FAQs regarding the dining transition at Carleton College

Q: What did the Dining Task Force recommend?

A: After considering all of the information at their disposal, the committee recommended contracting with Bon Appétit Management Company to operate Carleton Dining Services.

Q: When will this change take place and how long is the new contract?

A: The new contract will begin July 1, 2008 and will run for five years.

Q: Who will provide Carleton Dining Services through Commencement and Reunion this year?

A: Sodexho will operate Carleton Dining Services through the end of June 2008. They have served the College well for many years and we are confident that they will continue to do so in a most professional manner.

Q: Will the current Sodexho workers be employed by Bon Appétit?

A: Bon Appétit expects to offer employment to all of the current Sodexho employees who are members of the Operating Engineers union.

Q: Will Sodexho management staff be offered employment by Bon Appétit?

A: We don’t know. Those are discussions that are between Bon Appétit, Sodexho, and the affected management employees.

Q: How will the transition affect student workers?

A: Carleton values the contributions of student workers in all areas of the campus and dining is no different. Bon Appétit will continue to use similar numbers of student workers as those employed by Sodexho.

Q: Was the decision to hire Bon Appétit based on their costs being lower than Sodexho?

A: No. The costs of the programs proposed by Bon Appétit and Sodexho were very similar.

Q: Will the hours and offerings of the dining halls be the same next year?

A: We expect that the operating hours of the dining halls and Snack Bar will be the same as the current hours. We believe that Bon Appétit will make substantial menu
changes and offer additional choices in each facility as they introduce their approach to residential college dining.

Q: What will be the impact on prices in the Snack Bar next year?

A: Historically, prices at the Snack Bar have increased annually due to inflation and other economic pressures such as rising transportation and food costs. This would be the case regardless of which dining contractor serves Carleton and will no doubt continue in the future.

Q: What will the impact be on board costs in the future?

A: Based on the agreement reached with Bon Appétit, board costs for 2008-09 will not increase beyond the comprehensive fee increase that the Board of Trustees has approved. Board costs in the future may be affected by changes in the comprehensive fee set by the Board of Trustees and any changes to meal plans.

Q: How will the meal plans change?

A: There will be no changes during the 2008-09 academic year. As we work more closely with Bon Appétit, opportunities to improve meal plans in the future will be discussed as needed.

Q: What will be the impact on catering prices?

A: With the same caveats noted previously regarding retail and board plan prices, we do not expect to see significant price increases.

Q: How will campus feedback be incorporated into planning for next year?

A: The Dining Task Force will continue to meet during spring term in order to facilitate communication between Bon Appétit staff and members of the Carleton community.

Q: How much more locally grown food will the campus see?

A: Bon Appétit has established numerous relationships with many local area growers and processors. While we don’t have specific purchasing figures, we look forward to building more local connections and strengthening the college’s commitment to sustainability.