

New Flyer's Den hours receives negative response from students

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At the start of the semester, Sodexo announced hours for dining halls across campus, sparking controversy amongst students, with one particular eye-catcher. According to the new hours, the Flyer's Den was closed Sunday through Monday and opened later Tuesday through Saturday. As opposed to previous years, they now close at 11 p.m. on weekdays, instead of midnight.

Junior psychology major Tori Hagg is part of the women's track and field team and explained it's hard as an athlete when places like the Flyer's Den closed.

"We receive pressure from coaches to eat at certain times to match our workout hours, but it's hard to do with hours constantly changing," said Hagg.

Every Sunday, the track and field team has practice at 5 p.m. so

they must rush immediately after to catch dinner at the Laverne and Dorothy Brown Dining Hall, as opposed to previous years where they would go to the Flyer's Den.

"Sometimes I just have to miss a meal," said Hagg. "It's hard with not a lot of places being open late. It leads to me and others going off campus, but not everyone has the money for that."

Field Marketing Coordinator for Lewis Dining Sam Doran explained they initially started with closure on Sundays and Mondays because, "We anticipated students would use it [the Flyer's Den] less at the beginning of the semester; however, we soon learned that students wanted it open these days."

Sodexo explained that they, just like the entire nation, are facing labor shortages. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, there are 4.3 million workers missing based on pre-pandemic numbers.

Most of the staff at the Flyer's Den are full-time employees and Sodexo wanted to create a solution that employees could benefit from as well.

"We don't have extra people to relieve others for two whole days," said Doran.

Sodexo explained that due to short staffing, the Flyer's Den can only be open five days a week. They hired several people within the last few months and are still currently hiring. However, the increase in workers may not have an immediate impact on the Flyer's Den due to the need for workers in other dining halls across campus.

Aside from the labor shortage, Sodexo also says the number of orders on Fridays and Saturdays are low compared to Sundays and Mondays.

"Not many people were taking advantage of it being open so we wanted to shift our labor to what



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Due to a low amount of orders placed on the Bite app, the Flyer's den is now closed Fridays and Saturdays instead of Sundays and Mondays.

would help the most students," said Doran.

Doran encourages students to continue to give feedback to Sodexo because that's what brought the change in the first place.

"We had many student focus groups this year and we always

welcome feedback from the student community," said Doran.

On Monday, Oct. 18 the customer satisfaction survey began and Sodexo continues to encourage students to complete it. The survey will close on October 30.

International students blindsided by global social media outages

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On Monday, Oct. 4, apps including Instagram, Facebook and Whatsapp went down for about six hours. Facebook owns both Instagram and Whatsapp which explains this domino effect.

According to Facebook, it was a router issue and not a hacking issue. They went to Twitter, like most social media users, and issued an apology. "To the huge community of people and businesses around the world who depend on us: we're sorry," the tweet read. "We've been working hard to restore access to our apps and services..."

There are some people who use social media to update the world about their lives, while there are others who depend heavily on social media for their business or even to communicate with their family and friends. For many international students on campus, this social media closure halted communication with those close to them.

Cybersecurity graduate student Sai Srinath Mummaka immediately thought the outage

was from a hacker.

"It's very uncommon that a big company like Facebook has an outage for that long," said Mummaka.

This outage cost Facebook about \$10 million, which is one of their worst setbacks since their outage in 2019, which lasted for about 24 hours.

Mummaka's family is from India, which is 11 hours ahead of Illinois. Since he is not able to see his family for another year or two, he makes it a daily habit to speak with them via Whatsapp. On Oct. 4, he was unable to.

"It sucks that one company is monopolizing the entire social media," said Mummaka.

Similar to Mummaka, freshman aviation flight major Gyasi Boisson had to stop his daily conversations with his mom, who is currently in the Bahamas. The morning of the outage, Boisson had to make a payment for a flight block, but his message was never sent.

"I just thought it was Lewis Wi-Fi acting up so I didn't think much of it, until it never went through," said Boisson.

Boisson uses Whatsapp to



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communicate with his family in both his native land of Trinidad and his current home in the Bahamas. He was unable to talk or text via Whatsapp so he used email instead.

"It was difficult to explain to my mom over email what was going on, a phone call would've been better because the outage delayed the payment," said

Boisson.

Boisson's last time seeing his family in person was August 21, and he has plans on seeing them again for winter break. With the Bahamas only being an hour ahead, he's able to communicate with his family more frequently, in comparison to Mummaka who must plan and schedule his calls.

Facebook released a statement after the social media outages. "People and businesses around the world rely on us every day to stay connected..." wrote Facebook VP of Infrastructure Santosh Janardhan on Facebook Engineering's website. "We apologize to all those affected..."