

Assessing a Carpool Program at Western Michigan University

ENVS 4100: Assessing a Carpool Program at Western Michigan University

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Spring 2016



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Executive Summary

Western Michigan University (WMU) consists of a large and geographically stratified student body, the majority of whom commute to campus with a single-occupancy motor vehicle. This habit has led to a campus culture of malaise towards the Parking Services department, parking pass costs, and parking in general; this report seeks to find methods to reverse this trend; to work with Parking Services to create varied and unique ways of commuting to campus that reside within university guidelines and safety protocols.

To assess the feasibility of a carpool program at WMU, data from previous years' studies was collected, a new survey was created and distributed, and several meetings were scheduled with the heads of Parking Services and Human Resources to ascertain institutional limitations to such a program. This data collection revealed that the university has not previously considered establishing a carpool program, although it is currently possible under current parking guidelines. The survey revealed that the current trends of our campus transportation culture have not changed significantly since the previous surveys were conducted in 2010 and 2011. A majority of students continue to commute to campus with a single occupancy motor vehicle, and a majority of students live within a very short distance of main campus. This combination of factors demonstrates that an acute opportunity exists to reduce the number of vehicles coming to campus each day and subsequently improve WMU's commitments to sustainability while improving the university's public image to prospective students who choose to rely on alternative transportation. The meetings with administration revealed that there is a willingness to explore this program, with the one stringent requirement that it not affect day to day operations of the self-funded Parking Services by negatively impacting their budget. The authors investigated the carpooling programs of several other major US universities to determine what has worked for other large institutions.

A prospective carpool program has been outlined in this report, and recommendations have been made to assist anyone hoping to establish a pilot program in the future. A mission statement for this program has been fashioned with the intention that the original vision of the program, while modular, will remain true to the authors' goals of creating a sustainable and equitable carpooling program that exists inside university codes.

Introduction

To ensure Western Michigan University remains innovative and challenges 'business-as-usual' habits, the campus needs to encourage a wider variety of sustainable methods for students and faculty to travel. Commuting to and from WMU has a profound effect on campus sustainability. The primary methods of transportation to and from campus are single-occupancy vehicles, public or university buses, biking, or walking. Previous findings show that over 60% of the student body utilizes a single-occupancy vehicle as their primary method of traveling to campus. This report studies the viability and feasibility of establishing a university program that enables and incentivizes carpooling among students and faculty. A program like this would benefit the university and the students living in close proximity to the university; reducing the amount of vehicles traveling to campus while simultaneously reducing congestion and lowering campus greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This program will serve as another outlet for promoting and highlighting our campus vision for sustainability.

Several universities, such as Stanford University, University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Wisconsin Madison, all facilitate carpool programs for their students and/or faculty, and will serve as best practice models for a WMU program.

A. Carpooling Defined

Carpooling is defined here as the practice of multiple people sharing a ride in one car, with the express purpose of saving money on gas, parking, and vehicle maintenance. This definition does not include ‘car sharing,’ which entails a structured system in which a third party owns a vehicle that multiple persons have access to and pay a fee for the privilege of using. A car share service exists near WMU’s campus, in the form of ‘zipcar,’ an internet based carsharing service. Carpooling in this report's context will rely upon student and faculty vehicles, and will not require any vehicle investments on the part of WMU.

Methodology and Data

Campus transportation is a difficult thing to study. As of 2016, there have been only a few surveys done on students commuting methods. We gathered data from 2010, 2011, 2012 and created a survey of our own to become aware of how our current student body commutes. Our findings backed up the previous survey results; leading us to believe that there is still a strong potential for a campus carpool program to be implemented and effective in reducing university GHG emissions and bolstering campus sustainability.

According to a 2012 GHG inventory conducted by Christian Galbraith, commuting vehicles on WMU campus were responsible for 14,382.3 MT eCO₂. A 2010 ENVS 4100 study determined that (at the time) 56% of respondents lived less than three miles from campus, and 62% primarily drove their vehicle to get to class. The emissions from these trips make up approximately 31% of WMU’s total GHG emissions.

The 2011 College Green report card for WMU is the last available report put together by the administration of the WMU Office for Sustainability that spoke to our campus’s transportation culture. According to this report, 67% of students commuted via single occupancy vehicle in 2011.

To develop an optimal 2016 survey, the authors consulted with Erik Newton to design an appropriate survey to gather the required data on campus transportation. The 2016 survey found that 54% of the student body commutes via single occupancy vehicle, which is lower than the previous studies, although it remains to be the largest share of WMU’s commuting method. Combining this with the fact that 59% of students live within 1-5 miles of campus, a clear opportunity exists to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles traveling each day--especially from high concentration areas such as Kalamazoo’s Vine and Stuart neighborhoods. Furthermore, 66% of respondents reported that they have carpooled to campus before, and 56% said they would be interested in a university endorsed carpool program.

Meetings with the heads of Parking Services and Human Resources revealed that administration is generally amenable to the idea of a Carpool Program, so long as it can be prototyped and remain revenue neutral, and that organizers can find an outside revenue source. Parking Services computer system is modular to the point where no large scale changes would need to be made, the only change needed would be to create a new parking pass, application for that pass, and a tiered cost structure for those participating in the program. Captain Unangst also revealed that campus owns 14,000 parking spaces in 110 different parking lots. They do not sell that many parking

passes each year, which shows that there is room to co-opt several groups of spaces for the incentive structure outlined below.

The 2010 report inquired about incentive structures for carpooling. The 2016 survey did not include such questions because it was seen as too broad of a question and had potential to be misleading. Moreover, the authors saw the opportunity to purchase only one parking pass between groups as the best incentive.

A. GHG Reduction Analysis

Given an average MPG of 23 for the sample in our survey, and a factor of 8.78kg CO₂ per gallon of gasoline expended, we can extrapolate a rough estimate of GHG reductions that this program would engender. At 23MPG, given an average trip of 4 miles one way, we arrive at 32 miles per week of travel for the average student (coming to campus 4 days per week). This equates to 1.39 gallons of gasoline per week. At a factor of 8.78 kg CO₂ per gallon, we arrive at 12.2 kg CO₂ per week, per student driver. This comes to 195 kg CO₂ every semester for each car on campus. Extrapolating further, if this program reduces the amount of cars traveling to campus each semester by 40 vehicles, a low estimate--this would only require 20 groups of 3 students creating carpools, a GHG savings of 7816 kg CO₂ would be allayed each semester. These savings are significant and not to be scoffed at. This 'armchair analysis' is only a rough estimate, and will necessitate further investigations into the efficiency of the vehicles on campus as well as the driving habits of the campus community.

Examples of Best Practices on Other Campuses

Overview

While seeking the best carpool program structure for Western Michigan University the authors of this study have identified three universities that have successfully implemented carpool programs on their campuses. Stanford University, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Wisconsin - Madison all maintain carpool programs with similar, yet different approaches. By evaluating the various programs at these institutions, the authors hope to construct a recommended course of action for a potential carpool program at Western Michigan University.

Stanford

Stanford University has one of the foremost campus carpooling programs in the United States. The core functions of Stanford's program include the University's "commute club," their incentive program, and their ridematching service.

To qualify for the carpool program, applicants must first meet the requirements of Stanford University's Commute Club. The Commute Club at Stanford University was established to keep fellow commuters easily connected. The club can be joined if the applicant meets all of the nine eligibility requirements that the university has created (see appendix for full list). Requirements include not living on campus, being on campus at least 20 hours a week during normal business hours, and your primary commute destination must be Stanford's main campus. Membership needs to be renewed at the start of each academic year in the fall.

Stanford University also offers a variety of Commute Club membership rewards. Members can be rewarded with up to \$300 a year in “Clean Air Cash” or “Carpool Credit.” Twenty-five dollars is awarded per each month that an applicant is eligible for the Commute Club, for a total of three-hundred dollars per year of “Clean Air Cash.” Commute Club members are able to purchase up to eight daily parking scratchers per month for days they need to drive, and membership needs to be renewed at the start of every academic year.

Commuters that do not already have a carpool formed on Stanford’s campus can use the University's ridematching service. Commuters can sign up through “ride.com” as a driver or rider. Once the commuter is registered for the service they will need to provide their departure location and work schedule, then they will receive contact information of other Stanford commuters with similar commutes who are interested in carpooling. Lastly, payments are managed through the Ride app to prevent arguments over money and transportation costs.

In short, Stanford University offers many options for commuters to travel to campus. The university keeps commuters connected through their commute club and ridematching services while offering monetary incentives for commuters as well.

University of Texas

The University of Texas at Austin offers a carpool program to support efforts to reduce traffic and vehicle pollution in Austin. The University of Texas's carpool program requires eligibility, offers incentives and a “share pass.”

There are a strict list of guidelines and eligibility requirements that must be met to be eligible for the carpool program. A complete list of the University of Texas’s carpool program requirements can be found in the appendix. Requirements for this program are mostly similar to Stanford’s carpool program. The main difference is that this program maintains a maximum of four carpoolers (including the driver) allowed per group.

Like Stanford University, The University of Texas offers incentives for commuters. Incentives that are offered for the carpoolers include reserved spaces, a reduction of fifty dollars to the cost of a parking pass for each carpooler, a “Share Pass,” and a “Guaranteed Ride Home.”

Commuters interested in carpooling at the University of Texas receive a “share pass” that allows them to park in one of the university's parking garages if they need to drive themselves to campus. The number of times the pass can be used varies by semester. Commuters can also get a “Guaranteed Ride Home” from a taxi in an emergency situation. This system allows for up to two \$49.50 rides per semester (six per year).

The University of Texas at Austin offers a carpool program that contains incentives and benefits for the faculty or students taking advantage of the program. By providing the convenience of priority parking and “Share Passes,” the university has constructed a carpool program that is easy and effectively taken advantage of.

University of Wisconsin Madison

Perhaps the carpool program that is the most applicable to Western Michigan University is the University of Wisconsin - Madison, due to the climate similarities--both universities have to deal with heavy snowfall in the winter months. However, the University of Wisconsin has shown that they have no difficulty with promoting their carpool program throughout the seasons. Like the educational institutions listed previously, the University of Wisconsin - Madison offers incentives and requires eligibility for their carpool program. Uniquely, the University of Wisconsin only offers there carpool program to their faculty members.

They offer two options for carpoolers; one is to register your carpool permit if you had one previously (this is done on an annual basis), the second is to apply for a new permit. If the group is registering an already existing carpool one member of the carpool must have an annual base lot parking permit. This individual is considered the “captain” of the carpool and is responsible for the permit. The university encourages carpool users to use “Rideshare” online or to ask friends to form a carpool. If applying for a new permit, a minimum of three members are required and permits are given on a first come first serve basis.

Important requirements for the University of Wisconsin’s carpool program include, but are not limited to, being a University faculty member, owning an annual baseline parking permit, and having at least three members. Applicants that are approved for a carpool permit are offered two direct benefits from the University. The first are six complimentary daily parking passes each year; for when the main permit is unavailable or a member cannot ride in the carpool that day. The second is an emergency ride home program that can be used up to three times every six months.

To conclude, the University of Wisconsin - Madison’s carpool program is functional throughout the seasons, despite the heavy winters. Although this program encourages sustainable practices, it severely limits itself by excluding students.

Applicability to Project Area

From the best practice research that has been compiled from Stanford University, the University of Texas at Austin, and the University of Wisconsin - Madison, it is clear that all three programs share common themes and ideas. Overarching themes of all three programs are a ride home program, flexibility for daily passes, and priority parking. Although some programs offer monetary incentive structures, it is clear from interviews with WMU administrators that this is not feasible for WMU, although creative options exist for maintaining a revenue-neutral program. Moreover, ride home initiatives will need to be reviewed for monetary reasons as well. In short, a ride home program, flexibility for daily passes, and priority parking are essential for a successful carpooling program at WMU.

Discussion

A. How to connect riders with drivers

Connecting riders with drivers is central to the goals of this program. Several valid methods exist to accomplish this task, the most obvious and easiest to implement is what we will call the ‘Community Method,’ wherein riders and drivers decide to get a pass and split the cost together, without any university input. Another method is similar to what Stanford uses for their carpool program, which involves filling out an application that then matches you with other community members that live near you and have similar schedules.

These systems could be built and run via online architecture. Through applications like ride.com or an Uber-style App that is accessed through the Western App on smartphones, developed from open-source code and maintained by the computer science or business information systems departments at WMU. By contracting this responsibility to outside parties, WMU relinquishes much of the liability and can continue to focus on providing

comfortable parking options for faculty, staff, students, and visitors. An online presence like this would be very visible and highlight our campus vision of sustainability to a broader audience than would be possible through a small program run via paper applications in the Parking Services building.

B. Incentive Structure

The authors of this report received hundreds of comments from the last two questions of the 2016 survey. Many of these comments spoke to the high price of parking permits and expressed a desire for more options to exist for purchasing passes at reduced prices. The research shows that the best incentive option for students would be a reduced cost for a parking permit. A reduced parking permit cost combined with a small allowance of reserved parking spots for carpoolers, would ensure that this new program would be enticing for many, and would continue to reward those who already have carpools operating within the current system. Moreover, the authors had an open discussion with their peers in the Spring session of ENVS 4100: Appropriate Tech and Sustainability and it is clear that the likelihood of WMU students utilizing a carpool would dramatically increase if a reduced cost was applied to parking permits for carpoolers.

To expand on the discussion above, there is one option that was clearly preferred among WMU students for a reduced carpool parking pass structure. This option would be a reduction of the \$180 (fall semester) or the \$120 (spring semester) charge to \$100 a semester for each person in a 2 person carpool, \$80 for each person in a three person carpool, and \$60 for each person in a four person carpool. In this theoretical pricing structure, Parking Services could expect to lose \$720 per 4 students carpooling together, \$420 per 3 students, and \$200 per 2 students. Those calculations are based on a yearly analysis, a semester pass would change these figures. This pricing structure is purely theoretical and would need to go through several revisions during the pilot program to achieve optimization. This pricing reduction would not only attract single drivers to form a carpool, but it would entice non-permitted drivers to invest in a reduced price carpool pass. Informing drivers and non-drivers of the carpooling passes could be achieved by advertising the passes at parking services, an email blast at the start of each semester, and by informing incoming freshmen of the option at their orientation. With proper advertising methods, the authors of this study see a potential for new and old drivers to be persuaded towards a carpooling program.

One consideration to take into account is the necessity of a ride home program. In an emergency situation where the primary carpool driver has to leave campus before the scheduled egress time, the school would need to establish some sort of contingency for returning students to their homes. All of the carpool programs studied under the “best practices” section have a program like this, where the school pays for a taxi (covering costs up to \$49.50) to return the student to their home. The qualifications for this service would be very strict and not accessible to anyone outside of the carpool program.

C. Program Vision

A pilot program would be established in collaboration with Parking Services to create a new pass for carpoolers. An application for this permit would be created that would require participants to fulfill several requirements to ensure eligibility. A minimum of two persons would have to fill out an application together, all persons involved must be full time students or faculty, and all persons involved must travel to main campus as their primary destination (this does not exclude those who split time between Parkview campus and Main campus). By requiring stringent criteria for qualification, the program would reduce its scope to a manageable and equitable level.

Several reserved spots in campus owned parking lots would be established and signage produced to mark them as carpooling spaces. The location of these spots is to be determined, although several choice locations would be in the underutilized faculty lot behind Sangren Hall, and/or in the lots near Haworth College of Business. Participants who qualify for the program would be able to purchase a parking pass at a special rate, and split the costs of this permit between the members of their carpool. This intrinsic incentive structure will cost the university little, and the ultimate goal would be to eliminate the building of new parking lots on campus, which would save the university millions of dollars in the long run.

1. Mission Statement

“The WMU Carpool Initiative aims to empower the community with a means to intelligently commute to campus in a sustainable and collaborative manner. By fostering participation across our campus, the Carpool Initiative will increase connectivity and help facilitate the sustainability of our learning community while improving quality of life for all community members.”

D. Impacts on Parking Services

Parking services is entirely self-funded. This carpool program could impact their annual budget in several distinct ways. By reducing the amount of cars coming to campus, road maintenance would cost less. By creating a new pass for carpooling, we would have to add to the modular computer system to facilitate this, and we would have to print the new passes. This program could incentivize the large number of people that drive to campus but do not buy passes to become a customer of Parking Services, hopefully making the program revenue neutral. This is the biggest obstacle at the University level, making the program work within our established system, and ensuring that it does not impact the revenue or operations of Parking Services at an organizational level.

Several options exist for making this program revenue neutral. One option is to raise the price of regular parking passes by a nominal amount. This would offset the money lost to those taking advantage of the carpool system, and would also function to de-incentivize driving a single-occupancy vehicle to school. Another option is to create a “Commute Club” RSO that would apply each semester for money from WSA (Western Student Association) and would then support the students taking advantage of this program by reimbursing parking services at the end of the quarter for revenue lost due to carpooling.

The Parking Services department is completely self-funded. Their operational budget for 2015 was \$6,673,481, which was sourced (in order of highest to lowest impact) via the selling of parking permits, renting lots for private events on campus, and parking fines. The lion's share of their budget goes to paying back the loans that were taken out years ago to fund the building of parking infrastructure. Maintaining a stable revenue stream for parking services is critical to infrastructure maintenance and timely repayment of these loans.

This program carries the potential for job creation. A new position of Sustainable Transportation Director would be created that would oversee and develop sustainable transportation on campus. Several other universities employ a full time coordinator to fulfill this duty. Doing so on WMU's campus would prove that WMU is committed to fulfilling its Climate Action Plan (CAP) goals and to becoming the gold standard university that it is striving to become.

Analysis Limitations & Future Work

The previous 2010 student transportation survey collected their data via student email and a web-based survey system. The new study collected survey data by physically passing out hard copies of surveys around campus in various classes and the Waldo Library. There is a possibility that this method may have skewed our results, however, we feel that we have presented an accurate representation of the student body due to the wide variety and inherent randomness of ages and majors that can be found at Waldo library. However it is to be noted that not all of our survey respondents answered all of the questions we posed, some respondents chose multiple answers, and some respondents did not know the answer to some questions, especially the MPG of their cars.

A limitation to our study was caused by the lack of data in past years. We only had two other reports with which to compare our numbers to see how much the demographics of the university have changed. Unsurprisingly, the share of students driving to school each day has not changed much in relation to other modes.

Future work involves starting a pilot program and running it for an entire semester. This would allow program coordinators to see what works on WMU's campus and what needs to be revised from the original program vision. This program, if successful, could be expanded to include faculty and a Vanpooling program. Faculty carpooling would be extremely impactful to campus sustainability efforts as faculty members typically live further from campus than do students, and they must commute much more regularly. Providing faculty members with a rebate in their salary for the cost of the parking pass would incentivize many members to consider the program, and would allow the program to reach the entire strata of our campus community.

Conclusion/Recommendations

This study has shed light upon the areas of WMU's transportation culture that should be improved. It shows that an opportunity exists on campus *right now* to implement an effective carpooling program. The benefits from this program would be cumulative, and the sooner it begins the better off WMU will be towards achieving its CAP goal to become climate neutral by 2065.

The authors recommend that a pilot program be established to work out the wrinkles in the program and to create a buzz around the idea of carpooling on campus. Surveys should be done more frequently on the subject of campus transportation, as data is severely lacking in that field. The authors also recommend that GHG audits be more regularly performed to ascertain the effectiveness of WMU programs towards achieving the stated CAP goals.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Current Contact List

Isaac Green	Gerrit Anderson
isaac.s.green@wmich.edu , ehlonofex@gmail.com	gerrit.p.anderson@wmich.edu
1-269-686-6167	1-269-276-6426

Appendix 2: Contact List and Logs

Erik Newton - Survey Collaborator and Data Analysis

Collaborated with Erik on survey construction/ effective survey writing and distribution.

Dr. Warren Hills - Vice President of Human Resources at WMU

Discussed role of Administration and obstacles/Discussed faculty participation and benefits.

Captain Timothy Unangst - Head of Parking Services

Discussed role of Parking Services within WMU and image of the facility within the eyes of student body.

Dr. Harold Glasser - Executive Director of Office for Sustainability and Professor of Environmental Studies

Jeff Spoelstra - Sustainability Coordinator at WMU

Pointed us towards resources and past studies that focus on Carpooling.

Appendix 3: Copy of Survey Questions and Image Archive

Campus Transportation Survey 2016 (answered by 230 students)

1. How far away do you live from campus?
 - a. I live on campus
 - b. I live between 1 and 5 miles from campus
 - c. I live between 5 and 10 miles from campus
 - d. I live between 10 and 15 miles from campus
 - e. I live between 15 and 20 miles from campus
 - f. I live over 20 miles from campus

2. How many days per week do you commute to campus?
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5
 - f. 6
 - g. 7

3. How do you normally commute to campus?
 - a. Walk
 - b. Personal vehicle
 - c. The bus system
 - d. Non-motorized transportation (bike, skateboard, etc.)
 - e. Carpool

4. If you drive a motorized vehicle to campus, approximately how many city miles does it get per gallon?

5. If you drive to campus, how do you purchase your WMU parking pass?
 - a. Annually
 - b. Bi-Annually
 - c. Weekly
 - d. Daily
 - e. I do not purchase a WMU parking pass

6. Have you ever carpoled before?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. Would you be interested in a university endorsed campus carpool program at WMU?

- a. Yes
- b. No

8. Please explain your answer.

9. Do you have any final thoughts, comments, suggestions, or concerns about a campus carpool program at WMU?
We appreciate all feedback.

IMAGES AND GRAPHS

Data snapshot from Green College report card (their website is becoming defunct)

COMMUTE MODAL SPLIT

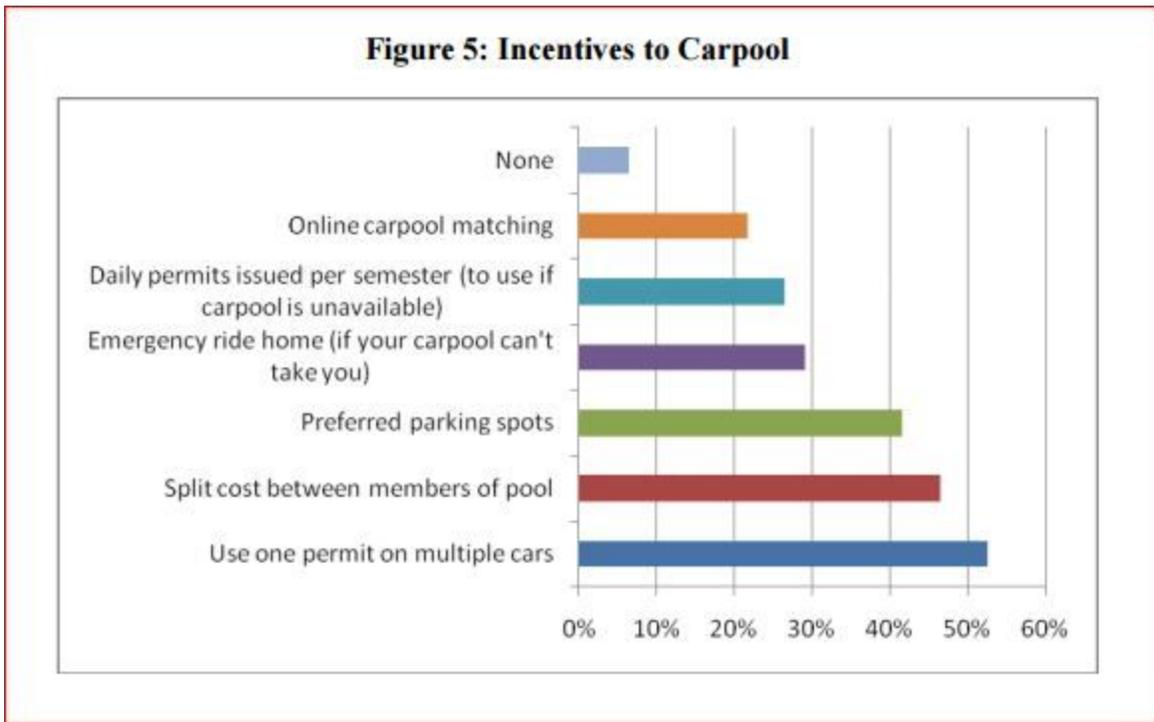
64) What portion of the student body commutes via transportation methods other than single-occupancy vehicles (e.g., bicycle, walking, public transportation, carpool/vanpool)?

33%

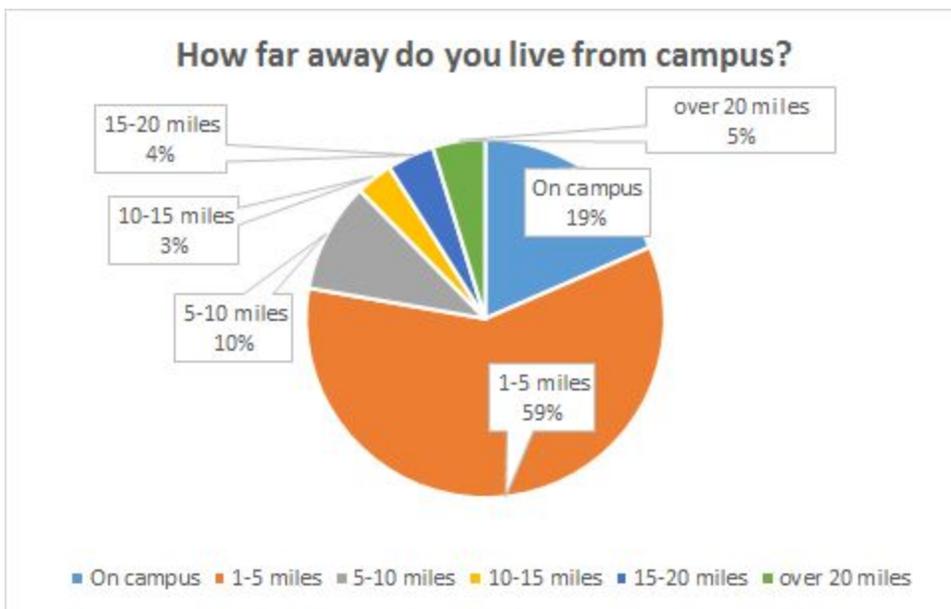
If data are available, please provide the percentage of students who commute by each of the following means.

	Percentage
Bicycle	3%
Carpool/vanpool	2%
Public transit	15%
Single-occupancy vehicle	67%
Walking	22%

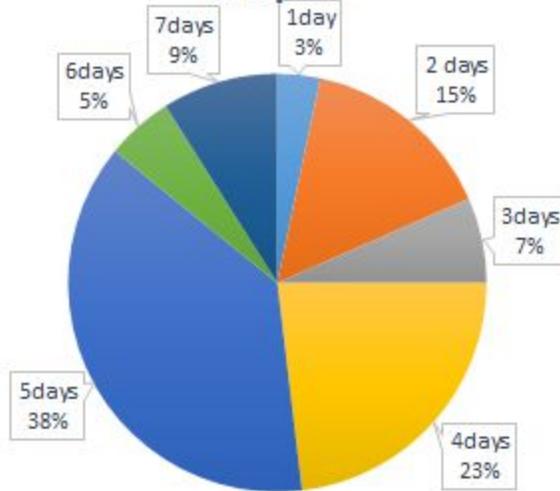
2010 Report image on Carpooling Incentives:



Graphs from survey questions: (in order)

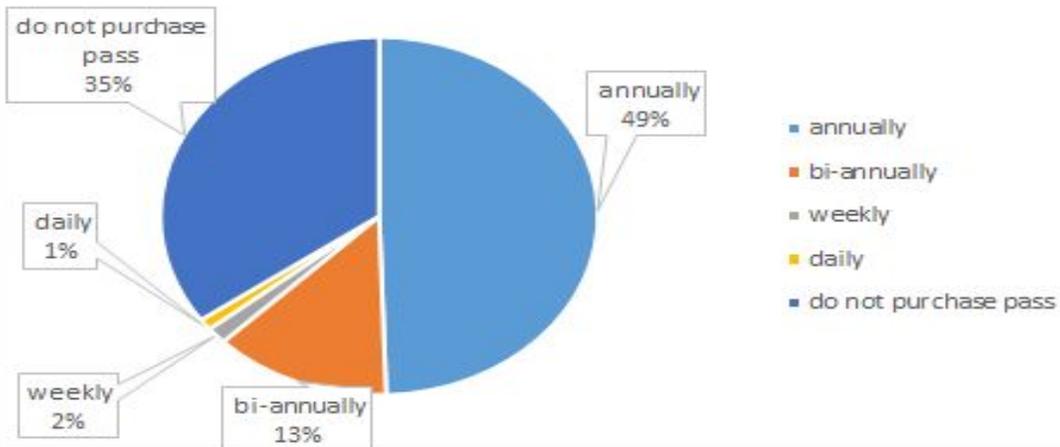


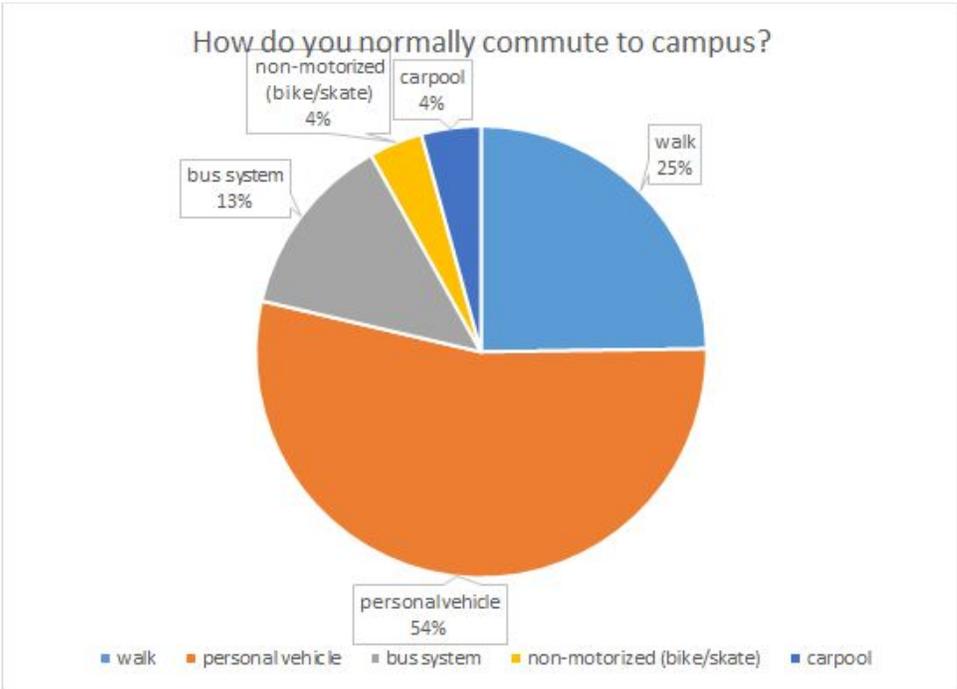
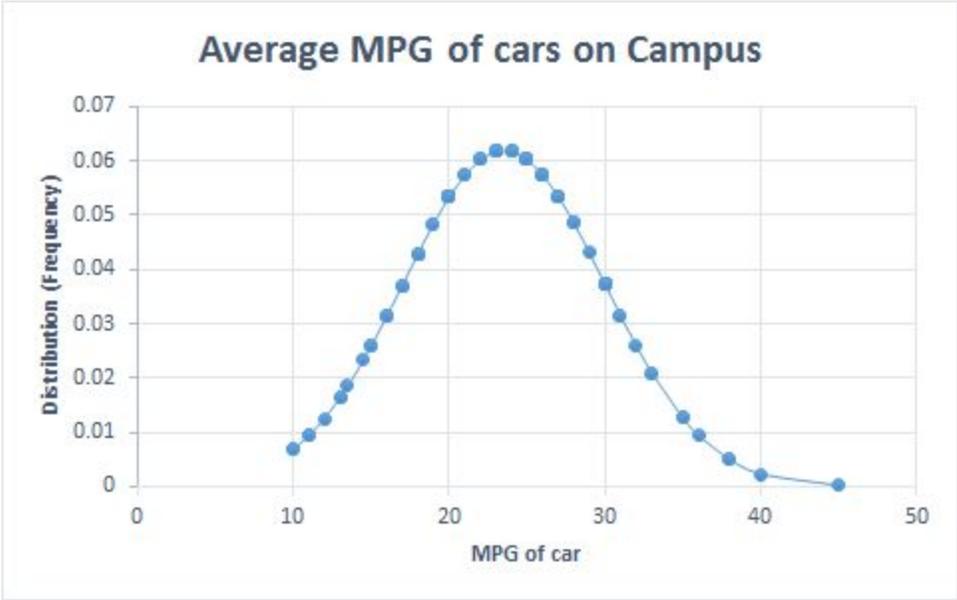
How many days per week do you commute to campus?



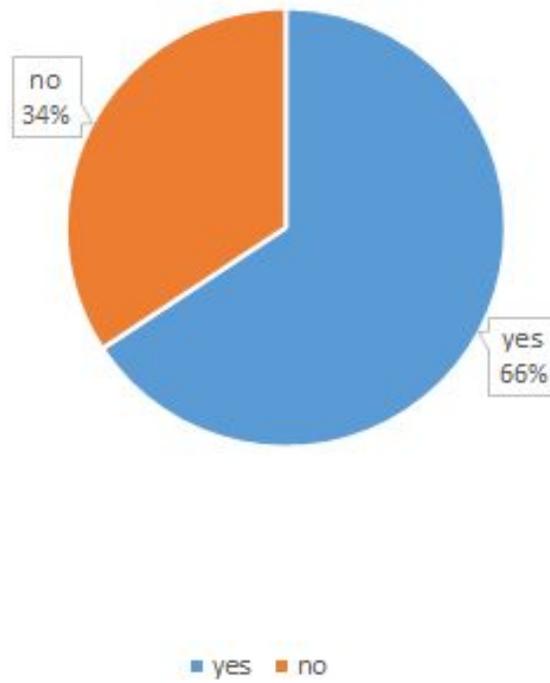
1 day 2 days 3 days 4 days 5 days 6 days 7 days

If you drive to campus, how do you purchase your WMU parking pass?

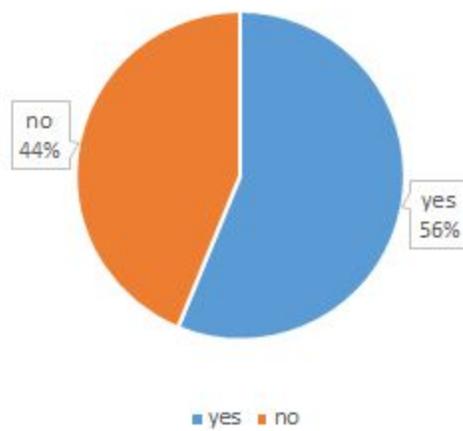




Have you carpooled before?



Interest in WMU carpool program?



Stanford Commute Club Details:

Eligibility

You are eligible for the Commute Club if you meet all of the following criteria:

- You do not drive and park near campus as part of your alternative commute, nor do you park at the VA Hospital or at off-campus Stanford parking lots and property.
- You do not live in on-campus student housing, Kingscote Gardens, or Olmsted Staff Rental Housing.
- You are actively employed at Stanford's main campus, or you are a postdoc or registered student (**students only qualify for registered quarters: minimum of 8 units for undergraduates and 6 units for graduate students**).
- You will be commuting to Stanford for the duration of your Commute Club membership.
- You would be required to display a Stanford parking permit if you were to park at your place of work or study.
- You are not an evening- or night-shift employee.
- You agree not to use any Stanford parking permit (except daily scratchers, a carpool permit, vanpool permit, SH permit, or service vehicle permit, if applicable) during the time you are registered as a Commute Club member.
- Your primary commute is to Stanford's main campus.
- You are required to be at Stanford's main campus at least 20 hours per week during normal weekday business hours.

University of Texas Carpool Details:

Guidelines & Eligibility

- All members of the carpool must be employed or registered at The University of Texas at Austin. One of the participants must be a University of Texas at Austin employee or student who has a current and valid UT parking permit. All carpool members must reside in the same commute area.
- The permit issued to the carpool will be the Class of Permit that the holder is currently eligible to purchase. ("[A](#)", "[C](#)", "[F](#)", "[S](#)"). Class "O" Permit holders may receive all benefits except the reduction in the parking costs. On campus residents and "R" permit holders are not eligible carpool members. Carpools must park in the lot that they are assigned or eligible. N and N+ permits are not eligible for the carpool program.
- Membership in Class "F" Permit carpools is restricted to faculty or staff members only. Class "F" Permit carpools will be assigned to a specific "F" lot; however, no specific spaces will be set aside for Class "F" Permit carpools.
- Only one University parking permit is issued per carpool, and only one of the registered vehicles may be parked in the designated lot at any time.
- The permit holder and all riders will be connected to the carpool permit and thus not eligible for another permit. Carpool members are ineligible to obtain additional permits of any type (including Class "M" Permits).
- Motorcycles, motor scooters, and mopeds are excluded from the carpool program.
- Individuals are only eligible to receive benefits once per academic year.
- If the permit is returned for a refund, the \$50 per member permit discount benefit will be prorated and will be adjusted with the refund based on the usage of the permit.
- Carpool Participants who choose payroll deduction as their payment method should do so on a post-tax basis in order to facilitate the refund process. Federal Regulations guidelines prevent the university from issuing refunds for permits purchased on pre-tax payroll deductions. To prevent the necessity of a refund, all returned permits must be turned into PTS no later than the 15th of the month prior to departure. Any permit being paid by pre-tax payroll deduction pre-tax turned into PTS after the 15th of the month will have a deduction for the following month. This deduction cannot be refunded. Participants who choose pre-tax for their payroll deduction, and whose refund is initiated after the payroll deduction documentation has been sent in for processing, will not receive a refund based on the IRS regulations guidelines.
- A max of four (4) members (including the permit holder) is allowed per group.