ENRICHING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

**EXCEED**
expectations

**LEADER**
in sustainability

**BE**
in innovative

**RESPONSIBLE**
financial management

**SUPPORT**
ISU’S OVERALL MISSION
**AND**
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS
MISSION

ISU Dining provides a variety of quality and sustainable culinary experiences that enhance the educational and cultural aspects of Iowa State University.

VISION

We strive to be one of the premier university dining operations in the country and a pillar of service for the Cyclone community.
Our guiding principles form the basis of our daily actions and drive our strategic plan.

## Guiding Principles

### Customer Experience:
Create a quality, consistent dining experience through the use of diverse menus, state-of-the-art technology, innovative facility designs, and friendly service providers that exceeds the customers’ expectation and brings them back to eat with ISU Dining, again and again.

### Core Commitments

**Quality Experience:**
Establish service objectives and provide staff training to ensure these objectives are met.

**Innovation:**
Utilize innovative technology, facility design, menu offerings, and equipment to stay on or ahead of current foodservice trends.

**Analysis:**
Measure and evaluate the customers’ expectations and satisfaction with their experience.

### Responsible Financial Management:
As a self-supporting operating department receiving no university subsidies or outside funding, ISU Dining is committed to offering the ISU community comprehensive meal plan programs and dining options at competitive prices in safe, modern, attractive, and functional facilities. We manage our financial resources in a responsible, efficient, and cost-effective manner that ensures the availability of capital to sustain current operations, fund innovation, and support future growth.

### Core Commitments

**Disciplined Budgeting:**
Establish a realistic, reasonable, and attainable budget as a tool to project the resources necessary for the achievement of the department’s defined goals and objectives.

**Thoughtful Evaluation:**
Regular review and analysis of budget-versus-actual results to measure financial performance of the department and each operating unit, ensure expenditures are reasonable, accurate, and appropriate to accomplish the department’s defined goals and objectives.

**Controlled Reinvestment:**
Thoughtful and disciplined allocation of all surplus funds back into our operations through the ongoing maintenance of existing facilities and equipment, new and re-modeled venues, repairs and upgrades to tools and equipment, and enhanced technology.
Core Commitments

Succession and Growth Opportunities:
Standardize processes to help employees grow without biases based on differences of any kind, recognizing that our differences make us stronger. Pursue opportunities to diversify staff at all levels to reflect the community we serve.

Safety and Accountability:
Lead and model diversity and take action when we observe someone being treated unfairly, recognizing that words and actions matter, and the absence of action and words also matter.

Awareness, Education, Accessibility, and Respect at all Levels:
Value diverse life challenges, creating an environment that is inclusive of all. Encouraging educational opportunities that enhance awareness of others’ lived experiences.

Develop and Maintain Culture-Rich Menus:
Understanding that food preferences reflect core values of our customers and communities.

Team Development and Recognition:
Growing a community that enhances team potential and efficiencies through teaching, modeling, personal development and recognition.

Core Commitments

Invest:
Retain and develop an innovative and diverse team of highly-competent, dependable, and service-oriented professionals.

Elevating Guest Experience Beyond Expectations:
Create confidence and desire in our team through recognition, positive interactions, and accountability.

Inspiring and Empowering our Team:
Share knowledge and ongoing mentoring to promote personal and professional growth.

Environmentally Conscious:
ISU Dining is committed to responsible stewardship in its efforts to provide a sustainable, quality dining experience for the Iowa State community. To achieve this, ISU Dining continually develops and implements sustainable solutions through local purchases, waste reduction and diversion, education, and other actions.

Core Commitments

Constant Progress:
Continually explore a variety of new environmental solutions to incorporate into our operations.

Outreach:
Share our sustainable practices with students, faculty and staff, local community, and peers for better understanding of our commitment to the environment.

Equity and Inclusion:
We respectfully embrace our differences, learn from one another, and seek to provide a safe and welcoming environment by offering a variety of cuisines to enhance the educational and cultural experiences that reflect our diverse community.
Assistant Director of Business Services, Stuart Essex, is responsible for ISU Dining’s strategic financial management with oversight of budgeting, forecasting, reporting, and capital project assignment. Leading efforts to identify revenue, cost, budget, and other statistical trends, he is a key contributor to departmental strategic planning, including the continual enhancements of ISU Dining’s program offerings. Stu manages and prepares ISU Dining’s budget and annual rate proposal to the Iowa Board of Regents with a focus on ensuring that meal plan rates remain competitive while also generating the necessary revenue to support ISU Dining’s operations. He is also responsible for managing requests associated to ISU Dining’s financials from auditors, regulatory bodies, and other departments across Iowa State University.

Stu’s professional experience spans progressive individual and leadership roles in financial operations, relationship management, strategic marketing, communications, and product management at Iowa State, in the financial services and investment management industry, as an independent consultant, and as an owner/operator of a top-rated fast-casual restaurant.

Around 80% of ISU Dining’s revenue is generated by meal plans and dining dollars sold to resident and non-resident students (further detailed below). University enrollment and on-campus housing occupancy directly impact ISU Dining’s revenue. Other revenue is generated from a variety of sources such as non-meal plan purchases at ISU Dining venues; caterings; groups/conferences that utilize ISU Dining services.

We believe it is critically important to charge competitive, yet appropriate, market value rates to ensure our product offerings, food quality, and service continue to exceed customer expectations. In order to do this, it is critical to pay competitive wages which attract and retain the more than 250 professional and merit employees, as well as the more than 1,600 student employees that make up the majority of our high-quality team.

It is vital to generate a modest, yet reasonable, profit in order to re-invest in our operations, minimizing the need to accrue any additional debt (more than $2.4 million in prior debt obligations paid in FY20). Therefore, ISU Dining is committed to using only funds generated from operations to finance any future reinvestments. Examples of reinvestment into our operations include: ongoing maintenance of existing facilities and equipment; new or remodeled venues; and new tools, equipment, new technology and systems. In each situation, our focus is on enhancing the experience of our customers.
Meal Plans Explained

ISU Dining offers students multiple styles of meal plans, including: unlimited/anytime dining, declining balance, and a retail hybrid flex option. Each of these plans provides students with Dining Dollars and Flex Meals.

Unlimited/anytime dining meal plans are intended to be used in a dining center which provide all-you-care-to-eat service. Economies of scale provide dining center food and labor cost to be lower than retail operations where smaller, individually produced items are typically served. Dining Dollars are intended for snack and convenience purchases.

Starting with the 2020-2021 school year, ISU Dining expanded its convenient GET & Go operations on both sides of campus. With this option, students can use a meal swipe and select from a variety of menu options for a quick and complete meal on the go.

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**Unlimited / Anytime Dining (Cardinal, Cyclone)**

This style of plan allows for access to any of the 5 dining centers as often as desired. With these plans, students do not have to manage their swipe quantity throughout the semester. These plans offer students the best value if used regularly – the more the card is swiped, the lower the per entry cost.

**Declining Balance (Gold, Silver, Bronze)**

This style of meal plan provides students a specific number of meal swipes per semester. Students are supplied tools to manage these swipes and view their account balance.

**Retail Hybrid (CyFlex)**

This style of meal plan supplies students a greater number of meal options at retail locations. The number of Retail meals per week is capped at 10 to encourage use of the dining centers, which is known to foster community for residential housing students.

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**BY THE NUMBERS**

- 26 service locations across campus
- Over $12M in self-funded capital projects (facility renovation, new technologies, equipment) in the last 4 years
- 1600+ student employees (largest employer on campus)
- 35%, or $6.7M, of total dining wages paid to student employees (FY19)
- 250+ P&S and merit employees
- 80,000+ accounting transactions approved (FY20)
## Dining Reinvestment Plan

### FY 21
- GET & Go (UDCC / Conversations) expansion
- MU Food Court Seating
- New MU Food Court venue, Pono Poké
- Kosher Kitchen
- Big Yella Food Truck

### FY 22
- College of Design Café
- Union Drive Marketplace, Dishroom Project
- Buchanan / Geoffroy dining venue
- Union Drive Marketplace Phase II

### FY 23
- Conversations Refresh
- Various Cafes Refresh
- TBD: North Side Dining Option
- Culinary Support Center / Bakery

## Recent Projects

### FY 20
- Union Drive Marketplace, Phase I
- GET & Go
- Increase in student labor wages by $1.00/hr.
- Commissary/Bakery Feasibility Study
- Gelato Production Equipment / Gelato Store

### FY 19
- Heaping Plato / Roasterie Café (The Hub)
- MU Food Court remodel
- Courtyard Café Refresh
- Increase in student labor wages by $1.00/hr.
- Addition of Quality Assurance / Food Safety Manager

### FY 18
- Friley Windows (construction completed)
- Lance & Ellie’s (in food court)
- Clyde’s (UDCC)
- Whirlybird’s (State Gym)
- Gentle Doctor Café (Vet-Med café remodel)
- IT / POS System Upgrade

### FY 17
- Bakery Equipment
- Dinkey’s Food Truck
- Friley Windows Construction
Assistant Director of Engagement, Karen Rodekamp, leads the team which connects students and families with information regarding meal plans and services offered by ISU Dining. The area of Engagement consists of the Dining Student Staffing Office, nutritional support for meal plan holders, marketing, and special events. Additionally this area oversees the outreach through academic programs, as well as orientation sessions to prospective and committed students and their families is developed and managed by this sector of dining. Sustainability initiatives are a key component of the department and are managed by this role, along with contract management of agreements which impact the student experience. Karen started her time with ISU Dining as a student employee, then student manager. After graduation, she was a manager with ISU Catering along with working in procurement with ISU Dining, Food Stores. This experience has supplied the building blocks of a broad understanding of ISU Dining’s services.

**Engagement**

Students are the number one priority of ISU Dining. By staying engaged with our students, we connect and learn from them to develop meal plan offerings, menus, facility design, and technology to exceed their expectations.

In order to ensure students have participation in the process, our team partners with the Inter Residence Hall Association (IRHA) and Student Government. We strive to present to these student led organizations multiple times throughout the academic year. Along with these student leaders, our team hosts the ISU Dining Food Committee. This group is comprised of students who have a vested interest in renovations, menu development and various happenings within our department.

Additional facets led by the Engagement Team are the assemblage and management of sponsorship requests from a variety of departments, student organizations, and programs on campus. These requests can range from gift cards to hosting of catered events, such as the ISCORE conference meals. ISU Dining supports over 70 departments and organizations per year, sponsoring over $75,000 in requests yearly. Along with the financial and in-kind support, ISU Dining was a leader in providing students the ability to make a difference with food security on campus. Through the development of the Give a Swipe program, students can choose to donate two portions of their meal plan to be available for their peers who are encountering food security concerns. Since its creation in 2019, 531 meals have been donated. ISU Dining is also applying to be approved for USDA’s SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefit acceptance.

Continuing the support of students, ISU Dining plays a significant role in various academic courses in a range of majors. Instructors, individuals, and student groups regularly reach out to our department for facility tours, case studies, process observations, class presentations and research information. Some of the areas of academia where ISU Dining has assisted coursework are: Journalism and Mass Communication, Food Science and Human Nutrition, Hospitality Management, Industrial Engineering, and Environmental Sciences. In total, ISU Dining assists with over 40 coursework requests per year.

In order to focus on student engagement, a newly added position to this team is a Event Planning Manager. This position provides student meal plan holders with a variety of experiences through themed special dinners, samplings, chef demos, and pop-up events on central campus. By hosting events of this nature, students will know they are the priority of our organization through the outreach and goodwill spread on a continual basis.
Sustainability in a university food service operation is important due to the sheer volume of purchases, production and waste associated with service a campus of our size.

In total, fifty-seven tons of produce from over ten local growers are purchased yearly to supply to our campus. These locally-grown products along with locally-produced and certified organic products comprise 10% of ISU Dining’s yearly food spend.

A major partner to ISU Dining’s local purchases is the ISU Horticulture Research Farm. This campus farm grows products specifically for use by ISU Dining. Some of the products grown by this team include thousands of pounds of peppers, onions, and apples.

Continuing sustainable practices, we forecast menus to only purchase the necessary amount of food for production. We compost over 285 tons of food generated from pre- and post-consumer waste per year. We implemented trayless service in our dining locations in order to help conserve water, energy and cleaning supplies with the added bonus of reducing food cost and food waste.

ISU Dining also continues to increase sourcing of compostable, disposable wares. Over 375,000 compostable carry-out containers and straws are purchased yearly. Additional sustainable programs ISU Dining partakes in recycling of a full array of products, including employee uniforms, cardboard, and used equipment. Used cooking oil is supplied to run the ISU BioBus on campus.

To give our unsold food a second life, volunteers glean food product from our cafés and markets for disbursing to the Food at First free community pantry. Leftover wholesome food from catered events is also donated to Food at First for daily meal distribution within our Ames community.

ISU Dining has representation on the University Sustainability Committee, the University Zero Waste Planning Group, and the STARS/AASHE workgroup. Through participation in these committees ISU Dining is committed to continuing advancements in sustainability efforts.
Nutritional Support

Our Registered Dietitian works with students who have meal plans. Their role is to support students eating on campus who have food allergies, or need dining accommodations to ensure they have access to safe food to eat.

The dietitian also provides nutrition counseling to students for a variety of concerns including managing chronic health conditions, eating disorder and body image services, helps students navigate the changes which come with starting college and eating on campus, and assists with other campus engagement, collaborations, and food security efforts. Students have the option to self-manage or utilize the Special Diet Kitchen for their dietary needs.

Dining Student Staffing Office

As the largest employer of students on campus, ISU Dining centralizes the human resources effort of employing more than 1,600 students through the Dining Student Staffing Office (DSSO).

The DSSO maintains online applications and responds to thousands of interested applicants. DSSO conducts phone interviews while listening to the student’s personal needs. Once employment is accepted, the student is hired into a location close to their home or convenient for their personal life. Class schedules and outside activities are considered when building their work schedule.

Payroll processing, orientation, schedule adjustments, job transfers, attendance, tracking of disciplinary and positive efforts, wage increases, coaching sessions, and separations are efforts conducted by this team.

While working for ISU Dining, students begin at $11 or $12 per hour, depending on the location. Wages increase after 480 hours worked. Students earn a free meal benefit with each three-hour shift. Growth opportunities for promotion to supervisor and student assistant manager positions allow the potential to earn up to $18.50 while gaining skills to create an impressive resume for their next endeavor.

To tackle the process of managing 1,600+ unique student schedules for dining operations, DSSO utilizes ScheduleSource, a software program which maintains employee records, schedules, availability, custom reports, and attendance. The DSSO team worked to build the integration between ScheduleSource and Workday with the assistance of University IT. This allows the two programs to compare a schedule to clock-in hours to determine attendance, tardiness, and more.

An internal online training platform for employment orientation developed by our team has been well received by our technology savvy students. The DSSO team continues to seek avenues which best connect with our student employees.

The Special Diet Kitchen (SDK) is an enclosed venue within Union Drive Marketplace that is mostly free of the top eight food allergens. It is managed in partnership between the dietitian and the Union Drive Marketplace management team. Currently, about 80 students are registered to utilize it.

The SDK is the primary way we are able to accommodate students with severe food allergies without fear of cross-contact of their allergen. Safe food is crucial for student success, and we collaborate with Student Accessibility Services to ensure students are able to feel supported nutritionally during their time at Iowa State University.
Marketing

ISU Dining Marketing assesses, designs, implements, manages and evaluates overall marketing strategies for unique locations, including creation of all media and other marketing collateral for every location.

Marketing efforts are carried out through a combination of professionals and student workers. ISU Dining Marketing also works closely with agency partners, campus life, and University Marketing to develop fun, innovating, and customer-focused brand elements.

Marketing Coordinator, John Greving, manages the day-to-day workload and assignment of marketing projects and acts as first point of contact for incoming jobs. Student workers help to maintain timelines and budgets and gain valuable experience related to their area of study.

All assignments are distributed through the work management system called Wrike. This system allows Marketing to review projects and tasks in real time, and allows for even distribution of work.

The Marketing Coordinator is responsible for purchasing and implementing advertising and promotional materials for ISU Dining campaigns with local vendors as well as helping with strategic direction for projects and over 50 special events throughout the academic year.

Marketing reviews and makes recommendations based on analytics obtained through social media, sales, email marketing and focus groups. Additionally, ISU Dining partakes bi-annually in surveys offered by the National Association of College and University Food Services (NACUFS). These activities give us the ability to make data-driven decisions as we focus on higher customer satisfaction and increasing revenues.

Digital marketing continues to be a crucial piece of how ISU Dining carries out initiatives with customers.

*ISU Dining Marketing is directly involved in messaging with the over 5,000 followers on four social media platforms along with updating and creating website content.*
ON THE FRONT LINE

OUR OPERATIONS

Residential, Retail, and Catering
Residential Dining

**Associate Director of Residential Dining**, Paige Ermer, brings a vast knowledge and experience of customer service and management to our residential team. Paige strategically manages four dining centers, with a total revenue of $29,000,000. Serving over 2.3 million meals per year to the students, university staff and guests. Paige oversees and manages 17 professional managers, 80 merit employees and over 850 student employees.

Paige Ermer

The residential team prides themselves on offering fresh, local and from-scratch menu options.

With an increasing culinary presence, we focus on utilizing sustainable products from Iowa-based producers in our everyday menus. Some examples include dairy products from Anderson Erickson, apples from Deal’s Orchard, produce from the ISU Horticulture Research Farm, tofu from Old Capitol Foods, ice cream from Blue Bunny, sauces from Cookie’s Sauces and Seasonings, among many others.

We strive to be innovative by staying up-to-date on current food trends, while providing excellent service and diverse cuisine. For example, at Union Drive Marketplace, ISU Dining provides our students authentic Latin cuisine, including homemade tortillas. At Seasons, we feature in-house smoked meats and at Friley Windows we roast locally-sourced chicken. Throughout the residential dining program, we recognize the diversity of our student population and provide vegan, vegetarian and Halal menu items to make sure we meet our students’ dietary needs.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT: 2019**

- ISU Dining purchased over 42,500 apples and 11,000 peppers from local suppliers including Deal’s Orchard and ISU Horticulture Research Farm.
- Ordered 49,405 gallons of milk from Anderson Erickson.
- Used over 13,500 pounds of tofu from The Old Capitol Foods from Iowa City, Iowa.
- Purchased over 32,000 pounds of shredded mozzarella cheese for pizzas.
- For our Thanksgiving special event, we purchase free range whole turkeys, locally grown, raised on a family farm to the total of 138-20+ pound individual turkeys.
- Served 124,000 pounds of french fries across the residential locations alone.
- Our students love wing night, we serve 8,950 pounds of boneless chicken wings on these nights.
Union Drive Marketplace

Union Drive Marketplace is ISU Dining’s largest and busiest residential dining center.

UDM has seven unique venues serving an immense array of menu options. In the past few years, UDM has transformed some of the venue concepts and now proudly serves Asian-inspired cuisine at Saikuron, a Latin-focused menu at Picosso, hand-pressed pizzas at Parma’s and a variety of smoked proteins at Cardinal Canteen. Dagwood’s offers made-to-order deli sandwiches. On the Sprout salad bar you will find healthy salad options and fresh cut fruits and vegetables. Sugar Sugar is our dessert counter, offering up fresh, homemade baked items from our Bakery. UDM incorporated over 1,498 new recipes into their four-week menu rotation during the 2018-2019 school year, giving guests more variety, selection and less duplication. UDM is also home to our Special Diet Kitchen, a safe place to eat for students with special dietary needs.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Union Drive Marketplace

Open seven days a week
Maximum occupancy: 927
Meals served per year: 824,703
Staff consists of six professionals, 31 merit staff and over 300 student employees.

Seasons Marketplace

Seasons is Iowa State University’s second largest residential dining center.

Located in the Maple-Willow-Larch Commons building on the east side of campus. Seasons boasts a wide variety of flavors and options, with six different venues to choose from. The Deli and Bushel Basket salad bar offers salad, sandwich and soup options. Olive Branch serves thin crust pizza or brick oven sandwiches. The Wood Grill offers grilled items, Hickory is our in-house barbeque location, that smokes all their meats daily. Cocoa Bean serves cookies, cakes and ice cream treats, and Bonsais features globally inspired flavors.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Seasons Marketplace

Open seven days a week
Maximum occupancy: 650
Meals served per year: 754,127
Staff consists of six professionals, 25 merit staff and over 250 student employees.
Friley Windows

Friley Windows is an all-you-care-to-eat dining center in the Friley Residence Hall overlooking Lake LaVerne. The dining room incorporates an industrial feel with wood column accents and colorful artwork created by a local artist, Susan Chrysler White. Windows serves about 390,000 meals per year to students, staff, guests, and summer groups. Windows is our newest residential dining location, it opened in 2017 with a project budget of 9 million.

Friley Windows features made-to-order dishes that focus on healthy, local, and sustainable ingredients and dishes from many regions. Guests have six dining stations to choose from: unique pizzas made fresh in the brick oven at Slice; rotisserie chicken using free-range chicken from a local farmer; a vegan/vegetarian venue at Zest, featuring tofu made from organic Iowa soybeans; homemade soups and breads; a salad and fruit bar; and homemade desserts along with hard-pack ice cream. Friley Windows meets the needs of the students with continuous service from lunch to late night.

Conversations Dining

Named after the artwork located in front of Oak/Elm Residence Hall, Conversations Dining is distinguished by its traditional dining hall atmosphere. The long tables make it easy to gather with friends and catch up after a long day of studying.

Conversations offers a great assortment of comfort foods from burgers, steak, shrimp, grilled chicken, specialty sandwiches, pizzas, soups, made to order deli, bakery fresh desserts and “hard pack” ice cream. We also feature a greater selection of vegan and plant-based options, allowing students to expand their culinary horizons.

Open seven days a week
Maximum Occupancy: 400
Meals served per year: 319,804
Staff consists of a 3 professionals, 12 merit staff, and over 150 student employees.
Retail Dining

**Associate Director of Retail Dining**, Kristi Patel, oversees retail and vending operations across campus which consists of five fast casual, three markets, 10 cafes, and two food trucks, accounting for approximately $11 million of ISU Dining’s revenue. She is responsible for ensuring consistency and quality of products, high level of customer service, human-resource management, and financial viability in these operations.

Retail Dining features a variety of cuisines tailored to meet the diverse needs of the campus community. From Mediterranean inspired cuisine to burgers and hand dipped shakes to Asian BBQ, menus are designed to create unique destination locations across campus. Menu items are made from scratch in our on-campus Bakery, Culinary Support Center, and the various retail venues throughout campus. We also offer a variety of coffee brands such as Starbucks, Caribou, The Roasterie and Ames-roasted Windmill Coffee.

In the past two years, we have renovated or refreshed seven retail concepts and purchased two food trucks to help enhance our customers’ experience. Future plans include renovation of the Design Café located in the College of Design, incorporating a coffee concept at the East Side Market and establishing a venue in Buchanan Hall.
Fast Casual

Our five fast-casual dining concepts offer customers the ability to dine in one of our unique, chef-inspired retail venues that offers variety and high quality menu items to satisfy everyone’s taste buds.

Clyde’s

A gastro diner, combined with a “We Proudly Serve” Starbucks concept, offering breakfast, lunch, and dinner options with both dine-in and take-out service. Clyde’s features made-to-order breakfast sandwiches, Piedmontese beef burgers, salads, specialty grilled cheese sandwiches, and hand-dipped shakes.

Lance and Ellie’s

Located in the Memorial Union and named for the swans that frequent Lake Laverne, Lance & Ellie’s features Boar’s Head meats and cheese, sub buns made in our on-campus bakery, along with a wide variety of sandwich toppings and spreads to customize any sandwich.

Heaping Plato

A Mediterranean-themed menu featuring scratch-made products such as hummus, falafel, sauces, salads, pita bread, and desserts including pistachio baklava, basbousa, and rosemary olive oil cake only available at Heaping Plato. Hand-shaved schwarma is roasted on a spit and served on rice, greens or a homemade pita and finished with a variety of toppings.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Clyde’s served 14,627 shakes and 37,636 burgers last year.

Lance and Ellie’s served 49,179 sandwiches last year.

Heaping Plato served 38,604 falafel last year.
Hawthorn

A combination market and café, Hawthorn features a variety of products including a We Proudly Brew Starbucks, grilled favorites, Lance and Ellie’s sandwiches, freshly-prepared items from our bakery and Culinary Support Center, along with a variety of snacks, grocery items, and bottled beverages. This venue primarily serves the students living in the Frederiksen Court and surrounding campus community.

Markets

East Side Market, located in the Maple-Willow-Larch Commons, West Side Market, located in the Union Drive Community Center, and South Side Market, located in the Wallace-Wilson Commons, feature a variety of snacks, grocery items, and bottled beverages. In addition, East Side Market offers pizza and made-to-order deli sandwiches. West Side Market also offers a made-to-order deli concept along with Smack Dog, our self-branded hot dog concept. In addition, West Side Market offers a variety of grocery products providing shopping convenience to our customers.

We continue to expand our grocery section, including local product selections and specialty offerings in our stores. We also now feature online ordering through the GET app so customers can conveniently purchase products for pick-up.

Dinkey’s Food Truck

Named after the train that used to run between Iowa State College and downtown Ames, Dinkey’s features a Korean-inspired fusion BBQ menu where customers can choose from a variety of proteins, bases, sauces and toppings to create their own unique experience.

Big Yella Food Truck

Our newest food truck started operations in the Fall of 2020. This truck features a build-your-own burrito bowl. Our food trucks give us flexibility to move around campus and adapt to the changing needs of the campus community.

Cafés

Our 10 campus cafés offer a variety of products made in our on-campus bakery and Culinary Support Center, along with snacks and bottled beverages.

Many of our cafés offer a full-scale, coffee-house experience featuring The Roasterie Coffee, a regional coffee brand out of Kansas City, whose founder is an ISU alumnus. At our flagship Roasterie location at the Hub, we also feature gelato made on campus, handcrafted syrups, along with all the standard coffee fare.

In addition to The Roasterie, we also feature two “We Proudly Serve” Starbucks and a “We Proudly Brew” Caribou location. Our coffee programs are sure to meet the needs of our diverse campus population.

Whirlybird’s is our self-branded smoothie concept located in State Gym featuring smoothies, shakes, and smoothie bowls.
Catering

**Associate Director of Catering**, Cheryl Lounsberry, is responsible for all financial, staff, quality, service and safety goals for ISU Catering and the Memorial Union Food Court. ISU Catering and the Memorial Food Court accounts for more than $3.65 million of ISU Dining’s total revenue. The Catering team catered 2,667 events last year.

Cheryl has been in the hospitality/food and beverage industry for over 40 years. Her experience includes Executive Chef, Banquet Chef, Director of Operations, and Director of Environmental Services in restaurants, bars, hotels, and healthcare.

Cheryl Lounsberry

ISU Catering is equipped to cater the full array of customer needs. We service events held within the Memorial Union, the Knoll, Alumni Center, Reiman Gardens, and throughout the campus, as well as the ISU, Ames and surrounding communities.

Events range from meetings, lectures and social gatherings, to milestone recognitions, and open houses and weddings. The food and service capabilities span drop-off coffee breaks, to boxed lunches, through five-course dinners. Their customer base varies from departments on campus, and individuals hosting private gatherings, to local companies and national corporations.

We train all staff in food safety and responsible alcohol service utilizing the National Restaurant Association’s ServSafe certification programs.

We are implementing Caterease, an event planning web-based software program that will save time and eliminate redundancy. We are also refreshing the ISU Catering website, expecting release in 2021.

**ISU Catering chefs are professionally trained, bringing outstanding skills and experience to the table, elevating tastes and exceeding expectations. Our sales team customizes menus to meet cultural and dietary preferences for any event. Innovation and guest satisfaction is the end result.**
Customer Testimonials

ISU Catering continues to exceed our expectations, time after time. They provide us with creative menu options and top notch service to us as clients and to our event attendees. We appreciate everyone at ISU Catering going the extra mile to provide our guests with a high quality experience.

Erin Heeren
Director of Event Strategies
Iowa State University Foundation

I want to personally thank you for the amazing food that you made for my opening. Everyone is still raving about it!!! Thank you so much.

Susan Chrysler White
Professor, Collegiate Scholar
Painting & Drawing Area Head
School of Art & Art History
University of Iowa

Outstanding! This is how I describe ISU Catering. I enjoy the attention to detail and knowledge of appropriate food items based on the event. The catering team has been very helpful in planning and execution. Staff and guests have raved about the cuisine. Thank you ISU Catering!

Annie Arbuckle
Executive Assistant to the Dean
Iowa State University
University Library

BY THE NUMBERS

- 5,377 first-year students attending 2019 Destination Iowa State picnic
- 10,284 Rice Krispie treats cut for ISU Campus Visits with Admissions
- 2 smallest lunch count served
- 10,564 student hours worked in 2019
The MU Food Court is located on the first floor of the Memorial Union. Food innovation is always on display at the food court’s six venues. We take pride in the creation of a mix of our many self-branded concepts and national chains that offer a variety of regional and globally-inspired cuisine to our customers.

- **Pono Poké**
  High-quality, fresh ingredients are combined to create a burrito or bowl. Featuring ahi tuna, salmon, miso beef, poached shrimp, chicken, and volcano tofu loaded with the perfect toppings and sauces.

- **Rowdy Rooster**
  Fresh chicken dipped in a gluten free coating and cooked to perfection, alongside a variety of sauces. Sides featured include macaroni and cheese and fries.

- **The Mix**
  Offering varieties of fresh fruits, vegetables, prepared salads, and cold and hot entrees.

- **Poco Picante**
  Made-to-order burritos, rice bowls, and loaded tortilla chips with a vast selection of proteins and toppings. Also serving breakfast burritos beginning Fall 2020.

- **Yum Burger**
  Beef and chicken burgers made to order with a variety of toppings to choose from. Breakfast service is new for Fall 2020, featuring eggs, pancakes, hashbrowns, and breakfast sandwiches.

- **Godfather’s**
  Our customers can pick from an array of pizzas with different toppings.
Support Services, IT & Menu Management, Culinary, Bakery, and Culinary Support Center

Providing vital support to ISU Dining’s front-line team allowing them to focus on and serve our customers.
Support Services

**Associate Director of Support Services**, Jamie Lenz, has been a part of ISU Dining for over three decades. Jamie started as an assistant manager in residential dining where he worked in multiple Dining Centers, working his way up to manager of Food Stores, Assistant Director of Food Stores and Vending, Assistant Director of Support Services to the position he currently holds, Associate Director of Support Services.

Jamie currently serves as a Midwest Membership Conference Chair of the professional organization, NACUFS (National Association of College and University Food Services). In 2018 Jamie was recognized with the Ted Maakestad Distinguished Service Award by the Division of Student Affairs. This award is given to those who typify its namesake with an upbeat attitude, genuine caring nature, and exemplary service to all.

Support Services encompasses a variety of dining departments which work behind the scenes to strengthen and maintain ISU Dining’s operations. These entities include Food Stores, Quality Assurance and Food Safety, Gelato Production and its retail store, Maintenance, and Dining Project Management.

Maintenance

In 2019, ISU Dining transitioned maintenance staff from from the Department of Residence to establish our own dedicated team. Bringing staff under the ISU Dining umbrella allowed for team members to further specialize in food service equipment and repairs. This also allows us to proactively conduct preventative maintenance, which reduces equipment failure and does not interrupt production. It also provides us the ability to prioritize emergencies as they arise.

There are four skilled maintenance staff members who specialize in HVAC, refrigeration, food service equipment, plumbing, carpentry, and electrical repair. Our maintenance team is responsible for our 26 service locations, three support facilities, three administration spaces, and more. In total there are more than 786 pieces of equipment, valued at $6.2 million.

We also utilize the in-house maintenance for small construction projects such as demolition, lighting installation, and emergency response.

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

2,600 work orders were completed last year.
Dining Project Management

It’s our philosophy to thoughtfully invest in our operations.

By doing so continually, we minimize long term cost and stay current with our customers’ expectations. Dining Project Management provides oversight to all Dining facility renovations, large equipment purchases, facility management and construction projects.

Project scopes range from renovating large facilities to designing a new concept from scratch, to scheduling painters. Internal construction management allows for centralized direct supervision of projects. This enables us to take knowledge gained from past projects and make informed decisions in future design and construction.

Project management does not begin when the first hammer strikes; projects start months to years prior with the development of the overall concept and menu design. The menu drives much of the project, as this impacts the overall atmosphere and flow of the space. Depending on the project scope, ISU Dining works with a variety of specialized professionals including architects, food service consultants, and branding agencies.

Proper branding is very important to our customers and the image of our department. Branding gives us identity and provides distinctive character to our in-house developed concepts. The role of dining project management ensures all dining, design, branding, and university construction professionals are working towards the same end goal.

Quality Assurance and Food Safety

The Quality Assurance and Food Safety (QA/FS) team uses a comprehensive approach to address both quality and safety standards within all of our dining facilities. The QA/FS team works across ISU Dining locations to ensure state and federal regulations are adhered to. Although the role of this team is divided into two components, food safety and quality assurance, they often go hand in hand to deliver constructive results.

In terms of food safety, the QA/FS team performs audits to ensure we are providing a quality product and maintaining food safety standards across ISU Dining. Established regulatory standards for safety and quality are recorded and documented during every step of the process – receiving, storage, preparation, delivery and service.

Setting high standards and making necessary improvements in quality is crucial in keeping with the size and complexity of our organization. The QA/FS team continually monitors food quality to ensure that ISU Dining standards are maintained consistently from recipe development to preparation to customer service.
Sourcing from over 125 vendors, this team procures, receives, stores, and transports over 75% of all food and non-food products that ISU Dining requires for production. This accounts for approximately $9.5m, for all food and supply needed to keep 26 service locations, the Central Bakery, and Culinary Support Center operational.

Food Stores serves as our internal procurement officers. They collaborate with ISU Procurement and follow all university guidelines. Along with food and supply procurement, Food Stores is ISU Dining’s expert in purchasing the variety of equipment needed for food production.

ISU Dining and ISU Procurement both collaborate with University of Northern Iowa and University of Iowa Dining programs for joint contracts for prime vendor, convenience store, and dairy distribution. In doing so, the three institutions are able to compile purchasing volumes to secure best possible pricing.

In addition to daily responsibilities, Food Stores is a resource to our Iowa State and Central Iowa communities. The team procures and delivers to a variety of departments and student organizations. Furthermore, we provide aid to our community during times of need. For example, they transported donated food supply during a pandemic, and transport water during other emergencies.

A benefit of having Food Stores is the ability to work directly with our local businesses. For instance, we can share our needs with local farmers ahead of their planting season. The farmers then have a commitment from us in advance to plant specifically for our needs. Examples of local product purchases are: tofu from Iowa City, made from Iowa grown soybeans; tomatoes and basil from Boone; green peppers, onions, and apples from Iowa State’s Horticulture Research Farm.
Quality Assurance and Food Safety

The Gelato Production facility first opened in 2019. It is the role of this facility to produce authentic, artisanal gelato and sorbet for The Roasterie Café at The Hub. Enthusiasm for these frozen treats trickled into ISU Catering and other ISU Dining events. Customers have enjoyed hundreds of unique, handcrafted flavors.

Our gelato and sorbet are fresh, made-to-order, and produced in a complex, small batch process. The result is handcrafted, authentic gelato. Each batch of gelato begins with locally sourced milk and cream, which heats, cools and agitates before entering a 12-hour aging process. This important step allows the fat and protein molecules to become fully incorporated, creating an excellent structure for great tasting gelato. Once aged, our gelato is flavored, using high quality, fresh ingredients. Products we use include fresh raspberries, locally sourced basil, and hand squeezed lemons. These are just a few of the raw ingredients you can expect to find in our gelato. Our facility takes pride in our choice to use fresh ingredients, as they deliver a high quality, authentic product.

Once flavored, we begin to churn and freeze the gelato. Our gelato churns slowly which helps keep this dessert dense and creamy. Then we begin to extract the gelato from the batch freezer into a serving pan. The gelato is then moved into a blast chiller to reach an internal temperature of negative 40 degrees. This crucial step instantly freezes the gelato and prevents additional ice crystal formation. Once tempered prior to serving. Gelato is traditionally served 10 – 15 degrees warmer than ice cream, which helps bring out the sweet flavor without additional sugar – or brain freeze!

Our sorbet is dairy-free, but undergoes a production process similar to gelato. We focus on using fresh fruits, herbs, teas and spices. Our sorbets are made in very small batches – creating only a handful of servings at a time. Each recipe heats, cools and agitates just before churning and freezing. Our facility is committed to providing a dairy-free alternative to our students. In order to achieve this, we use a rapid-residual protein swab that tests our equipment down to twenty micrograms (20 μg) of cesium and whey and five micromoles (5 μ moles) of lactose. This safety measure, combined with carefully selected ingredients, provides a peace of mind to our students in search of a delicious dairy-free alternative.

The Gelato Production facility recently expanded its offerings beyond gelato and sorbet, adding desserts such as custards, fillings, jams and sauces to the lineup – all of which are made fresh, from scratch, in small batches. Created from locally sourced milk and flavored with either vanilla or fresh raspberries, the custard is then molded into an elongated bar before our on-campus bakery adds the custard to their fresh-baked croissants.

The fillings and jams use a similar process, and complement ISU Dining’s homemade donuts. The Gelato Production facility also takes pride in the decadent from-scratch caramel sauce. Customers can find this delight drizzled atop homemade bread pudding or served in a warm churro out of Dinky’s food truck.

Dolce Freddo, located in the Memorial Union, is the signature storefront location and feature unique gelato novelties!

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Dolce Freddo, located in the Memorial Union, is the signature storefront location and feature unique gelato novelties!

ISU Dining proudly offers house made gelato, sorbet, custard, caramel sauce and jam, made right here on the ISU Campus.

Team members have trained under the Carpigiani Gelato University, achieving top-of-the-class recognition. Gelato is on display at The Roasterie Café, in the heart of campus.

Dolce Freddo, located in the Memorial Union, as the signature storefront location and feature unique gelato novelties!
Assistant Director of Information Systems, Mary Schott, directly oversees ISU Dining’s Menu Management and IT Department. She manages and maintains all of ISU Dining’s technology needs, which includes Dining’s Menu Management System, Meal Plan System, and Point of Sale System, and explores new technology solutions to better service ISU Dining and its customers. Mary started her career with ISU Dining as an assistant manager in the Culinary Support Center, where she supervised food production and distribution to 16 satellite locations.

Mary Schott

Menu Management

The Menu Management team coordinates all aspects of the ISU Dining Menu Management Programs. The team uses a software called Food Service Suite (FSS). This software is used to manage all production and purchasing needs for ISU Dining. This includes over 12,000 items purchased from multiple vendors, over 10,000 recipes, and frequently-changing menus for ISU Dining’s 26 locations. ISU Dining strives to be innovative and on-trend with new menus and ingredient offerings.

The Menu Management team works closely with the culinary team to ensure all new ingredients, recipes, and menus are standardized and ready for production. They also work closely with all production units, providing production recipes, ordering requirements, and training. Menu information is not only important to our production units, it is also important to our customers. Recently ISU Dining added an integration between FSS and the Menu Display Interface System. This system provided Dining with the ability to redesign how menus are displayed online as well as in Dining facilities. Online menus are now mobile friendly and can be updated throughout the day to provide customers with the most up-to-date and accurate information. Throughout Dining locations, digital screens have been added to display menus as well as informational advertisements to customers.

Using the Menu Display Interface to integrate with Four Winds Interactive allows Dining to control the content and design of all signs. Managing this system in-house versus contracting with a company that controls all aspects of the signs has saved Dining over $100,000 thus far and has allowed Dining to have full creative control. The Menu Management team is an integral part of ISU Dining and their day-to-day operations.
Nutritional Analysis

A vital role of the Dining Information Systems Office that can have a significant impact on students and guests is the Nutritional Analysis done by the team’s Registered Dietitian. It is the role of the Menu Management’s registered dietitian to ensure that all 12,000 items purchased have accurate ingredient and nutritional information entered into the FSS database. The registered dietitian reviews recipes ensuring calculations are correct, all allergens and dietary preferences are properly assigned, and collaborates with the Culinary Team on recipe alterations that promote health and meet a wide variety of dietary preferences.

ISU Dining has a very diverse clientele and it is important that we are meeting their dietary needs and providing them with the tools needed to make decisions that best meet their needs. ISU Dining Website has menus and nutritional information that directly pulls from the FSS system. Customers can easily navigate between locations to view menus, filter menus by allergens and dietary preferences, and drill into menu items to get a complete label that follows the FDA label guidelines. The registered dietitian also reviews and generates labels for the Residential Dining locations to post above menu items so customers can make educated decisions and self-manage any dietary preferences.

The Menu Management Dietitian and the Student Engagement Dietitian work closely together to create standard operating procedures for the department such as a cross contact policy, labeling policy, and menu and recipe nutritional standards. The Menu Management Registered Dietitian also provides back-up support to the Student Engagement registered dietitian as needed.

The Dining Information Systems office continually evaluates and researches new technology which can be utilized by the ISU Dining team to create additional efficiencies, to be innovative in its field and to assist ISU Dining with reaching its goals.

Information Technology

Dining ITS department oversees all technology systems for ISU Dining, which includes developing and maintaining Dining’s Point of Sale (POS) System, which handles every customer transaction in Dining’s 26 locations and has a database containing over 7,000 items, which constantly changes as new items are purchased. This department coordinates with the system vendor, system users, and University IT to resolve any system issues and schedules upgrades to the POS System with minimal interruption or business loss, facility closures, and sales/revenue loss. They also work closely with the University Treasurer’s Office and University IT Security Team to maintain compliance with all Payment Card Industry Data Security Standards (PCI DSS) and requirements.

An additional feature ISU Dining offers is GET, which is our online desktop and mobile ordering app. Online ordering is available at many retail locations across campus. Dining ITS department develops and maintains the CS Gold System which stores information for every individual that has been issued an University ID. This system also stores funds for patrons to use at all 26 locations, whether it be meal plans or stored value credit. This requires working closely with the Department of Residence and University IT to reconcile and validate Dining contracts sold are imported and posted accurately and on time to the CS Gold System.

Another major role of this team is managing, maintaining, and tracking inventory of ISU Dining’s hardware such as computers and printers. They assist ISU Dining Staff with any technical support they may need and provide training sessions as needed.

The continual growth of ISU Dining requires constant analysis of how the systems are used and requires innovative thinking to fulfill ISU Dining’s mission. The Dining Information Systems office continually evaluates and researches new technology which can be utilized by ISU Dining to create additional efficiencies, to be innovative in its field, and to assist with reaching our goals.
Culinary

Nolan Nguyen Green

Associate Director of Culinary Development, Nolan leads the culinary development of our self-branded concepts. He oversees the menu creation process, designs new, innovative dining concepts, and product sourcing and testing. He collaborates with the Menu Management, Quality Assurance and Food Safety, and Nutritional teams to create exciting and balanced recipes with the focus of using local and unique ingredients, scratch cooking methods, and on-trend items for menus.

Our culinary team is comprised of Sous Chefs and Chefs de Cuisine, who are passionate about food and enhancing the student experience. We develop creative, innovative menus serving on-trend concepts to students, faculty, staff and guests.

The varied culinary experiences of our team bring different perspectives. In addition, the team enjoys the challenge of meeting the needs of our large, diverse student population with authentic dishes.

Research and Development

The research and development chef contributes to equipment identification, kitchen and service layout, concept training documents, and concept opening rollout. He also continually supports ISU Dining location with help on menu accuracy, production efficiency, and ongoing training.

Some of the concepts Nolan helped create include Heaping Plato, a Mediterranean gyro market; Clyde’s Gastro Diner, where you can get an antibiotic-free burger with a hand-blended shake; and Lance and Ellie’s, a delicatessen-style sandwich concept. Eleven original concepts were created in the last three years.
Bakery

Located on the south-side of campus, our bakery produces a wide variety of fresh baked pastries, specialty desserts, cookies, and breads that are made from scratch and served throughout our retail, residential and catering operations. Scratch production allows us to serve better products to our customers, reduce food costs, and control ingredients.

Our bakers and culinary team create products complementing the overall experience of our customers. For example, we produce homemade pita for Heaping Plato, croissants, bagels, donuts, unique pizza doughs, and sub buns for Lance and Ellie’s. We also create a variety of specialized products for weddings, foundation events and VIP meals at The Knoll, in support of our catering operation.

We rotate our bakery menu options four times a year to allow for seasonal changes and the addition of new products.

Our buttermilk brownies and rice krispie treats are favorites with students, faculty and staff. We also focus on special diets, offering vegan cheesecakes and cookies as an option for our students.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- Last year our bakers rolled and scooped over 440,000 cookies, 55,000 croissants and 135,000 muffins.

- Yearly, we purchase over 118,150 pounds of flour and 50,000 eggs.
Culinary Support Center

Manager of Culinary Support Center, Rae Ann Chilton, oversees the central kitchen that produces a variety of foods for ISU Dining. A graduate of ISU, Chilton started her career 22 years ago with ISU Dining as an assistant manager for Residential Dining then to Manager of Culinary Support Center. Rae Ann has spent her last fifteen years overseeing the Culinary Support Center, that included full production for the 23 Sky Suites on Saturday home football games for 16 years and support for ISU Catering Department for 13 years.

The Culinary Support Center (CSC) prepares packaged sandwiches, salads, soups, hot entrées, wraps, and sides for ISU Dining retail locations. Additionally, deli meat slicing and select vegetable processing for all ISU Dining locations is done within the CSC.

A central focus of this facility is to produce menu items for our self-branded concepts. This helps us to be consistent and provide unique offerings to our students. Some of these locations include Heaping Plato at the Hub, Lance and Ellie’s, Hawthorn Market and Café, and Dinkey’s and Big Yella food trucks.

An important facet of our centralized production, is making sure our customers have accurate labeling information on their products. Labeling information provides allergen, caloric, and ingredient information to our customers, as directed by the FDA.

Academic Partnerships

The CSC contributes to the academic mission of ISU by offering a practicum to Dietetic interns each semester. Our facility is a great way for these students to gain hands-on experience learning the day-to-day operations. During their time with us, they learn how to develop, write, and test recipes. Additionally, they learn how to analyze nutritional information.

The Industrial Engineering department coordinates with the CSC team to tour the facility so these students can observe a real processing facility. This helps the students to understand the multi-faceted production environment.

Additionally, the Industrial Engineering students and ISU Dining collaborate through case studies where students gain experience, and we receive feedback on improving our production processes.
Dining Centers
1. Seasons Marketplace
2. Union Drive Marketplace
3. Union Drive Community Center
4. Conversations Dining
5. Oak-Elm Hall
6. Friley Windows
7. Friley Hall

Fast Casual
1. Hawthorn
2. Clyde’s
3. MU Food Court
4. Lance and Ellie’s
5. Dolce Freddo
6. Memorial Union
7. Heaping Plato
8. MWL Common

Markets
1. East Side Market
2. West Side Market

Cafés
1. Bookends Café
2. Business Café
3. Gerdin Business Building
4. The Roasterie
5. Courtyard Café
6. Design Café
7. Whirlybird’s
8. Gentle Doctor Café
9. Global Café
10. MU Market & Café

Food Truck
1. Dinkey’s
2. Big Yella

GET and Go
1. Union Drive Market Place
2. Union Drive Community Center