

Committee on Vendor Services

Annual Report Academic Year Fall 2017 – Spring 2018.

To: Emily Tai, Chairperson, Academic Senate Steering Committee

Committee Members: Cheryl Tokke, Chairperson; Melissa Dennihy, Secretary; Janet Franzese, Miguel Quiroz, Li Xu Li , David Wasserman. New members: Lucy Shi, Steven Cheung.

Date: May 22, 2018

In the academic year Fall -2017 to Spring 2018, the Vendor Services Committee met three times.

- Cheryl Tokke served as duly elected Chairperson.
- Melissa Dennihy served as duly elected Secretary for, Spring 2018, Fall 2018- Spring 2019
- Janet Franzese, was elected to serve was the Chairperson in the upcoming Fall 2018 – Spring 2019 Academic Year.

Key Activities

Resolutions

1. Purpose Statement Narrative

The Steering Committee charged our committee to create a 2-4 page narrative considering how the committee contributes to the realization of Queensborough’s Mission Statement and Middle States Accreditation Standards 2 and 6. The committee reviewed the mission statement and accreditation standards and the committee collaborated to create the following purpose statement.

In keeping with Queensborough Community College’s mission to provide an affordable, high-quality education for its students, the Vendor Services Committee focuses on reviewing the affordability and quality of food, beverages, and products available for purchase from campus vendors.

In addition, and in keeping with the College’s mission to provide a nurturing environment for its students, the Vendor Services Committee evaluates the availability of and demand for healthy food and beverage options provided by campus vendors. The committee seeks feedback from students about such matters as where they purchase healthy food options; which healthy food options they would be most likely to purchase; and how well vendors’ products meet their nutritional needs.

The Vendor Services Committee continuously assesses and seeks to improve vendor services through such efforts as conducting student focus groups and evaluating feedback; producing usage reports on sales and products; periodically reviewing vendor products; and considering competition from off-campus vendors. The committee considers and evaluates suggestions and complaints from students regarding prices, product availability, and the convenience of vending services. We focus, in particular, on finding a balance between nutrition, affordability, and diversity of options to meet students’ needs and preferences. We also consider issues of convenience such as the payment method options students can choose from and the accessibility of campus vendors such as Starbucks, cafeterias, and the Bookstore.

Vending Machine Research Project

A major initiative of the Vendor Services Committee in partnership with the Business Department was undertaken to investigate the usage and preferences of the vending machines by students.

In 2017 focus groups were formed in Dr. Tokke's Marketing Classes to research food options on campus. 47 students were divided into groups of four or five students, designated a certain vending machine area on campus, and were tasked with observing how and what students purchased at the vending machines. Further, they received feedback from students about food preferences in the vending machines. Collaborative evaluation was completed and each group developed finding and results. These findings and results were blended into the overall assessment that is included in this report.

Methodology:

Six research questions were presented to the focus groups. The students went onto campus to observe their assigned vending machines; students who were using the machines and what were contained in the vending machine. They took a picture of the vending machine (camera notes), and came back to class with their data. 46 of the 47 students personally used the machines at least once.

The following were significant findings that resulted from the project.

- “Significant competition exists for the vending machines... includ[ing] food carts on the perimeter of campus and local delis”
 - “5 of the 7 groups concluded that the prices of the vending machine were a ‘rip off,’” but students also note “the high cost from the food trucks... vending machines give a middle option.”
 - “Some students don’t trust the credit card options.... [or] the mechanical elements of the machine, having lost money... several students remarked about safety of using their electronic options”
 - “Overall, students were pleased with the new machines”
2. Healthy snack options

The work done by last year's committee reveals that, with the exception of bottled water, students are not purchasing healthy snack options nearly as much as they purchase “junk food” (e.g. Skittles, M&Ms and Snickers). The vending machine research supports this finding. The option of the food trucks off the premises but adjacent to campus does provide competition and several students use this option for purchase of food.

Student Representation

The committee discussed and acknowledged the need for input from student representatives. The student representatives listed as committee members do not continue attending. The new committee will need to investigate if it is plausible and possible to have student representatives participate on the committee, and if so nominate them and find some means to ensuring their continued participation and attendance in meetings and activities.

Respectfully submitted,

Cheryl Tokke, Ph.D.
Vendor Committee Chairperson,
Business Department