

From: [Mathieu Laperle, Mr.](#)
To: [Lucy Brown, Dr.](#)
Subject: FW: meal plans
Date: April 25, 2023 9:56:05 AM
Attachments: [New All You Care To Eat \(AYCTE\) Meal Plan model for Fall 2023.msg](#)
[2AllYouCareToEat_FAQ.pdf](#)

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From: Mathieu Laperle, Mr.
Sent: March 10, 2023 2:30 PM
To: Chidinma Offoh-Robert, Dr. <chidinma.offoh-robert@mcgill.ca>
Cc: Fabrice Labeau, Prof. <fabrice.labeau@mcgill.ca>; Theresa Knowles <theresa.knowles@mcgill.ca>
Subject: RE: meal plans

Hi Chidinma,

Enclosed: communication sent to our employees and an FAQ.

Below: a summary of the project.

Let me know if you need more details.

Regards,

Executive Summary

Much like other universities across North America, our Mandatory Meal Plan is designed to **support students** who are away from home for the first time. Meal Plans **ease the transition** to life at a large university by eliminating the need to shop for and prepare meals and allowing students to focus on academics and extracurricular activities.

SHHS is a **self-financing, mixed business model**, comprised of self-operated locations and providers and tenants. SHHS has to generate revenues to successfully meet the University's financial expectations. As such, we must ensure that the entire cost of the Meal Plan Program, including activity expenditures related to the operation of all the Dining Halls on campus (renovations, mortgages, repairs and maintenance, utilities, etc.), is covered.

From FY2008 to FY2011, we made important changes to the Meal Plan Program. These changes marked the beginning of a new Program that is better adapted to the lifestyle of our clientele. The following section offers a snapshot of previous Meal Plans and the current Meal Plan in FY 2023.

HISTORY: MEAL PLAN PROGRAM AT MCGILL UNIVERSITY

- 2009: MFDS Unit Creation: McGill Food and Dining Services is a newly created unit (since 2009) under the umbrella of the Office of the Deputy Provost (Student Life and Learning). Prior to 2009, food services at McGill were under the supervision of two separate units: Ancillary Services and Residences. In 2009, MFDS's mandate, was the systematic review of the entire unit, including the Meal Plan Program.
- The Traditional Residences Dining Halls **Plan** is applicable to all students residing in Carrefour Sherbrooke Residence, Douglas Hall Residence, Gardner Hall Residence, Molson Hall Residence, McConnell Hall Residence, New Residence Hall, Royal Victoria College Residence, University Hall Residence and Presbyterian College. The related Dining Halls are Bishop Mountain Dining Hall (BMH), Douglas Dining Hall (DH), Royal Victoria Dining Hall (RVC), Carrefour Sherbrooke Dining Hall (CS) and New Residence Dining Hall (NRH).
- Board Plan under Residences (BMH, RVC and DH) – Historically, McGill operated a Board Plan in three (3) of the residences. This plan allowed students three meals per day, Monday to Friday, at BMH and DH Dining Halls, and seven days per week at the RVC Dining Hall every term. The missed meal factor was significant, especially at breakfast. The total amount of the Meal Plan, including all associated administration costs, was incorporated into the residence rental fee.
- Declining Balance under Ancillary Services (NRH and Retails) – The concept behind this Meal Plan was like a debit card where funds were deducted from the Meal Plan account with every transaction. With the purchase of the NRH (then a hotel) in 2003, McGill began offering a declining balance Meal Plan Program. This Program was adopted in 16 locations on the two campuses, but not in the three (3) residences (BMH, RVC and DH) that had a Board Plan. The total amount of the Meal Plan, including all associated administration costs, was incorporated into the monthly residence rental fee.

Declining Balance Meal Plan Program

In the fall 2009, we chose to adopt the declining balance system for our Meal Plan, in part because students had requested this system for several years, but also because it was the most popular option among other universities in Canada. Residents now had access to 21 food locations on both campuses. In addition, resident student surveys consistently revealed that although students found the declining balance plan costly, overall, it had a much higher satisfaction rating than did the traditional fixed board plan at BMH, RVC and Douglas Hall. The fee breakdown (fee payment vs. food dollars) remained unchanged with the implementation of the new declining balance meal plan.

Project Scope/Opportunity/Guiding Principles

With the new academic year, the decision was made to review the current Meal Plan for the following reasons:

- To compare McGill's Meal Plan Program with other main Canadian universities and some US Universities
- To foresee the impact of the recruitment and the mission to provide a great meal plan for our population.

To analyze the option to provide a Dining Service with the cost of food rising.

All You Care To Eat Concept (AYCTE) – Project Overview

- Residence life and dining is an integral part of the education experience for many students. One thing is crystal clear... today's students want flexibility, convenience, and healthy options that match their lifestyle and personal interests. Whether enrolled in a mandatory meal plan or a voluntary plan, these factors influence their satisfaction levels and value perceptions. The Canadian higher education marketplace offers a variety of declining balance (DB), All You Care To Eat (AYCTE) and hybrid plans that reflect the history and traditions of the institution, market trends, and evolving customer expectations.
- Today's students and their parents have high expectations of post-secondary institutions. Parents have been intimately involved in the lives of their children and expect the institutions will take a similar approach to caring for their son or daughter. For many, their interactions, value perceptions and satisfaction with dining services are integral to influencing how they feel about their entire education experience.

Other Universities

- The traditional 'three meals a day' or 'Board Program' concept is no longer acceptable to today's students who demand the flexibility to eat, snack or drink when they want and where they want on the campus. As a result, the preferred meal plan on campuses today is the 'unlimited' or the 'all you care to eat,' option that allows students to eat as much or as little as they want, and at times that are convenient for them. Many Canadian schools have transitioned away from more traditional declining balance programs towards AYCTE plans.
- For example, the following schools now operate or have recently transitioned to AYCTE meal plan programs; University of Alberta, Simon Fraser, Carleton, Dalhousie, University of Ottawa, Queens, Laurier, Laurentian, University of Calgary, Brock, Ryerson, Lakehead, Concordia, University of Manitoba, and St Michael's College.

All You Care To Eat Option – benefits

The strategic initiatives are to:

- AYCTE plans provide meal plan holders unlimited access to any of the dining halls on campus. The AYCTE plan encourages culinary risk-taking and facilitates a shared dining experience with their peers. Perhaps most importantly, they (and their parents) expect, even demand, real value for their investment in their meal plan.
- With a simple swipe of their card at any dining hall entrance, AYCTE meal plan holders enter the dining hall and have the freedom to choose anything, regardless of cost, value or portion size, and have the option to return for seconds. It provides them the flexibility to choose what and how much they eat every day for a single fixed cost. This new plan will also include a 'flex' dollar component for use on campus retail locations.
- Students appreciate the structure of the AYCTE plan because it 'feels' like they're getting more. Having bought an AYCTE plan, students have the flexibility to eat what they like while also eliminating the portion size challenge (I get what I pay for). AYCTE plans also remove the common practice of students evaluating the price of menu options, and paying for food multiple times, and eliminates the risk of students running out of meal plan dollars. By removing this burden, students feel empowered to select foods based on their nutritional needs and personal preferences rather than selecting lower-cost items to save money.
- Increase students' satisfaction levels and value perceptions and the students won't have the burden to budget and to add meal funds throughout the academic year.
- With the AYCTE meal plan students will be able to choose from a wide variety of healthy and local foods based on their nutritional needs and personal preferences rather than choosing meals based on price.
- As well, our mandatory meal plan is designed to support the residence life experience and offers students the opportunity to eat and connect with each other in the dining halls. The dine-in, AYCTE meal plan will enhance social connections amongst residence students by encouraging communal dining and will help to build stronger residence communities.

- An AYCTE meal plan also has an additional benefit of being more sustainable by eliminating all single-use beverage and takeout containers, disposable cutlery, and retail-style packaging. This important consideration aligns and supports McGill's goal of becoming zero waste by 2035.

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Senior Director - Directeur principal

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All You Care To Eat FAQs

Q: What is an All You Care to Eat (AYCTE) meal plan?

A: The AYCTE meal plan offers residence students the opportunity to swipe their card at the entrance of the dining halls and enjoy as much as they care to eat while at the location!

Q: How will the offering change on this new meal plan?

A: There will be a variety of hot and **self-serve stations**, and all meals will be **dine-in**. We will continue to feature daily and weekly menus of delicious, freshly prepared home cooked meals to meet the needs of our diverse population. These include vegan, vegetarian and made-without-gluten food options.

Q: Will the new plan accommodate students with dietary restrictions?

A: As with the current meal plan, the menus on the AYCTE meal plan will pay close attention to the top allergens, and we will offer students who need special dietary attention options that take these into account.

Q: Who is the plan for?

A: This plan will be mandatory for all downtown resident students living in the traditional and hotel style residences.

Q: What happens to students who are not on the mandatory meal plan? Can they come and eat in the dining halls too?

A: Our dining halls are open to anyone on campus, including non-residence students without meal plans, staff, faculty. They would simply pay a flat meal fee for a one-time, all-you-care-to-eat visit.

Q: How does it work?

A: Students swipe their card upon entering the dining hall and will have unlimited access to the dining hall, with no restrictions on how often they enter, or what they eat.

Q: What happens to the current students who will have funds carried over to the rollover plan at the end of this academic year?

A: Students with any rollover funds will be able to use these funds at participating AYCTE locations.

From: [Mathieu Laperle, Mr.](#)
To: [Claire Loewen, Ms](#)
Subject: New All You Care To Eat (AYCTE) Meal Plan model for Fall 2023
Date: February 28, 2023 5:28:00 PM
Attachments: [2AllYouCareToEat_FAQ.pdf](#)

[view in web browser →](#)



Dear Colleagues,

We are happy to announce that after an extensive review and in response to feedback from students, SHHS will be transitioning away from the current mandatory declining balance meal plan and will be implementing an All You Care To Eat (AYCTE) meal plan model in the residential dining halls starting in the Fall 2023.

In recent years, students' satisfaction levels and value perceptions of the declining balance meal plan decreased with students having the burden to budget and to add meal funds throughout the academic year. Also, the post-pandemic inflation and the rising costs of food created additional pressures on students' purchasing power of food in residence.

Many Canadian universities have transitioned away from more traditional declining balance programs towards a more flexible and convenient AYCTE plan to meet students changing needs. With the AYCTE meal plan students will be able to choose from a wide variety of **healthy and local foods based on their nutritional needs and personal preferences** rather than choosing meals based on price.

As well, our mandatory meal plan is designed to support the residence life experience and offers students the opportunity to eat and connect with each other in the dining halls. The dine-in, AYCTE meal plan will enhance social connections amongst residence students by **encouraging communal dining** and will help to build stronger residence communities.

An AYCTE meal plan also has an additional benefit of **being more sustainable** by eliminating all single-use beverage and takeout containers, disposable cutlery, and retail-style packaging. This important consideration aligns and supports McGill's goal of becoming zero waste by 2035.

We invite you to consult our [AYCTE FAQs](#) for more details and information on this new meal plan model that we believe will improve the overall dining experience, health, and wellbeing of students.

Mathieu Laperle,
Senior Director, SHHS

This message was sent to you by the Student Housing and Dining Service Centre.
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