

Bon Appétit Dining Survey Findings from Spring 2019

Summer 2019

Office of Institutional Research

Special thanks to Annika Wennerlund, '22, & Bailey Haas, '19



Background and Method

Survey Background and Method

Sample for This Project:

- All Macalester College students, faculty, and staff were contacted via e-mail to complete the survey (n = 2,651)

Response Rate:

- Of the 2,651 participants contacted, 583 responded (22%)

Demographic Breakdown of respondents:

- N = 37 Faculty (6% of respondents)
- N = 132 Staff (23% of respondents)
- N = 414 Students (71% of respondents)
 - 74% of students lived on campus
 - 9% lived off-campus with an on-campus meal plan
 - 17% lived off-campus without an on-campus meal plan



Key Take-Aways

Executive Summary

Key Take- Aways

Positives

- Staff attitude, customer service
- Catering, overall
- Recent changes at Nessie's
- Atrium's food quality, value
- Convenience of Coffee Cart
- Potential for satellites to serve more people in a faster & more convenient way (thus absorbing Café Mac's crowds, especially over dinner);
- Potential to expand online ordering

Executive Summary

Key Take- Aways

Shorter-term fixes

- Address preparation of rice, meats, perceived over-use of salt
- Increase vegan & vegetarian options, especially fruits and protein (beans!), and do so consistently across meal times/locations
- Better food labeling; more attention paid to cross-contamination
- More options at the Coffee Cart; longer hours at this location
- Increase access to the Atrium (where perceived quality & satisfaction are high)
- More & better pre-prepared take-away options (like good chopped salads, pasta salads), especially at the Grille & Coffee Cart.

Structural fixes

- Reintroduction of double-swipes; any adjustment to the flex points system that minimize the feeling of unused swipes being unjustly wasted/"stolen"
- Café Mac layout, crowding (= anxiety-inducing)
- "All you care to eat" was still the most-preferred model, but a Block plan (declining flex balance) had significant support, more so than à la carte
- Many suggested à la carte options at Café Mac, especially for soups and salad bar
- Gap in service between 3-5pm (after classes, before extra-curriculars)

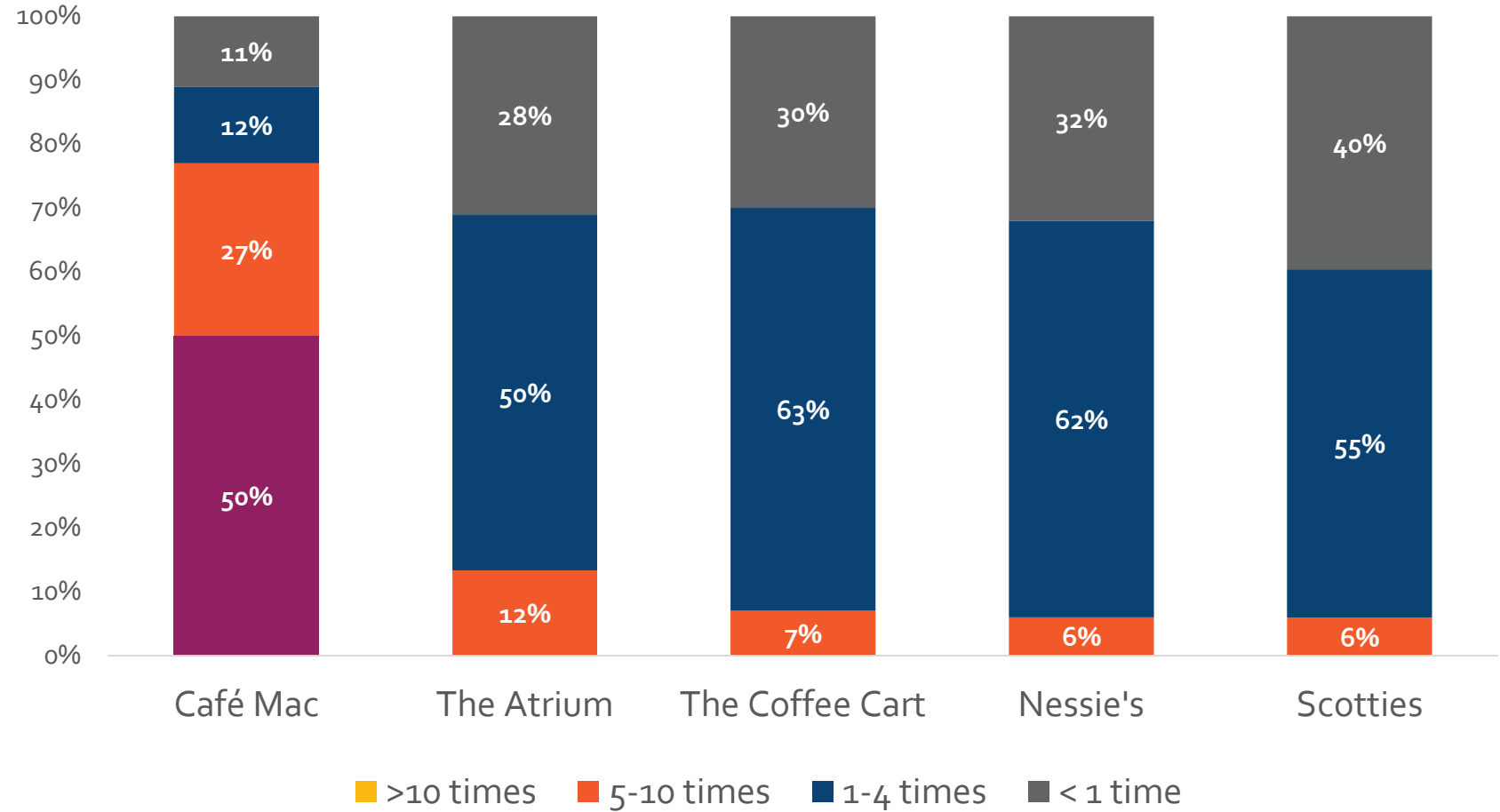


Quantitative Insights & Feedback

Student Dining Frequency

(Not Including Catering)

In a week's time, how often do you purchase food at...

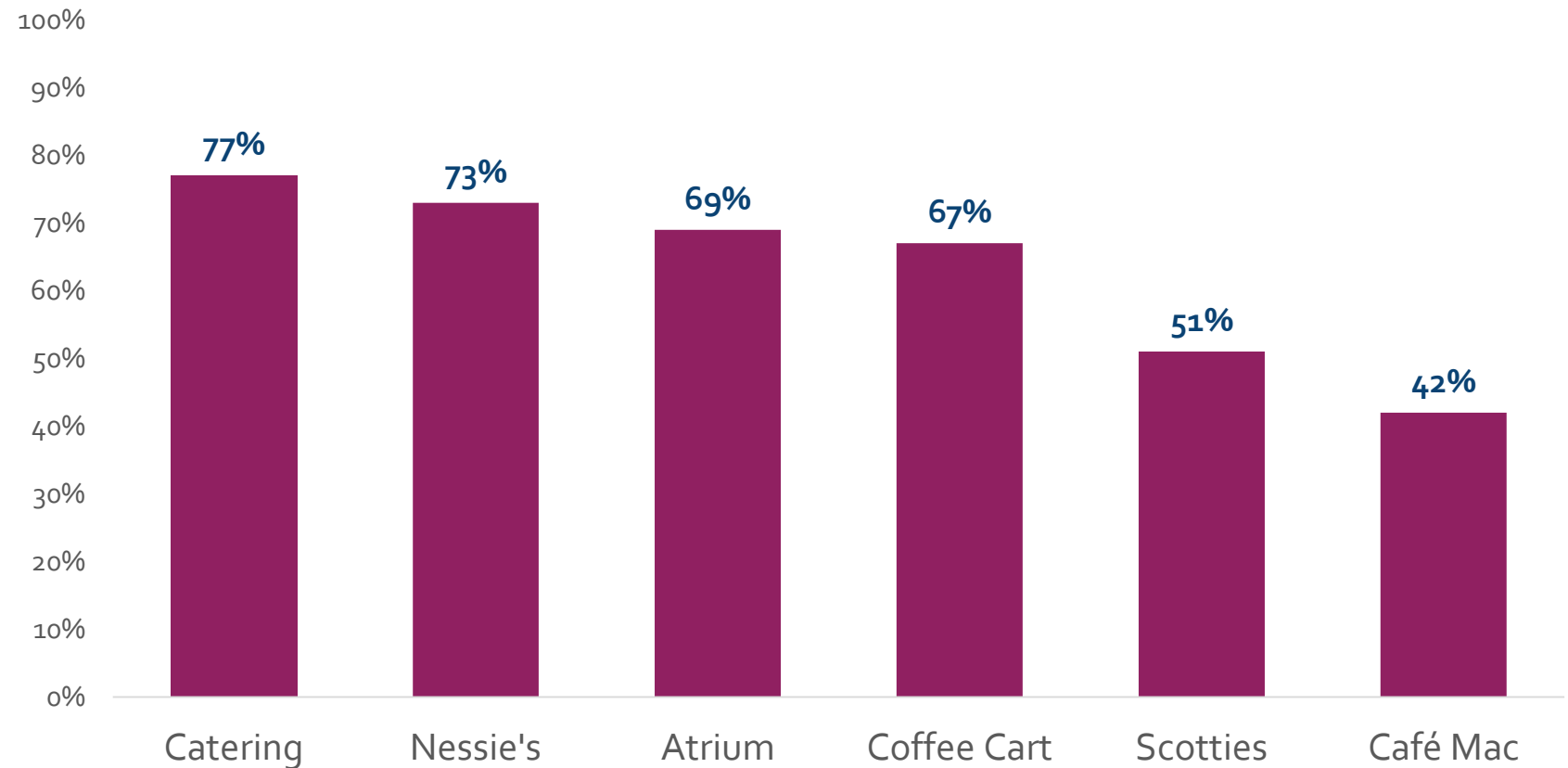


Note: Faculty & Staff report dining at Café Mac most often, followed closely by the Coffee Cart

Overall Dining Satisfaction

Percent of respondents saying their "Overall meal experience" is "Excellent" or "Good"

Overall Meal Experience is "Excellent" or "Good"



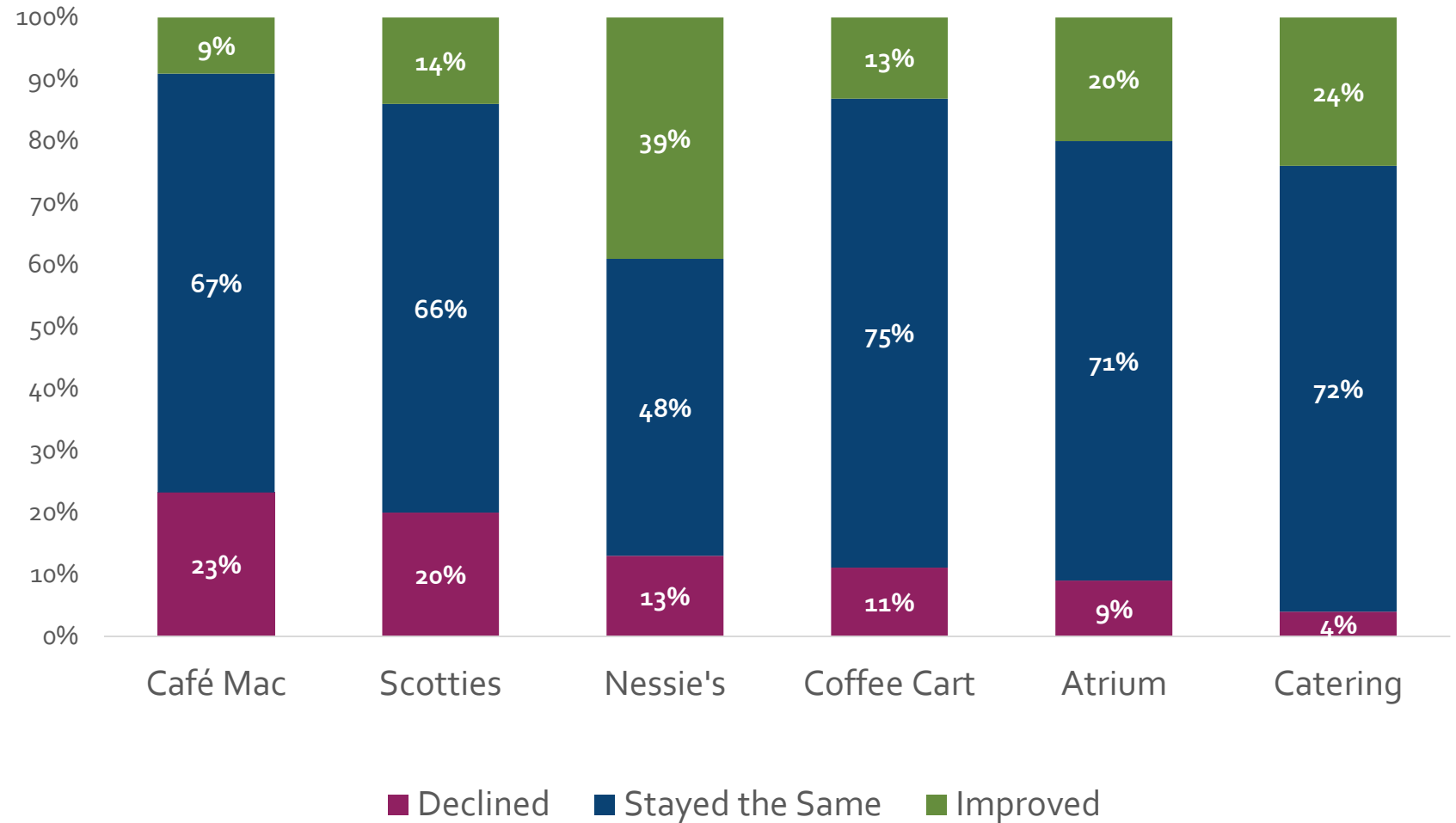
Over the past semester, your dining experience through _____ has

... Improved

... Stayed the same

... Declined

Dining Experience Consistency from Fall 2018 – Spring 2019



Highest and Lowest Rated Attributes for Each Dining Site*

	Highest Rated Attributes (% saying "Excellent" or "Good")	Lowest Rated Attributes (% saying "Poor")
Café Mac	Cleanliness (76%) Quality of Service (72%) Convenience (72%) Social Environment (69%)	Value of food (30%) Menu variety (28%) Quality of food (22%)
Atrium	Cleanliness (84%) Quality of Service (78%)	Timeliness of Service (33%) Social Environment (13%)
The Coffee Cart	Cleanliness (94%) Quality of Service (86%) Convenience (84%)	Menu Variety (26%) Value of food (14%)
Nessie's	Appearance (92%) Quality of Service (86%) Convenience (81%)	Menu Variety (15%) Value of food (12%)
Scotties	Convenience (85%) Cleanliness (81%)	Menu Variety (29%) Quality of food (22%) Value of food (21%)

*For the full list of all ratings for all sites, see the appendix



Insights & Feedback from Open-Ended Responses



What Does Dining
Services Do Well?

What Does Dining Services Do Well?

Top 5 Mentions

Customer Service! (110 mentions, 19% of respondents)

Menu variety (86 mentions, 15% of respondents)

Specific foods, Dietary Restrictions (79 mentions, 14%)

- Curry! Soups!
- Desserts
- Breakfast
- Vegetarian options

Food quality (55 mentions, 9% of respondents)

Convenience (38 mentions, 7% of respondents)

What Dining Services Do Well?

Illustrative Quotes from Students

- [They] cover a wide variety of diets. Perhaps not extensively, but there are options for everyone.
- The *bon appetit* employees and servers/workers in Café Mac are super nice and I always enjoy seeing them. There are good options for food such as curry and the salad bar has good variety.
- The employees are very friendly and are great at making the experience welcoming and fun.
- There are a lot of options to chose from on campus. Cafe Mac has so many options and it made my eating experience an enjoyable one last year. Having the dining options in different buildings is nice as well, as I mostly stay in the fine arts center. The coffee cart provides what I need for lunch.
- There is a variety of foods that changes from day to day, and the employees are so nice!
- There is considerably more varied options than at other campuses, and by and large the quality/flavor of the food is far better.

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What opportunities
does dining services
have to improve?

Opportunities for Improvement

Top 5 Mentions

Specific foods, Dietary Restrictions (147 mentions, 25%)

- Rice!
- More offerings of fruits & veggies; plant-based proteins
- Vegan & Gluten free options are lacking, poorly labeled / mislabeled
- Meats can be dry
- More authentic Asian food (*though the effort is appreciated*)

Menu variety (137 mentions, 23% of respondents)

Food quality (117 mentions, 20% of respondents)

- Saltiness mentioned frequently

Value (76 mentions, 13% of respondents)


Convenience & Hours/Availability (58 mentions, 10%)

- Weekend dinner availability
- 3-5pm gap in service around campus

Opportunities for Improvement

Illustrative Quotes from Students

- I begged for years for Cafe Mac to provide adequate food for vegans; they never really did, so I got off the meal plan. Protein is often one of the hardest things to find.
- Offer plant based protein options (beans, tofu, etc) everyday! More steamed vegetables and fruit at dinner so that anyone on a plant based diet is able to eat a proper meal.
- Don't serve same food for lunch and dinner at cafe mac, don't close the majority of stations on Fridays and weekends, provide three meals a day on Sunday, allow double meal swipes
- There needs to be more variety in the food options. The ability to have meal swipes roll over or to take food out of Cafe Mac would greatly increase the value of the meal plans. The quality of the food is fine, but not good enough for how much we pay per meal.
- The times the food services are open isn't ideal, especially in the window of 3-5pm where a lot of students are getting out of class and have a few minutes before going to their extracurriculars. The Grille is always open, granted, but sometimes when I'm heading to choir from the science building, waiting in line for food across campus doesn't give me enough time to walk back.

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What one change would
make you more likely to
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Top 5 Mentions

VALUE! (110 mentions, 23% of respondents)

- Double Swipes!
- Lower-priced plans and/or plans with greater flexibility
- Take-away options in Café Mac, better take-away at Grille, Coffee Cart

Specific foods, Dietary Restrictions (96 mentions, 16%)

- Better veggies, stir fry, & rice
- Quality Vegetarian & Vegan, at more locations, at more times of day

Food quality (69 mentions, 20% of respondents)

Variety (55 mentions, 13% of respondents)

Convenience & Hours/Availability (45 mentions, 10%)

- More options from 3-5pm would be very helpful
- Line-control at Atrium & Nessie's; online ordering at the Grille (GET app)
- More convenient weekend hours

What one change would make you more likely to dine more often?

Illustrative Quotes from Students

- Mealplan options that cost less and are available to on campus students. The fact that mealplan A B and C all cost the same is absurd. There should be a cheaper option with fewer meals that is available to on campus students.
- If I had a less expensive meal plan options that actually transferred the amount of money I am now spending on meals to be an equal amount of money for flex points. Or just less expensive meal plan options at all - so I can choose to use my own money (that isn't flex points) wherever I want instead of being forced to use it on campus food.
- Bring back double swipes. It's unjust, unethical, and likely unlawful to have people pay for something and then refuse it to them
- More healthy, vegetarian options at the Grille. Love the new avocado bean quesadilla!
- If things weren't so consistently under or over cooked. Mushy and crunchy rice mixed together isn't good.
- We should be able to have a system where taking food out of cafe mac is possible. Like most other schools.
- Varying choices in food options, making sure that certain areas [and locations] are properly stocked with different food options [and don't run out].
- Please extend dining hours for weekend, breakfast, and lunch

What one change would make you more likely to dine more often?

Illustrative Quotes from Staff & Faculty

- When I started at Mac 13 years ago the price for staff to eat in the dining hall was so great that it didn't make sense to eat anywhere else. Since then, it seems like the price has gone up and the quality has gone down and it doesn't seem like a good value to go to Cafe Mac. Either decreasing the price for staff or increasing the quality would make me dine in Cafe Mac more often.
- I guess as a staff person, making it a little more affordable and easier to get something to take away from Cafe Mac.
- Lower price for lunch for faculty, but it may also be necessary to make more space for it (too crowded in campus center). There was a time when colleagues regularly had meals together at the dining hall. I wish that were still true.
- If I could get a good chopped salad somewhere... [or] If I could go to the salad bar at the cafe and fill a clam shell to go at a affordable flat rate or even a price per lb. that is fair.
- hours that are extended, lunch is too expensive
- It would be great if the Coffee Cart in the JWFAC could stay open beyond 2 pm in the afternoon!

**What one
change would
make you more
likely to dine
more often?**

Other Mentions

- **Improved dining environment** (3% of respondents)
- **Transparency of labeling, menu planning** (2% of respondents)
- **Presentation, cleanliness** (1%)
- **Sustainability** (1%)
- **Consistency** (1%)
- **Customer Service** (1%)
- **Improved cultural dishes** (1%)
- **Staff well-being, pay** (1%)



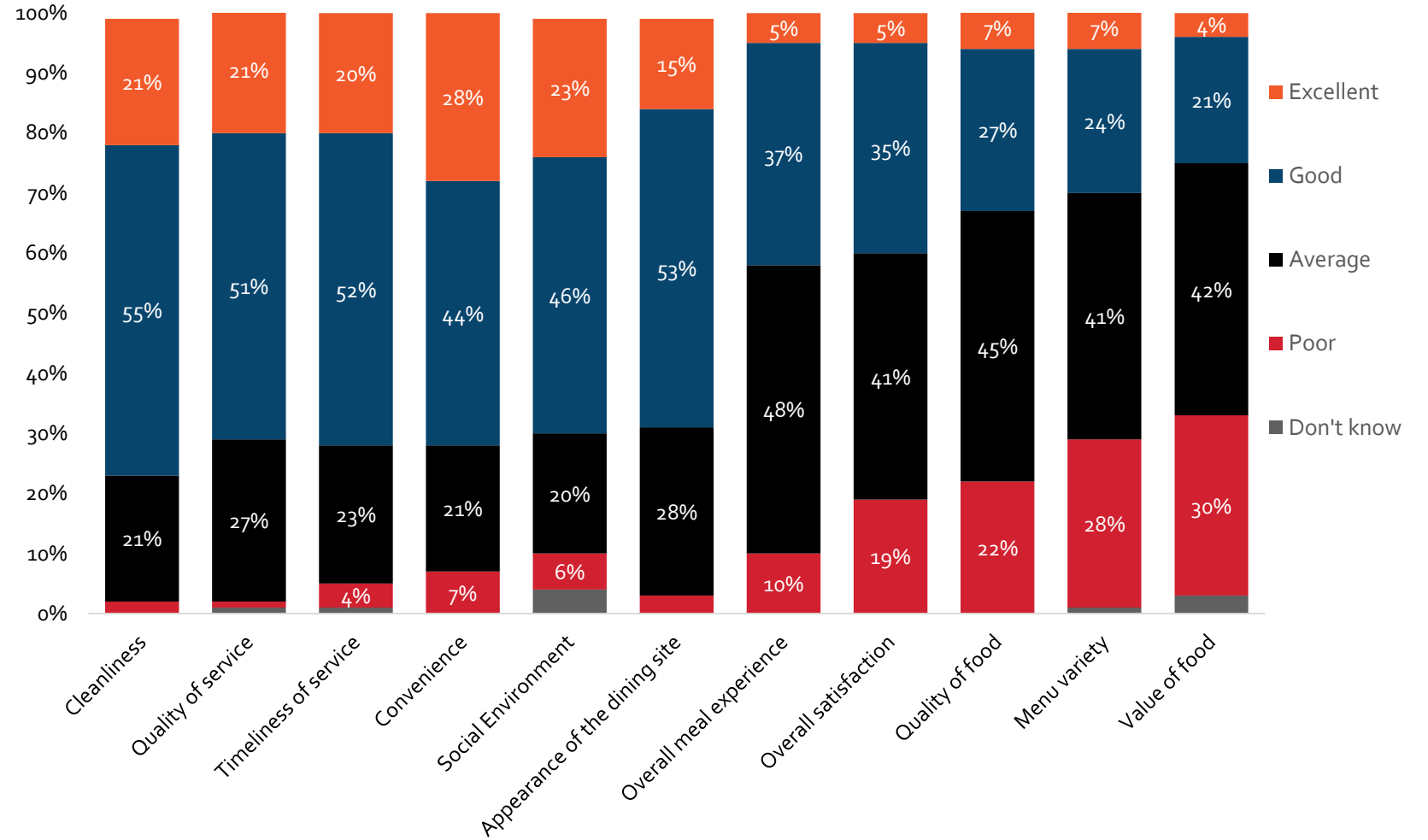
APPENDIX:

Additional graphs and representative comments for each dining site

Cafe Mac

"Rate the following ..."

Ratings for Cafe Mac



Positive Qualitative Comments Relating to Cafe Mac

- “I think that Mac tries to offer a huge variety of food on campus, with Cafe Mac and all other locations for food. It also does its best to serve all people . . .”
- “They are clean and they offer fast service and the ability to socialize while eating”
- “The staff are friendly and good at their jobs. The facilities are clean and well maintained.”
- “Their service is excellent. All the employees greet you with a smile and make you feel nice even if the food is not that great that particular day.”

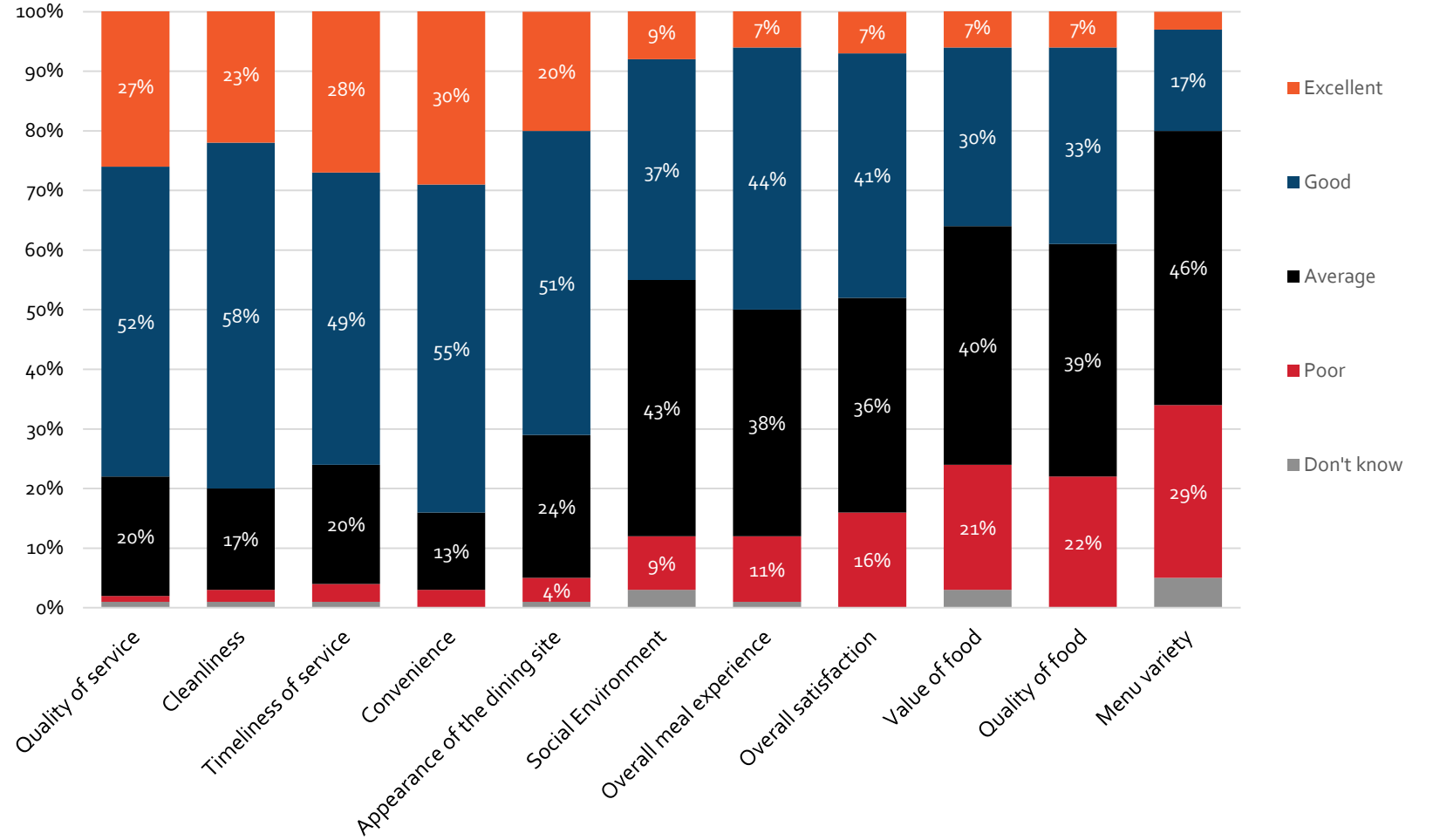
Negative Qualitative Comments Relating to Cafe Mac

- “. . . The food can get really monotonous and lacks creativity.”
- “There needs to be more variety in the food options. The ability to have meal swipes roll over or to take food out of Cafe Mac would greatly increase the value of the meal plans.”
- “Provide more seating options/better table arrangements. It is ridiculous when there is no where to sit at 6pm because there are two people at every table.”
- “Quality is poor, little flavor, over cooked, too greasy”
- “With such taste and variety each meal does not deserve to be so expensively priced as it currently is.”
- “Pay your workers more please. I know I already said that but I consider it important enough to reiterate.”

Scotty's

"Rate the following ..."

Ratings for Scotty's



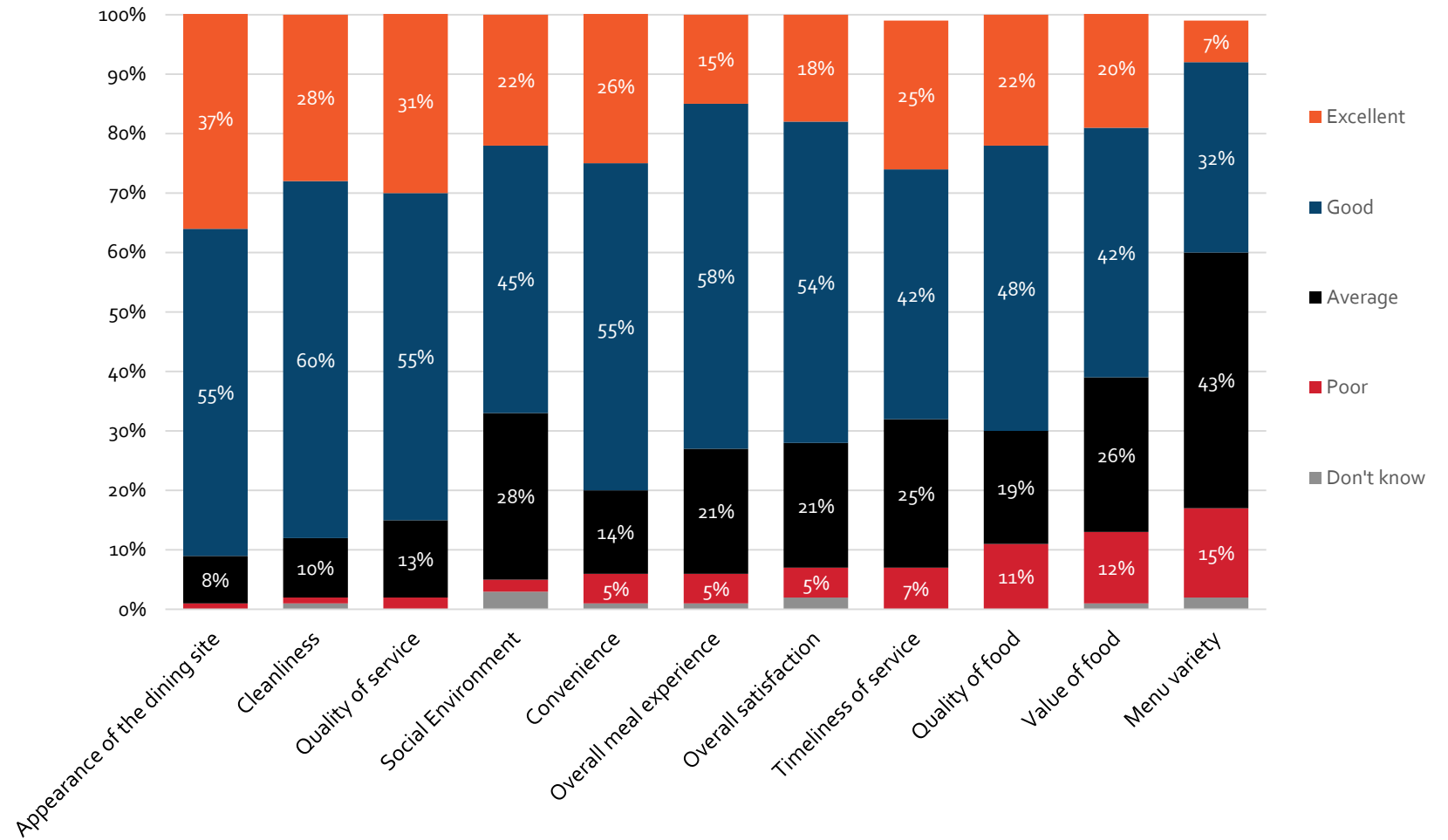
Qualitative Comments Relating to Scotty's

- "I really like the convenience and ease of Scotty's"
- "The staff at Scotty's are fabulous and very friendly!"
- "The staff were great as always, but the food was cold and poor quality."
- "The lines at Scotty's make it take too long to consider on a busy day."
- "Scotty's has been kind of a bummer lately - it doesn't seem like there's actually enough people working there"
- "There have been several times when Scotty's is out of key ingredients (pico de gallo/tomatoes, guacamole) -- with a limited menu, they really shouldn't be out of anything."
- "More variety at Scotty's would be good . . ."

Nessie's

"Rate the following ..."

Ratings for Nessie's



Dining
Experience
Consistency
Looking at
Nessie's

Nessie's is the only location with a large percentage of respondents reporting an "improved" experience over the last semester

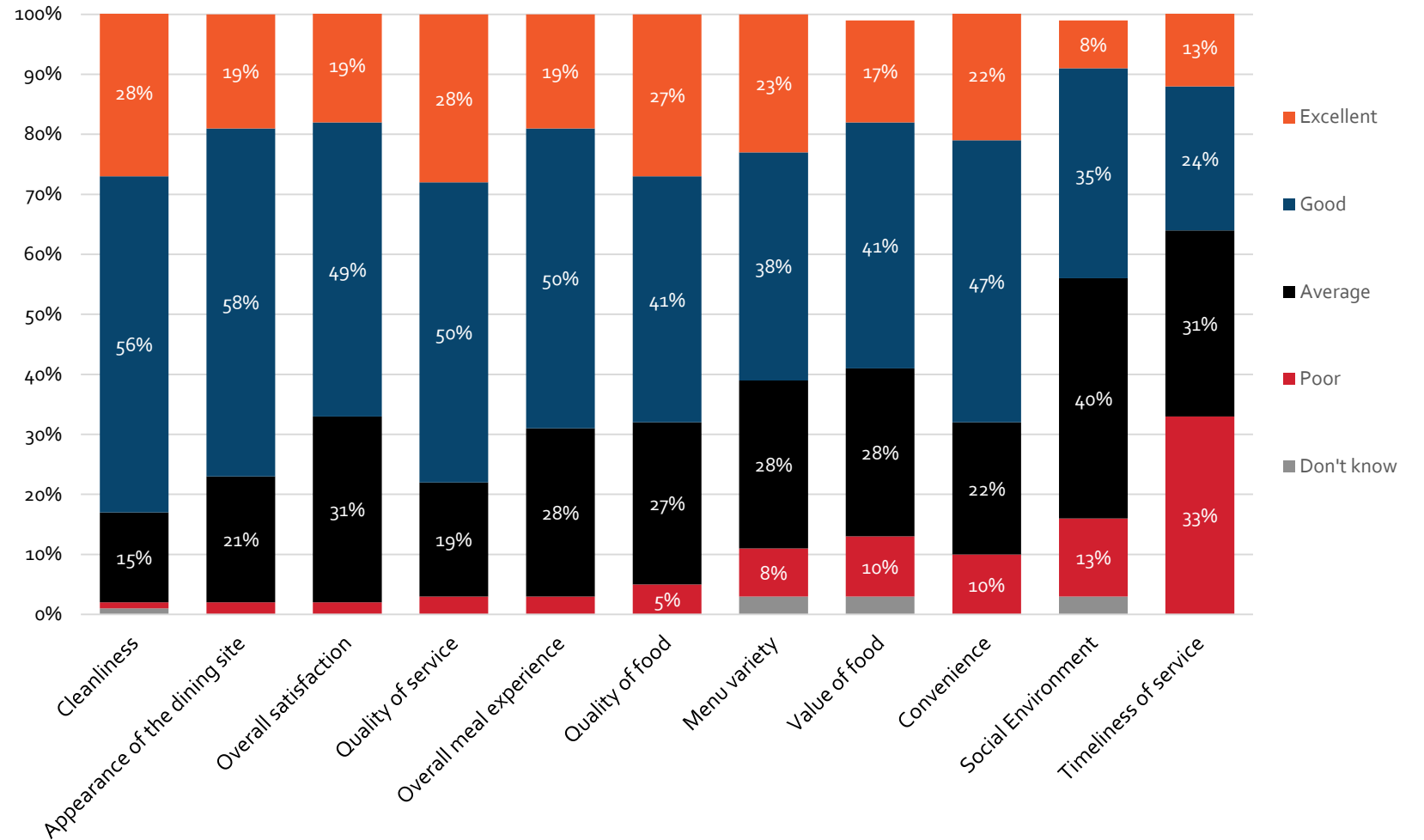
Qualitative comments:

- "I like the new menu at the loch"
- "I think the loch food has tremendously improved in quality since I arrived as a freshman, and being able to access that regularly is a highlight of my weekdays."
- "Nessie's is much better this year!"
- "Can the loch open for dinner please?"

The Atrium

"Rate the following ..."

Ratings for the Atrium



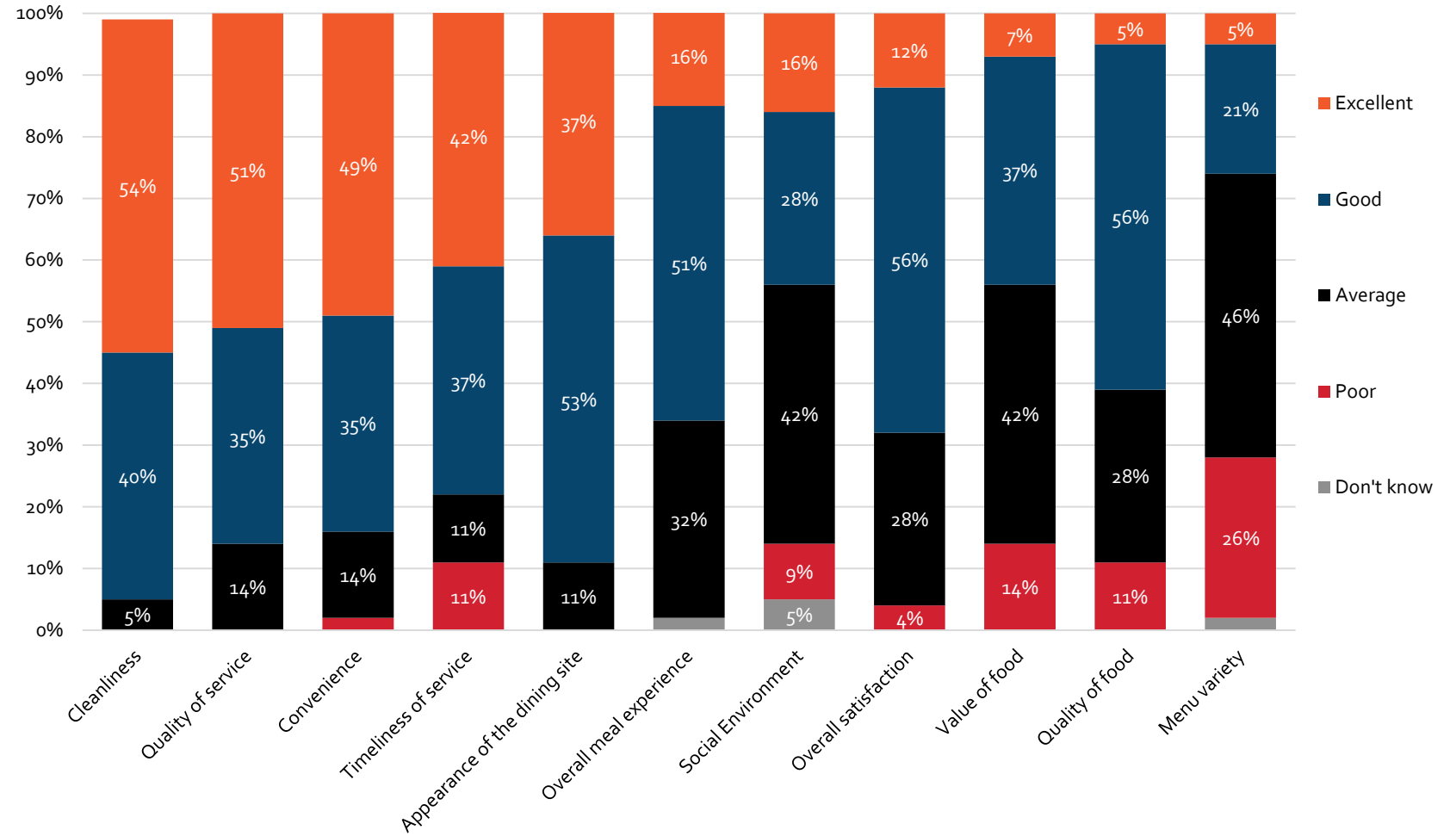
Qualitative Comments Relating to The Atrium

- “The food at the . . . Atrium is really, really good.”
- “Atrium is by far the best quality, but lacks the value in quantity of food.”
- “It would be nice if there was soup available at the Atrium.”
- “The Atrium could have a build your own salad option in addition to sandwiches, for those who do not eat grains.”
- “The atrium is great but its always so smoky that it’s kind of awful standing in line”
- “It might be nice to get 3 workers at atrium-one person per station, one at the register. Would speed things up a lot”
- “Faster service at the atrium. Longer hours.”

The Coffee Cart

"Rate the following ..."

Ratings for the Coffee Cart



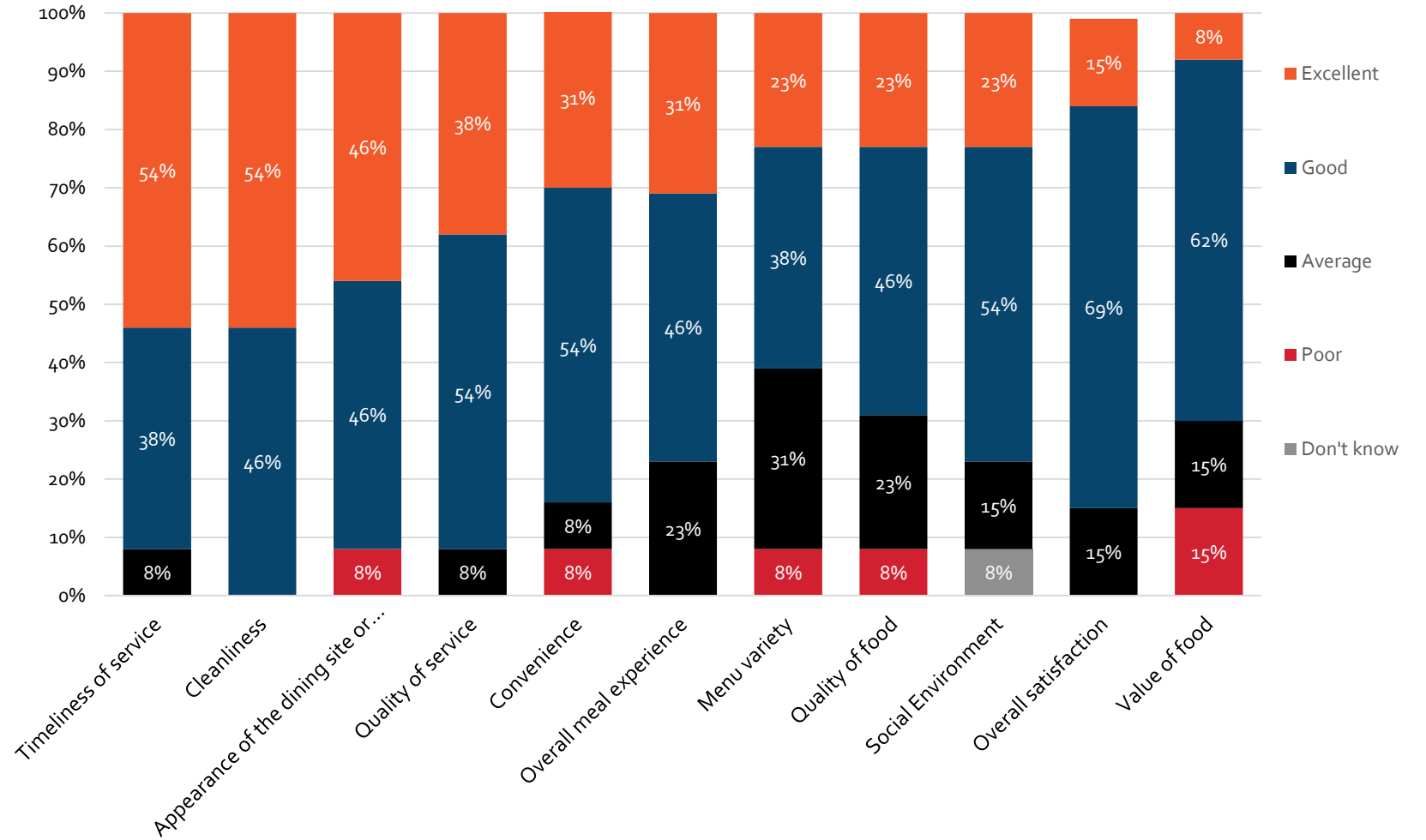
Qualitative Comments Relating to The Coffee Cart

- “The coffee cart in Art Commons is fine as a coffee cart and the person behind the cart is very pleasant. It would be nice if the cart started carrying some real lunch options again”
- “The coffee cart used to have a wide menu. Now the menu is not displayed”
- “Having only one person staffing the coffee cart means that at times there is no one there to take an order because the person has had to go get supplies, or step out to the bathroom. Maybe having a second person who stops by periodically to do the resupply or to give the main person a break would be good.”
- “It seems like whoever works at the coffee cart is on their own and can expect no assistance from Bon Appetite management. I used to buy my lunch there at least 2 times per week. The supply is so unreliable, that I don't bother even checking it out.”
- “More food options at JWall, especially with the new Theater Dance Building opening.”

Catering

"Rate the following ..."

Ratings for Catering



Qualitative Comments Relating to Catering

- “Catering always makes things look really nice, has a nice variety of interesting foods, generally does an excellent job of setup and cleanup”
- “The staff are really great to work with and the menu has greatly improved under the new chef. Lots of new food options with a more modern twist.”
- “I am always impressed with the quality of food and service.”
- “Catering options do not feel like a good value; the online ordering system lacks flexibility and it is difficult to make changes to the orders.”
- “I would appreciate a simpler, smaller, low end option for catering that would be less expensive per person. We are about to stop using the convenience of the on campus catering due to budget constraints.”
- “More vegetarian/vegan options that are not salads. I have been to so many catered functions on campus where the only option for me (vegetarian) is a salad where other diners enjoy full meals; a salad is not an entire meal.”