.

b.   posting a list of client comments and Food Services' responses (and vice versa) in each dining facility, which may help achieve a greater feeling of openness and responsiveness in welcoming dialogue; increasing the visibility of comment cards

c.   conducting market surveys on a regular basis of the kind proposed on page 67.

D. DINING ROOMS AND MEAL PLANS

1. Meal Plan Options

Recommendation: That new dining plan offerings be developed that meet the broad range of student needs, as well as Food Services' operational requirements.

With a combined room and board program operating in half of the Houses on campus, with meal plans available to other students, and with a la carte services available to the entire community, an extraordinary range of needs must be met.

a. Students are concerned primarily with issues of quality, flexibility, convenience, and financial equity:

● Even though a plan that had a high, built-in absenteeism factor would give the appearance of lower per meal costs, the Committee feels strongly that the plans offered should strive for a reasonably equitable relationship between meals purchased and meals consumed. The concept of value received for value tendered should be applied as well to both the lighter eaters and the heavier eaters in any dining facility (and the dining plans should not encourage overeating).

● The dining plans should provide as much consistency as possible among dining units so that there can be complete flexibility in transferring without registration or prior notification (including the snack bars), yet allow some tailoring of services in each House dining room to recognize unique characteristics and needs of each particular dining room.

● Though it would be desirable to encourage students to eat dinner together in their "home" dining room to the extent possible, the plans should acknowledge the varied eating patterns and schedules of students. The plans should provide flexibility by allowing students to eat in any dining unit that is open and to select any item offered.

● The plan should be available during IAP, summer, and other vacation periods, and should include the convenience of bringing "guests" at any time (at a lower guest meal rate) without registration or notification, though within limits to prevent overcrowding of dining rooms. The plans should be simple to use and minimize the problems typically associated with lost meal tickets or cards.

● The plan should recognize the uniqueness of the House dining rooms and preserve in them the focus on House community and on eating together, rather than change the House dining rooms to a cafeteria focus where the emphasis is on buying food.

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b. <u>The primary concerns of Food Services are the following</u>:

● The overriding objectives are to be responsive to student needs, to provide equity among users, and to meet nutritional standards with quality products at the lowest possible price.

● The dining plans should be financially viable, require a minimum of constraints on the users, and facilitate simple management controls with good accountability.

● The system should provide reliable data collection and analysis for inventory controls and cost efficiencies, and should have the capacity for modifications and expansion without affecting basic services.

c. <u>These requirements and constraints appear to be intractable</u>. The search for a plan which meets most of the requirements has resulted in substantial frustration during the course of the dining review, since the various alternatives explored invariably left significant needs unmet. For a variety of reasons, the Committee initially considered dining plans which did not include a computerized system. However, it now appears that <u>a computerized system provides the only likelihood for resolving the issues</u>.

In general outline (since the full details have yet to be worked out):

● The dining plan would consist of two basic components, i) <u>meal plans</u> and ii) <u>a computerized charge system, with use of both recorded through a magnetic picture ID card</u>, and with transferability to any dining facility.

● The Committee suggests making <u>three "meal plans" available, roughly in the range of 7, 12. and 19 meals per week</u>, with refinement of the plans pending further analysis of the cost benefits to and needs of students. The concept of "meal" is considered important to the development of the program aspect of dining, but for the sake of flexibility the meal plans would be structured around a particular number of meal plan units. For example, what has been termed the "12 meal" plan would provide 25 meal plan units per week (three units for dinner, two for lunch, and one for breakfast) -- which has the flexibility to provide anywhere from nine meals (seven dinners and two lunches) to 15 meals (two dinners, six lunchs, seven breakfasts). It is anticipated that students on the plans typically will take most of their dinners (four to six per week) in the dining rooms.

● The meal plans will be useable in all dining facilities and the meals will be useable over the seven-day week.

● Thus, under the proposal students are not penalized for missing a particular meal, yet must use the meals within a week's period -- a compromise between the current point plans and meal plans, which helps both Food Services and students plan on a weekly basis.

● For each meal, there would be a cash equivalency that could be transferred to dining facilities that were open at times when commons meals were not being served.

● These three meal plan options would be made available to any student living on or off campus, graduate or undergraduate, but one of the two larger plans would be required of students living in Houses with combined room and board plans (Baker, East Campus, MacGregor, McCormick, Next House). Until lunch time crowding in Morss Hall is satisfactorily addressed over the next several years (see Section F.2), residents of East Campus would be required to participate in a plan which provided in the vicinity of seven to nine meals per week (i.e., 19 meal plan units). As discussed earlier, there is a future possibility, pending further analysis of the impact, that juniors and seniors in McCormick and MacGregor might be able to elect the smaller of the meal plans offered, since kitchen facilities are available to supplement the Commons program.

● These meal plans would have two variations: a once-through-the-line option for a basic meal (although unlimited seconds would be provided on certain items, like beverages, salad, and breads) which normally would meet the needs of light eaters, and a more expensive twice-through-the-line option which normally would meet the needs of most heavier eaters.

● For people who are interested in more food than is offered by their plan (e.g., a third entree), the additional cost would be charged to the student's account using the ID card. Because a large number of "extra charges" might detract from the House dining environment, the purpose of having once-through and twice-through options would be to minimize this. Also, students on a meal plan who wanted more meals than their plan provided could charge additional meals on their ID card.

● Students not on a meal plan could eat in the House dining rooms at the "visitor's a la carte meal" rate or in the a la carte snack bars and cafeterias, and have all

costs charged on the ID card. [The charges made using the ID card will be referred to as "scrip."]

● The charges could be applied against an amount of "scrip" purchased in advance (that is, a declining balance concept) at a discount rate that increases with the amount purchased or could be paid on the basis of a monthly billing (perhaps also with a volume-dependent discount).

● The computerized system also provides flexibility of use for purchasing other services, such as from the Food Co-op, the new bakery, dorm snack bars, food for floor or entry parties, etc.

The dining plans described above substantially address the various requirements described earlier in terms of student concerns about equity, flexibility, and convenience, and meet Food Services' operating concerns as well.

There are some reservations about the impact of computer systems and "extra charges" in the House dining rooms, and constraints it places on programs like family-style dining and on specific dining amenities. Several East Campus residents have expressed interest in a total scrip system, rather than "unlimited" contract meal plans. The flexibility and greater financial equity of the particular meal plan variations being proposed, together with the ID charge feature, appear to address many of their concerns (which have been expressed as well by other students).

Within this general framework, Housing and Food Services will further refine the details of the proposed dining plans for subsequent discussion by the Dining Advisory Board.

2.   Timing of Implementation
Recommendation: That the above dining plans be offered starting in 1980-81 and that the combined room and board plan be implemented beginning with the Class of '84 (entering in the fall of 1980).

The Committee feels that the dining options of current students should not be affected by the proposed changes, though we hope present undergraduates will help in the effort over the next several years to develop more comprehensive House dining programs and encourage their participation. Broad support and understanding are needed as well in addressing some of the problems that may arise in the transition period.

There will be some costs associated with the transition which the Institute will need to cover. For example, the McCormick dining room may be underutilized for several years, and it has been suggested that provision be made for upperclass residents of the House to eat there on an a la carte or per meal basis (in addition to meal plans). During most of the transition, Baker and MacGregor dining rooms would continue to serve some residents of other Houses, though no extraordinary crowding problems are anticipated. Morss Hall would continue to provide a la carte service to the community for dinner, in addition to meal plans, during most or all of the transition.

3.   Improved Services in 1979-80
Recommendation: That concerted efforts be made in the 1979-80 academic year to improve the commons program and services along the lines eventually made possible by increased participation in the dining plans.

One of the concerns expressed about the proposed combined room and board plan is that people will be "forced" to take part in a dining plan that many will not like. The specific near-term improvements made to commons over the next year are therefore important in addressing such uncertainties. The changes proposed in the dining plans for 1980-81 will add significantly to the flexibility, convenience, and equity of the plans. In addition, the following suggestions have been made by members of the Working Groups and Committee, including Food Services staff, and currently are under consideration for 1979-80.

Recommendations:

a. Begin to develop the dining-related "programs" outlined in Section A.

b. Continue to work closely with dining committees in Baker, MacGregor, and East Campus/Senior House (merging the Commons Committees with working group members who have participated in the dining review) on reviewing the commons menu and addressing specific areas of concern in the respective dining facilities (including those reported in the current review). It is important that the committees are involved in menu review throughout the year, providing help in phasing in new menu items, eliminating least desired items, experimenting with different approaches, advertising menu improvements to students, etc. A regular schedule of menu reviews will be set up for the year, beginning in the fall.

c. Establish a transition committee in McCormick to begin planning for opening the dining room.

d.   Give increasing attention in menu design and balance to the needs of light or low carbohydrate eaters, vegetarians, and others conscious of their diets, who have requested greater variety in vegetable, whole grain, salad, and fruit selections to make the meal plans more attractive.

e.   Provide more deviations from the "advertised" menu, for example:

- make special funds available from which House dining room managers together with House dining committees could make modest proposals to do special things (menu, food presentation, etc.) in the dining rooms

- every evening, in addition to the regular menu, offer one or two cooked-to-order items, such as steak, which a student may select at an additional charge

- do special food programming near the end of each term when academic pressures are greatest and commons can be viewed as blase, for example, by increasing the frequency of the more popular items

f.   Clarify transfer policy (including use of points at Pritchett) and advertise policies more extensively; extend transfer hours in Pritchett and Twenty Chimneys to 9:00 p.m.

g.   Address crowding problem:

- extend hours in MacGregor to 7:00 p.m. and perhaps even longer in Baker to provide for late commons meals for all commons participants (including athletes after practice)

- if crowding persists on special nights or near the beginning of the term, experiment with even greater extension of hours, "snacks" for people who are waiting in line, etc.

h.   Extend to all commons participants the opportunity to bring guests for commons meals at rates lower than the usual price charged to those not on a meal plan:

- prices charged to guests will be at the meal plan rate of the host

- meal plan participants can charge to their term bill

- point plan participants can use up to 16 points per term for guests, then can charge additional guests to the term bill

i.   Work informally with House R/O Committees this year on ways Food Services can help with House R/O Week programs (and explore feasibility of formally opening dining halls during R/O Week next year).

j.   Improve Lobdell weekend menu, coordinating more with the planning done by the administrative dietician and having student review.

k.   Explore other services (perhaps longer-term):

- meal plans specifically for the two or three week period preceding finals

- provisions for meal plans to be paid in installments over the term (at a modest handling charge)

- luncheon food services to members of specific fraternities on a contractual group basis

4.   Short-Term Subsidy

Recommendation: That a short-term subsidy be provided out of general funds to implement some or all of the services in Recommendation 3. above, until such time that commons participation increases to support their costs.

Food Services, working with appropriate client groups, would have responsibility to prepare a budget for such a request.

5.   Discount Experiment

Recommendation: That the commons discount experiment tried the past two years not be continued in 1979-80.

The experiment did not achieve its goals either year of generating sufficient increased participation in the meal plans first and second term to cover the costs of the discount. The experiment lost a considerable amount of money this past year (on the order of $25K), and it is difficult to justify continuation of the experiment under these circumstances.

6.   Publicity

Recommendation: That Food Services, with support of the DSA, make concerted effort in the area of publicity programs.

It is important that the various dining options, services, and programs be clearly described and effectively presented to the student community and MIT community-at-large, so that people are aware of what is available. This will be particularly true over the next several years, as changes and improvements are likely to occur more frequently. In each of the following, particular attention needs to be given to design and presentation:

a. Prepare a simple Food Service pamphlet describing the various dining facilities and plans and welcoming new students to participate.

b. Provide a telephone recording of daily menus in MIT's dining rooms.

c. Post menus more widely to increase Food Services' visibility.

d. Provide menus with relevant nutritional information, specifically for dieters (low calorie) and athletes (high protein, high calorie).

e. Make information on major ingredients used in menu items, nutritional information, product quality requirements, product testing, and food preparation methods readily accessible to students; involve students in "food tasting."

f. Prepare a well-designed brochure on Food Services' catering services to help generate better community support and understanding, that describes:

- specific services available and their costs (from coffee and donuts at seminars to formal banquet dinners)

- what to look for in seeking prices from outside firms and making comparisons with regard to quality and pricing

- the impact of catering business on reducing meal costs to students

7. Financial Aid Implications

Recommendation: That current financial aid policies be reviewed in terms of the proposed changes in dining policy.

The Committee recognizes that the proposed changes in dining policy have financial aid implications, and has asked the Student Financial Aid Office to review the matter. The specific concept of reflecting students' actual room and board expenses in aid packages is important to explore, along with other possible approaches.

8. Additional Cost Savings

Recommendation: That other specific avenues be explored to reduce the meal plan costs to students.

In addition to normal management initiatives and the savings to some students that will result from achieving greater equity between value received and value tendered (for example, the once-through-the-line option in all dining rooms, the greater flexibility in using the meal plans, etc. -- see Recommendation 1. above on Dining

Plans), several other suggestions have been made to reduce costs, such as under-taking a major campaign to reduce food waste or eliciting the support of students in reducing the "feeding of friends." At one particular college, students have decided to eliminate certain items from the menu (for both nutritional and cost reasons).

9. Review Financial Impact

Recommendation: That the total financial picture under the proposed changes be carefully reviewed.

The proposed changes in dining policy and dining plans have impact on both the Housing budget and Food Services budget, and therefore in setting both room and board rates. A financial analysis of the proposed changes is needed to estimate what price reductions might be possible from increased meal plan participation, from reduced level of cooking in some Houses (savings in maintenance and utilities costs), etc., taking into account the added costs of the new services that are recommended. Meal plan prices will reflect the fact that a large absenteeism factor is not expected under the proposed plans. The comparative costs between Houses should reflect the capital, space, and operating costs of building and maintaining kitchen facilities and eating areas. There is a need to identify the specific financial effects on students' budgets, as well as shifts in the distribution of room and board costs, resulting from the proposed changes in dining policy, and over the longer term to monitor possible financial impact on students' housing decisions. The details on costs are important in order to finalize the specifics of the meal plan offerings and are being worked out by DSA and HFS staff.

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E. SUPPORT OF STUDENT COOKING

1. Food Co-op

Recommendation: That administrative support be provided for the establishment of
a store-front Food Co-op on campus.

With cooking facilities provided in many undergraduate and all graduate housing on
campus, many residents are expected to cook for themselves. Other students may
have need of nutritious snack foods, such as dairy products and fresh fruit. A
Food Co-op emphasizing poultry, fresh produce, dairy, and other perishable items,
would help maintain the nutritional quality of cooking efforts by providing convenient,
quality foods at competitive prices. The Co-op would be of significant value to the
fraternity system as well. Fraternities, through individual house stewards and the
IFC Purchasing Manager, have need of a Co-op for buying in large quantities. It
could also serve as a clearing house for sale of cooking utensils, etc. The Co-op
would serve undergraduate and graduate students, both on and off campus, and the
concept has broad support among students. The effort initially would be modest,
and then grow in response to demand.

The Food Co-op provides an institutional focus for support of the cooking option and
for programs in consumer information and education that would be of benefit to stu-
dents.

  a. Management - The Co-op will be financially independent of Food Services,
  but will receive support and guidance in administrative matters. The Co-op
  manager, an exempt employee of the Institute paid out of Co-op sales margins,
  will report administratively to the Director of Housing and Food Services. Food
  Services will provide advice and support, to the extent possible, in such areas
  as purchasing, accounting, and payment to vendors.

  b. Student Organization - The Co-op is a joint venture of student Co-op mem-
  bers and MIT Food Services. While the manager is an MIT employee and pro-
  vides continuity of operation, part-time student staff and a required number
  of contributed hours per term from Co-op members will provide all other labor
  to help keep costs down. A board of directors, including the Director of Housing
  and Food Services, General Manager of Food Services, DSA Dining Program Co-
  ordinator, several other faculty and staff, and about six student Co-op members,
  would address general policy considerations. To a significant extent students
  would have control over Co-op operations, as a valuable experience within their
  undergraduate education and as an important part of the concept.

c. Facility - Pending detailed discussion with Burton House residents, it is proposed that the Food Co-op make use of kitchen space in the Burton Dining Room and a storage room on the ground floor. It would have an outside entrance and would not interfere with current use of the Burton Dining Room area. Hours of operation would be limited so as to minimize any disruption to the House. It should be emphasized that the Committee is primarily recommending a Food Co-op (rather than a specific location), but feels that the Burton site is optimal in many ways, and hopes that the details can be worked out with Burton residents.

d. Financial Responsibilities - The Food Co-op basically will be a breakeven opera- tion and cover operating and capital expenses (other than the administrative ser- vices and space discussed above) out of sales revenue. However, an Institute loan will be needed for specific capital start-up costs (display cases, etc.). The Institute would be asked to self-insure the operation. A refundable membership fee from Co-op members will provide some working capital and cash flow for stocking shelves.

e. Education and Service - Education and service are major goals of the Co-op as described in the next section. It has been pointed out that the Co-op may be particularly helpful to some non-U.S. students (and their families) in terms of adjusting to shopping and consumerism in this country. The involvement of non-U.S. students in the Co-op may in turn stimulate a more international flavor in the overall student cooking efforts at MIT.

f. Implementation - The DSA and HFS will have joint responsibility for working with an initial group of interested students to define and work through the host of details concerning structure, logistics, space, clarification of responsibilities, and so forth. Some groundwork was done over the summer (1979) to begin addressing these details.

2. Consumer Information and Education
Recommendation: That a comprehensive program of consumer information and edu- cation be developed as a support service for those who cook for themselves.

Discussions with student members of the working groups who cook most of their meals indicate that there is widespread interest in learning to shop for and prepare nutritious meals at low costs. The Coordinator of Health Information and Education in the Medi- cal Department has expressed interest in working with DSA staff, student groups, and others in making such information available to the MIT community. The proposed

Food Co-op can play a central role in developing programs and disseminating information, since interested parties would be on the premises regularly. DSA staff would serve as a catalyst and overall coordinator for these efforts.

The following information programs were suggested by students and staff at working group meetings:

a. IAP course, UG seminars, or brochures on menu planning, nutrition, shopping (seasonal buying, budgeting, brand comparison, local sources of food), specific types of diets, resources available at MIT concerned with foods and eating, etc.

b. Workshops for fraternity stewards, language house stewards, and "stewards" from other House groups interested in community cooperative cooking.

c. Cooking classes appropriate to dorm cooking, including menu assistance.

d. Weekly columns in The Tech containing Food Co-op specials, relevant recipes, information raising general awareness of nutrition, eating habits, etc.

3. Cooperative Cooking Efforts
Recommendation: That informal efforts be made to encourage cooperative cooking and dining programs in the cooking-oriented Houses.

Group cooking appears to be successful in living groups that share a common interest, like the preparation of kosher or vegetarian meals or the cooperative structure of language Houses. In recognition of its potential contribution to the quality of the living environment, the Committee recommends encouraging more cooperative cooking through the informal efforts of Faculty and Graduate Residents, House Program Committees, and DSA staff. The House Program Committees, working with the Food Co-op, might distribute nutrition information or sample menus and recipes appropriate to cooperative group cooking. Suites and entries might delegate among themselves the responsibilities involved in inviting guests to dinner, organizing pot luck or progressive dinners with other entries, participating in Faculty/Alumni Associates functions, etc. Tutors often organize dinners with students, sometimes including faculty, or regularly cook and eat with students, and the Committee encourages these associations as well.

4. Adequacy of Cooking Facilities
Recommendation: That the adequacy of kitchen facilities be reviewed regularly in Houses where such facilities provide the primary mode of eating.

The Committee supports the efforts of HFS and DSA staff to see that reasonable standards of safety and cleanliness are maintained in the kitchens. Kitchen facilities should be reviewed in the near future, as well as periodically, to ensure that they can adequately meet students' needs under the proposed changes in dining policy. Storage capacity, better ventilation, and pest control are concerns that students fre- frequently cite. With increased levels of cooking expected in the cooking-oriented Houses over the next several years, adequacy of facilities will depend somewhat upon style of use (the proportion of group versus individual cooking efforts).

F.   IMPROVEMENTS IN STUDENT CENTER, WALKER, AND VENDING OPERATIONS

The costs of on-campus dining are affected by the fact that the two full-service cafe-
terias peakload at lunch, and are not cost-effective for breakfast, dinner, and week-
ends, whereas the House dining rooms peakload at dinner, and are not cost-effective
at other times. Yet all must be open for three meals per day in order to serve the
various needs of residential students, the larger community, and those who request
catering services. Similarly, while it would be most convenient to have some or all
of the House dining rooms open on weekends, in addition to Lobdell and the snack
bars, this arrangement would be at high cost to students unless the facilities were
fully utilized. In making the following recommendations, the Committee was influenced
by the general constraint of trying to make the most effective use of existing facilities.

1. Student Center
Recommendation: That Lobdell undergo a series of changes that will enhance the
dining experience for students and the community at large.

Lobdell is of serious concern to the Committee, though in several ways it remains an
enigma. It is generally crowded during the lunch period, and it appears that the
long lines can be attributed in part to a serving area that could be more efficiently
organized. The large physical space for dining is often viewed as impersonal. It
lacks warmth, a sense of scale, and many feel it is not conducive to relaxed dining.
Lobdell is not connected to the "student center" either in form or function. On the
other hand, it is convenient, relatively fast, and has the largest customer count of
any dining operation on campus.

A number of alternatives were explored; for example, eliminating hot lunches in
Lobdell and closing Lobdell for dinners and weekends so that a) Ashdown and other
House dining rooms could be reopened and b) Lobdell could offer a different kind of
lunch fare and service (such as soups, salads, and quick food specialities, including
some student entrepreneurial food services). However, the renovation expenses for
reopening Ashdown are large and the Student Center provides the only dedicated
space Food Services has for catering functions. Catering services are important to
the community and expansion of these services can help defray fixed costs. With
Ashdown closed, Lobdell is needed for a la carte dining services and catering on
weekends and for weekday dinners. With these contraints, the goal must be to make
major improvements in the Lobdell services and environment, rather than to sub-
stantially alter the kinds of services provided.

The following recommendations have evolved from Working Group and Committee discussions, and from several student analyses in 11.311 (Environmental Programming). Basically, Lobdell would continue services of the kind presently provided: major lunchtime service for the entire community, catering, commons and a la carte meals weekdays and weekends for students, etc.

As participation in the commons plans grows over the next several years, Lobdell is expected to become increasingly a center for student dining on weekends. The support of the DSA and Student Center Committee is needed to provide a weekend program focus in Lobdell (entertainment and other special happenings). Because of limitations on storage, kitchen, and serving capacity related to hot dinners, the need may arise during the transition period to open one of the House dining rooms for weekend dinners. While this may be convenient to the House, issues like opening the dining room to the community (unless the House itself provides high utilization) or scheduling around preparations for parties and other weekend House functions have to be explored with residents. Possible variations that have been suggested are to open one of the House dining rooms on Sunday evenings, either in addition to or in place of Friday evenings.

The Committee recommends that a number of important changes be made in Lobdell and Twenty Chimneys. The general recommendations are sketched in four phases (the first two being relatively inexpensive), since the longer-term view is influenced by the specific impact of the proposed near-term changes. Changes in Lobdell would obviously have client-team review, including both students and the community at large.

Phase I:

    a.   address concerns about menu, quality, and customer service in Lobdell.

    b.   make major improvements in the ambiance of Lobdell; provide dining areas of differentiated character appropriate to the varied requirements of those who eat there and the range of food served. Some of the eating styles which might be accommodated are:

- a fast food area that contains a sandwich counter, salad bar, and soup, with a mixed counter/booth seating arrangement close by

- a quiet, more secluded area (with smaller tables) that is suitable for leisurely dining

- the remaining area furnished with several table arrangements (with variations in table size and shape) that can accommodate larger groups who wish to eat together

The various dining spaces could be set apart by lighting, color (wall hangings, etc.), and boundaries set by plants, screens, and possible carpeting or slight elevations of floor areas. Such changes would have to be reviewed in terms of the current after hours use of Lobdell by student groups.

c. use "ping pong" room and part of adjacent hall to provide additional dining space in Lobdell (remove glass walls to integrate space more with Lobdell).

d. in Twenty Chimneys, expand food offerings (for example, pizza for evenings/weekends, pancake or waffle brunch on Saturday/Sunday).

Phase II:

a. modify serving area to improve aesthetics, to relieve congestion at peak periods, to increase speed of service, and to help diners orient themselves:

- increase menu visibility and provide colorful signs over various serving stations

- remove turnstile, design attractive entrance, and provide convenient coat room

- expand serving area space either by moving the cold sandwich line into main dining room area (see Phase I) or by providing more attractive alternative space for the 24 hour coffee shop elsewhere in the Student Center

b. use market survey information to determine appropriate balance between hot lunches and "quick foods" (sandwiches, grille, deli, salads, soups, etc.).

Phase III:

If lunch and weekend demand warrants (based on market research subsequent to the completion of Phases I and II), explore adding a balcony over part of Lobdell, which would:

- connect with Twenty Chimneys

- provide more intimate dining space underneath the balcony

- provide additional seating space to relieve crowding and additional lounge space to help further integrate Lobdell with the "student center" function

Phase IV (long-term vision):

> Extend loft/balcony concept (along the lines of the Schneider Center at Wellesley), with some small shops, further expanded lounge areas, some student entrepreneurial food services, etc.

2. Walker Memorial

Recommendation: That major changes in services and facilities be made in Walker to address the needs of the east campus residential community and the lunch time needs of the community at large.

MIT has a responsibility to provide adequate dining facilities to serve East Campus residents. For reasons discussed on page 41, the Committee has not endorsed proposals to add partial or full kitchen facilities to East Campus, or to construct a dining hall connected directly to the House. Given these considerations, the Committee has worked to develop a framework that would provide quality dining services and residential dining programs in East Campus.

Walker has served as the East Campus dining hall for many decades, even though the space is not physically connected to the House. It is possible to renovate the existing facilities and modify services to provide a unique dining program of high quality that meets House needs and that significantly surpasses current offerings. The dinner and evening use of the facility should center around the needs of East Campus residents so that they can develop the kinds of dining programs they want.

Major concerns appear to be: 1) that the facility provide dedicated, attractive space for House use, with a feeling of being "the House's"; 2) that a specific, major commitment be made to provide quality food and services, including resolution of the lunch time crowding problem. Other concerns are addressed by the specific dining plans that are proposed in Section D. A number of possibilities were explored which did not appear to be practical; for example, constructing a loft in Morss Hall or extending Morss Hall over one of the terraces.

A renovated Pritchett Lounge and Blue Room, in combination with Morss Hall, provides opportunities for unique services. The following proposals explore the strengths of both in addressing the dining needs of East Campus residents, as well as the needs of the community at large at lunch.

a.   While Morss Hall would continue to offer breakfast and lunch to the community at large, following the transition period it would function as a House dining room at dinner time, providing services and amenities similar to Baker and MacGregor. A la carte services at dinner would no longer be offered, and Morss Hall would be open primarily to undergraduates (mostly East Campus and Senior House) and graduate students who were on one of the meal plans, their guests, and faculty/ staff members who were interested in associating themselves with the East Campus community. Morss Hall could then provide opportunities for a program focus at dinner. It has been suggested that East Campus residents have priority in terms of the use of Morss Hall for evening functions. The possibility of using Pritchett/ Blue Room space for the evening meal setting was reviewed, but its size and shape make it less desirable than Morss Hall for this purpose. Morss Hall can accommo- date large groups, even the whole House eating together with invited guests such as Faculty Associates.

b.   On weekends, dining services would be provided in the Pritchett/Blue Room space, primarily for students. Pending further study, there is a possibility that with the addition of a "second cook," current snack bar/grille service could be augmented by soup, salad, and a limited hot meal menu at dinner. A broader range of full hot meals would also be available in Lobdell; Morss Hall would be closed on weekends.

c.   In earlier deliberations of the Committee, it was suggested that Pritchett Lounge, Blue Room, and Silver Room could be completely renovated to provide aesthetically attractive lounge and dining space and to serve three specific functions:

- to provide snack bar services along current lines, which would pri- marily serve residents of the East Campus after lunch until midnight;

- to provide social and lounge space which could be dedicated to East Campus use (with the exception of the weekday lunch period);

- to provide a unique community food service at lunch (for example, grille, fountain, soup, salad, etc.), with hot lunches and full sandwich line offered in Morss Hall.

For the purposes of evaluating the practicality of such renovations, the firm of Crabtree Associates was retained to assess the architectural and logistical con- straints imposed by the Pritchett/Blue Room space. Their findings have been discussed with Planning Office staff to further verify the feasibilty of under- taking renovations along these lines.

Although minor renovations to improve the physical conditions of the Pritchett/ Blue Room space and facilities have not been ruled out, several questions and concerns have been raised with regard to undertaking major renovations at this time. The Committee feels that the issues could profit from further discussion and has chosen to downgrade the priority of the renovations in its recommendations. However, there is an immediate need to address one of the major concerns motivating the renovations, namely, the current lunch time crowding in Walker.

d. Until the lunch time crowding issue in Walker is adequately resolved, East Campus residents would be required to take fewer meals on the combined room and board plan than residents of the other Houses (about 19 meal plan units per week, rather than the 25 units provided in the "12 meal" plan). The Dining Advisory Board would have the responsibility for reviewing this issue.

e. Addressing lunch time crowding in Walker must not only take into account the current level of demand for services, but also must recognize the longer-term potential impact on the facilities at lunch from the additional buildings planned at the east end of campus (which may be offset somewhat by the off-campus restaurants planned in Kendall Square), and from the increased participation in meal plans by East Campus residents. Although the Committee has chosen not to make any specific recommendations at this time regarding major renovations, several suggestions have been made to reduce crowding that might be explored further:

- Complete renovations upstairs of both the Pritchett grille/serving area and all seating areas could provide additional seating capacity (a total of 175 seats, serving about 400 people during the lunch hours) and an expanded serving line, which could help improve the speed of service; careful selection of menu items at lunch time in the new serving line would be necessary. [Expansion onto the balcony remains a remote possibility, but the costs are high for a limited number of additional seats. Also, in order to meet fire regulations, an additional exit would be needed either through the balcony area or an outside stairwell connecting from the Blue Room to the patio below.]

- An additional hot food line has been suggested in Morss Hall, if it were possible to relocate the sandwich line.

- Reopening McCormick and improving the services and capacity in Lobdell may help draw people away from Walker (with Ashdown an unresolved issue in this regard).

- Those employees who have the flexibility can be encouraged to avoid peak serving times, such as "on the hour" when classes end.

The proposal to dedicate Morss Hall at dinner as a House dining room will provide East Campus residents with the various dinner services and amenities currently available in the other House dining rooms (salad bar, unlimited beverage access, special "extras" in menu items, etc.). Although there are disadvantages because the dining space is not physically a part of the East Campus House, the proposal provides other services and possibilities that are not available in the House dining rooms. Whether or not major renovations are done upstairs, Walker facilities will provide a choice of two types of lunch menus in two locations and the social/lounge space in Pritchett and the Blue Room will continue to have snack bar facilities. Most importantly, Morss Hall has program possibilities in terms of House functions that are not available elsewhere on campus. East Campus in fact appears to be in a better position than other Houses to develop programs with faculty, staff, and graduate students because of the latter's greater familiarity with Morss Hall. These special features allow for a unique, high quality dining program to be offered at the east end of campus for dinner, and further improvements would result from addressing the lunch time crowding issue.

3. Ashdown

Some Committee members would dearly like to propose that Ashdown be reopened for lunch and dinner, not only as an attractive community resource for lunch, but to provide unique services and programs in the evening (quality restaurant on Fridays, coffee house, opportunity for occasional change in dining environment for undergraduates, etc.). Given the constraints imposed by Lobdell, and other capital expense involved in reopening Ashdown, however, first priority must be given to upgrading Lobdell.

4. Vending

Recommendation: That Food Services provide quality sandwiches, pastries, fruit, and coffee off of carts in several key locations in the main buildings and E19, with outside firm providing snack items through vending machines.

Alternatives to the existing arrangements will be explored with Seiler's this fall, including ways students and student entrepreneurial organizations could become more involved in the new services.

5. Market Study

Recommendation: That a market study be conducted in the fall of 1979 to test user preferences (type of food, cost, location, and improved services) vis-a-vis the proposed changes in Lobdell, Walker, McCormick, and vending, and to ascertain whether there is sufficient customer potential for reopening Ashdown.

The dining review has focused primarily on the undergraduate residential program. A professionally conducted market survey will help clarify the lunch time needs of the community at large in order to refine the details of the changes proposed in Walker, Lobdell, McCormick, and vending, and to examine ways to ease the lunch time crowding in existing facilities. The Committee's input from the community on lunch time needs has been sufficient to shape the general thrust of the recommendations, but not the specific details, both of which can be tested in the survey.

6. Dining Recommendation Costs

The areas of cost associated with the recommendations are listed on the following pages, and are in the process of being estimated. In rough terms, the capital costs are likely to be on the order of $700K, though depending upon the extent of the changes made in Lobdell and Walker.

Dining Recommendation Costs

Program Expenses (ongoing)

DSA Dining Program staff (full-time for two to four years plus expenses and secretarial support)

Dining Program Expenses (ODSA budget and Faculty Resident drawing accounts)

-- Faculty Associates

-- Faculty/Staff Guest Meals

-- Alumni Association expenses for Alumni Associates

-- R/O Dining Programs

-- Food Services Support of Housemaster-Tutor Program

-- Special dining event expenses (speakers, open forum discussions, etc.)

Rent Loss (from renovations)

Program Expenses (transient)

Operating Loss of McCormick Dining Hall until full capacity reached (FY81, 82, 83)

FY80 Loss Leaders on food services offered (extended hours, special funds for food service experiments, etc.)

Operating Loss on Weekend Dining Halls (FY82?, FY83)

Other Costs During Four-Year Transition

Capital Costs

Study Funds (for the following projects)

Renovation of Walker Dining Facilities

McCormick Start-Up Costs

Computerized System for Dining Plans

Establishment of Food Co-op (mostly loan funds)

Senior House Kitchens

Improvements in Lobdell Environment (short-term)

Market Survey Funds (to assess longer-term community
needs vis-a-vis Ashdown, Lobdell, Walker, Vending)

Lobdell (longer-term)

Improvements in East Campus Country Kitchen

Country Kitchen in Baker

[Special Dining Facilities for Next House]
-- storage to take advantage of bulk purchasing economies
-- bakery to serve system-wide needs

Other

APPENDIX A: Brief Historical Perspective on Dining at MIT

The current dining facilities and programs at MIT reflect the changing concerns and attitudes that have shaped the residence program since the first dining hall opened in 1917. Walker Memorial, which included a library, meeting rooms, and dining hall, served meals to the MIT community and acted as social center for the campus. Walker served meals for students from Senior House (although two of its six entries were designed for fraternity use and contained kitchens and lounges) and later, in the 1920s and 30s, served students from the Alumni Houses (East Campus parallels) when those dormitories were built.

In 1938 an old hotel, later renamed Ashdown House, was purchased and remodeled to house graduate students. The Ashdown and Walker dining rooms shared a tradition for community dining at lunch through the mid-sixties, when the Student Center was built. In 1949 Baker became the first undergraduate dormitory designed with an in-house dining room. Burton-Conner, an old apartment building, was purchased and renovated as a dormitory around 1950, and a large dining hall was added in 1961. Prior to that time it had been typical for Burton residents to walk to Ashdown, Walker, or Walton's (an independently operated cafeteria opposite 77 Mass. Ave.) for their meals, since Baker served only residents of the House.

The 1960s and 70s brought many new dormitories to the campus (McCormick was finished in 1968; MacGregor was ready in 1970; Burton-Conner was remodeled by 1971). The planning for each of these Houses was based on the general concept of the 1963 Committee on Student Environment Report that "each House -- new or old -- should be developed as a complete residential unit with common lounges, dining rooms, libraries, and recreation space." These Houses were divided into smaller living groups with some kitchen facilities and included a faculty housemaster, graduate tutors, and in-house dining rooms. They were to provide for the students' complete residential needs and contribute to the non-classroom education and growth of students. In addition to these newly-built or renovated Houses, two former hotel-apartment buildings, Random Hall and Bexley Hall, were used to ease the housing shortage beginning in the 1960s. During this time period, all students living in a dormitory with an in-house dining hall were on a compulsory meal plan. Before 1967, it was a 15-meal "no seconds" plan, but starting in the fall of 1967 became an "unlimited seconds" plan.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s the student body was becoming increasingly heterogeneous and was concerned about a number of important issues of the times. . In the context of this period, a decision was made at the request of students that the

commons program be completely voluntary. Many felt that eliminating the compulsory aspects of commons outweighed the particular program benefits that were lost. Others felt that the decision did not adequately assess its overall impact on students' residential experiences, both short range and long range. Beginning with the change to voluntary commons in 1971, the number of commons meals served each year dropped substantially over the next seven years. Thus, Burton and McCormick dining halls were closed in the early 1970s. Lobdell, the Student Center dining hall which opened in 1965 for lunch and breakfast service, expanded its operation in 1973 to include commons meals and dinners. This took up the slack from Ashdown dining hall, which closed at the end of 1972, because of insufficient business in the system and the capital funds that would have been required to renovate the kitchen.

In planning for New House (1975), it was decided to diversify further the housing stock at MIT and provide space for six loosely connected living groups of about 50 people, each with full cooking facilities. With the change from Stouffer's to MIT management in 1974, various types of meal plans were added to the traditional 15-meal plan in order to provide students with a range of choices in the number and type of meals eaten on commons.

These additions, changes, and reorientations lead us to the current dining situation, which is described in Part II of the Report.

APPENDIX B: Dining Programs at Other Colleges

Members of the Working Groups (primarily the Baker/MacGregor group) have visited several colleges and made reports on their dining/residence programs. Schools out of visiting range were investigated via contacts with acquaintances there. The views of the students who made these visits are summarized below:

Wellesley College requires all of its 1850 resident students to be on a 21-meal unlimited seconds plan; however, only 65% of these 21 meals are usually used by students. There are seven kitchens and 10 different dining halls which serve students from 14 different dorms. Meal tickets may be used in any dining hall, although at dinner most students eat in the dining hall nearest their dorms. Meal tickets may also be used for cash in the Schneider Center (Wellesley's student center), though the cash equivalency is about 18% below the purchase price. Disadvantages of the system are the high cost of staffing so many kitchens., and the limited menu choice and variety at each meal resulting from the small scale operation of each facility. At dinner there is a choice among two entrees, one of which is vegetarian. Advantages are good communication among students, staff, and dining management, availability of salad, vegetable dish, and cheeses at every meal, and good student-faculty interaction at meal time. Students can request guest meal tickets for faculty members, which the College pays for and allocates to the dorms. There are kitchenettes in some dorms, used mostly for entertaining. The Wellesley Food Committee deals with dining policy, food gripes, and planning special events that involve food. The Schneider Center is aesthetically attractive and stimulates a number of ideas about possibilities for Lobdell and the Student Center.

Cornell offers a diverse variety of dining options to its students. There are seven types of meal plans ranging from three meals seven days per week to two meals five days per week. These meal plans are served in four different dining halls, located throughout the campus. One serves a low calorie meal, the "Coop 2000," which is as expensive to operate as other dining halls because of the cost of fresh fruits and vegetables. In addition, there are two a la carte dining halls. There are frequent special events paid for by a yearly (nonrefundable) dining membership fee, which is required of each student on a meal plan. Although there is no mandatory commons program, almost all freshmen are on a meal plan. In general, students consider the quality and variety of food to be very good. With any dining contract, students receive four guest meal tickets. A small fraction of upperclass students cook, using kitchen facilities in the dorms. Overall, more than 5,000 students are on commons, 90% of the campus residents. Cornell also has a computerized system which helps in planning; the capital investment in the system is large, in part justified by the size of the program. The dining program is assisted by the presence of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and the School of Hotel Administration.

Yale requires all of its resident students to be on a 19 meal unlimited seconds plan. Most freshmen are housed together in one area of campus and eat together during the week, but eat with upperclassmen on weekends. Upperclassmen are assigned to one of 13 colleges (dorms). Each college has its own kitchen and dining hall in which students of the college, and faculty associated with the college, eat. Every faculty member is assigned to a college and is expected to associate himself/herself with the college. Students may invite any faculty member for lunch or dinner once a month at no charge to either. The dining halls

seat between 300 and 400 people, and alternative lines for vegetarian and kosher food exist. Yale undergraduates appear to be generally satisfied with the dining program, appreciating the enjoyable social setting and good food (though some would prefer to be on their own).

Harvard's dining program is comparable to Yale's. "Graceful dining" in a community setting is considered to be a part of a student's education. All students are required to be on a 21 meal unlimited seconds plan. All freshmen are housed in one area on campus and eat together in a common dining hall. There are 14 undergraduate Houses for upperclassmen, who eat in the dining hall of the House in which they live. Although the required dining program consists of 21 meals, the average number of meals eaten per week is 14. There are monthly dinners with the faculty associated with each House. Overall, the quality of food generally seems good, and tries to accommodate a variety of dietary regimens. There are typical complaints about overcooked vegetables, etc. Some students make periodic efforts to have the university provide a greater choice of meal plans, as alternatives to the 21 meal plan. However, such a change is viewed as weakening the sense of House community and closeness.

Dartmouth services its entire undergraduate population in one central facility, which is divided into five different dining areas. This facility stays open practically all day from 6:30 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. with a 45 minute break between breakfast and lunch and one and a half hours between lunch and dinner. In the evening, separate parts of the dining hall serve as a snack bar and pub. Only freshmen are required to be on a meal plan and may choose from a 21 or 14 meal plan, while upperclassmen may choose from the 21, 14, 10, or 5 meal plans, all of which are unlimited seconds and may be used on any day for any meal. Students may use their ID cards to charge meals at the snack bar or dining hall (though charged at a higher rate than the commons price). If a meal ticket is forgotten, the meal can be charged; the student has a specific period of time in which to provide the meal ticket and remove the charge. The food is perceived to be of good quality and there is usually a variety of types of food to choose from.

Boston College has a very versatile dining system for its 12,000 students. For the most part, B.C. operates large central facilities rather than dormitory-based dining halls. A commons plan, which is a minimum of 660 points, is required of all students living in dormitories without kitchen facilities. Most on-campus freshmen live in these dorms. Points, which can be bought by any student in books of 165, are worth $0.66 each and can be used in the wide range of B.C. food service facilities. These facilities include cafeterias, a nice restaurant (the Faculty Club, which is open to students two nights a week), a fast food facility, a grocery store, a deli, and snack bars. Students may also use their points to buy meals for guests in the Faculty Club. The B.C. dining service also includes a college bakery. A campus-wide student-administration Commons Committee plays an advisory role in reviewing dining program policies and complaints.

APPENDIX C: Historical Perspective on Goals of the
Undergraduate Residential Program*

As the exercises of the school begin at nine o'clock in the morning, and end by
five o'clock in the afternoon, students may conveniently live in any of the nearer
cities or towns... The cost of board and rooms in Boston and the neighboring
cities and towns need not exceed six to eight dollars a week.

-- From MIT Bulletins 1910-1915

One of the many reasons for moving to a new site was the need for improving the
living conditions of the students... To provide adequately for these men..., it
is imperative that dormitories should be provided as soon as practicable.

-- Richard C. Maclaurin
Report of the President, 1916

Education is to be found not only in the classroom and laboratory but in the experience
of living with one's fellows in an environment stimulating to intellectual activity and
conducive to the development of community responsibility. We want to carry further
the development of an environment at MIT which performs in the broadest sense an
educational function itself, not in a passive way but in a dynamic way. The whole
complex of living facilities, activities, and atmosphere must be skillfully arranged to
provide the kind of environment that contributes to the development of leadership,
breadth, and standards of taste and judgment among our students...

-- James R. Killian, Jr.
Inaugural Address, 1949

In 1956, a special committee chaired by MIT alumnus Edwin R. Ryer '20 strongly
supported the continuing development of a residential system "which has as its pri-
mary function the furtherance of the education of our students." To members of that
committee, education meant more than intellectual competence; it meant personal,
social, and spiritual development through which students would learn to live more
happily and more at ease with themselves and others. Education included the develop-
ment of individual values and standards and an acceptance of individual and shared
responsibility, combined with tolerance and respect for the views of others and a
sensitivity to their needs. These traits, the committee concluded, are best fostered
in an environment responsive to individual growth and conducive to social, as well
as intellectual, interaction. Creating this kind of supportive and enriching living
environment has been the primary objective of MIT's residential program.*

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* Taken in part from materials researched by the MIT Development Office in support
of undergraduate housing at MIT.

The fullest realization of the educational potentialities of a residential system will be secured as active participation by the Faculty is facilitated and as responsibility is assumed by and authority is delegated to students for management of their own residential lives and the maintenace of good living and study conditions.

-- Ryer Report, 1956

A university...is justified in undertaking the conduct of a residential system only insofar as it makes that system serve the purpose of education... The potentialities which such residence affords for mental stimulation, social development and maturing responsibility among students, for closer relationships between students and Faculty, and for general participation in a widening range of intellectual, aesthetic, and recreational community affairs are increasingly being realized. Full achievement of all of them is a prime goal of the whole endeavor. This is the basic philosophical reason for a residential system.

-- Ryer Report, 1956

The Ryer Committee emphasized the importance of developing each house as a self-sustained unit. Particular emphasis was placed on the importance of dining facilities. The Committee stated:

Pleasant and relaxed dining within the student's own house can and should be a significant educational experience. Very few other occasions can so profitably be utilized for the exchange of ideas between students and their elders.

... We endorse the inclusion of appropriate dining facilities as a most necessary part of any new or remodeled residential construction. The dining room should be designed in such a way as to serve a number of auxiliary purposes...

-- Committee on Student Environment, 1963

If we recognize dining -- particularly the evening meal -- as an important element of residential life, we must not only provide the appropriate space and quality of food and service but we must also provide time in each student's schedule to permit him to participate in various facets of educational life.

-- Committee on Student Environment, 1963

The essential difference between a simple dormitory system and a collegiate residential system is that the work of the former can be done practically as well by private rooming houses whereas the work of the latter is feasible only where teachers are to be found whose concern for the welfare and growth of their students is so great that they are prepared to share their own lives with those of their students... It is a society where age, giving whatever counsel and sagacity it can to youth, is in turn stimulated and strengthened by youth's questioning, curiosity, and vitality.

-- Frederick Gardiner Fassett
Dean of Residence
1966 Report to the President

A number of specific changes have been introduced with the aim of increasing the flexibility of the undergraduate program and offering the student more freedom of choice...

While the intent of the changes has been laudable and some of the results clearly beneficial in certain aspects, the overall consequences have fallen far short of what ought to be our goal. By ending the block grouping of freshmen, we have practically eliminated the chance that a student will see a familiar face from one class to the next. Much of a student's experience of MIT as an undergraduate is acquired in a diverse set of living groups, separated both physically and intellectually from the classroom. Although he is a member of an intellectually elite group of undergraduates, he does not share the intimate knowledge of his fellow students that is possible in small undergraduate colleges.

-- Report of the Commission on MIT Education, 1970

Other aspects of the environment also call for comment. The prevailing values of this institution place very great stress on productivity, efficiency, action, organization -- to the detriment of more contemplative, casual and spontaneous modes of intellectual life. Certainly these former qualities are great virtues, but in excess they work against reflectiveness about purposes and values and tend to make difficult the kind of ongoing self-consciousness about the larger meanings and consequences of one's work that we always need. MIT has the appearance of great busyness and terrific efficiency, but not of great reflectivenss -- an impression conveyed by more than one visitor to this university. The very fact that we have "awakened" to find ourselves uncertain of our purposes and direction lends weight to this judgment. It would be easy to caricature what we have in mind; the point is difficult to make but we feel it must be made. There is a relentless, driven quality to life at MIT that leaves little room for quieter intellectual activities, for the kind of moderate slackness that is often a condition of creativity and genuine communication. To some extent this is inescapable; we must accept the paradox that the serious pursuit of knowledge requires in some measure a narrowing of attention and a concentration of energy; that a certain intensity and singlemindedness are necessary conditions for intellectual discovery and intellectual excellence and surely for productiveness. But these are not conditions we have to worry about creating at MIT. Rather the opposite is true. We need to think about ways of somewhat slowing the pace of life here, the better to evaluate our activities and reorient, when necessary, our search for new knowledge by taking into consideration more consciously than we now do the ends we wish to serve or fulfill.

-- Report of the Commission on MIT Education, 1970

In many ways MIT is a fragmented community. This is yet another aspect of the environment we must consider. The dominant ethic at the Institute is one that urges individual striving and individual excellence -- this despite the tradition of collaboration and sharing that is so strong in science and engineering. To be sure, much collaboration does go on at MIT -- for example, many projects are genuinely collective efforts. In both oblique and sometimes systematic ways we do learn from one another and assist one another. Yet the Commission feels that there may be too much stress on individualism and not enough on a community of effort and purpose at the Institute. This is, unfortunately, especially true of students at MIT, who, even though there is a visible reaction against competitiveness among them, still strive so hard to excel as individuals that they do not adequately learn what genuine cooperation is. The result is the perpetuation of a kind of isolation and alienation

among them that makes the experience of other perspectives and values difficult.
The strong individualism that is a result of achievement-orientation works to diminish
a sense of community and reduces the opportunities for a kind of casual, humane
learning -- about how others think and feel -- that no curriculum can produce. The
more we are isolated from one another, the less adequately we know what it means
to be fully human. This is true not only of the students at MIT. The faculty mem-
bers are submerged in their work, separated by their functions, isolated by rituals
and status arrangements, kept apart by professional preoccupations, imprisoned in
specialized languages, scattered throughout an enormous academic city. They are
turned in on themselves in a variety of private enterprises. Even physical condi-
tions and arrangements are not conducive to a strong sense of community: many
students and most of the faculty of necessity live at some distance from the Institute;
and the various departments and disciplines at the Institute are not only intellectually
but physically separated. These are problems for which there are no clear answers
and for which in some instances there are no answers at all. But the real fact of
our fragmentation is something we ought constantly to bear in mind and try to over-
come in whatever ways seem feasible.

-- Report of the Commission on MIT Education, 1970

The importance of the residential experience in conditioning values, attitudes, patterns
of socialization, and choice of friendships cannot be overemphasized. The student
members of the CSE have repeatedly emphasized both the potential and the actual
effects that living in an MIT house has had on their own development as responsible
adult citizens, and on the development of their friends and neighbors within the
houses...

Since it has been well known for some time that the living group is the setting where
students spend most of their time and make most of the social contacts that condition
values and attitudes toward other people, it is very tempting to regard the residential
system as "a powerful non-curricular agency which can be utilized to facilitate the
realization of the full purpose of education," in the language of the Ryer Report(p.19).
By providing optimal facilities, personnel, and other resources, one has hoped to
achieve such values as "leadership, breadth, and standards of taste and judgment
among our students," "development of personal and social responsibility, as well as
the formation of patterns of behavior, thought, and spirit which will best foster the
students' living happily and generously," "the development of qualities which in simple,
old-fashioned terms we call character. I am talking about such qualities as judgment,
fortitude, integrity -- the virtues that mark men as civilized -- and I include, too,
the sensitivity and understanding that come from close relations with other students
and faculty." (1963 Report, p.13-17 passim.)

We wish to make it clear that the CSE is in complete sympathy with these lofty ideals.
We would like to see them develop in MIT students, and we believe that the Institute
does have a responsibility to promote any agencies that can help in achieving them.
Indeed, we believe that in 1972 they are probably even more important than in the
past. With the rapid growth of science and technology in recent decades, and the
dominance of their ideas as well as products within our contemporary culture, scien-
tists and engineers find themselves placed more and more in positions of leadership
and responsibility in society. MIT as a whole has recognized the necessity for its
graduates to become more deeply concerned with the human and moral consequences
of their work, and it is universally agreed that it is no longer enough to produce
people with mere technical training for a profession, even if this training is of the

highest quality. Furthermore, we know that a good experience within the residential system has in many individual cases been a crucial factor in developing such responsible attitudes.

Nevertheless, we are very much aware, and the Sommerkorn Report has rightly emphasized, that there often seems to be a considerable gap and discrepancy between these high ideals and the day-to-day realities of dormitory existence. As a result many students come to be cynical, and to regard these values as mere pious platitudes. For it is very unlikely that one can cultivate any specific values or attitudes by conscious effort and policy within an existing system, and in view of the diversity of today's students, any attempt to do so may appear to be forcing them into an artificial and undesirable mold. The same system, and the same institutions, may have wholly different effects on different people. Furthermore, these effects are often indirect, and their ultimate influence on a student's adult life may be quite different from what he or any outside person might predict at the time. If the effects of dormitory residence on each individual's overall education cannot be fully predicted, they can hardly be directed or controlled.

-- Committee on Student Environment, 1973

In view of our emphasis on diversity as both a fact and a positive value, what then should the residential system hope to achieve, and how should it go about trying to achieve this? We believe that the main social goals which are both desirable and feasible are to give each student the maximum opportunity to find an individual life style that will be best suited to his own temperment, needs, and goals, and will enable him to realize his highest potential as a scholar and person, while at the same time recognizing that he can do this only in a community where others have similar needs and rights. Secondly, we wish to maximize the social interaction among these diverse students, in the hope that through such meaningful interaction students will come to tolerate, to appreciate, and finally to learn from the individual peculiarities of each other. If these two goals can be achieved, they should in turn produce creativity, broadening, social maturity, and the other desiderata which previous reports have emphasized.

In order to achieve this we must provide the broadest possible range of facilities and opportunities for social and living styles, as well as personal contacts. Furthermore, these must be offered in an open, free, and non-compulsory way, where each student then decides what response is most appropriate for him or her. Students should have ample information about these facilities and ample opportunity to use them, but never be forced to do so. Under these circumstances a student may be content to ignore many of them, and thus it is not a failure of any part of the residential system if it is valuable only to a minority.

At the same time, it is essential to provide sufficient flexibility so that students can experiment and change life styles and friendship patterns during their undergraduate careers. Students tend to be open and experimental at a crucial period in their lives between parental control of the family home situation and the later responsibilities of providing for their own spouses and children. It would be most unfortunate if students were encouraged to get into the first convenient rut at a time when they have this freedom, and are most capable of taking advantage of it. They should have the right to make mistakes and then start anew. Diversity and flexibility breed a creative tension, and for both the individual student and for the system as a whole, they are the best antidotes to policy errors on the one hand and stagnation on the other.

-- Committee on Student Environment, 1973

The CSE has supported the abolition of compulsory commons in the past, and its recommendation to this effect in 1970, along with various student pressures, was instrumental in the Institute-wide conversion to a voluntary commons system in 1971-72. Students wish to move off campus and do their own cooking for a variety of reasons, including: 1) they can eat more cheaply, 2) they can get better food, 3) they like to cook, and 4) cooking together can promote closer relations among suitemates or other groups of friends. In addition, the compulsory aspect of commons is unappealing to students who might want to eat in a dining hall on occasion, especially if they do not take all the meals served or eat at more irregular hours. Although the dining halls are being run at a loss under the new system, and the Burton dining hall has not been reopened, we recommend that commons continue to be only on a voluntary basis. Despite efforts to improve the quality and variety of food, student sentiment against it remains too strong to warrant a return to the old system.

Nevertheless, we believe that something significant has been lost in this change. While this did not always happen, there were certainly many occasions when the 1963 Report's claim(p. 37) that "Pleasant and relaxed dining within the student's own house can and should be a significant educational experience. Very few other occasions can so profitably be utilized for the exchange of ideas between students, and between students and their elders." was fulfilled. Since everyone was required to take part, common meals were an important force for unifying a floor or entry. In addition, it was an excellent opportunity for those students who wanted to meet other house residents from different floors without either one having to go to the "territory" of the other. In addition, it gave housemasters and tutors an excellent chance to meet students both within and outside of their living groups without having to extend formal invitations. It was an excellent opportunity for them to play the educational role described above in a very informal way, without the work of having to prepare food and drinks for groups of student visitors. Since there is not comparable opportunity to meet and be seen by the whole house, they must make more of an effort to make themselves visible, and their job is made more difficult. It is certainly possible that the same sort of exchange of ideas and quality of conversations may occur on a smaller scale among groups of students who are cooking and eating together. However, they lack the possibility of a group whose size and composition, as well as the topics under discussion, may vary considerably in the course of a lengthy and relaxed meal. Efforts need to be made in other areas to recapture the values that the common dining hall was able to provide.

-- Committee on Student Environment, 1973

If MIT is to meet fully its responsibility to educate the men and women who will become future leaders in our society, it must actively promote the development of those traits of character, intellectual habits, and standards of conduct and achievement essential to wise governance of society. It is this noble purpose toward which the educational experience at MIT is aimed, and to which its residential program contributes so heavily.

-- Chancellor Paul E. Gray
Dedication Ceremonies,
New West Campus House, 1977

APPENDIX D: Recommendations to the Program Planning
Group from the Committee on Campus Dining

I. Introduction

An important goal of the Committee on Campus Dining is to develop the dining component of a residence program which, together with the academic program, responds to the rich diversity of the MIT community and offers students broad opportunities for growth. It is therefore important that the dining facilities planned for the new dormitory be considered in the broad context of a future residence program and not just as another component of the current food delivery services.

The Committee on Campus Dining is still in the process of reviewing the wide range of dining programs at MIT, and expects to make detailed recommendations later this spring. There would be obvious advantages if the new dormitory could be planned in the context of these recommendations. Although the time constraints do not make this possible, we feel that the recommendations being made with regard to the new dormitory can be evaluated in terms of current identifiable needs, and are consistent with the longer-term possibilities being explored by the Committee.

It is envisioned that the dining facilities in the new dormitory will be an important component of a much more diverse and flexible far west campus dining program that would address several of the perceived shortcomings of the current dining options. We urge that our recommendations not be viewed in the context of MIT dining today, but rather in the context of the ongoing effort to strengthen the overall program.

II. Recommendations

A. That the new dormitory contain a central dining room/multi-purpose function area

-- There is a need for a multi-purpose area for large social functions and meetings to serve both New House and the new dormitory residents.

-- The MacGregor dining room is not capable of handling the expected increase in volume at dinner time, nor can it accommodate increased participation in dining service programs resulting from future program changes or improvements.

-- The dining room could also serve some graduate students at the west end of campus, particularly Tang Hall, who currently do not have access to a conveniently located dining facility.

-- It is important to address the problem of geographical isolation by developing a unique dining program (see subsequent recommendations) which would draw people to the west end of campus.

-- The Committee feels strongly that the dormitory-based dining room offers students a convenient, supportive, and integrated residential experience, and facilitates interaction among undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and staff within the residential setting. We feel this is a compelling argument against reopening the Burton House dining hall to serve the needs of the far west campus.

B. That the dining program for the far west campus provide diversity of dining options

    -- Offer an a la carte option.

    -- Operate the new dining room after supper (until midnight) as a grill/pub/ coffee house with more substantial offerings than the typical dormitory snack bar.

    -- Provide dining opportunities seven days per week.

    -- Explore possibilities for coordinating the operation of the new facility and MacGregor dining hall in order to reduce costs and provide variety. Examples might include using only one of the dining rooms during breakfast and lunch, sharing kitchen support facilities, offering wider variety of supper menus (such as a "nice restaurant," delicatessen-type fare, soup and salad bar, etc. -- to be determined), or providing facilities for an in-house bakery operation.

C. That careful consideration be given to ambiance and central location of the dining room

    -- Provide aesthetically attractive decor (possibly including a river view and fireplace) in keeping with the variety of social functions such a space can serve.

    -- Integrate the dining room within the central circulation system which includes entry way, mail boxes, desk, lounges, recreational areas, etc., with connection directly to New House. Such a design would permit indoor passage among the three dormitories with regard to dining opportunities.

    -- Provide for movable partitions and furniture to accommodate various uses of the room.

D. That some provision be made for student cooking

    -- Include a "country kitchen" capable of handling special group functions. (McCormick's country kitchen has a capacity of about 70, but the typical use by students does not exceed groups of 35.)

    -- Provide a cooking area, in close proximity to the dining room, with three kitchen modules for use by students with special cooking needs. The Committee urges that the use of these kitchens be coordinated by the house government to enhance the effectiveness of their use in the overall residential program. One of the dining working groups has suggested (though not yet discussed by the Committee) that a small sink and counter area be incorporated in the lounge areas throughout the house, specifically for snacks (not major cooking).

III. Subsequent Planning

The specific aspects of the dining program in the far west campus will be considered further in the context of the full recommendations of the Committee on Campus Dining and its various working groups. The above recommendations are intended to address the more pragmatic components needed to begin planning for the physical facilities.

APPENDIX E: Dining Review Participants*

John Kassakian**, Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science
    (Chairman, Committee on Campus Dining)

Nelson Armstrong, Student Financial Aid Office

Julian Beinart, Department of Architecture; Faculty Resident, Burton House
    (Temporary Chairman, West Campus Working Group)

Anitta Bliss, McCormick, '81

Dorothy Bowe**, Student Financial Aid Office

Eugene Brammer**, Housing and Food Services

Adrienne Catanese, Senior House, '81

Mark Connelly **, Ashdown, Graduate Student

Dean Daniels, MacGregor, '81

Marcia Dearborn, Walker Food Services

Donna Duerk, Graduate Student
    (Staff to the Committee)

Ilse Evans**, Department of Humanities
    (Chairwoman, West Campus Working Group)

Michael Fink, MacGregor, '81

Will Frazier, Ashdown, Graduate Student

Joseph Gehret, New House, '80

Adina Gwartzman, East Campus, '81

Leo Harten, Ashdown, Graduate Student

Audrey Hartman**, McCormick, '82

Holliday Heine, Office of the Dean for Student Affairs

John Hengeveld, East Campus, '80

Adrian Houtsma, Department of Humanities; Faculty Resident, East Campus

David Kaus, Burton, '80

Bonny Kellermann, Office of the Dean for Student Affairs

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 * Including participants for part of the year.

** Member of the Committee on Campus Dining; Bliss, Harten, and Reddig were
    added to the C.C.D. in the fall of 1979 to replace members who graduated.

Robert Klein, Burton, '79

Betty Larsen, Electric Power Systems Engineering Laboratory

Edward Leonard, Food Services

Edward Maby, Graduate Resident, East Campus

Jeffrey Macklis**, Senior House, '80

Charles Markham, Sigma Chi, '81

Bora Mikic**, Department of Mechanical Engineering; Faculty Resident, Senior House
    (Chairman, East Campus Working Group)

Athena Moundalexis
    (Staff to the Committee)

Larry Nummy, Graduate Resident, Baker

Janos Pasztor, Graduate Resident, Senior House

Rhonda Peck**, McCormick, '81

Daniel Perich**, Random Hall, '81

Dean Phillips**, Baker, '80

Andrew Reddig, East Campus, '81

Charles Rohrs**, Graduate Resident, MacGregor
    (Chairman, Baker/MacGregor Working Group)

Alice Seelinger**, Office of the Dean for Student Affairs
    (Executive Secretary, Committee on Campus Dining)

Finley Shapiro, East Campus, '80

Michael Shatz, New House, '79

Robert Sherwood**, Office of the Dean for Student Affairs

Ann Stevens**, East Campus, '79

Dianne Thilly, Patent Office; Senior Tutor, MacGregor House

Nafi Toksoz, Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences; Faculty Resident, Baker
    House (Temporary Chairman, Baker/MacGregor Working Group)

Michael Wax, Burton, '79

Constance West, Baker, '80

David Wiley**, Office of the President and Chancellor

Charles Zukowski, New House, '81