

## **Auburn University's Required Participation Dining Plan – FAQ**

The following questions and answers should address most concerns and questions regarding the introduction of the program. If you have additional questions, please contact us at the [TigerCard](#) office.

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### **Why are all incoming first-year Fall semester 2008 students required to participate in the new campus dining program?**

A vibrant on-campus dining program is considered an essential part of Auburn University's commitment to creating a comprehensive campus-wide living and learning environment for all its undergraduate students. Promoting active student participation and engagement at our on-campus dining venues fosters a significantly enhanced collegial and educational campus community. Students attending their "first semester" at Auburn University during the fall of 2008 and any subsequent semester will be required to participate in the program.

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### **Why are there two participation levels for incoming students, \$995 for those residing in on-campus residence halls and \$300 for all others residing elsewhere?**

The program is designed for the participation and engagement for *all* AU undergraduates, regardless of where they live. But on-campus residence hall students have a greater need and benefit more from dining more frequently on campus. The \$995 on-campus resident semester rate is not intended to cover all meals a student requires during the semester, but if expended intelligently can cover a significant number of those meals. The modest \$300 per semester level for undergraduates residing elsewhere is designed to provide sufficient funds for on-campus meals and snacks with other students when the off campus resident student is actively on campus.

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### **What are the advantages of having a student participate in the dining program?**

Studies have consistently shown that for most students, on-campus dining and socializing has numerous educational and social benefits. Along with initially assisting in the transition from high school to college, some of the benefits of campus dining include:

*Meeting with and making new friends* – An important part of the educational experience is meeting new friends and fostering and maintaining relationships.

Just by eating together students build friendships and positively enhance their socialization opportunities. Many of the friendships made while dining on campus will last a lifetime.

*Convenience* – Through participation in the dining program our undergraduates will have the ability to walk into any campus dining venue for meals or snacks before, between, and after classes or when studying at the RBD Library. With the opening of seven additional venues in the new student center in August 2008, a wide variety of healthy meal options are available. Participants need not have cash since funds are accessible to students using their Auburn University student identification card, the TigerCard.

*Flexibility* – The Auburn University dining program has the unique feature of only assessing the participating student the cost of the food and beverages the student selects. Some days students choose to eat less or go home for the weekend. They are not penalized for that choice through “losing” the value of the meals not consumed that week as is the case with so many dining plans at other institutions. Participants in the Auburn University dining program may dine at any and every campus location; they are not limited to purchasing the majority of their meals at a central location.

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### **Are there other universities with “required participation” dining programs?**

Yes! For example, within the Southeastern Conference (SEC), 8 of the 12 universities operate extensive required participation dining programs. Generally, each institution’s plan is different from the others and has been individually designed to meet the needs of each particular campus and its student population.

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### **How will the funds be assessed to the incoming students in the 2008 fall semester?**

Auburn University students who will be residing in a residence hall on campus for fall semester 2008 will be assessed \$995 on their university account concurrently with their fall semester housing charges. All other students will be assessed \$300 for the fall semester. Students residing in CDV Extension Apartments on campus will be assessed the \$300 level. Sewell Hall residents will be assessed only the unique Sewell Hall resident dining fee.

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**Why are incoming undergraduates, who reside off campus, required to participate in the on-campus dining program, even at the nominal \$300 per semester level?**

Auburn University students benefit from the collegial and socialization experiences of dining regularly with classmates and friends. The array of new venues and brands across campus are designed to be of benefit and use by all Auburn University undergraduates, not simply the on campus residents. The fall semester 2008 incoming class represents the first of the four-year phased enrollment leading to 100% undergraduate student participation by the fall semester of 2011.

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**Does a participating student lose the funds not expended during a given semester?**

Generally speaking, no! Whether the student is an on campus resident participating at \$995 per semester or an off campus resident participating at the \$300 level, any funds not expended during the fall semester 2008 will be available to the participant during spring semester 2009 in addition to the spring semester's new assessment. Any funds not expended through the spring semester are available through the summer term commencement. Any funds remaining in the account after summer commencement day revert to Auburn University.

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**Are students required to participate during summer terms?**

No. Funds not expended from either of the immediately preceding two semesters may still be expended during summer term, but no additional assessment is required during summer term.

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**Why are students who reside on campus and are members of certain official university groups or organizations, eligible to participate at the lower \$300 per semester level?**

Certain organizations at Auburn University are required by membership to have their own meal plans with 10 or more meals per week. Since students within those organizations are already committed to dining within their organization, the need for the organization's meals as well as the \$995 level are not warranted.

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**Will the \$995 per semester level for on-campus residents provide meals for the entire semester?**

The \$995 per semester amount is not designed to cover all meals during a semester. Auburn University students occasionally dine off campus or go home on weekends. The \$995 total was identified as a participation level that should cover 60% to 90% of a student's meal requirements during a semester. All university meal programs studied for on-campus residents require a participation level 10% to 50% greater than Auburn's. Auburn University's on-campus resident level has designed that flexibility directly into the program itself.

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**When a student dines more frequently on campus and expends his funds prior to the end of the semester, can the student add to semester's required level?**

Yes, additional funds for meals may be placed on the student's TigerCard through the TigerCard office. Funds may be added in person, by phone, or by the internet.

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**Who can I contact if I have questions about the Auburn University required participation dining program?**

If you have any questions about the Auburn University required participation dining program being introduced in the fall semester 2008, please feel free to contact the TigerCard office in Foy Student Union at 334-844-4507 or visit our web site, [www.auburn.edu/tigercard](http://www.auburn.edu/tigercard), for additional details.

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