

Meal plan comparable to convenience store prices

A survey of Grab 'n Go and 7-Eleven showed similar pricing

BY KELLY BROWN
NEWS REPORTER

Those who criticize the price of higher education apparently aren't talking about the food.

A recent Emerald price survey comparing the Grab 'n Go in Hamilton Dining to a local convenience store showed that prices are similar — and often cheaper — at the on-campus mart.

Out of 16 randomly selected items available at both locations, seven are cheaper at the Grab 'n Go than the 7-Eleven on Franklin Boulevard, and three items are the same price.

If one was to purchase all 16 items, the totals would differ by a quarter: \$36.45 at the Grab 'n Go to \$36.70 at the 7-Eleven.

Tom Driscoll, food services director for University Housing, said that because dining services is "cost-making," meaning things are only priced high enough to cover costs, prices tend to be similar to or lower than area stores.

He said he feels dining services is more about quality than profit.

"I don't think that's the business we're in," he said. "We're into building communities, not apartment rentals."

It's very difficult to determine a set dollar value per meal point because housing and food costs are never separate, Driscoll said. Those living in the residence halls must purchase a meal point plan, and meal point plans are only available to on-campus students.

"We share all custodial and electrical costs, so it's impossible to say, 'This amount of money goes to food,'" he said.



KATE HORTON | PHOTOGRAPHER

Students use meal points to purchase food at the Grab 'n Go in the Hamilton Complex.

He said all profit made from dining services goes toward upgrading or adding new facilities, such as the addition of Fire 'n Spice Grill in 2002.

Most students interviewed expressed satisfaction with the value of the meal plan and said that even if they were given the option to not purchase the plan, they still would.

"I think it's a good value ... it's more than enough to get through the week, and the points balance out to less than a dollar per point," said Brenton Agena, a sophomore vocal performance major. "It costs more to drive out and then find somewhere and eat than just to walk here and use your points."

Andy Winn, a sophomore political science major, agreed with Agena, but he said he found the value of a point confusing.

"I like how accessible the food is ... there's lots of variety," he said. "But it's hard to tell, because it varies from place to place. Pizano's, you can get a slice of pizza for a point, which would be two bucks at a pizza place, and then you can get a candy bar, which is 75 cents, for a

point at the Grab 'n Go."

However, not all students are happy with the food.

Rachael Hart, a freshman pre-business administration major, said that she felt that healthy, low-fat items are overpriced and not always available.

"I just feel that for the quality of food, it seems like the amount of points you pay is pretty high," she said. "The healthy options that they offer are poor quality ... it's either too many points for things that are healthy, or the things that are healthy that are offered aren't really the freshest," she said. "Things that are healthy, like cereal, are seven, eight, nine points on up."

Driscoll said that dining services strives to meet student expectations.

"Everything we do is a response to feedback we get from students," he said. "We want to serve safe, great-tasting food — it's what we're here for."

Contact the higher education reporter at kbrown@dailyemerald.com

IN BRIEF

ASUO gives free rides to Westmoreland meeting

Student government will be providing transportation to the Oregon State Board of Higher Education hearing where board members will decide whether to allow the University to put the Westmoreland Apart-

ments up for sale.

An ASUO van pool will leave at 6 a.m. Friday morning to attend the hearing from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. at Portland State University.

To reserve a seat, visit the ASUO office, EMUSuite 4, before 5 p.m. today. Contact ASUO Vice President Kyla Coy at 346-0625 with questions.

— Nicholas Wilbur

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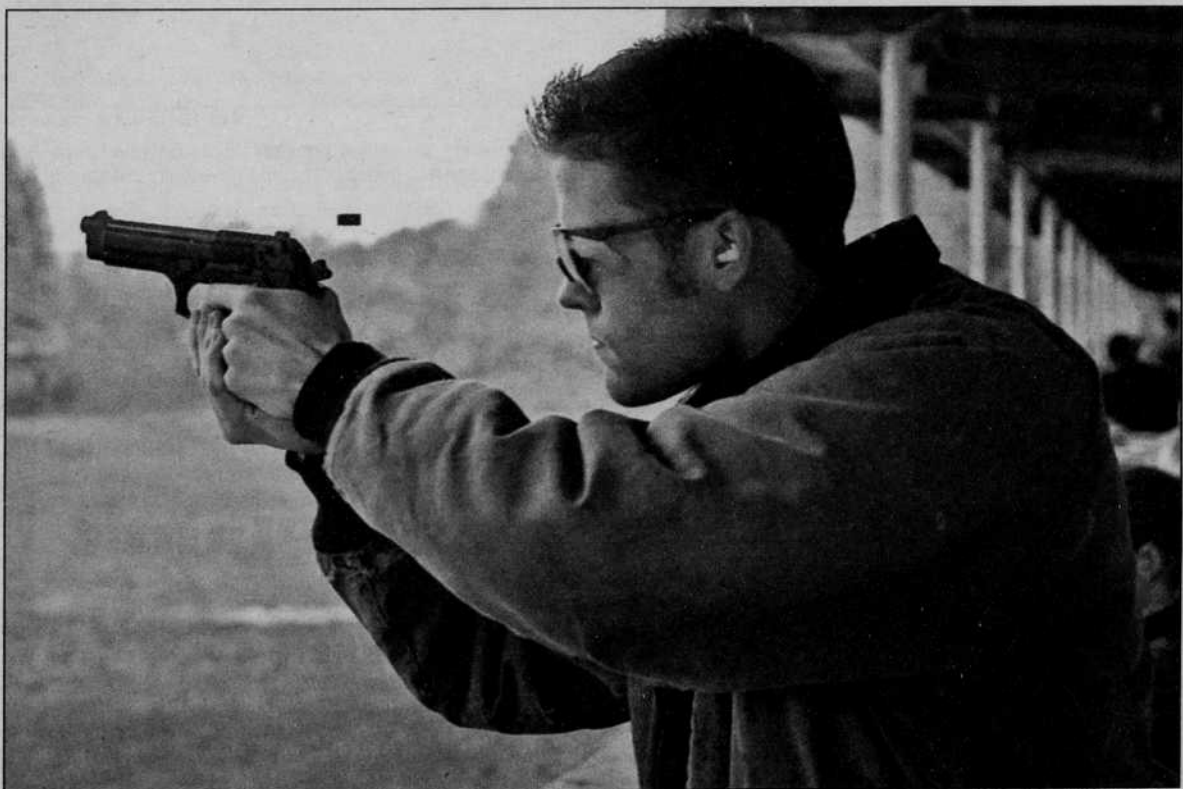
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College Republicans Chairman and University senior Anthony Warren fires his 9 mm Beretta semi-automatic at the Emerald Empire Gun Club in Springfield on Saturday. College Republicans members go to a shooting range every term as part of their "Second Amendment Day." Twenty to 30 people went to the range this term, Warren said, about half of whom had never fired a gun before. "We had just as many females there as we did males, which was surprising and very impressive," Warren said. "This will open the door for them to learn how to safely and responsibly use (guns)." The College Republicans held a safety class in the beginning of the day to teach participants how to safely handle and fire different types of guns. "Everyone had a blast, pardon the pun," Warren said.

—Meghann M. Cuniff

University of Oregon Homecoming 2005 Nov. 3-6

Homecoming Pep Rally

Thursday, Nov. 3 from 12:00 P.M. until 2:00 P.M.

EMU Amphitheater

Entertainment, raffle prizes, and free food!

Special performances by the UO Cheerleaders and Green Garter Band!



Duck Spirit Day

Friday, Nov. 4

Dress in your "Duck" gear on Friday!

The SARB Prize Patrol will be giving away prizes to all faculty, staff, and students who are "ducked" out in UO gear from 12:00 P.M. until 4:00 P.M.

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