Food is important not only for its nutritional value but also for the effect it has on our well being. We talk about comfort food and how there is nothing better than a home-cooked meal. We all have favorite foods. Some of us eat when we are happy and others eat when they are sad. Food is an important component of college life, too.

Our college food service is operated by a company called Fresh Ideas. This is their first year to provide our food service. I would like to introduce them to you. The manager is Dawn Morris. She has worked with Fresh Ideas for 3 years and moved here from Columbia, MO, where she worked with Westminster College. She has 6 children and 12 grandchildren. The Assistant Manager is Bob Rowe. Bob has worked for Fresh Ideas for 5 years. He also moved here from Columbia, MO. He has 3 children and 1 grandchild.
Fresh Ideas has accounts throughout Missouri and is based in the town of Columbia. It has a market concentration that is focused on “academic institutions as well as business and industry accounts.” Williams Baptist College is the first account in Arkansas for Fresh Ideas. This summer, Fresh Ideas began work by renovating the cafeteria. They removed a wall, put in tile flooring, painted and added new equipment and furniture. Some of you were here on campus during Homecoming and got a first hand look at the new and better Mabee-Gwinup Cafeteria.

The room wasn’t the only thing that was re-vamped. True to their name, Fresh Ideas “provides the freshest, highest quality, best tasting, full-service food operation in the Midwest. Fresh Ideas is committed to making every aspect of your food service healthy and wonderfully satisfying.” Now, instead of a serving line and salad bar, the cafeteria is divided into food stations with names like; Home Zone (healthy entrees), World Beat (foods with an international flair), Deli Delights (sandwiches, made to order), Little Italy (the pizza bar), Field of Greens (salads, plus more), and Temptations (desserts). Those of you who dined in the cafeteria during Homecoming got to sample Fresh Ideas’ menu.
Fresh Ideas also participates in WBC students’ lives. They had a Sliced Apple with Caramel booth at Harvest Fest, have a monthly birthday cake for students with birthdays, and re-create favorite recipes that students turn in. Fresh Ideas tries to meet special food needs that students have. The cafeteria is also open to the community on Sunday for lunch.

Williams has 3 meal plans options to meet student needs:

19 meals per week, all provided in the cafeteria;
12 cafeteria meals per week plus $125 flex dollars for use in the cafeteria or the Eagle Grill; and,
180 meal block plan, 180 meals to be used in the cafeteria anytime during the semester plus $100 flex dollars.

There is also a meal plan for commuters.
The majority of our students, who purchase meal plans, purchase the 12 meal plan. When asked “Why” they said,
1) they only eat two meals a day; many preferring not to eat breakfast,
2) they like the flexibility of having flex dollars to use when and how they want, and,
3) they like the alternative of using the flex dollars in the Eagle Grill which has a variety of short-order items and specialty drinks.

No matter which plan they choose, students have their favorite Fresh Idea selections: broccoli/rice casserole, lasagna, pasta Alfredo, stir fry, chicken
tetrazini, strawberry/spinach salad and many more. If you ever find yourself on campus, stop by the cafeteria and sample some Fresh Ideas.

Dawn Morris may be contacted at: 870-886-2967 or 870-759-4136.

March 1-5               Midterm
March 22-26             Spring Break
April 2                 Good Friday (offices closed, no classes)