



Dining Halls as Study Spaces Report

Brain Lin, BK '21

Angel Mora, TD '21

Introduction

This project was started last year by Nico Moscoso (SY '21) and Daniel Robinson (DC '20). Their report is attached.

Given the increase in the number of Yale students with the opening of the new colleges, and the limited number of study spaces around campus, we aim to offer another study space option for everyone: the residential colleges' dining halls.

Data from surveys and peer institutions are provided in Moscoso and Robinson's report, and they had begun the process of implementing this policy before the spring 2018 semester ended. Our team's responsibility is to speak with Heads of College to follow through on the implementation of these policies.

Background

Saybrook was the first college to pilot the idea of using a dining hall as a study space, and it was, for the most part, successful. Two minor incidents have occurred since the program's implementation in 2013. Saybrook Head of College Thomas Near has said these incidents do not overshadow the positive impact that this program has had on the Saybrook community.

After discussions with Yale Dining and individual Heads of College, we concluded that all colleges have some way to separate the area where people eat and where food is actually served and stored, so opening up the dining hall area itself should not pose a problem. Berkeley's doors separating the food-serving area and the dining hall do not lock, but the staff uses the utensil carts and signs to prohibit students from opening the doors. Yale Dining has approved the idea to use the dining hall as a study space and has stated that the decision to open up this area is up to the residential college dining hall managers.

We divided residential colleges that had not already opened their dining halls as study spaces amongst YCC team members and spoke with each Head of College individually.

Ryley

- Murray
- Franklin
- Davenport

Angel

- Timothy Dwight
- Silliman
- Trumbull
- Jonathan Edwards

Brian

- Morse/Stiles
- Berkeley
- Hopper

Results

Ryley

- Murray – Opens for one hour after dinner all the time.
- Franklin – Open 9:30 P.M. to 2:00 A.M. during the regular week. Will be open all night for finals period.
- Davenport – Open all the time during finals period.

Angel

- Timothy Dwight – The Head of College and dining hall staff manager agreed that next semester could be a “prototype” to see if this particular idea is possible in the long term. Implemented after being contacted by YCC.
- Silliman – There is already a program in play that utilizes the dining hall after hours. The Head of College is interested in the idea, so we will approach her next semester after evaluating the success of the program’s implementation this semester.
- Trumbull – Head of College has not replied. Follow-up email sent and reply expected in the next few days.
- Jonathan Edwards – Head of College has replied and a meeting has been scheduled for the beginning of spring semester.

Brian

- Morse/Stiles – Already open all hours before we talked and is now experimenting with different hours. Currently open all night but will try 10:00 P.M. to 1:00 A.M. next semester. Periodically has snacks, but providing beverages did not work out well. Late night hours implemented after being contacted by YCC.
- Berkeley – Test run during reading period successful – likely to continue next semester. Implemented after being contacted by YCC.
- Hopper – Dining hall is already used to hold a computer science class, but other students are welcome to utilize the dining hall as well.

Next Steps

- Follow up with Trumbull and JE, with a meeting with the Jonathan Edwards Head of College and renewed contact with Trumbull, both at the start of spring semester.
- Track feedback from HoCs and students.

Conclusion

Over the course of the 2019 fall semester, all Heads of College have been contacted and have initiated plans to integrate this initiative within their residential college or are willing to continue coordinating with YCC to integrate the program in the future. Overall, many colleges are in the process of implementing the initiative and opening their dining halls, but those who have yet to do so will, or are likely to give it a “test run” after we reached out.