

EDITORIAL

Lost in the Crunch

Every year the complaint remains the same: There are not enough places to park on campus. Here are a few solutions that could ease some of our parking woes.

Permit Problems

There are simply not enough places to park at the University and in the surrounding neighborhoods. This problem is aggravated each year when the University sells more parking permits than it has spaces available. Last year alone, the University sold a total of 6,362 permits when there are approximately 3,200 spaces available on campus.

In addition, the University has no system to determine whether a student needs a permit. There are many students, faculty and staff who commute to school from outlying areas, and if a bus reaches their homes, it is usually only once or twice a day. Is it fair for these students to purchase a permit only to arrive on campus at 11 a.m. and find that all the spaces are taken? This problem is made worse when students who live a few blocks from campus purchase permits and then drive to school.

The University needs to set limits on the number of permits it will sell. A priority system also needs to be developed to ensure that students purchasing permits and commuting long distances are guaranteed a place to park. A secondary set of permits could be oversold by a small percentage to those who could ride the bus, but for whom driving is more convenient.

Finally, people who live three blocks from campus should quit buying permits. Walking, biking or taking the bus is much faster than jumping in the car and then circling the campus for 20 minutes searching for a place to park.

The Future

The parking crunch is going to continue to get worse. Some University officials have speculated that the student population could grow to 20,000 in the next few years. Student growth is likely to be met with facility

growth, making parking a shrinking resource in the area. Already, the University has announced that one-fourth of the parking at Autzen Stadium will be eliminated in the next few years with the addition of a new indoor practice facility and soccer field.

At some point the University is going to have to build a parking structure to accommodate these growing needs. Two parking lots that could potentially be expanded upward and downward are the lot between Kincaid and Alder Streets on 14th Avenue and the lot on 15th Avenue across from the Bean Complex.

Alternative Transportation

Americans love their cars and, to many, the words "alternative transportation" threaten this love and the freedom that goes with it. Asking some people on campus to leave their cars at home to take the bus or ride a bike seems akin to throwing a first-born child into a lion's den: totally unthinkable.

The fact is, alternative transportation is a very practical option in Eugene. Students are given bus access on all LTD routes. Cycling is also an efficient alternative with the miles of bike paths that go all over town. Those who live within walking distance should walk or bike. Adopting an attitude that is open to different ways of getting from point A to point B can save time, ease parking congestion and help the environment.

The Bottom Line

If people make the effort to ride the bus, bike or walk and the University takes steps to better meet parking needs, next year people will have to complain about something new.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board.



CHRIS HUTCHINSON/Emerald

EDITORIAL POLICY

One of the purposes of the opinion page is to serve as a forum and readers are encouraged to submit letters or commentaries for publication.

Submissions may be by mail or in person and must include a current phone number to verify identification. If delivered in person, we request a photo ID.

Letters should be 250 words or less, and the Emerald reserves the right to edit for grammar and spelling errors, length and libelous content. Longer opinion pieces up to 800 words may be submitted as commentaries. However, the decision to run unsolicited commentaries is subject to the editor's discretion.

The Emerald will attempt to publish all letters in the order in which they were received as space allows.

Content of the editorial pages is determined according to a set priority list. That list is as follows:

- 1) Staff commentaries
- 2) Letters
- 3) Unsolicited commentaries

We also reserve the right to limit the number of letters concerning one particular topic if the volume of mail dictates the need to do so. In those cases, we will attempt to publish a sampling of letters accurately reflecting the volume and variety of opinions expressed.

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EDITORIAL

I thought that number was sacred

■ OUR OPINION: Check-writing policy should be rethought to protect privacy of students and staff

Any time you write a check on campus, the person at the register asks for your student identification number, which is then dutifully copied down onto the face of the check. That way, if you bounce a check, you can be traced back to the University.

That number includes most students' Social Security numbers.

From the moment it is issued, you are told to guard your Social Security number with your life. That number is the key to your credit history, your school records, just about everything.

Professors are prohibited by law from posting grades using full Social Security numbers in any way that could connect

the number to the name.

This law is aimed at protecting students' privacy. Shouldn't this also apply to clerks at the cash register?

This check-writing policy not only connects the name to the number, it also provides your full address, phone number, bank name and account number. How much more information would a dishonest person need to apply for a credit card with your name?

The University's check-writing policy needs to be reevaluated.

If a check-guarantee card can be furnished and a visual check of student identification is conducted, all of the bases should be covered without using the ID number. Why open the door to fraud when other, equally effective measures can be taken?

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