



Monday, September 10, 2001

Parking demand high during first week of classes

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

With the start of the fall semester, demand for parking has increased significantly on Oakland University's campus.

Because of demand for spaces in P-1, the main university lot that stretches from South Foundation Hall to Graham Health Center, and the lots south of Kresge Library, Oakland University Police established temporary lots on the adjoining grassy areas. But university police, administrators, students and faculty say that with proper planning, parking doesn't have to be a problem.

"Parking demand is acute, particularly on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays," said Lieutenant Mel Gilroy of the OU Police Department. "We've got 400 to 500 more students on campus this year. We can fit about 350-400 cars in those temporary lots. But I don't expect we'll need those lots after this week.

"Generally speaking, by the middle to end of the second week of classes attendance seems to fall off a little bit and takes off some pressure for parking. We see this pattern year after year."

University police are doing all they can to help people find parking spaces and keep the lots safe, said Gilroy.

"We know that parking is an issue that the university is addressing with the **Parking Committee** that was assembled," he said. "What we're trying to do is get officers out to inform people of where the alternate parking is, control traffic flow and minimize any problems. We're also writing citations because we're obligated to ensure that the parking lots are safe and orderly. We need to make sure people are free to come and go and that emergency vehicles can get through the lots, just in case."

The best lots to find a parking spot when the main lots are full are P-11, across from the George T. Matthews Apartments; P-32, south of Kresge Library; and P-3, north of Graham Health Center, said Gilroy.

"I'd also suggest that students leave early for class and allow an extra ten minutes to find a parking spot and walk to class," he said.

OU men's basketball coach Greg Kampe, who is the chair of the **Parking Committee** that addresses the daily problems associated with campus parking, said the best advice he can give campus drivers is to have patience.

"We knew parking would be hard with another increase in enrollment," Kampe said. "But by the second week of school students will have changed schedules and dropped classes, so the parking demand decreases. People also have a better idea by the second week of where to go and where to park. We're anticipating that a parking structure may be built, but these things take time to plan and build. I'd ask people to please be patient and know that we understand that there's a problem and we're doing our best to ensure that this problem is fixed."

OU's parking issue has been studied significantly and the campus' parking needs will be addressed, said Lynne Schaefer, vice president of finance and administration.

"As part of the **campus master plan** process, we've projected our parking needs out for the next 20 years and have a plan in place for addressing those needs over time," Schaefer said. "We'll be taking our requests to the **Board of Trustees** this week to begin planning and designing a parking structure. Last week we saw that everyone has been very patient and good about planning ahead and being flexible about finding a parking spot. We appreciate that as we plan to meet our current and future parking needs."

One student who has experienced the parking demand at the start of fall and winter semesters is senior psychology major Michelle Adomaitis. She said she plans ahead by leaving home a few minutes earlier than usual during the first week or two of classes.

"On Tuesdays and Thursdays I have a 10 a.m. class, so I left home early at 8:45 a.m. to get a space by Wilson Hall," Adomaitis said. "My class is in South Foundation Hall, so it was easier to park where I did than try to get a closer spot. I expected the

parking crunch at the start of the semester from my experience last fall and winter. And I know the university has formed a parking committee and has been getting suggestions. In past semesters, parking seemed to get better after the first couple of weeks.”

Dikka Berven, Special Instructor of French, teaches classes in South Foundation Hall and has an office in Wilson Hall. She also agreed that people should plan to leave a little earlier and walk a little farther at the start of a semester.

“In the past few years, people have had to park somewhat remotely during the first week or so of classes,” Berven said. “But everyone has to plan to come a little bit earlier. I think after the first couple of weeks the parking situation will sort itself out.”

For an overview of campus parking areas and their relation to campus buildings, please see the [Oakland University campus map](#).

SUMMARY

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Created by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Monday, September 10, 2001

Modified by CareTech Administrator (webservices@caretechsolutions.com) on Monday, September 10, 2001

Article Start Date: Tuesday, December 9, 2003