

# Foodie

A Nutmeg Magazine about food



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Designed by Brunna T. Louzada

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# Editor's Note.

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Hi Readers,

**A**s a graduating senior looking back at my UConn experience, there are several things I wish I knew a little more about as an underclassman. In my last semester as Nutmeg Publishing's Magazine Managing Editor, I wanted the Spring 2022 Magazine to focus on food, something we all know and love. Don't you ever wish there was an in-depth ranking of all dining halls? Or what about a feature on some of the most popular restaurants in Storrs Center? Well, if you're looking to explore what UConn has to offer – both the good and the bad – in terms of food, you're in the right place!

Best,  
Meira Tompkins



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# Dining Hall Ratings

## 1. Whitney

Whitney dining hall is rated first by University of Connecticut students in a survey conducted by Nutmeg Publishing. Located within the stately brick walls of East Campus, Whitney is popular for its stylish interior and relaxing coffee shop ambience. Though space — and, therefore, the amount of food — is small compared to other dining halls, many students find the atmosphere well worth the reduced selection. Whitney is notable for its emphasis on vegetarian dining — many diners attest to the number of tofu flavors in the menu rotation — its comfortable

cafe area, and its public Spotify playlist, which allows students to add anything to the queue, from the Top 40 to the Minecraft soundtrack.

Whitney is also home to a wall of hidden notes — if you look closely at the stone wall in the cafe room, you will notice bits of folded paper nestled within the cracks in the stone. For years, students have been leaving notes in the wall for future readers to find, from original poems to positive affirmations. If you ever have some time to spare, consider exploring the note wall, perhaps with a cup of good coffee



## 2. Northwest

Northwest, rated second by students, is located in the Northwest residence area, making it a staple for students living in Northwest, North, or Towers. Northwest offers several comfort foods like pasta and pizza, as well as special meals during the year like Thanksgiving dinner in November. While they are not as experimental with their meals as McMahon, they offer reliable choices for most students on campus. Northwest is the picture of a typical college dining experience, with simple tables and chairs.



*“I will go absolutely feral over Saturday morning hashbrowns at South.”*

*“People only like South more than McMahon because they are the kind of people to order chicken tenders at a restaurant.”*

## 3. South

South dining hall is a controversial dining choice at UConn, with as many critics as ardent defenders. Many students prefer South because its convenient location and wide selection of food make it a dependable option. The dining hall features multiple stations, such as the comfort station, international station, and grill station, ensuring that even the pickiest eaters can find something to fill their stomachs. For the exceptionally picky, there is also an endless supply of pizza, fries, and grilled cheese. Some students are more passionate about their preference: “South fish sticks bussin bussin SHEEEEEESH,” one survey respondent said.

South also employs the legendary “Soop Doop,” aka Luis Dias, whose friendly demeanor and catchphrase of “Good luck with everything, SOOP DOOP” have made him a celebrity among UConn students.



Putnam dining hall serves students in the Hilltop Dorms, Werth Tower, and Garrigus residence halls. Located at the top of the hill behind the athletic fields, Putnam provides a brisk workout for any prospective diner who does not happen to live close by. Students enjoy its spacious, sunlit seating and wide food selection with two floors of food choices. Survey respondents agree that Putnam's menu is among the most consistently appealing. Putnam is also renowned for being the only dining hall on campus that boasts a smoothie bar.

Overall, Putnam enjoys a solid reputation; one of students' only criticisms is that it is "overrated." Other students complain of the remote location, however, like with Gelfenbien, the general consensus is that good food is worth a walk.

## 5. Putnam



***“[McMahon] actually has good eggs in the morning and cooks their meat thoroughly (and of course they got the pizza oven)”***

## 4. McMahon

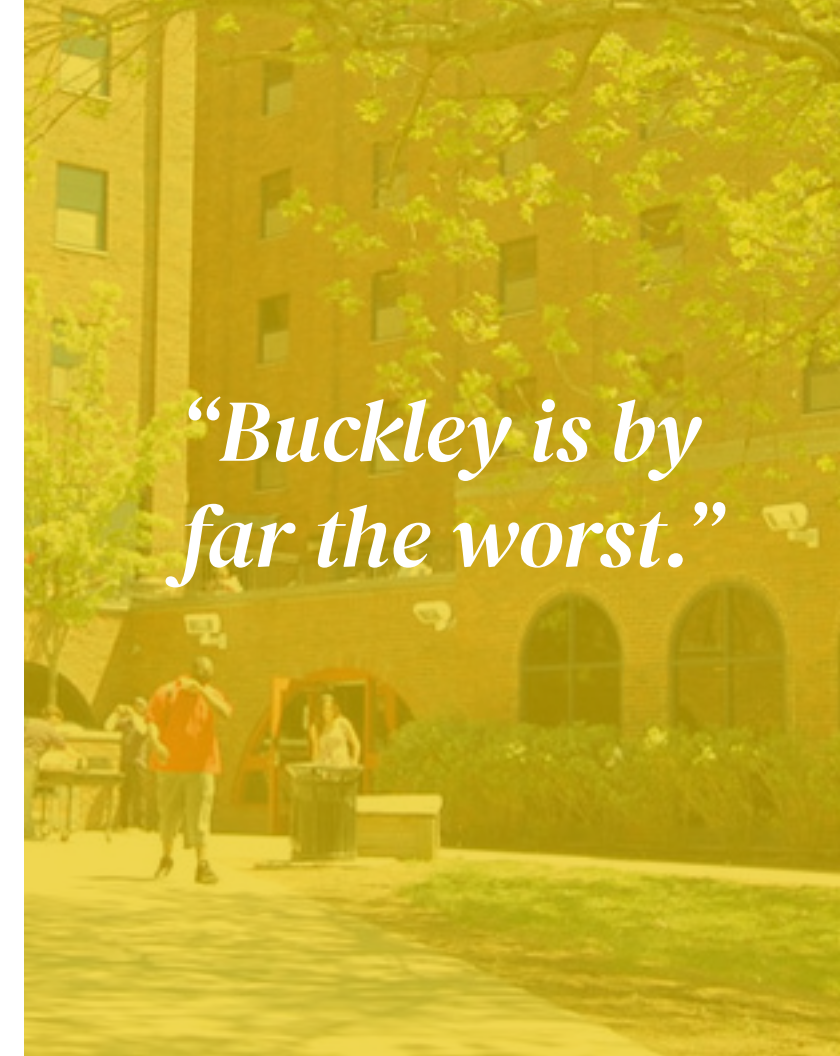
Rated fourth, many students consider McMahon a safe dining option, although it garners expected criticism. McMahon is located inside of the McMahon residence hall, making it very convenient for those who live in the building. It offers international cuisine and environmentally-friendly practices such as composting. McMahon features a pizza oven, churning out cheese and specialty slices all day to contribute to its standing as a popular, reliable option. Students can choose to sit at regular tables or they can relax in booth-style seating.



## 7. Buckley

**B**uckley, located close to Storrs Center, is one of the smaller dining halls on campus, and so, offers a limited menu compared to other dining options. It usually offers one rotating meal choice along with pasta, pizza, and dessert. This dining hall is attached to Buckley residence hall and is located next to Shippee residence hall. However many residents of those dorms may walk to South dining hall instead. Buckley is closed on weekends, further explaining why students may walk to South.

*“Buckley is by far the worst.”*



## 6. Gelfenbien

**M**ore commonly known as Towers because of its proximity to the Towers residence halls, Gelfenbien dining hall sits at the top of a considerable hill of stairs in a distant corner of campus. Nonetheless, students from all over campus willingly trek over to enjoy dining features such as pasta bar, stir fry bar, quesadilla bar, and omelet bar. These customizable bars are designated to different days of the week and attract so many students that the line will stretch all the way across the hall.

Other Gelfenbien features include NOSH kitchen, which provides daily kosher meals, and a pizza station, which supposedly churns out the best pizza on campus — however, Nutmeg Magazine can neither confirm nor deny this. Overall, Gelfenbien’s wide selection and daily action bars are widely considered to be worth the walk.

*“North is a\*\*”*



## 8. North

**N**orth was voted eighth by students and therefore, considered the worst dining hall on the Storrs campus. The lack of available information about this dining hall further contributes to the general dislike towards North. Attached to the North residence halls, North offers common, basic foods like pizza, pasta, and burgers.



# Hollieats



Nutmeg Publishing spoke with its very own copy editor Hollianne Lao about Hollieats, her food column at UConn's The Daily Campus, the University of Connecticut's independent, student-run newspaper. Lao, an eighth-semester political science and human rights major, has written Hollieats for the Life section since fall 2020.

**Nutmeg Publishing:** What drove you to create the Hollieats column? Was it conceptualized as a sort of spiritual successor to Melissa's Menu, or did you just want to write a food column?

**Hollianne Lao:** I actually had wanted to write a food column ever since I started writing for The Daily Campus in 2018. However, Melissa [Scrivani], our Associate Life Editor at the time, was writing Melissa's Menu. I knew she would continue until she graduated, so instead, I wrote a book column during the 2019-2020 school year.

Melissa's Menu was mainly recipes, but I wanted [my column] to cover anything related to food [because] I love talking about food. I do include recipes, but [reviews] are one of my favorite things to do, [in addition to] random thoughts on [different food-related topics]. I also like featuring different cultures' foods. I'm just really inspired by the variety of media about food out there. There are documentary-like shows about food, food competitions, and then movies and shows that are centered around food like Chef and The Hundred Foot Journey, so that's mostly where I wanted to go with my column.

**NP:** What were your goals in creating the column?

**HL:** [Hollieats] is a platform for me to discuss my outlook on food, to enrich and inform the student body, and support them in a different way than my usual Life articles. For example, I really enjoy featuring restaurants in Storrs and around campus because I like when my writing uplifts somebody, while still maintaining impartiality as a journalist.

Another goal was to use my platform to make the community more knowledgeable about different foods out there, especially because food is so important to me and my culture. I've been lucky enough to try different foods, but of course, there's always more to learn and try.

People [also] know that I like food, and they often ask me about food: recommendations, suggestions, what I thought about a certain place, etc. So my column is pretty much a published version of what

I would text or tell them.

**NP:** Were there any articles that were particularly challenging to write?

**HL:** I'm fully aware that when I'm passionate about something, I want to get as much as I can onto the page and get it right. I'm really passionate about diversity, inclusion, and representation . . . when I write for the Life section, I don't get too many opportunities to explicitly discuss how I feel about certain topics because we're meant to be unbiased reporters. But . . . I make sure to feature what I think is important, like cultural center events or social justice initiatives.

But how do I relate that to food? Most of the time, my pieces for Hollieats are pretty lighthearted – y'know, they're about food – but there are at least two [that] I've written about diversity in dining. They were challenging to write because I have so many thoughts about diversity in the food industry, which includes the intersections of culture and gender. Last year, during Women's History Month, I wrote about the gender gap in the dining industry, [inspired by] that paradox of saying "women belong in the kitchen," but at the same time, women professionally working in the industry are neither as respected nor work in as many leadership positions. Or, they're pigeonholed into working certain tasks or making certain foods.

[At the end of February 2022,] I wrote "Diversity in Dining, Part 2," inspired by my visit to Brooklyn Dumpling Shop in Storrs Center. It [had just] opened, and my job was to cover the opening. Just review it. But I started writing [the review], and I had some thoughts about how [the owner] says it's a dumpling shop, but the menu is just a bunch of, like, deli sandwiches stuffed into dumplings. That kind of rubbed me the wrong way, so I was going on and on about that in my review, and then I realized those thoughts weren't super pertinent to my review. I do think it's important to at least address in my review, but I don't necessarily think [it's] the best place to [write something in-depth about the issues with that].

I'm Chinese-Filipino, so how I felt about dumplings being so unrecognizable to me was a separate piece altogether. I ended up writing a long review and then a Hollieats entry about food appreciation and food appropriation. "Appropriation" sounds strong, but it manifests in different ways. I'm fully aware that there's Americanized Chinese food, and that doesn't necessarily offend me because people are aware that there's more traditional Chinese food out there. But the fact that this place is calling itself "Brooklyn Dumpling Shop" and that [even the owner had said], "It's not even a dumpling shop, it's more like a deli shop," [made me think], "Then don't call them dumplings."

That was a hard piece for me to write because I was trying to articulate how I felt, and I felt that I couldn't do so properly [because I was so] passionate about it. When I combine my passion for food with my passion for more serious topics like social justice and diversity, it's difficult to articulate how I feel.

**NP:** What was your favorite article to write?

**HL:** I'm really proud of the "Diversity in Dining" piece that came out [at the end of February]. [But] I wouldn't say it was my favorite to write because it stressed me out.

[As for my favorite]: there's this restaurant that my family and I have gone to a few times that we really like in Rhode Island called Matunuck Oyster Bar, and I have a really good experience every time I go. Writing a review was pretty fun because I got to reminisce about my experience and dream about going again. I also like this feature I did on the owner of Fresh Fork Café in Storrs Center because he's a UConn alum — again, that kind of goes with [how] I enjoy writing features because I'm supporting someone in the community.

**NP:** Now, finally: you're a senior. Would you want Hollieats continued in a new iteration after you graduate?

**HL:** I really hope so. There are so many people out there that are passionate about food, and I just hope that they put their own twist on it. It's like how Melissa was also passionate about food, and she took the column in one way, [while I took it differently].

For me, personally, my goal is to start a food social media account when I graduate. I told myself not to do it now, or else I would get distracted, but I think that would be a fun way to continue what I like, whether I post on Yelp or on Instagram.



*"I'm fully aware that when I'm passionate about something, I want to get as much as I can onto the page and get it right."*

# Mug Cakes

Looking for quick recipes you can make in your dorm? Mug cakes are quick, easy, delicious, and minimize the amount of dishes you need to wash, since all you need are a mug and a fork. There are plenty of different variations to make your mug cake your own, but the basic recipe is simple:

1. Combine wet ingredients and sugar in a large mug, then stir.
2. Add in the dry ingredients, then stir some more.
3. Microwave on high for about a minute.

Different microwaves have different levels of cooking power, so you might need to do some trial and error to find an appropriate cooking time. Microwaving for a shorter amount of time will result in a gooey, molten center. If you prefer the

cake consistency to be more baked, test the sponge by poking a toothpick into the middle. If the toothpick comes out clean, you're good to go!

That's it. That's all. Total preparation and cook time will not surpass five minutes. Next time you want a cozy dessert to enjoy late at night, need something to accompany your movie night, or simply aren't impressed by the dining hall's dessert offerings, whip together a mug cake and revel in some sugary, melty goodness!

Make the following mug cake variations with classic baking ingredients and the directions provided above.

## Chocolate Peanut Butter Mug Cake

- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ cup milk at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled
- ¼ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon creamy peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon mini chocolate chips

## Funfetti Mug Cake

- ¼ cup + 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ cup milk at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons salted butter, melted and cooled
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon pure almond extract
- 1 tablespoon + 1 teaspoon rainbow sprinkles

## Snickerdoodle Mug Cake

- ¼ cup + 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ cup milk at room temperature
- 2 tablespoons salted butter, melted and cooled
- ½ teaspoon pure vanilla extract



# Yiik Yak

## Food Quotes

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*“The churros at NW were  
life changing”*

*“I don’t like the vibes at  
towers d hall”*

*“Whitney for breakfast isn’t  
good, but it is for everything  
else. Northwest, McMahan,  
and South are also personal  
favorites”*

*“nw gave me a chicken’s  
ribcage”*

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# FAVORITE DUNKIN' & STARBUCKS BUCKETS ORDER



No matter where or when you are on campus, you will always pass students clutching a foamy latte from Starbucks or sipping on an iced coffee from Dunkin'. Many exhausted college students regard caffeine as their lifeblood, so they turn to coffee. With a Starbucks located in the bookstore and a Dunkin' located in the Student Union, as well as additional storefronts of each down in Storrs Center, there's no shortage of coffee options. Nutmeg Publishing asked students about their favorite orders.

A fan favorite drink frequently spotted in the hands of students is a Starbucks matcha latte. The drink is a bright green and a welcome splash of color, especially in the midst of a slushy gray winter typical of Storrs.

"I love matcha-flavored anything, and I don't enjoy drinking coffee from most American coffee chains, so it's the next best thing," said Nicole Catarino, an eighth-semester English major who adamantly refuses to drink anything iced in the winter.

However, Rylee Thomas, a fourth-semester English and Communications major, prefers the iced version of the matcha latte.

"It feels cleansing, tastes sweet, and helps me focus," Thomas said. She takes her latte with soy milk.

Catherine Casey, an eighth-semester English major, also enjoys sweet drinks.

"When I get a free drink, I always get a venti iced white chocolate mocha – three pumps of mocha, not the usual six – light caramel drizzle, and light vanilla sweet cold foam with skim milk. Casey explained. "I found it [on] TikTok, and then got addicted...It feels like a very nice reward when I have enough points for a free drink!"

Meanwhile, Team Dunkin' at UConn, which still enjoys sweet offerings, leans a bit more on the bitter side. Amer El Zein, a second-semester economics major, loves a large salted caramel cold brew.

"It still has that really nice bitterness of the cold brew, but the salted caramel cuts through it and adds such a pleasant sweetness. I [also] feel like [the large size

helps to] wake me up [in the mornings]," El Zein said.

Of course, Starbucks and Dunkin' sell more than just coffee, which is perfect for students looking for a pick-me-up without the caffeine boost.

"I don't really like hot drinks, [but] I love chocolate," said Avi Obie, a second-semester digital media and design major. Obie's go-to drink is a frozen hot chocolate from Dunkin', usually with a Boston Kreme doughnut or a toasted bagel with cream cheese. "Boston Kreme doughnuts are the best doughnuts, and [Dunkin's] bagels are always perfectly toasted."

The aforementioned orders are just a sampling of UConn students' palates. There is a plethora of food and drinks to choose from at Starbucks and Dunkin', ensuring that students are never without a boost from their beloved lattes and hot chocolates. What's your go-to order?



# UC Cafes

## The Beanery Cafe

The Beanery Cafe, located on the ground floor of the William Benton Museum of Art, is popular among University of Connecticut students for its relaxing, artsy atmosphere. With comfortable seating, unique decor — such as chairs covered in magazine collages — and the Benton Museum only a staircase away, the Beanery provides a comfortable spot to study, grab a coffee, or hang out with friends. Though space is limited inside the cafe — woe to anyone who tries to find a seat during the lunch rush — students can sprawl out on the nearby Student Union lawn. The Benton and the Beanery are also adjacent to a shady stone courtyard surrounded by trees and sculptures, providing a perfect spot to sit on warm days.



## Bookworms Cafe

For students looking to grab a bite to eat during study breaks, Bookworms Cafe, located on the plaza level of Homer Babbidge Library, is the perfect spot. The seating area is spacious, accommodating plenty of students to work on projects, study, or simply hang out. With a closing time of 9 p.m. from Sunday to Thursday, Bookworms stays open much later than the other UConn Cafes, providing students with caffeine well into a late-night study session. However, if you need a silent study space, consider taking your coffee and bagel to go: Bookworms is one of the spaces in the library where talking is allowed, making it a warm but noisy place.

# Up and Atom

Deep in the heart of the Biophysics building's winding hallways, Up and Atom Cafe offers an array of food and drinks to soothe exhausted STEM students or anyone else who happens to find themselves on the north end of campus. With plenty of seating and natural light, Up and Atom is a restful environment where students can catch a breath between classes, labs, exams, study sessions, or greenhouse visits.



## Market Cafe

Among the overwhelming array of dining options at the Student Union Marketplace, the Market Cafe is a dependable option, offering classic baked goods, coffee, sandwiches, and snacks. Located in the heart of campus, the Market Cafe is the perfect spot to grab a coffee or a quick breakfast before class. If you have time to stay and you manage to secure one of the larger tables in the Union, this cafe is also the perfect place to grab coffee with a group of friends.





## Crossroads

Below the distinctive gold dome of the Wilbur Cross building lies Crossroads Cafe, a cozy coffee shop located in the corner of the building's first floor. Consider yourself lucky if you secure a table — Crossroads is one of the smaller of the UC cafes, but what it lacks in seating options, it makes up for with ambience. Further, Wilbur Cross has plenty of comfortable study spots, so if you

can't find any space in Crossroads itself, you can always bring your food elsewhere. South reading room, in this writer's humble opinion, is one of the best study spots on campus; however, this area also has a strict no-noise policy, so any particularly crunchy snacks would be best enjoyed outside in the main hallway.



# Storrs Center Favorites

## Favs

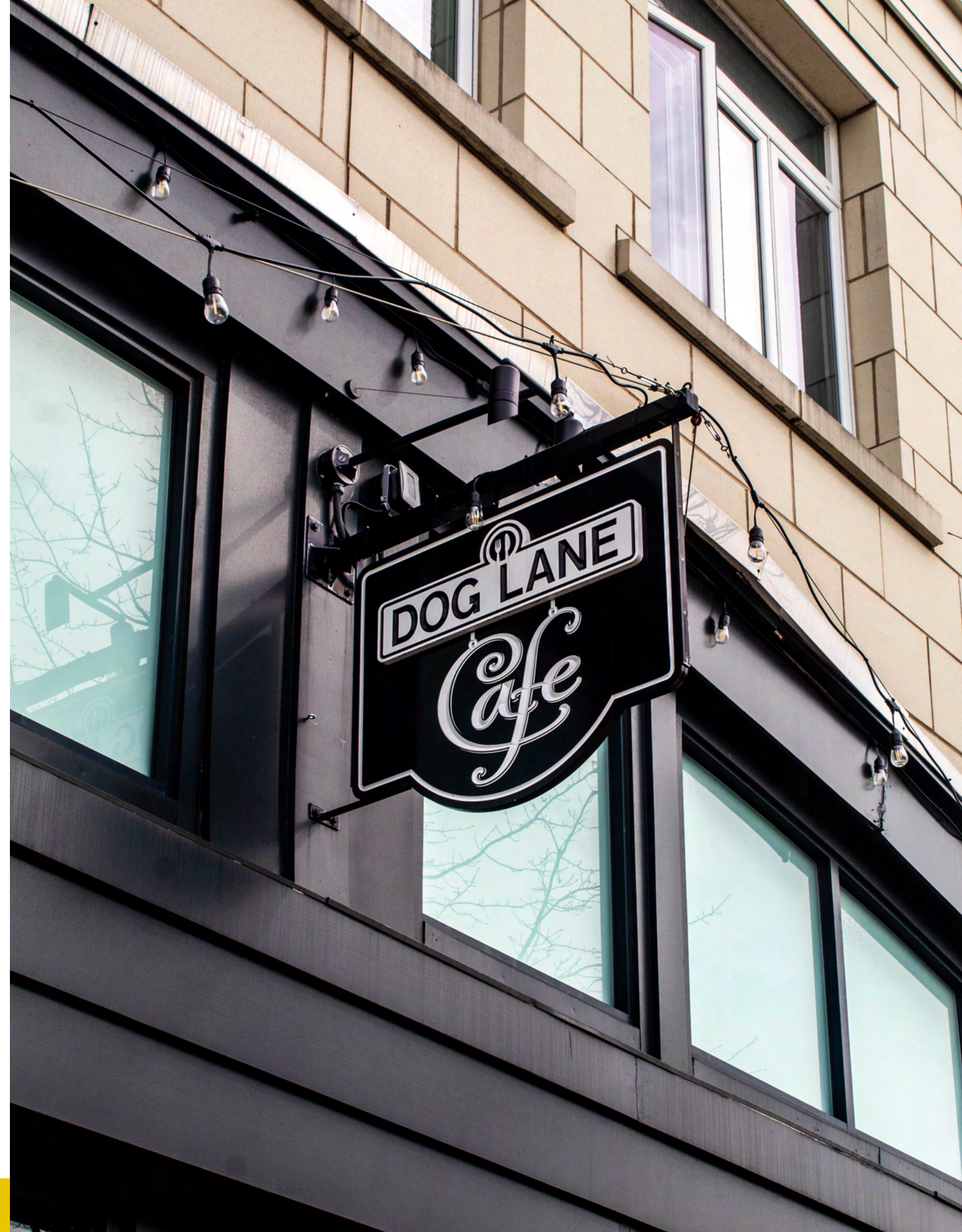
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Featuring: Dog Lane Cafe, Gansett Wraps, Little Aladdin's, D.P. Dough, Insomnia Cookies, Mooyah, and more!

Storrs Center in downtown Mansfield provides shopping, entertainment, and perhaps most importantly of all, restaurants for the University of Connecticut community to enjoy. From pizza to burgers and milkshakes to Chinese and Vietnamese cuisine, hungry students can order from over 25 restaurants and always have something new to try.

# Dog Lane

Among the range of dining choices, students have developed favorite spots for late night snacks or places to order different food from the usual dining hall fare. Dog Lane Cafe, which has been a staple in Storrs Center for years, is a community favorite for many reasons. The warm, inviting atmosphere draws customers in, who are greeted by decorations featuring a dog mascot not unlike UConn's own. Dog Lane Cafe serves a variety of breakfast and lunch foods like sandwiches, soups, and salads. They also serve several types of drinks and desserts, making it a perfect place to grab lunch with friends and family visiting campus.





*“Where else can you get a bomb falafel wrap?”*

— Anonymous

## Gansett Wraps

Another restaurant with many menu choices is Gansett Wraps, which offers falafel, wraps, salads, and lots of vegetarian options. Customers rave about their plates, which can feed well over eight people, as well as their affordable and delicious appetizers like pita chips, onion rings, fries, and mozzarella sticks. Gansett Wraps is owned by local residents, and its first storefront is located in Narragansett,

Rhode Island. Another local favorite with an expansive menu is Little Aladdin's, which serves Mediterranean food. They offer a mouth-watering selection of wraps, rice bowls, and salads with protein options like chicken shawarma, beef shawarma, falafel, hummus, lamb kebab, and more.



And of course, one can't talk about Storrs Center's restaurants without mentioning some of the late night classics. D.P. Dough is known across campus for its calzones, available until 3 a.m. on some nights. They serve over 20 calzone combinations, but if none seem enticing, customers can build their own. For many students, a fresh calzone is the perfect addition to a late night studying session. Another classic place to grab a late-night snack is Insomnia Cookies, which serves warm cookies for those Huskies that can't fall asleep or want a comforting treat. Insomnia offers many sweet snacks to choose from including ice cream sandwiches, and cakes made out of cookies. Huskies love walking down to Storrs Center

and ordering their favorite cookies fresh out of the oven, especially on cold, windy days typical of Storrs. The tiny store is usually packed, but students aren't deterred, either waiting in line or ordering ahead on the app.

Located right next to Insomnia, Mooyah's bustling environment attracts many Huskies looking for classic American fare like burgers, fries, and milkshakes. Mooyah allows customers to order on their app or on the kiosk at the entrance of the restaurant for convenience. Always playing lively music, Mooyah pairs their food with a fun and friendly atmosphere for community members to enjoy.



# Center

visit to see more!



**NM**