



An Assessment of the WSU Shuttle System

Special Initiative Award – FY09

2008-2009

Alyssa López, Lourdes Hall Director

Tamara Merkouris, Tau-Maria Hall Director

A special thanks to Don Walski, Director of Security

Introduction and Project Proposal

The WSU shuttle system serves students who are living at East Lake, on West Campus, and others who are traveling between these campuses and Main Campus. The students who are living at East Lake and West Campus constitute nearly half of all students who live on campus. Many of these students rely on the shuttle system as their daily form of transportation and often ride the shuttle multiple times a day. In data collected from Campus Security during the summer of 2008, it was reported that the shuttle makes an average of 14,125 student transfers per week between campuses. This study focuses primarily on the transportation between Main Campus and West Campus.

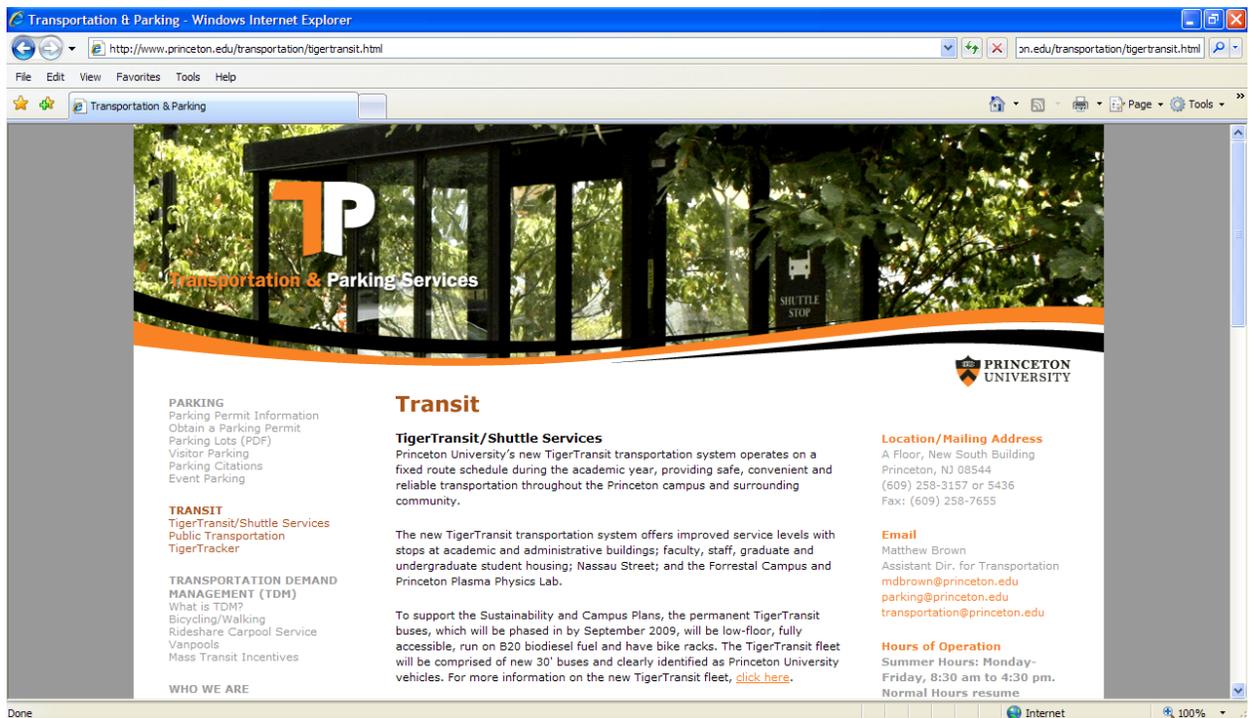
We decided to do this study to give a voice to the students of West Campus. As the West Campus hall directors, we interact frequently with the students who live on West Campus and often listen to their complaints and frustrations with the bus system. We believe the shuttle service should serve as the *link* between campuses, so that students living on the East and West Campuses have equal access to library services, events, activities, and classes with those who live directly on the Main Campus.

To measure and assess the current state of our shuttle system, we researched the shuttle systems of other universities and collected and reviewed qualitative and quantitative information about our own shuttle system. By researching other university shuttle systems, and even visiting the campus of the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University, we discovered how other schools promote and run their transportation services. We then analyzed WSU's current shuttle schedule, and took a close look into the ridership that was recorded during a one-week period in October 2008. During the same week that ridership data was collected, we ran four focus groups

which allowed us to obtain students' perspectives on our shuttle system. We strongly believe that big changes need to be made to improve the shuttle system in order to properly serve the students who live on West Campus, many of whom were assigned to live there, even though it was not their first preference. We feel that the nearly 900 students who live here (and constitute nearly half of the freshmen class) should be able to depend on both the bus and van shuttle services as a reliable and safe form of transportation.

Other University Transit Systems

One of the primary goals of this Special Initiative Award was to review transportation systems at other select institutions to determine how these systems function as well as ways to improve the shuttle system at WSU. An online review of several universities indicates that most universities are using their university's website to post information regarding their transportation system and to provide information and answers to frequently asked questions.



The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Transportation & Parking - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar displays "http://www.princeton.edu/transportation/tigertransit.html". The browser interface includes a menu bar (File, Edit, View, Favorites, Tools, Help) and a toolbar with navigation and utility icons. The website content features a large banner image of a shuttle stop with the "TP" logo and the text "Transportation & Parking Services". Below the banner, the Princeton University logo is visible in the top right corner. The main content area is organized into several sections:

- PARKING**
 - Parking Permit Information
 - Obtain a Parking Permit
 - Parking Lots (PDF)
 - Visitor Parking
 - Parking Citations
 - Event Parking
- TRANSIT**
 - TigerTransit/Shuttle Services
 - Public Transportation
 - TigerTracker
- TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT (TDM)**
 - What is TDM?
 - Bicycling/Walking
 - Rideshare Carpool Service
 - Vanpools
 - Mass Transit Incentives
- WHO WE ARE**
- Transit**
 - TigerTransit/Shuttle Services**

Princeton University's new TigerTransit transportation system operates on a fixed route schedule during the academic year, providing safe, convenient and reliable transportation throughout the Princeton campus and surrounding community.

The new TigerTransit transportation system offers improved service levels with stops at academic and administrative buildings; faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate student housing; Nassau Street; and the Forrester Campus and Princeton Plasma Physics Lab.

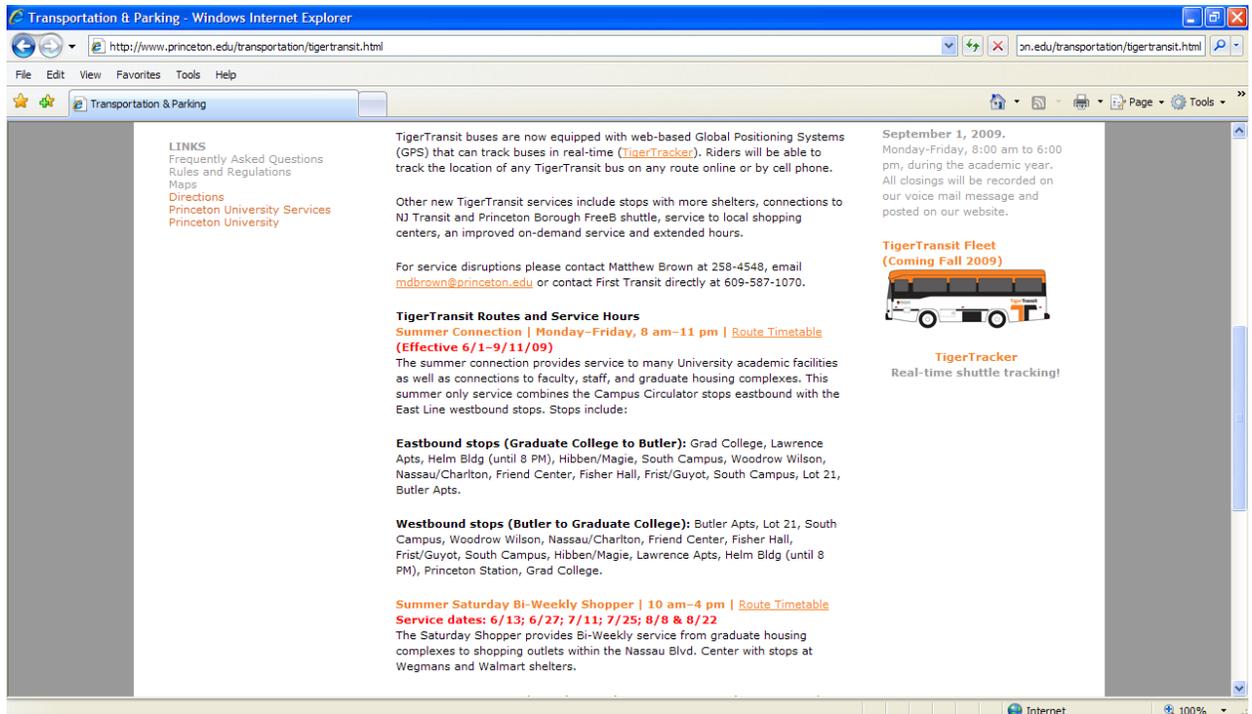
To support the Sustainability and Campus Plans, the permanent TigerTransit buses, which will be phased in by September 2009, will be low-floor, fully accessible, run on B20 biodiesel fuel and have bike racks. The TigerTransit fleet will be comprised of new 30' buses and clearly identified as Princeton University vehicles. For more information on the new TigerTransit fleet, [click here](#).
 - Location/Mailing Address**

A Floor, New South Building
Princeton, NJ 08544
(609) 258-3157 or 5436
Fax: (609) 258-7655
 - Email**

Matthew Brown
Assistant Dir. for Transportation
mlbrown@princeton.edu
parking@princeton.edu
transportation@princeton.edu
 - Hours of Operation**

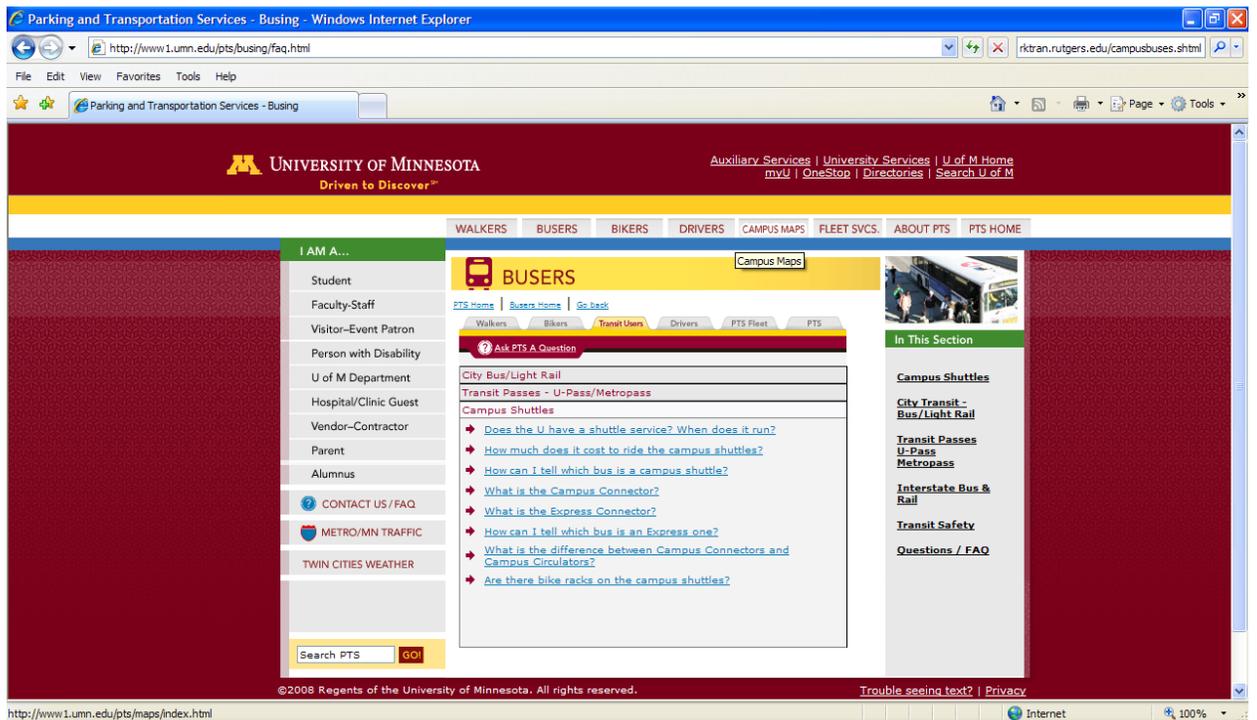
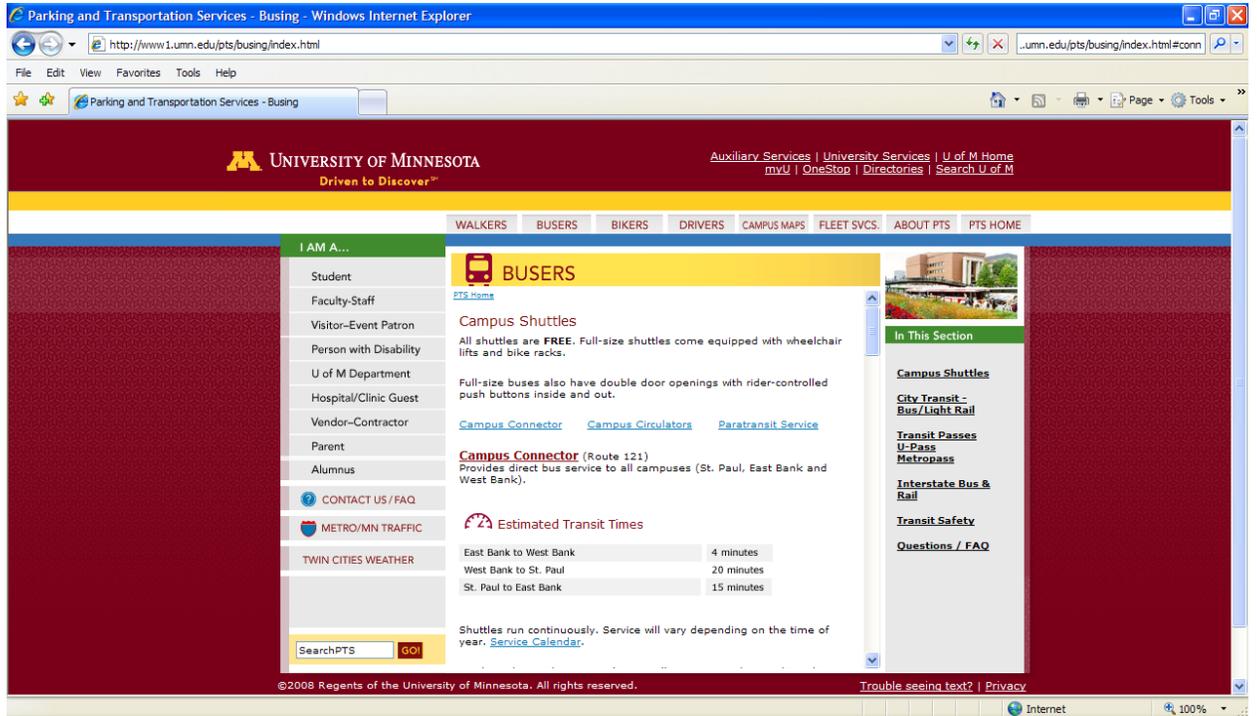
Summer Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.
Normal Hours resume

The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Done", "Internet", and "100%" zoom level.



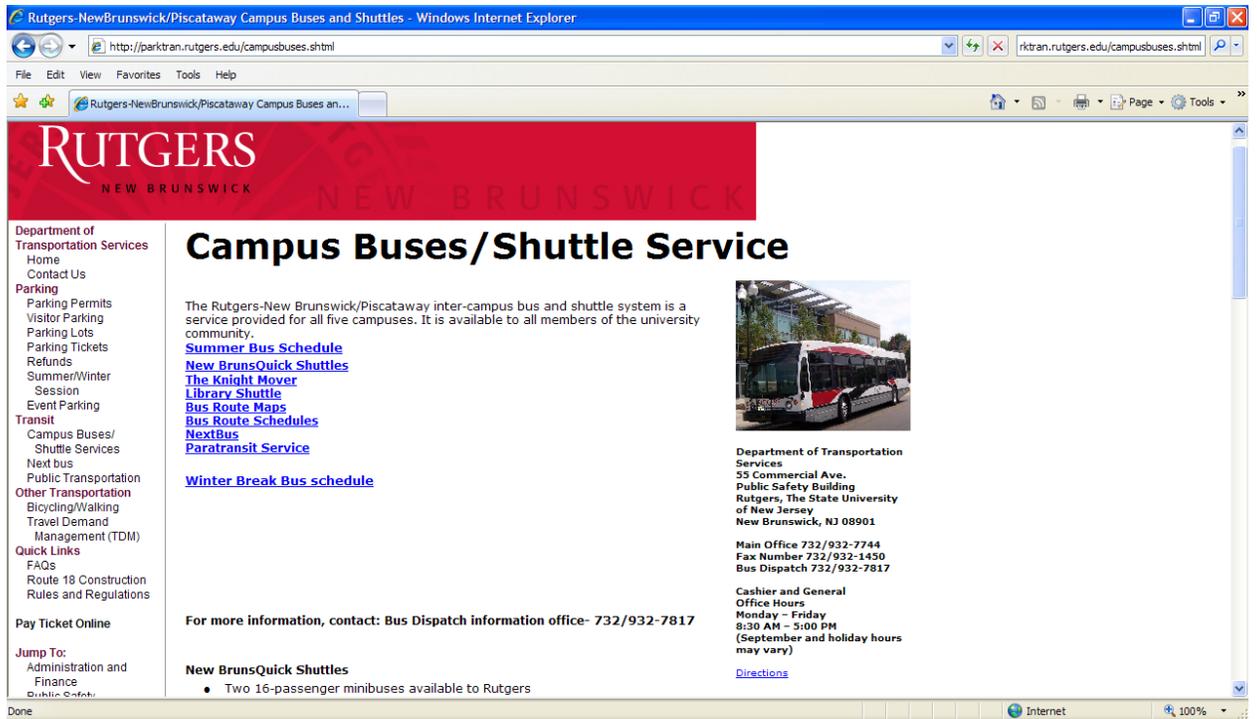
One example of how a university's website can be used to post information is Princeton University's use of their website (<http://www.princeton.edu/transportation/tigertransit.html>) to convey transit routes and service hours. Princeton University's website has a general transportation and parking website that includes all parking information, maps, rideshare carpool information, mass transit incentives, and public transportation schedules. The Princeton University website is also equipped with web-based Global Positioning Systems (GPS) that allows students to track actual bus locations on any route online or by cell phone. This provides students with the exact location of buses so that they can anticipate the arrival of the bus. The website also includes contact information and location of the Office of Parking and Transportation Services, providing a valuable resource for students who need to sign up for parking, pay tickets, ask questions about the bus system or address any other concerns and questions they have about parking and transportation. The combination of parking and transportation services makes the website a valuable resource for students with any

transportation need and made the information easy to find and offered an opportunity to address frequently asked questions.



The University of Minnesota also has a website for the Parking and Transportation Services Department (<http://www1.umn.edu/pts/busing/index.html#conn>). This website includes links for students, parents, faculty and staff, visitors, vendors, alumnus, persons with disabilities, different departments and hospital and clinic guests. It also gives specific information for bicyclists, walkers, busers and drivers. It includes maps, estimated transit times for campus shuttles, information about traffic in the metro area and metro buses and transit safety information. As with Princeton University, the U of M website includes contact information for Parking and Transportation Services Department as well as a listing of frequently asked questions.

The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Rutgers-NewBrunswick/Piscataway Campus Buses and Shuttles - Windows Internet Explorer". The address bar shows the URL <http://parktran.rutgers.edu/campusbuses.shtml>. The page features the Rutgers University logo at the top left. The main heading is "Campus Buses/Shuttle Service". Below this, there is a paragraph describing the inter-campus bus and shuttle system, followed by several blue hyperlinks: "Summer Bus Schedule", "New BrunsQuick Shuttles", "The Knight Mover", "Library Shuttle", "Bus Route Maps", "Bus Route Schedules", "NextBus", and "Paratransit Service". A "Winter Break Bus schedule" link is also present. To the right of the text is a photograph of a white and red bus. Below the photo, contact information for the Department of Transportation Services is provided, including the address (55 Commercial Ave., Public Safety Building, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, NJ 08901), phone numbers (Main Office 732/932-7744, Fax Number 732/932-1450, Bus Dispatch 732/932-7817), and office hours (Monday - Friday, 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM, with a note that September and holiday hours may vary). A "Directions" link is also included. At the bottom, there is a section for "New BrunsQuick Shuttles" with a bullet point stating "Two 16-passenger minibuses available to Rutgers". A left-hand navigation menu lists various services such as "Department of Transportation Services", "Parking", "Transit", and "Quick Links". The browser's status bar at the bottom shows "Done" and "Internet" with a 100% zoom level.



Rutgers website (<http://parktran.rutgers.edu/campusbuses.shtml>) includes similar information to the first two universities, combining parking, transit and other transportation information into their Department of Transportation website. This website contains links for a variety of parking needs. Additionally it provides campus bus and shuttle service, public transportation links, and information about bicycling and walking. The campus bus and shuttle service website gives a general overview of their shuttles with a link to each specific shuttle route. These specific route links provide schedules as well as printable schedules, capacity numbers for the shuttles, availability, peak hours, fixed stops and summer and winter break information. Rutgers also includes the location and contact information of the Department of Transportation with their hours of operation.

Campus Shuttles (1001490) - Windows Internet Explorer

http://map.ais.ucla.edu/portal/site/UCLA/menuitem.789d0eb6c76e7ef0d66b02ddf848344a/?vgnnextoid=bd4aaad23985c010VgnVCM200000dd6643a4RCRD

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Campus Shuttles (1001490)

UCLA

Prospective Students | Current Students | Parents | Faculty | Staff | Alumni | Visitors

ACADEMICS RESEARCH LIBRARY | HEALTH CARE CONTINUING EDUCATION UCLA IN THE COMMUNITY INTERNATIONAL | ABOUT UCLA ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYMENT CAMPUS SERVICES | HAPPENINGS SPORTS ARTS LECTURES

UCLA Home / Campus Services / Transportation & Parking / Getting Around Campus

Article ID: 1001490 Feedback Printer Friendly

Campus Shuttles

The campus shuttle system incorporates the use of buses and vans that are clean, wheelchair accessible and well-equipped with air-conditioning and comfortable seating.

Campus Express

The Campus Express shuttle travels in a counter-clockwise direction providing round-trip service from: Weyburn Terrace and Lot 36 in the southwest corner of campus, through Westwood and the University to Macgowan Hall turnaround in the northeast region of campus.

Schedule:
 Monday to Friday (excluding Holidays)
 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.
 Stops approximately every 8 - 10 minutes
 Reduced Hours: Summer, Winter, & Spring Breaks: 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

New Wilshire Center Route

The Wilshire Center shuttle travels in a counter-clockwise direction providing round-trip service from: Wilshire Center through Westwood Village, up Hilgard Avenue with stops at Parking Structure 2 (in front of Molecular Sciences), Gonda Research Facility, 100 Medical Plaza, completing the loop at the Wilshire Center.

Schedule:
 Monday to Friday (excluding Holidays)
 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.
 Stops approximately every 8 - 10 minutes

Related Information

- Campus Shuttle Routes (PDF)
- Public Transit
- Evening Van Service & Walking Escorts
- Shuttle Bus Advertising

Feedback about Campus Shuttles - Windows Internet Explorer

http://map.ais.ucla.edu/portal/site/UCLA/feedback.html?articleId=1001490&channelId=d4687ffa3c61c010VgnVCM100000db6643a4___c590cd255551c010VgnVCM200000dd6643a4___4d88871beb24ff00VgnVCM10000008f

UCLA

Submit Feedback

We welcome your feedback in our ongoing effort to improve the quality and delivery of information through the UCLA Portal. Your comment will be routed to the appropriate person.

Article Title: **Campus Shuttles**
 Article ID : 1001490

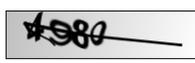
Required Contact Information
 Your privacy is important to us. Your contact information is used only to respond to your feedback.

Your Name:

Email Address:

Comments:

The security check below is intended to prevent spamming of our feedback recipients



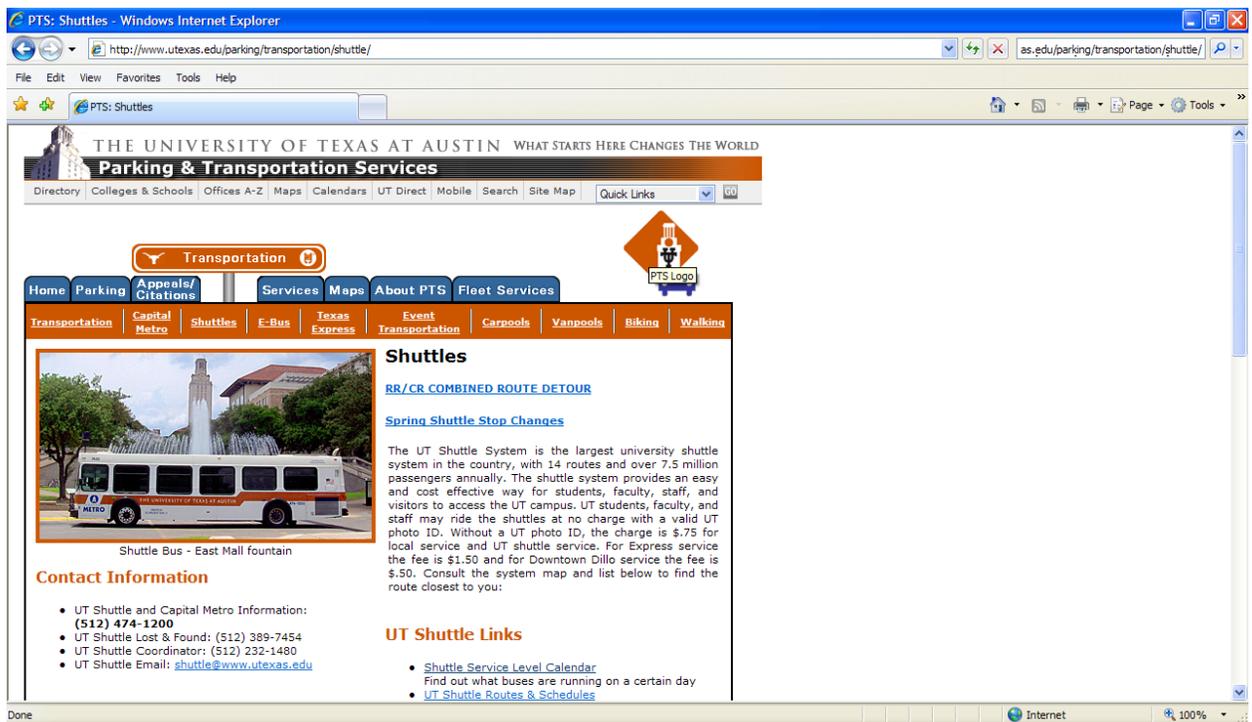
Type the number you see in the box above:

If you cannot read the number in the box, click the "Get a New Number" button

The University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)

<http://map.ais.ucla.edu/portal/site/UCLA/menuitem.3f8e7342ad4ca217b66d4ab4f84834a/?vgn>

<http://www.utexas.edu/parking/transportation/shuttle/>) also uses a general Parking and Transportation website that includes links for students if they want to ask specific questions or view common questions asked by others. It also has a link of construction related impacts on parking and transportation and parking projects that provides current information regarding ongoing construction and seismic upgrades. The Parking and Transportation website had a link to the campus shuttle system which includes general information such as; maps of the campus shuttle routes, schedules for specific routes, public transit information and evening van and walking escort information. It also provides the reduced summer, spring and winter break schedule. The campus shuttle website also has a link to submit feedback about the shuttle system. Students can click on a link that asks students to provide feedback in for their ongoing effort to improve the quality and delivery of information through the UCLA Portal. Students enter their name and e-mail and are told they will be contacted by the appropriate person.



PTS: Shuttles - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.utexas.edu/parking/transportation/shuttle/

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

PTS: Shuttles

- UT Shuttle and Capital Metro Information: (512) 474-1200
- UT Shuttle Lost & Found: (512) 389-7454
- UT Shuttle Coordinator: (512) 232-1480
- UT Shuttle Email: shuttle@www.utexas.edu

UT Shuttle Links

- [Shuttle Service Level Calendar](#)
Find out what buses are running on a certain day
- [UT Shuttle Routes & Schedules](#)
- [Shuttle Route Map](#) (campus area detail)
- [Shuttle Route Map](#) (system-wide)
- [Travelling to Campus on Saturdays](#)
- [Shuttle Service Changes](#)
- [Shuttle and Mainline Detours](#)
- [Capital Metro Trip Planner](#)
- [Feedback/Suggestions/Complaints](#)

Shuttle Route Descriptions

CP - Crossing Place	Serves Crossing Place north of Riverside Dr. Inbound stops at Red River/north of 15th, MLK/Red River, MLK/Trinity, San Jacinto/south of 21st, and East Mall Fountain. Outbound stops at San Jacinto/21st, MLK/Trinity, and Red River/School of Nursing.
CR - Cameron Road	Serves Camino La Costa, Clayton, Sheridan, Reinli, and Cameron Road north of 51st St. On campus this route stops at Robert Dedman/Music Bldg., 23rd/north side of San Jacinto, and San Jacinto/north side of 23rd.
EC - East Campus formerly DF - Disch Falk	Circulates between UFCU Disch-Falk Field, the parking lots east of IH-35, and main campus. Stops at Disch-Falk, Red River/MLK, Clyde Littlefield/Red River, Robert Dedman/23rd, and San Jacinto/23rd, San Jacinto/Dean Keeton, Dean Keeton (School of Law), Dean Keeton/east of IH-35, Lafayette/Manor, Comal/Manor.
ER - Enfield Road	Serves Enfield Rd. west of Lamar Blvd. to Lake Austin Blvd. On campus this route stops at 21st/San Jacinto, 21st/Speedway, and 21st/Whitis.
FW - Far West	Serves Woodhollow, North Hills, Hart, and Greystone. Stops on campus at 26th/University.
FA - Forty Acres	Circulates traveling clockwise around campus on San Jacinto, 21st, Guadalupe, Dean Keeton, Robert Dedman and 23rd.
IF - Intramural Fields	Serves Speedway north of Dean Keeton, 46th, Guadalupe south of 51st, and the Intramural Fields.

Internet 100%

PTS: Shuttles - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.utexas.edu/parking/transportation/shuttle/index.html

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PTS: Shuttles

Transportation

Home Parking Appeals/Citations Services Maps About PTS Fleet Services

Transportation Capital Metro Shuttles E-Bus Texas Express Event Transportation Carpools Vanpools Biking Walking



Shuttle Bus - East Mall fountain

Contact Information

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- UT Shuttle Lost & Found: (512) 389-7454
- UT Shuttle Coordinator: (512) 232-1480
- UT Shuttle Email: shuttle@www.utexas.edu

Shuttles

[RR/CR COMBINED ROUTE DETOUR](#)

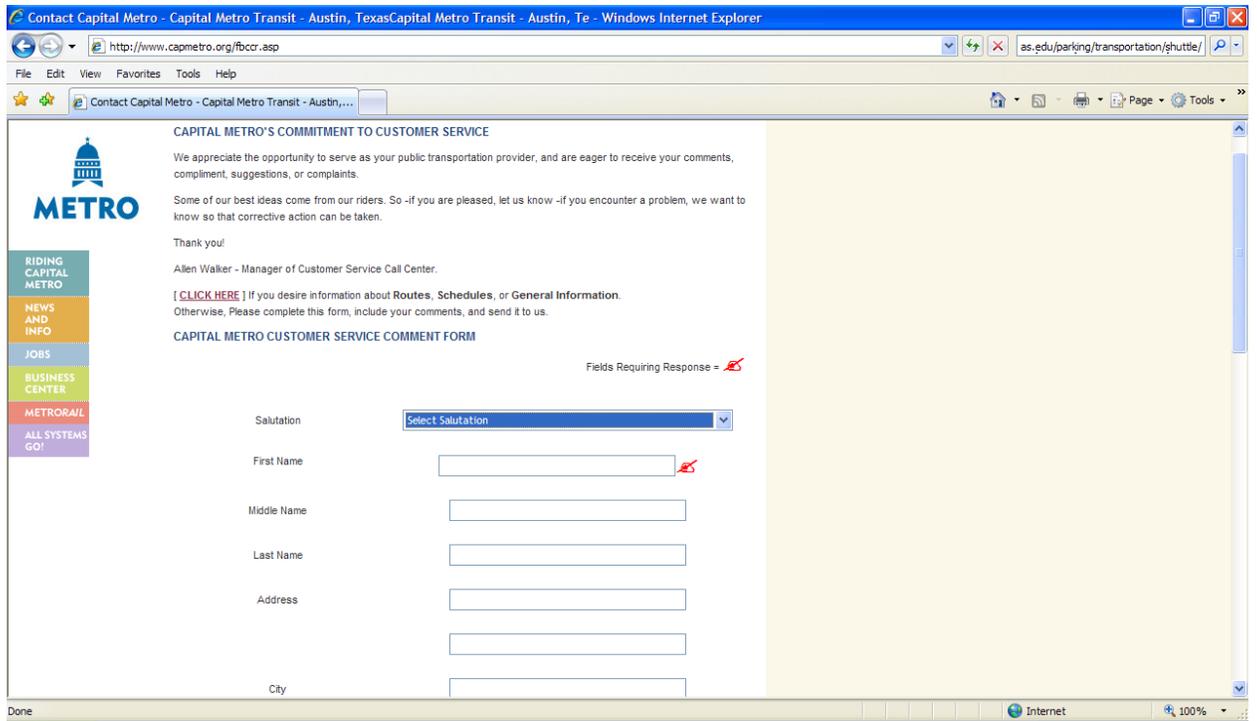
[Spring Shuttle Stop Changes](#)

The UT Shuttle System is the largest university shuttle system in the country, with 14 routes and over 7.5 million passengers annually. The shuttle system provides an easy and cost effective way for students, faculty, staff, and visitors to access the UT campus. UT students, faculty, and staff may ride the shuttles at no charge with a valid UT photo ID. Without a UT photo ID, the charge is \$.75 for local service and UT shuttle service. For Express service the fee is \$1.50 and for Downtown Dillo service the fee is \$.50. Consult the system map and list below to find the route closest to you:

UT Shuttle Links

- [Shuttle Service Level Calendar](#)
Find out what buses are running on a certain day
- [UT Shuttle Routes & Schedules](#)
- [Shuttle Route Map](#) (campus area detail)
- [Shuttle Route Map](#) (system-wide)
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- [Capital Metro Trip Planner](#)
- [Feedback/Suggestions/Complaints](#)

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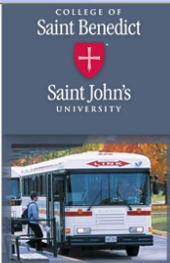
The University of Texas at Austin (<http://www.utexas.edu/parking/transportation/shuttle/>) has a Department of Parking and Transportation website that has links for general parking, event parking, shuttles, metro, carpools and vanpools, walking and bicycling information, etc. It also lists the location of the department, shuttle service calendars, shuttle service routes and schedules, maps, shuttle service detours, and a link for questions, suggestions and complaints.

Daily Gorecki/Sexton – Transportation – CSB/SJU - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.csbsju.edu/transportation/schedules/dailydemens_sexton.htm

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Daily Gorecki/Sexton — Transportation — CSB/SJU



COLLEGE OF
Saint Benedict
Saint John's
UNIVERSITY



Transportation Home
Daily Gorecki Center/Sexton
 Daily HCC/Gorecki/Sexton
 Daily Flyntown/Sexton
 Evening Sun-Thurs
 Evening Fri-Sat
 Weekend Day Bus
 Summer Link Schedule
 Bus to St. Cloud
 CSB/SJU Airport/Activity Shuttle Services
 Bus Cancellation Procedures
 CSB Facilities Management

Transportation

Daily Gorecki/Sexton

Monday through Friday
Days 1 - 6

Leaves Gorecki to Sexton	Leaves Sexton to Gorecki
*7:20-#7:31 a.m.	*7:35-#7:46 a.m.
8:00	8:15
*9:00	*9:00
#9:26	#9:26
9:45	9:45
*10:40	*10:40
#11:06	#11:06
11:15	11:15
*12:20 p.m.	*12:20
#12:46	#12:46
1:00	1:00
*2:00	*2:00
#2:26	#2:26
2:45	2:45
*3:50	*3:50
#4:00	#4:06

Internet 100%

Bus Cancellation Due to Bad Weather/Road Conditions – Transportation – CSB/SJU - Windows Internet Explorer

http://www.csbsju.edu/transportation/cancellation.htm

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

Bus Cancellation Due to Bad Weather/Road Condition...



COLLEGE OF
Saint Benedict
Saint John's
UNIVERSITY



College of Saint Benedict | Saint John's University

Transportation Home
 Daily Gorecki Center/Sexton
 Daily HCC/Gorecki/Sexton
 Daily Flyntown/Sexton
 Evening Sun-Thurs
 Evening Fri-Sat
 Weekend Day Bus
 Summer Link Schedule
 Bus to St. Cloud
 CSB/SJU Airport/Activity Shuttle Services
Bus Cancellation Procedures

Transportation

Bus Cancellation Due to Bad Weather/Road Conditions

Safety needs to be in the forefront of our minds and thoughts on a daily basis and especially so when weather and road conditions are less than ideal. Also, because we value our students, faculty, and staff, we recommend discretion when traveling in these conditions. We have identified our considerations, protocols, and procedures in this memorandum. Weather can be unpredictable and if we error, we intend to error on the side of safety.

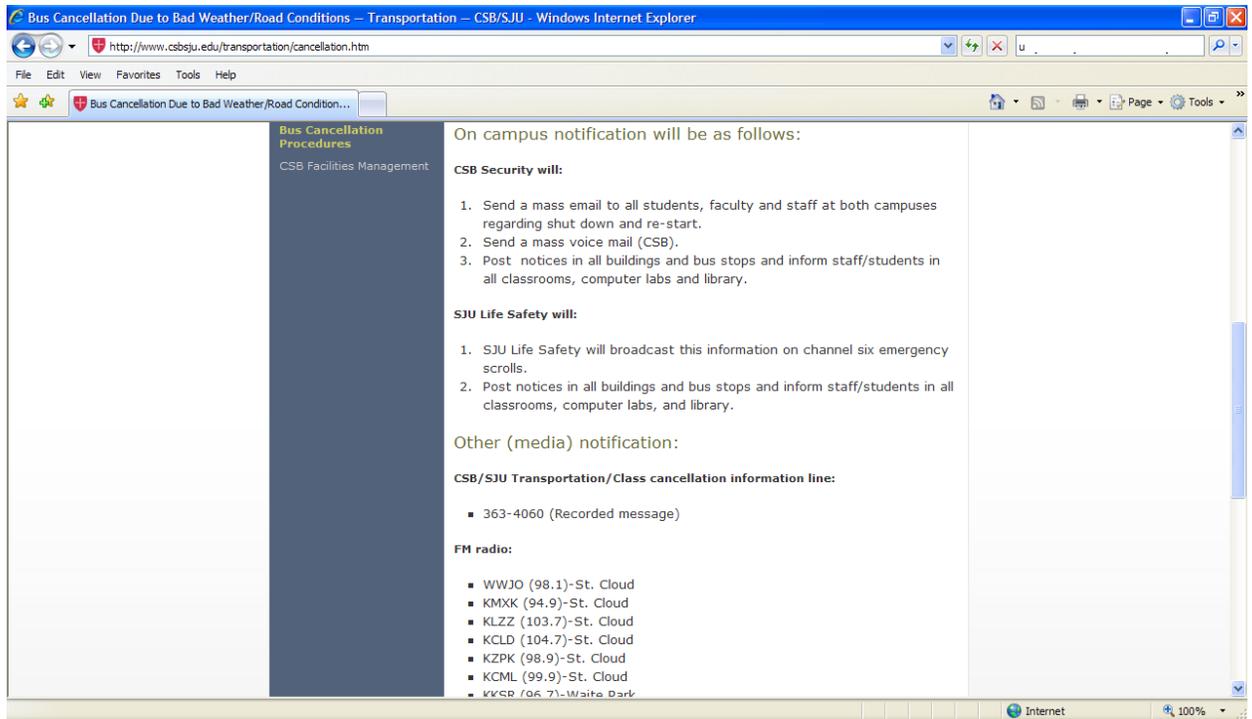
Our leading indicators will be the weather warnings issued by the National Weather Service in St. Cloud and travel warnings issued by the State Patrol. Next, we will rely on the experience of our driving supervisors to determine that the conditions are becoming unsafe and to contact the Transportation Director to determine if, and when, we will discontinue busing service. As much advanced notice as possible (ideally 1-2 hours) will be given prior to shut down.

While classes are scheduled:

The Provost, Transportation Director (or his/her designee), CSB Security, and SJU Life Safety Departments will make the decision on whether or not driving conditions warrant a possible shut down. Shut downs before classes begin will be announced as soon as possible, preferably before 6:00 am.

On campus notification will be as follows:

http://www.csbsju.edu/ Internet 100%



Due to the fact that many of the universities that we researched online are significantly larger and service a greater student population, we chose to research the shuttle system at a smaller university to determine how their system functions. We chose to study the shuttle system at the College St. Benedict and St. John's University in St. Joseph, Minnesota. We began our research by reviewing their transportation website (http://www.csbsju.edu/transportation/schedules/dailyclemens_sexton.htm).

There are several items on their website that we felt offers helpful information to students, including bus cancellation procedures, public bus schedules and days that the bus will not run (including vacation days). They also have their summer schedule posted for students and perspective students. Our second step in researching their shuttle system was to visit campus and get feedback from students and staff members on how it functions.

The shuttle system at the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University is called "The Link" which perfectly describes its function at these two sibling schools. The main function of their shuttle system is to *link* the two campuses which are located six miles apart from one another. The College of St. Benedict houses and enrolls female students, while St. John's University houses and enrolls male students. However, the two schools combine to offer one academic program, so students take classes on both campuses. The Link transports the 3800 students between their campuses, and serves faculty and staff as well. Link schedules are distributed on both campuses, and come in a convenient size that is folded to perfectly fit in one's wallet or pocket.

During a visit in February 2009 to the College of St. Benedict, Residence Hall Director Katie Rindahl explained that in order to keep the costs of this system down at such a small university, students are hired to drive the buses. Students who are hired apply for and receive special driver's licenses so that they are trained and able to drive the Link busses. The program is run by experienced student managers who handle the scheduling and supervision of the transportation system, as well as drive during more difficult weather conditions. Katie Rindahl says that during her two years as a hall director at St. Benedict, she hasn't heard students complain about the bus system and doesn't know of any students who feel the need to take their own vehicles to commute between campuses. As a staff member, Katie Rindahl said that she has also personally used the Link several times to attend meeting on the St. John's campus. She also mentioned that to provide the best service during the busiest times of the day, the Link offers multiple busses that run simultaneously during those times.

In an informal interview with a St. Benedict student named Amy, the student explained that if there are ever too many students at the bus stop to fit in the bus(s) provided at that time,

the bus driver always calls for another bus to pick up the remaining students. Amy also explained that there is an unwritten rule on the Link that students file off the bus in order when it reaches its destination. A few minutes later the Link arrived at St. Benedict. As Amy described, the students filed off beginning with passengers seated in the first row, followed by those in the second row, and so on. Amy said that she has been late to class before at St. Benedict, but it has never been due to the Link. The buses always arrive on schedule, have enough room on them (or call for back-up), and get her where she's going on time.

Analysis of WSU Transit Schedule

To get a picture of the use of the WSU Transit during a typical week, the number of passengers was recorded during the week of October 20, 2008 by bus and van drivers. This was the same week in which four focus groups were held, so correlations with some of the comments made by students in the focus groups can be verified directly through the data of that week. This original data was obtained from Don Walski, Director of Security, and is included in the back of the printed version of the Analysis of WSU Transit Schedule. A copy of the 2008-2009 WSU Transit Schedule can also be found in the back of this same section. As stated in the research proposal, the focus of this project will be on the shuttle and bus services between West Campus and Main Campus.

Number of Passengers transported by the WSU Transit Bus (Day)

West Campus to Main Campus

	10/20/08 Mon.	10/21/08 Tues.	10/22/08 Wed.	10/23/08 Thurs.	10/24/08 Fri.
7:05am	9	4	21	2	8
7:20am	31	13	25	20	7
7:35am	62	62	55	62	62
7:50am	62	35	55	42	40
8:05am	6	32	10	25	8
8:20am	23	35	27	24	17
8:35am	62	21	55	18	62
8:50am	62	24	55	19	33
9:05am	13	62	10	62	17

9:20am	25	62	26	62	25
9:35am	62	22	55	25	62
9:50am	47	13	25	7	35
10:05am	4	14	5	12	8
10:20am	47	19	29	14	12
10:35am	62	62	50	62	62
10:50am	25	18	23	23	23
11:05am	7	1	3	5	7
11:20am	9	14	9	20	6
11:35am	62	15	48	18	62
11:50am	34	18	32	15	25
12:05pm	9	50	5	42	9
12:20pm	10	21	7	21	15
12:35pm	43	17	55	11	35
12:50pm	29	16	No Data	16	40
1:05pm	2	6	No Data	6	6
1:20pm	10	19	No Data	18	12
1:35pm	62	62	55	62	24
1:50pm	32	28	24	42	14
2:05pm	10	12	9	15	2
2:20pm	25	7	3	11	5
2:35pm	44	16	36	18	8
2:50pm	7	14	10	9	7
3:05pm	5	42	2	31	4

3:20pm	3	18	2	12	0
3:35pm	9	17	9	No Data	10
3:50pm	5	17	19	14	4
4:05pm	15	37	15	4	6
4:20pm	3	6	8	6	11
4:35pm	15	17	7	10	7
4:50pm	7	19	7	15	2
5:05pm	6	8	8	7	5
5:20pm	4	5	8	7	2
5:35pm	9	20	20	20	2
5:50pm	7	20	26	14	2

Figure 1

Figure 1 shows the number of passengers transported on the WSU Transit Bus from West Campus to Main Campus during each trip during the week of October 20, 2008. Black cells indicate times when the bus was considered to be full by the bus driver. Note that some bus drivers allowed 54-55 passengers on the bus and considered it to be “full”, while most considered 62 passengers to be “full. Often times when the bus is full, this means that there is not enough space on the bus to accommodate all students who are waiting for the bus at this particular time. This causes some students to have to wait through multiple buses, particularly at times when the bus is full for two pick-ups in a row. As you can see on the chart, there were thirty times during the day the week of October 20, 2008 where the bus was full on its trip from West Campus to Main Campus, and it is highly likely that some students were left waiting for

the next bus, even though they arrive on time to the bus stop. The chart also indicates that the most popular time to travel from West Campus to Main Campus is in the morning, and early afternoon.

Number of Passengers transported by the WSU Transit Bus (Day)

Main Campus to West Campus

	10/20/08 Mon.	10/21/08 Tues.	10/22/08 Wed.	10/23/08 Thurs.	10/24/08 Fri.
7:12am	0	1	0	0	0
7:27am	0	0	0	0	3
7:42am	5	8	0	14	7
7:57am	8	4	2	25	4
8:12am	8	0	5	1	2
8:27am	4	0	1	0	4
8:42am	8	1	4	0	11
8:57am	48	4	43	5	8
9:12am	7	14	10	11	7
9:27am	7	28	5	30	9
9:42am	7	17	12	13	7
9:57am	52	13	55	21	21
10:12am	13	5	9	14	11
10:27am	2	16	6	6	20
10:42am	5	13	14	9	2
10:57am	14	62	47	62	48
11:12am	45	13	10	8	15

11:27am	3	12	1	8	35
11:42am	13	13	10	6	40
11:57am	62	12	55	19	62
12:12pm	18	12	22	30	20
12:27pm	23	62	8	62	9
12:42pm	35	25	No Data	15	7
12:57pm	62	17	55	8	45
1:12pm	17	15	No Data	7	30
1:27pm	14	20	No Data	19	10
1:42pm	8	12	8	16	11
1:57pm	62	62	55	37	62
2:12pm	8	20	7	11	12
2:27pm	9	12	9	13	6
2:42pm	8	10	18	7	20
2:57pm	62	12	54	27	35
3:12pm	62	16	55	27	4
3:27pm	35	35	8	44	15
3:42pm	10	14	19	No Data	9
3:57pm	62	11	52	62	62
4:12pm	62	16	31	14	62
4:27pm	22	25	26	14	17
4:42pm	20	14	20	40	1
4:57pm	17	47	25	34	12
5:12pm	8	24	20	18	6

5:27pm	5	19	18	9	9
5:42pm	22	21	10	23	1
5:57pm	13	23	32	6	1

Figure 2

Figure 2 shows the number of passengers transported on the WSU Transit Bus from *Main Campus to West Campus* for each trip during the week of October 20, 2008. Like in Figure 1, black cells in Figure 2 also indicate times when the bus was considered to be full by the bus driver. Note that once again, some bus drivers allowed 54-55 passengers on a bus and considered it to be “full”, while most considered 62 passengers to be “full. As you can see on the chart, there were 23 times during the day the week of October 20, 2008 where the bus was full on it’s trip from Main Campus to West Campus, and it is likely that some students were left waiting for the next bus, even though they arrive on time to the bus stop. The chart also indicates that the most popular time to travel from Main Campus to West Campus from late morning to late afternoon.

When combining the statistics from Figure 1 and Figure 2, it is worth noting that 53 times during the week, the bus was full and very likely had to leave people at the bus stop who got there on time. Logically, it would be very rare for the exact number of people to fill the bus, and to leave no people waiting. It is much more probable (and confirmed by the focus groups), that whenever the bus is full, people are left behind who got to the bus on time. If the number waiting was, for example, a modest five people on average who were left behind, this would mean that 265 people were left behind during the day time during this particular week. If the number waiting was an average of 10 people left per time the bus was full, this would mean that approximately 530 people were left behind during the week. During a 32-week academic year, this means that 8480-16960 people would be left behind during the average school year by the

transit bus during weekdays before 6:00pm. With an average of about 700 people on west campus during the academic year, this would mean that each person (assuming that all students ride the shuttle) gets to the bus on time, but does not get a seat an average of 12-24 times during the academic year. This is certainly a cause for frustrations by those students and causes many students to become aggressive and feel the need to push to get a spot on the bus.

During peak times, the back-up of riders could be assisted by having two buses run simultaneously, or by using a larger bus. Both of these solutions would cost more money. A solution to this cost problem could be to run the bus system as it is run by the College of St. Benedict and St. John’s University where they pay students to drive the buses, rather than professionals. If WSU were to do this, they would likely have to purchase or lease buses that students could drive, as we currently contract an outside company to provide the transportation and drivers.

Number of Passengers transported by the WSU Evening Shuttle

Main Campus to West Campus and

West Campus to Main Campus (Combined)

	10/20/08 Mon.	10/21/08 Tues.	10/22/08 Wed.	10/23/08 Thurs.	10/24/08 Fri.
6pm-7pm	No Data	79	1	101	40
7pm-8pm	No Data	73	61	81	47
8pm-9pm	No Data	66	60	69	37
9pm-10pm	No Data	49	23	34	95
10pm-11pm	No Data	37	38	60	21

11pm-12pm	No Data	18	24	31	32
12pm-1am	No Data	10	8	31	40
1am-2:30am	No Data	6	10	12	35
TOTAL Passengers	N/A	338	225	419	347

Figure 3

Figure 3 shows the number of passengers transported on the WSU Evening Shuttle between West Campus and Main Campus the week of October 20, 2008 during specified blocks of time. During the evening schedule of the WSU Transit system, the bus used during the day is replaced by a 12-passenger van that is driven by students employed through WSU Security. Because a driver always occupies one of the twelve available seats on the van, this means that a maximum of eleven passengers can be transported at one time. During the weekday evenings, the van is scheduled to make three complete trips between campuses every hour. Following this schedule, this would mean that van transportation allows for a maximum of 33 students to be transported from one campus to another every hour (i.e. 33 students can get from Main Campus to West Campus, and 33 students can get from West to Main Campus). Black cells indicate times when the shuttle transported 33 or more passengers during a one-hour period. While this means that passengers could be traveling both to Main Campus and from Main Campus, it is very likely that the majority of traffic was one way or the other (as you can see in the trends during the day schedule) as students are either heading to or from an event, speaker, or class. As with the day bus, often when the van is full, this means that there is not enough space on the van to accommodate all students who are waiting for the van at this particular time. This causes some

students to have to wait through multiple vans, especially at times when the van is full for multiple pick-ups in a row. As you can see on Figure 3, there were likely a high number of times during the evening of the week of October 20, 2008 where the van was full on trips between West Campus and Main Campus, and it is highly likely that many students were left waiting for the next van, even though they arrived on time to the bus stop. The wait between vans during the weekday evenings is 20 minutes for each van trip.

Figure 3 shows that on some evenings, an impossible number of students were transported. It should be noted that at times when the West Campus-Main Campus van is very busy, the van driver will often call the East Lake Van Driver to assist them in transporting passengers. However, the numbers who rode the East Lake Van between West and Main Campuses were not included in this data, so the van must have made many trips above and beyond what was scheduled to accommodate a massive number of students. It should also be noted that while the given figure of one passenger being transported between 6-7pm on Wednesday, October 22, 2008 is likely not a correct figure. Van drivers are not usually requested to keep track of the number of passengers, so it is likely that the driver forgot to count passengers during the first part of his or her shift. By viewing the data of other evenings, and of earlier that day, it seems nearly impossible that only one passenger would have traveled between campuses during that one hour time frame. It is also because of such human error, that data was not recorded for the evening on Monday, October 20, 2008 as well.

Number of Passengers transported by the WSU Weekend Shuttle

Main Campus to West Campus and

West Campus to Main Campus (Combined)

	10/25/08 Sat.	10/26/08 Sun.
9am-11am	14	No Data
11am-1pm	30	No Data
1pm-3pm	57	No Data
3-6pm	75	No Data
6pm-7pm	17	52**
7pm-8pm	27	24
8pm-9pm	38	36
9pm-10pm	30	17
10pm-11pm	33*	28
11pm-12pm	No Data	18
12pm-1am	53	8
1am-2:30am	66	1
*Includes passengers from 10pm-12pm		
**Includes passengers from 5:30pm-7pm		

Figure 4

Figure 4 shows the number of passengers transported on the WSU Weekend Shuttle between West Campus and Main Campus the weekend of October 25-26, 2008 during specified blocks of time. During the weekend schedule of the WSU Transit system, transportation is provided by a 12-passenger van that is driven by students employed through WSU Security. Because a driver always occupies one of the twelve available seats on the van, this means that a maximum of eleven passengers can be transported at one time. During the weekend from 9am-10pm, the van is scheduled to two complete trips between Main Campus and West Campus every hour. From 10pm-2:30am, the van is scheduled to make three complete trips between Main Campus and West Campus every hour. No cells were highlighted in black on Figure 4 as the recorded times are so sporadic which makes it tough to analyze. Instead, may be more helpful to consider comments made by students in the focus groups about the weekend schedule.

Focus Groups

Focus Group Transcription

Group #1, 7:00 pm

October 22, 2008- Lourdes South Lounge

Facilitator: Alyssa Lopez

Facilitator: Thank you for coming today. We appreciate you taking the time to give us your input. We encourage you to be clear and honest in your opinions and suggestions. We hope to use these opinions and suggestions to pin-point ways to provide the best service possible. Although we do not directly oversee the shuttle system, we will be passing this information on to the appropriate administrator. We will be recording and transcribing these discussions to pass on student feedback. However, we will not include any student names, or any identifying information, so we hope that you feel comfortable sharing your feedback openly. What I am going to do is ask you all these questions in succession and we will paused after each one and give you a chance to share feedback. You don't have to go in order, just share whenever you feel comfortable.

1. Please share why you do or do not currently use the shuttle system.

Student 1: Uhm, I currently do not use the shuttle system because I use my car. In the past the shuttle system has been sort of inconvenient for me and I have kind-of run in to a lot of problems to the point where I don't feel like it is worth it to use the shuttle.

Facilitator: Can you tell me more about why you feel it is inconvenient for you or about the problems you have had with it?

Student 1: Sure. Uhm, well for one I noticed that there are some inconsistencies. For example, the shuttle is supposed to leave at x time and it would leave early. Basically it would get off of the designated schedule. This made it difficult to schedule in order to get places that I needed to go. That was one of the problems. Then the other problem is just that at night there is a REALLY long wait in between each shuttle at night to the point where it doesn't seem worth waiting when I can just take my car over.

Student 2: I generally don't use the shuttle. I use in the morning to go to my classes because it is more consistent then, but when I have a class that gets out at four o'clock or after I always drive just because it is too hard to try to catch the shuttle or the last bus. I want to get back over here without having to wait so long for the van.

Facilitator: Can you tell me more about your experience riding the van and why you try to avoid riding it?

Student 2: It seems like there are always a lot of people waiting for it so you have to fight and scramble to get a seat. And then it is inconsistent when it runs. Like, I don't know what the schedule it at all.

Student 1: I would actually like to agree with her and also add that it is just sort of inconvenient to ride the van. The bus is comfortable to ride on, but the van itself is hard to get into. Especially when I am carrying something.

Student 3: If you have to get in the back it is horrible. You have to climb over seatbelt and climb over people. Yeah, it's not good.

Student 1: Yeah, your backpack is hooking on things. It isn't that big of a deal, it is just another negative thing about the vans.

Student 4: I use the shuttle in the morning, but after four I will not use it. Because the van is a pain. My freshman year when it was a bus I used it all the time. But now it is just too much of a hassle.

Student 3: I don't have a car so I don't have choice to not use the bus or that van. But, at night it is like, I have a class that will get out at like 7:50 or 8 o'clock and I will be waiting there and there will be twenty people waiting at the bus stop. And this is on a Tuesday so they don't have a bigger one. If you don't get there right after class you'll have to wait two van trips or so to even get on the van. Or there will be other times during the day that the bus leaves a few minutes early or something like that and I can't get to class on time. Then class is already more than half over by the time you get there anyway. In that case it is not even worth going. We need two buses!

Student 5: Uh, I use the bus pretty much all the time. Every once in awhile if I have missed the bus or if the bus left like thirty seconds early it sucks. I am not that frustrated with it, but sometimes it will leave a few minutes early or after I get on it will sit there for several more minutes until it leaves. This makes me late for class even though I was on the bus on time. Yeah, the schedule is off. I realize they try to do it on time, but it doesn't always work out. It gets off schedule. Sometimes it is really busy at random times of the day. On Wednesdays there is a time of during the day where I stand with like 50 people and end up waiting for two or three buses before I can get on. I end up waiting over 30 minutes just to get on the bus. That is really frustrating. I use my car if I am in a hurry, but otherwise I use the bus.

2. Please explain how often you use the shuttle system?

Student 1: I probably use once every couple of weeks. Not very frequently at all.

Student 2: I probably use it three or four days a week.

Student 4: I probably use it four days out of the week.

Student 3: I use it every day, sometimes a few times a day, and sometimes on the weekends.

Student 5: At least twice a day, probably three to four times a day.

3. What time or times of the day do you use the shuttle? Some of you already answered this, but if you didn't, you can share.

Student 1: When I use, or at least when I did use it it was mostly in the afternoon. I don't take a lot of morning classes, so that's why.

Student 2: I use it in the morning too, because like I mentioned, I hate using the vans.

Student 4: In the morning.

Student 5: Afternoon and night.

Student 3: Most of the time it is morning classes, but usually around noon too.

Facilitator: What times of the days you feel like most students are using it?

Student 4: In the morning.

Student 5: In the afternoon when I am trying to use it!

Student 4: The eight am bus is always packed. There is no room to be on it, and it gets really frustrating because if you don't get on you have to wait until the next bus gets there. And sometimes the bus sits and waits to go until the time it is supposed to even though it is full. I think this causes a lot of frustration because the people inside are waiting to leave and those outside are just sitting there staring at a full bus.

4. Do you use the shuttle system for programs or activities (i.e. sporting events)?

Student 5: Once in a blue moon.

Student 3: Sometimes, I mean, when we have had movies that they have shown I have gone over for it. I have used it a few times I guess.

Student 1: I one time I used it was during freshman orientation week for all of the programs and activities. There were a lot of people trying to use it though, so it was that was kind-of tough.

Student 2: I never use it if I am going to anything I will just drive- it is a lot easier.

Facilitator: Can you tell me why it is easier for you to drive?

Student 2: Like, if I am going to go to a club meeting that starts at 7:30 pm I would have to start waiting for the van at like 6:45 pm. And basically kill time waiting for the van.

Student 1: Sometimes even earlier than 6:45 pm.

Student 4: And a lot of times on night that there are programs the shuttle is full and you have to wait forever to get on one because there are so many people trying to get over there. It just gets too frustrating and I end up driving.

Student 2: I am going to drive myself instead of waiting forever, especially when I know I can be over there in like 10 minutes. It beats waiting for 45 minutes just to get on the bus.

Student 5: The only programs I go to are the ones on West. If I were to go to one I am completely at the mercy of the shuttle because I do not have a car or a ride over there.

Student 3: Yeah, when there is a big event, like the football games the shuttle is usually really packed. When I went to that movie I was like trying to meet people in their dorm before then so I was at the bus stop two trips early to try to get to main early to meet them and it was still really full. I barely got on because so many people had started trying to get there that early. I was almost an hour early, so that was crazy.

5. Tell us what you expected the shuttle system would be like when you were assigned to live on West Campus. Share if you use it more or less than you anticipated.

Student 1: I don't think I considered the shuttle that much. I guess I just assumed that it would always be ready to go for me! Ha, ha.

Student 2: I guess when I signed up on West I just told myself that I am just going to have to manage my time better and force myself to get out of bed. Last year I had an 8 o'clock class so I had to get up at really early to make sure I was at the bus by like 7 so that I could make sure I was on main on time.

Student 4: Yeah, I really didn't have much for expectations for the shuttle. I kind-of knew that it was a shuttle and we were just going to have to deal with however it was. So, I had low expectations for it, so it's met those expectations.

Student 3: Yeah, I knew it was a shuttle and that I would have to plan for it, but I wasn't expecting to have to miss shuttles because they were too full or wait for so long and plan ahead to get to main.

Student 5: I would say that I didn't really expect the shuttle to be there right when I showed up, but I did expect that if I showed up on time that I would at least be able to get on it. The frustration for me is when it leaves early, comes late or when it gets full. That's what was unexpected. And also, the van- I don't know what I thought it would be like, but it is smaller than I expected. I wish the shuttle ran at night.

Student 2: Or at least later into the evening. Because I feel like when it stops at six there are still a lot of classes. Like, I know some of my friends have class until 6:30 and they have to wait forever to get on the shuttle. A lot of times I just go pick them up because it is just a five minute drive over and a five minute drive back and then they are here. On these nights I wish there were a small bus or at least two vans because there will be no-one waiting at Lourdes and a mob of people on main waiting for over an hour to get back to West.

Facilitator: So I am hearing that you would like the bus system to run a little bit longer. What time do you all feel would be a good time for the bus to stop running and for the van to take over?

Student 1: I would say we may not necessarily need a full bus, but the short bus they had the year before last worked really well because it was a lot better. I mean if you have one class of with thirty people from West, the van will have to rotate 3 times just to get them all home. And that includes time the van has to sit and wait at Lourdes, so that last van full of people are stuck on main for a very long time. And that isn't fun when it is cold!

6. **What do you like most about using the shuttle system?**

Student 4: One thing I like about the shuttle is that depending on the drivers, sometimes the East Lake driver will take you to West. Also, it runs a lot more than it did two years ago. Two years ago it only ran every half an hour, so it is a big improvement to have to running so often now.

Student 1: I had a driver lie to me and say she couldn't take me to West and then she sat in her van and read a book while we all waited. That really irritated me.

Student 2: I guess something that I have kind-of liked about it is that you can get on the bus with your friends and ride to class together. This year I see a lot of residents from my floor on the bus. So that has been kind-of nice. It is like a social thing.

Student 4: And it is a really good place to meet people that are form West Campus. I mean most of the people who are on it are form West Campus, so it is a good five minute time that you can get to know other people.

Student 1: I also like riding the shuttle when it is on time and I am not stressed about it being off schedule. It's nice to ride when it is on time and I can just get on and ride over.

Student 4: I would say I like not having to drive. When it is on time it is nice! I mean, I don't have to find a parking spot. I have had to rush to class and try to find a parking spot end up parking really far away. Then it takes me just as long to get to class as if I would have taken the shuttle. I don't know, so I mean it is nice. It is nice to talk to people and get to know other students from West.

Facilitator: And what do you like least about the shuttle system?

Student 2: I would say it is inconsistencies.

Student 1: Yeah, if they could just leave at the time they have scheduled, unless the bus is full, then they can go. Otherwise students are just standing there staring at a full bus. Most of the time when it leaves early it is not full though. Inconsistency.

Student 4: One thing I don't like is that sometimes the bus drivers are crazy and you fear for your life. One time they ran a red light and there were cars coming. And when they hit the brakes really hard and you fly forward because you can hold yourself down. It can be a little scary some days riding the bus.

Student 5: At least when they drive like that you feel like they are trying to get you there on time. At least that is how I feel. Although in the winter I will be a little more nervous about it.

Student 3: I would say my least favorite thing is when there is not enough room on the van.

Student 2: And you always feel like you are the one kid who didn't fit on.

7. Please share any suggestions or ideas for improvement of the shuttle system.

Student 4: My suggestion would be to bring the short bus back at night.

Student 1: I agree! Bring back the short bus! Also, I had some residents tell me that there is this Mass Comm class on Wednesday with like 400 student and when the class gets out they get stuck waiting forever because there are like a 100 students from West trying to get back. I know the van drivers have to be noticing that! If they could just have the bus stay late on the days that there are a lot of classes that would be helpful.

Student 3: I have a friend in that class and she always complains about how horrible it is trying to get back. There really are around 100 people all trying to get back. They literally wait like an hour and a half.

8. Of those suggestions or ideas, please share one thing about the shuttle system that you would most like to see changed. You all have shared many things already, but this is our closing question, so if there is anything you would like to emphasize, please share.

Student 3: Uhm, I don't know. I keep hearing about the short bus that was here before I came and that sounds great, but I have had a couple of people say that if you had two buses running at a constant rate they could just leave whenever they were full and then people wouldn't have to wait. There are so many times that there are kids running toward the bus and they bus driver will just take off, I don't like that either. I guess maybe if the bus just went in circles faster and didn't have such a long wait time it would help. Also, the vans are awful. I have a friend in my hall who just takes his truck to the bus stop and lets people jump in the back and just carts them back and forth. He doesn't do it all the time, but whenever it gets backed up I guess he just feels sorry for the students sitting there waiting. I don't know if it is safe, but he moves a lot of people!

Student 4: Even bringing the two buses back in the morning! There is still only one bus! There were two at the beginning of the year and then one broke and we have only had one since then.

Student 2: I have class in the morning and it is so packed, we really need two buses.

Student 1: Please bring back the short bus!

Facilitator: Thank you again for sharing your feedback- we appreciate your time!

Focus Group Transcription

Group #2, 9:00 pm

October 22, 2008- Lourdes South Lounge

Facilitator: Alyssa Lopez

Facilitator: Thank you for coming today. We appreciate you taking the time to give us your input. We encourage you to be clear and honest in your opinions and suggestions. We hope to use these opinions and suggestions to pin-point ways to provide the best service possible. Although we do not directly oversee the shuttle system, we will be passing this information on to the appropriate administrator. We will be recording and transcribing these discussions to pass on student feedback. However, we will not include any student names, or any identifying information, so we hope that you feel comfortable sharing your feedback openly. What I am going to do is ask you all these questions in succession and we will paused after each one and give you a chance to share feedback. You don't have to go in order, just share whenever you feel comfortable.

1. Please share why you do or do not currently use the shuttle system.

Student 6: Uhm, I tend not to use it because it is really unreliable- time wise. Especially at night. I always get down there 15 minutes early because I never know when it is going to leave.

Student 7: I try to just use it during the day and be back to West Campus by six if possible so that I don't have to deal with the vans and having to wait to ride them when other people budge in front of you. They only fit a few people, so if you don't get on you have to wait an entire other round before you can even get on the van.

Student 8: I use it during the day because I do not want to struggle to have to find a parking spot. It is pretty decent having the two busses running in the morning, especially when they are on schedule for your classes. I don't use it at night because I have a class until 8:30 pm. When I get out of class there are like 50 people waiting to get rides back to West Campus, so they are all fighting to get in the van and I end up waiting literally over an hour just to get back to West. So, I just use my car at night.

Student 9: I use the bus all the time because I do not have a car here, but I agree. In the morning when there are two buses running I like it, but at night it is frustrating with just the little shuttles for so many people.

Student 10: I use the bus to get to class and that is about it. I have gotten to the point where I don't like using the shuttles, so I just don't ever go to main campus at night.

Student 11: I use it during the day and avoid it at night. I used to walk, but I can't anymore because of the weather, so I just don't use it at all at night. It isn't worth the time trying to wait to go to any activities on main or to class. I would rather bum a ride or skip class.

Student 12: I avoid it entirely at night! I walk. As soon as it is after 5:30 pm I always walk instead of trying to use the shuttle. The vans are hard to deal with and the buses in the morning- it is kind-of funny when like there will be ten kids walking toward the bus and it will leave even though they are almost to the door and there is plenty of room for them to sit. It just seems cruel to drive off when people are two seconds away from the door.

2. Please explain how often you use the shuttle system?

Student 6: I only use it in the mornings, to get to main campus and back.

Student 7: I use it during the day.

Student 8: During the week I use it to get to class, but I don't use it at all on the weekends. I don't really want to deal with the van. There are the same problems as there are at night because there is a small van and a bunch of people waiting to use it. I think people learned pretty fast that it wasn't the best way to get back and forth... It seems like people pretty much try to avoid it on the weekends unless they are desperate or are drinking and need a sober cab!

Student 10: I do use it on the weekends because I have friends on main and don't have a car. But, not really at night- more during the day. The drunk people who ride it at night annoy me.

Student 9: I just use it for class and sometimes on weekends.

Student 11: Just for class.

Student 12: I barely ever use it now...

3. What time or times of the day do you use the shuttle? Some of you already answered this, but if you didn't, you can share.

Student 6: In the morning and mid-afternoon. It's just more convenient to use the bus and not the vans. That's why I avoid the vans... they are way too unreliable.

Student 7: I use it during the day. It is really busy in the morning, but at least it is a bigger bus so we can get more students on it. Sometimes I wait till like 11 am to try to get back

to West because I know the bus will be packed. I just stay on main and study and wait for it to be a little less busy.

Student 8: I use it from 9 to 9:30 and in the afternoon.

Student 9: The mornings.

Student 10: Every morning to get to my 9 am class.

Student 12: I have been using it less and less because I get sick of getting left behind when I am walking toward the bus. I guess it just doesn't seem that reliable and I hate being late for class. There have been a few times that I was like 15 or 20 minutes late because there wasn't room on the bus or it took off while I was walking up to the door. Your professor is only going to believe a bus excuse so many times!

Student 11: I use it occasionally, I guess mostly in the mornings. I hate having to use the vans, so I avoid it whenever there is not a bus.

4. Do you use the shuttle system for programs or activities (i.e. sporting events)?

Student 6: I use it to get to cheerleading practice and for some basketball and football games if it is not too busy.

Student 8: I don't use it for programs because usually they are at night and it is the vans running so I just drive. Then I don't have to wait for the van.

Student 6: Yeah, it completely depends on how bad you want to go to an activity and how busy the van is.

Student 8: True, I can usually find a ride if it is a really popular activity...

Student 7: I tend to use it because it is my only form of transportation right now. If it is really busy I will end up walking with my friends, but it is getting a little cold for that now.

Student 7: Like, if I am going to go to a club meeting that starts at 7:30 pm I would have to start waiting for the van at like 6:45 pm. And basically kill time waiting for the van.

Student 6: Sometimes even earlier than 6:45 pm.

Student 9: And a lot of times on night that there are programs the shuttle is full and you have to wait forever to get on one because there are so many people trying to get over there. It just gets too frustrating and I end up driving.

Student 8: If I go to main I take my car.

Facilitator: Is there a reason you take your car?

Student 8: Because the lines are really long and then you end up waiting forever just to get over to main. And like, I know I am a fighter, so I can make it on to the van but all my friends are stuck there for another hour.

Student 10: I use it sometimes for events, but I like to walk.

Student 11: Like everybody else, there is just too big of lines on sporting event days. It is easier to walk and better for you!

Student 12: I guess I agree with everyone else, I really would love to have a larger bus scheduled for nights that there are special events or games. Maybe they could let us know the nights they have larger vehicles so people can actually plan to take the shuttle.

5. Tell us what you expected the shuttle system would be like when you were assigned to live on West Campus. Share if you use it more or less than you anticipated.

Student 6: When I was a freshman I used it a lot more than I anticipated because I did not have a car here. Now I use it less because I drive a lot more.

Facilitator: Can you tell me more about that?

Student 6: I have just learned that it is just more convenient and I hate relying on the bus and vans when I have a busy schedule because I feel like I waste time and have to wait around for them. You know you can get to where you need to go when you just drive yourself.

Student 7: It is a little less reliable than I thought, but I still have to use it every day because I don't have a car. I use it because I have no choice.

Student 9: I expected the shuttle system to run every 7 minutes because that is what they told me when I toured. Actually, on both of the tours that I took that is what I was told. That is why I chose to live on West Campus, if I would have known it is sometimes 15

minutes to a half an hour I don't know if I would have chosen to live here. I used it way less when I realized I had to wait over a half an hour.

Student 8: I guess I thought it would be the big bus the entire time. It really surprised me that they use a van when there is such a large amount of people who want transportation. For example, I know there is a big Business or Communications class on Wednesdays or something and it goes till 8:30 pm and there are so many people waiting it is ridiculous. I try to avoid it those nights, and usually end up calling a friend and asking them to pick me up.

Student 10: Uhm, basically what she said.

Student 11: I just expected it to run when it is supposed to. They have schedules posted all over and I pretty much schedule based on them to try to get to class, but they are never there when they say they are supposed to be.

Student 12: I agree, it seems strange to post the times and advertise that they run every 7 minutes when that information is only partially true. Maybe they can improve on the information that is given or update it more often.

6. What do you like most about using the shuttle system? What do you like least about the shuttle system?

Student 9: I guess I like it because it can be convenient when parking is tight. It is nice not to have to worry about parking and be able to just get off the bus and go to class. It is a big pain to park and walk to class, parking is a nightmare on main. The thing I like the least is just the unreliability of the scheduling and lack of space on the van.

Student 6: What I like most about it is that it is offered for people who do not have cars. It makes it possible for those people to live on West. What I like least is that I like, run out to the bus determined to get on it and it pulls away just as I am running up to the door.

Student 7: I appreciate having a way to get to class from West, but I agree that the unreliability is extremely frustrating. Especially when you have to depend on the shuttle.

Student 8: The same.

Student 6: I like the enjoyment from watching people run for the bus. I would never run for the bus! I appreciate that it is there and I can use it if I need to, what I don't like is that if I am the person who is not running, but walking briskly toward the bus and it drives off I am like no!!!

Student 10: I basically like that it is an option so that we are not stranded on West. What I don't like is when the bus gets off schedule. That makes it hard to depend on and difficult to get to class on time.

Student 11: The best part about it, that I like the most is that it is funny to see people run to the bus and watch when it closes the door in their face, but I hate when it is me! In all seriousness though, it is really sad to see people obviously running toward the bus and then see it just drive away.

Student 12: I don't like when we have to wait forever for trains. I know that is something that can obviously not be controlled, but it just makes riding the bus that much more annoying. Also, the bus drivers typically let us load on and off on both the front door and the back door, but sometimes the bus driver just refuses to open the back door and makes everyone who was waiting in that line come all the way up to the front. It is just random because there is no rhyme or reason for it.

Student 9: I don't like how everyone pushes and fights over getting on the vans at night-particularly the nights that we have Mass Com until 8:30 pm, it seems like everyone is fighting and pushing and if you aren't aggressive or rude you end up waiting for the van to make 5 trips before you even get on. It just seems strange to have that be the vehicle they use on those nights when there are obviously so many people wanting transportation.

Student 11: The other thing is that some drivers ask you to pile in like sardines and others will only let the number of people in that can wear seatbelts. I think that just creates frustration when it is inconsistent. A common ground is a good idea.

Facilitator: So I am hearing that you feel like you end up waiting when there is a van. Can you tell me how long you wait to get on the van?

Student 9: The first week I got out of that class and realized there would be 500 people waiting to ride back to main I never tried to use the van again to get home. I just drove every week instead. I had friends in the class who wouldn't get back for like 45 minutes. That sucks because if there is a program, class or something you want to do on West you have no control over what time you get back. I have friends who go to the library after late classes to study because they know it will take time for everyone to get on the vans.

They just wait and come back a few hours later to try it once everyone else has come back.

Student 6: I had one other thing I forgot to mention. Another really frustrating thing is when the van drivers have a friend riding with them they take up the front seat, making it take even longer everyone to get a ride back. It seems strange to have someone take up a seat when there are so many people waiting and obviously frustrated. I have had other friends complain about that.

7. Please share any suggestions or ideas for improvement of the shuttle system.

Student 6: I think there definitely needs a bus on Wednesday nights. We usually get out early, around 7:30 pm, but I think it would really be helpful on those nights.

Student 7: I think the time we get out is unpredictable, but one thing about the night is that the van will sit at West forever waiting to see if students need a ride when we are all waiting forever to get a ride back at main. If they just dropped people off and made constant rounds it would move people faster. Tonight I waited for 20 minutes and when the van finally came there was no-one in it. We actually took the East Lake van back because there were like 40 of us there and they were like “Just hop in!”

Student 8: Most of the time the East Lake bus won't do that though. They will say “We can't take you! We have to wait here.” It is another one of those inconsistencies that are random and frustrating.

Student 9: There is only like one East Lake driver who will take us.

Student 10: I think the schedule is nice at night, but maybe they should just keep constantly running so that people know that the bus will never be more that like 5 to 10 minutes away. And it is not like they are saving gas- they are sitting there burning it up waiting for the 15 minutes to be up.

Student 11: Or if they just ran the vans after 7 pm or 8pm after all of the classes are done. That would definitely be very helpful.

Student 6: I do like knowing the set schedule, I think it helps me plan.

Student 7: I think the schedule is best for the morning classes, but maybe continuously running with the vans would work better.

- 8. Facilitator: Of those suggestions or ideas, please share one thing about the shuttle system that you would most like to see changed. You all have shared many things already, but this is our closing question, so if there is anything you would like to emphasize, please share.**

Student 8: I think if the bus drivers were just more aware and watched for people running to the bus, kind-of like everyone was saying. It is just so frustrating to barely miss it or to have to wait another 15 to 30 minutes for a bus when they could wait two seconds to let you on. When I see someone running toward the bus I would not mind waiting a second while they are let on. I feel like it is common courtesy to wait if they are obviously in a rush and running to the bus.

Student 11: I actually have a friend who was getting on the bus and the bus driver shut the door on her, actually shutting her head in the door of the bus. The he yelled “We are full” and wouldn’t let her on. She was really embarrassed.

Student 7: That is crazy!

Student 11: She gave me permission to tell that in hopes that it wouldn’t happen to anyone else!

Student 9: I think they should have two buses running longer in the morning and two vans or one bus at night. Even a small bus would work, just something until everyone gets out of class around 8 or 8:30 pm.

Student 10: Or even just till 9 or something, when the giant classes are over.

Student 6: Yeah, if they could just pinpoint prime hours and have more room for passengers at those times.

Student 7: Yeah, I think there just needs to be something, like anything they can do to make the nights better!

Student 11: At least stick to the schedule that is posted and have more space available, like a small bus at night. Once the classes are over at night they could go back to the vans.

Student 6: Not all the bus drivers leave us. Some of them are really nice. They talk to you and let you on when you are running. I like those drivers. Just to end it on a positive note!

Facilitator: Thank you again for sharing your feedback- we appreciate your time!

Focus Group Transcription

Group #3, 7:00 pm

October 22, 2008- Lourdes North Lounge

Facilitator: Tamara Merkouris

Facilitator: Thank you for coming today. We appreciate you taking the time to give us your input. We encourage you to be clear and honest in your opinions and suggestions. We hope to use these opinions and suggestions to pin-point ways to provide the best service possible. Although we do not directly oversee the shuttle system, we will be passing this information on to the appropriate administrator. We will be recording and transcribing these discussions to pass on student feedback. However, we will not include any student names, or any identifying information, so we hope that you feel comfortable sharing your feedback openly. What I am going to do is ask you all these questions in succession and we will paused after each one and give you a chance to share feedback. You don't have to go in order, just share whenever you feel comfortable.

1. Please share why you do or do not currently use the shuttle system.

Student 13: I use it to go to class.

Student 14: I use it to go to class, except I don't use it when I have a later class. I drive to it instead. It's just easier to get a parking spot later on in the day than it is during the day, so I don't use the shuttle.

Facilitator: Okay

Student 14: I can get picked up right away instead of waiting around for it.

Facilitator: There's also...Parking is open in the evening too. Okay.

Student 15: I do use it to get to class in the morning, because I don't have a car. But, even if I did have a car, I think I would use it because WSU is on the verge of a horrible parking catastrophe here. We have a serious lack of parking here, and no planned facilities here to increase it.

Facilitator: I don't know about that, but it's hard when we're kind of land-locked.

Student 15: If I remember reading, the one parking lot by Sheehan, they're planning on putting up a new dorm on the parking lot.

Facilitator: That is true. Yes.

Student 14: But they did just make that new parking lot across from Kwik Trip.

Facilitator: Yeah. That whole big lot is actually new this year. So that actually more than replaces it, but it isn't quite as convenient, I will admit that. Okay, and for you ladies?

Student 16: I use it to go to class in the morning and get back. If I just miss it on the way back from classes, I'll just walk because it's another 15 minutes before another one comes, and you can almost beat it back by walking.

Student 17: Yeah, I do the same, and I use it because it's usually convenient although in the morning it's a little busy, but...

Facilitator: So what do you mean by "a little busy"?

Student 17: While, if you have an 8 o'clock class, and you want to catch the 7:35 shuttle, because it's most convenient, you don't always get on it, because it's full.

Facilitator: Because there's not enough room for everyone?

Student 17: No, there's not enough room at all.

Student 16: You're got to get there at least at 7:30.

Student 13: Yeah.

Student 14: Yeah, you're got to get there at least five minutes early to get it in time.

Student 13: There's no "ladies first" on the shuttle.

Student 16: (in agreement) No.

Student 17: (in agreement) No.

Student 14: It's every person for their selves.

Facilitator: So, with your example, how many people get left?

Student 18: There's always a handful, at least.

Student 14: I don't know, maybe 5-10. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, I think, is the busiest day for the shuttle.

Student 13: Yeah.

Student 14: And I think that's when the most people get left. And then Tuesday/Thursday,

it's more like mid-day, it's busier than it is in the morning, I would say.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 15: Sort of on that same thing, my main complaint about the bus system, even though it's a later question, it's on the same topic, is that the bus stops running at 6 o'clock. However, they switch to a van. The thing is, the van does not have nearly enough seats for the people who need to get home. Every single day, without fail, people get left behind at those first couple of vans after six.

Facilitator: Oh. So right away it's already a problem.

Student 15: Yes. And it's always like two or three people that have to wait for the next rotation.

Facilitator: Okay. Good to know.

2. Please explain how often you use the shuttle system.

Student 17: Everyday.

Student 18: Everyday.

Student 16: At least twice a day.

Student 14: I use it twice a day. But if I'm going to a friend's near main campus, I won't take it. Because, especially if it's after six, I won't even bother, I'll just drive.

Facilitator: So when you say "twice a day" do you mean there and back?

Student 14: There and back.

Student 16: There and back.

Facilitator: Okay. So do most of you just take a trip to main campus for the day, and just take one trip back?

Student 16: Yeah, because it's easier to just to like stay on main campus

Student 14: 'Cause the bus only runs so often. So you could, I mean if you have like an hour and a half break, you could come back, but it's not really....

Student 16: Convenient.

Student 14: ...possible at times.

Facilitator: Do any of you ever come back multiple times during the day?

Student 17: I tried it once, and was like "Oh, I'm going to go home and take a nap", and I had like 20 minutes and I had to go back on the shuttle again in order to make sure I got to my class on time.

Student 18: 'Cause you have to give yourself so much time when you're taking the shuttle.

Student 17: To catch it and to...

Student 16: I only do it if I have more than, like an hour and a half, like they said. Otherwise, it's not worth it.

Student 13: I have like, a two hour break on Mondays and Wednesdays, so sometimes I come back and take a nap.

Student 14: I come back on Fridays because I have two hours in between....I have three classes and two hours in between each one....and I'll come back in between. But other than that, I don't.

Facilitator: So anything shorter than that doesn't really make sense.

Student 14: No.

Student 15: I only do it if I need to get a piece of paper that I forgot or something.

Facilitator: Sure. Yep.

Student 15: Because even a quick run here and back takes a half an hour.

3. What time or times of the day do you use the shuttle?

Student 14: Morning and mid-afternoon, twelve, one, usually.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 16: Very rarely after six, I try and avoid the van.

Student 18: Yeah.

Student 17: Yeah, the van gets annoying.

Student 13: Yeah, if I have meetings over on main, it's easier to drive over there.

Student 16: Yeah, 'cause there's parking over there at that time, and the van is ridiculous

Facilitator: How many of you *don't* have a car? [Pause for hands being raised] How many of you *do* have a car?

Student 14: I have one

Student 13: I have one also.

Student 16: I have one too.

Facilitator: So three of you do not, and three of you do. Okay, so if the shuttle system *was* running in the evening, like if there actually was the bus running, do you think you would be more likely to take it at night?

Student 16: Yeah.

Student 13: Depending on the night, and what is going on on-campus, like if there is a basketball game, there is like no way you are ever going to get a spot on the van. But at the same time, I do try to use the van as much as possible, because I'm really not willing to pay for gas.

Facilitator: It's expensive.

Student 14: And right now I'll use my car more often with my...I have a 3-4 class, so I'll drive to it and come back. But once the weather starts to get bad, I won't. I'll just take the shuttle. Because it's not really worth the...

Student 13: Cleaning off your car...

Student 14: ...Bad weather and stuff.

Facilitator: Oh, sure.

Student 14: Sometimes if I miss the bus, I'll try to grab my car, but sometimes it's almost more of a hassle.

Facilitator: Okay. So it sounds like the times of the day you guys use the shuttle, you said mornings, afternoons....Anything different over here?

Student 15: Morning, and right before six.

Facilitator: Yep. Anything for you ladies?

Student 16: Nope.

Student 18: Not unless there's some activity.

Student 17: It just depends on whenever your classes are.

4. Do you use the shuttle system for programs or activities (i.e. sporting events)?

Student 13: It depends on when. I mean, like, the football games. Trying to use the vans on like a Saturday for a football game, it doesn't work.

Girl: Yeah.

Student 13: I mean, you get dropped off on Main, and you can walk over and it's easy, to get on and stuff, but...During the weekends it's really sporadic, like, they're not always on schedule and they come, like, slower, and you have to wait longer. It always feels like it anyway.

Facilitator: So did you actually have, like, a specific incident where you tried to go to a football game or something??

Student 16: Homecoming.

Student 17: Homecoming.

Student 18: Homecoming, gosh.

Facilitator: So the three of you all tried to use the shuttle on Homecoming.

Student 16: We just ended up walking back, because it was way too big of a line.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 15: I have had a couple of times where I have looked, and just counted, a quick head count, and knew I wasn't going to be able to get on the next bus, so I just walked it.

Facilitator: Can you actually see the shuttle from your window?

Student 15: Well, I can hear it, I can't see it.

Facilitator: You can hear it?

Student 15: But, I went outside and...

Student 14: You can hear the bus coming.

Student 15: I see, oh, well, the shuttle only has so many seats, and there's, you know, ten people out there, and I know I'm not going to get a seat. I might as well walk. If I'm not going to get a seat, I might as well walk.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 13: It seats twelve, actually. The van does.

Facilitator: I think that's including the driver, though, actually, too.

Student 13: Oh, okay.

Facilitator: But yeah, okay. So.

Student 14: Just wait until basketball games....

Facilitator: So you would use it for programs and activities if they were during the day.

Student 14: Yeah.

Student 13: Yeah.

Student 18: I use it...

Student 13: I use it at night too, though, after 6pm.

Student 16: Yeah.

Student 13: I usually go to main campus on Tuesday nights, and sometimes on Thursday nights.

Facilitator: Do you have class at those times?

Student 13: No, I just go to activities, or I go to my friend's house who lives next to Main. And it's just not worth it for me to drive. Like I said, I just don't feel like paying for gas.

Student 16: When there's big activities, though, and then everyone goes out, and you see by the bus stop, and there's like 30 people and you're like...

Student 13: There's a lot of evening classes at night, that get done around 8pm-8:30pm. And then there's at least, like 30 or 40 people. Then I think they normally call for back-up.

Student 16: Otherwise you have to wait, like, 45 minutes before you can get back on a shuttle.

Facilitator: They do call for the East Lake Van to help out.

Student 15: Well, as for activities, I'm in video game club [Identifying information left

out]. Once a month, we do a video-game all-nighter where we take up Kryzsko. You might have seen us down there. But, it goes from 7 o'clock in the evening, to 7 o'clock the next day. Almost everyone leaves at twoish, so they can catch the bus back to East Lake or back here. So most people leave right then.

Facilitator: So that affects your program?

Student 15: Yeah, a lot of people leave in the middle of it. And people who do stay for all of it have to wait an additional two hours after it's over for the bus to start showing up at 9am.

Facilitator: Because that's on the weekend, then?

Student 15: Yes.

Student 14: You can call security for escorts for certain situations.

Student 15: Yeah, but not, like, all the people would call security. There's lots of people.

Facilitator: So do you feel like the shuttle system hinders...Like do you decide not to go to a sporting event or a program because of the shuttle system?

Student 16: Yeah.

Student 17: Yeah.

Student 18: Not to make the trip over to meet people for, maybe a study group or something. Just say "Come over here" or, "I'll just do it myself".

Student 14: I have a car, so I'll just drive if it's after six, I don't bother. Even if it's after three I don't really bother. I just don't like to wait around that much for it. I don't know the bus schedule, so if it's not there when I come, I just leave.

Student 13: She lived on Main last year.

Student 14: Yeah, I'm from Main, so the bus is....it's different. It's not as bad as I thought it was going to be, coming from Main, but....

5. Tell us what you expected the shuttle system would be like when you were assigned to live on West Campus. Share if you use it more or less than you anticipated.

Student 18: I thought it was going to run a lot more. 'Cause when we came for four days, they opened up that, like, coach bus. And they just were running like non-stop, the buses were. And I was like "Oh, this is going to be nice! You never have to wait!" But they take that away. So...that's just for show.

Student 13: One thing that's different about this year, though, is that last year we had two buses running until, like, at least 12:30 in the afternoon. We always had the Winona Transit Bus, so I was expecting that to be occurring. And it was for a while, but then the transit bus went away for repairs and never came back. So, that's really inconvenient, because if you miss, like, the 9:35 bus, there was always, like, a 9:42. And you could always count on it being, you know, there was another bus in seven minutes so you could still make your class still. But that's not really happening so far this year.

Student 14: Yeah.

Student 13: Because I've missed it a few times. I have an 8 o'clock class and it's hard waking up that early. So, like, I have missed the 7:35 bus a few times, and then you go on the 7:50 bus, and you're just like antsy because it still takes the shuttle a while to go all the way to Main. You hope it makes it on time, and you hope you don't catch a train.

Facilitator: Sure. Others? Did you expect to be riding it more or less?

Student 15: I expected it to be like the buses in the Twin Cities. I'm from the Twin Cities and I took the buses all the time and it was great. It was so well organized there. The buses would pull up, and as the buses were coming, you know, it has the lights so everyone knows where their bus is and everyone gets in this nice, orderly line automatically. And everyone doesn't immediately push to the front; no it's just nice in order. And everyone files on, and when the bus goes, the people who are standing get off first, and the people in the front rows pair off. Here, everyone just pushes and it's incredibly irritating. And I have no idea how we could get people to start doing that, but it would be wonderful.

Facilitator: Okay. Other comments....Did you think you were going to be riding it more or less?

Student 14: I think I figured I would be riding it more than I am, since I came from Main campus last year. I think I assumed it came every ten minutes or something. That it would just be here all the time. But you just, kind of have to just work around it. Like, I always take the :30 bus, because I don't want to take the :50 bus and chance being late to class. I don't want to be that kid walking in late.

Facilitator: So then you end up getting ready a lot earlier.

Student 14: Yeah, I end up getting up like an hour before class starts.

Facilitator: Yeah.

Student 13: Usually you're just like, sitting there, killing time right before class starts because it just doesn't work out perfectly, you know. You can't just take the bus to campus and walk there and be there a couple minutes early, no. It's always like ten,

fifteen minutes early.

Student 16: Or like five minutes late.

Student 14: Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 15: The schedule isn't really worked out with class schedules at all.

Student 14: Well, it works...I think it works out; you just have to know when to go. If you expect to leave ten minutes before class, and you live on West Campus, then it's kind of your fault. You should have known to go earlier, if you're going to be the lazy one to....Personally, in my opinion, if you're going to be the lazy one to get up late, and want to get on the bus ten minutes before...Well, there are trains in Winona. You're going to catch stuff that isn't perfectly on time, but that happens whether you're driving or taking the bus, so I don't think it's necessarily the bus system.

Student 17: I don't think the timing is too bad, because if you get done with class at like 8:50 or so, and you walk straight to the bus, and you have to wait a couple of minutes and it's there, so.

Student 14: I agree.

Student 16: The timing from Main to West is a little better than the timing from West to Main.

Student 14: Yes, I do agree.

Student 15: Yes, that is true.

Facilitator: Because I think I've heard people say that, like you said, you're either going to get there late or way early. So the timing there, there seems to be a little....There isn't a time when you can get there five minutes early, or ten minutes early.

Student 15: In the morning I take the first one of the hour because if I go for the one at the thirty, then it's always completely crowded because everyone doesn't want to be on the next one, because they'll be late for class. So I have to show up a whole hour early and just chill before I do my classes.

Facilitator: Okay, so that's what you usually choose, is the one on the hour.

Student 15: Yeah.

6. What do you like most about using the shuttle system?

Student 13: It's free.

Student 14: It's free.

Student 17: Well, I guess not technically, since we're paying, but it seems free.

Student 13: It's paid for.

Facilitator: Yeah. You've already paid for it.

Student 16: I mean, it's pretty convenient for the most part. It gets you to class.

Student 13: And I'd say for the most part, it's reliable. A lot of the time, with the van drivers, it depends on whether or not they want to sit and read their book until the exact minute it's time to leave, or if they want to just keep going and be nice to the people. Like "Oh, I can see that there's twelve people waiting at Lourdes. I'm going to go right now, that way I can come and get them there faster." It depends on the van drivers, and what their attitude is. But, for the most part, the buses are pretty reliable. They leave at :35, they leave at :50, they leave at :05, they leave at :20.

Student 14: And if they leave early, it's 'cause it was full. So it's not like they're just leaving. But if the bus is full and it's that time...

Facilitator: Well, those are good comments. Other things you like? [Long pause] Okay.

(6.) What do you like least about the shuttle system?

Student 16: The vans after six, and on the weekends.

Student 14: Especially if you have a bigger group of friends that you are going to dinner with or something and you don't want to drive. Like if you are going to ZaZa'a or something, you might not be able to fit everyone in the van. It's not big enough for everyone. Like, you can only have ten friends to go.

Student 13: Weekends it seems like it's so....

Student 16: Sparse.

Student 13: ...never there. On weekends it only comes every half an hour to either spot.

Student 16: Is that what it is?

Student 13: Yeah I think it is only every half hour. It comes, like, every fifteen minutes on weekdays, so that's what I'm used to. Missing a van on a weekend is a lot bigger deal than missing a van on a weeknight.

Student 15: Well, I'm friends with a couple of the bus drivers and they don't even know the schedules themselves. They kind of leave whenever they feel like. Some of them I

know do have the schedule completely memorized and will leave on the hour or whatever. A lot of them will just kind of, "Well, I've been here for five minutes, let's go." So sometimes it's way, way off the schedule.

Facilitator: Is that the van, or...?

Student 15: That's the van on the weekends.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 16: And now, like, it's an option that you can walk, it's nice enough. But, in the winter, you won't have the option to walk.

Student 13: We're going to have, like, issues in the winter. Like for sure.

Facilitator: Do some of you walk a lot?

Student 17: Yeah

Student 16: I walk probably two or three times a week.

Student 18: Yeah, we walk it a lot. Or rollerblade it.

Student 16: Yeah, but that's only going to last, you know, so much longer and then once the snow comes it's going to suck.

Student 13: And just waiting out there...But it's better than scraping off a car, too. It's give and take.

Facilitator: So I'm hearing that the vans are your biggest complaint.

Student 13: Yes.

Student 16: Yep.

Student 13: Mostly on the weekends, though. That's the biggest issue.

Student 14: Nights, too, though. Like, I don't study in the library anymore, just because I can't get over there.

Student 18: Me too.

Student 14: Like, you can't chance it. You don't want to have to sit at the bus stop for 30 minutes, especially when it's getting colder out. And also 'cause, as a girl, it's in the dark and I don't want to have to sit there and wait.

Student 18: I never go to the library any more.

Student 17: No.

7. Please share any suggestions or ideas for improvement of the shuttle system.

Student 15: We need to find whatever happened to our stolen smaller bus.

Student 14: The transit?

Facilitator: Oh, the Winona transit?

Student 18: It comes sometimes, randomly. Like, I randomly see it at night.

Student 14: Oh, yeah. That's the transit system. It takes you to St. Mary's.

Student 13: And it also takes you downtown.

Student 15: We need to just get a smaller bus. And then, instead of switching to the van after six, until about ten, and then there's going to be no one on Main, so the van would work. Then it will fit everyone that's there at six, and it won't be wasting fuel by using the bigger bus.

Student 13: But there are some times where I feel bad for the van people, because it seems like they go from one stop, and there's maybe one person and they go to the other stop, and there's maybe two people or none at all. So there are times when it is absolutely dead and there are not people using the system and then it feels like they are just wasting gas.

Student 15: I have noticed that the East Lake van, in particular will...There'll be a whole ton of people who will want to come to Lourdes, and the East Lake person will pick up either one person, or no one, and just sit there and wait, and then drive back to East Lake and arrive with no one when it could be taking the people that got left behind on the Lourdes bus.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 14: But I will say, like let's say the Lourdes bus didn't have any one on their bus, and they went to go to East Lake instead, and then where's our bus? So you can, I can kind of see why...

Student 15: I've never seen East Lake residents that have missed the bus before.

Student 14: I have friends at East Lake, so. It's the same thing.

Student 13: And their bus doesn't come very often, because most students that live there

drive or walk or whatever, because it is a lot closer than Lourdes is to Main.

Student 15: I just have personally never seen it that crowded.

Student 13: Yeah.

Facilitator: So we have one suggestion to get another small bus that can help with the mornings and replace the van. Other ideas?

Student 15: Drive that on the weekend, too.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 13: Have it come more often.

Student 16: Yeah. Like instead of every fifteen minutes, have it come every ten, or every seven like it did last year, like [Student 13] said. That would be ideal. Especially as it gets colder.

Facilitator: Do you think that people would ride it more?

Student 16: Yeah.

Student 13: If people knew it, and they promoted it.

Student 14: I personally wouldn't drive as much, if I knew it was coming all the time.

Facilitator: Any other ideas?

Student 17: Kind of my own complaints are at night and on the weekends. Besides that, when it's really busy in the mornings, it kind of stinks. But beside that, I don't have a problem with it.

Student 15: As I said before, the people pushing.... As I also said, I have no idea how to fix that. No amount of advertising will change that.

Facilitator: Well, I think that if people were confident that they would get on, and that there was always a space, I don't think we would have the pushing.

Student 14: I absolutely agree.

- 8. Of those suggestions or ideas, please share one thing about the shuttle system that you would most like to see changed. You all have shared many things already, but this is our closing question, so if there is anything you would like to emphasize, please share.**

Student 13: I would like to see two shuttles, at all times, going between Main and West.

Student 14: Simultaneously?

Student 13: Yeah. Like, when one is at Main, one is at West, and they rotate. That would be most convenient, and that would ensure the seven-minute rules.

Facilitator: And would that be all the time?

Student 13: Depending on if it was buses for classes, or smaller buses or vans for the weekends and nights.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 14: I actually completely agree. I think it would be absolutely fantastic if it was going simultaneously between Main and West. And then I would also say that at night, I think that every half an hour is just too long to split it up. If it was every fifteen minutes, it would be more convenient. You'd still have to wait a while, but...I mean ten would be ideal, but fifteen would be compromising. Twenty even. Because every thirty is just....kind of...

Student 13: It's like you're one chance to get back.

Student 14: Especially since there's only so many kids who can get on and you have to wait another half hour to get on the next one.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 13: I agree with having it always running to make it seven minutes. It would make me use it more. It would allow me to, like, go to the library and to Main in the evenings and stuff. It would just be more convenient, and instead of like when I go to Main, and I stay on Main, I don't even try to come home until I know I can be on west for the rest of the night.

Facilitator: Mmm Hmm

Student 17: I agree with everything they said. The only thing I'd like change is the evening vans. That's basically it.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 16: Yeah, and if they're really stuck on keeping the vans after 6:00pm because it's cheaper for gas, just have two running probably, like they said. Leave from West and Main at the same time so there will always be someone coming. It will save gas, but people won't be left behind as much.

Student 15: The two simultaneous buses or one bigger bus after 6:00pm and on the weekends would work.

Facilitator: Any final comments on anything? [Long Pause] Okay, thank you for all of your feedback and for taking the time to share your comments with us.

Focus Group Transcription

Group #4, 9:00 pm

October 22, 2008- Lourdes North Lounge

Facilitator: Tamara Merkouris

Facilitator: Thank you for coming today. We appreciate you taking the time to give us your input. We encourage you to be clear and honest in your opinions and suggestions. We hope to use these opinions and suggestions to pin-point ways to provide the best service possible. Although we do not directly oversee the shuttle system, we will be passing this information on to the appropriate administrator. We will be recording and transcribing these discussions to pass on student feedback. However, we will not include any student names, or any identifying information, so we hope that you feel comfortable sharing your feedback openly. What I am going to do is ask you all these questions in succession and we will paused after each one and give you a chance to share feedback. You don't have to go in order, just share whenever you feel comfortable.

1. Please share why you do or do not currently use the shuttle system.

Student 18: I use the shuttle system because parking on Main Campus is ridiculous on the streets and I can't parallel park very well. I did it for the first time today, actually. It was exciting. Yes, first successful time on the first try. So that's why I take the shuttle. But yeah, and it's convenient 'cause it takes you right to campus; you don't have to walk far.

Student 19: And if you drive to campus you always end up parking like halfway to West Campus because parking gets so filled up right away and also people don't really like it when you park in front of their houses so it's a lot easier to take the shuttle and it's free.

Student 20: Doesn't waste your gas.

Student 21: Sometimes I do not use the shuttle system though because, like, I don't use the shuttle system at night because it takes a long time to, like, wait for the shuttle and they get filled up really fast. So with the time you have to wait, you could walk to Main [Campus].

Student 19: Especially on nights where there's like a speaker and they still have the shuttle running.

Student 18: Or like an athletic event.

Facilitator: Other people why *do* you, or why do you *not* ride the shuttle?

Student 22: I bike because I don't want to ride the bus because it takes too long.

Facilitator: So did you start riding it [the shuttle] at the beginning of the year and then change?

Student 22: I rode it like once or twice during orientation and that's it. I can bike faster

Facilitator: It's good exercise too. Do you plan on biking when it gets colder?

Student 22: I'm not sure yet. We'll see how it goes.

Facilitator: How about you?

Girl 5: I take it because I don't have a car. I don't really feel like dragging my bike all the way there. That's why I take it.

Facilitator: Okay, good.

2. Please explain how often you use the shuttle system.

Student 19: I use it every day for classes.

Facilitator: Okay, so like the weekdays

Student 19: Yeah, mostly weekdays.

Student 18: I use it weekdays and like to go visit friends or use it to go downtown. It's a lot easier to go back down to Main [Campus] and the go downtown to, like, the public library or whatever.

Student 21: I only use it during the day on weekdays not on weekends or during the night. I take my car then.

Facilitator: And why is that?

Student 21: Just because I usually don't have time to go outside a stand wait for the bus the 30 minutes it takes. I go like 5 minutes before the meeting would start and then it's quicker for me, more convenient. I don't have to wait after the bus or after the meeting whatever it is.

Facilitator: So, because it takes even longer to wait?

Student 21: Right, yeah. It's like an additional hour to your schedule of stuff.

Facilitator: Okay. Other people?

Student 20: Weekdays. Not at night. It takes too long. And usually not on the weekends cause you have so much time you can just walk.

Facilitator: Okay.

Student 19: It's a pretty walk.

Student 20: I haven't been on Main Campus on the weekends all this year other except during orientation week. I'm anti-Main Campus.

Facilitator: So some of you said you don't ride at night because of the wait. If there wasn't a wait do you think you would take the shuttle?

Group: Probably, yeah.

Facilitator: If it was like every 15 minutes you would be more likely to take it?

Group: Probably, yeah.

Student 18: It's also really hard to judge like how many people, because only 12 people fit on the shuttle, so I think, "Okay I have enough time to take it." But then if there is already people waiting out there and then you don't get on the first shuttle you have to wait for the next one too, so that can be inconvenient.

Facilitator: So, if it was it was riding more often and it could take more people...?

Student 18: Right.

Student 20: I've stopped going to my optional Monday night class because it takes too long and now it is cold outside. You have to wait outside for a long time in the dark.

Facilitator: So what's the optional Monday night class for?

Student 20: It's my approach to film for humanities and we watch the movies Monday night or you can like rent the libraries'.

Facilitator: Oh, so you can watch them on your own?

Student 20: Yeah.

Facilitator: So you have been watching it on your own instead? Okay, wow, Okay, Alright

3. What time or times of the day do you use the shuttle?

Student 18: Classes... Just morning, coming back around afternoon.

Student 19: Classes.

Facilitator: So, mornings, lunch time you come back from lunch?

Student 19: Around lunch time, it is usually really busy about that time too.

Facilitator: The shuttle is?

Student 19: Yeah, the shuttle is. When I take the 11 o'clock but the 12 o'clock bus is usually pretty packed.

Facilitator: So that's the 11 o'clock bus from Main [Campus] to West [Campus]?

Student 19: Yeah, well it isn't exactly 11 o'clock it is usually like 11:02 or something.

Student 20: And you always have to stand and sometimes and some people don't even get on the bus.

Facilitator: So stand *waiting* for the bus or stand *on* the bus?

Student 20: Yeah, it's always really busy.

[Student 23 enters the room]

Facilitator: [To Student 23] Hey, you're welcome to join us.

Student 21: Sorry I'm late.

Facilitator: That's okay if you want to grab and treats or whatever we are just starting here.

Student 19: The same goes for like the morning. I have stood out there for an hour and not got on the bus. But it's hard to judge when you have the time. Like when the next bus is going to be if there is double busing or not when the next bus is going to come... So if you have time to walk or...

Student 20: And like the bus driver has to reject a lot of people sometimes like, "Oh, no. We are too full. Wait for the next bus."

Facilitator: So when that happens how many people would you say are left waiting?

Student 19: It depends what time.

Student 20: It is usually an average of like 10 or 20 people.

Facilitator: So what the most you have seen waiting when the bus is full?

Student 19: A lot, like 30-40.

Student 20: Like, I have 8:00 am classes Wednesdays for lab and I sat through 2 busses and I missed part of my lab just to get on the bus.

Facilitator: Okay, so wow. [Student 23] we are just going through some of these questions here and we are talking about what times of the day you use the shuttle.

Student 23: Well, I have breakfast every morning around 8:00 am 'cause it's where all my friends are. So I tend to use it around 7:35 – 7:50 am. So I try and catch it and I almost never get on because I choose to wait because I know other people have 8:00 am classes so I let them go first. But, yeah, usually I'm one of the 15 people that doesn't get to get on the bus at that time. Now if I get on at 8:05 there are six people on the bus.

Facilitator: Because class starts at 8:00 am?

Student 23: Class starts at 8:00 am so it seems to be the 35's and 50's almost until like noon that people are like pretty packed.

Facilitator: That people are trying to get on?

Student 20: But even like the 7:15 bus is pretty packed too because people are starting to realize that they aren't getting on the :35 and :50 bus, so at least for me the 7:15 bus I like to make that Monday morning.

Facilitator: So that is already full at 7:15?

Student 20: Yeah.

4. Do you use the shuttle system for programs or activities (i.e. sporting events)?

Student 19: I would say we usually don't. Someone usually ends up driving because then you don't have to plan like a half an hour almost to an hour before the program just to go on and wait for the shuttle

Student 20: And then you have to wait an hour afterwards just to get back.

Facilitator: Because it's so full?

Student 20: Especially when it's at night. At least plan like an hour.

Facilitator: Other people, do you use it at night?

Student 18: I never use the shuttle at night. I usually just drive because it's more convenient and fast.

Student 21: I went to get on the shuttle at 5:15 tonight and the bus was packed and there was almost a full bus of people waiting outside, so I decided to drive and then I passed the bus stop on my way back and the whole area was full the bus stop area was full and they only have the shuttle because there was a speaker tonight.

Facilitator: Oh, Okay. So that was the bus from West [Campus] to Main [Campus] that was really busy tonight at 5?

Student 21: And then the bus stops at like 6 something like 8:15 the van was running and the bus stop was just packed with people.

Facilitator: Oh, because when it [the event] got over. Sure, okay.

Student 23: Oddly enough I'm actually late because I missed the shuttle. No, I was the only person that got kicked off the shuttle but I did miss the shuttle.

Facilitator: That's really too bad, but that's a really good excuse. Okay, Has anyone tried to go to an activity like a football game or anything like that or...and had a bad experience or had a good experience or have you just heard it is going to be bad or just seen it?

Student 21: I guess during...

Student 18: Well, we all know about waiting and stuff...

Student 21: Yeah.

Student 18: Like, we all know...

Student 21: We used it one night and we sat at the bus stop for like, I would say a good hour and I don't even think there was an event. It was like we left the library and there is like so many people there and it just took forever.

Student 18: Especially when it's Main.

Facilitator: Okay so they're just trying to get back. Do you have something to add?

Student 18: Well I know that, like, it doesn't even pertain to events, like sometimes it's night classes. Like big night classes will get out at like 7, 8 at night and, like, the shuttle, or, like, the bus stop is really busy because all those people are getting out of class. Like I think Mass Com. has a huge class and a lot of people on West Campus take that class so it's like hard...Like I don't take it, but sometimes when I'm over on campus after right around the time when a night class would get out, the bus stop is really busy because the

night class got out. So it doesn't even have to be like programs or like special things going on campus sometimes it is just night classes that are backing it up too.

Facilitator: Do any of you have night classes on Main Campus?

Student 20: I do, but I drive

Student 23: I kind of do. I have a meeting every night.

Facilitator: Oh, okay.

Student 23: So it is not a class. I have an hour-long meeting every Wednesday night that gets out around 7:00pm.

Facilitator: And do you take the shuttle then every time?

Student 23: Yes.

Student 19: Same as my Monday-Tuesday class, I don't go Monday class anymore because of it and Tuesday class gets out at 8 so pretty much I know I have to wait to get back to West [Campus].

Facilitator: So do any of you walk instead of riding? I know you said you take the bike. It's a good alternative. It sounds like all of you walked before.

Group: Agree

Facilitator: Do you walk for fun or because you missed the bus or both?

Student 20: Sometimes I just get frustrated waiting for the bus like if I know there is more than ten people when there is the van I'll walk or if I know there is a lot of people in line for the bus then I'll walk I usually get there faster than the bus dropping them off anyways.

Student 23: When *NAME* was here, there was probably 40 or 50 of us waiting outside for the shuttle, you know, and most of us didn't think that far ahead.

Facilitator: And that was the van then?

Student 23: And that was the van. And me and 5 people just walked and we made it about 2 minutes late so it wasn't bad.

Facilitator: Oh, so that's walking to get to the event.

Student 23: We walked to the event.

Facilitator: Okay, and *you*'ve walked [to Student 19].

Student 19: I have walked for, well it started out walking because I missed the first bus we were going to take, we went to get coffee earlier and then it just turned into its easier to walk those mornings then to get up and wait for the shuttle, you feel more proactive walking then sitting there reading a book or talking to people.

Facilitator: So those of you that have said you walk, will you still walk when it gets colder out?

Student 23: No

Student 19: No

Student 20: I would if I was prepared for it. I would, but sometimes I just go class with a fleece, you know, in the winter I will just grab a sweatshirt. But unless I'm planning on walking I won't, like, bundle up to go to class 'cause you know you just take your jacket off and scarf and all that stuff, but half the time I'm not prepared to walk if I miss the bus so I just have to wait for the next bus.

Student 19: I walked this morning. I watched the news, it wasn't going to be that cold and then I got to Main Campus and I was a popsicle. I couldn't feel my fingers.

5. Tell us what you expected the shuttle system would be like when you were assigned to live on West Campus. Share if you use it more or less than you anticipated.

Student 22: I use it less

Facilitator: Yes, since you bike.

Student 22: Yeah I rode it during orientation and I was like, "No, I'm not going to do this anymore!"

Facilitator: Did you think you would ride it all the time?

Student 22: Yeah

Student 18: I just expected to be the big bus all the time and that you would have a seat all the time, but every time I have rode the bus lately I have had to stand. So I use it more than anticipated just because I didn't anticipate it as being as far from Main Campus but it takes longer. So now I usually walk in the afternoon and stuff and not like in the mornings.

Facilitator: Any others?

Student 20: Well, last year I lived on main and I had a class on west and it was so much easier to get on the bus like as opposed to 8 am class here. So much easier getting on the bus coming this way then it is this year going from west to main.

Facilitator: Not as much competition to get over here then.

Student 20: Myself and two classmates last year.

Student 23: I use it a lot less then I thought I would just because of the amount of friends that brought their cars down since the beginning of the year because of their frustrations with the bus.

Facilitator: And so you have friends that have brought cars because of the bus?

Student 23: They have gotten so frustrated with waiting for the bus, or not getting on, or it taking too long, or it running on a half hour schedule... They have just gotten so frustrated that they have brought down their own cars. Frequently we end up just jumping in with them and getting a ride to campus. Even if there is not a line for the bus I found they still tend to drive now.

Student 18: Well, so I have lived on West Campus for the last 2 years so this is my third year and this by far has been the worst bus experience I have had in my 3 years of living here. In my freshman year I took the bus all the time I didn't have a car. I took the bus every once in a while I would take my car but I usually took the bus. Last year I took the bus a majority of the time and this year I only take the bus to class and anything that is not class-related, I drive or get a ride from a friend. And we had double bussing in the past and that's not going on so I have been really frustrated with the bus but, I'm just dealing with it but I, because of living over here I don't go an hour before class. Like for 9:30 class I'll catch the 9:05 or the 9:20 bus and I make sure I'm one of the ones that get on the bus. I'm not one of those people that are like, "Oh, go ahead." I make sure I get on that bus and I'm not afraid to walk in front of someone and cut them off to get on the bus. So I guess I just...

Facilitator: So you have to be pretty pushy to get on?

Student 18: Yeah. Just because I have lived over here I know that if you want to get on that bus you need to push your way on to it to make sure you get a spot.

Student 20: I definitely hear a lot of comments, oh, the squirrely freshmen this year push people out of the way to get on the bus and its obviously not the freshmen.

Group: [laughter]

Student 18: I just want to get on that bus!

Student 20: At the same time I have placed myself... Like I have watched the bus, I didn't get on that bus, I stood exactly where the doors open and the last time I have still not gotten on the bus, like I'm standing right in front of it and people are just going left and right of it.

Student 18: Yeah.

Student 19: You have to be really aggressive, you can't just stand there and wait. Like you need to make sure you get that inch a head of them to make sure they know that you are the next person to get on that bus. Like, it is really competitive getting on the bus in the morning.

Student 20: It should be an Olympic sport.

Student 19: It should be! We should start it. I would be good at it!

Facilitator: I mean really, it shouldn't be like that.

Student 19: It shouldn't be, but it is.

Student 21: Everyone watches for the bus...

Student 19: And then you can, like, hear the bus coming around the corner people, like, jump up.

Student 20: Yes, people, like, jump and then it's, like, just madness and chaos after that.

Facilitator: Okay, so out of curiosity, how many of you have cars here?

Student 23: I will have a car after this weekend.

Facilitator: Okay so four of you now have a car plus one more later and two of you do not. Let's see...I still haven't heard from a couple of you, you know, those of you that were assigned to live on West Campus do you use it more or less than you thought that you would?

Student 21: I probably use it the same that I thought I would just because I knew I wouldn't have a car. So that I would just have to use it when I knew I needed it.

6. **What do you like most about using the shuttle system?**

Student 21: It's free

Student 18: Not technically, though.

Facilitator: You don't have to pay per use or anything like that.

Group: [agrees]

Student 23: You know right where it's going.

Facilitator: That's true. Other comments?

Student 18: Well I have one. I like the social aspect, because you get to talk to a lot of people on the bus. I don't know, I do.

Student 20: We are all complaining about the same thing.

Student 18: I mean if you going to stand right next to someone you might as well talk to them, I mean.

Facilitator: Gives us some community over here, right?

Student 19: The bus is so crowded and so I got pushed right when we were moving and I ended up on some guy's lap. So, after that I was like, "Hi. How are you?" I met a new friend.

Student 18: I made a new friend when the bus driver closed my backpack in the door. Some kid had to tell the bus driver to open the door so that my backpack was actually in the bus with me!

Facilitator: That was nice of him.

Student 18: It was. He was a nice guy, but I don't remember who he is now. It was last year that happened.

(6.) What do you like least about the shuttle system?

Student 19: Setting my alarm clock, like a half an hour to wake up to get ready for it..

Student 23: I like the times the time when its 5 or 6 whenever it starts running at the half hour. Tonight for example I came from a meeting to a play to this meeting and now I'm going up to the attic and I need to go back to Main later tonight to work on a project on a project with a friend. I know that I'm going to waste 10-15 minutes which doesn't sound like much but over the course of the year 10-15 minutes just waiting for the shuttle to show up.

Facilitator: Not for the transportation part, just for the waiting part.

Student 23: Just for the wait, for the bus to show up.

Student 18: I have spent countless hours already and it October and I have spent like 7 hours waiting for the bus at the very least. I feel like I could do so much more with the

time. And I do try to do homework read a book that I have to read for class, talk to people but it's still hard.

Facilitator: So again it's not the time to ride the bus it is the time waiting for the bus.

Student 20: Waiting...

Facilitator: Waiting for a bus that has already left you or whatever.

Student 21: And the thing I like least is probably the aggressiveness in getting on the bus. And I'm like scared once it is wintertime. They are going to like be taking people down.

Group: [agrees]

Facilitator: Just know that there are cameras at both stops. So if anything bad happens, write down the time and let me know. No, but seriously there are cameras but that doesn't help when...

Student 18: When I break my leg when someone pushes me over it will probably be [name].

Student 21: I hate when sometimes the bus isn't full and it leaves early.

Student 18: I was just going to say that. Like the inconsistency...

Student 21: Or, it will be full and the bus driver will go and take a smoke break for like 10 minutes and you're like "Hey, I'm going to be late for class! Let's go! I'm on this bus for a reason. I didn't wait 15 minutes for the next bus."

Facilitator: How to you know it's not full when it leaves early?

Student 21: Because when it drives past you and you like...

Student 19: You will be like 5 feet from the bus and they will just leave.

Facilitator: Is it time to go then?

Student 19: It depends. It is really inconsistent. Like sometimes if they see you walking towards the bus they will wait for you but some of the bus drivers will pull away and give you a look like, "Get on the next one."

Student 21: Yeah.

Student 19: And there are some bus drivers that even though the bus is full they still sit there. And I talked to Don about this (who is in charge of the bus systems if you didn't know that) and he was saying that it all depends on the discretion of the bus driver but, I

feel like there should be some sort of a guideline. Like if the bus is full, you can go and come back for the next early. You know what I mean? And I know that would get the times off, but it would get the people moving faster. And it's pointless. Like one day the bus was completely full like no one was getting on there was like 15 people waiting for the bus still and we sat there for 15 minutes and like and watched the people that were waiting for the bus for like 5 minutes. So that gets really frustrating, like I got lucky I was on the inside but the people that were out there I would have been late for class because that bus is not getting going in time for them.

Student 19: And, like, you know that the bus driver has to draw the line somewhere, but it's hard to know that then from me to you if he going to wait or is he just going to go.

Student 21: I remember last year, like the bus driver would tell everyone to move back, 'cause this year it is...like I know the bus will get packed but in the past the bus would get packed even more then they are now. I don't know if it is just this year it is the students that don't want to move farther back but the bus drivers last year would be like, "Keep moving back, keep moving back." Because even if there is like two 6-inch gaps that is another person on the bus. So I know it is weird to be so close to someone but it means another person on the bus. And like last year I know that we were like an inch away from the person is that so like you know they aren't like making people like move back.

Facilitator: So they aren't verbalizing it.

Student 21: Right

7. Please share any suggestions or ideas for improvement of the shuttle system.

Student 20: I definitely think like the double bussing, Like I was talking to her orientation teacher the other day and having one bus on main and one bus be on west and kind of have them communicate when they are going to turn around... And yeah, I know a lot of busses might leave not as full but I think then people won't be as frustrated with it then and there would be less standing then. Like she said that she fell on someone like someone could be seriously hurt by that and like she said, the consistent times.

Student 21: Like during our orientation week it was really nice having both the buses going.

Student 20: And I thought that's how it would stay.

Student 21: I thought so too.

Student 23: I was under the impression when I took my tour too.

Student 20: It is supposed to.

Student 19: The second bus is broken down right now, the second shuttle is broken down so, Winona transit has two extra buses. One we use for East Lake and one is used for double busing in the morning for Winona state or I mean west campus but that bus is broken down so they had to choose, "Do we want Winona transit for East Lake or west?" So they chose East Lake because there is students over there that need to get to campus so that's why we don't have it. And I don't know why the small shuttle isn't running between as the double bus.

Student 23: I had one this morning

Student 19: I did see one this morning

Student 23: There was a double shuttle this morning that I took to class and it was really nice cause, yeah and there was only 9 of us waiting. And there was 9 of us left and within 2-3 minutes the van was there to pick us up.

Facilitator: So that van was helping out in the morning, well that's nice.

Student 20: I wish there was more bussing at night not till 2 in the morning but at some of those events

Student 21: Definitely until 9 or 10 at night

Group: Yeah.

Student 21: On nights of events I feel like they should run the big bus because people do use it. Like tonight I would be on the bus if I knew I would get on.

Student 19: And sometimes maybe even like breaks for the bus driver cause sometime they just take their breaks whenever it's like ok I have class, but if I knew when they had their breaks I would be like okay when they are on their breaks I will just walk or whatever.

Student 18: Or just take an earlier break or whatever.

Student 20: Well sometimes their breaks are unpredictable because sometimes they are like to use the bathroom or whatever. They can't be like, "Okay at 10:15 I'm going to use the bathroom." You know. Or like maybe do like the cigarette breaks, well they won't be able to after January 1st unless they cross the street.

Student 20: If they stand on the parkway it is owned by the city so technically it's okay.

Facilitator: Let's not worry about that.

Student 20: But when they leave for cigarette breaks, if they leave early like if the bus is full at that time maybe they could talk to the driver and have them take a break then instead of whenever they feel like it.

Student 19: Or maybe if they see students coming still they could...

Student 23: And that's the way I have always experienced it where there are like 5-6 of us waiting and that's when they get up or maybe they take a quick break when they get they run inside do their thing and then run out. I have never seen or experienced them do it then they're full.

Student 19: All the time.

Student 20: I'm different then, 'cause I missed class once cause he went to the bathroom and like had a cigarette so I missed class.

Facilitator: Wow.

Student 19: And I have had professors if you, like I have West Campus kids in my psychology class that have gotten kicked out of class for being late. And he was like, "What time is the shuttle? Take an earlier shuttle." But sometimes it isn't that easy.

Facilitator: And so sometimes they kick them out, wow.

Student 20: I have got a professor like that if you walk in two minutes late she will kick you out.

Student 19: My professor is always waiting for me to start, she will be like oh, I was waiting for you to start.

Facilitator: Well you must be like exception.

Student 19: I must be, like I'm the only person on West Campus.

- 8. Of those suggestions or ideas, please share one thing about the shuttle system that you would most like to see changed. You all have shared many things already, but this is our closing question, so if there is anything you would like to emphasize, please share.**

Student 22: I'll start I guess, like a bus at night.

Facilitator: A Bus at night.

Student 20: I would say, like, breaks for the drivers on like a schedule.

Student 19: Bigger busses to fit more people.

Facilitator: So, like not having a van, having a bus at night.

Student 19: Maybe, like having double bussing during the day and like one bus during the night.

Student 21: Getting the bus fixed faster.

Facilitator: Yes, so we can have double busses.

Student 21: I feel like it is not that hard, you take it to the shop and you just fix it, I mean.

Student 18: I was going to say double bussing. Bring it back but for a longer amount of time instead of just 7-9:30 do it until like noon or maybe even later cause sometimes even at like 3 the bus is really crowded. I know that is like a money issue,

Student 21: More bussing no matter what the time just more bussing.

Facilitator: So more frequent.

Student 23: Or just throw a van in there to help the double bussing.

Student 19: A light rail system that you could just hop on.

Facilitator: Any other comments or stories that we didn't that you didn't get a chance to talk about.

Student 20: Oh, I did hear of one girl on my floor that called the taxi one day. Because she thought she was going to be late to class and she didn't think she was going to make the bus so she called the taxi and got a ride to campus, cost her 4 dollars.

Facilitator: Thank you all for sharing your feedback.

Limitations

One major limitation in the focus group data was the small number of students and the fact that the students that did participate were not necessarily a fair representation of the overall population. A total of 23 students participated in the four focus groups that were offered.

Methodology

We held the four focus groups on the evening of October 22, 2008 in two locations on West Campus. Four sessions were held during that evening with a total of twenty-three students participating. We invited students to come with email messages, signs, and offerings of snacks and refreshments when they arrived. Every effort was made to make it convenient for students to come participate. The sessions were held at 7 pm and again at 9 pm for students who return later in the evening from classes. At the beginning of the focus group, students were told about the purpose of the study and were informed that the focus groups would be recorded and that transcripts would be made of the conversations, but the names of participants would not be disclosed on the transcripts. All students signed a consent form before proceeding with the focus group questions (this form can be found in the back of this section).

Data Collected

The data was collected in three steps. First the focus group sessions were recorded and transcribed by the person facilitating the discussion. These four transcripts have been included in this paper. Second, the transcriptions were reviewed in an effort to find common themes among the information provided by students. Finally, the common themes have been outlined with direct quotes from students.

Focus Group Themes

When reviewing the focus group transcripts there were several common themes that were noted as re-occurring, or were stated multiple times by students. As a result the following section will review these common themes as well as the direct quotes made by students. These direct quotes are in italics. There are three primary areas we explored in this section, including reports of aggression on the WSU Shuttle System, specific student comments and feedback about the van and specific student comments and feedback about the bus. In some sections quotes may be re-used if it represents feedback from more than one of these primary areas. Additionally, some of the direct quotes indicate when the facilitator or a specific student is speaking if the quotes are part of an ongoing conversation. If the quote represented a primary area on its own the specific student number was not indicated before the quote.

Reports of Aggression on the WSU Shuttle System

Students reported that they experienced being pushed while attempting to get on the bus. The frustration and desperation to get on the bus made many people pushy and aggressive. Students felt that they were left waiting for multiple trips if they were not aggressive and many commented that this level of aggression was one of their least favorite things about the shuttle system. This aggression is a direct result of the lack of space on the shuttle and an overall feeling of students that they have to fight to get on the shuttle in order to get to their desired destination on time.

And the thing I like least is probably the aggressiveness in getting on the bus. And I'm like scared once it is wintertime. They are going to like be taking people down.

I make sure I'm one of the ones that get on the bus. I'm not one of those people that are like, "Oh, go ahead." I make sure I get on that bus and I'm not afraid to walk in front of someone and cut them off to get on the bus....Just because I have lived over here I know that if you want to get on that bus you need to push your way on to it to make sure you get a spot.

It's every person for their selves.

You have to be really aggressive, you can't just stand there and wait. Like you need to make sure you get that inch a head of them to make sure they know that you are the next person to get on that bus. Like, it is really competitive getting on the bus in the morning.

I expected it to be like the buses in the Twin Cities. I'm from the Twin Cities and I took the buses all the time and it was great. It was so well organized there. The buses would pull up, and as the buses were coming, you know, it has the lights so everyone knows where their bus is and everyone gets in this nice, orderly line automatically. And everyone doesn't immediately push to the front; no it's just nice in order. And everyone files on, and when the bus goes, the people who are standing get off first, and the people in the front rows pair off. Here, everyone just pushes and it's incredibly irritating. And I have no idea how we could get people to start doing that, but it would be wonderful.

I know that if you want to get on that bus you need to push your way on to it to make sure you get a spot.

The bus is so crowded and so I got pushed right when we were moving and I ended up on some guy's lap.

There's no "ladies first" on the shuttle

I don't like how everyone pushes and fights over getting on the vans at night- particularly the nights that we have Mass Com until 8:30 pm, it seems like everyone is fighting and pushing and if you aren't aggressive or rude you end up waiting for the van to make 5 trips before you even get on. It just seems strange to have that be the vehicle they use on those nights when there are obviously so many people wanting transportation. It seems like there are always a lot of people waiting for it so you have to fight and scramble to get a seat.

I try to just use it during the day and be back to West Campus by six if possible so that I don't have to deal with the vans and having to wait to ride them when other people budge in front of you. They only fit a few people, so if you don't get on you have to wait an entire other round before you can even get on the van.

Student 15: As I said before, the people pushing.... As I also said, I have no idea how to fix that. No amount of advertising will change that.

Facilitator: Well, I think that if people were confident that they would get on, and that there was always a space, I don't think we would have the pushing.

Student 14: I absolutely agree.

Feedback regarding the WSU Van Shuttle System

In the following comments some students indicated that they avoid using the vans or gave up trying to use them after trying once and realizing how long they take.

Yeah I rode it during orientation and I was like, "No, I'm not going to do this anymore!"

Facilitator: What time or times of the day do you use the shuttle?

Student 16: Very rarely after six, I try and avoid the van.

...The van is ridiculous!

And now, like, it's an option that you can walk, it's nice enough. But, in the winter, you won't have the option to walk.

I have a car, so I'll just drive if it's after six, I don't bother.

I use [the shuttle system] a lot less than I thought I would just because of the amount of friends that brought their cars down since the beginning of the year because of their frustrations with the bus...They have gotten so frustrated with waiting for the bus, or not getting on, or it taking too long, or it running on a half hour schedule...They have just gotten so frustrated that they have brought down their own cars. Frequently we end up just jumping in with them and getting a ride to campus. Even if there is not a line for the bus I found they still tend to drive now.

Facilitator: Do you use the shuttle system for programs or activities (i.e. sporting events)?

Student 19: I would say we usually don't. Someone usually ends up driving because then you don't have to plan like a half an hour almost to an hour before the program just to go on and wait for the shuttle

I don't use the shuttle system at night because it takes a long time to, like, wait for the shuttle and they get filled up really fast. So with the time you have to wait, you could walk to Main [Campus].

Student 19: Especially on nights where there's like a speaker and they still have the shuttle running.

Student 18: Or like an athletic event.

I only use it during the day on weekdays not on weekends or during the night. I take my car then...because I usually don't have time to go outside a stand wait for the bus the 30 minutes it takes.

Not at night. It takes too long. And usually not on the weekends cause you have so much time you can just walk.

I haven't been on Main Campus on the weekends all this year other except during orientation week.

Student 22: I bike because I don't want to ride the bus because it takes too long.

Facilitator: So did you start riding it [the shuttle] at the beginning of the year and then changed?

Student 22: I rode it like once or twice during orientation and that's it. I can bike faster

Trying to use the vans on like a Saturday for a football game, it doesn't work.

Facilitator: So did you actually have, like, a specific incident where you tried to go to a football game or something??

Student 16: Homecoming.

Student 17: Homecoming.

Student 18: Homecoming, gosh.

Facilitator: So the three of you all tried to use the shuttle on Homecoming.

Student 16: We just ended up walking back, because it was way too big of a line.

I avoid it entirely at night! I walk. As soon as it is after 5:30 pm I always walk instead of trying to use the shuttle. The vans are hard to deal with and the buses in the morning- it is kind-of funny when like there will be ten kids walking toward the bus and it will leave even though they are almost to the door and there is plenty of room for them to sit. It just seems cruel to drive off when people are two seconds away from the door.

During the week I use it to get to class, but I don't use it at all on the weekends. I don't really want to deal with the van. There are the same problems as there are at night because there is a small van and a bunch of people waiting to use it. I think people learned pretty fast that it wasn't the best way to get back and forth... It seems like people pretty much try to avoid it on the weekends unless they are desperate or are drinking and need a sober cab!

The first week I got out of that class and realized there would be 500 people waiting to ride back to main I never tried to use the van again to get home. I just drove every week instead. I had friends in the class who wouldn't get back for like 45 minutes. That sucks because if there is a program, class or something you want to do on West you have no control over what time you get back. I have friends who go to the library after late classes to study because they know it will take time for everyone to get on the vans. They just wait and come back a few hours later to try it once everyone else has come back.

...there is just too big of lines on sporting event days. It is easier to walk and better for you!

I don't use it at night because I have a class until 8:30 pm. When I get out of class there are like 50 people waiting to get rides back to West Campus, so they are all fighting to get in the van and I end up waiting literally over an hour just to get back to West. So, I just use my car at night.

I guess I agree with everyone else, I really would love to have a larger bus scheduled for nights that there are special events or games. Maybe they could let us know the nights they have larger vehicles so people can actually plan to take the shuttle.

I don't use it for programs because usually they are at night and it is the vans running so I just drive. Then I don't have to wait for the van.

And a lot of times on night that there are programs the shuttle is full and you have to wait forever to get on one because there are so many people trying to get over there. It just gets too frustrating and I end up driving.

I am going to drive myself instead of waiting forever, especially when I know I can be over there in like 10 minutes. It beats waiting for 45 minutes just to get on the bus.

Yeah, when there is a big event, like the football games the shuttle is usually really packed. When I went to that movie I was like trying to meet people in their dorm before then so I was at the bus stop two trips early to try to get to main early to meet them and it was still really full. I barely got on because so many people had started trying to get there that early. I was almost an hour early, so that was crazy.

Student 2: I never use it if I am going to anything I will just drive- it is a lot easier.

Facilitator: Can you tell me why it is easier for you to drive?

Student 2: Like, if I am going to go to a club meeting that starts at 7:30 pm I would have to start waiting for the van at like 6:45 pm. And basically kill time waiting for the van.

It's just more convenient to use the bus and not the vans. That's why I avoid the vans... they are way too unreliable.

I currently do not use the shuttle system because I use my car. In the past the shuttle system has been sort of inconvenient for me and I have kind-of run in to a lot of problems to the point where I don't feel like it is worth it to use the shuttle.

I generally don't use the shuttle. I use in the morning to go to my classes because it is more consistent then, but when I have a class that gets out at four o'clock or after I always drive just because it is too hard to try to catch the shuttle or the last bus. I want to get back over here without having to wait so long for the van.

...at night there is a REALLY long wait in between each shuttle at night to the point where it doesn't seem worth waiting when I can just take my car over.

Having only 11 spots in the van does not easily accommodate night classes. Multiple students commented that it often takes many van trips to get students between campuses. Students in the focus group also commented specifically on the amount of students who go to Mass Media and Society class on Wednesday nights and are waiting for the van once class is complete. We felt these comments were a strong representation of what happens during the evenings when large classes are held. These comments are listed below.

A lot of times I just go pick them up because it is just a five minute drive over and a five minute drive back and then they are here. On these nights I wish there were a small bus or at least two vans because there will be no-one waiting at Lourdes and a mob of people on main waiting for over an hour to get back to West.

I guess I thought it would be the big bus the entire time. It really surprised me that they use a van when there is such a large amount of people who want transportation. For example, I know there is a big Business or Communications class on Wednesdays or something and it goes till 8:30 pm and there are so many people waiting it is ridiculous. I try to avoid it those nights, and usually end up calling a friend and asking them to pick me up.

I agree! Bring back the short bus! Also, I had some residents tell me that there is this Mass Comm class on Wednesday with like 400 student and when the class gets out they get stuck waiting forever because there are like a 100 students from West trying to get back. I know the van drivers have to be noticing that! If they could just have the bus stay late on the days that there are a lot of classes that would be helpful.

I have a friend in that class and she always complains about how horrible it is trying to get back. There really are around 100 people all trying to get back. They literally wait like an hour and a half.

There's a lot of evening classes at night, that get done around 8pm-8:30pm. And then there's at least, like 30 or 40 people.

Well I know that, like, it doesn't even pertain to events, like sometimes it's night classes. Like big night classes will get out at like 7, 8 at night and, like, the shuttle, or, like, the bus stop is really busy because all those people are getting out of class. Like I think Mass Com. has a huge class and a lot of people on West Campus take that class so it's like hard...Like I don't take it, but sometimes when I'm over on campus after right around the time when a night class would get out, the bus stop is really busy because the night class got out. So it doesn't even have to be like programs or like special things going on campus sometimes it is just night classes that are backing it up too.

Many students expressed frustrations with the inconsistent scheduling of the shuttle and felt they could not depend on the shuttle as a consistent source of transportation. Here are some direct quotes from students that spoke candidly about on the erratic schedule of the shuttle. Some of the comments gave suggestions for changes.

Or there will be other times during the day that the bus leaves a few minutes early or something like that and I can't get to class on time. Then class is already more than half over by the time you get there anyway. In that case it is not even worth going. We need two buses!

During the weekends it's really sporadic, like, they're not always on schedule and they come, like, slower, and you have to wait longer.

I would like to see two shuttles, at all times, going between Main and West.

I think it would be absolutely fantastic if it was going simultaneously between Main and West. And then I would also say that at night, I think that every half an hour is just too long to split it up.

Yeah, and if they're really stuck on keeping the vans after 6:00pm because it's cheaper for gas, just have two running probably, like they said. Leave from West and Main at the same time so there will always be someone coming. It will save gas, but people won't be left behind as much.

I agree with having it always running to make it seven minutes. It would make me use it more. It would allow me to, like, go to the library and to Main in the evenings and stuff.

I personally wouldn't drive as much, if I knew it was coming all the time.

Facilitator: So some of you said you don't ride at night because of the wait. If there wasn't a wait do you think you would take the shuttle?

Group: Probably, yeah.

Facilitator: If it was like every 15 minutes you would be more likely to take it?

Group: Probably, yeah.

Throughout the focus groups, students consistently expressed the desire to replace the vans with a smaller bus that would run in the evenings that could transport more students per trip. Students often referred to a “short bus” that was used in previous years. Several students indicated that they would like the bus to continue running later in the evening for evening classes or large events on campus such as games, programs and other activities.

Sort of on that same thing, my main complaint about the bus system, even though it's a later question, it's on the same topic, is that the bus stops running at 6 o'clock. However, they switch to a van. The thing is, the van does not have nearly enough seats for the people who need to get home. Every single day, without fail, people get left behind at those first couple of vans after six.

Especially if you have a bigger group of friends that you are going to dinner with or something and you don't want to drive. Like if you are going to ZaZa'a or something, you might not be able to fit everyone in the van. It's not big enough for everyone. Like, you can only have ten friends to go.

We need to just get a smaller bus. And then, instead of switching to the van after six, until about ten, and then there's going to be no one on Main, so the van would work. Then it will fit everyone that's there at six, and it won't be wasting fuel by using the bigger bus.

We need to just get a smaller bus. And then, instead of switching to the van after six, until about ten, and then there's going to be no one on Main, so the van would work. Then it will fit everyone that's there at six, and it won't be wasting fuel by using the bigger bus.

On nights of events I feel like they should run the big bus because people do use it.

I went to get on the shuttle at 5:15 tonight and the bus was packed and there was almost a full bus of people waiting outside, so I decided to drive and then I passed the bus stop on my way back and the whole area was full the bus stop area was full and they only have the shuttle because there was a speaker tonight.

Oddly enough I'm actually late because I missed the shuttle. No, I was the only person that got kicked off the shuttle but I did miss the shuttle.

We used it one night and we sat at the bus stop for like, I would say a good hour and I don't even think there was an event. It was like we left the library and there is like so many people there and it just took forever.

Sometimes I just get frustrated waiting for the bus like if I know there is more than ten people when there is the van I'll walk or if I know there is a lot of people in line for the bus then I'll walk I usually get there faster than the bus dropping them off anyways.

Please bring back the short bus!

I would say we may not necessarily need a full bus, but the short bus they had the year before last worked really well because it was a lot better. I mean if you have one class of with thirty people from West, the van will have to rotate 3 times just to get them all home.

And that includes time the van has to sit and wait at Lourdes, so that last van full of people are stuck on main for a very long time. And that isn't fun when it is cold!

At least stick to the schedule that is posted and have more space available, like a small bus at night. Once the classes are over at night they could go back to the vans.

My suggestion would be to bring the short bus back at night.

I agree! Bring back the short bus! Also, I had some residents tell me that there is this Mass Communications class on Wednesday with like 400 student and when the class gets out they get stuck waiting forever because there are like a 100 students from West trying to get back. I know the van drivers have to be noticing that! If they could just have the bus stay late on the days that there are a lot of classes that would be helpful.

But, at night it is like, I have a class that will get out at like 7:50 or 8 o'clock and I will be waiting there and there will be twenty people waiting at the bus stop. And this is on a Tuesday so they don't have a bigger one. If you don't get there right after class you'll have to wait two van trips or so to even get on the van.

Multiple students reported experiencing inconsistencies with the student van drivers. These inconsistencies included the amount of time the van drivers wait between trips, how many students they allow on the van and how long they wait between rounds. They also reported that student van drivers at times had friends ride with them (taking up one of the 11 spaces) or that some East Lake drivers will take them to West Campus when others will not.

I think the schedule is nice at night, but maybe they should just keep constantly running so that people know that the bus will never be more that like 5 to 10 minutes away. And it is not like they are saving gas- they are sitting there burning it up waiting for the 15 minutes to be up.

Or if they just ran the vans after 7 pm or 8pm after all of the classes are done. That would definitely be very helpful.

I think the time we get out is unpredictable, but one thing about the night is that the van will sit at West forever waiting to see if students need a ride when we are all waiting

forever to get a ride back at main. If they just dropped people off and made constant rounds it would move people faster. Tonight I waited for 20 minutes and when the van finally came there was no-one in it. We actually took the East Lake van back because there were like 40 of us there and they were like "Just hop in!"

I had a driver lie to me and say she couldn't take me to West and then she sat in her van and read a book while we all waited. That really irritated me.

I had one other thing I forgot to mention. Another really frustrating thing is when the van drivers have a friend riding with them they take up the front seat, making it take even longer everyone to get a ride back. It seems strange to have someone take up a seat when there are so many people waiting and obviously frustrated. I have had other friends complain about that.

Most of the time the East Lake bus won't do that though. They will say "We can't take you! We have to wait here." It is another one of those inconsistencies that are random and frustrating.

There is only like one East Lake driver who will take us.

A lot of the time, with the van drivers, it depends on whether or not they want to sit and read their book until the exact minute it's time to leave, or if they want to just keep going and be nice to the people. Like "Oh, I can see that there's twelve people waiting at Lourdes. I'm going to go right now, that way I can come and get them there faster." It depends on the van drivers, and what their attitude is.

Well, I'm friends with a couple of the bus drivers and they don't even know the schedules themselves. They kind of leave whenever they feel like. Some of them I know do have the schedule completely memorized and will leave on the hour or whatever. A lot of them will just kind of, "Well, I've been here for five minutes, let's go." So sometimes it's way, way off the schedule.

Feedback on the WSU Bus Shuttle System

Students consistently complained that bus drivers close doors on students who were actually getting into the bus or drive off when students are within inches of the door or are obviously running to get to the bus. Students in focus groups stated that they would not mind waiting (if they were already in the bus) for these students who are rushing to board the bus.

I made a new friend when the bus driver closed my backpack in the door. Some kid had to tell the bus driver to open the door so that my backpack was actually in the bus with me!

I have been using it less and less because I get sick of getting left behind when I am walking toward the bus. I guess it just doesn't seem that reliable and I hate being late for class. There have been a few times that I was like 15 or 20 minutes late because there wasn't room on the bus or it took off while I was walking up to the door. Your professor is only going to believe a bus excuse so many times!

I think if the bus drivers were just more aware and watched for people running to the bus, kind-of like everyone was saying. It is just so frustrating to barely miss it or to have to wait another 15 to 30 minutes for a bus when they could wait two seconds to let you on. When I see someone running toward the bus I would not mind waiting a second while they are let on. I feel like it is common courtesy to wait if they are obviously in a rush and running to the bus.

I actually have a friend who was getting on the bus and the bus driver shut the door on her, actually shutting her head in the door of the bus. The he yelled "We are full" and wouldn't let her on. She was really embarrassed. ...She gave me permission to tell that in hopes that it wouldn't happen to anyone else!

I avoid it entirely at night! I walk. As soon as it is after 5:30 pm I always walk instead of trying to use the shuttle. The vans are hard to deal with and the buses in the morning- it is kind-of funny when like there will be ten kids walking toward the bus and it will leave even though they are almost to the door and there is plenty of room for them to sit. It just seems cruel to drive off when people are two seconds away from the door.

It is really inconsistent. Like sometimes if they see you walking towards the bus they will wait for you but some of the bus drivers will pull away and give you a look like, "Get on the next one."

While the WSU website and schedule indicate a bus will make a trip every seven minutes in the morning hours, this is often not the case. If one of the buses or the Winona Transit break down students are often not notified and no replacement bus is provided. Students commented in the focus groups that they would like there to consistently be two buses in the morning. Students also suggested sending vans to assist in transporting individuals between campuses.

One thing that's different about this year, though, is that last year we had two buses running until, like, at least 12:30 in the afternoon. We always had the Winona Transit Bus, so I was expecting that to be occurring. And it was for a while, but then the transit bus went away for repairs and never came back. So, that's really inconvenient, because if you miss, like, the 9:35 bus, there was always, like, a 9:42. And you could always count on it being, you know, there was another bus in seven minutes so you could still make your class still. But that's not really happening so far this year.

Well, so I have lived on West Campus for the last 2 years so this is my third year and this by far has been the worst bus experience I have had in my 3 years of living here. In my freshman year I took the bus all the time I didn't have a car. I took the bus every once in a while I would take my car but I usually took the bus. Last year I took the bus a majority of the time and this year I only take the bus to class and anything that is not class-related, I drive or get a ride from a friend. And we had double bussing in the past and that's not going on so I have been really frustrated with the bus but, I'm just dealing with it.

There was a double shuttle this morning that I took to class and it was really nice cause, yeah and there was only 9 of us waiting. And there was 9 of us left and within 2-3 minutes the van was there to pick us up.

On Wednesdays there is a time of during the day where I stand with like 50 people and end up waiting for two or three buses before I can get on. I end up waiting over 30 minutes just to get on the bus. That is really frustrating.

Even bringing the two buses back in the morning! There is still only one bus! There were two at the beginning of the year and then one broke and we have only had one since then.

I think they should have two buses running longer in the morning and two vans or one bus at night. Even a small bus would work, just something until everyone gets out of class around 8 or 8:30 pm.

Yeah, if they could just pinpoint prime hours and have more room for passengers at those times.

Students in the focus group reported that they would prefer the bus to leave when it is full, even if it is ahead of the scheduled time it should leave. On the other hand, they also want bus drivers to wait until the specified departure time indicated on the schedule if the bus is NOT full. As stated in the comments below, the students would prefer that bus drivers are consistent with how

many passengers constitute a full bus. This discrepancy was also noted on the data provided by Security as some drivers indicated the bus was full at 54-55 students while others indicated it was full at 62 students.

I hate when sometimes the bus isn't full and it leaves early.

Student 18: I was just going to say that. Like the inconsistency...

Student 21: Or, it will be full and the bus driver will go and take a smoke break for like 10 minutes and you're like "Hey, I'm going to be late for class! Let's go! I'm on this bus for a reason. I didn't wait 15 minutes for the next bus."

Facilitator: How do you know it's not full when it leaves early?

Student 21: Because when it drives past you and you like...

Student 19: You will be like 5 feet from the bus and they will just leave.

And there are some bus drivers that even though the bus is full they still sit there. And I talked to Don about this (who is in charge of the bus systems if you didn't know that) and he was saying that it all depends on the discretion of the bus driver but, I feel like there should be some sort of a guideline. Like if the bus is full, you can go and come back for the next early. You know what I mean? And I know that would get the times off, but it would get the people moving faster. And it's pointless. Like one day the bus was completely full like no one was getting on there was like 15 people waiting for the bus still and we sat there for 15 minutes and like and watched the people that were waiting for the bus for like 5 minutes. So that gets really frustrating, like I got lucky I was on the inside but the people that were out there I would have been late for class because that bus is not getting going in time for them.

And sometimes maybe even like breaks for the bus driver cause sometime they just take their breaks whenever it's like ok I have class, but if I knew when they had their breaks I would be like okay when they are on their breaks I will just walk or whatever.

Yeah, if they could just leave at the time they have scheduled, unless the bus is full, then they can go. Otherwise students are just standing there staring at a full bus. Most of the time when it leaves early it is not full though. Inconsistency.

The other thing is that some drivers ask you to pile in like sardines and others will only let the number of people in that can wear seatbelts. I think that just creates frustration when it is inconsistent. A common ground is a good idea.

And you always have to stand and sometimes and some people don't even get on the bus.

Student 17: While, if you have an 8 o'clock class, and you want to catch the 7:35 shuttle, because it's most convenient, you don't always get on it, because it's full.

Facilitator: Because there's not enough room for everyone?

Student 17: No, there's not enough room at all.

Facilitator: So, with your example, how many people get left?

Student 18: There's always a handful, at least.

Student 14: I don't know, maybe 5-10. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, I think, is the busiest day for the shuttle.

I have had a couple of times where I have looked, and just counted, a quick head count, and knew I wasn't going to be able to get on the next bus, so I just walked it.

Class starts at 8:00 am so it seems to be the 35's and 50's almost until like noon that people are like pretty packed.

But even like the 7:15 bus is pretty packed too because people are starting to realize that they aren't getting on the :35 and :50 bus, so at least for me the 7:15 bus I like to make that Monday morning.

Student 19: The same goes for like the morning. I have stood out there for an hour and not got on the bus. But it's hard to judge when you have the time. Like when the next bus is going to be if there is double busing or not when the next bus is going to come...So if you have time to walk or...

Student 20: And like the bus driver has to reject a lot of people sometimes like, "Oh, no. We are too full. Wait for the next bus."

Facilitator: So when that happens how many people would you say are left waiting?

Student 19: It depends what time.

Student 20: It is usually an average of like 10 or 20 people.

Facilitator: So what the most you have seen waiting when the bus is full?

Student 19: A lot, like 30-40.

I walked this morning. I watched the news, it wasn't going to be that cold and then I got to Main Campus and I was a popsicle. I couldn't feel my fingers.

Oh, I did hear of one girl on my floor that called the taxi one day. Because she thought she was going to be late to class and she didn't think she was going to make the bus so she called the taxi and got a ride to campus, cost her 4 dollars.

The eight am bus is always packed. There is no room to be on it, and it gets really frustrating because if you don't get on you have to wait until the next bus gets there. And sometimes the bus sits and waits to go until the time it is supposed to even though it is full. I think this causes a lot of frustration because the people inside are waiting to leave and those outside are just sitting there staring at a full bus.

I have just learned that it is just more convenient and I hate relying on the bus and vans when I have a busy schedule because I feel like I waste time and have to wait around for them. You know you can get to where you need to go when you just drive yourself.

One of the most alarming reports from students were that some students felt so overwhelmed with trying to use the shuttle because of its unreliability that they had stopped going to certain classes. Others reported that being unable to obtain a seat on the shuttle and having to wait for the next trip made them late to class, and at times resulted in professors not allowing them in to class. Students reported that they avoided attending activities, going to the library or working in study groups to avoid using the shuttle system.

I've stopped going to my optional Monday night class because it takes too long and now it is cold outside. You have to wait outside for a long time in the dark.

I use it during the day and avoid it at night. I used to walk, but I can't anymore because of the weather, so I just don't use it at all at night. It isn't worth the time trying to wait to go to any activities on main or to class. I would rather bum a ride or skip class.

I have 8:00 am classes Wednesdays for lab and I sat through 2 busses and I missed part of my lab just to get on the bus.

I missed class once 'cause [the bus driver] went to the bathroom and like had a cigarette so I missed class.

And I have had professors if you, like I have West Campus kids in my psychology class that have gotten kicked out of class for being late. And he was like, "What time is the shuttle? Take an earlier shuttle." But sometimes it isn't that easy.

I have got a professor like that if you walk in two minutes late she will kick you out.

Facilitator: Like do you decide not to go to a sporting event or a program because of the shuttle system?

Student 16: Yeah.

Student 17: Yeah.

Student 18: Not to make the trip over to meet people for, maybe a study group or something. Just say "Come over here" or, "I'll just do it myself".

Facilitator: So I'm hearing that the vans are your biggest complaint.

Student 13: Yes.

Student 16: Yep.

Student 13: Mostly on the weekends, though. That's the biggest issue.

Student 14: Nights, too, though. Like, I don't study in the library anymore, just because I can't get over there.

Student 18: Me too.

Student 14: Like, you can't chance it. You don't want to have to sit at the bus stop for 30 minutes, especially when it's getting colder out. And also 'cause, as a girl, it's in the dark and I don't want to have to sit there and wait.

Student 18: I never go to the library any more.

I don't go Monday class anymore because of it.

Students reported that the information they received before attending WSU on tours and online was incorrect and misleading.

I agree, it seems strange to post the times and advertise that they run every 7 minutes when that information is only partially true. Maybe they can improve on the information that is given or update it more often.

I expected the shuttle system to run every 7 minutes because that is what they told me when I toured. Actually, on both of the tours that I took that is what I was told. That is why I chose to live on West Campus, if I would have known it is sometimes 15 minutes to a half an hour I don't know if I would have chosen to live here. I used it way less when I realized I had to wait over a half an hour.

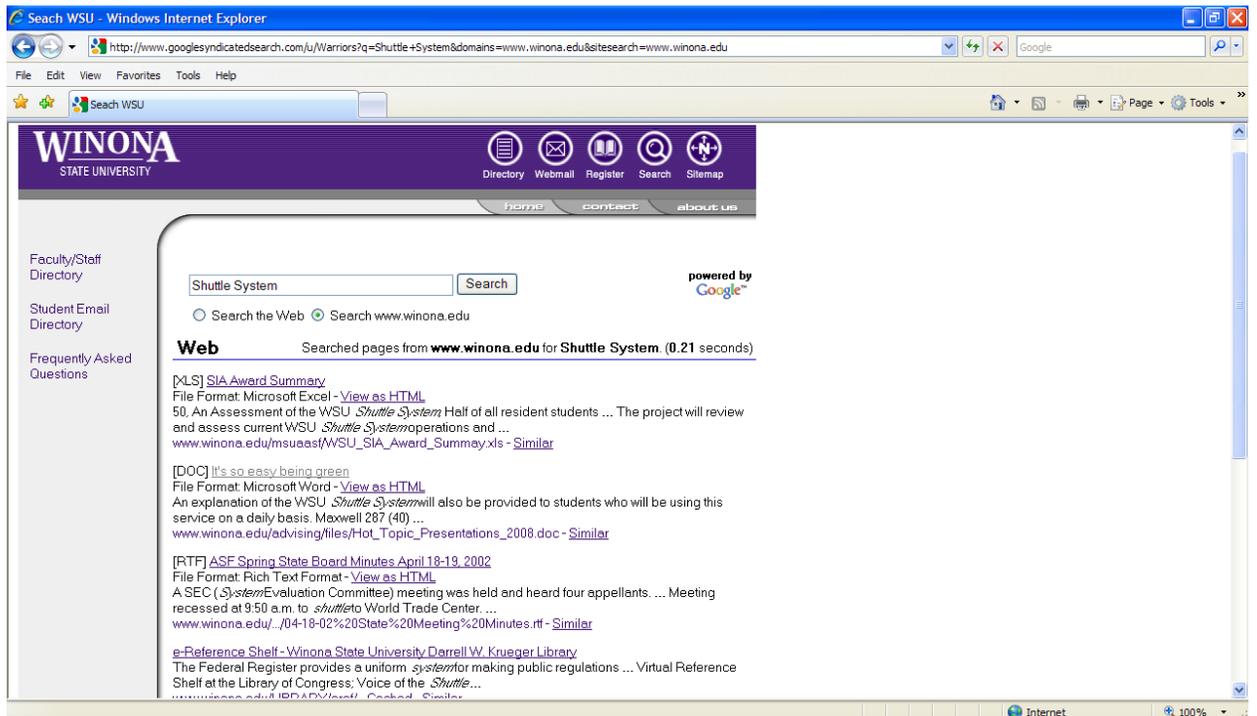
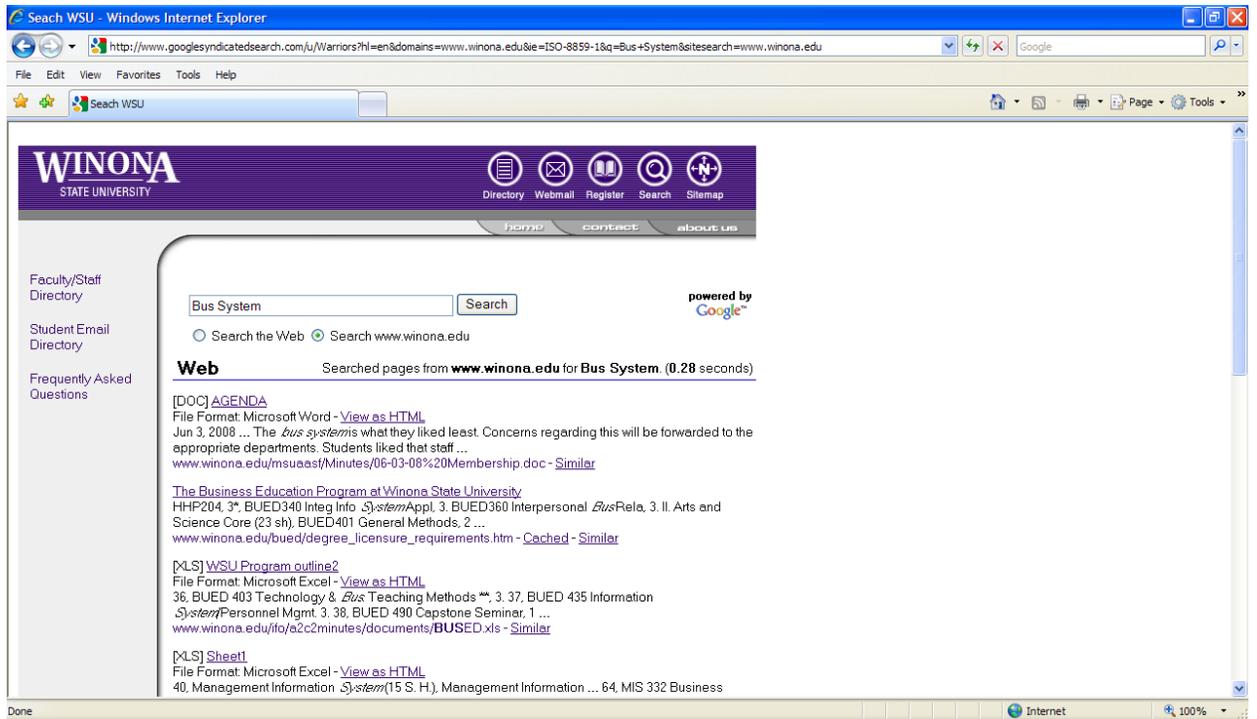
I thought it was going to run a lot more. 'Cause when we came for tour days, they opened up that, like, coach bus. And they just were running like non-stop, the buses were. And I was like "Oh, this is going to be nice! You never have to wait!" But they take that away. So...that's just for show.

I just expected to be the big bus all the time and that you would have a seat all the time, but every time I have rode the bus lately I have had to stand. So I use it more than anticipated just because I didn't anticipate it as being as far from Main Campus but it takes longer.

Suggestions for Improvement

After reviewing the transportation websites of several universities and visiting the College St. Benedict and St. John's University campus to ride their shuttle system and speak to staff and students, we have determined several recommendations for the WSU shuttle system. While many of the universities we researched serviced a larger number of students, several updates could be made to make the shuttle system more smoothly function on our campus.

Our first recommendation would be to name the shuttle system so that it is easily identifiable, as well as easier to search on the WSU website. As we were conducting focus groups, we noticed that students reference the WSU Transit as “the bus”, “the shuttle system” or “the vans”, but do not use the term *transit*. Not only is there confusion about the name of the shuttle system among students, the WSU website also lists shuttle information under multiple titles. Unfortunately this makes finding information about the shuttle system difficult. One of the links to the information is listed under the Parking Services webpage under the heading “WSU Transit”. If a member of the WSU Community is aware that the Director of Security oversees the shuttle system he or she can find a link on the Security website under the heading “WSU Shuttle Service”. By determining an identifiable and specific name for the shuttle service, the WSU community would be able to more easily search for shuttle information on the WSU website and would find the same heading used on both the Parking Services and Security websites.



We began this research project by searching the shuttle system on the WSU website and were not able to find any information about schedules or locations by typing in the keywords

shuttle system, bus, or van system. Screen shots of these searches are included on the previous page as a record of what information is retrieved when searching for these keywords on the WSU Website. After being unable to find any information with a keyword search, we did find the link to the information on the WSU Security website. Later, after reviewing other university's websites, we noticed that transportation information is generally found on a university's parking section of their website. We were then able to find the link to WSU's shuttle on the Parking Services website. By having a specific name for the shuttle it will help students, faculty, and staff, to better identify e-mails, posters and other information regarding the shuttle system and will make it easier to complete a successful online search for shuttle information. Some suggestions for names are: "Warrior Transit", "Warrior Link", "Warrior Connection" or "Warrior Shuttle".

This search process also helped us to determine our second recommendation, which is to re-name the link to the Parking Services webpage from *Parking Services* to *Parking and Transportation Services* so that students can more easily locate information about the shuttle system and other transportation information. Another suggestion for the website would be to create an online link of frequently asked questions about the shuttle system as well as a link to give suggestions or complaints. This document includes several screen shots in the *Review of Other Transit Systems* section that show examples of such online forms. We felt this could be a great resource for students, parents and prospective students who are seeking information about the shuttle system, but could also help document some of the suggestions and complaints of those who use the service. This could be a valuable tool when making future decisions about the shuttle system. In addition to re-naming the webpage, we felt that it might be beneficial for Parking Services to coordinate the shuttle system as many students are likely unaware that the

Director of Security is overseeing our system. All other universities that we researched included their service under the Parking Services department. At WSU, many students may be uncertain of who to contact when they experience a problem or have a suggestion. Also, Parking Services handles most transportation needs, so it would make sense to have a combined website and overseer. If this is not possible it may be helpful to have one shuttle service website using a specific shuttle name (as suggested earlier) so that students can access this information in one specific location.

To better market the shuttle, it would be helpful to provide small, printed versions of the shuttle schedule for students to place in their wallets. An example of this type of schedule from College St. Benedict and St. John's University is enclosed with the printed copy of this report in the pocket of the binder. As you can see on this smaller version, it provides the schedule, the website address, as well as a small statement indicating their commitment to sustainability.

We also believe it is necessary to communicate with students, faculty, and staff when major delays or schedule changes occur. These updates could be posted online, given through university emails, as well as on flyers and posters near the bus stops to inform passengers of changes to the shuttle schedule, construction-related impacts on parking and transportation, or long delays due to buses or the Winona Transit bus breaking down. Often times throughout the 2008-09 year when the Winona Transit broke down or when Phillips Bus Service broke down, students were not made aware of these crucial changes to the bus schedule, resulting in many students being late to or missing class. It is important to let the WSU Community know when there have been delays so that they can find alternative transportation or plan on taking an earlier bus to avoid over-crowding on the bus. It is also important to let the front desk of Lourdes know so that the Desk Assistants can inform residents who are coming to and from the bus.

We also noticed that other university websites provide online information about transportation schedules during academic break periods and feel that this information needs to be made available to the WSU Community. Other universities posted their winter break, spring break, and summer schedules online. Many times students living on West Campus, particularly international students and students without vehicles, are unaware that the bus system will not be running on breaks, vacation days and in the summer. The current schedule posted under the *Safe Ride Route* heading on the WSU Security webpage lists “days with limited and/or no shuttle service”, but all of the days are from the 2007-08 academic year and there is no clear indication of what the exact schedules will be on those days. By simply notifying these students in advance we can avoid leaving them stranded without transportation or waiting for long periods of time because they are unaware of adjusted schedules. As mentioned earlier, there are several simple ways that this information can be communicated to the WSU Community.

After a thorough review of the WSU Transit System it is apparent that our current system is not meeting our students’ transportation needs. An analysis of the shuttle schedule and ridership showed that there is not currently enough transportation available to provide good service to our students. Buses and vans are often filled to capacity, leaving many students behind who, although got to the bus stop on time, are forced to wait for the next bus or van, sometimes making them miss class or other opportunities. It should be noted that this does not include students who simply missed the shuttle, but those who were left because a shuttle was full or because they were attempting to avoid other aggressive students when boarding the shuttle. Many times, although students *have* planned ahead and compensated for travel time on the shuttle, they end up waiting anywhere from 15 to 45 minutes, often in the cold, to get a spot. This means they could spend up to an hour and a half a day just waiting for a spot on the shuttle

if they are commuting back and forth between Main Campus and West Campus. This certainly causes those students to be frustrated and sometimes even aggressive. Because spots are so limited on the shuttle service, many students believe it is necessary to push others to get a spot on the bus or van. If there were more spaces made available by adding extra morning buses and by having a smaller bus replace the evening vans, this would significantly reduce the amount of time that WSU Community members spend waiting for transportation, and would greatly reduce the likelihood of the aggression at the bus stops.

If we can provide more bussing, students in the focus groups expressed that they would be more likely to ride the buses, or would ride them more frequently. Many student in the focus groups expressed that they gave up riding the night and weekend vans in particular because they do not make frequent trips, and do not meet the demand for the number of passenger who hope to ride them. Increasing the availability of transportation between campuses would ultimately decrease the number to students driving to Main Campus in the evenings and on the weekends. It would also likely increase the number of students at University-sponsored activities and events. This would also support WSU's commitment to "going green" as highlighted on the WSU Homepage and lower the number of students who need parking permits.

It is apparent that to provide decent service to students living on West Campus, more bussing must be provided. More bussing will cost more money. A solution to this cost problem could be to run the bus system as it is run by the College of St. Benedict and St. John's University where they pay students to drive the buses, rather than professionals. If WSU were to do this, they would likely have to purchase or lease buses that students could drive, as we currently contract an outside company to provide the transportation and drivers.

It is clear that the current shuttle system at WSU is not providing students, faculty and staff with the quality of service that is necessary to meet student, staff and faculty transportation needs. Students living on West Campus are at a disadvantage, when compared to those living on Main Campus, when attempting to use academic services, attending university-sponsored events and activities, and participating in clubs and study groups when they are not provided convenient and efficient transportation. By implementing the suggested improvements, the WSU Shuttle System can better serve the WSU community.

Resources

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