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Foodservice rotation
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Cafeteria line flow of food/traffic patterns analysis

Traffic

The café at the Thornton campus consists of a combination of self-serve, cafeteria-style service, and quick-service stations. The open set up of the café lends itself to an overall efficient flow of customer and food traffic.

- The placement of trays, silverware, and paper dishes are on the outskirts of the café, out of the main traffic area. Customers pick up their tray before entering the service area.
- There is not just one line that everyone waits in; instead, they are free to go to whichever station they want.
- The two quick-service stations—the grill and the sandwich bar—are located on opposite sides of the café which helps to spread out customer traffic and prevents a back up of people waiting to place an order.
- The two cashier stations situated near the exit also help to keep traffic from staying in the service area.
- Tray return is on one end of the dining room, away from the café, so there is no traffic congestions of trays leaving and returning.

Food

- The sandwich station, drinks, and steam table areas are all located near the one door to the kitchen (located in the back left corner). This allows quick access to items for restocking or new batches of food for the steam tables.
- The grill has no direct access to the kitchen as the only door is on the other side near the sandwich station. Although it is not crucial to have direct access, as all the supplies for each meal are stocked in the grill area and then cooked there, it would be convenient for the grill to be able to quickly obtain supplies from the production area. When the grill runs out of an item or just needs something from the production area, the workers must pass through the middle of the café.
- The food for the steam table area is all prepared before lunch, kept warm and then taken out to the steam tables.
- 'Impulse foods' such as ice cream and snacks are strategically placed near cashiers and in other spots throughout the café.

Areas for improvement:

The main improvement would be to alter the way the steam table food is prepared. Instead of all the food being prepared ahead of time and held, the food should be prepared using the batch-cooking system. This would allow the food to be brought out in intervals throughout lunch, ensuring a hot, fresh product continuously. Batch cooking increases freshness, good appearance, and customer satisfaction.