**Food trucks fill dining gap on UH campus**

[**Paul Galvani**](http://www.29-95.com/users/paul-galvani-0) **at 8:28 am on June 18, 2012**

With its convenience store, Wendy’s and four other restaurants, the University Center is the heart of campus life at UH’s main campus.

So when Geoff Herbert first heard about the plan to completely remodel the center, he asked what anyone responsible for providing food to 30,000 students on a daily basis would ask: “What do you mean we’re going to be closed for 18 months?”

Once the shock had worn off, Herbert, director of operations for the University of Houston Dining Services, knew that he would have to find a way to feed the students.

“I’m not sure exactly which meeting it was or whose idea it was but the idea of bringing food trucks on campus to fill the void quickly took hold. It seemed like a natural, food trucks are a new and exciting venue for food service and at the same time we can take care of our constituents,” Herbert said.

The University Center was closed at the end of the spring semester, and on June 4 three food trucks rolled onto campus. The mobile kitchens are scheduled to bearound (in front of the shuttered center) until November or December 2013.

Herbert and his culinary team picked three trucks: [**Bernie's Burger Bus**](http://www.berniesburgerbus.com/), the [**Waffle Bus**](http://www.29-95.com/restaurants/story/) and [**Bare Bowls Kitchen**](http://www.barebowlskitchen.com/bbk.html). One or more of the buses are serving the campus 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday.

“Really, Phi Nguyen of the Waffle bus, who is a graduate of the university, heard that the UC was shutting down and he approached us and asked if he could participate,” Herbert said. “I guess the food truck community is pretty tight because word travelled fast and we started getting calls from a lot of the trucks. We either went out to try their food or we had them prepare something and bring it to us to try.”

Herbert said the buses have been a hit with the students.
“There was a lot of buzz on campus about the trucks,” he said, “with people wanting to know when they were coming and which ones were going to be here. So far, all of the comments have been positive. People are impressed with the quality (of the food) and excited to have the trucks here.”

“The trucks really add a nice touch, they’re pretty neat,” said student Christian Osorio. “I used to attend Texas State and there they have lots of food trucks on campus.”

UH student Steven Addison thinks the trucks are a good idea.
“They’re a better option than going to a big chain restaurant and I’m guessing the food is less processed,” he said.

“There is a lot of young, energetic and creative talent in culinary schools and what better way to harness this than in a food truck, without the expense of a brick and mortar place? It’s the ultimate American success story,” Herbert said.

**Editors note:** Freelance writer Paul Galvani, author of the upcoming guide [**Houston's Top 100 Food Trucks**](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Houstonstop100foodtrucks/202185703149587), has a financial interest in the Bare Bowls food truck.