



Congress Meeting 10-05-2011

On October 5, 2011, Abilene Christian University's Students' Association held their third congress meeting for the Fall 2011 semester. The meeting began with guest speaker Anthony Williams' discussion on the reformed meal plan. Williams explained that he understands the expectations of this new meal plan from a business standpoint. Additionally, he explained that he works in a department largely concerned with catering to the needs of students with respect to dining services, the campus store, mailing services, university purchasing, etc.

Williams explained that last school year, the Depot sent out a survey to students regarding what students want on our campus. Originally, the meal plan from last year had been in effect for sixteen years. Responses from the previously mentioned survey indicated students thought the meal plan was too rigid. Additionally, students didn't like that it went by ID swipes. Collectively, students said they didn't like the "old" meal plan, and also they were upset about the fact that bean bucks did not transfer over from one semester to the next. Essentially, students wanted to be able to eat what they wanted to eat.

Williams wanted students to know that the university is not making any more money off the new meal plan model in comparison to the old one. This "reformed" meal plan is truly a response to what students expressed in the survey. Additionally, with this year's meal plan, a student received approximately \$400 worth of bean bucks (which is a substantially larger amount than last year).

Williams proceeded to open up a time for questions from congress members. The following is a list of questions from congress members and corresponding answers from Anthony Williams.

1) Bo Braddock: "Currently, what is a way for you to see how many days you have used if you are on the five day access? How do you find that out?"

Answer: Meal plans for upperclassmen have not been a focal point. We are working on that this year, and we'd love for you some of you (congress members) to be a part of that.

2) Rodney Johnson: "What does the 999 meals mean?"

Answer: We just had to put a number in there, but it essentially means you have an unlimited amount of swipes.

3) Blair Agan: "For the five day meal plan, is the extra \$200 usually what is spent on the weekends?"

Answer: Usually, but we allow for a Friday exodus.

4) Andrew Salcedo: "Firstly, I'd like to thank you for listening to us. Let me just say that the meal plan situation has gotten a lot better. I do have concerns for people taking Greek, and people taking 12:00 classes. Usually, these people have to come back to the Bean around 2:00 or 3:00 and the quality of the food is not as good (ex. The burgers are dry). Do you have any plans to change that?"



Answer: This is all new for us, and it is often challenging. We run the bean from 7:00am to 11:00pm. We normally shut down the “home zone” after 2:00pm. This station has a higher fat content and the food is not very attractive after awhile. We want to provide an exhibition where you can get warm veggies. Also, there is always supposed to be grilled chicken breast available. Additionally, there is always supposed to be tuna, cold chicken, or some sort of protein available at the sub station. This station is always open. Also, we are looking into creating a station that is similar to Genghis Grill. It’s important to remember that we are still making modifications. We are still looking at the survey from Student Life about the meal plan and we are trying our best to respond accordingly. Our ultimate goal is to have a premiere dining program. We have one of the best.

5) Andrew Salcedo: “Is the salad line open all day long?”

Answer: Yes. The produce line is open all day long.

6) Cameron Bearden: “Why did all of our bean bucks recently reset?”

Answer: There was a power/system problem that made a lot of bean bucks reset. We are currently working with IT to correct this.

7) Cameron Bearden: “When are bean bucks supposed to reset?”

Answer: They are supposed to reset next semester. Additionally, they are supposed to carry over to next semester.

8) Cameron Bearden: “Is there anyway to make to-go boxes more available after lunch?”

Answer: Under our current model, we are not supposed to have to-go boxes. We can talk to Aramark to see if they will allow us to have it for lunch; however, there are lots of challenges with this. We are not opposed to revisiting this, though.

9) Cameron Bearden: “Why are there a lot of flies in the Bean?”

Answer: We normally have a fly screen in the back dock where vendors are coming in and out; however the fly screen recently broke so a lot of flies were able to get in. We just got a new fly screen installed on Friday, though, so we shouldn’t have a fly problem anymore.

10) Bo Braddock: “I am very happy about the meal plan reformation. The meal plan has vastly improved. However, the quality of food is not that good. In fact, the food quality is about the same.”

Answer: Our goal is to have a premier dining program. We want it to look good (good atmosphere). I want to know if the food is just average.

11) Connor Vansteenbergh: “When our friends walk in, sometimes the food looks really good; but then sometimes the food just looks okay.”

Answer: So, you’re saying that it’s not consistent? Would you like to pay more money for better food? Within the week, you’re supposed to have a premier meal.

12) Diamond Cobb: “Are you not allowed to put salt on the food?”

Answer: We like to prepare our food in a way that can be modified according to individual preference.

13) Diamond Cobb: “Do you use recipes?”

Answer: The cooks do use recipes. Five years ago, we didn’t have any culinary degree professionals, however now we have 6 of them working for us.



14) Tino Angadicheril: "I have a compliment. Last year, the plates were really dirty, but now everything a whole lot more clean."

15) Katherine Handy: "My freshman year I suffered from food poisoning. I was wondering what kind of efforts you are making to ensure your food doesn't make anymore students sick?"

Answer: We are closely monitored three times a semester. If a report comes back at below 95% cleanliness, then it immediately gets sent to my desk. I have a rigorous standard that is put in place.

16) Rodney Johnson: "There's nowhere to sit after chapel."

Answer: There are a little over 700 seats in the dining hall. We have about 900 swipes, most of them around chapel time. There is about a 15-minute period where we don't have enough seating. We want to add additional seating, however we're currently not allowed to.

17) Connor Vansteenbergh: "I have a compliment. The staff seems a lot nicer. However, a lot of times the screens are not always accurate about what the line is actually serving. Can they be more consistent?"

Answer: Yes, definitely.

Once the question-answer time elapsed, the Society of Physics presented a conference request to the SA congress. The Society of Physics requested \$345 and was granted \$345.

Additionally, the Swing Cats presented a conference request to the SA congress. The Swing Cats requested \$1,260 and were granted \$1,260.

The meeting concluded with Andrew Saucedo, Bible Building Representative, requesting to congress that \$30 be taken from the congressional budget (\$3,000 a semester) to buy a sweatshirt from the campus store that will serve as an incentive for Bible majors to take his survey. With the exception of four members who abstained, Congress passed the bill.