

4-26-2017

Think With Your Fork: Five Areas of Intervention for Kimball Dining Hall

Kristin Lane

College of the Holy Cross, kmlane17@g.holycross.edu

Christina Nee

College of the Holy Cross, cenee19@g.holycross.edu

Julia Metzger

College of the Holy Cross, jmmetz19@g.holycross.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://crossworks.holycross.edu/phil_stu_scholarship



Part of the [Ethics and Political Philosophy Commons](#), [Food Studies Commons](#), [Higher Education Commons](#), and the [Nutrition Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Lane, Kristin; Nee, Christina; and Metzger, Julia, "Think With Your Fork: Five Areas of Intervention for Kimball Dining Hall" (2017). *Philosophy Department Student Scholarship*. 1.

http://crossworks.holycross.edu/phil_stu_scholarship/1

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Philosophy Department at CrossWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Philosophy Department Student Scholarship by an authorized administrator of CrossWorks.

Think With Your Fork: Five Areas of Intervention for Kimball Dining Hall

Kristin Lane '17, Julia Metzger '19, Christina Nee '19

The average Holy Cross student spends 2.5 hours a day, 17.5 hours per week, 77.5 hours per month, 258.75 hours per semester, and over 2,000 hours over the course of four years in Kimball Dining Hall.¹ With unlimited swipe access, students with a resident meal plan are able to visit Kimball as often as they would like to eat. Being one of the most frequented places on campus, Kimball has the potentiality to also serve as a social hub, learning environment, and a campus community center. Unfortunately, radical changes to dining culture which occurred over the last three or four decades,² concurred in hindering Kimball from fulfilling these potentialities in a way that meets the standards that our institution abides by. Our goal with the present proposal is to bring modifications to the dining experience in Kimball, so to encourage a more well-rounded approach, which would best represent the values of continuous learning and education of the whole person (Part I: Motivations). In order to meet these goals, we recommend five changes to Kimball dining (Part II: Areas of Intervention), which we plan to implement during the Spring 2017 semester in collaboration with two Montserrat seminars (Part III: Plan of Action).

¹ Assuming students spent 0.5 hours for breakfast, 1 hour for lunch and 1 hour for dinner, a semester of 15 weeks, and no term studying abroad. We should note that the average number of hours spent per week in class is roughly 10.

² For a classic overview of these changes, please see: Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York:Penguin, 2006. Print.

PART I: MOTIVATIONS

When thinking about the role that dining should have at the College, we sought guidance within the *Mission Statement* of the College of the Holy Cross. The *Statement* calls for a questioning of the world around us and how we can improve our immediate (campus) or less immediate environment to benefit all. It says: “Dialogue [also] requires us to remain open to that sense of the whole which calls us to transcend ourselves and challenges us to seek that which might constitute our common humanity.”³ Accordingly, we aimed to transcend our everyday Kimball dining experience through various areas of intervention. We brought ourselves to question the different aspects of Kimball so that this essential hub can reach its full potential.

In order to comply with the *Mission Statement*, the College should encourage educational opportunities in all environments, not just in academic settings. Indeed, the College places a large importance on ensuring that extracurriculars and athletics adequately represent the values of the *Mission Statement*; however, we do not find a matching attitude when it comes to dining.⁴ The goal of the present proposal is to bring the students’ dining experiences to match other students’ life experiences on campus, providing opportunities that challenge “to be open to new ideas, to be patient with ambiguity and uncertainty, to combine a passion for truth with respect for the views of others,” as the *Mission Statement* holds.

There are several different benefits to deepening the relationship between students and food. For example, by providing easily accessible information on portion sizes, benefits of

³“Mission Statement.” Mission Statement | College of the Holy Cross. College of the Holy Cross, n.d. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.

⁴ For understanding the importance of justice at the dining table, see Sandler, Ronald L. *Food Ethics: The Basics*. New York: Routledge, 2014. Print. and Thompson, Paul B. *From Field to Fork: Food Ethics for Everyone*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015. Print.

different foods, and nutrition, the College can teach students how to live better lives. Kimball can also bring in Holy Cross alumni and chefs to teach students the different ways of incorporating food and recipes in everyday life. Not only, we are what we eat, and therefore our diet embodies our values and commitments, but also, it is important to think about the unwritten law that the College has in developing students into future adults. By constructing a more thoughtful dining experience, Holy Cross can instill in students the value of considering how and what they are eating. Integrating Kimball into the education provided by Holy Cross does not mean to make it into a more constraining place. There are plenty of scholars and food activists who have shown us how to provide a food education in an experiential, entertaining, and engaging way.⁵ The areas of intervention that we will discuss in Parts II and III draw precisely on such examples.

I.1 Kimball as a Site for *Cura Personalis*

Through the care for individuals' morality, intellectuality, and humanity, The College of the Holy Cross, and, more broadly, the Jesuit order emphasizes the motto of *cura personalis*: the duty to care for the whole person.⁶ *Cura personalis* should be sought after in all aspects of campus life, including the dining hall. An important part of *cura personalis* includes education of the mind. Holy Cross community members should live by the highest intellectual standards, yet the current dining experiences offered on campus are far from matching such standards. For instance, many students do not seem to understand the origins of common staples such as potatoes or apples.⁷ How can students live by such high standards if they are unaware of the evolutionary, ontogenetic, and social histories of their foods? Yet even more modest expectations

⁵ Wansink, Brian. *Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More than We Think*. Chapters 2 and 3. New York: Bantam, 2007. Print.

⁶ Geger, Fr. Barton T. S.J. (2014) "Cura Personalis: Some Ignatian Inspirations," *Jesuit Higher Education: A Journal*: Vol. 3: No. 2, Article 2.

⁷ Pollan, Michael. *The Botany of Desire: A Plant's Eye View of the World*. New York: Random House, 2001. Print.

regarding food education are only cursorily met. The Holy Cross Dining website currently provides no information about any of the bread or food in the salad bar; it does not say if the fruit was frozen, soaked in sugar or corn syrup, fresh, or even picked from local farmers markets. In order to meet the standards of higher education and deeper intellectual thought that the *Statement* declares, Holy Cross students should be made aware of key facts regarding the foods that they experience.

In addition to educating the mind, *cura personalis* seeks the proper nourishment of the body. We are questioning some of the food options that Kimball is supplying as they fall short from instilling in students a reflective attitude toward the body. Much of the food provided to students is standardly classified as heavily processed, making it nearly impossible for students to form a proper relationship with their foods. By this we are not advocating that Kimball should serve exclusively organic whole foods but simply that it should be more conscious of the ingredients in the products it invests in. We do recommend a shift from emphasis on nutrients to ingredients in line with much of recent leadership.⁸

Cura personalis also calls for a commitment to physical fitness. One can only efficiently exercise with proper nourishment. While this seems like it might only apply to athletes, athletic performance is important to all searching for physical well being. For example, calcium helps prevent stress fractures and iron lowers the risk of anemia. Food is especially important to active students in preventing and treating different ailments. Vitamin C, for example, helps maintain and repair collagen, which is especially useful for muscle building after a difficult workout.⁹ Active students need proper nutrition to fuel exercise.¹⁰

⁸ Scrinis, Gyorgy. *Nutritionism: The Science and Politics of Dietary Advice*. New York: Columbia UP, 2013. Print.

⁹ Hicks, J. Morris., and J. Stanfield. *Hicks. Healthy Eating, Healthy World: Unleashing the Power of Plant-based Nutrition*. Dallas, TX: BenBella, 2011. Print.

Our relationship with food is multidimensional. Not only does food provide sustenance, but it also impacts levels of attention, social bonding, self pleasure, inclusion and moods (just to name a few). Kimball can provide food that is beneficial for our mental health and would directly impact our well being. Posting information about certain foods on informational signs would encourage students to learn more about the benefits of foods on mental health. Kimball can strive to improve our relationship with food by working to combat the obesity stigma, eating disorders, and other mental insecurities associated with the food industry.¹¹

I.2 Kimball and the Education to Bodily Pleasure

As Carlos Petrini has argued, humans have a right to pleasure when it comes to food.¹² Such pleasure is realized not only at the level of palate, but also by knowing that what we are eating is good for our body, as well as for those that produced it and for the planet.¹³ The dining facilities should provide students with fresh, healthy foods so they can enjoy nourishing their bodies. It is a common misperception that healthy foods do not taste as good as unhealthy foods. Students should not feel that they must compromise taste for healthy foods. When properly prepared, the latter are often more enjoyable than their “unhealthy” counterparts. Nutritious foods allow students to feel more satisfied without feeling sick or guilty.

Healthy consumption impacts lifelong physical health. Many chronic illnesses are initiated by food consumption. Aside from stress, a poor diet is the number one reason for chronic illnesses. Many diet related illnesses are on the rise. Examples include diabetes, arthritis,

¹⁰ Flanagan, Shalane, Elyse Kopecky, and Alan Weiner. *Run Fast. Eat Slow.: Nourishing Recipes for Athletes.* Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2016. Print.

¹¹ For more information on the obesity stigma and how it affects dietary perception, see Puhl & Heuer “Obesity Stigma”; Allan, Steven, and Ken Goss. "Eating Disorder Beliefs and Behaviours across Eating Disorder Diagnoses." *Eating Behaviors* 15.1 (2014): 42-44. Web. and Thompson, Paul B: Chapter 3.

¹² Petrini, Carlo. *Slow Food Nation: The Creation of a New Gastronomy.* New York: Rizzoli Ex Libris, 2007. Print.

¹³ Hicks, J. Morris., and J. Stanfield. Hicks. opt. cit.

lupus, and hyperthyroidism.¹⁴ Diet plays a large role in avoiding flare ups within these illnesses and in treatment. It has been proven that diets low in processed foods have helped those suffering from these illnesses.¹⁵ In addition, processed foods often contain additives and ratios of salt, sugar, and fat that make us addicted to these products. Food companies will manipulate these ratios to ensure that the consumer will reach his or her highest pleasure satisfaction from the product.¹⁶ If Kimball refuses to purchase processed food, then it can play a role in preventing food addictions among students.

Not only do the pleasures of eating concern the quality of the food and its medical implications, but they also contribute to the psychological and social qualities of our lives. Therefore, this is the subject of the next section.

I.3 The Social Dimension of Kimball: Food and Identity

Making students more aware of the origins of their food and the farmers who grew it, opens up a dialogue about the food system. Food becomes an art, cultivated and cared for so that consumers can benefit.¹⁷ This streamline of information creates a story about the food, conveys an identity to the food, and transfers an identity to the now conscious consumer. In addition to connecting with food through food origins, individuals can relate to meals through memory. Individuals often identify with past experiences through their food. The foods that we eat either individually or collectively are key to the creation of an individual and social identity.¹⁸ For example, many children in New England grow up eating chicken parmesan, thereby associating

¹⁴ "Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Activities — United States, 1989." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 40.41 (1991): 697-700. The Growing Crisis of Chronic Disease. Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.

¹⁵ Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease

¹⁶ Moss, Michael. *Salt, Sugar, Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us*. New York: Random House, 2013. Print.

¹⁷ Conley, Erin. *The Pleasures of Eating: Reflections on Food*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 2003. Print.

¹⁸ Fischler, C. "Food, Self and Identity." *Social Science Information* 27.2 (1988): 275-92. Web.

it with family time. It is indeed not a coincidence that ‘chicken parm’ night in Kimball is a favorite to many students. Chicken parmesan is a comfort food that allows students to identify their meal on a higher level than simply something to eat for dinner.

Food is a central part to many cultures and religions.¹⁹ International students, and others who may feel estranged or homesick, could find comfort in their culturally significant foods being served. Kimball could highlight these cultures by sharing traditions and celebrating the cultures, much like it does for the Thanksgiving dinner, the Holiday dinner, and the Opening Day meal. Kimball has had Chinese New Year dinner in the past and it would be great if this could be done for other cultures as well.

Food can be used as a way to express one’s beliefs on certain issues. Food purchases impact world economics and supply chain, so individuals may choose to only eat foods that are fair trade to ensure the products they are consuming were ethically produced. Or, to name another example, if a person feels strongly about animal cruelty, they may choose not to consume animal products.²⁰ Our food choices become an essential part of our identity because they affect what we eat everyday and serve as a mirror to our ethical values. Holy Cross dining in this sense is a mirror of the College’s ethical commitment to the students’ health, pleasure, and identity, as well as to plants, animals, and the environment at large. In order to promote an ethically aware persona, Kimball should support students who choose to take action through their diets. For instance, Kimball can support ethical businesses by doing thorough research on the

¹⁹ Fischler, Claude, 1988. "Food, Self and Identity." *Social Science Information* 27:275-293

²⁰ Sandler, Ronald L. and Hicks, J. Morris., and J. Stanfield. Hicks.

food it serves or by keeping its commitment to not purchase meat from the “Big Four” food companies (Tyson, Cargill, JBS, and National Beef).²¹

I.4 Students’ Short- and Long-Term Physical Health

As our main dining hall on campus, Kimball has a large responsibility to teach students good eating habits that they will likely use for the remainder of their lives. Navigating College dining is the first time many students have had to self-regulate their food choices. It is a part of Kimball’s duty to supply nutritious meals to students. If students are provided with foods that improve their immediate health and are educated about their benefits, they are likely to continue consuming these foods after graduation. Healthy food choices allow for short term health. Kimball should provide students with an engaging environment where they have the option to devise by themselves a food habit that is healthy, such as putting together their own salads and grain bowls from suggested recipes.

Stress in college makes students more vulnerable to mental illnesses, such as depression and eating disorders. However, prevention can start in the dining hall. Many eating disorders revolve around an unhealthy relationship with food due to misinformation about food or food obsessions. Diseases can be combatted through awareness via signs. By offering more healthy options and less unhealthy options, Kimball could increase the likelihood that students will maintain healthy eating on a day to day basis and not binge eat junk food. By publicizing ingredients of foods and posting “high” and “ low” ingredient facts rather than exact calorie and fat information, Kimball can help prevent eating disorders that revolve around food obsessions. In this way, students will stop obsessing on numerical data and learn about their food.

²¹ Emilene Ostlind. "The Big Four Meatpackers." The Big Four Meatpackers. High Country News, 21 Mar. 2011. Web. 13 Dec. 2016.

I.5 Food and Athletic Performance

With an active student body, Holy Cross has a high demand for nutritionally dense foods to foster athletic performance. As Shalane Flanagan, professional runner, speaks about in her published book *Run Fast. Eat Slow*. many injuries can be avoided or cured through food remedies. For example, the consumption of healthy fats can cure athletic induced amenorrhea in females.²² Therefore, in combination with training, food has the ability to propel athletes to the next level. The building of the new athletic center at Holy Cross shows the commitment of the College to bring the athletics department to the next level. However, without proper nourishment, increased athletic success will not be possible.²³ Kimball should be providing student athletes with healthful foods and information on the correct ways to consume them.

I.6 Food and School Performance

Holy Cross prides itself on student success and academic performance. Students best learn, participate, and test if they are well nourished. Most students do not have a kitchen in their dorms and therefore must rely on Kimball as their source of food. When the brain is properly supplied, cognitive ability and concentration improve. In order to meet these expectations Kimball may discourage or replace foods that lead to energy crashes with those that will keep students fuller longer. Providing more satiating foods for students will give them focus throughout the day because they will not be preoccupied with hunger or fatigue.²⁴

²² Flanagan, Shalane, Elyse Kopecky, and Alan Weiner. opt. cit.

²³ Williams, H. M. "Nutritional Aspects of Human Physical and Athletic Performance." (Book, 1985) [WorldCat.org]. CABI, 11 May 2016. Web. 13 Dec. 2016.

²⁴ Florence, M. D., Asbridge, M., & Veugelers, P. J. (2008). Diet quality and academic performance. *Journal of School Health*, 78(4), 209-215.

PART II: AREAS OF INTERVENTION

First Area: Signs

Studies at Cornell University and at the University of Wolverhampton focus on menu labeling as a useful way of providing nutrition information.²⁵ When students read these labels, they can make decisions about what they are going to eat. These decisions would be divided into two different categories. The first category advises on how to make a balanced plate and choose nutritionally dense food. Having signs, such as “high in calorie” and “low in calorie,” or “high in fat” and “low in fat,” are simple ways of influencing students to eat better. These exact signs were put in dining halls at Cornell, and the impact was significant. After having placed the signs, high calorie and high fat food consumption decreased by 7%.²⁶ This helped students who desired to eliminate unnecessary food intakes to do so. If Holy Cross were to do something similar, the effects could positively impact the health and wellbeing of students. Another aspect of navigating the dining hall is portion control. Students tend to over serve themselves when in dining halls.²⁷ If informational signs provide descriptions on proper serving size, students could portion their serving sizes better, reducing unnecessary consumption and food waste²⁸.

Signs are a way of transforming the dining hall into a learning environment²⁹. In addition to displaying nutritionally useful information, Kimball could also post signs about the farmers and the origins of the foods found in the dining hall. This is a way of connecting the producers

²⁵ Thomas, Erica. "Food For Thought: Obstacles To Menu Labelling In Restaurants And Cafeterias." *Public Health Nutrition* 19.12 (2016): 2185-2189. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 11 Dec. 2016

²⁶ Ramanujan, Krishna. "Dining Hall Food Labels Nudge Diners to Eat Healthier | Cornell Chronicle." *Dining Hall Food Labels Nudge Diners to Eat Healthier | Cornell Chronicle*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.

²⁷ Wansink, Brian. opt. cit.

²⁸ Wansink, Brian, and Koert Van Ittersum. "Portion Size Me: Plate-size Induced Consumption Norms and Win-win Solutions for Reducing Food Intake and Waste." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied* 19.4 (2013): 320-32. Web.

²⁹ "Transforming School into a Fun Learning Environment." UTA Online. N.p., 15 Dec. 2015. Web. 13 Dec. 2016.

and products to create the social dimension discussed in section I.3. These types of signs could be in the form of “fun facts”, which could spark students’ interest and encourage them to research more about a particular farm or food. Signs have the ability to bring transparency to the dining hall, allowing students to become more equipped to make appropriate food decisions. Some of the information on these signs could include the benefits of the items, the distance that food took to travel to Holy Cross, or even facts about the farmers who grew the produce. Other signs can relate to additional motivations such as how certain foods relate to health, athletic performance, or academic performance.

The signs can be posted in various places around Kimball so that students can read them while waiting for their food. Students often wait in long lines for stir fry or for popular classics, such as tacos. Signs could be posted near lines, publicizing certain ingredients. Napkin dispensers are also visible and students read the print on the dispenser while they eat. Having signs in a social environment should encourage discussion. Students can further develop their relationships with food and consider food with a deeper meaning.

Second Area: Recipes and Featured Items

One aspect of Kimball that could be integral in its transformation is the addition of recipes from outside sources. These new recipes could be from alumni who have gone into the food industry, local restaurants, or local farmers. Through such recipes, Kimball would be able to strengthen the relationship between Holy Cross alumni in the food industry and current students. It is a great opportunity to acquire innovative recipes from alumni like Marc Sheehan ‘07, current head chef and owner of *Loyal Nine* restaurant in Cambridge, MA, who brings history into

the culinary arts. Through these relationships, Kimball can build its recipe inventory and current students can connect with Holy Cross alumni in the food industry.

Holy Cross is fortunate enough to be surrounded by a fantastic dining scene. Many students enjoy venturing into the city to experience local restaurants. Incorporating their recipes can strengthen the relationship between Holy Cross and the surrounding communities while spicing up the dining hall environment. For example, consider the Flying Rhino, a popular restaurant on Shrewsbury Street, which has a dish called the “Zen rice bowl.” Kimball could feature this recipe and a few specifics in the dish in the salad bar area. This way, students could construct their own bowl, following the recipe. This would serve as an exciting and educational way to further engage students with their food. While this could seem a petty example, giving the opportunity to student groups on campus to choose recipes from local restaurants that represent their identities and life experiences could foster pleasure and the sense of inclusion on campus.

Having a “farmer of the week” highlighted would also enhance the food’s meaning. Featuring a farm product a week in some menu items and sharing information about the farm would connect diners to the food that they are eating. Besides inspiring a more pleasurable experience, the knowledge of food origins could educate to better consumer decisions in the future. Depending on the season, local farms may have a surplus of a product that they would be likely sell to Holy Cross dining. Holy Cross could create new dishes, feature different ingredients, and advertise local farms, thus linking students with the local Worcester community. The featured item could create more variety in the menu and introduce students to new produce they may have never tried before.

Third Area: 5 Ingredients or Less Station

A 5 Ingredients or Less Station is a proposed section of Kimball that would serve dishes with five ingredients or less. The station could enhance health and educational opportunities in Kimball. Students would have an easy grasp of all ingredients of their food. When paired with informational signs, students could know how each of these ingredients affects their bodies, reinforcing attention to ingredients over nutrients.³⁰ Michael Pollan, a renowned author on food issues, emphasizes the importance of following the seven “food” rules, which includes “don’t eat anything with more than five ingredients, or ingredients you can’t pronounce.”³¹ Pollan explains the importance of eating whole foods.³² By having this station available, students could learn about the importance of ingredients, connecting their food experience with products and producers rather than abstract nutrients.

While there are a number of reasons why a station with minimal ingredients is important for students, the most convincing argument is the elimination of additives such as food dyes, food preservatives, fake sugars, and added sugars. Food dyes are outlawed in almost every developed nation for their harmful and carcinogenic qualities.³³ However, this is not the case in the United States. In 2008, The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) tried to lobby to outlaw food dyes because of research showing their behavioral effects in children. This did not pass because the FDA does not require companies to test for neurotoxicity³⁴. Food preservatives

³⁰ Scrinis, Gyorgy. *Nutritionism: The Science and Politics of Dietary Advice*. Columbia University Press, 2013, www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/scri15656.

³¹ Pollan, Michael, and Maira Kalman. *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual*. New York, NY: Penguin, 2013. Print.

³² *ibid.*

³³ Hennessey, Rachel. "Living in Color: The Potential Dangers of Artificial Dyes." *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine, 7 Aug. 2012. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.

³⁴ Potera, Carol. "DIET AND NUTRITION: The Artificial Food Dye Blues." *Environmental Health Perspectives*. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Oct. 2010. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.

also pose a risk to consumers. Sulfites, sulfates, benzoates, nitrites, and nitrates can have a range of effects from headaches to life threatening diseases such as cancer. Similarly, there are harmful effects in fake sugars, white sugar, brown sugar, corn syrup, and high fructose corn syrup. How is it ethical for Holy Cross to force students to have a meal plan that feeds them foods with harmful effects?

We believe the most instrumental thing Kimball can do would be to rid itself of all artificial ingredients (food dyes, preservatives, fake sugars, and to lessen the amounts of added sugars). This would lead to a healthier student population, as many of the problems caused by these artificial ingredients pose a risk.

Foods that could highly benefit students are those supported by organizations such as the Slow Food Movement.³⁵ This movement focuses on the need to come back to cooking and preparing our own foods rather than opening a box or driving through a drive thru to obtain a meal. While it is impossible for students to prepare their own meals in Kimball, the foundation of the movement is very informative and could be applied to the five items or less station. The movement focuses on *good*, *clean*, and *fair foods*. *Good food* means it is high quality, flavorful, and healthy. *Clean food* means that it does not do harm to environment. *Fair food* means it is accessible and workers who were involved in the production are treated and paid well.³⁶ Installing a station that educates students in food and food production would be extremely helpful in fostering a learning environment around food so students could carry their skills with them after Holy Cross.

³⁵ Folco Portinari. *Slow Food Manifesto*. 1989. <https://www.slowfoodusa.org/manifesto>

³⁶ USA, Slow Food. "Slow Food USA." *Slowfood USA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.

Fourth Area: Utensils and Plates with Guidance

The amount of food we eat is in a large part determined by the shape and size of the plates, utensils, and cups that we use.³⁷ The plates and utensils offered in Kimball have a direct effect on the amount of food the students are eating on a daily basis. In *Mindless Eating*, Brian Wansink introduces the idea of a “mindless margin,” that is the margin in which people can overeat or undereat by 100 calories and not realize a change in appetite.³⁸ These mindless calories do add up. By making small changes to the Kimball dishware, Holy Cross can help eliminate the “mindless margin” in excess or defect for students who wish to do so. We propose the manipulation of the dishes and utensils currently available in Kimball so that students will not unconsciously overeat. In order to help students understand portion control and serving sizes, we would like to propose that Kimball makes small changes to its dishes, glassware, and utensils. Our propositions include slimmer glasses, dishes with portion dividers built in, serving spoons the size of one serving, the division of food into smaller pieces, and smaller utensils. Each of those suggestions have been extensively researched in labs across the United States showing great potentiality over diners’ dietary habits.³⁹ This helps, guides, and empowers students.

When many students enter college, they are often unsure of how much food and what types of food they should put on their plates. Many students are used to being served their food at the dinner table. However, once they enter college, the experience is very different. Suddenly there are endless food options that can be both healthy and unhealthy. Without proper guidance

³⁷ Wansink, Brian, op. cit.

³⁸ *ibid.*

³⁹ *ibid.*

and education, it becomes easy for students to either gain or lose weight in unhealthy ways.⁴⁰ If Kimball is to provide a more suitable education experience it is their the responsibility to ensure that students receive guidance in how much food they should eat and what a serving size looks like.

To help students understand how much of each food group they could be eating at a meal, we recommend that Kimball implements a number of changes. The way glassware, utensils, and dishes look create visual illusions that affect the food choices we make. Small changes in the shape, sizes, and colors of utensils and glassware can positively impact how much food students eat. The first change regards portion dividers. The portions will tell how much of each food group should be consumed for a balanced meal. Studies have shown that when given larger plates, individuals will not account for the increase in plate size, but will draw portion sizes proportionate to the plate size (a method called plate mapping⁴¹). The divided plates will not only guide students about types of foods, but will also educate them on what a portion size is.

A second change way to reinforce student guidance with serving sizes is to make serving spoons for each dish equivalent to one serving size. For example, the spoon students use to dish out their pasta should be the measurement of the typical pasta serving size. Not only will this adjustment help students now, but it will also teach them serving sizes when they are eating outside the dining hall.

⁴⁰ Greaney, Mary L., Faith D. Less, Adrienne A. White, Sarah F. Dayton, Deborah Riebe, Bryan Blissmer, Suzanne Shoff, Jennifer R. Walsh, and Geoffrey W. Greene. "College Students' Barriers and Enablers for Healthful Weight Management: A Qualitative Study." *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* 41.4 (2009): 281-86. Web.

⁴¹ Sharp, David E., Jeffery Sobal, and Brian Wansink. "Using Plate Mapping to Examine Portion Size and Plate Composition for Large and Small Divided Plates." *Eating behaviors* 15.4 (2014): 658–663. *PMC*. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.

A third change concerns glasses. We propose changing the glasses in Kimball to be taller and thinner to see if this causes students to consume less liquids. In a study done by Brian Wansink, people who drank out of tall, thin glasses were proven to drink 74% less than people who drank out of short, fat glasses.⁴² This is all caused by visual illusion.

A fourth change we propose in regards to dish appearance is to purchase bowls with thick colored rims. Thicker and colored rims give the illusion that the plate area for food is smaller than it is really is and people will serve themselves less food.⁴³

A fifth change we suggest in regards to size is smaller utensils. If a person is given a large utensil, they will feel the need to fill it completely because when the food is on a larger background, it will appear smaller.⁴⁴ A smaller utensil will cause a person to slow down their eating rate. Slower eating will give the body more time to recognize when it is actually full and prevent overeating.

A sixth and final change that Kimball can help with portion control is cutting the food into smaller pieces, or servings. In a study done by Marchiori, Waroquier, and Klein, it was shown that cutting foods into halves will cause people to eat half as much than if they had the whole size in front of them.⁴⁵ With these small changes made, the students in the dining hall will not realize that they will be making better, more balanced meal portions. As a result of these changes, unwanted overeating should decrease and students will learn accurate portion sizes.

⁴² Wansink, Brian, op. cit. chapter 3.

⁴³ McClain, Arianna et al. "Visual Illusions and Plate Design: The Effects of Plate Rim Widths and Rim Coloring on Perceived Food Portion Size." *International journal of obesity* (2005) 38.5 (2014): 657–662. PMC. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.

⁴⁴ Wansink, Brian, op. cit. chapter 3.

⁴⁵ Marchiori, David. "Smaller Food Item Sizes of Snack Foods Influence Reduced Portions and Caloric Intake in Young Adults". *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* Volume: 111 Issue 5 (2011).

Fifth Area: Educational Spaces

Holy Cross prides itself to continuous learning inside and outside the classroom. Learning is encouraged in every area of campus, but not in the dining hall. In this sense, Kimball represents an ideal opportunity to offer an educational space concerning food on our campus. It can teach students how to think and live, facilitating their transition from dependant childhood into adulthood. If learning is not encouraged across the Holy Cross dining hall, then students do miss out on an important opportunity to build a strong and healthy relationship with food. Considering the pervasiveness of diet related diseases and health issues, the current dining situation creates a concerning gap in the education of our students.

To round up the educational outlook of Kimball, we also propose to create a designated physical educational space in Kimball. Such a space would serve a multiplicity of functions including the invitation of speakers (producers, farmers, scholars, faculty, student organizations, etc.), showcase of students' works in classes, promotion of student lead initiatives and a display of relevant publications and materials. The educational space would strengthen the other areas of intervention, such as signs and featured items and recipes.

However, learning about food does not have to be limited to the dining hall. Food can be talked about in the classroom as well. This semester, a Chemistry of Food class was offered to teach students about the science behind food. This class is a great start, but there are many other areas that can explored that pertain to food and that can be integrated into all of the disciplines. Since food pertains to almost every aspect of society, there could theoretically be classes offered in every major area that pertain to food in some way. We therefore recommend that the College expands its current class offerings with respect to food related issues. The food world is thriving

with job opportunities in food and it is important for Holy Cross to keep up with the times. For instance, we would particularly welcome a course on food business through the economics department or a course of the microbiology of food through the biology department.

Finally, we propose the College invest in a test kitchen on campus. Had a test kitchen been on campus this semester, students in Professor Sculimbrene's Chemistry of Food course and Professor Borghini's Montserrat courses (just to name two offerings from the Fall 2016 course catalog) could have greatly benefited. A test kitchen would open up the doors to more academic classes. Additionally, such a kitchen would give students the opportunity to learn how to cook, preparing them for their life after graduation. Test kitchens are available at many other schools. Holy Cross should consider this addition in order to stay competitive.

PART III: PLANS OF ACTION

In order to take further steps, we have devised a plan of action for the Spring 2017 semester. In coordination with Professor Borghini's Montserrat classes, we will experiment and observe changes in the various areas of intervention. Each student in the Montserrat class has chosen a topic to expand on and we will oversee their progress and help guide their research.

Signs: Overseen by Julia Metzger

PAIR 1: Ayleen Santarin & Elizabeth Hallahan

PAIR 2: Sarah Christo & Caroline Gill

PAIR 3: Grace Anzillotti & Megan Hawke

PAIR 4: Hannah Miksenas & Jennifer Ong

PAIR 5: Jack Quinn & Miles Alexander

PAIR 6: Ludovico Gallo & Nick O'Neil

Goal: To create 30 signs for Kimball dining and, if suitable, other dining venues on campus so that students can be properly informed. By having these signs on campus, students can learn more about the origins of foods and farms where their foods are grown. Access to such information allows students to feel more connected with their foods.

Featured Items: Overseen by Kristin Lane

PAIR 1: Janna Hearty & Molly Mahoney

PAIR 2: Danielle McAdam & Michael Calcaterra

PAIR 3: Shannon Hull & Megan Mulherin

Goal: To expose the Holy Cross student body to different foods that are grown locally. This will also give them a better sense of where their food comes from, specifically the local farms. The featured items can give students new ideas about ways to put together foods to create recipes and meals. This will be accomplished by researching local farms and their produce. We will pick one produce item to feature each week that the students will do research on. The featured item will be incorporated in different Kimball dishes that week, and signs will publicize the research done.

5 Ingredients or Less: Overseen by Christina Nee

STUDENT 1: Joshua Quinlan

STUDENT 2: Billy Cordes

STUDENT 3: Maggie Miskiewicz

STUDENT 4: Michael Raheb

STUDENT 5: Gabby Leonard

Goal: Research recipes with 5 ingredients or less that do not include ingredients beyond the food such as additives or preservatives. These recipes will be researched and will be able to be incorporated into each station in Kimball on a rotating basis. The recipes will be nutritious, sustainable, and come from different cultures. The students will research the individual ingredients in addition to the recipes in order to ensure healthful dishes.

Utensils & Plates with guidance: Overseen by Kristin Lane

STUDENT 1: Hannah Gillis

STUDENT 2: Isabel Prego

STUDENT 3: Kristin Kahrer

STUDENT 4: Chang Hwan Lee

Goal: Research the best sizes for the new dishes, plates, and utensils to be used in Kimball. Perform experiments that track the change in food consumption after the dishes, utensils, and plates have been changed.

Educational space in dining hall- Networking with Alum: Overseen by Julia Metzger

STUDENT 1: Fatima Oseida

STUDENT 2: Drew Haggerty

Goal: Research and interview alumni in different aspects of the food community. In interviews, ask about their Kimball experiences and see if the alumni can provide insights on how to improve dining. Additionally, bring alumni and professionals to campus for Fishbowl discussions and talks to connect students to the industry.

Educational space in dining hall- Researching and Organizing: Overseen by Christina Nee

STUDENT 1: Chris Woodilla

STUDENT 2: Ben Whidden

STUDENT 3: Celia Hans

Goal: Review ingredients in Kimball's current dishes and their potential health effects. For any added ingredients, research them and if they have negative health implications, find healthy and economically responsible replacements. This could include drawing attention to potential food dyes in the sauces and finding economical alternatives without the negative health connotations. We hope to work with Marty Dudek, vice president of dining services, in order to coordinate practical replacements to products.

Work Cited

- Allan, Steven, and Ken Goss. "Eating Disorder Beliefs and Behaviours across Eating Disorder Diagnoses." *Eating Behaviors* 15.1 (2014): 42-44. Web.
- Casper, R.C. *Curr Psychiatry Rep* (2004) 6: 425. doi:10.1007/s11920-004-0006-z
- "Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Activities — United States, 1989." *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 40.41 (1991): 697-700. The Growing Crisis of Chronic Disease. Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Conley, Erin. *The Pleasures of Eating: Reflections on Food*. New York: Barnes & Noble, 2003. Print.
- Emilene Ostlind "The Big Four Meatpackers." *The Big Four Meatpackers*. High Country News, 21 Mar. 2011. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Fischler, Claude, 1988. "Food, Self and Identity." *Social Science Information* 27:275-293
- Flanagan, Shalane, Elyse Kopecky, and Alan Weiner. *Run Fast. Eat Slow.: Nourishing Recipes for Athletes*. Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2016. Print.
- Florence, M. D., Asbridge, M., & Veugelers, P. J. (2008). Diet quality and academic performance. *Journal of School Health*, 78(4), 209-215.
- Hennessey, Rachel. "Living in Color: The Potential Dangers of Artificial Dyes." *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine, 7 Aug. 2012. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Hicks, J. Morris., and J. Stanfield. *Hicks. Healthy Eating, Healthy World: Unleashing the Power of Plant-based Nutrition*. Dallas, TX: BenBella, 2011. Print.
- Marchiori, David. "Smaller Food Item Sizes of Snack Foods Influence Reduced Portions and Caloric Intake in Young Adults". *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* Volume: 111 Issue 5 (2011).
- McClain, Arianna et al. "Visual Illusions and Plate Design: The Effects of Plate Rim Widths and Rim Coloring on Perceived Food Portion Size." *International journal of obesity (2005)* 38.5 (2014): 657–662. *PMC*. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- "Mission Statement." *Mission Statement | College of the Holy Cross*. College of the Holy Cross, n.d. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Moss, Michael. *Salt, Sugar, Fat: How the Food Giants Hooked Us*. New York: Random House, 2013. Print.

- Nutrition and Students' Academic Performance (n.d.): n. pag. Nutrition and Students' Academic Performance. Wilder Research. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Petrini, Carlo. *Slow Food Nation: The Creation of a New Gastronomy*. New York: Rizzoli Ex Libris, 2007. Print.
- Pollan, Michael. *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin, 2006. Print.
- Pollan, Michael, and Maira Kalman. *Food Rules: An Eater's Manual*. New York, NY: Penguin, 2013. Print.
- Potera, Carol. "DIET AND NUTRITION: The Artificial Food Dye Blues." *Environmental Health Perspectives*. National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, Oct. 2010. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Ramanujan, Krishna. "Dining Hall Food Labels Nudge Diners to Eat Healthier | Cornell Chronicle." *Dining Hall Food Labels Nudge Diners to Eat Healthier | Cornell Chronicle*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Sandler, Ronald L. *Food Ethics: The Basics*. New York: Routledge, 2014. Print.
- Scrinis, Gyorgy. *Nutritionism: The Science and Politics of Dietary Advice*. Columbia University Press, 2013, www.jstor.org/stable/10.7312/scri15656.
- Sharp, David E., Jeffery Sobal, and Brian Wansink. "Using Plate Mapping to Examine Portion Size and Plate Composition for Large and Small Divided Plates." *Eating behaviors* 15.4 (2014): 658–663. *PMC*. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Thomas, Erica. "Food For Thought: Obstacles To Menu Labelling In Restaurants And Cafeterias." *Public Health Nutrition* 19.12 (2016): 2185-2189. *Academic Search Premier*. Web. 11 Dec. 2016
- Thompson, Paul B. *From Field to Fork: Food Ethics for Everyone*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015. Print.
- USA, Slow Food. "Slow Food USA." *Slowfood USA*. N.p., n.d. Web. 11 Dec. 2016.
- Williams, H. M. "Nutritional Aspects of Human Physical and Athletic Performance." (Book, 1985) [WorldCat.org]. CABI, 11 May 2016. Web. 13 Dec. 2016.
- Wansink, Brian. *Mindless Eating: Why We Eat More than We Think*. New York: Bantam, 2007. Print.

Wansink, Brian, and Koert Van Ittersum. "Portion Size Me: Plate-size Induced Consumption Norms and Win-win Solutions for Reducing Food Intake and Waste." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Applied* 19.4 (2013): 320-32. Web.