



STUDENT GOVERNMENT

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHANNEL ISLANDS

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY CHANNEL ISLANDS * 1 UNIVERSITY DRIVE * CAMARILLO, CA 93012

A Resolution Calling for Meal Plan Flexibility and Student Autonomy

Drafted by: Noah Soriano, Senator of Housing and Residential Education

Sponsored by: Andrew Fox, Student Government President

Approval Date:

WHEREAS, the mission of California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI) Student Government is to place students at the center of the educational experience by leading with integrity and serving the students and CSUCI Student Government (SG) serves as the official representative voice of CI students; and

WHEREAS, CSUCI Student Government believes in advocating for the best interests of all CSUCI students; and **WHEREAS**, the current CSUCI policy requires all residential students to purchase a meal plan, with no option to opt out, regardless of personal dietary needs, financial situation, or culinary independence; and

WHEREAS, some students may have the ability, resources, and preference to prepare their own meals in a healthier, more affordable, or more culturally appropriate manner than what is currently provided by Campus Dining; and

WHEREAS, students have raised concerns regarding the nutritional quality of campus food, citing the use of seed oils and other low-cost ingredients that do not align with many students' dietary values and health goals; and

WHEREAS, during the Meeting with Student Government, Housing, and Campus Dining on Wednesday, March 12, 2025, a university representative suggested that students without a meal plan may resort to eating "a box of Oreos," implying a lack of trust in student autonomy; and

WHEREAS, Student Government opposes the notion that the university must act as a “nanny state,” monitoring every aspect of student life, and instead asserts that the university’s purpose is to educate and empower students to make informed decisions about their well-being; and

WHEREAS, CSUCI already offers a meal plan upgrade feature, allowing students who choose to opt out the option to later enroll or increase their plan if they so desire; and

WHEREAS, the student government recognizes the remarks of Julia Heck, Associate Vice President for Student Life & Support Programs and Dean of Students, regarding concerns that communal kitchens would become overrun if students could opt out, but maintains that this argument is unsubstantiated and seems to reflect more on current service shortcomings than valid reasoning for denying students choice; and

WHEREAS, during both the discussion with John Lazarus and the March 12th meeting, no convincing argument was presented to justify mandating meal plans for all residents; and

WHEREAS, enforcing a one-size-fits-all policy is inequitable, especially given the wide variety of dietary, financial, and cultural needs of the student population, including those that fall outside of sincerely-held religious beliefs and medically necessary dietary restrictions; and

WHEREAS, even students living in dormitories without kitchens may still exercise culinary independence by meal prepping at other locations such as a family residence and bringing their food to campus, where they can reheat it using the numerous microwaves available in the Student Union Building, Bell Tower, and Village kitchens; and

WHEREAS, allowing students to opt out would empower them to live more independently, alleviate financial burdens, and support those whose dietary restrictions or health choices are not met by campus dining services. Students who know how to shop and cook effectively can make far cheaper and healthier meals than what a meal plan currently offers; and

WHEREAS, the University of Florida allows on-campus residents to opt out of meal plans, providing students with autonomy in choosing how they meet their dietary needs, and this model has proven effective—according to UF’s Food Services Master Plan, 40.36% of surveyed students identified the non-mandatory nature of meal plans as “very important” in their decision to live on campus, demonstrating that such flexibility positively impacts student satisfaction and housing decisions; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that CSUCI Student Government recommends that the university introduce an opt-out feature for residential meal plans, to be made available through the housing portal prior to move-in; and be it further

RESOLVED, that students who choose to opt out receive an email and housing portal notification providing cooking resources and guidelines to support independent meal preparation and rigorous sanitation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that CSUCI Student Government recommends the implementation of a universal 30-swipe and 15-swipe meal plan option for all residential students, regardless of their occupancy type; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this resolution be widely distributed, including but not limited to: Governor Gavin Newsom, State Senator Monique Limon, Assemblymember Jacqui Irwin, Assemblymember Steve Bennett, CSU Board of Trustees, University President Dr. Richard Yao, Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Eboni Ford Turnbow, Dean of Students Julia R. Heck, Vice Provost Mitch Avila, ASI Board of Directors, Student Organizations & Involvement, CSUCI Housing & Residential Education, Campus Dining, Ventura County Board of Supervisors, The CI View, and relevant local and student media outlets.

Source: https://businessservices.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Food-Svcs-Master-Plan-Report_Final_December-2019.pdf

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