

Sodexo system flaw costs students meals

BY JARED YOUNG
Staff Reporter

Hungry after a day of classes, sophomore Kyle Lawson went to the cafeteria to eat. After swiping his card, a Sodexo worker told him he had no meals left.

Lawson said he had kept track of his meals closely throughout the year, and he knew that more meals should have been on his card.

"I also eat with my friends every time, and they still had about 30 meals each left," Lawson said. "There's no way I spent 30 more meals than all of them."

Lawson went to Sodexo's office in the Student Union Building, where he received a record of the times he had used meals. At a quick glance, Lawson said everything seemed normal.

"I still didn't feel right about it," Lawson said. "I went back and checked it out, ... and all the times [when extra meals were charged] were times where I was in class."

Lawson said these extra charges occurred at several different times when the card readers in the cafeterias and C-Stores were not working, requiring Sodexo employees to type the numbers in by hand. But he said he doubts the same typo could have been made several times.

"On March 4, I counted up nine [different] times they said I went to the C-store and purchased nine

meals worth of stuff," Lawson said. "The most shocking [incident] was within a 24-hour period, I apparently purchased twelve meals."

After bringing his findings to the attention of Sodexo, an employee put 20 meals back on his card. Lawson said he thinks more than 20 meals had been taken, but he was grateful to get back whatever was possible.

"I thought I was going to have to purchase another \$200 worth of meals to last me through the semester, and I wasn't going to let that happen," Lawson said. "I've also had other friends who have been suspicious about their meals being stolen as well."

Lawson said he appreciated Sodexo working with him to resolve the issue, but he did not like the way the situation was handled.

"I don't recall any kind of apology," Lawson said. "That was the part I was most angry with. I did want a little bit more explanation."

Director of Sodexo Dennis Markeson said he became aware of a possible problem with the card reading system Monday. Since that time, Markeson and his staff have been investigating the problem and checking for other instances, like Lawson's case where people might have lost meals.

Markeson said Sodexo currently is in the process of randomly analyzing 200 student meal cards to see if there is any suspicious activity. He

said a problem like this has never occurred before, and they want to figure out the cause quickly.

"If anyone is concerned that they have been charged more meals than they should have come by our office, and we'll take a look," Markeson said.

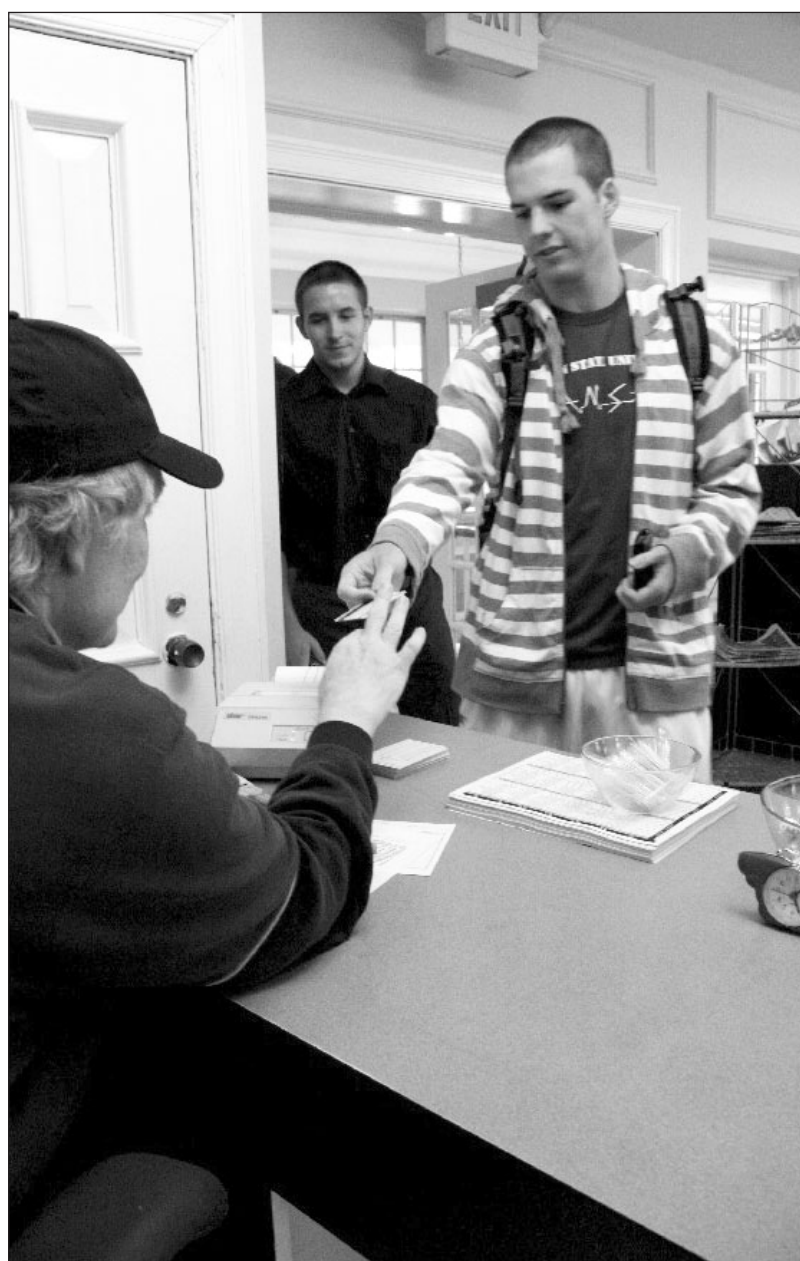
The system Sodexo has in place for reading cards has been in use since 1993. Markeson said they updated 10 years ago, and it cost \$40,000. Markeson said an entire new system would cost about \$80,000, which is why Sodexo is working to solve this problem quickly. Markeson said he hopes it is something simple and that it can be fixed soon.

Senior Amy Bockelman said Sodexo workers have taken her card number but has never had a problem. Although she has not had severe problems with her meal plan or Sodexo, Bockelman said she recognizes that the system is not perfect.

"I know sometimes the machines have trouble, or they'll have to write your number down," Bockelman said. "I think that it is just technology problems, not really a problem with Sodexo themselves."

Bockelman said she has had a good experience with Sodexo throughout her college career.

"I lost my card once, but I went to the office in the SUB, and they gave me a temporary card, and it worked fine," Bockelman said.



Amy Gleaves/Index
Sodexo employee George Walker swipes student's ID card in Centennial dining hall Monday.

Two dean candidates speak at forum

BY SARAH SCOTT
For the Index

The dean of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities will be selected May 1 or early next week.

Candidates for the position of dean of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities spoke in a forum Friday afternoon to address audience questions. Kathryn Brammall, associate professor of history, and Doug Davenport, interim dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, are the candidates for the position.

The need for a dean arose when the College of Arts and Sciences was split into three schools. The other two schools are the School of Arts and Letters and the School of Science and Mathematics.

"We've had a lot of successes in the past, but in order to continue to thrive and prosper in the future, we need to do some things differently," Brammall said.

She said her administrative experience as managing editor of the Sixteenth Century Journal, at Truman, will be helpful in the position as dean. Brammall said she also understands the faculty experience on campus because she has been here 12 years.

"Really the entire application process, the entire run-up to the forum is preparation for that — it's not really something you can cram for," Brammall said.

Davenport said he applied for the position because he has enjoyed serving as interim dean and would like to continue in the position.

"I've been able to be collaborative in making decisions and work ... [toward] reasonable solutions to problems that we've faced as an institution," Davenport said.

Davenport said the questions posed at the forum highlighted concerns about support for faculty, support for departments and how to address larger issues at the University.

Mark Hanley, professor of history and

chair of the screening committee, said the responsibility of the committee was to review the candidates who applied and inform the Provost if the committee thought the candidate met the requirements.

"Of the candidates we reviewed, these two were deemed acceptable for the process," Hanley said. "We did not recommend one, or in this case the two people who participated in the public forum. ... We simply deemed both of them as acceptable candidates meeting the required qualifications for the position."

Hanley said the candidates would have interviews with administrators including the provost and president.

"The public forum was designed to give faculty a chance to listen to both candidates [and] ask any questions they wanted," Hanley said.

Faculty and staff in attendance filled out evaluation forms of the candidates, which were then turned in to the provost.

Candidates for the School of Social Sciences and Humanities

Kathryn Brammall
• Associate Professor of History
• Managing editor of the Sixteenth Century Journal

Doug Davenport
• Interim dean of the college of Arts and Sciences
• Feels like he can work collaboratively to make decisions

We, the undersigned, are voicing our discontent with the Board of Governor's decision to honor former Missouri Governor and U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft with an honorary doctorate:

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Molly Beuke
Shannon Clark
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